



ELLIOT CLAN SOCIETY Newsletter

No. 70 – Spring 2013

Redheugh, Newcastleton,
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

There has been a great deal of activity at Redheugh to spruce it up for all our visitors. A new two bedroom cottage has been created out of one of the old barns, an ancient shed demolished and new greenhouse and acres of new gravel. Drainage and fencing is being improved upon and trees planted. Last year was the wettest on record and we are desperately hoping it was a one off! For those planning to visit the Borders for the first time, I have given them a few ideas in this issue about what there is to see in this area. Of course, there is Edinburgh and the Highlands too. No shortage of scenery in Scotland!

In this issue, a story of a family of intrepid and entertaining Elliots and an address my father gave on the Battle of Flodden in 1779. I have brought it out and dusted it off as it gives a clear resume on the effects of this terrible battle and why 500 years later it is an important if tragic part of the history of Scotland. Elliots fought and died in this battle.

The Canadian Elliots have a change of leadership and there is a short background note on the new president, Catherine Elliot-Shaw. You will, I am sure, be impressed by her considerable achievements. She and her husband, John, are coming to the Gathering and will get us all on the dance floor at the Ceilidh!

Christopher and I are looking forward to our trip to Atlanta in October. The Stone Mountain Highland Games is an impressive and well organised event and I was delighted to be asked to be this year's Guest of Honour.

A special plea for help to those who have a special interest or expertise in genealogy. Our clan society relies on the time and generosity of our members. Ken Blaiklock has given us a great deal of his time and energy and I hope there is somebody out there who can give him some help to carry on his work for the Clan.

See you soon!

Yours sincerely,

Margaret Elliott of Redheugh

NOTICES AND NEWS ITEMS

HELP WANTED – Ken Blaiklock has been a tireless archivist and researcher in Elliot genealogy for quite a number of years and has built up a considerable database of Elliot kinsmen. Due to difficult family circumstances he needs some assistance with this genealogical work and dealing with requests from our members. If you would like to help please contact the clan headquarters redheugh@btinternet.com

Keith Elliot Hunter has been researching in depth the origins of the Elliot name and has revealed some fascinating Breton connections as featured in the last issue of the newsletter. He has been appointed the Clan Elliot Society historian and will be attending the Gathering with his family in August 2013.

Sounds of the Borders – A compilation on CD of music and readings from Borders artistes and writers. Produced for Borders Talking Newspaper by Joy Chatters to celebrate its 1000th edition and 20 years of providing weekly recordings of audio extracts from local papers to the visually impaired in the Scottish Borders. £8.99 available from the Elliot merchandise list.

Stone Mountain Highland Games Atlanta, Georgia

The Chief will be Guest of Honour at this event over the weekend of the 19th and 20th October 2013. More information will be in The Signal Tower and on the websites but there is an Elliot dinner being planned for the evening of Saturday 19th October.

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

2013 ELLIOT CLAN GATHERING

We are all very much looking forward to seeing a good turn out for this year's gathering. At this point (March) we still have seats available for the **Flodden coach trip** on Sunday but it is proving popular so book early to avoid disappointment.



This memorial stone stands on the site of the Battle of Flodden Field, above Branxton near Cornhill on Tweed. The memorial plaque reads: "To the Brave of Both Nations."

Saturday evening: There may be something organised at Hermitage Hall to entertain you but at this stage it is too vague. If it has come to something you will be able to buy tickets at the Gathering itself. Hopefully we will be able to inform you more fully through the websites.

Some suggestions: Do make time to visit **Hermitage Castle** which is only 5 miles away from Redheugh as it does feature strongly in Elliot history and gives you a flavour of the grim 15th Century.

Hadrians Wall is a World Heritage Site and a great day out. **The Great Abbeys** of Jedburgh, Melrose, Kelso and Dryburgh. **Hawick** has The Heritage Hub, Drumlanrig Textile Museum and Wilton House Museum as well as some great Cashmere factory shops! Another day trip would be Traquair House, **Peebles** and Dawyck Arboretum. **Floors Castle** at Kelso is lovely with a great garden.

For **walking** and **cycling** enthusiasts – there are endless mountain biking opportunities at Newcastleton and throughout the Borders. For walkers, there are some lovely local walks round the village as well as St. Cuthberts' Way and the Southern Upland Way. **Fishing** also available at some beats on the River Liddel.

www.visitnewcastleton.com will be able to fill you in on any local Liddesdale information.

President of the Canadian Clan Elliot

Last November, Catherine Elliot Shaw succeeded Walt Elliot as the new President of the Canadian Region. A member since 1992, Catherine has served in several executive positions in the Ontario West Chapter. She is also an avid Scottish Country Dancer and has taught workshops across North America for over twenty years. Recently, she was awarded The Queen's Diamond Jubilee Medal for her unofficial ambassadorial role promoting Canada during her travels in the United States. Catherine holds two degrees from Western University of London, Ontario: an Honours BA in Art History and Criticism (for which she won the University Gold Medal) and an MA in Public History. She has been the Curator of the McIntosh Gallery at Western University for over 30 years, responsible during that time for over 350 exhibitions and for a permanent collection of over 3,500 art objects.

Red Jasper Intaglio

Walter Elliot, Borders historian, found this Red Jasper Roman intaglio of Caracalla as Augustus under Severus c 207AD on the site of Trimontium in February 1998. Trimontium was the name of the Three Hills Place in the lee of the Eildon Hills one mile from the town of Melrose beside the village of Newstead in the Scottish Borders. In the 1st and 2nd centuries AD there grew up an enormous Romano-native complex which lasted around 100 years. The Centre is in Melrose. The Museum is open every day except Sunday and there are Guided Walks to the site each Tuesday and Thursday from the Heritage Centre and tea included £3. Adults and children free, dogs welcome. 1.30-5.15pm.
www.trimontium.org.uk



Red Jasper Roman intaglio of Caracalla as Augustus under Severus, c 207AD. Measures 16x11mm. Found on the site of Trimontium, February 1998.

On the 9th September 1513 it is exactly 500 years since the disastrous Battle of Flodden. This is being commemorated in lots of different ways around the battlefield (Flodden 1513 website has information on events) and in St. Giles Cathedral in Edinburgh. There is an expedition heading to the battlefield from Liddesdale on the Sunday of the Gathering weekend. In 1979 my father, Sir Arthur Eliott of Stobs, gave an address at the annual Commemoration of the Battle and it seems to be appropriate to repeat some of this address in this 500th anniversary year.

The Flowers of the Forest



Lost flowers of the forest: 'News of Flodden'

Ladies and Gentlemen,

If we are to believe some historians, there were no more ruffianly lot of thieves and cut-throats than the Border Reivers of the 16th Century. This is taking a rather prim view of our past. Even so, as a descendant of one of the more active of the Scottish variety – the Elliots of Liddesdale – perhaps I ought to have had some misgivings in venturing so far into Northumberland today. Yet I feel very much among friends and I regard it as a great privilege to be invited to take part in this Commemoration of Flodden and help keep alive this memorial to the courage of our turbulent ancestors.

Indeed, I agree wholeheartedly with Sir Walter Scott whose imaginations was fired by a visit to this part of Northumberland. He wrote "To add to my satisfaction we are amidst places renowned by feats of former days; each hill is crowned with a tower or camp or cairn; and in no situation can you be near more fields of battle – Flodden, Otterburn and Chevy Chase, Ford Castle, Chillingham Castle, Coupland Castle and many another scene of blood are within the compass of a forenoon's ride.

However, Scott remained a realist when viewing the field of Flodden and the military tactics of James IV – "Never was an affair more completely bungled than that day's work was". The battle has since been the subject of much careful study by historians, but the verdict remains the same. What should have been a victory for the Scots was turned into defeat by impatience and over-confidence.

In this fact lies much of the sadness of Flodden. A great and noble army was thrown away by its commander, King James IV, a gallant Prince but a poor general. Certainly no event in the whole history of Scotland has made a deeper or more lasting impression on the minds of people than the Battle of Flodden.

Jean Elliot's haunting lines of "The Flowers of the Forest" written 250 years later expressed then and express today the feelings and sentiments of generation after generation of Scottish people.

On the fact of it Flodden was just another of those border battles which had been fought in nearly every generation living on the English-Scottish frontier for 200 years not to mention many other forays and encounters so what distinguishes Flodden from other pitched battles between the Scots and the English. ►

Pictured above – Lost flowers of the forest: 'News of Flodden' by William Brassey Hole (1846-1917)
Photo: City of Edinburgh Museums and Art Galleries, Scotland and The Bridgeman Art Library.



King James IV



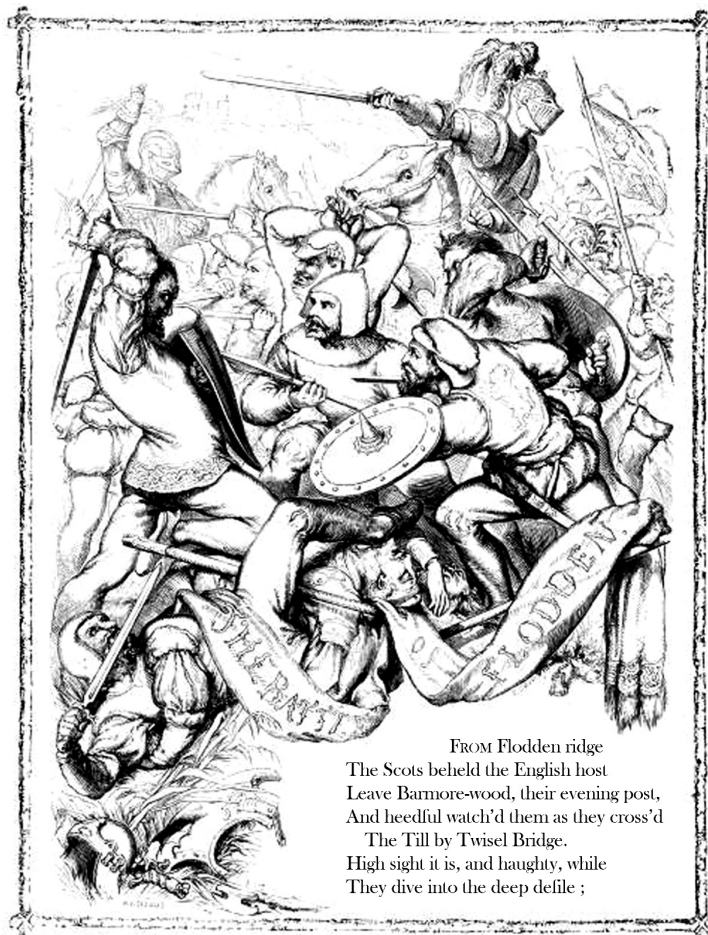
The Earl of Surrey / The 2nd Duke of Norfolk

The Battle of Flodden 1513

Flodden was a disaster and the disaster lay in the loss of so many of the leaders of the nation and of its best and bravest sons. The government of the country was virtually wiped out, leaving old men and infants as heads of state. In my own district of Liddesdale the death of the Earl of Bothwell left all in confusion, justice courts abandoned and the borders generally fallen into what was described as “in great ruyne and out of all good order.” There was scarcely a single family in the land that did not mourn the death of one of its number. It is said that, of the eighty men who marched out from Selkirk, only one returned. Some 10,000 men, more than a quarter of the army, were left dead on the field. Considering that the whole population of Scotland was no larger than Edinburgh today, the size of the catastrophe can be better understood. In addition, the crucial importance of the King in the semi-feudal hierarchy of the times – he was indeed the lynch-pin of mediaeval society – and the effects of his death on the battlefield become clear. James IV was perhaps the most able and certainly the most popular of all the nine Stuart Kings who ruled in Britain, the growing prosperity and dawning Renaissance in Scotland was brought to an abrupt halt and nation thrown back into its old mediaeval anarchy for almost another 100 years.

Historians have been inclined to underrate the importance of Flodden, perhaps because its effects were largely indirect. The power and independence of the border clans or surnames, the raiding and reiving which is today so much a part of our heritage, trace their beginnings to this battle and to the anarchy and misgovernment that followed it. If, added to the disorder and confusion, you consider the confidence which this victory gave to Henry VIII in his plans to reduce Scotland to a vassal state and make himself its master, the subsequent history of the borders becomes clearer.

The historian Andrew Lang observed, “No defeat bore less of dishonor, no battle lost by chivalrous folly was ever so well redeemed by desperate valour.”



FROM Flodden ridge
The Scots beheld the English host
Leave Barmore-wood, their evening post,
And heedful watch'd them as they cross'd
The Till by Twisel Bridge.
High sight it is, and haughty, while
They dive into the deep defile ;

*Pictured right –
The Battle of Flodden:
Henry Courtney Selous
(1803-90) 1846.
Electrotype of wood engraving
by C. Gray. 6.5 X 5 inches.
Source: Poems and Pictures, 71.
Image scan and text
by Simon Cooke.
With acknowledgement to
The Victorian Web website.*

James Bedford Elliott (1846-1906) was born in Middlesborough, Yorkshire, to a blacksmith, Thomas Elliott and his wife Mary Elliott. He and his brothers followed in their father's footsteps becoming blacksmiths or vocations related to the trade. After serving an engineering apprenticeship and spending a season with a circus James settled down to building 'Old Bone Shakers' and became an expert bicycle trick rider and racer winning money and medals. At the same time improving on cycle design and manufacture.

James' eldest son, Tom, took an interest in the bicycles from the age of three. His father made a tiny wood-wheeled bicycle for him which he was constantly attached to. As a result he became the first boy bicycle champion, winning first place, three pounds and a gold medal in the first junior bicycle race in Wolverhampton. His little sister, Kate followed his example.



As The Elliott-Savonas moved their cycling/musical act from town to town, this car owned by JB Elliott was loaded on a railway flatcar and taken off right before they reached the next site of their performances, pretending they had driven all the way.

THE CYCLING ELLIOTTS



The Elliott Family evolved into a musical bicycling act, playing fifty instruments among them. Later they changed the name of their troupe to The Elliott-Savonas.

Tom also became an acrobat on his bicycle, riding on the front wheel and turning pirouettes, a feat that was the inspiration for James' invention of the unicycle. With this new invention Tom learned to ride on the table while it was being rotated in the opposite direction. Tom, and his brother Jim, then both boys and a sister and finally all four – Kate, Polly, Tom and Jim were simultaneously circling on the rotating table.

The difficulty of the Elliot kids' stunts progressed over time of which the trickiest segment of their performance was the Revolving Wheel of Fire. In the early years of the act, the youth and bravery of the performers added to their appeal. James described an incident during their performance for the King of Sweden and Norway:

"The idea of performing before a real live king set the hearts of the little ones beating high with curiosity. Little Polly, straining her little eyes to catch a glimpse of this august family forgot herself for one moment. Turning her head away from the direction of her bicycle, she collided with Kate, a spill being the result, the latter falling from the stage. King Oscar seeing the little girl in this sorry plight, rose and lifted little Kate from her ignominious position. Quieting her little fears and caressing her, His Majesty restored the child to her father and at once sent his physician to the back of the stage, but to their surprise on his arrival Miss Kate was once more pegging away in the continuance of the programme."

On 12 March 1883, having already secured a contract with the Barnum-Bailey-Hutchinson circus, the family arrived in New York City which became their base for the next fifteen years. Despite a highly publicized trial brought by the society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children the judge (who had watched their performance) dismissed the case earning great publicity for the Elliotts and earning them the title "The Only Children Allowed to Perform by Law in America".

During 1894-1895 they performed in Cuba and by the time they returned to New York the family had two new additions; Tom's new wife, Eloina (an acrobat and trapeze artist) and their five month old daughter, Violetta.

The Cycling Elliotts returned to England in 1898 and toured widely throughout the British Isles. They dissolved their act at some point during the period 1904-1907 leading them to concentrate on making revisions to the Elliott Savona act. By 1907 they were billed for twice-nightly performances at the Empire Palace Theatre in Edinburgh but now as The Elliot Savonas.

They enjoyed a most successful career, one that gave rise to a showbusiness family tradition that, under such billings as the Elliott Savonas, The Seven Elliotts, Hazel's candies, and The Musical Elliotts continued to entertain audiences throughout the middle of the twentieth century.

We welcome the following new members to the Society

AUSTRALIA

A321 Williams, Mrs Betty, Penneshaw,
Kangaroo Island

CANADA

C1100 Westby, Jayde Krisanda, Calgary AB T2J 6W3

C1101 Sherry, Cameron & Winnifred, Howick QC J0S 1G0

C1102 Fawcett, Patricia, Calgary AB T3A 0P8

NEW ZEALAND

N327 Brookes, Lois, Motueka

UNITED KINGDOM

E460 Elliot, Mr Mark & Family, Whitley Bay,
Tyne & Wear

E461 Elliott, John Henry, Bedwell, Stevenage, Herts

E462 Sutton, Mr Lynn M., Nanpean, St. Austell,
Cornwall

E463 Elliott, Mr. Terry M. Chesterfield, Derbyshire

E464 Elliott, Mr & Mrs. Bryan W., Chippenham,
Wiltshire

E465 Bamford, Elizabeth & Danny, New Eltham, London

E466 Foster, Angus J. Elliot, Kensington Park Rd, London

E467 Agnew, Mrs. Doreen, Distington, Cumbria

E468 Thompson, Mrs. Jean., Cockermouth, Cumbria.

S152 Elliot, Samuel S. Bo'ness, West Lothian.

UNITED STATES

US3575 Elliott, Richard, Winnetka IL

US3576 Elliott, Gary, Tulsa, Ok 74133

US3577 Elliott, Dennis E., Royal Oak, MI 48073

US3578 Voss, Jeanne Elliott, Thornton CO 80229

US3579 Folkes, Rebecca Stanton, McDonough GA 30252

US3580 Modisett, Barbara, Chapel Hill, NC 27617

US3581 Elliott, Jeffrey Darrell, Beaverton OR 97007

US3582 Brown, Elizabeth Elliott, Modesto CA 95357

US3583 Regalado, Carol Elliott, Brentwood CA 94513

US3584 Elliott, Dennis, San Jose CA 95120

US3585 Elliott, Britt, Vallejo CA 94590

US3586 Fry, Joel APO, AP 09459

US3587 Biddex, Richard & Trina, Felton CA 95018

US3588 Holmes, Dave, Discovery Bay CA 94505

US3589 Steele, Richard Elliott, Berkeley CA 94707

US3590 Hall, Nancy R. Concord CA 04521

US3591 DiLoreto, Daniel & Patti, San Antonio TX 78227

US3592 Elliott, Nancy J., Amherst NH 03031

US3593 Hile, Nate Alea, Stevensville MT 59870

US3594 Lucas, Ralph, Bethlehem NH 03574

US3595 Snyder, Susan Macleod, Tarzana CA 91356

US3596 Ducey, Michael Elliott, Okatie SC 29909

US3597 Elliot, Doug, Houston TX 77094

US3598 Elliott, Robert J. Middleburg Heights OH 44130

US3599 Elliott, Roger C. Redding, CA 96003

US3600 Elliott, Marvin Benjamin, Durham NC 27707

US3601 Seitz, Patricia Elliott, Liverpool NY 13088

US3602 Simmons, Dennis, Dallas GA 30157

US3603 Elliott, Jason J. North Reading MA 01864

US3604 Kjos, Robin, Tacoma WA 98409

US3605 Elliott, Herbert & Danna, San Antonio TX 78227

US3606 Callahan, Barbara, Springfield MO 05807

US3607 Slater, Shawn & Tracy, Alexandria VA 22301

US3608 Supnet Jr., Freddie & Tina, San Jose CA 95127

US3609 Ferguson, David E., Southfield, MI 48033

US3610 Elliott, Steven Allen, Wasilla, AK 99687

US3611 Elliott Jr., Thomas R., Bixby OK 74009

US3612 Kiefer, Stephen, Nathaniel & Christopher,
Naperville, IL 60563

US3613 Kiefer, Nancy Louise, Madison WI 53705

US3614 Elliott, Christopher, Toronto M6P AH6 CANADA

US3615 Limpose, Cynthia, Sebring FL 33870

US3616 Elliot, Gavin Tudor, Orlando FL 32812

US3617 Elliott, Rick, Kentfield, CA 94904

US3618 Brown, Kathy, Roseburg OR 97470

US3619 Elliott, Jonathon & Evelyn, Lompoc CA 93436

US3620 Smotherman, Clyde & Mildred, Union MO 63084

US3621 Smotherman Sr., Greg & Anita, Cuba MO 65454

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