

The Abercairney Poems

On 23 March, 2012, with the kind permission of William Drummond-Moray of the Abercairney Estates, Crieff, and his son-in-law, Daniel Parker; Dugald MacNeil (the College of Piping, Glasgow) and I drove to Abercairney to seek out materials on John Grant. Grant had been family piper to Mr. Drummond-Moray's grandfather, Captain William Home-Drummond-Moray. Among some papers that contained bits of Grant's hand-written music were the following poems, written by Grant on 25 and 26 September, 1902. All of them are quite nice, but I especially like "Ben Greig" for both its insights and perfect sonnet construction. If anyone knows where Ben Greig is, please let me know, as I cannot find it!!

Ben Greig

[A Sonnet]

Why climb the mountains? I will tell thee why,
And if my fancy jumps not with my whim
What marvel, there is scope beneath the sky
For things that creep and fly and walk and swim.
I love the free breath of the broad wing'd breeze;
I love the eyes' free sweep from craggy rim;
I love the free bird poised at lofty ease
And the free torrents far up-sounding hymn;
I love to leave my littleness behind
In the low vale, where little cares are great,
And in the mighty map of things to find
A sober measure of my scanty state.
Taught by the vastness of God's pictured plan,
In the big world how small a thing is man.

Sept. 25th, 1902
John Grant