



Clan Hay has been an honoured and influential Clan from Scotland's earliest times. The Hays descend from a powerful Norman family, the de la Hayes, who came to the British Isles following William I's conquest of England in 1066. William de la Hay, the first Hay recorded in Scotland, held the distinguished position of hereditary cupbearer to both King Malcolm IV and King William I. A steadfast supporter of the Scottish monarchs, William volunteered himself as a hostage to the English to secure King William the Lion's release from southern captivity. The grateful king magnificently rewarded his gallant companion, granting him the barony of Erroll in Perthshire in 1178. The Hays soon married into the old Celtic and Pictish aristocracy, whose royal blood flows through Hay veins to the present day. Clan Hays' close affinity with the monarchy continued through the centuries, ensuring their ascent to glory.

The Hays were among the most loyal supporters of the great Robert the Bruce during the 14th century War of Independence. After the Scottish victory at the Battle of Bannockburn in 1314, Sir Gilbert, 5th Lord Erroll was granted the highest honours for his Clan's fealty. Bruce granted the Clan lands in Slain, Aberdeenshire, and made Sir Gilbert the Hereditary Lord High Constable of Scotland. This is a revered position, taking precedence over all other Scottish hereditary title holders, other than those of royal blood. The title, still held by the Hay chiefs, entitles the holder to have jurisdiction over all matters of affray arising within a 4 mile radius of the Queen when she stays in Scotland. It is testament to Bruce's esteem of the Hay fighting

spirit that he also made Sir Gilbert the Hereditary Commander of the Royal Bodyguard. This honour cost the Clan two chiefs, and innumerable Clansmen. The 6th Lord Errol was killed at the Battle of Neville's Cross in 1346, fighting beside his sovereign David II.

The Clan Hay also made a hefty sacrifice at the Battle of Flodden, where King James the IV was slain in 1513. The 4th Earl of Errol fell beside his monarch, along with John, 2nd Lord Hay, 87 gentlemen of the name Hay, and countless Hay warriors. The Clan Hay were ardent followers of Bonnie Prince Charlie in the 1745 Jacobite Rising. Mary Hay, Countess of Erroll, raised the Clan to fight for the young prince, using Slains Castle as a centre for Jacobite espionage against the government forces. The Clan paid for its loyalties following the 1745 Jacobite defeat at Culloden, when the 15th Earl's father, William the Earl of Kilmarnock, was executed for serving Prince Charlie. However, the Clan continued to be honoured, with noble Hays including the Marquises of Tweeddale and Earls of Kinnoull.

The Clan crest is of a falcon flying, and the motto reads "Serva jugum" meaning, in Latin "Keep the yoke". The crest derives from Hay legend, detailing how the Clan repelling a Danish invasion at Luncarty, using only ox yokes as weapons. The King is said to have released a falcon, and granted the Hays land in the direction that the proud bird flew. The 24th Earl of Erroll, Lord High Constable of Scotland, resides in Hampshire, England.

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