

Clan CATHCART



ARMS	Azure, three cross crosslets fitchee issuant from as many crescents Argent
CREST	A dexter hand couped above the wrist and erect Proper, grasping a crescent Argent
MOTTO	I hope to speed
SUPPORTERS	Two parrots Proper

The lands of Cathcart take their name from the River Cart in Renfrewshire. 'Caeth-cart' itself means the 'strait of Cart'. The progenitor of this noble family appears to have been Rainaldus de Kethcart who, as early as 1178, was witness to a charter of the king's steward to Paisley Abbey. William de Kethcart, his son, was witness to a charter around 1200, exchanging with the Abbey of Paisley the lands of Knoc for lands lying near Walkinshaw. Alan de Cathcart sealed a charter of resignation to the Abbot of Paisley of lands at Culbeth in 1234. His daughter, Cecilia, married John de Perthick, who later made over all her lands in the village of Rutherglen to the Abbot of Paisley, around 1262. William de Cathcart, Alan's son, was one of the Scottish barons who submitted to Edward I of England in 1296 and is listed on the Ragman Roll. He was succeeded by Sir Alan de Cathcart who was a staunch supporter of Robert the Bruce in the struggle to regain the independence of Scotland. He then followed the king's brother, Edward, and was one of a party of only fifty knights who, under cover of dense fog, surprised a much superior English force under Lord St John in Galloway and routed them. He survived the War of Independence and in a deed making a gift to the Dominican Friars of Glasgow in 1336 he is designed as 'Dominus ejusdem', generally translated as 'of that ilk'. He was related to the Bruces through his wife, the sister of Sir Duncan Wallace of Sundrum, who had married Eleanor Bruce, Countess of Carrick. His grandson, Sir Alan de Cathcart, successfully extended his patrimony, obtaining several estates in Carrick. In 1447 he was raised to the peerage with the title, 'Lord Cathcart'. He obtained lands in Ayrshire, including the estate of Auchencruive, which was to become the principal seat of the family until 1718. He became Constable of the royal castle at Dundonald and in 1485 he was appointed Master of the Artillery. Alan, son of the second Lord Cathcart, along with his two half-brothers, Robert and John, was killed at the Battle of Flodden in 1513. The third Lord Cathcart was killed at the Battle of Pinkie in September 1547.

Alan, fourth Lord Cathcart, was a fervent Protestant and a promoter of the Reformation, particularly in the west of Scotland where his influence was greatest. At the Battle of Langside in 1568 he fought with his men on the side of the Regent Moray against the army of Mary, Queen of Scot. The ancient Castle of Cathcart was near the field of battle and there is a viewpoint from which the queen is said to have awaited the outcome of the engagement.

Charles Cathcart, the eighth Lord, was born around 1686 and was to have a distinguished military career. In 1709 he became a major in the Scots Grays and was later appointed colonel of the regiment. At the outbreak of the Jacobite rising of 1715 he joined the Duke of Argyll at Stirling with a detachment of dragoons. At the indecisive Battle of Sheriffmuir, Cathcart's troops outflanked the Jacobite forces. He was later sent to Ireland with the rank of major general. The ninth Lord Cathcart also opposed the restoration of the Stuart monarch, having been appointed an aide-de-camp to the Duke of Cumberland. He fought at the Battle of Culloden, where he was wounded. In February 1768 he was appointed ambassador at St Petersburg and was well received by the Empress Catherine. He wore a patch on his cheek, apparently to cover a scar received at Fontenoy, and when he insisted on wearing this, even for his portrait by the great Sir Joshua Reynolds, he earned himself the soubriquet 'Patch Cathcart'. His eldest son, William later tenth Lord Cathcart, accompanied his father to Russia. On his return to Scotland he took up legal studies and was called to the Bar in 1776. When he succeeded to his father's title he gave up his legal career and returned to the army. He rose to the rank of Lieutenant general, and was commander-in-chief of the forces in Ireland in 1803. He was created a Knight of the Thistle. In 1807, as Napoleon's troops were about to take control of Denmark, Lord Cathcart with Admiral Gambier successfully besieged Copenhagen, capturing the Danish fleet of over sixty vessels together with naval stores and munitions. He was rewarded with the additional titles of 'Viscount Cathcart of Cathcart' and 'Baron Greenock'. In June 1814 he was advanced to the title of 'Earl Cathcart'. The second Earl also

had a distinguished military career and served throughout the Peninsular War and at the Battle of Waterloo in 1815. He was commander of the army in Scotland and governor of Edinburgh Castle from 1837 to 1842. His brother, Frederick, maintained the family's connection with Russia when he was appointed Minister Plenipotentiary at the Court of St Petersburg in 1820, and was made a Knight of the Russian Order of St Anne. The chiefly line has maintained its military traditions and the father of the present chief held the rank of major general.

Taken from *Scottish Clan & Family Encyclopedia*, by Collins, HarperCollins Publishers 1994

This Clan information sheet has been prepared by
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