

*She went north, across the border,
with her husband, furniture, dog
and tractor - in that order.*

*First she planted, then learned
to nurse where lights are dimmed
but never out at night, though often
souls leave bodies in the dark.*

*She nursed and let the souls go free
when she could do no more.*

*For this few thanks: medical men
on their visits knew her competence
and her place; higher nursing ranks
cared more about themselves; and managers
could manage without her at a pinch.*

*They pinched until, tired of it all,
she let go and left tomorrow
to nurse itself.*

Col Grant 10/85

Col Grant enjoyed a career as an academic in health service management at the University of New South Wales and is an active member of the North Shore, Sydney, Australia Poetry Group. Col was born in Cardiff and had his early education in Cheltenham, United Kingdom.

EDITOR'S NOTE:

Col is well known and respected by many Australian health managers fortunate enough to have had the opportunity to know him in the early days of the foundation Bachelor and Masters of Health Administration programs at the University of New South Wales, where many of us benefited through our interactions with Col and his colleagues at the start of our journey of what turned out to be lifelong learning. That journey was linked to lifelong friendships and active engagement in what is now known as the ACHSM, the originators of this Journal.

This poem is also unique as the first published in the APJHM. It resonates with the article by Briggs and Isouard in this issue that argues that the language of health reform is a powerful

lens through which the role of health management might be critically appraised and its teaching modified and made more relevant to teaching and learning health management. An understanding of history or literature is fundamental to the theories that underpin health management.

This poem will have different meaning and nuances for individual readers. It may provoke a response but equally it might invite the reader to submit a scholarly article around the themes it presents.

Dr DS Briggs

Editor