

a noble pursuit: the early works of John Grant

by Alan Armstrong, Ph.D.

UNTIL RECENTLY, the only written information available about Mr. John Grant, Edinburgh, was limited to biographical sketches in various *Oban Times* reviews (1), his autobiography (2) (covering his formative years as piping student under Pipe-Major Ronald Mackenzie at Gordon Castle, Fochabers), an article on his participation in the "Redundant 'A' Controversy" of the late 1920s (3), and various minor mentions by historians in papers and journals (4).

Perhaps because most bagpipe scholars reside in Britain, and Grant's known compositions and reputation caused them to dismiss him as an unimportant footnote in bagpiping history, a large corpus of his manuscripts have sat unstudied both at Harvard University and the Boston Museum of Fine Arts.

Besides these informative documents, his own letters, working papers, and newspaper clippings have now come to light (5), revealing much about a man whose every leisure moment for the best of sixty years was spent promoting the Great Highland Bagpipe and its music.

The Grant letters (6) from 1904-1908 are especially important because they document the interactions

between Grant and the influential people that helped set the course of his "avocation" as a composer of bagpipe music, especially *Ceòl Mór*.

Coupled with his massive collection of manuscripts, these references also provide us with a fuller history of the piobaireachd revival at the turn of the 20th century and help place Grant as one who, much to our surprise, played a meaningful part in that revival.

John Grant's autobiography is quite informative about his early years as a bagpiper, and his personal papers provide insight into his development as an artist and piobaireachd devotee.

In September 1893, at age 17, armed with a letter of recommendation from the pastor of the Dallas Church, Grant left his family's farm, 'The Bauds', Kellas, in order to take up employ with Messrs. Stewart and McIsaac, Solicitors in nearby Elgin.

John's father, George, owned properties on North Street in Elgin, and would presumably have made provision for his sixth born to reside in one, perhaps even free of charge.

During the six years Grant worked as an apprentice law clerk (7), he was required to learn the art of calligraphy in order to prepare legal forms for his employers.

In 1896, as we know from his autobi-



ography, he took up the bagpipes as a hobby, walking the twenty-two mile round trip to Gordon Castle twice weekly for private tutelage under Pipe Major Ronald Mackenzie of the Seaforth Highlanders, who was at that time piper to the Gordon and Richmond families.

In October, 1899, Mackenzie dissuaded Grant from enlisting in the Scots Guards and recommended him for the position of family piper to Captain William Home-Drummond-Moray, Lord of Abercainey.

Grant served the family until late 1902 (8).

We don't know the details surrounding Grant's move to Edinburgh at that time, but, at age 26 years, it is not difficult to imagine he wanted to get on

with life and a permanent career. A friendly letter from Abercainey dated 17 February 1906 thanking Grant for an illuminated manuscript of 'Abercainey's Salute' suggests that Abercainey had fond memories of Grant and that he had helped his former employee obtain a position as an accountant with an Edinburgh rubber company.

On 12 June 1903 Grant married Mary Jane Harper, a native of Auchterloss, at the Union Hotel, Turriff, and the newlyweds took up residence at 5 Athole Place, Edinburgh, the home of Grant's two spinster sisters, Elizabeth and Jane.

Under Ronald Mackenzie, Grant had not only been schooled in bagpipe technique and musicianship; but as he

states in the Preface to one of his Piobaireachd collections (to be described below), he also was instructed to write out the music in staff notation from the first week of lessons.

Grant already had some knowledge of staff notation; he had experimented with both the accordion and violin as a youngster.

However, now armed with a talent for calligraphy, he began copying out every piece of bagpipe music he could lay his hands on.

In 1900 he began 'A Collection of Ancient Piobaireachd or Highland Bagpipe Music' (9), which contained twelve Piobaireachd in twenty-nine pages, but by late 1904 he completed a work begun in 1898: a staggering eight-hundred tune, three-volume set of Piobaireachd, Marches, Strathspeys, and Reels (10).

Whether Ronald Mackenzie saw Grant's gift for manuscript writing early and encouraged him to send something to the Highland Society of London, or Grant learned later on that this was the organization that existed in part for "preserving the martial spirit, language, dress, music, and antiquities of the ancient Caledonians" (11), the young bagpipe enthusiast contacted the Society, not only to inform them of his completed magnum opus, but also to request to speak before the membership.

The address (12) took place on 14 December 1904, at which time Grant presented his three-volume set for the

Society's inspection. In early February, having heard nothing again from the Society for almost two months, Grant wrote to the newly-re-elected President; John Stewart-Murray, Marquise of Tullibardine, 7th Duke of Atholl, inquiring about the status of the "inspection." Lord Tullibardine responded 13 February:

"I did not write to you before with regard to your volumes of pipe-music until I could inform you that they have been laid before the Highland Society.

"They were set down in time for the last meeting which was only a committee [of] one and the secretary thought it inadvisable to produce them.

"There will be a general meeting on the 18th when they will be shown.

"After that I have no doubt a letter will be sent you on behalf of the Society acknowledging receipt of same and with their opinion regarding the work.

"So far as concerns myself allow me to congratulate you on the result of your labours.

"I am personally going to collect pipe-music of approved settings for the use of the Scottish Horse of Atholl Highlander bands, also for the use of pipers in this district, so I take a considerable interest in your collection as you may imagine."

Grant again waited patiently for the

SGòil nam Piobaire BOOK 1

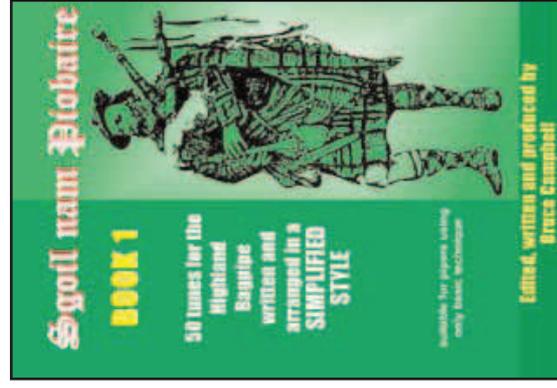
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more news until the end of March, and hearing nothing, wrote once more.

Lord Tullibardine's secretary,

Alexander McKay, finally replied on 21 April with the good news that the

"music was duly laid before those present at the general meeting of the Highland Society of London, and I am asked by Lord

Tullibardine to inform you that

extreme satisfaction was

expressed at the excellent result of your labours.

"You will no doubt hear from the secretary of the Society soon if you have not done so by this time."

Finally, on 5 May 1905, Assistant Secretary James Chisholm sent Grant the news he undoubtedly had hoped for:

"I have now the pleasure to acknowledge officially the address dated 14 Dec. 1904 which you presented to this society together with the books of Pipe music you kindly sent at the same time for exhibition amongst our members.

"On several important occasions the books were carefully examined and scrutinised, and the members were much impressed by the great amount of labour you must have bestowed on them and the magnitude of the work you are able to produce in a comparatively short period.

"The exquisite taste and design in

which the scroll work is executed also communicated very greatly to our members.

"Lord Tullibardine has intimated to me that it is possible you may be inclined to offer for the acceptance of the society one of the books.

"It is most kind of you to contemplate doing so, but I think it only right to point out that we keep all our important MSS. etc. in the

Advocates' Library, Edinburgh, having unfortunately no room in our quarters here for keeping books etc. in a manner to permit of them being examined and on view, and we should not like to consign anything of importance to an inaccessible cupboard.... The books have been dispatched to you today and I hope will be received in good order."

Unfortunately for us, only the remnants of the front material and partial indices of the Pìobaireachd portion of the collection exist (13).

However, from the page numbering it is evident there were at least 74 tunes covering 214 pages.

The list of tunes is provided in Appendix B.

With praise of this magnitude from no less a body than the Highland Society of London and no less an esteemed personage than Lord Tullibardine, it would be putting it mildly to say that Grant's self-assurance must have been bolstered.

Now armed with references of the

highest order, Grant set out on a course that, in the end, would bring him a lifetime of satisfaction.

The next few years saw Grant balancing work, family and his manuscript writing.

By July 1906 he had three children, and had prepared manuscripts of ancient (14) Pìobaireachd for several noblemen.

Where he got the idea at that time to try his hand at composing new tunes (15) for the Great Highland Bagpipe is curiously something Grant never got around to explaining in writing.

However, he defended the right of anyone to add to the corpus of ancient music to the last (16).

On 20 July 1906 he completed 'His Most Excellent Majesty King Edward VII's Salute' in folio format and forwarded it to Buckingham Palace.

He received a reply one week later from Sir Dighton Probyn, Keeper of the Privy Purse, that the Pìobaireachd had been laid before the King and accepted.

Thinking the King would also enjoy having the work prepared in a manner "suitable for framing", (17) he wrote the tune out again, this time on Whatman's paper affixed to a hard board measuring 22" x 31" (18).

Unsure if Probyn would find the gift too unwieldy for court, Grant wrote to Alexander Duff, Duke of Fife - who, until 1902, had been Lord Lieutenant of Elginshire and land holder of Grant's ancestral home - to ask where he should send it.

Lord Duff was a logical choice for the inquiry.

Not only was he the son-in-law of the King and Queen (his wife, Louisa, Princess of Wales, was their third eldest child), but since Grant was from the Elgin area, the Duke would be sympathetic to his needs.

Perhaps to insure that, on 20 August, Grant composed a personalized Pìobaireachd for the nobleman, illuminated it in folio form, and sent it off with an accompanying letter.

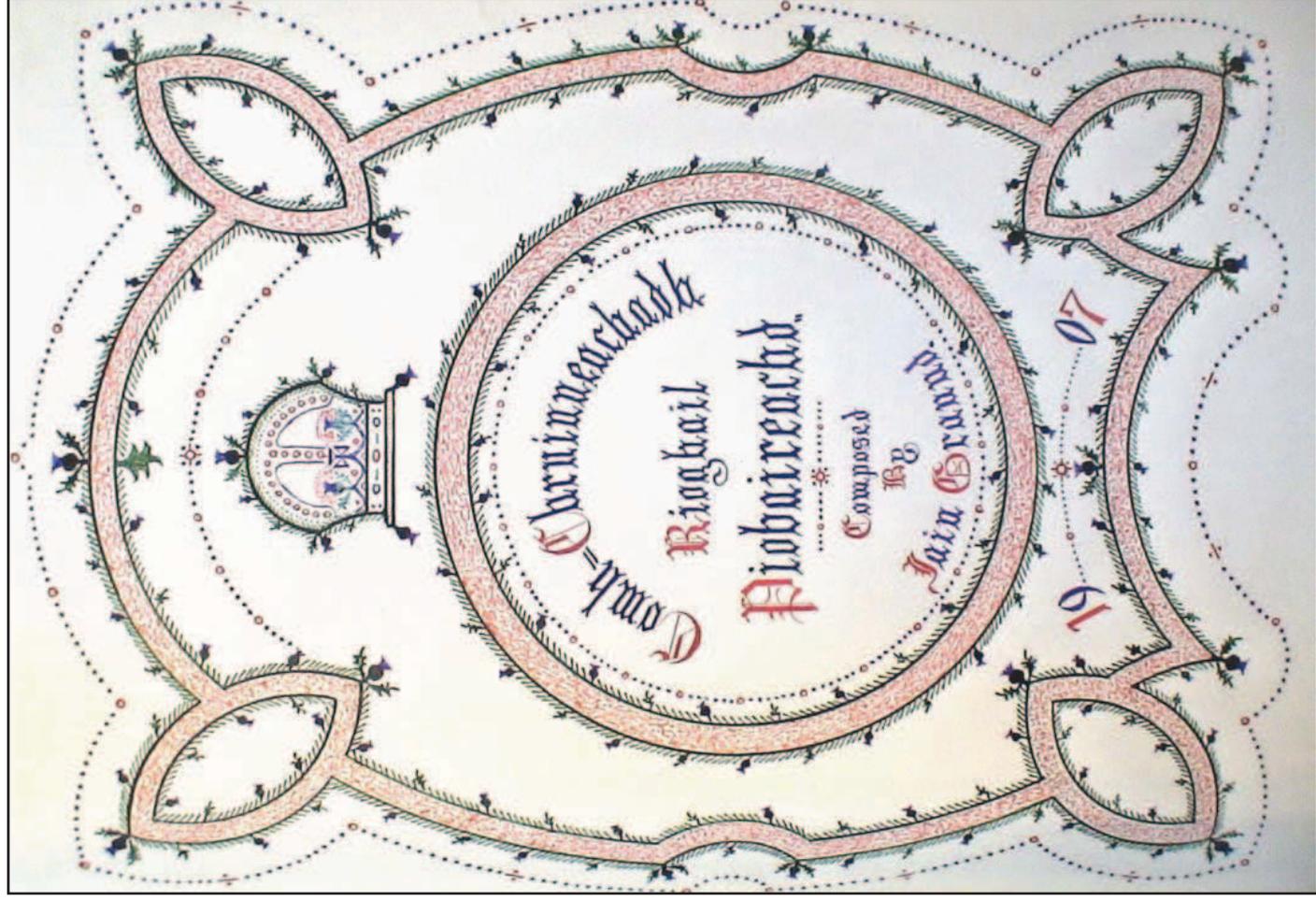
Within a few days Grant received the hoped-for advice: Probyn would accept the illuminated manuscript, but it would need to be sent to Balmoral-not Buckingham Palace.

The Duke, incidentally, did not neglect to praise the young composer. He thanked him "extremely," for the "Pibroch" that Grant had been "kind enough to send."

It is at the beginning of 1907 that Grant, already becoming known as a fine illuminator, crosses paths with members of the Pìobaireachd Society.

Major William Stewart of Ensay, a charter member of that organization, was in need of having some tunes written out, and a mutual friend of his and Grant's, noted piper John MacDougall Gillies, put Stewart in touch with Grant. Stewart wrote Grant on 15 January:

"Mr. MacDougall Gillies gave me your address so that I might communicate directly with you about the tunes you are kindly writing



out for me. I only want them roughly done, and please send me each one as you get it finished without waiting till they are all ready.

"I have a specimen of your very beautiful work which Mr. Gillies gave me and which I have had framed and has been much admired by many people.

"I hope Mr. Gillies told you I only want rough copies of the tunes named, and done on one side of the paper for convenience in alterations.

"I hope the first time I am in Edinburgh to have the pleasure of making your acquaintance, and to call on you and show you some of my manuscripts as I understand you are an enthusiast in Pibroch, and it is always a pleasure meeting one who is.

"Please keep the list of tunes and any mention of this private meeting."

Seeing that Stewart was unaware of just how much of an "enthusiast of Pibroch" Grant really was, he wrote back two days later and invited Stewart to visit in order to show him his Piobaireachd Collection, informing him in the process that he, Grant, was also taking a hand at writing new tunes.

Stewart replied on 21 January that he would be "delighted to avail" himself of the invitation and would call sometime in March, when he expected to be in Edinburgh.

He added: "I am afraid you have had a lot [of] bother writing out the tunes at a time when you are so busy, and I am very much obliged to you.

"I am also much interested to hear about the Pibroch you composed, and I'm glad to know the art is not lost. "I presume it has not been published in a collection."

Apparently Grant got to work on the copies for Stewart, but that is not all that occupied his time the rest of winter 1907.

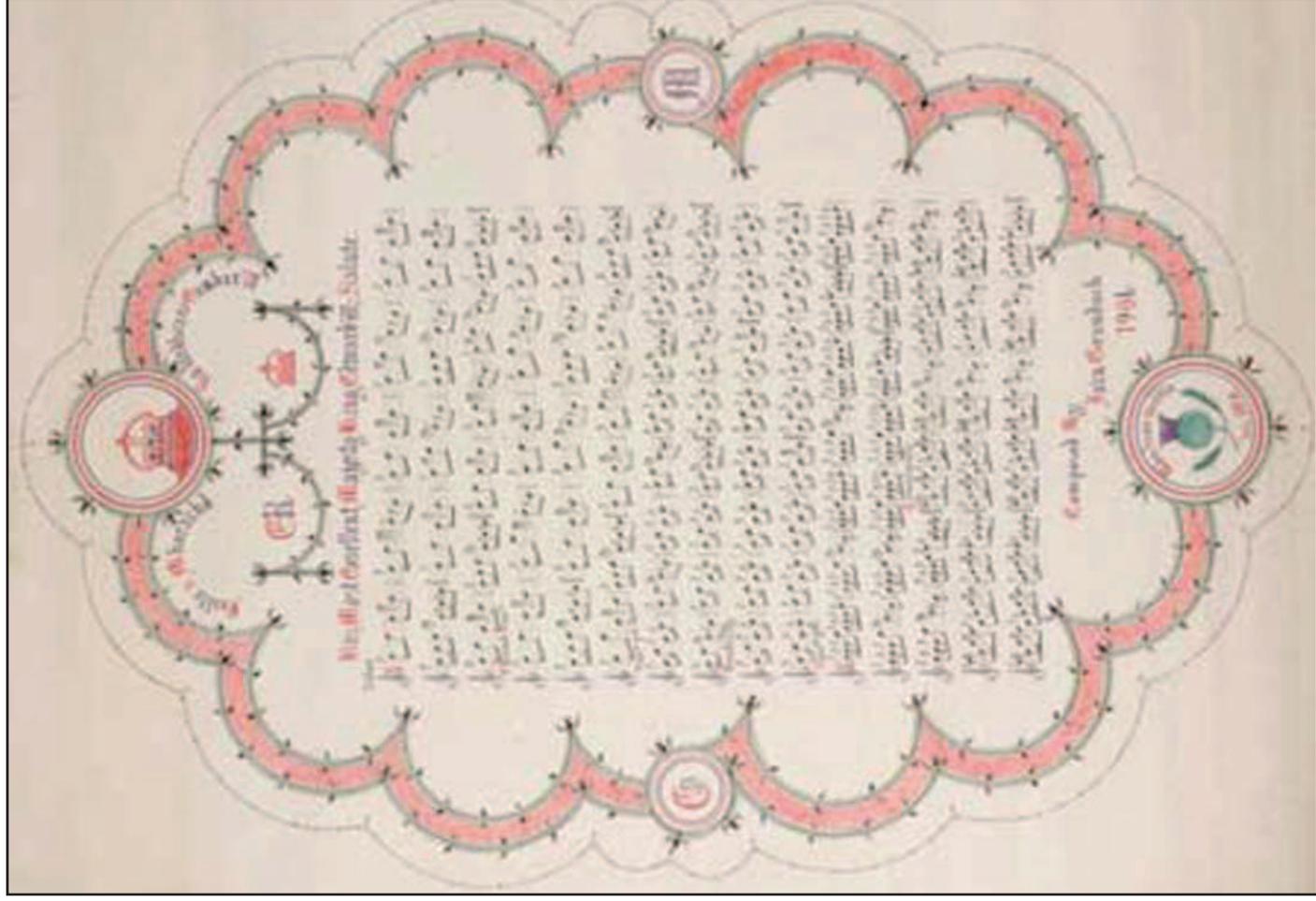
He also completed an illumination of 'The Old Sword's Lament' for the Prince of Wales, which His Royal Highness accepted (19), and composed a new Piobaireachd, 'Lament for Her Most Excellent Majesty Queen Victoria.'

Grant's reason for creating a Piobaireachd for the late Queen was an honourable one.

He saw it as: "a tribute to the memory of her Majesty who by her Royal patronage and encouragement the Great Highland Bagpipe and its Classical Music have been raised to that high and exalted position which they now hold after a period of depression and neglect, as a result of the unfortunate Rising of '45. (20)"

Since his first royal Piobaireachd had been accepted by Edward VII, Grant apparently had no qualms about forwarding another, and so soon after its completion he sent off a folio copy for the King's acceptance and approval.

The resultant letter is somewhat



amusing.

On 30 January Sir Dighton Probyn wrote Grant to thank him on behalf of the King for the music, but added "[since] His Majesty (though fully appreciating Mr. Grant's kind thought) seemed concerned at the time and expense which must have been entailed in the preparation of the Music, Sir Dighton Probyn thinks it would be better for Mr. Grant not to send any further compositions for his Majesty's acceptance."

Grant complied.

He wouldn't send anything more to Buckingham Palace until George V succeeded his father; in him and his progeny he would find much more willing recipients of his musical efforts.

As we see in his dedication to Queen Victoria above, John Grant's reason for composing new bagpipe tunes, both *Ceòl Mór* and *Ceòl Beag*, was to honour individuals who championed Highland culture and actively sought to propagate its native music.

It is no wonder, then, that Grant dubbed William Stewart "worthy" after learning of Stewart's interest in piobaireachd. It is not clear if Grant had completed a Piobaireachd in Stewart's honour yet, or was simply notifying him of his intent, that precipitated Stewart's letter of 15 March 1907:

"Very many thanks for your letter.

"It is most kind of you dedicating a Piobaireachd to me, and I assure you I consider it a very great com-

plement.

"If however I might make the suggestion that you would dedicate it to the Society it would be paying a high compliment to a large number of your countrymen who are doing what they can to help a cause in which it is a pleasure to find one so capable and interested as you are.

"I was quite under the mistaken impression that the art of piobaireachd composition was lost, and I am very glad to find I was under a misapprehension.

"I shall be most interested to hear your tune, and the moment I get to Edinburgh I shall put myself in communication with you, with a view to having the pleasure of making your acquaintance.

"I quite intended to have been in Edinburgh before now, but I had a very serious illness last autumn, and I have not yet got quite over it, and that has prevented my leaving home.

"I hope however early next month to be able to go.

"The copies of the tunes you kindly did for me were first rate and just what I wanted, and I must say I envy and admire your ability in doing them in so short a time and so correctly. . . .

"I am looking forward with pleasure to seeing some more specimens of your illuminations, as I used to do a little myself in that

way, and it always makes one better understand and appreciate the work of another.

"Thank you again for your very kind letter."

Grant sent the completed tune on 26 March, still, however, dedicated to William Stewart, who complimented the young composer in a letter two days later for his "excellent piobaireachd," adding, "I assure you I take it as a very great compliment." Grant would heed Stewart's suggestion to change the dedication in order to honour the Piobaireachd Society, but not until the publication of his first book a few months later.

By late spring 1907 Grant had decided to publish a book of his own "royal" Piobaireachd compositions, and was already soliciting subscriptions (21) to help defray the cost.

When one considers that his music had already been favourably received, reviewed, and accepted by His Majesty the King, the Duke of Fife, and William Stewart, it is not too difficult to understand his motivation for wanting to publish such a book.

With their stamp of approval, surely he probably thought- he must be doing something right, and what better way to show Piobaireachd was not dead than to publish a collection of new tunes from his own pen.

Whether it is because he wanted further assurances, just wanted to make his volume more "royally" complete, or for some other reason (22), Grant

composed two more Piobaireachd: one for Prince Arthur William Patrick Albert, the only other surviving son of Queen Victoria, King Edward's younger brother, the Duke of Connaught and Strathearn, and one for Lord Archibald Campbell.

In May 1907 Grant wrote once again to the Duke of Fife, who was becoming his major source for royal postal addresses, asking for that of the secretary of the Duke of Connaught. The Duke's own private secretary, Charles Taylor, replied on 25 May, sending, not only the needed information, but a cheque for £2 towards the cost of publication of Grant's Piobaireachd.

Grant sent his "HRH The Duke of Connaught's Salute" to Clarendon House, St. James shortly after finishing it on 2 June.

One week later Malcolm Murray, the Duke's Equerry, sent this hand-written reply:

"I am desired by HRH The Duke of Connaught to thank you for the Pibroch "The Duke of Connaught's Salute" which you have so kindly sent him and which it gives His Royal Highness much pleasure in accepting.
"The Duke of Connaught hopes to take an early opportunity of having the Pibroch played.
"His Royal Highness considers the illuminated copy in Celtic design exceedingly well done, and it will give him much pleasure to keep it.
Lord Archibald Campbell, brother of

the 9th Duke of Argyll, was next on Grant's list to receive a dedication tune.

Honouring Lord Campbell made sense.

Not only was he a royal, but he was also keenly interested in bagpiping, being the founder of the Inveraray Pipe Band and, like Stewart, a founding member of the Piobaireachd Society.

In order to introduce himself and his illuminated Piobaireachd to Lord Campbell, Grant once again evoked the name of their mutual friend McDougall Gillies.

The new tune reached Inveraray Castle mid-July 1907.

Like Stewart, Campbell was rather finicky about the tune, but not about the music; it was the cover design that he fussed over.

In a 23 July 1907 letter to Grant - actually more of a hastily-written note - Campbell acknowledges receipt of Grant's "composition kindly dedicated to" him, and informs Grant that he will have Miss Elspeth Campbell play it "in due course," since she had just arrived.

He then offers Grant suggestions on how he could improve the artistic design, referring Grant to J&R Glen for "knots and patterns to use rather than thistles."

He concludes by writing: "I draw and paint myself. Designs I always like to be copies of the antique."

A few days later Campbell approved "his" piobaireachd to be included in Grant's forthcoming collection and

paid 10/6d for a bound copy.

Having written Piobaireachd for two distinguished members of the Piobaireachd Society, and wanting the Society's blessing on his project, it was logical for Grant to want to dedicate the entire collection to the organization.

In September 1907 Grant made a formal request to that effect.

On 25th September William Stewart, as honorary secretary, sent the following letter to Grant:

The Piobaireachd Society

Dear Sir,

At the Annual Meeting of the above Society, held last Friday, your request to dedicate your forthcoming publication to the members, was duly submitted, and I was directed to convey to you the approval of the Society.

I have also arranged for the Society to take 8 copies at 2/6 each.

It is of course clearly understood that no liability of any kind attaches to the Society on account of the expense of publication further than the above subscription.

Kindly note that the title of the Society is "The Piobaireachd Society", and that the words "of Scotland" which you have added should be deleted.

In reply to your inquiry, I think a view of Dunvegan Castle would be

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suitable on the front cover, and your publishers would design an appropriate Celtic border to surround it.

"The dedication would be as follows, and would appear on the inside front page,

"Dedicated
 by special permission
 to

The President and Members
 of

The Piobaireachd Society"

'The Royal Collection of Piobaireachd', published at Grant's own expense, was ready for delivery in early May 1908, with the dedication page exactly as Stewart requested.

We do not know who the publisher was or how much Grant paid for the service, nor do we know how many books he had printed.

We do know that Grant had the book covered in two ways: the least expensive way, with the same thickness of paper as the rest of the book, and in a deluxe manner with royal blue leather over board, gilt lettering and edging.

The latter, more expensive way, was used for those volumes primarily intended for the royal subscribers, who paid handsomely for the privilege of ownership.

The list of subscribers, published on the last page of Grant's "slight volume," as he dubbed it, was divided into two

lists: those who were royal and those who were not.

Besides those individuals whose names Piobaireachd appeared in the book, other royal subscribers included The Duke of Fife, the Duke of Hamilton, The Earl of Aberdeen, the Earl of Seafield, Lord Strathcona and Mount Royal, Sir George A. Cooper, Colonel H.S. Home Drummond of Blair Drummond, and Captain W. Home Drummond-Moray of Abercairney.

The 157 names listed in the non-royal list represent individuals from all walks of life and from many locales; from Grant's next-door neighbour to medical doctors, solicitors, and members of the military; home-town friends and acquaintances, family members, clan members, and fellow pipers.

Although some undoubtedly subscribed because they wanted to support the efforts of the young composers, it seems clear that bagpipe aficionados, perhaps also those interested in the Celtic arts in general, were at least curious about the possibility of new Piobaireachd being composed.

A "correspondent" to the *Oban Times*, (actually Angus Campbell,) wrote:

"It has been almost an axiom among pipers of recent years, that the composition of piobaireachd should be treated as a lost art, and that no modern musician should presume to challenge comparison with the great masters of the past.

“One reason for this idea may be the difficulty of avoiding plagiarism, conscious or unconscious, owing to the limited scale of the bagpipe, and the somewhat rigid rules of construction almost invariably followed by masters of piobaireachd. “Mr. Grant is to be congratulated on the courage with which he has broken the conspiracy of silence, and upon having successfully overcome the difficulty above alluded to (23).”

Other reviews, all positive, appeared in *The Northern Scott*, *The People's Journal*, and later issues of *The Oban Times*, by Fionn, William Blair, and others, some detailing Grant's earlier manuscript collections, but all praising his efforts in breaking the silence in Piobaireachd composition.

If there were critics of the first edition of ‘The Royal Collection of Piobaireachd’ they did not publish their opinions. Apparently the wave of acceptance of the young man's ambitious undertaking dissuaded any nay-sayers from coming forward. (24)

What Grant did receive was the continued endorsement of important people who believed the dry spell in Piobaireachd composition had finally been broken.

Emboldened by their encouraging words, Grant was able in April 1911 to publish a second edition of ‘The Royal Collection of Piobaireachd’ containing

fifteen more tunes added to the original six.

He would compose an additional forty-three over the next forty-two years, and every one would be warmly received by its recipient.

Today virtually none of John Grant's published Piobaireachd are considered playable, yet, despite his often-mechanical and awkward style, some are actually quite nice.

John MacDougall Gillies often performed Grant's compositions for his dedicatees when Grant himself was unavailable to do so and letters praising the composer for the music often followed these performances, so it wasn't only the presentation placards and folios that impressed the noble recipients.

Part of the problem in reading his printed music today is that, in a world where the Piobaireachd Society's notational conventions are universally understood, Grant's archaic way of writing (*a la* Angus MacKay) is difficult to decipher.

Be that as it may, perhaps, in our time, when new Piobaireachd composition is often encouraged through competitions devoted to that purpose, and the Piobaireachd Society publishes a *Collection of Ceòl Mór Composed during the Twentieth Century 1930-1980*, we should reconsider some of Grant's tunes as worthy additions to the modern repertoire. (25)

APPENDIX A

Preface to ‘The Highland Society Collection of Ancient Piobaireachd’

In the compilation of this collection of Ancient Piobaireachd, my constant aim has been to come as near as possible to the ideal.

I have been endeavouring for several years to procure the most accurate settings of the tunes from the most reliable sources of information. The whole volume is transcribed in my own handwriting.

The collection comprises some choice tunes:- Chruinnichidhean, Failteachan, Cumhaichean, agus Spaidsearachdan.

The occasion which called forth the Cruinneachadh was a time of war; when the fiery cross was hurried o'er mountain and through glen; the Cruinneachadh roused the martial spirit of the clans, and to its hurried notes every man turned out with unquestioning bravery.

The coming of age of the chief, or his succession to the headship of his tribe, was the theme of the triumphant Faille.

The greatness of the chiefs of old and the yearning hope of the future found expression in those thrilling notes which gladdened the mountain solitudes.

But a more doleful subject was the burden of the Cumha, searching the heart to its inmost core, and tapping the fountain of tears.

For who that has ever been present at a chieftain's funeral where the flowing grass sways mournfully in the western breeze, as a zephyr moan in the green dells, but must realize the pathos of the Cumha for the hero that shall never return.

No more we tread the fancy haunted valley, where through the dark and lonely glen winds the dimpling stream; no more shall we look in the mirror of the radiant pools that reflect the image of the overhanging banks.

He is sleeping beside the sounding surge that laves his narrow bed, for the chief has closed his eyes in darkness, and has quitted the light of the day.

Surely here is a fit theme for the heart rending Cumha.

And as the piper dwells on the times that are gone and on the days of other years, he beholds the halls of ancient splendour but alas, alas, they are desolate.

The magic of young cutie has passed like a flower that fadeth, and the right arm of the warrior lies cold beneath the sod.

These sentiments which crowded on the mind of the minstrel found, as we said, due utterance, in the wail for departed glory, and the joys of the days are gone.

It is well known that the dress, the arms, the music, and the musical instrument of the Highlands have characteristics which are peculiarly their own.

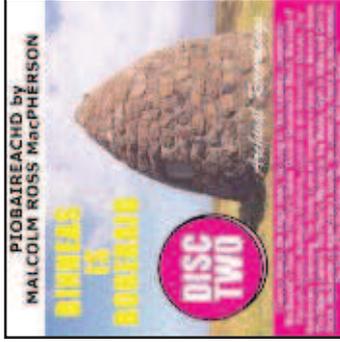
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spirit of the mist in the hills discoursing warlike lays on the great Highland bagpipes.

In the field of carnage, its music inspires the flagging heart; in the halls of festivity it encourages joy; amid scenes of sorrow it is not out of place, thus testifying to its adaptability to the varied emotions of the human heart.

There is no other instrument that possesses to such an extreme degree the power of moving a Highland heart either to gladness or to grief.

The violin indeed can bring sad tears, the harp can arouse soft feelings of melancholy—all these however are on a moderate scale—but for a slogan or a coronach commend me to the bagpipes. In the ear of imagination I hear the last of the great MacCrimmons; I see him gather his plaid around him as he paces the lofty battlements beneath the gathering clouds of night: I hear the moan of the ways the - on the strand below, and the plaintive Lament mingles with the sob of the billows.

Fond visions of the mind, dear to memory, reconstructing the scenes of old!

Alas the great battlements are now moss-grown and grey, and the billows sob alone.

The most celebrated performers on the national instrument where the MacCrimmons, hereditary pipers to the MacLeod of MacLeod, Dunvegan, Skye.

There Oil-thigh or college was at Borerraig, eight miles north of Dunvegan Castle.

They were as well as Masters of the national instrument the greatest composers of their day, and they did not think that their pupils were fit to leave the college until they had completed twelve years tuition, the cost of which was defrayed by their chief.

APPENDIX B

Partial Contents of Grant's 1904 'Highland Society Piobaireachd Collection'

Title of Piobaireachd*	Tune No.
Gram Donald's March (Spaisearachd Dhomhnaill Ghruamaich)	4
Lament for the Duke of Hamilton (Cumha Duic Hamilton)	5
Fairy Flag, The	7
Lord MacDonald's Lament (Cumha Morair Cloinn Dhomhnaill)	9
Catherine's Lament	11
Grout, The (An Gròta)	14
Battle of Waternish, The	16

Dispraise of MacLeod	17
Battle of the Bridge of Perth	18
Abercainry's Lament	19
Little Supper, The (An t-Suipear bheag)	20
Lament for Donald MacDonald Glengarry (Cumha Dhomhnaill an Lagain)	21
End of the Great Bridge, The	24
Blind Pipers Obstinancy, The	26
Lament for the Laird of Anapool (Cumha Fir Anapuill)	27
Lament for the Laird of Anapool (Cumha Fir Anapuill) [(sic) "Lady"?]	28
Gathering of the Clan Chattan, The (Cruinneachadh Chloinn Chatain)	30
Lament for the Castle of Dunnyveg 1647 (Cumha Casteal Dhum-Naiomhaig)	32
Little Finger Tune, The (Port na Ludaig)	35
Finger Lock, The (A' Galas Mheur)	37
Mrs. Smith's Salute (Fáilte Bean a' Ghobha)	39
Children's Lament, The	44
Lament for Sir John Garve McLean (Cumha Iain Ghairbh Mhic Illeathain)	45
Bard's Lament, The	46
Lament for King James's Departure (Suibhal Sheumais)	47
King's Taxes, The (Màl an Rìgh)	48
Beloved Scotland, I Leave You Gloomy	51
Cameron's Gathering, The	53
Duncan Macrae of Kintail's Lament (Cumha Dhonnaichaidh Mhic Iain)	54
Bicker, or Cogie, The	55
Finlay's Lament (Cumha Fhionnlaith)	57
Castle Menzie (Fàille Cloinn Shimdh)	58
Battle of Balladruishaig, The	60
Daughter's Lament, The	61
Mary's Praise (Mìoladh Mairi)	62
Are You Sad	63
Big Spree, The	64
A Flame of Wrath for Squinting Peter	65
Lament for Colin Roy Mackenzie (Cumha Chailean Ruaidh Mhic Coimnich)	66
Grain in Hides and Corn in Sacks (Grain an Seicheannan 's siol am poccanan)	67
Brother's Lament, The	70
Boisdale's Salute	71
Campbell's Gathering, The	73
Battle of Atholl, The	74

* English titles with no Gaelic equivalent are as Grant wrote them in the English

Index.

Gaelic titles are as Grant wrote them in the Gaelic index; the English Index for these is missing and standard translations are provided here for easier reference.

END NOTES

1. See, for example, 2 May 1908, 23 May 1908, 29 April 1911, 18 September 1915.
2. John Grant, *Fo gheas na Pioba 'Under the Spell of the Pipes' and Some reminiscences of a piper's life, with a complete Tutor for the Highland Bagpipe*, privately owned (see note below). A photocopy was anonymously given to the College of Piping Museum sometime about 2002-3. Jeannie Campbell made use of it in her sketch of Grant in her excellent history of the Piobaireachd Society. See Jeannie Campbell, 'The Piobaireachd Society from the Great Schism to World War II,' *Piping Times*, Vol. 55 No. 10, 29-33. For an annotated transcription of the complete autobiography see www.pmjohnggrant.com.
3. William Donaldson, *The Highland Pipe and Highland Society 1750-1950* (Edinburgh: Tuckwell Press Ltd., 2000), 341-346.
4. See, for example, Diana Henderson, "The Piobaireachd Society and the Origins of the Army Class," 1987 Piobaireachd Society Conference Proceedings, Session III; John Grant: Piper's of the Past, *Piping Times*, Vol. 21 No. 8, May, 1969.
5. These documents, referred to hereafter as the "Grant Private Collection" are in the possession of his descendants.
6. Since all letters referred to in this article are in the Grant Private Collection, no quotations will be cited.
7. Grant provided humorous details of his days in the employ at Stewart and McIsaac's in his autobiography (see note 2 above).
8. Grant later compiled an intriguing collection of bagpipe music in a manuscript entitled, "The Family Piper." The volume contains nine sets of MSRs and Piobaireachd which Grant performed as piper to the Lord of Abercainry. The volume also contains detailed information about the day-to-day activities of a family piper. The Boston Museum of Fine Arts obtained the manuscript along with 'A Collection of Ancient Piobaireachd' all in Grant's hand, when they purchased his 1898 Henderson bagpipes in 2004. For more on the latter volume see immediately below.
9. This "Collection" laid dormant in a cupboard in Grant's home until 1942, when, having some time on his hands while he waited for a friend to proof-read his 'The Highland Bagpipe Instructor', he pulled it out and, within a month, added forty-six more tunes. On the inside front cover, along with a dedication

- to his eldest son, Grant wrote: "The tunes in this volume have been copied from an MS volume which has come direct from pupils of the MacCrimmon School." A study of these tunes with the intent of identifying their sources is on-going.
10. Recounted in "Review: The Royal Collection of Piobaireachd," *People's Journal*, 22 May 1908.
11. "The Highland Society of London: List of Members To 30th October 1912," The Objects. Grant Private Collection.
12. Although the actual address is not preserved *per se*, a "Preface" to the extant portion of the Highland Society Collection - an essay Grant returned to on several occasions in his manuscript collections-may be what he shared. It is typical of Grant's highly romantic view of his native land and its music, and characteristic of the writing style that Major General Frank Richardson referred to as "indigestible matter, like currants in what our generation of Servicemen called a 'Naffy cake.'" Bruce Seton and John Grant, *The Pipes of War* (Glasgow: Maclehose, Jackson and Co., 1974), v. I have included the "essay" in Appendix A as a matter of interest.
13. The booklet in which these are contained appears to be a black and white draft for the non-musical portions of the collection. The first two pages of Indices provide the names of the same tunes, the first page in Gaelic and the second page in English. The English list is alphabetized. The third page continues the list in Gaelic but all subsequent pages are lost. From the gaps in the tune numbering, at least twenty-eight tunes are unaccounted for. The John Grant Collection, Harvard University, Houghton Library (hereafter HL), fMs Mus. 120.6 Box 3.
14. A better term would probably be "pre-existing," but "ancient" will suffice here to differentiate between music that already existed and Grant's own compositions.
15. Actually Grant composed light music in addition to piobaireachd, but of the sixteen marches, strathspeys and reels he included in his inventory, only one four-parted 2/4 March, "Their Most Excellent Majesties The King and Queen of Norway's Welcome to the Castle of Windsor" was written this early (10 November 1906). The rest were composed infrequently beginning in 1913. My article on the majority of his light music entitled "John Grant and the 'Windsor Marches'" will appear in the July 2011 edition of *The Voice*.
16. In the 8 January 1953 *Weekly Scotsman*, Archibald Campbell of Kilberry published an article entitled "Nobody Can Compose Piobaireachd Nowadays." Grant rebutted with his own article one week later entitled "Piobaireachd CAN be Written Now!"

17. Grant's reason for preparing bagpipe compositions in this way was explained in a later newspaper review: "Mr. Grant has . . . developed a way of writing clan piobaireachd in a form suitable for framing. The intention is that those interested in their own particular clan tunes may have them hung on walls, instead of secreting them away in some music folios, or concealing them in a cupboard. In this development our author has had single satisfaction. Tunes in this way have been accepted by the King, the Prince of Wales, the Duke of Connaught, and the King and Queen of Norway. Mr. Grant is the proud possessor of five royal letters of acceptance and thanks. Apart from musical worth these productions have the merit of rare calligraphy. Done in the ancient Celtic fashion, they bear heraldic designs and shields for mottos, family badges, and armorial bearings." *Oban Times*, 9 April 1909.
18. See a photograph of this placard at <http://nms.scran.ac.uk/database/record.php?usi=000-000-579-830-C&>
19. The letter of acceptance was written from Marlborough house on 26 January 1907.
20. John Grant. 'Royal Piobaireachd', HL Mf Mus 120.6, Box 3, fol. 39, p. 29.
21. Among Grant's letters are replies from Sir George Alexander Cooper, The Duke of Hamilton, The Earl of Seafield, and Lord Strathcona and Mount Royal- all happy to be added to the list of subscribers. Sir George Cooper was a wealthy landowner who, in 1902, donated a house and land in Elgin to the town for what became Cooper Park. He was made Baronet of Hursley, County of Southampton on 26 July 1905, and lived with his wealthy American wife on Grosvenor Place in London next door to Lord Strathcona. Lord Alfred-Douglas Hamilton, 13th Duke of Hamilton, kept a family piper at Hamilton Palace at South Lanarkshire, and had a strong interest in the music of the bagpipes. James Ogilvie-Grant, 11th Earl of Seafield was John Grant's exact contemporary and would soon be the Clan Chief. Donald Alexander Smith, Lord Strathcona and Mount Royal, was the grandson of a Scottish Grant. He was the famed co-founder of the Dominion of Canada, and in 1885 he drove in the last spike that opened the Canadian Transcontinental Railroad. He was also a member of the Highland Society of London. In Strathcona's reply letter to John Grant he wrote that it was "gratifying" to him "to know that in furtherance of the revival of the ancient art of pibroch-playing" Grant was publishing his six new tunes. He subscribed for three copies.
22. Grant owed a debt of gratitude to the Highland Society of London and its members for the praise they lavished on his work in 1904. In future years Grant would often favour members with his dedicated compositions, so it is possible

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Grant was doing so at this time. The Duke of Connaught was Vice-President and Lord Archibald Campbell was a past-President of the Society (1893).
23. *Oban Times*, 23 May 1908.

24. However, when the 2nd Edition of 'The Royal Collection of Piobaireachd' emerged in 1911, a Mr. MacKay Tait skewered Grant in the press. In a 11 March letter, Major John MacRae-Gilstrap consoled John: "I don't think you need feel hurt at the criticisms of Mr. MacKay Tait, because after all the value, or otherwise, of an opinion depends entirely upon the fact, as to whether a person giving his views knows anything at all about the subject which he ventures to criticize!" In 1946, looking back on his life, Grant reflected on those critics who apparently did voice their opinions over the years following the publication of his two editions. He was evidently undaunted by them. He wrote: "Very few men who fostered an art of either painting or music can rid themselves from criticism whatever its form may be. A critic is defined by men of ability as 'one who is skilled in estimating the quality of literary or artistic work.' One need not, however, hesitate to lay their work before those critics who are qualified to judge with all reasonable fairness, but there is the critic who can neither compose music, play it or find anything of value coming from people who can create new compositions, without attempting to cast 'cold water' upon their efforts, or being prejudiced against the composer personally. Be that as it may, there is no prejudice or difficulty of any kind, which can bar the way that leads the genuine lover of an Art like piobaireachd to revive its composition, that it may live again after being so long dead."

The Royal Collection of Bagpipe Music," HL., fMs Mus. 120.6, Box 3, fol. 39, l.
25. For an example of one of Grant's better tunes, hear "Lament for the Earl of Dunmore" on the web. <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6NAkZPNtYjc> or www.pmjohngant.com