

## A GENEALOGY OF BLAIR OF BALTHAYOCK AND THEIR CADETS

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## A Genealogy of Blair of Balthayock and their Cadets.

By Jack Blair

### Blair of Balthayock

**Arms:** *Argent, a chevron sable, between three roundles gules.*

The lands of Balthayock lie six kilometres due east of Perth. These were long associated with the ancient family of Blair. The name Blair appears about the 12<sup>th</sup> century both in the Southwest of Scotland and in East Scotland. Whether there was any link between the Blairs of Blair in Ayrshire and those to the north east is not established and it may be that quite separate families adopted the name from like named places but in remote locations.

The place name Blair is well distributed and a cluster of them is found around Blairgowrie in Perthshire and another cluster near the Blair of Crambeth in the Dowhill / Lochore locality of Fife. Nothing in this research has established any link between the early Tayside family and the Ayr family who took their name from Blair in that shire.

This genealogy looks only to the Perthshire/ Fife/Angus group.

The family archives of Balthayock are dispersed and regrettably those retained there were lost in a fire in 1998. Sir Robert Douglas had access to the family archive and he fortunately recorded a brief genealogical history indicating where he had drawn from these charters.<sup>1</sup>

The reader will find that within the following text, notice is paid to the charters where a Blair has been involved, even as a witness. One reason for this is that the ranking order can be significant as to how the witness stood among his peers. More importantly, in charters the witness frequently may be related to one of the parties.

### *Stephen de Blair (1150c - 1210c)*

The earliest association of the surname Blair around Tayside is discovered in the records of the Cistercian Abbey of Coupar Angus. Interestingly later persons of the name Blair were to hold various offices of Coupar Abbey such as Abbot, Chamberlain and bailie up to the time of the Reformation in 1560.

During the reign of King William (1165 - 1214) and sometime before 1195 Stephen de Blair, son of Vallenus, granted to the monks of Coupar a charter of the lands of Lethcassy to which William added a royal charter of Confirmation.<sup>2</sup> The gift was made for the salvation of the souls of the Kings David, Malcolm and William and for Stephen's father, mother, sisters and all his kinsfolk.

Witnesses to this charter of the late 12<sup>th</sup> century included William Hay, John Hasting, Philip Melgum, Hugh Kaladon, Malcolm Kettins, Richard Clarell, Robert Barclay, Adam son of Paulinus, Walter Burnett, William Huuioth, Randolph Russ and others. The associations here are informative for the principal witness was William Hay of Errol another benefactor of Coupar Abbey. The senior Blair family was to hold Balthayock near Errol for many centuries. Malcolm of Kettins was clearly a local man, the lands of Kettins being only one mile south east of the abbey. The gift itself, though brief, indicates much on analysis. The lands of Lethcassy or Ledcassy were in the parish of Blairgowrie and were later mentioned with the Mill of Ledcassy. In the Coupar Angus Abbey

<sup>1</sup> Douglas, Sir Robert; *The Baronage of Scotland*, Edin. 1778 referred to as "Douglas" in text.

<sup>2</sup> Rental Book of the Cistercian Abbey of Coupar Angus; Vol.1 Chr.35

rentals Leducassy was grouped with Millhorn, Aberborthie and Keithick. On Stobie's map of 1783, "Lead Carsie" is shown and the "Mill of Carsie" is located on the Lunan Burn east of Upper Gothens little more than three miles WNW of Coupar Angus. We therefore can identify Leducassy as the present day Carsie.

Later Blair families were to hold lands in Kettins to the south of the Abbey and much of the land to the north between Coupar Angus and Blairgowrie. The gift was from Stephen's possessions and thus he assumed his designation of Blair from his holdings in Blair(gowrie) for at this date surnames were not established and could readily change from one generation to the next. The gift was some time before 1 May 1201 for on that date a Papal Bull by Celestine II confirmed the possession and privileges of the monks of Coupar and made mention of the gift of William Hay and Stephen de Blair's gift of Leducassy in the parish of Blairgowrie which with Persie was subject of an agreement between the church of Coupar and the church of Blair regarding teinds.<sup>3</sup>

Also of significance, about this time, was a charter made between 1190 and 1202 granting to the Abbey of Coupar the whole marsh in the territory of Blair in Gowrie from King William's lands.<sup>4</sup> These were the lands of Muirton of Ardblair, on which more will be related later. The witnesses to the charter included MacBeth, judex of Gowrie, and John Hasting and William Hay, both of whom witnessed Stephen's grant.

Stephen de Blair was one of the witnesses to a charter of William Hay to Coupar Abbey not later than 1199. About 1201 he was among a long list of witnesses to a charter of Adam, son of Arbaham de Lour granting to David Rufus of Forfar the lands of Kinreich (Kyncrey) and part of Lour.<sup>5</sup> He also witnessed a charter by Donald bishop of Brechin granting a davoch of land to the Abbey of Aberbrothoc in the period 1204 to 1211.<sup>6</sup> That tract of land was called Balgillo Grand and could have been in the parish of Tannadice between Forfar and Brechin but it is likewise feasible that it was part of Balgillo in Kettins given Stephen's association with Gowrie. Balgillo was long associated with the Blair family passing from the main branch to a cadet.

The locations of identified lands of Leducassie are highly significant in this. Two miles to the north lies Ardblair, a mile to the west is Pittendriech and just beyond that Lethendy all of which were long held by Blair families, as will unfold in this history. From an early time the lands of Blacklunans were in the possession of the senior Blair family. This barony lies twelve miles north of Blairgowrie at the foot of Mount Blair. It came into the Blairs' hands in 1442 but perhaps part of the barony may have been held earlier.

The only documentary evidence of the origins of Stephen de Blair is in his charter granting Leducassy to the Church where he is described as son of Vallenus. Clearly he had considerable wealth to donate generously for salvation of the souls of Scottish kings and his own parents. In all probability his family were familiars of the Scottish Kings David, Malcolm and William. Stephen's father does not feature as Vallenus in records associated with these kings. Although such a name is found around this time and space, it may be that Vallenus is a corruption or misinterpretation of another name. In an earlier charter of King William to the Monastery of Cambuskenneth we find one of the witnesses "Vualeuo Comite" and in a confirmation by King Alexander the recitation gives him as "Valueuo comite" while in yet another charter to that Monastery he is named "Comite Waldeuo". This is the Waldeve earl of Dunbar also called Waltheof in English documents. Indeed further evidence is found. The Regestra Regum Scottorum shows that King William confirmed to Coupar Angus Abbey the lands of "Lecassy" granted by Stephen of Blair. The confirmation can be dated between 1183 and 1195, the witnesses being John bishop of Dunkeld, earl Gillebert, earl

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<sup>3</sup> Charters of Coupar Angus Abbey; Chr.13

<sup>4</sup> Regestrare Regnum Scottorum Vol.II .420

<sup>5</sup> Moray Charters Box 32

<sup>6</sup> Liber S.Thome de Aberbrothoc Vol.I Charter 74 bis; Bannatyne Club 1848

Malcolm of Atholl, Philip de Valloun and Henry son of Jordan. This Comment gives Steven as son of Waltheof. This alone is too weak to suggest that Stephen was a son of that earl but other circumstantial evidence can be found to support the hypothesis. Waldeve married his Countess Alina about 1160 and died in 1182. He had at least two sons, Patrick his heir and Constantine. Stephen was a contemporary of these sons. The Earl Waldeve and his son Patrick about 1180 were among the witnesses to King William's grant of the lands of Lindores in Fife to his brother David, earl of Huntingdon. Earl David in 1198 –1199 founded the Abbey of Lindores, which lies on the south bank of the River Tay only a few miles distant from Balthayock, which towers above the north bank. Patrick, by then the earl of Dunbar was a senior witness of this grant and among the lesser mentioned is Walkelinus son of Stephen. Walkelinus appears frequently as a witness to Earl David's charters to Lindores and also Aberbrothoc but nothing further identifies him or Stephen his father. These links though tentative may hold the vital clues. In the Aberbrothoc Charter of circa 1214, Walkelinus is shown as Walket. It is significant that in a grant to the Abbey of Scone probably circa 1220, Stephen de Melginch names Wallet as his uncle. This Wallet would appear to be again a form of Walkelinus. That Melginch was from earliest recorded times a possession of Blair of Balthayock family, we have strong pointers to the early genealogy of the Blair family. Furthermore, although very little is known of Constantine, the son of Earl Waldeve, a later Fife landowner, Constantine of Lochore appears to be a kinsman of the Blair family. Intriguing is another Charter of King William whereby the King confirmed to David of Lochore one third of Pitfirran, in Fife, granted by William son of Constantine of Lochore.<sup>7</sup> That the Blair of Balthayock family sprang from the ancient line of the earls of Dunbar and Northumberland yet sits as a hypothesis awaiting further research and a more skilled approach than this author can offer.

### ***Sir Alexander de Blair (1170c - 1225c)***

Alexander lived during the reign of William the Lion and Alexander II.

He married Ela, daughter of Hugh de Nyden of that ilk. Together they were granted a charter of the lands of Konakin in Fife, held of the bishop of St. Andrews.<sup>8</sup> The charter is undated but from the witnesses, Malcolm seventh earl of Fife and his brothers, it can be placed between 1203 and 1230. By this marriage, Alexander also gained part of the lands of Nyden, which according to Douglas featured for many years in the family possessions. He was probably the same Alexander who witnessed a charter by Fergus earl of Buchan<sup>9</sup> before 1214 and also a charter by Randulf de Strathphetham<sup>10</sup> Alexander Blair also witnessed the charter of Malcolm earl of Fife granting the church of Cleish to Dunfermline Abbey.<sup>11</sup>

In the period around 1220, when Malcolm, earl of Fife granted an acre of land near Markinch to the church, the witnesses included, Thomas of Kilmaron, Alexander Blair, Neis Ramsay and Malcolm Melville. The spatial and marital relationships are of interest, Kilmaron being just north of Cupar, Fife and the Blair's lands of Cults just SW of Cupar while a granddaughter of Neis Ramsay was to marry a grandson of Alexander in the years ahead.

An undated charter of about 1220-1230, mentions Sir Alexander de Blair among the witnesses and deserves further mention for the genealogical detail therein. Christine, the daughter of Walter Corbet granted a benefice to the church of St Andrews for the salvation of the souls of her father Walter Corbet, her mother Alice de Valoniis and her husband William, son of the earl Patrick. The principal witnesses were; Duncan son of the earl Duncan, William her husband, Sir Adam Cormurd and Sir Alexander Blair.<sup>12</sup> Another witness was Alwin de Arbuthnott who is identifiable as son of Hugh de Swinton, first laird of Arbuthnott who died about 1200. The first witness, Duncan was

<sup>7</sup> Regestra Regum Scottorum Vol.II 1165-1214 Charter 567

<sup>8</sup> Balthayock Charters 1

<sup>9</sup> Collections for a History of the shires of Aberdeen and Bamff. Aberdeen 1843

<sup>10</sup> Registrum Episcopatus Brechinensis Vol.ii. 3 Strathphetham / Strathechan = Strachan

<sup>11</sup> Reg.de Dunfermylne Chrtr.145

<sup>12</sup> Liber Cartarem Prioratus Sancti Andree in Scotia. Bannatyne Club 1841.

husband to Alice, daughter of Walter Corbet of Mackerston and thus brother-in-law of Christine. The second, her husband, was son to Patrick earl of Dunbar son of the earl Waldeve. If the above hypothesis held, that Stephen de Blair's father, Waldeve, was the same earl then Sir Alexander would be first cousin to William and would explain his presence as witness.

It was probably at the same time as the foregoing charter, that the same parties, William son of earl Patrick and his wife Christine Corbet made a further grant to the Priory and canons of St Andrews as the same witnesses are shown in like order. That charter confirms that Duncan's wife was Alice Corbet.<sup>13</sup>

Henry de Wynton granted a charter of eleven bovates of land at Lindores to the Priory of St Andrews about 1220. The witnesses included Duncan, son of Thomas of Kilmarnock, William of the Villa of St Andrews, Alexander de Blair, Adam de Kinnimonth, Henry of Dundemore.

Yet another undated charter of around 1220, has interesting genealogical clues. It is regarding settlement of payment of the fishings of Inchyra and the Rynd between the Abbot of May and Duncan of Inchyra who was a son of James of Perth.<sup>14</sup> The witnesses include John son of Michael, then Alexander de Blair and William de Blair, James son of Ketel, William smith of Crail and Robert Prior of Scone. Inchyra lies between Balthayock and the River Tay and in later years the fishings of Inchyra were in possession of the Blair lairds of Balthayock. This suggests that the witnesses were this Alexander and his son William and that even at this early date, Balthayock was in the hands of the Blair family.

Alexander may have been son to Stephen de Blair but proof is wanting. Significantly, Hugh de Nyden was also a witness to Coupar Angus Abbey charters. Alexander possibly died about 1225 and was succeeded by William, who is thought to be his son.

### *Sir William de Blair (1190c - 1250c)*

An early mention of William Blair is discovered in a Charter by Malcolm seventh earl of Fife with the consent of the Bishop and Chapter of Dunkeld granting the church of Redgorten to the Church of the Holy Trinity at Scone. William was one of the witnesses to this about May 1228. Others mentioned included Elias of Kinnimonth, John of Methil and Stephen of Melginch.<sup>15</sup>

An even earlier mention is made of William de Blair as a witness to a charter made by Angus son of The latter is of further interest for in later times Melginch, four and a half miles due north of Balthayock, belonged to cadets of Blair of Balthayock. It could be hypothesised that even at this date the Blair estate in Gowrie embraced Melginch and that this Stephen may have been a brother of Sir William named after his grandfather.<sup>16</sup> And as discussed above, this Stephen had an uncle named Wallet, whom this author suggests is otherwise Walkelinus son of Stephen de Blair.

William attained the office of Steward of Fife before 1236 and was knighted by Alexander II.

Douglas noted many documents relating to Sir William in the family archives.

Elsewhere, he is found as witness to charters.

William, designed Steward of Fife was witness at Dunfermline on 7 March 1235/6 to a charter of Constantine of Lochoy on the lands of Kinglassie and Pitbrochin.<sup>17</sup> Another witness was John Hay who was a major landholder in the Carse of Gowrie around Balthayock. The Hays were also Stewards of Fife. No evidence has been found to link Sir William to the Hay family but it will be shown later that William Blair may have been a kinsman of Constantine of Lochoy. The records of Dunfermline Abbey show that Constantine had a brother Patrick and a son David at this time.

<sup>13</sup> Liber Cartarum Prioratus Sancti Andree in Scotia. Bannatyne Club 1841.

<sup>14</sup> Carte Prioratus Insula de May

<sup>15</sup> Laing Charters, Chtr.6

<sup>16</sup> Liber Ecclesie de Scon Charter 116 shows Stephen de Melginch had an uncle named Wallet and John de (H)Aya was witness to his charter

<sup>17</sup> Registrum de Dunfermelyn. Bannatyne Club 1842

Another charter of this abbey on the lands of Inchtorphin was witnessed by Robert Hay, William Blair, John of Longforan, Roger of Cluny and Mathew of Glasclune strongly indicating a Gowrie location for all.<sup>18</sup>

In the summer of 1237, Malcolm the earl of Fife held a convention to settle the dispute between the convents of North Berwick Priory and St. Servan's Convent concerning teinds in the earldom of Fife. Those attending included Mr Peter de Ramsey (Rameysia), Mr Henry de Norham; lord William de Blair (*Blar*); Lord Ness de Ramsay (*Ramesay*); Lord Malcolm de Menteith (*Manetheth*) Duncan de Ramsay and Dunec de Blair (*Blar*).<sup>19</sup>

About 1240, Malcolm earl of Fife granted to the episcopacy of Moray lands at Adawyn and the patronage of the church of Cromdale. The earl's son David, William Blair, Elias de Kinnimonth and Adam Gurmund represented Fife's interests while a large number of the other witnesses were from Moray.<sup>20</sup>

A charter of Scone Abbey regarding lands granted by Willian de Len during the reign of Alexander II (1214-1249) dated in Perth on 5 May 1240 mentions Sir Walter Ruthven, Sir William Blair and Sir William Oliphant and another in the reign of Alexander III mentions knights Gilbert Hay, John and William Hay and William Blair.<sup>21</sup> Later in a charter of John of Inshyra, son of Duncan of Inshyra granting the Abbey of Scone a toft and acre of land on Inshyra, the witnesses included Gilbert de Haya, John and William de Haya uncles of John of Inshyra, William de Blair, Richard Mascul and John of Balwery, all of whom were knights. Again Sir William's presence here most probably arose from his holding of Balthayock beside Inshyra.<sup>22</sup>

When Malcolm, earl of Fife granted a charter of the lands of Admor to the Priory of St. Andrews in September 1245, the witnesses were Master Peter Ramsay, Sir William Blair, Sir Neis steward to the earl, Sir Salomon of Cupar, William of Leuchars, Duncan of Kilmaron, Robert vicar of Cupar and others.<sup>23</sup> Most of these witnesses held lands or appointments around Cupar in Fife where the Blair family had lands at Cults. The presence of Ramsay and Blair here is noteworthy as in the next generation, these family were bonded through marriage.

Also in the Charters of this area in the 13<sup>th</sup> century, an Adam Blair had a charter of the lands of Balbard and following this Sir Alexander Blair made these over to Duncan of Crambeth. Interestingly, just over three miles separate Lochore House and Crambeth Castle, later called Dubhhill and now spelt Dowhill. Furthermore, Blairadam and Blair Mill are found between these pointing to the need for further investigation to their origins. Most likely, they were part of the lands known as the Blair of Crambeth derived from the open woodland there. Adam Blair may have been a close kinsman of Sir William, particularly as his heir, Sir Alexander, also is recorded granting a charter of Balbard to Duncan of Crambeth. Inspection of a charter of Agnes Crambeth to her husband in 1354 mentions that she was daughter of the deceased Duncan of Crambeth and among her lands, mention is made of Balbard said to have been earlier held of the heirs of William de Monte Alto (Mowat).<sup>24</sup> Sir William Mowat had been a contemporary of Stephen de Blair and likewise granted alms to Coupar Abbey. Nothing is discovered linking the Blair family to him but this statement of 1354 regarding Balbard and Mowat's heirs is intriguing.

Sir William had issue:

(1) Alexander, his heir

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<sup>18</sup> idem Charter 332

<sup>19</sup> GD45/13/283

<sup>20</sup> Registrum Moraviense Charyers 62 & 63

<sup>21</sup> Chrtrs. 95 Liber Ecclesie de Seon, Bannatyne Club 1843

<sup>22</sup> Chrtrs. 118 Liber Ecclesie de Seon, Bannatyne Club 1843

<sup>23</sup> Liber Cartarem Prioratus Sancti Andree in Scotia. Bannatyne Club 1841.

<sup>24</sup> Regesta Regum Scottorum Vol.vi.Chrtr.132

(2) Walter, who is mentioned in a charter of Friskin de Moravia.

There is some evidence to support a hypothesis that by this time the Blair family were in possession of the lands of Balthayock or lands in the close proximity by this date. From the records of the priory of the Isle of May, a charter records William Blair and Alexander Blair as witnesses to the fishing rights of the River Tay in the location Mugdrum to Rhynd.<sup>25</sup> This stretch of river is adjacent to the lands of south part of Balthayock estate and later Blair lairds of Balthayock were to hold the fishing rights here by an Office of Searcherie.

Sir William appears to have died in the mid-thirteenth century.

### *Sir Alexander Blair (1225c - 1275c)*

He married Helen Ramsay, the sister of Sir William Ramsay of Dalhousie and by her had a son named John and probably a daughter Catherine who married Leonard Leslie.

In the charter-room of the Earls of Rothes there is a charter granted by Malcolm, Earl of Fife, to Alexander de Blar, of the lands of Thases (Taces), Kinteaces, and Ballindurth, to be holden of the said Earl and his heirs by the tenure of one knight's service. This charter has the Earl's seal appended, and bears no date, but it must have been granted before the year 1250.<sup>26</sup>

From this charter it would appear that Blair, must have been the name of the heiress who shortly afterwards brought the property of Taces into the possession of the family of Leslie. The author of *Laurus Lesceana*, states that Leonard Leslie married a Catherine Mure heiress of Taces. Perhaps here the Gaelic *blar* has been translated as Scottish *mure*.

Sir Alexander granted a charter of the lands of Balbard to Duncan of Crambeth which was confirmed by Simon, abbot of Dunfermline in 1275.<sup>27</sup> Although these lands were near Dunfermline, Simon also confirmed a charter of the lands of Bendochy in Gowrie which later Blair cadets were to hold. Sir Alexander died about 1275 leaving his young son John as heir. His wife survived him for many years and was among the Scottish nobility obliged to do homage to Edward I of England, probably for those lands held as her widow's terce.

Sir Alexander may have been the father of Margaret Blair, the wife of Adam the Blund. Margaret did homage to Edward I in 1306 for her lands in Angus and Stirling.

### *John Blair (1260c - 1310c)*

John was born about 1260/70 and was still a minor when he inherited the family estate. Constantine of Lochore was appointed his tutor and during his minority, his mother Helen was assisted by her brother, William, in running the estate. That Constantine was tutor to John, suggests that the deceased Sir Alexander Blair may have been the son of a close kinswoman of Constantine of Lochore. The tutor of John may have been the grandson of the earlier mentioned Constantine of Lochore. In 1286 John Blair and his tutors made an Indenture with the Priory of St Andrews regarding changes in the multures of Nyden.<sup>28</sup> The Blair family were associated with Nyden near St. Andrews through the marriage in the early 13<sup>th</sup> century of Alexander Blair to Ela, daughter of Hugh de Nyden.

The family seat in Fife at this time has not been identified but it may have been at Cults southwest of Cupar.

John was alive during the period when Edward I invaded Scotland. His eldest son was David, his heir. He may also have been father to Mr John Blair who is reputed to have attended Dundee Grammar School with William Wallace and who later was called by the patriot in 1297 to be his

<sup>25</sup> Records of the Priory of Isle of May. ED. Stewart, John.; Society of Antiquaries of Scotland 1868.

<sup>26</sup> Leslie of Balquhain, Historical Records of the Family of Leslie Vol.i Edin. 1869

<sup>27</sup> The Annals of Dunfermline and Registrum de Dunfermelyn Chrtr 315

<sup>28</sup> Liber Carturum Prioratus Sancti Andree in Scotia

chaplain and by this close association became the author of a biography on Wallace. Elsewhere, the chaplain has been named as Arnold Blair, a Benedictine monk from the Abbey of Dunfermline.<sup>29</sup>

Be that as it may, John Blair himself was a patriot. The Coronation Road leading to Scone Abbey from the crossing point of the River Tay passes close to Balthayock. It would seem most probable that John Blair attended the Coronation ceremony at the abbey on 27 March 1306. This invoked the wrath of King Edward of England whose Lieutenant of Scotland, Amyer de Valence led an army against the Scots meeting them outside Perth. In the ensuing battle at Ruthven, on 20 June 1306, Robert the Bruce was defeated and forced to flee. Many of his leading supporters were captured and carried off to England, where some were cruelly put to death in Newcastle upon Tyne. John de Blar was among the captives taken to England where he was in the hands of John Sheffield, sheriff of Northumberland in July 1306 with a group of other prisoners including, the Bishops of St Andrews and Glasgow, the Abbot of Scone, Sir Malcolm Lockard, Thomas de Boys, Alexander Bartelman, Mr Alexander de Braye, and Walter de Wynton.<sup>30</sup> Some executions of leading Bruce supporters were carried out in August but Sir Malcom Lockard and John de Blar were recorded in November 1306 as continuing to be imprisoned on account of their capture in Scotland.<sup>31</sup> It is not discovered whether the patriotic John Blair was able to return to his lands in Scotland or whether he met the fate of other noble Scotsmen in their pursuit of independence.

### *David de Blair (1280c - 1340c)*

In 1296, David was listed among the many Scottish barons and lairds who were forced to do homage to Edward I following his invasion of Scotland.<sup>32</sup> He paid homage for his lands in Perthshire clearly indicating that was the location of his main holding. Also listed in proximity were Thomas de la Hay and Edmund de la Hay of the Hay family who had a long association as neighbours of the early Blair family. It is feasible that this laird, David de Blair, held Balthayock but evidence is wanting. The tower of Balthayock was erected on land belonging to the Knights Templar of the Order of St. John of Jerusalem. The early history of possession of Balthayock may have been held in the records of Torphichen Preceptory.

This laird of Balthayock is said to have had sons:

- 1) Patrick, his heir
- 2) John of Ardler who is described as brother of Patrick Blair in his charter of 1369. He probably gained Ardler through marriage about 1369. He died before 1388 leaving a daughter as explained later.
- 3) Thomas of Moulin, who is considered as the progenitor of the Blairs of Ardblair, more of whom later. Thomas clearly, was the third son for the arms of the Blairs of Ardblair are differentiated from the senior family by the addition of a mullet.

When John of Pincerna sometime lord of Evelick granted a charter of the lands of Pitmiddle in favour of Sir John of Inchmartine, on 21 June 1304, the witnesses included Lord Richard Hay and Gilbert his son, John Cambrun, Sir Robert Harcross then sheriff of Perth, Peter Brunton then constable of Perth, Michael Scot his son, Roger Mortimer, Walter of Alyth and Thomas his son, David Blair, Edward Leys and Andrew Monorgund. The surnames were still variable and mainly designated by their land, Edward de Leys was probably Edward Hay.<sup>33</sup>

<sup>29</sup> Chal.His.Dunfermline, vol.1

<sup>30</sup> Cal. Of Docs. Relating to Scotland .Vol.v. Pt.II. 472

<sup>31</sup> Cal. Of Docs. Relating to Scotland .Vol.v. Pt.II. 492 xii

<sup>32</sup> Bain Vol.ii; p.204

<sup>33</sup> Fraser; The Melvilles, Earls of Melville and the Leslies, Earls of Leven. Vol.iii Charter 12

No relationship has been found to James Blair who in 1358 held the lands of "Maler" or in the following year the lands of Auchintevny<sup>34</sup>. The author has not identified the latter in Kinross, but Mailer, two miles south of Perth appears to have had little or no connection with the family of Blair of Balthayock. The early proprietor would be James Blair of Adamton who on 25 August 1363 exchanged his lands of East Mailer in Perthshire with Robert Erskine for his lands of Adamton in the barony of Kyle.<sup>35</sup> This James Blair was probably the son of Hugh Blair who about 1330 had charters of East Mailer and also of "Auchintelketye" in Kinross.<sup>36</sup> It is intriguing that Robert Erskine during the 1350's had a charter of Adamton in Kyle and Cults in Fife which later were owned by the Blair of Adamton and Blair of Balthayock families. Douglas has no mention of a James Blair of Adamton nor of Hugh whom James followed but gives Sir John Blair of Adamton who was knighted in 1390 as the progenitor of that house. He gave Roger Blair of that ilk as sire of Sir John and certainly the Arms of Adamton are differenced from the Blair of that ilk, bearing no resemblance to Balthayock. To further complicate this, in 1296, John of Mailer paid homage to King Edward of England for his lands in Perthshire and Hugh Blair did so for his lands in Ayrshire. We are left with the enigma that the Blair of Blair family represented here in Hugh and James Blair held for a time lands in Perth and Kinross yet whose interests remained based in the south west of Scotland.

According to Sir James Ramsay in his "Bamff Charters", when Nigel Ramsay gained ownership of Easter Maws in Blairgowrie about 1360, the deed was executed in Dundee in the presence of William Blair, alderman of Dundee.

The Exchequer Rolls mention that Gervase Blair was nominated a bailie of the burgh of Forfar at a meeting of 16 January 1367/8 at Perth. Again there is a lack of genealogical information but it illustrates the spread of the name and growing success of the family around this period.

David remains somewhat of an enigma. The Blair family appears to have been growing in influence in Angus and Perthshire in the early fourteenth century but there is a lack of detailed evidence even to the point whether it can be said that this was the only laird who died after John Blair and before 1369. The author suspects that there is a missing generation between David of 1296 and Patrick in 1369.

### ***Patrick de Blair (1340c - 1405c)***

Several charters in the family muniments show that Patrick held extensive properties. At Perth on 1 February 1369/70 Patrick de Blair received from Allan Lord Erskine of Inchmartine a charter of a 20-merk land and to pay to him and his heirs £12 from the lands of Quilts, now called Cults, in Fife.<sup>37</sup> This was entailed to John of Ardlar, brother to Patrick. It is of interest to note that Robert Erskine had a charter of David II for the lands of Cults about 1358.<sup>38</sup> The 1370 charter to Patrick was confirmed a month later in Stirling. Later that year, at Perth on 20 October 1370, Sir Nicholas Erskine, laird of Kinnoul, granted to Patrick the lands of Balthayock in Perthshire.<sup>39</sup> This was done on the resignation of Patrick which indicates that he already owned these lands probably from his forebears. The precept for infesting Patrick in Balthayock was made by Nicholas Erskine in 1373.<sup>40</sup>

The lands which comprised the later estate of the Blairs of Balthayock had several feudal superiors. It is of interest here that the fortalice of Balthayock stood on ground which was held of the Knights of St. John of Jerusalem and was called the Temple Lands of Balthayock. The above mentioned

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<sup>34</sup> Exchequer Rolls

<sup>35</sup> Regesta Regnum Scottorum Vol.Vi Chrtr.300

<sup>36</sup> R.M.S. i.App.ii.880 and 1016

<sup>37</sup> Balthayock Charters 5

<sup>38</sup> R.M.S. Vol.i App.ii.1288

<sup>39</sup> Balthayock Charters 7

<sup>40</sup> Balthayock Charters 8

Robert Erskine of that ilk was *custos* of the lands and rents of the Hospital of St. John of Jerusalem in Scotland and this may have some bearing on the above mentioned transactions where he seems to be acting as feudal superior. The Knights Templar held many parcels of land throughout Scotland. In the province of Gowrie they had besides others, lands at Balgillo and in Stormont they had lands at Lethendy and at Ardblair.<sup>41</sup> These also have long associations with Blair families but it is not established whether there is any common factor.

Robert, earl of Fife and Menteith, gave confirmation of the grant of Quilts in 1376 when Patrick is described as beloved cousin of the grantor. This suggests that there was a family link to the earls of Fife, perhaps not surprisingly given that his forebear, Sir William Blair had held the office of Steward of Fife. At this time Robert Stewart, third son of King Robert II, was earl of Menteith and Fife. This does not imply that there was a blood link to the Stewarts for Robert had been granted the title in 1371 and did not have a longstanding link to Fife. It may be that we should look elsewhere to find where Patrick's kinship to Robert Stewart arose. It may be that Patrick's mother was a Stewart but no record of that is found and a more likely link should be sought between Robert Stewart's wife and Patrick Blair. This leads us to the family of Graham of Menteith for Robert's wife was Margaret, daughter of Sir John Graham and Mary, Countess of Menteith.

There is a tradition, at least in more modern times, regarding the adoption of tartans to place the Blairs under the Graham of Menteith, although the Blair tartan can also be found.

Where this link arose remains somewhat of a mystery but if a historical link to the Graham of Menteith were established it may go some way to explain the above. A more likely explanation of the "tartan myth" was that Graham of Menteith was a feudal superior of some Blair lands. For example, there is evidence that Menteith was lord superior of Balgillo whereas there is no evidence to place Blair as a Sept of the Grahams.

Patrick was armour bearer to James, earl of Douglas. It is quite feasible that he fought alongside this earl in the period 1384 to 1388. The famous campaign of 1388, when the Scots invaded the north of England, led to the tilting bout near Newcastle when the earl carried off the spear and guerdon of Hotspur, Henry Percy, son of the earl of Northumberland. This incensed Henry Percy to raise forces to fight the Scots. The armies met at Otterburn on 5<sup>th</sup> August 1388. There, James Douglas pressed in ahead of his main force and was cut down and defended by a small band until the Scots advanced to them. At his request, they covered him with a cloak, raised his standard there and gave his cry, "A Douglas, a Douglas" and won the battle. Perhaps, Patrick Blair his armour bearer was there at the side of James Douglas at that chivalrous tilting bout and in the thick of battle at Otterburn.

In that same year of 1388, Patrick was granted a charter by King Robert II of the lands of Balgillo, near Kettins in Angus. Perhaps Patrick already held an interest in Balgillo from his forebears. Certainly, it was little more than a year later that a dispute arose over these lands with his neighbour James Fotheringham. At a court held at Balgillo on Sunday 8 January 1389/90, Robert, earl of Fife and Menteith requested that Duncan Leighton, depute sheriff of Forfar elect an assize of inquest consisting of Andrew Dempster, William Maule and others to adjudicate in this matter.<sup>42</sup>

It was probably his growing land acquisition in Angus which placed Patrick on a list of witness at Dundee on the Feast of the Beheading of St. John the Baptist [29 Aug] 1392, when Sir Thomas Hay of Lochorwort granted to Walter Murray of Drumsagard, for his homage and service, the lands of Glasswell and Torbirns.<sup>43</sup> Patrick here is placed immediately after William Fenton of that ilk at the end of the list of major local barons. Walter Murray already held Ardormie near Alyth which was just north of William Fenton's messuage of Baikie and of Patrick's lands of Balgillo.

<sup>41</sup> Scottish History Society, Fourth Series; The Knights of St John of Jerusalem in Scotland 1983

<sup>42</sup> Balthayock Charters 12

<sup>43</sup> R.M.S. Vol ii.729 registered in 1488.

Patrick also received a Charter of Resignation of William, son and heir of the deceased John de Menteith, of the lands of Balgillo at Dundee on 14 September 1393 presumably making him superior of all these lands to be held of the Crown.<sup>44</sup>

Sixty years earlier, Malise of Menteith had received a charter from King Robert I about 1320 of a davoch of lands of Balgillo<sup>45</sup> which may have been the same davoch which Stephen de Blair had witnessed being made to the Abbey of Arbroath about 1204.

At the same period when Patrick received his charters of Cults and Balthayock in 1370, King David granted under the Great Seal to John Blair, the whole lands of Ardler and Baldowrie, in Angus, besides a burgess ticket of Inverkeithing in Fife. John's charter included an entail which confirmed his brother Patrick as heir to these lands in the event of John failing to produce a lawful heir. Interestingly, in the family archives is an Obligation made by James, earl of Douglas, to Patrick Blair his armour bearer, that he shall procure the marriage of the daughter of the deceased John Ardler and find her in a £20 land or to pay to her marriage the sum of 100 merks sterling.<sup>46</sup> From this Obligation, we can deduce that John Blair of Ardler died in or before the years 1384-1388 leaving only a daughter to whom Patrick was Tutor and responsible for her marriage. In accordance with the entail Patrick gained his brother's lands, for his son in time held all the lands of Ardler and Baldowrie. The lands of Baldowrie had been acquired by Ingram Ardler from William Marshall in 1341.<sup>47</sup> It is probable that John Blair had gained these lands through marriage about 1369 to an heiress of Ardler.

Patrick had issue:

1. Thomas his heir
2. Probably William, Abbot of Kinloss, in Moray although evidence is lacking. William was originally a brother of the monastery of Coupar Angus and Doctor of Decretals. He became Abbot of Kinloss in 1401 and continued there till 1430 according to Ferrerius, the annalist of Kinross. He was translated to Coupar as abbot in 1430. William died 17 October 1445.

Patrick survived into the next century and in his advanced years resigned part of his estate to his son, Thomas. Patrick died before 1408.

### ***Thomas Blair (1375c - 1452)***

As son and heir, Thomas succeeded on the resignation of his father Patrick Blair of Balthayock and was granted a charter of the lands of Ardler, Baldowrie and Balgillo from Robert III at Dunkeld on 14 January 1400/1.<sup>48</sup> The family charters show this to be in the tenth year of the King's reign. In the Register of the Great Seal this is listed in the period 1398-1400 and Baldowrie is shown as both "Baldowrie" and "Kylldowry". Unfortunately, despite the lands being described clearly as in Forfarshire, several historians in recent times have confused Ardler with Ardblair which is in Perthshire.

Ownership of land is always most difficult to determine along its landward boundaries. Landowners frequently disputed their marches or boundaries and the remedy in earlier times was to refer this to the local court of the feudal superior. He in turn would probably refer this to the County Sheriff to set up an assize of local lairds to adjudicate usually by making a perambulation of the marches after which the agreed details were recorded for evidence. Such was the case described above for Balgillo

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44 Balthayock Charters 13

45 RMS Vol.i App.ii.359 Balthayock Charters 7

46 Balthayock Charters 11

47 RMS.Vol.i App.ii.785 and Regesta Regum Scottorum Chtrr.35

48 Balthayock Charters 14 and 15

14 **A GENEALOGY OF BLAIR OF BALTHAYOCK AND THEIR CADETS**

in Angus in 1390. A similar situation arose regarding the marches of Clie and Balthayock. In this event, Thomas Blair of Balthayock was at discord with the Abbot of Scone regarding the marches of Balthayock with Clie. Robert, duke of Albany made a precept to summon an assize to meet at Clie on the 6 March 1408/9 to resolve the issue.<sup>49</sup>

On 29 June 1410, Thomas acquired the lands of Balconnally, Perthshire by a charter of resignation from Walter Haliburton of that ilk and William Erskine of Kinnoul. A precept appointed Thomas Brown of Whelplaw as bailie for the infestment.<sup>50</sup>

A month later in Perth when John Mowat had a charter of lands in Caithness confirmed under the Great Seal, the minor witnesses, Robert Stewart of Lorne and a Thomas Blair were described as "scutifers".<sup>51</sup> This indicating that they were "shield bears" or squires. Perhaps, Thomas had continued in the role of his father as armour bearer to one of the earls.

Thomas had a son or sons:

1. Patrick heir apparent who predeceased his father and more of whom later.
2. George. A George Blair of Balgillo is mentioned in the 1460's. He held a third portion of Balgillo but appears to have been closely related to the laird of Balthayock.<sup>52</sup> George was progenitor of a family of burgesses of Dundee. A later George, burges of Dundee is mentioned near the end of the Balthayock entail of 1542. For details of this cadet of Balthayock, see section on Blair Burgesses of Dundee.
3. Robert? A Robert de Blare is mentioned frequently as a burges bailie of Perth in the period around 1456 to 1488 but no indication of his relationship has been traced.

Thomas Blair was the receiver of the pension of Lady Agnes Tulloch from the customs of Dundee in the year 1414. No genealogical link has been identified but the possibility should not be overlooked that she was his wife. Particularly, as Thomas is recorded as one of the jurors on the Inquisition of Retour of Sir Walter Tulloch in the lands of Tulloch and Crachie on 8 October 1438.<sup>53</sup> A dispute over the boundary of Flawcraigs held of Kinnaird held by William Scott the laird of Balwerie was settled on 23 July 1415 by an assize on which Thomas served.<sup>54</sup>

At Greyfriars Church in Dundee on 14 April 1422, Thomas Blair lord of Balthayock, a squire, witnessed a transumpt of an earlier charter.<sup>55</sup>

This is the first laird of Balthayock of whom it can be said, with confidence, that he was well travelled.

While still a boy, James I of Scotland while sailing to France was captured by an English ship and held captive by the English for eighteen years. It was not until 1424 that he was released under a treaty which required the payment of a massive ransom. To ensure payment several of the Scottish nobility were required to place themselves in England as hostages for a number of years. Among the first hostages to go to England was Alexander Lindsay, earl of Crawford. On 4 July 1424, Thomas Blair, Mr Alexander Lindsay and Mr Ingam Lindsay were granted safe conduct through England to attend to the earl. They were permitted to take one servant each.<sup>56</sup> Within a few years, Thomas was to travel to France.

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<sup>49</sup> Balthayock Charters 16

<sup>50</sup> Balthayock Charters 18

<sup>51</sup> A History of the Shires of Aberdeen and Banff Spalding Club

<sup>52</sup> Balthayock Charters 25

<sup>53</sup> Liber Niger S.Thome de Aberbrothoc Vol.2. Charter 83.

<sup>54</sup>GD45/16/3044

<sup>55</sup> GD150/14

<sup>56</sup> Bain, J.; Calendar of Documents relating to Scotland Addenda 1221 – 1435 Vol.IV

A Charter by Thomas Rattray, lord of Tulymurcho, in favour of Sir Walter Ogilvy, lord of Lintrathen of the lands of Tulymurcho in the lordship of Alyth and annualrent of 80 s. Scots furth of lands of Balloch was witnessed by Thomas Blair, lord of Balthayock, James Mortimer, Patrick Blair, esquire, Mr. John Idill, notary public and sir John Schurtyyn, priest at Meigle on 4 May 1427.<sup>57</sup> This is certainly father and son appearing here but even more significant is the link to Sir Walter Ogilvy as Patrick was to marry Christian Ogilvy.

The Auld Alliance was formed between Scotland and France to bring mutual military assistance in time of conflict with England, their powerful and aggressive neighbour. English claims and territorial ambitions had resulted in the invasion of Normandy in 1337 followed by a succession of wars in France and intervals of truce during the 14<sup>th</sup> century. The English had won every major battle from Crecy (1346) and Poitiers (1356). Then after a period of peace, Henry V of England defeated the French at Agincourt in 1415 and subsequently gained the crown of France in 1420 but died only two years later. Thereupon, the French disputed the English claim and their Dauphin, the young King Charles VII, engaged the powerful enemy that occupied his land and called on the Scots for assistance. However, the English swept through northern France and laid siege to Orleans. The story of how a seventeen-year old girl then came to lead the French army to raise the siege in 1429 and turn the tide in their favour is well known. Who has not heard of Joan of Arc, the Maid of Orleans? But what is less renowned is the part played by the Scots in their assistance of the young King Charles. At the start of the siege in October 1428, Orleans was defended by a strong contingent of Scots appointed by the king of France. The companies were commanded by three Scottish knights, William Hamilton, Thomas Houston and John Wishart and five scutifers: Thomas Blair, Henry Galloway, Edward Lennox, David Melvill and Alexander Norwill. On the 8<sup>th</sup> February 1428/29 significant reinforcements arrived led by William d'Albert with a strong body of 1000 Scots under the command of the halfbrothers John Stewart of Darnley and William Stewart of Castlemilk. Unfortunately a few days later there was a disastrous defeat at Rouvray-Saint-Denis on the plain of Beauce when the French commander, Charles of Bourbon attempted to intercept an English supply column on its way from Paris towards Orleans. To make a pincer movement, he instructed the French defenders of Orleans to sortie out but not to take part in the action. However, the supply wagons and their loads of barrels of fish were turned into an improvised fortification behind which the English archers were able to engage the enemy. Unfortunately, John Stewart and two of the French commanders from Orleans became impatient and entered the action. This impetuous attack by the Franco-Scottish cavalry cost them dear and 250 were left dead on the field of battle including both the Stewart brothers. Many fish from burst barrels also littered the battlefield and so this encounter goes down in history as the Battle of the Herrings.

Elsewhere, the remainder of the Scottish archers were charged by King Charles with the protection of a convoy taking supplies from Blois to Orleans with Joan of Arc, under the command Patrick Ogilvy of Auchterhouse, sheriff of Angus and Constable of the Scottish Army in France. This Franco-Scottish army eventually relieved Orleans and the siege was raised in May 1429. They then went on to win several other important battles.

As Balthayock lies only a few miles west of Auchterhouse, it was probably through their close association that Thomas Blair had joined the Scots Army in France under Patrick Ogilvy. Thomas Blair of Balthayock was present in 1428 at the start of the siege of Orleans where he commanded a company of 20 men-at-arms and 29 archers. Another of the Scottish defenders mentioned above had close associations with the Dundee area. He was Sir John Wishart of Pitarrow in the Mearns, who arrived at Orleans in October 1428 with 48 men-at-arms and 108 archers. For the payment of his company, Thomas received 67 écus and 55 sous equivalent to £136 from Hémon Raguier, trésorier des guerres du Roy.<sup>58</sup> After their service to the King of France, Thomas Blair and Sir John Wishart

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<sup>57</sup> GD16/12/1

<sup>58</sup> Loiseleur, J., Mémoires de la Société archéologique et historique de l'Orléanais, tome XI, 1868

returned safely to Scotland but their commander Patrick Ogilvy was lost at sea on the homeward journey.

A document records that Thomas Blair of Balthayock had safe conduct for journeying from Flanders to Scotland but the date is attributed to about 17 November 1460. This seems erroneous, either the date or the name of the laird being in error.<sup>59</sup>

While Thomas was abroad serving the King of France or shortly after his return, the dispute over possession of the lands of Balgillo came to a climax. At a justiciary court held in Dundee, evidence was taken from Henry of Hayston regarding a citation by John of Balbirnie upon the lands of Balgillo. On 15 March 1429/30 the court found against Thomas but two days latter, an Act of Parliament at Perth reversed the decision finding that the lands of Balgillo by a former assize were determined to have belonged to Patrick Blair, father of the said Thomas.<sup>60</sup>

A letter of Reversion in favour of Alexander Lindsay, earl of Crawford, and Sir David Lindsay, “the sone and the aire of that ilk”, on the third of an annualrent of the ten pound lands of Westirbrichty on 12 February 1436/7, was witnessed by Sir Walter Ogilvy of Lintrathen, Thomas Blair of Balthayock, David Hay of the Nauchtane, and William Blair of Ardblair.<sup>61</sup> The association with Sir Walter Ogilvy is significant and it may be that about this time the families were united by a marriage bond between the heir apparent of Balthayock and a daughter of Sir Walter.

Thomas Blair was a member of an Assize at Cairnconan near Arbroath, on 8 October 1438. This was at an Inquest of Retour held for the service of Sir Walter Tulloch as heir to his grandfather, Walter Tulloch of Craichie in the lands to the south of the Vinny.<sup>62</sup>

Given the dearth of information around this period, it is worthy of note that at Perth on 20 July 1421, William Blair rendered to the Exchequer, the account of the bailies of Dundee for the year to Whitsunday 1421 and in 1435 the Dundee accounts were rendered at Stirling by Alexander Blair, one of the bailies of Dundee. These were possibly kinsmen of Thomas.

At Edinburgh on 21 July 1450, Laird Thomas Blair attested receipt of annuity of Sir William Lord Crichton, Captain of Edinburgh Castle.<sup>63</sup> The Crichtons were feudal superiors of Kinfauns and thus had a long relationship with the Blairs of Balthayock.

At the Abbey of Coupar Angus on 1 October 1451, Thomas was one of the witnesses to a charter citing the earlier gift of the lands of Bellaty and Freuchie in Glenisla to the Abbey by Alexander II, King of Scots.

Thomas died in the period between Whitsunday and Martinmas 1452 as in mid 1453, the lands of Cults were recorded in ward from his death in that term.<sup>64</sup>

A Charter by Sir Simon Bain, Presbyter founded the Altarage of St. Simon and St. Stephen within the Parish Church of Perth for divine service to be performed for the Souls of persons mentioned within it and inter alia the Soul of the late Thomas Blair of Balthayock his master of certain Annualrents furth of tenements. This Charter was ratified by King James III in March 1472.<sup>65</sup>

### ***Patrick Blair heir apparent of Balthayock (1410c - 1450c)***

Patrick married Christian Ogilvy and by her had sons:

- 1) Alexander, his heir and heir to his grandfather more of whom later.

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<sup>59</sup> Bain's callendar IV.1311

<sup>60</sup> Balthayock Charters 20 and 21

<sup>61</sup> GD121/3/29

<sup>62</sup> Reg. de Aberbrothoc Charter 83.

<sup>63</sup> Exchequer Rolls Vol.v

<sup>64</sup> Exchequer Rolls Vol.v

<sup>65</sup> GD79/4/142

- 2) Thomas described as brother german of Alexander Blair of Balthayock in a Procuratory by James Blair, burghess of Dundee calling for him to resign with others the lands of Balgillo and Baldowie to Alexander, dated at Caithness 30 April 1469.<sup>66</sup>  
He was probably witness with his brothers to a charter at Inchture on 30 April 1489.
- 3) Patrick of Melginch. Patrick was admitted to Perth Guild on 12 August 1463 and as burghess of Perth was granted by David earl of Crawford, the lands of Melginch on 6 April 1467, although evidence of his relationship is lacking in these records. An entail of 1542 shows Blair of Melginch placed before Blair of Balgillo who are ahead of the Ardblair branch. (See Appendix i) Thus this placing of Patrick here is in keeping with the order. Patrick was progenitor of the Blair of Melginch and Blair of Balgray cadets of Balthayock. He died about 1471. {See Blair of Melginch.}
- 4) George. This is hypothesised as proof is wanting but a George Blair is found to have a third part of Balgillo in 1460, perhaps as a parental gift. With the consent of Alexander Blair of Balthayock, he sold this portion on 20 February 1460/1 at Dundee to Mr James Blair, burghess of Dundee, who can be identified as second son of William Blair of Ardblair. This George Blair had a son described as Patrick Blair, son and heir of the deceased George Blair on 5 February, 1473/74 when he resigned the lands of Balgillo with the mill, into the hands of Alexander Blair of Balthayock the superior thereof. Witnesses to this included David Blair in Bendochy, hypothesised later as the fifth son of William Blair of Ardblair.

Patrick appeared described as a squire when witnessing with his father a charter on 4 May 1427 in favour of Sir Walter Ogilvy of Lintrathen.

At an Inquisition of Retour, in Forfar on 31 October 1438, for the service of David Rossy as heir to his grandfather, a Patrick Blair is given as one of the jurors. His position on the list suggests that he was not one of the senior lairds and thus may have been this son of Thomas. Given the location of the retour and also the lands associated with Christian, it seems probable that she was the daughter of Walter Ogilvy of Carcary and Lintrathen. It is also deduced that through this marriage the barony of Blacklunans transferred from Ogilvy of Lintrathen (later of Airlie) to Blair of Balthayock. Formerly Blacklunans had been owned first by the de Kinross family and then the Ogilvy of Auchterhouse/Lintrathen family. About 1225 on the marriage of Dionisia, her father, John de Kinross granted to her spouse Alexander de Ogilvy the lands of Belauht Clunoe and Hauht Nahaele (Balclunoch and Auchnahall) and thus this charter came with Christian Ogilvy, presumably on her marriage about 1430, to be held in the Blair of Balthayock charterchest.

It seems that Patrick died before 25 July 1442 (or 1452), on which date at Dundee, Alexander Ogston of that ilk and lord superior of the barony of Craig of Glenisla, granted Christian, Patrick's widow, ward of the lands of Blacklunans (Balclunoch), Forfarshire.<sup>67</sup> The charter extract refers to Thomas Blair as the deceased father of Patrick but some doubts arise over the earlier date as Thomas survived to 1452. Christian Ogilvy may have survived to 1486 in which year, on 12 May, Alexander Blair of Balthayock was infeft in the lands of Blacklunans as son and heir of the deceased Patrick Blair following a precept by Margaret Ogilvy, Countess of Buchan.<sup>68</sup>

Note that a Patrick Blair was procurator for Thomas Schelgrene on 23 March 1446 when an eighth part of the lands of Kinnell were resigned to Sir John Ogilvy of Lintrathen.<sup>69</sup> Also in 1450 a Patrick Blair confirmed to the King's Treasurer that the chaplain of St Margaret's Chapel in Edinburgh

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<sup>66</sup> Balthayock Charters 33

<sup>67</sup> Balthayock Charters 24

<sup>68</sup> Balthayock Charters 36

<sup>69</sup> History of Carnegies, Earls of Southesk.

Castle had been paid his annual fee of £10. Neither of these could not be the above Patrick, if the earlier date of the Charter to his widow is correct. There is also some confusion regarding a safe conduct granted to Thomas Blair in 1460 as discussed below.

### *Alexander Blair (1435c - 1492c)*

It is recorded that the heir of Thomas, recovered from ward the lands of Cults by sasine shortly before Whitsunday 1454 on payment of £76 2s 4d to the Crown.<sup>70</sup> The total burden of his lands to the Exchequer was the considerable sum of £993.2s3d which presumably covered the relief from ward of all his lands held of the Crown. Although Balthayock is not mentioned, the Libri Responionum records that in this same year of 1454, Alexander Blair had sasine of the lands of "Ardblair" and "Balduary" in the Sheriffdom of Forfar.<sup>71</sup>

Clearly, these were the lands of Ardler and Baldowrie in that county and certainly not to be confused with Ardblair in Perthshire which was held by a cadet.

It was not until 12 May 1486 that Alexander was given precept for infeftment in the lands of Balclunoch, now called Blacklunans. The Blairs of Balthayock are said by MacFarlane to have long held the barony of Blacklunans.<sup>72</sup> The Barony seems to have comprised Bleaton, Drumföck, Borland, Coldrach, Balclunoch itself and Achnahall as all appear in their charters. Significantly Mount Blair rises above Blacklunans. That Alexander's mother, Christain Ogilvy had been granted ward of Blacklunans on the death of her husband, it appears that the lands of this barony were a Blair possession from an earlier date, perhaps even from the time of Stephen de Blair.

Alexander is mentioned as a witness to a charter of Scone Abbey on 7 April 1454.

It was about this time that Alexander reached his majority and married. At Aberdalgie on 21 June 1455, Margaret Oliphant relict of Sir John Oliphant of Aberdalgie, Laurence Oliphant of Aberdalgie and Alexander Dundas of Fingask made a Bond of Relief to free William Lord Hay earl of Errol of the payment of £200 Scots for which William and Laurence were bound to William Murray of Tillybardine for the marriage of Alexander Blair of Balthayock.<sup>73</sup>

The marriage of Alexander to Christian, daughter of the deceased Sir John Oliphant was to bring Alexander close to the local power base. At Perth in 1461, Laurence Lord Oliphant discharged a dispute with the Town of Perth in the presence of "wel-beloved friendis" Henry Wardlaw of Torie, Alexander Blair of Balthayock, James Hering, John Moncreiff and others.<sup>74</sup> On 31 May 1469, Alexander made a Bond of Manrent to Lawrence, Lord Oliphant for five years when he pledged his service to "my gude brother in law". Thereafter, Thomas Blair appears frequently as a witness to Oliphant charters. He was principal witness of several including Walter Murray's Bond of Manrent on 2 December 1478.

Alexander and Christian had sons:

1. Thomas his heir more of whom later
2. David described as son of Alexander Blair of Balthayock when admitted as a Guild Brother by Patrick Wells, the Dean of Guild of Perth, on 20 November 1489.<sup>75</sup> He was described as Dean of Guild when witness to a charter on five riggs of Rait in April 1491. His son, Alexander, was also a burges in Perth from 1506 and was provost of Perth probably in

<sup>70</sup> Exchequer Rolls Vol.v

<sup>71</sup> Exchequer Rolls Vol.vii

<sup>72</sup> MacFarlane, Walter, Genealogical Collections 1750-1751

<sup>73</sup> RH1/6/66

<sup>74</sup> The Moncreiffs and the Moncreiffes

<sup>75</sup> Perth Guildry Records

1513 and in 1531. Alexander was still alive in July 1528 when his son, Alexander Blair ygr. was admitted burgess and guild brother in right of his living father. This Alexander is mentioned in the entail of 1542. He was a bailie of Perth from 1545 and appears in Guild records of 1562.

The lairds of Balthayock held clear legal title of the lands of Balgillo as agreed in Parliament. William, the eldest son and heir of William Blair of Ardblair on 15 March 1463/4 resigned a third part of Balgillo to Alexander.<sup>76</sup> In 1466, Alexander had sasine of the lands of Balgillo. As mentioned under the previous section, George Blair and his son Patrick Blair held these lands of Balgillo of the laird of Balthayock.

It is recorded in the Calendar of Documents relating to Scotland that about 1460, *Thomas of Blayr of Rodyok and Robert Mercer of Innerbether* with eight attendants then in Flanders sought and obtained from King Henry VI a safe conduct through England to return to Scotland. Rodyok is a corruption of Bathock or Balthayock and Innerbether is clearly Innerpeffray. The name, Thomas Blayr of Balthayock may be erroneous as the laird of that name had deceased by that date. It suggests that Alexander had travelled abroad to Flanders with another Perthshire laird, Robert Mercer of Innerpeffray. Most likely the name has been wrongly entered or confused from Alexander son of Thomas.

Alexander Blair of Balthayock was witness at Kettins on 13 June 1468 and at Stirling five months later on 7 November. He attended the Parliament in Edinburgh on 17 February 1472/3. In July of that year, Alexander Blair of Balthayock requested an instrument of the Lords Auditors that Lord James Ogilvy was prosecutor on his behalf in presence of the lord auditors in a certain cause of Giles Seres.

He was mentioned along with others of the witnesses as kinsman of Lord Oliphant in the latter's charter to his kinsman Thomas Guthrie on 12 October 1473. Laurence Lord Oliphant and Alexander Blair were also mentioned two months previously with regard to legal instruments.

Alexander was accompanied by William Blair of Ardblair and Thomas Blair, probably Balthayock's son, when they sat on a panel of Inquest on 27 May 1476 at Perth for the retour of Robert Douglas as heir to his deceased father, Sir Henry Douglas of Lochleven.<sup>77</sup>

A summons was brought on 17 March 1478/9 by John Drummond of Cargill against Lord Oliphant, Robert Crichton of Kinnoull, Alan Kinnaird of that Ilk, Robert Ross of Craigie, Alexander Blair of Balthayock, Andrew Charters of Cuthilgurdie and others for a wrongful inordination made by them.<sup>78</sup> Alexander was a witness on 17 April 1479 to a Notarial Instrument of Walter Lindsay son of the deceased Walter Lindsay of Lekoquhy.<sup>79</sup>

An interesting Notarial Instrument dated 9 June 1483 records that at the Parish Church of Perth at the Altar of St. Monan, David Ogilvy of Inchmartin confirmed his readiness to perform his obligations to John Moncreiff of that Ilk regarding a contract. This was done in the presence of Laurence Lord Oliphant, Alexander Blair of Balthayock and others including Thomas Blair son and heir apparent of Alexander Blair.<sup>80</sup> This association of the Blairs with David Ogilvy of Inchmartin was probably as a result of or to result in a marriage contract between Thomas Blair and Marjory Ogilvy about this time.

A month later, on 30 July 1483, Alexander and others issued a Decreet Arbitral following their adjudication of a dispute over the peatmoss of Arnbothy between the Abbot of Scone and Thomas

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<sup>76</sup> Balthayock Charters 28

<sup>77</sup> GD150/163

<sup>78</sup> Acta Dominorum Auditorum

<sup>79</sup> Panmure Muniments GD45/16/546

<sup>80</sup> Moncreiff F., The Moncreiffs and Moncreiffes

Wardroper of Gothens. Among the witnesses to this document were Thomas Blair apparent of Balthayock, Patrick Blair and David Blair in Banchory.<sup>81</sup>

At Balthayock on 3 February 1489, Alexander sold to David Blair of Bendochy his lands of Balgillo and it would seem that this was the founding of one of the major cadets of Balthayock,<sup>82</sup> more of whom later. Alexander had a third part of the lands of Westfield of Dundee which, although a small parcel, featured over many years in the history of Balthayock and cadets holdings.<sup>83</sup> Alexander was in Edinburgh on 20 June 1489 when with the Abbot of Scone and Constable of Dundee, he witnessed an Indenture whereby Janet Fenton resigned her quarter share of the barony of Baikie to John Lord Glamis.<sup>84</sup>

At Inchmartin on 30 April 1489, Alexander was witness to a charter of David Ogilvy along with Thomas Blair and Patrick Blair. The relationship is not given but these appear to be his brothers in order of seniority.<sup>85</sup>

By 3 April 1490, Alexander's eldest son is described as Thomas Blair of Goddens.<sup>86</sup>

An Instrument regarding the possession of a piece of land adjacent to Rait near Balthayock was witnessed by Alexander and the earlier mention burgess, David in April 1491. In the preliminaries to this, on 6<sup>th</sup> July 1490, Thomas Blair of Goddens, when signing, was described as son and heir apparent to Alexander Blair of Balthayock.<sup>87</sup>

The seal of Alexander on a charter of 21 April 1491 shows his arms of a chevron between three roundles and in lower case Gothic letters "*S. alex blair*".<sup>88</sup>

On 13 February 1491/2, Alexander on behalf of himself and his tenants brought an action against Alexander Inglis for wrongfully grazing his cattle on the lands of Cults.<sup>89</sup> Alexander Blair probably died later that year of 1492. His widow, Christian Oliphant was conjunct fiar of the lands of Ardler and Baldowrie which she held after his decease up to the time of her death about 1515.<sup>90</sup>

### ***Thomas Blair (1460c - 1499)***

Thomas was witness to an Instrument of Transumpt by decree of William, Bishop of Moray as requested by Allan Kinnaird of that Ilk.<sup>91</sup>

Another early reference to Thomas as son and heir apparent to Alexander Blair of Balthayock is discovered in a court action brought by him on 16 February 1483/4 against Andrew Spence for the payment of 800 merks due to him for the marriage of Andrew's daughter, Christian, to Alexander Justice the son and heir apparent of Alexander Justice.<sup>92</sup>

This baron is first designed as Thomas Blair of Goddens. The place Goddens is shown by various spellings Goddins, Gothins etc and lies 2 miles north of Balthayock and is described in the family papers as being in the barony of Baltroddie (Pitroddie). Prior to this, half of Goddens was held by the family of Wardroper of the superiors, Lindsay earls of Crawford.<sup>93</sup> It is assumed that Thomas extended the estate northwards by purchasing Goddens from Alexander Wardroper son of Thomas Wardroper perhaps about 1480. On the death of his father, Thomas took the title of Balthayock. As

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81 GD68/1/8

82 R.M.S. vol.ii chrtr 1941

83 Acts of the Lords of Council in Civil Causes 1496-1501 p.22 and p.143.

84 Glamis Charters Box5.item 117.

85 RMS ii. 1896

86 R.M.S. Vol.ii chrtr 2031

87 Liber Ecclesie de Seon Chrtr.226

88 Macdonald, Wm., Scottish Armorial Seals, Edinburgh 1904.

89 Acta Dominorum Auditorum

90 RSS Vol.i. 2858

91 Rossie Priory Papers MS100/1/30

92 Acta Dominorum Auditorum

93 Balthayock Charters 23 and 31

such he is mentioned in an assize of Angus lairds appointed to settle a disputed claim over the moor of Balnamoon.<sup>94</sup> Thomas attended three meetings in this inquiry in late 1496.

Thomas was served heir to his father in 1493, Robert, Lord Crichton of Sanquhar, giving precept of Clare Constat for infefting him in the lands of Balthayock on 23 April.<sup>95</sup>

Thomas married Marjory Ogilvy, presumably a daughter of Ogilvy of Inchmartin<sup>96</sup>.

They had sons:

- 1) Alexander, his heir.
- 2) John of Balmyle and Potento, near Coupar Angus. He married firstly Margaret Lindsay, sister of John, earl of Crawford and secondly, Margaret Elder. See under Blair of Balmyle.

Thomas Blair of Balthayock was a member of the Inquest of Retour in favour of James Haldane as heir of the deceased John Haldane of Gleneagles held on 1 October 1493.<sup>97</sup>

A Decreet Arbitral was made on 15 July 1494 by Andrew, Abbot of Lindores following the adjudication of the disputed lands on the marches of Cults belonging to Thomas and those of Tarvit belonging to Alexander Inglis.<sup>98</sup> Thomas Blair was witness at Inchmartin on 23 October 1495 to a charter of David Ogilvy of Inchmartin.<sup>99</sup>

Although most of the Balthayock estate was in Perthshire, the Blair lairds appear regularly to have played a significant role in Angus and Dundee. In 1495 a dispute arose about the border of lands on the south side of the Muir at Balnamoon near Brechin. Andrew Gray, the Sheriff of Forfar, convened an assize at Balnamoon on the third of October. Thomas attended along with sixteen Angus lairds to consider the case. Insufficient evidence was available and the assize reconvened on 31 October at the tolbooth of Dundee when again Thomas attended although there was a considerable change in the jurors present. Another, Gowrie laird, William Monorgand of that ilk also sat on this assize. Due to non-attendance of the complainant, the case was adjourned to 28 November 1495 when yet group of mainly Angus lairds comprised the assize at the tollbooth. Again Thomas Blair was a juror and on this occasion another Perth laird, James Hering of Cluny also attended. They found in favour of the Abbot and Convent of Aberbrothock.<sup>100</sup>

When a Decreet Arbitral between Archibald, fifth earl of Angus and John, earl of Crawford on the lands of Crawford-Lindsay was settled at Edinburgh on 17 June 1496, Thomas Blair of Balthayock and Sir Adam Crichton of Ruthven were present.<sup>101</sup>

Thomas had a share of the lands of "Baltrody", now known as Pitroddie, as mentioned in an action brought by Janet, Lady Lindsay against her son, John earl of Crawford on 20 March 1497/8.<sup>102</sup> This came about through an obligation made by John Lindsay while still Master of Crawford on 17 September 1494. Therein he declared that so soon as his sister-in-law, Janet Gordon, would vacate her conjunct infeftment of the lands of Baltroddie and mill there, he, within 40 days after his infeftment, would give sasine of the same to Thomas Blair.<sup>103</sup> This was not to be, for Janet Gordon was to outlive them and still retained her liferent of Potento in

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94 Liber Niger de Aberbrothoc Vol.2, Chrtr.354

95 Balthayock Charters 37

96 Acts of Lords of Council in Civil Causes 1496-1501 p.481

97 GD198/26

98 Balthayock Charters 39

99 RMS ii. 2280

100 Liber S. Thome de Aberbrothoc Chrtr.354

101 Douglas Charters No.144

102 Acts of the Lords of Council in Civil Causes 1496-1501 p.147

103 Balthayock Charters 40

1519.<sup>104</sup> This Janet Gordon was a much married lady: first to John, Lord Lindsay, second to Patrick Master of Gray, next Patrick Buttar of Gormack, next to James Hering of Glasclune and finally to James Halkerston.

These several transactions which involved the earl of Crawford and Thomas were undoubtedly as a result of the marriage bond between the earl's sister and the son of Thomas. The strength of this relationship is further demonstrated in a gift made at Edinburgh in 1496 by the earl John to Thomas Blair of the ward of the lands of Evelick in the barony of Baltroddie and also with the marriage of David Lindsay, son and heir of the deceased David Lindsay of Lechoquhy.<sup>105</sup>

Before the days of banking, land was used as security on loans and an annual rent was paid against the loan for interest. The land could be released on payment of the original capital sum. Such transactions were carried out before witnesses often at the High Altar of a parish church.

On 13 May 1496 at Balthayock, William Chalmers of Drumlochy agreed to return the lands of "Collorauch in Angus" on the payment by Thomas of £46 Scots within the parish kirk of Blair.<sup>106</sup> In this Obligation of Reversion Thomas is designed "of Balthayock, laird of Balclunoch", presumably as the lands involved lay on the Balclunoch grounds. This recovery of Coldrach near Blaton, supports the observation made in 1750 by genealogist Walter MacFarlane regarding the barony of Blacklunans being long held by Blair of Balthayock

The fortalice of Balthayock stood on a parcel of ground in feu of the Knight Templars of St. John of Jerusalem. An intriguing episode occurs which suggests that Thomas Blair may have had some association with this ancient order. On 9 July 1497, he was granted a licence to leave Scotland for a period up to two years in order to make a passage to St. John of Amiens in France. During his absence any legal matters outstanding against him were to be held in abeyance until his return to the realm.<sup>107</sup>

It is not discovered whether this was a pilgrimage, perhaps for his health or whether he returned, for within the period of this licence, Thomas died. His death was shortly before Whitsunday 1499. The lands of Cults had been in ward for two years after this time when in 1501, David Beaton is recorded as managing the terce of these lands.<sup>108</sup> Marjory Ogilvy, the spouse of Thomas, survived him. The executors of his estate were William Chalmer of Drumlochy and James Ogilvy of Inchmartin.<sup>109</sup> The latter was probably a close kinsman of Marjory.

### ***Alexander Blair (1483c - 1505)***

Although, he inherited the estate in 1499, it was not until 1504 that Alexander Blair took sasine of the lands of Cults<sup>110</sup>. A Brieve of Chancery dated 14 March 1504/5 was addressed to the Sheriff of Forfar in favour of Alexander as heir to Thomas Blair of Balthayock, his father.<sup>111</sup> It may have been that David Beaton was his tutor during this period and that Alexander reached majority in 1504.

Alexander was also retoured heir in the lands of Balthayock on 1 April 1505 and in the lands of Cults three weeks later, on 23 April.<sup>112</sup>

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104 RMS Vol.iii. 180

105 Balthayock Charters 42

106 Balthayock Charters 41

107 RSS Vol.i. 103

108 Exchequer Rolls Vol.xi

109 Acts of the Lords of Council in Civil Causes 1496-1501 p.481 and p.487.

110 Exchequer Rolls Vol.xii

111 Balthayock Charters 45

112 Balthayock Charters 46 and 47

Alexander brought an action against Thomas Balfour to remove him from his lands of Inchyra in November 1501.<sup>113</sup> He had gift of the ward of the lands of Berclay before 1503 under the Privy Seal although it does not appear in the Register. This is recorded in a civil action brought by John Inglis the Marshall against John Lindsay who had wrongly cropped hay from these lands. Alexander was witness at Perth on 16 April 1504 when Gilbert Gray purchased the Pokemill.<sup>114</sup> He witnessed a charter of Andrew Lord Gray, his father-in-law, on 1 August 1504.<sup>115</sup>

This young laird did not survive long to enjoy his estate for he died in mid-1505 after 27 May and before 3 October.

The Exchequer Rolls record that in 1509, the heir of Alexander Blair of Balthayock, had an allowance out of the lands of Blatoun during the temporary ward covering the past year and five terms preceding. The description suggests that Alexander had recently died leaving a young heir and the indication is that the date of his decease was three and a half years earlier. It seems that he attained only 22 years of age for the accumulated evidence places his birth about the end of 1483 which is in the same decade that his father is first mentioned in records.

In 1510, Alexander's heir again received 8s for the allowance and his terce or third part of the multures of Baledgarno. This allowance was coming from the lands of Robert Boyd of Pitkindie in and around Abernyste, 8 miles north east of Balthayock. In the same account of these lands, Euphemia Merser occupied Waukmill and other lands as her widow's terce from her late husband, Sir James Scrymgeour of the Feuland of Abernyste<sup>116</sup>. It is not clear whether any of these persons was related to Alexander Blair.

Alexander married Jane, daughter to Andrew, second Lord Gray by his wife Elizabeth Stewart. From their brief marriage, Alexander and Jean had issue:

1. Thomas, his heir apparent, possibly born about the year 1500.

During the minority of the next laird, there is a gap in the role of the Blairs of Balthayock from 1510 to 1520, no obvious mention being found of them even as witnesses.

Jean Gray was thereafter married to Thomas Fraser, Lord Lovat and thirdly in June 1528 to Sir David Lindsay of Edzell, earl of Crawford.<sup>117</sup> This is confirmed in a tack taken on 1 December 1534 by Dame Jane Gray, Lady Lovat, with consent of David Lindsay of Edzell, her spouse granting the tack of her terce of the lands of Cults for an annual rent of 24 merks to her son, Thomas Blair of Balthayock.<sup>118</sup> It appears that Janet Gray died about 1549, for at Dundee on 11 February 1549/50, a royal gift was made to Thomas Blair of the ward of Kinnell then in the Queen's hands through the death of Dame Janet Gray, conjunct fiar of Kinnell. This also included the marriage of the son the deceased Robert Fraser of Kinnell.<sup>119</sup>

### ***Thomas Blair (1500c - 1568)***

As a child of about five years of age, Thomas became heir to the estate of Balthayock in 1505. Following the death of Alexander Blair of Balthayock, Andrew Ayton paid to the Lord High Treasurer the sum of £213.6s.8d to purchase the ward of the deceased's estate. He received a letter of 3 October 1505 gifting him ward of the land of Cults by reason of the death of Alexander Blair of

<sup>113</sup> Acts of the Lords of Council in Civil Causes 1501-1503 p.80

<sup>114</sup> RMS Vol.ii . 2949

<sup>115</sup> Panmure Muniments GD45/16/550

<sup>116</sup> Exchequer Rolls Vol.xiii

<sup>117</sup> Town Clerk of Dundee Protocol Book 1518-1534 fol.116

<sup>118</sup> Balthayock Charters 83

<sup>119</sup> Balthayock Charters 116

24 **A GENEALOGY OF BLAIR OF BALTHAYOCK AND THEIR CADETS**

Balthayock.<sup>120</sup> This gave Ayton and his wife, Isobel Kincragie, control over the neighbouring lands of Cults in Fife. It may have given the Aytons of that Ilk influence over the young laird's future and in time his marriage.

Thomas was retoured heir to his father Alexander on 2 May 1509, and following on from this he was seised in the lands of Balthayock on 2 June 1509 as instructed on 6 May in a Letter of Attorney by King James IV to Patrick Gray and others.<sup>121</sup> Patrick Gray, uncle to Thomas, was probably his Tutor during the time of his ward.

The gift of ward of the lands of Ardlar was granted on 23 August 1508 to Robert Gray, another uncle of the young laird, he being another son of Andrew Lord Gray.<sup>122</sup> At this time the aged Christian Oliphant would still retain her conjunct rights of Ardlar.

Gilbert Gray of Buttergask was granted ward of the nonentry of the lands of Ardlar and Baldowrie on 26 January 1516/7 after the decease of Christian Oliphant, widow of Alexander Blair (gt-grandparents of Thomas).<sup>123</sup>

A letter of Attorney of 27 December 1511 to James Kincragie, dean of Aberdeen granted him the gift of marriage of the young laird and in the event of his death without marriage, the dean would have the marriage of any other heir of the deceased Alexander Blair of Balthayock.<sup>124</sup> The earlier mentioned Isobel Kincragie probably was close kinswoman of the dean, and on the death of her husband, Andrew Ayton, she and her son Robert were gifted ward of the lands of Cults on 9 July 1516. This Kincragie/Ayton connection probably led soon to the marriage of Thomas Blair to Katherine Ayton.

Thomas was retoured heir to his father in the lands of Goddens on 31 October 1524.<sup>125</sup> He was similarly retoured in Blatonhaugh on 4 May 1536 by the feudal superior, Janet Haliburton of Dirleton.<sup>126</sup>

It was not until 17 September 1521 that Thomas Blair was able to recover the lands of Cults out of ward. On that date he was granted sasine of Cults having agreed to pay the Sheriff of Fife £660 for its relief based on an annual rate of £40, it having been in the King's hands for the space of sixteen years.<sup>127</sup> The most likely reason for the lands being relieved in 1521 was that Thomas had reached then his majority. This debt, or part of it was still due to the King many years later, for on 8 August 1542, the son of this laird had a letter gifting to him the relief owing on Ardlar and Baldowrie through the death of Alexander Blair of Balthayock his father and Thomas, his grandfather.<sup>128</sup>

Thomas Blair married Katherine Ayton who was presumably the daughter of the laird Andrew Ayton of that Ilk in Fife. (The birth brief of Alexander Blair of Paris drawn up in 1674, mentions a Mary Ayton daughter of the Laird of Ayton).

By Katherine, Thomas had three sons and four daughters:

- 1) Alexander his heir
- 2) William, named as second son in the entail of 1543. He is described as brother german to Alexander in numerous contracts recorded in the Town Clerk of Perth's Book and in charters dated 5 April 1574 at Goddens and 24 January 1574/5 at the

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120 RSS Vol. i. 1147

121 Balthayock Charters 52,53 and 54

122 RSS Vol.i.1716

123 RSS Vol.i. 2858

124 RSS Vol.i. 2345

125 Balthayock Charters 64

126 Balthayock Charters 84

127 Exchequer Rolls Vol.xiv

128 R.S.S. Vol.ii. 4816

- Church of Kinnoull and also another dated 15 February 1580/1.<sup>129</sup> He subscribed to a bond of caution at Balthayock on 22 September 1598.<sup>130</sup> Later he is mentioned in the Fife sasines with his brother, Patrick. William had sons John and William who appeared with him at the Parish Kirk of Kinnoull as witnesses in 1574.<sup>131</sup>
- 3) Patrick named as the youngest in the same entail. When witnessing a procuratory for the transfer of Clien from John Hedderwick to John Blair in 1569, he was described as brother german to Alexander Blair of Balthayock.<sup>132</sup> In a charter to William Hering of Cally on 12 November 1580, he was designed Patrick Blair of Wester Cults, portioner of Liff.<sup>133</sup> His kinsman Patrick Blair of Balmyle contracted to marry Elizabeth Crichton daughter of John Crichton of Ruthven by his spouse Janet Fraser. The laird of Balmyle fell at the battle of Pinkie Cleuch 19 months later leaving Elizabeth a young widow. This Patrick married Elizabeth and both survived beyond 1600.<sup>134</sup> He was designed as Patrick Blair portioner of Liff, when witness on 7 April 1575 to the preliminary marriage contract of Jane Blair of Balmyle and William Blair apparent of Balgillo. On 5 March 1585, they had a feu of a third part of the Kirkton of Liff from the Abbey of Scone when he was described as brother german to Alexander Blair of Balthayock.<sup>135</sup> Patrick and Elizabeth had a son and heir, Thomas, all being alive when they disposed of the lands of Kirkton of Liff on 15 August 1600 and apparently surviving in January 1602 when the charter was registered.<sup>136</sup> He is also mentioned later in the Fife Sasines.<sup>137</sup>
  - 4) Catherine, who married Thomas Chalmers of Northleys, mention being made of their marriage contract in a charter signed at Kinnoull on 27 May 1549.<sup>138</sup> Of interest is a contract made on 10 December 1573 between Edmund Hay in the Mill of Auchnere and Thomas Chalmer, the son of Margaret Blair, widow of late Thomas Chalmer and liferentrix of a quarter part of Durdie.<sup>139</sup> The document recites an earlier contract showing that the late Thomas was son of John Chalmer but no designation is given to them. The Blair witnesses were Alexander of Friarton, Andrew in the Mains of Errol and Thomas in Inchyra. Although none of these suggest a close link to Balthayock, the possibility remains that she was Margaret Blair, daughter of Thomas Blair of Balthayock.
  - 5) Margaret mentioned as daughter to Thomas and Katherine in a contract made with her brother Alexander on 3 January 1566.<sup>140</sup> As only Margaret and Christian are mentioned as daughters in that contract, it can be deduced that they were yet unmarried.
  - 6) Isabel, who married John Lindsay of Evelick, a neighbouring laird, and had issue. Their premarital contract granting to her a liferent out of the lands and Barony of Montago was signed at Balthayock on 12 February 1551/2.<sup>141</sup>
  - 7) Christian, who was contracted to marry Alexander Blair son and heir of William (sic) Blair of Balgray, their contract being dated 5 January 1552/3.<sup>142</sup> The marriage

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129 B59/8/13 Malcolm Bower Protocol Book 1572-78

130 RPC. Vol. v

131 B59/8/13 Malcolm Bower Protocol Book 1572-78 fol. 16 and 59

132 Balthayock Charters 187

133 R Wedderburn's Protocol Book 1580-1585 fol.14

134 R.M.S. Vol.VI.1273

135 Liber Ecclesie de Scon, Bannatyne Club 1843

136 R.M.S. Vol.vi, 1273

137 Fife Sasines iv.5

138 R.M.S. Vol.iii, chrtr.323

139 B58/8/13 Malcolm Bower's Protocol Book 1572-1578. fol. 35v

140 Cal. Of Deeds Vol. 9 item 53

141 Balthayock Charters 133

## A GENEALOGY OF BLAIR OF BALTHAYOCK AND THEIR CADETS

probably was unfulfilled as she is included in the contract dated 3 January 1566. She probably married firstly to Thomas Chalmer, son of Thomas Chalmer of Seggieden as there is reference to their contract of marriage dated 13 August 1565.<sup>143</sup> She married later to William Ramsay of Murray, before 19 Nov 1568 though the final payment of her tocher of 800 merks was not paid until 8 November 1572.<sup>144</sup>

- 8) Eupham who married firstly to Andrew Scott about 1555. He was a younger son of Sir William Scott of Balweary.<sup>145</sup> They lived at the Kirkton of Kinfauns and had sons Andrew and Alexander and daughter Christian. Christian Scott married Thomas Morton in Balnakillie in 1573. Andrew senior died while his family were in their teens and William Blair, Eupham's brother was appointed Curator. The youth, Andrew Scott died thereafter, leaving his brother, Alexander as his heir.<sup>146</sup> Alexander Scott was betrothed to Janet Ogilvy at Kinnoull on 28 May 1578. Janet was the daughter of Andrew Ogilvy of Migvy and relict of John Brown of Panshill by whom she had family Henry, John, Thomas and Janet.<sup>147</sup> Alexander's son George was grandfather to Sir John Scott of Ancrum. Eupham Blair married secondly to James Monorgund of that Ilk before 10 November 1573.<sup>148</sup> Her testament was registered 8 July 1595.<sup>149</sup>

Thomas may also have had two natural sons:

- 1) Thomas who is described as son of Thomas in a court case in April 1549 but was not mentioned in the entail of Balthayock in 1542. He probably was granted a tack of Inchyra as during the later part of the 16<sup>th</sup> century Thomas Blair in Inchyra features frequently. Gilbert the son of Thomas Blair in Inchyra, on 18 April 1578, was contracted to marry Helen Cluny the daughter of John Cluny and Agnes Bolshin who lived in Clayburns.<sup>150</sup>
- 2) John who was mentioned in an indictment for murder in 1562 after his brothers, William and Patrick.<sup>151</sup> As an illegitimate son, he was not mentioned in the entail of 1542, but his father made provision for him as a tenant nearby in Clie with a pension of 10 merks out of the mill lands of Cults.<sup>152</sup> John married during the 1560's, to Christian Spence, widow of Gilbert Hedderwick and by her had a son Thomas Blair. Christian died about 1582.<sup>153</sup> John and his son, Thomas (born circa 1565), had a fourth part of the Mains of Clie plus 8 acres and the teind sheaves thereof held of the Abbey of Scone, their fee being dated 5 March 1585 on the resignation of John Hedderwick.<sup>154</sup> As a portioner of Clie, John and his wife had a charter of an acre of Clie on 12 July 1581.<sup>155</sup> John died about 1614.<sup>156</sup> John's son, Thomas Blair, was heir and portioner of Clie. Thomas married Janet Adamson who died about 1613.<sup>157</sup> Thomas gave a charter to his son and heir, Alexander, who married Isabel Brown, daughter of Henry Brown of Panshill on or before 10 May 1614.<sup>158</sup> On 19 July 1623, Thomas was

142 Balthayock Charters 135

143 RD1 / 9 Books of Council & Session Deeds 14 Apr 1567.

144 Balthayock Charters 176 and 204

145 Nisbet System of Heraldry Vol.2

146 Protocol Book of Malcolm Bowers 1572-78 fol.203 and 204.

147 Protocol Book of Malcolm Bowers 1572-78 fol.249v and 250

148 Balthayock Charters 32 and Protocol Book of Malcolm Bowers 1572-78 fol.32

149 Comm. of Edinburgh

150 B58/8/13 Malcolm Bower's Protocol Book 1572-1578. fol. 269

151 Pitcairn, Criminal Trials Vol.i Pt.i p.424

152 Balthayock Charters 185

153 Comm.of Edinburgh Test.reg.6 Feb 1582/3

154 Liber Ecclesie S.Trinitatis de Scon

155 Balthayock Charters 235,236

156 Comm.of St.Andrews Testament 9 Mar 1614

157 idem Testament 16 Aug 1613

158 Balthayock Charters 338 and GD190/2/86

described as "of Kinfauns" although the accuracy of this designation is doubtful.<sup>159</sup> It was probably the son of Alexander and Isabel, John in Clie who died about 1687.<sup>160</sup>

On the death of his cousin, Alexander Blair of Balmyle, Thomas Blair of Balthayock was appointed Tutor to Balmyle's son and heir Patrick about 1533.<sup>161</sup>

Thomas appears as a witness to various charters made at Perth by local barons including Gilbert Gray of Buttergask on 27 March 1520/1 and John Crichton of Ruthven on 2 October 1527. With John Blair of Ardblair he was a member of the Inquest of Retour of Service of John, Lord Glamis as heir to his father John Lyon in the baronies of Longforan and Inchturre on 8 October 1528.<sup>162</sup>

A dispute arose in 1523 with William Lindsay of Pyetstone who was using the lands of Barclarie in Fife without the agreement of Thomas. A five-year tack of these lands by William Lindsay was agreed on 29 May 1525 but this failed for on 15 April 1528 an Instrument of Ejectment warned William to remove himself and his goods from the lands of Barclarie. He failed to comply by 3rd June, so that the notary public and the witnesses accompanying him in the execution of the order, on arrival at Barclarie removed the goods of Lindsay and installed those of Thomas Blair.<sup>163</sup> This was not the end of disputes with his Lindsay neighbours in Fife and as late as 27 March 1550, Thomas issued a writ to the sisters, Elizabeth and Janet Lindsay and their subtenant to remove from the lands of Cults by Whitsunday.<sup>164</sup>

That Thomas fell foul of the early planning and building controls, is recorded in a Decreet dated 15 July 1532 by the Sheriff of Perth who found against him for constructing a mill below Balthayock and diverting the water away from the mill of Clie which belonged to the Commendator of Scone Abbey.<sup>165</sup> He participated in an assize led by his uncle, Gilbert Gray of Buttergask on 21 July 1533 in settlement of a dispute over the marches of Panmure.<sup>166</sup>

In 1538, when he sold his lands of Kirkton of Cults in Fife to Mr Henry White deacon of Brechin, the witnesses included Patrick Ogilvy of Inchmartin. This contract contained provision for the redemption of the same lands.<sup>167</sup> In this same year, Thomas had legal issues over his pendicle of land called the west part of Turfhill in Goddens. He claimed in May that he had been wrongly charged for nonentry by the superior, David earl of Crawford as he had been granted by the Crown the gift following the death of the previous earl. Then in September he raised a summons against the Commendator of Scone for impeding him in his possession of Turfhill. The following year saw him summons Alexander Lindsay of Armbathie for impeding him in the possession of Turfhill and Myremoss.<sup>168</sup>

Thomas appears to have taken considerable measures to ensure that he was properly installed in all of his family properties. On 12 February 1539/40 at Edinburgh, Thomas resigned into the hands of Walter, Lord St.Johns Preceptor of Torphichen, Knight of the Order of Jerusalem, his Temple lands of Balthayock with the tower fortalice. He was then immediately granted by Walter a new charter of the same lands and on the following day was given a Precept of Sasine.<sup>169</sup> On his return he was

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<sup>159</sup> Balthayock Charters 372

<sup>160</sup> Comm. of St.Andrews Testament 11 Oct 1687

<sup>161</sup> Balthayock Charters 80

<sup>162</sup> Glamis Writs

<sup>163</sup> Balthayock Charters 63, 65, 67 and 71

<sup>164</sup> Balthayock Charters 128

<sup>165</sup> Balthayock Charters 77

<sup>166</sup> Panmure Muniments GD45/16/580

<sup>167</sup> R.M.S. and Balthayock Charters 89 and 91

<sup>168</sup> Balthayock Charters 87, 90 and 93

<sup>169</sup> Balthayock Charters 95 and 96

seised in Balthayock on 18 February.<sup>170</sup> An official Transumpt was made by the vicar of Dunlop from the protocol books of Andrew Doit, Balthayock Notary on 21 April 1539.

An assize on 5 May 1539 regarding William Moncreiff of that Ilk and part of the lands of Gorthy was headed by Thomas Blair and included John Moncur of Ballunie and John Blair of Melginch.

Thomas took sasine of the lands of Ardler in 1540 and the following year, the lands of Baldowrie<sup>171</sup>. These lands of Ardler, Baldowrie, in Angus, together with Cults in Fife and Goddens in Perth were incorporated and created as a free barony as granted under the Great Seal on 10 January 1542/43. At this time, an entail of considerable length was drawn up to identify the order of inheritance of this Barony of Ardler and proves very useful to the genealogist. (See Appendix i)

A further charter in this Register, records that Thomas was appointed bailie of the waters of Tay on 23 August 1553. This Office of Searcherie is a fine early example of conservation policy. It specified the keeping of the water of Tay between Meigdrum and the Heads of Scone from the killing of fry and smelts from the last day of February to the first of June yearly and to keep the water free from the killing of black fish in forbidden time. It was rewarded with all fees from the river fishing.<sup>172</sup>

Janet Gray, the mother of Thomas, married secondly to Lord Lovat and after his death she married David Lindsay of Edzell. Thomas was witness at Dundee to a charter to David Lindsay and Janet, Lady Lovat on 27 November 1538 and to another on the lands of Edzell 19 March 1538/9.<sup>173</sup>

A royal letter of 11 February 1549/50 gifted Thomas Blair the ward of the lands of Kinnell and the marriage of the young heir through the death of Robert Fraser of Kinnell and through the death of the late Dame Janet Gray, the mother of Thomas.<sup>174</sup>

About this time, the family was prospering and Thomas was able to redeem several of his lands which previously had been wadset to raise capital. He redeemed his lands of Roughleys, Kirkton of Cults from John Balfour and Janet Smith on payment to them of 500 merks and the lands of Walton from John Fullarton for 150 merks in the early months of 1551.<sup>175</sup> On 14 May 1551, his son Alexander Blair met with John Paterson, Snowdon Herald, and his spouse Agnes Ayton at St.Giles in Edinburgh and in the transaction there paid them £100 to recover the lands of Wester Cults.<sup>176</sup> Agnes may have been close kinswoman to Katherine, Lady Balthayock.

The sixteenth century was one of considerable change in Scotland. The growing pressures for reform of the church led to the formation of new factions not always based on family bonds but still frequently so. The powerful neighbour, England, too posed a threat from time to time. After the English Church broke with Rome, the Scots in favour of Reformation were inclined to look to the "auld enemy" for assistance and thus created more tension and confusion of loyalties. Dundee with its strong trading links with Europe was a centre of interest in reformation during the first half of the sixteenth century. Indeed, it has been described as the Geneva of the North. Inevitably, the lairds of Angus played an important role in the progress of the Reformation in Scotland. Being an important laird in Gowrie between Perth and Dundee, led Thomas Blair of Balthayock into the politics of the time as the following demonstrates.

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<sup>170</sup> Balthayock Charters 97

<sup>171</sup> Exchequer Rolls Vol.xvii

<sup>172</sup> Balthayock Charters 137

<sup>173</sup> RMS Vol.iii.1874 and 1951

<sup>174</sup> Balthayock Charters 116

<sup>175</sup> Balthayock Charters 125 and 126

<sup>176</sup> Balthayock Charters 129

Landholders were bound by feudal law to provide men and arms for service to the king or lord superior. Various reasons could deter a laird from meeting such obligations and in 1540 Thomas Blair failed to supply his obligation to King James V in a Raid on Solway. Several other lairds in the Tay area refrained from attending this Raid as they were unsympathetic to Cardinal David Beaton's pro-French / anti-Reformation policy which instrumented this attack on England. This was deemed a treasonous act of omission but on 10 March 1539/40 Thomas was granted a remission for abiding from the Army at Solway.<sup>177</sup> A later engagement on Solway Moss on 24 November 1542, brought an end to the campaigns of King James V and a week after the birth of his daughter and heir, Mary, King James gave up the will to live and died at Falkland on 14 December 1542. This encouraged the English to press for a marriage between the young rulers of the two countries and led to the years of the Rough Wooing. During this period, Thomas and other local lairds were sent a letter on Christmas Eve 1544 to be at the Lord Governors in Edinburgh on St. John's Day.

In another letter he was instructed with other neighbours to "*pas to Dundee to remain ther upon the said shippis.*" Following the disastrous defeat of the Scots Army at Pinkie Cleuch on 10 September 1547, an English garrison occupied Broughty Castle covering the sea approach to Dundee. The town of Dundee thus suffered from raids by the English and there is little doubt that Thomas and his men were called on to offer some defence from time to time.

During the 1540's, the Friaries in Dundee were attacked and their icons destroyed by the local population who supported the views of Lutherans. Other disputes between reformers and conservatives probably heightened existing feelings of bad blood in the neighbourhood. It may have been one such dispute which set the Blairs against their neighbours, the Charteris or Charterhouse family whose interests were also in Kinfauns. This led to the killing of Henry Dempster, a chaplain, John Charteris, Alexander Charteris, John Gray, John PULLOW and two others.

Thomas Blair of Balthayock, his son Thomas, John Moncur of Balmyle and nine others were indicted for the slaughter of these men and were ordered to find surety.<sup>178</sup> On 14 May 1549, the Laird of Moncreiff whose lands lay on the south bank of the Tay opposite Balthayock, provided the surety.<sup>179</sup> That there may have been some religious overtones is supported in that Robert Osler, a vicar was named among the Blair party. Nevertheless, the indications are that the Blair party were retaliating in a blood feud on behalf of the Moncur of Balluny and the Moncreiffs, for Thomas Charteris of Kinfauns was summoned to appear on the same day for the murder of James Ross of Craigton, Gilbert Moncreiffe and Margaret Douglas, Lady Balluny. This involvement probably has its origins in a Bond of Maintenance entered into by John Ross of Craigie, William Moncreiffe of that Ilk and Thomas Blair of Balthayock made at Perth on 22 April 1544 binding themselves to take part with each other in all their just and lawful acts.<sup>180</sup>

Although prospering at this time, this placed Thomas out of royal favour. Failure to attend the Queen's Army also kept him in the category of rebel but on 20 July 1553 he received remission for the latter and also for his part in the killing of "Sir Alexander Dempster". This appears to be an error for the murdered chaplain was called Henry Dempster. The title Sir was a polite title to clerics and does not imply that he was a knight.

This local dispute with the Laird of Kinfauns did not end there however. On 2 May 1562, Thomas Blair of Balthayock, Alexander Blair apparent of Balthayock, William, Patrick and John Blair, sons of Thomas Blair, Thomas, son to Alexander and Alexander Blair tutor to Balmyle, along with forty six others, were obliged to find surety to appear for the "*crewell slaughter of*

<sup>177</sup> Pitcairn, Criminal Trials Vol.i Pt.i p.254 and RSS Vol.ii. 3445

<sup>178</sup> idem Vol.i Pt.i p.343

<sup>179</sup> Moncreiff,F; The Moncreiffs and the Moncreiffes. p.78, Edinburgh 1929.

<sup>180</sup> Balthayock Charters 107

*umquhle Alexander Rae, burges of Perth and diverse utheris crymes contenit in the Letteris.*" Also called to appear at this same time were John Charteris of Kinfauns, David, his brother and many others to answer the charge that with 24 persons they had come upon the Laird of Balthayock giving him injurious words. Protesting at this John Charteris claimed that he was a Parish Clerk. The implications of these trials and the comments made, may suggest that the Charteris were a Reforming family and that the Blairs of Balthayock were conservatives.<sup>181</sup> This is not evident however. The laird of Balthayock took part in the Reformation Parliament of 1560, Thomas being listed between John Crichton of Ruthven and Ogilvy of Inchmartin. The laird of Balthayock also appeared among the King's Men during the Civil War following this period and therefore was among the reformation party at that time.

The records of these murders have drawn comment from various general writers of local histories who have extrapolated the deeds of these times to insinuate that the Blair families were among the most wild and lawless in the country. When viewed in the context of a country in the throes of Reformation and partial occupation by an enemy force it seems less awesome.

A year after the death of Alexander Rae, the "warring" neighbours Thomas Blair and John Charteris agreed to invite John, earl of Atholl and others to settle all the disputes and differences subsisting between them.<sup>182</sup>

It is of interest that just before the Reformation, Thomas Blair made an appeal to the Pope which arose as follows: Thomas and his tenant, the earlier mentioned John Balfour of Roughleys, stood accused of casting turfs for fuel and building and reconstructing houses on the glebe of Robert Menzies, the vicar of Cults. At an ecclesiastical court, Mr William Cranston, Professor of Theology of St.Salvators College, St.Andrews found against them and sentenced them to excommunication. Thomas appealed to the Pope on 11 May and a Papal Communication dated 5 June at Rome agreed to relieve him from church censure by paying an annual rent of 8 merks for 25 years.<sup>183</sup>

Alexander, the brother of the deceased Patrick Blair of Balmyle, was involved in 1554 in a barbarous attack in Blairgowrie which led to the murder of William Drummond of Leidcreiff and as a result, his goods were escheated and made over to Thomas Blair of Balthayock.<sup>184</sup> Eight years later, on 11 July 1562, a contract was drawn up between them whereby, Alexander was to receive a yearly pension of 4 chalders of victuals, £6 8s 0d Scots, 2 geese and 24 poultry out of the lands of Baldowrie. For his part, he was to surrender to Thomas all charters and letters of reversion made to the deceased laird of Balmyle on the lands of Potento and Balmyle.<sup>185</sup> On 3 January 1566, Thomas Blair, Katherine Ayton his spouse and William, Patrick, Margaret and Christian agreed a contract with Alexander Blair the eldest son.<sup>186</sup> No mention is made of the other sisters.

The earlier discord between Thomas Blair and his neighbour John Charteris was now behind them although at the end of July 1567, they appointed a new set of arbiters to settle their respective marches between Balthayock and Kinfauns. This was done amicably and a few days later on 4 August, Catherine, daughter to Alexander Blair the heir apparent of Balthayock, took sasine of a liferent out of the lands of Rybno, Gowkton and Tullybow in the barony of Kinfauns

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<sup>181</sup> Pitcairn, Criminal Trials Vol.1 Pt.1 p.424

<sup>182</sup> Balthayock Charters 163

<sup>183</sup> Balthayock Charters 144 and 145

<sup>184</sup> Balthayock Charters 141

<sup>185</sup> Balthayock Charters 159

<sup>186</sup> Cal. Of Deeds Vol.9 item 53.

as her prenuptial contract with George Charteris, son and apparent heir of John Charteris of Kinfauns.<sup>187</sup>

It has been described how land was used regularly for security on borrowing in the times before banking. Another function of banks is the safe keeping of documents. This too had its early equivalents. A neighbour, Thomas Chalmers, fiar of Seggieden, left in keeping with Thomas Blair a coffer containing writs concerning Seggieden and Strathy Chalmer. It was not until May 1601 that the son, Thomas Chalmers of Seggieden and grandson, Patrick, collected the coffer from the next laird of Balthayock.<sup>188</sup>

Thomas died in early 1568. A Ratification of a contract dated 18 March 1568, shows that he was survived by Katherine Ayton and their three sons, Alexander, William and Patrick.<sup>189</sup>

### *Alexander Blair (1521c - 1603)*

Alexander may have been born about 1520 and is first mentioned as heir apparent of Balthayock when he had a precept of sasine by Gilbert Blair of Balmyle for infefting him in the east fourth part of the lands of Balmyle on 5 April 1542.<sup>190</sup> He is the first heir in the entail of 1543.

Alexander was served heir to his father, Thomas, in the lands and barony of Balthayock in 1568. Details of his various infeftments will follow later.

Alexander married firstly to Janet Ogilvy, probably about 1545. Although no contract of marriage has been located it is deduced that she was daughter to Patrick Ogilvy of Inchmartine by his first wife, Mariot Stewart. Janet, daughter of Patrick Ogilvy of Inchmartine and her father were granted the gift of non-entry of the lands of Ardler on 6 April 1536.<sup>191</sup> The lands are significant as Blair of Balthayock was baron of Ardler. The name of the mother of Alexander's son mentioned in the birth brief of 1674 is given as "Isabella Ogilvy lawful daughter of Sir John Ogilvy of Inchmartine and Anna Gray".<sup>192</sup> These are all erroneous presumably as they were derived from poor research rather than family knowledge. Confusion seems to arise in that William Ogilvy, Janet's eldest brother married Janet Gray in 1541, thus ruling them out as feasible parents of Alexander's wife..

Balthayock Charter 207 {see illustration} provides confirmation that Janet Ogilvy was indeed the spouse of Alexander and that she had deceased by January 1572/3. When Patrick Ogilvy of Inchmartine granted a charter, on 21 April 1565, in favour of Patrick Ogilvy in Pitmiddle and to Janet Gray, the relict of his father, the principal witness was Alexander Blair of Balthayock. By that date Janet Gray had married James Sandilands of St.Monance.<sup>193</sup>

Alexander married secondly to Giles, also known as Edigia, widow of William Scrymgeour fiar of Myres and daughter of Laurence Mercer of Meikleour.<sup>194</sup> Their marriage took place before May 1573 and in accordance with the contract, on 31 July 1573 Giles was granted a liferent of the lands of Baldowrie and Ardler.<sup>195</sup> Giles brought with her family by her first marriage, James Scrymgeour the heir apparent of Myres and James, his brother german.<sup>196</sup>

<sup>187</sup> Balthayock Charters 168

<sup>188</sup> Balthayock Charters 303

<sup>189</sup> Balthayock Charters 178

<sup>190</sup> Balthayock Charters 105

<sup>191</sup> R.S.S.Vol.ii.1995

<sup>192</sup> R.S.S.

<sup>193</sup> Dundee City Archives; Thomas Ireland's Protocol Book 1534 – 72 fol.81

<sup>194</sup> R.M.S. Vol.v.chrtr.238 and PRS Vol.vi, 2047.

<sup>195</sup> Protocol Book of Malcolm Bower 1572-1578 f.10

<sup>196</sup> Protocol Book of Alex Wedderburn 1598-1600 p.119

Their arms are depicted on a shield of an entrance gate at Balthayock Castle. The shield is divided per pale, dexter being the Blair Arms of a chevron between three roundles and sinister the arms of Laurence Mercer being on a fess between three crosses pattee in chief and a star in base, three annulets. The shield is surmounted by the date 1578, presumably being when building modifications were undertaken, and below are the initials AB and GM.

By his first marriage, Alexander Blair and Janet Ogilvy had six sons and probably two daughters:

- 1) Thomas described as son to Alexander Blair of Balthayock younger in the indictment of 1562, and later described as heir apparent of Balthayock. He was the father of the next baron. He predeceased his father. See below.
- 2) John described as second son of Alexander in charter of his father granting him a liferent of the lands of Easter Cults on 23 December 1572.<sup>197</sup> David Thomson in Balthayock bequeathed sums of money to be paid to his brother James, burgess in Perth, his sister Giles and Lawrence Thomson his nephew and in addition a sum to be paid to John Blair this Obligation being recorded on 31 August 1578.<sup>198</sup> Described as brother to William Blair of Balquharmock in a horning by Alexander Kincaigie of against Blair of Balthayock and many cadets on 15 July 1593.<sup>199</sup> He was a merchant in Perth when admitted as a Guild Brother there on 21 April 1598 on payment of 40 shillings. He married Bessie Billie.<sup>200</sup> John was still in control of Easter Cults in 1603 when on 8 June, David Smith in Walton of Cults agreed to an obligation on the tacks of Easter Cults.<sup>201</sup> {See Blair of Pittendreich for further information on John and his sons.}
- 3) Andrew described as son of Alexander Blair of Balthayock when he represented his father in a contract on 21 March 1572/3 agreed with two burgesses of Perth and their spouses for the annual supply of victuals against an investment of 200 merks. The witnesses at Perth included William Blair in Loginpottie.<sup>202</sup> Andrew was seised in the sunny half of Walton of Cults with his spouse, Janet Rollo on 3 March 1578. She was daughter of Andrew Rollo of Duncurb and Marion Rollo. Janet was also described as sister to George Rollo of Duncrub. Their contract of marriage was dated 26 December 1574 at which time she was the widow of John Stewart of Keillebrochin.<sup>203</sup> He was a portioner of Nether Durdie when witness to a contract at Perth on 7 May 1593.<sup>204</sup> He was mentioned as cautioner to William Blair heir of Balquhormock in a summons raised by Alexander Blair of Balgray in 1608.<sup>205</sup> When he resigned his infetment of Walton of Cults on 11 November 1614, he was described as Andrew Blair of Rossieochill.<sup>206</sup> Andrew and George Hay of Ross resigned the lands of Nether Durdie, known as Durdie Inglis in 1621.<sup>207</sup> Andrew's eldest son, Andrew Blair married Marion Douglas between 24 March and 29 April 1607.<sup>208</sup> Their antinuptial marriage contract of the former date indicates that Marion was sister to Henry Douglas in Kenneston. It is not determined whether the latter was

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197 Balthayock Charters 204

198 Protocol Book of Malcolm Bower B59/8/13 fol.267v

199 Perthshire Hornings Vol. 6

200 Perth Guildry Book and Perth Deeds

201 Balthayock Charters 309

202 B58/8/13 Malcolm Bower's Protocol Book 1572-1578. fol.1v

203 Balthayock Charters 219

204 RD1 / 47 Books of Council & Session Deeds

205 CS7/232 2 Mar 1608

206 Balthayock Charters 342

207 RMS Vol.vi. 196

208 Perth Sasines RS52.5.492

the same as Mr Andrew Blair schoolmaster and Reader at Errol who was also kirk elder there in the district of Mains and Outfield of Errol in the first quarter of the 1600's. On 4 November 1612, Andrew Blair of Rossieochil provide a tocher of £1000 Scots for his daughter's marriage to William Blair of Tarsappie.<sup>209</sup> He was a member of an assize in 1620 with several other Blairs (see Laurence Blair of Over Durdie). William and Catherine had issue, Thomas Blair of Leitchill and William Blair of Willianston. Thomas Blair of Leitchill married Margaret Blair sister to Thomas Blair of Balthayock in 1633.<sup>210</sup>

- 4) William who was described as fourth son when his father granted him a liferent of the shady half of Welton in Myres.<sup>211</sup> {See illustration}. He was granted the lands of Potento on 5 April 1574. With his brother Andrew, he witnessed a contract made by his father on behalf of Giles Merser on 4 June 1574.<sup>212</sup> He married Margaret Arnot who appears to have been a daughter of John Arnot of Woodmill as the terms of their contract of marriage 14 May 1590 name him and his son also, John Arnot.<sup>213</sup> He was designed William Blair of Balquhormock when with his wife, they made a contract with Alexander Kincaigie of Pokemill dated 15 December 1592. This referred to an earlier contract made jointly with his father in June 1585 when he probably first gained the rights of a portion of Balquhormack.<sup>214</sup> On 24 May 1596, William was a member of an assize that included Alexander Blair of Balgay, John Blair of Melginch, Andrew Blair of Stenton, Patrick Blair son to the Laird of Balgillo, David Blair in Lethendie and Patrick Blair burgess of Perth.<sup>215</sup> He was witness to his grandnephew's charter in 1609.<sup>216</sup> He appears to have had issue, as he is described as William, elder in 1606.<sup>217</sup>
- 5) Peter described as a merchant and son of Alexander Blair of Balthayock when admitted to Perth Guildry on payment of £24 to the dean of Guild on 1 June 1587.<sup>218</sup>
- 6) Mr Alexander who after graduating M.A. St. Andrews in 1578, studied in France and settled in Berne.<sup>219</sup> Several families of Blair came of this union and settled in France, Switzerland and Southern Germany. "Letters Patent of the King of England attesting the antiquity of the Nobility of the Family of *BLAIR, BARONS OF BALTHAYOCK* in Scotland, and that those born in France are descended from them " dated 7 July 1674 were passed by Act of the Lords of the Privy Council and sealed in Edinburgh on 27 August 1674. The application was submitted by Alexander Blair of Paris who claimed that about 1585, his grandfather Alexander Blair had left Scotland and taken residence in Berne. His birth brief included therein needs careful interpretation. {See Blair Family in France.}
- 7) Katherine who was contracted to George, son and heir apparent of John Charteris of Kinfauns on 11 July 1567. Their prenuptial contract granted her a liferent of the lands of Rybno, Gowkton and Tulliebow in the Barony of Kinfauns.<sup>220</sup> Their marriage took place before 27 January 1583/4.<sup>221</sup>

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209 NRAS4320/4/1/1/17

210 NRAS4320/4/1/1/21

211 Balthayock Charters 207

212 B58/8/13 Malcolm Bower's Protocol Book 1572-1578. fol.57

213 RD 1 / 40 Books of Council & Session Deeds 9 Nov 1592

214 RD1 / 45 Books of Council & Session deeds 4 Jun 1593

215 RS49/1/13

216 R.M.S. Vol.vii.357

217 Perth Sasines RS52.5.56

218 Perth Guildry Records

219 Acta Facultatis Artium Universitatis Sanctiandree 1413-1588.

220 Balthayock Charters 168

221 RSS Vol.viii.1780

**A GENEALOGY OF BLAIR OF BALTHAYOCK AND THEIR CADETS**

- 8) Christine who married James Scrymgeour of Myres, son of Alexander's second wife<sup>222</sup>. Alexander in a letter dated 22 August (1603) to his son in Lescar University mentions his grandson "young guidman of ye Myrris".<sup>223</sup>
- 9) Isabel seems to be of this generation. She married Sir Patrick Murray of Byn and Drumcairn, fourth son of Sir Andrew Murray of Arngask. He died without succession in 1604.<sup>224</sup>

By Giles Merser, Alexander had three sons who were born before February 1580/1.<sup>225</sup>

- 10) Thomas, described in January 1580/1 as eldest lawful son by Giles Mercer in a charter granting him the town and lands of Kirkton of Cults. The entail of these lands names the other sons, Patrick and Laurence.<sup>226</sup> With his brothers Patrick and Laurence, he is mentioned in the Fife Sasines.<sup>227</sup>
- 11) Patrick, who married Margaret Bonar, daughter of William Bonar of Rossie, in June 1609 when he resided in Goddens.<sup>228</sup> He still resided there the following year.<sup>229</sup> Patrick was later designed "of Kincaroachie". Designed as such, he was member of an assize in 1617 along with Thomas Blair heir apparent of Balthayock, Alexander Blair of Balgray, Laurence Blair of Goddens and Andrew Blair of Rossieochill.<sup>230</sup> He was deceased by 1640.<sup>231</sup> His wife survived him.<sup>232</sup> They had a son, Major James Blair.<sup>233</sup>
- 12) Laurence, third son by Giles. (Said erroneously by Douglas to be the heir apparent.) Progenitor of Blair of Over Durdie. He was for a brief period around 1601 - 1606 designed Laurence Blair of Melginch. When he received sasine of Melginch the document dated 29 October 1601 describes him as "*son lawfull and eldest procreat betwixt Alexander Blair of Balthayock and Geills Merser his spouse.*"<sup>234</sup> He was probably also designed "of Goddens" around 1617.  
Laurence married Agnes Ayton and he had issue:
  - i) Major Patrick Blair sometime of Over Durdie, of Dunkenny and Eassie.
  - ii) Laurence Blair of Over Durdie. {See Blair of Over Durdie for further information on Laurence.}
- 13) James, presumably born after February 1581. Described as in Inchyra and son of Balthayock in 1593 when listed with his brothers, Laurence, Patrick and Thomas.<sup>235</sup>

In early September 1547, war was imminent and a strong English invasion force under the Duke of Somerset approaching Edinburgh. Just before marching out to encounter them, on 8 September Patrick Blair of Balmyle drew up his will nominating his brother german, Alexander, to be Tutor Testamentor, and Thomas Blair of Balthayock and Alexander, his son, to be curators

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222 R.M.S. Vol.vi, 2025

223 Balthayock Charters 311

224 Nesbit, A System of Heraldry Vol.2

225 R.M.S. Vol.v, 238

226 Balthayock Charters 234

227 Fife Sasines v.198

228 RMS and Fife Sasines v.198 and Perth Sasines RS52.6.477

229 GD112/ 51/90 and Perthshire Hornings Vol. 15 (10 Dec 1610)

230 RS49/1/17 1 June 1617

231 CC20/4/9 Testament of Dame Anna Murray

232 Deeds 1662; Mack.6.453

233 Deeds 1664; Mack.10.391

234 RS48/1.114

235 Perthshire Hornings Vol.6 21 jul 1593

of his children during their minority.<sup>236</sup> Two days later, a day known as Black Saturday, on the Field of Pinkie Cleugh the entire chivalry of Scotland was destroyed and around 10,000 Scots either fell there or were massacred in the retreat which developed into a rout. Many Angus and Perthshire lairds perished that day, Patrick among them. For the same reasons as Patrick, Andrew Scott in Kirkton of Kinfauns had also nominated Thomas Blair of Balthayock and his son Alexander to be curators to his children and this sad duty was recorded on 30 September 1547.<sup>237</sup> Not only did Thomas fulfill his role as Curator but the young Andrew Scott was wed to his daughter a few years later about 1555.

As already mentioned, for his involvement in the murder of William Drummond of Leidcreif, the goods of Alexander, brother of Patrick Blair of Balmyle were escheated and he also forfeited his tutorship of the Balmyle children. This and his goods were transferred to the son of Balthayock. On 2 May 1554 Alexander Blair apparent heir of Balthayock paid £100 for the relief of the lands of Balmyle and Potento which had been in ward from Martinmas 1547.<sup>238</sup> A Letter of Tutory by Queen Mary on 7 May 1555 nominated Alexander as Tutor Dative to Janet or Jane Blair daughter and heir of the deceased Patrick Blair of Balmyle until she attained majority.<sup>239</sup> This in time was to lead to Jane's marriage to his eldest son.

Alexander was Chamberlain of Coupar Angus Abbey when, on 20 June 1559, he witnessed a charter of Donald, Abbot of Coupar, on the Mill of Ledcassy<sup>240</sup> (later known as Mill of Carsie). This is of particular genealogical interest, as Ledcassy had been gifted to the abbey over three and a half centuries earlier by Stephen de Blair, the first of the Blair family.

Alexander Blair of Balthayock sat on the assize on 8 July 1564 for the trial of Andrew Ramsay, a burgess of Perth who was accused with others of attacking and wounding a servant of the laird of Craigie on the South Inch in January 1562. Also on this assize were John Blair of Melginch and Alexander Blair of Friarton.<sup>241</sup>

When Alexander made a contract between his father and himself on 13 August 1565, he did so with the consent Gilbert Monorgund of that Ilk, John Blair apparent of Balgillo, George Blair of Gairdrum and Alexander Blair of Friarton.<sup>242</sup>

As already mentioned, Alexander was served heir to his father, Thomas, in the lands and barony of Balthayock in 1568. Depending on the feudal superior, this happened at various times. He was seised in Blatonhaugh upon a precept of William, Lord Ruthven proceeding on a Letter of Attorney by King James VI dated 20 March 1567/8. James, Lord St.John, Preceptor of Torphichen gave Precept of Clare Constat serving him heir in the Temple Lands of Balthayock. The Precept was granted at Holyrood House on 30 April 1568.<sup>243</sup> For this he paid 20 shillings duty.<sup>244</sup> It was 11 November 1568 before he was seised in the lands of Balthayock following a Precept of Clare Constat by Edward, Lord Crichton of Sanquhar and Kinnoull.<sup>245</sup>

On 1 May 1568, Alexander also was seized in his lands in Angus, Fife and Perthshire earlier incorporated into the barony of Ardler, for which he paid the Sheriff of Forfar £133.6s.8d.<sup>246</sup>

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<sup>236</sup> Balthayock Charters 114

<sup>237</sup> Balthayock Charters 115

<sup>238</sup> Exchequer Rolls Vol.xviii

<sup>239</sup> Balthayock Charters 142

<sup>240</sup> Charters of Coupar Abbey

<sup>241</sup> Pitcairn, Criminal Trials, Vol.1.Pt.1.p452

<sup>242</sup> Cal. Of Deeds Vol.ix.56

<sup>243</sup> Balthayock Charters 173

<sup>244</sup> Balthayock Charters 171

<sup>245</sup> Balthayock Charters 170 and 175

<sup>246</sup> Exchequer Rolls Vol.xix

Like his father before him, as newly installed laird of Balthayock, Alexander now went about redeeming some of his lands which were burdened by wadset. Among those recovered were the lands of "Courach" (Coldrach) in the barony of Blacklunans, Lintrathen from William Chalmers of Drumlochy, half the lands of Hilton and Fethons in Cults from David Baxter, burghess of Cupar and Corlarach in Craig of Glenisla from Patrick Robertson of Balnakill and Grizell Rattray.<sup>247</sup>

Alexander bought out for a capital sum of 200 merks the pension which his brother William Blair had from the lands of Balthayock.<sup>248</sup> He also capitalised the pensions of his half-brother, John, for 100 merks in 1570 and his sister german, Eupham, for 120 merks in 1575.<sup>249</sup>

Other family transactions by Alexander show that he paid on 8 November 1572 the final sum of 300 merks of the 800 merks given to William Ramsay of Murray in payment of the tocher of his sister, Christian whose second marriage to William took place before November 1568 and probably during the life of their father. Alexander also provided pensions for his children granting his second son, John, liferent of the lands of Easter Cults and William, his fourth son, liferent of the shady half (north) of the lands of Walton in December 1572.<sup>250</sup>

He was mentioned as Alexander Blair younger of Balthayock on 27 December 1567 when adjudicating in a dispute between his namesake of Friarton with his wife Janet Kincaigie. On 16 February 1568/9 Alexander was nominated to a committee for pursuing Lord Huntly<sup>251</sup>. With his neighbour and wife's brother-in-law, Peter Hay of Megginch, he is at the end of the list which is headed by the earls of Atholl and Buchan and which included John lord Glamis and John lord Innermeath. All were strong supporters of the young King and newly Reformed Church and declared themselves faithful and obedient servants of our Sovereign Lord and that their lands and houses were in peril from the hostilities of George earl of Huntly and his accomplices who were noted Marians in the Civil War of this period.

Old tales of the Highlands are ever coloured by the outlawed Clan Gregor. Although this book is a history of a lowland Perthshire family, we cannot escape mention of that Clan. Following his mistreatment in 1563 by Sir Colin Campbell of Glenorchy, Mary Queen of Scots later granted Gregor Roy McGregor a warrant to kill the assassins of his kinsfolk. However, in 1569 a contract was signed by the Earl of Atholl, Glenorchy and others to suppress the Clan Gregor and as a result of this the young chief, Gregor, and his wife Marion, daughter of Campbell of Glenlyon, were forced into hiding. At a cave above Loch Tay, Gregor was captured by Glenorchy's men. At this critical time, Laurence Merser of Aldie, Alexander Abercrombie of Murthly, Alexander Blair of Balthayock and Peter Hay of Megginch were appointed justiciars on 6 August 1569 to try the imprisoned Gregor McGregor, son and apparent heir of Alastair McGregor of Glenstrae, for various crimes committed in bounds of Glenorchy, Breadalbane, Balquhidder and Menteith.<sup>252</sup> On 7 April 1570, Gregor was executed at the Castle of Balloch, now called Taymouth Castle.

There are two interesting charters in the Register of the Privy Seal. The first dated 1 August 1569 records the Royal gift of nonentry of the lands of Balthayock from the time of the decease of Edward, Lord Crichton of Sanquhar who was the lord superior of these lands. The second followed only five days later and was the gift to Alexander Blair of the relief of his own barony

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247 Balthayock Charters 179,180 and 190

248 Balthayock Charters 181

249 Balthayock Charters 185 and 225

250 Balthayock Charters 205 and 206

251 R.S.C. Vol.I. 598 and 645

252 GD121/1/847

of Ardler and lands of Baldowrie, Cults and Goddens of which he already had sasine.<sup>253</sup> Given the proximity to the above judicial appointment, one wonders if these gifts were an inducement to remain a strong supporter of the Reformation and the King's party.

Alexander's first wife, Janet Ogilvy probably died in 1572. Either later that year or early the next, he married Giles Merser, who was widowed in 1568 on the death of William Scrymgeour fiar of Myres. Soon after his second marriage, Alexander met with Laurence Merser of Meikleour to transact business at the Parish Church of Auchtermuchty on 9 May 1573. In accordance with the latter will of William Scrymgeour, Laurence had been appointed Tutor to James Scrymgeour apparent of Myres in 1568, the eldest son of Giles. By this time, Mr John Scrymgeour of Myres, the famous Master of the King's Works, had deceased leaving his inheritance to his grandson, the young James. The transaction at the church was to transfer to Giles her liferent of the eighteenth part of half the lands of Auchtermuchty, two cottars of land within Auchtermuchty and a third of Wester Rossie which Master John had made over earlier to her deceased husband. In due course, Alexander was to carry out other transactions regarding his wife's inheritance. On 4 June 1574 at Kinnoull, he settled a contract of an annual rent of victuals from the Myres estate which had been agreed between the late Mr John Scrymgeour of Myres and his wife Helen Little and Mr John Logy, advocate. Witnessing this were John Blair of Melginch and another burgess of Perth and two of Alexander's sons, Andrew and William.<sup>254</sup> The Scrymgeour step-children presumably lived in the Balthayock household for in time James Scrymgeour apparent of Myres joined his step-brother John Blair in witnessing documents at Balthayock and at Kinnoull Church in 1577 and 1578.<sup>255</sup>

Alexander's eldest son and heir, Thomas of Balmyle, died in early 1574. Alexander received the ward of his grandson, Alexander, who had become heir apparent of Balthayock. He paid the Lord High Treasurer £133.6s.8d for the composition of the gift.<sup>256</sup> When Jane Blair, Lady Balmyle remarried in 1576, Alexander took on the burden of young Alexander, his oy (grandson) and apparent heir.

The Blair family had long been barons of Blacklunans. Among their tenants there was John Spalding in Blaton who with his son, John, paid 1000 merks to Alexander to purchase the half town and lands of Blaton for the elder John to hold in liferent and the younger in feuferme without redemption. George Charteris apparent of Kinfauns was the principal witness to the charter made at Balthayock on 6 June 1576.<sup>257</sup>

A few weeks after this on 24 July 1576 and not far from Balthayock, at his home at the Kirkton of Kinfauns, lay a young man bedfast and deadly sick, with his brother Alexander in attendance. The dying man was Andrew Scott, the eldest son of Eupham Blair and thus nephew to the laird of Balthayock. Alexander Blair of Balthayock with his brother William and Alexander's eldest surviving son, John, joined George Low a burgess of Perth and Thomas Swinton, reader at Kinfauns Kirk at the deathbed. As Andrew was too ill to go into the detail of distribution of his goods and gear, Alexander Blair requested him to hold up his hand and in the blood and passion of Jesus Christ confirm his wishes to make over the management of this. Andrew did so saying that Alexander Scott, his brother german was to be his executor. Two weeks passed and Andrew died on 4 August. The Inventory of his goods and gear was made by Mr Thomas Monorgund, Thomas Coupar and Robert Robertson in the presence of Alexander Blair of Balthayock, James Monorgund of that ilk, Thomas Fraser of Kinnell and Mr David Balvaird parson of

<sup>253</sup> RSS Vol.vi, 697 and 703.and Balthayock Charters 182 and 183

<sup>254</sup> Protocol Book of Malcolm Bowers 1572-78 fol.57.

<sup>255</sup> Protocol Book of Malcolm Bowers 1572-78 fol.212v and 249v

<sup>256</sup> Balthayock Charters 211 and 212

<sup>257</sup> B59/13/8 Protocol Book of Malcolm Bowers 1572-78 fol. 150v

Saintmachrie, Thomas Brown in Clene one of the elders of the Parish Kirk of Kinfauns, Henry Brown of Panshill a parishoner there, Thomas Blair in Inchyra and George Low burgess of Perth. This illustrates the importance that was placed on handling fairly the legal matter of the deceased. Those present also represent the various threads woven into the life of the defunct young man. Alexander Blair was his uncle, James Monorgund was his step-father, Thomas Fraser was kinsman through their common ancestor Janet Gray and Thomas Blair was probably half brother to Andrew's mother.<sup>258</sup> The following year, Alexander Scott, the brother and heir of Andrew, received various bonds in his favour as his part of his father and brother's estate. Present as witnesses to these were Alexander Blair and James Monorgund and in May 1578 when young Alexander contracted in marriage to Janet Ogilvy in Panshill, a mature woman, Alexander, his son John and step-son James Scrymgeour witnessed the document.<sup>259</sup>

Douglas found in the family papers a letter dated 13 September 1579 from King James VI to Alexander in which he placed considerable confidence in his management of affairs in that neighbourhood. This came from a dispute between the Oliphants on one hand and the Murrays and Moncreiffe on the other. William Moncreiffe had obstructed the factors of John Oliphant from managing the estate in the parishes of Dunbarney, Kirk Pottie and Moncreiffe. The Lords ordained that the teinds of these parishes for that year be collected in a neutral place by Blair of Balthayock and Archibald Dundas of Fingask.<sup>260</sup>

At the Retour of Inquest for George Ramsay of Bamff as heir to his father, Alexander Blair was a member of the assize at Perth on 19 October 1580 which included Laurence Merser of Meikleour and Sir George Haliburton of Pitcur.

The defeat of the Spanish Armada by the English navy in 1588 is a landmark event of this period. Intrigue before and after by the Spanish kept both England and Scotland on guard for plots. The Scottish Parliament appointed numerous commissioners who were charged with the execution of the laws against "Jesuits and Papists and other delinquents". For the shire of Perth, the four commissioners were John earl of Atholl, Sir William Murray of Tullibardine, Alexander Blair of Balthayock and Patrick Ogilvy of Inchmartin.

When the election of Commissioners of the Shires for the next parliament was being arranged by Act of Parliament on 14 May 1589, it was ordained that the proclamation would be made at the market cross of head burghs of all shires and that barons be appointed to undertake the election. Alexander was held in such high regard that he was appointed to oversee this for Perthshire.<sup>261</sup>

A feud between the Lindsays and Ogilvys had troubled Angus during the 1580's and from time to time resulted in skirmishes and death. The alliances were drawn up mainly along the lines of the Ogilvy lands of north-west Angus and their towns of Kirriemuir and Arbroath and the Lindsay lands of north-east Angus and their towns of Forfar and Brechin. John Ogilvy of Inverquharity at this time headed the Ogilvy cause and was supported by many of the liberal lairds of Angus and the Mearns. Interestingly, among his supporters were the Blair lairds of Balthayock and Balgillo who with the leader and his accomplices were cautioned by the Lords of Council on 27 March 1591 not to harm the community and inhabitants of Forfar.<sup>262</sup>

A serious dispute causing Alexander Kincaigie of Ammerland to believe that his life was in danger from the Blair family led him to raise a court action of Horning "against Andro Blair of

258 B59/13/8 Protocol Book of Malcolm Bower 1572-78 fol. 164v and 170v

259 B59/13/8 Protocol Book of Malcolm Bower 1572-78 fol. 249v

260 RPC Vol.ii. and Seath,J.; Dunbarney a Parish with a Past; 1991 p.20

261 PRC Vol. iv

262 RPC Vol. iv

Balthayok, Alexander Blair his oy (*grandson*) and heir apparent, William Blair of Balgillo, ..... Blair of Baiston, Andro Blair of Balgirscho, ..... Blair of Ardblair, Alexr Blair of Balgray, John Blair of Melgins (*Melginch*), Patrick Blair portioner of Lethendie, David Blair there, Alexr Blair portioner of Innerbuis, Andro Blair portioner of Durdie, William Blair portioner of Balquhormok, John Blair his brother, Andro Blair in the Mains of Erroll, Balthayok's sons:

Lawrence, Patrick, Thomas, and James Blair in Inchyra, Patrick Blair's sons Robert and John, John Blair in Clene, and Thomas Blair his son, Patrick Blair burgess of Perth, Nicol Blair ..... and ..... Blairs his sons, Robert Blair burgess of Perth, William Blair burgess there, (*with others*), who have a deadly malice against the complainer and his possessions and lay in wait to slaughter him.”<sup>263</sup>

The Gowrie Conspiracy shook Perth in August 1600. After the death of the Earl of Gowrie in this event, Alexander Blair of Balthayock was made Provost of Perth until Michaelmas. A letter from King James dated at Brechin on 28 September 1600 was read at the Michaelmas election advising that James was well pleased with the good service of the Provost, Bailies and Council of the burgh of Perth. The king expressed his hope for them to continue in office. Subsequently, on 4 October, Alexander Blair was elected Provost, Sheriff and Coroner. He officiated as Provost at the Town Council Meeting of 21 July 1601 but thereafter does not appear, although he remained in office till his death.<sup>264</sup> Sir David Murray was elected the next Provost on in October 1601.<sup>265</sup>

Alexander died about September 1603 and was succeeded by his grandson named after him. By his latter will, Alexander appointed his wife, Giles Merser, his sole executrix testamentar. She duly submitted the Inventory of his goods and gear to the Commissary through Bailie John Ogilvy in the presence of the bailies of the burgh of Perth on 31 January 1604.<sup>266</sup> Giles may have married thirdly as second wife to James Ogilvy of Clova and if so she died in 1614.<sup>267</sup>

***Thomas Blair of Balmyle, heir apparent of Balthayock (1545c -1574)***

This eldest son of Alexander of Balthayock married Janet Blair daughter and heiress of Patrick Blair of Balmyle.

They had issue:

- 1) Alexander the heir of Balthayock
- 2) Thomas granted a liferent of the lands of Potento on 24 January 1574/5 in a charter registered under the Great Seal but deceased by 24 July 1576 when his grandfather agreed to discharge to his mother all the sums pertaining to him.

With his father and eight others, Thomas was implicated in the murder of seven persons in 1562 already described. In 1554, Janet, alias Jane Blair, while a child in the care of Thomas' father paid £100 to the Queen for relief of the lands of Balmyle<sup>268</sup>.

Thomas was described as heir apparent of Balthayock on 30 August 1571 when his wife, Lady Balmyle, received a Precept for a charter of the lands of Nether Balmyle and Potento.<sup>269</sup> They

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<sup>263</sup> Perthshire Hirings Vol.6 23 July 1593

<sup>264</sup> B59/16/1 Reg. Of Acts of Town Council of Perth

<sup>265</sup> Cant J; Memorabilia of the City of Perth but see also Peacock; Perth Its Annals and Its Archives, p248 and p542 which gives later dates.

<sup>266</sup> B59/14/1 Reg. of Bonds & Obligations fol. 166

<sup>267</sup> Airlie Mausoleum lintel at Cortachy Church has date 1614 and GM with arms of Mercer.

<sup>268</sup> Exchequer Rolls Vol. xviii

took sasine of these lands three weeks later.<sup>270</sup> Two years later, Jane Blair as proprietrix of lands at Meigle and Potento, with her husband Thomas and his father, registered a protestation against John Crichton of Ruthven who had caused to have built a dyke on her ground on the lone at the south side of the Burn of Meigle. The offending part had been cast down and the instruction was intended to prevent further building there. Patrick Haldene in Baldowrie and David Malcolm in Potento witnessed this document on 24 March 1572/3.<sup>271</sup>

Thomas and Jane renewed at Goddens on 5 April 1574, the charter granted to her uncle by Thomas Blair of Balthayock honouring the same terms as given in 1562.

Thomas died between 5 April 1574 and 23 June 1574.<sup>272</sup> On that later date, Alexander Blair of Balthayock was granted by King James VI the gift of the ward and nonentry of the lands of Nether Balmyle and Potento then in the king's hands by reason of the decease of Thomas Blair of Balmyle together with the marriage of Alexander Blair, his son and apparent heir.<sup>273</sup>

Jane survived her husband and married in 1575 to William Blair younger, apparent of Balgillo.<sup>274</sup>

### ***Alexander Blair (1568c- 1619c)***

Alexander was the son of Thomas Blair heir apparent of Balthayock and Jean Blair, Lady Balmyle. A charter dated 24 January 1574/5 states that Alexander was the eldest son of the late Thomas and that he was heir to the name and Arms of Blair. By this charter he gained from his mother the rents of Nether Balmyle and Potento during her lifetime. Another dealing with this is found in the Register of the Privy Seal when on 31 January 1574/5, in a precept for a charter to Alexander, he is described as grandson of Alexander Blair of Balthayock.

Alexander was described as apparent of Balthayock when on 9 October 1597 he was a witness to the preliminary contract of marriage of John Blair apparent of Balgillo who was his halfbrother. On 31 July 1598, with his kinsman William Blair of Balgillo, he was a member of the assize at the trial of Alexander Hay of Delgatie for adultery. He was summoned as, Alexander Blair younger of Balthayock, to be a witness at the trial of William Ruthven for treason in the Gowrie Conspiracy in October 1600.

In 1604, Alexander was retoured heir to Alexander, his grandfather, in the lands and barony of Balthayock.<sup>275</sup> At this time he was also retoured in the barony of Ardler in Angus.<sup>276</sup> The Office of Bailiary of the Temple Lands of Balthayock was conferred upon him on 1 May 1604 by James Sandilands, Lord Torphichen.<sup>277</sup> It was not until 12 December 1615 and 20 December 1617 that Alexander was retoured respectively in the lands of Blatonhaugh as heir to his grandfather<sup>278</sup> and the lands of Over Kinfauns as heir to his great-grandfather Thomas Blair of Balthayock.<sup>279</sup>

Alexander married Elizabeth, daughter of Sir George Haliburton of Pitcur, their contract of marriage being dated September 1587.<sup>280</sup> They had two sons and four daughters:

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<sup>269</sup> RSS. VoLvi.1251

<sup>270</sup> Balthayock Charters 195

<sup>271</sup> B59/8/13 Malcolm Bower's Protocol Book 1572-1578 fol.3

<sup>272</sup> R.M.S. VoLiv, chrtrs.2635 and 2355

<sup>273</sup> Balthayock Charters 211

<sup>274</sup> Balthayock Charters 228 and B59/8/13 .fol.84

<sup>275</sup> Perth Retours no.120. and Balthayock Charters 320 and 321

<sup>276</sup> Forfar Retours no.41.

<sup>277</sup> Balthayock Charters 317, 318 and 319

<sup>278</sup> Balthayock Charters 344

<sup>279</sup> Perth Retours no.252.and Balthayock Charters 346

<sup>280</sup> Balthayock Charters 258

- 1) Thomas, his heir at one time designed of Idvie in Angus.
- 2) John who married Elizabeth Straton 26 May 1633 and who had issue: a daughter, Elizabeth Blair married John Wood and also daughters called Agnes, Margaret, Grisel and Giles.<sup>281</sup> John was described as brother german to the laird of Balthayock when he was witness to his sister's marriage in 1623. He was party to a contract on 5 August 1633 regarding a tack of the lands of Lietchill.<sup>282</sup>
- 3) Giles who married Alexander Carnegie of Balnamoon and had a son John Carnegie. Their prenuptial contract in 1618 secured her in a liferent out of £10,000 lands in Angus for which Alexander Blair provided her tocher of 6000 merks.<sup>283</sup> The contract was discharged by 26 November 1622.<sup>284</sup>
- 4) Elizabeth who married James Arbuthnot of Arrat, younger brother of Sir Robert Arbuthnott fiar of that Ilk, and son of the deceased James Arbuthnott of Arrat. In their contract of marriage signed at Brechin on 13 November 1620, her brother Thomas bound himself to pay her tocher of 5,000 merks.<sup>285</sup> She was infert with her husband in the lands of Arrat on 16 July 1626. They had three sons Robert, Thomas and James and two daughters Marjory and Elizabeth.
- 5) Margaret, spouse to Thomas Blair of Leitchill, later of Tarsappie, their marriage being contracted in January 1623 when he was described as son of Tarsappie.<sup>286</sup> Thomas was heir to his father in the lands of Easter Tarsappie about 1625. Thomas and Margaret had issue. Their son, William, baptised at Kinfauns 31 October 1626, was heir to Tarsappie but died without issue. William Blair of Kinfauns was gifted the escheat of his estate on 21 January 1659.<sup>287</sup> His brother german, Alexander, was retoured heir of Tarsappie on 10 July 1661.
- 6) Jean. She married Sir John Stewart of Cardneys, who died 1646. They had issue.<sup>288</sup>

The previous laird of Balthayock had borrowed from his sons Alexander and Laurence and following his death they looked to their nephew for settlement. Alexander wrote from Lescar regarding 300 merks lent and offering to resign his liferent for a capital sum of £1000. This exchange, suggested on 3 June 1605, was not taken up for he raised the subject again in a letter from Berne on 28 June 1608.<sup>289</sup> Laurence Blair of Melginch resigned his pension of the mill and lands of Cults and a wadset of 3,000 merks was discharged on 10 June 1606.<sup>290</sup> In a contract dated 17 November 1614 with his uncle, Andrew Blair of Rossieochill, Alexander recovered Andrew's pension out of the lands of Walton of Cults and agreed to secure a pension of 110 merks from other of his lands.<sup>291</sup>

Alexander died about 1619, or early 1620 before 23 February, when the Sheriff of Forfar, John Ogilvy of Inverquharity had commission to serve Brieves from Chancery in favour of Thomas Blair of Balthayock as heir to Alexander Blair, Alexander Blair and Thomas Blair his father, great-grandfather and great-great grandfather respectively.<sup>292</sup>

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<sup>281</sup> Forfar Sasines RS35.2.291 and 320.

<sup>282</sup> NRAS4320/4/1/1/21

<sup>283</sup> Balthayock Charters 349

<sup>284</sup> Balthayock Charters 364

<sup>285</sup> Balthayock Charters 352

<sup>286</sup> RMS Vol.viii.1681

<sup>287</sup> GD16/42/401

<sup>288</sup> The Scottish Antiquary Vol VI

<sup>289</sup> Balthayock Charters 322, 327 and 331

<sup>290</sup> Balthayock Charters 330

<sup>291</sup> Balthayock Charters 342

<sup>292</sup> Balthayock Charters 356 and Burgh Court Books of Dundee

Alexander was survived by his wife Elizabeth Haliburton, who in accordance with her marriage contract, had a pension out of the Mains of Balthayock. On 30 June 1623, she renounced that to her son Thomas in exchange for the liferent of Goddens, Turfhillis and Baldowrie.<sup>293</sup>

### *Sir Thomas Blair (1590c - 1653)*

Thomas was mentioned as apparent of Balthayock when he witnessed a charter of William Blair of Balgillo in February 1615.

He was served heir to his father on 9 May 1620 when he was retoured heir to his father in the lands of Goddens and in the barony of Ardler and a part of the barony of Ardblair<sup>294</sup>. At this time he was also retoured heir to his gt-gt-grandfather Thomas Blair of Balthayock in the office of Custodian of the River Tay up to the Heids of Strathearn. He also had charters for the lands of Balthayock in 1621 and the Temple Lands there in 1622.<sup>295</sup>

Thomas married firstly about 1623 or earlier, Margaret, eldest daughter of Andrew Ayton of that ilk, in Fife.<sup>296</sup>

This marriage produced three sons and five daughters:

- 1) Alexander his heir born 1631.
- 2) Andrew baptised at Kinfauns 27 September 1632, later designed of Inchyra. He had charters of Inchyra registered under the Great Seal on 3 March 1662 and another a year later. Captain Andrew married Grisel Bower, daughter of the laird of Innerichty before 30 July 1647.<sup>297</sup> Grisel was the widow of Andrew Gray eldest son to William Gray Sheriff of Forfar.<sup>298</sup> He was a prisoner of war in 1653.<sup>299</sup> Andrew died in December 1699.

*His Arms: Argent a chevron crenelie sable betwixt three Torteaux.*

*Motto : Virtute Tutus.*

His eldest son and heir Alexander Blair of Inchturre had a large family but it failed in the male line and his estate was divided among four surviving daughters in 1748. For further details of this family see Arthur T. Mitchell's "Five Generations of the Family of Blair from the Counties of Perth and Forfar" published Exeter 1895.

- 3) Mr John of Balmyle. Baptised 27 Jan 1636. Was a notary public and with his wife, purchased the lands of Nether Balmyle in 1668. {See Blair of Balmyle.}
 

*His Arms: Argent a chevron Sable betwixt three torteaux within a bordure of the second. Motto: Facies Qualis Mens Talis*
- 4) Elizabeth described as the eldest daughter, who married Sir Gilbert Ramsay of Bamff, Alyth. Their contract of marriage being signed at Balthayock on 21 November 1634.<sup>300</sup>
- 5) Agnes who married Patrick Butter 20 Jan 1638 at Kinnoul and had son John (Dec 1648), and daughter Margaret (Feb 1650) in Blairgowrie. Patrick was the son of Archibald Butter and Lilius Inglis. He succeeded to Pitlochry Estate in 1684 and that same year purchased Killiemulin from his kinsman Thomas Butter.
- 6) Helen baptised at Kinfauns on 2 September 1628. She married John Graham of Balgowan on 27 April 1647 her tocher being 8000 merks by their ante-nuptial contract of marriage<sup>301</sup> of 24 March 1647.

<sup>293</sup> Balthayock Charters 367

<sup>294</sup> Forfar Retours no.127

<sup>295</sup> Balthayock Charters 358 and 363

<sup>296</sup> RMS Vol.viii. 586

<sup>297</sup> Forfar Sasines RS34.5.259 and R.M.S.Vol.xi.217

<sup>298</sup> Forfar Deeds SC47.56.10 : reg.1 Aug 1674

<sup>299</sup> Balthayock Charters 445

<sup>300</sup> R.M.S. Vol.ix.318 and Bamff Charters

- 7) Margaret, who married Alexander Haliburton of Fodrance on 4 August 1654. Later Alexander was designed of Ardler. They had issue. Margaret survived her husband.<sup>302</sup>
- 8) Jane, baptised at Kinfauns 2 September 1634, who married Thomas Graham on 21 May 1654. He was a son of George Graham, Viscount of Dundee and in 1663 they received a charter of the lands of Potento, the title of which Thomas Graham adopted.<sup>303</sup> Jane also known as Jean survived her husband.<sup>304</sup>

The baptisms of these children show that Patrick Hay of Pitfour was normally the principal witness although for the eldest son, Mr Alexander Lindsay, Bishop of Dunkeld was placed ahead of Patrick Hay.

Secondly, Sir Thomas married Nicolas Dundas at Kinfauns on 4 June 1643. The witnesses to this marriage were John Dundas of Fingask and James Clephane of Carslogie. By a previous marriage Nicolas had a son, George Fairlie. This was to be a brief marriage for she died within a year, her testament dative and inventory of her goods held in common with Sir Thomas being dated 3 July 1644.<sup>305</sup>

Thirdly in 1644, Sir Thomas wed Margaret, daughter to Sir Alexander Gibson of Durie and relict of Thomas Fotheringham of Powrie and mother of Elizabeth Fotheringham who later married his son. Earlier Lady Margaret had a servant Susanna Gibson who may have been a close kinswoman. When Susanna died, her sister Betty Gibson wife of William Blair in Kilsyth was one of her heirs on 16 July 1642.<sup>306</sup>

Sir Thomas had a son and daughter presumably by this marriage:

- 9) Thomas, baptised 25 August 1645 at Kinfauns.
- 10) Cathren, baptised 18 June 1647 at Kinfauns.

A 20-year tack of the teind sheaves of the parsonage and vicarage of the lands of Balthayock was set on 21 May 1624 to Thomas at an annual rental of £11 payable to his feudal superior, William Lord Crichton of Sanquhar.<sup>307</sup>

A difference with his kinsman led Thomas to bring summons on 6 June 1629 against Sir John Blair of Balgillo for impeding him in possession of the lands of Balmyle and Potento, Muir of Whitehills and others.<sup>308</sup> This probably arose from the death of Jean Blair of Balmyle who was mother to Sir John and grandmother to Thomas who had the senior claim to these lands. On 13 July 1631, Sir John sold the lands of Hallyards called Liberty Cruik to Thomas Blair of Balthayock.<sup>309</sup>

Thomas was knighted by Charles I, having paid to the clerk of His Majesty's Privy Council at Edinburgh on 7 August 1634, a sum of £40 for the honour of Knighthood.<sup>310</sup>

Designed as Sir Thomas Blair of Balthayock, he received a charter under the Great Seal on the lands of Gairdrum, Perthshire dated 13 March 1637.

Another charter dated 25 June 1642 confirms his title to the lands and barony of Ardler.<sup>311</sup>

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301 GD155/175

302 Forfar Sasines RS35.11.318

302 R.M.S. Vol.Ix.1824

303 R.M.S. vol.ix.361

304 Reg. of Deeds 1699: RD4/84 fo.1346

305 Balthayock Charters 419

306 Inquisitiones Generales no.2720

307 Balthayock Charters 374

308 Balthayock Charters 384

309 Balthayock Charters 394

310 Balthayock Charters 401

The lands of Goddens, the pendicle of Turfhill and manor and mill of Dundas were sold to the Bishop of Dunkeld on 3 May 1637.<sup>312</sup>

After a search at the house of Helen Duncan in Errol, the remains of a child were discovered in 1641. Her daughter Helen Moyes was suspected of infanticide and a commission of certain barons and gentlemen within the parish of Errol was instigated to hold a trial. The Estates of Parliament granted full power to Sir Patrick Ogilvie of Inchmartine, Sir Thomas Blair of Balthayock, Sir Peter Hay of Megginch, bailie of Errol, Peter Hay of Leys, William Kinman of Hill and Patrick Brown of Horne, or any three of them, as judges delegated by his majesty and the parliament, with Master Henry Kinross, sheriff clerk of Perth, or his depute, to be clerk to the judges.

The flood torrents of the River Tay swept away the bridge at Perth in 1621. For many years this caused great interruption to trade and the city suffered. Parliament meeting in Edinburgh on 17 August 1641 agreed to “re-edified” the bridge “for preserving the burgh from utter ruin”. They appointed John Drummond, earl of Perth, John Lyon, earl of Kinghorn, Patrick Murray, earl of Tullibardine, George Hay, earl of Kinnoull, Mungo Murray, viscount of Stormont, Sir Patrick Ogilvie of Inchmartine, Sir John Moncreiffe of that Ilk, Sir Thomas Blair of Balthayock, Sir Thomas Ruthven of Freeland, Master Francis Hay of Balhousie, John Oliphant of Bachilton, Peter Hay of Leys and David Carmichael of Balmedie, William Butter, son to the late Patrick Butter of Gormock, and the provost and bailies of the said burgh of Perth, or any seven of them as Commissioners to oversee the funding and re-building of the bridge.

Religious troubles broke out and the Scottish Parliament made preparations to defend the Protestant cause. At the Convention on 22 June 1643, they appointed colonels of horse and foot from the various Sheriffdoms throughout Scotland. Heading the list for Perthshire was Sir Thomas Blair. The following year he was commissioned to the Committee of War for the Sheriffdom of Perth. Civil War in England turned their Parliament against King Charles I and appeals came from both sides for Scots assistance. Eventually the Scots agreed to assist the Parliamentary cause and in January 1644 sent a Scots army of 20,000 men into England. In Ireland war broke out between the Irish on the one hand and the Scots planters and the older settlers both Scots and English on the other. This War of the Three Kingdoms was to prove expensive for Scotland for the English broke their promise to pay for the Scottish army even though their assistance was invaluable. It may also have proved expensive to Sir Thomas and his neighbour George Hay, Earl of Kinnoull for whom he and others stood surety. Papers in the family muniments record a list of disbursements to soldiers on behalf of the Earl in January 1644. Another is an intimation dated 9 May 1644 to Sir Thomas Blair in relation to the Committee of Estates and arms sent to England and Ireland.<sup>313</sup> The earl was accused of treason and a detailed account of expenses and disbursements for 1644 connected with him is among the Balthayock papers.<sup>314</sup> Sir Thomas Blair had a receipt for 1,000 merks to be delivered to the Earl of Kinnoull on his going to France. With the departure of the earl, Thomas appears to have managed the estates of Errol and Kinfauns, the rental books for 1643 and 1644 to 1646 being kept by him.<sup>315</sup> Sir Thomas and Patrick Lord Deskfurd had stood cautioners for George Hay and now found themselves burdened by a great debt. By a Contract of Division the barony of Kinfauns was renewed to Sir Thomas on 17 February 1647.<sup>316</sup> In March 1647, the five cautioners for the late earl of Kinnoull were ordered to make payment to Sir Adam Hepburn of Humbie of

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311 R.M.S. Vol.ix.1145

312 Balthayock Charters 406

313 Balthayock Charters 417 and 418

314 Balthayock Charters 420

315 Balthayock Charters 426 and 427

316 R.M.S. Vol.ix.1824

the sum of 6,000 merks as the interest and in full payment of the whole principalsum of 110,000 merks. Needed capital was raised in March 1648 when Sir Thomas resigned the barony of Cults into the hands of the King in favour of John, Earl of Crawford.<sup>317</sup> The earls of Kinnoul were staunch Royalists. The third earl died in Orkney in September 1649 awaiting the arrival of the Marquis of Montrose and assistance from France. The fourth earl had accompanied Montrose on his travels in Europe trying to raise assistance for King Charles. That earl, George Hay, landed in Orkney with the Marquis of Montrose and was with him at his defeat at Corbiesdale in April 1650. George Hay perished in the mountains, a fugitive after the battle. The debt of Kinnoul was thus to continue.

Throughout the 1640's Sir Thomas sat on several parliamentary commissions for the defence of the nation and the raising of taxes.

Parliament, meeting at Perth on 13 March 1651, passed an Act and added to the barons on the Committee of Estates, among others, Sir Thomas Blair of Balthayock and James Blair of Ardblair.

In April 1652 a contract between the cautioners narrated the great burden on then due to the failure to dispose of Kinnoul's estate.<sup>318</sup> Scotland was at that time an occupied country and with an English army demolishing Perth buildings, including the hospital, to make fortifications there would be little attraction to become a property owner in the locality. Sir Thomas Blair of Balthayock was Sheriff Principal of the County of Perth by 1646 and during the Commonwealth, he and Col. William Daniell were described as Sheriffs and Commissioners of Perth on 20 August 1652.<sup>319</sup>

That year, John Nairn purchased Seggieden from Sir Thomas for 44,000 merks so realising some of the capital.

The "Rentall Book of Perthshyre" for 1650 shows Thomas Blair was assessed at £500 for his lands of Balthayock in the parish of Kinnoul whereas for his two thirds of the Barony of Kinfauns his assessment was £2073. 6s. 8d

Lord Deskford disposed the lands of Kirkton of Errol to Sir Thomas by a contract dated 10 September 1652 and it appears he was still alive when it was registered three months later on 13 December. Sir Thomas died within the next five months. The list of his debts, resting at the time of his death, amounted to 384,752 merks and so were to burden the next laird.<sup>320</sup>

His testament dative was confirmed on 23 December 1658.<sup>321</sup>

Dame Margaret Gibson survived her husband and married thirdly to William, Master of Gray following their contract of 19 March 1654.<sup>322</sup>

### ***Sir Alexander Blair (1631 - 1692)***

Alexander was baptised at Kinfauns on 19 May 1631. He married in October 1648, Elizabeth, daughter of Thomas Fotheringham of Powrie by his wife Margaret Gibson.

Dame Elizabeth Fotheringham, her sister Cecilia spouse to David Carmichael of Balmedie, and her sister, Jean Fotheringham, were retoured heir portioners of line of Alexander Fotheringham of Powrie, their brother german on 29 June 1655.<sup>323</sup>

As witnesses at his marriage were his kinsmen, Alexander Carnegie of Balnamoon and John Aiton of that Ilk.

Alexander was knighted in the period between his marriage and the birth of his first son.

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317 GD20/1/760

318 Balthayock Charters 444

319 GD1/21/1/9 and Bamff Charters No.250.

320 Balthayock Charters 456

321 Balthayock Charters 480

322 Balthayock Charters 458

323 Inquisitiones Generales no.4032

Sir Alexander and Elizabeth had eight sons and three daughters:

- 1) Thomas his heir born in 1651.
- 2) John who also carried the title of Balthayock. He was baptised at Kinfauns on 23 January 1658.
- 3) Alexander baptised 19 Aug 1659.
- 4) David baptised 8 January 1664
- 5) Andrew baptised 21 Aug 1665, studied at University. Described as Dr. Andrew Blair brother german of Thomas and John in an Instrument of Protestation in 1701.
- 6) Laurence baptised 23 April 1670 died young.
- 7) Laurence another of this name baptised 3 Oct 1672 may also have died young.
- 8) Patrick baptised 23 November 1675.
- 9) Elizabeth who married to James Carnegie of Woodgate. Described as oye (grandchild) of the Mistress of Gray and eldest lawful daughter of Sir Alexander and as future spouse to James, eldest son of Robert Carnegie of Woodgate in an assignation of 9 November 1676.<sup>324</sup>
- 10) Anna baptised 30 October 1662. She married John Campbell, bailie of Ayr.<sup>325</sup> She was godmother at the baptism in Dundee on 20 May 1692 to Anne, the daughter of John Blair of Balmyle and Grisell Mann.
- 11) Margaret who in January 1685 married the reverend Mr Thomas Strachan following their contract of 31 December 1684.<sup>326</sup> Proceeding from this, on 21 June 1686, Margaret had sasine in a liferent of the lands of Craigmakirrane of which her husband was portioner.<sup>327</sup> Thomas was minister of St. Martins but was deprived by the Privy Council for failing to read the Proclamation of the Estates and not praying for William and Mary. They were later in Guthrie and finally moved to Edinburgh where Thomas died in 1722. They had issue.<sup>328</sup>

When his eldest son was baptised at Kinnoull in December 1651, Sir Alexander was designed apparent of Balthayock and the witnesses were Sir Patrick Hay of Pitfour and Thomas Blair of Tarsappie. After the death of his father, he was returned heir to Sir Thomas on 29 April 1653.<sup>329</sup> He took sasine of Ardler, Baldowrie, Balmyle and Potento and Cults that together had been erected into the Barony of Ardler. Following a Precept of Clare Constat of September 1658, he was seised in the Temple lands of Balthayock with the manor there a few months later.<sup>330</sup>

The inheritance brought with it a great burden that occupied the new laird. His brother, Captain Andrew Blair was then a prisoner of war and petitioned through the Commissioners of the Commonwealth for recovery of money lent to his father. Alexander requested on 15 April 1653 to be exempt for those debts incurred by his father due to the urgency of his affairs.<sup>331</sup> Two months later at Whitsunday, the list of debts on the estate stood at £253,333. 6s. 8d. Alexander was able to raise capital from some of the excessive estate later that year on 24 November when William Blair in Balthayock was given a wadset of £3600 per annum out of the lands and barony of Kinfauns.<sup>332</sup> Sir Alexander's brother, Mr John Blair was a notary in Perth and he too provided

<sup>324</sup> Dundee Register of Deeds No.450 : 3 Nov 1670 - 3 Apr 1677

<sup>325</sup> Reg. of Deeds 1707 RD4/101 fo.480

<sup>326</sup> OPR and Balthayock Charters 516

<sup>327</sup> Perth Sasines 22 June 1686

<sup>328</sup> Fasti Vol.4

<sup>329</sup> Inquisitiones Generales no.3783

<sup>330</sup> Balthayock Charters 477 and 478

<sup>331</sup> Balthayock Charters 445

<sup>332</sup> Balthayock Charters 452

capital to be granted on 7 December 1655 an annual income of £132 out of Potento and Balmyle.<sup>333</sup> Ten years later, John, described as Commissary Clerk of Dunkeld discharged this loan and purchased outright the lands of Nether Balmyle.<sup>334</sup> William Blair then described as “in Balthayock” was designed “now of Kinfauns” when Charles II ratified this grant through the Parliament of 1 January 1661. The register indicates that William Blair was granted the whole lands and barony of Kinfauns, Craigtoun and others, with the teind sheaves, salmon and other fishings and the heritable office of bailiary and keeping of the water of Tay.

The pressures continued and on 17 January 1654, Sir Alexander Wedderburn of Blackness brought a summons for non-payment of 14,000 merks due by a bond of June 1646 made by the late Sir Patrick Ogilvy of Inchmartin and the late Sir Thomas Blair and others.<sup>335</sup> The matter presumably was settled amicably for on 23 January 1658 when Alexander, the ninth son of Sir Alexander Wedderburn, was baptised, Sir Alexander Gibson of Durie and Sir Alexander Blair were witnesses. (At this time in Dundee it was customary for the main witnesses to share the same given name with the child).

Sir Alexander continued to raise capital by selling off part of the estate to relatives. His sister Jane had married in 1654 to Thomas Graham, a son of Graham of Claverhouse. In 1658, Thomas Graham was given by Sir Alexander the Inventory of the writs of the lands of Balmyle and Potento. Indubitably, these were the writs obtained by his great-great-great-grandfather, Thomas Blair in 1562 from the Tutor of Balmyle. This transaction is not specific but may have been for security on a loan to Sir Alexander and in time led to the sale of Potento to Thomas Graham.

Thomas, the eldest son of Sir Alexander was granted the lands of Hallyards called Liberty Crook on 13 July 1655.<sup>336</sup>

As part of the marriage settlement, Dame Elizabeth Fotheringham had been installed in a pension out of the lands of Balmyle and Potento. She also had a liferent from the barony of Erroll but in May 1658, Sir Alexander sold the Erroll lands to John, earl of Airlie and thus compensated his wife with a liferent of Balthayock.<sup>337</sup>

Mr William Rattray and Elspeth Drummond his wife were granted a pension of 240 merks uplifted annually from the lands of Balthayock by Sir Alexander in October 1660 with John Blair of Ardblair as cautioner.<sup>338</sup>

It can be assumed that during the early 1660's, Sir Alexander had a communication either directly from his namesake and distant kinsman in Paris or from the Lords of Council. This Alexander Blair of Paris had applied to the Lords for a knighthood and wished to establish as best as possible his ancestral tree for his Birth Brief in the application. The first reply from the Privy Council to Paris clearly accepted his claim to have come from an illustrious family and placed no obstacle to him. However, this Alexander Blair had become so enthralled by the subject of family history that as he was "greatly desirous to ascertain his predecessors at a more ancient period, he has implored our act of grace a second time, whereby the nobility of the family of Blair, of so great antiquity, may more clearly appear." This may well have involved Sir Alexander and a search of old documents in the charter chest. A declaration dated 1665 of the descent of Mr. Alexander Blair who settled in the principality of Berne came consequentially into Sir Alexander's possession. Unfortunately, the resulting Birth Brief is not accurate for the Blair

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333 Balthayock Charters 464

334 Balthayock Charters 491 and 492

335 Acts & Decrees of the Lords of Council and Session.

336 Balthayock Charters 459

337 Balthayock Charters 475 and 476

338 Perth Sasines 1 Dec 1660

of Balthayock in the "more ancient period" but with careful interpretation it does usefully fill some significant gaps.<sup>339</sup>

Parliament held on 1 January 1661 in Edinburgh appointed Commissioners for the counties. Sir Alexander Blair and John Blair of Ardblair were among those listed for the Sheriffdom of Perth. In 1663 an Act renewing the Justices of Peace appointed Sir Alexander a one of those in the Sheriffdom of Perth.

On 26 October 1670 in a Back Bond, Sir Alexander and his son Thomas obliged themselves to denude themselves of the lands of Over Durdie.<sup>340</sup> These lands were in the possession of Laurence Blair and his wife Janet Turnbull as part of their marriage contract of 14 November 1659.<sup>341</sup> An extract of the blazoning of the arms of Laurence Blair of Over Durdie under the signature of Sir Charles Erskine of Cambo, Lyon King of Arms, dated 16 September 1673 acknowledges the descent from Balthayock.<sup>342</sup> {See Blair of Over Durdie}

Sir Alexander and his eldest son, Thomas made an Obligation on 9 May 1678 to his wife, Dame Elizabeth Fotheringham, to provide her with a pension of 250 merks and 40 bolls of victual and certain poultry and also to grant to her the old laigh hall with two chambers on the turnpike on the north side of the close of Balthayock, the laigh house called the midhouse and others.<sup>343</sup> It was not until 17 June 1680 that Sir Alexander was retoured heir to his father in the lands of Seggieden, Byn and Northleys. This was made necessary in order that he could infest John Nairn of Seggieden in the lands of Byn.<sup>344</sup>

On 29 March 1687, Sir Alexander and John Blair of Pockmill were made burgesses of Arbroath.<sup>345</sup> This John Blair was son of the deceased Thomas Blair of Pockmill and Agnes Mitchell. Sir Alexander died in 1692 and was succeeded by his eldest son.

### ***Thomas Blair (1651 -1701)***

Thomas was baptised at Kinfauns on 30 Dec 1651. He retoured heir to his father, Sir Alexander, on 16 March 1693<sup>346</sup> and was granted a Precept of Clare Constat by David Viscount Stormont for infesting him as heir to his father in the Temple Lands of Balthayock on 16 January 1694.<sup>347</sup> He married Jean Pringle, relict of Buchannan of Lenie. Their contract of marriage dated 18 August 1683 provided to her a liferent of 500 merks furth of the lands of Balthayock.<sup>348</sup> The contract also gave her liferent of half the lands of Kirkton of Eassie.<sup>349</sup>

An Account Book of the Estate of Kinfauns has survived showing the rent charges and casualties payable to the estate from 1692 - 1699. There is little genealogical information in this but the names of tenants and servants and interesting aspects of running the estate can be gathered.<sup>350</sup> Thomas was made a burges of Arbroath on 11 May 1698.<sup>351</sup>

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339 R.S.C. 27 Aug 1674

340 Balthayock Charters 498

341 Balthayock Charters 451, 482 and 483

342 Balthayock Charters 504

343 Balthayock Charters 509

344 Balthayock Charters 511

345 Arbroath Court Book item 130.

346 Inquisitiones generales no.7345

347 Balthayock Charters 521

348 Balthayock Charters 513 and 514

349 Forfar Sasines RS35.8.144

350 Dundee City Archive GD/Mns/1.3

The following is extracted from Domestic Annals of Scotland Vol.III, p.190

*Throughout the year 1697, there were protracted legal proceedings before the Privy Council between Blair of Balthayock and Carnegie of Finhaven, in Forfarshire, in consequence of the latter having brought on a marriage between his daughter and a young minor, his pupil, Blair of Kinfauns, relative of Balthayock. The affair ended in condemnation of Finhaven and a fine of one hundred and fifty pounds to be paid to Balthayock for his expenses in the action. On the 20<sup>th</sup> September, 1703, by which time Balthayock was dead, Finhaven presented a petition to the Privy Council setting forth that he had not submitted to the sentence, but he placed the sum of the fine in consignment and thereupon was liberated. Balthayock had never called for the suspension; Her Majesty's late gracious indemnity had discharged the fine, "the cause of which", he alleged, "was natural and ordinary and the marriage every way suitable." There might be demur to the last particular, as young Kinfauns, when led into the marriage with Carnegie's daughter was only a boy. Nevertheless, the Council ordained the money to be rendered back to the petitioner.*

Thomas died on 31 August 1701, his testaments being registered in the Commissariat of St.Andrews on 31 December 1701, 20 December 1703 and 31 May 1710. Thomas was survived by his wife but as they were without issue, he was succeeded by his brother, John.

#### ***John Blair (1658 - 1710c)***

At the time of his brother's death, John had been "several years out of the Kingdom."

His younger brother, Dr Andrew Blair attended then to the legal matters of the estate on his behalf and was disturbed to find that Jean Pringle, Lady Balthayock, who was described as being in the Laigh Chamber (Lower Room) at Balthayock, had taken away some of her deceased husband's possessions which had been listed in the Inventory. Dr Andrew raised an Instrument of Protestation for the recovery of these furnishings to the apparent heir.<sup>352</sup>

John was retoured heir to his brother in Balthayock and Over Durdie in October 1705.<sup>353</sup>

At Errol Church on 22 September 1702, his banns were proclaimed in order for marriage to Margaret, daughter to Patrick Buttar of Gormack. They had only one daughter, Margaret who was heiress to the estate of Balthayock. Margaret Buttar had a liferent on the lands of Durdie and Balthayock granted on 10 September 1705.<sup>354</sup>

There were several debts which Thomas had contracted and these were carried over to John.

While his daughter was a child, John agreed with David Drummond, Advocate Treasurer of the Bank of Scotland on 23 July 1706, a contract of marriage between Margaret and Drummond's eldest son David<sup>355</sup>. This contract carried the above mentioned debts and was registered at Perth Sheriff Court on 2 January 1707.

John died before 1719 but the date is not discovered. He was survived by Margaret Butter and their daughter. They probably also had daughters Mary and Isobel, the latter who was married to the Rev. Thomas Beat at Kilspindie in 1759.<sup>356</sup> Mary died about 1783 and Isabel was her heir.

#### ***Margaret Blair (1702c - 1727c)***

On the death of her father, Margaret inherited the title of Balthayock as there was no longer a male entail on this estate. As she was still a child, her mother Margaret Buttar was appointed her sole Tutrix and Curatrix nominal. She was retoured heir general to her father 5 October 1723.<sup>357</sup>

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351 Arbroath Court Book item 1050.

352 Dundee City Archive GD/Mns/1.4

353 Balthayock Charters 528

354 Balthayock Charters 527

355 Dundee City Archive GD/Mns/1.6

356 Services of Heirs in Scotland Vol.ii

On 11 August 1723, she married David Drummond<sup>358</sup> and on 27 August at Edinburgh, the contact, made earlier by her deceased father when she was a child, was discharged between her mother and David Drummond, Treasurer of the Bank of Scotland. On marriage, David assumed the name and arms of Blair of Balthayock. They had a son John.

Margaret died while her son was still a child before mid-1727. David Drummond Blair died in 1728.

### ***John Blair (1725c - 1786)***

While still a child, John inherited the title of Balthayock being retoured heir to his mother on 6 July 1727.<sup>359</sup>

On 1 August 1762 in Edinburgh, John married Patricia, daughter of John Stevens, a banker in Edinburgh. Their contract of marriage dated 9 August 1762, provided for her a pension out of the lands of Over Durdie.<sup>360</sup> They had two sons and nine daughters, several dying in childhood.

- 1) David, his heir apparent born 1764. (Baptised 29 November). He died without issue.
- 2) John, born 1774 died young without issue.
- 3) Christian the eldest child, born 1763 died young.
- 4) Margaret, born 1766, heir to her brother.
- 5) Janet, born 1769 died unmarried about 1840, her testament was dated 12 Jan 1838.<sup>361</sup>
- 6) Christian, born 1770
- 7) Isabel, born 1772 made a Deed of Settlement dated 24 June 1845 leaving her estate to Neil Fergusson Blair of Balthayock.
- 8) Mary, born 1773 died unmarried on 8 October 1820 at Westwood Cottage, Balthayock, leaving her estate to her sisters Janet, Isabella and Susan.<sup>362</sup>
- 9) Jean, born 1775.
- 10) Jacobina, born 1777
- 11) Susan, born 1782 and died unmarried about 1862.

In 1744 on 26 September, John was seised in certain annual rents of the land and mill of Inchyra and salmon fishing. He recovered the five-pound lands of Balthayock and the lands of Over Durdie with its teinds on 27 July 1752. Anna Blair, presumably his great aunt, disposed of her portion of the lands of Inchyra, its mill and salmon fishing on 14 May 1750.

John borrowed heavily, on 9 August 1775, the sum of £10,000 Sterling from Margaret Dundas the widow of Major General John Scott of Balcomie<sup>363</sup>. The bond dated 27 December 1776 records that surety was against the estate which then comprised the lands of Balthayock in the Barony of Kinnoul with the whole of the Temple Lands of Balthayock, the tower fortalice and manor house. Over Durdie in Kilspindie, all the barony of Glencarse, lands of the barony of Clien, Mains of Clien, Abbotscrofts of Clien, Gardner's Lands, the meadow park and woods of Clien, the bog called Hole of Clien, Panshill called Rollo's Lands and the banks and braes now joined to Pitlowie in the parish of Kinfauns. These latter lands of Clien, Panshill and Pitlowie appear to have been late acquisitions by John Blair in 1754. He appears to have sold Hole of Clien and Pitlowie to David Craigie in 1773.<sup>364</sup>

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357 Balthayock Charters 530

358 Edinburgh OPR

359 Balthayock Charters 531 and Services of Heirs in Scotland Vol.1

360 Balthayock Charters 540 and 541

361 Books of Council and Session

362 The Edinburgh Magazine Nov. 1820 and Blackwoods Edinburgh Magazine

363 Dundee City Archive CD/Mns/1.7

364 Melville, Lawrence; The Fair Land of Gowrie, Wm.Culross, Coupar Angus 1939.

In 1776, John subscribed the generous sum of £21 for the building of the bridge over the Tay at Perth.<sup>365</sup>

Financial pressures increased and in 1786, under a Decree of Sale before the Court of Session he was obliged to resign Glencarse to Thomas Hunter.

John died about the end of 1786.<sup>366</sup> Patricia, his spouse, survived him and died about 1810.<sup>367</sup>

***David Blair (1764 - 1803c)***

David was retoured heir to his father on 27 January 1789.<sup>368</sup>

On 28 August 1793 he was retoured heir to Isabel Blair, wife to Thomas Beat, minister.

David died about 1803 without issue and the title passed to his sister, Margaret.

***Margaret Blair (1766 - 1829)***

Margaret married Major James Johnston HEICS. She was already a widow when she inherited the title of Balthayock on 30 May 1804 as heir to her brother and was described as Margaret Johnston of Balthayock.<sup>369</sup>

Only one daughter was born to this marriage, she being a posthumous child as Major Johnston died about 1790. Their daughter was named Jemima Johnston, also known as Jemima Johnston Blair.

The Blair family maintained a town house in Edinburgh at No35 George Street.<sup>370</sup>

Margaret survived her daughter and died 29 March 1829. A mural to her memory is in Kinfauns Church. The title passed from her to her grandson, Neil James Fergusson.

***Jemima Johnston (1790 - 1824)***

Jemima Johnston Blair married at Kinnoul on 26 November 1811, to Adam Fergusson of Balmacruchie in the parish of Kirkmichael. They had one daughter and seven sons, the eldest of whom, Neil James Fergusson adopted the name Blair and took the title of Balthayock. The others were Margaret (1813 -1823), Adam (1815 - 1867), David (1817 - 1855), John (1819-1849), James (1820 - 1850), George (1822-1895) and Robert (1824 - 1883).

Jemima was also known as Jemima Blair Fergusson, and it was probably she who commenced and arranged an index of abstracts "of the titles of the estate of Balthayock from the year 1300 to the year 1700, the order of their respective dates - and of the various other properties which formerly belonged to the family of Blair of Balthayock but which have since been sold and conveyed out of the family. Signed J.B.F."

She predeceased her mother and was thus never laird of Balthayock. According to the retour of her eldest son and heir, Jemima died on 14 April 1824. She was buried in Greyfriars, Edinburgh. Adam Fergusson married secondly to Miss Jessie Tower in 1833. He visited Canada in 1831 and emigrated with the family to Upper Canada in 1833. Adam Fergusson, although a member of the Faculty of Advocates, did not practice his profession but instead was a very enthusiastic agriculturist. The Rev.Patrick Bell (1801-1869), son of a farmer in the Carse of Gowrie, accompanied them to Canada as tutor to the younger boys. Bell was influential in their education from 1833 to 1837, after which he returned to Scotland. It is worthy of note that not only did the Fergusson family contribute significantly to the development of Canada but so too did the earlier work of the Rev.Patrick Bell. While still at university, Bell had invented a reaping machine and

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365 Memorabilia of Perth, Wm. Morrison 1806

366 Comm.of St.Andrews; Testament 28 Feb 1787

367 Comm.of St.Andrews; Testament 7 Apr 1810

368 Services of Heirs in Scotland Vol.ii

369 Services of Heirs in Scotland Vol.iii

370 Grant, James; Old and New Edinburgh Chapter XIX

subsequently four examples were exported to America and laid the basis for reapers to open the plains of North America.

Adam Fergusson died in Canada on 30 September 1862.

***Neil James Fergusson Blair (1814-1862)***

Born in 1814 at Dalton House, Northumberland, the eldest son of Adam Fergusson and Jemima Johnston Blair, Neil James Fergusson, was served heir male of Taillie and Provision Special to his mother in the lands of Balthayock and part of Glencarse on 21 January 1846.<sup>371</sup> As Neil Fergusson Blair he was shown as proprietor of Balthayock and Templelands in the Cess Roll of Perthshire in 1835. Neil married Barbara Edrington Douglas or Allen, daughter of Lieutenant-General Sir Neil Douglas, their contract of marriage dated 14 February 1855.<sup>372</sup> Barbara was a widow from an unhappy marriage. Prior to her first marriage she had been engaged to Neil but they had parted after a difference between them.

He placed the estate of Balthayock under a bond for £2000 in favour of Captain Thomas Peter Mitchell dated 7 June 1856.<sup>373</sup>

Neil Fergusson Blair died without issue on 12 January 1862 at Inchmartin House and was succeeded by his brother Adam Johnston Fergusson.

Barbara Douglas survived him and married thirdly in 1865 to William Arbuthnott, fifth son of John, eighth Viscount of Arbuthnott. After two summers living in Norway, they parted. William returned to Scotland but Barbara remained there for the rest of her life, living in great style. She became known as "The Uncrowned Queen of Sunndalen."<sup>374</sup>

***Adam Johnston Fergusson Blair (1815-1867)***

Adam succeeded to his brother as heir of Entail of Balthayock and adopted the name Blair. Thereafter he was known as the Honourable Adam Johnston Fergusson Blair.

He had spent most of his adult life in Canada making a very significant contribution to its development and has been described as "A Builder of Canada". His life there and his involvement in Canadian politics were a far stronger pull than the old Scottish estate. With the consent of his brother George, Adam and their brother Robert returned to Scotland to arrange for the disposal of the Balthayock estate. While they were in Scotland attending to this business, their father Adam Fergusson died in Canada. Adam disposed of Balthayock in May 1863 and so brought to an end the bloodline link of Blair to this estate.<sup>375</sup> The proceeds of the sale of Balthayock were divided among the four nearest heirs. Adam Johnston Fergusson Blair, George Douglas Fergusson, Robert Fergusson, and George's two sons, Adam David Fergusson and George Tower Fergusson. The Hon. Adam J.F. Blair, President of the Privy Council of Canada died at Ottawa on 29 December 1867.<sup>376</sup>

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371 Services of Heirs in Scotland Vol. iv

372 Books of Council and Session

373 Gen. Reg. of Sasines

374 Bing, Christy; *The Lairds of Arbuthnott*, Capability Publishing, Edzell 1993

375 Gen. Reg. of Sasines

376 *The Gentleman's Magazine* Vol. 224 Feb 1868

## Blair of Ardblair

*Arms: A chevron between three roundles with a mullet in chief.*

The arms are as Balthayock with the Mullet or star for difference, signifying a third son.

Ardblair lies a mile to the west of Blairgowrie, in the barony of Muirton. It is not established whether Steven de Blair owned these lands but his gift to Coupar Abbey lay south east of this. The Knights Templar were superiors of a parcel of land on Ardblair called Temple Loan, described as lying at the Myreside.<sup>377</sup> It may be that these lands have been held by the Blair family from the time of Steven de Blair though documentary proof is wanting. Nevertheless, it has been noted earlier that James Blair, later of Adamston, held the lands of Marlee adjacent to Ardblair up to 1363 and that he may have heired his lands from Hew Blair who flourished about 1330. {See David de Blair in Blair of Balthayock}

### *Thomas Blair of Moulin (1345c - 1415c)*

Thomas was the third son of David Blair and brother to Patrick Blair of Balthayock who lived in the second half of the fourteenth century. According to Douglas, Thomas acquired the lands of Moulin in Perthshire and was the first Blair to be designed by the title "of Ardblair".<sup>378</sup> This author has not viewed the document(s) available to Sir Robert Douglas but is inclined to the opinion that the reference may be to Muirton rather than Moulin. No evidence of his wife is found but as his son was a close kinsman of the Earl of Angus she may have been a Douglas.

Thomas had five sons:

- 1) William, his heir
- 2) Thomas named as heir to his brother, William, in an entail of 8 August 1423.<sup>379</sup>
- 3) John also named in entail.
- 4) Patrick also named in entail. It may be that Patrick held arms for one described as a Scutifier (shield bearer) appears in a charter of 17 April 1445.<sup>380</sup> Patrick Blair made surety for fishing of Drumnich and Cally let to Thomas Chalmer on Whitsunday 1446.<sup>381</sup> A fourth part of Pitlochry was let to him on Whitsunday 1453.<sup>382</sup>
- 5) Alexander also named in entail.

On 22 July 1410, in Perth when John of the Highlands had a charter of lands in Caithness confirmed under the Great Seal, the minor witnesses, Robert Stewart of Lorne and a Thomas Blair were described as "scutifers", this indicating that they were "shield bears" or squires. The description suits probably this Thomas more fittingly than his nephew who could have been designed "of Balthayock".

### *William Blair of Moulin and Ardblair (1370c - 1442c)*

William succeeded his father in the lands of Moulin or perhaps Muirton and is earliest identified by that title.

He gained the barony of Muirton and the lands of Ardblair from Sir William Hay of Naughton in a charter dated 8 August 1423 and witnessed by Patrick Ogilvy, Sheriff of Angus, Walter Ogilvy of Lintrathen and Thomas Fotheringham of Powrie.

<sup>377</sup> Scottish History Society, Fourth Series; The Knights of St John of Jerusalem in Scotland 1983

<sup>378</sup> This author has not seen these documents and ponders whether "Moulin" and "Muirton" have been confused

<sup>379</sup> Charter in Ardblair papers.

<sup>380</sup> Rental Book of the Cistercian Abbey of Coupar Angus; Chr.cxxxiii

<sup>381</sup> idem Vol. 1. p.125

<sup>382</sup> idem Vol. 1. p.129

Drawn up with this charter was a male-entail which prescribed that in the event of William failing to have a son, his next brother Thomas or his heir-male would inherit the title, which failing, the same would apply to the younger brothers, John, Patrick and Alexander in turn.

For his services to William Douglas the earl of Angus, William had sasine of the lands of "Wethirrishalch" or Weddershaugh on 20 December 1424.<sup>383</sup> This land in Strathdichty linked this family with the Burgh of Dundee. In this charter the earl addresses William as his beloved cousin (*dilecto nostro consanguineo*) which suggests that his mother may have been a daughter of William earl of Douglas, grandfather of the granter. A notarial Instrument narrating the refusal of Sir David Lindsay Master of Crawford to carry out an order of his father was witnessed by William on 26 November 1426.<sup>384</sup>

When David, Master of Crawford made a wadset of the lands of Camuston, Monikie to Thomas Maule on 26 November 1426, the Notarial Instrument was made at the Friars' Church in Dundee in the presence of John Affleck of that Ilk, William Blair laird of Ardblair and Alexander Ogilvy son of John Ogilvy sheriff depute of Angus.<sup>385</sup>

As William Blair of Ardblair, he is mentioned as patron of the chaplainry of St.Salvator in the parish church of Dundee on 12 December 1428 when he gave permission to the chaplain to set in tack to John Cauty, two acres of land lying on the north side of Westfield of Dundee.<sup>386</sup> This close association with Dundee suggests that it was he who rendered the account of the bailies of Dundee to the Exchequer on Whitsunday 1421.

On 10 March 1431/2 a debate was moved before the Scottish Parliament between Dundee and Montrose. The commissioners of Dundee who appeared at Perth were Robert de Mar, alderman, William de Blair, Duncan Parker, David de Aberchirder and Patrick Scott, with their forespeaker John de Crail. These commissioners produced before Parliament various charters giving them freedoms and bounds to buy and sell and to use merchandise through all the sheriffdom of Forfar, with escheats of foreign merchants.<sup>387</sup>

A document of 29 April 1432 needs interpretation. This Service of Heirs, recorded the retour of William Stirling in the lands of Redgorten. The assize for this inquest included Thomas Charters, John Hering, Patrick Rattray, Findlay Buttar, Thomas Monorgan and Donald Blair. The latter may have been a close kinsman of William Blair.

Members of the assize on 22 April 1440 at Kilconquhar, Fife for a Retour of Inquest for Thomas Chalmer as heir to William Chamer, his father who died three months earlier, included James Ramsay of Clatty, David Lindsay and William Blair.

William probably died about 1442.

### ***William Blair (1390c - 1456c)***

In the Libri Responsionum it is recorded that William Blair took sasine of the lands of Muirton in 1443.<sup>388</sup>

William had issue:

- 1) William, his heir
- 2) James, who according to Douglas later was heir to the title.
- 3) Patrick, who on graduating from university was termed Mr Patrick. He was Canon of Dunkeld and at Dundee on 5 March 1473, with the consent of his brother William Blair of Ardblair, granted six acres of Westfield of Dundee to George Blair, his

<sup>383</sup> Fraser, Sir William; The Douglas Book; Edin.1885 vol.iii.64

<sup>384</sup> Panmure Muniments GD45/16/1962

<sup>385</sup> Registrum de Panmure Vol.ii. p.192

<sup>386</sup> The Douglas Book vol.iii.67

<sup>387</sup> A1432/3/1

<sup>388</sup> Exchequer Rolls Vol.v

- nephew.<sup>389</sup> This is a particularly significant record regardless of the small parcel of land involved and will be used later. Mr Patrick Blair was rector of Dundee Grammar School when he witnessed a grant to the Parish church of Dundee on 3 February 1489/90.<sup>390</sup>
- 4) Walter, who witnessed his brother german's charter at Dundee on 5 March 1473. He was still alive on 15 March 1501 when John Stewart and his tutor, Andrew lord Gray brought an action against him claiming that he had wrongfully uplifted the annual rents of Peattie for the previous 28 years.<sup>391</sup>
  - 5) David . The proof of this is wanting but later the hypothesis is developed that David of Bendochy was the fifth son to this laird. See under Blair of Balgillo.

On 17 April 1445, William Blair of Ardblair was member of an assize in a dispute between Donald of Malles and William Blair the abbot of Coupar.<sup>392</sup> Many of the contemporary local lairds appear in the notarial instrument recording the resolution of a dispute between Donald Malles of that ilk and William Blair, abbot, and the convent of Coupar regarding a portion of land called Donaldshaugh by the River Ericht near Wester Drimmie. The abbot may have been a kinsman of the laird of Ardblair.

Along with Sir Walter Ogilvy of Lintrathen and Thomas Blair of Balthayock, William was witness to a contract of wadset of the lands of Wester Brichty made between Thomas Boyd and Alexander, earl of Crawford on 12 February 1436/7.<sup>393</sup>

When a dispute arose between the Abbot of Coupar and Thomas Stewart of Grandtully over the marches of Murthly and Kintully, Malcolm Moncreiff, on 10 July 1449, instigated an assize which included Patrick Ogilvy and William Blair of Ardblair.<sup>394</sup>

A settlement between the Abbot and convent of Coupar Angus Abbey and David Cumming of Couttie for the division of lands adjacent to the Loch of Blair on 7 April 1454 was witnessed by William Blair of Ardblair, Thomas Chalmer of Drumlochy, Patrick Rattray of Portdovan, Donald Malles of that ilk, David Blair an armiger and many others.<sup>395</sup>

Information is scanty but it appears that William died about 1456.

### ***William Blair (1415c - 1491c)***

William succeeded his father as laird of Ardblair as is recorded when he was retoured heir to his father, the late William Blair of Ardblair in the lands of Weddershaugh on 21 April 1457. Shortly after this on 18 May, at Edinburgh, William resigned this land to George Douglas, Earl of Angus who granted Weddershaugh to his uncle Robert Graham of Auld Montrose.<sup>396</sup>

Legal disputes were normally settled by arbitration at local courts or assizes formed by the peers of the parties involved. When David Cumming of Couttie had a dispute with Thomas of Strathearn regarding annual rent, the arbitrators who met on 30 April 1472 at Banchory, near

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389 R.M.S. Vol.v, 1064

390 R.M.S. Vol.ii.1935

391 Acts of Lords of Council in Civil Causes p481.

392 Charters of the Abbey of Coupar Angus Chr. cxxxiv

393 GD121/3/29

394 The Moncreiffs and the Moncreiffes

395 Liber Ecclesie S.Trinitatus de Scon Chrtr.216.

396 The Douglas Book Vol.iii. Chrtrs.91 & 92

Coupar Angus, included Alexander Blair of Balthayock, William Blair of Ardblair, David Fotheringham of Ballunie and David Blair of Bendochy.<sup>397</sup>

It has not been discovered whether formal bonds were made by the Blairs of Ardblair with neighbouring families but such were common and allegiance can be detected in the groupings of these lairds in business transactions. For example, on 1 July 1472 when Patrick Buttar and his grandson, Henry, made a transaction of their lands of Gormack, Tullyneddie and Balhied, the witnesses to the charter were Silvester Rattray of that Ilk, William Blair of Ardblair, John Chalmer and Thomas Chalmer. Some of those families have been mentioned already in association with the father of William.

Bonds were frequently made by marriage and indeed, Patrick Buttar's wife was Egidia Chalmer. The marriage contract of their son, Robert Buttar, was witnessed at Gormack on 20 April 1486, by Silvester Rattray, William Blair of Ardblair and Patrick Rattray.<sup>398</sup>

The Blair family appear to have gained land in the Mearns (Kincardineshire) at some earlier period, for by a contract of wadset made at Dundee on 15 March 1468/9, William annualised to James Scrymgeour, Constable of Dundee, his lands in the barony of Hilton for an annual payment of 4 merks, redeemable on his payment of 40 merks. These lands lay just north east of Marykirk.

William was a member of the jury of fifteen at the Special Retour in favour of Agnes Monteith as heir of Murdoch Monteith, her father, in half lands of Ardeonaig on 27 April 1473.<sup>399</sup>

The latest notice found of William Blair is the 1486 appearance as witness. He appears to have died shortly thereafter and, according to Douglas, without issue.

### ***James Blair (1420c - 1475c) and his son George Blair (1450c - 1506c)***

According to Douglas, the next laird was James, brother to William Blair of Ardblair.

In the writs of the Gray family, he found a charter of Patrick, Master of Gray, granting the third part of the lands of Westfield of Dundee to James Blair on 27 April 1461. The division of this land gave rise to several legal disputes over the years. On 10 May 1471 an action was raised by William Cauty against James Blair claiming that he wrongfully occupied two acres of the land of Westfield.<sup>400</sup> After documents were exhibited the Lords Auditors decreed that William Cauty was the lawful possessor.

At this time there was a George Blair of Balgillo who was a close kinsman of Alexander Blair of Balthayock. With the permission of the latter, on 20 February 1460/1, George sold to James Blair, burgess of Dundee, a third part of the lands of Balgillo near Kettins.<sup>401</sup> Clearly, James was a very successful merchant at this time and was Provost of Dundee in 1462 and 1463.<sup>402</sup> His seal appears on a charter of 11 October 1462 and from the blazoning described it appears to have been that of Balthayock.<sup>403</sup> Some difference must have applied and this needs further inspection. The lands of Balgillo which James Blair held included a third part of the mill there and half the lands of Baldowie. He retained these for only a few years and in April 1469 made a procuratory to David Blair of Bendochy, Thomas Blair the brother of Balthayock and Thomas Fotheringham of Ballunie to resign the property to Alexander Blair of Balthayock.<sup>404</sup>

<sup>397</sup> Ramsay, Sir James; *Bamff Charters*, Oxford 1915 Chtr.11.

<sup>398</sup> R.M.S.,ii.1681

<sup>399</sup> GD198/19

<sup>400</sup> *Acta Dominorum Auditorum*

<sup>401</sup> Balthayock Charters 25, 26 and 27

<sup>402</sup> Fotheringham of Powrie Papers. GD121 /2 Box 9 Bundle 2 Instrument of Resignation dated 15 June 1463

<sup>403</sup> Macdonald Wm.; *Scottish Armorial Seals*, Edin.1904

<sup>404</sup> Balthayock Charters 33

James Blair of Ardblair is mentioned by Douglas as an arbiter in a submission in 1490 between the abbots of Coupar and Scone concerning the marches between Carsie and the Moor of Blair. The other arbiters included Blair of Balthayock and Blair of Bendochy. Serious doubt must be cast on this claim as there is no evidence of James being laird. Indeed, the evidence points to James being a burghess of Dundee and that he died prior to 10 June 1478, at which time Laurence Lord Oliphant and Walter Ogilvy of Oures pursued an action against George Blair regarding the 10 merks lands of Auchtertyre resigned by the late James to George his son. It was claimed that George had withheld 18 merks, being two years mails of these lands, and that George had been wrongfully infeft by Walter Ogilvy of Oures in the west part of Kettins called Pitendownie.<sup>405</sup>

It is of much interest that the Libri Responionum records that George Blair took sasine of the lands of Westfield of Dundee and Balgillo<sup>406</sup> in 1473. This seems to be the same transaction already mentioned when Mr Patrick Blair granted George six acres of Westfield of Dundee in April of that year. By the time the charter of 1473 was registered under the Great Seal, the parties had all deceased, namely Mr Patrick, William, James and George Blairs. The charter states that George Blair was nephew of Mr Patrick who was brother german to William Blair of Ardblair. It goes on to identify the six acres of land being gifted to George by describing them as adjacent to George's existing lands of Westfield which earlier his father James had obtained from "the Lord Gray". This is in accord with the charter of 1461 in the Gray family muniments. One hundred years later, an Assignation covering many properties was recorded in the Town Clerk of Dundee's Protocol Book. Therein, it mentions that James Blair the son of the umquhil William Blair of Ardblair had contracted on 10 January 1462/3 for the redemption to Andrew Lord Gray of part of the Westfield of Dundee.<sup>407</sup>

Presumably it was the same George Blair who is recorded as having sasine of Muirton in 1492. Furthermore, at the same time John Blair took sasine of the lands of Balmaleddie, Balmanno and Hilton.<sup>408</sup> It has been shown that the Blair of Ardblair family held lands in the barony of Hilton, Kincadineshire prior to 1469.

The hypotheses, which this produces, are manifold but it seems feasible that George Blair was the nephew to the late William Blair of Ardblair and definitely grandson of the earlier William of Ardblair. The Exchequer Rolls point to George having sasine of Ardblair and the barony of Muirton in 1492 and at this time the Kincardine estate at Hilton was bestowed on John Blair, whom elsewhere is identified as his son and heir.

The baron of Muirton, George Blair of Ardblair probably died about 1506.

### ***John Blair (1488c - 1537c)***

John Blair, born about 1488 or later, took sasine of the lands of Muirton in 1508.<sup>409</sup> Presumably he had a precept of Clare Constat confirming his hereditary right for the accounts of Dunkeld Cathedral record that 9d was paid in the period 19 February 1507 - 29 December 1508 to the Granitor in Lothian for the brieve of John Blair. It is known that he was son of George, for on 8 April 1507, John Crichton of Blackburn was granted the gift of the marriage of John Blair, the son and heir of the umquhile George Blair of Ardblair.<sup>410</sup> The Rental Book of Dunkeld accounts for payment on 31 December 1509 to John Blair of Ardblair for the expenses of the bishop and his retainers in Dunkeld. Designated as John Blair of Muirton, he is recorded as making

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405 Acta Dominorum Auditorum

406 Exchequer Rolls Vol.ix

407 Dundee City Archives; Thomas Ireland's Protocol Book 1534 - 1572 fol.75

408 Exchequer Rolls Vol.x

409 Exchequer Rolls Vol.xii

410 RSS. Vol.i. 1459

58 **A GENEALOGY OF BLAIR OF BALTHAYOCK AND THEIR CADETS**

payments to the Avenar of Dunkeld, the Granitor of Cluny, the Granitor of Perth in the period between 20 November 1508 and 4 January 1512.<sup>411</sup>

In an exchange of land between John Cargill of Kinloch and John Dulie of Easter Essendy, witnesses to the contract of excambion on 4 March 1513/4 included John, earl of Atholl, John Stewart of Arntully and John Blair of Ardblair.<sup>412</sup>

A submission made by Neiss Ramsay in a dispute with Donald Fortay was made on 7 December 1516 at the high alter of the parish church of Blairgowrie in the presence of John Chalmer of Drumlochry, John Blair of Ardblair, David Butter and the brothers of Neiss.

John married Elizabeth, daughter of Silvester Rattray of Craighall. He had not reached majority when the marriage was made for John Crichton of Blackburn was assigned the marriage of John Blair, receiving for this a part payment of £6.13s.4d in the period 4 June 1506 - 23 January 1508.<sup>413</sup>

John and Elizabeth had issue:

- 1) John, the heir more of whom later.
- 2) Marian who married John Smith of Polack and by him had a son John.<sup>414</sup>

By 12 June 1518, Elizabeth Rattray was already his spouse when they purchased the lands of Essendy and Aikenhead from Patrick Hay of Essendy.<sup>415</sup>

An interesting episode in the life of this laird was recorded by Alexander Myln, Official of Dunkeld, who was present at the time. In his work "Vitae Episcoporum Dunkeldensium" about the lives of the Bishops of Dunkeld, he recounts the death of George Brown, Bishop of Dunkeld. Realising his death was nigh, on Saturday January 12, 1514/5, the 75 year old Bishop George requested Alexander Myln to make arrangements for the sacraments of the alter and extreme unction and to attend him early on Sunday. Besides the office bearers of Dunkeld Cathedral, Thomas Brown an apothecary from St.Andrews and several neighbouring lairds were in attendance at the requested Mass in the early hours of Sunday morning. Myln named these as John Cargill of Kinloch, John Blair of Haltoun, David Scrimgeour of Fardill, John Stewart of Arntuly, Walter Bannerman of Kellebrochin, Robert Brown of of Fordale, John Moncur of Balunie and John Rattray of Leichhill. The detailed account of that day survives relating that the canons, Robert Brown and all the Bishop's faithfully sevitors, kinsmen and relatives, in charge of his chests and cattle, remained at the death-bed till his passing away the following day.<sup>416</sup>

John disposed of at least some of his possessions in Kincardineshire, for on 20 May 1518 a precept was recorded upon a Charter of Alienation made by John Blair of Ardblair to Mr.Thomas Erskine and his wife, Elizabeth Scrymgeour of the lands of Balmaleddie, Balmanno and Hilton of Smidyhill.<sup>417</sup>

With Thomas Blair of Balthayock, he was a member of the Inquest of Retour of Service of John, Lord Glamis as heir to his father John Lyon in the baronies of Longforgran and Inchturre on 8

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411 Rentale Dunkeldense

412 Lindsay of Dowhill Muniments GD.254.229

413 Rentale Dunkeldense

414 Douglas, Baronage p.542.ii

415 RSS Vol. i. 3000

416 Scottish History Society, Rentale Dunkeldense with Myln's "Lives of the Bishops". 1915

417 RSS Vol.i .2993

October 1528 and with his neighbour, Patrick Buttar of Gormack, John Blair was member of an assize on 11 January 1529/30.<sup>418</sup>

Later that year on 19 November 1530, John and his spouse, Elizabeth Rattray had their charter of the major portion of the lands of Wester Kinloch registered under the Great Seal at Perth<sup>419</sup>. Just over three years later, when Janet Gordon, Lady Lindsay, redeemed her part of the lands of Wester Kinloch from John Cargill of Kinloch, witnesses of the transaction at the high alter of St.John's at Perth included Mr Laurence Oliphant, vicar of Fowlis, James Scrymgeour in Fordie and John Blair of Ardblair.<sup>420</sup> It may be significant that James Scrymgeour in Fordie and his wife Margaret Scrymgeour held an interest in the neighbouring lands of Easter Kinloch.<sup>421</sup> John, the eldest son of John Blair of Ardblair married a Janet Scrymgeour.

Along with Alexander Gilmoleoch, John Blair made a contract with John Cargill of Kinloch on 7 March 1533/4.<sup>422</sup>

This laird of Ardblair probably died in 1537. Elizabeth Rattray survived him and was still alive in 1568 when she granted a tack of her terce, one third part of lands of Ardblair, to her grandson, Andrew Blair of Ardblair. Her rights and liferents out of Ardblair were settled in a lengthy contract registered on 1 April 1568.<sup>423</sup>

### **John Blair (1515c - 1564)**

A payment of £15 made to the Sheriff of Perth for the relief of all and whole the lands and barony of Muirton and Ardblair recorded at Edinburgh on 8 October 1537 as due to the king for the sasine given to John Blair of Ardblair.<sup>424</sup>

As previously mentioned Thomas Blair of Balthayock and John Blair of Ardblair were members of an assize on 31 January 1537/8 regarding the lands of Hilton of Mailer.

John Blair made a bequethment to the chapel of St.Peter the Apostle in the Cathedral of Dunkeld on 2 April 1539.<sup>425</sup>

Given the style of the towerhouse and its courtyard of Ardblair Castle, it is probable that this laird was the builder of it.

It seems that John married Janet Scrymgeour about this time for on 11 March 1540/1 they were granted a precept of joint infeftment in the lands of Muirton, Ardblair and Myreside.<sup>426</sup> Janet was probably the daughter of James Scrymgeour of Fordie by his spouse Margaret, daughter of John Scrymgeour heir apparent of Fordell.

Thomas Wallace, rector of Unthank, chamberlain and granator of Scone Abbey, was given a Procuratory note by John Blair on 17 March 1552/3 to pay £76.16s into the Books of Council.<sup>427</sup>

John and his wife, Janet Scrymgeour had issue:

- 1) Andrew, his heir

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418 R.M.S. Vol.iii, 941

419 R.M.S. Vol.iii, 975

420 GD.254.236

421 GD.254.235

422 Calander of Deeds in Acta Dom.Con 1532-1539. Vol.iv.48

423 CS7/42

424 Exchequer Rolls Vol.xvii

425 R.M.S. Vol.iii.1136

426 R.S.S. Vol.ii. 3901

427 Acts and Decrees Vol. vii.35

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- 2) Thomas who is frequently mentioned as son of John and later as brother of Andrew<sup>428</sup> in period 1554 to 1577.<sup>429</sup> He was a household man of John Buttar of Gormack.
- 3) Alexander who was described as brother german of Andrew Blair of Ardblair on 7 November 1581, when witnessing a Renunciation by Robert Ayson or Eason in favour of James Lindsay of Dowhill.<sup>430</sup> Alexander was a burges of Perth. He died about 1605.<sup>431</sup>
- 4) Elizabeth also may have been their daughter. She married Patrick Ayson and had a son Robert Ayson of Tillymet. She and her spouse Patrick were both deceased by 12 January 1565 /6.<sup>432</sup>

The close association between the houses of Gormack and Ardblair has already been noted in the proceedings of earlier generations. A more dramatic situation arose in the life of this laird. The initial cause is not determined but John Buttar, the laird of Gormack, harboured a great hatred of George Drummond of Leidcrieff who had a fine town house in Blairgowrie. John Buttar laid a plot and on Sunday 3 June 1554, many of his associates gathered at his mansion to dine with him. These included his neighbours William Chalmer of Drumlochy, John Blair of Ardblair, Andrew and Thomas his sons, William Chalmer of Cloquhat, David Blair of Knockmaheir, John and Patrick his sons and Alexander Blair who was half-brother to John Buttar. Their kinsmen and household men accompanied these lairds. They were also supported by many tenants so that a band of 80 fully armed men with guns and bows was assembled. Meanwhile, after leaving his Place of Blair, George Drummond and his kinsmen and friends were playing a game of bowls in the Marketgait beside the parish church of Blair unaware that spies were reporting on them. About 2 p.m. a band of 66 men left Gormack's mansion and fell on the Drummonds beside the church where they slew George Drummond, his son William and others in his company. As a consequence of their foul deeds, the perpetrators were summoned to appear for trial before the Queen and her Privy Council on 13 June 1554.

The recalcitrant lairds of Gormack, Drumlochy and Ardblair and their colleagues offered the following:

- 1) to go on the four principal pilgrimages of Scotland
- 2) to do suffrage for the souls of the dead at the Parish Kirk
- 3) to donate to the kin, wife and children 1000 merks and other measures as the kinsfolk may think fit.

This brought the response that the repentance measures needed no answer but that the offer of 1000 merks was derisory under the circumstances.<sup>433</sup>

Following the trial, the Privy Council ordered that the goods of William Chalmer of Drumlochy, John Blair of Ardblair and Alexander Blair, brother to John Buttar to be confiscated and gifted to Sir Hew Kennedy of Gevanmans and Harry Drummond of Richmond. Likewise the goods of the persons in Drumlochy, Gormack and Mawes, David Blair in Aikenhead and Patrick Blair in Ardblair were confiscated for their involvement in this murder.<sup>434</sup>

A Bond of Manrent to Lord Drummond was offered and made by William Chalmer of Drumlochy. The ultimate price was paid by two of the lesser actors, for Patrick Blair, a tenant in

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428 Liang Charters 763;

429 R.M.S. Vol.iv, 2728

430 Scottish Archives GD 254/238 Lindsay of Dowhill Muniments.

431 Comm. of Edinburgh. Test. reg. 24 May 1606

432 Cal. od Deeds Vol.31 - 76. 24 July 1567

433 Pitcairn, Criminal Trials Vol.i Pt.1.p.371

434 R.S.S. Vol.iv.2786/7

Ardblair and Robert Smyth, a tenant in Drumlochy, were committed of the slaughter of George Drummond and his son William. They were beheaded in December 1555.

John Blair of Ardblair was still under censure at this time. For failing to find surety for his part in the murder, a letter of instruction on 24 January 1555/6 ordered the escheat of his £5 lands of Muirton and Ardblair, mill, multures etc. to be gifted to John Blair, son and heir apparent to William Blair of Balgillo.<sup>435</sup>

This was the period leading up to the Reformation Parliament of 1560 but due to the Buttar / Drummond incident the laird of Ardblair was probably in no position to influence decisions. John Blair next appears as a witness to a charter dated 26 August 1559 on the lands of Welton of Creuchies in the parish of Alyth granted to Thomas Ogilvy.<sup>436</sup>

John died in early 1564 and was survived by Janet Scrymgeour and their sons. A liferent out of the estate was reserved for Janet, who deceased prior to October 1590.<sup>437</sup>

***Andrew Blair (1545c- 1596c)***

The Sheriff of Perth received a payment of £15 for relief of the barony of Muirton and the lands of Ardblair with the mill, pendicles, outsets, tenements and freeholds and for the sasine of these given to Andrew Blair subject to the reservation of Janet Scrymgeour's liferent as lady of Ardblair and conjunct fiar<sup>438</sup>. This was recorded on 13 May 1564.

The major part of the estate was covered by this, but on 25 October 1568, Andrew was retoured heir of John Blair of Ardblair, his grandfather, in the lands of Wester Essendy and Aikenhead.<sup>439</sup> He paid £20 to the Sheriff of Perth for the relief of these lands. Not every landowner found the need to be formally retoured in all or part of his lands. This record suggests that Andrew's father had never taken sasine of this portion of land on the south side of his Ardblair estate.

Andrew married Margaret Buttar, a daughter of the neighbouring laird, Patrick Buttar of Gormack.

They had issue:

- 1) Patrick, the heir
- 2) George who was mentioned with several others, including John Blair in Banchory, in a court case at Perth on 4 August 1604 in a dispute with Margaret Watson, relict of David Soutar in Banchory and John Soutar, portioner there and James Soutar his brother.<sup>440</sup> George was witness to his brother german's charter on 10 May 1611 at the church of Kinloch<sup>441</sup> and to his nephew's marriage contract in October 1620. He was a member of an assize in 1620 along with several others of his race (see Laurence Blair of Over Durdie). He was described as uncle to the laird of Ardblair when witnessing a bond at Camno made by Patrick Blair of Keithock on 21 December 1629.<sup>442</sup>
- 3) Isabel described in an Inhibition dated 18 May 1621 as daughter to deceased Margaret Butter relict of the Andro Blair of Ardblair. Isabel married John Chalmer of Boig and had a son William Chalmer. Their contract of marriage of 24 May 1597

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435 R.S.S. Vol. iv.3127

436 Bamff Charters, Chrtr.59

437 R.M.S. Vol.v. 1815

438 Exchequer Rolls Vol.xix

439 Perth Retours No.24

440 RSC

441 R.M.S. Vol.vii.1336

442 RD1/454

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- made provision of 2,200 merks to Isabel for which she sued her husband and William Chalmer his brother as cautioner for that remaining unpaid.<sup>443</sup>
- 4) Margaret who married Donald Cargill, vicar of Rattray by whom she had children, John of Hatton, Janet who married John Blair of Pittendreich, Grissel who married George Drummond and Laurence who married Marjory Blair, his cousin.
  - 5) Jean who was spouse to Robert Ireland, brother to John Ireland of Parkhead. Their contract of marriage was dated 21 November 1649. She was described in 1605 as sister of Patrick Blair of Ardblair.<sup>444</sup> Jean died in December 1658 and was survived by her husband.<sup>445</sup>

In 1565, the marches of the lands belonging to Andrew Blair and those of his neighbour, John Lindsay of Kinloch were in dispute. A decree arbitral recorded the agreed settlement on 16 July.<sup>446</sup>

A noteworthy appointment came to Andrew from another neighbour the following year. On 22 May 1566, a Letter of Attorney named Andrew Blair of Ardblair to act on behalf of James Crichton, eldest son of Mr Robert Crichton of Eliock, advocate.<sup>447</sup> This young son of the Scottish Lord Advocate, born nearby at Cluny was about six years old at this time. However within nine years he was to graduate from St Andrews University and thereafter astound the Continental centres of learning by his language and debating abilities and others by his swordmanship.<sup>448</sup> This James is more famously known as "the Admirable" Crichton.

By this time, Andrew's grandmother, Elizabeth Ramsay, had held her widow's terce of the Ardblair estate for around 30 years. In 1567, she set to Andrew the tack of her third part of Ardblair.<sup>449</sup> On 29 March 1568, in a record of this tack, John Buttar of Gormack was the principal cautioner to Andrew, presumably his brother-in-law. Robert Crichton of Innernitie and John Rattray of Kinnaird also provided surety.

The close links with Coupar Angus Abbey continued even after the Reformation and Andrew can be found as witness to Charters of Mr Leonard Leslie the Commendator of Coupar around the year 1571.<sup>450</sup>

As an indicator of the times, it is noted that in February 1573/4, a messenger brought from Edinburgh a letter charging various gentlemen, including Blair of Ardblair to appear before the Privy Council to answer charges about eating meat and slaying flesh. The charge was posted in public at the market cross in Perth.<sup>451</sup> Andrew was present at the signing on 7 April 1575 of the preliminary marriage contract of Jane Blair of Balmyle and William Blair apparent of Balgillo. In 1584, Andrew stood cautioner for the appearance before the Lords of Council of his neighbour, George Hering of Wester Glasclune.<sup>452</sup> He also stood caution the end of the following year for John Cumming of Couitie and several Moncurs.

Andrew and his wife, Margaret Butter were alive on 14 October 1590 when they were party to the pre-nuptial contract for the marriage of their son, Patrick.<sup>453</sup> But Andrew was dead by 27

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443 D191 Vol.9 Perthshire Inhibitions

444 Perth Sasines RS52.4.190

445 Testament reg. at Perth Sheriff Court Mar. 1659

446 The Records of Invercauld

447 GD16/41/29

448 Urquhart, Sir Thomas; The Discoverye of a Most Exquisite Jewel, 1652

449 Calendar of Deeds, Acts & Decrees 2 Apr 1567

450 Laing Charters; Chrtr. 863

451 Accounts of the Lord High Treasurer Vol.xii

452 RSC. Vol. ii : 6 May 1584

453 R.M.S. Vol.v.1815

June 1596 when this contract was discharged.<sup>454</sup> Among the witnesses was Robert Blair, burghess of Dundee.

Andrew's testament was registered by the Commissariat of Edinburgh on 9 December 1598.

Margaret Butter had a liferent reserved out of the lands of Wester Essendy and Aikenhead. She had deceased by 1621.

### ***Patrick Blair (1570c - 1625c)***

Patrick was heir to his father in the title of Ardblair sometime before June 1596.

Patrick married firstly Isobel Ramsay, daughter of George Ramsay of Bamff in 1590<sup>455</sup> and they had issue:

- 1) James, his heir
- 2) Andrew described as brother to James in February 1627.<sup>456</sup>
- 3) William described as son of Patrick Blair of Ardblair in Forfar Sasines.<sup>457</sup> He probably had a university education as he is titled Mr. William in February 1627 when witnessing a contract of Thomas Lundie minister at Alyth and his wife Johanna Blair.<sup>458</sup> Although not stated there, she was his sister. At Dundee on 20 Aug 1628 he received an Intimation from his brother James of Ardblair regarding payment to him in accordance with a mandate of their sister german, Anne.
- 4) Patrick who was designed of Knockinchard. He married and had issue. His widow Katherine Yeaman was pursued on 1 May 1602 by the Commissary of Edinburgh, for failing to register his testament.<sup>459</sup>
- 5) George mentioned in a lawborrows of 30 August 1631 not to harm Mr John Strachan the minister at Lethendie with Andrew as brothers of James Blair of Ardblair.<sup>460</sup> George probably lived in Newton of Ardblair.
- 6) Anne, described as lawful daughter to the umquhile Patrick Blair of Ardblair in an Intimation on 20 August 1628 which mentions a bond for £800 to her from her father dated 26 February 1624.<sup>461</sup>
- 7) Marjory who married Laurence Cargill of Nether Colquhatt.<sup>462</sup> They had two sons and three daughters. The eldest son, Donald Cargill was a famous Covenanter who was beheaded on the scaffold for his faith in Edinburgh on 26 July 1681.<sup>463</sup>
- 8) Johanna, born 1593, married Mr Thomas Lundie (1574-1630), minister of Alyth.<sup>464</sup> They had four daughters and two sons. She died 26 May 1636 and was buried in Alyth Churchyard.
- 9) Eupham described as sister of James Blair of Ardblair on 12 November 1667.<sup>465</sup> About 1630 she married Laurence Stewart in Nether Fornocht brother german of James Stewart of Rossyth.<sup>466</sup> Their only child was Isobel. After his death Euphan married before 18 May 1634 to Patrick Ireland of Parkhead.<sup>467</sup> They had daughters

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454 Bamff Charters; Chrtr.122

455 Bamff Charters No.122

456 R.S.C. 8 Feb 1627.

457 Rental of Perthshire 1650; Forfar Sasines RS 34.2.290

458 RS1.20

459 Perthshire Hornings Vol. 12

460 Perthshire Hornings Vol .21

461 Protocol Book of Thos. Kessane Nov 1616-Nov 1641. fol.24

462 RMS volvii.324

463 Howie, John, The Scots Worthies, Oliphant Edin.

464 Fasti Vo.v.p249.

465 Acts & Decrees, Mack

466 Perthshire Sasines 15 Jul 1633

467 Acts & Decrees; Dal, 22 Feb 1665

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Margaret, Jean and Isobell.<sup>468</sup> Patrick died about 1656. Thirdly, she married John Wilson of Lochend of Blair before 2 March 1659. They were both alive in November 1678 but Eupham died before Martinmas 1681.<sup>469</sup>

- 10) Agnes, confirmation wanting, but transactions in 1657, 1663 and 1665 support this hypothesis. She was wife to Patrick Buttar of Gormack.

Patrick was witness to charters by his wife's father in 1598 and to her brother on 31 December 1608.<sup>470</sup> In May 1611, Patrick and Isabel were jointly infeft in the shady (northern) half of the lands of Wester Kinloch. By the time this charter was registered in November 1615, Isobel Ramsay had deceased.<sup>471</sup>

Patrick married secondly, Grisel Blair, daughter to Sir William Blair of Balgillo after 17 October 1620.<sup>472</sup> Their prenuptial contract was dated 25 August 1620.

By Grisel, Patrick had a son and daughter,

- 11) John who was progenitor of a cadet of Ardblair. Designed from about 1645 to 1675, John Blair of Balleid<sup>473</sup>, he married Jean Blair, daughter of John Blair of Pittendreich in 1650. John sold Balleid and gained Wester Gormack of which he was subsequently designed. They had sons, James Blair of Wester Gormack, John Blair of Polcalk and Mr Gilbert. James died about 1721.<sup>474</sup> John younger married Grissel Drumond. Mr Gilbert Blair, who married Jean Lawson, sister of John Lawson the minister of Alyth, was minister of Blair and also designed "of Balgersho, chamberlain to the Master of Balmerino". {See also under James Blair (1656 -1724) of Ardblair.} When Gilbert died without issue, his brother John Blair of Polcalk was served his heir on 5 March 1709.<sup>475</sup> His brother James Blair of West Gormack was executor of the estate in 1709.
- 12) Jean described as daughter to Patrick Blair and Grisel Blair in a court action of 11 November 1630 for recovery of debts owed to them by Sir John Blair of Balgillo and other Blairs.<sup>476</sup>

The late 16<sup>th</sup> century was a violent period with many blood feuds causing distress to families. The wives, bairns and sisters of Robert and John Glennys took action on 14 December 1598 before the Lords of Council against Patrick Blair. They accused Patrick of violently taking and detaining as prisoner, John Glenly and the slaughter of Robert Glenly. Alexander Blair of Balgray stood surety of £1000 for Laurence Mercer of Aldie to appear as witness in this case. Patrick stood 300 merks for John Wilson in Carsie to the same effect.<sup>477</sup> Nor was this the first instance of violence, for earlier, Patrick had been accused with over two dozen other local lairds of besieging Ashintully Castle in Strathardle and taking Andrew Spalding of Ashintully prisoner in November 1597.<sup>478</sup>

An Act of the Scottish Parliament in 1609 established the Justices of Peace. Patrick Butter of Gormack was appointed J.P. and from June 1612 to December 1613 caused consternation in the Privy Council by his quarrel with Patrick Blair of Ardblair and escalated this by summoning

468 Perthshire Deceets 2 Mar 1659

469 Reg. of Acts & Deceets (Mack) 2 Jun 1688

470 Bamff Charters; Chtr. 124 and 139.

471 R.M.S. Vol. vii.1336

472 R.M.S. Vol.viii.952

473 Forfar Sasines RS34.2.292

474 Comm. of Dunblane test.reg. 25 Feb 1722.

475 Services of Heirs in Scotland Vol.iii

476 CS7/429

477 RPC Vol. v

478 Pitcairn, R., Ancient Criminal Trials Vol.2

Ardblair for contempt of the Justice Court and for carrying firearms. Patrick Blair countered by pointing out that Butter was doing the same thing, although in the end the Council upheld the J.P.

It was not until 30 June 1621, that Patrick was retoured as heir to Andrew, his father in the lands of Dulater in the Forest of Clunie.

On 4 August 1604 Patrick Blair had to find surety of 2000 merks from Lawrence Nairne of Tullifergus not to harm Margaret Watson relict of David Soutar in Banchory, John Soutar portioner there and his brother James Soutar. In turn for the same reason, Patrick stood surety of 400 merks each for Laurence Nairn of Tullifergus, William Martin at the wood of Gormack, James Nicoll in Whiteloch, George Drummond servitor to the laird of Gormack, Thomas Wat at the Mill of Gormack, William Ritchie in Mause. He also stood surety for 1000 merks for John Blair elder in Banchory.<sup>479</sup>

In January 1612, Blair of Ardblair and Patrick Blair in Scroggiehill accompanied by others, came to Perth armed for a mischievous errand. At night, when Patrick Drummond, son of Charles Drummond of Leitchhill was returning to his lodging in Perth from his father's house there, the armed band pursued and severely wounded him while causing a great disturbance in the town.<sup>480</sup>

This was not the only illegal night raid of which Patrick Blair of Ardblair was accused. He appeared in Court on 20 March 1617 accused with Patrick Blair of Lochtonhill, his brother George, John Blair, notar public and Walter Crockett, messenger to answer a charge brought by John Wishart of Fettercairn. Wishart claimed that he had been detained at his own house by them at night and then taken captive to a private house in Brechin the following morning. A protestation was raised against Wishart by John Blair, the notar public (see Blair of Pittendreich).<sup>481</sup>

While the latter incident may have been an illegal detention, on 9 March 1620, Patrick Blair of Ardblair with others, including the provost and bailies of Perth were given jurisdiction to apprehend William Stewart elder and younger for the abduction of Elizabeth Henderson from her mother's house in Perth on 28 February.<sup>482</sup>

Patrick may have taken part in other arrests and trials, for he was a Justice of the Peace and was re-appointed in August 1623 to this office for Perthshire and the Stewartries of Strathearn and Menteith.<sup>483</sup>

Patrick died about 1625. On 10 November 1628 Grisel, his widow, raised an action of horning against James Blair of Ardblair with John Blair of Balgillo his cautioner, who by a contract of 4 November 1625 was to provide her with a liferent from Ardblair.<sup>484</sup>

Grisel Blair thereafter married Patrick Falconer of Newton.<sup>485</sup>

### ***James Blair (1595 - 1660c)***

James was heir to his father and was granted a charter under the Great Seal of the lands and barony of Ardblair, Cotton of Ardblair and Essendy in the year 1626.

James married first Magdalene Blair, daughter of Sir John Blair of Balgillo, their pre-nuptial contract being dated 25 August 1620.<sup>486</sup>

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479 RSC

480 RSC Vol.ix

481 RSC Vol. xi

482 RSC Vol. xii

483 RSC Vol.xiii

484 Perthshire Hornings Vol. 20

485 Forfar Sasines RS.34.2.290

486 R.M.S. Vol.viii.952

Later James married her sister, Eupham, widow of John Wilson in Lochend<sup>487</sup> and also a daughter of Sir John Blair of Balgillo by his wife Margaret Haliburton.

James and Eupham had issue:

- 1) John, his heir
- 2) Thomas, born about 1636, he matriculated as a student at University of St. Andrews on 31 January 1653 and graduated MA 28 July 1656. Passed trials before the Presbytery of Meigle and was admitted minister of Blairgowrie 23 March 1664. He was presented to Bendochy by James VII on 4 May 1688. He died before 11 Sep 1692.<sup>488</sup> Thomas married Helen Malcolm, who was sister of Mr William Malcolm, minister at Kinloch.<sup>489</sup> She survived Thomas. They had issue: William, Margaret, Isobel and Helen.<sup>490</sup> William followed his father into the ministry and is recorded as a bursar of the Presbytery in 1697. He probably married a sister of William Rattray, Clerk of Coupar about 1710.
- 3) David, a Royalist who defended the Bass Rock in the Firth of Forth when it was the last remaining post being held for James VII of Scotland, II of Britain. He emigrated to France to serve King James and died there. He was described as brother-german to the laird of Ardblair on 11 February 1680 when he was witness at Blair to a bond by James Spence, portioner of Middle Mawes.<sup>491</sup>
- 4) Isabel who married John Robertson of Bandirran in October 1650 at Blairgowrie and had issue.<sup>492</sup> Mr John Robertson was son of Patrick Robertson, notary, in Littleton of Rattray. He was minister at Airlie but deserted his charge in 1662. Isabel survived him.<sup>493</sup> Their son James succeeded to the title of Bandirran.<sup>494</sup> They also had a son John.
- 5) ? married Andrew Gray of Drumelzie.
- 6) Jean married Alexander Nairn of Tullifergus at Blairgowrie on 19 March 1649. Alexander Nairn of Tullifergus with his son, James, granted a bond of 250 merks in favour of Mr William Malcolm, minister at Kinloch in 1678 and this was assigned to James Blair of Ardblair the following year.<sup>495</sup> Jean survived her husband.<sup>496</sup>
- 7) Catherine who married Robert Pattullo of Kinnochtrie in May 1657 at Blairgowrie.<sup>497</sup> When she had sasine of the cornmill of Kinnochtrie on 29 June 1657, her brother, Mr Thomas was her attorney.<sup>498</sup> They lived in Kinnochtrie where several children were born to them. By 29 May 1663 when their son Robert was baptised at Kettins, Robert Pattullo was designed of Mylnholl, (Scone) but in 1670 he was still in Kinnochtrie when their son George was baptised. Catherine died about 1673.<sup>499</sup>

The cause of his quarrel with James and John Wilson is not determined but the serious nature shows the violence of the times. James Blair of Ardblair with a small band of armed men comprising mainly his brothers and kinsmen descended on the house of Thomas Wilson at

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487 Forfar Sasines RS35.7.528

488 Comm. of Dunkeld Testament 1692

489 Parliamentary Paers Vol. 23 p86

490 Fasti Ecclesiae Scoticae Vol.5. p.253

491 Reg. Of Deeds of Perthshire Sheriff Court 29 Mar 1684

492 Blairgowrie OPR and Forfar Sasines RS35.4.442

493 Reg of Deeds 1700; RD4/87 fo.522

494 Deeds 1686; Mack.LIX.490

495 Reg of Acts & Decrees (Mack) 14 Nov 1684)

496 Deeds 1690; Mack.LXVI.1007

497 Kettins OPR 26 Apr 1657 Banns first called.

498 Perthshire Sasines 15 Jul 1657

499 Comm. of St. Andrews Test. 4 Sep 1673.

Balburdoch (Balvidoch?) and forced entry looking there for his brother John Wilson. Failing to find him there, the Blairs lay in wait at the Bridge of Essendy and when John Wilson appeared with his brothers William and Thomas, they pursued them to Andrew Crocket's house nearby. Having convinced the Wilsons that they meant no harm they lured them out and grabbed John, stripping him and trusting him up before severely beating him. James Blair finally stunned him with a blow from his sword guard. Thereafter William and Thomas Wilson were set upon and injured, Thomas suffering severe injury to head and limbs. Called before the Lords of Council to answer charges against them, James and his brothers appeared on 8 February 1627. James was found guilty, fined 100 merks and ordered to pay 250 merks to Thomas and 50 merks each to John and William Wilsons. The sentence included imprisonment in the Tolbooth of Edinburgh until the fine and compensation was paid. A not proven verdict was returned on the others.<sup>500</sup>

During the Commonwealth period under Cromwell, a "Roll of the Rent of the Sheriffdome of Perth made by the Commissioners under the Act of the Estates of Parliament held in Edinburgh August 1649", led to the Commissioners meeting weekly from August 1649 till 15 January 1650. On production of the report, J.Blair of Ardblair was one of the four subscribing the document. For his lands of Ardblair in the parish of Blairgowrie James was assessed at £241.13s.4d In the parish of Lethendy, Blackloch was £65 and in Cluny, for Wester Lednathie and Burnside, James was assessed at £200. Also in Cluny, for his wadset of Dullator the cess of the laird of Ardblair was £20. Parliament, meeting at Perth on 13 March 1651, passed an Act and added to the barons on the Committee of Estates, among others, Sir Thopmas Blair of Balthayock and James Blair of Ardblair. This was duly done at Perth on the last day of March.

Toward the end of his life, on 29 October 1659, James Blair with his eldest son, John, made a contract to pay to Alexander Nairne, fiar of Tullifergus a pension of £116 Scots uplifted from the lands of Ardblair and Gormack.<sup>501</sup>

James died about 1660 as his lands had been in the Crowns hands for two years when on 12 August 1662 his son was served his heir and retoured.<sup>502</sup>

### ***John Blair (1630c - 1683c)***

John was retoured on 30 April 1662 as heir to his father James Blair of Ardblair in the lands of Ardblair, Crosston of Ardblair and Wester Essendy, the lands of Muirton with multures, Myreside of Ardblair, Aikenhead all in the barony of Muirton, and the shady half of Wester Kinloch with the liberty of fishing in the three lochs within Kinloch.<sup>503</sup>

Proceeding on a Precept of Clare Constat signed at Edinburgh on 2 March 1664, John was installed in the kirklands of Kirkhill of Meigle on 3 June 1664 as heir to his deceased father.<sup>504</sup>

John Blair of Ardblair married Isabel, daughter of Commissary James Stewart of Ladywell in January 1655. John was termed Fiar of Ardblair at this time. Isabel's first husband, John Stewart of Forgoth had deceased in January 1650.<sup>505</sup>

They had issue:

- 1) James born in June 1656, his heir.
- 2) Isabel born in 1659
- 3) Katharine, died unmarried
- 4) Elizabeth, the youngest daughter who married Thomas Ireland of Parkhead and had issue. Their contract of marriage was dated 3 Aug 1696.<sup>506</sup>

<sup>500</sup> R.S.C. 8 Feb 1627

<sup>501</sup> Perthshire Sasines 8 Nov 1660

<sup>502</sup> Perthshire Sasines Vol.1 fol.418

<sup>503</sup> Perth Retours No.696

<sup>504</sup> Perthshire Sasines reg.28 June 1664

<sup>505</sup> Acts & Decrees; Dal. 7 Feb 1663 and Perthshire Hornings, xxii.70

<sup>506</sup> Anderson, Joseph; The Oliphants in Scotland; Edin.1879 Chrtr.225

**A GENEALOGY OF BLAIR OF BALTHAYOCK AND THEIR CADETS**

- 5) Helen who married Mr George Freer minister of Lethendy on 26 December 1699. They purchased the estate of Easter Essendy in 1732.<sup>507</sup> They had five sons and a daughter. Helen died 11 December 1751.<sup>508</sup>

Parliament held on 1 January 1661 in Edinburgh appointed Commissioners for the counties. Sir Alexander Blair of Balthayock and John Blair of Ardblair were among those listed for the Sheriffdom of Perth.

By a charter of 2 February 1663, John was granted the lands of Gormack, Woodsyde and Torrens in the barony of Gormack and Wester Kinnaird in Atholl on the resignation of Patrick Butter of Gormack. Patrick Butter's wife was Agnes Blair. The Cargill and Lundie parties in this and other transactions suggest that she was a daughter of James Blair of Ardblair.

Along with Mr Thomas Lundie, minister of Rattray, and Mr David Cargill, John Blair granted at the Kirkton of Rattray on June 1665 a discharge of 7314 merks 10s 8d being the remainder of a sum of 14,000 merks from the sale of the lands of Parkhead and Leycocks to David Ireland of Parkhead.<sup>509</sup> The original sale had been made by Mr Thomas Lundie, David Cargill and James Blair of Ardblair, this laird's father, in a contract dated 14 February 1657.

Church discipline was strict at this time with a requirement of public repentance in presence of the congregation "on cutty stool" (a short stool) or at a pillar in full view of the assembly. In 1674, the laird of Ardblair found himself under discipline and was called by the Kirk Session of Blairgowrie to make public profession of his penitence for his sin. John indicated that he was "willing to satisfie, if not ordained to goe to the place or pillar of publik repentance." On 23 June his brother, Mr Thomas Blair, minister of Bendochy was given the unenviable task of citing him to appear at the next meeting of Presbytery. The laird disregarded the summons and two other private citations. He continued to stall over the next year claiming illness so that on 13 July 1675, Mr Thomas Blair reported to Presbytery that he had not summoned him fearing that a public appearance would drive him from the Church. The Presbytery showed patience but continued to call for his appearance and the matter was referred to the Archbishop and Synod of St. Andrews for their advice, this being during the Episcopal period of the Church of Scotland. The proceedings were held in abeyance during the winter of 1675-76 due to the laird's health. Throughout 1676, Mr Thomas reported back that Ardblair had declared his willingness to conform but that he was still delaying. Eventually after years of procrastination, the Laird submitted and on 23 March 1677, his brother was able to advise Presbytery that Ardblair "hes satisfied".<sup>510</sup>

John Blair of Ardblair was a Captain in the Perthshire Militia between 1670 and 1684. He was commissioned on 3 September 1668.<sup>511</sup>

John Blair and his son James were mentioned in 1682 in a settlement on disputed marches between Wester Kinloch and Ardblair.<sup>512</sup>

It has not been determined when John Blair died but it was in the period 1682 - 1684.

***James Blair (1656 - 1724)***

James, born in 1656, joined his father in contracts from 1674 and on reaching full age was described as fiar of Ardblair on 13 February 1677. This indicates that by then he had taken on the

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<sup>507</sup> SIG1/59/36

<sup>508</sup> Fasti Ecclesiae Scoticae Vol.4

<sup>509</sup> Reg of Deeds Perth Sheriff Court

<sup>510</sup> Fasti of Presbytery of Cowpar-Angus

<sup>511</sup> Military History of Perthshire 1660 - 1902

<sup>512</sup> Perth Sheriff Court Book Vol. 14 fol.133

responsibility for running the estate and was thus party with his father to the major transactions.<sup>513</sup>

He is mentioned as James Blair of Ardblair on 14 November 1684.<sup>514</sup>

James married Margaret, the only daughter and heiress of Patrick Blair of Little Blair. {See Blair of Pittendreich}

Their contract of marriage was signed on 15 September 1674. In terms of the precept James was infest in the lands and barony of Ardblair and Margaret in a liferent out of the Mains of Gormack.<sup>515</sup>

They had a large number of children but only two sons survived him.

- 1) James his heir
- 2) Gilbert described as brother german to James on 20 May 1732.<sup>516</sup> He appears to have had a son James who married Janet Morrison and had issue.
- 3) William described as son of Ardblair when he took part in a demonstration at the kirk of Blair on Sunday 15 May 1698.

Through his wife's inheritance, James added significantly to the estate. This was not without an initial problem for on 3 February 1676 James petitioned for the delivery of the charter chest of the deceased Patrick Blair of Little Blair that at that time was in the hands of William Young.<sup>517</sup>

This laird played an active part in the life of the county. He was a Justice of the Peace and one of the Commissioners of Supply and thereby was involved in the local administration of law and order and of the roads and bridges in the county of Perth. As captain of the militia he also had a role in local defence.

During his lifetime, James saw many significant changes. He was born during the Commonwealth period when an army of occupation was based in the local towns. Dundee which had been a major trading port was reduced to ruins although law and order throughout the land were more strictly enforced and obeyed than ever before. Then followed the Restoration of the Monarchy, when Charles II returned to Britain but disregarded his promises previously made in signing the Covenant in Scotland. On the death of Charles in 1685, his Catholic brother, James VII followed. When a son was born in 1688 to James and his queen, Mary, a Catholic succession was implied and thus the Whig government invited the King's son-in-law, William of Orange to rule the United Kingdom. This gave rise to Jacobite Risings in support of the deposed James VII and his son in 1689 and 1715. In 1707, the Scottish Government was dissolved and control passed to the Westminster parliament in London. This resulted in the proscription of trade with Scotland's traditional Continental partners and it took many years before benefit came from new markets opened in the English colonies. The Stuart line extinguished and was succeeded by the Hanovarian monarchy.

Church and State played equal roles at this time. During the life of James Blair, the Church of Scotland moved from a strict Covenanting period into an Episcopalian frame under Charles. Then it came under the Protestant influence of William of Orange. Patronage in the placing of ministers was abolished only to have it reimposed later by a remote London government under George I. Changes were not instantaneous and many rural churches clung to their minister's form of worship. Thus James Blair and his kinsmen were to be involved in argument, dispute, protest and some even in rebellion when they adhered to the old order.

Such was a situation that arose in the kirk at Blair in May 1698. Mr Archibald Deans had been delegated by the General Assembly of Dundee to preach on three Sundays in Blairgowrie and on the first, 8 May 1698, to declare the church vacant through the deprivation of Mr Gilbert Blair.

<sup>513</sup> Perthshire Sasines 2 Nov 1674 and Reg. Of Deeds of Perthshire Sheriff Court, 18 Sep 1677

<sup>514</sup> Reg. Of Acts & Decrees, Mack

<sup>515</sup> Perthshire Sasines reg.2 Nov 1674

<sup>516</sup> Perth Sasines Vol.20. fol.437

<sup>517</sup> RSC Vol. iv Third Series

He duly went to Blairgowrie but found the doors closed against him. The beadle refused to give him the keys and approaches to John Drummond of Newton and Patrick Johnston of Gormack brought rebuffs that they were well enough supplied and that there was no need for ministers such as Deans. Deans then preached in the kirkyard while Mr Alexander Mackenzie, the deprived minister of Newtyle, preached within. Stone throwing from the mob troubled Deans throughout his sermon. Undeterred, Deans came back on the 15<sup>th</sup> to discharge his commission but was met by a mob some of whom were armed and who had guarded the church overnight. Whenever Deans attempted to approach the church the mob pelted him with stones, divots and rotten eggs and hurled abusive language at him. He then approached the heritors present in the kirkyard, James Blair of Ardblair, John Drummond of Newton, Patrick Johnston of Gormack, Mr Gilbert Robertson of Drumloch, James Coupar of Lochblair and Paul Farquharson of Rochallie with whom was Mr Henry Fife, pretended minister at Ruthven. Deans read the Act of Privy Council to them but they did not comply with his request for the keys and stood impassively by while the crowd hustled Deans. They then left him and entered the kirk and listened to a sermon from Mr Fife who had been forbidden to preach there by the Presbytery. Deans then preached in the kirkyard but was mocked by William Blair, son of Ardblair and John the son of Drummond of Newton. Rotten eggs were thrown at those who listened to Deans and stones were flung at him by several of the Blair citizens. The third Sunday was again riotous and James Mitchell, a servant of Ardblair, was named as one of those beating Deans and his assistants with cudgels.<sup>518</sup>

In 1721, Sir James Kinloch of that Ilk raised an action against James Blair of Ardblair, merchant in Edinburgh, for the recovery of 300 merks due in a bond by James Blair to the the deceased Mr Gilbert Blair of Balgersho. An Executor of the testament of Mr Gilbert had given a gratuitous discharge to James Blair but the Court agreed that this was not within the powers of the executor so to do.<sup>519</sup>

James Blair of Ardblair is mentioned on 14 March 1700 as a consenting party to a disposition.<sup>520</sup> He died in 1724 in his 68<sup>th</sup> year. His widow Margaret survived a further twenty eight years and died in Ardblair on 16 November 1752 in her 97<sup>th</sup> year.<sup>521</sup>

### ***James Blair (1685c - 1770c)***

Younger sons of lairds at this time were usually educated and financed to become a merchant, writer (i.e solicitor or lawyer) or to purchase a commission as an officer in the Army. As James was not the eldest son, he was educated and financed to become a merchant. In this he was successful and became a director of the Bank of Scotland in Edinburgh.

On the death of his father, as his elder brother had died without issue, he inherited the title and was served heir to his father on 3 July 1739.<sup>522</sup> James moved to Ardblair where he made great improvements and extended the estate.

He married Christian Forrester, daughter to Mr William Forrester, Writer to the Signet by his wife Rachel who was daughter to David Balfour of Forrest, a Lord of Session.

James and Christian had issue:

- 1) James born Edinburgh 10 January 1713. Along with his father he was admitted a burgess of St Andrews on 23 June 1736.
- 2) Gilbert born 1 October 1716 in Edinburgh

<sup>518</sup> Hunter, Rev.J; The Diocese and Presbytery of Dunkeld 1660-89 Vol.2

<sup>519</sup> Decisions of the Court of Session

<sup>520</sup> Perth Sasines Vol. 14

<sup>521</sup> British Gazetteer Sat 11 Nov 1752

<sup>522</sup> Perth Retours

- 3) Margaret, known as Peggie, was born in 1721. She married lieutenant colonel William Fullerton of that ilk at Ardblair on 5 November 1765. Margaret was heir to her father. She married secondly James Carnegie of Boysack.  
Margaret died without issue in 1802 and was succeeded by her niece.
- 4) Agnes born 13 July 1722 in Edinburgh
- 5) Michall born 20 March 1724 in Edinburgh
- 6) Patrick born 20 March 1724 in Edinburgh
- 7) Rachel, born 1725, married Dr Joseph Robertson at Ardblair on 29 November 1767. Their only child, Christina was heir to her aunt.
- 8) Christian born 21 November 1726 in Edinburgh

Very soon after he inherited the estate, James Blair of Ardblair described as merchant in Edinburgh disposed of the old abbey lands above the water of Isla and under the Braes of Angus to Thomas Graham of Balgowan. These comprised Over and Middle Cloquhat, Creuchies, Mains of Mause, Meikle Blair, town of Blair commonly called the Brewlands of Blair, Corn Mill of Blair, Newton of Blair and Rochalzie.<sup>523</sup> This group of properties may be particularly significant as these may well be part of the earliest Blair possessions dating back to the time of Stephen de Blair in the 12<sup>th</sup> century. That they were held of the abbey, lordship and barony of Scone suggests that it was within that abbey's records the early family would be traced.

James Blair of Ardblair, merchant in Edinburgh, and his eldest son, James, were admitted burgesses of St Andrews on 23 June 1736.

James Blair of Ardblair is named in a claim dated 9 November 1749 for repetition of the augmented stipend of Aikenhead paid to the minister of Cluny.

In July 1751, he took evidence in Edinburgh.

During the lairdship of James Blair, Agricultural Improvement made remarkable progress and changed the countryside and welfare of the people of Strathmore more significantly than at any earlier period. He clearly encouraged the introduction of modern techniques for when this laird of Ardblair set a tack of Whiteloch farm to his tenant James Baxter, the lease on 12 November 1756 allowed the privilege of digging and carrying off marle from Fingask Loch for fertilising his fields. Interestingly, his daughter and heir, Mistress Margaret F. Blair granted similar privileges to Thomas Baxter when he leased Whiteloch farm on 11 March 1779.<sup>524</sup>

James died in 1769 and with him the male line of the Blairs of Ardblair failed.<sup>525</sup>

### ***Later Lairds of Ardblair***

Margaret Blair, wife to William Fullerton, succeeded her father to the title of Ardblair about 1770 but she died without issue on 4 November 1802.<sup>526</sup> The title passed to her niece, Christina Robertson, the only child of Rachel Blair. Christina Robertson married in 1795 to Lawrence Oliphant of Gask. Their son, James Blair Oliphant followed in the title of Ardblair in 1829. He died without issue and was succeeded in 1849 by his sister, Miss Rachel Blair Oliphant. She was described as Rachel Oliphant, Coombank near Bristol when served heir to her mother on 5 April 1849.<sup>527</sup> On her death in 1864, she was succeeded by her nephew, Thomas L.K. Blair-Oliphant.

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523 GD83/487 Bamff Papers

524 Sheriff Court Books Perth reg.1781

525 Edinburgh Commissariat Testament registered 16 Apr 1771

526 Services of Heirs in Scotland Vol.iii

527 Services of Heirs in Scotland Vol.iv

**Blair of Bendochy**

*The arms of Blair of Balgillo : A chevron between three roundles (represented by annulets) with a star in chief.*<sup>528</sup>

These arms are as Blair of Ardblair with annulets for difference. The Annulet normally signifies a fifth son.

There is sufficient evidence to say unequivocally that the progenitor of the house of Balgillo lived there in the second half of the fifteenth century and all evidence points to David Blair of Bendochy father of William Blair, the first designed of Balgillo.

The lands of Bendochy, also known anciently as Fordowy, lie just over a mile north west of Coupar Angus Abbey on the road to Blairgowrie. Although close to the muirlands and Ledcarsie lands gifted to Coupar Abbey by King William and his subject Stephen Blair these lands belonged to Dunkeld Cathedral and came under the jurisdiction of the Abbey of Dunfermline. Bendochy is mentioned in early charters of Dunfermline Abbey. The lands of Fordowy including Bendochy, Couttie and Keithick were granted by Dunkeld Cathedral to Dunfermline Abbey in honour of the saintly Queen Margaret of Scotland as confirmed in a papal bull dated at Sens 27 July 1164. An even earlier charter of Dunfermline confirms the gift of the Church of Bendochy.<sup>529</sup>

***David Blair of Bendochy (1425c - 1495c)***

The arms of Blair of Balgillo suggest that they derive from the house of Ardblair by a fifth son. Full evidence is wanting but the progenitor would be David Blair who appears in a Charter dated 20 September 1463 by Richard, Abbot of Dunfermline, granting to David Blair a tack of the lands of Fordowy (or Fordochy) and the superiority of Keithick which Walter Ogilvy of Oures resigned.<sup>530</sup> At this time he lived in Keithick just west of Coupar Angus and was known as Davy Blair. Thom Strathearn, who also lived there, appointed him on 3 April 1462 his assignee for the lands he had inherited from his father Richard Strathearn.<sup>531</sup> As mentioned under Ardblair, James Blair, son of William Blair of Ardblair also had dealings with Walter Ogilvy of Oures. That James Blair described as burgess of Dundee, for a period during the 1460's held a third part of Balgillo and in 1469 on resigning it to the laird of Balthayock, he nominated David Blair of Bendochy and others to hand over the property. This accumulated evidence points to David being the fifth son of William Blair laird of Ardblair in the period 1430 - 1456. Given his placing in this family, David was possibly born about 1430. Some caution is needed in promoting this claim when considering the order of the entail of Balthayock of 1542. Therein Ardblair is placed after Balgillo but before Bendochy. That would support the hypotheses of David as progenitor of the Bendochy branch coming from the house of Ardblair but does not explain why Balgillo is placed closer to the Blair line of Balthayock.

David Blair, armiger who, with William Blair of Ardblair, witnessed an instrument of David Cumming of Couttie as recorded in a charter of Scone Abbey dated 7 April 1454 appears to be the earliest record which could be attributed of him with reasonable confidence although he may be the witness on a charter of 12 June 1451. He is also described as an armiger or esquire when witnessing a charter at Dundee on 19 September 1457.<sup>532</sup> His association with David Cumming continued.

By a Charter Dated 6 February, 1473/74 Alexander Blair of Balthayock granted to David Blair in Bendochy of a third part of the lands of Balgillo and a third part of the Mill thereof.

<sup>528</sup> Macdonald Wm.; Scottish Armorial Seals, Edin.1904

<sup>529</sup> Reg. de Dunfermylne Chtr.128

<sup>530</sup> Dunfermline Charters 470

<sup>531</sup> GD181/97 and Miscellany of the Spalding Club Vol.v 1852 p.286

<sup>532</sup> RH1/ 6/71

Arbitration over annual rent payable by David Cumming of Couttie to Thomas of Strathearn was judged at Banchory adjacent to Bendochy on 30 April 1472 by Alexander Blair of Balthayock, David Fotheringham of Ballunie, David Blair of Bendochy and William Blair of Ardblair.<sup>533</sup> Later that year, when David Blair in Kercow discharged an annual rent to David Cumming in Couttie, the contract was made at Bendochy before David Blair of Bendochy and another of his neighbours, William Rogerson who dwelt in Coupar Grange.<sup>534</sup> The aforementioned David Fotheringham of Ballunie was ordered by the Lord Auditors to pay £62 to David Blair under two letters of Obligation when he failed to produce evidence at a court case on 30 July 1473.<sup>535</sup>

David Blair of Bendochy had further dealings with Walter Ogilvy of Oures when on 4 November 1475 at the Monastery of Coupar Angus he made a contract to purchase from Walter, the lands of Easter Auchluchrie which are in the parish of Tannadice.<sup>536</sup> The principal witness was Alexander Fenton of Ogil who was a laird in that parish and a distant relation of Walter Ogilvy's wife, Margaret Fenton. David Fenton (probably the brother of William Fenton of Cukiscarden) and George Crichton who also attended may have been neighbours of David. The strong Fenton representation suggests a marriage bond here, evidence of which will be shown later.

It is known that David's wife was named Janet.<sup>537</sup>

David and Janet had issue although the order of birth is not known:

- 1) John described as son of David Blair of Fordowy.<sup>538</sup>
- 2) George described as son to David Blair of Bendochy.<sup>539</sup>
- 3) William may also have been a son but evidence is very sparse. The office of "lord cellarer" of Coupar Angus Abbey in 1492 was held by William Blair.<sup>540</sup> Given that for the period 1468 - 1477, David Blair of Bendochy occupied this office, it seems likely that this was his son. The hereditary nature of the secular offices of the abbeys is to be anticipated by this stage of the Church in Scotland. In this case, it continued with later Blairs of Balgillo being bailie-deputes of the abbey carrying out a similar function to Chamberlain or factor for the estates.

At Whitsunday 1468, the Abbey of Coupar set a five-year tack of Coupar Grange. William Roger was one of the ten tenants named. The lease with conditions regarding tree planting, drainage and digging fuel was given to them by the cellarers, David Blair and William Stabil. The cellarer by this time was a lay official of significant rank who regulated the domestic and business affairs of the Abbey. It was probably equivalent to the office of Chamberlain in some other abbeys.

This is further demonstrated in a later tack of Coupar Grange of 1473, again to ten tenants. The let is subject to detailed obligations regarding working the land, building houses, conserving woods, draining and reclamation of land with the "*consale of the abbot and convent and Davy Blare...*"

David Blair's role as Cellarer would have involved him in considerable travel on business to the Coupar Abbey lands that were widely dispersed in Perthshire and Angus. With this experience and being a major tenant himself of another remote abbey probably gained him respect and duties from Dunfermline Abbey also. When the cemetery at the parish church of Bendochy was found to be in need of enlargement, David Ruch, a monk at the Abbey of Dunfermline and David Blair were appointed commissioners to arrange for the transfer of ground on the south side of the

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533 Bamff Charters Chrtr.11

534 Bamff Charters Chrtr.12

535 Acta Dominorum Auditorum

536 R.M.S. ii.1230

537 GD181/60

538 Charters of Coupar Angus Abbey Chrtr.CXXXIX

539 R.M.S. ii.1898

540 Register of Cupar Abbey Vol.i p.xl.

cemetery from land belonging to the monastery. This was granted on 26 September 1477 by Henry, Abbot of Dunfermline who addressed David Blair as "*our lovit familiar*".<sup>541</sup>

It was possibly through his business contact with Dunfermline Abbey that David knew the king's porter. When in June 1474, William Clark, king's porter, and Agnes his wife had the tack of the teinds of the Kirk of Fossoway, they found an honourable squire to stand surety for the contract. The squire was David Blair of Bendochy.<sup>542</sup>

Robert Fullarton of Dundee and Thomas Thornton of that ilk were ordered on 13 October 1479 to free David Blair of Bendochy of the sum of £50 being the remainder of a larger sum which David was bound to pay to Andrew Barrie, burghess of Dundee. David had stood surety for them in an earlier contract. Two years later on 20 March 1481/2, Duncan Campbell and Margaret Drummond, his spouse, accused Laurence Merser and David Blair of withholding the mails of the third part of Powmill, and the third part of the 4 merks lands of Tullybaccart. David failed to appear in court to answer the claim and was ordered to surrender the Tullybaccart lands to Duncan.<sup>543</sup>

For some time in 1481, George Blair dwelling in Balgillo, persistently refused to honour his obligation to pay to David Blair of Bendochy an outstanding sum of 60 merks. On 21 March 1481/2 the Lord Auditors decreed that George should pay 66 merks to David.

By a Precept of sasine dated 20 September 1481, Alexander Blair of Balthayock granted to David Blair in Bendochy, two parts of the lands of Balgillo with its mill. Bailies for the infestment were David Cumming of Couttie, John Chalmer of Drumbouchquhy and Andrew Drummond.<sup>544</sup>

David Blair of Bendochy and his spouse purchased the lands of Balgillo from Alexander Blair of Balthayock by a contract made at Balthayock on 3 February 1489/90. Witnesses included Thomas Blair in Melginch, Master James Rattray and Master John Kynmonth. It is of interest that also in 1490, William Blair had sasine of Balgillo and Westfield of Dundee. From this we might assume that shortly after purchasing Balgillo, David made it over to his eldest son. Some caution however is necessary, as both Balgillo and Westfield were divided into portions and ownership was shared with the Balthayock Blairs. The William Blair in this instance may have been son to George Blair of Balgillo already mentioned under Balthayock in the period around 1460. William, a burghess of Dundee certainly held part of Balgillo and a third portion of Westfield of Dundee. {See Blair Burghesses of Dundee}

At Dunfermline, four months later on 20 June 1490, Adam, Abbot of Dunfermline set a tack of 19 years term of the lands of Bendochy to David Blair who inhabited it and to George Blair his son and to David who was George's son.<sup>545</sup>

David died within the next few years and certainly before mid-1496.<sup>546</sup> His grandson, John Blair of Balgillo was heir to most of his estate.

### ***George Blair of Bendochy and of Peattie (1460c - 1507c)***

Half of the east lands of Kettins were sold by James, earl of Buchan, lord of Auchterhouse to George Blair on 28 September 1489. These lands, which may have been Peattie, were held jointly by George Blair and his wife, Isabel Haliburton.<sup>547</sup> Isabel, also called Elizabeth as was

<sup>541</sup> Register of Cupar Abbey Vol.i. 263

<sup>542</sup> Register of Cupar Abbey Vol. i. 277

<sup>543</sup> Acta Dominorum Auditorum

<sup>544</sup> GD181/59

<sup>545</sup> Registrum de Dunfermelyn Chrtr.489

<sup>546</sup> Acts of the Lords of Council in Civil Causes 1496-1501 p.28

<sup>547</sup> R.M.S. ii.1898

common in the 16<sup>th</sup> century, was a daughter of John Halyburton of Gask and Pitcur, the major landowner in Kettins.

George and Isabel (Elizabeth) had sons:

1. David. His heir.

It was probably this George Blair who is mentioned in a reversion for 320 merks on lands of Kettins in 1490/1.<sup>548</sup>

George took the title of Bendochy on the death of his father, perhaps about 1495 but his nephew John Blair was described as heir to David of Bendochy.

Following the death of William Haliburton, George purchased the marriage of the heir who was still a minor for the sum of £100 Scots.<sup>549</sup> This transaction presumably was for his wife's nephew who was still in ward due to his age. In this record, George is designed "of Peattie" which was in the Haliburton lands. The following year he is designed of Bendochy when he settled an account with Andrew Ayton and the relief of Langtoun.<sup>550</sup>

On Passion Eve, 22 March 1504/5, after a successful hunt, George Blair of Bendochy sent a present of a roe deer and wild fowl to the King.<sup>551</sup>

George died within the next three years. His widow, Isabel (Elizabeth) Haliburton retained the east half of the lands of Kettins. She lived for many years and was still alive in June 1532 when she renounced the east half of Kettins to Mr. David Pitcairn, archdeacon of Brechin on 8 June 1532 but she had deceased by 1551.<sup>552</sup>

#### ***David Blair of Bendochy (1485c - 1537c)***

David was heir to his father George, and described as David Blair of Bendochy when he had a charter for half the lands of Peattie in 1508.<sup>553</sup> In the same year on 8 June, John Haliburton of Gask granted a charter to David Blair of Bendochy of the lands of the Mains of Kinrossie. The seal on this document is missing.<sup>554</sup>

David married Marjory Dury who was probably a daughter of George Dury of that Ilk in Fife.<sup>555</sup> Little is recorded of them. An old charter of early 16<sup>th</sup> century mentions John Haliburton of Gask selling to George Blair son of David Blair in Bendochy one quarter part of the Mains of Gask occupied by John Thomas and David Mitchell.<sup>556</sup>

They had a son and heir:

1. Master George Blair who was identified as son of Marjory Dury in a Papal Charter of 1 July 1539.

#### ***Master George Blair of Bendochy and of Peattie (1492c - 1555c)***

Mr George Blair is described as heir of the late David Blair of Peattie in a letter of Attorney to Alexander Ogilvy dated at Edinburgh on 20<sup>th</sup> May 1539 and as son of Marjory Dury in a Papal charter of the same year..

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548 GD16/22/6

549 Accounts of the Lord High Treasurer Vol.ii.

550 Accounts of the Lord High Treasurer Vol.ii.

551 Accounts of the Lord High Treasurer Vol.iii

552 Calander of Deeds in Acta.Dom.Con. 1532-1559 Vol.I.18 and Acts & Decrees vi.160

553 R.M.S.

554 GD121/2/3 bundle 4 Writs of Ogilvy of Balfour in Fotheringham of Powrie Muniments.

555 Registrum de Dunfermelyn

556 GD121/2/3 bundle 1

Master George Blair of Bendochy was heir to half the lands of Peattie, and was gifted the non-entry of these on 6 January 1538/9 presumably due to the death of his feudal superior. He is mentioned in the Balthayock entail of 1542 after John Blair of Ardblair and before George Blair, burgess of Dundee.

He probably graduated Master of Arts from St. Andrews University, for a George Blair was nominated for determination there in 1510 and nominated for licence in 1512.<sup>557</sup>

He was described as in Bendochy and son of Elizabeth Haliburton in June 1532 when acting as cautioner on her resignation of half the lands of Kettins.<sup>558</sup>

He was described as Laic ie Layman of St Andrews in a Papal Charter of 1 July 1539 confirming the grant of his kinsman George Dury, Commendator of Dunfermline Abbey. This granted him the abbey lands of Bennathie and in the event of him failing to have heirs the destination was in favour of John Ogilvy heir apparent of James Ogilvy of Cookston (later of Balfour) and whom failing the heirs of Marjory Dury the mother of George Blair.<sup>559</sup>

George Blair in Peattie was the principal witness of the Precept of Sasine dated 3 March 1539/40 for the infeftment of James Ogilvy of Cookston and his spouse Marjory Dury in the lands of Balfour in the nearby parish of Kingoldrum in Angus. In settling a dispute over the Meikle Moss at Cookston between Donald, Abbot of Coupar Angus and James Ogilvy of Cookston on 9 Feb 1540/1, William Blair of Balgillo and John Blair son of Master George Blair were among those chosen to represent the Abbot.<sup>560</sup> Two years later there was further contractual business with this family.<sup>561</sup> On the resignation of the lands of Bennathie by George Blair of Peattie on 1 July 1543, George Dury, Commendator of Dunfermline, granted these to John Ogilvy, heir apparent of Balfour whose mother Marjory Dury was sister to the Commendator. The Commendator was probably a nephew of Marjory, the mother of George Blair. This transfer was thus between two local lairds whose kinswomen were named Marjory Dury, the younger likely named after her aunt.

Shortly after this, George Blair sold half the lands of Peattie to the foresaid John Ogilvy and his young wife, Margaret Haliburton,<sup>562</sup> daughter of the laird of Pitcur. It seems that the Ogilvy of Balfour and Blair of Bendochy males were taking wives from the same families.

About this time the Blair ownership of Bendochy and Peattie extinguished although Mr George Blair continued to live there engaged as a notary public.<sup>563</sup> Mr George Blair in Bendochy about 1545 was fined for the non-entry of Thomas Stewart in Durdie.<sup>564</sup> It is known that Master George built a substantial three-storey house on the ground he rented at Bendochy. For some unfortunate reason it was destroyed Lord Ogilvy of Airlie and his associates in August 1546. Thereafter George sued James Lord Ogilvy for casting down "ane stane hous of thre hous heycht togidder with ane hall and chalmer, keiching, baikhous, brewhous, stabillis, barnis, victall hous built and occupied by the complainer."<sup>565</sup>

<sup>557</sup> Acta Facultatis Artium Universitatis Sancti Andree Ed. Dunlop, Annie; Oliver & Boyde 1964.

<sup>558</sup> Cal of Deeds Act Dom. Concilli et Sess. 1532-1559

<sup>559</sup> Barty, J.W.; Ancient Deeds and other writs in the Mackenzie-Warncliffe charter chest. App. 1 Edinburgh 1906

<sup>560</sup> GD121/2 Box 6 Bundle 3

<sup>561</sup> GD121./2/1

<sup>562</sup> R.M.S. Vol.v.1047

<sup>563</sup> Bamff Charters Chr.50 and Laing Charters Chr.483

<sup>564</sup> R.S.S 2580 15 Mar 1554

<sup>565</sup> Acts of the Lords of Council in Public Affairs (1501-1554)

The transfer of George Blair's land to his Ogilvy kinsfolk seems to have continued. John Ogilvy died soon after taking Bennathie and Peattie but his younger brother, Mr James Ogilvy of Balfour inherited these lands.<sup>566</sup>

About 1550, Robert Dury of that Ilk with the consent of George, Commendator of the Abbey of Dunfermline disposed of the lands of Peattie in the parish of Kettins to Master James Ogilvy.<sup>567</sup> Peattie was to feature for many years in the holdings of the Ogilvys of Balfour. Ownership of part of the goods in the transfer may have been confused, for on 20 January 1551/2, Mr John Ogilvy of Balfour and Marjory Dury, his mother, on the one part raised a decret Arbitral (anent a spulzie) with Mr George Blair, son of the umqhhile Isobel Haliburton on the other.<sup>568</sup> It is not discovered whether Mr. George's son, John survived him.

### **Blair of Balgillo**

The lands of Balgillo lie at the western end of Angus, the shire of Forfar, and are shown on early maps set between the village of Kettins and the farm of Leys.<sup>569</sup> Hallyburton House now occupies the site.

The arms of Balgillo are those of Ardblair with the three roundles shown as annulets for difference and indicating the armiger was a fifth son. As shown previously, David Blair of Bendochy was the progenitor fitting these arms and it was he who first purchased part of the lands of Balgillo from the Balthayock estate. David's grandson, John, was retoured at the end of 1494. David's eldest son presumably had died earlier and evidence suggests that John Blair of Fordowy was the eldest son and thus father of David's heir.

#### ***John Blair of Balgillo (1470c- 1513)***

John Blair took sasine of the lands of Balgillo and its multures in 1501.<sup>570</sup>

John was heir to his grandfather, David, and earlier to his father from whom he inherited the lands of West Ballunie near Kettins and Balgillo. Andrew Lord Gray and James Ouchterlony of that Ilk are mentioned with respect to an Inquest of Retour of John Blair which was referred on 10 December 1494 to the next head court of Forfar.<sup>571</sup> He is mentioned as a witness at the kirk of Bendochy on 16 December 1497.<sup>572</sup>

In a legal instrument of 3 February 1502/3, John Ferny as attorney for John Blair of Balgillo showed that John's predecessors had been superiors of the lands of Fordowy for 36 years and that he had no intention of changing this.<sup>573</sup> A detailed local diary / history recorded about 1500, mentions that the lands of Fordowy belonged to Dunfermline Abbey and that a quarter was the property of John Blair of Balgillo who held these of the abbot and convent.<sup>574</sup> This alone is a strong indicator that he was heir of David Blair of Bendochy and with the other evidence proves that his grandfather was also known as David Blair of Fordowy. John resigned the lands of Fordowy in the regality of Dunfermline in a charter at Coupar Angus Abbey on 7 April 1506.<sup>575</sup>

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<sup>566</sup> Registrum de Dumfermelyn Chrtr.553

<sup>567</sup> SRO GD121/2/Box 3 Bundle 4 part2 of 2

<sup>568</sup> Calendar of Deeds in Acts & Decrees 1542-64. Vol.vi.160

<sup>569</sup> Timothy Pont Map of Strathmore c.1585

<sup>570</sup> Exchequer Rolls Vol.xi

<sup>571</sup> Acta Dominorum Auditorum.

<sup>572</sup> RH1/6/150

<sup>573</sup> Acts of the Lords of Council in Civil Affairs

<sup>574</sup> Rentale Dunkeldense

<sup>575</sup> RMS Vol.ii.2955

Two charters and two Precepts of Sasine by John, Master of Crawford, to his cousin Thomas Maule of Panmure on the lands of Camuston and lands of Carlungie were made at the Abbey of Coupar Angus on 13 August 1494 and the witnesses included William Symons, vicar of Bendochy, John Blair, Duncan Stirling and Thomas Fotheringham who were all termed armigers.<sup>576</sup> Clearly, this was John Blair the grandson of the laird of Bendochy before he took title of Balgillo.

William Tyrie sued John Blair on 1 July 1496 for withholding the annual rent of eleven head of nolt (black cattle) owing to him for the use of the lands of Keillor.

On 3 April 1498, John Blair described as the grandson (nevo) and heir to the late David Blair of Bendochy brought an action against John Rattray of Kinballoch for a payment of 400 merks made by David to James Moncur of Ballunie. On the same date he also raised an action against an assize of thirteen Angus lairds and the Sheriff Clerk of Forfar for an erroneous retour and showed evidence that David Blair had held lawfully the lands of Wester Ballunie for 20 years before his death<sup>577</sup>. This matter was raised again in 1503 when John Moncur brought an action against John Rattray and John Blair who is described again as grandson and heir of David Blair and it was agreed that on receipt of payment John Blair should hand over the lands of Wester Ballunie to John Moncur. The interesting feature is that this was only five days later than a case against David Coupar when John was designed of Balgillo. The difference in descriptions does not cause serious conflict however, as the pertinent feature in the Ballunie case was the prior role of David Blair and hence his heirs rights. Nor do the locations give rise to doubt as Ballunie lies in Kettins just north of Balgillo with Keillor just to the east of that.

On 3 February 1502/3, John brought an action against David Coupar, burges of Dunfermline.<sup>578</sup>

He was a member of the assize at Forfar on 20 April 1504 for the Inquest of Retour of Andrew Craig as heir to his father Walter in the one third of the lands of Baldovie.<sup>579</sup>

In December 1512, he purchased the third part of the lands of Balgillo from William Blair, burges of Dundee.<sup>580</sup> For the registration of this charter, he paid the sum of £7.6s .8d to the Lord High Treasurer.<sup>581</sup>

At the end of that year, on 28 December 1512, John was principal witness at Dundee when Andrew Bonar leased the lands of Innerduffat to John Balfour.

Many of the Angus lairds fell with their king on the Field of Flodden on 9 September 1513. John Blair of Balgillo was among these "Flowers of the Forest". His widow was among many others who found caution after the disaster.<sup>582</sup>

### ***William Blair (1492c - 1576)***

William Blair took sasine of Balgillo on 12 November 1513 for which he paid £12 to the Sheriff of Forfar for non-entry from the time of Martinmas last. The following year he attended an inquest at Forfar on the assize for the retour of Alexander Lindsay as heir to his father, Richard Lindsay in the office of Blacksmith of the Lordship of Brechin.<sup>583</sup> He appears in a retour of

<sup>576</sup> Registrum de Panmure Vol.ii p.257-260.

<sup>577</sup> Acts of the Lords of Council in Civil Causes 1496-150. p168 and p.204

<sup>578</sup> Acts of the Lords of Council in Civil Causes 1501-1503.

<sup>579</sup> Laing Charters Chtrr.247

<sup>580</sup> RMS Vol.ii.3798

<sup>581</sup> Accounts of Treasurer of Scotland Vol.iv.

<sup>582</sup> Acta Dominorum Concilii

<sup>583</sup> Miscellany of the Spalding Club Vol. v. p.291

Robert Maule of Panmure at Forfar on 7 May 1519, and various charters under the Great Seal from 1522 to 1532.

William Blair married Elizabeth Halyburton, daughter of his neighbour, William Halyburton of Pitcur. On 22 August 1522 William made a discharge to George Halyburton of Gask, her brother for 360 merks in settlement of her marriage contract.<sup>584</sup>

William had issue:

1. John his heir
2. Andrew of Balgersho. He is first mentioned with his father and elder brother in a tack of half of Blackstone from the Abbey of Coupar Angus in 1541. In October 1551 with the consent of his Curator, John Blair son of the deceased George Blair, Burgess of Dundee Andrew was to be infest in the feu of his lands (Westfield) beside Dundee.<sup>585</sup> Andrew was designed of Balgersho by 1566. He married Elizabeth Hering the daughter of James Hering of Wester Gormack and Sibilla Drummond, their contract of marriage made on 24 Aug 1564.<sup>586</sup> James Hering of Glasclune and her brother Archibald Hering were cautioners to the contract. Andrew and Elizabeth had a son Leonard and six daughters Sibill, Katherene, Elizabeth, Margaret, Barbara, and Grisell.<sup>587</sup> The eldest three daughters were born by 15 November 1575.<sup>588</sup> Andrew was one of the witnesses to the preliminary contract of marriage in 1575 of Jane Blair and William Blair apparent of Balgillo. Elizabeth Hering died on 1 November 1581. Andrew married secondly to Marion Crichton, the widow of James Scrymgeour of Glasswell (1528-1580).<sup>589</sup> She survived him. Andrew died and his son, Leonard was retoured in his lands of Balgersho in 1598.<sup>590</sup> Leonard and his wife Margaret Blair sold Balgersho to George Campbell of Cronan in May 1598.<sup>591</sup> Leonard purchased Polcalk in the parish of Auchterhouse but was designed "sometime of Balgersho" when witness to a contract at Kirkhill on 4 April 1634.<sup>592</sup> Andrew's daughter Katherine appears to have married John Bell portioner of Balmyle. Elizabeth and Margaret were alive and probably still unmarried in 1605.<sup>593</sup>
3. Marjory who married William Roger in Coupar Grange circa 1540. The Abbot and convent of Coupar Abbey set a tack to them jointly with their son and daughter for a twelfth part of Coupar Grange on 1 May 1542.<sup>594</sup> William was nominated bailie-depute of the monastery by 1544. He died at Coupar Grange in June 1562 and was survived by his wife, Marjory, and their son William.<sup>595</sup>
4. Elizabeth may also have been his daughter. She married John Haldane of Wester Keillor. When their son George Haldane sold Wester Keillor, on 19 August 1598, to Mr Thomas Halyburton son of George of Pitcur, William Blair of Balgillo and his wife Jean Blair gave their consent. The following year Elizabeth Blair as relict of the deceased John Haldane gave precept for this and Archibald Blair brother german to William of Balgillo was bailie.<sup>596</sup>

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584 GD181/65

585 Acts & Decrees Acta Dom. Conc.&Sess. 20 Oct 1552.

586 Calendar of Deeds in Acts and Decrees Vol.31 - 76

587 Edinburgh Testaments CC8/8/16

588 Calendar of Deeds in Acts and Decrees Vol.31 - 76.

589 SC49/1/vol. 11 Perth Sheriff Court act books 1557-1621

590 SC49/1/vol. 13. Perth Sheriff Court act books 1557-1621

591 SC48/1 18 Nov 1601

592 RD1/490

593 RS48/4 13 Jul 1605

594 Rogers Rev.C., Register of Cupar Abbey, Grampian Club 1880. (Tack 13)

595 Comm. of Edinburgh. Testament

596 Alex Wedderburn Protocol Book 1598-1600 p256

80 **A GENEALOGY OF BLAIR OF BALTHAYOCK AND THEIR CADETS**

William Blair was fined on 29 November 1531 for failing to attend as member of an assize for the trial of Janet, Lady Glamis. He was not alone, for this and later assizes were boycotted by many of the neighbouring lairds who must have been appalled at the King's charges against and despicable treatment of Lady Glamis.

When John Wishart of Logie sold to John Bell and Marion Blair the lands of Lockartston, Drumshade and Haughriggs adjacent to Auchendorie, near Kirriemuir, the witnesses at Kinnaneil included first William Blair of Balgillo, Andrew Ramsay and Henry Fotheringham. The principal witness implies that Marion Blair may have been a close kinswoman to William, probably his sister.<sup>597</sup>

At Coupar Abbey on 1 October 1539 William Blair and John his son and heir apparent joined a list of major Ogilvy lairds who witnessed the charter of the lands of Campsie and Craigyloch to James, Master of Ogilvy and his wife.<sup>598</sup>

A nineteen year tack of half of Blackstone for his care of the marches and his investment there was set in 1541 to William and his sons John and Andrew. The Rental Book of Coupar Abbey in 1542 shows Blackstone rented to the laird of Balgillo.<sup>599</sup>

He held court as bailie-depute of Coupar on 19 April 1542 and on 26 November 1554.<sup>600</sup>

William was probably instrumental in William Roger being nominated as a bailie-depute of Coupar Abbey by 23 April 1544, although the latter's family had long been associated with the abbey as tenants from 1454.

At Edinburgh on 2 December 1554, a Commission of Justiciary was made to James Lord Ogilvy, principal bailie of the Monastery of Coupar, Mr David Campbell, William Blair of Balgillo, James Hering of Glasclune, Mr James Haliburton, tutor of Pitcur and Thomas Kennedy. This appointed these local gentlemen to oversee justice in the lands of the monastery with regard to theft, oppression, destruction of the greenwood, poaching of deer etc.<sup>601</sup>

On 12 February 1558/9 Donald the Commendator of Coupar Angus Abbey granted to William in a charter, half the lands of Blackstone in the parish of Airlie. Witnesses included James Hering of Glasclune, James Hering of Wester Gormock, Master David Campbell in Densshade and Colin Campbell of Cronan.<sup>602</sup>

William witnessed various charters of Donald, abbot of Coupar Abbey, the latest being dated 3 May 1561.<sup>603</sup>

He appears to have survived beyond 1573 when his son John is described as apparent of Balgillo. Evidence points to William's death being about mid 1576.

***Sir John Blair (1520c - 1594c)***

Mentioned as son of William in 1539, John appears as apparent of Balgillo at the Retour of Inquest at Forfar on 6 October 1548 when Mr James Ogilvy was served heir to his father James Ogilvy of Balfour.<sup>604</sup> He was gifted the escheat of the Meikle Mill of Brechin when John

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597 R.M.S. Vol.iii.1117

598 R.M.S. Vol.iii.2091

599 Rogers,R, Rental Book of Cupar-Angus. Grampian Club 1880

600 Frag.Scoto-Monestica p.xxviii and p.xxxi / Charters of Coupar Angus Abbey

601 Exchequer Rolls Vol. xviii.p.577

602 GD121/2/6/3 and R.M.S. Vol.v.2247

603 Charters of Coupar Angus Abbey Chr.ccxliv.

604 Laing Charters Chrtr.545

Waterston was punished for wounding John Curror. Another letter on 24 January 1555/6 gifted him the escheat of the lands of Muirton and Ardblair with its multures when John Blair of Ardblair failed to find surety for the murder of George Drummond of Ledcreiff.<sup>605</sup>

He was one of several kinsmen who gave consent to Alexander Blair's contract in 1565 with his father Thomas Blair of Balthayock.

John is described as apparent of Balgillo when, on 4 October 1568, he was admitted a Brother of the Guild of Dundee.<sup>606</sup> He was similarly designed on the 29 February 1569/70, when he directed a precept of sasine to Robert Ayson.<sup>607</sup> Robert was presumably designed of Tillymet, being the son of Patrick Ayson and Elizabeth Blair already described.

During his father's life, with Dundas of Kingask, John Blair apparent of Balgillo and Graham of Fintry and the bailies of Dundee were appointed a Commission of Justiciary in April 1573. This instructed them to capture and make trial of Andrew Boyd for arson of Melginch and burning the granary there.<sup>608</sup>

He was described as apparent of Balgillo on 8 October 1575 when with his son Andrew, they witnessed the testament of George Halyburton in Kettins.<sup>609</sup>

Sasine of the whole lands of Balgillo was granted to John on 18 October 1576 on payment of £24 due to the king for relief.<sup>610</sup>

John had a Precept of Clare Constat from Leonard, Commendator of Coupar confirming him as heir to his father, William, in half the lands of Blackstone.<sup>611</sup>

Sir John had issue :

- 1) William
- 2) Archibald who was described as son to John Blair of Balgillo when with his father he was witness on 23 December 1581 to a charter in favour of William Hering of Cally.<sup>612</sup> Archibald was appointed bailie for the Precept of Sasine in the marriage contract of his nephew John Blair in October 1597. He wrote the contract when his brother, Peter, loan 200 merks to John Campbell of Southerhouse in 1598. A family charter in 1607 and the charter of the sale of half of Blackstone to James Ogilvy of Balfour on 4 October 1602 were witnessed by Archibald.<sup>613</sup> He was bailie for Catherine Blair in June 1606 when she and her husband, John Bell, sold their one-sixth portion of Over Balmyle to Margaret Erskine, Lady of Ruthven.<sup>614</sup> He died in the parish of Meathie (Inverarity) on 3 August 1616.<sup>615</sup> He had a son Patrick who was witness with him to a charter made by Alexander Montgomery on 15 May 1607 with consent of William Blair of Balgillo, his spouse Jean Blair and their third son Alexander and his spouse Grisel Hutton.<sup>616</sup>
- 3) Andrew who is mentioned with his brother german in a contract between his father and John Nevay on 16 September 1570. He was witness to a Renunciation dated 30 Aug 1603 of tenancy of a portion of Little Balmyle in favour of his brother William.<sup>617</sup>

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605 R.S.S. Vol.iv.499 and 3127

606 Dundee Lockit Book

607 R.M.S. Vol.v.2248

608 Exchequer Rolls Vol.xx p.440

609 Edinburgh Testaments CC8/8/9

610 Exchequer Rolls Vol. xx p.507

611 R.M.S. Vol.vi.1056

612 Robt Wedderburn's Protocol Book 1580-1585 fol.43. Dundee City Archives

613 GD121/2/6/2

614 Perth Sasines RS48 Vol. v fol. 89r

615 Comm.of St.Andrews Testament 4 Jun 1617. CC2/4/6

616 MS167 Perth & Kinross Archive

617 RD1 Register of Books of Council & Session Deeds 1594 -1620

## A GENEALOGY OF BLAIR OF BALTHAYOCK AND THEIR CADETS

- 4) Peter who appears to have had considerable means as on 17 November 1598 John Campbell granted to him a bond for 200 merks and in July 1608 David Maule, Commissary of St.Andrews, granted a bond in 500 merks to him.<sup>618</sup> Peter witnessed his nephew's preliminary contract of marriage in October 1597 and his brother german's charter in February 1615. He was appointed Curator to Patrick Blair the son of the deceased Alexander Blair of Denhead about 1617. He witnessed a discharge on 4 February 1628 when Andrew Blair of Balgillo settled all the legacies due to his step-mother Grisel Blair.<sup>619</sup> Peter was deceased by 1643.<sup>620</sup>
- 5) John who was witness in Dundee in 1602 with regard to the sale of Blackstone to James Ogilvy of Balfour.
- 6) Katherine who married John Nevay younger of that Ilk but died before September 1570.<sup>621</sup>
- 5) Elizabeth (Bessie) may have been a daughter but proof is wanting. Bessie married James Small of the Kirkland of Kettins and had by him sons Andrew and James before 1558.<sup>622</sup> James Small was one of the witnesses to the preliminary contract of marriage of Jane Blair of Balmyle to William Blair apparent of Balgillo in 1575. James and Bessie were still alive in March 1590 when Donald Cargill acting as notary assisted Bessie in signing a contract.<sup>623</sup> James deceased before May 1595 and his eldest son Andrew was his heir. In July 1600, Bessie raised a summons against her son Andrew Small then in Ardblair regarding the settlement of her late husband's goods and gear. William Blair of Balgillo stood her cautioner again implying her close kinship.<sup>624</sup> Her son, James Small lived sometime in Foderance but moved latterly into Dundee where he died in late 1613.<sup>625</sup>

During his latter years, threats of Papist Plots troubled Protestant Scotland. Sir John Blair and other local lairds were ordered to subscribe not to harm Barbara Scott, widow of Sir David Graham of Fintry due to her association with one such plot termed the "Spanish Banks."

Along with George Small of Fodrance, John stood caution of £500 for Bessie Blair, relict of James Small of Kettins and 500 merks for her son James Small not to harm Andrew Small in the Kirkton of Kettins who was also her son. Although no relationship is quoted it is possible that Bessie was sister to John.

The testament of John Blair was recorded by the Edinburgh Commissariot on 20 Dec 1597. He appears to have been alive in January 1596 when his son, William, was designed heir apparent of Balgillo but deceased by 13 May 1597 when William is designed of Balgillo.<sup>626</sup> However, a horning of 7 Aug 1594 although confusing names suggests that John Blair had deceased by then and that his executor had failed to register his testament.<sup>627</sup>

### *Sir William Blair (1550c - 1621c)*

William was described as apparent of Balgillo from 1573.<sup>628</sup>

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<sup>618</sup> Register of Deeds

<sup>619</sup> RD1 / 413

<sup>620</sup> R.M.S. Vol. ix. 1295

<sup>621</sup> Thomas Irelands Protocol Book 1534-1572, fol. 147; Dundee City Archives

<sup>622</sup> RPC. Vol. v 12 Sep 1593

<sup>623</sup> Writs Preserved at Yester House No. 876; Scottish Record Society

<sup>624</sup> CS7/192 20 Jul 1600

<sup>625</sup> Brechin Testaments CC3/3/3

<sup>626</sup> Perthshire Hornings Vol. 9

<sup>627</sup> DI57 vol. 5

<sup>628</sup> R.M.S. Vol. v. 2174

He was heir to his father, Sir John.<sup>629</sup> William was retoured his heir in the lands of Balgillo and half of Blackstone, Wester Keillor and Balkeerie. He was also retoured in half the lands of Blackstone in a charter registered under the Great Seal on 12 July 1600.

William married Jane Blair, Lady Balmyle in 1575, their preliminary contract of marriage being signed at Balthayock on 7 April 1575.<sup>630</sup> She was the daughter and heiress of Patrick Blair of Balmyle who died at the Battle of Pinkie Cleugh in 1547 and widow of Thomas Blair heir apparent of Balthayock who died in 1574. Jane owned the lands of Balmyle and Potento and had a liferent of the teinds of Nether Balmyle.<sup>631</sup>

William and Jane had issue:

- 1) John his heir
- 2) Patrick described as son of William Blair of Balgillo in October 1597 when witness to his brother's contract of marriage and in 1602.<sup>632</sup> On 5 May 1624 when he signed an obligation to Jean Blair, his mother, he was described as second son to the umquhile William. In 1632 he had a dwelling place at Pitcairns and was designed of Keithick the following year.<sup>633</sup> He was a member of an assize in 1645.<sup>634</sup> He lived to an old age being described as uncle to Sir William in a deed of 15 Nov 1651.<sup>635</sup>  
Either Patrick or Alexander was probably father to Mr William Blair born in 1598 whose monumental inscription in Newtyle Kirkyard records that he died on 16 November 1656 aged 58. His wife Euphan, daughter of James Patullo in Coupur, survived him and had a gravestone erected showing the Blair and Patullo arms.<sup>636</sup> They had a daughter born about 1648. Mr William's testament shows that he lived in Kirkton of Newtyle.
- 3) Alexander, the third son who was described as son of Willian Blair apparent of Balgillo and Jean Blair when infeft in the fee of a fourth part of of the Eastside of Balbrogie in August 1594.<sup>637</sup> He was styled as brother of John in December 1599 when ordered into ward in Blackness Castle with his elder brothers. About 1600, he married Grisel Hutton, neice of John Blair of Melginch and was portioner of Balbrogie.<sup>638</sup> It is readily deduced that Grizel was the daughter of William Hutoun, younger, portioner of Balbrogie and Isobel Blair who were alive in 1579.<sup>639</sup> In June 1602, Grizel received a payment of 6000 merks from a debt owed to the deceased John Blair.<sup>640</sup> On 15 May 1607 when he obtained a portion of the lands of Balbrogie from Alexander Montgomery of Nether Perth, he was designed as Alexander Blair, portioner of Balbrogie and Wester Denhead, third son to Sir William Blair of Balgillo and Jean Blair. See under Blair of Denhead.
- 4) James Blair D.D. who was promoted from Second Mastership in New College of St. Andrews and ordained 21 September 1620. He married Catherine, daughter of Andrew Wood of Greenside, their contract of marriage being dated 11 Oct 1611. He was minister at Lundie and Fowlis Easter from 1620 to 1636.<sup>641</sup>

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629 Forfar Retours RS33.8.235

630 B59/8/13 Malcolm Bower Protocol Book 1572-78 fol. 84

631 R.M.S. Vol. viii.586 and Balthayock Charters 113

632 Kincardineshire Sasines i.77, 142 and ii.58.

633 General Registers of Hornings and Inhibitions D14/vols 1-37: 1610-34

634 SC45/1/18 8 Feb 1645

635 Forfar Deeds SC47/56/8

636 Davidson, F.; Inventory of 17th Century Tombstones in Angus"

637 MS167item 19 Perth & Kinross Archive

638 Perth Sasines RS52.1.27 and RS52.5.549

639 GD16/12/82

640 RD1/93 Books of Council & session Deeds

641 Fasti Ecclesiae Scotticae Vol.5 p.355

## A GENEALOGY OF BLAIR OF BALTHAYOCK AND THEIR CADETS

- 5) Katherine married David Guthrie of Kincaldrum, their preliminary contract of marriage being drawn up at Kincaldrum and Balgillo on 10<sup>th</sup> and 15 June 1594 although their marriage may have been a little later.<sup>642</sup> Their eldest son Alexander Guthrie was mentioned in a contract made in favour of Katherine Blair in 1616 and witnessed by her father and eldest brother.<sup>643</sup>
- 6) Jean who married Alexander Gardyne fiar of Borrowfield, their contract of marriage dated 30 March 1605 at Montrose and his wife by 21 May 1613.<sup>644</sup>
- 7) Christian mentioned in a court action dated 11 December 1630.
- 8) Grisel who married firstly Patrick Blair of Ardblair and secondly Patrick Falconer of Newton whom she survived.<sup>645</sup>
- 9) Eupham who married Sir Roger Rollock, the second son of Walter Rollock of Gardyne and his spouse Lady Jean Stewart.<sup>646</sup> They lived at the baronial residence of Reedie, later owned by Blair of Balgillo lairds. Their monumental inscription is on the shaft of a cross on a table stone in Airlie Kirkyard and reads:  
 LYIS HERE ROGER AND YOFOM ROLOK QUHA DIED IN RIDIE 1640.

A Procuratory for the transfer of the lands of Clie from John Hedderwick to John Blair, natural son of Thomas of Balthayock, on 2 February 1569/70, was witnessed by John Blair apparent of Balgillo, William Blair his son and apparent heir and Patrick, brother to Balthayock.<sup>647</sup>

A fourth part of the lands of Eastside of Balbrogie was purchased on 4 August 1594 from Alexander Montgomery, portioner of Little Pert, William and Jean being infest on 9 August in the liferent and their son Alexander in fee of these lands.<sup>648</sup>

In June 1601, William and his wife acquired the lands of Nether Criggie and Mains of Criggie in the parish of St. Cyrus, Kincardineshire.<sup>649</sup> In 1615, they sold the lands of Muirhead, Mill of Criggie and others there to Sir Robert Graham of Morphie<sup>650</sup>. Witnesses to this charter included Thomas Blair apparent of Balthayock, Alexander Blair in Denhead and Peter Blair, brother to William.

The following year William Blair and his wife Jean agreed to the sale of their half of Blackstone to James Ogilvy of Balfour and Catherine Arbuthnott, his wife. Witnesses to the transactions and documents included John Blair and Archibald Blair the brothers german to William and also another John Blair.<sup>651</sup>

On 19 February 1608, during a drinking session in Grissel Russel's house in Burntisland, Fife William Keith, the son of Alexander Keith of Auchquhirk and an Englishman, Thomas Coulston, fell into argument. Later they encountered on the shore of the Forth where Keith drew his sword and plunged it into Coulston's chest, killing him. Such was the speed of the law at this time, that Keith's trial was held within the week on 23 February. The jury of fifteen men, which included William Blair of Balgillo, found Keith guilty of murder and he was sentenced to be taken to the Market Cross in Edinburgh to be beheaded.<sup>652</sup>

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<sup>642</sup> R.M.S. Vol.vi, 1935

<sup>643</sup> Protocol Book of James Wedderburn 1612-1622 fol. 31

<sup>644</sup> R.M.S. Vol. vii. 1167

<sup>645</sup> Forfar Sasines RS.34.2.290 and Deeds 1661; Mack.2.373

<sup>646</sup> Wilson, Wm., Airlie A Parish History

<sup>647</sup> Balthayock Charters 187

<sup>648</sup> Perth & Kinross Archives MS.167.10

<sup>649</sup> R.M.S. Vol. 1164

<sup>650</sup> R.M.S. Vol. vii.1205

<sup>651</sup> GD121/2/6/2

<sup>652</sup> Pitcairn, R. Ancient Criminal Trials in Scotland Vol.ii Second part.

His estate was widespread for on 2 June 1612 William set a tack to Mr James Fotheringham of the teinds of the half lands of Glenboye.<sup>653</sup>

William also held lands of David Lindsay of Edzell at the south half of Waterston near Careston.<sup>654</sup>

The arms of William show a chevron between three annulets with a mullet in chief.

William was an ally of the Ogilvys in their dispute with the Lindsays and was among those cautioned in 1591 not to harm the inhabitants of Forfar.<sup>655</sup>

He appeared as William Blair of Balgillo on an assize on 3 August 1598 for the trial of Alexander Hay of Dalgetie.<sup>656</sup>

At the trial of Findlay Fernie and Robert Innes for forgery and falsifying a charter, a member of assize is recorded as John Blair of Balgillo. This seems erroneous as the date was 15 February 1600 and the party involved must have been this laird or his son John who was then apparent of Balgillo.

In a contract of 27 June 1613, James Lord Ogilvy granted William a nineteen-year tack of the teinds of Garlawbank under a reversion of 1000 merks to be paid by William as grassum. There was a clause requiring William to pay the tax on the teinds.<sup>657</sup>

Sir William died about 1621. Jean Blair survived her husband being mentioned as his relict in November 1627 when she made a contract with John Blair of Pittendreich for the marriage of his son and heir apparent to Jean Blair the daughter of the deceased Alexander Blair of Denhead.<sup>658</sup> Elsewhere it has been wrongly reported that this younger Jean was daughter to Sir John Blair of Balgillo.

Jean Blair, Lady Balmyle had deceased by 11 December 1630 when a court action was raised by her daughters Christian and Grisel Blair, against Sir John Blair of Balgillo, Patrick Blair his brother, Doctor James Blair minister at Lundie, and Grisel Blair spouse to Patrick Falconer of Newton, who by an Obligation of 26<sup>th</sup> October 1628, they all had been summond to appear and conform to a decree pertaining thereto.<sup>659</sup>

### ***Sir John Blair (1578c-1635c)***

John was knighted about 1620. As Sir John he was retoured heir to his father on 11 May 1622.<sup>660</sup>

John when apparent of Balgillo married Jean, a daughter of George Haliburton of Pitcur and his wife Lady Elizabeth Learmont. Their preliminary contract of marriage was drawn up on 9 October 1597 at which time Archibald, the brother of William Blair of Balgillo, was appointed bailie for the infetment. The contract was signed by William Blair of Balgillo and Jean Blair his wife, with the notary assisting her. Witnesses to this included James Haliburton apparent of Pitcur, Alexander Blair apparent of Balthayock, George Hay of Nether Liff, Mr George Haliburton of Halhoill. When it was registered on 18 October in the Dundee Town Clerk's Book, those present were Alexander Blair apparent of Balthayock, Peter Blair brother german to

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653 Scrymgeour Wedderburn papers

654 R.M.S. Vol. vii. 579

655 RPC Vol. iv

656 Pitcairn, Criminal Trials Vol.2.

657 GD16/48/64

658 Laing Charters Chtr.2009

659 CS7/429

660 Retours General No.1025

**A GENEALOGY OF BLAIR OF BALTHAYOCK AND THEIR CADETS**

William Blair of Balgillo and Patrick Blair, William's son.<sup>661</sup> Alexander Blair's presence is readily explained as he was elder half-brother to the prospective groom. George Hay of Nether Liff had married Margaret Haliburton, Jean's sister two years earlier. He was a neighbour of Balthayock and his association with that Blair family has been covered, when in later years he was designed Earl of Kinnoull.

Sir John Blair and Jean Haliburton had issue:

- 1) William his heir born about 1600.
- 2) John who was described as son to Sir John when he witnessed his brother's preliminary contract of marriage in Dundee on 16 April 1622.
- 3) George described as son of Sir John Blair of Balgillo and brother of Sir William. He appears in several transactions about the mid-17<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>662</sup> He was granted a liferent by his elder brother out of the lands of Kirkhill of Balnachorn in 1643.
- 4) James who witnessed a charter to his father at Coupar Abbey on 28 August 1624. He was among the mercenaries recruited in 1626 by Alexander Erskine of Dun to fight in Europe for Christian IV of Denmark.<sup>663</sup>
- 7) Elizabeth who married David Cairncross son of Nicholas Cairncross of Balmashanner and his spouse Isabella Scrymgeour.<sup>664</sup>
- 8) Magdalene who married James Blair of Ardblair, their prenuptial contract dated 17 October 1620.<sup>665</sup>
- 9) Susanna who married James Hamilton of Kirkton of Arbroath.<sup>666</sup>
- 10) Eupham, who first married John Wilson in Lochend and after his death was second wife to James Blair of Ardblair.

It is not discovered whether Dr Patrick Blair, Doctor of Medicine in Dundee was a son of Sir John but the doctor is mentioned in 1637 regarding lands in the burgh of Dundee owned by Sir John Blair of Balgillo.<sup>667</sup> Dr Patrick Blair married Grissel Kynloch, only daughter to William Kynloch, burgess of Dundee in or before May 1633.<sup>668</sup> By January 1637, the wife of Dr Patrick is given as Margaret Fletcher, who was probably daughter to Andrew Fletcher, burgess of Dundee.<sup>669</sup>

When aged about 21, John accompanied by his younger brothers Patrick and Alexander, and aided by James Blair in the Grange of Balbrogie and Leonard Blair of Balgersho, armed themselves with hagbuts and pistols and led others on to the lands of Fodrance. This first occurred on 3 November 1599 and was repeated on the following two days. There they exchanged shots with George Small of Fodrance and his brothers, Thomas and James. As a result of these armed affrays, the Blairs and Smalls appeared in December 1599 before the Lords of the Privy Council. The Blairs were committed to ward in the Castle of Blackness on the south bank of the Firth of Forth while the Smalls were ordered to remain in Edinburgh Castle until freed by the king.

The lands of Camno, Whitehills, Greenmyres, Pilmore and Balmacron near Meigle were purchased by Sir John from John Scrymgeour of Dudhope in March 1624. He later made these over to his son, William. A charter given at Coupar Abbey on 28 August 1624 records that James Crichton of

661 Alex Wedderburn's Protocol Book Sep 1597-Jul 1600 fol.6

662 Forfar Sasines RS34. 2.229 to 324

663 Jacob, Violet; The Lairds of Dun, J.Murray, London 1931

664 GD137/2430

665 R.M.S. Vol.viii.952

666 Forfar Sasines RS34.ii.229 to 426

667 Protocol Book of Alex. Wedderburn jnr 1633-1639 fol.88

668 Protocol Book of Alex. Wedderburn jnr 1633-1639 reg. 15 May 1633

669 Protocol Book of Alex. Wedderburn jnr 1633-1639 fol.88and fol. 93

Ruthven sold lands in the barony of Reedie to Sir John Blair of Balgillo<sup>670</sup>. This transaction probably included half the lands of Blackstone there. The contract was made on 27 March 1624 for the payment of 11,500 merks by Sir John.<sup>671</sup> He took sasine of this on 8 February 1632.

Sir John wished to lead a model life. He and Alexander Erskine of Dun considering that excess "*of drinking is prohibit bothe by the Law of God and Man, and that they were willing to give guid example to utheris be their lyff and conversacioun to abstain from the like abuse.*" They therefore signed a "Temperance Bond" at Dundee on 5 July 1627 wherby before witnesses, they bound themselves to drink nothing except in their own dwellings until 1<sup>st</sup> May 1628 under the penalty of 500 merks Scots for the first failure and break of this and 100 merks for every succeeding one.

With Thomas Blair of Balthayock, Sir John was a member of the Inquest of Retour of Patrick Oliphant as heir to his grandfather on 7 May 1633.<sup>672</sup>

John added to the estate with the purchase of the lands of Lour and Muirton from Alexander Guthrie of Kincaldrum by a contract made at Dundee on 29 November 1633.<sup>673</sup>

John died about 1635.

### ***Sir William Blair (1600c - 1653c)***

William was retoured heir to his father Sir John Blair on 3 May 1642<sup>674</sup> and in the lands of barony of Kingoldrum and the lands and barony of Reedie on 21 May 1642.<sup>675</sup> He was knighted prior to this and is described as Sir William Blair of Balgillo knight on 14 January 1638.<sup>676</sup>

A preliminary contract of marriage was agreed at Dundee on 16 April 1622 whereby William Blair son and heir apparent to Sir John Blair of Balgillo was to wed Jean Durham, lawful daughter to John Durham, son to William Durham of Grange.<sup>677</sup> They married subsequently on 30 April 1622 at Monifieth.<sup>678</sup>

Sir William and Jean had issue:

- 1) John baptised 13 April 1623 at Monifieth. He was probably Sir John Blair of Camno who on 14 January 1638 was witness to the baptism of Patrick Blair at Monifieth. He died young without issue. His death was presumably within the next five years for William is described as the eldest son on 4 November 1643<sup>679</sup> and Sir William is named as proprietor of Camno in the Cess in 1650.
- 2) William his heir born about 1625 more of whom later.
- 3) Thomas described as brother of William Blair of Balgillo.<sup>680</sup> Thomas married Margaret Blair at Kettins 29 April 1655. They had a large family whose baptisms are recorded in the Kettins Old Parish Register. They lived in Balgillo but from 1671 Thomas was desiged of Muirfolds. Their son William, born at Balgillo in 1656, was the last Episcopal Minister at Lethendy. As Mr William schoolmaster in Monifieth

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670 R.M.S. viii.954

671 Calendar of Strathmore Writs 1308-1770 Chr.208

672 Anderson, The Oliphants in Scotland Chrtr.196

673 R.M.S. Vol.ix.323

674 Forfar Retours

675 Calendar of Strathmore Writs 1308-1770 Chr.221

676 Monifieth Old Parish Register

677 Protocol Book of James wedderburn Jun 1610-May 1622 fol.66 registered 27 Apr 1622.

678 Monifieth Old Parish Register

679 Forfar Sasines RS34.2,229

680 Forfar Sasines RS35.7.298

**A GENEALOGY OF BLAIR OF BALTHAYOCK AND THEIR CADETS**

- and son of Thomas Blair in Balgillo, he was appointed bursar of the Presbytery of Perth at New College for four years from Martinmas 1679.<sup>681</sup>
- 4) Alexander described as son of Sir William Blair in a Heritable Bond registered 6 November 1673 wherein Jean Durham is named as relict of Sir William.<sup>682</sup>
  - 5) Captain James Blair who was living in 1654.<sup>683</sup>
  - 6) Patrick was baptised at Monifieth on 14 January 1638. As Captain Patrick Blair at Mons, Flanders on 24 October 1682 was granted a bond by Alexander Whitehead, indweller in the Ford of Pitcur, Kettins. Captain Patrick then assigned it on 7 January 1683 at Mons to his nephew Mr William Blair. The latter donated the bond of 100 merks to the minister at Kettins for the support of the poor on 7 November 1685.<sup>684</sup>
  - 7) Jane described as lawfull daughter to the deceased Sir William Blair in a bond registered 19 July 1666 which also mentions Anna her sister and Alexander her brother.<sup>685</sup>
  - 8) Anna described as sister to Jane. About 1675, an Anna Blair was described as relict of Archibald Farquharson in Keithock. It is not discovered if this is the same.<sup>686</sup>

William was designed as "apparand of Balgillo" on his marriage to Jean Durham in 1622 and similarly when their son John was baptised there on 13 April 1623. The witnesses to the baptism were William Durham elder of Grange and William Durham younger, the great-grandfather and great-uncle respectively of the child. The marriage linked the Blairs to one of the old landowning families of Angus. A Sir William Durham received from King Robert I in 1322 a charter of the Grange of Monifieth. When Patrick Blair was baptised in Monifieth in 1638, Sir John Durham of Balmachaner was a witness, presumably the grandfather of the child.

William Blair was the principal of the trustees appointed in 1645 along with James Durham of Pitkerro and James Durham of Ardownie to manage the mortification by Lady Grange for poor scholars in Monifieth.<sup>687</sup> Jean Ochterlony, Lady Grange, her husband William Durham of Grange and Elizabeth Durham, Lady Balbegno, their daughter had deposited 2500 merks with William Durham, fiar of Grange for the maintenance of the poor and to assist education in the parish of Monifieth.

Sir William was probably one of the executors of David Tyrie of Nevay's estate, for after Tyrie's death about 1651, Christine Tyrie the only living daughter of the deceased David pursued an action against Alexander Tyrie, John Stewart of Clunie and Sir William.<sup>688</sup>

Besides his lands in Angus, Sir William held lands in Perthshire. In the 1650 "Rentall of Perthshyre" he was assessed £600 for Camno with its pendicles, and £526.13s.4d for Kirkhill and Balmachroine in the parish of Meikle.

Sir William died about 1653 and was survived by his spouse, Jean Durham. Jean was still alive on 16 February 1660 when she gave her consent to a bond made by her son William.<sup>689</sup>

681 Mitchell,A.T., Five Generations of the Family of Blair., Pollard, Exeter,1895.

682 Deeds 1673; Dur.34.375

683 Mitchell,A.T., Five Generations of the Family of Blair., Pollard, Exeter,1895.

684 Acts & Decreets, Dal, 3 Jul 1687

685 Forfar Deeds SC47/56/8 19 Jul 1666

686 Deeds 1675 Mack. 38.284

687 R.M.S. Vol. ix.1631

688 Airlie Muniments GD16/41/318

689 Forfar Deeds SC47/56/8 30 Jan 1666 and Deeds 1663; Mack. 8.274

*Sir William Blair (1625c - 1678c)*

William was retoured heir to his father Sir William on 10 February 1654 in his lands in the barony of Reedie. He took sasine of this on 26 April 1654.<sup>690</sup> Prior to this, he married Margaret Gray, fourth daughter of Andrew seventh Lord Gray.<sup>691</sup> Margaret was baptised 29 October 1628. Margaret brought a tocher of 1800 merks to the marriage half of which was paid by 17 October 1657.<sup>692</sup>

They had issue:

- 1) William whose mother is given as Margaret Gray,<sup>693</sup> was born about 1658. He was the heir to his father.
- 2) Archibald who was born at Kettins in 1661 and died of fever aged 20.
- 3) John who was baptised at Kettins 15 July 1669 but died young.
- 4) Margaret described as daughter of William Blair of Balgillo in 1700 along with her sisters Elizabeth and Isobel.<sup>694</sup> She married John Beaton, apothecary in Cupar.<sup>695</sup>
- 5) Jean who was baptised at Kettins 27 September 1650. She died of fever in 1681.
- 6) Anna who married as second wife to Scottish Episcopalian minister James Lawtie in December 1679. She was described as sister to William Blair of Balgillo. They had issue, five daughters and one son.
- 7) Elizabeth born at Kettins in 1662. She married Patrick Murray of Pitlochrie.<sup>696</sup>
- 8) Catherine born at Kettins in 1664.
- 9) Isobel born at Kettins in 1665.

Sir William received the lands of Camno, Pilmore and Balmacron from his father in a charter dated 30 June 1647. These lands were acquired by Henry Smith of Glasswell in 1662.<sup>697</sup>

Mr David Nevay, sheriff of Forfar and his wife Margaret Hay purchased a liferent out of the lands of Reedie from William by an Instrument of Resignation dated 2 March 1656.<sup>698</sup> He made a contract with Lilius Monteith and her husband on 6 April 1657.<sup>699</sup>

The lands of Ley of Balgillo and Doocotton were appraised from William Blair on 15 July 1658 to settle a case brought against him and William, Master of Gray, by John Reid of Knapp and others.<sup>700</sup>

Financial pressures were building up on the estate. On 24 February 1664, at the instigation of Mr John Rattray, minister of Alyth a Letter of Inhibition was issued against John Gardyne of Lawton and William Blair of Balgillo for payment of a heritable bond for 5000 merks.<sup>701</sup> The bond had been made with the earl of Airlie, when he was James Lord Ogilvy on 29 May 1630. Such bonds were used as security on large transactions and so could be assigned from one person to another over the years. The laird of Balgillo subsequently wrote from Perth on 19 January 1666 to Lord Ogilvy relating to the bond assigned by him to David Hering.<sup>702</sup>

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690 Calendar of Strathmore Writs 1308-1770 Chr.237

691 Gray Inventory 565

692 NRAS4320/4/3/94

693 Forfar Sasines RS35.7.268 and 298.

694 Reg. of Deeds 1700; RD4/86 fo.530

695 Deeds 1694; Dal.LXXVII.ii.41

696 Reg. of Deeds 1700; RD4/86 fo.532

697 RMS Vol.xi. 213

698 Calendar of Strathmore Writs 1308- 1770; Chr.279

699 R.M.S. Vol.x.597

700 R.M.S. Vol.x.672

701 GD16/41/427

702 GD16/41/445

William was Retoured in lands of Lour, Muirton, Denhead, Greenmyre and Easter and Wester Meathie on 4 April 1665 as heir to his father Sir William<sup>703</sup> and on the same date he was retoured heir masculine to his grandfather, John Blair of Balgillo.<sup>704</sup>

By the following year, William had sold the above lands of Lour, Muirton etc.<sup>705</sup>

William at some stage is said to have secured a bond for the meagre sum of 434 merks on a part of his estate. This was a commonplace method of raising cash at this time but, in this case, was reputed to have dire consequences in due course.

There is evidence that during William's lairdship, the estate was in decline, for as noted above during the 1650's and 1660's, control of Reedie passed from him and he disposed of Ley of Balgillo, and his lands in Lour and Meathie. This may have been the result of opposition to the forces of Oliver Cromwell for Mr Thomas Blair, son of James Blair of Ardblair was gifted by the Protector, the escheat of the goods and lands belonging to William Blair of Balgillo at the time of his denunciation on 23 October and 22 November 1656.<sup>706</sup>

The Rev. Robert Edward writing on his description of the county of Angus in 1678, mentions Blair of Balgillo as one of forty barons of Angus. His contemporary, John Auchterlonie of the Guynd wrote a fuller account of county in 1684 on a parish basis. In his description of Kettins, Auchterlonie gives Halyburton as the laird of Pitcur stating that "Most part of the parish belongs properlie to him, and the restmost of them his vassals, or otherways depends upon him."

No mention whatsoever is made of the house of Balgillo.

William died in or before 1678 and was survived by his wife Margaret Gray, and William his heir.

The family suffered greatly from an epidemic fever in 1681. Margaret Gray, her daughter, Jean and her sons William and Archibald all died in this outbreak of fever.

### ***William Blair (1658c - 1681)***

William was the last Blair laird of Balgillo. He was infeft in the lands of Balgillo in 1680 but died the following year without lawful issue but he had two illegitimate children as follows:

1. By Isabel Rattray he had a daughter Anna who was baptised at Kettins on 9 April 1678
2. By Elizabeth Clark a posthumous son William who was baptised at Kettins on 29 October 1681.

An insight to the role of church discipline in the late Episcopalian period in 17<sup>th</sup> century Scotland is found in the Kirk Session records of Kettins. On 31 March 1678 Margaret Haliburton and Isabel Rattray were summoned to appear before the Kirk Session, which they did the following Sunday. On their next appearance before the Session on 14 April, Margaret confessed that she was guilty of fornication with James Haliburton the laird of Fodrance and was strongly rebuked by the minister and ordered to reappear the next week. Likewise, Isabel Rattray appeared and confessed her fornication with William Blair of Balgillo. She received a similar rebuke and was ordered to appear again. Neither of the lairds presented themselves the following two Sundays to answer the call to them. However on the 28<sup>th</sup> April it was reported that the laird of Balgillo was not well. The next day, Monday 29<sup>th</sup>, James Haliburton confessed to the Session and professed his repentance when he was admonished. While the women had complied with the orders of Session, the men had shown great reluctance in facing the Session. Yet it was the unfortunate Margaret Haliburton who then had to appear on 6 different Sundays between then and late October 1678. On each occasion she had to appear in the public place in church to repent hersin

<sup>703</sup> Forfar Retours No.413

<sup>704</sup> Inquisitiones Generales No.4886

<sup>705</sup> R.M.S. Vol.xi.883

<sup>706</sup> Reg. Of Decreets of Perthshire Sheriff Court 19 Feb 1662

before she was received back fully. Meanwhile over these months, the minister spoke to William Blair of Balgillo requesting his appearance before Session to make a confession but could not at all persuade him. By 2 December, he finally had Balgillo's agreement to appear privately at the manse before two or three of the Session. Thus on 8 December 1678, William Blair of Balgillo in minister's house, before the minister, the Session Clerk, David Ramsay, Patrick Smith and Andrew Blair at last confessed his fornication with Isabel Rattray and promised to satisfy the discipline of the church. On 22 December Isabel and William were called to appear in the public place the following Sunday. By 5 January 1679, Isabel had appeared for the fourth time but there is no mention of the laird of Balgillo having been able to muster enough courage. The humiliating experience brought about by the birth of his daughter failed to still the passions of the laird. Nevertheless, he was to escape the discipline that would have followed inevitably on the birth of his son by Elizabeth Clark, for Death claimed him before that event.

Along with his mother, sister and brother who died in the same epidemic, William Blair of Balgillo was buried in Kettins. His brothers had predeceased him. It is alleged that the lands of Balgillo were seized at that time by Haliburton of Pitcur in satisfaction of the earlier mentioned bond for 434 merks taken out by William's father. If so this took place before 2 July 1681 when David Haliburton of Pitcur registered the discharge of the sum of 434 merks owed by the deceased William and his mother.<sup>707</sup>

### *The Claim of Blair of Balgillo*

On the death of the last laird in 1681, the ancient title of Blair of Balgillo would have passed to his nearest heir apparent as he died without lawful issue. His brother Archibald however perished in the same epidemic of fever. William's uncle Thomas Blair of Muirfaulds lived in Balgillo and was witness to a document in 1680. Thomas and his wife, Margaret Blair had married in 1655 and between then and 1677 had children William, Jean, Janet, Alexander and John. The line therefore could have continued in name and arms, even if not in possession of the lands, of Balgillo.

As it was, Haliburton of Pitcur took possession of Balgillo and in time built there a mansion house, naming it Hallyburton House, and thus extinguishing the name from its ancient site.

It was not until 28 October 1805 that Anna Blair was served heir to her gt-gt-granduncle, William Blair last infeft of Balgillo, by a Jury at Edinburgh.<sup>708</sup>

Anna was the only child of William Blair and Christian Blair in Blairgowrie. She was served heir to her mother on 29 January 1808. Her maternal grandparents were Alexander Blair and Mary Blair also in Blairgowrie. In turn, Alexander Blair was the son of Rev. William Blair the last Episcopal Minister of Lethendy already described in this section as the son born in Kettins in 1656 to Thomas Blair and Margaret Blair.

Anna Blair married Alexander Berry in 1793. She died without issue but having assigned her claim to the Balgillo Estate to Captain Thomas Blair of Walton Grove, Surrey.

The Lord Lyon granted Arms on 17 October 1815 to Thomas Blair of Walton Grove with descent from Blair of Balgillo and Balthayock. Unfortunately, the proofs of descent were not preserved and it was not until 1895 that Arthur Tompson Mitchell collected and arranged his paper "Five Generations of the Family of Blair from the Counties of Perth and Forfar".

For a detailed family tree of descendants of Peter Blair of Founart, Perthshire, the grandfather of Thomas Blair of Walton Grove, the "Five Generations" is excellent. The author openly drew on Douglas's "Baronage" for his other family trees and was conscious that there were weaknesses therein.

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<sup>707</sup> RS35.7.299

<sup>708</sup> Services of Heirs in Scotland Vol.iii

### **Blair of Balmyle**

The lands of Balmyle and Potento lie to the north west of Meigle at the eastern border of Perthshire. The Lindsay earls of Crawford were major landowners in Angus and Fife and formerly held much of the land immediately north of Meigle.

A contract was made at Balthayock on 17 September 1494 between John Lindsay, Master of Crawford and Thomas Blair of Balthayock regarding the transfer of Baltroddie to Thomas. It appears that it was about this time that a marriage bond was formed between these two houses.

#### ***John Blair of Balmyle (1485c - 1520c)***

John, a younger son of Thomas Blair of Balthayock married firstly Margaret Lindsay, daughter of David fifth earl of Crawford and Euphemia, Lady Bothwell. Margaret was sister of the above mentioned John Lindsay who in 1495 succeeded his father as sixth earl of Crawford.<sup>709</sup>

John Blair and Margaret had sons:

1. Alexander the heir more of whom later.
2. Gilbert ? who with his wife, Elizabeth Wedderburn, had the east quarter of the lands of Balmyle from 1529 to 1542. He was in Innerqueich when on 23 April 1575, he ratified that he had disposed of his portion of Balmyle to Alexander Blair of Balthayock.<sup>710</sup>

David, earl of Crawford sold on 25 February 1513/4 to John Blair and his son, Alexander Blair the lands of Balmyle and Potento and also the lands of Camno and Mains of Meigle in warrandice under reversion upon payment by the earl of 1400 merks. John and Alexander were subsequently seised on 10 June 1519.<sup>711</sup>

Margaret Lindsay was probably dead by 1514 and certainly so before 2 February 1517/8. John married secondly, Margaret Elder who survived him. John died about 1520.

#### ***Alexander Blair (1505c - 1532c)***

Alexander was seised in the lands of Balmyle and Potento on 5 October 1520 in a ceremony conducted by his neighbour, Walter Tyrie of Drumkilbo, acting as bailie appointed by David, earl of Crawford.<sup>712</sup> As a consequence of Alexander having paid great sums of money to David Lindsay, on 4 May 1528, this earl of Crawford resigned his right of reversion made in the contract of 1518.<sup>713</sup>

At Dundee on 19 March 1528/9, Alexander granted a charter of the fourth part of Balmyle to Gilbert Blair and Elizabeth Wedderburn his spouse. This gave Gilbert and his wife temporary possession as the charter was covered by a Letter of Regression by King James V of 26 March 1529 to Alexander to allow him to redeem this portion in the future.<sup>714</sup>

It is not discovered to whom Alexander Blair of Balmyle married but she may have been Janet Blair, who may have been a daughter of John Blair of Melginch based on the following evidence. On 13 August 1547, Janet Blair, Lady Balmyle was assigned by John Blair of Melginch parts of the lands of Balmyle.<sup>715</sup> This John Blair was son and heir of the deceased John Blair of Melginch who on 2 July 1532 at Edinburgh was granted a gift by King James V of the mails and duties of the two parts of the lands of Balmyle which were in the King's hands due to nonentry since the

<sup>709</sup> Lives of the Lindsays

<sup>710</sup> Balthayock Charters 223

<sup>711</sup> RMS Vol.iii 180; Acts & Decrees Vol.viii.357; Balthayock Charters 55,56 and 60

<sup>712</sup> Balthayock Charters 61 and 62

<sup>713</sup> Balthayock Charters 68 and 70

<sup>714</sup> Balthayock Charters 72 and 74 and also RSS Voli. 4124 and Vol.ii.1

<sup>715</sup> Balthayock Charters 113

decease of John, Earl of Crawford and until the lawful heir came of age.<sup>716</sup> After his death, Alexander's wife married Buttar, the laird of Gormack and her son by him, John Buttar was heir to that title.

By his wife Alexander had two or perhaps three sons:

1. Patrick his heir born about 1525.
2. Andrew? described as brother german to Patrick in the Balthayock entail of 1542. This may be one and the same as Alexander immediately following as there appears to have been only two sons.<sup>717</sup>
3. Alexander described as brother german when appointed Tutor Testamentor to Patrick's children in 1547. Under the leadership of his half brother, John Buttar the laird of Gormack, Alexander joined with the laird of Ardblair and the laird of Drumlochy when they attacked and murdered George Drummond of Leidcreiff (as described under Ardblair). For his part in the murder, Alexander was put to the horn and forfeited the gift of Tutor of Balmyle.<sup>718</sup> In the preliminary contract of marriage dated 7 April 1575, between Jane Blair, the widow of Thomas Blair apparent of Balthayock, and William Blair apparent of Balgillo, mention is made of Alexander Blair of Bruceton who had been infeft in part of Jane's lands of Balmyle and Potento. It seems most probable that this was the same. He married Grissel Guthrie.

Alexander Blair of Balmyle died about 1532. On 2 July 1532, the gift of the mails of the lands of Balmyle was granted to John Blair of Melginch by reason of nonentry. Shortly thereafter he was granted the duties of the lands due to the death of the feudal lord, John earl of Crawford. That he qualified for the gift would be due to the death of Alexander Blair of Balmyle and the receipt of the other would follow under the circumstances.<sup>719</sup>

#### ***Patrick Blair (1525c - 1547)***

Patrick was still a pupil when his father died and thus Thomas Blair of Balthayock was appointed his Tutor. Patrick was retoured heir to his father Alexander Blair of Balmyle on 29 March 1533 and was seised in the lands of Balmyle and Potento a month later on 29 April.<sup>720</sup>

Patrick also appeared before his grandfather's widow, Margaret Elder and requested her to infeft him in the third part of the lands of Balmyle according to a decret by the Lords of Council. She protested that she had her own interest in this, presumably as her widow's terce but through his Tutor he protested and took Instruments.<sup>721</sup>

With the consent of his Tutor, Patrick renewed the charter to Gilbert Blair and Elizabeth Wedderburn on 25 July 1533. When the sasine was granted at Balthayock on 15 July 1534, to Gilbert and Elizabeth, a David Blair was the principal witness.<sup>722</sup> The east fourth part of Balmyle that Gilbert held was later transferred on 5 April 1542 by him to Alexander the son of Thomas Blair of Balthayock who took sasine on 24 May 1542.<sup>723</sup>

Blair of Balthayock as Tutor would have had initial control over Patrick's marriage. However, on 31 July 1538 the gift of his marriage was obtained by Mr John Gardin, Parson of Tyre. The

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716 Balthayock Charters 76

717 RSS Vol.ii. 2665

718 Balthayock Charters 141

719 RSS Vol.ii. 1319 and 1332

720 Balthayock Charters 78 and 79 and Acts & Decrees Vol.viii.357

721 Balthayock Charters 80

722 Thomas Irelands Protocol Book Dundee City Archives

723 Balthayock Charters 103 to 106

contract stated that in the event of Patrick dying unmarried, the gift extended to the marriage of the other heir of the late Alexander.<sup>724</sup>

On 9 February 1545/6, Patrick granted a liferent of three quarters of Potento to Elizabeth Crichton, daughter of the neighbouring laird of Ruthven, John Crichton and his wife Janet Fraser.<sup>725</sup> The grant was made to Elizabeth in the days of her virginity, implying that this was a prenuptial contract.

It is assumed that the marriage took place and that Patrick Blair and Elizabeth Crichton had issue:

1. Jane or Janet who was heir to the title. She was probably named in the Scottish tradition after her maternal grandmother, Janet Fraser a daughter of Lord Lovat. She married firstly, Thomas Blair heir apparent of Balthayock and secondly, Sir William Blair heir to Sir John Blair of Balgillo.

Patrick Blair of Balmyle promised on 29 June 1547 to pay to William Coult, burges of Dundee an annual payment of 6 bolls of bear (barley) out of the lands of Potento.<sup>726</sup>

Later that year a major English force invaded Scotland to prevent the young Queen Mary being wed to a French alliance. The young laird of Balmyle responded to the call to arms and realising the hazard ahead, made his testament on 8 September 1547 naming his brother german, Alexander, as Tutor to his children during their minority.<sup>727</sup> It seems that two days later, Patrick perished on the field of Pinkie Cleugh along with numerous other lairds and their supporters.

The young widow, Elizabeth Crichton, later married Patrick, the third son of Thomas Blair of Balthayock and had family by him. They both survived into the 17<sup>th</sup> century. (See under Blair of Balthayock).

### *Janet or Jane Blair (1546 - 1630c)*

In accordance with her father's testament, Alexander Blair the brother of the deceased Patrick, was appointed tutor to the children. However, Alexander was among those outlawed in September 1554 for the murder of George Drummond of Leidcreif and thus arrangements were made to appoint another Tutor.<sup>728</sup>

A Letter of Tutory by Queen Mary on 7 May 1555 appointed Alexander Blair, son and apparent heir of Thomas Blair of Balthayock to be Jane's Tutor Dative until she attained full age.<sup>729</sup>

It was possibly about 1562, that Jane married Thomas Blair, son of her Tutor Dative, and grandson of Balthayock. In that year, Alexander Blair of Balthayock made a contract with Alexander Blair, Jane's uncle, to deliver up the charters of Balmyle to Balthayock.

Jane's husband, was thus described as Thomas Blair of Balmyle. They had issue as described earlier under Balthayock.

This union united the lands of Balmyle with the Balthayock estate and thus the later lairds of Balmyle are found under Balthayock from the time of Thomas Blair of Balmyle, heir apparent to Alexander Blair of Balthayock.

After the death of Thomas, about 1574, Jane married William Blair son of Sir John Blair of Balgillo and had issue by him. Their preliminary contract of marriage was signed on 7 April 1575 at Balthayock and the Parish Church of Kinfauns. The contract indicates that Alexander

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<sup>724</sup> RSS Vol.ii. 2665

<sup>725</sup> RMS Vol.iii.3203

<sup>726</sup> Balthayock Charters 111 and 112

<sup>727</sup> Balthayock Charters 114

<sup>728</sup> Balthayock Charters 141

<sup>729</sup> Balthayock Charters 142

Blair of Brucetown had earlier been infeft in Jane's lands of Mains of Balmyle and Potento by her late husband. The list of parties and witnesses to this contract reads like a major family gathering. The parties being Jane and her future husband William, Alexander Blair of Balthayock, and Alexander Blair of Bruceton. The witnesses included Andrew Blair of Ardblair, Andrew Blair of Balgersho, John Blair of Melginch, and Patrick Blair portioner of Liff and James Small in Kettins who was spouse to Bessie Blair.<sup>730</sup> This contract also reveals that Jane, although a significant heiress in her own right, was unable to sign her name without the assistance of the scribe. See also under Blair of Balgillo. Jane Lady Balmyle, survived her second husband and was still alive in 1627. Jane was mother not only to a laird of Balthayock but also to a laird of Balgillo.

***Alexander Blair of Balthayock (1568c -1619c)***

As described above, the Balthayock family held Nether Balmyle and Potento.

***Thomas Blair of Balthayock (1590c-1653)***

Thomas was retoured heir to his father in the lands of Nether Balmyle and Potento on 21 March 1629.<sup>731</sup>

***Mr John Blair of Balmyle (1636 - 1699c)***

Mr John Blair born in 1636 to Thomas Blair of Balthayock by his spouse Margaret Ayton, was the next laird to use the title of Balmyle. With his wife, John was granted a charter on the lands of Nether Balmyle dated 16 July 1668. He gained a Masters degree at University as he is described as Mr John Blair in 1664 and earlier.<sup>732</sup> He was a notary public in Perth when seised on 7 December 1655 in a pension of £132 annually out of the lands of Potento and Balmyle.<sup>733</sup> John was Commissary Clerk of Dunkeld and also a merchant burgher of Dundee. He probably lived much of the time at Balthayock. On 14 May, 1677 he wrote from there to James Rattray of Craighall saying that he is sorry that he has not received Craighall's letter until now, and that until 12 June he is busy. After that he hopes he may be able to visit Craighall.

His spouse appears to have been Elizabeth Forrester.<sup>734</sup> Mr John Blair died about 1699.<sup>735</sup>

*His Arms: Argent a cheveron Sable betwixt three torteaux within a bordure of the second.*

*Motto: Facies Qualis Mens Talis*

***John Blair (1671 - 1732)***

The next laird of Balmyle was a doctor of medicine in Dundee. He was the eldest son of Mr John Blair, minister of Kilspindie (see under Blair of Lethendy). Dr John was born at Kilspindie in 1671, studied medicine and became one of the most eminent physicians of his time. Dr John acquired the estate of Balmyle before 30 May 1692. He married, on 27 April 1691 at Dundee, to Grisell Mann, daughter of James Mann, merchant and bailie of Dundee, their contract of marriage being dated 13 March 1691.<sup>736</sup> Her mother was Grisell Davidson, daughter to Robert Davidson of Balgay.

John and Grisell had issue:

Two sons named John, the first of whom died as a child and the second born in 1700, the heir apparent, became a physician but died young without issue.

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730 B59/8/13 Malcolm Bower Protocol Book 1572-78 fol. 84

731 Perth Retours 491

732 R.M.S. Vol.xi.783

733 Balthayock Charters 464

734 Reg. of Deeds 1699; RD3/91 fo.608

735 Comm. of Brechin 24 May 1699

736 Perthshire Sasines 2 Apr 1691.

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A son James who also died young without issue, probably shortly after his father as he appears to have had sasine of Balmyle in 1732.

Their youngest son Alexander born in 1703 was the sole survivor and heir.

They had daughters, Anne born in 1692, Grisell in 1696 and Janet in 1713 and possibly a daughter Helen who married Alexander Mackenzie of Inchculter.

The Dundee Old Parish Register of the baptisms of the children contains a wealth of family information. When their first son John was baptised on 3 April 1694, the godfathers were Mr John Blair, minister at Kilspindie and John Mann, brother of Grisell. Their daughter Grisell had as godmothers her grandmother, Grisell Davidson and Grisell Gordon, daughter to the laird of Letteruns. At the baptism of the second son named John, Mr John Blair minister of Kilspindie, grandfather was again principal godfather. The others were Mr John Brown the provost of Dundee, John Mann uncle, James Mann grandfather and Mr John Drummond minister. Patrick Blair, Apothecary was witness.

Dr John Blair was described a doctor of medicine in 1702 and 1703 in the Dundee Old Parish Register.

Dr John died in 1732 and was succeeded in time by his youngest son although it may be that briefly his son James Blair was laird of Balmyle.<sup>737</sup>

### *Alexander Blair (1703 - 1780c)*

Alexander was born in Dundee on 19 January 1703 and on the following day was baptised. His godfathers were Alexander Blair Surgeon Apothecary in Port Royal, Jamaica, Alexander Blair the provost of Dundee who was a merchant burgher there and his grandfather, James Mann who also was a merchant burgher of Dundee. After a University education Alexander was a merchant in Dunkirk and later practised law as a Writer in Edinburgh. He was served heir to his father, Dr John Blair of Balmyle on 1 July 1737.<sup>738</sup>

Alexander married Margaret, a daughter of Alexander Colville of Kincardine.

They had issue:

1. Alexander
2. Helen Blair.

### **Blair of Pittendreich and Lethendy**

The lands of Pittendreich lay in the barony of Glasclune and are found in the parish of Lethendy just to the south of Ardblair and the barony of Muirton which as earlier described were long associated with the Blairs of Ardblair. Previous histories have been very inaccurate with regard to the relationships of the lairds of Pittendreich, Lethendy and Glasclune. The following attempts to unravel the confusing interlace which arose through purchases from kinsfolk and failure in the direct line of inheritance.

Blair of Pittendreich was a cadet of Balthayock. The progenitor was John Blair, son of John Blair of Wester Banchory the second son of the first marriage of Alexander Blair, laird of Balthayock from 1568 -1603.

### *John Blair (1551c - 1608c) in Wester Banchory*

John, the second son of Alexander Blair of Balthayock by his first wife, was granted by a charter of his father, a liferent of the lands of Easter Cults on 23 December 1572.<sup>739</sup> John married Bessie Billie and they lived in Perth where he was a merchant, being admitted as a Guild Brother there on 21

<sup>737</sup> Comm. of Brechin test. reg. 8 Jun 1733

<sup>738</sup> Services of Heirs in Scotland Vol.i

<sup>739</sup> Balthayock Charters 204

April 1598 on payment of 40 shillings.<sup>740</sup> John was still in control of Easter Cults in 1603 when on 6 June, David Smith in Walton of Cults agreed to an obligation on the tacks of Easter Cults.<sup>741</sup> John was designed "of Wester Banchrie" in August 1605.<sup>742</sup> He is given variously as in Wester Banchory or Meikle Banchory from 1604 up to 1607.

John had sons:

1. John who became the first laird of Pittendreich; more of whom later.
2. Patrick who married a daughter of Andrew Wilson in Balleid. His father-in-law, and brother-in-law William Wilson accompanied by Patrick were armed with pistols and hagbuts when they went to the house of John Spalding in Wester Tullylundie (Tullyneddie) on 8 April 1610. There they assaulted Spalding's wife, Janet Clark, and manservant, William Spalding knocking them both stunned to the ground. Four days later, they returned while the Spaldings were ploughing and this time Patrick Blair presented a hagbut to the ploughman's breast and then with a drawn sword wounded both of them. Subsequently they were tried before the Privy Council on 24 May. The Wilsons were admonished but Patrick Blair was found guilty of discharging the firearms and was ordered to imprisonment in the tolbooth of Edinburgh.<sup>743</sup> The process of law was remarkably swift in these days and by 24 August 1610, Patrick, described as son of the late John Blair in Wester Banchory, was granted a remission for the duration of his life in a Royal letter.<sup>744</sup> He was ordered to stand trial before the Lords of Council on 3 January 1611 and made a bond of £500 on 31 January 1611 not to carry hagbuts or pistols thereafter.<sup>745</sup> The notary public at the signing of this bond at Kirkton of Rattray was John Blair, who although no relationship is quoted was Patrick's elder brother.
3. William described as son of John Blair in Meikle Banchory in 1605 and Wester Banchory in 1607.<sup>746</sup>

A dispute between neighbours at Banchory involved John Blair and his son John on the one part and John Soutar, who was a portioner of Banchory and John Ireland of Parkhead. Family bonds extended this to others in both camps. At a court of the Privy Council at Perth on 4 August 1604, the Blair party which was headed by Ardblair, included Andrew Blair of Gairdrum and Thomas Blair in Kinclaven and many other neighbours. They were ordered to find surety not to cause harm to Margaret Watson, the widow of David Soutar in Banchory, the above John Soutar or James his brother. Four days later, John Ireland of Parkhead stood surety of 1000 merks for John Soutar not to harm John Blair elder in Banchory or his son, John.

John died in June 1605 in Meikle Banchory as described in his testament registered by his sons Patrick and William with the Commissariat of Edinburgh on 4 November 1608. His debts included money due to Patrick Blair of Ardblair, John Blair his son and John Blair in Myreside of Ardblair.

***John Blair (1580c - 1645c) of Ledcassie, first laird of Pittendreich***

John was born about 1580. He had a wadset of the lands of Ledcassie, those same lands which first showed the association of the name Blair in Perthshire, as described under Stephen de Blair. As John Blair of Ledcassie, he married in early 1606 to Janet Cargill, a daughter of Mr Donald Cargill, vicar of Rattray and Margaret Blair, his spouse.<sup>747</sup> {See Blair of Ardblair}.

<sup>740</sup> Perth Guildry Records, Perth Deeds B59/8/9.54F and B59/8/10.7B; Perth Sasines RS52.4.156

<sup>741</sup> Balthayock Charters 307

<sup>742</sup> Perth SasinesRS52.4.103 4 July & 31 Aug 1605.

<sup>743</sup> RSS 24 May 1610

<sup>744</sup> RMS vol vi. 368

<sup>745</sup> RSC Vol.ix

<sup>746</sup> Perth Sasines RS52.4.103 and RS52.6.5

By Janet he had six sons and three daughters:

- 1) John, his heir baptised at Rattray on 7 December 1606. More of whom later.
- 2) Laurence who was described as second son of John in his brother's marriage contract in 1627. He was baptised at Rattray in 1610. He died without issue.
- 3) Mr Donald, baptised at Rattray in 1612, he graduated MA St. Andrews University in 1632. Presented by Charles I on 31 March 1636 to Lundie & Fowlis. In 1649, he was deposed by the Commission of Assembly as a supporter of the Royal Cause and for favouring the expedition of 1648. He married Katherine Ogilvy who survived him. They had family: Patrick; Anne who married Thomas Wilson his successor at Lundie & Fowlis; and several others. Three sons, James, James and Colin died as children by 1651. Their son Thomas was baptised in Dundee on 2 October 1656. The Privy Council granted Mr Donald on 1 August 1661 a payment of £15 on account of his great misery, infirmity and many children whom he had nothing to support. He was later admitted to Lethendy & Kinloch in February 1665 but died in 1667. His gravestone in Lundie Churchyard has the arms of Blair and Ogilvy in pale flanked by the initials DB and KO.<sup>748</sup> His son, Donald, had a bond registered on 15 July 1667.<sup>749</sup>
- 4) Mr George, designed of Pittendreich was the progenitor of the Blairs of Glasclune. More of whom later.
- 5) Patrick, designed of Little-Blair. (*His arms: as Balthayock with a crescent in chief.*) Born about 1615, he trained as a notary under his father and qualified in 1633. He held a commission of lieutenant colonel in the Royalist army during the Civil War and bought Little-Blair in 1651. He probably gained this through marriage to Mary, daughter to George Drummond of Balloch and Blair about 1650 as Drummond sent a letter dated 2 October 1650 to Robert Douglas, asking for a warrant to ministers in Orkney so that two of his daughters may be married, the eldest to Patrick Blair, son of deceased John Blair of Pitindreich, and the other to Patrick Monteith of Eglischaw in Orkney.<sup>750</sup> Patrick was appointed Sheriff of Orkney after the Restoration. Three of his children by Mary Drummond namely, Patrick, Grissel and Barbara, died young about 1653 -1660 –1662 in Orkney. Their tombstone bearing the Drummond and Blair arms is in the nave of St Magnus Cathedral, Kirkwall, Orkney. Patrick married later to Barbara Graham, Lady Halcro. Patrick died in 1672.<sup>751</sup> His daughter and heiress, Margaret, born in 1656, married James Blair of Ardblair. She died at Ardblair in 1752 in her 97<sup>th</sup> year.
- 6) James of Glasclune. He married Isobel Tyrie only daughter of Sir Thomas Tyrie of Drumkilbo. Their prenuptial contract was dated 8 December 1654 when they were infert in Over Balcarnie and other lands in the barony of Glasclune.<sup>752</sup> They jointly had a sasine of the lands of Glasclune dated 8 September 1670. They appear to have had a son, for on 14 July 1687 Thomas Wilson pursued through court for recovery of debt from David Blair, fiar of Glasclune.<sup>753</sup> Thomas Wilson, who was the son-in-law of Mr Donald Blair, above mentioned brother to James, had been granted on 7 December 1663 a bond for 3000 merks by James Blair of Glasclune with George Blair of Pittendreich and Thomas Blair of Lethendy, as cautioners.<sup>754</sup> James appears to have sold Glasclune to his nephew, George son of Mr. George. James died in

747 Perth Sasines 10 Mar 1606 ; Laing Charters

748 Fasti Ecclesiae Scotianae Vol.4.167 and Vol.5.355

749 Deeds 1667; Dur.15.302

750 CH1/5/4 Wodrow Folio MSS. vol. 25

751 RSC Vol. iv Third Series

752 Airlie Muniments GD16.1.24.188

753 Acts & Decrees; Durie 25 Feb 1688

754 Reg. of Perthshire Homings, 25 Mar 1673

- 1688.<sup>755</sup> Isobel Tyrie survived him and was one of the subscribers to the disastrous Darien Scheme.
- 7) Margaret baptised at Rattray 12 June 1608, she married Mr John Strachan minister of Lethendy.
  - 8) Jean who married firstly to Major William Scrymgeour of Fardle,<sup>756</sup> who died without issue and secondly in 1650 married to John Blair of Balleid by whom she had issue. Her husband, John, eldest son James Blair and she are mentioned in a contract of 1673 along with John Blair of Ardblair and Thomas Blair of Pittendreich.<sup>757</sup> {See Blair of Ardblair}

John appears frequently as a notary public in several charters registered under the Great Seal in the period 1600 to 1620. He lived in the Kirkton of Rattray in the early 1600's.<sup>758</sup> Initially, he held the lands of Ledcassie by wadset but a few months after his marriage to Janet, these lands were redeemed by Patrick Blair of Ardblair in July 1606.<sup>759</sup> He probably lived in the Hatton of Rattray in 1610 and 1611. John purchased the lands of Pittendreich in early 1614.<sup>760</sup> As John Blair of Pittendreich he received a charter of the lands of Aird, Little Fardle and other properties in the barony of Fardle from James Scrymgeour younger of Fardle on 14 July 1619.<sup>761</sup>

On the marriage of his eldest son in 1627, John made over the whole lands of Pittendreich to him, reserving a liferent to himself and his spouse Janet Cargill.

John Blair of Pittendreich and Mr Donald and George his sons witnessed at Pittendreich and Welton on 8 and 30 May 1634 a charter of sale by James Saunders, portioner of Welton of Blair. He added to the estate on 22 May 1638 when, with his eldest son and heir apparent, John, he purchased from Thomas Tyrie of Drumkilbo and Margaret Ogilvy his spouse, the Mains of Lethendy and also the Mains of Glasclune, Easter and Wester Glasclune.<sup>762</sup> In this contract, he retained liferent for himself, no mention being made of his spouse.

John Blair elder of Pittendreich was still alive on 14 July 1643 when with his son John, he signed a charter at Pittendreich with the consent of Mr James Rattray sometime of Logie.<sup>763</sup>

He continued his profession of notary public at his home of Pittendreich until his death in 1645. Janet Cargill survived him and was still alive in 1650 when the "Rentall Book of Perthshire" states that £182 cess for Pittendreich belonged to the mother of John Blair of Lethendy. She must have been about 85 years of age about 1670 and died shortly afterwards as she had deceased by 25 June 1672.<sup>764</sup>

### ***John Blair of Lethendy (1606 - 1661c)***

John was described as eldest son and heir apparent when in November 1627 his marriage contract was made with Jean Blair who was described as the lawful daughter of the late Alexander Blair of Denhead.<sup>765</sup> There is confusion in previous histories but they had sons:

- 1) Thomas the heir
- 2) James who served with the Scots Brigade in Holland. He was godfather at Dundee on 19 January 1702 to his grand-nephew, James Blair the son Dr John Blair. At

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<sup>755</sup> Comm. of Edinburgh test. reg. 10 Jul 1693

<sup>756</sup> Deeds 1664; Mack.10.455

<sup>757</sup> Reg. of Inhibitions for Perthshire 9 Jul 1675.

<sup>758</sup> R.M.S. vi.1273 and vii.2056 and Perth Sasines RS52.6.560 dated 1 Aug 1608

<sup>759</sup> Perth Sasines, 9 Jul 1606

<sup>760</sup> PRP, Feb 1614

<sup>761</sup> R.M.S. vii.2065

<sup>762</sup> RMS Vol. ix. 820

<sup>763</sup> RMS Vol. ix. 1376

<sup>764</sup> Deeds, Mack., 34.123 3 June 1670; RSS vi.5.256

<sup>765</sup> Laing Charters Chrtr.2009

## A GENEALOGY OF BLAIR OF BALTHAYOCK AND THEIR CADETS

- Balthayock on 7 December 1691 he made his testament as Captain James Blair of Colonel George Lauder's Regiment. He died about 1705.<sup>766</sup>
- 3) Mr John. He matriculated at the University of St. Andrews as a student on 31 January 1653 and graduated MA 28 July 1656. He was admitted to Caputh in 1663 and translated to Kilspindie 1667. The Synod deposed him for contumacy on 8 April 1691. He died after 25 May 1707. Mr John married in March 1668, Helen, eldest daughter of Henry Drummond of the family of Colquhalzie and had issue Dr. John MD (b.1671), who practised medicine in Dundee {see under Blair of Balmyle}; Thomas (b.1672); Alexander (b.1676) a surgeon apothecary in Port Royal in Jamaica when named godfather in Dundee on 20 January 1703 to Alexander, the son of aforementioned Dr John Blair; William (b.1678); James who was godfather to his eldest brother's son on 19 January 1702 at Dundee. He was a seaman who died about 1705 on board HMS *Oxford*;<sup>767</sup> Helen (b.1669); and Margaret (b.1680) who died before 17 October 1704.<sup>768</sup> In his somewhat confused genealogy of Blair of Pittendreich in the Baronage of Scotland, Douglas mentioned an Alexander Blair who became a surgeon and settled in Jamaica where he made a considerable fortune. The above evidence found in the Dundee Old Parish Register of Baptisms supports the case that Alexander born in 1676 was the same. Mr John was still described as minister of Kilspindie in 1703.
  - 4) Patrick described as brother of Thomas Blair of Lethendy and Pittendreich when witness to a sasine dated 2 April 1664. He was similarly described when witnessing the transfer of the lands of Middle Gormack in Caputh from John Blair of West Gormack to William Lindsay on 31 May 1670. He was an active Jacobite. As a Captain in the Earl of Dunmore's Regiment of Dragoons, he fought under Graham of Claverhouse, Viscount Dundee at Killiecrankie. Captain Patrick probably died within a few years of that engagement.<sup>769</sup> Dame Mary Grant, the widow of the deceased Captain Patrick Blair, raised Letters of Horning and Poinding against Sir David Threipland in 1693.<sup>770</sup>

In 1650 the lands of Pittendreich in the parish of Lethendy, were assessed at £800 against John Blair of Lethendy and his mother. On 22 August 1657, John Blair of Lethendy gave a charter of the lands of Boiggs and other in favour of James Blair of Glasclune and Isobel Tyrie his wife.<sup>771</sup> John died about 1661 when he was described as "John Blair of Lethendy designed of Pittendreich." Jean Blair survived her husband.<sup>772</sup>

### *Thomas Blair of Lethendy and Pittendreich (1630c - 1690c)*

Thomas Blair was retoured heir to his father on 30 August 1661 to the lands of Lethendy with Garnersland and the pendicle of Glasclune.<sup>773</sup>

It appears that Thomas sold Lethendy to Mr George Blair his uncle soon after. Although Mr George Blair was then rightly designed of Pittendreich, the heirs of the elder line continued to assume the title as can be found in Douglas's "Baronage".

Thomas was described "of Pittendreich" in the will of David Young, minister of Dunkeld on 17 December 1686.<sup>774</sup>

<sup>766</sup> Comm. of Edinburgh Test. Reg. 26 Feb 1706.

<sup>767</sup> Comm. of Edinburgh Test. Reg. 1 Mar 1706

<sup>768</sup> Fasti Ecclesiae Scoticae Vol.4 p.214; Kilspindie OPR

<sup>769</sup> Comm. of Edinburgh test. reg. 29 Dec 1693

<sup>770</sup> MS169/2/i/2/28 Threipland Papers

<sup>771</sup> Perthshire Sasines 22 Dec 1657

<sup>772</sup> Deeds 1673: Dur. 33.700

<sup>773</sup> Perth Retours no.680

Thomas Blair married Janet Auchinleck, eldest daughter of Sir George Auchinleck younger of Balmanno, their contract of marriage being 31 Jul 1662.

By Janet, Thomas had one surviving child:

1. Jane who from 1688 had a pension of 300 merks from her parents marriage contract.<sup>775</sup> It is believed that Jean married Mr William Blair born in 1656 to Thomas Blair in Kettins, brother to the last laird of Balgillo. Mr William was minister at Lethendy and their son Alexander born at the manse there, died aged 63 in Blairgowrie. (See "Five Generations of the Family of Blair")

Thomas married for his second wife, Sara, daughter of John Kinloch of Gourdie, their contract of marriage being dated 6 June, 1672.<sup>776</sup> He had two other daughters by her:

2. Helen, described as daughter of Thomas Blair of Pittendriech. She married John Tyrie of Busbie.<sup>777</sup>
3. Christian, mentioned with her sister Helen above and described as lawful daughter of deceased Thomas Blair of Pittendreich, had her testament registered by the Commissariat of Edinburgh on 27 Oct 1779.

Thomas was designed of Lethendy when he was commissioned a Lieutenant in the Perthshire Militia on 3 September 1668. He served in that rank from 1673 to 1679 designed "of Pittendreich."<sup>778</sup>

Several transactions were made with his brother Mr John. At Perth on 26 July 1682 in the presence of James Blair of Lethendy and Mr David Young, minister there, Thomas Blair of Pittendreich signed a bond for £545 in favour of Mr John Blair, minister of Kilspindie and his wife. James Blair of Lethendy joined with Thomas on 19 March 1685 in making a further bond to Mr John Blair in a pension out of the lands of Pittendreich.<sup>779</sup>

### **Blair of Glasclune**

The Blair association with the lands and castle of Glasclune came at a relatively late date.

In earlier times, the families of Hering of Glasclune and Chalmer of Drumlochry were lairds of this area just north west of Blairgowrie.

The first Blair laird of Glasclune appears to be James Blair son of John Blair of Pittendreich and brother german of Mr George Blair of Pittendreich. He is designed "of Glasclune" on 23 February 1666.<sup>780</sup> James and his spouse Isobel Tyrie took sasine of the lands on 8 September 1670 proceeding on a Crown Charter.<sup>781</sup> It is believed that they had issue but that Glasclune was purchased from them by their nephew, George Blair.

### ***Mr George Blair of Lethendy (1615c - 1682c)***

*His Arms: Argent on a chevron Sable betwixt three torteaux a martlet of the first becked and membered gules.*

*Motto: Nec Temere Nec Timide*

George was a younger son of John Blair of Pittendreich.

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<sup>774</sup> Comm. of Dunkeld 13 Mar 1688

<sup>775</sup> Reg. Of Deeds of Perthshire Sheriff Court, 24 Sep 1688

<sup>776</sup> RS52

<sup>777</sup> Reg of Deeds 1707: RD4/100 fo.695

<sup>778</sup> Military History of Perthshire 1660-1902

<sup>779</sup> Reg. Of Deeds of Perthshire Sheriff Court, 4 Jul 1693

<sup>780</sup> Bamff Charters No.276

<sup>781</sup> Perth Sasines Vol.4 fol.414 registered 24 Oct 1670

**A GENEALOGY OF BLAIR OF BALTHAYOCK AND THEIR CADETS**

Mr Donald, George and Patrick sons of John Blair of Pittendreich were witnesses to the sale of a portion of Middle Mawes on 30 August 1632.<sup>782</sup> George appears to have had a University education and gained a Masters degree after 1632. He became a successful merchant in Dundee and having earned considerable profits, he purchased Garrock by which he was first designed and then the estate of Lethendy, Perthshire. By the early 1660's he was described "of Pittendreich." For some years he was chamberlain or factor to the Earl of Queensberry.

George married Eupham, a daughter of Dr Blair of the family of Balgillo by his spouse, a daughter of John Scrymgeour of Kirkton.

George and Eupham, or Effie as she was known, had four sons and two daughters:

- 1) James his heir in the title of Lethendy
- 2) George baptised at Dundee on 5 October 1668. This George was a successful businessman and appears to have purchased Glasclune from his uncle. He died without issue about 1697.
- 3) John baptised at Dundee on 1 February 1670. He was heir to his brother.
- 4) Patrick, possibly born about 1672, was an eminent physician trained in Flanders, practising initially in Dundee and Coupar Angus and later at Boston, in England. His wife was Elspeth Whyte whom he married in April 1702. They had three sons, John, Gilbert and Harry and two daughters Isabel and Elizabeth. John and Gilbert died young, the latter being interred at Kettins on 17 August 1707. Patrick was an reluctant Jacobite surgeon in the 1715 Rising. On his capture, his estate was forfeited. At this, Elspeth Whyte submitted a claim for herself and children, Harry, Isobel and Elizabeth for 13000 merks which she had brought in her marriage contract. Dr Patrick died in January 1728 and was survived by his daughters who were both alive in July 1738. His daughter Isabel Blair died in March 1745.<sup>783</sup> See also An Eminent Physician and Botanist: Dr Patrick Blair 1672c -1728.
- 5) Margaret who married to the Reverend Mr Henry Chrystie minister of Kinross where he was presented in 1679. Ten years later he was deprived for his Jacobite views, as he neither read the proclamation of the Estates nor prayed for William and Mary, but for the restoration of James VII and "confusion to his enemies". They had a son who lived sometime with his uncle Dr Patrick Blair in Dundee and who about 1709 went abroad to study Pharmacy and Surgery.<sup>784</sup>
- 6) Jean baptised at Dundee on 26 July 1667. She married John Patullo of Kinochtrie, her second cousin. The marriage appears to have been agreed while she was still a child, the bond being registered in 1676.<sup>785</sup>

Mr George Blair of Pittendreich was admitted a guild brother of Dundee on 29 May 1668.<sup>786</sup>

On 5 April 1678, Mr George made a bond in favour of David Tyrie of Colluthie to provide a pension of 108 merks uplifted annually from the lands of Lethendy.<sup>787</sup>

Master George Blair died about 1682. His last will was made on 6 March 1682 and the testament was registered in the Commissariat of Dunkeld on 17 February 1683. Eupham Blair survived her husband and was alive in December 1686 when she was described as Lady Lethendy in the will of David Young, minister of Dunkeld.<sup>788</sup>

<sup>782</sup> Perth Sasines 3 Oct 1632

<sup>783</sup> Comm.of St.Andrews Test. 31 Jan 1750

<sup>784</sup> Dundee University Archive; MS67/1/11: Patrick Blair's letter to nephew 23 Feb 1710.

<sup>785</sup> Deeds 1676.

<sup>786</sup> Dundee Lockit Book

<sup>787</sup> Perth Sasines 11 Mar 1679

<sup>788</sup> Comm.of Dunkeld 13 Mar 1688

***James Blair of Lethendy and Glasclune (1665c - 1701c)***

James was retoured in the lands of Lethendy on 4 May 1686 as heir to his father. Presumably he had attained then full age. When his father died about 1682, Thomas Blair of Pittendreich was appointed as one of his curators and was still acting so in 1684.<sup>789</sup>

On 9 January 1698, he was served heir conquest of his closest brother, George the second born son of Master George Blair of Lethendy.

James married Marjory, a daughter of Mr Nathan Fife, advocate, Sheriff of Perth and they had only one daughter:

- 1) Marjory who married Hector Mackenzie, brother of George Mackenzie of Inchculter.

When James Blair of Lethendy granted a charter of confirmation in favour of Mr Thomas Crichton in the lands of Tomhorne and others within the barony of Glasclune on 3 April 1685, his mother Eupham was a witness.<sup>790</sup>

As the estate of Glasclune was a male entail, on the death of James about 1701, it was inherited by his brother John.<sup>791</sup>

***John Blair (1655c - 1742c)***

John Blair of Glasclune was retoured heir to his brother, James, on 16 May 1702.

He married Agnes, a daughter of Mr Thomas Fotheringham of Ballindean. John had issue:

- 1) Thomas, his heir
- 2) Eupham described as eldest daughter in her testament which was registered on 20 April 1760 in the Commissariat of Dunkeld.
- 3) Margaret who married Mr Henry Christie, minister of Kinross.
- 4) Agnes who married Captain Robert Patullo of Kinnochtrie

At Dundee on 4 June 1703, John was the principal godfather of John Blair, the first son of his brother Mr Patrick Blair surgeon apothecary in Dundee.

The first Jacobite Rising had already taken place some 12 years before John assumed the lairdship and in a similar space of time the 1715 Rising followed in favour of the restoration of the Stuart Dynasty. It was soon crushed and many of its supporters were to pay dearly for it. John was a Major in Nairne's Battalion at Preston when taken prisoner.<sup>792</sup> In 1716, he was convicted of treason and his lands were forfeited and seized by the Crown.

In 1724, John McKewan purchased Glasclune from the State and later that same year sold it on to Alexander Christie. After a short tenure, Alexander sold Glasclune to Thomas Blair, the eldest son of John Blair and thus the lands were restored to the family in 1728.

Thomas was seised in the lands of Glasclune in November 1728 but the charter contained many provisions in favour of his father and mother.<sup>793</sup> John Blair continued to be described as "of Glasclune". He acted as arbiter on 20 May 1732 in a dispute over the draining of Rae Loch.<sup>794</sup>

When the Presbytery visited the Parish of Kinloch on 24 January 1738, the meeting in the manse was attended by the heritors who included John Blair of Glasclune and his son.

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<sup>789</sup> GD38/1/334

<sup>790</sup> Perthshire Sasines 25 May 1685

<sup>791</sup> Commissariat of Dunkeld Testament registered 22 Mar 1701.

<sup>792</sup> A Military History of Perthshire; Chronicles of Atholl and Tullibardine

<sup>793</sup> Perth Sasines Vol.20 fol.130

<sup>794</sup> Perth Sasines Vol.20 fol.437

John Blair died about 1742.<sup>795</sup> His widow, Agnes Fotheringham was still alive in 1776.

***Thomas Blair (1700c - 1760c)***

Thomas was a successful merchant in Dundee and was able to recover the estate for his family in 1728. He inherited the estate of Glasclune on the death of his father about 1740.

He married Isabel, a daughter of George Dempster of Dunnichen.

They had a son:

- 1) George, his heir

On the death in England of his uncle, Dr Patrick Blair in January 1728, Thomas was appointed the sole executor dative.

Thomas was a strong sympathiser of the Jacobites. He played a very active role in raising men for the 1745 Campaign and was a Lieutenant Colonel of the 1st Battalion of Lord Ogilvy's Regiment in that army. He took part in the invasion of England and was on the field at the Battles of Falkirk and Culloden. During the retreat in February 1746, at Blair Atholl the Fieri Cross was sent round but very few recruits answered the call. Thomas Blair as Lieutenant Colonel of the Atholl Brigade then took punitive action yet could only force out 200 recruits for the Prince by cruelly burning houses.<sup>796</sup> After the defeat in April 1746, the Regiment marched south and was disbanded at Clova. There, Lord Ogilvy with a few companions, including Thomas, lurked for a time while a vessel was secretly hired at Dundee. They made their escape by boat from Broughty and sailed to Norway where the authorities seized and imprisoned them in Bergen, probably at English instigation. They were soon released and made for France where Thomas Blair was granted £1000 by the King to assist his relocation there. He remained active in the Jacobite Party in France for many years and settled as a merchant in Dunkirk. He died about 1771.<sup>797</sup>

Isabel Dempster survived her husband. She died at her house in Dundee on 13 December 1772.<sup>798</sup>

***George Blair of Adamston***

George Blair of Adamston inherited the estate of Glasclune. The estate of Adamston(e) near Lundie is shown on the Dundee – Newtyle road map of G. Taylor / A. Skinner in 1776 with Blair as the proprietor's name.<sup>799</sup> He was served heir to his father Thomas Blair of Glasclune on 16 January 1788.<sup>800</sup>

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**Blair of Denhead**

Denhead lies just to the north of Coupar Angus and Ardlar and on the south of the River Isla. The lands of Ardlar were anciently a major holding of Blair of Balthayock but the proximity to Balmyle and Balgillo suggests that the lands may have come under one of those cadets. The family owned Wester Denhead by which title they were more properly designed.

***Alexander Blair of Denhead (1580c - 1617c)***

Alexander of Denhead was third son to William Blair of Balgillo and also to his wife, Jean Blair the relict of Thomas Blair of Balmyle, heir apparent of Balthayock. Alexander was described as brother of John in December 1599 when ordered into ward in Blackness Castle with his elder

<sup>795</sup> Commissariat of Dunkeld testament registered 14 Oct 1742

<sup>796</sup> Military History of Perthshire 1660 - 1902

<sup>797</sup> Comm. of Edinburgh test. reg. 15 Nov 1771.

<sup>798</sup> Scots Magazine: December 1772

<sup>799</sup> NLS ref: EMS.b.3.48

<sup>800</sup> Services of Heirs in Scotland Vol.ii

brothers. About 1600, he married Grisel Hutton, neice of John Blair of Melginch and was portioner of Balbrogie.<sup>801</sup> On 15 May 1607 when he obtained a portion of the lands of Balbrogie from Alexander Montgomery of Nether Perth, he was styled as Alexander Blair, portioner of Balbrogie and Wester Denhead, third son to Sir William Blair of Balgillo and Jean Blair. Alexander was witness in 1615, when William Blair of Balgillo sold the lands of Muirhead, Mill of Criggie and others there to Sir Robert Graham of Morphie.<sup>802</sup>

Alexander married Grissel Hamilton and had issue.

1. Patrick his heir apparent
2. William described as brother to Patrick Blair of Wester Denhead when witness at Kirkhill on 4 April 1634 to an Obligation by Patrick Blair sometime of Kethock Lindsay on borrowing 3,300 merks from Mr Lawrence Rollock third son of Duncurb.<sup>803</sup>
3. Jean who married John the son and heir of John Blair of Pittendreich in 1627.<sup>804</sup>
4. Katherine who was described as daughter to the umquhile Alexander Blair of Denhead and spouse to Andrew Blair in a horning dated 5 September 1633.<sup>805</sup> The horning also mentioned William Blair and a deceased Grissel Blair but it is not clear whether they were siblings of Alexander or siblings of Katherine.

Alexander and his spouse Grisel Hamilton granted a Disposition on 10 May 1611, to Alexander Campbell of Crunan for 2,000 merks an annual rent of 200 merks out of Wester Denhead.<sup>806</sup>

Alexander witnessed a charter of David, earl of Crawford at Dundee on 28 October 1611.<sup>807</sup>

He was granted charters in his favour regarding lands in the Kirkton of Liff on 5 June 1615, the documents being witnessed by Mr James Dun, minister of Liff and Andrew Blair, skinner burges of Dundee.<sup>808</sup>

Alexander died in the period 1615 - 1617 leaving young family.<sup>809</sup>

### ***Patrick Blair (1606c - 1660c)***

As Patrick Blair the son and heir was still a minor at the time of the deceased of his father, Alexander of Wester Denhead, Peter Blair brother to William Blair of Balgillo was appointed his curator.<sup>810</sup> Patrick was granted sasine of Wester Denhead on 29 July 1619 when John Blair of Balgillo acted as bailie in that part.<sup>811</sup> He was served heir general to his father on 10 February 1627.<sup>812</sup>

On the death of William Blair of Balgillo, Jean Blair his widow and Patrick Blair son and heir of the deceased Alexander Blair of Wester Denhead, were appointed the deceased William's assignees.<sup>813</sup> At Camno on 21 December 1624, Patrick attested a sasine for lands of Arthurstone made in favour of James Ayson of Arthurstone by Sir John Blair of Balgillo, Patrick Blair of Ardblair and Peter Blair, his curator.<sup>814</sup> He was assessed at £235 for his lands of Wester Denhead in the parish of Coupar in the 1650 "Rentall of Perthshyre". Patrick married Elizabeth or Elspeth

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801 Perth Sasines RS52.1.27 and RS52.5.549

802 R.M.S. Vol. vii.1205

803 RD1/490

804 Laing Charters Chtr.2009

805 General Registers of Hornings and Inhibitions DI4/vols 1-37: 1610-34.

806 DI91 Vol. 11 Perthshire Inhibitions 1 May 1627.

807 A Wedderburn's Protocol Book 1607-1613 fol.140

808 T Wichtane's Protocol Book Feb 1615-Jun 1619 fol.33v and 35

809 Comm. of St.Andrews Test. 27 Aug 1617

810 RMS Vol. ix. 1295

811 RS1 Vol.4

812 Inquisitiones Generales No.1320

813 Perthshire Hornings Vol. 18 (3 Aug 1623)

814 RS1 / 17 28 Mar 1625

Guthrie and had issue.<sup>815</sup> There was at this time a close association between the Blair of Balgillo lairds and Alexander Guthrie of Kincaldrum as they stood surety for each other in contracts.<sup>816</sup> Patrick carried out business with traders in Dundee including David Hayok, tailor burgess in Dundee.<sup>817</sup>

### ***Henry Blair of Newtonhill and Wester Denhead (1640c - )***

Henry or Harry was the son and heir of Patrick Blair.<sup>818</sup> Henry was described "of Wester Denhead" by 1661<sup>819</sup> and also designed of Newtonhill when, on 4 November 1687, he was served heir to his grandfather Alexander Blair of Wester Denhead.<sup>820</sup> Henry married Agnes, daughter to Alexander Campbell of Balgirsho, their contract of married dated 3 November 1663.<sup>821</sup> He was described "of Wester Denhead" when their son Patrick was baptised at Kettins on 10 July 1675. He may be the same as Henry described as "nephew of Sir John Blair of Balgillo" in a deed registered 16 July 1668.<sup>822</sup> Based on the evidence here, the relationship would have been grand-nephew. Henry married secondly to Katherine, daughter to David Donald, portioner of Grange of Aberbothie. Henry's second son David Blair, founded the family of Blair of Crunan at Coupar Angus.

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### **Blair of Over Durdie**

*Arms : Argent a chevron invected sable betwixt three torteaux.*

*Motto: Virtute Tutus*

The arms and motto show a close affinity to the house of Balthayock.

The lands of Over Durdie lie to the east of Balthayock in the parish of Kilspindie.

### ***Laurence Blair of Melginch and of Over Durdie (1580c - 1645c)***

The progenitor was Laurence Blair youngest son of Alexander Blair of Balthayock and Giles Mercer, born about 1580. Laurence purchased the lands of Bauchlandlatch, commonly known as Overton of Friarton etc. in a charter dated at Friarton 31 December 1598.<sup>823</sup> Briefly was known as Laurence Blair of Melginch, having purchased the lands in 1607 from John Mercer of Melginch.<sup>824</sup> He disposed of Melginch to the Duke of Perth in 1608.<sup>825</sup> He renounced his wadset of the mill and lands of Cults on 10 June 1606.<sup>826</sup> By at least 1612 he was designed of Over Durdie.

Laurence married Agnes Ayton.<sup>827</sup> He had sons:

1. Major Patrick Blair sometime of Over Durdie and of Dunkenny and Essie
2. Laurence Blair of Over Durdie

Laurence survived his wife who died about 1618.<sup>828</sup>

<sup>815</sup>Deeds 1663; Mack.8.729 and 1668 Dal.22.98 and Forfar Deeds SC47/50/5 12 Jul 1655

<sup>816</sup> Brechin Testaments CC3/4/1 and CC3/3/5

<sup>817</sup> Brechin Testaments CC3/3/5

<sup>818</sup> Deeds 1663

<sup>819</sup> Deeds 1661; Dur.3.87

<sup>820</sup> Perth Retours 966

<sup>821</sup> MS162/2/2

<sup>822</sup> Deeds 1668; Mack.22.80

<sup>823</sup> R.M.S. Vol.vi, 1126

<sup>824</sup> Fife & Kinross Sasines

<sup>825</sup> RMS Vol. vii. 32

<sup>826</sup> Balthayock Charters 330

<sup>827</sup> R.M.S. Vol.vii.32

<sup>828</sup> Comm.of St.Andrews; Testament 1 May 1618

An Assize of 25 April 1620 included Sir John Blair of Balgillo, Laurence Blair of Durdie, Patrick Blair of Ardblair, Alexander Blair of Balgray, William Blair of Tarsappie, Gilbert Blair in Inchray, Andrew Blair of Gairdrum, and George Blair brother to the said Patrick Blair of Ardblair.<sup>829</sup>

Laurence was witness to his grandnephew's charter at Balthayock on 29 November 1632.<sup>830</sup> Laurence possibly lived in Durdie about this time,<sup>831</sup> and was designed "of Over Durdie" when he gave sasine to Thomas Blair of Tarsappie and his spouse Margaret Blair.<sup>832</sup> She was niece to Laurence. He was living in Perth in 1643 when he was given a nine year tack of Cults on 29 May and later on 16 December at the time of his son's marriage contract. This is the latest mention of Laurence and it is assumed he died in the mid- 1640's.<sup>833</sup>

***Major Patrick Blair of Dunkenny (1610c - 1677)***

Major Patrick Blair made a contract of marriage with Agnes Bruce, daughter of Sir Robert Bruce of Clackmannan on 16 December 1643.<sup>834</sup>

He was described as Patrick Blair of Overdurdie in a contract made on 27 March 1650 with Mr George Patullo of Balhousie.<sup>835</sup>

In April 1657, Patrick Blair of Dunkenny agreed a contract of wadset whereby for a sum of money lent to him by Andrew Ayton of Kinglessie, an advocate, he agreed to pay 300 merks annually secured upon the lands of Kirkton of Essie.<sup>836</sup> Later that year on 14 June, Patrick set a tack to lease the lands of Over Durdie and its teinds to John Mercer.<sup>837</sup>

For the trial of James Marshall at Glamis for murder of Alexander Steven in Forfar, a commission of justiciary was given to Patrick on 6 September 1661.<sup>838</sup>

In October 1670, Sir Alexander Blair of Balthayock and his son Thomas made a back bond obliging them to denude themselves of the lands of Over Durdie. The following year, on 20 November 1671, Patrick entered into a contract with his nephew, James Blair, of an annual rent of the lands of Essie. It seems that he had other business contracts with kinsmen for on 19 November 1677, an assignation was made in favour of John Arbuthnot of Fiddes and Helen Bruce his spouse who was daughter of Major George Bruce, brother to Patrick's wife. Patrick died without issue about the end of 1677, his heir being his brother, Laurence.<sup>839</sup>

***Laurence Blair of Over Durdie. (1615c - 1690c)***

Laurence, the brother german and heir of Major Patrick Blair, was designed of Over Durdie by 15 November 1653 when he made a prenuptial contract with his future wife, Janet Turnbull to provide her with a pension of 350 merks furth of the lands of Over Durdie. Janet was probably only entering her teens at the time. They married at Kilspindie on 6 November 1659 and in accordance with their contract of marriage drawn up the following week on 14 November, Janet was infeft in the lands of Over Durdie.<sup>840</sup>

They had issue:

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829 SC49/1/17

830 R.M.S. Vol.ix. 664

831 Kinfauns OPR, 31 Oct 1626.

832 RMS Vol. vi. 1681

833 Balthayock Charters 414

834 Balthayock Charters 415

835 Forfar Sasines RS35.8.154

836 Balthayock Charters 469 and 470

837 Balthayock Charters 473

838 RSC Vol. I Third Series

839 Perth Retours

840 Kilspindie OPR and Balthayock Charters 482 and 483

## A GENEALOGY OF BLAIR OF BALTHAYOCK AND THEIR CADETS

1. Thomas described as eldest son of Laurence on 30 April 1679 when with his father and Sir Alexander Blair of Balthayock a bond of provision was granted to Janet Turnbull.<sup>841</sup>
2. James described as nephew to Major Patrick when he had an annual rent out of Essie.
3. Helen described as lawful daughter to the deceased Laurence in her testament registered on 8 September 1694.

Laurence was retoured heir to his brother german Major Patrick Blair of Essie on 5 June 1678.<sup>842</sup> The lands of Over Durdie were recovered by the house of Balthayock when Thomas Blair of Balthayock took sasine of Over Durdie on 1 May 1694 following upon a precept dated 4 February 1688.

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### Blair of Melginch

The lands of Melginch lie four and a half miles due north of Balthayock and to the east of the parish Kirk of St.Martins which was properly called the Kirk of Melginch in former times.<sup>843</sup>

#### *Patrick Blair of Melginch (1435c - 1471c)*

Patrick was admitted to Perth Guild on 12 August 1463 by payment of five merks and as burgess of Perth was granted by David earl of Crawford, the lands of Melginch on 6 April 1467. Four years later the earl granted the lands of Pitskelie and the lands of Mill of Balgray in the Barony of Melginch to James Blair, eldest son and heir of Patrick Blair. Although evidence of Patrick's relationship is lacking in these records, it appears that he was a younger son of Patrick Blair heir apparent of Balthayock by his spouse Christian Ogilvy. An entail of 1542 shows Blair of Melginch placed before Blair of Balgillo who are ahead of the Ardblair branch. Thus this placing of Patrick here is in keeping with the order. Patrick probably died about 1471 and before 1478. Patrick had issue :

1. James eldest son and heir. See under Balgray following this section.
2. Thomas who held Melginch as follows.

#### *Thomas Blair (1460c - 1495c)*

Thomas Blair of Melginch was admitted burgess and to the Guild gratis on 6 February 1483/4. The free entry implies that he was son of the former burgess laird of Melginch and the name would be in keeping as a gt-grandson of Thomas Blair of Balthayock. He is described as "in Melginch" in a charter to Thomas Maule of Panmure in August 1478.<sup>844</sup> When principal witness to a charter of William Chalmer on the lands of Temple Acre at Meigle on 24 June 1482, he was designed "of Melginch".<sup>845</sup>

When David Blair of Bendochy and his spouse purchased the lands of Balgillo from Alexander Blair of Balthayock by a contract made at Balthayock on 3 February 1489/90, Thomas Blair in Melginch, was one of the witnesses.

#### *Patrick Blair (1485c - 1515)*

The Patrick Blair of Melginch who died on 6 January 1514/15 leaving a widow and children was probably grandson of the above Patrick and son of Thomas.<sup>846</sup>

<sup>841</sup> Register of Deeds of Perthshire Sheriff Court, 23 Jul 1688

<sup>842</sup> Inquisitiones Generales no.6080

<sup>843</sup> RSS Vol.vi. 700

<sup>844</sup> R.M.S. Vol.ii, chrtr.2207

<sup>845</sup> GD121/3/12

<sup>846</sup> Rentale Dunkeldense

It appears that his children may have included:

1. John his heir
2. Janet? It is not discovered to whom Alexander Blair of Balmyle married but she may have been Janet Blair, who may have been a daughter of Patrick Blair of Melginch based on the following evidence: On 13 August 1547, Janet Blair, Lady Balmyle was assigned by John Blair of Melginch parts of the lands of Balmyle.<sup>847</sup> This John Blair was son and heir of the deceased John Blair of Melginch who on 2 July 1532 at Edinburgh was granted a gift by King James V of the mails and duties of the two parts of the lands of Balmyle which were in the King's hands due to nonentry since the decease of John, Earl of Crawford and until the lawful heir came of age.<sup>848</sup>

### ***John Blair (1510c - 1545c)***

Patrick's heir was still a child in 1515. He was John Blair of Melginch who received a gift of non-entries of his superior from King James V in 1532.

On 16 Nov 1532, a sasine was granted in favour of John Blair, son and heir to the deceased Patrick Blair of Melginche, for the town and lands of Melginche with pertinents in Perthshire, by David Lindsay, Earl of Crawford and as the superior of these lands. This was witnessed by Patrick Kinnaird, Alexander Strauchan and others.<sup>849</sup>

John married but whom is not ascertained. In a contract in favour of Henry Blair dated 10 March 1584/5, mention is made of an honest matron, Margaret Blair relict of the umquhile John Blair of "Melgan" which suggests this may have been the spouse of this laird of Melginch.<sup>850</sup> Henry Blair was a burges of Dundee and may have been their son but no relationship was discovered.

John had issue:

1. John his heir
2. Isabel who married William Hutton, portioner of Balbrogie,<sup>851</sup> and who had a daughter Grisel spouse to Alexander Blair, son of William Blair of Balgillo.<sup>852</sup> Isabel deceased before 1601.

An assize on 5 May 1539 regarding William Moncreiff of that ilk and part of the lands of Gorthy was headed by Thomas Blair and included John Moncur of Ballnay and John Blair of Melginch. On the same day, John also was witness to a protestation raised by Alexander Lindsay, tenant of Arnbothy, objecting to the Prior of Scone's grant to John Robertson, indweller of Turfhillis regarding the rights to peats from the moss between their lands.<sup>853</sup>

He died before 1547 when his son John was his heir. See above under his father.

### ***John Blair (1530c - 1601c)***

This laird appears to be the son of John Blair mentioned in the 1542 entail of Balthayock. (See Appendix I) He was laird by 13 August 1547 as explained above.

This John Blair appears to have had issue:

1. Janet who was contracted on 13 December 1589 to marry John Ireland, nephew of John Ireland of Parkhead and his spouse Margaret Blair.<sup>854</sup> John Ireland senior and

847 Balthayock Charters 113

848 Balthayock Charters 76

849 NP1 Vol.2a

850 Alex Wedderburn Town Clerk of Dundee, Jun 1583- Apr 1587 Fol.44

851 GD16/12/82

852 Perth Sasines RSS2.1.16

853 GD68/1/34

854 RMS Vol. v. 1272

**A GENEALOGY OF BLAIR OF BALTHAYOCK AND THEIR CADETS**

Margaret Blair had a feu charter of Parkhead on 19 December 1584 but he had deceased by 1589.<sup>855</sup> Margaret Blair died about 1599.

An assize sat on 8 July 1564 for the trial of Andrew Ramsay, a burges of Perth who was accused with others of attacking and wounding a servant of the laird of Craigie on the South Inch in January 1562. Alexander Blair of Balthayock headed this assize which included as members John Blair of Melginch and Alexander Blair of Friarton.<sup>856</sup> John was a burges of Perth and thus appears in this capacity in the Protocol Book of the Town Clerk of Perth.<sup>857</sup>

John Blair of Melginch was present at the signing on 7 April 1575 of the preliminary marriage contract of Jane Blair of Balmyle and William Blair apparent of Balgillo. He is mentioned in a contract of 11 January 1594/5 along with Thomas Halyburton in Gairdrum and Patrick Whytsand alias Laird.<sup>858</sup> He was a member of an assize on 21 April 1601.<sup>859</sup> John died without surviving issue and his estate was inherited by Grisell Hutton, his sister's daughter. John granted her sasine of one thrid part of Melginch on 6 August 1601.<sup>860</sup>

On 12 october 1601, Alexander Blair of Balthayock, his wife Giles Mercer and their son Laurence Blair were granted a wadset of parts of Melginch from John Blair. This was witnessed by William Blair of Balgillo, James Haliburton of Pitcur, Alexander Blair heir apparent of Balthayok, and by Patrick Ogilvie of Inchmartin.<sup>861</sup>

It appears that John sold other parts of Melginch for in the early 1600's John Mercer was designed of Melginch.

In turn Mercer sold Melginch to Laurence Blair and Agnes Ayton in 1607. Laurence disponed of these lands within a year. {See Blair of Over Durdie}

By 1637, the lands of Melginch and Balgray were in the hands of John Mercer of Melginch.

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**Blair of Balgray**

The lands of Balgray lie just west of Melginch to the north of Balbeggie and were disjoined and far from their parish church of Kinnoull yet only a short distance to St.Martins. In old writings the name appears in versions of Bagraw and Bagra.

The Blair of Balgray family appear to have sprung from the progenitor of Blair of Melginch. In the 1542 Entail of Balthayock, Blair of Balgray was penult, between Blair of Auchteralyth and Blair in Peattie. There was a close family link between the Balgray and Friarton Blair families as the Friarton entail of 1566 indicates. (See Appendix ii). Their lands placed them as subjects of the Monastery of Scone but the association appears to have been even stronger for the family considered themselves to be "Blairs of the Monastery of Scone" and some held the office of chamberlain there. Located as they are between Balthayock and Ardblair it was inevitable that their transactions would be with both families.

***James Blair of Balgray (1455c - 1510c)***

Balgray is first recorded as being a Blair possession in 1471. On 10 July of that year, an Instrument of Sasine was granted in favour of James Blair, eldest son and heir of Patrick Blair, of the lands of "Petskele" and the lands of Mill of "Bolgray" in the Barony of Melginch, following

855 RSS Vol. viii. 2694 and Liber Ecclesie S.Trinitatis de Scon

856 Pitcairn, Criminal Trials, Vol.1.Pt.1.p452

857 G59/8/13: Protocol Book of Malcolm Bower 1572-78 fol. 7, 42, 93v and 104

858 Perth Deeds B59/8/6

859 RS49/1/13

860 RS48.1

861 RD1/82 4 Nov 1601

upon a precept by David, Earl of Crawford.<sup>862</sup> It thus appears that James was the elder son of Patrick Blair of Melginch (1435c-1471c).

James Blair of "Bagraw" and his spouse, Margaret, gave sasine on 28 July 1504 of the lands of Meadowlands of Ardblair (or Ardler?) to their son David following on from a letter of Bailiary by James. James died before 1516. It is hypothesised that James was a son of Patrick Blair apparent of Balthayock and Christian Ogilvy.

***David Blair (1480c - 1545c)***

Little is known of David Blair but he is the penultimate named in the Balthayock entail of 1542 showing that he was alive at 10 June 1542 and that his relationship to the family of Blair of Balthayock came from a distant time. David had sons:

1. William his heir.
2. Alexander of Friarton. See under Blair of Friarton. He was described in 1565 as a paternal uncle to Alexander Blair of Balgray. In 1549 he was described as son of the late David Blair of Balgray and brother to late William Blair.

When Michael Tullos gave sasine on 4 January 1515/6 to William Bonar son of the late John Bonnar of Rossy in parts of the lands of Cairnbadie, Perthshire and lands of Newton and Balgersho, Forfarshire (sic), the principal witness was David Blair of "Bagraw".<sup>863</sup> There were to be close links between the Bonar lairds of Balgersho and Blair lairds of Balgray for many years following. David appears to have died in the mid-1540's .

***William Blair (1505c - 1547c)***

William probably was granted title to the lands of Balgray during the lifetime of his father. He was styled of Balgray, eldest son and apparent heir of David Blair, of Balgray, on 24 December 1539, when he and his wife Isobel Bonar had an Instrument of Sasine for the lands of Tullyhow from Thomas Charteris of Kinfauns.<sup>864</sup>

Isobel was daughter of William Bonar, 5th of Rossie, by his wife Elizabeth, daughter and coheir of John Charteris of Cuthilgurdie. William and Isobel had issue:

1. Alexander. A contract of marriage dated 5 January 1552 in the Balthayock muniments records that Christian Blair daughter of Thomas Blair of Balthayock was to marry Alexander Blair, son of William Blair of Balgray. This contract would have been drawn up while they were still children and appears to have been unfulfilled perhaps by the early death of Christian.
2. James described as brother german of Alexander Blair of Balgray in 1564 and 1568. He was similarly described in an entail of the Blairs of Friarton when he was placed ahead of his elder brother Alexander.<sup>865</sup> As James travelled abroad, he may have been a merchant.
3. William who was executor to his eldest brother in 1575.<sup>866</sup> Described as brother german to Alexander Blair of Balgray in contracts dated 30 May 1574 and 5 June 1574.<sup>867</sup> Named as youngest brother in Alexander's testament of 1575.

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862 GD1/60/1

863 Calendar of Charters RH6.837

864 Protocol Book of Sir Robert Rollock. No. 83 & 84.

865 RMS Vol.v. 763

866 CC8/8/6/11

867 B59/8/13 Malcolm Bower Protocol Book fol. 55v and fol. 58

William was described as deceased in an Instrument by his brother Alexander Blair dated 1 December, 1549.<sup>868</sup> Isabel Bonar survived her husband, being described as mother to the deceased Alexander in 1578.

***Alexander Blair (1525c - 1575)***

Alexander, the son of William became the next laird of Balgray.

Alexander married Isabel Merser, daughter of Laurence Mercer of Meikleour, and in right of his wife was admitted burghess of Perth on 27 July 1547 on payment of 40s.

They had sons and daughters :

1. Alexander his heir
2. Patrick mentined in his father's testament in 1578 along with John, William, Elspeth, Katherin, Barbara, Gelis and Isobell.
3. John
4. William (Dutch William), described as younger son of deceased Alexander Blair of Balgray when admitted burghess of Perth on 6 September 1596.<sup>869</sup> At Perth and Hoill on 13 April 1604, William with his brother Alexander acting as cautioner entered a preliminary contract of marriage with Margaret Olipher the widow of Alexander Smith son of Patrick Smith in Scone and with the consent of William Olipher in Layston her father.<sup>870</sup> On 20 September 1598, his brother stood caution of 1000 merks for him not to harm Silvester Chapman in Kinclaven.<sup>871</sup> His brother, Alexander of Balgray represented him in March 1610 when William brought an action against William Gray of Bandirran for failing to honour a contract to infest him in the lands of North Bandirran. As a merchant burghess, he probably traded regularly with Holland for he was known in Perth as "Dutch William." In June 1611, William Blair of Tarsappie encountered Dutch William at the old city gate known as the South Inch Port. There a noisy affray commenced between them and continued into town. This attracted a number of Perth inhabitants who came bearing arms to interpose. Among them, a baxter boy who held some grudge against Dutch William took the opportunity to wound him. Subsequently, the provost and bailies arrested William of Tarsappie and locked him in the tolbooth, although it was known that the baker boy had caused the injury. Tarsappie raised a complaint for wrongful detention by the town officials. However, on 2 July 1611, David Sibbald, one of the burghesses of Perth appeared before the Lords of Council, who on hearing the evidence, exonerated the provost and bailies. William Blair of Tarsappie was ordered to Edinburgh Castle to await trial for his part in hurting Dutch William, burghess Sibbald being instructed to convey him there. For his involvement, on 19<sup>th</sup> July, the laird of Tarsappie was placed on bail of 2000 merks. A court action of November 1630 makes mention of an earlier sasine granted to Sir John Blair of Balgillo by William Blair now of Balgray some time styled merchant traveller in the lands of Meikleburt, and said William with consent of Jean Blair his spouse and Thomas Blair heir apparent of Tarsappie. Jean may have been a daughter of William Blair of Tarsappie an the abovementioned fracas a family dispute.<sup>872</sup>
5. Elspeth or Elizabeth who married John Stewart, eldest son and apparent heir of Alexander Stewart of Carse. In their contract of marriage dated 11 December 1593,

<sup>868</sup> Protocol Book of Sir Robert Rollock. No. 180

<sup>869</sup> Perth Guildry Record Book

<sup>870</sup> NRAS4320/4/1/1/13

<sup>871</sup> RPC Vol. v

<sup>872</sup> CS7/438

she was described as sister german to Alexander Blair of Balgray.<sup>873</sup> She was widowed by 1610.<sup>874</sup>

6. Katherine
7. Barbara who married Alexander Lawrie, burgess of Perth. She was widowed before 26 June 1612.<sup>875</sup>
8. Giles
9. Isobel

William Bonar of Rossie and Margaret Seyton his mother on the one part made a contract on 27 July 1562 with Alexander Blair of Balgray and his mother, Isobel Bonar on the other part.<sup>876</sup>

A contract dated 23 March 1564/5 agreeing an annual rent with his brother, James, provides valuable genealogical information. This shows that Alexander and James were nephews to Alexander Blair of Friarton.<sup>877</sup>

Alexander Blair of Friarton was one of several kinsmen who gave consent to Alexander Blair's contract in 1565 with his father Thomas Blair of Balthayock.

An interesting assembly took place in the kirkyard of Bennathie in September 1566, when Alexander Blair of Balgray appeared before Sir George Haliburton of Pitcur and his friends to confess that he had no title either by writ or promise of Sir George to the teind sheaves of the parish of Melginch called St.Martins Kirk. Sir George then set the tack of these to Thomas Maule of Panmure, Andrew Mercer apparent of Meikleour, John Blair apparent of Balgillo and Alexander Blair of Friarton. The witnesses there included John Cargill, James Small in Kettins, his son Andrew Small and Andrew Blair of Balgersho.<sup>878</sup> These Smalls were Blair kinsmen. (See Blair of Balgillo).

Along with his neighbour, Alexander Blair of Friarton, Alexander made a contract with his brother, James. Due to failure to honour this, a number of sheep were confiscated from him by the Crown and gifted to his brother on 3 March 1567/8.<sup>879</sup> Alexander had a nineteen-year tack or lease of the teinds of the kirk of St Martins which was properly known at that time as the Kirk of Melginch. His financial problems continued from the above case with his brother, for some eighteen months later on 2 August 1569 at Perth, he was put to the horn and the tack was confiscated and gifted to Adam, Bishop of Orkney.<sup>880</sup> Perhaps, his brother was a merchant for on 13 June 1575, Alexander gave surety for his brother while abroad.<sup>881</sup>

Alexander died intestate on 18 July 1575.<sup>882</sup>

### *Alexander Blair (1550c - 1615c)*

Alexander was still a youth when his father died and thus his uncle, William Blair, was appointed his Curator. With approval of his Curator on 16 May 1576, he paid off a contract for £52/16/- which his father had made earlier with John Nairn and his wife Giles Merser.<sup>883</sup> Lawrence Merser of Aldie was also a tutor to the young Alexander on his mother's side.<sup>884</sup>

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873 GD1/408/12

874 RD1/170 10 Mar 1610

875 RD1 / 397 20 June 1627

876 Cal.Of.Deeds Vol.vi.19

877 Cal.Of.Deeds 28 Sep 1565.

878 Calendar of Charters RH6.2058

879 RSS Vol. vi.187

880 RSS Vol. vi.700

881 RSC Vol. ii

882 CC8/8/6/11 Comm.of.Edinburgh Test.reg. 6 Feb 1577/8

883 B59/13/8 Protocol Book of Malcolm Bower 1572-78 fol. 149

884 CS7/69 20 Jun 1577

He had probably just come of age, when an Instrument of Sasine was granted on 26 August, 1577 in favour son and heir of the deceased Alexander Blair of Balgray in the lands of Pitskelie and Balgray with the Mill thereof.<sup>885</sup>

It was not until 6 September 1596 that Alexander as son and heir of the deceased Alexander Blair of Balgray was admitted burgess of Perth as entered in the Guildry records.

Alexander married Jean Bruce and had sons:

1. Alexander his heir
2. John described as brother to Alexander Blair of Balgray when the latter borrowed a sum of money from his aunt Barbara Blair on 20 June 1612.<sup>886</sup>

Jean appears to have been a close relative to William Bruce of Fingask. When Alexander and Jean undertook to pay 1400 merks to John Spens burgess of Perth for the rights of Barclayhills in the parish of Scone, William Bruce of Fingask was the first named cautioner. This contract was witnessed at Perth on 7 May 1593 by Patrick Bruce apparent of Fingask and Andrew Blair portioner of Nether Durdie.<sup>887</sup>

There was a close affinity between this laird and his neighbour Bonar of Balgersho.

When Alexander Bonar of Balgersho placed £500 in caution on 6 February 1588/9, William Bonar of Rossie, Alexander Blair of Balgray and several other Bonars were held not to harm Dame Dorothy Stewart, Countess of Gowrie, or her tenants and servants. A month later, the same placed 500 merks in caution for Alexander Blair that he and John Berry in Rait would not harm John Christie in Abernyte. This was followed on 27 May when Alexander placed 1000 merks in caution that Robert Crichton of Innernytie would not harm Margaret Craig spouse of the late Donald Bryson sometime of the Mill of Innernytie.<sup>888</sup>

A local dispute arose in 1590 about a mile north of Old Scone in a place called Scones Lethendy. Thomas Grant, living there, was a rather disreputable character described by the minister as an insolent blasphemous man who did not attend church but worked on the Sabbath. Thomas so upset his neighbours that Edward Abercromby, Silvester Chapman, William Sydie, Patrick Blair, David and Robert his brothers all at Scones Lethendy and Alexander Blair at Innerbuist chased Thomas and his sons, Andrew aged 12 and William aged 7 to the fear of their lives. The above named neighbours were cautioned on 4 November 1590 not to cause any harm to Thomas and surety of 300 merks each was put up by Alexander Blair of Balgray and John Crichton of Invernitye. A year later, at Stobhall on 4 December 1591 each of the parties were ordered to make a bond of 500 merks to maintain the peace.<sup>889</sup> There may be some close kinsmanship between the various Blair families mentioned. Alexander Blair at Innerbuist may have been a grandson of Helen Scott who had a fee of an eighteenth part of Innerbuist from Scone Abbey on 16 March 1585/6 by which time her husband Andrew Blair and their son William were both deceased.<sup>890</sup> The Blair family continued in Innerbuist. Patrick Blair of Innerbuist married Elizat Gib and had children, Andrew, Alexander, James, Patrick, George, Isabel and Janet. Patrick died on 1 September 1644.<sup>891</sup> Andrew Blair, son and heir of the deceased Patrick Blair, portioner of Innerbuist, granted a charter to Elspeth Gardener, his spouse, of the fourth part of the town and lands of Innerbuist, and a third of the Mill thereof on 8 September, 1649.

The two main cautioners for the 1590 incident were to become involved in a more serious affray themselves. His motives are not clear, but on 19 September 1599, Alexander Blair of Balgray

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<sup>885</sup> GD1/60/2

<sup>886</sup> RD1 / 397

<sup>887</sup> RD1 / 47 Books of Council & Session Deeds

<sup>888</sup> RSC

<sup>889</sup> RSC Vol. iv

<sup>890</sup> Liber Ecclesie S.Trinitatis de Scon.

<sup>891</sup> CC20/4/10

assailed John Crichton of Invernytie on the highway and fired hagbutts and pistols at him. For this he stood trial on 29 December 1599.<sup>892</sup>

A dispute also arose between the Blairs and the above mentioned Silvester Chapman who in 1598 lived in Kinclaven. The Privy Council on 20 and 22 September ordered a whole list of Blairs to find caution not to harm Silvester Chapman. The main providers of surety for this were Alexander Blair of Balgray and William Blair of Balgillo. Besides these, those cautioned included Alexander Blair of Balthayock, his grandson Alexander and brother Laurence in the Balgillo party. Under Balgray came his brother William, Leonard Blair of Balgersho, Alexander Blair fiar of Friarton, Patrick Blair portioner of Lethendy and David Blair portioner of Innerbuist.

A submission regarding a dispute over five and a half barrels of salmon was made at Perth on 8 December 1600 by Robert Blair merchant burghess of Perth on one part and William Blair younger, also merchant burghess there and his spouse, Marion Quillson (Wilson), as the other party. Those appointed for arbitration were Alexander Blair of Balgay and Patrick Blair merchant burghess of Perth.<sup>893</sup>

Alexander was chancellor of two assizes in 1607 and was witness to a charter at Kinclaven Castle that same year.<sup>894</sup>

At Dundee on 11 July 1609, with the consent of James Bonar of Rossie, Alexander Blair and his son and heir apparent, Alexander, sold to James Blair, burghess of Perth, the north half of Ballathie and the nearby Starry Wood in Kinclaven.<sup>895</sup> The lairds of Balthayock and Ardblair witnessed this contract as did the heir apparent of Balgillo, showing the close affinity of these old families.

In March 1610, Alexander represented his brother, William, who pursued a charge against William Gray of Bandirran. Alexander also appeared as a defender that month in a case brought by Gilbert Robertson of Newbigging who claimed that Alexander had failed to pay a court order of £160 plus £50 expenses from two months before. Also that year and in January 1611, Alexander and his son, together with Andrew Blair of Gairdrum, stood surety for Alexander Blair in Nether Collace who was put on trial for false accusation of Harry Freeland. {See under Blair of Gairdrum.} As this involved a massive bond of £10,000 surety it would appear that Andrew Blair of Gairdrum and Alexander Blair in Nether Collace were close kinsmen of Balgray.

### ***Alexander Blair (1585c - 1630c)***

Little has been traced of this son of Alexander of Balgray.

At Dundee on 11<sup>th</sup> July 1609, he and his father on the one part made a contract with James Blair merchant burghess of Perth and others, pertaining to lands and fishings at Balathie in Kinclaven parish.<sup>896</sup>

He married Agnes Bruce and they had issue:

1. James. Studied at University graduating before 1633, he was designed Mr James Blair of Newbigging, minister at Rossie. He married Agnes or Nan Ogilvie, widow of Andrew Gibb younger in Ballindean. Their only daughter Katherine married Peter Hay of Leys about 1670. The entail of Master James is shown in the Appendix. Mr James was minister at Rossie by 1638. He died in February 1672 and was survived by Agnes. The aforementioned Andrew was probably the son of Andrew Gibb and Janet

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<sup>892</sup> Pitcairn; Criminal Trials Vol. ii

<sup>893</sup> B59/14/1 Reg. of Bonds & Obligations fol. 55

<sup>894</sup> RMS Vol. vi. 2044 and 2087

<sup>895</sup> RMS Vol.vii. 357

<sup>896</sup> RD1/176 17)ct 1610

**A GENEALOGY OF BLAIR OF BALTHAYOCK AND THEIR CADETS**

- Blair in Ballindean whose testament was registered with the Comm. of St Andrews in 1624. A Blair family lived in Ballindean for many years, Alexander Blair who died about 1591, William Blair who died about 1625 and his wife Catherine Duncan, Alexander Blair whose wife was Agnes Duncan (1591 – 22 December 1654), and whose son William Blair died 27 February 1662, aged 31.
2. John. Likewise educated to a Masters Degree, he was a writer in Edinburgh and a notary in Perth. He died about 1667 and bequeathed 3500 merks to William Blair of Kinfauns. His brother german, Mr James was executor of his estate.
  3. Cecilia who in 1633 married James Blair in Kirkland in Errol, son to Gilbert Blair in Inchgray.<sup>897</sup> By December 1637 they lived in Craig McKirrand and at Inchfanarge a year later. Her husband was deceased by 1658. James and Cecilia had issue, a son, Thomas who went abroad about 1664 and was assumed dead by 1677 and a daughter, Jean who married John Runsieman in Clein.

On 3 August 1619, John Earl of Mar granted sasine in favour of Alexander Blair of Balgray, for lands in [urlagrdonachrie] and Port of Boscak, and in the barony of Fothergill.<sup>898</sup> Alexander was deceased by September 1633.

As mentioned previously, by 1637, the lands of Balgray were owned by John Merser of Melginch.

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**Blair of Friarton**

The lands of Friarton are just to the west of the parish church of St. Martins but were in the parish of Scone.

According to Douglas, Andrew Blair married Agnes Scott, the widow of William Smith of Braco, and that they had a son William who in 1557 named his brother uterine, Patrick Smith of Braco, his sole Curator. It would appear that both Andrew and Agnes had been previously married, William being her third son. Presumably by his earlier marriage Andrew's eldest surviving son was Alexander. Interestingly, it will be seen below that an Andrew Blair, married Helen Snell, a daughter of an Agnes Scott relict of William Smyth who had the duties of the lands of Braco and Warkland and Hoill of Scone. It is assumed that Sir Robert Douglas confused the name with the later Andrew. The date of 1557 also seems erroneous and thus there is no viable evidence of an earlier Andrew Blair of Friarton.

***Alexander Blair (1510c - 1583c)***

Alexander was uncle to Alexander Blair of Balgray. James, the brother of Balgray, was described as brother son to Alexander Blair of Friarton in a contract of 1564.<sup>899</sup> This points to Alexander being a son of David Blair of Balgray.

Alexander Blair married Janet Kinraigie, widow of David Lindsay, probably about 1540 and they had sons:

1. Andrew his heir
2. George described as brother german of Andrew in the entail of Friarton dated 1 November 1566. {See Appendix ii} At Scone on 9 April 1573, he represented his

<sup>897</sup> St Andrews University Archive ms36220/1134

<sup>898</sup> RS1 Vol.4

<sup>899</sup> Cal. of Deeds 28 Sep 1565

father in a protestation raised by his father against the mother-in-law of his bother, Andrew.<sup>900</sup>

Janet came with children by her first husband. Their marriage fell short of domestic bliss. A messenger came from Edinburgh on 10 September 1567 carrying a summons for Alexander Blair of Friarton and others to appear before the Privy Council.<sup>901</sup> On 28 December 1567, Alexander Blair of Balthayock and George Drummond of Blair stood surety of 500 merks that Alexander Blair of Friarton in future would do nothing to harm his spouse Janet Kincaigie and that he would take her back to their house and treat her as an honest man does his wife. He was also to pay her £16 compensation to provide for the bairns by her first husband.<sup>902</sup>

In 1564, Alexander was a member of an assize with Alexander Blair of Balthayock and John Blair of Melginch. He was admitted freely as a burgess of Dundee 27 November 1565.<sup>903</sup>

Alexander Blair was chamberlain to the Abbey of Scone and appears frequently in this office in charters through the 1560's up to 1574 but by the following year had lost this office probably through mismanagement. In 1560 Alexander as Chamberlain gave a discharge to Constance Snell in Scone and his wife Agnes Scott of the duties of Braco. The duties of Chamberlain could involve him in distant properties. On 26 September 1561 as chamberlain, he witnessed a charter at Scone upon the Kirkton of Duppill in the Sheriffdom of Elgin and Forres, granted in favour of James Innes of Tolquhies. The rent of this was to be paid in kind at Spynie where the bishop had a very fine fortalice. He also represented the interests of Scone Abbey as their chamberlain in other dealings with the Episcopacy of Moray on 16 August 1561 and 28 March 1562/2.<sup>904</sup>

Alexander Erskine of Gogar raised an action against him for non-payment of money from the Abbey due at Martinmas 1574 to the ministry and provost of Dundee and for non-payment to the canons of the abbey for several years past. Alexander Blair was found guilty and his confiscated goods were gifted on 26 August 1575 to Edward Young, servitor of William lord Ruthven.<sup>905</sup>

Along with Andrew Blair portioner of Lethendy, Alexander gave, on 9 November 1574, a bond in favour of Robert Mathew, merchant burgess of Perth to act upon an Obligation to infest Thomas Haldane of Easter Keilor in an annual rent.<sup>906</sup>

On Christmas Day 1581, Alexander was gifted the goods of Elizabeth Kinnair at the Mill of Newtyle when she failed to move from the £5 toft of Hatton of Newtyle.<sup>907</sup>

In 1566, Alexander made over the ownership of Friarton to his eldest son, reserving the title and liferent to himself. (see Appendix ii.) His son Andrew then became Fiar of Friarton during Alexander's remaining years.<sup>908</sup>

### ***Andrew Blair (1540c - 1601c)***

In or before 1572, Andrew married Helen Snell, daughter to Constantine Snell in Scone and his wife Agnes Scott.<sup>909</sup> Constantine had married about 1553 to Agnes Scott, the widow of William Smyth alias Chesman.

Andrew and Helen had sons:

1. Alexander his heir

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900 B59/8/13 Malcolm Bower's Protocol Book 1572-78 fol. 5v

901 Accounts of Lord High Treasurer of Scotland 1571-1574.

902 RSC Vol. i

903 Dundee City Archives, The Lockit Book of Dundee

904 Registrum Maraviense Charter 362, 414 and 451

905 RSS Vol. vii. 272

906 Cal. of Deeds 13 Feb 1578

907 RSS Vol. viii, 607

908 B59/8/13 Malcolm Bower Protocol Book 1572-78 fol. 60

909 B59/8/13 : Malcolm Bower Protocol Book 1572-78 fol.5v and 91v

**A GENEALOGY OF BLAIR OF BALTHAYOCK AND THEIR CADETS**

2. William described as younger son in the Guildry Record Book when he was admitted burgess of Perth on 6 September 1596.

At Scone on 9 April 1573 Alexander Blair of Friarton lodged a protest requesting Agnes Scott to deliver to Andrew and his wife, bear and victual due to them from the infield lands of Friarton for the year 1572 as had been contracted to them earlier, presumably as part of their marriage contract.<sup>910</sup> Agnes was Helen's mother, she being the widow of Constantine Snell in Scone.

Andrew had a precept of a charter on 30 Nov 1584.<sup>911</sup>

On the last day of 1600 at Holyrood, confirmation was made of a charter of Andrew Blair of Friarton and Alexander, his eldest son and heir with the consent of their wives, for the sale of the lands of Bauchlandlatch otherwise known as Overton of Friarton and the lands called Wardley to Laurence Blair son of Alexander Blair of Balthayock and Egidia Merser.<sup>912</sup>

At Perth on 10 July 1604 Andrew and his wife Helen Snell sold to his eldest son, Alexander, a liferent from property at Huntingtower.<sup>913</sup>

Andrew died about 1605.

***Alexander Blair (1575c - 1620c)***

Alexander married Christine Cairncross. He was described as Fiar of Friarton on 20 September 1598 when cautioned of 1000 merks with others not to harm Silvester Chapman in Kinclaven. By March 1601 he was described as "of Friarton." Although his father was still alive.

Thomas Allarton of Lochton complained to the Lords of Council that Alexander Blair of Friarton, Patrick Blair in Friarton, David Blair in Scone, Alexander Blair of Balgray, Patrick Blair in Lethendy and John and Gilbert Young there had long oppressed him. In particular he claimed that the lairds of Balgray and Friarton had attacked him on 7 September 1599 while in his own harvest field. He had fled for safety but they returned at night armed with spears, halberds and swords and let out his sheep on his corn. He claimed that on the following Sunday they drove all the animals over from Lethendy on to his crops and destroyed 50 threaves of oats and 40 of bear.

In November they waylaid his son, Robert Allarton and wounded him in the head with a whinger (short sword). Thereafter they continued to harass the Allarton family. Both parties appeared before the Lords of Council on 5 March 1601 when many witnesses were called. The pursuer failed to prove his allegations and the Blair defenders were acquitted. In the early 1600's, this Alexander disposed of the property and was described as "sometime Fiar of Friarton" on 22 Nov 1605.<sup>914</sup> Thereafter Alexander and his wife Christian Cairncross were tenants in Lethendie.<sup>915</sup>

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**Blair of Gairdrum**

The lairds of Gairdrum appear to be a cadet of Friarton. The lands of Friarton and Gairdrum are within the parish of Scone but are remote from the parish church there. These lands, formerly described as in the Stewartry of Huntingtower, are very close to the parish church of St. Martins.

***George Blair of Gairdrum (1520c - 1580)***

An early laird of Gairdrum was George Blair who married Janet Anderson.

They had issue:

1. Alexander who was heir to Gairdrum

<sup>910</sup> B59/8/13 Malcolm Bower's Protocol Book 1572-78 fol. 5v

<sup>911</sup> RSS viii.2610 and RMS v.763

<sup>912</sup> RMS Vol. vi. 1126

<sup>913</sup> RD1/121 2 Jul 1606

<sup>914</sup> Perth Sasines RS52.4.289

<sup>915</sup> Perth Sasines RS52.5.72

2. Andrew who was portioner of two parts of Lethendy and also of the lands of Gairdrum. He was described as Andrew Blair in Lethendy, son of George Blair of Gairdrum, when he granted a discharge to Agnes Scott, in Scone, for 100 merks Scots, as contained in a contract dated 21 August, 1573. Two years later when this Agnes, described as relict of the umquhile Constantine Snell, entered a contract with David Bannerman, Andrew Blair of Lethendy was one of the witness.<sup>916</sup> He married Eupham Ogilvy shortly after 21 April 1586.<sup>917</sup> Andrew appears to have died before mid 1604. They had a son: Patrick who was heir to his father and to his uncle. Patrick was cautioned on 20 September 1598 not to harm Silvester Chapman. This Patrick, portioner of Lethendy, married Katherine Abercrombie<sup>918</sup> before July 1606 and had a son Peter, who is the last named in the entail of Mr James Blair of Newbigging dated 1658. {See Appendix iii}. Significantly, when Patrick sold the lands of Gairdrum to Thomas Blair of Balthayock in 1632, the sasine was directed by James Blair in Kirkland who as already shown was brother-in-law to Mr James Blair of Newbigging.

George Blair described as "in Gairdrum" had the gift of the escheat of Robert Wallace in Balcraig on 7 February 1554/5.<sup>919</sup> He acquired from Andrew Moncur of Balmaw, half of the half lands of Balmaw that William Laing occupied.<sup>920</sup>

On 14 October 1561, George Blair of Gairdrum was bailie appointed by the commendator of Scone Abbey for the infestment of Patrick Smith in abbey lands.<sup>921</sup>

He was one of several kinsmen who gave consent to Alexander Blair's contract in 1565 with his father Thomas Blair of Balthayock. On 21 January 1574/5, George witnessed the resignation of Nether Balmyle by Jane Blair, lady Balmyle to the earl of Lennox.<sup>922</sup>

Janet died in or before 1577 and George died on 16 November 1580.<sup>923</sup>

### ***Alexander Blair (1545c - 1588)***

Alexander was described as lawful son and heir to George, when he registered his father's testament. He is mentioned with his father on 28 Nov 1567.<sup>924</sup> Alexander Blair in Gairdrum witnessed a contract of sale on 30 May 1574 whereby Alexander Blair of Balgray with his brother William Blair and John Craig agreed to fulfil an assignation of three years annual rents of Balgray and Pitskelly. He was laird by 21 June 1579 when he made a contract with his brother, Andrew Blair, portioner of Lethendy, to infest Andrew and his spouse, Eupham Ogilvy in the lands of Gairdrum and the fifth parts of the lands of Lethendy.<sup>925</sup> Alexander married twice.<sup>926</sup>

His second wife was Margaret Ferguson and by her had issue:

1. Andrew the eldest and his heir
2. Giles . Alexander's testament registered in 1591 mentions Margaret Ferguson as his relict who acted in name of their children, Geillis, Isobell, Peter, Margaret, Beatrix and Jane Blairs.
3. Isobel

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916 B59/8/13: Malcolm Bowar Protocol Book 1572-78

917 Liber Ecc.de Scon; Fues of Scone lxxxiv

918 Perth Sasaines RS52.3.339 and RS52.5.102

919 RPS Vol. iv. 2918

920 RMS Vol. vi. 267

921 GD190/3/53

922 RD1 / 13 Books of Council & Session Deed 2 Feb 1574/5

923 CC8/8/17/169 Comm.of Edinburgh

924 Acts & Decrees

925 Balthayock Charters 232

926 RMS Vol.ix.664

**A GENEALOGY OF BLAIR OF BALTHAYOCK AND THEIR CADETS**

4. Peter described as brother german of Andrew Blair of Gairdrum on 29 July 1618 when charged with the murdered of David Toshock younger of Monyvaird within Perth on 23 June 1618.<sup>927</sup> He was witness to a sasine granted in favour of Margaret Blair daughter of Alexander Blair and Janet Scrymgeor on 6 December 1619.<sup>928</sup>
5. Margaret
6. Beatrix
7. Jane

Alexander died in October 1588.<sup>929</sup> Due to the above contract, Patrick, portioner of Lethendy and son of Andrew, was named the heir masculine by provision of tailie to the late Alexander in the lands of Gairdrum in a Retour dated 9 August 1604. {It is not discovered if there is a link from the Blair/Ogilvy families here to an earlier Patrick Blair in Lethendy spouse of Janet Williamson who after his death married Thomas Ogilvy in Lethendy sometime before 1561. Janet and her son by the first marriage, David Blair, both attached their seals to a Renunciation dated 9 July 1580.<sup>930</sup> By 15 March 1581 Janet had died leaving a tenement in Perth called St.Katherine'sland to an Alter in Scone Abbey. }

***Andrew Blair (1575c - 1635c)***

This lawful son of Alexander was granted a charter made at Perth on 10 May 1605 by his cousin Patrick (portioner of Lethendy) of the lands of Gairdrum to be holden of the superiors of Patrick. Andrew was required on 4 August 1604 to find 400 merks surety for good behaviour in a dispute between John Blair in Wester Banchory and John Soutar portioner of Banchory.<sup>931</sup>

Many years later, Patrick with the consent of Andrew wadset the lands of Gairdrum to Thomas Blair of Balthayock in a charter signed at Balthayock in 1632.<sup>932</sup>

Andrew was probably a close kinsman of Alexander Blair in Nether Collace who found himself in deep trouble regarding claims he made about the Gowrie Conspiracy Trial of 1600. King James VI had ridden into Perth unannounced in August 1600 and called at The Earl of Gowrie's house there. It was claimed that there the earl and his Ruthven family attempted regicide and in Gowrie House the unarmed earl was slain by some of the king's party. The Trial in 1600 led to several executions and to the surname Ruthven being proscribed. Thus, Ruthvenfield Castle became known as Huntingtower and a branch of the family Ruthven of Freeland adopted the alias of Freeland. The aforementioned Alexander Blair in 1609 informed Lord Scone that he had heard Harry Ruthven alias Freeland, then a man of 60 years who had been present at Gowrie House during the fateful incident, make treasonable comments about the king and the trial saying "the Erle of Gowry was saiklesly put downe; and the King and all that was thair that day was traiteuris to the Erle of Goury." This led to the arrest of Harry Freeland but he countered that it was a false accusation. Thus both were put into the tolbooth at Edinburgh awaiting trial. Alexander Blair of Balgray and Andrew Blair of Gairdrum acted as cautioners for Alexander so gaining his temporary release in September 1610 and standing surety for his later appearance in court. On 21 January 1611, they made a bond of £10,000 to ensure that Alexander Blair in Nether Collace would enter trial. The general result of the trial was that Blair was discredited and deemed to have invented his accusation from spite. Nevertheless, given that the Crown was massively in debt to the Ruthven family and the evidence of many historical investigations into the Gowrie Conspiracy Trial, it is clear that many, if not Harry Freeland, believed that the fine

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927 Pitcairn; Criminal Trials Vol.iii

928 RS1 Vol. 4

929 CC8/8/22/570 Comm. of Edinburgh Test. reg. 10 Apr 1591

930 GD190/3/2

931 RSS 4 Aug 1604

932 RMS Vol. ix. 664 and Balthayock Charters 395

young Earl of Gowrie was entrapped and murdered that August day in 1600.<sup>933</sup> In 1620 he was a member of an Assize with several other Blairs. (See Laurence Blair of Over Durdie).

### **Blair of Ballathie**

The lands of Ballathie lie on the north bank of the River Tay just below the confluence of the River Isla in the barony and parish of Kinclaven. At one time these lands were owned by Alexander Blair of Balgray.

#### ***James Blair of Ballathie (1560c - 1617c)***

At Dundee on 11 July 1609, with the consent of James Bonar of Rossie, Alexander Blair of Balgray and his son and heir apparent, Alexander, sold to James Blair, burges of Perth, the north half of Ballathie and the nearby Starry Wood in Kinclaven.<sup>934</sup> James, a merchant in Perth, then was designed of Ballathie. Soon afterwards, he bestowed a liferent out of the estate in favour of his wife Janet Watson on 13 September 1609. They had issue:

1. John his heir
2. Thomas mentioned as witness to a Discharge by his mother at Perth in 1637.

James performed the role of bailie in the conjunct infestment of Alexander Ireland and Janet Murray upon the lands of Meiklelour in November 1615. James died before 26 February 1618 and was survived by his wife, Janet Watson and sons.<sup>935</sup> Janet was still alive on 9 December 1637 when she discharged a debt of interest on a capital sum of 4000 merks paid to her by John Hood.<sup>936</sup>

James was succeeded by his son.

#### ***John Blair (1590c - 1646c)***

John was retoured heir to his father James Blair in the shady part of Ballathie and the Starry Wood on 18 March 1619.<sup>937</sup> He was mentioned as proprietor of Ballathie in the Retour of Lord Kinclaven on 27 October 1627. John died about 1646.

#### ***James Blair (1610c -1670c)***

James was retoured on 16 July 1646 as heir to his father John Blair in the lands of Ballathie with the salmon fishing in the Tay.<sup>938</sup> In 1650 he was assessed for Ballathie and the fishing at £213.6s.8d. Eupham Hay was described as the relict of James Blair of Ballathie in a Bond registered in 1675.<sup>939</sup> They had issue:

1. James who was heir to the title of Ballathie.
2. George mentioned as son of James Blair of Ballathie in a bond registered 7 November 1673 wherein Eupham Hay is described as relict of James Blair.<sup>940</sup> George is also mentioned in a Discharge registered 12 April 1680 and is assumed to be son of this laird.<sup>941</sup>
3. Eupham also mentioned in the Discharge of 1680.

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<sup>933</sup> Lang, A., James VI and the Gowrie Mystery, Longmans 1902 Tranter, N., Past Master, 1960

<sup>934</sup> RMS Vol.vii. 357

<sup>935</sup> RMS Vol.vii. 1782

<sup>936</sup> Glamis Muniments 112/8/5

<sup>937</sup> Perth Retours No.266

<sup>938</sup> Perth Retours No.553

<sup>939</sup> Deeds 1675; Dal.39.497

<sup>940</sup> Deeds 1673: Dur.34. 201

<sup>941</sup> Deeds 1680. Dal.51.498

James died about 1670. Eupham Hay survived her husband and was described as mother of James Blair of Ballathie in 1672.<sup>942</sup>

***James Blair (1640c -1690c )***

James Blair succeeded to the title of Ballathie before October 1672. Earlier that year he wrote to Patrick Rattray of Craighall, Balathie, on 23 March. He requested Craighall to lend him *ten pises and what sourte you ples'*, saying that he had to go to Edinburgh again. And assuring that Craighall would be repaid at Martinmas.<sup>943</sup>

Eupham Turnbull was given as the spouse of James in a Disposition registered in 1682.<sup>944</sup>

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**Blair of Shanzie and in Auchteralyth**

Little is discovered of this cadet but the branch is placed after the burges of Dundee and before Blair of Balgray in the 1542 entail of Balthayock.

***William Blair (1480c-1530c)***

William Blair was designed of Shanzie which is in the east side of the parish of Alyth. He married Margaret Gibson who was described as his relict in August 1535.

***Gilbert Blair (1500c-1550c)***

Gilbert is described as the son and heir of the late William Blair in a settlement dated 31 August 1535, with Margaret Gibson relict of William Blair sometime of Shanzie.<sup>945</sup> This would be the same Gilbert Blair in Auchteralyth listed in the entail of Balthayock shown in Appendix i.

Gilbert was in Auchteralyth when David Ogilvy was granted sasine of the sixth part of it on 10 June 1533.<sup>946</sup>

***Simon Blair (1530c-1580c)***

Indications are that Simon Blair may have been son to Gilbert. When Sasine was given to George Ramsay of Bamff in part of Auchteralyth and in Watterscheill, in March 1575/6, Simon Blair in Watterscheill was a witness there.<sup>947</sup>

**Blair Burgesses in Dundee**

The Blair family of burgesses of Dundee was closely related to the Blair of Balthayock and appear in the 1542 entail of Balthayock. (See Appendix I) They owned a portion of the lands of Westfield of Dundee which lay between the old town and Blackness and reached down to the riverside.

***George Blair (1425c - 1484c)***

George was possibly a younger son of Thomas Blair of Balthayock and brother to Patrick Blair the heir apparent of Balthayock. He is mentioned in the Balthayock Muniments as George Blair of Balgillo in the 1460's. He held a third portion of Balgillo but appears to have been closely related to

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942 Deeds 1772:Dur.32.96

943 X.c.61 (103) Papers of Rattray of Craighall. Folger Shakespeare Library

944 Deeds 1682. Dal.57.500

945 Protocol Book of Thomas Ireland 1534-1572, fol.50. DundeeCity Archives.

946 Bamff Charters No.42

947 Bamff Charters No.82

the laird of Balthayock and also a kinsman of Blair of Ardblair.<sup>948</sup> He married Janet Abercrombie and had issue. George probably died in 1484. Janet Abercrombie survived him and had as her widow's terce, a liferent of the six acres of Westfield of Dundee. She married secondly to Thomas Drummond before 1498 when with her husband, she raised an action against James Rollock, Alexander Ogilvy and David Fotheringham for occupying Westfield for the past 14 years without a lease from her. It was claimed that James and Alexander had a tack from Alexander Blair of Balthayock and proof was demanded. David was ordered to desist from his occupation of Westfield.<sup>949</sup>

***William Blair, burgess of Dundee (1460c - 1513)***

George may have been the father of William Blair, burgess of Dundee who owned a third part of Westfield of Dundee and had sasine of Balgillo in 1490. This William had a son George and daughter Janet Blair.<sup>950</sup>

At Dundee on 30 December 1512, William sold his portion of the lands of Balgillo to John Blair of Balgillo.<sup>951</sup>

William died towards the end of 1513, possibly at the Battle of Flodden.

***George Blair, burgess of Dundee (1490c - 1545)***

George, the son of William Blair, was also a burgess of Dundee and is mentioned near the end of the Balthayock entail of 1542. He had a son John, his heir.

The lands of Westfield of Dundee were in the king's hands for one term from Martinmas 1513. For relief of the lands of Westfield of Dundee, George Blair paid £5 for non-entry and £10 for relief to the Sheriff of Forfar when he was granted sasine on 29 May 1514. He was admitted a burgess of Dundee as heir to his father William Blair on 15 January 1527.<sup>952</sup> His wife was probably a close in kin to James Small.

George, described as son and heir of the late William Blair, burgess of Dundee, for the love of his sister, Janet Blair, granted her a liferent of the third part of Westfield of Dundee.<sup>953</sup> His wife may also have been a Blair as John, his son and heir, was also heir to his grandfather, James Blair.<sup>954</sup>

George died in late 1545.

***John Blair (1532c - 1585c)***

John Blair was still a minor when his father died and thus James Small was appointed his Curator.

In October 1551 with the consent of his Curator, he consented that Andrew Blair, son of William Blair of Balgillo should be infeft in the feu of his lands beside Dundee.<sup>955</sup>

The third part of the lands of Westfield of Dundee had been in ward for seven and a half years when on 18 May 1553, it was recorded that £100 had been paid for non-entry of the heir and £13.6s.8d paid to the queen for the sasine given to John Blair. It may be that sometime following this, John agreed to dispoise his lands to the Gray family, for Patrick, Master of Gray, raised an action against John Blair son and heir of the late, George Blair, burgess of Dundee. This resulted, on 4 January 1566/7, in the confiscation of John's goods for non-renouncing of the third part of Westfield.

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948 Balthayock Charters 26

949 Acts of Lords of Council in Civil Cases

950 RMS Vol.iii.946

951 RMS Vol.ii . 3798

952 Dundee City Archives, The Lockit Book

953 RMS Vol.iii. 946

954 CS7/61 24 Jun1575

955 Acts & Decreeets Acta Dom. Conc.&Sess. 20 Oct 1552.

On 12 December 1573 John Blair apparent of Balgillo granted sasine of the six acres occupied by John the son of deceased George Blair in favour of Thomas Mann.<sup>956</sup> Certainly by 1590, the land formerly owned by George Blair was in the hands of Thomas Mann.<sup>957</sup>

John Blair continued as a burghess of Dundee where he owned property within the burgh. He and his wife, Isobel Brown, had a charter in their favour on 1 June 1582.<sup>958</sup>

A John Blair maltman burghess in Dundee was a witness to a contract at Dundee on 17 June 1600. He may not have been a close relative as, in March 1600, there was recorded also a John Blair skinner burghess of Dundee whose wife was Janet Mitchell.<sup>959</sup> In April 1610, William Blair, burghess of Dundee, with his wife Margaret Cockburn and son, Alexander, took possession of property in Dundee.<sup>960</sup> John, the skinner burghess died without issue about 1616 and on 16 January 1617, William Blair, his brother german, was granted a Precept of Clare Constat appointing him as John's heir.<sup>961</sup>

William and his wife were still alive in 1622.<sup>962</sup> It is not known whether these brothers were related to the above John Blair. The Dundee Town Clerk's books also record an Andrew Blair, skinner burghess, about this time. (See under Alexander Blair of Denhead.)

## **An Eminent Physician and Botanist**

### ***Dr Patrick Blair (1672c - 1728)***

A colourful character among the Blair families deserves a special mention here. He was a younger son of Mr George Blair of Lethendy already described. He married Elspeth Whyte in April 1702. They had sons John and Harry and daughters Elizabeth and Isobel. When their son John was baptised in Dundee on 4 June 1703, Patrick was described as a surgeon apothecary. The godfathers of this son were John Blair of Glasclune, Mr John Blair minister of Kilspindie with his son Mr John Blair doctor of medicine in Dundee and John Patullo of Kinnochtrie.<sup>963</sup> These clearly confirm the origins of Dr Patrick Blair. John Blair of Glasclune was Dr Patrick's elder surviving brother, and thus the most senior of that branch of the Blair family. Mr John the minister was his first cousin, they both being grandsons of John Blair first laird of Pittendreich. The relationship of Mr John the doctor is thus obvious but their common interest of practising medicine in Dundee clearly enhanced the bond. Indeed Dr Patrick had been witness to the baptism of Mr John's son, John in 1700. The fourth godfather was brother-in-law of Dr Patrick, John Patullo, being the husband of Jean Blair. {See under Blair of Pittendreich}

The following is extracted from an old report.

"Angus is fortunate to have had such a distinguished scientist as Patrick Blair (c.1666-1728) to contribute to the recording of its flora. Blair was probably born in either Dundee or Perthshire (where his father had estates). His main interest was medicine (in which he trained in the Low Counties), but at that time medicine was intimately connected with botany. Blair had settled in Dundee by 1701 as a surgeon-apothecary and it was near here, in 1706, that he made the first ever dissection of an elephant. The unfortunate subject had been toured around Europe, but collapsed a mile from Dundee. A ditch was dug to try and raise the beast, but this filled with rain and she

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956 Aleander Wedderburn's Protocol Book Vol.10

957 RSS

958 A Wedderburn's Protocol Book 30 Oct 1581 – Dec 1582

959 A Wedderburn's Protocol Book 31 1600-1607 p.47

960 A Wedderburn's Protocol Book 32 1607-1613 p.103

961 T Wichtane's Protocol Book 35 1615-1619 fol.123

962 A Wedderburn's Protocol Book 34 1619-1624 fol.92

963 Dundee OPR

succumbed. Blair took advantage of this and communicated a minutely detailed paper (with four copper-plate engravings) on its anatomy to the Royal Society of London in 1710. In 1712 he was elected a fellow of the same society. His affairs took a bad turn in 1715 when he espoused the Jacobite cause (in his capacity as surgeon). He was taken prisoner at Preston and thence to Newgate, where he was sentenced to death. However through the influence of Sir Hans Sloane and James Pettiver, with whom he had previously met and corresponded, he was pardoned and released. He remained in London and it was here that he published his botanical works. The most important of these was *Botanical Essays* of 1720 in which he propagates the sexual nature of plants. It is his other works that are relevant to the present work. *Miscellaneous Observations in the Practise of Physick, Anatomy and Surgery, with New and Curious Remarks in Botany* (1718) comprises a series of letters written during the previous years. The first is dedicated to Sir Isaac Newton."

The account continues to list those plants that Patrick Blair recorded in Perthshire and Angus. His botanical texts contain "fascinating digressions such as recipes for oatcakes and different sorts of bread".<sup>964</sup> Most but not all of this report is accurate.

The following, gathered mainly from his letters, is added to expand or amend the detail:

Patrick was born about of after 1672. He was clearly a brilliant student and as a very young man went to study abroad perhaps in 1689. He mentions a surgical case with which he was involved in Flanders in 1695-1697. By 1700 he was in Dundee as mentioned above. Several of his letters from Dundee show that he lived there up to 1710 and that he kept in touch with friends and family abroad. In a letter of 9 April 1708 he mentions that the bearer, James Lyon is going to a "cousin of mine in Jamaica." This cousin would be Alexander Blair (b.1676), son of Mr John Blair minister of Kilspindie, who was a surgeon apothecary in Port Royal in Jamaica. On 23 February 1710 he wrote to his nephew "M Christy" who was abroad studying Pharmacy and Surgery. By 18 June 1711 he was in Coupar Angus when he described the case of a 13 year old boy who had suffered severe pain, sickness and loss of mobility for 16 months and the several cures tried without success. On 28 April 1712, he recorded the success of cold bathing on this patient. The "use of cold water impetuously let down from the fall of a Mill upon his vertebrae " after three or four sessions "the weakness of his back & disability of his limbs is quite recovered."

It was probably in his youth and later while at Dundee and Coupar Angus, that Patrick did much of his fieldwork on the botany of Angus and Perthshire. He describes that he found "flore albo at Glasclune" and "Artemesia flore albo at Lethindy, my Father's Estate."

Patrick seems to have travelled to London about 1713 and on his return, in Edinburgh on 1 February 1714, mentions that he had "been pushing for a Natural History Society in Scotland."

From Coupar Angus on 6 July 1713 he wrote about the spread of venereal disease which had afflicted the Highlands of Scotland following the (Government) soldiers being dispersed throughout the Highlands after the Battle of Killiecrankie (1689). It was another such Jacobite rising that was to disturb his life in Coupar Angus. Of the 1715 Rising, he wrote, "it was my lot to live near to the place where it first broke out and where the nobility and gentry rising all at once they would allow none to stay behind without their raising quartering upon and loading them with heavy severe taxes." They "obliged me to serve as Physician Surgeon in those regiments under the command of Lord Nairn." After his capture at Preston he was imprisoned at Newgate, London. Several letters show he was there throughout 1716. On 5 July 1716 he was sentenced to death for Rebellion and wrote "There is at least a Human period put to my life which is to terminate on Friday next as warrant intimated to me this day unless the Providence of Almighty God and the good endeavours of such worthy friends as may prevent it." Reprieve came but he was still suffering in prison "fevered cold lying three abed" on 3 December 1716. He remained in London writing various scientific papers and was there in 1719 when an Appeal was heard in June. Thereafter he settled in Boston and continued to produce learned papers. He returned to London to add information to

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964 Stevenson A.P., (1908) Patrick Blair Surgeon Apothecary, Dundee. Trans.Proc.of Bot.Soc. Edinburgh., p23,pp258-276

former papers and had been there for some time, having "quitted Boston" when his new volumes were advertised at one guinea in December 1727. While there in January 1728, Patrick appears to have suffered from a series of strokes and died later that month.<sup>965</sup>

Copperplate engravings of the elephant dissected were produced by Patrick Blair for his paper and a reproduction and other facts about this outstanding doctor can be found in Alan P Stevenson's "Patrick Blair a Memoir", 11 Apr 1907.

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## Blair Family in France

### *Mr Alexander Blair (1563c – 1615c)*

His Arms: *Argent a chevron waved sable betwixt three Torteaux.*

Alexander was a younger son of Alexander Blair of Balthayock by his first wife, Isabel Ogilvy. Born in the early to mid-1560's, he attended St.Leonards College of the University of St.Andrews where he was nominated for the baccalaureate in 1578 and awarded his Masters degree the following year. Like many other laird's sons he furthered his education on the Continent of Europe. Mr Alexander first studied at Poitiers in France. He wrote from there to his father on 15 July 1581 mentioning his studies and family matters.<sup>966</sup> Being an academic, he transferred to the College of Orthez in Béarn, Navarre in South East France.

At the castle of Pau, the capital of Béarn, by contract of marriage dated 2 December 1590, he married to the noble lady, Marie de Rémy, daughter of Robert de Rémy, knight, "valet de chambre" of the king of Navarre and guardian of the castle of Pau. The contract says that Alexander came from "the noble house of Balthayock in Scotland". Alexander Blair of Balthayock wrote to his son at the College of Orthez on 20 September 1591 regarding his marriage.<sup>967</sup>

Alexander and Marie de Rémy had issue of four sons:

1. Pierre de Blair, advocate at Orthez and Pau, married first Suzanne de Lacomme (without heir) and second Marie de Lapuyade by whom he had issue. Their descendants remained in Béarn until the 18<sup>th</sup> century.
2. Arman(d) de Blair, born about 1600 or a little later, he attended school in Cupar, Fife around 1614.<sup>968</sup> At that time, Mr Robert Williamson was schoolmaster of the Burgh School where the Latin grammar of Mr John Vaus was taught.<sup>969</sup> Armand was known as "seigneur du Bousquet", a member of the assembly of nobles of Béarn. He married on 4 June 1629 to Anne de Norman. There is no record of issue.
3. Pierre-Jean de Blair, doctor in medecine in Salies, was married to Marie du Faget. They had a son, Jean, of whom nothing is discovered.
4. Alexander, probably born about 1610, more of whom later.

Master Alexander was "principal" at the royal Navarre College of Orthez and professor of Protestant Theology at the University of Béarn. Like himself, Marie de Rémy was evidently educated in the reformed religion. Her parents had married in 1550 in the Calvinist city of Geneva, Switzerland. While in refuge in Geneva, Robert de Rémy had married there the noble lady, Jeanne de Séguier daughter of Berthomibe Séguier, belonging to a very important French family. On returning to France, Jeanne was a lady in waiting to the Queen of Navarre. As a result

<sup>965</sup> University of Dundee Archive; MS67/1/11

<sup>966</sup> Balthayock Charters 238

<sup>967</sup> Balthayock Charters 264

<sup>968</sup> Balthayock Charters 343

<sup>969</sup> Boyd, Margt.W.W., Over 600 years of Schooling in the Royal & Ancient Burgh of Cupar-Fife.

of his good marriage, Alexander gained considerable wealth. He bought lands and castles in Béarn including the property of Lasaubetat for 4000 French tournois pounds on 11 July 1595 and the castle of Andreinh for 22600 French tournois pounds in 30 August 1614.

In 1598, Mr Alexander was considering returning home from Lescar when he wrote to his father, chiefly about money matters.<sup>970</sup> It may have been at this time or in 1603 that his father borrowed 300 merks from him. It seems that in 1603, the Laird of Balthayock was having problems with Lord Crichton of Sanquhar regarding the teinds of Kinnoul as he remarked in his letter to Alexander on 22 August. He also made mention of the "young guidman of ye Myrris" who was Balthayock's grandson. This letter also gave information on Mr Peter Young of Easter Seaton who was Preceptor to the King. Mr Peter was an academic from Dundee and had been pedagogue to the young King James. This would be of particular interest to Mr Alexander for by then he was Provost of the University of Lescar at Béarn.

Some months after the death of his father, Mr Alexander wrote from Lescar on 8 August 1604 to his nephew, Alexander the new laird of Balthayock. He raised the issue of repayment of the loan of 300 merks made to his father and also to his liferent of the lands of Barclarie.<sup>971</sup> He followed this up on 3 June 1605 when he offered to resign the liferent for £1000. In another letter from Lescar on 28 June 1608 he again raised this matter.<sup>972</sup> Alexander was at Orthez when he wrote to Balthayock on 20 March 1614. He made mention of their kinsman, the son of Scrymgeour, the laird of Myres and he also commented on his own son Arman who was then at school in Cupar, Fife.<sup>973</sup> It was probably within the next year that Alexander died and perhaps before 2 July 1616. However, there is a report in the Obituary of Robert Boyd of Trochrig written in French that he had learned in June 1617 of the death of his good friend Mr Blair principal of the College of Lescar and pastor of the church there. He states that he was one of the great pillars of the Royal College of Béarn and had died aged in excess of 60.<sup>974</sup>

Alexander's sons survived him but it was his youngest son who was progenitor of most of the noble family of Blair in France.

### ***Alexander de Blair (1610 c – 1666c)***

Born in Béarn, the youngest son of Master Alexander Blair, Alexander de Blair was designed lord of Blainville. He settled in Paris and there married on 29 June 1643 to Madeleine Pittau, daughter of Master Pittau, "orfèvre-joallier" in Paris, and Marie Leclerc.

Alexander and Madeleine had three sons:

1. Alexandre de Blair, "seigneur des Fayolles", "fermier général", president "à mortier" of the parliament of Metz (1683), married in Poitiers by contract of 5 February 1669 to Renée Mesmin, daughter of Aaron Mesmin, "échevin" of Niort, "seigneur of Fayolles". As heir to his father who had initiated the application, he was the grandson of Master Alexander Blair who obtain the Letters Patent from Charles II, signed at Edimburgh on 7 July 1674. See below the discussion on the birth brief with the Letters Patent. This Alexander was the founder of the "Poitou line" of this family which ended in the 18<sup>th</sup> century.
2. Armand de Blair, born circa 1650, died on 21 March 1719 in Metz, "seigneur des Etangs" in Lorraine, "directeur général des fermes réunies du roi au département de Lorraine, Barrois et Trois Evêchés", president "à mortier" in the parliament of Metz (1691-1716), married on 27 September 1676 to Pauline Marie Estienne d'Augny. He died after 1710.
3. Melchior de Blair, "seigneur de Cernay", married by contract of 27 February 1686 signed by the King, to Henriette de Brinon. This line ended at the end of the 18<sup>th</sup> century.

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970 Balthayock Charters 290

971 Balthayock Charters 322

972 Balthayock Charters 327 and 331

973 Balthayock Charters 343

974 Bannatyne Miscellany

**A GENEALOGY OF BLAIR OF BALTHAYOCK AND THEIR CADETS**

It seems that near the end of his life, Alexander initiated correspondence with his kinsman, the laird of Balthayock for the family muniments have a "Declaration of the descent of Mr Alexander Blair who settled in the principality of Beame" dated 1665. This was done with a view to submitting an application for knighthood. Alexander did not survive to see this however, as he died in Paris before 9 April 1667. It was his eldest son Alexander de Blair of Paris who received the Letter's Patent discussed below:

"Letters Patent of the King of England attesting the antiquity of the Nobility of the Family of *BLAIR, BARONS OF BALTHAYOCK* in Scotland, and that those born in France are descended from them " dated 7 July 1674 were passed by Act of the Lords of the Privy Council and sealed in Edinburgh on 27 August 1674.

The application for knighthood claimed that about 1585, his grandfather Alexander Blair had left Scotland and taken residence in Béarn. His birth brief included therein needs careful interpretation and is erroneous in earlier generations.

It is clear from the Privy Council records that although there was no hesitation on the part of the authorities from validating his claim of descent from Balthayock, Alexander Blair in Paris was most anxious to have the birth brief attest the earlier generations regarding the lineage of his ancestors and implored the Council to more clearly define his ancestors for the records. This was duly attempted and the resultant birth brief was incorporated in the Letters Patent of 1674. Unfortunately the lineage quoted is very inaccurate, misnaming them all from the grandfather of Mr Alexander Blair back and designing them as knights, though none were such. The family names of the spouses of the Balthayock lairds were recalled somewhat better.

Regrettably, little weight can be given to this official birth brief.

## Appendices

### *Appendix i*

#### Outline of Charter to Thomas Blair of Balthayock and Entail dated 10 June 1542 at Perth.

For his good service to the King, Thomas Blair of Balthayock resigned the lands of Ardler and Baldowrie in Forfarshire, Cults in Fife and Goddens and pendicles in Balthayock (Pitroddie) in Perthshire. The King returned them to be held as the free barony of Ardler, the tower and fortalice of Ardler, and the principal messuage there to be held by Thomas and on his death by Alexander his eldest son and heir apparent and his heirs masculine whom failing William Blair, second son and his heirs, whom failing Patrick Blair the youngest and his heirs, whom failing Patrick Blair of Balmyle and his heirs, whom failing Andrew Blair brother german of said Patrick and his heirs, whom failing Alexander Blair burgess of Perth and his heirs, whom failing John Blair of Melginch and his heirs, whom failing William Blair of Balgillo and his heirs, whom failing John Blair of Ardblair and his heirs, whom failing Master George Blair of Bendochy and his heirs, whom failing George Blair burgess of Dundee and his heirs, whom failing Gilbert Blair in Auchteralyth and his heirs, whom failing David Blair of Balgray and his heirs, whom failing George Blair in Peattie and his heirs.

### *Appendix ii*

#### Outline of Charter to Andrew Blair of Friarton and Entail dated 1 November 1566 at Abbey of Scone.

In 1584, the King confirmed the charter of the late Patrick, Bishop of Moray, Commendator of Scone granted to Alexander Blair in Friarton who for £200 sold to Andrew Blair, his son, the lands of Friarton (which Alexander and Janet Kincragy, his spouse, hold in liferent) to be held by Alexander and his heirs; whom failing George Blair his brother german; whom failing James Blair, brother german of Alexander Blair of Balgray whom failing, Alexander Blair of Balgray or other of arms and the race of Blair. Witnessed at Monastery of Scone 1 Nov 1566.

### *Appendix iii*

#### Outline of Charter of Mr James Blair of Newbigging and Entail dated 16 July 1658

Charter of toft and lands called Waterbutts, Carsegrange by Mr James Blair of Newbigging and the heirs to his body whom failing to John Blair his brother german, whom failing Thomas Blair, son of late James Blair sometime in Kirkland by Cecilia Blair sister to Mr James, whom failing William Blair son of the late Peter Blair, brother german of the late Andrew Blair of Epidrum whom failing Alexander Blair of Alberie, brother german of William Blair of Tarsappie whom failing, Peter Blair son of the late Patrick Blair in Lethendy. Life rent of Waterbutts to be reserved to Agnes Ogilvie, wife of Mr James Blair. Registered under the Great Seal 1666.