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## *Bruce and the Macdoulls* *by Tony Bonning*

When Robert the Bruce was making his claim for the throne of Scotland, most of the fighting was done at that time down in Galloway. Edward 1st had sent his knight, Aymer de Valens, to kill Bruce and to claim Scotland for the English king.

Bruce fought around the hills of Galloway. He had one other problem. The people who had followed on from Uchtred were against him because he was from Gilbert's side of the family. So the people who then had the lordship of Galloway were also fighting on the side of the English against Bruce.

Now Bruce himself was actually being chased through the Galloway hills by Aymer de Valens and a crew of Galloway warriors. The thing that they were using to try and get a hold of Bruce was his very own bloodhound. The bloodhound knew its master and so some soldiers set out with the bloodhound to try and find Bruce and they were chasing him over the hills over Craignaw. He managed to get down on to the Silver Flow and into the water.

Now back in those days, the Galloway hills were covered in trees so he was in the forest and he was running down the river, the bloodhound, of course, lost the scent of the trail. Bruce then sent his own man back, that was with him, and he killed the dog with the bow and arrow.

But later on Bruce and the other man ran into five Galwegian soldiers. Bruce in the end killed four of them. His own man was killed.

Later, Bruce ran into three more soldiers and thinking they were on the side of Bruce, as he did, he joined with them and they went to a cottage. They happened to have a sheep with them and the sheep was then divided into parts and cooked on the fire. Now the fact was that the soldiers, although they gave the idea they were on Bruce's side were in actual fact the Galwegians who were looking for him. Bruce after the meal fell asleep and as he did so, the soldiers rose up to kill him. At the last moment he awoke and stood up, killed the first soldier and then the other two, showing that he was indeed a mighty, mighty warrior.

We know this because on the eve of the Battle of Bannockburn did Robert the Bruce not fight in single combat, DeBohun, a great English warrior? And he slew him, as I say, in single combat. A mighty warrior indeed was Robert the Bruce.

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