

THE BLAIR FAMILY MAGAZINE

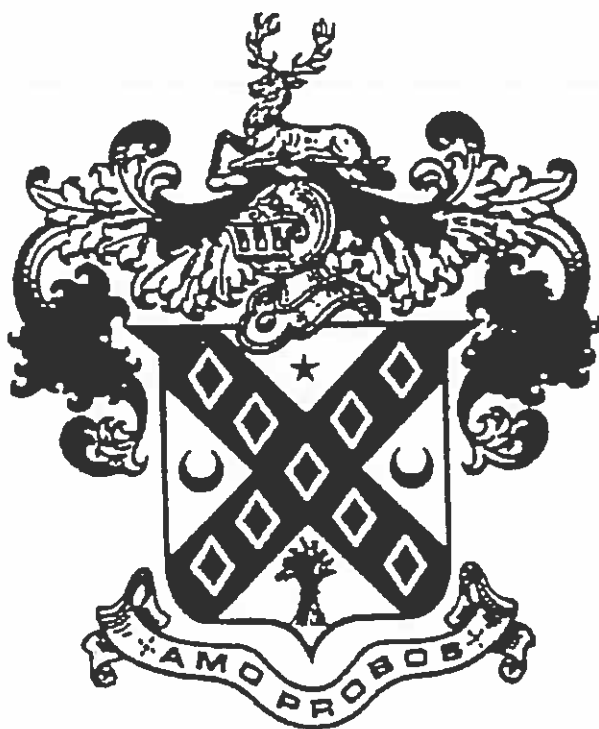


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From the President's Desk

Dear Members,

I hope each and every one of you had a wonderful holiday season. Genealogy and family history focus our attention on the past, so it becomes especially meaningful when we can enjoy celebrations in the present with our loved ones.

As we begin 1999, here are some suggestions for your New Year Resolutions.

Our membership chair is currently vacant, so we are asking each of our members to help us add one new member during 1999. This can be accomplished easily by those of you with internet access, and others may solicit membership from family members.

Also, this might be a good year to contribute an article to the *Blair Family Magazine*. So many times, we continue to hold back publication of our families' history -- perhaps we would like to accumulate more data, or we are not quite comfortable with the material we have gathered. An article might bring another researcher to our attention who can share the material they have gathered. In the very least, it would preserve the material for future generations, and if you later locate an error, Mary will always be happy to place a correction in the magazine.

This new year would also be a wonderful time to volunteer some help or time for the benefit of the organization. We have several chairs empty at present, and we could really use your help. We need a membership chair -- someone who has the time to correspond by e-mail with possible new members on the internet. Raymond Stoudt needs a project coordinator for the Blair Obituary Project. Lethene Parks could use some help in planning our annual

conventions and seminars. Charlotte Blair Stewart is looking for state experts for the database. This would involve correspondence on Blair families only in a particular state. It does not need to be the state where you reside, perhaps you are more familiar with another where you have done research. Charlotte would provide you materials to use as your base, and asks only that you send her corrections and additions to that material. We always need typists and computer experts.

So please let one of our officers know your interests, the time you are willing to provide, and the skills you possess. We can all be reached by e-mail, phone, and postal addresses found on the inside cover. Please help by providing the support the BSGR deserves.

I hope all of you are making your plans to attend the June convention in Frankfort, Kentucky. Lethene is working hard to insure a good time for all of us. Our web page has been updated and includes some details and links for those of you who are planning research or sight seeing during your visit. Whenever one visits a new research facility, it is always beneficial to familiarize yourself with the materials that are available at that location. We hope these links can provide you that information. The Kentucky Archives has the Blair Archives among their holdings. Those of you who wish to review these documents should visit during the week. On the weekends, only microfilm is available to researchers.

All of your officers join me in wishing you all a very prosperous 1999.

Nancy Knox Schaffer

Blair/Allison/Wallace Book

The Western Reserve Historical Library has a copy of Effie Blair Walls' research on the Blair, Allison, Wallace, etc. related families. This book is a photocopy of her research, and contains family Bibles, obits, pictures and a great deal of information on the family who descended from William Blair and Mary Hannah, who were married in Lancaster County, Pennsylvania. The family moved west to Beaver and

Erie counties in Pennsylvania, and Ohio. This is the family of the late Raymond Parker and a number of other BSGR members. For those who cannot get to the library, the library will photocopy this book for \$10.00 plus 35 cents per page. Anyone needing the address, etc., can get in touch with Charlotte Blair Stewart (address inside cover).

BSGR On Line

by Blair Leatherwood

Hope everyone's had a wonderful holiday season! This column will be a little short this time, primarily due to the fact that the month of November was taken up with two concerts, a trip to New York, a trip to Hawaii (life's tough, isn't it?) for our 15th Anniversary, and a move from a big house to a smaller one. Needless to say, the genealogy got put on hold for a little while – just ask the people who've requested lookups from me!

I have an apology to make to John Blair—I provided incorrect information about the content of his site at <http://www.familytreemaker.com/users/b/1/a/John-A-Blair>. The information there is about Blairs of New Hampshire and Vermont, not Virginia (that's

what I get for not looking closely at the site!). John also has created a WebRing for Blairs (this is a series of connected Blair websites which, as it grows, will allow you to jump from one Blair site to another with much less effort). Check it out at <http://www.people.ne.medianone.net/jablair/Ring.htm>.

Finally, I found what may be an interesting resource for information on cities and towns: <http://officialcitycites.org>. This has links to the official web pages for cities in the US, UK, Canada and more. Some of these official sites will link you to counties and genealogical resources.

Until next time, have fun!

* * * * *

Lawrence C. Blair

The Oregonian, Wednesday, December 9, 1998

(Submitted by Edward L. Fitzgibbon, BSGR Mem. #496)

A funeral will be at 3 p.m. Thursday, December 10, 1998, in Memorial Gardens Funeral Chapel in Vancouver, Washington, for Lawrence C. Blair, who died December 7 at age 101.

Mr. Blair was born November 4, 1897, in Aldrich, Missouri. He moved to Vancouver in 1918 and was a superintendent for Crown Zellerbach Corporation for forty-five years before retiring in 1962. He married Ruby Gardner in 1917; she died in 1972.

Survivors include his son, Gene, of Vancouver; sister Gladys Lynk of Portland; one grandchild; two great-grandchildren; and two great-great-grandchildren.

Interment will be in Evergreen Memorial Gardens Cemetery Mausoleum. The family suggests remembrances to Hospice Southwest.

[Note: Lawrence Blair was the son of Rome J. and Anna May (Courtney) Blair; grandson of Hillary and Armanda (Huff) Blair; and great grandson of Alexander "Pete" and Rebecca (Brown) Blair.]

From the editor:

Thanks to all who submitted material to be printed in *Blair Family Magazine* during 1998. It is very much appreciated, even if not immediately used. Keep 'em coming!

The Spring issue will be devoted to "Blair Women" – those born Blairs, and those who by marriage became the mothers of Blairs, adding their blood and spirit to the lineage. Please send any articles or stories about your favorite Blair women to me by March 1st. As usual, cite sources and give genealogical linkages, if known. Mary J. Powers, editor (address front cover)

Gene Blair of Virginia, the Man and the Ship

By Maureen Franklin (BSGR Mem. #108L), and Fredrick E. Blair (BSGR Mem. #353L)

Noble Eugene "Gene" Blair was born at Bucu on Frying Pan Creek in Dickenson County, Virginia, April 26, 1909. His parents were Dakota and Margaret (Powers) Blair. Dakota was the son of Jacob Blair IV and Sarah (Johnson) and the line goes back to the Irish immigrant Jacob I and his Cherokee wife whose name is unknown.

Gene enlisted in the U.S Navy on November 23, 1929. After boot camp in Hampton Roads, Virginia, he served on several destroyers and destroyer tenders. About 1937 he married Muriel Agnes (____), of Providence, Rhode Island, where they established their home. There were no children.

During his third enlistment Gene was assigned to the small seaplane tender *USS William B. Preston*. The *Preston* was assigned to the Asiatic Fleet and was there at the outbreak of war in 1941. She tended the flying boats of Patrol Wing 10, first in the Philippine waters, then in the Netherlands East Indies before ending up in Port Darwin, Australia in mid-February 1942. Gene by this time had been promoted to Chief Machinist's Mate and was a member of the Damage Control and Repair Party.

Planes from four of the Japanese carriers that had attacked the Pacific Fleet at Pearl Harbor struck Port Darwin in the morning of February 19, 1942. The *Preston* got underway immediately and headed for the open sea. The attack developed rapidly. Gene ignored the risk of being trapped below, and raced to the lower deck to close hatches and water-tight doors and ensure the ship's watertight integrity.

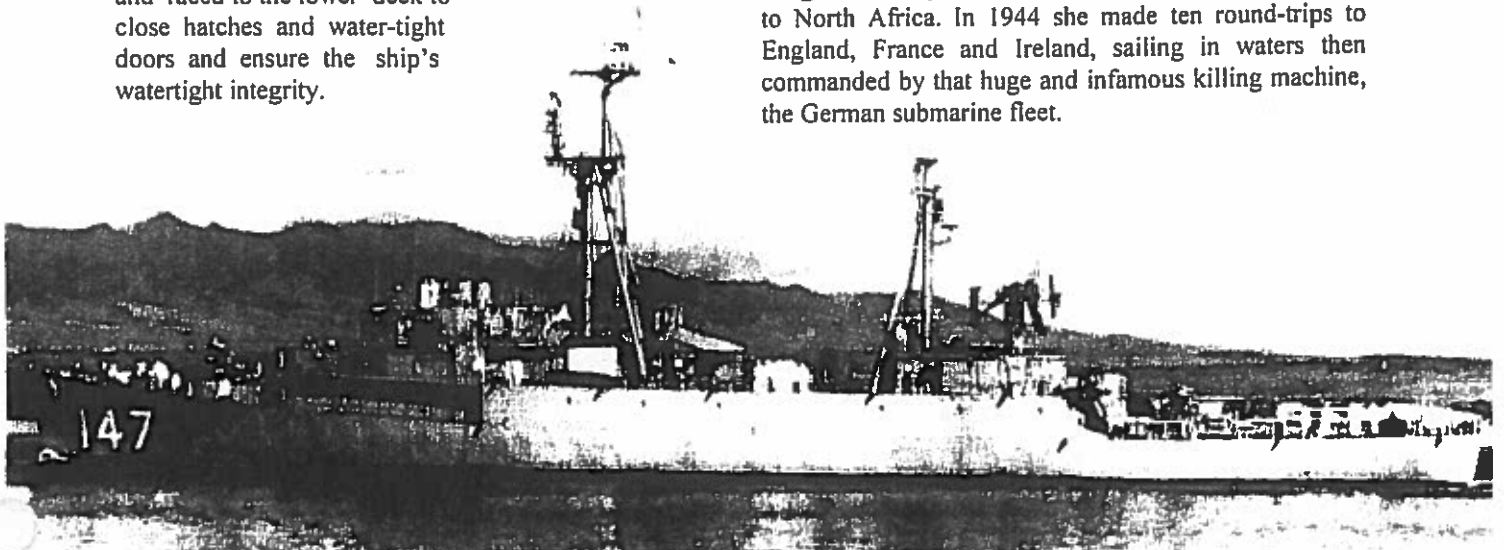
Just as he finished, at 10:10 a.m., a bomb struck the ship in the compartment in which he was standing, killing him and others instantly. His efficient performance of duty had limited the flooding of the ship to two compartments, preventing the after section of the



ship from filling, and saving the ship from sinking. For his action, cited as "Gallantry above and beyond the call of duty," Gene was posthumously awarded the prestigious Silver Star along with the Purple Heart.

Three men were lost and eleven were killed in this action. There was no chance for shore burial, and at 6:25 that evening the crew conducted services for Gene and his Shipmates and buried them at sea just Northwest of Darwin. He was the first fatality of the war from Dickenson County. A marker placed in the family cemetery on Blair Ridge commemorates his death.

The following year, in recognition of his heroism, a ship was named in his honor. The *Destroyer Escort USS Blair* (DE-147) was launched at Orange, Texas, on April 6, 1943, and commissioned that September. She performed various training exercises before being assigned convoy escort duties, making her first cruises to North Africa. In 1944 she made ten round-trips to England, France and Ireland, sailing in waters then commanded by that huge and infamous killing machine, the German submarine fleet.



The *Blair* then sailed for Hawaii, arriving in August 1944. After the war she returned to the United States, was decommissioned and placed in the Reserve Fleet at Green Cove Springs, Florida in June, 1946. As the Korean War developed, the *Blair* was recommissioned on October 5, 1951, and used in various training operations sailing out of Jacksonville, Norfolk, Newport and Key West.

She was placed out of commission again for conversion to a radar picket ship. Recommissioned in 1957, equipped with long-range aircraft detection and altitude-finding radars, she joined the Early Warning Barrier of ships and planes guarding American shores from surprise nuclear attack. She sailed barrier patrols from Pearl Harbor until the spring of 1960.

The ship was then sailed to the Puget Sound Naval Shipyard, Bremerton, Washington, where in June of

1960 she was placed out of commission for the final time. She was stricken from the Naval Vessel Register on December 1 1972, and in 1974 was sold to the West Waterway Lumber Company of Seattle, Washington. The *Blair* was eventually broken up for scrap.

Chief Petty Officer Noble Eugene Blair was killed early in the war, but part of him lived on, his valor continued. He lived on in a small warship crewed by men of his sort, duty-bound, honor-bound, incredibly brave men who served our country well under the most perilous of conditions. It is fitting that now and then we ponder upon men such as this man, and upon ships such as this ship, and upon the men who manned her and all the thousands more, with gratitude to them, and with pride in their service.

* * * * *

Mrs. Hannah Blair Foster*

Submitted by Charlotte Blair Stewart, BSGR Mem. #022

Friday, May 25, 1810. Communicated. Departed this life, at the town of Mercer, on Monday, the 14th Instant at the age of 65 years, Mrs. Hannah Foster, widow of the Rev. William Foster, formerly minister of the Presbyterian church in the congregation of Upper Octorara and Doe Run, in Chester Co., who, while he lived, was esteemed and respected by all who knew him, for his solid sense and unaffected piety, and universally beloved by his congregations, which by his wisdom, talents, and piety he had united, after the schisms which had long divided them, in common with the Presbyterian church at the time. He died at an early age, but his praise will long remain in the church, as one of her burning and shining lights.

Mrs. Foster was the daughter of the Rev. Samuel Blair, formerly pastor of the Presbyterian Church in Fagg's Manor, in the same county, eminently distinguished for his talents, learning and usefulness in the church, at the early day in which he lived. He established at that time a seminary of learning under his own immediate directions, from which ministers of the gospel in their day, amongst whom may be mentioned, the Rev. Samuel Davies, president of Princeton College, and immediate successor, the Rev. Doctor John Rodgers of New York, and the Rev. Dr. Robert Smith of Pequea, with many others, some of whom are still living.

She was the grand-daughter of Lawrence Vanhook, Esq., formerly one of the judges of the court of common pleas of the city of New York. He was among the first settlers in that place from the United Netherlands, previous to its exchange by the States General with Great-Britain.

Mrs. Foster was distinguished for a sweetness and equanimity of temper, and strength of mind, which made her an ornament to her numerous relations, and adorned those principles in which she had been educated, and which she constantly practiced through life. She beheld her approaching dissolution with a serenity and composure of mind, which put honor on the holy religion she had so long professed, and which nothing could inspire but a review of a life spent in the practice of piety and virtue, and an unshaken hope and confidence in her God and Savior. Breathing forth petitions for her beloved but now disconsolate children, she fell asleep in the Lord, and changed the earthly house of this tabernacle, for a house not made with hands, eternal in the Heavens. Pittsburgh, May 25.

*Taken from *The People and Times of Western Pennsylvania. Pittsburgh Gazette Abstracts, 1806-1811, Vol. 3.* Compiled and Edited by Clara E. Duer. Published by Western Pennsylvania Genealogical Society. Page 222.

The Blairs of England & Wales in 1881

by Mike Blair, BSGR Mem. #650, Bedfordshire, England

It may surprise many readers to know that there were 2,302 Blairs living in England & Wales in 1881, according to the Census conducted in March of that year.

True, 282 were born in Scotland and 110 in Ireland - and 3 had even been born in the USA - but that still leaves over 80% who were born in England & Wales itself.

When I began work on analysing the 1881 Census for the BSGR, I little realised how long it would take or how much interesting information would emerge. I hope the results will be of interest to many.

England in the 1880s

What was England like at the time of the Census? These were very much the days of Empire, when England "ruled the waves" and a large chunk of the land mass as well. Queen Victoria was still firmly in command, having already been on the throne for over 40 years. The year of her succession, incidentally, was to prove of great significance to genealogists in England & Wales, since 1837 was the first year of Civil Registration of Births, Marriages and Deaths. To this day, it is far more difficult to obtain documentary proof of one's ancestry before then.

As in all Empires, there was always a War to be fought somewhere in the world to protect territory or to annex new areas. In the early 1880s, the first South African Wars against the Boers began in the Transvaal; we were still fighting the Afghans as we had been doing for 40 years; and the British took control of Egypt.

This was a time of great industrial development and a general move away from a largely agricultural economy. The "dark satanic mills" of the English Midlands and North were working at full steam.

Blair Occupations

So what of the Blairs? Who were they, and what contribution did they make to this new industrial era?

The first surprise is how very few were involved in Agriculture. It is a running joke amongst family researchers in the UK that most spend years seeking ancestors of nobility only to find that they are descended from the "AgLabs." Out of over 750 males

over 12 years of age, only 42 worked on the land - less than 6%. Of these, 7 were farmers of more than 100 acres of land in their own right, quite significant farms, at least by British standards!

There were a small number in associated trades such as 9 Blacksmiths and a Cattle Dealer, but the vast majority were in primary industries such as coal-mining (41) or secondary trades such as cotton, building, wood and stone working and so on. Many were labourers of one sort or another, ranging from general labouring to dock labourers and mason's labourers.

Stonemasonry seems to have been a Blair speciality, with 18 masons working mainly in the quarries of Lancashire, Durham and Westmoreland in the North.

The rest of the Blair male occupations cover virtually the entire range from grocer to gas fitter, coachman to chemist, and plumber to policeman. Some of the more unusual professions recorded amongst the English Blairs of the time were those of a Roman Catholic Cleric, a Ropemaker, a Jet Worker (rather before his time?), a Stay Cutter, a Sugar Boiler, and my own personal favourite - a Cricket Bat Maker, so quintessentially English!

We must not forget that women also worked very hard in these times, although it was far less usual for married women to have a formal occupation. Most female workers were unmarried or widowed and a very large proportion were in domestic service of some kind. There were many domestic servants, housekeepers, domestic nurses and so on. Quite a number were described as servants even though they clearly lived with their own families. Whether this was their own description of their role, or an indication that not all domestic servants lived in, can only be guessed at. I will refrain from commenting as a mere male! Amongst the less common occupations of the Blair ladies were a Papermaker, a Tailoress, a Glove Mender, a Chapel Keeper and a Gas Foreman. I regret to say that our only Prisoner identified in the Census was also female, a poor 16 year old inmate of London Female Prison in Clerkenwell called Kate Blair. This may well have been what is still our most famous female prison, Holloway.

Numbers and Ages

The number of males to females almost exactly matches the figures today. In our Blair sample, there were 1,111

The Blairs of England & Wales in 1881 . . .

males (48%) and 1,190 females (52%). We must remember that the average life expectancy in 1890 was around 50, but greater longevity has obviously not upset the balance of the sexes.

By age, there were 740 Children of 12 or under (32%) and only 280 (12%) aged over 50, of which 55% were female.

The overall age distribution of the Blairs was as follows:

	<u>Male</u>	<u>Female</u>	<u>TOTAL</u>
0-5	177 (16%)	201 (17%)	378 (16%)
6-12	177 (16%)	189 (16%)	366 (16%)
13-20	172 (15%)	170 (14%)	342 (15%)
21-30	213 (19%)	204 (17%)	417 (18%)
31-40	145 (13%)	166 (14%)	311 (14%)
41-50	99 (9%)	106 (9%)	205 (9%)
51-60	78 (7%)	84 (7%)	162 (7%)
60+	50 (5%)	70 (6%)	120 (5%)
70+	21 (2%)	32 (3%)	53 (2%)
80+	4 (0.4%)	7 (0.6%)	11(0.5%)

The oldest Blairs alive in England & Wales in 1881 were Elizabeth C. Blair aged 87, an Irish-born widow living alone in St. Marylebone, London; and Lucy Blair, also a widow born in 1793, but by contrast living in Stoke-on-Trent with her 47 year old son William, his wife Mary Ann and their 10 children!

The oldest male was only a little younger at 86, Richard Blair, living in Workington, Cumberland with his 80 year old wife, Sarah, and their 46 year old unmarried daughter, Ann.

Where did we live?

With the Scottish and Irish roots that we all share, it is clear that by 1881, the majority of Blairs had still not strayed too far South. The most heavily populated counties of the time are believed to have been Lancashire, Yorkshire and Middlesex.

The first two of these represented the cradle of the Industrial Revolution and the home of the newly mechanised cotton and clothing industries, heavy engineering and coalmining. They will therefore have attracted workers not only from the land, but from other areas of the country. Lancashire in particular was very well placed for England's maritime trade, both for raw material imports and exports to countries throughout the world.

<u>County</u>	<u>Number of Blairs</u>	<u>%</u>
Lancashire	477	21%
Durham	340	15%
Northumberland	285	12%
Middlesex	217	9%
Cumberland	192	8%
Yorkshire	162	7%
	-----	-----
Top 6 Counties	1673	73%

Apart from these 6, none of the 53 Counties of England & Wales at that time had more than 100 Blairs, and 10 of them had none at all. Wales seems to have had little attraction, with only 23 living there, 10 of whom were in Monmouthshire, always regarded by the English as part of England.

The apparent anomaly of Middlesex is probably because most of the county was London itself. This has always been a magnet as national capital, being a centre of industry and trade as well as government. Including Surrey and Kent, both partly London, there were 362 Blairs in and around the capital.

Origins and Immigrants

Nearly 60% of all Blairs in England & Wales at the time of the 1881 Census were still living in their county of birth. This includes children, of course, the majority of whom one would expect not to have been immigrants, although there were some.

The most common foreign origins were naturally Scotland (282 or 12%); and Ireland (110 or 5%). Only 32 Scottish and 5 Irish immigrants were aged 12 or under. In each case, the percentage of male to female immigration was remarkably similar and consistent, being just over 60% male.

The Irish tended to settle much closer to their natural point of entry in the North West of England, with by far the largest number living in Lancashire - a good basis for the old adage that Liverpool became the capital of Ireland.

Recent Scottish immigrants, by contrast, were far more widely spread throughout England. Whilst a significant proportion lived in the northern counties, many went much further south to London and the Home Counties. Over a quarter of all Blair immigrants from Scotland were living in Middlesex (most of which was London), Surrey and Kent.

There is evidence from the occupations of those who came this far south that they were more professional than otherwise, but such a small sample makes this purely an observation.

Immigrants from other countries included 20 from India - presumably families associated with British rule there. Less easy to explain are the 2 families born in Constantinople (now *Istanbul*). One was the wife of a mariner and her 3 sons, who had settled in Lancashire, and the other the 3 young grandchildren of a John Wetherilt, living with him in Newington, Surrey. Perhaps their parents were still working in Turkey and felt their children would be better off in the home country, though at ages 5,3 and 1, they were extremely young to be away from their mother.

Finally, there were immigrants from as far afield as Brazil, Australia, South Africa, Canada and three born in the USA.

Popular Blair First Names

Blairs in the Census give a remarkably typical insight into what were the fashionable names of the period. The most popular female name by far was *Mary*, of which there were 173 - nearly 15% of the total of 1,190. In this respect, Blairs were completely in step with Victorian fashion when *Mary* and its variants was by far the most popular girls' name. Almost unbelievably, nearly a fifth of all girls christened in England and Ireland a century before this were *Marys*.

The top 6 male and female Blair first names, including variants, in 1881 were:

<u>Male</u>	<u>Female</u>
William 156 (14%)	Mary 173 (15%)
John 154 (14%)	Elizabeth 121 (10%)
Thomas 105 (9%)	Margaret 94 (9%)
James 105 (9%)	Ann 89 (7%)
Robert 89 (8%)	Jane 84 (7%)
George 74 (7%)	Sarah 61 (5%)
683 (61%)	622 (52%)

Names for girls being generally more varied, in our Blair sample the ladies shared 106 different first names, compared to only 87 for the men.

William, by a narrow margin the male favourite, was introduced by the Normans and popularised by William the Conqueror and his followers. It remained the commonest recorded name for over two centuries, and is still amongst the most popular.

John originated as *Jochanaan* in Hebrew and is now the most popular male first name in England - as it has been since the thirteenth century. The Crusaders found it to be very popular amongst Eastern Christians and brought it back with them. As a result, and helping to popularise the name, there are over 500 ancient English churches dedicated to St John the Baptist. It has been the most popular English name for 700 years, with its female variant *Jane* also extremely widely used.

Our other top male names, *James* and *Thomas*, have very different origins. As we might have expected, *James* was first popularised in Scotland by their 6 kings of that name, although it also dates back to the Hebrew form of *Jacob*. The earliest use of *Thomas* is a little more obscure, with no recorded uses before the eleventh century, except that the apostle *Thomas* was really called *Judas*, but renamed to distinguish the two. There is a Scottish connection, however, with a real thirteenth century poet called *Thomas the Rhymer*.

Those of us whose ancestors have far less common names are, of course, more fortunate. I have a problem tracing proof of my Scottish forebears beyond my own *James Blair* who lived in Perth in the mid eighteenth century. How much easier would it have been to have been related to an *Ethelbert*, *Moses* or *Septimus*? Any mention of these could almost be taken as proof, as would *Moran*, *Neilina* or *Usilla* on the female line. All these names appear in the 1881 Census of Blairs.

Conclusions

After what seems to have been a very long period of research and analysis, it is a little frustrating to conclude that our Blair ancestors, as reflected in the 1881 Census, bore very few distinguishing features not to be found in the rest of the population of the time.

Despite our Celtic roots, Blairs of the period mirrored the most popular male and female names; they worked in a wide enough spread of occupations to suggest reasonable parity with the rest of the country's workers, with just a small proportion clearly better educated and endowed; and they lived broadly where one would expect, with far more in the North of England than the South.

However, we should perhaps rejoice in this typicality, rather than be disappointed by it. The analysis of a small slice of society whose only common link is their surname should not really be expected to differentiate it significantly from the rest of the population of the time.

The fact that most Blairs chose to live and work in the North owes a great deal to Scottish and Irish ancestry, and this reflects the timing of immigration from those parts of the British Isles. As transport and general mobility have increased, so also has our distribution.

Further Information

If any reader believes they may have connections with Blairs in England & Wales at this time, please contact me at *4 Lyme Road, Amphill, Bedfordshire, England, MK45 2LB*. I have copies of all the original microfiches used for this study, and can access more detail on addresses, family groups and so on.

Pioneer Library, Bedford County, Pennsylvania Materials by Charlotte Blair Stewart, Database Chair, BSGR Mem. #022

Founding BSGR member Sylvia Hykes Reebel died 2 December 1997 in Santa Rosa, California. She had lived most of her life in Dormont, Pennsylvania and was also a member of the Western Pennsylvania Genealogical Society, and had devoted over twenty-five years to genealogical research. She was born 26 November 1904 in Guernsey Co., Ohio, the daughter of Thomas Seymour Hydes and Emily Alverda Frush, and was descended from Brice Blair who died in Bedford Co., Pennsylvania in 1785.

Sylvia had a stroke a number of years ago and her files containing years of research were indiscriminately thrown into boxes and came extremely close to being burned! However, a gentleman intervened and adopted her boxes of jumbled records. He stored them in his garage for several years before giving them to the Bedford County, Pennsylvania Pioneer Library. He arranged to donate these papers, then simply dumped boxes and boxes of unorganized documents at that library.

I inquired at the Pioneer Library several months later to see if these were available and was told they were "unavailable for research." Following discussion with the library director it was decided that the library would lend these papers to me in return for my organizing them. It took two trips to Bedford County in order to bring all the boxes to my home in Windber, and about three months before the files were even organized according to the families Sylvia was researching.

The good news is that the files are now in a "semblance" of order and back in the Pioneer Library. I have extracted most of the Blair descendants and that information is now in the BSGR database. However, the number of letters, documents, etc., in these files was simply too vast to copy. Anyone interested in the various branches of the "Bean's Cove Blairs" should consider a trip to Bedford County. Check with me first, however, to find out whether what you are seeking is there.

Don't let this happen to your research efforts! The above records came extremely close to being destroyed, and twenty-five years worth of very dedicated research would have gone up in smoke. Make sure you pass your research on to an interested person, or at a minimum, submit it to the BSGR for microfilming. By making it a part of our permanent archives, you insure it will survive.

Following is a very minimal index to the BLAIR files of Sylvia's records in the Pioneer Library. She also did extensive research on her other family lines. Contact me for a complete index of these families.

The Blair Society archives will preserve your family data for future generations of Blair researchers. Your materials will be micro-filmed and returned to you. Contact Edward P. Blair or Nancy Schaffer for additional details.

CONTENTS OF BOX 1, Sylvia Hykes Reebel Files, Pioneer Library, Bedford County, Pennsylvania.

Blair, Brice, b. 1720 Ireland, d. 1785 Bedford Co., PA. Wife: Susannah _____.
Blair, John, b. c.1745. To Bedford Co., PA. 1766? Wife: _____.
Blair, Thomas, b. 1757, d. 1833 Spencer Co., IN. Wife: Sarah _____.
Blair, Sarah, b. c.1740 MD, d. 1793 Floyd Co., KY, Husband: Jeremiah Patrick.
Blair, Rebecca, b. c.1759 MD, d. ?, Husband: John McCoy.
Blair, Brice, b. 1762 MD, d. 1813 Bedford Co., PA. Wife: Nancy McCoy.
Blair, John, b. 1787 PA, d. 1855 Bedford Co., PA Wife: Mary Perdew.
Blair, Archibald, b. 1788 Bedford Co., PA., d. 1863 Henry Co., IN. Wife: Mary Lakin & Susannah Orr.
Blair, Rebecca, b. 1796 Bedford Co., PA, d. 1888. Husband: Benjamin Lakin and Benjamin Wigfield.
Blair, Albert, b. 1870 OH, d. 1947 OH. Wife: Frances Murphy.
Blair, Mary, b. 1792 PA, d. 1851 Harrison Co., OH. Husband: William Wright.
Blair, Rachel, b. 1794 Bedford Co., PA, d. 1833 Bedford Co., PA (2 files). Husband: Elijah Perdew.
Growden, Thomas, b. 1800 England, d. 1883 Bedford Co., PA. Wife: #1 Nancy Blair, #2 Elizabeth Blair.
Growden, John, b. 1797 England, d. 1883, Bedford Co., PA. Wife: Sarah Blair.

The James Blairs of Chester County, South Carolina in the Late Eighteenth and Early Nineteenth Centuries

by Don and Janet Dickason, BSGR Mem. #826

In June 1998 we visited Chester County, South Carolina, in order to clarify information about four different James Blairs who have been attributed to this county in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries.

This report assesses and integrates information from a wide variety of sources and clearly determines the identities of the different James Blairs, most particularly differentiating between the Blairs of Fishing Creek and those of Rocky River.

Four James Blairs of Chester County

There have been four James Blair names attributed to Camden District, Chester County, South Carolina.

1. **James Blair, Sr.** (hereafter identified as James #1)
This James arrived 1772 on the *Lord Dunluce*, part of the Rev. William Martin's five shiploads of Covenanters who came to South Carolina (see Stephenson). James #1 was born in Ireland about 1735 and died in Chester County, South Carolina. His will was probated there.

He received a warrant for 250 acres when he arrived, as reported by the South Carolina Council Journal meeting of 6 January 1773, noting the arrival in December 1772. This 250 acres would indicate James as head of household. James, Sr. was accompanied by his wife Margaret (Junkin or Jenkins), his son William, reportedly 4 years

of age when they arrived, and a daughter Jane (or Sarah Jane), born 16 October 1767.

The 250-acre warrant for James #1 "situate in Craven County on the Drafts of Fishing Creek" tracked the following path:

Warrant dated 6 January 1773 for 250 acres
Plat dated 16 February 1773 for 230 acres
Grant dated 26 July 1774 for 230 acres
Memorial dated 31 December 1774 for 230 acres

2. **James Blair** (hereafter James #2), the son of Thomas Blair who arrived in South Carolina in 1767. He arrived on the *Lord Donegal* in 1767, age 9, born about 1758, with his father, Thomas Blair (age 38, born about 1729), and mother, Margaret (age 33, born about 1734), and a sister, Jane, age 2. The South Carolina Council Journal of 22 December 1767 reported the arrival of this family (see Revill). Revill's work does not cite the acreage warranted to Thomas.

3. **James Blair** (hereafter James #3). He reportedly arrived 1772 on the *Pennsylvania Farmer*, another of the Rev. Martin's five ships. (Revill and Stephenson), and supposedly received a warrant for 350 acres, location not given. Revill's work has the listing for this James Blair under a subtitle: "The undermentioned are not able to pay."

Some Blair researchers have surmised that this person is the same as James #1; above, and that there may have

been duplicate and erroneous recordings of his warrant. This James' 350 acres compares to the warrant for 250 acres for James #1. There is no further record of James #3, no plats, no grants, no memorials, nor could we find a will. Therefore, he will not be discussed further in this paper.

4. **James Blair** (hereafter James #4), son of James Blair #1, was born 25 October 1789 in South Carolina.

J. C. Blair's information is inconsistent with this report. J. C. Blair's work, page 4, paragraph 3, cites information concerning Blairs in three locations. He states that: James, Sr.[#1], had a 230-acre plat in 1773 on Fishing Creek; Thomas [father of James #2] had a 350-acre plat on Rocky Creek in 1768; a Thomas Blair received a plat for 100 acres in 1772 on both sides of the Branch of Pudding Swamp, which is a branch of the Black River. [Note: This is not in Chester County, but is between eighty and one hundred miles away. There does not seem to be any readily apparent connection with any of the Chester County Blairs, neither James, #1, nor James #2.]

Most particularly, J. C. Blair states, "James Blair, according to Plat Book, Vol. 13, p. 123, received a tract of land of 230 acres in Craven County on the drafts of Fishing Creek, which is adjacent to the grant of Thomas Blair on Rocky Creek made in 1767." This is incorrect since these two grants are some five miles apart and on branches of different rivers.

Further information about James Blair #1.

As indicated previously, James Blair #1 received a warrant for 250 acres and a plat, grant and memorial of 230 acres. The plat for the 230 acres revealed a very irregularly shaped property. His land was bounded SE and NE on Robert McFadden's land, SW on Thomas Martains [sic] land and SW on William McFadden's.

James #1's 230 acres had grown to 374 acres in 1816 when his sons sold the land provided to them by his will. The two deeds of sale of land by William and James, Jr. (James #4) indicated that each had sold 187 acres.

Besides William and James #4, James #1's will named his wife, Margaret, his daughter, Martha, his daughter, Sarah, and his son-in-law Richard Rye [sic], believed to be Wyatt.

How did James #1's land increase from 230 to 374 acres? 104 acres came from James Burcham, which came from Robert McFadden's original grant of 350 acres, and 40 acres came from James Ferguson's land.

Chester County Background

Land records played a dominant role in solving the Blairs in Chester County land puzzle. The history of the geographical definitions of what is now Chester County varied over time. Land records may have notations of one or more of the following.

Before 1771 - There was an area in northern South Carolina called Craven County, but there was no precise definition. Approximately 1771-1784, Camden District was defined. In 1785 the counties of York, Chester, Fairfield, Lancaster, Richland, Clarendon and Clarendon were defined. In 1786-1790, Chester County defined as of "Camden District." 1791-onward, Chester County defined as "of Pinckney District."

The 104 Acres. An "indenture" (contract) made 6 May 1780 identified James Burcham and James Blair Sr. #1. In the interior of this indenture was described the sale of 104 acres of land to James Blair #1 from 350 acres owned by James Burcham. The indenture described that Burcham had purchased these 350 acres from Isaac McFadden, heir of Robert McFadden who had received the 350 acres as a royal grant. (Robert McFadden received a plat for 350 acres on 25 November 1772, and a grant for 350 acres on 26 July 1774—the same date as the grant of James Blair #1). This plat was bounded by James and John Ferguson and vacant land.

Thus, James Blair #1 bought 104 acres of the original Robert McFadden land that bounded his own, probably to straighten out some of his irregular plat. With this acquisition, James #1 had 334 acres compared with the 384 that his two sons sold.

There is an additional reference to James Burcham and James Blair #1 which recorded an event of some kind 11 April 1789 (cited as "Order Book A, #331, Chester County Court Records." No one at the Chester County Court House could identify this reference. The citation abstracted is "Deed of Conveyance from James Burchen [sic] to James Blair, Sr. . . . is formerly [sic] proved . . . and committed to the record." Perhaps this is an affirmation of the 104 acres detailed above.

The Other 40 Acres. These acres came from James Ferguson's 300 acres which bounded James #1 on the North. The deeds of sale by his sons William and James #4 describe precisely that 40 acres came from a strip across the southern edge of Ferguson's land. No deed could be found for the previous transfer from Ferguson to James Blair #1.

The Entire 374 acres Sold by James #1's Two Sons. Son William sold 187 acres to Thomas Collins. The deed of that sale indicated that the "187 acres...being a part of a grant to their father James Blair dec'd for 230 acres dated the 26th day of March [sic] 1774,...and part of a grant the same date to Robert McFadden for 350 acres." This confirms that some of the McFadden land (by way of a James Burcham, see below) was a part of James #1's estate. The survey descriptions in the deed also showed that tract included most of the 40 acres that James #1 had obtained from James Fergusson.

His son James #4 sold 187 acres to William Ferguson. The deed for the sale of those 187 acres indicated that the "before mentioned said land...being a part of a grant to their father James Blair, Sr., dec.'s for 230 acres dated the 26th day of March [sic] 1774." The survey descriptions in the deed also showed that the tract included a small piece of the 40 acres that James #1 had obtained from James Fergusson.

In summary, the two sons sold all of James #1's original 230 acres, 104 acres and 40 originally belonging to James Fergusson.

Summary of James Blair #1. James #1 and Margaret Blair, who arrived in Charleston on the *Lord Dunluce* in 1772 were the residents of Fishing Creek. James's grant of 230 acres with additions of 104 acres from Robert McFallen's land (via Robert Burcham) and 40 acres from James Ferguson's land equals the 374 acres then sold in two parcels by sons William and James #4 in 1816.

We saw these lands. The Fishing Creek properties are about one and one-half miles east of the village center of Richburg, South Carolina (which is ten miles east of Chester). The most important landmark location is where Tinkers Branch joins Fishing Creek (which is the location of John McFadden's land-grant for 331 acres in 1771). James Blair #1's land is west of that location. Today the Lewisville Elementary School sits on the original site of James's land. The drafts of Fishing Creek could not be seen at that location. They are "sunken" (we were told) under the school land.

Ferguson, McFadden, Blair and Peter Wylie are names that are repeatedly named on each others' grants' boundaries.

Further Discussion of James Blair #2. As previously shown, this James Blair was age 9 in 1767 when he arrived in South Carolina. His father Thomas Blair's warrant was for 250 acres. Based on South Carolina

Council records for arrival in 1767, will and deed data, the family in time included the following:

Thomas Blair, born 1739, Ireland
Margaret Blair, born 1734, Ireland
Children: James #2, born ca.1758
William
Mary
Jane, born ca.1765
Thomas
Elizabeth

The plat for the 250 acres to Thomas Blair, on Rocky Creek in Craven County, is dated 5 January 1768, bounded on all sides by vacant land.

We found the following actions for this family that tie these various family members together. They are all on Rocky Creek.

1792. James #2 sells to his son Thomas Blair the 162 acres of a 1787 grant that had been made to him. This sale refers to a "bargain" sale with certain other conditions for one year so it appears to be a sale within that family.

There are other citations (see below) of James #2's 1787 grant for 162 (or 163) acres, but neither the original warrant nor plat has been found. It is curious that he apparently received this grant in 1787, age 29, some 20 years after the family's arrival in South Carolina. Many persons lived on the land for considerable time before applying for warrants or plats. Perhaps James #2 was one of these, but that seems peculiar since his father went through the regular process in a timely manner. The lack of the original plat does not harm the logic of the land progression, however, since the other citations are very consistent.

1793. Thomas Blair, Sr. and Margaret (wife) have an indenture with son Thomas (Jr.) for 163 acres under a certain grant of 4 June 1787, which was granted to James Blair #2. Also, a tract was granted to Thomas Blair, Sr. (undated) probably of 145 acres.

1795. Thomas Blair, Sr.'s will indicating Wife Margaret to have lawful genteell [sic] maintenance during her whole life. Sons, William and Thomas who each have to provide half Margaret's maintenance from their respective plantations. Sons James [#2] who gets "five shillings & no more" and "his son Thomas Blair one pound five shillings worth of hogs." Son John Blair who gets "five shillings and no more." We interpret the language to mean that "his son" and "John" were sons of James #2. Alexander Walker gets "five shillings and no more." Son Thomas gets "five shillings and no more. Daughters Mary and Elizabeth, certain goods.

Son William gets the plantation. James and William are the executors. (Why didn't James, the elder son, get part of the plantation? He already had 162 (or 163 acres. Dividing the plantation between William and Thomas would give them 125 acres each. Perhaps father Thomas thought this was a fair overall division of land.)

1798. William Blair is selling, as heir of Thomas Blair 22 acres to William Paul.

1803. William Blair, selling 290 acres to William Paul, refers to boundary with Thomas Blair.

1809. James Blair, selling 188 acres to John McCreary, part of John Reynolds grant of 1769.

1811. James Blair, selling 200 acres to William Neel, "on Haug's? branch waters of Rocky Creek.

The Thomas Blair family of Rocky Creek and the James Blair #1 of Fishing Creek are clearly not of the same family, at least not in these generations. The names, ages, and neighbors of the Thomas Blair family of Rocky Creek are not consistent with the names of James Blair #1 of Fishing Creek, his family and neighbors. The Fishing Creek Blairs and neighbors are about one and one-half miles east of Richburg. The Rocky Creek Blairs are about three-one half miles southwest of Richburg. The direct distance between the two groups is (approximately) five miles, not the roughly ten miles as once estimated by J. C. Blair. Both creeks empty into the Catawba river on the eastern border of Chester County. Rocky Creek enters nearest the southern border of the county and runs generally northwest. Fishing Creek enters the Catawba about three miles north of where Rocky Creek connects. Fishing Creek runs generally north by northwest.

Descendants of James Blair #1. The plats, grants, memorials, deeds and indentures examined demonstrate that James #1 Blair is the one who arrived on the *Lord Dunluce*, and received the 250-acre warrant, platted as 230 acres on Fishing Creek. These data also demonstrate that James #1 of Fishing Creek is not the same person as the younger man, James #2 (son of Thomas, Sr.) who was on Rocky Creek.

William Blair, son of James #1 is well documented. In addition to his land sale in South Carolina we have been able to document him in Lincoln County, Tennessee. He married Margaret Phoebe Morton, and died in Tennessee in 1832, not in Randolph County, Illinois, which has often been reported and accepted. This conclusion is based on records of the Swan Creek Congregation of the Reformed (Covenanter) Church in

Lincoln County, Tennessee, and the probate of his will there.

Obtaining and documenting land in South Carolina involved three or four steps:

- 1 - a "warrant" for land was issued by the South Carolina Council.
- 2 - a "plat" (or survey) of the warranted land was conducted and legally defined and described the land.
- 3 - a "grant" was title to the land, written in flowery language; it again described the land.
- 4 - a "memorial" was a record of payment of "quit rent" taxes to the Crown in pre-Revolutionary time; the land was again described.

Although "warrants" were issued by the South Carolina Council, the actual designation of land to be received was within the discretionary power of land surveyors out in the field. Their discretion in selecting land to plat was unlimited.

Alexander Blair, son of William, and grandson of James #1 was born in 1816. He married Ann McLaughlin, and died in 1865, a civil war casualty. The place of his death is not certain. Letters of Administration were filed in Randolph County, Illinois, and he is listed as buried in Old Bethel Cemetery, Eden, Illinois, but there is no marker. When we visited the cemetery we found markers for Alexander's wife and two daughters. There is an open space between Ann and the daughters. It is speculated that Alexander is buried in that space.

Margaret Adeline Blair, daughter of Alexander, granddaughter of William and great-granddaughter of James #1 married William Sloane Wisely. They are Janet Wisely Dickason's great grandparents. The rest of the line from Margaret Adeline Blair (Wisely) to Janet is well documented.

Bibliography:

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- Revill, Janie, "A Compilation of Original Lists of Protestant Immigrants to South Carolina, 1763-1772," Genealogical Pub. Co., Baltimore, Md., 1974.
- Stephenson, Jean, "Scotch-Irish Migration to South Carolina, 1772 (Rev. William Martin and His Five Shiploads of Settlers," Shenandoah Pub. House, Inc. Strasburg, Virginia, 1971.)

The various plat maps referred to herein have been consolidated and compiled on two 11x17 inch summary maps. These include the lands of James Blair #1, his sons James #4 and William, Robert McFadden, James Ferguson, Thomas Blair, his son James #2, etc. Readers who are interested in these summary maps should send \$3.00 and a self-addressed #10 or 9x12 inch envelope to Donald G. Dickason, 64 Mason Drive, Princeton, NJ 08540.

A Brief History of St. Margaret's Church Parish Church of the Blairs of Blair, Dalry, Ayreshire, Scotland¹ by Jack R. Blair, Sydney, Australia BSGR Mem. #708

The beginnings of St. Margaret's Church in Dalry, Ayreshire go back to the dim mists of antiquity and are thought to have arisen when "a Roman soldier who was also a *miles Christi* (soldier of Christ) marched up the Vennel."

Another view holds that Christianity began in the Dalry area as a result of the missionary activities of St. Wynnin and St. Monach, very early saints in the late Sixth century, who are thought to have converted the Celts in "the farm area of the West Kilbride Road" (presumably near Dalry).

Little is known of the church until the Middle Ages when districts with a church building and a priest responsible for the "cure of souls" became defined as parishes in the Eleventh and Twelfth centuries. Dalry is first mentioned in 1226 as a "chapel of Ardrossan" (a nearby town). If the parish was not formed at that date it would have been established by 1279 when a certain "Henry, Rector of the Church of Dalry" appears in the Register of the Diocese of Glasgow.

Dalry may have appeared late in time as a Parish, but there was some compensation in that there were apparently two places of worship in Dalry – one east of the River Garnock (possibly identifiable with the chapel sited within the Blair of Blair estate), and the other on the west side of the river near an area called "the Old Glebe" which appears to have been the main parish church.

At that time the church would have been a small, simple building, probably with an earthen floor, thatched roof and several windows, the interior divided crudely into a choir section and a "nave" where parishioners could stand or "the weak could go to the wall for a seat."

It is believed that the church was dedicated to St. Margaret of Antioch, a virgin-martyr of the Third or Fourth century who lived in the Syrian city of Antioch where the biblical Book of Acts records: "the disciples were for the first time called Christians." St. Margaret was greatly honored in the Middle Ages as one of the saints who "appeared to Joan of Arc." Her attribute

was a dragon; her feast day was 20 July and she was regarded as the patroness of women in childbirth.

In the Deanery of Cunninghame and nominally under the jurisdiction of the Bishop of Glasgow, the Abbey of Kilwinning (a few kilometres south of Dalry) by 1471 had appropriated the presbytery teinds (tithes of grain) and probably as "rector" and "patron" did the appointing of a vicar (or a deputy) to do the actual parish work. This was a common practice that gave wealth and power to the abbeys at the expense of the parishes and people (e.g., Kilwinning Abbey had 21 parishes and Paisley Abbey 28). The pattern took another form when in the 1530's the vicarage teinds (tithes of fish, fowl, etc.) went to support St. Mary's Collegiate Church which was being founded about this time at the Tron in Glasgow.

At this point the work in Dalry was assigned to a vicar pensionary, a priest who got a small allowance and who undoubtedly, as evidenced elsewhere, had to exact financial support from his poor parishioners.

While the Reformation was a time of discord and struggle, it seems to have been effected harmoniously in Dalry, the glebe (a portion of land usually adjoining a church and attracting a benefice and revenue in respect of the clergy) was shared between the "old" and the "new" church order.

A new parish church replaced the old one about 1604, partly as a consequence of adherence to the Reformation order (the parish was often served by "Readers," men who were originally of the old order or who had insufficient qualifications for the higher standards demanded by the new order in respect of "Word and Sacrament") but also because Dalry itself did not exist as a town until "Kirkton" grew up around the new parish church. The "Kirk" or church essentially "made" the village and the later town of Dalry as it grew around the present St. Margaret's Church.

In 1929 with the union of the Church of Scotland and the United Free Church, the old medieval dedication name of St. Margaret was re-adopted for the present, gothic, cruciform church with its clock tower and spire soaring to 159 feet high. The church is proud of its two

¹ Adapted from a brochure issued by the present incumbent of the parish, Rev. A. Douglas Lamb, 1998.

old communion cups: silver chalices made in Edinburgh especially for St. Margaret's Church of Dalry dating from about 1618. Its old bell, cast in Amsterdam, Netherlands, by a famous bellmaker, Francis Hemony, still rings out each old year and each time a new couple are united in Christian marriage.

The vestibule of the church contains an Armorial Stone of John Blair of Blair and his spouse Grizel Sempil, daughter of the notorious and infamous Robert, Lord Sempil III, and dated 1604. John Blair married Grizel, 1 May 1565 and was Laird of Blair Castle, Dalry, dying in 1609 aged about 62. Their second eldest son, Bryce, became Laird of Blair in 1610 and Anne, one of his five daughters, married Robert Boyd of Pitcome in 1633. There is an oak armorial pew decoration of the shield of Blair of Blair impaled with that of Boyd of Pitcome also in the vestibule of the church.

In the saga of the Seventeenth century with the Stuart governments attempting to impose episcopacy in lieu of Presbyterian church order, Dalry had a deciding Covenanting laird in Robert Ker of Kersland to whom there is a brass memorial dedicated in the vestibule. While Ker died in exile, two other Dalry men died under the hatches off Orkney while being transported after the Battle of Bothwell (1679). The limestone cave system known as "Cleves Cove" was possibly a Covenanter hideout in the area and John King, a tutor and Chaplain at Blair Castle was captured and executed at Edinburgh.

William, the Laird of Blair (1664) probably showed his true colors and his mettle in siding with the "Glorious Revolution" of 1689, dying a prisoner in Mull as a result. With the full establishment of the presbyterian order things became much more settled of which the extant Kirk session minutes dating from 1693 bear witness even though they testify to local crime, immorality, superstitious practices, poverty, etc.

The early Seventeenth century church was replaced in 1771 by a plain quadrilateral structure (typical of the heritor's kirks of the period) "devoid nearly of every external adornment as the humblest dwelling house." However, it retained the belfry of the earlier building and with extensive internal repairs in 1821 presented "a much superior appearance within." A vastly increased population and the poor state of the building caused the concerned heritors (landowners liable in law for kirk and manse) to act. Together with the able support of the Rev. Robert Stevenson of the day, the church that exists today is a distinctive and distinguishing feature of Dalry. It was built with stone from Auchenskeith quarry at a basic cost of 4500 pounds between 1871 and 1873,

including the old burial vaults of the earthly remains of the Blairs of Blair, Boyds of Pitcom and Kers of Kersland, etc., having been previously sealed. Stained glass windows were generously gifted by the Blair family and others; a new larger bell, the one that summons to worship: "*voco venite in templum domini*" was donated by James McCosh of Merksworth, a son and grandson of Dalry manse. Gavin Fullarton of Kerelaw gave the clock which was first lit in 1882. In 1889 the first pipe organ was installed, the same year in which the church Hall, the gift of the Minister, was built.

The medieval dedication name of St. Margaret, as previously mentioned, was re-adopted in 1931 and a St. Margaret stained glass window was dedicated a year or so ago in memory of the Kirkland family. It was during the ministry of Robert Kirkland that following the eradication of dry rot and with extensive renovations completed, the church was severely damaged by fire in 1951 - some blackened roof timbers and a charred burning bush with its appropriate motto: "*Nec tamen consumebatur*," at the rear of the nave witness to the event as does a commemorative window. However, with vision, hard work and insurance the church was repaired and considerably improved, particularly when the lathe and plaster was removed to reveal the warm stonework. The Session was also fortunate in procuring fine hand-crafted Beith furnishings. In 1985, a fine silver baptismal basin for the font was dedicated.

Mention is also made of the fine old manse of c.1604 which stood close to the church in Manse Close in a dilapidated condition at the back of the King's Arms hotel. It was finally but sadly demolished for safety reasons about 1976 as it had long ceased to belong to the church - the manse having been built on the present site in 1766, with that manse by the handsome Victorian House constructed for about 1500 pounds, largely from Swindridgemuir quarry stone, in 1893. This building was modernized in 1963-1965.

INCUMBENTS OF ST. MARGARET'S, DALRY

	1279	Henry, rector
ante	1430	John Tait, vicar
	1430	Stephen Ker, vicar
	1430	John de Crawford, vicar
ante	1482	Gavin Henry
	1482	John Williamson
	1482	Thomas Crawford
	1485	Adam Arnot
	1485	John Barclay
ante	1508	John Skeoch
	1510	Thomas Brown, priest
	1512	Gilbert Haldane, vicar

1517 Christopher Boyd, vicar
 1534 Thomas Boyd, parish clerk
 1542 John Crawford, vicar
 1549-64 John Hepburn, vicar
 1560 John Rankin, curate
 The Reformation c.1560
 1566 Archibald Crawford, MA, Vicar pensionary with oversight of Dalry 1574-1579
 1567-73 George Boyd, reader
 1574-91 Andrew Blair, reader
 1591 Robert Maxwell, MA
 1591-1603 Archibald Blackburn, MA
 1604-35 John Cunningham, MA
 1635-82 John Bell, MA
 1682-88 Andrew Slirie, MA
 1689-91 Hugh Kilpatrick
 1693-1713 John King
 1713-61 John Fullarton, primus MA
 1762-1802 John Fullarton secundus
 1802-20 John Thomson
 1821-43 Thomas Johnstone
 1843-90 Robert Stevenson, DD
 1891-1915 James L. Fyfe
 1916-33 Andrew B. Thomson, MA, BD

1934-47 Archibald Minto, MA, STM
 1947-73 Robert Kirland, MBE
 1973-98 A. Douglas Lamb, MA

It can be seen that the parish church of the Blairs in Dalry has had a long and colorful history – probably most of it in the unrecorded period prior to the Twelfth century. Yet, if and when Blair muniments and archives are made publicly available, they will undoubtedly reveal a much clearer and even more fascinating saga of the emergence of the Blairs and their participation, not only in events associated with Dalry and Ayrshire, but with the social, religious and political intrigues in the history of Scotland.

All Blairs or Blair descendants visiting Scotland should include Dalry and a visit to St. Margaret's Church in their itineraries to absorb some of the history and mystery of our ancient Blair heritage. They will be amply rewarded for their effort. Dalry is only a short 40 kilometer rail or road journey southwest of Glasgow.

* * * * *

Blairs and Coopers of Greene County, Tennessee

by Shirley H. Landen, BSGR Mem. #309

I have compiled this in the hope that some Blair researcher can help me connect my William H. Blair and his father William Blair to some of the other Blair families. We know that they were in Greene County, Tennessee by 1811, and that William H. Blair married Jane Cooper at Christopher Cooper's home in Greene County on 29 January 1823, with a large crowd in attendance. We know that their children were born in Greene County prior to the family's move to Laurel County, Kentucky by 1834. We know that there were at least two William Blairs in Laurel County between 1834-1841. According to the 1840 Census, the one other than William H. was not old enough to be his father.

Family tradition says that they were traveling through Laurel County in a wagon train going west when "Granddaddy's wife took sick with wagon fever and died and he wouldn't leave." She allegedly was buried in Campground Cemetery where they were camped and

where William H. and Jane are buried. There is no surviving stone for her.

It is obvious that John Blair and Sally Blair mentioned below had some connection with the two Williams.

Christopher Cooper's (probable) daughter Jane married William Blair's son, William H. Blair, Jr. in Greene County, Tennessee on 29 January 1823 at Christopher Cooper's house. Christopher Cooper's Revolutionary War Pension abstract lists him as marrying Jane Brown 20 October 1786 in Botetourt County, Virginia. He was born about 1753-54, and died 29 May 1830 in Greene County. Jane applied for pension 26 March 1844 in Greene County, and was aged 74.

Children listed were Catherine, born 2 March 1789, married Robert Maloney 9 May 1805; Phoebe (Johnson), born 3 April 1791; Elizabeth (Johnson) born 8 July 1793, Christopher, Jr., born 25 September 1798

married 1 August 1822 Jane Maloney. One of the daughters married a Doty as a grandson William C. Doty is mentioned.

Jotham Brown was at the wedding of Christopher, Sr. and Jane Brown. Jane Cooper is not listed in the abstract nor is she listed as a child of Nathan Cooper. There were mentions of a Washington Cooper and William Cooper in Greene County. I have gone through many Greene County records and the following is what I have abstracted. Any additional is welcome.

April 1804 - Christopher Cooper overseer of road from Babbs to Zachariah Casteels.

July 1805 - Christopher Cooper, Juror, also in 1808, 1809.

October 8 1807 - surety for marriage of Jotham Brown and Peggy Mahoney.

Taxes - 1809, 1810, 1812, 1814, 1815, 1816 Christopher Cooper had 240 acres.

Taxes- Wm Blair first pd taxes in Greene Co. in 1811 on 167 acres. One later census record lists him as born in Virginia. Which William was he and where was he prior to 1811? Paid taxes but no property listed in 1812, and 1813, Jacob Bler pd 1 white poll in 1814 and Wm. Blayr pd. On 100 acres and 1 white poll in 1816.

1811 John Maloney overseer of road from Christopher Cooper's to Zachariah Casteels.

November 11, 1811 - Wm. Blair overseer of road from Plumb Crk to Big Gap crk.

May 1, 1812 - Mention of Christopher Cooper's Plantation near John Gass.

June 20, 1812 - Wm. Blair was a juror.

July 28, 1812 - Greene Co. Court Wm. Blair took oath.

July 31, 1812 - Wm. Blair vs. Wm. Stapleton, Christopher Cooper, Juror.

April 27, 1813 - Washington Cooper vs. Benjamin Neel, Wm. Blair a witness, was paid for 13 days attendance. Case appealed to Circuit Ct.

July 30, 1813 - Wm. Blair vs. Wm. Stapleton, Surety Christopher Cooper. *Certierari*—Justices present Wm. Rankin, Joseph Brown, and Michael Bright. Found for the Plaintiff and assessed his damages to be \$16.26 besides costs. Motion to recover against Wm. Stapleton and Christopher Cooper his security for prosecution of his writ of *certierari*. John Gass, witness, proved 12 days attendance. Zachariah Luster, witness, proved one day attendance.

April 27, 1815 - Wm. Blair vs. Wm. Stapleton and Christopher Cooper on a judgment recovered in this court by plaintiff against defendant on the 26 day of October 1813. Christopher Cooper judged to recover from Stapleton his security of \$42.00. (Cooper had to

pay as he was security for Stapleton and he is trying to recover his costs.) Cooper's attorney was John Kennedy.

April 28, 1815 - Wm. Brown, Assignee of Wm. Blair against Nancy Harom owed \$48.00 on 18 November 1814. Had no money so an order to condemn and sale property was made. Consisted of 160 acres on the head of Gass Crk. On the waters of Lick Crk. adjoining the lands of John and Stephen Harom, James McPheron and Thomas Russell.

28 July 1817 - Estate of John Young deceased - Wm. Blair bought one auger, two chisels, and a currying knife - \$1.25.

July 27, 1824 - Phoebe King in her proper person appeared in court and releases all right that she has any motion against William Blair and securities for the bastard children heretofore begotten of the body of said Phoebe by William Blair. 1821 records show that one daughter was named Aveline Matilda Blair and that she bought property adjoining William Blair on the South side of Bays Mt.

April 25, 1826 - Phoebe King, Pauper, vs. Wm. Blair. The proper steps not having been taken in this suit, it is ordered that it be stricken from the docket.

July 26, 1826 - State of Tennessee John McCurry, Prosecutor, vs. Wm. Blair, TAB(?) Def. Being charged, not what for, not found guilty.

October 26, 1826 - Wm. Blair, overseer of public road from Christopher Cooper's to Zachariah Casteel's Branch. ??? Christopher Cooper lived on Beech Crk. Rd. and Rogersville Rd. next to Wm. Cox and Elizabeth Kidwell.

1828-29 - Christopher Cooper Jnr. As Juror.

1828 - Wm. Blair Jnr. And Sally Blair paid \$2.50 and \$2.00 as witnesses.

January 28, 1829- State of Tennessee vs. Wm. Blair Recognized as TAB (terroristic assault and battery) committed on Nancy Blair (?Bangstrom), his wife. For reasons appearing to the court, ordered that the State Attorney General send a Bill of Indictment to the Grand Jury in this cause without a Prosecutor endorsed thereon.

January 29, 1829 - Assault and Battery against wife Nancy. Was to show up for court under \$100.00 and \$50.00 Bond. Wm. Jnr to deliver him or pay costs.

April 28, 1829 - Cont'd until next court.

July 29, 1829- Can't find them. Judgement assessed. \$50.00 and \$100.00.

January 30, 1832 - Indictment for TAB committed on Nancy Blair for reasons appearing to the court ordered that this prosecution be discontinued.

April 26, 1830? - State paid costs connected with above \$12.22 1/2. Forfeited recognizance. In the County of Greene no property found for Wm. Blair Sr. or Jnr.

31 July 1824 - State of Tennessee vs. John Blair "Indict for an affrey." He defaulted by not showing up. Christopher Cooper was surety. If Christopher Cooper can't get him there, will have to pay bond of \$100.00. State of Tennessee vs. John Blair Indict for an affrey. On motion and with the assent of court, a *Nelli presequi* is entered and def'd by attny. Withdrew plea in abatement filed and hereupon William Blair Junr appeared in court and assumed payment, etc. AG stays executier six months.

April 27 1825 - State of Tennessee vs. John Blair of Tennessee vs. John Blair. Christopher Cooper Both to recover costs of suing. Later Chrisopher Cooper sues John Blair for costs.

September 5, 1834 - Note due on William Blair for \$1.00 to estate of James Goss deceased. Filed September 5, 1842 - says note due since 1834 and collection doubtful.

July 30, 1836 - David Rankin deceased—Wm. Blair owed \$1.12 to estate.

1834 Laurel Co., Kentucky Tax List - Three Wm. Blairs listed - Two may be same or an error but Wm. H. is Wm. Blair Jnr. From Greene Co., Tennessee as his children all state they were born there in their marriage licenses. Wm. H. Blair lived in Laurel Co. until his death in 1866.

1836 - Laurel County, Kentucky-One Wm. Blair listed (same property as Wm. H. Blair).

1840 and 1841 - Laurel County - Wm. H. Blair and Wm. Blair listed. Thereafter, only Wm. H. Blair listed until his son Wm. (born 2831) is old enough to pay tax.

1840, Laurel Co. Census lists Wm. B. Blair age 20-30 with wife and four daughters under age 15 and Wm. Blair age 30-40, wife and five children. (John was youngest, born 1833, in Greene County, Tennessee.)

Christopher Cooper, Jnr. Still in Greene County, Tennessee in:

January 1834 - owed estate of James Galbreath \$100.00 (says proven acct).

April 26, 1836 - bought one pr bedsteads for \$1.00 from Joshua Kidwell.

1836 - owed estate of Joseph Hurley \$7.52 - collection doubtful; and James Patterson \$3.15. No comment in records.

1838 - Commissioner on estate of Harmon McKee.

November 1, 1841 - Comm. of estate of Thomas Maloney Dec'd (probably wife's father or brother). Says all property bequeathed and nothing remains to take inventory. Also sighed by W. Conway Maloney.

October 3, 1842 - Comm. of estate of Mary Key, widow.

January 2, 1843 - bought three tables, one leg chain, and two augers from the estate of Elijah Kidwell Dec'd. and was also Commissioner. According to Christopher Cooper Sr. Rev. War papers, Christopher Jnr. moved to Missouri in 1851.

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Henry Blair, 1804-1860, Inventor

Submitted by Julia R. Stubbs, BSGR Mem. #674

Henry Blair, a free black man from Montgomery County, Maryland, was the first black American to receive a patent from the United States Patent Office.

He lived at Glen Ross during the 1830's, a farming hamlet located near present-day Silver Spring. The community took its name from the nearby estate of the Cissel family. Very little more is known of Blair's life, but it likely he was a tenant farmer as there is no record of his owning land.

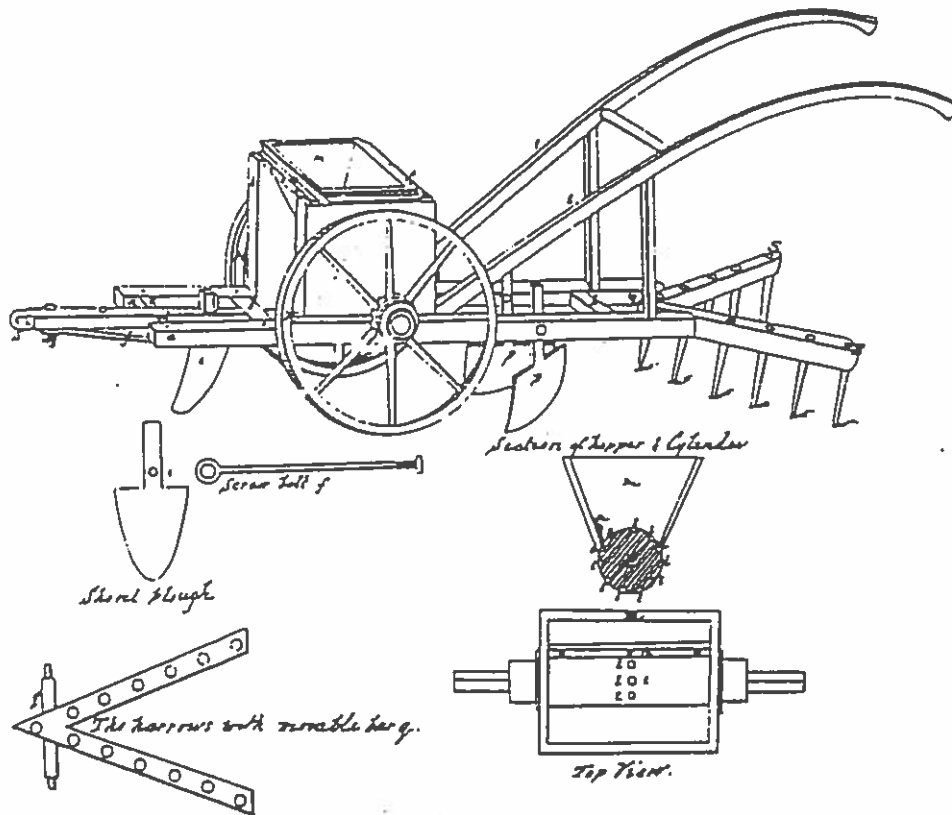
On 14 October 1834 the United States granted Henry Blair a patent on his new seed planter. None of the parts of Blair's machine were particularly new to farming; it was how they were all put together that made the invention unique. It must have been quite a

sight to his neighbors watching as he guided his new-fangled contraption over the open fields. Since he probably had to cultivate his land by himself, his invention probably came out of necessity. To reduce the amount of time and energy expended in cultivating his land, Blair combined in one machine the three-step process of ploughing, sowing, and harrowing a field.

It is not known whether Blair built more than one model of his machine, or whether the seed planter was put into production by others. The fate of Blair is also not known after 1834 as no record of him has been found in Montgomery County.

Source

"The Montgomery County Story, *Montgomery County Inventors and Inventions, 1803-1873*, Vol. 29, No. 4, by Mark Watson. Published by the Montgomery Historical Society, November 1986.



Henry Blair's "Seed-Planter," Patented October 14, 1834, Unnumbered (U.S. Patent Office)