

Military History of Dael Riata

The history of [Dael Riata](#) is defined by a culture of raiding and internecine warfare. While much of the violence occurs via bloodfeuds governed by specific rules of engagement, the realm has seen several major wars and civil conflicts over the last three centuries.

~528-547 Wars of Independence and Liberation

Following the death of Ruaridh IX in 528, the Ruary dynasty began to fail, plunging the land into nineteen years of war.

Belligerents: The Ranald coalition (supported by House [Sioltach](#) and [Malcolm Murchadh](#)) against the fragmented remains of the previous dynasty and [Bernician](#) interventionists.

Notable Events:

- **Bernician Invasion:** King Edmund I of Bernicia invaded to claim the Daelian throne. The conflict only ended when the Daels united against the foreign threat.
- **Rise of Ranald:** Fearchar and Alasdair Ranald successfully won the crown in 547, rewarding their allies with the first Earldoms (e.g., House [Sioltach](#) as Earls of Duffjord and [Malcolm Murchadh](#) as Earl of Uisdean).

665-672 The Bernician Invasion

This war was sparked by Bernician attempts to avenge King Harold V, who had been killed by Daelian forces.

Belligerents: Dael Riata (under King Alasdair II) vs. Bernicia (under King Edmund II).

Notable Engagements:

- **Battle of Dalry (666):** A massive engagement where Earsaid Murchadh (3rd Earl of Uisdean) was killed.
- **The Heroism of Iain Murchadh:** The 4th Earl of Uisdean stopped his contingent from being wiped out and fought through the Life Guard to engage King Harold V in a duel, killing the Bernician monarch and effectively ending the battle.

Outcome: The war continued for several years until Edmund II was persuaded by his nobles to seek peace.

690-699 The Nine Years' War

A foreign conflict where Daelian forces fought internationally.

Belligerents: Dael Riata volunteers supporting the Kingdom of Salicia.

Outcome: The war was fought primarily overseas, with Daelian veterans gaining significant combat experience.

710 Black Diarmid's Rebellion

A domestic uprising led by a bastard son of Alasdair III seeking to assert a claim.

Belligerents: Black Diarmid and his followers against the Dael Riata Crown.

Notable Engagement: Battle of Grisholm, where the rebellion was ultimately contested/defeated. [Duke Simon of Goddodin](#) (a prominent noble from the neighbouring [kingdom of Bernicia](#)) fought in this battle as a young squire. He reportedly distinguished himself well during the engagement and was knighted on the field.

739 The Invasion of Bernicia

An ill-fated offensive campaign launched to press a claim on the Bernician throne.

Belligerents: Dael Riata (under King Alasdair IV) vs. Bernician nobility.

Notable Events:

- The Ambush of 739: While attempting to march south, the Daelian army was ambushed by Bernician nobles.
- Noble Losses: King Alasdair IV was killed in the fighting, alongside many great nobles, including Iain Murchadh (4th Earl of Uisdean), who fell while attempting to repeat his earlier feat of killing a Bernician king.

754-755 The Queen's War / The Civil War

[The Queen's War](#) was a brief but bloody civil war triggered by the deposition of [Queen Caoimhe](#).

Belligerents: The Regency Council (King's Side): [Alpin](#), [Murchadh](#), and [Aonghus](#). The Loyalists (Queen's Side): [Sioltach](#), [Suibhne](#), [Ahearn](#), and [Gilrinald](#), with military backing from King Edmund IV of Bernicia.

Notable Engagement: Battle of Drumfada Ridge (754).

The Duke of Glasholm (Loyalist) routed the Murchadh infantry but was killed shortly after. The Aonghus cavalry (Regency) mounted a direct attack on the Queen's command post, causing her to flee the field.

Outcome: The [Suibhne](#) house was effectively decapitated, losing three generations of leadership. The war ended with the Queen returning to Bernicia and the installation of the infant Alasdair V as King under a regency.

Recent Hostilities (774)

While not a formal war, a significant violent incident occurred at [Caer Suibhne](#) that has sparked a new feud.

Participants: King Alasdair V and his Steward ([Iain Alpin](#)) vs. the Murchadh brothers.

Notable Event: During a dinner under the rules of hospitality, the 5th Earl of Uisdean and his brother Fearchar were killed by the King's Steward. The King claimed they attempted to assassinate him, while the Murchadh bannermen view the act as premeditated murder.

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