



THE COCHRANE HERITAGE

The official newsletter of Clan Cochrane in North America

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HAPPY HOLIDAY SEASON TO ALL

COCHRANE

The Chief of Clan Cochrane is the Earl of Dundonald. The following article is taken from the June 1987 issue of the *Scottish Field* magazine. The Earl has given permission to reprint it. You will note he mentions (in letters to the Editor) that it is out of date having been published four years ago, announcement in our last edition I thought I would publish as is, without update, perhaps we can do that soon.

“Next month the amiable young 15th Earl of Dundonald gets married in Gibraltar to his beautiful bride, Beatrice Russo. Special flights have been arranged to bring over his friends from Scotland and after the ceremony, the reception is being held on mainland Spain.

The Cochranes are traditionally a notable military and naval family, but the current Earl runs a successful property development company, specializing in commercial projects. He divides his time between his flat and office in Edinburgh and the family home in Lochnell near Oban. His father’s sudden death last October elevated him, so-to-speak, into the House of Lords, but, although he does spend time in London, he prefers to live in Scotland.

There are various theories on the origins of the Cochranes. Tradition has it that they descend from a Scandinavian sea-warrior who settled in what was, until recently, the county of Renfrew. The name itself is said to derive from the “Five-Merk” land of Cochrane (Coweran), near Paisley.

“Either we came from Scandinavia direct to Scotland, settling here around 900 A.D., or, we arrived from Ireland”, says the 15th Earl, “Some Irish cousins have discovered a Prince of Ulster in 600 BC who was supposedly called Cochrane, but I think that is probably very fanciful. Anyway, we are not sure whether the family came to Scotland from Ireland. One way or the other, we have a very strong connection with Northern Ireland.”

It is only recently that he has found himself involved with hi Clan societies. The most active one over the years is in America, where there is a branch in California and another based near Fort Worth.

In 1983, his father collaborated with Alexander Cochrane to write a book covering 600 years of naval and military history called “The Fighting Cochranes”; it was published by the

Quiller Press. *“My father was promoting the book in Australia and an incredibly enthusiastic chap got in contact with him. As a result, he set up a Cochrane Clan Society which is a huge success.”*

The Cochranes acquired their peerage in 1647 and the earldom was bestowed upon the first Baron Cochrane of Dundonald in 1669. At that time, the family owned the town house known as “The Place of Paisley”, which is today open to the public, but in the seventeenth century they purchased Dundonald in Kyle, a castle built by the Stewarts in the twelfth century.

Certainly they were an energetic and impressive breed. Archibald, 9th Earl was a scientist and inventor who made a number of important discoveries in chemistry; Thomas, 10th Earl, served in the Royal Navy and became one of the greatest commanders of his age. He conducted the attack on the French Fleet at Basque Roads and later commanded not only the Chilean navy, but the Peruvian, Brazilian, and Greek navies as well. The Brazilians created him Marquess of Maranham.

The 11th Earl was Q.M.G. to Forces in the Chinese War and the 12th Earl took part in the Nile Expedition in 1884, fought hand-to-hand with the Dervish warriors when they broke into a British “square” during the Gordon Relief episode and his mounted troops, “Dundonald’s Cavalry” became a by-word for bravery during the Boer War.”

I THOUGHT I WAS IRISH!

Former U.S. President Ronald Reagan flew out of Scotland today – leaving a trail of wisecracks in his wake.

On a whistle-stop tour, he rediscovered his Scottish roots and left guests at a high society banquet rolling in the aisles.

On ancestry, he said: “Someone once said it cost very little to trace your ancestors to Scotland but it costs a fortune to keep it quiet. Why pay money to have your family tree traced when you can go into politics and your opponents will do it for you?”

On history – Reagan’s forebears emigrated to America from Nova Scotia – he said “Like other immigrants at that time, they were given a horse, a plough, and land. And two tickets to Frank Sinatra’s first farewell concert.”

On literature and whisky: “Robert Burns and freedom and whisky go together. Mark Twain said “too much of anything is bad – but too much whisky is barely enough.”

The former president fired the gags at a banquet of aristocrats and whisky industry chiefs at Blair Castle, Perthshire, where he was last night installed as a Keeper of the Quaich, a whisky promotional body.

The ceremony was the finale to a one-day visit where he and his wife Nancy attended a Sunday church service minutes after landing at Glasgow Airport.

His unannounced visit to Paisley’s Castlehead Church was arranged at the last minute after church officials realized he was landing near the town where his great-great-grandparents married.

GOOD NEWS & BAD NEWS

So the bad news is a rather diminished edition, the good news is that it will arrive in time to with a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year. The better news is that I intend to do another at the end of January. That edition will focus on membership, contain some of that material I could not cram in this one and hopefully perhaps some more letters, notes or even comments on Christmas cards, if you would like to send them along. I will be taking another week off in early January and promise to put together an effort worthy of the new year. Until then my sincere thanks to all who wrote.

EXCERPTS FROM LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

In response to my asking permission to use an article about Lord Dundonald:

August 20, 1991

Dear Mr. Cochrane:

Thank you very much for your letter and enclosures dated 8 August, which I have read with much interest. First could you please make sure that my address is shown correctly as somebody seems to have made a terrible muddle of it.

With reference to the article published in the Field, I can confirm that the contents are accurate, but somewhat out of date as the publication was first distributed some four years ago.

I am sorry to hear that Society memberships do not seem to have improved very much, but I hope that the good Colonel Cochran's helpful assistance in acting as our Agent for *The Fighting Cochranes* should boost Clan membership. Perhaps you would be good enough to have a word with him and the Commissioner.

I was very glad to read that there is an up and coming Cochrane golfer who I am sure we will see more of in some of the European tournaments.

Yours Aye,

Dundonald

Lord Dundonald's correct address is:

Lochnell Castle
Ledaig, Argyll
PA37 1QT

Letter received with the current issue of the Australian Newsletter:

September 25, 1991

Dear Donald:

Congratulations on your latest issue of "The Cochrane Heritage". Enclosed is our newsletter. I have used some of your articles as you will see, and hope that you will use articles from my newsletter.

The index may be useful for you – please let me know if I can send you a copy.

I am sending a copy of the newsletter to Michael Hartley also.

It is hard work, but a sense of satisfaction at the end makes it worthwhile.

Your item on "Cochrane History on a Scroll" rang a bell – a similar company was operating in Australia a few years ago and was investigated by the authorities and found to be quite fraudulent.

I received a letter in the mail offering me a book about my FLORANCES of whom I am a world authority. I was tempted to expose the fraud but it was done for me on television and radio. The company is still operating in another guise. If you substitute any family name, other than Cochrane it would still read coherently.

I look forward to hearing from you again soon – did you get your tartan?

Best Wishes,
Sandra Florance

****Editor's Note****

Florance raised an interesting point concerning scams! Any comments from other members?

THE GATHERING OF THE CLANS

Michael Hartley

High Commissioner Clan Cochrane

May - Maryland –

On Tuesday the temperature was 92. It was going to be a hot Saturday. Six yards of wool in this humid heat was going to have its effect. On Wednesday, "they" said it would rain on Saturday. I had images of lively times under the tents trying to keep from getting drenched. By Friday it appeared the storm had come early and maybe Saturday would be nice. At seven a.m. on Saturday my dog took me for my walk and the sun was just starting to warm the air. It was going to be a beautiful day. The drive to Fairhill was thru the country and spring was blooming all around. This is one of the really nice things about these games. But as soon as I arrived I noticed that something was amiss. Storm clouds started creeping in. Something was very wrong. It wasn't as warm as expected and I'd left my sweater home. I realize that if you don't leave something home its not much of a trip, but my sweater! All in all it was a very poor turnout. Most of the Clans talked among themselves. We always enjoy ourselves.

July – Virginia

The Middle Atlantic States were in for one of the worst droughts in a while. The temperatures had been breaking all the records with higher than normal temperatures. Since May they had been in the 90 to 100 degree range. The only break had been, of course, the Fairhill Games. Saturday it rained all day. The walk around the tent area was covered with two inches of mud. Navigation was tight. Despite all the mud spirits were high and comradely was strong. We were situated next to Clan Hay, which is our usual position. Clan Cochrane presented an award for amateur harping on that day.

The next day it cleared up and it turned out to be one of the better days of the summer. Mud row was covered with straw and life went on. Connie Cochran stopped by to chat. Connie is the descendant of the Surgeon to Washington and the founder of Cochran, Pennsylvania. She had sent me 25 pages she received from the Peruvian Embassy in Washington about Thomas Cochrane. Now was my chance to get her to translate all this Spanish. Connie has been on an extended trip to Peru and toured the Thomas Cochrane Museum down there.

Another clansperson stopped by, Laurie Clarkston from Spotsylvania, Virginia. Laurie had some tough questions about the "Fighting Cochranes" and showed me a letter she sent to Bill Cochrane in California. Good luck Bill!!!! Always great to see Laurie. Will I see her at the Old Town Alexandria?

October – Georgia

I picked a great time to fly into Atlanta. The Braves had just won the pennant and the town was going crazy! I heard the tomahawk chop for three days. This was the Braves first World Series. Being from Baltimore I know how a town can get winning a pennant. We once did what the Braves did; we went from worst to first.

John Cochrane our Georgia Commissioner ran the tent and sent me off to do PR work. John has lots of enthusiasm and some great ideas. He sent out 100 posy cards announcing our representation to Cochranes around the Atlanta area. Unfortunately, only 1 showed up. It's still a great idea. I'm going to try it myself. John was informed about a Cochran Family reunion in Northern Georgia. He hopes to attend. Lots of laughter and good spirits come out of John and there was never a dull moment at our tent. John was visited by a Canadian Gentleman who wants to sell Clan Cochrane jewelry. Things are still to be worked out.

Alton Cochrane is one of the officials at the games. I've been trying to get him to join for years. I feel that this may be the year. Hopefully when he gets another complementary issue he will join us. What do you think? Alton is a member of Clan Donald as I am. Clan Hay had an interesting gentleman who promised to send me information he has on various Cochranes and information about a wonderful genealogical disk he has. He also informed me that there is a Cochrane family reunion in Southern Virginia every year and promised to get me invited next year.

John Sinclair is carrying back information on our clan to a Cochrane in Saint Andrews Society of San Francisco. All in all a very productive trip. Lots of PR. We'll see what happens.