

Marjoribanks LETTER

ATIONS – MARCHBANKS, MARCHBANK, MARSHBANKS, AND THE REST



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On that occasion, Anne Marjoribanks of Edinburgh commented: that the family was growing and coming into its own and asked if it was not possible to have a tartan of our own. The idea was accepted enthusiastically and it was agreed to look into the necessary procedures

The following year, at the Gathering on Prince Edward Island, John Marjoribanks produced a design which followed the same pattern of checks and stripes as the Johnstone tartan but in the colours of our own Chief's coat of arms: black, red, gold and silver. The design was approved by the Chief and the members present and, during the next several months, John arranged to register the pattern and to have the firm of D.C. Dalgliesh Ltd. in Selkirk weave it.

(Information about how to order appears on page 2.)

See You in Texas!

Fort Worth, Texas, will be the site of the 2000 Gathering, on the week-end of October 13, 14 and 15.

Several sites were discussed at the Annual Meeting. The two states mentioned most often were Tennessee and Texas. Both have many historic connections with the family.

William Marchbanks Jr., the grandson of George Marchbanks the Jacobite, emigrated to Tennessee from South Carolina in the latter part of the 18th century and many of his descendants were successful farmers, lawyers, judges and legislators.

In the middle of the next century there was a migration of Marchbankses from Tennessee to Texas. Most of the travelers settled in or near the town of Waxahachie, not far from Dallas and Fort Worth.

After some discussion, it was agreed that the matter should be left to the Executive Committee and the Committee subsequently recommended Fort Worth, in the middle of October when the weather will be more comfortable. Further details will be announced when they have been decided.



John Marjoribanks of Berwickshire, in formal highland dress and wearing the very first Marjoribanks kilt, presents a sample of the new tartan to his brother the Chief during the Annual General Meeting in Edinburgh. John designed the tartan, registered it with the Scottish Tartans Society, and arranged to have it manufactured. It incorporates the colours of the Chief's coat of arms: red, black, gold and silver and follows the pattern of checks and stripes of the tartan worn by our cousins the Johnstones. You will find instructions for ordering tartan material and garments on page two of this issue. (A full-colour snapshot is enclosed for your album.)

Regiment Recalls the Major

A recent newsletter published by the British regiment known as the Green Howards carries an article about Major John Marjoribanks and his heroic role in the Battle of Eutaw Springs in 1781.

The article, accompanied by a photograph of Fiona Marjoribanks laying flowers on the major's grave in 1996, quotes his commander as saying:

"Every other soldier fulfilled the separate duties of their stations with great gallantry but to Major Marjoribanks and the flank battalion under his command I think the honour of the day is greatly due."

The Green Howards, officially known as the 19th Regiment of Foot, landed at Charleston June 3, 1781, after a 12-week crossing of the Atlantic, to reinforce the hard-pressed British troops in South Carolina. The American and British forces eventually confronted each other in a four-hour battle at Eutaw Springs, the last battle of the war.

Major Marjoribanks, severely wounded and weakened by fever, made his way to a slave cabin where he was cared for, eventually died and was secretly buried. The Ravenel family, owners of the plantation, learning of the major's death, erected a wooden marker over his grave inscribed with his name, rank, regiment and the date of his death.

Eventually the wooden marker deteriorated and the Ravenels decided to replace it with a permanent headstone. They wrote to the British War Office asking for assistance in their tribute to a British hero. The pompous reply was:

"If England put up a monument wherever one of her heroes lay, the world would be white with stones."

Fortunately, the Ravenels and the people of South Carolina were more generous and the major's body now lies under a suitably inscribed stone on the battlefield, now transformed into a pleasant park.

How To Order Tartan

The Marjoribanks tartan is now available from:

D.C. Dalgliesh Ltd.

Dunsdale Mill

Selkirk TD7 5EB

Scotland

Ties, scarves and sashes will be shipped fully made up by Dalgliesh but if you want a kilt, trews, waistcoat, kilted skirt or other garments, there are two ways to go about it:

1. You can order an appropriate length of material from Dalgliesh and take it to your kilt-maker or tailor to have it made up. The tartan is identified as Marjoribanks/Marchbanks and is registered by the Scottish Tartans Society as number 2607.

OR

2. Your kilt-maker or tailor may be willing to measure you and to order the required length of material from Dalgliesh on your behalf. This option is simpler but it might be more expensive.

Prices are as follows:

Ties, £5.23; scarves, £ 7.43; lady's sashes, £19.25.

For a kilt you will need 4.5 yards of cloth in 56 or 54 inch widths depending on the weight you prefer. Medium-weight material is 56 inches wide and costs £17.38 per yard or £78.21 per kilt. Heavy-weight material is 54 inches wide and costs £17.55 per yard or £78.97 per kilt.

Ladies' kilted skirts require three to six yards of material, depending on the lady's height. A gentleman's waistcoat requires three-quarters of a yard to a full yard, depending on his size, if the

Falling-Down Monument

There was a great fuss during the summer about the seventy-foot monument that stands in the centre of Coldstream in the Scottish Borders, honouring Charles Marjoribanks, the Member of Parliament for Berwick who helped pass the Reform Bill of 1832.

The monument, which supports a statue of Charles at its very top, has been in disrepair for several years and there have been alarmed letters to the editor from time to time warning that a chunk is likely to fall on somebody's head.

There was a brief flare of publicity in August last year when the Lord Lieutenant of Berwickshire, Major-General Sir John Swinton, wondered publicly why the statue had been erected at all.

"With the greatest respect to his family," Sir John inquired, "who the hell was he?"

This ill-tempered outburst attracted the attention of the national press and John Linklater of the Sunday Times came up to Coldstream in June to find out what it was all about. His report was published under the headline:

NO TAKERS FOR A 70-FT STATUE OF A NOBODY

Mr. Linklater said that the monument's prominence in the town was "out of all proportion to the obscurity of the forgotten man it was supposed to commemorate. The truth is that Charles Marjoribanks was a political nobody whose career ended almost the moment it began."

Charles was the son of Sir John Marjoribanks who was Lord Provost of Edinburgh in 1813 and 1814. At the age of 19, Charles entered the service of the East India Company in Macao, in southeast China. He learned Chinese and rose through the ranks to become President of the Company's China Committee. Ill health forced him to return home in 1832 and he was immediately invited to stand for Parliament in the election which forced the House of Lords to accept the Reform Bill and to increase the number of citizens eligible to vote. He died of his illness the following year.

An inscription at the base of the monument says it was erected by his "numerous friends . . . to perpetuate their admiration of his high qualities and political principles" and to commemorate the political victory.

All of this publicity and the dilapidated state of the monument has raised fears that it might be torn down. Estimates for a complete restoration of the structure have been as high as £200,000 and it is not clear who should undertake the work and pay the bill.

Roger Marjoribanks of Guildford in Surrey who, like Charles, is a member of the Lees branch of the family, wrote to the Planning Department of the Borders Council and was assured that the monument is protected under British heritage legislation and is very unlikely ever to be torn down. Recent repairs were sufficient to ensure its survival for at least another few years.

back is to be in plain material, or double that length if the back is to be in tartan. The kilt-maker or tailor will, of course, charge you an additional amount for making it up.

If you are ordering directly from Dalgliesh there will be an additional charge for postage and packing, depending on weight UK residents and residents of other European Union countries will be required to pay 17.5 per cent in Value Added Tax. Outside the U.K. there may also be customs duty to pay.

A deposit of at least one third of the total value must accompany all orders. Payments may be made by cheque or money order in British pounds.

Round Scotland on a Bicycle For Environmental Research

Alexander Marjoribanks of Berwickshire cycled 2,330 kilometres (almost 1,400 miles) in a little more than 16 days, following the entire coast of Scotland and the English border.

Alexander, who is 18 and the son of John and Andrea Marjoribanks and a nephew of the Chief, began and ended his journey at Charles Marjoribanks's monument at Coldstream in the Borders. His aim was to raise money to finance his participation as a research assistant in an expedition to North Vietnam to study depletion of the rain forest as a result of the war.

Sponsors of his round-Scotland tour contributed more than £3,500 and on October 5 he joined the team, organized by the Society for Environmental Exploration, and expected to remain in Vietnam until March.

As a result of the war and uncontrolled deforestation eighty-five per cent of Vietnam's natural forest has been destroyed and many rare species of plant, bird and animal life are in danger of extinction.

"There were days when I really felt like giving up," Alexander says, "when the rain was lashing down and the wind blowing right into my face but there were other days when the weather was glorious, the views superb and it felt great to be on the road."

One of his worst days was on Mull.

"In driving rain, I hit a deep pothole which smashed my back wheel"

A kindly farmer took him to the ferry to Oban where he found a bike shop that could rebuild the wheel with new spokes and a rim. On the second-to-last day of the tour he had reached the southernmost tip of Scotland on the Mull of Galloway.

"It was there, after falling off the bike in the rain and landing in a puddle, I felt most like quitting," Alexander says. The weather improved, however, and on Wednesday September 22, with the wind at his back, he enjoyed a lovely ride through the Border hills to Coldstream.

Alexander's adventure recalls a similar accomplishment by Catriona Marjoribanks, the Chief's eldest daughter. In 1996, at the age of 23, she was a member of the crew of a yacht which finished second in a grueling, month-long, 2,100-mile race right around the British Isles, beating out eight other crews from Scotland, England, Wales, Ireland and France. A French boat was first.

Like Alexander, she upheld the family honour.

(If you did not have chance to sponsor Alexander's ride and would like to support his work, you may do so by making a cheque payable to: Frontier Vietnam Project (Alexander Marjoribanks) and mailing it to:

*Alexander Marjoribanks
Eden House, South Street
Gavinton by Duns
Berwickshire,
TD11 3Q5
Scotland)*

The Gift of a Stick

During the Annual General Meeting, Marion Marjoribanks of Coldstream presented the Chief with a chief's walking stick, which she had made herself, with his name inscribed on a silver band. . The handle was shaped like a shepherd's crook but Marion insisted that, in the Borders, it was known simply as a "stick." In the Highlands it would be called a crummock, from the Gaelic cromag. The Chief thanked Marion for her gift, which he said was beautifully done and similar to one carried by his father.

A Gallant American's Fight for Civilization

Alphonso Calvin Marchbanks III was one of the gallant young Americans who, before the United States entered World War II, volunteered to serve with the Royal Air Force in Britain against the enemies of civilization.

He was born in Waxahachie, Texas in 1917, the grandson of the Alphonso Calvin Marchbanks who, in 1851, at the age of three, made the trek from Tennessee to Waxahachie with his grandmother and other members of his family. (At some stage in his life, the grandson changed the spelling of his given name from Alfonso to Alphonso.)

After training as a pilot in the U.S. Air Force, he arrived in England in June, 1941 and, at the age of 24, was commissioned as a Pilot Officer in an international squadron of the R.A.F.

His letters home and other correspondence were preserved by Coit Yancey of Fort Worth, Texas whose maternal great-grandfather, James Claiborne Marchbanks, made a similar trek with his own family in 1850.

After some additional training he flew Hurricanes and Spitfires against German bombers over Britain and made sorties into France, Holland and Norway. In his letters he asks for news about about his father's corn and cotton crops and his mother's chickens and about the progress his brothers and sisters were making in school. He promised "we will have some big times when the war is over."

On October 7 he wrote: "By the time you get this letter, I shall probably be on my way to the Far East - Singapore, maybe."

His station commander had been ordered to assign one man, "someone fairly well educated and a good pilot" to join a squadron that was being sent to the Pacific theatre. He asked Alphonso if he would like to be considered for the job.

"I answered yes but I had no idea that I would be the one to go," he wrote to his parents. "Last Saturday at tea I was told I had been selected. So far as I know, I will be the first American to go with the RAF to the Far East."

In another letter written in November and carried by an American friend who was flying home, he says that this may be his last letter for a couple of months but he adds: "Don't worry about me because I know I will be perfectly safe."

The next item in the file of correspondence is a telegram dated January 23, 1942 from the British Air Ministry saying that he is missing in action. His death was not confirmed for almost another five years. On October 24, 1945 another telegram from the Air Ministry said that he was now reported to have lost his life. Released prisoners of war said they saw his plane shot down about twenty miles south of Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia.

Alphonso's name is inscribed on the Singapore Memorial, on a hillside overlooking the Straits of Johore, one of 24,000 men and women who served in the forces of the British Commonwealth and, like him, have no known grave.

His mother received many letters from people who knew Alphonso during the war and who wrote glowingly about his cheerful enthusiasm.

A naval officer who met and admired him during the long voyage from England to Singapore wrote to Mrs. Marchbanks:

"Here was a man who voluntarily left the security of his home to fight in a battle that was not his nor his country's . . . because he recognized that the war was for ideals identical with his own."

Church Holds Memories

Two of the Chief's ancestors, his great-grandfather and his great-great-grandfather, were ministers of the Church of Scotland in the village of Stenton, about forty kilometres east of the centre of Edinburgh. We found many traces of their presence in the old church when we visited there on the Sunday afternoon of the Gathering.

Rev. Thomas Marjoribanks D.D. of that Ilk who was at one time minister of Lochmaben church near the ancestral estates in Dumfriesshire, was called to Stenton in 1849. On his death in 1868 he was succeeded there by his son Rev. George Marjoribanks D.D. of that Ilk who served the Stenton parish until his retirement in 1915. He died five years later.

Mrs. Maeve Jeffrey, whose late husband was a Session Clerk of the church and who is intimately familiar with the church's history, accompanied us on a tour of the church and a house across the road which was once the manse.

There are many marks of the two ministers' generosity and of the parishioners respect and affection. The stained glass window in the west wall was installed in memory of Thomas and his wife Mary Cook by the parishioners. Another, in memory of George, representing the Sower and the Good Shepherd, was the gift of his children.

A communion table which now stands in the vestry was the gift of Thomas's widow. A later table was given in memory of George by the congregation and other friends. A brass plaque on the wall commemorates the life and death of Alexander and his brother James Leslie Marjoribanks. Alexander was born in the Stenton manse in 1879, served as a captain in the 52nd Sikhs, Indian Army, and died in India in 1914. James was born in 1874, served as a colonel in the Indian Medical Service, and died in 1942.

Rev. Thomas Marjoribanks is buried in the Stenton churchyard and George at the parish church of Colinton in Midlothian.

Archie Writes Home

Another interesting Marjoribanks book has come to light.

It is a collection of letters that Hon. Archibald Marjoribanks wrote home from the Rocking Chair Ranch in Texas in the 1880s. You may recall that the Honourable Archie, a younger son of Edward Marjoribanks, the first Baron Tweedmouth, was sent to Texas to manage a huge cattle ranch which was apparently bought with the idea of keeping him usefully occupied.

The scheme was a failure and its lack of success has been blamed on Archie who was regarded as a remittance man with no sense of business and no knowledge of cattle ranching. The author and editor Estelle Tinkler would like to perpetuate that notion. She is no admirer of the British aristocracy and rarely misses an opportunity to comment unfavourably on Archie's appearance, manners and intelligence. The letters themselves, however, which Archie wrote to various merchants and suppliers and to the ranch's board of directors in London show that he was an aggressive and demanding businessman. His letters to London make it clear that he had a good understanding of the American cattle industry and the effect on grazing lands of expanding railways and the growing population. There is good evidence to show that, if the Rocking Chair Ranch eventually failed, it was not due to Archie's incompetence but to the directors' failure to take his advice.

Archibald John Writes the Rocking Chair Rancho Letters. Estelle Tinkler. Eakin Press, Burnet TX, 1979.

(There is no explanation of the apparently superfluous "e" in Rancho.)

Notes from the Secretary

You are a member of the Marjoribanks family by right of birth, always will be, and there are no dues to be paid.

If, however, you are in a position to help pay for publishing and distributing The Marjoribanks Letter and The Marjoribanks Journal and for maintaining and strengthening links with our kinsmen and kinswomen around the world, then you should consider becoming a member of The Marjoribanks Family – the family organization. For that, there are dues to be paid and they are set out in the schedule below.

It cost \$1,921.81 in Canadian funds last year to run the organization – for postage, printing, advertising and other expenditures. That's not counting salaries because many people provide their expert professional services and their labour for nothing. We took in \$1,541.26 – \$380.65 less than we spent. I'm not worried about that. It's happened before and I have no doubt we will make up the difference in the year ahead.

I mention it just to remind you that it costs money to carry out our activities. Many people, in addition to all their other obligations, can't afford to pay membership dues, and that is understandable. But if you're interested in your family history and enjoy getting to know people who share that interest, and if you have a little money left in the bank at the end of the month, I invite you to consider becoming a member of The Marjoribanks Family.

Even if you decline that invitation, we want to keep in touch.

You're one of the family and we don't want to lose you.

Three loyal Texans – Jim McDonald in Austin, Coit Yancey in Fort Worth and Donna Lonon in Waxahachie – are working on arrangements for the 2000 Gathering in Fort Worth, Texas. At the moment they're negotiating for space in a suitable hotel. You'll be hearing about the results of their efforts soon but, in the meantime, mark the dates on your calendar: 13, 14, 15 October.

Robert Marjoribanks

Honorary Secretary

E-mail: mjbns@sympatico.ca

Website: <http://www3.sympatico.ca/mjbns>

P.S. My Marjoribanks tartan arrived in the mail from Scotland this morning and I'm off to see the kilt-maker. I will provide photo-opportunities in Fort Worth!

The Marjoribanks Letter

The Marjoribanks Letter is published by The Marjoribanks Family and is distributed without charge to members.

Annual Fees:	Individual	Family*
The United Kingdom	£12.00	£22.00
<i>If you prefer, fees may be paid in local currencies at the following rates:</i>		
The United States	\$18.00 (U.S.)	\$34.00
Canada	\$26.00 (Can)	\$47.00
Australia	\$25.00 (Aus)	\$45.00
New Zealand	\$30.00 (NZ)	\$55.00

* Family membership includes parents and their children.

Please address applications for membership, payments of fees, editorial contributions and other correspondence to:

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2228 Kipling Street

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Canada.