

Clan BANNERMAN



ARMS	Gules, a banner displayed Argent, thereon a canton Azure, charged with a St Andrews. Cross of the Second, as the badge of Scotland
CREST	A demi man in armour holding in his right hand a sword Proper
MOTTO	Pro partia (For my country)
SUPPORTERS	Two armed men Proper

The name of Bannerman has its origin in the Privilege held by ancestors of the family of carrying the royal standard in the tenth and eleventh centuries and the arms of this family prominently proclaim this ancient and honorable office. It is not known when this right passed from the family, but according to one tradition it occurred in the late eleventh or early twelfth centuries, during the reign of either Malcolm III or Alexander I. The king is said to have arrived at the River Spey, where a large enemy force had assembled on the opposite bank, believing themselves protected by the rising flood waters. The king was urged by his advisors not to attempt to cross the river until it fell, but he was enraged at the sight of the enemy and unable to restrain himself, he drove his horse into the water. Sir Alexander Carron, the king's chamberlain, perceiving his master's danger, seized up the royal standard and braved the raging waters, followed by the rest of the Scottish army. The rebels were put to flight and Carron was rewarded for his audacity by being named hereditary Standard Bearer to the King. His descendents still bear this privilege and carry the Scottish royal banner at appropriate ceremonials.

In June 1367 David II granted land to Donald Bannerman 'dilecto medico nostro' of the lands of Clyntrees, Waterton and Weltown in the parish of Ellon in Aberdeenshire. The Bannermans were required to build a chapel where weekly mass was to be said for the repose of the soul of the king's father, Robert the Bruce. In 1370 the Abbot of Kinloss granted to the Bannermans land lying to the west of the city of Aberdeen.

The Bannermans became embroiled in the politics of north-east Scotland, which inevitably meant taking sides in the great feud between the powerful Bordons and their enemies the Forbeses, during the sixteenth century. The Bannermans generally were supporters of the Forbeses, but in 1608 Margaret Bannerman married George Gordon of Haddo, son of Sir John Gordon. He was to be a loyal supporter of the king and was later executed for opposing the National Covenant. Alexander Bannerman of Pitmedden also supported Charles I in his struggle against his Scottish Presbyterian subjects. His estates were only saved from forfeiture by passing them to his brother-in-law, Sir George Hamilton of Tulliallan. In 1644 Bannerman fought a duel with his cousin, Sir George Gordon of Haddo, and wounded him. The family lands were eventually restored to his eldest son, Sir Alexander Bannerman of Elsick, who was created a Baronet of Nova Scotia by Charles II on 28 December 1682. The royal patent proclaims the title was for his constant loyalty during the rebellion (i.e., the civil war) and of the heavy calamities he had suffered on that account. His youngest son, Patrick, was to support the cause of the deposed Stuart monarchs and he rose in support of the 'Old Pretender' in 1715. He was Provost of Aberdeen and presented a loyal address from the town to James VIII at Fetteresso, welcoming James to his ancient kingdom of Scotland. James clearly delighted with the demonstrations of loyalty and promptly knighted Provost Bannerman. He was arrested after the failure of the rising and he was conveyed as a prisoner to Carlisle to await execution, but he managed to escape, and went to France.

The Bannerman support for the Jacobite cause continued unabated, and Sir Alexander, son of the second Baronet, joined Prince Charles Edward Stuart with 160 men at Stirling in 1745 and was with his prince at the disaster of Culloden field in 1746. He escaped with his life, fleeing north to Dingwall and then to Sutherland. He ultimately escaped to France, having narrowly escaped government troops at Elsick where he concealed himself in a secret closet. Sir Alexander Bannerman, fourth Baronet was forced to sell the Elsick estates in face of a threat of forfeiture for suspected Jacobite intrigues.

Sir Alexander Bannerman was MP for the city of Aberdeen from 1832 to 1840, and thereafter Governor of the Bahamas and of Newfoundland. In 1851 he reacquired the house and estate of Elsick, but these passed through his only daughter to the Carnegie Earls of Southesk. The present chief of the Carnegies, the Duke of Fife, still resides at Elsick House.

Sir Henry Campbell Bannerman, Liberal Prime Minister of Britain from 1905 to 1908, was born in Glasgow in 1836. He assumed the name Bannerman through his mother after he entered politics in 1868. His first government post was financial secretary to the War Office, but he rapidly rose through the ranks to become Secretary of State for War in 1886. He became a close friend of Edward VII who made him Prime Minister on the resignation of the Conservative Administration of Arthur Balfour. He recognized talent and he appointed to his cabinet two future prime ministers: Herbert Asquith and David Lloyd George. Lloyd George was the first cabinet minister to come from a working-class background and Campbell Bannerman was criticized in some quarters for advancing him. With his health failing, Campbell Bannerman resigned in favor of fellow Liberal, Herbert Asquith, only seventeen days before his death in April 1908.

Sir Arthur Bannerman, twelfth Baronet, served in the Indian army and was political aide to the Secretary of State for India from 1921 to 1928. He was appointed a Gentleman Usher to George V and thereafter to Edward VIII and George VI. He was made a Knight Commander of the Royal Victorian Order in 1928.

John Bannerman, who died in 1969, was one of Scotland's greatest rugby players, winning no less than thirty-nine caps for his country. He was a passionate Scottish nationalist and a supporter of the Gaelic language. He was made a life peer as Lord Bannerman of Kildonan in 1967. The thirteenth Baronet served in the Cameron Highlanders. An interest in languages led him to become a Russian interpreter, and after his military career he taught at Gordonstoun and Fettes College in Edinburgh. His son is the present chief.

Taken from *Scottish Clan and Family Encyclopedia*, by Collins. HarperCollins Publishers 1994.

This Clan information sheet has been prepared by
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