



## GRANT 1714 TARTAN

New Grant Tartan Inspired by Early 18<sup>th</sup> Century Portraits



*Alister Mohr Grant, the Laird's Champion*



*William Cumming, the Laird's Piper*

The Grant 1714 is one of the earliest tartans on record and has recently been reintroduced and authorised by Sir Michael Grant of Grant, Lord Strathspey, 34<sup>th</sup> Chief of Grant.

In July 1704, Alexander Grant, the eldest son of Ludovick, Chief of Grant, instructed his tenants and clansmen to be prepared to muster in “*Heighland Coates trewes and short hose of tartaine of red and Greine sett broad springed.*” This directive was recorded in the Court Book of the Regality of Grant.

Whilst there’s no surviving remnant of this Strathspey red and green tartan, there are strong clues as to the specific sett (pattern) of the time.

In 1714, Richard Waitt – an artist who travelled the highlands, accepted a commission from the Laird of Grant to paint life-sized portraits of William Cumming, the Laird’s Piper, and Alister Mohr Grant, the Laird’s Champion.

Both portraits depict highlanders in ceremonial tartans of red and green, which were almost certainly woven by the same weaver. Described by Waitt on his invoice as *ad vivum pinxit* (Latin for “painted to life”), they were large scale and presented exactly as he saw them.

## Reconstructing the cloth

Lord Strathspey had always been intrigued by the paintings, especially the Piper. After discussions with Hank Grant, author of Grant Tartan, it was agreed that this could very likely be an early Clan tartan, and [Peter MacDonald](#), tartan historian and honorary Head of Research at The Scottish Tartans Authority, was invited to conduct a more detailed examination and reconstruction.

Peter arranged to view the paintings, and armed with his observations and dozens of photographs, he created a workable pattern with colours that were typical of those used in the first half of the 18<sup>th</sup> century.



Working with Lochcarron weavers, Scotland’s premier tartan manufacturer, yarns were selected and a trial run produced to confirm the design before undertaking a larger run. The new tartan has been registered with the Scottish Register of Tartans and Design Registry in the name of the present Chief, Lord Strathspey, 34<sup>th</sup> Chief of Grant.



# MADE IN SCOTLAND

The perfect addition to your collection

Using pure new wool dyed in historic shades, the Grant 1714 tartan is available in light, middle and heavy weight cloth. Alternatively available in made-to-order items including kilts, trews and skirts or in accessories exclusively from [Lochcarron of Scotland](#) the world's leading manufacturer of tartan.



Kilts, trews and skirts made to order by Lochcarron of Scotland or by your own kiltmaker.



The Grant 1714 Tartan  
Reiver Lightweight  
Cushion Cover Medium



The Grant 1714 Tartan  
Reiver Tie



The Grant 1714 Reiver  
Lightweight Tartan Scarf



The Grant 1714 Tartan  
Reiver Bow Tie



The Grant 1714 Tartan  
Reiver Sash

## Preserving our traditions

Whilst it's not known exactly when tartan originated, a piece of cloth found in a pottery jar near Falkirk dates back to 250 AD. Traditionally made from wool, the cloth was hardwearing and locally produced. Each region would have their own weavers and natural dyes, leading to particular districts and families developing their own unique patterns and styles.

The new Grant 1714 is not intended to replace the existing 19<sup>th</sup> Century Grant tartans, but as a historic and “muted” alternative to the brighter later tartans.

The traditional Grant hunting, dress, ancient and modern tartans continue to be a proud symbol of identity for Clan Grant as well as having become the regimental uniforms of armies today.



The Grant 1714 tartan adds to the collection of other long-standing tartans associated with the Grant Clan.

CLAN GRANT TARTANS

## DESIGN NOTES FROM PETER MACDONALD

### Tartan Historian and Designer

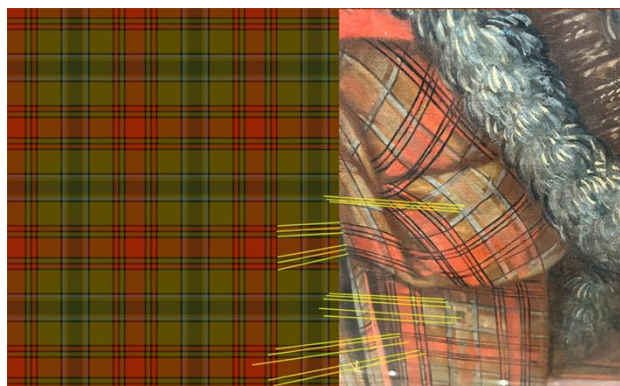
The concept of the clan tartans can be dated to the middle of the Highland Revival period and the desire by the Highland Society of London that the ‘Tartans, Plaids, and Banners’ of the clans ought to be preserved. As a result, in 1815 the Secretary, General David Stewart of Garth, wrote to the (Highland) chiefs asking them to submit a piece of their tartan certified by the chief’s stamp. It is not known whether the chief of the Grants was included, but if he was, he did not submit a specimen and there is no Grant tartan in the early



collection. The Clan Grant tartan is also worn by the Drummonds and a specimen of the tartan was submitted by their chief as the Drummond tartan in 1822.

By contrast, before the 19<sup>th</sup> century people generally wore what they liked, could afford, or was available. The idea of uniformity was not generally a consideration and based on surviving examples from the first half of the 18<sup>th</sup> century, red, blue and green based patterns appear to have been popular. The Grant 1714 tartan fits into this style of patterns and possibly reflects the red and green tartan requested to be worn for the muster in 1704.

There can be no doubt that many such tartans were lost as a result of the Act of Proscription (the Dress Act) which, following the collapse of the last Jacobite Rising, banned the wearing of Highland Clothes (but not tartan per se) in 1746. As a result, the number of early surviving tartans is relatively small, fewer than 50 of the over 12,000 setts recorded by The Scottish Tartans Authority. Amongst these rare patterns only one, the so-called Glen Affric tartan, pre-dates the 18<sup>th</sup> century. Most specimens are associated with the '45 era whereas several other early patterns are taken from earlier portraits, the Grant 1714 and other Grant portraits painted by Richard Waitt are notable amongst these for their clarity.



In the autumn of 2023, I was contacted by the chief who was interested in re-introducing the tartan worn in Waitt's Grant portraits of the Laird of Grant's Piper and Champion. Both Hank Grant and I were of the opinion that, whilst there were some differences between the two portraits, this was down to artistic licence and that they were intended to reflect the same tartan. It was agreed that I would proceed on that basis. Fortunately, both portraits were on display at the National Museum of Scotland and it was possible to make a detailed examination of both. I was also able to examine the unattributed portrait held at the Inverness Museum that was also by the same artist and which I believe to have been a trial for the later portraits. The detailed examination and comparison of the piper and champion portraits enabled me to extract a workable pattern (sett) and the likely colours involved.

Having arrived at the sett and colours, I then refined the shades to reflect those that were typical of those used in the first half of the 18<sup>th</sup> century. Working with Lochcarron weavers, yarns were selected and a trial run produced to confirm the design which has been well received by all those that have seen it. Working on the presumption that the two portraits showed the same tartan, the Scottish Register of Tartans have revised and combined their entries for both to reflect this interpretation/reconstruction. In

addition, because the tartan has not been previously commercially produced, it has been possible to register it as a protected design with the UK Intellectual Property Office – Design number: 6358684.

Peter MacDonald

Tartan Historian and Designer