

Castle Leslie looms over the landscape, surveying the property that has been in the family for centuries. The stately façade is constructed of gray limestone with red sandstone and terra-cotta details.

SUSTAINING a *Legacy*

A thousand years of recorded annals trace the Leslie family's influence in Irish history—a narrative that still thrives within the walls of this grand and glorious castle nestled beside the village of Glaslough.

TEXT KAREN CALLAWAY PHOTOGRAPHY STEPHANIE WELBOURNE STEELE





The Republic of Ireland's rolling countryside spreads out in a great verdant blanket, interspersed with thousands of picturesque lakes and the vestiges of many ancient forests that once covered the land. Set amid this heart-stirring landscape is magnificent circa 1870 Scottish baronial-style mansion Castle Leslie, standing on land owned by Leslie kin since 1665.

The family tree, which traces its roots to Atilla the Hun, brims with interesting characters. Bartholomew Leslie, a Hungarian nobleman and protector of Margaret, Queen of Scotland, once saved the royal from drowning by bidding her to "grip fast" to his belt buckle so he could pull her to safety; that directive became the family motto. Another member was John Leslie, known as the "fighting bishop" because he helped defend against Oliver Cromwell's forces at the Battle of Raphoe.

Castle Leslie was built beside an aging seventeenth-century structure, which was demolished upon the new home's completion. Made of chiseled stone and moulded sandstone and crowned with a steeply pitched slate roof, the castle was designed by architects Charles Lanyon

Opposite: Among the treasured works found in the gallery is a circa 1600 tapestry from Brussels. This page, above left: Guests enjoy afternoon tea in the Blue Room, which offers expansive views to the garden and Glaslough Lake.





This page, above right: The drawing room features the oldest and most precious item in the house: a marble mantelpiece with carved cherubs floating above a blue background. Created by renowned Italian Renaissance sculptor Luca della Robbia, the adornment dates to the mid-1400s and was purchased from a priest several generations ago. Below right: Gilt-framed portraits of Leslie kin line the pistachio-hued walls in this elegant dining room.





and W. H. Lynn for Sir John Leslie, 1st Baronet. He and his wife, Constance, furnished the house with a cache of Italian Renaissance-style pieces purchased on their extensive travels to that country.

The estate has stayed in the family ever since, with John's great-great-granddaughter Samantha Leslie the current trustee. Old buildings such as this often require expensive upkeep, and Samantha recognized that a commercial venture would safeguard the future of the home. Restored and refurbished to charming perfection, Castle Leslie now welcomes guests to stay in a range of luxe accommodations, from the castle itself to a converted hunting lodge and the old stable mews. This historic property also hosts equestrian and other sporting events, and it has been the romantic setting for many a memorable wedding. *V*



Opposite, above: The Mauve Room, formerly known as The Royal Suite, once served as the lavishly appointed guest quarters for regal visitors, such as Queen Margaret of Sweden and Prince Pierre of Monaco. The Duke of Connaught bestowed Lady Leonie Leslie with the silver triptych mirror bearing her name that rests atop the dresser.