



# THE Marjoribanks LETTER

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

## THE TEXANS SHOW THE FAMILY A REAL SOUTHERN WELCOME

Family members from Scotland, England, Northern Ireland, Canada and many states of the American Union enjoyed real Texas hospitality during their visit to Fort Worth for the annual Gathering October 13, 14 and 15.

The Chief, Andrew Marjoribanks of that Ilk, was honoured by the presentation of the flags of both Texas and the United States. Earlier in the year his Texas flag had been flown over the legislature building in Austin on March 2, to celebrate the anniversary of Texas's independence from Mexico, and on July 4 the Stars and Stripes flag was flown over the national Capitol in Washington to celebrate the anniversary of America's independence from Great Britain. The Chief said he would cherish the flags and, on his return to Scotland, would display them on all appropriate occasions.

During a bus tour on Saturday members visited the graves of many of their ancestors in the nearby towns of Ennis and Chatfield. At Ennis they honoured the burial place of Boling Feltz Marchbanks whose maternal grandmother, Ann Feltz Sullivan, led a family migration in 1851 from Smith County, Tennessee to Ellis County, Texas. Boling Feltz is notable for his 117-page manuscript which records much family history including details of the historic trek. Another matriarch, Margaret Sophonia Marchbanks, led an earlier group on a similar journey in 1850.

At Boling Feltz's grave in Ennis, Rob Jones, a lawyer and amateur historian, dressed in the uniform of major in the Confederate Army, gave a brief sketch of Boling Feltz's life including his service in Parson's 12th Texas Cavalry, sometimes known as the 4th Texas Mounted Dragoons, during what he referred to as "the Northern War of Insurrection." Mr. Jones is descended from Robert Lewis Hodge, the brother of Mollie Hodge, Boling Feltz's first wife.

Luncheon at the Ennis Country Club was arranged by Donna Lonon of Waxahachie, who is descended from Mary Ann Marchbanks, the grand-daughter of George Marchbanks, the Jacobite rebel who was transported to Virginia in 1716. After lunch we visited the Hodge plot in Chatfield cemetery where Mollie and other members of her family are buried. At the cemetery a gun crew, dressed in Confederate uniforms and under the command of Mr. Jones, fired an artillery salute in memory of Boling Feltz and other family members who had served in the Civil War.

From the cemetery it was a short drive to Hodge Oaks, Mollie's family home, once a plantation two square miles in extent. She and Boling Feltz were married there in 1865 at the foot of the broad staircase in the large entrance hall. There is, still standing on the front lawn, a large and ancient tree, called The Liberty Oak. It is said that under this tree Mollie's father, Captain Robert Hodge, assembled his slaves and, with an eloquent speech, granted them all their freedom.



*A gun crew dressed as Confederate soldiers, under the command of Rob Jones, fires a salute in honour of Boling Feltz Marchbanks and other members of the family who fought in the Civil War.*

At the conclusion of the tour, Rob Jones invited the entire party to the Jones house in Chatfield where we were graciously received by his parents, Robert N. Jones Sr. and his wife Frances, and enjoyed lemonade and cookies while admiring a large collection of family heirlooms. In the evening, many members took the opportunity to sample Tex-Mex cuisine at Joe T. Garcia's famous restaurant which specializes in Mexican food cooked with a Texas accent.

On Sunday morning the Chief opened the Annual General Meeting with the traditional ringing of the Balbardie bell which was used between 1727 and 1824 in the Marjoribanks barony of Balbardie whenever the laird had announcements to make. It was presented to the family by Hazel Leslie of Kilconquhar, Leven, Fife in 1989.

The meeting noted with sorrow the passing on January 10, 2000, at Greenock, Scotland, of Thelma Williamson, widow of William Logan Marjoribanks of that Ilk and mother of Andrew Marjoribanks of that Ilk and of John Logan Marjoribanks of Eden House, Berwickshire. She was 86. The late chief died at his home in Aberdeenshire in 1991 at the age of 81. They were married in 1938 at Morham in East Lothian by William's father, a minister of the Church of Scotland. The Chief also acknowledged the death of Elizabeth Marjoribanks Bair of New York, widow of Rev. George Marjoribanks of that Ilk, brother of the late chief.

Robert Marjoribanks reported that membership in The Marjoribanks Family stood at 170. Finances were in good shape, with a current bank balance of just under \$1,500 in Canadian dollars.

The new Tartan was very much in evidence - a couple of kilts, several ladies's sashes, and innumerable ties, including the bow tie worn by Alastair Marjoribanks of Coldstream in Scotland - and a handsome waistcoat by Bill Jackson of McLean, Virginia.

## NEXT GATHERING WILL VISIT HADDO HOUSE

Next year's Gathering will be held in Aberdeen. The Annual General Meeting agreed that it should be early in June, before transatlantic air fares increase. Details would be left to the Executive Committee.

One of the attractions of the Aberdeen area is Haddo House, the first home of Isobel Marjoribanks after her marriage in 1877 to John Hamilton Gordon, the seventh Earl of Aberdeen. She came to the house in an open carriage, in the teeth of a gale, almost twenty miles north from Aberdeen. When they reached the main door of the house the bridal couple was greeted with wild cheers from the earl's tenants. That began a week of celebrations which ended with a dinner to which all nine hundred and fifty tenants and their families were invited.

For Isobel, who was raised in the warm and friendly atmosphere of Guisachan, her father's shooting lodge in Invernesshire, the imposing Georgian architecture of Haddo House, built in 1713, seemed uncomfortably austere. She hired the best Scottish architects and interior designers to give it a more home-like feeling. She added a wing at the rear of the house to accommodate nurseries, and sitting rooms, created a large library, added bow windows and a more welcoming entrance.

The house became a favourite retreat for the Aberdeen's titled friends and political allies, especially leaders of the Liberal party. A well-known painting by A.M. Emslie shows Isobel presiding at the Haddo dinner table with Prime Minister Gladstone at her right hand and the Earl of Roseberry, Gladstone's Foreign Secretary at her left, and a table full of distinguished-looking guests, while a piper in the far corner of the room provides a musical accompaniment to the conversation.

Isobel was a full partner in the Earl's career of public service, as Viceroy of Ireland and as Governor General of Canada, and they

retired together in 1920, when he was 73 and she was 63. Because of the rising cost of maintaining Haddo House and the burden of taxes, they sold off more than 60,000 acres of their 75,000-acre estate and turned the house over to their eldest son, George, Lord Haddo.

Isobel and her husband went to live in a pretty, more modest, house at Cromar, forty miles south of Haddo, on the River Dee, where they could more comfortably enjoy visits from their children and grandchildren and their many friends. The Cromar house was not far from Balmoral, the royal family's much-loved Scottish retreat which was sold to Queen Victoria and Prince Albert in 1852 by the Earl's grandfather.

Queen Mary, the wife of King George VI, often came to tea and, on one occasion, the Duchess of York (now the Queen Mother) came with her daughters, the present Queen and her sister Margaret. The little girls planted saplings alongside many others planted by royal visitors.

The Earl died of a cerebral hemorrhage on the afternoon of March 6, 1933, in his study, in the arms of his loving wife. The following year, Isobel left Cromar and moved to a pleasant house on a hill overlooking Aberdeen which George had bought for her. She died of a heart attack on April 18, 1939 and was buried beside her husband on a sunny knoll, among the trees, near Haddo House.

The house passed from George to his nephew David and then to David's brother Archibald who eventually gave it into the safekeeping of the National Trust for Scotland. David's widow, Lady June Gordon, retains a family wing for her personal use. Haddo House is decorated in late Victorian style with much fine furniture, paintings and objects of art, including a hand-painted porcelain dinner service presented to the Earl and the Countess on the occasion of their leaving their Canadian post.

### Off the press: Journal No. 6

The Marjoribanks Journal No. 6 is now off the press. At fifty pages it's the biggest issue we have ever published.

The leading article is called "The Way We Lived" and describes in words and pictures some of the houses our ancestors occupied - from palaces to humble farm houses. It includes Brook House, the magnificent London building erected by Dudley Courts Marjoribanks, the first Baron Tweedmouth, and Springfield, in Perthshire, the cottage where Samuel Mandeville Marjoribanks set out for the new world in search of his father.

Another article, "Life on the Rocking Chair Ranch," offers new information about Hon. Archibald John Marjoribanks and the sad life he spent as a manager of his father's cattle ranch in Texas.

John Marjoribanks of Berwickshire, who designed the Marjoribanks tartan and arranged to have it produced and distributed, has written a piece about tartan in general and our own in particular. His advice is, "Splash it around! Use it for anything that takes your fancy - curtains, table cloths, bedspreads, sheets!"

The fourth article in this issue, "Alexander Marjoribanks Visits America," is based on a travel book, published in 1853 by the eldest son of "The Auld Laird," Alexander Marjoribanks of Ballardie and of that ilk. It's a lively account of a Scottish gentleman's impressions of America in the middle of the 19th century.

Since issue No. 6 includes half a dozen illustrations in full colour, it's not only the biggest ever published, it is also the most expensive. It is available, on request and without charge, to members in good standing of The Marjoribanks Family.

### Family Life, 1881

Sheila Hale of Fort McMurray, in Alberta, Canada, head librarian at the local genealogical library, recently produced a transcription of all the Marjoribankses - in various spellings - in the 1881 census of the United Kingdom. Among other useful data, it gave us some long-sought information about the ancestors of one of our Australian families.

It also provided an insight into the lifestyle of the Marjoribankses in the latter years of the 19th century.

For instance, it lists the occupants of Brook House, in London's Park Lane, the four-storey mansion owned by Sir Dudley Courts Marjoribanks, later the first Baron Tweedmouth, and his wife Isabella. By 1881 their five children were grown and left home but Sir Dudley and Lady Isabella were by no means alone. They shared the house with the following people:

John Robinson, the butler; Robert Tomlinson, the under butler; Charles Ratford, a valet; John Pittaway, John Barrett and Frank Harris, footmen; Samuel Pike, the caretaker; Mary Wood, the housekeeper; Maria Spinks, a lady's maid; Mary Shannon, Mary A. Smith, and Mary J. White, housemaids; Elizabeth Burns, a kitchen maid; and Kitty Macdonald, the scullery maid (the lowest rank of all, she scrubs the pots and pans in the kitchen)

Fourteen servants to look after one gentleman and his wife!

Of course, not all the family lived in this style. The census records show many John Marjoribankses and Mary Jane Marchbanks who were themselves employed as servants in lonely farm houses throughout the kingdom and one can imagine that their living conditions were far from luxurious.

## An Ancient Uniform Lovingly Preserved

The Confederate Army uniform worn by Burton Marchbanks has been lovingly preserved for almost one hundred and forty years and now rests in the Layland Museum in Cleburne, Texas, about thirty miles south of Fort Worth.

It was hand-made for him by his wife Mary Emmeline before he enlisted in E Company of the 30th Texas Cavalry in 1862. She spun the thread, wove the cloth, cut and sewed his coat, trousers and gloves, knitted his socks, and embroidered his initial on each piece. The Confederate Government provided the metal buttons.

Burton was shot through the neck and captured at the Battle of Honey Springs a year after he signed up. He was patched by Union surgeons and sent home to his farm near Cleburne but he contracted pneumonia and died on February 12 1864.

Mary Emmeline folded the uniform carefully and put it in the bottom of her wooden quilt box and there it remained. At the time of her death in 1925 she was living with her grand-daughter Ova Shannon. When Miss Shannon died in 1978, her nephew Roy Howell, inherited the house and had the job of disposing its contents.

He remembered seeing the quilt box and its uniform when he was in high school and spent his summers visiting his grandmother and his aunt in Cleburne. He realized its historic significance and when the museum approached him he was most willing to give it into their care.

The uniform is not allowed to be handled and is enclosed in a glass case and covered with a cloth to protect it from the light. It was briefly unveiled for a group who visited the museum after the Fort Worth Gathering. It is planned to produce patterns of the garments for the benefit of people who wish to dress in authentic Confederate uniforms while re-enacting historic battles.

Burton and his bride were part of the group that made the trek from Tennessee to Texas in 1851 led by Burton's widowed mother Ann Feltz Sullivan Marchbanks, who was then about sixty-five years of age. In the same party was the 12-year-old Boling Feltz Marchbanks.

Burton and Emmeline settled on a ranch in Johnson County near Cleburne where they raised horses. They had six children, three of whom - Vance, Josiah and Martha - died in infancy. Ema died at the age of fifteen but Sarah and Mary Angeline lived to help support their mother Emmeline who never married and never applied for a widow's pension.

## "Evening Devotions"

Tom Krakow of Chapel Hill, North Carolina, sends this story about one of his wife's ancestors, Burgess Pinckney Marshbanks, who was for forty-four years a professor at Campbell College at Little Bices Creek.

The professor was crossing the campus in the early evening and, as he passed some tall shrubs along one of the walks, he heard a rustling sound and stopped to investigate. Behind the shrubs he found two students, a young man and a young woman. The students were embarrassed but the young man was ready with an explanation. He and his girl friend had sought a place of quiet retreat, where they could pray and have evening devotions together. Professor Marshbanks ordered the pair to return to their dormitories and to report to their counsellors.

"Why, Professor Marshbanks," the young man cried, "you wouldn't punish us for having our evening devotions together!"

"No, young man," the professor replied. "I am punishing you for what I would have been doing had I been in your place."

## "The Mystery of the Marshbanks"

Dr. Jerry Oldshue of Tuscaloosa, Alabama, has discovered an old novel with an intriguing title. It's called "The Secret of the Marshbanks," by Kathleen Norris, and it was first published in 1940 by P.F. Collier & Son.

The heroine of this sentimental and romantic story is Cherry Rawlings whose parents died when she was seven. Cherry is now twenty and is leaving her orphanage in the custody of her guardian, the kindly Judge Judson Marshbanks who lives in a splendid mansion near Oakland, California, surrounded by servants. There Cherry meets the judge's niece Amy Marshbanks, the daughter of the judge's late brother Fred, a sophisticated, spoiled and snobbish debutante.

As the bizarre plot unfolds Cherry learns that she was actually Fred's illegitimate daughter, the result of his affair with a servant girl. She and Amy were born at about the same time and, since Amy was sickly and not likely to live, the servant girl switched babies in their cribs, taking the dying Amy and leaving her own healthy and unwanted child in her place.

But the sickly baby lived and was raised as Cherry and the servant girl's child became Amy. Cherry, the poor but honest orphan girl, is really the rich heiress and the spoiled debutante is really the impoverished daughter of an unmarried servant girl.

That's the "Secret of the Marshbanks."

Soon after revealing this information to Cherry, the kindly old judge is shot. Who actually shot him and why is another secret and you will have to read the book to find out. (It was not the butler!)

Amy, of course, is shocked to be deprived of her riches, particularly since she was about to marry Count Georgio Francisco Mario Alexandro Stanislau Constantino, a hopelessly debt-ridden gambler who believed the marriage would save him from creditors.

Cherry, in the meantime, has fallen in love with a poor but talented artist, Fred Coates, and has agreed to marry him. In the sweetness of her nature, she proposes a solution: She will go on being Cherry - now Cherry Coates - and Amy will go on being Amy Marshbanks - now Countess Constantino - and no one will be any the wiser. Cherry, as she is entitled to do by law, will keep the vast inheritance but she will pay off the Count's debts and she will give Amy an allowance with the provision that it will be immediately cut off if the Count should prove to be less than an admirable husband.

## New Officers Elected

William E. Lucado, a prominent Tennessee banker, was elected President of The Marjoribanks Family at the Annual General Meeting in Fort Worth.

He lives in Germantown, Tennessee, with his Canadian-born wife, the former Elizabeth McLeod and their daughter Andrea. Bill is descended from Samuel Mandeville Marjoribanks who emigrated from Perthshire to South Carolina in 1794 and shortened his name to Banks. He has served as Vice-President for the last two years.

The new Vice President is Alastair Marjoribanks of Coldstream in the Scottish Borders, near the seat of the Lees branch of the family. He and his wife Marion, a retired nurse, have both been active in the family since its inception in 1988. Alastair worked as a printer for a number of Scottish newspapers and is now an enthusiastic golfer and a talented pianist. (He frequently performs at funerals and says, "People are dying to hear me play!")

## The Barefoot Plowman

Alvin Marchbanks was the son of Jasper, another of the gallant band who emigrated in horse-drawn carts and carriages from Tennessee to Ellis County in Texas in 1850. Two or three years later, the family moved to Johnson County and that's where Alvin was born, about two miles north of Cleburne.

Alvin's life was celebrated in the centennial issue of the Cleburne Texas Times-Review in 1953. He was said to be, at the age of 91, Johnson County's oldest living native.

Many sad stories are told about Alvin's early life. He got, and lost, his first job when he was little more than five years old. A neighbour hired him to do some plowing but Alvin had no shoes and, walking behind the plow, his feet were cut and scratched by the stubble. His father went to town and got him his first pair of store-boughten shoes but, since he had no socks to wear with them, they only made his feet worse and he lost the job.

Alvin remembered that his father went once a year in an ox wagon more than thirty miles to Dallas to buy such things as flour, sugar and coffee. One of his favourite foods was dried beef, cut in strips and smoked. His mother died when he was five, his father when he was fourteen, and Alvin was left to look after himself. He got a job one winter cutting wood for seven dollars a month.

At the age of twenty-nine he became a law officer, rising to the rank of deputy sheriff. He later spent fifteen years as a cotton-buyer He married Martha Baker of Alvarado in 1891 and they had seven children and, at the time of his ninety-first birthday, fifteen grandchildren and eight great-grandchildren.

## New Light on George the Jacobite

Some new clues have been uncovered about the origins of George Marjoribanks (Marchbanks) the Jacobite rebel who was captured at Preston in 1715 and transported to Virginia.

Documents discovered in the Public Records Office in England provide details of English state trials held over several centuries. Among them is a box of papers concerning the Jacobite uprising of 1715, including lists of prisoners taken. One of the prisoners listed is George Margerybanks. Although the name is misspelled, it undoubtedly refers to the ancestor of many American members of the family.

He is said to have been imprisoned at the small Lancashire town of Wigan, but he himself was from the village of Singdean in Roxburghshire in the Scottish Borders. He is listed as one of a group of "Scotch servants" attached to an Argyllshire regiment.

Roger Marjoribanks, the family's principal researcher, says it has not been possible to identify George further since early registers for the area have not been preserved but the investigation will continue. The discovery of the Public Records document tends to cast doubt on earlier speculation that he was the grandson of great-grandson of Thomas Marjoribanks of Ratho who died in 1557.

## Bike Tour Nets £3,500

Alexander Marjoribanks, who rode his bicycle almost 1,400 miles around the perimeter of Scotland to finance his environmental work in Viet Nam, raised £3,500 from admiring sponsors, including several members of the family.

He spent more than five months in Viet Nam as a research assistant, studying the depletion of the rain forest as a result of the war. It's expected that the Vietnamese government will turn the surveyed area into a national park.

In the next phase of his career, Alexander plans to enter the Royal Military Academy Sandhurst.

## How Do You Spell That?

Marjoribanks is not the only name that is pronounced in a different way than you would think from seeing it written. There are many British names like that – probably the result of hundreds of years of careless diction.

Cholmondely, of course, is pronounced Chumly; Colquhoun is Cuhoun; Belvoir is Beaver; Bohun is Boon; Beauchamp is Beccham.

You have to remember these idiosyncrasies if you are to understand the poem that follows. It is by Harry Hearson and appears in The Oxford Book of Comic Verse.

(In this case the author is evidently pronouncing our name Marshbanks.)

### Nomenclaturik

There was a young fellow named Cholmondely,  
Whose bride was so mellow and cholmondely  
That the best man, Colquhoun,  
An inane young bolqufoun,  
Could only stand still and stare dolmondely.

The bridegroom's first cousin, young Belvoir,  
Whose dad was a Lancashire velvoir,  
Arrived with George Bohun  
At just about nohoun  
When excitement was mounting to felvoir.

The vicar – his surname was Beauchamp –  
Of marriage endeavoured to teachamp,  
While the bridesmaid, Miss Marjoribanks,  
Played one or two harjorjorjorjor,\*  
But the shoe that she threw failed to teachamp.

(\*harsh pranks)

In the same vein, a short verse was once composed and dedicated to our Honorary Secretary:

To his laundry, Robert Marjoribanks  
Said, "My shirts need no starch, thanks!  
My tie and collar bowth  
Arc hidden by my facial growth.

## The Marjoribanks Letter

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\* Family membership includes parents and their children.

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