

## The Grants of *Clann Chiaran*

According to tradition, the branch family of the Clan Grant known as *Clann Chiaran* descended from *Lucas Ciar*, a younger son of an early chieftain. The Gaelic adjective *ciar* generally referred to a man who was of dark, dusky complexion or perhaps gloomy in appearance. *Lucas Ciar*'s father was said to be Gregory le Grant, an early chieftain in the 13<sup>th</sup> century. With all due respects to folklore-loving clansmen, there is absolutely no evidence to substantiate the existence of either man. In fact, Gregory le Grant was almost certainly a fictitious figure. (Additional information on this is available at *For Members Only* → *A History of the Clan Grant* → *Origins of the Clan* → *Grants in Early Documents*.)

The chieftain of *Clann Chiaran* held the lands of Auchnarrow in Strathspey, perhaps as early as the 15<sup>th</sup> century. At some point the *dabhach* (ancient measure of land) of Auchnarrow was divided into *Auchnarrowbeg* (small) and *Auchnarrowmore* (large). Other farmsteads were probably carved out of the original *dabhach* and renamed over the course of hundreds of years.

In the 15<sup>th</sup> century, the first documented laird associated with Auchnarrow was Patrick Grant *Riach*, whose mother, Marjory Lude, held half the barony of Freuchie in her own right. The identities of Marjory Lude and Patrick *Riach* and how they gained control of their half-*dabhach* remain a mystery. Nor is it known if Patrick *Riach* was a scion of *Clann Chiaran*. The sobriquet *Riach* is from the Gaelic *riabhach*, brindled or grizzled, which sometimes referred to a person whose hair color was mixed with gray.

Auchnarrow was – and is today – situated about a mile northeast of the *messuage* of Freuchie. The manor house was later enlarged and known as *Ballachastel*, and since the late 17<sup>th</sup> century as Castle Grant.

Although the *Ceann Tighe* or chieftain of *Clann Chiaran* held Auchnarrow from early times, he apparently moved across the Spey to Dellachapple in Cromdale in the 17<sup>th</sup> century, or perhaps the senior line of Auchnarrow failed to produce an heir and the chieftainship of *Clann Chiaran* devolved upon a junior line or cadet who resided there.

Another suggested origin of *Clann Chiaran* was that the *sept* descended from an original progenitor known by the Gaelic patronymic *MacGillechiaran*, son of the servant of St. Ciaran, or son of the servant of the dark one – not to be confused with Satan. There were a number of early Irish saints named *Ciaran*. *Ciar* was also a son of Fergus, the legendary King of Ulster.

Patronymics derived from the Gaelic adjective *ciar* have a long association with the country of the Grants in Strathspey: *MacGillicheir*, *McKeran*, *McKerron*, *McKerran*, *MacErron*, *Keranach*, *Kiranach*, *Kiar*, *Keir* and *Nicolcheir*. It is not known if all these names are related to the Grants of *Clann Chiaran*, but some must surely be. (*Historical Notes on Some Surnames and Patronymics Associated with the Clan Grant*, an unpublished manuscript by James Grant, revised 2014)

Parenthetically, it must be noted that an Irish origin is not inconsistent with the traditional accounts of the history of the Clan Grant. If the reader accepts the conjectural notion that the early Chiefs of Grant descended from a Norse nobleman, it should be recalled that he arrived in Scotland after a brief sojourn in Ireland.

Another folkloric origin for *Clann Chiaran* was that the *sept* descended from a son of *Duncan Carrach*, the head of *Sliochd il Carrach* (the family of *Carrach*). According to tradition, Duncan and his family accompanied an early Grant chieftain to Strathspey from their former home in Stratherrick. (In Gaelic, *carach* means sly or cunning.)

In the 13<sup>th</sup> century, Stratherrick was a barony on the southeast banks of Loch Ness owned at various times by the powerful family of Byset (Bissett), the Frasers of Lovat, and early

chieftains of the name Grant. Although somewhat confusing, *Stratherrick* is actually a rendering of *Strathfaragaig*, the valley of the River Faragaig, which flows into Loch Ness at Inverfaragaig.

*Duncan Carrach* reportedly had two sons – *Lucas Lia* and *Amphra Buy*. *Lucas Lia* (from *liath*, meaning gray, *i.e.* gray-haired Lucas), was said to be the ancestor of *Clann Chiaran*. His brother, *Amphra Buy* (from *buidhe*, meaning yellow, *i.e.* blond-haired Humphrey), was said to be the representative of *Sliochd il Carrach* – the senior line of *Duncan Carrach*.

According to the *Monymusk MS*, *Sliochd il Carrach* first held Lettoch in the parish of Abernethy. Early descendants of the family were *MacFinlay Mor* in Muckrach of Abernethy and *Donald More*, boatman of Balliefurth. Of course, these references are derived from a traditional account, which is really nothing more than folklore sprinkled with a few historical facts. (*Ane Account of the Rise and Offspring of the Name of Grant*, transcribed from a copy at Altyre and printed for Sir Archibald Grant of Monymusk, Bt., 1876, p. 14)

Rev. John Grant, an 18<sup>th</sup> century minister at Elgin, suggested that *Clann Chiaran* might have been among the indigenous tribes who inhabited Strathspey before or arrived on the scene after the Grants arrived. In his *Survey of the Province of Moray*, Rev. Grant opined as follows regarding the origins of several traditional families:

*“These branches are the Clan-Allan, Clan-Chiaran, and the Clan-Phadrick. The probability is, that some of them are the remains of the inhabitants who were established in the country, before the Grants obtained possession of Strathspey by purchase or marriage, and that others afterwards settled there. They enjoyed protection, and in time united in a bond of amity with a more powerful family, and assumed the name of Grant, as many small tribes do that of MacIntosh.”* (*A Survey of the Province of Moray*, Rev. John Grant & Rev. William Leslie, Aberdeen, 1798, pp. 18-20)

There is also an oft-repeated legend that a 15<sup>th</sup> century Grant chieftain was murdered by the Cummings while on a visit to Baron Stewart of Kincardine. With the Grants and Stewarts in hot pursuit, the murderers took refuge in the local church and were subsequently surrounded. The Grants and Stewarts, of course, were reluctant to take revenge and desecrate a place of worship. Finally, someone shot a flaming arrow into the church’s heather-thatched roof. All those inside perished save for one giant Cumming who came running out, only to be killed by a single blow from a two-handed sword wielded by a Grant clansman. It is said that the sword was proudly displayed in the home of the chieftain of the *Clan Cheran* for many years. (*In the Shadow of Cairngorm*, by William Forsyth, DD, 1899, reprinted 1999, p. 71)

Returning to the actual documented history of the clan, in 1532, *Johanni Graunt in Auchnarow* was a witness to a legal document executed on behalf of Margaret, Lady of Gordon and Badenoch, and James, son of John Grant, the Laird of Freuchie, regarding the lands of Tullochgorm and other properties. This John Grant was probably the ancestor of subsequent generations of *Clann Chiaran*.

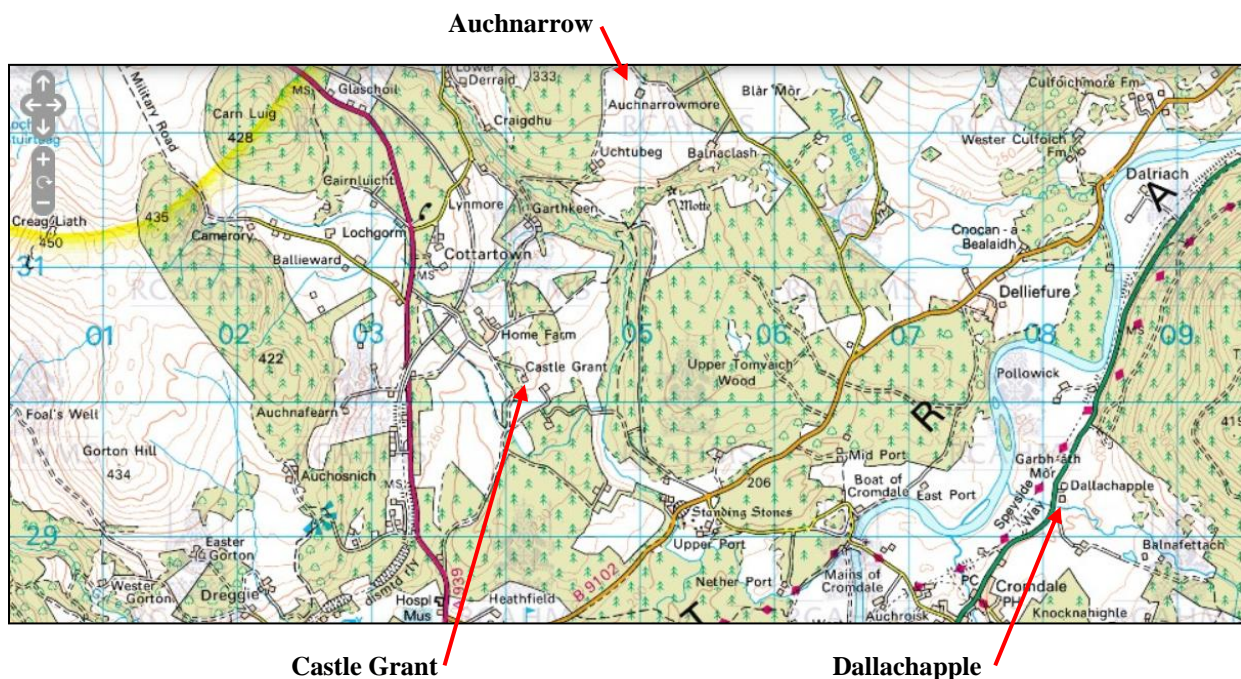
The earliest known *Ceann Tighe* (head of a family) or chieftain of *Clann Chiaran* was *Willelmo Grant in Auchnaro*, who was mentioned in a remission by King James VI in favor of John Grant of Freuchie in 1569. *Andrea Graunt in Achnarrovoir* (Andrew Grant in Auchnarrovmore) was also mentioned. John McAllan, son of *William McAllan in Achennarryr*, witnessed a document in 1580.

In 1585, *William McAllan in Achenairne* was mentioned in another charter under the seal of King James VI. *William McAllan in Achenarris* witnessed a significant sale by James Grant of Auchernach to John Grant of *Fruquhe* in 1589. *William McAllan in Auchnarroure* was mentioned in a submission by Simon Lord Lovat and John Grant of Freuchie in 1599.

Upon the death of William MacAllan, the leadership of *Clann Chiaran* devolved upon his grandson, John Grant. In 1615, *Johnne Grant McWilliam McAllane in Auchnarro* and *Duncane McWilliam McAllane, his bruithir*, were fined for abetting or “resetting” outlaws of the Clan Gregor. Since William, John and Duncan McWilliam shared the patronymic McAllan, it can be assumed that they descended from a father and grandfather named Allan. It is not known if this Allan was the first chieftain of *Clann Chiaran* to hold land in Strathspey.

In 1645, *William Grantt off Auchnarrow* was listed among the principal members of the Clan Grant in Badenoch, Rothiemurchus, Strathavon and Glenlivet in a bond of friendship and protection in favor of the Laird of Grant. (*The Chiefs of Grant*, Sir William Fraser, LL.D., Vol. III, Edinburgh, 1883, pp. 76-7, 137-8, 238-9, 393, 396, 401, 195, 315)

These notations essentially document the first three generations of the Grants of Auchnarrow, chieftains of *Clann Chiaran*. (It is also interesting to note the various spellings of the territorial designation *Auchnarrow* in the old documents.)



At some point during the 17<sup>th</sup> century, the chieftaincy of *Clann Chiaran* passed from the Grants of Auchnarrow to the Grants of Dallachapple. Dallachapple is situated about two and a half miles southeast of Castle Grant on the opposite side of the River Spey. It is not known if Grant of Auchnarrow simply moved to Dallachapple because it was a better location for his family, or if the line of the chieftain failed to produce a male heir and the leadership of the clan devolved upon a junior line or cadet. In any event, the Grants of Dallachapple became the chieftains of *Clann Chiaran*.

(The name *Dellachapple* – sometimes pronounced *Dala-haple* – has been spelled many different ways over the course of hundreds of years. The most frequent variant is *Dallachapple* but others will be noted in this report.)

### **Other Families of *Clann Chiaran***

With the passage of time, other families descended from *Clann Chiaran* gained footholds in Strathspey. The Grants of Glenbeg were generally considered the second-most influential

branch of the *sept*. Their neighbors in the parish of Inverallan – Gaich, Craggan, Newtown and Kirkton of Inverallan – were almost certainly cadets of Glenbeg.

The families of Easter and Wester Lethendry in Cromdale, and the Grants of Rothiemoon in the parish of Abernethy were also *Chiaranach*. The family of Brainedin in Abernethy parish was a cadet of Rothiemoon in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century.

Another short-lived, but prominent late 18<sup>th</sup> century family in Forres, Morayshire, the Grants of Kincorth, were descended from the Grants of Glenbeg and the Lethendries.

### **The Grants of Glenbeg**

The Glenbegs were an influential, yet subordinate branch of *Clann Chiaran*. They were situated in the ‘little glen’ in the parish of Inverallan – about a mile west of the modern community of Grantown. The glen was originally carved out of a hill known as *Tobair Alline*, by the rivulet Allan as it flowed toward the Spey. Only piles of stones survive today from what might have been a manor house held by the Glenbegs centuries ago.

At the stream’s confluence with the Spey, there are remnants of an ancient stone fort, which in earlier times was probably held by the Lords of Inverallan. The original lordship included the lands of Kildreke (Dreggie), Glenbeg, Craggan and Gaich, which coincidentally comprised the patrimony of the Grants of Glenbeg.

By 1653, the rights and title to the lands of Glenbeg were disposed to James Grant, 7<sup>th</sup> Laird of Freuchie.



**Ruins at Glenbeg, parish of Inverallan**

Little is known of the family’s early forbears, but they descended from Allan Grant, his son William, and Robert Grant of Glenbeg, a chieftain who lived during the first half of the 17<sup>th</sup> century and died *circa* 1652.

In 1665, ‘*Robert Grant of Glenbegge, his relict,*’ was listed as a creditor in the amount of two thousand pounds in the last will and testament of James Grant of Freuchie. At that time, £2000 was a huge sum of money. (Fraser, *opere citato*, III, p. 350)

The next chieftain was James Grant, *wadsetter* (holder of a long-term lease) of Glenbeg and Craggan, the instigator of the *Black Band of Clancheran*. (The infamous *black band* will be discussed hereunder.)

Considerable evidence suggests that this James of Glenbeg and other members of his extended family were evicted from Strathspey in the late 17<sup>th</sup> century by Ludovick Grant, Laird of Freuchie.

James Grant of Glenbeg resided at Aitnoch, in Braemoray, and died there *circa* 1690. Aitnoch is only about eight miles north of Castle Grant, but it was in Cumming territory, and consequently outside the bounds of control of the Chief of Grant. Several other families descended from the Glenbegs were also noted in Braemoray at the same time – notably at Kerrow, Branchill in the parish of Dallas, and at Gortons in Knockando.

The most significant of these families was headed by James Grant's son, Donald Grant in Kerrow. Donald patiently bid his time and eventually made his way back to Strathspey. He held Tullochgriband in Duthil parish in 1705, and finally became *wadsetter* of his father's former estate of Glenbeg in 1715, where he lived until his death in 1735. Donald apparently regained favor and enjoyed the friendship of Laird Ludovick's successor, Brigadier Alexander Grant of Grant. In fact, Donald's portrait was painted by Richard Waitt in 1713 – presumably at the behest of Brigadier Grant – and adorned the walls of the great hall at Castle Grant from that time until the castle was closed in the mid-20<sup>th</sup> century.



**Donald Grant of Glenbeg, painted by  
Richard Waitt in 1713**

### ***The Black Band of Clancheran***

As previously mentioned, in the late 17<sup>th</sup> century, certain families of the Grants of Glenbeg were living outwith the lands of the Clan Grant – all apparently as tenants of other landlords not associated with the Chief of Grant.

In 1658, a writ of *lawbarrows* had been issued by representatives of Oliver Cromwell against members of *Clann Chiaran*, including Alexander Grant in Auchnarrow and his son, Allan – presumably initiated by the Laird of Grant. Also listed among the offenders in the writ were William Grant of *Newtoun* and his son, Donald, and John Grant of Gorton, and fifteen

others. (A *lawbarrows* was a Scottish civil action issued by one person against another, with the anticipation of retaliation by the other party – similar to a restraining order in America.)

The writ stated that members of *Clann Chiaran* frequently molested the Laird of Grant's tenants and his woods, destroyed his property, and continually threatened the Laird, "...*awoing oppinlie to bereawe him of his lyiff.*" (Fraser, *Chiefs, opere citato*, Vol. I, p. 179)

During Oliver Cromwell's interregnum in the 1650's, James Grant of Glenbeg led a revolt of *Clann Chiaran* against James Grant, Laird of Freuchie. Glenbeg also compiled a list of grievances called "*the black band of Clancheran,*" which he took to Captain Hill, Cromwell's representative at the garrison fort of Ruthven in Badenoch. The band enumerated a number of "irregularities" perpetrated by the Chief which were "contrary to all law and government."

George A. Dixon MA, certainly the foremost authority on the history of the Clan Grant, detailed the episode in the following notes quoted from an 18<sup>th</sup> century Grant manuscript in the National Archives of Scotland:

Dixon: "*In the middle third of the 17<sup>th</sup> century the Clan Cheran (there are various spellings) were initially powerful, with James Grant of Glenbeg and the Achnarrowbeg and Newton Grants apparently their leading figures. Then, relatively suddenly, one finds a scattering of their families almost along a crescent fringing the northern bounds of the Chief's lands in Strathspey – i.e., they turn up as tenants on estates just beyond the Chief's control. The following is an extract from the MS "Anecdotes anent the family of Grant", written by an unknown but I think generally reliable writer, probably c. 1760-70, which appears to offer an explanation – perhaps the explanation – of the 17<sup>th</sup> century dispersal of the Clan Cheran:*

*"The black band of Clan-Cheran happened in the Laird's [James of Freuchie, ob. 1773] time. James Grant of Glenbeg headed a party against the Laird & charged him of being guilty of several irregularities, contrary to all law & government. After this the above James Grant of Glenbeg and one or two more of his tribe went to Ruthven of Badenoch [about 29 miles upstream from Castle Grant] and delivered the above band to Capt. Hill, governor of Badenoch & Ruthven, begging that he would transmit it to Oliver Cromwell protector of Britain their (sic) being articles in the band, which leveled at Grant's life & the forfeiture of his estate. The government was then very strict, and there was reason to fear, had it reached Oliver Cromwell, that the consequences would have been fatal to Grant's interest. This daring attempt of theirs was prevented by Duncan Macpherson, Laird of Cluny, in Badenoch, who luckily happened to be with Capt. Hill, when he received the above band; and he interceded with Mr. Hill not to send it up to court, on account of the great merit & antiquity of Grant's family. The said Capt. Hill called for Grant, signified to him the danger he was in, provided such things as were laid to his charge by Glenbeg & others proved true and took Grant's promise he would not remove any of the Clan-Cheran out of his country, during all his life time, which accordingly happened. The said Capt. Hill reading the band to Grant, burnt it that thereby the affair might forever be cancelled."*

*"Lewis [Ludovick Grant of Freuchie/Grant] succeeded the above James and was so much incensed against the Clan-cheran, on the account of the above black band, that he banished them all his country, save Dellachapple [an Achnarrowbeg], and never allowed any of them to reside in it during all his life time. [One of Glenbeg's younger sons, Donald Grant (painted by Waitt in his barred plaid), did however come circuitously back into Strathspey before Ludovick's death in retirement in Edinburgh, and eventually obtained a tack of Glenbeg, dying at a great age in 1735] The Laird, on the expiration of [James of] Glenbeg's tack, refused him room for his corns on any part of his estate, either hill or strath, and Glenbeg was, on his part,*

*so high & mighty as to order his fold for Cows, to be set up by the burn of Glenbeg, in order that the dung might be carried away by the current, rather than that Grant's ground should, in the least be bettered by it.*" (National Archives of Scotland, GD 248/30/3; letter of correspondence: George A. Dixon, June 30, 1982)

As stated above, when Captain Hill read the grievances, he was persuaded by Cluny, who just happened to be present, not to forward the controversial document to the government. Cluny and the Laird of Freuchie negotiated a compromise with Captain Hill and the black band was subsequently destroyed. Under the terms of the agreement, the Laird of Grant promised not to retaliate against *Clann Chiaran* or expel them from their lands during the Chief's lifetime.

Unfortunately for Glenbeg and his co-conspirators, the Chief's son, Ludovick Grant of Freuchie, was not so lenient. As soon as his father died, Ludovick implemented reprisals against *Clann Chiaran* that ultimately forced them from their lands in Strathspey. And as previously noted, they were forced to live in Braemoray – outside the Chief's realm of influence during the latter stages of the 17<sup>th</sup> century. (Fraser, *Chiefs, opere citato*, Vol. I, pp. 278-9)

### **The Grants of Dellachapple**

Throughout all this period of conflict, Grant of Dallachapple, said to be *Ceann Tighe* or overall chieftain of *Clann Chiaran*, continued to enjoy the trust and support of the Chief of Grant. Dallachapple was obviously not a party to the black band.

In fact, *Mr. John Grant in Dalchappel* was *Procurator* to James Grant, Laird of Freuchie, at that time. (A procurator or *procurator fiscal*, as the office was frequently called, was the legal representative of a sheriff, or in this case, the Laird of Freuchie, who had legal jurisdiction over his clan lands and the maintenance of law and order. The procurator was responsible for enforcing the law and collecting fines.

In 1647, the Laird of Dallachapple conducted an inventory of the Laird's property in Urquhart, and in 1655, *John Grant in Dellichappell* witnessed a bond of service between the Laird of Freuchie and James Grant of Auchernach. (Fraser, *Chiefs, opere citato*, Vol. III, pp. 341-2, 243-4)



**19<sup>th</sup> Century House at Dellachapple, Cromdale**

The more recent history of the *Chiaranach* is somewhat confusing. During the 19<sup>th</sup> century a number of different local lairds were known at various times as *Ceann Tighe* or 'chieftains' of *Clann Chiaran*. It was also during this time that the *sept*'s influence waned.

Lewis Grant (1716-1791), Adjutant of Chelsea College in 1780, claimed descent in the male line from Lewis Grant, ancestor of the Grants of Dallachapple. He matriculated the following arms in the Court of the Lord Lyon: “*Gules a cross patee fitchee Argent between three antique crowns Or within a bordure invected of the second.*” Crest: A two-handed sword in bend, proper, hilted and pummeled or, over a man’s head issuing out of the wreath of the first. Motto: “Have at you!” This Lewis Grant did not claim to be the chieftain, but merely a descendant. (Fraser, *Chiefs, opere citato*, Vol. I, p. 533)

The two-handed sword in the crest almost certainly symbolized the killing of the Cumming giant by a member of *Clann Chiaran* when he tried to escape from the burning church of Kincardine, as told in the legend.

Alexander Grant, Esq., of Dellachapple (1776-1829) married Helen Grant, only daughter of the Rev. John Grant, minister of the parish of Abernethy.

(Rev. Grant was a much-loved minister, known locally as the ‘Minister of the Gazette’ for his custom of reading the newspaper to his congregation after the sermon during the Napoleonic Wars. These wars culminated in the famous battle of Waterloo in 1815. Rev. Grant was a descendant of the family of Milton in the parish of Duthil.)

Alexander Grant of Dellachapple became a successful business man and purchased a property in Garmouth, where he built a house called *Dellachpple*. (Garmouth is a village in Morayshire, near the place where the River Spey empties into the Moray Firth.) After Mr. Grant’s death in 1829, Mrs. Grant lived in retirement at *Dellachapple* until her death in 1865.

Alexander and Helen Grant had the following sons: James Augustus Grant, who died at Kishnagur, Bengal, India, in 1838 at the age of twenty-five; Ensign Alexander William Grant of the 11<sup>th</sup> Regiment of the Army of Madras, who died in 1840, at the age of eighteen; and Major John Sueton William Grant, the only surviving son, who became the last known representative and chieftain of the Grants of Dellachapple and *Clann Chiaran*. Major Grant survived into the 20<sup>th</sup> century, dying in 1913.

(James Augustus Grant, who died in India, was no doubt named for Mrs. Grant’s brother, who was Chief Secretary to the Government and Senior Judge of the Court of Circuit in Bombay. He later returned to Nairn, where he served as Provost and Commissioner of Supply, and Convenor of the county until his death in 1847.)

## **The Grants of Rothiemoon**

In the 19<sup>th</sup> century, another claimant to the chiefship of *Clann Chiaran* was Charles Grant of Rothiemoon (1768-1843), in the parish of Abernethy. Charles’ father, John Grant, was known as *Iain Mor na Liteach* (Big John of the Porridge), so named because of his enormous size and strength, and his ability to eat large quantities of food – particularly porridge (oat meal).

Charles Grant had five sons. The eldest son was Rev. James Grant, who served for twenty-six years as minister of the parish of Cromdale. The second son, John Grant, was tenant at the farm of Brainedin in the parish of Abernethy. He was the tall, handsome highlander who represented the Clan Grant in the beautiful commemorative book of watercolors, *The Highlanders of Scotland*, produced by Kenneth MacLeay for Queen Victoria in 1870. He was also the standard bearer of the Abernethy Highlanders at the annual Castle Grant Gathering.

The other sons were Lewis Alexander, Robert and Francis. Lewis lived at Rothiemoon and later at Brainedin. As a young man, he was known for his athletic ability, and with the passage of time, became one of the most popular men of the community at social and church gatherings, although he remained a bachelor all his life. Robert served the Earl of Seafield as



factor of Glenurquhart and died at Rothiemoon in 1858. He was also an accomplished musician, composer of songs and poetry. The song *Ruidhle Mor Strathspey* was attributed to him.



*John Grant, Brainedin, in Abernethy Parish,  
& John Fraser from The Highlanders of Scotland  
by Kenneth MacLeay*

## **The Grants of Lethendry and Kincorth**

Another prominent family descended from *Clann Chiaran* was headed by Robert Grant of Kincorth, said to be a direct lineal descendant of the Grants of Glenbeg, through the family of Lethendry in the parish of Cromdale.

In the mid 18<sup>th</sup> century, a number of young men from the Clan Grant “went out” to North America to seek their fortune. Faced with hardships and dismal prospects in their native land, younger sons of established highland families gained employment in the Canadian fur trade, specifically the North West Company.

Robert Grant, his brother Cuthbert, their Uncle James, and two of James’ sons, John and Charles, went to Canada, beginning in 1768. All were descended from James Grant of Glenbeg, the instigator of the infamous black band, and all made their mark in Canada.

Robert Grant became an investor and partner in the North West Company in 1779. He was very successful, and in 1793, retired from the firm and returned to Scotland. He purchased the estate of Kincorth, at Forres, Morayshire – reportedly from his uncle James Grant, also known as James Grant of Red Lake, Minnesota. Robert Grant was the son of David Grant of Easter Lethendry and Margaret Grant, daughter of Robert Grant of Wester Lethendry – both being descendants of the Glenbeg family of *Clann Chiaran*.

At the age of forty-one, Robert was financially secure, an eligible bachelor, and eager to start a family. He married Anne, daughter of the Rev. Lewis Grant, minister at Cromdale – the parish of Robert’s youth.

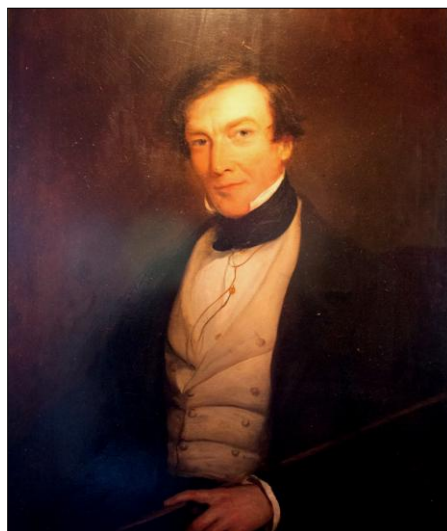


**Kincorth, Forres, Morayshire**

Robert and Anne Grant of Kincorth had four children: twin sons Robert and Lewis, and two daughters, Robina and Davina. The younger of the twins, Lewis, went to Bombay, India, became a successful businessman and died there unmarried. Robina married John Grant, a son of Rev. James Grant of Laggan and his wife Anne, the well-known authoress. Davina married Frederick Grant Esq., JP, DL, of Ecclesgreig, Mount St. Cyrus, Kincardineshire. Frederick Grant was the son of Charles Grant, also a successful businessman in Canada and a descendant of the Grants of Glenbeg.

The older twin son, also named Robert, became a Justice of the Peace, Deputy Lieutenant of Moray and a member of the Faculty of Advocates. He succeeded his father in the estate of Kincorth. Robert married Edith Anne, daughter of the Rev. Thomas Eaton, Canon of Chester, in 1859.

Frederick's sister, Margaret Grant, married John Forsyth (1762-1837), a partner in the Canadian commercial house of Forsyth, Richardson & Company and one of the founders of the Bank of Montreal. Their son, William Forsyth (1804-1863), succeeded his uncle Frederick Grant in the estate of Ecclesgreig – and in accordance with Scottish custom – was known thereafter as William Forsyth-Grant of Ecclesgreig, JP, DL.



**William Forsyth-Grant of Ecclesgreig, JP, DL**

The arms of the family of Ecclesgreig are as follows: “Quarterly, 1 and 4 argent, a chevron engrailed gules, between three griffins segreant azure, armed and membered sable, crowned or, for Forsyth; 2 and 3, gules, three antique crowns or, for Grant. Crests: A demi-griffin segreant vert, for Forsyth; a burning mountain proper, for Grant. Mottos: *Instaurator ruinae* and *Stand fast*.

Robert Grant of Kincorth’s brother, Cuthbert James Grant, also became a partner in the North West Company. He married *Marguerite Utiniwasis*, an indigenous Canadian of the *Metis* tribe. He died at Kaministiquia, Thunder Bay, Ontario, in 1799.

Charles Grant, said to be a cousin, had already gone to Canada in 1768 and established himself in business in Quebec, where he died in 1784. He was also descended from *Clann Chiaran* and was a grandson of Donald Grant of Glenbeg.

Both Cuthbert and Charles have living descendants in North America who are members of the Clan Grant Society.

Perhaps the most colorful and interesting member of this family was Cuthbert Grant, Jr. He was half-Scottish and half-Metis, a fluent bi-lingual fur trader, farmer, politician, Justice of the Peace and tribal leader of the *Metis*. Cuthbert James Grant, Jr., was born at *Fort de la Riviere Tremblante*, an outpost of the North West Company, and baptized in the Scots Presbyterian Church in Montreal, where he was educated under the watchful eye of his father’s business agent, William MacGillivray.

During his early career, Cuthbert worked for the North West Company in various capacities. Although he later participated with the Metis in insurrections between competing trading companies, and the French and English settlers, sponsored by them, he was a staunch supporter of the authority that operated in a virtual political vacuum of the Canadian wilderness, firstly as an employee of the North West Company, and later, under the Hudson Bay Company.



**Cuthbert James Grant, Jr.**

Cuthbert worked diligently to establish a sense of identity and nation among the Metis – particularly during periods of conflict between the trading companies. He served as a captain in Metis paramilitary formations.

In 1817, he was arrested and charged with murder and various other crimes related to an insurrection, but escaped in a small canoe. In 1820, Cuthbert was present at the last major encounter between the rival trading companies, when a brigade of the Hudson Bay Company

ambushed a convoy of the North West Company. A year later, the factions reconciled and merged, but Cuthbert was initially denied employment in the new company until 1823, when the Hudson Bay Company realized he could be an asset because of his close relationship with his Metis kinsmen. Nevertheless, he resigned the following year.

In the spring of 1824, with about one hundred Metis families, he established a village called Grantown on the Assiniboine River. Within three years, he had thirty-four acres under cultivation and considered himself the *seigneur* of White Horse Plain, though he had no legal claim to that title. He and the Metis transported goods for the Hudson Bay Company and later traded under their license. In 1828, he was appointed 'Warden of the Plains' by the HBC's Council to prevent the illicit trade in furs within the district. He continued to serve as captain of the Metis' buffalo hunts and was appointed Justice of the Peace. He attended the Hudson Bay Company's council meeting in 1839, and was officially appointed to serve as a councilor, as well as Sheriff of Assinboia. In 1844, he negotiated a peace settlement with the Sioux on behalf of the Mets over tribal buffalo hunting rights.

Cuthbert continued to serve as Warden, Magistrate and Sheriff for the Hudson Bay Company, but in 1854, he fell from his horse at White Horse Plain, Manitoba, and died shortly thereafter. Cuthbert James Grant, Jr. was buried inside the church of St. Francois Xavier which he had built in Grantown after his conversion to Roman Catholicism. (*Dictionary of Canadian Biography*, by George Woodcock, Vol. VIII, 1851-1860, by George Woodcock)

A 21<sup>st</sup> century descendant of *Clann Chairan* – albeit through the female line – is Maurice James Forsyth-Grant, whose family held the imposing Victorian manor house of Ecclesgreig, at St. Cyrus, Montrose, Aberdeenshire, formerly Kincardineshire. Mr. Forsyth-Grant is descended from the Grants of Glenbeg, through Margaret Grant, who married John Forsyth in Canada in 1798. Mr. Forsyth-Grant is a painter, commercial artist and avid sportsman.



**Ecclesgreig Castle, St. Cyrus, Aberdeenshire**

Regrettably, the magnificent old Victorian manor house of Ecclesgreig has fallen into ruin. It was sold to outside investors in the 20<sup>th</sup> century who apparently have no specific plans to restore or refurbish the mansion.

Maurice James Patrick Forsyth-Grant lives in a modern home on the former Ecclesgreig estate, on a high hill overlooking the village of St. Cyrus and the North Sea.



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