

Note of proceedings at extraordinary General Meeting of the Piobaireachd Society held at 5 Charlotte Square, Edinburgh, on Thursday, 4<sup>th</sup> March, 1920.

(Sir Francis Davis in the Chair)

Minutes of Meetings were read, including Minutes of Meeting held at Inverness on 20<sup>th</sup> September.

General Davis: Are there any observations anyone would like to make?

Colonel MacRae-Gilstrap: In regard to this man John Grant. I think it is suggested that he should have an honorarium for services rendered. May I ask how the man was appointed, because, as I understand it, he is rather dissatisfied with having been got rid of by the Society. He resents the treatment given him by the Piobaireachd Society.

Sir Colin MacRae: He has written a letter and has also come to me and complained. Of course I simply received the order to tell him that his services were not required, and informed him accordingly.

General Davis: That notice was a resolution come to by the Society, I suppose?

Sir Colin MacRae: It was decided by the Music Committee which have control of such matters. Under Rule 12 (b) they appoint instructors.

Colonel MacRae-Gilstrap: I wonder how the man was appointed and if he has any just cause for being dissatisfied. That is what one would like to know.

Sir Colin MacRae: so far as I know, he was appointed when these classes began-sometime about a year ago, I think it was. He was then proceeding to instruct the class and then I got an order to tell him to withdraw and to appoint Ross instead; he then withdrew and Ross was appointed straightaway.

General Davis: It was really a temporary measure?

Lady Margaret MacRae: I suppose it was to be confirmed afterwards. It was just that the class might be started. So long as there are no classes there is no money.

General Davis: I should have thought that Grant held his office during the pleasure of the Society.

Lady Margaret MacRae: I think the difficulty was dismissing Grant as if he were not able to do anything at all. It is very damaging to the man's reputation and practically all that he has for his wife and family is derived from his teaching - at any rate, the greater part of it. He did work in some Government Office while the war was going on, I believe.

Sir Colin MacRae: I believe so. He sent in a statement which I have here.

(Sir Colin MacRae here read statement from Mr. Grant dated 15 September, 1919)

Major Grant: I think I should perhaps explain what the attitude of the Music Committee was to this appointment of Mr. Grant. By the rules it was laid down in 12 and 13 that in general - all matters technically musical would be dealt with by the Music Committee - in particular, the appointment of instructors in one of their duties mentioned in Rule 12 (b). For that purpose as soon as the Music Committee was formed they drew up a list of instructors into classes -first of all, instructors fit to take advanced pupils and secondly, instructors for beginners. Mr. Grant did not appear in either of these lists and the Committee see no reason to include him now. It is entirely a technical question about the merits of one instructor against another that is precluded by the rules from a General Meeting of this Committee. We felt as a Committee that he had been hardly used. He had been engaged as a wartime expedience and since things settled down it was the duty of the Music Committee to see that we get the best teachers available. We felt that it was certainly hard that through circumstances Mr. Grant had been removed but it was absolutely essential in the interests of the Society to try and express what I imagined to be the feeling of the Music Committee by suggesting that in thanking him we should at the same time ask them to accept a cheque, really as solatium for his wounded feelings and for being dismissed on such very short notice. The amount of the cheque it is perhaps for this meeting to consider.

Col. MacRae-Gilstrap: I think it is not so much a question of money as that his reputation suffers. I do not think that any sum would have been a sufficient satisfaction to the man from his point of view.

Genl. Davis: don't you think a letter which he can show, thanking him for his services during the war etc. would meet the case?

Col. MacRae-Gilstrap: This man was employed during the war by us and one feels that it is somewhat hard on him that he should be shifted when the war is over in this way, which affects his livelihood for the future. That is the point.

General Davis: What I hope is that a letter in sympathetic terms thanking him for the work which he did for the Society and giving him an honorarium will meet the case - can you do more? This letter he could show and publish if you liked.

Colonel MacRae-Gilstrap: It would have been better for him if he had never been employed by the Society - that is his point.

General Davis: It seems to me that you have got to this. The Music Committee who are competent to act in this matter came to the decision that he ought to be replaced and that has been done - you cannot alter that. It only remains to do what you can in any case to make up to him for his somewhat summary dismissal and I do not see what more you can do than has been suggested.

Colonel Hunt: Did the Music Committee break any agreement with Grant over his dismissal? What agreement had they made with him?

Major Grant: None at all. They did not make any at all. The powers of the Music Committee are to recommend instructors to the General Meeting. This man who was not one of their recommended instructors was dismissed not by the Music Committee - though by the action of the Music Committee - but by the Society itself.

General Davis: it appears to me that everyone is agreed that a letter should be written to him, and that present the question laid before you is that the resolution passed at this meeting should be confirmed. I just want to see if anyone wishes to move any amendment to that.

Mr. Bartholomew: I beg to propose that a sum of £ 25 be paid to him.

Colonel Hunt: I second that.

(This motion was carried unanimously.)