



# ELLIOT CLAN SOCIETY Newsletter

No. 68 – Spring 2012

Redheugh, Newcastleton,  
Roxburghshire TD9 0SB  
[www.elliotclan.com](http://www.elliotclan.com)  
[www.elliotclanusa.com](http://www.elliotclanusa.com)  
[www.elliotclanaustralia.org](http://www.elliotclanaustralia.org)  
[www.visitnewcastleton.com](http://www.visitnewcastleton.com)

Chief: Margaret Elliott of Redheugh

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

Dear Members,

We are weathering out the winter here in more ways than one. Although not much snow has fallen it has been overwhelmingly wet and miserable. Some distinguished old trees have fallen in very high winds and it is not over yet. The date as I write is 20th February and there is still plenty of time to get heavily snowed upon.

We are smartening up the Redheugh drive entrance ready to welcome you in 2013. It is being built by our expert dry stane dyker, John Elliot!. We have also attempted to modernise the layout of this newsletter and I hope you will find it more amusing and clearer to read.

About a year ago, we threatened to increase the UK membership rates but reduced postage levels meant we could hold it for another year. However, in order to be in good financial shape for the Gathering all UK members will receive a note of the new fees this autumn. I hope they will renew despite the increase.

On 9th September 2013 it is five hundred years since the Battle of Flodden. This was a defeat for Scotland against England and James IV of Scotland was killed surrounded by the Flower of Scotland on the battlefield. It changed the course of history. Robert Elliot of Redheugh, eldest son of the chief was killed and probably many other Elliots as foot soldiers who were not recorded.

I am, as Vice Convenor of the Standing Council of Scottish Chiefs, organising a Commemorative Service to be held at St. Giles Cathedral in Edinburgh and if there are any Elliots still in Scotland after the Gathering, they might like to buy tickets. More information will be in the next newsletter.

Yours sincerely,

Margaret Elliott of Redheugh

## ELLIOT GATHERING 2013

*The basic dates and outline of the next Gathering will be as follows:*

- ◆ Thursday 29th August – Officers Dinner (by invitation only)
- ◆ Friday 30th August – Open House at Redheugh. Barbecue. Formal Gathering. Evening ceilidh.
- ◆ Saturday 31st August – Holm Show – our local Agricultural Show takes place in Newcastleton.
- ◆ Sunday 1st – Expedition to Flodden Battlefield with guided tour and lunch.

Full details and ticket application will be in the next newsletter going out in the Autumn 2012.

Details of bed and breakfast, local hotels and self-catering list will be posted on our website at **[www.elliotclan.com](http://www.elliotclan.com)**

If you need any help planning your visit please ask your local commissioner for their advice. All addresses and emails will be in the Members list 2010 which each member should have.

**email [redheugh@btinternet.com](mailto:redheugh@btinternet.com)**

## Hawick Reivers Festival 2012

**23rd to 25th March:** A full weekend of activities including Scocha Concert, Reivers Procession, Sixteenth Century Market and Encampment. For full details and times of events visit **[www.hawickreivers.com](http://www.hawickreivers.com)** or Telephone 01450 375 263.

## New Clan Armstrong Museum proposed

Due to the deteriorating condition of the present Clan Armstrong Museum which is housed in a former wooden church, the Clan Armstrong Trust Ltd. are hoping to raise enough funds to move into the former Catholic Church in Langholm.

**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](mailto:redheugh@btinternet.com)**

# Obituaries . . .

*We have had a sad winter with two important members of our Clan Society passing away. Many of you will remember them from past Gatherings.*

**HARRY ELLIOT** was born in Carlisle, the second child of Clara and Sandy Elliot. They moved from Liddesdale to Carlisle after World War II when Sandy became a tram driver. On family visits back to Newcastleton Harry met Margaret Foster and they married in 1947. Harry had been in the RAF during the war and they moved back into the village where they had two daughters, Sandy and Alison.



Harry went to work on the Waverley Route as a signalman. At that point the railway went right through the village from Carlisle to Edinburgh and Harry enjoyed riding the footplate of a steam train on his days off. He never lost his passion for the great steam engines but after they closed the railway in the 1960s he went to work for Lothian and Borders Police and was there until he retired in 1984.

When Sir Arthur Eliott started up the Clan Society he asked Harry to help him and, as Secretary, he corresponded with clan members all over the world. He had the most beautiful handwriting. He and Margaret entertained many Elliots who came to Liddesdale.

When Margaret died he never recovered from the shock as they were a devoted couple.

## **JAMES DUNCAN ELLIOT 1933-2011**

*I will miss Jim's cheerful grin and helpful presence. He was a positive and friendly character whom everybody warmed to.*

Jim was born in 1933, the only son of May and Jim Elliot. He was educated at Newcastleton Primary School and then at Hawick High School. He worked for the Forestry Commission until he was called up for his two years National Service with the RAF but stayed with them for three years based at Gutersloh in Germany.



He stayed with the Forestry for four more years and married Mary Beattie in 1957. The following year he started work as a postman and worked in Newcastleton for over twenty years until they both moved to Hawick and he spent another eleven years with the Post Office before taking early retirement.

He was involved in many organisations especially Rugby and Football and the Hawick Common Riding. Their campervan holidays took them all over the country. He also played in the Liddesdale Temperance Brass Band and was Secretary of the British Legion for ten years and was always on hand to help with the Elliot Clan. He and Billy Thomson were a terrific pair welcoming all the visitors to Redheugh and cracking jokes endlessly.



## THE STANDING COUNCIL OF SCOTTISH CHIEFS

is growing in energy and influence. It was established almost sixty years ago as an informal group where chiefs could compare notes. Over the past five years it has evolved into a Council with a mission. Deeply proud of their past, it is now building on the involvement of the millions of Scots who live outside Scotland. The SCSC is committed to providing a focus and a voice for this community.

Under the guidance of the Earl of Caithness, it has become a more active body working more closely with other agencies within Scotland holding the first ever clan Convention in the Scottish Parliament alongside the International Clan Gathering in Edinburgh in 2009 organised by Lord Sempill. This has laid the groundwork for the transformation of the Council from a passive but useful body to an active and influential.

It is as important to understand what the SCSC does not do as it is to understand what it does. It is not a pressure group or politically motivated in any way. We are not about to raise the clans and storm the English Parliament, exciting as that image may be. We do not comment on government policy or divisive issues such as windfarms or Scottish independence. We do not interfere with how a clan chief conducts their business within their clan. Clan chiefs remain, and always will be, autonomous.

What the SCSC does is build on the Common "standard" – or brand of a chief – which is the three feathers of the golden eagle. This should be a mark of quality, a mark that has been respected for countless generations and is a symbol of a deep rooted authority and authenticity.

The Scottish Government has declared 2014 a Year of Homecoming. The focus will be the 700th anniversary of the Battle of Bannockburn which took place on June 24 1314. Plans are only now being considered and the Council is looking hard at how the chiefs and clans will fit into the overall structure of events to be held during the summer of 2014.

The Executive Committee consists of:

Convenor – Sir Malcolm MacGregor of MacGregor,  
Vice Convenor – Margaret Eliott of Redheugh,  
Treasurer – David Irvine of Drum,  
The Earl of Caithness, Lord Sempill,  
Donald Maclaren of Maclaren,  
Andrew MacThomas of Finegand,  
The Hon. Alexander Leslie,  
James Macnab of Macnab and  
Secretary – Romilly Squire of Rubislaw.

**[www.clanchiefs.org](http://www.clanchiefs.org)**

*Taken from a much longer article written by Sir Malcolm MacGregor of MacGregor in The Highlander Nov/Dec 2011 issue.*

# A BRIGHTER OUTLOOK FOR FATLIPS CASTLE

*After years of vandalism which has left it close to ruin, one of the Borders' most dramatic landmarks is to be saved for future generations to enjoy.*



Fatlips Castle sits in a commanding position on top of Minto Crag, near Denholm with panoramic views of Teviotdale. But it has been besieged over decades by vandals intent on creating mayhem, including hurling slates from its roof and pushing stone work from the parapet.

A joint effort between the Tweed Forum and Minto Estate, which has taken several years to be realised, has resulted in a financial package worth £200,000 being put together to pay for repair work. Tweed Forum is a charitable trust conserving the natural, built and cultural heritage of the Tweed river catchment area and has been coordinating the project on behalf of the Minto Estate.

Fatlips Castle was originally built by the Turnbulls in the 16th century but was completely rebuilt by the ELLIOTS OF MINTO, the current owners, in 1857 and further remodelled as a family museum by Sir Robert Lorimer in 1897.

TIMOTHY MELGUND, the 7th Earl of Minto, is a trained chartered surveyor who now heads up the stationery firm, Paperchase. He said "Up until the 1970s, the castle contained a family museum and was locked up but if people wanted a look round, the key used to hang on the wall at home and could just ask my father to borrow it. Times have changed unfortunately and after the vandalism started it was no longer possible to allow that and it is no longer safe to walk around inside."

Attempts were made to make it secure by erecting breezeblock walls but these were knocked down and cutting equipment was even used to force their way into the castle through the locked doors. When asked whether there would be any possibility in the future of the public being allowed access inside the castle, Lord Minto said there was no longer anything to see inside the building and that its special quality is the position it occupies, standing sentinel over some of the finest views in Teviotdale.

*Fatlips Castle can be seen positioned dramatically on a clifftop on the road between Hawick and Jedburgh.*



# NEWS FROM OUR CLAN GENEALOGIST

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## An unusual Ancestral Connection

Most of the Clan members will have joined the Clan Society with a variation of the Elliot name in their family history. Elliot of any spelling is not an uncommon surname. There are, for instance over 100,000 births between 1837 and 1983 in the General Registry.

However, one recent member has a most unusual and probably unique Elliot connection with Gilbert, 1st Earl of Minto who was born in 1751. As Governor General of Bengal 1807-1813 he took Mauritius from the French, subdued Borneo and took Java from the Dutch. He was created 1st Earl of Minto and died in June 1814 on his way home to Scotland.

Before leaving India Gilbert had been given a young boy, aged around 10-14 years old, having been a slave to the Rajah of Bali. He was given the name John Friend by the Earl and brought back to Britain where he became a servant of the family and eventually a footman and valet.

Such a gift, now considered unthinkable, was not considered undesirable in the early 19th century and John Friend was looked after well. It was not long after this that Wilberforce's Abolition of Slavery came into law in 1833.

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## The Elliott Brothers factory in 1895



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*Brothers Charles and Frederick Elliott ran a business from 1850 manufacturing navigational equipment. The company went into the new aviation industry producing early aircraft instruments. See page 5.*

# ELLIOTT BROTHERS TO BAE SYSTEMS

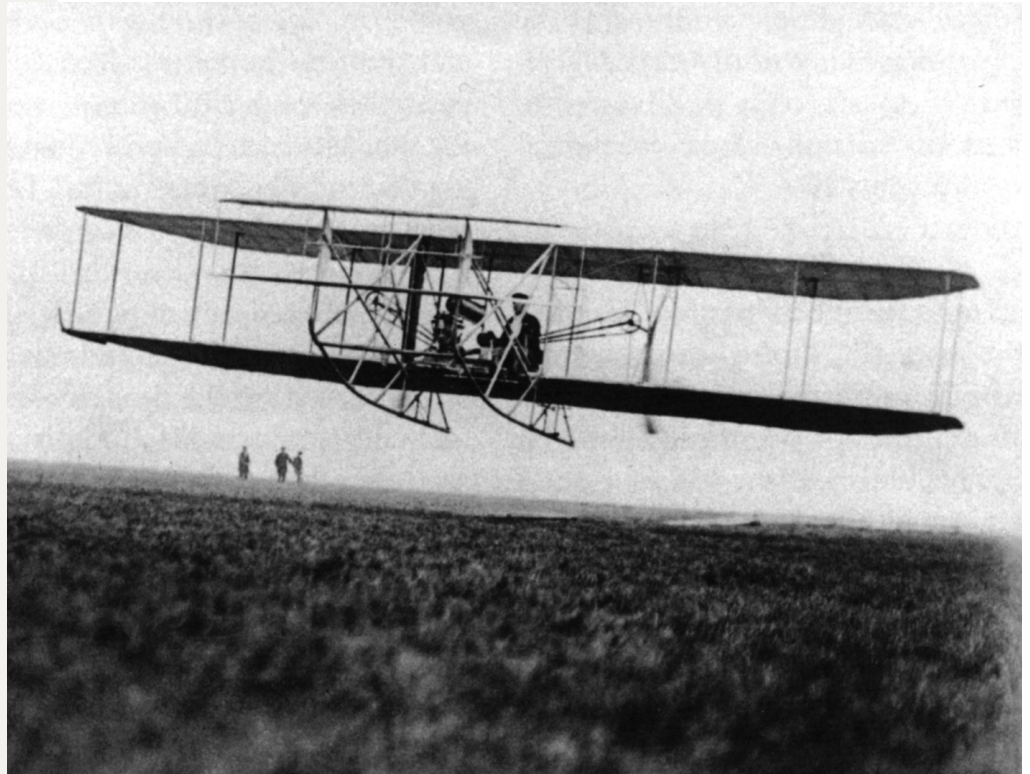


*Frederick Elliott (above) and  
Charles Elliott (below).*



*WILLIAM ELLIOTT was born in 1780 or 1781 in the parish of St. Andrew, Holborn, London and in 1795 was bound apprentice for seven years to William Backwell, a compass and drawing instrument maker. William established his own first business in 1800 and trading under his own name of W. Elliott, making drawing instruments and mathematical scales many of which survive and described himself as a mathematical, optical and philosophical instrument maker.*

*With thanks to David Elisha  
of Romford.*



**Editor's Note:** *The above Short Brothers airplane was piloted by Frank McLean, maternal grandfather of Margaret Elliott, who was the founder of the Fleet Air Arm and brought the original Wright Brothers engineering plans back to the UK after a demonstration of flight by them in Le Mans, France. He used this photograph as his Christmas card in 1911.*

In 1850 his two sons, Frederick Henry and Charles Alfred joined him in the business and began trading as WILLIAM ELLIOTT AND SONS. William died in 1853 but the company thrived under his sons and before long the company, WILLIAM BROS. was producing most of the standard optical, surveying, navigational for home and overseas customers.

In 1877 CHARLES ELLIOTT died and FREDERICK continued to run the business as sole proprietor but left the business to his wife SUSAN on his death in 1873. She established new works in St. Martins Lane, London to supply the growing demand for telegraph equipment and took on a new business partner, Willoughby Smith, a famous telegraph engineer.

From these beginnings the company went into the new industry of aviation manufacturing accelerometers and was in the forefront of several types of aircraft instrument for general use such as the tachometer used by Tommy Sopwith on a record distance flight to Belgium on 18th December 1910.

As early as 1910 a panel of Elliott instruments was being offered as an 'optional extra' by Short Brothers who had established the first aircraft factory in the world, on the Isle of Sheppey, making aeroplanes based on designs by the Wright Brothers.

After many changes of name in 1968 the GEC, AEI, English Electric and Elliott-Automation were forged into two major groups. GEC-Marconi Electronics incorporated Elliott Flight Automation and became in 1969 Marconi-Elliott Avionic Systems Ltd. The trading name of ELLIOTT BROS. LONDON was finally dropped in 1986.

*POSTSCRIPT: In July 1966 The Royal Liberty School in Gidea Park laid claim to the first ever computer in a British school and possibly all of Europe. The size of a large desk and costing £17,000 the ELLIOTT 903 was the same model used by Nasa. In 1970 the computer was moved to the former Quarles Secondary School site in Harold Hill and used as a resource in the community.*



## THE BOLLOCK DAGGER . . .

The **bollock dagger** or **ballock knife** is a type of dagger with a distinctively shaped shaft, with two oval swellings at the guard resembling male genitalia ("bollocks").

The guard is often in one piece with the wooden grip, and reinforced on top with a shaped metal washer.

The dagger was popular in Scandinavia, Flanders, England and Scotland between the 13th and 18th centuries, in particular the Tudor period.

In England the bollock dagger was **commonly carried by many Border Reivers**, as a backup for the lance and the sword.

A large number of such weapons were found aboard

the wreck of the Mary Rose. In use, the bollock dagger was similar to the Scottish dirk.

In the Victorian period weapon historians introduced the term kidney dagger, due to the two lobes at the guard, which could also be seen as kidney-shaped, in order to avoid any sexual connotation. (Blair 1962).

The hilt was often constructed of box root (dudgeon) in the 16th and 17th centuries, and the dagger was sometimes called dudgeon dagger or dudgeonhafted dagger in this period.

The bollock dagger is the source of the expression, to get, or give, a "bollocking", meaning to give or receive a severe chastisement.

## We welcome the following new members to the Society

### UNITED STATES

US3511 Gladieux, Jennifer Elizabeth, Alexandria VA  
US3512 Elliott, Mike, Monterey CA  
US3513 Cota, Margaret D. Peacham VT  
US3514 Poulin, Howie, Epping HN  
US3515 Placketchi, Katie Elliott, Benton NH  
US3516 Elliott, Kyle, Santa Ana, CA  
US3517 Elliott, James, Lehigh, FL  
US3518 Elliott, Brian, superior CO  
US3519 Elliott, Philip W., High Ridge MO  
US3520 Elliot, Richard M., St. Louis MO  
US3521 Elliott, Stewart Thomas, Jefferson GA  
US3522 Goodwin, Sonja Elliott, Marietta GA  
US3523 Herzon, Joan, Fresno CA  
US3524 Jacoby, Barbara L., Altadena CA  
US3525 Elliott, Paula Jean, Apollo Beach, FL  
US3526 Perry, Trudy Lynne, Copperas TX  
US3527 Elliott, Nancy J., Brevard NV  
US3528 Elliott, James & Kirsten, Mt. Laurel NJ  
US3529 Hollett, Melanie, Prtist River ID  
US3530 Waters, Susan C., Hobbs NM  
US3531 Bilyeu, Meg, Tulsa OK  
US3532 Battles, Carolyn Elliott, Rockville MD  
US3533 Battles, James Elliott, Richardson TX

### UNITED STATES

US3534 Battles USN, Timothy K., Brunswick ME  
US3535 Elliott, Chip S. Poway, CA  
US3536 Hope, George M., Gainesville FL  
US3537 Lowstuter, Judy, Anandale VA  
US3538 Corby, Michael, Jax FL  
US3539 Elliot, Andrew Robert, Manchester CT

### CANADA

C1093 Elliott, Michael John, Vancouver BC  
C1094 Johnson, Elden J., East Jordan MI  
C1095 Elliott, Howard & Patricia, Winnipeg MB

### UNITED KINGDOM

E456 Greenwood, K.D., Clitheroe, Lancashire  
W8 Baron, Dr. Charles, Mold, Flintshire

### AUSTRALIA

A308 Donnan, Mrs. Karen E. Cairns, QLD  
A309 Elliott, James L. Karrinyup WA

### NEW ZEALAND

N322 Stewart, Mr & Mrs S K., West Melton, Christchurch.

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