

## GRANT

Source: The Scottish Highlands, Highland Clans and Highland Regiments, Volume II (of 2) by Sir John Scott Keltie

With regard to the clan Grant, Mr Skene says,—“Nothing certain is known regarding the origin of the Grants. They have been said to be of Danish, English, French, Norman, and of Gaelic extraction; but each of these suppositions depends for support upon conjecture alone, and amidst so many conflicting opinions it is difficult to fix upon the most probable. It is maintained by the supporters of their Gaelic origin, that they are a branch of the Macgregors, and in this opinion they are certainly borne out by the ancient and unvarying tradition of the country; for their Norman origin, I have upon examination entirely failed in discovering any further reason than that their name may be derived from the French, *grand* or *great*, and that they occasionally use the Norman form of *de Grant*. The latter reason, however, is not of any force, for it is impossible to trace an instance of their using the form *de Grant* until the 15th century; on the contrary, the form is invariably *Grant* or *le Grant*, and on the very first appearance of the family it is ‘*dictus Grant*.’ It is certainly not a territorial name, for there was no ancient property of that name, and the peculiar form under which it invariably appears in the earlier generations, proves that the name<sup>[251]</sup> is derived from a personal epithet. It so happens, however, that there was no epithet so common among the Gael as that of *Grant*, as a perusal of the Irish annals will evince; and at the same time Ragman’s Roll shows that the Highland epithets always appear among the Norman signatures with the Norman ‘*le*’ prefixed to them. The clan themselves unanimously assert their descent from Gregor Mor Macgregor, who lived in the 12th century; and this is supported by their using to this day the same badge of distinction. So strong is this belief in both the clans of *Grant* and *Macgregor*, that in the early part of the last century a meeting of the two was held in the Blair of Athole, to consider the policy of re-uniting them. Upon this point all agreed, and also that the common surname should be *Macgregor*, if the reversal of the attainer of that name could be got from government. If that could not be obtained it was agreed that either *MacAlpine* or *Grant* should be substituted. This assembly of the clan *Alpine* lasted for fourteen days, and was only rendered abortive by disputes as to the chieftainship of the combined clan. Here then is as strong an attestation of a tradition as it is possible to conceive, and when to this is added the utter absence of the name in the old Norman rolls, the only trustworthy mark of a Norman descent, we are warranted in placing the Grants among the *Sìol Alpine*.”

With Mr Smibert we are inclined to think that, come the clan designation whence it may, the great body of the Grants were Gael of the stock of *Alpine*, which, as he truly says, is after all the main point to be considered.<sup>[220]</sup> The first of the name on record in Scotland is Gregory *de Grant*, who, in the reign of Alexander II. (1214 to 1249), was sheriff of the shire of Inverness, which then, and till 1583, comprehended Ross, Sutherland, and Caithness, besides what is now Inverness-shire. By his marriage with Mary, daughter of Sir John Bisset of Lovat, he became possessed of the lands of Stratherrick, at that period a part of the province of Moray, and had two sons, namely, Sir Lawrence, his heir, and Robert, who appears to have succeeded his father as sheriff of Inverness.

The elder son, Sir Lawrence *de Grant*, with his brother Robert, witnessed an agreement, dated 9th Sept. 1258, between Archibald, bishop of Moray, and John Bisset of Lovat; Sir Lawrence is particularly mentioned as the friend and kinsman of the latter. Chalmers<sup>[221]</sup> states that he married Bigla, the heiress of Comyn of Glenchernach, and obtained his father-in-law’s estates in Strathspey, and a connection with the most potent family in Scotland. Douglas, however, in his *Baronage*,<sup>[222]</sup> says that she was the wife of his elder son, John. He had two sons, Sir John and Rudolph. They supported the interest of Bruce against Baliol, and were taken prisoners in 1296, at the battle of Dunbar. After Baliol’s surrender of his crown and kingdom to Edward, the English monarch, with his victorious army, marched north as far as Elgin. On his return to Berwick he received the submission of many of the Scottish barons, whose names were written upon four large rolls of parchment, so frequently referred to as the Ragman Roll. Most of them were dismissed on their swearing allegiance to him, among whom was Rudolph *de Grant*, but his brother, John *de Grant*, was carried to London. He was released the following year, on condition of serving King Edward in France, John Comyn of Badenoch being his surety on the occasion. Robert *de Grant*, who also swore fealty to Edward I. in 1296, is supposed to have been his uncle.

At the accession of Robert the Bruce in 1306, the Grants do not seem to have been very numerous in Scotland; but as the people of Strathspey, which from that period was known as “the country of the Grants,” came to form a clan, with their name, they soon acquired the position and power of Highland chiefs.

Sir John had three sons—Sir John, who succeeded him; Sir Allan, progenitor of the clan Allan, a tribe of the Grants, of whom the Grants of Auchernick are the head; and Thomas, ancestor of some families of the name. Sir John’s grandson, John *de Grant*, had a son; and a daughter, Agnes, married to Sir Richard Comyn, ancestor of the Cummings of Altyre. The son, Sir Robert *de Grant*, in 1385, when the king of France, then at war with Richard II., remitted to Scotland a subsidy of 40,000 French crowns, to induce the Scots to invade England, was one of the principal barons, about twenty in all, among whom the money was divided. He died in the succeeding reign.

At this point there is some confusion in the pedigree of the Grants. The family papers state that the male line was continued by the son of Sir Robert, named Malcolm, who soon after his father's death began to make a figure as chief of the clan. On the other hand, some writers maintain that Sir Robert had no son, but a daughter, Maud or Matilda, heiress of the estate, and lineal representative of the family of Grant, who about the year 1400 married Andrew Stewart, son of Sir John Stewart, commonly called the Black Stewart, sheriff of Bute, and son of King Robert II., and that this Andrew sunk the royal name, and assumed instead the name and arms of Grant. This marriage, however, though supported by the tradition of the country, is not acknowledged by the family or the clan, and the very existence of such an heiress is denied.

Malcolm de Grant, above mentioned, had a son, Duncan de Grant, the first designed of Freuchie, the family title for several generations. By his wife, Muriel, a daughter of Mackintosh of Mackintosh, captain of the clan Chattan, he had, with a daughter, two sons, John and Patrick. The latter, by his elder son, John, was ancestor of the Grants of Ballindalloch, county of Elgin, of whom afterwards, and of those of Tomnavoulen, Tulloch, &c.; and by his younger son, Patrick, of the Grants of Dunlugas in Banffshire.

Duncan's elder son, John Grant of Freuchie, by his wife, Margaret, daughter of Sir James Ogilvie of Deskford, ancestor of the Earls of Findlater, had, with a daughter, married to her cousin, Hector, son of the chief of Mackintosh, three sons—John, his heir; Peter or Patrick, said to be the ancestor of the tribe of Phadrig, or house of Tullochgorum; and Duncan, progenitor of the tribe called clan Donachie, or house of Gartenbeg. By the daughter of Baron Stewart of Kincardine, he had another son, also named John, ancestor of the Grants of Glenmoriston.

His eldest son, John, the tenth laird, called, from his poetical talents, the Bard, succeeded in 1508. He obtained four charters under the great seal, all dated 3d December 1509, of various lands, among which were Urquhart and Glenmoriston in Inverness-shire. He had three sons; John, the second son, was ancestor of the Grants of Shoggie, and of those of Corrimony in Urquhart.

The younger son, Patrick, was the progenitor of the Grants of Bonhard in Perthshire. John the Bard died in 1525.

His eldest son, James Grant of Freuchie, called, from his daring character, Shemas nan Creach, or James the Bold, was much employed, during the reign of King James V., in quelling insurrections in the northern counties. His lands in Urquhart were, in November 1513, plundered and laid waste by the adherents of the Lord of the Isles, and again in 1544 by the Clanranald, when his castle of Urquhart was taken possession of. This chief of the Grants was in such high favour with King James V. that he obtained from that monarch a charter, dated 1535, exempting him from the jurisdiction of all the courts of judicature, except the court of session, then newly instituted. He died in 1553. He had, with two daughters, two sons, John and Archibald; the latter the ancestor of the Grants of Cullen, Monymusk, &c.

His eldest son, John, usually called Evan Baold, or the Gentle, was a strenuous promoter of the Reformation, and was a member of that parliament which, in 1560, abolished Popery as the established religion in Scotland. He died in 1585, having been twice married—first, to Margaret Stewart, daughter of the Earl of Athole, by whom he had, with two daughters, two sons, Duncan and Patrick, the latter ancestor of the Grants of Rothiemurchus; and, secondly, to a daughter of Barclay of [253] Towie, by whom he had an only son, Archibald, ancestor of the Grants of Bellintomb, represented by the Grants of Monymusk.

Duncan, the elder son, predeceased his father in 1581, leaving four sons—John; Patrick, ancestor of the Grants of Easter Elchies, of which family was Patrick Grant, Lord Elchies, a lord of session; Robert, progenitor of the Grants of Lurg; and James, of Ardnellie, ancestor of those of Moyness.

John, the eldest son, succeeded his grandfather in 1585, and was much employed in public affairs. A large body of his clan, at the battle of Glenlivet, was commanded by John Grant of Gartenbeg, to whose treachery, in having, in terms of a concerted plan, retreated with his men as soon as the action began, as well as to that of Campbell of Lochneil, Argyll owed his defeat in that engagement. This laird of Grant greatly extended and improved his paternal estates, and is said to have been offered by James VI., in 1610, a patent of honour, which he declined. From the Shaws he purchased the lands of Rothiemurchus, which he exchanged with his uncle Patrick for the lands of Muchrach. On his marriage with Lillias Murray, daughter of John, Earl of Athole, the nuptials were honoured with the presence of King James VI. and his queen. Besides a son and daughter by his wife, he had a natural son, Duncan, progenitor of the Grants of Cluny. He died in 1622.

His son, Sir John, by his extravagance and attendance at court, greatly reduced his estates, and when he was knighted he got the name of "Sir John Self-the-land." He had eight sons and three daughters, and dying at Edinburgh in April 1637, was buried at the abbey church of Holyrood-house.



His elder son, James, joined the Covenanters on the north of the Spey in 1638, and on 19th July 1644, was, by the Estates, appointed one of the committee for trying the malignants in the north. After the battle of Inverlochy, however, in the following year, he joined the standard of the Marquis of Montrose, then in arms for the king, and ever after remained faithful to the royal cause. In 1663, he went to Edinburgh, to see justice done to his kinsman, Allan Grant of Tulloch, in a criminal prosecution for manslaughter, in which he was successful; but he died in that city soon after his arrival there. A patent had been made out creating him Earl of Strathspey, and Lord Grant of Freuchie and Urquhart, but in consequence of his death it did not pass the seals. The patent itself is said to be preserved in the family archives. He had two sons, Ludovick and Patrick, the latter ancestor of the family of Wester Elchies in Speyside.

Ludovick, the eldest son, being a minor, was placed under the guardianship of his uncle, Colonel Patrick Grant, who faithfully discharged his trust, and so was enabled to remove some of the burdens on the encumbered family estates. Ludovick Grant of Grant and Freuchie took for his wife Janet, only child of Alexander Brodie of Lethen. By the favour of his father-in-law, the laird of Grant was enabled in 1685, to purchase the barony of Pluscardine, which was always to descend to the second son. By King William he was appointed colonel of a regiment of foot, and sheriff of Inverness. In 1700 he raised a regiment of his own clan, being the only commoner that did so, and kept his regiment in pay a whole year at his own expense. In compensation, three of his sons got commissions in the army, and his lands were erected into a barony. He died at Edinburgh in 1718, in his 66th year, and, like his father and grandfather, was buried in Holyrood abbey.

Alexander, his eldest son, after studying the civil law on the continent, entered the army, and soon obtained the command of a regiment of foot, with the rank of brigadier. When the rebellion broke out, being with his regiment in the south, he wrote to his brother, Captain George Grant, to raise the clan for the service of government, which he did, and a portion of them assisted at the reduction of Inverness. As justiciary of the counties of Inverness, Moray, and Banff, he was successful in suppressing the bands of outlaws and robbers which infested these counties in that unsettled time. He succeeded his father in 1718, but died at Leith the following year, aged 40. Though twice married, he had no children.

His brother, Sir James Grant of Pluscardine, was the next laird. In 1702, in his father's lifetime, he married Anne, only daughter of [254] Sir Humphrey Colquhoun of Luss, Baronet. By the marriage contract it was specially provided that he should assume the surname and arms of Colquhoun, and if he should at any time succeed to the estate of Grant, his second son should, with the name of Colquhoun, become proprietor of Luss. In 1704, Sir Humphrey obtained a new patent in favour of his son-in-law, James Grant, who on his death, in 1715, became in consequence Sir James Grant Colquhoun of Luss, Baronet. On succeeding, however, to the estate of Grant four years after, he dropped the name of Colquhoun, retaining the baronetcy, and the estate of Luss went to his second surviving son. He had five daughters, and as many sons, viz. Humphrey, who predeceased him in 1732; Ludovick; James, a major in the army, who succeeded to the estate and baronetcy of Luss, and took the name of Colquhoun; Francis, who died a general in the army; and Charles, a captain in the Royal Navy.

The second son, Ludovick, was admitted advocate in 1728; but on the death of his brother he relinquished his practice at the bar, and his father devolving on him the management of the estate, he represented him thereafter as chief of the clan. He was twice married—first, to a daughter of Sir Robert Dalrymple of North Berwick, by whom he had a daughter, who died young; secondly, to Lady Margaret Ogilvie, eldest daughter of James Earl of Findlater and Seafield, in virtue of which marriage his grandson succeeded to the earldom of Seafield. By his second wife Sir Ludovick had one son, James, and eleven daughters, six of whom survived him. Penuel, the third of these, was the wife of Henry Mackenzie, Esq., author of the *Man of Feeling*. Sir Ludovick died at Castle Grant, 18th March 1773.

His only son, Sir James Grant of Grant, Baronet, born in 1738, was distinguished for his patriotism and public spirit. On the declaration of war by France in 1793, he was among the first to raise a regiment of fencibles, called the Grant or Strathspey fencibles, of which he was appointed colonel. After a lingering illness, he died at Castle Grant on 18th February 1811. He had married, in 1763, Jean, only child of Alexander Duff, Esq. of Hatton, Aberdeenshire, and had by her three sons and three daughters. Sir Lewis Alexander Grant, the eldest son, in 1811 succeeded to the estates and earldom of Seafield, on the [255] death of his cousin, James Earl of Findlater and Seafield, and his brother, Francis William, became, in 1840, sixth earl. The younger children obtained in 1822 the rank and precedence of an earl's junior issue.

The Grants of Ballindalloch, in the parish of Inveravon, Banffshire—commonly called the Craig-Achrochean Grants—as already stated, descend from Patrick, twin brother of John, ninth laird of Freuchie. Patrick's grandson, John Grant, was killed by his kinsman, John Roy Grant of Carron, as afterwards mentioned, and his son, also John Grant, was father of another Patrick, whose son, John Roy Grant, by his extravagant living and unhappy differences with his lady, a daughter of Leslie of Balquhain, entirely ruined his estate, and was obliged to consent to placing it under the management and trust of three of his kinsmen, Brigadier Grant, Captain Grant of

Elchies, and Walter Grant of Arndilly, which gave occasion to W. Elchies' verses of "What meant the man?"

General James Grant of Ballindalloch succeeded to the estate on the death of his nephew, Major William Grant, in 1770. He died at Ballindalloch, on 13th April 1806, at the age of 86. Having no children, he was succeeded by his maternal grand-nephew, George Macpherson, Esq. of Invereshie, who assumed in consequence the additional name of Grant, and was created a baronet in 1838.

The Grants of Glenmoriston, in Inverness-shire, are sprung from John More Grant, natural son of John Grant, ninth laird of Freuchie. His son, John Roy Grant, acquired the lands of Carron from the Marquis of Huntly. In a dispute about the marches of their respective properties, he killed his kinsman, John Grant of Ballindalloch, in 1588, an event which led to a lasting feud between the families, of which, in the first part of the work we have given a detailed account. John Roy Grant had four sons—Patrick, who succeeded him in Carron; Robert of Nether Glen of Rothes; James an Tuim, or James of the hill; and Thomas.

The Glenmoriston branch of the Grants adhered faithfully to the Stuarts. Patrick Grant of Glenmoriston appeared in arms in Viscount Dundee's army at Killiecrankie. He was also at the skirmish at Cromdale against the government soon after, and at the battle of Sheriffmuir in 1715. His estate was, in consequence, forfeited, but through the interposition of the chief of the Grants, was bought back from the barons of the Exchequer. The laird of Glenmoriston in 1745 also took arms for the Pretender; but means were found to preserve the estate to the family. The families proceeding from this branch, besides that of Carron, which estate is near Elchies, on the river Spey, are those of Lynachorn, Aviemore, Croskie, &c.

The favourite song of "Roy's Wife of Aldivalloch" (the only one she was ever known to compose), was written by a Mrs Grant of Carron, whose maiden name was Grant, born, near Aberlour, about 1745. Mr Grant of Carron, whose wife she became about 1763, was her cousin. After his death she married, a second time, an Irish physician practising at Bath, of the name of Murray, and died in that city in 1814.

The Grants of Dalvey, who possess a baronetcy, are descended from Duncan, second son of John the Bard, tenth laird of Grant.

The Grants of Monymusk, who also possess a baronetcy (date of creation, December 7, 1705), are descended from Archibald Grant of Ballintomb, an estate conferred on him by charter, dated 8th March 1580. He was the younger son of John Grant of Freuchie, called Evan Baold, or the Gentle, by his second wife, Isobel Barclay. With three daughters, Archibald Grant had two sons. The younger son, James, was designed of Tombreak. Duncan of Ballintomb, the elder, had three sons—Archibald, his heir; Alexander, of Allachie; and William, of Arndillie. The eldest son, Archibald, had, with two daughters, two sons, the elder of whom, Archibald Grant, Esq. of Bellinton, had a son, Sir Francis, a lord of session, under the title of Lord Cullen, the first baronet of this family.

The Grants of Kilgraston, in Perthshire, are lineally descended, through the line of the Grants of Glenlochy, from the ninth laird of Grant. Peter Grant, the last of the lairds of Glenlochy, which estate he sold, had two sons, John and Francis. The elder son, John, chief justice of Jamaica from 1783 to 1790, purchased the estates of Kilgraston and Pitcaithley, [256] lying contiguous to each other in Strathearn; and, dying in 1793, without issue, he was succeeded by his brother, Francis. This gentleman married Anne, eldest daughter of Robert Oliphant, Esq. of Rossie, postmaster-general of Scotland, and had five sons and two daughters. He died in 1819, and was succeeded by his son, John Grant, the present representative of the Kilgraston family. He married—first, 1820, Margaret, second daughter of the late Lord Gray; second, 1828, Lucy, third daughter of Thomas, late Earl of Elgin. Heir, his son, Charles Thomas Constantine, born, 1831, and married, 1856, Matilda, fifth daughter of William Hay, Esq. of Dunse Castle.

The badge of the clan Grant was the pine or cranberry heath, and their slogan or gathering cry, "Stand fast, Craigellachie!" the bold projecting rock of that name ("the rock of alarm") in the united parishes of Duthil and Rothiemurchus, being their hill of rendezvous. The Grants had a long-standing feud with the Gordons, and even among the different branches of themselves there were faction fights, as between the Ballindalloch and Carron Grants. The clan, with few exceptions, was noted for its loyalty, being generally, and the family of the chief invariably, found on the side of government. In Strathspey the name prevailed almost to the exclusion of every other, and to this day Grant is the predominant surname in the district, as alluded to by Sir Alexander Boswell, Baronet, in his lively verses—

"Come the Grants of Tullochgorum, Wi' their pipers gaun before 'em, Proud the mothers are that bore 'em. Next the Grants of Rothiemurchus, Every man his sword and durk has, Every man as proud 's a Turk is."

In 1715, the force of the clan was 800, and in 1745, 850.