



Clan SETON

ARMS CREST

Or, three crescents within a double tressure flory.

On a ducal coronet, a dragon Vert, spouting fire Proper, with wings elevated and charged with a star Argent

MOTTO

Hazard yet forward

On compartment In via virtuti via nulla (No path is too hard to virtue)

SUPPORTERS

(not matriculated) Two mertrixes Proper, collared Or, the collars charged with three crescents Gules; to their collars chains are fixed, passing between their forelegs and reflexing over their backs; upon an escrol, coming from behind the shield and passing over the middle of the supporters, are these words (from Horace) 'Intaminatis fulget honoribus'

It is thought that the village of Sai near Exmes in Normandy had given its name to Seton in Scotland by 1150, when Alexander de Seton witnessed a charter of David I. Sir Christopher Seton, who died in 1306, secured the family's fortunes when he married a sister of Robert the Bruce. He was a witness at Bruce's coronation at Scone in March 1306, and is said to have saved the king's life when he was unhorsed at the Battle of Methven in June of that year. Seton was captured at the same battle and taken to London where he was executed with great brutality. In 1320 Sir Alexander Seton, who was probably his brother, signed the famous missive to the pope, later to be called the Declaration of Arbroath, asserting the independence of Scotland. He was governor of Berwick from 1327 to 1333 when the town surrendered to the English. The surrender was made all the more bitter by the fact that the English had hanged Seton's son whom they held as hostage. Further tragedy followed when his remaining sons were killed – one fighting Edward Balliol and the other drowning in a sea battle with an English fleet. His daughter, Margaret, succeeded to the estates, and it was her descendants who were created Lords Seton. William, Lord Seton, attended the coronation of Robert II. One of his sons married Elizabeth Gordon and so was ancestor to the Marquess of Huntley. George, the third Lord was a favorite of James IV and died with his king at Flodden in 1513. The Setons supported Mary, Queen of Scots, and in 1557 the fifth Lord attended the queen's wedding to the Dauphin of Viennois. Seton later became her Privy Councilor, Master of the Household and close personal friend. On the terrible night of the murder of the queen's secretary, David Rizzio, he helped the queen escape, first to his castle at Seton in East Lothian, and then to Dunbar. After the assassination of the queen's husband, Darnley, it was again to Seton that the queen turned and it was in his castle that the marriage contract with Lord Bothwell was sealed. When his queen was imprisoned in Lochleven Castle in 1568 Seton, with two hundred lances, aided in her escape. He retired to Flanders after the queen's defeat at the Battle of Langside, and tried to enlist foreign aid. He returned to Scotland two years later. In 1581 he was one of the judges at the trial of the Earl of Morton, accused of complicity in the murder of Darnley. His portrait, which now hangs in the Scottish National Portrait Gallery is one of the most spectacular paintings of his or any other period. His second son, Robert, who succeeded to his father's title, was created Earl of Winton by James VI in 1600. The earl's brother, Alexander Seton, was appointed Lord President of the Court of Session, Scotland's highest judicial office, and then Chancellor of Scotland. He was himself created Earl of Dunfermline forfeited his title for his support of Viscount Dundee in 1689, as did the fifth Earl of Winton after the 1715 rising. Other branches of the family include the Setons of Abercorn, who were created Baronets of Nova Scotia in 1663. Sir Alexander Seton of Pitmedden, who took the title, 'Lord Pitmedden' on his appointment to the Supreme Court Bench in 1677, was also created a Baronet of Nova Scotia in 1684. Port Seton, Seton Collegiate Church and Seton House itself all still lie on the coast south of Edinburgh, fitting memorials to this great family.

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Clan SETON Septs – SEATON, SEATON