



# THE Marjoribanks LETTER

FOR AND ABOUT PEOPLE OF THE NAME, IN ALL ITS VARIATIONS – MARCHBANKS, MARCHBANK, MARSHBANKS, AND THE REST

## THE FAMILY REVISITS GREENLANDS MANSION

The 1996 Marjoribanks Family Gathering will take place in Charleston, South Carolina, on Saturday and Sunday, September 14 and 15. That decision was taken by members attending the 1995 Gathering at Henley-on-Thames in England.

Vice-president William P. Jackson Jr. of McLean, Virginia, undertook to look after the arrangements. It will be held in conjunction with the Annual Charleston Scottish Games and Highland Gathering, sponsored by The Scottish Society of Charleston.

Some forty Family members from Scotland, England, the United States and Canada attended the Henley gathering which was held at Greenlands, the beautiful white mansion which was the summer residence of Edward Marjoribanks, the senior partner in the banking firm Coutts & Co. Edward died at Greenlands in 1868. The building now houses the Henley Business Management College.

From the dining room window, members could look down a long stretch of rolling lawn to the banks of the Thames where scullers passed back and forth all day, training for the Royal Regatta. It rained on the Saturday, the day we went for our cruise on the river, but nobody seemed to mind. The banks were lined with all manner of craft, docked in front of summer residences, many of them evidently hundreds of years old. We stopped at the five arches of the Henley bridge and went ashore for lunch, splitting up to visit some of the town's many ancient pubs.

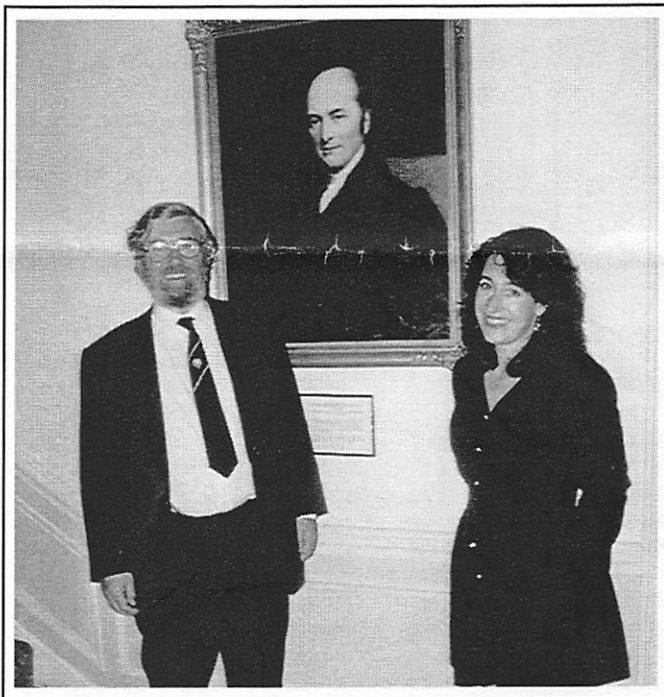
After lunch we visited Edward's parish church at Hambledon to see the elaborately carved and decorated marble plaque erected by his family to commemorate "a long life of kindly actions." On the bus, we passed the hat and collected £86.30 to have the memorial cleaned and repaired.

The Annual General Meeting on Sunday morning was officially opened by the Chief, Andrew Marjoribanks of that ilk, who rang the Balbardie bell and offered a special welcome to several members of The Family who were attending a Gathering for the first time.

Sir James Marjoribanks, the President, in his opening remarks paid a special tribute to Edward. He quoted from Edward's obituary notice in *The Gentleman's Magazine* of 1868 which referred to his "aptitude for business, integrity of character and courtesy of manner . . . which secured for him a lasting respect, not only in his own family, but also in a very large circle of relatives and friends to which his happy, sun-like influence was felt and appreciated."

Robert Marjoribanks of Ottawa, the Honorary Secretary, reported that membership in The Family organization now stood at 120, an increase of more than 20 per cent over the previous year. On behalf of the Honorary Treasurer, he reported that the previous year's deficit had been overcome and there was now a balance of \$284.34 (Canadian). In addition, there was almost an equal amount in the Research Fund which consisted entirely of voluntary contributions from members.

Special guests at the luncheon that followed the meeting were The Most Hon. the Marquess of Aberdeen and Temair and the Marchioness. Lord Aberdeen is the grandson of Isabel Marjoribanks who was the wife of the Governor General of Canada at the turn of the century.



*Roger Marjoribanks of Surrey and his daughter Sally Kipping pose in front of a portrait of Sally's great-great-grandfather Edward Marjoribanks, the former owner of Greenlands.*

After lunch, Lynne Stone, the Greenlands archivist, gave a talk on the history of the house and work that has been done to ensure that the grounds and the interior decoration reflect the style of Edward's generation.

Following the genealogy session, we had tea in the lounge and took leave of each other for another year.

## Fetch, Marjoribanks!

This could be called a "shaggy dog story" — except that it involves a basset hound, a breed not distinguished by long hair.

William P. Jackson Jr. was returning from a meeting of the American Transportation Lawyer's Association in San Diego when he struck up a conversation with another lawyer sitting beside him, a member of the Canadian Transport Lawyers Association. The Canadian mentioned that his group would hold their next meeting in Ottawa.

Bill said he was familiar with Ottawa because The Marjoribanks Family had held its annual Gathering in Ottawa earlier in the year. The Canadian was very interested to hear the family name.

"How do you spell that?" he asked.

Bill spelled it for him, and asked if he knew someone of that name.

"Not actually," he said, "but the fact is, when I was a little boy in England, we had a basset hound named Marjoribanks!"

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## NEXT YEAR IN AMERICA

Charleston will feel familiar to British members of The Family who visit there in 1996. It has a history as long as many English and Scottish towns, having been founded in 1670.

It was named after Charles II, the British king who granted the Carolina territory to a handful of his favourite courtiers who were styled the Lords Proprietor of the colony. They imported colonists who raised livestock, cut timber and traded in furs. The city acquired its special character, however, from the French Huguenots who arrived after 1685, established rice plantations, built themselves town houses in Charleston, and created a sophisticated urban milieu which has persisted into modern times.

As an important colonial seaport, Charleston was captured and recaptured several times during the American Revolution and the first shot in the American Civil War was fired by Confederate forces upon nearby Fort Sumpter which was occupied by Union troops.

A specially convened state convention, meeting in Charleston on December 20, 1860, made the first declaration of Southern independence by resolving "that the union now subsisting between South Carolina and other states, under the name of 'The United States of America' is hereby dissolved."

From earliest times Charleston has been attracting visitors by its salubrious climate. Rev. Jedediah Morse (father of the inventor of the telegraph) in the first edition of his immensely popular "Geography Made Easy," published in 1789, wrote that the city's refreshing sea breezes make Charleston "the resort of great numbers of gentlemen . . . who come here to spend the sickly months, as they are called, in quest of health and the social enjoyments which the city affords."

The health-giving sea breezes are still to be enjoyed, as well as the planters' elegant houses and remnants of the city's colourful history. Fort Sumpter, the first Confederate target in the Civil War, is now a national monument which can be inspected daily from tour boats. Fort Moultrie which, during the American Revolution, served to drive off an invading squadron of the Royal Navy under Lord Cornwallis, is likewise on view.

Charleston's baronial mansions are of great architectural and historical interest and many of them serve as delightful bed-and-breakfasts. You can wander the city's cobbled streets or tour the sites in a horse-drawn carriage, an air-conditioned bus or a tram car.

William Jackson says the temperature in mid-September would likely be "about 80 degrees, plus or minus two or three degrees," which he says would be "a very moderate climate," compared with his own state of Alabama where it is consistently 95 degrees in the summer.

The Scottish Games will be held at the Boone Hall Plantation, a former cotton-growing estate of 738 acres, about eight miles north of the city. Major John Boone received the property — then consisting of 17,000 acres — from the Lords Proprietor in 1681. The original Georgian mansion was destroyed but was rebuilt in 1935, using much of the original materials. It is approached by a famous avenue, a half-mile in length, lined by massive oaks draped in Spanish moss.

About sixty miles northwest of Charleston is the site of the Battle of Eutaw Springs, a critical engagement in the American Revolution, in which Major John Marjoribanks of the 19th Regiment of Foot fought gallantly and was fatally wounded. Major Marjoribanks, who was born in the parish of Eccles in Berwickshire, was cared for by Daniel Ravenel, the owner of the nearby Wantoot plantation. The Ravenel family tended his wounds and then gave him a dignified burial, erecting a slab of cypress wood over his grave as a marker. The slab was later replaced by a concrete marker and, in 1941, when the area was flooded by the erection of a dam, Major Marjoribanks's grave was moved to higher ground and is still to be seen. The descendants of Daniel Ravenel now live in Charleston.

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## 'The Worst Sort of Bushwhackers'

Col. Charles W. Blair, Commanding Officer of the Fourteenth Kansas Volunteer Cavalry at Fort Scott, Kansas, sent this message to the Deputy Provost-Marshal on March 10, 1865:

"The two young Marchbanks are the worst sort of bushwhackers. The old man is not . . . Bill Marchbanks is as bad as Quantrill. . . Please arrest all but the old man and, if possible send here. . . Iron them heavily as no guard house will hold them."

The bushwhackers that Col. Blair was talking about were Capt. William Marchbanks, his brother Robert, and their father Nathaniel Ridley Marchbanks of Vernon County, Missouri. They were descended from another famous rebel: George Marjoribanks who was captured at Preston in Scotland in 1715 during the uprising against the English and transported to Virginia.

The Colonel's reference to Quantrill is to William Clarke Quantrill a southern guerrilla leader who has been described as "the bloodiest man in American history." Among members of his band at various times, in addition to the Marchbankses, were Frank James, brother of Jesse James, and the four Younger brothers, notorious bank bandits and train robbers.

The Civil War exploits of the Marchbankses came to light in documents discovered by Dr. Jerry C. Oldshue, the archivist of the University of Alabama, himself a descendant of George the Jacobite. Military dispatches have many accounts of their raids on Northern towns and Union forces and of attempts to track them down and capture or kill them.

William and his followers are reported to have pursued a group of Union militiamen into the town of Nevada, Missouri on 24 May 1863. According to a local historian, all but two of the militiamen escaped.

"One, an old man named Shuey, dismounted, unarmed and terror-stricken, was shot down. . . Another, named Whitely, was chased to the northeast edge of town and shot out of his saddle by Marchbanks."

William was one of the leaders of a band who entered Lamar, Missouri at two o'clock in the morning of on 28 May 1864 and, according to the mayor, "burnt nearly every house in the place, together with most of the household goods."

William was cursed by the northerners but was highly regarded in his home county. The local newspaper described him as "stern-hearted but upstanding, a highly respected early-day settler." A history of Vernon County, written in 1887, declares: "Though he fought as a bushwhacker, it is said of him that he never murdered a prisoner or a private citizen."

The research that revealed the existence of this Marchbanks family is described in The Marjoribanks Journal No.3, which was published in June. In the same issue is an article about Marjoribanks heraldry by John Marjoribanks, the chief's younger brother, now living in New Delhi, India. It explains heraldic traditions and describes the coats of arms displayed by several members of the family.

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## Uncle Edward

Did you know . . . that Edward Marjoribanks, the second Baron Tweedmouth, was Winston Churchill's uncle?

Lord Tweedmouth in 1873 married Fanny Octavia Louisa, third daughter of John Winston Spencer-Churchill, seventh Duke of Marlborough, and sister of Lord Randolph Churchill, Winston's father.

In 1893 Churchill, who was then 19 and an ardent Conservative, wrote to his father about an argument he had with his Uncle Edward, then Chief Whip of the Liberal party, in which Edward predicted a Liberal parliamentary victory.

"I wish you had been there to answer him, father, as I am sure there was an answer though I could not think of it."

## The Further Adventures of Ishbel "THROUGH CANADA WITH A KODAK"

Ishbel Marjoribanks, Marchioness of Aberdeen and Temair, was one of the first amateur photographers and, when George Eastman in 1889 invented the "Kodak," his portable, hand-held camera using roll film, she requested a demonstration and promptly bought one for five guineas.

She took it with her in 1890 and again in 1891 when she and her husband visited Canada. It was partly a holiday trip but, more particularly from Ishbel's point of view, an opportunity to promote the emigration of British working-class women who were living under severe economic and social hardships. Her account of these voyages was published in monthly installments in the journal of the Onward and Upward Association, an organization which she founded for the enlightenment and moral improvement of female servants, factory workers, shop assistants, and women in similar occupations.

The articles, copiously illustrated with Ishbel's snapshots and drawings, were a huge success and were published for the general public as a book called *Through Canada With a Kodak* in 1893 by W.H. White & Co. of Edinburgh. It has now been republished by The University of Toronto Press in a paperback edition (\$24.95 Canadian) with a comprehensive introduction by Dr. Marjory Harper.

Ishbel's observations are delivered in a relentlessly cheerful and optimistic voice for the edification of her young female readers. Her interpretation of Canadian history and her assumptions about Canada's people may seem naive in a modern light but they are only what could be expected of a Victorian aristocrat whose opinions about the New World were largely formed by the popular periodicals. In matters which fall within her own experience, her judgment is much more acute.

### *The French-Canadians*

She was fascinated by the ramparts and spires of Quebec City whose charm she compares with that of Edinburgh and she was captivated by her first encounter with French-Canadians whom she found "a thrifty, contented, law-abiding, religious people." They were grateful to the conquering British for allowing them to keep their own laws and customs with the result that "nowhere can be found more loyal subjects to the British Crown."

The four Aberdeen children accompanied their parents to Canada: Lord Haddo, the eldest, aged 11, Lady Marjory, 9, the Honourable Coutts, 6 and the Honourable Archie, 5. They were left with a governess in a large rented house near Hamilton, Ontario. There are photographs of all four children in the book: Lord Haddo in a sailor suit and a straw hat, and his brothers in three-piece tweed suits with Eton collars. Lady Marjorie looks quite beautiful, with long curling hair.

Their trip across Canada was not exactly a grass-roots exploration. From Ottawa westward they travelled in a private railway car provided by Sir Donald Smith of the Canadian Pacific Railway who had entertained them in his "hospitable mansion" during their stay in Montreal. The car during the day could be used as "one long sitting room paneled with pretty white mahogany, where we read, wrote and painted and where we had many a pleasant little tea party." At night it was partitioned into separate rooms. The dining room was in an adjacent car. They were accompanied by Turner, Lord Aberdeen's valet, and Barron, Lady Aberdeen's maid.

### *'oor ain folk'*

At every stop along the way the local gentry jockeyed to be presented to the Aberdeens but Ishbel made a point of finding servants and other women who had recently emigrated and asking about their progress and their working conditions. Frequently they met some of "oor ain folk," women who had worked on the Aberdeens' own Haddo House estates in Aberdeenshire.

In Winnipeg they were joined by Ishbel's brother Hon. Coutts Marjoribanks who, with the financial backing of his father, had been managing a spectacularly unsuccessful cattle ranch in North Dakota.

Just west of Winnipeg, the Aberdeen train was derailed after running into a herd of cows. Lord and Lady Aberdeen had just entered the dining car and were beginning their dinner "when there came a sudden tremendous screwing of the brakes, a series of jerks, an abrupt transference of crockery and glass from the tables to floor, and then the car was motionless, and all perfectly still."

When the Aberdeens dismounted they found the locomotive lying on its side on the bank and the next four cars were derailed. The last three cars, including the dining car and the Aberdeens' sitting room, were still upright. Three members of the crew were cut and bruised but surprisingly no one was more seriously injured.

Ishbel was upset by the "hard-hearted" account of the incident as reported by English newspapers. They observed that, while Lord Aberdeen went about ministering to the wants of the wounded, Lady Aberdeen made sketches of the scene.

She appeals to her loyal readers: "I wonder what those of our Members and Associates who happened to notice this statement thought of the doings of their President while she was away beyond their reach?"

Ishbel did make a sketch of the overturned locomotive (it appears in the book) but apparently not until after the bruised and cut railwaymen had been attended to.

### *The Indians*

In Alberta she was genuinely moved by her first sight of Indians.

"Their tents or 'teepees' are pitched in groups on the plains you pass by, and miserable specimens in dirty squalid-coloured blankets haunt the railway stations, with the object of selling buffalo horns, or baskets, or feather-work"

She found it impossible to do justice to the "magnificent panorama" of the Rocky Mountains but she did manage to snap some shots with her Kodak and, in leisured moments, to produce some impressive sketches of the passing scene. She found the people of British Columbia delightful, particularly for their "faith and hope in the future of their country."

Infected by that kind of faith, Lord Aberdeen, during their one-day stop in Vancouver, arranged for the purchase of 480 acres in the Okanagan Valley in South-Central British Columbia which they believed had great potential for fruit-growing. Their intention was to settle Coutts on this property and to give him an opportunity to repair his hitherto unimpressive reputation as a business manager. Ishbel named it Guisachan (Gaelic for place of firs) after her father's deer forest in the Scottish highlands.

After a day in Victoria, they began their return trip by train to Hamilton where they were reunited with their children and then to New York where they boarded the S.S. Umbria for Liverpool.

### *Guisachan*

Lord and Lady Aberdeen, along with young Lady Marjorie, returned to Canada the following September and the latter part of the book is taken up with an account of nine days they spent at Guisachan. When they returned to Canada for the third time, in 1893, Lord Aberdeen was the Governor General. Ishbel's considerable impact on Canadian history, and particularly her efforts on behalf of Canadian women, have been recorded elsewhere. *Through Canada With a Kodak*, in her words, "does not aspire to deal with the deeper questions of Canadian life," but are "merely the superficial and passing notes of a traveller," published "for the information and amusement of members of the Onward and Upward Association."

## Genealogy Seminar

Cynthia Allen of Huddersfield in England is descended through her mother from James Leslie Marjoribanks (1874-1942) who was a Lieutenant-Colonel in the Indian Medical Services and a younger brother of Rev. Thomas Marjoribanks of that ilk (1871-1947.)

Since the Marjoribanks side of her family is very well documented, when she spoke to the genealogy session at the Henley Gathering, she talked about her efforts to trace the ancestors of her father, Clifford McLaglen.

Cynthia and her husband Ron travelled about in Scotland, scrutinizing gravestones and examining records looking for an ancestor named Bruce McLaglen, a 19th century blacksmith and a wrestler. Their search came to a dead end in Edinburgh where they discovered they would have to examine seventy-eight record books to find what they were looking for.

While they were going through the family papers, however, Cynthia and Ron came across many interesting photographs and documents relating to Cynthia's father, who was an actor, and to his more famous brother, Victor McLaglen. She passed around a photograph of Victor in the moving picture "The Informer" for which he won an Oscar and another of him in "What Price Glory?" Even though it was a silent film, Cynthia said audiences complained about "the bad language." There were pictures of her father in the very first German talking picture ever made.

Like many of the McLaglen family, Victor was a prize-fighter in his early years and she has photographs of him fighting Jack Johnson, who became the first black heavyweight champion by defeating the Canadian Tommy Burns at Sydney, Australia in 1908. Uncle Victor got knocked out.

William P. Jackson Jr. described the work done so far to trace the family in America — much of it by Dr. Angus Marchbanks of Bakersfield, California. He described a computer program called Personal Ancestry File, produced by the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, which he was using to organize his genealogical data.

Allan Marchbank of Truro, Nova Scotia traced the history of Marchbanks families in Prince Edward Island and New Brunswick since the 1820s. His great—great-grandfather, James Marchbank, had come to Prince Edward Island from Annandale in Dumfriesshire. His great-grandfather took part in the California gold rush before returning to Prince Edward Island, marrying a Johnstone, and establishing a mill that manufactured wool cloth, sawed timbers, and ground cereals to make flour. The milling tradition continued in Allan's family until his father's time. Many of the Marchbanks in New Brunswick are descended from Gabriel Marchbank who came from Annandale at about the same time as James. Gabriel was a very successful ship-builder and launched more than thirty vessels during his lifetime.

## Marion A. Marchbank

Marion Audrey Marchbank M.B.E., descended from a family who lived in Kirkcudbrightshire, Scotland in the last century, died in Ottawa on July 6 at the age of 97.

She was employed for a number of years in the British Embassy in Washington and, for her services, was admitted a Member of the Order of the British Empire. She was born in Durango, Mexico in 1898 where her father, Archibald Marchbank, was employed by a railway company. He died in 1918 of yellow fever contracted during a visit to the Panama Canal Zone. Her grandfather, George Marchbank (1825-1864), was born in Kirkcudbrightshire but her great-grandfather, also named Archibald ((1793-1862) emigrated to Scotland from Tipperary in Ireland.

She was cared for in her last years by her niece, Mrs. Rosamond Sturk, a member of the Family, whose mother, Jessie Marchbank, was Marion's sister.

## Notes from the Secretary

Alcc Marchbank of Bergenfield, New Jersey, who has signed up several of his relatives as members of The Family, continually reminds me that his approach to recruitment is very effective. I agree. Send me the names and addresses of your uncles, aunts, nieces and nephews. I'll send them a bundle of propaganda. And check your card to make sure your own membership is up to date.

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Write to me anyway — whatever the excuse. It's a dull day when I don't get a letter from a kinsman or a kinswoman in some part of the world.

One of my most faithful correspondents is Richard Marjoribanks in Busselton, West Australia, who is now 80. He says his health will prevent him from joining us at Charleston but he adds, "Old England seems to have put on her best for your visit to Greenlands. I shall read about it in The Marjoribanks Letter."

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I'm doing a brisk business in back copies of The Marjoribanks Journal and The Marjoribanks Letter. I've reprinted the Journals to keep up with demand. Five dollars (Canadian) or the equivalent will cover the cost of printing and mailing. It's not practical to reprint the Letters but, as long as they last, back copies can be had for \$3.00 each.

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We're unfortunately out of Family ties but I'm arranging for a new supply and I'll let you know when they arrive.

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It was not the printer's fault, or the fault of the computer. In these notes, in the last issue, I joined the innumerable host who throughout the course of history have misspelled our family name. Mea maxima culpa.

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I'm looking forward to meeting a lot of American members of the Family for the first time at Charleston — and, of course, as many loyal Britons as can afford the time and money to come! I'll see you there!

*Robert Marjoribanks  
Honorary Secretary*

## 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.

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