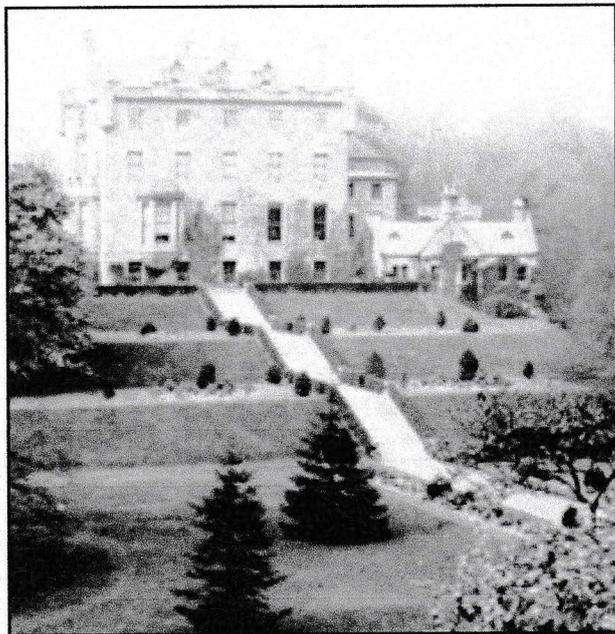


The Douglas Support Estate

William Douglas runs the impressive [Douglas Archives](#) website, and has been a supporter of the Friends from our earliest days. Here he describes the fate of the building which was once at the centre of the Douglas fortune.



I had the pleasure of attending the Grand Opening of the Monteath Mausoleum in July, and noted how the wealthy Thomas Monteath Douglas had spent some of his fortune on such a magnificent monument to himself. I was particularly struck by how inherited Douglas wealth has a legacy which is not reflected at Douglas Support where his cousin, Archibald Douglas became its owner.



Douglas Support 1860

The Historic Douglas Support Estate, in North Lanarkshire, now split by the new M8 link, is a shadow of its former self. Now owned by a family trust, much has already been sold off, including the area, once a bing, that is home to the Strathclyde Business Park. Now, the Trustees have offered part of the estate to the local community, and the Viewpark Conservation Group has been successful in obtaining a grant from the Scottish Land Fund towards the purchase cost.

In 1691, the estate was named Hags, and in the possession of Edinburgh merchant Archibald Hamilton, who had acquired the estate from heavily indebted Sir Alexander Hamilton MP's trustees and renamed it Rosehall. In 1757, it passed to Archibald Hamilton of Dalzell, whose eldest son James Hamilton sold Rosehall in 1783.

By now, the land had risen in value due to a combination of the minerals below it and the construction of the Monkland Canal, which enabled coal to be transported easily. Alexander Houston, Governor-General of Grenada, acquired the estate

and made extensive alterations to the house, but he sold off some of the land before finally disposing of the rest to Archibald Douglas, 'Duchess Meg's' nephew. She had died in 1774 bequeathing him the residue of her estate. Just as Thomas was required as a condition of the will to change his name to Douglas, so too was Archibald obliged to change the estate's name to Douglas Support, in recognition of the support given during the famous Douglas Cause trials that followed the death of the Duke.

The estate passed to Rev. Sholto Douglas Campbell Douglas, who also succeeded to the Blythswood estates. But tragedy struck in July 1908 when first his wife, Violet Mary Paget died and then the house burnt down, destroying many relics dating back to Robert the Bruce. It was, however, covered by insurance and Douglas Support was rebuilt, with the addition of a chapel. The mine workings under the estate extended under the mansion house, and by 1932 it was unsafe and was demolished.

The last of the tenant farmers died in February 2018 and the land now lies fallow; the once beautiful gardens are untended, though still rich with interesting plants, trees and wildlife. Plans were drawn up to build offices and factories on the site, but now the surviving members of the Douglas family have offered it to the local community who are keen to keep their 'green lung' in an otherwise area of commercial and industrial development.

Viewpark Conservation Group is actively seeking contributions to help buy the estate for the community. Details on how to donate can be found at www.viewpark.org.uk

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