



THE BLAIR ESTATE

HERITAGE



The fascinating family history reaches back into the end of the 11th and start of the 12th century. After William the Conqueror had captured England in 1066 he marched north establishing his throne as he went. After a period of resistance the Scots gave in and King Malcolm III paid homage to William in 1072 at Abernethy, Perthshire. Many Norman warriors remained in Scotland at this time to protect the peace. It is the supposition that it is the grandson of one of these Norman warriors who first established the lands of Blair around the end of the 12th century under the reign on Richard I (Coeur de Lion). For it was upon a man named Jean FranÁois whom Richard I (1165-1214) conferred the Barony of Blare.

Jean's progeny adopted the surname Blair, as was tradition when one inherited a Barony, and it was Jean's eldest son William de Blare who married King John I of England's daughter. The knowledge of these facts are traceable due to various signatures appearing on royal charters around this time containing the surname de Blare. There then follows a unique succession of direct inheritance for 23 generations up until 1732, where the bloodline ended due to the birth of only one daughter Magdalene. On her marriage her husband, William Scott, adopted the Blair name and there were a further 5 successive generations through to Cecily Blair, the last Blair of Blair, who died unmarried in 1978. The estate passed through the female line to Cecily Blair's cousin Colonel Michael Borwick of the Royal Scots Greys and now to his nephew Luke Borwick and his family.



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Blair reflects the interesting family heritage and the benefits of many generations loving involvement with the castle and the estate. The first Norman Peel tower, circa 1105, built by Jean Francois and his son William was embellished by successive generations adding a second tower c 1230. These early Norman Towers have been incorporated into later additions which extended the original tower house.

In 17th Century Sir William Blair, who married Margaret, daughter of the 2nd Duke of Hamilton, built the elegant 1668 South Wing; notable for its beautiful plaster work in the Drawing Room.

The East Wing was added in the mid 1700s where originally there was a castle yard with a high wall. In the early period the castle was moated but the moat was filled in after a young laird nearly drowned. Over the next two centuries the family added extensively to Blair. The impressive Stables built in the early 1800s incorporated the stone and castellations from the early walled enclosure off the 1668 kitchens on the West side of the house. A walk round the Estate is a journey through Scottish history.

