

## Glamis Castle (Forfar, Scotland)

Castle legendarily linked to Macbeth, and family seat of the late Queen Mother



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*"Glamis thou art, and Cawdor; and  
shalt be/What thou art promis'd;  
yet I do fear thy nature . . ."*

William Shakespeare, *Macbeth* (c. 1605)

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- 📖 In her earlier years, Elizabeth Bowes-Lyons was known to pour water over visitors to Glamis from a tower.
- 📖 Glamis Castle is a masterpiece of the Gothic-inspired Scottish Baronial style of architecture.

The family home of Elizabeth Bowes-Lyons, the late Queen Mother, and the birthplace of Princess Margaret, boasts a remarkable collection of chilling legends and ghost stories. For one thing, Glamis Castle is the setting of Shakespeare's *Macbeth*, and the real Macbeth was Thane of Glamis, while the bloodstain to be seen on the floor of King Malcolm's room has been attributed to King Malcolm II, recorded as having been attacked and killed at Glamis in 1034.

The castle's most famous legendary inhabitant is the Monster of Glamis, a child so appallingly deformed that his family kept him locked away in a set of rooms that were bricked up after his death. There is said to be another sealed room where one of the lords of Glamis wanted to play cards on a Sunday, which was strictly forbidden. A stranger appeared and the two settled down to play, but the stranger was said to be the Devil. The same room was perhaps where some of the local Ogilvies, who came to the castle seeking protection from their enemies, the Lindsays, were shut in and left to starve to death. The various ghosts include the "Gray Lady," who haunts the chapel, and a "White Lady," who may be the member of the family who was burned alive as a witch in the sixteenth century.

Romantically turreted and battlemented in red sandstone, the later house began its existence as a royal hunting lodge. In 1372 Robert II gave the building to Sir John Lyon, who had married the king's daughter, Joanna. Their son was made Lord Glamis in 1445 and probably built the original castle, which was massively enlarged in the seventeenth century when the family acquired the earldoms of Strathmore and Kinghorne. They changed their surname to Bowes-Lyon after marrying a rich Bowes heiress from England.

Today, the castle and gardens are open to the public, including the Italian Garden, created in 1910 by Cecilia, mother of the late Queen Mother. **RC**

