



# *Sprig Of Heather*



**Winter Edition**

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This Winter edition is being prepared following the Royal Nuptials. The wedding of Prince Harry and Meghan Markle was held on 19 May 2018 in St George's Chapel at Windsor Castle. The event brought together a diverse blend of humanity, whether as guests, doting public or the myriad of behind the scenes personnel or choral entertainers. Scotland celebrated the wedding in style with happy tears and conviviality. Thousands across the country celebrated the big day with afternoon teas and street parties. At gatherings, well wishers waved Union Jacks, donned Harry and Meghan masks and raised their glasses to the happy couple's big day at venues across Scotland such as at Hamilton Park Racecourse where more than 100 fans gathered to watch on a big screen. There were hundreds of parties thrown across Scotland as people celebrated in the sunshine. One watcher said "The royals certainly know how to throw a party and it's great that something like this can bring so many people together. The Citizen bar in Glasgow had the Union Jack bunting out for an afternoon get-together to mark the occasion. Drinkers in Sloans bar in Glasgow city centre got into the spirit of the big occasion by wearing Royal Family masks and toasting the couple. The capital city was in the mood to celebrate the Royal wedding too. Residents in Buckstone Road gathered together for Edinburgh's only official street party, featuring a bouncy castle, barbecue, party games and a cake competition. For me here in New Zealand the highlight was Bishop Michael Curry's wedding '**Love**' address which made Harry go 'wow' - but pushed some of the Royal family right out of their comfort zone. In the wedding aftermath one must remember the independence Referendum of September 2014 ! Had Scotland voted yes to "Should Scotland be an independent country", how would the Wedding have been commemorated North of the Border. Local authorities had issued one Royal Wedding street party permit for Elgin, and was supposedly the only one held in Scotland. A spokesman for Aberdeenshire Council said they hadn't received any applications, but added: "We understand local hotels and restaurants in the Royal Deeside area organised themed afternoon teas and such like". Jim Anderson, chairman of Ballater and Crathie Community Council, said the lack of official street parties did not mean Scots were not interested in the wedding. **Joe Little**, managing editor of Majesty Magazine, said: "If there had been hardly any street parties for William and Catherine in Scotland then it's unlikely there would be any for Harry and Meghan. "I would not read anything into it; it's just a sign of times."

*Allen Little* **Steward**



A cèilidh is a traditional Scottish social gathering. In contemporary usage, it usually involves playing Gaelic folk music and dancing, either at a house party or a larger concert at a social hall or other community gathering place. Cèilidhs facilitated courting and prospects of marriage for young people and, although discos and nightclubs have displaced Cèilidhs to a considerable extent, they are still an important and popular social outlet in rural parts of Scotland, especially in the Gaelic-speaking regions.

In Scotland privately organised cèilidhs are now extremely common in both rural and urban Scotland, where bands are hired, usually for evening entertainment for a wedding, birthday party, celebratory or fundraising event. These may be more or less formal, and very often omit all other traditional Gaelic activity beyond the actual music and dancing. Novices are usually among the participants, so a "dance caller" may teach the steps before music begins for each dance. The more versatile bands will demonstrate the dances too.

In the Celtic communities, what we often call Ceilidh dances were originally simply local gatherings which developed into a form of literary entertainment with storytelling, recitations and songs; instrumental music and dancing were added later. In those days before radio and television, the performers would almost all be talented locals; any reluctance on their part would be mitigated by appropriate refreshment and the party atmosphere. Events like these can still be found, notably in the more isolated Scottish communities, but dancing to a live band usually predominates. As a visiting participant, it's important to remember there are many local variants of what we may think of as familiar dances and so it is wise to be a little circumspect.

One is likely to encounter a Ceilidh as part of a Scottish or, more commonly, an ex-patriate Scottish wedding. Even though there will usually be a caller, its sensible for the organizer to choose those Ceilidh dances which are traditional and will be familiar to the participants.



# ODE TAE GLESGA ...

Oh where is the Glasgow where I used to stay?  
 White, wally closes done up wi' pipe clay,  
 where you knew everybody, first floor to third  
 and to keep your door shut was considered absurd.

Where are the weans that once played on the street?  
 Wi'a jorrie, a peerie, a gird wi'a cleet,  
 can they still cadge a hudgie or dreep aff a dike,  
 play hunch cuddy hunch, kick the can, and the like

Where is the wee shop where I used to buy,  
 a quarter o' totties, a tuppenny pie,  
 a bag o' broken biscuits, a wee sodie scone,  
 an'the wummin aye asked, how's yir maw getting on'?

And where is the cludgie? That cosy wee cell.  
 The string fae the cistern, I remember it well  
 where I sat wi'a caunnle and studied the rags  
 a win for the Auld Firm, a loss for the Jags.

Where is the tramcar that once did a ton,  
 doon Great Western Road on the ol' Yoker run.  
 The conductress aye knew how to deal wi'the nyaffs,  
 'if yir gaun, weil cumoan -- if yir no, weil gittaff'.

I think o' the days o' my tenement hame.  
 We've got fancy new hooses but they're jist no the same.  
 Ill swap your gizunders, flyovers and jams,  
 fur a tuppenny ride on the old Partick trams.

Gone is the Glesga that I used to Know.  
 Big Wullie, wee Shooie, the Steamie, the Co.  
 The shilpa wee bachle, the glaikit big dreep,  
 yir ba on the slates and yir gas on a peep.

These days wurnae rosy, and money was tight,  
 the wages hauf finished by settiday night,  
 but still we came through it and weathered the ruts.  
 The reason is simple, our parents had guts.



## Where was the place our ancestors called home?

Discussing family heritage there are many localities which can complicate discussion. I begin by saying my Ancestors come from 'South West Scotland' and then elaborate giving the name of our Village or area of interest. The term South West Scotland is an ambiguous one which can include Ayrshire, Galloway, Dumfriesshire, the Stewartry of Kirkcudbright, as well as Lanarkshire and Renfrewshire. The inclusion or exclusion of these areas is to an extent arbitrary: the only unquestionable boundaries of South West Scotland are the border with the nearby county of Cumbria in North West England and the sea, namely the Solway Firth, the North Channel and the Firth of Clyde. Its not entirely clear when all of what we today call South West Scotland became incorporated within Scotland. The area has a complex cultural history and at one time formed part of the Kingdom of Strathclyde, the last stronghold of the Britons in what is now Scotland,

Due to Scotland's rugged terrain, historically many Scots did not travel far from where they were born. This has resulted in a diverse set of dialects across the country. The communities of South Ayrshire, Kirkcudbright, Wigtown, Dumfries and Galloway are influenced by West Central areas. Most of the region uses local dialect speakers use pronunciations such as "gyid, min, shin" (good, moon, shoes). Its common to hear certain things in the dialect contracted in speech. For example, "in the", "on the", and "at the" become i'e, o'e, etc, as for example i'e toun or i'e mornin (in the town and in the morning). Some other words from the South West are; Crowbogle – a scarecrow; Jawhole – a drain; Ken – you know; Ha neck – how embarrassing; Mintit – something good; Funnered – full up; Speir – inquire

Whereas most speakers of Scots would say "you", a person from around the Borders would say "yow". They say now and down rather than "noo" and "doon". In Hawick, people traditionally spoke a distinct dialect known as Teri talk. Terms unique to the area include 'Watergaw' (a rainbow on the verge of disappearing) and 'Fooky-meat' (a pastry). Some other Border words include Emmock – ant; Mauckie – bluebottle; Shive – slice (as in bread); Watergaw – a rainbow on the point of disappearing; Splairgit – spattered; Fooky-meat – a pastry; Yett – gate; Steek – shut.

When people immigrated to the antipodes, they oft held close the memories of their homeland, its language, geography and occasions of celebration. They carried their past into the new land of opportunities and remembered Caledonia, the historical area of Scotland previously inhabited by the tribe of Caledones (Calidores). ... "Home is where the heart is"....

AJL []



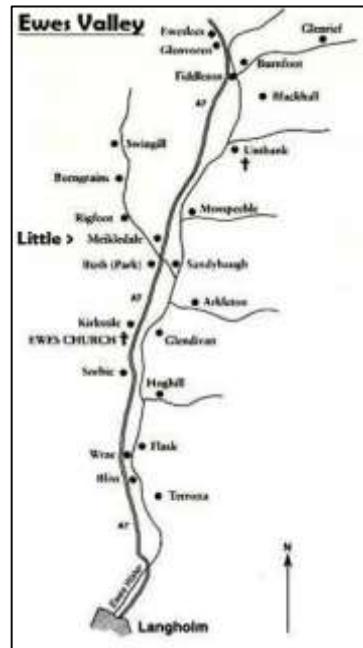
# Before Oil it was Wool!

The following was published on May 15<sup>th</sup> 2018 in the North American Facebook group and attributed to Nelson Bruce. Its one of the best summaries I have ever read and we are indebted to the Author.

Clan Little lived in the Valley of Ewes, so beautiful that it earned this line of praise by visiting poet Killarney upon looking into the valley, "Angels often pausing there, doubt if Eden were more fair." To the clan, the valley of Ewes outside of Langholm was their Eden. Langholm was a market town to receive wool from the surrounding endless moors where sheep were raised. The Clan Little family, like the other clans in the area, were in the wool business in the 1600s. Wool was their source of wealth, considered the golden fleece, as their annual cash enterprise, tended over the whole of the year, as a vital part of their economy. Not just the local economy, but England itself. Wool for centuries was Britain's principle product.

In 1426, when Simon Litil was Laird (Lord) of Meikeldale to modern times; Meikeldale, in the valley of Ewes, was a glen within a great expanse of endless moors that could graze thousands of sheep across its hills. The moors were windswept, which encouraged thick and valuable woolly coats of fleece. The wind was such that it prevented trees from growing on the moors where there was no shelter from the wind. Instead, thick heather, herbs, mosses and grasses grew for the flocks to graze for endless miles. The clan insisted that the wind promoted warm sturdy wool in the sheep and also loyalty and strong character in the men of the moors. The men's character was also shaped by the moor since prehistory, hence their motto to never concede.

The moors and flocks were of such size that shepherding was achieved on horseback. The men were cavaliers, meaning that they both shepherded and fought on horseback. The men of Clan Little became expert horsemen, herding the sheep with the cooperative help of all of the other horsemen and their intelligent sheepdogs who would run crisscrossing the hills with the flocks, abiding the calls of their master riding on the other side of the flock on horseback, and together they protected the animals as a finely-tuned team.



This daily shepherding teamwork on horseback carried over to agile teamwork in mounted defence, battle and retrieving stolen animals from raiders.

The clan had a tower and "keep" to store their bundles of wool just before market and into which they could retreat in time of attack by raiders. About the time of shearing in early fall was when they were most subject to attack. Their great flocks of sheep, like living gold, was constantly at risk for theft by raiders who would steal what sheep that they could. The clan protect their flocks from horseback. At night the flocks were at risk too.

There were reiver guards who were on watch at all times on the perimeter of the land. The clan motto was "Concedo Nulli" which means, "never give up". Even under protection, raids were a predictable occurrence near shearing time. The men did not seek to kill thieves. They sought to prevent their sheep being lost to raiders. However, when animals were stolen, a retrieval party was launched on horseback. One rider held aloft a spear-pierced cut of heather sod, lit on fire, so that the fiery torch could be seen across the moor. This was the visual signal to call for the help of the other men. All of the men were expected to join the the reiver ride of retrieval once they saw the torch. This process of retrieval was called "reiving" and the men "reivers" meaning retrievers, not raiders, an important legal distinction. At one time, the valley of Ewes was under the quick riding rule of the wool Clans.

#### Poem of the times:

**"They ran their steeds on the Langholm holm,  
They ran their steeds with might and main:  
The ladies looked from their high windows,  
God bring our men well back again!"**

The era of highland clans began before memory, while riding and reiving for the golden fleece lasted the period when wool was the principle product of Britain. The Little clan also grew corn and had a corn mill at Meikledale.

Langholm was the nearest market town. Clan Little would shepherd huge flocks of sheep from the hills of the moor to be shorn, and the wool taken into the Langholm market where the wool was sold and woven, or shipped down the waterways to weavers and mills across the land and to the continent of Europe. Langholm was so-named as it was once a settlement of Swedish Viking families. Clan Little was the descendant of a Swede. It was observed in older times that most of the children of the town had white gold hair.

In time the clans grew so great that the law was changed so that a father's property was divided between all sons.



This legal change began to fracture the clans into many smaller less tightly knit groups which made the brothers more competitive: and they fought brother against brother, as incidents of reiving increased. Clan cooperation eroded and vigilante law, was the law. Alliances of clans who had skills acquired as reivers began to act collectively against the intrusion of the English across the English border.

The English vilified the reivers as outlaws exaggerating their exploits even though the border clans were being assailed by the English.

However, the era came to an end as the men of the moors were pushed out of Scotland to the New World. Although their motto was to never concede, Clan Little finally gave up on their homeland in Scotland when the English felt it necessary to destroy their ability to rise and work collectively as one -- as they did on the moors.

The clans were dismantled increasingly after every collective clan alliance, including the local Border Wars, and other events brought an end to clan independence such as the Battle of Culloden, the end of the Jacobite Rebellions and other conflicts with the English, finally resulting in the Highland and Border Clearances.

The Valley of the Ewes was the Paradise from which Clan Little were banished. There is only a single carved memorial stone today marking the place where the Clan Little tower once stood. Abandoned by its own men who once guarded it with their lives, the Clan Little tower was dismantled over time for its wood and stone. The stories of the men were lost to the wind on the moors. There are two instances of a John Little of Langholm recorded as a merchant in the 18th century.

The oldest relic in the area takes us back to before the period of written history, and is the stone known as the "Grey Wether," standing in front of Meikledale House. Such stones are across Scotland and England. In Scotland, they are all known as "Wethers". They sometimes mark the burial place of a famous clan chief, but not all have associated graves, so some say that Wethers were also objects for prayer where it marks a special spot of reverence of a memory, now lost, of events long ago that merited monumental importance to our ancestors. We do not know what memory the Meikledale Wether marker denotes.

The people of Scotland were once loyal to the clan chief, not the crown. It was the chief who decided which crown the clan would support. Often, there were kings the clan chiefs tolerated, but did not support.

For many reasons, in the 17th century, severe ongoing social upheaval at that time in Scotland brought an end to the paramountcy of the clan chiefs. During this time over a million Scotsmen gave up on Scotland, most never to return. There were many who were killed in this period during the constant warfare, raids, and "cleansing" of entire towns by lighting all of the houses on fire at

once. During the Scottish clearances after the defeat of Scotsmen who supported Bonnie Prince Charlie, soldiers actively went looking for clan survivors to kill them where they found them. The era of clan power ended and the English largely took over the south of Scotland. In 1426, the first Laird (Lord) of Meikledale was Simon Lytle.

After the last chief of clan Little David Little, Laird of Meikledale, was killed, some sons of the chief-less Little clan took what wealth they had and sailed to America or other destinations.

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## **Extract from “The New Zealand Scotsman”**

**March 15 1928**

### **Screeeds o' Tartan**

A weather report: A thunder-clap.

Ane who can aye gi'e note for note—a pianist.

A bird in the bush is worth a' the rest in a cat.

The dishonest merchant leeves by varyin' weighs.

Soor grapes—declaring that your neibor's siller's taintit.

Gin ye hain your dinner ye'll ha'e mair for your supper.

Bless the bad folk—they dae a lot to mak' life interestin'.

The chap wha is owre big for the wee jobs whilk need daein', 'll be owre wee for the big jobs should ony come his airt.

The man wha rins into debt meets wi' a grievous collision.

Money easily come-by ne'er satisfied the receiver's wants.

Though ane be but occasionally correct, ane can aye be critical.

These days gin ye're no' up an' daein', ye'll sune be doun an' dune.

Some weemin luik owre their age; but maist weemin owre-luik it.

Men nae langer hide ahint weemin's skirts—an' naither dae weemin.

“Gin the shae fuits ye,” says Miss Female Fashion, “use a size sma'er.”

Be carefu' o' your criticism o' ither; ye'll maybe expose your ain consate.

A cynic: A chap wha is ha'ein' the time o' his life makin' folk believe he isnae.

A wumman can jump to a conclusion as glegly as she can jump frae a moose.

**CONTINUED....**

Some folk wad raither mak' a failure in a big wey, than mak' a success' in a sma' ane.

A bachelor: Ane wha thinks the mule the maist stubborn creature on Gude's earth.

A mairriet man: Ane wha kens better.

The mean man is aye a puir man—puir in a' that coonts for happiness an' peace o' min'.

"Frien'ly rivalry" is but another phrase for mair or less, generally less—civilised jealousy.

Wumman's richts are no' jist thae whilk entitle her to be like a man, but to be unlike him.

Ted: "Say, whit is an Oddfellow?"

Ned: "A chap wha doesnae drive a motor caur."

Luek chenges; but it aye chenges quicker when ye're ha'ein' guid luck than it does when ye're ha'ein' bad.

Sam: "But, man, the worm'll turn, as ilka buddy kens."

Tam: "I dinnae see the need; it's the same at baith en's."

He wha says "I will," an', owre-comin' a' obstacles, does, is a "persaveerin' chiel." But he wha says "I winnae"; an' nae maitter what inducement is held oot to'm, doesnae, is a "contermacious cuif."

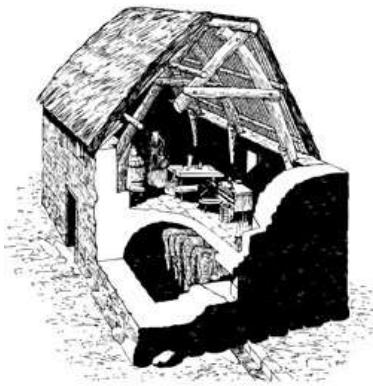
Gin ye peen your faith to ony frien',  
Min' ye dae it wi' a safety preen.

Get intac' this wee bit fac'  
'Neath your cranium lid;  
The might to say, the might to dae  
Nocht but the things ye shid.



# Fit for purpose

Thinking about the primitive living of our Border ancestors one can only marvel. Our forbearers had to be in a state of constant preparedness, alert and doing what they could to protect themselves against ruthless invaders. From the 12th to 16th century, the land straddling the border of England and Scotland was rife with thievery, cattle rustling, extortion and murder committed by men from all social classes who came to be known collectively as the '**Border reivers**'.



In the very worst periods of warfare, people were unable to construct more than crude turf cabins, the destruction of which would be little loss. When times allowed however, they built houses designed as much for defence as shelter. The bastle house was a stout two-storeyed building. The lower floor was used to keep the most valuable livestock and horses. The upper storey housed the people, and often could be reached only by an external ladder which was pulled up at night or if danger threatened. The stone walls were up to 0.9m thick, and the roof was of slate or

stone tiles. Only narrow arrow slits provided light and ventilation. Such dwellings could not be set on fire, and while they could be captured, for example by smoking out the defenders with fires of damp straw or using scaling ladders to reach the roof, they were usually not worth the time and effort.

Peel towers were usually three-storeyed buildings, constructed specifically for defensive purposes by the authorities, or for prestigious individuals such as the heads of clans. Smailholm Tower is one of many surviving peel towers. Like bastle houses, they were very strongly constructed for defence. If necessary, they could be temporarily abandoned and stuffed full of smouldering turf to prevent an enemy (such as a government army) destroying them with gunpowder.

Peel towers and **bastle houses** were often surrounded by a stone wall known as a barmkin, inside which cattle and other livestock were kept overnight.



There is helpful information at [www.biggararchaeology.org.uk](http://www.biggararchaeology.org.uk)

# Kiwi academic Prof Neil Gemmell, leads research team on Loch Ness Monster?

Can DNA Sampling Finally Unveil the Loch Ness Monster? A team of researchers are combing through the waters of the Loch Ness for DNA evidence of the mythical beast.



The Loch Ness Monster has captured the popular imagination since 1933, when a photo surfaced of the mythical creature, long neck slinking out of the water. The photo has since then been dispelled as a hoax (it turned out, the creature pictured was a toy submarine with a fake snakehead attached), and previous scientific studies have not yielded evidence of the mythical beast.

Now, a team of scientists will investigate the phenomenon anew through DNA sampling of Loch Ness in the Scottish highlands. "I'm going into this thinking it's unlikely there is a monster, but I want to test that hypothesis," Professor Neil Gemmell, a scientist from New Zealand and a leader of the research team, told *The Guardian*. What the researchers will certainly find, even if it's not the legendary monster, is a biodiversity of the freshwater lake.

Whenever an animal moves through its environment, it drops tiny fragments of DNA: whether that's skin, scales, feathers, fur or faeces and urine. Scientists can then capture and sequence the DNA. When researchers compare the sequences with giant databases of known genetic sequences from hundreds of thousands of organisms around the world, they'll be able to identify the organisms in the lake. Scientists will extract DNA from the loch over two weeks, then send samples across labs in Australia, Denmark, France and New Zealand for analysis.

"There's absolutely no doubt that we will find new stuff, and that's very exciting," Gemmell said. The new species discovered may just be bacteria, or details about invasive species in the loch. But perhaps, the DNA could point towards mysterious larger creature. Adrian Shine, a lead expert from the Loch Ness Project, will join the research team. Shine last described the enduring appeal of the lake monster in 2017. "As the human world shrinks, people tend to look for something bigger than themselves – something frightening, something mysterious or something hidden," Shine said. □

# “Clan Little modernises”

Worldwide an issue faced by every club and organisation is continuing relevance from one generation to the next. A minor change for us is the Sprig Of Heather will be published twice a year; Winter and Summer.

In 1974 Our respected modern founder the late **Dr Johnnie Little** found some family papers, which aroused his curiosity about the Little history. He took early retirement in 1981 and undertook additional research preparatory to a 1987 lecture which he delivered for the Scottish Genealogy Society.

Clans in Scotland were known to be inclusive of outsiders who expressed allegiance to the family name. In modern terms a clan society is a group of people who share a common interest in a particular surname. There are various rendering of the family name “Little” such as Lyttle, Lytle, Lytil, Littel, Littell, Lityl, or Litle. The name has endured for certioraris moving from age to age in the context common usage amongst common peoples, artisans, aristocracy and officialdom in all its guises. Literacy of the people has a bearing on how the name has been used and transmitted. Examples can be found in ‘Old parish Records’. Today we join together in clan societies to preserve the history and traditions of our Scottish ancestors. This is done at cultural and heritage events such as Clan callings, Burns dinners, Hogmanay celebrations, or Highland games and festivals.

## A Note From Thomas

As Past Steuart, Allen asked me to update you on the goings on with the Clan Little Society. After the change of leadership six months ago, many things are in motion. First, here is a formal introduction of the new officers;

**Steuart** Jeff Buckler – California

**Marischial** John Bosen – Kentucky

**Secretaur/Treasurer** Jim Lyttle – Minnesota



**Thomas Little**

So, what's happening? Well, a lot. First, we had to initiate the transfer of power, meaning the bank accounts, website authorizations, PayPal and merchandise along with a briefing on all of the duties and responsibilities and the status of such. So, I will just dive in here.

CLSN to CLSi – Name and organizational structure change. With the UK Society closing their doors and CLSN adopting all those members, we are now over 800 strong on our Face Book group, which serves as our membership organization (<https://www.facebook.com/groups/ClanLitte/>)

The leadership decided to take that opportunity to recognize that we are not just a North America organization any longer, but representative of Littles worldwide. The name is now officially Clan Little Society, Inc. and all of our registrations now reflect such. Our tax status in America remains a 501-C-7 not-for profit membership organization

**WEBSITE** – The Society website has moved from to a different webserver and you will notice a marked difference when you log on. The past web address directs you to the new web address which is [www.ClanLittleSociety.org](http://www.ClanLittleSociety.org) Merchandise can still be bought on line as well as our history and facts, just like the old site. Clan Little is the only authorized seller and distributor of our Tartan, cap badges and kilt pins and use of our name and logos. Those of you in this region wishing to purchase items from our store will need to include a wee bit of additional postage for items purchased, but you are welcome to buy from here. Our items have very little to no mark up. The Genealogy portion is still under construction and inquiries may be directed to Jim Lyttle ([Secretary@ClanLittleSociety.org](mailto:Secretary@ClanLittleSociety.org)) or our Genealogist David Lyttle ([Genealogist@ClanLittleSociety.org](mailto:Genealogist@ClanLittleSociety.org)) in the meantime.

The web site is accessible to everyone and can be found at [www.ClanLittleSociety.org](http://www.ClanLittleSociety.org)

**GENEALOGY** – The Clan Little website contained a vast assortment of genealogy documents and family trees available for our members to research. Recently a law passed in the UK extended privacy conditions on the sharing of such information. We now must have individual written permission to share these documents and allow the use of such. Consequently, until leadership develops a policy statement and procedures to be in line with the law, the genealogy section remains closed. Although this was legislated in the UK, it has broad worldwide ramifications, especially with a large number of international members and their family history. Standby for this to be resolved. Meanwhile, a more serious face book group has been established for the serious genealogy researcher.

**FUTURE PLANS** – I suspect at some point, the leadership will re-establish a more formal membership process which will include a modest fee and specific benefits, but until then, please feel free to visit our Clan Little Face Book group, request to join and enjoy participating in real time conversations with several of the officers and other Littles, Lyttes, Liddells, etc from around the world.

*Thomas L. Little*, Past Steuart CLSNA

# For what its worth !

Our ancestors lived through hard times struggling to keep house and home.

As Scottish industry flourished and more people were drawn to urban areas, overcrowding became a serious problem with many complex health and well being issues. Urban overcrowding and the slum areas become the scourge of Scotland for many years. There was concentrated everything wretched, dissolute, loathsome and pestilential.

Thousands of people struggled to eek out a living and often fell on hard times, being poor and impoverished. The care of the poor has been a concern to government, community, and religious leaders since the beginning of time. In Scotland, though the government passed an act addressing the relief of the poor as early as 1424, it was the church and community leaders who cared for the poor within their parish or community. Further government legislation was passed at times to provide more direction, but it was not until 1845 that a major change was made to the system. Before 1845 Heritor's or landowners of a parish were responsible for maintaining the church, the dwelling house of the minister, and the school. Until 1845, they were also responsible for caring for the poor in the parish. The heritor's worked with the Kirk Session (parish court), but the heritor's were more involved with the disbursement of parish funds. Heritor records vary in the type of information they contain, but almost every family in the parish shows up in them at one time or another. Because the parish received its funds by assessing (taxing) the heritor's, these records also contain assessment rolls that list the land owners and the value of their property. You will also find lists of inhabitants and poor persons.

The economic and social changes ushered in by industrialisation dramatized the problem of poverty in Scotland by concentrating it in large pockets within the rapidly growing urban centres. The boom and bust economics of the free market added to the problem as it brought with it periodic mass unemployment which in a pre-welfare society left thousands of workers in poverty. Obviously the periodic occurrence of mass unemployment had a distorting effect on the level of long-term poverty in Scottish society. The Scottish poor laws, both old and new, did not recognise the 'able-bodied' poor, since they were assumed to have brought their poverty upon themselves.

Available figures seriously underestimate the level of poverty in Scotland. In 1843 there were only 4,000 able-bodied persons in receipt of poor relief in spite of the harsh conditions. Those on poor relief between 1807-16 were 44,199, or 2.5% of the total population. []

The Littles are the oldest landed or tenant family in Ewesdale. As early as 1426 Simon Little was granted the lands of Meikledale, Sorbie and Kirkton. There is an interesting stone in the Ewesdale Kirkyard recording the death of Thomas, the Laird's son, in 1673.

The Littles of Langholm are derived from this branch, one of the most influential men in Langholm being Bailie Little whose brother gave the name to the Laird's Entry.



## Clan MacMillan Society

**Robert MacMillan** of Levin kindly shared with us news of an intended return visit to New Zealand by **Graeme McKenzie** their Historian Graeme Mackenzie MA. Graeme who is an accomplished Genealogist plans to arrange as many paying lectures or seminars - on **Highland Scottish history and genealogy** - as possible. He hopes to help and encourage any local genealogical or Scottish interest groups who care to engage his services. To that end Graeme has sent a message to all known branches of the New Zealand Society of Genealogists, and to the Caledonian Societies of Canterbury and Otago. Graeme's possible itinerary dependent on who wants presentations at any particular time. The tentative outline is as follows: Fly in to Auckland 19 Feb - rail to Wellington and ferry to Picton - Nelson 22/23 Feb - Christchurch 24/25 - Queenstown 26/27 - Invercargill 28 - Dunedin 1/2 Mar - Wellington and other south North Island places (e.g. Whanganui, Hawera, New Plymouth, Waikane, Palmerston North) 3/11- Hastings/Napier/Hamilton 12/13 - Auckland 14 - Northland 15/17 - Auckland 19 - fly to Australia 20 March. For information email:- [p.ml.pool@xtra.conz](mailto:p.ml.pool@xtra.conz) or phone Peter on (09) 424 7690

# An Urban History of The Plague

A friend has just published a 222 page book considering the Socio-Economic, Political and Medical Impacts in a Scottish Community, 1500–1650. As a medical, economic, spiritual and demographic crisis, plague affected practically every aspect of an early modern community whether on a local, regional or national scale. Its study therefore affords opportunities for the reassessment of many aspects of the pre-modern world. **Dr Karen Jillings** book examines the incidence and effects of plague in an early modern Scottish community by analysing civic, medical and social responses to epidemics in the north-east port of Aberdeen, focusing on the period 1500–1650. While Aberdeen's experience of plague was in many ways similar to that of other towns throughout Europe, certain idiosyncrasies in the city make it a particularly interesting case study, which challenges several assumptions about early modern mentalities.

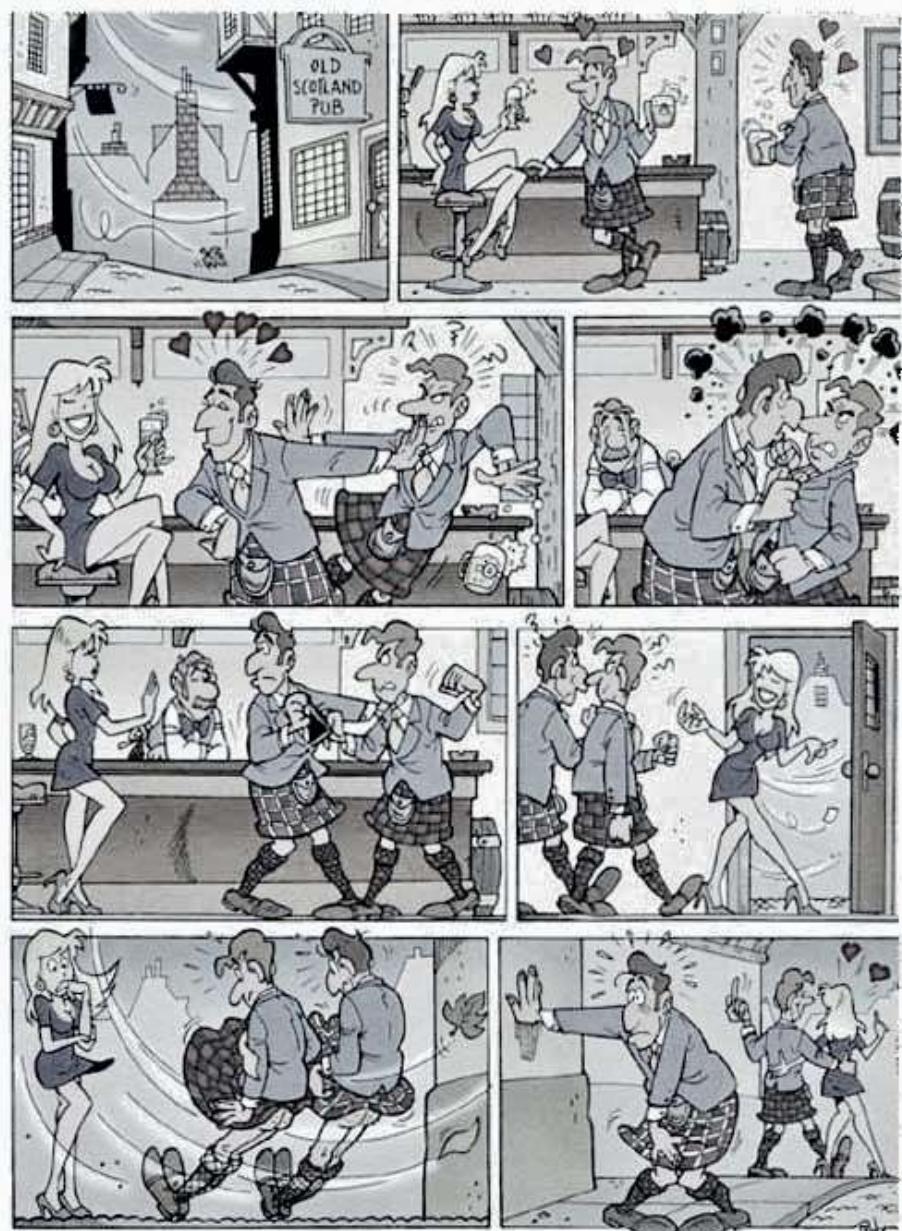


**Karen Jillings**

Plague epidemics ravaged Europe from the 6th to the 17th centuries. The first known outbreak in Scotland of 669 appears to have been contained; it affected only the Lothians. Actual epidemic outbreaks are first recorded for 1349-50 and 1362. According to some witnesses, the first of these wiped out up to a third of the population. While the 15th century saw two major outbreaks, during the entire 16th century Scotland suffered from serious plague outbreaks. It affected mostly the Central Belt, but also Dumfries, Fife, St Andrews, Dundee, Aberdeen and Elgin. There is very little recorded evidence of the plague affecting the Highlands and Islands, but occasional references and the fact that folk medicine remedies against the plague existed suggest that these sparsely inhabited areas also experienced plague outbreaks. Epidemics and more contained incidents in Scotland went on at short intervals until the mid-17th century. However, the Great Plague of 1665-1667 did not reach Scotland. To a large extent, this was due to the preventive measures put into place by the Scottish government. The Privy Council passed laws which forbade trade with countries affected by the plague, in particular England and the Netherlands. Even after the disease had dwindled there, further acts imposed a forty-day quarantine on goods imported from these places. Economically, such an interruption of trade was very disruptive, not least since England and the Netherlands, two main trading partners.



# Consequence





**Clan Little Society New Zealand & Australia** is a voluntary not for profit group connecting with, understanding and sharing our family heritage.



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YOU**

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CALM  
AND  
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