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# Electronic resources for local population studies

## The Paradox of Medieval Scotland, 1093–1286 (PoMS) and local history

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### Introduction

For the past three years *The Paradox of Medieval Scotland, 1093–1286* (PoMS) has been exploring social relationships and identities before the Wars of Independence. With the collaboration of the Universities of Glasgow and Edinburgh, King's College London and the Centre for Computing in the Humanities, and with funding from the Arts and Humanities Research Council (AHRC), this project has produced as its main outcome a prosopographical database of individuals and their relationships in Scotland in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries. The unique database contains more than 15,000 persons and institutions from this period, gathered from over 6,000 contemporaneous charters relating to Scotland. The PoMS database has succeeded in pinpointing these people, their social identities and their relationships in the charters, making the study of social networking and local populations much easier for historians, scholars, students and general users. The project's survey of property and possessions in Scotland has also facilitated research on the nature and extent of landholding, with detailed information on lands, associated rights and burdens, and terms of tenure.

Now completed, the project and online database can be found at <http://www.poms.ac.uk/> and is available free to all users. The database aside, the website offers information about the project and the historical period, and also includes various 'Features of the Month'. These are short pieces, written by project members and other scholars, which highlight charters, people or other items of interest which have been revealed during the course of the project. The project team anticipates the PoMS database will be a useful and important resource for scholars of medieval Scotland.

### What is the 'paradox'?

The project's title comes from a statement made by Rees Davies in *The first English empire* (Oxford, 2000) that 'paradoxically, the most extensively English-settled and Anglicised part of the British Isles was the country which retained its political

independence'.<sup>1</sup> The historical period under investigation is the most crucial in exploring this paradox and its political, social and cultural impact. It was during this time, the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, that Scotland was transformed into a recognisable kingdom with very similar boundaries to today. In order to examine how this transformation took place, the project has focused on the surviving charters of the period relating specifically to property, privileges or positions in Scotland, of which more than 6,000 have been identified. The majority of these charters come from aristocratic and lesser-known families. These two groups in medieval society are usually under-researched, making this survey even more crucial to studying the period. The question at the centre of the PoMS project asks, 'how did the social identities and inter-relationships of individuals in Scottish society change in the period 1093–1286?' This question touches on many other related issues such as ethnicity, the emergence of new institutions, and changes in social status and naming-patterns, while the examination of the contemporaneous documents sheds light on the adoption of charters, the use and variation of languages—especially Gaelic—and the expansion of law and custom in medieval Scotland. In order to answer the pivotal question and to address the other issues related to the 'paradox', it has been necessary to scrutinise the charters in depth, from the spelling of names to the use of dispositive language.

As data entry got under way in the project, the sources became more and more interesting and, indeed, complicated. As John Reuben Davies, a research assistant on the project, has explained on the PoMS website, the usual vocabulary of charter scholarship—that of 'grants' and 'confirmations' in particular—did not accurately describe what was taking place in our sources.<sup>2</sup> Richard Sharpe, Professor of Diplomatic at the University of Oxford, shared with the team his insights into the use of the verbs *dare*, *concedere* and *confirmare* ('to give', 'to grant' and 'to confirm') from his work on Anglo-Norman *acta*, which led us to a more refined understanding of dispositive clauses in Scottish charters. The result was a fresh look at the modern categorisations of Scottish charters, for which users should refer to Dr Davies's three-part 'Feature of the Month' on the PoMS website for a more in-depth explanation.<sup>3</sup>

The project has offered further insights into current debates in the study of medieval Scotland, such as the Europeanisation and Anglicisation of Scottish society. The transformation of society before 1286 has been previously discussed by Robert Bartlett and

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1 R.R. Davies, *The first English empire: power and identities in the British Isles, 1093–1343* (Oxford, 2000), 170.

2 J.R. Davies, 'Giving', 'Granting' and 'Confirming': the problem of dispositive verbs in twelfth- and thirteenth-century Scottish charters: parts I, II and III, PoMS Features of the Month (July, September, October 2009): <http://www.poms.ac.uk/content/feature/feature.html> [14 November 2010].

3 A more developed version of these short articles appears as J.R. Davies, 'The donor and the duty of warrandice: giving and granting in Scottish charters', in D. Broun ed., *The reality behind charter diplomatic in the Anglo-Norman era* (Glasgow, forthcoming).

Rees Davies, although in more European and British terms.<sup>4</sup> However, this transformation can also be examined in a ‘Scottish’ context. As Dauvit Broun’s recent work on *The Chronicle of Melrose Abbey* has highlighted, those living in the localities of the Borders came to identify themselves as Scottish despite the area being predominately English. The period before 1286 might therefore also be viewed as that of the ‘Scotticisation’ of Scotland.<sup>5</sup> The project’s examination of landholding and lordship has also contributed to debates on feudalism, a system which was essentially imported from Scotland’s southern neighbours and which points to a more Anglicised Scottish society. Finally, the impact of Anglo-Norman institutions on the transformation of Scottish society, and the blending with traditional Celtic customs, can be explored in the PoMS database by investigating the interactions of these two social groups within Scotland. By identifying all persons recorded in Scottish charters, the project has taken these debates to a more local level of society.

## The database

With these themes and research questions in mind, we can turn to the database itself. As noted above, it includes more than 6,000 documents and 15,000 persons and institutions. We have also identified more than 15,000 relationships, 37,000 titles and occupations, nearly 10,000 properties and privileges and nearly 3,000 examples of ownership. These items have been termed ‘factoids’, meaning assertions of fact made in a document, whether this be a person’s title, relationship or possession, or a transaction in a document. What follows will hopefully give users an idea of how to search the database and what can be found there.

### *Basic and advanced searching*

There are two main ways to search the PoMS database: a basic search or an advanced search (browse). Any whole or partial words will be searched. For instance, searching for ‘**earl of Angus**’ will produce a list of results where the user may find these words together, whether that be Adam, **earl of Angus**, or **Angus**, clerk of **Earl Henry of Atholl**. Words can also be entered only partially: for example, searching for ‘**Ball**’ will return members of the **Balliol** family, the Church of **Dunballoch**, and Jocelin of **Ballindard**. The basic search should be used for quick, initial enquiries concerning people, sources or factoids, while the ‘browse’, or advanced search, should be used for those who wish to do a more investigative search. For the purposes of this article, I have concentrated on the advanced search. However, users should keep in mind that a full ‘how to’ tutorial on using the PoMS database is available on the website, where a glossary and explanation of terms used is also provided.

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4 R. Bartlett, *The making of Europe: conquest, colonisation and cultural change, 950–1350* (London, 1993); Davies, *First English empire*.

5 D. Broun and J. Harrison eds, *The Chronicle of Melrose Abbey: a stratigraphic edition, volume I: introduction and facsimile edition* (Woodbridge, 2007).

Figure 1 Example of names and titles as they appear in the source

NAME (ORIGINAL LANGUAGE)	NAME (TRANSLATION)
Alexandro Comyn	Sir Alexander Cumin, sheriff of Buchan, then justiciar of Scotia
Ado	Sir Adam, then abbot of Arbroath
Thoma de Fynwych	Sir Thomas of Finwich, knight
Willelmo de Haya	Sir William de Hay, knight
Guuydone de Normauyle	Sir Guy de Normanville, knight
Stephano Pycard	Sir Stephen Picard, knight
Matheo de le Chene	Matthew le Cheyne, then sheriff of Forfar, knight

### People

The most important aspect of PoMS is the study of people and their relationships in Scotland. During the project, several research questions were considered: Who were the people of medieval Scotland? How were they connected one to another? Where did they come from and where did they live? What conception did they have of their identity? In seeking to answer these questions, relevant information such as persons and relationships were extracted from the charters and entered into our database.

Each person has been entered using a ‘headline form’ of their name—that is, the most recognisable form for our end-users. This means that Alan, the doorward (d.1275), appears as Alan Durward; Walter, the steward (d.1177), appears as Walter Stewart. It was especially important to capture each source in its purest form, meaning that medieval spellings of personal-names and place-names have been preserved, in the hope that this will be particularly useful for examining the spelling of non-standard names. A person’s name on its own is given exactly as it appears in the source; any additional titles that accompany the name appear only in the translation. So the form *Alexandro Comyn* has been recorded, but the rest of the information that accompanies the name appears in translation: ‘Sir Alexander Cumin, sheriff of Buchan, then justiciar of Scotia’. Figure 1 shows further examples of the recorded information as it appears in the database.

Each person also has a reference or ‘biography’ page where there is information about their families, landholdings, offices held, and *floruit* dates (see Figure 2). Obviously, for those persons who appear in only a few charters there will be limited information, if any at all. In some cases, users will be referred to other sources, such as the *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* or the *Fasti Ecclesiae Scoticae*,<sup>6</sup> for information on more well-known people, particularly kings and bishops. It should be remembered that the *floruit* dates

<sup>6</sup> *Oxford dictionary of national biography* (Oxford, 2004), online edition: <http://www.oxforddnb.com/> [14 November 2010]; D.E.R. Watt and A.L. Murray eds, *Fasti Ecclesiae Scoticae medii aevi ad annum 1638* (Edinburgh, 2003).

Figure 2 Biography page for Walter Stewart, son of Alan (d.1177)

[Home](#)
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## Viewing Person Record: Walter Stewart, son of Alan (d.1177)

<b>NAME</b>	Walter Stewart, son of Alan (d.1177)
<b>MEDIEVAL NAME</b>	
<b>MODERN GAELIC NAME</b>	
<b>GENDER</b>	M
<b>BIOGRAPHY</b>	Walter, son of Alan, was the third son of Alan, son of Flaald. He had a brief reign, he had become his steward, an office which was to become hereditary Renfrew, Kyle, Berwickshire, Roxburghshire and Haddingtonshire. Walter m (per. c.1110-c.1350): Walter fitz Alan (d.1177), _ODNB_ (2004) [http://w
<b>FLORUIT (START DATE)</b>	1137
<b>FLORUIT (END DATE)</b>	1175

Total number of associated factoids: 746

Generic factoids (579):	Pro-Anima factoids (17):	Witnesses factoids (150):
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RECORD ID	TYPE	SHORT SUMMARY
64357	relationship	Steward of William I, king of Scots (d.1214) (Em)
64359	title/occupation	steward (king's)
64364	relationship	Lord (dominus) of Walter Stewart, son of Alan (c
64367	transaction	Gift of 1 mark in the mill of Innerwick
65010	title/occupation	steward
65020	relationship	Son of Alan Stewart, son of Flaald (Familial relat
64394	relationship	Son of Walter Stewart, son of Alan (d.1177) (Fai
65032	relationship	Son of Walter Stewart, son of Alan (d.1177) (Fai
66163	relationship	Grandfather of Walter Stewart, son of Alan (d.1:

pertain only to sources in the PoMS database, and are therefore not comprehensive or exact. For persons who appear just once or twice in documents which cannot be dated narrowly, the *floruit* may appear unfeasibly long. Because they reflect the evidence of the charters in the database, the *floruit* of some well-known persons—such as kings, bishops and earls—for whom we have other evidence that falls outside the scope of the PoMS data, may appear shorter than expected: the database reflects the period as seen through the charter evidence.<sup>7</sup>

The reference page also lists all the factoids associated with the person, so that users can navigate through the sources in which a particular person appears and investigate other information about them, including the titles used to describe them in the sources, their relationships, and their properties. Users can also browse through the various sources and transaction on a person's page to see their connections to other members of Scottish society, as explained in more detail below.

Users should bear in mind that not all persons in the PoMS database will be named. There are several un-named or unknown persons who are mentioned in the sources, such as the goldsmith who appears as a landholder in Perthshire.<sup>8</sup> His existence in these particular sources is notable for two reasons. The first is that we are given a glimpse of an otherwise unknown person and his occupation; the second, that he was a lesser landholder, holding a toft in Tibbermore (PER).

In a similar way, not all persons who appear in the PoMS database were alive during the period of study. Persons long dead at the time a source was written may be referred to, and because they are mentioned in the source, they have been included in the database. King Malcolm III (d.1093) provides a specific example. King Malcolm's death is the starting point of PoMS, so he was of course not alive at the time of any of the sources recorded in the database. He is, nevertheless, often referred to in our charters, and can thus be found in the database as a person with a 'secondary' role, or as someone named in a *pro anima* clause. There are also patronymic persons who are not personally relevant to a given source, but who are identified as the father or mother of someone who does appear in a source. Walter, son of Alan, the steward (d.1177) is an example (see Figure 2). He appears most frequently as 'son of Alan', yet his father, Alan, son of Flaald, does not appear in our sources independently. Nonetheless, Alan, son of Flaald can be found in the database for every occurrence of his son as 'son of Alan'.

The project team entered people into the database based on a number of criteria including their role, title, and relationships. Role is identified as a person's particular role in the

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7 See the PoMS glossary on the website for more information: <http://www.poms.ac.uk/glossaryterms.html> [14 November 2010].

8 3/516/1 (*Scone Liber*, no. 21), gift by Swain, son of Thor, to Scone Abbey, 1182–94; 3/516/2 (*Scone Liber*, no. 125), renewal by Swain's grandson, Walter son of Alan, to Scone Abbey, 1212–22; 1/7/51 (RRS, iii, no. 317), confirmation by Alexander II to Scone Abbey, 1214–22.

document or other transaction, such as grantor, beneficiary or witness. These are the most common roles, but frequently documents will also have consentors, sealers or signatories. A role of *sicut* clause or *pro anima* designates when a person appears in these clauses in a charter. A charter's witness list is probably the most beneficial tool that researchers can use to pinpoint networks and relationships, especially at a local level. It is here that one can view who appeared alongside whom, where they appeared together, and in what capacity. Fathers, sons and brothers would often appear together, as well as those in the employment of another, such as chaplains or clerks. Equally important is the order in which witnesses appear, so the database displays witness lists in their given order.

Titles and relationships are entered using the terms that they are given in the charter, although some exceptions are made. For example, the abbot of Cambuskenneth is sometimes called the abbot of Stirling and, likewise, the abbot of Holyrood is sometimes referred to as the abbot of Edinburgh. In these cases, we have used an 'official' title of abbot of Cambuskenneth or Holyrood in the standard searchable categories, but have left the translation of the title in the record entry in its original form. Other examples of alternative names, such as Conveth and Laurencekirk (in Kincardineshire) have been handled similarly. Institutions, such as religious houses, churches and chapels, chapters, hospitals and so forth, are equated as 'persons' in the database, complete with their own 'biography' page, where we have listed information about their foundations and to which religious order they belonged. Other types of institution that one can find in the database include bishoprics and archdeaconries, as well as groups of people such as local burgesses.

### *Relationships*

One of the most important elements of the database is the 'relationship'. The way in which historical persons related to one another is a crucial aspect of the project's research agenda. For the purposes of this article, these relationships will be classified as 'specific' and 'non-specific', although these are not terms of distinction which we have used in the database. 'Specific' relationships are those given in a particular source where 'X' is something to 'Y', that is, when a person is specifically mentioned as being related to someone, whether in the employment of another or as a relative: for example, Robert, chaplain of the king; John, clerk of Bishop Andrew of Moray; Walter, son of Alan; Ada, wife of Earl Henry. In these cases, a specific familial or employment relationship is tangibly identified. Another example is a tenurial relationship, where someone called 'X' is a tenant of 'Y' or when 'Z' calls King Alexander II 'my lord'. Again, as with all the information given in the database, relationships have been recorded as they are given in the source, and no assumptions have been made. Although we may know, based on the nature of a charter, that a certain piece of land was to be held by person 'A' from person 'B', unless the words 'my tenant' are used, 'A' has not been given a relationship factoid as a 'tenant' of 'B'. Figure 3 is an example of how a familial relationship appears in the database.

Figure 3 Example of a relationship factoid

Home PoMS Database Feature of the Month Help

SEARCH BROWSE RECORD FAMILY TREES

Viewing Factoid Record: Son of Alan Stewart, son of Flaald (Familial relationship)

TYPE OF FACTOID	Relationship
SOURCE	Document 35479 (Kel. Lib., no. 170)
DESCRIPTION	Son of Alan Stewart, son of Flaald (Familial relationship)
FIRM DATE	9 December 1165X 1177
PROBABLE DATE	
DATING NOTES	accession of King William x death of Walter Stewart
RELATIONSHIP	Son

Associated People (2):

ROLE	NAME	NAME (ORIGINAL LANGUAGE)	NAME (TRANSLATION)
Secondary	Walter Stewart, son of Alan (d.1177)		
Primary	Alan Stewart, son of Flaald		

Other specific relationships which we have entered include those between religious houses, when one house is mentioned as a mother or daughter house, or when a person is given in the source as a patron of a particular church. A benefit of this is that one can investigate the piety of individuals during this time, as well as landholding, as the churches which received patronage from an individual were usually on that individual's lands.

'Non-specific' relationships may be more beneficial for end-users as these relate more to the interaction between groups of people and between individuals; again, this is central to the project's research questions. These relationships are not searchable in the same way that other, more tangible, relationships are, but can be seen by examining each source individually. By viewing those persons mentioned in a given source, such as grantors and beneficiaries in a transaction, groups of witnesses in a document, or those involved in legal cases, one can get a much better understanding of social circles—whether royal, noble or local—and how people interacted with each other. One can examine which witnesses or groups consistently appear together, what lands are involved, and—when a place and date is given—where and when the transaction took place. This information could offer useful glimpses into the history of medieval Scottish localities. Often it is in a witness list where we can see the mixing of the 'native' Celtic families and the 'newcomers', the Anglo-Norman families, as in Figure 4.



Figure 4 Witnesses as they appear in a source, highlighting social circles

Associated People (2):		Witnesses (21):
- Witnesses in original, but not copied into cartulary: no		
- Teste in ipso: no		
NAME	NAME (ORIGINAL LANGUAGE)	NAME (TRANSLATION)
Matthew, bishop of Aberdeen (d.1199)	Matheo	Matthew, bishop of Aberdeen
Andrew, bishop of Cuthness (d.1194)	Andreo	Andrew, bishop of Cuthness
Duncan (II), earl of Fife (d.1204)	Duncano	Earl Duncan
Malcolm, earl of Atholl (d.c.1197)	Malcolno	Malcolm, earl of Atholl
Gilbert, earl of Strathern (d.1223)	Gilberto	Earl Gilbert of Strathern
Gille Brigte, earl of Angus (d. >1185)	Gillebrid	Earl Gille Brigte of Angus
Richard Cunyn (d.c.1179)	Ricardo Cunin	Richard Cunin
Ness, son of William, lord of Leuchars (d.1178 <83)	Nesso filio Willelmi	Ness, son of William
William de Mortimer (12C)	Willelmo de Mortimer	William de Mortimer
Walter Olfhank, elder	Waltero Olford	Walter Olford
Walter Barclay, chamberlain (d.c.1183)	Waltero de Berkeley	Walter of Berkeley
Waltheof, son of Gospatric, lord of Dalmeiry and Inverhathing	Waldef filio Gospatric	Waldef son of Gospatric
Alan de Lascelles (fl.1165 <74)	Alano de Laccles	Alan de Lascelles
Ralph de Clare	Radufo de Clare	Radulf de Clare
Robert Berlay (12C)	Roberto de Berlay	Robert of Berkeley
Hugh, bishop of St Andrews (d.1188)	Hugone	Hugh, the clerk
Richard de Prebenda, bishop of Dunblaid (d.1210)	Ricardo	Richard, clerk of the provender

### Possessions

Possessions are another important feature of the database and will allow users to examine landholding in medieval Scotland. Examples of the nearly 10,000 possessions recorded in the database include lands, churches, objects (such as books), unfree persons, revenues and privileges. Lands are categorised by the pre-1975 counties of Scotland and include the Isle of Man. Place-dates of documents, if known, are also entered in both the original and modern language, but are only searchable in the modern form. While the lands, churches and place-dates recorded in the database will perhaps be the most useful for local historians, it should be remembered that this is not a comprehensive collection of places in medieval Scotland. However, the sheer number of places mentioned in relation to people makes the PoMS database an unprecedentedly detailed electronic resource for the study of landholding and local populations.

Any possession involved in a transaction is attached to that document in the database, including obscure references to 'the land that X held' or other unnamed possessions. Transactions concerning marriage and inheritance can also shed light on how various localities might have been linked in this period. In cases of landholding, the person is entered as a landholder (previous, neighbouring or eponymous) in the transaction and also given a separate 'possession factoid'. This will give users an idea of both lay and monastic holdings and the boundaries of other localities by pinpointing these properties and its owner. Two examples are given in Figures 5 and 6.

Figure 5 Possession as it appears in a transaction

Associated People (2):			Witnesses (20):			Pro Anima People (1):			Possessions: Lands (1):		
Possessions: Lands (1):											
TYPE	NAME	ORIGINAL TEXT									
PER	apdaine of Madderty	terram nostram in Maddymyn que terra vocatur Abchan'									

Figure 6 Possession factoid linking John, bishop of Dunkeld to the apdaine of Madderty (PER)

Home		PoMS Database		Feature of the Month		Help	
SEARCH		BROWSE		RECORD		FAMILY TREES	
Viewing Factoid Record: Apdaine of Madderty (PER)							
<b>TYPE OF FACTOID</b>				Possession			
<b>SOURCE</b>				Document 2/6/15 (SEA, i, no. 46)			
<b>DESCRIPTION</b>				Apdaine of Madderty (PER)			
<b>FIRM DATE</b>				1195 X 1203			
<b>PROBABLE DATE</b>							
<b>DATING NOTES</b>				First possible attestation of John, archdeacon of Strathern × de			
Associated People (1): Possessions: Lands (1):							
ROLE	NAME	NAME (ORIGINAL LANGUAGE)					
Primary	John Scott, bishop of Dunkeld (d.1203)						

*Charters and other documents*

It should be stressed that the database is one of persons, not of charters. The project's focus was prosopographical and it has been necessary to limit the amount of information taken from each document. This included perambulations, for example, although when a perambulation clause appears in a source, it has been recorded in the 'transaction factoid'.

Figure 7 Examples of searchable terms of tenure



While this may hinder more investigative research on the localities of medieval Scotland through the PoMS database, the wealth of information on people and society that is available should facilitate other independent studies in this area and allow users a starting point from which to begin their research.

We have also offered end-users a selection of searchable charter elements, including common burdens, legal pertinentents, *sicut* clauses, sealing, warrandice, the use of *dei gratia* in titles, and more. These can be found in the advanced search (browse) options under 'Terms of Tenure' (see Figures 7 and 8).

The PoMS database offers genealogical insights. By entering relationships exactly how they are given in the sources, we hope to gain a clearer picture of familial relationships and, by either proving or disproving lineage, clear up any obscure family lines. This will mean that the database could supersede some information in the Scottish *Fasti*, Watt's *Scottish graduates*, or *Heads of religious houses in Scotland*.<sup>9</sup> Indeed, we have already

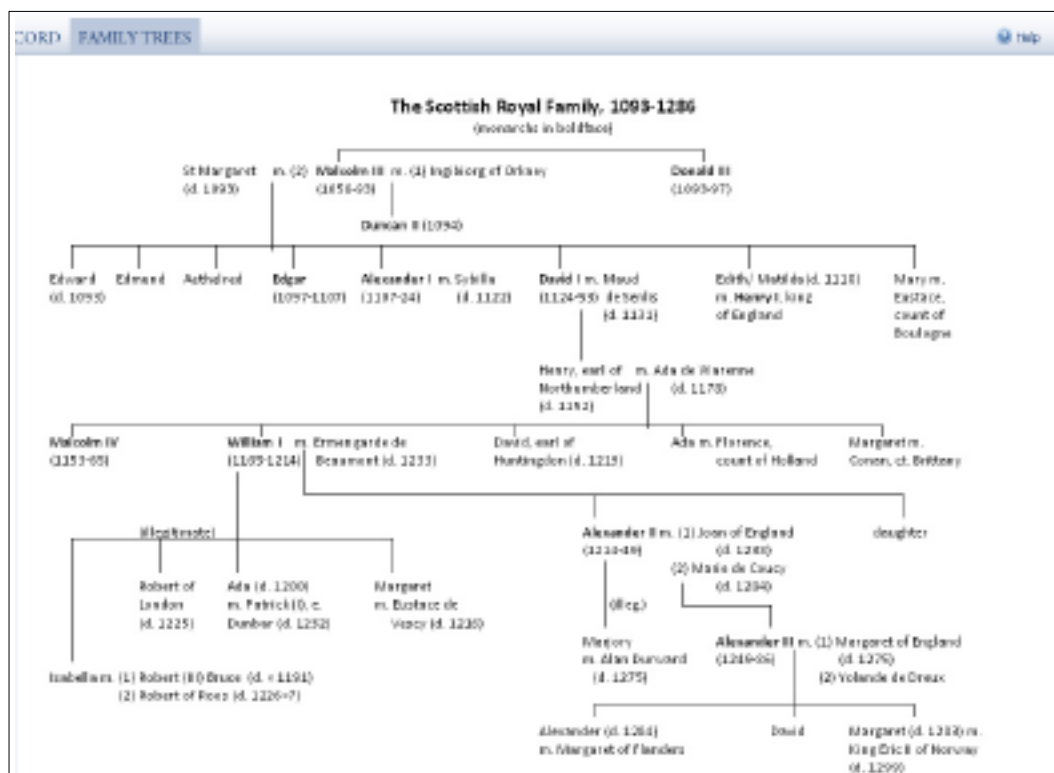
<sup>9</sup> D.E.R. Watt, *Biographical dictionary of Scottish graduates to AD 1410* (Oxford, 1977); D.E.R. Watt and N.F. Shead eds, *The heads of religious houses in Scotland from twelfth to sixteenth centuries* (Edinburgh, 2001).

Figure 8 Charter elements as they appear in a transaction

<b>TYPE OF TRANSACTION</b>	Gift
<b>PRIMARY</b>	yes
<b>DARE?</b>	yes
<b>VERBS NOT SPECIFIED?</b>	no
<b>EXCHANGE</b>	yes
<b>CONVETH?</b>	no
<b>TENENDAS</b>	for homage and services; in feu and heritagis; of me and my heirs
<b>TENENDAS ORIGINAL LANGUAGE</b>	pro humagio et pro ser[uitio] de nobis et he[redibus nostris in] feodo et hereditate
<b>EXEMPTIONS</b>	
<b>EXEMPTIONS ORIGINAL LANGUAGE</b>	
<b>RENDER DATES</b>	
<b>NOMINAL RENDERS</b>	
<b>SICUT CLAUSE</b>	Included; kingdom
<b>LEGAL PERTINENTS</b>	gallows; infangthief; ordeal pit; sake and soke; toll and team
<b>RETURNS / MILITARY</b>	fraction of a knight
<b>RETURNS / RENDERS</b>	
<b>COMMON BURDENS</b>	
<b>PREVIOUS MENTIONS IN CHARTER</b>	no
<b>PREVIOUS MENTION IN CHROGRAPH</b>	no
<b>PERAMBULATION</b>	no
<b>MALEDICTION</b>	no
<b>CORROBORATION / SEALING</b>	no
<b>BOTH ADDRESSORS MENTIONED</b>	no
<b>WARRANTICE</b>	no
<b>SPIRITUAL BENEFITS</b>	

discovered two new priors of Restenneth, which users can read about in the website's 'Feature of the Month' for June 2009. Another benefit for genealogists is an interactive section on family trees, where users will be able to click on particular persons in the family tree and be taken to their biography page, if they appear in the database. A limited number of family trees is available at the moment, and more will be added in the future. An example is given in Figure 9.

Figure 9 Family tree of the Scottish royal family, with clickable links to persons in the PoMS database



The PoMS database should also be viewed as a resource for local history. As mentioned above, by pinpointing all members of society who appear in our sources and by highlighting local landholding and possessions, the database will be a useful tool for researching associations between people and places, whether that be through relationships (such as tenants, lords and neighbours), the witnesses to a document with a given place-date or transactions involving inheritance and marriage. More than 3,000 place-dates of charters and nearly 7,000 lands and churches within them can be found in the database, offering users a vault of information on local society and social relationships in medieval Scotland.

## Acknowledgement

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