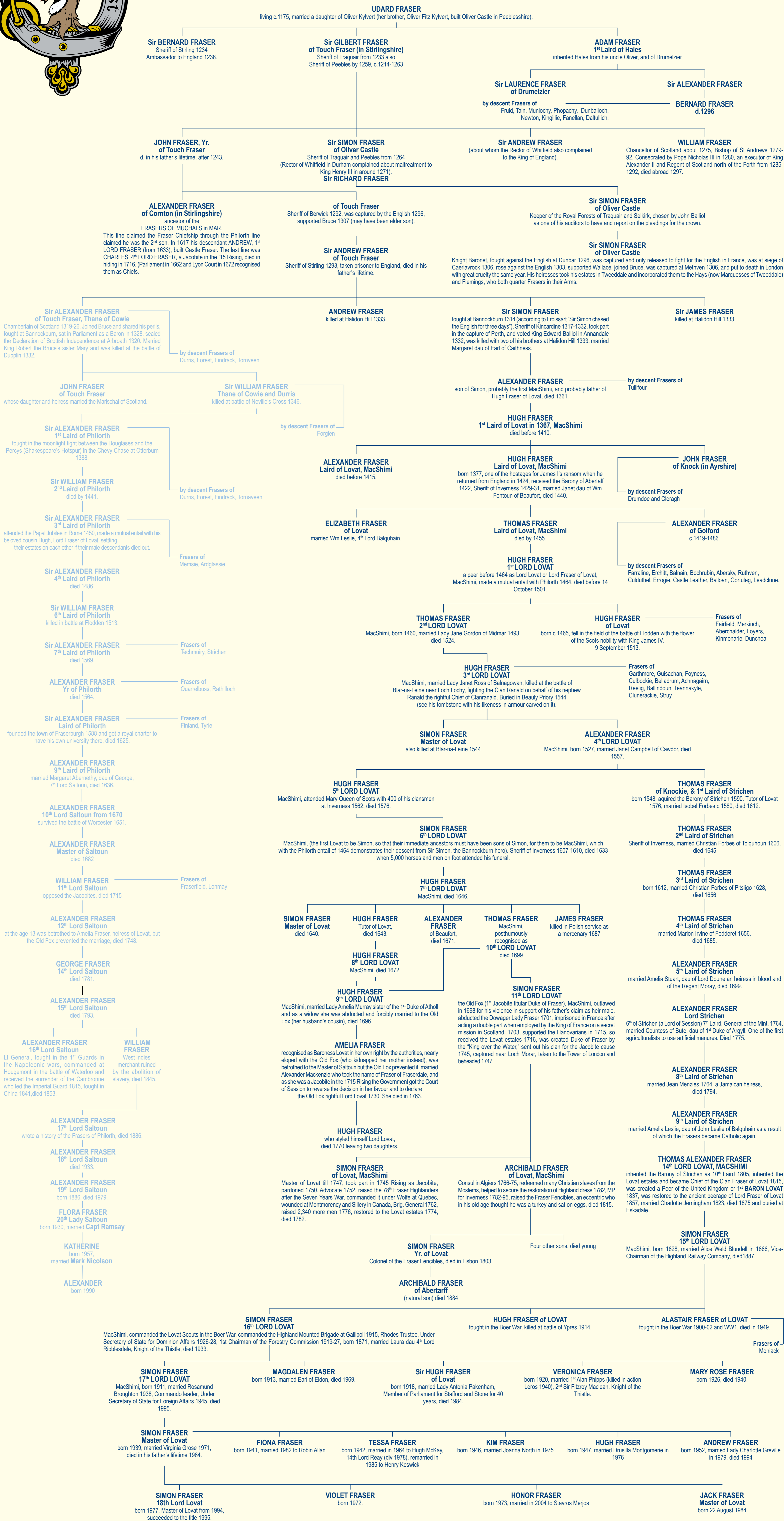


# ~ Clan Fraser in Scottish History ~

## Origins

A SIMON FRASER gifted the church of Keith to the monks of Kelso c.1160. He left a daughter and heiress, EDA. GILBERT FRASER was at King William the Lion's Scottish Court and witnessed a charter in 1166.



## Note

Though the name Fraser - however spelled - is French, it is now over 800 years since the first bearer of it, Simon Fraser, is recorded in Scotland. He and his successors are found in the Borders, but the advance of the Frasers northwards was swift. In the process they contrived to make some remarkable contributions to Scottish history. By the 14<sup>th</sup> century the Northern Frasers formed two distinct groups, in Aberdeen-shire and in Inverness-shire. Of the former group, a forebear of the Fraser Lords Saltoun founded Frasersburgh about 1601: of the latter, Lord Lovat's forebearers had created one of the great Highland Clans at least a century earlier. It was from the Tower and plain of the Beaulieu estuary that the Chief of the Inverness-shire Frasers took the peerage title granted to him about 1460 - the precise date is not known. By then, as since, Gaelic speakers accorded him the honour of the patronymic MacShimi (Son of Simon).

The Lovat Chiefs never made the mistake of acquiring their lands as conquerors. Prudent marriages and diplomacy established the Frasers as proprietors south and west of the Beaulieu Firth, in Stathfarrar, in part of Strathglass, in Strathcarrick, to the east of Loch Ness and even, for a time, in part of Glenelg on the western coast. In all these districts, the numerous younger children and other relaives of MacShimi married with alacrity and content into the families of the original occupants of the land. The happy consequence was that during the 15<sup>th</sup> century there emerged a swarm of warrior-farmers, enjoying somewhat better soil and climate than some of their neighbours: Gaelic in speech, custom and thought, quick to defend their homes, and all proud to consider themselves Frasers and MacShimi's men. The Clan Fraser of Lovat had been born.