

ELLIOT CLAN SOCIETY Newsletter

No. 73 – Autumn 2014

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Roxburghshire TD9 0SB
www.elliotclan.com
www.elliotclanusa.com
www.elliotclanaustralia.org
www.visitnewcastleton.com

Chief: Margaret Elliott of Redheugh

"Here's to all Elliots and Elliot' bairns
And them that lie in Elliots arms."

Dear Kinsmen,

By the time you receive this newsletter Scotland will have decided on the independence question and I hope fervently that we will still be a part of the United Kingdom.

Redheugh has had a very happy summer with my daughter, Kate's wedding to her Dutchman, Nic Verbij and they are now officially Mr and Mrs. Nic Verbij of Haarlem, The Netherlands. Newcastleton was surprised to find itself overrun with the Dutch rather than far flung Elliots. The cannon was fired and we danced all night.

I am looking forward to my trip to Central Florida in January to be held at Central Winds Park, Winter Springs. I will need all your support. It is always easier when I know I have kinsmen about me.

The membership list is overdue for a reprint. It is an expensive operation but a very useful tool to know who your nearest Elliot neighbours are wherever you live in the world. We are planning to have it printed this autumn.

This issue brings your attention to the nuts and bolts of the Clan Society. The history of Redheugh explains why it is the focus of the Elliot story and why this modest farmhouse is important. A note about the Clan Society, what the original vision was and why the Elliot diaspora helps to keep the show on the road. A great work on the origins of the Elliot name by Keith Hunter which I urge you to read online. I hope you find it interesting.

Yours sincerely,

Margaret Elliott of Redheugh



NOTICES AND NEWS ITEMS

Marriage announcement: On 2nd August 2014 the marriage took place at Redheugh between Kate Frances Elliott and Nic Merlijn Verbij.

Sir Arthur Elliott Memorial Grants 2014:

Grants totalling £1150 were awarded to:

Holm Show – Towards the annual event.

Sara Yahia Mohammed – Degree in Anatomy at Aberdeen University.

Tilly Skelton – Midwifery Degree at Robert Gordon University, Aberdeen.

Dulcie Skelton – 3rd year Primary Teaching at University of Cumbria.

Rachel Walker – 1st year Art degree at Dundee University.

Fiona Walker – 2nd year Costume Production & Associated Crafts at Plymouth College of Art.

Abbotshaw Bed and Breakfast:

This farm was originally The Flatt Farm and was owned by Elliots. William, alleged (illegitimate) son of Henry in Flatt, married Helen McVittie on 19 Jan 1845. They had eight children. He then married Elizabeth Little with whom he had fifteen children many of whom have descendants in Canada and New Zealand. There are now four bedrooms available for bed and breakfast and ensuite bathrooms and extremely comfortable and just three miles outside the village of Newcastleton.

Robert Louis Stevenson:

The author of 'Kidnapped' was proud of his Elliot blood brought into the family by Professor James Balfour's marriage with Cecilia Elphinstone, daughter of Sir John Elphinstone of Logie and Mary Elliot, daughter of Sir Gilbert Elliot of Minto. 'I have shaken a spear in the Debateable Land and shouted the slogan of the Elliots' Stevenson claimed. Mary Elliot's portrait hangs at Pilrig House, the Balfour house near Edinburgh, and shows her dark-eyed and very handsome in a beautiful russet dress (with thanks to Dee Elliott-Wakefield).

Clan Room: To avoid disappointment, please warn us if you intend to visit Redheugh. Email or telephone us on the following
UK number: **013873-75213** or redheugh@btinternet.com

By Clan Historian,
Keith Elliot Hunter, QPM, BA

*The town of Elliot was their
antiquitie,*

*Which stands in Angus, at the
foot of Glenshie;*

*With brave King Robert Bruce
they hither came;*

*Which is three hundred and
eighty years ago;*

In West Teviotdale these
gentlemen did dwell,*

*They were twelve great families,
I hear my goodsir tell;*

*Their chief was a Baron of
renown,*

*Designed Reid-heugh, which is
now called Lariston*

Scott of Satchells.

Quoted by the Dowager Lady
Elliott and Sir Arthur Elliott.

**The name often used to include
Liddesdale.*

Editor's Note: Keith Hunter's full 34-page dissertation on the history and origins of the name of Elliot are available to read on the three Elliot websites. It is an erudite body of work that sheds light on the early mediaeval movement of people resulting from the Norman (and Breton) invasion. The other important aspect of this work is a diagnosis of the complex area of nomenclature and how our surname emerged from this soup of French/Scottish/English language into the one recognized today as Elliot (in all its spellings).

The early history of the Elliots – a Scoto-Breton Border Clan

Walter d'Elliot (d'Alyth) of The Brae (forfeited 1306) and of Redheugh, circa 1314-1320

A combination of modern science and the digital revolution now gives today's generation more insight into its ancestry than could hitherto be attained, except by lifetimes – available to professional historians - spent poring through many archives. A great deal of new evidence, now electronically accessible, most of it corroborative, has made it clear, beyond any reasonable doubt that:

- Elliot and its many variant names, which drew comment from the late George MacDonald Fraser in his colourful history of the Border Reivers, *The Steel Bonnets*, are of Breton origin;

- all Elliots and bearers of variant names of Breton origin, first arrived in England as participants in the Norman Conquest of 1066 and they left behind the ancestors of the many Elliots living in Brittany today;

- the claim that the Eliots of St Germans are of Anglo-Norman origin has always been based on nothing more than an unsubstantiated assumption (confirmed personally by the earl of St Germans, Peregrine Eliot);

- DNA sampling has revealed that nearly forty per cent of Elliots (all spellings) tested, are of Celtic-Brittonic origin (as opposed to Celtic-Gaelic);

- the history of Elliot involvement in the wars of Scottish independence, with high casualty rates, demonstrated by their appearance in various sources, points to the likelihood that the occurrence of Germanic and other DNA haplogroups among Elliots, is the result of a number of adoptions born to Elliot mothers, whose men were killed in battle;

- pronunciation of the name led on both sides of the Channel to two versions: Alliot and Elliot, before their spelling was settled along geographic lines, and according to prevalent local and regional clerical preferences, at a time when there was no standardisation of phonetic spelling and *scriptores* applied a 'take your pick' approach to use of the Roman alphabet;

- the initial spelling choice made by one or more early *scriptores*, was based on the long accepted Elliot variant name Dalliot, or more accurately d'Alliot, which they spelt variously as *Alyth*, *Alight* and *Alyght*, where the letter **y** was used not as the vowel **i**, but as a semi-vowel, standing for **io**;

- When successive 16th, 17th and early 18th century cartographers visited the cross border Angus and Perthshire region of Glen Isla and Glen Shee, they were told that the name of a town, whose medieval spelling has been restored to modern maps, its kirk and its forest, were, firstly, Elyeht or Elieht, and lastly, by the time phonetic spelling was becoming more accurate, ELLIOT;

- Walter d'Alyth (pronounced d'Elliot – since there is no reason to question what the cartographers were told) was the baron 'of renown', of The Brae, which can be seen just to the north of Alyth on larger scale OS maps, who forfeited these lands in 1306, when supporting Robert the Bruce;

- the Brae was given to the Balliol supporter Adam Brunyng, before it was inherited by his son, substitute justiciar, John Brunyng, who came over to Bruce's side;

- this led to the need for Bruce to make a compromise (as he had to do with other lands) when rewarding his supporters with confiscated lands in the aftermath of his victory at Bannockburn, a challenging one for the Elliots, since Liddesdale was of great strategic importance to Bruce (In his "Robert Bruce" (Eyre & Spottiswoode) 1965, G.W.S. Barrow used the description 'prodigals' for those who came to the support of Bruce late in the day. In some cases lands were restored to them, hence the need for compromises in the land settlement following Bannockburn).

- The name Elliot (spelt as Ellot, but given the prevalent use of French, probably always pronounced as Elliot – as the cartographers found out) was brought to Liddesdale, but the name Elwald, a common name, was given to the chieftain.

- Elwald could never have been a precursor to Ellot, (pronounced as Elliot?) as opposed to the other way round, and a morphological evolution from one to the other was impossible.

- Whatever the explanation for this 'charter name' was – a typical Breton attempt to take a native name, a name with which, again typically, the clerks took liberties or even a nickname, like the Flemish mercenary Berowald (Clan Innes) – surviving documents show quite clearly that both names were used contemporaneously, and often interchanged.

THE HISTORY OF REDHEUGH

Redheugh was the principal tower and main settlement of the Border Elliots. The name is derived from the name of the burn, the 'Rede' which runs through the farm and the 'heugh' (bank) on which the tower originally stood. The site is a very typical defensive position. To the North there is a steep bank that in the 14th Century would have had the river acting as a moat running along the base. To the South the natural deep ditch defence of the burn and behind the farm was a deep moss, long since drained.

The tower's strategic position overlooked the main crossing point of the Hermitage Water and the hill would have been bare of trees so that the top of the tower had a clear view up and down the valley. This valley was one of the main routes between England and Scotland and Redheugh was the first of a series of pele towers built within sight of each other up and down the valley creating an excellent early warning system.



Redheugh Farmhouse by Terry Murphy

c.1320 A charter to the lands of Redheugh was granted to a chief of the Elliots by Robert the Bruce.

c.1376 Redheugh mentioned in a Rent Roll of Liddesdale.

c.1400 "Elliot of Redheugh" referred to in a Pedigree of the Blackadder family.

c.1497 Robert of Redheugh, Chief, who was stated to be the 10th of his name. He was a close friend and adherent of Archibald Douglas, Earl of Angus and Lord of Liddesdale and his eldest son was Captain of Hermitage Castle. *(more)*

1497-1516 Robert Elliot the 12th Chief. War with England 1513. Robert's eldest son killed at the battle of Flodden with the Earl of Bothwell, Lord of Liddesdale.

1516-62 Robert Elliot the 15th Chief, Captain of Hermitage Castle and Deputy Keeper of Liddesdale. Married to Jean Scott, sister of Buccleuch.

1564-91 Robert Elliot the 16th Chief. Unity of the Clan affected by political and religious divisions in Scotland. Robert lived mainly in Teviotdale until 1578 when he was appointed Captain of Hermitage Castle. Redheugh occupied for the most part by his great-uncle, Martin Elliot of Braidley and Prickenhaugh, who became a notable leader of the Liddesdale clans.

1591-1670 Robert Elliot the 17th. Lived in a new tower at Larriston. Redheugh declined in importance and, after the suppression of the clan system in 1605 and the imprisonment of Robert, the towers were probably destroyed and Robert's tenants and followers dispersed. Redheugh was settled on Robert's daughter, Margaret, in 1637 on her marriage to James Elliot, a younger son of Stobs. Their descendants were the Elliots of Larriston.

1670-88 Robert Elliot of Larriston, grandson of Robert the 17th, died bankrupt. Redheugh was adjudicated to Christopher Irving of Binks.

The present house:

1730-93 Redheugh purchased by William Elliot (of the line of Falnash), a younger son of Robert of Redheugh the 13th, for his 2nd son, Robert. The present house and barn built at this time and part of the north and east facing walls of the original tower probably incorporated into the new farmhouse. The meadowland along Hermitage Water cleared. A stone from the old cottages (now a part of the cattle barn) is dated 1784.

1793-1806 John Elliot, 2nd son of Robert, allowed his brother life tenancy of the farm. Newcastleton village (Copshaw Holm) was begun. The road to Hawick and the 'smiddy' brig at the end of the drive built shortly after.

1806-69 Robert Elliot, nephew of John. Many improvements carried out – the cow byres are dated 1813 – and it was probably during this period that the Rede burn was partially diverted and an attempt made to drain the loch covering the lower hill ground. The railway embankment was built in 1861.

1869-1915 Robert Elliot, grandson of Robert. The stone dykes built and plans made for a substantial enlargement of the house with a carriage drive at the East side but were never carried out. Robert died with no male heir and his siter sold Redheugh to the tenants, James and Thomas Scott.

1918-46 This is the only time that Redheugh was out of Elliot hands.

1946-58 Thomas Scott sold Redheugh to Sir Gilbert Elliott of Stobs, Bt. and Chief of the clan, descended from Robert the 15th of Redheugh. Redheugh substantially modernized and converted to an all-grass stock farm. A cottage was built beside the farmhouse for the farm manager, Mr. George Turnbull and his family.

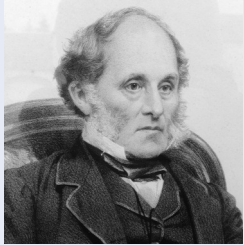
1958-89 Sir Arthur Elliott, 11th Baronet of Stobs, succeeded his father. Wind breaks and many trees planted. Fields drained, modernization and enlargement of the house continued. James Turnbull took over as farm manager from his father who was given Sandholm Cottage and the bottom field. The railway viaduct blown up, Clan Society founded and establishment of the Clan Museum.

1989- Margaret Elliott inherited Redheugh from her father. With her husband, Christopher Wilkins, the farmhouse and cottage have been amalgamated into one house. The Rede Burn dammed to create a small loch. A new cottage built behind the farm and the railway embankment bought from British Rail. 7000 trees planted. The farmland is now managed by Peter Dixon who has his own farm up the valley.

BOOKS·BOOKS·BOOKS

"The Eden Valley Railway"

by Robert Western, published by The Oakwood Press, price £9.95. Dedicated to the memory of ADMIRAL RUSSELL ELLIOT without



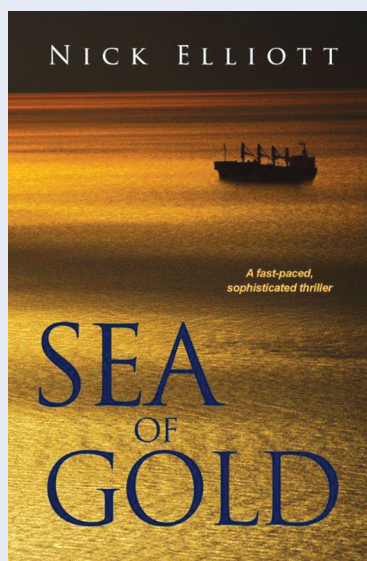
whom the Eden Valley Railway would almost certainly never have been built.

"A Quite Remarkable Man"

The life of Patrick Brydone and his family 1736-1818 by John Evans, published by Amberley Books, ISBN 978 1 4456 3890 4. At the age of seventy, Brydone married his eldest daughter, Mary, to GILBERT ELLIOT, heir to the earldom of Minto. Writing to her husband Lady Minto described Mary as: 'beautiful, but her beauty is not her principal merit, as she is universally said to have a temper as fair as her face. Her family dote on her and have brought her up with simple tastes, which will not jar with Gilbert's; so that we shall gain a daughter and not lose a son, which might have been the case had she been a London lady, apt to think Scotland a desert'.

"The Gathering" David Elliott's sequel to his historical supernatural thriller 'Clan' set around Hermitage Castle. Published by Red Cap Publishing ISBN 978 0 9573411-4-2.

"Sea of Gold" by Nick Elliott who lived and breathed shipping, and more than a few of the events described in Sea of Gold are inspired by his own experiences.



A Report from Headquarters

My father, the late chief Sir Arthur Elliott of Stobs, wrote his first newsletter in 1978. He died in 1989 leaving me with an extremely well organized society albeit uncomputerised. I will try to explain to our members world wide how it works from this end and it will become apparent that our Society is at heart an extended family of kinsfolk run with great goodwill and generosity in Australia, New Zealand, the USA and Canada.

Each branch is in charge of their own membership and collecting membership fees. A small percentage of these fees is sent annually to the Elliot Clan Society at Redheugh. This annual income is important as it enables us to hold a Gathering every four years, put out a newsletter twice a year and send out a 'Welcome' package to each new member. It also goes towards the heating and upkeep of the little Clan Museum and will cover the next printing of a membership list.

Each of the branches of the Society are run on slightly different lines; for instance the US branch holds elections for its officers and is now a non-profit organisation. The others depend entirely on each President and his particular team of helpers who give their time in travel, writing newsletters and membership records. Margaret Laurenson in New Zealand has been in charge since the foundation of the Clan Society and continues to look after her Kiwi members brilliantly.



Computers have helped considerably in reducing the soaring costs of postage by being able to post newsletters online. My only regret is that I have no idea whether anybody reads them . . . !

In order to keep your chief straight, we have Trustees who are sent a Report and Accounts every year. Our local Executive team meet to discuss administration issues and financial concerns. The only person on the payroll is Hazel White who keeps the accounts in an orderly fashion.

As far as genealogy goes, we are putting together a complete database of Elliot records so that our members can access this. The genealogist in the UK, Ken Blaiklock, is working with John Hodgkinson in Australia to coordinate this project.

The overall aim is to keep our heads above water and continue my father's original aim which was to foster ancestral ties and the unfolding history of this unusual Border family.



Visitors to The Clan Room 2014:

April:

Bill Johnson, Virginia Commissioner, Fairfax VA, USA.

May:

Sally Birch, High Lorton, Cumbria UK.

Neil & Kani Elliott, Chester-le-Street, Co. Durham, UK.

Virginia Elliott, Clatskanie, OR, USA

Christine & Bill Holland, Clatskanie, OR, USA

Nancy Martin, Clatskanie, OR

June:

Joshua Lytle, Mary Lytle, Janet and Fianna, Tucson, AZ, USA

Hilary Haston, Dalkeith, Midlothian

July:

Terry Elliott

Tim Elliott, Corsicala, Texas

Rebecca Elliott McClure, Westingford, IL

Orion Elliot, Sage Hansen and Judy Elliot, retired President ECS USA

Richard Elliott Henderson II, Altamonte Springs FL

August:

Michelle Elliott and Cheanne Chellis, MI, USA

Larry & Cheryl Scholtz with Margaret of Denver, CO

Patricia Maxted of Kent, WA, USA

Randall & Kyle Elliott of Niagara Falls, ON, Canada

Allan & Duncan Elliott of Quebec, Canada.

Malcolm Woods, Chislehurst, Kent.

THE ELLIOTT PECAN TREE

The Elliott Pecan Tree was originally a seedling in the lawn of a house in Milton, Florida purchased by Henry Elliot in 1912. The Elliott is best suited for planting in warmer climates with mild winters and despite its small nut size it is still popular due to its beautiful kernel colour and uniquely outstanding taste.



We welcome the following new members to the Society

UNITED KINGDOM

E482 Palmer, Lady Laura, Carlton Curliou, Leicestershire

E483 Facer, Mr & Mrs Simon, Leeds, West Yorkshire

E484 Elliot, Matthew, Lewisham, London

E485 Elliott, Arthur, Langton Green, Tunbridge Wells

CANADA

C1112 Elliott, Robert Parry, Alliston ON

C1113 Kelly, Brenda and Gordie, Apohaqui NB E5P 1A6

C1114 Elliott-Moyer, Hamilton, ON L9C 7LB

C1115 Sleeper, Sylvia, Lewis Mountain, NB E4J 1W1

C1116 Brown, Kenneth & Pauline, Sussex NB E4E 3C9

NEW ZEALAND

N329 Bussell, Derek Elliot, Alexandra

UNITED STATES

US3686 Elliott, Laura & Neale, Conyers GA

US3687 Charles, Anne L., Scottsbluff NE

US3688 Lumsden, Kathy, Sand Springs OK

US3689 Elliott-Pinedo, Gilda, Laguna Niguel, CA

US3690 Elliott, Jacob, Fleming Island, FL

US3691 Elliott, Andrew, Fleming Island FL

US3692 Pate, Gary W., Hilliard FL

US3693 Saunders, Derrie Elliott, Wolfeboro, NH

US3694 Elliott, John M., Prescott, AZ

US3695 Elliott, Gregory, Fontana CA

US3696 Coniam, Cynthia, Peoria ZA

US3697 Elliott, Danielle, Lynn MA

US3698 Stelzer, Michael A., Yakima WA

US3699 Giulianelli, Anthony, Lexington Park, MD

US3700 Hutchens, Elliot, Kirkland, WA

US3701 Huff, Richard G., Freedom PA

US3702 Geldert, Dale T., Oceanside CA

US3703 Elliott, Kirk, Bayfield CO

US3704 Elliott, Jeffrey Jon, Wichita KS

US3705 Naragon, Michelle Elliott, Ft. Riley KS

US3706 Bradford, Judy Elliott, Lenexa KS

US3707 Elliott, Lynn T., Lawrence KS

US3708 Elliott, Kevin, Sparta MI

US3709 Veldhuizen, Ongie Elaine, Blairsville GA

US3710 Chellis, Cheanne Elliott, Paradise MI

US3711 Elliott, Todd & Carla, Peoria, AZ

US3712 Norris, Charles A., Hacienda Heights CA

US3713 Elliott, Mackenzie, Eugene OR

US3714 Read, Norman, Eugene OR

US3715 Elliott, John C., Boca Raton FL

US3716 Klein, Karen, Lancaster OH

Details of new members received too late for publication will appear in the next newsletter.