

National Records of Scotland, Transcription of two letters by W Colquhoun Grant, late captain, Scots Greys, to Lord Seafield, 1848-9, Reference: GD248/489/14/17-18

Letter from W Colquhoun Grant, late captain, Scots Greys, to Lord Seafield, 1848 (Seafield papers, National Records of Scotland GD248/489/14/17)

Castle Hill, Forres
Sept 29 – 48

My Lord

I have to apologise for the great liberty I, as a stranger, take in addressing your Lordship, but venture to hope that the circumstances may in some measure plead my excuse. Having attained from the Hudson's Bay Comp'y a grant of land in Vancouver's Island I propose sailing for that new British settlement in North America towards the end of the month of October.

One of the conditions on which I attained the said grant of land, was that I should take out with me six labourers and mechanics for every 100 acres that I purchased and I am most anxious, if possible to take out with me some men of the Clan to which I have the honour of belonging, and of which your Lordship so worthily fills the position of Chief.

My family claims now to be the principal representative of the branch of the Clan Grant, called the Clan Allan being lineally descended from the second son of James Grant of Auchernack who was chief of the Clan Allan in 1560. My forefathers since that period held uninterruptedly the Wadset of Mullochard and in the parish of Duthil my great-grandfather married a daughter of Robert of Muckrach, son of the then Laird of Grant, and my grandfather was the first of his family who left Strathspey and came down and settled in the Low Country, receiving from Your Lordship's father a charter of some lands below Forres which are now in my possession.

I have to apologise for troubling Your Lordship with this family detail. I do so with a view of accounting for what would otherwise appear an absurd penchant, but which with me is a hereditary attachment to Strathspey and to the race which inhabit it.

I therefore venture to request the favour of Your Lordship's sanction which perhaps may be accompanied with permission to avail myself of the assistance of your agents, to beat up for recruits in Strathspey and to endeavour to persuade some of Your Lordship's unemployed dependants, to accompany me for some years to a region which though distant, is in climate and other respects much assimilated to Great Britain.

Permit me to express my sincere regret if in addressing Your Lordship in this subject. I have used too great a freedom & believe me to remain Your Lordship's obedient humble servant

W Colq Grant
Late Capt
2nd Dragoons

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Letter from W Colquhoun Grant, late captain, Scots Greys, to Lord Seafield, 1849 (Seafield papers, National Records of Scotland GD248/489/14/18)

Glen Barr House
Tarbert, Argyllshire
Jan 4 – 49

My Dear []

May I take the liberty of asking you to be so kind as to forward the enclosed paper to Lord Seafield, with my humble petition that if the contents do not meet with his disapprobation, he will be so good as to favour me by affixing his signature thereto.

In a few weeks, viz either on the 17th of this or 1st of next month I set sail for Vancouver's Island, and as in all probability I shall never again revisit my native land. I am most anxious to bear with the name of my forefathers, and to call by the name of Mullochard a small grant of land which I have procured there. I believe my family are almost the sole representatives of the Clan Allan, in any case we are the principal ones being directly descended from the second son of James Grant of Auchernack chief of the clan in 1560, through his second son the male descendants of the eldest being extinct, I have the full consent of my Uncles to make the application for his Lordship's consent which I now venture to do, as they care neither about Mullochard or Clan Allan, and in all probability if I were not going to so far distant a country, my clannish feeling might not now be roused to the pitch which it is. I send my application for Lord Seafield's consent to assume the name of Mullochard through you, being afraid of being considered obtrusive. If I personally addressed his Lordship, being a stranger to him. The reason I wish to obtain his consent before calling my new purchase by his name is because the bona fide Mullochard is at this moment his property, and partly because it would add very much to my satisfaction, in assuming the name, by having the consent of the hereditary chieftain of the Clan to do so.

Of course I wish it merely for my own private satisfaction and not for any public purpose whatsoever. I have adhered a memorandum of my pedigree which I took partly per the Count de pause, history of the Clan Grant, partly per Shaw's history of Moray, but principally from an extract per an old manuscript given me. The late Capt Grant (Birchfield) and from information given me by my Uncle Sir James Grant.

I do not expect Lord Seafield's signature to my pedigree but merely to his consent to my assuming the name of Grant of Mullochard. I trust I may not be considered dictatorial in drawing out a paper for signature. I did so partly with a view of more clearly explaining my views and partly with a view of saving his Lordship the trouble of writing on the subject. I feel that my apologies are due both to Lord Seafield and yourself for troubling with so much matter irrelevant to you though deeply interesting to me and I remain, dear Sir, yours truly

W Colq Grant

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