



# *The Reiver*

*The newsletter of the  
Clan Little Society, Inc.*

December 2021

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## **Clan Little Society, Inc.**

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Florida

VP, Ilene Jones  
Florida

Secretary, Thomas J. Little  
Pennsylvania

Treasurer, Jim Lyttle  
Minnesota

Games Coord: Maggie Little  
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Genealogist: Connor Swihart  
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### ***Welcome to the Latest edition of The Reiver!***

*The 2021 BGM was held on July 17th, marking the end of our first two years since the rejuvenation! Moving forward, we have elected a new president to lead us. We also say good-bye to Thomas L Little who previously held sway as Steuart and most recently served as Treasurer, and to J. David Lyttle, who served as genealogist for over a decade.*

Greetings Clan Little!

After many months of postponed and canceled events it has been great to see increased activity over the Summer and Fall with highland games and festivals across the country. Many thanks to those that have hosted Clan Little tents and tables and have proudly represented our clan. It has been obvious by the stories and pictures shared by participants that everyone has enjoyed these gatherings filled with competition amongst athletes, talent of the pipe and drum bands, great food, music and camaraderie with members of our group and other clans.



Through 2021 the leadership team of Clan Little Society has worked hard to grow our membership, add content and value for members and expand on knowledge of past generations of Littles gained through work related to the Little Surname DNA Project.

In continuation of the founding objectives of Clan Little Society, I would like to promote and foster a feeling of kinship and fellowship amongst Society members, encourage interaction between members at local gatherings and help one another gain a deeper understanding of our Scottish heritage and traditions.

As 2022 quickly approaches, I look forward to attending more events and to meeting many of you at these gatherings.

Thank you for your membership, input, participation and support!

Slainte Mhath!!

Thomas R Little

# Meet The Leadership Team

## Steuart/President: Thomas R Little, Bradenton Beach, Florida

As Steuart (President) of Clan Little Society, it is my responsibility to ensure that the efforts, actions and direction of our group align with the objectives outlined in our By-Laws.

I joined Clan Little Society to learn more about my Scottish heritage and to trace my families lineage as far into the past as possible.

My goal as a leader of Clan Little Society is to promote an environment that encourages interaction amongst our members to help us all learn about our heritage and ancestors. I'd also like to encourage efforts to represent Clan Little Society at local highland games and festivals, enjoying these events and camaraderie with one another.



## Mailin/Treasurer: Jim Lyttle, Duluth Minnesota

As Mailin (Treasurer) I currently serve as Mailin (treasurer), it is my job to keep track of your dues and make sure our bills are paid.

I joined the Clan Little Society in 2007 when I started taking an interest in my heritage.

My goal is to ensure that our treasury has plenty of funds so that our bills and fees are paid on time and our reputation remains secure

Jim has been a long time standing member of the Clan Little Society.

## Marischal/Vice-President: Illene Jones, Orlando, Florida

As Vice-President it is my responsibility to support the positions of the other officers as needed. My Technology background allows me to be the Web Master and support the Society's technology platforms.

I joined the Clan Society in search of my ancestors. I love performing research and discover new links constantly

My goal is to help others make their discoveries and to use my talents to support the Society and support others expressing themselves in all things Scottish!



## Secratur/Secretary: Tom J. Little, Harrisburg, Pennsylvania

As Secretary I'm responsible for maintaining the records of the society, legal filings required for the corporation, and managing the membership database.

I joined the Society in 2012 because I had just confirmed via Y-DNA that I had Scottish lineage in my father's line. I was excited and willing to explore all avenues on the subject, and Clan Little was exactly on topic for me! Later, I found out that my aunt had joined in the late 1990's, so I was overdue, actually.

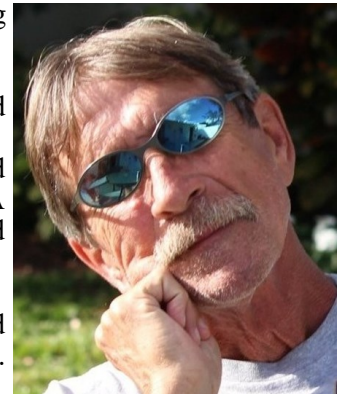
I volunteered to be Secretary in 2019 because I wanted to help keep the organizational structure healthy. I think that's important for us to grow and be here for new folks who are excited about their heritage just like I still am

# The Pat Little-Maddox Service Award

In 2013, Clan Little Society created the Pat Little-Maddox Service Award, presenting this award to Pat Little - Maddox for meritorious service to Clan Little Society.

Clan Little Society is proud to present the Pat Little-Maddox Service Award to David Lytle for many years of dedication and commitment to our group. David held the position of Clan Genealogist for seven years, continuing and expanding work initiated by Pat Little-Maddox. David also served as administrator for the Little Surname DNA Project. Regardless of the positions he held, David was passionate about his work and helped countless people trace their heritage and roots to past generations.

David's hard work and dedication over the years has resulted in likely the largest and most complete compilation of Little family history and ancestral charts in the world. As we seek additional knowledge of our lineage, we all benefit from David's efforts.



Please join me in thanking David for his work and congratulating him on receiving this prestigious award.



## Social Media Groups

Clan Little Society is active on social media and invites you to join us on Facebook. There is no charge for joining either of these groups, but you **MUST** answer entry questions to be admitted!

Clan Little—For those descended from or otherwise interested in the ancient Clan Little of the Scottish Borders. Its motto was *Concedo Nulli*, which means "I yield to none." Nonetheless, political viewpoints, advertisements, and personal attacks will yield to the wrath of the moderators. Anyone who wants to join is cordially invited to make such a request personally and answer the three questions we ask of all petitioners. You **MUST** answer questions to protect the integrity of our group.

Little Surname—Genealogy and DNA—This Little Surname group has been created for the sole purpose of finding our "roots" of our Little ancestry. The use of the name "Little" is always to be understood as Little, Lytle, Lytton, Liddell, Littell, and all other variations. The intent is that this is a shared process where we learn and hopefully gather information and possibly assist others in their search. **Serious researchers and participants Only!**

# How Our Society Is Organized

by Tom Little, Secretary

Clan Little Society, Inc. is incorporated in the State of Georgia and as such is registered with the Georgia Department of State, Bureau of Corporations. An annual filing is required each January--along with a fee of \$35--that keeps us in good graces there. We have a "registered agent" as a contact person for this purpose, and it happens to be the director of the Odom Library in Moultrie, GA. This is the repository of the archives of many Scottish clans including ours.

Clan Little Society, Inc. is also registered with the United States Internal Revenue Service as a non-profit "Social Club" under section 501(c)(7) of the IRS code. This means that we are not responsible for filing a tax return for any income we make, but we do submit an annual report. It is a very simple online filing that in essence tells the IRS we are still alive and well. We also confirm the contact person, who is the secretary. Since our annual budget is less than the \$50,000 cut-off, this brief online filing satisfies our annual requirement with no fees. For us, this filing is made before November 15 each year since our fiscal year ends on June 30.

It is good for Clan Little Society, Inc. to have the credentials of a legal and current organization as we are represented at Scottish festivals and games or other functions, wherever they may be held. It shows we are a legitimate organization with an official structure and why we make a point to include the "Inc." after our name whenever we can.

## MEMBERSHIP NEWS

With about 130 current members in good standing, including nearly 60 with Life or Honorary status, we are widespread. Here are some demographics by country and state:

United Kingdom	18
Canada	5
Ireland and Mexico	ea.1
California	11
Florida, Texas, Virginia	ea. 6
Pennsylvania, Georgia	ea. 5
Michigan, Minnesota, Ohio	ea. 4
Other states	3 or less

In the coming year we hope to inspire more people who share our interest via the Facebook group to formalize their engagement with a membership to our society. You can encourage your friends and family to join, as well, and share the pride in our collective Little heritage.

## BREAKING NEWS!

Little of Morton Rigg Tartan is in stock.

13-ounce weight for kilts is \$80/yard

10-ounce for scarves, etc. is \$65/yard

Visit "The Store" online

Tailor now available to [make your kilt.](#)





# Games Games Games!

By Maggie Little, Games Guru

We had GAMES this year! Can you tell that I am excited about the return of Games and Festivals?

January started the kick off to the 2021 season with JJ Lytle hosting the North East Florida Games tent: JJ says he met a society member there. Games are a great place to make connections.

June saw us at the Celtic Fling at the PA Renaissance Faire site at Mount Hope, PA. We had Claude Shepperd and Tom Little (PA Tom) there to help. I found the instructions on how to put up the banner frame after it was up, so it looks a bit wonky here. Note to self – pack the instructions with the pole pieces!

September had us in the western side of PA at the Ligonier Games. First time there for me. Got to meet Paul Munshower without whom I wouldn't have been able to set up. I sprained my ankle immediately upon entering the site and he and his friend were a big help! Boudicca was a very well-behaved walking billboard for the society. Claude hosted a tent at the Virginia Scottish Games in September also. He met some other Littles there as well. All things considered, 2021 was a very good games year. Looking forward to the rest of the year and into 2022 for more!

Remember – the Clan has a basic starter kit with display items for you to build on if you want to host a tent. It's easy – if I can do it, anyone can! I maintain a list of the games here in the states with one or two Canadian ones too if you'd like to find a game close to your home. Contact me through the Facebook Group; we'll get you set up.





## How Many Were We?

-- Tom Little

Secretary for Clan Little Society and Project Admin for the Little Surname DNA Project

For a few years after I joined Clan Little Society back in 2011, I gazed at the photos of the valley at Meikledale shown beyond the Clan Little marker along A7 wondering where everyone lived. In my mind I envisioned huts all about the hillsides with their horses, maybe some sheep or livestock grazing peacefully nearby, all in the shadow of the tower-house must have stood somewhere in the vicinity. Is that what you wondered, too?

My other curiosity was about the size of the Little Clan. “How many riders could they muster?” I wondered. In relation to exploring our ancestors and their reiving reputation, it sounds like there were a lot of us.

Those of you who have read “The Steel Bonnets” by George McDonald Fraser, or other accounts from the period, the references to the Littles riding with the Armstrongs, Maxwells, Elliots, and others is familiar. Here is an excerpt from the Wikipedia article on Clan Little:

By the start of the 16th century, [Clan Armstrong](#) had risen to power such that it was reputed in 1528 that they could muster 3,000 horsemen, Littles amongst them. Their leader, [Johnnie Armstrong](#) of Gilnockie, posed a threat to [King James V](#), who arranged in 1530 to meet him at [Caerlanrig](#). The Armstrong retinue was surprised by the king's men, and then 33 Armstrongs, Littles, Elliots and Irvings, including Johnnie, were hanged on the spot.<sup>[6]</sup> In 1568 over 100 Littles rode with Batysons, Armstrongs, Glendinnings and Thompsons on [John Maxwell, 8th Lord Maxwell](#)'s raid on Stirling. Family tradition has it that the Littles returned with many more horses than they set out with. They were pardoned in 1585, while Maxwell was briefly serving as the Earl of Morton.

Our history suggests that Alan Little, who was granted lands south of Muirkirk near Cairntable in southeast Ayrshire about 1175, was likely one of our forefathers. By the time Simon was granted lands including Meikledale in 1426, about 250 years had passed, or 8 to 10 generations.

While many of us are descended from those riding families from the 15-16<sup>th</sup> centuries, other sources reveal that they were a bit wider-based than just in Meikledale. This seems likely due to the number of families, and perhaps also because these family clusters were descended from Little ancestors many generations earlier.

While the chief, Simon Lyttill was granted tenure at Meikledale, which his family maintained until the mid-1600's, other Little families lived in the environs of Eskdale at places like Bombie, Craig, Stablgortoun, and Milneholm. These small clusters of dwellings among the hills were on either side of the Esk Waters. They lie north of Langholm, but not as far up stream as Bentpath where the Eskdale Parish Church is located. This whole area was owned by the 8<sup>th</sup> Lord Maxwell. In December of 1585 the Scottish Parliament recorded an “Act in Favoure...” of Lord Maxwell, while he held the title Earl of Morton. —the intent of which was to “forgive” them for the raid on Stirling in 1568. Listed by name, the Little men numbered 70 or more. No wonder they rode with Maxwell—they were his tenants!

There were other locations in the West March with Little families established during the same timeframe. Some were in the area south of Annan and another cluster is shown across the border west of the city of Carlisle. Our founder Dr. Johnnie's ancestor Thomas Little was at Redkirk on the northern shore of the Solway Firth, a short distance west of Gretna.

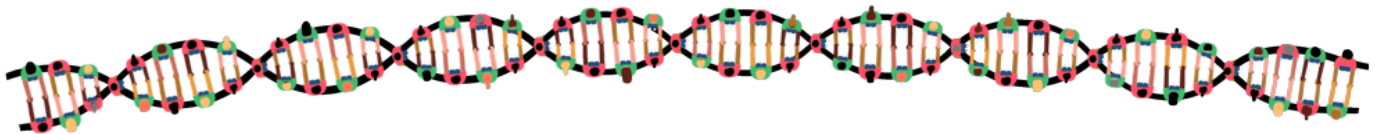
## What does Y-DNA tell us?

Over the past six years, the advances in technology for Y-DNA sequencing, such as the BigY-700 test at FamilyTreeDNA.com, has been amazing. The Y-chromosome is only carried by men and is passed along from father to son over centuries allowing paternal lines to be examined. With many Little men participating, it has allowed several observations to emerge.

The genetic signature that is prevalent in the descendants of the Scottish Borders Littles during the reiving period of 15-16<sup>th</sup> centuries is a marker called R-Z17299. This defines a group of genetically similar people- or a “haplogroup.” In fact, nearly everyone who is found to be within this haplogroup carries the surname “Little” or can trace their paternal ancestors to someone who does. R-Z17299 falls under R-L21 that indicates we are descended from Celtic origins and R-L513 that points to native Britons found in the western part of the island, including southwest Scotland, northwest England (Cumbria), and Wales.

Geneticists have been able to assign estimated dates of formation for R-Z17299 to sometime before 900 AD. However, surnames did not come into common usage until after 1100 AD, thus the implication is that the family was cohesive and stuck together for a few hundred years before they adopted the moniker of “Little”.

We have also subsequently discovered there are various lineages that branch out from R-Z17299 during the ensuing generations and had begun to appear by the “Riding Times” or even earlier. So, Clan Little was not only made up of fathers, uncles, brothers, and cousins, but many distant cousins as well. They were descendants of Little ancestors who lived many generations and a couple centuries earlier. Thus, the numbers were likely substantial.



## The Diaspora

During the “Pacification of the Borders” that took place the initial decades of the 1600’s, Little families were displaced to a wider area in Scotland, south into northern England, and to the plantations of Ulster in Northern Ireland. There are records of some of the men being hung or drowned in punishment for crimes committed twenty or more years earlier. Some were conscripted and sent to the Lowlands (today’s Netherlands, Belgium, etc.) to fight the English King’s wars on the continent.

The “diaspora” from Scotland and Ulster by the early 1700’s included North America, the Caribbean, and Australia, although the Little surname is still well represented today around Langholm and the eastern tip of the Solway, north and south of the border.

Through the years, the Little family lines continued to grow and expand. We find ourselves today --

Through the years, the Little family lines continued to grow and expand. We find ourselves today -- another 400-plus years later -- looking for our connections back to the West March of Scotland and to each other. We are so many generations removed now, it is easy to see why we rarely find close relationships among us in our Clan Little Society or with autosomal DNA testing. But, as more people take advanced Y-DNA testing to identify their specific Little lineage, we can make better educated estimates to refine the answer to: *How many were we?*

*Records of the Parliaments of Scotland* (online: <https://www.rps.ad.uk>). James VI: Manuscript, 1585, 10 December, Linlithgow, Parliament; Parliamentary Register -entry no. [1585/12/38].

Jon Tait – *Dick the Devil’s Bairns, Breaking The Border Mafia*; Rough Badger Books, 2020

## The "STORE" of Clan Little Society

By Jim Lyttle, Mailin

We are proud to offer several branded products exclusively to our members through the ClanLittleSociety.org website. These include several items of clothing made with the official Little of Morton Rigg tartan, which is licensed exclusively, along with several pewter items of jewelry, such as cap badges and kilt pins. We also offer two qualities of tartan material: a thinner one (10 oz per square meter) for scarves and such and a heavier one (13 oz per square meter) for kilts. And now **we can even make kilts for you!**. Contact us for prices and wait times.

When you decide that you're ready for a kilt, you will typically order four yards of our double-width fabric and take it to your local kilt maker. This process takes a long time, because each pleat on the kilt is hand made and carefully sewed so as to continue the tartan pattern. Expect to wait at least 4 - 6 weeks for that to be done. Our tartan material is woven at our mill in Scotland and imported by our quartermaster in North Carolina. Our prices are so low that we lose money on each purchase, so you can expect some price increases in the future, To order, enter the members' area of the website using your unique password and visit the STORE



### Why Is Our Group a Clan Society Instead of a Clan?

An armigerous clan is a Scottish clan, family, or name which is registered with the Court of the Lord Lyon (*i.e.*, has arms) It once had a chief who bore undifferenced arms but no longer has a chief and is recognized as such by Lyon Court.

Some members of the various Scottish Clans have organized "Clan Societies" which usually have the objectives of bringing like-minded people together to assist each other in researching their family roots, in gaining knowledge of the history and heritage of their Clan, and of their own forebears. The Societies also provide an organizational structure through which members can get together for social purposes, to celebrate Scottish Feast Days and have their Clan represented at Scottish Gatherings and Festivals. Most Societies also provide their members with a periodic "Newsletter" which is the core of communication between members. The Clan Little has no Chief, thus we are the Clan Little Society, Inc.