



# CLAN ELLIOTT

## ARMS

Gules, on a bend Or a baton Azure

## CREST

A hand couped at the wrist in amour holding a cutlass in bend Proper

## MOTTO

Fortier et recte (Boldly and rightly)

## On Compartment

Soyez sage (Be wise)

## SUPPORTERS

(on a compartment embellished with white hawthorn Proper) Dexter, a ram; sinister, a goat (both supporters Proper, gorged with a laurel branch Vert, horned Gules, hooved Or)

## STANDARD

The Arms in the hoist and of two tracts Gules and Or, upon which is depicted the Crest three times along with the Motto 'Soyez sage' in letters Or upon two transverse bands Azure

## PLANT BADGE

White hawthorn

Outside the small circle of the nobility and great land families, few individuals or their kin are well recorded in Scottish medieval history, but the obscurity surrounding the origin of the Eliotts, who suddenly make their appearance as a distinct clan with a chief in the late fifteenth century, is unusual even by the sparse standards of such records. This lack of information can probably be traced to the destruction of the old castle at Stobs in a fire in 1712, when all the family documents, with a single exception, were burnt.

According to family tradition, the Elliot's (as the name was then spelt) came from Angus at the foot of Glensire, and moved to Teviotdale at the time of Robert the Bruce. It is true that to move from the north to the Borders, as suggested by the Elliott tradition, would be considered as exceptional. However, in 1320 where occurred in Liddesdale an event of some note which might lend credence to the tale. In that year, William de Soulis, one of the most powerful nobles in Scotland, whose family had for nearly two hundred years held the Lordship of Liddesdale, was convicted of treason against Robert the Bruce and imprisoned for life. All his lands were forfeited. Two years later Liddesdale, together with the great Borders fortress of Hermitage Castle, was made over to Bruce's illegitimate son, Robert. On the occasion of so sudden and dramatic a change in the lordship, it would scarcely be remarkable for Bruce to ensure his hold on the strategically important frontier region by encouraging the settlement of a loyal and tested clan- such as the Elliot's - in the district.

It is known from a Berwickshire pedigree that Elliott of Redheugh was living in the early 1400's. John Elwalde from Teviotdale is recorded in 1426. Robert Elliot of Redheugh appears as the tenth chief in 1476, and from that time the formal history of the clan can be said to have begun. In 1470 he built a strong tower on a cliff overlooking the ford on Hermitage Water. This was one of about one hundred strong towers belonging to the Elliots which were dotted around Liddesdale, which they shared with the Armstrongs, another of the great Borders riding clans.

They fought at Flodden where Robert, thirteenth chief was killed along with James IV and the flower of Scottish nobility. In 1565 a deadly feud developed between the Elliots and their neighbors, the Scots. Scott of Buccleuch, ancestor of the present duke, executed four Elliots for the minor crime of cattle rustling. Three hundred Elliots rode to avenge their kinsmen. The losses on both sides were heavy, but the Scots thought better of matters, and came to terms with the Elliots. Their next opponent was James Hepburn, the great Earl of Bothwell and future husband of Mary, Queen of Scots. In a skirmish around Hermitage Castle Bothwell was wounded, and in reprisal a royal force of nearly four thousand men devastated the lands of the Elliots and their neighbors in 1569.

The Union of the Crowns in 1603 marked the beginning of the end for the border reviers. There were many summary executions, and around this period many Borderers accepted the offer of a new life in Ulster during the plantation, when much of the province was colonized. Robert Elliott of Redheugh went into exile in Fife, leaving his broad lands in Liddesdale. It was around the 1650's that the 'I' was introduced into the name of Elliot.

Sir Gilbert Elliott of Stobs became chief in 1673. He was created a Baronet of Nova Scotia by Charles II in December 1666. The third Baronet remodeled the old Tower of Stobs into a mansion house around 1764, although it was subsequently rebuilt after a fire. His second son, Augustus, was a distinguished soldier who was rewarded for his spirited defense of Gibraltar in 1782 with a peerage. He was created Lord Heathfield, but this title became extinct within one generation. Another branch of the chiefly family acquired the lands of Minto in 1703. This line has produced some persons of distinction, and were created baronets in 1700. Sir Gilbert Elliott of Minto was a diplomat who served first in Corsica, then in Vienna, finally becoming Governor General of Bengal. He returned

from India in 1813 to be created Earl of Minto and viscount Melgund. The present Earl of Minto is prominent in local government in the Borders, although the magnificent mansion house of Minto has had to be demolished. The estate of Stobs also passed from family hands at the turn of this century. For a time the chiefs resided in America, but in 1932 the tenth Baronet reclaimed the ancient holding of Redheugh where he died in 1958. The present chief is the daughter of Sir Arthur Elliott, eleventh Baronet and twenty-eighth chief. There being no bar to female succession to a Scottish chiefship, she assumed her father's seat on the Council of Chiefs, but the baronetcy passed to a male heir.

*Taken from "Scottish Clan & Family Encyclopedia", by Collins, HarperCollins Publishers 1994*

#### **Clan ELLIOT Septs**

ELIOTSON  
ELLET  
ELLIOT(T)  
LARRISTON  
LAURISTON  
MAC ELLIGOT(T)

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