“Whatever the world admires in a prince.” Robert Stewart, duke of Albany: Power, Politics, and Family in Late Medieval Scotland

by

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A Thesis
presented to
The University of Guelph

In partial fulfilment of requirements
for the degree of
Doctor of Philosophy
in
History

Guelph, Ontario, Canada
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Robert Stewart, duke of Albany (1340-1420), was the second surviving son of Robert II of Scotland. Over the course of his career, he served many roles in the Scottish government including Governor of Scotland for his absent nephew James I. Albany is famous in Scottish historiography for the murder of his nephew and heir to the throne, David, duke of Rothesay. Chroniclers and historians from the late fifteenth century until today have ascribed to Albany a nefarious royal ambition. This devious ambition supposedly led him to stage coups against his father, Robert II, and brother, Robert III, to seize power in Scotland. Undoubtedly Albany was a deeply ambitious man. However, not much consideration has been given to the idea that Albany, in his governmental roles and as regent for three kings, was not acting on a deeply held desire to sit on the Scottish throne. Rather, Albany’s role in governance is an example of medieval corporate monarchy wherein the entire royal family assisted the reigning monarch in ruling the kingdom.

The structure of corporate monarchy has been used previously to examine queens and the role of women in the institution of monarchy. By applying this structure to a male member of the royal family, this dissertation seeks to place Albany in the wider European context of regency in the late medieval period. By examining how Albany fulfilled the roles and duties of kingship for two adult monarchs and a third absentee monarch, this dissertation seeks to uncover how Albany
performed essential roles of governance within the parameters of a corporate monarchy. To succeed in his role, Albany cultivated a royal identity and presented himself as the highest royal authority in Scotland. Through the examination of Albany’s governmental roles, his relationship with the nobility of Scotland, his presentation of himself as a prince of Scotland, and his interactions with the institution of the church, this dissertation firmly places Albany in the wider European context of rulership in late medieval Europe and demonstrates how Albany was integral to the daily governance of Scotland, and to the survival of the early Stewart dynasty.
Acknowledgements:

First I would like to express my gratitude to my supervisors Dr. Elizabeth Ewan and Dr. Susannah Ferreira for their continuous support and guidance throughout this process. Their immense knowledge, suggestions, conversation, corrections, and patience have been invaluable. I cannot imagine a better supervisory team.

I would also like to thank the other members of my thesis committee, Dr. Mairi Cowan, Dr. Peter Goddard, and Dr. Michael Brown whose insightful comments, suggestions, and difficult questions encouraged me to think both more broadly and more deeply about my research.

Over the course of my research I have been aided by many archivists and librarians but would like to say a special thank you to Teresa Lewitzky in the McLaughlin Library Data Resource Center for her many hours of assistance with the creation of the maps for this dissertation.

Additionally, I would also like to thank the History Department and Centre for Scottish Studies for their generous funding which allowed me not only to undertake this degree but also funded my research in Scotland.

I also thank Dr. Marian Toledo Candelaria for both her encouragement of my research on Albany, and the many hours and late nights we spent discussing Scottish history and the exercise of kingship in Scotland over the dinner table.

On a more personal note, I would like to thank my family, my parents, Penni and Bill, and my siblings, Sherrie and Sean, for their support of not only my research and academic pursuits, but in life generally.
Last but certainly not least I would like to thank my partner, Garey, without his love and support none of this would have been possible.
**Table of Contents:**

Abstract  
Acknowledgments  
List of Names  
List of Maps and Images  
Source Abbreviations  

Introduction: Robert Stewart, duke of Albany  
   Historiography  
   Records and Methodology  
   Conclusion  

Chapter 1: Kingship and the Corporate Nature of Monarchy  
   Late Medieval Kingship: Duties and Theories  
   European Context: Regency in Medieval Europe  
   Scottish Context: Guardians, Lieutenants, and Governors  
   Conclusion  

Chapter 2: Governance and the Corporate Monarchy Under the Stewart Dynasty  
   Pre-1380 Corporate Kingship  
   Chamberlain  
   Carrick Lieutenancy 1384-1388  
   Albany Guardianship 1388-1392/3  
   Ducal Creation  
   Rothesay Lieutenancy and Murder  
   Governorship 1406-1420  
   Conclusion  

Chapter 3: Courting the Nobility: Marriages, Bonds, and Patronage  
   The Central and Western Highlands  
   The Earls of Douglas and the South of Scotland  
   Northeast Scotland and the Balance of Power in the Highlands  
   Fife, Menteith, and Perthshire  
   Conclusion  

Chapter 4: Trading and Raiding: International Relations  
   Diplomacy  
   Warfare  
   Trade  
   Conclusion  

Chapter 5: Power, Piety, and Politics in Religion  
   Schism and Heresy  
   Religion and Scottish Politics  
   Defense and Confirmation of the Rights of the Church  

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Abstract</td>
<td>ii</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Acknowledgments</td>
<td>iv</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>List of Names</td>
<td>viii</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>List of Maps and Images</td>
<td>ix</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Source Abbreviations</td>
<td>x</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Introduction: Robert Stewart, duke of Albany</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Historiography</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Records and Methodology</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conclusion</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chapter 1: Kingship and the Corporate Nature of Monarchy</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Late Medieval Kingship: Duties and Theories</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>European Context: Regency in Medieval Europe</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scottish Context: Guardians, Lieutenants, and Governors</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conclusion</td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chapter 2: Governance and the Corporate Monarchy Under the Stewart</td>
<td>39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dynasty</td>
<td>43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pre-1380 Corporate Kingship</td>
<td>54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chamberlain</td>
<td>58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Carrick Lieutenancy 1384-1388</td>
<td>62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Albany Guardianship 1388-1392/3</td>
<td>79</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ducal Creation</td>
<td>82</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rothesay Lieutenancy and Murder</td>
<td>92</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Governorship 1406-1420</td>
<td>98</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chapter 3: Courting the Nobility: Marriages, Bonds, and Patronage</td>
<td>99</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Central and Western Highlands</td>
<td>110</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Earls of Douglas and the South of Scotland</td>
<td>123</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Northeast Scotland and the Balance of Power in the Highlands</td>
<td>141</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fife, Menteith, and Perthshire</td>
<td>161</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conclusion</td>
<td>181</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chapter 4: Trading and Raiding: International Relations</td>
<td>183</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Diplomacy</td>
<td>186</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Warfare</td>
<td>200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trade</td>
<td>211</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conclusion</td>
<td>217</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chapter 5: Power, Piety, and Politics in Religion</td>
<td>219</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Schism and Heresy</td>
<td>224</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Religion and Scottish Politics</td>
<td>235</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Defense and Confirmation of the Rights of the Church</td>
<td>242</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Names

Due to the repetition of names and titles such as Robert Stewart or earl of Buchan major figures have all been assigned one title which will be used throughout the dissertation for the sake of simplicity and cohesion. With the exception of Robert II and Robert III, most figures will be referred to by their most distinguishing title or historical moniker. For example, Albany will be referred to as Albany throughout the dissertation regardless of his current title at the time to avoid confusion. If a certain aspect of a person’s title needs to be emphasized it will be in the text (eg. Albany as earl of Fife in 1372).

Robert Stewart, Albany
duke of Albany, earl of Fife and Menteith, Governor of Scotland

Murdoch Stewart, Murdoch/duke Murdoch
duke of Albany, earl of Fife and Menteith, Governor of Scotland

John, earl/lord of Buchan, earl of Ross, Constable of France Buchan

Robert Stewart, son and heir of Murdoch Robert of Fife

Walter Stewart, son of Murdoch Walter of Lennox

James Stewart, son of Murdoch James the Fat

King Robert II r.1371-1390 Robert II
Robert II prior to 1371 Robert the Steward

King Robert III r.1390-1406 Robert III
Robert III prior to 1390 John, earl of Carrick/Carrick

David, duke of Rothesay and earl of Carrick Rothesay

Alexander Stewart, earl of Buchan, lord of Badenoch Badenoch/Wolf of Badenoch

Alexander Stewart, earl of Mar, son of Badenoch Mar

Walter Stewart, earl of Caithness and Atholl, lord of Brechin Atholl

Earls of Douglas where relevant will be referred to as 2nd, 3rd, 4th, etc. earl
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>List of Maps and Images</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2.1 Albany Stewart Lands</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.1 Highland Marriages</td>
<td>122</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.2 Lowland Marriages</td>
<td>133</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.3 Doune Castle</td>
<td>162</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Abbreviations


NLS = National Library of Scotland

NRS = National Records of Scotland


Introduction: Robert Stewart, Duke of Albany

George Buchanan’s scathing indictment of Robert Stewart, first duke of Albany (c. 1340-1420) as a man who “despised his brother [Robert III] as a weak man, and endeavoured, by every means, to destroy his children, whose disasters he considered as his gain, in order to transfer the kingdom to himself,” remained the dominant picture of Albany for nearly 500 years after Albany’s death. Closer to and during Albany’s own lifetime chronicler Andrew of Wyntoun characterized him as a person of virtuous renown, a devoted Catholic, chaste in life, honourable, and honest. Chronicler Walter Bower, writing some twenty years after Albany’s death provided the glowing epitaph,

Guardian of rights, and lover of peace, and most skilled at arms, Robert the first foremost duke of Albany, an ornament to nature, a mirror in which true justice has shone, and whatever the world admires in a prince, has died; and likewise peace and honour, Scotland, totally perished when Robert the guardian was taken away from affairs in the year one thousand four hundred and nineteen.

Given Albany’s fraught historical reputation and position as regent for three adult kings of Scotland, it is curious that he remains an understudied historical figure. The Parliament and king appointed Albany guardian of the realm in 1388 when his father, Robert II, was declared incapable of ruling because of his age, and his brother John, Earl of Carrick’s, recent injuries prevented him from acting for his father. From 1388 until his death in 1420 Albany remained at the forefront of the Stewart dynasty at times ruling for kings declared incapable, and in the case of his nephew James I, absent due to imprisonment in England.

Albany’s nearly sixty-year career in Scottish politics and governance started when he married Margaret Graham, countess of Menteith, in 1361 and became the lord of the earldom of

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1 George Buchanan, The History of Scotland Translated from the Latin of George Buchanan with Notes and Continuation into the Union in the Reign of Queen Anne, vol. 2, trans. James Aikman (Glasgow, 1827), 69.
2 Wyntoun, The Original Chronicle, vol. 6, 417.
3 Bower, Scotichronicon, vol. 8, 133.
Menteith. Albany was the third born son of Robert the Steward, earl of Strathearn, and Elizabeth Mure. His father was the heir presumptive to the Scottish throne, and as such Albany came from a family of consequence. In the intervening years between 1361 and his death in 1420, Albany also became earl of Fife (1371), Chamberlain (1382), Guardian of the Realm (1388-1392/3), duke of Albany (1398), Lieutenant of the kingdom (1402/3-1406), and Governor of Scotland (1406-1420). He accumulated many lands and lesser titles, but most importantly, he became a prince of Scotland in 1371 when his father inherited the Scottish throne upon the death of David II. Albany’s wealth and status continued to rise until the culmination of his power in 1406 when he was named Governor of Scotland for his absent nephew James I.

Albany did not rise to the lofty heights of regency on his own. Rather his position as regent, and indeed his role in the Scottish government generally, was owed to his position and membership in the royal family. Albany, his father, Robert II, and his brother, Robert III, made extensive use of what Theresa Earenfight has termed the corporate nature of monarchy. The corporate nature of monarchy defines monarchy as, “an institution for rulership by a powerful kin group organized as a dynasty, a complex blend of the domestic and the political, though not necessarily in equal parts.” The idea behind the corporate monarchy is that in the Middle Ages, the monarchy was perceived as being more than just the king himself. In fact, it was recognized as an institution that extended beyond the partnership of the king and queen. The corporate monarchy could encompass the entire royal family, with everyone serving different roles.

From the beginning of his father’s reign in 1371, Albany was integrated into the corporate monarchy. Robert II had made extensive use of his family members in his governance

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of the realm and Albany played an important role. Robert II’s extension of his powers to his sons, allowed them to grow in influence. Somewhat ironically, this extension of powers enabled Robert II’s sons to sideline their father by declaring him incapable of governing. Prior to Albany’s first appointment as guardian of the realm in 1388 he already had a hand in the daily governance of the kingdom, but with his appointment as guardian he began to fulfill some of the essential duties of kingship that related to the administration of justice, defense of the realm, and focus of loyalty within the kingdom. Robert II and Robert III frequently recognized the integral role that Albany played in the corporate monarchy, but Albany also developed his own royal identity over the course of his career. This royal identity was most readily expressed in his foreign correspondence, personal documents, and religious patronage. Albany was not only recognized by his family as playing an important role in the governance of the kingdom, he also increased his visibility in this role by emphasizing his royal lineage—particularly during the period of the governorship.

Albany’s opportunity to fulfill the duties of kingship as regent was a result of his membership in the royal family, but he further enhanced his position by forming connections with other Scottish magnates, foreign monarchs and prelates. In this regard, he strategically used his many children to secure political alliances, developed a large network of affinity through the use of personal bonds, employment, favours, and land grants. With the careful presentation of himself as a prince of Scotland and the face of the Stewart dynasty, he wielded significant political power from 1380, up until his death in 1420, without usurping the throne and within the contemporary understanding of corporate kingship.

When Albany has appeared in previous scholarship, he usually does so in a limited way. For instance, there are individual assessments of his governorship and his periods as guardian
and lieutenant for Robert II and Robert III. While his roles of governor and lieutenant are integral to any study of Albany, I seek here to also illuminate Albany’s full political career for a better understanding of not only his climb to power, but also the methods he utilized to maintain his positions. This dissertation will discuss Albany in the context of his place in the Stewart dynasty, as both a supporter of the kings and an actor in his own right.

**Historiography**

Albany and his family are infamous in Scottish historiography for the black reputation of Albany, largely due to his involvement in the death of his nephew David, duke of Rothesay, and the violent end to the legitimate male line through the execution of Albany’s son and heir Murdoch, and Murdoch’s sons Walter of Lennox and Alexander by James I. The focus on the poor reputation and executions has overshadowed much of the study of Albany. Although the Albany Stewarts held prominent positions in fifteenth-century Scotland, Albany and his family receive scattered scholarly attention. Robert Stewart is the most widely studied, but even here the analysis is incomplete. There is only one full length study of Albany. Karen Hunt conducted an analysis of Albany’s political career as governor (1406-1420) in her unpublished PhD dissertation, “The Governorship of the First Duke of Albany, 1406-1420.” Hunt condensed her thesis into a chapter for *Scottish Kingship, 1306-1542, Essays in Honour of Norman Macdougall*. Hunt’s thesis provides an excellent starting point for the study of Albany. She

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6 Hunt, “The Governorship.”

outlines how Albany exercised power and argues the grounds upon which he might be considered a ruler in his own right during his period of governorship despite serious limitations placed upon his authority: including the inability to summon Parliament, distribute crown patronage, and creating new titles. Moreover, she also deftly explains some of the more challenging situations faced by Albany during his period of governorship. These challenges include opposition from Donald, lord of the Isles, turbulence stemming from the final years of the Papal Schism, and the need to achieve a balance power among the earls of Douglas and Mar. Her research recasts Albany’s character from a murderous ambitious uncle, complicit in the death of his nephew David, Duke of Rothesay, to a capable administrator. Unlike Hunt’s dissertation, my research extends beyond the period of governorship to examine Albany’s full career between the years 1380 and 1420. I aim to show how Albany was able to use common strategies to enhance his landed power in order that he might exercise legitimate political authority as understood by his late medieval contemporaries through the corporate nature of monarchy. I examine how Albany was both deployed within that framework by his family and how he used it himself.

Albany, as well as many members of his family, appear at least briefly in other works on late medieval Scotland beginning with contemporary and later chronicles from the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. Albany usually appears in some capacity in all Scottish chronicles and histories from the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. However, Albany’s portrayal during his own lifetime and the sixteenth century are in stark contrast. As already noted, Andrew of Wyntoun (c.1350-c.1422) and Walter Bower (1385-1449) provide largely favourable portrayals of Albany
and his family as well as give a general narrative for their lives, deeds, and deaths. Bower and Wyntoun have been accused by historians of promoting Stewart propaganda, and in particular a skewed portrait of Albany which was likely drawn from a now lost, anonymous, pro-Fife primary source. The two chroniclers were likely in some way acquainted with Albany. Wyntoun himself was the Prior of St. Serf’s on Lochleven in Fife, in Albany’s landed domain, and he had a Fife patron, Sir John Wemyss. Bower was the abbot of Inchcolm Abbey, also in Fife, and his patron was Sir David Stewart of Rosyth, another Fife man. Wyntoun wrote his chronicle during Albany and Murdoch’s governorships and that may account for his copious praise. The same cannot be said of Bower who wrote in the 1440s, over twenty years after Albany’s death and the execution of Murdoch and his sons. Given this distance from events, the contemporary pressure for a favourable portrayal of Albany and his family was less acute. Correspondingly, Bower’s portrayal of Albany and Murdoch was more critical and he was not afraid to showcase the flaws of his protagonists. Nonetheless, his representation of Albany can still be considered fairly positive.

Later chroniclers were not as generous. The unfavourable portrayal of Albany seems to stem from the chroniclers’ certainty that Albany was directly responsible for the 1402 death of his nephew and heir to the throne, David, duke of Rothesay, while the young duke was in Albany’s care. While rumors of foul play certainly existed at the time of Rothesay’s death,

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chroniclers do not report Albany’s guilt with certainty until well after Albany’s own death. Furthermore, later chroniclers often conflate the murder of the heir to the throne with treasonous intentions to take the throne. For later chroniclers, Albany murdered his nephew in cold blood with the intention of taking the throne. He was a murderer and a potential usurper, and therefore lacked the ability to soundly lead the kingdom. The murder and potential for usurpation colored all of Albany’s acts both before and after 1402. Rothesay’s murder is used as evidence of lifelong ill-intention.

John Shirley’s 1437 *The Dethe of the Kynge of Scotis* is the first to lay blame for Rothesay’s death squarely on Albany, although Shirley did express some sympathy for Albany, but later chroniclers would make more of his guilt. John Major writing in 1521 is not fully willing to write Albany off as a usurper but did lay most of the tragedies of the kingdom between 1388 and 1424 on Albany’s shoulders. A few years later, Hector Boece’s 1527 *The Chronicles of Scotland* greatly elaborates on the death of Rothesay and even goes as far as to say Albany engineered his own acquittal for the incident, but is willing to admit that Albany was an able ruler despite this incident. However, by the end of the sixteenth century Albany loses any positive qualities when George Buchanan assigns malicious intent to all of Albany’s actions and

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12 Due to space constraints the analysis below only looks at a few of the major works of the sixteenth century and is not an exhaustive sampling. In the political realm, Amy Blakeway’s recent study has demonstrated that Albany was by the sixteenth century considered an archetype, “Albany’s supposed excessive ambition became a leitmotif in English and Anglo-phile commentary on his governorship,” and it was paraded out when needed to guard against the dangers of a close relative taking charge of the minority government of James V. In this case James V found himself in the care of John, duke of Albany, his cousin, but some objected, citing the previous dangers of a duke of Albany taking charge. Amy Blakeway, *Regency in Sixteenth-Century Scotland* (Woodbridge: Boydell Press, 2015), 34-5.


makes him seem all powerful in Scotland. Buchanan uses Albany’s malicious intent as proof of his poor leadership even stating Albany “would have had all the qualifications if not for his blind ambition to rule.” By the end of the sixteenth century Albany had become the archetypal wicked uncle occupying a similar place in Scottish historiography to England’s Richard III. Albany’s nephews and brother were not safe because Albany had the talent, ambition, and most importantly the sway over the kingdom to deprive them of power. Although these later chroniclers are aware of the work of Bower if not Wyntoun, the acknowledgement of Albany’s positive qualities is gone. Buchanan’s image of Albany the usurper is by and large the one that continued to appear in Scottish histories until the 1980s.

There is no shortage of more modern works that draw on Buchanan’s example of Albany. For example, Ranald Nicholson’s Scotland: The Later Middle Ages and E.W.M. Balfour-Melville’s James I, King of Scots 1406-1437 characterized Albany as a murderous man bent on the destruction of the royal Stewart line so he could take the crown himself. However, Albany was not characterized in this manner by every historian. Both Alexander Grant and Jenny Wormald provide balanced views of Albany noting his flaws but also not shying away from his more innovative and successful methods of lordship such as his use of personal bonds. The old characterization as well as the Scottish historiographical trend to focus on kings prevented a full evaluation of the first duke of Albany as a capable member of the royal family. More recently historians have been kinder to Albany, while not absolving him entirely due to his involvement

16 Buchanan, The History of Scotland, 41-90.
17 Buchanan, The History of Scotland, 76.
in the death of his nephew Rothesay. They instead recognize Albany as an integral part of the running of the Scottish government during the reigns of Robert II and Robert III. Both Stephen Boardman and Michael Brown acknowledge in their works on the first three Stewart kings the vast influence the Albany Stewarts had on politics. Albany and Murdoch may have controlled the government of Scotland, but the councils and kings did not always rule in their favour, ensuring that, while powerful, the dukes did not actually usurp the throne. As Boardman and Brown focus on understanding and reevaluating the reputations of their kings, the secondary status of the Albany Stewarts makes sense.

Albany and Murdoch appear regularly in recent wider surveys and studies of the late medieval period in Scotland. In these works, such as Michael Penman and Norman Reid’s recent article, “Guardian – Lieutenant – Governor: Absentee Monarchy and Proxy Power in Scotland’s Long Fourteenth Century,” Albany’s tenure as governor is generally acknowledged in the context of the use of the regent offices of guardian and lieutenant in Scotland. Much like Albany’s historiographical reputation, the brief evaluations of Albany in these works span the spectrum of wicked uncle and usurper to able administrator and defender of Scotland. Generally, however, Albany and occasionally Murdoch’s appearances in these works are brief and

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contained in discussions of trends such as the decentralized nature of power in Scotland and events such as the papal schism.

Albany in his capacity of regent should not be considered only within his particular Scottish context, but more generally in the late medieval European context. As a royal figure himself Albany should be considered within the wider framework of the re-emerging field of Royal Studies. This dissertation seeks to help place Albany in that context and utilize some of the more recent tools used for understanding monarchy in the medieval period. Albany occupied a unique status in the Scottish kingdom as the second surviving son of the king and head of a cadet branch of the royal family. Theresa Earenfight’s corporate monarchy structure proves useful in understanding the heights and limitations of monarchial power, as well as the great influence Albany had in Scotland and on the European stage in his capacity as regent.23 While Earenfight applies her theory largely to medieval queens, the idea is easily translated to minor or other royal males. The king could not fulfill all the responsibilities and duties of the monarchy by himself and relied on the queen and other family members to fill the gaps. The monarchy was not one person but a group effort on behalf of the royal family in concert with royal ministers and the parliaments or councils. Boardman and Hunt engage with the idea by other names exhibiting how the Albany governors did not depose the kings, but rather acted for them. This preserves the monarchy in its original line even when the king is weak or ineffectual, but generally the discussion is framed within a Scottish context rather than wider European precedents.24 This idea of the corporate nature of monarchy can be applied not only to Albany, who acted as regent for

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his father, brother, and nephew, but also to the Scottish royal family as a whole. Robert II and Robert III did not rule alone. Both they and Albany used their families and close associates to govern and to form marital alliances that would help them to stabilise and rule the kingdom. All of the Albany Stewarts played some part in maintaining their vast networks and control of Scotland, not unlike other monarchs or regents in Europe.

Furthermore, recent studies have taken a new look at power structures in medieval kingdoms. The evaluation of monarchies and the exercise of power in medieval Europe have expanded beyond the study of the person of the king or queen to numerous studies on parliaments, general councils, other members of the royal family, the nobility, and lordship generally. Scottish historiography of course has not been immune to this trend. However, as of yet no cohesive body of scholarship has emerged about the specific place of second sons in the medieval monarchy in either the Scottish or wider European context. There have been individual studies on second sons and other royal males such as John of Gaunt, duke of Lancaster, Philip the Bold, duke of Burgundy, John the Fearless, duke of Burgundy, and Prince Henry the Navigator just to name a few of Albany’s contemporaries, but there is no unifying body of literature on second sons. The present dissertation seeks to engage with the idea that the

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positions the Albany Stewarts filled in the royal government were based on their situation as a powerful cadet branch of the royal Stewarts, and the idea that minor members of the royal family were often used in the governance of medieval kingdoms and in the context of corporate monarchy. Where relevant, this dissertation will draw parallels to the minor branches of other European royal families and will compare Albany to John of Gaunt, duke of Lancaster, and John the Fearless, duke of Burgundy.

An examination of Albany’s career will also contribute to the wider study of aristocratic families, the peerage, and lordships generally as while Albany was the son of the king he also held multiple peerage titles. In particular, this study will contribute to the wider examination of royal and noble patronage networks and affinities, using models that began with K.B. McFarlane’s exploration of bastard feudalism as extended networks of noble patronage in England. Jenny Wormald applied this same idea to Scotland in Lords and Men in Scotland: Bonds of Manrent, 1442-1603 in which she names Albany as one of the first users of bonds of manrent in any significant way in late medieval Scotland. Extended networks of patronage, the formation of an affinity, and in particular the use of bonds of manrent facilitated much of Albany’s power in Scotland as these methods did in other later medieval kingdoms, particularly England.

Other scholars have conducted larger family centric studies of late medieval Scottish nobles. The most directly relevant study is Michael Brown’s work, The Black Douglasses: War

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29 Wormald, Lords and Men, 37.
30 Boardman, The Campbells; Cathcart, Kinship and Clientage.
and Lordship in Late Medieval Scotland, 1300-1455. Brown uses the individual careers of the earls of Douglas to examine more broadly the political situation in Scotland as they, like the Albany Stewarts, were vastly influential in the kingdom, but especially at the borders and in foreign policy with England. Brown’s work illustrates the ability of a family to dominate Scottish politics through generations, both by courting royal favour and by building up lands and influence. Brown’s general approach can be easily translated into a study of other late medieval families such as Albany and his large family.

Rather than focus solely on Albany and his direct heirs, this dissertation seeks to engage with the roles of all the Albany Stewart family members. A full study of Albany’s career involves research into the women of the family and as such this study contributes in a small way to the ever expanding field of Scottish women’s history. Unfortunately, the Albany Stewart women have left little record of themselves beyond their marriages. However, this study strives to engage with wider scholarship on medieval queens and medieval women to some degree. Often little direct evidence remains of the lives and deeds of medieval women no matter their rank, and historians make use of the indirect evidence of influence on the actions of other family members, usually husbands or sons. These actions include changes in patronage, political, social,

or religious to reflect the wife’s natal family traditions rather than the husband’s or a change in allegiance or service to an adherent of the wife or mother’s natal family. This study of Albany and his family draws on these same methods to uncover how the many Albany Stewart women contributed to the status and power of the family. Albany married twice and had at least seven daughters, all of whom married prominent noblemen and potentially acted as Albany Stewart satellites of influence around Scotland. While the Albany governors did not have all the powers of the king, they were responsible for the governance of the kingdom and thus called upon their wives and daughters in the same manner to exercise the power of the monarchy through marriage and patronage.

*Records and Methodology*

In order to gain a full picture of Albany this dissertation utilizes a variety of sources including charters, personal bonds, governmental documents such as the *Exchequer Rolls* and the *Records of Parliament*, collections of family papers such as those compiled by William Fraser, chronicles, ecclesiastical documents such as papal petitions, and other manuscript sources housed in the National Records of Scotland and the National Library of Scotland. When taken together these sources provided a full picture not only of the events of Albany’s political career but also the mechanisms with which he underpinned his power. While the purpose here is to illuminate Albany’s whole career, most of the surviving evidence comes from the later period of Albany’s life in particular the governorship from 1406-1420.

The chronicles provided the overarching backbone for the political story of Albany’s career. The two most prominent chronicles used were Andrew of Wyntoun’s *Original Chronicle*
and Walter Bower’s *Scotichronicon*. Both Bower and Wyntoun were rough contemporaries of Albany, and their chronicles provided a background for the events of the late fourteenth and early fifteenth century. Wyntoun and Bower also provided insight into how Albany and his family were perceived during their lifetimes. In addition to Wyntoun and Bower, other contemporary or near contemporary chronicles, such as *Liber Pluscardensis* and the anonymous, fifteenth century, short chronicle housed in the Bodleian Library, MS Fairfax 23, were used to fill in events not mentioned or glossed over by Wyntoun and Bower. Later sixteenth-century chronicles and histories such as those by John Major, Hector Boece, and George Buchanan were consulted to determine how the view of Albany shifted as well as to continue to flesh out the political narrative. The chronicles provide names and places associated with Albany in his more high profile affairs such as negotiations and battles with England and France.

This dissertation also makes extensive use of charters, such as those available in the *Register of the Great Seal*, and also those housed in the National Records of Scotland. The charters, like the chronicles, provided evidence for Albany’s actions, particularly during the governorship. Most importantly the charters have been used to reconstruct Albany’s sphere of influence and affinity, or a collection of men that were in some way bound in terms of service or loyalty to Albany. An affinity could include minor nobles, country gentry, knights, and household servants. Albany likely also retained a retinue, or a group of armed knights whom he paid or provided some sort of incentive for their loyalty, but very little evidence of who made up

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that retinue survives. By conducting a survey of Albany’s witness lists I have been able to roughly reconstruct Albany’s circle of influence and members of his affinity.\(^{38}\) It is here that the lack of sources like household accounts are most acutely felt. A survey of witness lists is an imperfect way to reconstruct Albany’s affinity, as there is no way for sure to know who he actually rewarded for their service. There are, however, several names on the witness lists that appear with enough frequency to imply some type of connection. For instance Sir John Stewart, lord of Lorn, appears on Albany’s witness lists more than forty times. Stewart of Lorn’s son, Robert, married Albany’s daughter, Johanna, and his frequent appearance on Albany’s witness lists throughout the 1390s and the governorship at many different geographical locations indicates a close relationship of some kind. Whether or not Albany formally rewarded Stewart of Lorn with a place in his retinue is unknown, but Stewart of Lorn was certainly part of Albany’s circle of influence. By using this indirect evidence as well as the titles and descriptors attached to witnesses (such as Constable of Falkland, kinsman, and squire), it has been possible to some extent to reconstruct Albany’s affinity and sphere of influence which seems to cover much of Scotland. The witness list appearances combined with other tools of lordship such as personal bonds, marriages, and land grants work in concert to reveal whom Albany surrounded himself with and his reliance on the nobility to underpin his power.

Albany also courted the nobility through marriage alliances between his own large family and other Scottish nobles. The marriage alliances were reconstructed largely through the use of ecclesiastical records such as marriage dispensations, a few surviving marriage indentures, and indirect evidence such as familial relationships named in charters or chronicles.\(^{39}\) The

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\(^{38}\) See Appendix A.

reconstruction of the Albany Stewart family tree and marriages also utilized sources such as *The Scots Peerage* as assembled by James Balfour Paul, with the help of other peerage compilations such as Sir Robert Douglas’s *The Peerage of Scotland* and George Crawford’s *Peerage of Scotland*. As many of the Albany Stewart children married, this allowed access to a familial network that was not necessarily evident in the charter witness lists. For instance, Duncan, earl of Lennox, did not often witness Albany’s charters but Lennox’s daughter and heir Isabella married Albany’s son and heir Murdoch in 1392, leading to an augmentation of the Albany Stewart landed domains as Murdoch and Isabella became Lennox’s sole heirs. The basic marriage information provided a starting point to further examine other connections between the families such as friendship bonds for reciprocal patronage and greater exertion of Albany Stewart influence beyond the day of marriage.

Albany did not rely solely on marriage to court the nobility and underpin his power. He also engaged in the practice of forming personal bonds, also known as bonds of friendship or manrent. Personal bonds, as defined by Jenny Wormald, were “a means of expressing loyalty, friendship, and service.” They were agreements between two nobles or a noble and his vassal to exchange some type of service for loyalty. Albany adopted this practice to underpin his power and help his father stabilise the Stewart dynasty. Albany exchanged his counsel or assistance in some task such as the recovery of land for the loyalty of the other party. Albany used bonds to

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40 James Balfour Paul, *The Scots peerage: founded on Wood's ed. of Sir Robert Douglas's Peerage of Scotland; containing an historical and genealogical account of the nobility of that kingdom* (Edinburgh: David Douglas, 1906); George Crawford, *The Peerage of Scotland: containing an historical and genealogical account of the nobility of that Kingdom. Collected from the Publick Records of the Nation, the Charters and other Writings of the Nobility, and from the most approved histories* (Edinburgh, 1716); Sir Robert Douglas, *The peerage of Scotland: containing an historical and genealogical account of the nobility of that kingdom, collected from the public records, and ancient chartularies of this nation* (Edinburgh, 1764).


bind men to him for a certain purpose and to augment his affinity. Personal bonds included many
different types of service exchanges and were mutually beneficial to both parties, making them
an effective way to maintain power and build loyalty when access to crown resources and
Parliament were denied during the years of the governorship.

As both a prince and the highest royal authority in Scotland during the governorship,
Albany also had to work with the church in Scotland in addition to the secular lords. Albany’s
relationship with religion and the institution of the church generally in Scotland was complex.
He was the ruler of Scotland during the closing years of the Papal Schism (1378-1417) and the
spread of the Lollard heresy. As such he had a part to play in navigating Scotland through that
complex time. Uncovering Albany’s role in these matters required the combined use of the
Records of the Parliament, chronicles, and ecclesiastical records such as papal petitions.43 On a
more local level within Scotland, Albany formed multifaceted relationships with men in the
church hierarchy such as the bishops of Dunblane, and seemed to exercise some influence on the
promotion of his family and favourites within the church. Albany was also a patron of religious
institutions and given to displays of piety in line with his contemporaries and those too are
reflected in a variety of sources such as charters, chronicles, and the personal records of those
like James Haldenstone of St. Andrews.44 Some churchmen too appear on Albany’s witness lists,
but the variety of sources taken together provide a full picture of Albany’s interactions with and

https://www.rps.ac.uk/; William Henry Bliss, ed., Calendar of Papal Entries Relating to Great Britain and Ireland
Petitions, 1342-1419, vol. 1 (London: H.M. Stationery Office, 1893); Clement VII; Benedict XIII; E. R. Lindsay and
A. I. Cameron, eds., Calendar of Scottish Supplications to Rome 1418, 1422, (Edinburgh, T. and A. Constable,
1934); J. A. Twemlow, ed., Calendar of Entries in the Papal Registers Relating to Great Britain and Ireland, Papal
44 James Haldenstone, Copiale Prioratus Sanctiandree, ed. James Houston Baxter (Edinburgh: T and A Constable,
1930).
influence on both religion and the religious during his career. Albany could not have effectively ruled Scotland without the support and influence of the religious in Scotland.

When possible and relevant Albany is compared with his rough contemporaries around Europe to display how his place in the Stewart dynasty is similar to other minor royal family members around Europe in the late fourteenth and early fifteenth centuries. These comparisons make use of a variety of primary and secondary sources including studies of Albany’s counterparts in Europe such as John of Gaunt, duke of Lancaster, Philip the Bold, duke of Burgundy, John the Fearless, duke of Burgundy, and Prince Henry the Navigator.45 These comparisons illustrate how Albany was in line with his contemporaries in Europe in the types of power he exercised within Scotland, his place in the corporate monarchy, how he built his affinity, and his interactions with the church.

Conclusion

Over the course of his nearly sixty year career Albany was able to effectively exercise power in Scotland including regency and royal powers as a guardian, lieutenant, and governor. Albany’s power derived from his place in the royal family and the Stewart’s effective use of the corporate nature of monarchy. In the early days of his career Albany relied on the good will of his father and the creative use of his own resources. Later Albany was able to utilize the tools available to him in the exercise of power such as the office of the lieutenant as it fit into the corporate nature of monarchy. To effectively wield these powers, however, Albany had to build a vast network of allies and an affinity. He used marriages, patronage, and personal bonds to court the nobility. Albany also effectively presented himself as the highest power in Scotland in

45 Goodman, John of Gaunt; Vaughan, John the Fearless; Vaughn, Philip the Bold; Peter Russell, Prince Henry “the Navigator.”
foreign affairs. Finally, Albany built relationships with churchmen that allowed him to exert influence on the church in Scotland, while also displaying his own piety. Albany was not always successful in his endeavours, and at times he was opposed in his goal, but he was able to gather enough support to carry on a political career that dominated the Scottish government for more than three decades.

Albany’s political career highlights the degree to which non-ruling princes were able to exercise royal power circumscribed by the limits of corporate monarchies. Albany was an integral part not only of the governance of the kingdom generally, but of the stabilisation of his father’s early rule. After 1388, Albany began to act as the face of royal power in Scotland due to the incapacities and absences of the early Stewart kings. As the son of the king, Albany was not necessarily out of line with his contemporaries in exercising his powers in office, but the hold he maintained on power in Scotland through the trials of the early Stewart dynasty was formidable. The coming chapters therefore will highlight the methods, strategies, and relationships Albany formed and utilized both from Scottish and wider European precedents to gain and maintain his power in place of the Stewart kings.
Chapter 1: Kingship and the Corporate Nature of Monarchy

Prior to Robert II’s kingship, Albany was already counted among Scotland’s nobility. In 1361 Albany married Margaret Graham, the heiress of the earldom of Menteith, and became the lord of the earldom of Menteith.1 Had Albany’s great-uncle David II produced an heir, this may have been the highest position that Albany obtained. However, with Robert the Steward’s inheritance of the throne upon the death of David II in 1371, Albany’s position changed. Albany became the son of the king and was gradually integrated into the daily governance of the kingdom. Over the course of his career, Albany served as regent three times in place of the incapacitated or absent Robert II, Robert III, and James I. Although he was not king, Albany dominated the Scottish government from the 1380s until his death in 1420 and exercised the duties and in some cases the power and authority of the king of Scotland.

Central to understanding Albany’s long career and dominance in the Scottish government is his proximity to the Scottish throne, role in the royal family, royal image, and the general conception of monarchy in late medieval Europe. Albany’s career from 1382 until 1420 was dominated by the daily needs of Scottish governance and, in particular, his periodic fulfilment of regency positions. In order to fully consider his roles and positions it is necessary to establish an understanding of the roles and duties fulfilled by a late medieval monarch and to outline the theories of monarchy that allowed kings to exercise of power and authority in a kingdom and to delegate them. Crucial to understanding all of these topics and Albany’s position in Scotland is the corporate nature of monarchy, a theory which details how responsibility for ruling a kingdom

1 Fraser, The Red Book of Menteith, vol. 1, 128-9. Fraser includes a complete transcription of the marriage dispensation. Albany and Margaret needed a dispensation due to blood relations, including Albany’s relation to Margaret’s first two husbands and their own kinship in the fourth degree of consanguinity. The pope granted the dispensation on the condition that Albany and Margaret construct a chapel in the parish of Dunblane and endow it with an annual rent of twelve marks for a chaplain within one year of the date of the dispensation.
was not solely the king’s alone, but that of the whole royal family. Albany’s position as regent as well as his other positions such as Chamberlain were born out of his place in the royal family and the Stewart dynasty’s use of the corporate monarchy.

**Late Medieval Kingship: Duties and Theories**

Monarchy was the dominant system of governance in medieval Europe. The institution was not static and changed over the medieval period. Each European kingdom had its own regional style when it came to how the monarchy functioned or who could be the monarch, but everywhere the preference was for male rulership. Medieval kingship was in no sense unlimited, and the importance of monarchs listening to good counsel, behaving moderately, and avoiding tyranny were topics of particular interest to the people and writers of late medieval Europe.

Despite regional variations kings around Europe were generally responsible for three main functions or duties: the king served as the focus for loyalty within a kingdom, defended the realm, and administered justice. In relation to these duties were royal prerogatives such as the

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2 Earenfight, *Medieval Queenship*, 9. There are few instances in Europe of queen-regnants before the late medieval and early modern periods.


ability to legislate, coin money, summon Parliament, and muster an army for defense of the realm. Kings also held ultimate superiority over the lands of the kingdom. In Scotland, as in many medieval kingdoms, kings had the exclusive right to try cases of treason, grant the ability to hold criminal court, and pardon offenses. The king or occasionally the queen was the center of the government of a kingdom. The monarch presided over parliaments, led troops into battle, and embodied the realm. The health and well-being of the realm were often thought to be directly related to the health and well-being of the king. Medieval monarchy was a deeply personal institution and the personality and behavior of the king had a large effect on the kingdom as a whole. An ill, incapacitated, or absent monarch effected the realm as much as a vigorous and present one.

Monarchs possessed the most power and authority within their kingdoms. Power in this sense is the ability of a person to act and/or influence the will and actions of others, while authority is the right to give commands or make others act. A medieval king usually had both power and authority within his kingdom, which was directly related to the amount of land the king owned and the size of his affinity. However, kings were not the only ones to exercise power and authority within their kingdoms. Queens, princes, princesses, king’s deputies, and other governmental officials also maintained some level of power and/or authority within a kingdom. As the study of medieval women and queens has shown it was possible to have power in a medieval kingdom without authority. It was possible to influence others, without the ability to

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command them. Regardless, positions within the royal family or government came with some level of power and/or authority which derived its legitimacy from the king.

The institution of the monarchy and individual monarchs themselves have been the subject of intense historical study. Many scholars have recognized and explored the complex nature, image, and perception of monarchy and power in medieval Europe. Studies of individual monarchs abound, as do studies of the multifaceted nature of monarchy and power.8 Directly relevant to the early Stewart dynasty are two theories relating the rulership in medieval Europe: Ernst Kantorowicz’s theory of the king’s two bodies and Theresa Earenfight’s corporate nature of monarchy. Kantorowicz’s *The King’s Two Bodies* was a ground-breaking work, in which he set out the idea of the medieval monarch as inhabiting two bodies, the body politic and the body natural. Kantorowicz detailed how the monarch was both a physical person, and also the embodiment of the eternal monarchy or the crown.9 This idea allows for a separation of the person of the king from the idea of the crown. A king’s reign was temporary, but the monarchy was eternal. This theory separates the notion of the monarchy from the person of the king.

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allowing others to step in and fulfill the duties of kingship even if the king is incapacitated, as occurred during the reigns of Robert II and Robert III.

On the other hand, the corporate nature of monarchy, as laid out by Theresa Earenfight, lends a more practical understanding to the way that medieval kingdoms were governed. Through her examination of Maria of Castile’s role as queen-lieutenant in the Crown of Aragon for her husband Alfonso V, Earenfight developed the theory of the corporate monarchy in which the success or failure of the monarchy depended not just on the king, but on the royal family working as a whole.\textsuperscript{10} Therefore the monarchy was not solely embodied in one person, and the responsibilities of rule rested on the royal family as a whole.\textsuperscript{11} The members of the royal family all had roles to play in the governance of the kingdom which were often based on their place in the family and sometimes dictated by their gender. For instance, princesses served as permanent ambassadors for their kingdom and family through marriages to foreign princes. Queens represented and exercised the traits of and duties of monarchs deemed more feminine such as mercy and intercession. Earenfight’s framework has been utilized by other scholars mainly in the context of queenship studies. As of yet, little attention has been given to younger sons and their role in the corporate monarchy, outside of their potential to inherit the throne. However, younger sons often played a role in the governance and stability of medieval kingdom as will be discussed in the case of Albany. The success of the monarchy relied not just on the success of the king and queen, but on the royal family as a whole. And here, the role of non-inheriting princes was crucial.

\textsuperscript{10} Theresa Earenfight, \textit{The King’s Other Body Maria of Castile and the Crown of Aragon} (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2010), 1.
\textsuperscript{11} Earenfight, \textit{Queenship in Medieval Europe}, 9-10.
The governance of the kingdom was a large task even for the royal family, let alone one person. Thus, medieval monarchs relied on nobles, friends, councils and parliaments in addition to their family to see to the necessary arrangements of successfully ruling a kingdom. The sovereign, usually the king, served as the head of the government but often delegated power or authority over particular matters to others. The corporate monarchy allowed monarchs to delegate necessary responsibilities to others particularly as over the late medieval period governments grew in size and complexity. The king could delegate responsibilities and offices to the other members of his family or the nobility just as Robert II did in 1382 when he named Albany as the Chamberlain, (chief financial officer) of Scotland. Although Albany still answered to the king and derived his authority from him, he oversaw the actual financial matters of the kingdom.

During the Middle Ages, when kings were not always present, a number of strategies were developed to ensure good governance. Other people might rule in the place of the monarch, but their power and authority was said to derive from the monarch, both the literal person and the idea of the monarch. The corporate monarchy structure was particularly important for administering the kingdom in the absence or incapacitation of the king, as happened in Scotland frequently during the late fourteenth and early fifteenth centuries. Far from being a strange outlier in European politics in this manner, Scotland’s use of lieutenants, guardians, and governors was very much on par with its European contemporaries and in accordance with the idea of the corporate monarchy. Although Scotland may have appeared unique during the reigns of Robert II and Robert III, insofar as it had experienced two physically present adult kings.

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declared as incapable of ruling, the idea that someone might exercise power in place of a king was not.

**European Context: Regency in Medieval Europe**

Although medieval monarchy was a deeply personal institution, that did not mean that a kingdom was left completely leaderless if the king or queen regnant was absent from the kingdom or unable to rule.¹⁴ Scholars have recently taken a greater interest in the practice and theory of what is now termed absentee authority, in which a person or group of persons often related to the king ruled a kingdom in the absence of a monarch.¹⁵ Regency fits well into the idea of the corporate monarchy. Regents by and large were appointed by three different methods: direct appointment from the king before a planned absence, devolution on a near blood relative, or by election.¹⁶ In the past, many historians have examined the subject of regency for child kings. More recently, historians have begun to differentiate the different types of regency in place in medieval Europe, as well as the commonality of such offices. Regency for a child king remained a common office in late medieval Europe and most kingdoms or realms had an instance of a child inheriting the throne at some point.¹⁷ When a child inherited the throne, it was

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customary for the queen or another close family member to rule until the child came of age. However, child monarchs were not the only ones who needed regents. Regents were often named when the sovereign was absent from the kingdom during times of war or in the era of the Crusades. Richard I of England famously left his mother Eleanor of Aquitaine as regent while he was on Crusade.\(^{18}\)

Moreover, some kingdoms possessed territories away from their main geographical cores, and to maintain royal authority in these areas kings would name a representative to act in his stead while he was away. For example, in the Crown of Aragon and in Castile, queens and other members of the royal family served as lieutenants in the various crown territories around the Mediterranean as the king could not be present in all areas at once. The Crown of Aragon, in particular, had lands not only in the Iberian Peninsula, but also had possessions in the Mediterranean and for a period laid claim to Sicily and Naples. The king therefore relied upon his family and close advisors to maintain each portion in his absence as Martin I did in the early fifteenth century when he trusted his wife, Maria de Luna, to maintain royal authority in Aragon during his absence in Sicily.\(^{19}\) The queen-lieutenant was sometimes referred to as the king’s \emph{alter nos} or “other body”, as Maria of Castile was in the early fifteenth century when she acted as lieutenant for her husband Alfonso V. Lieutenants in the Crown of Aragon had the power and authority to act for the king in all matters and even were empowered to convene the Cortes

\(^{18}\) Earenfight, \emph{Queenship in Medieval Europe}, 140.
\(^{19}\) For a more detailed discussion of the lives and roles of the queen lieutenant please see: Nuria Silleras-Fernandez, \emph{Power, Piety, and Patronage in Late Medieval Queenship: Maria de Luna}, New Middle Ages (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2008); Earenfight, \emph{Queenship in Medieval Europe}; Theresa Earenfight, ed., \emph{Queenship and Political Power in Medieval and Early Modern Spain}, (Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2005); Earenfight, \emph{The King’s Other Body}. 
(Parliament). Lieutenants still answered to the king and derived their power from him, but they often worked independently in his name.\(^\text{20}\)

In Portugal a similar practice was in place, particularly once Portugal started conquering overseas territories. John I appointed his son, Prince Henry the Navigator as his lieutenant in Ceuta in 1416. Prince Henry was charged with all the crown responsibilities in the region such as administrative and financial affairs.\(^\text{21}\) A similar practice was used in England as England claimed lands in Wales, France, and Ireland. Edward III named his sons to govern particular areas in his name. Edward III’s eldest son Edward the Black Prince was Prince of Wales, while one of his younger sons Lionel, duke of Clarence, was named lieutenant of Ireland.\(^\text{22}\) The English lieutenants had varying degrees of freedom and authority in their territories, depending on the area’s level of independence from England itself. The Valois king of France made use of a similar strategy when John II created his youngest son Phillip his lieutenant-general and duke of Burgundy to continue French influence in Burgundy.\(^\text{23}\) In these instances the king was not unable to rule, he simply was not present in a territory, so his representatives maintained royal power, authority, and daily governance in his absence.

In late fourteenth century France, a form of regency was used to continue the governance of the kingdom in place of a king incapable of ruling. Charles VI, sometimes called Charles the Mad, suffered bouts of what historians had tentatively diagnosed as either schizophrenia or bi-polar disease during his rule.\(^\text{24}\) Charles VI’s’ periodic instances of illness prevented him from

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\(^{20}\) Earenfight, *The King’s Other Body*, 1.


\(^{23}\) Vaughan, *Philip the Bold*, 3.

ruling the kingdom. In his place, his uncles, cousins, and wife stepped in to continue the governance of the kingdom. Due to Charles VI’s intervals of “sanity” a formal regency was not established until 1420 when after Henry V conquered France. It appears that the political community of France regarded the effects of his illness as temporary. Nonetheless, the French royal family relied on Charles VI’s uncles and cousins to govern the kingdom periodically throughout his reign. By the 1450s, such close male relations would be termed “princes of the blood.”

France’s regencies during the reign of Charles VI, draw a close comparison to the regencies of Scotland whose kings were also declared incapable of ruling due to illness.

The practice of someone close to the king ruling in his stead was not uncommon in medieval Europe. On the contrary, regency fell within the corporate monarchy structure, and it was one of several avenues that might be taken to prevent the loss of leadership in a kingdom. The immediate situation in Scotland under Robert II and Robert III did somewhat differ from the usual situations in which regents were named, but there was a plethora of tradition and example from around Europe as well as within recent Scottish history of which the political community of Scotland could make use during the reigns of Robert II, Robert III, and James I.

*Scottish Context: Guardians, Lieutenants, and Governors*

Historians have spent some time untangling the situations in which two physically present adult kings of the early Stewart dynasty were deemed incapable of ruling between 1384 and 1406. Both Robert II and Robert III were declared incapable of ruling their kingdom and

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sidelined in favour of other members of the royal family.\textsuperscript{27} Robert II was replaced by sons in the daily governance of Scotland for the last six years of his rule (1384-1390). Of the sixteen year reign of Robert III, he only personally ruled seven years and was otherwise replaced by his brother Albany and his son Rothesay. This early fifteenth century state of affairs was further complicated by the eighteen-year captivity of James I in England from 1406 to 1424 during which Albany and then Murdoch ruled Scotland for the king. For the sixty-six years of the Stewart dynasty’s first three kings, they only personally ruled for thirty-three years. In their place, the Scottish political community and Stewart dynasty employed other members of the royal family in regency-type positions.

It is usually here, in the discussion of replacement of the Scottish kings, that Albany’s royal ambitions are discussed in the sense that he engineered the coups against his father and brother and murdered his nephew Rothesay in order to take the throne of Scotland himself. Undoubtedly, Albany was an ambitious man. He would have had to be in order to maintain the influence and networks he did.\textsuperscript{28} Often overlooked in the discussion of guardians, lieutenants, and governors in Scotland, is the extent to which Albany’s tenure was viewed as part of his role as a “prince of the blood” and whether it conformed to expectations in European corporate monarchies at the turn of the fifteenth century.\textsuperscript{29} Albany may well have harboured ambitions for the Scottish throne, but during the reign of James I, he was the heir presumptive. The possibility that he would rightfully inherit the throne was far from remote and it is apparent that many

\textsuperscript{27} RPS 1384/11/4, 1388/2/1, 1399/1/3
\textsuperscript{28} See chapters 3, 4, and 5 for this discussion.
\textsuperscript{29} That Albany had some right to his position has been mentioned at various points particularly in the works of Karen Hunt, Steve Boardman, Michael Brown and most recently by Michael Penman and Norman Reid in “Guardian-Lieutenant-Governor.”
members of the political community viewed him as the person best suited to fulfil the core duties of kingship.

Historians have commented about how Albany was the eldest living Stewart male at the time of James I’s captivity, but often the discussions are carried out in other terms, for example Karen Hunt and other historians discuss Albany’s positions using “constitutional” reasoning and the precedents of the guardianships from the Wars of Independence. While of course useful avenues of analysis, these approaches neglect the idea that Albany was in line to inherit the kingship as long as Carrick remained without a male heir or James I remained without an heir altogether. Albany could potentially inherit the throne in the case of dynastic accident. Furthermore, as discussed above, it was common in medieval Europe for younger sons and other family members to fulfil regent roles for kings. While there was precedent around Europe for a queen to fulfil this role, there was at this point little precedent within Scotland of a queen taking on this position. It may have been possible for Queen Euphemia or Queen Annabella to step into these roles during the reigns of their husbands, but the preference in Scotland seems to have been overwhelmingly for male rule.

During the years of the early Stewart dynasty three different regent roles were used when the king was declared unfit to rule or was absent: lieutenant (locumtenente), guardian (custodem regni), and governor (gubernator). The terms guardian, lieutenant, and governor are sometimes used interchangeably, especially by chroniclers, but the offices were not in reality the same.

31 For a full discussion of the precedent for female regency established in the mid to late fifteenth century see Downie, She is But a Woman.
Chroniclers made little distinction between Albany’s terms as guardian and governor. No chronicles mention that Carrick held the lieutenancy between 1384 and 1388, nor do they mention that Albany’s original appointment as guardian ended in 1392/3. Discussion of Rothesay’s lieutenancy is also completely absent from these accounts. The picture that emerges from the chronicles is that Albany was appointed in 1388 and held the position of governor until his death in 1420, something certainly disproven by the parliamentary record alone. The insistence of chroniclers that Albany was named governor in 1388 and continued to hold that position until his death is incorrect and an overstatement of Albany’s power during the reigns of Robert II and Robert III.³³

During the reigns of Robert II and Robert III two positions were used to replace the king in the matters of day to day governance, lieutenant and guardian. The powers of both offices were never really laid out in full, but they were not completely interchangeable titles. The title lieutenant could apply to two different positions. First it was a type of regency that could be granted for the whole realm like it was for Carrick in 1384. The title lieutenant also designated the king’s representation in a certain area or region of the kingdom, as it did in 1382 when Robert II named the Campbells lieutenants of Argyll.³⁴ Neither form of lieutenancy is dissimilar to others found in Europe. Scotland did not have overseas territories but the same idea behind the lieutenant of Ireland applied to a lieutenant of Argyll; he was the king’s representative in that area. The primary purpose of the lieutenant of the kingdom was to administer justice and defend the kingdom as a whole—which were two of the main duties of medieval kingship. Lieutenant of

³³ Later chroniclers like Boece and Buchanan likely repeat this mistake as they used Bower as a source. Bower, *Scotichronicon*, vol. 7, 443.
the kingdom seems to usually be a title reserved for the heir to the throne, as was the case in 1399 when Rothesay was named lieutenant for his father.\textsuperscript{35}

The term guardian on the other hand is an office with its roots in the late thirteenth century, when the Scottish political community chose a leader during the absence of an adult monarch. Guardian is the term used for Albany in his 1388 appointment, and implies that this is an office given to someone who was not the heir presumptive.\textsuperscript{36} Guardian usually denotes any other non-direct heir to the throne type of regent and was used during both phases of the Wars of Independence. The only exception to the use of the title guardian was when the Steward was named lieutenant during David II’s captivity in England likely as the Steward was the heir presumptive to the king.\textsuperscript{37} The duties of the guardian, stated in the December 1388 Parliamentary appointment, claimed that Albany’s role was to dispense internal justice and defend the realm. These duties were not dissimilar to what Carrick was charged with in 1384, although the 1384 Parliament’s concerns centred more on internal strife and justice than external threats. Both the 1384 and 1388 appointments fell short of the full duties of the king laid out for Rothesay ten years later.\textsuperscript{38}

The offices of lieutenant and guardian became more sophisticated and developed over this period. The differences in the offices had to do with status of the men filling them, and what the Council or Parliament deemed most necessary at the time. Rothesay as lieutenant held the most expansive power, as he was to fulfil all the duties of the king. The 1404 parliamentary record that explicitly named Albany as lieutenant complicates the idea that the lieutenancy was

\textsuperscript{36} RPS, 1388/12/1; Day, “David, Duke of Rothesay,” 145-6.
\textsuperscript{37} Day, “David, Duke of Rothesay,” 146; Brown, \textit{Disunited Kingdoms}, 93-4. At Albany’s 1388 appointment he was not heir presumptive as Carrick had a son.
\textsuperscript{38} RPS, 1384/11/4, 1384/11/5, 1388/12/1, 1399/1/3.”
reserved solely for the heir. It is possible that by 1404 the term lieutenant was used in recognition of Albany’s status as a prince and duke of the royal house.\(^{39}\) In theory both the lieutenant and the guardian answered to the king and parliament for their continued appointment, and neither term was interchangeable with governor.

Albany’s 1406 appointment as governor was an entirely different matter from his previous guardianship and lieutenancy. Scotland was in a difficult situation with the death of Robert III during James I’s imprisonment in England. The king was a minor, uncrowned, and in the control of a foreign power. Scotland was not in the same situation as in 1286 when Alexander III died followed closely by his only heir Margaret the Maid of Norway leaving the kingdom completely without a monarch. It was again different from the previous two decades that saw stand-ins for adult kings present in the kingdom. Rather it is most similar to other cases of child regency in Europe. The reasons for the particular title of governor were not explained in either the burgh record of Aberdeen or Andrew of Wyntoun’s account of the 1406 General Council.\(^{40}\) Karen Hunt’s evaluation of Albany’s governorship finds that the title was likely based in feudal law and that Albany acted in effect as tutor or guardian for the royal minor as he would under private law.\(^{41}\) Because of this as well as James I’s uncrowned state and minority, Albany used the term governor.\(^{42}\) Albany’s duties as governor seem to have been largely the same as his duties as guardian: to defend the realm and administer justice. However, as governor he had some


\(^{40}\) Wyntoun, *Original Chronicle*, vol. 6, 415–9.; RPS, A1406/1.

\(^{41}\) Hunt, “The Governorship of Robert Duke of Albany,” 130.; Blakeway, *Regency in Sixteenth-Century Scotland*, 22, 31. John Stewart, duke of Albany would also use the term governor during his regency for James V. Blakeway demonstrates that by the sixteenth century ideas of regency were tied to the succession.

limitations placed on his power and was therefore not considered to be a full replacement for James I. Most importantly Albany could not hold Parliament as that was a royal prerogative. Albany also ruled with the advice of a General Council, although this stipulation was not unusual, as most rulers ruled with the aid of a council. While Albany was limited in some senses, he was also free of the direct oversight of James I due to his captivity which was a change from Albany’s previous regent positions.43

Albany’s governorship would not be the last Scottish minority regency, and would be used as a precedent for others. As the fifteenth century passed Scotland became increasingly familiar with the role of regents and minority councils as every king from James I to James VI in the late sixteenth century ascended to the throne as a child, sometimes as an infant. The office grew in sophistication, but drew precedents from the Albany governorships. For instance, in the early sixteenth century John, duke of Albany, and cousin of James V, was chosen as governor for the child James V as Duke John was the nearest male heir after James V.44 Amy Blakeway’s recent study of Scottish sixteenth-century regencies makes clear that a regent was never a full replacement for the real thing, stating “Monarchs and regents were not identical, and individual regents governed with various degrees of success.”45 Regents could be denied some of the prerogatives of kingship, as was the case of Albany. They might also be subject to factional infighting which impacted their ability to rule. This certainly applied to the guardians, lieutenants, and governors of Scotland during the early Stewart dynasty as well. Albany, Carrick, and Rothesay may have been able to rule the kingdom with varying degrees of success, but they

43 Stevenson, Power and Propaganda, 67; Brown, “Lele consail for the comoun profite,” 61; Black, Political Thought in Europe, 155, 170.
44 RPS, A1513/1.; For the career of John, duke of Albany, see Elizabeth Bonner, “Stewart [Stuart], John, second duke of Albany (c. 1482–1536), soldier and magnate.” ODNB.
45 Blakeway, Regency in Sixteenth-Century Scotland, 5.
were not the king. They acted for the king and derived their power and authority from him and the political community, but the king usually remained the highest power and authority within the kingdom, at least in theory.

The situation in Scotland under Robert II and Robert III certainly does differ somewhat from other regent positions around Europe, although it bears the most similarities with the situation in France under Charles VI. The king was present in Scotland and, according to all known sources, mentally stable, but deemed incapable of fulfilling the duties of kingship due to age or illness. In many ways, the lieutenants and guardians of the early Stewart dynasty do not indicate a weakness in the conceptualization of the monarchy and power in Scotland, rather they highlight its strength. What the Scottish political community sought to manage was a weakness in the person of the king, not the institution of monarchy. The weakness in the person of the king was rectified by the strength of other members of the royal family in keeping with the corporate nature of monarchy.

Conclusion

Monarchs in late medieval Europe relied on their families to help them rule. The corporate nature of monarchy allowed for the king to delegate power and authority to his family and others for the sound governance of the kingdom. The success or failure of a monarchy depended on the work of the whole family not just the king. In this regard Scotland, under the early Stewart kings was not different from other European kingdoms. Robert II and Robert III invested much power and authority in their family to help them rule. Albany served the dynasty in several capacities, most importantly as regent. However, Albany was not just part of the corporate Stewart monarchy, he was also implemented the corporate monarchy himself. Albany’s power and authority derived from the royal family, but he was also a capable politician.
and lord adept at implementing the tools of lordship and kingship to maintain and grow his power and authority in Scotland.
Chapter 2: Governance and Corporate Monarchy Under the Stewart Dynasty

The corporate nature of monarchy was readily used by the early Stewart dynasty. Albany, in particular was integral to the exercise of power in this manner by the early Stewart kings. Albany’s importance to the government of Scotland lay not only in his regency positions, but also in the other roles he filled. Albany was Chamberlain from 1382 to 1406, a staple of Robert III’s and Rothesay’s councils, and appeared regularly on Robert III’s witness lists, likely indicating a near constant attendance on his brother the king.1 Albany’s two eldest sons, Murdoch and John, earl of Buchan, also played increasingly large roles in the Scottish government. The positions that they filled included Justiciar North of the Forth, Constable of the Scottish troops in France, and Chamberlain, all positions where they exercised important functions ascribed to a corporate monarchy. After 1388, Albany and his sons fulfilled essential roles in the daily governance of the kingdom.

Initially, Robert II used his sons to help stabilise his rule and effectively govern the kingdom. However, between 1384 and 1420 the corporate monarchy structure was used to replace absent and incapacitated kings who were unable to fulfill the duties of kingship. Albany served in this capacity three times between 1388 and 1420. Albany’s political career from 1388 until 1406 is the most heavily discussed aspect of his life. Beginning with chroniclers in the sixteenth century and up through Scottish histories of the 1970s and 1980s, Albany’s fulfillment of regency roles was considered as an outlet of his nefarious royal ambition.2 According to these

1 See RMS, i, 801-878.
older histories Albany wanted to sit on the throne of Scotland himself, so he staged coups against his father and brother and seized the power of Scottish kingship. In pursuit of this goal, Albany murdered his own nephew, David, duke of Rothesay, to clear his path. More recent scholarship has disputed this point, and while it has not completely exonerated Albany from the charge of murder, his ability and necessity to rule Scotland in place of the king is less in question.³

Neither this chapter nor this dissertation as a whole seeks to absolve Albany of some of his more dubious actions in office, but rather to place him firmly within the Stewart dynasty itself, and the centre of power in Scotland as an effective royal actor part of the corporate monarchy.⁴ He was both an independent political actor and a member of the Stewart dynasty crucial to its early success and survival. Albany on more than a few occasions abused his power within the kingdom, as can be said of most rulers. However, Albany’s governmental actions were often in the interest and sometimes preservation of the Stewart dynasty. To write Albany and his family off as merely jumped-up magnates or place holders for the king does a disservice to the complex understanding of monarchy in late medieval Scotland and Europe. Many scholars

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⁴ Albany’s long career of course contains missteps, many of which will be discussed in the coming chapters. His dealings with his brother Badenoch were not always on the level. Albany also does not handle Archibald, fourth earl of Douglas’s, dubious interactions with the exchequer well. From 1410 to 1420, the governor seems to constantly need to speak to Douglas about it although nothing ever comes of it. However, Alexander Grant has proposed that Albany intentionally allowed this to happen as he lacked the ability to grant Douglas annuities and so the pilfering was actually for services such as being the Warden of the Marches. ER iv 118, 201, 253, 322, 324; Grant, Independence and Nationhood, 185-6. Furthermore, the legality of the transfer of the earldom of Ross to Albany’s son John also does not appear as honest, although many have discounted the autonomy of Euphemia Leslie in this action. By strict rights of inheritance the earldom of Ross should have gone to Mary Leslie, wife of the lord of the Isles, but Euphemia resigned the earldom to her uncle Buchan instead. Furthermore, Albany continued to collect his pension for Rothesay’s retinue long after the prince’s death. Albany collected the pension almost every year from 1402 to 1420 ER iii, 559, 586, 609, 644; ER iv, 39, 101, 132, 162, 189, 212, 238, 265, 288, 309, 335. Finally, Albany is often accused of promoting the interests of his own family over those of Scotland, but as is demonstrated in this chapter, his bestowal of patronage in terms of governmental duties is narrowed mostly to his sons Murdoch and John and in keeping with the corporate nature of monarchy.
have discussed the nuanced understanding of monarchy in Scotland and the lengths to which the political community went to preserve the Scottish monarchy in the face of English opposition, internal strife, and absence of the king.\(^5\)

In this manner, Albany still often worked for the good of the Stewart dynasty, but he became an alternate focus of royal power within Scotland, in essence fulfilling another duty of kingship beyond the administration of justice and defense of the realm stipulated by Parliament. With his first appointment as guardian in 1388, Albany only grew in power as he exercised some of the duties of kingship and harnessed enough support to weather some of the most grisly upsets of the early Stewart dynasty, including his likely murder of the heir to the throne, David, duke of Rothesay. Murder, however, was not enough to undo Albany’s political ascendency and he even continued to grow in influence in the aftermath. During this thirty-two year period Albany acted to preserve the Stewart dynasty with the tools he had, and provided the focus of royal power needed in Scotland during the reigns of Robert II, Robert III, and James I.

Albany’s elevation to the offices of guardian and later lieutenant is often discussed in terms of familial rivalry. Albany had a rivalry with both his brother Carrick/Robert III and his nephew Rothesay. Only one study by Linda Day on the political career of Rothesay has supposed there was no rivalry.\(^6\) There was undoubtedly at least some rivalries among the sons of Robert II. The corporate monarchy structure certainly did not preclude competition. But the distribution of


\(^6\) Day, “David, Duke of Rothesay.”
sovereign power among various members of the royal family could lessen potential rivalries. Still, the potential for internal rivalry within the royal family depended on the personalities and ambitions of its members. Albany certainly had a very public rivalry with his brother Badenoch, whom he eventually toppled from power in the Highlands in the early 1390s. While it was not nearly as dynamic Albany had a rivalry with his brother Carrick, however, Carrick’s injuries made him less of a threat to his brother’s power. In many ways a discussion of Albany in these positions of power cannot be divorced from the questions of ambition and murder. It is not the goal of this dissertation to minimize the extent to which personal rivalries drove Albany’s political agenda. Nor is it to rehabilitate his character and absolve him of the role he may have played in the murder of his nephew. Rather, the purpose is to examine the degree to which Albany’s political actions occurred within the circumscribed limits of corporate nature of monarchy. This is not to say that Albany did not seek nor willingly take on his expanded role in government from 1388 on, but his actions as regent reflected more than mere ambition to usurp the throne or dislodge other Stewart princes from power. They were an interplay of family politics, European precedent, lack of belief in the abilities of the king, and promotion of an alternate focus for royal power in Scotland. The purpose of this chapter is two-fold. First, it is to discuss the Stewart dynasty’s use of the corporate monarchy with emphasis on Albany’s increased importance to the Scottish government over the period of 1382 to 1420. Secondly, the chapter aims to discuss the ways in which Albany grew in power and how he exercised (or did not) power and authority through his positions in the corporate monarchy oftentimes fulfilling the duties of the king in the capacity of regent.
Pre-1380 Corporate Kingship

From the very beginning of his reign Robert II made use of the corporate nature of monarchy, and this was fundamental to the early survival of the Stewart dynasty. Robert II often delegated power and authority or gave his children a share in the power of the monarchy through prudent marriage alliances, appointing his sons to governmental offices, and assisting his sons in their acquisition of lands, which all aided him in ruling and stabilising his kingdom. One of the ways in which Robert II invested his sons with power was by assisting them in their expansion of their previously existing regional land bases to become dominant regional powers. Carrick built on his regional land base in the south of Scotland, while Badenoch concentrated on the Highlands, and Albany looked to the Western Highlands and Central Scotland. Over the course of the 1370s and early 1380s, Albany accumulated land and power mostly due to the support of his father. While Albany’s own ambitions should not be discounted in this period, but many of his major land acquisitions such as the earldom of Fife were made with the encouragement and approval of Robert II. Robert II engaged many of his sons, both legitimate and illegitimate, in the governance of Scotland, but the focus of this chapter will be on Albany’s early role in corporate kingship.

One of Robert II’s first acts as king was to confirm the succession. The day after his coronation, 27 March 1371, Robert II declared his eldest son John, earl of Carrick, to be his heir to the throne. Later in 1373, Robert II detailed the rights of his other sons in the Scottish royal succession in an Act of Parliament. The 1373 Act stipulated that the crown was to go first to Carrick and his male heirs. A provision was made that if Carrick had no male heirs, the crown

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7 Brown, Disunited Kingdoms, 159. The Stewart princes held eight Scottish earldoms by 1384.
8 RPS, A1371/4.
9 RPS, 1373/3.
would be passed through Albany and his male line, continuing in this vein all the way down to Robert II’s youngest legitimate son Walter and his male heirs. This act did not necessarily bar female inheritance. Indeed, if there were no legitimate heirs in the male line, the crown could be passed through a female line starting with Carrick’s daughters. But this succession act did firmly outline the preference for a male over female ruler.10 The 1373 Act not only clarified any conflict that might have arisen over the succession, but it also highlighted the importance Robert II placed on all his sons, and staked their place in the Stewart dynasty. The confirmation of the succession impacted Albany, in particular, because in 1373 Carrick still did not have a son, thereby placing Albany second in line for the throne.

With the Steward’s succession to the throne, Albany moved from being a less important lord to a prominent earl and son of the king. In the first decade of Robert II’s reign Albany along with his brothers received several land grants and governmental positions from his father.11 Albany became keeper of Stirling Castle, earl of Fife, and Chamberlain. In addition to these major appointments and grants Albany also received several lesser lands from his father greatly expanding his landed base. Albany made use his father’s generosity with lands as well as the crafting of personal bonds, marriage alliances, to create an area of landed influence for himself in the central and western Highlands. This landed base would be his source of money and men for the rest of his career.

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10 Michael Penman, “Diffincione Successionis ad Regnum Scottorum: Royal Succession in Scotland in the Later Middle Ages,” in Making and Breaking the Rules: Succession in Medieval Europe, c. 1000-c.1600, ed. Frédérique Lachaud and Michael Penman (Turnhout: Brepols, 2008), 57. Barring female succession in Scotland would have invalidated the Bruce and Stewart claims to the throne. This detailed provision for the succession likely occurred due to Carrick’s lack of a male heir despite his ten year marriage to Annabella Drummond. Carrick and Annabella would ultimately have three sons, although only two survived to adulthood, but none of them had been born by 1373.

11 Brown, Disunited Kingdoms, 159.
Albany’s importance to the early Stewart corporate monarchy is best showcased through two major events: the acquisition of the earldom of Fife and Albany’s bond of friendship with Sir Robert Erskine, a former favorite of David II. Albany’s acquisition of Fife occurred early in his father’s reign. Isabella MacDuff, countess of Fife, had no children from any of her three marriages, including her short marriage to Walter Stewart, second son of Robert the Steward, in 1362. In 1370, shortly before the Steward’s ascension to the throne, David II had coerced Isabella into resigning Fife to one of his own favorites, John Dunbar, brother of the earl of March. In 1371 Isabella quickly aligned herself with the new Stewart dynasty and made an indenture with Albany on 30 March 1371 to regain some of her hereditary rights. The 1371 indenture named Albany Isabella’s heir to Fife in accordance with two previously existing entails. The first entail, a 1315 agreement between Duncan IV MacDuff and Robert I, stated that the earldom of Fife fell to Robert I’s lawful heir should MacDuff’s line go extinct. The earldom could not, however, become part of the royal patrimony or be held directly by the king as one of the earl of Fife’s chief roles was to enthrone the king at the coronation ceremony. Barring a lawful heir of the king, the earldom of Fife reverted back to Fife’s extended line to Alan, son and heir of Alan, earl of Menteith. These specifications made Robert, earl of Menteith, doubly qualified as he was the second son of the king and married to Margaret Graham, Alan, earl of Menteith’s, grand-niece and heiress. The 1371 agreement referenced a second indenture made between Isabella and her late husband Walter Stewart in favour of Albany for the inheritance of Fife should the couple have no heirs. In the 1371 agreement,

12 Walter died soon after their marriage. Fraser, *The Red Book of Menteith*, vol. 1, 132.
13 RMS i, App. 2 1624; SRO RH6/176; Boardman, *The Early Stewart Kings*, 24-5, n. 127. Dunbar granted Isabella and annuity of £147 a year in exchange for her resignation.
15 Boardman, *The Early Stewart Kings*, 50-1.
Albany agreed to recover Fife for Isabella as she had been forced to resign it when David II granted the earldom to John Dunbar in 1370. Albany successfully recovered Fife with the aid of his father and a large land deal with the Dunbars. Isabella then resigned the earldom to the king and Robert II in turn granted Fife to Albany now styled the earl of Fife and Menteith.\(^\text{17}\)

Boardman argues that the acquisition of Fife was another step in Stewart landed dominance of the earldoms of Scotland, and indeed it was.\(^\text{18}\) However, the establishment of Robert II’s second surviving son as the foremost noble in the kingdom is itself significant beyond just the domination of a landed territory.\(^\text{19}\) Robert II’s promotion of his sons, particularly Albany, to the highest positions in Scotland elevated the new Stewart dynasty as a whole. The new dynasty was also strengthened by the corporate nature of monarchy. The earldom of Fife held historical and political value. According to chronicler John of Fordun, Malcom III granted the MacDuff earls of Fife the right to enthrone the king, making them the foremost earls in the kingdom.\(^\text{20}\) Likely though, the position developed as a compromise between the MacDuffs, descendants from King Dubh, and the Canmores in which the MacDuffs gave up their claim to the throne in return for their privileged position.\(^\text{21}\) It might be a step too far to read into the historical parallel of a minor branch of the royal family giving up their claim to the throne in order to maintain the foremost position in the kingdom after the king, but the similarity is striking.

\(^{17}\) Fraser, *The Red Book of Menteith*, vol. 2, 251-6; Boardman, *The Early Stewart Kings*, 51-2. Several provisions were made for Isabella MacDuff in the indenture. Even though Albany was now the earl of Fife, Isabella and her mother still retained lands in Fife, and Isabella in particular maintained her residence at Falkland. Isabella also maintained some oversight of the courts in Fife which were to be held by a steward rather than Albany.


\(^{19}\) John, earl of Carrick, remained the heir of his father’s lands and titles and the Steward of Scotland.


\(^{21}\) Andrew McDonald, “Macduff Family, Earls of Fife (Per. c.1095–1371),” *ODNB*. 
At the time of Robert II’s coronation, the earl of Fife was the highest ranking noble in the kingdom. The first dukedoms would not appear until 1398; as such Robert II’s effort on behalf of his son to obtain this position was not dissimilar to that of other royal families. Kings around Europe frequently set up younger sons or brothers in positions that were either the highest within the kingdom or extended the influence of the kingdom beyond its domains. The creation of dukedoms for younger sons was a strategy used in corporate monarchies in which the wider family is used to help rule the kingdom and maintain or spread the dynasty’s power. Not long before Albany’s acquisition of Fife, Edward III of England in 1359 arranged a lucrative marriage for his fourth son John of Gaunt, to Blanche, the co-heiress of the duchy of Lancaster. Due to the deaths of both Blanche’s father Henry, first duke of Lancaster, in 1361, and in 1362 Blanche’s sister Maude, Gaunt and Blanche were the sole heirs of the large and profitable dukedom. Edward III pursued similar tactics with his other children to ensure dukedoms or at least prominent land holdings and power for all. Edward III followed the example of previous English kings who set up their sons and brothers in as lieutenants in English held areas like Ireland and Aquitaine, such as Henry II who named his son John as lord of Ireland in 1177. Similarly the princes of France held the highest ranking titles in France or its domains such as the duke of Orleans, duke of Burgundy, and duke of Berry. Likewise in 1420, Alfonso V of Aragon attempted to satisfy his brother, John’s, ambitions by having him marry Blanche the heiress of the kingdom of Navarre, with the dual hope of keeping him occupied and extending the influence

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22 Earenfight, *Queenship in Medieval Europe*, 9-10.  
of Aragon into Navarre. In all three cases, these positions not only occupied the younger sons and gave them the power that came with ruling a duchy, but they also extended the rule of the realm and the ruling dynasty into other regions. While the acquisition of Fife was about spreading the Stewart family landholdings, it was also about status and the corporate monarchy. The sons of English, French, and Iberian kings held the highest titles in their kingdoms making them regional political players; Robert II too sought the equivalent positions for his sons. Furthermore, this allowed Robert III to be crowned by a member of his own family, prohibiting another Scottish family from acting as kingmaker.

In addition to helping his sons obtain earldoms, Robert II also granted smaller parcels of land among them. In particular, Robert II granted Albany several smaller pieces of land around Scotland, mainly in the northern and central part of the kingdom. Most of Albany’s major land acquisitions happened during the period of Robert II’s kingship (1371-1390) and Albany’s first guardianship (1388-1392) including: the keepership of Stirling Castle which came with a 200 mark annuity, the Barony of Redhall in Edinburgh, Glen Dochart in Perth, bordering his Menteith lands, land in Linlithgow, the Strathearn lands of John Loutfute who forfeited due to his adherence to Richard II, and the annual rents from Ardormie in Banffshire and Estir Inneralown in Stirlingshire. As Boardman argues, Albany’s acquisition of these territories was not an uncoordinated land grab but rather a concerted effort that included land accumulation through grants and marriages which would result in Albany’s control of “a huge contiguous lordship embracing the earldoms of Lennox and Menteith, Glen Dochart, Loch Tay, Fortingall, Strath Tay, Strath Braan, and Strathord.” This large base provided Albany with the landed

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27 RMS i, 458, 554, 562, 571; NRS GD39/1/9, GD83/7, RH6, vol. 1, 204, RH6/182
28 Boardman, The Early Stewart Kings, 170.
resources for his career and made him the main regional power in Central Scotland and the Western Highlands. Albany also held a few other earldoms temporarily before he granted them to others, such as the earldom of Atholl, which Albany received from Robert III in 1403 after the death of the duke of Rothesay, previous holder of the earldom.\textsuperscript{29} Albany later granted the earldom to his younger brother Walter, lord of Brechin.\textsuperscript{30} Albany also inherited the earldom of Buchan from his brother Badenoch which he granted to his son John in 1406/7.\textsuperscript{31} Robert II’s actions in this land distribution were not dissimilar to those of other European kings, and they allowed his sons to become the dominant lords in several areas of Scotland, helping to stabilise his rule as he could now count on his sons to carry out royal justice and laws throughout the kingdom.

In addition to bestowing lands and titles on his sons, Robert II used his sons to reconcile the wider nobility to the new dynasty and help him more effectively rule. While, as Bower reports, the political community was largely united behind Robert the Steward as heir to David II, there were several men loyal to David II who did not immediately reconcile themselves to the change in power.\textsuperscript{32} Men of middling rank but high in David II’s favour requested safe conducts to or through England in the weeks after David’s death, including: Walter Leslie (later an Albany adherent), Sir John Abernethy, Alexander Ramsay of Dalhousie, Simon Reed, constable of Edinburgh Castle, and Bartholomew Loen (later an Albany man).\textsuperscript{33} One of David II’s former favorites, Sir Robert Erskine, decided early on to side with the Stewarts.

\textsuperscript{29} RMS i, App. ii 1766.
\textsuperscript{30} RMS i, 884. Walter appears early in Albany’s governorship as the earl of Atholl and Caithness.
\textsuperscript{32} Bower, \textit{Scotichronicon}, vol. 7, 365-7.
\textsuperscript{33} Penman, \textit{David II}, 417.
Figure 2.1 Albany Stewart Lands

34 Map 1.1 The outlines of the earldoms on the map above, as well as all subsequent maps are based on those found in Peter McNeill and Hector MacQueen, eds., *Atlas of Scottish History to 1707* (Edinburgh: University of Edinburgh, 1996), 206. This map represents the height of the Albany Stewart lands (the lands of Albany, Murdoch, and Buchan) during the governorship. It includes their earldoms and smaller lands held directly by them. Each
According to Wyntoun and Bower, Erskine defended Robert II’s claim to the throne when he was briefly challenged for it early on by the earl of Douglas. Erskine would not, unfortunately, have his loyalty rewarded with high positions in Robert II’s government, but rather be pushed out of his roles and have his offices and posts reassigned amongst Robert II’s large extended family. Robert II compensated Erskine with pensions and gifts, but largely stripped him of his power.

In order to facilitate the eclipse of Erskine, Robert II engaged Albany as a representative of the royal family. Sir Robert Erskine had been a loyal man of David II, but the Erskines were also tenants of the Stewarts as their lands lay mainly in Renfrewshire. Sir Robert Erskine and Albany entered into a bond of friendship on 7 February 1372, the same day that Robert II granted Albany keepership of Stirling Castle, a position formerly held by Erskine. This is the earliest known example of this type of bond in use by Albany. There is nothing particularly out of ordinary about the bond itself. Albany promised to be a good and faithful lord and friend to Erskine, and Erskine’s brother, sons, and men. Moreover, he promised to protect Erskine’s lands, rents, goods, and possessions. However, this bond is an early example of Robert II’s employment of the corporate monarchy. Furthermore, the situation around the bond likely alarmed Erskine, as shortly after Robert II’s coronation Erskine and his family were replaced in their roles as

shaded circle represents the locations of baronies and lordships in the given area, i.e. Albany had several baronies around Perth and therefore the whole area around Perth is shaded.

36 Penman, David II, 416. Erskine remained a fairly regular witness of Robert II’s charters, but as Penman notes he now had to “find service abroad or in the retinues of Stewart and Douglas earls.” Boardman, The Early Stewart Kings, 53. 100£ annuity ER ii, 415, 494, 543, 577; ER iii, 27, 76, 101, 125, 141. Gift of 500 marks ER ii, 433, 460, 472, 515, 517, 555. Gift of 20£ ER iii, 667.
37 Steve Boardman, “Erskine Family (per. c. 1350–c. 1450), Administrators and Noblemen,” ODNB.
38 NRS GD124/7/1
39 If Albany used personal bonds before Robert II’s kingship, none of them have survived. His ready use of them so early in Robert II’s reign does suggest a prior familiarity with them.
40 NRS GD124/7/1
keeper of Edinburgh Castle by Carrick, Justiciar of Lothian by the earl of Douglas, and Sheriff of Edinburgh by Malcolm Fleming, both Carrick adherents.41

Both Robert II and Carrick sealed the bond of friendship between Erskine and Albany but neither were held to it, which is particularly interesting as they benefitted more from the bond than Albany. A bond between Erskine and the king would have been improper and shown favouritism towards a particular magnate. Neither Robert II nor Robert III made any bonds, although later monarchs did.42 This separation in level was likely also the reason Carrick, the king’s heir, did not make a bond with Erskine himself even though he and his adherents replaced Erskine in more roles than Albany. Carrick was certainly going to inherit the throne, but Albany as second son seemed unlikely to inherit the throne himself.43

During the early years of Robert II’s reign, Albany benefitted from his father’s elevated station and his own as son of the king, but he did not seem at this point to have been conscious of any separation of his own rank from that of the rest of the nobility. In stark contrast with his later bonds (and particularly those made during his governorship), Albany listed himself as Robert Stewart, earl of Fife and Menteith. Later, he would style himself Prince Robert or the son of the king.44 The bond was made in the presence of his father the king and his brother Carrick, but unlike his later styles Albany did not here emphasize from the beginning his place in the royal dynasty as the son of the king, let alone as a prince. Rather the implication of the language was

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41 Boardman, The Early Stewart Kings, 52-3.
42 Wormald, Lords and Men in Scotland, 359-65. Wormald notes bonds made by James II, Margaret Tudor, Queen of Scotland, and Marie de Guise, the most famous of which is the Lanark Bond between James, ninth earl of Douglas and James II. For more on the Lanark Bond see Michael Brown, “The Lanark Bond,” in Kings, Lords and Men in Scotland and Britain, 1300-1625: Essays in Honour of Jenny Wormald, ed. Steve Boardman and Julian Goodare (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2014), 228-245.
43 Carrick and Albany were fairly close in age. It is possible that before the birth of David, Carrick may have considered his nephew Murdoch as his possible successor.
44 NRS GD124/7/1
that Albany outranked Erskine as Albany was an earl, but there was no other emphasis on his status royal or otherwise.

While it was Albany that made the bond with Erskine it was most likely a piece of larger Stewart family maneuvering rather than a personal act of lordship. By deploying Albany in the capacity of a representative of the royal live, Robert II was able to retain Sir Robert Erskine’s loyalty through a bond of friendship. Due to Albany’s position in the royal family it is often difficult to discern what acts were purely his own versus ones in concert with the rest of the family, particularly early in Robert II’s reign before Albany established his own power. This bond much more clearly than others was part of Robert II’s consolidation of power in the hands of the corporate monarchy. That Albany acted as a stand-in for his father and brother here is supported by the Erskines’ infrequent appearance at court during Albany’s governorship. The Erskines were frequent witnesses of Robert II’s charters and part of Carrick’s retinue, but infrequently appear on Albany’s witness lists during the governorship. Robert Erskine died in 1385, and there is no surviving evidence that Albany renewed the bond with Erskine’s son, Thomas. Erskine’s sons were included in the initial bond, so perhaps it was not needed.

Robert II made frequent use of the corporate nature of monarchy. He placed his sons around Scotland in strategic lands and invested them with official positions such as Keeper of Stirling Castle. Albany early on was part of Robert II’s government, but in 1382, his place in the corporate monarchy took on a new dimension when Robert II named Albany to an important role in the royal household, Chamberlain.

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45 See Appendix A for witness list.
46 Boardman, “Erskine Family (per. c. 1350–c. 1450),” *ODNB*.
47 In 1420 Murdoch renewed his father’s bond with Alexander, earl of Mar. This was necessary because Murdoch was not present during the initial bond and was therefore not a part of it.
Chamberlain

In 1382 Albany replaced his brother-in-law Sir John Lyon as Chamberlain after Lyon was murdered by Sir James Lindsay of Crawford.⁴⁸ Albany held the position of Chamberlain until he became governor in 1406, at which point, he granted it to his second son John, earl of Buchan. The role of Chamberlain greatly enhanced Albany’s standing and power within Scotland as the position of the Chamberlain was one of the most influential offices under the king. In his capacity as Chamberlain, Albany both collected and disbursed the crown revenues.⁴⁹ This included collecting the rents of the Crown lands, great customs, payments due from marriages, and reliefs, fines from the justiciars and sheriffs among other revenue sources. In late fourteenth century taxation was not regular in Scotland and was only levied during emergencies. Such taxes did not account for much of the income regularly collected in the kingdom. The Chamberlain disbursed funds to finance the royal household, defend the kingdom, and generally keep up the governance of the kingdom.⁵⁰

The immediate revenues of the kingdom were collected by sheriffs and ballivi ad extra who saw to the collection of rents, fines from the ayres, and feudal casualties. Revenues were also collected by customers of the royal burghs who collected the great customs and burghal fermes. In addition to collecting revenues, these officials also disbursed the revenues within their area of jurisdiction for a variety of functions such as outfitting castles for defense or paying annuities.⁵¹ Due to this more localized management of money, the actual revenue amount that came into the hands of the Chamberlain was fairly low. The Chamberlain did oversee the

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⁴⁸ ER, iii, lli.
⁴⁹ ER, i, xxxiii-iv.
⁵⁰ ER, i, xxxiv; Walker, A Legal History of Scotland, 140.
⁵¹ ER, i, xxxiv
individual officials and all accounts, even those of the Chamberlain himself, were audited yearly by Lords Auditors appointed by the king. Auditors were generally people of importance in the kingdom, and included such personages as the Chancellor, high ranking churchmen, and high-ranking nobles.\textsuperscript{52}

In addition to directly financial purposes, the Chamberlain was also supposed to hold yearly ayres. The purpose of the Chamberlain’s ayres was both judicial and administrative. The Chamberlain’s ayre served as both a court of appeal for cases from the burgh courts and a first court for matters pertaining to ballies of the burgh. The Chamberlain’s ayre also audited and made inquiries into the sound running of individual burghs.\textsuperscript{53} Little is known about the actual proceedings of the Chamberlain’s ayres in this period, other than they took place usually annually.\textsuperscript{54} In all the Chamberlain held a vital role in not only the financial health of the kingdom, but also the government of the burghs.

Robert II’s appointment of Albany to this position exemplifies his use of the corporate monarchy. Robert II placed the finances and oversight of the royal burghs in Albany’s hands. The accounts of the Chamberlain from 1382 until 1406 are near continuous indicating that Albany carried out his duties for auditing and presumably the Chamberlain’s ayres yearly. It is unclear how much influence Albany had over appointing the officials on the ground such as the customers. There is little change in the men collecting customs after Albany was appointed Chamberlain in 1382. Most of the officials that appear in the \textit{Exchequer Rolls} between 1382 and

\textsuperscript{52} Walker, \textit{A Legal History of Scotland}, 140.
\textsuperscript{54} Dickinson, “A Chamberlain’s Ayre,” 29. Entries regarding payments for the ayres appear regularly throughout the \textit{ER}, but the actual accounts of the proceedings are largely lost.
1406 have little connection to Albany outside of their positions.⁵⁵ There is some overlap in names between the witness lists and those who appear as customers in the *Exchequer Rolls*. However, such overlap is generally with men who only appeared once or twice on the witness lists, such as John Seton, Customer of Arbroath, or William Ydill, Customer of Cupar, and indicates that perhaps the charter was witnessed at the same time their accounts were audited.

Many of the Exchequer officials remained in their positions for several years as well. Some such as William Ferny, Customer of Cupar, remained in his position for the entirety of Albany’s tenure as Chamberlain.⁵⁶ There is very little change in these officials and the extent to which Albany influenced their appointments or possible dismissals is difficult to ascertain. Likely their appointments had more to do with local politics than Albany’s influence.

Albany did, however, maintain Deputy Chamberlains unlike his predecessor Sir John Lyon. There were two deputies, one North of the Forth and one South of the Forth. These positions too were held for long terms and between 1382 and 1406 only five men held these positions. North of the Forth Walter Tulach held the position from 1390 until 1403 after which David Lindsay, Earl of Crawford took the position. South of the Forth the position was held by Patrick Lumly from 1390-8, then Adam and John Forrester until 1406.⁵⁷ Presumably Albany had much say in naming his deputies. Walter Tulach was a cousin of Albany’s through marriage and received several lands from Robert III.⁵⁸ Outside of this familial connection and his role as Deputy Chamberlain, Tulach only appears in Albany’s business once. Tulach was part of Albany’s council during his arbitration of a dispute between the Earl of Moray and the Bishop of

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⁵⁵ See *ER* iii, 84-648.

⁵⁶ *ER* iii, 70, 95, 121, 136, 151, 177, 206, 224, 254, 302, 361, 388, 416, 444, 467, 497, 526, 550, 576, 599, 628.

⁵⁷ Tulach: *ER* iii, 241, 273, 314, 345, 374, 401, 424, 456, 481, 508; Crawford: *ER* iii, 613, 647; Lumly *ER* iii, 236, 278, 309, 339, 370, 397, 424, 452; Forrester, Adam *ER* iii, 694, 608; John *ER* iii 613.

⁵⁸ *RMS* i, 570, app. II 1737, 1876, 1909, 1910. *ER*, i, lxxiii.
Moray in 1387.\textsuperscript{59} Other than this Tulach does not appear in Albany’s witness lists or other business. The latter is also true of the first Deputy Chamberlain South of the Forth Patrick Lumly. The longevity of Tulach and Lumly’s positions indicates a good working relationship, and likely some initial connection to Albany for their appointments. The Crawfords, on the other hand, had ample connections to Albany, and were certainly part of his affinity as will be discussed in chapter 3. John and Adam Forrester had both been Customers of Edinburgh for several years, and Adam Forrester had been an auditor before taking on the Deputy Chamberlainship.\textsuperscript{60} Adam Forrester had a history of service to the royal family as well, he served as Queen Annabella’s Chamberlain and briefly Keeper of Edinburgh Castle.\textsuperscript{61} Outside of this general association they did not have much else specifically to do with Albany. However, it was likely Forrester’s track records of good work and experience that brought him to the role of Deputy Chamberlain for Albany.

The Auditors of the Exchequer were a different matter. Although appointed by the king and with a few obligatory members such as the Chancellor of Scotland, Albany exercised some power over who were appointed as auditors. For instance, known Albany associates appeared as auditors periodically throughout his tenure as Chamberlain such as Sir John Ramornie in 1396 and 1401, David Lindsay, lord Crawford, in 1401, and Patrick Graham and William Graham appear several times throughout the period.\textsuperscript{62} However, the appointment of the auditors was not solely based on Albany’s influence over the king. Men loyal to Robert III such as Sir David Fleming were also appointed, and there were obligatory appointments such as the Chancellor of

\textsuperscript{59} Cosmo Innes ed. \textit{Registrum Episcopatus Moraviensis} (Edinburgh: The Bannatyne Club, 1837), 197-203.
\textsuperscript{60} \textit{ER} iii, 161, 186, 202, 219, 236, 246, 264, 273, 283, 309, 319, 350, 378, 397, 405, 424, 433, 452, 481, 486, 508, 514, 539, 590, 608, 685, 689, 696.
\textsuperscript{61} \textit{ER} iii, 249, 252, 289, 466, 472, 660.
\textsuperscript{62} See Chapter 3 for more about the Graham-Albany Stewart connections. \textit{ER} iii, 613, 642.
Scotland. By and large though the appearance of Albany Stewart adherents as auditors indicates that Albany exercised some power over their appointments, and appointed men from his affinity.

Albany’s position as Chamberlain was an increase in his governmental power. He had a say in how the kingdom’s money was spent, and that indicates a level of trust in his abilities on the part of his father and brother to hold this type of power. The Chamberlain also was a position in the king’s household, which gave him direct access to the center of power, the king. Robert II’s appointment of his son as chief financial officer displays his use of the corporate monarchy since this position held substantial power in the kingdom. However, this was not the last time the Stewart monarchy made significant use of the corporate monarchy. In 1384, John, earl of Carrick, seized power from his father and began acting as lieutenant of the kingdom, and exercising the powers of kingship in place of the reigning king.

*Carrick Lieutenancy 1384-1388*

In 1384, Parliament appointed John, earl of Carrick, lieutenant of the realm to govern Scotland in place of his father Robert II. Carrick’s appointment seems to have been the will of the king and Parliament. The November 1384 parliamentary record states that:

> because our lord king himself is unable on each occasion to be attentive continually to the execution of justice and the law of his kingdom in person, he has desired, granted and ordained by the counsel and ordinance of his council that his firstborn son and heir the lord [John Stewart], earl of Carrick, should cause execution of common justice throughout the realm, for all who have suffered troubles or injuries at the hands of all and singular persons offending against law…

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63 ER iii, 470.
64 RPS, 1384/11/4
The wording of the appointment makes it clear that Carrick’s main concern was to be the administration of justice and suppression of rebellion within the realm which were two of the main duties of kingship. The act of the Parliament clearly states that Parliament was beholden to Carrick the same as they were to the king and rebellion against Carrick would be treated as such. Carrick assumed the lieutenancy because of the complaints made about the aggressive lordship practices of his brother Alexander Stewart, lord of Badenoch, in the Highlands which went largely unchecked by Robert II. Robert II was either unable or unwilling to curb his son’s actions. In the end, Carrick proved equally unable to perform the duties of kingship. But in 1384 he had seemed to be a preferable alternative to the aging king. Carrick, however, spent most of his lieutenancy concerned with Anglo-Scottish affairs rather than subduing problems in the Highlands.

Carrick had built up a steady base of loyal men in Lothian and since 1371 increasingly became the public face of the Stewart dynasty around Edinburgh. Outside of the issues in the Highlands, Carrick’s lieutenancy went fairly well and he was attentive to the needs of daily governance and the external defense of the realm. However, there are hints in the chronicle record that Carrick may have gone further than simply fulfilling his role as lieutenant and the duties of kingship he was charged with. It appears that in 1388, Carrick may have arrested his father. The Parliamentary record is very clear that Carrick’s position was subject to his fulfillment of the tasks of administering justice. Perhaps in failing to administer justice within the kingdom and particularly in the Highlands, Carrick did not fulfill the requirements of his post and Robert II thought better of allowing him to remain in power. According to a short,

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65 RPS, 1384/11/4, 1384/11/5.
66 Brown, Disunited Kingdoms, 207-8, 225.
67 Boardman, The Early Stewart Kings, 123-5.
anonymous, fifteenth century Scottish chronicle housed in the Bodleian Library, MS Fairfax 23, David Fleming, a man usually considered loyal to Robert II, arrested Robert II on 7 February 1388. This information, found neither in Wyntoun nor Bower, is corroborated by Liber Pluscardensis as the author alludes to an undated arrest of Robert II as a viable reason for the death of David Fleming at the hands of James Douglas on Long Hermiston Moor in 1406 during the flight of the future James I to the Bass Rock. How long the king was held captive and the terms of his release remains unclear, but Robert II was present at the Parliament session held in Linlithgow on 18 August 1388.

The exact reasons for the arrest cannot be pinpointed but most likely the king was seized on Carrick’s orders. This argument is built on the scant surviving evidence for this event contained in MS Fairfax 23, a brief mention in Liber Pluscardensis, and an allusion in Froissart’s chronicle. Boardman notes that Froissart alludes to tensions between the nobles and the king in the lead up to the battle of Otterburn in 1388. Robert II’s unwillingness to enter into war with England did not sit well with magnates like James Douglas, second earl of Douglas, David Fleming, and other men in the borders, Carrick’s powerbase, who built their careers around raids and battles with the English. Bower and Wyntoun’s silence on this subject while unhelpful is not necessarily strange. Wyntoun time and again shied away from or completely excluded contentious topics, such as the death of Rothesay and the Battle of Harlaw. For Bower, the arrest and sidelining of the king does not fit in with his portrayal of strong kingship or his adherence to

69 MS Fairfax 23, folio 116-7; Boardman, “Coronations, Kings and Guardians,” 107.
70 MS Fairfax 23, folio 116-7; Liber Pluscadensis, 262.
71 RPS, 1388/8/1.
73 Boardman, “Coronations, Kings and Guardians,” 108-9. It should also be noted at this juncture that Froissart’s Scottish source were exiled and disaffected Douglas knights and squires who were exiled in the wake of the Douglas inheritance dispute of 1388, and therefore are not overly favourable towards the Stewarts, possibly Albany in particular.
Stewart family propaganda.\textsuperscript{74} The corroborated evidence, however, does point to a brief imprisonment of Robert II in 1388 during the lead up to the Battle of Otterburn, likely on the orders of Carrick. How and why Carrick ultimately released Robert II remains unknown, but likely the unjustified arrest was part of Carrick’s downfall.

The Battle of Otterburn on 5 August 1388 was a rousing Scottish victory; however, it would have long term ill effects on Carrick’s power. First and foremost, Carrick lost one of his greatest allies, James, earl of Douglas. The death of Douglas led to a dispute between the branches of the Douglas family for the lands and title of the earldom. The main victor was Archibald the Grim, lord of Galloway, and bastard son of Good Sir James Douglas. Archibald the Grim found an ally in Albany. Ultimately, Albany was unwilling to take on Archibald’s deep entrenchment in the borders and he generally supported the Archibald’s claims to the Douglas lands over other claimants.\textsuperscript{75} The switch of allegiance of the head of the Douglases severely weakened Carrick’s hold on the kingdom. This political decline was compounded by an injury from a kick by a horse that left him lame and weakened both his health and his image.\textsuperscript{76}

Descriptions of Carrick’s injuries are scant. It is likely that over the short term, the accident left him unable to ride a horse and lead an army into battle. Carrick was weakened both politically and physically in the wake of Otterburn. The inability to defend the kingdom coupled with the lax justice in the Highlands meant he was not fulfilling the duties of kingship he was charged

\textsuperscript{75} Brown, The Black Douglases, 76-86.
\textsuperscript{76} Boardman states that Carrick’s injuries may have been severe than an inability to walk. Robert III’s infirmity was not a secret. The 1425 entry for the Irish Annals of the Four Masters recording the executions of Duke Murdoch and his sons states that they were killed by the son of the “lame king of Scotland” indicating that Robert III’s injury was well known. Steve Boardman, “Robert III (d. 1406), king of Scots.” ODNB; John O’Donovan, ed., Annals of the Kingdom of Ireland by the Four Masters From the Earliest Period to 1616, 2nd ed., vol. IV (Dublin: Hodges, Smith, & Co., 1856) 866.
with as lieutenant. This combination as well as his arrest of his father left Carrick vulnerable to political attack and removal from power.

Albany Guardianship 1388-1392/3

Whether for revenge or for the good of the kingdom, motives not necessarily mutually exclusive, Robert II re-established his power at the end of 1388, but not in a personal way. With the information as murky as it is, there is no way to discern that Albany did not collude in the imprisonment of Robert II, although if he did likely later chroniclers would have used that piece of evidence to lambast him as a usurper.\textsuperscript{77} What part if any Albany played in possibly freeing the king is also lost. However, at the end of 1388, the king, Carrick, and Parliament named Albany guardian of the realm. It seems strange that Robert II “by authoritative utterance” would place Albany in power if he had a role in the king’s imprisonment, allowing for speculation on Albany’s role in freeing the king.\textsuperscript{78} Albany’s appointment, much like Carrick’s, had strict guidelines. Specifically, Albany was “guardian of the kingdom under the king, and his firstborn, and his son and heir, for putting into effect justice and keeping the law internally, and for the defence of the kingdom with the king's force, as set out before, against those attempting to rise up as enemies.”\textsuperscript{79} Albany was named guardian specifically to maintain internal justice and to defend the kingdom from enemies, again two of the main duties of kingship. He was also given the authority to act with the “king’s force” in these matters. The full Parliamentary record very explicitly states that Albany was named because of the king’s great age, Carrick’s infirmity, and

\textsuperscript{77}For more information on Albany’s black reputation in the sixteenth century see: Boece, The Chronicles of Scotland RPS, 1388/12/1.

\textsuperscript{78} RPS, 1388/12/1.

\textsuperscript{79} The wording here is very interesting. Albany was precisely named as Guardian under the king. His position is in no way unlimited or without the approval of the king. “regni custodem ad justiciam fieri faciendam et ad legem servandam interius ac ad defensionem regni cum potencia regis, ut premissititur, contra conantes insurgere ex adverso.” RPS, 1388/12/1.
the minority of Carrick’s heir. Furthermore, the appointment only lasted until Carrick recovered from his infirmity, David came of age, or as long as the “lord earl of Fife shall manage himself well and usefully in the aforesaid office.” Although Albany’s appointment was limited, he was still able to exercise some of the duties of kingship. There was no specific date set for expiration but if Carrick recovered, David came of age (not a far off prospect), or Albany failed in his duties as Carrick had, he too would be removed.

1388 proved to be a watershed year for Albany regardless of any limitations set on him by the council. Prior to this Albany was not a small player in Scottish politics. His positions as earl of Fife and Chamberlain would not have allowed him to sit idly by, but he burst onto the national stage with vigour and determination. Albany’s guardianship is mainly remembered for the campaign he undertook to destroy his brother Alexander Stewart, lord of Badenoch’s, power in the Highlands. Albany brought down his brother with a ruthlessness not previously seen in his dealings. The power and authority he built from 1388 on departed radically from his life before the guardianship. Prior to 1388, Albany had been in his father’s councils, and fulfilled his duties as Chamberlain, earl of Fife and Menteith, and a definitive part of the corporate monarchy. However, after 1388 he stepped into the role previously held by his brother Carrick, the public face of the Stewart monarchy, an alternate focus of royal power in the kingdom, fulfilling another duty of kingship. Albany and his sons took on leading roles in the administration of justice, day to day governance of the kingdom, and military exploits of the Scottish dynasty. From 1388 on it is hard to divorce the wellbeing of the kingdom from Albany’s actions. Whether

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80 RPS, 1388/12/1.
due to personal ambition or the will of his father and brother, Albany remained in the centre of governance often acting as regent until his death in 1420.

Much like Carrick’s lieutenancy the public record of governance during Albany’s guardianship reflects the continued presence of the king. Charters were issued in the name of Robert II and Parliaments and General Councils were still held in his presence. Whether or not the king was always present is debatable, but from 1388 until Robert II’s death in 1390, Albany fulfilled his role to the satisfaction of the king, Carrick, and the council, implying that the central event of Albany’s guardianship, the assault on Badenoch’s land and power in the Highlands, was sanctioned by the political community. Albany also successfully led a raiding expedition in Northern England in 1389 and concluded an Anglo-Scottish truce later in that same year.\footnote{Boardman, “Coronations, Kings and Guardians,” 111.}

The central event and exercise of Albany’s power as guardian was the removal of Badenoch from power. The attack on Badenoch removed him from his political offices, but was later augmented by Albany’s partial absorption of Badenoch’s power base through a series of land acquisitions, assumption of Badenoch’s titles and offices, and the creation of a network of Highland alliances based on marriage and patronage.\footnote{Boardman, \textit{The Early Stewart Kings}, 159-222; Steve Boardman, “Lordship in the Northeast: The Badenoch Stewarts, I. Alexander Stewart, Earl of Buchan, Lord of Badenoch,” \textit{Northern Scotland}, 16 (1996): 1-30.} The destruction of Badenoch’s power is one of the best explored aspects of Albany’s political career. Both Boardman’s monograph \textit{The Early Stewart Kings} and his article “Lordship in the Northeast: The Badenoch Stewarts, I. Alexander Stewart, Earl of Buchan, Lord of Badenoch” outline this attack well.\footnote{The marriages of Albany’s children to Highland nobles will be more thoroughly discussed in Chapter 3.} The object here is not to refute any of Boardman’s findings on the destruction of Badenoch’s political career, but

\footnote{This episode also appears in more general studies of late medieval Scotland including: Brown, \textit{Disunited Kingdoms}; Stevenson, \textit{Power and Propaganda}; Nicholson, \textit{The Later Middle Ages}; Barrel, \textit{Medieval Scotland}.}
rather consider it in the wider career and tactics of Albany as a politician and member of the royal family.

Albany’s determination to counteract his brother were not purely selfish. Calls to subdue Alexander Stewart, lord of Badenoch, and his cateran forces predated Robert II’s kingship. In the later years of David II’s reign, the king and parliament charged the Steward, Carrick, and Albany with attempting to control Badenoch and others like him in the Highlands. The attempts to control Badenoch were part of a larger initiative to temper the volatile situation in the Highlands due to the expansion of the interests of the lords of the Isles and the power vacuum in much of the Highlands. During the mid-fourteenth century the central Highland lordships and earldoms in particular were in a state of upheaval. This upheaval had been going on since the beginning of the century in almost every arena including political, social, and economic, all of which were exacerbated by European wide issues such as the Black Death and economic downturn. This period saw the expansion of the MacDonald, lords of the Isles, eastward, the fragmentation of the northern earldoms and lordships due to the disruption caused by the first and second Wars of Independence, and the frequent change or extinction of noble lines which caused assumption of smaller areas of power by lesser nobles with militarized or cateran followings to keep power. In effect by the 1360s it seemed the northern lordships were in a state of constant warfare in which personal and intensely local lordship was more important or effective than wide ranging territorial lordship still in effect in Lowland Scotland, such as that of the earl of Douglas.

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85 Boardman, “Alexander Stewart, Earl of Buchan,” 2; Brown, Disunited Kingdoms, 169.
86 Boardman, “Alexander Stewart, Earl of Buchan,” 3-5; Brown, Disunited Kingdoms, 129-31, 168-9; Davies, Lords and Lordship in the British Isles, 133. The growth of retained militarized followings was also on the rise in Ireland during the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries as part of the Gaelic Resurgence. Gaelic lords recruited galloglass soldiers from the Hebrides and Argyll to augment their own armies.
of the issue with this type of local lordship from the governmental point of view was that the cost to maintain cateran forces was high and leaders would at times extract the resources they needed from their tenants by force or intimidation which led to the complaints to the king and Parliament. However, this type of militarized local lordship had become the key to exercising power in the Highlands by the end of the fourteenth century, so the complaints of the people largely led to nothing.\footnote{Boardman, “Alexander Stewart, Earl of Buchan,” 7; Stevenson, \textit{Power and Propaganda}, 57; Brown, \textit{Disunited Kingdoms}, 182-3.} It was in this environment that Badenoch cemented his hold in the Highlands during the late 1360s to 1380s.

The lordship style of Badenoch, as well as the violent activities of his adherents, cateran forces, and band of illegitimate sons, made many of the surrounding nobles feel threatened, particularly with Badenoch’s rapid land acquisitions and political advancement during the 1370s after his father inherited the throne. In the early years of Robert II’s reign Badenoch was held in high favour by many of the locals. He was even referred to as Alasdair Mòr mac an Righ or Great Alexander, the king’s son.\footnote{Boardman, “Alexander Stewart, Earl of Buchan,” 10.} This title implies that Badenoch was both well respected in the Gaelic world and held a great amount of authority in the region from his father. Badenoch, like Albany, had been used by his father in the corporate monarchy to establish the rule of the Stewarts across Scotland. Under Robert II, Badenoch held the position of lieutenant of the north of Scotland which included authority over Scotland north of the Pentland Firth and the Sheriffdom of Inverness. Badenoch acquired more lands and influence by both appointment and force including control of the barony of Urquhart along with its castle and he was the acting royal Justiciar of the Appin of Dull.\footnote{Stevenson, \textit{Power and Propaganda}, 57-8; Boardman, “Alexander Stewart, Earl of Buchan,” 10-11.} Regardless of his high standing in the Gaelic speaking world, Lowland interpretations of Alexander’s behavior were distinctly less favourable likely
due to the difference in lordship style and the complaints against him and his caterans. Despite the complaints about Badenoch, Robert II did little to control his son.

Badenoch also focused his attention on acquiring the earldom of Ross; initially he uplifted the terce due to the widowed countess Euphemia for her maintenance, and ultimately married the widowed countess in 1382. Robert II seemed to agree with his son’s plans as the couple married in his presence and many of the countess of Ross’s lands were resigned to Robert II and then granted to Badenoch, now styled earl of Buchan, his wife, and their heirs. Only if the couple had no heirs would the lands go to Euphemia’s son from her first marriage, Alexander Leslie, heir of the earldom of Ross. The new earl of Buchan also received the rents of the earldom of Ross during his life. This vast resignation of lands alienated the heir of Ross, still a minor, from many of his lands. He was virtually left with only the earldom of Ross itself, but without its profits.

Badenoch’s intrusion into Ross considerably augmented his power in the Highlands. His office of royal lieutenant of the North of Scotland combined with his new earldom interfered with many of the local nobles’ land ownership and exercise of power, particularly that of the lord of the Isles, the Lindsays, and the Leslies. Badenoch’s success as a crown agent in recruiting cateran forces loyal to the crown was agreeable to the king and his desire to keep the peace.

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90 Brown, *Disunited Kingdoms*, 185.
91 Clement VII, 79; Stevenson, *Power and Propaganda*, 57.
92 Hunt, “The Governorship,” 207-8, 223; Boardman, *The Early Stewart Kings*, 77; Boardman, “Alexander Stewart, Earl of Buchan,” 12. The earldom of Buchan had been dismantled in 1308 when John Comyn died leaving his two nieces as his heirs. One of his nieces, Alice, married an English lord, Henry Beaumont, who became one of the disinherited, allowing Robert I to dispose of the lands as he pleased. This resulted in Robert Keith, the Marischal’s, receipt of a bulk of the lands. The lands Robert III granted Badenoch included the barony of Kingedward, which comprised most of the northern half of the old earldom of Buchan, allowing Badenoch to assume the title earl of Buchan.
93 Boardman, *The Early Stewart Kings*, 78; Boardman, “Alexander Stewart, Earl of Buchan,” 12-3. This included the lordships of Skye and Lewis, the thanages of Dingwall, Glendowachy, and Deskford, and all the lands of Euphemia Ross in Caithness, Sutherland, Atholl, and Galloway.
despite the fact that it interfered directly with the rights of the other lords of the north.\textsuperscript{94} Badenoch’s successful militarized following demanded a lot of resources which he took from the lands in his control, leading to several disagreements particularly with the bishops of Moray and Aberdeen as the bishops attempted to defend church lands and tenants from the demands of Badenoch.\textsuperscript{95}

The height of Badenoch’s power came in the mid to late 1380s when his brother Carrick accepted Badenoch’s wide ranging lordship in the north of Scotland, including his office of Justiciar North of the Forth.\textsuperscript{96} However, the 1388 Albany/Robert II coup reversed the fortunes of Badenoch, as Albany attempted to exercise the powers of his lieutenancy and do something about the complaints in the Highlands while also expanding and protecting his own interests in the Western Highlands. Albany had Badenoch removed from the position of Justiciar North of the Forth even going as far as to have the general council declare that Badenoch “had been ‘useless to the community’” in his position as he caused so much trouble in the Highlands he could not administer justice properly.\textsuperscript{97} Badenoch was also removed from his position as Justiciar in the Appin of Dull. Murdoch, Albany’s son and heir, thereafter took up both positions.\textsuperscript{98} The removal from these two positions severely diminished Badenoch’s political and judiciary powers.


\textsuperscript{95} Boardman, \textit{The Early Stewart Kings}, 84-5.

\textsuperscript{96} Brown, \textit{Disunited Kingdoms}, 187.

\textsuperscript{97} Boardman, “Alexander Stewart, Earl of Buchan,” 16.

Albany’s use of the regency to eliminate Badenoch can be seen in his arbitration of a dispute between Alexander Bur, bishop of Moray, and John Dunbar, earl of Moray, on 27 October 1389.99 Albany gathered a council and travelled to Inverness to arbitrate the wide ranging dispute between the bishop and earl. Albany’s council on this occasion contained many of his own adherents such as: Sir David Lindsay of Glenesk, Alexander Lindsay of Glenesk, Sir John Swinton, Alan Erskine, Sherriff of Fife, Walter Tulach, Sir George Leslie of Rothes, Sir John Hay, Thomas Sibbald, John Lindsay, and Sir John Ramornie. The Bishop of Moray and the Earl of Moray were in dispute over many issues including jurisdiction over land in Moray, the rights of the bishop versus the earl to some of the earl’s estates and fishing rights, and the fighting and damages wrought by both of their adherents including the murder of David Berclay by the bishop.100 In the arbitration, the earl and bishop agreed to make restitution for the damages they caused to each other and to their adherents and agreed to end their hostilities. As an example, the Earl of Moray promised not to interfere with the bishop’s justice on his lands anymore. Furthermore, all future quarrels were to be referred to Albany as guardian so that he and a council might mediate the dispute and prevent the further escalation of hostilities.101

Albany sought to end the long running dispute not only due to his charge to administer the king’s justice, but also because he required the support of both the Bishop of Moray and the Earl of Moray. Both the Bishop and the Earl of Moray had several grievances with Badenoch.102 A united front between the three could have wide ranging effects on Badenoch’s power. The Bishop of Moray was in a long running dispute with Badenoch due to Badenoch’s forceful

99 Moray Register, 197-203.
100 It is unclear if this David Berclay was related to the Berclays that served as Albany’s squires.
101 Moray Register, 198.
102 Moray Register, 183-91, 196.
imposition of his caterans and their destructive upkeep on church lands.\textsuperscript{103} By bringing the Earl and Bishop of Moray together Albany could more effectively oppose Badenoch in his own area of influence by lessening the effect of his caterans on the lands around Moray. As part of this arbitration, the earl and the bishop agreed to become allies and work against Badenoch. Albany soon after also encouraged Thomas Dunbar, son of the earl of Moray, to enter into a bond with the Bishop of Moray to help protect the church lands from Badenoch, thereby lessening his power.\textsuperscript{104} The settlement of the dispute between these two parties and their subsequent alliance against Badenoch was part of Albany’s plan to undermine Badenoch’s powerbase within and near his own lands of Badenoch and Strathspey. Albany capitalized on the desire of the neighboring magnates to control Badenoch and his powers as regent to solve the problem of Badenoch in the Highlands.

Albany also made headway into Badenoch’s landed domains himself. In 1389, Isabella MacDuff, the former countess of Fife, resigned the baronies of Coule and Oneil near Aberdeen, which Robert II then granted to Albany.\textsuperscript{105} In August 1389, Isabella resigned more of her lands in the Highlands including: the barony of Strathord, with the lands of Strath Braan, Discher, and Toyer, and the islands within Loch of Tay, which also ended up in Albany’s possession.\textsuperscript{106} Albany was further granted the lordship of Fortingall in northern Perthshire. Albany and Murdoch now had territorial and jurisdictional powers in Badenoch’s stronghold.\textsuperscript{107} Initially Isabella MacDuff’s lands brought Albany prestige and the most lucrative earldom in Scotland.

\textsuperscript{103} Boardman, \textit{The Early Stewart Kings}, 170.
\textsuperscript{104} Moray Register, 201-3; Boardman, \textit{The Early Stewart Kings}, 170-1.
\textsuperscript{105} \textit{I. Banff}, vol. 4, 30-1; Stevenson, \textit{Power and Propaganda}, 59. Albany later granted these lands to his son John. These baronies would be the start of Buchan’s northeastern landed domain.
\textsuperscript{106} NRS RH6/196. Isabella MacDuff died in 1389.
\textsuperscript{107} Boardman, \textit{The Early Stewart Kings}, 169; RMS i, App. ii 1744. The Appin of Dull consisted of the western half of the earldom of Atholl including Strath Tay, Fortingall, and Glen Lyon.
but her later land grants aided him in his destruction of his brother while guardian of the kingdom.

In late 1389 Albany intervened in Badenoch’s powerbase in a far more personal manner which also supported his own expansionist interests in the Highlands. Likely with the assistance of Albany, countess Euphemia of Ross complained to the bishop of Moray, already an ally of Albany’s against Badenoch about the state of her marriage to Badenoch and Badenoch’s long-time cohabitation with his mistress and mother of several of his illegitimate children, Mairead inghean Eachann. Likely in this action countess Euphemia sought the return of her lands rather than the return of her husband.\textsuperscript{108} The bishops of St. Andrews and Glasgow received a mandate from the pope to inquire into the marriage of Badenoch and countess Euphemia, curiously on the same day, 9 June 1392, that the dispensation for Murdoch and Isabella of Lennox’s marriage was issued, prompting Boardman to view this as evidence of Albany’s intervention on behalf of the countess of Ross.\textsuperscript{109} Strikingly the mandate states, “They [Badenoch and countess Euphemia] were together only for a short time and the marriage has been the cause of wars, plundering, arson, murders, and many other damages and scandals, and it is likely that more will happen if they remain in this union.”\textsuperscript{110} A further mandate arrived in Scotland dated 5 December 1392 granting a separation of countess Euphemia and Badenoch on the grounds of adultery that Badenoch pursued “to the great peril of his soul, injury to his wife, as well as the grave scandal given to many others.”\textsuperscript{111} Countess Euphemia was granted the separation and restoration of her property. After this time countess Euphemia and her son Alexander were Albany’s guest at


\textsuperscript{110} \textit{Clement VII}, 174.

\textsuperscript{111} \textit{Clement VII}, 181.
Stirling Castle, where she issued a charter to Alexander.\textsuperscript{112} It was likely at this point that Euphemia and Albany’s alliance was cemented if not by the actual marriage of their children Alexander and Isobel then at least the plan to have them wed. The expansion of Albany’s interests into Ross during the period of Badenoch’s downfall and the marriage of Alexander Leslie and Isobel Stewart highlights the methods Albany would use time and again to expand his power while coinciding with his duty to administer justice and defend the realm.

Albany’s increased power as guardian, the marginalization of Carrick, and the death of Robert II, which effectively stripped Badenoch of any royal protection, and created a situation in which Badenoch’s relevance in Scottish politics could be destroyed. Boardman argues that it is at this point that Badenoch “deployed his cateran forces in large-scale raids and attacks on political targets in the Moray coastal plain and the lowlands of Angus,” and became the Wolf of Badenoch.\textsuperscript{113} In light of Albany’s determination to strip his brother of power and replace Badenoch in offices with people loyal to himself, Badenoch’s 1390 attack on Elgin Cathedral has the appearance of a desperate bid to regain power.\textsuperscript{114} As a result of Albany’s attacks both personal and political, Badenoch was effectively reduced to ruling the areas he began in during the 1360s, mainly Badenoch.\textsuperscript{115} When Albany was reconfirmed as guardian in 1390, as his brother Carrick/Robert III was deemed previously incapable of ruling, Badenoch had little left to lose. Badenoch launched his attacks on Moray in May 1390. The burning of the cathedral was

\textsuperscript{112} NLS Flemings of Wigtown, Ch. No. 15821; Boardman, \textit{The Early Stewart Kings}, 179.
\textsuperscript{113} Boardman, “Alexander Stewart, Earl of Buchan,” 16.
\textsuperscript{115} Stevenson, \textit{Power and Propaganda}, 60-1; Boardman, “Alexander Stewart, Earl of Buchan,” 17. Badenoch did retain his title, earl of Buchan, until his death in 1405.
criticised as sacrilege and Albany was able to effectively denounce Badenoch as unfit for rule.\textsuperscript{116} The attacks of Badenoch and his men were used in Albany’s propaganda to demonstrate that Badenoch’s style of lordship was “savage,” and in this particular case sacrilegious as Badenoch was excommunicated for his actions.\textsuperscript{117} From this point forward with the continued incursions both militarily and personally of Albany into the Highlands and with the final blow to his marriage and lands in Ross in 1392, Alexander Stewart, the Wolf of Badenoch, was effectively marginalized in the north of Scotland and reduced to his original lands in Badenoch, Strathspey, and northern Perthshire until his death in early 1405.\textsuperscript{118}

Even with the destruction of Badenoch, Albany did not achieve supreme Highland dominance nor solve the problem of fragmented lordship in the area.\textsuperscript{119} The removal of Badenoch from the scene actually served to heighten the issue, as Alexander MacDonald, lord of Lochaber, was able to move into part of the power vacuum left by Badenoch, particularly in the Great Glen. There were similar complaints about Lochaber and his brother Donald, lord of the Isles, to those made about Badenoch in the previous decades. It is possible that Albany initially supported the advancement of the MacDonalds in the 1390s, but as the MacDonalds further encroached on his own territory, their relationship became strained and collapsed.\textsuperscript{120}

The destruction of Badenoch’s power was one of the central events and displays of power and authority during Albany’s first guardianship, but it was not the only one. On 19 April 1390 the Scottish political community faced an unprecedented event when Robert II died at his castle

\textsuperscript{116} Wyntoun, \textit{Original Chronicle}, vol. 6, 368; Bower, \textit{Scotichronicon}, vol. 7, 447; \textit{Liber Plascadensis}, 252.
\textsuperscript{117} Boardman, “Alexander Stewart, Earl of Buchan,” 18.
\textsuperscript{120} Boardman, “Alexander Stewart, Earl of Buchan,” 19-20. Albany’s relationship with the MacDonalds is further discussed in Chapter 3.
on Dunonald. At this point, Albany was still guardian not just for Robert II but ostensibly for Carrick and his son David as well. Albany performed his duties to the satisfaction of the political community, but the unfortunate timing of Robert II’s death put them all in an awkward position. The heir to the throne was an adult and present in the kingdom, but recently declared incapable of fulfilling the duties of kingship. The events of the summer of 1390 point to some concern over the ability of an incapacitated heir to ascend to the throne. The record of these events, much like the arrest of Robert II, is both lacking and unclear. Bower clearly states Robert II’s death date as 19 April 1390, and Robert III’s coronation as 14 August 1390.121 Robert III’s coronation was delayed almost four months, an occurrence that neither Wyntoun nor Bower see fit to discuss. Wyntoun and Bower, although aware of the time between the dates, merge them together into an impossible chronology stating that Robert III was crowned the day after Robert II’s burial despite the four month difference in the dates.122 The death and coronation dates as four months apart are corroborated by MS Fairfax 23 which also adds the date of Robert II’s burial at Scone as 25 April 1390.123 Boardman argues that Wyntoun and Bower directly manipulated or omitted the delay in an attempt to smooth over the events of the summer.124

Why did this delay and manipulation occur? Surely an assembly of the nobles could be called in order to crown the new king, particularly as so many were likely present for Robert II’s funeral. One plausible theory is that there was some consideration of bypassing Carrick and his son in the succession in favour of Albany.125 Albany had proven himself capable of handling the duties of kingship as a soldier, diplomat, and acceptable face or focus of loyalty for the Stewart

121 Boardman, “Coronations, Kings and Guardians,” 112; Bower, Scotichronicon, vol. 7, 412-3; Bower, Scotichronicon, vol. 8, 3.
123 MS Fairfax, folio 117.
125 Boardman, “Coronations, Kings and Guardians,” 114-5.
dynasty during his guardianship. Albany also, as was vitally important in 1373 when the succession entail was drawn up, had several sons. His eldest son, Murdoch, was already an adult with political and administrative experience, and Albany had at least one more son from his second marriage, John, about ten years old. Carrick at this point still only had one son, David, a boy of twelve. While likely not as important a factor as Albany’s successful political career, his fertile line probably had the appeal of more stability than Carrick’s struggling one.

There is some evidence of political turmoil in the summer of 1390. Dauvit Broun has theorized that a version of Fordun’s *Chronica Gentis Scotorum* compiled in St. Andrews between 1388 and 1405 changed the birth date of the earlier king of Scots, William the Lion (1142-1214) to portray him as the younger brother of David, earl of Huntingdon (1152-1219), possibly to provide a precedent for a younger son inheriting the throne over an elder one. This raises the question as to whether or not the chronicle was manipulated to justify bypassing Carrick’s rights in favour of Albany. Albany was reconfirmed as guardian in April, before Robert III’s coronation, implying that early on the political community deemed Robert III unfit to rule and in need of a regent, once again making use of the corporate nature of monarchy. Furthermore, Carrick changed his name to Robert supposedly upon his ascension to the throne. There is not any clear reason as to why this name change occurred. Perhaps it was because the name John was considered to be unlucky. Also there was the problem of whether or not Carrick should be titled John I or John II—due to the contested nature of John Balliol’s kingship during the Wars of Independence. Three pieces of royal business were conducted in the name of

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126 Albany had two more sons with Murielle Keith, Robert and Andrew. Likely both had been born by 1390, but their birth dates are unknown.
128 Boardman, “Coronations, Kings and Guardians,” 115-6. The name John was considered unlucky as King John II of France had been a prisoner of the English after the Battle of Poitiers. Furthermore, King John Balliol of Scotland had been stripped of his kingship by Edward I during the Wars of Independence.
Robert III before his coronation between late May and late July.\textsuperscript{129} This means the name change was intended from the start, and it is possible as Boardman argues that the adoption of a royal name provided the separation between the king’s two bodies, and therefore denied Robert III his personal rule but still continued the rightful dynastic line while also legitimizing Albany’s guardianship.\textsuperscript{130} A possibility not discussed heavily by Boardman is the support Albany or David may have had to take the throne. The political community may have seriously considered this in 1390 or later given the wide date range of Broun’s proposed compilation, or perhaps they considered bypassing Carrick in favour of his son David. David was still a minor and would need a regent, likely his uncle Albany. Perhaps the political community would favour Albany over a king who could not fulfill the duties of kingship. If Broun’s theory on the manipulation of Fordun is correct then there may have been some time dedicated to research of this particular occurrence in Scottish history at St. Andrews or an attempt on the part of Albany to establish a precedent thereby accounting for the delay in the coronation.

There appears to be no clear or singular reason for the four month delay and Carrick’s change of name. John may have been an ill-omened name, but that hardly seems like a reason to change the name of a man in his mid-fifties. Carrick had carried on a semi-successful (until recently) career under the name John. Furthermore, there were quite a few other traditional Scottish monarch names available to him. A name such as Malcolm or Alexander would have

\textsuperscript{129} Boardman, “Coronations, Kings and Guardians,” 115-6. As cited by Boardman he following documents appeared under Robert III in the summer of 1390: A privy seal document from 20 May 1390 for John Stewart of Auchingowan Strathclyde Regional Archives, Mitchell Library, Shaw Stewarts of Ardgowan, T-Ard 1/6/11/1; Robert III confirmed the truce of Leulingham on 16 July 1390 \textit{CDS}, iv. 416; and Robert III issued a charter on 23 July 1390 \textit{RMS} i. 802. Boardman also draws attention to the escapades of Badenoch during the summer of 1390 when he infamously burned Elgin Cathedral positing that this event while still connected to local and regional animosities, may also have been in opposition to whatever settlement was reached about the fate of John, earl of Carrick. Was Badenoch only protesting Albany’s continued guardianship or was he protesting a far more troubling idea of making Albany king and rising in some ways to the defense of his eldest brother?

\textsuperscript{130} Boardman, “Coronations, Kings and Guardians,” 116-117. For more information on the political theory of the King’s two bodies see Kantorowicz, \textit{The King’s Two Bodies}. 
tied him more securely to the preceding Canmore dynasty. David would have connected Carrick with the pious king David I, provided a link with his son’s presumed future kingship, and honoured David II who considered Carrick rather than the Steward his ultimate heir. The name Robert indicated a continuation of the rule under his father and reminded people of the heroic king Robert Bruce, Carrick’s great-grandfather. It could also indicate a brief but ultimately unsuccessful tenure of Albany as king. While undoubtedly more competent than his brother Carrick, a full bypassing of the rights of the heir to the throne and his son would likely have been an unpopular move. In line with the conservative nature of Scottish political thought, the Scots might depose a king, but they put the rightful heir in his place. It was one matter to make use of a regency position and the corporate monarchy but another to effectively depose a king. It may have been possible to bypass Carrick for Albany if not for the existence of his son David. It seems to be David’s rights to the throne of Scotland that were more consistently held up than Robert III’s own.

David’s rights were firmly upheld in the December 1388 Parliament that named Albany guardian. Albany was only to remain guardian until Carrick/Robert III recovered or David came of age. Karen Hunt and Linda Day have both convincingly argued that Albany stepped down from the guardianship sometime in 1392/3 when David came of age at fourteen. David at the age of fourteen would not have been considered fully able to rule, despite the recent precedent of

131 Penman, David II, 113.
133 RPS, 1388/12/1.
Richard II’s minority ending at fourteen in England.\textsuperscript{135} David did, however, take a more active role in governance and promotion of the royal Stewart line from this point. Robert III attempted to establish David as the center of loyalty for the dynasty by building a retinue for his son. There was no official end to Albany’s guardianship, but at some point in 1392/3 Albany simply stopped appearing as guardian. There is not a record of Albany receiving his 1,000 mark payment for the role of guardian from 1392 until he was reinstated after the death of the duke of Rothesay in 1403.\textsuperscript{136} Albany was compensated for his loss of the guardian’s pension and position with other gifts. Around the time Albany stepped down as guardian, both Albany and his son started to receive payments as part of David’s retinue.\textsuperscript{137} It was also around this time that Murdoch married Isabella of Lennox, which resulted in the entailment of the earldom of Lennox on the couple and their heirs adding to the Albany Stewart landed domains.\textsuperscript{138}

As Albany did not continue as guardian and David did not immediately step into the position of lieutenant upon legal maturity, the assumption logically therefore is that Robert III ruled himself from 1392/3 until his son took over as lieutenant in 1399. Robert III’s personal reign should not be read as a defeat of Albany, but rather a natural conclusion of Albany’s office as guardian. Albany was not shut out of Robert III’s government and continued to appear as a regular witness to the king’s charters, remained in his position as Chamberlain, and was part of Rothesay’s lieutenancy council. The governance of the kingdom was too large a job for just the king, and indeed a king considered by the political community to be infirm. The royal Stewarts’ reliance on Albany, who had proven himself capable of handling the job, should not be viewed

\textsuperscript{135} Saul, Richard II, 6-23. Richard II’s minority was ruled by a “continual council.”
\textsuperscript{136} ER, iii, (1389) 698, 703, 701, (1390) 238, (1391) 276, 280, (1392) 312, 317, (1403) 566, 589.
\textsuperscript{138} NRS GD220/2/1/33; Day, “David, Duke of Rothesay,” 182.
only in terms of the king’s inability and the heir’s immaturity. A whole and healthy king would still need the rest of the family to help, especially a king with so few sons. The positions Albany filled during the reigns of both Robert II and Robert III were in keeping with the wider trends in European power when the king was considered incapable of ruling. They also adhered to the corporate understanding of monarchy as Albany still had a role in the daily governance of the kingdom in his capacity as Chamberlain and counsellor.

Ducal Creation

Robert III recognized Albany’s prominent place in governance but also the royal family in 1398 when he elevated his brother to the ducal rank alongside his son David. Robert III created the dukedom of Rothesay for his heir and the dukedom of Albany for his brother. The titles were largely honorific and not attached to any particular lands.139 This was not unusual. As Grant’s study of the higher nobility in Scotland during the early Stewart period explains, there was a shift during this period from the traditional territorial lordships to the personal ones with distinctive and honorary titles.140 This change would culminate in the mid-fifteenth century with the creation of the lords of the Parliament. Lordships in essence were no longer necessarily tied to specific landed domains, but rather the honorific lordships became the norm.141 The titles were symbolic, but denoted a separation in status between the princes of the royal house and the higher nobility.142 Rothesay was the ancestral home of the Stewarts, and Albany or Alba was the name for Scotland North of the Forth, the pre-existing landed power bases of each new duke.

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139 Albany’s earldoms of Fife and Menteith did not become a single entity the Duchy of Albany, rather they remained as they had always been separate entities. Grant, “The Higher Nobility in Scotland,” 51-2; Stevenson, Power and Propaganda, 63.

140 Grant, “The Higher Nobility in Scotland,” 41. For a full discussion of this change see chapter 2 of Grant’s work.

141 Grant states that by 1371, the earldom of Fife as acquired by Albany was already likely not a contiguous lordship, but rather the lands were scattered throughout the sheriffdom of Fife with baronies unconnected to the original earldom. Grant, “The Higher Nobility in Scotland,” 47, 56.

142 Stevenson, Power and Propaganda, 65.
Albany’s new title may have been a direct attempt to tap into Gaelic connections based on Albany’s western Highland regional base during a period of direct conflict with the lord of the Isles. Boardman states, “Albany’s title expressed the duke’s aspiration to regional lordship over the area north of the Clyde in a way which was acceptable and understandable to the duke’s allies and adherents in the Gaelic society of the south-western Highlands.” This was not the first time the Stewarts encouraged a Gaelic association with the monarchy. The Stewarts were originally an Anglo-Norman family who came to Scotland during the reign of David I (r.1124-1153). The Stewart family consciously created a tie with the Gaelic areas their lands were in through actions such as devotion and encouragement of the cult of St. Brendan on the Isle of Bute. Many of Robert II’s most loyal men were from his lands in Gaelic speaking areas. Albany, much more so than either Robert III or Rothesay, could claim a continuation of investment in Gaelic Scotland, particularly after he partially absorbed Badenoch’s power base in the Highlands. Albany and his sons were not strangers to the men of the borders and Lothian, but their personal landed interests remained in the Highlands. This may have originally been a deliberate strategy begun by Robert II to have a son with influence in all areas of the kingdom, placing his heir in power in the Lowlands and his spares in the Highlands.

Likely the Stewarts were in this case also keeping up with the trends around Europe. The title duke had long been in use in some places on continental Europe such as France, but the first use of it in the British Isles occurred during the reign of Edward III. In 1337 Edward III created his first-born son, later better known as Edward the Black Prince, the duke of Cornwall. This

143 Boardman, The Early Stewart Kings, 185, 207.
144 Steve Boardman, “The Gaelic World and the Early Stewart Court,” in Miorun Mor Nan Gall, The Great Ill-Will of the Lowlander? ed. Dauvit Broun and Martin MacGregor (Glasgow: Glasgow University Press, 2007), 84-86; Stevenson, Power and Propaganda, 64.
145 Even John’s earldom of Buchan and later Ross were traditional Gaelic strongholds.
elevation originally set Edward apart from the rest of the nobility as he was the only duke in England.\(^{146}\) Edward III elevated two more men to the status of duke. The first was his good friend, cousin, and one of the most prominent nobles in England, Henry of Grosmont, who became duke of Lancaster in 1351. The second ducal title came about in 1362 when Edward III created the duchy of Clarence for his son Lionel. Edward III’s third son John of Gaunt also became a duke when he inherited the dukedom of Lancaster through his wife. Edward III’s creation of these dukedoms likely had to do with the particular nobles roles in international affairs. The title duke symbolized their place in the royal family and gave them equal standing with their continental counterparts, particularly in France and Castile.\(^{147}\) The same idea was likely true with the creation of the dukedoms of Albany and Rothesay. Both Albany and Rothesay were the leading members of the royal family behind the king, and had frequent roles in both Anglo-Scottish and Anglo-French negotiations.\(^{148}\) Their new ducal titles put them on par with their contemporaries and symbolized their roles in the royal family and the corporate monarchy.

The ducal ceremonies displayed all the pomp and circumstance the Stewart dynasty could muster. Robert III invested the new dukes at Scone Abbey, the traditional inauguration place of Scottish kings, and the mass was celebrated by Walter Trail, bishop of St. Andrews.\(^{149}\) The new royal dukes were outfitted in fur trimmed robes, and the ceremony reportedly lasted for fifteen days.\(^{150}\) Likely the fifteen days contained all manner of celebrations such as feasts or jousts, a

\(^{146}\) Chris Given-Wilson, *The English Nobility in the Late Middle Ages* (London: Routledge, 1997), 45.
\(^{147}\) Given-Wilson, *The English Nobility*, 45-6.
\(^{148}\) Boardman, *The Early Stewart Kings*, 207.
\(^{150}\) Moray Register, 382; Liber Pluscardensis, 254; Bower, *Scotichronicon*, vol. 8, 13; Wyntoun, *Original Chronicle*, vol. 6, 383-4.
favourite past time of Rothesay, although unfortunately no record of the events remains outside of the brief chronicle accounts of the ceremony itself. The elevation of Rothesay and Albany was likely an attempt to reassert royal authority and dignity for Robert III’s reign.¹⁵¹ Indeed a two week celebration must have portrayed a sense of royal majesty on the part of Robert III missing since his coronation. The investiture was also an open acknowledgement of the importance Albany had to the Stewart monarchs. He was integral to the daily governance of the kingdom and he alone of his brothers and the wider nobility received a dukedom alongside the heir to the throne. This may have again been an attempt on the part of the monarch to heighten the prestige of the royal family widely, in the same way the acquisition of Fife was. The duke of Albany and the duke of Rothesay were unquestionably the foremost princes and nobles in the land.

Rothesay Lieutenancy and Murder

After Albany stepped down from the guardianship in 1392/3, Albany and Murdoch continued in their respective roles as Chamberlain and Justiciar North of the Forth. As Rothesay matured he played a larger part in governance as expected of the heir to the throne. He witnessed his father’s charters, participated in March Day negotiations, and ultimately consolidated his power in a lieutenancy for his father in 1399.¹⁵² In 1399, Robert III found himself in the same position as his father fifteen years before when he was sidelined in the daily governance of the kingdom by his own heir. Likely Rothesay’s appointment came about due to a coalition between Rothesay, Albany, the earl of Douglas, and Queen Annabella. By 1399 it was clear that Robert III was not capable of fulfilling the duties of kingship. The north of Scotland was still in disarray

with the ever present power vacuum and the incursions onto the mainland of the lord of the Isles and his brother Alexander, lord of Lochaber.\footnote{Brown, \textit{Disunited Kingdoms}, 229; Boardman, \textit{The Early Stewart Kings}, 209-11, 224.} This situation led to a military expedition captained by Rothesay and Albany against the lord of the Isles in 1398, but the expedition achieved limited results.\footnote{See Chapter 3 for a fuller discussion.} The situation in the north of the kingdom did result in complaints about the ineffectiveness of royal government and the administration of justice under Robert III. Boardman describes Robert III’s personal rule as his “contributions to the governance of the realm, undoubtedly restricted by illness, seems to have involved long spells of relative inactivity broken by occasional and usually ineffective bursts of aggression.”\footnote{Boardman, \textit{The Early Stewart Kings}, 211-4.} It seems that Robert III never fully recovered from his 1388 accident, and much like Charles VI’s uncles and brother in France, the extended royal family including Albany and Rothesay decided the king could no longer rule personally.

In November 1398, Albany, Rothesay, and other members of the political community such as Walter, bishop of St. Andrews, Murdoch, and Archibald, third earl of Douglas, met at Falkland to discuss what was to be done about the king.\footnote{Boardman, \textit{The Early Stewart Kings}, 214.} The end result of the meeting was that Albany put his political weight behind Rothesay to take the lieutenancy and rule for his father. The results of this meeting did not manifest themselves until the January 1399 General Council meeting in Perth, when Rothesay officially assumed power.\footnote{\textit{RPS}, 1399/1/3; Boardman, \textit{The Early Stewart Kings}, 214-5.} While Rothesay’s lieutenancy, like Carrick’s, started with the heir to the throne seizing power under the excuse of lax governance, it seems Rothesay did not learn from his father’s mistakes to not overstep his bounds and power.
Rothesay’s appointment as lieutenant was much more expansive than the appointments of Carrick and Albany, suggesting a real concern in the political community about the misgovernance of Robert III. Rothesay’s appointment was set for three years and he had the “full power and commission of the king.” Stevenson has suggested the elevation of Rothesay to a dukedom allowed “a creative constitutional rearrangement of the government of the kingdom and allowed for Rothesay to proceed through the rituals of kingship of the Scots, without needing to depose the rightful king.” Like Albany, Rothesay as a “prince of the blood” could exercise the rights and duties of kingship, without the unpleasantness of formally deposing his father.

While a large part of the text of the appointment focused on the administration of justice, a constant problem, the wording used made it clear that this lieutenant’s powers went well beyond previous appointments as Rothesay was to

fulfil after his ability all the things that the king at his crowning was sworn to do for the Holy Kirk and the people, since he is to bear the king's power in these things, that is to say to keep the freedom and right of the kirk undiminished, to cause the laws and loveable customs to be kept for the people, to restrain and punish manslayers, robbers, burners and all misdoers generally through strength, and especially to restrain at the request of the kirk cursed men, heretics and [people] excluded from the kirk. And that the king be obliged that he shall not hinder [the duke's] office nor the execution of it by any countermandments as sometimes has been seen; and if anything is done contrary to these letters or in any other way through our lord the king's bidding, that countermandment will be of no value or effect, and the aforesaid lieutenant not held to answer such countermandments, and excused for not doing his office by virtue of them.

In essence, this appointment stripped Robert III of his power and authority for three years.

Robert III was king in name only. Both Albany and Carrick’s appointments afforded them a great amount of power, and sidelined the reigning king, but they still answered to king and council for any misdeeds. Rothesay did not have to heed the king. Robert III lost his authority to

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158 RPS, 1399/1/3.
159 Stevenson, Power and Propaganda, 66.
160 Brown, “‘I have thus slain a tyrant,’” 40-1.
161 RPS, 1399/1/3
override the lieutenant. He ruled with the assistance of the General Council or in their absence a council of twenty-one “wise men,” including Albany, Douglas, the bishops of St. Andrews, Glasgow, and Aberdeen. The use of a council was not unusual and was considered part of good rulership.\textsuperscript{162} Kings had councils throughout the Middle Ages. Albany, Carrick, and previous guardians and lieutenants were subject to the approval of a council, and the Catholic Church and Europe generally were in the midst of the conciliar movement. Usually the limitation on the lieutenants and guardians was that the lieutenant/guardian had to perform their duties to the satisfaction of the king and council. In Rothesay’s commission as lieutenant the oversight of the king was removed. While Albany and Rothesay orchestrated this power transfer, the scope of Rothesay’s power suggests that the political community lost their faith in Robert III’s ability to fulfill the duties of kingship possibly due to the ongoing effects of his 1388 accident.

Rothesay discharged part of his office well. For instance, there was a flurry of legislation in 1401 concerning all manner of subjects from land appeals to the rights of widows to the killing of salmon.\textsuperscript{163} However, the situation deteriorated quickly due in part to external events but also to Rothesay’s behaviour. The 1399 deposition of Richard II of England by his cousin Henry Bolingbroke, later Henry IV, impacted affairs in Scotland.\textsuperscript{164} Robert III initially refused to recognize Henry IV’s kingship. Scottish border magnates took advantage of the chaos in England caused by the rebellion of Henry Bolingbroke to mount large scale border raids, despite the current Anglo-Scottish truce, culminating eventually in Henry IV’s attack on Scotland in 1400. Matters were further aggrieved by Rothesay’s marriage misadventures. In 1397 the king and the

\textsuperscript{162} Black, \textit{Political Thought in Europe}, 156-161.
\textsuperscript{163} RPS, 1401/2/1-15.
earl of March agreed that Rothesay would marry Elizabeth Dunbar, but by early 1400 Rothesay had backed out of the agreement and repudiated Elizabeth for Mary Douglas, daughter of the earl of Douglas. Robert III declined to make Rothesay reconsider the union with Elizabeth or pay back the dowry money, causing Dunbar to threaten the king. In summer 1400 Dunbar, enraged on this account and no doubt other grievances such as Douglas’s seizure of Dunbar Castle and Douglas’s doubled pension as keeper of Edinburgh Castle, allied himself with Henry IV who took this as an excellent opening to invade Scotland. It seems likely that Albany did not agree with the actions of his nephew (both in regards to the marriages and treatment of March), and saw the subsequent English invasion as Rothesay’s fault. Albany declined to aid Rothesay when Henry IV laid siege to Edinburgh Castle, although Albany also likely did not want to risk a pitched battle with the English. While the English invasion was short lived and Henry IV left with little to show for it, Rothesay’s lieutenancy did not improve from there.

Rothesay’s power, like that of his father’s in 1388, was weakened by ill-timed deaths. 1401 brought the deaths of three of Rothesay’s biggest supports and, if the chroniclers are correct, restrainers of some of his worse impulses: Queen Annabella, Walter Trail, bishop of St. Andrews, and Rothesay’s father-in-law Archibald, third earl of Douglas. From here on Rothesay’s behavior became more independent, belligerent, and at times fool-hardy. As Boardman succinctly states, “Rothesay simply ignored his father’s court and Albany’s allies on

166 Boardman, *The Early Stewart Kings*, 227-8; Bower, *Scotichronicon* vol. 8, 30-3. The chronicle accounts place emphasis on the repudiation of Elizabeth as the reason for March’s defection. While undoubtedly annoying there was likely something more to it, possibly the near constant favouritism shown towards the Douglas earls by the Stewarts. Later chroniclers such as George Buchanan state that Albany played a part in Rothesay’s change of prospective wives, saying Albany manipulated the Three Estates to bring this about. Buchanan, *The History of Scotland*, 67.
the council, and began to behave like the king he expected to become.”\textsuperscript{168} Rothesay forcibly and violently took money from burgh customs and ignored his council. The tipping point came in late 1401 when Rothesay attempted to seize the Palace of St. Andrews temporarily vacant after the death of Walter Trail. Rothesay was captured en route to the castle and briefly imprisoned there on Albany’s orders. After a hasty meeting at Culross with some of the leading magnates including the earl of Douglas, Rothesay was transported to Albany’s castle of Falkland where he died on 26 March 1402 either, as the official record reads, of divine providence or, as the rumors had it, of starvation.\textsuperscript{169} Wyntoun and Bower omit any guilt for Albany, and Bower even stresses that Rothesay was imprisoned by Albany on Robert III’s orders. However, later writers and chroniclers like Shirley, Buchanan, and Boece do not hesitate to lay the blame squarely on Albany. Shirley in particular details that Rothesay was left to starve in the dungeons of Falkland, but while he blames and condemns Albany for Rothesay’s death he does also justify it through detailing Rothesay’s personal failings.\textsuperscript{170} Although most chroniclers do also depict Rothesay as a tyrant and somewhat justify his deposition, the chroniclers of the sixteenth century firmly tied Albany’s guilt in the Rothesay murder to his desire for the throne.\textsuperscript{171}

It seems strange that if Albany killed his nephew in cold blood as later chroniclers attest because Rothesay like Richard II was considered “too dangerous to be allowed to live,” he was never charged with treason.\textsuperscript{172} On 16 May 1402 Robert III issued letters stating that both Albany

\textsuperscript{168} Boardman, The Early Stewart Kings, 235.

\textsuperscript{169} RPS, 1402/5/1; Bower, Scotichronicon vol. 8, 39; Boardman, The Early Stewart Kings, 241-2.

\textsuperscript{170} Brown, “‘I have thus slain a tyrant,’” 41.

\textsuperscript{171} Shirley, “The Deth,” 49; Major, A History of Greater Britain, 345; Boece, The Chronicles of Scotland, 370-1, 480, 489; Buchanan, The History of Scotland, 69-76. Steve Boardman fully details the contradictory reputation of Rothesay that emerged in the wake of his death. In some sources Rothesay was portrayed as a tyrant and in others he was portrayed as a martyr. Steve Boardman, “A Saintly Sinner? The ‘Martyrdom’ of David, Duke of Rothesay,” in The Cult of Saints and the Virgin Mary in Medieval Scotland, ed. Steve Boardman and Eila Williamson, 87-104 (Woodbridge: Boydell Press, 2010).

\textsuperscript{172} Boardman, The Early Stewart Kings, 244; Brown, Disunited Kingdoms, 95; Chris Given-Wilson, “Rank and Status Among the English nobility, c. 1300-1500,” in Princely Rank in Late Medieval Europe: Trodden Paths and
and Douglas were examined and investigated but found them not guilty in Rothesay’s death, although all freely admitted to Rothesay’s imprisonment. Furthermore, Albany was reinstated as guardian/lieutenant soon after. Albany’s re-instatement as lieutenant indicates that the political community had lost confidence in Robert III’s ability to carry out the duties of kingship, and it highlights the level of power and influence Albany held in Scotland. Linda Day posits that the reason Albany did not suffer any repercussion for the Rothesay’s death was that Albany arrested Rothesay because Rothesay planned to take the throne from his father, but was prevented by Albany. Most of the evidence for this theory is negative evidence, the lack of initial reasoning for the seizure of Rothesay mentioned in official letters from Robert III, the silence of Wyntoun, the lack of blame from Bower, and finally Albany’s continued political ascendancy. The imprisonment of Robert II by Carrick was likely one of the downfalls of his lieutenancy. Could it be that Robert III’s son did not learn from his father’s mistakes, and Albany served once again as a check on the power of the heir to the throne? Unfortunately, the record for 1402 is about as devoid of detail as that of 1388, so likely the answer will never be clear.

Albany likely facilitated the death of his nephew; whether or not that was his intention from the initial arrest of Rothesay or a crime of opportunity remains unknown. For the purposes here what matters in the wake of Rothesay’s death is Albany’s continued political survival.
Clearly any opposition to Albany’s innocence while murmured about did not gain traction. Bower notes that in the immediate aftermath there were rumours that Albany starved Rothesay.\textsuperscript{176} However, any opposition to Albany and Douglas’ innocence in Rothesay’s death would have had to face the combined weight of the Albany Stewart and Douglas influence. During his own lifetime, Albany’s guilt was not enough of a reason to remove him from power. This was also likely because Albany was recognized as the most capable and acceptable of Robert II’s sons as ruler of the kingdom.\textsuperscript{177} Robert III was deemed unable to fulfill the duties of kingship before he even took the crown, and with the death of Rothesay that left a seven year old boy, James, as heir to the throne. There was clearly some debate over the succession in 1390 although the full nature of the debate remains lost. Perhaps there was an abiding notion that Albany would have been the better choice and the kingdom would not have been subject to so many disasters. According to the letters issued by Robert III, Albany and Douglas claimed to work for the common good in the case of Rothesay.\textsuperscript{178} There was not enough evidence of their guilt to fully condemn them. Albany and Douglas were not charged with murder, nor did they suffer any ill effects from the whole affair. Indeed, Albany was reinstated as lieutenant of the kingdom by 1403 indicating once again that the corporate monarchy was needed to rectify the situation of a king unable to fulfill the duties of kingship.

The death of Rothesay is the most commonly used example of Albany’s ambition to take the throne from his brother and his family. While the murder of the heir to the throne is a heinous crime, it is not in itself usurpation; however, these two crimes are often conflated in discussions of Albany’s career. Historians have discussed the conservative nature of the Scottish political

\textsuperscript{176} Bower, \textit{Scotichronicon}, vol. 8, 37-41.
\textsuperscript{177} Stevenson, \textit{Power and Propaganda}, 66.
\textsuperscript{178} RPS, 1402/5/1.; Brown, “‘I have thus slain a tyrant,” 42.
community, due in part to the dynastic uncertainties of the thirteenth century and the continued Anglo-Scottish conflict of the fourteenth century.\textsuperscript{179} Michael Brown in particular has detailed that there was a clear understanding of theories of resistance to tyranny in late fourteenth- and early fifteenth-century Scotland that resulted in the palace coups, although not formal deposition as discussed above.\textsuperscript{180} However, while there were assassinations of Scottish kings, namely James I and James III, and periods in which the king was deemed incapable of ruling, Robert II and Robert III, there was little attempt after the Second War of Independence to replace the ruling house. Even the Second Wars of Independence cannot be fully considered an internal struggle as the Balliol faction found support in Edward III of England. Prior to the 1480s with the rebellion of Alexander Stewart, duke of Albany and brother of James III, there was no known full scale attempt to unseat the reigning king and inaugurate a different line after the 1330s with Edward Balliol.\textsuperscript{181} Even the assassination of James I did not result in a change of ruling family as his son still succeeded him as James II. Alexander, duke of Albany’s, rebellion, which included many other disaffected nobles, was the first full-scale attempt to unseat a reigning king with the intent of replacing him with someone other than his direct heir since the Second War of Independence.

In Albany’s case, the murder of the heir to the throne does not necessarily indicate a usurpation attempt. Competition within the family of the monarch does not equate to usurpation. As Brown discusses, the murder of Rothesay was dangerously close to regicide, but Rothesay was still not king.\textsuperscript{182} Albany and Douglas both claimed to work for the common good and contemporary accounts such as Bower follow the likely Albany propaganda line that Rothesay’s

\textsuperscript{179} Mason, “Kingship, Tyranny and the Right to Resist,” 125–51; Boardman, “Coronations, Kings and Guardians, 1371-1406;” Wormald, “National Pride, Decentralised Nation.”


\textsuperscript{181} Mason, “Kingship, Tyranny and the Right to Resist,” 126.

\textsuperscript{182} Brown, “‘I have thus slain a tyrant,’” 41.
downfall was brought on by his own immoderate behaviour or tyranny. The portrayal of the victim as a tyrant and the murderer as an agent working for the common good were rhetorical themes that justified the murder and coups against rulers. For instance, Shirley used the tyranny of James I to justify James I’s assassination at the hands of Robert Graham and his associates. Equally, Henry IV used Richard II’s tyranny as a justification for his deposition, and John the Fearless, duke of Burgundy, also used the justification of resisting tyranny and the common good in the aftermath of the murder of his political rival Louis, duke of Orleans. Albany was most likely guilty of homicide and subsequently justifying it, but he was not guilty of usurping the throne. Perhaps Albany’s reputation has come to suffer not from the act of murder but rather from conflating the crime with usurpation. Many historians both past and present seem to have little doubt that the primary motive behind the murder of Rothesay was Albany’s designs on the throne of Scotland; however, after the Rothesay murder Albany never made a move to take the Scottish throne. Albany did justify his actions to the political community and claimed to work for the common good, but he did not attempt to unseat his brother. The murder of Rothesay is also not tenable as usurpation as it cannot be proven that Albany killed his nephew with the

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183 RPS, 1402/5/1; Bower, Scotichronicon, vol. 8, 37-41.
185 Boece, The Chronicles of Scotland, vol. 2; Major, A History of Greater Britain; Buchanan, The History of Scotland.; William Robertson, The History of Scotland, (Perth: R. Morison and Son, 1793); John Pinkerton, The History of Scotland, (London, 1797); E. W. M. Balfour-Melville, James I, King of Scotland 1406-1437, (London, Methuen & Co., 1936); William Dickinson, Scotland from the Earliest Times to 1603, ed. A. A. M. Duncan, (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1977); Nicholson, The Later Middle Ages. The entire narrative is constructed around Albany’s desire to rule the kingdom. Questions never satisfactorily answered for this narrative include: Is the murder of the heir to the throne treason? If so, why was Albany never tried for treason? If usurpation was the primary motive where was the subsequent move on the throne?
186 Brown, “‘I have thus slain a tyrant,’” 42-3.
intent of taking the throne, rather than simply removing a threat of tyranny from the kingdom. In the end Robert III acquitted Albany of any suspicion in the death of Rothesay and Albany continued on in the same positions as he filled before. He was even regarded well enough by the political community to be installed as lieutenant, while Robert III was still considered incapable of ruling. For the remainder of Robert III’s reign Albany continued to act as the head of the Scottish government and face of royal power and focus of loyalty in Scotland.

*Governorship 1406-1420*

Further tragedy befell the main Stewart line in 1406, when James, the heir to the throne, was captured by English pirates and imprisoned by the king of England Henry IV. After the death of Rothesay, Robert III began promoting and securing the place of his last surviving male heir, then aged about eight years old. Robert III invested James with all the lands and titles later customarily held by the heir to the Scottish throne, such as the earldom of Carrick and the title Steward of Scotland. The king also began to build his affinity in the south of Scotland to promote its allegiance to James in order to further secure loyalty to the Stewart dynasty. By early 1405 James was in the keeping of Henry Wardlaw, bishop of St. Andrews. The men surrounding James in this period were largely men with influence in the Scottish Marches such as David Fleming of Biggar and Cumbernauld and Henry Sinclair, earl of Orkney. In early 1406 James passed into the care of David Fleming and accompanied Fleming and his men as a symbol of royal power to aid in a military campaign in Lothian where Fleming and his men were in conflict with the Douglases. The two sides met on Long Hermiston Moor on 14 February at which point Fleming was killed. James and Orkney had remained behind at the Bass Rock once battle was

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James and Orkney boarded a ship, the *Maryenknecht*, bound for France, but were captured by English pirates on the way. Thereafter James was given to Henry IV, and remained in England for the next eighteen years. Shortly after hearing this news, Robert III died on 4 April 1406.\footnote{Brown, *James I*, 16-7. Brown has refuted the idea that James was going to be sent to France for his safe keeping away from Albany, rather it was to get him away from the political turmoil caused by Fleming’s actions.}

James, as Robert III’s last surviving son, inherited the Scottish throne; however, he could not exercise his kingship while imprisoned in England and still a minor. Likely the Scots did not envision such a prolonged captivity for their king, but in his absence, someone had to rule the kingdom. The only record of Albany’s 1406 appointment as governor comes from Wyntoun and a single reference in the burgh records of Aberdeen. However, there did not seem to be much hesitation on the part of the political community in creating Albany governor.\footnote{Brown, *James I*, 17; Bower, *Scotichronicon* vol. 8, 63.} Aside from a conflict with the lord of the Isles which cannot really be confined to the period of the governorship, there seems to have been little wide spread internal opposition to the leadership of Albany during the captivity of James I.\footnote{Wyntoun, *Original Chronicle*, vol. 6, 416-7; RPS, A1406/1.} So little opposition was there, that the governorship automatically transferred to Murdoch upon Albany’s death in 1420. The choice of both Murdoch and Albany as governor seems natural given the fact that they were the eldest and leading male members of the Stewart family living in Scotland. Their fulfilment of this role is evidence of the ready use of the corporate monarchy by the Stewarts. In addition, Albany spent many years cultivating and building his image as the ideal guardian and possible alternative to the reigning kings. He had spent much of the previous two decades discharging the duties of kingship for his father and brother. There is not much evidence to suggest before Walter of Lennox’s imprudent
actions of 1423/4 that the Albany Stewarts seriously considered staging a coup and taking the
throne for themselves, but they certainly represented an alternative to the direct line of kings, a
competent and watchful heir presumptive ready to step in when needed.192

It does not seem necessary to debate again here whether or not Albany was a good
governor. Karen Hunt’s evaluation thoroughly covered this topic.193 Albany can now be
generally regarded as an able politician who energetically discharged his duties in both
administration and defense of the realm, two of the main duties of kingship assigned to regents in
Scotland.194 Furthermore, Alexander Grant proved that far from bankrupting the Scottish
government, Albany largely financed the government during his governorship through his own
private funds. Although the Exchequer Rolls record a deficit, most of the money was actually
owed to Albany himself, as he often did not collect his fee as governor.195 Albany’s supposed
assumption of the governorship as an outlet for his royal ambitions and neglect of the imprisoned
King James I have also been largely disproven or at least tempered. In addition to the numerous
negotiation attempts, the freedom of James I depended as much if not more on the dispositions of
Henry IV and Henry V and the state of English politics as on Albany.196 The eventual release of
James I during the early years of the minority of Henry VI is a telling sign of the dispositions of
Henry IV and Henry V as adult rulers opposed to giving up their power over Scotland by holding
the king. Henry V in particular saw the use of James I for the curtailing of the Scottish
contingent of soldiers in the Dauphin’s army during the Hundred Years’ War.197 If the chronicle

192 For a full discussion of the lead up to the executions of Duke Murdoch, Walter of Lennox, Alexander Stewart,
and Duncan, earl of Lennox, see Brown, James I.
195 Grant, Independence and Nationhood, 164, 185-6.
196 Evidence for multiple envoys in 1411, Summer and Winter of 1412, 1414, 1415 CDS, iv, 793, 823, 824, 833; ER,
iv, 142, 163, 211, 223, 238; Barrell, Medieval Scotland, 151-2.
197 See Chapter 4
evidence is to be believed, Murdoch sought more urgently than his father to have the king released as a power check on his own haughty sons. The much repeated story of Buchanan and Boece was that Murdoch could not control the ambitions of his sons, particularly Walter of Lennox, and thought the return of the king would quiet them so he put more effort into securing James I’s release than his father. 198 Likely, however, it was the minority of Henry VI that allowed for a more successful negotiation for the release of James I.

As governor Albany did not have the ability to command all the prerogatives and powers of the king such as the right to summon Parliament or distribute crown patronage, and as a result he was limited in his abilities to run the kingdom. 199 During Albany’s tenure as governor he was able to call General Councils to assist him in the administration of the kingdom. The records for the General Councils are sparse because they were not full Parliaments. 200 The records available indicate that the General Council met regularly, although not annually. A paucity of information makes it difficult to discern the composition and membership of Albany’s General Council in full. Nonetheless, charter evidence indicates that many of the leading nobles such as the earls of Douglas, Alexander, earl of Mar, and John, earl of Buchan, were in attendance as were leading churchmen such as Gilbert Greenlaw, bishop of Aberdeen and Chancellor. 201 Without more evidence it is not possible to reconstruct what participation if any there was from the burgesses of Scotland. Albany’s inability to call Parliament is a limit on his abilities to fully exercise the

198 Buchanan, The History of Scotland, 84-5; Boece, The Chronicles of Scotland, 377. Both Buchanan and Boece assert that Murdoch was a weak prince and brought back James I to stop Walter from defying him.

199 Hunt, “The Governorship,” 30-45; Nicholson, The Later Middle Ages, 226. Nicholson states that during Albany’s short lieutenant between 1404 and 1406 he was empowered to call General Councils, but barred from calling Parliament, a stipulation that carried on into the governorship.

200 The meetings noted in the RPS between 1406 and 1424 are pieced together sometimes from records of the meetings, but often from indirect evidence such as mentions in the ER, references in Bower, and notations in charters that they were given during a General Council.

201 See for example RPS 1410/1 and 1411/1.
duties of kingship as a regent, and a contrast to some of the other regent positions around Europe. The ability to call Parliament is generally acknowledged as the prerogative of the king, but queen-lieutenants for instance had full authority to convene the Cortes in the absence of the king.\textsuperscript{202} The full limitations around what a General Council versus a Parliament could do is murky at best, as Albany’s commission as governor is no longer extant. It has been well established that Albany could not call a Parliament, but the role of Parliament in affairs such as making treaties, deciding to go to war, and the general daily business of the government seems to have transferred to the General Council.\textsuperscript{203}

However, given that previous commissions of lieutenancy usually included the charge of administering the king’s justice, likely that aspect also carried over into the governorship as well. One of the king’s prerogatives in regards to Parliament also included the ability to forfeit magnates and have the Parliament serve as the court for treason.\textsuperscript{204} There is no record of Albany’s use of the General Council to bring other magnates up on charges of treason or to forfeit them for crimes. Whether or not Albany had this ability at all due to the inability to call Parliament is a matter of some debate.\textsuperscript{205} There is no record of Albany forfeiting or attempting to forfeit any problematic magnates such as the lord of the Isles in the wake of the Battle of Harlaw. It is unclear if that was simply not the route Albany chose to go because the submission of the lord of the Isles was enough, or if he just did not have that ability. Albany did, however, reverse a sentence of forfeiture in 1409 for the Earl of March. After Albany made concessions to the earl of Douglas who profited in March’s absence, March was welcomed back to the kingdom and

\textsuperscript{202} Walker, \textit{A Legal History}, 136; Earenfight, \textit{The King’s Other Body}, 2.
\textsuperscript{203} RPS A1408/3/1, A1419/1; Hunt, “The Governorship,” 48;
\textsuperscript{204} Walker, \textit{A Legal History}, 136-7.
\textsuperscript{205} Hunt, “The Governorship,” 45-50; Fraser, \textit{The Red Book of Menteith}, vol. 1, 45.
many of his lands were restored. James I later forfeited March’s son which does cast some doubt on Albany’s ability to restore March without being king or the use of Parliament, but March’s successful return in 1409 does indicate an understanding on the part of the other Scottish magnates that Albany did indeed have the power to reinstate the errant earl. For certain during Albany’s governorship there is no record of a meeting of Parliament, however, the General Council met regularly and fulfilled many of the roles of the Parliament.

Despite any limitations Grant notes that Albany’s governorship was “one of the least eventful regencies in Scottish or English history.” Indeed likely due to the lack of James I’s presence, Albany and Murdoch’s governorships were largely devoid of the large scale internal faction fighting that marked other minorities as different groups worked to gain possession of the person of the king and control of the government. There were some internal problems, like the ongoing issue with the lord of the Isles, but Albany was able to follow through on his external duties fairly well, and did not radically depart from the policies of his father and brother. Albany continued the classic Scottish international diplomacy of alliance with the French and ongoing conflict with England punctuated by periods of truce. Albany’s style of governance did not depart from his father’s or brother’s in that he relied on magnate cooperation, alliance with France, and opposition to England. In the end it seems Albany’s governorship was as successful as it could have been given the restraints and international situation.

206 Bower, Scotichronicon, vol. 8, 73-5.  
208 Grant, Independence and Nationhood, 186.  
210 MacInnes, Scotland’s Second War of Independence, 240-2; Boardman, “Stewart, Robert, First Duke of Albany (c.1340–1420).” ODNB.
Conclusion

Far from being an outlier in European politics, the appointment of Albany as Regent for Robert II, Robert III, and James I followed many of the precedents present in medieval Europe. The situation in Scotland may have been somewhat unique, but the understanding of the tools of monarchy available to rectify the infirmities of the kings were not. From the very beginning of Robert II’s reign, the Stewart dynasty made frequent use of the corporate monarchy and much power and regional domination was invested in Robert II’s sons. Albany was of course part of this and grew in power and authority through his governmental appointments and land accumulation. Albany’s fulfilment of regent positions fell in line with many of his contemporaries, and his own power was greatly enhanced by acting for the Scottish kings in the arenas of defense and justice. However, after 1388 Albany increasingly became the face of the royal dynasty in Scotland due to the incapacity of Robert III and he remained central to the governance of the kingdom. By 1406, with the absence of James I, Albany was the foremost remaining member of the royal family left in Scotland and exercised royal power within Scotland, though not in an unlimited way. Albany may have occupied the highest position in the kingdom, but he like the king did not operate alone. Albany like his father would implement the corporate monarchy throughout his career and as will be explored over the coming chapters Albany often integrated his own family and close associates in governmental positions. Albany possessed excellent skill in building relationships and networks as well as wielding them to the best advantage. The remainder of this dissertation will focus on the tools Albany used to maintain his power, authority, and the approval of the Scottish political community to secure his regent positions, fulfill the kingship duties of defense and justice through the regencies, and continue to serve as the face of royal power both inside and outside of Scotland.
Chapter 3: Courting the Nobility: Marriages, Bonds, and Patronage

Albany drew his power and authority as regent from his position in the royal family, corporate monarchy, and appointment by the political community. But part of his ability to act on that power and authority came from his success in courting the favour and compliance of the Scottish nobility and his own use of the corporate monarchy. In this manner of ruling, Albany did not depart from the tactics used by his predecessors. Robert II and Robert III made frequent use of the corporate monarchy, and also utilised a more decentralised form of rulership. This style of rule in Scotland has been widely remarked on in Scottish historiography. Scottish kings generally relied heavily on the cooperation of their nobility, many of whom were familial relations, to govern the kingdom outside of the king’s own lands. This was once considered a weakness of the Scottish monarchy but scholarship of the past few decades has widely shown how it was a strength or at least disputed that it led to lawlessness in Scotland. Over the course of his long career Albany built up a network of friends and allies in Scotland which aided him in maintaining his hold on power throughout the period of 1388-1420, and particularly helped him rule Scotland during the absence of James I. Albany drew nobles of all ranks and geographical location into his wide network through the use of strategic marriages, personal bonds, and patronage. The support and cooperation of the nobility was key to Albany’s exercise of power and authority in Scotland.

Albany’s style of ruling through reliance on the nobility did not depart from the ruling practices of his father and brother. Both Robert II and Robert III relied on the regional supremacy of individual magnates to carry out governance in the kingdom. For Robert III, in particular, the cultivation of the nobility for both his own and his sons’ retinues was a way to promote loyalty to the main Stewart line. In a similar manner Albany’s quest for allies bolstered his own royal image and place in the corporate monarchy. Robert II and Robert III allied themselves with the nobility through marriage and patronage much the same way Albany did. As kings, Robert II and Robert III could grant lands, create new lords and earls, gift annuities and offices to the nobility to build their loyalty to the royal house and ensure stability and peace within the kingdom. Albany had more limited tools at his disposal as he could not create a new lordship or earldom, but he could grant away his own lands, which he did on several occasions. He could not grant annuities from the exchequer, but he often found other ways to build loyalty. Like his father and brother, Albany had his children marry Scottish nobles to create alliances with other families, Albany offered governmental positions when he could, sometimes he paid other nobles to serve his retinue, and for the lesser nobles Albany offered places in his own household and affinity. Albany also employed the use of personal bonds to bind nobles in Scotland to his rule, a method his father and brother did not use. Because Albany was expected to carry out the duties of kingship, but was limited from some of the tools and prerogatives of the king, he had to get creative with the resources available to him.

In the medieval period land equated to power. Through the support of his father and Albany’s own ambitions he commanded vast stretches of land in Scotland. The land in turn provided him with money and resources to court the nobility when he could not use some of

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same tools as ruling monarchs. As earl of Fife and Menteith and lord of many smaller areas of land, Albany could already command the loyalty of many men through more traditional landed power. However, the loyalty of men in his own lands while important would not have been enough to rule the kingdom. Albany, like the king, needed the loyalty and support of the people throughout the kingdom to rule effectively. Due to Albany’s place in the royal family as well as his position as regent, by engendering loyalty to himself he was also promoting loyalty to the Stewart dynasty. This was especially true in the wake of Carrick/Robert III’s accident which left him unable to fulfill the duties of kingship including being the face of royal power in the kingdom. Albany’s recruitment of the nobility certainly benefitted him personally, but it also kept the nobles loyal to the Stewart dynasty in the absence of the king.

In order to secure this loyalty Albany used several tools. Albany, like his father and brother, often used marriage to create alliances. Albany himself married twice, and had at least eleven children, many of whom made advantageous marriages around Scotland through Albany’s negotiations. Like many of his royal and noble predecessors Albany utilized the links of marriage to form connections with other families. Marriage alliances represented both a physical and symbolic union between two families. Marriages could involve the transfer of land or wealth, but in a less tangible sense they provided open links of communications between families. As has been demonstrated in recent scholarship on queens and medieval marriage generally, through marriage a woman could serve as a permanent ambassador for her natal

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4 Eight out of Albany’s known eleven children made advantageous marriages. The only two for whom there is no recorded marriages or attempts to arrange a marriage are his two youngest sons Robert and Andrew.
family, carrying the interests and influences of her natal family in her new home. This could manifest itself in many ways including diplomatic relations, new influences in arts, culture, and religious patronage, and changes in allegiance for the marital family. Just because Albany’s daughters left home and married into another family did not mean they were no longer loyal to the interests of their natal family. Many of their husbands became tightly allied with Albany, sometimes in opposition to their regional lord.

The marriages of Albany and his children broadly follow two distinctive patterns. The first and best known are the Highland matches into the families of the earls of Lennox and Ross, the Stewarts of Lorn, and the Campbells of Lochawe. The marriages between the Albany Stewarts and the Highland nobility were part of Albany’s assault on Badenoch’s powerbase. Not only did Albany render his brother politically irrelevant, but he also attempted to fill his place in the Highlands by creating a network of nobles loyal to himself. The Highland marriages resulted in a large bloc of territory in the Western Highlands in which Albany had direct or indirect influence through the marriage of his children.

There was another distinctive marriage strategy employed by the Albany Stewarts that has not been much discussed in the scholarship of the period. Albany arranged the marriages of several of his children into either the Douglas family directly or to nobles in their retinue or larger network. At least two children married directly into the Douglas line: John, earl of

5 Marriage and the influence of women on her marital family and kingdoms is a topic that has received a lot of attention in the last few decades. As a small sampling of the information on this topic see: Earenfight, Medieval Queenship; McCash, The Cultural Patronage of Medieval Women; Jordan, Women, Power and Religious Patronage; Underhill, For Her Good Estate; Downie, She is But a Woman; Duggan, Queens and Queenship; Erler and Kowaleski, Gendering the Master Narrative.

6 The Highland marriages are discussed in both Boardman, The Early Stewart Kings, 181-5; Boardman, “Alexander Stewart, Earl of Buchan.”

7 See Map 3.1

8 Boardman and Brown both remark on the marriages in passing in both the Early Stewart Kings and The Black Douglases, but they are not discussed in terms of a general pattern, rather more simply that the marriages occurred.
Buchan, married Elizabeth Douglas, daughter of the fourth earl of Douglas, and an unnamed daughter of Albany’s married James Douglas of Balvenie. Furthermore, four of Albany’s daughters married men with Douglas connections: Sir John Swinton of Swinton, Sir Walter Haliburton of Dirleton, Sir William Abernethy of Saltoun, and Sir Malcolm Fleming of Biggar and Cumbernauld. Unlike the Highland marriages these marriages did not bring the Albany Stewarts large areas of land, but rather outposts of influence in the south of Scotland or in the case of direct Douglas marriages, an alliance with the most powerful magnate in the south of Scotland. The southern marriages were less direct in terms of motive and outcome, but were certainly part of Albany’s wider desire to court the good will and support of all the nobility.

Marriage of course was not the only tool Albany utilized to court the nobility, he also used personal bonds. The use of personal bonds was not unique to Albany, but he was one of the earliest regular practitioners of them in Scotland.9 Jenny Wormald’s 1985 *Lord and Men in Scotland: Bonds of Manrent 1442-1603* sparked lively debates around the nature of lordship and use of personal bonds in late medieval and early modern Scotland.10 While Wormald’s thesis remains neither unchallenged nor unchanged, her initial conclusions about the nature of bonds still hold true, that they were “a means of expressing loyalty, friendship, and service.”11 The surviving bonds from this period record, “the intangible, the personal relationship between lords and their men, removed from or at least no longer dependent on material consideration.”12 This is particularly important for Albany’s methods of cultivating loyal nobles as he did have somewhat

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9 Only a handful of bonds survives from Albany, although they do span the entirety of Albany’s career and there is also one from Murdoch. This is certainly more than exists for any of Albany’s contemporaries, and there are likely more that did not survive.

10 Wormald, *Lords and Men*.


limit resources as governor and could not solely rely on landed incentive to court some of the
more prominent nobles like the earls of Douglas and Mar.

Bonds of maintenance and manrent are sometimes discussed in the context of “bastard
feudalism,” as Wormald did herself, but have over the years come to be discussed more
generally in terms of affinity, retinue, and tools of late medieval lordship. Bonds became
integral to outlining the relationships between lords and their loyal men or in some cases the
relationship between lords on equal footing. Often the bonds did not detail the exchange of land
for services but rather more intangible trades such as protection or counsel for service and
loyalty. There were two main types of bonds, bonds of manrent and bonds of friendship. Bonds
of manrent provided lords with followers, men with protectors and maintenance, and fulfilled the
needs of late medieval society. Although men bound themselves in loyalty to a lord, there was
usually a clause included in the bond excepting loyalty to the king over the lord. Bonds of
manrent did not become widely used until the 1440s. Bonds of friendship were also for
assistance and protection like bonds of manrent, but they were not agreements between lord and
retainer but rather between two apparent equals. Based on Wormald’s study, the earliest
surviving bond that used the term “manrent,” a term unique to Scotland, dates from 18 January
1442. While the entirety of Albany’s lifetime lies outside the bounds of Wormald’s study, she
does note that Albany lived during a period when the term auxilia/auxilium (aid, help, support,

13 Boardman and Goodare, Kings, Lords and Men; Wormald, Lords and Men; Caroline Burt, “A ‘Bastard Feudal’
Affinity in the Making? The followings of William and Guy Beauchamp, Earls of Warwick 1286-1315,” Midland
History 34, no. 2 (2009): 156-180; Christine Carpenter, “The Beauchamp Affinity:” 514-532; Cathcart, Kinship and
Clientage; Christine McGladdery, James II, (Edinburgh: John Donald, 1990); Alexander Grant, “Service and Tenure
in Late Medieval Scotland, 1314-1475,” in Concepts and Patterns of Service in the Later Middle Ages, ed. Anne
14 Wormald, Lords and Men, 3, 26.
15 Wormald, Lords and Men, 3, 14. Indenture was used in England and alliance in France. Indenture is a term
sometimes used in Albany’s bonds, possibly because the term manrent was not yet commonly in use.
reinforcement) began to change in meaning for lordship. No longer did it mean money payments and limited numbers of occasions where the vassal was to make payments to his lord, but rather it became part of good lordship for the lord to assist his man “to recover and enjoy his possessions,” a recurring theme in Albany’s bonds.\footnote{Wormald, \textit{Lords and Men}, 29-32.} While, as Wormald points out, this assistance was always part of good lordship, during this period this assistance became more general in sense.\footnote{Wormald, \textit{Lords and Men}, 29-32.} In terms of the types of bonds Albany made, bonds of maintenance or personal bonds, and bonds of friendship are the more accurate terms rather than manrent. Albany’s bonds spanned the breadth of the nobility from one with his squire Hugh Berclay to one with the earl of Douglas. They are too early to be considered bonds of manrent, but the bonds were not always made with nobles on equal footing with Albany, and a few bonds even stress their inequality of station. Albany used these bonds fairly regularly throughout his life to express “personal promises for a particular purpose.”\footnote{Wormald, \textit{Lords and Men}, 38.} Albany’s bonds do not make the general promises that later fifteenth century bonds of manrent did, but they also differ from older bonds which concerned land and payment. Albany’s bonds could be quite specific in terms of the aid he could provide or like with the Douglas bond the specific methods of addressing law and order in the kingdom, giving his practice of lordship a firm outline.\footnote{Fraser, \textit{The Red Book of Menteith}, vol. 2, 277, 281.}

Albany’s use of bonds was not wholly unique. Other lords made use of bonds in the same period, although Albany made far more, and the practice would continue to gain popularity and
remained in use until the seventeenth century. Bonds became so common that Keith Brown describes them as, "a way of keeping existing social relationships on a steady keel, rather like renegotiating home insurance every so often." Some of Albany’s bonds like that with his squire Hugh Berclay could be characterized as such, but some also outlined new relationships such as the bonds with the earls of Mar and Douglas during the governorship. From his personal bonds Albany emerges as an emphatic defender of land rights. He promised several of his men that he would aid them in the return of their land, and there is not any reason from the surviving documentation to believe he did not follow through on this, particularly as families like the Berclays continued in his service long after the initial bond. The reoccurrence of such bonds with different people indicates that Albany followed through on his word and many sought his help in their own land recovery. Albany made ready use of bonds throughout his political career to bind other nobles to himself in well outlined relationships which helped his successful exercise of power.

Albany likely also made use of the common late medieval practices of maintaining a paid retinue and courting a much wider group of loyal men known as an affinity. It became increasingly common in the late Middle Ages for nobles to gather affinities, that is a collection of men that were in some way bound in terms of service or loyalty to a lord. A noble’s affinity

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20 Wormald, Lords and Men, 37.
could include minor nobles, country gentry, knights, and household servants.\(^{23}\) An affinity was a wider collection of men than a retinue, as the retinue only consisted of loyal fighting men who were compensated in some way by their lord. Unlike some of his counterparts such as John of Gaunt, duke of Lancaster, or Richard Beauchamp, earl of Warwick, there is scant surviving evidence of Albany’s indentures of retinue or even the make-up of his household. Only two concrete mentions of Albany’s retinue survive. One mention can be found in his bond with Alexander, earl of Mar, in which Mar became part of the duke’s retinue. In the second, Sir Gilbert Kennedy in 1408 became part of Albany’s retinue as part of a larger settlement between the two. Kennedy had lands in the earldom of Carrick, so Albany here may have been acting in the place of James I.\(^{24}\)

The absence of household accounts or an indenture book, like the extant book belonging to John of Gaunt, limits definitive statements about retainers or the size of Albany’s affinity or household.\(^{25}\) However, formal indentures like those that survive for Gaunt are not generally found among surviving Scottish sources. That does not mean, however, that there was not a similar notion at play in Scotland.\(^{26}\) The evidence of charters, witness lists, and personal and friendship bonds does reveal parts of Albany’s affinity, close associates, possible retinue, and household. An examination of Albany’s charter witness lists exhibits some interesting patterns and insights into his associates and networks. First and foremost, Albany’s witness lists display a much greater variety of witnesses than his brother’s. The witness lists from Robert III’s charters are almost completely formulaic. A majority of Robert III’s lists often in their entirety contained


\(^{24}\) Unfortunately there is not much else known about Kennedy and he made little other significant appearance in Albany’s affairs. Grant, “Service and Tenure,” 164; NRS GD25/1/31; Ill. Banff, vol. 4, 181-2.


\(^{26}\) Brown, Disunited Kingdoms, 184.
the following witnesses: Walter, bishop of St. Andrews, Mathew, bishop of Glasgow, Robert, earl of Fife and Menteith later duke of Albany, Archibald Douglas, lord of Galloway and earl of Douglas, James Douglas, lord of Dalkeith, Thomas Erskine, knight, Alexander Cockburn keeper of the Great Seal, and once he came of age David, duke of Rothesay. A majority of the charters from Albany’s governorship contain a core three or four witnesses but the rest of the list often varied widely with a number of nobles, religious, and other people appearing anywhere from once to more than forty times. Unfortunately, like in so many other cases, the bulk of surviving material for Albany’s career is from the period of his governorship, so it is not possible to reconstruct with any certainty his affinity prior to the early 1400s. During the years of his governorship, Albany’s core witness list was: Gilbert, bishop of Aberdeen and Chancellor of Scotland, Andrew Hawick, his secretary, John, earl of Buchan, his son, and Robert Stewart of Fife, his grandson. Beyond this core group of four, the witness lists varied depending on the location and people involved in the actual grant.

Based on the information in the witness lists and bonds, Albany’s wider affinity spanned the ranks of nobility from the powerful earls of Douglas to the lesser known Cunninghams. He drew men from all over the kingdom, and occasionally drew men from the retinues of his brother Robert III and nephew Rothesay. Albany’s network was vast and only grew with his governorship. As the symbol of royal power in Scotland during much of the reign of Robert III and the governorship, Albany attracted those who wanted to advance. From the beginning of his career Albany made creative use of his own resources, a skill particularly useful during the governorship as he was unable to dispense crown patronage. Albany’s vast network and ability

27 Information taken from Robert III’s charters in RMS i.
28 For full list see Appendix A.
29 Albany did not name a new Chancellor upon assuming the governorship, rather he retained Robert III’s Chancellor.
to retain loyalty underpinned his climb to power and ability to weather upsets like the Rothesay murder.

During the later years of the 1390s and likely up until the death of Robert III in 1406, the continued search for loyal men and families was bound up in the rivalry between Albany and the royal Stewart line embodied by Robert III and Rothesay. Although Albany could and did on several occasions work in harmony with his brother and nephew, there was also a high level of vying for power and influence within Scotland. The rivalry may have ebbed and flowed but Albany kept a steady drive to recruit men if not entirely into his camp then at least amenable to his influence. During both Robert III’s and Rothesay’s tenures in power the king and his heir largely drew their loyal men and affinities from the south of Scotland, and particularly in Robert III’s case the south-east, where they also had friendly dealings with the Douglases.30 Albany likely never sought to dislodge the royal Stewarts from their power base, as he never sought to remove the Douglases; an ambition of that magnitude would have required much more deliberate action than he showed. The on-going rivalry likely meant that Albany sought to have friendly eyes and ears all around Scotland as well as some representation of his own interests all over the kingdom. This was likely also true during the governorship when the royal line was no longer an issue, but the Albany Stewarts did have to contend with the earls of Douglas and their entrenchment in the south of Scotland. In some cases, during the governorship, Albany’s role as royal representative meant that the loyalty of the king’s men transferred to him.

In addition to marriages and bonds, the final tool at Albany’s disposal for the courting of the nobility was more traditional patronage. Albany used many of his own resources such as

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lands and the ability to grant governmental offices to gain the support and cooperation of the nobility. During the governorship of Albany, he could not create new earls, call Parliament, nor make use of crown patronage; instead, he used his own considerable resources to gain the support of the nobility. Albany frequently granted lands to his own family and loyal men in strategic areas. He also, when possible, particularly during the governorship, granted offices to men loyal to him in an attempt to maintain that loyalty. Albany may not have been able to grant annuities, but he did not stop existing ones from being paid. Albany may not have had the resources on the scale of Robert II and Robert III to recruit and reward loyal men, but he did make creative use of his own considerable resources.

Generally, Albany used a combination of marriage, bonds, and patronage to gain the support of the nobility. In this endeavour, Albany was largely successful and was able to gain widespread support or at least indifference from nobility all over Scotland which allowed him to rule more effectively. There were of course a few outliers, most importantly, the MacDonald, lords of the Isles. The only widespread disaffection during Albany’s governorship came from the lord of the Isles, which ultimately resulted in the Battle of Harlaw in 1411. Generally, however, the nobility of Scotland reconciled themselves to Albany’s power and place in the Stewart dynasty and many entered into some form of alliance or agreement with him. In turn, Albany relied on the courted good will of the nobility to successfully carry out the duties of kingship as regent.

*The Central and Western Highlands*

Part of Albany’s attack on Badenoch in the Highlands included a partial absorption of his brother’s powerbase. Albany and Murdoch both occupied some of the former lands and offices of Badenoch, but Albany also set out on a mission to build a network of alliances with other
nobles of central and western Highlands. This not only offered him more support in the area, but also complemented his landed expansion out from his original landed base in the earldom of Menteith and the lands around Loch Tay. Albany contracted his children to four different major Highland families, the earls of Lennox and Ross, and the lords of Lorn and Argyll. Through the marriage of his children into other Highland noble families Albany could use them as agents in other earldoms and lordships and create a huge area under both his direct and indirect influence in the central and western Highlands.

As previously discussed, part of Albany’s destruction of the Wolf of Badenoch was his assistance to countess Euphemia of Ross in her pursuit of a separation from Badenoch. Albany lent his support to this endeavour and the alliance between the two was capped by the marriage of their children Alexander Leslie and Isobel Stewart. Isobel’s marriage to the next earl of Ross ensured an open line of communication between Albany and Ross and allowed Ross to fall under the influence of the larger Albany Stewart network. The marriage proved in the end to be short. Alexander and Isobel married at some point in the mid to late 1390s, but Alexander died in 1402. He left a single heir by Isobel, their daughter Euphemia. The earldom of Ross passed into Albany’s care and would lead to problems during the governorship, as explored later in this chapter, when the lord of the Isles also tried to claim Ross.

At the same time Albany assisted the countess of Ross in her separation from Badenoch, he was also courting another Highland magnate, Duncan, earl of Lennox. On 17 February 1392 Albany’s heir Murdoch married Isabella of Lennox, daughter and of co-heiress of Duncan, earl of Lennox, and Helen Campbell. The position of the earldom of Lennox made it an attractive

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31 See chapter 2 for more information.
32 Boardman, *The Early Stewart Kings*, 258-60.
alliance option for Albany as it was right next to Menteith and above the lands of the Stewartry. The neighbouring earls already enjoyed a friendly relationship, as exhibited by one of the marriage dispensation’s listed impediments, Lennox was Murdoch’s godfather. Lennox lived a quieter life than Albany, but he would come to wield much more power within his earldom than many of his contemporaries due to his alliance with Albany. By the early 1400s Lennox controlled not only his hereditary rights as earl but also the royal powers of justice and war leadership within Lennox and control of the royal castle of Dumbarton. Despite this, Lennox appeared infrequently in government business and largely confined himself to the interests and duties of his earldom.

In 1392, Murdoch was about thirty years old, and it is unclear when his first wife, Joan, died, but it is possible that the marriage of Murdoch and Isabella was postponed due to internal strife in Lennox politics for which Lennox sought Albany’s support. During the 1380s Lennox was locked in a power struggle with his parents for control of the earldom. Lennox’s right to the earldom came through his mother Margaret, the sole heir of earl Donald of Lennox. Initially Lennox won the struggle for control of the earldom in May 1385 when his mother, Countess Margaret and his father, Walter of Faslane, resigned their rights to the earldom at Stirling Castle, one Albany’s strongholds, indicating his support. This was reversed in an act dated 19 August

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33 Boardman, *The Early Stewart Kings*, 181; *Clement VII*, 174; Mairi Cowan, “The Spiritual Ties of Kinship in Pre-Reformation Scotland,” in *Finding the Family in Medieval and Early Modern Scotland*, ed. Elizabeth Ewan and Janay Nugent (Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2008), 117-8. As discussed by Mairi Cowan, dispensations for spiritual kinship were not unusual in medieval Scotland.
36 The marriage dispensation for Murdoch and Isabella of Lennox list as one of the impediments to their marriage Isabella’s relation “in the fourth degree of consanguinity to Joan, deceased wife of Murdoch.” Nothing else is known about Joan, not even her surname. *Clement VII*, 174.
37 Brown, “Earldom and Kindred,” 214. Countess Margaret of Lennox was the only child of earl Donald, and in order to keep the power of the earldom within the family Margaret married Walter of Faslane a kinsman from one of the cadet branches of the earls of Lennox.
1388 in which Lennox was confirmed heir, but Walter and Margaret received custody of Lennox for their lifetimes. This decision likely resulted from Carrick’s attempts as lieutenant to keep his slipping power by creating an alliance with Walter to undermine Lennox’s alliance with Albany. In the intervening years between 1388 and 1392, Albany replaced his brother as guardian of Scotland. In an attempt to regain control of his earldom, Lennox sought a tighter alliance with Albany which was manifested in the marriage of their children. The terms of the marriage indenture for Murdoch and Isabella stipulated Albany’s assistance in returning the control of the earldom back to Lennox at the price of entailing the earldom of Lennox on Murdoch and Isabella. In order to do this Lennox had to obtain the permission of his father, and Albany had to purchase the king’s approval for this venture; both succeeded in their tasks. Lennox resigned his earldom to Robert III who granted it back to him under a male entail on 8 November 1392. Duncan of Lennox was then the undisputed earl of Lennox and Murdoch and Isabella were his heirs.

The marriage indenture of Murdoch and Isabella made the couple the sole heirs, and Isabella’s two younger sisters were disinheritied. Murdoch and Isabella’s marriage indenture was incredibly detailed and outlined all manner of contingencies such as what Lennox was to do if he was in the position to marry again and possibly produce a male heir (marry one of Albany’s daughters) to Albany’s duty to arrange the marriages of Lennox’s other two daughters. Most importantly, the marriage indenture made clear that the earldom of Lennox once acquired by Albany would not be easily let go. From this time on the fate of the earldom as well as the earl

39 NRS GD220/2/1/33 This entail disinheritied Isabella’s two younger sisters, but kept the earldom intact.
41 Fraser, The Lennox, vol. 2, no. 36; NRS GD220/2/1/36
42 Fraser, The Lennox, vol. 2, no. 33, 36.
43 Fraser, The Lennox, vol. 2, no. 33; NRS GD220/2/1/33
and Isabella were bound up with those of the Albany Stewarts. This proved to be both fortunate and unfortunate for the earl of Lennox and Isabella as they did enjoy the benefits of the alliance, but were caught up in the ultimate downfall of the Albany Stewarts in 1425.44

Prior to 1425 Murdoch and Isabella’s children played a prominent role in both Albany’s government and Lennox. Given Murdoch’s absence for the first nine years of Albany’s governorship, it seems natural that once Murdoch and Isabella’s eldest son Robert of Fife came of age he would become a mainstay of Albany’s government, in keeping with the use of the corporate monarchy. Robert appeared frequently in his grandfather’s witness lists after 1407 presumably when he was about fifteen years old until his death in 1419. Robert most likely grew up in Murdoch’s household until he came of age and began to participate in Scottish politics, after which he seems to have spent much of his time with his paternal grandfather.45 Robert became known as Robert Stewart of Fife, while his brother Walter was styled Walter of Lennox. Robert more often was associated with his paternal grandparents while Walter was associated with his maternal grandfather.46 This may have to do with a possible division of power within the family. As eldest son and heir it would have been Robert’s birthright to inherit not only the title duke of Albany but the earldoms of Fife and Menteith. However as the earldom of Lennox came to the Albany Stewarts through Murdoch’s marriage to Isabella, this portion may have been considered divisible and was intended for one of Murdoch and Isabella’s younger sons. During Murdoch’s governorship, Isabella rather than Murdoch or Walter confirmed a charter of her

44 Brown, “Earldom and Kindred,” 217. Due to his alliance with Albany, Lennox received the offices of deputy to the justiciar in Lennox and coroner in Lennox. Albany also assisted Lennox in a local dispute, the recapture of Dumbarton Castle.
45 Murdoch was sometimes styled Sir Murdoch Stewart of Kinclaven in charters. While there is no record of a grant, Murdoch made his home in Kinclaven outside Perth for part of Robert of Fife’s childhood.
46 Steve Boardman, “Stewart, Murdoch [Murdac], Second Duke of Albany,” ODNB. It was in Lennox that James Stewart their younger brother mounted his rebellion when James I imprisoned Murdoch, Walter, Isobel, Duncan, earl of Lennox, and Alexander in 1425.
father. This indicates an initial understanding that the power in Lennox was actually exercised by Isabella and Murdoch was the heir in name only.  

Power in the earldom passed from Earl Duncan to Isabella to one of Isabella’s sons.

Murdoch’s other sons appear infrequently or not at all in Albany’s charters, although in the beginning of the governorship this was due to their youth. Walter of Lennox remained in Robert of Fife’s shadow until Robert’s death in 1419, after which Walter became the sole heir to his father and mother. There is one charter dated in 1421 which styles Murdoch and Isabella’s third son Alexander as Alexander of Lennox in the witness list, indicating that he like his brother Walter before him was now considered the ultimate heir of the earldom of Lennox, but this idea did not take. Walter continued to be styled as the heir of all three earldoms for the remainder of his life and indeed on one occasion Prince Walter. There appears to have been an attempt to maintain the initial division of the earldoms among Murdoch’s sons, but likely the forceful personality of Walter of Lennox and the following he built in Lennox precluded any change in inheritance that granted his brother Alexander the earldom of Lennox.

Prior to 1425, the alliance with Lennox provided a large extended territory directly influenced by Albany and Murdoch, as well as the foundation for a larger network of power. While likely the earls maintained a friendship, Albany’s ambitions should not be discounted in his enthused defense of Duncan’s interest in Lennox. The alliance provided benefits to Albany beyond influence in Lennox, as it also vastly increased the inheritance of Murdoch, who was now the heir ostensibly to three earldoms. The Lennox alliance provided Albany with further

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47 RMS ii, 165, 166.
48 RMS ii, 165; NRS GD121/3/7; Brown, “Earldom and Kindred,” 219. In 1423 Duncan, earl of Lennox made a land grant to William Graham with the consent of his heirs Murdoch and Isabella as well as with the consent and goodwill of his grandson Walter, heir of the duke of Albany.
support and influence in the region, which manifested itself in two other marriages of his daughters Marjory and Johanna to Sir Duncan Campbell of Lochawe and Robert Stewart of Lorn respectively.\textsuperscript{49}

The marriages of Marjory and Johanna had the double benefits of extending Albany’s influence and solving a regional power dispute. Like the earl of Lennox, the Campbells of Lochawe and the Stewarts of Lorn were major regional players in western Highland politics and therefore potentially useful allies to Albany. The Campbell family rose in prominence in the late fourteenth century culminating in their elevation to earls of Argyll in the late 1450s. Gillespic Campbell of Lochawe (d. 1385-7) was a retainer of Robert II prior to his kingship, and after 1371 the Campbells found themselves in the royal circle.\textsuperscript{50} The Campbells of Lochawe had not always been the dominant power in Argyll. Through the careful pressing of rights and claims to lands by Gillespic and his son Colin (d. 1412/3) they rose in local dominance, “wielding wide-ranging judicial powers and claiming the title ‘lord of Argyll,’” all helped along by the collapse of their main rival in the area John MacDougall of Lorn.\textsuperscript{51} MacDougall had been an adherent and nephew by marriage of David II, but he saw his fortunes reversed with the arrival of the first Stewart king. MacDougall was removed from lands and offices in western Perthshire, and his former lands and positions were granted to Robert II’s sons. MacDougall died sometime before 1388, but left no legitimate male heir. MacDougall did have two daughters, Isobel and Janet, who married two brothers John and Robert Stewart of Innermeath.\textsuperscript{52}

\textsuperscript{50} Boardman, The Campbells, 94.
\textsuperscript{51} Boardman, The Campbells, 94.
\textsuperscript{52} Boardman, The Campbells, 95.
A power struggle ensued in Lorn between the husbands of the MacDougall co-heiresses, Allan MacDougall—possibly an illegitimate son of John MacDougall—and the MacArthur Campbells of Strachur who possessed several charters granting them lands in Appin, Benderloch, and Lorn. The outcome of the conflict ultimately favoured the strongest claimant, Isobel MacDougall and her husband John Stewart of Innermeath, likely due in part to an alliance with Albany. Outside of his immediate family, Albany had no closer adherent than John Stewart of Innermeath, later lord of Lorn (d. 1421). Stewart of Lorn witnessed at least forty of Albany’s charters. John Stewart, originally of Innermeath and Durrisdeer, was a cousin of Albany. Their relationship may have started as kinsmen, but during the late 1380s into the 1390s Stewart was drawn into Albany’s affinity and possibly his retinue. Stewart first rose to prominence when he married Isobel MacDougall. Stewart’s brother Robert and his wife Janet MacDougall exchanged their claim to Lorn to Stewart and Isobel for Stewart’s lands of Durrisdeer during a 1388 General Council meeting presided over by Carrick. This made Stewart and Isobel the sole heirs of Lorn.

The MacDougall lords of Lorn had traditionally been one of the three heirs of Somerled: Clan Donald, Clan Dugall, and Clan Ruari who all had claims to the overlordship of Argyll. However, the Campbells had grown in power during the fourteenth century, even using the title lord of Argyll, which they would receive in practice in the early 1400s. This was a significant shift away from the original base of power in the region. While they may not have had control of Lorn the Campbells of Lochawe did wield more power in the region than the Stewart lords of

53 Boardman, The Campbells, 95.
54 Boardman, The Early Stewart Kings, 182; Boardman, The Campbells, 95. Given that John and Isobel’s eldest son Robert was of age to marry Albany’s daughter Johanna in the late 1390s, their marriage likely took place in the late 1370s or early 1380s.
Lorn thanks to the efforts of Gillespic and Colin Campbell. Albany promoted this change in power, as particularly evident in the marriage of Marjorie and Duncan Campbell.\textsuperscript{55}

While John Stewart of Lorn could not hope to compete with the Campbells to reclaim the old MacDougall ascendancy, he could and did ally himself with Albany to benefit his own regional power. With Albany’s backing, as well as a wider alliance with Lennox and the Campbells of Lochawe, John Stewart of Lorn was able to consolidate his hold on the lands of MacDougall of Lorn in opposition to the Campbells of Strachur.\textsuperscript{56} To further solidify their alliance, Albany used one of his favoured methods for courting the nobility, marriage. Stewart’s eldest son Robert married Albany’s daughter Johanna in 1397.\textsuperscript{57} While Albany could not hope to influence Lorn in the direct way he and his son influenced Lennox, the tie created by marriage ensured that his grandsons would inherit Lorn and maintain a family link subjecting the area to more indirect influence. It also strengthened an already existing though distant family tie.\textsuperscript{58} Lorn was another large building block in the territorial domination of Albany cemented by marriage. Lorn was located above Lennox and the Campbell lands, creating a larger area of Albany influenced land in the Central and Western Highlands.

Albany and Stewart’s alliance lasted well beyond the controversy over Lorn and the marriage of their children. John Stewart spent more time in Albany’s company than many of Albany’s family members. Even amongst the in-laws Stewart’s number of witness list appearances, over forty, dwarfs the rest.\textsuperscript{59} Stewart kept in regular attendance on Albany, but

\textsuperscript{55} Boardman, \textit{The Early Stewart Kings}, 181-2.
\textsuperscript{56} Through a series of land deals, backed and orchestrated by Albany, Stewart of Lorn was able to wrench most of the control of the MacDougall lands back from the Campbells of Strachur who claimed them. Boardman, \textit{The Early Stewart Kings}, n.191-2.
\textsuperscript{57} Benedict XIII, 75. Robert and Johanna had several children including John the next lord of Lorn, Walter, Alan, David, Robert, and two daughters.
\textsuperscript{58} Benedict XIII, 75.
\textsuperscript{59} See Appendix A.
unlike others he was not heavily rewarded with gifts, offices, or lands. Given Stewart’s frequent appearance on Albany’s witness lists he was likely a part of Albany’s retinue and/or a favourite cousin and friend. Albany employed Stewart as an ambassador to England along with Robert Lanyn, provost of St. Andrews and John Busby in 1412 for negotiations for the liberation of James I and Murdoch. Stewart was also an ambassador to France in 1412. Beyond these few snatches in the record and frequent appearance on Albany’s witness lists very little is known about Sir John Stewart of Lorn. His primary loyalty was with Albany over Robert III, but he did have a younger son, Alexander, in the service of Archibald, fourth earl of Douglas, as a squire. Douglas granted Alexander the lands in the Abthanery of Dull on 30 March 1414. The lands had previously been John Stewart’s but were resigned to Douglas in Albany’s presence. Stewart’s charter was witnessed by “an illustrious Prince and the Earl’s dread lord, the Governor of Scotland,” as well as Buchan, Robert Stewart of Lorn, and Sir William Borthwick. As lord of the Abthanery of Dull, Albany at some point had granted lands to Stewart, but his possession of them was short lived. Furthermore, as Douglas granted the lands for Alexander’s service, it seems full family loyalty did not lie with the Albany Stewarts although Alexander’s lands were still in Albany’s domains.

John Stewart of Lorn’s frequent appearance on Albany’s witness lists throughout the governorship in particular indicates a close relationship which went beyond the marriage of their children. Besides Albany’s Chancellor, secretary, son, and grandson, Stewart was the most

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60 ER iv, 6, 48. Stewart’s son Robert Stewart of Lorn received two payments from the exchequer of ten pounds and twenty pounds respectively in 1406 and 1407 by order of the governor for unspecified reasons.
61 ER iv, 142, 163.
62 ER iv, 164.
frequent charter witness. The infrequent appearance of Albany’s other in-laws like the earl of Lennox, the Campbells, or Leslies likely has to do with their early death or status as earls or dominant power in their territories. However, other extended family members of the same rank as Stewart such as the Flemings of Biggar or the Haliburtons of Dirleton were also infrequent, perhaps due to their geographical distance from Albany’s main power centres at Stirling and Falkland. Stewart frequently witnessed charters in Perth and Edinburgh likely given during General Council sessions, but he also made appearances at Stirling, Doune, Dunblane, Haddington, and Queensferry. Due to the scattered nature of the places outside of General Council meetings, Stewart probably travelled regularly with Albany on government business but also perhaps because of a more personal friendship. Of all the people in the Albany Stewart network and affinity, the Stewarts of Lorn seem by far the most loyal as well as the closest to Albany. The connection between the Albany Stewarts and the earl of Lennox and lord of Lorn was far more straightforward than others, and perhaps contained the added bond of real friendship. The last of the central and western Highland marriage alliances was more complicated.

At some point in the 1390s, Albany’s daughter Marjorie married Duncan Campbell of Lochawe. There is no surviving marriage dispensation, but there is evidence of the marriage in later charters; in particular Marjory and Duncan’s son Gillespic was referred to as Albany’s grandson in 1414 charter witness list.65 Marjory either predeceased or did not long outlive her father, and Duncan Campbell married as his second wife Margaret Stewart of Accyngowan in 1423.66 Given that Marjory and Duncan’s son was of age to consent to and witness charters in

65 NRS RH6/245.
66 CPL, viii, 259, 336. Marjory is last known 15 February 1420, when she and Duncan applied for a portable altar to Martin V.
1414, likely the marriage took place in the mid-1390s, amidst the struggle over Lorn and after Murdoch married Isabella of Lennox. Through his marriage to Isabella, Murdoch became cousins by marriage with Duncan Campbell, as Isabella’s mother was Helen Campbell of Lochawe, Duncan Campbell’s aunt. Marjory’s marriage reinforced an already existing familial tie.

The marriage of Duncan and Marjory could have been part of the settlement to recognize the Stewart claim in Lorn while compensating the Campbells for their inability to expand into Lorn. Both Duncan Campbell and John Stewart of Lorn witnessed the perambulation of Fife conducted by Albany on 6 July 1395.\(^{67}\) If Duncan and Marjory were not already married at this point, it is possible the marriage took place around that time. The alliance between the Campbells of Lochawe and Albany was less cut and dry than the others, because the Campbells had a close association with the main branch of the royal family. The Campbells of Lochawe were retainers of Robert II and had interests and claims to lands held directly by the Stewart kings, mainly Cowal, Knapdale, and Arran.\(^{68}\) Tensions between Albany and the government of Robert III and James I created complicated situations for the Campbells as they were allies of the Albany Stewarts but also tenants of the king. The Campbells generally balanced this well and survived both the crises of 1402 and 1424/5 largely without injury, although as Boardman notes relations between the Campbells of Lochawe and James I were never particularly warm as the king regarded Duncan Campbell as too close to the Albany Stewarts, even though Marjory died before the return of James I.\(^{69}\)

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\(^{68}\) Boardman, *The Campbells*, 107. 
Despite the complications the Campbells of Lochawe remained strategically-located allies. Their lands were located between Lennox and Lorn. The alliances reinforced by marriage with the Campbells, Lorn, and Lennox created a large block of land directly and indirectly influenced by Albany through the marriage of his children. By gathering in the earl of Lennox, the lords of Lorn and Argyll, and the earl of Ross Albany created a formidable power base that would only be augmented as he continued his rise to power. Albany’s landed influence in the western and central Highlands would not be matched anywhere else in Scotland. This did not mean, however, that Albany did not court the favour of the nobility in the rest of Scotland. His landed power lay mainly in the central stretch of Scotland, but he would attempt to ally himself with nobles all around Scotland.

Figure 3.1 Highland Marriages
The Earls of Douglas and the South of Scotland

Albany’s Highland ambitions are generally well recorded and remarked upon. There is little debate about why he formed close relationships with the neighbouring nobles and had four of his children marry directly into the inheriting lines of Lennox, Ross, Lorn, and Lochawe. There has been a less cohesive discussion, however, about how Albany used marriage outside of the central and western Highlands. Part of the lack of discussion about Albany’s other children may have to do with the seemingly inconsequential nobles they married as well as what appears to be a lack of distinct pattern. Outside of the Highlands the only other Albany Stewart marriage that has sparked some discussion was the one between Albany’s second son John, earl of Buchan, and Elizabeth Douglas daughter of Archibald, fourth earl of Douglas, in 1410. A marriage between the two leading powers in Scotland during the period of Albany’s governorship seems almost necessary for the stability of the kingdom, however, Buchan and Elizabeth’s marriage was far from the Albany Stewarts’ first foray into marriage with nobles in the south of Scotland. In the late 1390s into the early 1400s Albany was courting the favour of nobles all around Scotland, particularly in the south of Scotland, sometimes through marriage but other times through bonds and positions in his own household and the Scottish government.

While Albany was the dominant power north of the Forth, in the south of Scotland that position belonged to the earls of Douglas. The earls of Douglas famously got their start as crown adherents and defenders of Scottish borders during the career of Good Sir James Douglas, the steadfast companion of Robert I. After the Wars of Independence, the lords of Douglas continued

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70 These situations are remarked upon variously if they came up naturally in Boardman, The Early Stewart Kings, Boardman, The Campbells, Brown, The Black Douglastes, and Brown, James I, but never cohesively in a wider discussion of their implications for Albany’s wider affinity nor as another set of decisive marriage partner choices for his children outside of the Highlands.
to grow in power, influence, and land with their base largely in the south of Scotland, close to the English border, and in Galloway. The Douglasses built their military careers around border skirmishes and raiding.\textsuperscript{71} Their service to the crown resulted in the creation of the earldom of Douglas by David II in 1358, bestowed on William Douglas, nephew and heir of Good Sir James.\textsuperscript{72}

Albany’s relationship with the Douglas earls can be traced to 1388 when he threw his support behind Archibald the Grim, illegitimate son of Good Sir James Douglas, during the inheritance controversy that arose for Douglas lands when James, second earl Douglas, died without a clear successor. Albany’s brother Carrick favoured his brother-in-law Malcolm Drummond of Conraig, husband of Isabella Douglas sister of the deceased second earl James.\textsuperscript{73} The real turn in the dispute came in late 1388 when Albany replaced Carrick as guardian. Michael Brown argues that Albany as guardian of the realm had little interest in the Douglas lands unlike Carrick who drew most of his support and retinue from the south of Scotland. Due to this lack of interest Albany was more willing to keep the status quo as Archibald the Grim had proven himself an able defender of the borders, and amassed a large power base among the Douglas lands during his lifetime.\textsuperscript{74} Because Albany’s landed interests lay mainly north of the Forth he was content to back the man who already effectively ruled southern Scotland in place of other claimants like Drummond.\textsuperscript{75} While Albany did not seem overly interested in any Douglas lands, he did not show a complete lack of interest in the south of Scotland. By the last recorded marriage of his daughter Elizabeth in 1413, Albany had four daughters and one son married to

\textsuperscript{71} For an in depth discussion of the Douglas war machine see Brown, The Black Douglasses, ch. 6 & 7.
\textsuperscript{72} RMS, i, app. 2, 1222; Brown, The Black Douglasses, 49.
\textsuperscript{73} Brown, The Black Douglasses, 85-6, 77. For a full discussion of the inheritance dispute see chapters 3 and 4.
\textsuperscript{74} Brown, The Black Douglasses, 85.
\textsuperscript{75} Though unrecorded, Albany’s dislike for Malcolm Drummond could also have extended from his conflict with John Drummond of Conraig in Menteith.
partners in the south of Scotland including: Sir William Abernethy of Saltoun, Sir John Swinton, Sir Walter Haliburton of Dirleton, Sir Malcolm Fleming of Biggar, and Elizabeth Douglas, daughter of Archibald fourth earl of Douglas. Abernethy, Swinton, Haliburton, and Fleming all owned land either in or near the Douglas lands, and were in some way connected to the earls of Douglas.

In addition to Buchan and Elizabeth Douglas’s 1410 marriage there was one other direct, but short marriage into the wider Douglas family. An unnamed daughter of the duke of Albany married James Douglas of Balvenie, later seventh earl of Douglas, probably at some point in the early 1420s. Balvenie appeared in a witness list as “our dear brother” on a charter from Murdoch to Henry Ramsay for the lands of Leuchars in 1423/4. Balvenie was also listed as Murdoch’s brother in a commission to treat for James I in England around the same time in August 1423. The only other evidence for James Douglas’s married life comes from his second marriage to Beatrix Sinclair, daughter of the earl of Orkney, after 1424. When or why a marriage between Balvenie and an Albany Stewart took place remains unknown, but likely it was short-lived and produced no heirs.

Well before Buchan and Elizabeth’s 1410 marriage, Albany began searching for allies in southern Scotland. At some point during his 1388 guardianship, Albany contracted one of his daughters to marry Sir William Abernethy of Saltoun. The evidence for the marriage rests on a few entries in the Register of the Great Seal and the Exchequer Rolls rather than a dispensation.

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76 From the existing evidence it is impossible to tell if this was another younger daughter of Albany and Murielle or if this was the second marriage for another one of Albany’s known daughters, possibly Margaret Stewart as her husband Sir John Swinton died in 1402.
78 CDS, iv, 932.
79 Fraser, The Douglas Book, vol. 1, 443.
In 1407 and 1408 William Abernethy, grandson of the governor, received £10 from the customs of Edinburgh, and eleven shillings from the Customs of Haddington.\(^{80}\) On 24 November 1413, Patrick Abernethy, styled the governor’s grandson, witnessed one of Albany’s charters.\(^{81}\) The appearance of the Abernethy grandchildren in the early 1400s hints at a possible marriage date in the late 1380s or early 1390s, placing the daughter in question as the child of Margaret Graham rather than Murielle Keith. Both Steve Boardman and the editor of the *Exchequer Rolls*, have suggested that this daughter is possibly the elusive Janet Stewart, eldest daughter of Albany and Countess Margaret.\(^{82}\) While this is possible, it is equally likely that the daughter in question is a different one due to Janet’s abrupt disappearance from the *Exchequer Rolls* in 1379.\(^{83}\) This daughter may have been named Mary. Robert III confirmed a charter in 1404 which granted Abernethy and his wife, Mary, a few baronies in Forfar.\(^{84}\) The text of the document does not list Mary as the king’s niece or make mention of her father as Albany, who witnessed the confirmation. It is possible that Mary was Abernethy’s second wife.

Why Albany chose to court Abernethy in particular is a bit of a mystery. William Abernethy was of minor political importance to the kingdom overall, but he had some ties to the Douglasses. Abernethy witnessed a charter by James Douglas of Dalkeith in 1388 at Dalkeith.\(^{85}\) One of Abernethy’s sons, James, received the lands in the barony of Hawick from Archibald, third earl of Douglas.\(^{86}\) Other than these scattered mentions, there is little remaining evidence of the Abernethy family until Laurence Abernethy, grandson of Sir William Abernethy, became a

\(^{80}\) *ER*, iv, 42, 63.  
\(^{81}\) *RMS*, i, 946.  
\(^{82}\) *ER*, iv, clxxxv; Boardman, “Stewart, Robert, first duke of Albany (c.1340–1420)” *ODNB*.  
\(^{83}\) *ER*, ii, 561, 610.  
\(^{84}\) *Ill. Banff*, vol. 2, 227.  
\(^{85}\) *Morton Register*, 164-5  
lord of Parliament in 1445. Their lands in Haddington, while maybe not always directly subject to the earl of Douglas, were in close enough proximity to create a useful outpost for the Albany Stewarts. What scant evidence remains points to a Douglas affinity of some kind, particularly on the part of Albany’s grandson James, giving the Abernethys a foot in both camps. Furthermore, the 1380s saw a re-opening of hostilities with England and Albany’s allies in the south of Scotland helped him to defend the realm in his role as guardian.

Abernethy was not the only minor nobleman from the south of Scotland brought into the Albany Stewart sphere of influence through marriage. Albany’s daughter Margaret married the renowned knight Sir John Swinton of Swinton as his third wife. Swinton had a long and illustrious career as a soldier. He was described by the anonymous chronicler of Liber Plascardensis as “Nobilissimus et validissimus miles,” the very noble and very strong knight. He fought in numerous battles along the borders for the Scottish kings and earl of Douglas, but first he spent time in the retinue of John of Gaunt, duke of Lancaster, fighting in France and England. Swinton amassed a considerable amount of money in his service to John of Gaunt, and upon his return to Scotland in 1378 was able to purchase lands directly with silver. Swinton’s lofty reputation also brought him the opportunity to marry as his second wife Margaret, countess of Mar and widow of William, first earl of Douglas, subsequently allowing Swinton to use the title lord of Mar. Swinton had considerable dealings with the earls of

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87 C. A. McGladdery, “Abernethy family (per. c.1260–c.1465),” ODNB.
88 George S. C. Swinton, “John of Swinton: A Border Fighter of the Middle Ages,” Scottish Historical Review 16, no. 64 (July 1919): 262; Liber Plascardensis, 327.
90 MacDonald, “Swinton, Sir John,” ODNB; King and Etty, England and Scotland, 57. Swinton’s lands were likely among those recovered by the Scots in the 1370s.
91 Swinton, “John of Swinton,” 270-1.
Douglas and the crown. His reputation and ability to muster men for combat made him an attractive ally to both the earls of Douglas and the Scottish kings. Swinton remained in the retinue of the earls of Douglas from his return to Scotland in 1378 until his death at the Battle of Homildon Hill in 1402. 92

Upon his return to Scotland in 1378, Swinton had his own retinue of sixty men and a considerable international reputation. Many nobles tried to court him during the next three decades. Both Swinton’s lands and marriage to the countess of Mar placed him in close proximity with the earls of Douglas. Through his Douglas connections, Swinton found himself in the retinue of the heir to the throne David, duke of Rothesay, in 1394, an alliance likely compounded by Carrick/Robert III’s recognition of Swinton’s rights to some of the contested Douglas inheritance in the right of his wife Margaret, countess of Mar. Swinton did not stray far from the Douglasses; he witnessed their charters, and received lands grants. 95 His place in the Douglas retinue was due to the renewed warfare with England in the late fourteenth century. The Douglasses maintained a highly militarized household due to the constant threat of border skirmishes. 94

Swinton did not pledge his loyalty exclusively to the earls of Douglas, and Albany was able to successfully contract Swinton in marriage to his daughter Margaret. This likely was the culmination of a longer alliance that began in the late 1380s during Albany’s guardianship. Swinton was part of Albany’s council for arbitration between the Bishop of Moray and Earl of Moray in 1389. 95 The interest in Swinton as a husband for Margaret was for a number of reasons.

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95 Moray Register, 197-203.
Swinton, although not a high ranking noble, possessed a considerable reputation and retinue of sixty men. His lands may not have been extensive but he was often utilized in both border warfare and negotiations. His familiarity with the English and particularly John of Gaunt, duke of Lancaster and warden of the Scottish Marches, would prove particularly helpful to Albany as the guardian of Scotland. Swinton was a useful fighting man and diplomat, and as a border noble he often played a part in the defense of the kingdom—all useful qualities in an ally.

Furthermore, Swinton’s close alliance with the earls of Douglas provided Albany with a link to the family. One of the reasons Swinton may have returned home in the late 1370s was to reclaim his ancestral lands in Berwickshire due to the Scottish advances of 1376-7. Given the proximity of his lands and his occupation, Swinton was a natural ally for the earls of Douglas. The marriage of Swinton and Margaret Stewart, however, allowed Albany to create a connection with an adherent of the earl of Douglas. Likely the marriage took place before 1400 as a son of Margaret and Swinton, also named John, received payments from the customs of North Berwick 1415 and 1417. As guardian of the kingdom from 1388 until 1392-3, and increasingly after 1398 when that office was given to his nephew, Rothesay, Albany needed allies to counteract the growing influence of Rothesay who like his father largely drew his affinity in the south of Scotland. Finally, Swinton was in both Robert II’s and Robert III’s favour and received a yearly pension of £20 from the kings for his services between 1381 and his death in 1402. Swinton’s

96 Swinton, “John of Swinton,” 270.
97 Boardman, The Early Stewart Kings, 112-3. William, first earl of Douglas, may have even been responsible for the exchange of the lands of Little Swinton for Mykery between Henry Swinton and Sir John Swinton in the Douglas barony of Strathord in Perthshire.
98 ER, iv, 226, 279.
importance was not lost on the Stewart monarchs as they too recognized his strategic importance in border warfare and diplomacy.

Little is known of Lady Margaret Stewart after the 1402 death of her husband. She appears not to have remarried and had to appeal twice to have her rights to her widow’s terce confirmed in 1408 and 1425/6. Margaret and Swinton’s son and heir John journeyed to France in the early 1420s with his uncle John, earl of Buchan. According to Bower, John Swinton the younger died with his uncle at the Battle of Verneuil in 1424.

Albany continued to build up his alliances in the south of Scotland into the 1400s. His daughter Isobel, widow of Alexander Leslie, earl of Ross, married as her second husband Sir Walter Haliburton of Dirleton. The couple requested a marriage dispensation in 1417 well after their actual marriage. It is possible they married in the early 1400s, but the dispensation does not state a date. Haliburton, much like Abernethy, appeared infrequently in the political landscape of the late fourteenth and early fifteenth centuries. His advances in career did not come until the reign of James II in which he was made the treasurer. It is unclear how long after 1417 Isobel lived as she does not appear in any other documented source.

The Haliburton lands in Lothian, Berwickshire, Perthshire, and Angus once owed allegiance to the earls of March but by the 1350s they more frequently were adherents of the earls of Douglas, and for the following century that continued due to a lack of strong leadership by the earls of March or in some cases their complete absence. Walter Haliburton was not as

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100 NRS GD12/18, 12/24. There is a 1433 appeal for the protection of the Swinton widow’s terce in Berwick for a Marjory Swinton. It is unclear if that is Margaret or the wife of one of the subsequent short lived John Swintons.
102 Benedict XIII, 332.
103 Alan Borthwick, “Haliburton family (per. c.1375–c.1500),” *ODNB*. Haliburton also appears as a witness to several of James II’s charters, *RMS*, ii, 201, 203, 206, 210, 211, 212, 230, 401.
loyal a Douglas retainer as Sir John Swinton. As Haliburton’s lands in Lothian were outside the traditional area of influence for the earls of Douglas, the Douglases relied on land grants to build patronage as well as personal connections not only with the Haliburtons but also other families in the area. Walter Haliburton and his family, however, kept divided loyalties. There seems to be two different and often confused Walter Haliburtons in early fifteenth-century Scotland with an unclear familial relationship. One Walter Haliburton married Albany’s daughter Isobel and the other Walter Haliburton married Mary Douglas, the widow of David, duke of Rothesay and sister of Archibald, fourth earl of Douglas. Michael Brown suggests that the Walter Haliburton who married Mary Douglas was the son of the Walter Haliburton married to Isobel. If so, the Haliburton family successfully courted both of the most powerful nobles in Scotland at the beginning of the fifteenth century. However, if Alan Borthwick’s analysis of Walter Haliburton of Dirleton is correct then he was born in 1375. This birth year would put him in his late twenties around the time of the marriages in question. It seems highly unlikely that he would have a son old enough in 1403 to marry Mary Douglas. All that remains clear is that Walter Haliburton of Dirleton married Isobel Stewart and the other man named Walter Haliburton married Mary Douglas. How closely related these two Walter Haliburtons were remains unclear, but what it may indicate is a wider family policy of courting the favour of the higher nobility. Regardless of the marriage of a possible son or other family relation to Mary Douglas, Haliburton of Dirleton kept up a relationship with both the duke of Albany and the earl of Douglas. The Haliburtons, as a southern noble family, would have been an important ally for both Albany and Douglas due to the ongoing warfare with England.

107 Borthwick, “Haliburton Family,” ODNB.
At times, Haliburton’s relationship with Albany took precedence over his relationship with the earl of Douglas. According to Walter Bower, Haliburton acted as intermediary between Albany and George Dunbar, earl of March, during the 1409 negotiations to reinstate March to his lands and earldom after his defection to England. The earl of March had removed himself and his loyalty from Scotland in 1400 due to an ongoing conflict with the royal Stewarts that was tipped over the edge by the repudiation of March’s daughter Elizabeth by Rothesay in favour of Mary Douglas.\(^\text{108}\) In 1409 Albany and March opened negotiations for March’s return to Scotland using Haliburton as an intermediary. Haliburton as an intermediary makes sense as at this point he was likely Albany’s son-in-law, and one of March’s former tenants, as well as an associate of the earl of Douglas. The negotiations succeeded and March returned to Scotland. Haliburton received £40 worth of land in Birgham for his troubles.\(^\text{109}\) The return of March generally was not agreeable to the earl of Douglas as he had been profiting and expanding his power in the south of Scotland in March’s absence.\(^\text{110}\) Haliburton’s alliance to the governor included other practicalities as well, such as Albany periodically confirming charters to and for Haliburton.\(^\text{111}\) Haliburton did not witness charters for Albany nearly as often as Albany’s other sons-in-law.\(^\text{112}\) Haliburton, unlike the Stewart of Lorn in-laws, did not often attend Albany’s court or travel with him extensively either on business or as part of his retinue, but he was certainly courted by Albany.

Haliburton kept up his relationship with the earl of Douglas as well and lent his support when needed, particularly for military mustering like the battles of Homildon Hill in 1402 or

\(^\text{108}\) See Chapter 2 for a fuller discussion of these events.
\(^\text{109}\) Bower, *Scotichronicon*, vol. 8, 75.
\(^\text{111}\) RMS, i, 897, 900, 934, 1923, 1945.
\(^\text{112}\) RMS, i, 159.
Long Hermiston in 1406.\textsuperscript{113} Haliburton occasionally witnessed charters for the earls of Douglas.\textsuperscript{114} Although Haliburton shared in the efforts to defend the borders of Scotland alongside the other southern nobility, he was more impartial than some of the other Douglas adherents, making him a rather attractive ally for the Albany Stewarts, as he could play on many sides, and contributed to Albany’s charge to defend the realm.

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\includegraphics[width=\textwidth]{figure3_2_lowland_marriages.png}
\caption{Lowland Marriages}
\end{figure}

The duke of Albany did not rest his entire hopes of a southern presence on marriages to minor noblemen. On 20 June 1409 at Inverkeithing Albany and Archibald, fourth earl of Douglas, entered into a bond of friendship which was later augmented by the marriage of Albany’s son John, earl of Buchan, to Douglas’s daughter Elizabeth. The bond was one of friendship and mutual support against all others except the king.\textsuperscript{115} This bond has been considered sinister or audacious.\textsuperscript{116} According to Nicholson, Albany and Douglas, the two most

\begin{thebibliography}{99}
\bibitem{Bower} Bower, \textit{Scotichronicon}, vol. 8, 49.
\bibitem{Fraser1} Fraser, \textit{The Douglas Book}, vol. 3, 403, 413.
\bibitem{Fraser2} Fraser, \textit{The Red Book of Menteith}, vol. 2, 277-280.
\bibitem{Nicholson} Nicholson, \textit{Scotland: The Later Middle Ages}, 256.
\end{thebibliography}
powerful magnates in Scotland, were in effect meeting to carve up the kingdom. Albany took the north and Douglas took the south. The bond was an expression of their power. Nicholson also considered the bond a blatant statement of Albany’s devious aspirations for the throne, as Albany had the audacity to integrate into the bond “that if it happens the said lord the Duke to grow in time to come to the estate of king, that this bond…shall expire from then forth, but that all kindness and friendship shall be kept between them in time to come.”¹¹⁷

However, Wormald does not view the bond this way, even stating “the sinister qualities have been greatly over-emphasised.”¹¹⁸ The mention of Albany’s potential kingship was listed among a number of other possible future contingencies, not uncommon in bonds of friendship. Furthermore, Wormald argues that the bond actually states Albany’s lack of royal ambition and assurance for the earl of Douglas. The contingency for kingship was more about status. As duke and earl they were on the same playing field, but as king and earl they would not be, and their level status is emphasized in the bond.¹¹⁹ What is particularly interesting about this line of argument is that in both this bond and the marriage contract for Buchan and Elizabeth Albany was styled as “the excellent and mighty prince, Robert Duke of Albany, Earl of Fife and Menteith, Governor of Scotland.”¹²⁰ In strict ranking of peerage, Albany as duke, outranked Douglas. The addition of Prince indicates a definitive statement of royal power, although not necessarily in a sinister sense. Contrary to both Nicholson and Wormald, this bond certainly states Albany’s “royal ambition” or more likely his royal identity and place in the corporate monarchy. Albany was a prince and the heir presumptive to the throne, and more importantly in 1410 the remaining face and force of royal power in Scotland. This was likely a time in which

¹¹⁸ Wormald, Lords and Men, 39.
¹¹⁹ Wormald, Lords and Men, 39.
Albany was employing the fiction of first among equals in his office of governor, but also firmly stating his place in the succession and place in the corporate monarchy. He deployed the title Prince as a statement of his royal power, but not of his designs on the throne. Many of Albany’s more personal rather than Scottish governmental documents make use of his title prince. For instance, as discussed above, Albany was styled “an illustrious Prince and the Earl’s dread lord, the Governor of Scotland,” in the land grant from the earl of Douglas to John Stewart of Lorn’s son Alexander.\textsuperscript{121} Albany’s use of the term prince certainly made a statement about his power, but the sparing use of the title can be attributed to his attempt to emphasise his place in the royal dynasty and his authority as regent rather than his desire to sit on the throne.

In the bond, Douglas and Albany promised to be counsellors and friends to each other, but a large portion of the bond focused on keeping law and order in the kingdom. For example, they resolved on “restraining and controlling their dependents and in settling cases of civil dispute or crime.”\textsuperscript{122} Albany and Douglas agreed to settle disputes between them with the assistance of their councils. The overall conclusion from this bond is much more about friendship and law and order within in the kingdom (a reoccurring problem since the 1360s) than power brokerage between Douglas and Albany.

The Albany-Douglas bond may also state something about the hopes of negotiation with England for the return of Murdoch and James I. As clearly stated above, the bond was void should Albany inherit the throne. Given that Albany was heir presumptive to the still captive James I, this was not an unreasonable inclusion. At this point James I had only been imprisoned for four years, however Murdoch had been for seven. Murdoch was absent from any obligations

\textsuperscript{121} Fraser, The Douglas Book, vol. 3, 410-11. Alexander Stewart received the lands of Garnetully, Kyltullyth and Aberfally.
\textsuperscript{122} Wormald, Lords and Men, 40-41.
in this bond, but Murdoch’s sons Robert of Fife and Walter of Lennox were included along with Douglas’s sons Archibald and James to continue the upkeep of the bond after the deaths of their grandfather and father respectively, as well as to hold them to the terms of the bond. At this point, Albany was in his late sixties or early seventies, so it is possible that he believed he would not live to see his son or the young king released. This does provide an interesting insight into the state of the negotiations for the release of James I and Murdoch; they were not going well and Albany did not foresee the release of his heir or the king in the near future. Likely Murdoch was not included in the bond due to his absence and therefore inability to agree to it, but the prospect remained for Murdoch’s sons to be in a bond of friendship with Douglas that he was not. There is no evidence that the bond was renewed to include Murdoch once he returned home, although the subsequent marriage of Buchan and Elizabeth Douglas likely made this unnecessary.

The marriage of Albany’s son and Douglas’s daughter can be viewed as the seal on this bond of friendship. Certainly the marriage brought the two families into a working relationship and alliance if not an actual friendship. The situation and relationship between Albany and Douglas was not unlike that of John the Fearless, duke of Burgundy and Louis, duke of Orleans between 1404 and 1407 while they vied for control of the French government. In order to avoid civil war between their rival factions the dukes swore to a truce and to be “good friends.” Burgundy and Orleans traded all the outward signs of medieval friendship such as dining together, participating in jousting tournaments, and celebrating court events together. The two

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124 Albany’s death before the release of Murdoch would have caused an interesting situation in which the legal heir was an adult but absent (not unlike the situation with James I). Albany had been grooming his eldest grandson, usually styled Robert of Fife to take over. It is entirely likely that Albany envisioned a situation in which his grandson would fulfil his role in Scottish affairs in the absence of Murdoch. However, Murdoch did return before the death of his father, resulting in a seamless transition.
French dukes performed all the motions expected of a medieval friendship, while still privately detesting each other. Gerd Althoff argues, “in the middle ages friendship was not the expression of a subjective feeling or emotion, but rather a type of contract carrying with it an obligation of mutual help and support.” Like Orleans and Burgundy, it was not necessary for Albany and Douglas to maintain an emotional friendship as long as they went through the motions and oaths required by medieval society and promised in their bond. Their outward signs of friendship were for the good of the realm, even if they continued to carry on a personal rivalry. Buchan and the Douglases may have made a genuine bond, however. Buchan and Elizabeth’s brother Archibald Douglas, earl of Wigtown, shared joint leadership of the Scottish army in France in the early 1420s. This also would not have been the first time Albany tried to seal a bond with a marriage, although possibly the first successful try. While the marriage did not occur immediately and was not included in the initial text of the bond, likely the marriage resulted from closer relations between Albany and Douglas as outlined in the bond. Like the Highland marriages Albany wanted to create a lasting bond between the families.

The marriage dispensation for Buchan and Elizabeth is dated 1 May 1411, and gives the reason of relation in the third degree of consanguinity as a necessity for the dispensation. Indeed the Stewarts and the Douglases had intermarried before. The marriage indenture drawn up 21 July 1410 at Perth is almost as detailed as the one for Murdoch and Isabella of Lennox and included provisions for the granting and exchanging of several pieces of land between the

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128 *Benedict XIII*, 234.
Albany Stewarts and Douglasses meant for the couple’s upkeep. As a result of this marriage, Buchan developed a close relationship with Elizabeth’s brother, Archibald, earl of Wigtown and Elizabeth’s father the earl of Douglas and later duke of Touraine. Buchan and the Douglasses fought several battles in France and Buchan and the earl of Douglas died together on 17 April 1424 during the Battle of Verneuil. They were buried side by side at St. Gatien in Tours with the earl of Douglas’ younger son James.

The 1410 bond and marriage were the high point of Albany/Douglas co-operation for the governance of Scotland. The direct marriage of the Douglas and Albany Stewart lines demonstrated the commitment of the earl and duke to work together for the good of the kingdom. This marriage strengthened the familial ties between Albany and Douglas, compounded by their sons’ later close relationship, and provided a very tangible seal on their bond of friendship. Furthermore, this signified Albany’s recognition of Douglas’s role in the governance of Scotland, particularly the defense of the borders. It may also be a concession on the part of Albany for the recent return of the earl of March in 1409. The marriage and bond demonstrate a difficult balancing act for Albany who needed to recognize the power of the earl of Douglas but not let it overstep and infringe on his power as governor. Douglas maintained almost as much land and power as Albany, and a successful alliance sealed by marriage made sense for the good governance of Scotland. In this manner Albany employed his son Buchan in the corporate monarchy to stabilise the kingdom through a marriage alliance. It also was in line with the policies and reliance on good magnate relations used by Robert II and Robert III who also depended on the earls of Douglas to keep the balance of power in the South of Scotland.

129 Fraser, The Douglas Book, vol. 3, 359; RMS, ii, 945, 946, 947, 948.
130 Bower, Scotichronicon, vol. 8, 125-7; Brown, The Black Douglases, 220-3.
131 Balfour-Melville, James I, 41.
While maintaining an alliance with the earl of Douglas was politically very important, Albany did not abandon his previous quest for other allies in the south. In 1412, Albany’s daughter, Elizabeth, married another southern noble, Sir Malcolm Fleming of Biggar and Cumbernauld. Fleming and Elizabeth, according to the 22 August 1412 marriage dispensation, were related in the third degree of consanguinity. The marriage likely took place without receipt of the dispensation as Malcolm Fleming, along with Walter Haliburton witnessed a charter by Albany on 1 March 1412 where they are listed as his sons. Little more is known of Elizabeth after her marriage until the death of Sir Malcolm in 1440.

Albany likely sought an alliance with Malcolm Fleming as the Fleming family had a long history of service to the crown as well as greater lords, an important trait particularly during the governorship. Malcolm Fleming’s father David Fleming had a close relationship with Robert III, and a fraught relationship with the Douglases. David Fleming on several occasions caught the ire of the Douglases. In 1405 David Fleming allowed Henry Percy, earl of Northumberland, to escape Scotland before Percy could be exchanged for the fourth earl of Douglas, a captive in England since Homildon Hill in 1402. David Fleming also had general land aggrandizement goals in the south of Scotland. Ultimately David was killed in 1406 by James Douglas of Balvenie on Long Hermiston Moor during the flight of James I to the Bass Rock. In light of these events Malcolm Fleming’s distaste for the Douglases is understandable. Likely because of

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132 Benedict XIII, 254-5.
133 RMS, i, app. I, 159.
134 Francis Grant, ed., *Charter Chest of the Earldom of Wigtown 1214-1681* (Edinburgh: James Skinner & Co, 1910), no. 23, 24, 25, 26, 28, 29. Fleming was executed with the earl of Douglas in 1440 after the infamous Black Dinner. In the wake of this Elizabeth and her son Robert Fleming sued for the return of their lands.
135 Michael Brown, “Fleming, Sir David (d. 1406),” *ODNB*.
136 Henry Percy had fled to Scotland in early 1405 in the wake of his failed rebellion against Henry IV.
137 Brown, “Fleming, Sir David (d. 1406),” *ODNB*.
his father’s actions, Fleming maintained a closer relationship with the Albany Stewarts than with the earls of Douglas.

In contracting this marriage Albany attempted to ally himself with the son of a former royal favourite and a thorn in the side of the Douglases, despite his recent bond of friendship with the earl of Douglas. Malcolm Fleming, unlike his father, does not seem to have been openly hostile towards the Douglases, but he was also not frequently seen in their company until after the fall of the Albany Stewarts. Indeed prior to 1425, Fleming formed links with Murdoch’s sons. Malcolm was arrested in 1424 with Walter of Lennox’s men for rebellion in Lennox, although he was later let go. It was only after the 1425 Albany Stewart executions that Fleming developed a closer relationship with the earls of Douglas, particularly with William, sixth earl of Douglas, which resulted in Fleming’s death at the Black Dinner in 1440. Fleming does, however, represent an interesting juxtaposition to the friendship bond between Douglas and Albany. While the marriage of Fleming and Elizabeth did not violate any portion of the bond, the idea that Albany was still recruiting allies in the area is an interesting undermining of the spirit of the bond, particularly as Fleming actively maintained Albany’s interests rather than those of Douglas.

Albany’s search for allies in the south of Scotland was more complex than that of the policy in the Highlands, although both largely relied on marital alliances. Albany both maintained and undermined his relationship with the earls of Douglas in the choice of marriage partners for his children. On the one side is a direct marriage into the Douglas family between Buchan and Elizabeth Douglas, and the marriage of Albany’s daughter Margaret to the Douglas adherent Sir John Swinton. On the other side are men not quite in line with their most powerful magnate in the region. Sir Walter Haliburton and Sir Malcolm Fleming often found themselves
at odds with the Douglases in favour of their father-in-law. Albany chose both the most loyal to
the Douglases and those easily swayed from their influence. There is nothing to suggest that
Albany was attempting to dislodge the earl of Douglas or for that matter his brother Robert III or
nephew Rothesay from their faithful Southern retinues, but the clustering of marriages in the
south indicates an attempt to establish some kind of presence or influence in the area. Albany did
not seek to destabilise the power balance in the south of Scotland, but he did want to have some
weight and standing there. He may have gathered southern nobles to his affinity or retinue due to
the reopened hostilities with England. Albany’s reputation relied not solely on his dynamic
personality and political prowess, but also on the ability to successfully lead an army, something
after 1388 his brother could no longer do.\textsuperscript{138} In addition to capable politician, Albany also
needed to be a capable protector of the realm. The reasons for southern alliances are many, and
unlike the alliances of the Highlands, they result in less land for the Albany Stewart family, but
more influence in places Albany was not the leading regional power.

\textit{Northeast Scotland and the Balance of Power in the Highlands}

In the northeast of Scotland Albany used a combination of marital alliances, bonds, and
familial loyalty to court the favour of the nobility and attempt to maintain the balance of power
in the region. As previously discussed, the balance of power in the Highlands was precarious.\textsuperscript{139}
Albany’s removal of Badenoch and partial absorption of his powerbase did not solve the
recurring issues of power vacuums. Albany attempted to follow the example of his father and use
the corporate monarchy to set-up his second son John as a regional power in the northeast by
creating him earl of Buchan. This was not a simple task. Buchan had to contend with one power

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\textsuperscript{138} For Albany’s military career see Chapter 4.
\textsuperscript{139} See Chapter 2.
already established, Alexander Stewart, earl of Mar and illegitimate son of the Wolf of Badenoch, and the attempts of the lord of the Isles to move further into the mainland and claim the earldom of Ross. Keeping the power balance in the Northeast and offsetting the power of the lords of the Isles in their Highland ambitions was the most fraught area of Albany’s governorship. He wanted to counteract the growing power of the lord of the Isles, and keep the new dominant power loyal to himself. To do this Albany used his favoured tools of lordship as well as the old policies of his father and brother to deny more power to the lord of the Isles and attempt to maintain peace in the Highlands and northeast.

Albany started his search for allies in the northeast with his own second marriage in 1380. After Countess Margaret’s death around 1379/80, Albany married a woman more than twenty years his junior, Murielle Keith, daughter of William Keith, Marischal of Scotland, and Margaret Fraser. A Keith marriage offered the opportunity for an ally in the northeast as the Keith family’s ancestral lands were near Aberdeen. Unlike Countess Margaret, Murielle did not bring an earldom to her marriage, but rather a closer relationship with the Marischal of Scotland. William Keith in his capacity of Marischal cultivated friendly relationships with David II, Robert II, and later Robert III making him an attractive ally in royal favour.140 While Albany was Murielle’s first husband, there is a previous dispensation dated 17 January 1379 stating that she was to marry Reginald Cheyn.141 Likely this proposed marriage did not take place due to the more advantageous match with the earl of Fife and Menteith. Two identical copies of the dispensation for Murielle and Albany exist both dated 4 May 1380.142 The dispensation lists only one impediment to their marriage, one of “public honesty, because Robert has had carnal

140 C. A. McGladdery, “Keith family (per. c.1300–c.1530),” ODNB.
141 Clement VII, 21.
142 Clement VII, 44.
relations with a woman related to Murielle in the fourth degree of consanguinity.\textsuperscript{143} The woman’s identity remains a mystery, and to date no record has surfaced of an illegitimate child of Albany’s. Murielle herself proved to be an active countess and later duchess, leaving behind more records than her predecessor, Margaret Graham. Albany and the Keiths also maintained a close relationship.\textsuperscript{144}

Albany attempted to build a powerbase in the northeast for his first son by Murielle, John. Albany and the Keiths worked in concert to reach this goal. Initially in 1398, Albany, with the consent of Murdoch, granted Buchan the baronies of Coule and Oneill in Aberdeen, near his Keith relations.\textsuperscript{145} In 1407 William Keith and Margaret Fraser granted John the lands of Tulchfraser and Dryppis near Stirling and Aboyne near Aberdeen.\textsuperscript{146} There is no record of either of Buchan’s two younger brothers, Andrew and Robert, receiving land from their grandparents.\textsuperscript{147} Albany augmented Buchan’s land and position in 1406 when he became governor. Upon taking the governorship Albany passed his position of Chamberlain and chief financial officer in the kingdom to Buchan, once again making use of the corporate monarchy. During this period Buchan also inherited the earldom of Buchan from his father who inherited it from Badenoch upon Badenoch’s death in 1405. Albany was here attempting to set up Buchan as a regional lord in northeast Scotland in an area that had recently lost two of its more powerful magnates, Badenoch and Alexander Leslie, earl of Ross (c.1402).\textsuperscript{148} This arrangement was likely

\textsuperscript{143} Clement VII, 44.
\textsuperscript{144} Clement VII, 21, 44; Benedict XIII, 187, 302; C.S.S.R. 1418-1422, 129; Murielle’s pension during the reigns of James I and James II ER iv, 406, 416, 433, 447, 466, 469, 500, 514, 531, 535, 560, 564, 572, 613, 614; ER v, 19, 72, 234, 270, 306, 342
\textsuperscript{145} RMS i, App. 1 155.
\textsuperscript{146} RMS i, 892, 893.
\textsuperscript{147} Albany’s other two sons Andrew and Robert were named as heirs should John die without a male heir in the above charters, however, even though Andrew survived his brothers’ deaths in 1424 and 1425, he did not come forward to claim the lands.
\textsuperscript{148} The earldom of Buchan paired well with John’s other lands from his grandparents the Keiths.
favourable to at least one of the major land holders in the northeast, the Keiths. Buchan would eventually assume some control of the earldom of Ross from his niece Euphemia Leslie in 1415. However, this proved to be a long and drawn out fight.

Upon Buchan’s marriage to Elizabeth Douglas in 1410 Albany also endowed the couple with several pieces of land around Scotland. Buchan now controlled a vast amount of territory and as Chamberlain and son of Albany he likely wielded a good amount of power in Scotland. Murdoch of course as heir to all his father’s lands as well as the earldom of Lennox, would eventually outrank his brother, but for the majority of Albany’s tenure in power, Murdoch’s position seemed to pale in comparison to his younger brother’s.

John, earl of Buchan, appears to have almost constantly been with his father between 1406 and when he left for France in 1419. Buchan’s near constant attendance on his father was caused by Buchan’s position as Chamberlain, usually a position that would have made him part of the king’s household, and by Murdoch’s imprisonment in England from 1402 until 1415, thereby depriving Albany of his heir. Before his capture at Homildon Hill in 1402, Murdoch and Isabella of Lennox had several children including Robert of Fife, Walter of Lennox, Alexander of Kinclevin, James the Fat, Isobel, and a second daughter. In 1402 however, Robert of Fife was still underage and could not act as a stand in for his father, so Albany’s second son took on a more important role until 1407 when Robert of Fife came of age. In this manner, Albany utilised the corporate monarchy in a similar fashion to his father, where he invested a great deal of power and authority in his second son because of the inability of his first to fulfill these duties.

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150 RMS i, 945, 946, 947, 948, 949. Albany granted Buchan and Elizabeth the lands of Stewarton, Ornishuche, and Dunlop in Ayr, Trabuyage in the earldom of Carrick, Tulchfraser in Stirling, and Tuliculture in Clackmanan.
151 Buchan appears on the majority charter witness list between 1406 and when he left Scotland for France in 1419.
152 Michael Brown, “Stewart, Murdoch [Murdac], Second Duke of Albany,” ODNB.
As earl of Buchan, Chamberlain, and lord of several smaller areas of land around Aberdeen, Buchan seemed poised in 1406 to take on his cousin Alexander Stewart, earl of Mar. A contest for power never materialized. Instead Buchan seemed content with the power he had and Mar not only maintained but grew in power and prestige during the governorship of his uncle Albany.

On 16 November 1420, Murdoch, now duke of Albany, and his cousin Alexander Stewart, earl of Mar, entered into a bond in which Mar agreed to become the lele (loyal) man and serve in the retinue of his cousin for all of his life. Mar promised to serve his cousin, styled the excellent and mighty prince, Murdoch, duke of Albany, earl of Fife and Menteith, Governor of Scotland, as he had served Murdoch’s father implying the existence of a previous bond. The bond between Murdoch and Mar is very different from the one between Albany and Douglas. It is evident from the text of the bond that Duke Murdoch and Mar were not on equal footing, an interesting change from the Douglas bond. Duke Murdoch was styled “Prince Murdoch”, the same as his father was “Prince Robert” in the Douglas bond. Perhaps this distinction here indicates a growing status for the prince, but also an acknowledgement of Murdoch as Mar’s superior as Mar now served in Murdoch’s retinue, a position the earl of Douglas did not take on. While Murdoch and Mar, like Albany and Douglas, were concerned with law and order within the kingdom, the Mar bond outlines a much more explicit monetary relationship. The bond includes provisions for Mar’s profits as Justiciar of Aberdeen, Banff, and Inverness, Mar’s promise to do his best to bring justice to the honour and profit of the governor, Murdoch’s promise to confirm the charters of Mar to Thomas Stewart Mar’s illegitimate son who would also be in the retinue of Murdoch, and a rather interesting point that Mar agreed to help prevent the marriage of Walter of Lennox and Janet Erskine as Murdoch did not approve of the match.

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Nor indeed did Mar, as the Erskines had a claim to the earldom of Mar and a renewed alliance between the Albany Stewarts and the Erskines could overturn Mar’s plans to have the earldom entailed on his bastard son Thomas.\textsuperscript{154} Likely, with the exception of the bit about Walter’s marriage, this bond was similar to one signed earlier but no longer extant between Albany and Mar at an unspecified date.\textsuperscript{155} By 1420 Mar was concretely a supporter of Albany and a member of his retinue. Albany was, here again, making use of the corporate monarchy by using his nephew to secure power in the Northeast.

At the beginning of the governorship, Mar was an unlikely ally of Albany, given Albany’s very real destruction of Mar’s father’s power base in the 1390s. As the governorship continued Albany came to rely more heavily on Mar as his lieutenant in northeast Scotland, which eventually resulted in the above personal bond outlining their relationship. In sharp contrast to his father Badenoch, Mar’s historical reputation is that of a reformed magnate—a man turned from the wicked ways of his father to a life of respectable authority in Lowland Scotland. Contributing to this was also Mar’s international reputation. Mar, like his cousin Buchan and contemporary Sir John Swinton, found glory abroad in jousts and battles in England, France, and the Low Countries.\textsuperscript{156} In addition to courting the chivalric ideal, Mar also maintained relationships with the French Court and John the Fearless, duke of Burgundy for whom he fought rebel citizens in Liège.\textsuperscript{157} In his discussion of Mar’s career Brown states that Mar’s rehabilitation into a respectable magnate and loyal Albany man was not an accident, but rather

\begin{footnotes}
\item[155] Likely the bond between Albany and Mar was drawn up sometime between 1411 possibly in the prelude or follow up to Harlaw but before 1415 when Murdoch returned, thereby making the second bond necessary as like the bond with Douglas Murdoch would not have been included in the first.
\end{footnotes}
Mar’s lordship is viewed more favourably than his father’s because it resisted the increasing advancement of the MacDonald lords of the Isles in the Highlands.\(^{158}\) Mar was valuable to Albany as the clash between the lord of Isles and the Stewarts continued into his governorship.

Mar had built up an affinity in northeast Scotland beginning in the 1390s and continued until his own death in 1435. He became earl of Mar through his marriage to Isabella Douglas, widowed countess of Mar, in 1404. Although Isabella died in 1408, Mar remained earl of Mar for the rest of his life. Mar’s marriage likely was in direct opposition to Albany’s original plans for the area as he supported the Erskine claims to the earldom which Mar’s marriage settlement bypassed.\(^{159}\) However, due to Mar’s entrenchment in the area, Albany eventually gave up the Erskine cause and courted Mar instead. Mar was granted the earldom of Mar for his life, after which it reverted back to Isabella’s heirs.\(^{160}\) Mar expended considerable energy to have that agreement overturned and have the earldom entailed on his illegitimate son, Thomas, who unfortunately predeceased him in 1430 bringing his plans to nothing.\(^{161}\)

During the period of 1404 to 1411, Albany came to rely on Mar’s well-connected and well-supported lordship in Mar to keep control of the area, much the same way he relied on Douglas in the south. Although Albany granted John the earldom of Buchan and later shakily installed him as earl of Ross (both Badenoch’s former lands), a power rivalry between the two cousins never materialized; rather Buchan and Albany seemed content to accept Mar’s deeply-


\(^{159}\) RMS i, App. I 1908; David Ditchburn, “Stewart, Alexander, Earl of Mar (c. 1380–1435), Magnate,” *ODNB*. Mar’s desire to have the earldom entailed on the unlikely children of this marriage or if no children Mar’s own heirs was denied royal ratification. However, Mar did continue to hold on to the earldom of Mar after Isabella’s death four years after their marriage as she entailed it to him.

\(^{160}\) RMS i, App. I 1908.

rooted power over the northeast. Albany’s reliance on Mar even extended to unofficial approval of his piratical activity in the North Sea. Albany came to trust and rely on Mar to the extent that Mar had control of the royal forces during the Battle of Harlaw in 1411 against Donald, lord of the Isles. The results of the battle are contested in chronicle sources, but the battle brought an augmentation to Mar’s following in Aberdeenshire and the surrounding areas. This, in combination with the death of David Lindsay, earl of Crawford, in 1407, meant that Mar was the only regional magnate with the ability to continue to defend the area from the incursions of the lord of the Isles.

Due to Mar’s hold on and vast network of support in the northeast, Albany and Buchan decided not to take on the challenge of removing Mar from power. Rather they utilised him to help them govern, in accordance with the corporate monarchy. Much like Robert II’s reliance on regional magnates and family for governing, Albany used Mar’s pre-existing power to his advantage, much as he had done with the Douglases in the south of Scotland. While a lieutenant for his uncle in the northeast, Mar may have developed a closer relationship with his cousins Murdoch and Buchan. Buchan relied on Mar to safeguard his lands while he was in France, and even granted a number of lands to Mar’s adherents, the Ogilvies and Forbes.

At some point Albany and Mar entered into a personal bond. It seems likely that the first bond was made early in Albany’s governorship as that was the time Mar most benefitted from Albany’s patronage and the bond would have better outlined their relationship. Brown notes that Mar received £4,238

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163 For more information of Mar’s piracy see section on trade in chapter 4. It is perhaps this abandonment of their claim that led the Erskines to appear infrequently in Albany’s court.
166 Mar received several payments by order of the duke of Albany between 1407 and 1410, RMS iv, 16, 43, 47, 49, 82, 106, 136, 194, 196, 241.
from the Albany Governors before the return of James I. This substantial sum was meant for a few items, including building works at Inverness Castle and his expenses against the lord of the Isles. Much of the money, however, was meant to help Mar maintain and arm his retinue and affinity through payments of annuities.\footnote{Brown, “Alexander Stewart Earl of Mar,” 39-40. Brown also notes that the years of highest payments to Mar coincided with action against the Lord of the Isles, 1412, 1414-16, 1419-20, confirming his place in the northeast as a check on the power of the lord of the Isles.} The maintenance of Mar’s retinue explains the largely financial outline of the personal bond as well. Mar, like his own father Badenoch, needed his retinue to stay in power.

Despite his somewhat scattered appearance in the witness lists, Mar was certainly part of Albany’s affinity and as outlined in the personal bond his retinue, highlighting his subordinate status to Albany and later Murdoch. Like other earls, Mar’s appearances often coincided with meetings of the General Council, of which Mar was certainly a part.\footnote{Mar most often witnessed Albany’s charters in Perth. Based on surviving evidence of General Council meetings for the period of the governorship, Perth appears to have been Albany’s favoured spot to hold the meetings. Mar’s frequent although not exclusive appearance at Perth suggests that there were several more General Council meetings held there than we have evidence for. This evidence suggests that Albany favoured Perth as a royal capital as his father had. Mar’s witness at Perth RMS1, 877, 879, 880, 881, 882, 883, 895, 898, 939; William Fraser, The Scots of Buccleuch, 2 vol. 2, (Edinburgh, 1878), no. 22. For Robert II’s geographic locations see Stephen Boardman, “Robert II (1371-1390),” in Scottish Kingship 1306-1542, Essays in Honour of Norman Macdougall, ed. Michael Brown and Roland Tanner, (Edinburgh: John Donald, 2008), 76.} In addition to tending to the needs of his own lands, and the occasional act of piracy, Mar also ventured to England, France, and the Low Countries on embassies but also for jousts, and was Admiral of Scotland, meaning that unlike his cousin Buchan, he was not and could not be in constant attendance on Albany. Nonetheless, Mar, like Douglas in the south of Scotland, was paramount in stabilising power in Scotland during the governorship. Albany, like his father, relied on the courted good will of the local magnates and corporate monarchy structure to carry out the rule of royal governance outside his own landed powerbase.
The partnership with Mar was also bound up in the Stewart family’s old enmity with the lords of the Isles. Despite Donald, lord of the Isles’, close familial relationship to Albany (Albany was Donald’s uncle), there was little cooperation nor indeed a personal relationship of any kind between the two.¹⁶⁹ Albany came to armed confrontations with Donald of the Isles twice during his career, once in 1398 and then again in 1411 at the Battle of Harlaw. The battle was one of the most contentious episodes of internal unrest during the governorship, ostensibly about the lord of the Isles’ claim to the earldom of Ross in the right of his wife Mary Leslie in opposition to Albany’s claims.¹⁷⁰ The battle was not an act of purely personal animosity on either side, but rather another installment in the ongoing struggle for power between the lords of the Isles and the Scottish crown, albeit with a personal twist. Although Albany and Donald of the Isles had a personal disagreement over the earldom of Ross, likely Albany also continued the Scottish crown’s general antagonism towards the lords of the Isles and their land aggrandizement goals.

Historians differ on the state of the relationship between the lords of the Isles and the Stewart dynasty. Alexander Grant states that John of the Isles, Donald’s father, generally kept a good relationship with Robert II, no doubt due in part to John’s marriage to Robert II’s daughter Margaret, but after his death the relationship quickly deteriorated.¹⁷¹ Hunt asserts that the

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¹⁶⁹ Donald’s father John married as his second wife Margaret Stewart, Albany’s sister. Despite having older brothers from his father John’s first marriage to Amie MacRuairi, Donald inherited the lordship of the Isles while his MacRuairi half-brothers inherited the MacRuairi lands. According to the Book of Clanranald the eldest son from John’s first marriage, Ranald, gave the scepter of the Isles to his brother Donald during a meeting of the nobles despite the nobles’ opposition. Karen Hunt has stated that the bypassing of Ranald may have had to do with the elevation of the Stewarts to the kingship as Donald’s grandfather was now king and could reasonably expect some form of patronage due to that. Alexander Cameron, trans. The Book of Clanranald, CELT, 29 January 2013. https://celt.ucc.ie/published/T402566/index.html; Hunt, “The Governorship,” 220.

¹⁷⁰ Brown, Disunited Kingdoms, 235.

¹⁷¹ Grant, Independence and Nationhood, 214. The relationship between David II and the lords of the Isles is less contested among historians as the lords of the Isles favoured the Balliol claim over that of David II in the Second Wars of Independence.
relationship between Robert II and John of the Isles, while not hostile, was not overly warm either. Robert II did confirm all of the lord of the Isles’ land in 1371, but Robert II also favoured Walter Leslie’s claim to the earldom of Ross over the lord of the Isles which would be an ongoing point of contention between the Scottish government and the lords of the Isles.¹⁷² Steve Boardman, like Grant, sees the early years of the Stewart dynasty as a time when the Scottish king actively sought to integrate the lordship of the Isles into the wider Scottish political community, particularly in the king’s grandson Donald.¹⁷³

Despite periods of peace, the Stewart dynasty as a whole was often at odds with the lords of the Isles. Conflicts with the MacDonald lords of the Isles were often about their growing hegemony in western Scotland. The lords of the Isles claimed much of the Hebrides and western Scotland as their domain.¹⁷⁴ The fourteenth century saw a stabilisation and expansion of the lordship of the Isles under John MacDonald (d. 1387) and his son Donald. In some ways their regional supremacy was not unlike that of other magnates in Scotland such as the Douglases or Albany himself.¹⁷⁵ The MacDonalds expanded out of the Hebrides onto mainland Scotland particularly in Argyll and Ross because they were able to “exert armed pressure in areas where legal lordship was weak or missing.”¹⁷⁶ As discussed previously power in the Highlands was absent or fragmented in this period. By exerting force the MacDonalds could insert themselves as the lords of an area which often resulted in their installment as permanent lords that could in

¹⁷² Hunt, “The Governorship,” 221. For a full history of the earldom of Ross see chapter 3 of this work.
¹⁷³ Boardman, The Early Stewart Kings, 90-1.
¹⁷⁴ For a full history of the kingdom/lordship of the Isles up to 1336 see R. Andrew McDonald, The Kingdom of the Isles: Scotland’s Western Seaboard c.1100-c.1336 (East Linton: Tuckwell Press, 2002).
¹⁷⁶ Grant, Independence and Nationhood, 213.
turn be sanctioned by the Scottish government. This method, however, could sometimes lead to conflict with locals and the crown as it did in 1411 at Harlaw.

The attempted expansion of the MacDonalds was at the heart of the armed conflicts between Albany and Donald of the Isles. After the destruction of Badenoch’s powerbase in the early 1390s and the partial absorption of it by Albany there were still areas of weak or no lordship in the Highlands. As a result Alexander of Lochaber, Donald, lord of the Isles’ brother, and his army aggressively expanded into these regions particularly in the Great Glen, Ross, and Buchan. In April 1398 this aggressive expansion led to intervention on the part of the Scottish government. The king and parliament charged Albany and Rothesay with leading an army into the Highlands to subdue the lord of the Isles and his brothers styled as rebels in the parliamentary record. To help the campaign along Robert III granted Rothesay control of the northern earldom of Atholl which allowed him to exercise some direct authority in the northern part of the kingdom. The elevation of Rothesay and Albany to their dukedoms may have also been part of this campaign. Their chosen titles emphasized their connections to Gaelic Scotland. In this way Albany and Rothesay could be portrayed as leaders rather than adversaries of the Gaels of the Isles. In this manner the conflicts between the lords of the Isles and the Stewarts should not be viewed as they sometimes have been as a Lowland vs. Highland or English vs. Gaelic world, rather the conflicts were about power and authority in the Highlands, as well as internal family struggles. In 1398 however, Albany and Rothesay’s joint venture into the Highlands was only
marginally successful. Donald of the Isles agreed to confine his brother Alexander, but broke that agreement and released him a few months later, and their expansionist tendencies continued.¹⁸³

Due to this on-going conflict part of the causes of the battle of Harlaw can be attributed to the pre-existing animosity between the lords of the Isles and the Stewart dynasty.¹⁸⁴ Donald, lord of the Isles, did not appear once in any of Albany’s known charters, and it seems that he did not attend General Council meetings.¹⁸⁵ Their relationship consists mainly of the struggle over the earldom of Ross and the Battle of Harlaw. The historiography of the Battle of Harlaw is fraught with much debate about both the causes and outcomes of the battle. As both Karen Hunt and Ian Olson have discussed the discrepancies and merits of the sources for the battle at length it does not seem necessary to repeat the discussion here.¹⁸⁶ Rather the purpose is to uncover the extent to which Albany’s positions and power were undermined by the lord of the Isles, if at all.

Donald of the Isles like his father maintained an interest in expanding further into western Scotland through the early 1400s, and in particular wanted to claim the earldom of Ross. After the death of Alexander Leslie, earl of Ross, c.1402 there was no adult leadership in the earldom. The heiress of Ross was the young Euphemia Leslie, granddaughter and ward of Albany.¹⁸⁷ After the earl of Ross’s death Albany took control of both Ross and his granddaughter. Albany placed

¹⁸³ RPS, 1399/11/5; Boardman, The Early Stewart Kings, 222 n. 87; ER iii, 460. Albany received a payment of £59 19s and 6s for his efforts on behalf of the king in remote regions of the kingdom in 1398.
¹⁸⁵ The evidence for the General Council meetings is sparse at best and it is possible Donald, lord of the Isles did attend on occasion, but he did not seem to be in the habit during the reign of Robert III. It seems likely giving the on-going conflict that Donald of the Isles made no appearances at Albany’s court.
¹⁸⁶ See Hunt, “The Governorship,” chapter 3 and Olson, Bludie Harlaw, in particular chapters 3 through 6. Brown has also briefly discussed the context of the Battle of Harlaw in a wider British Isles sense giving consideration to all sides of the interpretations including a family squabble, Highland vs. Lowland or Gaelic vs. English, Crown vs. Rebels, etc. Brown concludes that the Battle of Harlaw did cement some notion of cultural difference within Scotland. Brown, Disunited Kingdoms, 242-4.
¹⁸⁷ Why Euphemia was Albany’s ward is a bit of a mystery as her mother Isobel was still alive and married to Sir Walter Haliburton of Dirleton. It is possible that Isobel’s remarriage to Walter Haliburton ended her ability to rule Ross for her daughter during her minority. Or more likely she left the care of Ross in the hands of her father Albany given the on-going conflict with the lord of the Isles, and the general upheaval in the Highlands.
a man known as the “Black Captain” as guardian of Dingwall Castle, installed his brother-in-law Alexander Keith as the Baillie of Kingedward, and styled himself as the “lord of the ward of Ross.”188 A few years later in 1405 another regional power died, Albany’s brother Badenoch. Badenoch had kept the title earl of Buchan after his defeat by Albany in the 1390s, even if he had greatly diminished powers. Badenoch had no legitimate heirs so the earldom fell to Albany and he granted it in 1406 to his son John. Albany then two days later ratified the charter as governor. The legality of this move is dubious, and may have been contested by the lord of the Isles as John was styled lord rather than earl of Buchan until after the Battle of Harlaw.189 Hunt points out that it is significant that Albany waited until after the death of Robert III to grant Buchan to his son. This arrangement seemed to be agreeable to the region’s nobles such as William Keith, Sir William Hay Constable of Scotland, and Sir Alexander Fraser. However, in his study of the Scottish nobility in the early Stewart period Grant states that “royal or official approval must have been required before a man could become an earl.”190 Arguably, Albany as regent could be said to provide “official approval,” as there was no king to approve the charter and in the case of Buchan no legitimate heir to claim the earldom from Albany. While Hunt states that Albany could not create new earls that likely did not extend to the confirmation of an earldom on a legitimate heir, otherwise during the eighteen years of the governorships earldoms would have been left in limbo if an earl died even with a legitimate heir.191 The contestable or dubious nature of this act may lay in the fact that Albany issued charters and acts in his own name as governor

190 Grant, “The Higher Nobility,” 8.
rather than in James I’s name as a normal regent would do. In theory, Albany’s ability to act as
governor or regent rested on the idea that his power still derived from the king or at least the idea
that Scotland still had a sovereign although uncrowned monarch. If Albany had done the same
thing but acted in name of the king, although the king was still a minor would that have changed
the idea of the legality of the act even though Albany’s authority still stemmed from the same
source? Likely Albany waited to grant Buchan to his son as Robert III would not have agreed,
but as Albany inherited the earldom of Buchan he was not “creating” a new earl by bestowing
his own land on his son. The dubious nature of this act seems to stem more from the wait for
Robert III’s death rather than an illegality of transferring his own title to his son.

The issue over dominance in the north of Scotland was only heightened by the situation
in Ross. The often repeated chronicle story states that Euphemia, left in the care of her
grandfather was bullied into resigning the rights to Ross to her uncle John and shooed off into a
nunnery. The lord of the Isles contested this resignation as his wife Mary was the sister of the
deceased earl of Ross and father of Euphemia, Alexander Leslie. Mary therefore had a right to
the earldom if Euphemia decided to resign it. Albany denied this right and instead granted the
earldom of Ross to his second son John, earl of Buchan, resulting in the Battle of Harlaw.192

There are several issues with this version of events as it traditionally stands. First and
foremost the Battle of Harlaw took place in 1411, four years before Euphemia resigned the rights
of Ross to Buchan. Karen Hunt has speculated that the lord of the Isles made several petitions to
Albany to have the rights of Mary Leslie recognized in the wake of the 1406 grant of the earldom
of Buchan.193 These petitions were denied or ignored. However, there is also an often overlooked

192 MacPhail, *Highland Papers*, vol. 1, 28-9; Buchanan, *The History of Scotland*, 79; Boece, *The Chronicles of
Scotland*, 370-1.
marriage dispensation for Euphemia and Thomas Dunbar, son of the earl of Moray, dated 3 June 1415.\textsuperscript{194} The dispensation is dated twelve days before Euphemia ultimately resigned Ross to Buchan.\textsuperscript{195} Clearly as Euphemia entered the convent at North Berwick, the marriage did not take place.\textsuperscript{196} However, if Albany had been planning for years to have his granddaughter take the veil and resign her earldom in favour of Buchan, why then go through the trouble to arrange a marriage? The marriage dispensation adds another layer of curiosity because although it does not state who applied for it, it seems highly unlikely that Albany would not have known about it. In 1415, Euphemia was between thirteen and seventeen years old, likely closer to seventeen given her parents’ marriage sometime in the mid to late 1390s. It seems likely that Albany was involved in the marriage arrangement and unlikely that he would suddenly change his mind about his granddaughter’s marriage.\textsuperscript{197} This proposed marriage may have been part of an ongoing reconciliation between the wider Dunbar family with the governor after the return of the Dunbar, earl of March, from England in 1409.\textsuperscript{198} Why the marriage did not take place is unknown, but it is not inconceivable that Euphemia chose the religious life of her own accord. She did not leave any records beyond the transfer of Ross, so it can never be known for certain, but it does seem possible that entering the convent was her own idea, not something she was persuaded into, particularly as the marriage had already been arranged.\textsuperscript{199} Hunt has also suggested that Mar may have offered himself as a potential groom for Euphemia as he applied

\textsuperscript{194} Benedict XIII, 317.
\textsuperscript{195} RMS i, App. ii 1976, 1977.
\textsuperscript{196} Paul, The Scots Peerage, vol. 1, 241. Euphemia entered a convent in North Berwick not far from where her mother lived with her second husband Walter Haliburton, lord of Dirleton.
\textsuperscript{197} As demonstrated above, Albany often used marriages to create or seal alliances as well as parts of personal bonds.
\textsuperscript{198} Thomas Dunbar, earl of Moray, also possessed several of the lands that had at one point been held by the earl of Ross and also was a tenant in some of the Ross lands. The marriage of Moray’s heir to Euphemia would have reunited many of these lands. Hunt, “The Governorship,” 273.
\textsuperscript{199} Another possibility for why the resignation happened in 1415 and not before was that Euphemia may not have been of age to legally resign the earldom of Ross before 1415.
for an annulment of his marriage to Maria Horn around the same time in 1415. This arrangement would have allowed Mar to regain one of his father’s lands and also position him as the uncontested dominant power in the region, a sure line of defense against the lord of the Isles. Albany even made the petition for annulment on Mar’s behalf. While Hunt argues that the marriage between Mar and Euphemia would have been contrary to Albany’s wishes, given Albany’s attempt to set up his son Buchan as a rival regional power to Mar, the close relationship between Mar and Albany at this point in 1415 argues otherwise. In the intervening four years after Harlaw, Albany began to rely more on Mar and had already given up the idea of setting up Buchan as a rival and likely entered into a personal bond with Mar. Albany’s acceptance of Mar as a regional power and part of the corporate monarchy was complete by June 1415. As a testament to the amount of power Mar held in the northeast, Liber Pluscardensis states simply that the Battle of Harlaw was fought not between the governor and the lord of the Isles but between the earl of Mar and the lord of the Isles. However, most other accounts differ and agree that Albany was involved.

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200 Benedict XIII, 313.
202 Benedict XIII, 313.
203 Hunt, “The Governorship,” 273. David Ditchburn’s analysis of Mar’s request for annulment highlights Mar’s personal reasons Mar wanted to annul the marriage because Maria was still legally married to her first husband. Mar applied to have his marriage annulled twice, once in 1415 and again in 1424, but Maria was still styled as the countess of Mar a year before Mar’s death in 1435. David Ditchburn, “Stewart, Alexander, earl of Mar (c. 1380–1435), magnate.” ODNB.
205 For a full discussion of sources for this see Olson, Bludie Harlaw. The nearest contemporary chronicler, Andrew of Wyntoun is unfortunately maddeningly silent on these events. Bower, however, states that the battle occurred between Mar and Donald of the Isles as the lord of the Isles had sacked Aberdeen. The losses on Mar’s side were much heavier according to Bower and included many men of Buchan and Albany’s grandson William Abernethy. Bower does not report a victor of the battle itself. Bower, Scotichronicon, vol. 8, 75-77. The History of the MacDonalds in particular paints a scathing picture of Albany in which he snatched away his granddaughter Euphemia and persuaded her to give up Ross. This act was so against Euphemia’s will that she “was bereaved of her life” by Albany. After this apparent murder of his granddaughter, Albany refused the lord of the Isles’ petitions for Ross in the right of Donald’s wife in a haughty manner. The lord of the Isles eventually declared that “he would either lose all or gain the Earldom of Ross.” Thereafter the Battle of Harlaw ensued and Donald of the Isles was the victor. This image of Albany as a murderous, grasping, and greedy pretender fits well with other later narrative
What then is the significance of the Battle of Harlaw during Albany’s governorship? It was part of the ongoing dispute over power between the royal Stewarts and the lords of the Isles. Hunt states that Donald, lord of the Isles, first tried to obtain Ross through the methods acceptable to the Stewart dynasty, petitioning to have his wife’s rights recognized. However, he was unsuccessful, “and thus, the enormity of Donald’s actions at Harlaw could be interpreted as an attempt by an embittered and unfulfilled magnate, who was forced to resort to the tactics employed by his ancestors to regain credibility in the eyes of his own kinsmen.”

The outcome of the battle was contested, so much so that Bower does not report a victor of the battle itself. Albany gathered an army in the aftermath, followed the lord of the Isles to Dingwall Castle, and attacked Donald of the Isles’ forces. The lord of the Isles then submitted to Albany at Lochgilp in 1412. The victor of the battle may be contested but the year after Donald, lord of the Isles, submitted to Albany. According to Bower, Donald of the Isles “offered oaths and hostages to keep the peace and provide protection for the king’s subjects.” For the short term at least it seems Donald of the Isles ultimately recognized Albany’s authority as governor of Scotland and representative of the king.

Based on the previous evidence of incursion from the Isles it would be reasonable to say that the Stewart dynasty had an uneasy relationship with the lords of the Isles. The seemingly friendly relationship between Robert II and his son-in-law John of the Isles was likely an anomaly in the crown’s poor relations with the lords of Isles dating back to the reign of Robert

207 Bower, Scotichronicon, vol. 8, 75-77.
208 Olson, Bludie Harlaw, 125-135.
209 Bower, Scotichronicon, vol. 8, 77.
Other than a brief period of reconciliation with the lord of the Isles during the trial and execution of the Albany Stewarts, James I would also find the lord of the Isles troublesome. Donald of the Isles’ main goal in 1411 was probably obtaining the earldoms of Ross and Buchan for regional supremacy. He was unsuccessful in that endeavour. Donald of the Isles had an impressive backing and his own network of allies in the northwest of Scotland, and Albany’s subsequent frequent and unlimited promotion of Mar was to counter that. John Bannerman speculates that the claim of Donald of the Isles having 10,000 men at Harlaw was not much of an exaggeration given the resources he commanded and his access to gallowglass soldiers. The amount of money Albany’s government spent to rebuild Inverness Castle and fortify it signified that the 1412 submission of the lord of the Isles was not a true end to the conflict for dominance in the Highlands. After the 1412 submission at Lochgilp, there was not another full scale incursion to mainland Scotland from the Isles during either Albany governorship. It seems the Battle of Harlaw and the 1412 submission put an end to large scale armed resistance to the governor at least. The lord of the Isles could still not be counted among Albany’s affinity nor likely even a friendly ally, but Donald of the Isles did not make a reappearance to contend for his wife’s inheritance after Euphemia’s June 1415 resignation.

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211 James I embarked on a four year campaign against the lord of the Isles starting in 1428. Brown, James I, 93.
214 Hunt, “The Governorship,” 271-2; ER iv, 145, 163, 173, 211, 227, 228, 255. Albany authorised several payments to Mar between 1412 and 1416 for substantial building at Inverness Castle including a new tower.
215 Mar did receive £20 in 1416 for a naval campaign against the lord of the Isles indicating localized continued hostilities, but although Hunt makes a speculative argument for the campaign’s attachment to the lord of the Isles’ protest against Buchan’s assumption of the title earl of Ross there is no other evidence to back this up. ER iv, 265; Hunt, “The Governorship,” 275-6.
The end result of Euphemia’s resignation and Albany’s ultimate conferment of Ross on Buchan was a further locking out of the lord of the Isles from mainland Scotland. While this transfer of the earldom may not have been strictly legal it was likely viewed by the Scottish political community as a good compromise between the northern powers of Mar and the lord of the Isles for the defense of the realm. Hunt states,

The strategic importance of these two earldoms [Buchan and Ross] had long been recognised by Scottish monarchs, and were invariably held by magnates whose loyalty was beyond dispute, while the marginalisation of the MacDonald chiefs was to become an attendant policy during the reign of David II, if not earlier. The reversal of this policy would have represented such a radical break from past convictions, that it could not have been contemplated even by the most pretentious of regents. Despite his personal interest in Buchan gaining the earldom of Ross, Albany’s general designs on Ross were not out of place with recent attitudes of Scottish monarchs. Perhaps this historical animosity boded ill for any alliance or at least friendly relationship between the lord of the Isles and Albany particularly as governor. As in many other policies, Albany’s governorship did not depart from the practiced traditions of the Scottish kings. Among the Scottish nobility and indeed Albany’s own family, Donald, lord of the Isles, is the only magnate that falls into the category of constant internal enemy. Many of the other Scottish magnates may not have been as friendly as Sir John Stewart of Lorn, but often reached some form of agreement with Albany like the earl of Douglas did in 1409, in order to continue the smooth governance of the kingdom in the absence of the king. The later years of Albany’s governorship saw some concessions to the lord of the Isles such as the marriage of Albany’s grandson Celestine/Gillespic Campbell to Donald of the Isles’ daughter Mary, but under the Albany governorship the lord of the Isles was never fully

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216 Likely Buchan did not actually exercise full power over the earldom of Ross and the lord of the Isles maintained many loyal followers and adherents in the area and was able to continue his influence over parts of the earldom. When James I conferred Ross on Alexander, lord of the Isles in 1436 it was likely an acknowledgement of power already existent in the area rather than a transfer of power. Hunt, “The Governorship,” 279-80.
217 Hunt, “The Governorship,” 277. The earldom of Ross had recently been held by Walter Leslie an adherent of David II and the Wolf of Badenoch, the favourite son of Robert II.
integrated into mainstream Scottish politics or the corporate monarchy. Albay was unable to reach an agreement with the lord of the Isles or court his goodwill, but he certainly countered him well in his cultivation of Mar.

*Fife, Menteith, and Perthshire*

Most of the Albany Stewart landed territory lay in central Scotland. The core of Albany’s original landed base came from his marriage to the heiress of Menteith, Margaret Graham in 1361. This marriage was originally meant to solve the issue of a wide ranging feud between the Menteiths of Rusky (relations of the earls of Menteith) and the Drummonds over lands in Menteith, as well as to augment the Steward’s power in Central Scotland. Albany and Margaret were married for almost twenty years and Albany remained the earl of Menteith after Margaret’s death. In the beginning of his career Menteith was the center of Albany’s landed base and where he and Margaret built their home and expression of lordly power, Doune Castle.

Doune Castle was likely constructed prior to 1381, but due to the absence of household accounts there is no way of knowing who Albany employed to design and build the castle. The design of the castle does build on that of his father’s castle at Dundonald, but makes further innovations such as a more elaborate gatehouse, a larger number of public and semi-public rooms, and a great hall that was separate from but still connected to Albany and Margaret’s

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219 See Map 1.1
220 Fraser, *The Red Book of Menteith*, vol. 1, 124, 128-9; Boardman, *The Early Stewart Kings*, 16-17; Michael Penman, *David II*, 246-8.
private quarters in the gatehouse.²²¹ Doune’s location was strategic. The castle was built at the cross-roads of two main trading routes from Edinburgh to Inverlochy and Glasgow to Perth and Inverness.²²² As such Albany would have been able to command some control over the trade through central Scotland.

Figure 3.3 Doune Castle²²³

The castle, itself, was a display of Albany’s status and power. The castle’s design was innovative for late fourteenth century Scotland and followed the trends of continental building. There is a striking similarity between Doune and the French Château de Pierrefonds, built by the

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²²³ Photo credit, Doune Castle, author, 2016.
Duke of Orleans.\textsuperscript{224} Doune Castle possesses a commanding gate house meant to impress those approaching, particularly as the castle dominates the surrounding countryside. While highly defensible, this show of power was likely meant more to display Albany’s abilities to defend the castle rather than foreseeing an actual need to. The gatehouse could be closed off from the rest of the castle, but lacked basic cooking facilities and access to clean water. Therefore it was not meant to be a hideaway from the rest of the castle.\textsuperscript{225} Within the gatehouse are a series of increasingly well-appointed private chambers meant to further display Albany’s power. The entry to the increasingly private rooms further up in the main tower were well controlled and designed to impress and display Albany’s power. Only the closest family would have been allowed in the highest chambers in the gatehouse, most visitors likely would never have proceeded beyond the commanding great hall on the first level or Albany’s semi-private rooms on the second floor.\textsuperscript{226} It appears that Doune was meant to serve as Albany’s main residence, which accounts for such a show of power in its design and construction. However, by the time Albany became governor Doune increasingly faded into the background, and he was much more likely to conduct governmental business at Falkland or Perth.

In terms of actual land, Albany had his two earldoms of Fife and Menteith and accumulated several smaller pieces of land in Perthshire and particularly around Loch Tay. Given the sheer amount of land Albany and his family controlled he was overlord of several minor Scottish nobles and gentry. Albany certainly did not neglect to cultivate the good will of his tenants and neighbours and draw them into his wider affinity. There are several instances

\textsuperscript{225} Oram, “Dundonald, Doune,” 274-5. 
\textsuperscript{226} Oram, “Dundonald, Doune,” 274-6.
within in his own lands where Albany used bonds, land grants, and good lordship to keep men in
his landed sphere of influence loyal to him. In addition to drawing men into his wider affinity,
Albany also employed the men of his lands in his household and likely in his retinue. Albany
expended much on cultivating the good will of his tenants. Although they would not always find
themselves in agreement, the men in Albany’s landed base seem largely to have been loyal to
him both before and during the governorship. Albany did have a rival for power in Perthshire, his
own half-brother, Walter Stewart, earl of Atholl and Caithness. Atholl, unlike Albany’s other
brothers, was not often integrated into the corporate monarchy by his father. Prior to the
governorship Atholl and Albany worked fairly well together, but the quest for regional
dominance in Perthshire led to rivalry. Atholl did not become an enemy of the realm as the lord
of the Isles had over his disagreements with the governor, but during Albany’s governorship
Atholl proved a more inconstant ally than other nobles as the two brothers vied for land and
regional supremacy.

Walter Stewart, lord of Brechin and later earl of Atholl and Caithness, was the youngest
son of Robert II and his second wife Euphemia of Ross. During the late 1380s and 1390s, Atholl
had been an ally of Albany. Atholl assisted Albany in the destruction of their brother Badenoch
in Perthshire by building his own area of influence. To achieve dominance in Perthshire, Atholl
acted as tutor for his young niece, Euphemia, countess of Strathearn and daughter of Robert II’s
fourth surviving son David, built a personal powerbase in Strathearn, and later acted as a
governmental official in northern Perthshire thereby reducing the influence of the Wolf of
Badenoch in that region.227 Atholl aspired to permanent power in Strathearn, but Albany

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thwarted those plans by arranging the marriage of countess Euphemia to one of his own adherents Patrick Graham who subsequently became earl of Strathearn. However, Albany tried to appease Atholl’s desire for landed territory by granting him the earldom of Atholl sometime before the 1404 General Council in Linlithgow where he first appears as the earl of Atholl and Caithness.228

Despite this upset in Strathearn, Albany still wanted Atholl to police Perthshire, but Atholl did not give up his pursuit of Strathearn. It seems very likely that Atholl was behind the 1413 murder of Patrick Graham, earl of Strathearn, by John Drummond of ConCraig, Graham’s chief official in Strathearn. After this Atholl once more installed himself as tutor of another young heir of Strathearn, Malise Graham, Patrick Graham and Euphemia Stewart’s son.229 With his successful coup in Strathearn, Atholl built up a rival powerbase centred in Perthshire in opposition to Albany’s plans for his own family, namely Murdoch and Buchan.230 Throughout the rest of the governorship Atholl continued to build his influence in Perthshire. This may be another reason Albany was eager to install Buchan in northeastern lands, to counter Atholl’s growing power. While in this period Atholl never moved in direct open defiance of Albany, he cannot be counted among Albany’s affinity. Furthermore, although a somewhat regular witness to Albany’s charters, Atholl’s appearances on the witness lists occur almost exclusively in Perth. Atholl did not often travel to see his brother and likely confined their relationship to meetings of

228 A. A. M. Duncan, “Councils General, 1404-1423,” *The Scottish Historical Review* 35, no. 120 (1956): 134; Brown, “‘That Old Serpent and Ancient of Evil Days,’” 28. Atholl was the only one of Robert II’s son to not receive an earldom directly from Robert II or his political maneuvering. Atholl had gained the lordship of Brechin through marrying the heiress Margaret Barclay.


the General Council which often occurred in Perth. Atholl’s frequent appearance on Perth based charters makes sense given the proximity of his lands and interests.

Atholl generally appeared infrequently in governmental business outside the general councils. Albany did not utilize him as an ambassador, governmental official, nor is there any indication that Atholl was part of Albany’s retinue as Mar was. There is no surviving bond between the brothers, indicating that Atholl’s power in Perthshire was not considered great enough to warrant his necessary cooperation for the sound governance of the kingdom. Albany attempted to appease his brother and did not stop him from acting as tutors for the young heirs of Strathearn, but for the most part it seems Atholl was left to his own devices.

Outside of his rivalry with Atholl, Albany generally cultivated the loyalty and good will of the men in his lands or those close by. He used a combination of bonds, land grants, and governmental and household positions to promote loyalty to himself, particularly during the governorship. Albany used the same methods to court both the lords and gentry of his landed regions. An early example of Albany’s cultivation of men in his own lands is Bartholomew de Loen. Albany and Loen entered into a bond in 1372 and renewed the bond in 1375. In this case Albany was cultivating men in his own lands as well as bringing a former favorite of David

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231 Atholl’s witness list appearances in Perth RMS i, 883, 884, 905, 908, 910, 941; Fraser, The Scots of Buccleuch vol. 2, no. 22; William Fraser, The Sutherland Book, vol. 3, (Edinburgh, 1892), no. 27.
232 NRS RH5/157; RH6/163. Fraser, The Red Book of Menteith, vol. 2, 247-9; Boardman, The Early Stewart Kings, 16, 34, 39, 68; A. A. M. Duncan, “Honi soit qui mal y pense: David II and Edward III, 1346-52,” SHR, 67, no. 184 (1988), 116; Bruce Webster, ed., Regesta Regum Scotorum VI: The Acts of David II, 1329-1371 (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1982), 104, 267; Penman, David II, 121, 261. Robert I granted the barony of Barnbougle to the earls of Menteith after the forfeiture of Roger of Moubray for treason as the Moubrays adhered to the Balliol cause. In 1346 David II granted the barony of Barnbougle to Loen and Philippa of Moubray. The barony was reconfirmed on 6 January 1362 to Loen and Philippa by David II, but this time it had the additional stipulation that if the Graham earls of Menteith and their successors wanted to reclaim the barony they would have to pay 2,000 marks in feudal casualties to Loen. Loen served David II mainly as a diplomat and as constable of Kinghorn in Fife. He petitioned Pope Clement VI on behalf of David II for David’s freedom from English captivity as well as carrying out several other diplomatic missions to France.
II’s into agreement with the Stewart dynasty. Loen had trouble maintaining hold over his barony of Barnbougle, granted to him by David II in 1346, and both indentures he made with Albany concerned the recovery of Barnbougle, a former possession of the earls of Menteith. Loen may have run into problems recovering the land as he like some other of David II’s favourites fled to England when the Steward inherited the throne. Loen’s flight likely had to do with the change in dynasty, but also fear of Albany. Loen had been a pawn in David II’s schemes to disrupt Albany’s control of Menteith in the 1360s, but in the end Loen and Albany reached an agreement. Certainly Loen and Philippa were back in Scotland by July 1372 when the first bond was drawn up.233

The 1372 bond included provisions for a marriage between the Moubray/Loens and the Albany Stewarts. Albany’s daughter Janet was contracted to marry Loen’s son David. This marriage likely never took place, but the provisions for it were very detailed. Most interestingly, the upkeep of the couple was placed entirely on the Loen family, even if Janet outlived her husband and in-laws. If Janet outlived her husband and in-laws she would hold the whole barony of Barnbougle for her life and it would only revert back to Philippa’s heirs after Janet’s death provided she and David did not have children of their own.234 In a few short lines in the end of the document, Albany also promised to give his aid and counsel to Loen and Philippa in recovering their lands.235 The marriage of Janet and David would have brought a previously alienated piece of Menteith land back into the influence although not the direct control of the earl and countess of Menteith, and the bond more generally reconciled Loen and the Stewarts, as well as built a relationship between Loen and Albany specifically.

233 Boardman, *The Early Stewart Kings*, 39, 68.
234 NRS RH5/157
Albany and Loen renewed their bond on 25 November 1375 without restating the marriage contract. In this case Albany promised in good faith to aid and counsel Loen in the recovery of his wife’s lands. Albany also promised to maintain Loen and all his possessions against all men except the king, Albany’s brothers, William, earl of Douglas, Douglas’ son James, and, of course, himself. Whether or not Albany followed through on this promise is unknown as Loen and the barony of Barnbougle disappeared from the record at this point.

As there was no further renewal of the bond, it seems reasonable to conclude that Loen and Philippa regained control of the lands. The proposed marriage, on the other hand, likely never took place. There is no further evidence of David Loen. Janet appears in the Exchequer Rolls of Scotland twice in 1377 and 1379, and then abruptly disappears. In 1377 and 1379 she received payments of ten marks from the customs of Perth during the lifetime of John, lord of the Isles. The entries do not state why Janet received the payments, but Janet did have a familial connection with the lord of the Isles as John of the Isles married Janet’s aunt, Margaret Stewart. Perhaps Janet was a favourite niece often in her aunt’s company. John, lord of the Isles, died in 1387, but there is no record of Janet’s yearly payment after 1379. In 1379 Janet was probably in her early to mid-teens, old enough to fulfill the marriage contract, but there is no further record of an Albany Stewart daughter named Janet. It is possible that she is one of the unnamed daughters in subsequent marriages connected to the family, but the stoppage of her payment several years before the death of John of the Isles, indicates a likely possibility that she died sometime around 1380, possibly due to the plague recorded that year by Walter Bower, which was said to have caused the death of a third of the kingdom.

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237 ER, ii, 561, 610.
238 Bower, Scotichronicon, vol. 7, 381.
Loen was not the only minor noble from whom Albany sought loyalty. Albany’s cultivation of the loyalty of the Graham family is an excellent example of the multiple methods Albany used within his own lands to gain loyalty. Sir William Graham, lord Graham, in particular was a staunch supporter of Albany. Graham appeared in Albany’s witness lists twenty-five times. Sir William Graham and his brother Patrick, later earl of Strathearn, were kinsmen of Albany as Sir William married Albany’s niece, Mary Stewart, daughter of Robert III. Albany’s patronage of the Grahams began in the 1370s when he granted Sir William’s father Patrick land in Achinross in Lennox. Albany granted the Grahams other pieces of land, and Murdoch likely carried on this patronage by encouraging his father-in-law Duncan, earl of Lennox, to grant William Graham enough land in Lennox to make him Lennox’s chief tenant.\(^{239}\) As discussed above, Patrick Graham also became the earl of Strathearn by marrying Albany’s niece Euphemia, although he was ultimately murdered for his part in Albany’s power play against Atholl. Finally, Albany also used governmental offices and gifts to court the Grahams. Both Sir Patrick the elder and Sir William were Auditors of the Exchequer during Albany and Buchan’s tenures as Chamberlain, and Sir Patrick replaced one of Robert III’s favourites, John Schaw, in the reception of customs on English cloth.\(^{240}\)

As prominent land holders, and long-time Albany adherents, Sir William Graham and his brother Patrick were likely on Albany’s General Council; their appearances on the witness lists coincide with known meetings in Perth. Sir Patrick, earl of Strathearn, until his demise in 1413,

\(^{239}\) RMS i, 651, 685; RMS ii, 165, 166, 168. 166 is a charter issued by Isabella of Lennox for the same lands in Lennox, dated 25 August 1423, fifteen days after her father’s original grant which was issued with the consent of Isabella, Murdoch, and Walter. In 1416 Albany granted Sir William lands in Dumfries.

\(^{240}\) C. A. McGladdery, “Graham Family (per. c. 1250–1513), Nobility,” ODNB; Boardman, The Early Stewart Kings, 211.; RPS 1398/14, 1398/15; RMS i, App. ii 1937; ER i, 161, 186, 202, 219, 236, 264, 273, 283, 309, 319, 339, 350, 370, 405, 424, 433, 452, 462, 381, 486, 508, 613, 685, 689, 696. At an unknown date Sir William was also granted the lands of Logyachray in Stirling by Archibald, earl of Douglas (likely the fourth earl).
was likely a part of the council due to his position as an earl. Albany was successfully able to cultivate the loyalty of the Grahams and that loyalty transferred to the wider Albany Stewart family after Albany’s death. Graham’s Lennox lands were where Walter of Lennox’s men gathered to ferment rebellion in the wake of Walter’s arrest by James I in 1424. Although there is no evidence to say if any of the Grahams were maintained as part of Albany’s paid retinue, their unwavering loyalty and frequent attendance at Albany’s court seem to indicate that they were at least part of his affinity.

The Grahams of course were not the only tenants Albany cultivated. Albany’s witness lists reveal that several men from his lands frequently were in attendance upon him, particularly when he was conducting governmental business. His patronage of many other families is more difficult to track due to the lack of records. Frequent appearances on Albany’s witness lists and the placement of their lands in Albany’s landed base seem to indicate that there was a relationship of some kind, likely that of tenant and lord but as many of the men were also knights they could have also been part of Albany’s retinue.

Albany cultivated several families in Fife, such as the Leslies and the Lindsays. The Leslies of Fythkill were called kinsmen or cousins, but their familial relation to Albany was convoluted. The Leslies’ principal seat in Fife was Fythkill, later renamed Leslie, the seat of the Leslie descendants, the earls of Rothes. Sir George Leslie of Fythkill witnessed Albany’s charters on at least twenty occasions before his death in 1411/2. Leslie appears on several charters dated from Perth, indicating that he may have been part of the General Council during

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242 George Leslie was the cousin of Alexander Leslie, earl of Ross, husband of Albany’s daughter Isobel. Leslie also married Elizabeth Hay daughter of Thomas Hay, Constable of Scotland, and Elizabeth Stewart, daughter of Robert II.
Albany’s governorship. However, his appearances at Falkland, Queensferry, Inchgall, and Cupar indicate a frequent presence at Albany’s court while in residence in Fife, likely as one of Albany’s retainers or principle tenants. Leslie’s adherence to Albany long predated the governorship. He appeared as part of Albany’s council when Albany arbitrated a conflict between Alexander Bur, bishop of Moray, and John Dunbar, earl of Moray, in October 1389 and again later that month when Euphemia, countess of Ross, sought Albany’s assistance with her separation from the Wolf of Badenoch.244 As a close relative of countess Euphemia and her heir Alexander Leslie, Leslie strengthened the bond between the Leslies and Albany, and also received and witnessed grants from the countess Euphemia during the 1390s.245 This connection was further strengthened when Richard Comyn, former adherent of countess Euphemia’s first husband, Walter Leslie, became an adherent of Albany’s. Sir Richard Comyn appeared on fourteen witness lists, usually either at Perth or Falkland, indicating that he was likely also part of Albany’s retinue. Leslie remained an Albany adherent for the rest of his life. It is unclear if his son Norman took up his father’s post after as Norman does not appear in any of Albany’s charters.

In close connection with the Leslies were the Lindsays, both the main branch embodied by the earls of Crawford, but also a minor branch, the Lindsays of Rossie in Fife. The Lindsays of Rossie were the half-brothers of David Lindsay, first earl of Crawford.246 Sir Walter Lindsay of Rossie and his brother Sir William Lindsay of Rossie appear with some regularity on Albany’s witness lists, nine and seven times respectively. The Lindsays of Crawford were long time crown supporters, and in the retinue of David, duke of Rothesay, and members of his

244 Moray Register, 197-203; Boardman, The Early Stewart Kings, 170-1.
245 Boardman, The Early Stewart Kings, 179.
246 David Lindsay was elevated to earl of Crawford in 1398 when Albany and Rothesay both received their dukedoms.
household until Rothesay’s death in 1402.\textsuperscript{247} According to Bower, however, it was Sir William Lindsay of Rossie and Sir John Ramornie, both members of Rothesay’s household, who arrested Rothesay and delivered him to Albany in 1401/2. These two knights were also apparently the instigators behind Rothesay’s siege of the bishop’s castle at St. Andrews.\textsuperscript{248} After 1402, the Lindsays of Rossie attached themselves to Albany’s affinity and carried that through the governorships; the earl of Crawford was Deputy Chamberlain South of Forth and Sir William was an auditor of the Exchequer in 1421 and 1422 under Murdoch.\textsuperscript{249} Sir Walter followed John, earl of Buchan, to France where he too died in the Battle of Verneuil in 1424.\textsuperscript{250}

Despite seeming widespread support, Albany’s relationship with the men in his lands was not always smooth. On occasion Albany, like most lords, came into conflict with his own loyal men and tenants. Between 1400 and 1402, Sir John Wemyss of Reres in Fife lodged several complaints against Albany due to Albany’s continued possession of the lands of Petconochqwhy and lands in Wemyss in Fife. Furthermore Albany refused to grant these lands to Wemyss’s wife Isabella Erskine and her sister Margaret, as the rightful heirs of Sir Alan Erskine of Inchmartin, former holder of the lands.\textsuperscript{251} Wemyss had spent the better part of the previous two decades accumulating lands in Fife, and actively pursued his rights to obtain what he felt was legally his.\textsuperscript{252} Albany’s initial refusal on 17 June 1400 to allow the sisters access to their land did not

\textsuperscript{248} Bower, Scotichronicon, vol. 8, 39-41. John Wright the Constable of Falkland kept watch over Rothesay during his imprisonment.
\textsuperscript{249} ER iii, 613; ER iv, 337, 352, 358, 373.
\textsuperscript{251} William Fraser, Memorials of the Family of Wemyss of Wemyss, vol. 2 Charters, (Burlington, Ont.: TannerRitchie Publishing, 2011), 36-42.
state a reason; however, their husbands, Sir John Glen and Sir John Wemyss, were called to appear before Albany and his court the next day. Here Albany stated that the lands in question had been in possession of Sir Robert Livingston. Wemyss and Glen refuted this point, stating that they could prove otherwise, but would not because the proceedings were illegitimate. In response Albany called a jury, the same was heard again and the general consensus was that the whole process was illegal, and Albany was in the wrong.

The aftermath of this affair is obscured. William Fraser writes that Wemyss was moved to an act of disloyalty that resulted in the siege of Reres by Rothesay but sanctioned by Albany in late 1401. However, this does not take into consideration the whole chain of events. Sir John Wemyss’ castle of Reres was besieged during Rothesay’s efforts to gain control of the bishop’s Palace in St. Andrews after the death of bishop Walter Trail. Wemyss had been the keeper of the bishop’s Palace since 1383 and likely the siege of his personal castle was coordinated with that of St. Andrews as Wemyss refused to grant Rothesay access to the palace. Rothesay had also taken Wemyss’s lands into royal control and given them to Badenoch. While Albany in his capacity as Chamberlain approved Rothesay’s expenses for the sieges, he likely personally did not approve of the attack on one of his tenants. This possibly contributed to the factors Albany deemed extreme enough to arrest and imprison the heir to the throne in 1402. Rothesay most likely found himself in the care of Wemyss during his initial imprisonment in St. Andrews.

253 Fraser, Wemyss, vol. 1, 52; Fraser, Wemyss, vol. 2, 39-42.
254 Fraser, Wemyss, vol. 1, 52; Fraser, Wemyss, vol. 2, 41-2.
255 Fraser, Wemyss, vol. 1, 51.
256 Boardman, The Early Stewart Kings, 233.
257 Fraser, Wemyss, vol. 2, 44.
258 ER, iii, 552, 559-60; Boardman, The Early Stewart Kings, 233.
By 24 May 1402 Sir John Wemyss was in control of his lands again, presumably including the lands belonging to his wife, as there is no further record of the dispute.\textsuperscript{259} Other than this dispute and one in 1419 over the rents in the Wemyss lands in which the General Council ruled in Wemyss’s favour, Wemyss remained a loyal man and beneficiary of Albany’s.\textsuperscript{260} Prior to both conflicts, Albany had in 1399 stood in assurance for Wemyss that he would not hurt Walter Lindsay further after Wemyss allegedly arrested Lindsay and held him. Albany gave this pledge in the General Council at Linlithgow in November 1399.\textsuperscript{261} Wemyss and his descendants on more than one occasion received land grants in Fife from Albany and later Murdoch.\textsuperscript{262} Sir John Wemyss continued to serve as an intermittent witness to Albany’s charters, and likely also provided military service as one of his tenants and a knight possibly of Albany’s retinue.

In addition to lands, offices, and marriages, Albany also used positions in his household to build loyalty. Due to the lack of surviving household accounts, it is difficult to piece together Albany’s full household. However, parts of Albany’s household can also be reconstructed from his witness lists. A few of his squires, chaplains, secretaries, chamberlains, and castle constables witnessed his charters. The combination of Albany’s witness lists as well as safe conducts reveal some information about the people who Albany employed, mostly during the years of the governorship. The most common household designation on Albany’s witness lists was squire. Thirteen different men received the title. Although Albany had squires before his governorship;

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\textsuperscript{259} Fraser, \textit{Wemyss}, vol. 2, 44. Sir John received a letter of protection from Robert III that he and his lands would be safeguarded from Alexander Stewart.
\textsuperscript{260} Fraser, \textit{Wemyss}, vol. 2, 44-5.
\textsuperscript{261} RPS, 1399/11/3; Fraser, \textit{Wemyss}, vol. 1, 51.
\textsuperscript{262} Fraser, \textit{Wemyss}, vol. 2, 16-18, 29, 31, 45-6.
\end{footnotesize}
the numbers increased and the names diversified during the period of his governorship. This likely had to do with the lack of a royal court. In the absence of the king, Albany’s court served as the focus of Scottish politics as well as advancement, thereby fulfilling one of the other duties of kingship. Albany’s court and household were likely smaller than a Scottish king’s would have been but probably mimicked the structure of royal courts around Europe. Grant remarks that Albany financed the Scottish government during his governorship largely out of his own resources. With this in mind, it is reasonable to assume that Albany likely maintained some of the responsibilities of the King’s household and court such as providing positions for nobles to advance in or providing a centre for knightly training or culture. He did this at his own expense as he had no access to the Crown’s resources such as granting annuities or creating new titles. Albany’s household likely reflected the growing trend around Europe of keeping upper and lower households which was the growing separation between public and private spaces (or the hall and the chamber) in the fifteenth-century royal household. In this manner Albany likely employed household squires for the body who performed duties such as cupbearers, attending Albany in his chambers, and carrying messages. Typically squires employed in the household received wages, “wine, ale, wax, candles, litter, clothing, rushes and so forth,” for their service. People in chamber positions like household squire began to populate governmental positions due to their close daily attendance on the king. Household squires could be young men

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263 In recognition of the possibility that the squires noted in the witness lists may not have been Albany’s but rather the squire of someone else on the witness list the discussion here is confined to those who appear often, indicating an attachment to Albany rather than another witness.
264 Grant, Independence and Nationhood, 186.
265 Malcolm Vale, The Princely Court Medieval Courts and Culture in North-West Europe 1270-1380, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001), 56-7, 63, 94. The upper and lower households were not mutually exclusive and often overlapped, but the lower household was more likely to be populated by lower class servants and the upper by nobles.
266 Vale, The Princely Court, 57, 102, 111. Squires also had livery differentiated in some way from other household liveries to designate their status as squire.
of noble blood, but squiring could also be a career for men from “well-born families” in which they rose through the ranks eventually to knighthood.\textsuperscript{267} The latter was likely the case for many of Albany’s squires such as the Berclays, a family with the tradition of serving as squires to Albany.

Albany likely also participated in the other part of retaining squires, training them for knighthood. As a knight himself (although it is unclear how and when he attained this status, Albany is referred to as Sir Robert Stewart), as well as the centre of a large network of knights, Albany could provide ample training opportunity for squires. Albany had the financial means to support squires as well as a retinue to put them to work in.\textsuperscript{268} Albany’s ability to supply this opportunity likely took on greater significance with his governorship. Squires not only trained in combat and learned the philosophy of knighthood, but also pursued public careers. Squires began to inhabit a social rank just under knight, although there was no official ceremony in which they were bestowed with this rank as knights were.\textsuperscript{269} Becoming a knight was not necessarily the ultimate goal of every squire. Some remained squires but enjoyed the benefits of knightly training as well as political advancement.\textsuperscript{270}

Ideally squires began their training in warfare at a young age; this included such skills as training with weapons, riding horses, and donning armour. As there was no formal prescribed

\textsuperscript{267} Vale, \textit{The Princely Court}, 61, 68. These types of positions also bound nobles to the king.


\textsuperscript{269} Bennett, “The Status of the Squire: The Northern Evidence,” 1–11; Michael Prestwich, \textit{Armies and Warfare in the Middle Ages: The English Experience} (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1999), 17-8; Katie Stevenson, \textit{Chivalry and Knighthood in Scotland 1424-1513} (Woodbridge: Boydell Press, 2006), 19, 70. Stevenson’s work on chivalry has hypothesized that Albany and Douglas may have run their own tournaments during the governorship, however due to the lack of household records as well as contemporary commentary it is impossible to say.

\textsuperscript{270} Stevenson, \textit{Chivalry and Knighthood}, 39, 51. Some men simply did not aspire to be knights, others did not want to take on the financial obligations such as properly outfitting themselves.
education or knight schooling in Scotland, young squires learned in a kinsman’s or nearby household, observation of their elders, at the royal court, or in battle.271 Albany’s household likely fulfilled all of these roles particularly during the governorship when there was no royal court. For those aspiring to knighthood Albany also fulfilled another role usually occupied by the kings. As Katie Stevenson describes it, “aspiring knights often wanted to receive knighthood from a man of particular distinction, such as the king.”272 During the governorship, Albany was both the highest ranking royal personage and noble in the kingdom; there was no one of a higher distinction from whom to receive a knighthood. During the later years of Robert III’s kingship, David, duke of Rothesay, served as the focus for Scottish chivalric culture. Rothesay enjoyed tournaments and jousts and retained men like David Lindsay of Glen Esk, known for his chivalric exploits.273 After Rothesay’s death in 1402, there is no evidence of further tournaments and jousts, but as Stevenson has noted that may be due to the lack of household accounts from either Albany or Douglas, the two most likely to host such events, although there is also no mention from contemporary chroniclers.274

There is, however, evidence to show that Albany continued to encourage knightly pursuits, at least in his own household where he employed many squires over the years. David Berclay appeared on the witness lists far more often and regularly than other squires, thirty-seven times mainly during the governorship. While the most frequent witness, David Berclay was not the first Berclay to have a place in Albany’s household as a squire. Berclay’s relations Hugh, William, and John, also made appearances, usually noted as squires. The Berclays of Kippen

272 Stevenson, Chivalry and Knighthood, 57. Stevenson notes that it was also an honour to receive a knighthood from “one who had established a reputation of chivalric prowess and outstanding knightly deeds.” Someone like Sir John Swinton filled that role nicely, as would the various earls of Douglas.
were from Albany’s lands in Menteith, although through service in Albany’s household they would acquire more lands. David Berclay was eventually styled of Tulch or Mernys, lands in Perthshire. David Berclay also collected Murdoch’s pension for Rothesay’s retinue in 1409. Albany’s association with the Berclays as squires long pre-dated his governorship. In 1380 Albany entered into a bond with his squire Hugh Berclay, lord of Kippen, to be a helper and counsellor to Berclay in his recovery of the lands of Been and Cathocyll. There is a later 1389 grant for Sir Hugh Berclay for the Barony of Arngask in Fife so presumably the initial bond was successful, and Berclay was rewarded for further service with more lands. The squires David and William Berclay were probably the sons or grandsons of Hugh. For certain, at some point Albany granted David Berclay the baronies of Craimbeth and Cleish in Fife; although the charter is undated, likely this happened sometime during Albany’s governorship. Albany’s long-standing relationship with the Berclays indicates that they were a gentry family from Stirling with a tradition of service in his household, which was well rewarded. Their well-rewarded service kept loyalty through at least two generations.

Albany also favoured the Cunningham family as squires in his household. Archibald Cunningham was noted as Albany’s squire and appeared in eleven witness lists. Archibald was the son of William Cunningham of Redhall, Sheriff of Ayr, and younger brother of Robert Cunningham for whom in 1413 Albany confirmed many lands around Scotland. Umfred

275 There is a present day town called Kippen in Stirlingshire. There is a present day town called Tuchan in Perthshire. *RMS* i, App. II 1973
276 *ER* iv, 86. 87.
277 NRS GD90/1/29. There is also a collection of transcriptions GD190/3/484/28 which contain a copy of this bond dated 1 May 1380. The exact location of these lands is unclear as it is not specified in the text of the bond itself.
278 NRS GD190/3/484/28. Berclay also in the intervening years attained the status of knight.
279 *RMS* i, App. II 1973
280 John Anderson, ed., *Calendar of the Laing Charters A.D. 854-1837 Belonging to the University of Edinburgh*, (Burlington, Ont.: TannerRitchie Publishing, 2010), no. 94; *RMS* i, 874. Murdoch resigned the Barony of Redhall to
Cunningham, another infrequent witness (four appearances), was likely the youngest of the Cunningham brothers. With the bulk of their lands in Ayr, near the earldom of Carrick, or Renfrew, part of the Stewartry, the Cunninghams probably had connections with the Stewarts prior to their kingship. The Cunninghams likely benefitted by the Steward’s elevation to the throne as they could then take advantage of the power vacuum in the area.\textsuperscript{281} Due to the location of their lands, in the 1413 grant Albany was acting not only in his capacity as regent but also as head of the Stewart kindred and Steward of Scotland, administering the king’s lands in his absence.

Prior to the governorship, it is difficult to say with certainty that Albany served as patron for the Cunninghams. William Cunningham was granted the Barony of Redhall after Murdoch’s resignation in 1396, and Umfred Cunningham appeared on a witness list in 1401 when Albany granted Duncan, earl of Lennox, the office of coroner in Lennox, but the bulk of their appearances occurs after 1406, when Albany’s court became the centre for royal governance.\textsuperscript{282} After 1406, the Cunninghams were semi-regular witnesses, usually in the person of Archibald Cunningham, Albany’s squire. However, the attachment of the Cunninghams to the Albany Stewarts proved brief. After the return of James I in 1424, the Cunninghams quickly returned to the king’s favour. Sir Robert Cunningham met the king in Durham on his return home, was knighted at James I’s coronation, sat on the assize that convicted the Albany Stewarts in 1425, and was commissioned by James I to end the Lennox rebellion.\textsuperscript{283} It seems that like many others,

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\textsuperscript{281} Hector MacQueen and John Simmons, “Cunningham Family (per. c. 1340–1631), Nobility,” \textit{ODNB}.  \\
\textsuperscript{282} Alexander Campbell, ed., \textit{Cartularium Comitatus de Levenax} (Burlington, Ont: TannerRitchie Publishing, 2009), 95.  \\
\textsuperscript{283} MacQueen and Simmons, “Cunningham Family (per. c. 1340–1631), Nobility,” \textit{ODNB}.” The former adherents of the Albany Stewarts who later convicted Murdoch and company of treason should not necessarily be read as an abandonment of the Albany Stewart cause or the culmination of long seeded hatred, but rather the move of
\end{flushright}
the Cunninghams navigated the turbulent fourteenth and fifteenth century by attaching
themselves to those in power but quickly detaching themselves when those people fell. Likely
Archibald Cunningham was Albany’s squire as at the time Albany was not only in favour, but
the face of royal power in Scotland in absence of James I.

Not much can be determined about many of Albany’s less conspicuous squires. His
squires such as Michael Name, Walter Curry, John Camera, and Robert Ferny were probably
second sons, minor nobles, or landholders who came to Albany’s household as they aspired to be
knights or obtain some kind of public position. The possibility remains that these men came from
other places in Scotland, as Albany’s household took the place of the king’s household when
such hopefuls would have previously found employment. As they came in and out and do not
appear to have had a strong family connection like the Berclays or Cunninghams, many probably
wished to take advantage of the relationship between lord and tenant, a distant kinship, or
opportunity for their sons for some kind of advancement.

Much like the more obscure squires, Albany’s witness lists reveal the names but not
much else about the people who made up his household. Again, unlike the Berclays and
Cunninghams, there does not seem to have been familial lines inheriting individual positions like
Steward of Fife or Constable of Falkland, but the information is far too scanty to be sure. There
does seem to be a slant in the existing information for the earldom of Fife. As Albany became
more important in a national sense, Menteith faded more into the background with the Castles of
Falkland and Stirling taking on more importance than Doune in terms of where governmental

politically astute lords and earls who did not want to be caught up in the same fate. Furthermore, the Cunninghams
had been crown adherents before the Stewart Dynasty. Prior to Robert II’s reign William Cunningham (the father of
the one above) had the royal favour of David II, and was even granted the lands of the earldom of Carrick, although
he was not granted the earldom itself; rather he was lord of the earldom until David II granted Carrick to John
Stewart in 1368.
business was transacted. During the period of the governorships Albany made very few charters at Doune. He was twice as likely to attend to government business at Falkland or Stirling, but over thirty charters were made at Perth during the governorships, reflecting meetings of the General Council. Perhaps Albany, as James I would after he took possession of the castle in 1425, used Doune as a retreat during the governorship, as it was more remote than his other holdings.

Conclusion

As guardian and governor of Scotland, Albany’s interests began to encompass the whole of the kingdom rather than just his landed domains. Albany sought to cultivate alliances and bonds throughout the kingdom to help underpin his political dominance. During the governorship he used the corporate nature of monarchy to share power amongst his family and allied himself with major regional magnates, but he did not forget to cultivate the minor nobility and the men in his own lands. Albany maintained clear relationships with the Douglases and Alexander, earl of Mar, and relied on them to govern their areas of influence just as his brother and father had before him. He cultivated their good will through gifts and marriages, and outlined their relationship with bonds. In this endeavour he seems to have been mostly successful. Albany continued to rely on the methods of magnate cooperation to govern Scotland. He respected the local authority of both Douglas and Mar, although he was often careful to draw attention to his elevated status as governor, and often invoked the title “prince” in his correspondence with them. Like his father and brother Albany also attempted to restrict the power of the lord of the Isles, with mixed success.

As evident from the witness lists Albany drew support for his affinity and possible retinue from all over Scotland. He courted nobility of Scotland with marriages, bonds, lands, and
favour in order to underpin his power and governance. The lion’s share of the evidence corresponded to the period of Albany’s governorship, but this was also when Albany needed the most support from all over Scotland as he lacked the powers and abilities of the king, although he was still expected to fulfill many of the duties of kingship. However, just as in other endeavours, Albany supported his loyal men from his own resources except of course in cases like Mar as Mar was also working for the government and therefore could be rewarded from the Exchequer. Through the creative use of his own resources and an understanding of the effective use of the tools available to him such as marriages, bonds, and the corporate nature of monarchy Albany was able to ally much of the nobility to himself and expand his power within Scotland, and retain stable magnate relations in absence of the king. With the exception of the lord of the Isles, Albany was successfully able to ally or gain the support of the Scottish nobility to underpin his power and authority in Scotland. He used the corporate monarchy to employ his family in this endeavour and succeeded in carrying out many of the duties of kingship such as defense of the realm through his ability to rely on his allies.
Chapter 4: Trading and Raiding: International Relations

As the face of royal power in Scotland Albany had to not only forge relationships with the Scottish nobility but also the rulers of other kingdoms. In this context Albany fulfilled one of the main duties of kingship charged to him, defense of the realm. Well before the governorship Albany was known to rulers outside Scotland. As guardian, lieutenant, and later governor Albany was at the forefront of negotiating truces with England, trade treaties with the Low Countries, and, when the need arose, leading the Scottish army. He maintained Scotland’s main diplomatic and trade relationships with England, France, and the Low Countries, particularly during the period of his governorship.

Events occurring outside of Scotland shaped the nature and needs of Albany’s foreign affairs, the most important of which was the ongoing Hundred Years’ War (1337-1453) between France and England over the succession to the French throne. The hostilities between France and England at times dominated western European politics as other kingdoms were brought into the war through alliances.¹ Diplomatic and military relations between France and Scotland, and England and Scotland would be affected by the events of the Hundred Years’ War. England was at times allied with the Low Countries and German Princes, while France sought allies in Scotland and Iberia, particularly Castile.² During the period of Albany’s early political career (1361-1388) the Hundred Years’ War was in its second phase, and France had the upper hand. France recovered much of the English lands in France except Gascony and Calais (1369-74) and

¹ The Hundred Years’ War has been the subject of intense historical study for a full background on the Hundred Years’ War see a very small sample of recent wider works: Andrew Villalon and Donald Kagay, eds. The Hundred Years’ War: A Wider Focus (Leiden: Brill, 2005); Andrew Villalon and Donald Kagay, eds. The Hundred Years’ War (Part II): Different Vistas (Leiden: Brill, 2008); Anne Curry, The Hundred Years’ War 1337-1453 (Oxford: Osprey Publishing, 2002); Andy King, “‘Then a great misfortune befell them’: The Laws of War on Surrender and Killing of Prisoners on the Battlefield in the Hundred Years’ War,” Journal of Medieval History 43, no. 1 (2017): 106-117.
² Curry, The Hundred Years’ War, 15.
France and England agreed to a twenty-eight year truce in 1389 allowing for a temporary cessation of hostilities. During Albany’s governorship, the Hundred Years’ War entered into its third phase in which England dominated France, partially due to the instability in France caused by the intermittent illness of Charles VI and the civil war brewing between the Burgundians and Armagnacs for control of the king and government. In 1415, Henry V won a decisive victory at Agincourt, between 1417 and 1419 he retook Normandy, and in 1420 Henry V was named Regent of France. 3 Throughout much of Albany’s career, and indeed the period of the Hundred Years’ War generally, France was Scotland’s main military ally, and as such the needs of the Hundred Years’ War often dictated the terms around the relations and treaties forged between France and Scotland in continuance of what is commonly referred to as the Auld Alliance. 4 Relations with England were affected by both the events of the Hundred Years’ War and separate issues between England and Scotland. For instance in relation to the Hundred Years’ War Scottish incursions on the Anglo-Scottish border could be co-ordinated with France to divide the attention of the English for a greater chance at victory for both Scotland and France. 5 Other issues, however, such as the negotiations for the release of James I and Murdoch from imprisonment in England were distinctly Anglo-Scottish problems outside the confines of the Hundred Years’ War.

It is difficult to gauge how much of the foreign diplomacy that occurred during Albany’s guardianship and lieutenancy were of his doing as governmental business was carried out in the

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3 Curry, *The Hundred Years’ War*, 10.
name of the king, but the events of the governorship are not so obscured.\(^6\) During the
governorship, Albany like his father and brother, maintained a pro-French anti-English foreign
policy, and he also continued to negotiate and renegotiate favourable trade treaties with
Scotland’s main trading partner, the Low Countries. In his foreign relations, Albany was an
effective international actor and often the leaders of other realms recognized Albany not only as
the governor and therefore highest power in Scotland, but also as a representative of the royal
line and the corporate monarchy. Often in his negotiations with other kingdoms and realms
Albany represented himself as and was recognized as Prince Robert, duke of Albany. The use of
this title was likely deliberate on both sides to underscore the power of Albany to act as a
representative of Scotland and the corporate monarchy.

The minutiae of Albany’s diplomacy with England in particular has been fairly well
covered. Hunt’s study of Albany’s governorship lays out the detailed relations between Albany
and England, especially in regards to the attempts to negotiate for the release of James I and
Murdoch.\(^7\) Relations between Scotland and England are often at the forefront of most major
political studies of Scotland for this period.\(^8\) Rather than focusing solely on restating other’s
conclusions on the relations between England and Albany for the release of the king, this chapter
will instead discuss some of the less well known aspects of Albany’s foreign relations during his
career such as his military exploits, his representation of himself as the highest authority and
prince of Scotland, as well as his role in trade negotiations for Scotland, particularly during the

\(^6\) Brown, *Disunited Kingdoms*, 241. Brown theorizes that Albany’s refusal to acknowledge James I’s royal title until 1410 was an attempt to “heighten his own position as ruler of Scotland.”


governorship. Albany much more clearly in foreign relations represents himself as a royal prince of Scotland to assert his authority and right to negotiate and act on behalf of Scotland in absence of the king.⁹ In both negotiations and war leadership, Albany as regent was fulfilling one of the main duties of kingship, defense of the realm. Outside of England there seems to have been little hesitation on the part of foreign powers in accepting Albany’s authority, likely due to the commonality of the office of regent in medieval Europe. In the case of Franco-Scottish relations, especially during the early years of Albany’s governorship, the French government was dominated by John the Fearless, duke of Burgundy, due to Charles VI’s illness. Burgundy was a cousin of Charles VI’s and his role in the French government and corporate monarchy was similar to that filled by Albany, making both dukes more likely to recognize the legitimate authority of the other. In order to be an effective international actor, Albany had to be recognized and represent himself as a prince of Scotland’s royal house.

_Diplomacy_

It was in the realm of international relations during the governorship that Albany most clearly articulated his place in the corporate monarchy to the wider world. Albany was often addressed as Prince Robert, duke of Albany, in his foreign correspondence. Despite clearly articulating his own power and authority, Albany, like in internal Scottish affairs, largely kept to the policies of his father’s and brother’s reigns in that he maintained a definitive pro-French, anti-English outlook. Many of Albany’s diplomatic interactions with England concerned the

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⁹ Jörg Peltzer, “Introduction,” in _Princely Rank in Late Medieval Europe: Trodden Paths and Promising Avenues_, ed. Thorsten Huthwelker, Jörg Peltzer, and Maximilian Wemhöner, (Ostfildern: Jan Thorbecke Verlag der Schwabenverlag AG, 2011), 19. The term prince was very flexible in late medieval Europe. The general consensus on the term is that it was used to indicate supreme rather than individual power within a land. It could be applied to many ranks, i.e. the rulers of the Holy Roman Empire were referred to as princes, bishops were sometimes called princes of the church, and kings usually used the term in some fashion as well.
release of Murdoch and James I, with the occasional renewal of an Anglo-Scottish truce.

Meanwhile Albany kept open lines of communication with France to maintain Scotland’s Auld Alliance.

Albany must have been involved with most Anglo-Scottish relations from the time he became a permanent part of his father’s daily government in 1382. Likely during his tenures as guardian and lieutenant he was at the forefront of any negotiations with England; however, as the guardian conducted business under the king’s name it is difficult to tell what was Albany’s initiative rather than his father’s or brother’s. The situation during the governorship is much clearer. At the start of Albany’s governorship, Murdoch had been imprisoned in England for four years after his capture at the Battle of Homildon Hill in 1402. The addition of James I to English imprisonment made the negotiations for the release of both prisoners as well as the renewal of truces central to Albany’s correspondence with Henry IV and Henry V.

Albany was known to Henry IV before his governorship. Albany had frequent diplomatic contact with Henry IV’s father, John of Gaunt, who served as Warden of the Scottish Marches, during the reigns of Robert II and Robert III. ⁹ As lieutenant for Robert III, Albany wrote to Henry IV on certain matters such as the seizure of Scottish ships, commending the new Rothesay herald to the king, and Murdoch’s imprisonment. ¹¹ In all these matters Albany identified himself as brother of the king and lieutenant of the realm. After the death of Robert III the situation changed and Albany’s correspondence with Henry IV also changed. Albany and Henry IV now conversed in much more formal although largely friendly terms as befitted legitimate rulers who were also cousins. ¹² In his letters Henry IV often acknowledged Albany’s title and position as

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¹² Given-Wilson, Henry IV, 321.
governor and even in 1410 began greeting Albany as “the noble and mighty Prince, Robert Duke of Albany.”¹³ Early in Albany’s governorship, Henry IV did express some doubts about the validity of Albany’s position and the heights Albany might assume. Henry IV articulated these doubts to his son John, duke of Lancaster.¹⁴ In a letter from John of Lancaster to his father in 1407 concerning the negotiation of an Anglo-Scottish truce John of Lancaster states,

> And by reason of the doubt which we have, that by any of your commissions the said Duke might take advantage of the name and right of Governor of the realm of Scotland contrary to the protests lately made on your part in the presence of the same the messengers of the same Duke, it seems expedient to await the coming of your said Chancellor to London…¹⁵

Early in the governorship Henry IV appears to have expressed some displeasure at Albany acting with the power and authority of the king in Scotland to negotiate truces. Likely this reluctance sprang from Henry IV’s possession of the Scottish king, and his desire to extend English dominance over Scotland through James I. Henry had the rightful heir to the throne, but as James I was both a child and imprisoned he could not rule his kingdom. Perhaps Henry IV hoped to exercise some influence over Scotland through the young king, but the presence of Albany and Albany’s position as governor prevented that. This reluctance to recognize Albany proved short, and for the remainder of his reign Henry IV did not balk at communicating or negotiating with Albany. Although their exchanged letters were formal and polite, this period was one that saw episodic bouts of Anglo-Scottish hostility. Underlying the veneer of politeness, Albany favoured a French over English alliance. However, the letters between Albany and Henry IV largely discussed the extension of truces and the release of James I and Murdoch. Over the course of the governorship the English kings issued several safe conducts for Scottish envoys, sometimes

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¹³ Letters of Henry IV, vol. 2, 291; NRS SP6/10/1. It is unclear when this change took place.
specifically for the negotiations for the release of Murdoch and James I. Usually these envoys consisted of members of Albany’s affinity.

Three specific envoys set out for English court in 1408, 1411, and 1412 to negotiate the freedom of Murdoch and James I.\textsuperscript{16} In 1408 John Stewart, lord of Lorn, Walter, bishop of Brechin, Duncan, earl of Lennox, Walter Stewart of Railston, Robert Lanyne, provost of St. Andrews, John of Glasgow, and John Busby, Albany’s chaplain, had permission to enter England to treat with Henry IV. All of the participants in this embassy had some tie to Albany, either familial or as part of his affinity.\textsuperscript{17} This type of position was likely a mark of favour from Albany to his loyal men. The 1412 envoy again included several men close to Albany such as John Stewart, lord of Lorn, William Graham, lord Graham, Robert Lanyne, William Borthwick, and George Lawder. Although some connections were closer than others, the same names came up consistently for safe conducts to England. The 1411 safe conduct differed slightly. This envoy only included George Dunbar, the son and heir of the earl of March, recently returned from England, and John Busby, Albany’s chaplain. George Dunbar may have been fulfilling some bargain between his father and Albany, given that Albany had recently allowed the earl of March to return to Scotland after his defection to England in 1400. These commissions were ultimately unsuccessful in obtaining the freedom of the king; however, Murdoch was freed in late 1415 when he was exchanged for Henry Percy, earl of Northumberland.

While these three instances remain the only concrete evidence of treating for the freedom of James I and Murdoch, there is also an undated safe conduct for many of the Scottish nobles

\textsuperscript{16} CDS, iv, 780, 813, 833. The 1411 safe conduct does say specifically for Murdoch, but it is likely there was also negotiations for the release of James I as well. For an in depth look at Albany’s attempts to free James I see Hunt, “The Governorship,” chapter 3.

\textsuperscript{17} See affinity chart Appendix A and chapter 3 for more information.
from sometime around 1416. Most of the major Scottish nobles were included such as the earls of Atholl and Douglas. This likely indicates a point at which negotiations for the freedom of James I were going well in the wake of Murdoch’s 1416 release, and the king’s return seemed possible. However, the relations between England and Scotland quickly soured and the negotiations were once more abandoned. Between 1416 and 1419 Henry V started pushing claims to overlordship of Scotland, and in 1417 Albany and Douglas undertook a major raid into northern England known as the “Foul Raid.” The combination of these events ensured that for the remainder of Albany’s governorship the return of the king was not an option. Ultimately James I did not obtain his freedom until 1424, but there were likely other attempts at negotiation as well. John Stewart, lord of Lorn, was a favourite of Albany’s to send on embassies. Stewart of Lorn received several safe conducts for England between 1405 and 1419. His earliest trip to England in 1405 was specifically to treat for Murdoch on behalf of Albany. Stewart of Lorn undertook this task with other Albany adherents: William Graham of Kincardine, William Borthwick, and Adam Forrester, one of Albany’s Deputy Chamberlains. Thereafter Stewart of Lorn regularly returned to England often with the expressed purpose of going to the English court. While it cannot be ascertained for certain that Stewart of Lorn always attended the English Court with the intent of negotiating for James I and Murdoch, it seems difficult to believe that it would not be part of his business with the English king, particularly when he was

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18 CDS, iv, 894. What makes this document most likely from 1416 is the inclusion of Murdoch as the son and heir of the duke of Albany and John Stewart the son of the duke of Albany. This must be dated after Murdoch’s return to Scotland in 1416, but before Albany’s death in 1420.
19 Bower, Scotichronicon, vol. 8, 87; King and Etty, England and Scotland, 66; Brown, The Black Douglases, 215-6. The “Foul Raid” will be discussed more below.
20 CDS, iv, 675. A similar safe conduct was issued for Peter Fleming, John Porter, and Robert Marischal of Scotland. Signet Letters of Henry IV and Henry V, 516.
sent by Albany. Henry IV remained willing to accept envoys in the name of Albany as governor of Scotland indicating a recognition of his title, position, and place in the corporate monarchy.

There is some evidence that Albany and Henry IV considered a marriage alliance. In 1410 Albany and Henry IV considered a marriage between Albany’s daughter, Elizabeth, and Henry IV’s son, John of Lancaster, later duke of Bedford. A letter of instruction from Henry IV to his ambassador Edmond Bugge discussed the proposed marriage among other issues such as the need for truce between Scotland and England and negotiations for the release of Murdoch from English captivity.\textsuperscript{22} The letter implies that the marriage proposal came from Albany rather than the Henry IV.\textsuperscript{23} Furthermore, Henry IV sent a letter to “the magnificent prince his dearest cousin,” the duke of Albany on 3 December 1410, in which he stated that he received Albany’s proposal for a marriage between Elizabeth and John of Lancaster.\textsuperscript{24} According to the letter, the proposal was before the council for consideration. A very real possibility exists that Albany intended this marriage to seal the proposed truce between England and Scotland as well as part of Murdoch’s ransom. The marriage of Elizabeth to John of Lancaster would also have benefitted wider Anglo-Scottish relations as John was Warden of the East March for England and frequently part of Anglo-Scottish truce negotiations.\textsuperscript{25} Elizabeth could have been a permanent ambassador on the Marches for the interests of her father and Scotland.

In the end, Henry IV did not agree to the union, and John of Lancaster married Anne of Burgundy in 1423 as part of the Anglo-Burgundian alliance against France.\textsuperscript{26} Elizabeth married

\textsuperscript{24} NRS SP6/10/1
\textsuperscript{25} Jenny Stratford, “John [John of Lancaster], duke of Bedford (1389–1435), regent of France and prince.” \textit{ODNB}. John of Lancaster much like Albany benefitted greatly from his father’s unlikely succession to the English throne. He was Henry IV’s lieutenant in both England and France.
\textsuperscript{26} Jenny Stratford, “John [John of Lancaster], duke of Bedford (1389-1435),” \textit{ODNB}.
Sir Malcolm Fleming in 1412. However, the proposal remains a clear indication that Albany saw himself as an effective international actor and representative of the Scottish dynasty. He was capable of making these types of alliances, but not foolish enough to offer his daughter in marriage to the heir to the throne, the future Henry V, unmarried at the time. The marriage between Albany’s daughter and a younger son of the king of England would have been an acceptable move and it would have married a younger English prince to a cadet branch of the Scottish royal house, thus the two would be on the same level. Likely, Albany knew a proposal for marriage between the heir to the English throne and his daughter would not be accepted and that it would have clearly overstepped his bounds as governor and not king. However, the change in Albany’s address to include Prince may have had something to do with this proposal.\textsuperscript{27} Albany here could have intentionally emphasized his and by extension his daughter’s place in the royal line in order to make the offer more attractive to Henry IV. In 1410 Albany was negotiating for the release of both James I and his own heir Murdoch from imprisonment in England and for a truce between England and Scotland, as well as attempting to arrange a marriage between John of Lancaster and Elizabeth. Albany was, in this case, acting as the highest power in Scotland and as the local representative of royal power. In his negotiation of this marriage, he was using a common tool of international diplomacy for both nobles and kings to promote the interests of Scotland.

Ultimately, Albany was only successful in procuring the release of his son Murdoch in 1415. Murdoch had since 1402 been housed in various English castles including the Tower of London and Windsor, but usually close to the English king.\textsuperscript{28} Murdoch was sometimes lodged

\textsuperscript{27} When Albany started referring to himself as prince in his letters to Henry IV is unknown, but the earlier terms of address used by Henry IV did tend to align with how Albany referred to himself in his own letters.

\textsuperscript{28} CDS, iv, 647, 70, 837, 846, 850, 867, 870.
with his cousin James I, but largely they were held separately. Albay and Henry V finally came to terms for Murdoch’s release in early 1415. Albany procured Murdoch’s freedom through an exchange for Henry Percy, earl of Northumberland, himself a captive in Scotland since 1403. On 4 May 1415, Murdoch was released from the Tower into the care of Henry V’s squires John Hull and William Chancellor. The party was then to proceed north to Calfhill near Berwick for the exchange. This did not go as planned and English Lollards captured Murdoch on the way. Murdoch was swiftly recaptured and given into the care of the earl of Westmorland, who did finally conduct the exchange. With Murdoch’s return to Scotland, Albany no longer had to fear for the succession of his own house, and may have in turn let animosity to the English have fuller rein as seen in the “Foul Raid” and possible plot with the French to destabilise England as discussed below.

England was not Albany’s only foreign concern. Albany was also responsible for the maintenance of Scotland’s Auld Alliance with France both before and during the governorship. During the governorship, the Auld Alliance took on new urgency as the Hundred Years’ War was not, at that point, going well for France. Albany maintained a staunchly pro-French policy, like Robert II and Robert III. Within months of his coronation in June 1371, Robert II renewed the Auld Alliance with France. Robert II’s renewal of the Auld Alliance stood in opposition to

29 Michael Brown, "Stewart, Murdoch [Murdac], second duke of Albany (c. 1362–1425), magnate." ODNB.
32 The ramifications for Murdoch’s capture by Lollards will be discussed more in chapter 5 as they relate to Albany’s apparent hatred of heretics.
33 Bower, Scotichronicon, vol. 8, 85; CDS, iv, 895, 900. The earl of Westmorland was reimbursed for his expenses of housing first Murdoch then Percy later in the year.
34 Bower, Scotichronicon, vol. 8, 87.
35 NRS SP7/2; ER iii, xcvi-cv; Boardman, Early Stewart Kings, 43; Macdougall, An Antidote to the English, 46. Robert II sent Archibald Douglas, the future third earl of Douglas, to France to renew the alliance. Both Robert II and Douglas had previously fought with French soldiers both in Scotland and in France between 1330 and 1360s.
the recent policies of his predecessor David II, who favoured closer relations with England, particularly after his return from his imprisonment in England in 1357. As in other versions of the Franco-Scottish treaties, Robert II promised to provide aid to France in the event of Anglo-French hostilities after the expiry or annulment of the then current Anglo-Scottish truce due to expire in 1383. In 1371 this military assistance would have been a moderate need of France as they currently had the English routed in France and were gaining territory back from the English particularly in the southwest of France. In return for Scottish aid Charles V promised to provide advice and assistance when required by the Scots in the face of English hostility. Charles V further offered to pay off the rest of David II’s ransom in return for immediate renewed Anglo-Scottish hostilities on the borders with the help of French soldiers. Robert II ultimately rejected this offer, but it does highlight the immediate nature of the alliance for both France and Scotland. The renewal of the Auld Alliance, particularly after David II’s friendly relations with England, provided the new Stewart dynasty with some assurance of help in the face of English opposition, and provided each kingdom with support to win back their territories then under English control.

The Anglo-Scottish truce expired in 1383. Prior to this border hostilities had increased over the last decade largely under the control of the Douglases in an effort to reclaim some of the lands near the Scottish border still held by England. In anticipation of the expiration of the

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Robert II as the Steward previously held a pro-French foreign policy during the absences of David II and negotiated the renewal of the Auld Alliance in 1351-2 and 1359.

36 For a full discussion of David II’s pro-English foreign policy to the point of considering John of Gaunt or Edward III as his successor see Penman, David II, ch. 5 & 9. Macdougall, An Antidote to the English, 42, 48. Macdougall also comments that the 1371 renewal of the Auld Alliance mirrored France’s ascendancy in the Hundred Years’ War.

37 Curry, The Hundred Years’ War, 49.

38 Boardman, The Early Stewart Kings, 109-10; Macdougall, An Antidote to the English, 42, 48.

39 King and Etty, England and Scotland, 55-7.
truce, Robert II concluded another Franco-Scottish treaty with the new French king, Charles VI. This time the results of the truce were much more immediate. Charles VI promised money and troops for the impending Anglo-Scottish hostilities, and before May 1384, 1,000 men-at-arms, 1,000 suits of armours, and 40,000 gold francs arrived in Scotland.\footnote{Bower, 
\textit{Scotichronicon}, vol. 7, 383-9; Boardman, \textit{The Early Stewart Kings}, 109-110, 118, 127, n. 49; Macdougall, \textit{An Antidote to the English}, 42; Brown, \textit{Disunited Kingdoms}, 209.} Bower reports that the French men-at-arms arrived in Scotland at Dunbar and Leith under the command of Sir John de Vienne, count of Volentinosa and Admiral of France. While initially the French army joined forces with the earl of Douglas, they later were part of Albany’s army during the siege of Roxburgh.\footnote{Bower, 
\textit{Scotichronicon}, vol. 7, 403-5. Once they captured the castle the Scots and French disagreed about in whose name it was held, the French king or the Scottish king. The French said they would not participate unless their terms were met. Bower does not report a resolution.} Bower states that the French army “served admirably alongside the princes and magnates of Scotland who were active on warlike expeditions; but when their money ran out, they took ship and set out for France about the feast of St. Albans.”\footnote{Bower, 
\textit{Scotichronicon}, vol. 7, 407.} Between the late 1380s and the start of Albany’s governorship the military aspect of the Auld Alliance was relatively quiet due to the truce reached between France and England in 1389, which was supposed to last twenty-eight years.

When Albany assumed the governorship in 1406, France and England still held to their truce in the sense that there were no direct battles between the two kingdoms. France, however, was still aiding England’s enemies including Scotland and Wales.\footnote{Owain Glyn Dŵr approached the French for assistance and received it during his rebellion in Wales in the early 1400s. For more see R. R. Davies, \textit{The Revolt of Owain Glyn Dŵr} (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997), ch. 6 & 7.} Early in his governorship in 1407 Albany renewed the Auld Alliance demonstrating his pro-French policy early on despite the need to negotiate for the return of Murdoch and James I.\footnote{Archives Nationales AN J677, no. 19. Special thanks to Dr. Michael Brown for this reference.} Albany’s administration had
regular contact with France. During the early years of the governorship the French government was dominated by John the Fearless, duke of Burgundy, due to the illness of Charles VI. Burgundy was the king’s cousin and inherited the political supremacy of his father Philip the Bold.\textsuperscript{45} Burgundy was not the only Prince of the Blood who sought control of the French government. Charles VI’s brother, Louis, duke or Orleans, also built a considerable following and challenged Burgundy for control. Orleans and Burgundy’s contest for power eventually resulted in the assassination of Orleans by Burgundian agents, and a civil war ensued between the Burgundians and Armagnacs. Burgundy maintained control of Charles VI and the French government until 1413, when the Armagnacs triumphed and Burgundy fled into exile.\textsuperscript{46}

During the years of Burgundy’s control of the French government, he had ample contact with not only Albany, but also the earls of Douglas and Mar, for both his own and the French government’s diplomatic needs. Burgundy and Albany may have even formed a more personal friendship as Albany loaned Burgundy money in 1418, and the two dukes frequently exchanged gifts.\textsuperscript{47} Furthermore, Alexander, earl of Mar, served in Burgundy’s army against Liège in 1408. Burgundy sought Scottish aid in the form of soldiers in 1411 when he faced the opposition of the Armagnacs. Archibald, fourth earl of Douglas, entered into a treaty with Burgundy in 1413 while in Paris, in which Douglas promised 4,000 soldiers to Burgundy when he needed them. In return, Burgundy promised 300 men when Douglas would have need of them in Scotland.\textsuperscript{48} Burgundy likely needed these alliances due to his ongoing armed conflict with the Armagnacs, now led by Charles, duke of Orleans, in the struggle for power in France.

\textsuperscript{45} Hutchison, “The Politics of Grief,” 427; For more on the career of Philip the Bold see Vaughan, \textit{Philip the Bold}.
\textsuperscript{47} Vaughan, \textit{John the Fearless}, 260.
\textsuperscript{48} Vaughan, \textit{John the Fearless}, 87, 55, 260.; Brown, \textit{The Black Douglases}, 214-5;
In his regular contact with the French court, Albany again employed his affinity as ambassadors. Albany sent embassies to France in 1408, 1410, and 1415 including men such as John Busby, his chaplain, William Graham, lord Graham, and Robert Lanyne, provost of St. Andrews. Furthermore, Albany claimed reimbursement for the expenses of hosting French ambassadors in 1413 and 1415. What these embassies discussed in particular is unknown, but despite any personal connection with the duke of Burgundy, Albany’s official French connection remained with whomever spoke for the king and opposed the English. After Burgundy’s exile in 1413, Albany was compelled to deal with the Armagnacs. Twice between when Burgundy was exiled in 1413 and his brief return to power in 1418, he attempted but never actually sealed an alliance with Henry V. During this period Henry V also became increasingly vocal about pressing the claims of English overlordship to Scotland likely driving Albany more forcefully towards the Franco-Scottish alliance with the Armagnac dominated government, and a possible plot with Charles, duke of Orleans.

Charles, duke of Orleans and nephew of Charles VI of France, was a captive in England after the Battle of Agincourt in 1415. Henry V regarded him as a highly important political prisoner, whom he could use as a pawn when necessary. However, Henry V was not the only one to acknowledge the importance of Orleans. Orleans, like James I and Murdoch, had been kept in Windsor and the Tower of London, but when Henry V prepared to return to France in 1417, he had Orleans moved to Pontefract Castle in northern England. Orleans generally had a light confinement as suited a prince of the blood, but an undated fragment of one of Henry V’s letters states that Orleans should be kept under stricter confinement in Pontefract as Orleans had been in

49 ER iv, 70, 71, 133, 189.
50 ER iv, 189, 238.
51 Vaughan, John the Fearless, 206-7, 213-4.
52 Allmand, Henry V, 100.
contact with Albany.\textsuperscript{53} Henry V further stated that Orleans and Albany planned to bring the “mammet of Scotlond to sturre what he may.”\textsuperscript{54} Since the early 1400s Robert III and later Albany maintained the pretender Thomas Warde of Trumpington as a fictitious Richard II, called the mammet by the English. Supposedly Richard II (Thomas Warde) escaped into Scotland after his deposition, and was found in the lord of the Isles’ castle working in the kitchen. Warde was recognized as Richard II and sent to Robert III’s court where he was kept as a king in exile thereafter until his death in 1419.\textsuperscript{55} Bower reports that Richard II died at Albany’s stronghold Stirling Castle in 1419.\textsuperscript{56} Macdougall states that the discovery of the mammet does coincide with heightened Anglo-Scottish border warfare in 1402. However, the implication of Henry V’s letter was that there was some collusion with France to act on the false claims of the man claiming to be Richard II, rather than just maintaining a pretender to cause aggravation. There is no evidence other than this fragmentary letter that Albany openly planned to deploy the pretender in order to aggravate the English king.\textsuperscript{57} Apparently the threat of such an action in collusion with Orleans and presumably French support was enough in 1417 for Henry V to order Orleans to be held under tighter guard, so perhaps this was not the first time Albany had behaved in such a manner. Albany had after all been maintaining the pretender since the death of Robert III. In this case Albany was not only recognized as an effective international actor, but also a threat with the help of France to Henry V’s kingship.

\textsuperscript{53} Signet Letters of Henry IV and Henry V, 881; Anthony Tuck, Anthony, ”Richard II (1367–1400), king of England and lord of Ireland, and duke of Aquitaine,” ODNB.
\textsuperscript{56} Bower, Scotichronicon, vol. 8, 115.
\textsuperscript{57} Macdougall, An Antidote to the English, 57; King and Etty, England and Scotland, 62.
This threat became much more tangible in 1419 when the king of France wrote to Albany requesting aid against the English.\(^{58}\) In 1419, France was in dire straits, as Henry V had won a victory in 1415 at Agincourt, and had taken back some lands in France including Harfleur and parts of Normandy. Henry V’s aggressive actions were exacerbated by the civil war and power struggle in France between the Burgundians and Armagnacs.\(^{59}\) France needed Scotland’s military assistance. Albany convened his General Council, and decided to send his son Buchan to France with an army of 7,000 men. Bower reports that this request from the King of France came as a result of the “strength of the treaty between the kingdoms.”\(^{60}\) This displays that Albany maintained his father and brother’s foreign policy throughout the governorship, and that Charles VI and his wider family recognized Albany as the representative of royal power in Scotland capable of aiding France in a time of need.

Diplomatic relations between Scotland and both France and England were often, but not always linked to the events of the Hundred Years’ War. The needs of the Hundred Years’ War was not all Albany had to contend with during the governorship; he also sought the return of James I and Murdoch. In his diplomatic relations in this arena, Albany was effectively able to represent himself as the high royal authority in Scotland and utilized the tools available to him, truces, trades, and possible marriages, to attempt to bring home his own heir and Scotland’s king. Although Henry IV was initially hesitant about Albany’s power in the early years of the governorship, he came to recognize Albany’s position and ability to act for Scotland.

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\(^{58}\) Bower, *Scotichronicon*, vol. 8, 113.


\(^{60}\) Bower, *Scotichronicon*, vol. 8, 113.
The rulers of France were less reluctant to recognize Albany likely due to the similar situation in France under Charles VI and their own use of the corporate monarchy. Albany was able to carry on an effective pro-French policy during the governorship. Scotland and France sought each other’s aid in the face of English hostility, but they did often stand against England without each other. Often the result of the Auld Alliance was military action of some kind. In addition to treaty and truce negotiations, Albany and his sons were also involved in the military action that resulted both from the Anglo-Scottish hostilities and from Scotland’s alliance with France during the Hundred Years’ War.

Warfare

Despite Albany’s formal cordial correspondence with Henry IV, Anglo-Scottish hostilities continue throughout the late fourteenth and early fifteenth centuries, resulting in military action. Albany carried on his anti-English pro-French stance in warfare, often aiding the French and taking the field against the English himself fulfilling as regent and son of the king one of the main duties of kingship, defense of the realm. The Auld Alliance was in essence a military alliance—France and Scotland promised each other aid in the event of English opposition. Albany and his sons enthusiastically participated in this facet of foreign relations as well. Much of the Scottish war effort between 1371 and 1425 focused on the on-going Anglo-Scottish conflict, manifested mostly in border raids, skirmishes, a few large battles, and participation in the Hundred Years’ War with the French army. Due to the nature of the border skirmishes as well as a good deal of propaganda, much of the military historiography for this period focuses on the efforts of the earls of Douglas. As the most influential border magnates of this period and those with the most to lose to English incursions, the Douglases undoubtedly contributed much to the military efforts of Scotland. Few historians have taken a serious look at
the royal war efforts of this period, particularly as Robert II and Robert III had little to boast of in terms of kingly military leadership. Robert II as the Steward was active in the Second War of Independence, and Iain MacInnes’s recent evaluation of the martial abilities of the Steward states, “While the Steward’s political career has been successfully reappraised by Steve Boardman, rescuing it from negative perceptions dating back to the writing of Froissart, it is more difficult to rescue his military reputation.”61 As king, Robert II saw no military action, and little if anything at all can be said about Carrick/Robert III’s battle abilities. In the early 1360s, Carrick did participate in his father’s rebellion against David II, and through the 1370s he was head of the royal envoys in the marches to negotiate truces and settle issues during March Days.62 During Carrick’s guardianship border warfare increased and Carrick was part of that. Curiously though, Carrick remains absent in chronicle accounts of battles in this period, which instead focus on Douglas and Albany.63 The royal Stewart war efforts rested almost entirely with Albany and his sons. After 1388, Albany consciously deployed the use of the corporate monarchy following Carrick’s accident which had left him unable to lead soldiers into battle. In this manner Albany acted for the Stewart dynasty to fulfill the duty of kingship that the king could not, defense of the realm. Albany here could be said to be acting in a very literal sense as the king’s “other body.” Albany and particularly Buchan proved themselves to be able warriors and leaders of men. In addition to what appears to be a natural ability, according to Albany’s epitaph, Albany and his sons cultivated their martial prowess for increased reputation and popularity among the nobility as well as an international reputation. Albany, more so than his brothers, can claim a reputation of protecting Scotland from both internal and external threats.

61 MacInnes, *Scotland’s Second War of Independence*, 104.
62 King and Etty, *England and Scotland*, 57; Boardman, “Robert III (d. 1406), king of Scots.” *ODNB*.
63 Bower, *Scotichronicon*, vol. 8, 395-415. Bower does not mention Carrick once in any of the 1380s skirmishes.
and displayed the qualities sought in a medieval prince.\textsuperscript{64} Albany’s experience with internal threats such as the Wolf of Badenoch and lord of the Isles has already been discussed so here the concentration will remain on foreign threats and alliances.\textsuperscript{65}

Much like other sons of medieval noblemen, Albany likely trained in arms and given his birth during the Second War of Independence and Hundred Years’ War was probably no stranger to warfare. It is unclear if Albany fought in any of the later battles of the Second War of Independence during 1350s, but he had been an active participant in the skirmishes of his father’s rebellion against David II in the early 1360s.\textsuperscript{66} Certainly by the late 1380s, Robert II and later Robert III consistently called upon Albany and his sons in addition to the Douglases to defend the borders when needed, invade England when the Scots had the upper hand, and to lead the French troops in Scotland or Scottish troops in France. By the late 1380s Albany became the mainstay of royal war efforts, fulfilling one of the main duties of kingship. It is unclear, however, what Albany’s main motivation for war was. Albany was not as ferocious a war leader as his counterpart Archibald, fourth earl of Douglas, nor would the potential riches involved have been a large source of his own wealth given the amount of land he owned.\textsuperscript{67} Rather as Alastair Macdonald has proposed for late fourteenth-century Scottish nobility generally, Albany’s motivation for war likely had a more “national” prospective, or in his specific case for the preservation of his family’s dynasty.\textsuperscript{68} Albany’s martial efforts likely served the purposes of the

\textsuperscript{64} Alexander Stewart, the Wolf of Badenoch, was undoubtedly of a martial disposition, but his efforts were not often for the wider defense of the realm.
\textsuperscript{65} See Chapters 2 and 3
\textsuperscript{66} Penman, \textit{David II}, 1329-71, 293.
\textsuperscript{68} Macdonald, “Profit, Politics and Personality,” 118-130.
Scottish kings, and the chivalric and monetary aspects were added perks. His main goals were the protection of Scotland and the Stewart dynasty, and the maintenance of the Auld Alliance.

Given the realities of late medieval Europe, Albany’s place at the head of the royal Scottish war effort was not out of the norm. Edward III’s sons all played a part in the Hundred Years’ War. Before his death in 1376, Edward the Black Prince was instrumental to Edward III’s expeditions, battles, and raids in France.69 Before and after his brother’s death John of Gaunt also led several military engagements for the English in Scotland, France, and Castile.70 Likewise Charles V of France often deputised his brothers to lead armies or portions of armies such as when he sent his brother Philip the Bold to meet John of Gaunt’s army at Calais in 1369.71 Perhaps the larger scale and protracted nature of the Hundred Years’ War accounts for the greater participation of contemporary princes from other royal families in comparison to the Stewarts, but the number of major battles, frequent border skirmishes, internal strife, and border raids provided ample opportunity for the other Scottish princes to engage in warfare just within Scotland. David, duke of Rothesay, did actively participate in the military, but due to his short life his involvement in actual warfare was negligible in the larger picture. Rothesay certainly had an interest in chivalric pursuits such as jousting and tournaments that may have transferred to military pursuits had he lived longer.72 By and large, however, the defense of the realm remained with the border magnates and with the Albany Stewarts as representatives of the Stewart dynasty. Scotland was not necessarily unique in this aspect and many late medieval kingdoms relied on the power and ability of their magnates to not only muster men but to effectively lead

69 Green, Edward the Black Prince, 12-16.
70 Goodman, John of Gaunt, 212.
71 Vaughan, Philip the Bold, 7-8.
72 Boardman, “Robert III,” 121. See full chapter for a discussion of the ways in which Rothesay attempted to make the Scottish court a centre for chivalry due to his own interests.
them as well.\footnote{Goodman, \textit{John of Gaunt}, 222.} However, the inability of Robert III to lead an army made Albany’s position much prominent.

Walter Bower and Andrew of Wyntoun emphasized Albany’s position as head of the Scottish army.\footnote{Walter Bower and Andrew of Wyntoun have been accused by historians of promoting Stewart propaganda, and in particular a skewed portrait of Albany. This may be due in part to Bower and Wyntoun’s reliance on a pro-Albany source now lost. For a fuller discussion of that source see Steve Boardman, “Coronations, Kings and Guardians: Politics,”102–22.} Albany either appeared at every major battle himself or employed the corporate monarchy structure himself and sent his sons Murdoch and Buchan. The chroniclers did often spend more time on the deeds and deaths of the earls of Douglas and their kin in battle, but Albany and/or his sons were usually connected in some way to any major military operation from the 1380s on. In cases like the Battle of Otterburn in 1388, where the centrepiece of the story is usually the death of the earl of Douglas, it is very easy to overlook Albany’s contributions, but both Bower and Wyntoun always made sure Albany or his sons appeared somewhere in the battle itself or the planning process.\footnote{Wyntoun, \textit{Original Chronicle}, vol. 6, 305, 315, 321-5, 327, 401, 407; Bower, \textit{Scotichronicon}, vol. 7, 404-5, 408-9, 412-3, 414-7, 442-3; Bower, \textit{Scotichronicon}, vol. 8, 9, 34-5, 44-5, 52-55, 60-1, 76-7, 86-7, 112-3, 118-21, 124-9.}

With the help of Bower, Albany comes down in the record as particularly anti-English and determined to uphold the honour and sovereignty of Scotland, particularly in the face of England’s opposition. Bower consistently portrayed Albany and his sons as ready to spring into action against the English whenever needed. For example, shortly after the disastrous Battle of Homildon Hill in 1402, in which Murdoch was captured, the English laid siege to Cocklaws Tower and the garrison made agreements to hand over the tower to the English if they were not relieved. Albany upon hearing this was “amazed condemning the foolishness of the pledge.”\footnote{Bower, \textit{Scotichronicon} vol. 8, 53-5.}
He gathered a council and consulted them on what to do. The council agreed it was better to let the castle go than to expose the kingdom to danger. Bower wrote of Albany’s reaction,

And when from among all these men not even one was found to advise to the contrary, the duke, becoming rather agitated, rose from the midst of those who were seated and burst into these words saying “I vow to God and St. Fillan that if I am spared I shall be there on the appointed day even if no one comes with me save my boy Patrick as rider of my warhorse.”

While likely a fabrication, the implication of Bower’s descriptions of Albany and his battle readiness well into his sixties is that he was the face of the Stewart war effort ready and willing at all times to defend even the slightest affront to Scottish pride or sovereignty. In life, Albany likely cultivated an image of chivalric ideal. He, unlike his brother Robert III and nephew Rothesay, had a long history of fighting the English in particular, and no little experience fighting internal threats such as the lord of the Isles. According to the anonymous chronicler of Liber Pluscardensis, Albany also fought in Ireland. This reputation was likely enhanced by Albany’s own deeds and position as the earl of Fife, the foremost noble in the kingdom.

In order to effectively defend Scotland, Albany and his sons not only actually fought in battles, but also maintained close contacts with some of the most chivalric figures of the day. From 1388 until Buchan’s death in 1424, Albany and his sons maintained close working relationships with the earls of Douglas. The Albany Stewarts and the Douglases generally shared joint command of military campaigns including the battles of Otterburn and Homildon Hill. The alliance between the two families would go as far as joint command of the Scottish troops in France between John, earl of Buchan, and his brother-in-law Archibald, earl of

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77 Bower, Scotichronicon vol. 8, 55.
78 Liber Pluscardensis, 248; Bower, Scotichronicon vol. 7, 412-15. The anonymous chronicler places the earl of Fife with William Douglas of Nithsdale on his campaign against the English in Carlingford, Ireland. Bower is a bit less certain in the details and it is unclear if Albany was with Douglas in Ireland, but Bower does name Robert Stewart of Durisdeer, so perhaps there was a mix up in which Robert Stewart was present in Ireland.
79 See chapter 3 for full discussion of the Albany Stewart-Douglas connections.
Wigtown, son of Archibald, fourth earl of Douglas. While there were several excellent reasons for joining forces politically, the alliance between Albany and Douglas was likely also for the good of Albany’s military reputation and the defense of the realm. The Douglases built their land and fame on effective border warfare.\(^8\) In order to be successful militarily, Albany needed the Douglases and their military network in the south of Scotland. Albany extended the search for reputation enhancers to Douglas retainers like Sir John Swinton. Albany’s daughter Margaret married Sir John Swinton, and this connection was certainly for a particular purpose.\(^8\) Chroniclers in Scotland, England, and France celebrated Swinton’s knightly deeds. He was a legend in his own time, a welcome addition to the Albany Stewart military image. Swinton’s son and heir would find himself in his Uncle Buchan’s army in France, unfortunately resulting in his death in 1424.\(^8\)

While Bower’s accounts are likely not free of Albany propaganda, Albany certainly retained the trappings of war. Albany requested safe conduct into England for several of his servants to acquire two full suits of armour and horses (in addition to a large quantity of wine and malt). Albany also incurred expenses for transporting horses around Scotland.\(^8\) Albany and his grandson, Walter, were keepers of the strategic Scottish castles of Stirling and Dumbarton respectively.\(^8\) Albany received payment not only as keeper but also for outfitting both Stirling and the castle of Calder.\(^8\) Albany also requested reimbursement for military expeditions within

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\(^8\) For a full discussion of this marriage see Chapter 3.
\(^8\) CDS, iv, 584, 802; ER iii, 214.
\(^8\) Stirling: ER ii, 437, 462, 524, 551, 554, 555, 585; ER iii, 81, 118; Calder ER iii, 404. Although Murdoch did not inherit the Keepership of Stirling along with his father’s other offices he did request reimbursement for repairs to Stirling in 1421 ER iv, 338.
Scotland such as that to subdue the Lord of the Isles in the wake of the Battle of Harlaw in 1411, although unsuccessfully.\textsuperscript{86} Albany either personally led or deputized a son to lead many major military engagements within and without Scotland; the only exception was the Battle of Harlaw, although Albany’s nephew Alexander, earl of Mar, led the governor’s side and Albany extracted a submission from the lord of the Isles himself afterward.\textsuperscript{87}

The Albany Stewarts were not always successful in their military exploits. Arguably their biggest military failures were the battle of Homildon Hill in 1402 against the English, led by Murdoch and Archibald, fourth earl of Douglas, and the “Foul Raid” in 1417 led by Albany himself. According to Bower, the Battle of Homildon Hill was born out of the Scots’ defeat by the English at Nisbet in June 1402.\textsuperscript{88} The earl of Douglas approached Albany for troops and support claiming he could not take on England without it, a telling statement about Albany’s political and military sway within the kingdom. Albany acquiesced and provided men and Murdoch to lead them. Aside from a stirring speech about bravery from Sir John Swinton which resulted in the reconciliation on the battle field with Swinton’s lifelong enemy, Adam Gordon, the battle was a dismal failure.\textsuperscript{89} Much of the Scottish army died, including many knights and Swinton himself. The English captured not only Murdoch and Douglas but the earls of Moray and Angus as well as several knights, including Albany’s son-in-law Sir William Abernethy, and long-time Albany supporter John Stewart, lord of Lorn. Many of the knights were ransomed and brought back to Scotland, but Murdoch remained in England until 1415. Despite the personal loss, Albany was not deterred from his anti-English stance.

\textsuperscript{86} ER iv, 213, 239.
\textsuperscript{87} Bower, Scotichronicon, vol. 8, 74-5.
\textsuperscript{88} Bower, Scotichronicon, vol. 8, 45.
\textsuperscript{89} Bower, Scotichronicon, vol. 8, 45-7.
After the return of Murdoch and in co-ordination with the French, Albany and the earl of Douglas launched an ambitious attack on Northern England dubbed the “Foul Raid.”\textsuperscript{90} Henry V was once again campaigning in France in 1417, which led Albany and Douglas to uphold Scotland’s end of the Auld Alliance. Douglas laid siege to Roxburgh, while Albany attacked Berwick. Albany and Douglas likely believed that in the absence of Henry V the north of England would be less well guarded. They were mistaken. John, duke of Bedford, quickly organized the border nobles in England and relieved both towns easily.\textsuperscript{91} The Scots retreated to Scotland and the English even raided deep into Douglas lands. Douglas would retaliate, but the 1417 raid was a dismal failure or as Bower succinctly states “Nothing praiseworthy was achieved there.”\textsuperscript{92} The “Foul Raid” and subsequent support of the French in the Hundred Years’ War is a good example of Albany’s staunchly pro-French foreign policy particularly in the wake of the safe return of Murdoch when good relations with the English were less important for the return of his son and heir.

Indeed Albany encouraged his son Buchan in further upholding the Auld Alliance by sending him to France with a Scottish army in 1419 to aid the French in their reversal of fortunes in the Hundred Years’ War. John, earl of Buchan, has received little scholarly attention outside of how he was a stand in for his brother Murdoch during the early years of the Albany governorship.\textsuperscript{93} Buchan, like his father, is often overlooked militarily in favour of his more famous companions his father-in-law Archibald, fourth earl of Douglas and brother-in-law, Archibald Douglas, earl of Wigtown, fifth earl of Douglas, and duke of Touraine, but Buchan

\textsuperscript{90} Bower, \textit{Scotichronicon}, vol. 8, 87
\textsuperscript{91} Bower, \textit{Scotichronicon}, vol. 8, 87; Brown, \textit{The Black Douglases}, 215-6.
\textsuperscript{92} Bower, \textit{Scotichronicon}, vol. 8, 87.
\textsuperscript{93} The most complete examinations of Buchan as an independent actor appear in Macdougall, \textit{An Antidote to the English}, 53-77; Michael Brown, “Stewart, John, third earl of Buchan,” \textit{ODNB}; Brown, \textit{James I}. 
was instrumental in the French army from 1419 to 1424. Bower’s description of Buchan is even more generous than his description of Albany. Bower states that Buchan

bore himself most gloriously for the time he was there [France]: the laudatory statements of the French [still] acclaim him to the full. He and his men were therefore received with honour by the king of France … From a combination of venerable maturity, admirable industry, careful shrewdness, graceful bearing, comely apparel, care for his manners, fluent way of speaking and handsome shape of his face he so won the hearts of king and community that he seemed to have risen like another Messiah among and with them.\

By request of the king of France in accordance with the Auld Alliance, Buchan and Wigtown led an army of more than 7,000 Scottish soldiers to France and reached Tours in November 1419 to aid the French army in holding back the advancing English after the Battle of Agincourt. Buchan, Wigtown, and other Scottish leaders such as Sir John Stewart of Darnley and John Seton received several gifts from the French king including horses, lands, and castles. Buchan received Châtillon-sur-Indre in Touraine from Charles VI. Together with their French allies the Scottish army won the Battle of Baugè in 1421. After this point, Buchan was made the Constable of France, a position that did garner some resentment among the French soldiers since Buchan was a foreigner. It is likely that while Douglas has received more attention, Buchan actually had the leading role in the France.

Buchan’s efforts on behalf of the maintenance of the Auld Alliance, while acceptable under the government of his pro-French father and brother, did not endear him to his cousin James I, who was integral to Henry V’s battle plans in France. Henry V increasingly deployed James I in his army in hopes that he would deter the Scottish soldiers on the French side. Buchan’s victory at the Battle of Baugé likely increased James I’s importance on the English

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95 Macdougall, *An Antidote to the English*, 63.
side and James I was elevated to a joint command of the English forces with Henry V’s brother, the duke of Gloucester, in August 1421. However, this placement in Henry V’s army also pitted James I against his own subjects, and even resulted in the execution of Scottish soldiers as rebels on James I’s order after the fall of Melun to the English in 1420. James I’s presence overall did not deter the Scottish soldiers, as they would not adhere to a king under a foreign power.

Buchan did not remain with his original army of Scottish soldiers. He returned to Scotland in 1423 at the head of a French embassy to recruit more men. This proved a tricky point as negotiations for the release of James I were well underway, and a contingent of Scottish soldiers fighting for France did not work well for James I as an ally of the English. Buchan was, after negotiation, allowed to bring a last round of men to France but no more after May 1424. According to Michael Brown, Buchan and his army in France remained a check on the power of James I once he returned to Scotland as Buchan possessed considerable political power of his own complemented by his alliance with his half-brother Murdoch and his in-laws the Black Douglases. Buchan wielded considerable power and influence within the French army as well and remained in France during the return of his cousin. However, this power and security would be brief, as Buchan died in 1424 during the Battle of Verneuil. Upon the death of Buchan with the earl of Douglas and much of their army, James I was relieved of a threat of a returning army

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98 Later chroniclers while unsure about Albany were generally complimentary about Buchan. Major approved of the Scottish soldiers under Buchan refusing to obey James I while he was in Henry V’s army, and wrote highly of Buchan. Major did note that the loss at Vernauil was due to infighting between Buchan and Douglas. John Major, *A History of Greater Britain*, 343-4.; Macdougall, *An Antidote to the English*, 64.
99 Brown, *James I*, 29; Macdougall, *An Antidote to the English*, 63. Shortly after Buchan and the army’s arrival in 1419, Charles VI sent a letter to Alexander, earl of Mar, requesting he come to France with as many recruits as possible. Mar declined to make the journey.
if he moved on the power of either the Albany Stewarts or the Black Douglasses, and thus a check on his power was removed.100

The Albany Stewarts, while not always successful in war, provided the main backbone of the royal army. Along with powerful regional magnates like the earls of Douglasses, the Albany Stewarts maintained an active military presence in the kingdom and in France in accordance with the needs of the Auld Alliance. Albany encouraged this image and took his position as leader of the royal Stewart army seriously. As a second son, in the beginning this may have been an avenue to power and support of his father’s dynasty. Later, as Albany’s power grew as regent, it became one more way in which Albany fulfilled the duties of kingship for an incapacitated king. Albany was not only an effective diplomatic actor, but a military leader when necessary which helped him actively maintain his pro-French, anti-English policy not only in Anglo-Scottish affairs but in the French alliance during the Hundred Years’ War. By the late 1380s with his aging father, injured brother, and young nephew, Albany was the natural choice as war leader in the kingdom. Albany’s sons too took up this role, with Buchan, possibly originally due to his position as second son, being more successful although ultimately ill-fated. The Albany Stewarts’ position as the leaders of armies may have been threatening if they seriously considered taking the throne, but in the end they used their talents for the protection of Scotland and the Stewart dynasty, and the maintenance of their alliance with France.

Trade

Outside of diplomacy and war, Albany’s foreign relations revolved around trade, mainly with the Low Countries. Albany had both a personal and political stake in the trade with other

100 Brown, *James I*, 52.
realms, and trade negotiations occupied much of his correspondence with the Low Countries. During the late fourteenth and early fifteenth centuries, Scotland (and Europe generally) suffered a period of economic decline in the wake of the Black Death.101 In particular, the wool trade, which had been extremely profitable for Scotland at the beginning of the fourteenth century, reached its height in the 1370s and began to taper off during the latter part of the century.102 However, Scotland still conducted a lot of trade during the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries. During the late fourteenth and early fifteenth centuries, Scotland entered into and renegotiated several trade agreements with specific cities in the Low Countries, including a renegotiation of the Scottish Staple, a trade agreement in which Scotland was granted certain rights, protections, and privileges for using a certain port, in Bruges in 1387, 1394, 1407.103 Due to a problem with high tariffs in 1423 during Murdoch’s governorship, Scotland had moved its Staple to Middleburg, but ultimately James I moved it back to Bruges in 1427.104 In some ways Albany’s connections with the Low Countries are an outgrowth of his relations with France and John, duke of Burgundy. But in other ways, these connections were simply confirmations of the agreements that had been struck by his father and brother. Albany negotiated several trade issues in the Low Countries, and the complaints and grievances of the Scots were taken seriously. Early in his governorship, Albany sent Walter Stewart, burgess of Perth, William Lawedre, John Gille, and John of Lethe on an embassy to negotiate with John, duke of Burgundy.105 The 1407 Scottish embassy complained about "excessive charges levied by both porters (who monopolised the

101 Stevenson, Power and Propaganda, 169.
carriage of goods and who were also burgesses) and brokers."\textsuperscript{106} The local authorities launched an investigation in order to regain the Scottish Staple and punished offenders as examples. Furthermore, the duke of Burgundy at this point also appointed a Conservator of Scottish Privileges, in order to protect Scottish trading rights, although no further mention of this officer comes until 1466. The end result of this embassy, at Albany’s request, was a charter of privileges for Scottish merchants.\textsuperscript{107} The city of Bruges went a step further eleven days after the creation of this charter and addressed themselves to the Prince, the duke of Albany, confirming not only the original privileges granted by the duke of Burgundy but also “all possible protection was promised to the Scots and their goods, and reparation and restitution in the case of damage or false arrest.”\textsuperscript{108} The 1407 letter from the Council of Bruges clearly addressed Albany as the “lofty and great prince, the duke of Albany, governor of the realm of Scotland,” indicating that Albany presented himself that way in the negotiations and that they recognized him as the son of a king and the current highest power in Scotland. In further trade matters in 1416 with count William of Holland, however, Albany was simply referred to as the governor of Scotland as the letter was also addressed to the still absent James I, Duke William’s dear cousin and a powerful prince.\textsuperscript{109} When James I was included Albany lost his princely status. Regardless, Albany was still recognized as the highest power in Scotland when envoys came to negotiate. In 1412 both Albany and Buchan claimed several reimbursements for the cost of hosting ambassadors from Flanders and Holland for the purpose of commercial negotiations.\textsuperscript{110} In the absence of Murdoch, Albany likely had Buchan act as host to the ambassadors while they were in Scotland.

\textsuperscript{106} Stevenson, “Medieval Scottish Associations with Bruges,” 99.
\textsuperscript{107} Rooseboom, \textit{The Scottish Staple in the Netherlands}, 11. Full text of the charter can be found in the appendix of this work, no. 14. Stevenson, “Medieval Scottish Associations with Bruges,” 100.
\textsuperscript{108} Rooseboom, \textit{The Scottish Staple in the Netherlands}, 12, App. no. 15.
\textsuperscript{109} Rooseboom, \textit{The Scottish Staple in the Netherlands}, 15, App. no. 18.
\textsuperscript{110} ER iv, 137, 139, 140, 143, 145, 148, 149, 150.
During the governorship, Albany actively worked to establish a favourable arrangement with the leaders of the Low Countries, most importantly the duke of Burgundy. Trade negotiations with Burgundy were also likely enhanced by the close relationships the duke formed with Albany and other Scottish nobles as discussed above. Negotiating favourable trade treaties was good for the whole kingdom of Scotland, but Albany likely also benefitted personally. There are several entries in the *Exchequer Rolls* for Albany’s customs for exporting hides, wool, and woolfells from both his estates of Doune and Falkland. Likely much of the exported wool or woolfells from the Albany Stewart estates ended up in the Low Countries, probably specifically Bruges, where there was a flourishing textile industry, and much of Scotland’s exported wool made its way there. Albany owned at least one ship, but the only evidence for it comes from its use by others. During the late Middle Ages kings and nobles often rented out their ships to others. In 1409 James Douglas of Strabrok requested safe passage through England and Guyenne for himself and others aboard Albany’s ship the *Tay*, as they made their way on a pilgrimage to Santiago de Compostela. Unfortunately, there are no further mentions of a ship called the *Tay*; however, it is reasonable to assume that Albany’s ship took some part in trade between Scotland and Europe as well as the transportation of pilgrims, possibly even shipping his own wool to a Scottish merchant based in Bruges. Much earlier in March 1384, Albany requested safe conduct for a year for his merchant John of Bodyngton and their merchandise to cross the seas. Again it seems likely that Bodyngton’s destination was the Low Countries,

111 *ER* iv, allowed custom of hides of his house at Stirling, 5, 73, 102, 138, 172, 197, 216, 244, 271, 292, of wool do. 271, 292, of woolfells do. 292, of wool, fells, and hides of his house at Falkland, 77, 198, 220, 246, 272, 292.


113 Signet Letters of Henry IV and Henry V, 741.


115 *CDS*, iv, 324.
given the amount of Scottish trade that went through Bruges. While there is no further mention of Bodyngton or Albany’s ship, this fragmentary evidence points to Albany’s engagement with trade and maintenance of his own merchant and vessels for doing so.

Scotland’s trading partnerships were not solely peaceful nor successful in this period. Beginning in 1408, there were several complaints about Scottish piracy in the Low Countries. Some attacks were attributed to Alexander, earl of Mar, a known pirate. Despite the complaints, Albany did not see fit to stop or restrain his nephew or other pirates. The Scots fell out with several towns in the Low Countries which eventually erupted into full hostility. Scottish pirates attacked English, Dutch, and Hanseatic ships resulting in mixed demands on the Scottish government. The English wanted restitution and occasionally detained Scottish merchandise, but no other official action was taken. The Dutch, while they did not close their ports to Scottish merchants, did between 1408 and 1410 authorise arming ships at Brouwershaven, Westkaple, Flushing, Zierickzee, and Westenschowen.\textsuperscript{116} The hostilities kept up until a brief respite in 1416 for peace negotiations. Further Scottish piracy broke the peace which was not sufficiently restored until 1423 during Murdoch’s governorship when a new treaty was signed and the Scots agreed to restitution. The Hanseatic diet was not as forgiving as others of the acts of piracy, and imposed an embargo on Scottish trading from Christmas 1412 until 1436, although there was a brief respite between 1415 and 1419 in order to negotiate peace, but that was not a fruitful endeavour.\textsuperscript{117} The Hanseatic authorities in particular objected to the continued activities of Mar. There was little Flemish reaction to the piracy of the Scots, likely because Scotland supplied the Flemish weavers with so much wool. Despite Mar and his pirate comrades, states Ditchburn,

\textsuperscript{116} Stevenson, \textit{Power and Propaganda}, 177-8; Ditchburn, “The Pirate, the Policeman and the Pantomime Star,” 21-3.

\textsuperscript{117} Ditchburn, “The Pirate, the Policeman and the Pantomime Star,” 22-3; Rooseboom, \textit{The Scottish Staple in the Netherlands}, 14-15.
Scottish exports and revenues did not decline in proportion to the embargos and sanctions, possibly due to the disunited front of the sanctions. Scotland still freely traded with France, Castile, and England, and several Hanseatic ships and merchants ignored their government’s stance. Furthermore, Scotland’s biggest trading partners Flanders, Holland, and Zeeland continued to accept Scottish ships.\textsuperscript{118}

The Low Countries were certainly Scotland’s main trading partner, but not the only one.\textsuperscript{119} On occasion Albany requested safe conducts for his men to go to England to conduct trade. Two specific instances of Albany’s very detailed requests for safe conducts for trade survive. In September 1401 “the noble and puissant prince” Albany, possibly the earliest use of such a title, was granted safe conduct for his men Henry Wedalle, William Ydil, Richard Johnson, John Chambre, John Porter, and John of Lennox to go to England to purchase for him two full suits of armour, and large quantities of wine, flour, and malt.\textsuperscript{120} Ten years later in May 1410-11, Albany requested license for his chaplain John Busby to purchase for him in England a long list of items including linen cloth, saddles, basins, three beds of “wirstede” with curtains, scarlet cloth, various household goods, and three scarlet hats.\textsuperscript{121} Besides revealing Albany or perhaps Murielle’s penchant for scarlet clothing, these safe conducts indicate that Albany regularly sent men to England for personal purchasing reasons. Some of the men listed in the safe conducts for specific trade are also some of the same men Albany sent as ambassadors or messengers to the Kings of England. For instance, earlier in January 1401, Henry Wedalle, John

\textsuperscript{118} Ditchburn, “The Pirate, the Policeman and the Pantomime Star,” 23, 27.
\textsuperscript{119} The works of David Ditchburn, Matthijs Rooseboom, and Alexander Stevenson have illuminated a vast trading network between Scotland, England, France, the Low Countries, the Baltic countries, in a few cases Italy and later in the fifteenth century for Scandinavia as well. Unfortunately for the early fifteenth century the evidence is extremely fragmentary particularly in regards to Albany and at this point I can only definitively say that on a personal level Albany had trading connections with England and the Low Countries.
\textsuperscript{120} \textit{CDS}, iv, 584.
\textsuperscript{121} \textit{CDS}, iv, 802. Alternatively “cappes descarlet” could be scarlet capes.
Porter, Richard Johnson, and John of Lennox, were all granted safe conduct into England to deliver messages to Albany’s herald at the English court.¹²²

Taken altogether these fragmentary pieces of evidence suggest an enduring interest in trade for both personal and political reasons. The problems in the Low Countries affected not only Scottish merchants as a whole, but likely Albany’s own interests. While impossible to gauge Albany’s level of investment in these adventures, it can suffice to say that bad trade conditions for Scotland would mean a loss in profit for himself. Of course, Albany’s interest in trade was not unusual; as exhibited even by this short survey John, duke of Burgundy was equally invested in good trade relations with Scotland. In matters of trade there was little hesitation about Albany’s ability to be an effective international actor in Europe.

Conclusion

In foreign affairs Albany did not stray from the precedents of the reigns of Robert II and Robert III. He maintained a pro-French, anti-English policy and preserved pre-existing trade links with the Low Countries. Aside from some hesitation on the part of Henry IV there was little reservation in other realms and kingdoms to accepting not only Albany’s position as governor, but also his place in the corporate monarchy and presentation of himself as a prince invested with the authority to act and negotiate on behalf of the Scottish kingdom. Albany deployed the title prince far more often in foreign relations than he did within internal Scottish affairs. Albany represented himself as a prince and was accepted as such outside of Scotland. Furthermore, Albany was an effective international actor. He successfully negotiated trade treaties and attempted to obtain the freedom of his son and nephew through the acceptable means of

¹²² CDS, iv, 570.
diplomacy and the proposal of marriage alliances. Although Albany ultimately only gained the freedom of his son, Henry IV and Henry V recognized Albany’s ability to negotiate for the king on behalf the whole Scottish realm. During period of hostility both specific to Scotland and in alliance with France during the Hundred Years’ War Albany was also the driving force behind the royal army for Scotland. He worked with other Scottish magnates, specifically the Douglas family, to effectively defend Scotland and uphold the Auld Alliance with France in accordance with the duties of kingship charged to him. Albany’s position as regent for his nephew was not an uncommon one in Europe and as such his princely title, position, and authority in matters related to Scotland whether trade, diplomacy, or warfare were readily recognized and accepted by other rulers and the Scottish magnates.
Chapter 5: Power, Piety, and Politics in Religion

After a lengthy debate Scotland entered the obedience of Pope Martin V in 1419 as the last major outlier in the papal schism of 1378-1417. The General Council at Perth finally prevailed upon governor Albany to give up his allegiance to the anti-pope Benedict XIII. For reasons unknown, Albany maintained a staunch preference for Benedict XIII through the years of the governorship and well after the election of the new pope Martin V at Council of Constance in 1417.\footnote{Bower, \textit{Scotichronicon}, vol. 8, 87-93.} During the governorship, Albany like his father and brother before him, was able to exert his influence on the allegiance of Scotland during the papal schism. This was not the first time Albany interfered with or influenced matters of religion in Scotland. Like other royal figures and nobles in late medieval Europe, Albany maintained an interest in the affairs and workings of the Catholic Church in Scotland. Albany’s relationship with the church in Scotland and religion generally was complex. On the one hand he was given to personal displays of piety and devotion, but on the other he was quick to exploit the church and its affairs for personal and political gain. During the papal schism Albany used the pope’s weakened position to enhance Scottish-papal relations in favour of Scotland just as many of his European contemporaries did. Albany may have been quick to exploit the immediate situation of the papal schism, but he also stood with St. Andrews in opposing the spread of the Lollard heresy in Scotland. Within Scotland Albany used his political weight to advance his favourites within the church hierarchy and on more than one occasion used church offices for political gain. However, Albany was also given to personal displays of piety in line with his contemporaries, such as devotion to saints’
cults and patronage of hospitals. For Albany involvement in religious affairs was an expression of both personal piety and political might.

In his capacity as governor fulfilling the duties of kingship, Albany was responsible for the welfare and protections of religion and the religious in the kingdom and engaged in the wider challenges occasioned by the papal schism and heresy in fifteenth-century Europe. Albany’s interaction with religion outside of the schism is a largely neglected topic. Hunt thoroughly covered Albany’s part in continuing to promote adherence to Benedict XIII after the Council of Constance.² Albany is usually mentioned in passing or in general discussions of the schism, heresy, and its impacts on Scotland.³ However, Albany’s impact on the church in Scotland and his own piety are subjects very little explored, likely due to the dominating discussions of schism and heresy in Scotland and Europe generally for the late medieval period. As a duke, an earl, and the son of the king, Albany acted as a patron for men who became bishops and affected the church hierarchy within Scotland. Albany often used his political clout for the promotion of his favourites including his chaplains. In his capacity as a secular lord, Albany’s name was used to enhance papal petitions, he interfered with the election of bishops, defended the rights of the cathedrals and monastic houses from other secular lords, and advanced the interests of his favourites.

In terms of expressions of piety, Albany did not erect any monasteries or endow any colleges. He was not himself a scholar of religion and did not, like his rough contemporary Prince Henry the Navigator, endow theology chairs at universities or make plans to go on

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crusade. Rather Albany concentrated on smaller endowments and the promotion of people. In this regard Albany’s religious patronage largely falls within wider European trends of the late medieval period, and within the norms of his own family as neither Robert II nor Robert III were notable patrons on the scale of David I or St. Margaret. In the late medieval period patronage in Scotland and Europe generally moved away from large monastic endowments. For the royal family in particular religious patronage fell into one of two categories, confirmations of earlier grants and new more personal grants centred on smaller endowments such as that of perpetual celebrants or masses for the dead. Christina Strauch explains the change in medieval patronage as part of the rise of mendicant orders in the later Middle Ages, which provided a different focus for medieval spirituality. Instead of endowing large monasteries, royal and noble patrons turned instead to mendicant orders and founding and/or supporting places such as hospitals in order to provide immediate support to their communities. These good works in turn allowed patrons to help provide for their own salvation as salvation depended on both good works and the prayers of others. Albany certainly kept with this trend of smaller scale patronage and while his connections with mendicant orders is a bit sparsely documented he and his family certainly did support institutions such as hospitals for immediate impact on medieval society as well as endow perpetual celebrants and altars.

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Many of these smaller foundations were accompanied by obits, masses or prayers for the dead, for the good of the donor’s soul as well as those of their family. The smaller scale patronage of Albany was in line with the change in religious expression and forms of piety present in late medieval Europe, which also reflected the growing trend of lay people seeking personal salvation. Audrey-Beth Fitch states that these types of endowments focused on improving the standing of a person’s soul after death and shortening their time in purgatory. Endowing obits and supporting hospitals ensured continued prayers for their souls after death, as those who benefitted from the foundations were charged with praying for the patron. Like many other late medieval Christians, Albany probably envisioned the need for several years’ worth of prayers to leave Purgatory for Heaven. Albany’s piety and care for his soul found expression in small scale land grants, financial patronage, and promotion as was common among his counterparts of this period.

None of Albany’s children pursued a religious life, although a few of Albany’s grandchildren did. Albany’s granddaughter Euphemia, countess of Ross, resigned her earldom in favour of a religious life in a convent in North Berwick, nearby her mother, Isobel, and stepfather, Walter Haliburton of Dirleton. As discussed previously, there is debate over whether or not Albany forced Euphemia on this course, but to assume she had no say or no genuine religious calling does a disservice to the countess. Another grandchild, George Abernethy, son of Albany’s daughter and William Abernethy of Saltoun, was a clerk in the diocese of St. Andrews prior to 1450 and later provost of St. Mary’s collegiate church in Lennox

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9 Fitch, *The Search for Salvation*, 85-6, 188.
11 See Chapter 3 for full discussion.
through the patronage of his aunt, Isabella of Lennox.\textsuperscript{12} Although the evidence for some of Albany’s children is scant, it can be reasonably assumed that had any of his children entered the religious life, particularly a son, Albany would have sought to promote them to high positions within the church in Scotland as he was known to do with some of his kinsmen and indeed many of the churchmen who found themselves in his employ.

Before further discussion of Albany’s influence on the church, it should be noted that his interactions with the church were sometimes complicated by his position as governor, head of the Stewart family, and highest ranking member of the royal family left in Scotland. This means that it is sometimes unclear if Albany acted solely as himself, the duke of Albany, or in some cases as a stand-in for the Scottish king, the governor. During the governorship, Albany usually petitioned the pope and granted or confirmed charters under all of his titles, Robert Stewart, duke of Albany, earl of Fife and Menteith, governor of Scotland regardless of whether his actions were personal or governmental, making the distinction between his personal and political roles difficult. There were not any major or indeed noticeable changes to royal support of religious institutions during the governorship. On occasion Albany even reconfirmed earlier religious grants of kings, once more fulfilling a duty of kingship as governor. The confirmation of royal charters to religious institutions and the continuation of royal religious patronage does signify an understanding on the part of the bishops and abbots in Scotland of Albany’s ability to act for their absent king and Stewart dynasty, as does the increase during the governorship in citations of Albany’s support of or relation to men seeking religious offices. Whether in personal agreement with Albany or not, the Scottish bishops and churchmen did support the governor in

his position as stand in for the king, although they were not afraid to oppose him when necessary.

Schism and Heresy

As the Regent of Scotland, Albany had a duty not only to the Scottish people, but also to the protection of the Catholic Church in Scotland. Albany’s commission as governor does not survive; however, in Albany’s oath as lieutenant in 1388 he was charged to uphold the sovereignty of Scotland, and Rothesay’s 1399 commission detailed his responsibility to protect the church. This idea was of particular importance in 1388 during the renewed hostilities with England. While Richard II and Henry IV did not exert their claims to overlordship of Scotland in the same way Edward I or even Henry V did, the threat of English overlordship continued as an undercurrent in Anglo-Scottish hostility. English claims to overlordship often extended beyond the secular realm and into the religious. Discussions of a growing national consciousness in Scotland included not only the idea of defining “Scottishness” but also development of national institutions or identities like that of a national church in Scotland headed by St. Andrews.

Whether or not the Scottish church was subject to the English church (particularly the Archbishop of York) was a long running debate that was supposed to have been settled by Pope Celestine III’s 1192 papal bull Cum Universi. After 1192, Scotland was considered the “Special Daughter” of the papacy and subject in ecclesiastical matters only to the pope with no

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13 RPS 1399/1/3
However, over the course of the later Middle Ages, different popes wavered on this matter, as well as Scottish independence generally, as they often did not want to risk the alienation of England. Conflicts about religious independence were bound up in general issues over Scottish sovereignty. In the early fifteenth century with both the papal schism and the precarious nature of Scottish politics with James I a captive of the English king, the defense of Scottish sovereignty both secular and religious and relations with the papacy were of vital importance. These were likely some of the matters at the forefront in Albany’s government.

Albany’s defense of and relationship with the universal church was complicated by two external problems, the Papal Schism (1378-1417) and the heresy of Lollardy. Wyntoun’s description of Albany portrays Albany as an enthusiastic defender of religion in Scotland. Wyntoun writes, “He was a constane Catholyk./ All lollaris he laythit and herrotyk.”

Wyntoun’s portrayal of Albany as previously noted tends towards positive, but the general sense from Albany’s actions during the period of the governorship is that he displayed a concern for the state of religion in Scotland. Albany did of course like other nobles and monarchs around Europe exploit the schism, but his interactions with the church in these wider European crises indicated a concern for both orthodoxy and the preservation of the rights of Scottish churchmen.

The Papal Schism started well before Albany’s governorship. In 1377, Pope Gregory XI attempted to re-establish the papacy in Rome after decades of the popes residing in Avignon. Gregory died soon after his return to Rome in 1378. The cardinals were pressured by the people

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16 Barrell, Medieval Scotland, 60-1.
18 Wyntoun, The Original Chronicle, vol. 6, 417. “He was a constant Catholic./All Lollards he detested and heretics.”
of Rome to elect a Roman as the new pope; many Romans had resented the predominantly French descent of the previous Avignon popes. The cardinals gave into the demands and elected Bartolomeo Prignano, the archbishop of Bari, as the new pope. Prignano took the name Urban VI. Urban soon proved to be a poor choice and a domineering pope. The cardinals fled Rome and elected a new pope, the anti-pope Robert of Geneva or Clement VII who settled back into Avignon. Neither pope was willing to give up the papacy resulting in two popes in Europe. The schism had wide spread effects not only on the spirituality of late medieval Europe, but also on the political situation. Each realm now chose their preferred pope, usually based on the choices of their allies and enemies and the privileges the popes would offer rulers and kingdoms for their obedience. In 1409 a group of cardinals attempted to end the schism. They requested both popes to resign and elected a new pope, John XXII, during the Council of Pisa. This did not work, as neither the pope in Rome nor the one in Avignon resigned, and Catholics now had three popes to choose between. Europe would not be reconciled under one pope again until after the Council of Constance elected Martin V as the sole pope in 1417. John XXII and Urban’s Roman successor Gregory XII resigned, but Clement’s successor, Benedict XIII, refused. Benedict was deposed during the Council of Constance and fled into exile. Benedict maintained, largely without any supporters, that he was pope until his death in 1423.19 During this conflict the European kingdoms chose whichever pope benefitted them most, and many kingdoms switched allegiance at some point during the schism. Scotland, of course, was not immune to choosing sides in this conflict.

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One of the more curious aspects of Albany’s governorship is his personal hold-out from adhering to Pope Martin V after the Council of Constance in 1417. Albany withheld the obedience of Scotland until 1419, longer than many other kingdoms, a move that risked the isolation of Scotland in Europe.20 During the schism, Scotland for a myriad of reasons supported the anti-popes Clement VII (1378-1394) and Benedict XIII (1394-1419) based in Avignon. As in other kingdoms in 1378, the international situation in Europe influenced Scotland’s stance. England supported the Roman Pope Urban VI, in the belief that an Italian pope would rid the papacy of the French influence that had prevailed for most of the last century, and France chose Clement VII then residing in Avignon. While at peace in 1378, Scotland had closer political and intellectual ties with France and the University of Paris than with England, influencing Scotland’s choice of the Avignon based Clement VII.21 Despite the fracturing nature the schism had on the universality of the late medieval church, in some ways it worked out for secular rulers in the short term. The different popes often found themselves attempting to win influence over Europe’s royal families and nobles through the granting of petitions and favours, a situation of which many like Albany took advantage. For example, early in the schism, Clement VII attempted to gain Scotland’s support through supporting their claims to the disputed monastery of Coldingham over English claims in 1378.22 On the other side of this dispute, the Roman popes did not want to lose the obedience of England and therefore allowed Henry IV to extend royal justice to criminal clergy with little incident.23 The international situation was just as compelling as the favours for Scotland. During the schism Scotland’s old enemy England could be labeled

21 Nicholson, The Later Middle Ages, 191; Brown, Disunited Kingdoms, 144-5; Stevenson, Power and Propaganda, 121. This assumption likely has to do with the periodically renewed “Auld Alliance” as well as the number of Scottish students studying in France as Scotland at this point did not have a university.
22 Clement VII, 24-5; Boardman, The Early Stewart Kings, 112-3.
23 Given-Wilson, Henry IV, 348-52. In 1399 Henry IV had Thomas Merks, bishop of Carlisle, executed for treason. This was novel as generally treasonous clergy were exiled rather than executed.
schismatics, allowing the political anti-English sentiment to merge with the religious anti-English sentiment born of the attempts of the English church to bring the Scottish church under their power in centuries past.\textsuperscript{24} This fitted well with the Stewart dynasty’s anti-English, pro-French foreign policy. Interestingly, the label of schismatic did not apply to the close ally of Albany and the other Scottish nobles, John, duke of Burgundy. Burgundy was an avid supporter of the Roman popes during the schism and even used the different allegiances to tar his rival Louis, duke of Orleans, a supporter of Benedict XIII, in the aftermath of the Orleans murder.\textsuperscript{25} After Burgundy’s 1413 exile and the Armagnac ascendency in the French government, Scotland and France once again supported the same pope.

Unlike other kingdoms such as France, Scotland maintained an unwavering adherence to Avignon based popes through the entire schism.\textsuperscript{26} The Scots held out through the Council of Constance until 1419 before pledging themselves to Martin V. Previous scholarship has pinpointed Albany as the main reason for Scotland’s delay in adherence to Martin V, and likely Albany was a factor in the delay. According to Bower, the decision to remove obedience from Benedict XIII and transfer it to Martin V occurred in the General Council in Perth in 1419.\textsuperscript{27} Prior to this decision, Benedict XIII addressed a letter to Albany and the Three Estates requesting that Scotland remain his supporter.\textsuperscript{28} Albany appears to have taken this request to heart and beginning in 1416, Albany employed an English friar, Robert Harding, to argue for continued obedience to Benedict XIII. John Fogo, later abbot of Melrose, vigorously debated Harding, and

\textsuperscript{25} Vaughan, \textit{John the Fearless}, 32, 72.
\textsuperscript{26} Some kingdoms, like France, did change allegiance when it suited them, particularly if the other pope offered more favourable concessions or the international situation favoured it. Rollo-Koster, \textit{Avignon and Its Papacy}, 260-9.
\textsuperscript{27} Bower, \textit{Scotichronicon}, vol. 8, 87-93.
\textsuperscript{28} Bower, \textit{Scotichronicon}, vol. 8, 89.
accused him of a number of evils including promotion of schism and heresy. Harding was not only opposed by Abbott Fogo, but also the whole of the University of St. Andrews. In 1419 Harding died of natural causes, and according to Bower, the governor was prevailed upon by the bishops and political community to withdraw from Benedict. Bower does make Albany look like a continued encourager of schism, but he does not give a reason as to why Albany insisted on Benedict over Martin. Hunt proposes a reason which takes into account the wider situation of European diplomacy and the ever-present threat of English domination. In the wider European context, Scotland was not the only hold out from obedience to Martin V. In Aragon two cardinals and some clergy maintained allegiance to Benedict; Bernard and his heir Jean IV, counts of Armagnac, continued to petition Benedict until 1419, and several high ranking members of the French and English courts also continued to petition Benedict XIII. Benedict was not completely without allies in the immediate wake of Constance. Martin V also faced challenges within the Italian city states and it was not until 1420 that he could claim a universal obedience.

Furthermore, several kingdoms did not accept the ruling of Constance right away but delayed in order to develop national “concordats,” such as France in which the concordat, “carefully delineated the authority of the pope and the liberties of the Gallican church.” England, the

29 Bower, Scotichronicon, vol. 8, 87-9; Katie Stevenson, “Lollardy, Hussitism and the Scottish Inquisition, c.1390-c.1527,” Revue d'histoire ecclésiastique 110, no. 3-4 (2015): 697, 701; Katie Stevenson, “Heresy, Inquisition, and Late Medieval St. Andrews,” in Medieval St. Andrews Church, Cult, City, ed. Michael Brown and Katie Stevenson (Woodbridge: Boydell Press, 2017), 341. Walter Bower was himself at this time a student at St. Andrews and an eyewitness to these events. Harding and the faculty of St. Andrews traded several insults and abusive messages. Harding was accused of heresy by Master John Elward, rector of the University of St. Andrews. James Haldenstone, prior of St. Andrews, examined Harding in 1418, but did not find him guilty of heresy. The employment of Harding by Albany also demonstrates how even internally, the religious of many kingdoms were not in agreement on which pope to support. England largely favoured the Roman popes, but here Harding favoured those in Avignon.

30 Bower, Scotichronicon, vol. 8, 87-93.
31 Rollo-Koster, Avignon and Its Papacy, 272.
German, Italian, and Iberian kingdoms all made their own concordats.\textsuperscript{33} While there is no extant Scottish concordat, changes in the relationship between the papacy and Scotland indicate some type of agreement between the governor and Martin V, such as the addition of a Scottish scriptor to the papal curia to expedite Scottish business. During Murdoch’s tenure as governor he complained about the lack of appointments of Scotsman and “favourable graces” indicating that perhaps the Scottish concordat was not held to.\textsuperscript{34} Albany’s delay may have had to do with negotiating a fair agreement for Scotland, although his employment of Harding does point to a personal objection as well.

A further delay was likely caused by the uncertain political situation occasioned by the imprisonment of the Scottish king. The balance of power between Albany and James I, especially later in the governorship once James I came of age, was often contentious. The antipopes did not hesitate to recognize Albany’s position and treat him as the highest royal power in Scotland. Martin V took another route and handled petitions from churches in royal patronage differently. Martin V began referring to James I rather than solely to Albany as Benedict XIII had previously done in his communications with Scotland. For example, in a 1419 petition referring to St. Giles in Edinburgh, Martin states, “since the assent is accorded of James King of Scots or the Governor, true patron of the said parish church…”\textsuperscript{35} Martin V received early obedience in the name of Scotland through James I, although the Scottish political community

\begin{footnotes}
\textsuperscript{33} Smith, \textit{The Great Schism}, 216-7. 229; Hunt, “The Governorship,” 416-7; Tanner, \textit{The Church in the Later Middle Ages}, 21. France would repudiate their concordat in less than a year, but would periodically renew their efforts in subsequent church councils to continue to reduce papal powers through new agreements.

\textsuperscript{34} Hunt, “The Governorship,” 417; \textit{C.S.S.R. 1418-1422}, 97-8. A scriptor was a type of scribe at the papal curia dedicated to facilitating Scottish concerns. Albany petitioned for his clerk John Feldew to be a papal scriptor in 1419.

\textsuperscript{35} \textit{C. S. R. 1418-1422}, 62.
\end{footnotes}
did not actually transfer obedience until the Council of Perth in 1419, likely explaining Martin’s more forward acknowledgement of the king of Scots.

Although James I quickly pledged himself and Scotland to Martin V, he was still in the custody of Henry V, a vocal proponent of English domination of Scotland. In the late 1410s Henry V petitioned the pope for recognition of his claims to the French throne, a prospect likely alarming to the Scots. Not only was France Scotland’s ally, but this conflict once again raised the spectre of English expansion over her neighbours. While Martin V did ultimately rule against English claims to the French throne in 1420, the immediate uncertainty in 1417 likely influenced Scotland’s delay in pledging obedience. Scotland’s delay probably also took Albany’s obstinacy into account, but was influenced by several other factors. The sovereignty of Scotland concerned both the governor and the Scottish bishops, but in the end the bishops and nobles prevailed upon the governor to adhere to Martin V. Albany’s personal objections to Martin V remain lost, but perhaps he simply feared the loss of favour and status that had come with adhering to the anti-popes.

While likely the most important, the papal schism was not the only issue facing the church in Scotland. The heretical teachings of John Wycliffe made their way to Scotland. As Katie Stevenson’s recent studies have demonstrated, Lollardy was a larger problem in Scotland than historians have credited it before. There was growing concern in Scotland about heretics from at least the 1380s on, and one of the charges of Rothesay’s lieutenancy was the restraint of

38 Some of Wyclif’s major teachings included denial of transubstantiation, promotion of predestination, encouragement of anti-clericalism and a return to the study of the scripture written in the vernacular. Barrell, *Medieval Scotland*, 256; Tanner, *The Church in the Later Middle Age*, 144-6.
39 Stevenson, “Lollardy, Hussitism and the Scottish Inquisition,” 684-715. Stevenson does note that while Lollardy was probably widespread it did not seep too deeply into everyday religious life in Scotland (709).
heretics within Scotland.\textsuperscript{40} Heresy was a concern for both the religious in Scotland and the Scottish government. Albany had no direct recorded interaction with the first named Scottish Lollard, Quintin Folkhard, the author of the letters the “News of Scotland” sent to like-minded reformers in Prague in 1410.\textsuperscript{41} Folkhard was active in and likely from Glasgow diocese, near both the earldoms of Menteith and Lennox, so it seems likely that Albany knew something of him.\textsuperscript{42} Perhaps it was this close association with Albany’s own lands that prompted Wyntoun to comment on Albany’s hatred of heretics. This vehement testament of Albany’s adherence to orthodox Christianity was possibly also born of some association of the wider family with Lollards.\textsuperscript{43} Indeed in the early sixteenth century some of Albany’s direct descendants, the lords of Avondale, descendants of Murdoch’s son Walter of Lennox, were well known Lollards and later Protestant reformers. Walter Stewart, son of Andrew Stewart, third lord Avondale, was tried in Glasgow for an act of iconoclasm in Ayr.\textsuperscript{44} While the evidence is certainly circumstantial Folkhard’s activity around Glasgow near Lennox where Murdoch’s son Walter maintained his sphere of influence is interesting.

Albany himself did not have much recorded direct interaction with any Lollards in Scotland, but the Lollard heresy was a general concern for the Scottish government. Inquisitors were likely active in Scotland as early as 1388, and detection and discussion of heresy largely

\textsuperscript{40} RPS 1399/1/3; Stevenson, “Lollardy, Hussitism, and the Scottish inquisition,” 690.
\textsuperscript{42} Sanderson, “The Lollard Trail,” 3.
\textsuperscript{43} I owe this initial idea to a conversation with Dr. Steve Boardman in 2014. While it is difficult to prove for certain that any of the Albany Stewarts had an association with Lollards, the evidence does appear to support some kind of connection.
\textsuperscript{44} Sanderson, “The Lollard Trail,” 12-3.
emanated from St. Andrews in Fife, part of Albany’s landed domain. The execution of the English Lollard James Resby took place in Perth during Albany’s governorship in 1408. Resby was an English priest, and his writings found some traction amongst the people of Scotland. An inquisitorial court under Laurence Lindores, the inquisitor of heretical deviation in Scotland, tried Resby and condemned him. Albany did not have any direct involvement, but likely was aware and approved of the actions taken.

Albany’s hatred of Lollards was augmented in late 1415 when a group of Lollards kidnapped Murdoch on his way to Scotland after his release from imprisonment in England. According to English chroniclers, Murdoch’s detour was part of a plot by Lollards and Richard of Conisbrough, earl of Cambridge, to exchange Murdoch for Henry Percy, heir of Northumberland. The conspirators planned to form an alliance between the Percies, the Welsh, and the Mortimers against Henry IV. However, it appears that this was not an organized plot, rather an abduction of opportunity that did not work out for the Lollards as Murdoch was safely back in English custody a week later and returned to Scotland in February 1416.

Lollardy continued to be a problem through Albany’s governorship and beyond. In 1415 Benedict XIII charged the Bishop of Moray with investigating heresy in his diocese. There was another execution of a Lollard in Glasgow in 1422 during Murdoch’s governorship, although

49 Hunt, “The Governorship,” 382-3; *CDS*, iv, 863.
again the governor was not directly involved.\textsuperscript{51} James I also took a hard line on heretics when he returned to Scotland and instructed the Scottish bishops to make inquiries into heresy.\textsuperscript{52}

During Albany’s governorship in particular, however, the University of St. Andrews was founded in part as another move to combat heresy in Scotland. The documentation for the founding of the university around 1412 is at best scanty.\textsuperscript{53} On the surface it seems Albany had little to do with the founding of the university, rather it was an ecclesiastical affair that incorporated the name of James I as well as the three estates on the official petition to Benedict XIII.\textsuperscript{54} Albany was not named directly. It seems in this instance Albany’s status as governor rather than king was not enough for an official petition for the founding of a university.\textsuperscript{55}

However, Albany likely did have some involvement. Julian Luxford’s evaluation of the maces of St. Andrews found Albany’s coat of arms on the Arts mace along with those of Henry Wardlaw, bishop of St. Andrews, the earl of Douglas, and Alexander, earl of Mar. These coats of arms likely reflected those who supported the university.\textsuperscript{56} Although the founding documentation is scanty, it seems almost impossible that the governor of Scotland would have had no part to play in the foundation of Scotland’s first university, particularly as it was in Fife. Albany may have been partially behind St. Andrews’ stance against heresy and possibly a proponent of the oath

\textsuperscript{51} Barrell, \textit{Medieval Scotland}, 257.
\textsuperscript{52} Stevenson, “Lollardy, Hussitism, and the Scottish inquisition,” 702-3.
\textsuperscript{53} Bower, \textit{Scotichronicon}, vol. 8, 77-81; Norman Reid, “The Prehistory of the University of St. Andrews,” in \textit{Medieval St. Andrews Church, Cult, City}, ed. Michael Brown and Katie Stevenson (Woodbridge: Boydell Press, 2017), 237-8. The formal petition to the pope for the university was dispatched in 1412, but in reality teaching may have started as early as 1410. Reid also explains that likely St. Andrews evolved from gradual process due to the tradition of education and theological discussion present in the area. So while heresy was indeed a part of the foundation, it was not the only cause.
\textsuperscript{54} Reid, “The Prehistory,” 240.
\textsuperscript{55} For James I’s personal involvement in the University of St. Andrews see J. Maitland Anderson, “James I of Scotland and the University of St. Andrews,” \textit{Scottish Historical Review} 3, no. 11 (1906): 301-315.
taken by graduates against Lollardy.\textsuperscript{57} Indeed, as has been well established in recent scholarship, St. Andrews was central to the detection of heresy in Scotland, and it is very possible that Albany played a part in the promotion of that.\textsuperscript{58}

\textit{Religion and Scottish Politics}

In matters pertaining solely to Scotland, Albany used religion both as an expression of his power and also to show his piety. As a secular lord, regent, and representative of the corporate monarchy in Scotland, Albany found himself defending the rights of the church but also interfering in the business of ecclesiastical appointments, particularly in his landed domains of Fife and Menteith. When acting in an official capacity as governor, Albany’s actions took a more protective line for the institutions of the church thereby fulfilling one of the duties of kingship. Whereas when acting as himself, the duke of Albany, Albany’s interactions with the Scottish church could be classified more as interference. As duke of Albany, earl of Fife, and earl of Menteith, Albany maintained considerable influence over the election of bishops and standards of the religious houses in his lands.\textsuperscript{59} He sustained an active and pervasive interest in the running of St. Andrews and Dunblane Cathedral. Interference in St. Andrews probably occurred due to St. Andrews’s prominence in the hierarchy of the Scottish church as well as its placement in Fife, the most prestigious of Albany’s lands. Similarly, Dunblane was the closest cathedral to Albany’s castle of Doune in Menteith. While Albany’s interference in St. Andrews only became

\textsuperscript{57} Maitland Anderson, “James I of Scotland and the University of St. Andrews,” 307-8.

\textsuperscript{58} Stevenson, “Lollardy, Hussitism, and the Scottish inquisition;” Stevenson, “Heresy, Inquisition and Late Medieval St. Andrews.”

\textsuperscript{59} Barrell notes that it was rare for laymen to exert pressure on chapter elections, but the influence of kings on naming bishops increased during the late medieval period. However, Barrell also states that royal influence should not be automatically inferred in all appointments. Barrell, \textit{Medieval Scotland}, 233-4; Cowan, \textit{Death, Life, and Religious Change}, 91.
prevalent as Albany became more powerful, his influence on Dunblane stretched further back to the 1370s.

Albany’s initial opposition to the election of Martin V was not the first time he clashed with the bishops in Scotland. Previously in 1401/2, Albany interfered with the election of a new bishop of St. Andrews after the death of bishop Walter Trail. In one of his more blatant abuses of power, Albany arranged for his half-brother Thomas Stewart to resign from his position as bishop-elect of St. Andrews in favour of Walter Danielston in order to solve the problem of Danielston’s prolonged siege of Dumbarton Castle. Danielston had seized the castle in 1397 after the death of his brother Robert, the keeper of Dumbarton. Robert III tried and failed to relieve the castle through a siege. Albany tried to draw Danielston out by offering him the bishopric of St. Andrews, which he accepted. However, Danielston died before the pope confirmed his election. This interference in St. Andrews was rather blatant, although as Hunt points out this type of interference on the part of a secular lord or king was not uncommon. Albany’s contemporary, John of Gaunt, promoted his own son Henry for several church offices ultimately culminating in Henry’s appointment as bishop of Lincoln 1398, a position Gaunt heavily pushed for. Similarily in 1378, Philip the Bold, duke of Burgundy, interfered with the election of a bishop of Verdun and was able to have his own candidate elected to the position. Albany used the bishopric of St. Andrews as a bribe to remove the troublesome Danielston from a royal castle and restore the balance of secular power in the area. Albany’s selfish reasons for the promotion of Danielston became more apparent with the placement of Walter Buchanan, a

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63 Vaughan, *Philip the Bold*, 105.
Lennox adherent, as keeper of Dumbarton Castle. With the placement of Buchanan in Dumbarton, Albany’s in-laws Duncan, earl of Lennox, and the Campbells of Lochawe now controlled the dominant routes to and from Argyll, which complemented his control of other trade routes which ran through Doune.\textsuperscript{64} Albany’s actions in this instance were not for the good of the Scottish kingdom or church, but for his own family’s power. Danielston was not an important nor popular cleric in Scotland and would have been unsuitable for the bishopric of St. Andrews; however, Albany’s ability to convince his half-brother to resign and then subsequently influence an internal election in St. Andrews displays just how far reaching his power was.

Albany’s interference with this episcopal election was hardly an isolated incident, although probably the most obvious. Danielston aside, it seems generally the men promoted by Albany were fit for their positions, rather than just his favourites or those who could be used to fix a political problem. Generally, Hunt states, “Of the eight bishops provided by Benedict XIII during the governorship of the first duke of Albany, the majority may have been loyal to the governor or his brother Robert III, but it has to be noted that they did not in any way challenge the conscience of the papacy by their unsuitability for office.”\textsuperscript{65}

Albany’s interference in St. Andrews was not limited to Danielston. James Haldenstone, prior of St. Andrews, accused both Albany and Murdoch of simony, although both were dead at the time, in a 1428 case of an excommunicated monk charged with apostasy. William de Cupro had entered the monastery due to the influence of Albany and Murdoch, according to Haldenstone.\textsuperscript{66} While there is not much other record of Albany’s direct influence on St. Andrews, the implication here and in the Danielston controversy is that he did exercise

\textsuperscript{64} Boardman, \textit{The Early Stewart Kings}, 257.
\textsuperscript{65} Hunt, “The Governorship,” 373.
\textsuperscript{66} Haldestone, \textit{Copiale Prioratus Sanctiandree}, 1-3, 381.
considerable power, but his relationship with Haldenstone reflects that the power was in no way unlimited. Haldenstone did not have the best relationship with Albany. Albany had refused Haldenstone an audience and protested his election as prior of St. Andrews. Nevertheless, Albany was not successful in his protest and Haldenstone continued as prior and maintained a prominent place in the University of St. Andrews. Likely, Albany’s dislike of Haldenstone stemmed from Haldenstone’s promotion of Martin V, determination to end the schism, and partiality to James I. Despite Albany’s objections and efforts, Haldenstone had a lengthy and well respected career at St. Andrews until his death in 1443. Much like in the case of the schism, Albany’s personal dislike of a cleric could be overruled by others.

Interference with St. Andrews and its affiliates was not necessarily always negative for Albany, and was sometimes undertaken to assist his wider family. For instance, in July 1408 at the request of his kinswoman, Alice Mur, Albany became entangled in an issue with the Cistercian Convent of Haddington which was subject to St. Andrews. Mur and another nun, Mariote Lethe, refused to receive Joneta Wardlaw as prioress of Haddington, protesting that Wardlaw was not dispensed from being the child of unmarried parents. The bishop of St. Andrews commanded Mur and Lethe to receive Wardlaw under threat of excommunication, but they refused, were excommunicated, and subsequently appealed to the pope. Albany, on behalf of Alice Mur, petitioned to have Wardlaw examined to determine her suitability for the post of prioress. While the verdict is not recorded, likely Wardlaw was examined and found fit due to Benedict XIII’s previous two dispensations for Wardlaw’s “defect of birth” in October 1403 and

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69 Benedict XIII, 180-1. Alice Mur was probably a relative of Albany’s mother Elizabeth Mure.
70 Benedict XIII, 180.
June 1408, indicating perhaps that Mur and Lethe objected to Wardlaw for more personal reasons not expressed in the petitions. However, this instance of interference represents both Albany’s familial interest and concern for the standards of St. Andrews.

Murielle, duchess of Albany, also was active in upholding church standards, particularly in St. Andrews. On 1 October 1414 Pope Benedict XIII mandated that the bishop of St. Andrews examine William Francland, the abbot of Augustinian house of Inchaffray as Murielle alleged that “William had alienated and wasted the goods of the abbey, had suffered the building to fall into ruins and had lived publicly with a concubine.” Murielle’s charges were serious and possibly resulted in William being deprived of his post in favour of Patrick of Lorn. Unfortunately the outcome of the examination is unknown. However, it does illuminate something about the duchess of Albany. Murielle like her husband took an active interest in the good running of the nearby churches, and was willing to step in herself to see the standards of the church upheld. Probably her interest in Inchaffray grew out of her patronage of the abbey. Murielle here upheld one of the traditional roles of noblewomen and queens, taking an active interest in and serving as a patron of religious institutions. There is not enough evidence from Murielle to determine whether or not she fulfilled some of the other duties of queenship in absence of a reigning queen.

Much as with St. Andrews, Albany as earl of Menteith interfered with and promoted clergy within the cathedral and diocese of Dunblane, the closest cathedral to his original power centre in Doune. Albany is mentioned as a former patron (as he was dead at the time) of

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71 Benedict XIII, 110, 177.
72 Benedict XIII, 302.
73 Patrick of Lorn may have had an Albany Stewart connection as John Stewart, lord of Lorn, was a close ally of Albany.
74 Earenfight, Medieval Queenship, 17.
Dunblane once in a 1423 issue over the ability of Malcolm John, clerk of Dunblane, to hold the canonry and prebend of Kippen in Dunblane.\textsuperscript{75} Albany maintained a sustained interest in Dunblane likely from the 1360s when he first became lord of the earldom of Menteith. The first concrete instance of interest, however, dates from 1380, when Albany petitioned the pope for a canonry of Dunblane for his chaplain and secretary Dougal of Lorn/Ergadia. Dougal of Lorn later became Bishop of Dunblane, again likely due to the influence of Albany.\textsuperscript{76} Albany and Bishop Dougal remained close. Dougal witnessed two charters of Euphemia, countess of Ross, while she stayed with Albany at Stirling Castle in 1392, likely around the time Euphemia and Albany arranged the marriage of their children, Alexander Leslie and Isobel Stewart.\textsuperscript{77}

Dougal of Lorn died around 1401, and was succeeded by another of Albany’s men, Finlay Colini. Colini had been Albany’s chaplain prior to his election as bishop. He had also previously been canon and held a prebend of Dunblane and the archdeaconry. There was probably a connection between being Albany’s chaplain and the later promotions.\textsuperscript{78} Watt states that Colini was very much an Albany man, and even possibly held the hospital of U throgle in Fife as a gift from him.\textsuperscript{79} Colini witnessed a few of Albany’s charters during the governorship. Most importantly, Colini witnessed Euphemia Leslie’s resignation of Ross in favour of her uncle, John earl of Buchan.\textsuperscript{80} While not unusual in itself, the presence of a loyal bishop of Dunblane for both Ross related charters indicates a special relationship between Albany and

\textsuperscript{75} CPL, vii, 252-3. 
\textsuperscript{77} Watt, \textit{A Biographical Dictionary of Scottish Graduates}, 360. Dougal also witnessed a third charter with Albany later c. 1398-1401 for the Lord of Byres. 
\textsuperscript{78} CPR-Petitions, vol. 1, 615; Watt, \textit{A Biographical Dictionary of Scottish Graduates}, 106. Three of Albany’s chaplains became bishops, Dougal of Lorn, Finlay Colini, and Finlay of Albany. 
\textsuperscript{79} Watt, \textit{A Biographical Dictionary of Scottish Graduates}, 106. Watt notes that the hospital was in lay patronage and in the jurisdiction of St. Andrews. 
\textsuperscript{80} RMS i, 887, 891, 908; Watt, \textit{A Biographical Dictionary of Scottish Graduates}, 106-7.
Dunblane, and possibly the need for high ranking churchmen for the business conducted. Colini kept a reasonably close relationship with the Albany Stewarts until his death in 1419.

By the end of the period of the governorship, Albany’s influence over Dunblane waned a bit. The next bishop of Dunblane, William Stephanson, was not quite as much an Albany man as the previous two, but Albany was still likely involved in his promotion. Prior to his election, Stephanson was known to Albany. Stephanson was involved in a curious incident with Albany’s son-in-law, Sir Walter Haliburton of Dirleton, Stephanson’s apparent mortal enemy. Stephanson grievously wounded a man in the company of Haliburton, resulting in the wounded man’s death. The unknown man had stolen Stephanson’s oxen, but Stephanson was rehabilitated for this incident by Benedict XIII. If not known to him prior to this, Albany certainly became acquainted with Stephanson at this point. Around 1415 Stephanson was also Bishop of Orkney. Albany utilized Stephanson as an envoy to France as well as to the new pope Martin V to bring Scotland’s obedience. James I, however, did not regard Stephanson as too close to the Albany Stewarts, and commissioned him to investigate Finlay of Albany, bishop of Argyll and Albany adherent, after the Albany Stewart executions in 1425.82

Albany’s influence over Dunblane is much harder to see than his interference with St. Andrews. As the local magnate, the expectation was that he would be involved in the running and politics of the Cathedral, as many of his contemporaries were. It would have been considered part of his duty to see the church standards upheld, promote his favourites and to defend and protect the rights of the churches in his lands.83

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81 Watt, A Biographical Dictionary of Scottish Graduates, 508.
82 Watt, A Biographical Dictionary of Scottish Graduates, 508.
83 Goodman, John of Gaunt, 263.
Defense and Confirmation of the Rights of the Church

While given to influencing Dunblane and St. Andrews for his own needs, as both Chamberlain and governor, Albany often saw to the needs and defense of churches all around Scotland in fulfillment of the duties of kingship charged to him. He took the complaints of abuse of religious houses seriously and acted upon them to protect the rights and privileges many churches and religious houses in Scotland had long enjoyed. In 1399, Albany issued a precept to the Customers of the Great Customs of Edinburgh, Haddington, and Dunbar, reminding them that under a charter from David II reconfirmed by Robert III, Melrose Abbey was entitled to some of the customs of wool and produce in their burghs. 84 In this particular instance, Albany was acting as Chamberlain of Scotland in an effort to protect the rights of Melrose Abbey to its due as set out by the kings of Scotland. Albany as governor further upheld the rights of the church to their monetary dues in June 1413. He sent a letter to the sheriffs and baillies of Kincardine about the tithes due to the Bishop of Brechin. 85 Albany sent a similar mandate to the sheriffs of Aberdeen and Banff for the Bishop of Aberdeen to receive the customary tithe in June 1417. 86 In the later instances, as the directions went to governmental officials, this duty normally would have been reserved for the king, but in absence of the king Albany fulfilled this particular duty of kingship. These acts demonstrated that Albany did not take the complaints of the church lightly, and worked to ensure the bishops and monastic houses received their dues, particularly during his governorship as there was no king to protect them. 87

87 In another unconfirmed instance of Albany Stewart arbitration between the laity and church, Andrew Stewart, although not definitively stated to be Andrew Stewart one of Albany’s younger sons, presided over a right/value
This was not the only time Albany filled in for the king in religious matters. In 1413, Albany confirmed the grant of his grandfather Walter, Steward of Scotland, to Melrose Abbey.\textsuperscript{88} Albany on several occasions confirmed charters as would have been the duty of the king, but this instance proved to be more personal as it also had to do with a grant of the Steward of Scotland from the family lands in Kyle. James I, prior to his capture and the death of his father, took the titles duke of Rothesay, earl of Carrick, and Steward of Scotland as previously held by his older brother David. In his absence, Albany filled the role of managing the Stewart family lands as there did not seem to be a Steward of Scotland in this period.\textsuperscript{89} Here he filled the dual role of king’s representative and representative of the Stewart family.

\textit{Promotion of Family and Favourites}

Albany’s position as head of the Scottish kingdom as well as head of the Stewart family is particularly pertinent not only for the maintenance of the Stewart lands but for the promotion of his family within the church. During the reigns of Robert II and Robert III this task fell to the king, but during the governorship it was a role Albany took on. Given Robert II’s prodigious fertility, there were several families that could claim kinship to the royal family via either marriages to Robert II’s legitimate offspring, or through his many illegitimate children.\textsuperscript{90} In particular, two illegitimate sons of Robert II, Thomas Stewart and Walter Stewart, called on their half-brother to petition for them during the governorship. In 1413, Benedict XIII granted Thomas, archdeacon of St. Andrews, “Indult … to visit churches, monasteries, and other

\begin{footnotes}
\item[88]\textit{Melrose}, vol. 2, 473.
\item[89]After 1398, the heir to the throne of Scotland assumed the roles and titles of duke of Rothesay, earl of Carrick, and Steward of Scotland. This is similar to the English tradition of elevating the heir to the throne to the position of Prince of Wales.
\item[90]Quite a few of Robert II’s illegitimate sons entered the religious life.
\end{footnotes}
ecclesiastical places in the archdeaconry of St. Andrews by deputy for a period of ten years, and
to receive procuration dues…”91 Prior to the governorship, Thomas Stewart relied on his
connection to his brother, Robert III, and throughout his life Thomas always mentioned he was
the son of Robert II in his petitions.92 Robert II was usually willing to advance his children,
legitimate and illegitimate, in both the ecclesiastical and political spheres. Thomas’s increased
reliance on Albany during the governorship indicates a willingness to draw on the support of his
royal connections in absence of the king, and Albany’s fulfillment of both roles. Thomas’s status
as Albany’s half-brother did not, however, mean that Albany supported him unequivocally, as
discussed before in the Danielston controversy.93 Aside from this potential election, Thomas
Stewart largely remained an obscure cleric, who continued to rely on his royal connections for
promotions.94

Walter Stewart, another bastard son of Robert II, also called upon his royal connections
in his petitions to the pope. Walter appealed to the pope as related to James I in the second
degree of consanguinity and kinsman of Albany and Alexander, earl of Mar, in his petition to
hold one to three compatible benefices in 1414.95 While Albany’s name was certainly included, it
is interesting that Walter, unlike his half-brother Thomas, chose to emphasize his status as James
I’s uncle rather than Albany’s half-brother. This is particularly strange as Walter made his home
in Glasgow where he held a canonry, prebend, and deanery, near Albany’s and Lennox’s landed

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91 Benedict XIII, 283.
92 Benedict XIII, 108, 118, 332. In 1403, Thomas Stewart in addition to being a canon of Glasgow and archdeacon of
St. Andrews, became a canon of Aberdeen and held a prebend of Dere. In 1404, as son of the King of Scots he was
granted the ability to hold one or more benefices in addition to his archdeaconry. In 1415, Thomas was again the son
of the King of Scots when he was given permission to choose a suitable and discreet confessor.
93 Watt, A Biographical Dictionary of Scottish Graduates, 514.
94 Watt, A Biographical Dictionary of Scottish Graduates, 514-5.
95 Benedict XIII, 307. Walter may have appealed based in his kinship to James I due to the contemporary upswing in
the involvement of James I in international affairs. However, in subsequent petitions he named himself half-brother
of Albany.
base."\textsuperscript{96} Walter, like his brother Thomas, benefitted from his royal brothers, but chose the status of the absent king over his present regent half-brother, perhaps indicating a closer relationship with Robert III over Albany. Albany continued to be included, but unlike others Walter sought the added prestige of relation to the king.

In addition to his half-brothers, Albany worked to promote his wider family. Many of the petitions put forward by Albany or that include him called upon some kind of kinship. However, as Philip Grace describes in his examination of papal petitions and German households, the term relative is “dangerously vague.”\textsuperscript{97} This can encompass anyone actually related by blood to Albany or part of his household. \textsuperscript{98} Although the term familiar is not unheard of in the petitions examined here, overwhelmingly the term of choice is kinsman. It is difficult to ascertain how closely related to Albany most of the people petitioning were. Albany, as the son of Robert II, the head of his own very large family, household, and governor of the kingdom, would have had many people looking to him for support in their endeavours whether they were for ecclesiastical advancement or dispensation for marriage.

A few kinsmen names such as Stewart (4), Borthwick (3), and Cunningham (3), reoccur in papal petitions.\textsuperscript{99} Unfortunately not much is known about most of them outside a scattered few petitions. Several Stewart kinsmen are to be expected given the proliferation of the family and name around Scotland. It is hard to gauge how closely related the various Stewarts were or if there are repeats but a Robert Stewart made four mentions of Albany and Murdoch as his

\textsuperscript{96} Benedict XIII, 378-9. Walter was originally a clerk in the diocese of Dunkeld, 393.


\textsuperscript{98} Grace, “Family and Familiars.” 196.

\textsuperscript{99} Petitions from Borthwicks and Cunninghams used Albany’s name in their first instance of promotion and then afterwards relied on their own standing.
kinsman in his petitions.\textsuperscript{100} George and John Borthwick both used Albany’s name for promotion to smaller church offices.\textsuperscript{101} How these men were related to each other is unclear, but the repeat of the name indicates a genuine family connection between Albany and the Borthwicks. A connection is also likely between Albany and Robert and William Cunningham who also used their family connections to attain the ability to be ordained after being previously barred due to their bastard birth.\textsuperscript{102} The Cunninghams were likely related to the Cunninghams who served as squires in Albany’s household.\textsuperscript{103} Most of the utilizations of Albany as kinsman are single mentions for minor church offices around Scotland (prebends, canonry, etc.). Murielle was also named by those seeking dispensations and promotions. In 1408, William de Camera in his petitions for the archdeaconry of Moray cited Murielle as his kinswoman in the petition.\textsuperscript{104} How close a relationship any of these men had with Albany and his family is unknown, but their distant royal relative certainly added prestige and weight to their petitions.

In addition to his family, Albany was a general promoter and advancer of his favourites and familiars in the hierarchy of the church in Scotland, not unlike his promotion of people in the secular realm. Placement in Albany’s household as a cleric or chaplain often resulted in further promotion. Finlay of Albany is the most well-known religious adherent of Albany. Finlay became Albany’s chaplain sometime before 1396 when he was granted safe conduct to England for study at Cambridge or Oxford. Sometime between 1396 and 1409 Finlay became a Benedictine monk and took a theology degree.\textsuperscript{105} Prior to 30 August 1409 Finlay became the

\textsuperscript{100} Benedict XIII, 304; CPL vii, 210; C.S.S.R. 1423-1428, 17.
\textsuperscript{101} Benedict XIII, 158, 246.
\textsuperscript{102} Benedict XIII, 188, 224; CPR-Petitions vol. 1, 636-7.
\textsuperscript{103} See Chapter 3 for more information on the Cunningham family.
\textsuperscript{104} Benedict XIII, 187.
\textsuperscript{105} Watt, A Biographical Dictionary of Scottish Graduates, 4.
custodian of the convent in Ayr and vicar general of the Benedictines in Scotland. Later in Albany’s governorship, Finlay was Albany’s confessor as well as envoy to the Council of Constance. After this Finlay was a papal nuncio charged with receiving Scotland’s obedience to the new pope Martin V, but never actually made the trip. Griffin Yonge, bishop of Ross, did instead. Martin V granted Finlay the provostship of the Polmadie hospital in Lennox, in place of William Cunningham, possibly at the insistence of Albany. Finally, Finlay was Albany’s choice for Bishop of Argyll, which was approved by Martin V in 1419/20. It should be noted that Albany was a patron of the deanery of Argyll and the Campbells of Lochawe were the patrons of the former Bishop of Argyll, Bean John Andrew, so Finlay found himself in another wider Albany Stewart supported position. There is no indication that Finlay was undeserving of his positions, but many of his promotions probably had to do with the influence of his patron Albany to whom he showed a remarkable amount of loyalty.

Bishop Finlay ended his prosperous career in exile because of his loyalty. According to Bower, Finlay accompanied James the Fat, Murdoch’s only remaining son at liberty after the 1425 Albany/Lennox arrests and rebellion, on his escape into Ireland. Finlay died soon after their arrival. It is unclear if Finlay accompanied James’s attack on Dumbarton and subsequent murder of Sir John Stewart of Dundonald during James’s brief rebellion, but Finlay’s flight would indicate some type of involvement. The very involvement of the Bishop of Argyll in the rebellion and flight of James Stewart indicates an attachment to the wider family and a

106 Charters of the Friars Preachers of Ayr (Edinburgh, 1881), 43-4; Watt, A Biographical Dictionary of Scottish Graduates, 4. Finlay issued a charter as vicar general to Sir Henry Stephenson for lands belonging to the Ayr convent.
107 Watt, A Biographical Dictionary of Scottish Graduates, 4-5.
108 Benedict XIII, 213-4; Clement VII, 192-3.
remarkable amount of loyalty; indeed, Watt theorizes that Finlay may have been related in some way to Albany given his choice of name.\textsuperscript{110}

Andrew Hawick was another close adherent of the Albany Stewarts, long in the governor’s service, who died if not in literal exile, then in a prudent extended stay at the papal curia in 1425. Likely born around 1375, Hawick was originally employed by David, duke of Rothesay, until Rothesay’s death in 1402. Hawick occupied a number of positions in the church, including canon of Dunkeld and rector of Liston (St. Andrews).\textsuperscript{111} Sometime between 1402 and 1404 Hawick entered the employ of Albany. Albany supported Hawick’s petitions to the pope in 1408, 1412, and 1420. Hawick also appeared regularly throughout the 1404-1420 period as Albany’s secretary, keeper of his seal, and counsellor on Albany’s witness lists. Towards the end of Albany’s governorship and during Murdoch’s, Hawick spent most of his time abroad as an envoy. He traveled to France where he received a payment of £1000 pounds from the French king to Albany, part of a much larger sum.\textsuperscript{112} From France Hawick traveled to Spain to see Benedict XIII in 1418/9, unaware that Scotland had withdrawn its allegiance to this pope and transferred it to Martin V. When Hawick found out, he left Spain and returned to Scotland, but was deprived of his benefice by Martin V because of it. This was rectified when Hawick himself served as envoy to the papal court in 1419/1420 and received dispensation for his actions.\textsuperscript{113}

\textsuperscript{110} The illegitimate children of James the Fat and Walter of Lennox returned to Scotland and gained some prominence under James II. They were at first styled “de Albany.” It is possible Finlay was a bastard child although likely that would have been mentioned somewhere, but Albany’s close attachment and promotion of Finlay does speak of some affection.

\textsuperscript{111} Watt, A Biographical Dictionary of Scottish Graduates, 256-7. Hawick was also provost of Rathven hospital in Aberdeen, canon with exception of prebend in Aberdeen, granted pension on fruits of St. Andrews priory forfeited by James Haldenstone (never actually carried out), canons with exception of prebend in Glasgow and Dunkeld, canonry of Moray, and Kincardine O’Neil prebend, and archdeaconry of Teviotdale in Glasgow diocese. Although he did not always possess these titles, Hawick was given provision by Benedict XIII and Martin V for them.

\textsuperscript{112} Watt, A Biographical Dictionary of Scottish Graduates, 258. It is unclear at this point what specifically this payment was for, but it may have been a repayment of a loan made from Albany to John the Fearless, Duke of Burgundy.

From henceforth, it appears that Hawick stayed on the continent sometimes in Rome, at other times pursuing a degree in canon law in Siena. He died at the Roman court in May 1425 around the time of the Albany Stewart executions. Whether Hawick stayed away from Scotland due to the death of Albany in 1420 or for personal reasons is unclear.\textsuperscript{114} However, remaining in Rome likely saved him from the mess many Albany Stewart adherents found themselves in with the return of James I.

Murielle, much like her husband, sought promotion for her chaplain. In October 1419, she supplicated for her chaplain Patrick Scot, a Benedictine monk of St. Andrews and perpetual vicar of the church of Inverkelore, for an ecclesiastical benefice at Dunfermline Abbey.\textsuperscript{115} The small glimpses of Murielle that appear in the historical record independently from her husband are all religious in nature, and for the promotion of her familiars. She, much like her husband, seemed to be a patron of people, and concerned with the state of religious standards in Scotland.

In addition to Hawick and Finlay of Albany, Albany and his family had several chaplains (7), secretaries (5), clerks (3), and counsellors (5) over the period of the governorship in particular, for many of the men Albany either supported their petitions himself or his name was used to enhance them.\textsuperscript{116} By and large, these men sought offices such as prebends, deaconships, and canonries in churches where Albany and his family had landed interests or influence. There is no one diocese that stands out from the rest, but the largest number of petitions are for Dunkeld, Brechin, and St. Andrews. There are a scattering of others for Dunblane, Dunfermline, Argyll, Aberdeen, and Glasgow. Overwhelmingly the petitions fall into places where Albany

\textsuperscript{114} Watt, \textit{A Biographical Dictionary of Scottish Graduates}, 259.
\textsuperscript{115} \textit{C.S.S.R. 1418-1422}, 129.
\textsuperscript{116} At least seven chaplains, five secretaries, and three clerks as found in \textit{C.S.S.R., Clement VII, Benedict XIII, and CPR-Petitions} vol. 1.
himself or his children had a presence (Fife, Menteith, Lennox, Buchan, and Argyll). Curiously there is little representation from lowland Scotland outside of Fife, or alternatively the areas where the earls of Douglas were powerful. There is only one petition from Galloway, another stronghold of the Douglases. Much of this evidence is from the 1406-1424 period, and reflects the fact that while Albany was responsible for the whole kingdom, local lordship still held more importance for promotion.

**Expressions of Personal Piety**

In addition to using his power for the promotion of people and interfering with religious houses in his landed domains, Albany has also left a record of his own personal piety. The records for Albany’s own beliefs and direct patronage are a bit sparse, but what does remain reflects Albany’s adherence to the acceptable modes of religious expression.\(^{117}\) Albany, like his contemporaries, exhibited a concern for medieval social welfare as well as the welfare of his own soul and the salvation of those closest to him. Albany was conscious of his duty, not only of upholding the standards of the church, but of serving as an example to those around him of conventional norms of late medieval piety.\(^{118}\) Albany was a noted devotee of saints’ cults, a patron of hospitals, and an endower of chantries and obits for the good of his own soul and those of his family.

Devotion to particular saints and the cults was common in medieval Europe. Saints appealed to medieval Europeans as they were models to aspire to but also intercessors between

\(^{117}\) This is another place where the lack of household accounts is particularly detrimental. Small or continued donations to local chapels are often found in these types of accounts. R. N. Swanson, *Religion and Devotion in Europe, c. 1215-c. 1515*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995), 214.

\(^{118}\) Goodman, *John of Gaunt*, 263.
themselves and God.\textsuperscript{119} Saints waxed and waned in popularity and their popularity was often regional. Many kings, queens, prominent nobles and indeed medieval people generally would have favoured one or a few saints in particular.\textsuperscript{120} Some like John of Gaunt chose a name saint, a saint whom he was either named after or with whom he shared a name, in Gaunt’s case St. John the Evangelist.\textsuperscript{121} People chose saints for a variety of reasons; sometimes they were devoted to multiple saints, other times they kept their devotion to a single saint.\textsuperscript{122} Albany in particular showed affinity for one saint, St. Fillan (Fáelán). St. Fillan was a well-known Celtic saint in late medieval Scotland and evidence for his cult is common around both Scotland and Ireland.\textsuperscript{123} Albany’s lands in central Scotland, Perthshire in particular, were home to some of the highest concentrations of place names, church dedications, or fair days dedicated to St. Fillan.\textsuperscript{124} Bower credits Albany with a moving although likely invented speech prior to the 1402 siege of Cocklaws Tower in which he, “vow[ed] to God and St. Fillan…” to relieve the siege of Cocklaws himself when he could find no one among his council to go with him.\textsuperscript{125} Beyond this invocation of St. Fillan there is no evidence of Albany actively vowing to the saint elsewhere.\textsuperscript{126}

\textsuperscript{120} Swanson, \textit{Religion and Devotion in Europe}, 146, 172.
\textsuperscript{121} Goodman, \textit{John of Gaunt}, 246-7.
\textsuperscript{122} Goodman, \textit{John of Gaunt}, 246-7, 265.
\textsuperscript{124} Taylor, “The Cult of St. Fillan in Scotland,” 177, 184, 188. The diocese of Dunkeld had thirty-eight instances, Dunblane had thirty-one, and the lands around Fife had thirty-eight. Western Perthshire generally was central to the cult of St. Fillan. Fife had several important dedications as well such as a healing well near Aberdour Church and Pittenweem Cave.
\textsuperscript{125} Bower, \textit{Scotichronicon}, vol. 8, 55.
\textsuperscript{126} Cowan, “‘The Saints of the Scottish Country,’” 4. Cowan explains that the \textit{Scotichronicon} is part of a literary tradition that often relies on these types of speeches that may or may not have actually occurred, however, the people of medieval Scotland would have expected some sort of assistance from their local and national saints in instances like this.
However, the chapel inside Albany’s castle of Doune was dedicated to St. Fillan. Given that Doune was constructed sometime between 1361 and 1381, Albany likely maintained a life-long devotion to the saint. There was also a medieval chapel dedicated to St. Fillan in the town of Doune.\textsuperscript{127} Whether or not Albany had a connection to the chapel outside the castle remains uncertain, but it seems unlikely that it was a mere coincidence between the dedication in the town and castle.\textsuperscript{128} Furthermore, the cult of St. Fillan centred on Glen Dochart, part of Albany’s lands since 1374.\textsuperscript{129} It is unclear if this inspired Albany’s interest in the saint, or if his interest in the saint drove him to acquire the land. Albany’s acquisition of Glen Dochart likely also had to do with the position of the lands as one of the main routes that connected the Western Highlands and Central Scotland, a useful route to control for trade and travel, as well as its importance to the cult of St. Fillan.\textsuperscript{130}

The choice of St. Fillan as a personal patron saint was deliberate. The cult had a healthy following in both the Highlands and in Fife in the late medieval period.\textsuperscript{131} More importantly, however, Robert I favoured St. Fillan. Robert I endowed Inchaffray Abbey (an abbey Murielle showed interest in) with two churches and lands in Killan and Strathfillan, areas with a

\begin{footnotes}
\footnote{128} “EN/EW/1454,” \textit{Saints in Medieval Scotland}, last modified 15 August 2006, \url{http://saints.shca.ed.ac.uk/index.cfm?fuseaction=home.main}. Doune Castle became a possession of the Scottish kings after the 1425 Albany executions. In 1499, James IV gifted fourteen chalders of oatmeal to St. Fillan’s chapel near Doune Castle to make up for the previous thirteen years in which the chapel had not received that allotted oatmeal, indicating that this was a longstanding arrangement. Whether or not the arrangement dated back to Albany is uncertain, but later kings maintained a connection between the St. Fillan chapels in the castle and the town.
\footnote{129} RMS i, 458; Boardman, \textit{The Early Stewart Kings}, 271; Taylor, “The Cult of St. Fillan,” 191.
\footnote{130} Taylor, “The Cult of St. Fillan,” 186.
\end{footnotes}
connection to the cult of St. Fillan. Although not recorded in a more contemporary source, Hector Boece later related in his sixteenth-century history that Robert I brought the right arm bone of St. Fillan in its reliquary to the Battle of Bannockburn where it performed a miracle. The priest charged with transporting the relic feared for the safety of the arm and removed it from the case before bringing it to the battlefield. Miraculously the arm appeared in the case when the priest arrived. Bruce took this as a sign that the battle would go well. Robert I’s devotion to the cult of St. Fillan was well known and likely influenced Albany’s own choice of patron saint. It is possible that Albany in this action sought to emulate the revered hero king, and continued to build the royal image of the Stewarts using a local tradition. Indeed Simon Taylor argues that Albany specifically invoked St. Fillan before the siege of Cocklaws to identify with Robert I in an instance of hostile Anglo-Scottish relations.

Certainly one of Robert I’s favoured saints would bolster Albany’s royal image in this regard and others.

Albany also showed some devotion to St. Michael the Archangel, probably due to the influence of Murielle’s family, the Keiths. Dedications to St. Michael displayed general concern for the welfare of the soul. Late medieval people prayed to saints like St. Michael or St. Gabriel because they were associated with the Day of Judgement and Purgatory. Dedications to St. Michael the Archangel were popular around Europe generally, the most famous being Mont Saint-Michel in Normandy. Those with the means to do so could endow chapels or chantries for

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134 For more on Robert Bruce’s devotion to saints see: Michael Penman, “‘Sacred Food for the Soul’: In Search of the Devotions to Saints of Robert Bruce, King of Scotland, 1306-1329,” *Speculum* 88, no. 4 (2013): 1035-1062. Bruce’s devotion to St. Fillan may have predated his kingship and been part of the wider traditions of the Bruce family (1040).
a doubled effect; not only was St. Michael associated with the Day of Judgement, but there was also someone obligated to pray for the founder’s soul in St. Michael’s chapel.  

137 In 1406 Albany confirmed a charter for William Keith, Murielle’s father, who endowed an altar for St. Michael along with a perpetual celebrant in the parish of Inverkeithing in Fife, from his lands in Rosyth.  

138 William Keith endowed this altar specifically for the good of the souls of Sottish kings Malcolm, William, Alexander and all predecessors and successors of the kings as well as for the souls of Albany, Murielle, William Keith himself, his wife Margaret Fraser and all their successors and predecessors.

The second dedication to St. Michael was Albany’s own. He made an endowment for a perpetual celebrant at St. Michael’s chapel in Stirling Castle with funds from his lands around Stirling in 1407.  

139 Albany made this endowment for the good of the souls of Robert I, David II, Robert II, Robert III, his deceased wife Margaret and current wife Murielle, as well as their successors.  

140 Albany was not alone amongst his family in dedications to St. Michael. In 1405 Robert III endowed the monastery of Deer with funds for an altar and celebrant for St. Michael for the souls of himself, his deceased wife Annabella, their son David, duke of Rothesay, his father Robert II, and mother Elizabeth Mure.  

141 In this case the obits are as telling as the saint. Linking an obit with the memory of ancestors was a usual occurrence in late medieval Europe. Many medieval people founded obits not only for the good of their own souls, but also their wider families and more distantly remembered ancestors.  

142 In particular, St. Michael was a good
saint to invoke for salvation. In addition to following conventional methods of piety, the specific identification with the memory of the kings of Scotland served to link both families with the royal line. Albany was more obviously linked through his father and descent from Robert I, and Keith was linked to the royal line through the marriage of his daughter, but also his wife Margaret Fraser was the daughter of Mary Stewart, sister of Robert I.\textsuperscript{143} Although not always immediately obvious, Albany linked himself to Robert I as often as possible, likely for self-promotion and enhancement of his royal status. Robert I served as a good model for Albany as not only was he Albany’s great-grandfather, but he was already in the early fifteenth century revered as a hero king. The wider Stewart family, particularly Robert II made much of their descent from Robert I; in several small ways Albany made constant connections to bolster his image as an integral member of the royal family.

Albany, in keeping with the idea of medieval social welfare and the hope for prayers for his salvation after death, was also a patron of hospitals. Often medieval hospitals were associated with local religious institutions or towns, very often mendicant orders. They were divided into four types: leper houses, almshouses, hospices for the poor and pilgrims, and carers of the sick poor.\textsuperscript{144} Albany’s patronage of hospitals, like many of his other pursuits, was common practice among medieval monarchs and nobility, and Albany’s support of hospitals may have played a part in his popularity among the common people.\textsuperscript{145} Patronage of hospitals by Albany suggests a feeling of duty toward the well-being of the poor or at least keeping in step with contemporary displays of piety and care for the welfare of the soul. Albany provided for the sick and poor and

\textsuperscript{145} Nicholson, \textit{Later Medieval Scotland}, 252-3.
in return they were to pray for the salvation of his soul.146 Albany was not unique even among his family in this particular act of patronage. Albany’s son Buchan was the patron of the Hospital of St. Mary and St. Congan in Turriff near Aberdeen.147 Albany’s daughter Elizabeth was likely involved in her son, Robert Fleming’s, patronage of St. Leonard’s Hospital in Biggar.148 Finally Duncan, earl of Lennox, and later his daughter Isabella of Lennox were patrons of the Hospital of St. John/Polmadie for the poor in Lennox.149

Albany had a hand in at least two St. Leonard’s hospitals, one in Perth and one in Ayrshire. St. Leonard was a popular dedication for hospitals after the proliferation of the saint’s cult in the eleventh and twelfth centuries.150 There were several hospitals dedicated to St. Leonard in Scotland including ones in Edinburgh, Biggar, Perth, St. Andrews, and Ayr. How actively Albany participated in the patronage of these hospitals is unknown, but he was cited as the patron of two of the hospitals of St. Leonard in the charters pertaining to the affairs of others. On 23 November 1411, Robert Clark, Master of the Hospital of St. Leonard’s in Perth, resigned his rights in favour of Elizabeth Dunbar, daughter of the earl of March.151 This charter mentions Albany as the patron of the hospital and the person in whose hands control then rested. Nothing

146 Swanson, *Religion and Devotion*, 227.
151 NRS GD79/4/79
else survives illustrating Albany’s involvement with this hospital, but it is reasonable to assume that as patron he in some way supported the working of the hospital either by direct financial support or through a land donation.\textsuperscript{152} However, Albany’s involvement in this hospital is complicated by St. Leonard’s reception of royal patronage starting with Robert I.\textsuperscript{153} The above charter, dated during Albany’s governorship, raises the question of whether or not Albany himself was the patron of St. Leonard’s or if Albany was maintaining royal interest in the hospital. No evidence remains of Albany’s personal involvement with this particular St. Leonard’s outside of the royal affiliation, perhaps indicating that Albany stood in for the king here as he did with St. Giles.

Albany certainly supported the St. Leonard’s hospital in Ayrshire himself through a land donation. In 1442 James II reconfirmed the possession of the lands of Collinhathrig in Dumfries to the Hospital of St. Leonard in Ayrshire. According to this charter, Albany and William, bishop of Glasgow, had made this arrangement previously.\textsuperscript{154} This donation was possibly called into question as many of the Albany lands had been attainted by the crown after the execution of Murdoch and his sons in 1425. James II continued to allow the hospital to hold these lands and acted as royal patron.\textsuperscript{155} Albany’s personal interest remains, like so many other aspects of his life, unclear, but there may be a connection to the interests of the royal image of the Stewarts. St. Leonard’s hospital in Dunfermline, at least according to legend, was founded by St. Margaret,

\textsuperscript{153} The prioress of St. Leonard’s first appears in a 1327 entry in the \textit{ER}, there is then a gap of twenty-eight years presumably due to the disruption in the Scottish government for the Second Wars of Independence and then to the prolonged captivity of David II in England (1346-1357), regular payments resume in 1359 and continue until 1406. \textit{ER i}, 66, 88, 168, 264, 306, 364; \textit{ER ii}, 26, 63, 105, 152, 205, 250, 285, 326, 391, 409, 486, 541, 571, 594; \textit{ER iii}, 21, 58, 75, 105, 131, 143, 156, 182, 201, 218, 235, 262, 307, 336, 367, 393, 421, 450, 478, 503, 531, 555, 582, 605, 640.
\textsuperscript{155} Some of the Albany Stewart lands remained in royal hands long after the executions.
although more likely by her descendant Alexander III as dedications to St. Leonard were more in vogue during his reign.¹⁵⁶ In addition to the one in Dunfermline, the Scottish crown endowed at least three St. Leonard’s hospitals around Scotland. Patronage of hospitals was one of the many causes favoured by monarchs and nobles to display their piety. Interest in many hospitals with the same dedication, on the other hand, does exhibit a certain affinity towards St. Leonard, and another possible tie to the royal line which funded so many St. Leonard’s hospitals.

A strain of patronage notably absent from Albany’s remaining records is that of the Dunfermline Abbey. It seems strange that there is no record of endowments or donations for the abbey as it is within Fife and the burial site of Albany. However, Emilia Jamroziak’s study of lay burials at Melrose did not find a significant correlation between numbers of grants and the people buried at that particular abbey. While many of the lay burials in Melrose have wider family donations to the abbey, burials of individuals and donations to the abbey are not necessarily linked. Burial in an abbey does still suggest an attachment of some kind to the abbey.¹⁵⁷ Albany, unlike his father and brother, chose the prestigious burial site of many Scottish kings as his final resting place.¹⁵⁸ This further connected Albany to Robert I and the Canmores and symbolized his importance to the Scottish monarchy. Albany’s grave marks the last royal burial of a Scottish ruler in Dunfermline.¹⁵⁹ Dunfermline Abbey saw somewhat of a revival under Robert I as many of the Bruce family and Bruce’s supporters were buried in the Abbey.¹⁶⁰

¹⁵⁶ “St Leonard’s Chapel and Hospital - Dunfermline, Fife - Places of Worship in Scotland | SCHR.”
¹⁵⁸ Robert II was buried in Scone Abbey, and Robert III was buried in Paisley Abbey.
¹⁶⁰ Bruce’s association with Dunfermline was likely an attempt to link himself with the Canmore dynasty. Boardman, “Dunfermline as a Royal Mausoleum,” 144; Cowan, “‘The Saints of the Scottish Country,’” 15.
It is perhaps this significance and Robert I’s focus on the abbey as a symbol of the royal family that drove Albany to be buried there. It is possible that this lack of patronage is a result of the survival rate of records from the period as it does seem unlikely that Albany would have been buried there with no previous connection to the church besides his royal blood. However, as argued by Mike Parker Pearson, “Tombs are not just somewhere to put dead bodies: they are representations of power.” Perhaps Albany’s burial was more about the display of power than piety in this case. He sought burial near his prestigious ancestors to highlight his power as governor, status as prince of Scotland, and membership of the Scottish royal family.

Unfortunately, like some of the other royal tombs in Dunfermline Abbey, no trace of Albany’s tomb remains. Bower notes that Albany “was buried with royal honours in the monastic church of Dunfermline between the choir and the Lady Chapel.” No other member of the Albany Stewart family was buried at Dunfermline. Albany’s burial with “royal honours” certainly indicates on the part of his contemporaries an understanding of his prominent place in the Stewart dynasty and corporate monarchy.

Conclusion

Albany’s interactions with the church in Scotland spanned the spectrum from heavy and blatant interference to meet his own often political needs to displays of personal piety. In this manner, Albany was like many of his contemporaries. He exploited the church and its offices when expedient but also showed genuine piety in line with the trends of the late medieval period.

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161 As discussed above Murielle had some connection to the Abbey through her confessor.
163 Bower, Scotichronicon vol. 8, 135; Fitch, The Search for Salvation, 38; Cowan, Death, Life, and Religious Change, 33-4. Albany’s choice of site near the choir likely reflected the popular belief that Albany’s soul would benefit from the frequent masses said in the choir as well as place him well for Judgement Day. Fitch states that this type of burial site brought many spiritual benefits.
He promoted his family and friends within the church, but generally the recipients of his support were deserving. As evidenced by his stance during the papal schism and beyond as well as his donations, Albany held to his beliefs firmly, but usually kept them within the acceptable range of a noble and prince, even earning himself the admiration of Wyntoun in his hatred of the unorthodox beliefs of the Lollards. In religion as in politics, Albany upheld Scottish sovereignty and the precedents set by his father, brother, and previous Scottish kings. He maintained royal religious patronage, defended the church when needed fulfilling the duties of kingship, and interfered when it suited his interests. At the same time Albany also expressed his genuine religious devotion that displayed both power and personal belief.
Conclusion

Over the course of his long career Albany was an integral part of the corporate monarchy in Scotland. As son of the king, Chamberlain, and Regent of Scotland he acted on behalf of his father and brother and fulfilled the duties of kingship for a king incapable of doing so. Albany’s fulfillment of the duties of kingship, including the administration of justice, defense of the realm, and focus of loyalty in Scotland, ensured the survival of the early Stewart dynasty and made him indispensable to the royal family. The use of the corporate nature of monarchy by the early Stewart kings, particularly the office of regent, ensured that the duties of kingship were carried out and there was also always a royal presence in Scotland.

Part of Albany’s place in the corporate monarchy was a development of his own royal identity. Over the course of the reigns of Robert II and Robert III, Albany showed an increasing awareness of his position as son or brother of the king and a prince of the royal house. Albany’s elevation to earl of Fife and duke of Albany showcased the importance his father and brother placed on him as a member of the royal family, but Albany’s own use of titles displayed how he interpreted this position himself. Around 1400, Albany began to increasingly deploy the title ‘prince’, unlike his brothers. In foreign correspondence both before and after his governorship Albany was recognized as Prince Robert, the son and/or brother of the king on par with his contemporaries such as John of Gaunt or John, duke of Burgundy. The title ‘prince’ was used sparingly and seems to have been reserved for Albany’s more personal documents or foreign correspondence. Inside Scotland, likely due to lingering suspicions after the death of Rothesay and Albany’s frequent fulfillment of the duties of kingship for his incapacitated brother, the title prince only makes a few appearances in personal land grants and bonds of friendship. In charter confirmations undertaken in his capacity as governor, Albany never referred to himself as prince.
Likely it was generally understood by the Scottish political community, given his appointment as governor and their general acceptance of his power, that Albany was a prince and part of the royal family, but overt statements of this royal identity were unwelcome given his history of rivalry with other members of his family.

Furthermore, in his religious patronage Albany made several connections not only with his own royal father, but also Robert I and the Canmore dynasty. His obits, patronage of St. Leonard’s hospitals, dedication to St. Fillan, and burial in Dunfermline Abbey with royal honours all proudly declared his connection to three royal families in Scotland. Such practices were not necessarily uncommon, but Albany’s place as a younger son of the king make his royal connections much more interesting particularly as he often fulfilled the duties of kingship in place of the main Stewart line. Some of the royal connections such as the dedications to Robert I’s favored saint stretch back through most of Albany’s life, but the later connections to the royal tradition in Scotland may have stemmed from an attempt to further legitimize his roles as regent and his ability to act for the king.

Albany’s place in the royal family and the corporate monarchy could be contentious. The corporate monarchy structure allows for the whole royal family to share in the power and authority that comes with ruling a kingdom, but it does not preclude rivalries. Albany certainly had rivalries with his brothers and his nephew Rothesay. Despite some of his more questionable actions and the likely murder of his nephew, Albany continued to be central to the Scottish government. The incapacities of his father and brother in the 1380s and 1390s allowed for Albany, a capable administrator, to seize the power of kingship and rule Scotland for kings declared incapable. This would not have been possible if not for the support he found among the nobility. With the glaring exception of Donald, lord of the Isles, Albany was able to come to an
agreement if not an alliance with many of the leading nobles in the kingdom, whom often seemed to agree that the king was not capable of governing himself. Albany’s skill at forming beneficial alliances through marriages, bonds, and patronage underpinned his ability to rule for the Scottish kings particularly when he was barred from some of the prerogatives of kingship such as calling Parliament during the governorship.

The earls of Mar and Douglas are Albany’s best-known associates, but he did not neglect the lesser nobility and the men of his own lands. Albany’s lordships were not free of conflict and he was occasionally at odds with his own tenants, but generally he cultivated the good will of many of the lesser nobles and those living in his lands through land grants and offices broadening his powerbase. Albany’s affinity was vast and covered most of Scotland and spanned the secular and lay realms during the governorship. This network building combined with his abilities to fulfill the duties of kingship to an acceptable level allowed him to dominate Scottish politics and act for his father, brother, and nephew.

Far from being an outsider in this manner, Albany’s career had many parallels particularly with his immediate contemporaries John of Gaunt and John, duke of Burgundy. Albany’s place and roles in the corporate monarchy were similar to those of other minor royal men in late medieval Europe. His place as regent, role in the royal army, and general duties in the Scottish government were similar to his contemporaries. In particular, Albany and Burgundy had much in common not only in that they served as regents for adult kings present in their kingdoms, but they also faced inquiries for murder and contended with the ambitions of rival family members. France under Charles VI and Scotland under Robert II and Robert III had much in common beyond their alliances and the two governments would greatly benefit from a full comparative evaluation. In general, Albany like his contemporary princes fulfilled many roles in
the corporate monarchy that deserve full evaluations beyond their places as spares and potential foils for their reigning kinsmen. Younger sons like Albany were full participants in the corporate monarchy with crucial governmental roles that aided and sometimes determined the survival of a dynasty.

Albany’s accomplishments and integral place in the corporate monarchy have been overlooked due to his poor historical reputation, and the failure of his son to survive the return of personal kingship to Scotland. Murdoch was unable to live up to his father’s tremendous reputation and responsibilities, due to his prolonged imprisonment in England, the unfortunate timing of his brother Buchan’s death, and his intractable son, Walter. The arrest, short rebellion, and execution of Murdoch, Walter, Alexander, and Duncan, earl of Lennox, cast a long shadow on the reputation of the Albany Stewarts.1 Albany’s remaining family lived out the reign of James I in relative obscurity, or died in exile.2 The family made a small comeback during the reigns of James II and James III when Isabella of Lennox brought her illegitimate grandsons (the sons of Walter and James the Fat) back to Scotland from their exile in Ireland, and some of them

1 For a full discussion of the events after the return of James I to Scotland see Brown, James I; Grant, “Service and Tenure,” 178. Grant notes in his study that affinities and retinues do not always transfer from father to son.

2 James I and James II paid Murielle a pension of 66s 6d and 4d per annum from the customs of Aberdeen until her death in 1449. ER iv, 406, 416, 433, 447, 466, 469, 500, 514, 531, 535, 560, 564, 572, 613, 614; ER v. 19, 72, 234, 270, 306, 342. Likely Andrew Stewart, Albany’s third son died sometime between 1407 and 1413. Robert collected an annuity of £13 6s 8d from the customs of Dundee in 1429 and 1431. ER iv, 470, 500, 532. Nothing is known of Robert after 1431. Bower, Scotichronicon, vol. 8, 245; B. MacCarthy, ed., Annals of Ulster, vol. III: AD 1379-1541 (Burlington, Ont: TannerRitchie Publishing, 2017), 99; Annals of the Four Masters, vol. 4, 866, 875, 494 n. Interestingly, the 1429 entry in the Annals of the Four Masters recording James’s death reads, “James Stuart, son of the king of Scotland, and Roydomna of Scotland, who had been banished from Scotland to Ireland, died, after the arrival of a fleet from the men of Scotland to convey him home, that he might be made king.” The fleet referenced here is part of the lord of the Isles schemes in his rebellion against James I in 1429. The term Roydomna appears several times in the Annals of the Four Masters and is used to indicate a prince of some sort, sometimes the heir presumptive, or the son of the king, but Donovan notes earlier in the text that the term may be used to indicate a “prince designed or fit to be king.” Here roydomna may very well mean heir presumptive. While James I married Joan Beaufort before his return in 1424, the couple would not have a male child until 1430. While James I had at least one daughter, Margaret, born in 1424, the earlier entail of Robert II from 1373 clearly laid out the succession of male children over female children, meaning in 1429 James the Fat could inherit over his female cousins if James I suddenly died.
rose high in the service of James II and James III. However, the family never again reached the heights of Albany’s power and authority over Scotland. Any use James I had for the corporate monarchy, which was certainly less than his father and grandfather, did not include his Albany Stewart cousins. Rather Robert Stewart, duke of Albany’s, career, political ascendancy, and prominent place in the corporate monarchy in the end benefitted himself and his father and brother, but not his own family in the long run.

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3 William Fraser, *The Stirlings of Keir, and Their Family Papers*, (Burlington, Ont: TannerRitchie Publishing, 2010), 214; *Munimenta Fratrum Predicatorum de Glasgu* (Glasgow, 1846), no. 29; Brown, “Earldom and Kindred,” 221-4. On 12 May 1437, Isabella as “Duchez of Albany and Countas of Leuenax” issued a precept of sasine detailing that she granted a number of lands to her dearest “nevo” (most likely meaning grandson rather than nephew) James Stewart of Albany, one of James the Fat’s children. This was Isabella’s first recorded act since the 1425 executions, and it was to bring her grandchildren back to Scotland from their exile. Isabella’s grandsons as stated in her charters were named: Sir Andrew, Sir Murdoch, Alan, Arthur, Walter of Morphe, James Beg, and Robert. Upon their immediate return to Scotland, all of Isabella’s grandsons were styled “de Albany” in her charters. The most famous of Isabella’s grandsons was Andrew Stewart, lord Avondale. For more information on Avondale’s career see McGladdery, *James II*; Norman Macdougall, *James III A Political Study* (Edinburgh: John Donald, 1982); Alan R. Borthwick, “Stewart, Andrew, Lord Avondale (c. 1420–1488), Courtier,” *ODNB*. 
Appendix A: The Affinity of Robert Stewart, duke of Albany

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Witness</th>
<th>Kinship</th>
<th>Link</th>
<th>Grant</th>
</tr>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>45</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>John Stewart, earl of Buchan</td>
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<td>land</td>
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<td>Elizabeth Douglas</td>
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<td>daughter-in-law</td>
<td></td>
<td>land</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Andrew Stewart</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Son</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>William Abernethy</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Patrick Abernethy</td>
<td>1</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Malcolm Fleming of Biggar</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>son-in-law</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Robert Stewart of Lorn</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>John Swinton I</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>John Swinton II</td>
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<tr>
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<td>5</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Duncan Campbell</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Celestine Campbell</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>grandson</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Euphemia Leslie</td>
<td></td>
<td>granddaughter</td>
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<td>land</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Walter Stewart, earl of Atholl and Caithness</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>brother</td>
<td></td>
<td>land</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thomas Stewart, archdeacon of St. Andrews</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>brother</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>John Stewart of Dundonald</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alexander Stewart, earl of Mar</td>
<td>18</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alexander Lindsay, heir of Crawford/earl</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>nephew</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Thomas Dunbar, earl of Moray</td>
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<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>David Stewart, duke of Rothesay</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>William Hay of Nachtane</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>nephew</td>
<td>Constable of Scotland</td>
<td>land</td>
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</table>

1 This chart is composed of the names mentioned on the witness lists of Albany’s charters. The bulk of Albany’s surviving charters date from his governorship, as such a majority of this list is from the RMS i, which accounts for the absence of Albany’s son and heir Murdoch, but frequent appearance of Murdoch’s son, Robert Stewart of Fife. However, I have also utilized manuscript charters from the NRS, the Fraser Family Histories, Ill. Banff, and similar sources (see bibliography for full range of sources). Many of the surviving manuscripts as well as those in the Fraser Family Histories are duplicates of those in the RMS and I have taken care not to list duplicate charters. With the removal of the duplicates this list reflects a survey of around 120 charters. Charters granting lands to Albany have not been considered in this list as much of his land was granted by Robert II and the inclusion of those witness lists would likely better reflect the affinity of Robert II rather than Albany. Name spellings have been standardized to either their most common (ie. Duvery = Doversy) or modern spelling where possible (Lindsie = Lindsay). The term kin has been used as a catch all to denote family members of more complicated, distant, or unspecified relations. For instance the earls of Douglas have several ties of kinship to both the Albany Stewarts and the royal Stewarts making them both cousins and in-laws in some cases. Kin is also used for anyone described as “consanguinei” in the charters for whom the immediate relationship to Albany is not apparent, for example Walter, earl of Atholl and Caithness, is immediately identifiable as Albany’s brother, but Patrick Graham, earl of Strathearn, was the son of Albany’s niece Euphemia Stewart, countess Palatine of Strathearn, and her husband Patrick Graham, still considered “kin” but the relationship is more convoluted.
<table>
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<tr>
<th>Name</th>
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<td>James Sandilands of Caldore</td>
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<tr>
<td>Robert Keith</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mariote Stewart</td>
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<td>niece</td>
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<td>John Lyon</td>
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**Kinship - Earls and Lords**

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<tr>
<td>John Stewart, lord of Lorn</td>
<td>40</td>
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<td>William Graham, lord Graham</td>
<td>25</td>
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<tr>
<td>Archibald Douglas, 4th earl of Douglas</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>Bond</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Patrick Graham, earl of Strathearn</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>kin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>David Fleming, lord of Biggar</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>kin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Duncan, earl of Lennox</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>kin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>William Keith, Marischal of Scotland</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>kin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>David Lindsay, earl of Crawford</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>kin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Archibald Douglas, 3rd earl of Douglas</td>
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<td>kin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>James Douglas, lord of Dalkeith</td>
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<td>kin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Robert Keith, Marischal of Scotland</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>kin</td>
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<tr>
<td>Henry Sinclair, earl of Orkney</td>
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<td>kin</td>
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<tr>
<td>Bartholomew Loen</td>
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<td>Bond</td>
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<td>John, earl of Moray</td>
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**Kinship - Others**

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<td>George Leslie of Fythkill, knight</td>
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<tr>
<td>Walter Stewart of Railstoun</td>
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<tr>
<td>Patrick Graham</td>
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<td>Alexander Keith</td>
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<td>Norman Defly</td>
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<td>Alexander Stewart of Dernley</td>
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<tr>
<td>Robert Stewart of Dernley</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>kin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arthur Campbell</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Robert Stewart of Schanbothy</td>
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<td>land</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>William Stewart</td>
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<td>John Sinclair</td>
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**Ecclesiastical**

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<td>Andrew Hawyk</td>
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<td>Donald of Bute, dean of Dunblane</td>
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<tr>
<td>William, bishop of Glasgow</td>
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<td>Walter, bishop of Brechin</td>
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<td>Robert, bishop of Dunkeld</td>
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<tr>
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<td>John, abbot of Culross</td>
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<tr>
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<tr>
<td>William Camera, rector of Eroll/Aberdeen</td>
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<td>John Cornton, vicar of Stirling</td>
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<tr>
<td>John, abbot of Holyrood</td>
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<td>Alexander Carnis, provost of Lincludden</td>
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<td><strong>Household</strong></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Name</td>
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<td>Role</td>
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<tr>
<td>-----------------------------------</td>
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<td>James Armut</td>
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<td>Squire</td>
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<td><strong>Others - Earls and Lords</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>George Dunbar I, earl of March</td>
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<tr>
<td>William Scott, lord of Balwery</td>
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Appendix B: Family Trees

The Family of Robert II

Robert II = Elizabeth Mure

Robert III = Walter, lord of Fife = Isabella, countess of Fife
Annabella Drummond

Robert, duke of Albany =
1. Margaret, countess of Menteith
2. Muriella Keith

Alexander, earl of Buchan =
Euphemia, countess of Ross

Robert II = Elizabeth Mure

Margaret =
John, lord of the Isles
Marjorie =
John Dunbar, earl of Moray
Elizabeth =
Thomas Hay, Constable

Robert, duke of Albany =
1. Margaret, countess of Menteith
2. Muriella Keith

Robert II = Euphemia Ross

David, earl of Strathearn =
Euphemia Stewart, countess of Strathearn
Walter, earl of Atholl =
Margaret Barclay, lady of Brechin

Egidia =
William Douglas of Nithsdale

Jean =
David, earl of Crawford
Albany Stewarts

Robert, duke of Albany = Margaret Graham, countess of Menteith

Murdoch = Isabella of Lennox  Janet  Mary? = Sir William Abernethy  Marjorie = Duncan Campbell, lord of Argyll

Robert, duke of Albany = Murielle Keith

John, earl of Buchan = Elizabeth Douglas  Isobel = 1. Alexander Leslie, earl of Ross  Johanna = Robert Stewart of Lorn
  2. Walter Haliburton of Dirleton

Robert  Andrew  Elizabeth = Malcolm Fleming of Biggar  ? = James Douglas of Balvenie
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Papers of the Kennedy Family, Earls of Cassillis GD25
Papers of the Maule Family, Earls of Dalhousie GD45
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Papers of the Smythe Family of Methven, Perthshire GD190
Papers of the Spens Family GD334
Papers of the Steuart Fotheringham Family of Pourie, Fotheringham, Murthly and Strathbraan GD121
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Records of Thomson and Baxter GD241
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Register House Transcripts RH1
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