



### *CREICH CASTLE*

*Fife, Scotland*

The nearly solid rock mound in an old marsh offered a good place to build a defensive tower. Rock gave a solid foundation and marsh slowed the advance of the enemy. In the 8th and 9th centuries Viking raiders rowed their longships up the river looking for rich farms to attack. The ridge between the rock mound and the Tay afforded a lookout point little noticed from the river. If the Vikings did stop to attack, there was time to gather goods and people to the rock mound in the middle of the marsh.

The Earl MacDuff chose this site for one of his defensive towers. A trustworthy family of his clan was installed as Constable of this new defensive tower south of the River Tay. Called Creich Castle - a castle on a rock in Gaelic language, very similar to old Celtic French language. Queen Gruoch (Lady MacBeth of the old Scoto-Pictish royal line) was contemporary to and cousin to King Malcom Canamore. Malcom killed most of the rivals of Clan MacDuff (Queen Gruoch line). Malcolm and Margaret Althing of England produced several children. Aethelred, oldest son, married the heiress of Clan MacDuff (Queen Gruoch line). He was installed as Earl of Fife and Abbott of Abernethy to reduce tensions between rivals.

Aethelred and his wife (Scoto-Pictish royal line) produced several children. The oldest son was to inherit Earldom of Fife. One of the younger sons was installed as Constable of Creich, probably, as was the custom, by marriage into the

Creich family. This son and his wife lived in Creich Castle as part of the extended royal family. Also, as was the custom, the oldest son inherited property; later sons were installed as knighted clergy. This way the family was able to hold administrative, military, and religious control of their assigned territory for the Crown.

The first Creich by name is recorded as Donald de Creich, a knighted cleric, after the fashion of the new Norman society. Simon de Creich was the religious Canon of Moray. The male line of Creich Castle family failed in 1353. The oldest daughter married Andrew Murdock, contemporary of King James I. Reared in the Norman English court with King James, both went back to Scotland as young men. Andrew Murdock was the grandson of King Robert Bruce, son of Robert, Earl of Fife who died in 1420. Andrew Murdock now became the Duke of Albany, strongest figure in Scotland, second to the king. Married to a wife reared at Creich Castle, related by blood and marriage to most of the landed gentry of Fife, the Duke spent much time in the rich farmland area. Edinburgh was full of strife and intrigue. Creich was peaceful and FAMILY.

King James V had a first son by a distant relative, but the child was born out of wedlock (very common occurrence in the best of families). This son, Lord James Stuart, was not eligible to be king, so was created the Earl of Moray. I believe Moray moved the studious members of family Creich to Edinburgh to be his trusted clerical staff.

Kinsmen of the Liddel and Beaton families were installed as Constable of Creich Castle. Farmers of Creich family stayed on the farm to continue to produce the food required by the favorite royal castle of Falklands. The Laird of Creich, Beaton by name, had an older brother who was the Archbishop of St. Andrews nearby. The third son of Laird Creich, Davie Beaton, went to work for his uncle, the Archbishop of St. Andrews. Hard-working, he married a distant cousin named Margaret, daughter of Lord Ogilvie of Airlie. Lord Ogilvie was and is now the Chief of the ancient Pict clan of Ogilvie and Angus, living at Castle Airls Angus.

Scotland needed a superb ambassador to France and Davie Beaton was appointed. While in France, Beaton was persuaded to take Holy Orders of the French Roman Catholic Church. Now Beaton was eligible to become the Archbishop of St. Andrews and ancient Kingdom of Fife. Davie Beaton did, in fact, follow his uncle to this position. He was married to Lady Margaret Ogilvie for his entire life-time. When asked about being a priest and also married, he replied, "I was married in Scotland. Later became a priest in France. Two countries and two different set of rules. I shall remain both!" Davie Beaton, Archbishop of St. Andrews was now the senior priest of both Roman Catholic and Old Celtic religious orders.. Primate of Scotland.

Margaret and Davie were devoted to each other, and produced many healthy children. It seems that Lady Margaret lived most of her life at Creich Castle within the household of her father-in-law, the Laird of Creich. Those were violent times and disputes were settled by violence to all parties involved. Being reared in Creich Castle, most of the children of Davie and Margaret used the name of Creich. Their grandfather was the Laird of Creich, a royal property!

The children of Davie Beaton and Lady Margaret Ogilvie were reared in Creich Castle with full knowledge of their ancestry. On their father's side were the Earl MacDuff, Robert the Bruce, Earl MacBeth, Queen Guroch, the Malcolm Kings, Queen Margaret Althing of Hungarian royalty, English royalty and Thor Finn the Mighty's sister, Queen Ingeborg, first wife of Malcolm Canamore III. On their mother's side their grandfather was Lord Ogilvie, Earl of Angus, descendant of the Pictish kings of Angus. These children knew they were not ordinary landless peasants! They were children of Creich Castle, a royal property for 600 years!

Mary, Queen of Scots, had four ladies-in-waiting. One was Mary Beaton of Creich. Queen Mary often wrote of the kindness of the Laird of Creich in keeping Castle Falklands with plenty of good food while she lived at Falkland. The town of Creich, Scotland, grew up with Creich parish as a market place for the parish Castle and Creich Church.

By the time John Knox returned to Scotland preaching Calvinism, the Scottish throne and supporting nobility were corrupt. The nobility was using the Church in a way never seen before in Europe. Church was part and parcel of the scheme to keep control of the people and the nation. Christianity was preached, but not practiced. The Archbishop of St. Andrews, Davie Beaton of Creich Castle, religious primate of Scotland, made an enemy of Henry VIII of England, who wanted his daughter on the throne of Scotland. Beaton supported Mary as queen. No agreement could be reached. King Henry sent a professional assassin to murder Beaton. Learning of the plot, Beaton had the assassin tried and convicted of heresy. He watched from his episcopal window as George Wishart burned at the stake. The next year a group of Scots nobles crept into Beaton's bedroom and stabbed him to death. They hanged his naked body by the ankle from the same episcopal window for all to see. Any friends or family of Davie Beaton, Archbishop of St. Andrews, were under death threats. The Laird of Creich and his family fled. John Knox preached for their death, and the castle was occupied by his followers and the property converted to his use! Mary, Queen of Scots, was driven from the nation, Creich Castle was no longer a royal property and the official religion became Presbyterian.

To survive they must change their name and renounce their ancestors or keep their family name and leave home. Surely some chose security and renounced their heritage. The defiant ones kept their name and moved to areas where the

name Creich was not associated with Archbishop Davie Beaton. Thus did the family name of Creich disappear from Castle Creich after 600 years of living there.

Richard Creich (Creech is the English spelling) emigrated to Jamestown, Virginia as a mercenary guard to the English tobacco farmers. This Richard was killed on the outer perimeter of Jamestown during an attack by Indians. His wife and daughter also died, but his two sons were away at school at the time survived to become the ancestors of the Family Creich in the colonies.

After studying numerous books, maps, and histories, I believe this is a reasonable of the life and times and customs of the Family Creich...written September, 1995 after the third trip to Fife, Scotland to study Castle Creich and Family Creich.

David N. Miles  
(year unknown)