

Letter from Malcolm McLaurine, chamberlain of Tiree, to the Duke of Argyll, 15 Dec 1801

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Malcolm MacLaurine

December

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Inveraray, 15th Dec 1801

My Lord Duke,

I cannot sufficiently express my gratitude to Your Grace, for giving me the Farm of Balaphuil, and agreeing to build a house upon it, after a proper plan & estimate are approved of.

When I had the honour to represent to your Grace in August last, upon my return from that island, the inconveniency the Factor would feel, in being deprived of that farm, I did not conceive, that your Grace in agreeing to give it, had any intention, of giving away, the farm of Crossapoll, which you had ordered for me at the old rent and which by the last instructions, is intended to be divided into small Crofts, when the house is ready at Balaphuil. This circumstance, I take the liberty of mentioning to your Grace, with no intention of interfering with any plan thought conducive, to the good of the inhabitants, trusting that you will do in it whatever you deem proper; but to beg that your Grace will be pleased to name, the rent of Balaphuil; & with a view of instructing the people of that Island in farming, is essential to its prosperity, as nothing can impress them more forcibly than example and a conviction of this interest, it may not be improper to suggest to your Grace's

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consideration, the necessity there may be of inclosing & subdividing Balaphuil, and building at the same time with the house, the necessary offices; and if planting were ever to be attempted in that Island, it might be proper to make a pretty large garden to afford a nursery & due shelter for such plants as would be supposed most suitable and hardy for the experiment.

I beg also to submit to your Grace the good tendency the Volunteer Company would have to maintain the social order of that Island, as well as to suppress smuggling and distilling; & that if Government shall think it expedient to keep some of the Argyllshire Companies in pay, during Peace, I trust your Grace and Lord Lorn will be pleased to include the Tyrii Company in the number.

I would wish to know, if I am to procure the plan & estimate for your Grace's approbation; as the sooner the building was to begin in Spring, the better.

I have the honour to be

My Lord Duke

Reference: Argyll Papers/PFV65/70, An Iodhlann 2021.53.70

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Transcribed by Iona MacKinnon Campbell as part of the Transcribing Tiree project, July 2022

Your Grace's

Most obed^t humble Serv^t

Malcolm MacLaurine

His Grace

The Duke of Argyll