

# Monarchs of Highland Marches

## The MacDuff Dynasty

Before the rise of Robert the Dark, the Marches had no unified King, though it was governed over by Montaigne kings who had married into the dominant Clans of the time.

		1576-1582	Agnes <sup>8</sup> <i>Daughter of Malcolm IV</i>
1219-1258	Robert I - "The Dark" <sup>1</sup>	1582-1585	William I <sup>8</sup> <i>Husband of Agnes</i>
1258-1302	Robert II - "The Just" <sup>2</sup> <i>Son of Robert I</i>	1585-1604	James I - "The Warrior" <sup>8</sup> <i>Son of Agnes</i>
1302-1305	Robert III <sup>3</sup> <i>Son of Robert II</i>	1604-1631	William II - "The Holy" <sup>9</sup> <i>Son of James I</i>
1305-1323	Malcolm I <sup>3</sup> <i>Uncle of Robert III</i>	1631-1642	Robert V <sup>10</sup> <i>Son of William II</i>
1323-1377	Duncan - "The Mad" <sup>4</sup> <i>Son of Robert III</i>	1642-Present	James II <sup>11</sup> <i>Son of Robert V</i>
1377-1381	Catherine I - "Lady of Grace" <sup>5</sup> <i>Daughter of Duncan</i>		
1381-1425	Malcolm II - "The Lion" <sup>6</sup> <i>Son of Catherine I</i>		
1425	Kenneth - "Black Kenneth" <sup>7</sup> <i>Brother of Malcolm II</i>		
1425-1463	Iain - "The Solemn" <sup>7</sup> <i>Son of Malcolm II</i>		
1463-1467	Robert IV <i>Son of Iain</i>		
1467-1525	Alexander <i>Son of Robert IV</i>		
1525-1532	Malcolm III <i>Son of Alexander</i>		
1532-1559	Catherine II <i>Daughter of Malcolm III</i>		
1559-1576	Malcolm IV <i>Son of Catherine II</i>		

### Notes

1. Robert the Dark founded the MacDuff dynasty and clan as separate from the pre-existing clans of the Marches, removed from the familial grudges that had ruled his people for millennia.
2. Robert the Just (1258-1302) formalised the existence of Clan MacDuff and encoded the legal system of the Marches in the Declaration of Connickmoor (1261).
3. Robert III ruled for only a short period of time before dying at sea in suspicious circumstances. Malcolm, his uncle, took the throne, as Robert's son Duncan was only 3 years old at the time.
4. Duncan the Mad (1323-1377) wrested the throne from the grip of his great-uncle Malcolm I, and was hailed as a national hero for restoring the true MacDuff line without a long and bloody war. Unfortunately, Duncan had been driven mad by his uncle, having spent much of his childhood in confinement and cruelty – a problem that did not become apparent until he had been enthroned. Duncan's early goodwill evaporated as he began to see plots against him everywhere. During



Duncan's long reign, many peripheral members of the MacDuff clan were executed or exiled, and those members of the clan close to the King were kept under constant watch. Duncan eventually poisoned himself for reasons not widely known, and the throne passed to his daughter Catherine, one of only three High Queens in the history of the Marches.

5. Catherine the Graceful (1377-1381) ruled well, restoring the faith of the people of the Marches in the MacDuff line. She pardoned all exiled members of the Clan and brought them back to the Marches. She died giving birth to her son, Malcolm, who was crowned High King at the age of 1 day old.
6. Malcolm the Lion (1381-1425) enjoyed an extensive Regency period, throughout which he was the "guest" of numerous clans, primarily the MacDonald clan. The MacDonalds suffered a great setback when they took the young King out hunting on the 8th of Septimus, 1390, and he was abducted from under Iain MacDonald's nose by the Boyd family of Kirksoulis, who raised Malcolm for the next five years and acted as Regents during that period. Strangely, Gordon Boyd was uninterested in profiting from the Regency, though he did ransom the 14-year-old King to the MacLeods, who took command of the Regency for the next two years and used that time to line their pockets and redistribute Clan lands to the expense of the MacDonalds. On Malcolm's 16th Birthday, he was brought to Kirkwall, where his first official act was to order the grisly execution of Callum MacLeod and the overturning of the MacLeod Regent's acts. Malcolm was to prove a dynamic King, and his rule favoured no one clan over another. He governed the Marches well, and fought nobly at home and abroad against the Marches' enemies in the name of his country and his Church. He was brought low when he died in battle at Lochcarn. It was to later emerge that one soldier had chanced to see the King slain by none other than Kenneth, his brother and successor.
7. Black Kenneth (1425) reigned throughout the summer of 1425 before he was brought to trial before the full Council of the Clans. Despite the fact that he was the King, he was sentenced to death by hanging for the murder of his brother. This set an unusual precedent in

Highland law, proving that no one was above justice in the land. The reigns of power passed to Malcolm's son, Iain, who governed the Marches with wisdom and piety.

8. Queen Agnes (1576-1582) ruled with her heart, and was deposed by her second husband, William, who exiled her to Montaigne after taking the throne. It is said the Queen died of a broken heart in Montaigne, though her husband's heart was broken by the sword of James MacDuff, son of the Queen, who challenged his stepfather to a duel over his mother's honour and ran him through with one clean stroke. James was crowned High King before his stepfather was even cold, and William's funeral was overshadowed by the celebratory coronation of King James.
9. William the Holy (1604-1631) was the son of King James I, and was called James by his father, though he took the name William upon taking the throne for his own reasons. In his journal, preserved in the Royal Treasury in Kirkwall, William explains that his father was twisted by hate, and the people resented the name of William. He felt it his duty to remind the people of the Marches that no one name should live in infamy.\*
10. Robert V died of the White Plague, leaving his young son, James, High King of the Highland Marches at the age of 11.
11. The current High King of the Highland Marches, James I is the first openly Objectionist High King, though several of his predecessors, including James, Agnes, William, and Robert before him both secretly espoused the faith.

\* A previous version of this publication listed William II as the first Objectionist High King, however this conflicts with *Avalon* pg 48 and has been corrected above.

## Credits

### 7th Sea System Creation

John Wick, Jennifer Wick and Kevin Wilson

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