

Letter from Charles Edward Middleton-Stewart
to his three sons- Ivor, Donald and Colin
on family tradition

Nagpur.

25th April. 1933.



My dearest Sons.

I am typing each of you a copy of this letter.

As I was young when my father died, and also to set of unfortunate circumstances, pretty well all family records which I understand were entrusted to Uncle Ben, my fathers youngest and third brother and to Aunt Winnie the ~~ixg~~ wife of John by father's second brother have been lost. These documents etc should by rights have been handed over to me when I came of age as being the only son of my father (David Henry) who was the eldest of the three brothers. Although I was only about 16 when my father died, I know that he claimed to be the heir-male of our branch of the Stewarts..the Stewarts of Cragiehall parish of Dalmeny Linlithgowshire.

Unfortunately I only took an interest in family matters when on leave home in the winter of 1932, and then only in a vague sort of way. I had no idea of what branch of the Stewarts we belonged to

~~and~~ ^{because} even the name Cragiehall conveyed nothing to me, because I thought it was the name of the house where ~~the~~ family once lived.

Aunt Winnie
I even forgot ~~xxx~~ telling me this untill it came back to me very recently for your mother saw her before she died and I met her in 1922 and your mother remembered the occasion.

I remembered of course but in a very muddled sort of way, the stories I was told of the family by my father and Aunt Winnie when I was a kid. I might say my mother was queer about these matters. She held the idea that it was up to every person to carve their own future and that the less they knew of the past the better. Her idea was that ^y a young man ~~who~~ knew that he was of excellent family and that sort of thing ^u tended to make him snobbish and to have ideas as to what sort of job etc was his due, in short did him little good if he was not in a position to pick and choose... had no money. On the other hand if a lad knew he was a nobody at all, bar sinister and all that it could give an inferiority complex. Her view therefore was — if a boy was in the position that he had to carve his own future, had no money to expect, or position, except it came from his own endeavours it was best that the past was hidden from him. She consequently took little or no interest in the history of our family. A most unfortunate attitude for it is this that such records etc my father possessed were not entrusted to her. Anyhow thanks to the assistance and hint first given by Col: A.K. Stewart (The Stewart of Achnacone, Appin, Argyllshire and Mr J.K. Stewart the Hon: Secretary of the Stewart Society Edinburgh of which I am a life member, I was able to meet Col: Burton Stewart of Marine House Alnmouth Northumberland who also claims to be of Cragiehall stock. It was he who gave me the articles by Burke and McKerlie and the "tree" history.

Hunt Wynn, just as mother I remember after her
to me we were of Cragiehall but I did not grasp
that it meant - thought it was name of a tuncalor
& I forgot it.



The first clue was the motto you see above and crest. I remember seeing this on some papers my father had and which belonged to his father. The coat of arms photo of which I send you he also had. I have a vague dim remembrance of it. Anyhow from what I repeated of the family history as I knew it in a muddled way connection with the West Indies, ~~xxxxxxxx~~ David row with his father, John East at sea, it became clear when the actual records were seen of the family.....and these were only discovered a few years ago..it became clear that we are Stewarts of Cragiehall. It is not ~~that~~ finished at that. I have no doubt at all but that we are the direct descendants of that David who rowed with his father and was cut off. That is a matter that has to be traced up; I hope to do that next time I go on leave but as life is short and so on and heaven knows what may happen I want you to have all on record that I can give so that if I get "bumped off to the happy hunting grounds" before I can do it, you boys will have something to work on. You will have read what Burke and McKerlie have written. Taking my father's assertion as correct that he is the direct heir-male of our branch and there is every reason to believe that he was, it follows that I am, if Burke is correct, co-heir of the ancient

Lords of Lorn and Princes of the Isles as well as of the Kings of Scotland as well as heir male of the house of the Lord High Stewarts of Scotland, in short The Stewart of all of the name.

Chas. ~~xxxx~~ Because I was not certain I did not mention it in my letter to J.K. Stewart, but I rather think my father said that when David was reconciled to his father and returned to High Scotland from America he had to move out and the family then settled in the North of England. Either then or later. I hope to get the record of my fathers birth certificate from Somerset House. He was born at Walleend in Durham, his father was D. T. Stewart ~~Dr. J. Stewart~~. My father's tombstone may is not very clear in the initial of his father so it may be J or even A. Anyhow the point can be cleared because my grandmother apparently was a Middleton. The Middletons are an old Northumberland family. The eldest of the branch lives at Bewsey Castle not far from Newcastle. I think that a Middleton married the present owner of Faschnacloch in Appin Argyllshire. My grandfather apparently was quite well-to-do in Newcastle; he lived at Killeen Place and won a race, Northumberland Plate perhaps with a horse called Joyey Joe. I remember the print of the horse. Either he or his father was also granted an engineering patent somewhere about 18 in the early reign of Queen Victoria. These are the brief facts I have to go upon in order to trace back. The birth certificates will have to be hunted up. It may not prove a diffic-



difficult task, in any case it will be well worth it. We must be in a position to establish our claims definitely for there is no moral doubt about it. There is no reason why we should not come in and assume the titles of rank which is ours. I can't at present see how it is but I am certain my father said he was by right the Earl of Newcastle a title which became extinct and which was in the ~~xxxxix~~ descendants of the second son of Sir John Stewart of Bonkyl. We are descended from the fourth son of Sir John of Bonkyl. The lines of the three first sons have become extinct which leaves us the senior as the Tree will show. The Appins are also from the fourth son and so are our kinsmen.

As it will interest you I send you photos of the family ~~kenn~~ tombstone at Dalmeny... it is about 20 miles from Edinburgh, copy of the Coat of Arms and certificate about it. I have it about three times the size and painted in the proper colours supplied me by the Court of the Lord Lyon of Scotland. I hope later on to have copies made (painted) for each of you. The photo of the Hon: Tree made in 17 something is of no value but is interesting in that it shows our branch up to a point. I have a letter from J.K. Stewart the Hon Sec. saying he has no

doubt that we are Cragiehall, but we cant rest content with that.

It would be a good thing if you were to join the Stewart Society. The subscription is only 10/6 (shillings) a year. Write to J.K. at the address I gave at the bottem of my letter to him and ask him for the rules etc.

I will keep you three posted with all developments. Regard my letters and all I send as important documents. Nothing may come of it in my time or even yours. We must look further ahead and make every endeavour to make the prophetic motto ..I shall rise again....come true.

I think Donald that you with your knowledge of minerals will be the one to raise the old family fortunes up again. You are in Durma in parts where few white prospectors perhaps have ever been and if you keep your eyes open and always be on the look out goodness knows what you may find. Not that I believe in horoscopes and that sort of junk thing, but it will interest you to know that one made by an old Indian when I was a kid said that through one of my sons who would find it IN THE GROUND we would be very very rich again. Anyhow from the way things have come about and the veil lifted persons who have accidentally to all ordinary ways of thinking met me who could help and have done in my quest which again was accidentally taken up I feel sure there is a providence behind it all guiding for some purpose. Best of love sons of mine. Good luck and fortune attend you

Your loving Dad
Charles Edward Niddish Stewart