

# Clan SINCLAIR



## ARMS

Overall a cross engrailed and counterchanged Argent and Sable (Sinclair)

## CREST

A cock Proper, armed and beaked Or

## MOTTO

Commit thy work to God

## SUPPORTERS

Two griffins Gules, wings elevated, armed, beaked and winged Or

## STANDARD

Azure, a St Andrew's Cross Argent in the hoist and of four tracts Or, Azure, Argent and Gules, upon which is depicted the Crest in the first compartment, the 1<sup>st</sup> Badge in the second compartment, and the 3<sup>rd</sup> Badge in the third compartment, along with the Motto 'Commit thy work to God' (in letters Gules) upon three transverse bands (Argent)

## BADGES

1<sup>st</sup>, a unicorn sejant Proper, armed, maned and tufted Or; 2<sup>nd</sup>, a demi-bear Proper, muzzled Or, issuing from the cirlet of an Earl's coronet Proper; 3<sup>rd</sup>, a mermaid Proper, crined Or, holding in her dexter hand a looking glass Proper, framed Or, and in her sinister a comb also Or

## PLANT BADGE

Whin

**S**t Clare-dur-Elle lies in the Pont d'Eveque region of Normandy. Such romantic origins are hard to mind in the traditional pronunciation of the name – *Singklar*. No certain records exist but it is likely that Norman knights from St Clare came to Scotland to seek land and fortune during the reign of David I. Henry de St Clair of Herdmanston near Haddington founded a line in 1163 which was raised to the peerage as Lord St Clair, a title still borne today. The chiefs, the Earls of Caithness, descended from Sir William St Clair, a sheriff of Edinburgh who was granted the barony of Roslin in 1280. His eldest son, Sir Henry, swore fealty to Edward I of England in 1296, and the family generally favored the Balliol claim to the throne. However, as the struggle for Scottish independence became paramount, the St Clair's gave their loyalty to Bruce, and they fought at Bannockburn in 1314. Sir Henry received a grant of lands around Pentland in 1317 as his reward. Sir Henry's son, Sir William, was a favorite of King Robert, and he accompanied Sir James Douglas on his expedition to the Holy Land with the heart of the king. The Scots knights did not see the Holy Land, but joined the king of Aragon in his fight against the Moors of Spain. St Clair and Douglas were both killed, and the pilgrimage was abandoned. William's tomb is in the chapel at Roslin, which remains one of the finest chapels of the late-medieval period in Scotland. His grandson, Henry St Clair, became Earl of Orkney through his mother, Isabel. Haakon VI, King of Norway, who had previously controlled the islands outright, recognized the title in 1379. Henry conquered the Faroe Islands in 1391 and discovered Greenland. He is now believed to have voyaged as far as the Americas, possibly landing in both Nova Scotia and Massachusetts.

The third Earl was High Chancellor of Scotland between 1454 and 1458. He was granted the earldom of Caithness in 1455 in compensation for the loss of his claim to the lordship of Nithsdale. James III married Princess Margaret of Denmark in 1458 and her father, unable to pay her dowry in cash, pledged Orkney and Shetland in lieu. The islands were never redeemed by the Danes, and became part of Scotland. The earldom, or principedom, of Orkney was conveyed by the St Clairs in 1470m to James III. William settled the earldom of Caithness on the eldest son of his second marriage, and the Roslin lands on his younger son. It was around this time that the spelling 'Sinclair' came into general use. The second Earl of Caithness died at Flodden in 1513 following his royal master, James IV.

The chiefship followed with the earldom of Caithness, and the fourth Earl, George, was as fierce as any of his Viking ancestors. He imprisoned his own son, the Master of Caithness, for making peace with the Morays without his permission.

George, the sixth Earl of Caithness, was forced to sell off much of the family lands in 1672, being greatly burdened with debt. He died without issue in 1676, and Sir John Campbell of Glenorchy claimed the earldom, being in possession of most of the mortgaged estates. Glenorchy promptly married the widowed countess. The right to the title in the estates was disputed by George Sinclair of Keiss, a descendent of a younger son of the fifth Earl. Keiss took possession of the estates by force, but when he met the Campbells in a pitched battle on the banks of Altimarlech near Wick, it is said so many Sinclairs were killed that the Campbells were able to cross the water without getting their feet wet. The Sinclairs regained the earldom in 1681 by an order of Parliament.

The St Clairs of Roslin laid claim to be hereditary Grand Master Masons of Scotland. In 1736, when forty-four Scottish Freemasons' Lodges met in Edinburgh to found the Grand Lodge of Scotland, William St Clair appeared as a candidate for Grand Master. He played his trump card by offering to surrender his hereditary rights, and promptly became the first elected Grand Master.

The remains of Rosslyn Castle near Edinburgh and the splendid chapel associated with it are still in family hands. In 1805, the earldom of Rosslyn passed to Sir James St Clair Erskine, Baronet, whose descendants care for these jewels of Scottish architecture today.

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

**Clan genealogists:**

Richard Ray Lower  
 Genealogist  
 Clan Sinclair Association, Inc. (USA)  
 127 Pinebrook Drive  
 Folsom, CA 95630  
 (916) 989-5627  
 email: cognord@aol.com  
 Home Page: <http://www.clansinclairusa.org>

Wanda Sinclair  
 Clan Genealogist  
 Clan Sinclair Association Canada  
 178 Elmhurst Drive  
 Rexdale ON M9W 2L1  
 email: wanda@clansinclaircanada.ca

Clan Genealogist  
 Clan Sinclair Australia  
 email: [genealogist@clansinclair.australia.org](mailto:genealogist@clansinclair.australia.org)  
 Home Page: <http://www/clansinclair.australia.org>

Clan Sinclair Society in Caithness  
 Home Page:  
<http://www.sarindel.demon.co.uk/Sinclair/index.htm>

**Clan SINCLAIR Septs**

CAIRD	GOTTS	LUDDALE,-ALL	PAPPEY
CLOUSTON	HALCRO(W)	MAC BARNETT(E)	PETTENRECK,-ICK
CLOUSTON	HARROW	MAC FEND	POTTINGER
CLYNE	HORRIE,-Y	MAC NACKAIRD	SCIATER
CUMLAQUOY	HOURLIE	MAINLAND	SCIATER
CURS ITER	HOURLIE	MASON	SINCLARE
DELDAY	INKSTER	MEY	SINKLER
DREVER	ISBISTER	MOAR	ST. CLAIR
FLAWS	KILDAY	MORN(E)	ULRICK
FLETT(E)	LINKLATER	PAPAY	WHITEFIELD
GOAR	LINKLETTER	PAPLAY	

This clan information sheet has been prepared by  
 The Scottish Society of Louisville, Inc.  
 PO Box 32248  
 Louisville, KY 40232-2248