

National Records of Scotland, Transcription of a letter from John Mitchell, Collector of Excise, to Robert Graham of Fintry, Commissioner of Excise, 6 August 1789

Sir,

I was favoured with yours, of the 3rd, & begs to offer my warmest acknowledgments for what it contains, regarding my appointment.

With esteem, I am,

Sir,,
Your much obliged, obedient Servant,

John Mitchell

Dumfries
6th Augt 1789

Having seen Mr Burns by accident yesterday, I took him aside & told him, I had heard from you by which [I] had authority to assure him of three Facts,

That the sallaries were advanced, that he was ordered to do duty in the place he wished, & that not as an expectant, but appointed the officer.

He stood, with Eyes & hands, directed upwards, in an attitude Poetically fancifull. Upon announcing each fact, I paused, while he repeated some strikingly applicable Exordium, but at last said, you would not believe it, M^r M., from my appearance, that my Nerves are so weak, as to oblige me to request, if any more strictures from Mr Graham, to stop now, I cannot bear the shock. But, as to him, says he, it may be said

No Music is so engaging as the requests of those that wants his aid.
With regard to me, as an officer

Men must have public minds, as well as sallaries, or they will serve private ends, at the public cost, etc. etc.

(National Records of Scotland, GD151/11/26/35A)

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