



Clan Johnstone is one of the greatest Clans ever to inhabit the borders, an area renowned throughout Scotland for its lawlessness. A hardy people, the Johnstones fared well in their turbulent territory, quick to defend their family and possessions in the face of any aggression. While the Johnstones were not indisposed to a little cross-border cattle raiding, they were also highly regarded for their loyalty to the Scottish Crown. The Johnstones well utilised the location of their lands, ensuring that the English did not encroach into Scottish territory, but would often cross the border whenever they fancied the taste of some prime English beef.

The earliest recorded Johnstone appears in the 12th Century, a prominent border settler by the name of John Johnston. The Clan Johnstone soon rose to prominence, and by 1381 John's great-grandson had been appointed the Warden of the Western Marshes. His son, Adam, Laird of Johnstone, fought bravely for the Scottish cause at the Battle of Sark in 1448. This tradition of fealty to the Crown was to be a family tradition, and Adam's son stood firmly beside James II during the King's conflicts with the powerful House of Douglas. A grateful monarch rewarded Clan Johnstone with the lands of Buittle and Sannoch in Galloway, adding to the Clan's border territories.

The Clan Johnstone's influence was such that serious discord arose between the Clan and their neighbours, the Clan Maxwell. This conflict continued over successive generations, with each Clan vying for supremacy over the Borders. The long-standing war between the Johnstones and the Maxwells came to a head at the Battle of Dryfe Sands in 1593. On this day, the great Lord Maxwell, reputedly the most powerful man in the southwest of Scotland, lost his life to a Johnstone blade. Unable to defeat the Johnstones on the battlefield, the Maxwells resorted to treachery to exact their revenge. In 1608, the chiefs of Clan Johnstone and Clan Maxwell met in an effort to end the years of bloodshed, but the 9th Lord Maxwell had other plans. As the meeting was being conducted, Maxwell brutally murdered the Johnstone chief, an act of villainy, which earned him the hangman's noose in 1614. Clan Johnstone's tradition of loyalty to the Crown continued down through the centuries,

increasing their power and influence throughout the Borders.

In particular, the Johnstones' support for Charles I during the 17th Century Civil War made them an honoured Clan in the annals of Scottish history. In 1633, Charles I created Sir James Johnstone the Lord Johnstone, and ten years later Sir James was made the Earl of Hartfell. After Charles I's defeat in the Civil War, both the chief and his eldest son were imprisoned by the victorious Roundhead army in the Castles of Dumbarton, Glasgow, St Andrews and Edinburgh. After the Stuart monarches returned to the throne, Charles II rewarded the Clan's loyalty by creating Lord Hartfell the Earl of Annandale and Hartfell, Viscount of Annan, Lord Johnstone of Lochwood, Lochmaben, Moffatdale and Evandal. The Clan gained further honours when William, the 3rd Earl of Annandale and Hartfell was raised to the Marquess of Annandale in 1701, a distinguished reward for his services as Secretary of State and the President of the Privy Council.

The Clan Johnstone crest is a winged spur and the proud motto reads "Nunquam non paratus" meaning in Latin "Never unprepared". The Clan chief is Patrick Johnston, 11th Earl of Annandale and Hartfell.

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