



# ELLIOT CLAN SOCIETY Newsletter

No. 82 – Spring 2019

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 Kinsmen,

*This has been a particularly sad new year with the news of the deaths of too many friends.*

*Dommie Elliot, a Trustee, was a kind and charming man, a scion of the great Minto line and very proud of his family's illustrious history.*

*Also, many of you will remember John C. K. Elliott, larger than life and great fun who, with his wife Angela, attended all the Gatherings since the beginning and gave his time and legal brain to setting up the Sir Arthur Elliott Memorial Trust. We will miss them both.*

*Also Janet Danforth, Commissioner South Carolina, who heroically made it to the dinner in North Carolina last summer and Carol who organized our visit to Grandfather Mountain so beautifully. Both of them became good friends and are a terrific loss.*

*In this issue, plans for a new hardback edition of The Elliots with the addition of a brief resume of new research on The Origins of the Clan. The dramatic story of Wee Jock Elliot and an artist called Arthur Elliot who painted Montrealers but of whom I know nothing else. Somebody reading this may be able to fill me in?*

*We are starting work on Foulshiels cottage any day now with a view to renting it out for holiday lets. In the next newsletter I hope to be able to report it 'open for business' !!*

Yours sincerely,

Margaret Elliott of Redheugh

## NOTICES AND NEWS ITEMS

**Our New Treasurer,** Sandra Inglis, is bringing our UK membership records up to date, so you may well receive a reminder to update your Standing Order Mandates. This has been a rather complicated operation and I hope that we have not made any errors. **Please, where possible, put your membership number** as it is sometimes difficult to identify one Elliott from another !!!

### Letter in The Times:

Sir, I was interested to see that Frank Wild, Ernest Shackleton's second-in-command, ate penguins while awaiting rescue on Elephant Island in 1916, and found that "the legs taste like mutton and the breast very like hare." SIR GERALD ELLIOT also ate penguins while wintering over at the whaling station on South Georgia in the 1960s and when subsequently asked what they tasted like he replied with his usual straight face that they tasted "not unlike cormorant."

### Tour Guide for the Borders:

Alistair Cunningham of Clans and Castles Ltd is highly recommended. Based in Hawick, so he knows his way around the history of the Borders. The website: [www.clansandcastles.scot](http://www.clansandcastles.scot) email: [info@clansandcastles.com](mailto:info@clansandcastles.com)

### Acquired for the Clan Room Library:

"A narrative of the life and death of John Elliot, M.D.' containing an account of the rise, progress, and catastrophe of his unhappy passion for Miss Mary Boydell; a review of his writings. Together with an Apology, written by himself..."

Published by Gale Ecco Print Editions.

### VISITING THE 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)

# Obituary

**The Hon. Dominic Elliot**



Trustee of the Clan Elliot Society, he died peacefully on 3rd October 2018 aged 87. Much loved husband of Jane, beloved father of Alexander, Esmond, Violet and George and grandfather to Lara, Alice, and Flora. After a funeral in Salisbury, he was interred at Minto Churchyard in the Borders.

He was a prominent society figure in the 1950s and 1960s and was a frequent escort of Princess Margaret and later a member of the Mustique set. He was born in 1931, son of the 5th Earl of Minto, by his wife the former Marion Cook; married firstly in 1962 to Countess Marianne Esterházy, and married a 2nd time in 1983 to Jane Caroline Reeve. Dommie loved the Borders where he grew up and was a great supporter of the Clan Society and gave encouragement whenever he could. He had great charm and was proud of his family's history.

## Mary, Queen of Scots

Mary Stuart, 1542-1587, Queen of Scotland and Dowager Queen of France. Daughter of James V of Scotland and Marie de Guise. Her second marriage was to Lord Darnley who was murdered in very mysterious circumstances. The Earl of Bothwell was suspected of causing his death.



In the mid 16th century, such was the level of violence on the border with England and Scotland, that the Earl of Bothwell was dispatched with a strong force to Liddesdale to deal with the troublemakers. He arrived at Hermitage Castle about the same time as Mary arrived in Jedburgh to attend court and deal with wrongdoers.

While attending to her civic duties in Jedburgh, news reached Mary that Bothwell had been seriously hurt during an encounter with the reivers and lay helpless at Hermitage Castle. She decided to go to Hermitage there and then to attend to him.

The route took the party over huge tracts of open moorland and bog. It was difficult terrain and foul

weather and more than once Mary's horse stumbled in the bog and only with difficulty found firm ground. On one occasion she lost her watch along with other possessions.

For 300 years Mary's watch lay where she had dropped it, until it was picked up by a farm worker digging a drainage channel. It had been well preserved and is now on display at Queen Mary's House in Jedburgh.

Later, after being held in captivity by Elizabeth I of England, she said "Would that I had died in Jedburgh."

Mary was executed at Fotheringay Castle on the orders of Queen Elizabeth in 1587. It is said that she died with dignity and great courage.



British artist **Arthur Elliot** sketched dozens of lively pictures of Montréal, Canada, during his visit there from September 1881 to March 1882. He had a sharp eye for the details of daily life and recorded them with an equally sharp wit.

The winter months, in particular, were of interest to Elliot, who recorded the various sleighs and the winter dress of Montréalers, and painted charming watercolours of skating carnivals and of children sledding on city streets.



# Wha daur meddle wi' me

*Ma castle is aye ma ain,  
An' herried it never shall be,  
For I maun fa' ere it's taen,  
An' wha daur meddle wi' me?*

*Wi' ma kit i' the rib o' ma naig,  
Ma sword hingin' doon by ma knee,  
For man I am never afraid,  
An' wha daur meddle wi' me?*

*Wha daur meddle wi' me?  
Wha daur meddle wi' me?  
Oh, ma name it's wee Jock Elliot,  
An' wha daur meddle wi' me?*

*Fierce Bothwell I vanquished clean,  
Gar'd troopers an' fitmen flee;  
By my faith I dumfoondert the Queen,  
An' wha daur meddle wi' me?*

*Along by the dead water stank,  
Jock Fenwick I met on the lea,  
But his saddle was toom in a clank,  
An' wha daur meddle wi' me?*

*Wha daur meddle wi' me?  
Wha daur meddle wi' me?  
Oh, ma name it's wee Jock Elliot,  
An' wha daur meddle wi' me?*



James Hepburn 1st Earl of Bothwell had been appointed by Mary, Queen of Scots as Lieutenant of the Middle March and Keeper of Liddesdale, responsible for law and order on the frontier between England and Scotland.

Bothwell was eager to take on the mission as it was a chance to display his courage and loyalty to the queen. At this stage there was no hint of romance between them as both were married to other people. In his capacity as Keeper he used Hermitage Castle as his base for overseeing the rule of law in the area and he had managed to round up some Armstrongs and put them under strong guard in the Castle.

On an October day Bothwell had ridden out with a company and came across John Elliot on his own – more commonly called Wee Jock Elliot (*As is the way of nicknames, he was probably a very big fellow - Ed*). As Bothwell had the superior mount he had ridden ahead of his group and came across Wee Jock. A struggle ensued in which Jock was sent sprawling and Bothwell, seeing this as an opportunity not to be missed, dismounted and approached the apparently lifeless reiver.

Jock was not seriously injured but feigned death while watching as Bothwell approached. Bothwell misjudged the ground and slipped becoming “so hurt that he swooned.” Jock, despite being shot in the thigh, summoned the strength to attack Bothwell with a two-handed sword causing three wounds – one in the body, one in the head and one in the hand.

Bothwell was left for dead, bloodied and lying in the heather, until his troopers caught up and discovered him badly, but not mortally, wounded. He was dragged back to Hermitage Castle on a sledge.

However, this was not the end of his problems and on their return he found the imprisoned Armstrongs had escaped and overpowered their guards. They refused Bothwell entrance to his own Castle.

It was Robert Elliot of the Shaws who stepped in and negotiated terms with the Armstrongs letting them go as free men and in return allowing access for the wounded man. In return for this service Robert Elliot was awarded the rents and duties of the lands of Blackgrave.

Without medical aid Bothwell would have certainly died. We know that Wee Jock Elliot still lived and was at liberty according to the reliable source of Sir John Forster, the Warden of the English Middle March. There is no record of his subsequent apprehension.

*Taken from an article by Derek Stewart in The Highlander, January 2019.*



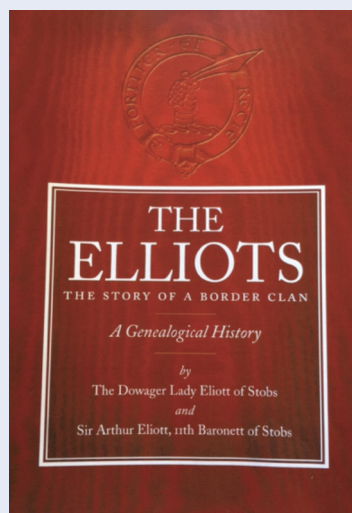
*Pictured left: The Earl of Bothwell and Little Jock Elliot, from the G & S Embleton painting.*

# The Elliots, The Story of a Border Clan . . .

A third edition of **The Elliots, The Story of a Border Clan** is in the planning stage of a re-issue this summer.

The cost will be £65.00 per copy excluding postage. There is a pre-publication cost of £60.00 excluding postage. If you would like to order a copy please email [redheugh@btinternet.com](mailto:redheugh@btinternet.com) with mailing address and postage preference (ie. Airmail or surface mail).

This edition will also include a summary of K. E. Hunter's research on the Origins of the Clan.



*The story of the Elliots, from their arrival in Liddesdale to the present day, is contained in "The Elliots, Story of a Border Clan" written by Sir Arthur Eliott of Stobs, Bt. and the Dowager Lady Eliott.*

## ORIGINS OF THE CLAN

*By Keith Elliot Hunter — Appendix B*

In 1688, Walter Scott of Satchells published his *Metrical History of the Honourable Families of Scot and Elliot In Two Parts*, which made the claim, in his inimitable doggerel, that he had overheard his 'good sir' tell the story of the Elliots:

*The town of Elliot was their antiquitie,  
Which stands in Angus in the foot of Glenshie;  
With brave King Robert they hither came,  
Which is three hundred and eighty years ago;  
In West Tiviotdale\* these gentlemen did dwell,  
There were twelve great families, I heard my good-sir tell;  
Their chief was a baron of renown,  
Designed Reid-heugh, which is now called Lariston.*

\*An old description of Liddesdale.

Satchell's 'good sir' was telling the truth. Aliot, Allot, Eliot (Elliot, Eliott or Elliott) and Elot, are French-corrupted co-variants of an older purely Breton name, Alegouët, spelt also as Elegouët, from which the English Elligott and Ellacott are derived. The names are still found in some numbers today in Haute Bretagne, which used to include the Pays Nantais and Loire Atlantique, as well as in some parts of Normandy.

Around a thousand Breton mercenaries, along with a smaller number of Flemings, joined William the Conqueror in his invasion of England in 1066, and fought on his left flank at the Battle of Hastings. Many of them settled in England and were joined later by Normans and Bretons who supported Henry I (1100-1135) in his fight against his eldest brother, Robert Curthose for the duchy of Normandy. Many of Henry's 'new men' were established by him in unsettled northern English counties and some were soon to find themselves the beneficiaries of the introduction of feudal military tenure in Scotland, by king David I (1124-1153), Henry's Anglo-Gaelic brother-in-law and Earl of Huntingdon.

The hand of Henry can be seen behind the so-called 'Davidian Revolution.' The most important of the Breton men to whom David gave

lands was Walter fitzAlan, the king's 'stewart' (steward or seneschal), progenitor of the Stewart dynasty. The appearance of Eliottstoun in his barony of Renfrew raises a question which is covered elsewhere. It is important to grasp the implications which arise from the exclusivity of Aliot and Eliot, as French-corrupted Breton names.

The feudalization of eastern Scotland, north of the Forth, was accomplished by David's grandsons, King Malcolm IV (1153-65) and King William I, the Lion (1165-1214). It was the latter who installed Elias (a popular medieval Breton name) with lands at Alyth, now in Perthshire. The king's clerks promptly laid a false trail for future historians by following the custom of identifying him by place name, despite his possession, unlike many other Bretons, of a surname, spelt by English chancery clerks, noted for standardized 'English chancery spelling,' as d'Aliot. The spelling of the name, as either Aliot or Eliot, was still fluid.

Elias, perhaps a typically illiterate fighting man, was unaware of, or did not understand the Gaelic aileadh from which Alyth was derived.

Breton settlers are known to have been intensely proud of their Breton identity, and Elias was known more commonly as Elias d'Aliot. (more) >>





## ORIGINS OF THE CLAN

Continued from page 4

Thanks to the digitization of surviving old maps of Angus and Perthshire held by the National Library of Scotland we now know that Alyth itself was for some considerable time more commonly known as Eliot. Alyth appears for the first time in late eighteenth century maps and the tributary of the river Isla, now known as Alyth Burn, was known as Elyeht Water. Two leading cartographers of the modern era finally spelt the name as Eliot. The vill or settlement of Auchtereleot whose situation gives us some idea of the considerable size of the Aliot/Eliot landholding, now appears as Auchter Alyth.

Walter d'Aliot and his brother Thomas, both described by English clerks as esquires, were taken prisoner at the battle of Dunbar in 1295. Walter was taken off to Tonbridge in Kent, and Thomas was still incarcerated at Kenilworth Castle in June, 1298. A fellow prisoner, John, Earl of Atholl, secured his release by guaranteeing his own and his followers' service to Edward I, in his war against the French king. Among his followers were Walter and Thomas d'Aliot.

Most Scots of higher rank and status made their peace with a triumphant Edward I and in 1304, we find Walter d'Aliot and his son, Thomas, acting as witnesses to a charter, along with no less a personage than Roger Mortimer, lord of Wigmore, and father of Roger, Earl of March and lover of Edward II's queen, Isabella, the 'she wolf' of France.

Walter later attended the coronation of Robert Bruce as Robert I, along with the Earl of Atholl whose squire he appears to have been, and for their pains the lands of both men, along with all others who attended, were ordered to be dispossessed of their lands by Edward I. Adam Brunyng, a man of middling rank involved in the earlier capture of William Wallace, petitioned for Walter's lands, described as those of 'the Brae,' but whether he was in a position and had the resources to oust the incumbents is doubtful.

There is little doubt that Liddesdale was seized by Bruce soon after the death of Edward I, in July, 1307, and that it remained under the control of his lieutenants, Sir James Douglas and Sir Thomas Randolph, until 1310, when he undoubtedly began planning and preparing for his great raids into England of 1311 and 1312.

Liddesdale's pro-English keeper, Sir Simon Lindsay, had abandoned Liddesdale and the tenants had fled with their cattle into Cumberland so it was only sparsely populated and only superficially feudalized.

Bruce undoubtedly needed to colonize this strategically important frontier valley prior to the launching of his raids.

Knight service attached to some lands was converted to mounted archer service, and logistics dictated the need for the leaders of warbands to be given land to have and hold. The Elliott holding of Redheugh and the Liddesdale lands indicates that this policy was spearheaded by the Elliots.

# Obituary

**John C. K Elliott MBE,  
1937-2018.**



Qualified as a Lawyer at Manchester University and founded his own firm ELLIOTT & COMPANY. When he retired in 1996 the firm had 175 Partners and employees with an office in London. President of The Manchester Law Society in 1982 and active in the Solicitors Benevolent Association. Awarded an MBE for his charitable work and became Chairman of the Manchester Branch of the NSPCC. He helped set up the Sir Arthur Elliott Memorial Trust and was English commissioner of the Clan Society for 25 years never missing a Gathering.

*Hermitage Castle, Liddesdale, Scottish Border Country*



# We welcome the following new members to the Society

## UNITED KINGDOM

E495 Elliot, Christine, Liverpool, L4 9RB

## CANADA

C1146 Johnson, Andrew & Family, Strathroy  
ON N7G 1J6

## UNITED STATES

US3981 Troh, Stephen, Rock Hill SC 29730

US3982 Elliott, Mason Kelly, Las Vegas NV 89131

US3983 Cudd, Brandon, Lancaster AC 29720

US3984 Bailey, Bruce, Centennial CO 8-112

US3985 Elliott, David L., Hamilton MT 59840

US3986 D'Eramo, Anthony Carmel IN 46032

US3987 Raras, Darian, Novato CA 94949

US3988 Elliott, Catherine, Conway NH 3818

US3989 Elliott, Marty D., Danville KY 40422

US3990 Rudi, Rachel, Barre, VT 5641

US3991 Carl, Stephanie, Jacksonville Beach FL 32250

US3992 Carl, Steven, Jacksonville Beach FL 32259

US3993 Valines, Francisco, Independence KY 41051

US3994 Nowack, Keith B., Acworth, GA 30101

## UNITED STATES

US3995 Stiles, Martha, Gridley CA 95948

US3996 Stiles, Corrinne, Gridley CA 95948

US3997 Elliott, Elinor, Portland OR 97213

US3998 Elliott, Karen, Ocala FL 34471

US3999 Elliott, Diana, Syracuse NY 13207

US4000 Johnson, Eileen, Fairfax VA 22033

US4001 Fuhs, Tim, Pismo Beach CA 93449

US4002 Young, Sally J, Mendham NJ 7948

US4003 Elliott, James, Alvin TX 77511

US4004 Brown, Verne, Antelope CA 95843

US4005 Charles, Ronnie, Scottsbluff NE 69361

US4006 Bordenkecher, Theresa, Wheaton IL 60187

US4007 Elliott, Reba Janet, Jacksonville FL 32223

US4008 Elliott, Ralph Earl, Jacksonville FL 32223

US4009 Elliott, Harold W. Phoenix AZ 85045

US4010 Combs, Susan, Deltona FL 37525

US4011 Lesman, John, Ocoee FL 34761

US4012 Slone, Nan, Orl FL 32836

US4013 Boggs, Elizabeth, Hillsboro OR 97124

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



## HAWICK REIVERS FESTIVAL

22-24  
March  
2019

Step back in time to the mid sixteenth century when the Borderlands were an area of constant feuding – when loyalties were to kinship rather than king and country and when “Reiving” was a means of survival.

Through music, drama and re-enactments experience what life was really like for the men and women in the Border Marches.

Hawick Reivers Festival aims to help visitors

and townsfolk alike Experience, Explore and will endeavour to Explain day to day life in this violent and turbulent period of our history.

Fiercely loyal and independent, hard-working and prepared to fight for what they believed in these men and women of the 1500's did much to shape the character of the modern day Borderers.

visit our website at: [www.hawickreivers.com](http://www.hawickreivers.com)