



*Clan Rutherfurd / Rutherford*



[Welcome](#)

[Mission Statement](#)  
[History](#)

[Clan Photos](#)

[Rutherford Homes](#)

[Rutherford Genealogy](#)

[Clan Herald](#)

[Membership Info.](#)

[The Cadets](#)

[Edgerston](#)

[Hunthill](#)

[Bowland](#)

[Scottish Borders](#)

[Ireland](#)

[Canada](#)

[Tidewater VA](#)

[New Zealand](#)

[Australia](#)

[Other Links](#)

[Contact Us](#)

## Rutherford/Rutherford History

### Scotland - Roxburghshire

The earliest accounts of the name Rutherford/Rutherford in Scotland come from the 12th century. Robertus dominus de Rodyrforde witnessed a charter by David I to Gerwase de Rydal, in or about 1140. In Scotland the Rutherfords/Rutherford are a large extended family or in the true meaning of the word, "a clan" or group of "near kin" or "children". Our great fortune as a family is that we have such an old and relatively well-documented family history. The Rutherford/Rutherford name has been in written use for over 800 years in Scotland and predates that by two centuries in West Flanders. The Flemish origins of the name must surely account for the great number of Rutherford/Rutherford spelling variations. In his book, "The Rutherfords of Britain, a history and guide" Kenneth Rutherford Davis lists over 300 spellings for our surname. Today Rutherford, Rutherford and Rutherford are the three most common permutations.

Most of the 'origin stories' for the Rutherfords are a quaint form of Scottish fiction called "pseudo-Celtic mythology" i.e. "ancient stories" that have little basis in truth. The most common of these is the story of a man named Ruther who showed a Scottish king the way to ford the River Tweed. Another fable is much like it: King Ruther, Rhydderch Hael, King of Strathclyde, was fleeing a hostile army when he crossed the Tweed at "Ruther's Ford". The story of King Ruther's queen is the most common source of connection between King Ruther and the Rutherford family patron saint, Saint Kentigern. The legend says that King Ruther's queen was once unfaithful to King Ruther and she gave her lover a ring that had been a present to her from the King. While walking by the River Clyde, the King came across a young man sleeping on the riverbank. He immediately recognized his wife's ring on his finger and, tearing it from the gigolo's hand, he threw it into the river. Later that day, he insisted that his wife produce the ring as a sign of fidelity. His queen was frantic and turned to St. Kentigern for help. The two prayed together and, at that very moment, the queen's servants, who were fishing for dinner, caught a large salmon in the Clyde. In its mouth, they found the ring! King Ruther's command was thus satisfied and he was obliged to accept his wife's innocence. This story took place on the present day site of the city of Glasgow and that city's heraldic arms commemorates this story with a statue of St. Kentigern, a golden ring and a salmon.

Another fable, with variations, describes an English army which foolishly abandoned a strong position on the heights above the Tweed to attack a Scottish force on the opposite bank. The English attempted to cross the river and were defeated. The victorious Scots are said to have named the place "Rue the Ford", to commemorate the disaster. Lastly, a possible etymology: "ryther" meaning "oxen or cattle" and "ford" meaning a river crossing in Old English. However, there is no evidence that the Rutherfords were in Britain when Old English was in still in use. All of these stories concerning the supposed origins of the Rutherford/Rutherford name are from an impossibly early period of Scottish history. The name Rutherford is much more likely the Flemish compound word "riddler" or "ruder" a horse mounted knight and "woorde" a ford. Hence, Rudderwoorde, or "a knight's river crossing".

### The House of Erembald - from West Flanders to Scotland

The Rutherfords, like their cousins the Douglases, most likely trace their ancestry back to West Flanders and to the powerful Erembald family. Other families in Britain who share these roots are the Ypres (Douglas), Furnes, Harnes, Lucy, Hacker and Winter families. The political events of the 11th and 12th centuries within Flanders were to change the lives of these families and push them down a migratory path which began in today's Belgium and ended up in Scotland, Ireland, America, Canada, New Zealand and Australia.

The noble families of Flanders were jealous descendants of Charlemagne until the coastal invasions by the Vikings began and military resources in Flanders were stretched dangerously thin. During the ninth and tenth centuries, Europe, and particularly West Flanders, were ravaged by the Vikings. Traditional tactics were insufficient to stop these raiders and a new "non-noble" class of knight was born, the 'ministeriales'. The ministeriales manned cavalry units throughout Flanders, thus solving the problem of fast response to Viking assaults and creating a new social class.

At this time we see the rise of a new class of family, the Karls. The Karls did not belong to the nobility - in fact,



they despised feudalism and were proud self-made freemen. They were the hereditary chiefs of the commercial guilds and free members of the Flemish burghs which were later copied in Scotland. The hamlet of Ruddervoorde, the origin of the modern name of Rutherford/Rutherford, was part of the political and military structure of the beautiful city of Bruges [Brugge]. Cities like Bruges had a mixed population; noblemen and freeman merchants who ran the powerful guilds. David I of Scotland used these free burghs as the model for Jedburgh, Roxburgh and Berwick on the Scottish Borders. The most important social distinction in a burgh was not between nobles and merchants, or between merchants and craftsmen, but between those who held the status of burghers and those who didn't. The Ruddervoorde enjoyed a unique position as freemen, burghers and ministeriales.

Many of the maternal lines of the Erenbalds were noble and here lay the problem in future years. The nobles of Flanders were required to prove their noble descent through both the paternal and maternal lines. At Gent, Courtrai, Saint-Omer, Bergues, Bournbourg and Ypres, the comital and castellan families came from nobles who had held estates and public authority in these areas since the establishment of the Baldwins as Counts of Flanders. At Veurne, however, power was held by the Erenbalds, who were ministeriales from the Veurne region. The Erenbalds of Veurne who were rewarded for helping Robert I in his conquest of Flanders in 1071. After that, the Erenbald's rights as freemen were acknowledged throughout Flanders, their chiefs were received at court on an equal footing with the nobles, they occupied high positions in the church and state and their daughters were married to feudal lords. The most powerful of these Karl families was the House of Erenbald.

Following the death of Robert I things began to change for the worse for the Erenbalds. Charles "the good" became the new count of Flanders just when the Erenbalds had reached a political and economic zenith. After 1091 Bertulf, a member of the Erenbald clan was both the chancellor of the county, and the provost of the wealthy church of St. Donatian at Bruges. Although Charles had been in Flanders for some forty years he was surprised when he was informed that the status of the Erenbalds was an open secret among the other powerful families of Bruges and that none was particularly upset by it until Charles raised the issue. Indeed, after discovering the problem with the Erenbalds, Charles summoned his councilors, many of whom were related to the Erenbalds which meant that there were other non-nobles in the Count's council and Charles knew it. Charles was bent upon reducing the Erenbald's status and the Erenbalds were having none of it.

In 1127 a feud broke out between Provost Bertulf Erenbald and Count Charles. The Count burnt Bertulf's nephew's house to the ground. Borsiard, Bertulf's nephew and others, plotted with the Erenbald clan and assassinated Charles on March 2, 1127 - Ash Wednesday. A week later citizens of Bruges led by Cervaese de Praet besieged the castle, and barons swore to support them in a league. King Louis VI of France granted the barons to Arras, and they elected William Clito as count. Count William granted charters to towns and had Bertulf Erenbald put to death. A siege of Ypres captured William of Ypres, and Borsiard was left to die nailed to a tree. England's king Henry I opposed William and sent money to oppose his cause. Thierry d'Alsace gained the support of the people at Ghent by promising to support the privileges of the Burghers. In March 1128 Count Thierry d'Alsace was elected count by the barons and burghers at Bruges. France's Louis still supported William Clito, and a partisan struggle raged in Flanders until William was killed in the siege of Alster in June 1128. Count Thierry visited the towns and was invested by the kings of France and England with the fiefs and benefices that Charles had held.

Desiderius Haker, Chatlain of Bruges, was head of the house of Erenbalds. His brother Bertulph was Provost of St. Donatian's, hereditary chancellor and chief of the Count's household. Also under suspicion for the assassination of Count Charles, Desiderius Haker and his young son Robert, escaped from the tower fleeing Bruges. It is believed that his nephew Burchard escaped to southern Ireland. Haker and his son crossed the great salt marsh north of the city, reached the castle of his son-in-law Walter Cromlin, Lord of Lissewege where he remained hidden until Thierry d'Alsace became Count of Flanders a year later. He was sent to trial, proved his innocence, was restored to his former rank and became abbot of Dunes, founding a monastery at Lissewege. One of his descendants, Louis of Gruthuise, was created earl of Winchester by Edward IV. Haker founded a branch of Dunes at Lissewege called Ter Doest Abbey which was noted as an early Cistercian Abbey and strongly connected to the Knights Templar. The Hakerets of County Kildare, Ireland, are also known as the de Ridelstorf family of Lincolnshire. Haker means hooks, which is also a type of fish. Haker was a prominent Christian name of this family and along with Lucy [also a fish] Haker and Lucy evolved into surnames in Britain.

On July 29, 1128 Count Thierry d'Alsace and a large army of knights took the Erenbald city of Ypres. The people of Bruges and the knights also plundered Ruddervoorde. Lambrecht of Ruddervoorde, Lambrecht of Wingene, Volkert of Tiel who had been supporters of count William, withdrew back to the castle of Wingendale.



They surrendered and recognized Count Thierry as the new count of Flanders. The Erembald Clan was in total disarray. Those who had participated in the assassination of Count Charles were dead or hunted men. Those Erembalds who were not involved were nonetheless implicated through association.

With the recognition of Thierry d'Alsace as Count of Flanders, the Erembalds of Ruddervoorde came under the protection of a just overlord. In 1128 Lambert van Ruddervoorde I was a witness to count Thierry d'Alsace. In 1154 Lambert van Ruddervoorde II and his brother Eustachius served as witnesses to bishop Gerald of Tournai and count Thierry d'Alsace. By the year 1230, the lordship of Ruddervoorde belonged to Lanekin van Ruddervoorde after the death of his father Knight Hakel who received it from the Dean of St. Donatian church in Bruges. The Lordship of Ruddervoorde lasted into the 14th century but with increasing frequency the young Erembalds of Ruddervoorde began to migrate to Britain. They disappeared from Flanders at the same time the "Rutherford's" began to appear in England, Scotland and Ireland. The English county of Gloucester has a town called Ruddelford listed in the Domesday Book of 1086. The Yorkshire wapentake of Austerhorpe also lists the town of Redeford. Both properties were owned by Roger de Busli who, like the Rutherfords, was from the coastal area of Flanders called Bray. Roger de Busli was the master of Tickhill Castle with which the Rutherfords were long connected.

Fortunately, the Ruddervoordes and other Flemings who came to Britain were among the first to use both surnames and heraldry. The works of Mrs. Beryl Plants have been central to the idea that the Rutherford/Rutherford family, like their near relatives: Douglases, Bruce, Stewart, Lindsay, Hay, Bethune, Lyle, Erskine and Crawford came to Scotland from Flanders and Normandy. The Rutherfords have always followed the Douglases - in Flanders and in Scotland. Therefore, a secondary working theory has been that a detailed study of the Douglas family history in Flanders would certainly shed light on the origins of the Rutherfords.

In West Flanders, the Rutherford familial relations center around these 4 groups - all of whom later came to Britain:

1. Hacket - Ridelstord - Ypres - Douglas - Rutherford
2. Harnes
3. Wavrin - Beaufemetz [Beaumez] - de Fourmes [Furnes/Furness] - Bailleul [Ballio]
4. Bethune [Beaton] - Lille [Lyle] - de Insula

### The Flemish Diaspora in Britain

A genuine "genesis story" for the Clan Rutherford by necessity began with a detailed study of each and every Scottish family that had ever signed a charter, marriage contract, agreement of manrent or any other document between 1140 and 1498. These families included the de Rydel, de Percy, de Morville, de Normannville, de Sturteville, de Vaux, de Neufmarché, de Valonnis, de Lacy, de Lacy, de Insula, de Ghent and, of course, the Douglas family. It has become very clear that all of these Scottish families had Flemish connections. Even families with names like "de Normannville" were actually Flemish immigrants from West Flanders who had been resettled in Normandy and Brittany. The Normans were excellent at conquering but knew nothing about administering the lands which they had conquered. For this they looked to the descendants of Charlemagne, the Frankish nobility of Flanders. Like the Scots-Irish on the American frontier, the Flemings were perfectly suited for the task at hand. They were very experienced at laying sieges, building castles, running armadas and managing large coordinated human efforts ..... like invasions. So William the Conqueror was wise in his use of Flemish archers and mounted knights but even wiser in later placing these families in "wild areas" like Ireland and along the Welsh and Scottish Marches.

### David I and the Flemings

Under the Scottish kings David I (1124-53) and Malcolm IV (1153-65) a program was devised with the Flemish counts, Thierry (1128-63) and his son Philip d'Alsace (1163-91) to settle Flemish immigrants in Scotland in order to build up urban cloth centers in Scotland, as existed in Flanders. Malcolm's daughter Marie married Eustache III, Count of Boulogne brother of Godfroi de Bouillon, conqueror of Jerusalem, creating a dynastic link between the court of Scotland and that of Jerusalem. Malcolm's successor, his brother William I (1165-1214), known as "the Lion", continued the Flemish settlement policy, as well as utilizing Flemish aid in other matters. In 1173, when William invaded northern England, he was reinforced by a Flemish contingent sent by Philip d'Alsace, Count of Flanders. Count Thierry and his son Philip d'Alsace were the overlords of the Ruddervoorde family in Flanders.



Although some Normans ventured into Scotland at the time of Malcolm III and the Battle of Alnwick, there was no effective penetration until the reign of King David I (1124-53). But even then this controlled immigration was engineered for specific reasons when David invited the sons of Norman and Flemish aristocracy to his realm. The resultant settlement was far more Flemish than Norman, even though some of the noble families of Flanders (like those of de Brus and de Ballen) had been granted lands in Normandy before the conquest of England. King David (the Saint) recognized that, during the recent years of turmoil, Scotland had fallen behind the European countries in many ways; her systems of government, trade, manufacture and urban development were all outmoded, and the economy was suffering. Flanders, on the other hand, was at the forefront of a significant commercial urbanization, which provided substantial rental and mercantile income. The Flemings were also advanced in agricultural expertise, and had a greatly superior weaving industry. All in all, David deemed their knowledge and updated techniques necessary to aid Scotland's survival on the international stage. The Normans too had grown in matters of government and land management. King David, therefore, sought their aid in all manner of administrative affairs: sheriffdoms were created, new communication networks were developed, and the powers of the judiciary were considerably strengthened. Also, the prerogatives of the Crown were redefined so as to be more socially effective and financially viable. Generally, the incoming nobles of Flanders and Normandy married into Celtic noble families, and conversely King David married Maud de Lens of the Flemish House of Boulogne.

### The Flemish Laws of Nobilitas

Flemish law forbade noble men and women to marry outside their own class. This law followed the Flemish nobility wherever they were. Its effects were especially apparent in Scotland where the Flemish and Norman aristocracy were closely related. The very fact that Ruthberford knights were marrying the daughters of Flemish noblemen is proof that they were both Flemish and noble themselves. Initially knights like the Ruthberfords were not considered members of the nobility. They were called 'miles' or 'caballarius'. Knights were seen as mere soldiers. In Scotland, the laws of nobilitas continued, but with the lessons of the Flemish wars and the Erenbalds weighed and considered. Knights like the Ruthberfords, were given small Scottish estates in return for guarding castles, keeping the peace and accompanying their Home and Douglas lords on campaign.

The hamlet of Ruthberford enters into the Scottish record during the reign of William the Lion shortly after 1165. Since the time of James Ruthberford II the Ruthberford chieftains have always been from Edgerston which is to the south of Ruthberford on the Jed River flowing through the town of Jedburgh. The other close relatives of the Ruthberfords are all of Flemish origin. Like the Homes, Hopningles, Lauders and Nisbets, the Ruthberfords were ancestral escutifers [squires] of the Douglas chiefs. Because of the similarity between the Ruthberford and Balliol arms it is thought that they too may have family connections. The Balliol family also came to England with William the Conqueror and were also from Flanders. They fought under the flag of the Counts of Boulogne [Boulonnais]. Their heraldic charge is the reversed tinctures of the de Wavrin family and identical to the Ruthberfords. Baldwin of Ballen, castellan of Ypres was married to Agnes de Wavrin in the 1130s.

### Ruthberford of that ilk

The town name of Ruthberford or Ruderforde is no doubt of great antiquity. The nearby moor of Ruthberford has the vestiges of a Roman encampment, with a Roman causeway. In its glory days Ruthberford had a hospital dedicated to Saint Mary Magdalene. Hospitals in those days were as much an inn as a hospital. Therefore, the mission of Saint Mary Magdalene's Hospital was to take in travelers and care for the poor and sick of the area. In those days, there was no church at Ruthberford, only a chapel within the hospital. The chapel churchyard also had a cemetery. In 1296 the master of the hospital swore fealty to Edward I "Longshanks" of England along with three other Ruthberfords: Nicholas, Aynce and Margaret. These were the days of Sir William Wallace's fight for Scottish independence from the English and this "fealty" was achieved at the point of a sword. Later when Scotland had won its freedom, King Robert the Bruce granted the newly created hospital to the protection of the Abbey of Jedburgh. As of yet, no archaeological work has been done on the former site of the town or its hospital. In about 1770 the cemetery was ploughed under. The gravestones were broken up and thrown into field drains by a farmer. In 1296 there was no parish attached to Ruthberford, however, the present parish of Maxton comprises the ancient parishes of Maccuston/Mackiston and Ruthberford. After its destruction by the English, Ruthberford was absorbed into Maxton parish, a small town to the west.

During the reigns of Saint/Queen Margaret and Saint/King David [mother and son] abbeys were created at Kelso, Melrose, Dryburgh and Jedburgh. These were strategically placed defenses against English invasions. This defensive line across the Cheviot Hills also included the smaller parishes, such as, Ruthberford, Roxburgh,



Makerston and Maxton. The Cheviot Hills are a region of heathered moorlands and smoothly rounded hills divided by deep glens. The Tweed River itself has always been a barrier against the English and the river made Rutherford very important militarily. If Jedburgh Castle fell, the next line of defense was Rutherford on the Tweed and nearby Roxburgh Castle.

### The Royal Burgh of Jedburgh

Jedburgh has always been the political, religious and military center of "the lands of Rutherford". Jedburgh was made a royal burgh in the reign of Saint King David I and received a charter from Robert the Bruce. Central to the town of Jedburgh are the old red sandstone ruins of the Augustinian Abbey of Saint Mary, standing on the high left bank of the Jed River. Lands, churches, houses, and valuable fisheries, on both sides of the border, were bestowed on the abbey by David I, Malcolm IV, William the Lion, and other royal and noble benefactors. Alexander III chose to be married in the abbey church to Yolande de Dreux in 1285. The town also has been called Jedward, Jedworth, Jethart and Jeddart. Scotland's style of hanging them first and trying them afterwards is known as "Jedart Justice," a term which originated when Sir George Home/Hume summarily strung up a gang of reivers during the reign of James VI.

For several centuries there was always some sort of fighting in the Cheviot Hills. As a result, fortified farmsteads known as pele castles sprang up throughout the area. Near to Rutherford estates in Roxburghshire are the famous castles/poles of Roxburgh, Smalholm Tower, Ferniehirst and Cessford. There were significant Rutherford towers at Hundalee, Huntmill, Edgerston and Rutherford itself.

Foreign politics also created friction on the Scottish border. England and France were constantly at war and Scotland was France's ally. In this way, Scotland was forever caught in the middle. For centuries the English and Scots took turns invading each other. To complicate things even more, the French were Catholic and the English were Protestant with the Scots historically torn between the two. Many Rutherfords were among the Scottish soldiers who went to France to fight the English. As a result, the lands of Rutherford and the surrounding areas became a lightning rod for English cruelty.

By 1297, English troops led by Sir Richard Hastings had so plundered and wrecked the abbey at Jedburgh that, in 1300, it was declared uninhabitable and the canons fled to Thornton-on-Humber. They hadn't even started rebuilding the abbey when it was ravaged again in 1410, in 1416 and in 1464. Reconstruction began in 1478 and the tower was partly rebuilt by 1508. But then, English troops led by the Earl of Surrey torched the place in 1523, another English force led by Lord Ivers burned it down again in 1544 and the Earl of Hertford led more English troops to destroy the abbey for a third time not too long afterwards.

In a later period, the English warden Sir Ralph Eure, invaded Scotland southwest of Rutherford eventually losing a great battle at Ancrum Moor. The battle of Ancrum Moor was fought between the parishes of Maxton and Ancrum in 1543 at Lillard's Edge. This place is named for a young woman of the name of Lillard who fought with great bravery along with the Scots, and who lies buried in the field of battle. In this effort, the English commander, Sir Eure thought he had gained the cooperation of the Rutherford clan. The Rutherfords had agreed to fight with the English on the English side of the border in order to redress complaints against the Kerrs. In fact on September 30, 1543 the Earl of Suffolk thought it unwise to mount a winter campaign north of the border with 10,000 English troops because of the threat of the Rutherfords at Huntmill, Hundalee and Edgerston. Sir Eure proceeded anyway making the fatal mistake of burning out dozens of border towns and then attempting to enter Rutherford country near Jedburgh. Jedburgh itself was burned to the ground and Adam, George, and Gawen Rutherford were taken prisoner.

### Jedburgh Abbey - The Rutherford Family Church

On 13th July 1464 the abbot of Jedburgh granted a right of burial in the abbey to Robert Rutherford of Chatto and Huntmill and his wife Margaret Glendonwyn. The whole of the choir was afterwards divided among the Rutherfords as their resting-place, and allotments assigned for those of Edgerston, Huntmill, Hundalee, Fernington, Bankend, the Hall, the Towthead, to the Lorimer and to the Baillie and his son. The reason given for the ancestors of Robert Rutherford of Fairnilee not being buried in the choir, but in the Bell House Brae (north-west part of the churchyard), is that when the English made one of their raids upon Jedburgh they carried off the largest bell belonging to the abbey, which hung in the tower on the slope above referred to, and that Richard Rutherford, having pursued them with a handful of men, made a desperate effort to recover it, but was overpowered and mortally wounded, and requested to be buried in the Bell House. Robert Rutherford of Fairnilee, who was a writer in Edinburgh, and Deputy Receiver General of Supply of Scotland, was the last of his



family who was buried in the Bell House, where his son erected a monument for him, with the coat of arms of the family. Tradition says that the bell was carried off to Hexham. The Bell House has long since been removed, but the oldest family of the Jedburgh Rutherfords still bury on the site.

The last man of note who was buried in the choir was John Rutherford of Edgerston, who did much for the good of his native county, and in respect for his memory a beautiful Gothic monument was erected by public subscription. The inscription upon it gives the true character of this highly-esteemed country gentleman, and is as follows:

"To the memory of John Rutherford, Esq. of Edgerston, Vice-Lieutenant-Colonel of the Local Militia, and for two successive parliaments knight of the shire for the county of Roxburgh. A gentleman distinguished alike by eminent talents' and unshaken integrity, who during a long and useful life devoted his exertions to the maintenance of order in the country at large, and to the promotion of every local improvement in his native district. Zealous in the performance of his public duties, just and correct in every private relation; a loyal subject, a considerate landlord, he left an example of public spirit and private worth, and of the true dignity of an independent Scottish gentleman. Died 6th May 1834, aged 86." John Rutherford was married to Mary Ann Leslie, daughter of General the Honorable Alexander Leslie, son of the Earl of Leven. General Leslie and his wife, the Honorable Rebecca Leslie, are also interred here, on the south side of the choir.

### The Rough Wooing

From the times of Lord Thomas Rutherford of Edgerston, third son and eventual heir of Lord James Rutherford II who lived from about 1460 to 1517, the Rutherfords had been allies and members of the Clan Home. Lord Thomas Rutherford served as the bailie for Sir Patrick Home/Flume. Lord Thomas' son and heir was Lord Robert Rutherford of Edgerston who lived from about 1490 to sometime before October of 1544. Lord Robert was the leader of the dominant Rutherford line at the time of the Hertford invasion. He's honored among the Rutherfords for defending Edgerston from Walter Ker of Cessford. For his efforts, he was declared an outlaw.

In 1544 the English were pressing their campaign into Scotland when the Rutherfords joined forces with their former rivals, the Kerrs, and defeated the English at Ancrum Moor. Ancrum Moor is a stone's throw from both Rutherford and Jedburgh. Sir Ralph Eure, the English warden was killed, as was John Rutherford of Edgerston. Now the English thought they had been betrayed by the Rutherfords, but to the contrary, the Rutherfords had not agreed to fight for the English in Scotland. They had agreed to fight for them in England and only against their enemy the Kerrs. Their service was in return for the safety of the Rutherford family and the Rutherfords had kept their end of the bargain.

During the last months of his life, Lord Robert Rutherford saw the ancestral village of Rutherford "spoiled" by Henry VIII's thugs in July of 1544. Two months later, on September 9th, 1544 the town was 'destroyed'. The rest of the village was burnt, razed and cast down between September 9th and September 13th, 1544. On September 16th the Rutherford estate at Hundalee was "razed and burnt".

Two days later, after the burning of four noble Rutherford estates, the Rutherford Lords of Hunthill and Hundalee rode out to meet and remind the English army of its agreement with them. The English reminded them that liars for obeying the Scottish governor's command to attack at Ancrum Moor. Lord Robert reminded them that they were in Scotland now and the terms of their covenant with the English had been strictly kept. Hertford then agreed to spare the already burned Rutherford estates. Lord Robert had hoped to "ride both horses" and had failed. The English responded by sending another even larger force of foreign mercenaries the following year, cutting deep into Scotland and sacking Edinburgh itself.

### The Common Riding

Nowadays, these times are not forgotten on the Borders and many towns celebrate this turbulent past by holding a Common Riding every year. Varying in style and content from one community to the next, they are all basically commemorations of the ancient need to ride the boundaries of their communities for security purposes. In Jedburgh, the "riding clans" such as the Rutherfords and Kerrs ride out on horseback with banners flying. Toasts are drunk, ancient local customs are rehearsed, and everybody has a good time! Every July in Jedburgh, they have a rideout on "Festival Friday". Participants go riding to Ferniehirst Castle, the ancestral home of the Kerr family and then on to Jedburgh Castle. There they present the new 'Callant' to the Kerr family and ride back to town in great ceremonial style. Two Rutherfords have served as Callants, Bobby Rutherford in 1950 and his son David Rutherford in 1983. Bobby Rutherford has also served as Reidswire Speaker in 1999.



### The Battle of Reidswire

The Rutherfurds, including the Lairds of Edgerston, Hundalee, and Hunhill, were present at the battle of the Reidswire in 1575. The battle of Reidswire is considered the last actual battle fought between England and Scotland. Richard Rutherford of Lartcheuch, son of the "Cock of Hunhill", at that time provost of Jedburgh, led on the burghers, who came upon the scene while the skirmish was going on, and raising their slogan, "A Jedworth! A Jedworth!" turned the tide of battle in favor of their countrymen. The Black Laird of Edgerston was also a principal player in this battle. An old ballad in reference to this says:

"Bauld Rutherford he was fu' stout,  
Wi' his nine sons him round about,  
He led the town of Jedward out;  
All bravely fought that day."

Another surviving tradition from that time is called "The Hand Ba' Game". It is celebrated on Candlemas [February 2nd] and comes from the troubles of 1549 when a few Scots played a post-battle football game with the severed heads of some Englishmen. Candlemas is a day of celebration in the town, culminating in a football game between the 'tippies' and the 'doonies'. Nowadays, a leather ball replaces the Englishman's head. The boundaries of the game stretch from Castlehill, which is up on high ground, to Townfoot, down at the bottom. In this way, the town of Jedburgh is divided into two teams; the 'tippies' and the 'doonies'. English volunteers are always welcome!

### The Reiving Times

The Rutherfurds were among the most notable of the Riding Clans who dominated the Borders from the 14th to 16th centuries. The Rutherfurds, like other clans, took advantage of the struggle between the two Kingdoms of Scotland and England and lived in a state of semi-lawlessness. The Rutherfurds were a rugged, tough clan who enforced their own code of conduct and were among those known as 'Reivers'.

The Rutherfurds quickly came to realize that due to the sudden and brutal nature of the times, that the Scottish government could provide neither justice nor protection against the English and that their only strength and safety lay with the clan. The Rutherfurds joined in the grim business of 'reiving' from neighboring families and those across the border. Raids were made, not in the name of Scotland, but in the name of the family. The Rutherfurds were superb horsemen and well drilled in repelling light attacks. When large-scale assaults took place, usually from England, the Rutherfurds harried the invaders and fought alongside the Homes and Douglases. The Rutherfurds of Jedburgh were also famous 'horimers' or saddle makers, an all important trade for reiving clans.

Scotland used the Riding Clans as a standing army for a first line of defense against English invaders. In an attempt to govern the border region more effectively, the English and Scottish governments reached an agreement in 1249 known as the 'Laws of the Marches'. By it's terms, both sides of the border were divided into three areas, East, West and Middle Marches - each to be administered both judicially and militarily by a March Warden, the first being appointed in 1297. It was the Warden's duty to see that peace was maintained, to administer justice and to deal with 'bills' or complaints. The Rutherfurds frequently served as the wardens of the Middle March or as the warden's baillie. The Scottish authorities were inclined to appoint their wardens from the gentry who lived locally and were often the 'headmen' of the most powerful riding families.

In 1603 James VI of Scotland became James I of England and he immediately set about unifying the two countries. James was determined to have a United Kingdom and one priority was to pacify the Border country and restore law and order. He wasted no time and in April of that year he issued a proclamation in Newcastle whereby the Marches and the posts of Wardens were abolished. The term 'the Borders' was forbidden and the old frontier ceased to exist. James affirmed that the borders were now "the heart of the country" and that "no supply should be given to all rebels and disorderly persons, their wives or their bairnes (children) and that they be prosecuted with fire and sword". Under the rule of James' the domination of the Reivers was finally swept away. Severe measures were now pursued to enforce the law and there was, after centuries of disorder a will to see that the law was enforced. Wanted men were hunted down and executed. They were now subject to 'Jeddart Justice' which was a summary execution without trial. All Borderers were forbidden to carry weapons and they could only own horses of a value up to 50 shillings. Deprived of their basic reiving equipment, all unlawful activities ceased. Reiving families were dispossessed of their lands. Their homes were destroyed and the people scattered or were deported.



## Leaving Scotland

Migration accelerated for several reasons during this period, principally economic and religious. The violent period of the two Civil Wars and the Cromwell era sent many Rutherfords abroad, first to the continent to fight for religious causes and eventually to Ireland and the Commonwealth at large. Immigration to Ireland began in the early 1600s. The Ulster Plantation brought thousands of Scottish Presbyterians to Ulster. When Charles I sought to impose his preferred style of worship and doctrines upon the Church of Scotland, a protest movement arose which culminated in the signing of a National Covenant in 1638. The Solemn League and Covenant was a pledge to maintain a reformed church throughout the British Isles and was agreed to by the governments of England, Scotland and Ireland in 1643. The new settlers maintained links with their relatives and co-religionists in Scotland. In fact, when William of Orange came to Ireland in 1690 many of his troops were Scots who had been serving in the Dutch Scots-Brigade loyal to the House of Orange.

Among the leading Scottish Covenanters of the day was Rev. Dr. Samuel Rutherford, a member of the Huntly cadet of the Clan Rutherford. He was born near Nisbet-Crailing in Roxburghshire and started his education in the family church at Jedburgh Abbey. He played a prominent role in the Westminster Assembly, which brought forth the "Westminster Confession of Faith" and its catechisms. He also wrote a book called "Lex Rex" ("The Law Is King"), whose principles greatly influenced the English philosopher John Locke. Followers of Rutherford and Locke include such notable figures in the United States as Rev. John Witherspoon, Thomas Jefferson, Benjamin Franklin, and James Madison. The principles of Rutherford and Locke, such as having a system of checks and balances between three different branches of government, formed the foundation of American democracy. It was General George Washington, who said: "If defeated everywhere else, I will make my stand for liberty among the Scots-Irish in my native Virginia".

The fundamental causes for the Scots migration from Ireland were economic. Repressive trade laws, rack-renting landlordism, famine, and the decline of the linen industry were major factors in stimulating the overseas movement of the Scots-Irish or Ulster Scots. The loss of the United States was a great blow to the British Empire and changed the migratory paths of Rutherfords who were yet to leave Britain from 1776 onward. In the 18th and 19th centuries Canada, New Zealand and Australia became the Rutherford destinations rather than the USA. "The sun never set on the British Empire" and even far away Egypt, South Africa and India saw Rutherford military families, thus spreading the surname across the globe into the 20th and 21st centuries.

### Sources:

- Kenneth Rutherford Davis  
"The Rutherfords in Britain: a history and guide"  
Alan Sutton Publishing  
Gloucester, England 1987
- Gary Rutherford Harding  
"The Rutherfords of Roxburghshire" - 6th edition  
Alenao Press 2002  
Seattle, Washington
- Paul Vandewalle  
"Van Rudderwoorde naar Rutherford"  
Rudderwoorde, Belgium: Heemkundige Kring, 2003
- Paul Vandewalle  
"Gerard de Ridefort"  
Rudderwoorde, Belgium: Heemkundige Kring, 1998
- Alexander Jeffrey  
"An historical and descriptive account of Roxburghshire"  
published in Edinburgh by Fraser & Co. in 1836
- Thomas H. Cockburn-Hood  
"The Rutherfords of that Ilk and their Cadets"  
published in Edinburgh 1884



Alexander Jeffrey  
"The history and antiquities in Roxburghshire and adjacent districts"  
published between 1855 and 1864 by T.C. Jack

John Marius Watson  
"The Imperial Gazetteer of Scotland"  
published in 1868

James Watson  
"Jedburgh Abbey and the Abbeys of Teviotdale"  
Edinburgh: David Douglas 1894

George MacDonald Fraser  
"Steel Bonnets : The Story of the Anglo-Scottish Border Reivers"  
Trafalgar Square 1986

Charles A. Hanna  
"The Scotch-Irish: The Scot in North Britain, North Ireland, and North America"  
Vol.1 New York, NY  
G. P. Putnam, 1902.

Robert W. Ramsey  
"The 'Scotch-Irish' Migration  
"Carolina Cradle, Settlement of the Northwest Carolina Frontier, 1747-1762"  
Chapter XII, 1964

Copyright © 2015-2016 by [Software Auditing](#). All Rights Reserved