

SCOTTISH GAELIC WOMEN'S POETRY

UP TO 1750

2 VOLUMES

VOLUME 1.

Anne Catherine Frater M.A. (Hons).

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SUMMARY

The intention of this work was not to provide a detailed study of all the poems composed by women up to 1750, but rather to find the threads which linked them to each other. These threads are mainly thematic, although others, such as the songs connected with a story, cross a thematic range while sharing a common link. The spectrum of topics dealt with in the women's poetry is broad, and the aim was to show the similarities and differences in the treatment of recurring themes by the composers.

Songs were collected on the basis of ascription to a woman author, clues in the text which indicated a woman author, and, in some cases, nothing in the text which excluded possible female authorship. The songs were collected from printed and manuscript sources, and one version of each has been included in the appendix. The ascription of some of the songs in printed collections seems doubtful, and in such cases the song has been included in the anonymous section of the appendix. Likewise, the 'anonymous' songs for which an author can be identified with a fair degree of certainty have been included under the name of the relevant poetess. The dating of some of the songs is problematic, and textual evidence, where it is present, has been relied on in order to place the anonymous poems in as near to chronological order as possible in the appendix. The compositions of named poetesses are placed in alphabetical order, by surname; those for whom a name, but no surname, is known being placed between these and the anonymous songs.

The basic criterion for discussion of each song thus collected was that its theme was not confined to one song or one author. A song from the Thirty Years War, although included in the appendix, is not discussed, as the conflicts dealt with by the other poetesses of the period are those which directly concerned themselves and their clans. Likewise, the religious poems of Sileas na Ceapaich have been omitted, as she is the only poetess of the time who produced such compositions.

Comment on the metrical structures used takes a wider viewpoint rather than overly concentrating on specific songs. As

individual metrical analysis of such a large number of songs was not possible in the context of this study, the aim was to identify the main metres used, and the periods in which each was most popular, along with a discussion of the origins and forms of these metres.

Where there is a doubt over the ascription of a song to a particular author, as much evidence as possible was collected and collated in order to verify or discount the ascription. Likewise, where there is conflicting information as to the identity or background of a poetess, the arguments have been studied in order to come to what is hopefully a satisfactory conclusion, based on the available information.

While collecting the songs, it became evident that a large number of them had a story attached which either explained the song or the circumstances which brought about its composition. A number of these have been grouped together in one chapter, although others were more relevant in the chapters dealing with specific topics. One must admit that some of the stories are not always directly related to the composition of the song, but where these have been included it is in order to illustrate a particular aspect of the subject being dealt with, or the character of the person addressed.

Comparison of the women's songs with those of their contemporary male counterparts would perhaps have been desirable, but was not possible, given the time period and the number of topics dealt with. In any case, the aim of this study was not to discover an identifying trait which distinguished female poetry from that of men, but to discuss the works of the women poets in relation to their social situation, their lives, and each other.

PREFACE

The purpose of this work was to study the Scottish Gaelic poetry composed by women in the period up to 1750, discussing the lives of the authors, the styles they used, and the main themes dealt with in their songs. For this to be done, it was necessary to collect as many songs, by as many different authors, as possible, from both published and manuscript sources before it was possible to identify the main themes which were addressed therein. The large number of sources thus consulted, and the problems of reference leading from the fact that many of them are no longer in print, led to the compilation of the appendix to this work, which includes at least one version of each song discussed. ||

Before discussing the topics dealt with in the songs, I felt it necessary to mention the main metrical structures used by the poetesses, and the periods during which each was most popular. It was not possible to go into metrical detail about each individual song, therefore my approach was to give examples, where appropriate, of the metrical forms used, alongside evidence for the origins and development of these metres. The aim was to identify trends in verse form at particular times, although it must be noted that this identification could only be made using the songs which have survived to the present day, and therefore cannot claim to be precise.

Once the forms used by the poetesses had been identified, the next step was to identify and present the women themselves, where this was possible. With the vast majority, we know little apart from their name, if even that, but those of whom a little is known seemed also to be the subjects of controversy regarding their identity, affiliation, and even existence. By the very nature of the debate surrounding these poetesses, my conclusions will doubtlessly be disagreed with, at least questioned, by some, but I have aimed to base my conclusions on the evidence, both textual and historical, with which I was presented.

While one could not regard as a theme the fact that a song has a connected story, there were such a number of compositions which fell into this category that they could not be ignored. For this reason, one chapter was devoted to discussion of these songs, and an attempt, where necessary, to discover if the link between the two was

genuine or invented. Historical accounts were consulted alongside traditional reports in order to present the full picture.

The majority of the work, however, is concerned with the recurring themes in the poetry of the women of this period: love; death; war; motherhood, etc. Many of the songs combine more than one theme, and are dealt with in more than one chapter, although, where possible, I have attempted to deal only with the relevant part of such songs in each. To understand the background for the songs of conflict, it was necessary to consult historical works in order to verify or disprove certain details, and to try to understand the political atmosphere in which the songs were composed. With others, particularly some anonymous songs, genealogical evidence was required in order to identify the person to whom the song was addressed, and from there to deduce the circumstances which may have caused the poetess to compose. I make no apology for the fact that some songs are studied in more detail than others: my aim was to discover the factual and highlight the original, rather than to pay close attention to songs which were noteworthy for their subject rather than their often formulaic content. This is not to say that songs with a largely formulaic construction were ignored or dismissed, but that they had to have something of interest in addition to the stock phrases and imagery in order to be discussed in any great detail. If only for their rarity, the songs by female authors addressed to women were looked at in an attempt to discern any differences between these songs and the large number addressed to men, especially in the songs of praise.

I undertook this study in an attempt to discover the motivation for the women poets of this period to compose, sometimes in defiance of the social conventions of their time. Because of the number of poems and authors involved, I soon realised that it would be impossible to present anything other than a broad picture, with specific examples, of the events and circumstances which led these women to express themselves in poetry and song. I am aware that many of the topics and poetesses dealt with are worthy of further study; although this was not possible in the context of this work, it may serve as a starting point for another. In collecting and discussing the songs of women poets as a whole, I hope that I have contributed to an awareness of the relevance of the female voice, even in the male-dominated society in the period up to 1750.

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I should like to thank Mr. Kenneth D. MacDonald for his assistance and advice while supervising my work on this thesis, especially his suggestions as to where to find the information I needed, and for taking the time to help me decipher a particularly problematic piece of transliteration.

I also appreciated the encouragement of Professor Donald MacAulay, and his help with transliteration. Likewise, many thanks to Meg Bateman for providing me with her transliteration of *Éistibh a luchd an tighe-se*, thereby saving me the struggle.

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Finally, thank you to Marie MacAulay, for material help, and to my parents, on whose support and encouragement I could always rely, and to whom I dedicate this work.

Declaration:

The research and writing for this thesis were undertaken entirely by the author. As far as I am aware, all sources and quotations have been fully acknowledged. No part of this thesis has previously been published.

1. FROM SYLLABLES TO STROPHES

Of the poems composed by women in the period up to 1750 which have survived down to the present day, the vast majority can be dated to the 17th century. This flourishing should not come as a surprise, when one considers the great upheavals which were taking place in the Highlands, and throughout Scotland, at that time. The Montrose wars, combined with the political intriguing of the Campbells in order to expand their territories, and various other inter-clan disputes, provided plenty of opportunity and occasion for bards to compose. It was also at this time that the power of the clan system began to decline, and, with that, the order of the old Gaelic society. Without the patronage of the clan chiefs, who were becoming increasingly anglicised by their education away from their native lands, the bardic orders could not continue as they had been, and this left a gap which was filled by the vernacular bards. These bards were often members of the higher echelons of Gaelic society, possessing a basic knowledge of the bardic metres and styles, but the difference was that they composed poetry to be sung, rather than recited, and they used the vernacular rather than the classical Gaelic as their medium of expression. Because they had not undergone the rigorous training, of studies lasting seven years or more, required to become a bard in the classical tradition, and thus were not educated in the intricacies and rules of the bardic metres, they used simplified versions of the bardic metres, although the structure of their songs was based on the classical examples with which they were familiar. The greatest innovation of the 'new' vernacular poetry was that it was based on rhythm and stress counts, rather than the syllabic counts of bardic verse. This progression is easily enough understood: as the new poetry was composed to be sung, the rhythm and stress rather than the number of syllables in each line, had to be regular. We should be grateful that this is the way in which things changed, for we would not have even the small proportion of songs from this early period which have survived to the present day if they had not lived on in the mouths of the people.

There are only four extant examples of poems in the classical bardic style composed by, or at least attributed to, women. Three of

these are ascribed to Iseabail Ní Mheic Cailéin¹, and are recorded in the Book of the Dean of Lismore. Of these three, two are courtly love-poems in the style of the *dánta grádha*, while the third is a bawdy composition about the household priest. The second 'bardic' authoress is Aithbhreac inghen Coirceadail, widow of the warden of Castle Sween in Knapdale, who composed an elegy on the death of her husband². This poem is composed in *rannaigheacht mhór* metre, observing the bardic conventions of syllabic count, and also employing the closing device or *dúnadh*, repeating the first line of the poem in the final line. As is to be expected from authors not of the bardic school, but nevertheless thoroughly familiar with the classical styles and metres, both of these women were members of the Gaelic aristocracy, and would both have heard enough classical bardic verse to be aware of the forms and conventions which were required in its composition. Of the two authors, the verse of Aithbhreac inghen Coirceadail is the earlier in date, while in the work of Iseabail Ní Mheic Cailéin we see not only an awareness, but a mastery, of the contemporary vogue for *dánta grádha*: a fashion which probably reached Scotland via Ireland. The courtly love poem is a relative rarity in Scottish Gaelic literature as a whole; in fact, Niall Mór MacMhuirich³ is the only male author of such a poem in Scottish Gaelic, while the other two are those composed by Iseabail Ní Mheic Cailéin. We can therefore say that, in Scottish Gaelic terms, the work of this particular poetess was very much innovatory.

It is interesting to note the different metrical structures employed by the vernacular female bards in the period up to 1750. Of the compositions which can with a fair degree of certainty be ascribed to women, the waulking song or *òran luaidh* type is by far the most common. However, not all of these paragraph-rhyming compositions were composed as waulking-songs, although their structure meant that they could be adapted for use as such, usually by increasing the tempo. *Cumha Seathan Mac Rìgh Eirinn*⁴, can be safely assumed to be an adaptation, as it is highly unlikely that a lament such as this was originally sung to the speed of a waulking song. However, without the adaptation, the song might not have survived at all, certainly not such a full version.

It should not be considered unusual that the majority of the songs sung as *òrain luaidh* are composed by women, as it was the women who used and preserved them – men traditionally being barred

from the waulking of the cloth. The songs mostly take the form of love-songs, praise-songs, or laments, and frequently a mixture of all three, as the voices of different singers and composers are heard. Although not all of those which have been collected have a vocable refrain, this is more likely to be due to an omission on the part of the collector rather than the singer or composer, as the form of all the *òrain luaidh* is so similar that one is led to think that they must all have had some kind of vocable refrain originally.

There are two distinct types of paragraph verse: songs where the final stressed syllable rhymes in each line of the paragraph, and those where the rhyme is on every alternate line. In some cases it is difficult to make a distinction between a paragraph-song of the second type, and a song composed in couplets. Although the use of the bardic convention of *aichill* could be used as an argument for the latter, in most cases the distinction seemingly lies in the preference of the song collector as to which way the song should be written. Perhaps those songs which have been included as examples of the couplet form should properly be classed as paragraph verse, or, conversely, paragraph verse of the second type should be classed as couplets. The question is a difficult one to resolve.

It was in the seventeenth century that strophic metre began to be more widely used, although it must have been 'invented' quite some time before then, and became even more popular in the eighteenth century. The first possible example of the use of this metre by a female author is *Cumha Mhic an Tòisich*,⁵ composed around 1526, although in this case the use of repetition seems to point to a development of the couplet form of paragraph verse, rather than a genuine strophic structure.

Iain Lom and Màiri nighean Alasdair Ruaidh are the two best-known exponents of the strophic metres, but there are much earlier examples, including *Cumha do dh' Iain Ruadh Mac Dhùghaill* ⁶ by Beasa nighean Eòghain mhic Fhearchair, which was composed around the year 1610. This song is unarguably in what is regarded as a strophic metre, the origins of which are more probably to be found in an adaptation of a bardic metre than in the development of a vernacular one:

Besides the ordinary four-line *rann*, the old poetry has another kind of metrical structure, which we shall call strophic. In it we have a series of similarly constructed

lines (or "phrases") ended off by a shorter line of different structure. This forms a half-strophe; the other half is constructed to correspond. In certain cases the similarly constructed lines, or phrases, have end-rhyme, and the last word of the first part rhymes with the last word of the second part. Strophic measures are well represented in the modern poetry of Ireland and Scotland. They lent themselves readily to rhythm, and were probably the first of the syllabic metres to be adapted to stress. With us, these measures are used chiefly in labour-songs, especially *iorram*, boat-chant, and in *cumha*, laments...In several cases...the connection between these metres and the old syllabic verse is clear; in others it is not traceable directly, partly, no doubt, because the old strophic measures have not been fully recorded, partly because the modern measures, once they came into vogue, developed independently...

In the old strophic metre called *Ochtfhoclach mór* the longer lines end on disyllables: $(3 \times 6^2) + 5^1$. The following example is from the Book of Leinster, compiled c. 1150, but the verse is older:

Cid Domnall na Carpre
na Niaman án airgne,
cid iat lucht na bairddne
rot fiat-su cen acht.
Fonaisc latt ar Morand,
mad aill leat a chomall,
naisc Carpre mín Manand
is naisc ar da mac.

Here the long lines contain seven syllables. In the first three phrases the syllables that bear the first stress rhyme with each other, as do also the syllables that bear the second stress. There is aichill between the third and fourth phrases...

Ochtfhoclach mór corranach is a sixteen-line variety of the above...Here the final stressed syllables of the first four strophes rhyme together, the four strophes thus forming a rann, each of which is a strophe.

Ochtfhoclach beag is of the form $(3 \times 5^2) + 4^1$. It also has a *corranach* form of sixteen lines or four strophes...The *rann* consists of four strophes, each the equivalent of a line, the

final words of the strophes rhyming in each *rann*.⁷

Derick Thomson agrees with this theory on the origins of the strophic metre, and adds:

I would regard the Gaelic 3-line strophic stanza as essentially a half-portion of an adapted *ochtfhoclach* stanza. This becomes the new basic unit, and is subject to minor modification as to syllabic length or line-finals, while the end-rhyme, originally between lines 4 and 8 of the *ochtfhoclach* is extended to the entire poem...

It is no doubt significant that when it first comes to our attention this form is practised by representatives of the literate classes (An Cléireach Beag and MacCulloch of Park). And it continues to be used by poets who have an established position in Gaelic society, though they are not professional poets: Iain Lom, Eachann Bacach and Iain Dubh Mac Iain 'ic Ailein are good examples, and Mary MacLeod and Mairearad Nighean Lachlainn must be allowed to fit into the same or a similar niche. If, as we suspect, several such poets were non-literate, it may be that it is to them we owe the main adaptations, and the flexible use, of these strophic metres.⁸

From this we can see that the bards who used a strophic construction had not invented a new metre, but merely adapted one which was already in existence. When we understand that the very sounds of the spoken language were changing at the same time as the social order was in a state of transition, it is not surprising to discover that the forms of the songs had changed to accommodate this.

Throughout the seventeenth century and the beginning of the eighteenth, the number of songs composed by women using strophic metre is on an upward curve, and when we look at the subjects on which these songs were made, the majority are either work-songs or laments, although praise poems and love songs are also composed in this metre. It was a particular favourite of Màiri nighean Alasdair Ruaidh, most of whose songs, in subject matter if not in title, fall into the categories of praise or lament; and it was also frequently used by Mairearad nighean Lachlainn, who composed on similar themes. As Derick Thomson points out, both of these poetesses

belonged to the higher echelons of Gaelic society, and although unlettered, were certainly not illiterate. They would have been familiar with bardic verse, and with its adaptations, so it is only natural that they should use the new metre, while mainly dealing with the themes which were traditionally the province of the professional bards, i.e. *moladh* and *cumha*.

The quatrain form of song structure, while not as prominent as strophic, paragraph, or eight-line stanzas, is nonetheless an increasingly popular form during the period we are dealing with, and one which has its beginnings very early on in the songs of women. There are two examples dating from the latter half of the sixteenth century, one of which can be dated with reasonable certainty to 1570. This song, *Cumha Ghriogair Mhic Ghriogair*⁹, uses the quatrain form which is followed by a refrain made up of a combination of vocables and words. This song almost falls into the ballad tradition, as it tells a story, but it cannot be truly placed in that category as it is also a sincere expression of personal sorrow, lacking the detached narration of events found in the true ballad form. The quatrain form is used masterfully in this song, with *aichill* in each couplet and *abcb* rhyme in each stanza. A song dating from the same period¹⁰, and possibly composed by the same woman, also uses the quatrain format. As the author of *Griogal Cridhe* was of the higher echelons of Gaelic society, it is possible that her use of the quatrain is an adaptation of the bardic *rannaigheacht mhór* metre, rather than a development of a truly vernacular tradition. The quatrain format in general contains many features of the *rannaigheacht mhór* and *rannaigheacht bheag* classical metres; although stress is the regulator of line length, rather than syllabic count, the rhyme-scheme and the use of *aichill* are very much in the bardic tradition. For example:

Moch madainn air latha Lùnasd'
Bha mi sùgradh mar ri m' ghràdh
Ach mu 'n d' thàinig meadhon latha
Bha mo chridhe air a chràdh.¹¹

Here we see *aichill* between *Lùnasd'* in line 1 and *sùgradh* in line 2; as well as between *meadhon* in line 3 and *chridhe* in line 4. However, in this song, the rhyme scheme is not maintained in the chorus, which is a combination of vocables and words. Here, lines 1

and 3 are composed of identical vocables, whereas lines 2 and 4 are made up of words, with the same end-rhyme in each: *laoigh* (l.2) rhyming with *caoidh* (l.4).

The majority of the songs by women in quatrain form were composed in the seventeenth century, while the main exponent of this type of verse after 1700 is Sileas Nì Mhic Raghnaill, who composed ten songs, mainly hymns, using quatrains. Many of the songs of this type have a chorus to be sung after each stanza, several of which are composed of words, rather than vocables, which is a fairly new development. It should be noted that the words-only type of chorus comes into use around 1650, whereas the vocable chorus was present much earlier. We can also assume with reasonable safety, given that the early collectors of Gaelic song placed little or no importance on recording vocable refrains, concentrating only on the verses, that those songs for which no chorus is given would, in the main, have originally been accompanied by a vocable refrain.

The chorus of vocables in some early examples perhaps indicates that the quatrain form was in some cases a development of the paragraph-rhyme used in the waulking songs. It can also be seen to have followed on from the songs composed of couplets, which are usually sung as quatrains where the second couplet of one stanza is used to form the first couplet of the next, and only the very first and the final couplets are not repeated at all. This form of verse is directly descended from paragraph songs, forming what James Ross classed as 'Type II waulking songs'¹², i.e. with the rhyme scheme maintained on every second line rather than on each individual line, so that the song is composed of a series of couplets with the rhyme-scheme maintained on the final stressed syllable of each couplet. These couplets also contain *aichill* between the last stressed syllable of the first line and a stressed syllable in the middle of the second. An example of this is to be found in the song to MacNaughton of Dunderawe¹³: the rhyme on each alternate line remains constant throughout the poem, although each stanza stands on its own as a quatrain, and seems to have been sung in that form.

The eight-line stanza, usually with end-rhyme on the evenly-numbered lines, and *aichill* in each couplet, becomes increasingly common in the womens' poetry of the period between 1650 and 1750. Although a number of these songs take the form of a lament or a song of praise, a large proportion deal with political subjects, and

comment on the changes taking place in the Gaelic-speaking world at that time. Sileas nì Mhic Raghnaill, or Sileas na Ceapaich, was a notable exponent of this metrical structure. She not only used it for songs of praise and laments, but also for her songs of social comment, such as *An Aghaidh na h-Obair Nodha*¹⁴ and *Comhairle air na Nigheanan Oga*¹⁵. Sileas also made good use of strophic metre and of quatrains, as well as being the only female poet of her time, so far as I have been able to establish, to use the Limerick metre for some of her songs.

Of the songs composed by women concerning the Jacobite risings of the eighteenth century, the majority use the eight-line stanza, following the trend which made this the most popular song structure of the first half of the eighteenth century. The first use of the form by a bardess is possibly much earlier, in the lament composed by Màiri nighean Aonghais for Sir Donald of Clanranald.¹⁶ The poem has been tentatively dated around 1618, and, as with the earliest extant examples of strophic metre, the poetess here shows a surety of touch which points to a much earlier period for the creation and adoption of this metre by the vernacular poets. It possibly arose as a development of the quatrain, allowing more information to be included in each stanza, while following the basic rhyme-scheme found in four-line verse. Like some quatrains, however, there are examples of eight-line verse which seem to have developed from the vernacular tradition of paragraph songs. Examples, such as Mairearad Nì Lachlainn's *Mo cheist an Leathanach mòdhar*,¹⁷ maintain the rhyme on the final stressed syllable of each line of the stanza, without the use of *aichill*, and often with the same rhyme used over several stanzas. This could be classed as regular paragraph verse, with each paragraph eight, or a multiple of eight, lines long.

The eight-line stanza was a favourite of the MacLean poetess, Catrìona nighean Eòghain Mhic Lachlainn. Of the four surviving songs ascribed to her with some certainty, three use this particular metre, with the first of these¹⁸ dating from around 1675. The popularity of the eight-line stanza is not difficult to explain. Unlike strophic metre and paragraph songs, the end-rhyme did not have to be constant throughout the poem, or even in every line, as long as it was maintained in the alternate lines of each individual verse. Secondly, the use of *aichill* in each couplet provided the singer with a useful mnemonic device, which aided both the retention and the

transmission of the songs. Songs composed in this way appear from the turn of the seventeenth century, and we can see a natural progression in vernacular verse from single line rhyme schemes to couplets, from there to quatrains, and finally to eight-line stanzas. At the same time, the breakdown of the strict bardic metres into more flexible and accessible forms allowed echoes of classical structures to be heard in vernacular verse. Thus, the adaptation of bardic verse forms, along with the extension and embellishment of existing vernacular structures, led to the creation of a rhythmical, flowing, but very structured type of verse; the imagination and artistry of the vernacular tradition married to the form and convention of bardic verse created a vigorous hybrid with lasting appeal.

Notes:

1. Appendix; pp. 353-54.
2. Appendix; p. 520.
3. T. Ó Rathile, *Dánta Grádha*, Cork 1976; p. 51.
4. Appendix; p. 565.
5. Appendix; p. 560.
6. Appendix; p. 375.
7. W.J. Watson, *Bárdachd Ghàidhlig*, Stirling 1959; pp. xlv-l.
8. D. Ellis Evans, J.G. Griffith & E.M. Jope (ed.), *Proceedings of the Seventh International Congress in Celtic Studies*, Oxford 1986; pp. 125-26.
9. Appendix; p. 359.
10. Appendix; p. 358.
11. ref. 9.
12. *Éigse*, No. 7; p. 231.
13. Appendix; p. 362.
14. Appendix; p. 412.
15. Appendix; p. 409.
16. Appendix; p. 377.
17. Appendix; p. 447.
18. Appendix; p. 425.

2. A QUESTION OF ASCRIPTION

One of the most important questions thrown up by the study of a literature which has been preserved mainly in the oral tradition is that of ascription. The identities of many of the female authors have been matters of doubt at various times, and I will now attempt to deal with some of these.

The ascription of the three poems, *Atá Fleasgach ar mo thí*, *Is Mairg Dá nGalar an Grádh* and *Éisdibh a Luchd an Tighe-se*¹ to Iseabail Ní Mheic Cailéin is called into question on two counts. The first cause for doubt over these ascriptions is the usage of the style Ní Mheic Cailéin which would normally indicate that the poetess was a daughter of Mac Caillein, the Earl of Argyll. Isabel, Lady Cassels, daughter of Archibald, Earl of Argyll and Chancellor of Scotland, who fell at Flodden in 1513 "was a writer of Gaelic poetry"². This would seem to point to Lady Cassels being the author of the poems in question, were it not for the fact that they seem to date from an earlier period. D.S. Thomson in his reference to Iseabail Ní Mheic Caillein is equivocal about her identity, describing her as "A poetic member (or members) of the household of the Earl of Argyll (the form indicates a daughter, but one poem is ascribed to 'Contissa Ergadien Issobell'"³. W.J. Watson attempts to clear up this confusion in the appendix to his edition of the Scottish verse in the Book of the Dean of Lismore:

As regards the identity of the poetess, the style "Ní Mheic Cailéin" is proper to the daughter of the Earl of Argyll, and two such bore the name Isabel: the daughter of the first earl, Colin, and of his wife Isabel Stewart; and the daughter of the second earl, Archibald, and of his wife Elizabeth Stewart. Probably, however, it is to the wife of the first earl that we should attribute all three poems...If this is correct, "Ní Mheic Cailéin" must be, as it were, the feminine equivalent of Mac Cailéin, denoting his wife, a not uncommon usage. In MS. A of "The Genealogie of the Campbells"...it is recorded that Sir Colin of Glen Orchy, husband of Margaret Stewart, eldest daughter of the then Lord of Lorn, and tutor of the infant Earl Colin, procured to Earl Colin for his lady Isobella Stewart

his own sister-in-law. Here MS. B gives Isobell as the name of Glen Orchy's wife; "the daughter who married Argyll is there called Margaret and also Marvale na-ridaghri (?) 'for her inclination to Rhyming'"...MS. A is right, but it seems likely that the nickname given in B may have been in fact applied to this Isabel.⁴

This conclusion is backed up by Calum Mac Phàrlain's comments in *Guth na Bliadhna*, where he says of Iseabail Ní Mheic Cailéin:

Tha e air a ràdh gu 'm b' ise Iseabail Stiùbhaird an nighean a bu shine a bha aig Iain Triath Lathurna, agus gu 'm bu bhean-phòste i aig Cailean Caimbeul a bha 'na Iarla air Earra-ghaidheal eadar na bliadhnachan 1457 agus 1493.⁵

The identity of Iseabail Ní Mheic Cailéin is thus resolved, albeit tentatively, the dating of the poems recorded by the Dean of Lismore pointing to their author being Isabel Stewart, wife of Colin, Earl of Argyll, rather than his daughter or his grand-daughter.

However, the identity of the poetic Isabel is not the only cause for doubt regarding the ascription given to these three poems. Some scholars have questioned the authorship of the poems, suggesting that they were not the compositions of Iseabail Ní Mheic Cailéin, but of another member of the household of the Earl of Argyll. Various reasons have been given as to why Iseabail may *not* have been the author of the poems. Firstly, with the two courtly love-poems, both either about or addressed to a secret lover, it is difficult to believe that a woman holding such a high position in society would risk offending her husband by letting it be known that she had composed such verse. However, it is not necessary to assume that the poems were anything more than what Meg Bateman calls *jeux d'esprit*,⁶ or poetic exercises, especially when one takes into consideration the subject and tone of the third poem which is ascribed to her. Also, if she was not, indeed, the author of these poems, one has to ask why they have been ascribed to her from such an early source. If, because of their content, she had denied authorship, that would be easily understood, but it would seem strange that she should claim authorship of the poems of another, however fashionable they may have been, when their subject matter might be expected to cause

friction between herself and her husband. The manuscripts discussed by W.J. Watson show that the wife of the first Earl of Argyll was given to composing poetry, and so, for the purposes of my discussion, I will note the doubts while accepting the three poems so ascribed as the works of Iseabail Ní Mheic Cailéin, or Isabella Stewart.

Another important poetess whose true identity has been called into question is the seventeenth century MacLeod bardess, Màiri Nighean Alasdair Ruaidh. Some traditions record her name as Fionnghal, with Màiri being the name of the woman who accompanied her on her travels, putting tunes to, and singing, the songs which Fionnghal composed. However, it is possible that the confusion arises from the patronymic *Nighean Alasdair Ruaidh*, and not from the singing companion, even if she did exist. Fionnghal Nighean Alasdair Ruaidh was a poetess from the north of Skye, whereas Màiri Nighean Alasdair Ruaidh was from Harris, although she may have spent some of her life at Dunvegan. It is not improbable that there were two red-haired Alasdairs living at roughly the same time on different islands, both of whom had daughters who composed songs, thus the doubt over the name of Màiri Nighean Alasdair Ruaidh can be dispelled quite convincingly.

The life of Màiri Nighean Alasdair Ruaidh, and where she spent most of it, is in dispute amongst scholars of Gaelic literature. Harris is generally accepted as her birthplace, and also the place where she is buried, but the island on which she spent her adult years is in doubt. As Alasdair Mac Neacail puts it:

Is aithne do na h-uile gum bheil dà àit ag agairt còrach air dùthchas Màiri Nì'n Alasdair Ruaidh - Na Hearadh agus an t-Eilean Sgiathanach, agus luchd-àiteachaidh nan ionadan sin cho muinghineach 'nam barail fa leth agus gun dùisg e ar n-uair a leithid de spéis a bhith 'g a thaisbeanadh ann am fìor bhàrdachd. Chan eil eileanaich eile ann as còrdte r' a chèile na na Hearaich agus na Sgiathanaich, agus chan iongnadh sin, agus an dlùth dhaimh a bha eatorra le bhith fad iomadh linn mar luchd-leanmhuin do 'n cheann-feadhna - Mac Leòid na Hearadh. Is e an t-aon nì a chuireadh eatorra, agartas le taobh seach taobh a thogail air dùthchas Màiri Nì'n Alasdair Ruaidh.

Anns an t-Eilean Sgiathanach, tha i a ghnàth air a sloinneadh air àit ris an abrar an Draighneach, baile-fearainn

air taobh siar an eilein. Air fad agus leud na Hearadh theirear leis gach aon gum b' e sin ainm an àit anns an d' rugadh i, ged nach eil àit fo 'n ainm sin air àrainn an dùthcha no eadhon an eilean eile air taobh siar na h-Albann.⁷

Mac Neacail goes on to put the case for the bardess having been born, and mainly resident, in Skye, using quotations from her songs as evidence. This view is supported by John Mackenzie, who, assumes that Màiri was a member of the chief's household at Dunvegan. The Rev. William Matheson⁸ also favours Skye as Mary's residence, placing her under the patronage of Iain Breac at the same time as An Clàrsair Dall, Roderick Morison.

The conclusions drawn by these respected scholars would surely convince us that Mary MacLeod was resident at Dunvegan for the greater part of her life, were it not for the equally impressive arguments in favour of Harris, particularly the island of Berneray, as not only her childhood home, but also where she spent most of her adult life. John MacInnes notes that "there is a persistent oral tradition that she was a nurse, not in Dunvegan, but in the household of Sir Norman MacLeod of Bernera", but he qualifies this by pointing out that Màiri "may, of course, have lived at different times in both houses".⁹ However, MacInnes provides linguistic evidence for Màiri having been brought up in Harris rather than Skye:

This occurs in the rime sequence of verse one of *Crònan an Taibh*... where the substitution of *sean*...for...*siud* restores the rime.(*Taibh/ ghean/ sean*). *Sean* is the modern Harris pronunciation of the demonstrative; this is never used in the Gaelic of Skye, nor judging from what little we know of the history of Gaelic dialects is it likely to have been used in Màiri's time.¹⁰

Of course, the conclusion that Màiri spoke the Gaelic of Harris rather than that of Skye does not prove that she spent most of her time there, only that, as is generally accepted, she was born and brought up there. A more convincing argument for Màiri having stronger ties with Harris than with Dunvegan is given by Alexander Morrison, who casts doubt on the information given by John Mackenzie.

[Mackenzie] took no trouble to acquaint himself with the

genealogy of the MacLeods of Harris and Dunvegan. In 1790, Douglas of Glenbervie, after much exhaustive research, compiled invaluable works on the genealogies of Highland families. These were available to John MacKenzie, and a perusal of them would have prevented serious shortcomings in his own work. It is also equally certain that they might have led John MacKenzie to make a search in the Island of Berneray, Harris, for any traditions about Sir Norman MacLeod, who was the generous patron of Mary MacLeod as he knew full well. These omissions were responsible for MacKenzie's belief that Sir Norman MacLeod was a chief of the MacLeods of Harris and Dunvegan, and that he therefore resided in the Castle of Dunvegan.¹¹

Morrison cites the evidence of a Berneray man, Alexander MacLeod, "a man of great intelligence and a veritable mine of information on Harris in general and Berneray in particular", who: .
 was of the opinion that the great bardess was born on the island of Berneray. He was, however, quite emphatic on the point that she was both the nurse and bardess in Sir Norman's household of Berneray. He could actually point out the site of her house which was in close proximity to Berneray House. It is called *Tobhta nan Craobh* and sometimes *Tobhta Mairi*.¹²
 Morrison adds to this with some information about Berneray House, the residence of Sir Norman MacLeod:

About the middle of last century the old historic house was demolished, and only a small building survived, now used as a barn...These historic buildings were all grouped together in the district of the Island, known as Baile – a name still in current use. It occurs in the poetry of Mary MacLeod...and on each occasion the late Professor James Carmichael Watson translates it as "homestead", but it clearly means the district where Berneray House was located.¹³

The case is then made for Berneray House, and not Dunvegan Castle, being indicated in Mary MacLeod's *An talla bu ghnàth le Mac Leòid*, citing evidence from Dr. Norman MacLeod which shows that: both Sir Norman MacLeod and his brother, Sir Roderick MacLeod of Talisker, were born at Baile in the Island of

Berneray. Their father, Sir Roderick Mor MacLeod, must have had a mansion house on the Island at least in the first decade of the seventeenth century.¹⁴

Morrison goes still further, using the Dunvegan Papers to show that: the mansion house was occupied on occasions as late as June 1630. In that year a summons of reduction and improbation was served on Iain Mor MacLeod, son of Sir Roderick Mor MacLeod. Attached to the summons is a certificate by the messenger stating that the message had been safely delivered at "John McCloyd's mansion house in Berneray..."

These facts plainly prove that the mansion house in Baile, later occupied by Sir Norman MacLeod, was occupied by such Chiefs of the Clan MacLeod as Sir Roderick Mor MacLeod and his son Iain Mor MacLeod. It could therefore, with propriety, be accurately described as 'An talla bu ghnàth le Mac Leòid'.¹⁵

The occupation of Berneray House by the chiefs of MacLeod does not prove that Mary was more attached to the family of Sir Norman of Berneray than that of Dunvegan, but Morrison uses the evidence of her surviving songs to strengthen his case:

Readers of Mary MacLeod's poetry cannot fail to notice that a considerable number of her poems – and that the best – is devoted to Sir Norman MacLeod of Berneray, and his son, John of Contuillich...In striking contrast to this is the paucity of poems on the Chiefs of Dunvegan. There is not one eulogy or lament for such fine and noble chiefs as Iain Mor and Iain Breac. Indeed there are only two compositions which can be connected with certainty to the Chiefs of Dunvegan. These are *Cumha do Mhac Leòid*...and *An Crònan*..¹⁶

This argument is made all the more convincing if we compare the works of Mary MacLeod with those of her contemporary, Roderick Morison, the Blind Harper, whom we know to have been a member of Iain Breac's household at Dunvegan. Morison's songs are full of praise for Iain Breac, and, in *Oran do Mhac Leòid Dhùn Bheagain* ¹⁷, full of criticism of his son and successor, Roderick; Mary's songs either ignore these two Chiefs, or just mention them in passing, which would hardly be politic if she was a member of the household of Dunvegan. It does seem strange that the main focus for

her attention and praise is Sir Norman of Berneray if we are to believe that her patron and benefactor was actually Iain Breac.

Alexander Morrison then gives his interpretation of another of MacKenzie's comments in *Sâr-obair* ¹⁸:

John MacKenzie stated that he had heard one of Mary's poems in which she said that she nursed "five lairds" of MacLeod and "two lairds" of Applecross. Professor Watson attempts to identify these lairds. The five "lairds" of MacLeod, he writes "were, it may be, Roderick the fifteenth chief, who was under eighteen when his father died in 1649; his younger brother Iain Breac; Iain Breac's sons, Roderick and Norman; and Norman's son, Norman. The two 'lairds' of Applecross", he continues, "we must suppose to be Iain Molach, who succeeded his father Roderick in 1646, and his eldest son Alexander". In the absence of the actual words of the poem, we can only regard these statements as pure conjecture. Is there any proof that these "five lairds" were "five chiefs" of the MacLeods ? After all, John MacKenzie was mistaken in making Sir Norman MacLeod the Laird and chief of the MacLeods. Might not MacKenzie's "five lairds" be the five sons of Sir Norman MacLeod of Berneray - John of Contuillich, James, Alexander of Unish, Norman and William of Berneray and Luskintyre ? As for the "two lairds" of Applecross, might not this be MacKenzie's rendering of "Mac Choinnich" ? The Campbells of Harris, the foster brothers of Sir Norman MacLeod of Berneray, were styled "Mac Choinnich" in the seventeenth century. Professor Watson ingeniously tries to explain the designation of "Tormod nan trì Tormod" to whom this song is addressed. He says that the three Normans were Norman, the eighteenth chief, Sir Norman of Berneray, and Norman, father of Sir Roderick Mor. Clearly this identification is not convincing. The only sensible explanation of the phrase "Tormod nan trì Tormod" is that it refers to a Norman who was the son of Norman, who was the son of Norman. In the genealogy of the Berneray family, we find a Norman who answers this description, and in no other MacLeod family, thereby proving that this lost poem was composed on that family.¹⁹

The MacLeod Estate Accounts, for the period during which Mary was alive, give further support to Morrison's claim that she was a resident of Berneray rather than Dunvegan:

They prove conclusively that the Chief of Dunvegan was no "mean tyrant"...Time and again, the searcher comes across... disbursements and gratuities from the Estate to widows, orphans, and "insolvent" persons...throughout the accounts Mary MacLeod, who was certainly alive and was probably well over eighty years of age at the time, is not once mentioned. Surely if she had been so "closely and honourably associated" with Dunvegan Castle as a "nurse and bardess" during the chiefship of "five lairds", she would not be forgotten by a household at once so compassionate and at the same time so mindful of long and faithful service. The satisfactory conclusion is that she had no connection with Dunvegan, and that, as the nurse and bardess of Sir Norman of Berneray, she was already well provided for by her patron.²⁰

Unfortunately, this conclusion does not clear up all the points of contention regarding the life and works of Màiri nighean Alasdair Ruaidh, as a doubt remains over the ascription of certain songs to her. John Lorne Campbell discusses the four songs ascribed to Mary in *An Duanaire* ²¹, and, from historical and textual evidence, concludes:

Pòsadh Mhic Leòid as printed in the *Duanaire* is certainly not by Mary MacLeod and should be omitted from any future edition of her poems entirely. As for the other three songs²² ...their original form and content and their authorship are so uncertain that they would be better placed in an appendix...and no great reliance placed on them for factual information about Mary MacLeod's career.²³

The songs in the *Duanaire* are not the only ones ascribed to Mary MacLeod which might not have been her compositions. If we accept Morrison's theory, that the reference to *Mac Choinnich* in the poem to *Tormod nan trì Tormod* indicates the Campbells of Harris, we must then doubt the ascription of the lament for the Laird of Applecross²⁴ to Màiri nighean Alasdair Ruaidh. Her only connection to Applecross comes from Mackenzie's interpretation of *Mac Choinnich*, although

there is evidence within the poem that the author was, indeed, a MacLeod. The description of the dead man as *Iarogha Uilleam* could refer to the fact that Roderick MacKenzie of Applecross, the son of Alexander MacKenzie of Coull, was the great-great-grandson of William Dubh MacLeod 'of the Lews'²⁵, but the poet also calls Roderick *mo rìgh*, which would be an unlikely phrase for Mary MacLeod to use of anyone other than MacLeod of Dunvegan, or Sir Norman of Berneray, given her loyalty and devotion to the latter. Even if Mary was actually the author of this song, one verse which is included in Watson's version surely does not belong in this lament to Roderick MacKenzie:

An àm suidhe 'nad sheòmar
 Chaidh do bhuidheann an òrdugh,
 Cha b' ann mu aighear do phòsaidh
 Le nighean Iarla Chlann Dòmhnail
 As do dhéidh mar bu chòir dhi;
 Is ann chaidh do thasgaidh 's an t-sròl fo d' léine.²⁶

Roderick was married to the daughter of MacKenzie of Redcastle²⁷, and it would seem at best tactless, at worst insulting, to insinuate another relationship in the lament, especially if his wife was still alive. Gratuitous insult was not Màiri's style, if this poem was hers, and even if it was not, this stanza is certainly out of place in this poem.

Although the question arises with Iseabail Ní Mheic Cailéin as to whether or not the poems ascribed to her were actually composed by her, with Mary MacLeod we have the suggestion that she was the author of some poems which are now categorized as anonymous. A case is made by the Rev. William Matheson:

No doubt many of Mary's songs are lost, while others may be forgotten rather than lost, because, though still extant, they lack the ascription to her, and have not been identified as of her composition.²⁸

Two possible examples of such poems are given, with the reason for Mary's composition of them having been forgotten being that they are on the subject of the Macleans. However:

Mary was persona grata to many of the leading families of the Western Highlands and Islands – MacLeods of Harris and of Raasay, Mackenzies of Applecross, MacDonalds of Clanranald.

Why not also of the Macleans, whom she usually includes in her lists of friendly and supporting clans...?²⁹

The first of these songs³⁰, recorded in the *Eigg Collection* ³¹, is addressed to Hector Maclean, Laird of Duart, who was killed at the battle of Inverkeithing in 1651. Hector is referred to three times in the poem as the grandson of Sir Rory Mór – his mother was Mary, daughter of Sir Rory Mór Macleod of Dunvegan – and this would certainly be in keeping with Mary's style of poetry, never missing an opportunity to praise the MacLeods. There is no irrefutable evidence in the poem as to the identity of the author, "but we cannot exclude the possibility that the composer was Mary MacLeod."³² This possibility is strengthened by the information that there is "some indication that Mary was traditionally believed to have composed a song on this very subject."³³

The second song proposed by Matheson as the work of Mary MacLeod is *An Crònán Muileach* ³⁴, which seems to be "on the death of Sir Hector Maclean and the terrible losses suffered by the Clan Maclean at the battle of Inverkeithing."³⁵ The description of Sir Hector as *mac na deagh mhnatha 'chinneadh m' athar* indicates that it was composed by a MacLeod, as we have already established that his mother was of that clan. The case in favour of Màiri nighean Alasdair Ruaidh is further strengthened on two counts:

The form in which the song is cast is such as would be used only by a woman...[and] Mary was famous for her cròrain...It may therefore be suggested that *An Crònán Muileach* is one of a group of such songs composed by Mary MacLeod, of which others extant are *Crònán na Caillich* (so called in the MacLagan MSS) an *Crònán an Taibh*. If this is accepted, then it strengthens the case for regarding the song previously discussed as her composition.³⁶

Matheson then discusses one of Màiri's songs which "has been overlooked or ignored, rather strangely, for it has been published with the ascription to her."³⁷ The song seems to have originally been an *iorram*, with the opening lines *Siùdaibh, siùdaibh so fhearaibh*, which has been adapted for use as a waulking song by the substitution of *mhnathan* for *fhearaibh*, and of *luaidhibh* for *iomraibh*. The song:

may be identified as one traditionally known to have been composed by Mary. John Mackenzie [in *Sàr-obair nam Bàrd Gaelach*]...writes that among unpublished songs of hers heard

by him...was "a rather extraordinary piece, resembling MacDonald's 'Birlinn', composed upon occasion of John, son of Sir Norman, taking her out to get a sail in a new boat." In retrospect, the song may have appeared to have been on a grander scale than was actually the case. It is frankly incredible that a poem like MacDonald's 'Birlinn' could have been composed extempore even by such a gifted poetess as Mary. What probably happened is that she composed and sang some verses by which the rowers kept time. [This] song... though no doubt incomplete, answers exactly to that description, and may confidently be regarded as one of Mary MacLeod's forgotten songs.³⁸

With Mairearad nighean Lachlainn, it is neither her first name nor her patronymic which is disputed, but the clan to which she belonged:

It is generally supposed that the famous Mairearad was a Maclean. In behalf of this opinion [it] may be urged that the earliest reference to her in a printed work is in Duncan Kennedy's collection of hymns, which was published in 1786, and in that work she is called 'Mairearad nigh'n Ailain, or Margaret Maclean.'...It is certain, however, that [Kennedy] was mistaken in calling her Mairearad Nigh'n Ailain. It is possible, then, that he was also mistaken in speaking of her as Margaret Maclean. She may, of course, have been married to a Maclean.³⁹

Although Mairearad nighean Lachlainn is commonly accepted as a Maclean bardess, it has, nonetheless, been claimed that she was actually a MacDonald by birth, and there has been much debate on the subject. There is one conclusion which would seem to satisfy both parties:

...she seems to have been both, a MacDonald in her maiden state, but married to a Maclean, and with a Maclean mother.⁴⁰

Internal evidence in her poetry has been used to support this theory: it is maintained by some that whilst her mother was a Maclean her father's name was Lachlan Macdonald, not Lachlan Maclean. Two arguments may be advanced in support of this view. In the first place, Margaret nin Lachlan's compositions seem to show that she was a Macdonald. In "Gaoir nam Ban Muileach" she laments the death of Allan Macdonald of Moidart

and especially the death of Sir John Maclean of Duart, and tells us that she was without a chief either on her father's side or on her mother's. In "Chunnaic mise thu, Ailein," she asks the following question: Where, in Scotland or over in Holland, is there the like of my mother's clan apart from the pride of the Clan Donald ? In "Mo cheist an Leathanach modhar," she makes the following statement:- I was not near my father's clan since the Macleans were expelled from their country and their seat. It is certain that she lived in Mull, and that she was as near the Macleans as she could be. If, then, she was a Maclean, how could she say she was not near her father's clan since the expulsion of the Macleans ? The second argument which tends to show that Margaret nin Lachlan was a Macdonald is the fact that John Maclean, the poet, described her in his manuscript in 1816 as "Mairearad Dhomhnallach, do'm bu cho-ainm Mairearad nigh'n Lachainn,"...It is certain that John Maclean believed that she was a Macdonald. It is equally certain that there was a tradition to that effect among some Argyleshire men in 1816."⁴¹

The Rev. A. Maclean Sinclair is also quoted as having said of Mairearad:

We are inclined to believe that she was a MacDonald. We got the following account of her...from a daughter of John MacLean, the poet, who told us that she had received it from her father. Mairearad nigh'n Lachainn was born in Mull, and lived and died there. Her father was a MacDonald, and her mother a MacLean. She was married and had a large family. All her children died before herself. She nursed sixteen MacLeans of the best families of Mull. All these, like her own children, predeceased her. She used to go very frequently to the grave of the last of them, and sit there. She was a very old woman, and was much bent by age. John MacLean took down several of her poems from oral recitation about the year 1816..."⁴²

Somhairle Mac Gill-Eain agrees with Maclean Sinclair thus far, using the evidence within her poems to conclude that:

tha e soilleir gum bu Bhan-Domhnallach de Chloinn Raghnaill
Mairearad, agus gum bu Nic Gill-Eain a màthair. Chan eil

teagamh sam bith nach robh Mairearad pòsda aig fear de chloinn Ghill-Eain, agus tha e cuideachd cinnteach gun do chaith i a beatha am Muile, agus gum b' e Clann Ghill-Eain cuspairean a dân, có dhiubh anns na dân a tha againn fhathast.⁴³

However, despite the seemingly conclusive evidence noted in *Na Bàird Leathanach*, Maclean Sinclair completely refutes the possibility that Mairearad was a MacDonald on either her father's or her mother's side a few years later in *The Celtic Review*. Instead he uses the evidence of two of her songs, *Gur e mis th' air mo leònadh* ⁴⁴, and *Gur h-e mheudaich mo chràdh* ⁴⁵, as evidence that she was, in fact, a MacLean on both sides, claiming that her mother was a MacLean of the family of Moidart and her father one of the Jura family:

Lachlan Og Maclean of Torloisk had Hector of Torloisk and John Diùrach. Hector of Kinlochaline married Janet, daughter of Hector of Torloisk, and by her had John of Kinlochaline and the Lachlan who was drowned on the way to Canna.

Mairearad Nigh'n Lachainn describes the Lachlan who was drowned as 'Ogha brathar mo sheanar',...Lachlan was the son of Hector, son of Lachlan of Torloisk; Mairearad, then, must have been the daughter of Lachlan, son of John Diùrach, who was a brother of Hector Og of Torloisk. It is admitted by all who know anything at all about Mairearad that her mother was a Maclean, and that she belonged to a prominent family. It may be regarded as fairly certain that her mother belonged to the Macleans of Morvern.⁴⁶

Maclean Sinclair has, however, made some mistakes in his reasoning, for, according to *Clan Maclean* ⁴⁷, Hector Maclean of Kinlochaline was married to a daughter of Lachlan Og of Torloisk, and by her had John and Lachlan. The Lachlan who was drowned, then, would have been the son of Hector of Kinlochaline, son of Allan of Ardtornish, son of Iain Dubh of Morvern. If this is the case, then the grandfather of the Lachlan who was drowned was either Allan of Ardtornish or Lachlan Og of Torloisk. We must then look to the brothers of these men for the possible grandfather of Mairearad, and one possibility is immediately evident: Charles, second son of Iain Dubh of Morvern, and brother of Allan of Ardtornish, had two sons, named Lachlan and John Diurach. All that we know about this

Lachlan is that he had a son, Donald, who was a merchant in Glasgow, and there is no record of his having had any daughters.⁴⁸ As far as dating the lives of the two sons of Charles, all that we are told is that John Diùrach was at the battle of Inverkeithing in 1651. As Mairearaid Nighean Lachlainn was born around 1660,⁴⁹ it is possible that Lachlan, son of Charles, son of John Dubh of Morvern was her father, and if this was so, then she was indeed a Maclean by birth. Thus, Maclean Sinclair's assertion may be correct, although his evidence is not.

One cannot, however, assume that the phrase 'bràth'r mo sheanar' refers to Mairearad's paternal grandfather, a Maclean. She could have quite as easily meant her maternal grandfather, and, even if it was proved that he was a Maclean, as Maclean Sinclair attempts to do ⁵⁰, it does not follow that Mairearad's father was; he might very well have been a MacDonald.

The case for connecting Mairearad Nighean Lachlainn with the Jura Macleans is made using the evidence of two of her poems: one about Eachainn Mac Iain Diùraich, and another composed to Lachlainn Mac Iain Diùraich. Although Maclean Sinclair has tried to prove in the same article that these poems were actually addressed to John of Kinlochaline and Lachlan, son of Hector of Kinlochaline respectively, he nonetheless uses the earlier titles as evidence that:

it is pretty certain that Mairearad was looked upon as being closely connected with the Macleans of Jura – that in fact she belonged to the Jura family⁵¹.

This conclusion, again, it must be said, leaves room for doubt. If the titles given for these two poems are incorrect, then the evidence of the persons to whom they are addressed proves nothing; if they are correct, then I would think it unlikely that a poem to Lachlan Mac Iain Diùrach, whom Maclean Sinclair has attempted to prove to have been Mairearad's father, composed by Mairearad Nighean Lachlainn, would not have been remembered as a song to her father; it is also highly unlikely that the family relationship would go unmentioned in the song itself.

The case against Mairearad being a MacDonald is made using the evidence in *Gaoir nam ban Muileach* ⁵², composed in 1716, in which:

Mairearad Nigh'n Lachainn states that she was without a clan-head either by her father or mother – 'Gun cheann-cinnidh

thaobh athar no màthar'. Had she been a MacDonald she could not have made such a statement as that. The MacDonalds had practically two chiefs in 1716, Dòmhnall a' Chogaidh of Sleat, and Alexander Dubh of Glengarry, and could take their choice of them⁵³.

Maclean Sinclair seems to forget the evidence which points to her being a Clanranald MacDonald, in which case she had good reason to lament the loss of *both* her chiefs.

The reference to Mairearad Nighean Lachlainn as 'Mairearad Domhnallach' in the John Maclean MS, which Maclean Sinclair earlier accepted as proof that she was, in fact, a MacDonald by birth, is explained by the suggestion that:

Mairearad's husband was a MacDonald, and that he lived in Moydart or Ardnamurchan. But to whatever clan her husband belonged, it is certain that Mairearad had relatives in Moydart and Ardnamurchan, as well as in Morvern, Ardgour, and Kingerloch.⁵⁴

This article seems to try too hard to reclaim Mairearad for the Macleans, especially as there is so much evidence pointing to a MacDonald link of some kind, and a great deal of that uncovered by Maclean Sinclair himself in earlier publications. Maybe he is correct in suggesting that MacDonald was Mairearad's married name, but from the evidence in her poems, it would seem that one of her parents also belonged to that clan. The common belief that she was a Macdonald, supported not only by tradition, but also by the manuscript of John MacLean, is not, in my opinion, satisfactorily disproved. However, what is important for our purposes is that she lived in Mull, on MacLean lands, and composed songs about the social changes and hardships brought upon the people of her homeland due to the downfall of the MacLean chiefs and the takeover of Mull by the Campbells. Her surname is not really that important; what is important is her poetry.

One of the songs ascribed in several collections to the poetess known only as 'An Aigeannach' is now generally accepted as the composition of a MacKinnon bard, Fear a' Chinn Uachdaraich. As well as the ascription of this song, *Gun tug mi Ionnsaigh Bhearraideach*, there is further doubt as to the identity of this particular poetess. According to Magnus Maclean:

An Aigeannach seems to have been a daughter of Dòmhnall Gorm, Sleat, brother to Lord MacDonald of the day. The most of her songs were satires – or rather lampoons – and it is as well that all of them are now almost forgotten. She was, however, a terror in her own day.⁵⁵

A. Maclean Sinclair goes into more detail about the possible identity of An Aigeannach:

In the first edition of Mac Mhaighstir Alasdair's poems, published in 1751, there is a poem entitled 'Marbhrann Mari nighean Iain mhic Iain, do 'n goirteadh An Aigeannach'. In one of [the] stanzas the following lines occur:-

'N àm 'bhi cur na h-ùir' ort
Sheanachaisinn mo rùn-sa
'Mach a teaghlach Mhùideart,
Culidh 'rùsgadh phiostal.

It seems then that the Aigeannach's name was Mary Macdonald; that her father's name was John, Iain mac Iain; and that she belonged to the Clanranald branch of the Macdonalds. According to Gillies' collection her father's name was Donald, Dòmhnall Gorm. It is certain that Mac Mhaighstir Alasdair knew who she was. It is also altogether probable that he would give her father's real name and not a fictitious name. We think then that she was, not a daughter of Dòmhnall Gorm, but of Iain mac Iain.⁵⁶

Both these articles assume that there was only one poetess known as An Aigeannach, but just as the patronymic 'Nighean Alasdair Ruaidh' could refer to either Màiri or Fionnghal, so the soubriquet 'An Aigeannach' could conceivably refer to more than one poetess. Colm Ó Baoill notes:

J.L. Campbell has pointed out...[that] the word *aigeannach* may have been used as a common noun meaning 'une fille de joye', and it may have meant 'a self-willed boisterous female'...it is therefore safest to regard the name An Aigeannach as essentially a nickname, quite capable of being applied to several different individuals.⁵⁷

The ascription of one song in Gillies' collection to 'an Aigeannuich Nighean Donuill Ghuirm', while Mac Mhaighstir Alasdair's Aigeannach is the daughter of Iain Mac Iain is thus not necessarily the result of

any confusion, although confusion results from the assumption that only one poetess was known by this name.

Colm Ó Baoill turns his attention to the Aigeannach of Mac Mhaighstir Alasdair's *Marbhrann*. Here, she is "depicted as a woman of very easy virtue, no more and no less – there is not the slightest evidence that I can see that she might have been a poet"⁵⁸. The *Acts of the Presbytery of Mull* are then quoted, in which we find a Mary MacDonald being summoned both in 1739 and 1747 for adultery and fornication; and Ó Baoill concludes :

It is quite likely that the same Mary MacDonald is referred to in both these entries. And it is possible that she was Máiri nian Ean Mhic-Eun, and that Mac Mhaighstir Alasdair's 'mock elegy' could have been 'inspired' by the memory of some unsatisfactory encounter he had with her. Conceivably he saw his Aigeannach, whether she was this Mary MacDonald or not, as being connected with the spread of venereal diseases in Ardnamurchan.⁵⁹

Although claiming earlier that he could not find "the slightest evidence" that this Aigeannach was a poet, Ó Baoill quotes from another of Mac Mhaighstir Alasdair's poems:

which might suggest that Máiri nian Ean Mhic-Eun was a poetess. This appears in one of Mac Mhaighstir Alasdair's poems against an Oban poetess...

Thu fein 's a' bhéist an Aigeannach,
An aon nasg caigheam teann.

It seems reasonable to assume that the Aigeannach here is again Máiri nian Ean Mhic-Eun, but it may be going too far to say that, because she is bracketed with the Oban poetess, she was also herself a poet.⁶⁰

The two extant poems ascribed fairly certainly to An Aigeannach have been dated to the first half of the eighteenth century, so that there is a possibility that Mac Mhaighstir Alasdair's Aigeannach was the author. However, considering the character reference given by Mac Mhaighstir Alasdair for Máiri nighean Iain mhic Iain in his poem, when contrasted with the fine feelings displayed in the songs to Bean Chladh na Macraidh and to Dòmhnall mac Eachainn Ruaidh, it seems unlikely that our poetess is the same person as the victim of Mac Mhaighstir Alasdair's *Marbhrann*.

The two poems in question are reasonably close in date, and they could very well have been the compositions of one poetess, as O Baoill concedes:

We cannot be sure that the same individual composed both the poem to Domhnall Mac Eachainn Ruaidh of Coll and the poem to Bean Chladh na Macraidh. However, Anna of Cladh na Macraidh had close connections with the Coll family, and it seems quite likely that an Aigeannach may have got to know one of her subjects through her contacts with the other.⁶¹

Doubt is cast on the ascription of the one poem that is supposedly by the Aigeannach who was 'Nighean Dòmhnall Ghuirm' by Colm O Baoill:

The designation 'Nighean Dòmhnall Ghuirm' occurs only in connection with the poem which usually begins *Gun tug mi ionnsaidh bhearraideach* and which was first printed in Gillies 1786:128, with the heading: 'Oran do Lachlann og Mac Ionmhuinn, leis an Aigeannuich Nighean Donuill Ghuirm'. It is my contention that this poem may be wrongly so headed, and that we therefore have no extant poetry which is unquestionably the work of 'An Aigeannach Nighean Dòmhnall Ghuirm'.⁶²

O Baoill suggests that the mistaken ascription of this song is due to confusion over where the title of the song was given on the manuscript from which it was taken, adding:

It would seem...that we no longer have the poem to which the title 'Oran do Lachlann Og Mac Fhionghain, leis an Aigeannaich nighean Domhnaill Ghuirm' belongs. As an outside possibility we might consider the poem *A Lachainn òig gun innsinn ort*, which has a chorus beginning *Lachainn òig, gum faic mi thu*. This appears in Macdomhnull 1776 [Comh-chruinneachadh Orannaigh Gaidhealach]:89 under the title 'ORAN do Lach'unn mor Mac Gilleòin triath Dhubhairt, le Eachunn bachdach', and most of it is copied in...[Sàr-obair nam Bàrd Gaelach]:79. Lachlann Mór Maclean of Duart died in 1598, and Eachann Bacach's *floruit* is usually given as c. 1650. In the poem itself, the chief of the Macleans seems, on the most obvious interpretation, to be named as a witness to the good qualities of the subject, so that a case could probably be made for holding that the poem is in fact addressed to a Mackinnon,

possibly Lachlan Mór (c. 1628 – c. 1690), who became head of his family in 1649...If so, the use of the word *òg* might indicate that the poem was composed not long after 1649.

Furthermore, the chorus has the lines:

Do dheud gun stòir o 'm binn thig glòir,
O 'n faighin pòg a's fàilte.

These may indicate that the author of the poem is likely to have been a woman; but it is also possible that the chorus belonged originally to a different poem.

The author of this poem, whoever it was, probably had strong Mull connections (as had the Mackinnons), for the poem includes many Mull placenames.⁶³

In *Bàrdachd Chloinn Ghill-Eathain*, O Baoill goes into more detail about the Mackinnons:

Sir Lachlann Mór's mother was Catherine, daughter of Lachlan Maclean, 7th of Coll...and his own first wife was Mary, daughter of Sir Lachlann of Duart...From 1642 till 1649 Lachlann Mór's tutor-dative, since he was a minor, was Iain Garbh, 8th Maclean of Coll...

All of this would help to explain the poem's emphasis on its subject's potential allies in Mull, if the subject is, in fact, Sir Lachlann Mór Mackinnon...Following this identification we would have to date the poem, which calls its subject *Lachlann òg*, to a time not long after 1649, or perhaps even before that date. Such a date is, of course, consistent with composition by Eachannn Bacach...

Accepting, nevertheless, that the poem may have been composed either c. 1630 or c. 1650, we have in [O 'm faighinn pòg is fàilte] a piece of evidence against Eachann Bacach's authorship. While the mention of a kiss there could be held to represent an old literary convention...the simplest explanation is that the poet was a woman...In SGS XIII p. 105, the suggestion is made...that the proper heading for this poem may be *Oran do Lachlann òg Mac Fhionghain, leis an Aigeannaich Nighean Domhnaill Ghuirm*...We must note, however, that [O 'm faighinn pòg is fàilte] with its strong hint of female authorship, occurs in the chorus, and that choruses can be moved from song to song. But in this case the chorus

begins with the same address to Lachlann òg which begins the first stanza, so that this chorus is likely to have originated with this poem.⁶⁴

Using internal evidence, O Baoill draws us away from the idea of Eachann Bacach as the author of this poem, as it "suggests that the poet was not professionally employed by the subject, whereas it is likely...that Eachann Bacach was maintained as a poet by Sir Lachlann [16th of Duart].⁶⁵

So, although we have "no extant poetry which is unquestionably the work of 'An Aigeannach Nighean Dòmhnail Ghuirm'", there is the possibility that she was the author of the poem to Lachlann òg which has been ascribed to Eachann Bacach. There may also be another poem of hers which survives, although without the ascription to 'An Aigeannach'.

The anonymous song, *Biodh an deoch-s' air làimh mo rùin*⁶⁶, is said to have been composed by a daughter of Dòmhnall Gorm of Clanranald who was banished to Coll by her father, after giving birth to an illegitimate child, fathered by one of Dòmhnall Gorm's servants⁶⁷. The possible interpretations of aigeannach as "a common noun meaning 'une fille de joie'", or "a self-willed boisterous female"⁶⁸ would seem to fit a woman who had so defied the conventional behaviour of a woman of her social status, and I would suggest that this daughter of Clanranald may have been known as An Aigeannach, although she is not the authoress of the songs to Bean Chladh na Macraidh and to Domhnall Mac Eachainn Ruaidh of Coll. The dating of *Biodh an deoch-s' air làimh mo rùin*, (c. 1650) would also fit in with the possible dating for the song to Lachlann òg Mackinnon. Additionally, having been banished to Coll, in Maclean territory, she would probably have known Lachlann Maclean; and there is a possibility that she was acquainted with Lachlann Mackinnon. The poem to Lachlann òg even contains a small clue to the author having been a MacDonald, as Dòmhnall Gorm's daughter would be, the tenth stanza beginning with the lines:

Bratach aig Clann Dòmhnail
Nam biodh iad chòir gum b' fheàrrde.⁶⁹

The ascription of at least one poem on the Battle of Sheriffmuir to Sileas Nì Mhic Raghnaill, or Sileas na Ceapaich, is

admitted to be dubious even by Colm Ó Baoill, who includes it in his edition of her poems. The poem which begins *Dh' innsinn sgeula dhuibh le reusan* ⁷⁰ "sounds like the work of a participant or an eye-witness, and on this score we might be justified in deciding that Sileas was not the author".⁷¹ Doubt has also been cast on the ascription of the song opening with the line *Mhic Choinnich bho 'n tràigh* ⁷² to Sileas na Ceapaich, as Ó Baoill points out "the ascription to [her] is notably late, as the text is...and is totally unsubstantiated".⁷³ One only has to consider the work of Màiri Nighean Alasdair Ruaidh to see that it is not inconceivable that a poetess should compose more than one song on what is basically the same theme, but Ó Baoill suggests that both these songs have been ascribed to Sileas "simply because she is known to have composed other poems...relating to the Battle of Sheriffmuir."⁷⁴ These doubts must be borne in mind when discussing the work of Sileas na Ceapaich, and one should not rely on these two poems for definitive proof of any kind until the ascription to her can be more clearly substantiated.

Notes:

1. Appendix; pp. 353-54.
2. *An Gàidheal*, vol. I; p. 297
3. D.S. Thomson, *The Companion to Gaelic Scotland*, Oxford 1983; p. 139.
4. W.J. Watson, *Bàrdachd Albannach O Leabhar Deadhan Liòs-Moir*, Edinburgh 1978; p. 307.
5. *Guth na Bliadhna*, vol. X; p. 346.
6. C. Kerrigan, *An Anthology of Scottish Women Poets*, Edinburgh 1991; p. 14.
7. *Gairm Magazine*, No. 5; pp. 55-56.
8. *Transactions of the Gaelic Society of Inverness*, vol. XLI; p. 18.
9. *Scottish Gaelic Studies*, vol. 11; p. 6.
10. ref. 9; p. 6.
11. *The Clan MacLeod Magazine*, 1954; p. 134
12. ref. 11; p. 135.
13. ref. 11; p. 135.
14. ref. 11; p. 136.
15. ref. 11; p. 136.
16. ref. 11; p. 136.
17. William Matheson (ed.), *The Blind Harper*, Edinburgh 1970; pp. 58-72.

18. J. Mackenzie, *Sàr-obair nam Bàrd Gaelach*, Edinburgh, 1904
19. ref. 11; p. 137.
20. ref. 11; p. 139.
21. Donald Macpherson, *An Duanaire*, Edinburgh 1868
22. *Mairearad nan Cuireid* (Appendix; p. 478); *Tuireadh* (Appendix; p. 486);
& *An t-Eudach* (Appendix; p. 494).
23. *Scottish Gaelic Studies*, vol. 11; p. 191
24. Appendix; p. 480.
25. A. Mackenzie, *History of the MacKenzies*, Inverness 1879; p. 382.
26. J.C. Watson, *Gaelic Songs of Mary MacLeod*, Edinburgh 1965; p. 18.
27. ref. 25; p. 442.
28. *Clan MacLeod Magazine*, 1951; p. 12.
29. ref. 28; p. 13.
30. Appendix p. 637.
31. Raonuill Macdomhnuill, *Comh-chruinneachadh orannaigh Gaidhealach*,
Edinburgh 1776; p. 232.
32. ref. 28; p. 13.
33. ref. 28; p. 13.
34. Appendix; p. 630.
35. ref. 28; p. 14.
36. ref. 28; pp. 14-15.
37. Frances Tolmie's Collection, 1911; No. 58.
38. ref. 28; p. 15.
39. A. Maclean Sinclair, *The Gaelic Bards from 1715 to 1765*,
Charlottetown, P.E.I. 1892; p. 84.
40. D.S. Thomson, *An Introduction to Gaelic Poetry*, London 1974; p. 141.
41. A. Maclean Sinclair, *Na Bàird Leathanach*, vol. I ,
Charlottetown, P.E.I. 1898; p. 178.
42. K.N. Macdonald, *Macdonald Bards from mediaeval times*, Glasgow 1900; p. 33.
43. *Transactions of the Gaelic Society of Inverness*, vol. XLII; p. 34.
44. Appendix; p. 453.
45. Appendix; p. 454.
46. *The Celtic Review*, October 1911; p. 200
47. A Sennachie, *Account of the Clan Maclean*, London 1838; p. 331.
48. ref. 47; p. 333.
49. ref. 46, vol. XLII; p. 30.
50. ref. 46; pp. 193-203.
51. ref. 46; p. 200.
52. Appendix; p. 458.

53. ref. 46; p. 202.
54. ref. 46; p. 202.
55. *Transactions of the Gaelic Society of Glasgow*, vol. II; p. 181.
56. ref. 39; p. 76.
57. *Scottish Gaelic Studies*, vol. XIII; p. 103.
58. ref. 57; p. 108.
59. ref. 57; p. 109.
60. ref. 57; pp. 109-10.
61. ref. 57; p. 108.
62. ref. 57; p. 103.
63. ref. 57; pp. 105-6.
64. C. Ó Baoill, *Bárdachd Chloinn Ghill Eathain*, Edinburgh 1979; pp. 188-89.
65. ref. 64; p. 189.
66. Appendix; p. 624.
67. J.L. Campbell, *Songs Remembered in Exile*, Aberdeen 1990; p. 158.
68. ref. 57; p. 103.
69. ref. 64; p. 30.
70. C. Ó Baoill, *Bárdachd Shilis na Ceapaich*, Edinburgh 1972; p. 38.
71. ref. 70; p. 149.
72. Appendix; p. 397.
73. ref. 70; p. 144.
74. ref. 70; p. 144.

3. THE SONG AND THE STORY

Several of the songs by women which have survived from early times to the present day have a story attached to them, explaining the circumstances under which they were composed. Some of these stories are so dramatic, and so touching, that one has to wonder whether it was the story which kept the associated song alive, or vice-versa.

The earliest example of this type of pairing of song and story is found in *Cumha Mhic an Tòisich*¹, which dates from the early sixteenth century. The traditional story tells us:

...there was a prediction prevalent amongst his clansmen that Mackintosh of the day was destined to die through the instrumentality of his beautiful black steed...But whatever he felt, the Chief resolved to show his people that he treated the prediction lightly, and so he continued to ride his favourite notwithstanding the entreaties of his friends to the contrary. On the day of his marriage, the spirited Chief rode his spirited black steed, which, on the way to the church, became more than usually restive. The steed reared and plunged and curvetted and altogether behaved so wildly that the rider, losing control of himself and the horse, drew his pistol and shot him dead. A *gille mòr*, "man nearest to him," as the old people say, handed his chief another horse and they proceeded to church. After the marriage ceremony, the gay party set out on their homeward journey. The bride and her maids, upon white palfreys, preceded, and the bridegroom and his friends followed. In passing, the Chief's roan horse shied at the dead body of the black horse, and the rider was thrown to the ground and killed on the spot. A turn on the road hid the accident from those in front, and thus the bride, unconscious of the scene of misery behind her, continued on her way home, the happiest of happy brides!²

The lament which accompanies this sad tale was composed by the young widow who, as she says, was a maiden, a wife and a widow, all in the space of one hour:

Bha mi 'm bhréidich, a' m' ghruagaich,
'S a' m' bhantraich san aon uair ud.³

The song contains a reference to the black steed, and the fact that it was another horse which threw Eoghann and killed him:

Marcaich an eich leumnaich dhuibh,
Leag an t-each bàn thu.⁴

The story is one which has been preserved in the oral tradition, but which is difficult to verify as historical fact, due to the lack of a Mackintosh chief named *Eòghan*, the name given in the lament. Also, the dating of the song, at around 1526, casts further doubt on the subject of the song being the chief of Mackintosh, as the chief at that time was William, the then infant son of Lachlan.⁵ The captaincy of Clan Chattan was given to Eachann, the natural son of Farquhar, the 12th chief, who:

was chosen by the clan as their captain, - probably only as *locum tenens* of [William] during his minority, although it is not unlikely that...he was chosen head of the clan without regard to William.⁶

The idea that *Eòghan* might have been substituted for *Eachann* through oral transmission, and that this Eachann was the subject of the lament, although tempting, does not solve the mystery, as Eachann was killed some time after 1527 by a monk named Spens at St. Andrews⁷. The account of the circumstances surrounding the composition of the poem is also called into doubt:

Tradition associates the lament with a chief of the Clan called Hugh or Evan, but the late Dr. Fraser-Mackintosh declares - 'There was no chief of the Mackintoshes named either Hugh or Evan, and no incident such as is related (in the usual traditionary story) is known in any authentic Mackintosh tradition. A History of the Mackintoshes, written in Latin in 1676 by Lachlan Mackintosh of Kinrara, uncle of the then chief, refers to the lament as follows:- "It was...William (second of that name and thirteenth Laird of Mackintosh), that in his expedition to Rannoch and Appin, took the bard Macintyre, of whom the Macintyres of Badenoch are descended, under his protection. This Macintyre was a notable

rhymers. It was he that composed that excellent Erse epitaph called *Cumha Mhic-an-Toisich*, in joint commemoration of Farquhar vic Conchie and William vic Lachlan Badenoch, Laird of Mackintosh. Farquhar, fourth of that name, and twelfth of Mackintosh, died at Inverness, 10th October, 1514, a year after his release from his very lengthened imprisonment in the castle of Dunbar. William, thirteenth Laird, was murdered at Inverness by some lawless members of the Clan on the 20th, or according to the Manuscript of Croy, on the 22nd May, 1515'.⁸

The case for the bard Macintyre being the composer of this lament is not, however, watertight. If it was composed by a man, how did the references to being a maiden, wife and widow in the same day come to be included ? The lament certainly strikes one as being the work of a woman, even if the person to whom it is addressed remains in question. There are various references in the extant versions of the song to the composer, such as *Gur mise 'bhean-mhulaid* and *Is mi mhaighdean ro-dhubhach*, which underline the fact that the author was a woman, while other phrases make it clear that she is the wife of the dead man. Macintyre may well have composed a song named *Cumha Mhic-an-Toisich*, but this cannot be the same one.

The problem remains that the traditional account of the composition of this poem differs greatly from the historical records concerning that time. One could look slightly further afield in the search for a solution: instead of accepting that the name Eòghan, which is used in the poem, is incorrect for a chief of Mackintosh, we *can* investigate the possibility that the subject of the song *is* Eòghan, but that he was a prominent member of another clan in the Clan Chattan confederacy. Shaw gives the name of the son of the contemporary MacPherson of Cluny as *Ewen Og*, so one could ask if it is to this Ewen that the song was composed, and that, somewhere along the line, the original title was changed from that of a lesser member of Clan Chattan to that of the leading clan of the alliance. Even this tenuous suggestion, however, does not stand up, if Shaw is correct, as he records that Ewen Og married a daughter of Donald Mackintosh of Strone and by her had three sons, so he could not possibly have been killed on his wedding day⁹.

The MacLagan MS. version of this lament gives the title as simply *Bealach a' ghàraidh*,¹⁰ and there is no reference to Mackintosh whatsoever. It could be that the song has no connection to either Clan Chattan in general or Clan Mackintosh in particular, and that the title which indicates such a link is a later addition. The story behind the song may be based on fact, but it is quite possible that in the centuries between its composition and it being recorded the name of the clan to which the dead Eòghan belonged has been confused with another. There is a tradition in Ross-shire that the poem was addressed to one of the Mackenzies of Gairloch (although there is no historical evidence for this¹¹), and furthermore, the tune which is known to pipers as *Cumha Mhic an Tòisich* does not fit the words of the song as it is known.¹² This latter point would seem to indicate that, if there was a song called *Cumha Mhic an Tòisich*, it did not have the same text as the one which has been preserved in the oral tradition under that title, and that the song to *Eòghan Òg* was probably originally composed to a member of another clan. If one looks at the text of the song, one cannot fail to notice that not once is Clan Mackintosh mentioned, and the only name given is that of Eòghan Òg. I would suggest that the most likely explanation for the fact that the story which accompanies this poem bears little or no resemblance to known Mackintosh history is this: either it was composed to a member of the clan who was not the chief, although the title would lead one to assume that he was, or else the poem was addressed to a member of another clan altogether.

A song for which there is a historical record for the events surrounding its composition is *Cumha Ghriogair Mhic Ghriogair Ghlinn Sreath* ¹³, also known as *Griogal Cridhe*. It was composed by a daughter of Campbell of Glenlyon, who had run away and married Gregor of Glenstrae against her family's wishes, and later watched her husband being put to death by her own father and uncle. The MacGregor s were an outlawed clan, and in dispute with the Campbells at the time, although some branches of the two families were related:

Details of the Glenstray family, from the Black Book of Taymouth, Johne Makewin V'Allaster M^cGregour...
 ravischet Helene Campbell, dochter to Sir Coline Campbell of Glenurquhay, Knight. This Helene Campbell wes widow and lady of Lochbuy, and scho wes ravischet. The foresaid Johne wes not righteous air to the M^cGregour, bot wes principall of

the Clan Doulagnear.

This Johne M^cEwin begat upon the fairsaid Helene, Allaster M^cGregour of Glenstray, quha mariet ane dochter of the laird of Ardkinglass, being widow to M^cNachtan of Dundaraw.

This Allaster M^cGregour of Glenstray begat upon the said dochter of the laird of Ardkinglass, Johne M^cGregour of Glenstray and Gregour Roy, his brother. The said Johne diet of the hurt of an arrow going betwixt Glenlyoun and Rannoch. Gregour Roy, his brother, succedit to him. The said Gregour Roy mariet the laird of Glenlyoun's dochter, and begat upon her Allaster Roy M^cGregour and Johne Dow M^cGregour, his brother. This foresaid Gregour Roy was execute be Colin Campbell of Glenurchy.¹⁴

Gregor Roy's crime seems to have been that he preferred his own name to that of his feudal superiors:

Gregor Roy MacGregor of Glenstray...was never infeoffed in this property although bearing the title of it. Archibald Earl of Argyll sold the superiority of the twenty merkland of Glenstray to Colin Campbell of Glenurquhay in 1556, and was granted the ward and marriage of Gregor MacGregor, heir of the late Allaster to him...

Possibly Sir Colin might have befriended him if he had been willing to give up his own Clan, but Gregor evidently preferred to cast in his lot with his persecuted brethren. His name is found in several of the complaints against the MacGregors, and ...it must be supposed that there were some feuds, the history of which has not been transmitted, or other causes to excite the malignity of Glenurquhay...¹⁵

Perhaps the 'other cause' which led to Gregor's death was that he fell in love with a Campbell woman whose father had already arranged a more profitable match, from his point of view, for her:

Duncan Campbell of Glenlyon...had a daughter whom he intended giving in marriage to the Baron of Dall, on the south side of Loch Tay. The daughter was of a different opinion for having met with young Gregor MacGregor of Glenstrae she gave up to him her heart's warmest affections and which he fully returned. In spite of all opposition, she left her father's house, and married him. Duncan was bitterly vexed, so were the then heads of the eastern Campbells, Sir Colin of

Glenurchay and his son 'Black Duncan'. In consequence Gregor and his wife were followed with the most unrelenting enmity. They were often obliged to wander from place to place, taking shelter in caves under rocks, and in thickets of woods. On the night preceding the 7 of April 1570, they had rested under a rock on a hillside above Loch Tay. Next morning after taking such breakfast as in the circumstances they could compass, the young wife sat herself on the ground, and dandled her young babe in her arms whilst Gregor was fondly playing with it. This endearing episode of pure love and affection was ruthlessly broken in upon. In an instant they were surrounded by a band of their foes, and carried off to Balloch. Gregor was at once condemned to death, and beheaded at Kenmore in presence of Sir Colin; his wife, daughter of the Ruthven, who looked out of an upper window; Black Duncan; Atholl the Lord Justice Clerk, and Duncan Campbell of Glenlyon. Most pitiful of all, the unutterably wretched wife was forced to watch her Husband's execution. Immediately thereafter, with her babe in her arms, she was driven forth by her kindred helpless and houseless. The kindness however thus cruelly denied, was abundantly given by others who sorely pitied her sad case. In her great anguish she composed the song...and sung it as a lullaby to her babe.¹⁶

This account contains some basic oversights, if we accept the records in the Black Book of Taymouth. According to the Black Book, Gregor Roy had not one, but two sons, by the daughter of Duncan Campbell of Glenlyon, indicating that they were fugitives for quite some time before Gregor's capture, even if John, the second child, was born posthumously. Also, the song gives the date of Gregor's capture as *Là Lùnasd'*, Lammas morning, not the day previous to Gregor's execution. On the latter point, however, Derick Thomson suggests that the original version of the song may have referred to *Là Thùrnais*, or Palm Sunday, which in 1570 fell on the 19th of March. Thomson points out that it is highly unlikely that Gregor would have been held captive from August 1569 until April the following year, whereas :

the interval between [19th March] and 7th April would have allowed the 'great justiciar' time to invite the "Erle of Atholl,

the justice clerk, and sundrie uther nobillmen" to Taymouth Castle to witness so effective a demonstration of Campbell authority in the former MacGregor territories.¹⁷

The song itself appears in two separate and distinct forms: a short version and a long one, with a different chorus for each. The short version summarizes the story given in the long one, for which up to eighteen verses are given in some sources. This longer song is in ballad form, telling the story of how Gregor was captured, of his widow's love for him, of her grief over his death, and her hatred of those who have caused her such anguish:

Mallachd aig maithibh is aig càirdean
Rinn mo chràdh air an dòigh,
Thàinig gun fhios air mo ghràdh-sa
Is a thug fo smachd e le foill.¹⁸

Naturally, the characteristic objectivity of the strict ballad form is not found here, as the song is charged with emotion. It was composed as a lullaby to Nighean Dhonnchaidh's child, the son of Gregor, although it is actually a poignant lament for her husband.

There exists another song ascribed to Nighean Dhonnchaidh, concerned with the same event, and addressed to Duncan Campbell of Glenorchy, or Donnchadh Dubh a' Churraic¹⁹. The author of this song was evidently a Campbell who was married to a member of an opposing clan, and whose father brought about the death of her husband:

Gun logh an Rìgh sin do m' athair,
Gur caol a sgait e m' fheòil diom;
Thug e bh' uamsa m' fheara-tighe,
Gu 'm bu sgafanta roimh thòir e.²⁰

This would certainly support the claim that the authoress was the wife of Gregor Roy of Glenstrae, and one cannot overlook the possibility that the *Ridire Donnchadh Caimbeul* to whom the song is addressed is, in fact, Duncan Campbell of Glenlyon rather than Donnchadh Dubh of Glenorchy. If this is the case, the authoress being both the wife of Gregor MacGregor and the daughter of the man to whom this song was composed does tie in with historical

records. (The MS from which this poem was taken names the authoress as the daughter of Black Duncan).

From the following century, before 1645, we have another song which has a story of love and tragedy connected with it. The tale of Màiri Camshron, daughter of Cameron of Callard, is one of shortlived happiness:

Mary Cameron...was celebrated for her personal charms of beauty, and eminently charitable disposition. But having unfortunately incurred her father's displeasure for too liberal a distribution of charity to the poor, she was for a time estranged from the other members of her family, and occupied a garret-room under the paternal roof. Under these peculiar circumstances it was that a vessel laden with merchandize from the Mediterranean anchored in Lochleven, near the house of [Callard]. From their traders on board the family provided themselves with silks, & other articles of dress, but as...Mary was not then in favour at home, she had no share in these foreign decorations...But under folds of richest materials was concealed the fatal seeds of disease, which...soon attacked & carried away...every human inmate of the house of [Callard] except Mary Cameron, whose isolated chamber in the attics saved her from the reach of the relentless malady that raged below.

All the neighbours naturally became alarmed on the outbreak of this pestilence, and to prevent the further spread of infection, a watch was placed at every place of approach...to the death-smitten mansion, which was ordered to be burnt to the ground...but as Mary, the beloved of all the neighbours, was still alive, it was agreed that the house should not be thus destroyed, so long as she might continue to reply to the voice of a Warden; who, once each day, was to hail her at a distance, asking if she was yet living.

[Mary] was under an undivulged promise of marriage to Mac Dhonnachie Campbell of Inverawe, to whom, through the agency of the warden, she was enabled, secretly, to convey a message intimating her forlorn condition. For her sake, this generous chief resolved to risk his own life. He at once manned his barge on Lochetive, & came round to Lochleven

under cover of night...By help of a ladder, Inverawe got to the roof of [Callard] house, & opening a hole in it, he let one end of his plaid drop down into his beloved Mary's apartment, & wrapped in its folds, he drew her up into the open air, & carried her away to his own estate in his boat. But not to incur any unnecessary danger, he & the rescued lady remained in voluntary quarantine...until it was deemed safe for them to enter the family mansion of Inverawe, where they soon were united in the bonds of marriage. While their happiness was thus complete, her husband (who had been taken prisoner in February 1645 at Inverlochay) died, leaving her disconsolate...²¹

This account basically corresponds to that found in other versions of the rescue of Màiri Cameron from her father's plague-stricken house of Callard by Patrick Campbell of Inverawe. The happy-ever-after ending which might have led to this story being classed as a folk-tale or fairy-tale was denied with the death of Patrick Campbell after Inverlochay. After Patrick's death, Màiri was compelled by her father-in-law to marry the Prior of Ardchattan, with which she complied, although her heart belonged only to her dead husband, who lay buried in the churchyard of Ardchattan, overlooked by the Priory. Màiri apparently spent her days looking out over the grave of her first and only love and, before her own premature death, she composed the beautiful lament, *A Mhìc Dhonnchaidh Inbhir Atha* ²², to him.

The supernatural, ranging from witchcraft to fairies to the second-sight, is cited in several of the stories connected with songs by women. The popular *Crodh Chailein* ²³ is traditionally held not to be about cattle at all, but about the deer, which were milked like cattle by the fairy folk: "Colin was a fairy whose cattle were the deer. His mortal sweetheart composed this song for their milking"²⁴. There also exists a less romantic tale concerning the circumstances in which this song was composed:

The creach which originated this favourite song of Highland dairymaids was carried away from the lands of Cashlie, near the head of Glenlyon, by the Macdonells of Keppoch, sometime between the close of the wars of Montrose and 1655, in which year Campbell of Glenlyon...attained his majority.

Colin was a younger brother of Captain Campbell, and at the time of the Creach the two youths were under the guardianship of their uncle John...afterwards laird of Duneaves, and known as the Tutor on account of his having charge of the education of the lads. A part of Cashlie was left in liferent to Colin by his grandfather, Duncan Campbell...

Duncan...survived by several years his eldest son, Archibald, the father of the two youths, and at his death confided them to the care of his second son, Iain. There had been a long-standing feud between the Macdonells and the Glenlyon family since the time of "Cailein Gorach"...during whose time those taking part in an attempted Creach met with summary justice at the hands of that clever but very eccentric chieftain. Colin's minority provided a favourable opportunity for revenge to the Keppoch men, who came down with force upon the defenceless shieling of Cashlie, and took away every hoof of cattle from its green meadows, and even carried off the two dairymaids who were in charge of the milch kine. While on the march the eldest maid contrived somehow to break the legs of one or two of the young calves, thus delaying the progress of the raiders, and allowing time for their pursuers to overtake them. Probably it was while resting for a short time amid the rich pastures of Glenmeran, one of the passes that lead off from the head of Glenlyon, that this musical Highland maid first expressed her feelings in the touching strains of the song; it is said that she was singing it when the Glenlyon men came upon the scene. A desperate struggle now took place between the warriors of Glenlyon and Keppoch, in which the former were at last successful. In the fight the young dairymaid, a girl named Macnee, was unfortunately slain, but the authoress of the song, whose name has not come down to us, accompanied the rescuing party back to the neighbourhood of Meggernie Castle; a further stay at Cashlie being deemed unsafe. At the spot where the young girl was slain a cairn was raised to her memory still known as "Carn Nic Cridhe"...

In allusion to this sad incident, and the derelict calves, the following verses occur:

Ged a dh' itheadh na fithich
 Nic Cridhe 's na laoigh,
 Gu 'n tugadh crodh Chailein
 Dhomh bain' air an raon.²⁵

Although this story may be true, one cannot overlook the possibility that the verse referring to *Nic Cridhe* may have been added to an older, original song, especially since there is no mention of the *creach* or of being carried off forcibly in the other stanzas. The dairymaid may have known the song, and added to it, rather than composing the entire piece; but there is no means of proving the truth of the matter.

Other songs connected with fairy lore are not so easily explained rationally. The lullaby, *Mo Chùbhrachan* ²⁶, is a mother's plaint for a child stolen by the fairies. She sings of finding all the secret and inaccessible places of nature, but no trace of her lost infant. This could be the composition of a distressed mother who has lost her child through natural causes, but who cannot accept the fact; who better to blame for the loss of her child than the fairy-folk? The song beginning *A ghaol, leig dhachaigh gu m' mhàthair mi* ²⁷ is said to be a young girl's entreaty to a kelpie, or *each-uisge*, to release her and allow her to return to her own people. The song could just as easily be addressed to a mortal lover – maybe, given the fear of, and belief in, the supernatural in those times, the *each-uisge* was used as a convenient excuse by the girl for dallying longer than she should have with her sweetheart. However, some versions of these two songs seem to have been composed in more recent times as 'art' songs, rather than being true folk-songs; their origins lying in the imagination of the composer, and not in any real event.

The death of Iain Garbh Mac Gille Chaluim of Raasay is a story for which there are both traditional and historical accounts. In Fraser's *Polichronicon* for 1671, the following record is made:

This April the Earle of Seaforth duelling in the Lewes, a dreadful accident happened. His lady being brought to bed there, the Earle sent for John Garve M'kleud, Laird of Rarzay, to witness the christening; and after the treat and solemnity of the feast, Rarzay takes leave to goe home, and, after a rant of drinking uppon the shoare, went aboard off his birling and sailed away with a strong north gale off wind: and whither by

giveing too much sail and no ballast, or the unskillfulness of the seamen, or that they could not mannage the strong Dut[ch] canvas saile, the boatwhelmd, and all the men dround in view of the cost. The Laird and 16 of his kinsmen, the prime, perished; non of them ever found; a grewhound or two cast ashoare dead; and pieces of the birling...This account I had from Alexander his brother the year after.²⁸

Fraser's record differs radically from the traditional version of events which, although agreeing with both the time and the place of Iain Garbh's death, is much more definite as to the cause: witchcraft. Opinions differ as to whether the witch in question was Iain Garbh's own foster-mother²⁹, or that of MacDonald of Sleat³⁰, and as to the precise methods used, but the storm which sank the birlinn is the result of the practice of the Black Arts in every case. One version is this:

Iain Garbh's foster-mother lived in Tronaidh, usually known as Tronaidh a' Chuain, a small remote island lying north of Trondairnis, Trotternish, Skye. It is not known, though the matter is often spoken of, why his foster-mother was offended with Iain Garbh.

Iain Garbh left Loch Sealg in Lewis on a day clear and calm, with not a cloud in the sky. The 'muime' saw her 'dalta'...coming, and she put milk in a 'miosair mhôr'...and a 'miosair bheag'...floating in the milk. She herself was a milkmaid in the island, and she placed the calf-herd...in the door of the àirigh...where he could see both Iain Garbh's birlinn and the two vessels, large and small. She herself stood by the fire with her foot in the 'slabhraidh'...reciting incantations. Immediately after she began her incantations the little vessel floating in the large vessel began to sway to and fro like the pot-chain over the fire. The herd-boy called out that the little boyne was going round 'deiseil', sunwise, in the big boyne, and then being violently agitated and going round 'tuathail', widdershins, and shaking the side of the big boyne, and then capsizing and floating bottom upwards. At this same moment Iain Garbh's boat disappeared and the boy saw no more of it.³¹

MacDonald of Sleat is blamed in some accounts as being the mastermind behind the sinking of Iain Garbh's birlinn, bribing the witch to destroy his rival.³² After the death of Iain Garbh, the witch, whoever she was, is said to have been overcome with remorse for her actions, and to have composed an elegaic lament to the Laird of Raasay.

It has been suggested that the lament for Iain Garbh which begins *Mi am shuidh air an fhaoilinn*³³ was composed by his own foster-mother, using a little-known verse as evidence of her authorship:

Tha do phiuthar gun bhràthair;
Tha do mhàthar gun mhac aic';
Do leannan gun chéile,
'S mi féin, 's mi gun dalta.³⁴

The story behind this lament is then given, attributing the loss of Iain Garbh's birlinn to his own *muime*:

...His foster-mother, who was particularly attached to him, fearing that owing to his reckless seamanship he would some day be lost, resorted, having some occult powers, to a harmless way of scaring him when at sea. In the act of curdling milk in a large wooden dish...having the scalloped shell with which she measured the rennet in the palm of her hand, she placed this, face upwards, on the surface of the milk. As she tilted this from side to side, Iain Garbh's boat, or birlinn, was supposed to do likewise. Alas ! She unwittingly allowed her hand with the shell to get submerged, and at that moment Iain Garbh with his boat and friends got submerged also. Hence the pathos of her lament.³⁵

Whatever caused the loss of Iain Garbh's birlinn, it gave rise to several beautiful laments, most of which were the compositions of his grieving sister, Nic Gille Chalum. He had two sisters, Janet, who married Duncan Macrae of Inverinate, and Giles (Sileas), who died unmarried³⁶. Sileas was known to be a poetess³⁷, and she is probably the author of these laments, although the *MacDonald Collection* names Janet as the composer³⁸. That Sileas was the author would certainly tie in with the information given in one of her poems,

beginning *Moch 's a mhaduinn Di-dòmhnaich* ³⁹, that she was abandoned by her lover, *mac tighearn' an Dùine* in favour of the daughter of Mackintosh. This song is as much a complaint about being jilted as a lament for her brother, with the poetess stating that her lover would not have dared to act in such a way if Iain Garbh was still alive:

Mur bhiodh bristeadh a' bhàta
 Agus esan a bhàthadh
 Gu 'm bu dàna dhuit m' fhàgail 's mi tiom.⁴⁰

None of the four extant laments for Iain Garbh ascribed to Nic Gille Chaluim so much as hint at witchcraft, not even *Mi am shuidh air an fhaodhlainn*, which *An Gaidheal* claims as the composition of Iain Garbh's foster-mother, who is traditionally held to have been the author of the shipwreck in which he was drowned⁴¹. From this, one can conclude that the version of events preserved in the oral tradition was invented as a means of explaining how such a calamity could have befallen the laird of Raasay; perhaps because it was easier for people to accept the idea of supernatural foul play than it was to believe that their chief had been lost due to a combination of drunkenness and bad weather.

The next song for consideration is very firmly attached to a historical event: the battle of Cairinis, in North Uist:

...Around 1601 hostilities had broken out between the MacLeods of Dunvegan (or Harris) and the MacDonalds of Sleat, in consequence of Donald Gorm MacDonald of Sleat... having repudiated his wife, who was the sister of Sir Rory MacLeod of Dunvegan. A raid by the MacLeods on MacDonald lands in Skye was followed by a retaliatory raid by the MacDonalds on the MacLeod land of Harris; whereon the MacLeods, forty men under the command of Dòmhnall Glas, a cousin of Sir Rory, raided North Uist, which then belonged to the MacDonalds of Sleat, and captured the goods and cattle which the MacDonalds had put into the sanctuary of the old church building called Teampull na Trianaid, and installed themselves there for the night.

Word of this raid quickly got to Donald MacDonald, 'Dòmhnall Mac Iain 'ic Sheumais', then tenant of the island of Eriskay,

who was grandson of James MacDonald of Castle Camus and second cousin of his chief, Donald Gorm of Sleat. Donald travelled rapidly north with twelve retainers, picking up three more recruits on the way, and arrived at Carinish in North Uist after crossing both the south and north fords, while the forty MacLeod raiders were breakfasting...on a cattle beast they had captured and slaughtered. The MacDonalds were outnumbered by more than two to one, but they had the advantage in leadership, bowmanship, and surprise. In the words of the Revd. John MacDonald:

"The McLeods had hitherto encountered no opposition, and had no idea that danger could be so near. Reasons were too obvious to the enemy why he should not fall upon them in the 'temple', and being well acquainted with every inch of the ground, he made the following disposition of his few men. Dividing them into three parties, he concealed the first, consisting of seven, behind the south of the brook...called 'Feithe na Fala'...the next division, four in number, he stationed behind a knoll about half way between the position of the first division and the 'temple'; and the last, consisting of the remaining four, were appointed to give the alarm to the McLeods that "McIain had arrived". The men had been duly harangued, and each had received his instructions in the most definite terms; their leader then took an elevated position on the height a little to the north of where the preaching-house now stands, from whence he had soon the satisfaction of seeing his orders carried out to the very letter. The alarm given, out rushed the McLeods all in confusion, and before they were aware of what the danger really was, four of their number were brought down by the cool aim of their enemies. The latter, after carrying out their orders so far, fell back with all speed upon the second party, and with them waited the approach of the foe. These, fancying they had only a handful to deal with, rushed on in the same confusion till they were checked by a second shower of arrows, which made eight of them reel back and bite the dust. The McDonalds now precipitated themselves upon the main body, and waited as before until the enemy was within range, when all suddenly springing up and letting fly a third discharge of arrows with

the same well-regulated aim, and with the same galling effect, rushed across the hollow through which the road now passes, and took their position for the brunt of the day, a little below the place where their leader stood.

"The upshot of these tactics was that the fight was reduced to one on level terms, in which the McDonalds were victorious. Only five or six of the McLeods escaped; Dòmhnall Glas was killed on a strand of Baleshare Island, which has ever since been called after him; his skull, distinguished by a sword gash, remained in a window of Teampull na Trianaid for many years. Towards the end of the fight, Dòmhnall Mac Iain 'ic Sheumais getting to close quarters with the enemy, had "received an arrow ann am beula chuarain", i.e. at the mouth of his cuaran or shoe, which threw him on his length in 'Feithe na Fala'...

"He was conveyed to a house in Carinish with the arrow sticking in his flesh...The arrow was extracted, but not without great difficulty and pain. The song sung by "Nic Coshem", McIain's foster-mother, to drown his cries, is now for the most part lost. She sang it extempore, at the head of a band of young women arranged around a "waulking board". Knowing how passionately fond he was of a good song, she set up this demonstration to divert his attention while undergoing the operation..."⁴²

Another account suggests that Nic Coiseam learned of the danger that her *dalta* was in through the gift of second-sight, and that this is why she travelled to North Uist, composing her song on the journey, and teaching the refrain to the women who accompanied her on the way.⁴³

The song itself is one of praise for the wounded hero, listing his personal and physical attributes, and the battles in which his presence either did make, or would have made, a difference to the outcome. Nic Coiseam also refers to the wounds received by Mac Iain 'ic Sheumais during battle, and of her own efforts to staunch the flow of blood:

Bha fuil do chuirp uasail
Air uachdar an fhearainn.

Bha fuil do chuirp chùraidh
 A' drùghadh troimh 'n anart.
 Bha mi féin 'g a sùghadh
 Gus 'n a thùch air m' anail.⁴⁴

This motif, of sucking or drinking the blood of a loved one, is not uncommon in Gaelic poetry of this period, although it usually refers to the blood of a dead person, not of a living one. In this case, Nic Coiseam's actions may have been as much for medicinal reasons as they would have been a demonstration of her love for her *dalta*.

Another waulking song which is accompanied by a story is the one beginning *Cha téid Mòr a Bharraigh bhrònaich* ⁴⁵, a flyting between Nic a' Mhanaich, Clanranald's bardess, and Nic Iain Fhinn, the bardess of MacNeil of Barra:

...MacNeil of Barra had a bardess called Nic Iain Fhinn...who was a famous poetess in her day. MacNeil was married to a daughter of MacLeod of Harris, and her sister was married to Clanranald, and they were living at Ormaclete Castle.

Clanranald was a wealthy, powerful man. But although MacNeil only owned a little rock, he was proud and arrogant and very vain of his worldly possessions. The two ladies were very jealous of each other.

Clanranald too had a bardess, called Nic a' Mhanaich...Many a time MacNeil was casting it up to Clanranald that she...could not come anywhere near to Nic Iain Fhinn in composing poetry. Clanranald, who was better off than MacNeil in every worldly respect, was vexed that it was being said that the Barra bardess would win poetic honours from Nic a' Mhanaich. Eventually they each made a wager that his bardess was... better, and they decided that there should be a waulking at Ormaclete Castle, and that Nic Iain Fhinn should go to the waulking, and that Nic a' Mhanaich should be in her party, and that the two of them should then have the chance to prove themselves.

So it fell out. A boat with a crew went from Eoligarry to Uist with Nic Iain Fhinn. Tide and wind were against them, and it was rather late before Nic Iain Fhinn reached her destination. But she went up to the castle, where she saw a band of women gathered together. When she came near to

them, she heard one of them abusing her...Nic Iain Fhinn did not listen to any more, but jumped in amongst the Uist women, yelling at the top of her voice 'You come out and let me in, so I can make the flyting with the stumpy, catty, lumpy, greedy, thick-ankled hussy'. And she sat down at the waulking board opposite Nic a' Mhanaich.⁴⁶

The flyting contest then got under way in earnest, Nic a' Mhanaich beginning with a dispraise of Barra, claiming that none of Clanranald's daughters, Mòr. Catriona and Anna, would ever go there of their own free will; and Nic Iain Fhinn replying with praise of her own island, whilst satirizing both Uist and Nic a' Mhanaich:

And then what happened but when she stopped satirizing her, the Uist woman fell dead at the waulking-board opposite her. 'Take that old hag out of the house and put another one in her place' said Nic Iain Fhinn 'I'm not half finished'. Then the Uist people went to catch hold of her, and she made off with the Barra crew. When they reached their boat, they jumped aboard, cut the rope, sailed off, and reached Barra. Nic Iain Fhinn had won the wager ! ⁴⁷

Such is the vehemence of the insults thrown by the rival bardesses in this song that:

[it] was forbidden to be sung at social gatherings or ceilidhs in Cape Breton, where the descendants of emigrants from Barra and South Uist live side by side around Christmas Island and Beaver Cove on the eastern shores of the Bras d'Or lake; the song could start a fight.⁴⁸

An indication as to the accuracy of the story connected with this song is to be found in the opening stanza, composed by Nic a' Mhanaich:

Cha déid Mòr a Bharraigh bhrònaich,
Cha déid Catriona 'ga deòin ann,
No Anna bheag, ma 's i as òige ⁴⁹

John MacDonald, 10th of Clanranald, had three daughters, named Moir, Catherine and Anne, by his wife, the daughter of Sir Ruairi

Mór MacLeod, and Catherine actually married MacNeill of Barra⁵⁰.

Further proof is given by:

the entry in the Book of Clanranald, '*Anno Domini 1670 an bhliadhna do theasda Eoin Muideordach an éirisgáigh an uibhisd agus do cuireadh a chorp an Thogh mór ar fágail aon mic .i. Domnall agus triur inghen, Mór bainntigerna Chola, Catriona bainntigerna Bharraigh, agus Anna bainntigerna Benni-mhaola*'⁵¹

Nic Iain Fhinn herself is said to have received her gift for song-making from the *sídh* :

She had a fairy lover, did Nic Iain Fhinn, She had a stepmother, her father had married a second time. Though she was her stepmother, she was very good to her. Her stepmother knew she was going with a fairy lover, and she didn't want her to be going with him at all. Nic Iain Fhinn would not get into the fairy mound if she were to eat anything before she went out; unless she went fasting, she wouldn't get into the fairy mound at all.

No matter how quietly she got up, her stepmother would hear her, and would make her eat something, before she left. But this day, anyway, Nic Iain Fhinn was just about to close the door, going to meet her fairy lover, when her stepmother awoke. She didn't know what she should do about her; she picked up the cogie and threw it after her. A drop of what was in the cogie struck her. When she arrived, her fairy lover said to her: Λ r

"Oh, it's no use for you to try to come, you'll not get to come at all, they have taken the enchantments off you today. But since we're parting, I'll give you the power of composing poetry. If you put your tongue in my mouth, you'll compose the airs for them [as well]."

Well, she was afraid to put her tongue in his mouth, for fear he was going to bite it off. She got the power of composing poetry excellently, but she could never make airs for her poems.⁵²

That Nic Iain Fhinn was an excellent satirist is to be seen in *Cha téid Mòr a Bharraigh Bhrònaich* and *An Spaidearachd Bharrach* ⁵³, if she was indeed MacNeil's representative in the latter flyting. *Latha dhomh 's mi 'm Beinn a' Cheathaich* ⁵⁴, which is also attributed to

her, is a solo composition, but we do not know whether or not Nic Iain Fhinn did actually rely on someone else to make the tunes for her songs. The story of a woman gifted in poetry, but unable to put tunes to her own songs, also occurs in connection with Màiri nighean Alasdair Ruaidh, but there are no traditions attributing her skill as a bardess to a gift from the *sidhe*. However, both Màiri nighean Alasdair Ruaidh and Mairearad nighean Lachlainn are said to be buried in a manner which, in Norse times, was reserved for those believed to have been witches. Why they should have been treated this way, when the only traditions which have come down to us about them concern their song-making, is a mystery. Perhaps they were considered to have infringed on the domain of the bards, especially by daring, as women, to compose panegyric verse. The hereditary bards are thought to have been the descendants of the druidic order⁵⁵, and certain types of verse were credited with having magical powers; so the idea that these two bardesses had some kind of supernatural influence may have arisen from their composing the same kind of poetry as that produced by the bards. They may have been condemned for having meddled in a type of poetry which was considered to be a male preserve, or there could be another reason, more closely linked to the women themselves:

Màiri never married; nor, according to some traditions, did Maighread. This in itself is at least eccentric in that kind of society. Both of them, it is said, went around accompanied by a woman who seems to have acted as an assistant, one of whose functions was to make up choruses of vocables, or to set her mistress' song to a melody. Both women, it is said... were buried face-downwards...

There is...[a] tradition which may have a bearing on the matter. Long ago in the Islands, it is said, if a boat went missing, a wise woman was consulted. She was of mature years, unmarried, strong-minded, and she, too, had an assistant. The woman went to sleep, and while she slept, her spirit went out to search for the missing boat. But, if the wind changed while she was asleep, she lost her reason.

Now this seems to be a fairly straightforward description of a Shamanistic trance and the recovery of hidden knowledge. May it be that some vestige of the poet-seer's practices lingered on in Scotland into the eighteenth century ?

...Maighread Nì Lachainn...simply could not compose out of doors...at the proper moment, she saw her poems running along the green turves that formed the intersection of wall and roof. The phrase used by the *seanchaidh* was: *A' feitheamh na bàrdachd a' ruith air na glasfhadan.* ⁵⁶

This last piece of information is interesting, as it seems than Mairearad had a ritual which she followed before composing poetry, and which, if generally known, might have been seen as a vaguely occult practice – especially with the description of 'seeing' her poetry.

Màiri nighean Alasdair Ruaidh certainly met the criteria required for a *bean-fiosaich* as described above, and so would Mairearad nighean Lachlainn if she was indeed not married. Maybe both these respected poetesses were given the burial of a witch in order to prevent their spirits from walking after they died. However, if it was due to such a superstition that they were buried face-downwards, it is surprising that this is not related in the oral tradition, especially since they were both prolific and popular bardesses. We can only speculate as to the truth of the tradition regarding the way in which they were buried, and the reasons for which it may have been done, while it is a matter for regret that, although the works of both these women are well-known, there is comparatively very little information regarding their lives. Their songs survive without the benefit of their stories, but that is not to say that the stories might have been equally, if not more, interesting.

The lament of Nì Mhic Raghnaill for her brothers, Alasdair and Raghnaill, which begins *Dh' éirich mise moch Di-dòmhnaich* ⁵⁷ has a story of treachery and murder as the reason for its composition. The eighteen-year-old chief of Keppoch and his sixteen-year-old brother were murdered in their own home by two of their cousins, and some of the MacDonalds of Inverlair, with whom Keppoch was in dispute:

The conception of the plot is ascribed by [Rev. James] Fraser to Archibald (Allan ?), son of Alasdair Buidhe, former Tutor of Keppoch. According to this source he conspired with Alexander Roy...in Inverlair, and encouraged him to kill the two boys, his motive being that he himself should take possession of the lands of Keppoch, while Alexander Roy should have Inverlair. He then withdrew from the scene and

left MacDonald of Inverlair together with six accomplices to perpetrate the murder. The aspiration of Alasdair Buidhe's son might well have afforded a pretext for the murder, and this was an excellent opportunity for enlisting the help of the MacDonalds of Inverlair, who were on none too cordial terms with the Chief at this time...

The facts of the murder are clearly set forth by Iain Lom.⁵⁸ He states that the boys were brutally put to death in their own home by two of the sons of Alasdair Buidhe, and seven of the MacDonalds of Inverlair. Fraser...says that they were out on the field harvesting when MacDonald and his accomplices arrived, but as the poet was at the scene shortly after the event, and was also present at their funeral, his evidence is obviously to be preferred.

With regard to the motive which prompted the murder he is also very specific, and states explicitly that it was committed solely on account of the attempt made by the young Chief to curb the unruly habits of his assailants...It seems clear that an attempt was made to raise the general standard of conduct within the clan, and although it is not possible to ascertain the nature of the rules in question, it is probable that they were resented by the MacDonalds of Keppoch, who were a predatory clan by tradition and economic necessity. This would help to explain their general apathy after the event. The Chief and his brother were murdered in cold blood, yet there was no reaction whatsoever on their part to avenge their death. The callous attitude thus displayed appalled the poet, who was horrified not only by the murder, but by the indifference of his kinsmen. He set forth clearly his plea for revenge, but realising that no help was to be obtained within the clan, he addressed his muse to Chieftains outwith it, notably Glengarry and Sir James MacDonald of Sleat, whom he knew were in a position to exert their influence and power upon the perpetrators of the murder. His determined efforts to secure retribution eventually bore the desired results. On 29th July 1665 a commission of fire and sword was granted by the Privy Council to Sir James MacDonald of Sleat against [two of the sons of Alasdair Buidhe and five of the MacDonalds of Inverlair.] There is a tradition that the murderers anticipated

retribution from Glengarry, and maintained a constant vigilance, but as there was no sign of any activity in that direction they relaxed their vigilance, with the result that they were taken by surprise. Fraser's account is somewhat different from the above, but similar to that given by [Iain Lom]. He states that MacDonald of Inverlair sought refuge in a stronghold which he built near a linn not far from his home, and which he considered impregnable. After a prolonged siege he was eventually smoked out with six of his accomplices. Their heads were then cut off, and sent to Edinburgh to be set up on poles on the Gallows Hill of Leith...

At a meeting of the Privy Council on 7th December 1665 it was ordained that the heads of the following be set up on the Gallows Hill between Edinburgh and Leith:

Alexander MacDougall in Inverlair;
 John Roy MacDougall, brother to the said
 Alexander;
 Donald Orie McCoull in Inverlair;
 Dugall McCoull in Tallie;
 Patrick Dunbar there.

Although only five names appear in the Register of the Privy Council the decapitation of seven of the defenders of the stronghold of Inverlair is a fact that has been established beyond all reasonable doubt. About the middle of last century Dr. Smith of Fort William...decided to excavate the mound where the decapitated bodies of the murderers were said to have been buried. To his surprise he came across seven skull-less skeletons, one of which he was able to identify as MacDonald of Inverlair, who, according to tradition, was lame on account of a fractured thigh-bone which had been badly set in his youth...

A comparison between the names of those whose heads reached Edinburgh and the list of names contained in the Privy Council's Commission of fire and sword shows that Donald and Allan, the sons of Alasdair Buidhe...were not among the number of the decapitated...Alasdair Buidhe, whatever suspicion may have attached to him, became Chief of the Clan in 1665

without any apparent opposition, and continued in that position until 1669.⁵⁹

That, then, is the story of the Keppoch murder and its aftermath. The sister of Alexander and Ranald is not once mentioned, although she is the author of a lament to them. That the murdered man had a sister is confirmed by *Clan Donald*,⁶⁰ but she is not named, and is said to have died unmarried. We do not know if she assisted Iain Lom in his quest for justice, but from her poem we can see that her version of events – where the bodies were found, and what state they were in – tallies with that given by Iain Lom, who describes the scene as follows:

Mi os cionn nan corp geala,
Call am fala fo 'm brot;
Bha mo làmhach-sa craobhach
'N déis bhith taosgadh ur lot...

Tha do sheòmarthaigh dùinte
Gun aon smùid ann no ceò,
Far an d' fhuair thu 'n garbh dhùsgadh
Thaobh do chùil is do bheòil ⁶¹

Their sister also mentions the blood flowing round their bodies, as they lay murdered in their own home:

Chunna mi taigh m' athar gun chòmhlà,
Gun smùid, gun deathaich, gun cheò dheth,
Dh' fhosgail mi dorus ur seòmair,
Thàinig ur fuil thar mo bhrògan.⁶²

Both of these poets were eye-witnesses very soon, and in Iain Lom's case almost immediately, after the event, so a greater reliance can be placed on their accounts than on those of others. They are both clear about the scene of the murder, and both call for revenge on those who have perpetrated such a deed, although only Iain Lom names them as *Sìol Dùghaill* ⁶³ (Dùghall being MacDonald of Inverlair). The main facts of the murder are a matter of historical record, while the laments for Keppoch and his brother clarify some

points which have been a matter of dispute. Nì Mhic Raghnaill's song is a cry from the heart, not only for the fact that she has lost her brothers and is now left alone, but also for the treacherous way in which they were taken from her. She seems to have been away from Keppoch at the time of the murders, as the song tells of how she reached 'Cepach na dòruin'⁶⁴ on the Sunday morning. According to *The MacDonald Bards* : "she was sent over the river Spean to Inch on some pretext, so that she was not in the castle when the deed was actually done. It is also said she received such a shock on beholding her brothers' dead bodies that she lost her reason, a thing not at all unlikely"⁶⁵. The same source is, however, unable to give us any more information about the poetess herself, although A. Maclean Sinclair claims that she was one of *two* sisters of Alexander and Ranald of Keppoch:

Bha dà phiuthir aig na gillen a chaidh a mhort. Bha té dhiu pòsta aig Fer na Tulich. Bha 'n té eile a' cumail taighe dha bràithren. So an té a rinn an cumha. Bha i an Taigh na Tulich an oidhche roimh 'n mhort. Nuair a bha i 'tighin dachidh thachair na mortairen oirre.⁶⁶

The connection to Tulloch, although not recorded in *Clan Donald*, might nonetheless be correct, as the aforementioned volume is not always accurate. However, it might arise out of Maclean Sinclair's interpretation of the reference in some versions of the song (although not in the one which he includes in his collection) to *an tulaich bhòidhich*.⁶⁷ From the context it seems clear that the bardess is referring to a grassy knoll, as she says she sat on it. She may well have encountered the murderers on her journey homewards, as she talks of meeting *Prasgan fherabh le falbh mòdhar*,⁶⁸ who did not answer her when she spoke to them; *mòdhar* perhaps indicating furtiveness as well as quietness here. If they were, indeed, the murderers, she would undoubtedly have recognized them, which may have added vehemence to her calls for revenge – especially since some of them were her own relatives. Perhaps she was sent away so that she would not be a witness to what happened to her brothers, and therefore unable to identify their killers, although why the murderers should have taken such care to get her out of the way is unclear. Maybe one of the sons of Alasdair Buidhe thought to strengthen his

claim to Keppoch by taking her as his wife, something which would certainly have been impossible if she knew that he had been a party to the murder of her brothers, although this is but speculation.

Another song which was composed in response to a murder, is that addressed to Uisdean Mac Ghilleasbuig Chléirich⁶⁹, probably Hugh MacDonald, grandson of Donald Gruamach of Sleat (d. 1534), and nephew of Donald Gorm (d. 1539)⁷⁰. MacDonald was as much hated by his own clan as he was by others, due to his attempts to usurp his cousin's son, Donald Gorm Mòr, as head of the MacDonalds of Sleat. His grievance against the family of Sleat seems to have arisen from the loss of the power gained by his father, Archibald the Clerk, as Tutor of Sleat⁷¹. The reasons for his slaughter of the MacVicar brothers in North Uist are as follows:

The impact of the Reformation (1560) did not reach the Western Isles for many years, and when it did it met with some opposition...In the Island of North Uist the opposition came from the MacVicars and their associates, who were custodians of the old faith and the old customs...

The reforming authorities...arrived at the conclusion that as long as the MacVicars were in power there was no chance of the Reformation making headway among the people of the Isles. So a plot was hatched to break their power and get rid of them.

A tool was ready in the person of Hugh MacDonald...a villian of the first order. He was bribed by promises of money and lands by his uncle Donald Gorm of Sleat and by the head of Clan Campbell...to murder the MacVicars. Donald, Am Piocair Mor, was invited to a conference in Edinburgh in the Autumn of the year 1581. His wife...tried to persuade him not to go, saying she had a presentiment that something ominous might happen. Donald said it was difficult to make up his mind whether to go or not, but in the end he decided to go. Before he left he told his son Donald who lived with his wife and three children...at Carinish, to collect all the documents and papers pertaining to the Lords of the Isles and the church at Carinish and hide them on Craonaval.

When [Am] Piocair Mor was away, Hugh of Sleat seized his opportunity. He landed at Lochmaddy with a large force and before proceeding to Dun an sticir, in the North of the Island,

made for Carinish and murdered Donald. He also set fire to all his houses and burned the valuable documents and papers. Then, by deceit and treachery and...under the pretence of friendship he lured the other brothers, Angus, Hector, and John to his Headquarters at Dun an sticir. There, at a banquet, he put them to death in cold blood.

When the father arrived home...he found his four sons dead and their lands taken over by the MacDonalds...⁷²

In one version of the song composed after this murder, the brothers are named as: Uisdean, Lachlann, Eachann, Teàrlach, Iain, Ragnall, Ràghall and Alasdair.⁷³ The song as it survives seems to be a joint composition by the mother and sister of the dead brothers, with the mother interrupting the sister's lament to add her own keen.

In some versions it is not quite clear which voice we are hearing, as either the mother's intervention is missing, or the verses which are attributed to her in one version are ascribed to the daughter in others. In any case, the grief of the women at the violent loss of the men of the household is apparent, and they clearly name the perpetrator of the dreadful act, while cursing him for what he has done:

Uisdein 'ic 'Ill' Easbaig Chléirich
 Far an laigh thu slàn na éirich.
 Do bhiodag gu dian do reubadh
 'S do mhionach bhith an lùb do léineadh.
 Sgiala do bhàis go mnathan Shléite,
 'S mo chuid dùbailt ugam fhéin dhi.⁷⁴

Little else is known about the murder of the MacVicar brothers, apart from the fact that Uisdean Mac Ghilleasbuig Chléirich seems to have had a holding of some kind in Uist, which may have been the land so ruthlessly gained from the MacVicars. Eventually he met an end which his violent life merited:

While in Uist he wrote two letters – one to William Martin, a tenant of Donald Gorme's, at Eastside of Troternish, in which he solicited Martin's assistance in his nefarious scheme [to overthrow the Chief] – the other to the Chief of Sleat,

containing warm professions of affection and fidelity. By a strange oversight the letters were wrongly addressed, the Chief's letter going to Martin, and Martin's finding its way into the hands of Donald Gorme. The Chief at once decided to take effective measures, and sent a strong party to apprehend him...Hugh, who knew that such emissaries were on his track, took refuge in an ancient fortress...in the Sand district of North Uist, communicating by stepping-stones with the shore. There Hugh, who was a man of immense physical strength, was, with some difficulty, seized, and carried prisoner to Skye, where he was incarcerated in the dungeon at Duntulm, and...allowed to die in an agony of thirst.⁷⁵

The 'agony of thirst' is said to have been caused by Hugh being fed salt beef and denied water.⁷⁶

The song by the daughter of the Laird of Grant⁷⁷ to Dòmhnall Donn MacDonald of Bohuntin tells of her love for him. although her father refused to let her marry him. Their romance was to have a tragic outcome:

Donald MacDonald, poet and politician, commonly called "Donald Donn", was...the second son of John MacDonald, fourth of Bohuntin, and uncle to Gilleasbuig of Keppoch ...Donald was not on friendly terms with his chief, Coll of Keppoch...Like many of his countrymen he was a "creachadair", or raider, his exploits in which direction history fails to record. There is, in fact, not very much known about him. It seems that he was in love with a daughter of the chief of the Grants, whose seat was at Glenurquhart, but the Grants would not hear of the match on account of his poverty, though of high lineage. The poet and his lady-love having planned an elopement, Donald to be at hand hid himself in a cave on the north side of Loch-ness...Here he was to remain until Miss Grant was able to join him, but Donald's secret and retreat were betrayed to the brother of his love, and he was decoyed into a house in the neighbourhood of the castle, by a pretended message from Miss Grant. Donald, thrown off his guard by the kindness and hospitality of the lady's pretended confidant, was prevailed upon, not only to drink freely, but

also to sleep in the barn. No sooner was he asleep than his sword and target were removed by his treacherous host, hence, when his foes came upon him in the morning, he had no weapon but his gun, which missed fire, so that he was literally unarmed...Donald expected that his clan would interfere and pay his éirig fine, but the bad terms he was on with his chief...prevented that. The night before his execution while in prison, he composed the beautiful song:-

'S truagh a Rìgh ! Mo nighean Donn,
Nach robh mi thall 'am Muile leat...

...His allusion to Mull...was probably on account of his having planned his elopement for that locality; he would be safer on an island than on the mainland.⁷⁸

Dòmhnall Donn was in prison for some time before being beheaded; apparently this method of execution was his own request, in order to deny satisfaction to a man who had declared that he would see him hang.⁷⁹

The song to Dòmhnall Donn composed by the Laird of Grant's daughter evidently dates from before his capture; there is no trace of concern for his safety, or fear of him coming to harm, only a heartfelt wish for them to be reunited:

Tha mo rùn air a ghille,
'S mòr mo dhùil ri thu thilleadh.⁸⁰

Somewhat unusually for such a song, the poetess not only names the object of her affections, but also names herself in the opening stanza:

Tha thu 'd mhac do dh-fhear Bhoth-Fhionntainn
'S mise nighean tighearna Ghrannnda.⁸¹

The song contains references to leaving her home to be with Donald, in defiance of the wishes of her family, so it was probably composed after the elopement was planned, while she waited for her sweetheart to come for her:

'S rachainn leat a null do 'n Fhraing
Ged bhiodh mo chàirdean gruamach...

Shiubhlainn leat thar cuan do dh-Eirinn,
 Rachainn leat air chuairt do 'n Eipheit.⁸²

She complains about her father's refusal to allow her to marry Dòmhnall Donn, stating that lack of wealth would not be so important to others in considering him as a husband. The rest of the song is full of praise for Dòmhnall Donn's appearance, his bravery, and his reputation as a redoubtable fighter, but there is no hint of his imprisonment or imminent execution, so it must have been composed while he was still a free man.

His abandoned wife's song to MacNaughton of Dunderawe⁸³ also has a story of familial treachery behind it, only this time the blame lies with a sister of the poetess. However, in this case, one's sympathy for the poetess is diminished by the knowledge that, in some ways, it was her own original deceit which led to her situation:

MacNaughton...had been engaged in marriage to the second daughter of Maciain Riabhaich Campbell of Ardkinglass...

In those days it was customary that the bride and bridesmaids should wear a veil over their face at a marriage, and...that marriages should take place in the evening, when dancing began, in which the young couple took part until midnight, when the bridesmaids took away the bride and put her to bed, after which the bridesmen took away the bridegroom and put him to bed, and carried away the candle. Now, at the marriage, the eldest sister had personated her younger sister, and having been put to bed as described, MacNaughton did not notice the deception until morning. On coming to breakfast he remarked that there had been a mistake made last night. Ardkinglass, however, excused himself by saying that it was customary for the eldest daughter to get married first, and that she would make as good a wife as her sister. MacNaughton brought home his wife, and when near her confinement the sister came to attend to her. In due time Mrs. MacNaughton presented her husband with a son and heir. Some time after, it began to be whispered about the place that the young lady [the second sister] was in an interesting...way to MacNaughton, and eventually he was apprehended and lodged in prison in the old tower of Inverary. The young lady

visited him, bringing ropes under her mantle to enable him to escape over the prison walls, and, according to agreement, she and a lad named MacLean, a native of Dunderave, with a fisherman, came into the bay below the old tower of Inverary, in MacNaughton's barge at night. Then...MacNaughton escaped. On a Monday they set sail never to return, and landed at Port Rush, where they got married.⁸⁴

The marriage of John MacNaughton to Jane, eldest daughter of Campbell of Ardkinglass, must have taken place before 1720, when the third of Campbell's eight daughters was married. That he eloped with his sister-in-law is borne out by his first wife's song, although their destination seems to have been Anstruther, where John MacNaughton was a customs officer, rather than Port Rush.⁸⁵

The song begins with Jane, or Janet's complaint that she cannot sleep for thinking about her husband, and when she does sleep her dreams of being reunited with him turn to disappointment on waking and finding that he is gone. Despite her complicity in her father's plot to trick MacNaughton into marrying her, she seems genuinely to have been in love with the man, and her distress over his absence is very real.

She has nothing but praise for her husband, his skill with weapons, and his personal appearance, being mentioned before she turns to her own feelings for him:

Leam bu mhillse do phòg
 Na mìl òg o 'n bheachunn,
 Na ùbhlàn nan craobh
 Leam bu chùbhraidh t-anail.⁸⁶

She claims that she has lost her reason through love of her runaway husband, and claims that he would return if he knew how she was suffering without him. Her attention then turns to the sister who took her husband away, cursing her for what she has done; hoping that her children will not live long enough to be baptised, and that her life will be full of trials and tribulations. But she adds that it is only because of her sister's actions that she wishes her harm:

Mur a bhith do dhroch bheus
 B' oil leam féin sud a thachairt;

Oir, ged 's cruaidh e ri ràdh,
 'S i 'n aon mhàthair a bh' againn.⁸⁷

As the story makes clear, Seònaid was not entirely the innocent party in all this, and to some extent she brought the situation on herself; but one cannot doubt the pain which she feels at the loss of her husband, and her sense of betrayal by her sister.

Beasa Nighean Eòghain Mhic Fhearchair, or Elizabeth MacPherson, was a native of Skye, who was married to Murdoch Macaulay of Valtos in Lewis. By him she had John, known as Iain Ruadh Mac Dhùghaill (the patronymic name of the family), Zachary, and other children⁸⁸. The story behind her only extant song⁸⁹ is this:

Early one morning *Iain Ruadh*, accompanied by his brother *Sgàire* (Zachary), started for the chase. On reaching the margin of *Loch Langabhat*, they observed a large stag grazing on the *Eilean Dubh*, in the middle of the loch. They immediately stripped, and, fixing their guns behind their necks, swam to the island; but after searching it from end to end, no living creature could be seen. Chagrined by their disappointment, they again returned to the mainland, but no sooner did they arrive there than they saw the stag on *Eilean Dubh* as before. The second time they swam to the island, but on again reaching it nothing could be seen. Disappointed and vexed they returned to the mainland; but, strange to say, no sooner had they reached the shore than they saw the stag for the third time in the same place. Determined not to be foiled thus, they made for the island the third time, every inch of which they carefully examined, but failed to find any trace of the stag, or of any other living creature. Looking at each other with a bewildered and silent gaze, they left the islet the third and last time. In their repeated journeys already made to and from the island, *Iain Ruadh* took the lead, and the last was commenced in the same manner – *Iain Ruadh* was foremost; but when about mid-channel he called out to *Sgàire*, "I am awfully sick – I can go no further." Scarcely were the words uttered, when the comely form of the brave *Iain Ruadh Mac Dhùghaill* sank to rise no more...Although only a few strokes

behind him when he sank, *Sgàire* could render no assistance, so rapidly did his brother sink. The gillies, too, stood on the shore helplessly looking on – they could give no help. It was with a sad and heavy heart that *Sgàire* went home that day; and the sorest trial he ever endured...was when he beheld the bitter anguish of his mother, who, on hearing the melancholy death of her son, cried long and vehemently...and tore the jet black hair from her head.

Iain Ruadh was drowned on a Wednesday; and all the inhabitants of Valtos turned out that evening to search for the body, which they soon recovered. In the spot where his body was laid down...after it was taken out of the water, a large stone has been placed on end. It is still called "*Clach Bheis*," after *Iain Ruadh* 's mother...His mother, on every succeeding Wednesday while she lived, composed, at the side of "*Clach Bheis* ", either a song in praise of her son's beauty, or a lament for his death.⁹⁰

His mother's lament for *Iain Ruadh* begins with her grief over the loss of her son for the sake of hunting the deer:

'S daor a cheannaich mi 'm fiadhach
A rinn *Iain Diciaduìn*,
Rinn an t-Eilean Dubh riabhach mo leòn.⁹¹

She then describes the search for the body, the appearance of the corpse when it was brought in, and her own reaction on seeing it. She names *Dòmhnall Mac Iain*, presumably one of the gillies, or one of the neighbours who assisted in the search, and not *Sgàire*, as the one who brought her the news of *Iain Ruadh*'s death. The reaction of *Iain Ruadh*'s sisters, tearing their hair in grief, is mentioned; and in the MacLagan MS version⁹², *Beasa* also names *Dòmhnall*, *Dùghall* and *Aonghas*, probably brothers of the dead man, as well as his foster-mother, who is said to have been *air a cuaradh na feòil* ⁹³ at the news. The mention of his father, if the relevant stanza does indeed belong in this poem, disproves A. Maclean Sinclair's assertion that *Iain Ruadh*'s father died when he was in his fifteenth year.⁹⁴

Iain Ruadh's personal qualities are listed and praised: his skill as a hunter on land, and on sea, and the esteem in which he was held

by all who knew him. The distress of his mother at the tragedy is evident throughout her lament, as is the deep love which she had for him:

Mo chruit chiùil mo chroinn mheal [th]u
 Chaigh air ghiùlan nan geal-làmh
 Is nach dùisg [th]u ri caithrim a bhròin.⁹⁵

If it is true that Beasa Nighean Eòghain Mhic Fhearchair composed a song to her son every Wednesday from the day of his death, then it is surely a great loss that this is the only one which has survived to the present day, at least the only one which still has the ascription to her.

A story with a happier ending is connected to the version of the song *Biodh an deoch-s' air làimh mo rùin* ⁹⁶, which was composed by a daughter of Clanranald on being reunited with her brother after years of separation:

A daughter of MacDonald of Moidart had a child by one of her father's servants. The child was placed in charge of a woman in Uist...The girl went to Coll, and spent several years there as a tablemaid in the castle. On a certain day Maclean of Coll expected a visit from the son and heir of Clanranald. As he did not come when expected, the laird of Coll happened to say, "Cha tig am balach an diugh". Young Clanranald was greatly charmed with the tablemaid, chiefly because she resembled his erring sister. When he was ready to leave Coll she sang the song to him. He was glad to find her, and took her with him to Uist.⁹⁷

The song begins with the refrain:

Biodh an deoch so 'n làimh mo rùin,
 Slàinte le fear an tùir;
 Biodh an deoch so 'n làimh mo rùin.⁹⁸

which is repeated after every couplet of the song. The poetess describes the approach of Clanranald's galley, bearing the symbol of the Red Hand, and praises the young chief, while chastising Maclean for his off-hand reference to Clanranald:

Bu dàna leam thu ràdh am balach
Ri Mac-Mhic-Ailein nan tùr.⁹⁹

She claims that Clanranald is the son of a better father than Maclean:

Mac an athar b' fheàrr na t' athair-s',
An gnìomh, an tapadh, 's an cliù.¹⁰⁰

Some versions have this stanza addressed to Clanranald, saying that he is a better man than his father, which would be understandable, as it was their father who banished the poetess from her native district. She talks of returning to Uist and seeing 'muime nam macaibh', which could be a reference to the woman to whom her illegitimate child was sent, although in *Songs of the Hebrides* it is evidently Clanranald's foster-mother who is meant.¹⁰¹ In all the versions there is a stanza which affirms that the composer of the poem was the sister of Clanranald, although it is not clear whether or not this fact was unknown to him:

'S mur a b' e gur tu mo bhràthair
'S mi nach àicheadh idir thu.¹⁰²

The song to Clanranald also mentions King James, which does not quite fit in with the dating of this poem at around 1650:

Dh' òlainn deoch-slàinte Rìgh Seumas,
Bhi 'ga eigheach air a' chrùn.¹⁰³

This reference would make more sense if we accept that it could originally have been to 'Rìgh Seurlas', Charles II, who was at the time in exile, and waiting for the chance to return and claim his throne. It is not unlikely that over the years the reference was changed, perhaps as a means of updating the song to suit a Jacobite context. The song certainly seems to have been adapted at one stage to fit a new set of circumstances, as there is a later version addressed to James, son of Dòmhnall Gorm of Sleat¹⁰⁴. The version addressed to James preserves some of the original stanzas, but without the references to King James and to Clanranald. The person to whom the poem is addressed is in little doubt, as he is named as 'oighre dhligheach

Dhuntuilm' and 'Sheumais Òig 'ic Dhòmh'll Ghuirm'.¹⁰⁵ Donald Gorm Og, first Baronet of Sleat, was succeeded by his son James in 1643. The Sleat version of the poem, however, must date from around 1660 at the earliest, even though James was at that time the Chief of Sleat, rather than the heir. The song mentions James' marriage to 'Nighean Mhic Leòid nam bratach'¹⁰⁶, and he married Mary, daughter of John MacLeod of Dunvegan in 1661.¹⁰⁷ It is highly unlikely that the poem is much earlier in date than this, as Mary MacLeod was the second wife of Sir James; the first having been Margaret, daughter of Sir John Mackenzie of Tarbat, by whom he had eleven children.¹⁰⁸ The author of this version also gives a small clue as to his or her own identity:

'S ogha mise do 'n aosdàna,
Bheannaich an long bhàn air tùs.¹⁰⁹

This confirms that this song is related to the earlier version only in the tune and the refrain, which have been used as a starting point for the new composition. The author of the first version identifies herself as the sister of Clanranald, while the author of the Sleat version is much less precise, although we can assume that if there was any blood relationship to the Chief of Sleat it would have been mentioned. The story behind the song clearly belongs to the version addressed to Clanranald, and has no connection to the later poem for Sir James Mòr of Sleat.

The next song which has a story behind it was composed by an old woman of the Clan MacLennan,¹¹⁰ mocking the failed attempt of the factors of the forfeited estates to uplift rents from the tenants of the exiled chiefs:

After the suppression of the Rising of The Fifteen, the estates of the Earl of Seaforth, The Chisholm, and Grant of Glenmoriston were forfeited, and placed by Government under the management of a body of gentlemen who were known as the Forfeited Estates Commissioners, and who were expected to collect the rents on behalf of the Crown. These gentlemen did not find their task an easy one. Donald Murchison, Seaforth's chamberlain, ignored the forfeiture, and continued to uplift the rents and send them to the Earl, who was in exile on

the Continent. In the same way The Chisholm and the Laird of Glenmoriston continued to enjoy their old patrimonies. It is said that tenants sometimes paid their rents twice over – first to the old proprietors or their representatives, and again to the Government officials. That, however, could not have happened often, for as a matter of fact the said officials did not often venture within the territories which they were supposed to rule...The lairds and tenants were encouraged in their resistance by rumours of a Spanish invasion in the interests of the Chevalier. The invasion took place in 1719, when a few Spaniards landed at Kintail; but it was soon stopped by General Wightman, who...met and defeated the strangers at the battle of Glenshiel. Still, however, no rents came to the Commissioners, and what they hoped to be effectual measures were resolved on. They appointed two Ross-shire Whigs – William Ross of Easter Fearn...and his brother, Robert Ross...factors on the estates, and, placing them under the escort of Lieutenant John Allardyce and a company of the Royal Regiment of North British Fusiliers, ordered them to do their duty. They started from Inverness on 13th September, 1721...reached Invermoriston "after some adventures", and there held a court on the 21st, to which they summoned the tenants and wadsetters. Some attended, but paid no rents; and after the factors went through the formality of giving judgement against the defaulters, they proceeded to Strathglass, where they held another sitting with very much the same result, and then prepared to make their way to Kintail by Glen-Affric.

Among those who watched their proceedings at Invermoriston was Patrick Grant, Glenmoriston's second son, a lad of eighteen who resolved to do what he could to cut short their factorial career. As soon as they left his father's estate, he, with a few kindred spirits, took the short route to the West Coast by the Braes of Glenmoriston, and informed Donald Murchison of their intention to visit Kintail. Donald, who had some military experience as an officer in the Jacobite army in The Fifteen, determined that they should not enter his bounds, and with about three hundred men, including Patrick Grant and his Glenmoriston followers, crossed the hills in the

direction of Strathglass. He met themselves and their escort on Monday, 2nd October, at Ath-nam-Muileach, in Glen-Affric, where, after an exchange of fire, he and Easter Fearn had an interview between the lines, with the result that the factors retraced their steps, leaving their commission in Donald's hands. In the skirmish Easter Fearn and his son, Walter, and several others were wounded. Walter's injuries proved fatal, and his body was carried by the Fusiliers to Beaulieu, and buried in the old Priory.¹¹¹

The song connected with this event is one which throws scorn on Easter Fearn and his attempt to collect the rents, while praising Donald Murchison and the outcome of the skirmish. The first stanza makes this plain:

'S a Dhòmhnaill chridhe thapaidh
 chuireadh feum air feachd fo 'n éideadh,
 gun guidhinn ceum gu tapaidh dhuit,
 bho 'n b' ait leam fhìn mar dh' éirich:
 gun deach Fear Feàrna mhaslachdainn
 's gun deach a mhac a reubadh,
 's chaidh luchd nan còta daithte bh' ann
 dh' an casaid do Dhùn Eideann.¹¹²

The route which Easter Fearn's party took on their way to Kintail is then recounted, as is the encounter with Donald Murchison and his men, and the poetess almost gleefully records the effect which the death of Walter Ross had on the government troops and their leader:

Dol sìos troimh mhonadh Afaraic
 a leag sibh Bhaltair gaolach...
 'nuair chunnaic na fir chasluath sin
 gun ghabh iad sgapadh, sgaoil iad...¹¹³

The authoress of this poem was evidently a fiercely partisan supporter of Seaforth, or at least of the old order of things, and her delight in the humiliation of Easter Fearn may also have been heightened by the knowledge that one of her own clan, Donald Dearg MacLennan from Morvich,¹¹⁴ was said to have fired the shot which

killed Walter Ross. Although he is described as 'Bhaltair gaolach', there is no shred of pity for the young man who was killed; rather, the phrase is used to further mock Easter Fearn and his loss. In the same way, a typical panegyric construction, which would not look out of place in a genuine elegy, is used as a taunt in the refrain of this song:

dar shaoil leibh dhol a Shasainn
théid a thasgaidh anns a' Mhanchainn.¹¹⁵

The story behind the final song which I will look at in this chapter, *A' Bhean Eudach*,¹¹⁶ is one which has an equivalent in the folk-tale tradition of several other European countries. The theme is that of a jealous sister who causes the death of her love-rival in order to take her place, and occurs in several languages. Although some versions of the story behind the Gaelic song give definite names and places for the events and the people concerned, the stories all follow the same basic pattern:

One woman was secretly in love with the husband of another, and lured her rival to the shore on the pretext of gathering dulse. On a tidal rock, she lulled the married woman to sleep, and left her there as the tide returned. Waking, surrounded by the incoming tide, and unable to escape, the wife sang the song, pleading with the jealous woman to come to her aid. The jealous woman left her to drown, and, in due time, married the husband of her victim. Her crime was discovered when she was overheard singing the song as a lullaby to the dead woman's child.

Some versions of the tale state that the women were two sisters; that the jealous woman entwined the sleeping woman's hair in the seaweed so that she could not escape the tide, and that the drowned woman left three young children. In almost all the versions, the unfortunate wife is drowned when it is within the power of her rival to save her, and the jealous woman is found out when she is heard singing the dying woman's song

The song itself confirms that there was another woman present, and the authoress appeals to "a' bhean ud thall", or "a' phiuthar ud thall" to come to her rescue:

Sìn do chas bhuat,
 Thoir do làmh dhomh
 Feuch an dean mi
 Buille shnàmhadh !¹¹⁷

The uncaring attitude of the jealous woman is recorded, with her refusal to take pity on the drowning woman who desperately calls for help:

An truagh leat bean òg 's i ga bàthadh ?
 Cha truagh, cha truagh, 's beag do chàs dhith¹¹⁸

The doomed woman then thinks of her children, and how they will cry uselessly for her that night; of her husband coming in the morning to find her body, along with her father and brothers, and of the scene which will greet them:

'S gheobh iad mise	'n déidh mo bhàthadh,
Mo chòta gorm	an uachdar sàile,
'S mo bhroids airgid	air cloich làimh rium;
'S mo phaidirean	'n lag mo bhràghad ¹¹⁹

In some versions, she also asks for the news of her death to be kept from her mother. She boasts of all the sheep and cattle, and all the wealth of produce which the woman who takes her place will inherit, along with a good husband:

'S buidhe dh' an té
 Theid nam àite
 Gheibh i modh ann,
 Ciall, 'us nàire.
 Gheibh i gobhair
 Bhios air àrd-bheinn.
 Gheibh i caoraich
 Mhaola bhàna.
 'S crodh-laogh a
 Ruith mu 'n àiridh.¹²⁰

This song is unusual, in that we find a woman keening her own death, and not that of another. Her references to her children and her husband may have been attempts to arouse some kind of pity in the heart of her rival, but in the end she seems resigned to the fact that she is going to die. The description of her own corpse is vivid and emotional, as the horror of death approaches, yet she manages to think of protecting her mother from the shock of finding out that her daughter is dead. The song thus manages to tell the story, from the visit to the shore, to the drowning, to what happened afterwards, all of which is narrated by the central character herself. The similarity to the ballad form of song is evident, but this is not a true ballad, as it:

lacks the...constant of telling the story -'objectively with little comment or intrusion of personal bias'. [The] plot may be recognisable as a classical ballad plot, but it is told not by a detached observer but by a participant.¹²¹

As mentioned above, the theme of the story accompanying this song is not unusual in folk-literature, but the fact that the song itself tells the story is relatively uncommon in the Gaelic tradition. It is worth noting that two of the best-known Gaelic songs which come closest to the ballad form, *Griogal Cridhe* and *A' Bhean Eudach*, were the compositions of women. Both of these songs are laments which tell the story behind their grief, as well as expressing that grief, rather than concentrating, as most laments do, almost solely on praise of the departed loved one, and expressions of sorrow at their loss.

From the examples given in this chapter, it can be seen that, just as the songs themselves vary in form and content, so do the stories attached to them. Some of these tales can be verified as being based on historical fact, others rely on the supernatural to explain events, and still more have been passed down as facts, while there is no extant evidence to prove or disprove their veracity. With most of them, however, the question remains: which was the more popular, and therefore contributed to the survival of the other, the story, or the song ?

Notes:

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3. MacLagan MS. No. 61.
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5. A.M. Shaw, *Historical Memoirs of the House and Clan of Mackintosh and of the Clan Chattan*, London 1880.
6. ref. 5; p. 196
7. *ibid.*
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9. ref. 5; p. 524.
10. ref. 3.
11. A. Mackenzie, *The History of the Mackenzies*, Inverness 1894; pp. 385-447.
12. *The Celtic Magazine*, vol. II; p. 235.
13. Appendix; p. 359.
14. A.G.M. MacGregor, *History of the Clan Gregor*, vol. I, Edinburgh, 1898; p. 53.
15. *ibid.*
16. ref. 14; pp. 158-59.
17. *Scottish Gaelic Studies*, vol. 10; pp. 68-70.
18. W.J. Watson, *Bàrdachd Ghàidhlig*, Stirling, 1959; p. 244.
19. Appendix; p. 358.
20. ref. 4; p. 179.
21. National Library of Scotland MS. No. 2128; pp. 80b-82a.
22. Appendix; p. 367.
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24. Margaret Fay Shaw, *Folksongs and Folklore of South Uist*, Aberdeen, 1986; p. 169.
25. ref. 2, vol. III; p. 237.
26. Appendix; p. 709.
27. Appendix; p. 708.
28. D.A. Fergusson, *From the Farthest Hebrides*, Toronto, 1978; p. 267.
29. *Gairm Magazine*, No. 79; pp. 214-17.
30. *Clan MacLeod Magazine*, 1936; p. 49.
31. A. Carmichael, *Carmina Gadelica*, vol. V, Edinburgh, 1954; p. 300.
32. ref. 30; p. 49
33. Appendix; p. 516.

34. *An Gàidheal*, vol. XXIX; p. 168.
35. ref. 34.
36. A. MacKenzie, *History of the MacLeods*, Inverness, 1889; p. 369.
37. *Scottish Studies*, vol. 6; p. 241.
38. ref. 4; p. xxix.
39. Appendix; p. 513.
40. A. Maclean Sinclair, *Clàrsach na Coille*, Glasgow, 1881; p. 262.
41. ref. 34
42. J.L. Campbell & F. Collinson, *Hebridean Folksongs*, vol. III, Oxford, 1981; p. 252.
43. D.A. Fergusson, *Beyond the Hebrides*, Halifax, N.S., 1977; p. 63.
44. A. Sinclair, *An t-Òranaiche*, Glasgow, 1879; p. 131.
45. Appendix; p. 553.
46. *Hebridean Folksongs*, vol. II, Oxford, 1977, p. 113.
47. ref. 46
48. ref. 46; p. 226.
49. ref. 46; p. 114.
50. A. MacKenzie, *The MacDonalds of Clanranald*, Inverness, 1881; p. 58.
51. ref. 46; p. 228.
52. ref. 46; p. 119.
53. Appendix; p. 552.
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55. O Bergin, *Irish Bardic Poetry*, Dublin 1970; p. 9.
56. John MacInnes, *Proceedings of the Third International Congress of Celtic Studies*, ed. W.F.H. Nicolaisen, Edinburgh, 1968; p. 41.
57. Appendix; p. 384.
58. A.M. MacKenzie, *Òrain Iain Luim*, Edinburgh, 1964; pp. 82-92.
59. ref. 58; p. 268.
60. A. & A. MacDonald, *Clan Donald*, vol. III, Inverness, 1904; p. 420.
61. ref. 58; pp. 82-84.
62. D. Macpherson, *An Duanaire*, Edinburgh, 1868; p. 23.
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66. ref. 64; p. 65.
67. ref. 62; p. 22
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70. ref. 60; p. 469.
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73. ref. 46; p. 94.
74. K.C. Craig, *Òrain luaidh Màiri nighean Alasdair*, Glasgow, 1949; p. 23.
75. ref. 60; p. 48.
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79. Alexander Macdonald, *Story and Song from Loch Ness-side*,
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80. *Transactions of the Gaelic Society of Inverness*, vol. XXIV; p. 273.
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84. A. Campbell, *Records of Argyll*, Edinburgh 1885; pp. 46-47.
85. A.D.I.J. Macnaghten, *The Chiefs of Clan MacNachtan*,
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88. ref. 64; p. 28.
89. Appendix; p. 375.
90. *The Celtic Magazine*, vol. II; p. 484.
91. ref. 90.
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93. ref. 92.
94. ref. 64; p. 28.
95. ref. 92.
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97. ref. 80, vol. XXVI; p. 238.
98. ref. 80, vol. XXVI; p. 239.
99. *ibid.*
100. *ibid.*
101. M. Kennedy-Fraser, *Songs of the Hebrides*, vol. I, London 1909; p. 42.
102. *ibid.*
103. *ibid.*
104. Appendix; p. 626.
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- 106. National Library of Scotland MS. No. 3783; p. 39.
- 107. ref. 60; p. 473.
- 108. ref. 60; p. 472.
- 109. ref. 4; p. 340.
- 110. ref. 80, vol. XLI; p. 321.
- 111. ref. 80, vol. XIX, pp. 1-3.
- 112. ref. 80, vol. XLI, pp. 322-23.
- 113. *ibid.*
- 114. ref. 80, vol. XLI; p. 321
- 115. ref. 80, vol. XLI; pp. 322-23.
- 116. Appendix; p. 683.
- 117. E. Bassin, *The Old Songs of Skye: Frances Tolmie and her circle*,
London, 1977; p. 193.
- 118. ref. 74; p. 1.
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- 121. ref. 37, vol. 1; p. 126.

4. CONFLICT AND UPHEAVAL

The major conflicts in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries involving the Highlands and Islands were the Montrose Wars and the rebellions of 1689, 1715 and 1745. Not surprisingly, there are a number of songs by women which date from these times of upheaval, and although most of these are composed from a royalist point of view in the seventeenth century and from a Jacobite one in the eighteenth, there are a sufficient number from the opposing sides to give us a contrasting outlook on the situation.

In support of the Montrose cause in the mid-seventeenth century, we have songs such as *Alasdair Mhic Cholla Ghasda* ¹ and Diorbhail Nic a' Bhruthainn's *Alasdair a Laoigh mo chéille* ² in praise of Alasdair MacDonald, Montrose's general:

Alasdair Macdonald was of the ancient stock of Dunyveg in Islay, the son of Macdonald of Colonsay, commonly called Coll Keitach...The name, corrupted into Colkitto, was transferred by the Lowlanders...from the father to the son. Sorley Boy Macdonald, the father of the first Earl of Antrim, had been his father's great-uncle. The Macdonnells of Antrim were near blood-relations of Alasdair's own people of Islay and Kintyre, and the Campbell oppression of the latter clan had left bitter memories on both sides of the North Channel. Alasdair was a man of herculean strength and proven courage; self-indulgent and somewhat inclined to drunkenness; obtuse and incapable of framing or understanding any complex strategy...But he was a born leader of men, and so impressed Leven in Ireland that he did his best to reconcile him to Argyll, and sent him to Scotland for the purpose. But the chief of the Campbells treated the Irish commander with contempt, and Alasdair returned to Ulster with all his hereditary grievances inflamed, and burning for revenge.³

Despite all his faults, the arrival of Alasdair and the 1600 recruits raised by the Earl of Antrim was a welcome boost to Montrose's cause, which at that time, in August 1644, stood on shaky ground:

Huntly had failed ruinously in the north, and the Gordons were leaderless and divided, while the influence of their uncle,

Argyll, was driving Huntly's sons to the Covenant camp. Some of the Graham and Drummond kinsmen even, with the alternative of prison and fines before them, were in arms for the Estates. There were rumours of Covenant levies in Aberdeenshire, and in the west Argyll had his clan in arms.⁴

Little wonder, then, that a supporter of the royalist cause, and no lover of the Campbells, such as Diorbhail Nic a' Bhruthainn should sing to Alasdair mac Colla, '*S e thogadh m' inntinn thu thighinn*'.⁵ The song, *Alasdair a laoigh mo chéille*, is the only composition by this poetess which is still extant with the attribution to her, although we know that she composed many more. She begins with glowing praise for the subject of her song:

Alasdair a laoigh mo chéille,
Cò chunnaic no dh' fhàg thu 'n Eirinn,
Dh' fhàg thu na mìltean 's na ceudan
'S cha d' fhàg thu t' aon leithid féin ann,
Calpa cruinn an t-siubha[i]l eutruim,
Cas chruinneachadh 'n t-sluaigh ri chéile,
Cha deanar cogadh as t-éugais,
'S cha deanar sìth gun do rèite,
'S ged nach bi na Duimhnich réidh riut,
Gu 'n robh an rìgh m[a]r tha mi féin dut.⁶

The anti-Campbell sentiments in this song are every bit as strong as, if not stronger than, the royalist or anti-Covenant views expressed. The song is fundamentally one of praise of the Macdonald hero, listing all his personal and physical attributes, but Diorbhail's awareness of political events is illustrated by the lines:

'S truagh nach eil mi mar a b' ait leam,
Ceann Mhic-Cailein ann am achlais,
Cailean liath 'n deidh a chasgairt,
'S an Crùnair an deidh a ghlacadh...⁷

The song mentions seeing Alasdair's ship passing by, and this would probably date the song at late 1643 or early 1644, when Alasdair and his brother Ranald 'embarked on a long raid through the

Western Isles'⁸. The purpose of this raid would seem to have been the recruitment of more men, as he is said to have joined Montrose with a following of 1600, whereas 'the committee of war of Argyll had reported that Alasdair and 300 armed and rebellious Irish, all papists, had landed in the Isles accompanied by two priests'⁹.

Mackenzie tells us in his note to *Diorbhail Nic a' Bhruthainn's* song that "the air to which this piece is sung is rather a kind of irregular chant than a tune"¹⁰. This would doubtlessly lead to an incantatory effect in performance, and perhaps it was thought to have some power of enchantment, bearing in mind the link between poetry and magic in pagan times.¹¹

There is another song in praise of Alasdair mac Colla by a female author¹² which was composed at the time of his voyage to the Hebrides. The composer is said to have been the daughter of Murdoch the Harper, who was in Griminish at the time of Alasdair mac Colla's visit. The song is a very simple one, and the tune to which it is sung was used as a dance reel in Griminish.¹³ The song praises Alasdair and the poetess expresses her admiration for the man and for his fighting skills:

'S e Alasdair loinneil, mo roghainn 's mo rùn,
Ruidhlinn gu sìgeant le gille mo rùn
'S e Alasdair loinneil, mo roghainn 's mo rùn,
'S e loineadh na bodaich air Machair nan Gall.¹⁴

A fragment of a third song to Alasdair mac Colla survives in a manuscript.¹⁵ Although it is not certain whether the author was male or female, it deserves mention for the evidence it gives supporting Buchan's assertion that Alasdair was "somewhat inclined to drunkenness"¹⁶. The poem begins:

Alasdair chridhe mhic Cholla mhic Dhòmhnaill,
B' aithne dhomh fhéin an gnìomh bu mhòr leat
Ag òl gach treòradh fo t' iomadh tràth
'S do bhrataich ri crannaibh ga seòladh.¹⁷

This, then, is the man who joined Montrose's army before the battle of Tippermuir, and whose experience in battle was to prove so important to the royalist victories.

The death of Campbell of Auchinbreck, the leader of the Covenanting forces, at the battle of Inverlochy is credited to the hand of Alasdair mac Colla in the song *Alasdair Mhic Cholla Gasda*, which contains the line: "Mharbhadh Tighearn' Ach nam Breac leat". This cannot, however be taken as definite proof of fact, as the song also refers to the burning of Glasgow, which did not happen, although the sack of Aberdeen which is also exulted over in these verses did take place. After the Royalists gained Aberdeen in September 1644, Alasdair and his men were allowed by Montrose to sack the city, contrary to his usual behaviour. This was partly due to his anger over the murder of his friend, Kilpont, partly to his outrage over the killing of a drummer-boy sent to the city under a flag of truce.¹⁸ The treatment of the town of Glasgow in August 1645 was altogether different:

After waiting two days at Kilsyth, during which he sent a message of assurance to the city of Glasgow, the victorious general entered the capital of the west...A deputation from the town council met the king's lieutenant outside the walls, offering the value of £500 in English money as a largesse to the soldiers, and praying that the city might be left unmolested. To this request Montrose readily agreed. He issued stringent orders against theft and violence, and his entry was welcomed with a popular enthusiasm hardly to be looked for in the Lowlands...Unfortunately the sight of the well-stocked booths and prosperous dwellings of the Saltmarket and the Gallowgate was too much for some of his followers, who had not believed that so much wealth existed in the world, and could not readily forget their Highland creed that spoil should follow victory. Looting began, and Montrose, true to his word, promptly hanged several of the malefactors. But he saw that Glasgow would prove too severe a trial to his army, so two days after his arrival, about the 20th of August, he marched six miles up the river to Bothwell.¹⁹

So much for the city of Glasgow being set alight by the royalist army.

The Battle of Inverlochy, probably the most famous victory for the Royalists, followed an epic march from Kilcumin by Montrose and his army to reach the Covenant forces, but they did not quite manage to take Argyll by surprise:

During the night Argyll withdrew to his galley *An Dubh Luidneach*, which lay in Loch Linnhe...Auchinbreck commanded his clansmen in the centre with a reserve behind. A detachment of Campbells was placed on both wings, the six companies of Leven's regiment being equally distributed between them. Forty or fifty men were placed in Inverlochy Castle and a field piece was placed on the vantage point just north of the modern hotel...To the south-east Glen Nevis is guarded by Beinn Neamh-bhathais...The Royalists approached from the direction of Leanachan woods to the north-east...employing a long line extending across the valley.

Montrose commanded about fifteen hundred men but some...had returned home with booty. Catholic prayers were offered before battle commenced. O' Cahan was sent against Auchinbreck's right with orders to withhold fire until he could shoot lead into the breasts of the enemy. He went one better and held off until he 'fired their beards'. The Campbells could no more stand their ground than could the veterans of Marston Moor. Alasdair assaulted the left wing which also broke. The van, led by Montrose himself, advanced against Auchinbreck's centre, firing at close quarters and charging 'in a close bodie with such strength and furie as they ware forced to give backe upon there reire', which instead of either opening to receive them or standing to present covering fire, turned and ran. Some tried to escape the merciless claymores and Lochaber axes by making for the castle but Sir Thomas Ogilvie headed them off...

[Montrose] claimed that he would have prevented the ensuing slaughter had it been within his power to do so. Fifteen hundred of the enemy reputedly lost their lives. Many died where the waters of Nevis enter the loch. Some tried to escape into Glen Nevis where their graves are still pointed out. Others fled to what is now Fort William to be cut down at the foot of the Cow Hill. Alasdair pursued the defeated along the upper Auchintore road which skirts the Mamores on its way to Loch Leven...Near Loch Lundaure he gave up the chase. There, according to tradition, he erected a cairn 'Clach [nan] Caimbeulach'; 'every Campbell or sympathiser with Argyll throws down the topmost stone, every MacDonald or admirer

of Montrose with equal duty replaces it'. Ewen of Treshnish was wounded when he intervened to prevent an Atholl sword despatching Campbell of Skipness, one of his late comrades-in-arms in Ireland. Few of Sliochd Diarmaid were so fortunate. Auchinbreck was given the choice of death by the rope or the sword. His reply became proverbial, 'dha dhiu gun aon roghainn'...Alasdair understood that kind of language. Tradition says in any case that Auchinbreck died by his own hand...

This victory 'much diminished Argyll's credit among his own followers, to whom this day was very fatal,' wrote Menteith, 'because it broke the band wherewith he kept those poor Highlanders attached to his interest.' When the fortunate Campbell of Skipness was brought before Montrose he condemned the cowardice of his chief. According to Montrose himself the prisoners laid 'all the blame on their chief.'²⁰

The victory at Inverlochy, and the flight of Argyll, gave rise to many exultant poems by the bards of the royalist party, the best known of these being that composed by Iain Lom, who shows no mercy to the grieving Campbell widows:

Sgrios orm mas truagh leam bhur càramh,
'G éisdeachd anshocair bhur pàisdean,
Caoidh a' phannail bh' anns an àraich,
Donnalaich bhan Earr-Ghàidheal.²¹

Not surprisingly, the women's songs composed after the battle of Inverlochy which have survived are the laments of these Campbell women so cruelly mocked by Iain Lom. One of these²² lists the terrible loss suffered by one woman, the widow of Campbell of Glen Faochain, in which she blames "nan Eirionnach dòite", and the strength they added to the royalist cause, for her pitiful state:

Mharbh iad m' athair is m' fhear-pòsda,
'S mo thriùir mhacanan grinn òga,
'S mo cheathrar bhràithrean ga 'n stròiceadh,
'S mo naoidhnear cho-dhaltan bòidheach.
Loisg iad mo chuid coirc' is eòrna.

Mharbh iad mo chrodh mór gu feòlach,
'S mo chaoirich gheala ga 'n ròsdadh.²³

The last three lines given here undoubtedly refer to the raid on the countryside of Argyll carried out by Alasdair mac Colla and his followers in the winter of 1644–45, during which:

The Clan Campbell as a whole was successfully challenged for the first time in generations, and its reputation was shattered. Through this, and through his own failings in resisting the invasion, the marquis of Argyll was partially discredited...But the ravaging of Argyllshire was aimed at more than simply inflicting humiliating military defeat on the Campbells. It was, as far as Alasdair MacColla and his allies were concerned, the first major success in a campaign to destroy the Clan Campbell completely, reviving MacDonald power in its place. But military victory in itself would not free land for restoration to its rightful owners, the Clan Donald and other clans who had suffered at Campbell hands; therefore it was a brutal logic as well as lust for revenge that dictated that all Campbell men who were captured should be killed...Argyllshire was left 'lyke ane deserte'. With their menfolk fled or dead, their houses destroyed, their food, goods, and cattle carried off, the Campbell women and children must have suffered horribly in the winter months that followed.²⁴

The loss of the poetess' father, husband, four brothers and nine foster-brothers might seem exaggerated, but, as Stevenson points out: in an age when Highlanders still tended to fight in kin-based groups rather than in artificial military units it was quite possible for the killing of a group of enemies who had been surrounded to wipe out an entire family.²⁵

The poem continues to describe the woman's grief at the loss of her husband, and how this grief is shared by the people of his district:

Tha gach fear 's an tìr s' ga d' chaoineadh
Thall 'sa bhos mu Inbhir-Aora,
Mnathan 'sa bhasraich 's am falt sgaoilte.²⁶

Like Campbell of Skipness and the prisoners taken by Montrose after the battle, Glenfaochain's widow lays the blame for the defeat at Inverlochy on the shoulders of Argyll, condemning his flight from the battle and the way in which he left his clansmen to their fate at the hands of the royalists:

Thug Mac Cailein Mòr an linn' air,
'S leig e 'n sgrìob ud air a chinneadh.²⁷

It is unusual in Gaelic poetry to find such open criticism of a clan chief, although Roderick Morison's *Oran Do Mhac Leòid Dhùn Bheagain* ²⁸ is a later example. One can easily understand the sense of betrayal which must have been felt by the Campbells on being abandoned, as they saw it, by the head of their clan before such an important battle. The excuses made on Argyll's behalf, that:

Auchinbreck, not he, was in command; he was not by physique a useful fighting man, and he was still suffering from a damaged shoulder; he was the chief pillar of the Covenant in Scotland, and the head of a great clan; for him to risk his life, sword in hand, against desperate men was against every counsel of prudence and common sense²⁹

must have seemed very feeble to a woman who had lost eighteen of her menfolk fighting for his cause. Little wonder then, that she blames Argyll for having sailed away down the loch when his clan were in most need of his leadership and encouragement.

The lament of Mary Cameron of Callard³⁰, the widow of Patrick Campbell of Inverawe, is doubly poignant, considering that she had previously lost her own family to a plague of some kind and was now totally alone.

Tradition states that the lament was composed after she had been compelled by her father-in-law to marry as her second husband the Prior of Ardchattan, but one version³¹ seems to be much more immediate than one composed some time after the event could be. The lament does not mention Argyll or Inverlochy, but is a song of praise to her dead husband, and an expression of her own profound grief over his loss:

Nuair a thèid mi mach bithidh mo shùil riut,
A's n'ar thig mi staigh bithidh mo dhùil riut,

'S tric mo dheòir a' ruith o m' shùilean
Is dealbh Mhic Dhonnchaidh air mo ghlùin sibh.³²

Despite 'dealbh Mhic Dhonnchaidh', which could be interpreted literally as a portrait of Patrick Campbell, or metaphorically as a reference to his son, who resembles his father, Mary Cameron finds no solace now that her beloved husband is dead:

Tha féidh air ìnnseag na h-iùbhraich,
'S bric ann an linne na lùba;
'S ged a tha, ciod dhòmhsa is fiù iad,
'S mo Phàraig gaolach, 's e anns a' chrùiste.³³

This song strikes one as being the composition of a woman who was not much interested in the political situation which took her husband away from her: we find no expressions of support for the Covenant; no condemnation of the Royalists; no mention, even, of the protagonists in the battle of Inverlochy. Although the conflict was the cause of her husband's death, it is the *fact* of his death which concerns her, and which gives rise to her lament.

Stevenson suggests that Mary may have had divided loyalties, as the Camerons fought with Montrose³⁴, but I would argue that her only loyalty lay with her husband, and that her sole concern was for his safety rather than any political cause. Although she was a Cameron by birth, she had no close relatives marching with the Royalists, as her father and brothers were already dead from the plague which had struck the house of Callard.³⁵

There is, however, one lament composed after Inverlochy which is the work of a woman torn apart by the conflict³⁶. Fionnghal Caimbeul was the wife of Iain Garbh Maclean of Coll who, along with their son, Hector Roy, fought for Montrose; she was also the sister of Campbell of Auchinbreck, commander of the Covenant forces, who lost his life at Inverlochy. Fionnghal seems to have been treated badly by the Macleans, and opens her song by lamenting the fact that she ever went to Coll, describing how her husband's clan behaved towards her:

Rinn iad mo leab' aig an dorus,
Comaidh ri fearaibh 's ri conaibh;

'S thug iad am bràisd as mo bhroilleach,
'S m' usgraichean 's mo chneapan corrach...³⁷

Her bitterness against the Macleans knows no bounds, as she curses Hector Roy, her own son, thus:

Eachainn Ruadh de 'n fhine dhona,
'S coma leam ged théid thu dholaidh,
'S ged a bhiodh do shliochd gun toradh.³⁸

Fionnghal feels totally alone in Cell, as there is nobody to share her grief for her brother, and she expresses her wish to be in Inverary, where there would be tearing of hair and beating of hands over the death of Auchinbreck. The strongest expression of her emotions, and her loyalties, is reserved for the final stanza. This is full of venom against the Macleans and Clan Donald, whom she holds responsible for the death of her brother; traditional accounts, indeed, attribute the death of Auchinbreck to Alasdair Mac Cholla:

Nan robh mis' an Inbhir-Lòchaidh...
Dheanainn fuil ann, dheanainn stròiceadh,
Air na Leathanaich 's Clann Dòmhnall;
Bhiodh na h-Eireannaich gun deò annt',
Is na Duibhnich bheirinn beò as.³⁹

Stevenson relates that "soon after Inverlochy [Fionnghal] went mad", and adds, "whether or not this is true, the poem starkly portrays a woman in the first wild paroxysms of grief, torn between the conflicting claims to her loyalty of Campbells and MacLeans."⁴⁰ From actual text of the song, however, it seems that Fionnghal's grief stems not so much from conflicting loyalties, but from the fact that her loyalty lay with one side, while she was the mother and wife of members of the opposing side, and living in the lands of a clan which was fighting against her own. One can only try to imagine the agony of her position, and, if she did lose her mind, it is understandable in such circumstances.

The extant songs by women relating to the Covenanting wars thus give us both sides of the story: the joy of the victors and the sorrow of the vanquished. The women shared the same language and

heritage, differing only in the political stance taken by their respective clan chiefs, and the effects which this had on them.

Scotland was again in a state of turmoil and conflict less than half a century after the final defeat of Montrose, when the Highland clans rallied behind Graham of Claverhouse in rebellion against the Revolution Settlement of 1689. James VII and II had earned the resentment of many with his attempts to catholicise Britain, but the final straw was the birth of a son, in 1688, to James and his second, and Catholic, wife. This:

fused numerous interests, two of which were paramount. The King's Protestant opponents in Britain envisaged the possibility of an endless Roman Catholic dynasty; to William of Orange it meant the end of his wife's right of succession to the British throne, and of vital British support for the Dutch in future years against France.⁴¹

As a result of this, James was forced to follow his wife and newborn son into exile, and William of Orange arrived in Britain to take up the throne offered to him by Parliament. This move was not universally popular, and armies were raised by those still loyal to King James in an attempt to restore him to his throne. The Scottish army was led by Graham of Claverhouse, Viscount Dundee.

Although there are many songs connected with this campaign composed by men, there is only one by a woman author which survives. The song⁴² is a lament for Dòmhnall Gorm, younger son of Glengarry, who was killed at the battle of Killiecrankie. The lament is ascribed to his wife, who is named as Nì Mhic Raghnaill, although it seems unlikely that this is the same poetess who composed the lament for the murdered chief of Keppoch and his brother in 1663, as, according to *Clan Donald*, she died unmarried.⁴³

Clan Donald is not, however, a completely reliable source. In vol. II, the Donald Gorm who was slain at Killiecrankie, having "killed 18 of the enemy with his own hand", is said to be the son of Alasdair Dubh, heir to Glengarry, although "a brother of Alasdair Dubh is also said to have fallen."⁴⁴ In the genealogies of the families of Clan Donald in vol. III, compiled by the same authors, there is no son of Alasdair Dubh named Donald, although Donald Gorm is given as the son of Ranald, 9th of Glengarry, and thus the brother of Alasdair Dubh.⁴⁵ The genealogies as given in *Clan Donald* cast doubt on the naming of Donald Gorm's wife as Nì Mhic Raghnaill, as none of the

sisters or daughters of the contemporary chiefs of Keppoch are said to have married Donald Gorm. Furthermore, the poetess is said to have lost her father and brothers at Killiecrankie⁴⁶, and, although the chief of Keppoch, Colla nam Bò, was at Killiecrankie, neither he nor his brothers or sons died there. The inconsistencies in *Clan Donald* add to the confusion: A daughter of Alasdair nan Cleas, 10th of Keppoch, is said to have married Donald Mac Angus of Glengarry⁴⁷; but, although three wives are listed for this Donald, grandfather of Donald Gorm, none of them are from the family of Keppoch; a daughter of Archibald, 15th of Keppoch, and thus sister to both Colla nam Bò and Sìleas na Ceapaich, is said to have been the wife of Alexander MacDonald, 12th of Glencoe⁴⁸, but the list of Keppoch's children⁴⁹ includes no daughters married to Glencoe.

If we put the inconsistencies to one side and accept the information regarding the daughters of the Keppoch family to be correct, we must then ask who the wife of Donald Gorm was, and how she came to be known as Nì Mhic Raghnaill. One possibility is that she was not Nì *Mhic* Raghnaill, which implies a member of the Keppoch family, but simply Nighean Raghnaill, and that oral transmission of the tradition surrounding the song is to blame for the alteration in the ascription. Another reason might be that, if Donald Gorm was known as Mac Raghnaill, his father being Ranald, 9th of Glengarry, our poetess could have been named Nì Mhic Raghnaill in the same way that Iseabail Ní Mheic Cailéin was the wife, rather than the daughter, of Mac Cailean. The former theory seems the more plausible, but one must bear in mind the inaccuracies in the *Clan Donald* genealogies, and the possibility that the poetess was a daughter of Keppoch who was overlooked by the compilers of that work.

The song itself is a cry from the heart, although containing elements of classical bardic elegy: Dòmhnall Gorm is praised for his looks, his strength, his handling of weapons, and his prowess as a hunter, alongside striking images of genuine grief, such as:

Tha mo chridh' air a dhochnadh
Mar gun goirticheadh sgian e⁵⁰

The only mention of the poetess' family backs up the note in the MacLagan manuscript, while weakening the Keppoch connection:

Bean gun bhràthair gun athair
 Gun fhear-tighe gun chéile.⁵¹

MacLagan may have been mistaken in his belief that it was at Killiecrankie that she lost the rest of her family, but, even if this happened earlier, we still cannot find a link to Keppoch. MacLagan was certainly mistaken in giving Dòmhnall Gorm the title of *tànaistear* of Glengarry⁵², indicating the heir to the chiefship, when we know that Alasdair Dubh held that title as the eldest son. Whoever Dòmhnall Gorm's wife really was, it is clear that the death of her husband is the hardest to bear of all her losses, and that it is the main cause of her grief:

Chan eil air an t-saoghal,
 Do dhaoineibh no dh' àirneis,
 No dh' uachdaran finnidh,
 No chinneach no chàirdibh,
 Aon nì 'tha mi 'g acain;
 Ge b' ait leam nan slàint' iad,
 Ach am fear ud a phòs mi
 Glè òg is mi 'm phàistein.⁵³

Despite the confusion surrounding the identity of the composer of this lament, there is no doubt as to the love and tenderness displayed by the poetess for her husband, and her profound and sincere grief at his loss. It is a fine example of the mixture of heartfelt lament with the more classical elements of bardic elegy to produce a work which is at once full of praise, pride, love and sorrow.

Although the battle of Killiecrankie was a victory for the forces led by Viscount Dundee, the loss of Claverhouse himself in the battle effectively ended any hopes of success for his cause, and an uneasy peace settled on the Highlands and Islands for a quarter of a century, until the Jacobite rebellion of 1715.

The reign of William and Mary had been followed by the reign of Mary's younger sister, Anne, whose children all predeceased her. Although it has been suggested that Anne wished her half-brother, James VIII and III, to be her successor, this was precluded by the

1701 Act of Settlement, passed by the English Parliament, which stated that she was to be succeeded by her nearest Protestant relative, The Electress Sophia of Hanover, or her heirs. This would not have prevented the Scottish Parliament from choosing James as their monarch, had the Union of the Parliaments not occurred seven years before the death of Anne. The Act of Settlement notwithstanding "many people have said ever since that had James come straight over from France the moment Anne died, and declared himself King, he would probably have been accepted even though remaining a Catholic".⁵⁴ Instead, George, Elector of Hanover and son of Sophia, was proclaimed King, and arrived in England on the 18th of September 1714.

The first poem by a woman which is concerned with this period of turmoil is a song to King James by Sileas na Ceapaich, an ardent Jacobite. *Do Rìgh Seumas* ⁵⁵ has been dated by to late 1714 or early 1715, probably after James' declaration of his intention to resist the succession of the Elector of Hanover by force.⁵⁶

Sileas' song contains the refrain *Mo Mhàili bheag O*, and it is unclear whether this is because she is singing it to a child (possibly her daughter or a grand-daughter) or whether it is some sort of code-name for King James. The latter explanation is quite possible, as the pseudonym *Mòrag* was used for Prince Charles Edward Stuart during the rising of 1745. The song is vigorous and joyful, inspired by a (false) report that James was on his way immediately, and with a large fleet, although Sileas is aware of the unreliability of such rumours, and in fact seems to doubt the truth of what she has heard, with the words, *Nam b' fhìor na bheil mi cluinntinn*.

Having begun her song by expressing her joy at the news which she has received, of the imminent arrival of James, and the surrender of his opponents, Sileas launches an attack on the house of Hanover and the English government, using the image of a pig which was so often used by poets such as Mac Mhaighstir Alasdair in the 1745 campaign:

Tha do chathair aig *Hanòver*
Mo Mhàili bheag O,
 Do chrùn 's do chathair còrach,
Mo nighean rùin O ;
 Tha 'n sean-fhacal cho cinnteach

'S gur barail leam gur fìor e,
 Nach marcach muc an dìollaid,
*Mo Mhàili bheag O.*⁵⁷

Sileas was evidently against the Union of the Parliaments, which took place in 1707, thereby removing the right of the Scottish parliament to choose their own monarch, and ensuring that the Act of Settlement passed by the English parliament in 1701 would apply to Scotland also. She feels that Scotland has been sold to England, and evidently sees it as a rapacious invader rather than a partner, urging Scotland to fight against it:

Ach Alba éiribh còmhla,
Mo Mhàili bheag O,
 Mun gearr Sasunnaich ur sgòrnan,
Mo nighean rùin O ;
 Nuair thug iad airson òir uaibh
 Ur creideas is ur stòras...⁵⁸

The Union is described as *uinnein puinnsein*, a poisoned onion served up to the Scots, making a pun on 'union' and 'uinnean'. Sileas then goes on to invoke Divine power to ensure that James gains the throne, trusting that God is on his side.

The next poem composed by Sileas on this subject is one entitled *Do Dh' Fheachd Mhorair Mar* ⁵⁹, composed "between September (when the Highland leaders set out to collect their men) and 13th November 1715 (when the Battle of Sheriffmuir took place)." ⁶⁰ Sileas begins this poem with an expression of her anxiety over the men who have left to join Mar, knowing that some of them will not return:

...chaidh iad air astar
 Gun chinnt mu 'n teachd dhachaidh ⁶¹

Her mood then lifts slightly, as she wishes them success in their struggle, and hopes that James will be crowned in England as a result of their efforts. She names individuals who have risen with Mar, beginning with "Dòmhnall o 'n Dùn", or *Dòmhnall a' Chogaidh*, the fourth Baronet of Sleat:

From the beginning of the eighteenth century to the eve of the Rebellion, Sir Donald had lived mostly in Glasgow and had little communication with the isles; but, released from prison, where he had been detained on suspicion of Jacobite tendencies [He fought with Dundee at Killiecrankie] in 1714-15, he repaired to Skye to raise there his following of seven hundred to nine hundred men⁶².

Sir Donald was unable to take part in Mar's rising himself, as he was taken ill on his way south, so his brothers, James of Orinsay and William, also mentioned by Sileas, took on his rôle as leaders of the MacDonalds of Sleat in Mar's army.

The next leader named by Sileas is Alasdair Dubh of Glengarry, who had also fought at Killiecrankie. He had been at Mar's meeting at Braemar, after which "the lairds and chiefs dispersed to their own territories to raise their men. Of those who had come from the west of Scotland, only Glengarry honoured his word and immediately set about calling out his clan..."⁶³ His prowess in battle is praised thus:

'Nuair a théid thu gu buillean,
'S do nàimhdean a dh' fhuireach,
Gu cinnteach bidh fuil air am bian.⁶⁴

Although Grant of Glenmoriston came out with Glengarry, Sileas does not mention him here, preferring for the moment to concentrate on her own clan, Clan Donald. The next member mentioned is Ailean Mùideartach, leader of Clanranald, and yet another veteran of Killiecrankie, after which he fled to France with his brother and joined the French guard:

The Proclamation issued by the government, offering protection in their persons and property to all who had been in arms, if they would surrender and take the oath of allegiance, before the 1st of January, 1692, was spurned by Clanranald, who proceeded with his brother Ranald, to France, where he completed his education, under the eye of James VII., and became one of the most accomplished gentlemen of his age.⁶⁵

Sileas alludes to an injury which has made it impossible for Ailean to have children:

'S e ro-mheud do ghaisge
Chum gun oighr' air do phearsa ⁶⁶

I know of no other reference to such a wound in the historical works connected with Clanranald, or the rising of 1715, but Sileas may well be correct. Although he was married by the time he returned to Uist, around 1704, Ailean died childless, and was succeeded by his brother, Ranald. He was one of the first to rise in support of King James:

— see 65
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It is generally believed that he was in correspondence with the Court of St. Germain before the rising of 1715, for no sooner had the Earl of Mar raised his standard at Braemar than Clanranald sailed from Uist with his followers, and summoned his vassals of Moydart, Arasaig, and the small isles.⁶⁷

After Clanranald, Sileas praises her own branch of Clan Donald, the MacDonalds of Keppoch, led by her brother, Colla nam Bò. This praise is somewhat premature, as Coll did not take part in this rising, although he had fought with distinction at Killiecrankie. He was not alone in his reluctance to lead his men into battle once again in the Stuart cause, and for good reason:

One of the reasons given by some of the chiefs for their reluctance to join Gordon and Glengarry was fear of raids into their territories by the Government troops at Fort William. This was put forward by Coll Macdonnell of Keppoch in a letter of 3 October 1715. He promised to come as soon as he could, but referred to 'the Country People being terrified by the Garrison of Fort William, who threatens to destroy all the Country how soon ever we leave it.'⁶⁸

Having dealt with the main branches of Clan Donald involved, Sileas moves on to mention the other clans which took part: the MacKenzies of Seaforth, Frasers of Fraserdale, MacLeods, MacKinnons and Chisholms. She uses a long metaphor on cock-fighting to describe the support of the Duke of Gordon, the Cock of the North, for the Stuart cause, even though he was in captivity, with his son acting as his representative in Mar's army.

Robertson of Struan, another returned from exile in France

after Killiecrankie, and the Forbeses, who were tenants of the Earl of Mar are praised, although Sileas expresses her regret that the Forbeses are not as numerous as they might have been, due to being led by a Whig:

Tha mo ghruaim ris a' bhuidhinn ud thall,
 A luaithead 's a mhùth iad an t-sreang;
 Tha mi cinnteach am aigne
 Gum bu mhiann leo bhith againn
 Mur biodh Chuigse bhith aca mar cheann.⁶⁹

MacPherson of Cluny is the last clan leader to be praised, although Sileas seems unsure as to whether or not he will actually join the rising. Sileas had good reason to doubt Cluny's willingness to fight:

Duncan MacPherson of Cluny succeeded his brother in 1666 as 16th chief of his family, and he appears to have spent much of his career in trying to avoid taking sides in battles...In 1689, 250 of his men fought for James VII at Killiecrankie, but Duncan was not committed...He was an old man in 1715 (he died in 1722), and, once again, though some of his men were present at Sheriffmuir...he did not come out himself.⁷⁰

Sileas concludes the poem by looking forward to the day that Mar's army reaches London and takes power, although we know now that this was not destined to happen.

The Battle of Sheriffmuir which, though indecisive, effectively put paid to the Jacobite cause, is the subject of the next poem connected with the rising which has been ascribed to Sileas. *Sgeul a thàinig an dràsda orm* ⁷¹ opens with Sileas lamenting devastating news which she has received about the battle: that Huntly deserted his men and that the clans all suffered terrible losses. The truth was that the Jacobite right wing defeated Argyll's left, the survivors of which "kept running all the way back to Stirling, where they reported a complete defeat"⁷², while the Jacobite left wing was defeated by Argyll's right. Of Huntly's rôle in all this, there are conflicting reports:

Some accounts...indicate that the whole of the Jacobite horse which should have supported this left wing had been moved by

error across to the right. On the other hand, there are certain authorities who indicate that the Marquess of Huntly's horse was involved in the fighting in the withdrawal to the Allan Water. Indeed, many of the very uncharitable things that were said about Huntly are concerned with his flight from the dragoons' attack.⁷³

This seems to be what Sìleas refers to when she says:

Thug Morair Hunntainn as a chasan,
'S beagan each nach b' fhiach ⁷⁴

The news that her own son was among the casualties, "mo mhac-sa air dol dhiom", gives Sìleas a further cause for grief, but although she condemns what she has heard of Huntly's actions, she decides that the reports cannot be true, bracketing the Gordons with Clan Donald in terms of loyalty and bravery:

Gar am biodh ann ach Gòrdanaich 's Clann Dòmhnail
Thachairt còmhla anns a' bhlàr,
Cha toir an saoghal orm a shaoilsinn
Nach tug iad aodainn dàibh.⁷⁵

We are then given a vivid description of the battle, and the valorous part played by Clan Donald, although we must remember that Sìleas' perception of events is coloured by her strongly partisan feelings. There is a rebuke for Huntly and those who fled with him:

Ceud mallachd aig a' phàirtidh
A dh' fhàg sibh ann am feum,
Bha 'n cùirt an rìgh 's Mhorair Hunntainn,
Luchd plùndrainn nan ceud⁷⁶

Her feelings about Huntly seem to be justified:

Huntly was aggrieved that he was not chosen to lead the Rising...which many of the Highlanders also expected him to do...He contacted Argyll about surrender terms even before the battle, and was among the first to submit to the Government afterwards.⁷⁷

Sileas, however, makes no mention of the cowardly behaviour of Seaforth, who, instead of leading his clan into battle, stood back from the fight and watched his clansmen fall at the hands of Argyll's right wing.⁷⁸

This poem seems to have been composed over a period of time, rather than truly *ex tempore*, for by the end it is clear that Sileas has received a more accurate account of what happened at Sheriffmuir. She laments the loss of the Captain of Clanranald, and of the Earl of Strathmore, who was only twenty-five years old when he died. His youth is referred to by Sileas, using the image of a tree:

Am planntas deas dàicheil
Nach d' fhàs ach 'n a ghéig⁷⁹

The identity of the two Iain Grants whom she also laments is unclear, although the Grants of Glenmoriston were certainly in Mar's army, having joined at the same time as the MacDonalds of Glengarry:

The most distinguished Iain Grant present at Sheriffmuir was Iain a' Chragain (1657–1736), 6th chief of Glenmoriston, who with his men followed Glengarry and joined General Gordon's force about 20th September 1715...But unless Sileas is misinformed he cannot be one of the Iain Grants mentioned here, for he survived the battle.⁸⁰

At the same time, the two Iain Grants "must almost certainly have been Glenmoriston Grants, since the other main branch of the family, the Grants of Grant, were Whigs."⁸¹

Sileas finishes by lamenting all the young men who have died in the Jacobite cause, praising their devotion and their bravery:

'S e meud an dùrachd anns a' chùis ud
Chuir air lùths an lann,
'Gan spadadh le luaidh ghlas 's le fùdar,
'S b' e mo dhiùbhail bh' ann.⁸²

The second poem on the battle of Sheriffmuir which has been ascribed to Sileas⁸³ is much more spirited, vehemently attacking those clan leaders whom she considers to have been less than enthusiastic in the fight. She first turns her vitriol on Seaforth, chastising him for

his failure to take part in the battle, and for his subsequent flight, although there is "no evidence for the distance he ran from the battle, or that he ran at all".⁸⁴ Sileas has evidently heard that he did just that, and attacks his cowardice:

Nuair a chunnaic thu 'm blàr
 'S ann a thàir thu 'n t-eagal;
 Rinn thu cóig mìle deug
 Gun t' each sréin a chasadh ⁸⁵

She then turns her attention, somewhat unfairly judging by historical evidence, on the Camerons of Locheil:

Fire faire, Lochiall !
 Sud mar thrial do ghaigich:
 'Nan ruith leis an t-sliabh,
 Làn fiamh is gealtachd⁸⁶

The Camerons of Locheil were on the Jacobite left wing, which was decimated by Argyll's dragoons, where they "bore the brunt of Argyll's attack and were defeated and driven back in spite of having rallied six times"⁸⁷ After the destruction of the left wing, the survivors fled in the direction of the Allan Water, where many of them were drowned, "but very few actually cut down by the dragoons...Argyll's Scots officers were more anxious to drive off than kill the enemy, many of whom were their friends, and even relatives".⁸⁸

The next clan at the receiving end of Sileas' sharp tongue are the Gordons, the very clan she had praised in the previous poem, saying now that they ran away *le luaths an casan*. This condemnation of the Gordons might lead one to suspect that Sileas was not, in fact, the author of this poem, as she was married to a Gordon and her son, whom we know from the previous poem to have taken part in the battle, would presumably have been amongst those very Gordons accused of cowardice. However, one has only to take the evidence of the poem by Fionnghal Caimbeul on the battle of Inverlochy to show that ties by blood can be stronger than ties by marriage, and one's allegiance to one's own clan stronger than that to any other. Sileas is, first and foremost, a MacDonald poetess, and this could have

allowed her to make such a statement, so we cannot assume that she could not have composed this poem simply because it is less than flattering towards her husband's clan.

Although Sileas is fiercely partisan in the Stuart cause, she is not impressed by the conduct of the Stewart clan at Sheriffmuir, saying that they are *Làn spid is maslaidh*, and she is similarly contemptuous of the MacKinnons, whom she accuses of fleeing before the enemy:

Theich buidheann nam faochag
Gun aodach dhachaidh.⁸⁹

The explanation for this last line is that "The Highlanders threw off their plaids on going into battle...and those who were defeated were unable to return for them."⁹⁰ The MacKinnons were on the left wing of Mar's army, and thus defeated, so they could not reclaim their plaids after the battle.

The men of Atholl and Badenoch are the next on Sileas' list of cowards and traitors, as she describes how:

Theich iad bho 'n bhlàr
Gun stà, gun fhuireach ⁹¹

The Duke of Atholl was on the government side, but his son, William Murray, Marquis of Tullibardine, was in Mar's army leading the Atholl Highlanders. They were in the defeated second line at Sheriffmuir, but only Sileas seems to view their actions as treacherous. The men of Badenoch referred to are the MacPhersons, some of whom joined the Jacobite army despite the neutral stance adopted by their leader, MacPherson of Cluny.⁹²

Many of them joined the MacGregors under Rob Roy...who kept his followers aloof from the Sheriffmuir action; they were met several miles from the battlefield by the fleeing men of Mar's left wing...But John Cameron tells us that some of the MacPhersons, like the MacKinnons, joined up with the Camerons at the battle, and these are probably the "fir Bhàideanaich" here referred to.⁹³

So it would seem that criticism of at least some of the MacPhersons is justified, but not of them all, and that the blame for the inaction of

those who stayed out of the battle should be laid at the door of Rob Roy MacGregor, and not at that of the MacPhersons who, after all, were under no obligation to have been in Mar's army, when their chief had refused to join.

Robert Stewart of Appin, "Raibeart nam bó" is the next leader criticised, again somewhat unfairly. He "brought 250 men to join General Gordon's contingent for Mar's army"⁹⁴, so Sileas' accusation that:

...cha b' fhiach am biadh,
An t-aon chiad a bh' agad.⁹⁵

is inaccurate. As O Baoill points out, the designation "Raibeart nam bó" could apply to Rob Roy MacGregor, but the rest of the stanza makes it clear that the subject is someone who had dealings with Queen Anne, gaining money from her, and all this fits in with Robert Stewart of Appin, who was Commissioner of supply for Argyllshire under the government of Queen Anne.⁹⁶

Sileas finishes this poem, as one might expect, with words of praise for Clan Donald, and the actions of Alasdair of Glengarry after Clanranald had fallen:

Chaidh e sìos an rathad
Gu cruadalach dian
'Nuair bha 'n triath laighe⁹⁷

The men of Clan Donald are the only ones to escape Sileas' wrath in this poem, as they are the only ones mentioned for their good conduct, and their response to Alasdair Dubh's call, rather than for cowardice. The song is rounded off with a refrain lamenting the loss of Clanranald:

Air chalmain duinn, O!
Gun d' fhalbh ar Caiptinn;
Call iù ri ò,
Cha tàinig e dhachaidh.⁹⁸

This final reference, to *ar* Caiptinn rather than *an* Caiptean, might lead one to suspect that the author was a member of the Clanranald branch of Clan Donald, rather than the Keppoch branch, as Sileas was. O

Baoill admits that "the ascription to Sìleas is notably late, as the text is (1894), and is totally unsubstantiated".⁹⁹

The ascription of the third poem on the battle of Sheriffmuir, which is included in Ó Baoill's collection, to Sìleas is very doubtful indeed:

much of this poem sounds like the work of a participant or an eye-witness, and on this score we might be justified in deciding that Sìleas was not the author.¹⁰⁰

For this reason, given that certainly a participant in, and probably an eye-witness of, the battle of Sheriffmuir would have been male rather than female, I have chosen not to discuss the poem, *Dh' innsinn sgeula dhuibh le reusan* ¹⁰¹ here.

There is, however, another poem by Sìleas concerning the Rising of 1715¹⁰², which is addressed to King James' army. It would seem to have been composed in the time between the battle of Sheriffmuir and the arrival of James on 22nd December 1715.¹⁰³

Sìleas begins by lamenting the state in which the Highlanders have found themselves after Sheriffmuir, with many women left widowed and grieving for the men they have lost:

A' sìor chaidh nan uaislean
A fhuair iad ri phòsadh.¹⁰⁴

She laments the dispersal of those who have survived the battle, who have been living as fugitives, but claims that they will gather and fight again when the need arises, with the arrival of King James:

Ged a tha sibh 's an àm
Air feadh ghleann agus munaidhean,
Gu nochd sibh ur ceann
An àm teanntachd mar churaidhnean;
'Nuair thig Seumas a nall
'S i ur lann bhios fuileachdach ¹⁰⁵

She invokes divine power to protect the army from danger and suffering, hoping that they will be spared:

O bhuillibh de 'n tuaigh
Tha na h-uaislean a' fuileachdainn¹⁰⁶

This may be a reference to the leaders captured at the battle of Preston, and held prisoner awaiting trial, but although some of them were subsequently executed, no executions had taken place at this time¹⁰⁷. Of course, Sileas would have known that many of them were liable to be executed for their part in the rebellion, so this reference is not out of place.

Her attention then turns from the Jacobite army to the enemy, namely King George, whom she accuses of being *gun tròcair gun bhàidh*, and of butchering the Jacobites. She is also only too aware of the power of bribery, which she claims George, *an sean-mhadadh-allaidh*, and the Whigs are using in order to persuade the Highlanders to lay down their arms, and to buy the allegiance of those who have sided with James. Although this did not, in fact happen, Sileas declares in any case that this will have no effect, and that:

...luchd togail nan arm
Bidh iad searbh dhàibh ri chunntadh¹⁰⁸

In this, Sileas' expectations matched those of Argyll, but they were both mistaken:

Argyll estimated in November 1715 that James could quickly assemble 20,000 men on his arrival in Scotland, but when James eventually reached the army at Perth there were barely 5000.¹⁰⁹

The final stanza uses the parable of the dog who dropped his meat into the water while looking at his own reflection to illustrate the submission of some of the Jacobite leaders to the government after Sheriffmuir:

suggesting that in submitting they are throwing away the benefits of a victory which is still within their grasp, in a vain hope of getting other benefits from the Government. Such leaders would include Seaforth, who eventually submitted at Inverness...and Huntly, who had been seeking surrender terms from Argyll even before the battle.¹¹⁰

From these poems we can see that, although occasionally unfair in her criticism of other clans, Sileas was a fervent Jacobite, and fiercely partisan in her support for both King James and Clan Donald.

The next bardess moved to song by the events of 1715 and their aftermath is Mairearad Nighean Lachlainn, who was based in Mull, on Maclean lands, although which clan she actually belonged to is disputed¹¹¹. The song beginning *Dh' fhalbh mo chadal a' smaointinn*¹¹² was composed by her around the year 1715, and is addressed to Sir Iain Maclean, who died in February 1716 at Gordon Castle, and was buried at Elgin, according to a letter sent by Clanranald to the Duke of Mar in 1716.¹¹³

At the time of the composition of this song, Sir Iain was evidently still alive, but away from Mull. Sir Iain returned to Britain from France, where he had lived since about 1692, in 1703...after which "he resided in London and occasionally in the highlands."¹¹⁴ This must be what Mairearad is referring to with:

Sir Iain cha d' fhuirich
 Cha do dh' fhaodadh a chumail
 Air bhòrd ann an Lunnainn,
 No a' feitheamh air furan rìgh Deòrsa.¹¹⁵

The poetess seems to be lamenting the loss to the clan of having a leader close at hand, and living in his lands. Sir Iain could not do this because of actions taken against him by Argyll after Killiecrankie:

Sir John [Iain] returned home and retained possession of his estates till Argyle represented him to King William as an enemy to his cause, and procured a commission from him to bring the Macleans to obedience; which he began to do by fire and sword. He came to Mull with 2,500 men, but Sir John being unprepared for resistance in consequence of the desertion from his cause of Glengarry and Lochail who had faithfully promised to assist him, he did not deem it prudent to offer opposition, all friends, save his own clan, having forsaken him; and knowing, though he should get the better of Argyle, yet being in arms against the existing government and his wily enemy being in favour, his ultimate ruin was inevitable. He

therefore advised his friends to take protections from Argyle, while he himself, with a number of his armed followers, went to the garrisoned island of Kernburg, [Cairnburgh] where he captured several ships belonging to King William, one of which was laden with necessities for the army in Ireland.¹¹⁶

Maclean stayed on this island until 1692, when he left to go first to London, and then to France, where he stayed in the court of King James at St. Germain's until his return in early 1704. Mairead looks forward to the return of her chief, who is sadly missed by all his clansmen and clanswomen:

'S iomadh bean agus nighean
A thogadh e 'n cridhe
Na 'n deanadh tu tighinn
Mar a b' ait leinn a rithist le sòlas.¹¹⁷

Her song is a mixture of praise for the absent chief: listing his noble ancestry; his personal appearance and his armoury; combined with expressions of grief at his not being amongst his own people. The poetess uses striking imagery to convey this:

'S ann a tha do luchd-muinntir'
Mar ghaoir sheillean 'gad ionndrainn¹¹⁸

The people of Mull had good cause to grieve the absence of their chief, and his adherence to his principles, rather than political ends:

He had many opportunities of making his peace with King William, as well as with his successor Queen Anne, and thereby to save his estates from the fangs of those who for generations industriously laboured to make his hereditary rights their prey. They at length unhappily succeeded, and the forfeited property of the chief of Maclean enabled Archibald Campbell, first Duke of Argyle, to add to his other insidiously acquired honours the title of "Lord of Mull, Morvern, and Tyrie".¹¹⁹

The death of Sir Iain, as well as the situation in which his devotion to the Stuart cause had left his clan, gave rise to what is probably

Mairearad's most famous poem, *Gaoir nam ban Muileach* ¹²⁰ which was composed in 1716. In this poem, she laments the loss of Sir Iain, and the fact that his absence from Mull this time is permanent:

...gun Sir Iain ann an Lunnainn,
No 'san Fhraing air cheann turais¹²¹

Sir Iain did have the opportunity to escape to France with King James after the failure of the 1715 rising, but was unable to accept it due to ill health.¹²² The illness which caused him to remain in Scotland is referred to by Mairearad:

'S e mo chreach gun do dhrùidh ort
Meud an eallaich a bhrùchd ort,
'S nach robh léigh ann a dhiùchradh am bàs bhuaith.¹²³

She goes on to describe the misfortunes of the Macleans of Duart at the hands of the Campbells, although claiming that her main cause for grief is the loss of Sir Iain himself: "'s e lom sgrìob an earraich so 'chràidh mi."¹²⁴ Later on she exclaims:

Oirne thàinig an diobhail !
Tha Sir Iain a dhìth oirnn,
'S Clann-Ghilleoin air an diobradh...
Iad am measg an luchd mìoruin
Is a fulang gach mì-mhodh ¹²⁵

The personal qualities of Sir Iain are again listed in this poem: his bravery in battle; his generosity; his allies and his lineage. The Clan Maclean in general are praised, and the loss of so many of them at Killiecrankie is lamented:

Fhrois gach abhall a h-ùbhlán,
Dh' fhalbh gach blàth agus ùr-ròs,
'S tha ar coill' air a rùsgadh de 'h-àilleachd.¹²⁶

The clan was further weakened by the fact that Sir Iain's only son, Hector, was but a child at the time of his father's death, *gun an t-oighre 'na ghliocas*, but Mairearad expresses her hope that he will

enjoy more of his hereditary lands than Sir Iain did.

The final cause which Mairearad gives for her sorrow is that Sir Iain's body was not brought home to be buried amongst his own people, *Mar ri t' athair 's ri d' sheanair*.

The final stanza of this poem is full of sorrow at the loss of the chief, but more importantly for the repressed and leaderless state of the Clan Maclean. It contains some very effective imagery, and is worth quoting in full:

'S mairg a gheibheadh gach buille
A fhuair sinne bho 'n uiridh;
Thàinig tonn air muin tuinne
A dh' fhàg lòn sinn 's an cunnart,
Chaidh ar creuchdadh gu guineach,
Dh' fhalbh ar n-eibhneas gu buileach;
Bhrist ar claidheabh 'na dhuille
Nuair a shaoil sinn gun cumamaid slàn e.¹²⁷

The next poem is one which is more directly concerned with the Rising of 1715 than those composed by Mairearad Nighean Lachlainn. The song to William Mackintosh of Borlum¹²⁸ was composed by his foster-mother in 1716, when William was still imprisoned and awaiting trial after the battle of Preston.

William of Borlum, known as the Brigadier, joined Mar's army at Perth on the 5th of October 1715, and his clan regiment "was generally considered to be the best in the Jacobite army"¹²⁹. With him was his nephew, the chief of Mackintosh, who was acting as his Lieutenant-Colonel. Borlum was the commander of the Jacobite force which crossed the Firth of Forth on the night of Wednesday, 12th October, 1715. From there, with about fifteen hundred men, he marched first on Edinburgh, and seeing no opposition to them there, to Leith, which they took and:

barricaded up the old fort, which was largely intact, and mounted cannon on the ramparts. The gates and entry points they blocked with beams, carts filled with stones, earth, and other debris.¹³⁰

This enabled the Jacobites to defy Argyll's orders to surrender when he arrived from Stirling, although it did not serve them to any

other purpose, as they could not make a successful attack on Edinburgh, now that it was reinforced by three hundred dragoons and two hundred foot soldiers sent by Argyll. Realizing this, Borlum left the Old Citadel on the 15th October and marched to Seaton House, which belonged to the Earl of Wintoun, and which the Jacobites set about fortifying. From there Borlum's force headed for the Borders, where he finally met up with the Northumbrian Jacobites and the Scottish Border group on the 22nd of October.¹³¹

One would have expected such exploits to have been exulted over in a poem addressed to William of Borlum, but this is not so. The poetess, Nic Ghille Sheathanaich, is too concerned over his present plight to dwell on his past escapades, although she praises his courage and his worth as a leader:

Am fear misneachail morlaoch,
A lean a chòir air a cùl,
Beinn Sheoin thu nach dìobair,
Cridhe dileas gun lùb¹³²

The battle of Preston, which led to the imprisonment of William of Borlum, began on 12th November 1715. The Jacobite force was in control of the town, and repulsed the attack of the government troops on the opening day. The government army was, however, reinforced by up to two thousand five hundred men on the following day, and succeeded in blocking all exits from the town. Although the Highlanders wished to carry on fighting, Forster, the leader of the Northumbrian Jacobites, was discussing surrender terms by midday. There was much to-ing and fro-ing in the course of that day, with the Jacobite leaders attempting to get the best possible surrender terms for their men, but all this ended when:

At 7 a.m. on Monday 14 November the Jacobites sent out their final answer, which was to accept [General] Wills's terms of capitulation and surrender at discretion, as rebels taken in the act of rebellion.¹³³

After this, the prisoners were divided up:

...as a start the lords, officers and gentlemen were split up. The important ones were sent off to Wigan on 21 November en route for London and trial...The less important were

distributed in gaols locally – Chester, Lancaster and Liverpool
– to await trial in Lancashire.¹³⁴

William of Borlum was amongst those sent to London for trial, which is where he must have been when this poem was composed, some time between the 21st of November 1715 and the 4th of May 1716, when Borlum and thirteen others broke out from Newgate Prison:

The break-out had a definitely 'Borlum' character: no slipping out in disguise, but a sudden rushing of the guards in the exercise-yard and a wild dash out into the streets...Borlum himself, his son... and one or two others managed to get clean away. ¹³⁵

All this, of course, had yet to take place when Nic Ghille Sheathanaich composed her song, and her mood is one of sadness and anxiety. She opens by exclaiming that she has no cause for laughter since the Rising began:

'S tearc an diugh mo chùis gàire
Bho 'n chaidh Albainn gu strì ¹³⁶

She shows herself to be fervently pro-Jacobite, and anti-Whig, lamenting the nobles who have been lost in the struggle against the government:

Tha na h-urrachan prìseil
A dol sìos mar am moll,
Aig fir-Chuigse na rìoghachd,
'Cur nan dìsnean a fonn. ¹³⁷

Nic Gille Sheathanaich sees the power of the Whigs as ungodly, and accuses them of acting against God's will in depriving James of his throne:

'S daoine iad 'loisgeadh am Biobull,
'Chur na firinn a bonn ¹³⁸

Her awareness of the political situation is illustrated by her reference to the swift actions of the government after the death of Queen Anne in replacing her almost immediately with the Elector of Hanover, not giving King James a chance to reclaim his throne:

Rinn sibh Anna a chàradh
Gun a bàs a thoirt suas ¹³⁹

The poetess then turns her attention to the Marquis of Huntly, and his distinct lack of enthusiasm in supporting King James, although he, and not the Earl of Mar, was the one who most of the Highlanders had expected to be their leader. Huntly's half-hearted support for the rising can be explained on two counts: firstly, that he was related by marriage to prominent Whigs, and secondly, that he took offence at not being asked to lead the Rising.

...Huntly had been brought up in the [Roman Catholic] religion, and that, doubtless, was one amongst the many reasons why he was not, as he no doubt wished to be, made head of the movement. Since the Rising had started in the North-east corner of Scotland, where the inhabitants had always been so loyal, the obvious leader would seem to have been the descendant of Queen Mary's "Cock of the North", or, in this case, his son and representative, and a contemporary chronicler says, "It is certain all the clans at their first coming had no other notion but that of being commanded by Huntly." Many people thought he would be "unwilling to serve under any subject's command," as indeed he was, and delayed for some time in raising his men, though...preparations had already been made at Gordon Castle.¹⁴⁰

Nic Gille Sheathanaich complains that the Gordons have not given the support which they promised to King James, although her reference to the Duke being "na fhùidse" might seem unfair, considering that he was imprisoned in Edinburgh Castle during the Rising. However, her reference to "an coileach", although the Duke of Gordon was known as the Cock o' the North, is probably aimed at his son, the Marquis of Huntly. She states that his behaviour is a result of things not going as he expected, namely that he was not chosen as the leader of the Rising, and that the half-hearted way in

which he acted because of this angered and disappointed his allies:

Bhrìst thu 'n crìdhe le smuairnean,
An aobhar buairidh no dhà,
'S tha càch ag eughach mu 'n cuairt duit
Gun deach do chruadal mu làr.¹⁴¹

The poetess' attention then turns to the members of the Clan Mackintosh who had fought in the Rising. She first mentions "Sir Lachluinn nan tùr", the 20th chief of Mackintosh, and a Colonel in Mar's army, who was taken prisoner after the battle of Preston. He remained in prison until August 1716, when he was released "upon the intercession of his Lady and others of his friends who made it plain that he was trepanned into the Rebellion by the craft of the Brigadier."¹⁴²

She laments the loss of the gentlemen of the clan from the chief's home at Moy, saying that it is now left desolate without their presence and that of Lachlann himself:

M' aobhar clisgidh a dhùisg mi,
Shìl mo shùilean gu trom,
A feitheamh Caisteal na Mòidhe,
Am bu tric tathaich nan sonn,
'S e 'n diugh na fhàsach gun uaislean,
No gun tuath bhi mu bhonn.¹⁴³

She mentions the chief's lady, Anne, daughter of Alexander Duff of Drummur,¹⁴⁴ describing her as being distraught by her husband's enforced absence:

Tha do bhaintighearna ghasda,
An deigh pasgadh a ciùil,
'S tric a deòir oirre 'bras-ruith,
Mu Shir Lachluinn nan tùr,
O 'n chaidh prìosan an Sasuinn
Air sàr ghaisgeach nach lùb.¹⁴⁵

The chief is praised for his honour and bravery in the cause of King James:

Thu bhi 'n tòir air a' cheartas,
 'S e chuir air aiseag thu null;
 Ghabh thu toiseach a ghùtair,
 Ged a shàraicheadh thu.¹⁴⁶

We then come to William of Borlum himself, who, although commonly known as Old Borlum during the Rising of 1715, was properly *younger* of Borlum, as his father was still alive at this time. William was about fifty-two years of age at the time of the Rising¹⁴⁷, so it is quite possible that his nurse or foster-mother was still alive at that time, and that the traditional account, that this was Nic Gille Sheathanaich, is correct.

Although the song is said to be addressed to him, only one stanza, is dedicated to William of Borlum. The poetess seems to be concerned as much for the situation of the country, and of the Mackintosh clan, as for the individual members, although the lack of the chief and of William of Borlum is obviously a grave loss to her. She invokes God's help to bring home all those who have gone to battle and not returned:

Thoir gach dùthchasach dhachaidh,
 Dh' fhalbh air seacharan bhuainn,
 Mac-an Tòisich nam bratach,
 A's Clann Chatain nam buadh,
 A ghabh fògradh o 'n aitreibh,
 'S cha b' ann le masladh no ruaig.¹⁴⁸

We are told by Shaw that:

Among the rank and file who were sent to Liverpool for transportation or who were executed or died in jail at Lancaster were sixty bearing Clan Chattan names, including 13 Mackintoshes and 16 Macgillivrays.¹⁴⁹

It would seem to be these ordinary clansmen whose fate is being lamented in these lines as much as that of the chief.

Nic Gille Sheathanaich concludes her poem by attacking Huntly once again for his eagerness to surrender to Argyll, declaring that he will live to regret his actions:

'N coileach dona gun fhìrinn,
 Ghibht e chirean 's a ghràs,
 Cha 'n eil feum ann gu sgrìobadh,
 Is cha dìreadh e 'n spàrr,
 Ma gheibh Mac Cailean na lìn thu,
 Bheir e cìs dhiot gu dân,
 'S daor a phàidheas tu 'n tìm s'
 Air son na fìrinn a bha.¹⁵⁰

This in some ways echoes Sileas na Ceapaich's feelings about the failure of the Rising: that it could have been a success had the leaders not been so eager to surrender in order to protect their own positions and property.

The final stanza turns to King George, mocking his right of succession, and hoping for the downfall of the Whigs, and of the House of Hanover. The poetess laments what has befallen Scotland in the Stuart cause, and curses the House of Hanover, hoping that it will collapse, and be without heirs:

Ghlac thu 'n t-urram air òr-bheinn,
 'S bu daor an còmhrag sin duinn;-
 Sgrios a thigh'nn air a' ghàradh
 Mu 'n cinn bàrr air nì 's mò.¹⁵¹

It is evident that the composer of this poem is strongly religious, as it is full of invocations to divine power to change the fortunes of the House of Stuart, and to deprive the Whigs of their power. She begins her entreaties to God to come to the aid of the Jacobites in the very first stanza:

'Rìgh na fàg sinn air dìth.
 Tog féin do chrois-tara,
 Thoirt nan càirdean gu tìr;
 Ann am purgadair tha sinn,
 Mur gabh thu Phàrrais ra 'r sìth.¹⁵²

She calls on God to look after them at this time, and urges those in favour of the Jacobite cause to pray for the safety of the King who has been forced overseas:

Bi'bh ag ùrnuigh le dichìoll
Dia 'chur dìon air an luing¹⁵³

and asks Him to change the situation in which they now find themselves:

'S a rìgh dhùlaich na feartan,
Tionndaidh 'n reachd so mu 'n cuairt¹⁵⁴

The Whigs and pro-Hanoverians are represented as opposing the will and word of God; describing them in terms such as, *'Chuirge tha bòtadh na binne* and *'S daoine iad 'loisgeadh am Biobull*. Obviously the religious element in the Jacobite cause is one of Nic Gille Sheathanaich's main considerations. She seems to be well informed as to the events leading up to the Rising, and the reasons for its failure, and, although the poem is framed as a type of lament for the chief and for William of Borluma, the political element in this song makes it much more interesting. It is not simply a song of sorrow and anxiety, it is a song of anger, filled with a feeling of betrayal by the Marquis of Huntly in particular, and the rulers of the country in general.

In contrast to this is the song *Mo Ghaol am Fleasgach* ¹⁵⁵, which was also composed around the year 1715. Ascribed to Ciorslan nighean Dhonnchaidh Alasdair, it makes no mention of the political situation, apart from the second stanza:

'S liom as aithreach
gun bhith mar riut,
thu bhith fo smachd nan Gallbhodach.¹⁵⁶

The rest of the poem consists of expressions of love for the youth who has left, and traditional elements of praise poetry, such as his skill as a hunter, and his fitness to bear arms, such as firearms and:

Lann gheur thana
air dhreach na glaine,
sgiath nam ball meanbhbhreaca.¹⁵⁷

A suggestion has been made that Ciorslan may have been the daughter of Duncan Macrae, or Donnchadh Mór mac Alasdair, who was Captain of the Earl of Seaforth's watch for protecting the marches of his estates. He is said to have been a poet, and was killed at Sheriffmuir.¹⁵⁸ Apparently "it has been found impossible so far to recover any more than the merest fragments of his productions"¹⁵⁹ ; but it is possible that he was the father of Ciorslan, as Donnchadh Mór mac Alasdair was married and had issue, although we have no further information on them.

The next song arising from the events of 1715 is also one which is more concerned with the person who has left to join the Jacobite cause than with the cause itself. The song addressed to Ailean Mùideartach, Captain of Clanranald¹⁶⁰, seems to have been composed before Sheriffmuir, as the tone is one of praise and longing, rather than lament. The deer in the distance remind our poetess that her lover, who would hunt them, is gone, and she begins her song :

Chì mi, chì mi, chì mi thall ud
Chì mi na féidh air a bhealach
'S gun an giomanach aig baile¹⁶¹

She goes on to praise his prowess as a hunter, drinker, and sailor:

Sealgair ròin thu, geòidh is eala
'N dobhrain duinn 's a' bhrìc bhallaich;
Pòiteir an fhìon 's an taigh leanna,
Stiùreadair air luing nan crannag.¹⁶²

Ailean Mùideartach's blood ties, '*S càirdeach thu 'Mhac Leòid na h-Earradh*, are noted in the final extant line of this song. In fact, he was very closely related to the MacLeods of Harris, not only through his mother, who was a daughter of John MacLeod, the fourteenth chief, but also through his paternal grandmother, who was a daughter of Sir Ruairidh Mór MacLeod.¹⁶³ It is interesting to note that, despite Clanranald's strong Jacobite ties, and his eagerness to join the Jacobite army, no mention is made of this. This poem could, of course, have been composed some time before the actual Rising in 1715, but certainly not after the battle of Sheriffmuir.

An anonymous poem composed by a woman to a lover who has gone to fight in the Jacobite army, *Chunnaic Mise mo Leannan*,¹⁶⁴ exists in several slightly differing versions. The song begins with a description of how the girl saw her lover leaving to join the Rising, and that he did not take any notice of her:

Chunna mise mo leannan,
'S cha d' dh' aithnich e 'n dè mi.

Cha d' fhiosraich, cha d' fharraid,
Cha do ghabh e mo sgeula.¹⁶⁵

In some versions this blow is softened:

Cha b' ann aige bha chaire,
Ach nach d' fhuirich mi fhéin ris.¹⁶⁶

while in others the poetess takes offence:

Nuair a chunna mi e 'n uair sin,
Bha mi suarach m' a dhéidhinn.¹⁶⁷

or else is indifferent:

Cha robh mis' an trom-déidh air.¹⁶⁸

The attention of the poetess then turns to the Jacobite army, and especially Clan Donald, leading one to suspect that this is the clan to which she herself belongs:

Rìgh ! gun cuidich an còmhlan
Le Clann Dòmhnail nan geurlann.

Luchd nan calpannan troma,
Cùil donna, ceum eutrom.¹⁶⁹

She goes on to praise the warlike qualities of the men of Clan Donald, their skill with firearms, at archery, and with the claymore. There is a reference in several of the versions of this song to the

Highlanders taking an oath not to sheathe their swords until King James had been victorious:

Thug iad mionnan air a' Bhiobull
Aig sruth ìseal Allt Èireann

Nach rachadh claidheamh an truaill leo
Gun a bhuaidh aig Rìgh Seumas.¹⁷⁰

and:

Thug sibh mionnan a Phiobail
An srath ìsiol Allt Eirinn

Nach d're' claidheamh an duille',
Gus an crùinte Rìgh Sheumas.¹⁷¹

Other versions contain the same idea, but elaborate on it further:

Cha déid claimheamh a chùmhnaidh,
Gus an crùnair Rìgh Seumas.

No gun cuir iad Rìgh Seòras
Air fòrlach do 'n Èipheit.¹⁷²

There is some doubt as to the dating of this poem; the reference to Auldearn would lead one to believe that it was concerned with the Montrose campaign, whereas the naming of King James links it to either 1715 or 1745. Some versions of the song have *Seurlus* instead of *Seumas*, but:

King Charles was already a crowned king when it [the battle of Auldearn] was fought, and the couplet could only make sense if the word *crùinte(adh)* were translated 'restored'. The allusion could be to something that had happened in the past.¹⁷³

The references to sending King George away, however, point to either 1715 or 1745. As the couplet in question occurs in the run of praise of Clan Donald, it is quite possible that the poem was composed at the time of the 1715 Rising, but that the reference to Auldearn is used as an illustration of the valour and fighting spirit of the clan.

The reference to Auldearn may also be inspired by a very similar passage in a poem composed in praise of Clan Donald during the Montrose wars¹⁷⁴:

Thug sibh mionnan a Bhiobuill,
An srath iosal Allt-Eirinn.

Nach rachadh claidheamh an truaill,
Gu 'm biodh a bhuaidh le Rìgh Seurlas.¹⁷⁵

Chunnaic mise mo leannan is evidently the composition of a Jacobite, and probably a MacDonald, but the Rising is not the only thing to occupy her thoughts or her verse. Some, but not all, of the versions of this song, refer to the girl being abandoned by her lover, and the shame which she has endured because of the relationship which she had with him. Of course, as with all waulking songs, one has to take into account the possibility of later accretions to the original song, and it seems probable that the verses connected with the motif of the abandoned lover are not originally part of the song in praise of Clan Donald and the Jacobite cause. The verses are viewed as such by the reciters from whom the songs were collected¹⁷⁶, and they seem ill at ease with the tone of the opening stanzas. As often happens in Gaelic poetry, it would seem that both the refrain and opening line of the original song were used as a springboard to the composition of another which, through oral transmission, has in some versions been added on to the original. It certainly seems strange that a song which begins with praise for a lover should end with a complaint against him, and so it would seem that only the verses in praise of Clan Donald and the girl's lover are related to the Rising of 1715, while the complaint is a later addition.

A song which, from internal evidence, is addressed to MacDonald of Sleat¹⁷⁷ is another of those composed around 1715, although it is unclear as to whether or not it is connected with the Rising. Certainly the chief is absent from his homeland at the time of composition, and the poet awaits his safe return. This could apply to either the period leading up to the Rising, or to the actual campaign itself, as Sir Donald had lived mainly in Glasgow until then.

The listing of the allies who would rise with MacDonald found in some versions cannot be taken as proof that the poem refers to the

Rising of 1715, as it is a common bardic device. However, the reference to King James seems to link the song to that campaign:

Dh' éireadh leat-sa, Dhòmhnaill,
Nan rachadh tòir air Seumas.

Dh' éireadh Mac 'ic Alasdair,
'S Gleann Garadh linn le chéile.¹⁷⁸

The death of the Captain of Clanranald is lamented in *Moch 's a' mhaduinn 's mi 'm dhùisg* ¹⁷⁹, again, by an anonymous author. The poem refers to the battle of Sheriffmuir, and its disastrous aftermath for the Jacobites, although the poet is most concerned with those members of Clan Donald who took part. The poem begins with an expression of grief over what has happened, and that all the news regarding Sheriffmuir seems to be bad from a Clan Donald point of view. The fate of Sir Donald MacDonald of Sleat is lamented in the lines:

Fàth mo mhulaid 's mo bheud,
Sir Dòmhnall á Sléibht',
'Bhi gun fhearann, 's e sgeul a's cràitich' leam.¹⁸⁰

Sir Donald himself did not take part in the battle of Sheriffmuir, having been taken ill at Perth shortly after joining Mar's army, but the men of Sleat fought under his brothers, James and William, in the right wing of Mar's army. As Sir Donald did not surrender to the government in person after Sheriffmuir, he was found guilty of high treason, and his estates were duly forfeited.

The fate of those members of Clan Donald who took part in 'Latha Shiorraimh' is lamented, and the effect which the death of Clanranald had on the whole clan is recorded:

Air ur tilleadh a nìos,
Bha fàth ur n-ionndraichinn shìos,
Mac-Mhic-Ailein, 's bu dìobhail chàirdean e.¹⁸¹

The next few stanzas are ones of praise of Clanranald, his skills as a warrior, the honour which he won because of them, and

the sorrow which his clansmen feel at his loss. The Earl of Seaforth is then mentioned, with his actions being given as one of the reasons for the losses suffered by the Highland army at Sheriffmuir:

Bha Mac-Coinnich 's a neart,
Mus 'n do tharruing iad ceart,
Gu 'n d' fhuair maoim nan each glasa bàireadh oirnn.¹⁸²

Of course, there was no love lost between the Clan Donald and the Clan MacKenzie, the reason for Seaforth's delay in joining the Rising being that the MacDonald presence in Mar's army was so strong, but his inaction at Sheriffmuir is deserving of the chastisement given by the MacDonald poets of the time. The composer of this poem also seems to be a less than enthusiastic supporter of the Jacobite cause, seeing it as having brought about the suffering and difficulties in which the Clan Donald is now placed:

'S e Rìgh Seumas an t-Ochd a shàraich sinn.¹⁸³

The poet then turns to what I take to be two MacDonald leaders. The first is referred to as *Seumas Mòr 'an robh 'chiall*, and the second simply as *am fear ruadh*. The stanza about *am fear ruadh* would certainly fit the accounts of the actions of Glengarry:

Bu mhaith gu brosnachadh sluaigh,
'S cha bu chladhaire 'n uair a chramhain e.¹⁸⁴

However, Alasdair of Glengarry was known as Alasdair Dubh, so someone else is evidently being referred to here. One possibility is that both *Seumas Mòr* and *am fear ruadh* are the two brothers of Sir Donald of Sleat, who led the clan into battle when their brother and chief was taken ill; namely James of Orinsay, and William, progenitor of the Vallay family of MacDonalds.¹⁸⁵ This theory is strengthened by the lines found in the Irvine M.S. version of this song:

A Sheumais Mhòir an robh 'n ciall
Bh' air ur ceann...¹⁸⁶

The order of the stanzas in this version changes the emphasis of the poem from Allan of Clanranald to Sir Donald of Sleat, and the assumption that *Seumas* and *am fear ruadh* are his brothers certainly fits in with this context, especially if we take it that the poem was composed by one of the MacDonalds of Sleat rather than a member of the Clanranald branch. It certainly seems strange that what is given in in one version¹⁸⁷ as a lament for Clanranald should devote so much attention to the Sleat family, whereas any poem by a MacDonald after the battle of Sheriffmuir would be expected to mention the loss of Ailean of Clanranald.

The poem ends with the poet putting his or her trust in God to assure the safety of the clan:

An Tì dhe 'n goirear an t-Uan, 's E shàbhalas...
'N diugh tha 'ghàirdean cho cruaidh 's a b' àbhaist dha.¹⁸⁸

Apart from the attempted rising of 1719, the Jacobite clans had to wait for almost thirty years before they once again had a chance to rally in the cause of King James, with the arrival of Prince Charles Edward Stuart in Scotland, landing in Eriskay on the 23rd of July, 1745.

The song *Cò sheinneadh an fhìdeag airgid*¹⁸⁹ was composed by a woman who supported the Jacobite cause, and the popular tradition is that it refers to the arrival of Charles Edward Stuart in 1745, but:

...the song cannot be taken as a unity, and all that can be said is that a part of some versions of it...are on a Jacobite theme. Otherwise the fact is that the poem is expressed in seventeenth-century language and contains a number of formulaic passages on subjects which are well-known in other waulking songs.¹⁹⁰

Although the song may have existed in an earlier form, it would seem from lines such as:

Nuair a thig mo Rìgh gu f(h)earann,
Crùnair am Prionnsa le caithream¹⁹¹

that parts of it, at least, have been adapted at a later date in order to relate to the expected arrival of Prince Charles. The reference to

'Eòghainn Camshron' again confuses things, as the Ewen Cameron of Lochail who is probably being referred to died in 1719.¹⁹² The composer of the song awaits the return of her King to Scotland, praising him and the welcome which he will receive from Clan Donald, listing the MacDonald leaders who will greet him: Clanranald, Glengarry and Keppoch, as well as the Cameron, 'Mac Dòmhnail Duibh Loch Abair'.¹⁹³ One version of the poem mentions sending King George back to Hanover, but as the Hanoverian kings of 1715 and 1745 were both named George, this is not conclusive one way or the other. My own theory is that this song was originally composed at the time of the 1715 Rising, or even earlier, and that it was adapted in 1745 to celebrate the imminent arrival of Prince Charlie.

The earliest extant song by a female poet which can definitely be dated to the Rising of 1745 is *So an tìm tha cuir as domh*.¹⁹⁴ According to Turner¹⁹⁵, the poetess was a 'Ban-Stiùbhartach mhuinntir Strath-Speidh', and in *The Poetry of Badenoch* ¹⁹⁶ she is said to have been 'a kinswoman of Colonel John Roy Stewart'. That the poetess was a Stewart is clear from internal evidence in the poem, as is her strong support for the Jacobite cause. The poem seems to have been composed before, or at the very beginning of the Rising, as the bardess lists all those who would rise with Prince Charles, and looks forward to seeing him take London. She begins her song on a rather banal personal note, complaining about the weather, and that it has left her suffering from the cold. She declares that this is not what she needs, but to be able to strongly support 'Rìgh dligheach nan Gàidheal' in his campaign to reclaim his throne. Praise of Prince Charles, and his mission to dethrone 'mearlach Rìgh Shasunn', is followed by a promise that her own clan, the Stewarts, will support him in numbers:

'S ioma leòmhann deas stàtail,
Dhe mo chinne mòr làidir,
Bhios fo d' bhrataichean bàna ag éirigh.¹⁹⁷

The Stewarts who would come out for the Prince are then named: the Earl of Bute, the men of Appin, the Colonel of Kincardine, and 'am Màidsear'. The Stewarts of Appin were led by Charles Stewart of Ardsheal, Tutor of Appin, who brought around 300 men to Prince Charles' army. The Colonel of Kincardine was

John Roy Stewart, himself a poet, who survived Culloden, while 'am Màidsear' was his cousin, Gillies Macbean, or 'Gillios Mór Mac Bheathain, Fear Chinne-Choille'.¹⁹⁸ Praise of Gillies Macbean is followed by naming the other clans who could be looked upon to join the Jacobite cause, beginning with the Earl of Antrim (who did not, in fact, join), and then going on to Clan Donald as a whole, with a vivid description of how they would treat King George:

'Na 'm biodh amhach Rìgh Deòrsa,
Ann an làmhnan Chlann Dòmhnuaill,
Gheibheadh i tobha math còrcach, no stéinne.¹⁹⁹

The Clan Donald septs which would join the campaign are then mentioned: Sir Alasdair Mòr of Sleat, Clanranald, Glengarry and Keppoch; along with Robertson of Struan, the MacPhersons of Cluny, known as *Clann Mhuirich*, and Clan Cameron; followed by anticipation of the effect they would have on the government forces:

'S ma 's a beò mi còig bliadhna,
Chì mi fhathasd droch dhìol
Air luchd-sgathaidh nam bian bharr na spréidhe.

Air luchd chasagan dearga,
'S Mailisi Earraghàidheal,
Chì sibh fhathasd droch àird air na béisdean.²⁰⁰

Sir Alasdair MacDonald, seventh Baronet of Sleat did not join the 1745 Rising:

[He] had indeed promised to provide both men and money for the struggle if the Prince could secure the assistance of France; but without that aid he foresaw that the attempt of the young Stuart was doomed to failure, and that for the head of the Macdonalds to espouse a cause so hopeless would be but to involve in ultimate ruin all faithful clansmen who followed where their Chief led. Accordingly, whatever his secret predilection for the cause of the Stuarts, the Chief of Sleat announced his adherence to King George...²⁰¹

Ranald MacDonald, fifteenth of Clanranald, likewise refused to take

any part in the Rising, although he allowed his son, Ranald, to join the Prince at the head of 500 men.²⁰² The MacDonalds of Glengarry were led in the Jacobite army by Aonghas Òg, Glengarry's second son, while the men of Keppoch were led by their chief, Alasdair, who fell at Culloden along with his brother, Donald. Ewen, eldest son of MacPherson of Cluny, joined the Prince's army, although he might just as easily have been fighting against it:

Just before the commencement of the Rising he [Ewen] had obtained a commission in Lord Loudon's regiment, but in August 1745 he was captured by the Jacobites, and as his sentiments were apparently in favour of the Stuarts he had no great difficulty in transferring his allegiance. He joined the Prince with about 120 of his name...²⁰³

Alexander Robertson of Struan was a Major-General in the Atholl Brigade, where many of his clan followed him. The Jacobite Duke of Atholl, William, was looked upon by the Athollmen as their rightful leader, and not his younger brother James, the Hanoverian Duke, so most of the Athollmen followed William and Prince Charles. Cameron of Locheil also joined the Rising, although he had the same misgivings about its prospects for success as those of MacDonald of Sleat and of Clanranald:

Locheil sent his brother...to dissuade Charles, then came himself to advise him that as he had come over without the expected French aid there was no prospect of a successful rising and he had better return to France...Charles refused to take his advice. 'In a few days,' he is said to have replied, 'with the few friends that I have, I will erect the royal standard, and proclaim to the people of Britain, that Charles Stuart is come over to claim the crown of his ancestors, to win it, or to perish in the attempt: Locheil, who, my father has often told me, was our firmest friend, may stay at home, and learn from the newspapers the fate of his prince.' This was too much for Locheil, who declared: 'No, I'll share the fate of my prince; and so shall every man over whom nature or fortune [sic] hath given me any power.'...Locheil's support was particularly important: he was an influential Highland chief, and knowledge that he would bring out his clan in support of the Prince had considerable effect throughout the Highlands.²⁰⁴

That all the chiefs listed here as supporting the Stuart cause did not in fact do so indicates that the poem was composed before the Prince's arrival in Scotland, as Clanranald was the first chief he met, and the first to refuse to come to his aid. The poem certainly reflects the mood of optimism of the Jacobites at this time, anticipating the arrival of Charles and the restoration of the House of Stuart. However, the reference to *an fhir ruaidh* who gained honour in *blàr Chop* points to a slightly later dating, possibly after the Jacobite victory over Cope's army at Prestonpans. It is possible that the bardess believed that the reluctant Jacobite chiefs would yet join the Rising, or perhaps she uses their patronymics not to mean the chiefs themselves, but as a means of identifying the clans who joined Prince Charles, even though the men of Clanranald and Glengarry were led by the sons of their chiefs, and not by Mac Mhic Ailean and Mac Mhic Alasdair themselves. The praise of *an fhir ruaidh* is probably addressed to Charles Edward Stuart himself, especially as he is compared to Graham of Claverhouse, the leader of the Royalist forces against the Revolution Settlement. Viscount Dundee was the figurehead behind which the clans rallied in 1689, and one would expect a comparison such as this one to refer to the figurehead of the Rising of 1745, namely Prince Charles.

The poetess goes on to express the hope that God will protect the Jacobites, and that they will be able to overturn the power of the Hanoverian government and of the Clan Campbell:

Gar 'm faic mis' e le m' shùilean,
 Gu 'm bi Dia leibh 's mo dhùrachd,
 'S cha dean luaidhe no fùdar bonn beud duibh.

Gar am faic mis' a chaoidh e,
 Ma thionndas a' chuibhle,
 Bidh Sasunnaich 's Guimhnich 'n an éiginn.²⁰⁵

The poetess then returns to her own circumstances: she is away from her kinsfolk, with only the sound of the deer for company. She decides to go home to *dùthaich an fhasgaidh 's nan geuga*, and uses this as a way of returning to her praise of the people who live there: her own clan, the Stewarts. The declaration that the Stewarts were a clan *nach diùltadh an crùn do Rìgh Seurlus* seems

rather confusing. It could simply be a mistake, if we assume that the original reference was to *Rìgh Seumas*, or the poetess may have been anticipating the crowning of Prince Charles as king. The latter explanation, although plausible, is undermined by the fact that, throughout this poem, Prince Charles is referred to as *Teàrlach*, and not *Seurlas*, so that one could assume that the name of the king to be crowned was *Seumas*, and that this has been altered through the oral transmission of the song. Yet, the poetess talks in the very next stanza of seeing Charles crowned, although he is named in this instance as *Teàrlach*. Perhaps she was not sure if Charles Edward was aiming to gain the throne for himself or for his father.

The song ends with praise of two more men who have thrown in their lot with the Jacobites, *Seumas òg* and *Uilleam òg Ghart*. The second of these was William Stewart of Garth, but there are no further clues as to the identity of *Seumas òg*, although he was probably a Stewart as well. Both are described as being outstanding soldiers and leaders, and the poetess sends her blessings to them. Despite its title, this song is one of hope and optimism rather than despondency. The ordinary clansfolk did not share the reservations of many of their leaders about the outcome of the Rising, believing instead that, with the Jacobite clans behind him, Prince Charles could not fail to bring down the House of Hanover.

The next poem composed as a result of the Rising is a lament for Angus Og of Glengarry²⁰⁶, who was accidentally shot two days after the battle of Falkirk, which took place on the 17th of January, 1746. Angus, second son of John, son and successor of Alasdair Dubh, was in command of the Glengarry Regiment, and his death had a dispiriting effect on the MacDonalds in Prince Charles' army:

Colonel Aeneas MacDonald...[was] 'shot by the accident of a Highlandman's cleaning his piece,' as Alexander Macdonald put it. 'This poor gentleman satisfied of the unhappy fellows innocence, beggd with his dying breath that he might not suffer; but nothing could restrain the grief and fury of his people, and good luck it was that he was a M^cDonald (tho not of his own tribe but of Keppochs) and after all thay began to desert daily upon this accident, which had a bad effect upon others also and lessend our numbers considerably,...'²⁰⁷

The composer of the lament for Aonghas Og is named as Bean Achadh Uaine²⁰⁸, but her actual name is not known. It is probable that she was a Glengarry MacDonald, although there is no evidence in the poem to suggest that she had any closer connection than that to Aonghas Og, for example that she was his foster-mother or a relative.

The song begins with a lament for the loss of Aonghas Og, describing the way his blood flowed after his fatal wound:

'S maing a chitheadh t-fhuil bhòidheach,
A bhi taosgadh mu d' bhrògan, ,
'S i bhi taomadh gun òrdugh air causair.²⁰⁹

Then we have praise of the dead man's virtues, and his value to Prince Charles' campaign:

Gus 'n do chuir iad san uaigh thu
Gun robh Teàrlach an uachdar;
Bha do bhuillean cho cruaidh leis
'S nach robh tilleadh dà uair ac' ²¹⁰

Although the credit could not be laid at the feet of any individual, it was true that, although retreating, the Jacobite army was undefeated at this point. The praise continues with a basically formulaic description of Aonghas Og's skill with weapons, how worthy he was to bear arms, and his qualities as a leader of men. The effect of his death on his clansmen, already mentioned above, is also referred to by the poetess:

Cùis 'bu mhath le Rìgh Deòrsa
O 'n là 'dh' inntrig thu 'n tòs leo,
Thu bhi 'dhìth air do sheòrsa.-
Dh' fhalbh iad uile mar cheò uait,
O 'n là 'chuir iad fo 'n fhòid thu,
Cha d' fhan dithist dhiu 'n òrdagh;-
Och, mo chreach, nach bu bheò gus an dràsdu thu.²¹¹

The lament seems to have been composed after the battle of Culloden had taken place, as the poetess appears to be referring to

the atrocities committed afterwards by the army of the Duke of Cumberland, when she says that, if Aonghas Og were still alive:

Cha bhitheadh Diùc Uilleam
Cho trom oirnn 's cha b' urrinn ²¹²

She claims that the death of Aonghas Og is the reason for the failure of the Rising, and that if he had survived, the outcome would have been different:

Nan do dh-fhuirich an gunna ,
Gun do bhualadh o 'n uinneig'
Gun robh Teàrlach an Lunn[a]inn roimh 'n àm so.²¹³

The personal appearance of Aonghas Og is praised, and the suffering of his father and his clan at his loss is described. Iain, father of Aonghas Og, and son of Alasdair Dubh, is addressed, with the assurance that despite King George and the Duke of Cumberland:

Thig t' oighre dhach[a]idh le sòlas o bheallt[a]inn.²¹⁴

This is a reference to the imprisonment in the Tower of London of Alasdair Ruadh, eldest son of Iain, who was captured on his way from France in 1745, and kept in prison until after the battle of Culloden.²¹⁵ The poetess declares that only the return of Alasdair will lift the spirits of the clansfolk in their difficulties:

Ma thig Alasd[a]ir dhach[a]idh
As a phrìosan 'tha 'n Sasu[i]nn,
O 'n Tor-uain' as na glas[a]ibh,
'Thoirt d' ar cridheachan aitis,
On tha 'n saoghal so cleachdadh na h-ainneart.²¹⁶

The lament for Aonghas Og is a tender combination of formulaic elegaic description and heartfelt emotion, with the loss to the clan of such a courageous leader being set alongside the personal losses of his father and his wife. Aonghas Og was married to Mary, daughter of Colonel Duncan Robertson²¹⁷, and her grief at the death of her husband is described by the poetess:

Tha do chéil' air a sgaradh,
 O 'n là chuir iad thu 's talamh;
 O 'n là dh' fhàg thu i b' ainneamh a gàire.²¹⁸

The sorrow of Iain of Glengarry at the loss of his second son is also mentioned:

Beirt 'bu chruaidhe le t' ath[a]ir
 Thu bhí uaithe gun fhaighinn ²¹⁹

It is a pity that there is no more information as to who Bean Achadh Uaine was, but it is certain from this poem that she was in some way connected with the Glengarry family, and that she held Aonghas Og in high regard.

The next and final battle fought by the Jacobites after Falkirk was the battle of Culloden, which had such terrible consequences for the clans and for the Highlands as a whole. The Highland army was in retreat, despite the victory at Falkirk, and a letter was sent to Prince Charles by the leading men in his army, advising him:

that there is no way to extricate your Royal Highness and those who remain with you out of the most imminent danger, but by retiring immediately to the Highlands, where we can be usefully employed the remainder of the winter, by taking and mastering the forts of the north; and we are morally sure we can keep as many men together as will answer that end, and hinder the enemy from following us in the mountains at this season of the year; and in spring, we doubt not but an army of 10,000 effective Highlanders can be brought together, and follow your Royal Highness wherever you think proper.²²⁰

The decision was taken to head for Inverness, with the Prince taking the mountain route accompanied by the clans and artillery, while Lord George Murray led the rest of the army by the coast road:

Most of the army spent two days at Crieff and on 4 February they set off in two divisions by their separate routes to the north. That day Cumberland's army left Stirling in pursuit of the Jacobites. One by one the alternatives left open to Charles were falling away, and his squabbling officers gave notice by

their ill-temper of their sense that they were no longer masters of their own strategy but were an army on the run.²²¹

Through February and March the Jacobite army moved north, getting involved in a few skirmishes and diversions along the way, with Prince Charles himself reaching the outskirts of Inverness on the 16th of February. In March news was received that a ship, *Le Prince Charles*, sent from France with treasure to finance the Jacobite Rising had been captured, and the desperately needed money was lost. This meant that the Jacobite leaders had to resort to paying their men in meal, and the army was in desperate straits, especially when the Prince was told not to expect any aid from France, as the expeditions planned to send men to support him had been given up.²²² Everything seemed to be stacked against the Jacobites, and things were destined to get worse:

It was known that the Duke of Cumberland was now advancing from Aberdeen, and an attempt was made to re-unite the scattered Jacobite forces. The Earl of Cromarty was in Sutherland with a force of Mackenzies, Macgregors and Macdonalds to try and raise men and money; they took Dunrobin Castle, seat of the Earl of Sutherland who escaped them, but his wife remained and professed zeal for the Jacobite cause: however, while Cromarty and some of his officers were taking their leave of her to thank her for her kindness to them, a force of Lord Sutherland's and Lord Reay's men surrounded the castle and took them prisoners. The Macdonalds...arrived too late for the coming battle. Others in the Highland army had returned temporarily to their crofts for the spring sowing; these included the Macphersons, who also got back too late...Charles's army was about 2,000 under strength.²²³

The choice of Culloden Moor for the forthcoming battle was made by Colonel William O' Sullivan, who had fought in the French army, and Charles agreed with him, but those who knew more about Highland warfare than these two were less than happy with the decision, and justifiably so:

Lord George Murray, who does not seem to have been consulted at all before the choice was made, strongly disapproved. 'I did not like the ground', he later wrote: 'It was certainly not proper for Highlanders. I proposed that Colonel Ker and Brigadier Stapleton should view the ground on the other side of the water of Nairn, which they did. It was found to be hilly and boggy; so that the enemy's cannon and horse could be of no use to them there.' This stretch of open moorland...was calculated to be of maximum assistance to the enemy, he believed.²²⁴

Although Lord George Murray can be exonerated of any blame regarding the poor choice of battle-ground, he was behind the failed attempt to attack Cumberland's army at night at their camp in Nairn which left the Highland army so weary when they faced the enemy on Culloden Moor. Nairn was about twelve miles away from the Jacobite camp, and progress towards Cumberland's camp by the weary and hungry Highlanders was slow. When they were within a few miles of Nairn, it was realized that there was no hope of gaining the advantage over Cumberland's army, as it would be daylight before they reached his camp. The decision was taken to turn back and regroup at Culloden, thus sealing the fate of the Highland army and the Jacobite cause. Lacking in sleep, food, and numbers, they prepared to face the enemy.

The result of the battle of Culloden is well enough known not to go into any great detail about it, and the losses suffered by the Highland clans were huge. It was the end of the power of the clans, and with it the end of the dream of restoring the House of Stewart to the throne. The laments composed by women for their slain menfolk after this battle are not numerous, but at least one of those which have survived is a veritable work of art, filled with pride, grief, and love for the poetess' dead husband. *Mo Rùn Geal Og* ²²⁵, composed by Christina Ferguson, is probably the best known song connected with Culloden, and deservedly so.

The poetess was the daughter of a blacksmith from Contin in Ross-shire, and was married to William Chisholm of Strathglass.²²⁶ She begins with an address to Charles Edward Stuart:

Och! a Theàrlaich òig Stiùbhairt,
 'Se do chùis rinn mo lèireadh,
 Thug thu bhuam gach nì bh' agam,
 Ann an cogadh na t-aobhar:
 Cha chrodh is cha chaoirich,
 Tha mi caoidh ach mo chéile,
 Ge do dh' fhàgte mi m' aonar,
 Gun sian 's an t-saoghal ach léine.²²⁷

This lament contains very little of a political nature, except for a reference in the second stanza to the poetess' wish to see her King, King James, in his rightful place:

Ach cia mar gheibhinn o m' nàdur,
 A bhi 'g àicheadh na 's miann leam,
 A's mo thogradh cho làidir,
 Thoirt gu àite mo rìgh math ?²²⁸

The rest of the poem is addressed to her dead husband, William Chisholm, flag-bearer of his clan at Culloden:

This man, after the retreat of the Clans at Culloden became general, rallied his Clansmen and led them to the charge again and again. He then manfully defended a body of his Clansmen who had taken refuge in a barn which was soon surrounded by the English. Eventually he was shot by some Englishmen who got up on the roof of the barn.²²⁹

The formulaic praise of the dead man: his personal appearance; his skill as a hunter, and his generosity, is mingled with expressions of love and grief which add great poignancy to the lament:

Bha do shlios mar an eala
 'S blas na meal' air do phògan.²³⁰

Christina Ferguson relates her feelings of loss and desolation at the realisation that her husband will not return from the battle:

Bha mi greis ann am barail,
 Gu 'm bu mhaireann mo chéile,

'S gun tigeadh tu dhachaigh,
 Le aighear 's le h-éibhneas,
 Ach tha 'n t-àm air dol tharais,
 'S cha 'n fhaic mi fear t-eugais²³¹

She describes herself, in fairly formulaic terms, as being inconsolable after her husband's death, before returning to her praise of him. Although we are told from other sources that William Chisholm acted heroically at Culloden, the reference to his bravery in his widow's lament was possibly made before she knew about it. She is praising her husband and, because he died in battle, she assumes that he died courageously:

...cha do sheas an Culodair,
 Fear do choltais bu tréine²³²

The lament is made all the more touching by the short, simple, refrain, *Mo rùn geal òg*, at the end of each stanza, underlining the poetess' love for her husband. The poem is restrained and crafted, but this serves to highlight the depth of emotion expressed; the formulaic elements give the lament its shape, while the original elements provide the texture and feeling which give the song its lasting appeal.

Alasdair MacDonald, chief of Keppoch, also fell at Culloden, and a lament for him composed by a widow, although whether or not she was *his* widow is unclear, is still extant²³³. Alasdair was married to Jessie, daughter of Stewart of Appin, but he also had a "secret or irregular union" with a young woman from the Isle of Skye.²³⁴ It is possible that either one of these two women composed this song, as the author refers to their trysts:

'S iomadh moch agus feasgar
 Rinn mi coinneamh is còmh dhail
 Ris an fhleasgach chiùin fharasd,
 Bu chùbhraidh [anail] ri phògadh.²³⁵

The lament begins with a description of the gloom which has descended on the people of Keppoch since the loss of their chief, and with the poetess wishing that she had been close to him when he was

being buried:

'S truagh nach mise bha làimh riut
Nuair a bha iad 'gad ghreasadh.²³⁶

She goes on to describe her meetings with Keppoch, and declares that, even if she were to gain the rights to Islay, she would rather be lying with Keppoch in the earth. This could be interpreted as meaning that the poetess wishes that she were also dead, but it may be a reference to lying together during their trysts. The former interpretation, however, seems more plausible, as she talks of lying 'anns an ùir', indicating burial.

The poetess goes on to say that her grief is not lessened by the fact that she was not called to rally round Keppoch's standard, then she mentions that he is 'dhìth air do leanaban'. Again, this could be either the children he had by Jessie Stewart, or the son he had by the woman in Skye; and it could equally be the anxious concern of an ardent clanswoman for the children of her chief.

The clans who would rise in favour of Keppoch are listed, and the chief himself is praised for his skill as a warrior. The poetess names the arms he used, and she is in no doubt as to his fitness to use them to good effect. The poem ends as it began, with a description of the sorrow of Keppoch's clansmen over his loss:

Tha do bhaile gun aiteas,
Gun cheòl-gàire, gun phìob ann,
Gun sùil thoirt air mànnan,
No gun làmh thoirt air dhìsnean,
O 'n chaidh ceannard a' Bhràighe
Do 'n chiste-làir 's do 'n uaigh ìseal,
'S iomadh neach a tha cràiteach
Bhon a thàinig a' chrìoch ort.²³⁷

This lament lacks the passionate expressions of grief and love found in *Mo rùn geal òg*, but it is, nonetheless, full of genuine sorrow; the element of personal loss outweighs the formulaic elegaic praise for a dead chief. The poetess combines her own grief over the death of her loved one with that of the clan as a whole for the loss of their chief.

The MacLagan MSS²³⁸ contain a song composed by *Mairea* [Maria] Strong to 'Alastair Butter a chuaidh a mharbhadh 'n Cuilfhodair'²³⁹. There was an officer from Faskally in the Atholl Brigade of Prince Charles' army named Alexander Butter,²⁴⁰ and he would seem to be the subject of this poem.

The song seems to be simply one of praise rather than a lament. The prowess as a hunter of *Sandai Butter* is detailed, saying that he killed foxes, deer, ducks, salmon and otters. The poetess does not seem to have been romantically involved with Alasdair Butter in any way, because she sees as a *buaidh* that '*s ro thoil leat gruagaichin*. Perhaps she herself is the *Malai bheag* who stayed at home with girls sewing for her, which would lead one to believe that she was either a blood relation or his foster-mother. MacLagan gives us no further information, and, as this is the only version of the song which I have come across, it is impossible to speculate as to her identity.

Although it is unlikely, given the tone of this poem, that it was composed after Culloden, it could very well be connected with the earlier part of the Jacobite campaign, despite the fact that his skill with a gun is only mentioned in connection with hunting, and not with fighting. There is no mention of Prince Charles or the Jacobite cause, nor does the poetess mention the fact that the *fleasgach scibealt* was an officer, which one would expect to be used in a song of praise composed during the Rising of 1745, which could lead one to conclude that it was composed at an earlier date. It is possible, of course, that there was more to this song which has not survived, and that the original did mention the Rising, but this cannot be proven either way. I have included it here simply because it is addressed to a lesser-known soldier who died at Culloden, and it seems to be the only information which we have about him.

The aftermath of Culloden, and the flight to safety of Prince Charles Edward, is the subject for the song to Prince Charles beginning *Fhir ud tha thall ma àiridh nan Comhaichean* ²⁴¹. The composer of this song declares that she would travel all over Scotland with her Prince, through all kinds of country, and that he is her choice out of all the men in Scotland. She then proclaims her love for him:

A Theàrlaich òig a chuilein chiataich,
 Thug mi gaol dut 's cha ghaol bliadhna,
 Gaol nach tugainn do dhiùc na dh' iarla,
 B' fheàrr leam fhìn nach fhaca mi riamh thu.²⁴²

She seems to have met the Prince, as she describes his personal appearance and his conversation:

B' annsa leam na chuach bu bhinne,
 'Nuair dheanadh tu rium do chòmhradh milis.²⁴³

Just how well she knew him is indicated by the line:

Bha do phòg mar fhòn na Frainge²⁴⁴

but this could as well have been a kiss on the hand or the cheek as a kiss on the lips, indicating the effect which it had on her rather than the taste; and it does not necessarily point to any personal involvement on the part of the Prince. However, the final lines of the Dornie MS. version hint at a more intimate relationship:

Gu 'n d' fhuair mi de d' ghaol a dh' fhaodadh mo mhealladh
 Gur [h-ann?] de do dheòin nach robh mi 'mo bhanaltrum.²⁴⁵

The poetess mentions having seen the soldiers in pursuit of Charles, and the effect which this had upon her, probably because of her anxiety for his safety:

A Theàrlaich òig a mhic Rìgh Seumas,
 Chunna mi tòir mhòr an dèigh ort,
 Iadsan gu subhach a's mise gu deurach,
 Uisge mo chinn tigh'n tinn o m' léirsinn.²⁴⁶

The poetess was a victim of the degradations committed by the redcoats in their search for Prince Charles, and any of those who might have fought for him, or aided his escape, and she lists all the misfortunes which have befallen her and her kindred:

Mharbh iad m' athair a's mo dhà bhràthair,
 Mhill iad mo chinneadh a's chreach iad mo chàirdean,
 Sgrios iad mo dhùthaich rùisg iad mo mhàthair...²⁴⁷

However, this does not alter her support for Prince Charles, or for his cause, and she declares that:

...bu laoghaid mo mhulad nan cinneadh le Teàrlach.²⁴⁸

The poetess who composed this poem is not known, although it exists in manuscript version as *Miss Flora MacDonald's Lament for Prince Charles* ²⁴⁹. It is probable that this title was added at a later date, maybe to give the song more glamour or romanticism, as it seems unlikely that Flora MacDonald was the composer. Her father was already dead; her step-father was involved in the search for Prince Charles, although he was secretly sympathetic, and in fact aided his escape; and there are no reports of any mistreatment of Flora's family, or even of herself upon her capture. I would venture to guess that the poem was probably composed by a woman living on the mainland of Scotland, within reach of the redcoats who caused such indiscriminate suffering after the battle of Culloden. She may have been the Lady or daughter of one of the houses in which Charles stayed during his campaign, or a lady he danced with at one of the balls he attended, but we cannot be certain who she really was.

The final poem in this chapter is a complaint about the treatment of the Highlanders by the Government after the Rising of 1745-6. The Disarming and Disclothing Acts were passed in 1746-7, not only prohibiting the ownership of weapons by the Jacobite clans, but also the wearing of the Highland dress. It is this banning of the plaid which gave rise to the *Óran mu 'n éideadh Ghàidhealach* ²⁵⁰ composed by Margaret Campbell, wife of the Rev. James Stevenson, who was at that time the minister of Archattan.²⁵¹ She states her case in the opening lines of the poem:

Thàinig achd ro chruidh oirnn
 A nuas a Sasuinn,
 Muigheadh air ar n' éideadh,
 Cha 'n eil e tlachdmhor.²⁵²

Her claim that the innocent Gaels have done nothing to deserve such treatment is rather ironic, considering the events which led to the Act being passed:

Ciod e chuir na daoine
 Gun airm ach bata,
 Is nach d' thug iad caonnag
 No aobhar bagraidh.²⁵³

One version of this song contains a short refrain which indicates that this poetess, unlike most of those with whom we have been dealing, was literate:

Ho ridum o uo ho radum
 Tha mulad gam theumadh o le[u]gh mi 'n t- ac[hd] ud.²⁵⁴

She declares that the plaid has been worn by the Gaels since the days of King Fergus, and laments the fact that anyone seen sporting it since the Disclathing Act would face *fògradh agus prìosan* for doing so. The third stanza contradicts the claims made earlier about the peacable nature of the Highlanders, as, in claiming noble patronage for the plaid, it refers directly to the Rising of 1745:

'S gur neònach a' muigheadh e,
 Ann an gradadh,
 Ghiorrad 's o 'n bha 'm Prionnsa,
 Gach diùc, is baran,
 A' caitheamh an fhéilidh,
 Le sgéith 's le claidheamh,
 'S nan do mhair a t-sreup ud
 Bha feum air fathasd.²⁵⁵

The poetess rails against the hats and coats which will be *ro lionmhor* now that the plaid will no longer be seen, and declares the young women will not be impressed by such attire:

An t-òganach seòlta,
 O 'n mhùgh e earradh,

Cha toir maighdean pòg dha,
 Cha dean i aithn' air.²⁵⁶

She emphasises the point thus:

Trùp as gach dùthaich
 A dol air faidhir,
 'S ainneamh a bhios cùirt
 Aig na fearaibh tighe;
 Gun uidheam ach lùireach
 A bha 's an fhasan,
 Bheir na mnathan cùl riu,
 Cha 'n fhiù leo 'n caidreamh.²⁵⁷

The Lowland dress is described as being uncomfortable and inelegant, and unsuitable for riding in. The young men are also said to be unhappy now that they have to wear trews:

Sud an sgeul tha tùrsach,
 Le iomadh fleasgach,
 Nach faicear a ghlùinean,
 No bac na h-íosgaid ²⁵⁸

The poetess ends her diatribe by saying that King George himself is losing out, because he will not be gaining from the taxes on cloth and dyes used in making the plaid; and the merchants are starving because of the loss of trade. She finishes with the hope that the Act will be repealed:

...na measadh a chùirt e,
 Thig mùthadh fhathasd.²⁵⁹

Being both a Campbell and the wife of a Presbyterian minister, it seems unlikely that Margaret Stevenson would have been a staunch Jacobite by any manner of means, but her complaint here is one on behalf of all the Gaels, even those who had supported the House of Hanover, who were being punished for the Rising of the Jacobite clans. The Disarming Act, one could understand, but the Disclothing Act was an unnecessarily harsh measure, a 'cowardly and absurd piece

of legislation'²⁶⁰ which attempted to rob the Gaels of their identity, as well as of their warlike spirit:

for years those clansmen who persisted in defying the Act and wearing the only garb they possessed, or go naked, were hunted by the redcoats like partridges on the mountains...and the country jails were filled to their utmost capacity with men wearing the tartan.²⁶¹

The poetess seems to have been moved by a sense of injustice, rather than political motives, in composing her song; but it serves as a reminder that Gaels were on both sides in all the conflicts dealt with here, and that the steps taken by government to destroy the culture and society of the vanquished also affected the victors who shared that common heritage.

Most of the songs composed by female authors concerned with the major conflicts of the 17th and 18th centuries are laments for chiefs, husbands, and lovers who died in battle, so the element of personal grief is very much in evidence. The women were powerless to influence events themselves, and had to content themselves with waiting at home for news, good or bad. Those who were politically aware, in the sense that they understood what was happening in the government of the day, and had definite views on which cause was right and which was wrong, produced poems containing spirited rallying calls, although these were sometimes tempered with the realization that things were maybe not going as they would have hoped. Description of battles is limited to naming those who stood their ground, those who ran, and those who fell, as these women were not witnesses to the events which so markedly affected their lives. They fulfilled their expected rôles: praising and encouraging their menfolk when they were alive, and lamenting them when they fell, although, as in the case of Fionnghal Campbell, the menfolk they praised were not always their husbands. These poems show us that the women of the Highlands at this time were not ignorant of what was going on in the world around them, and that their loyalty to their clans, however strong, was not blind. They have left us a powerful and moving record of those times of upheaval and conflict, and the effect which they had on the clans as a whole, and not just on the armies who fought the battles.

Notes:

1. Appendix; p. 621.
2. Appendix; p. 372.
3. John Buchan, *Montrose*, London, 1928; p. 179.
4. ref. 3; p. 178.
5. John MacKenzie, *Sàr-obair nam Bàrd Gaelach*, Edinburgh, 1904; p. 63.
6. ref. 5; p. 63
7. *ibid.*
8. David Stevenson, *Alasdair MacColla and the Highland Problem in the Seventeenth Century*, Edinburgh, 1980; p. 99.
9. ref. 8; p. 99.
10. ref. 5; p. 63.
11. O. Bergin, *Irish Bardic Poetry*, Dublin 1970; p. 9.
12. Appendix; p. 558.
13. Donald A. Fergusson, *From the Farthest Hebrides*, Toronto, 1978; p. 99.
14. ref. 13; p. 99.
15. Appendix; p. 618.
16. ref. 3; p. 179
17. National Library of Scotland MS. No. 14876; p. 47a.
18. ref. 3; pp.200-204.
19. ref. 3; p. 274.
20. Edward Cowan, *Montrose: for Covenant and King*, London, 1977; pp. 183-5.
21. A. MacKenzie, *Òrain Iain Luim*, Edinburgh, 1964; p.24.
22. Appendix; p. 355.
23. A. Maclean Sinclair, *Mactalla nan Tùr*, Sydney C. B, 1901; p. 92.
24. ref. 8; pp. 147-48.
25. ref. 8; p. 148.
26. ref. 23; p. 92.
27. *ibid.*
28. W. Matheson, *The Blind Harper*, Edinburgh, 1970; p. 58.
29. ref. 3; p. 225.
30. Appendix; p. 367.
31. National Library of Scotland MS. No. 2128; p. 82.
32. ref. 31.
33. ref. 31.
34. ref. 8; p. 161.
35. Chapter 3; p. 48.
36. Appendix; p. 356.

37. *Transactions of the Gaelic Society of Inverness*, vol. XXVI; p. 238.
38. ref. 37; p. 238.
39. *ibid.*
40. ref. 8; p. 160.
41. John Baynes, *The Jacobite Rising of 1715*, London, 1970; p. 9.
42. Appendix; p. 385.
43. A. & A. MacDonald, *Clan Donald*, vol. III, Inverness 1904; p.
44. A. & A. MacDonald, *Clan Donald*, vol. II, Inverness 1900; p.
45. ref. 43; p.
46. MacLagan MS. No. 137; p. 11a
47. ref. 43; p. 420.
48. ref. 43; p. 214.
49. ref. 43; p. 421.
50. MacLagan MS. No. 152.
51. ref. 46; p. 11a
52. refs. 46 & 50.
53. ref. 50.
54. ref. 41; p. 17.
55. Appendix; p. 390.
56. C. Ó Baoill, *Bàrdachd Shìlis na Ceapaich*, Edinburgh 1972; p. 128.
57. ref. 56; pp. 16-18.
58. *ibid.*
59. ref. 56; pp. 20-24.
60. ref. 56; p. 131.
61. ref. 56; pp. 20-24.
62. A. M. W. Stirling, *Macdonald of the Isles*, London, 1913; p. 67.
63. ref. 41; p. 53.
64. ref. 56; pp. 20-24.
65. A. Mackenzie, *The Macdonalds of Clanranald*, Inverness, 1881; p. 57.
66. ref. 56; pp. 20-24.
67. ref. 65; p. 58.
68. ref. 41; p. 55.
69. ref. 56; pp. 20-24.
70. ref. 56; p. 138.
71. ref. 56; pp. 26-30.
72. ref. 41; p. 147.
73. ref. 41; p. 149.
74. ref. 56; pp. 26-30.
75. *ibid.*

76. *ibid.*
77. ref. 56; p. 141.
78. ref. 56; p. 140.
79. ref. 56; pp. 26-30.
80. ref. 56; pp. 143-4.
81. *ibid.*
82. ref. 56; pp. 26-30.
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84. ref. 56; p. 146.
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5. LOVE AND JEALOUSY

The love-songs composed by women up to 1750 are numerous, and they take several different forms. The earliest extant love-songs ascribed to a woman author are those said to have been composed by Isabella, Countess of Argyll, or Iseabail Ní Mheic Cailéin. Dating from around the year 1500, the two poems, *Atá Fleasgach ar mo thí*¹ and *Is Mairg dá nGalar an Grádh*² are examples of the courtly love-poems which were popular with the aristocracy of Scotland and Ireland at that time. In keeping with the tradition of courtly love, these poems are on the subject of secret or unrequited love. It is unusual to have an example of such a poem composed by a woman, and some scholars have cast doubt on the ascription to Iseabail Ní Mheic Cailéin of these two, but I have chosen to accept the ascription in the Book of the Dean of Lismore, and assume that she was, indeed, the author³. *Is Mairg dá nGalar an Grádh* is a poem about a secret love, possibly unrequited, which is why the author is lovesick for the man of whom she writes. As the second stanza tells us:

An grádh-soin tugas gan fhios,
 ós é mo leas gan a luadh,
 muna fhaghad furtacht tráth,
 biaidh mo bhláth go tana truagh.⁴

Atá Fleasgach ar mo Thí gives us another side of unspoken love, this time with the lady herself as the object of a reciprocated desire, but unable to be with the one she loves:

Atá fleasgach ar mo thí,
 a Rí na ríogh go rí leis !
 a bheith sínte re mo bhroinn
 agus a choim ré mo chneis !

Dá mbeith gach ní mar mo mhian,
 ní bhiadh cian eadrainn go bráth,
 gé beag sin dá chur i gcéill,
 's nach tuigeann sé féin mar tá.⁵

Both poems are composed in *rannaigheacht mhór* metre, indicating a thorough familiarity with classical Gaelic bardic verse, as one who held such a high position in Gaelic society would be expected to have. There are, however, none of the elliptical and cryptic images used by the professional bards: the meaning of the poem is straightforward and frank, with the lady longing for a distant and unobtainable love.

The courtly love tradition in Gaelic poetry does not, on the surviving evidence, seem to have been either as widespread or as popular in Scotland as it was in Ireland at that time. In fact, of the *dánta grádha* collected by Tomás Ó Rathille⁶, only two Scottish poets are included: Iseabail Ní Mheic Cailéin and Niall Mór MacMhuirich. Both of these were based in the west of Scotland, and therefore more likely to have come into contact with the new fashion which was sweeping across Ireland. The poems which they composed in this style show a surety of touch and a depth of feeling which indicates that this type of poetry was very familiar to them. Perhaps the lack of poems in the courtly love mode composed in Scotland is due to a question of survival rather than production, especially when one considers that such poems would most likely have been transmitted and preserved in manuscript form, rather than orally: manuscripts are more easily mislaid than memory.

The later songs of love have been kept alive in the oral tradition, and this is probably why they are so much more plentiful, although the songs from this period tend to have love as a secondary subject, rather than the main focus of the poem.

Diorbhail Nic a' Bhruthainn's only extant song, although we know that she composed many more, is *Alasdair a Laoigh mo Chéille*⁷, a song to Alasdair MacDonald, or Alasdair Mac Colla, the leader of the Highlanders in the army of Montrose, which was composed around the year 1645. In this song, Diorbhail's love for the man is indistinguishable from her support for his cause. She has never met him, nor is she likely to, but she is full of praise for him, expressing her feelings in words such as:

Mo chruit, mo chlàrsach, a's m' fhiodhall,
 Mo theud chiùil 's gach àit' am bithinn,
 'Nuair a bha mi òg 's mi 'm nighinn,
 'S e thogadh m' inntinn thu thighinn,

Gheibheadh tu mo phòg gun bhrùithinn,
'S mar tha mi 'n diugh 's math do dhligh oirr'.⁸

This is not by any means a standard song of love, as praise of Alasdair Mac Colla is intermingled with praise of the clans who would rise to support his cause; and especially since the bardess seems never to have met him, only to have heard of his prowess and exploits. The idea of *tearc eugmhais*, falling in love with the deeds and character of the man without having met him, is familiar in Gaelic legends, and its use here underlines Diorbhail's representation of Alasdair as a heroic warrior. Her support for the Royalist cause is, however, paramount, and her love for Alasdair arises from his active support for it.

The Jacobite rising of 1715 gives Ciorslan nighean Dhonnchaidh Alasdair the opportunity to declare her love for her young man in *Mo Ghaol am Fleasgach* ⁹. This song to her lover follows the pattern of panegyric poetry, most of the song being taken up with praise of his prowess as a hunter and as a warrior. Although the poem begins and ends on a personal note, expressing the poetess' love for the man who has gone away, and her anxiety over his safety, these expressions of her own feelings only constitute one quarter of the poem, the rest being somewhat formulaic praise. This means that we do not know anything about her relationship with this man, whether he was her husband or her lover, or even who he was. Not once is a personal name mentioned, or even the clan to which he belonged. For this reason, one could not class the poem as a true love-song, even though the author makes it clear that she is in love with the man:

Do phòg, a lasgair,
fhuair mi taitneach,
's fhada bha do mheanmhain orm.¹⁰

Tha Caolas Eadar mi is Iain ¹¹ is a song of longing composed by a girl who is physically parted from her lover, who, apparently was not in love with her.¹² She wishes that the sea between them would recede and allow her to cross:

Truagh nach tràghadh e fo latha,
 Nach biodh ann ach loch no abhainn,
 Fiach am faighinn a dhol tarsainn
 Far a bheil mo leannan falaich¹³

She then wishes to be alone with her love in an isolated place,
 living as man and wife:

'S truagh nach robh mise 's an t-òg gasda
 Am mullach beinne guirme caise,
 Gun duine beò bhith 'nar n-aisge,
 Ach dall is bodhar is bacach;
 'S thigeamaid am màireach dhachaigh,
 Mar gum pòsaimid o 'n altair.¹⁴

Some of this song seems to be missing, or intermingled with another, as one version ends with the girl declaring that she will return home and tell her family 'mar a thachair'¹⁵, while the rest of the song is concerned with what she wishes would happen, and not with what has actually taken place.

Oran Mòr Sgoire Breac contains two contradicting themes, but this confusion is probably best explained by assuming that it is the work of more than one poetess, and thus the two distinct and discordant themes are not intended to relate to the feelings and experiences of one woman. Very often, two songs which shared a tune became confused and intermingled through oral transmission.

One version of the song is a panegyric, probably to a Nicolson of Scorrybreck in Skye, praising his house, his generosity, and his wife, a MacLeod of Raasay.¹⁶ There is nothing in the song to indicate that the composer is in love with the subject, *Calum Mac Dhòmhnaill*, apart from a reference to him as *mo leannan* which could conceivably be the voice of a nurse, or a devoted servant, as much as that of a lover. Furthermore, one would hardly expect a woman who was in love with this Nicolson to praise his choice of another for his wife, which is just what our poetess does here:

'S fhuair thu 'chéile 's cha b' i 'n òinid
 Cha b' i 'n aimid, cha b' i 'n òinseach
 Nighean Fir a Caisteal Bhròchaill¹⁷

Of course, the song *could* possibly have been composed by an admirer who was of a lower social status than Calum mac Dhòmhnaill, but in that case one would expect at least a wish that she could have been in the place of Nicolson's bride, or a more physical description of the man himself, neither of which is found here. No personal note intrudes into the song of praise, which is why I would conclude that it was the work of a woman who loved Nicolson, but who was not *in love* with him. The second version of the song is very different – so different, in fact, that although it has the same title in some collections, it seems inconceivable that it was ever part of the panegyric to Calum Nicolson.

The song entitled *Oran Mòr Sgoilre Breac* in K.C. Craig's collection¹⁸ begins with the complaint of a young girl that she has been taken advantage of; in fact, from the description given in the song one would conclude that she was raped by her lover:

Thàinig mo leannan nam chòmh dhail.
 Shuidh sinn air taobh cnocain bhòdhaich.
 Theann sinn ri mire 's ri gòraich.
 'S e thàinig as sin dò[i]bheairt.
 Bhagair e mo léine shròiceadh.
 'S rinn e liadan beag' dhe m' chòta.
 Chuir e falt mo chinn fo bhrògan.
 Thug e air mo shùilean dòrtadh.¹⁹

The song as recorded here does mention Scorrybreck in the final few lines, which echo the opening of the panegyric version:

Bheir soraidh bhuam fhìn go m' eòlas
 Do Sgorabreac am bi a' chòisir²⁰

but they do not seem to belong here. The songs probably shared the same tune, which led to them being sung together, and this is where the confusion seems to arise. K.C. Craig's version is strikingly similar to a song beginning *Dh' éirich mise moch Di-Dòmhnaich* ²¹, in which the woman tells of how she has been raped by her lover, and appeals to a man walking on the moor to take a message to Scorrybreck and to her sister in Knoydart, telling her sister:

Rinn mi dìolanas ro 'n phòsadh,
 Laigh mi le glas-ghiollan gòrach,
 Nach dug cir no stiòm no bròg dhomh,
 Nach dug fàinne far a mheòir dhomh,
 Cha dug, no 'm bréid, 's e bu chòir dha.²²

With the frankness typical of folk-song, she then names the young man who has so wronged her, condemning him for not having waited until they were married before doing as he did:

Iain Mhic Chaluim 'ic Dòmhnail,
 Cha digeadh tu nuair bu chòir dhut,
 Tacan beag mu 'n rinn mi 'n còrdadh,
 Gun laighinn leat an déidh còrdaidh,
 Dhianainn banais is mór-phòsadh²³

A fragment of what seems to be the same song has much the same story, only there is no mention of the woman being attacked by her lover. Instead she complains that her suitor seems to take her for granted, not giving her the gifts that she would expect:

Mhic an fhir fo 'n Chaman Sgiathach
 Gu 'm b' iognadh dhuit thighinn ga m' iarraidh
 Gun chrodh laoigh, gun aighean chiad-laoigh ²⁴

Although the versions found in K.C. Craig's collection and in *Hebridean Folksongs* mention Scorrybreck, they are distinct from *Oran Mòr Sgoire Breac*. The melody may be the same, but the sentiments are vastly different, and the two versions together do not make one whole song, although some parts at least seem to have been sung as such.

An abandoned woman was the author of *Tha 'n oidhche nochd fuar* ²⁵, in which she warns against the follies of love and the ways of young men:

'Nuair a gheibheadh e thoil féin
 'S mar a thaitneadh ri bheus,
 Chan iarradh e 'd dhèidh nas mò.²⁶

Despite his behaviour, she praises her lover, before declaring that he will have cause to regret his treatment of her:

Mun tig ach geàrr uair
Bithidh tusa bochd truagh,
'S bithidh mis' anns an uaigh gun deò.²⁷

The authoress of *Is annfeasgar Di-h-aoine*²⁸ was in a similar situation, rejecting other suitors in favour of Dòmhnall, who seems to have spurned her. Her reaction is not to punish her lover with guilt over her death, but to convince herself that he will return to her:

Ach ged chaidh thu orm thairis
Gur mòr mo bharail 's mo dhùil
Gun till thu rium fhathast...²⁹

A song seemingly addressed to Dòmhnall Dubh a' Chuthaig³⁰, son of Iain Mùideartach of Clanranald, describes an illicit love-affair between Dòmhnall and the authoress. In return for her favours, she enjoys rent-free tenancy, as well as various gifts, but there is a certain paradox in her song of praise. The need for secrecy seems important, the authoress expressing her relief at not having produced a child which might have embarrassed Dòmhnall Dubh, but the very existence of her song makes the relationship public. The song may have been composed after Dòmhnall Dubh succeeded as chief of Clanranald, in 1670³¹, and moved from his base in Canna, thereby removing the danger of his wife, daughter of John MacLeod of Dunvegan³², discovering the secret liaison through the Canna woman's song.

Dòmhnall Dubh's marriage to Mòr MacLeod was a troubled one, ending when he accused his wife of adultery and sent her away.³³ The charge laid against her by her husband in 1680 may or may not have been true, but there is evidence that she was in love with a man other than her husband. Mòr is credited with the authorship of the love-song *Ged is grianach an latha*³⁴, which she is said to have composed to her sweetheart in Skye on returning to Uist after a visit to her father. The song expresses her sadness on parting, but also her defiance of those who would disapprove of her love:

'S a cheart aindeoin luchd mì-rùin
 'S mi gun dùraigeadh pòg dhuit,
 Ged a chuirte mi 'm sheasamh
 Air an t-Seisein Di-Dòmhnaich...³⁵

There was, however, another daughter of MacLeod of Dunvegan who married the chief of Clanranald: Mòr, daughter of Sir Ruairidh Mòr, married Iain Mùideartach, and was the mother of Dòmhnall Dubh, so she may have been the author of the poem. If Dòmhnall Dubh was the subject of the Canna woman's song, and his wife was the composer of *Ged is grianach an latha*, one has to pity both of them, trapped in a loveless marriage.

*Rinn mi mocheirigh gu éirigh*³⁶ is also a song of secret love between the poetess and a noble lover who is named in some versions as *Mac 'ic Ailein*. Most versions, however, ask *Nighean Mhic Ailein* not to be jealous of or angry with the poetess, indicating that her lover may have been married to Clanranald's daughter. The song is one of praise of the woman's lover, and of Clan Donald, although the final two stanzas seem to be the interjections of another woman, who declares that she would make war on Clanranald.

The higher social status of the poetess is the cause of sorrow behind the song to Dòmhnall Donn of Bohuntin by the daughter of the Chief of Grant³⁷. She was in love with Dòmhnall Donn, and he with her, but her father would not allow their marriage because of his poverty, although he was of a good family.³⁸ The story of their doomed love has already been dealt with³⁹, but the song contains no hint of the trouble which was to come, only of the poetess' love for her sweetheart, and her distress at being parted from him. She lists all the places to which she would follow Dòmhnall Donn, praising his hunting skills and appearance, and claiming that his poverty does not diminish his attractiveness:

'S iomad nionag a tha 'n tòir ort,
 Eadar Inbhirnis is Mòrair,
 Ged bhiodh tu air crùn de stòras,
 'Phòsadh anns an uair thu.⁴⁰

The refrain of the song by Grant's daughter, as well as much of her praise of her lover, was used in the later song by Bean a'

Bharra ⁴¹, which seems to have been composed some time before 1750. She declares that she would defy her family to be with her lover, although he was poor, but despite her love for him, he seems to have rejected her: *Dh' fhàs thu umam suarach*.

One of the best-known love-songs from this period is *Bothan Àirigh am Bràigh Raineach* ⁴², where a woman sings the praises of her husband, who has gone to Glengarry:

Fear na gruaige mar an t-òr
Is nam pòg air bhlas meala.⁴³

His appearance and clothing are praised, as is his generosity to the poetess:

An uair a ruigeadh tu an fhéill
Is e mo ghear-sa a thig dhachaigh.

Mo chriosan is mo chìre
Is mo stiomag chaol cheangail ⁴⁴

The fact that she is also bought a *bréid* is an indication that the poetess is married, as that was the headgear worn by a married woman. She is well-provided for by her husband's cattle raiding (although she might mean that the livestock would be gained by legitimate means), which is alluded to in the lines:

Cuime am bìomaid gun eudail
Agus spréidh aig na Gallaibh ?

Gheibh sinn crodh as a' Mhaorainn
Agus caoirich a Gallaibh.⁴²

She uses a familiar folk-song motif to end her song, expressing her wish to have her husband all to herself on a lonely shieling, with only animals for company.

This is a simple song of love to an absent husband, with the poetess praising him to the hilt, and wishing that he could be with her on the shieling. It is a celebration of her feelings for her him and of their life together, without a hint of complaint or sadness,

except for the fact that they are apart. Life on the shieling is presented as an idyllic existence, without interference from others.

A widely known love song, which is full of imagery and symbolism, is the sixteenth-century song to MacKay of the Rhinns of Islay, *Craobh nan Ubhal*.⁴⁶ The image of the apple tree is used throughout the poem to represent MacKay, who is also seen to have magical powers of some kind⁴⁷, although this may be a metaphor for the effect which he has on the poetess:

'S e Mac Aoidh an duine treubhach,
Nì e sìoda de 'n chlàimh Chéitein,
Nì e sròl de 'n fhraoch nam b' fheudar,
Nì e fìon de uisg an t-sléibhe.⁴⁸

The poetess talks of washing MacKay's shirt and handing it to his page, followed by an incantatory run which calls to mind a similar passage in *Tàladh Dhòmhnaill Ghuirm* ⁴⁹:

Chraobh nan ubhal, gun robh Dia leat,
Gun robh gile, gun robh grian leat,
Gun robh gaoth an ear 's an iar leat,
Gun robh gach nì a thànaig riamh leat,
Gun robh gach mathas agus miann leat,
Gun robh gach brioghais agus briain leat,
Gun robh Somhairle mór 's a chliar leat,
Gun robh gach neach mar tha mi fhian leat.⁵⁰

This is evidently a song by a woman who is in love with MacKay, rather than just a supporter, as she confidently claims:

Nam bitheadh Mac Aoidh san làthair,
No Nial[l] anbharrach a bhràthair,
Cha bhiodh mo thochradh gun phàigheadh.⁵¹

Intermingled with her praise of MacKay are expressions of love which raise this poem out of the realms of traditional panegyric and into those of the love-song:

Mo ghaol, mo ghràdh an t-òg beadrach,
 Dhannsadh eutrom rìoghail aigheach ⁵²

and:

Mo ghaol, mo ghràdh an t-òg feucant
 Tha muigh fo choill mhór nan geugan,
 Rachainn leat thar chuan na h-Éireann.⁵³

There is one passage in this poem which is somewhat difficult to interpret, although on one level the image is quite a simple one:

'Nuair a théid thu 'n choill g' a rùsgadh
 Aithnich fhéin a' chraobh as lioms' ann,
 A' chraobh gheugach pheurach ùbhlach,
 Bun a sàs 's a bàrr a' lùbadh,
 Chraobh as buige 's as mìls' ùbhlan.⁵⁴

Although another version of this passage has *a' chraobh am bi mise* ⁵⁵ instead of *a' chraobh as lioms*, the latter form certainly fits the rhyme-scheme better, and I take this to be the original. The woods here may represent women in general, with a play on the different meanings of *rùsgadh*. The poetess uses the tree as a metaphor for her own womanly qualities, urging MacKay to choose her fruit and pluck it. The image seems a sexual one, the fruit representing fertility and desirability.

This is to be contrasted with the extension of the image which occurs in some versions:

Ach ma théid thu 'na choill' fhiosraich
 Foighnich a' chraobh am bi mise,
 Chraobh a thilg a bàrr 's a miosan,
 Chraobh a thilg a peighinn phisich.⁵⁶

This would seem to indicate that the poetess is in straitened circumstances, or else that she has given away her fruit and shoots when she should have waited for them to have been plucked. Perhaps it is reading too much into this to suggest that the woman has been too free with her favours, and is now left with nothing. The *peighinn phisich* mentioned was a kind of talisman used to hail the new moon⁵⁷, *rìoghain na h-oidhche*, and it is not too much of a stretch of

the imagination to see that it could be used metaphorically to signify maidenhood: the pure, whole, new moon welcomed by the turning of the *peighinn phisich* becoming the virginal purity represented by the talisman. Maybe the poetess feels that she is now undesirable, just like a fruitless tree, because she has lost her virginity, her *peighinn phisich*. Of course, there may be no sexual reference intended here, simply that good fortune has deserted the poetess, and that she has no wealth of any kind to offer.

In contrast to the complex symbolism of *Craobh nan Ubhal*, the only problem of interpretation posed by the song *Mhic iarla nam brataich bàna* ⁵⁸ is that of identifying the man to whom it is addressed. He is definitely not a Macleod, as Dunvegan is dismissed as being 'beag o'n làr', but I would venture to suggest that he may have been a MacDonald. Duntulm is referred to as 'Dùn Tuilm na brataich bàineadh', and these white banners would seem to provide a link with the subject of the poem. The viability of this argument depends on the interpretation of the last few lines of the song:

Sìoda reamhar ruadh na Spàine,
 'S cha b' ann a Glaschu a bhà e,
 No 'n Dùn Bheagan, 's beag o 'n làr e,
 No 'n Dùn Tuilm na brataich bàineadh ! ⁵⁹

If one takes the second line quoted here as referring to the ship on which the subject of the song was travelling, then we can rule out the connection to Duntulm. If, on the other hand, the second line refers to the silk from Galway, it is quite possible that Duntulm, although not the place from which the silk came, was the place from which the ship came.

The rest of this song is concerned with praise of the son of the Earl of the White Banners, describing his prowess as a hunter, and the finery of his ship. Both of these descriptions contain clichés of the waulking song genre, such as:

Sealgair sithinn o fhrìth nan àrdbheann,
 'S an ròin léith o bheul an t-sàile,
 An earba bheag a dh' fhalbhas stàtail ⁶⁰

and, adding an element of fantasy:

Chunnaic mi do long air sàile,
 Bha stiùir òir oirr' 's dà chrann airgid ⁶¹

This formulaic approach also extends to the composer's description of herself, presenting herself as an object of pity because of her unrequited love for the son of the Earl of the White Banners:

A bhean ud thall a nì 'n gàire,
 Nach truagh leat piuthar gun bhràthair ?
 Is bean òg gun chéile 'n làthair ?
 'S gur h-ionann sin 's mar atà mi,
 M' inntinne trom, m' fhonn air m' fhàgail,
 Mu 'n fhiùran fhoghainneach àlainn ⁶²

This song is made up almost entirely of formulaic images which are found throughout Gaelic folksong, and particularly amongst those of the waulking-song type. The lack of invention seems to indicate a lack of true emotion in this song, although that is not to say that it is not a fine composition. The different elements are blended together skillfully to form a coherent whole, which is not always true of the *òrain luaidh*, but the fact that all of these elements are to be found elsewhere detracts from the overall effect of the song.

Seeing a ship going by, or looking out for one, is the starting point for several Gaelic songs, and the love-songs are no exception. *Alasdair òig Mhic 'ic Neacail* ⁶³ begins like this in some versions:

Là dhomh 's mi buain na dearca
 Taobh 'n fhraoich an cois 'n aiteil
 Chunnaic mi bàta dol seachad
 'S dh' fhoighnich mi cò rinn a chaismeachd
 No cò thilg an urchar thapaidh
 Alasdair Og 'n fhuilt chleachdaich ⁶⁴

Another version has a slightly different opening:

'S muladach, 's muladach a thà mi,
 Dìreadh na beinne 's 'ga teàrnadh;

'S nach fhaic mi tighinn am bàta
 Ris an togte na siùil bhàna,
 Bha m' athair oirr' 's mo thriùir bhràithrean,
 'S mo leannan fhìn air ràmh-bràghad,
 Alasdair na gruaige bàine.⁶⁵

Another variation of this song begins with the composer in the woods, rather than by the sea, although it is probable that this is actually a different song, as the object of the poetess' affections is named here as *Oganach ùr de Chloinn Lachluinn* ⁶⁶. This song begins:

Latha dhomh 's mi 'n coill nan dearcag
 Feadh an fhraoich ri taobh an aitinn
 'Buain nan cnò air bhàrr gach slataig
 Chuala mi d' fhùdar a' lasadh,
 'S dh' fhoighnich mi cò rinn a' chaismeachd.⁶⁷

This is said to be the composition of a daughter of one of the Camerons of Lochail, the subject being her father's forester.⁶⁸ Although much of the text of this poem is to be found in the song addressed to Alasdair Òg, the significant differences point it being the composition of a different author, and addressed to another person, although one of the songs has evidently been used as the framework for the other.

In the song to Alasdair Òg, the poetess expresses a wish to bear him many sons, naming a trade for each one of them:

Fear 'na dhiùca, fear 'na chauptin,
 Fear 'na dhròbhair mór air martaibh,
 Fear air a'luing mhóir a' Sasunn,
 Fear 'na cheannard air sluagh feachdach.⁶⁹

The MacNicol MS version of the song is fragmentary, although the basic plot is the same as that found in South Uist. A more detailed text, which indicates that the poetess was from Lewis, is to be found in K.C. Craig's collection:

Alasdair òig mhic ac Neacail,
 B' fheàrr lium gun saothraichinn mac dhut,
 Còigear no sianar no seachdnar.
 B' arralach ciùin dhianainn altram.
 Bheirinn glùin is cìoch an asgaidh.
 Thogainn suas [air] bharraibh bas iad.
 Air mo ghualainn fhìn gum faict' iad.
 'S rachainn leotha a Leódhas dhachaidh.⁷⁰

The praise of her lover which follows adds a new element to the familiar praiseworthy attributes found in panegyric song, as he is described as *leughadair nan duilleag*, indicating that, even in the early seventeenth century, literacy was seen as a valuable skill, just as much as military or hunting prowess. By the end of the seventeenth century there was only too much evidence of the power of the pen, with charters being used to claim territories from clans which until then had always held them by strength, so the ability to read and write became increasingly important. It was not, however, the most important attribute in the eyes of the poetess, as she devotes much more of her song to praise of Alasdair's physical appearance, and of the wealth of his household: two traditional and somewhat clichéd subjects.

There are several passages in *Coisich, a rùin*⁷¹ which are formulaic, and which occur in other compositions, although it also contains much which shows originality. The best known version of the song begins with the poetess sending her good wishes to Harris, and to John Campbell, her lover; but there are two distinct versions of the passage relating to John Campbell. One has the poetess sending him a message, reminding him of how they used to be together:

Innis dha-san	gu bheil mi fallain,
Gun do chuir mi	'n geamhradh fairis;
Bu tric a laigh	mi fo t' earradh,
Ma laigh, cha b' ann	aig a' bhaile,
'N lagan uaigneach,	'n cluain a' bharraich,
Gum b' iad na h-eòin	ar luchd faire,
'S gaoth nan àrdbheann	draghadh fairis... ⁷²

The other version praises Campbell's hunting skills, listing all the animals he would catch:

Sealgair geòidh thu	ròin is eala,
Bhrìc a nì leum	'n fhéidh nì 'n langan,
'S an dòbhrain duinn	's an laoigh bhallaich,
'S na circeig' bhig'	air nead falaich. ⁷³

Part of the passage about lying entwined in his plaid is also included in this rendering of the song, although it is not as detailed as in the first version. In any case, this song is clearly of composite authorship, as the identity of the singer's lover changes as the song progresses. We have seen that it begins with a greeting to John Campbell of Harris, who is described as the *leannan* of the authoress, so it is unlikely that he is the same man referred to in the passage:

'S fliuch an oidhche	nochd 's gur fuar i,
Gun dug Cloinn Nill	druim a' chuain orr';
Ma 's fhìor dhomh fhìn	chì mi bhuam iad,
Le 'n longanan	loma luatha...
Mo leannan fhìn	air bhòrd fuaraidh... ⁷⁴

In this instance, the lover referred to is most likely a MacNeill of Barra, not a Campbell from Harris, so one must conclude that this passage was composed by a different bardess to the one who began the song. Yet another voice is heard in the next section, where the authoress laments the death of her 'first secret sweetheart':

Gura mise	nach eil fallain
Bho 'n chiad Mhart	o thùs an earraich,
M' òg-fhleasgach donn	ris a' bhalla
Cùl do chinn air	deile daraich,
Freasdal léine	chaoil dha 'n anart ⁷⁵

The passage which follows this is in a lighter vein, with another poetess describing her plans to take advantage of a betrothal to catch the eye of her lover, as well as giving a vivid description of her fierce jealousy of any rival for his affections:

Nan cluinninn té	eile luaidh riut
Spìonainn bun is	bàrr mo chuailein,
Gu falbhadh m' fheòil	na ceò uaine. ⁷⁶

Another version has this to add:

Nan cluinninn té	eil' bhith luaidh ort,
Leumadh mo shròn	àird na stuaidhe. ⁷⁷

Both the versions found in *Hebridean Folksongs* II end with the poetess listing all the precious things which her lover represents for her, although it is not clear if she is one and the same as the composer of the passage on jealousy. The rhyme scheme is different in this section, which possibly indicates that this was contributed by another author:

Mo mhill, mo mhill,	mo mhill fhìn thu,
Mo shiucar is	mo cheòl fìdhle,
Mo cheòl clàrsaich	'n àird 's an ìseal,
Mo dhìtheinean	eadar ghartaibh. ⁷⁸

A. Maclean Sinclair's version of this song opens with a passage which is very reminiscent of *Hè mandu* ⁷⁹:

'S truagh nach robh mi 'n riochd na h-eala
 No 'n riochd faoileig chrìn na mara
 Shnàmhainn an caol 's rachainn thairis.
 Ruiginn am ball 'bheil am fear ud;
 M' aighear, m' eibhneas, 's mo cheud leannan.⁸⁰

This example of the song is fragmentary, although it both echoes the *Hebridean Folksongs* versions, and contains one significant difference. Where the two previous texts praise the MacNeils of Barra, and the lover's skill as a sailor, this one laments their loss at sea:

'S cruaidh an sgeul an diugh a fhuair mi;
 Thug Clann-Nèill druim a' chuain orr'.
 Chaidh iad fodha anns an fhuaradh;
 Luchd nan leadan troma-dualach.⁸¹

This anxiety is also found in a manuscript version, which seems to be concerned only with the MacNeils. Although many of the passages are similar to those found elsewhere, the order in which they occur seems to be a more logical sequence, giving the song as it is found here a less disjointed feel. The poetess begins by describing how she shared her lover's plaid on many occasions, and then moves on to her distress at the possibility that he has been lost at sea:

'S mis' a' bhean bhochd, th' air a sgaradh,
 Ma 's è 'n cuan mòr d' àite falaich !
 Ma 's è na ròin do luchd-fhaire
 Ma's e leaba dhuit an fheamainn
 Ma 's è cluasag dhuit a ghaineamh
 Ma's è na h-éisg do choinnlean geala.⁸²

The imagery used here is not wholly original, as most of it is to be found in other songs of drowning, but the comparison of fish to the white funeral candles is unusual. This version of the song stands as a complete entity, all the parts related and contributing to the whole, while the other versions, although containing similarities, have a composite feel about them and are probably the work of more than one author.

A fragment of a song which bears much resemblance to the praise of the sweetheart in *Coisich a Rùin* begins '*S fliuch an oidhche nochd 's gur fuar i*'⁸³. However, the author here ends with a complaint against the nobleman's son who has abandoned her:

... 'm bothaig bhig an iomall tuatha
 Gun òl cupa gun òl cuacha.⁸⁴

It is relatively rare to find a waulking song to which an author has been attributed, but one of the few in this category is Mòr Nighean Uisdean's *Hè Mandu*⁸⁵. Fragments have been included in several collections, but fuller versions are also to be found. Most of these open with lines addressed to women which indicate that the song was composed at the waulking board:

Nan éisdeadh sibh rium a mhnathan
 dh' innsinn mo sgeul dhuibh air m' athais

gu bheil an làn	anns an fhadhail
chan fhaod mo ghaol	tighinn a thadhal,
òganach donn	deas fo chladheamh. ⁸⁶

Most versions of this song contain a passage which indicates that Mór Nighean Uisdean is separated from her sweetheart, and she describes her wish to reach him:

Nam biodh agam	sgiath a' ghlaisein,
Iteag nan eòin,	spòg a' lachain,
Shnàmhainn na caoil	air an tarsuinn,
An Caol Ileach	's an Caol Arcach;
Rachainn asteach	chon a' chaisteal
'S bheirinn amach	as mo leannan. ⁸⁷

The motif of the girl being forced by her parents to marry a rich, but unattractive and much older man, instead of the man with whom she is in love, occurs in several renditions of this song. The grotesque description of the man chosen for her by her parents, as the poetess laments her position, has parallels in other languages:

Ochan is och	is mi brònag,
cha bhean chrìonda	ghlic ri m' bheò mi;
mo mhàthair air	thì mo chòrdaidh;
tha m' athair air	thì mo phòsaidh
ri fear odhar	bodhar breòite,
ri fear dall cha	léir dha bhrògan,
gur mù a cheann	na chruach mhòine,
's gur faid' fheusag	na sguab eòrna,
's caoile amhach	dhuit na feòirnean,
cha dèan dà shlat	dheug dha còta,
théid seiche daimh	mhór 'na bhrògan. ⁸⁸

Included in most versions of this song is a somewhat elliptical passage referring to a message and gifts received from the son of the Earl, seemingly in a vain attempt to win the affections of the bardess, who names the man whom she prefers:

Thàinig teachdair	nis ga m' iarraidh -
Dithis an uiridh	's triùir am bliadhna.
Gille 's litir	each a's diollaid
Falaire dhonn	spuir a's srian innt'.
Teachdaireachd	bho mhac an Iarla...
'D é ged tha	cha ghabh mi 'm bliadhna
B' annsa leam	mac Anna riabhaich.
'G am bi na h-eich	mhòr air shrianaibh.
Na h-eich dhonna	throma, dhiolldach ⁸⁹

Mac Anna (Annra in some versions) is then more clearly identified as a Cameron chief by the poetess, who declares that she would go anywhere with him, in any conditions, using somewhat stock folk-song imagery:

Mhic Dhòmhnaill Duibh	a Loch Abar,
siod, a Rìgh, nach	robh mi agad,
ge be àite	'm bheil do leabaidh,
'm bun nan craobh no	'm bàrr nam baideal,
no air bòrd do	luinge fada,
no air morghan	gorm an aigeil,
'n dèidh do chur no	'n dèidh do chathadh,
'n dèidh do dheoch mhór	uisge-beatha. ⁹⁰

Some of the elements found in the different versions of this song possibly do not belong to the original. The passage about being forced to marry an old man seems out of kilter with the rest of the song, especially when taken alongside the reference to rejecting the Earl's son in favour of her sweetheart. One can hardly imagine her parents forcing her to wed an old decrepit man if another of her suitors was of such a high degree. The rest of the song seems to form one thematic unit, with the poetess declaring her love for a man from whom she is, for some reason, parted.

Parting is also the theme of the late seventeenth or early eighteenth century song, *Chunnaic mise mo leannan* ⁹¹, in which the author tells of her sweetheart leaving her to fight in the Jacobite army - although it is not absolutely certain with which campaign this is connected. The song begins almost as a complaint, with the girl telling of how her lover passed her as he was leaving, without

acknowledging her presence, although she immediately excuses him. The only clue to the identity of the man is the poetess' wish for Clan Donald to be victorious, indicating that her sweetheart was of that clan. She then launches into a formulaic run of praise for the clan, ending with a reference to the Battle of Auldearn and King James. This seems to be the plot of the original song, but, as often happens with popular songs and tunes, the chorus of this one seems to have been 'borrowed' for the composition of another which, through time, has in some versions become intertwined with the original. The girl's complaint of being ignored by her lover is still to be found, but this time there is no excuse for his actions, only condemnation of what he has done to her:

'S ann am bothag an fhàsaich
Thug am meàrlach mi air éiginn.

'S ann am bothag a' ghlinne,
Far nach cluinneadh iad m' eigheach.

'S tha do leanabh 'nam achlais,
'S mi gun tacsas fo 'n ghréin dha.

'S mura falbh mi as m' òige
A dh' iarraidh lòn air gach té dha.⁹²

A similar reference is to be found attached to the end of the original song in one text, although it is not clear in this instance if the man forced himself on the author, or if his crime was that he abandoned her:

Thug mi Dòmhnach 'nam sheasamh
Anns an t-Seisein mu d' dhéidhinn.

Gu robh snighe mo ghruaidhean
Deanamh fuarain 'nam léinidh.⁹³

These additions are not related to the original song by anything more than a shared tune and chorus. The air is a simple and popular one, and it needs no great leap of imagination to assume

that this, along with the refrain, was used as a starting point for a later poetess, who sang about her mistreatment and abandonment by her lover.

The composer of '*S tric mo shùil air an linne*'⁹⁴, was also abandoned by her lover, but in this case, there is no hope of a reunion, as he has gone to marry another. In spite of this, she bears him no ill-will – in fact she prays that he will be safe on his journey to fetch his bride:

Chuir mo leannan a chùl rium,
'S chuir e chùram air bàta;

Ged a dhiùlt thu dhomh 'n t-aiseag,
A rìgh gu faicinn-se slàn thu !⁹⁵

She goes on to relate how it was her modesty, and concern for her reputation, which led her lover to leave her, and, although she does not wish him any harm, her feelings towards his prospective bride are not so generous:

Ach ma chaidh thu nunn thairis
A dh' fhios na cail' tha 'n Dun-sgàthaich,

'S truagh a rìgh nach tu gheibheadh
Fuar fodha i 'n déigh a bàthaidh⁹⁶

She wishes that she was the only woman left on earth, so that they could go back to the way they had been together, with her sheltering under his plaid as she had done so often before. She prays for the safety of her sweetheart as his ship sails towards his bride, expressing nothing but love for him, despite his treatment of her, and reserving her venom for her rival in love.

The song which is known by the refrain of *Mo rùn Ailein*⁹⁷ begins in some versions with the poetess looking out to sea, watching her sweetheart's ship passing, and praising his skill as a sailor:

Có bh' air an stiùr	ach mo leannan
'S e bheireadh i	slàn gu caladh,
Fhad's a mhaireadh	stagh no tarraig. ⁹⁸

The composer of this song, according to some renditions, also has a complaint to make, although it seems to be against the gossips who are spreading rumours about her, rather than against her lover. She is upset both by the rumour that she is pregnant, and by the man who is thought to be the father of her child; and it is with some sense of pride that she declares whom she would choose as the father of her children:

Mìle marbhaisg	luchd nam breugan
Thog iad ormsa	mo chuid fhéin dhiu
Gu robh mo chrìos-sa	àrd ag éirigh,
Ma bha cha b' ann	o 'n bhéist ud,
Ach o Sgoilear	Donn na Beurla ⁹⁹

She does not make it clear whether or not she is actually carrying a child, only who her choice of father would be. Her cursing of those who are spreading rumours about her would seem to indicate that she was not, but this is not certain. The song contains very little else about the poetess or her sweetheart, so identification of either of them is impossible.

An raoir a bhrudair mi 'n aisling ¹⁰⁰ is a woman's song to her MacGregor sweetheart. The song contains no personal declarations of her love for him, although she praises everything about him: his skill at hunting; his prowess with arms; his love of drinking wine, and his allies. What is unusual about this song is that it ends with a reply, supposedly composed by her sweetheart, naming the poetess as *Màiri Nic Arthair* ¹⁰¹. In his reply, the young man declares his love for Màiri, and claims that he will treat her like a lady:

Cha leig mi thu an bhuaile,
Le cuman na buaraich,
'S ann a bhith's tu ri fuaidheal le d' mheòir.

'S ann a thèid thu do 'n chlachan,
Latha fèille, san fhasan,
Gùn do 'n t-sìoda ort bhith's gasda gu leòir.¹⁰²

Not so fortunate was the author of *O bha mo leannan ann* ¹⁰³, who gave her love to a *seircein saighdeir* named as Dòmhnall Mac

Néill mhic Iain Buidhe, and faithfully awaited his return. The lover's reply in this case tells the girl to look for a more suitable husband, hinting that her pride in her love for him is misplaced.

There are two distinct versions of the song *A Dhòmhnaill Ruaidh ghaolaich* ¹⁰⁴, one of which is a straightforward *iorram*, the other a waulking song composed by a girl who was enamoured with Dòmhnall Ruadh. This is made clear at the very beginning:

A Dhòmhnuill ruaidh ghaolaich
'S e do ghaol a th' air mo mhealladh ¹⁰⁵

The body of the song is a description of Dòmhnall Ruadh's ship, and praise of his seamanship, while there are two versions of the ending. The first continues in praise of Dòmhnall Ruadh, using familiar folk-song motifs:

Gur a minig a bha mi
'S tu nar laigh air a' bharraich,
Bhiodh mo làmh fo d' cheann gaolach
'S ri d' thaobh mar an canaich.¹⁰⁶

The alternative ending seems to suggest that the poetess has left her native district in order to be with her love, but she does not reproach him for taking her away:

'S e do ghràdh thug do 'n tìr mi
Fhir na mìog-shùile meallaich.¹⁰⁷

Yet another version of this song exists, but it is composed in quatrains, rather than the half-lines of the waulking song and *iorram* styles. From this, one would have to deduce that the quatrain version is a later song; indeed, apart from the name of the person to whom it is addressed, this version has little in common with the other two. Again, the lover is portrayed as being at sea, with the poetess declaring her faith in his seamanship, but the expressions of love are more concentrated and numerous:

Och, a Dhòmhnuill Ruaidh, ghaolaich,
'S tu mo rùn de na fearaibh;

'S tu mo chnothan 's mo chaorann,
Mo shugh-craobh 's mo chìr-mheala.

'S tu mo dhearcagan donna,
'S iad an tornadaibh caineil;
Mo luibh 's am bi bhrìgh thu
Nach crìon ri fuachd gaillinn.¹⁰⁸

A song to a Ruairidh MacLeod from Harris¹⁰⁹, ascribed by John Maclean¹¹⁰ to Màiri nighean Alasdair Ruaidh, seems to be a love-song rather than a panegyric. The line, *Ged nach eil thu 'n ar n-uachdar* implies that Ruairidh was not the head of the clan, while the description of the subject as one who *b' fheàrr buaidh anns an Olaint* indicates military service abroad. I have been unable to find a Ruairidh of the Harris MacLeods who fits this description, but the ascription to Màiri certainly seems mistaken, unless either the name Ruairidh or the reference to Holland are corruptions of the original names.

The above examples are songs of love which were composed as such, and perhaps their relative scarcity does not back up the claim that love-songs in the period up to 1750 were numerous. However, amongst the laments composed by women to their dead husbands and sweethearts, there are songs of great love and tenderness; and having put them into one category does not mean that they must be excluded from another.

Elegaic songs tended to be composed for chiefs or noblemen, men with whom the poetesses were not personally involved although they respected and admired them. The laments, on the other hand, are songs to husbands, sons and lovers, and are cries from the heart uttered by grief-stricken women. In the love-song/laments, the bardess praises the man who has died and bewails his loss, not, as in an elegy, to the clan, but primarily to herself.

One of the earliest songs of this type is the one beginning *Och nan och, leagadh tu* ¹¹¹, where a young bride laments the death of her husband on their wedding day. The song is mostly a straightforward lament, with the poetess concentrating on her own grief at her loss, but there are stanzas describing the man she has lost, and how much she loved him:

Mo rùn air mo leannan,
 Lùb ùr a' chùil chlannaich,
 Gum bu chùbhraidh na 'n caineal
 Liom anail do bhràghad.

Mo ghràidh air mo chùirteir,
 Geug àlainn na dùthcha,
 Mar ghàrradh nan ùbhlán
 Do shùgradh 's do mhànan.¹¹²

She declares that she cannot take pleasure in anything now that her sweetheart is dead, and looks forward to the day when they will be reunited:

Mo ghaol air mo leannan,
 Mo ghaol ort ri m' mhaireann,
 Mo ghaol ort air thalamh
 'S ann am flathas an Àrdrigh.

Mo ghaol thu 's mo rùn thu,
 Mo ghaol 's mo chruit chiùil thu,
 Mo ghaol thu 's mo dhùrachd,
 'S mo dhùil riut am Pàrras.¹¹³

Cumha Sheathain ¹¹⁴, is another lament by a woman who was in love with the subject of her poem. She describes the life which they had together, travelling to many places, seemingly fugitives from *luchd a shealga* ¹¹⁵, although it is not clear who Seathan's pursuers were. The poetess identifies herself in some versions as *céile Seathan donn an t-siubhail*, although she says in others that Seathan was her *leannan falaich*. Seathan is further identified as the son of *mo rìgh a Tìr Chonaill*, while the poetess names herself as:

Piuthar a dh' Aodh 's a Bhrian Buidhe mi,
 Bana-charaid do Fhionn mac Cumhaill mi ¹¹⁶

This need not be taken literally, as the poetess could merely be underlining that she also belongs to Ireland.

Intermingled with praise of Seathan are heartfelt expressions of

sorrow and grief at his loss, apparently when he did not seem to be in any danger:

Nuair a shaoil mi thu bhith 'san tòrachd,
'S ann a bha thu marbh 'nam chòmhdhail,
'S tu air ghuaillan nam fear òga...

'S nuair a shaoil mi thu bhith 'sa ghailleann,
'S ann a bha thu marbh gun anam ¹¹⁷

Seathan is praised in the style of a classical elegy, and there is an echo of the common bardic theme, of nature responding to a good leader, only this time nature is being portrayed as coming to his aid if it were possible to free him from death:

Nam faighte Seathan ri fhuasgladh,
Gheobhte 'n t-éirig mar an luachair,
Gheobhte 'n t-airgead mar an luatha,
Gheobhte 'n t-òr air oir nan cluantan,
Gheobhte 'm fion mar uisg an fhuarain,
Gheobhte bheòir mar chaochan fuarghlas;
Cha bhiodh meann an creig no 'n cruadhlaigh,
Cha bhiodh mìseag ann an cluanaig,
Cha bhiodh cìob an carr no 'n cruachan,
Cha bhiodh crodh air magh no buaile,
Cha bhiodh orc no arc air cluana;
Thigeadh na bradain as na cuantan,
Thigeadh na bric as na bruachan,
Thigeadh na gearrain as an luachair ¹¹⁸

The poetess' love for Seathan is evident throughout this lament, as she declares that she would choose him above all others, despite their wealth and status:

B' annsa Seathan an cuaich shìomain
Na mac rìgh air leabaidh lìona;
B' annsa Seathan air chùl gàrraidh
Na mac rìgh le sìod air clàraidh,
Ged bhiodh aige leaba shocrach

An déidh na saoir a bhith 'ga locradh,
 An déidh na draoidh a bhith 'ga cosnadh;
 B' annsa Seathan 'sa choill bharraich
 Na bhith 'sa Mhaigh Mhild le h-Airril,
 Ged bhiodh sròl is sìod fo chasaibh,
 Cluasagan òr-dhearg air lasadh.¹¹⁹

Her love for Seathan is further emphasised by her description of how closely she would want to hold him, letting nothing, however small, come between them:

A Sheathain duinn, a shaoi na mìne,
 Is beag an t-àit an cuirinn fhìn thu,
 Chuirinn am bàrr mullaich mo chinn thu,
 Chuirinn an tàrr mo dhà chich thu,
 Eadar Brìghde 's a bréid mìn thu,
 Eadar maighdean òg 's a stiòm thu,
 Eadar òigh ghil 's a brat sìod thu,
 Eadar mi fhìn 's mo léine lìn thu.¹²⁰

Perhaps the most telling evidence of the strength of the poetess' love for Seathan comes at the end of the lament, with her declaration that she would not trust him to the care of anyone but herself, not even to Christ, implying that Seathan is more important to her than religion; perhaps that she worships him above all else:

Cha toirinn do lagh no rìgh thu,
 Cha toirinn dh' an Mhoire mhìn thu,
 Cha toirinn dh' an Chrò Naoimh thu,
 Cha toirinn do dh' Iosda Crìosd thu,
 Cha toireadh, eagal 's nach faighinn fhìn thu !¹²¹

By far the most vivid expression of both grief and love is to be found in the final stanza as it occurs in some texts, where the poetess asserts that she would give up everything just to be with her love once more:

A Sheathain, mo ghile-gréine,
 Och dha m' aindeoin ghlac an t-eug thu,

'S dh' fhàg siod mise dubhach deurach
 'S iargain ghointeach orm ad dhéidh-sa;
 'S masa fìor na their na cléirich
 Gu bheil Irinn agus Nèamh ann,
 Mo chuid-sa Nèamh, dì-beath an éig e,
 Air son oidhche mar ris an eudail,
 Mar ri Seathan donn mo chéile.¹²²

The song popularly known as *Griogal Cridhe* ¹²³, composed to Gregor MacGregor of Glenstrae, who was beheaded in 1570, is one in which both grief and love play their part. Although composed as a lullaby, the composer's grief at the loss of her husband, and her love for him, is the main theme of the song. We can judge the depth of the love which the author had for her husband, by the extent of her grief. She curses her own family, who have brought about his death, and describes both her life with Gregor, and his execution. Her love for Gregor is illustrated by her reference to drinking his blood after his death – a common folk-song image used to indicate a deep and enduring love for the dead person:

Chuir iad a cheann air ploc daraich
 Is dhòirt iad fhuil mu làr:
 Nam biodh agamsa an sin cupan,
 Dh' òlainn dìth mo shàth.¹²⁴

Although the image is used here to illustrate the poetess' grief, she does not seem to have actually drunk the blood of Gregor. As D.S. Thomson states:

It is likely that here we can observe some distancing from the ritual, and that distancing may arise in more ways than one. The young wife would presumably be kept away from the actual execution, in which her own Campbell kin were involved. And she was hardly a "commoner" in the Gaelic society of the time, so she may instinctively have associated a cup with drinking, even drinking blood.¹²⁵

She also uses the apple-tree image as a metaphor for her husband, lamenting the fact that others have their husbands with

them, while her own husband is dead:

Is ged tha mi gun ùbhlán agam
 Is ùbhlán uile aig càch,
 Is ann tha m' ubhal cùbhraidh grinn
 Is cùl a chinn ri làr.¹²⁶

Although one cannot doubt from reading this song that the author, Nighean Dhonnchaidh, was deeply in love with Gregor MacGregor, yet there are no explicit expressions of love, and one can find very little of the formulaic praise which is common in both panegyric and in the love-song. Because of this, there is a greater sense of the expression of genuine emotion, rather than the reworking of old ideas into a new song. The combination of love and grief results in a highly original and moving poem.

Màiri Camshron's great love for her husband, Patrick Campbell of Inverawe, and her devastation, not only at his death, but at her being forced to marry another man, lends great pathos to her lament for him¹²⁷. She concentrates on her sense of loss without him, and on all the things he did for her, declaring her love for him above all others:

Mo ghràdh thu dh' fhearaibh shìol Adhaimh¹²⁸

Another version indicates that the lament was not composed immediately after Campbell's death, but after her second marriage, to the Prior of Ardchattan:

Rìgh, gur mis' a th' air mo sgaradh,
 Bhi dol le fear eil' a laighe,
 Is m' fhear féin air cùl an taighe¹²⁹

From this, we can see that Màiri considers herself to have only one husband, Patrick Campbell, and that her second marriage is as much a source of grief to her as the loss of her first and only love.

The widow of Donald MacDonald of Clanranald, who died in 1618, composed a lament which contains many elements of the classical elegy¹³⁰, although personal feelings of loss are prevalent.

The opening stanza is a true lament, with the effect of the loss of the loved one on the composer being the theme:

Moch 's a' mhaduinn 's mi 'g éiridh,
 Gur ruiteach mo dheur air mo ghruaidh,
 Nach freagair thu m' éigheach,
 A lùb cheanalta treun a dh' fhàs suairc;
 'S e chuir mo shùilean o leirsinn
 Bhi càradh na léine mu d' thuairms',
 Ach a Mhuire ! mo sgeula,
 Cha 'n éirich thu féin gu là luan.¹³¹

The poetess moves to the panegyric style of a classical elegy, praising her husband's wisdom; his horsemanship; his personal appearance and dress; his eloquence, and his generosity. She then returns to her own grief, and that of his kinsfolk, at the death of Clanranald, describing her inability to take pleasure in anything, and her anxiety over the future of their children. Her grief is described in somewhat clichéd terms:

'S mi tha muladach, brònach,
 'S mi falbh feadh do sheòmair leam féin,
 'S mi gun chadal, gun chòmhnadh,
 Gun aighear...¹³²

but she also uses some strikingly original imagery, such as:

Gur mis' th' air mo sguabadh ¹³³

and:

...thàinig lom chreach orm,
 Mar gun ruitheadh a' chlach leis a' ghleann.¹³⁴

There is perhaps too much of the formulaic elegy in this poem for it to be classed as a true, personal lament, but there are enough expressions of love, and of great sorrow resulting from that love, to say that it is a love-song as well as a death-song.

The Maclean poetess, Catrìona nighean Eoghainn mhic Lachlainn, composed a lament to her husband, James Maclean¹³⁵. This lament gives a detailed account of the poetess' emotions: her

love for her husband, her grief at his loss, and her wish to be reunited with him. Although elements of praise-poetry occur in this song, it is primarily a lament, concentrating on the poetess' sense of loss and grief, and on her love for her husband. This is evident early on, where the poetess describes her mental anguish as if it was a physical wound:

Gun robh saighead am àirnean,
'S i gam shàthadh gu h-itich ¹³⁶

The love which the bardess shared with her husband seems to have formed a very strong bond. She declares that, when he was living:

Gur h-e mise nach sòradh
Nì bu deònach le d' bheul-sa. ¹³⁷

and, even after his death, she does not want to be parted from him:

'S truagh nach robh mise mar-riut,
'S mi gun anam, 's an fhuar leab' ! ¹³⁸

Throughout the lament, the bardess addresses the dead man in terms of endearment, such as *a' rùin*, *m' eudail*, *mo ghràdh* and *fhir-cridhe*, showing that her lament came from the heart, rather than being a formulaic expression of grief. The imagery which she uses is sometimes, but not often, clichéd, and at times almost too vivid – as in her description of the appearance of the buried corpse:

Do chorp glè gheal th' air dubhadh,
'S do chùl buidh' th' air dhroch càradh ¹³⁹

The lack of explicit declarations of love in this song does not hide the fact that the love was there: it is not so much what the poetess says, but the way in which it is said, that is important, and makes it clear that this is a love-song as well as a lament.

Like *An-raoir bhruadair mi 'n aisling*, the lament for the forester of Coire-an-t-Sìth ¹⁴⁰ begins with a dream, only in this case, the man dreamt of by the poetess is parted from her for ever. She

describes how the realisation that he was gone affected her, before going on to praise him:

An raoir a bhruadair mi 'm chadal,
Mì bhi 'm folach 's an luachair,

'S a bhi cur mo làmh tharad,
'S ann a dh' fhairich mi bhuam thu,

Gu 'n d' thug sud orm briosgadh;
'S mòr is misde mo shnuadh e!
,

'N uair nach d' fhuaras thu agam
A lùb ghasda 'n robh suairceas.¹⁴¹

Not surprisingly, given her husband's occupation, the bereaved poetess devotes much of her lament to praising his skill as a hunter, listing all the animals he would kill. She praises his lineage, and says that he will be missed by the deer-forest as well as by Mac Cailein, before going on to tell of the circumstance which has heightened her own grief:

Gur e sud mo sgeul deacair,
Gu 'n do thaisg iad 's Taobh Tuath thu.

'S ann an cladh Chinn-a-ghiùthsaidh
A rùisg iad an uaigh dhuit.

'S truagh nach robh fir do dhùthcha
Ga do ghiùlan air ghualainn.

'S nach robh i bean d' fhàrdaich
'S a ghàirich m' an cuairt duit.¹⁴²

Why the poetess was not present at her husband's funeral is not explained, nor why his body was not brought home for burial. One can only speculate as to the reasons – perhaps his death was as the result of a skirmish of some kind (although then one would expect this to be mentioned in some way in the lament), or it may be that he

was simply alone when he died, with none of his kinsfolk or countrymen to take his body home. There is no clue within the text as to the truth of the matter.

A love affair ended by the violent death of her sweetheart, according to one source at the hands of her father and brothers, is the theme of the song to Mac Dhùghaill mhic Ruairidh¹⁴³. According to the tradition in Benbecula, it was composed in that island,¹⁴⁴ but there is no further information as to the identity of the composer or the man to whom it was addressed. The poetess' grief at the death of her lover is evident:

'S i mo ghràdh sa t-fhuil chumhra
Bha 'na drùchd air an fheur, o

Ge d' òlainn mo shàth dhi
Cha slànuicheadh mo chreuchdan.¹⁴⁵

It would seem from the text that her relationship with Mac Dhùghaill was frowned upon by her family: her parents, and their willingness to think ill of her, being said to be the cause of her unhappiness; and she blames her sister for telling her family about it:

O 's diùmbach mi 'm phiuthar
'S tric i dubhadh nan deur orm.

Thuir gu 'n rabh mi 's tu caidreach
Ann an eachluidh na spréidhe.¹⁴⁶

Another version blames a cowherd for having told his enemies where to find Mac Dhùghaill, allowing them to take him by surprise:

Mìle mallachd d' an bhuachaille
Chaidh chuairteach na spréidhe,

Chaidh dhùsgadh na 'n abhac o,
Roimh latha mu 'n d' éirich.¹⁴⁷

She praises her lover's generosity towards her, as well as his own personal appearance and armaments. Echoing the sentiments of

Nighean Dhonnchaidh in *Griogal Cridhe* ¹⁴⁸, she declares that it was the fact that he was so outnumbered by his assailants, rather than any lack of martial prowess which led to his death:

Mur biodh a thruim ort ach dithis
Cha bhiodh sitheann mu d' éirigh

Ach a chuirear no sheisir
Gu 'm bu lea-trom air cheud iad.¹⁴⁹

The poetess wishes that she had been able to save her sweetheart from his fate, naming her brothers as those responsible for his murder:

Truadh a Rìgh nach robh mis' ann o
'S trì fichead fear treabhach;

Chuirinn sgaoileadh nam' bhraithrin o,
'S dheanainn àr air luchd m' éislein;

Mu 'n do chuir iad t-fhuil bhrùite
Air ùrlar do chléibhe ¹⁵⁰

Adding to the poetess' grief seems to be a feeling that she could have prevented the murder, that by staying with him she is in part to blame for the death of her sweetheart:

Truadh nach mise bha 'n Sagson o
No air machair na Beurla;

Mu 'n do chuir mi riamh bac' ort
Moch maduinn is tu 'g éirigh.¹⁵¹

This lament is unusual in that, while concentrating on the grief of the bereaved woman, it also tells us how the subject died, and why he was killed; whereas most of the other laments dealt with here focus only on the fact that the subject is dead, and how he was when living. In the absence of any other information regarding Mac Dhùghaill mhic Ruairidh, this recording of the circumstances in which

he died means that the lament is of interest as it stands, and we do not need to know any more about him to appreciate the pathos of the song, and the great sorrow which brought it into being.

The lament for Niall Og Maclean¹⁵² composed by Mòr Nic Phaidean contains many elements of panegyric elegy. She praises his appearance, his strength, his lineage and relatives, his skill as a hunter, his bravery, and even his skill at cards. How he died is not related, only the sorrow of those left behind. There is very little in this lament which relates directly to Mòr Nic Phaidean's romantic love for Niall Og, although the opening stanza makes it clear that the subject of the lament was her sweetheart:

Gur a mise 'th' air mo chùradh,
Thug mi gealladh do 'n chùirtair,
Is cha leig mi fo rùm e na 's mò.¹⁵³

Although she claims that because of Niall Og's death, *mheudich sùgradh nam fleascach dhomh bròn*, and her praise of him indicates that she thought highly of him, he was evidently not her only suitor:

'Rùin, nam bidhedh tu mairenn,
Bu tu mo raghain de dh-fherabh,
Leiginn Eoghan is Ailain air falbh.¹⁵⁴

Significantly, she does not say that she *had* given up the other two when Niall Og was alive, which would lead one to think that she was maybe not quite as attached to him as she would like to make out. Of course, she may mean that Eòghan and Ailean were amongst the *fleasgaich* whose courting brought her no joy since Niall Og's death, and that she would not have to put up with them if her sweetheart was still alive. Taken with her reference to having given a promise to Niall Og, I would suggest that the latter possibility is the more plausible, although not entirely certain.

One song, composed around 1605, survives only as an fragment which is very difficult to categorise. '*S toigh leam Ailean Dubh á Lòchaidh*'¹⁵⁵ is a declaration of love by a woman for a man who has destroyed everything that she possessed:

Sguab thu mo spréidh bharr na mòintich,
 Loisg thu m' iodhlann chorc' is eòrna,
 Mharbh thu mo thrùir bhràithrean òga,
 Mharbh thu m' athair is m' fhear-pòsda
 'S ged rinn thu sin 's ait leam beò thu.¹⁵⁶

Her 'terrible passion' ¹⁵⁷, is shocking and thought-provoking. How could she love a man who had so utterly ruined all that she had, unless she had lost her mind through grief? Maybe the sexual passion which Ailean Dubh aroused in her was so powerful that it over-rode all her natural emotions, blocking everything else out. Or could it be with a bitter sense of irony that she sings the words '*S toigh leam Ailean Dubh á Lòchaidh*? Of these hypotheses, the least likely seems the one suggesting the use of irony: it is not a feature of the folk-song tradition to use words which describe the opposite of what is meant; in fact, the great strength of Gaelic folk-songs is the total frankness and honesty with which the composers reveal their emotions. Thus, we must conclude that the unfortunate woman who first sang this song had been, in one way or the other, unbalanced by the sight of Ailean Dubh and the effect which his arrival had on her life. One cannot be certain whether this song arises out of a strong, instantaneous love which blocks out all reason, or if the poetess has lost her reason because of the horror and grief which she has suffered.

As well as songs of love, there are several songs of jealousy extant in the compositions of female poets, probably the most famous of which is *A' Bhean Eudach* ¹⁵⁸. This song is not on the subject of jealousy *per se*, but it was the jealousy of one woman which caused the circumstances under which it was composed¹⁵⁹. The only input to the song from the jealous woman herself comes in a brief exchange with the drowning wife:

'Nighean ud thall	'n cois na tràghad
An truagh leat bean òg	's i 'ga bàthadh ?
Cha truagh, cha truagh,	's beag mo chàs dhith ! ¹⁶⁰

The dying woman's song is a plaintive cry for help, and, when that is not forthcoming, a song of sorrow for the children who will be left motherless by her death.

Two songs on the subject of jealousy are ascribed to Màiri nighean Alasdair Ruaidh: *An t-Eudach* ¹⁶¹ is a description of her supposed jealousy of the woman who has enticed her lover away from her, while *A' Mhairearad nan Cuireid* ¹⁶² is a stinging riposte by Màiri to a jealous rival, who has been spreading spiteful rumours about her. However, these songs do not seem to have been based on any *real* love in Màiri's life. *An t-Eudach* is introduced by Watson as a song composed *mar gum biodh i ag eudach* ¹⁶³, and he suggests that her reference to looking across to Fionnairigh indicates that the song was composed during her period in exile.¹⁶⁴ This would date the composition to late in Màiri's life, when she would certainly have been beyond the age of courting. If Màiri was the author, no genuine emotion is involved in this poem, but one cannot ignore the possibility that it has been wrongly ascribed to her¹⁶⁵, and that it *was* the work of a jealous woman. The song is addressed to a woman from Islay, and the poetess expresses her anger towards her for what she has done:

...nam bithinn 'na fianuis,
Gum biodh spìonadh air bhréidean.¹⁶⁶

The song addressed to Mairearad nan Cuireid is a complaint about what has been said about the poetess herself, but also a satire on the woman who made the accusation that Màiri was pregnant:

Gu robh leanabh gun bhaisteadh
Fo aisne mo chléibh'.¹⁶⁷

She devotes the rest of her song to a diatribe against her accuser, comparing her family and circumstances unfavourably to her own. The man with whom the poetess has been linked in this scandal is named as Calum, and he receives glowing praise, but this song also seems to have been composed as the result of an idea, rather than actual experience.

Caoidh Mhic Neachdain an Dùin ¹⁶⁸ is a song of jealousy and betrayal, the story behind which has already been related¹⁶⁹. The 'lament' was composed by MacNaughton's abandoned wife, the elder daughter, who curses her sister for what she has done:

'Thé 'thug bhuamsa m' fhear féin,
 'S a chuir creuchdan fo m' aisnibh,
 'Chaidh nior fhaicear ort bréid
 Latha féille no clachain.

Is nior fhaicear do chlann
 Dol do theampull a bhaistidh;
 Ach ga 'n cur anns an uaigh,
 'S tu bhith buan dheth gun mhac leat.

Biodh leac shleamhainn ri d' bhonn,
 'S talamh tolltach fo d' chasaibh,
 'S boinne snighe fliuch, fuar
 Tigh'nn mu bhruchaibh do leapa.¹⁷⁰

However, the original deceit was that of the father and of the poetess herself, so one cannot feel too sorry for her in the situation in which she found herself, although her genuine love for MacNaughton is apparent in her song.

The description of jealousy occurring in the song *Coisich, a Rùin*, as quoted earlier in this chapter¹⁷¹, is both extravagant and amusing, while providing a vivid metaphor for the strength of the poetess' feelings for her sweetheart. Another version of the song refers to *sùilean gobhar an ceann nan gruagach* ¹⁷², perhaps implying that all the young women were watching each other very closely, in case one of them got more than her fair share of attention.

As can be seen from these examples, the themes of love and jealousy, although not always the main thrust of the poem, are present in a large number. Sometimes there is only a stanza or two to distinguish a love-song from a panegyric, while at others the pathos of a lament is heightened by the expressions of love intertwined with expressions of grief. Apart from Màiri nighean Alasdair Ruaidh's imitations of love-songs, and Iseabail Ní Mheic Cailéin's *jeux d'esprit* ¹⁷³, they have a frankness and honesty about them, with a refreshing lack of artifice; even the formulaic and clichéd imagery used in some of them is balanced by the genuine love and tenderness of the poetess for the man addressed, or her anger and jealousy at being betrayed by him.

Notes:

1. Appendix; p. 353.
2. Appendix; p. 353.
3. Chapter 2; p. 18.
4. T. Ó Rathile, *Dánta Grádha*, Cork, 1984; p. 74.
5. J.C. Watson, *Bàrdachd Albannach o Leabhar Deadhon Lios-Moir*, Edinburgh, 1978; pp. 307-308.
6. ref. 4
7. Appendix; p. 372.
8. J. MacKenzie, *Sàr-obair nam Bàrd Gaelach*, Edinburgh, 1904; p. 63.
9. Appendix; p. 528.
10. *Transactions of the Gaelic Society of Inverness*, vol. XLI; p. 345.
11. Appendix; p. 608.
12. J.L. Campbell and Francis Collinson, *Hebridean Folksongs*, vol. II, Oxford, 1977; pp. 62-64.
13. *ibid.*
14. *ibid.*
15. *ibid.*
16. Appendix; p. 645.
17. *Scottish Studies*, No. 6; pp. 237-242.
18. Appendix; p. 646.
19. K.C. Craig, *Òrain Iuaidh Màiri nighean Alasdair*, Glasgow, 1949; p. 66.
20. *ibid.*
21. C. Kerrigan, *An Anthology of Scottish Women Poets*, Edinburgh 1991; p. 34.
22. (ref. 19; p. 9. W ong ref.) HF I p. 72
23. J.L. Campbell & F. Collinson, *Hebridean Folksongs* vol. I, Oxford 1969; p. 70
24. National Library of Scotland MS. No. 14876; p. 37a.
25. Appendix; p. 702.
26. D.S. Thomson, *The Macdiarmid MS Anthology*, Edinburgh 1991; pp. 216-18.
27. *ibid.*
28. Appendix; p. 688.
29. A. Maclean Sinclair, *Mactalla nan Tùr*, Sydney C.B., 1901; pp. 86-88.
30. Appendix; p. 651.
31. ref. 26; p. 39.
32. A. Mackenzie, *The Macdonalds of Clanranald*, Inverness 1881; p. 56.
33. J.L. Campbell, *Canna, the story of a Hebridean island*, Oxford 1984; pp. 77-85.

34. Appendix; p. 517.
35. ref. 12; p. 32.
36. Appendix; p. 633.
37. Appendix; p. 370.
38. K.N. Macdonald, *Macdonald Bards from mediaeval times*, Glasgow, 1900; p. 12.
39. Chapter 3; p. 68.
40. *Transactions of the Gaelic Society of Inverness* vol. XXIV; pp. 273-75.
41. Appendix; p. 365.
42. Appendix; p. 686.
43. W.J. Watson, *Bàrdachd Ghàidhlig*, Stirling, 1959; p. 192.
44. ref. 21; p. 24.
45. *ibid.*
46. Appendix; p. 575.
47. D.S. Thomson, *An Introduction to Gaelic Poetry*, London, 1974; pp. 94-95.
48. A. Carmichael, *Carmina Gadelica*, vol. V, Edinburgh, 1954; pp. 2-9.
49. Appendix; p. 593.
50. ref. 48; pp. 2-9.
51. *ibid.*
52. *ibid.*
53. *ibid.*
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6. FLESH, BLOOD AND FOSTERLINGS

Most of the songs composed by women are on themes, such as grief, love, praise, and clan, which are also dealt with to a greater or lesser extent by the male poets of their time. There is one class of poem, however, which is almost solely the domain of the woman poet: the songs to a child, whether the author's own or a foster-child. Some of these songs take the form of a *tàladh* or lullaby, praising the man that the child will be when he grows up. Of the few songs coming into this category which have survived, two examples are *Tàladh Dhòmhnaill Ghuirm* ¹ and *Tàladh Choinnich Oig*.²

Apparently addressed to Kenneth MacKenzie, Lord of Kintail,³ *Tàladh Choinnich Oig* addresses the child as if he were already an adult, praising his dress; his hunting prowess; his armaments and clan, while at the same time reminding us that he is still a child:

O Mhic Coinnich fhuair thu 'n t-urram
Théid thu mach gu làidir ullamh
Dh' òladh leat fion Baile Lunnain
Mach go Loudie le d' chuid giullan.

'S ann air Coinneach tha ghruag àlainn
'S e Rìgh nan Dùl a chuir blàth oirr'
Ceannachadair nan each a b' àirde
Gilleann 'na ruith chon a' stàpaill.

Chan 'eil Coinneach ach 'na leanabh
Cha d' ràinig e aois a sheanair
Sealgair an fhéidh a's na gleannaibh
Choilich dhuibh air bharr o' mheangain.⁴

As we can see, the first two stanzas indicate a grown man: held in esteem by his contemporaries; old enough to drink wine; able to muster a force of men and capable of choosing and buying good horses; while the third stanza reminds us that he is, in fact, still a child, and gives his grandfather as an example for him to emulate.

The earlier *Tàladh Dhòmhnaill Ghuirm* is more consistent, as it is to the adult Donald Gorm of Sleat⁵ that the song is addressed, although one would assume from the title that it was composed to a child. The song contains exaggerated praise of Dòmhnall Gorm, typified by the following extract describing Dòmhnall Gorm's ship:

'S mòr leam an trom	tha na deireadh,
Tha stiùir òir orr'	trì chruinn sheilich,
Gu 'm bheil tobar fìona	shìos na deireadh,
'S tobar fìor uisg,	's a cheann eile. ⁶

Exaggerated praise is also found in *Tàladh Choinnich Oig*, where his foster-mother describes his extravagance, thereby implying his future power and wealth:

mhic an t-seòid nach fuilingeadh masladh,
bheireadh am fìon d' a chuid eachaibh,
cruidhean òir a chur fo 'n casan.⁷

As in the above example, the identity of the subject of one particular passage can be ambiguous: it is sometimes difficult to establish if the object of the bardess' praise is her *dalta*, a relative of his, or the clan as a whole.

Amongst the praise of the *dalta* contained in these songs, there is striking similarity with one of the images used to describe their power in terms of the number of men who would follow his call to arms. The earlier song has the more extended version:

Cha liutha dris	air an droigheann
No sguab choirce air	achadh foghair
No sop seann-todhair	air taobh taighe
Na an cùirt Dhòmhnaill	sgiath is claidheamh
Clogaide gormdheas	is balg-shaighead
Bogha iùbhrach	is tuagh chatha. ⁸

while *Tàladh Choinnich Oig* has:

'S lìonmhor duilleag th' air an draigheann
eadar Bealltainn agus Samhuinn,

's lìonmhor' na sin sgiath is claidheamh
'n gualainn Choinnich Òig am Brathainn.⁹

The 'borrowing' of imagery and phrases is not uncommon in Gaelic poetry, often with the opening line of one song providing a springboard from which another is launched. In the same way, some verses from one poem would be adapted to suit the subject and circumstances of another. An example of this can be found in connection with *Tàladh Choinnich Òig*, where his nurse encourages him with:

h n

A Mhic Coinnich na biodh gruaim ort,
cha do ghlac do mhàthair buarach
no plaide bhàn air a gualainn,
ach sìoda dearg is stròl uaine.¹⁰

From around the same period we have a fragment of a flyting between rival supporters of Macpherson of Cluny and Mackintosh,¹¹ in which one bardess addresses her chief with the words:

'Ghaoil Lachlainn na biodh gruaim ort,
Cha do ghlac do mhàthair buarach,-
Plaide bhàn chuir mu 'gualainn,
Ach sìoda dearg is sròl uaine.¹²

The Lachlan being addressed is probably a Mackintosh, as the first Macpherson chief of that name was Lachlan of Noid, who succeeded his cousin Duncan, the 16th chief, in 1722, by which time he was already forty-eight years old.¹³ In contrast, between the beginning of the 16th century and the middle of the eighteenth, there were five chiefs of Mackintosh with that name. The Lachlan being addressed here is probably either Lachlan, the 19th chief, who was born in 1639, or his son, the 20th chief, born around 1670,¹⁴ although there is not enough evidence in the fragment which remains of this poem to be certain.

Both *Tàladh Choinnich Òig* and *Tàladh Dhòmhnail Ghuirm* contain a charm put on the loved one in order to keep him safe from all harm. In *Tàladh Choinnich Òig* this charm is fairly short:

Na dhean an gobhann an claidheamh,
 Na dhean an ceàrd an ceann leathann,
 'S na dhean an [fh]leisdear an t-saighead,
 'Chuireas Coinneach òg 'na laidhe.¹⁵

In *Tàladh Dhòmhnaill Ghuirm*, however, the run is much more extended, and the incantation builds up with such intensity that it must have been almost like casting a spell over Donald Gorm. John MacInnes points out the continuity of tradition between this sequence and that found in early Gaelic literature, such as *Saint Patrick's Breastplate*, and says of *Tàladh Dhòmhnaill Ghuirm* :

This magnificent song may not strike the reader or listener...as religious in a conventional sense, but the invocation of elemental powers puts it on a par with the 'druidic breastplate'; and in some versions, the sequence is rounded off in a similar way with a prayer that the strength of the Son of God may give protection.¹⁶

One version of the incantation is as follows:

Neart na gile dhuit	neart na gréine,
'Bhi eadar Dòmhnall	Gorm 's a léine;
Neart na tuinne,	na tuinne threubhaich
'Bhi eadar Dòmhnall	Gorm 's a léine:
Neart an daimh dhuinn	is àirde leumas;
Neart na fairge	throma beucaich
Eadar Dòmhnall	Gorm 's a léine.
Gu'n robh neart na cruinne leat	agus neart na gréine.
Neart Chuchullain	fo làn éideadh;
Neart sheachd Cathan,	's feachd na Féinne
Neart Oisín bhinn;	neart Oskuir
	[euchdaich;
Neart Ghoill,	nan trom chreuchdan
Neart Fhinn	nan iomadh beum;
Neart gach aimhne,	's gach uillt sléibhe;
Neart na stoirme,	's na toirm ghaoith
	[reubaich;
Neart na torruinn,	's na beithreach éitidh;
Neart an dealain	's an tàirneinich
	[bheuthraich;

Neart nam mìola	mòra séideadh;
Neart nan dùl,	is chlanna speura;
Gach aon duibh sud	's neart Mhic Dhé;
Bhi eadar Dòmhnall	Gorm 's a léine,
De ma bhitheas,	cha tachair beud
	[dhuit. ¹⁷

The foster-mother's love for her charge is expressed not only by referring to him as 'mo leanabh', but also more explicitly:

Gu 'm bheil mi dhuit	mar tha do phiuthar,
Mur 'eil mi 'm bàrr	tha mi uidhir. ¹⁸

Although there were undoubtedly many more examples of *tàladh* composed through the ages, *Tàladh Dhòmhnaill Ghuirm* and *Tàladh Choinnich Oig* are the only ones which have survived in a recognizable form. Other types of cradle-song, such as *crònain* and *luinneagan*, exist and, again, these are not always addressed to an infant.

The songs by foster-mothers in general tend to be concerned with the prowess and power of their charges, whether in the future or at the time that the poem was composed. An awareness of the importance of charters rather than tradition or heredity in assuring the continuity of that power is evident in the song beginning *B' fheàrr leam gun sgribhtheadh dhuit fearann*¹⁹, composed some time before 1550. Although the child himself is not named in this song, there is enough evidence to identify him. The lands mentioned suggest that he is a Cameron of Locheil, and this is proved by the naming of his ancestors:

Ogha Eobhain 's iar-ogh' Ailean
'S iar-ogh' Dhonuill Duibh bho 'n darach.²⁰

From this information, it has been deduced that the child:

must have been "Eobhan Beag Mac Dho'ill 'ic Eobhain"...the grandson of the famous chief Ewan Allanson. The great great grandfather, referred to in the lullaby, must have been "Donald dubh" the chief who fought at Harlaw in 1411.²¹

As well as providing evidence for the identity of the child, the position, if not the name, of the bardess can also be deduced from the song, as much by what she leaves out as by what she includes:

The lullaby must have been composed by the nurse, who was one [of] the clan. Had it been the mother that composed it, she would have made loving mention of the child's father, but the nurse would ignore him as he died without attaining to the honour of being chief, and she could only feel entitled to be proud of her nursling as the offspring of a line of chiefs.²²

There is virtually no description of the child himself in this poem, although at the end his nurse makes it clear that the song was sung as a lullaby to an infant of whom she was very fond:

'S bòidheach d' aodann 's caoin leam d' anail,
Socrach ciùin a rùin do chadal.²³

Somewhat surprisingly, songs by a foster-mother addressed to a child are less common than songs of praise for the adult *dalta*, such as *A Mhic Iain 'ic Sheumais*²⁴ and *Mhic Iain a laoigh mo chèille*²⁵, composed to the notable MacDonald warrior, Dòmhnall mac Iain mhic Sheumais by his foster-mother, Nic Coiseam. The close bond between foster-mother and foster-child is shown in the former song by Nic Coiseam's reference to drinking the blood of Mac Iain 'ic Sheumais after he had been wounded. The motif of drinking blood usually only occurs in laments, and then it is usually the wife who refers to drinking the blood of her dead husband. The fact that Nic Coiseam mentions that she actually did this indicates that she was very close to her charge, and certainly viewed as family rather than as a servant or a retainer.

She is full of praise for MacDonald's manly qualities and physical attributes:

[Mac Iain 'ic Sheumais]
duine treubhach, smearail.

Gruaidh ruiteach na féileadh
mar eubhal 'ga garadh.

Bu cheannard ro' shluagh thu,
'dol suas ro' thìr aineoil,

Le claidheamh geur cruadhach
's dé ! cha d' fhuairleadh sgann air.²⁶

The prowess in battle of Mac Iain 'ic Sheumais is celebrated in *Mhic Iain a laoigh mo chéille*, where he is portrayed as being almost single-handedly the reason for a MacDonald victory over the MacLeods:

Mhic Iain ! a laoidh mo chéile, '
Gur moch a chuala tu 'n éibhe,
Fhreagair thu 'n tràigh 's an là glasadh,
Bhuail thu maoim air sìol a chapuill,
Sìol na làradh, blàire, bacaich.²⁷

Both of the surviving songs composed to her *dalta* by Nic Coiseam are directly connected to the battle of Carinish ²⁸: *Mhic Iain a laoigh mo chéile* apparently composed on her arrival in North Uist in an attempt to soothe the wounded hero, and *A Mhic Iain 'ic Sheumais* sung with the help of the local women while Nic Coiseam extracted an arrow from his foot.²⁹ It seems highly improbable that a woman who was able to compose two songs to her foster-child on a single occasion would not have made many others in his praise both previously and subsequently, but, if she did, none of them have survived with the ascription to her.

The foster-mother or nurse of the heir of the Sleat family would seem to be the composer of *Mo cheist air altram mo ghlùine* ³⁰ a fragmentary song, all the elements of which it is impossible to reconcile as being addressed to one person. That the composer was entrusted with the care of the child seems evident from her assertion:

Na 'm bu bhean a dheanadh lochd mi
Cha bhiodh oighre air a' chnoc Slèibhteach.³¹

The subject of at least part of the poem is possibly Donald, son of Sir James MacDonald of Sleat, who was an only child in the mid-1630s; his aunt, Mary, was married to Cameron of Locheil, explaining

the Lochaber-Sleat link apparent in the song.³²

Although Màiri nighean Alasdair Ruaidh was celebrated for her *crònain* and *luinneagan*, the style of song which one might expect a nurse to compose for her charge, her relationship with Sir Norman MacLeod of Berneray was not that of a *muime* with her *dalta*. She may well have been the nurse to Sir Norman's own five sons³³, but the main focus of her attention in the majority of her songs is Sir Norman himself. Her songs to him follow the pattern of bardic eulogy, although her reference to him in *Luinneag Mhic Leòid* ³⁴ as *mo leanabh* indicates that her involvement with him was not of a purely professional nature. She may have been a servant in Sir Norman's household, but they were also 'distantly related, and she takes an almost maternal pride in his person and his achievements. The only other person whom she addresses as *mo leanabh* is Norman, the eighteenth Chief of MacLeod, in *An Crònán* ³⁵, although this is probably because of his youth rather than because she had a strong personal attachment to him. However, this poem, the subject of which seems beyond doubt, contains lines which would seem to imply that she was the foster-mother of Norman of Dunvegan:

B' e m' àrdan 's mo phrìs
Alach mo Rìgh thogbhail.³⁶

This adds to the confusion over the details of Màiri's life, when it seems most likely that she was actually a member of the household of Sir Norman of Berneray. It is, however, possible, that she spent some time in Dunvegan; and if this is so, she could well have been the nurse to the young Norman, for a time at least. If not, one could interpret these lines as meaning that she *would* have been proud to have nursed the children of the chief, rather than that she actually did so; or that, in Màiri's eyes, her *Rìgh* was Sir Norman of Bernera.

Nic Gille Sheathanaich's song to her foster-son, William Mackintosh of Borlum ³⁷, is one of praise for his qualities, and of distress at his having been taken prisoner at Preston while taking part in the rebellion of 1715. The song was evidently composed before his escape in May 1716, as the bardess says:

Mo chreach Uilleam a Bhorluim
'Bhi aig Deòrsa na thùr..

'S e fo chòmhla gu diblidh
'N diugh ga dhìteadh 's gach bùth.³⁸

Although she was his nurse, Nic Gille Sheathanaich's song is more one in dispraise of the government and King George than one in praise of William of Borlum. The main focus of the song is the political situation, although the plight of both William of Borlum and of his chief, Lachlan, 20th of Mackintosh, evidently adds to her anxiety after the failure of the rebellion.

Another song composed by a fretful foster-mother is that to Fear Bhàlaidh ³⁹, which opens with the lines:

An raoir chunna mi 'n aisling
'N àm dùsgadh cha cheart i,
Thus' a ghràidh a thighinn dhachaidh ⁴⁰

Although both the Gesto Appendix and N.L.S MS. 14902 ascribe this song to the foster-mother of Fear Bhàlaidh another version, with the same opening lines, is to be found in other collections, with differing opinions as to both the author and the subject. The difference arises from the fact that, where the songs said to be about Fear Bhàlaidh have the line *Ogh' Shir Sheumais nam bratach*, the other versions have *Shir Sheumais nam bratach*, from which Donald A. Fergusson concludes that the second song is to Sir James MacDonald of Sleat, who succeeded Donald Gorm Mòr, his father, as baronet in 1644.⁴¹ As we have seen before, it is not impossible that two songs exist with the same opening lines, but on different subjects, and with these songs, although the first four lines are almost identical, that is where the similarity ends. The second version names the prominent men of the district in the seventeenth century, including *fear Bhàlaidh* ⁴², so the song is clearly not addressed to him. This song is one of praise for the absent *Seumas nam Bratach*, and there is evidence that the author was either his wife, or a woman in love with him, as she wishes that he was at home and *eadar mo ghlacaibh*.⁴³

If we accept that the later song is addressed to Macdonald of Vallay, then the subject must be William, third son of Sir Donald Macdonald, third baronet of Sleat, and therefore the grandson of Sir James Mòr:

...a man of fine physique and proved courage in the field of battle, having fought with his two brothers, Sir Donald and James of Orinsay, at both the battles of Killiecrankie and Sheriffmuir.⁴⁴

The anxiety expressed in the final lines of his foster-mother's song would indicate that it was composed during his involvement with either Viscount Dundee's campaign of 1689 or the Earl of Mar's of 1715:

Rìgh ! na cùm a' ghaoth làidir
Cùm an soirbheas ciùin sàmhach
Air chòir 's gun tigeadh na h-àrmuinn.⁴⁵

We can assume with reasonable confidence that the original song to Sir James Mòr provided the opening for the later version addressed to his grandson.

The song to Iain Og Mac Mhic Néill⁴⁶ is another one where the subject is imprisoned and his foster-mother is worried about his safety, in this case rightly so:

John Og son of MacNeil was pursued, and he was caught landing from a fishing skiff, and he was carried away prisoner to Glasgow. The death they inflicted on him was to put him in a barrel, and to let the barrel roll down the mountainside, either in Edinburgh or in England. There were spikes thrust through the barrel, and when the barrel reached the foot of the mountain John Og son of MacNeil was dead.⁴⁷

We are told that:

This is no doubt John Og MacNeil of Barra who was taken prisoner to Glasgow in 1610 and then transferred to the Tolbooth in Edinburgh, where he died.⁴⁸

This conclusion is backed up by the evidence provided by the text, where the foster-mother lists her misfortunes, stating that they are not the cause of her sorrow:

Ach mo chùirtear
 'N Iaimh an Glascho,
 'S iad a' maoidheadh
 Chur a Shasann
 No Dhùn Èideann
 nan ceud fasan.⁴⁹

Although we are not told the reason for the imprisonment of John Òg in the song, it is obvious that it was as a result of some raid:

Mharbh thu 'n coirneal,
 Leòin thu 'n caiptean;
 Thug thu do shluagh
 Fhéin leat dhachaigh,
 Luchd nan cùl donn
 'S nan leadan clannach;
 Dh' fhàg thu na Goill
 Marbh gun anam ⁵⁰

Some light is thrown on this subject in the *Miscellany of the Maitland Club*, where a family dispute, combined with his own actions, seems to have led to John Òg's downfall:

The haill Iles ar in a reasonable goode estate and quietnes except the Lewis and the Ile of Barra...The trouble of the Ile of Barra proceedis from a dissensioun betuix the sonis of auld McNeill begottin of tua moderis, The eldest of the suster of McClayne, The youngest of the suster of the Capitane of Clanrannald, bothe contending for the prerogative of the birth right. The eldest sone of McClaynes suster wes the principall actor in the spoil of Abell Dynneis ship and slaughter of his men, he was apprehendit be the Capitane of Clanrannald within the Ile of Barra and broght to the tolbuthe of Edinburgh quhair he endit this lyffe, In revenge quhairof McClayne and McNeillis other sonis of the first mariage tooke and apprehendit the bruther of the secund mariage and send him in to the tolbuthe of Edinburgh whair after he had remainit a lang tyme, and Abell Dynneis agentis and procuratouris being hard aganis him, thair could no thing be verifeit aganis him of that insolence committit aganis Abell Dynneis wherupoun he

wes dimittit upoun band to be ansuerable; McNeillis sones of the first mariage thinking thair fader better affectit to the sones of the secund mariage nor to thame hes tane him, and keepis him in the Irnis, They being chargeit for exhibitoun of him ar putt to the horne, and commissioun given to the Capitane of Clanrannald to persew thame, thair being no uther who wald undertak suche a commissioun. [Records of the Privy Council, Sept. 1613].⁵¹

From this we can gather that John Òg was the eldest son of MacNeil of Barra by his first wife, the sister of MacLean, and that he led a pirating raid on a ship, for which he was pursued and apprehended by the Captain of Clanranald, brother of his step-mother. Clanranald's motives, although probably seen by the Privy Councillors as those of duty and loyalty to the Crown, were more likely to have been those of self-interest. He would undoubtedly prefer to see his own nephew at the head of the MacNeils of Barra than to give MacLean even the smallest foothold in the Western Isles. It is somewhat surprising, therefore, to find no mention of Clanranald or the disputed succession in this song which is so passionately in favour of John Òg. It could, of course, be that they were conveniently 'forgotten' once the succession was verified in favour of MacNeil's eldest son by his second marriage; it would certainly not have been politic to denounce the right of the new chief to that status, although the song might have been acceptable in the version which survives, as a song of simple praise of John Òg.

The song contains echoes of *Cumha Seathan* ⁵² with the listing of all the things which would be given as ransom for John Òg, such as cattle, horses and sheep; and we are told clearly by the bardess that she was the foster-mother of John Òg:

Dheagh mhic Mhic Néill
 'N tùs o 'n Chaisteal,
 'S i mo làmh-sa
 Bha 'gad fhalcadh,
 'S i mo ghlùn-sa
 Bha 'gad altram,
 'S i mo chìoch-sa
 Bha 'gad atadh.⁵³

This, I feel, makes it all the more unlikely that the song which we have here is the complete version as it was composed: John Òg's *muime* is fiercely partisan in her support of him, and it is, to my mind, inconceivable that she would not have used her song as a vehicle through which to proclaim the rights of her favourite to the chieftainship of Clan MacNeil; especially as he was the eldest son of Ruairidh an Tartair's first marriage, if it was legal. A contemporary writer says that Ruairidh:

...had severall Noblemens daughters and had sundrie bairns,
and at last everie one of them thinking and esteeming himself
to be worthie of the Countrie after the father's deceass,...at
last everie one of them did kill others except one that is alyff
and another drowned in the sea.⁵⁴

While this is exaggerated, A. Maclean Sinclair also casts doubt on the legality of MacNeil's union with Maclean's daughter:

He handfasted with a Maclean woman by whom he had two or
three sons...He married Marion, daughter of Allan Macdonald
of Moydart...and had by her Niall Uisteach and other sons.⁵⁵

Whatever the rights or wrongs of the struggle for the right of succession to the head of the Clan, Ruairidh an Tartair was followed as chief by the eldest son of his marriage to Clanranald's sister, Niall Uisteach. This being the case, it is remarkable that any of the song in praise of John Òg survived, rather than that any references to his right to be chief of MacNeil which may have been in the original version are missing.

A song which is possibly the composition of a foster-mother to her *dalta* is *An Iorram Daraich* ⁵⁶, which dates from around 1585. This is a poem in praise of Iain Òg mac Sheumais, full of expressions of love and pride, and while one cannot be sure that the author was his *muime*, it is highly unlikely that this was the work of his mother or his sweetheart. Firstly, it would not have been seemly for the poetess to praise herself, even indirectly, so the case for his mother as author is ruled out by the description of Iain Òg as being of:

Sliochd na mnà a choisinn ceutadh.⁵⁷

Secondly, the poetess praises Iain Òg's choice of bride, without expressions of regret, making this unlikely to be the work of a woman who was romantically involved with him. That the poem was the composition of a woman is not evident from the type of praise used to eulogise Iain Òg, but some words and phrases, such as *m' eudail* and *m' euraig is m' ulaidh*, seem to indicate female authorship. Although it is not definitive proof, this theory may be reinforced by the lines:

'S nam bu bhàrd mi dhèanainn iorram,
'S nam bu shaor mi dhèanainn luingeas...⁵⁸

Given the attitudes displayed towards women composing a type of verse which was considered to be the domain of the bards, or at least of men, this closing may be a means of reassuring her listeners that she was not composing an *iorram*, when in fact that is exactly what was being produced. Màiri nighean Alasdair Ruaidh tried to excuse her panegyric poetry by claiming her compositions to be *luinneagan* or *crònain*, and there is no reason to believe that she was the first female poet to do so.

The main problem with this song is establishing the identity of Iain Òg. We know that he was the son of James, and also:

...ogha Ruairidh na féile,
'S iarogha Thorcaill nan geurlann ⁵⁹

These names indicate the MacLeods, with Torquil pointing to the MacLeods of Lewis in particular. However, James is not a common name in that family, and, although the genealogy of the MacLeods of Lewis has more than one Roderick who was a son of Torquil, none of them had a son named James, neither are they recorded as having a daughter married to a James. The possibility was then investigated that Torquil and Roderick were not directly related, but, having sifted through the genealogies, there was still no James, far less John son of James. It could be that Iain Òg was, in fact, a Macdonald. James of Castle Camus, younger son of Dòmhnall Gruamach of Sleat, was married to a daughter of MacLeod of Harris, and had by her a son, Iain who:

...seems to have incurred the enmity, and suffered unjust treatment at the hands of, the Earl of Argyll, who, in 1578, imprisoned him in the Castle of Inchconnell, Lochawe, but was afterwards compelled to liberate him. He was killed in Mull in 1585 in the course of the feud between the families of Sleat and Duart.⁶⁰

However, according to *Clan Donald*⁶¹ and the *History of the MacLeods*⁶², Iain Og's grandfathers were Donald Gruamach and Alasdair Crotach, seeming to rule him out as the subject of this poem. At the same time, one cannot ignore the possibility that the names have been changed at some point during the transmission of the song, remembering also that the published genealogies of the clans are not always reliable. All that one can say with any certainty about the identity of Iain Og is that he had MacLeod connections and that the author was probably also a member of that clan.

Most numerous among the songs by a foster-mother to her *dalta* are laments, such as the poignant *Cairistìona*⁶³, which is unusual in that the subject is female rather than male. The bardess begins by calling to the dead woman:

Nach fhreagair thu, Chairistìona ?
 Nach fhreagair thu, chuilein dhilis ?
 Nam freagradh gun cluinninn fhìn thu.⁶⁴

and then she sets the scene for her lament:

Chì mi luingeas air Caol Ile
 Tighinn an coinneamh Cairistìona,
 Chan ann gu banais a dhèanamh
 Ach g' a cur san talamh ìseal,
 Fo leacan troma gu dìlinn.⁶⁵

The life which the bardess led while she had Cairistìona as her charge is then detailed, along with the personal qualities of the dead woman. Her beauty and desirability are mentioned:

Muineal thu dha 'n tigeadh lìonan
 'S braighe geal mar shneachd an t-sìor chur.

'S iomadh diùc a dh' òladh fion leat.

'S lìonar iarla nach iarradh nì leat.⁶⁶

The identity of the composer of this song is in no doubt, or at least her relationship to Cairistiona is made clear by the words *gura mi do mhuime chicheadh*.⁶⁷ There are not enough clues in the text of this poem to allow one to identify Cairistiona, although the mention of Glencoe and Islay would indicate that she was a Macdonald, and of an important branch of that clan. As far as I have been able to ascertain, this is the only song by a foster-mother to a female *dalta* which has survived, and for this reason, as well as for the obvious tender emotion displayed by the bardess,³ it is worthy of note.

A song which gives a telling insight into the relationship between *muime* and *dalta* is that composed by Màiri Nic Phàil to Eachann Og Maclean of Tiree⁶⁸, who was drowned between Tiree and Barra. This song uses some of the formulaic imagery of bardic elegy, such as *Chaill mi ubhlán mo chrann*, but also contains some strikingly imaginative similes of the bardess' own:

Gun do sgaoil e mo shìc,

'S tha mo chridhe 'na lìc,

'S e mo ghnàths bhì air mhisg gun òl.⁶⁹

What is most interesting about this poem, however, is not the imagery, but the fact that it is composed as a lament to her foster-son, when her own son was drowned in the same incident. Although the song runs to nine stanzas, her own son is mentioned only in the very last one:

Gun robh cuilein mo rùin,

Fear na camagan dlùth,

'S e a' seòladh ri d' ghlùin,

Gus 'n do dhalladh a shùil

Ann am mire nan sùgh gun deò.⁷⁰

The loss of the young Maclean would undoubtedly have been seen by the clan and its followers as more important than the loss of his foster-mother's son, but it is strange that the bardess herself seems to think in the same way; the primary subject of her lament is

Eachann Og, while the loss of her own flesh and blood is treated as being of only secondary importance.

Thus far, I have been concentrating on songs composed by foster-mothers to their charges, but there is an equally wide range of songs by mothers to their own children. Some of these are not directly addressed to the children, but mention them all the same. The well-known song *A' Bhean Eudach*⁷¹, sung by a woman drowning on a rock as a result of the machinations of a jealous rival, contains a passage of lament for the trapped woman's children who will be left motherless:

Mo thruaighe nochd	'	gaoir mo phàisdean -
Fear dhiubh bliadhna		fear a dhà dhiubh,
'S tìmpire beag		an ceann na càraid.
Ach, Iain bhig,		a nì 's a nàire,
Chan iarr thu a nochd		cìoch do mhàthar. ⁷²

Likewise, the lament for Gregor MacGregor of Glenstrae⁷³, by his wife, Nighean Dhonnchaidh, was composed as a lullaby to MacGregor's child, although he is addressed only in the refrains; and even these show that Nighean Dhonnchaidh's thought were with her husband although she was singing to her child:

Ochain, ochain, ochain uiridh
 'S goirt mo chridhe, a laoigh,
 Ochain, ochain, ochain, uiridh
 Cha chluinn t' athair ar caoidh.⁷⁴

and in the final stanza:

Ba hu, ba hu, àsrain bhig,
 Chan 'eil thu fhathast ach tlàth:
 Is eagal leam nach tig an là
 Gun dìol thu t' athair gu bràth.⁷⁵

Most of the songs composed by mothers to their children, however, are addressed directly to the child, whether praising them, or lamenting their loss.

Sileas na Ceapaich composed songs to several of her children, one of which is a dual lament for her daughter, Anna, and for her husband⁷⁶, who died within a week of each other. The lament is mainly addressed to her husband, remembering the way in which he had tended her while she herself was ill, while Anna is only briefly mentioned, her loss seemingly being regarded as the lesser of the two:

Cheud Di-Sathurna bha dhiùbh
Chuir mi Anna anns an ùir;
'S tric a dh' fhàg i le sùgradh mi aighearach.⁷⁷

The final stanzas of this lament turn towards Sileas' three sons, who are all away from home. She seems to be concerned not only for their welfare, but also that of the estate which their father has left. She hopes that the only one of them whom she considers capable of doing so will return to claim it, although she does not name which son she means.

Another song to her husband and daughter, beginning '*S mòr mo mhulad 's mi 'm aonar*'⁷⁸ contains traces of the classical elegy, with praise of the beauty and virtues of the deceased, but it also has a deeply spiritual feel, as Sileas prays to God to have mercy on their souls, and describes the scene on the Day of Judgement:

...thig Crìosd as a' chathair,
'Ghabhail cunntais is taiche de chloinn;
Bì na gobhair 's na caoirich
An sin air gach taobh dheth 'gan roinn⁷⁹

The lament for her husband and daughter serves as an opening for Sileas' hymn of praise, although her grief over their loss is evident in the opening stanzas:

Ona chaidh sibh an taisgeadh
'S goirt a chaochail mo chraiceann a shnuadh.⁸⁰

Sileas also composed a song to Gilleasbuig, her son⁸¹, which implies that for some reason Gilleasbuig, although the eldest son, was not his father's heir. While the fact that he was Sileas' first-born seems clear from her reference to him as *A' cheud ghineal so*

dh' àraich mi, the line *Ma 's tu Gilleasbuig Gòrdain* raises the possibility that Gilleasbuig was illegitimate, although that is not to say that Sileas' husband was not his father. It could mean, though, that he would perhaps not be eligible to inherit his father's estate, although Sileas evidently feels that he is the most suitable of her sons to take over, declaring *'S feàrr còir air a chinneach thu*. Another interpretation is offered by Ó Baoill, who takes the couplet:

A' cheud ghineal so d' àraich mi
Gun fhàillinn gun uireasbhuidh⁸²

and suggests that:

Sileas may have meant that any brothers older than Gilleasbuig (George, perhaps, or George and James) were in some way handicapped, in their mother's opinion at least, and thus incapable of leading the family.⁸³

From rest of the song we gather that Gilleasbuig is away from home, and his mother feels that he should return and claim what is rightfully his. It is a pity that the song is not more explicit about the reasons for Gilleasbuig leaving, and for Sileas' belief that he is the rightful heir to his father. We do know that it was her son James who inherited his father's estate in 1720.

In contrast to this, the song to her daughter Màiri⁸⁴ is lighthearted in tone. Sileas begins by praising the girl's appearance:

Is math a thig a' mhuislín duit,
Cuide ris a' pheàrluinn,
Is ribeanan air uachdar ort
Cho uallach 's tha 'n Dùn-éideann.⁸⁵

Sileas takes pride in the number of young men courting her daughter, declaring them all unworthy of her, and she finds an additional source of praise in the fact that, judging from the text, one of Màiri's suitors, had a Royal connection:

Tha oighear air a' Cheapaich ud,
'S ann a b' ait leis aige fhéin thu.

Gur dalta Chiorstan Stiùbhart thu,
'S gun d' òl thu sùgh a féithean.

A Rìgh gur ait an gnothach leam
Gur comhalt' thu Rìgh Seumas.⁸⁶

Sileas cannot resist ending her song with a political point, namely that King James will come when things are ready for him, indicating that the song was composed before 1715. This is probably one of Sileas' early compositions, as the things in which she takes pride here are things which she condemns, or at least points out the dangers of, in later songs such as *Comhairle air na Nigheanan Oga*⁸⁷ and *An Aghaidh na h-Obair Nodha*.⁸⁸

Although Nic Gilleathain's *Oran do Lachainn Mac-Gilleain*⁸⁹ is addressed to her brother, it opens with a lament for her daughter, whose loss she considers equal to, if not greater than, that of her brothers:

'S mise chaill na deagh bhràithrean,
Chuir mi uile gu tràigh iad;
'S i 'n aon nighean a chràidh mi 'san uair so.⁹⁰

Her maternal pride in her daughter's beauty and skills, describing them in the same way as one would describe and praise the appearance and aptitude of a chief, is evident:

Sùil bu mhìogaiche sealladh
Fo chaoile na mala,
Mar gum biodh an t-òl leana air na cuachan;

Beul tana dearg daite
Mu 'n deud bu leòir ceartais,
Sùil chorrach ghorm ghlas gun bhith luaineach...

Chan fheil léine mhic tighearn',
Chuireadh òganach uime,
Nach deanadh mo nighean-sa fhuaigheal.⁹¹

Beathag Mhòr's song to Màrtainn a' Bhealaich⁹² concerns the illegitimate child which she bore him. She had evidently been the mistress of Martin Martin and borne him a son; but she must have been well below him on the social scale, and thus unable to marry him. This Martin was probably the eldest son of Donald Martin of Beallach, who married a daughter of Lachlan Maclean of Vallay in North Uist.⁹³ Beathag seems to bear him no grudge for not marrying her, and her words reveal that, although the thought of him taking another as his wife grieves her, she is still in love with him; and she even gives him some advice on his choice of wife:

Ma théid thu dh' Uibhist an eòrna'
Thoir té bhòidheach dhachaidh as.

Thoir dhachaidh té shocair chiallach
Riaraicheas na caipteanan.⁹⁴

Some verses have been recorded in which Beathag shows a less charitable attitude:

Ma bheir thu bean a Sìol Leòid
Gun iarr i mòran fhasanan.

Ma bheir thu bean a Sìol Tharmoid
Marbhaidh i le macnas thu.⁹⁵

Despite her love for Martin the main theme of her song is one of concern for the welfare of her child, who will be brought up by his father and his new wife, which is why she takes such an interest in the bride chosen by him:

Thoir dhachaidh té mhodhail chiùin
Dh' ionnsaicheas mo mhac-sa dhut.⁹⁶

Her protectiveness of her child is displayed by the misfortune she wishes on any who would mistreat him, but she also blesses the woman who would be loving to him:

Is ma bhuaileas i le feirg e
Guma meirg thug dhachaidh i.

Is ma bhuaileas i le fuath e
Guma luath 'n a' chlachan i.

Ach ma bhuaileas i le gràdh e
Guma blàth fo d' achlais i.⁹⁷

One can only imagine the heartache suffered by Beathag Mhòr at the thought of giving up her son to the care of another, even though it might be in his own interests.' This song illustrates the acceptance of illegitimacy in earlier Gaelic society. The child was acknowledged by his father, to the extent that he was to be brought up by him, and the mother does not mention any hardship or shame which she has suffered because of having borne a child outside wedlock. She regrets only that she cannot marry Martin herself, but she accepts the situation, and the only thing which concerns her is Martin's choice of bride, and her attitude to the child.

The remainder of the songs by mothers to their children are laments, such as the plaintive cry of a mother for her five dead children found in *Muladach mi 's mi air m' aineoil*.⁹⁸ The lament here is combined with a reproach for another woman who is casting her loss up at her:

A bhean a chuir	orms' an aithlis
Gun robh mi call	mo chuid leanabh,
Cha ghuidh mise	pian dha d' anam
Ach a bhith agad	fios mo ghalair -
Do chiochan làn	's do ghlùin falamh
Chuir mi cóigear	an ùir am falach -
Una 's Sìne,	Mór is Anna,
Ailein a' chùil	a rinn mo sgaradh,
Chuir mo chuailein	donn an tainead,
Chuir thu ceum mo	chois am maillead. ⁹⁹

The curse contained in this song is both forceful and poignant: it is not after death that the mother wishes her mocker to suffer, but in this life. She wants the other woman to know for herself the pain

of losing her children, so that she will understand the agony which she is enduring.

The distraught mother reveals that she was raised in Harris, although there also seems to be a Macdonald link, possibly through Raonuill, who may have been her husband, or simply a member of the Clanranald family, whose house is said to be frequented by chiefs:

Taghlaidh Macleòid
Mac 'ic Alastair,
'S m' eudail mhòr
Mac 'ic Ailein.¹⁰⁰

The poetess does not say what has caused the deaths of her children, but the emotional devastation brought about by their loss is clear in the poem. One can only imagine the sense of desolation of a bereaved mother, away from her native district, and seemingly with nobody to comfort her in her grief.

The lament for Iain Ruadh Mac Dhùghaill, '*daor a cheannaich mi 'm fiadhach*'¹⁰¹, is the only one to have survived of the many which his mother, Beasa nighean Eòghain Mhic Fhearchar, is said to have composed to his memory¹⁰². This single extant lament is the cry from the heart of a grieving mother for her son. The style is close to that of a ballad, detailing the sequence of events, especially the recovery of Iain Ruadh's body and the appearance of his corpse:

Bu domhain an linne
'S an robh na fir ga do shireadh,
'S an d' fhuair iad mo chion 's e gun deò.

Nuair a thug iad a steach thu
Bha do ghruaidhean air seacadh;
Och ! 's e m' eudail a bh' aca gun deò.¹⁰³

The emotions expressed in this song, however, are far removed from the impersonal stance of the ballad form; while she is relating the events as they happened, Beasa nighean Eòghain includes her own feelings of profound grief and loss while expressing her love for her dead son.

Although one version of the song '*S a Mhàiri bhàn a bhroilich ghlèghil*'¹⁰⁴ is a flyting between two rival bards, the other is a mother's lament for her dead daughter¹⁰⁵. This song contains echoes of *Cairistiona*, with the poignant pleading for the dead girl to answer her mother's cries:

Mhàiri bhàn a bhroilich ghlè-ghil !
 Cha dhùisg glaodhaich thu no éibheach...
 Cha dhùisg glaogh do mhàthair fhéin thu !

Mhàiri nach freagair thu idir !
 Cha fhreagair, mo thruaighe mise !¹⁰⁶

This is evidently just a fragment of the original composition, and what remains gives us no clues as to the provenance of the lament, or of who Mhàiri was. It would seem from the text that the author was the girl's mother, and her grief is evident even in the few lines which remain of her composition.

A much more light-hearted song is that composed by a mother to her sons on a boat-trip from Heisgeir.¹⁰⁷ In this song, the boys are praised, one by one, and their mother declares of each in turn, *Is araidh e air maighdin*.¹⁰⁸ The song seems to have been composed merely as a diversion, a kind of *iorram* to shorten the boat-trip, each boy's appearance and position in the boat described in turn, starting with the eldest, Dòmhnall Donn, and ending with the youngest, Ailean Beag.

The lament for the MacVicar brothers of North Uist¹⁰⁹ is one in which their mother and sister combine to compose their song of grief. In some versions, the sister begins by cursing their murderer, Uisdean Mac Ghilleasbaig Chléirich:

A fhir mhóir o shliabh a' Chuilinn,
 'S làidir thu féin, 's trom do bhuille;
 Mo sheachd mhollachd aig do mhuime
 Nach d' leag i glùn ort na uileann
 Mu 'n d' mharbh thu na bràithrean uile !¹¹⁰

The brothers are named by their sister, but the way in which this is done varies. One version has:

'S ann agam fhìn a bha na bràithrean,
 Uisdean, Lachlann, Eachann, Teàrlach,
 Iain is Ragnall is Ràghall,
 'S Alasdair na gruaige fàinnich.¹¹¹

Another version is more detailed, not only about the brothers, but also about how they were killed:

Seall thu 'n triùir ud air an islig,
 'S am fear ud eile 's a chistidh
 Aonghus air an Dùn 'ga chuipeadh.

Ghabh Dòmhnall Odhar a' chuartach,
 'S olc am faothachadh a fhuair e,
 'Ga ruith le biodagan fuara...

['S a bhean ud thall a leig an lasag...
 Nam bu phiuthar thu do Eachann,
 Do Iain Donn na d' Aonghus maiseach.]¹¹²

This latter version tallies with what is known of the MacVicar brothers:

Donald, Am Piocair Mór, and his youngest son John...held Baleshare and Eaval. Angus...had Baleloch, Balemartine and Balelone. Donald...had Carinish and Cladach Carinish. Hector had Kyles Bernera, Baile Mhic Phàil and Baile Mhic Conain.¹¹³

Carmichael's version of the song is more detailed than the others, as it also names two of the daughters of Am Piocaire Mór as Mòr and Màiri, while the third, unnamed, sister is the author of the lament.

The mother's contribution seems to be a rebuke to the sister for trying to keen the brothers, seeing it as her right as their mother to do so:

Uist a bhean gun chiall gun tuigse !
 'S mic dhomh fhéin mas bràithrean dhuts iad,
 A ìochdar mo ghuim a thuit iad,
 Is mo ghlùin fhéin a dh' fhurtaich,

'S mo léine lìn a fhliuch iad,
Bainne mo dhà chich a shluig iad.¹¹⁴

The imagery employed by the mother illustrates that her sons were more precious to her than any material possessions; they were her harvest and her wealth:

Thog mi 'n gàrradh 's lìon mi 'n iodhlann.
Chan ann dha 'n eòrna ghlan thioram,
No dha 'n choirce gheal na mine,
Ach a dh' ògradh òg mo chinnidh.¹¹⁵

This is an effective adaptation of the imagery often found in songs composed after a raid, where the stocks of meal, barley and oats are said to have been destroyed by the marauders; in this case, the woman's family has been destroyed, and, unlike the harvest, her dead sons are irreplaceable.

I have come across two songs composed by mothers who have been forced to give up their children. Beathag Mhór's *An Cùl Bachalach* has already been mentioned, and the other composition, *Biodh an deoch-s' an làimh mo rùn*¹¹⁶ is said to have been made by a daughter of MacDonald of Clanranald who was banished to Coll for having an illegitimate child by one of her father's servants.¹¹⁷ The song is mainly one of praise to her brother, the new chief, on his paying a visit to Coll, but in some versions the bardess also states her desire to go to Uist, where her son was fostered, and her gratitude to the woman who brought him up:

Mo rùn air muime nam macaobh,
A bhiodh 'gan altrum air a' ghlùin.¹¹⁸

The praise of her brother in the song begins with a description of his ship, sporting the emblem of Clanranald, approaching Coll:

Bu sgairteil i a tigh'nn troimh 'n fhairge,
'S coltas làmh-dheirg air an stiùir.¹¹⁹

In some versions the poetess seems to refer to her ill-treatment by her father, when she addresses young Clanranald as:

...am mac a b' fheàrr na 'n t-athair,
An cliù, an aighear, 's an sùnn.¹²⁰

The song is one of joy at being reunited with her brother, and the prospect of finding her child again. The great sorrow which the bardess must have suffered on being parted from her family for so long is transformed into happiness when she realises that she is now able to return.

Nic Gilleathain's song to her brother, Lachlan,¹²¹ seems to be a lament, as she says that she has lost all her brothers, but some passages seem to be addressed to an exile, rather than a dead man:

Ach a Lachainn a Muile
'S cian 's gur fada leam t' fhuireach;
'S ann a ghlaodhadh iad curaidh roimh shluagh dhiot.¹²²

It may be that the Lachlann addressed here is not the brother of the bardess, but another of the same name; but it is also possible that the image of exile is being used as a euphemism for death. The praise of Lachlan follows the panegyric code, lauding his hardiness in battle, and his notable allies:

Nuair a chaidh thu 'san achdair,
Cha do choisinn thu masladh;
Bheireadh Ruairidh nam bratach do luach ort.

Chaidh thu 'n làthair Mhic-Cailein,
Fhuair thu airm 's gu 'm b' e t' airidh;
Sin an t-Iarla rinn aithn' air do chruadal.¹²³

Nonetheless, doubts arise as to the true circumstances behind this song. There is mention that the brothers of the poetess are all dead, and the lament for her daughter with which the song opens is emotional and touching, but the verses to *Lachainn a Muile*, presumably addressed to Sir Lachlan Maclean of Duart, contain little of the imagery and references which one would expect to find in a lament. On this basis, one must consider the possibility that the ascription of the song to the sister of Lachlan MacGilleathain is incorrect, although it *is* probably the composition of a Maclean

bardess who awaits his return from exile, or his aid on the loss of her brothers.

A lament for the chief of Clanranald¹²⁴, possibly Dòmhnall Dubh, son of Iain Mùideartach, contains a passage in which the poetess laments her brothers:

'S ann agam fhìn a bha na bràithrean
 Dh' iomradh, dh' éibheadh, dh' òladh, phàigheadh...
 'S cha b' e 'n Aoine rinn ur n-àireamh,
 Ach a' bhean a bha gun nàire,
 Di-Dòmhnach is Là na Sàbaid,
 'S a' chiad Di-luain an ceann na ràithe.¹²⁵

The exact circumstances of the brothers' deaths are not recorded, although one can deduce from the text that they were not drowned. *Aireamh na h-Aoine ort* has been recorded as an equivalent to 'may you be drowned'; and bathing on a Friday was considered unlucky, especially as there was a little known charm which, if recited in sight of people bathing, would cause them to drown.¹²⁶ The sister evidently blames whatever happened to her brothers on another woman, although how she was the cause is, again, not told. The depth of the animosity felt by the poetess towards this woman is illustrated by the revenge which she wishes for; she wants not only death for the cause of her sorrow, but a painful death, administered by the poetess' own hand:

'S truagh, a Rìgh ! nach fhaicinn-s' ise,
 A taobh leòinte 's a glùn briste,
 'S gun aon léigh fo 'n ghréin ach mise !
 Chuirinn creuchd am beul gach niosgaid,
 Air mo làimh gun dearbhainn misneach !
 Bhristinn cnàimh 's gun tàirninn silteach,
 Chuirinn ùir air bruaich do lice,
 Gus an càirinn i 's an islig,
 'S gus an dùininn thu 'sa chiste.¹²⁷

As with so many of these songs, the information contained within this one is insufficient to allow us to ascertain the events which led to its composition. The death of Dòmhnall Dubh allows us to

tentatively date the poem, but not to identify the poetess. Of course, the poetesses with whom we are dealing were not composing for posterity, but for their contemporaries, who would have known the meaning of all the references and allusions made in the text. It is interesting to know the reasons for a song being made, but it does not detract from a fine text that we do not know exactly who or what each phrase refers to. Others, however, might be enhanced by some awareness of the circumstances in which they were composed.

As we can see, the songs composed by mothers and foster-mothers cover a wide range of styles and topics: praise of the child and the adult; wishing a happy future for the child; lament for the loss of a child; worry about the well-being of a child, and joy at the prospect of being reunited with a child. The bond between a *muime* and her *dalta* is seen as being every bit as strong as the ties of blood between a mother and her natural child, and in some cases, one suspects that it may even be stronger. Of the few songs by sisters to their brothers, we have a mixture of laments and songs of happiness at being reunited, all of which are fulsome in their praise of the man being addressed. The types of song dealt with here are those which it was acceptable for women to produce, as they did not infringe on the territory of the male professional bards, and it is to be regretted that, probably because they were regarded as inferior to the *Orain Mòr*, so little of what must have been a large body of work has survived to the present day.

Notes:

1. Appendix; p. 593.
2. Appendix; p. 642.
3. *Scottish Studies*, No. 7; pp. 226-30.
4. *ibid.*
5. D.S. Thomson, *An Introduction to Gaelic Poetry*, Edinburgh 1989; pp. 58-59.
6. A. & A. Macdonald, *The Macdonald Collection of Gaelic Poetry*, Inverness, 1911; p. 35-39.
7. *Transactions of the Gaelic Society of Inverness*, vol. XLI; pp. 318-320.
8. C. Kerrigan, *An Anthology of Scottish Women Poets*, Edinburgh, 1991; pp. 18-20.

9. ref. 7; pp. 318-20.
10. *ibid.*
11. Appendix; p. 644.
12. Thomas Sinton, *The Poetry of Badenoch*, Inverness 1906; p. 77.
13. MacPherson of Dalchully, *The Chiefs of Clan Macpherson*, Edinburgh, 1947; pp. 8-30.
14. A.M. Mackintosh, *The Mackintoshes and Clan Chattan*, Edinburgh, 1903.
15. *Transactions of the Gaelic Society of Inverness*, vol. VII; pp. 118-19.
16. *Transactions of the Gaelic Society of Inverness*, vol. LII; p. 226.
17. ref. 6; pp. 35-39.
18. *ibid.*
19. Appendix; p. 564.
20. *Transactions of the Gaelic Society of Inverness*, vol. XII; pp. 212-13.
21. *ibid.*
22. *ibid.*
23. *ibid.*
24. Appendix; p. 549.
25. Appendix; p. 551.
26. J.L. Campbell & F. Collinson, *Hebridean Folksongs* vol. III, Oxford, 1981; pp. 94-98.
27. ref. 6; p. 31.
28. Chapter 3; p. 54.
29. A. Sinclair, *An t-Òranaiche*, Glasgow, 1879; pp. 131-35.
30. Appendix; p. 616.
31. D.S. Thomson, *The Macdiarmid MS Anthology*, Edinburgh 1991; p. 79.
32. ref. 31; p. 80.
33. Chapter 2; p. 24.
34. Appendix; p. 488.
35. Appendix; p. 498.
36. J.C. Watson, *The Gaelic Songs of Mary MacLeod*, Edinburgh, 1965; p. 60.
37. Appendix; p. 469.
38. *The Celtic Magazine*, vol. III; pp. 410-411.
39. Appendix; p. 664.
40. K.N. Macdonald, *The Gesto Collection of Highland Music*, Leipzig 1895-1902; Appendix; p. 22.
41. D.A. Fergusson, *From the Farthest Hebrides*, Toronto, 1978; p. 205.
42. ref. 6; p. xxxix.
43. ref. 6; pp. 244-45.
44. A. & A. MacDonald, *Clan Donald*, vol. III; Inverness, 1904; p. 540.

45. National Library of Scotland MS. No. 14902; p. 15.
46. Appendix; p. 600.
47. A. Carmichael, *Carmina Gadelica*, vol. V; Edinburgh 1954; p.23.
48. *ibid.*
49. ref. 47; pp. 22-26.
50. *ibid.*
51. *Miscellany of the Maitland Club*, vol. III, part I; p. 30.
52. Appendix; p. 565.
53. ref. 47; pp. 22-26.
54. J.L. Campbell, ed, *The Book of Barra*, London, 1936; p. 47.
55. *The Celtic Review*, vol. III; p. 218.
56. Appendix; p. 573.
57. ref. 47; pp. 16-20.
58. *ibid.*
59. *ibid.*
60. ref. 44; pp. 499-500.
61. ref. 44.
62. A. Mackenzie, *History of the MacLeods*, Inverness, 1889.
63. Appendix; p. 582.
64. K.C. Craig, *Òrain luaidh Màiri nighean Alasdair*, Glasgow, 1949; pp. 87-88.
65. ref. 16; p. 303.
66. ref. 64; pp. 87-88.
67. *ibid.*
68. Appendix; p. 526.
69. A. Maclean Sinclair, *The Gaelic bards from 1715 to 1765*,
Charlottetown, P.E.I., 1892; pp. 150-152.
70. *ibid.*
71. Appendix; p. 683.
72. ref. 64; p. 1.
73. Appendix; p. 359.
74. W.J. Watson, *Bàrdachd Ghàidhlig*, Stirling, 1959; pp. 244-46.
75. *ibid.*
76. Appendix; p. 402.
77. ref. 6; pp. 82-83.
78. Appendix; p. 403.
79. C. Ó Baoill, *Bàrdachd Shilis na Ceapaich*, Edinburgh 1972; pp. 58-62.
80. *ibid.*
81. Appendix; p. 401.
82. ref. 79; pp. 50-52.

83. ref. 79; p. liii.
84. Appendix; p. 389.
85. ref. 79; pp. 2-4.
86. *ibid.*
87. Appendix; p. 409.
88. Appendix; p. 412.
89. Appendix; p. 467.
90. A. Maclean Sinclair, *Na Bàird Leathanach*, vol. II, Charlottetown, P.E.I., 1900; pp. 167-68.
91. *ibid.*
92. Appendix; p. 547.
93. ref. 44; p. 561.
94. *Gairm Magazine*, No. 9; p. 47.
95. *ibid.*
96. *ibid.*
97. *ibid.*
98. Appendix; p. 662.
99. ref. 64; pp. 81-82.
100. ref. 6; pp. 254-57.
101. Appendix; p. 375.
102. Chapter 3; p. 72.
103. *The Celtic Magazine*, vol. II; pp. 484-485.
104. Appendix; p. 603.
105. Appendix; p. 602
106. National Library of Scotland MS. No. 14902; p. 32.
107. Appendix; p. 559.
108. ref. 41; pp. 42-43.
109. Appendix; p. 580.
110. ref. 47; pp. 10-14.
111. ref. 26; pp. 94-96.
112. ref. 47; pp. 10-14.
113. *ibid.*
114. *ibid.*
115. *ibid.*
116. Appendix; p. 624.
117. *Tocher* No. 38; pp. 26-31.
118. J.L. Campbell, *Songs Remembered in Exile*, Aberdeen 1990; pp. 157-58.
119. *Transactions of the Gaelic Society of Inverness*, vol. XXVI; pp. 236-38.
120. *An Gàidheal*, vol. VI; p. 90.

121. ref. 89.
122. A. Maclean Sinclair, *The Glenbard Collection of Gaelic poetry*,
Charlottetown, P.E.I., 1890; pp. 167-69.
123. ref. 90; pp. 167-68.
124. Appendix; p. 635.
125. M.F. Shaw, *Folksongs and Folklore of South Uist*, Aberdeen, 1986; pp. 246-47.
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127. J.L Campbell & F. Collinson, *Hebridean Folksongs* vol. I, Oxford, 1969;
pp. 48-50.

7. ELEGY AND LAMENT

One has to exercise a deal of caution in classing a song to a dead person as either an elegy or a lament. In general, the elegy is more in the bardic style of verse than in the vernacular tradition. An elegy tends to list the qualities and demeanour of the dead person, and the effect which his or her loss has had not only on the clan, but on nature itself, whereas a lament is more a cry from the heart. This is not to say that genuine grief is absent from elegaic verse, nor does it mean that elements of praise are not to be found in laments; but the lament tends to be of a much more personal nature, arising from a sense of personal loss, rather than a loss to the clan. As we will see, the songs of grief composed by women take several different forms, but they are similar in that they all, to a greater or lesser extent, blend the formal praise of the elegy with the heart-rending cries of true sorrow.

The earliest song coming into this category is the elegy composed by Aithbhreac inghean Coirceadail, around 1470, for her husband, Niall Og Mac Néill¹, constable of Castle Sween in Knapdale. The poem uses the rannaigheacht mhór syllabic metre, indicating the bardess' familiarity with bardic verse, which is not surprising for someone who was evidently a member of the aristocratic class in the Gaelic society of the time; while the imagery is borrowed directly from that used by the professional bards in their eulogies and elegies. What marks this poem as different from the works of many of the bardic poets is that Aithbhreac inghean Coirceadail gives expression to her own genuine feelings of sorrow at the loss of her husband, the opening three stanzas owing more to the style of a lament, although the metre is a bardic one:

A phaidrín do dhúisg mo dhéar,
 ionmhain méar do bhitheadh ort;
 ionmhain cridhe fáilteach fial
 'ga raibhe riamh gus a nocht.

Dá éag is tuirseach atáim,
 an lámh má mbítheá gach n-uair,

nach cluinim a beith i gclí
agus nach bhfaicim í uam.

Mo chridhe-se is tinn atá
ó theacht go crích an lá dhúinn;
ba ghoirid do éist ré ghlóir,
ré h-agallaimh an óig úir.²

The following stanzas of praise for the dead man follow the classical formulae of bardic verse, describing Niall Óg as *leómhan Muile* ; *seabhag Íle* ; *seabhag seangghlan Sléibhe Gaoil* ; *dreagan Leódhuis*, and *éigne Sanaís*, as well as praising his generosity to poets:

Dámh ag teacht ó Dhún an Oir
is dámh ón Bhóinn go a fholt fiar:
minic thánaig iad fá theist,
ní mionca ná leis a riar.³

This type of praise belongs strictly to the bardic code of poetry, where the poets relied on open-handed chiefs for their livelihood. The reference to poets travelling from Ireland to see Niall Óg adds to the praise, as the distance which they were willing to travel was often used as a measure of the power and munificence of a chief.⁴ Aithbhreac inghean Coirceadail is here merely employing a standard form of praise with which she would have been familiar; whether or not it is a true reflection on the influence and fame of Niall Óg is open to conjecture.

The author's personal feelings are again stated, in a manner which is commonly found in later vernacular laments by women who have lost their husbands or sweethearts, where she states that she is:

Gan duine ris dtig mo mhiann
ar sliocht na Niall ó Niall óg;
gan mhuirn gan mheadhair ag mnáibh,
gan aoibhneas an dáin am dhóigh.⁵

The sadness which has fallen on Castle Sween and Gigha because of the death of Niall Óg is then related by the poetess, and

she uses the imagery of the nut, symbolising the fertility and promise of the dead man, to illustrate the loss to the clan caused by her husband's death:

Cnú mhullaigh a mogaill féin
bhaineadh do Chloinn Néill go nua ⁶

The final three stanzas use the bardic device of *dúnadh*, where the opening line of the poem is repeated in the final line, although the expressions of personal loss are closer to the vernacular lament than to the bardic elegy:

do sgar riom mo leathchuing rúin,
a phaidrín do dhúisg mo dhéar.

Is briste mo chridhe im chlí,
agus bídh nó go dtí m' éag ⁷

The very last stanza contains a prayer to the Virgin Mary and to Christ, echoing a common feature of the elegies composed by the professional bards; as well as the *dúnadh*, addressing Niall Óg's rosary, the sight of which brought on her grief. The poem is a mixture of raw emotion and restrained, formal delivery, which heightens the pathos of the elegy, although it does not quite bring it into the realms of the lament.

The women who composed songs of a elegaic character tended to be, like Aithbhreac inghean Coirceadail, from the higher strata of Gaelic society, as they were better acquainted with the bardic tradition. As members of the family or household of a chief, they had access to the performance of bardic poetry and, although not schooled in all its intricacies, the metrical structures and formulaic images would have been familiar. Into this category come Mâiri nighean Alasdair Ruaidh, Mairearad nighean Lachlainn and Sileas na Ceapaich: all vernacular poets bearing the bardic imprint. Both Mâiri nighean Alasdair Ruaidh and Mairearad nighean Lachlainn occupied positions of some status in the households of leading men of their respective clans, while Sileas was the daughter of Gilleasbuig, chief of the MacDonalds of Keppoch, and sister to Colla nam Bó.

The songs which Màiri nighean Alasdair Ruaidh composed on the death of Sir Norman MacLeod of Bernera, and on hearing a report that her chief and his brother had died, although not composed in a classical metre, are certainly classical in tone. The very first stanza of *Cumha do Mhac Leòid* ⁸ expresses her anxiety for the clan at the death of the Chief without leaving an heir:

Gur e abhall an lios so
Tha mise ag iargain,
E gun abachadh meas air
Ach air briseadh fo chiad-bharr.⁹

Praise of the ancestry of Roderick, the seventeenth Chief, follows the usual bardic pattern, with Màiri bringing in both attested and legendary ancestors; Olghair and Ochraidh, as well as Ruairidh Mòr and Iain Breac. Màiri seems to be mechanically following the bardic code in her description of Roderick and his brother, Norman, as:

A cheann-uidhe luchd-ealaidh
Is a leannain na féileachd.¹⁰

This echoes Roderick Morison, *An Clàrsair Dall*, who in the lament *Creach na Ciadaoin* ¹¹ describes Iain Breac as:

ceann-uidhe luchd ealaidh
mar ri earras luchd seanchais,
agus ulaidh aos-dàna ¹²

Roderick the chief was not, however, a favourite of the poets and musicians who had been so welcome in his father's home. Although she does not openly condemn his anglicised ways, as the Blind Harper did in *Oran do Mhac Leòid Dhùn Bheagain* ¹³, Màiri's lack of specific praise of the chief himself, and concentration on his forbears, would lead one to deduce that she was not overly fond of him. Roderick is referred to in terms of his ancestry, rather than in his own right, and the description *A thasgaidh mo chéille* ¹⁴ refers to his brother, indicating that it is the news of Norman's death, rather than that of her chief, which has caused Màiri's distress. This is

reinforced by her expressions of joy in *An Crònán* ¹⁵, on hearing that Norman is, in fact, alive. At the time of composition of the *Cumha*, however, Màiri's main concern is for the future of the clan, and the possible claim of Robert Stewart of Appin, husband of Iain Breac's daughter Isabel, to the MacLeod estates. Màiri expresses her fears that the MacLeods will be exiled from their lands, while emphasising that any attempt to do so will be resisted.

This poem illustrates the difference in tone between elegy and lament. Màiri is distressed at the possible implications for her clan caused by the death of Roderick, but the loss of the man himself is not what causes her grief. In contrast to this, her *Marbhrann* ¹⁶ for Sir Norman of Bernera, although elegaic,³ contains instances of genuine grief and echoes of the lament; even the irregular stanza length seeming to reflect her distracted mood. The sense of personal loss felt by the poetess is related in the opening stanzas:

Cha sùrd cadail
An rùn-s' air m' aigne,
Mo shùil frasach
Gun sùrd macnais...

Is trom an cudthrom so dhrùidh,
Dh' fhàg mo chuisleìn gun lùth,
Is tric snighe mo shùl
A' tuiteam gu dlùth...¹⁷

The bond between the bardess and her patron is illustrated by her declaration that with his loss:

Chaill mi iuchair mo chiùil:
An cuideachd luchd-ciùil cha téid mi.¹⁸

The almost proprietorial way in which Màiri regarded Sir Norman is indicated by her reference to him as *mo Leòdach*, and she uses striking, if not wholly original, imagery to portray the extent of her grief:

B' i sud saighead mo chràidh
Bhith 'g amharc do bhàis ¹⁹

Although her personal feelings towards Sir Norman intrude, the poem is in essence an elegy, as Màiri lists the personal qualities of her patron; his appearance, generosity and wisdom are noted, as is his ancestry from *sliochd Olghair*, the MacLeods, and *siol Cholla*, the MacDonalds, his mother having been a daughter of Glengarry. The traditional reference to the wife of the deceased, *Inghean Sheumais nan crùn*, is not overlooked, and that Màiri is composing on behalf of the Clan as well as for herself is underlined by her use of the plural form in the most vivid image which she uses for her sense of desolation:

Is i fhras nach ciùin
 A thàinig as ùr,
 A shrac ar siùil
 Is a bhrìst ar stiùir
 Is ar cairt mhaith iùil
 Is ar taice cùil
 Is ar caidreabh ciùil
 Bhiodh againn 'nad thùr éibhinn.²⁰

Màiri's *Cumha* ²¹ for Sir Norman, composed in regular three-line strophic stanzas, is more of a lament than an elegy, in that her personal feelings are given precedence over the loss to the clan; although elegaic references appear, they are overshadowed by the expressions of genuine grief uttered by the poetess. Her sorrow is articulated with sometimes startlingly original imagery:

Is e bhith smuainteachadh ort
 A chràidh mi am chorp
 Is a chnàmh na roisg bho m' shùil.²²

The tone of this poem is one of restrained, yet genuine, grief at the loss of such a generous patron, whom Màiri probably also considered to be a friend. The formulaic elements of the elegy are used as the structure for her lament, while her own original expressions of sorrow provide the emotional impetus of the poem.

Like Màiri nighean Alasdair Ruaidh, Mairearad nighean Lachlainn mostly uses an elegaic tone in her songs composed on the death of a prominent member of her clan or society. Her poem on

the death of Allan, son of Lachlan, second Maclean of Brolas²³, who died in 1722²⁴ is very much concerned with the future of the family of Brolas, as Allan died unmarried. Although his elder brother, Donald, was still alive, he also seems to have been unmarried, or childless at the time, and the house of Brolas without an heir:

Ach 's e aobhar mo ghearain
 An dràs d eallach Fear Bhròlais...
 Bho na dh' fhalbh uainn a bhràthair,
 An tùs àilleachd is òige,
 Gun am mac 'théid na àite...²⁵

Donald *did* marry, and his son, Allan, eventually succeeded Sir Hector MacLean as Chief of the Clan in 1750,²⁶ but he may not have been born until after 1722. Mairearad's concern for the family of Brolas extends to the Clan Maclean as a whole, and she uses this poem as a medium for her disquiet over the Campbell takeover of the Maclean lands:

Clann-Ghilleain nan cruaidh-chath,
 Dh' fhalbh iad bhuainn mar an raineach;
 Fhroiseadh ùbhlán a ghàraidh
 Gus an d' fhàgadh e falamh.
 'S ann tha 'n t-oighre air fògradh
 'S e gun seòl aig air fanailt;
 Och, a Mhoire, mo leòn
 Gu bheil a chòir aig Mac-Caillein.²⁷

The apple-tree image used here, which is so often found in Gaelic bardic verse to represent a leader, is employed earlier in the poem to represent the dispersed and confused state of the Macleans, where the poetess laments *Na crainn mhòra bhith brisd'* and adds:

Thuit a phàirc 'san robh 'n t-abhall
 'S fhrois an snodhach 'bu phrìseil.²⁸

The elegaic praise of lineage and demeanour, as well as the listing of allies, are all found in this poem, in which Mairearad's personal grief is very much underplayed. The death of Allan may

have been the catalyst for her verse, but the main theme is that of the impending downfall of the Macleans. A much more personal expression of grief, although following the bardic elegaic model, is found in *Gur h-e 'mheudaich mo chràdh* ²⁹, which Turner entitles *Do Dh' Eachunn mac Iain Diùrach*.³⁰ Where Turner obtained this title is not known, although from the poem itself one can ascertain that it is addressed to a Maclean, a great-grandson of John Dubh of Morvern, and a grandson of Allan, possibly Allan of Ardtornish, who was married, with issue, at the time of his death. If, as previously suggested³¹, Mairearad was herself a great-grand-daughter of John Dubh of Morvern, the dead man would have been her second cousin, explaining the tenderness of emotion displayed in the poem. That Mairearad was deeply affected by his loss is apparent from the opening stanza, where she declares:

Gur a diombach mi 'n bhàs
'Thug an fheòil dhiom o 'n chnàimh³²

Despite her references to *mo chall*, *mo chruas* and *mo dhìth* ; and her use of *mo ghràdh*, *mo luaidh* and *m' rùn* for the dead man, Mairearad's concern for the Clan as a whole is still evident in this poem, where the loss of this leader is only one of many which the Macleans have suffered:

'S ann tha sinne air claidh,
Gar sàrach' a' caoidh
Bhon a dh' fhalbh uainn gach saoidh
'Dheanadh feum is stath dhuinn ³³

The panegyric code of praise is again followed by the bardess in this poem: the appearance, horsemanship, courage, wisdom and ancestry of the dead man are recounted; and the traditional reference to his widow and children is also included. The poem is not wholly personal, nor is it wholly composed from a clan standpoint, while the blending of emotion with formulaic structure means that one would have to class it as elegaic rather than a straightforward elegy.

Sìleas na Ceapaich is another poetess from the higher strata of Gaelic society, well-acquainted with the forms of bardic elegy, who adopted many of the characteristics of the classical style when

composing songs on the deaths of important people in her life. The poems on the death of her husband and daughter³⁴, as well as the *marbhrann* beginning *Is coma leam fhìn no có dhiùbh sin* ³⁵, addressed to these two and Sir James MacDonald of Sleat, owe more to the lament tradition than to the bardic elegy. Nonetheless, the praise of Sir James contains echoes of bardic verse, such as the description of him as *An leómhann frioghail fearail feumail / Tionnsgalach garg beòdha euchdach* ³⁶; the listing of adjectives and the alliteration being common devices in classical poetry. Concern for the clan is also voiced, especially as the heir was only ten years old at the time, under the guardianship of his uncle, William:

Nise ona dh' fhalbh na bràithrean,
'S nach eil ach Uilleam dhiùbh an làthair,
A Rìgh mhóir, deònaich dàil dà
Gus an diong an t-oighre 'n t-àite.³⁷

The loss of the leaders of Clan Donald is one of Sileas' main concerns in her poem on the death of Alasdair of Glengarry³⁸ which, although heartfelt, is firmly in the elegaic mould. The image of the leaders as noble trees is employed to illustrate the poetess' feeling that the best men of her clan have been lost:

Gur tric an t-eug uainn a' gearradh
Rogha nan darag as àirde.³⁹

This image is expanded in the second stanza, where the dead leaders of Clan Donald are described in the language of classical elegy:

Chaill sinn ionann agus còmhla
Sir Dòmhnall 's a mhac 's a bhràthair;
Ciod e 'n stà dhuinn bhith 'gan gearan ?
Thuit Mac Mhic Ailein 's a' bhlàr uainn;
Chaill sinn darag làidir liath-ghlas
A chumadh dìon air ar càirdean,
Capull-coille bhàrr na giùthsach,
Seobhag sùil-ghorm lùthmhor làidir.⁴⁰

Sileas then goes on, in the longest list of kennings and related

images of praise in Scottish Gaelic verse,⁴¹ to list the personal qualities of Glengarry, creating an incantatory effect, and ending with the tree image, which is extended to include not only the noble trees, which Glengarry resembles, but also the inferior ones which he bears no likeness to:

Bu tu 'n t-iubhar thar gach coillidh,
 Bu tu 'n darach daingean làidir,
 Bu tu 'n cuileann 's bu tu 'n draigheann,
 Bu tu 'n t-abhall molach blàthmhor;
 Cha robh do dhàimh ris a' chritheann
 Na do dhligheadh ris an fheàrna;⁴²
 Cha robh beag ionnad de 'n leamhan

The bardic blueprint is followed closely, with the reference to Glengarry's widow, but Sileas adds her own touch here with the advice:

H-uile bean a bhios gun chéile,
 Guidheadh i Mac Dé 'n a àite,
 O 's E 's urra bhith 'ga còmhnaidh
 Anns gach bròn a chuireas càs oirr'.⁴³

The religious theme is continued, with a prayer for Alasdair of Glengarry's soul alongside one for his people, and the stability of the clan, with his son in his place. She ends with the classical *dùnadh*, repeating the first two lines of the poem as the final lines. Sileas seems to be making a distinction in these songs between people who were close to her personally, for whom she composed elegaic laments, and those who were important to her clan, for whom her compositions were much closer to the bardic style of panegyric elegy.

A contrast to her song for Glengarry is to be found in *Cumha Lachlainn Daill* ⁴⁴, where Sileas' sorrow is heightened by the friendship which she shared with the harper, and her style is reminiscent and tender. She relates how Lachlann Dall, *mo cheann seanchais* kept her informed with news of her friends and relations, recalling with sadness the tunes which he used to play for her, and declaring that hearing them again will cause her sorrow by reminding her that Lachlan is gone. Her praise for the harper is mainly

concentrated on his musical skill, although that was not his only gift:

Ged a bha iad dall do shùilean,
 Cha bu dall an cùis no dhà thu:
 Cha bu dall do bheul ri sùgradh,
 'S cha bu dall air lùths do làmh thu.⁴⁵

Religion again comes into this poem, with a prayer for the harper's soul:

O bha do thlachd 's a' cheòl 's an t-saoghal,
 Ceòl am miosg nan naomh dha t' anam.⁴⁶

The *dùnadh* device is employed at the end of this poem also, although this is merely a nod to the elegaic convention in a poem which is so evidently personal. Lachlann Dall was not an important man, although he was important to Sileas, and this is a lament as much for the friendship which they shared as for the loss of the man himself.

Little is known about the Skye bardess, Fionnghal nighean Alasdair Ruaidh, except that she was from the Trotternish district, and composed an elegy on the death of MacLeod⁴⁷. Although the language used in her verse, and the imagery employed, is thoroughly vernacular, the composition of her poem follows the bardic example. The poem begins with the setting of the scene: the bardess is watching the ships taking MacLeod's body over to Harris for burial, where the keening women await, and she wishes that she was also crossing the Minch. She then begins her praise of MacLeod, describing his household in Dunvegan:

Bhiodh na Filidh, 's na Bàird ann,
 'S b' e ceann-uidhe nan Clàrsairean thu;
 Bhiodh na h-Ollamhan àrd ann
 Gabhail urraim gach Dàn os an cionn ⁴⁸

The truth of this statement very much depends on the chief who is thus described. Although the final stanza in one version refers to:

Ruaraidh mor a bha 'n luingeas
 Fear mor meadhrach 's e macanta treun
 Craobh dhe 'n abhall a b' uire
 'S gun do thuit i gun ubhlan gun pheur.⁴⁹

from which one could deduce that the subject is Roderick, and that he died without an heir, the opening four lines of the same stanza imply that this Roderick is only one of *nar tighearna dùthcha* who have gone before. Roderick, the fifteenth chief, was married to Margaret, daughter of Sir John Mackenzie of Tarbat, without issue, and was succeeded by his brother, Iain Breac. Both versions of the poem agree that MacLeod's wife was *Nighean mhaiseach Mhic Dhonuill*, and Iain Breac was married to Florence, daughter of Sir James Macdonald of Sleat.⁵⁰ Iain Breac, who died in 1693, was the last of the MacLeod chiefs to maintain in his household a piper, harper, bards and fool, and it seems likely that he is the subject of this poem.

The traditional praise of the deceased's fitness to bear arms, and the number of men who would rise in his cause, is included, as is his skill as a hunter and his personal appearance. There is a reference to his having been away in France, although there is no evidence that Iain Breac spent any time there. One can only assume that, if the poem is about Iain Breac, the reference to France is a later accretion. The poetess laments the loss of a man who treated her with kindness, praising his generosity, and recording the sorrow of the clan at his loss. The poem is very much in the panegyric mould, with few flashes of inspiration or original expression. The emotions may be genuine, but they are masked by the formulaic presentation.

It has been suggested that an elegaic lament composed on the death of Hector Maclean of Duart at Invekeithing in 1651⁵¹ is the work of Màiri nighean Alasdair Ruaidh, although the ascription to her has been lost.⁵² It is composed in a strophic metre, and there are clues that the author was a MacLeod, with three references to Hector having been the grandson of Sir Ruairidh Mór, his mother being Sir Ruairidh's daughter; and that she was not a MacLean is made clear:

Ga bu chruidh leam mo chairdin
 An la ud ga m' fhagail;
 Cha n' iad tha mi 'g airimh ⁵³

Again, the praise of the deceased follows the bardic structure, with his ancestry, personal appearance, bravery, and allies being listed in turn. However, personal feelings also appear, with the bardess underlining that her grief comes from the heart, rather than from any clan ties:

Thuit mo cho-dhalta tapaidh
 Thall fo bhaile na faiche...
 'S ged bu chràiteach mar thachair,
 Cha 'n e sin tha mi 'g acain
 Ach an sgiùrs a fhuair Eachann roimh 'naimhdean.⁵⁴

The genuine feeling expressed in this poem compensates for the formulaic elements, although it remains more elegy than lament. Màiri nighean Alasdair Ruaidh may be the author, but there is insufficient information about the composer contained in the poem to allow one to be certain.

The anonymous lament for Sir Dùghall of Auchinbreck⁵⁵ is very much in the elegaic mode, although the restrained emotion adds a certain pathos. The contrast between past and present is made, with the recounting of all the things which are missing now that Auchinbreck is dead, but what remains of this elegy contains no information as to the possible identity of the composer.

The song composed by his widow to William Chisholm⁵⁶, is probably the finest example of an elegaic lament, brimming over with heartfelt emotion, while at the same time restrained and finely crafted. The traditional elements of panegyric are present, as well as some less classical attributes:

Bu tu pòitear na dibhe -
 'N àm suidhe 's taigh òsda,
 Ge be dh' òladh 's tu phàidheadh;
 Ged' thuiteadh càch mu na bòrdaibh,
 Bhi air mhisg cha 'n e b' fhiù leat
 Cha do dh' ionnsaich thu òg e ⁵⁷

The imagery used is not wholly original, especially in the passages describing Chisholm's personal appearance and his skill as a hunter, but this does not detract from the poem, in which the

poetess' love for her husband and grief at his loss is evident in every stanza:

She is so full of the idea of her noble-souled husband that her own personal hardships and privations find no place in the catalogue of her miseries – they have but one great radical source, the death of her beloved.⁵⁸

The lack of concentration on her own feelings heightens the poignancy of the song, as the poetess refers to herself only in relation to her husband, and to the attitude of others towards their relationship.

Laments tend in the main to dwell on the sense of loss of the author, and on her grief, as much as on the person who has gone, although the elements of praise found in elegies also make an appearance. An example of this is to be found in the lament for Donald of Clanranald⁵⁹, composed in 1618 by his widow, Màiri nighean Aonghais, daughter of Angus MacDonald of Dunyveg and the Glens⁶⁰. Her grief is apparent from the opening lines:

Moch 's a' mhaduinn 's mi 'g éiridh,
Gur ruiteach mo dheur air mo ghruaidh,
Nach freagair thu m' éigheach,
A lùb cheanalta treun a dh' fhàs suairc ⁶¹

She continues in the same vein, relating her sorrow at preparing her husband's corpse for burial, and declaring that it would be difficult to find a better husband than Sir Donald. The next few stanzas then are in the panegyric mode, recounting Sir Donald's exploits and his respect as a leader of men, as well as his skill at horsemanship and his generosity. The personal aspect of her loss is, however, never far from the surface, and she adds this to her praise:

Riamh cha d' choisinn thu gràin uam,
'S ann a gheibhinn uat fàilt' agus mùirn.⁶²

The focus then turns to the loss to clan, with a description of the show of grief at Sir Donald's burial, and Màiri's own reaction, *mo shùileansa cruinneachadh dheur*. The heir is mentioned, along with the poetess' wish that she will live long enough to see his children:

Ri mire 's ri àbhachd leo féin.⁶³

She also mentions *Mòr chliùiteach nigh'n Ruairidh*, adding *Guidheamsa buaidh air a clann*. This again relates to the future of the clan, as Mòr, daughter of Sir Ruairidh Mór MacLeod of Dunvegan, was married to Màiri's son John, the new head of Clanranald. The life of the chief's household and his skill as a hunter are recounted, along with interjections of grief; seeing objects which belonged to him only deepen her anguish that he is no longer able to use them. She expresses her sorrow with imagery that is often vivid and original, such as: *Tha mo chridh' air a mhùchadh*, and *mo throm sgàldadh*. The praise contained in this poem is straightforward, without the kennings so common in bardic verse, while imagery is used to illustrate the anguish of the poetess rather than in descriptions of the deceased. This is a cry from the heart, influenced by, though not following, the panegyric code.

Ni Mhic Raghnaill's lament for her husband, who died at Killiecrankie⁶⁴, is another song which incorporates bardic elements without being shaped by them. It has previously been dealt with in another chapter⁶⁵, so it is unnecessary to go into any great depth here. The personal element far outweighs the panegyric in this poem, although familiarity with classical Gaelic literature is apparent with the bardess comparing herself to legendary characters, Ossian, Deirdre, Naoise and Finn, in order to illustrate her plight.

One of the earliest laments *Seathan Mac Rìgh Éirinn*⁶⁶, is a fine example of the form, with the poetess' love for Seathan and her grief at his death being the moving forces behind the poem. There is, however, an original use of the bardic idea of pathetic fallacy, where nature joins in mourning the loss of a worthy ruler. Here, nature is portrayed as one of Seathan's allies, with animals offering themselves as his ransom. The praise of Seathan does not follow the panegyric code, instead his merit is illustrated through the expressions of love uttered by the bardess, and her account of her life with him. Elements of panegyric praise are found in the lament to Mac Dhùghaill mhic Ruairidh⁶⁷ and in *Marbhrann Fòrsair Choire an t-Sìth*⁶⁸, but again, these are primarily songs of love, with the formulaic elements overshadowed by heartfelt cries of grief. The lament for Mac Dhonnchaidh Ghlinne Faochain⁶⁹ is different again, with the poetess recounting all the family members whom she has lost at Inverlochy,

and the despoilation wreaked on her home by the victorious Royalist army. Although addressed to her husband, the poem is cry of desolation and desperation; she does not overly concentrate on her own feelings, but the litany of her losses illustrates her situation so effectively that such expression is unnecessary.

In *Griogal Cridhe* ⁷⁰, praise for her husband is mingled with the author's description of the intensity of her own grief at his loss:

Cha d' fhàg mi ròin de m' fhalt gun tarraing
No craiceann air mo làimh.⁷¹

Although finely crafted, this song is a genuine cry from the heart, with Nighean Dhonnchaidh cursing her father, uncle and brother for their parts in Gregor Roy's death; she even goes as far as to reject her own clan:

Chuirinn Cailean liath fo ghlasaibh
'S Donnchadh dubh an làimh,
'S gach Caimbeulach a th' ann am Bealach
Gu giùlan nan glas-làimh.⁷²

The poem gives an account of Gregor's fate, as well as of the distress of his widow, and her concern for their child. Although the man himself is not described in any detail, here, also, the wife's desperate grief acts as a testament to the character of the deceased.

Catriona nighean Eòghain mhic Lachlainn's lament for her husband⁷³ is one where her emotions are very close to the surface. The poetess uses a narrative technique, interspersed with expressions of love for her husband, and grief at his death. The desolation felt by the poetess is such that she no longer wants to live, wishing that she were dead so that she could be alongside her beloved husband. She relates the small events which remind her that her husband is gone, then adds:

Nam biodh fios air mo smaointinn
Aig gach aon dha bheil céile,
'S fad mun deanadh iad gearan,
Fhad 's a dh' fhanadh iad-fhéin daibh.

Ged a gheibhinn de dh' òig'
 Air achd 's gum pòsadh dha-dheug mi,
 'S dearbh nach faicinn bho thoiseach
 Aon bu docha na 'n ceud fhear.⁷⁴

Both the elements of this stanza, formulae of this type of composition, are to be found in other laments, with their use being almost exclusively confined to the work of female authors. Although not original, its use here does not detract from the pathos of the lament, as the rest of the poem is so full of expressions of love combined with a frank portrait of the distress of the poetess on the death of her husband.

The song addressed to Uisdean mac Gilleasbuig Chlèirich⁷⁵ is a combination of a curse on the man and a lament for the destruction which he wrought on the MacVicar family⁷⁶. As is typical of many laments, the focus is not only on the loss, but also on the consequences of that loss. The men who were killed are not described in any great detail, as one would expect in an elegy; instead we are given an image of the bodies laid out for burial, and of the brutal death which the brothers suffered

Murder is also the theme in Nì Mhic Raghnaill's lament for her brothers⁷⁷, killed in 1689 by members of their own clan, some of whom were also their cousins. In this case it is interesting to note the differences as well as the similarities between Nì Mhic Raghnaill's lament and that composed by the bard of the MacDonalds of Keppoch, Iain Lom⁷⁸. In many ways, the songs are similar, in that they roughly agree on the details of the murder. Iain Lom states that the murder was discovered *moch Di-sathurna*⁷⁹, while Nì Mhic Raghnaill describes returning to Keppoch *moch maduinn Dhomhnaich*⁸⁰ to find her brothers dead. That the brothers died in their own home is also confirmed by both poets, as they describe entering the brothers' room to find their blood on the floor. The description of the scene in both songs emphasises the loss of blood:

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Bha mo làmhnan-sa craobhach
 'N déis bhith taosgadh ur lot.⁸¹

and:

Ruigeadh i barr-iall mo bhrògan
 Fuil an cridhechan a dòrtadh.⁸²

The difference between the poems lies in the presentation. Nì Mhic Raghnaill's lament is twenty-six lines long, narrating her return to Keppoch, her horrifying discovery, and her wish for revenge. Iain Lom's composition is much longer, running to two hundred lines, and although he relates the reasons for the murder, the methods used, and by whom, all the while displaying a genuine affection for the victims, he looks at things more from a clan perspective. The future of Clan Donald is at risk, in his eyes, if they allow such a deed to go unpunished, and he makes it clear that he views the murder as equivalent to patricide, the Chief being the father of his clan:

'S iomadh murt bha 'san t-saoghál
O mharbhadh Abel le bhràth'ir,
Ach b' e samhladh a' ghnìomh so
Mar gum marbhta leis Adh'mh.⁸³

The stances adopted by the two poets are differentiated mainly by the manner of their respective appeals for justice to be done. Iain Lom calls on MacDonald of Sleat to hunt down the murderers, with the warning:

'S mór an sgainneal 's am mìochliu
Do Chlann Dòmhnail air fad,
Ma bhios stad 'nan dùsgadh
Gu dìoghaltas grad.⁸⁴

and:

Gheibh sibh spìd is mòr mhasladh
Ged nach tabhair mi 'm beum.⁸⁵

Nì Mhic Raghnaill's call for justice is also addressed to the leading men of Clan Donald: Mac Dhòmhnail, Mac Mhic Alasdair and Mac Mhic Ailein, but her reason for doing so is much simpler:

'S cairden dhuibh fhéin, 's bràithren dhomhs' iat.⁸⁶

Her appeal is based on ties of blood rather than the honour of the Clan; her grief is that of a sister, not of a clanswoman, and she wants revenge for her brothers, not for her chief. While it would be incorrect to state that Iain Lom only saw the murdered youths as the

representatives of their clan, his lament, while full of fire and calls for vengeance, does not have the same poignant effect as the sorrowful cry of their sister.

It is not surprising to find that many of the laments composed by women concern death by drowning. For those based in the islands, and even on the mainland, travel by water was common, often necessary, although not all of the drownings which are lamented were caused by shipwreck.

The one incident from which the most laments arise is the drowning of Iain Garbh Mac Gille Chaluim of Raasay in 1671⁸⁷. His sister composed four songs after his death, and Màiri nighean Alasdair Ruaidh also has a *Marbhrann* addressed to him. This *marbhrann*⁸⁸ is more in the elegaic mode, full of praise for Iain Garbh's skill as a hunter and his fitness to bear arms, and although Màiri expresses her own sorrow at his loss, her language is formulaic rather than heartfelt. The final stanza illustrates the close relationship between Màiri's style and the bardic elegy, where the traditional references and kennings are made. However, one must question the mention of a brother being left behind, as his one brother was also drowned, and he was succeeded by his cousin:

Is e an sgeul cràiteach
Do 'n mhnaoi a dh' fhàg thu,
Is do t' aon bhràthair
A shuidh 'nad àite...
Craobh a b' àirde de 'n abhall thu.⁸⁹

In contrast to this, the laments composed by Iain Garbh's sister are much more personal: the clan, represented by Màiri nighean Alasdair Ruaidh may have lost a leader, but she has lost her brother. Iain Garbh had two sisters, Janet, who married Duncan Macrae of Inverinate, and Giles⁹⁰ or Sìleas, who is believed to have been the composer of these laments. The song beginning *Moch 's a' mhaduinn Di-dòmhnaich*⁹¹ is a combination of a lament for her brother, and a complaint against her sweetheart, who has abandoned her for another. In *Clàrsach na Coille*, she is described as *air tuiteam le mac Tighearna an Dùine, a thréig i agus a bha 'dol a phòsadh té eile*⁹², and she uses her heartbreak at this betrayal as a prelude to her greater grief, the loss of her brother. The praise of Iain Garbh follows elegaic lines,

concentrating on his skill as a warrior and his generosity, while contrasting that with the present:

'S tha do thaighean fuar fallabh,
'S neull an fheoir air am barrabh,
Cha n' eil sùnt anns san talla rodh shibh.⁹³

Nic Gille Chaluim expresses her difficulty in believing the manner in which her brother died in *Och nan och 's mi fo léireadh*,⁹⁴ where his seamanship is implicitly praised:

Bha mi uair nach do shaoil mi, '
Ged is faoin bhi 'ga agradh,
Gu 'n rachadh do bhàthadh
Gu bràth air cuan farsuinn.⁹⁵

She declares that, as long as the boat held together, there was no wind or high sea that Iain Garbh could not cope with, but ends with the admission that even he could not handle a storm such as the one in which he was drowned:

Thog a' mhuir 'na mill dhùbhghorm
's smuais i an iùbhrach 'na sadan.⁹⁶

A common device in songs about drowning is the use of the image of looking out to sea for the sight of the missing boat, and this is used by Nic Gille Chaluim in one of her laments⁹⁷, although she knows that there is no hope of her brother's return. Having begun with this request, she turns to the cause of her sorrow:

Sgeula nach binn leam
Chaidh innseadh mu 'n Chaisge,
T' fhaotainn marbh air a' charraig
Mar ri Calum do bhràthair.⁹⁸

According to contemporary accounts, none of the bodies of the ill-fated crew were found⁹⁹, thus the reference to finding Iain Garbh and his brother on the rocks may simple be a formulaic way of saying that they were drowned. However, there could be a factual basis for

this statement, in that there is a tradition that: 'he swam to the shore and clung to a rock, impossible of ascent, but with such a grip that when the waves tore the body away his right hand still clung to the rock.'¹⁰⁰ Although not listed in the *History of the MacLeods* ¹⁰¹, it is evident from the songs composed about the loss of Iain Garbh that he had a brother, Calum or Gillechaluim; and both Màiri nighean Alasdair Ruaidh's lament and a version of *Oran Mór Sgoirebreac* ¹⁰² suggest that he was survived by another brother, Alasdair. While Fraser names ~~the~~ his source for the tale of the shipwreck as Iain Garbh's brother Alexander,¹⁰³ this is probably his cousin, who succeeded him as Laird of Raasay¹⁰⁴; although there is a possibility that Alasdair may have been an illegitimate son of Iain Breac's father¹⁰⁵. Another reference is made to the bodies which implies that they were washed ashore:

Bha sibh salach le siaban,
Tigh'n o liantanaibh bàite.¹⁰⁶

This need not be taken literally: the description of the appearance of the dead body is common in laments, and the poetess seems here to be borrowing a formulaic image, even though it does not quite fit the circumstances. There is a strong panegyric element in this poem, describing Iain Garbh's strength and personal appearance, as well as the fine armaments which befitted him. The Earl of Seaforth, whom Iain Garbh had been visiting before the fateful voyage, is said to be suffering over his loss, while Raasay's nobility is underlined with the lines:

'S ge do thigeadh iad uile
Bu leat urram nan Gàidheal.¹⁰⁷

Perhaps the most touching of the laments to Iain Garbh is '*S mi nam shuidh' air an fhaoilinn* ¹⁰⁸, where the bardess praises her brother while relating her own sorrow at his loss:

Cha tog mi fonn aotrom
O Dhi-haoine mo dhunach.¹⁰⁹

Iain Garbh's physical strength is mentioned, possibly connected to the story that his hand clung to the rock although his body was torn away:

'S i do ghuala bha làidir
 Ged a shàraich a' mhuir thu;
 Cha 'n 'eil h-aon ann an Albainn,
 Nach toir ainm air do spionnadh.¹¹⁰

She then expresses her distress that he has not been given a proper burial, having been lost at sea:

'S ann an clachan na tràghad,
 'Tha mo ghràidh-sa bho 'n uiridh:
 Gun sìod' air do chluasaig,
 Fo lic uaine na tuinne.¹¹¹

The poetess indirectly describes Iain Garbh's way of life by naming the things which are no longer done now that he is dead: no young women are asked to sew his shirts; his sword lies unused, and:

Tha do mhiolchoin air iallan,
 'S cha triall iad do 'n mhunadh,
 Gu fireach na seilge
 No garbhlach a' Chuilinn.¹¹²

The implicit contrast between past and present is a very effective device, enabling the poetess to praise her brother and lament his loss at one and the same time. In most versions, the lament ends with a *dùnadh*, but this may simply be as a result of the poem being composed in couplets with a constant end-rhyme, meaning that the stanzas are virtually interchangeable where their order does not dramatically affect the meaning of the song. One could not leave this lament without reference to the tradition that it was actually the composition of Iain Garbh's foster-mother, the evidence being a stanza¹¹³ (which does not occur in any of the printed versions of the song) describing the author as *gun dalta* after Iain Garbh's death. As this verse was collected in West Perthshire, rather than in the islands, it could be an accretion to the lament for Iain Garbh, although it is

possible that it was in the original, and that this song should be ascribed to Iain Garbh's *muime* rather than his sister.

The sister of the dead man is the author of the lament '*S ann mu 'n taca so 'n-dè*'¹¹⁴, composed around 1645. Although she is named in sources as Nic Leòid, implying the daughter of the Chief of MacLeod, the evidence in the text does not tie in with the known histories of the main MacLeod families of the time: they did not join Montrose, nor did all the sons of any chief of the period die young. Although the dead man is praised in the usual ways, including his fondness for the company of noblemen, the information given about him seems to contradict any theories of noble birth:

C' aite facas fui 'n ghrein
Aon mhac gobha b' fhearr beus,
Na mo Bhrathair deas, treubhach, òg.¹¹⁵

One can hardly imagine a clan chief being referred to as a smith, even by his own daughter. A clue as to the dating of the lament is given in the lines:

Cha robh filidheachd cainnt,
Cha robh lùth-chleas no danns',
Nach do dh' ionnsaich thu 'n càmp Mhontròis.¹¹⁶

However, the reference to the deceased having fought alongside Montrose seems to be contradicted by the naming of the person responsible for his death:

'Se mac Cholla nan euchd
'Rinn do bhualadh, mo bheud !¹¹⁷

Alasdair mac Cholla was Montrose's General, and it seems unlikely that he would have killed one of his own men, except maybe as a punishment for looting¹¹⁸, in which case a song of praise to the deceased seems unlikely. One can only conclude that at least one of these references is a later accretion to the lament, unless the subject was put to death or else accidentally killed by his own side. Other versions, though largely similar, make no mention of Mac Cholla, indicating instead death by drowning:

Tha do bhreachdan fliuch, fuair,
 'S e ga nighe air droch luagh,
 'S e fo bhritheabh na 'n stuagh 's nan ròn.

Tha do leine chaoil bhàn,
 Tighinn astigh air an t-snamh,
 Gun do ghabh thu dhe 'n t-sàl do leoir.¹¹⁹

Further confusion about the origin of this song arises from the possibility that it was not composed by Nic Leòid at all, but by a man. A manuscript version¹²⁰ gives the title as *Iorram Cu rin Gohine da Bhrathir*, indicating that the author was himself also a blacksmith. Although containing the same references as other versions to kinship to the MacLeods of Lewis and the MacDonalds of Sleat, there is no clue here as to how the subject met his death. This version also lacks the final stanza which appears in others, and which certainly points to a female authorship for the poem: a man losing his brothers would hardly wish for death to come rapidly, when the future of his family depended on him:

'Nis bho 'n thachair dhomh féin,
 Bhith gun bhràthair a' d' dhéidh,
 B' fheàrr gun greasadh Mac Dé mi 'd lorg.¹²¹

I would suggest that all the variations of this lament are mixtures, in varying proportions, of two separate songs with the same opening line and metrical structure, one of which was composed by a MacLeod woman, although probably not a daughter of the Chief.

Mairearad nighean Lachlainn is said to be the composer of the lament beginning *Gur h-e mise th' air mo leònadh*¹²². Maclean Sinclair says it is 'slightly probable' that this is addressed to Lachlan, second son of Hector, first Maclean of Kinlochaline¹²³, although there is sufficient evidence to back this conclusion. There is no record in the *Account of the Clan Maclean*¹²⁴ of any descendants of Lachlan, indicating that he possibly died young, and his father is named as Eachainn:

Och mo thruaigh'...thus Eachainn,
 Le do mhocheirigh mhaduinn,

Ri siubhal gach cladaich,
'S nach d' fhuaras leat Lachainn¹²⁵

Furthermore, the list of related clans and forebears given in the poem stands up to scrutiny:

Gur a càirdeach mo rùn-sa
'Mhac-Gilleain nan luireach...
Is do dh' Iarla sin Antruim...
Ri Murchadh na Maighe,
'S ri Mac Fhionghain an t-Sratha...
Do Chlann Eoghain o'n leathad... '
Ri tighearna Mhùideart,
Ri Mac-Neill o na tùraibh...
'S gur dearbh charaid mo rùn do Shir Seumas.
Gur a càirdeach thu 'Lachainn,
Bho Ros riabhach...
Gur a h-iar-ogh' thu dh' Ailein...¹²⁶

Maclean Sinclair records:

Hector Mór of Duart married Mary, daughter of Alasdair mac Iain Chathanaich, father of Sorley Buy, whose son Randal was created Earl of Antrim in 1620. Hector Mór had Hector Òg, John Dubh of Morvern, Mary, and other children. Hector Òg was the father of Sir Lachlan Mór, father of Hector Òg, father of Lachlan, whose daughter Mary was married to Lachlan Mór MacKinnon. John Dubh was the father of Hector of Kinlochaline, Charles of Ardnacross, and Janet, wife of Macneil of Barra. Mary, Hector Mór's daughter, was married to Donald MacDonald of Sleat...[great-grandfather] of Sir James, who died in 1678. By "Clann Eoghainn..." are meant the Macleans of Ardgour and Boreray. "Lachainn bho Ros riabhach..." is Lachainn Odhar, a distinguished warrior...¹²⁷

There is one mistake in this statement, in that Hector of Kinlochaline was the grandson of John Dubh of Morvern, his father being Allan of Ardtornish.¹²⁸ This would make the drowned man the grandson of Allan, and both earlier versions of the lament¹²⁹ name him as such, with *Gur a h-ogh' thu do dh' Ailean*.¹³⁰

The lament itself concentrates on the ancestry and kinship of the dead man, although this is laced with expressions of grief and praise for Lachlann himself. There is no doubt that he was drowned:

Tha mo dhiubhail 'na fheòil fo na béistean...
Bu tu sgiobair na mara
Ged nach dàinig thu fallain no gléidhteach.¹³¹

Mairearad sympathises with Lachlann's parents over the loss of their son, before using the poetic trick of declaring her inability to do something immediately before proving herself wrong. Her introduction to the five stanzas listing Lachlann's kin is:

Mur bhith dhòmhs' 'bhith òg, leanabail,
Is nach h-eol dhomh do sheanachas
Bheirinn umad làn iomradh;
Ach cha b' fhuilear dhomh aimsir
'Chur do ranntachd, òig mheanmnaich ri 'chéile.¹³²

Unless she is being totally untruthful here, we can assume that this lament was composed while Mairearad was still quite young; Lachlann was of the same generation as her, *ogh' bhrath'r mo sheanar*,¹³³ and he died young.

Màiri Nic Gilleathain's '*S ann Di-Satharn a chualas*'¹³⁴ is also addressed to a Lachlan Maclean who was drowned, but this time the subject is Maclean of Coll, who was drowned in the Water of Lochy in Lochaber in 1687.¹³⁵ This song contains many of the elements of bardic elegy, both in the straightforward praise of the man, and in the imagery used:

Càit' an robh ann an Albainn
Beachd-meanmna mo rùin ?
Laoch gasda, deas, dealbhach,
'S tric a dhearbh thu do chliù.¹³⁶

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The distress of those whom Lachlann has left behind, including friendly clan chiefs, such as Maclean of Duart, MacLeod, Clan Donald and Mac Cailean (although, as he is described as being *Bho charraig nan seòl*, this should probably be emended to Mac Ailein) is related.

The song is composed from a clan as well as a personal perspective, with the poetess concerned for their future:

Gur h-e mis' tha gun aighear,
Tha do thaighean gun àird,
Bhon a fhroiseadh an t-abhall,
Is a chrathadh a bhàrr,
'Chraobh a b' ùire de 'n fhìon-fhuil,
'Bha 'cumail dìon' oirnn is blàths.¹³⁷

She ends with an earnest wish for the safety of the heir, Iain Garbh, and his uncle, Donald, the last of the male line of the family:

'Rìgh nan dùl is nan aingeal,
Cùm am pearsannan suas.¹³⁸

Although most of this lament is fairly straightforward: praise of the dead man, stressing his wisdom and strength; the narration of the body coming ashore and the clan in mourning, and the concern for the future of that clan, there is one phrase which could be read somewhat ambiguously. The John Maclean MS, on which A. Maclean Sinclair based his versions, in the stanza addressed to Lachlainn Mhic Eachainn, contains the lines:

Gur a troum leum do shachdsa,
Snach h-achdain u sgios.¹³⁹

This seems to imply that the Lachlann being addressed is living, and that he is sorrowing for the loss of the drowned man. It seems to be taking imagination too far to suggest that the poetess is portraying Maclean of Coll as burdened by the fact that he is dead. However, one could also take it as meaning that the weight of her sorrow over Lachlann's death is heavy on Màiri herself. This interpretation is more convincing in the light of a contemporary version to John Maclean's, which has:

Gur trom leam tha t-acain,
'S nach fairich thu sgios ¹⁴⁰

One could read this as meaning that sorrowing for her chief is heavy on the poetess, now that he himself cannot feel anything. The lines may have been addressed to Eachann, Lachlann's father, in his tireless search for his son, but this seems a remote possibility. Alongside the general simplicity of the poem as a whole, even allowing for the condensation of meaning which is often found in Gaelic verse, neither version of these lines is wholly satisfactory, and one is led to conclude that, in the hundred and thirty years between the poem being composed and being written down, they have been changed somehow, and their meaning lost or at the very least impaired.

The drowning of Iain Ruadh mac Dhùghaill¹⁴¹ while swimming in Loch Langabhat gave rise to a lament¹⁴² by his mother, Beasa nighean Eòghain mhic Fhearchair, in which she describes the search for his body and the appearance of the corpse when it was brought home. The effect which his absence has on her is recounted:

Gur mise th' air mo chreachadh
Dol a dh' ionnsuidh do leapadh,
'S gun mo làmh air do chraicionn geal òg.¹⁴³

while praise is implicit in the number of people who mourn his death, and explicit in his mother's description of him, as she laments the deer-hunt which proved so costly to her.

One of the rare laments by a woman for a woman possibly relates to a drowning, although this is by no means explicit in the text. *Cairistìona*¹⁴⁴ was composed by her foster-mother for the dead woman, who died young. The possibility that Cairistìona drowned is raised by the lines in K.C. Craig's version:

An turus a thug thu Ghleann Comhann
Gheàrr thu leum 's cha d' dh' fhaod thu tomha
Air muir dùdaidh dorchaidh domhain.¹⁴⁵

This is, however, the only one where the action is attributed directly to Cairistìona. Another version has the foster-mother making the leap:

Cha b' urra dhomh mo leum a thomhas;
Cha robh Cairistìona romham.¹⁴⁶

In others, it is unclear as to whether the voice is that of the foster-mother, or of the dead girl herself:

Gheàrr mi leum 's cha d' rinn mi thomhas...
 'S thuirt iad rium nach dianainn gnothach,
 Nach fhaighinn mo mhuime romham ¹⁴⁷

One explanation for the confusion is that in some versions all the lines with the same rhyme-scheme have been grouped together, although they may not have been so originally, and thus the meaning has been altered or obscured. In K.C. Craig's version, the rhyme changes five times, with two of the rhyme-schemes each being used in two distinct sections. In my opinion, this version seems to be simpler and clearer than the others, as well as being the most extended. Here, Cairistìona's beauty and attractiveness are openly praised, while her nobility and status are implied by the number of noblemen in their ships coming to her funeral, and the reference to her having spent time in the court of the King. Just who Cairistìona was is not clear, although the mention of Glencoe might lead one to suppose that she was a MacDonald. Craig's version also has the bardess stating that MacLeod would stand up for her rights, which may mean that she herself was a MacLeod, or possibly that her *dalta* was. Whichever, if either, of these hypotheses is correct, neither the identity of the poetess nor that of her subject is very important here: the song stands on its own as a beautiful and plaintive lament, blending praise with heartfelt grief.

Gur h-e mise 'tha fo mhulad ¹⁴⁸ is a sister's lament for her drowned brothers, Eachann and Lachlan. The song concentrates on the poetess' own sense of loss, with no description of the dead men, which is rare in a lament of this period. There is no information which would allow for an identification of the brothers, although their names would suggest a Maclean connection.

Two songs, one of which concerns a drowning, seem to have been combined to produce *'S ann an raoir nach d' fhuair mi cadal* ¹⁴⁹. The opening voice is that of a young girl who is parted from her lover, who recounts seeing a boat passing with a woman on board keening the loss of her brothers, sons, and husband at sea. From the grieving widow, the focus changes to the murder of the brothers of the narrator, which seems to bear little relation to what has gone

before. Another rendering¹⁵⁰ has the woman in the boat recounting the murder of her brothers, with no mention of the drowning, and this seems to be the original of one of the songs used to produce the conflated version.

As can be seen from the collection of songs dealt with in this chapter, although the songs can be classed as elegaic, or mainly lament, they are rarely, if ever, anything other than a mixture of both styles. Elements of lament are found even in the songs closest to the bardic example, while aspects of elegaic verse appear in the most heartfelt of laments. The women who composed these songs of sorrow did so because they felt a genuine grief at their loss, not, as some bardic practitioners, because they had to look elsewhere for their livelihood because of the death of a patron. Only a few of them composed from a clan perspective, and those who did were mainly from the aristocratic classes themselves. The personal standpoint is the one adopted by most of the women dealt with here, although their view is not a selfish one by any means. Even when they have been totally despoiled, their concern is not for themselves, but for the person they loved, and who is now dead.

Notes:

1. Appendix; p. 520.
2. W.J. Watson, *Bàrdachd Albannach*, Edinburgh, 1978; pp. 60-64.
3. *ibid.*
4. C. Kerrigan, *An Anthology of Scottish Women Poets*, Edinburgh, 1991; p. 339.
5. ref. 2; pp. 60-64.
6. *ibid.*
7. *ibid.*
8. Appendix; p. 495.
9. J.C. Watson, *Gaelic Songs of Mary MacLeod*, Edinburgh, 1965; pp. 52-58.
10. *ibid.*
11. William Matheson, *The Blind Harper*, Edinburgh, 1970; pp. 46-56.
12. *ibid.*
13. ref. 10; pp. 58-72.
14. ref. 9; pp. 52-58.
15. Appendix; p. 498.
16. Appendix; p. 507.
17. ref. 9; pp. 88-94.

18. *ibid.*
19. *ibid.*
20. *ibid.*
21. Appendix; p. 510.
22. ref. 9; pp. 96-98.
23. Appendix; p. 438.
24. A. Maclean Sinclair, *Na Bàird Leathanach*, vol. I, Charlottetown, P.E.I., 1898; p. 204.
25. ref. 24; pp. 199-203.
26. A Sennachie, *Account of the Clan Maclean*, London 1838; p. 228.
27. ref. 24; pp. 199-203.
28. *ibid.*
29. Appendix; p. 454.
30. P. Mac-an-Tuairneir, *Comhchruinneacha do Dh' Orain taghta, Ghaidhealach*, Duneidionn 1813; p. 8.
31. Chapter 2; p. 30.
32. ref. 24; pp. 183-86.
33. *ibid.*
34. Appendix; pp. 402 & 403.
35. Appendix; p. 405.
36. C. Ó Baoill, *Bàrdachd Shilis na Ceapaich*, Edinburgh, 1972; pp. 64-68.
37. *ibid.*
38. Appendix; p. 407.
39. ref. 36; pp. 70-74.
40. *ibid.*
41. *Transactions of the Gaelic Society of Inverness*, vol. L; pp. 435-98.
42. ref. 36; pp. 70-74.
43. *ibid.*
44. Appendix; p. 415.
45. ref. 36; pp. 108-112.
46. *ibid.*
47. Appendix; p. 473.
48. A. & D. Stewart, *Cochruinneacha taoghta de shaothair nam Bàrd Gaèlach*, Duneidin 1804; pp. 396-401.
49. MacLagan MS. No. 120; pp. 5a-7a.
50. A. Mackenzie, *History of the MacLeods*, Inverness, 1889; p. 115.
51. Appendix; p. 637.
52. *Clan MacLeod Magazine*, 1951; pp. 12-15.

53. *Co-chruinneachadh nuadh do dh' Orannibh Gaidhealach*, Inverness, 1806; pp. 61-64.
54. ref. 24; pp. 266-68.
55. Appendix; p. 617.
56. Appendix; p. 422.
57. J. Mackenzie, *Sàr-obair nam Bàrd Gaelach*, Edinburgh, 1904; pp. 409-10.
58. *ibid.*
59. Appendix; p. 377.
60. A. & A. MacDonald, *The MacDonald Collection of Gaelic Poetry*, Inverness 1911; p. ix.
61. ref. 60; pp. 26-29.
62. *ibid.*
63. *ibid.*
64. Appendix; p. 385.
65. Chapter 4; p. 96.
66. Appendix; p. 565.
67. Appendix; p. 684.
68. Appendix; p. 681.
69. Appendix; p. 355.
70. Appendix; p. 359.
71. ref. 4; pp. 56-59.
72. *Guth na Bliadhna*, vol. X; pp. 348-50.
73. Appendix; p. 429.
74. ref. 24; pp. 62-64.
75. Appendix; p. 580.
76. Chapter 3; p. 65.
77. Appendix; p. 384.
78. A.M. Mackenzie, *Òrain Iain Luim*, Edinburgh, 1964; pp. 82-92.
79. *ibid.*
80. A. Maclean Sinclair, *The Gaelic Bards from 1411 to 1715*, Charlottetown, P.E.I., 1890; pp. 62-65.
81. ref. 78; pp. 82-92.
82. ref. 80; pp. 62-65.
83. ref. 78; pp. 82-92.
84. *ibid.*
85. *ibid.*
86. ref. 80; pp. 62-65.
87. Chapter 3; p. 51.
88. Appendix; p. 484.

89. ref. 9. pp. 26-30.
90. ref. 50; p. 369.
91. Appendix; p. 513.
92. A. Maclean Sinclair, *Clàrsach na Coille*, Glasgow, 1881; pp. 262-63.
93. John Maclean MS.; pp. 408-410.
94. Appendix; p. 514.
95. *The Celtic Monthly*, vol. XVIII; p. 70.
96. ref. 9; p. 100.
97. Appendix; p. 515.
98. D.A. Fergusson, *From the Farthest Hebrides*, Toronto, 1978; p. 266.
99. J. Fraser, ed. W. Mackay, *Chronicles of the Frasers*, Edinburgh, 1905; p. 499.
100. *An Gàidheal*, vol. XXIX; p. 168.
101. ref. 50.
102. Appendix; p. 645.
103. ref. 99; p. 499.
104. ref. 50; p. 370.
105. *Scottish Studies* No. 6; p. 241.
106. *Transactions of the Gaelic Society of Inverness*, vol. XXIV; p. 166.
107. *ibid.*
108. Appendix; p. 516.
109. *An Gàidheal*, vol. VI; p. 280.
110. *ibid.*
111. *ibid.*
112. ref. 60; p. 155.
113. ref. 100; p. 168.
114. Appendix; p. 517.
115. D. Macleoid, *Orain nuadh Ghaeleach*, Inverness, 1911; pp. 237-39.
116. A. Maclean Sinclair, *Mactalla nan Tùr*, Sydney, C.B., 1901; pp. 107-108.
117. *ibid.*
118. Chapter 4; p. 89.
119. ref. 100; pp. 237-39.
120. National Library of Scotland MS. No. 14876; pp. 31b-32a.
121. ref. 116; pp. 107-108.
122. Appendix; p. 453.
123. ref. 24; pp. 180-82.
124. ref. 26.
125. ref. 24; pp. 180-82.
126. *ibid.*
127. *ibid.*

128. ref. 26; pp. 330-31.
129. ref. 93; pp. 405-407 & A. Maclean Sinclair, *The Glenbard Collection of Gaelic poetry*, Charlottetown, P.E.I., 1890, pp. 110-12.
130. ref. 93; pp. 405-407.
131. ref. 24; pp. 180-82.
132. *ibid.*
133. *ibid.*
134. Appendix; p. 464.
135. ref. 26; p. 310.
136. ref. 24; pp. 51-53.
137. *ibid.*
138. *ibid.*
139. ref. 93; pp. 175-78.
140. Iain Mac Illeain, *Orain nuadh Ghaedhlach*, Edinburgh, 1818; pp. 189-91.
141. Chapter. 3; p. 72.
142. Appendix; p. 375.
143. *The Celtic Magazine*, vol. II; pp. 484-85.
144. Appendix; p. 582.
145. K.C. Craig, *Orain luaidh Màiri nighean Alasdair*, Glasgow, 1949; pp. 87-88.
146. *Transactions of the Gaelic Society of Inverness*, vol. LII; p. 303.
147. J.L. Campbell & F. Collinson, *Hebridean Folksongs*, vol. I, Oxford, 1969; pp. 54-56.
148. Appendix; p. 706.
149. Appendix; p. 696.
150. K.N. Macdonald, *The Gesto Collection of Highland Music*, Leipzig 1895-1902; Appendix; p. 22.

8. CLAN AND TERRITORY

Until the Jacobite rebellion of 1745 and the measures taken by the government in its aftermath, the clan system remained the principal political structure in the Highlands and Islands. Nonetheless, social change had taken place before that date. After the 1609 Statutes of Iona, the eldest sons of the Highland chiefs were educated in the Lowlands, with the result that Lowland fashions and values were beginning to encroach on the Highland way of life. Some clans adapted to this change better than others; clans such as the Campbells quickly learned that the pen could be mightier than the sword, and set about obtaining by charter what they could not win by force. Thus, some clans discovered that the land on which they had lived for centuries was no longer legally theirs, frequently while the clan chief was himself exiled and unable to stand up for the rights of his people. Unlucky political decisions had led to the forfeiture of many clan chiefs, while others were weakened by a succession of chiefs who had come to that position in their minority, leaving them prey to the machinations of unscrupulous tutors or feudal superiors who used them as pawns in order to augment their own positions. It is little wonder, then, that so many poems exist in which the precarious state of the clan is lamented, or in which the poet is aware that age-old territorial rights were becoming meaningless without a charter to prove that such a right existed.

The earliest poem by a woman in which this issue is raised is *B' fheàrr leam gun sgrìobhteadh dhuit fearann*¹, composed probably between 1520 and 1530 to Eòghainn Beag, grandson of Eòghainn Mac Ailein, thirteenth chief of Clan Cameron. Donald, father of Eòghainn Beag, married in 1520 and died between 1536 and 1539, while Eòghainn Beag accompanied his grandfather in the Raid of Urquhart in 1544–45². The poetess names the chiefs from whom Eòghainn Beag is descended, before expressing her anxiety that he should have a charter for the lands of Lochiel:

B' fheàrr gun sgrìobhteadh cinnteach d' fhearann,
Ceann-Lochiall 'us Druim-na-saille,
'S Coire-bheag ri taobh na mara,

Acha-da-leagha 'san Anait,
 'S a Mhaigh mhor 's an t-Sron 'san-t-Earrachd,
 'Muic 'us Caoinnich, Craoibh 'us Caillich,
 'S Murlagan dubh grannda, greannach.³

The first charter possessed by the Camerons of Lochiel was relatively recent to the composition of this poem, having been given in 1472 by Alexander of Lochalsh to Allan, father of the thirteenth chief.⁴ The charters wished for by the poetess were presumably obtained, as all of the places named in her poem are listed in the rental for the Estate of Lochiel of 1787.⁵

Sir Ewen Cameron, seventeenth of Locheil, seems to be the subject of *Eòghain mhic Iain mhic Ailein*⁶ in which he is loudly praised; but there is insufficient evidence in the text to identify the author as either male or female. The poem seems to refer to Sir Ewen's alliance with General Monk on his expedition to England, which led to the Restoration of Charles II in 1660.⁷

Throughout the seventeenth century, political choices influenced the fate of many clans as much as the possession of charters. The most notable example of this is the Clan Maclean, once a powerful force in the islands, whose downfall resulted from a combination of loyalty to the Stuart cause and the early deaths of its chiefs. The earliest song concerning the Macleans from this period is *An Crònan Muileach*⁸, an anonymous song which has been tentatively ascribed to Màiri nighean Alasdair Ruaidh.⁹ The poem was evidently composed after the deaths of both Sir Lachlan Maclean and his eldest son, Hector Roy, who was killed at the battle of Inverkeithing in 1651:

Lachainn a dh' fhalbh bhuainn mu Fheill-Leathainn,
 Mo sheachd rùin chaidh bhuainn mu Shamhainn¹⁰

The clue that the poetess is a MacLeod comes with her reference to Hector Roy's younger brother, Allan, who was still a minor when he succeeded:

Ceann mo mhùirn an cunnart fhathast;-
 Mac e 'n deadh mhnaoi 'chinneadh m' athar¹¹

Allan's mother was Mary, second daughter of Sir Roderick MacLeod of Dunvegan. The poetess evidently feels that the young chief is in danger, possibly because of the allegiance of his family to the house of Stuart, or else because of the debt owed to Argyll by Sir Lachlan. The severely weakened state of the clan after their terrible losses at Inverkeithing was also a factor, and one which subsequent events would prove to be decisive. Dating the song to 1651 or soon afterwards would certainly tie in with the opening stanza, where it is clear that a great calamity has befallen the Macleans:

Gur h-e mise tha ga m' lathadh,
 Tha mo shùil 'na bùrn 's na ceathach
 'S mi gun cheòl gun òl gun aighear,
 Mu 'n dol sìos 'th' air siol an taighe.¹²

Not only was the chief of Maclean killed at Inverkeithing, along with some of the most important men of the clan, they also lost a huge number of clansmen in the battle. The Macleans were led by a child, with few of his clan to protect him, so it is little wonder that the poetess laments the situation and expresses her concern for Allan's safety. 7 7

That her concern was well founded is illustrated by *Sgeul a thàinig do 'n dùthaich* ¹³, composed by the Coll bardess, Catriona nighean Eòghainn mhic Lachainn. Although addressed to the Laird of Coll, the news which is lamented at the beginning of the song is that of the Campbell incursions into Mull and the atrocities which they perpetrated against the native Macleans:

Gu 'n robh uachdaran Iùra,
 Cumail cùirt ann a Muile;
 'S iad ri ropainn 's ri èigheach,
 Co 's gleusda ni buidhinn,
 'S na fir dligheach air fògradh,
 'S iad gun chòir gun chead fuireach.¹⁴

The Campbells had gained the upper hand over the Macleans due to debts incurred by Sir Lachlan Maclean during the Montrose Wars, during which he had not paid the his public dues, "estimating the amount of these dues as a remuneration trifling enough to

indemnify him for the expense of maintaining a thousand armed followers at his own expense on behalf of his king..."¹⁵ Following the defeat of Montrose, Sir Lachlan refused to pay the dues to a government which he considered as usurpers, and Argyll duly took advantage, "purchasing up all the debts...against the chief of Maclean he could find...[which] enabled Argyle to forge a plausible claim against the chief of Maclean to the amount of £30,000."¹⁶ Maclean refused to acknowledge this debt to Argyll, who held him prisoner for more than a year until Sir Lachlan's failing health forced him to sign the bond which ensured his release, soon after which he died. The clan was weakened further by the death of Sir Lachlan's eldest son, Hector Ruadh, at the battle of Inverkeithing in 1651, leaving as his heir his brother Allan, who was at the time still a child. A respite was gained with the Restoration of Charles II in 1660, followed by the execution of the Marquis of Argyll; but it was not long before Argyll's son was not only restored to his father's forfeited estates, but also elevated to the title of Earl of Argyll, after which he continued the persecution of the Macleans begun by his father. Sir Allan Maclean was unable to clear the debt, and passed it, along with his title, to his son John, who was four years old when Sir Allan died. Sir John's guardians, Lachlan Maclean of Brolas and Lachlan Maclean of Torloisk, attempted to come to an arrangement with Argyll in order to pay off the bond, but the latter's postponement and ultimate refusal of their terms left only one option: to refuse to pay the rents which Argyll had been collecting as payment for Maclean's debts¹⁷. Argyll was not slow to react:

The government gave him the assistance of 500 men...and with these, joined to 1,800 of his own followers, he commenced his preparations to invade Mull. The Macleans, not yet recovered from the destructive effects of the disastrous battle of Inverkeithing, were upon this occasion but ill-prepared to resist the invasion of so considerable a force. The Campbells therefore landed without opposition, the inhabitants contenting themselves with removing into the mountains and fastnesses of the island for protection with their cattle. The young chief, to shield him from personal harm, was sent to the fortified island of Kernburg, and afterwards to Kintail, under the care of the Earl of Seaforth.

Argyll now at last got quiet possession of the inheritance of the chief of Maclean. Duart and Arros Castles were taken ...and garrisoned...and his thieving followers spread themselves all over the island...adding personal insult and violence to the wanton barbarities committed upon the property of the unresisting inhabitants.¹⁸

Catrìona nighean Eòghain mhic Lachlainn reproaches the Campbells not only for the manner of their incursion into Mull, but also for their audacity in usurping the hereditary chief of that island. She points out that they have no right to the lands which they now possess:

Cha 'n e dùthchas bhur n-athar
'Tha sibh a labhairt 's an àm air,
No oighreachd bhur seanar
'Tha sibh a cenagal mu Chaingis,
Ach staid dheagh Mhic-Gilleain
A tha grathunn air chall bhuainn¹⁹

The poetess then turns her attention from the Macleans of Mull and their exiled child-chief to Maclean of Coll. Although most versions of the song give the chief's name as Eachainn, it is probably addressed to the son of Hector Roy, Lachlan, 8th Maclean of Coll, who succeeded his grandfather, John Garve, and died in 1687.²⁰ The poem combines praise of the laird of Coll with thanks to God that he still holds his ancestral lands:

Taing do Dhia mar a tha thu,
Nach do tharl' thu 'nam freasdal,
Gu bheil Col' agus Cuimhnis
Fo do chuimse gu beagnaich,
Is Rùm riabhach na sithne...²¹

and:

Glòir do Chrìosd mar a thachair,
Nach h-fheil smachd aig luchd-fuath' ort.²²

The predicament of the clan is seen as a burden to be carried by Maclean of Coll:

Gur a mór a chùis uallaich
 'Th' air mo luaidh-sa mar chùram;
 'S ann d' i clann Mhic-Gilleain,
 'Chaill an aighear 's an sùgradh ²³

The poetess declares that other clans are distressed by what has become of the Macleans, naming a Mackenzie, *oighre na Cùile*, in particular, as the Macleans and Mackenzies were traditionally held to have the same common ancestor, being *de shliochd bhràithrean*. She prays that the misfortune which has befallen her clan will be righted, and ends with the heartfelt wish:

'N dreach 'bu mhiann leam air fhaicinn
 Seal mu 'n glacadh am bàs mi,
 Mo mhuinntir a thilleadh
 As gach ionad 'sna thàmh iad...
 'S iad a thabhairt ruaig mhanaidh
 Far an ainid le càch e.²⁴

In 1675, Keppoch, Glengarry and Lochail went to Mull to aid the Maclean resistance against Argyll, upon which occasion a 'witch-wife'²⁵ is said to have composed *Chunnacas long seach an caolas* ²⁶, in which she asks God to thwart Argyll if he aims to take Duart. Unfortunately for the Macleans, her spell was ineffective.

The dispute between Argyll and Maclean continued until 1680, when the king directed an immediate resolution, resulting in Argyll gaining Tiree as full payment for his claim. Tiree was restored to Maclean on the forfeiture of the Earl some years later. However, this was not the end of Sir John Maclean's troubles. He joined Viscount Dundee in 1689, and, after Killiecrankie, retained his estates until Argyll "represented him to King William as an enemy to his cause, and procured a commission from him to bring the Macleans to obedience; which he began to do by fire and sword."²⁷

It was around this period that *Dheagh Mhic Coinnich a Brathann* ²⁸ was composed, with its appeal to various friendly clans to come to the aid of the Macleans. The description of the suffering of the clan is combined with expressions of disbelief at the inaction of their allies against their oppressors. However, it is impossible to tell whether or not the composer of this song was a woman.

Sir John retired to Kernburg, where he remained until 1692 when, on King James' order, he capitulated to the government and was asked by the king to go as a volunteer on his next campaign on the Continent. Sir John accepted, although he remained a Jacobite at heart, and on his arrival in Bruges he heard a rumour from supporters of King James – that William had been dethroned as a result of a counter-revolution in England – which changed the fortunes of himself and his clan:

Sir John with a fatal credulity listened to this false report, and unfortunately acted upon it; for instead of joining King William he immediately proceeded to the court of James at St. Germain, where he remained till Queen Anne's accession to the throne...²⁹

It was while her chief was thus exiled abroad that Mairead nighean Lachlainn composed *Cha choma leam fhìn cò dhiù sin* ³⁰, in which she laments the change in the fortunes of her people. She blames the Campbells for the absence of Sir John:

Cha choma leam fhìn co dhiù sin
Aon mhac Shir Ailain nan luireach...
A bhi bhuainn le cluain nan Duibhneach.³¹

She prays to God to change the fortunes of the clan, then praises the Macleans as a brave and warlike clan, unaccustomed to being under the Campbell yoke:

An àm dol 'sìos do 'n dream Dhuibhneach,
Dol suas le buaidh 'bu dual dhuibhse³²

Her imagery is vivid and appropriate when she describes the rapidity of the decline of Maclean power, while her pride in her clan is mingled with pity for them as they are now:

Ach cò 'n neach air nach dig mùthadh,
Mar na neoil 'sna speuribh dubh-ghorm !
Cinneadh làidir nan lann rùisgte,
'S truagh mar tha iad roimh na Duibhnich,³³

The poetess ends with a description of her distress at the predicament of her clan, and her hope that she will live to see their power restored.

Mairearad's song *Ged is stoc mi 'n deidh crìonadh* ³⁴ also dates from the period of Sir John's exile in France, although it is impossible to be more specific than that. She laments the absence of Sir John, evidently under the impression that he has been forced into exile:

An ceann-cinnidh 'bu phrìseile,
De 'n fhìor fhuil 'bu ghlaine
As a choill a b' fheàrr cnuasach,³
Rinneadh fhuadach thar mara.³⁵

However, the historical account suggests that it was his own decision to stay on the continent; although the reference may be to his being forced to leave Mull as child after the Campbell invasion, or the fact that he went to the continent first of all as a condition of his pardon by King William. Mairearad does not reproach her chief for staying away, but she uses the bardic idea of pathetic fallacy to illustrate the effect which his absence is having not only on his clan, but on the land also:

Tha do chinneadh an cruaidh chàs,
Tha iad truagh dheth gad ghearan...
Tha do dhuthchannan bochd dheth,
Làn de ghort is de dh' ainnis.³⁶

Pathetic fallacy is combined with extravagant praise of Sir John in the next stanza:

Gur mac-samhailt do 'n reul thu,
Do na ghréin no do 'n ghealaich.
Laigh dubh-smàl air na crìochan
O 'n là 'strìochd thu o 'n bhaile.³⁷

The rest of Mairearad's song is devoted to praise of Sir John's appearance, and the generosity of his household while he was in Mull, and with this the tone of the poem moves from a lament for the

present situation of the clan to a celebration of the way things were before Sir John went into exile.

It was presumably after Sir John's release from prison³⁸ that Mairearad nighean Lachlainn composed *Gun d' fhuair mi sgeul 's chan àicheam e*³⁹, in which she rejoices in the news of the return of her chief. She pleads for the queen's sympathy for the chief, despite his support for King James:

Nam b' fhiosrach Bànrùinn Anna
Mar a dh' fhògradh ann ad leanabh thu,
Is mar a thugadh t' fhearann bhuaite,
Gum biodh i aoidheil, geanail riut,
Is nach robh cron ri aithris ort
Ach leantail do rìgh dùthchais.⁴⁰

She declares that she herself would plead the case for the clan, and tell the queen of the indignities and persecution suffered by the Macleans, leaving them only a shadow of the power which they once were:

Na Leathanaich bu phrìseil iad,
Bu mhoralach nan inntinn iad;
'N diugh crom-cheannach 's ann 'chìtear iad,
'S e teann lagh a thug strìochdadh asd';
Is mairg a bha cho dìleas riutha
Riamh do rìgh no 'phrionnsa.⁴¹

The poetess turns her attention to the Campbells, outlining the ways in which they have gained their power while underlining their dishonesty and double-dealing in pursuit of their goals:

Gum b' fheàrr bhith cealgach, innleachdach,
Mar bha 'ur naimhdean mìorunach;
'S e dh' fhàgadh làidir, lìonmhor sibh.
'S e 'dheanadh gnothach cinnteach dhuibh,
A bhith cho faicleach, crionnta
Is gum b' fhiach leibh a bhith tionndadh.⁴²

Mairearad recalls that the Macleans were once a clan of great power, and she goes on to praise their strength, courage, and loyalty:

An fhine mhòr 'bha àrdanach !
 Bha urram is buaidh-làrach leibh.
 Bu deas a dh' iomairt chlàidhean sibh,
 Cha mheirgeadh iad nan sgàbartan;
 Is cha bu gheilt no sgàthachas
 A leughadh iad an cùnnart.⁴³

She then paints a portrait of the scene when the Macleans went into battle, and of the sport and pastimes which were to be found in their households, before returning to her lamentation of the fact that those days are gone:

Gun d' éirich cleas Mhaol-Ciarain daibh,
 Cha 'n fheil ri 'inns' ach sgial orra ⁴⁴

The tone of this poem is almost a reversal of the previous one, with the joy of the opening stanza moving through bitterness at the treatment of the Macleans and then, after a celebration of their past glories, ending on a note of despair at their current situation.

The next poem composed by this poetess to Sir John Maclean can be fairly accurately dated as it mentions *Rìgh Deòrsa*, who was proclaimed King in September 1714, and Sir John died in March, 1716. Strangely for a poem of this date, there is no mention of the Earl of Mar's rising, or of the anticipated arrival of King James, although the Macleans were a staunchly Jacobite clan. The main thrust of *Dh'fhalbh mo chadal a smaointinn* ⁴⁵ is the poetess' distress over the absence of her chief, although he is evidently still alive. Just where he is, however, and why, is not clear, although there is a suggestion that his absence is not altogether voluntary. The majority of the song is taken up with praise of Sir John and his ancestry, and of the clan Maclean, although there are flashes of grief at the lack of her chief, a grief which is shared by the clan:

Tha iad iargaineach, tùrsach;
 Cuin a thig thu gan ionnsuidh le còmhnaidh ?⁴⁶

The song ends with a plea for divine intervention, evidently seeing it as the only hope for the restoration of the influence of the clan, although the poetess admits that they are perhaps not worthy of such aid:

Och, a Dhé, dean ruinn tionndadh;
 Thoir dhuinn fàbhar gun diùltadh,
 'S sinn ri feitheamh do chùirte,
 Ged nach h-fheil sinn cho mùinte 's bu chòir dhuinn.⁴⁷

The meaning of *mùinte* here could be 'educated', the poetess perhaps implying that their knowledge of the Bible is not as good as it should be; but the word can also mean 'polite', so that she is perhaps remarking on the refusal of the clan to be humbled, despite their hardships.

Mairearad nighean Lachlainn's most famous work is her lament for Sir John Maclean, *Gaoir nam ban Muileach* ⁴⁸. Maclean joined the Earl of Mar in 1715, with his clan taking part in the battle of Sheriffmuir and remaining with the Jacobite army until King James left the country. "Sir John was offered accommodation on board the Chevalier's ship, but he declined it."⁴⁹ He died at Gordon Castle, and was buried in the church of Raffin, far away from his native Mull. The song begins with the poetess' lament that Sir John's absence is not one of exile:

'S goirt leam gaoir nam ban Muileach,
 Iad ri caoineadh 's ri tuireadh,
 'S gun Sir Iain an Lunnainn,
 No 'san Fhraing air cheann turais;
 'S trom an sac 'thug ort fuireach
 Gun thu dh' fhalbh air an luingeas;
 'S e sin aobhar ar dunaich ⁵⁰

She then refers to the change in the fortunes of the Macleans due to their loyalty to the Stuart family, allowing their enemies to take advantage and dispossess them:

Chuireadh aon mhac Shir Ailein
 As a chòirichean fearainn,
 Le fìor fòirneart 's le aindeoin ⁵¹

Political matters are temporarily put aside while the poetess expresses her grief over the death of Sir John, all the while praising him and his ancestors, as well the clans to which he was related. Mairearad does not overlook the losses suffered by other clans in 1715, such as the Captain of Clanranald, seemingly viewing her chief as a casualty of Mar's rising, although it is not certain that his death was a direct result of his involvement in this. An extra edge is added to her sorrow by the fact that Sir John was buried outside Mull, before the news of his death had reached the majority of his clan, and that the heir, like Sir John himself, was a minor when his father died:

Och is mis' 'th' air mo chlisgeadh,
 Saoir bhith sàbhadh do chiste,
 'S gun do chàireadh fo lic thu
 'N àite falaich, gun fhios duinn...
 'S gun an t-oighre 'na ghliocas...
 'S goirt an call ris a bhriosgadh 'thug Màr as.⁵²

The next stanza is more personal in tone, as the poetess specifically refers to her own grief, not only for the loss of Maclean, but also for another clan chief who died in that year:

'S mòr mo chall-sa bho shamhuinn,
 Tha mi 'm thruaghan bochd mnatha...
 Gun cheann-cinnidh 'thaobh athar no màthar.⁵³

The final phrase here has been used in the debate over the clan to which Mairearad herself actually belonged⁵⁴. As Clanranald's death has already been mentioned, it seems reasonable to assume that he is the other chief referred to, but this cannot be used as proof that she was a MacDonald by birth; all that one can say is that probably one parent was a MacDonald and the other a Maclean.

The poetess is aware of the perilous state in which the clan has been left by the loss of Sir John leaving a child as his heir, especially as they were already weakened:

Ged a thogar na mairt bhuainn,
 Cha bhi srann aig do bhrataich,
 Is cha chluinnear do chaismeachd ⁵⁵

Despite seeming earlier to blame Mar's rising for the death of Maclean, Mairearad is aware that this was not so, declaring that if human hand had been the cause of Sir John's death, the clan would be swift to avenge it. This leads her into a passage of praise for the Maclean warriors, and for the lifestyle which was enjoyed in the household of the chief, which she contrasts with the present situation:

Cò an neach dha bheil sùilean '
 Do nach soilleir am mùthadh
 'Tha air teachd air ar dùthaich ⁵⁶

Her next image employs the bardic idea of pathetic fallacy to illustrate the sense of loss experienced by the clan, and their feeling of exposure now that they have no chief:

Bho 'n là chaill sinn an t-aon fhear
 Fo làimh Dhè ghabh dhuinn cùram;
 Fhrois gach abhall a h-ùbhlan,
 Dh' fhalbh gach blàth agus ùr-ròs,
 'S tha ar coill air a rùsgadh de 'h-àilleachd.⁵⁷

The vision of the clan as naked and helpless is reinforced by the description of them as *mar gheòidh air an spìonadh*, at the mercy of their enemies. This leads Mairearad back to the question of ownership of the Duart estates, expressing her regret at the difficulties encountered by Sir John, and hoping that his son, Hector, will have an easier reign:

Ged nach d' fhuair thu fo t' fhacal
 An tìr farsuinn 'bh' aig t' athair,
 B' fheàrr gum faigheadh do mhac i ⁵⁸

Sir John's decision to join Mar is cited as the reason for the present difficulty of the clan, the poetess describing it as *turas na truaighe*. The position of the chief as the father of his clan is

highlighted, as the bardess describes them almost as lost orphans, searching for shelter:

Tha do chlann air an dìobradh;
Cò nì 'n deoch dhaibh a lìonadh,
A chur casg air an ìotadh ?
Cò nan laigse 'bheir dìon dhaibh ?⁵⁹

This image is extended and combined with Mairearad's distress at the situation:

'S e 'chuir m'astar am maillead '
Is mo shùilean an doillead,
A bhith faicinn do chloinne
'S an luchd-foghlaim is oilein
Air am fògradh gun ghoireas,
Ach mar cheatharnaich-coille
Iad gun fhios ac' cia 'n doire 'san tàmh iad.⁶⁰

Mairearad refers again to Sir John's burial in Raffin, saying that it would have been some comfort for the clan to have him near:

Gur a goirt leam ri 'chluinntinn...
Nach deach aobhar ar n-ionndrainn...
A thoirt dachaidh d' a dhùthaich;
Gum bu shòlas le d' mhuinntir
Do chorp geal a bhith dlùth dhaibh...⁶¹

Mairearad feels that Sir John should have been buried in Iona along with his ancestors, regretting that she is unable to visit his grave because it is far away. His death is the last of a long line of calamities to befall the clan, and, in the last verse, Mairearad uses vivid imagery to portray the powerlessness of the clan in the face of all their troubles, and the death of their hopes with the death of their Chief:

Thàinig tonn air muin tuinne
A dh' fhàg lòn sinn 's an cunnart,
Chaidh ar creuchdadh gu guineach,

Dh' fhalbh ar n-eibhneas gu buileach;
 Bhrist ar claidheabh 'na dhuille
 Nuair a shaoil sinn gun cumamaid slàn e.⁶²

Mairearad was correct in her thinking that this was the end of the Macleans of Duart. Sir John Maclean's estates were forfeited as a result of his involvement in the rising of 1715, enabling Archibald Campbell, the first Duke of Argyll, to become the "Lord of Mull, Morvern, and Tyrie"⁶³

Although the Macleans suffered severely for their loyalty to the house of Stuart, they were not the only highland clan troubled by forfeiture, both threatened and actual, as a result of their Jacobite allegiance. Both the MacDonalds and the MacLeods suffered great losses at the battle of Worcester in 1651 in support of Charles II, the MacLeod losses being so great that "it was agreed to by the other Clans that the MacLeods should not take part in another conflict until they had had time to multiply and recover their losses."⁶⁴ The reluctance of the MacLeods to follow the Jacobite standard in later campaigns was compounded by the seeming indifference of the Stuarts to acknowledge their sacrifice⁶⁵. Although Clan Donald fought with Montrose, the chief himself did not join the campaign, and thus avoided forfeiture after its failure. Not only this, but after Worcester, he accepted the Cromwellian government, for which he was heavily fined after the Restoration. His son Donald was not so lukewarm, being among the first to join Viscount Dundee in 1689, although his poor health forced him to leave his son, Donald, in command of the clan. For his part in the rising, a sentence of forfeiture was passed against young Donald in 1690, but the old chief refused to submit to the government, holding out for some time.⁶⁶ Young Donald, *Dòmhnall a' Chogaidh*, was chief at the time of Mar's rising in 1715, and led his men to join the Jacobite army. Illness forced him to return home, but his brothers, James and William, led the clan into battle in his stead. After Sheriffmuir, Sir Donald was found guilty in his absence of high treason, and his estates were forfeited.⁶⁷ The MacDonalds of Clanranald were led at Killiecrankie by their 16-year-old chief, Allan, who, rather than submit to the government, went to France; his estates were preserved by the submission of his Tutor, MacDonald of Benbecula, on his behalf.⁶⁸

Despite the number of MacDonalds involved in the conflicts of 1645, 1651, 1689 and 1715, women's songs in praise of the clan are not numerous. There are laments for the fallen, but political considerations are not paramount, neither are those of the standing of the clan, except in the poetry of Sileas na Ceapaich concerning the Rising of 1715. This poetess unreservedly supports the Jacobite cause, but does so from a Clan Donald standpoint. Her compositions on this subject already been dealt with⁶⁹, as has the lament *Alasdair a Gleanna Garadh*⁷⁰; but the latter poem also contains a note of concern for the whole of Clan Donald, not just for Glengarry, referring to the deaths of Dòmhnall a' Chogaidh, his son Donald, and his brother James in the space of two years, and the loss of Clanranald at Sheriffmuir, all of which weakened the clan. The rest of the song is an elegaic lament to Glengarry, while the poetess expresses the importance of continuity in the chiefship in the final stanza:

Gum faic mi do mhac ad àite
Ann an sàibhreas 's ann an cùram.⁷¹

The arrival of Prince Charles Edward in 1745 led Nighean [Mhic] Aonghais Oig to compose a song of welcome⁷². She was evidently a MacDonald, and, from her concentration on that family, of the Keppoch branch of the clan. She is full of praise for the men of Keppoch, but rebukes Sir Alexander of Sleat for his failure to join the Prince's army:

A Shir Alasdair uasail
Nach grad-ghluais thu air t' aghaidh,
Leam as fada tha t' fhuireach
Gun bhith air thurus 'nan deaghaidh,
Le do bhrataichean lìonmhor,
'S iomadh ciad th' ann ad fhaghaidh,
O 'n bu dual dhuit bhith fuileach
Leig do chuilein air adhart.⁷³

This refers to the refusal of Sir Alexander to join the Prince's army, although he was thought to be one of those who had encouraged Charles to undertake his expedition. There remains a

doubt as to his true motive for remaining neutral:

There is every reason to believe that he spoke sincerely and honestly when he told young Clanranald that he wished well to the cause, but that seeing the attempt was inopportune, the Prince so slenderly attended, and the probability of success so remote, he could not support him. There was another matter which must have weighed with Sir Alexander. He could not well forget the favour shown him by the reigning family in restoring him to his estate, and the present prospects of the Prince were not such as to tempt any level-headed man to stake vast interests upon them.⁷⁴

Interestingly, Nighean [Mhic] Aonghais Oig refers in her song to another clan against whom political manoeuvring had achieved what force could not, as a result of which they were outlawed and persecuted:

A Chlann-Ghriogair a' chruadail,
 O 'n bu dual dhuibh bhith tapaidh,
 Chaidh ur dìteadh 's ur ruagadh
 Le luchd fuatha gun cheartas;
 So an t-àm dhuibh bhith dùsgadh
 Thoirt ur dùthchas fhéin dhachaidh,
 'S ged is fad o 'n tha 'chuing oirbh
 Théid na Duibhnich fo 'r casaibh.⁷⁵

One could not dispute that the machinations of the Campbells were a major factor in the fate of the MacGregors, but the House of Stuart had also played no small part in their harsh treatment. The problems faced by the MacGregors were, in some ways, similar to those of other Highland clans, but were exacerbated by reason of politics and geography. In earlier times, the MacGregors had been in possession of Glendochart and Glenorchy, as well as Rannoch, Glenlyon, Glenloch, Strathfillan and Balquhiddy, presumably held as free baronies. The loss of these lands, and MacGregor power, can be traced back to the reign of Robert the Bruce:

The Lord of Lorn, who married a sister of John Cumin the Black, brother-in-law of King John Baliol, took...a very active part in favour of Baliol, and after the dethronement of that

unfortunate prince, attached himself to the Cumin party, displaying a constant and energetic opposition to the claims of Bruce. The family of MacGregor, from the situation of their principal property, Glenurchy, in Lorn...were necessarily in strict alliance and otherwise closely connected with the house of Lorn, and would naturally follow the fortunes of that very powerful family...We find, accordingly, that Bruce had no sooner established himself on the throne, than the house of Lorn, with all its followers and allies, suffered severely by forfeiture.⁷⁶

It is not known how Glenurchy,³ which escaped forfeiture, also passed from MacGregor hands into those of the Campbells, but this had happened by the early fifteenth century, leaving the MacGregors as merely tenants on lands owned by others. Their condition was worsened by the actions of Parliament, which allowed their landlords to persecute them⁷⁷, and worse was to come:

About the year 1560 arose a deadly feud between the MacGregors...and Sir Colin Campbell of Glenurchy...From the representations on the subject to the Secret Council, a commission of fire and sword was in 1563 issued to sundry noblemen and barons, against the ClanGregor. Of this most anomalous production...a prominent feature is the strict manner in which it is directed that the Clan be expelled from all the districts in which they dwelt, or to which they were in the habit of resorting, without specifying...any other district into which they might be received. The impolitic and remorseless severity of this measure, which could only have been carried into effect by a universal massacre, naturally rendered it abortive...

Sir Colin Campbell of Glenurchy had, about [1563] been individually armed with a separate and additional commission of fire and sword against the *Harbourers* of the ClanGregor, in whatever part of the kingdom...

As Glenurchy had been...pre-eminent in severity against all whom he chose to suspect of tenderness towards the persecuted ClanGregor, we may fairly presume that his conduct towards the latter was not remarkable for moderation.⁷⁸

The principal branch of the Clan Gregor was at this time the family of Glenstrae, who held their lands as vassals of the Earl of Argyll. The Captain of Glenstrae was regarded as the leader of the Clan, although, as he was not designated as chief, there is some doubt as to the lineal descent.⁷⁹ Despite intermarriage with several important Campbell families, the MacGregors of Glenstrae were not protected from their machinations once the Earl of Argyll transferred the superiority of Glenstrae to Campbell of Glenorchy, in 1554:

...it was obviously the great aim of the Glenurchy family to get rid of every vassal of the name of MacGregor. They refused to enter Gregor MacGregor MacGregor of Glenstray as heir to his father...and after the death of Gregor...they denied the proper feudal investiture to his son Allaster, who in 1590 was legally ejected from the lands of Glenstray, on the assertion that he was merely a tenant...against the will of the proprietor...⁸⁰

This Gregor of Glenstrae, beheaded in 1570, was the subject of the lament, *Griogal Cridhe* ⁸¹, which was composed by his wife, a daughter of Campbell of Glenlyon. The song is one of sorrow and of praise for the dead Gregor, but there is only brief reference to his clan:

Na 'm biodh dà fhear dheug de chinneadh,
 'S mo Ghriogair air an ceann,
 Cha bhiodh mo shùil a' sileadh dheur
 No mo leanabh féin gun dàimh.⁸²

What is remarkable in this song is the poetess' utter rejection of her own family and clan, who were responsible for Gregor's death:

'S truagh nach robh m' athair ann an galar,
 Agus Cailean ann am plàigh;
 Ged bhiodh nighean an Ruathbhainich
 A' suathadh bhas is làmh.

Chuirinn Cailean liath fo ghlasaibh
 'S Donnchadh dubh an làimh,

'S gach Caimbeulach a th' ann am Bealach
Gu giùlan nan glas-làmh.⁸³

There are also a number of anonymous songs composed in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries to members of the fugitive Clan Gregor. The earliest of these, '*S mi am shuidhe n so 'm ònar*'⁸⁴, was composed some twenty years after the death of Gregor of Glenstrae, and refers to an incident which brought the wrath of the government down on the clan. The King's Forester in Glenartney, Drummondernach, was murdered in 1589 or 1590, and blame fell on the MacGregors, although other traditions place the blame on the MacIans of Ardnamurchan and on the '*Sìol Dhùghaill*', the murderers of Keppoch.⁸⁵ Whatever the truth of the matter, the MacGregors took the punishment. In 1590 a commission of fire and sword was granted against the whole clan, and those who aided them, while other measures forced more and more of them to live as fugitives:

About [1592-1593] those barons and gentlemen who had the ClanGregor as tenants...forced by the severe enactments of the General Band, which made every landlord answerable for the misdemeanours of his tenants, began to take measures for an universal ejection of the Clan from their possessions...⁸⁶

The song is traditionally held to be the composition of a MacGregor woman who was hiding fugitives of the clan in her home and who, to distract their pursuers and allow them to escape, went outside the house and sang this song. The opening of the song would certainly give the impression that the bardess had not seen any of the fugitives herself:

Is mi suidhe an so am ònar
Air còmhnard an rathaid,

Dh' fheuch am faic mi fear-fuadain,
Tighinn o Chruachan a' cheathaich,

Bheir dhomh sgeul air Clann Ghriogair
No fios cia an do ghabh iad.⁸⁷

She then names the places in which the fugitives are said to have been seen, mentioning some of the men who were in the party, before touching on the death of Drummondearnoch:

Is ann a rinn sibh an t-sidheann anmoch
Anns a' ghleann am bi an ceathach.

Dh' fhàg sibh an t-Eòin bòidheach
Air a mhòintich 'na laighe,

'Na starsnaich air féithe
An déidh a reubadh le claidheamh.⁸⁸

These lines would imply that the MacGregors were, in fact, responsible for the murder of Drummondearnach, and that the poetess is gloating over their deed. Why she uses the adjective *bòidheach* to describe the dead man is open to interpretation:

The concession in the word is...ambivalent. How much is it a gloating contrast between his living appearance or his appearance of a mangled decapitated corpse left a stepping-stone over a bog; and how much is there in it of a woman's pity for a handsome man ?⁸⁹

I would argue that pity plays a negligible part in the poetess' use of this word, as her description of the killing as *an t-sidheann anmoch* implies that she viewed the forester as fair game for the MacGregors, having put some of their clansmen to death for poaching. The use of the article in naming Drummondearnach as *an t-Eòin* also distances him from the human; he is seen as a thing or an animal, not as a man. An even simpler explanation may be that the original song described Drummondearnoch, not as *bòidheach*, but as *botach*, as found in one version⁹⁰, and which causes no difficulty in interpretation.

Some of the stanzas in the song are obscure, leading some to conclude that the poem was, in fact, composed by a man:

Ann am Bothan na Dìge
Ghabh sibh dian air an rathad;

Far a dh' fhàg sibh mo bhiodag
 Agus crios mo bhuilg-shaighead.

Gur i saighead na h-àraich
 So thàrmaich am leathar.

Chaidh saighead am shliasaid,
 Crann fiar air dhroch shnaidheadh.⁹¹

However, if the author was indeed one of the fugitives, one would expect the use of the first rather than the second person plural in the first two of these stanzas. The explanation may be that the dagger and quiver are metaphors, possibly for relatives of the poetess, and her grief at their loss, rather than any physical wound, is the cause of her pain. The pain of sorrow is frequently described in laments as an arrow in the side, and the battlefield mentioned may well be where the wound in the heart of the poetess was received, as well as in the body of the person or persons for whom she grieves. This theory would also tie in with the final stanzas of the poem, which imply that the poetess has, indeed, lost members of her family in the conflict:

Is ann bha bhuidheann gun chòmhradh
 Di-dòmhaich am bràighe bhaile.

Is cha dèan mi gàir éibhinn
 An àm éirigh no laighe.

Is beag an t-iongnadh dhomh féin sud,
 Is mi bhith 'n déidh mo luchd-taighe.⁹²

The poetess includes a prayer for the safety of those who remain, and, given the hunted and despised position in which the clan found themselves at this time, her concern for them is not without cause:

Gun seachnadh Rìgh nan Dùl sibh
 O fhùdar caol neimhe,

O shradagan teine,
O pheileir 's o shaighid,

O sgian na rinn caoile,
Is o fhaobhar geur claidhimh.⁹³

Gregor MacGregor of Ruadhshruth was among those named in the proclamation of fire and sword against the clan after the death of Drummondernoch, but it was at the battle of Glenfruin in 1603, which had such disastrous consequences for the MacGregors, that he was killed:

[Around 1600] the King and Council...constituted the Earl of Argyle as his Majesty's Lieutenant and Justice in the whole bounds inhabited by the ClanGregor...

Under Argyle's administration, the Clan, as might be expected from the policy pursued by that nobleman, became daily more troublesome to the Lowlands, and to such of the proprietors more particularly who had the misfortune to be at feud with Argyll. The Lairds of Buchanan and Luss suffered severely from the incursions of the ClanGregor; and those of Ardkinlass and Ardincaple escaped assassination only by the laird of MacGregor's refusal to execute in their cases the revolting fiats of the King's Lieutenant. Finally in the spring of 1603 at the instigation of Argyle...MacGregor with his men of Rannoch invaded the Lennox, and fought the celebrated conflict of Glenfrune, opposed by the Colquhouns and their friends and dependants...

The King and Council, horrified by the intelligence of this hostile inroad, proceeded to take the most severe measures for bringing the offenders to justice. A series of sanguinary enactments against the unhappy ClanGregor was crowned by that of the proscription of the names of Gregor and MacGregor under pain of death, which bears date 3d April 1603.⁹⁴

It is not known who composed the lament for MacGregor of Ruadhshruth⁹⁵ (although ascribed in the MacLagan MS to *Dùghall Mac a' Mhinister*,⁹⁶ this is the only place where an author's name is given), and there is little in the text to distinguish it as the work of

either a male or a female author. The song begins as one of praise of the dead man, before turning to the weak and endangered position of the clan, with no-one to protect them:

Ge do bhuail e mi 'm ba-laoch,
Ga m' ghearan cha bhì mi.

Ge do dhèan iad orm ea-coir,
A Rìgh fèin cò nì dhìoladh ?

'S luchd a ghabhail mo leth-sgeil,
Ann san t-sheapall so shìos uam.⁹⁷

These lines imply that the author is unable to protect him or herself, which could indicate that they were composed by a woman, but equally that they were the work of an old or incapacitated man; one cannot be certain. Whoever the author was, the poem is notable for the warning given to Clan Gregor, the words of which make it only too clear the constant peril in which they were placed:

'N uair a theid thu 'n tigh-osda,
Na ol ann ach aon deoch.

Gabh do dhrama ad sheasamh,
A's bi freasd'lach mu d' dhaoine.

Na dean diuthadh mu d' shoitheach,
Gabh an ladar no 'n taoman.

Dean am foghar de 'n gheamhradh,
'S dean an samhradh de' n fhaoiltich.⁹⁸

Another song from the same period is one addressed to Griogar Odhar Ard⁹⁹, which is much more light-hearted in tone, ignoring the troubles of the clan and concentrating instead on the prowess and feats of one of its members. He is said one source⁹⁹ to be *Mac Dhonnachaidh nan Gleann, bràthair do Mhac Griogair Ghlinn Sreatha*. Donnchadh nan Gleann was the son of Alasdair, 5th of Glenstrae, and brother of the Gregor Roy who was beheaded in 1570;

his son Gregor, described as 'a famous soldier'¹⁰¹ and mentioned in an action brought against the Earl of Argyll by Colquhoun of Luss in 1602,¹⁰² is the subject of this song. The song begins with praise of Gregor, and an account of his prowess in battle:

Gun d' leagadh Mac-an-Aba leat,
 Os cionn na glaic ud thall;
 Gu 'n robh fear de Chlann Chamshroin ann,
 Is dealg 'na bhrot gu teann;
 Gu 'n robh Iain Og Mac Chailein ann,
 'S cha b' fhallain e fo d' laimh.¹⁰³

Some useful information regarding the persons named is given with one version of this poem:

This MacNab was of the family of Acharu, near Killin...
 MacNab went, for hire, with Sir Robert Campbell, to the
 skirmish at Bientoig, at the head of Glenorchy...

Cameron of Lundabhrádh, in Lochaber, also went for hire,
 to the same skirmish, with Sir Robert Campbell...

Iain Óg Mac Chailean, from Bochart...a near relation of
 the Breadalbane family, went with Sir Robert Campbell
 likewise...¹⁰⁴

This information is verified by Sir Robert Gordon:

The King caused proclaim them (the MacGregors) rebels,
 directed commission and lettres of intercommuning against
 them forbidding any of his lieges to harbor them. At last he
 employed the Earle of Argyle and the Campbells...and at
 Bintoig where Robert Campbell...accompanied with some of the
 ClanChameron, Clanab, and Clanronald to the number of two
 hundred chosen men fought against thriescore...of the
 ClanGregor in which conflict tuo of the ClanGregor were slain,
 to wit Duncan Aberigh...and his son Duncan. Seaven gentlemen
 of the Campbell side were killed, though they seemed to have
 the victorie.¹⁰⁵

There is no mention of the death of Donnchadh Abarach and
 his son, which one might expect in such a partisan MacGregor song.

However, the subject of this poem is not Glenfruin, but Gregor himself, and the poet may have chosen to ignore those details which did not fit the tone of the song. The poet concentrates on the positive, and that he or she was also a MacGregor seems clear from the final lines:

Cha b' ann de Chlanna Chatain thu,
 No luchd nam plaide bàn,
 No idir de Chlann Dòmhnuaill thu,
 No luchd nan ròiseol àrd;
 Ach Griogarach gu dìreach thu,
 Chuir dìth air clann nan Gall.¹⁰⁶

Whoever the poet was who composed this song, they did so in praise of one whose actions would be interpreted as rebellious by the Crown, and of a clan whose very name was proscribed, yet there is no hint of fear apparent. The poem is a celebration of a warrior by one of his clan, and the opinion of the government matters not one whit.

The final anonymous MacGregor poem from this era, *Saighdean Ghlinn Liobhann*,¹⁰⁷ is an elegaic lament, mainly composed of formulaic panegyric, with few clues as to the author. The subject may have been John MacGregor of Stronmelochan, brother of Alasdair of Glenstrae, who was also killed at Glenfruin, judging by the lines:

Triath na Stròine,
 Mas fhìor dhòmh-sa e:
 Gur i a' chòir as fheàrrde leat.¹⁰⁸

The final stanza, which is almost identical to one found in the much later *Mo Ghaol am Fleasgach* ¹⁰⁹, possibly points to a female author, unable to join him in battle; but there is a stronger case for male authorship:

Ol aig t' uaislibh
 Anns gach uair dh' an tàrladh sinn.¹¹⁰

I would argue that, without a feminine prefix of some kind, the inclusion of the author as one of the *uaislean* indicates that the

composer of this song was a man. It is possible that nobility required no gender specification, especially when the rhyme scheme did not allow it, but there are too many doubts regarding the authorship of this song for it to merit a closer examination in the context of this study.

The reason for the singling out of the MacGregors by the government is possibly also the reason that relatively few of their songs survived: their proximity to the Lowlands. Their main base was around Perthshire, where King and Council often met, which is why their activities came to their close attention. Forfeited clans further to the north, such as Clan Chattan, were able to retain their lands by force, acting in a similar predatory manner against neighbouring clans, but they were sufficiently removed from the seat of power to allow the government to ignore their activities. Changing linguistic boundaries may also have contributed to the disappearance of MacGregor songs, as the areas in which the clan remained became predominantly English-speaking. Given the number of MacGregors who were executed, persecuted, and killed in various skirmishes, it is highly unlikely that there did not exist many more laments and songs than have survived to the present day.

Songs purely in praise of the clan to which the poetess belonged are relatively rare. Apart from the MacGregor songs, and in some measure those of the Maclean bardesses, there is only the song by a Kennedy bardess, *Buidheann mo chridhe Clann Ualraig* ¹¹¹, in which her clan is loudly praised, although it is also a lament for her dead sweetheart. The song is said to have been composed after a cattle-raid in the Lochaber area around the year 1670:

In some parts of the Highlands, it was in those days an established custom for a bridegroom, with as many followers as he could muster, to make a foraging expedition into the territories of a neighbouring proprietor, and remove from thence all the bestial stock and other spoil they might be able to carry forcibly away...and whoever had not the resolution and courage to conduct and lead such an expedition, was to be considered unworthy of a wife, and unfit to provide sufficiently for the requirements of a family.

A gentleman of Lochaber, "Fear Achluachrach"...being on the eve of marriage with a maiden of his own country, made a predatory excursion into the Lowlands for the purpose of

lifting the "Creach Pòsaidh"...He invaded the estate of Rose of Kilravock in Nairnshire, and drove away all his best cattle, with which he had reached Croclach, in the braes of Strathdearn, without suffering the least molestation. The freebooters considering themselves safe at this place, and beyond the reach of danger, resolved to rest for the night...

Meanwhile Kilravock had missed his cattle, and with all the assistance he was able to procure, was now in eager pursuit of the depredators. Rose made a call in passing upon his friend the laird of Kylochie, in Strathdearn, who at once armed and turned out at the head of his servants and retainers, and joined in the pursuit. John MacAndrew [a noted bowman] happened to be in the employment of Kylochie at the time, and formed one of the party. The little man was considered a valuable acquisition to the force, as, besides his well-known superiority as a marksman, he was well acquainted with the ground which had to be traversed. Just as the sun was disappearing in the western horizon, the diminutive Strathspeyman and the advance guard of Kilravock's following, came in sight of the camp-fires of the Lochabermen, and Kilravock with savage delight beheld his own valuable herds browsing quietly on the green slopes of Croclach. He was, however, well aware that without a struggle and bloodshed the booty was not to be redeemed, and although his own followers in number far exceeded those of the freebooter, he was by no means ignorant of the warlike character of the race he had to deal with. Kilravock and his advisers on that account felt that the utmost caution in attacking them was necessary, and unless they were to be taken in some measure by surprise, the result might terminate fatally to some of themselves, or, at least, to many of the undisciplined band which they commanded. It was therefore resolved to delay an attack upon the rievvers until the silent hour of midnight, when it was to be supposed they would be less prepared to defend themselves, and a greater chance might exist of escaping the vigilance of the sentries.

This precautionary measure turned out in every way as anticipated – the rievvers had reposed in fancied security, and placed a very inefficient watch, who lay down among the heather and fell fast asleep. At the set time, and in breathless

silence, Kilravock and Kylochie led their men towards the camp, and the first warning of their approach the doomed party had, was a shower of arrows falling in their midst, and which pierced the bodies of a few of their number.

Upon the instant the men of Lochaber sprung into action, but the glimmering light of their own fires, and the density of the surrounding darkness, prevented almost any chance of execution on their part, while their assailants from the same causes were doubly favoured. The services of Little John MacAndrew were noted to have been of no mean value. He sought and singled out the chief of the party, which he was able to distinguish by the superiority of his dress, and...his always well-directed arrow was observed to lodge in the breast of "Fear Achluachrach"...

It is said, that with the exception of the faithless sentry, not a single individual survived to carry the tale to Lochaber, but even he was sufficient to convey the sad intelligence to the disconsolate Bride of Achluachrach, that her betrothed had fallen at Croclach...¹¹²

This bride is said to have been the composer of the song in praise of Clan Kennedy, and the text ties in with the information given about the raid. She begins with praise of the clan, and their skill at cattle-lifting, amongst other things:

Buidheann mo chridhe Clann-Ualraig;
Bheireadh iad suas na h-iomainean.
Bheireadh iad crodh dhe na buailtean
'S chuireadh iad sluagh bho chinneachadh.¹¹³

The fatal cattle-raid is described, with the poetess lamenting the expedition, and dispraising those who pursued the Lochaber men:

'S olc a fhuair sinn crodh nan Ròsach,
Is Clann-Chatain air an tòrachd,
Baran liath na coise breòite;
'S air mo dhaoine s' rinn iad feòlach.

'S a Chrò-chlach am Bràigh Srath-Eireann,
 Oidhche dhorch' air nach bu leir dhaibh,
 'Cur nan saighdean ait a cheile,
 Thuit mo leannan 's deich fir threuna.¹¹⁴

Although opening with a celebration of the clan, the song moves through a narrative of the calamity which befell Achluachrach, and ends with the poetess' plaint for the difference between the station which she had expected to marry into, and the one in which she finds herself now that her betrothed has been killed:

Nuair a shaoil leam 'bhi gu uasal'
 Am bhean-taighe Achaluachrach,
 'S ann a tha mi gu bochd suarach
 'Bleoghann a chruidh 'feadh a bhuachair.¹¹⁵

One would expect a number of songs in praise of the Clan MacLeod, but those composed by women tend to focus their praise on the person to whom their poem is addressed, rather than the clan in general. The clan is extolled only as an additional praiseworthy feature of their subject, because he belongs to that race, but this does not form the main thrust of the song. Clan issues do, occasionally, make an appearance, such as the concern for the future of the MacLeods of Dunvegan expressed by Màiri nighean Alasdair Ruaidh in her *Cumha do MhacLeòid* ¹¹⁶, composed when she thought that both the chief and his brother were dead. The concern arises firstly from the lack of a direct heir:

Gur a abhall an lios so
 Tha mis ag iargain,
 E gun abachadh meas air
 Ach air briseadh fo chiad-bhàrr.¹¹⁷

She fears that the MacLeods will suffer a similar fate to the Macleans in Mull, losing their lands because of the lack of a chief to lead them:

Gur rò bheag a shaoil mi
 Ri mo shaoghal gun éisd'mid,

Gun cluinneamaid Leòdaich
 Bhith 'gam fògradh á 'n oighreachd.¹¹⁸

The reason for Màiri's concern is understandable, as Roderick and Norman's sister was married to Stewart of Appin, who might have had a claim on the estate if the report of Norman's death, as well as Roderick's, had been true. She addresses Stewart directly, leaving no doubt as to what she thought of his possible claim:

Mhic Iain Stiùbhairt na h-Apunn,
 Ged is gasda an duine òg thu...
 Na gabh-sa meanmna no aiteas '
 Anns an staid ud nach còir dhuit:
 Cha toir thu i dh' aindeoin
 Is chan fhaigh thu le deoin i.¹¹⁹

Other songs implicitly praise the clan through praising a prominent member of the family. *Luinneag Mhic Neachduinn*¹²⁰, the title of which suggests female authorship, follows the pattern of panegyric praise, with the listing of allies and family connections as well as of the man himself. The poem seems to be addressed to Alasdair, the chief in the mid-seventeenth century, and his brother John, both sons of Malcolm who died around 1647. This identification is made possible by the mention of both Iain and Alasdair in the song, and the reference to their mother in the final stanza:

Shaorainn Ealasaid o mhulad,
 Ceist nam ban o thùr nan uinneag,
 Gun glèidh an Rìgh do dhà chuilean,
 'S gun seachainn e uatha tubaist.¹²¹

Malcolm MacNaughton was married to Elizabeth, daughter of Donald Murray, son of Patrick Murray of Ochertyre; he was succeeded by his son Alasdair, and there is evidence that he also had a son named John.¹²² It is not clear if the song was composed before or after the death of Malcolm, although the lack of reference to him, without expressions of lament, would suggest a date some time after 1647 for this *luinneag*. Apart from the naming of kinsmen and allies of Alasdair, the poem itself contains little in the way of concrete

information or specific detail; it is enthusiastic, but formulaic.

Outright praise of one's clan is more common in flytings between bardesses of opposing clans, such as the Clanranald/MacNeil composition *Cha téid Mòr a Bharraigh bhrònaich*,¹²³ and the MacDonald/MacLeod verse dispute, *Oran Arabhaig*.¹²⁴ In these flytings, each poetess praises her own clan and chief as the finest for appearance, wealth, generosity and arms, and the victor in each contest was the bardess who could do all this while at the same time pouring vitriolic scorn and insults on the clan and person of her poetic rival. In the case of *Cha téid Mòr a Bharraigh bhrònaich*, as explained in a previous chapter¹²⁵, the song caused so much bad feeling that it is never sung in a mixed 'company of Uist and Barra people, while when *Oran Arabhaig* was sung in Skye by two opposing groups at a reaping, the singers got so carried away by the song that in their enthusiasm they were cutting themselves with their scythes, and not noticing,¹²⁶ proving that the songs were still capable of arousing heated emotions centuries after their original composition.

The MacLeod part of *Oran Arabhaig* has been attributed by some to Màiri nighean Alasdair Ruaidh, but this is doubtful, as Watson points out in his collection of her songs:

Its style is by no means that of Mary MacLeod, and it was clearly composed at a time when MacDonald and MacLeod were at bitter enmity, which was the case during Roderick Mòr's time (d. 1626) but not during Mary's poetic career.¹²⁷

Màiri's relationship to the household of Dunvegan also being in question¹²⁸, it seems unlikely that she was the author of this poem, although she may have adapted the original song for her own purposes at a later date. The song as it appears in many collections seems confused as to which of the protagonists composed each part, or else the change of voices is ignored, which causes difficulty in interpretation. J.L. Campbell¹²⁹ has used the evidence contained in the text in order to arrange it in a satisfactory way, and in his version, the poem is opened by the MacLeod bardess:

Mhairghread chridhe	nighean an Tòisich,
Falt buidhe air	dath an òir ort,
'S cian am bliadhna	liom o 'n phòs thu,
['S ann gu d' bhaile	thriall am mór shluagh,

Thriall Mac Coinnich is MacLeòid ann,
'S Mac Fhionghuin bho Shrath nam bó ann.]¹³⁰

Other versions address Mairghread as *Nighean an Leòdaich*, but this can be dismissed on two counts:

Mairghread Nic an Tòisich can be reasonably identified as Marjory, daughter of the chief of Macintosh, who married Dòmhnall Gorm Mór (MacDonald) of Sleat around the year 1614. MacLeod of Dunvegan would hardly have travelled to his own daughter's wedding at her own home...¹³¹

The MacDonald bardess replies, seemingly without rancour at first, using the device of a stranger's question to open her praise of her clan:

'S mi 'nam shuidh air	Caolas Rònaidh,
M' aghaidh air Hiort	nan eun móra,
Thànaig bleidein,	bleideil, bòsdail,
Le meilbheid 's le	spuir 's le bòtainn,
'S dh' fhoighneachd e dhìom	le càil còmhraidh
Gu dé b' fhasan	do Chlann
	[Dòmhnail ?] ¹³²

Clan Donald and their customs are then briefly recounted, but this is merely a means of launching the attack on Clan MacLeod, comparing them negatively to the MacDonalds:

Cha b' ionnan dhaibh	sìol nan Leòdach,
Sìol a chapuill	bhacaich, spògaich,
Bheathachadh air	mol is fòghlach,
Air dùdan dubh	's air gulm eòrna,
Air uisge bog	a' phuill-mhòna,
Cha ghoirear riu	ach 'pruis-òidhidh',
Taod mu 'n claigeann	's goid mu 'n
	[dòrnaibh] ¹³³

This general dispraise is followed by mocking a MacLeod defeat, at Glen Haultin:

Thug thu teicheadh	phrasgain ghealltaich,
No 'n cuimhne libh	là Ghleann Shealltainn?
Sheas sibh 'san fhraoch	mar na cearcan,
Chaidh sibh 'san loch	mar na lachain,
Chaidh sibh 'sa chuan	mar na farspaich ! ¹³⁴

The MacLeod bardess attempts to distract her poetic rival from her vitriolic outpourings:

Có i 'n long taobh	staigh an eilein ? ¹³⁵
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but this ploy is unsuccessful, merely giving the MacDonald poetess another opening for praise of Clan Donald and mockery of the MacLeods:

Don-bhuaidh ort !	[c' uim an ceilinn ?]
Tha long Dhòmhnaill	Ghuirm nan eilein;
Dh' fhàg i 'n rubh' ud	's an rubh' eile,
Chuir i bòrd far	long Mhic Coinnich,
'S dh' fhàg i long	Mhic Leòid air deireadh ! ¹³⁶

The final couplet here may be a mocking reference to Dòmhnall Gorm's repudiation of his first wife, the sister of Ruairidh Mòr MacLeod, and his subsequent marriage to the daughter of MacKenzie of Kintail.¹³⁷ This might suggest that the song was composed before Dòmhnall Gorm's marriage to Marjory Mackintosh, although she, his third wife, may conceivably have used it, if she was the Mairearad being addressed, as useful ammunition which did not detract from her own position.

It is little wonder that the song ends with the MacLeod poetess conceding defeat in the bardic contest, although she does claim that it is her own weakness, rather than a lack of things to praise, which prevents her from a riposte:

Mur bhitheadh mo	chrìdh a' dìobradh,
'S mo ghuth lag air	beagan spìdidh,
'S mi gun seinneadh	tuireadh cinnteach
Dha na fearaibh	tha 'n taobh shìos dhiom
An Dùn Bheagain	nan long lìonmhor... ¹³⁸

According to one account, this flyting ended with the poetesses coming to blows:

The two female controversialists were sitting, one on each side of the stream flowing into Loch Snizort, which was the boundary between the properties of MacDonald of Sleat and MacLeod of Dunvegan...and there they reviled each other's clan. A male passer-by said "An té aig abheil an fhuil is deirge caitheadh i smugaid air an té eile." This having been done, Margaret leapt across the stream and chastized her opponent.¹³⁹

The sixteenth century song *Là Mille Gàrraidh* ¹⁴⁰ is possibly a flyting, although it may be the work of one poetess. It begins with a MacLeod poetess mocking a MacDonald defeat:

'N am chui[mh]ne leibh
Là na h' Airde ?

Na 'n là eile
Mille-Gàrraidh

Bha fir a 'n sin
Air dhroch càradh

An druim fòdh
'S am buinn bàn ris.¹⁴¹

The battle of Mille Gàrraidh was a MacLeod victory over the MacDonalds, during the feud between those two clans in the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries. A party of MacDonalds had invaded MacLeod's territory, stealing sheep and cattle, and worse:

When the MacLeods of the district [Waternish] went to church according to custom, at sunrise, the MacDonalds surrounded it, barricaded the door, and, being a thatched building, they easily managed to set it on fire. The MacLeods forced the barricade but were cut to pieces as they came out...

But swift retribution was at hand for this cruel butchery; for MacLeod sent a strong party to Waternish at daybreak to warn the people, who quickly assembled, and on seeing their

church in flames and surrounded by the enemy, they rushed upon the MacDonalds with terrible fury, following the Fairy Flag of MacLeod. The Clanranald became panic-stricken, and ran for their boats, followed by the MacLeods, who cut to pieces every one they could overtake; but, on reaching the beach, the MacDonalds were in utter despair, for MacLeod had previously removed their boats. Finding themselves in this terrible dilemma, they formed under cover of a high loose stone wall, built above the beach to shelter the crops. The MacLeods charged the wall in line and threw it down, when a savage struggle ensued, in which all the MacDonalds were slain. Their bodies were covered over with the stones of the dyke where they fell...The place is called "Milleadh Garaidh" to this day...¹⁴²

Other battles, at Allt-Eirinn and Uamh Dearg, are mentioned also, but I have been unable to discover whether these were MacLeod or MacDonald victories, although Uamh Dearg could possibly refer to the cave in which the MacDonalds of Eigg hid on the approach of the MacLeods, and in which they died. The cave in which they took refuge is not named in the accounts of the Eigg massacre, and Uamh Dearg may be somewhere else altogether, but the date of the massacre, in 1577, roughly corresponds with the dating of this song. The flyting continues, with a change of topic:

Chunnacas Bat'
Falbh gu siùbhlach

'S i dol tiomchioll
Rudha h-Ùnais

As a sin gu
Rùdh-an-Dùnain

Bè mo leannan
Bha ga stiùradh.¹⁴³

Although this portion may be the composition of a MacDonald, the final part of the song is certainly by the MacLeod woman:

'S ioma bhean bhoichd
Bha gu cràiteach

'S i gun mhac ann
'S i gun bhràthair.

Gun duin ann a
Ghabhadh bàigh ri

'S mo mhollachd sin
Aig Clann Rànuill.¹⁴⁴

,

This evidently refers to some raid made on MacLeod lands by the MacDonalds of Clanranald, so one might speculate that the poetess who described the ship may have been of the latter clan, and that her sweetheart was the leader of the raid.

*A' Ghriadach Dhonn*¹⁴⁵ is a flyting composed at the waulking board between a Mull woman, presumably a Maclean, and a woman from Lochaber who was married in Mull. The Mull bardess opens her song with a wish for the destruction of Lochaber:

B' fheàrr gun cluinninn sud am màireach,
Creach Ghlinnlaoch is Ghlinnemhàillidh,
Ghlinne Cinngidh nan clacha geala,
Ghlinne Pheathann nan craobh àrda,
Gun Camshronaich bhith ri ràdhainn,
Sin nuair gheibhinn an cadal sàmhach...¹⁴⁶

This is followed by a dispraise of the place itself and of the people who lived there:

Gheibhte sud an Dochanasaidh,
Bodaich bheaga ghearra lachdann,
Ghoideadh an fheòil san latha fhrasach,
'S bheireadh i san anmoch dhachaidh,
Osain laoicinn 's cuairean chraicinn,
Féileadh àrd is dronnag bradach.¹⁴⁷

This passage would indicate that the Mull poetess was baiting her Lochaber counterpart, and if this was so, one could deduce that the Lochaber woman was a Cameron from the area of Dochanasaidh. The specific dispraise of her native place is thus the signal for her to enter the fray, which she does firstly with a spirited defence of Dochanasaidh:

Gheibhte sud an Dochanasaidh,
Comhlan ùr de ghillean gasda,
Stiùireadh an long san latha fhrasach,
'S nach leigeadh balgam bric a steach oirr',
Ged a thigeadh aisd' an calcadh...¹⁴⁸

The praise, mingled with insults aimed at at her poetic rival, is continued, with a negation of all the slurs cast on her clan by the Mull poetess:

Cuime an duirt an trusdair siubhal,
Nach fhaighte sud 'na do bhuidheann,
Fear osain gheàrr is còta cumhann,
Bonaid bheòil bhig air cùl buidhe,
Cuime an duirt an trusdair caillich,
Gun robh an t-Ailein Donn gun chaisbheairt,
B' uaibhreach dha sud, 's lìonmhor aig iad,
Stocaidh de 'n t-sròl,
Bròg dhubh bhaltdubh,
Bròg dhubh mhìndubh, chiardubh, chiarrtaidh,
Bho leathar nam bó thig a Sasunn...¹⁴⁹

Ailean Donn is Allan Cameron, sixteenth of Locheil, who succeeded his uncle as chief of the clan some time before 1585, and died around 1647.¹⁵⁰ The poetess here changes the subject, and her meaning is somewhat obscure:

Nuair a shuidh mi 'n ceann na clèithe,
Chuir mi dithis ris an àireamh,
Leanamh beag an ceann a ràithe,
'S beag nach tug mi 'm bàs d' a mhàthair,
'S cha b' éirig sud air mo thàmailt,

'N na fhuair mi,
 Sgrios mo chàirdean,
 Sgrios mo chinneadh taobh mo mhàthar...¹⁵¹

If the child is her own, then the poetess seems to be saying that she wishes herself dead in order to escape the treatment which she is receiving from her neighbours in Mull, although, if it is not her child, the infant's mother may be the person whom the poetess regards as her greatest enemy, the person who has caused her the most anguish in her new home. Evidently *sgrios mo chàirdean* refers to the satire on Clan Cameron to which the poetess has been subjected, but she does not tell to which clan her mother belonged, although she was evidently not a Maclean if her clan was also dispraised in Mull. The complaint against her treatment is followed by a vengeful wish for those who have caused her distress:

B' fheàrr gun cluinninn,
 Sud 's gum faicinn,
 Ged nach bì mi,
 Creach an t-sìthein,
 'S creach an lagain,
 Creach Mhuile an Rois,
 'S a chruidh chaisfhionn,
 An t-Eilean Druidhneach bhith 'na lasair...
 Mnathan òga falbh sa' bhasraich,
 'S an cuid leanaban falbh gun bhaisteadh,
 Bualadh gu tric air ar macaibh,
 Iomain gu tric air ar martaibh...¹⁵²

le

One of the strongest curses used in women's Gaelic poetry is that the children of enemies would be left unbaptised, leaving them outside the church as well as outside of society. The idea that God would not watch over them, leaving the clan or family doomed, is contained in this not uncommon image.

After more exulting over the results of such raids and depredations committed against the people of Mull, the poetess returns her attention to her own clan, longing for her chief to come to Mull, and describing the route which he would take to do so, before praising him with traditional tree imagery:

Tha fiodh fraoich ort, tha chaor dhearg ort,
Tha 'm beithe beag ort 's an calltuinn...¹⁵³

Allan is portrayed as a man to be admired whether in peace or in battle, although his skill as a warrior is what the poetess concentrates on:

'S math thig sìth dhut, 's olc thig fearg dhut,
'S math thig lùireach leathann gharbh ort,
Cò theid sìos leinn do na blàraibh,
Gur h-i d' aghaidh nach robh sgàthach,
Gearrar cinn leat sam bi cnàmhan,
Dòirtear fuil leat sam bi nàire.¹⁵⁴

Although she sees these qualities as laudable, it was his very propensity for battle which caused Allan's reign to be:

one of the most cloudy and disastrous in the history of the clan, though he was one of its bravest and most distinguished chiefs. His constant feuds with the Mackintoshes and with the Earls of Huntly and Argyll kept him constantly in hot water, and in the end he lost the greater portion of the lands which had been acquired by his predecessors.¹⁵⁵

The poetess ends her song on a plaintive note, wishing that she could return to her native district, and indicating that she feels very much an outsider in Mull:

'S truagh nach robh mi san tìr Abrach,
Gun tigh'nn riamh as 'm measg nan coigreach.¹⁵⁶

Like *Cha téid Mòr a Bharraigh bhrònaich*, the song *An Spaidearachd Bharrach* ¹⁵⁷ is a flyting between a Clanranald bardess and her MacNeil counterpart; the Barra tradition being that the protagonists in this song also were Nic a' Mhanaich and Nic Iain Fhinn.¹⁵⁸ The ascription may be accurate, but it could arise from confusion with the later flyting in which they were involved. *An Spaidearachd Bharrach* was composed early in the seventeenth century, and, like the later song, the Uist woman begins the contest:

A Dhia ! 's gaolach	lium an gille
Dh' am bheil deirge	's gile 's duinnead,
Dalta nam bàrd	thùs nam filidh,
Ogha an fhir o 'n	Chaisteal Thioram thu
Bheireadh air an	togsaid sìleadh,
Cha n-ann le bùrn	gorm na linge,
Le fion daithte	's e air mire
Le fion théidear	cian 'ga shireadh. ¹⁵⁹

Within this run of praise is a clue to the identity of the object of the Uist bardess' affections. In 1610, Sir Donald of Clanranald obtained by charter "the fourteen merk lands of Morar, seven merk lands in Arisaig, twenty-three merk lands of Kindess...and six merks of Boisdale, all united and incorporated into the free barony of Castletirrim"¹⁶⁰. As the subject of the praise is referred to as the grandson of this Donald, we must conclude that he is Donald, son of Iain Mùideartach. The praise of Donald is interrupted by the Barra bardess, who is eager to sing the praises of her own clan, and to outshine the boasting of her rival with her extravagant claims:

Ach eudail mhór	's a Dhia fheartaich !
C' àit an d' fhàg thu	Ruairi an Tartair,
No Niall Glùndubh	no Niall Frasach,
Gill'Eóghanain	mór an gaisgeach ?
Chrathadh am flùr	fo na martaibh,
Dhòirteadh am fion	fo na h-eachaibh,
Air ghaol bùrn nan	lòn a sheachnadh,
Bheireadh cruithneachd	dhaibh 'san fhraasach,
Chuireadh strìan an	airgead ghlais riu,
Chuireadh cruidhean	òir fo 'n casan ! ¹⁶¹

This marks the end of any semblance of politeness between the bardesses, as the poem moves from praise of their respective clans to vitriolic abuse of the Barra bardess and her island by the Uist woman:

A bhradag dhubh bheag	a bhrìst na glasan,
Fàgaidh mi ort	an dubh-chapull,
Cha d' fhuairadh riamh	staoileadh agaibh,
Ach Barraidh dhubh bheag	chrìon-dubh, chlachach,

Oighreachd fhuair sibh	bhuainn an asgaidh,
Nuair a chunnaic	Dia 'nur n-airc sibh,
Eilean fiadhaich	am bi nan fachaich,
E gun rùm 's gun	fhiar 's gun fhasgadh,
'S e air fleòdradh	leis na sgaitibh ! ¹⁶²

The *dubh-chapull* was the penalty for defeat in a bardic contest, and here the Uist poetess does indeed have the victory, although another version gives the final words to the Barra woman:

A bhradag dhubh	bhrist na glasan
A Mhuilgheartach, na	nan cochull craicinn,
Cuiridh mi ort	an dubh-chapull... ¹⁶³

In this version, however, only the Barra contribution is given, and it seems to be summarised rendering of the song. The only other full version of the song which I have found¹⁶⁴ confirms that the victory in this contest went to the Uist bardess. The mocking reference by the Uist woman to Barra having been gained by the MacNeils only through the charity of the MacDonalds is actually based on fact, as "Alexander, Earl of Ross and Lord of the Isles, gave a charter of the lands of Barra to Gilleonan, the son of Roderick, the son of Murdoch Macneill, in 1427."¹⁶⁵ This highlights the accuracy of the historical knowledge displayed by both bardesses in their efforts to outdo each other. Knowledge of the history of her clan is shown by the Barra poetess with her references to past chiefs. Ruairidh an Tartair was the chief of the MacNeils of Barra at the time of the composition of the poem:

He appears to have had a legitimate family by Mór, sister to Donald MacDonald of Clanranald, and an illegitimate one by Mary MacLeod, only daughter of William MacLeod of Dunvegan and widow of Duncan Campbell of Auchinbreck. On 11 March 1613 the Register of the Scottish Privy Council recorded his complaint that he and his legitimate son...had been seized and imprisoned by his natural sons...The usurpation was permanent.¹⁶⁶

This would suggest a date prior to 1613 for this poem, as it is unlikely that a chief who had been taken prisoner by his own sons

would be listed among the heroes and warriors of the clan, as Ruairidh an Tartair is here. Niall Glùndubh and Niall Frasach were High Kings of Ireland who were claimed as ancestors by the MacNeils of Barra, and who reigned from 916 to 919 and from 763 to 770 respectively, while Gill' Eóghanan is probably the father or grandfather of Ruairidh an Tartair, and a member of the Council of the Isles formed in 1545.¹⁶⁷ This serves to illustrate the depth of knowledge possessed by these supposedly unlearned poets, able to quote relevant facts and names in an *ex tempore* composition, using history, as well as the present, to argue their case.

The attachment to one's native place and clan is an important element in the songs composed by women who, for one reason or another, were exiled from their native districts. These exiles were generally imposed on the authors by men who had authority over them: fathers or clan chieftains; and not all of them ended with a return to her native district for the poetess.

Turus mo chreiche 'thug mi 'Chola ¹⁶⁸ was composed by Fionnghal Caimbeul around the year 1645. She was the daughter of Dugald Campbell of Auchinbreck, the half-brother of the MacNeil usurper mentioned above, and was married to John Garbh, seventh MacLean of Coll.¹⁶⁹ She seems to have been treated very badly by her husband and his people:

Rinn iad mo leab' aig an dorus
Comaidh ri fearaibh 's ri conaibh;
'S thiug iad am bràisd as mo bhroilleach,
'S m' usgraichean 's mo chneapan corrach,
'S thug iad sin do Sheonaid dhona.¹⁷⁰

Fionnghal had a daughter named Janet, but it is unclear whether she is the *Seònaid dhona* referred to. It seems more likely that this was a member of Maclean of Coll's household, and one version of the song names her as *Shonaid Moireach* ¹⁷¹. One could take as proof that *Seònaid* was not related to the poetess the curse which she pronounces on her:

'Sheonaid air nach cinn an sonas,
Nior fhaiceam do chloinn an coinnimh,
'S nior fhaiceam am blàr fo 'm boineid.¹⁷²

However, this is followed by a most unmaternal address to her son, Hector Roy, who fought with the Royalist army at Inverlochy, against the Campbells, who were Covenanters:

Ach na 'm faighinn sìod a chuir an ordugh
Eachun ruadh a chuir air ròsta
Air diol na muice duibhe dòighte
No diol na circe thig o n chòcaire.

Eachun ruadh a dhol an dolaidh
S nior faiceam a chlann mù [muigh] ri dorus
No a chuid mac a dol na choinne[amh].¹⁷³

Although living in Mull, Fionnghal's loyalties obviously still lie with the Campbells. The poem was composed after the Royalist victory at Inverlochy, and the poetess makes her position very clear. She supports Clan Campbell over the Macleans, even though her own son, Hector Roy, and her husband were fighting for the latter clan. There is no praise for the Macleans in this song, instead it is a lament for her kinsfolk, whom she is not able to grieve openly because of her situation:

'S truagh nach robh mi 'n Inbhir-Lòchaidh,
'S gum faicinn dà shùil mheallaich Dhòmhnaill...
'S aghaidh Dhonnachaidh chalma, chròdha,
Laoch nach tiomadh ri uchd còmhraig.

Eudail de dh' fhearaibh an t-saoghail,
Cha 'n fhaic mise bean ga d' chaoineadh
Eadar Sorasdal 's an Caolas,
Breacachadh is Tota-Raonaill.
Cha b' ionnan sud is Inbhir-aoraidh,
Bhiodh na mnathan ann a glaothaich,
'S gruagaichean 's an cuailein sgaoilte.¹⁷⁴

Fionnghal is said to have gone mad with grief after Inverlochy, and it is not difficult to understand how her sorrow over her dead kinsfolk while living amongst those who had contributed to their deaths could have been too much for her to bear.

Perhaps the best-known female exile of the period up to 1750, although neither the reason for her banishment, nor the location to which she was sent, are known for certain, was Màiri nighean Alasdair Ruaidh. That Màiri was exiled on the orders of the Chief of MacLeod is indicated by the information in *Fuigheall*¹⁷⁵ that the news of her exile being at an end came *O Dhùn Bheagain nan steud*.¹⁷⁶ However, her return does not seem to have been to Skye:

...she mentions that she intends to voyage "westwards", obviously to Harris. There is every reason to believe that *Dùthaich Mhic Leòid* was Harris, for in the earliest charters extant the MacLeods are invariably styled "of Harris".¹⁷⁷

This does not automatically point to a recall by Sir Norman, as:

the bardess states that she will see MacLeod, the young Chief of the MacLeods, but does not say where. There is no reason to believe that the Chief was at all times resident in the Castle. He could quite easily have been at the time on a visit to Sir Norman of Berneray.¹⁷⁸

J.C. Watson gives an opposing view of the direction which Màiri's journey took:

The question must arise whether her destination was Dunvegan, the seat of the chief, or Bernera, the residence of Sir Norman. The words [Siùbhlaidh mi an iar] constitute the only tangible evidence for the latter, and we are probably safe in accepting...that her passage was to Skye. Dunvegan would be her natural destination, and especially the abode of the chief is indicated by *dùthaich Mhic Leòid*...for Mary is consistent in applying the proper style MacLeod to the chief alone...¹⁷⁹

Although Watson argues that "the expression...referring to her passage westward probably does not mean that she was bound for Harris", his explanation is not wholly convincing:

So far as we know, she set out from Dunvegan from either Sgarbaidh or...Mull. If from the former, the expression can be taken literally only if we suppose it to apply to the first part of the voyage to Dunvegan by way of the Sound of Iona. If we are content to concede to her a poetic licence, the phrase is as well used of a voyage from Aros as of one from Sgarbaidh north through the Sound of Mull; in either case it

can only loosely describe the first part of the voyage, which is of course on the whole northwards and not westwards.¹⁸⁰

The drawback to this theory is that Màiri, on the whole, was not given to using poetic licence. Imagery and metaphor are used in her work, but her songs are honest and straightforward. If she sang of going westwards, it was probably because she was heading west; and if she was going in that direction, her destination must have been Berneray rather than Skye.

That permission for Màiri to return came from Dunvegan, although it was to Berneray she returned, points to the reason for her exile being that she incurred the displeasure of the Chief for some reason. How this happened is not known, although there are several theories. John MacKenzie states that:

She gave publicity to one of her songs, which so provoked her patron, M'Leod, that he banished her to the Isle of Mull under the charge of a relative of his own.

It was during her exile there that she composed... "Luinneag Mhic Leòid". On this song coming to M'Leod's ears he sent a boat for her, giving orders to the crew not to take her on board except she should promise to make no more songs on her return to Skye. Mary readily agreed to this condition of release, and returned with the boat to Dunvegan Castle.

Soon after this a son of the Laird's had been ill, and on his recovery Mary composed a song which...drew on her devoted head the displeasure of her chief, who remonstrated with her for again attempting song-making without his permission. Mary's reply was, "It is not a song; it is only a crònan."¹⁸¹

Mackenzie does not tell us how Màiri angered MacLeod in the first instance, but John MacInnes provides several possibilities:

Modern tradition explains that she was given to composing satirical or even obscene songs...Other explanations are that she aroused MacLeod's jealousy by her songs to Sir Norman of Bernera, or that she over-praised the chief's children – a dangerous practice, liable to bring ill-luck upon them. Watson adopts Mr. Alexander Nicholson's view, "that she was among

those dependants who suffered expulsion from Dunvegan under the anglicised régime of Roderick, the seventeenth chief, and that she was restored at the accession of his brother Norman ...It would place her exile late in life, for Roderick succeeded in 1693 and died in 1699." This is a reasonable assumption. W.J. Watson observed that Màiri's *Luinneag Mhic Leòid*, composed while she was in exile, cannot be earlier than 1675... and it could, of course, be much later.¹⁸²

MacInnes then cites Alexander Morrison's theory:

that the motive for banishing the poetess derived from the attitude displayed by the Commonwealth Government towards supporters of the Stuart cause, among whom the MacLeods were prominent. [Morrison] points out that after the chief of the clan capitulated, in 1656, Norman of Bernera had to leave for the continent; it might therefore "have been deemed politic to exile such a stormy petrel as Màiri nighean Alasdair Ruaidh as well", for she was Norman's "most outspoken supporter."

We have no evidence as to the length of Màiri's exile; it might conceivably have stretched from 1656 to 1675 or beyond. Yet the tone of *Luinneag Mhic Leòid* is not that of a song composed after long years in exile. Nor...do any of the traditional accounts give the impression that Màiri's exile was so protracted...Mr. Morrison's conjecture regarding the chief's motives for banishing her makes good sense. The theory that this was...a political decision can be applied with equal validity even if we think that the exile is more likely to have fallen in the last decade of the seventeenth century. For it is certainly true that the political atmosphere which followed the Revolution Settlement of 1689 was no more favourable to the Gaels than that which prevailed during the time of the Commonwealth.¹⁸³

Rev. Matheson's theory was that Màiri was exiled for composing the type of songs which were the preserve of male bards, rather than limiting herself to the laments and lullabies which women were permitted to produce¹⁸⁴, but MacInnes does not wholly agree:

It was not...so much because she was a woman composing the "big songs" that Màiri was banished, as because of the content

of these songs. In her panegyric poetry, Màiri nighean Alasdair Ruaidh is quite as strong a propagandist for the Gaelic social order as any *file*; consequently, in the political atmosphere of the time, her activities as a poet could be a source of embarrassment to the chief of the clan. But if she confined herself to songs that did not so explicitly celebrate the traditional virtues to be looked for in the clan leaders – such as songs of normal feminine occupations – then her poetry could be explained away.¹⁸⁵

From the evidence, I am inclined to agree that Màiri's exile was politically rather than personally motivated, and that she was exiled from, and returned to, the household of Sir Norman MacLeod in Berneray. Given that her exile was not earlier than 1675, it would seem that the accession of William and Mary, and the troubled period which followed, was the reason for her leaving her home. In the songs composed during her exile, Màiri displays no anger or displeasure towards her chief, indicating that she was not in his disfavour. She is not anxious or uneasy at the news of her recall, but joyful at the prospect of returning home, indicating that she had nothing to fear from MacLeod. As for where she spent her exile, the truth seems...that she made a *cuairt*. A tradition which is still extant recounts that she was at first in Scarba...and this is reinforced by the heading and contents of the *Tuireadh*. Besides this, a tradition known to Dr. Carmichael and still strong in Harris tells us that the poem "Ri fuaim an taibh", which is called *Crònan an Taibh*, was composed during her exile on the isle of Pabbay in Harris, where Mary's brother Neil, MacLeod's factor for St. Kilda, is said to have lived. Bàrd Phabaidh, born about 1812, refers to her in one of his poems:

Chaidh roimhe ban-Leòdach
Chur air fògradh do'n àite so;
Rinn i luinneagan 's crònain
Chur air dòigh ann am bàrdachd ann...

The evidence of tradition, however, makes it clear that she was also in Mull, and we can gather with tolerable certainty from her own words that this was at the end of her exile, and that

it was to Mull that the boat came to fetch her home; if we read Aros and not àros...it appears that she embarked from that place upon her homeward voyage.¹⁸⁶

If we take a closer look at the poems which she composed during her banishment, we can see that she is not at all happy with her situation, and that she wishes to return home as soon as possible. In her *Tuireadh* ¹⁸⁷, she begins:

Is muladach mì
O cheann seachdain,

Is mi an eilean gun
Fhiar gun fhasgadh

Ma dh' fhaodas mi
Théid mi dhachaidh;

Nì mi an t-iomramh
Mar as fhasa...¹⁸⁸

Likewise, *Luinneag Mhic Leòid* ¹⁸⁹ begins with a note of sadness and disbelief at the situation in which she finds herself:

Is mi am shuidhe air an tulaich
Fo mhulad 's fo aimcheist,
Is mi ag coimhead air Ile,
Is ann de m' iognadh 's an ám so;
Bha mi uair nach do shaoil mi,
Gus an do chaochail air m' aimsir,
Gun tiginn an taobh so
Dh' amharc Dhiùraidh á Sgarbaidh.¹⁹⁰

The banishment imposed on Màiri seems to have been unexpected, which is natural enough considering her advanced years at the time. She uses her experience to make a philosophical statement in *Crònan an Taibh* ¹⁹¹:

Gur mairg a bheir géill
Do' n t-saoghal gu léir;
Is tric a chaochail e cheum gàbhaidh.

Gur lionmhoire a chùrs
Na' n dealt air an driùchd
Ann am madainn an tùs Màighe.¹⁹²

However, there is no trace of bitterness towards the family of the chief who caused her exile, and she continues to praise the MacLeods of Harris and of Dunvegan, lamenting only the fact that she is separated from them.

Biodh an deoch-s' air láimh mo rùin ¹⁹³ was also, according to tradition, composed by a woman forced into exile by her clan chief, only in this instance the chief, Dòmhnall Gorm MacDonald, was also her father¹⁹⁴. There is very little in the song, most of which is devoted to praise of Clanranald and his ship, to describe the life led by the poetess in Coll, although she evidently thinks little of the island:

'S mairg a shamhladh Cola creagach,
Ri Dùnbheagain no Dùn-tuilm.¹⁹⁵

Although composed in exile the song is one of joy on being reunited with her family, and at the prospect of returning home.

There are two songs of exile beginning with *'S muladach mi 's mi air m' aineoil* by women authors. One version of the earlier song¹⁹⁶, composed in the seventeenth century, begins with the poetess lamenting her exile, and waiting for the arrival of her lover, who has promised her many things. However, her feelings for him may be somewhat ambiguous:

'S muladach mi 's mi air m' aineoil,
'S éisleanach mi 'sa chùil rainich,
'S nach fhaic mi tighinn mo leannan,
Geugaire fionn foinnidh fearail,
E air shealbh mo lorg a leantail,
E air shealbh mo phòig a mhealadh;
Gun saoradh Dia mi o t' ainbhiach !

Gheall thu mo phòsadh gun cheannach,
 Caisteal a dheanamh do dh' Anna,
 Ùbhlán òir a chur air chrannaibh.¹⁹⁷

The plea to be freed from her sweetheart's *ainbhiach* is somewhat strange; neither *ainmhidheachd* or *ainbhfhìach*, brutality or indebtedness, fit in with the complimentary tone of the passage. Perhaps she is referring to unwelcome physical advances, or wishing to be freed of the love which she bears for her sweetheart, whose promises will not be fulfilled for some reason, presumably one of status. The poetess would not expect to marry without a dowry, *gun cheannach*, unless she was of a much lower social status than the man she loved, and could not provide a suitable marriage-portion.

The remainder of the poem is a celebration of MacDonald of Clanranald, although it is not clear whether or not he is also the *leannan* for whom she is waiting. Considering the absence of personal description, concentrating rather on the splendour of his household and his retinue, the impression is given that Mac 'ic Ailein is not the sweetheart of the poetess, but almost certainly her chief. She makes some extravagant claims in her description of his household:

Fiamh an duin' òig air an t-sean-duin',
 Faimh na maighdin air a chaillich¹⁹⁸

This song is somewhat unusual in that the poetess names herself, although she gives no more information which would allow one to identify her. Clanranald is also named as *Ailean*, which gives a clue as to the dating of the song. Allan, son of Iain Mùideartach, died in 1593, but as the poetess calls him *an tighearn' òig*, and Allan was around fifty years old when he succeeded his father, he is unlikely to be the subject of this poem.¹⁹⁹ His eldest son, also named Allan, did not succeed his father, as he was killed by his brothers from his father's second marriage,²⁰⁰ and therefore would not normally be referred to as Mac 'ic Ailein. This seems to leave only the possibility that the praise of the poetess is addressed to Allan of Clanranald, who was only thirteen when his father, Donald, died in 1686, yet he accompanied his tutor to fight at Killiecrankie in 1689²⁰¹, and was himself eventually killed at Sheriffmuir in 1715.²⁰² Although the passages of praise to young Clanranald are formulaic,

they would be most appropriate for this Allan, thereby placing the poem in the latter quarter of the seventeenth century. However, one cannot overlook the possibility with this particular poem that the opening passage is all that remains of the original, and that the praise of Clanranald is a later accretion from another song in the same metre. Another version of the same song, with a very similar opening, is presented as a flyting between a supporter of MacLeod of Harris and the supporter of Clanranald; the opening lines belonging to the MacLeod woman:

'S muladach mi 's mi air m' aineoil,
'S éisleanach mi 's a chluain rainich,
Còimhead uam air chuan na Hearadh,
'S nach fhaic mi tighinn mo leannan,
Geugaire fionn foinnidh fearail...²⁰³

The poetess follows this praise of her lover with a very different treatment of Clanranald:

'S truagh nach fhaighinn sìod air m' aineachd -
Mac 'ic Ailein bhith 'san fheamain,
Bhaintighearna a bhith aig an sgalaig,
An tighearna òg a' bruich an arain,
Mac Nìll a' feitheamh na fallaid.²⁰⁴

The reference to MacNeil here is no more complimentary than that of the Clanranald poetess in *An Spaidearachd Bharrach*, suggesting that he is waiting for the leavings from Clanranald's table, even though the poetess here is wishing straitened circumstances upon Clanranald himself. The reply of the Clanranald poetess to this in parts bears a close resemblance to *Cha téid Mòr a Bharraigh bhrònaich*, although one could not be certain in this case which song borrowed from the other, if either one did. The MacDonald bardess names her chief as Dòmhnall, adding:

'S ann a bhiodh tu 'n ceann do mhórshluaigh,
'S tu cur fìon an obair òircheard,
Do dh' iarlachan 's do Mhontròsa,
'S tu cur shaighdeirean an òrdugh.²⁰⁵

The naming of Donald as the chief of Clanranald, along with the mention of Montrose, dates this version of the song around 1645, suggesting that the song wholly in praise of Clanranald is probably of a later date, with the composer using the opening lines of the flyting to launch into her own song. This would explain the absence of references to Harris or the MacLeods in the later version, as it is presented from a purely Clanranald viewpoint. The Clanranald bardess involved in the flyting is also an exile from her own lands:

'S e m' fheudail mhór Mac 'ic Ailein,
Cha b' e Mac Leòid 's mi 'na fhearann...²⁰⁶

As the MacLeod bardess also claims to be *air m' aineoil*, one would have to assume that she was either a Skye woman living in Harris, or vice-versa, and that the poem was composed in one of these two islands.

The second song beginning '*S muladach mi 's mi air m' aineoil*,²⁰⁷ although not all the versions contain this line, was composed around 1700 by a woman who was apparently a native of Harris:

'S muladach mi	's mi air m' aineoil,
Gur fada 's gur cian	chì mi 'n sealladh,
Chì mi Rùm is	Eige 's Canaidh bhuam,
Tìrith' ìseal	's tìr Mhic [Ailein];
Ge tà cha n-fhaic	mi na h-Earadh bhuam
Far an d' fhuair mi	gu h-òg m' aran ann... ²⁰⁸

Coll seems the most likely location for the composition of this poem, as it is the only island from which all the others could be seen, and which is not itself mentioned in the song. The poetess seems to be awaiting the arrival of a boat, although this may be used simply as "an image of disquiet and anguish...a despairing seeking for relief or distraction."²⁰⁹ Some versions of the song connect the boat with Raghnaill, although the longer versions deal with this separately. Raghnaill is evidently connected with the poetess, but whether this tie is one of kinship or one of laird and tenant is not clear, although he seems to be of relatively high social status:

Raghnaill, a rùin	cùm do ghealladh rium,
Cùm an dùthchas	bh' aig do sheanair rium.
Dian do thoigh air	ceann an rathaid
Far an dian na	h-uaislean tathaich,
Tadhlaidh Mac Leòid	's Mac 'ill' Eathain ort,
Tadhlaidh m' eudail	Mac 'ic Ailein ort. ²¹⁰

Tha affectionate reference to Clanranald does not tie in with the earlier indications that the woman was a native of Harris, especially as she does not refer to MacLeod in the same way. Unless the poetess was a Clanranald MacDonald who was fostered in Harris, in which case both the attachment to Harris and to Clanranald could be explained, this is probably an accretion to the original song. Despite the bardess' longing to see her native place, this song is not primarily one of exile, but a lament to her five children. Nonetheless, one can imagine how her feelings of grief would be heightened by the distance between herself and her native people. Like Fionnghal Caimbeul, she may have felt unable to fully express her sorrow and anguish among strangers, increasing her sense of isolation and loss.

These songs illustrate, in different ways, the importance of belonging, to a clan, to a place, or to both. One can only imagine the difficulties faced by women who, because of marriage, travelled far from their homes and families to live as a stranger in a strange district; and it is understandable that they clung more tightly to their roots as a result. Absence from one's native place, whether by choice or through necessity, often serves to increase one's attachment to it, and to the people left behind.

The delight in the past glories of their clan, and concerns for its future, are shared in the songs of both male and female poets, but there is a note of fatalism in the women's poetry which is not evident to such an extent in that of their male counterparts. This is perhaps explained by the fact that women could do little to change things themselves; they could only encourage their menfolk to do so. To a large extent they were the helpless observers, or the pawns in games of power, and their only weapon or means of rebellion was their skill with words, and the knowledge of history and current affairs which enabled them to use this talent to best effect. Women did not carry out the raids over which they exulted; they did not fight in the battles which they lamented; they were not responsible for the making

or breaking of the fortunes of their clans, but their very lack of direct involvement meant that they were able to record these events from a clan perspective, often providing a valuable counterpoint to historical accounts. Although not directly involved in the martial exploits of their clans, the women's songs show that their loyalty to their chief and his territory was as strong as any man's. Their lack of control over their situation, especially in terms of marriage, did not result in meek acceptance of their fates. The clan to which they gave their loyalty remained their own free choice, however much difficulty that decision caused them, and they were unafraid to make that loyalty known, despite any persecution or rejection which might result.

In this context it is interesting to note the tradition surrounding the song in praise of Clan Donald, beginning *Tha tasgaidh bhuam an diomhaireachd*.²¹¹ In all the sources, this song is ascribed to Màiri nighean Alasdair Ruaidh, who, in all her other poems, is a staunch supporter of Clan MacLeod. The background for the composition of this song is given by Alexander Macdonald:

She appears to have been known as the daughter of one Alexander Macleod, who was..."a descendant of the chief of that clan." it is said, however, to have transpired, when she was pretty well advanced in years, that she was the daughter of a distinguished Macdonald of the time; and that when she discovered the fact she composed [the] song.²¹²

Just how Màiri could have discovered this fact about her parentage late in life is not explained, nor how, if it was known by others, she did not learn of her Macdonald connections much earlier, but both the John Maclean manuscript²¹³ and Iain Macilleain's collection²¹⁴ agree with the ascription of this song to her, and name the person to whom it is addressed as Sir Donald of Sleat. The song itself makes no mention of Clan MacLeod, which is unusual in a poem composed by Màiri. Even if she had turned her back on them on discovering her true identity, one would expect some reference to the clan which she had served and praised for so many years, if only as one of the friendly clans listed in the song. Although the song is composed in a strophic metre, and the vigorous rhythm is sustained, the ascription to Màiri is doubtful. The song seems to be composed

from a Skye perspective, which one would expect in a poem addressed to a Skye chief, but Màiri spent little, if any, time in Skye, and she was born in Harris, at a time when relations between the houses of Dunvegan and Sleat were less than cordial, making it unlikely that a liaison between Màiri's mother and a MacDonald would have gone unnoticed. The ascription may therefore arise from confusion between the two poetesses with the patronymic *Nighean Alasdair Ruaidh*, with the Skye-based Fionnghal being a more credible author for this poem than her Berneray contemporary. As the MacLeod and MacDonald estates in Skye were adjoining, the possibility of belonging to one clan while being brought up in another is greater, and, as there is no evidence that Fionnghal enjoyed any closer relation to the chief of MacLeod than that of a clanswoman, the fact that the clan MacLeod are not mentioned in her song is less surprising than such an omission would be in a composition by Màiri nighean Alasdair Ruaidh. If we accept that Fionnghal rather than Màiri was the author of this song, and that she considered herself a MacLeod in 1693, when she composed a lament to Iain Breac, then the Donald being addressed in here is probably Dòmhnall a' Chogaidh, who became chief of Sleat in the early eighteenth century. The opening of the poem seems to back up the tradition as to the circumstances in which it was composed, with the poetess expressing her elation at her discovery:

Tha tasgaidh bh' uam an diomhaireachd,
 Bho cheann an fheadh so bhliadhnachean,
 Cha 'n airgiod glas, cha 'n iarunn e,
 Ach Ridire glic, riasanta,
 Bheil meas is misneach Iarlachean,
 Bho 'n thuair mi nis le iarraidh thu,
 Gu 'n riaraichinn Sir Domhnull.²¹⁵

The praise of Sir Donald and his allies which follows is fairly conventional, with reference to legendary as well as historical ancestors, and using formulaic panegyric imagery. The splendour of the chief's dwelling at Duntulm is described, and the poem ends with what seems to be a reference to the chief's wife, and a wish for the prosperity of the chief and clan. The penultimate stanza is in praise of a woman, and although she is not identified as such, it would seem that she was the wife of the chief, as would be indicated by the

positioning of the reference in the poem:

Gu ma pailt an saoghal so,
 Do 'n dalta rinn mo dhaoine dhomh,
 'S na chinn suas na h-ionracas,
 Bu mhisneachail an caonnaoig thu,
 Gu measail mar a ghlaodhte ris
 Gun bheud, gun mhas, gun mhaolachadh,
 'S i 'n aon té bha ga 'r mòchadh.²¹⁶

This stanza is problematic, as the focus seems to switch from the woman to the clan, or a male member' of the clan, with the mention of battle. If *caonnaoig* is interpreted as struggle or dispute, however, the entire stanza could be addressed to a woman, although the meaning of the final line is obscure. If we read *mothachadh* instead of *mòchadh*, the line could mean 'she is the only one who understood you', or 'she is the only one who felt you', indicating that the woman was, indeed, the wife of Sir Donald.

The poem ends with a wish for good fortune for the chief, along with further praise of his character and his ancestry. The poetess is unequivocally a MacDonald supporter, and, although her style is formulaic, the value of this song lies in the tradition which accompanies it, that it was composed by a woman who did not discover that she was a member of Clan Donald until late in life, and for whom the news is not shocking, but something to be joyful about. One has to wonder, in such a case, about her loyalty to the clan which she considered herself to belong to until this revelation, given the ease with which she transferred her allegiance. Perhaps she was disillusioned with the new Chief of MacLeod, Roderick, and his anglicised ways, and was pleased to have found in Sir Donald a clan leader worthy of praise in the traditional style.

Notes:

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4. ref. 2; p. 41.
5. ref. 2; pp. 458-59.
6. Appendix; p. 640.
7. ref. 2; pp. 148-49.
8. Appendix; p. 630.
9. *Clan MacLeod Magazine*, 1951; p. 14.
10. A. Maclean Sinclair, *Clàrsach na Coille*, Glasgow 1881; pp. 257-58.
11. *ibid.*
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13. Appendix; p. 425.
14. Iain Mac Illeain, *Orain nuadh Ghaedhlach*, Duneudainn, 1818; pp. 225-28.
15. A Sennachie, *Account of the Clan Maclean*, London 1838; p. 151.
16. *ibid.*
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19. A. Maclean Sinclair, *Na Bàird Leathanach*, Charlottetown, P.E.I. 1898; pp. 57-59.
20. ref. 15; pp. 308-11.
21. ref. 19; pp. 57-59.
22. *ibid.*
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27. ref. 15; pp. 196-98.
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35. ref. 19; pp. 191-92.
36. *ibid.*
37. *ibid.*
38. ref. 15; pp. 198-200.
39. Appendix; p. 443.
40. ref. 19; pp. 187-89.
41. *ibid.*
42. *ibid.*
43. *ibid.*
44. *ibid.*
45. Appendix; p. 442.
46. ref. 19; pp. 189-90.
47. *ibid.*
48. Appendix; p. 458.
49. ref. 15; p. 200.
50. ref. 19; pp. 192-97.
51. *ibid.*
52. *ibid.*
53. *ibid.*
54. Chapter 2; p. 28.
55. ref. 19; pp. 192-97.
56. *ibid.*
57. *ibid.*
58. *ibid.*
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60. *ibid.*
61. *ibid.*
62. *ibid.*
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65. ref. 64; pp. 102-11.
66. A. & A. MacDonald, *Clan Donald*, vol. III, Inverness 1904; pp. 70-76.
67. ref. 66; pp. 79-81.
68. A. & A. MacDonald, *Clan Donald*, vol. II, Inverness 1900; p. 340.
69. Chapter 4; p. 99.
70. Appendix; p. 407.
71. C. Ó Baoill, *Bárdachd Shilis na Ceapaich*, Edinburgh 1972; pp. 70-74.
72. Appendix; p. 418.
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77. ref. 76; p. 32.
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80. ref. 76; p. 152.
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85. ref. 76; pp. 204-19.
86. ref. 76; pp. 153-54.
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91. ref. 87; pp. 38-40.
92. *ibid.*
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95. Appendix; p. 591.
96. MacLagan MS. No. 56.
97. Gilleasbuig Meinne, *Comhchruinneacha do dh' Orain thaghta Ghaidhealach*,
Glascho 1870; pp. 27-29.
98. A. Sinclair, *An t-Òranaiche*, Glasgow 1879; pp. 92-94.
99. Appendix; p. 589.
100. A. & A. MacDonald, *The MacDonald Collection of Gaelic poetry*,
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116. Appendix; p. 495.
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122. Angus I. Macnaghten, *The Chiefs of Clan MacNachtan and their descendants*, Windsor 1951; p. 38.
123. Appendix; p. 553.
124. Appendix; p. 598.
125. Chapter 3; p. 57.
126. ref. 100; pp. lxxv-lxxvi.
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128. Chapter 2; p. 20.
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132. ref. 129; pp. 154-58.
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142. ref. 64; pp. 51-52.
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146. *Gairm Magazine*, No. 6; pp. 125-26.
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166. ref. 129; pp. 232-35.
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9. WOMAN TO WOMAN

Considering the wealth of poetry composed by women, it is perhaps surprising to discover that so few of these songs are to, or about, other women. Women are mentioned in the passing in many songs, e.g. as the wife, daughter or mother of a clan leader or as a rival for the love of the poetess' sweetheart, but, if we ignore these, there remain less than a dozen songs by female authors in which the main focus is on a woman, or on women in general. This is in contrast to the large number of songs composed by men to women, although, as the majority of these are love-songs, one might expect such a disparity. Nonetheless, it might seem unusual that while both men and women composed songs to men of high and low social status, women generally seem to be unworthy of attention other than in a romantic sense. The reasons for this mainly spring from the type of society in which the women, and the poetesses lived, rather than the relative worth of the women themselves; the world into which they were born denied them many freedoms which are now taken for granted, punishing those who tried to loosen their chains. A wife was viewed as an accessory of her husband, her grace and beauty reflecting his glory, rather than celebrated as virtues in the woman herself. A daughter was a pawn in her father's hands, married off for political and financial ends, rather than through her own choice. Mothers and foster-mothers praised their offspring and their charges, seemingly unconscious of the role which they had played in forming their characters. No matter how worthy of praise a woman was in her own right, it is unsurprising that in such a society even her own sex would not think to sing her praises; if a woman was not supposed to compose the 'big' songs to her chief, how much ostracism would have been her reward for composing one to the chief's lady ?

Women did not think themselves important, they were trained to obey and serve their menfolk, and it was only in the eighteenth century that this mould began to be broken to any great extent. There were songs to women before then, two laments for a dead child, and one waulking song, but songs to women in general and to women who were not related to the poetess only begin to appear after 1700.

The two earliest songs addressed to women, *Nach fhreagair thu, Cairistiona ?*¹ and *Mhàiri bhàn a bhroillich ghlèghil*² are laments for young women, composed by poetesses with whom they had very close ties. *Cairistiona* is the composition of the dead girl's foster-mother, grieving over the untimely death of her charge. She commiserates with Cairistiona's sweetheart on his loss, addressing him in similar terms to those used for the widow of a dead nobleman:

Oganaich na gruaige duibheadh,
 'S ann an nochd as mòr do mhulad.
 Chan ianadh lium thu bhith dubhach -
 'S do leannan a stoigh fo dhubhthàr
 An cistidh nam bòrd air a dubhadh.³

The dead woman is praised not only for her womanly virtues and accomplishments, her skill at sewing and her beauty, but also for her education and wisdom:

Ceann na céilleadh, beul na comhairle,
 Sgrìobhadair, leughadair leabhar.⁴

This takes the place of bravery in battle and skill with weapons lauded in poetry addressed to men. Cairistiona's achievements are in gentle pastimes, although the ability to read and write was still relatively rare amongst the Gaelic nobility in general at that time, and is considered by the contemporary poets as a praiseworthy attribute in a man as well. Where the poem differs from the standard elegies to a dead chief or leader is that we are not given any details as to the actual identity of Cairistiona. She seems to have been a MacDonald, from the reference to having spent time in Glencoe, but who her forebears were, and where she lived, remains a mystery. Since she was a woman, it was irrelevant whether or not she was the offspring of a race of chiefs, as she could never be a chief herself, and clan genealogies recorded only the paternal line, so that the poet would have been unable to provide her with any detailed references to the line of women of which she was a representative, or of any of their noble acts. The dead girl's father and mother are not mentioned in the song, nor is any member of her immediate family, which may be considered odd, especially since, if they were also dead, that fact is

unlikely to have gone unmentioned. The answer may simply be that such references did occur in the original song, but have been lost in transmission.

Only a fragment remains of the lament for Màiri Bhàn, an outpouring of her mother's grief, with the only description of the dead girl being given in the opening line:

Mhairi bhàn a bhroillich ghle-ghil ⁵

There is no clue as to who Màiri was, where she lived, or what kind of person she was; we can only gather that she is sorely missed by the composer of the song. There is another song with the same opening line⁶ which, however, bears no other resemblance to this lament; instead it seems to be a flyting between Nic a' Mhanaich and another bardess. The flyting version is mainly composed of passages which also occur in other songs of that type, and contains little of originality.

The waulking song, *Siuthadaibh, siuthadaibh a mhnathan* ⁷, and the angry chastising of a rumour-monger, *A Mhairearad nan Cuireid*,⁸ are ascribed to Màiri nighean Alasdair Ruaidh. The second of these songs seems to be a response to a woman who has been spreading rumours that Màiri is pregnant by her lover. Màiri, if she was indeed the author, angrily denies this and satirizes the family of her accuser, while praising her own:

Cha b'ionann do m' athair
Is do t' athair-sa, éisg !

Cha b' ionann do m' bhràithrean
Is do ghàrlaich gun spéis.

Cha b' ionann do ar tighean
An àm laighe do 'n ghréin:

Gum faighte an tigh m' athar-s'
Sitheann 's cnàimhean an fhéidh

Is e gheibhte an taigh t' athar-s'
Sùgh is cnàimhean an éisg.⁹

It is interesting to note that the comparisons are struck between male family members, rather than between the women themselves, proving that women tended to view themselves in relation to their menfolk, rather than in their own right. Women took pride in the reflected glory of their menfolk, instead of praising their own virtues. Likewise, the disgrace of the men is reflected on the women. Màiri, if she was, indeed, the composer of this song, confines her abuse of Mairearad to name-calling, reflecting somewhat on her character, but otherwise giving little concrete information about the woman:

Gur a diombach mi 'n chaile
Thog sgannal nam breug;

Dubh iomall na tuatha,
Buinneag shuarach gun spréidh...¹⁰

The waulking song is merely an encouragement to the women at the waulking board to waulk the tweed well, and also mentions taking a boat over to the chief's hall. A similar song, *Siuthadaibh, siuthadaibh, fhearaibh*,¹¹ is found as a rowing-song, and it is unclear as to which is the earlier version. The *iorram* begins:

Siùdaibh, siùdaibh so fhearaibh,
Iomraibh athaiseach leam.

Ma théid mi air m' adhart
Nì mi tadhal san Dùn.

Far 'eil Ruairidh mac Iain,
Mac athar mo rùin,

Feuch am faigh sinn a' bhirlinn
No am faod i toirt dhùinn.

Tha sinne 'n so ceathrar,
Aon a bharrachd air triùir;

'S mór gum b' fheairrde sinn ochdnar
'S urra shocrach air stiùir.¹²

These words fit easily into the context of a rowing-song, whereas the references to sailing do not sit quite as easily with the image of the tweed being waulked:

Siuthadaibh, siuthadaibh, a mhnathan,
Luadhaibh athaiseach liùm;
Tha sinne 'n seo ceathrar,
Urta bharrachd air triùir,
Cha b' fhuilear dhuinn ochdnar, ' ,
'S urra choltach air stiùir,
Ach ma théid sinn air adhart,
Nì sinn tadhal 'san Dùn
Far bheil Ruairi mac Iain,
Mac athar mo rùin,
Fiach am faigh sinn a' bhiairlinn,
No 'm faod e a tobhairt dùinn...¹³

The mention of *Ruairidh mac Iain* in both versions of the song narrow the date of composition to between 1693 and 1699, when Ruairidh, son of Iain Breac, was chief of MacLeod. Given the evidence of the text, it seems most likely that the *iorram* is the earlier song, which was then adapted by Màiri nighean Alasdair Ruaidh for her own purposes while the original was, itself, fairly recent. This practice, adaptation of one song in order to provide a starting point, and a tune, for another, was fairly common, and the remainder of the waulking song differs from the text of the *iorram*, although the image of the boat is still to the forefront. An extended version of the rowing-song describes the voyage undertaken by the boat, and seems to refer to conflict of some kind:

Ruigidh sinn an cala sàbhailt,
Ged bu ghàbhaidh teachd nunn...

Bidh am fùdar 'ga sgailceadh
Anns a' mhaduinn òig, ùir.

Bithidh fonn air gillean gaisgeil
Do! a chleachdadh cleas-lùth.

Chionn tha fiughair ann ri cogadh,
'S gu 'm bheil doireann oirnn dlùth.¹⁴

There were no major conflicts during the chiefship of Ruairidh, which indicates either an earlier or a later date for this particular version of the song. It may refer to one of the Jacobite risings, or perhaps to the Montrose campaign of 1645, or that of Viscount Dundee in 1689. It is quite possible that this is, in fact, the original *iorram*, and that both Màiri nighean Alasdair Ruaidh's song and the rowing-song which mentions Ruairidh developed from it. The waulking song changes voices, almost as if a dramatic scene is being played out, with the speculation over the acquisition of the birlinn in the opening section being answered in the second part:

Cha n-fhaigh sibh a bhiaoirinn,
'S cha n-fhaod mi a tobhairt dùibh;
'S ann a gheibh sibh an coite
'S e bu choltaiche dhùibh;
Nuair a dh' fhalbhas na Faoillich,
Théid na saoir os a cionn.¹⁵

This section underlines the unimportant status of those asking for the birlinn, but it is debatable whether this was because they were women, or because they were of low social class; certainly, a noblewoman would not be expected to participate in waulking the cloth.

The significance of waiting until after the equinox¹⁶ to repair the boat is unclear; perhaps there was some superstition attached to that time.

The final passage of the song as it appears in *Hebridean Folksongs* seems to bear no relation to what has gone before, and may be a later accretion although, as has previously been noted¹⁷, the theme of a waulking song is liable to change, often dramatically, with the change of singer at the composition. This section is partly a complaint of poverty, although most of it could be described as worry over nothing:

Gu dé nist a nì mise
 Ma bhristear mo ghlùn ?...
 Cha dian mi ceum astair
 Gun tagsa ri m' chùl
 'S mi 'm bothan gun tughadh
 'S an t-snighe os mo chionn.¹⁸

Although this song was composed by women, and begins as an exhortation to the waulkers of the tweed, it gives little insight into the female perspective of the time. It is a functional song, not one composed to express emotions or opinions, and as such stands slightly apart from the main body of women's poetry. A dramatic contrast to this song is provided by the compositions of Sileas na Ceapaich, in whose poetry on the subject of women, both emotion and opinion are plentiful.

Sileas sets out her opinion on what she sees as the decline in moral standards of her day, and the risks to which this exposes young women, in two songs, *Comhairle air na Nigheanan Oga*¹⁹ and *An Aghaidh na h-Obair Nodha*.²⁰ In the first of these songs, Sileas uses her own experiences in order to outline the pitfalls of a too ready belief in the flattery of young men. Her jaundiced view of human behaviour is clear from the very beginning:

An toiseach m' aimsir is mo dhòigh ri bargan
 Gun robh mi 'g earbsa nach cealgte orm;
 Cha chòmhradh cearbach air ro-bheag leanmhuinn
 Bho aois mo leanbaidh chaidh fheuchainn dhòmhs';
 Ach nis bho chì mi cor nan daoine,
 An comunn gaolach gur faoin a ghlòr,
 Cha dean mi m' aontadh ri neach fo 'n t-saoghal;
 Chan eil gach aon diùbh air aon chainnt beòil.²¹

Sileas evidently has a low opinion of young men, especially those who dress in fine clothes and declare their passion for young women, but she also condemns the foolishness of young women who believe such flattery:

Saoilidh gòrag le bhriathraibh mòrach
 'Ga cur an dòchas le glòir a chinn:

'A ghaoil, gabh truas rium 's na leig gu h-uaigh mi;
Do ghaol a bhuair mi bho ghluais mi fhìn.'²²

The song continues along these lines, basically warning girls that young men are only after one thing:

'Nuair gheobh e mhiann di gun toir e bhriathra
Nach fhac e riamh i...'²³

Although this poem was probably one of those condemned for being coarse and indelicate²⁴, the tone of the piece is highly moralistic rather than bawdy or in any way improper. It may not have been deemed ladylike to openly speak of the matters addressed by Sileas here, but the aim of the work is to preserve and protect the reputations of young women, rather than to corrupt them in any way. If anything, she is too moralistic, judging all men by the standards of some, allowing for little possibility that the words of love uttered by some may be genuine:

A chlann, na éisdibh ri 'n glòr gun éifeachd,
'S na toiribh spéis do fhear caogaidh shùil;
Gur h-aobhar reusain dhuibhs' an tréigeadh -
'S ann annta fhéin a bhios gné nan lùb.'²⁵

The poetess draws on her own experiences as a young girl in order to illustrate the falseness of men:

Na geallan glé-mhór a gheobhainn fhéin bhuap'
Air chor 's nach tréigeadh iad mi gu bràth;
A nis is léir dhomh na rinn mi dh' eucoir
'S a mheud 's a dh' éisd mi d' am breugan bàth.'²⁶

This may be linked to Sileas' poem to her son, Gilleasbuig ²⁷, whom she regards as the rightful heir to his father, although he did not succeed him. It is possible that this son was actually illegitimate, although the son of her husband, and that this was why he did not inherit despite being the eldest son. If Gilleasbuig was born before Sileas' marriage, one could excuse her advocacy of prudent behaviour in young girls, but it does not explain her attack on the character of

young men; if Gilleasbuig's father was Gordon of Baldornie, he cannot be said to have abandoned her once he had got what he wanted from her. The song continues to disparage the desires of young men, and to tell girls how not to behave, but she also has some advice on what girls should rely on when faced with the attentions of a suitor:

Taobh an inntinn mar as cinnteach,
Is theirig aotrom air ghaol thoirt dàibh...

Cum do cheutaidh fo d' cheud-bharr ùr...
Dh' aindheoin uaigneis is raspars uasal,
Na leig e 'n uachdar air chruas a ghìlùin,
Ach cùm e 'n ìochdar ge b' oil le fhiacaill,
Mur toir e bhriathar gur fhiach leis thu.²⁸

Sileas ends her poem by admitting that there are some honest men about, and that their values are far different from those of the smooth-talking seducers; her arrows are not aimed at men in general, but at those whom she considers unreasonable and unreliable. She underlines the differing values of men with honourable intent and those whose aim is solely to add another conquest to their list:

Am fear a thriallas a dhol a dh' iarraidh
Na mnà as miannaiche bhios d' a réir,
Gur cailinn shuairc i nach fhuiling mì-stuamachd,
Na dhol an uaigneas le neach fo 'n ghréin;
Mar shamhladh bhà sud, a bhrìgh a nàire,
Dhol nas dàine na mànràn béil;
Bheir fear gun riaghailt an sin a bhriathar
Gu bheil i fiadhta 's nach fhiach a gné.²⁹

The second song composed by Sileas follows the same theme, although it was composed as a direct response to Mackenzie of Gruineard 's *An obair nogha*, in which the poet praises sexual licence in quite explicit terms, using women characters to illustrate his case.³⁰ In this poem the women talk of their experiences with men, rather than the other way around, which is slightly at odds with Sileas' presentation of the song:

Is mise th' air mo bhodhradh
 Le tòghnadh na h-Obair Nodha,
 Aig éisdeachd nan daoine
 A' laoidh mar nì iad an gnothach;
 B' fheàrr leam bhith as aonais
 Gu m' aois, gus am bithinn gnothaist,
 Na bhi 'g éisdeachd an sgéil ud
 Mar leumas iad air na mnaithibh.³¹

Of course, although Mackenzie's poem uses the voices of women to celebrate the 'new work', the audience for, and singers of, such a song would be predominantly male, and it was probably from a male source that Sileas heard it. Her disdain for the attitudes espoused in the song are clear, and her rebuttal of them is forthright:

Mur faighinn fear pòsda
 Le deòin a dhèanadh mo ghnothach,
 Cha bu diù leam cuairt
 Do dh' fhear fuadain a shiùbhladh roimhe.³²

and:

B' fheàrr leam dol thar sàile
 Do 'n àite riamh nach fhacas,
 Na bhith 'g àrach phàisdean
 Do ghràisg nach fuilig am faicinn.³³

Sileas repeats the basic message of *Comhairle air na Nigheanan Oga*, but in a more concise fashion, underlining her attitude towards permissiveness, and her belief in the inconstancy of young men:

Mo chomhairle 's an tìm so
 Do nianag i bhith gu taidheach;
 Bhith gu teisteil diamhair
 Gun mhì-mhodh idir a ghabhail
 O na gillean òga
 Air bhòidhchead 's am bidh an labhairt,
 Ach gun dèan sibh còrdadh,
 Pòsadh is dol a laighe.³⁴

Sileas describes the consequences which girls will have to face if they succumb to the new fashion being promoted by Mackenzie's song: pregnancy, abandonment, disgrace, and the ~~ap~~probation of the church: as

Bidh ministearan is cléir ann
 'G ur éigheadh a stigh gu h-Eaglais -
 Chan usa dhuibh na h-éildearan
 'Nuair 's éigean duibh thighinn gu seisean;
 Chan fhaigh sibh ràdh-éisdeachd,
 Ur beusan cha dèan ur seasamh,
 Is bheir sibh mòran nàire
 D' ur càirdean, mur bidh sibh teistail.³⁵

Again, this song hints at Sileas' own less than perfect past, and the possibility that she had an illegitimate child, although the reference here seems to point to someone other than her husband as being the father:

Mo nianagan bòidheach
 Nam b' eòlach sibh mar mise,
 Mun a' bhrosgul bhréige
 Seal mun éirich air a' chrìosan;
 Gheibh sibh gealladh pòsaidh
 'Nuair thòisicheas boga-bhriseadh,
 'S 'nuair a gheibh e 'n ruaig ud:
 'Beir uam i ! Chan fhaca mis' i !³⁶

The poem ends with a stanza each addressed to *Ruairidh*, *Sìne* and *Seumas*. Roderick, son of George Mackenzie, 2nd of Gruineard, may have been the author of *An Obair Nodha*, and *Ruairidh* referred to, although this is by no means certain.³⁷ The other two cannot be identified from the textual evidence. the

In these poems, although there may be a factual basis for Sileas' arguments, she could also be said to be overreacting to a fashion for a certain type of verse, which did not necessarily reflect the morality of the general population. After the restoration of Charles II, there was a fashion for the composition of bawdy verse, and Mackenzie of Gruineard may have simply been following this

trend. He may also have been reacting against puritanical religious doctrines³⁸ which, given Sileas' own deep religious beliefs, would have added greater fuel to her fire when she composed her reply.

The tone of both these songs of advice contrasts sharply with Sileas' earlier poem in praise of her daughter, Màiri ³⁹, in which she delights in her daughter's appearance, and in the thought that she will have so many young men seeking her affection. There is no word of caution in the song, and, although the poetess rejects certain suitors, their unsuitability seems to be based on social rather than moralistic grounds.

Sileas also composed three laments partly addressed to Anna⁴⁰, another of her daughters, in which she praises the virtues of the dead girl, and sorrows over her loss. However, these poems, are mainly concerned with her husband and her chief, who, along with Anna, died within a short space of each other.

The anonymous song, *Marbhrann do bhaintighearna na Comraich* ⁴¹ is addressed to a noblewoman, and some internal evidence points to the author being female, although this is not certain. The title describes the lady as *do Teaghlach Mhic Shimi* ⁴², while the lament names her as Anna, allowing an identification: Alexander MacKenzie, third of Applecross, was married to Anne, daughter of Alexander Fraser, Tutor of Lovat.⁴³ The lament must have been composed before 1713, when MacKenzie of Applecross remarried. However, there is little in the poem to allow for identification of the author. The lines:

Cha dhù dhomh bhi gruamach
nuair a bhuaileas mi 'n t-àite
Anns am b' àbhaist dhomh t' fhaotainn
gu faodalach sèimh.⁴⁴

might suggest that Alexander MacKenzie was the author, were it not for the reference to *do shàr chéile agus d' ùrmhac* which, while adapting the traditional elegaic convention of mentioning the wife and children of a dead man, would be unseemly if the poet himself was the husband referred to. Furthermore, the author hints that he or she is not considered a poet, a claim which is disproved by the very context in which it is found:

Nam bithinns' 'am ùghdar
na 'm b' urra, dhùbladh an dân.⁴⁵

I would suggest that this kind of denial is more likely to have been made by a female author, although such false humility was not a purely female preserve. This declaration may be the poetess' attempt to avoid castigation for composing an elegy in a style which owes much to the classical model, and doing it well. Another stanza might indicate that the author was a friend or a personal servant of the dead woman:

Do mhnathan chaidreamh gan dìobradh
's t' aignidh pòrghlan gun sgàth,
Gach aon 'bha [ga] t' amharc
air sìor lorg do ghràdh;
Thug E seachd air an dìosnair
's chaill mi fhìn sud mar chàch.⁴⁶

One could argue that the frequent references to the harp and harp-music, as well as to travelling poet bands, suggest that the author was a harper or musician of some sort, and therefore male. They could, however, be regarded as developments of formulaic praise, rather than as clues to the author's identity.

The panegyric style is adapted in this poem to suit a female subject: the familiar tree-image is used to represent fertility, a *gheug thobhartaich threun*, and femininity, *Bu threun boladh a peur*, rather than strength. The praise of a generous nature is also extended to include feminine virtues:

Ceann-uidhe luchd astair,
'bheireadh freasdal air dàimh;
Agus muime nam macaibh
gu mùirneach, macnasach, sèimh.⁴⁷

The poem ends with a *dùnadh*, repeating the opening two lines, again indicating familiarity with the forms of bardic verse. The originality of this poem lies not in the expressions of sorrow and grief, but in the effective adaptation of panegyric imagery to suit a female subject.

A similar adaptation is used by An Aigeannach, who is credited with the authorship of *Fhìr a dhìreas am bealach 's théid a null thar a Mhàin*,⁴⁸ addressed to Bean Chladh na Macraidh. The song is eulogistic in tone, praising the lady for her beauty, kindness and generosity, and listing the noble families which she can count amongst her kin. This leads to a passage of the kind usually found in praise of a chief, with the listing of ancestry and allies:

Gu lìonmhor sruth uaibhreach mu d' ghuailleabh gun mheang,
 Sliochd Dhiarmaid nan lann 's nan lùrichean,
 'Shìol na fìor fhuil a's uaisle dha 'm bu dual 'bhi 'san Fhraing,
 'Fhuair urram nan Gall 's a chungaisich.
 Ridir àrd Loch-nan-Eala do charaid dlùth teann,
 Gu 'n cuirinn an geall nach diùltadh e...

Is fad' 'tha do fhriamhan air sgaoileadh san tìr,
 Gum buin dhuit air chinnt' na Dùghallich,
 Is Morair Bhraid-Albinn nan garbh bhratach sròil,
 A sgapadh an tòr 's nach cunntadh e,
 Tighearna Charradail cheutich leis an éireadh na slòigh,
 'S cha tréigeadh tu còir nan Stiùbhartach,
 'S a bhain-tighearna phrìsail o 'n lìonmhor an stòr,
 Bho 'n ghineadh an òigh le ionracas.⁴⁹

Praise of the lady thus becomes praise of the clan leaders to whom she is related – although it is interesting to note that a noblewoman is listed alongside them as a relation of whom one could be proud – and finally leads to praise of her husband, thereby reversing bardic convention:

'S e mo rùn an t-òg fearail ùr, aithneachail, àrd,
 Mo bheannachd gu bràth le dùrachd dhuit...
 'Fhìr òig Chladh-na-macraidh 's ùr macanta t' ainm
 On bhaideadh an Gàidhlig Dughall ort.⁵⁰

A tentative identification of the woman being addressed can be made from the information in the poem: she was the daughter of Gilleasbuig, her name was Anna, and she was married to the laird of Cladh-na-Macraidh. It has been suggested⁵¹ that she was the

daughter of Archibald Campbell of Ballimore, who married Dugald Campbell of Glenmacrie. As Dugald succeeded his father around 1730, and is referred to in the poem as *fear òg*, the poem was probably composed around this date.⁵²

The description of Anna by the poetess draws on the conventions of both bardic poetry and of love-poetry. Her beauty is described in formulaic terms: *deud cailce; gruaidh mheachair dhearg dhaite; Sùil ghorm...mar dhearcaig; do bhràghad..mar chanach nam blàr*, etc, while her personality is also praised:

Craobh dhaite de 'n fhìon thu, is lìonmhor ort buaidh
 Ri 'n labhirt a suas mar chunntinn iad;
 Deagh ghliocas is gleidheadh is caitheamh ri uair
 Gu furanach, suairce, bunntamach;
 'S tu deagh bhean an taighe, 'bheil mathas, 's bu dual,
 Tha cumantan 's uaislean cliùiteach ort;
 'S tu mac-samhilt na h-eiteig, thug na ceudan gu bàs,
 'S tu 'n léigh a nì stàth gach aon duine.⁵³

There is no definite clue in the poem as to whether the author is male or female, so we must rely on the ascription to An Aigeannach here as being correct.

Catriona nighean Eòghainn mhic Lachlainn composed the song *Tha mi falbh an cois tuinne* ⁵⁴ to Catriona Maclean, daughter of Maclean of Brolas, and wife of Lachlan, son and heir of the Laird of Coll. It seems that this Catriona was also a foster-child of, or very closely acquainted with, the poetess, as she is referred to as *mo leanabh*.⁵⁵ The poem begins with the familiar image of the poetess looking out to sea:

Tha mi 'falbh an cois tuinne,
 'S tha mo shùil air na grunnaibh
 'Dh-fheuch am faicear leam culaidh fo sheòl.⁵⁶

The poetess is awaiting news of Catriona, and proceeds to describe her, using stock images and phrases, before revealing that she already knows what has happened:

Thu bhith 'd laighe 's an Innis,
 Ged is dùthchasach t' ionad,
 'Chuir mo shùilean a shileadh nan deòir.⁵⁷

Catrìona is identified in terms of her male ancestry on her father's side; her maternal grandfather, Allan of Ardgour, being 'the most improvident of his race'⁵⁸, who almost ruined his estate through his extravagance, would not be considered a praiseworthy subject, and is ignored.

Nighean Dhòmhnaill mhic Lachainn...
 'S [iar ?]ogha Dhòmhnaill mhic Eachàinn nan sròl.⁵⁹

This is the cue for the focus of praise to move from Catrìona to her father, Donald, third Maclean of Brolas, who 'received two severe wounds on the head in the battle of Sheriffmuir'.⁶⁰ These injuries, and the circumstances in which they were obtained, are referred to by the poetess in a way which implies the bravery which she has previously lauded:

Ged bha comharr' ad shiubhal,
 Rinn thu gnìomh bu mho pudhar,
 'S dh' fhàg thu luchd nan ad dubha fo leòn.⁶¹

The poetess then brings the situation of the clan to our attention, with no chief, and a child as his heir, and, seemingly, no one else to lead the clan:

Dhuinne dh' éirich an diombuaidh,
 Gu 'n do dh' fhalbh ar ceann-cinnidh,
 Gun do thaoitear 'bhith 't ionad 'nad lorg.

Tha do mhuinntir fo imcheist,
 'S do mhac fhathast òg leanabail,
 Bho dhubh sheachdain na Caingis so 'dh' fhalbh.⁶²

Donald of Bròlas died in 1725, so the song can reasonably be dated to this period. From the evidence of the text, Donald died around Whitsuntide, in April or May of that year, and the poem was

composed shortly afterwards. The poem itself is evenly balanced, the first five stanzas being directed at Catrìona, the middle stanza placing her in relation to her father, and the remaining five stanzas being addressed to Donald himself. In common with several other songs of the period up to 1750, the poem is addressed to one person, but ends up with the focus of attention on another. Perhaps this results from pride in the initial subject extending to pride in their forebears and relations, or it could be a kind of filling-in device: when the subject of the poem has not achieved much glory on his or her own behalf, this is supplied through reference to illustrious relations and ancestors.

The only other poems composed by women to women are the flytings between rival bards. Although these compositions mainly took the form of praise of one's own clan and the disparagement of the other's, the majority also contain vitriolic personal abuse hurled at each other by the rival poetesses. Most of this is confined to insults thrown in here and there, but in one of the flytings the abuse is more sustained. At the composition of *Cha téid Mòr a Bharraigh bhrònaich*,⁶³ Nic Iain Fhinn was apparently greeted on her arrival in Uist with the words:

Nic Iain Fhinn, ban-eileineach,
 Cailin spàgach, uinneineach !
 Blad-chraois leathan, dealanach,
 Stròn ghorm, ghoirid, mheallanach,
 Bus is spor is spreilleann ort,
 Taobh dearg a seicheadh a muigh !⁶⁴

Further into the exchange between Nic Iain Fhinn and Nic a' Mhanaich, the Barra bardess retaliated in kind:

A chailin dubh 's a dhubh-bhrògach,
 Cheangladh t' athair leis na ròpan,
 Struth as a smuig feadh na lònnaibh !
 Ogha rag-mheàrlaich an eòrna,
 Nighean cailleach dhubh an fhòtais,
 Bradag nan obag 's nan òisneag...⁶⁵

Whereas, in the previous song, the ancestors of the woman

addressed were used as a means of praising her more greatly, in this song the Barra poetess insults the Uist woman's descent as a means of cutting her more effectively. The ending of the song is in much the same vein, the Barra bardess having gained the upper hand in the flyting, also has the last word, addressed to her rival:

'S truagh nach fhaighinn siod air m' òrdan,
 Slaodadh ris an Tùr air ròpa,
 Taod mu d' chlaban, calp mu d' dhòrn dheth,
 Dà shac dhiag gu teine mòna,
 Bradag bhith 'na miosg 'ga ròsladh,
 'S na coin mhór bhith 'gad shròiceadh,
 'S na mucan ag ithe t-fheòla !⁶⁶

The flytings are the only surviving songs by women in which the element of satire is present. Perhaps this was the only context in which it was permissible for a bardess to use such verse, which strayed so visibly into the territory of the bards. Satire was viewed as having almost magical powers, probably dating from the time of the druids, from whom the hereditary bards are said to be descended⁶⁷, so the use of such a tool by a female bard was probably frowned upon unless it was aimed, as here, at another woman.

Most of the songs composed by women to women are laments or eulogies, and thus contain a large element of praise for the person being addressed, while the mockery of the flytings is confined to that verse-form. Why the poetesses composed so few songs to women is a question which remains unanswered, although there are a few possible reasons. Perhaps there were more which have not survived, but even if there were, the balance is still tipped in favour of poetry addressed to men, if we assume that the proportion of each type of song lost was similar. Then again, if women were discouraged from composing the type of poetry which was seen as the preserve of the bards, the panegyric poetry, and also from praising anyone other than their chief, it may have also been frowned upon for a woman to overtly praise the chief's wife as a person in her own right, and not merely as her husband's chattel. Thirdly, the reason may be that women themselves did not think highly enough of their own gender to praise them in the same manner as they would a man, and there is evidence that at least one poetess⁶⁸ has little pity for a girl who has

been raped, and instead praises the man who thus attacked her:

An cuala sibhs' a' mhoighdeann cheutach
 Air an tug Niall Bàn an éiginn
 Air taobh beinneadh ri latha gréineadh ?
 'S truagh, a rìgh, nach b' e mi fhéin i.
 Cha sracainn brollach do léineadh.
 Nan sracadh, gum fuaighinn fhéin i...⁶⁹

This implies that the poetess here thinks that a nobleman remains attractive and praiseworthy, even if his actions are ignoble; she thinks that the raped girl should have been proud to have gained the attention of such a man, and not resisted his advances. Men were the key to power and position, and the only way in which a woman could improve her social standing was to marry a man higher up on the social scale than herself, or, if she could not marry him, to bear him a child which would then enjoy the protection and some of the privileges of his father's status. In these circumstances, it is difficult to condemn too severely the attitude displayed by the composer of this song. Her mention of the raped girl is used as a prelude to her own declaration that she would not have resisted, but, although declaring herself willing to become his mistress, she herself seems to have no chance of actually marrying Niall Bàn, indicating that his attention and affection are all that she can hope for, presumably because of her lower social status. This underlines the position of women in the society of this time: reliant on men for their status, protection and power, and having little control over the direction of their own lives. Husbands were chosen for them by their fathers, and if the woman expressed her own views on the matter, she was punished; they could be repudiated by their husbands for the most trifling reasons, while it is rare, if not unknown, to find a woman repudiating her husband; for the most part the education of women was neglected in favour of that of her brothers, and even if not, she would not be able to pursue her studies at a university. Poetry was a means of escaping the narrow world into which they had been born, and, in some cases, with certain types of poetry, to stray a little into the world of men. It is only a pity that so many of these women used their means of escape in order to praise the very order which kept them in a subordinate position.

Notes:

1. Appendix; p. 582.
2. Appendix; p. 602.
3. K.C. Craig, *Òrain luaidh Màiri nighean Alasdair*, Glasgow 1949; pp. 87-88.
4. *ibid.*
5. National Library of Scotland MS. No. 14902; p. 32.
6. Appendix; p. 603.
7. Appendix; p. 477.
8. Appendix; p. 478.
9. J.C. Watson, *Gaelic Songs of Mary MacLeod*, Edinburgh 1965; pp. 12-14
10. *ibid.*
11. *Transactions of the Gaelic Society of Inverness*, vol. XLI; pp. 22-23.
12. *ibid.*
13. J.L. Campbell & F. Collinson, *Hebridean Folksongs*, vol. I, Oxford 1969; pp. 94-96.
14. *The Celtic Monthly*, vol. XXVII; p. 140.
15. ref. 13; pp. 94-96.
16. E. Dwelly, *Faclair Gàidhlig gu Beurla*, Glasgow 1977; p. 414.
17. Chapter 5; p. 169.
18. ref. 13; pp. 94-96.
19. Appendix; p. 409.
20. Appendix; p. 412.
21. C. Ó Baoill, *Bàrdachd Shilis na Ceapaich*, Edinburgh 1972; pp. 6-10.
22. *ibid.*
23. *ibid.*
24. ref. 21; pp. 125-26.
25. ref. 21; pp. 6-10.
26. *ibid.*
27. Appendix; p. 401.
28. ref. 21; pp. 6-10.
29. *ibid.*
30. ref. 21; pp. 253-54.
31. ref. 21; pp. 76-82.
32. *ibid.*
33. *ibid.*
34. *ibid.*
35. *ibid.*

36. *ibid.*
37. ref. 21; pp. 167-68.
38. *ibid.*
39. Appendix; p. 389.
40. Appendix; pp. 402, 403 & 405.
41. Appendix; p. 665.
42. National Library of Scotland MS. No. 14876; pp. 27a-b.
43. A. Mackenzie, *History of the Mackenzies*, Inverness 1879; p. 444.
44. ref. 42; pp. 27a-b.
45. *ibid.*
46. *ibid.*
47. *ibid.*
48. Appendix; p. 538.
49. A. Maclean Sinclair, *The Gaelic Bards from 1715 to 1765*,
Charlottetown P.E.I. 1892; pp. 80-83.
50. *ibid.*
51. *Scottish Gaelic Studies*, vol. XIII; pp. 108-9.
52. *ibid.*
53. ref. 49; pp. 80-83.
54. Appendix; p. 435.
55. A. Maclean Sinclair, *Na Bàird Leathanach*, Charlottetown P.E.I. 1898; pp. 60-61.
56. *ibid.*
57. *ibid.*
58. A Sennachie, *Account of the Clan Maclean*, London 1838; p. 269.
59. ref. 55; pp. 60-61
60. ref. 58; p. 228.
61. ref. 55; pp. 60-61.
62. *ibid.*
63. Appendix; p. 553
64. J.L. Campbell & F. Collinson, *Hebridean Folksongs*, vol. II,
Oxford 1977; pp. 112-21.
65. *ibid.*
66. *ibid.*
67. O. Bergin, *Irish Bardic Poetry*, Dublin 1970; p. 9.
68. Appendix; p. 698.
69. ref. 3; pp. 9-10.

CONCLUSION

Many of the songs produced by women in the period up to 1750 display a strange paradox: by imitating the panegyric praise of clan and chief which was looked upon as a bardic, and therefore male, preserve, they upheld the very social order which kept them constrained and left them open to chastisement for the forms and subject matter of their poetic efforts. Yet their work is no pale reflection of bardic eulogy and elegy: they add life to the formulae and clichés of the bards with expressions of genuine emotion. The structure of the songs may have been borrowed from the bards, but the fabric is of the women's own making.

Whether dealing with clan, political, or personal affairs, the majority of the poetesses remain within the boundaries of their own experience in their commentaries. With few exceptions, those who express an opinion on the subject are fiercely partisan in favour of their own clan, many displaying a thorough and accurate knowledge of the history of their race. In songs dealing with political events, their judgement is derived from the standpoint adopted by their own clan, rather than from an investigation of their own beliefs and expectations, although one cannot deny that the prosperity of the individual poetess and that of her clan were in most cases inextricably linked. However, in many instances, losses which affected the clan or country as a whole are focused on an individual for whom the poetess had a personal affection or regard, rather than on the wider implications of the loss. They did not know the leaders of the armies for whom their clan fought, but they knew and loved some of the people who followed them, and who did not come back. Their songs provide an emotional and moving record of the effects of events on the ordinary people who took no direct part in them, and as such act as a valuable counterpoint to historical accounts.

In the songs to children and fosterlings, the women display maternal devotion and pride, while taking none of the credit for having helped to shape the noble characters which they so loudly praise. These were the types of song which women were permitted to compose, and they took full advantage of this sanction to show that they could produce panegyric poetry of the highest standard while maintaining the personal touch borne of long and faithful attachment to the subject of their verse. As mothers and *muimes*, they knew their charges more intimately than any professional bard ever could, and this adds an extra

touch of pride to their praise, and pathos to their laments.

In the songs of love there is a frankness and honesty which outshines the often formulaic description of the subject. The authors borrowed tunes, refrains, images, even whole passages of verse, yet the genuine emotions being expressed are rarely lost amongst those borrowings. They were not afraid to state their feelings, even if rank, convention and church would seek to deny them the liberty to give vent to their emotions; neither were they ashamed to celebrate their love for, and relationships with, men to whom they could never be married because of their differing social status. Rank, convention and church constrained their lives and limited their aspirations, but their hearts were not so easily subdued, and to whom they gave their love remained their own free choice.

Although women of this period were subjugated and had little, if any, power, their defiance of convention rarely manifested itself in a refusal to accept the paths laid out for them by their social status or their sex; rather, it occurred in their refusal to conceal their thoughts and feelings when these paths did not take them where *they* wanted to go. There are no songs lamenting the position of women in general, or protesting at the way in which they were so dependent on their menfolk; instead we have individual, subjective, complaints about specific situations from which we gain an insight into the lack of status in their own right which women of that period endured. They did not want to change the systems of their society, only the influence of that society's expectations on their own lives, especially when the will of the men who had jurisdiction over them conflicted with the poetess' own desires and aspirations.

The aim of this work was to find a common thread linking the poetry of women in the period up to 1750. While it could be argued that this thread is the personal involvement of the poetesses with the subjects dealt with in their poems, and their tendency to consider events in relation to how they themselves were affected by them rather than taking a broader clan or national perspective, this is not always true. Instead of one linking thread running through the women's songs, the picture which emerges is that of several distinct strands which overlap and intertwine to create a textured and vibrant cloth.

ERRATA:

All references to *aichill* (Chapter 1) should read *aicill*.

SCOTTISH GAELIC WOMEN'S POETRY

UP TO 1750

2 VOLUMES

VOLUME 2.

Anne Catherine Frater M.A. (Hons).

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APPENDIX

CAIMBEUL

Iseabail Ní Mhic Cailéin

1. MAIRG DARAB GALAR AN GRÁDH (c. 1500)

Mairg darab galar an grádh,
gibé fáth fá n-abraim é;
is deacair sgarthain re a pháirt;
truagh an cás a bhfuilim féin.

An grádh-soin tugas gan fhios,
ós é mo leas gan a luadh,
muna fhaghad furtacht tráth,
biaidh mo bhláth go tana truagh.

An fear-soin dá dtugas grádh,
's nách féadaim a rádh ós aird,
dá gcuire sé mise i bpéin,
go madh dó féin bhus céad mairg !

2. ATÁ FLEASGACH AR MO THÍ (c. 1500)

Atá fleasgach ar mo thí,
a Rí na ríogh go rí leis !
a bheith sínte ré mo bhroinn
agus a choim ré mo chneis:

Dá mbeith gach ní mar mo mhian
ní bhiadh cian eadrainn go bráth,
gé beag sin dá chur i gcéill,
's nach tuigeann sé féin, mar tá.

Acht ní éadtrom gan a luing,
sgéal as truaighe linn 'nar ndís:
esan soir is mise siar,
mar nach dtig ar riar a rís.

3. ÉISTIBH A LUCHD AN TIGHE-SE (c. 1500)

Éistibh a luchd an tighe-se
 re scél na mbod bríoghmhar,
 do shanntaich mo chridhe-sa
 cuid dana scéalaibh do sgríobhadh.

Cé líonmhor bod bréagh-bhileach
 do bhí san aimsir romhainn
 tá aig fear an uird chrábhaidh seo
 bod as cho mór righinn.

Bod mo shagairt thuarasdail
 cé tá cho fada seasmhach
 o tha céin ní chualabhair
 an reabh atá ina mhacan.

Atá a riabh ro-reamhar
 an sin 's ní h-e scéal breácach
 noch a [chuala] cho-reamhar
 mhotha bhod arís. Éistibh.

Banntrach Fir Ghlinne Faochain

4. CUMHA MHIC-DHONNCHaidh GHlinne-FAOCHAIN (1645)

Ho, gur mi 'tha air mo leònadh,

Na i ri ri ho ro;

Ho, gur mi 'tha air mo leònadh,

Na i ri ri 's i ri ri ho ro.

Bho latha blàr Inbhir-Lòchaidh;

Bha ruaig nan Eireannach dòite,

'Thàinig do dh' Albainn gun stòras,

A bha dh' earras air an cleòcaibh.

Thug iad spionnadh do Chlann-Dòmhnail;

Mharbh iad m' athair is m' fhear-pòsda,

'S mo thriùir mhacanan òga,

'S mo cheathrar bhràithrean ga' n stròiceadh,

'S mo naoidhnear cho-dhaltan bòidheach.

Loisg iad mo chuid coirc' is eòrna.

Mharbh iad mo chrodh mór gu feòlach,

'S mo chaoirich gheala ga' n ròsdadh,

Ho gur mise 'th' air mo chlaoidheadh

Mu Mhac-Dhonnchaidh Ghlinne Faochain;

Tha gach fear 's an tìr s' ga d' chaoineadh

Thall 'sa bhos mu Inbhir-Aora,

Mnathan 'sa bhasraich 's am falt sgaoilte.

Ho gur mi tha air mo mhilleadh,

Mu mharcaich' nan srian 's nam pillein,

'Thuit 'sa chaonnaig le 'chuid ghilleann,

Thug Mac-Caillein Mór an linn' air,

'S leig e 'n sgrìob ud air a chinneadh.

Fionnghal Chaimbeul

5. TURUS MO CHREICHE 'THUG MI 'CHOLA (c. 1645)

Turus mo chreiche 'thug mi 'Chola !
 Rinn iad mo leab' aig an dorus,
 Comaidh ri fearaibh 's ri conaibh;
 'S thug iad am bràisd as mo bhroilleach,
 'S m' usgraichean 's mo chneapan corrach,
 'S thug iad siud do Sheònaid dhona. ˆ

'Sheònaid air nach cinn an sonas,
 Nior fhaiceam do chlann an coinneamh,
 'S nior fhaiceam am blàr fo 'm boineid.-
 Eachainn Ruadh de 'n fhine dhona,
 'S coma leam ged théid thu dholaigh,
 'S ged a bhiodh do shliochd gun toradh.

'S truagh nach robh mi 'n Inbhir-Lòchaidh,
 'S gu 'm faicinn dà shùil mheallaich Dhòmhnaill,
 An t-òg fearail, smearail, bòidheach,
 Mun spìonadh fitheach iad no ròcais,
 'S aghaidh Dhonnchaidh chalma, chròdha,
 Laoch gun tiomadh ri uchd còmhraig.

Eudail de dh' fhearaibh an t-saoghail,
 Cha 'n fhaic mise bean ga d' chaoineadh
 Eadar Sorasdal 's an Caolas,
 Breacachadh is Tobhta-Raonaill.
 Cha b' ionnan sud is Inbhir-aoraidh,
 Bhiodh na mnathan ann a glaothaich,
 'S gruagaichean 's an cuailean sgaoilte.

'S iomadh sùil 'tha 'n diugh a sìleadh
 Mu Acha-nam-breac am bun a ghlinne,
 Caisteal Suibhn' mu 'n iadh an linne,
 Camasaraidh 'm bi na gilleann,
 Is thall mu cheann Locha-giorra.

'Nan robh mis' an Inbhir-Aora,
 'S ann an sin a bhiodh a ghlaodhaich;
 Rachadh an glaodh thar mo ghlaoidh-sa;
 Cha b' ioghnadh sin, bu mhòr an t-aobhar.

Nan robh mis' an lagan a Ghlasraidh,
 'S ann an sin a bhiodh a bhasraich;
 Falt an cinn dol fo na casaibh,
 'S iad a caoidh gu cruaidh mar thachair.

Nan robh mis' an Inbhir-Lòchaidh, ^
 'S claidheabh dà-fhaobhair am dhòrnaibh,
 'S neart agam gu m' mhiann is eòlas,
 Dheanainn fuil ann, dheanainn stròiceadh,
 Air na Leathanaich 's Clann-Dòmhnail;
 Bhiodh na h-Eireannaich gun deò annt,
 Is na Duibhnich bheirinn beò as.

Nighean Dhonnchaidh

6. ORAN DO'N RIDIRE DONNCHADH CAIMBEUL (1570)

A Rìgh ! gur mòr mo chuid mulaid,
 O' n cheud là thruimich do bhròn mi;
 O' n cheud là ghabh mi iùil ort,
 Cha dùraiginn pòsadh.

Gun logh an Rìgh sin do m' athair, ‘
 Gur caol a sgait e m' fheòil dhiom;
 Thug e bh' uamsa m' fhear-tighe,
 Gu' m bu sgafanta roimh thòir e.

'S lionmhor iad de mo chinneach,
 De 'n gheàrr thu 'm muineal mu 'n chòta,
 Agus Guineach mòr prìseil,
 Dheth 'n tug thu 'n sìoda 's na bòtan.

Chum thusa 'n cuid aodaich,
 Ge bu dìleas iad dhomhsa

.....

Mur bhi dhomh daingneach a' chaisteil,
 'S nan geatachan mòra,
 Agus cuingead nan glasan,
 Nach fhaighinn seachad gun seòladh.

'S truagh nach robh mi 'na m' fhaoilinn,
 No cho caol ris an fheòraig,
 'S gun snàmhainn am buinne,
 Cha chumadh an t-òr mi.

7. CUMHA GHRIOGAIR MHICGHRIOGAIR GHLINN SREITH (1570)

Moch madainn air latha Lùnasd'
 Bha mi sùgradh mar ri m' ghràdh,
 Ach mun tàinig meadhon latha
 Bha mo chridhe air a' chràdh.

Ochain, ochain, ochain uiridh
 Is goirt mo chridhe, a laoigh,
 Ochain, ochain, ochain uiridh
 Cha chluinn t' athair ar caoidh.

Mallachd aig maithibh is aig càirdean
 Rinn mo chràdh air an-dòigh,
 Thàinig gun fhios air mo ghràdh-sa
 Is a thug fo smachd e le foill.

Nam biodh dà fhear dheug d' a chinneadh
 Is mo Ghriogair air an ceann,
 Cha bhiodh mo shùil a' sileadh dheur,
 No mo leanabh féin gun dàimh.

Chuir iad a cheann air ploc daraich,
 Is dhòirt iad fhuil mu làr:
 Nam biodh agam-sa an sin cupan
 Dh' olainn dhith mo shàth.

Is truagh nach robh m' athair an galar,
 Agus Cailean Liath am plàigh,
 Ged bhiodh nighean an Ruadhanaich
 Suathadh bas is làmh.

Chuirinn Cailean Liath fo ghlasaibh,
 Is Donnchadh Dubh an làimh;
 'S gach Caimbeulach th' ann am Bealach
 Gu giùlan nan glas-làmh.

Ràinig mise réidhlean Bhealaich,
 Is cha d' fhuair mi ann tàmh:
 Cha d' fhàg mi ròin de m' fhalt gun tarraing
 No craiceann air mo làimh.

Is truagh nach robh mi an riochd na h-uiseig,
 Spionnadh Ghriogair ann mo làimh:
 Is i a' chlach a b' àirde anns a' chaisteal
 A' chlach a b' fhaisge do 'n bhlàr.

Is ged tha mi gun ùbhlán agam
 Is ùbhlán uile aig càch,
 Is ann tha m' ùbhal cùbhraidh grinn
 Is cùl a chinn ri làr.

Ged tha mnathan chàich aig baile
 'Nan laighe is 'nan cadal sàmh,
 Is ann bhios mise aig bruaich do lice
 A' bualadh mo dhà làimh.

Is mòr a b' annsa bhith aig Griogair
 Air feadh coille is fraoich,
 Na bhith aig Baran crìon na Dalach
 An taigh cloiche is aoil.

Is mòr a b' annsa bhith aig Griogair
 Cur a' chruidh do 'n ghleann,
 Na bhith aig Baran crìon na Dalach
 Ag òl air fìon is air leann.

Is mòr a b' annsa bhith aig Griogair
 Fo bhrata ruibeach ròin,
 Na aig Baran crìon na Dalach
 A' giùlan sìoda is sròil.

Ged a bhiodh ann cur is cathadh
 Is latha nan seachd sìon,
 Gheibheadh Griogair dhòmh-sa cragan
 'S an caidlimid fo dhìon.

Ba hu, ba hu, àsrain bhig,
Chan 'eil thu fhathast ach tlàth:
Is eagal leam nach tig an latha
Gun dìol thu t' athair gu bràth.

Seònaid Chaimbeul

8. MAC NEACHDAINN AN DÙIN (? ante 1720)

Tha an oidhche 'nochd fuar,
 'S och, mo thruaighe ! gur fad' i;
 Ged tha càch na 'n sìor shuain,
 'S beag mo luaidh-sa air cadal.

Cha 'n e giorrad mo rùm
 'S cha 'n e cuingead mo leapa
 Ach fear òg a' chùil duinn,
 Chuir an truim' seo air m' aigheadh.

Gu 'n do bhruadair mi 'n raoir,
 Thus', a ghaoil, a bhith agam
 Anns an leaba chaoìn, mhìn,
 Is tu sìnt' ann am ghlacaibh.

Ach nuair 'thionndaidh mi 'nùnn
 Bha do rùm-sa fuar, falamh;
 Thàinig snigh' air mo shùil,
 'S b' fhad', a rùin, thu á m' shealladh.

'Dheagh Mhic Neachdainn o 'n Dùn
 Is o thùr nan àrd bhaideal,
 B' fhad' a dh' aithnichinn do chùl,
 'Dìreadh stùc agus chreachann,

Le do ghille 's le d' chù,
 'S le d' cheum lùthar mar ghaisgeach,
 'S le do chuilbheir caol, ùr,
 'S e nach diùltadh dhuit sradag.

'S math thig boineid ghorm, ùr
 Air do chùl bòidheach, dathte,
 'S math thig dag dhuit is sgiath,
 'S claidheamh geur, guineach, sgaiteach.

Leam bu mhillse do phòg
 Na mil shòghail nam beachan;
 Is na ùbhlán nan craobh
 Gu 'm bu chaoine leam t' anail.

'N cuala sibhse bean riamh
 'Chaill a ciall mu 'ceud leannan,
 Mur a h-innis mi breug,
 'S i mi-féin an diugh 'bhean ud.

'S iomadh bàt' agus long
 Tha le fonn a' dol thairis
 Eadar Eirinn an t-slàigh
 'S dùthaich bhòidheach Mhic-Cailein.

Nam biodh fios aig mo ghràdh
 Mar a tha mi 'ga acain,
 Bhiodh e 'nall, tha mi 'n dùil,
 An gearr ùine gu m' fhaicinn.

Thé 'thug bhuamsa m' fhear féin,
 'S a chuir creuchdan fo m' aisnibh,
 'Chaidh nior fhaicear ort bréid
 Latha féille no clachain.

Is nior fhaicear do chlann
 Dol do theampull a bhaistidh;
 Ach ga 'n cur anns an uaigh,
 'S tu bhith buan dheth gun mhac leat.

Biodh leac shleamhainn ri d' bhonn,
 'S talamh tolltach fo d' chasaibh,
 'S boinne snighe fliuch, fuar
 Tigh'nn mu bhruchaibh do leapa.

Mur a bhith do dhroch bheus
 B' oil leam féin sud a thachairt;
 Oir, ged 's cruaidh e ri ràdh,
 'S i 'n aon mhàthair a bh' againn.

Tha an oidhche 'nochd fuar,
 'S och, mo thruaighe ! gur fad' i;
Ged tha (na) càch na 'n sìor shuain
 'S beag mo luaidh-sa air cadal.

Bean a' Bharra

9. THA MO RÙN AIR A GHILLE (ante 1750)

LUINNEAG:

Tha mo rùn air a ghille
 'S e mo dhùrachd gun tig thu;
 'S mi gun siùbhladh leat am fireach
 Fo shileadh nam fuar-bheann.

Oidhche gheamhraidh dhomh 's mi 'm ònar,
 Na 'm b' urrainn dhomh dhèanainn òran;
 'S truagh a rìgh nach robh mi pòsd'
 Aig òigear a chùil dualaich.

O, gur h-e mo cheist an t-òigear,
 Fear 'chùil duinn 's an leadain bhòidhich;
 'S mi gun siùbhleadh leat thar m' eòlais
 Ged tha 'n còta ruadh ort.

'S mór a thug mi 'ghaol do 'n fhiùran
 'Tha 'm mach a teaghlach Chill-Iunnduinn;
 Sealgair fhiadh thu 'm beinn a bhùiridh,
 'S eilid lùth nan luath chas.

Ged a tha do phòcaid aotrom,
 Cha do lùghdaich sud mo ghaol ort;
 'S mi gun siùbhladh leat an saoghal
 Na 'm faodainn do bhuannachd.

Phòsainn thu 'dh' aindeoin mo chàirdean,
 Gun toil m' athair no mo mhàthair;
 Iain saor a tha mi 'g àireamh,
 Gur h-e 'chnàmh mo ghruag dhiom.

Tha 'n Nollaig a tigh'nn as ùr oirnn;
 Ged a tha, gur beag mo shùrd rith',

'S am fear nach fàgadh 'sa chùil mi
Air chùl nan tonn uaine.

'S beag a shaoilinn fhìn an uiridh
Gun tréigeadh tu mi cho buileach;
Mar gun tilgeadh craobh a duilleach
Dh' fhàs thu umam suarach.

CAMSHRON

Màiri Chamshron

10. A MHIC DHONNCHaidh INBHIR-ATHA (c. 1645)

A Mhic Dhonnchaidh Inbhir-atha,
Is coimheach a ghabhas tu 'n rathad;
Ged tha Màiri Chamshron romhad,
'S òg a chaill mi riut mo ghnothach.

Eudail a dh' fhearaibh na Dàlach,
Thug thu mach a taigh na plàigh mi,
Far an robh m' athair 's mo mhàthair,
Mo phiuthair ghaoil 's mo choignear bhràithrean.

Eudail a dh' fhearaibh na gréine,
Thog thu taigh dhomh 'n coill nan geugan,
'S bu shunndach ann mo laighe 's m' éirigh;
Cha b' ioghnadh sud, oir b' ùr mo chéile.

M' eudail, m' aighear is m' annsachd,
'S ann ad' thaigh nach biodh a ghainntir;
Gheibhte sitheann ghlas nam beanntan,
'S na geala bhradain a bu reamhra.

Rìgh, gur mis' a th' air mo sgaradh,
Bhi dol le fear eil' a laighe,
Is m' fhear féin air cùl an taighe,
Sealgair nan damh donn 's nan aighean.

'Saoil nach mise th' air mo sgaradh,
'S ioma rud a rinn mi fhaicinn;
Chunna' mi bhith roinn do bhreacain,
A' tiodhlacadh do ghunna glaice.

Fhuair mi dusan de d' chrodh-bainne,
 'S ceud na dhà de d' chaoraich gheala;
 Ach ged fhuair chan fhada mhaireas,
 Théid mi leat gun dàil fo 'n talamh.

Théid mi ann mun òdhraich t' anart,
 Bidh mi leat an cùirt nan aingeal;
 'S fheàrr bhith leat na 'n seo air m' aineol,
 'Fhir bu chaoine guth na 'n cainneal.

Thug thu ginidh air mo bhrògan,
 Cùig dhiubh air mo bhreacan pòsaidh;
 Cha d' fhuair mo leithid a bha beò e,
 Saoil am b' iongnadh mi bhith brònach.

CEANADACH

11. BUIDHEANN MO CHRIDHE CLANN UALRAIG

Buidheann mo chridhe Clann-Ualraig;
 Bheireadh iad suas na h-iomainean.
 Bheireadh iad crodh dhe na buailtean
 'S chuireadh iad sluagh bho chinneachadh.

'S olc a fhuair sinn crodh nam baran,
 Bodaich bheag' nam briogais gheala;
 Cha b' iad a b' urrainn air an fhalachd,
 Ach fir Strath-Eireann 's Strath-Narrainn.

'S olc a fhuair sinn crodh nan Ròsach,
 Is Clann-Chatain air an tòrachd,
 Baran liath na coise breòite;
 'S air mo dhaoine-s' rinn iad feòlach.

'S a Chrò-chlach am Braigh Srath-Eireann,
 Oidhche dhorch' air nach bu léir dhaibh,
 'Cur nan saighdean ait a chéile,
 Thuit mo leannan 's deich fir threuna.

Nuair a shaoil leam 'bhi gu uasal
 Am bhean-taighe Achaluachrach,
 'S ann a tha mi gu bochd, suarach
 'Bleoghann a chruidh 'feadh a bhuachair.

GRANND

Nighean Tighearna Grannd

12. THA MO RUN AIR A GHILLE (ante 1692)

Luinneag:- Tha mo rùn air a ghille,
 'S mòr mo dhùil ri thu thilleadh;
 'S mi gu 'n siùbhladh leat am fireach
 Fo shileadh nam fuar-bheann.

Tha thu 'd mhac do dh' fhear Bhoth-Fhionntainn
 'S mise nighean tighearna Ghrannda,
 'S rachainn leat a null do 'n Fhraing
 Ged bhiodh mo chàirdean gruamach.

Gur h-e m' athair 'rinn an dò-bheart,
 Mise chumail gun do phòsadh;
 Shiubhlainn leat ge b' ann do 'n Olaint,
 Ach do chòir a bhuannachd.

Rachainn leat thar cuan do dh' Èirinn,
 Rachainn leat air chuairt do 'n Èipheit;
 'S aig a mheud 's a thug mi spéis dhuit,
 B' eutrom orm an t-uallach.

Nàile, 's e mo cheist am fiùran,
 Domhnall Donn, mac fhir Bhoth-Fhionndainn;
 'S fad is farsuinn a tha cliù
 Air mùirnein nam ban-uaisle.

Nàile, 's e mo ghaol an t-òigear,
 Domhnall Donn an leadain bhòidhich;
 Tha thu 'n fhìne àrd gun fhòtus,
 Dòmhnallaich a chruadail.

'S iomad nìonag a tha 'n tòir ort,
 Eadar Inbhirnis is Mòrair,
 Ged bhiodh tu air crùn de stòras,
 'Phòsadh anns an uair thu.

Tha do phearsa cuimir dealbhach,
 'S math thig éideadh dhuit is armachd;
 Bu tu 'n curaidh treun, neo-chearbach,
 'S meanmnach anns an tuasaid.

'S math thig féile dhuit 's an fhasan, ,
 Boineid ghorm is còta breacain,
 Osan geàrr is trì chuir ghartan,
 'S glas lann air do chruachainn.

Cha 'n fheil òganach cho ainmeil
 Ruit 's a chearna so de dh' Albainn;
 'S mairg a dhùisgeadh suas gu feirg thu
 'N àm nan arm a bhualadh.

Ged a gheibhinn-sa gu m' òrdagh
 Na tha dh-fhearann aig Diùc Gòrdan,
 'S mòr gu 'm b' annsa leam na stòras
 Sin làn chòir air m' [uaibhreachd.(?)]

NIC A' BHRIUTHAINN

Diorbhail

13. ALASDAIR, A LAOIGH MO CHÉILLE (c. 1644)

Alasdair, a laoigh mo chéille,
 Có chunnaic na dh' fhàg thu 'n Èirinn ?
 Dh' fhàg thu na mìltean 's na ceudan,
 'S cha d' fhàg thu t' aon leithid féin ann: '
 Calpa cruinn an t-siubhail eutruim;
 Cas chruinneachadh an t-sluaigh ri chéile;
 Cha dèanar cogadh as t' eugmhais,
 'S cha dèanar sìth gun do réite;
 'S gar am bi na Guimhnich réidh riut,
 Gu 'n robh an rìgh mar tha mi féin dhuit.

E ho hì ù ho ró hó eile,
 E ho hì ù hó 's ì rì ri ù;
 Ho hì ù ho, ró hó o éile,
 Mo dhiobhail dìth nan ceann-feadhna.

Mo chruit, mo chlârsach is m' fhidheall,
 Mo theud ciùil 's gach àit am bithinn;
 Nuair [a] bha mi òg is mi 'm nighinn
 'S e thogadh m' inntinn thu thighinn;
 Gheibheadh tu mo phòg gun bhruidhinn;
 'S mar tha mi 'n diugh, 's math do dhligh' oirre.
 Mhoire, 's e mo rùn am fireann;
 Cha bhuachaille bhò e 'san innis;
 Ceann-feadhna greadhnach gun ghiorraig;
 Marcaich nan steud is leòr a mhire;
 Bhuidhneadh na crùintean d' a ghilleann;
 'S nach seachain an tòir iomairt;
 Ghaolaich na 'n deanadh tu pilleadh,
 Gheibheadh tu na bhiodh tu sireadh,

Ged a chaillinn ris mo chinneach
Pòg o ghruagaich dhuinn an fhirich.

'S truagh nach eil mi mar a b' ait leam;
Ceann Mhic Cailein ann am achlais,
Cailean Liath an déidh a chasgairt,
'S an Crùnair an déidh a ghlacail,
Bu shunndach a gheibhinn cadal
Ged a b' i a' chreag mo leabaidh.

M' eudail thu dh' fhearaibh na dìle;
'S math is aithne dhomh do shloinneadh 'innseadh -
'S cha b' ann an cagar fos n-ìosal:
Tha do dhreach mar dh' òrdaich rìgh e;
Falt am boineid tha sìnteach;
Sàr mhusg ort no cuil-ìobhar;
Dh' éigteadh geàrd an cùirt an rìgh leat;
Ceist nam ban o 'n Chaisteal Ileach;
Dorn geal mu 'n dèan an t-òr snìomhan.

Domhnullach gasda mo ghaoil thu;
'S cha b' e Mac Dhonnchaidh Ghlinn-faochain
No duine 'bha beò de dhaoine;
Mhic an fhir o thùr na faoileachd,
Far an tig an long fo h-aodach;
Far an òlteadh fion gu greadhnach;
'S mo dhìobhail dith nan ceann-feadhna.

Mhoire, 's e mo rùn an t-òigear
Fiùghantach, aigeannach, spòrsail;
Ceannard na ceathairne móire;
'S mise nach diùltadh do chòmhradh
Mar ri cuideachd, no am ònar;
Mhic an fhir o 'n innis cheòlmhor,
O 'n tìr am faight' na geòidh ghlas,
'S far am faigh fir fhalamh stòras.

Bhuailteadh creach is speach mhòr leat;
'S cha bhiodh cridhe tighinn do d' fheòraich

Aig a liuthad Iarla 's Mòr-fhear
 Thigeadh a thoirt am mach do chòrach;
 Thig Mac Shimidh; thig Mac Leòid ann;
 Thig Mac Dhòmhnuille Duibh o Lòchaidh;
 Bidh Sir Seumas ann le mhòr fhir;
 Bidh na b' annsa: Aonghas òg ann;
 'S t' fhuil ghreadhnach féin bhi 'ga dòrtadh,
 'S deas tarruing nan geur lann gorma.

'S na 'n saoiladh cinneadh t' athar
 Gu 'n deanadh Granndaich do ghleidheadh,
 'S iomadh fear-gunna 's claidheimh,
 Chòtan uaine 's bhreacan dathail,
 Dh' eireadh leat dà thaobh na h-abhann
 Cho lionmhor ri itean an draighinn.

Ged tha mis' am phàiste suarach
 Thall 's a bhos mu uisge Chuain so,
 Na 'm biodh mo chrodh air na buailtean,
 Mo ghreigh a' tadhal nam fuaran,
 'S mo chaoraich gheala 'gan cuartach,
 Riobainean ceangal mo ghruaige,
 Gur lionar fear a bhiteadh luaidh rium.

Mhoire, 's iad mo rùn an comunn,
 Luchd nan cùl buidhe is donna,
 Dheanadh an t-iubhar a chromadh,
 Dh' òladh fìon dearg 'na thonnaibh,
 Thigeadh steach air mòintich thollaidh,
 'S a thogadh creach o mhuinntir Thomaidh.

NIC A' PHEARSAIN

Beasa Nighean Eoghain Mhic Fhearchair

14. 'S DAOR A CHEANNAICH MI 'M FIADHACH (c. 1610)

'S daor a cheannaich mi 'm fiadhach
A rinn Iain Di-ciadain,
Rinn an t-Eilean Dubh riabhach mo leòn,-
 'S daor, &c. ^

Bu domhainn an linne
'S an robh na fir ga do shireadh,
'S an d' fhuair iad mo chion 's e gun deò.

Nuair a thug iad a steach thu
Bha do ghruaidhean air seacadh;
Och ! 'se m' eudail a bh' aca gun deò -

A Dhòmh'uill Mhic Iain
A nochd 's cruaidh leat mo naidheachd -
'S ann a tha iad gun aighear san Stròrn -

Gur mise th' air mo chreachadh
Dol a dh' ionnsaidh do leapadh,
'S gun mo làmh air do chraiceann geal òg.

Tha do pheathraichean truagh dheth,
Air droch cheangal tha 'n gruagaibh;
O ! 's e 'n losgadh a fhuair iad 's an leòn:

'S gur 'iomadh duin' uasal,
Leis 'm bu duilich mar chual iad,
Bho 'n Teist gus am buail iad an Stròrn:

Cas a shiubhal nam fuar bheann,
Ghabh thu roghainn 'bha uasal,
'S tu gun treobhadh na buailtean air dòigh;

Is gur iomadh bian béiste,
Chunnaic mise mu d' réidhlean,
'S e mo chreach nach do dh' fhaod thu bhi beo !

Gur lionmhor dhuit caraid
Eadar Leòdhas 's na Hearadh,
Air nach tréigeadh am barail dha 'n deòin.,

NIC DHÒMHNAILL

Màiri Nighean Aonghais

15. MARBHRANN DO SHIR DOMHNULL, Triath Chlann Ràghnuill.
(?c.1618)

Moch 's a mhadainn 's mi 'g éiridh,
Gur ruiteach mo dheur air mo ghruaidh,
Nach freagair thu m' éigheachd,
A lùb cheanalta treun a dh' fhàs suairc;
'S e chur mo shùilean o léirsinn
Bhi càradh na léine mu d' thuairms',
Ach a Mhuire ! mo sgeula,
Cha 'n éirich thu féin gu Là Luain.

Ach a Dhòmhnuill nan geurlann,
A Mhic Ailein a dh' éisdeadh ri ceòl,
A bha gu misneachail treubhach,
Ann an gliocas 's an ceumaibh bha àrd;
Fear do choltais cha tréiginn,
Bho 'n bu deacair dhomh fheutainn na b' fheàrr,
B' e mo chreach air an t-saoghal,
Nach bu mhaireann na daoine ud gu bràth.

Sàr uachdaran cliùiteach,
Air Uidhist 's air Mùideart nan gleann,
Sàr mharcaich eich shunndaich,
Air each aigionnach lùthchas nan srann,
'S maith thigeadh ad' a' bheòil ùir dhuit,
Air chùl bachlagach cùl bhuidh nan clann,
'Dol an coinneamh na cùirte,
Bu fhathail an t-sùil a bha 'd cheann.

Nuair a bha thu 'n Dun Èideann,
Cha bu Ghall air each sréine bha teann,
Ach an t-àilleagan eibhneach,
'S a' chridhe gun eucoir, gun fheall,

Ri uchd barra na tuinne,
 'S tu chuireadh an ìre do chainnt,
 Beul a labhradh an fhìrinn,
 Cho ceart 's ged sgrìobht' i le peannt.

An uair a rachadh tu thairis,
 Air chuireadh gu baile Mhic Leòid,
 'S iomadh gallan glan uasal
 'S mac maiseach a ghluaisleadh ad chòir;
 'N àm suidhe mu 'n fhìon dhuit,
 'S tu b' urrainn ga dhìoladh 's ga òl,
 'S tu nach deanadh a phrìs dheth,
 Gheibheadh càch dheth gun dìobradh an leòr.

Nuair a thigeadh na mnaithean,
 Na h-uaislean 's luchd tathaich do 'n tìr
 Bu tu féin an ceann-uidhe,
 Nuair a dheanadh tu suidhe gun sgìos;
 Ann an uachdar do thighe,
 Bu neo-bhruailleanach t' fhaighinn 'san tìm,
 Gheibhte fìon 's uisge beatha,
 Agus ùrla nam flatha ga dhìol.

Och m' aighear is m' eudail !
 'S tu a sheasadh le céile ri m' chùl,
 C' aite am b' aithne dhomh fhaotainn,
 Ceann cinnidh a b' fhaoilidh na thù;
 Leat bu mhiann a bhi stàtail,
 'S tu féin a bhi càradh um' gùn,
 Riamh cha d' choisin thu gràin uam,
 'S ann a gheibhinn uat fàilt' agus mùirn.

B' e mo dhìubhail an t-aiseag,
 Air an d' thàinig thu dhachaidh gun chainnt,
 O ! 's mis' th' air mo sgaradh,
 'N àm sgaoileadh do bhrataich ri crann;
 Gheibhte fir air bheag céille,
 Agus mnathan gun bhréid air an ceann,

'Bhi ga d' ghiulain gu Eaglais:
Leam bu dubhach an t-eidheach a bh' ann.

O ! 's mis' th' air mo chiùrradh,
Mu cheannard na dùcha' so féin,
Bha an cruinneachadh dùmhail,
'S iad uile fo thùrsa 'na d' dhéigh;
Nuair a chuir iad 's an ùir thu,
Bha mo shùileansa cruinneachadh dheur:
Och ! a Mhuire mo thruaighe,
Chaidh cha ghluais thu le luathghair nan teud.

Tha mo ghuidh' air an Àrd Rìgh,
'N t-òg mhac sin a dh' fhàg thu na d' dhéigh,
Mi bhi leis airson bràthar,
Mar ghibht is mar àbhachd dhomh féin;
Gum bu bhuidheach a bha mi,
Nam faigheadh e dàil on an eug,
Gus am faicinn a phàistean,
Ri mire 's ri àbhachd leo féin.

Is iomadh sgàil pìobadh,
Mar ri farrum nan dìsnean air clàr
Rinn mi éisdeachd a' d' bhaile,
Mar ri éisg agus caithream nam bàrd;
Rinn do leabhraichean seanachais,
Le falluinge dearga, 's ri dàin,
Mar ri sòlas gun iotadh,
C' uim an leiginn-sa dhiom thu gu bràth.

O ! 's mise th' air mo bhuaireadh,
'S mi 'g amharc a suas ris a ghleann,
'S mi a' cuimhneachadh uaislean,
'Chuir sgaoilidh 's a ghruaig bh' air mo cheann;
Mòr chliùiteach nigh'n Ruairidh,
Guidheamsa buaidh air a' clann,
Sìol Ailein 'ic Ailein,
'S e ur n-aobhar bu choireach ri m' chall.

O ! 's mis' th' air mo sgaradh,
 'S mi falbh feadh do bhaile leam féin,
 Ged a dheante leo banais
 Cha 'n fhaic iad mi 'tional da réir;
 O nach maireann mo ghràdhsa,
 Leat cha chàirich mi bréid,
 Bho 'n is deacair am bàs dhomh,
 Tha m' fhortan an gràsaibh Mhic Dhé.

'S mi tha muladach, brònach,
 'S mi falbh feadh do sheòmail leam féin,
 'S mi gun chadal, gun chòmhnadh,
 Gun aighear o 'n Dòmhnuch so leum;
 Mi ag amharc do bhaile
 Gun sùgradh, gun aighear, gun fheusd,
 Gur mis' th' air mo sguabadh,
 On a chailleadh oirnn buachaill an fhéidh.

O ! 's mis' tha fo mhulad,
 'S mi 'g amharc do ghunn' air an stéil,
 Sàr ghiomanach ullamh,
 'S tric a rinneadh leat fuil anns a bheinn;
 Le gunna caol a bheòil chumhaing,
 'S tric a rinneadh leat fuileachd air seilg,
 Ged a dheanadh càch rùsgadh,
 Cha d' iarr thu riamh cunntas 's na beinn.

Tha mo chridh' air a mhùchadh,
 'S mi ag amharc na dùthcha' ud thall,
 'S cha lugh' mo chuid airtneil,
 Le mo léirsinn bhi faicinn do bheann;
 Mur a biodh mar a thachair,
 'S ann leamsa gu 'm b' ait' 'bhi dol ann,
 Gus an d' thàinig lom chreach orm,
 Mar gun ruitheadh a chlach leis a ghleann.

Sguiridh mise dheth 'n dràsda,
 O nach urrainn mi ràdh na bheil fìor,

'S ann tha m' ulaidh is m' àbhachd,
Ann an ciste nan clàr 'ga chur sìos;
Làmh iomairt an tàileisg,
'S a chuireadh an clàrsair am prìs,
Ach a Rìgh ! mo throm sgàldadh,
Nach éigh iad gu bràth thu 'ga dhìol.

Mòr Nighean Uisdein

16. HÉMAN DUBH (?c. 1615)

Nan éisdeadh sibh	hé hubadh
rium a mhnathan	hé a bhi
dh' innsinn mo sgeul	haoiri hó ro
dhuibh air m' athais	
héman dubh hùribhi ù hó	
hó ró hù ó.	

Dh' innsinn mo sgeul	hé hubadh
dhuibh air m' athais	hé a bhi
gu bheil an làn	haoiri hó ro
anns an fhadhail	
héman dubh hùribhi ù hó	
hó ró hù ó.	

Chan fhaod mo ghaol	tighinn a thadhal
òganach donn	deas fo chladheamh.

'N oidhche bha sibh	'n Airigh Lochain,
cha robh e ann	fear do choltais,
bho nach maireann	Fionn no Oisean,
no Diarmaid donn	mac Rìgh Lochlainn.

Ochan is och	is mi 'm brònag,
cha bhean chrìonda	ghlic ri m' bheò mi;
mo mhàthair air	thì mo chòrdaidh;
tha m' athair air	thì mo phòsaidh
ri fear odhar	bodhar breòite,
ri fear dall cha	léir dha bhrògan,
gur mù a cheann	na chruach mòine,
's gur faid' fheusag	na sguab eòrna,
's caoile amhach	dhuìt na feòirnean,
cha dèan dà shlat	dheug dha còta,
théid seiche daimh	mhór 'na bhrògan.

Ged tha mise
 trom-aigeannach
 thàinig teachdair-
 teachdaireachd bho
 dithis an uraidh
 gille 's litir
 'n fhalaire dhonn,
 nam bu mhise
 'n dorus sabhail
 bheirinn fodar,
 bheirinn cruithneachd,
 treis fhalaireachd
 Ge ta cha ghabh
 b' annsa liom mac
 dha 'm bi na h-eich
 na h-eich dhonna

Mhic Dhòmhnail Duibh
 siod, a Rìgh, nach
 ge be àite
 'm bun nan craobh no
 no air bòrd do
 no air morghan
 'n déidh do chur no
 'n déidh do dheoch mhór

'm uiseag riabhaich,
 gun bhith sgiamhach,
 eachd 'gam iarraidh,
 mhac an Iarla,
 's triùir am bliadhna,
 each is diallaid,
 spuir is srian innt';
 gille biadhtha,
 bheirinn biadh dhi,
 bheirinn feur dhi,
 bheirinn fion dhi,
 air an t-sliabh dhi.
 mi e 'm bliadhna,
 Annra riabhaich,
 mhór air shriana,
 throma dhiallta.

a Loch Abar,
 robh mi agad,
 'm bheil do leabaidh,
 'm bàrr nam baideal,
 luinge fada,
 gorm an aigeil,
 'n déidh do chathadh,
 uisge-beatha.

Ni Mhic Raghnaill

17. DH' ÈIRICH MISE MOCH DI-DÒMHNAICH (1663)

Dh' éirich mise moch Di-Dòmhnaich,
 I ri u, ho ro !
 'S chunnaic mi 'tighinn am' chòmhdhail,
 Fàth mo leann-duibh, ho ro !

'S chunnaic mi 'tighinn am' chòmhdhail,
I ri u, ho ro !
Prasgan fhearaibh le falbh mòdhar,
Fàth mo leann-duibh, ho ro !

Prasgan fhearaibh le falbh mòdhar,
Cha do fhreagair iad mo chòmhradh,
Ràinig mi Ceapach na dòruinn,
Gu tùr àrd 's cha b' ann gu m' shòlas,
Chunnaic mi an taigh gun chòmhlà',
Gun smùid, gun deathaich gun cheò dheth,
'S shuidh mi air an tulaich bhòidhich,
'S leig mi air an tuireadh bhrònach,
Dh' fhosgail mi dorus an t-seòmbair:
Ruigeadh i barr-iall mo bhrògan,
Fuil an cridheachan a' dòrtadh,
'S teann nach d' òl mi fhìn mo leòir dhi.
Fuil Raoghnaill am fear a b' òige,
'S fuil Alasdair an leadain bhòidhich:
Fear flathail 's e leathann dòmhail.
Beir fios bhuamsa gu Mac Dhòmhnuill,
Gu Mac Mhic Alasdair Chnòideart,
Gu Mac Mhic Ailein o 'n mhòr chuan,
Mar a dh' fhàgadh na fir òga.
Tha m' earbsa an Rìgh na glòire,
Gun lean sibh gu dìon an tòrachd;
'S càirdean dhuibh fhéin; 's bràithrean dhòmhs' iad.
Dìol na muice duibhe dòithhte,
'S na circe fo làimh a' chòcair',
Air gach aon a dh' iadh mu 'n fheòlach.

18. OCH A'S OCH GUR MI 'N T-OISIAN (1689)

Och ! a's och! gur mi 'n t-Oisian
 Ann an coltas Mhaolciarain,
 Tha mo chrìdh air a dhoch'nadh,
 Mur gu 'n goirticheadh sgian e;
 Air mo lìonadh le tùrsa;
 Mur furtaich thu Rìgh mi,
 Chaoidh cha bhi mi dheth fallain,
 O nach maithreann mo chiad fhear.

Cha d' fhuair mi 'n raoir cadal
 Air leabaidh, a's mi 'm ònar,
 Gun sùgradh, gun mhacnas,
 'S ann a chleachd mi bhì còradh
 Ris an tànaistear bheachdail,
 Bu mhór mais', agus mórchuis,
 Deagh mhac Raonuill o 'n Chaisteal,
 Ceud nan creachaibh nach beò thu.

'S math thig claidhe' an crios dhuit
 Air do shlios air dheagh chàradh,
 Agus targaid bhreac, bhallach,
 Air an t-slinnein neo-sgàthach,
 'S air Nàile dh' earbainn siud asad,
 'N àm tachairt ri d' nàmhaid,
 Gu 'm b' urrainn 'g an casg thu,
 'Nuair a ghlacadh tu 'n t-àrdan.

Sàr ghiomanach gunn' thu,
 Dol air d' uileann san aonach;
 'Nuair a chaogadh tu 'n t-sùil ud,
 Bu neo-lùthmhor mac éilde;
 'Nuair a lùbadh tu 'n glùn ud,
 Bu mhór mo dhùil as do shaothair;
 Bu sealbhail air driùchd thu,
 Moch 'n àm dùsgadh na gréine.

Bu mhath do làmh air a bhogha,
 Sàr fhoghainnteach, làidir,
 Le do shaighidean geur, sgaiteach,
 Dheanadh caitheadh gun fhàilling,
 Mar ri glac na 'n ceann leathann,
 An deigh's an taghadh o 'n cheàrdaich,
 Ann an deas-làimh mo chridhe-s',
 Dheanadh sitheann gu m' àilgheas.

Na 'm biodh fios air mo smuaintean
 Aig gach mnaoi dha 'n bheil céile,
 Cha dùisgeadh i fharran,
 Am fad 's a mhealadh i féin e,
 Ged fhaighinn-s' de dh' òigridh,
 Gus mo phòsadh na ceudan,
 Cha 'n fhaigh mi cho cosmhail,
 No cho tocha ri m' cheud-fhear.

Co b' e chuireadh an umhail,
 Mi bhi dubhach, neo-éibhinn,
 Cha do thuig iad mo ghalar,
 'S cha d' aithnich iad féin e,
 Bean gun mhàthair, gun athair,
 Gun fhear-tighe, gun chéile,
 Gun aon sòlas 'sa chruinne,
 O nach d' fhuirich mo cheud ghràdh.

Bu tu 'n cearraich bha gasda,
 Air chairtean, 's air thàilìsg,
 Leis an `iomairt gu lasan,
 Bu ceart a bhiodh d' àireamh,
 Fear beachdail, deagh aithne,
 Sheasadh daingean le d' chàirdean,
 A's 'n'air bha thu 's tigh bhinnidh,
 Cha do dhìt thu riamh an sàraicht'.

'S pailt do chàirdean am bheachd-sa,
 Tha thu d' dhalt do Shir Seumas,

Agus chunnaic a mhac sin,
 'N àm d' fhaicinn a' d' éiginn,
 Thug thu toighe do 'n cheartas,
 Cha robh do thlachd ann san eucoir,
 'S mór a b' annsa leat onair,
 Na do sporan a chaomhnadh.

Bha thu 'm blàr Inbhir-Lòchaidh
 'S rinn thu còmhrag gu gleusd' ann;
 Nis cha duine 'bha òg thu,
 Ach cha 'n eil beò neach thoirt beum dhuit;
 'S na blàir eil' bha ri d' thìom-sa,
 Cha do dhìobair thu h-aon dhiubh,
 Chuir thu uil' iad le h-onair,
 Ge b' oil le luchd Beurl' e.

Ged fhaighinn an saoghal,
 Na th' ann de dhaoine, 's de dh' àirneis,
 'S a bhi m' uachdaran finidh,
 M' uile chinnidh, 's mo chàirdean,
 Cha leasaich sud m' acain,
 'S cha chaisg e dhomh m' àmhghar,
 O nach beò am fear a phòs mi,
 Glé òg is mi 'm phàisdean.

Fhuair mi 'm fear nach a b' fhiù mi,
 Air thùs ri àm m' òige,
 Ann an uaisl', a's an onair,
 An glaine fala, 's am mórchuis,
 Ann an treabhantas pearsa,
 Ann am macantas còraidh,
 Le cruadal gun taise,
 'Nuair a thachaireadh tu 'n còmhrag.

Ceist na 'm ban o Chill-fhianan,
 Gur lìontach le d' ghràdh mi,
 An gaol a thug mi an tùs dhuit,
 Cha mhùth mi gu bràth e,

'N'air a sheall mi am' dheighidh,
 B' e mo roghainn a dh' fhàg mi,
 Thug sud doill' air mo fhradharc,
 Ghaoil nach tadhail thu 'n t-àros.

Sud a ghaoil mar tha mise,
 'S mo chridhe briste as d' eagmhais;
 Mi an deidh mo chlisgeadh,
 Beart bu tric leam ri fhaotuinn;
 Gun dùil ri seilg beinne,
 Na ri eireachdas frìthe,
 Gun sùgradh, gun aiteas,
 Cha ghluais m' aigne gu dìlinn.

Thigeadh piostal caol glas dhuit,
 Ann an taic ri do chruachain,
 Agus beannan do bhreacain,
 Ann am pasgadh mu 'n cuairt dhuit;
 Rinn thu bun de do chlaidhe',
 'Nuair a chaith thu do luaith riu',
 Dh' fhàg sud deagh fhear mo thaighe
 Na laighe 'n Raon Ruairi.

Tha mi nis air mo sgriosa',
 Air call mo nithe, a's mo dhaoine,
 Tha mo chridhe na bhloighean,
 'S tearc mo leithid ri fhaotuinn,
 Mar mac Fhinn, a's e aosda,
 Ann an deidh Cloinne-baoisge,
 Cho truagh 'sa bha Deardir,
 Ann deidh a gràidh thoirt do Naoise.

Sìleas na Ceapaich

For complete collection, see 'Bàrdachd Shìlis na Ceapaich', ed. Colm O Baoill, Edinburgh, 1972.

19. DO MHAIRI A NIGHEAN (ante 1715)

Mo Mhàiri, mo Mhàiri,
Mo Mhàiri, bi spèiseil.

Is math a thig a' mhuislín duit,
Cuide ris a' pheàrluinn,
Is ribeanan air uachdar ort
Cho uallach 's tha 'n Dùn-éideann.
Mo Mhàiri, mo Mhàiri,
Mo Mhàiri, bi spèiseil.

Bidh gùn de 'n t-sìoda Shasunnach
Is aparán dha réir ort.

Bidh fàineachan á Hamilton
'Gan ceannach air gach féill dhuit.

Na cluasan 's am bidh na lubagan,
Bidh ruibean anns gach té dhiùbh:

Cha mhise bhios 'ga cheannach dhuit,
Ach daoine òga bhios an déidh ort.

Cha leig mi thar an abhainn thu,
Bidh Somhairle an déidh ort.

Cha toir mi d' fhear Tom Mhuilinn thu,
O 's cuilean de 'n mhuic bhreun e.

Cha toir mi thu do 'n bhàillidh,
'S e air a chràdh mu d' dhéidhinn.

Cha toir mi Chloinne Ghriogair thu,
Na luchd nam biodag geura.

Cha toir mi luchd na sìthne thu
Mas toir iad fhrìth an fhéidh thu.

Bidh Iain òg do choimhearsnach
Cur a ghnothaichean an céill duit.

Tha oighear air a' Cheapaich ud,
'S ann a b' ait leis aige fhéin thu.

Gur dalta Chiorstan Stiùbhart thu,
'S gun d' òl thu sùgh a féithean.

A Rìgh gur ait an gnothach leam
Gur comhalt' thu Rìgh Seumas.

'S gun tig Rìgh Seumas fhathast oirnn
Nam biodh an rathad réidh dhà.

Ge fada leibh gun tigheachd e,
Cha deach an t-slighe réiteach.

Mo Mhàiri, mo Mhàiri,
Mo Mhàiri, bi spéiseil.

20. DO RÌGH SEUMAS (c. 1715)

'S binn an sgeul so tha 'd ag ràdhainn,

Mo Mhaili bheag O,

Ma sheasas e gun fhàillinn,

Mo nighean rùin O ;

Rìgh Seumas a bhith air sàile

'S a' tighinn a steach gun dàil oirnn

Chur misneach ann a chàirdibh,

Mo Mhaili bheag O.

Nan tigeadh oirnne Seumas,
Mo Mhaili bheag O,
 Le chabhlach làidir ghleusta,
Mo nighean rùin O,
 Ge fada sinn 'n ar n-éiginn
 Fo ainneart Cuigse 's cléire,
 'S e sud a dhèanadh feum dhuinn,
Mo Mhaili bheag O.

'S e sud a thogadh sunnd oirnn,
Mo Mhaili bheag O,
 Nam b' fhìor na bheil mi cluinntinn,
Mo nighean rùin O ;
 Do loingeasan 'gam bréideadh
 'S an cuan a bhith 'ga reubadh,
 'S do nàimhdean dhuit a géilleadh,
Mo Mhaili bheag O.

Tha do chathair aig *Hanòver*,
Mo Mhaili bheag O,
 Do chrùn 's do chlaidheamh còrach,
Mo nighean rùin O ;
 Tha 'n sean-fhacal cho cinnteach
 'S gur barail leam gur fìor e,
 Nach marcach muc an dìollaid,
Mo Mhaili bheag O.

Ach Alba éiribh còmhla,
Mo Mhaili bheag O,
 Mun geàrr Sasunnaich ur sgòrnan,
Mo nighean rùin O ;
 'Nuair thug iad air son òir uaibh
 Ur creideas is ur stòras,
 'S nach eil e 'n diugh 'n ur pòca,
Mo Mhaili bheag O.

Gur goirt leam thug iad sgrìob oirbh,
Mo Mhaili bheag O,

'Nuair a dheasaich iad ur dìnneir,
Mo nighean rùin O,
 'Nuair chuir iad uinnean puinnsein
 'Ga ghearradh air gach truinnsear:
 Ma 's fhiach sibh bidh se cuimhnichte,
Mo Mhaili bheag O.

Chaill Sasunnaich an nàire,
Mo Mhaili bheag O,
 A' ruith air beart mi-ghnàthaichte,
Mo nighean rùin O :
 Tha mo dhòchas anns an Àrd-rìgh,
 An rìgh tha tighinn air sàil' oirnn,
 Gun réitich sibh *Whitehall* dhà,
Mo Mhaili bheag O.

21. DO DH' FHEACHD MHORAIR MÀR (1715)

Tha mulad, tha gruaim orm, tha bròn,
 On dh' imich mo chàirdean air folbh;
 On chaidh iad air astar
 Gun chinnt mu 'n teachd dhachaidh,
 Tha m' inntinn fo airtneal na 's leòir.

Gun cluinn mi naidheachd as binn
 Air gach duine a dh' imich o 'n tìr:
 Gum pilleadh sibh dhachaidh
 Le cruadal 's le gaisge,
 'S gun crùinteadh an Sasunn leibh 'n rìgh.

Beir soraidh gu Dòmhnall o 'n Dùn,
 Gu h-Uilleam 's gu Seumas 'n an triùir:
 'Nuair chruinnicheas uaislean
 Do chinnidh mun cuairt duit,
 Glac an t-urram a fhuair thu le cliù.

Beir soraidh gu h-Alasdair liath:
 As do chruadal gun earbainn deagh-ghnìomh;

'Nuair a théid thu gu buillean,
'S do nàimhdean a dh' fhuireach,
Gu cinnteach bidh fuil air am bian.

Beir soraidh gu h-Ailean o 'n chuan,
Bha greis anns an Fhraing uainn air chuairt:
'S e ro-mheud do ghaisge
Chum gun oighr' air do phearsa,
Craobh chosgairt air feachd nan arm cruaidh.

Beir soraidh an deaghaidh nan laoch,
Gus a' bhuidhinn ga 'n suaicheantas fraoch,
Gu ceannard a' Bhràghad
'S a chuid eile de m' chàirdibh:
Buaidh shìthne 's buaidh làrach leibh chaoidh.

Tha ùrachadh buidheann tighinn oirnn:
Mac Choinnich, Mac Shimidh 's Mac Leòid,
Mac Fhionghuin Srath Chuailte
'S an Siosalach suairce;
'S e mo bharail gum buailear leo stròic.

"Gig Gig !" thuirt an Coileach 's e 'n sàs;
"Tha mo sgoilearan ullamh gu blàr;
Am fùidse nach coisinn,
Cuiribh a cheann anns a' phoca,
'S chan fhiù dhuinn bhith osnaich mu bhàs."

Crath do chìrein, do choileir 's do chluas,
Cuir sgairt ort gu feachd an taobh tuath,
Cuir spuir ort 's bí gleusta
Gu d' nàimhdean a reubadh,
'S cuir Mac Cailein fo ghéill mar bu dual.

Thighearna Shrùthain o Ghiùthsaidh nam beann,
Thug thu tamull a' feitheamh 's an Fhraing;
Tog do phìob is do bhratach -
So 'n t-àm dhuit bhith sgairteil -
'S cuir na Caimbeulaich dhachaidh 'n an deann

A Rìgh 's buidheach mi 'n Mhorair sin Mâr
Leis a dh' éireadh a' bhuidheann gun fheall:

A liuthad Foirbeiseach gasda
Tha 'g iadhadh mu d' bhrataich,
B' fhiach do Sheumas an glacadh air làimh.

Tha mo ghruaim ris a' bhuidhinn ud thall,
A luaithead 's a mhùth iad an t-sreang;
Tha mi cinnteach am aigne
Gum bu mhiann leo bhith againn
Mur bhiodh Chuigse bhith aca mar cheann.

Far an robh sibh ri péidseachas riamh,
'S cha b' ann 'g osnaich air mullach nan sliabh,
A liuthad cùbaid tha 'n dràsda
Fo chùram na gràisge,
Agus easbuig fo àilgheas nam biast.

A Dhonnchaidh, ma dh' imich thu null,
Tha do chiabhan air glasadh fo chliù;
Gun cluinneam 's gum faiceam
Do philleadh-sa dhachaidh,
'S do chinneach nach stad air do chùl.

'Nuair a ruigeas sibh cuide ri càch,
Ciamar chumas a' Chuigse ruibh blàr ?
Càite bheil a h-aon aca
An Albainn no 'n Sasunn
Nach gearradh sibh as mar an càl ?

'Nuair a ruigeas sibh Lunnainn nan cleòc,
'S a bheir sibh an fhàistinneachd beò,
Bidh tomhas an t-sìoda
Le ur boghannan rìomhach
Air an drochaid, is mìltean fo 'r sgòd.

22. LATHA SLIABH AN T-SIORRAIM (1). (1715)

Sgeul a thàinig an dràsda oirnn
 A dh' fhàilnich air mo chiall,
 Mu dhéidhinn Clann Choinnich is Clann Dòmhnail
 Thuiteam còmhladh air an t-Sliabh;
 Thug Morair Hunntainn as a chasan,
 'S beagan each nach b' fhiach,
 'S bha gach Caiptean air an casgairt,
 'S mo mhac-sa air dol dhìom.

Is goirt an greadan fhuair ar dùthaich
 Le fùidse nach b' fhiach,
 A theich 'na dheann-ruith bhàrr na machrach
 Mu 'm facas a ghnìomh;
 Dh' fhàg sud mnathan anns a' bhasraich
 Toirt am failt a nìos,
 'S cha robh neach a chual a' chaonnag
 Nach do chaochail nial.

Ge bu lag mise ghlac mi misneach
 'S thubhairt mi ri càch:
 "Beir uam ur sgeula dona breugach,
 Na tugaibh éisdeachd dhà:
 Gar am biodh ach Gòrdanaich 's Clann Dòmhnail
 Thachairt còmhladh anns a' bhlàr,
 Cha toir an saoghal orm a shaoilsinn
 Nach tug iad aodainn dàibh."

Glé mhoich an là 'r na mhàireach,
 Mun d' àrdaich air a' ghrian,
 Bha buaidh làrach aig mo chàirdibh
 Mar a b' àbhaist riamh;
 Thug iad deannal leis na lannaibh
 Gu cruaidh daingean dian,
 'S bha fuil is faobh is claignean sgaoilte
 Aig luchd chur ar n-aobhair sìos.

'S e 'n Rìgh a bha 'g ur còmhnaidh
 'N ur n-òranan leibh fhéin,
 'Nuair a theich iad uaibh, ur càirdean,
 'S ur nàimhdean an gleus;
 Cruas ur làmh an ceann ur lann
 A' gearradh cheann gu feur,
 A' sgathadh chluas 's a' sgoltadh chnuachd
 'S a' cur na ruaig 'n an déidh.

Ceud mallachd aig a' phàirtidh
 A dh' fhàg sibh ann am feum,
 Bha 'n cùirt an rìgh 's Mhorair Hunntainn,
 Luchd plùndrainn nan ceud;
 B' iad mo rùn na saoidhean
 A chuir an aodainn ri gleus
 An aghaidh nan cùrs-each dùbh-ghorm
 Bu dùbailte sréin.

Mo chreach lot àrmainn Mhùideart,
 Bu chliùthmhor a bheus;
 B' e sud an seobhag sùil-ghorm
 Fhuair cliù am measg nan ceud;
 'S e dol cho dàna 'n uchd do nàmhaid
 Thug an call ort fhéin,
 Ach 's goirt an cridhe fhuair do chàirdean
 'Nuair a dh' fhàg iad thu 'n an déidh.

Thuit Morair uasal òg an t-Srath-mhòir,
 Mo chreach 's bu mhór am beud !
 Am planntas deas dàicheil
 Nach d' fhàs ach 'n a ghéig;
 Ged nach fhacas riamh do mhàthair,
 Chualas cainnt a thùirt a beul:
 An taobh a chaidh am fear a b' àirde
 Càch a dhol 'n a dhéidh.

Mo dhiùbhail dà Iain Grannd
 A bh' air an àr-fhaich fhuair;

B' iad na spailp-dhaoin' uaisle tapaidh
 A chum an t-sabaid uainn,
 'Gan robh na teaghlaichean fial farsuing
 Nach do chleachd a' ghruaim:
 Mo chreach ur clann 's ur mnathan uaisle
 Toirt a nuas an gruag.

Chaill sibh òigridh shèamhaidh sheòlta
 Dh' an tughas móran gràidh,
 'Gan robh m' eòlas o thùs m' òige -
 Leam bu bhròn an call;
 'S e mheud an dùrachd anns a chùis ud
 Chuir air lùths an lann,
 'Gan spadadh le luaidh ghlas 's le fùdar,
 'S b' e mo dhiùbhail bh' ann.

23. LATHA SLIABH AN T-SIORRAIM (2). (1715)

Mhic Choinnich bho 'n tràigh,
 'S e 'n gnìomh nàr mar thaich thu;
 'Nuair a chunnaic thu 'm blàr
 'S ann a thàir thu 'n t-eagal;
 Rinn thu cóig mìle deug
 Gun t' each sréin a chasadh;
 Bha claidheamh rùisgt' ann ad dhòrn
 Gun fhear cleòc a leagail.

Ho ró agus hó,
 Ho ró an t-eagal !
 Mo mhallachd gu léir
 An déidh na theich dhiùbh !

Fire faire, Lochiall !
 Sud mar thriall do ghaisgich:
 'N an ruith leis an t-sliabh,
 Làn fiamh is gealtachd;
 Ged is iomad fear mór
 Bha mu Lòchaidh agaibh,

'S thall 's a bhos mu Ghleann Laoigh
 'S mu dhà thaobh Loch Airceig;
 Fir nach seasadh ri teine
 'S an cnap geire 'n an achlais.

Theich Gòrdanaich uainn
 Le luaths an casan,
 Agus cinneadh an rìgh,
 Làn spìd is maslaidh;
 Clann Fhionghuin bu luath
 Air ruaig le gealtachd:
 Theich buidheann nam faochag
 Gun aodach dhachaidh.

Fir Athuill is Bhàideanaich,
 Dh' fhalbh iad uile;
 Theich iad bho 'n bhlàr
 Gun stà, gun fhuireach;
 Cha robh iad ach sgàthach
 Bhualadh bhuillean,
 'S cha b' fheàrr iad na 'm màthair
 Gu nàmhaid fhulang.

Ach a Raibeart nam bó,
 'S mór an sgleò a thachair:
 Bho 'n bhan-rìgh nach beò
 Fhuair thu òr am pailteas;
 Gheall thu còrr is còig ceud
 De dh' fhearaibh treuna sgairteil,
 Is cha b' fhiach iad am biadh,
 An t-aon chiad a bh' agad.

An t-Alasdair Ciar,
 Chaidh e sìos an rathad
 Gu cruadalach dian
 'Nuair bha 'n triath laighe;
 Bha Clann Dòmhnail an fhraoich
 Air do thaobh 's bu mhath iad;

'S iad a chaidh air ghleus
'Nuair a dh' éigh thu claidheamh.

Air chalmair duinn, O!
Gun d' fhalbh ar Caipinn;
Call iù ri ò,
Cha tàinig e dhachaidh.

'S iad nach tilleadh 's a' bhlàr
No an làthair gaisge,
'S nach gabhadh bonn sgàtha
Roimh nàmhaid fhaicinn;
Fir ghasda mo rùn
Nach diùltadh aiteal,
'S a chuireadh an ruaig
'Nuair bu chruaidh am baiteal.

24. DO DH' ARM RÌGH SHEUMAIS (1715)

A Rìgh 's diombach mi 'n iomairt
Chuir gach fine air fògradh,
Dh' fhàg e gun chadal am dhùsgadh mi,
Gun aighear, gun éibhneas,
Gun réite bho Dheòrsa,
Dh' fhàg e gun chadal am dhùsgadh mi;
A Rìgh 's iomad bean uasal
Tha gu h-uaigneach 'n a seòmar,
Gun aighear, gun éibhneas,
'S i ag éirigh 'n a h-ònar,
A' sìor-chaidh nan uaislean
A fhuair iad ri phòsadh,
Dh' fhàg e gun chadal am dhùsgadh mi.

Mo thruaighe a' chlann
Nach robh gann 'n an curaiste,
Dh' fhàg sibh gun chadal am dhùsgadh mi;
Luchd rùsgadh nan lann
An àm nam builleanan,

Dh' fhàg sibh gun chadal am dhùsgadh mi.
 Ged a tha sibh 's an àm
 Air feadh ghleann agus munaidhnean,
 Gu nochd sibh ur ceann
 An àm teanntachd mar churaidhnean;
 'Nuair thig Seumas a nall
 'S i ur lann bhios fuileachdach,
 Dh' fhàg sibh gun chadal am dhùsgadh mi.

Ach guidheam air Dia
 Ur dìonadh o chunnartaibh,
 Dh' fhàg sibh gun chadal am dhùsgadh mi,
 O chunnart, o chàs,
 O bhàs, o dhuilichinn,
 Dh' fhàg sibh gun chadal am dhùsgadh mi,
 O bhuillibh de 'n tuaigh
 Tha na h-uaislean a' fuileachdainn;
 'S gun imich null uainn
 Le cruadal 's le duilgheadas
 An sgeul cruaidh so fhuaras,
 A chuala na chunnaic sinn,
 Dh' fhàg e gun chadal am dhùsgadh mi.

Mìle marbhphaisg air Deòrsa
 Dh' fhàs gun tròcair gun bhàidh ann !
 Dh' fhàg sibh gun chadal am dhùsgadh mi;
 Ona dh' fhàs e 'n a fheòladair
 A' spòltadh ar càirdean,
 Dh' fhàg sibh gun chadal am dhùsgadh mi;
 Tha an sean-mhadadh-allaidh
 'Gar mealladh le chùinneadh,
 Is na nathraichean neimhe
 Cur an gathan 'n ar sùilibh;
 Ach luchd togail nan arm,
 Bidh iad searbh dhàibh ri chunntadh,
 Dh' fhàg sibh gun chadal am dhùsgadh mi.

Tha bùrn a' tighinn fodhaibh
 Mur dèan sibh grad-dhùsgadh,

Is fada 'n ur cadal gun chùram sibh,
 Is mur tionndaidh sibh cleòc
 Théid ur sgòrnan a chiùrradh,

Is fada 'n ur cadal gun dùsgadh sibh;
 Rinn sibh cleas a' choin sholair
 Thug a chobha 'n a chraos leis:
 'Nuair a chunnaic e fhaileas
 Thug e starradh g' a fhaotainn;
 'Nuair a chaill e na bh' aige
 Dh' fhàg sin acrach re shaogh'l e;
 Is fada 'n ur cadal gun chùram sibh.

'S e rìgh na muice
 'S na Cuigse Rìgh Deòrsa,
 Is fada 'n ur cadal gun dùsgadh sibh;
 Nan éireadh sibh suas
 Ann an cruadal 's an duinealas,
 Eadar islean is uaislean,
 Thuath agus chumanta,
 Sgiùrsadh sibh uaibh e,
 Rìgh fuadain nach buineadh dhuinn,
 Is dhèanainn an cadal gu sunndach leibh.

25. DO GHILLEASBUIG A MAC (c. 1720)

Mo laochan, mo laochan,
 Mo laochan Gilleasbachan,
 Mo laochan, mo laochan,
 Mo laochan Gilleasbachan,
 Mo laochan, mo laochan,
 Mo laochan Gilleasbachan,
 Cas dhìreadh ris an fhuaran,
 Nì 'n cuartachadh feasgair dhuinn.

Mas tu Gilleasbuig Gòrdan
 'S feàrr còir air a' chinneach thu;
 'N àm cur a dhaoine 'n òrdugh
 Bi seòlta deas innealta;

Le d' phaidhir dhag is gòrsaid,
 Each cròidheach is pillean air,
 Bi sgiobalt ann ad dhiallaid
 Le d' shrianaibh 's le d' stiorapaibh.

Is dar a thig an Diùc sin
 Bidh sùrd air mo ghillea-sa,
 'N àm dìreadh ris na stùcaibh
 Gu dlùth ris na firichibh;
 Dar a nì thu crùban
 'S e t' fhùdar gun innis e,
 Le gunna caol nach diùltadh
 Air ùdlaiche 'n daimh chinn deirg.

'S gur iomadh sgeul a fhuair mi
 Chuir truas agus mulad orm,
 Thug rudhadh as mo ghruaidhibh,
 Dh' fhàg droch-snuadh is droch-chular orm;
 A' cheud ghineal so dh' àraich mi
 Gun fhàillinn gun uireasbhuidh,
 E dh' fhalbh uainn air sàile
 Gun aon fhios càit an d' fhuirich e.

26. CUMHA AIR BÀS A FIR AGUS A H-IGHNE (c. 1720)

O chan urrainn mi gu bràth
 Dol thoirt cunntais uam do chàch
 Anns na rug orm eadar dhà Dhi-Sathurna.
 Anns na rug orm eadar dhà Dhi-Sathurna.

Cheud Di-Sathurna bha dhiùbh
 Chuir mi Anna anns an ùir;
 'S tric a dh' fhàg i le sùgradh mi aighearach.
 'S tric a dh' fhàg i le sùgradh mí aighearach.

An ath Dhi-Sathuran 'n a dhéidh,
 Mun d' àrduich air a ghréin,
 Thug mi liubhairt do Mhac Dé d' fhear mo thighe uam.
 Thug mi liubhairt do Mhac Dé d' fhear mo thighe uam.

Thug mi liubhairt de mo ghaol
 Measg nan aingeal is nan naomh,
 'S iad a ghabh ris gu caomh ann am Flaitheanas.
 'S iad a ghabh ris gu caomh ann am Flaitheanas.

'S iomadh smuaineachadh bochd truagh
 Tha tighinn eadar mi 's mo shuain
 Ona dh' fhàg mi Di-Luain ad laighe thu.
 Ona dh' fhàg mi Di-Luain ad laighe thu.

'S iomadh latha is mi fann
 Thug thu 'd shuidhe aig mo cheann,
 Is nach dèanainn riut cainnt ach gu h-athaiseach.
 Is nach dèanainn riut cainnt ach gu h-athaiseach.

'S ro-mhath shileadh tu na deòir,
 'S tu aig amharc orm-sa leth-bheò,
 'S nach cunntadh tu stòras a chaitheamh rium.
 'S nach cunntadh tu stòras a chaitheamh rium.

Tha Alasdair 's an Fhraing
 Is tha Iain fada thall,
 Is tha Gilleasbuig air chall is chan fhaighear e.
 Is tha Gilleasbuig air chall is chan fhaighear e.

O nach d' fhàg thu ann ad dhéidh
 Ach an t- aon mhac 's a bheil feum,
 Gun seòladh Mac Dé gu tìr athar e.
 Gun seòladh Mac Dé gu tìr athar e.

27. LAOIDH AIR BÀS A FIR AGUS A H-IGHNE (c. 1720)

'S mór mo mhulad 's mi 'm ònar,
 'S mi 'm shuidhe ann an seòmar gun luaidh,
 Is nach fhaic mi tighinn dhachaidh
 Fear cumail mo chleachdaidh a suas,
 Fear a dh' fhadadh mo theine
 Is a dh' éigheadh gach deireas a nuas:

Ona chaidh sibh an taisgeadh
'S goirt a chaochail mo chraiceann a shnuadh.

'S tric mo shùilean rì dòrtadh
Ona thug iad thu Mhòr-chlaich a suas,
'S nach faic mise 'n t-àite
'S an do chuir iad mo ghràdh-sa 's an uaigh;
Dh' fhàg sibh Anna aig a' bhaile
'S bidh mise 'ga ghearan gu cruaidh,
A sìor-amharc a' bhalla
Aig na chuir iad i 'm falach gu buan.

'S mòr mo mhulad 's mo chùram
'Nuair a shileas mo shùilean gu làr,
Nach eil spiorad na h-ùmhlaichd
Ann am thaic 'ga mo ghiùlan na 's fheàrr;
Gu dol air mo ghlùinibh
'S 'gam liubhairt do Phrionnsa nan Gràs,
On tha sgeula ro-chinnteach
Gu bheil sinn uile fo chìs aig a' Bhàs.

Chan ann gu tighinn a rithisd
Chaidh cuideachd mo chridhe-sa uam;
Gus an ruig mise iad-san
Chan fhaicear leam iad gu Là Luain:
On nach tilleadh air ur n-ais duibh,
Ach ur cnàimhean air seacadh 's an uaigh,
Rìgh dèan iochd ri ur n-anam
'N comh-chomunn nan Aingeal tha shuas.

'S beag mo ghnothach ri féiltibh
No dh' amharc na réise ri m' bheò,
No m' aighear ri daoine:
Chaidh mo chuid-sa dhiùbh cuide fo 'n fhòid;
Ona dh' fhalbh iad le chèile,
An dithis nach tréigeadh mi beò,
Rìgh thoir dhomh-sa bhith leughadh
Air an aithreachas gheur a bh' aig Iòb.

'Nuair thig latha a' bhràtha
 'S bhios na trompaidean àghmhor 'gan seinn,
 'S thig Crìosd anns a' chathair
 Ghabhail cunntais is taca de chloinn,
 Bidh na gobhair 's na caoirich
 An sin air gach taobh dhe 'gan roinn:
 'S mairg a théid anns an teine
 Nach teirig 's nach deilich ri 'n druim.

Gheibh na caoirich an deas-làmh,
 'S na gobhair am feasd an làmh chli,
 'S an uair bhios Crìosd a' toirt breith:
 "Thigibh dhachaidh, a chlann a rinn sìth,
 Gu rìoghachd ur n-Athar
 Far nach cluinn sibh ach aighear gun strì:
 Sgriosar sìos a' chuid eile
 Do 'n teine nach teirig a chaoidh."

Glòir thoir do Mhac Muire
 Thug 'e ghibht domh gun d' fhuiling mi leòn,
 Thug de bhròn 's de leann-dubh dhomh
 Gus na theirig de m' fhuil agus m' fheòil,
 Gus an tigeadh mo Shlànair
 A rithisd 'gam shàbhaladh beò;
 Rìgh, glac m' anam an latha ud
 'S thoir suas e gu Cathair a' Cheòil.

28. MARBHRANN (c. 1720)

Is coma leam fhéin na có dhiùbh sin,
 Mìre no aighear no sùgradh;
 An diugh o theann mi ri chunntadh,
 So ceann na bliadhna thog riadh dhìom dùbailt.

'S i so bhliadhna 's tur a chlaoidh mi,
 Gun sùnn'd gun aighear gun aoibhneas:
 Mi mar bhàta air tràigh air sgaoileadh,
 Gun stiùir gun seòl gun ràmh gun taoman.

'S i so bhliadhna chaisg air m' àilgheas:
 Chuir mi fear mo thighe 'n càradh
 An ciste chaoil 's na saoir 'ga sàbhadh;
 O 's mise tha faoin 's mo dhaoine air m' fhàgail.

'S mise nach gearanadh feudail,
 Tinne na an-shocair na euslain',
 Gus an d' fhàg thu nis ad dhéidh mi,
 'S tu 's an ùir a' cnàmh is feur ort.

Chaill mi sin 's mo chuilean gràdhach,
 Bha gun bheum gun leum gun àrdan,
 Bha gu beusach ceutach nàrach:
 Bha guth do bheòil mar cheòl na clàrsaich.

'S ann ri d' ghnùis a dhèanainn faoilte -
 Sùil chorrach ghorm, gruaidh mar chaorunn;
 Thug mi cìoch is glùn is taobh dhuit:
 Sud an gnìomh a b' fhiach mo shaothair.

Mas beag leam sin, fhuair mi bàrr air:
 Ceann mo stuic is pruib nan càirdean,
 Leag na céid le bheum 's na blàraibh,
 D' a chuir fo 'n fhòd le òl na gràisge.

Cead nan creachan a thug uainn thu !
 Thug do Inbhir Nis air chuairt thu,
 Dh' òl an fhìona las do ghruaidhean,
 'S a dh' fhàg nad chorp gun lot gun luaidh thu.

'S mór a tha gun fhios de d' chàirdibh
 'S an tìr mhóir tha nunn o 'n t-sàile,
 Thu bhith aig na Gaill 'gad chàradh,
 'S do dhùthaich fhéin air a mort le nàimhdibh.

Bu tu 'n curaidh fuilteach buailteach,
 Ceannsgalach borb làidir uasal;
 Nam b' ann am blàr no 'n spàirn a bhuailte thu,
 Gum biodh do chàirdean a' tàir-leum suas orr'.

An leómhann frioghail fearail feumail,
 Tionnsgalach garg beòthail euchdach:
 An Coille Chnagaidh is Latha an t-Sléibhe
 Bu luath do lann 's bu teann do bheuman.

Mo chreach long nan leómhann garga,
 Nam bratach sròil 's nan dòrn gearr-gheal;
 'S tric an t-eug gu geur 'g ur leanmhuinn,
 'S a' leagail ur crainn siùil gu fairrge.

Nise ona dh' fhalbh na bràithrean,
 'S nach eil ach Uilleann dhiùbh a làthair,
 A Rìgh mhóir, deònaich dàil dà
 Gus an diong an t-oighre 'n t-àite.

Ach a Rìgh mhóir, tog-sa 'n àird iad
 Mar chraoibh iubhair mheurach mhiadhair,
 Mar ghallain ùr nach lùb droch-aimsir,
 Mar phreasa fiona 's lionmhor leanmhuinn.

Mas e so deireadh an t-saoghail bhruidhnich,
 A Chrìosda dèan sinn ort-sa cuimhneach;
 An déidh an latha thig an oidhche,
 Is thig an t-aog air chaochladh stoidhle.

29. ALASDAIR A GLEANNA GARADH (? 1721)

Alasdair a Gleanna Garadh,
 Thug thu 'n diugh gal air mo shùilibh;
 'S beag ionghnadh mi bhith fo chreuchdaibh
 'S gur tric 'gan reubadh as ùr iad;
 'S beag ionghnadh mi bhith trom-osnach,
 'S meud an dosgaidh th' air mo chàirdibh;
 Gur tric an t-eug uainn a' gearradh
 Rogha nan darag as àirde.

Chaill sinn ionann agus còmhla
 Sir Dòmhnall 's a mhac 's a bhràthair;

Ciod e 'n stà dhuinn bhith 'gan gearan ?
 Thuit Mac Mhic Ailein 's a' bhlàr uainn;
 Chaill sinn darag làidir liath-ghlas
 A chumadh dìon air ar càirdean,
 Capull-coille bhàrr na giùthsaidh,
 Seobhag sùil-ghorm lùthmhor làidir.

Bu tu ceann air céill 's air comhairl'
 Anns gach gnothach am biodh cùram,
 Aghaidh shoilleir sholta thlachdmhor,
 Cridhe fial farsaing mu 'n chùinneadh;
 Bu tu roghainn nan sàr-ghaisgeach,
 Ar guala thaice 's tu b' fhiùghail;
 Leómhann smiorail fearail feumail,
 Ceann feachda chaill Seumas Stiùbhart.

Nam b' ionann duit-se 's do Dhòmhann,
 An uair a chuir e 'n long air muir,
 Cha tigeadh tu dhachaidh gu bràth
 Gun fhios dé 'm fàth as 'n do chuir;
 'Nuair a chunncas air an tràigh sibh
 A bhith 'gur fàgail air faondradh,
 Thuit ar cridheachan fo mhulad:
 'S léir a bhuil - cha robh sibh saogh'lach.

Bu tu 'n lasair dhearg 'gan losgadh,
 Bu tu sgoltadh iad gu 'n sàiltibh,
 Bu tu curaidh cur a' chatha,
 Bu tu 'n laoch gun athadh làimhe;
 Bu tu 'm bradan anns an fhìor-uisg,
 Fìreun air an eunlaith 's àirde,
 Bu tu 'n leómhann thar gach beathach,
 Bu tu damh leathann na cràice.

Bu tu 'n loch nach fhaidte thaomadh,
 Bu tu tobar faoilidh nà slàinte,
 Bu tu Beinn Nibheis thar gach aonach,
 Bu tu chreag nach fhaidte theàrnadh;
 Bu tu clach uachdair a' chaisteil,

Bu tu leac leathan na sràide,
 Bu tu leug lòthmhor nam buadhan,
 Bu tu clach uasal an fhàinne.

Bu tu 'n t-iubhair thar gach coillidh,
 Bu tu 'n darach daingean làidir,
 Bu tu 'n cuileann 's bu tu 'n draigheann,
 Bu tu 'n t-abhall molach blàthmhor;
 Cha robh do dhàimh ris a' chritheann
 Na do dhligheadh ris an fheàrna;
 Cha robh bheag ionnad de 'n leamhan;
 Bu tu leannan nam ban àlainn.

Bu tu céile na mnà prìseil,
 'S oil leam fhéin d' a dìth an dràsdu thu;
 Ged nach ionann domh-sa 's dhi-se,
 'S goirt a fhuair mise mo chàradh;
 H-uile bean a bhios gun chéile,
 Guidheadh i Mac Dé 'n a àite,
 O 's E 's urra bhith 'ga còmhnaidh
 Anns gach bròn a chuireas càs oirr'.

Guidheam t' anam a bhith sàbhailt
 Ona chàradh anns an ùir thu;
 Guidheam sonas air na dh' fhàg thu
 Ann ad àros 's ann ad dhùthaich:
 Gum faic mi do mhac ad àite
 Ann an sàibhreas 's ann an cùram:
 Alasdair a Gleanna Garadh,
 Thug thu 'n dìugh gal air mo shùilibh.

30. COMHAIRLE AIR NA NIGHEANAN OGA (?post 1720)

An toiseach m' aimsir is mo dhòigh ri bargan
 Gun robh mi 'g earbsa' nach cealgte orm;
 Cha chòmhradh cearbach air ro-bheag leanmhuinn
 Bho aois mo leanbaidh chaidh fheuchainn dhòmhs';
 Ach nis bho chì mi cor nan daoine,

An comunn gaolach gur faoin a ghlòr,
 Cha dèan mi m' aontadh ri neach fo 'n t-saoghal;
 Chan eil gach aon diùbh air aon chainnt beòil.

Nach fhaic sibh òig-fhear nam meall-shùil bòidheach,
 Le theangaidh leòmaich 's e labhairt rium,
 Le spuir 's le bhòtan, le ad 's le chleòca,
 Le chorra-cheann spòrsail an òr-fhuilt duinn;
 Saoilidh gòrag le bhriathraibh mòrach
 'Ga cur an dòchas le glòr a chinn:
 "A ghaoil, gabh truas rium 's na leig gu h-uaigh mi;
 Do ghaoil a bhuair mi bho ghluais mi fhìn.

"Le d' theangaidh leacaich nam briathran tearca,
 'S e saobhadh t' fhacail dh' fhàg sac 'gam leòn;
 Gu bheil mi 'g altrum am thaobh an tacaid
 A rinn mo ghlacadh 's mo ghreas fo 'n fhòid."
 Mar shamhladh dhà sud gaoth a' Mhàirt ud,
 Thig bho na h-àirdibh 's nach taobh i seòl:
 'Nuair gheobh e mhiann di gun toir e bhriathra
 Nach fhac e riamh i, 's car fiar 'n a shròin.

Na geallan breugach air bheag reusan,
 Fallsail, eucorach, neo-ghlan rùn,
 Air eagal bhreugan no maslaidh fhaotainn
 'S ann leam nach b' éibhinn taobhsann riù;
 A chlann, na éisdibh ri 'n glòr gun éifeachd,
 'S na toiribh spéis do fhear caogaidh shùil;
 Gur h-aobhar reusan dhuibhs' an tréigeadh -
 'S ann annta fhéin a bhios gné nan lùb.

Bha mi uair 'nuair bha mi 'm ghruagaich
 Gum faighinn uaigneas gun fhios do chàch;
 Mar shamhladh bruadair an diugh 'ga luaidh rium,
 Gun dad de bhuannachd ach buaidh mar ghnàth,
 Na geallan glé-mhór a' gheobhainn fhéin bhuap'
 Air chor 's nach tréigeadh iad mi gu bràth;
 A nis is léir dhomh na rinn mi dh' eucoir
 'S a' mheud 's a dh' éisd mi d' am briathran bàth.

Ach a fhearaibh òga, ge mór nur bòlaich,
 'S math 's aithne dhòmh-sa cuid mór d' ur gnàths:
 Gu barrail, bòidheach sibh tighinn am chòmhdhail,
 Le teangaidh leòmaich 's le 'r còmhradh tlàth;
 Ghabhte ceòl leibh an aodann gòraig,
 'S mur bidh i eòlach gun gabh i à:
 'Nuair bhios e stòlda 's 'nuair gheobh e leòr dhi,
 Gum bidh Ochòin aic' an lorg bhith bàth.

A ghruagach chéillidh na creid fhéin iad,
 An car-fo 'n-sgéith sin bhios ann an gràdh;
 Chan eil 's an t-saoghal nach creid an saoradh,
 Ach 's mise dh' fhaodadh a chaochladh ràdh;
 Taobh an inntinn mar as cinnteach,
 Is theirig aotrom air ghaol thoirt dàibh:
 Dh' aindeoin fhocail 's a bhriathra brosguil,
 Na dèan do lochd leis an t-sochair-dhàil.

A ghruagach dheud-gheal an fhuilt theud-bhuidhe,
 Cum do cheutaidh fo 'd cheud-bharr ùr;
 Na creid am breugan 's na tog droch-sgeula,
 Ged robh fear leumnach 'n an déidh mar chùl;
 Dh' aindeoin uaigneis is raspars uasal,
 Na leig e 'n uachdar air chruas a ghlùin,
 Ach cum e 'n ìochdar ge b' oil le fhiacaill,
 Mur toir e bhriathar gur fhiach leis thu.

Am fear a thriallas a dhol a dh' iarraidh
 Na mnà as miannaiche bhios d' a réir,
 Gur cailinn shuairc i nach fhuilig mì-stuamachd,
 Na dhol an uaigneas le neach fo 'n ghréin;
 Mar shamhladh bhà sud, a bhrìgh a nàire,
 Dhol nas dàine na mánran béil;
 Bheir fear gun riaghailt an sin a bhriathar
 Gu bheil i fiadhta 's nach fhiach a gné.

Ma bhios i gléidhteach air nì 's air feudail,
 Their fear gun reusan gum bidh i crìon,
 'S ma bhios i pàirteach air nithe àraidh,

Gun abair càch rith' gum b' fheàrrd' i ciall;
 An té tha stròdhail, cha bhuin i dhòmh-sa
 Mar chéile pòsta bhon tha i fial;
 Gur cailinn shàmhach nach fhuilig tàmailt,
 A mòid no mànrann an àirde miann.

31. AN AGHAIDH NA H-OBAIR NODHA (post 1720)

Is mise th' air mo bhodhradh
 Le tòghnadh na h-Obair Nodha,
 Aig éisdeachd nan daoine
 A' laoidh mar nì iad an gnothach;
 B' fheàrr leam bhith as aogais
 Gu m' aois, gus am bithinn gnothaist,
 Na bhith 'g éisdeachd an sgéil ud
 Mar leumas iad air na mnathaibh.

Ged bhithinn-se 'nam ghruagaich
 Cho uallach 's a bha mi roimhe,
 Cha chluinntes ri m' bheò mi
 Cur tòir air an Obair Nodha;
 Mur faighinn fear pòsda
 Le deòin a dhèanadh mo ghnothach,
 Cha bu diù leam cuairt
 Do dh' fhear fuadain a shiùbhladh roimhe.

Mo chomhairle 's an tìm so
 Do nianag i bhith gu taidheach;
 Bhith gu teistheil diamhair
 Gun mhì-mhodh idir a ghabhail
 O na gilleann òga
 Air bhòidhchead 's am bidh an labhairt,
 Ach gun dèan sibh còrdadh,
 Pòsadh is dol a laighe.

Mo chomhairle ri m' bheò dhuibh
 Na h-òganaich uile sheachnadh;

Gun am fulang dàna
 Ann cainnt na 'm briathran fachaid;
 B' fheàrr leam dol thar sàile
 Do 'n àte riamh nach fhacas,
 Na bhith 'g àrach phàisdean
 Do ghràisg nach fuilig am faicinn.

Bidh mionnan agus briathran
 'S mì-chiataidh an déidh a leithid;
 Bidh gul agus caoidh ann,
 Is caochladh na h-uile latha;
 Bidh cùram air càirdean,
 Bidh cràdh aig màthair is athair;
 'S mo nianagan gaolach,
 Bithibh cuimhneach air na tha mi 'g ràdh.

Bidh ministearan 's cléir ann
 'G ur éigheadh a stigh gu h-Eaglais -
 Chan usa dhuibh na h-éildearan
 'Nuair 's éigean dhuibh thighinn gu seisean;
 Chan fhaigh sibh ràdh-éisdeachd,
 Ur beusan cha dèan ur seasamh,
 Is bheir sibh móran nàire
 D' ur càirdean, mur bidh sibh teisteil.

Mo nianagan bòidheach
 Nam b' eòlach sibh mar mise,
 Mun a' bhrosgul bréige
 Seal mun éirich air a' chrìosan;
 Gheibh sibh gealladh pòsaidh
 'Nuair thòisicheas boga-briseadh,
 'S 'nuair a gheibh e 'n ruaig ud:
 "Beir uam i ! Chan fhaca mis i !"

'Nuair théid sibh thun na féille
 Na géillibh do luchd nan gibhtean;
 Innsidh mi dhuibh reusan
 As feudail nach coisinn mios iad:
 Ged a gheibh sibh làimhnean,

Fàinne no deise ribean,
 Is daor a nì sibh phàidheadh
 'Nuair a dh' àrdaicheas air a' chriosan.

Ged a théid sibh thun na binnse,
 Na sanntaichibh luchd na misge:
 Ged robh móran cainnte ann,
 'S an àm sin gur beag an gliocas.

.....

Bheirinn dhuibh mo sheòladh,
 'S ri 'r beò, nan dèanadh sibh a ghabhail,
 Cha chuireadh sibh déidh orra
 Fhéin, na air an Obair Nodha;
 Bidh iad brionnach breugach
 Ma ghéilleas sibh ullamh romha,
 Is nan gabhadh sibh mo sheòladh
 'S e 'm pòsadh a dhèanadh gnothach.

Chì thu gruagach rìomhach
 Is crios sìoda oirre an ceangal,
 Ach meallar i os n-ìosal
 Is strìochdas i don a' ghnothach;
 Dannaids i air ùrlar
 Gu sùndach an déidh a leithid,
 Ach 'nuair a thig am pàisdean
 B' fheàrr bhith mar bha i roimhe.

Tha ceist nam ban air Ruairidh,
 Chuir buaidh air an Obair Nodha;
 Is iomadh gruagach uallach
 Le suairceas tha teachd m' a chomhair,
 Dùil aca gu 'm b' fheàrr iad
 Càirdeas na h-Obair Nodha,
 Ach 's ann a bheir i tàir orr'
 Nach fàg iad ri fad an latha.

Beir fios uam gu Sine
 Gur dìomhain di cuid d' a gnothach,
 Dar a chuir i 'n dùthaich
 Fo chùram na h-Obair Nodha;
 Ged tha mise 'm bhantraich
 Cha sanntaich mi dol m' a comhair,
 Le cùram mo phàisdean
 As cràidhtiche leam fo 'n domhain.

Beir fios uam gu Seumas
 E fhéin a dhèanamh a ghnothaich:
 A sheana-bhog a thréigeadh
 'S bhith réidh ris an Obair Nodha;
 An Obair Nodha sgiùrsaibh
 Do 'n dùthaich an robh i roimhe,
 Far am bidh i diamhair
 Aig nianagaibh Ghlinne Comhann.

32. CUMHA LACHLAINN DAILL (ante 1727)

Slàn a chaoidh le ceòl na clàrsaich
 Ona ghlac am bàs thu, Lachlainn;
 Cha bhidh mi tuille 'gad iargain,
 Nì mò dh' iarras mi chaoidh t' fhaicinn;
 Fhuair mi mo chleachdadh ri d' cheòl-sa
 'Nuair a bha mi òg 's mi 'm phàisdean,
 'S ged a thàinig mi 'n taobh tuath uat
 Thigeadh tu air chuairt do m' fhàrdaich.

'Nuair a chithinn thu a' tighinn
 Dh' éireadh mo chridhe 's an uair sin;
 Gheibhinn uat sgeula gun mhearachd
 Air na dh' fharraidinn de dh' uaislibh;
 'Nuair a thàrlamaid le chéile
 B' e Sléibhte toiseach ar seanchais:
 Gheibhinn-sa uat sgeula còmhnard
 Air Dòmhnall agus air Maighread.

Gheibhinn sgeula uat gu cinnteach
 Air gach aon nì bh' anns an àite;
 Gheibhinn sgeul air Mac Mhic Ailein,
 'S air na dh' fharaidinn de m' chàirdibh;
 Gheibhinn sgeula uat air Cnòideart,
 Air Mòrair 's air Gleanna Garadh;
 Gheibhinn sgeul uat as a' Bhràighe,
 Air gach fàrdaich bh' anns gach baile.

Gheibhinn sgeul air Mòir 's air Seònaid,
 Ged tha 'n còmhnuidh 'n Earraghàidheal;
 Gheibhinn sgeul air Gleanna Comhann,
 'S air gach gnothach mar a b' àill leam;
 Nis o chaill mi mo cheann seanchais,
 'S cruaidh an naidheachd leam ri éisdeachd;
 Mur cluinn mi tuille dhe d' labhairt,
 Có uaidh a ghabhas mi sgeula ?

Ach mur tig thu chaoidh do 'n bhaile,
 Gun laigh smàl air mo shùgradh;
 'S e an t-eug 'gad thoirt le cabhaig
 Thug an diugh gal air mo shùilibh;
 'S ann umad a bha mi eòlach,
 'S air do cheòl a bha mi déidheil;
 Cha bhiodh gruaman air nar buidhinn
 Far an suidheamaid le chéile.

'Nuair a ghlacadh tu do chéile
 'S a bhiodh tu 'ga gleusadh làmh rium,
 Cha mhath a thuigte le h-ùmaidh
 Do chuir chiùil 's mo ghabhail dhàn-sa;
 Bu bhinn do mheòir air a cliathaich
 'Nuair a dh' iarrainn *Cumha 'n Easbuig*,
Cumha Nì Mhic Raghnaill làmh ris,
Cumha Màiri 's Cumha Ghilleasbuig.

Cha chluinn mi chaoidh Socair Dhàna,
 Cumha na Fàilte na Oran,
 Nach tig na deòir o mo shùilean

Le trom-thùirse o nach beò thu;
 Ged a bha iad dall do shùilean,
 Cha bu dall an cùis no dhà thu;
 Cha bu dall do bheul ri sùgradh,
 'S cha bu dall air lùths do làmh thu.

'S truagh leam do chlârsach 'ga rùsgadh,
 'S truagh leam gach cùis mar a thachair;
 'S duilich leam nach tig thu 'n taobh so,
 'S gun mo dhùil bhith chaoidh ri t' fhaicinn;
 Iarram air Dia bhith riut iochdmhor
 'S do leigeil am miosg nan Aingeal;
 O bha do thlachd 's a' cheòl 's an t-saoghal,
 Ceòl am miosg nan naomh dha t' anam.

Cha d' iarr thu phòrsan 's a' bheatha
 Ach na gheibheadh tu o uaislean,
 'G imeachd le sùgradh 's le aighear
 'Nuair bhiodh tu caitheamh do dhuaise;
 Ciod an stà dhomh bhith 'gad chaoidh-se
 'N déidh gach saoidh a rinn ar fàgail ?
 'S ge bu toigh leam e ri m' òige,
 Soraidh slàn le ceòl na clàrsaich.

Nighean Aonghais Oig

33. ORAN AIR TEACHD PHRIONNSA TEARLACH (1745)

An ulaidh phrìseil bha uainne
 'S ann a fhuair sinn an dràs' ì,
 Gum b' i sud an leug bhuadhach
 'Ga ceangal suas leis na gràsan;
 Ged leig Dia greis air adhart
 Do 'n mhuic bhith cladhach ad àite,
 Nis o 'n thionndaidh a' chuibhle
 Théid gach traoitear fo 'r sàiltean.

Slàn do 'n t-saor rinn am bàta
 A thug sàbhailt' gu tìr thu;
 Slàn do 'n iùl-fhear neo-chearbach
 Thug thar fairge gun dìth thu;
 Gum b' e sud am preas toraidh
 Thug an sonas do 'n rìoghachd,
 'S lionmhor laoch thig fo d' chaismeachd
 Bheir air Sasunnaich strìochdadh.

Slàn do 'n uachdaran ghasda
 Dh' fhalbh o 'n Cheapaich Di-haoine,
 Rinn an cruinneachadh rìoghail
 Chuir fo thaimh iad le maoidheadh;
 Bha dà Dhòmhnull ri d' shlinnein,
 'S do chuid gillea cha b' fhaoin iad
 H-uile h-aon deas gu bualadh,
 'S cha robh uath' ach an saothair.

Ursainn-chatha a' chruadail,
 Thug do dhualchas o t' athair,
 Dia 'gad chumail an uachdar
 Chosnadh buaidh anns gach latha;
 H-uile fear théid gu d' chòmhnaidh,
 Ge b' ann le còmhrag a chlaidhibh,

Gun robh Prionnsa na glòir leis
Chur Rìgh Deòrs' as a chathair.

Thighearn' òig o bhun Airceig
'S ceannard feachd thu nach géilleadh,
Thù féin 's triath fir a' Bhràghad
Chuir ur nàdur ri chéile;
Dà chraoibh-chosgair a' chruadail
Air thùs sluaigh a rinn éirigh,
'S aig a bhail' agus uaithe
Ur neart an guailibh a chéile.

Tha dream foghainteach, fearail
A Gleann-Garadh 's a Cnòideart,
Fo 'n cinn-feadhna nach tilleadh
'S nach gabhadh giorag roimh chòmhraig,
Gu borb, armailteach, lìonmhor
A' dol sìos anns a' chòmhdhail,
'S mairg a thàrladh fo 'r buillibh,
A shìl nan curaidhean còire !

A Shir Alasdair uasail
Nach grad-ghluais thu air t' aghaidh,
Leam as fada tha t' fhuireach
Gun bhith air thurus 'nan deaghaidh,
Le do bhrataichean lìonmhor,
'S iomadh ciad th' ann ad fhaghaidh,
O 'n bu dual dhuit bhith fuileach
Leig do chuilein air adhart.

Tha do chinneadh fo mhulad
A thaobh t' fhuireach 'san uair so,
O 'n 's ann uileann ri h-uilinn
Bu mhaith gach spionnadh gu cruadal;
Ciod a chùis tha fo 'n chruinne
Ris an cuireadh sibh gualainn
Nach biodh sibh 'nur n-urrainn
A' chlach-mhullaich a bhuannachd ?

A Chlann-Ghriogair a' chruadail,
 O 'n bu dual dhuibh bhith tapaidh,
 Chaidh ur dìteadh 's ur ruagadh
 Le luchd fuatha gun cheartas;
 So an t-àm dhuibh bhith dùsgadh
 Thoirt ur dùthchais fhéin dhachaidh,
 'S ged is fad o 'n tha 'chuing oirbh
 Théid na Duibhnich fo 'r casaibh.

'N uair théid gach cinneadh ri chéile
 Eadar Sléibhte 's a' Cheapaich, .
 Eadar Uidhist 'us Mùideart,
 'S Mac Iain Stiùbhart na h-Apunn,
 'S gach dream eile do 'm b' àbhaist
 Bhith a ghnàth leis a' cheartas,
 Ged nach tigeadh na Duibhnich
 'S beag ar suim de na phac ud.

Sgrios le claidheamh gun dearmad
 Air gach cealgadair bréige,
 Tha o dhuine gu duine
 A' cur bun anns an eucoir;
 Nis o 'n thàinig an Rionnag,
 Teannaibh uile r' a chéile,
 'S leibh clach-mhullaich a' chabhsair
 Anns gach àite do 'n téid sibh.

Bha 'n Seanalair gòrach
 Tighinn a chòmhrag 'nur n-aghaidh,
 'S teann nach islich e 'shròn,
 Ged thig e spòrsail air adhart;
 Ach nan cumadh e còmh dhail
 Mar bha òrdugh a' chladhair',
 Gum bu lìonmhor fear casaig
 Gun cheann, gun chasan, gun fhradharc.

Deanaibh cruadail le misneach,
 'S ann a nis tha an t-àm ann,

O 'n a thàinig an solus
Thogas onoir na h-Alba;
Fhir a sgaoil a' Mhuir Ruadh
'S a thug do shluagh troimpe sàbhailt',
Bi mar gheàrd air a' Phrionnsa,
Air a chùirt, 's air a phàirtidh.

NIC FHEARGHAIS

Cairistiona

34. CUMHA DO DH' UILLEAM SISEAL (1746)

Och ! a Theàrlaich òig Stiùbhairt,
 'S e do chùis 'rinn mo léireadh,
 Thug thu bhuam gach nì 'bh' agam,
 Ann an cogadh na t' aobhar:
 Cha chrodh, a's cha chaoirich,
 Tha mi caoidh ach mo chéile,
 Ge do dh' fhàgte mi m' aonar,
 Gun sian 's an t-saoghal ach léine.
 Mo rùn geal òg.

Cò nis 'thogas an claidheamh,
 No nì chathair a lìonadh ?
 'S gann gur h-e tha air m' aire,
 O nach maireann mo chiad ghràdh;
 Ach cia mar gheibhinn o m' nàdur,
 A bhi 'g àicheadh na 's miann leam,
 A's mo thogradh cho làidir,
 Thoirt gu àite mo rìgh math ?
 Mo rùn geal òg.

Bu tu 'm fear mór bu mhath cumadh,
 O d' mhullach gu d' bhrògan,
 Bha do shlios mar an eala,
 'S blas na meal' air do phògan;
 T' fhalt dualach, donn, lurach,
 Mu do mhuineal an òrdugh,
 'S e gu cam-lùbach, cuimeir,
 'S gach aon toirt urram d' a bhòicheid.
 Mo rùn geal òg.

Bu tu 'm fear slinneanach leathann,
 Bu chaoile meadhon 's bu dealbhaich,

Cha bu tàillear gun eòlas,
 'Dheanadh còta math gearra dhut;
 Na dheanadh dhut triubhais
 Gun bhi cumhann, no gann dhut;
 Mar gheala-bhradan do chasan
 Le d' gheàrr osan mu d' chalpa.
 Mo rùn geal òg.

Bu tu iasgair na h-amhunn -
 'S tric a thathaich thu féin i;
 Agus sealgair a mhunaidh -
 Bhiodh do ghunn' air dheagh ghleusadh:
 Bu bhinn leam tabhuinn do chuilein,
 Bheireadh fuil air mac éilde;
 As do làimh bu mhòr m' earbsa -
 'S tric a mharbh thu le chéil' iad.
 Mo rùn geal òg.

Bu tu pòitear na dibhe -
 'N àm suidhe 's taigh òsda,
 Ge be dh' òladh 's tu phàigheadh;
 Ged' thuiteadh càch mu na bòrdaibh,
 Bhi air mhisg cha 'n e b' fhiù leat,
 Cha do dh' ionnsaich thu òg e,
 'S cha d' iarr thu riamh cùis,
 Air té air chùl do mhnà pòsda.
 Mo rùn geal òg.

Gur mis th' air mo sgaradh,
 'S ge do chanam, cha bhreug e -
 Chaidh mo shùgradh gu sìleadh,
 O 'n nach pillar bho 'n eug thu,
 Fear do chéile a's do thuigse,
 Cha robh furasd' ri fheutainn,
 'S cha do sheas an Cuil-fhodair,
 Fear do choltais bu tréine.
 Mo rùn geal òg.

'S ioma baintighearna phrìseil,
 Le 'n sìoda, 's le 'n sròlaibh,
 Da 'n robh mis' am chùis-fhàrmaid,
 Chionn gun tairgseadh tu pòg dhomh;
 Ge do bhithinn cho sealbhach,
 'S gu 'm bu leam airgead Hanòbhar,
 Bheirinn cnac anns na h-àithntean,
 Na 'n cumadh càch sinn bho phòsadh.
 Mo rùn geal òg.

Och ! nan och ! gur mi bochdag,
 'S mi làn osnaich an còmhnuidh;
 Chaill mi dùil ri thu thighinn -
 Thuit mo chridhe gu dòirteadh;
 Cha tog fiodhull no clàrsach,
 Pìob, no tàileasg, no ceòl e;
 Nis o chuir iad thu 'n tasgaidh,
 Cha dùisg caidreadh duin' òg mi.
 Mo rùn geal òg.

Bha mi greis ann am barail,
 Gu 'm bu mhaireann mo chéile,
 'S gu 'n tigeadh tu dhachaigh,
 Le aighear 's le h-éibhneas,
 Ach tha 'n t-àm air dol tharais,
 'S cha 'n fhaic mi fear t' eugais,
 Gus an téid mi fo 'n talamh,
 Cha dealaich do spéis rium.
 Mo rùn geal òg.

'S iomadh bean a tha brònach,
 Eadar Tròiteirnis 's Sléibhte,
 Agus té 'tha na banntraich
 Nach d' fhuair samhla da 'm chéile;
 Bha mise làn sòlais,
 Fhad 's bu bheò sinn le-chéile,
 Ach a nis bho na dh' fhalbh thu,
 Cha chùis fhàrmaid mi féin dhaibh !
 Mo rùn geal òg.

NIC GILLEATHAIN

Catrìona nighean Eòghainn mhic Lachlainn

35. ORAN DO DHÒMHNALL MAC-GILLEAIN, Tighearna Chola, agus
na Caimbeulaich a suidheachadh fearainn Mhic-Gilleain Dhùbhairt.
(c. 1675)

'N sgeul a thàinig do 'n dùthaich
'S e a dh' ùraich dhomh mulad,
Gun robh uachdaran Iùra,
'Cumail cùirt ann am Muile,
'S iad ri ròpàinn 's ri éigheachd
Co a's gleusda 'ni buidhinn,
'S na fir dhligheach air fògradh,
'S iad gun chòir, gun chead fuireach.

Cha 'n e dùthchas bhur n-athar
'Tha sibh a' labhairt 's an àm air,
No oighreachd bhur seanar
'Tha sibh a' ceangal mu Chaingis,
Ach staid dheagh Mhic-Gilleain
A tha grathunn air chall bhuainn;-
'S sinne chrein air bhi rìoghail
'N nis bhon strìochd sinn gar n-antoil.

Cha 'n e cumha fear Ìle
'Tha mi fhìn a sìor acainn;
No chuir smàl air mo shùgradh
No chuir mo shùilean gu frasachd;
Ach an naidheachd so 'fhuair mi
'N àm dhuit gluasad air mharcachd,
Nach do dh' iarr iad nan cùirt thu,-
'S cha b' e 'n cùbaire 'bh' aca.

Cha bu sgrùbaire clàir thu
'N tùs pàighidh no iomairt,
Ach fear misneachail suairce,

A bha uasal ri shireadh.
 Is fear ceannsgalach, dân, thu,
 Is tu làidir an spionnadh,
 'Dol an coinneamh do nàmhaid
 Cha bu tlàth thu ri d' thilleadh.

Taing do Dhia mar a tha thu,
 Nach do tharl' thu 'nam freasdal,
 Gu bheil Col' agus Cuimhnis
 Fo do chuimse gu beagnaich,
 Is Rùm riabhach na sìthne
 Ri a dìreadh 'bu chreagach;
 'S gur a tric air a h-àrd chnoic,
 'Dh' fhàg thu 'n làn-damh fo leatrom.

Is gum b' airidh air tuilleadh
 An duin' 'tha mi 'g ràitinn,
 D' a bheil mórchuis is misneach,
 Mórán gliocais is àrdain.
 Gu bheil seirc ad ghnùis aobhaidh,
 'S mòran gaoil air do chàirdean;
 'S b' fheàrr dhaibh falbh na bhith fuireach,
 Seal mu 'm buidhinn am bàs thu.

A dheagh Thighearna Chola,
 Fhuair thu onair 's bu dual dhuit,
 'S tu a shliochd nam fear gasda,
 Nach bu tais an àm cruadail,
 Cha tug òr ort no eagal
 Gun thu sheasamh ri d' dhualchas;
 Glòir do Chrìosd mar a thachair,
 Nach eil smachd aig luchd-fuath' ort.

Gur tu 'n t-uachdaran cliùiteach,
 Cha b' fhear spùinnidh air tuath thu;
 Tha thu faighidneach, iochdmhor,
 'S tha thu measail aig uaislean.
 'S tu ceann-uidhe nan deòiridh
 'Thoirt an lòn air bheag duais dhaibh;

'S ann an comunn nan aingeal
 Bidh aig t-anam-sa suaimhneas.

'S i mo cheist do ghnùis shìobhalt
 A's glan fiamhachd is faicinn;
 Gruaidh dhearg mar na caorunn,
 Sùil air aogasg na dearcaig;
 Deud air chumadh na dìsne,
 'S beul o 'n cinntiche facal;
 Nuair a bhiodh tu 's taigh-bhìnne,
 'S tu gun ìnnseadh an ceartas.

Gur a mór a chùis uallaich
 'Th' air mo luaidh-sa mar chùram;
 'S ann d' i clann Mhic-Gilleain,
 'Chaill an aighear 's an sùgradh;
 Clann an t-saoidh sin, Fear Bhròlais
 'Tha fo 'n fhòid gun chead tionndadh;
 Is clann Mhurchaidh na Maighe,
 Cùis gun aighear siud dhuinne.

'S iomad aon 'tha fo aimheal
 'S Mac-Gilleain as àite;
 'S ann dhiubh oighre na Cùile,
 'S iad bhith 'n tùs de shliochd bhràithrean.
 Chaidh an saoghal air chuibhlibh,
 Bonn os-cionn a nis tha e;
 Ach, a Rìgh 'th' anns a chathair,
 Cuir caoin dhreach ann ad ghràdh air.

'N dreach 'bu mhiann leam air fhaicinn
 Seal mu 'n glacadh am bàs mi,
 Mo mhuinntir a thilleadh
 As gach ionad 'sna thàmh iad,
 Na h-òganaich ghasda
 Chùl-chleachdach, dheas, dhàicheil,
 'S iad a thabhairt ruaig mhanaidh
 Far an ainid le càch e.

36. ORAN DO LACHLANN MAC-GILLEAIN, TRIATH CHOLA (c. 1685)

Is muladach 's gur fiabhrasach
 A bhliadhna-sa do ghnàth,
 Bho 'n dh' fhàg ceann na cliaran sinn
 Gus an trialladh bàird.
 Gu 'm bu cheann aos-ealain thu
 'S gu 'm b' aith'reil dhuit do ghnàths;
 Bu dùthchas dhuit bho d' sheanair e,
 Lùb allail a thug bàrr.

Tha mise dheth trom éisleineach,
 'S mi 'g éirigh, gach aon là,
 Bhith 'g amharc air do réidhleanan
 Gun neach fo 'n ghréin ach bàrd.
 Cha 'n eil mnai no marcaich' ann,
 No gaisgich air an tràigh;
 Is cha 'n eil òl air chuachaibh
 Ann an talla buan mo ghràidh.

Is e mo rùn an gaisgeach ud
 A's smachdaile roimh shluagh,
 An àm nochdadh dhuit do bhrataich
 Is neo-air snealach a snuadh.
 Cha b' e triall gun taice dhaibh
 Is t' fhaicinn rompa 'suas;
 Bhiodh iad fallain dhachaidh leat,
 Cia fad 's ga 'n d' thugteadh ruaig.

Is e mo rùn an curaidh
 Leis 'm bu toil bhith 'n cumasg lann;
 Bu mhiann leat arm sgaiteach,
 Agus clogaid glas mu d' cheann.
 Ann an àm an rùsgaidh
 'S ann fo d' shùil a bhiodh an sgraing;
 Mo làmh gun deantadh pùdhar
 Le glac lùthaidh fir gun taing.

Is ionmhuinn leam an Lachlainn sin
 A's foinnidh, dreachmhor gnùis.
 Dh' aithinichinn air an fhaiche thu
 Air maise taobh do chùil.
 Tha blàth rathmhor, bhuadhach ort
 Nach ciùrradh fuachd ga dhlùths.
 Air mo làimh bu shàr-ghasd' thu,
 S tu'n t-àilleagan 'sa chùirt.

Nuair 'thigeadh Mac-Gilleain ort
 Le 'chathan is le 'rann,
 'S gach toiseach mar bu chubhaidh dhaibh
 Do mhaithibh Innse-Gall,
 Bhiodh farum air na tùraibh ud,
 Bhiodh fùdar gorm 'na 'dheann;
 Bhiodh clàrsaichean ga 'n spreigeadh
 Is luchd-leadanan ri danns'.

An àm bhith triall gu t' fhàrdaich
 Gu 'm b' e t' àbhaist, mar bu dual,
 Bhith tarruing ort am bràithreachas
 'Cur shlàinteachan mu 'n cuairt.
 Bhiodh searragan is tunnachan
 Gun chunnart air an luach;
 'S sìor-òl air còrnaibh sinnseireach,
 A dhiobradh fir gu suain.

37. CUMHA DO SHEUMAS MAC-GILLEAIN, A FEAR (c. 1700)

Gur h-e mise 'tha pràmhail
 'S fhuair mi fàth air 'bhi dubhach
 Tha mi feitheamh an àite
 Far 'm bu ghnàs dhuit 'bhi 'd shuidhe,
 'S gun do ghunn' an air ealachainn
 'Chuireadh earba bho shiubhal.-
 Mo chreach dhuilich gu 'n d' dh' eug thu,
 Nàmhaid féidh anns a' bhruthach.

'N uair a bha mi 'ga d' chàradh
 Ged bu shàr-mhath mo mhisneach
 Gu 'n robh saighead am àirnean,
 'S i 'gam shàthadh gu 'h-itich,
 Mu 'n fhear churanta, làidir,
 Nach robh fàilinn na ghliocas.
 Cha robh 'n saoghal mar chàs ort
 Nam biodh d' àilgheas fo d' iochd dheth.

Cha do rinn mi riut fàilte
 Ged a thàinig thu, Sheumais.
 Gur h-e mise 'tha cràiteach
 Is cha slànaich an léigh mi
 Bho nach 'eil thusa maireann
 'Fhir bu cheanalt' 's bu bheusaich;
 Gur h-e mise nach sòradh
 'Nì 'bu deònach le d' bheul-sa.

Ormsa thàinig am fuathas
 O 'n Di-luain seo 'chaidh tharam;
 Bho na chunnaic mo shùilean
 Thu 'gad' ghiùlan aig fearaibh.
 Gu 'n robh mnai air bheag céille
 'S fir gu deurach gad' ghearan.-
 O na dh' fhàg iad 's a' chill thu
 Och, mo dhìobhal, 's trom m' eallach.

'N uair a thug iad gu tilleadh
 Gu 'n robh 'n iomairt ud cruaidh leam
 'S tusa 'rùin air do chàradh
 Ann an càrnaich na fuarachd.
 Com cho geal ris a' chanach
 Fo chùl clannach, cas, dualach,
 'S truagh nach robh mise mar-riut,
 'S mi gun anam, 's an fhuar-leab.

'N uair a ràinig mi 'n clachan,
 Chaidh am braisead mo dheuraibh.

Bho nach d' ligeadh a steach mi
 Dh 'ionns' na leapa 'n robh m' eudail.
 Na am bitheadh tu maireann
 Cha dhealaicheadh tu féin sinn;
 Ochain, ochain, mo sgaradh
 Gur h-i mo bharail a thréig mi.

Air Di-dòmhnach 'sa chlachan
 Cha an 'fhaic mi mo ghràdh ann;
 Bidh gach aon té gu h-éibhinn
 Is a céile fhéin làmh-r' i,
 Ach bidh mise gad' ghearan-s',
 'Fhir bu cheanalta nàdar;
 Mo thinn thruagh bhi 'gad chumhadh
 'S tu 'n leab' chumhainn nan clàran.

Tha mi 'm ònrachd 's an fheasgar,
 'Ghaoil, cha deasaich mi t' àite,
 'S gun mo dhùil ri thu 'thighinn,
 'S e, 'fhir-cridhe, so chràidh mi.
 Do chorp glé-ghlan th' air dubhadh,
 'S do chùl buidh' th' air dhroch càradh.
 Ged a dh' fhàg mi thu 'm dheoghainn
 B' e mo roghainn 'bhi làmh-riut.

N' am biodh fios air mo smaointinn
 Aig gach aon dha bheil céile
 'S fad mu 'n deanadh iad gearan
 Fhad 's a dh' fhanadh iad-féin dhaibh.
 Ged a gheibhinn de dh' òige
 Air achd 's gum pòsadh dhà dheug mi,
 Cha an fhaicinn bho thoiseach
 Aon bu docha na 'n ceud fhear.

Na 'n do ghabhadh leat fògar
 'S barail bheò 'bhi aig càch ort,
 Gu an rachainn-sa 'n tòir ort,
 B' e sin sòlas mo shlàinte,

'N dùil gun deanadh tu tilleadh
 'Dh' ionns' an ionaid a dh' fhàg thu.-
 'S fheudar fhulang mar thachair,
 'S ann a ghlais iad fo 'n chlàr thu.

Och a Rìgh, gléidh mo chiall dhomh
 'S mi ga d' iargainn-sa, ghràidhein:
 Fhir bu tuigsich' 's bu chiallaich',
 'S mòr 'bha chiataibh 'co-fhàs riut.-
 Tha mi 'nis mar Mhaol-Ciaran,
 'Gad ghnà-iarraidh 's mi cràiteach
 Math mo laigsinn, a Rìgh, dhomh,
 Gur h-e d' iasad a chràidh mi.

38. GED A DH' FHÀG THU RI PORT MI (c. 1710)

Ged a dh' fhàg thu ri port mi,
 Cha 'n eil mi dheth socrach no slàn;
 'S cha 'n e cùram an aiseig so
 A chùm mi gun chadal, gun tàmh;
 Ach nach grunnaich mo chasan,
 Is nach d' fhoghlaim mi 'n toiseach an snàmh,
 Gus an ruiginn an talla
 Far an tric am biodh caithream nam bàrd.

A Thighearn Oig, tha mo rùn ort,
 Crìosd gad choimhead bho thuirling nan stuadh;
 Ged a dh' fhàg thu ri port mi,
 Cha 'n eil mi dha d' chorp ann am fuath.
 Bha mo chridhe 'ga thàladh
 Nuair a chunnaic mi 'm bàta 'dol 'suas,
 Fo a h-uidheam gu socrach,
 Is mi guidhe dhuit fortain is buaidh.

Gu bheil lànain na féile
 Nan laighe le chéil' anns an tùr;
 Gun d' fhuair sibh gu 'r n-iarrtas,
 Cuid de dh' aighear 's de mhiannaibh ur sùl.

Gur h-e 'chobhartach àghmhor
 Air a bhliadhna so thàinig nar lùib,
 Mac-Gilleain 's a' chéile
 A bhith caitheamh na feusda le mùirn.

Ged a b' fhad' as an t-eilein
 Cha 'n fhaca mi gainn' air ur cùl;
 Gum faight' ann a t' fhàrdaich
 Fion dathte na Spàin' air na bùird,
 Aran cruithneachd geal, sòghar,
 Ga chàradh an òrdagh gu dlùth;-
 Sàr bhiadhannan gasda
 Mar gun tàrladh tu 'n taice ri bùth.

Is a Thighearn òig Chola,
 'S tu m' eudail, is m' anam, 's mo rùn;
 Cuim' nach bi mi gad mholadh,
 'S gum bu mhiann leat mu d' choinnimh luchd-ciùil ?
 Bu tu 'n curaidh sàr ghasda,
 Air mo làimh-sa gun sgapadh tu crùin.
 B' i do chéile 'n seud ainmeil
 Is a bhean dha 'm bu toirbheartach cliù.

'S beag an t-ioghnadh mór cheutachd
 Bhith air ogha Shir Seumas o 'n tùr;
 I bhith furbhailteach, fialaidh,
 'Sin a b' fhasan d' i riamh is bu dù.
 Fhuair i urram nan Leòdach.
 Ann am misnich, am mórchuis, 's an cliù,
 Chaidh an naidheachd sin fad' ort
 Aig gach aon a ghabh beachd air do ghnùis.

Nighean Ruairidh nam bratach,
 Gur a maiseach r' a faicinn 'measg mhnà.
 'Bhean dha 'n robh i mar asaid,
 Aice fhéin a bha 'n t-achlasan àigh.
 Gur h-i baintighearna Chola
 Ris am faca mi 'n sonas a fàs;

'S fhuair is' mairiste prìseil
Leis am buannaichteachd sìth agus bàigh.

A Dhòmhnai Mhic Eachainn,
Gun guidhinn-sa leatsa deagh bhuaidh,
A mhic dalta mo sheanar,
A fhuair urram, 's tu 'd' leanabh, air sluagh.
Latha buadhach sin Lòchaidh,
'S e a b' urrainn an tòrachd a ruag;
Le a luaidhe 's le 'lannaibh
Gum biodh àireamh air cheannaibh gu, uaigh.

Tha mi guidh' air an Àrd-Rìgh
Gun cumadh e 'n t-àlach so 'suas,
Do mhac oighre 'bhith 't àite,
Mar bu chubhaidh, na àilleagan sluaigh,
'Bhith 'na shuidh' ann a t' ionad
Ri toirt suidheachaidh inich d' a thuath,
Gu socrach 'na theaghlach,
Is e 'freasdal nam feumach 's nan truagh.

Is tric aobhar mo mhulaid,
Is cha 'n eil mi dheth ullamh an dràs,
Bho 'n a dhealaich ruinn Lachlainn
Bheireadh dhomhsa feum fearainn gun mhàl;
An sàr churaidh 'bha 'n Lòchaidh
'Chaidh le aighear nam bòrd air an t-snàmh;
Is dà Lachlainn 'san Innis,
Is air leam nach robh 'n iomairt-san ceàrr.

Deanaibh fuireach beag fhathast
Agus bitheadh ur faighidinn ciùin,
'S gun a gheibh sibh deagh latha,
Ge nach biodh dhoibh air fhaighinn ach triùir.
O gun deanadh sibh éirigh
Mar chaoin aiteal na gréin' air an driùchd
'S nuair a bhrùchdas bhur snodhach,
Gun grad chuir sibh sluagh coimheach an cùil.

39. ÒRAN DO CHATRÌONA NIC-GILLEAIN, Nighean Fhir Bhròlais
(c. 1725)

Tha mi 'falbh an cois tuinne,
'S tha mo shùil air na grunnaibh
'Dh' fheuch am faicear leam culaidh fo sheòl,
Tha mi 'falbh, &c.

'Bheir dhomh sgeul air mo leanabh,
Bean chiùin nan rosg malla,
Sùil dhubh-ghorm a's glan sealladh gun sgleò.

Beul mìn-dearg an fhosaidh
Fo 'n inntinn 'tha socrach;
Cha bu dùthachas dhuit brosgal no bòsd.

Gruaidh mar ròs air a tharruing
Tha fo chaoile na mala;
Deud dlùth a's math gearradh gun sgòd.

Thu bhith 'd laighe 's an Innis,
Ged is dùthchasach t' ionad,
'Chuir mo shùilean a shileadh nan deòir.

Nighean Dhòmhnaill mhic Lachlainn,
A tha mise 'n diu 'g acainn,
'S ogha Dhòmhnaill mhic Eachainn nan sròl.

Nighean athair mo rùin-sa
Craobh dhìon d' a luchd-muinntir,
'S e nach leigeadh an cùis dheth gun tòir.

Chuala mis' iad ag ràitinn,
Nuair a bha thu 's na blàraidh,
Gum b' fhear misneachail, dân thu, le foirm.

Ged bha comharr' ad shiubhal,
Rinn thu gnìomh bu mhoth' pudhar,
'S dh' fhàg thu luchd nan ad dubha fo leòn.

Dhuinne dh' éirich an diombuaidh,
Gu 'n do dh' fhalbh ar ceann-cinnidh,
Gun do thaoitear 'bhith 't' ionad 'nad lorg.

Tha do mhuinntir fo imcheist,
'S do mhac fhathast òg leanabail,
Bho dhubh sheachdain na Caingis so 'dh' fhalbh.

Mairearad nighean Lachlainn

40. CHA CHOMA LEAM FHÌN CO DHIÙ SIN (c. 1698)

Cha choma leam fhìn co dhiù sin
 Aon mhac Shir Ailein nan lùireach,
 Cuilean leòghann nan long siùbhlach
 A bhi bhuainn le cluain nan Duibhneach.

Ach 'Fhir ris an deanam m' ùrnaigh, ,
 'S mi mar Oisein 'n deidh an rùsgaidh,
 Tionndaidh an roth mar bu dù dha,
 'S cuir an tìr so 'n òrdagh dhuinne.

'Nuair 'thànaig sibh siar an toiseach,
 Bha sibh buadhail anns gach cogadh,
 Lannan cruaidh 'dhuibh 's bhuailteadh goirt iad;
 Chuirteadh feum air léigh dha 'n lotaibh.

An àm dol 'sìos do 'n dream Dhuibhneach,
 Dol suas le buaidh 'bu dual dhuibhse;
 'S fhada chluinnteadh gabh 'ur muinntir
 'Togail fhaobhair taobh gach tulachain.

Ach cò 'n neach air nach tig mùthadh,
 Mar na neòil 'sna speuraibh dubh-ghorm!
 Cinneadh làidir nan lann rùisgte,
 'S truagh mar tha iad roimh na Duibhnich.

Gu bheil m' inntinn-sa fo smalan,
 Is mo shùilean gum bi galach
 Gus am faic mi rithist an latha
 'Am bi dol suas air sìol an taighe.

41. ORAN DO DH' AILEAN MAC-GILLEAIN, MAC FEAR BHRÒLAIS
(c. 1722)

Chunnaic mise thu, Ailein,
Is tu amaideach, gòrach,
Mu 'n do ghlac thu 'n gnìomh fearail,
Is mu 'n d' rinneadh dhiot còirneal;
Marcach ùr nan steud brasa,
Tha 'n diugh 'n tasgaidh 'sna bòrdaibh;
Och is mis' 'th' air mo sgaradh
'Caoineadh Ailein 's nach beò e !

Fear t' aogais cha 'n fhaic mi
Ann am faicheachd no 'm foghlum;
Bu mhath cumadh do shléisde
Is do bheul is do shròine.
Gu 'm bu cheannard air feachd thu
'Thoir dhaibh smachd agus òrdaigh;
'Fhir nach leughadh a' ghealtachd,
'S tu nach seachnadh an còmhrag.

'Ogha bràthair Shir Lachlainn,
'S e mo chreach nach do phòs thu;
Sin a dh' fhàg sinn cho galach,
'Dheagh mhic Lachlainn mhic Dhòmhnail;
Mhic an fhir a fhuair urram,
'S nach cuireadh duin' air an fhògradh –
B' e sin Lachlainn na céille,
Mar bha 'n treun-fhear bha còmh' ris.

Air an dol do Dhunéideann
Thug iad réite leo dhachaidh;
Ghlac Diùc Seumas air làimh iad,
'S dh' iarr a bhan-diuc a steach iad.
Cha robh Gall 's cha robh Gàidheal
'N seòmbar clàraidh no 'n caisteal,
Nach do sheas air a' chabhsair
Aig meud an geall air am faicinn.

'N uair a chunnacas na h-àrmuinn,
 Na fìor Ghàidheil gun fhòtus,
 Is nach d' iarr iad de dheise orra
 Ach breacan is còta.
 Is sgiath bhreac nam ball iomad
 Air an slinnein gu còmhrag,
 'S ann a thubhairt gach duine,
 Siud a chulaidh 'tha bòidheach.

C' ait an robh iad 'san t-saoghal,
 No an taobh so de fhlaithes,
 Mac-samhail nan daoine' ud ?
 Cha 'n fhaodar am faighinn,
 Mach o ghathaibh na gréine
 Ann an speuraibh an adhair;
 'S cha 'n iarramaid airson sgàthain
 Ach bhi 'n àite 'gan amharc.

Thuirte gach morair a b' àirde
 Gun robh 'n àit' 's an taigh-lagha:
 Cò a dhìobradh gu bràth iad
 Is gun ghràin air an aghaidh ?
 Gur h-e 'n teachdaire dân
 'Bha 'gabhail tàimh 's a cheann-adhairt
 A dh' fhàg sinne mar 'tha sinn,
 'S nach robh dh' àdh oirnn an gleidheadh.

Gur a càirdeach thu 'Lachlainn
 'Thug an t-each a Srath-Lòchaidh,
 A thug ùmhlachd bho 'n mharcach,
 A thug 'ad is a chleòc dheth;
 Ach cha b' fhiach leis an gleidheadh,
 Ged bhiodh deiltreadh de 'n òr orr',
 Ach am mathadh d' a ghillean
 'Dheanamh iomairt is òil leo.

Sin 'n uair chruinnich na h-àrmuinn
 Is na Gaidheil gu h-uile,

Luchd nan clogaidean stàilinn
 'S nan lann Spàinteach geur guineach,-
 An àm tilleadh o 'n bhlàr dhuibh
 Bu leibh fàilt' agus furan,
 Is pìob roimhibh a' màrsadh,
 Is nach b' àill leibh an drumma.

An àm tilleadh o 'n bhlàr dhuibh
 Gu ur n-àiteachan còmhnuidh,
 Chluinnteadh fuaim air an dannsa,
 'S fìon is branndaidh 'gan òl leibh,
 'S uisge-beatha nam feadan
 Leis an leagtadh na geòcaich;
 'S air an ùrlar 'nan seasamh
 Bhiodh luchd-freasdal gu leòir dhuibh.

'S car a dh-Iarla nam pìos thu
 A bha 'n Ile ri stròiceadh,
 Lachlainn Mór a bha prìseil,
 Sin 'chuir mi 'gad shìor fheòraich.
 C' àit a bheil iad an Albainn,
 No thall ann san Olaint,
 Leithid cinneadh mo mhàthar
 'Mach o àrdan Chlann-Dòmhnail ?

Ach 's e aobhar mo ghearain
 An dràst eallach Fear Bhròlais;
 Cò a sheasas ri 'ghuallainn,
 'S e 'san uair so 'na ònrachd,
 Bho na dh' fhalbh bhuainn a bhràthair,
 An tùs àilleachd is òige,
 Gun am mac 'théid 'na àite;-
 Leam is cràiteach an dòibheart.

'S fhir dha 'n robh a ghnùis àlainn
 Fo chùl tlàth nan ciabh òr-bhuidh',
 Com 'bu ghile na 'n canach,
 Is na meall-shùilean mòdhar,

A dh' fhàs deas, foinnidh, fearail,
 'S b' fhad' a leanadh an tòrachd,
 'S e do bhàs eadar Ghallaibh
 A dh' fhàg galach le bròn sinn.

'S e do bhàs eadar Ghallaibh
 'Chuir sinn tamull 'gad ionndrainn,
 'S nach robh 'n sin agad caraid
 A theannadh gu d' ionnsaidh,
 No gu d' chàradh 's an anart
 'N uair a dhalladh do shùilean,
 Ach t' fhàgail 'san t-seòmbhar
 Is a chòmhl' air a dùnadh.

Ach na 'm biodh tu san tìr so
 Far am biodht' air do thòrradh,
 Ghluaisleadh Murchadh na Maighe,
 'S Mac-Gilleain nan rò-seol,
 Mac Mhic Eoghain 's mac Eachainn
 Bho shìol Arcaig 's bho Lòchaidh.-
 Och mo thruaighe do bhràthair !
 Is do mhàthair 's i 'bhrònag.

Ach a Thì 'thug an sgrios oirnn,
 'S ann 'tha sin air a sgrìobhadh;
 Na crainn mhór' air am bristeadh
 Mu 'n do dh' fhiosraicheadh dhuinn iad.
 Na crainn mhóra bhi brist'
 Thug dhinn ar n-iteach 's ar linnidh;
 Thuit a phàirc 's an robh 'n t-abhall,
 'S fhrois an snodhach 'bu phrìseil.

Mi mar Oisean 'n 'ur deaghaidh,
 Bho 'n rinneadh taghadh nan caor' oirbh;
 Chaidh gach aon mar a b' fheàrr dhaibh
 'Thoirt a fàsach an t-saoghail s'.
 Ach a Thì a ghabh toirt dhiubh,
 'S a dh' fhàg goirt-cheannach daor sinn,

Seall a nuas oirnn an tràcair,
'S maith ar bròn dhuinn 's ar caoineadh.

Clann-Ghilleain nan cruaidh-chath,
Dh' fhalbh iad bhuainn mar an raineach;
Fhroiseadh ùbhlan a' ghàraidh
Gus an d' fhàgadh e falamh.
'S ann 'tha 'n t-oighre air fògradh
'S e gun seòl aig air fanailt;
Och, a Mhoire, mo leòn
Gu bheil a chòir aig Mac-Cailein.

'S tric a' faighneachd gach aon neach,
Ciod e t' aois, a nigh'n Lachainn ?
Ciod am fàth dhomh sin innseadh,
'S nach creid sibhs' e 'n lorg m' fhaicinn ?
Cha 'n 'eil fiacail a' m' dheudaich
Nach do leum às mo chlaigeann,
A' sìor iargain nan daoine
Ris an glويدhteadh na gaisgich.

42. ORAN DO SHIR IAIN MAC-GILLEAIN, TRIATH DHUBHAIRT
(c. 1715)

Dh' fhalbh mo chadal a smaointinn
'S mi ri tigh'inn air na daoine
Nach h-fheil againn air faotuinn;
Chuir sin mise air faontrath 's air fògradh.
Chuir sin mise, &c.

Sir Iain cha d' fhuirich;
Cha do dh' fhaodadh a chumail
Air bhòrd ann an Lunnainn,
No a feitheamh air furan rìgh Deòrsa.

'S beag an t-ioghnadh e 'thachairt,
Thu 'bhith àrdanach, beachdail,
Nuair a lìonteadh le reachd thu,
Is a liuthad fuil bhras a bha 'd phòraibh.

Bu tu ogha Shir Lachlainn,
 Iar-ogh' Ruairidh nam bratach
 'Th' anns a chiste chaoil ghlaiste,
 'S fionn-ogh' Chailein nan lasgairean cròdha.

'S ann a tha do luchd-muinntir'
 Mar ghaoir sheillean ga t' ionndrainn;
 Tha iad iargaineach, tùrsach;
 Cuin a thig thu gan ionnsaidh le còmhnaidh ?

Luchd nan leadanan cùl bhuidhe,
 Nan clogad 's nan lùireach,
 'S nan sgiath bhreac air dheagh chùineadh,
 Aig am b' iomadach ionntas is stòras.

'S iomadh bean agus nighean
 A thogadh e 'n cridhe,
 Nan deanadh tu tighinn
 Mar a b' ait leinn a rithist le sòlas.

Mur a deachaidh mi 'm mearachd,
 Bu tu dalta mo sheanar
 'S nighean Ruairidh 's na Hearadh;
 Cha b' e anaghlàs a bhainne a dh' òl thu.

Och, a Dhé, dean ruinn tionndadh;
 Thoir dhuinn fàbhar gun diùltadh,
 'S sinn ri feitheamh do chùirte,
 Ged nach h-fheil sinn cho mùinte 's bu chòir dhuinn.

43. ORAN DO SHIR IAIN MAC-GILLEAIN (c. 1704)

Gun d' fhuair mi sgeul 's chan àicheam e;
 Gu bheil e dhomh 'toirt gairdeachais,
 Gur binne leam na clàrsaichean
 'Bhith 'g innse mar a thàinig sibh,
 Gu bheil Sir Iain sàbhailte,
 'S gun d' thug a' Bhànruinn cùirt dha.

Nam b' fhiosrach Bànuinn Anna
 Mar a dh' fhògradh ann ad leanabh thu,
 Is mar a thugadh d' fhearann bhuat,
 Gu 'm biodh i aoidheil, geanail, riut,
 Is nach robh cron ri aithris ort
 Ach leantail do rìgh dùthchais.

Gur truagh gun mi cho beachdail
 Is gu 'm faighinn éisdeachd facail dhi;
 Nan labhrainn Beurla Shasunnach,
 No Fraingis mhìn gu fasanta,
 Gun innsinn gun dol seachad dhi
 Mar 'rinneadh ort do dhiùchradh.

Na Leathanaich bu phrìseil iad,
 Bu mhoralach nan inntinn iad;
 'N diugh crom-cheannach 's ann 'chìtear iad,
 'S e teann lagh a thug strìochdadh asd';
 Is mairg a bha cho dìleas riutha
 'Riamh do rìgh no 'phrionnsa.

Gu 'm b' fheàrr 'bhith cealgach, innleachdach,
 Mar 'bha ur nàimhdean mìorunach;
 'S e 'dh' fhàgadh làidir, lìonmhor sibh.
 'S e 'dhèanadh gnothach cinnteach dhuibh,
 A bhith cho faicleach, crìonnta
 Is gu 'm b' fhiach leibh a bhith 'tionndadh.

Chuala mi 's mi 'm phàisdeachan,
 Mun d' ghlacadh tuigse nàdair leam,
 Na bha fo thuath, ge làidir iad,
 Gur sibh a ghnàth bu bhàghan dhaibh;
 'S beag ioghnadh leam mar tha iad
 Anns a Ghàidhealtachd g' ur n-ionndrainn.

An fhine mhòr 'bha àrdanach !
 Bha urram is buaidh-làrach leibh.
 Bu deas a dh' iomairt chlaidhmhean sibh,
 Cha mheirgeadh iad nan sgàbartan;

Is cha bu gheilt no sgàthachas
A leughadh iad an cùnnart.

'N àm togail dhuibh le gairdeachas
A chaiseamachd bu ghnàthach leibh
Bhiodh sluagh gu leòir a mairsail leibh,
Fir sgairteil throm' neo-fhàilinn each,
'S bhiodh brataichean gan sàthadh
Aig sliochd Mhànuis Oig gan rùsgadh.

Is iomadh lùireach mhàilleach
'Bhiodh air ealachainnean 'nur fàrdaichean;
Cha togadh sibh na ràpairean,
Gum b' fheàrr a chrath't'an Spàinteach leibh,
A dh' fheuchadh spionnadh ghàirdeanan
'S am bogh' a b' fheàrr a lùbadh.

Cuid eile de bhur n-àbhaistean
Mun do chuireadh sgànnradh annaibh,
Puirt is stuic is stàndachan,
Is bualadh bhròg air dheàrnachan,
'S gach neach dhuibh mar a dh' fhàsadh e
Bhith 'foghlum dhà gach lùth-chleas.

A rìgh ! gur dubhach, cianail mi
A 'caoidh nan laoch a b' fhiachaile;
Gun d' éirich cleas Mhaol-Ciarain dhaibh,
Cha 'n eil ri 'inns' ach sgeul orra;
Mo thruaighe ! gun do thrìall iad bhuainn,
Fir threun nan sgiath 's nan lùireach.

44. GED IS STOCHD MI 'N DEIDH CRÌONADH (?ante 1703)

Ged is stochd mi 'n deidh crìonadh,
 Cha 'n eil mìorun air m' aire
 Do na fir a bha 'n ruaig orr',
 Dha 'n robh 'n cruadal aig baile.
 An ceann-cinnidh 'bu phrìseile,
 De 'n fhìor fhuil 'bu ghlaine
 As a' choill a b' fheàrr cnuasach,
 Rinneadh fhuadach thar mara.

Tha do chinneadh an cruaidh chàs,
 Tha iad truagh dheth gad ghearan;
 Bha iad roimhe so sàr mhath,
 Nuair a dh' fhàgadh tu 'd leanabh.
 'Nuair a thug thu dhaibh sòlas,
 Ghabh thu fògradh a t' fhearann;
 Tha do dhùthchannan bochd dheth,
 Làn de ghoirt is de dh' ainnis.

Gur h-e m' aighear is m' eudail,
 Marcaich ùr nan steud meara.
 Gur mac-samhailt do 'n reul thu,
 Do na ghréin no do 'n ghealaich.
 Laigh dubh-smàl air na crìochan
 O 'n là 'striochd thu o 'n bhaile.
 Bu tu iuchair nan Gàidheal
 Ann an gàradh 's an dainginn.

Gur h-e aona mhac Shir Ailein,
 Am flath ceanalta dàicheil;
 Cha bu chularaibh coimheach
 'Bhiodh mu d' chomhair an sgàthan;
 Ach gruag chléiteagach, chleachdach,
 Mu ghruaidh mhaisich 's math deàrrsadh;
 Fiamh an òir air a h-uachdar,
 'S i na cuachagaibh fàinneach.

'S e do thalla 'bha rìoghail,
 Gheibhteadh fion ann air bhòrdaibh,
 Agus feadagan fiadhaich,
 Is gach eunlaith ga chòir sin.
 Bhiodh an sàr uisge-beatha
 Ga chur seachad gu h-òrdail;
 Is le eagal an ìota,
 Bhiodh leann brìoghmhor is beòir ann.

Bhiodh fir ghasda ri freasdal,
 Moch is feasgar 's tràth-nòine;
 Bhiodh an comunn làn eibhnis,
 Rachadh éislean air fògradh.
 'H-uile dràm mar a thigeadh
 Chuirteadh sud ann an òrdagh,
 Ann am broinn nam fear-fialaidh
 Nach do liath an déidh pòsadh.

45. ORAN DO MHAC ILLEAIN DUBHAIRT (? ante 1703)

LUINNEAG:- Hì rì rì éile,
 Hoireann ò rò hò ì ò hò éile,
 Hiùraibh ì hù ò hì na ò éile.

Mo cheist an Leathanach mòdhar,
 Guala dheas ga 'n tig an còta,
 Bho Ghallaibh an deidh a chòmhdach,
 Sìoda is [peàrluinn ?] air do dhòrnaibh,
 Mar a chàireadh tàllar dòigh air,
 Glan airgiod a d' bhroilleach òr-bhuidh,
 'S math thigeadh sin sgarp de 'n t-sròl dhuit.

'S math thigeadh sin sgarp de 'n t-sròl dhuit,
 'S each crùitheach an deidh a chòmhdach,
 Spuir is stiorapan fo d' bhrògan,
 Do phaidhir phiostal a d' phòcadh,
 Do shluagh mu d' thimchioll an òrdugh,

'S iad féin ag éisdeachd do chòmhraidh,
'Thogadh creach 's a thilleadh tòrachd.

M' eudail thu 'dh' fhearaibh an achaidh,
'N uair a dh' éireadh tu 's a' mhadainn,
Bhiodh do shluagh gu greadhnach agad,
Cha b' fhiach leat 'bhi togail bhaltag,
Na giùlan chleòcannan glasa,
Boghannan iubhair na 'r glacaibh,
Dùthchannan roimhibh gan creachadh,
Teàrnadh bho ghleanntan gu machair.

Dh' aithnichinn do cheum 'dol seachad,
Bhiodh fear a' giùlan do bhrataich,
Gur fada chìte a h-aiteal,
Cearrach thu, pòiteir is marcach,
Fear chùil dualaich, chuachaich, chleachdaich,
Gruaidh mar chaorann, taobh mar chailce,
Guth do chinn bu bhinn ri chlaistinn,
'S cha b' e tuireadh mnà nach fhaicte.

'S Ailein, a ghràidh, glac a mhòrchuis,
'S, eudail nam fear, dhuit bu chòir sin,
Car' thu 'n Iarla 'b' fheàrr bha 'n Albainn,
Air 'n do chuir a Bhàinrigh arachdas,
Bha thu measail, cliùiteach, ainmeal;
Rinn thu, anns gach cùis, a dhearbhadh,
Chuir i do luingeas air fairrge,
'S gabh i trom-cheist air t-ainme.

Ailein, eudail, 's ann 'bha thusa
Mar a [bha] Naoise, mac Uisne,
'S gach aon té ri tabhairt thugad,
Dh' fhalbh le Deirdre, nighean a' chruitear,
C' àite 'n robh i 'n luib a trusgain
De shìoda, na shròl, na mhuislin,
Aon bhean òg, air meud a cunntais,
Nach faodadh laighe mar-riutsa ?

B' fheàrr leam gun cluinninn do phòsadh,
 Cha bu choma leam co dhò sin,
 Nighean Mhic Cailean, nighean Mhic Dhòmhnaill,
 Ogha no iar-ogha do 'n Mhòr'ear,
 Na 'bhean is fheàrr a sìol Thormoid,
 Bheireadh dronngachan de 'n òr dhuit,
 'S rachadh eich gheala 'na còmhhdhail.

Eudail de dh' fhearaibh an achaidh,
 Thuirt iad riut gu 'n robh thu prabach,
 Gun do shil na sùilean asad,
 Cha b' ann ag iasgach a ghlais éisg,
 Na 's tràigh ri togail nam partain,
 'S ann a bhiodh tu 'm blàr 's am baiteal,
 Bithidh sin a d' chuimhne cho fada,
 'S a [bha] Fionn do dh' fhear a' bhradain.

Gur h-e mise 'tha fo mhìghean,
 'S mòr leam na tha dhuit am mìorun,
 Eadar Èirinn is Cinntìre,
 Agus Maol na h-Oighe 'n Ìle,
 Thuirt iad nach b' airidh air mnaoi thu,
 'S aca nach robh an fhìrinn,
 'S gun robh do chuid arm a dhìth ort,
 Gu 'n d' dh' fhàg thu fo ghlais an Í iad.

Eudail do dh' fhearaibh na dìlinn,
 Nam bithinn-sa 'cuir a' bhinne,
 Air gach aon 'bha ort a dìmheas,
 'S nach b' ann do chaolach an t-sìl thu,
 Na 'n mhosgan a ghabhadh crìonadh,
 Ach slat àrd de 'n abhall phrìseil,
 B' ùr a' choille 's 'n do rinn thu cinntinn,
 'S bu ghlan uchd do mhuime chìcheadh.

Gur h- e mise 'bha asad cinnteach,
 Na 'n tachradh tu 'n àite dìomhair,
 Air chomas do làmh a shìneadh,
 Gu 'm biodh mòran dhiubh gun fhiacalan,

Gun charbad uachdar no ìochdar,
 Gun chothrom gluasad an giallan,
 Càirdean a' tagairt an dìleab,
 'S an èirig fada gun dìoladh.

'S e sin a dh' fhàg maol do ghualladh,
 Shir Lachluinn an Ì air bhuannachd,
 'S Eachunn mòr, am fìr-eun uasal,
 'S Lachluinn Catanach na gruaige,
 Feachd aigeannach, meanmnach, uaibhreach,
 Chuir an aghaidh ris a' chruadail,
 Dh' fhàg siud pannal ùr fo ghruaman,
 'Caoineadh luchd nan leadan dualach.

B' e m' eudail an còmhlan ainmeil,
 Chaidh do dh' Èirinn, 's fhuair sibh ainm ann,
 Trì fichead de dh' fhearaibh dearga,
 'S ceithir fichead fear fo 'n armaibh,
 Bha sibh cruadalach na 'r n-aimsir,
 Ged is faoin e 'n diugh ri 'sheanchas,
 Ghlac sibh eun air ealtainn ainmeil,
 'S thàinig sibh le cliù do dh' Albainn.

Gur h-e mise tha fo mhulad,
 Mu 'n turas a thug Iarla Mhuile,
 Ghabh Holburn foill air do bhuidheann,
 Ghabh Mac Cailein na bu liugha,
 Na 'm faigheadh mo ghràidh cead siubhal,
 Na 'm faigheadh, bhitheamaid subhach,
 Bheireadh am Prionnsa dhuit cumadh,
 'S phòsadh an Rìgh riut a phiuthar.

Gur e mo chean an curaidh,
 'S e m' eudail mac Iarla Mhuile,
 Car' thu 'n laoch a choisinn urram,
 'S fhada chluinnteadh fuaim do bhuille,
 Stoirm do thuaigh air clàr do luinge
 'S tu 'cuir a' chaisteil gu fhulang,

Gus 'n do strìochd thu iad gu h-uile,
'S tu ga bhuannachd le geall urram.

Dhaoine, na cuiribh dhomh an duileachd
'Bhi tighinn air an Iarla Mhuileach,
Gur càirdeach thu do 'n churaidh
'Dh' òladh deoch, 's cha b' ann a cumann,
A searragan nam beul cuimir,
'S do thogsaidean air an uileann,
'S iomadh stòcach mòr mar dhuine
Gheibheadh deoch an àm an tunnaidh.

Gur e mise 'th' air mo leònadh,
'S beag mo shùnn air gabhail òrain,
'S mi mar chomhachaig gun sòlas,
Mar eun am bruthach am ònrachd,
Gun duine sheasamh mo chòrachd
Bho na dhealaich rium na connspuinn,
Sir Iain 'san Fhraing air fògradh,
'S Ailean gun a bhi air Mòr-thìr.

'S mis a chorr' an deidh a dachaidh,
'S mi 'm ònrachd air cheann rathaid,
Mì gun cheòl, gun òl, gun aighear,
Ach fo bhròn, gun sòlas beatha,
'S nach robh mì 'chòir cinneadh m' athar,
Bho na dh' fhògradh Clann Illeain
As an dùthaich, 's as an cathair,
Fàth mo bhròin, gun sòlas beatha.

46. ORAN DO DH' AILEAN MAC ILLEAIN, TAOITEAR BHRÒLAIS

Mo rùn an t' Ailean, marcaich' allail,
Nan steud mòra 's na lann tana,
'S cian 's is tamull thu air fanadh
Gun tigh'nn fairis dh' ionns' an fhearann dhùthchasaich.

Fear àrd coltach 'sheasadh roimhe,
 An làthair cogaidh, an tùs troide,
 'S maìrg a bhrosnaicheadh gu droch bheirt,
 'N uair a nochd thu 's bonaid sgrogt' air chùlaibh.

Fear mòr garbh de 'n fhine bhoirb,
 Bu ro-mhòr ainm an Innse Gall,
 'S a b' fheàrr 'san àm an robh iad ann,
 'N uair thogteadh air fearg, a Rìgh, bu shearbh gach sùgradh.

Gun robh thu càirdeach do 'n t-sliochd làidir
 A fhuair àite am measg nan Gàidheal,
 Bu mhath geàrd a' dol 's na blàraibh,
 Measail, àghmhor, fhad 's a bha iad cùramach.

'S e fàth mo phudhar 's a dh' fhàg mu dubhach
 An sliochd ud Dhubhairt gu 'n triall luchd siubhail,
 'S a chosgadh riutha, 's ann daibh 'bu chubhaidh,
 'S e 'tha mi 'cumha nach dùsgadh fuigheall spùinne dhiubh.

Nach cluinn thu 'n spréidh le 'n osnaich féin,
 Gu fiù nan eun 'tha 'falbh na speur,
 Nach dubhairt ri chéile, gur bochd an sgeul,
 Do 'n bheil nan deidh o phàighibh éirig dùbailte.

'S i 'n fhras gàbhaidh a ghreas gu tràigh sinn,
 'S goirt am màl a thoirt ri phàigheadh,
 Thuit a phàirce is chaidh làr oirnn,
 Tha sinn cràiteach o 'n là 'dh' fhàg a h-ùbhlann i.

'S i 'chill ur leaba, 's an uaigh ga treachailt,
 'Dh' fhàg mi acaideach, làn airsneul,
 Mnathan ri basraich 'bhi gam faicinn,
 'Dol do 'n chlachan 's nach ann a nasgaidh pùsaidh dhaibh.

Tha mise fann 's gu bheil mi dall,
 Cha léir dhomh falbh gun duine 'm làimh,
 O 'n dh' fhàs mi mall 's a chaidh air call,
 Gun mhath dhomh ann, gun glòir am cheann a dhùisgeas sibh.

47. CUMHA DO LACHLAINN MAC-GILLEAIN

Gur h-e mis' th' air mo leònadh
 Mu dheidhinn na h-òigridh !
 An àm dol do 'n taigh-òsda
 Gum bu leam na fir òga:-
 Tha mo dhiùbhail 'na fheòil fo na béistean.

Mo cheist ogh' bhràth'r mo sheanar
 'S e 'tha mis' an diugh 'gearan;
 'S e mo dhìth 'thug thu 'Chanaigh;
 Bu tu sgiobair na mara
 Ged nach d' thàinig thu fallain no gléidhteach.

Och, mo thruaighe do mhàthair !
 'S daor a cheannaich i 'phàirtidh,
 Nuair a bhristeadh do bhàta
 'S a bha bloigh air gach tràigh dh' i:-
 Bha mo dhiùbhail mu 'n chàrn gun chead éirigh.

Och, mo thruaigh' i 's thus Eachainn,
 Le do mhocheirigh mhaduinn,
 Ri siubhal gach cladaich,
 'S nach d' fhuaras leat Lachlainn;
 Og ùr a chùil chleachdaich mar theudan.

'S ann aig bun na dubh sgeire
 Chaill thu 'n coisiche beinne,
 Air nach d' fhuaras riamh deireadh:-
 Bu ro chinnteach do pheileir;
 Gum bu mharbhadair eilid is féidh thu.

Mur bhith dhòmhs' 'bhith òg, leanabail,
 Is nach h-eòl dhomh do sheanachas
 Bheirinn umad làn iomradh;
 Ach cha b' fhuilear dhomh aimsir
 'Chur do ranntachd, òig mheanmnaich ri 'chéile.

Gur a càirdeach mo rùn-sa
 'Mhac-Gilleain nan lùireach
 Leis an éireadh na fiùran,
 Is do dh' Iarla sin Unntruim,
 Marcach allail nan cùrs-each a Eirinn.

Tha do sheanachas ri 'labhairt
 Ri Murchadh na Maighe,
 'S ri Mac 'Fhionghain an t-Sratha,
 'S tu ro dhìleas 'thaobh t' athar
 Do Chlann Eoghain o 'n leathad le 'chéile.

Tha do chàirdeas ri 'rùsgadh
 Ri tighearna Mhùideart,
 Ri Mac-Néill o na tùraibh
 Aig am biodh na fir ùra,
 'S gur dearbh charaid mo rùn do Shir Seumas.

Gur a càirdeach thu 'Lachlainn,
 Bho Ros riabhach nam badan,
 'Dh' fhàg fir Ìle nan cadal,
 'S a thug dìth orr' an Asgaig;
 Thug e dìoladh 's na bh' ac' anns an eucoir.

Gur a h-iar-ogh' thu dh-Ailein
 'Thug an long o Mhac-Cailein
 Ris an oidhche ghil ghealaich,
 Is a luchd innt' 'chrodh ballach,
 Ged nach b' ann gu crò earraich a gheumraich.

48. GUR H-E 'MHEUDAICH MO CHRÀDH

Gur h-e 'mheudaich mo chràdh,
 Is a lughdaich mo chàil,
 'Liuthad latha 's a bha
 Mis' 's tus' air an tràigh -
 Gur a diombach mi 'n bhàs

'Thug an fheòil dhiom o 'n chnàimh;
 Gur h-ann againn a bha na treun laoich,
 Gur h-ann againn a bha, &c.

Luchd a dh' iomairt an òir;
 'S iad a dhioladh an t-òl,
 'Leanadh fad air an tòir
 Ann an cumasg nan sròl;
 'S cò a chuireadh orr' gleò
 Ann am mùiseadh an t-slòigh;-
 Ach de 'm fàth dhomh bhith 'm bròn, mu 'r deidhinn ?

Mo cheist an Leathanach ùr,
 Bu ghlan sealladh do shùil,
 Fo amharc gun smùr;
 Càit am faicteadh an cùirt
 Fear t' fhasain gun tulg ?
 Bha thu seasmhach 's gach cùis,
 'S ann ri t' fhacal a b' fhiù dhuinn éisdeachd.

'S anns an eaglais seo shuas,
 'N ciste ghiubhais nach gluais,
 'Tha ùr cheannard an t-sluaigh,
 Agus marcaich nan stuadh
 Ri là frionasach, fuar;
 'S tu gu 'n iarradh i 'suas
 Ged a bhiodh i 'n sàs cruaidh 'na h-éiginn.

Och a Mhoire, mo chall !
 Thu 'bhith 'n ciste nan crann,
 Air a sparradh gu teann,
 'Fhir bu shìobhalta cainnt;
 Ach nuair 'dhùisgeadh iad t' fhearg
 Cha bu shùgradh siud dhaibh;
 'S mór gar dìth fear do rann bhon dh' eug thu.

Marcaich deas nan each seang',
 Bheireadh roid asd' is srann;
 Beart nach b' iongantach leam

Thu 'bhith uasal, is t' ainm;
 Làmh thu 'dh' iomairt nan arm
 Gu treun, cruadalach, garg;
 'S ogha dh-Ailein nan lann 's nan steud thu.

'S car' thu dh' Ailein nan ruag
 'Chreach a Chôrca dà uair;
 Thug e Rùt' air le buaidh,
 'S cò a b' urrainn 'thoirt uaith',
 An àm cruinneachadh sluaigh;
 Cha robh athadh 'na ghruaidh
 Nuair a chaidh e air chuairt do dh-Èirinn.

Is gur car' thu 'Mhac-Leòid,
 'Mhic mhic Ailein mhic Eòin;
 'Dh-Eachann Ruadh nach eil beò
 'Dha 'm biodh tàileasg air bòrd,
 'S fion is branndaidh gan òl,
 Aig na fir 'bu chruidh gleò,
 Agus bualadh nam bròg gan teumadh.

Ach nam bithinn 's a bhùth,
 Is na h-airm ann a b' fhiù,
 Nàile thaghainn do m' rùn
 Sgiath bhreac nam ball dlùth,
 Claidheabh sgaiteach geur cùil,
 Is dà dhaga nach diùlt;
 'S cha bu chladhaire thu 'thoirt feum' asd'.

Iar-ogh' dìleas mo ghràdh
 Do dh-Iain Dubh' a bha 'n làimh;
 Sliochd nan iarlachan àrd,
 'S fad o 'n thriall sibh o 'n Spàin;
 'S ann bho Lachlainn a bha
 An ionndraichinn chràidh;-
 Fear do choltais gu bràth cha léir dhomh.

Gur a càirdeach mo luaidh
 Do Chlann-Dòmhnail nam buadh.-

'Mhic mhic Ailein nan ruag,
 Thu bhith 'd 'laighe 'san uaigh
 Ann an eaglais nan stuadh,
 Och, a Mhoire, mo chruas;
 Ghabh na fir dhìot cead buan nach b' éibhinn.

'Fhir 'bu tighearnail gnàths;
 Beart 'bu dligheach sud dà;
 Mo chreach do nighean gun àird,
 'S e na leith-sgeul aig càch
 Nach do ghabh iad a pàirt,
 A liuthad òinnseach a thà
 'Faotuinn ionaid is àite féisdeil.

'Fhir a cheannaicheadh am fìon,
 Is a b' urrainn a dhìol,
 'S tu a b' airidh air pìc,
 'S bogha glaic nan ceann liobht';
 Och, a Mhoire, mo dhìth,
 Bha mi romhad air tìr
 'Nuair a thug iad thu 'dh' I na cléire.

Dhomhsa dh' éirich an call
 Nuair a thug iad thu 'nall
 Gu réilig nam marbh
 Mu 'n robh chaiseamachd shearbh,
 Bualadh bhasan gu teann,
 'S gun do chluasag fo d' cheann;
 A rùin, cha fhreagair thu 'n t-àm gu éirigh.

Tha do chéile fo leòn,
 'S tric i snigheadh nan deòir,
 Is do dhilleachdain òg'
 Gun àird, no gun dòigh,
 Mu na lochanan mór;
 Dh' fhàg thu sinne fo bhròn,
 'S chaill sinn tuilleadh 's a chòir mu t' éirig.

'S ann tha sinne air claidh,
 Gar sàrach' a caoidh
 Bhon a dh' fhalbh bhuainn gach saoidh
 'Dheanadh feum is stàth dhuinn;
 A nis shracadh ar siùil,
 Dh' fhalbh ar cairt, bhrìst ar stiùir;-
 Dia 'thoirt rathad g' a ionnsuidh féin dhuinn.

49. GAOIR NAM BAN MUILEACH (1716)

'S goirt leam gaoir nam ban Muileach,
 Iad ri caoineadh 's ri tuireadh,
 'S gun Sir Iain an Lunnainn,
 No 'san Fhraing air cheann turais;
 'S trom an sac 'thug ort fuireach
 Gun thu dh' fhalbh air an luingeas;
 'S e sin aobhar ar dunaich;
 B' òg a choisinn thu 'n t-urram 'sna blàraibh.

Air an rìgh sin dha 'n d' rinneadh
 Togail suas ann am barrachd,
 'S daor a thug sinne ceannach,
 Bho 'n là 'thionnsgainn a charraid;
 Chuireadh aon mhac Shir Ailein
 As a chòirichean fearainn,
 Le fìor fhòirneart 's le aindeoin;
 Ach 's e lom sgrìob an earraich so 'chràidh mi.

Ged a b' fhad thu air siùdan,
 Cha robh lochd ort r' a chunntas;
 Do luchd-toisich cha b' fhiù leat
 Dhol a dheanamh dhaibh ùmhlachd;
 Curaidh àrd thu 'bu mhùinte;
 'S e mo chreach gun do dhrùidh ort
 Meud an eallaich a bhrùchd ort,
 'S nach robh léigh ann a dhiùchradh am bàs bhuait.

Fàth mo ghearain 's mo thùrsa,
 Mac-Gilleain nan lùireach
 'Bhith 'na laighe 'sa chrùiste
 An suain cadail gun dùsgadh;
 Is ruaig bhàis air do mhuinntir,
 Aig nach d' fhàgadh de dh-ùine
 Cead an armachd a ghiùlan;
 Thug an naimhdean d' an ionnsuidh nan deann-ruith.

B' fhiach do chàirdean an sloinneadh,
 Morair Shléite 's Mac-Coinnich,
 Is Mac-Leòid às na Hearadh,
 'S am fear treun sin nach maireann,
 Ailein Mùideartach allail.
 Fàth mo chaidh gach fear fearainn,
 Tha 'n deagh rùn dhuinn 's nach mealladh,
 'Bhith gun chomas tigh'nn mar-ruinn an dràsda.

Cha chainnt bhòsdail 's cha 'n earra-ghlòir
 'Tha a shannt orm am sheanachas,
 'S mi g' ur faicinn-se caillte
 'N deidh gach mór ghnìomh a rinn sibh,
 Ann an Èirinn 's an Albainn,
 'Shliochd Ghilleain nam feara-ghleus;
 Chuidich Eachann Cath Gharbhfaich,
 'S e air deas làimh na h-armailt' le 'shàr fhir.

Cha 'n e 'n curaidh neo-thais ud,
 No Sir Eachann le 'ghaisgich,
 A tha mis' an diugh 'g acain,
 Ach Sir Iain nam bratach,
 Nam pìos òir 's nan còrn dathte,
 'Dheanadh stòras a sgapadh:
 Is mairg rìoghachd do 'n deachaidh
 An triath calm' ud is Caiptean Chlann Raghnaill.

Och is mis' th' air mo chlisgeadh,
 Saoir bhith 'sàbhadh do chiste,
 'S gun do chàireadh fo lic thu

'N àite falaich, gun fhios duinn.
 'N àirde 'n iar air a brisdeadh,
 'S gun an t-oighre 'na ghliocas;
 So a bhliadhn' a thug sgrios oirnn;
 'S goirt an call ris a bhriosgadh 'thug Màr às.

Gur neo-éibhinn ar gabhail
 Bho 'n là dh' eug Mac-Gilleain
 'S a chaidh sìos sliochd an taighe
 A bha cliùiteach ri 'n latha.
 'S mór mo chall-sa bho Shamhuinn, ,
 Tha mi 'm thruaghan bochd mnatha,
 Tha mi faondrach, gun fharraid,
 Gun cheann-cinnidh 'thaobh athar no màthar.

Mo chreach ! ceannard nan gaisgeach
 Anns a bhlàr nach d' fhuair masladh
 Bhi gar dìth an àm àirce;
 Ged a thogar na mairt bhuainn,
 Cha bhi srann aig do bhrataich,
 Is cha chluinnear do chaismeachd;
 Mhathaich sùil nach robh ceart duibh,
 'N latha chunnacas o Pheairt sibh a màrsadh.

Cha neart dhaoine' a thug bhuainn thu;
 Nam b' e chiteadh air ghluasad
 Iomad gaisgeach mór, uasal,
 'Thogail t' éirig 'san tuasaid;
 Luchd nan clogaidean cruadhach,
 'S nan lann soilleir gun ruadh mheirg;
 Fir mar gharbh fhrasan fuara,
 Leis an dèantadh lòn sguabadh 'san àraich.

'S ann 'na 'r caistealan grinne
 A bha tàmh na cinn-cinnidh
 A bha aoibheil ri 'n sireadh;
 Gur ann timchioll an tine
 'Chluinnteadh bàrdachd nam filidh
 'S guth nan clàrsaichean binne,

'S gheibht' ann ceàrraich ri iomairt;
Mo rùn luchd nan cùil fionna, cas, fàinneach.

'Threunaibh calm' nan long siùbhlach,
Nan ceann-bheart 's nan each crùidheach,
Ged bu dìleas do 'n chrùn sibh
Fhuaradh seòl air bhur diùchradh;
'S mairg nach gabhadh dhibh cùram,
Ann an éirig bhur siùdan,
Nuair nach d' aidich sibh tionndadh;
'S ann a rinneadh air aon luing bhur fàgail.

Cò an neach dha bheil sùilean
Do nach soilleir am mùthadh
'Tha air teachd air ar dùthaich
Bho 'n là chaill sinn an t-aon fhear
Fo làimh Dhé 'ghabh dhinn cùram;
Fhrois gach abhall a h-ùbhlán,
Dh' fhalbh gach blàth agus ùr-ròs,
'S tha ar coill' air a rùsgadh de 'h-àilleachd.

Oirrne thàinig an dìobhail !
Tha Sir Iain a dhìth oirnn,
'S Clann-Ghilleoin air an dìobradh,
Iad gun iteach, gun linnidh,
Ach mar gheòidh air an spìonadh,
Iad am measg an luchd mìoruin
Is a fulang gach mì-mhodh,
Ged nach ann ri feall-innleachd a bha iad.

Gur a cruaidh mar a thachair
Bhon cheud là 'chaidh thu 'mach uainn
Le loinn gheur nan trì chlaisean
Ad làimh threubhaich gu sgapadh.
Ged nach d' fhuair thu fo t' fhacal
An tìr fharsuinn 'bh' aig t' athair,
B' fheàrr gum faigheadh do mhac i;
Dia g' ur coimhead o mhiosguinn bhur nàmhaid.

Gum b' e turas na truaighe,
 'Bha gun bhuidhinn, gun bhuannachd,
 'Thug thu 'n uiridh nuair 'ghluais thu
 Le do dhaoine ri d' ghualainn;
 Dh' fhàg e sinne ann an cruaidh-chàs
 Os-cionn tuigs' agus smuaintinn;
 Tha sinn falamh, lag, suarach;
 Dh' fhalbh ar sonas mar bhruadar gun stàth bhuainn.

'S e mo chreach gun do strìochd thu,
 'Fhiubhaidh, eireachdail, fhiachail;
 Tha do chlann air an dìobradh;
 Cò nì 'n deoch dhaibh a lìonadh,
 A chur casg air an ìotadh ?
 Cò nan laigse 'bheir dìon dhaibh ?
 Och, gur fad thu bho d' dhìslean;
 'S ann a dh' fhàg iad thu mhìos gus am màireach.

'S e 'chuir m' astar am maillead
 Is mo shùilean an doillead,
 A bhith faicinn do chloinne
 'S an luchd-foghlaim is oilein
 Air am fògradh gun ghoireas,
 Ach mar cheatharnaich-coille
 Iad gun fhios ac' cia 'n doire 'san tàmh iad.

Gur a goirt leam ri 'chluinntinn,
 'S gur a h-oil leam ri 'iomradh;-
 Nach deach aobhar ar n-ionndrainn,
 Olc air mhath le 'luchd-diumba,
 A thoirt dhachaidh d' a dhùthaich;
 Gum bu shòlas le d' mhuinntir
 Do chorp geal a bhith dlùth dhaibh
 Ann an Ì nam feur cliùiteach le d' chàirdean.

Och is mis' th' air mo sgaradh,
 Bho nach d' thug iad thu thairis
 'Dhol air tìr air an Ealaidh,
 'Dhol fo dhìon anns a charraig

Ann an réidhlig nam Manach,
Mar ri t' athair 's ri d' sheanair,
'S iomad treun laoch a bharrachd,
Far am faodamaid teannadh mu d' chàrnaibh.

'S mairg a gheibheadh gach buille
A fhuair sinne bho 'n uiridh;
Thàinig tonn air muin tuinne
A dh' fhàg lòn sinn 's an cunnart,
Chaidh ar creuchdan gu guineach,
Dh' fhalbh ar n-eibhneas gu buileach;
Bhrist ar claidheabh 'na dhuille
Nuair a shaoil sinn gun cumamaid slàn e.

Màiri

50. 'S ANN DI-SATHUIRN' A CHUALAS (1687)

'S ann Di-sathuirn' a chualas
 Sgeul an fhuathais nach gann;
 Gun robh mnathan gam buaireadh
 'S fir gan gualadh gu teann;
 Bu bheag an t-ioghnadh dhaibh féin sud,
 B' ùr an eudail a bh' ann;
 Làmh a ghlacadh na mìltean
 An àm rùsgadh nan lann.

'S moch a chuala mi 'n t-éigheachd,
 'S cha b' e teirim mu 'n mhàl;
 Ach m' aiteas is m' eibhneas
 A thigh'nn 'na éideadh gu bàgh.
 Tha mì cinnteach a m' sgeula,
 Gun robh do chèile ga cràdh,
 'Dol a dh-amharc na gibhte
 'Bh' ann an ciste nan clàr.

Ach a Lachlainn mhic Eachainn,
 Nam bratach 's nam pìob,
 Gur a trom leam do shac-sa,
 Is nach acain thu sgìos
 Thàinig iuchair a ghaigich
 Fo ghlasaibh do 'n tìr;
 Crann gun tiomadh, gun tais' thu,
 'S tu gun caisgeadh gach sgìos.

Gu bheil maithean do dhùthcha
 Fo throm chùram an dràs,
 Mu 'n uachdaran chliùiteach,
 Marcaich' ùr nan steud àrd;
 Chaidh thu tamull do dh' Eirinn,
 Do 'n Eipheit 's do 'n Spàin;
 'S nuair a chaidh thu do Lunnainn,
 Fhuair thu 'n t-urram thar chàich.

Càit' an robh ann an Albainn
 Beachd-meanmna mo rùin ?
 Laoch gasda, deas, dealbhach,
 'S tric a dhearbh thu do chliù.
 Corp bu ghile na maghar
 Bha fo 'n aghaidh gun smùr;
 'S e dh' fhàg mise fo leatrom
 Am ball-seirce 'bha d' ghnùis.

Càit' an robh e r' a innseadh
 'N taobh so 'chrìch Innse-Gall,
 Aon oighre 'bu phrìseile ?
 Gur dìth leinn do chall.
 Bu tu 'n ceannachadair fìor ghlic
 De 'n fhìon-fhuil gun mheang,
 Leis an deant' an t-òl farsuinn
 Ann am bailtean nan Gall.

Bu tu 'n ceannachadair sàr mhath,
 'S tric a phàigh thu na buinn,
 'S bu tu sgiobair a bhàta
 'S tric a shàraich na croinn.
 Bu leat rogha gach ardraich
 'Chur a h-earrlainn air tuinn,
 Ged a rinneadh do bhàthadh
 Leis an ràdh air a bhùrn.

Tha an t-oighre 's 'th' air Dùbhairt
 Fo phùdhar gu leòir;
 Tha Clann-Dòmhnail fo aimheal
 Agus maithean Mhic-Leòid.
 Bu leat càirdeas Mhic-Cailein
 Bho charraig nan seòl.
 Gur a h-iomad fuil phrìseil
 A bha dìreadh mu d' shròin.

Gur h-e mis' tha gun aighear,
 Tha do thaighean gun àird,
 Bhon a fhroiseadh an t-abhall,

Is a chrathadh a bhàrr,
 'Chraobh a b' ùire de 'n fhìon-fhuil,
 'Bha 'cumail dìon' oirnn is blàths.
 Gur a bròn leis gach tighearn
 Thu bhi tighinn gu bàgh.

'Dheagh Mhic-Iain o 'n Chorpaich,
 Gur a fad' tha thu bhuainn.
 Do dhream sheasadh mo làrach
 Ann an àite glè chruaidh.
 'S ann dhiubh Iain is Dòmhnall,
 'Tha 'n diugh brònach, bochd, truagh.
 'Rìgh nan dùl is nan aingeal,
 Cùm am pearsannan 'suas.

Nic Gilleathain

51. DO LACHLAINN MAC-GILLEAIN

Gur a cianail bochd m' adhart,
 Chaill mo shùilean am fradharc,
 'S mi 'm ònrachd a' feitheamh do ghruaige.
 Gur a cianail, bochd, &c.

Tha i dualach tiugh cleachdach,
 'Na snìomhanan casa,
 'S léir do m' Rìgh gu 'm bu tlachdmhor do shnuadh-sa;

Sùil 'bu mhiogaiche sealladh
 Fo chaoile na mala,
 Mar gu 'm biodh an t-òl leanna air na cuachan;

Beul tana dearg daite
 Mu 'n deud 'bu leòir ceartais,
 Sùil chorrach ghorm ghlas gun 'bhi luaineach.

'N uair a rachadh tu 'n chlachan
 Is a shileadh an sneachda,
 Bhiodh t' aghaidh bhruich mheachair gun fhuachd oirr'.

Cha 'n eil léine mac tighearn
 A chuireadh e uime
 Nach deanadh mo nighean-sa fhuaigheal.

Gur h-e mis' 'th' air mo chiùrradh,
 Tha do phobull leam sùmhail,
 Nach robh tional na dùthcha 'dhaoin' uaisle ann.

'S mise chaill na deagh bhràithrean,
 Chuir mi uile gu tràigh iad;
 'S i 'n aon nighean a chràidh mi 'san uair so.

Gur a lionmhor dhuit caraid
 Ann am blàr sin nan fala,
 'Bheireadh giùlain gu h-allail gu uaigh dhuit.

Ach a Lachlainn á Muile,
 'S cian 's gur fada leam t' fhuireach;
 'S ann a ghlaodhadh iad curaidh roimh shluagh dhìot.

Dh' fhàg thu 'm marcaich san fhéithe,
 'S e 'na chlachan fo cheudan,
 'S gu 'm bu bheag siud dhe t' euchd mar a chualas.

'N uair a chaidh thu 'san achdair,
 Cha do choisinn thu masladh,
 Bheireadh Ruairidh nam bratach do luach ort.

Chaidh thu 'n làthair Mhic-Cailein,
 Fhuair thu airm 's gu 'm b' e t' airidh;
 Sin an t-Iarla 'rinn aithne air do chruadal.

Gur a càirdeach thu 'n gaisgeach
 'Rinn an Éirinn an tapadh,
 'Thug a chreach ud gun fhaicill bho thuath às;

'Rinn a chreach air Mac-Guine,
 'Chuir a cheann ann an cunnart,
 Agus móran de 'mhuinntir an cruadal.

NIC GILLE SHEATHANAICH

Nic Gille Sheathanaich

52. ORAN DO DH' UILLEAM A BHORLUIM (1716)

'S tearc an diugh mo chùis gàire
 Bho 'n chaidh Albainn gu strì;
 Fo bhreitheanas nàmhaid
 'Rìgh, na fàg sinn air dìth.
 Tog féin do chrois-tara,
 Thoirt nan càirdean gu tìr;
 Ann am purgadair tha sinn,
 Mur gabh thu Phàrrais ra 'r sìth.

Chaidh an saoghal gu bagairt,
 'S éiginn aideachadh bhuainn,
 Faic a chòir ann an dìobradh,
 Chaill an fhìrinn a bonn.
 Tha na h-urrachan prìseil
 A dol sìos mar am moll,
 Aig fir-Chuigse na rìoghachd,
 'Cur nan dìsnean á fonn.

Athair seall oirnn 's an tìm so,
 Bho 'n tha 'n ìobairt ud trom,
 'Chuigse tha bòtadh nan binne,
 Gu dé 'nì sinn air lom,
 'S daoine iad 'loisgeadh am Bìobull,
 'Chur na fìrinn a bonn:-
 Fhuair fir Shasuinn an stiobull
 'N deidh an rìgh 'chuir air luing.

Bi'bh ag ùrnuigh le dìchioll
 Dia 'chur dìon air an luing,
 Faicibh 'm posd' air a dhìobradh
 Leis an stiobull ud lom;

An t-oighre tuisleach a' dìreadh,
 O 'n 's e ar mì-run a thoill,
 Aig luchd mortaidh na firinn
 'S mór a libhrig sibh bhuaibh.

Ma 's iad ur cealgan cho lionmhor
 'Chuir an rìgh so gu gluas'd,
 Chuir sibh corruich gu dìlinn;
 'S plàigh bho 'n easbuig air buaidh,
 Rinn sibh Anna a chàradh
 Gun a bàs a thoirt suas;
 Seumas 'chur air an t-sàile -
 'Sgeul a chràidh sinn 's an uair.

Shaoileadh Seumas òg Stiùbhart,
 Fhad 's a bhiodh triùir air a sgàth,
 Nach tugadh Gòrdanaich cùl dha,
 A gheall a chùis air a chlàr,
 Ged tha 'n coileach na fhùidse
 Cha be dhùthchas 'bhi bàth;
 'S olc a dhearbh thu do dhùrachd
 Gus an crùn thoirt á càs.

Tha do chàirdean mór uasal,
 'S iad fo ghruaim riut gach là,
 'S éiginn dhaibhsean 'bhi 'm fuath riut,
 Ged is cruaidh e ri ràdh,
 Bhrist thu 'n cridhe le smuairnean,
 An aobhar buairidh no dhà,
 'S tha càch ag éigheach mu 'n cuairt dhuit
 Gun deach do chruadal mu làr.

Air dhomh tionndadh mo leaba,
 Sgar an cadal siud bhuam,
 M' aobhar clisgidh a dhùisg mi,
 Shil mo shùilean gu trom,
 A feitheamh Caisteal na Mòidhe,
 Am bu tric tathaich nan sonn,

'S e 'n diugh na fhàsach gun uaislean,
No gun tuath bhi mu bhonn.

Feitheamh Caisteal na tàirne,
Dheth 'm b' àbhaist 'bhi smùid;
Tha do bhaintighearna ghasda,
An deigh pasgadh a ciùil,
'S tric a deòir oirre 'bras-ruith,
Mu Shir Lachluinn nan tùr,
O 'n chaidh prìosan an Sasuinn
Air sàr ghaisgeach nach lùb.

Tha do chòmhlaichean glaiste,
'S tha do gheatachan dùint';
Og phrìseil na pailte,
Cha b' ann le airc no le brùid,
Thu bhi 'n tòir air a cheartas,
'S e chuir air aiseag thu null;
Ghabh thu toiseach a ghùtair,
Ged a shàraicheadh thu.

Mo chreach Uilleam a Bhòrluim,
'Bhi aig Deòrsa na thùr,
Am fear misneachail mórloach,
A lean a chòir air a cùl,
Beinn Sheoin thu nach dìobair,
Cridhe dileas gun lùb,
'S e fo chòmhla gu dìblidh
'N diugh ga dhìteadh 's gach bùth.

'S a Rìgh dhùlaich na feartan,
Tionndaidh 'n reachd so mu 'n cuairt,
Thoir gach dùthchasach dhachaidh,
Dh' fhalbh air seacharan bhuainn,
Mac-an-Tòisich nam bratach,
A's Clann Chatain nam buadh,
A ghabh fògradh o 'n aitreibh,
'S cha b' ann le masladh no ruag.

Chuir e m' inntinn gu leughadh
 Dé mar dh' éirich so dhuinn,
 Am faic thu 'n t-eilean na aonar,
 Gun aobhar eibhneis na thùr;
 Far am b' aigeannach teudan,
 An àm éiridh do chùirt,
 Fìon na Spàinne ga eughach,
 Air slàinte Sheumais a chrùin.

Am faic thu 'n t-uachdaran brèige,
 Air an sgeul ris a Phàp;
 'S iad a damnadh a chèile,
 O 'n latha 'dh' éirich am bràth,
 Gura tùrsach an sgeula
 Bhi ga éisdeachd o chàch;
 Mheall thu coileach na féile,
 Dhùt a chlàir e gu bàs.

'N coileach dona gun fhìrinn,
 Ghibht e 'chìrean sa 'ghràs,
 Cha 'n eil feum ann gu sgrìobadh,
 Is cha dìrich e 'n spàrr,
 Ma gheibh Mac-Cailean na lìn thu,
 Bheir e cìs dhiot gu dân,
 'S daor a phàigheas tu 'n tìm s'
 Air son na fìrinn a bha.

'S gura sean leam a chòir sin,
 A th' aig Deòrs' air a chrùn,
 Ma 's e Chuigs' 'tha ga sheòladh,
 Guidheam leòn air a chùis,
 Ghlac thu 'n t-urram air òr-bheinn,
 'S bu daor an còmhrag sin duinn;-
 Sgrìos a thigh'nn air a ghàradh
 Mu 'n cinn bàrr ann ni 's mò.

NIC LEÒID

Fionnghal Nighean Alasdair Ruaidh

53. CUMHA DO MHAC LEÒID (1693)

'S mór mo mhulad, 's mi 'm ònar,
 'S mi 'g amharc nan seòl air chuan sgìth,
 'S mi bhi 'g amharc nan ro-seòl,
 A bha 'g aiseig Mhic Leòid, bu mhór prìs,
 Iuchair ghliocais nan Gàidheal,
 Fo na bhrat air a chàradh fo dhìon,
 'S truagh nach mis' bh' air a chòrs ud,
 'S gu 'n tarraiginn mo scòid dhi gu tìr.

Cha chùis fharmaid am pannal,
 Tha na 'n suidh' air a charraig ud thall,
 Mnaithean truagha na Hearadh,
 Cha cheòl cluais th' air an aire san àm.
 Ach ged nach urr' iad a dhùsgadh,
 Bheir iad greis air bhi rùsgadh an làmh,
 'S gur e mheudaich mo mhulad-s'
 Mi bhi 'n tìr, far nach cluinninn an gàir.

Bu tu leigeadh ri èarlaid,
 'Nuair a ghabhadh tu tàmh anns an Dùn;
 Bhiodh na filidh, 's na bàird ann,
 'S b' e ceann-uidhe nan clàrsairean thu;
 Bhiodh na h-ollamhan àrd ann
 Gabhail urram gach dân os an cionn,
 'S is dùlan duine, gun àireamh,
 C' àit' an d' fhuaras riamh fàth ort, ach cliù.

'Nuair a bhiodh tu 's tigh thallaidh
 'G òladh fìona le faram nan teud,
 Mar bu chubhaidh re t' àrdan
 Greis air iomairt air thàilìsg do bheus,

'Nuair a thogadh tu 'n ad bhar
 Cùl snìomhain nam badanan féidh,
 'S i do ghnùis a bha flathail,
 'S a bha aoidheil ri caitheadh na féisd.

Na 'm b' airm nochta, no luaidhe,
 Seo bhrosnaicheadh uainn thu gu bàs,
 Gu 'm bu lìonmhor siud againn
 Cinn-fheadhnaidh nach caisgte gun spàirn,
 Agus òigridh mhór ghasda,
 Rachadh sgiamhach fo dheasachadh arn,
 'S tu gu 'm b' urra 'g an seasamh,
 'Nuair bu lìonmhoir' na creachan air falbh.

'Nuair a bhiodh tu fo t' uidheam,
 'S i do ghruaidh bu ghlain' ruidhe, a's snuadh,
 Sùil bu mhì-chùisich sealladh,
 Fo leacainn aoidheil chaoil mhalaidh gun ghruaim
 Do bheul tana dearg ceutach
 An robh aighear, a's eibhneas an t-sluaigh,
 Corp sneachdaidh fo d' léine,
 Leis an d' rugadh an fhéile mar bhuaidh.

Nuair a bhiodh tu aig baile,
 Bu tu marbhaich na h-eal' air an t-snàmh,
 A gheòidh glais, a's a chathain,
 Cuid de d' mhiann a mhic athar mo ghràidh.
 Cas a shiubhal na frìth thu,
 'S an acfhuinn chruidh, chinnteach a d' làimh,
 Gu 'm biodh suaitheantas fala
 Air damh craobhach chinn allaidh nam beann.

Nuair a thàinig thu dhachaigh,
 An deigh a bhi fada san Fhraing,
 Bu tu 'n curaidh, 'san gaisgeach,
 Cas bu lùthmhoir' air faiche nan gleann.
 Thug gach duine dhuit urram,
 Gu 'm bu taitneach leo cumachd do bhall;

Cò b' e dh' amhairceadh suas riut,
Bu dlùth taitneach cuir gruaig air do cheann.

Tha Mac Dhòmhnuill fo mhulad,
'S air Mac Gilleain tha urrad ri dìthis,
Mac Mhic Ailein a Mùideart,
'S Mac Mhic Alasdair chunntainn e leibh,
Mu mhàthair fhuasg'laidh nan ceistean,
An deidhs teachd dhachaigh o 'n t-Seisean, 's o 'n Rìgh,
'Nuair a théid sibh gu coinneamh,
'S e mo chràdh na bheil soilleir 'g ur dìth.

Bu tu ar baranta a b' àirde,
'S gu 'm bheil mise gu bràth ga do chaoidh,
Làmh dheas an robh m' èarlaid,
'S mise dh' fhaodadh e ràite gu 'm b' i;
'Nuair a bha mi an ascall,
'S a chual' thu gu 'n lagaich mo nì;
Cha luaith' a ràinig mi thusa,
Na fhuair mi uat dusan bà laoigh.

Cha bu charaiche lùb thu,
Cha mhò shuidheadh tu 'n cùis am bitheadh foill;
Cha do chuir thu do chùinneadh
Ann an ciste, no 'n cùlaist dhuit féin,
Cha robh, cha bu d' fhiù leat,
'S cha bhiodh tu ri spùinneadh luchd feum.
Tha beannachd muinntir ga d' fheitheamh,
Gus do dhìon ann am Flaitheas Mhic Dè.

Gur sinn th' air ar ciùrradh,
'S tha lion-dhubh oirnn air drùidheadh mar tha,
Mu nar uachdaran dùthcha,
Bu tu nar barantas sùrdail a ghnà.
Gur e mheudaich ar cùram,
Thu bhi 'd chadal san dùn ud gu bràth,
Ann an eaglais nan stuaghan,
Far nach cluinn thu do thruaghain ri gàir.

Dh' éireadh leatsa gach sòlas,
'S fhuair thu 'n àill bhean ri phòsadh o 'n chlàir,
Nighean mhaiseach Mhic Dhòmhnuill,
Leis an d' rugadh a chòir ud mar bheus,
Sùil bu ghlain' ann an sgàthan,
Fo mhalaidh chaoil, àillidh, glan, rèidh,
'S mar a dh' òrduich an t-Àrd Rìgh,
Fhuair thu 'n cùnnradh a b' fheàrr bh' air an fhéill.

Màiri Nighean Alasdair Ruaidh

See 'The Gaelic Songs of Mary Macleod', ed. J.C. Watson,
London, 1934.

54. M' ITEAGAN IS M' EÒIN IS M' UIGHEAN

M' iteagan is m' eòin is m' uighean,
Mo chrodh-laoigh ri taobh mo thaigh';
Le m' iubhair, le m' archair, le m' bharrgha dubh ciarach,
Gu siubhlainn an oidhche fo fhrìth nam beann àrda
Le m' àilleagan cùbhraidh,
Ho ró, m' ulaidh, hé m' ulaidh, cead torrach troileiche.
A Ruairidh, bu chorrach thu;
A liùbhan, a leòbhan, bha uair a ghabhainn òran,
A liùbhan, a leòbhan, cha ghabh mi nochd ach gnòmhnan.

55. SIUTHADAIBH, SIUTHADHAIBH, A MHNATHAN (c. 1696)

O ho ì ù ó,
Air fair all ill ó ho,
Ro ho ao ri rì ó.

Siuthadaibh, siuthadaibh, a mhnathan, O ho &c.
Luadhaibh athaiseach liùm;
Tha sinne 'n seo ceathrar,
Urra bharrachd air triùir,
Cha b' fhuilear dhuinn ochdnar,
'S urra choltach air stiùir,
Ach ma théid sinn air adhart,
Nì sinn tadhal 'san Dùn
Far bheil Ruairidh mac Iain,
Mac athar mo rùin,
Feuch am faigh sinn a' bhirlinn,
No 'm faod e a tabhairt dhùinn,
Mura faigh sinn a' bhirlinn,
Feuch am faigh sinn am bàta
Chaidh a chàradh as ùr.

Atharraich

'Chan fhaigh sibh a' bhirlinn,
 'S chan fhaod mi a tabhairt dhùibh;
 'S ann a gheibh sibh an coite
 'S e bu choltaiche dhùibh;
 Nuair a dh' fhalbhas na Faoillich,
 Théid na saoir os a cionn.'

Atharraich

Gu dé nist a nì mise
 Ma bhristear mo ghlùn ?
 Ma bhristear 's gum bristear,
 Ma bhristear, 's oil liùm;
 Cha dian mi ceum astair
 Gun tagsa ri m' chùl
 'S mi 'm bothan gun tughadh
 'S an t-snighe os mo chionn.

56. MAIREARAD NAN CUIREID

Ach a Mhairearad nan cuireid,
 Cuime a chuir thu orm breug:
 Hi riri o hiri o hi o.

Gun robh leanabh gun bhaisteadh
 Fo aisne mo chléibh',

Ann an làraich mhic tighearn'
 Far nach bithinn 's tu fhéin.

Cuim' nach innseadh tu an fhìrinn
 Cho cinnteach rium fhéin ?

Cha b' ionann do m' athair
 Is do t' athair-sa, éisg !

Cha b' ionann do m' bhràithrean
Is do d' ghàrlaich gun spéis.

Cha b' ionann do ar tighean
An àm laighe do 'n ghréin:

Gum faighte an tigh m' athar-s'
Sitheann 's cnàimhean an fhéidh:

Is e gheibhte an tigh t' athar-s'
Sùgh is cnàimhean an éisg.

An àm dìreadh o 'n bhaile
Is trom 's gur h-annamh mo cheum.

Gur a diombach mi 'n chaile
Thog sgannal nam breug;

Dubh iomall na tuatha,
Buinneag shuarach gun spréidh,

Le farmad 's le mìorun
Chuir mìchliu orm fhéin;

Thog ormsa an droch alladh,
Is ortsas, a Chaluim nam beus.

Air an d' fhàs an cùl dualach
Tha 'na chuaileanan réidh,

Is e sìos mu d' dhà shlinnean
Mar an fhidheall fo theud.

57. MARBHRANN DO FHEAR NA COMRAICH (1646)

Tha mise air leaghadh le bròn
 O 'n là dh' eug thu 's nach beò
 Mu m' fhiùran faidhidneach còir
 Uasal aighearach òg,
 As uaisle shuidheadh mu bhòrd:
 Mo chreach t' fhaighinn gun treòir éirigh.

Is tu an laoch gun laigse gun leòn
 Macan mìngheal gun sgleò;
 Fearail finealta an t-òg
 De shliochd nam fear mór
 D' am bu dual a bhith còir,
 'S gum b' fhiù faiteal do bheòil éisdeachd.

Is tu clann na h-irghinn a b' fheàrr,
 Glan an fhreumh as an d' fhàs,
 Càirdeas rìgh anns gach ball,
 Bha sud sgrìobht' leat am bann
 Fo làimh duine gun mheang
 Ach tu lìonta de àrdan euchdach.

A Ruairidh aigeanntaich àird
 O Chomraich ghreadhnaich an àigh,
 Mhic an fhir bu mhór gàir
 Nan lann guineach cruaidh garg,
 Ort cha d' fhuaradh riamh cearb,
 Iarogha Uilleam nan long bréidgheal.

Fhuair mi m' àilleagan ùr
 Is e gun smal air gun smùr,
 Bu bhreac mìndearg do ghnùis,
 Bu ghorm laghach do shùil,
 Bu ghlan sliasaid is glùn,
 Bu deas daingeann an lùb ghleusta thu.

A lùb abhall nam buadh,
 Is mairg a thàrladh ort uair

Mu Ghlaic Fhionnlaigh so shuas
 Air each crodhanta luath,
 Nàmhaid romhad 'na ruaig,
 Air dhòigh buille cha b' uair éis e.

Ach fhir as curanta làmh
 Thug gach duine gu cràdh,
 Is truagh nach d' fhuirich thu slàn
 Rì uair cumaisg no blàir
 Thoirt tilleadh as do nàmh;
 Bu leat urram an là cheutaich.

Bu tù an sgoilear gun dìobradh,
 Meòir as grinne nì sgrìobhadh,
 Uasal faidhidneach cinnteach,
 Bu leat lagh an tigh-sgrìobhaidh,
 Is tu nach mùchadh an fhìrinn;
 Sgeul mo chreiche so ! shìl do chreuchdan.

Stad air m' aighear an dé;
 Dh' fhalbh mo mharcantan féin;
 Chuir mi an ciste an teud;
 Dhiùlt an gobha dhomh gleus;
 Dh' fhairtlich sud orm 's gach léigh,
 Is chaidh m' onoir, is, mo rìgh, dh' eug thu.

Thuit a' chraobh as a bàrr,
 Fhrois an gràinne gu làr,
 Lot thu an cinneadh is chràdh
 Air an robh thu mar bhàrr
 'Gan dìonadh gach là,
 Is mo chreach, bhuinig am bàs teum ort.

An àm suidhe 'nad sheòmar
 Chaidh do bhuidheann an òrdugh,
 Cha b' ann mu aighear do phòsaidh
 Le nighean Iarla Chlann Dòmhnai
 As do dhéidh mar bu chòir dhi;
 Is ann chaidh do thasgaidh 'san t-sròl fo d' léine.

Ach gur mise tha bochd truagh,
 Fiamh a ghuil air mo ghruaidh;
 Is goirt an gradan a fhuair,
 Marcach deas nan each luath,
 Sàr cheannard air sluagh,
 Mo chreach, t' fhàgail ri uair m' fhéime.

Ach fhuair mi m' àilleagan òg
 Mar nach b' àbhaist gun cheòl,
 Saoir ri càradh do bhòrd,
 Mnà ri spìonadh an fheoir,
 Fir gun tàilisg gun cheòl;
 Gur bochd fulang mo sgeoil éisdeachd.

An uair a thionail an sluagh
 Is ann bha an t-iomsgaradh cruaidh
 Mar ghàir sheilleam am bruaich
 An déidh na meala thoirt uath;
 Is ann bha an t-éireadh bochd truagh
 Is iad mu cheannas an t-sluaigh threubhaich.

58. AN TALLA AM BU GHNÀTH LE MAC LEÒID

Gur muladach thà mi,
 Is mi gun mhire gun mhànràn
 Anns an talla am bu ghnàth le Mac Leòid.

Tigh mór macnasach meadhrach
 Nam macaobh 's nam maighdean,
 Far am bu tartarach gleadhraich nan còrn.

Tha do thalla mór prìseil
 Gun fhasgadh gun dìon ann,
 Far am faca mi am fìon bhith 'ga òl.

Och mo dhìobhail mar thachair,
 Thàinig dìle air an aitribh:
 Is ann is cianail leam tachairt 'na còir.

Shir Tormoid nam bratach,
 Fear do dhealbh-sa bu tearc e,
 Gun sgeilm a chur asad no bòsd.

Fhuair thu teist is deagh urram
 Ann am freasdal gach duine,
 Air dheiseachd 's air uirghioll beòil.

Leat bu mhiannach coin lùthmhor
 Dhol a shiubhal nan stùcbheann,
 Is an gunna nach diùltadh ri h-òrd.

Is i do làmh nach robh tuisleach
 Dhol a chaitheamh a' chuspair
 Le do bhogha chruaidh ruiteach deagh-neòil.

Glac throm air do shliasaid
 An déidh a snaidheadh gun fhiaradh,
 Is bàrr dosrach de sgiathaibh an èoin.

Bhiodh céir ris na crannaibh
 Bu neo-éisleach tarruing,
 An uair a leumadh an taifeid o d' mheòir.

An uair a leigte o d' làimh i
 Cha bhiodh òirleach gun bhàthadh
 Eadar corran a gàinne is an smeòirn.

Ceud soraidh le dùrachd
 Uam gu leannan an t-sùgraidh:
 Gum b' e m' aighear 's mo rùn bhith 'nad chòir.

An ám dhuit tighinn gu d' bhaile
 Is tu bu tighearnail gabhail,
 An uair a shuidheadh gach caraid mu d' bhòrd.

Bha thu measail aig uaislean,
 Is cha robh beagan mar chruas ort:
 Sud an cleachdamh a fhuair thu ad aois òig.

Gum biodh farum air thàilìsg
 Agus fuaim air a' chlàrsaich,
 Mar a bhuineadh do shàr mhac Mhic Leòid.

Gur h-e bu eachdraidh 'na dhéidh sin
 Greis air ursgeil na Féinne,
 Is air chuideachda chéirghil nan cròc.

59. MARBHRANN DO IAIN GARBH MAC GHILLE CHALUIM (1671)

Mo bheud is mo chràdh
 Mar a dh' éirich dhà
 An fhear ghleusta ghràidh
 Bha treun 'san spàirn
 Is nach faicear gu bràth an Ratharsaidh.

Bu tù am fear curanta mór
 Bu mhath cumadh is treòir
 O t' uilinn gu d' dhòrn
 O d' mhullach gu d' bhròig:
 Mhic Mhuire mo leòn
 Thu bhith an innis nan ròn is nach faighear thu.

Bu tù sealgair a' gheòidh,
 Làmh gun dearmad gun leòn
 Air am bu shuarach an t-òr
 Thoirt a' bhuannachd a' cheòil,
 Is gun d' fhuair thu na 's leòir is na chaitheadh tu.

Bu tù sealgair an fhéidh
 Leis an deargta na béinn;
 Bhiodh coin earbsach air éill
 Aig an Albannach threun;
 Càite am faca mi féin
 Aon duine fo 'n ghréin
 A dhèanadh riut euchd flathasach ?

Spealp nach dìobradh
 An cath no an strì thu,
 Casan dìreach
 Fada finealt:
 Mo chreach dhìobhail
 Chaidh thu a dhìth oirnn
 Le neart sìne,
 Làmh nach dìobradh caitheadh oirre.

Och m' eudail uam
 Gun sgeul 's a' chuan
 Bu ghlé mhath snuadh
 Ri gréin 's ri fuachd,
 Is e chlaoidh do shluagh
 Nach d' fheud thu an uair a ghabhail orra.

Is math thig gunna nach diùlt
 Air curaidh mo rùin
 Ann am mullach a chùirn
 Is air uilinn nan stùc:
 Gum biodh fuil ann air tùs an spreadhaidh sin.

Is e dh' fhàg silteach mo shùil
 Faicinn t' fhearainn gun sùrd,
 Is do bhaile gun smùid
 Fo charraig nan sùgh,
 Dheagh mhic Chaluim nan tùr á Ratharsaidh.

Mo bheud is mo bhròn
 Mar a dh' éirich dhò,
 Muir beucach mór
 Ag leum mu d' bhòrd,
 Thu féin is do sheòid
 An uair reub ur seòil
 Nach d' fheud sibh treòir a chaitheadh orra.

Is tu b' fhaicillich' ceum
 Mu 'n taice-sa an dé
 De na chunnaic mi féin

Air faiche nan ceud
 Air each 's e 'na leum,
 Is cha bu slacan gun fheum claidheamh ort.

Is math lùbadh tu pìc
 O chùlaibh do chinn
 An àm rùsgadh a' ghill
 Le ionnsaigh nach till,
 Is air mo làimh gum bu chinnteach saighead uat.

Is e an sgeul cràiteach
 Do 'n mhnaoi a dh' fhàg thu,
 Is do t' aon bhràthair
 A shuidh 'nad àite:
 Di-luain Càisge
 Chaidh tonn-bhàidhte ort,
 Craobh a b' àirde de 'n abhall thu.

60. TUIREADH

Hóireann ó ho bhì ó
 Hóireann ó ho bhì ó
 Hóireann ó ho bhì ó
 Rì hóireann ó o hao o !

Is muladach mì, hì ó
 Hóireann ó ho bhì ó
 O cheann seachdain, hì ó
 Ro hóireann ó o hao o.

Is mì an eilean gun
 Fheur gun fhasgadh.

Ma dh' fhaodas mì
 Théid mì dhachaidh;

Nì an t-iomramh
 Mar as fhasa,

Do Uilbhinnis
A' chruidh chaisfhinn,

Far an d' fhuair mi
Gu h-òg m-altrum,

Air bainne chìoch
Nam ban basgheal,

Thall aig Fionnghail
Dhuinn nighean Lachlainn,

Is ì 'na banchaig
Ris na martaibh

Aig Ruairidh mòr Mac
Leòid nam bratach.

'S ann 'na thigh mòr
A fhuair mi am macnas,

Danns' le sunnd air
Urlar farsaing,

An fhìdhleireachd 'gam
Chur a chadal,

A' phìobaireachd
Mo dhùsgadh maidne.

Thoir mo shoraidh
Gu Dùn Bheagain.

61. LUINNEAG MHIC LEÒID (post 1675)

Mi am shuidhe air an tulaich
 Fo mhulad 's fo imcheist,
 Is mi ag coimhead air Ìle,
 Is ann de m' iongnadh 's an àm so;
 Bha mi uair nach do shaoil mi,
 gus an do chaochail air m' aimsir,
 Gun tiginn an taobh so
 Dh' amharc Dhiùraidh á Sgarbaidh.

I hurabh o i hoiriunn o,
 i hurabh o i hoiriunn o,
 I hurabh o i hogaidh ho ro,
 hi ri ri rithibh ho i ag o.

Gun tiginn an taobh so
 Dh' amharc Dhiùraidh á Sgarbaidh;
 Beir mo shoraidh do 'n dùthaich
 Tha fo dhubhar nan garbh bheann,
 Gu Sir Tormod ùr allail
 Fhuair ceannas air armailt,
 Is gun cainte anns gach fearann
 Gum b' airidh fear t' ainm air.

Gun cainte anns gach fearann
 Gum b' airidh fear t' ainm air,
 Fear do chéille is do ghliocais,
 Do mhisnich 's do mheanmhain,
 Do chruadail 's do ghaisge,
 Do dhreach is do dhealbha,
 Agus t' fholachd is t' uaisle
 Cha bu shuarach ri leanmhainn.

Agus t' fholachd is t' uaisle
 Cha bu shuarach ri leanmhainn;
 D' fhuil dirich rìgh Lochlainn
 B' e sud toiseach do sheanchais.
 Tha do chàirdeas so-iarraidh

Ris gach Iarla tha an Albainn,
Is ri h-uaislean na h-Éireann:
Cha bhreug ach sgeul dearbhta e.

Is ri h-uaislean na h-Éireann:
Cha bhreug ach sgeul dearbhta e.
A Mhic an fhir chliùitich,
Bha gu fiùghantach ainmeil;
Thug barrachd an gliocas
Air gach Ridir bha an Albainn
Ann an cogadh 's an sìothshaimh,
Is ann an dioladh an airgid.

Ann an cogadh 's an sìothshaimh,
Is ann an dioladh an airgid.
Is beag an t-iongnadh do mhac-sa
Bhith gu beachdail mór meanmnach,
Bhith gu fiùghant' fial farsaing,
O 'n a ghlac sibh mar shealbh e:
Clann Ruairidh nam bratach,
Is e mo chreach-sa na dh' fhalbh dhiubh.

Clann Ruairidh nam bratach,
Is e mo chreach-sa na dh' fhalbh dhiubh;
Ach an aon fhear a dh' fhuirich
Nìor cluinneam sgeul marbh ort;
Ach, eudail de fhearaibh,
Ge do ghabh mi uat tearbadh
Fhir a' chuirp as glan cumadh,
Gun uireasbhuidh dealbha.

Fhir a' chuirp as glan cumadh,
Gun uireasbhuidh dealbha;
Cridhe farsaing fial fearail,
Is maith thig geal agus dearg ort.
Sùil ghorm as glan sealladh
Mar dhearcaig na talmhainn,
Làmh ri gruaidh ruitich
Mar mhucaig na fearradhris.

Làmh ri gruaidh ruitich
 Mar mhucaig na fearradhris.
 Fo thagha na gruaige
 Cùl dualach nan camlùb.
 Gheibhte sud ann ad fhàrdaich
 An càradh air ealchainn,
 Miosair is adharc
 Is rogha gach armachd.

Miosair is adharc
 Is rogha gach armachd,
 Agus lanntainean tana
 O 'n ceannaibh gu 'm barrdhéis.
 Gheibhte sud air gach slìos dhiubh
 Isneach is cairbinn,
 Agus iubhair chruaidh fhallain
 Le an tafeidean cainbe.

Agus iubhair chruaidh fhallain
 Le an tafeidean cainbe,
 Is cuilbheirean caola
 Air an daoiread gun ceannaichte iad;
 Glac nan ceann liomhta
 Air chur sìos ann am balgaibh
 O iteach an fhìreoin
 Is o shìoda na Gailbhinn.

O iteach an fhìreoin
 Is o shìoda na Gailbhinn;
 Tha mo chion air a' churaidh,
 Mac Mhuire chur sealbh air.
 Is e bu mhiannach le m' leanabh
 Bhith am beannaibh na sealga,
 Gabhail aighear na frìthe
 Is a' dìreadh nan garbhghlac.

Gabhail aighear na frìthe
 Is a' dìreadh nan garbhghlac,
 A' leigeil nan cuilean

Is a' furan nan seanchon;
 Is e bu deireadh do 'n fhuman ud
 Fuil thoirt air chalgaibh
 O luchd nan céir geala
 Is nam falluingean dearga.

O luchd nan céir geala
 Is na falluingean dearga,
 Le do chomhlan dhaoine uaisle
 Rachadh cruaidh air an armaibh;
 Luchd aithneachadh latha
 Is a chaitheadh an fhairge
 Is a b' urrainn g' a seòladh
 Gu seòlaid an tarruinte i.

62. CRONAN AN TAIBH (post 1666)

Ri fuaim an taibh
 Is uaigneach mo ghean;
 Bha mise uair nach b' e sin m' àbhaist.

Ach pìob nuallanach mór
 Bheireadh buaidh air gach ceòl,
 An uair a ghluaiste i le mèir Phàdraig.

Gur maing a bheir géill
 Do 'n t-saoghal gu léir:
 Is tric a chaochail e cheum gàbhaidh.

Gur lionmhoire a chùrs
 Na 'n dealt air an driùchd
 Ann am madainn an tùs Màighe.

Chan fhacas ri m' ré
 Aon duine fo 'n ghréin
 Nach tug e ghreis féin dhà sin.

Thoir an t-soraidh so bhuam
 Gu talla nan cuach,
 Far am biodh tathaich nan truagh dàimheil.

Chun an tighe nach gann
 Fo an leathad ud thall,
 Far bheil aighear is ceann mo mhànrain.

Sir Tormod mo rùin,
 Olgharach thù,
 Foirmeil o thùs t' àbhaist.

A thasgaidh 's a chiall,
 Is e bu chleachdamh dhuit riamh
 Teach farsaing 's e fial fàilteach.

Bhiodh tional nan cliar
 Ré tamaill is cian,
 Dh' fhios a' bhaile am biodh triall chàirdean.

Nàile, chunnaic mi uair
 Is glan an lasadh bha ad ghruaidh,
 Fo ghruaig chleachdaich nan dual àrbhuidh.

Fear dìreach deas treun
 Bu ro-fhìrinneach beus,
 Is e gun mhìghean gun cheum tràilleil;

De 'n linnidh b' fheàrr buaidh
 Tha 's na crìochaibh mun cuairt,
 Clann fhìrinneach Ruairidh làn-mhoir.

Chan 'eil cleachdainn mhic rìgh
 No gaisge no gnìomh,
 Nach 'eil pearsa mo ghaoil làn dheth.

An tréine 's an lùth,
 An ceudfaidh 's an cliù,
 Am féile 's an gnùis nàire.

An gaisge 's an gnìomh,
Am pailteas neo-chrìon,
Am maise is am miann àillteachd.

An cruadal 's an toil,
Am buaidh thoirt air sgoil,
An uaisle gun chron càileachd.

Tuigsear nan teud,
Purpais gach sgéil,
Susbaint gach céill nàduir.

Gum bu chubhaidh dhuit siod
Mar a thubhairt iad ris,
Bu tu an t-ubhal thar mios àrdchraoibh.

Leòdach mo rùin,
Seòrsa fhuair cliù,
Cha bu tòiseachadh ùr dhàibh Sir.

Bha fios có sibh
Ann an iomartas rìgh,
An uair bu mhuladach strì Theàrlaich.

Slàn Ghàidheail no Ghoill
Gun d' fhuaras oirbh foill,
Dh' aon bhuaireadh gun d' rinn bhur nàmhaid.

Lochlannaich threun
Toiseach bhur sgéil,
Sliochd solta bh' air freumh Mhànuis.

Thug Dia dhuit mar ghibht
Bhith mórdhalach glic;
Chrìosd deònaich do d' shliochd bhith àghmhor.

Fhuair thu fortan o Dhia,
Bean bu shocraiche ciall,
Is i gu foistinneach fial nàrach.

A bheil einneach is cliù,
Is i gun mhilleadh 'na cùis,
Is i gu h-iriosal ciùin càirdeil:

I gun dolaidh fo 'n ghréin
Gu toileachadh treud,
Is a folachd a réir bànrighinn.

Is tric a riaraidh thu cuilm
Gun fhiabhras gun tuilg:
Nighean oighre Dhùn-tuilm, slàn dhuit.

63. AN T-EUDACH

Hìrirì ohù robhó,
Roho ì ohì o.

Gura mise tha air mo chlisgeadh,
Tha loch uisge fo m' chluasaig.

Ged a théid mi do m' leabaidh
Chan e an cadal as dual dhomh,

Is a' bhean tha an Ìle
Sìor mheudachadh m' euda;

Bhean thug uamsa mo roghainn,
Is gun taghainn thar cheud e.

Ach nam bithinn 'na fianuis,
Gum biodh spìonadh air bhréidean.

Chì mi an Fhionnairigh thall ud
Is i gun earras fo 'n ghréin oirr'.

Gum faca mise uair a
Bha daoine-uaisle mu d' réidhlean.

Rachadh cuid do 'n bheinn-sheilg dhiubh,
Cuid a mharbhadh an éisg dhiubh,

Air Linne na Ciste
Am bi na bric anns an leumraich.

Tha mo chean air an lasgair,
Saighdear sgairteil fo sgéith thu.

An uair a thig thu do 'n chaisteal
Bheir thu dhachaidh do cheud ghràdh.

Ged a tha mi air m' aineoil
O 'n bhaile fo éislean,

Chan ion do 'n bhan-Ilich
Bhith strì rium mu d' dhéidhinn.

64. CUMHA DO MHAC LEÓID (1699)

Gur e an naidheachd so fhuair mi
A dh' fhuadaich mo chiall uam
Mar nach bitheadh i agam
Is nach fhaca mi riamh i;
Gur e abhall an lios so
Tha mise ag iargain,
E gun abachadh meas air
Ach air briseadh fo chiad-bhàrr.

Gur e sgeula na creiche
Tha mi nise ag éisdeachd,
Gach aon chneadh mar thig orm
Dol an tricid 's an déinid;
Na chunncas 's na chualas
Is na fhuaradh o 'n cheud là,
Creach nid an t-seabhaig,
Air a sgathadh ri aon uair.

Ach a chlann an fhir allail
 Bu neo-mhalairtich beusan,
 Ann an Lunnainn 's am Paris
 Thug sibh bàrr air na ceudan;
 Chaidh nur cliù thairis
 Thar talamh na h-Éiphit,
 A cheann-uidhe luchd-ealaidh
 Is a leannan na féileachd.

Ach a fhriamhaich nan curaidh
 Is a chuilein nan leóghann
 Is ogha an dà sheanair
 Bu chaithreamach lòisdean,
 Càite an robh e ri fhaotainn
 Air an taobh-s' an Roinn Eòrpa ?-
 Cha b' fhuras ri fhaighinn
 Anns gach rathad bu dòigh dhuibh.

Ach a Ruairidh mhic Iain,
 Is goirt leam fhaighinn an sgeul-s' ort;
 Is e mo chreach-sa mac t' athar
 Bhith 'na laighe gun éirigh;
 Agus Tormod a mhac-san,
 A thasgaidh mo chéille !
 Gur e aobhar mo ghearain
 Gun chailleadh le chéile iad.

Nach mòr an sgeul-sgrìobhaidh
 Is nach iongnadh leibh féin e,
 Duilleach na craoibhe
 Nach do sgaoileadh a meanglain,
 An robh cliù agus onoir
 Agus moladh air deagh bheairt
 Gu daonnachdach carthannach
 Beannachdach ceutach.

Ge goirt leam an naidheachd
 Tha mi faighinn air Ruairidh,
 Gun do chorp bhith as dùthaich

Anns an tuama bu dual duit,
 Sgeul eile nach usa
 Tha mi clàistinn 'san uair so,
 Gar nach toir mi dha creideas,
 Gur beag orm ri luaidh e.

Gur ro bheag a shaoil mi
 Ri mo shaoghal gun éisd'mid,
 Gun cluinneamaid Leòdaich
 Bhith 'gam fògradh á 'n oighreachd,
 Is á 'n còraichean glana
 Is á 'm fearainn gun déidh air,
 Is ar ranntannan farsaing
 Nan rachte 'nam feum sud.

Gun éireadh 'nad aobhar
 Clann Raghnaill 's Clann Dòmhnail
 Agus tigh Mhic Ghille Eathain
 Bha daingeann 'nur seòrsa,
 Agus fir Ghlinne Garadh
 Nall thairis á Cnòideart,
 Mar sud is Clann Chamshroin
 O champ Inbhir Lòchaidh.

Is beag an t-iongnadh Clann Choinnich
 Dhèanamh oireachd mu d' ghualainn
 Is gun robh thu 'nam fineachd
 Air t' fhilleadh trì uairean.
 Is e mo chreach gun do chinneadh
 Bhith mu chruinneachadh t' uaghe,
 No glaodh do mhnà-muinntir,
 Is nach cluinntear 'san uair-s' i.

Tha mo cheist air an oighre
 Tha a staoidhle 'sna Hearadh,
 Gar nach deach thu 'san tuam ud
 Far am bu dual duit o d' sheanair.
 Gur iomadh fuil uaibhreach
 A dh' fhuaraich ad bhallaibh

De shloinneadh nan rìghrean
Leis na chìosaicheadh Manainn.

Is e mo ghaol-sa an sliochd foirmeil
Bh' air sliochd Olghair is Ochraidh,
O bhaile na Boirbhe
Is ann a staoidhleadh tu an toiseach;
Gur iomadh fuil mhórdha
Bha reòta 's a' chorp ud:
De shliochd àrmuinn Chinn-tìre,
Iarla Ile agus Rois thu.

Mhic Iain Stiùbhairt na h-Apunn,
Ged is gasda an duine òg thu,
Ged tha Stiùbhartaich beachdail,
Iad tapaidh 'n àm fòirneirt,
Na gabh-sa meanmna no aiteas
Anns an staid ud nach còir dhuit:
Cha toir thu i dh' aindeoin
Is chan fhaigh thu le deòin i.

Cuime an tigeadh fear coigreach
Do thagradh ur n-oighreachd ?
Gar nach 'eil e ro dhearbhte
Gur searbh e ri éisdeachd;
Ged tha sinne air ar creachadh
Mu chloinn mhac an fhir fhéilidh,
Sliochd Ruairidh mhóir allail,
Is gur airidh iad féin oirr'.

65. AN CRONAN (1699)

An naidheachd so an dé
Aighearach è:
Moladh do 'n léigh
Thug malairt do m' chéill:
Nis teannaidh mi féin ri crònan.

Beannachd do'n bheul
 Dh' aithris an sgeul
 Dh' fhàg fallain mo chré;
 Cha ghearain mi féin
 Na chailleadh 's na dh' eug
 Is mo leanabh 'nan déidh comhshlàn.

Nam biodh agamsa fion
 Gum b' ait leam a dhìol
 Air slàinte do thighinn
 Gu d' chàirdean 's gu d' thìr;
 Mhic àrmuinn mo ghaoil,
 B' e m' àrdan 's mo phrìs
 Alach mo rìgh thogbhail.

Is fàth mire dhuinn féin
 Is do 'n chinneadh gu léir
 Do philleadh o 'n eug;
 Is milis an sgeul,
 Is binne na gleus orghan.

Is e m' aiteas gu dearbh
 Gun glacar grad shealbh
 An grunn d farsuing nan sealg
 Is an caisteal nan arm
 Leis a' mhacaomh d' an ainm Tormod.

Tha mo dhùil-sa ann an Dia
 Gur mùirneach do thrial
 Gu dùn ud nan cliar
 Far am bu dùthchas do m' thriath
 Bhiodh gu fiùghantach fial foirmeil.

Gu dùn turaideach àrd,
 B' e sud innis nam bàrd
 Is nam filidh ri dân
 Far am bu mhinig an tàmh:
 Cha b' ionad gun bhlàths dhoibh sud.

Gu àros nach crìon
 Am bi gàirich nam pìob
 Is nan clàrsach a rìs
 Le deàrrsadh nam pìos
 A' cur sàraidh air fion
 Is 'ga leigeadh an gnìomh òircheard.

Buadhach am mac,
 Uasal an t-slat
 D' an dual a bhith ceart
 Cruadalach pailt
 Duaismhor am beachd
 Ruaimneach an neart Leòdach.

Fiùran na cluain
 Dhùisg 'san deagh uair,
 Is dùth dhuit dol suas
 An cliù 's ann am buaidh:
 Is dùthchas do m' luaidh
 Bhith gu fiùghantach suairc ceòilbhinn.

Fasan bu dual
 Fantalach buan,
 Socrach ri tuaith,
 Cosgail ri cuairt,
 Coisionta cruaidh
 Am brosnachadh sluaigh,
 A' mosgladh an uair fòirneirt.

Lean-sa 's na tréig
 Cleachdamh is beus
 T' aiteim gu léir,
 Macanta sèimh,
 Pailt ri luchd theud,
 Gaisgeil am feum,
 Neartmhor an déidh tòrachd.

De shliochd Olghair nan lann
 Thogadh sròiltean ri crann:

An uair a thòisich iad ann
 Cha bu lionsgaradh gann,
 Fir a b' fhìrinneach bann,
 Prìseal an dream,
 Rìoghail gun chall còrach.

Tog colg ort a ghaoil !
 Bi ro chalma is gum faod;
 Gur dearbhtha dhuit, laoich,
 Do chinneadh nach faoin
 Thig ort as gach taobh gu d' chòmhnadh.

Uasal an treud,
 Deas cruadalach treun
 Tha an dualchas dhuit féin,
 Théid mu d' ghuaillibh ri t' fheum
 De shliochd Ruairidh mhóir fhéil;
 Cuir-sa suas, a Mhic Dé, an t-òg rìgh.

Tha na Gàidheil gu léir
 Cho càirdeach dhuit féin,
 Is gur feairrde thu gu t' fheum
 Sir Dòmhnall á Sléit',
 Ceannard nan ceud,
 Ceannsgalach treun rò-ghlic.

Is maith mo bharail 's mo bheachd
 Air na fiùrain as leat
 Gu carantach ceart:
 Is ann de bharrachd do neirt
 Mac mhic Ailein is dà mhac Dhòmhnail.

A Gleann Garadh a nuas
 Thig am barantas sluaigh
 Nach mealladh ort uair:
 Cha bu charantas fuar
 Na fir sin o chluain Chnòideart.

Is leat Mac Shimidh o 'n Aird,
 Is Mac Choinnich Chinntàil',
 Théid ad iomairt gun dàil
 Le h-ìomadaidh gràidh;
 Cha b' iongantach dhàibh
 Is gur h-ìomadh do phàirt dhoibh sin.

Is goirt an naidheachd 's gur cruaidh
 Mac Ghille Eathain bhith uainn,
 Gun a thigheadas suas:
 Bha do cheangal ris buan,
 T' ursainn-chatha ri uair dòrainn.

B' iomad gasan gun chealg
 Bu deas faicheil fo arm
 Bheireadh ceartachadh garbh
 Is iad a' chlaistinn ort fearg
 Eadar Breacachadh dearg is Bròlas.

Tha mi ag acain mar chall
 Iad a thachairt gun cheann
 Fo chasaibh nan Gall
 Gun do phearsa bhith ann:
 Mo chruaidh-chàs nach gann
 Thu bhith fad' anns an Fhraing air fògradh.

A Chrìosd, cinnich thu féin
 An spionnadh 's an céill
 Gu cinneadail treun
 An ionad na dh' eug,
 A mhic an fhir nach d' fhuair beum
 Is a ghineadh o 'n chré ròghlan.

A Rìgh nan gràs
 Bi féin mar gheàrd
 Air feum mo ghràidh,
 Is dèan oighre slàn

Do 'n teaghlach àigh
 Bu mheamhrach dàimh,
 D' an robh coibhneas air bhàrr sòlais.

66. FUIGHEALL

Théid mi le m dheòin
 Do dhùthaich Mhic Leòid,
 M' iùil air a' mhór luachach sin.

Bu chòir dhomh gum bi
 M' eòlas 'san tìr
 Leòdach mur pill cruadal mi;

Siùbhlaidh mi an iar
 Troimh dhùbhhlachd nan sian
 Do 'n tùr g' am bi triall thuathcheathairn,

O 'n chualas an sgeul
 Buadhach gun bhreug
 Rinn acain mo chléibhe fhuadachadh.

Chì mi Mac Leòid,
 Is prìseil an t-òg
 Rìomhach gu mór buadhalach,

Bho Olghair nan lann
 Chuireadh sròiltean ri crann,
 Is Leòdaich an dream uabharra.

Eiridh na fuinn
 Ghleusta air na suinn,
 Is feumail ri ám cruadail iad,

Na fiùranan garg,
 An ám rùsgadh nan arm
 Is cliùiteach an t-ainm fhuaras leibh.

Siol Tormoid nan sgiath
 Foirmeileach fial,
 Dh' éireadh do shluagh luathlàmhach;

Deàlrach nam pìos,
 Torman nam pìob,
 Is dearbh' gum bu leibh an dualachas.

Thàinig teachdair do 'n tìr
 Gu macanta mìn,
 Is ait leam gach nì chualas leam,

O Dhùn Bheagain nan steud
 Anns am freagair luchd-theud
 Bheir greis air gach sgeul buaidh-ghlòireach.

An uair chuireadh na laoich
 Loingeas air chaol
 Turus ri gaoith ghluaiste leibh,

O bharraibh nan crann
 Gu tarruing nam ball
 Teannachadh teann suas rithe;

Iomairt gu leòir
 Mar ri Mac Leòid
 Chàraich fo 'n shròl uain-dhaite i,

Bho Aros an fhìon
 Gu talla nam pìos:
 Gum beannaich mo rìgh an t-usal ud.

67. LUINNEAG

Hithill uthill agus ó
 hithill ó horiunna
 hithill uthill agus ó
 hithill óhó horiunna
 hithill uthill agus ó
 hithill ó horiunna
 faillill ó hullill ó
 hó ri ghealladh ill an.

Ged a théid mi do m' leabaidh
 Chan e cadal as miannach leam
 Aig ro mheud na tuile
 Is mo mhuileann gun iarann air;
 Tha a' mholtair ri pàidheadh
 Mur cailltear am bliadhna mi,
 Is gur feumail dhomh faighinn
 Ged a gheibhinn an iasaid i.

Tha mo chean air a' chlachair
 Rinn m' aigne-sa riarachadh,
 Fear mór a' bheòil mheachair,
 Ge tosdach gur briathrach thu:
 Gum faighinn air m' fhacal
 Na caisteil ged iarainn iad:
 A cheart aindeoin mo stàta,
 Gun chàraich sud fiachan orm.

Ged a thubhairt mi riut clachair
 Air m' fhacal cha b' fhòr dhomh e;
 Gur rìoghail do shloinneadh
 Is gur soilleir ri iarraidh e:
 Fir Leòdach ùr gasda
 Foinnidh beachdail glic fialaidh thu,
 De shliochd nam fear flathail
 Bu mhath an ceann chliaranach.

Ach a mhic ud Shir Tormoid
 Gun soirbhich gach bliadhna dhuit
 A chuir buaidhe air do shliochd-sa
 Agus piseach air t' iarmadan;
 Is do 'n chuid eile chloinn t' athar
 Anns gach rathad a thriallass iad,
 Gu robh toradh mo dhùrachd
 Dol an rùn mar bu mhiannach leam.

An uair a théid thu do 'n fhireach
 Is ro mhath chinneas am fiadhach leat,
 Le do lomhainn chon ghleusta
 Ann do dhéidh 'n uair a thrialladh tu:
 Sin is cuilbhir caol cinnteach
 Cruaidh dìreach gun fhiaradh ann;
 Bu tù sealgair na h-éilde,
 A' choilich is na liath-chirce.

Tha mo chean air an Ruairidh,
 Gur luaimneach mu d' sgeula mi;
 Fìor bhoinne geal suairc thu,
 Am bheil uaisle na peucaige,
 Air an d' fhàs an cùl dualach
 Is e 'na chuachagan teudbhuidhe;
 Sin is ùrla ghlan shuairce:
 Cha bu tuairisgeul breugach e.

Slàn iomradh dhuit Iain,
 Guma rathail a dh' éireas duit,
 Is tu mac an deagh athar
 Bha gu mathasach meadhrachail,
 Bha gu furbhailteach daonnairceach
 Faoilteachail déirceachail;
 Sàr cheannard air trùp thu
 Nan cuirte leat feum orra.

Gur àlainn am marcach
 Air each an glaic diollaid thu,

Is tu conbhail do phearsa
 Ann an cleachdamh mar dh' iarrainn duit:
 Thigeadh sud ann ad làimh-sa
 Lann Spàinteach ghorm dhias-fhada
 Is paidhir mhath phiostal
 Air crios nam ball snìomhaineach.

68. MARBHRANN DO SHIR TORMOD MAC LEÒID (1705)

Cha sùrd cadail
 An rùn-s' air m' aigne,
 Mo shùil frasach
 Gun sùrd macnais
 'S a' chùirt a chleachd mi
 Sgeul ùr ait ri éisdeachd.

Is trom an cudthrom so dhrùidh,
 Dh' fhàg mo chùislein gun lùth,
 Is tric snighe mo shùl
 A' tuiteam gu dlùth,
 Chaill mi iuchair mo chiùil:
 An cuideachd luchd-ciùil cha téid mi.

Mo neart is mo threòir
 Fo thasgaidh bhòrd,
 Sàr mhac Mhic Leòid
 Nam bratach sròil,
 Bu phàilt mu 'n òr,
 Bu bhinn caismeachd sgeòil
 Aig luchd-astair is ceòil na h-Èireann.

Có neach d' an eòl
 Fear t' fhasain beò
 Am blasdachd beòil
 Is am maise neòil,
 An gaisge gleòis
 An ceart 's an còir,
 Gun airceas no sgleò féile ?

Dh' fhalbh mo shòlas:
 Marbh mo Leòdach
 Calma cròdha
 Meanmnach rò-ghlic;
 Dhearbh mo sgeòil-sa
 Seachas eòlais
 Gun chearb fòghluim:
 Dealbhach ròghlan t' éagasg.

An treas là de 'n Mhàirt
 Dh' fhalbh m' aighear gu bràth;
 B' i sud saighead mo chràidh
 Bhith 'g amharc do bhàis,
 A ghnùis fhathasach àilt,
 A dheagh mhic ràthail
 An àrmuinn euchdaich.

Mac Ruairidh reachdmhoir
 Uaibhrich bheachdail,
 Bu bhuaidh leatsa
 Dualchas farsaing
 Snuadh ghlaire pearsa,
 Cruadal 's smachd gun eucoir.

Uaill is aiteas
 Is ann bhuat gu faighte,
 Rì uair ceartais
 Fuasgladh facail
 Gun ghruaim gun lasan
 Gu suairce snasda reusant'.

Fo bhùird an cistidh
 Chaidh grùnnd a' ghliocais,
 Fear fiùghant' miosail
 Cuilmeach gibhteil,
 An robh cliù gun bhristeadh:
 Chaidh ùr fo lic air m' eudail.

Gnùis na glaine
 Chuireadh sunnd air fearaibh,
 Air each crùidheach ceannard
 Is lann ùr thana ort
 Am beairt dhlùth dhainginn
 Air cùl nan clannfhalt teudbhuidh'.

Is iomadh fear aineoil
 Is aoidh 's luchd ealaidh
 Bheir turnais tamall
 Air crùintidh mhalairt
 Air iùl 's air aithne:
 Bu chliù gun aithris bhreug e.

Bu tu an t-sìothshaimh charaid
 Ri ám tighinn gu baile,
 Ol dian aig fearaibh
 Gun strì gun charraid,
 Is bu mhiann leat mar riut
 Luchd ìnnse air annas sgeula.

Bu tric uidh chàirdean
 Gu d' dhùn àghmhor
 Suilbhir fàilteach
 Cuilmmhor stàtail
 Gun bhuirb gun àrdan
 Gun diùlt air mhàl nan déirceach.

Thu á sliochd Olghair
 Bu mhór morghail,
 Nan seòl corrbheann
 Is nan còrn gormghlas,
 Nan ceòl orghan
 Is nan seòd bu bhorb ri éiginn.

Bha leth do shloinnidh
 Ri sìol Cholla
 Nan cìos troma
 Is nam pìos soilleir,

Bho chóigeanh Chonnacht:

Bu lìonmhor do loingear bréidgheal.

Is iomadh gàir dhalta

Is mnàì bhasbhuaìt'

Ri là tasgaidh:

Chan fhàth aiteis

Do d' chàirdean t' fhaicsinn

Fo chlàr glaiste:

Mo thruaighe, chreach an t-eug sinn !

Inghean Sheumais nan crùn,

Bean-chéile ghlan ùr,

Thug i ceud-ghràdh d' a rùn,

Bu mhór a h-aobhar ri sunnd

An uair a shealladh i an gnùis a céile.

Is i fhras nach ciùin

A thàinig as ùr,

A shrac ar siùil

Is a bhrìst ar stiùir

Is ar cairt mhaith iùil

Is ar taice cùil

Is ar caidreabh ciùil

Bhiodh againn 'nad thùr éibhinn.

Is mór an ionndrainn tha bhuainn

Air a dùnadh 'san uaigh,

Ar cùinneadh 's ar buaidh,

Ar cùram 's ar n-uail,

Is ar sùgradh gun ghruaim:

Is fada air chuimhne na fhuair mi féin deth.

69. CUMHA DO SHIR TORMOD MAC LEÓID (1705)

Mo chràdhghal bochd

Mar a thà mi nochd

Is mi gun tàmh gun fhois gun sunnd.

Gun sùrd ri stàth
 Gun dùil ri bhith slàn,
 Chaidh mo shùgradh gu bràth air chùl.

Chaill mo shusbaint a càil,
 Fàth mo thùrsaidh gach là,
 Is mi sìor-ùirsgeul air gnàths mo rùin.

Mu dheagh mhac Ruairidh nan long,
 Làmh liobhraigeadh bhonn,
 Is bha measail air fonn luchd-ciùil.

Is e bhith smuainteachadh ort
 A chràidh mi am chorp
 Is a chnàmh na roisg bho m' shùil.

Mi ri smuaintean bochd truagh
 Is ri iomradh baoth buan
 Is mi 'gad ionndrainn-sa uam: 's tu b' fhiù.

Ag ionndrainn Leòdach mo ghaoil
 Bhith 'san t-sròl-anart chaoil
 Gun chomhdach r' a thaobh ach bùird.

O 'n là ghlasadh do bheul
 Gun deach airc air luchd-theud
 An uair sgapadh tu fhéin na crùin.

Thog na filidh ort sgeul
 Fhad 's a dh' imich an ceum
 Nach fhaca iad na b' fhéile gnùis.

Gun robh maise ann ad fhiamh,
 Sin is tlachd ort measg chiad,
 Rud nach cuala mi riamh air triùir.

Tha am Mac Leòid-s' air ar ceann
 Is e fo thùrsadh nach gann;
 Is beag an t-iongnadh, 's e chaill a stiùir.

Chaill e maothar a threud
 'San robh fradharc nan ceud
 Is tagha de dheagh chairt-iùil.

Deagh shealgair am frìth,
 Bha gun cheilg do thigh Rìgh,
 Agus seirbhiseach dìleas crùin.

Tha do chinneadh fo ghruaim
 Is gach aon fhine mun cuairt
 O 'n là ghrinnicheadh t' uaigh 's a' chrùist'.

Mu 'n t-sàr ghaisgeach dheas threun
 Ann am batail nan ceud,
 Cha bu lapach 'san leum ud thù.

Làmh churanta chruaidh
 Ann an iomairt 's gach buaidh,
 Chan urrainn domh t' uaisle, a rùin.

Do thigh-talla fo ghruaim,
 Is e gun aighear gun uail,
 Far am bu mhinig a fhuair sinn cuirm.

Nic Gille Chaluim

70. MOCH 'S A' MHADAINN DI-DÒMHNAICH (1671)

Moch 's a' mhadainn Di-dòmhnach
 'S mi ri leughadh mo leabhraich
 Fhuair mi sgeul, is bu leòir leam a mheud.

A mhic Tighearn' an Dùine
 Ma thug thusa do chùl rium
 Gu 'm bi snighe air mo shùilean ga d' chaoidh.

Och, ma cheangaileadh am pòsadh thu
 Ri nighinn Mhic-an-Tòisich
 Cha tig aighear ri m' bheò gu mo chrìdh'.

'S iomadh oidhche agus latha
 Bha sinn còmhla a' labhairt;
 'S beag a shaoil mi gu 'n caitheadh tu 'n fhoill.

Ochain, ochain, mo thàmailt,
 Cò a dhìolas mar tha mi ?
 Tha mo bhràthair fo 'n t-sàile gun dìon.

Mur biodh bristeadh a' bhàta
 Agus esan a bhàthadh
 Gu 'm bu dàna dhuit m' fhàgail 's mi tìom.

B' e sin gaisgeach a' chruadail
 'Dheanadh gnìomh anns an tuasaid;
 B' e a chleachdadh 'bhi buadhach 's gach strì.

Thigeadh claidheamh math stàilinn
 Ann an deas-làimh mo ghràidh-sa,
 Is sgiath bhreac nam ball gearrte air 'thaobh clì.

'S truagh mi, 'eudail nam fearaibh,
 'S gun thu 'n diugh ann ad bhaile,
 Far am faigheadh luchd ealaidh an dìol.

Tha do thighean fuar, falamh,
 'S neul an fheadir air am barraibh;
 Chan eil sunnd ann ad thalla 'g òl fion.

71. OCH NAN OCH 'S MI FO LÉIREADH (1671)

Och nan och 's mi fo léireadh
 mar a dh' éirich do 'n ghaisgeach;
 Chan 'eil sealgair na sìthne
 an diugh am frith nam beann caşa.

Hù o ro hó io hó hùg oireann o,
 hó a o hù, éile e hó,
 hù o ro hó io hó bhà,
 hó ro bha, hiu ra bhó, hiu o ró,
 hú o ro hó io hó hùg oireann o,
 faill ill ó laill io hó.

Bha mi uair nach do shaoil mi,
 ged is faoin bhi 'ga agradh,
 Gun rachadh do bhàthadh
 gu bràth air cuan farsaing;

Fhad 's a sheasadh an stiùir dhith
 's tu air cùl a buill bheairte,
 Dh' aindeoin ànradh nan dùilean
 agus ùpraid na mara;

Fhad 's a dh' fhanadh ri chéile
 a cuid dhealgan 's a h-acfhuinn,
 Is gum b' urrainn dhi géilleadh
 do d' làimh threun air an aigeann.

Ach b' i an doineann 'bha iargalt',
 le gaoth á 'n iar-thuath 's cruaidh fhrasan:
 Thog a' mhuir 'na mill dhùbhghorm
 's smuais i an iùbhrach 'na sadan.

72. SEALL A-MACH AN E LÀ E (1671)

Seall a mach an e là e,
 'S mi 'feitheamh na fàire,
 'S e 'n sgeula nach binn leam,
 Chuaidh innseadh o Chàisg dhomh.
 O ioro i 's o i ril o bha,
 O ioro i 's i rim i o ho u,
 O 's tu gun tighinn fallain.

T' fhaighinn bàit' air a charraig,
 Mar ri Calum do bhràthair;
 Fear mòr thu Shiol Torcuill
 'S e do chorp a bha làidir.
 O 's maith thig dhuit breacan
 Air a lasadh le càrnaid,
 'S cha 'mhios thig dhuit triubhas
 Dol a shiubhal nan sràidin.

Nochd is mòr tha de t' iargain
 Air Iarla Cheann-tàile;
 Nach robh 'n soirbheas ud réidh dhuit
 'S gur tu féin air a b' àirde.
 Dìreach muigh ris an rudha,
 Fhuair sibh 'n cùrsa nach b' àill leam;
 Bha sibh salach le siaban,
 Tigh'n o liantanaibh bàite.

Dh' fhàg e smuairein air m' aignidh,
 Dh' fhàg gun cadal ochd tràth mi,
 Mheud 's a' gheibhinn de bheadradh,
 'N uair a thiginn gu t-àrois.
 'S maith thig siud os cionn t-fhéil ort,
 Gorm geur nan lann Spàineach
 Mar ri duille air a céireadh,
 Sgiath réidh air do cheàrr-laimh.

Lamh dheas air a chuspair,
 Cha b' ann bharr uchdan nan gàrbhlach;

Leis an tarraig ùir fharsuing
 Chuireadh cairt as a h-àite;
 'S ge do thigeadh iad uile
 Bu leat urram nan Gàidheal.

73. MI AM SHUIDHE AIR AN FHAOILINN (1671)

hi leó ró i bha hó
 hi liù 's hi leó

hi leó ro i bha hó
 ro i bha hó hi leò.

Mi am shuidh' air an fhaoilinn
 'S mi ri caoineadh 's ri tuiream,
 Cha d' rinn mi ceum aotrom
 O Dhi-h-Aoine mo dhunach,
 On a chunnaic mi am bàta
 Far na bhàthadh an curaidh,
 Gille Calum a b' òige
 'S Iain Mòr, mo sgeul duilich.
 Cha robh ceàrn ann an Albainn
 Nach robh ainm air do spionnadh.
 'S e do ghuala bha làidir
 Ged a shàraich a' mhuir thu.
 Tha do chlaidheamh 's e dùinte
 Fo dhrùdhadh na h-uinneig.
 Tha do choin air na h-iallan
 'S cha triall iad dha 'n mhunadh,
 'S gun duin' ann nì am fuasgladh,
 O, cha ghluais thu leo tuilleadh.
 'S ann am baile na tràghad
 Tha mo ghràdh sa bho an uiridh,
 'S tu gun sìod' is gun chluasaig
 Ach leacan fuara na tuinneadh.

Nic Leòid

74. GED IS GRIANACH AN LATHA

Hò hao ri ri hó,
 Hò hiù ra bhó ro hó hó,
 Hao ri rì hó.

Ged is grianach an latha,
 Gur beag m' aighear r' a bhòidhchead,
 'S mi ri feitheamh a' chaolais,
 'S gun mo ghaol-sa 'ga sheòladh;
 Ach nam faicinn thu 'tighinn,
 'S mi gun ruitheadh 'nad chòmhdhail,
 'S mi gu rachadh 'nad choinneamh,
 Air mo bhonnaibh gun bhrògan.
 'S a cheart aindeoin luchd mì-rùin
 'S mi gun dùraigeadh pòg dhuit,
 Ged a chuirte mi 'm sheasamh
 Air an t-Seisein Di-Dòmhnach
 Ann am fianais na cléire,
 'S gun ach léine 'gam chòmhdach.
 Tha mo chion air an fhleasgach
 Dhonn, leadanach, bhòidheach;
 'S ged nach eil thu de m' fhine,
 Lìom a b' inbhich' do phòsadh,
 Tha thu 'n fhine nach strìochdadh,
 Do dh' fhìor-fhuil Chlann Dòmhnall !

75. CUMHA D' A BRÀTHAIR (c. 1645)

'S ann mu 'n taca so 'n dè
 'Bu bhoichd, airsnealach m' fheum,
 Is mi smaointinn air beus do bheòil.

'S e mac Cholla nan euchd
 'Rinn do bhualadh, mo bheud !
 Dh' fhàg sin mise ri m' ré fo leòn.

Ann an ciste chaoil, theann,
 Tha thu 'd laighe gun srann,
 Is gun socair fo d' cheann ach bòrd.

Corp bu ghil' thu na 'n cnàimh
 Fo do léine chaoil, bhàin,
 Is thu 'd laigh' air an tràigh gun treòir.

Slios mar eala nan tonn,
 Is cùl fàinneach deas, donn;
 'S bu tu 'n t-òg a bha connmhor còir.

Nuair a chunnaic mi féin,
 Fuil do chridhe 's do chléibh,
 Chaidh am pudhar air ghleus am fheòil.

Cùl an righe so thall
 Bha 'n sàr ghaisgeach air chall;
 Fear an aignidh gun fheall, gun ghò.

'Tigh'nn bho cheàrdaich a ghual,
 Bu ghlan rudhadh do ghruaidh,
 Mar an t-ubhall air uachdar meòir.

'S i do chas a bha luath,
 'S i do làmh a bha cruaidh,
 Nuair a thachradh tu 'n ruaig no 'n tòir.

'S i do ghuala 'bha treun
 Ann an carraid no 'n streup;
 Bu tu marbhaich' an fhéidh 's an eòin.

Bu tu marbhaich' bhruc ruaidh
 'Thig bho 'n fhireach so shuas,
 Is a choilich nuair ghluaist' an t-òrd.

Bu tu marbhaich' bhric bhàin
 'Thig bho 'n aigeal air snàmh,
 Nuair a ghlacadh tu 'n crann a' d' dhòrn.

Cha robh filidheachd cainnt,
 Cha robh lùth-chleas no danns',
 Nach do dh' ionnsaich thu 'n càmp Mhontròis.

C' àit' an robh e fo 'n ghréin
 Aon mhac gobha b' fheàrr beus
 Na mo bhràthair deas, treubhach, òg ?

Bha thu ceanalta, suairc,
 Ann an còmh dhail an t-sluaigh;
 Gheibhteadh t' fhuran is t' uaisle 's t' eòl.

Leat bu mhiannach rùm druidt'
 Is daoine uaisle mar-riut,
 An àm tarruing ri uchd an òil.

'S tu nach sealladh gu crìon
 Air a bheagan a dhìol
 Nuair a thàrladh am fìon a' d' dhòrn.

Bha thu càirdeach, a rùin,
 Do dheagh oighre Dhun-tuilm,
 Ceann nan gaisgeach bu chliùiteach dòigh.

Bha thu càirdeach dà uair
 Do Shìol Torcuill mu thuath;
 Sud na fearaibh a fhuair an leòn.

'Nis bho 'n thachair dhomh féin,
 Bhith gun bhràthair a' d' dhéidh,
 B' fheàrr gun greasadh Mac Dé mi 'd lorg.

NIC NEILL

Aithbhreac Inghean Coirceadail

76. A PHAIDRÍN DO DHÚISG MO DHÉAR (c. 1470)

A phaidrín do dhúisg mo dhéar,
 ionmhain méar do bhitheadh ort;
 ionmhain cridhe fáilteach fial
 'gá raibhe riamh gus a nocht.

Dá éag is tuirseach atáim,
 an lámh má mbítheá gach n-uair,
 nach cluinim a beith i gclí
 agus nach bhfaicim í uaim.

Mo chridhe-se is tinn atá
 ó theacht go crích an lá dhúinn;
 ba ghoirid do éist ré ghlóir,
 ré h-agallaimh an óig úir.

Béal asa ndob aobhdha glór,
 dhéantaidhe a ghó is gach tír:
 leómhan Muile na múr ngeal,
 seabhag Íle na magh mín.

Fear ba ghéar meabhair ar dhán,
 ó nach deachaidh dámh gan díol;
 taoiseach deigh-einigh suaírc séimh,
 agá bhfaightí méin mheic ríogh.

Dámh ag teacht ó Dhún an Óir
 is dámh òn Bhóinn go a fholt fiar:
 minic thánaig iad fá theist,
 ní mionca ná leis a riar.

Seabhag seanglan Sléibhe Gaoil,
 fear do chuir a chaoín ré cléir;

dreagan Leódhuis na learg ngeal,
éigne Sanais na sreabh séimh.

A h-éagmhais aon duine a mháin
im aonar atáim dá éis,
gan cluiche, gan chomhrádh caoin,
gan ábhacht, gan aoibh i gcéill.

Gan duine ris dtig mo mhiann
ar sliocht na Niall ó Niall óg;
gan mhuirn gan mheadhair ag mnáibh,
gan aoibhneas an dáin im dhóigh.

Mar thá Giodha an fhuinn mhín,
Dún Suibhne do-chím gan cheól,
faithche longphuirt na bhfear bhfial:
aithmhéala na Niall a n-eól.

Cúis ar lúthgháire má seach,
gusa mbímis ag teacht mall:
's nach fuilngim a nois, mo nuar,
a fhaicinn uam ar gach ard.

Má bhrisis, a Mheic Dhé bhí,
ar bagaide na dtrí gcnó,
fa fíor do ghabhais ar ngiall:
do bhainis an trian ba mhó.

Cnú mhullaigh a mogaill féin
bhaineadh da Chloinn Néill go nua;
is tric roighne na bhfear bhfial
go leabaidh na Niall a nuas.

An rogha fá deireadh díbh
's é thug gan mo bhrígh an sgéal:
do sgar riom mo leathchuing rúin,
a phaidrín do dhúisg mo dhéar.

Is briste mo chridhe im chlí,
agus bídh nó go dtí m' éag,
ar éis an abhradh dhuibh úir,
a phaidrín do dhúisg mo dhéar.
A phaidrín.

Muire mháthair, muime an Ríogh,
go robh 'gam dhíon ar gach séad,
's a Mhac do chruthuigh gach dúil,
a phaidrín do dhúisg mo dhéar.
A phaidrín.

NIC PHAIDEIN

Mòr Nic Phaidein

77. CUMHA DO NIALL ÒG (c. 1630)

Gur a mise 'th' air mo chùradh,
Thug mi gealladh do 'n chùirteir,
Is cha leig mi fo rùm e nas mò.
Gur a mise, &c.

Tha mi 'm muigh ann san fheasgar,
'S gun do chuspair ga cheapadh,
'S mheudaich sùgradh nam fleasgach dhomh bròn.

Tha mi 'feitheamh na faiche,
'S fir an òrdagh 'dol seachad
Ach fear t' aogaisg chan fhaic mi gan còir.

Bu duin' uasal treun tapaidh,
Fiùran gasda ro bheachdail,
Am fear fial dha 'n do bhaist iad Niall òg.

Ach nam b' aithne dhomh t' àireamh,
B' ùr a' choill' as an d' fhàs thu,
'Shìol nam fallainean àrd' 'bu mhòr stoirm.

Mac-Gilleain air thùs leat,
Agus oighre na Cùile,
'S leat Mac Fhionghain bho dhlùth choille chnò.

'S leat Mac Cuimilein uaibhreach,
Is Iarl' Antruim mu 'n cualas,
'S Lachlainn 'thuit ann am bualadh nan sròn.

Gur a math 'thigeadh féileadh
Air an iosgaid nach b' éitidh,
'Nuair a sgioblaicheadh m' eudail gu falbh.

Cha bu mhios' 'thigeadh boineid
Air chùl fàinneach nan donnag,
Bu tu 'n gaisgeach deas foinnidh, gun ghò.

Sealgair féidh air an driùchd thu,
Bhiodh e loite le t' fhùdar,
'Call na fala 's do chù air a lorg.

Bu tu 'n cearrach mòr, prìseil,
Air na cairtean 's na dìsnean,
'S tu gu 'm buidh'neadh a chis ann san toirm.

Agus cearrach air feòirne,
Air an tàileasg 'gan steòrnadh;
'S tu nach iarradh 's nach sòradh an t-òr.

Bu tu ceann do luchd-muinntir,
Nach robh geur ann an cainnt orr'
Ann an eireachdas cunntais no mòid.

An là 'thàinig thu 'dh' Albainn,
Bu làmh shònraichte airm thu;
Tha sud fìrinneach dearbhta gun bhòsd.

'Rùin, nam bitheadh tu maireann,
Bu tu mo roghainn de dh' fhearaibh,
Leiginn Eòghan is Ailean air falbh.

A mhic Néill 'bu mhòr gaisge,
'Fhuair a stialladh mu 'n chlachan,
'S e do bhàs 'chuir am fadal mòr-s' oirnn.

Chunna mi do cheann-cinnidh,
'S càch ga d' ghiùlain gu innis;
'S gun robh sùrd ann air tioma gu leòir.

Bha gruaim mhòr air do dhalta,
'N àm an uaigh bhi ga treachailt,
Gun robh uair nach bu mhasladh sud dhò.

Tha thu 'd chòmhnaidh 'sa chaibeal,
'S tu gun chòmhradh, gun chaidreabh,
Is gun chomhfhurtachd leapa ach bòrd.

NIC PHAIL

Màiri Nic Phàil

78. CUMHA DO DH' EACHANN ÒG MAC-GILLEAIN A TIRIODH

Gur h-e mise 'tha fann
 Tha mo shùil gu bhi dall,
 'Caoidh an fhiùran gun mheang;
 Chaill mi ùbhlàn mo chrann,
 'S chuir sin buaireadh 'am cheann ri m' bheò.
 'S chuir sin buaireadh, &c.

Cha bu sgeula gun fhios
 Mu 'n d' thug m' eudail orm sgrios;
 Gun do sgaoil e mo shic,
 'S tha mo chridhe 'na lic,
 'S e mo ghnàths 'bhi air mhisg gun òl.

Air an eadradh Di-màirt
 Fhuair mi greadan mo chràidh;
 Sin a leag mi gu làr
 Is a leadir mo chnàimh;
 An t-sleagh dhìreach tha sàtht' am fheòil.

'S ann aig t' athair 'bha ghibht,
 Aig na h-eòlaich tha fios;
 Cha bu thacharan mic
 Nach do chàireadh fo 'n lic;
 Dh' fhàg sin esan 'na sgriot'chan bròin.

A mhic aoibheil a b' fhiù,
 B' àlainn sealladh do shùl;
 'N uair a chrathadh tu null
 Do ghruag dhualach, dhonn chùil,
 B' àrd a thogadh tu 'rùin an t-sròn.

A mhic mhaisich gun fheall,
 B' àlainn cumadh do bhall,
 Calpa cuimir neo-cham
 'Dhol a shiubhal nam beann;
 Bu tric buidheann gun mheang 'ad chòir.

Nam bitheadh tu thall
 Ann an coinneamh nan Gall,
 'S iomadh fear 'bhiodh mu d' cheann,
 'S iad a' tarruing ort teann;
 'Rìgh ! bu taitneach leo cainnt do bheòil.

Gun robh gabhail mhic rìgh
 Air deagh dhalta mo chich,
 Tùs an latha 'dol sìos,
 Air a chuairt dhe nach till,
 Ann an trusgan caol, mìn gu leòr.

Gun robh cuilein mo rùin,
 Fear na camagan dlùth,
 'S e a' seòladh ri d' ghlùin,
 Gus 'n do dhalladh a shùil
 Ann am mire nan sùgh gun deò.

NIC RATH

Ciorslan Nighean Dhonnchaidh Alasdair

79. MO GHAOL AM FLEASGACH (c. 1715)

Mo ghaol am fleasgach
dh' fhalbh uainn feasgar,
ghabh mi cead 'san anmoch dhiot.

'S leam as aithreach
gun bhith mar riut,
thu bhith fo smachd nan Gallbhodach.

Cas nach tuislich
dìreadh uchdan,
bidh bian buic na h-earban ort.

Bidh bian damh allaidh
ort a lasgair,
tighinn dhachaigh 's neo-chearbach thu.

Bidh coin air iallaibh
's tuill air bhianaibh,
b' e do mhiann an t-sealgaireachd.

Bidh saca troma
air eachaibh donna
tighinn dhachaigh 'san anmoch dhuit.

'S mi gun taghadh
seòlta seaghach
rogha 's togha armachd dhuit.

Bidh luaidh 's fùdar
air do ghiùlan
chuireadh smùid fo gharbhchriocheaibh.

Lann gheur thana
air dhreach na glaine,
sgiath nam balla meanbhbreaca.

Dà thrìan do mhaise
cha dèan mi aithris,
's math a thig na h-armaibh dhuit.

Do phòg, a lasgair,
fhuair mi taitneach,
's fada bha do mheanmhain orm.

STEVENSON

Mrs Stevenson

80. THÀINIG ACHD RO CHRUAIDH OIRNN (1747)

Thàinig achd ro chruidh oirnn a nuadh a Sagson
A mùthadh ar n-aodaich, chan eil e taitneach,
Ciod a chuir air daoine gun airm ach bata,
'S nach do thog iad caonnag no aobhar bagraidh ?

Ho ridum o uo ho radum

Tha mulad gam theumadh o leugh mi 'n t-achd ud.

Théid e Là Lùnasdal ann an cleachda
'S aodaich Chlanna-gàidheil a chuir á fasan
Fògradh a's prìosan ma chìtear ac' e,
'S o chrùnadh Rìgh Fearghuis tha 'n Alba breacan.

'S gur neònach a mhùthadh e ann an gradadh,
Ghiorrad 's o 'n bha 'm Prionnsa, gach diùc is baran
A' caitheadh an fhéile le sgéith 's le claidheamh,
'S nam maireadh an streup ud bha feum air fhathast.

Bithidh an ad ro lìonmhor 's an còta farsuing,
Diallaid a's bòtan air seòrsa gearrain,
An t-òganach seòlta o mhùith e earradh
Cha toir maighdean pòg dha, cha dean i aithn' air.

Trùp as gach dùthaich a' dol air faidhir,
'S ainneamh a bhios 'house' aig na fearaibh taighe,
Gun uidheam ach lùireach a bha 'san fhasair
Bheir na mnàith'n cùl riu, cha 'n fhiù leo 'n caidreamh.

Cha 'n eireachdas Dòmhnach e 'dhol do 'n chlachan
Casag leabhar ròineach do 'n chlàimhlein lachdunn,
'S airsnealach ri 'ghiùlan i 'dhol air astar,
'S iomadh duine còir 'tha gun seòl air marcachd.

Sud an sgeul 'tha tùrsach le iomadh fleasgach,
Nach fhaicear a ghlùin, no bac na h-easgaid,
Osain fhada chuarain g' an cumail seasgair,
'S còta glas na luids' air an cùl ag cleidis.

Tha call aig an Rìgh ann, ma 's fhiach mo bharail,
Tha 'n cusbainn a dhìth air gun iùs air dathan;
Marsantan na rìoghachd ag caoidh gun aran
'S na 'm measadh a' chùirt e, thig mùthadh fhathast.

STIÙBHAIRT

81. SO AN TÌM THA CUIR AS DHOMH (1745)

So an tìm tha cuir as dhomh,
 Làn tùchain is cnatain,
 Mo dhiùbhail 's mo chreach ! cha b' e dh' fheumainn.

Ach bhi guidhe gu làidir,
 Le Rìgh dligheach nan Gàidheal,
 Théid a Lunnainn gun dàil uainn le ceuta',-

An t-òg tionnsgalach gasda,
 Prionnsa Teàrlach nam baiteal,
 Théid meàrlach rìgh Shasunn a ghèilleadh.

'S ioma leòmhann deas stàtail,
 Dhe mo chinne mòr làidir,
 Bhios fo d' bhrataichean bàna ag éirigh.

Na Stiùbhartaich ghasda,
 Fìor chùirteil mu d' bhrataich,
 Bidh Iarla Bhòid 's fir na h-Apunn gu léir leat,-

Còirneal Ruadh Chinne-Chàirdin,
 'S clann uasal a bhràthar,
 Thog iad bratach 's cha 'n fhàillig iad gleus leath'.

'S gur h-e 'n duine am Màidseir,
 Mac oighre a mhàthar,
 'N Rìgh 'g a neartach' an àird ann an ceutadh.

'S beag an t-iongnadh an t-àrdan
 'Dhol a' d' bhathais cho làidir,
 'S a liuthad sruth àrd as 'n do leum thu,-

Dh' fhuil Rìgh agus Bharain,
 Do 'm bu dligheach am fearann,
 Do 'n fhuil phrìseil bha fearail ag éirigh.

'Thaobh eile do mhàthar,
 Tha thu 'bhroilleach nan Granndach,
 'N aon teaghlach is feàrr tha 'n Strath Spé dhiu.

Dh' éireadh sud is Iarl' Anndrum,
 Mar ri Teàrlach an tionnsgal,-
 'N Rìgh 'g an greasadh a nall dhuinn a Éirinn.

'N am biodh amhach Rìgh Deòrsa,
 Ann an làmhnan Chlann Dòmhnall,
 Gheibheadh i tobha math còrcach no stéinne.

'N am biodh làmh an fhir ruaidh ort,
 Bha mo roghainn-s' an uachdar,
 Gun aon duin' bhi mu 'n cuairt duibh le chéile.

Am blàr Chòp fhuair thu 'n t-urram,
 Bu cheann-feadhn' thair gach duin' thu,
 'S ann a shamhlaich iad uil' thu ri Cléibhir.

'S tu gu 'n cuireadh droch sheòl,
 Fo champa Rìgh Deòrsa,
 'N ceann 's na casan 's na bòtainn' gu léir diu.

Bidh e làidir 'g ar còmhnaidh,
 Dun Tuilm le Chlann Dòmhnall,
 Thig Sir Alasdair Mòr oirnn a Sléibhte.

Thig Mac Mhic Ailein a Mùideart,
 Mac Mhic Alasdair 'Chnòideart,
 'S Mac Mhic Raoghnaill, cha sòradh leis éirigh;

Agus Tighearna Struthain,
 Thig e nuas oirnn o 'n ghiùbhsaich,
 Bidh e féin 's a chuid cùirte gu léir ann.

Agus Tighearn òg Chluainidh,
 Leis an t-sròl-bhrataich uaine
 'S Clann Mhuirich mu 'n cuairt dà gu léir dà.

Bidh Clann Dòmhnuaill 'n an uidheam,
 Cuir na ruaig ris a' bhruthach,
 Le 'n arma' 's glan-uidheam aig Seurlus.

Bidh Clann Dòmhnuaill 's Clann Chamshroin,
 Sud na seòid a tha ainmeil,
 Am fìor-thoiseach na h-armailt' ag éirigh.

'S ma 's a beò mi cóig bliadhna,
 Chì mi fhathasd droch dhìol
 Air luchd-sgathaidh nam bian bharr na spréidhe.

Air luchd chasagan dearga,
 'S Mailisi Earraghàidheal,
 Chì sibh fhathast droch àird air na béisdean.

Gar 'm faic mis' e le m' shùilean,
 Gu 'm bu Dia leibh 's mo dhùrachd,
 'S cha dean luaidhe no fùdar bonn beud duibh.

Gar am faic mis' a chaoidh e,
 Ma thionndas a' chuibhle,
 Bidh Sasunnaich 's Duibhnich 'n an éiginn.

Bidh luaidhe ri earbull,
 Luchd chasagan dearga,
 Aig Frisealaich ainmeil nan geur-lann.

'S mi air thurus 's a' bhràighe,
 Cian fada o m' chàirdean,
 Far nach cluinn mi ach rànail an fhéidh ann.

Tha mi sgèth 's mi làn airsneal,
 Nàile fhìn ! théid mi dhachaigh,
 Gu dùthaich an fhasgaidh 's nan geuga.

Gu tìr nam fear ùra,
 Luchd sgapaidh an fhùdair,
 'S nach diùltadh an crùn do Rìgh Seurlus.

'S a Theàrlaich òig Stiùbhairt,
 Chì sinne an crùn ort,
 'S bidh tu fhathast a sgiùrrsadh nam béisdean.

Tha Seumas òg uasal,
 Leis an Rìgh mar bu dual dha,
 Sàr cheannard air sluagh an t-òg trèubhach.

Agus Uilleam òg Ghart,
 Mo dhùrachd dhuit thachairt,
 An Rìgh sin 'g ad sheachnadh o bhéisdean.

Sàr cheannard an t-saighdeir,
 'S cridhe soilleir gun fhoill doibh,
 'S gu meall sibh bhur n-oighreachd le chéile.

STRONG

Maria

82. AIR ALASDAIR BUTTER, A CHAIDH A MHARBHADH AN CÙIL-LODAIR (ante 1746)

Sandaidh Butter am fleasgach sgiobalt'
A shiùbhladh fraoch is fuar mhunadh,
Sandaidh, &c.

Le osan geàrr nach iarradh gartan
'S féile 'bhreacan uasal ort.

Bhiodh cuilbheir caol 's ann air do ghàirdean
'Dol air ghaoth nam fuar-mhunadh.

Bhiodh mìol-chù, eun-chù, 's deagh chù 'beagle'
Air do dheidh ga d' bhuachailleachd.

'S nuair 'dhùisgeadh tu 'm balgair as a' gharbhlach,
Bhiodh e marbh ri h-uair agad.

Damh chinn chabraich, cha dol as dha,
Ged robh sneachd is cruadal ann.

'S lach a' chinn uaine, cha dol bhuait dhi,
'Dol mu 'n cuairt Loch Uaileagan.

Nuair thig e dhachaigh fear an tacair
O ! bithidh tlachd is suairceas ann.

Bithidh Màlaidh bheag 's ann aig a' bhaile,
'S caileagan ri fuaigheal aic'.

'S marbhaich' bradain thu air caiseag,
Ged robh casgadh cruaidh aire.

Is dòbhrann donn an earbaill fhada
An grunnnd an aigeal bhuaileadh tu.

Cha phòitear dìbh' thu 'n àm dhuit suidhe,
'S cha robh 'n gill' ud tuasaideach.

Ach tha buaidh eil' ort, cuim' an ceilinn ?
O 's ro thoil leat gruagaichean.

Am féill' no 'n clachan, riamh am phrab thu,
O, chan fhacas gruaman ort.

GUN SLOINNEADH

An Aigeannach

83. ORAN DO BHEAN CHLADH-NA-MACRAIDH (c. 1730)

'Fhir a dhìreas am bealach 's théid an null thar a Mhàm,
 Thoir soiridh no dhà le dùrachd bhuam,
 Do ribhinn nam meall-shùil as farasda gnè,
 Do mholadh gu h-àrd bu dùthchasach;
 Deagh nighean Gilleasbuig de 'n fhaillean as fheàrr
 Am misnich, an stàt, 's am fiughantas;
 Slàn iomradh do dh-Anna, gur math leam i slàn,
 'S air m' fhalluinn gur nàdar cùise sin.

Foinnidh, dìreach, glan, gasta, deagh mhaiseach, deas, àrd,
 'S cùl cas-bhuidhe, fàinneach, lùbach ort;
 Do ghnùis a tha dreachmhor is taitniche blàth,
 'S neo-bhagarrach neul na dùbhlachd ort;
 Gruaidh mheachair dhearg dhaite, deud cailce dlùth bàn
 Ri amharc an sgàthan 's cùramach.
 Chan eòl dhomh bean t' aogais, 's chan fhaiceam an tràth s';
 'S cian, fada, 's gach àit an cliù sin ort.

Craobh dhaite de 'n fhìon thu, is lìonmhor ort buaidh
 Ri 'n labhairt a suas mar chunntainn iad;
 Deagh ghliocas is gleidheadh is caitheamh ri uair
 Gu furanach, suairce, bunntamach;
 'S tu deagh bhean an taighe, 'bheil mathas, 's bu dual,
 Tha cumantan 's uaislean cliùiteach ort;
 'S tu mac-samhailt na h-eiteig, thug na ceudan gu bàs,
 'S tu 'n léigh a nì stàth gach aon duine.

Sùil ghorm a's glan sealladh fo 'n mhala dhuinn àrd,
 Mar dhearcaig air bhàrr nan driùcanan.

Do bhràghad glan, fallain, mar chanach nam blàr,
 Slios fada, corp sèimh gun dùmhladas;
 Do chalpannan cruinn, am bròig phiollich troigh àrd
 Nach saltair gu 'n làr na flùranaibh.

Gur buidheach do d' chéile, 's e-fhéin a thug bàrr
 Gach neach a bha 'n aobhar diùmba ris,
 'Nuair naisgeadh gu h-eibhinn leis déideag an àigh,
 Glac gheal nam meur fàinneach lùth-chleasach.
 'S tu ogha 's dà iar-ogh' nan iarlachan àrd
 'Fhuair urram thar chàch 's cha b' ònghnadh e;
 An diùc ud, Mac-Cailein bho charraig nam bàrr,
 Bha t' athair 's do mhàthair dùbailt dha.

Gur lìonmhor sruth uaibhreach mu d' ghuaillibh gun mheang,
 Sliochd Dhiarmaid nan lann 's nan lùraichean,
 'Shìol na fìor fhuil as uaisle dha 'm bu dual bhi 's an Fhraing,
 'Fhuair urram nan Gall 's a chungaisich.
 Ridir àrd Loch-nan-Eala do charaid dlùth teann,
 Gu 'n cuirinn mo gheall nach diùltadh e
 Dol sìos ann sa bhaiteal a sgapadh nan ceann,
 'N uair 'chluinnt' a ghaoir chatha gun dùisgeadh e.

Iar-ogh' Chailein na féile leis an éireadh luchd-dàimh,
 Ogh' Alasdair àlainn, fhiughantaich,
 A thogadh na caisteil gu baidealach àrd,
 Gu tiùireideach, àghail, lùthchairteach,
 Na h-arasan fialaidh mu 'n iadhadh na bàird,
 'S am biodh iad gu stàtail, cùramach;
 'Nuair 'thigeadh tràth nòine gu còmhnuidh 's gu tàmh
 Gum b' fharumach gàbh bhur lùth-chleasan.

Is fad' 'tha do fhreumhan air sgaoileadh san tìr,
 Gum buin dhuit air chinnt' na Dùghallaich,
 Is Morair Bhraid-Albainn nan garbh bhratach sròil,
 A sgapadh an t-òr 's nach cunntadh e,
 Tighearna Charradail cheutaich leis an éireadh na slòigh,
 'S cha tréigeadh tu còir nan Stiùbhartach,

'S a bhan-tighearna phrìsail o 'n lionmhor an stòr,
Bhon ghineadh an òigh le ionracas.

'S e mo rùn an t-òg fearail ùr, aithneachail, àrd,
Mo bheannachd gu bràth le dùrachd dhuit,
'S do nàdar math beannaichte, ceanalta, tlàth,
'S neo-ainniseach ceàrn do dhùthcha-sa.
Cheart aindeoin luchd tuaileis cha ghluaisear thu ceàrr,
Gun agad ceann-fàth cha dùisgear thu.
'Fhir òig Chladh-na-macraidh 's ùr macanta t' ainm
On bhaisteadh an Gàidhlig Dùghall ort

84. ORAN DO DHOMHNALL MAC EACHUINN RU Aidh (c. 1718)

Soraidh gu Breacachadh bhuam,
Gu baile nan stuadh àrda
Far a bheil ceannard an t-sluaigh
'Tha measail, buadhmhor, àrdmhor;
Gu mac gasda Eachuinn Ruaidh,
Guidheam-sa leis buaidh làraich;
Duine smachdail, reachdmhor, ciùin
A bhuidhinneadh cùis dhe 'nàmhaid.

Rinn mi diochuimhn' 's cha bu ghann i
'S teann nach bi i pàidhte;
Tha bràthair Iarla nan sròl
'N dràst ga fhògar as àite.
'Rìgh, gur h-iomadh sruthan mòr
Bha 'n òrdagh mu bhràghad;
Bha fuil dhìreach Mhic-Gilleain ann
Eachuinn òig 's a bhràthar.

Chuir thu do long fhada dharaich
Le 'ballaibh air sàile
Le stiùir, le croinn, 's le buill bheairte,
'S le acraichean làidir.
C' àite an robh coimeas do 'n iùbhraich
Gu stiùireadh air sàile ?

Bha triùir phìobairean 'na toiseach
A steach gu port na tràghad.

Dh' fhalbh thu an coinnimh na cuideachd
Le furan 's le fàilte;
Rug thu air làimh Mhic-Gilleain
Le beatha 's le slàinte.
Cha do shalaich iad an casan
'Tighinn a steach do d' bhàghan;
'N uair a ràinig iad an caisteal,
Rìgh, bu tearc an t-àit' e.

Gach nì 'smaointicheadh an cridhe
Bha 'tighinn gu saibhir,
Bu chùis-teirbheirt dha do ghillean
Bhi 'toirt dibhe air làraich;
'S ann an sud bha 'n gean 's an sòlas
'S ceòl a' tigh'nn bho 'n chlàrsaich;
Coinnlean céire laiste 'n lantair
'S òl air branndaidh Spàinnteach.

Ge b' e thàrladh ann ad rùm
Nach tugadh cliù dha d' fhàrdaich
Bu neach gun eòlas air tùir e,
No air lùchairtean àrda.
'S ann ad sheòmraichean cùbhraidh
'Bhios an sunnd 's an àbhachd;
Chit' annt iomairt air an òr
Is òl air branndaidh làidir.

Ge b' e tharlaicheadh air do bhuidleir
'S glùtair e gun nàire;
Cha 'n 'eil e 'n Albainn no 'n Éirinn
Fear as ceutaich' gnàthan.
Gach seorsa fìon' tha na d' thalla,
An stuth fallain bàigheil;
'S bheirear seachad e gun ghainne
'S na searragan làn dheth.

Gheibhteadh do bhannal a fuaigheal,
 Do ghruagaichean àraid
 Aig nighean Thormoid mhic Ruairidh
 Dha 'm bu dualchas àrdan.
 Bhiodh ac' sunnd air dèanamh léintean
 'S tarruing gréis le snàthaid;
 Iomairt air còtaichean tric ac',
 'S mise bh' ann 's an làthair.

Gu 'm biodh na cùirteannan dathte
 Air na leapanan clàraidh;
 Agus cluasagan 'g a réir sin
 'S gach nì dh' fheumte làmh riu;
 Bhiodh orr' braith-lìnean is bratan,
 Culaidh 'chadail shàmhaich,
 Far am biodh blàths aig na h-uaislean,
 Cha tig fuachd nan dàil annt.

A dheagh mhic Iain na féile,
 'S làmh nach euradh dàimh thu;
 'S tu làn de mhòralachd 's de ghliocas;
 'S de ghibhteanan saibhir.
 Dhuit a bhuineadh a bhi cruadalach
 'Thoirt buaidh 's an àraich:
 A rìgh gum meal thu do stoileadh
 'S do mhac oighre ad àite.

A ghaoil, nan éireadh ort cruadal
 Bhiodh leat uaislean àrda;
 Do charaid, Morair Chlann-Dòmhnuille,
 Bu deònach na d' phàirt e.
 Dh' éireadh Mac-Leòid á Dun-Bheagain
 Gu seasamh do làraich,
 'S gu 'n éireadh gu grad leat á Mùideart
 Na fiùrain neo-sgàthach.

Dh' éireadh leat Colla bho 'n Cheapaich
 Gu h-acfhuinneach làidir;

'S Mac-Dhòmhnuill Duibh á Lochabar
Le 'ghaisgichibh sàr-mhath.
Dh' éireadh Mac-Fhionghainn o 'n Chreich;
'S bu treun anns a' bhlàr e.-
Soraidh gu Breacachadh bhuam,
Gu baile nan stuadh àrda.

Bean Achadh-uaine

85. CUMHA AONGHUIS ÒIG GHLINNE-GARADH (1745)

O ! gur muladach oirne
 Mar a thachair do 'n Chòirneal,
 Sàr cheann-feadhna Chloinn-Dòmhnuille
 Ri àm catha no còmhraig.-
 'S mairg a chitheadh t' fhuil bhòidheach
 'S i a taosgadh mu d' bhrògan,
 Is a taomadh gun òrdugh air cabhsair.

Aonghuis òig a chuil dualaich,
 'S ro-mhath 'dh' éireadh gach buaidh leat;
 Gus 'n do chuir iad san uaigh thu
 Gun robh Teàrlach an uachdar;
 Bha do bhuillean cho cruaidh leis
 'S nach robh tilleadh dà uair ac',
 Air mo làimh gur tu 'bhuaileadh 'n adbhannsa.

Aonghuis òig a chùil chlannaich,
 Is na calpannan geala,
 Is an t-slios mar an eala,
 No là gréine gun smalan,
 Tha do chéil' air a sgaradh,
 O 'n là chuir iad thu 's talamh;
 O 'n là dh' fhàg thu i b' ainneamh a gàire.

Nan d' fhuaireadh leat làithean,
 C' àit' an robh e, mac màthar,
 Ris nach seasadh tu àite,
 'Dhol a dh' iarraidh na h-àraich,
 Is a bhualadh an nàmhaid ?
 Le do chlaidheabh geur stàilinn
 Bhiodh luchd-chòtaichean madair dheth cailte.

'Nuair a rachadh tu t' éideadh
 Fo bhreacan an fhéilidh,
 Thigeadh claidheabh fo d' sgéith ort,

Cuilibheir caol air dheagh ghleusadh:
 Air mo làimh bu mhòr t' fheum leo,
 'Dhol an aghaidh nan ceudan,
 'S bhiodh fir Shasuinn ag éigheach na h-ainneirt.

'Nuair a thogteadh leat bratach,
 Bhiodh làmh-dhearg leat is bradan,
 'S fraoch dubh-ghorm na ghagain
 Aig fir ùra gun taise
 Nach gabh cùram no gealtachd
 As na trùpairean fhaicinn;
 Gheibhteadh cùnnradh de chlaigeannan geàrrte.

Cùis 'bu mhath le Rìgh Deòrsa
 O 'n là 'dh' inntrig thu 'n tòs leo,
 Thu bhi 'dhìth air do sheòrsa.-
 Dh' fhalbh iad uile mar cheò uait,
 O 'n là 'chuir iad fo 'n fhòid thu,
 Cha d' fhan dithis dhiu 'n òrdugh;-
 Och, mo chreach, nach bu bheò gus an dràs thu.

Cha bhitheadh Diùc Uilleam
 Cho trom oirnn, 's cha b' urrainn,
 On 's tu 'sheasadh gach cunnart
 Is a bhuaileadh na buillean.-
 Nach do dh' fhuirich an gunna
 Gun do bhualadh o 'n uinneig'
 Gun robh Teàrlach an Lunnainn roimh 'n àm so.

Dhomhsa b' ainneamh ri 'fhaotuinn
 Fear a dh' innseadh dhomh t' aogas;
 Dà ghruaidh dheirg mar an caoran
 O thùs barraich gun fhraoch ort,
 Sùil chorrach 'ad aodann,
 Beul tairis 's e faoilidh:-
 Och nan och ! tha do dhaoine dheth caillte.

Chraobh a b' àirde fo 'n adhar'
 'S i fo bhlàth, chaidh a chrathadh;

Rinn an luaidhe do sgathadh,
 'S thug siud uatsa do labhairt;
 Beirt 'bu chruaidhe le t' athair
 Thu bhi uaithe gun fhaighinn;
 Och, mo thruaigh' ! tha do cheathairn' ga t' ionndrainn.

Dheagh Mhic Alasdair Mhòr-thir,
 Ghlinne Garadh is Chnòideart,
 Fhuair thu 'n staoil ud as t' òige,
 'S b' airidh air ri do bheò thu.-
 Olc air mhath le Rìgh Deòrsa
 Is le Uilleam mar chòmhlà
 Thig t' oighre dhachaidh le sòlas o Bhealltainn.

Chan fhaod sinne 'bhi 'g acain,
 Dubhach brònach, làn airtneil,
 Ma thig Alasdair dhachaidh
 As a phrìosan 'tha 'n Sasuinn,
 O 'n Tùr-uain' as na glasaibh,
 'Thoirt d' ar cridheachan aiteas,
 On tha 'n saoghal so cleachdadh na h-ainnneirt.

Beathag Mhòr

86. AN CÙL BACHALACH (c. 1700)

B' e sud an cùl,
 So an cùl bachalach,
 B' e sud an cùl.

Och a Mhàrtainn duinn an Dùine
 'S tu mo rùn 's nach fhaic mi thu.

'S och a Mhàrtainn duinn 'ic Dhòmhnail
 Rinn do phòsadh aiceid dhomh.

Blas na mealadh air do phògan,
 'S cainnt do bheòil a b' aite leam.

Ma théid thu shiubhal nam fuar bheann
 Thoir sùil bhuat 's gu faic thu mí.

'S ma théid thu shiubhal na frìthe
 'S cinnteach mi gun tachair sinn.

Ma théid thu dh' Uibhist an eòrna
 Thoir té bhòidheach dhachaidh as.

Thoir dhachaidh té shocair chiallach
 Rìaraicheas na caipteanan.

Thoir dhachaidh té mhodhail chiùin
 Dh' ionnsaicheas mo mhac-sa dhut.

Is ma bhuaileas i le feirg e
 Guma meirg thug dhachaidh i.

Is ma bhuaileas i le fuath e
 Guma luath 'n a' chlachan i.

Ach ma bhuaileas i le gràdh e
Guma blàth fo t' achlais i.

B' e sud an cùl bachalach dualach
Or-bhuidh, cuachach, cas-bhuidhe.

Nic Coiseam

87. ÒRAN DO DHÒMHNALL MAC IAIN MHIC SHEUMAIS (1601)

A mhic Iain, mhic Sheumais,

Tha do sgeul air m' aire.

Air fara-lai leò, air fara-lai leò.

Là blàr a' chéidhe,

Bha feum air mo leanabh.

Hì-ò hìri-ibhò hì éileadh

Hì-ò hìri-ibhò rò-o hao-o

Chall éileadh-ò hìri òho-hì-oho.

Là blàr a' chéidhe, etc.

Air fara-lai leò, etc.

Là blàr na féithe

Bha do léine ballach.

Hì-ò-hìri-ibhò, etc.

Bha fuil do chuirp uasail

Air uachdar an fhearainn.

Bha fuil do chuirp chùbhraidh

A' drùghadh troimh 'n anart.

Bha mi féin 'g a sùghadh,

Gus 'n a thùch air m' anail.

Bha 'n t-saighead 'n a spreòl

An corp seòlta na glaine.

'S cha do ghabh thu 'm bristeadh

Làmh leigeadh na fala.

Bho 'n là thug thu 'n cuan ort,
Bha gruaim air na beannaibh.

Bha snigh' air na speuraibh,
'S bha na reultan galach.

Bha 'n raineach a' ruadhadh,
'S bha 'n luachair gun bharrach.

Mu mhac Iain, mhic Sheumais,
Duine treubhach, smearail.

Gruaidh ruiteach na féile
Mar éibhil 'g a garadh.

Cha 'n eagal leam dìth dhuit,
Ach sìoban ga d' dhalladh.

Anns an eilein ìosal,
Eadar Niall a's Ailein.

Anns an eilein fhuaraidh,
Gun luachair gun bharrach.

Na 'm biodh agam curach,
Gu 'n cuirinn air chuan i.

A's gille math turuis
'Bhiodh furachail uaithe.

Feuch am faighinn naidheachd
Air mac an duin' uasail.

Na 'm faighinn beachd sgeul'
Air ògh' Sheumais a' chruadail.

'S càirdeach do rìgh Leòdhais,
Mo leoghann glan, uasal.

Mac-Leòid anns na Hearadh,
'G e caraid e 's fuar e.

'S càirdeach tha mo leanabh,
'Shìol Ailein Mhic-Ruairidh.

'S a mhic Iain, mhic Sheumais,
Tha do sgeul air m' aire.

88. ÒRAN DO MHAC IAIN MHIC SHEUMAIS (1601)

Mhic Iain ! a laoigh mo chéile,
Hì rì rì rì o hù.

Gur moch a chuala tu 'n éibhe,
Hò ròho hì rì,
Chall éilibhò hì o roho,
Rò ho i o chall o hao rì ù.

Gur moch a chuala tu 'n éibhe,
Hì rì rì rì o hù.

Fhreagair thu 'n tràigh 's an là glasadh,
Bhuail thu maoim air sìol a chapuill,
Sìol na làradh, blàire, bacaich.

Nic Iain Fhinn

89. AN SPAIDEARACHD BHARRACH (c. 1610)

A BHAN-UIBHISTEACH:

Fa liù o ho
 A Dhia ! 's gaolach
 O hao ri ho ho
 Rì ho ho, ri ho ho,
 Fal iù o ho.

A Dhia ! 's gaolach
 O hi a hao

lium an gille
 O hao ri ho ho,
 Ri ho ho, ri ho ho,
 Fal iù o ho.

lium an gille,
 O hi a hao,

Dha 'm bheil deirge,
 O hao ri ho ho, etc.

's gile 's duinnead,
 O hi a hao,

Dalta nam bàrd,
 Ogha an fhir o 'n
 Bheireadh air an
 Chan ann le bùrn
 Le fion dathte
 Le fion théidear

thùs nam filidh,
 Chaistéal Thioram thu,
 togsaid sìleadh,
 gorm na linne,
 's e air mire,
 cian 'ga shireadh.

A' BHANA-BHARRACH:

Ach eudail mhór
 C' àit an d' fhàg thu
 No Niall Glùndubh
 Gill' Eóghanain
 Chrathadh am flùr

's a Dhia fheartaich !
 Ruairidh an Tartair,
 no Niall Frasach,
 mór an gaisgeach ?
 fo na martaibh,

Dhòirteadh am fìon	fo na h-eachaibh,
Air ghaol bùrn nan	lòn a sheachnadh,
Bheireadh cruithneachd	dhaibh 'san fhraasach,
Chuireadh strìan an	airgid ghlaist riu.
Chuireadh cruidean	òir fo 'n casan !

A BHAN-UIBHISTEACH:

A bhradag dhubh bheag	a bhrìst na glasan,
Fàgaidh mi ort	an dubh-chapull,
Cha d' fhuaradh riamh	staoileadh agaibh,
Ach Barraigh dhubh bheag	chrìon-dubh, chlachach,
Oighreachd fhuair sibh	bhuainn an asgaidh,
Nuair a chunnaic	Dia 'nur n-airc sibh,
Eilean fiadhaich	am bi na fachaich,
E gun rùm 's gun	fheur 's gun fhasgadh,
'S e air fleòdradh	leis na sgaitibh !

90. CHA TÈID MÒR A BHARRAIGH BHRÒNAICH (ante 1653)

NIC A' MHANAICH:

Cha téid Mòr a Bharraigh bhrònaich,

Hó ró, hugaibh ì,
Hùgaibh ise, 'n dùgaibh éileadh,
Hó ró, hugaibh ì.

Cha téid Catrìona 'ga deòin ann,

Hó ró, etc.

No Anna bheag, ma 's i as òige,
Far am bi na sgait air fleòdradh
Dallagan is sùilean rògach,
Giomaich 'gan tarruing a frògaibh,
Strùbain 'gan cladhach le 'm meòirean,
Muirsguin 'gan tarruing a lònnaibh –

NIC IAIN FHINN:

'S fhada mi 'm chadal 's mi dòltram,
 Tha lionn-dubh mo chinn air dòrtadh,
 'G éisdeachd ri bleideig an Ròdha !
 C' uim' nach do dh' fhoighneachd thu 'm bu bheò mi ?
 'S gheibheadh tu comain do chòmhradh,
 Nam fòghnadh éisginn mo bheòil dhut !
 A chailin dubh 's a dhubh-bhrògach,
 Cheangladh t' athair leis na ròpan,
 Struth as a smuig feadh nan lònaiqbh !
 Ogha rag-mheàrlaich an eòrna,
 Nighean cailleach dhubh an fhòtais,
 Bradag nan obag 's nan òisneag
 Bheireadh air na luingeis seòladh
 Air aodann na Beinn' Móir' Di-Dòmhnach,
 A chuireadh na cuirp mharbh an còmhlan,
 Cha b' e mo thìr an tìr bhrònach -
 Tìr a' chorca, tìr an eòrna,
 Tìr uisge-bheatha agus bheòire,
 Tìr ithinnich is òil i;
 Dh' fhàsadh peasair, dh' fhàsadh pònair,
 Dh' fhàsadh biolair air a lòintean,
 Fàsaidh lìon air chnocain chòmhnard.
 Gheobhadh Éireannaich an leòr innt',
 Nam fòghnadh muc, ìm, is feòil dhaibh,
 Sitheann mu seach agus ròsda,
 'S mairtfheoil 'ga bhruich, muc 'ga stòbhadh,
 Tubhailtean geal' air na bòrdaibh,
 'S gille frithealadh an còmhnaidh !
 C' à na shuidh i ann an seòmbar,
 Ged bhiodh an sìoda 'ga còmhdach,
 'S ged a bhiodh i air a h-òradh
 O mhullach a cinn gus a brògan,
 Nighean Tighearna no Tòisich,
 Nach b' airidh Gill' Eóghanain Òg oirr' ?
 'S ann a bha e shliochd nam fear móra,
 Thogadh creach 's a thilleadh tòrachd !

O hùg o, chailleach chrùbach, o hùg o, lùgach, iollagach !
 O hùg o, bhradach, bhriagach, o hùg o, bhialach, ionasdach !
 O hùg o, bhreugach, sgeulach, o hùg o, éisgeach, inisgeil !

O hùg o, tha do theanga o hùg o, leathan, còmhnaidh,
 tha trì roinn oirr' 's faobhar leòit' oirr',
 chaidh i ri cloich air a bhòn-dé !

O hùg o,..... mi thighinn dhachaigh
 b' fheàrr dhomh bhi muigh 'na mo bhreacan
 [na] 'g éisdeachd ris na chluinn mi ana-cainnt.
 sìor-chur sìos, na air Niall a' Chaisteil.
 cha b' e do dhìol dh' aodach leap' e -
 cluasagan òir deirg a lasradh,
 's na h-eich chruidheach shrianach ghlasach,
 chàireadh e flùr air an dealt dhaibh !

O hùg o, bu tu a' bhradag dh' fheann na caoirich,
 dh' itheadh tu na caoirich mhaola,
 's tu 'gan draghadh as na fraochaibh !
 shluigeadh tu na muic le gaoiseid,
 shluigeadh tu na searraich mhaola,
 chrochadh t' athair leis na taodan,
 dh' fhalbh do mhàthair air an t-sluagh aotrom !

O hùg o, gun déid an clò o hùg o, gun ìm gun fheòil !

'S truagh nach fhaighinn sìod air m' òrdan,
 Slaodadh ris an Tùr air ròpa,
 Taod mu d' chlaban, calp mu d' dhòrn dheth,
 Dà shac dheug gu teine mòna,
 Bradag bhith 'na miosg 'ga ròsladh,
 'S na coin mhòr bhith 'gad shròiceadh,
 'S na mucan ag ithe t-fheòla !

91. LÀ DHOMH 'S MI 'M BEINN A' CHEATHAICH (c. 1650)

Fair all al ò, ro hi bhi ò,
 Hoireann is ò, ho rò bhi o ho
 Hi rì ho ro ho bha, o haodh ò.

Là dhomh 's mi 'm Beinn a' Cheathaich, a
 Fair allal ò, etc.

Ruagadh nan caorach 's 'gam faighinn, a
 Cha b' e caigeann an dà pheathar, a
 No caigeann bheag cheann an rathaid, a
 'S ann agam fhìn a bha an sealladh, a
 Faicinn do bhàta dol seachad, a
 Toirt a cinn do na chuan fharsuinn, a
 Mach bho dhùthaich Mhic Nill Bharraigh, a
 Mach bho Chìosamul an aighir, a
 Far am faighte chuir r' a gabhail,
 Ol fion a dh' oidhche gu latha,
 Caithream nam fear ag òl leanna,
 Sìoda donn 'ga chur air mnathan; a
 Gura mise th' air mo sgaradh, a
 Ma chaidh birlinn Chlann Nill seachad, a
 Bhrìst i an càbhla 's dh' fhàg i 'n t-acaire,
 Bhrìst i am ball a b' fheàrr a bh' aice;
 B' aithne dhomh fhìn fir 'ga fastadh, a
 Gill' Eóghanain Mór an gaisgeach, a
 Niall Gruamach mac Ruairidh an Tartair,
 Ruairidh Òg an t-oighre maiseach, a
 Ruairidh Bàn b' e 'n làmh rì tapadh e
 Is Murchadh Ruadh bho cheann a' chlachain,
 Is Murchadh Beag, céile nigh'n Lachlainn,
 Dà mhac Iain Mhic a' Phearsain, a,
 'S math thig gunna 's sgiath 'n ur glacaibh
 Le boineid dhùbhghorm air chùl bachlach, a.

Atharraich

Nuair bha mi 'nam nighinn fo lighe mo ghruaige,
 Cha sìnninn mo thaobh geal ri taobh balaich shuaraich,
 B' annsa leam agam fear geal nach biodh gruaim air,
 Fear buidhe donn àlainn gun àrdan gun uabhar,
 Dhìreadh am munadh 's a ghunna ri ghualainn,
 Sealgair daimh chabraich 'san lag 'm bi 'n luachair
 Sealgair a' choilich 's na h-eilide ruaidhe,
 Na circeige duinne bheireadh gur as an fhuairniod,
 Nach gabhadh a mhasladh a deachamh thoirt uaithe.

Fair all al ò ro hi bhi ò.
 Hoireann is ò ho rò bhi o ho
 Hi rì ho ro ho bha o haodh o.

Nighean Mhurchaidh an Clàrsair

92. ALASDAIR MAC CHOLLA (1645)

'S e Alasdair lurach, mo roghainn 's mo rùn,
 Mo rùn 's mo roghainn, mo roghainn 's mo rùn,
 'S e Alasdair lurach, mo roghainn 's mo rùn
 Mo rùn 's mo roghainn, 's e ceanail mo rùn.

Ho ro stiomag 'us bréideag,
 Bristear le gealladh 'n uair philleas tu nall;
 Ho ro bréideag 'us stiomag,
 Dannsa ri faileas 'n uair philleas tu nall.

'S e Alasdair loinneil, mo roghainn 's mo rùn,
 Ruidhlinn gu sugaint le gille mo rùn
 'S e Alasdair loinneil, mo roghainn 's mo rùn,
 'S e leònach na bodaich air Machair nan Gall.

Ho ro saodach nam bodach,
 Saodach nam bodach air Machair nan Gall;
 Ho ro saodach nan Gallach,
 Saodach nam bodach air Machair nan Gall.

Raonaid Nighean Alasdair Mhic Raghnaill

93. SGOTH A' TIGHINN BHO HEISGEIR (c. 1750)

O hí u í ho u bho;
 Gu 'n tog sinn fonn 's gu 'n gabh sinn iorram;
 'S grinn an loinn tha air an sgoth,
 An diugh a' tighinn bho Heisgeir;
 O hi u i ho u bho.

Cha liunn tana an tobar fuar
 Am bainne cìch a fhuair mo ghilleam;
 Cha 'n "abhsadh a' chromain luchd"
 Bu dualchas dhoibh a seòladh.

An ceann na sreath tha Dòmhnall Donn,
 Mo cheud-ghin 's e gràdh nan gilleam;
 Mo ghaol air a' charra-gruaig,
 Is airidh e air maighdean.

Taobh an fhuaraidh Aonghus Ruadh,
 Le geadadh dualach bachlach clannach;
 'S aoibhneach e air bac bhòrd sàil,
 Is araidh e air maighdean.

Mu gualainn toisich srann na luinn
 A' cumail pong ri seòl na luinneig;
 Iolach àrd aig Alasdair Bàn',
 Is airidh e air maighdean.

Tha Iain Òg an tacsachroinn,
 An dùil ri tìr a ruighinn tioram;
 Samh na bairlinn air a ghruag,
 Is araidh e air maighdean.

So, 'illeam beaga, togaibh fonn;
 Is iomadh tonn a reub a darach,
 'S an ath sgrìob a chuireas i,
 Bi Carrachag air ar fuaradh.

GUN URRAINN

94. CUMHA MHIC AN TÒISICH (?1526)

Gura mis' a' bhean mhulaid,
 A' giùlan na curraic,
 O 'n a chuala gach duine
 Gur ann 'na mhullach bha 'm fàbhar.

Gura mis' atà tùrsach
 O 'n a chuireadh san ùir thu;
 Thoir mo shoraidh le dùrachd
 Gu tùr nan clach àrda.

Gura mis' atà cianail
 O thoiseach na bliadhna;
 Dé cha ghabhainn ga m' iarraidh
 Mac iarla no stàta.

Tha an latha geal grianach,
 Tha ceòl air na liana,
 Tha féile, tha fìon ann,–
 Cha tog sin dhìomsa mo phràmhan.

Dé cha téid mi gu banais,
 Chaoidh gu féill no gu faidhir,
 'S ann toiseach an earraich
 Fhuair mi 'n t-saighead a chràidh mi.

Mo rùn air mo leannan,
 Lùb ùr a' chùil chlannaich,
 Gum bu chùbhraidh na 'n caineal
 Leam anail do bhràghad.

Mo ghràdh air mo chùirteir,
 Geug àlainn na dùthcha,
 Mar ghàrradh nan ùbhlan
 Do shùgradh 's do mhànan.

Is tu dhannsadh gu còmhnhard
 Dar sheinneadh ceòl dut,
 'S cha lùbadh tu 'm feòirnean
 Fo shròin do bhròig àrda.

Bu tu sealgair an fhéidhe,
 A' bhrìc air an leuma,
 A' chabhair air gheuga,
 Gun reubte 'n t-eun bàn leat.

M' eudail thu 's m' aighear
 Am éirigh 's am laighe,
 Aig féill agus faidhir,
 Do shaighead a chràidh mi.

Is mise bha cureideach,
 Mireagach mearshuileach,
 Is mise ta muladach
 Is 'm Màidh fo 'n fhàileig.

Am fìon bha gu d' bhanais
 'S ann chaidh e gu t' fhalair;
 Rìgh, gur mis' a bha galach
 An àm nan galan a thràghadh.

Gur mis a' bhean dheurach
 Gach madainn 's mi 'g éirigh,
 A' giùlan na bréide
 Gach féill agus Sàbaid.

'S i maighdean ro-dhubhach
 Nach aithnichear tuilleadh mi
 O 'n taca seo 'n uiridh
 O 'n chuireadh orm fàinne.

Gura mise tha tùrsach,
 Is tric ligh air mo shùilean,
 Ag ionndrainn an fhiùrain,
 Marcaich ùr nan steud àlainn.

Bha mi 'm mhùrnaich 's am bhréidich,
 Bha mi 'm chùrnaich 's am chéilich;
 Och nan och, mar a dh' éirich
 Dhomh féin san aon latha !

Bha mi 'm stiomaich 's am bhréidich,
 Bha mi 'm bhantraich bhoichd dheuraich,
 Lot nan lot ga mo léireadh,
 'S cha dèan céirein domh stàtha.

Mo ghaol air mo leannan,
 Mo ghaol ort ri m' mhaireann,
 Mo ghaol ort air thalamh
 'S ann am flathas an Ardrigh.

Mo ghaol thu 's mo rùn thu,
 Mo ghaol 's mo chruit chiùil thu,
 Mo ghaol thu 's mo dhùrachd,
 'S mo dhùil dhuit am Pàrras.

Eóghain òig, leagadh tu,
 Eóghain òig, leagadh tu,
 Eóghain òig, leagadh tu
 Am bealach a' ghàrraidh.

Och nan och, leagadh tu,
 Och nan och, thogadh tu,
 Och nan och, leagadh tu,
 Am bealach a' ghàrraidh.

Leag an t-each ceannfhionn thu,
 Thog an t-each ceannfhionn thu,
 Leag an t-each ceannfhionn thu
 An ionad a' ghàrraidh.

Och nach robh mis an sin,
 Och nach robh mis an sin,
 Och nach robh mis an sin,
 'S bheirinn air làimh ort.

Mharcaich an eich leumraich dhuibh,
Leumraich dhuibh, leumraich dhuibh,
Mharcaich an eich leumraich dhuibh,
Reub an t-each bàn thu.

Eóghain òig, leagadh tu,
Eóghain òig, leagadh tu,
Eóghain òig, leagadh tu
Am bealach a' ghàrraidh.

95. B' FHEÀRR LEAM GUN SGRÌBHTEADH DHUIT FEARANN
(ante 1540)

Hi, ha, ho, mo leanabh
B' fheàrr leam gun sgrìbhteadh dhuit fearann.

Hi, ha, ho, mo leanabh,
Ogha Eòghain 's iar-ogh' Ailean.

Hi, ha, ho, mo leanabh,
'S iar-ogh' Dhòmhnuill Duibh bho 'n darach.

Hi, ha, ho, mo leanabh
B' fheàrr gun sgrìbhteadh cinnteach d' fhearann

Hi, ha, ho, mo leanabh
Ceann-Lochiall 'us Druim-na-saille.

Hi, ha, ho, mo leanabh
'S Coire-bheag ri taobh na mara.

Hi, ha, ho, mo leanabh
Acha-da-leagha 'san Anait.

Hi, ha, ho mo leanabh,
'S a Mhaigh mhór 's an t-Sròn 'san t-Earrachd

Hi, ha, ho, mo leanabh
'Muic 'us Caoinnich, Craoibh 'us Caillich.

Hi, ha, ho, mo leanabh
'S Murlagan dubh grannda, greannach.

Hi, ha, ho, mo leanabh
'S bòidheach d' aodann 's caoin leam d' anail.

Hi, ha, ho, mo leanabh-
Socrach ciùin a rùin do chadal.

96. SEATHAN MAC RÌGH ÈIREANN (c. 1550)

'S mairg a chual' e nach do dh' innis e,
 Hù rù na hur i bhi ò
 'S mairg a chual' e nach do dh' innis e,
 Na bhi hao bhò hao bhi ò an
 Gu robh mo leannan-sa am Minginis;
 Nam bitheadh, a ghaoil, 's fhad o thilleadh tu:
 Chuirinn long mhór g' a shireadh ann,
 Sgioba chliùiteach ùr-gheal innicheil,
 Gum bitheadh fir òg agus gilleann ann,
 Thadhladh e 'n seo dar a thilleadh e,
 Bheirinn fhéin là féill a' mire ris,
 Shuidhinn air cnoc 's dhèanainn miodal riut,
 Chaisinn do cheann mar bu mhinig liom,
 Laighinn ad ghlaic 's chumainn an sileadh uat,
 Chuirinn léine chaol an gilead dhut
 Fhad 's a mhaireadh bùrn san linnidh dhomh,
 'S thiormaichinn air geug san fhireach i.

Ach tha Seathan an nochd 'na mharbhan,
 Sgeul as bochd le fearaibh Albann,
 Sgeul as goirt le luchd a leanmhainn,
 Sgeul as moit le luchd a sheilge,
 Le mac Caillich nan Trì Deilgne.

A Sheathain chridhe nan sùl socrach,
 Gur minig a dhearg thu na cnocan:
 Cha b' ann le fuil chruidh no chapall,
 No fuil féidh a théid 'na astar,
 No fuil earb an cearb a' gharta,
 Ach fuil do nàmh an rùn do thachdadh.

Dar a shaoil mi thu san tòireachd
 'S ann a bha thu marbh san chòmhdhail,
 'S tu air ghuailibh nam fear òga,
 'S tu air thuar do chur san tòrradh.

Dar a shaoil mi thu sa Ghaillinn
 'S ann a bha thu marbh gun anail,
 'S tu air ghuailibh nam fear bearraidh,
 'S tu cho fuar ri sneachd nam beannaibh.

Mo ghaol do làmh dheas ge fuar i,
 Bu tric agam, b' ainneamh uam i,
 Bu tric a fhuair mi le duais i,
 'S cha b' ann le dad a bha suarach,
 Cha b' ann le bata no le cuaille,
 Cha b' ann le bladadh no le buaireadh,
 Ach le sròl uaine 's sìoda buaidheach,
 Leis na preasanan a b' uaisle.

A Sheathain duinn, a laoigh mo chéille,
 'S fhada, ghaoil, a dh' fhalbhainn fhéin leat,
 Rachainn leat troimh choill nan geugan
 Far am bi na h-eòin a' séisdreich,
 Rachainn leat thar cuan na h-Éireann
 Far am bi muir àrd ag éirigh,
 Rachainn leat thar cuan na Gréige
 Far am bi na Duibhnich reubal.

Mis' is Seathan a' siubhal sléibhe,
 Mise lag is Seathan treubhach,
 Nach giùlanainn ach beag éididh,
 Còta ruadh mu leth mo shléisne,
 Bréid dhe 'n anart caola glégheal,
 Is mi falbh le Seathan m' eudail.

A Sheathain, a Sheathain gun anam,
 Dhearbhadh mhic mo rìgh a Tìr Chonaill,
 Is tric a laigh mi fo t' earradh;
 Ma laigh, cha b' ann aig a' bhaile,
 Ach lagan uain an cluain a' bharraich
 Fo leth-taobh nan gormbheann corrach,
 Gaoth nam beann a' taomadh tharainn,
 Gaoth nan gleann le gaoir a' gabhail
 Tula-làn dhe 'n nodhas earraich.

'S iomadh gleann is meall a shiubhail sinn,
 Bha mi 'n Ìle, bha mi 'n Uibhist leat,
 Bha mi 'n Sléite nam ban buidhe leat,
 Bha mi 'n Ì nan cailleacha dubha leat,
 Bha mi 'n tìr nan eun 's nan uighean leat,
 Bha mi 'n Éirinn, bha mi 'n Liutha leat.
 Thaisteil mi Bhrathann 's a' Bhruthann leat,
 Thaisteil mi Mhórthir 's a' Mhuthairn leat,
 Thaisteil mi Bhòinn, thaisteil mi Mhumha leat,
 Dh' éisd mi Aifreann sa Chill Chumha leat,
 Dh' éisd mi ceòl na sìdh-bhrugha leat,
 Dh' òl mi deoch a tobar an t-siubhail leat,
 Bha mi a' bhòn-uiridh 's an uiridh leat,
 Bha mi o rubha gu rubha leat,
 Bha mi 'n Cill Donnain a' ghiuthais leat,
 Bha mi trì bliadhna air a' bhruthach leat.
 Chaithris mi là am bàrr na cranna leat,
 Chaithris mi tràth san tiùrr fheamad leat,
 Chaithris mi oidhche air sgeir mhara leat,
 Chaithris, a ghaoil, is leam cha b' aithreach e,
 Mi an cirb do bhreacain bhallaich,
 Siaban nan tonn sìor dhol tharainn,
 Uisge fìorghlan fuarghan fallain e.

Mo ghaol Seathan nan sùl socrach,
 Laighinn leat air leabaidh dhochairt,
 Leaba fhraoich 's mo thaobh air chloichibh;
 B' annsa Seathan an cuaich shìomain
 Na mac rìgh air leabaidh lìona;
 B' annsa Seathan air cùl gàrraidh
 Na mac rìgh le sìod air clàraidh,
 Ged bhiodh aige leaba shocrach
 An déidh na saoir a bhith 'ga locradh,
 An déidh na draoidh a bhith 'ga cosnadh;

B' annsa Seathan sa choill bharraich
 Na bhith sa Mhaigh Mhild le h-Airril,
 Ged bhiodh sròl is sìod fo chasaibh,
 Cluasagan òr-dhearg air lasadh.

Nam faicte Seathan ag éirigh
 Ri sgàth cruic air madainn chéitein,
 Èile geàrr mu leth a shléisne,
 Criosan caol dubh air a léinidh,
 Gaol a mhuime, gràdh a chéil e,
 Seachd seallaidh a mhàthar fhéin e,
 Leannan falaich dhomh féin e.

A Sheathain duinn, a shaoidh na mìne,
 Is beag an t-àit an cuirinn fhìn thu,
 Chuirinn am bàrr mullaich mo chinn thu,
 Chuirinn an tàrr mo dhà chìch thu,
 Eadar Brìghde 's a bréid mìn thu,
 Eadar maighdean òg 's a stiòm thu,
 Eadar òigh ghil 's a brat sìod thu,
 Eadar mì fhìn 's mo léine lìn thu.

Ach tha Seathan san t-seòmar uaigneach,
 Gun òl cupa, gun òl cuaiche,
 Gun òl fìon á pìosan uaibhreach,
 Gun òl beòir le eòil 's le uaislean,
 Gun òl ceòl, gun phòg bean buairidh,
 Gun cheòl cruite, gun cheòl cluaise,
 Ceanglaichean teann air a ghualainn,
 Ceanglaichean dul air na fuaintean.

Piuthar a dh' Aodh 's a Bhrian Buidhe mi,
 Bana-charaid do Fhionn mac Cumhaill mi,
 Céile Sheathan donn an t-siubhail mi,
 Ach 's mairg thuirt riumsa gum bu bhean shubhach mi,
 Bean bhoichd chianail thiamhaidh dhubhach mi,
 Loma-làn leòin is bròin is mulaid mi.

Chuir m' athair mi an àite carraideach
 An oidhche sin a rinn e banais dhomh,
 Och a rìgh nach b' i m' fhalaire,
 Nach do rinneadh an t-anart a ghearradh dhomh,
 Nach do rinneadh an giuthas a ghlanadh dhomh,
 Nach do chuireadh dul a cheangal orm,

Nach do chuireadh san ùir am falach mi,
 Eagal a bhi beò air thalamh dhomh.
 Is lionmhor bòrd an toirear bearradh dhomh,
 Nach cagainn mo dheud dhomh 'n t-aran ann,
 Nach mò bhios mo spàin a' tarraing ann,
 Nach mò bhios mo sgian a' gearradh ann,
 Nach mò bhios mo mhiann a' tathaich ann.

Nam faighte Seathan ri fhuasgladh,
 Gheobhte 'n t-éirig mar an luachair,
 Gheobhte 'n t-airgead mar an luatha,
 Gheobhte an t-òr air oir nan cluaintean,
 Gheobhte 'm fion mar uisg an fhuarain,
 Gheobhte bheòir mar chaochan fuarghlas.
 Cha bhiodh meann an creig no 'n cruadhlaigh,
 Cha bhiodh mìseag ann an cluanaig,
 Cha bhiodh cìob an carr no 'n cruachan,
 Cha bhiodh crodh air magh no buaile,
 Cha bhiodh orc no arc air cluana;
 Thigeadh na bradain as na cuantan,
 Thigeadh na bric as na bruachan,
 Thigeadh na gearrain as an luachair;
 Cha bhiodh bó dhubh no bó ghuailfhionn
 An àrd no 'n ìseal na buaile,
 An iomall baile no 'm buabhall,
 Nach cuirinn, a ghràidh, gu t' fhuasgladh,
 Gu ìre mo bhreacain uaine,
 Ged bheireadh siod an aona bhó uamsa,
 'S cha b' e aona bhó dhubh mo bhuaile,
 Ach na treudan dhe 'n chrodh ghuailfhionn,
 Dhe 'n chrodh chinnfhionn dhruimfhionn chluasdhearg.

Ach tha Seathan a nochd sa bhail' uachdrach,
 Cha dèan òr no deòir a bhuannachd,
 Cha toir àr no sàr o 'n luain e,
 Cha toir stairn no spàirn o 'n t-suain e;
 'S tha mo chridhe briste bruailleach,
 Tha mo shilteach ruith 'na fhuaran,
 Neo-shocrach a chaidleas mi air clusaig,

'S tu gun duine sam bith le 'n truagh thu
Ach mise 'nam ruith thuige 's uaidhe.

A Sheathain chridhe ! a Sheathain chridhe !
Cha toirinn do lagh no rìgh thu,
Cha toirinn do 'n Mhoire mhìn thu,
Cha toirinn do 'n Chrò Naoimh thu,
Cha toirinn do dh' Iosda Crìosd thu,
Cha toireadh, eagal 's nach faighinn fhìn thu.

A Sheathain, mo ghile-gréine,
Och ! dha m' aindeoin ghlac an t-eug thu,
'S dh' fhàg siod mise dubhach deurach,
'S iargain ghointeach orm ad dhéidh-sa;
'S masa fìor na their na cléirich
Gu bheil Ifrinn 's gu bheil Nèamh ann,
Mo chuid-sa Nèamh, di-beath an éig e,
Air son oidhche mar ris an eudail,
Mar ri Seathan donn mo chéile.

97. LÀ MILLE-GÀRAIDH (c. 1570)

E hò-ro-ho-ro-ho!

E hò-ro-ho-ro-ho!

'N am chuimhne leibh ?

O-hì-ri-rì-hì-rì o ro ho

Là na h-Àirde ?

Na 'n là eile - O hì-ri-rì

Mille-Gàraidh - E-ho

Bha fir a'n sin

Air dhroch càradh

An druim fòdh',

'S am buinn bhàn ris

'N am chuimhne leibh

Là Allt-Èirinn ?

Na 'n là eile

Uamh-deirge ?

Chunnacas bàt'

'Falbh gu siùbhlach

'S i 'dol timchioll

Rubha h-Ùnais,

As a sin gu

Rùbh'-an-Dùnain.

B' e mo leannan

'Bha 'ga stiùireadh:

Beul 'ga éughach,

Làmh 'ga h-iomradh.

'S ioma bean bhoichd
'Bha gu cràiteach

'S i gun mhac ann,
'S i gun bhràthair.

Gun duin' ann a
Ghabhadh bàigh ri',

'S mo mhallachd sin
Aig Clann Ràghnuill.
E-hò-ro-ho-ro-ho.

98. AN IORRAM DHARAICH (? 1585)

M' eudail-sa dh' fhearaibh na gréine,
 Chan fhaca mi 'n diugh no 'n dé thu.
 Chan fhaca mise fear t' eugais,
 Ach an tig thu, Eòin mhic Sheumais,
 'Nad aois òig mus do bhuin eug riut.
 Bu tu ogha Ruairidh na féile,
 'S iarogha Thorcaill nan geurlann,
 Sliochd na mnà a choisinn ceutadh;
 Dh' fhàg thu m' aigne tùrsach deurach.
 'S na hada hia hì 's na hì hó hua.

M' eudail a dh' fhearaibh nan àlach,
 'N uair a dheigheadh tu gu d' bhàta
 Siod an obair nach biodh ceàrr dhut,
 Bhiodh do ghilleann anns an àlach,
 Bhiodh tu fhéin air stiùir do bhàta,
 Fear curantach treubhach làidir.
 'S na hada hia hì, &c.

M' eudail is m' euraig is m' eallach
 Iain Og mac Sheumais nam meallshul,
 Sùil ghorm 'nad aodainn 's cha b' fhanaid,
 Sheòl thu 'n dé troimh chuan na Hearadh,
 'S mo dhùrachd fhéin dhut ruighinn fallain.

M' eudail a dh' fhearaibh na beinne,
 'N uair a dheigheadh tu dha na beannaibh
 'S e do losan nach biodh falamh,
 Gum b' ann le gunna bheòil thana
 No le iubhar nam meallan,
 Briseadh cnàimh 's gach àit ri 'm beanadh,
 Sior chur fàilt air fear nan langan.

M' eudail-sa 'dh' fhearaibh na dìle,
 Chunna mi 'dol seachad sìos thu;
 Gu meal thu gruagach na stioma,
 Nighean tighearn Ghleanna Sìthe,

'Gan robh 'n cinneadh leathann lionmhor,
Céis ghlan bho leitir an fhìon thu.
Gheibh thu buaile de 'n chrodh chìardhubh.

M' eudail-sa 'dh' fhearaibh na seòltachd,
'N uair a shìneadh tu ri seòladh
Ghlacadh i eadar na sgòide,
Cneadan a cléithe bu cheòl dhut,
Stiùir 'na déidh 's fear treubhach eòlach
'Ga stiùireadh san iùl bu chòir dhi.

M' eudail is m' euraig is m' ulaidh
Luchd nan leadan dubh is donna
Dhèanadh an fhairge a phronnadh,
Dhèanadh an darach a sgoladh,
'S a dh' òladh fìon dearg 'na thonnann,
Thogadh creach bhàrr mòinteach Thomman.

M' eudail is m' euraig is m' eallach,
'N uair a dheigheadh tu chum na mara
'S e do làmh nach faight' air lapadh
Ged nach robh thu féin ach leanabh;
Crann tarraig 'ga snìomh á darach
'S i tilgeadh lann bharr cheann gach taraig;

Cha robh do luingeas air crìonadh,
'S cha robh do sheòladh gu ìosal.

M' eudail is m' euraig is m' ulaidh,
'S ann ort a dh' fhàs a' mhaise mhullaich,
Gruag leadanach sheudach dhuilleach
Air a cìreadh 's air a cumadh;
'S nam bu bhàrd mi dhèanainn iorram,
'S nam bu shaor mi dhèanainn luingeas,
Is 'nad dhéidh-sa 's éiginn fuireach.

99. CRAOBH NAN UBHAL (c. 1590)

Chraobh nan ubhal
 Gheug nan abhal,
 Chraobh nan ubhal,
 Abhal ubhlan.

'N uair a théid thu 'n choill g' a rùsgadh,
 Aithnich féin a' chraobh as lioms' ann,
 Chraobh as buige 's as mìls' ùbhlan,
 A' chraobh gheugach pheurach ùbhlach,
 Bun a' fàs 's a bàrr a' lùbadh.

Tha craobh agam sa Chreig Uaine,
 Craobh eile 'n ursainn a' ghàraidh;
 Nam biodh Mac Aoidh anns an làthair,
 No Niall anbharrach a bhràthair,
 Cha bhiodh mo thochra-sa gun phàigheadh,
 Le crodh-laoigh 's le aighean-dàire,
 Le caoirich dhubha agus bhàna,
 Le gearrain gu dèanamh àitich.

'S e Mac Aoidh an duine treubhach,
 Nì e sìoda de 'n chlòimh Chéitein,
 Nì e sròl de 'n fhraoch nam b' fheudar,
 Nì e fìon de dh' uisg an t-sléibhe.

'S e Mac Aoidh an duine buadhmhor,
 Nì e an cruadhchadh gun chonnadh,
 'S ann l' a dhùirn a nì e 'phronnadh.

'S e Mac Aoidh a' chòtain eangaich
 Nach iarradh an t-earradh troma,
 Marcaiche nan eachaibh donna,
 Chuireadh cruidhean òir fo 'm bonnaibh,
 Coisiche nan talamh tolla.

Mo ghaol, mo ghràdh an t-òg euchdail,
 Rachainn leat troimh choille gheugaich,

Chumainn is dh' fhuaighlinn do léine
 Le snàthaid chaoil 's le snàth glégheal;
 Nighinn a rithist 'na dhéidh sin
 Air lic shleamhainn abhainn ghléghlain;
 Thiormaichinn air bhàrr nan geug i,
 Chuirinn paisgt an làimh do phéid i.

Chraobh nan ubhal, gun robh Dia leat,
 Gun robh gile, gun robh grian leat,
 Gun robh gaoth an ear 's an iar leat,
 Gun robh gach nì a thàinig riamh leat,
 Gun robh gach mathas agus miann leat,
 Gun robh gach brioghais agus brian leat,
 Gun robh Somhairle mór 's a chliar leat,
 Gun robh gach neach mar tha mi fhìn leat.

Mo ghaol, mo ghràdh an t-òg beadrach,
 Dhannsadh lùthmhor sunndach aigheach;
 Am bàrr nam beann bhiomaid aighreach,
 Am bràigh nan gleann bhiomaid.....
 Am bun nam beann bhiomaid.....
 Air bhàrr nan tonn bhiomaid.....

100. A' GHRIADACH DHONN (c. 1600)

MAR A SHEINN A' BHAN-MHUILEACH:

B' fheàrr gun cluinninn sud am màireach, hu hi ho ro
 Creach Ghlinnlaoich is Ghlinnemhàillidh, hu hi ho ro
 Ghlinne Cingidh nan clacha geala, hu hi ho ro
 Ghlinne Pheathann nan craobh àrda, hu hi ho ro
 Gun Chamshronach bhith ri ràdhainn, hu hi ho ro
 Sin nuair gheibhinn an cadal sàmhach, hu hi ho ro
 Gus an éireadh grian am màireach, hu hi ho ro
 Gun duine dhiubh a bhith 'n làthair, hu hi ho ro
 An eilean mara mu 'n iadh an sàile, hu hi ho ro

Gheibhte sud an Dochanasaidh, hu hi ho ro
 Bodaich bheaga ghearra lachdann, hu hi ho ro
 Ghoideadh an fheòil san latha fhrasach, hu hi ho ro
 'S bheireadh i san anmoch dhachaidh, hu hi ho ro
 Osain laicionn 's cuairean chraicionn, hu hi ho ro
 Féileadh àrd is dronnag bratach, hu hi ho ro.

FHREAGAIR A' BHEAN A LOCHABAIR:

Gheibhte sud an Dochanasaidh, ì u o
 Còmhlan ùr de ghillea gasda, ì u o
 Stiùireadh an long san latha fhrasach, ì u o
 'S nach leigeadh balgam bric a steach oirr', ì u o
 Ged a thilgteadh aisd' an calcadh, ì u o

Cuime an duirt an trusdair siubhal, ì u o
 Nach fhaighte sud 'na do bhuidheann, ì u o
 Fear osain gheàrr is còta cumhann, ì u o
 Bonaid bheòil bhig air chùil buidhe, ì u o

Cuime an duirt an trusdair caillich, ì u o
 Gun robh an t-Ailein Donn gun chaisbheairt, ì u o
 B' uaibhreach dhà sud, 's lìonmhor aig iad, ì u o
 Stocaidh de 'n t-sròl, ì u o
 Bròg dhubh bhaltdubh, ì u o

Bròg dhubh mhìndubh, chiardubh, chiartaidh, ì u o
 Bho leathar nam bó thig a Sasunn, ì u o

Nuair a shuidh mi 'n ceann na cléithe, ì u o
 Chuir mi dithis ris an àireamh, ì u o
 Leanamh beag an ceann a ràithe, ì u o
 S beag nach tug mi 'm bàs d' a mhàthair, ì u o
 'S cha b' éirig sud air mo thàmailt, ì u o
 'N na fhuair mi, ì o u
 Sgrios mo chàirdean, hi ho hiu
 Sgrios mo chinneadh thaobh mo mhàthar, ì u o

B' fheàrr gun cluinninn, ì o u
 Sud 's gum faicinn, ì u o
 Ged nach bì mi, ì u o
 ì o u
 Creach an t-sìthein, ì o u
 'S creach an lagain, ì u o
 Creach Mhuile an Rois, ì u o
 'S a cruaidh chaisfhionn, ì u o
 An t-Eilean Druidhneach bhith 'na lasair, ì u o
 'S masa breug e, ì u o
 Seall a mach air, ì u o
 Mnathan òga falbh sa 'bhasraich, ì u o
 'S an cuid leanaban falbh gun bhaisteadh, ì u o
 Bualadh gu tric air ar macaibh, ì u o
 Iomain gu dìon air ar martaibh, ì u o
 Raognall Mór thar chuan 'gan aiseag, ì u o
 'S a bhith 'gan roinn air dàil Ghlasdruim, ì u o
 Nan tàrladh dhomh bhith dol seachad, ì u o
 Bu leam fhìn dhiubh mart is capall, ì u o
 Cóig no sia dhiubh, sia no seachd dhiubh, ì u o
 Am feasda gus am bithinn beartach, ì u o

Ailein Duinn, ì u o
 An tig thu 'n tìr so, ì u o
 An cluinninn farum do long ris an lìonadh,
 Fuaim do ghnocain ri cois tìre,
 Roimh na caoil thu.....

Roimh Chaol Muil' thu, roimh Chaol Ile,
 Ro' Choire-bhreacain nan sruth lionmhor,
 Gu Colbhasaidh Mhic a' Phì thu,
 Roimh Loch-odha gu Latharn' ìochdrach,
 Far an do ghabh mo ghaol a dhìneir:
 Cha b' ann de bhùirn dubh na dìgean,
 Ach de bhainne a' chruidh chiardubh.

Eudail nam fear 's lionmhor ainm ort,
 Tha fiodh fraoich ort, tha chaor dhearg ort,
 Tha 'm beithe beag ort 's an calltuinn,
 Tha ainm eil' ort 's docha leamsa,
 Tha an t-Ailein Donn siùbhlach.
 'S math thig sìth dhut, 's olc thig fearg dhut,
 'S math thig lùireach leathann gharbh ort.

Có théid sìos leinn do na blàraibh,
 Gur h-i d' aghaidh nach robh sgàthach,
 Gearrar cinn leat sam bi cnàmhan,
 Dòirtear fuil leat sam bi nàire.

Ràinig mi 'n caol 's ghlaodh mi 'n t-aiseag,
 'S tric a fhuaireadh na bu chais e,
 'S truagh nach robh mi san tìr Abrach,
 Gun tigh'nn riamh as 'm measg nan coigreach.

101. UISDEAN MAC GILLEASBAIG CHLÉIRICH (c. 1600)

em bó a luì a ló
 hua ho ró éileadh
 em bó a luì a ló

Chaidh mis' a dh' Eubhal imprig,
 A dh' Eubhal 's a Bheinn na h-Aire
 Thog mi an gàrradh, lìon mi an iuthlann,
 Chan ann dhe 'n eòrna gheal mhillis,
 Chan ann dhe 'n chorca gheal thioram,
 Ach a dh' òigridh ghlan mo chinnidh.

Truagh nach fhaicinn fhìn mo mhàthair,
 Cuman aic' agus ceann spàineadh,
 'Na ruith a dh' àirigh gu àirigh
 Mhiosad 's a chumh' i na bràithrean.

Eisd, a bhean gun chiall, gun tuigse,
 'S mic dhomh fhìn iad; 's bràithrean dhu's' iad.
 O ìochdar mo chuim a thuit iad.
 'S e bainne mo chìoch a shluig iad.
 'S e mo léine lìn a fhliuch iad.

Uisdein 'ic Iain Mhóir á Tunord
 'S aotrom do cheum, trom do bhuille,
 Mo mhìle mhallachd go d' mhuime
 Nach do leag i ort glùin no uileann
 Mun do rinn thu mo chreach-sa buileach.

Uisdein 'ic 'Illeasba* chléirich,
 Far an laigh thu slàn na éirich.
 Do bhiodag gun dian do reubadh,
 'S do mhionach bhith an lùib do léineadh.
 Sgeula do bhàis go mnathan Shléite
 'S mo chuid dùbailt' ugam fhéin dheth.

102. MHIC IARLA NAM BRATACH BÀNA (c. 1600)

Hi-ill-ein beag, hó ill ò ro,	(tutti)
Hi-ill-ein beag, hó ill ò ro,	(solo)
Hi-ill-ein beag, hó ill ò ro,	(tutti)
Hù hoireann ò, hò ro éileadh.	(tutti)

A bhean ud thall a nì 'n gàire,	(solo)
A bhean ud thall a nì 'n gàire,	(tutti)
A bhean ud thall a nì 'n gàire,	(solo)
Nach truagh leat piuthar gun bhràthair ?	(solo)
Hi-ill-ein beag, etc.	

Nach truagh leat piuthair gun bhràthair,	(trì uairean)
Is bean òg gun chéile 'n làthair ?	
Hi-ill-ein beag, etc.	

Is bean òg gun chéile 'n làthair,	(trì uairean)
'S gur h-ionann sin 's mar atà mi,	
Hi-ill-ein beag, etc.	

M' inntinne trom, m' fhonn air m' fhàgail,
 Mu 'n fhiùran fhoghainneach àlainn,
 Sealgair sìdhn' o fhrìth nan àrdbheann,
 'S an ròin léith o bheul an t-sàile,
 An earba bheag a dh' fhalbhas stàiteil,
 Le crios iallach uallach airgid
 Air uachdar na léine bàineadh.
 Mhic Iarla nam bratach bàna,
 Chunnaic mi do long air sàile,
 Bha stiùir òir oirr' 's dà chrann airgid,
 'S cupla de shìoda na Gailmhinn,
 Sìoda reamhar ruadh na Spàine,
 'S cha b' ann a Glaschu a bha e,
 No Dùn bheagan, 's beag o 'n làr e,
 No Dùn Tuilm na brataich bàineadh !

103. CAIRISTÌONA (c. 1600)

è hó hì rì
 hó ho ì sa bhó ró ho
 è hó hì rì

Nach fhreagair thu, Chairistìona ?
 Nach fhreagair thu, chuilein dhìlis ?
 Nam freagradh, gun cluinninn fhìn thu.

'S gura mi do mhuime chìtheadh.
 Thug mi bliadhna an cùirt an Rìgh leat,
 'S ged chanainn e, thug mi trì ann.
 Chan ann ri gnothaichean mì-thur -
 Fuaigheal anartan is sìoda
 'S a' cur gràinn' air léinidh rìomhaich.

M' eudail mhór 's a luaidh an domhain,
 An turus a thug thu Ghleann Comhann,
 Gheàrr thu leum 's cha d' dh' fhaod thu tomha'
 Air muir dùdlaidh dorchà domhain.

Chì mi luingeas 's a' Chaol Ìleach
 Lìonmhor long is bàt' is birlinn
 Seòladh troimh chaolas an lìonaidh,
 Tighean an coinneamh Cairistìona -
 Chan ann gu pòsadh an rìgh riut -
 Gus do chur 's an talamh ìseal
 An cistidh nam bòrd druidte dìonach.

Muineal thu dha 'n tigeadh lìonan
 'S bràighe geal mar shneachd an t-sìor chur.
 'S iomadh diùc a dh' òladh fion leat.
 'S lìonmhor iarla nach iarradh nì leat.

Chì mi bàta seach an rubha,
 'S ge mòr an stoirm, 's ùr a h-uidheam,
 'S fir òg' a' laigh' air a giuthas.

Oganaich na gruaige duibheadh,
 'S ann a nochd as mór do mhulad.
 Chan ioghnadh leam thu bhith dubhach -
 'S do leannan a staigh fo dhubhthar
 An cistidh nam bòrd air a dubhadh
 Fo na bratan gorma 's dubha.

Théid mi màireach do Ghleann Comhann.
 Canaidh iad nach fhaigh mi gnothach
 O nach robh mo dhalta romham,
 Ceann na céilleadh, beul na comhairle,
 Sgrìobhadair, leughadair leabhar.
 Leugh thu dà dhuilleig dheug air mheomhair.

Théid mi màireach leat dha 'n chlachan.
 Canaidh iad nach fhaigh mi ceartas.
 Ge tà, cha lig iad a leas e,
 Fhad 's as beò Mac Leòid nam bratach.

104. CLANN GHRIOGAIR AIR FÒGRADH (c. 1600)

Is mi suidhe an seo am ònar
Air còmhnaid an rathaid,

Dh' fheuch am faic mi fear-fuadain,
Tighinn o Chruachan a' cheathaich,

Bheir dhomh sgeul air Clann Ghriogair
No fios cia an do ghabh iad.

Cha d' fhuair mi d' an sgeulaibh
Ach iad bhith 'n dé air na Sraithibh.

Thall 's a bhos mu Loch Fìne,
Masa fìor mo luchd bratha;

Ann an Clachan an Dìseirt
Ag òl fìon air na maithibh.

Bha Griogair mòr ruadh ann,
Làmh chruaidh air chùl claidhimh;

Agus Griogair mòr meadhrach,
Ceann-feadhna ar luchd-taighe.

Mhic an fhir a Srath h-Ardail,
Bhiodh na bàird ort a' tathaich;

Is a bheireadh greis air a' chlàrsaich
Is air an tàileasg gu h-aighear;

Is a sheinneadh an fhidheall,
Chuireadh fioghair fo mhnathaibh.

Is ann a rinn sibh an t-sidheann anmoch
Anns a' ghleann am bi an ceathach.

Dh' fhàg sibh an t-Eòin bòidheach
Air a' mhòintich 'na laighe,

'Na starsnaich air féithe
An deidh a reubadh le claidheamh.

Is ann thog sibh ghreigh dhùbhghorm
O lùban na h-abhann.

Ann am Bothan na Dìge
Ghabh sibh dìon air an rathad;

Far a dh' fhàg sibh mo bhiodag
Agus crios mo bhuilg-shaighead.

Gur i saighead na h-àraich
So thàrmaich am leathar.

Chaidh saighead am shliasaid,
Crann fiar air dhroch shnaidheadh.

Gun seachnadh Rìgh nan Dùl sibh
O fhùdar caol neimhe,

O shradagan teine,
O pheileir 's o shaighid,

O sgian na roinn caoile,
Is o fhaobhar geur claidhimh.

Is ann bha bhuidheann gun chòmhradh
Di-dòmhnach am bràighe bhaile.

Is cha dèan mi gàir éibhinn
An àm éirigh no laighe.

Is beag an t-iongnadh dhomh féin sud,
Is mi bhith 'n deidh mo luchd-taighe.

105. 'S FLUICH AN OIDHCHE 'N NOCHD 'S GUR FUAR I (c. 1600)

Èileadh na ùrabh o ho,
 'S fliuch an oidhche, o hù o ho,
 Èileadh na ùrabh o ho,
 A nochd 's gur fuar i, o hù o ho,
 Èileadh na ùrabh o ho.

Thug am bàta, o hù &c.
 'S beag mo chùram
 'S mo leannan air
 Oganach deas
 Làmh air an stiùir
 Cha b' fhear cearraig
 No fear làimhe deis'
 Guma slàn do 'n
 'Dh' fhàg e luchdmhor
 Fulangach gu
 'N saoil sibh péin na
 Do m' leithid fhìn
 'Bhith 'm bothaig bhig
 Fo dhìolanas
 Gun òl cupa,

bàn an cuan oirr', o hù &c.
 as a fuadach.
 bhòrd a fuaraidh,
 do dhuin' uasal,
 nuair 'bu chruaidhe,
 'bheireadh uat i,
 is fuachd air.
 làimh a dh' fhuaigh i,
 làidir luath i,
 siubhal chuantan,
 nach mór an truaighe,
 do gheala-ghruagaich
 an iomall tuatha,
 mhic duin' uasail,
 gun òl cuaiche.

106. 'S TRIC MO SHÙIL AIR AN LINNE (ante 1605)

O 's tric mo shùil air an linne
A's air an fhireach is àirde;

'S tric mo shùil air mo dheidhinn,
Is e mo roghainn na dh' fhàg mi.

Thoir mo shoraidh do 'n fhleasgach
A dh' fhalbh mu fheasgar le bhàrc uainn;

Chuir mo leannan a chùl rium,
'S chuir e chùram air bàta;

Ged a dhiùlt thu dhomh 'n t-aiseag,
A rìgh gu faicinn-se slàn thu !

Ged a dh' éitich thu rùm dhomh,
Cha bu dùmhail mi d' bhàta.

'S tric a bha mi 's tu sùgradh,
Ann am bùthan na ràimhe.

Ann an coille nam badan
Is tric a ghlac thu air làimh mi.

'S cha b' e t' fhuath thug dhomh t' éiteach,
Ach mi bhi teisteil mu m' nàire.

Ach ma chaidh thu nunn thairis
A dh' fhios na cail' tha 'n Dun-sgàthaich,

'S truagh a rìgh, nach tu gheibheadh;
Fuar fodha i 'n déigh a bàthaidh;

'S gach bean a chaidh luaidh riut
A bhi 's an uaigh o cheann ràithe;

Ach mise bhi fallain,
A's thusa maireann 'na d' shlàinte;

Thus' a's mise, 'laoigh ghaolaich,
A bhi 'na 'r n-aonar am fàsach;

Sinn bhi 'n eilein 'nar dithis;
O 's e mo chridhe tha 'n geall air !

Sìor thoiseach an dùbhlaich
Dh' fhalbh mo stiùir 's mo chroinn-bhràghad,

Ach a rìgh mhòir a' chruinne,
Cum 'na thuireadh 's na thàmh e;

Gus am buannaich iad Muile
Luchd a' chunnairt 's a' ghàbhaidh;

Luchd a dhìreadh nan stuadhan
Air muir ruaidh nan tonn àrda.

Tha gaoth mhòr air an latha,
'S uisge reamhar, trom, tlàth ann.

Tha do bhreacan fliuch fionn-fhuar,
Gu b' e ionad ann do thàmh thu.

'S truagh gun m' aodach, a ghaoil, agad
Gu moch maduinn am màireach;

'S e bhi ris gun fhios uait,
Seal mu 'm fiosraicheadh càch e.

'S e do bhreacan ùr uasal
A chum am fuachd 'uam is mi 'm phàisdein;

'S tric a chum thu mi tioram
Fo shileadh nan àrd-bheann.

107. RANN AIR GRIOGAIR ODHAR ARD (c. 1605)

An saoil sibh féin nach foghainnteach,
 'S e Griogar Odhar Àrd,
 Gu 'n d' aithnich mi sgairt diùlach ort
 'S tu dìreadh ris an allt;
 Gu 'n d' leagadh Mac-an-Aba leat,
 Os cionn na glaic ud thall;
 Gu 'n robh fear de Chlanna Chamshroin ann,
 Is dealg 'na bhrot gu teann;
 Gu 'n robh Iain Òg Mac Chailein ann,
 'S cha b' fhallain e fo d' làimh.
 Gu 'n gleidheadh an rìgh o dhòruinn,
 Am fear mòr a bhrìst am fang;
 Cha b' ann de Chlanna Chatain thu,
 No luchd nam plaide bàn;
 No idir de Chlann Dòmhnuille thu,
 No luchd nan ròiseol àrd;
 Ach Griogarach gu dìreach thu,
 Chuir dìth air clann nan Gall.

108. AILEAN DUBH Á LÒCHaidh (c. 1605)

'S toigh leam Ailean Dubh á Lòchaidh;
 mo ghaol Ailean donn a' chòta
 's toigh leam Ailean dubh á Lòchaidh
 Ailein, Ailein, 's ait leam beò thu:-
 'S toigh leam, etc.

Sguab thu mo spréidh bharr na mòintich:-
 'S toigh, etc.

Loisg thu m' iodhlann chorc' is eòrna:-
 'S toigh, etc.

Mharbh thu mo thrùir bhràithrean òga:-
 'S toigh, etc.

Mharbh thu m' athair is m' fhear-pòsda:-
 'S toigh, etc.

'S ged rinn thu sin 's ait leam beò thu:
 'S toigh leam Ailean dubh á Lòchaidh;
 mo ghaol Ailean donn a' chòta;
 's toigh leam Ailean dubh á Lòchaidh.

109. MAC-GRIOGAIK A RUADHSHRUTH (c. 1605)

Tha mulad, tha mulad,
Tha mulad 'gam lionadh,

Tha mulad bochd truagh orm
Nach dual domh chaoidh dìreadh

Mu Mhac Griogair a Ruadhshruth
D' am bu dual 'bhith an Gleann Liobhunn.

Mu Mhac Griogair nam bratach
D' am bu tartarach pìoba,

D' am bu shuaicheantas giuthas
Ri bruthach 'ga dhìreadh;

Crann caol air 'dheagh locradh,
Is ite dhosach an fhìreoin;

Crann caol air dheagh shnaidheadh:
Cuid de dh' aighear mic rìgh e,

An làimh dheagh Mhic Mhuirich
'Ga chumail rèidh dìreach.

Ge do bhuail e mi am balach,
'G am ghearan cha bhì mi.

Ge do dhèan iad orm eucoir,
A Thì féin, cò nì dhìoladh ?

Is luchd a ghabhail mo leithsgeil
Anns an t-seipeil so shìos uam;

Luchd a sheasadh mo chòrach,
Is e mo leòn iad bhith dhìth orm.

Mo chomhdhaltan gaolach
An leabaidh chaoil 's an ceann ìosal;

An léine chaoil anairt
Gun bhannan gun sìod' oirre.

Is nach d' iarr sibh g' a fuaigheal
Mnathan uaisle na tìre.

Ort a bheirinn-sa comhairl'
Nan gabhadh tu dhìom i:

An uair a théid thu 'n tigh-òsda
Na h-òl ann ach aon deoch.

Gabh do dhrama 'nad sheasamh,
Is bi freasdlach mu d' dhaoinibh.

Na dèan diùthadh mu d' shoitheach:
Gabh an ladar no an taoman.

Dèan am foghar de 'n gheamhradh,
Is dèan an samhradh de 'n fhaoilteach.

Dèan do leaba 's na creagaibh,
Is na dèan cadal ach aotrom.

Ge h-ainneamh an fheòrag,
Gheibhear seòl air a faotainn;

Ge h-uasal an seabhag,
Is tric a ghabhar le feall e.

110. TALADH DHÒMHNAILL GHUIRM le a mhuime (c. 1610)

Nàile bho hì nàile bho h-àrd

Nàile bho hì nàile bho h-àrd

Ar leam gur h-ì

Nàile bho h-àrd

Nàile bho h-ì

a' ghrian 's i ag éirigh

's i a' cur smàl

air na reultaibh

Nàile nàile nàile ri triall hò

Gu cùirt Dhòmhnaill

nan sgiath bhallbhreac

Nan lann ceanngheal

Nan long seòlach

nan saighead siùbhlach

nam fear meanmnach.

Nàile nàile hò nàile gu triall

Gun d' fhaighnich a' bhean

Na, có iad an long ud,

.....

Don-bìdh ort !

Có ach long Dhòmhnaill

Long mo rìgh-sa

'S mór leam an trom

Tha stiùir òir oirr'

Gu bheil tobar fìona

moch a màireach.

do 'n mhnaoi eile:

siar an eirthir

's a' chuan Chanach ?

C' uim' an ceilinn ?

long mo leanabh

long nan Eilean.

atà 'san eathar.

trì chroinn sheilich.

's a' cheann eile.

Hó nàile nàile nàile ri triall

Nàil' chuirinn geall

.....

An uair théid mac mo

Ge bè caladh

Gum bi mire

Bualadh bhròg

Bìdh sud is iomairt hò

Air na cairtean

Is air na dìsnean

moch a màireach.

is mo shean-gheall:

am faod sibh àicheadh ?

rìgh-sa dh' Alba

tàimh no àite

cluiche is gàire

is leòis air deàrnaibh

air an tàileasg

breaca bàna

geala chnàmha.

Hó nàile nàile nàile le chéile

Ge bè àite

Bìdh sud mar ghnàths ann

an tàmh thu an Alba

ceòl is seachas

Pìob is clàrsach
 Bidh cairt uisge
 Ol fiona is
 Is gur lionmhor triubhas

àbhachd 's dannsa
 suas air phlanga
 beòir ad champa
 saothreach seang ann.

Nàile nàile
 An uair théid mac hó
 Chan ann air chóignear
 Chan ann air naoinear
 Ceud 'nan suidhe leat
 Ceud eile, hó, bhith cur
 Dà cheud deug bhith
 Dà cheud deug bhith
 Dà cheud deug bhith

nàile hó nàile
 mo rìgh-sa deiseil
 chan ann air sheisear
 chan ann air dheichnear:
 ceud 'nan seasamh leat.
 a' chupa deiseil dhut
 dèanamh chleasa leat
 cur a bhuill-coise leat
 'n òrdugh gleaca leat.

Nàile nàile hó nàile so hugaibh i
 An uair théid mac mo
 Chan i a' Mhórthir
 Ìle is Cinn-tìre
 Dùthaich Mhic Shuibhne

rìgh fo uigheam
 a cheann-uidhe
 am Ròimh 's a' Mhumhan
 is dùthaich Mhic Aoidh
 [cuide riutha.

Cha liutha dris
 No sguab choirce air
 No sop seann-todhair
 Na an cùirt Dhòmhnaill
 Clogaide gormdheas
 Bogha iùbhrach
 Gur lìonmhor bonaid
 Is coinnle chéire

air an droigheann
 achadh foghair
 air taobh taighe
 sgiath is claidheamh
 is balg-shaighead
 is tuagh chatha.
 ghorm air staing ann
 laiste an lannair.

Nàile nàile hó nàile le chéile
 An uair théid mac mo
 Gu robh gach dùil mar
 Ciod e ma bhios ? Cha
 Gu bheil mi dhut mar
 Mur 'eil mi bàrr

rìgh-s' 'na éideadh
 tha mi fhéin dha.
 tachair beud dha.
 tha do phiuthar:
 tha mi uidhir.

Neart na gile
 Bhith eadar Dòmhnall
 Neart an fhochainn
 Bhith eadar Dòmhnall
 Neart na tonna
 Bhith eadar Dòmhnall
 Neart a' bhradain as
 Bhith eadar Dòmhnall
 Neart Chon Chulainn
 Bhith eadar Dòmhnall
 Neart sheachd cathan
 Bhith eadar Dòmhnall
 Neart Oisein bhinn neart
 Bhith eadar Dòmhnall
 Neart na stoirm' 's na
 Bhith eadar Dòmhnall
 Neart an torrain is na
 Bhith eadar Dòmhnall
 Neart na miala
 Bhith eadar Dòmhnall
 Neart nan dùl is
 Bhith eadar Dòmhnall
 Gach aon dhiubh sud
 Bhith eadar Dòmhnall
 Ciod e mar bhios ? Cha

Ar leam gur h-ì
 Nàile bho hì nàile

neart na gréine
 Gorm 's a léine.
 anns a' Chéitean
 Gorm 's a léine.
 troma treubhach
 Gorm 's a léine.
 braise leumas
 Gorm 's a léine,
 fo làn éideadh
 Gorm 's a léine.
 feachd na Féine
 Gorm 's a léine.
 Osgair euchdaich
 Gorm 's a léine.
 toirmghaoith reubaich
 Gorm 's a léine.
 beithreach éitigh
 Gorm 's a léine.
 móire a' séideadh
 Gorm 's a léine.
 chlanna-speura
 Gorm 's a léine.
 is neart Mhic Dhé
 Gorm 's a léine.
 tachair beud dhuit.

a' ghrian 's i ag éirigh.
 bho hò h-àrd.

111. DH' ÉIRICH MI MOCH MADAINN EARRAICH (c. 1610)

Dh' éirich mi moch madainn earraich,
 Madainn dhuainidh fhuaraidh fhearach
 Ghabh mi suas ri gual' a' bheannain
 Shuidh mi air cnoc is leig mi m' anail
 Dh' amhairc mi bhuam fad mo sheallaidh
 Chunnaic mi long 's a' Chaol Chanach
 Is i a' strì ri sgrìoban geala
 Is i a' sìorruith dh' ionnsaidh cala
 Chuala mo chluas fuaim a daraich
 Fuaim a cuid seòl is iad a' crathadh
 Chunnaic mo shùil i dol fairis
 Socrachadh sìos anns a' ghaineamh
 Lùb mi mo ghlùn, dh' iarr mi sìth dhaibh
 Sìth do dh' Eòghainn, sìth do dh' Ailein
 An dà bhràthair tàmh biodh agaibh.

112. MO RÙN AILEIN (c. 1610)

Dh' éirich mo moch, hó hò,
Mo rùn Ailein, hó hò,

madainn earraich, hó hò,
mo rùn Ailein, hó hò.

Dhìrich mi suas
Shuidh mi air cnoc,
Dh' amhairc mi bhuam
Chunnacas do long
Cò bh' air an stiùir
'S e bheireadh i
Fhad's a mhaireadh

gual' a' bhealaich,
lig mi m' anail,
fad mo sheallaidh,
mhór 'san t-seanail,
ach mo leannan ?
slàn gu caladh,
stagh no tarraig.

Hala ho éile, hó hò,
Hala ho éile, hò hò,
Hala ho éile, hó hò.

Cha téid mise, hó hò,
Hala ho éile, hó hò,

chaidh cha téid mi, hó hò,
hala ho éile, hó hò,

Cha téid mise
'S dìomhain dhomh siod,
Chan eil m' àite
Aig mnathan Uibhist,
Aig gruagaichean

'n cois na cléitheadh,
ann cha téid mi,
an dràs' fhéin ann,
aig mnathan Shléibhte,
luadhadh le chéile.

Mìle marbhphaisg !
Thog iad ormsa,
Gu robh mo chrios
Dé ma thà, 's gun
Chan ann o bhruinnein
Ach o sgoilear
Théid a Shasuinn
Nì e 'n duilleag
'M fianais an Rìgh

luchd nam breugan,
mo chuid fhéin dhiubh,
'n àird' ag éirigh,
.....
no o bhréinein,
donn na Beurla
's a Dhùn Èideann,
bhàn a leughadh,
's ann a théid e.

113. ÒRAN ARABHAIG (c. 1610)

A' BHEAN LEÒDACH:

Mhairghread chridhe
 Falt buidhe air
 'S cian am bliadhna
 ['S ann gu d' bhaile
 Thriall Mac Coinnich
 'S Mac Fhionghuin bho

nighean an Tòisich,
 dath an òir ort,
 leam o 'n phòs thu,
 thriall am mór shluagh
 is Mac Leòid ann,
 Shrath nam bó ann.]

A' BHEAN DÒMHNALLACH:

'S mi 'nam shuidh air
 M' aghaidh air Hiort
 Thànaig bleidein,
 Le mheilbheid 's le
 'S dh' fhoighnich e dhìom
 Gu dé b' fhasan
 Dhomhsa b' aithne
 Fìon 'ga ligeadh
 An treas tarraing
 Cha b' ionnan dhaibh
 Sìol a chapuill
 Bheathachadh air
 Air dùdan dubh
 Air uisge bog
 Cha ghoirear riu
 Taod mu 'n claigeann
 Thug thu teicheadh
 No 'n cuimhne leibh
 Sheas sibh 'san fhraoch
 Chaidh sibh 'san loch
 Chaidh sibh 'sa chuan

Caolas Rònaidh,
 nan eun móra,
 bleideil, bòsdail,
 spuir 's le bòtainn,
 le càil còmhradh
 do Chlann Dòmhnail ?
 beus bu chòir dhaibh,
 beòir 'ga h-òl ac',
 'ga chur an stòpaibh;
 sìol nan Leòdach,
 bhacaich, spògaich,
 mol is fòghlach,
 's air gulm eòrna,
 a' phuill-mhòna,
 ach 'pruis-òidhidh',
 's goid mu 'n dòrnaibh !
 phrasgain ghealtaich,
 là Ghleann Shealtainn ?
 mar na cearcan,
 mar na lachain,
 mar na farspaich !

A' BHEAN LEÒDACH:

Cò i 'n long taobh

staigh an eilein ?

A' BHEAN DÒMHNALLACH:

Don-bhuidh ort !
 Tha long Dhòmhnail
 Dh' fhàg i 'n rubh' ud
 Chuir i bòrd far
 'S dh' fhàg i long

[c' uim' an ceilinn ?]
 Ghuirm nan eilein;
 's an rubh' eile,
 long Mhic Coinnich,
 Mhic Leòid air deireadh !

A' BHEAN LEÒDACH:

Mur bhitheadh mo
 'S mo ghuth lag air
 'S mi gun seinneadh an
 Dha na fearaibh
 An Dùn Bheagain
 'S ann aig Ruairidh
 Thèid i dh' Ìle
 Fir òg ag òl

chrìdh a' dìobradh,
 beagan spìdidh,
 tuireadh cinnteach
 tha 'n taobh sìos dhiom
 nan long lìonmhor;
 tha 'n long fhada,
 thèid i dh' Arainn,
 air a sarcuinn.

114. IAIN ÒG MAC MHIC NÈILL (c. 1610)

Ho ho éile hó i o hù o
 Hó i o hù o
 Ho ho éile hó i o hù o.

Is mis' a' bhean bhoichd
 Th' air mo chreachadh,

Hò i o hù o

Chan e mo chrodh
 No mo chapail,
 No mo chruachan
 Air an sgapadh;
 Chan e m' iodhlann
 'Dhol 'na lasair,
 No mo dhaisean
 Air an creachadh;
 Chan e mo nighean
 Dh' fhalbh le h-asaid,
 Gum b' fhiach do mhnaoi
 Tuireadh tacan;

.....

Chan e chreach mi,
 Ach mo chùirtair
 'N làimh an Glascho,
 'S iad a' maoidheadh
 Chur a Shasainn
 No Dhùn Èideann
 Nan ceud fasan.
 Nan gabht' éirig
 As mo leanabh,
 Cha bhiodh an crodh
 Sìos na gleannaibh;
 Cha bhiodh eich
 A' feannadh feamainn;
 Cha bhiodh caoirich
 Bhàn air bheannaibh !

Dheagh Mhic Mhic Néill

'N tùs o 'n Chaisteal,

'S i mo làmh-sa

Bha 'gad fhalcadh,

'S i mo ghlùn-sa

Bha 'gad altram,

'S i mo chìoch-sa

Bha 'gad atadh.

Dheagh Mhic Mhic Néill

Bho 'n tùr 's bho 'n Chaisteal,

Mharbh thu 'n còirneal,

Leòn thu 'n caiptean;

Thug thu do shluagh

Fhéin leat dhachaigh,

Luchd nan cùl donn

'S nan leadan clannach;

Dh' fhàg thu na Goill

Marbh gun anam,

Luchd nan gruaga

Ruadha greannach.

'S mi th' air mo ghualadh,

Th' air mo sgaradh,

'Nam thaigh mór,

'Nam thaigh taisgidh;

Mo chadal-taigh,

M' àite leapa,-

Ge b' oil liom sin,

Chan e chreach mi !

115. MHAIRI BHÀIN A BHROILLICH GHLÈ-GHIL (1)

Hi-ri-rì-ri-ri-rith-ibh-o-hó

Ho riònna o-hì-o-ho-o-éile !

Hi-ri-rì, ri-rì-rith-ibh-o hó.

Mhàiri bhàin a bhroillich ghlè-ghil !

Hi-ri-rì-ri-rì &c.

Cha dùisg glaothaich thu no éigheach !

Cha dhùisg an fhidheall 'ga gleusadh !

Na pìob-mhór na feadan éibhinn.

Cha dhùisg glaoth do mhàthair fhéin thu !

Mhàiri nach freagair thu idir !

Cha fhreagair, mo thruaighe mise !

Bha mi 'n raoir air bruaich do lice.

Ma bha, cha b' fheàrrde mo mhisneachd

'S gu 'm b' fhuras falbh gun fhios dhuit !

Hi-rì-ri, &c.

116. 'S A' MHÀIRI BHÀN A BHROILLICH GHLE-GHIL (2)

'S a Mhàiri Bhàn a bhroillich ghle-ghil,
Hi ri ri ri ri ibhò.

'S muladach mi 's a' Chaol Rònach.
Hò rò ohi oho,
Urabhi uo rotho.

Chan ioghnadh e 's gun mi fallain.
Hi ri, &c.

M' eudail mhòr Mac Leòid na Hearadh.
Hò rò, &c.

'S breugach mo bheul, tha mi 'm mearachd.
'S e m' eudail mhòr Mac 'ic Ailein,
Ged a chuir thu mi as m' fhearann,
Thug thu fearann saor do m' sheanar.
B' fheàrr dhuit mi na Nic a' Mhanaich,
Na tha beò de shliochd a seanar,
Sìol na brùide mòra mosach.

Eisd a chaile, sguir dhe d' sgeòdail,
'N cuimhneach leat gur a beò mi ?
Am chrùbadair ri cùl na còmhla.
Tha mo theanga fallain còmhnaidh,
Chaidh i ri cloich air a bhòn-raoir;
Tha trì roinn is faobhar gleòis oirr'.
A bhradag nan obag 's nan òthan,
A bheireadh air na luingeas seòladh.
Air aodann nam beanntan mòra,
A chuireadh na cuirp mharbh a' chòmhrag.

'S muladach mi 's mi air m' aineoil,
A' coimhead uam air cuan na Hearadh;
Chan fhaic mi tighinn mo leannan:
Geugaire ciùin, foinnidh, fearail,
Gruaidh mar chaorunn 's caoine sealladh;

Brèagha, bàn, mar bhàrr a' chanaich,
 Fiacaill bhàn fo 'n bheul nach sreamach.

'Na 'm faighinn siud air m' òrdugh
 An tighearn' òg a bhith 's an fheamainn,
 A Bhaintighearna 'bhith aig a' sgallaig,
 'S Dòmhnall Gorm gu bruich an arain,
 Raghnaill mòr a leigeadh leanna.

'S ìosal an inbh' a thug thu 'Dhòmhnull,
 Chan e beus mo thighearn' òg e.
 'S ann a bhitheadh e air ceann a mhòr shluaigh,
 A' cur nan saighdearan an òrdugh.

Eòghainn Dhuinn 'ic Eòin 'ic Ailein,
 Dhomhsa b' aithne beus do thalla
 'S an fheasgar fhuar, fhaoillich Earraich:
 Muc 'ga sgrìobadh, mart 'ga feannadh,
 Tubhailtean air bhòrdaibh geala,
 Fiamh na maighdean air a' chaillich,
 Fiamh an duin' òg air an t-seann-duin'.

117. SAIGHDEAN GHLINN LÌOBHANN (c. 1620)

A m'hic an fhir ruaidh,
 Bha gu misneachail cruaidh,
 Do thuitem 'san ruaig cha b' fheàrrde mi.

A' triall 's tu dìreadh
 Ri cois frìthe,
 Bhiodh cuilbheir dìreach dearbhte leat.

Coin air iallaibh,
 Garg an gnìomhan:
 B' e do mhiann bhith sealgaireachd.

Pic 'nad dhòrnaibh
 Is mill na 's leòir oirr':
 Is ann le treòir a tharraingear i.

Glac nach leumadh
 Ri teas gréine,
 Agus céir o 'n Ghailbhinn oirr'.

Ite an eòin léith,
 Briogadh 'na déidh,
 Air a gleus le barbaireachd.

Sìod' a h-Èirinn
 Is mèir 'ga réiteach:
 Cha tig bréin' fir-cheaird air sin;

Ach fleisdeir finealt'
 O Ghleann Lìobhann,
 Sior chur sìod air chalpannan.

Cinn bhreac sgiathach
 Air dhreach dialtaig:
 Cha tig iarann garbhcail orr'.

Gun chron dlùthaidh
O d' làimh lùthmhoir
Ite chu'idh is càrr air sin.

An saoidh nach sòradh
Air thùs tòrachd:
Is mairg fear lòdail thàrladh ort.

An saoi nach maoimeadh
Air thùs feadhna:
Bhiodh sgian chaol o 'n cheàrdaich ort.

Triath na Sròine,
Mas fhìor dhòmh-sa e:
Gur i a chòir as fheairrde leat.

Dàimh 'gad mholadh,
Triall gu solar:
Bhiodh do sporan càrlaidh dhàibh.

Beòir air chuachaibh
Ol aig t' uaislibh,
Anns gach uair dh' an tàrladh sinn.

Pìob 'ga spreigeadh,
Fìon 'ga leigeadh,
Luchd leadan ann ri càrrachas.

Foireann air thì,
Dolaran sìos,
Galain de 'n fhìon bhàrcaideach.

Cupannan làn,
Musgar ri dàimh,
Usgar air mnàibh airgbhraiteach.

A bhile a h-Èirinn,
Sin ort sgeula;
Thig cóig ceud a shealltainn ort.

An t-òg as deis' thu
Dh' fhalbh mu fheasgar:
Ghabh mi cead 'san anmoch dhìot.

An t-òg as finne,
Is feàrr de 'n chinneadh,
Nach d' rinn cillein airgid riamh.

'S ann leam a b' aithreach
Gun bhith mar riut,
Dol fo sparradh Ghallbhodach.

118. THA CAOLAS EADAR MI IS IAIN (post 1620)

Tha caolas eadar mi is Iain

Hi hu a hao ri a hu,

Cha chaol a th'ann, ach cuan domhainn,

O hao ri rì rì ho ro,

Ho hi hoireann ho, hao ri ho hù.

Cha chaol a th' ann, ach cuan domhainn,

Hi hu a, etc.

'S truagh nach tràghadh e gu latha,

'S bhithinn-sa 'n Gleann Dubh mo làithean;

'S truagh nach robh mis' is tusa, fhleasgaich,

Aig bun nan craobh fo bhàrr nam preasan,

'S truagh nach robh mise 's an t-òg gasda

Am mullach beinne guirme caise,

Gun duine beò bhith 'nar n-aisge,

Ach dall is bodhar is bacach;

'S thigeamaid am màireach dhachaigh,

Mar 's gum pòsaimaid o 'n altair.

'S truagh nach mise 's tusa, ghràidhein,

'N eilein ciùin mara nach tràghadh,

Gun sgoth gun bhirlinn gun bhàta,

Gun saor a dheanadh an càradh,

Ach coite beag is dà ràmh air.

'S ged bu nighean do Mhac Cailein mi,

'S dha 'n Iarla Aondrainn 's dha 'n Diùc Arannach,

O ! 's miosa na sin mar thachair dhomh,

Bothan beag is eòrlaig arain dhomh,

Na maoir a' togail a' ghearraidh dhiom.

119. ALASDAIR ÒIG MHIC 'IC NEACAIL (c. 1625)

Hillean ó ho ì ho ro hó	(soloist)
Hillean ó ho ì ho ró,	(chorus)
Na huill irinn ó ho ì o ro hó.	(soloist)

'S muladach, 's muladach a thà mi,
 Dìreadh na beinne 's 'ga teàrnadh;
 'S nach fhaic mi tighinn am bàta
 Ris an togte na siùil bhàna,
 Bha m' athair oirr' 's mo thriùir bhràithrean,
 'S mo leannan fhìn air ràmh-bràghad,
 Alasdair na gruaige bàine.

Alasdair òig, mhic 'ic Neacail,
 B' fheàrr liom fhìn gum beirinn mac dhut,
 Dhà no trì dhiubh, sia no seachd dhiubh,
 Cógear no sianar no seachdnar;
 Bheirinn cìoch is glùn dhaibh an asgaidh,
 Bheirinn ciùird a làimh gach fear dhiubh;
 Fear 'na dhiùca, fear 'na chaptin,
 Fear 'na dhròbhair mór air martaibh,
 Fear air a luing mhóir an Sasuinn,
 Fear 'na cheannard air sluagh feachdach.

120. COISICH, A RÙIN (c. 1625)

Coisich, a rùin
hù ill o ro,

lùb nan geal-làmh,
ho i ibh ó,

Ceud soraidh bhuam
hù ill o ro,

dha na Hearadh,
och hoireann eó.

Ceud soraidh bhuam,
hù ill o ro,

dha na Hearadh,
ho i ibh ó,

Gu Iain Caimbeul
hù ill o ro,

donn mo leannan,
och hoireann eó.

Gu Iain Caimbeul
hù ill o ro,

donn mo leannan,
ho i ibh ó

Innis dha-san
hù il o ro

gu bheil mi fallain,
och hoireann eó.

Gun do chuir mi
 Bu tric a laigh
 Ma laigh, cha b' ann
 'N lagan uaigneach
 Gum b' iad na h-eòin
 'S gaoth nan àrdbheann
 'S uisge fìorghlan
 Mar fhìon uaibhreach
 Sinn beul ri beul
 Do bheul cùbhraidh
 'S mi fo chirb do
 Fo bhile na
 Fo theanga 'n fhéidh

'n geamhradh fairis;
 mi fo t' earradh,
 aig a' bhaile,
 'n cluain a' bharraich,
 ar luchd faire,
 draghadh fairis,
 fuarghlan fallain
 dol an glainne,
 breug cha chanainn,
 sùghadh m' anail,
 bhreacain bhallaich.
 luinge fada,
 a nì langan.

'S fliuch an oidhche
 Gun d' thug Cloinn Nill
 Ma 's fhìor dhomh fhìn
 Le 'n longanan
 Le 'm brataichean

nochd 's gur fuar i,
 druim a' chuain orr';
 chì mi bhuam iad,
 loma luatha,
 gorm is uaine,

Le' n ulagan
 Mo leannan fhìn
 Greim air an stiùir
 Cha b' fhear cearraig
 No fear làimhe deis'

Their mi 'n fhirinn
 'S tu 'm fireannach
 Shaltair air feur
 Laigh air a thaobh
 No chuir cas am

Gura mise
 Bho 'n chiad Mhàrt
 M' òg fhleasgach donn
 Cùl do chinn air
 Freasdal léine
 Chan eil feum air
 Ged nach eil, tha
 Mórán mór de
 Gura mise
 Air mo ghualadh,
 Falbh am màireach
 Ma tha, chan ann
 Gus do chur
 Dh' aindeoin na bheil
 Thug mi 'n oidhche
 Bheir mi 'n oidhche
 Cha laigh smal air
 Gun téid ùir air
 Ùir air sùil mo

Réiteach an nochd
 Ma dh' fhaodas mi
 Sùilean ghobhar
 Nan cluinninn té
 Spìonainn bun is
 Gu falbhadh m' fheòil

cruinne cruaidhe,
 air bhòrd fuaraidh,
 nuair bu chruaidh' i;
 bheireadh bhuat i,
 is fuachd air;

's chan i an t-sochair,
 leam bu docha
 gorm no fochann,
 deas no toisgeal,
 bròig no 'n osan.

nach eil fallain
 o thùs an earraich,
 ris a' bhalla
 deile daraich,
 chaoil dha 'n anart;
 léigh 'nad bhaile,
 feum air anart,
 choinnlean geala.
 th' air mo sgaradh,
 air mo ghearradh,
 leat o 'n bhaile,
 gu do bhanais -
 'san ùir am falach,
 beò 's na chailleadh.
 a raoir air t' fhaire,
 nochd ann fhathast,
 coinnean geala
 sùil mo leannain,
 cheud-ghràidh falaich.

'sa bhail' uarach,
 nì mi buannachd,
 'n ceann nan gruagach;
 eile luaidh riut
 bàrr mo chuailein,
 'na ceò uaine.

Mo mhill, mo mhill,
Mo shiùcar is
Mo cheòl clàrsaich
Mo dhìtheinean

mo mhill fhìn thu,
mo cheòl fìdhle,
'n àird 's an ìseal,
eadar ghartaibh.

121. AN RAOIR BHRUADAIR MI 'N AISLING (c. 1630)

An raoir 'bhruadair mi 'n aisling
 'Bhi mu bhruachaibh mo leapa
 Am fear mòr a bha 'n streap air gu falbh,
 An raoir bhruadair, &c.

Gur h-e 'n Griogarach gasda
 Leis 'm bu mhiannach mar fhasan
 A bhi 'g òl air fion daithte nan còrn.

Uisge-beatha na braiche
 Bhiodh an cupaichean glasa;
 'S chuir' á pìoban tombaca leis ceò.

Gu 'm bu taitneach leat agad
 An àm éiridh 's a' mhaduinn
 Sár-ghiomanach dag air ghleus òir.

Leat bu mhiannach coin lùghmhor
 'Dhol a shiubhail nan stùc-bheann
 Leis a' ghunna nach diùltadh roimh òrd.

'S tu gu 'n loisgeadh am fùdar
 Mach air uilinn nan stùc-bheann
 Ris an eilid 's ri ùdlaiche 'n lòn.

Bhiodh gu làr an damh cabarach
 A's fiamhaiche 'chaidileas
 'S a b' fhiadhaiche 'chasadh a shròn.

Agus earbag an aonaich
 Bu luath dhìreadh na fraochan;
 Leat bu mhiannach, a ghaoil, 'bhi ga còir.

'S car' do Ghriogair òg ruadh thu,
 'S b' e sin connspunn a' chruadail;
 Leat gu 'n éireadh Coir-Uanain bho 'n chrò.

Gura car' thu Mhac-Cailein
'Us do 'n Iarla bha 'm Bealach
Gus an trialladh luchd-ealaidh gu leòir.

'S car' thu 'Dhòmhnull Gorm Sléiteach
'S do dh' Iarl' Anntruim an Éirinn
Dha 'm bu dual a bhi treubhach ro-mhòr.

122. THUG MI 'N OIHCHE, GE B' FHAD' I (c. 1630)

Thug mi 'n oidhche ge b' fhad' i
 O hu a leò ho ro ho,
 Chaidh an cadal a dhìth orm,

 Hò ro hill a rinn à,
 Hò ro hù ri rinn à,
 Hó ro hu a leò ro ho.

Chaidh an cadal a dhìth orm,
 O hu a leò ho ro ho,
 'S mi ri amharc nam bràithrean,
 Hò ro hill, etc.

'S mi ri coimhead nam bràithrean,
 O hu a leò, etc.

Bh' anns a' phàirc an taobh shìos dhiom;
 Gum bu sin na fir fhurail,
 Fhuair an t-urram 's a b' fhiach e,
 'S math ur gnothach 's a' Ghearmailt,
 Gur neo-chearbach ur gnìomh ann;
 Thig an claidheamh siar faraibh,
 Neul fala gu 'n dias air;
 Thig an clogada cruadhach
 Air gruaig nan clann snìomhainn.

Ach, òganaich laghaich,
 Sguir dha m' thadhal 's mi suarach,
 'S mi gun tugadh ort comhairl',
 Nan gabhadh tu bhuam i -
 Gun bhith trom air a' chadal,
 Mun tèid t' aigne air bhruaillein,
 Na bi ursainn gu h-ursainn
 Le gugach na truaighe.

123. DUANAG (?1633)

Mo cheist air altram mo ghlùine,
 Mo sheachd rùn is rùn mo chéile.

Hithil inn is horo éile,
 Ho i ù o hù o éile,
 Hithil inn is horo éile.

Nam biodh agad, a ghaoil, fearann
 Cha robh gearradh anns an spréidh dhomh.

'S iad do chlann mac a ghabh fògradh,
 Fhuair cuid dhiubh fòd ann an Éirinn.

Is gur lionmhor agad caraid
 Air gach caraid air an téid thu.

Thall 's a-bhos mu Abhainn Lòcha
 Gheibheadh tusa seòid a dh' éireadh.

Gun éireadh Camshronaich mu d' ghuaillibh
 Mun chinneadh iad tuais no beud ort.

Dh' éireadh Mac Leòid na Hearadh
 'S na bheil am fearann Shir Seumas.

Na 'm bu bhean a dheanadh lochd mi
 Cha bhiodh oighre air a' chnoc Slèibhteach.

Siud a Rìgh ! gur beag mo dhùil
 Ris an fhear nach dùirigeadh éirigh.

'S nach tigeadh gu taobh mo leapach
 A thoirt na plaide dhiom air éiginn.

124. AIR SIR DÙGHALL ACH-NAM-BREAC, MARBHRANN (c. 1642)

'S uaigneach a nochd cathair Dhùghaill,
 Chaidh a dùnadh ri ceòl 's ri aighear,
 Am bruth sìth amhluigh ghòraich
 Gun sailm, gun chòisir, gun tathaich.

Gun chlàrsaich dhonn de 'n fhiodh chùbhraidh,
 Gun sheanchaidh, gun fhilidh [labhairt]
 Gun fhear-dàn anns a' bhruth òirdheirc
 Gun mhnaoi mhìn-gheal gun [leughadh leabhar].

A Dhùghaill òig mhic Dhonnchaidh chliùitich
 'S i do chùis bu mhór r' a h-iomradh
 Basraich bhan fo ghàraich leanabh
 'S truagh am pannall ud mu d' thimchioll.

Ach 's beag leam sud a dheanamh d' sheachas
 Sagsonach thu, Frangach, Spàinneach
 Lochlannach thu, Breatannach binneach
 An fhuil a's mire 'ghin o Adhamh.

125. DO DH' ALASDAIR MAC COLLA (c. 1645)

Alasdair chridhe
 mhic Cholla mhic Dhòmhnail,
 B' aithne dhomh féin
 an gnìomh bu mhòr leat:
 [Fo t' iomadh tràth
 Ag òl gach treòradh]
 'S do bhratach ri
 crannaibh 'ga seòladh.

Alasdair Oig
 an Dòmhnail gu Liosmartach,
 An uidheamachadh stròile
 's na h-eòin gioragach –
 Air sluagha grànnda
 do dhèanadh tu conbhail
 Le do mhuinntir-sa
 sluaigh Connluth.

126. 'S MULADACH MI 'S MI AIR M' AINEOIL (c. 1645)

'S muladach mi 's mi air m' aineoil,
 Hao rì, ri ri ri a bhó,
 'S éisleineach mi 's a chùil rainich,
 Iu o hao ri ho,
 O hao ri ri iu ho ro ho.

'S éisleineach mi 's a chùil rainich,
 Hao rì, etc.

'S nach fhaic mi tighinn mo leannan,
 Iu o hao, etc.

'S nach fhaic mi tighinn mo leannan,
 Hao rì, etc.

Geugaire fionn foinnidh fearail,
 E air shealbh mo lorg a leantail,
 E air shealbh mo phòig' a mhealadh;
 Gun saoradh Dia mi o t' ainbhiach !
 Gheall thu mo phòsadh gun cheannach,
 Caisteal a dheanamh do dh' Anna,
 Ùbhlán òir a chur air chrannaibh.

'S e m' eudail mhór Mac 'ic Ailein,
 Dh' aithnichinn do long mhór an caladh,
 A bhith togail a siùil gheala,
 Fuaim an t-sìoda r' a cuid chrannaibh;
 Dhomhsa b' aithne beus do bhaile,
 Èirigh moch air madainn earraich,
 Ruaig a thoirt do Bheinn a' Bhealaich,
 A chur na tòir air na Gallaibh,
 Toirt uath' an còrach, dheòin no dh' aindheoin !

Dh' innsinn-sa beus an tighearn' òig dhuibh,
 Taigh mór farsainn, ùrlar còmhnaidh,
 A bhith cur shaighdearan an òrdugh,
 Le ghunna fo sgéith an dòblait.

'S e m' eudail mór Mac 'ic Ailein,
 Dhomhsa b' aithne beus do bhaile;
 Martfheoil 'ga bruich, crodh 'ga feannadh,

Bacastair a' bruich an arain,
 Grùdairean a' ligeil leanna,
 Maighdeannan a' fuaigheal anairt,
 'S a' cur an t-sìoda air am ballaibh,
 Air an guaillean, 's air an eangaibh;
 Fiamh an duin' òig air an t-sean-duin',
 Fiamh na maighdin air a' chaillich;
 Dhomhsa b' aithne beus do bhaile,
 Chan e beòir a nì thu cheannach -
 Fuaim an fhìon a' dol 's a channa,
 Branndaidh chruaidh a nuas a Gallaibh;
 'S e m' eudail mhór Mac 'ic Ailein,
 Pòiteir an fhìon 'san taigh leanna,
 'S mar dh' òladh càch, phàigheadh Ailean !

127. ALASDAIR MHIC CHOLLA GASDA (c. 1645)

Alasdair mhic, hó hò, Cholla gasda, hó hò,
As do làimh-sa, hó hò dh' earbainn tapachd, trom éile.

Chall éileadh ì (solo)
Chall o ho ro (tutti)
Chall éileadh ì (solo)
Chall o ho ro (tutti)
Chall na hao ri ri (solo)
Chall o ho ro ó (tutti)
Haghaidh o ho ó, trom éileadh.

As do làimh-sa, dh' earbainn tapachd,
Mharbhadh Tighearn', Ach' nam Breac leat,
Chall éileadh ì, etc.

Mharbhadh Tighearn', Ach' nam Breac leat,
Thiodhlaigeadh e, an oir an lochain,
Ged 's beag mi fhìn chuir mi ploc air,
'S chuir siod gruaim air Niall a' Chaisteil,
'S dh' fhàg e lionndubh air a mhac-sa,
'S bha Nì Lachlainn fhéin 'ga bhasadh,
'S bha Nic Dhòmhnaill 'n dèidh a creachadh;
Cha b' iognadh sin b' fhiach a mac e
Dronncair, pòiteir, seòlt' air marcachd,
Ceannard an airm an tùs a' bhatail,

Sheinneadh pìob leat mhór air chnocan,
Dh' òladh fìon leat dearg am portaibh.
Chuala mi 'n dé sgeul nach b' ait liom,
Glaschu bheag bhith 'na lasair,
'S Obair-eadhain an dèidh a chreachadh.

128. CLANN DÒMHNUILL AN COGADH RÌGH TEÀRLACH I (1645)

Horo hì hòireanan
 Hòro chall éile,
 'S na horo hì hòireanan.

Tha mo chion air Clann Dòmhnuaill,
 Dream ògalachd éuchdach.

Clann Dòmhnuaill na gallain,
 Sìol allail Chuinn Cheudchath'ch.

Sìol Chuinn nan ceud cath,
 Gur cian 'chaidh all' air ur n-éuchdan.

Clann Dòmhnuaill a' chruadail,
 Nach biodh suarach mu 'chéile.

Clann Dòmhnuaill nam faiche,
 Nam bratach, 's nan geurlann.

Luchd nan còtaichean sgàrlaid,
 Chit' an deàrrsadh là gréine.

Luchd nan còtaichean gearra,
 Dha 'm maith dha 'n tig féileadh.

Luchd nan osanan ballach,
 'S nan gartanan glè-dhearg.

Luchd nan calpannan tomult,
 Mar bhoght' air 'dheagh ghleusadh.

Luchd nam boghannan iubhair,
 'Chuireadh siubhal fo shaighdeabh.

Luchd tharruing nam biodag,
 Fo chrìosan an fhéilidh.

'S nan gunnachan dubha,
'Dheanadh bruthadh is reubadh.

'S nan claidheamhnan geala,
Chìt' air bhearradh an t-sléibhe.

Dream uaibhreach nam buillean,
Siud a' bhuidheann nach géilleadh.

Gun cinnich an Dòmhnach
Le Clann Dòmhnuille na féille.

Luchd nan sgiath 's nan lann tana,
Neul na fala gu 'n déis orr'.

'S ann an dèidh ur làimhe
Gheibht' an cnàimh air na réidhlean.

Clann Dòmhnaille a' chruadail,
Thug a' bhuaidh am Blàr Léine.

Clann Dòmhnuille nan gaisgich,
Dream gun ghaiseadh, gun éislein.

Thug sibh mionnan a' Bhìobuill,
An srath ìseal Allt-Éirinn.

Nach rachadh claidheamh an truail
Gu 'm biodh a' bhuaidh aig Rìgh Seurlas.

Gu ma slàn do na gilleann,
'Dh' fhalbh an iomairt Rìgh Seurlas.

[Tha mo chion air an fhleasgach
'Dh' fhàg mu fheasgar an Dè mi.

Och, a Rìgh, 's a Mhic Muire !
Leam a b' aithghearr a' chéilidh.]

129. BIODH AN DEOCH-S' AIR LÀIMH MO RÙIN (1) (c. 1650)

LUINNEAG:-Biodh an deoch-s' air làimh mo rùin,
 Slàinte le fear an tùr;
 Biodh an deoch-s' air làimh mo rùin.

Sùil ga 'n tug mi thar mo ghuala,
 Sheall mi air a' chuan gu dlùth.

Chunna mi long thar na caoiltean,
 'S fear mo ghaoil a' teannadh rium.

Bu sgairteil i a' tigh'nn troimh 'n fhairge,
 'S coltas làimh-dheirg air an stiùir.

Chunna mi a staigh mu 'n Mhaoil i,
 'S badan fraoich am bàrr a siùil.

'N uair a chunnaic mi air sàil i,
 Bheannaich mi 'n long bhàn air tùs.

Bheannaich mi 'càbaill 's a h-achdair,
 A buill-bheirte 's a cairt-iùil.

Dhìrich e 'mach gual' a' bhealaich,
 Fear dh' am math a thig bròg ùr;

Fear dh' am math a thig an t-éileadh,
 Calpa cruinn fo 'n fhasan ùr;

Boineid ghorm a chosgadh ginidh,
 Slat de ribean dubh 'na cùl.

Bu dàna leam thu ràdh am balach
 Ri Mac Mhic Ailein nan tùr.

Mac an athar b' fheàrr na t' athair-s',
 An gnìomh, an tapadh, 's an cliù.

'S mairg a shamhladh Cola creagach
 Ri Dùn-bheagain no Duntuilm.

Òladh no na òladh càch e,
 Bidh mo chàirt-s' air ceann a' bhùird.

Cha 'n fhaca mi òl an t-seipein,
 Gus 'n do sheas mi ann bhur cùirt.

'S e a chleachd mi òl nan gallan
 Anns an tall' am biodh a' mhùirn.

'S e a chleachd mi òl an fhìona,
 'S iad 'ga riaghladh mu na bùird.

Ged a tha mi 'n so an Cola,
 B' e mo thoil a dhol do Rùm.

'S rachainn as a sin do dh' Uibhist,
 Ach mo ghuidhe a dhol leam,

'Choimhead muime chaoin nam mac
 A rinn an t-altrum air a glùin,

'S mur a biodh gur tu mo bhràthair,
 'S mi nach àicheadh idir thu.

130. BIODH AN DEOCH-S' AIR LÀIMH MO RÙIN (2) (c. 1661)

Biodh an deoch-s' air làimh mo rùin,
 Deoch-slàinte do Fhear an Tùir,
 Biodh an deoch-s' an làimh mo rùin.

Leigidh mi às an t-seisreach
 Is am feasgar a' leagadh drùchd.

Sguiridh mi 'threabhadh an fheur,
 Gus am feuchair mi 'n Dùn.

Dh' òlainn deoch-slàinte mo thighearna,
 'S tu gu 'n riaraicheadh na crùin.

Oladh no na òladh càch i,
 Bidh mo chàirt-sa 'n ceann a' bhùird.

Dh' òladh mi deoch-slàinte 'rithist
 Air oighre dligheach Dhùntuilm.

Deoch-slàinte Dhòmh'll Ghuirm Shléibhtich,
 'S ceann-feadhna ro' d' mhuinntir thu.

Gur a h-e mo rùn an gasan
 'Chaidh air each 's a' chnocan chruinn.

'Dhìrich a-mach guala Bhocaich,
 'Fhir as cleachdaiche gruag chùil.

Dh' fhalbh thu seachdain roimh Fhéill-Brìde,
 Dia 'na dhìein dhuit 's gach cùis.

Thig thu seachdain roimh Fhéill-Pàdruig,
 'S bidh Dia làidir air do chùil.

Chaidh thu 'phosadh a Dhùn-éideann,
 Sheumais Oig 'ic Dhòmh'll Ghuirm.

Ri nighean Mhic Leòid nam bratach,
Glac gheal a mhalairt nan crùn.

'S i bain-tighearna Chaisteil-thioram
Craobh as ion'aiche 'bha dhiubh.

C' àit' 'n do shuidh i air a còta,
No a sgaoil i foidhpe gùn,

Aon a thug orr' bàrr an glaine
'N tùr, am maise, is am mùirn ?

Mo rùn air muime nam macaibh,
Bhiodh gan altrum air a glùin.

Ach 'nan gabhadh iad an t-scòlaid,
Bu mhaith an còmh dhail a-null.

Bhiodh beannachd na daoine bochda
'N ceann na drochaid air an cionn.

'S ogha mise do 'n aosdàna
'Bheannaich an long bàn air tùs.

'Bheannaich a càbla 's a h-acfhuinn,
A buill-bheirte, 's a cairt-iùil.

'S lìonmhor orr' fear sgéithe gile,
Togsaid a' sileadh fo rùm.

'S ged nach eil gunnachan againn,
'S iomadh clach dheth 'n d' thug sinn rùsg.

131. CRODH CHAILEIN (c. 1650)

Crodh Chailein, crodh Chailein,
 Crodh Chailein, mo ghaoil,
 Crodh riabhach breac ballach,
 Air dhath nan eun-fraoich.

Tha a' chailinn gun leannan,
 'S tha 'm balach gun mhnaoi,
 'S tha a' bhuarach, 's a' chuinneag
 Anns a' mhunadh air chall.

Tha a' chailleach 's i bodhar,
 'S tha 'm bodach 's e cam,
 'S cha léir dhoibh 'n crodh 'bhleoghann,
 Le ceò odhar nan càrn.

'S iad mo ghràdh-sa crodh Chailein,
 'Bheir am bann' air an fhraoch,
 Air mullach a' mhunaidh,
 Gun duine 'n an taobh.

Air mullach a' mhunaidh,
 Gun duine 'n an taobh,
 Le gogan, gun bhuarach,
 Gun laoighcinn, gu laogh.

'S i bó Bean-an-taighe -
 Bó leathann, dhubh-liath;
 Bó lìonadh an gogan,
 'S bó thogail nan laogh.

'S cha 'n eil leithid mo bhà-sa
 Ann am bàthach an rìgh;
 Cluinnear 'geum' an Dùn-Éideann,
 'S i-fhéin 'an Gleann Laoigh.

'S 'n uair 'thigeadh am feasgar,
 'S àm eadrach nan laogh,

Gu 'n tig mo ghaol dhachaidh,
'N dèigh 'bhi cosgradh an fhéidh.

'S ge b' oil leis an fhorsair,
'S ged a chailleadh e 'chiall,
Bidh mise 's mo leannan
Ann an gleannan nam fiadh.

'Dol a mach ri Gleann Eigh,
'S tigh'nn a's tigh air Gleann Dé,
Bho ghleannan gu gleannan,
Sìor-leanail an fhéidh.

Bho ghleannan gu gleannan,
Sìor-leanail an fhéidh,–
Far an caidil na h-aighean,
'S na minn ri an taobh.

Cha 'n eil mo mhiann sìthne
'N Gleann Sìth no 'n Gleann Dé,
No idir 'n Gleann Tatha,
No 'n Garbh-choirichean Dhé.

Cha téid mi 'n a' Bheachan,
No a ghleidheadh nan laogh;
Bidh fear a' bhreacain chaoil, chathaich,
'G am fheitheamh 's an fhraoch.

132. AN CRÒNAN MUILEACH (c. 1650)

E ho i o hu o éileadh,
 E ho i o hù orin o;
 E ho i o hu o éileadh,
 Hì ri hù na hùraibh o ho.

Gur h-e mise 'tha gam làthadh,
 Tha mo shùil 'na bùrn 's na 'ceathach,
 'S mi gun cheòl, gun òl, gun aighear,
 Mu 'n dol sìos 'th' air sìol an taighe.

Mu 'n dol sìos 'th' air sìol an taighe;
 Lachlainn a dh' fhalbh bhuainn mu Fhéill-Eathain,
 Mo sheachd rùin 'chaidh dhiùbh mu Shamhainn,
 'S ceann mo mhùirn an cunnart fhathast.

Ceann mo mhùirn an cunnart fhathast;
 Mac na deagh mhnà 'chinneadh m' athar;
 Màthair nam mac mìn-gheal, flathail,
 Nach d' fhuair beum air ghleus g' am faighear.

Nach d' fhuair beum air ghleus g' am faighear,
 Am fairg', an doire, no 'n abhainn.
 Tha 'n dòbhran fo lorg bhur n-abhag,
 'S bheir sibh leum a céil' an aighe.

Gur h-e mis' a fhuair an clisgeadh
 Iad a dh' fhalbh an tùs am pisich;
 Comunn nan gruag 's nan coin slìos-gheal,
 O 'n taigh mhór 's am biodh am briotal.

O 'n taigh mhór 's am biodh am briotal,
 Toirm air thàileasg, clàir 'gam piocadh,
 'S iad ag òl gu pòiteil, misgeil,
 Le beul an t-sùgraidh 's a' ghliocais.

Gur h-e mise 'th' air mo chuaradh
 Mu shliochd nam fear o 'n Leth Uachdraich;

Siol Ailein duinn, chòrnaich, chuachaich,
Bho rubha ciar na h-àirde fuaraidh;

Bho rubha ciar na h-àirde fuaraidh,
'S bho Chaol Muile 'n luingis luainich
'Sheòladh gu Dubhairt na stuaidhe,
Tùr àrd 'sam biodh bàird air bhuannachd.

Gheibhteadh an Dubhairt na stuaidhe
Leathanaich, Camshronaich, Tuathaich,
Stiùbhartaich o 'n ghleannan uachdrach,
'S Mac-Dhùghaill o thùr nan clach uaine.

Ach cò 'n neach air nach tig mùthadh,
Mar na neòil 'sna speuraibh dubh-ghorm !
Cinneadh làidir nan lann rùisgte,
'S truagh mar tha iad roimh na Duibhnich.

Nuair 'thainig sibh siar an toiseach,
Bha sibh buadhail anns gach cogadh,
Lannan cruaidh' dhuibh 's bhualteadh goirt iad;
Chuirteadh feum air léigh dh' an lotaibh.

An àm dol 'sìos do 'n dhream Dhuibhneach,
Dol suas le buaidh 'bu dual dhuibhse;
'S fada chluinnteadh gàbh bhur muinntir
'Togail fhaobhair taobh gach tulachain.

Bu taitneach leam fhìn co dhiù sin,
Aon mhac Shir Ailein nan lùireach,
Cuilein leoghainn nan long siùbhlach
'Bhith 'cur lasrach ri aitreabh Dhuibhneach.

Ach 'Fhir ris an deanam m' ùirnigh,
'S mi mar Oisein 'n dèidh an rùsgaidh,
Tionndaidh an roth mar bu dù dha,
'S cuir an tìr so 'n òrdugh dhuinne.

Gu bheil m' inntinn-sa fo smalan,
Is mo shùilean gum bi galach
Gus am faic mi rìsd an latha
'Am bi dol suas air sìol an taighe.

133. RINN MI MOCHEIRIGH GU ÉIRIGH (c. 1650)

Hó hó, ho la ill ó,
 Ho ì ó ho nàilìbh i,
 Hó hó, ho la ill ó.

Rinn mi mocheirigh gu éirigh,
 Hó hó, etc.

Cha b' ann a dh' uallach na spréidhe,
 No ghleidheadh an fhochainn Chéitein,
 Ach chumail coinneamh ri m' fheudail -
 Nighean Mhic Ailein, na bi 'n eud rium,
 Tha mi 'n troma-ghaol air do cheudghaol,
 Tha mi sin, ma 's oil leat fhéin e;
 Rachainn leat ro' chuan na h-Éireann,
 Far am bi muir àrd ag éirigh,
 Loingeas a' loisgeadh ri chéile,
 Mucan mara móra séideil.

Atharraich

Rachainn leat ro' chùl-taigh dùinte,
 Far am faighinn modh is mùirne,
 Daoin' uaisle mu bhòrdaibh dùmhail,
 Ruidhleadh mu seach air an ùrlar,
 Le pìob mhór nam feadan siùbhlach.

Atharraich

Rachainn leat ro' chuidh' na spréidhe,
 Far am bi laoigh òg a' leumnaich
 Mnathan a' caoidh, crodh a' geumraich,
 Gaoir nan creach 'gan toirt o chéile,
 'S nach aithnich mi mo chuid fhéin dhiu.
 Mhnathan, nach tog sibh fo m' éighe ?
 Togaidh mise, leagaibh péin e,
 'S ann dhomh fhìn bu chòir a h-éigheach.

Atharraich

Ochan, 's och mar a tha mise,
 An dùthaich a bhith gun cheann-cinnidh,
 Freasdal làn an dùirn a ghiollan;
 Nan éireadh gach eun le fhine,
 Dh' éireadh na Dòmhnallaich linne.
 Camshronaich o 'n gharbh-bheinn bhioraich,
 'S Leathanaich nach leugh an giorag,
 Chuireadh Sìol Leòid air an uilinn –
 'S tìom dhuinn, a ghaoil, a bhith tilleadh.

Atharraich

Nam bithinn-se làidir fearail,
 'S neart Chù Chulainn a bhith 'm bhallaibh,
 B' aithne dhomh cò chùirt a leannainn
 Cha b' i cùirt Mhic 'Ille Chaluim
 Cùirt a' Ghruamaich, cùirt a' Ghallaich,
 Cùirt an Dòmhnaill Ghuirm nach maireann.

Atharraich

Nam bithinn-se làidir eòlach,
 'S gum b' aithne dhomh mo bhogha sheòladh,
 Chuirinn am blàr le Cloinn Dòmhnaill,
 Le Sìol Ailein nan long leòmhant'.

Atharraich

Chuirinn fhìn mo gheall 's mo theann-gheall
 Dh' fhaodainn siud, ge b' e mo cheann e,
 Gun cuireadh sibh creach 'na deannruith,
 Steach le leathad corrach gainntir,
 O mhullach beinne gu beul fainge.

134. 'S MISE BHEAN BHOCHD DHUBHACH DHEURACH (c. 1650)

FONN: Hill irin ó hó
 Huill eo ro bha hó,
 Hill ir inn ì hó a ó ro
 Huill eo a ro ho.

Gura muladach a thà mi
 Dìreadh na beinne 's 'ga teàrnadh,
 Hill inn ó, etc.

Dìreadh na beinne 's 'ga teàrnadh;
 Thuit mo chridhe, 's fhad' o 'n là sin,
 Hill inn ó hó, etc.
 Thuit mo chridhe, 's fhad' o 'n là sin,
 Cha tog fiodhull e, no clàrsach,
 No piob mhór nam feadan àrda.
 'S ann agam fhìn a bha na bràithrean
 Dh' iomradh, dh' éigheadh, dh' òladh, phàigheadh,
 Chuireadh an cluich air an tàileasg,
 'S air na cairtean breaca, bàna,
 'S air na dìsnean geala cnàmha.
 'S cha b' e 'n Aoine rinn ur n-àireamh,
 Ach a' bhean a bha gun nàire,
 Di-Dòmhnach is Là na Sàbaid,
 'S a' chiad Di-Luain an ceann na ràithe.

'S truagh, a Rìgh, nach tigeadh ise,
 A làmh leòinte, 's a cas briste,
 'S i 'g iarraidh léigh am beul gach litreach,
 'S gun aon léigh 'san tìr ach mise;
 'S air mo làimh gun dearbhainn misneachd,
 Lùbainn cnàimh 's gun tàirninn silteach,
 Gus an càirinn i air islig,
 'S chàirinn ùir air bruaich a lice.

'S mise a' bhean dhubhach, dheurach,
 Chan ann a lughad mo spréidhe,
 Ach mu Iain Mùideartach na féile;

Chunnaic mi latha bha feum ort,
 Latha Cnoc nan Dos bha gleus ort,
 Latha Cill Saighde bha feum ort,
 Dhòirt thu fuil' is gheàrr thu féithean,
 Dh' fhàg thu nàmhaid air dhroch-reubadh;
 'S iomadh fear a bha gu deurach,
 Agus bean air bheagan céille,
 Mnathan òga call an céile,
 'S ionnan mise 's mar tha té dhiu,
 Gun chomas falt mo chinn a reubadh.

Cha chadal dhomh ach 'nam dhùsgadh -
 Chunna mi do thaigh 'ga rùsgadh,
 'S marcaich' an eich dhuibh air thùs' ann,
 'S marcaich' na fàlaire dùbhghlais,
 Marcaich' an eich chrùidhich chlisnich,
 Le spuir òir 's le spòig nach bristeadh.

135. ORAN DO DH' EACHANN MAC-GILLEAIN TRIATH DHUBHAIRT
(1651)

Ach ge grianach an latha
Gur a cianail an rathad
So, tha mise 'ga ghabhail,
'Dh-fhios an tùir an robh m' aighear,
Is mac mòr Mhic-Gilleain,
'S e gun sùgradh 'na laighe,
'S nach eil e ri fhaighinn 'na shlàinte.

Cha bu chruaidh leam mo chàirdean
An là ud 'ga m' fhàgail;
Chan iad tha mi 'g àireamh,
Ach mo bharanta làidir
Agus t' fhearann gun àiteach,
'Fhir 'thug fortan le càirdeas gun sgraing dhomh.

Dhomh bu deacair toirt thairis
Lùb ùr nan sùl meallach
Is na calpannan geala,
Is na deudaich chùbhr' anail,
Tha thu 'shinnsribh nam fear nach robh sgàthach.

Mac thu b' uaisl' o Shir Lachainn
O nighinn Ruairidh nam bratach.
Chuir thu buaireadh air m' aigheadh,
Agus deòir air mo rasgaibh;
Chuir mi m' uaislean an leapachan tàmh.

Ceann mo lòn ri uair m' ainneis !
Bha dìol gruaig air mo leanabh,
Cùl grinn cuachach nan camag,
'S e mar fheòirnein 'na charaibh;
'S tu 'bu mhòr-chuiseach sealladh.-
Gum bu rìgh thu 'measg barrach fir Alba.

'S iomad tlachd 'bh' ort ri àireamh:
Aghaidh shìobhalta, bhàn-gheal,
'S gnùis flathail, ghlan, mhàlda;

Gun robh gruaidhean an àrmuinn,
 Cheart cho dearg ris an sgàrlaid,
 D' an robh gliocas is càirdeas gun anamoich'.

'Mhìc an àrmuinn a Muile,
 On a rinneadh leat fuireach
 Anns a' bhlàr 'san robh 'n cumasg,
 Do thaobh mìn-gheal làn bhuillean,
 'S do luchd-leanmhuinn a' fulang,
 'S lag is sgìth mi ri tuireadh mo chàirdean.

Thuit mo cho-dhalta tapaidh
 Thall fo bhaile na faiche,
 Làn de chruadal 's de ghaisge;
 'S ged bu chràiteach mar thachair,
 Cha 'n e sin 'tha mi 'g acain
 Ach an sgiùrs a fhuair Eachann roimh 'nàimhdean.

Càit an d' rugadh no dh' àraicheadh,
 No 'n do ghineadh mac àrmuinn,
 Pearsa duin' a thug bàrr ort
 Nuair a ghlacadh tu 'n Spàinteach
 Lìobhta churanta, làidir,
 Is a chuireadh tu fàilt' air do champa ?

Ged a thigeadh fir Shùineirt,
 Is Clann-Iain o 'n Rùta,
 Is Clann-Chamshroin nach diùltadh
 Le 'm boghaichibh cùl-bhuidh',
 Is le 'n saighdibh 'bu shiùbhlach,
 Bhiodh gach boineid a' lùbadh do m' luaidh-sa.

Ged bu dùmhail am feachd ud,
 Is iad cruinn air aon fhaiche,
 Is mo ghràdh a teachd seachad
 Bu leis urram gach maise.-
 Is mairg màthair do m' mac thu,
 Is mairg muime 'rinn t' altrum,
 No a chunnaic cur seachad na h-ùir ort.

Gur h-e mis' 'th' air mo sgaradh
Mu na chùirt 'th' aig na Gallaibh,
'S ogha Ruairidh 'na leanabh,
Dalta dileas mo sheanar.-
Bha thu 'n càirdeas Mhic-Cailein,
Is an rìgh a bh' air Manainn
'Bha gu ciallaideach, carraideach, ainmeil.

136. EOGHAINN MHIC IAIN MHIC AILEIN (c. 1660)

Eoghain mhic Iain mhic Ailein
 Dhomhsa b' aithne beus do bhaile;
 Pìob 'ga spreigeadh, long 'ga tarruing,
 'Bhi 'g òl fìon, á pìosaibh glainne.
 O i oirinn, O i o u, O i oirinn. O i o ro,
 O i oirinn, O i o u, Thog u oirinn, O i o ro.

O gur e mo rùin 's mo roghainn,
 Is buidhe 'chùl 's is gile 'aghaidh;
 Cha bhuachaille bhà na ghobhar,
 Ach sealgair féidh thu 's a' choir' odhar.

Ach tha fear ann san t-sròn odhar,
 'S an t-sròn chuilionn thall mu 'chomhair
 Far am bì meann aig gach gobhair,
 Laoghan aig a' ghamhain 'deòlaidh
 Agus uanan aig an òisge,
 Measair chairt mar chuman bleoghain.

Ach tha againn an Dun Éideann
 Ceannard na comhairle 's na céille,
 Thig e dhachaigh 's nì e réite
 'S bithidh fir Bhaideanach nan sléibh dhuinn.

'S gàbhaidh leam t' aigne fhir Chluanaidh,
 Ged 'tha saibhlean agad 's cruachan,
 Dag a' chinn òir air do chruachainn,
 Ge sin féin is pailte uaislean.

Ach, a Mhuire, sgrios gu 'm faic mi
 Air luchd nam mogana glasa,
 Ged 'tha 'n t-aois air tigh'nn tharpa;
 Shaoil iad gum b' iad féin 'bu tapaidh.
 Sud a bhuaidh nach d' fhuaras aca,
 'S nach fhaigh am bliadhna nas pailte.

Nuair thig oirne na fir gheala,
 A Mùideart 's a Gleanna-garadh,
 Fàgaidh iad Cloinn a' Mhuirich 'nan cabhaig,
 'S cha 'n fhàg iad feusag air fear dhiubh.

Na dh' fhalbh uainne air turus,
 Do dheòin, Dia, gun tig iad uile;
 Cha bhuin gàbha riutha no cunntart,
 Bithidh fuil pailt air Cloinn a' Mhuirich.

Dh' éireadh sud dà thaobh Ghlinn-ruaidh leat,
 Luchd nan leadan troma dualach
 Nach biodh sgàthach ri àm cruadail;
 Cha b' e 'n sùgradh 'dhol gam bualadh.

137. TÀLADH CHOINNICH ÒIG (?c. 1670)

Ach gur mise fhuair an cùnnradh
 nach d' fhuair aonan riamh am dhùthaich:
 cheannaich thu dhomh dusan gùintean,
 each is diallaid gus mo ghiùlan.

A Mhic Coinnich, fhuair thu 'n t-urram,
 théid thu mach gu làidir ullamh,
 dh' òilte leat fion baile Lunnainn,
 Machair Loudaidh fo d' chuid ghiullan.

A Mhic Coinnich nan stròl farsaing,
 mhic an t-seòid nach fuilingeadh masladh,
 bheireadh am fion d' a chuid eachaibh,
 cruidhean òir a chur fo 'n casan.

Chan 'eil Coinneach ach 'na leanabh,
 cha d' ràinig e aois a sheanar -
 marbhaich' an fhéidh anns na gleannaibh
 's an eòin bhig air bhàrr a' mheangain.

Gaol nam fear dha 'n tug mi toghaidh,
 's duibhe cùl 's as gile aghaidh,
 cha bhuachaille cruidh 's cha ghobhar,
 ach sealgair an fhéidh 's a' choir' odhar.

Dar théid Coinneach 'na chiad deise
 's lionmhor fear a bhios 'na fhreasdal,
 ceud 'nan suidhe, ceud 'nan seasamh,
 dà cheud deug 's a' ghualainn deis dha.

'S lionmhor duilleag 'th' air an draigheann
 eadar Bealltainn agus Samhuinn,
 's lionmhoir' na sin sgiath is claidheamh
 'n gualainn Choinnich Òig am Brathainn.

'S iomadh bean le 'gùinte stròl
 'S le ceanna òir air a crios,

air mo làimh-sa, Choinnich Oig,
là Féill-an-Ròid Inbhir Nis.

'S ann air Coinneach tha ghruag loinneil,
tha tobar fiona 'na mullach,
cha b' fhuilear leam dhi mar urram
triùir mhac an rìgh 'bhith 'ga cumadh.

A Mhic Coinnich na biodh gruaim ort,
cha do ghlac do mhàthair buarach
no plaide bhàn air a gualainn,
ach sìoda dearg is stròl uaine.

Na dhèan an gobhainn an claidheamh,
na dhèan an ceàrd an ceann reamhar,
na dhèan an fhleisdear an t-saighead
chuireas Mac Coinnich 'na laighe.

Ach gur h-e mo ghaol an comunn
air am faodainn féin mo shloinneadh -
luchd nan cùl buidh' agus donna
thall 's a bhos mu Eilean Donnain.

Ach gur h-e mo ghaol na h-àrmainn
dh' iarradh 's a dh' òladh 's a phàigheadh,
's a dhèanadh na buideil a thràghadh,
fir ghearra dhonna Chinn t-Sàile.

138. GHEIBHTE SUD AN TAIGH NA MAIGHE (c. 1639 or c. 1670)

Gheibhte sud an Taigh na Maighe,
 Ol is fìdhleireachd is aighear,
 Farum sìoda ris na fraighean,
 'Cur bhaintighearnan a laighe.

Gheibhte sud an Taigh Chluanaidh
 Cuirm is cupannan is cuachan,
 Teine mòr air beagan luaithre,
 'S iad fèin ag òl air fìon uaibhreach.

'Ghaoil Lachlainn na biodh gruaim ort,
 Cha do ghlac do mhàthair buarach,-
 Plaide bhàn chuir mu 'gualainn,
 Ach sìoda dearg is sròl uaine.

'Nuair 'théid Lachlann do Dhùn Èideann,
 Le each cruidheach, craobhach, leumach,
 Air beulaibh an rìgh gheibh e éisdeachd;
 'S gheibh a ghillean gun e fhéin e.

139. ORAN MÒR SGORABREAC (1) (ante 1671)

Ceud soraidh bhuam fhìn gu m' eòlas
 Go Sgorabreac am bi a' chòisir
 Chan ionnann sin 's mar dh' éirich dhomhsa
 Mi 'm bothan beag air dhroch còmh-dail
 Bidh siud aig Calum mac Dhòmhnail
 Ciste nan iuchraichean bòidheach
 De 'n umha de 'n airgead de 'n òr ann
 Far an dèan am marcaich tòirleum
 An talla farsaing Clann Dòmhnail
 An taigh mòr an ùrlair chòmhnaird
 Le seuthraichean 'gan cuir an òrdugh
 Far am faighte fion ri òl ann
 A cupan donna 'bheòil bhòidhich
 Miosairean is truinnsearan feòdair
 'S amar bruthaidh an eòrna
 Deoch cho làidir 's thig o 'n Olaind.

'S b' aithne dhomh fhìn beus bu dual dhuit
 'S beus de d' bheus bhith suirghe ghruagach
 'S a' cur nan geall, 's ann leat bu bhuadhmhor
 'S gheibhte sud an taigh an uasail
 Bhith 'g òl fion a pìosan fuara
 'N taigh mòr farsaing 's ùrlar sguabte
 Ruighleadh ubhal sìos is suas air.

'S gheibhte siod an taigh mo leannain
 Muc 'ga sgrìobadh 's mart 'ga feannadh
 'S coinneir òir air bhòrdaibh geala.

Doilleir dhorch air oidhche reòta
 Chaidh do bhàt' thar Rubha Rònaigh
 Dol troimh na caoil a null a Bhròchaill
 Dh' amharc air maighdeann an òr-fhuil
 'S fhuair thu 'chéile 's cha b' i 'n òinid
 Cha b' i 'n aimid, cha b' i 'n òinseach
 Nighean Fir a Caisteal Bhròchaill
 A Ratharsair mhór na Leòdach

Tìr nan gaisgeach air an òirlich
 Iain Mór is Iain Òg dhiubh
 Bu dhiubh Sileas agus Seònaid
 'S Alasdair a' mac a b' òige
 De Shìol Torcuill thig a Leòdhas.
 Maighistir Iain 's Maighistir Dòmhnall.

140. ORAN MÓR SGORABREAC (2) (ante 1671)

Latha dhomh 's mi 'falbh na mòintich,
 Cha robh uisge mór no ceò ann,
 Grian gheal air aghaidh nam mòrbheann,
 Thàinig mo leannan nam chòmhdhail.
 Shuidh sinn air taobh cnocain bhòidhich.
 Theann sinn ri mire 's ri gòraich.
 'S e 'thàinig as an sin an dòibheart.
 Bhagair e mo léine shròiceadh.
 'S rinn e liadan beag' de m' chòta.
 Chuir e falt mo chinn fo 'bhrògan.
 Thug e air mo shùilean dòrtadh.
 'Fhir ud a shiùbhlas a' mhòinteach,
 Air an tig na h-airm an òrdan -
 Claidheamh, sgiath, bogha 's dòrlach,
 Fois air do cheum 's bidh sinn còmhladh.
 Soraidh gu mo phiuthar do Chnòideard;
 Innis dhith mar a dh' éirich dhòmhsa -
 Rinn mi dìolanas roimh 'n phòsadh.
 Thuit mi le glas ghiullan gòrach
 Nach tug cìr no stìom no bròg dhomh,
 Nach tug fàinne far a' mheòir dhomh
 'S nach tug am bréid - 's e 'bu chòir dha.
 Bheir soiridh bhuam fhìn gu m' eòlas
 Do Sgorabreac am bì a' chòisir,
 Do thigh mór an ùrlair chòmhnaird,
 Far an cluinnte pìob is òrgan,
 Seuthraichean 'gan cur an òrdan.
 Glainneachan 'gan cur air bhòrdan
 'S truinnseir staoìn 's a thaobh air òradh.

141. CHUNNACAS LONG SEACH AN CAOLAS (? 1675)

CHORUS: Hi haori ri iù,
 Hiri am boho hug éile
 Chall oho hi iù.

Chunnacas long seach an caolas
 Hi haori ri iù, etc.

Ceart aogasg Mhic-Cailein,
 Chall oho hi iù.

Ach gu 'n caisg an Rìgh Mòr e,
 Hi haori ri iù,
 Hiri am boho hug éile,
 Chall oho hi iù.

Ma tha Dubhairt air aire
 Chall oho hi iù.

Guidheam tonn thar a tobhta,
 Hi haori ri iù
 Hiri am boho hug éile,
 Chall oho hi iù.

Dh' fheuch an tog dheth 'marachd,
 Chall oho hi iù.

142. LUINNEAG MHIC NEACHDUINN (? c. 1680)

'S fad tha mi 'g éisdeachd ri ur dìochuimhn',
 Aig cuir air tuireadh gu lìonmhor,
 Air clann nam bodachan crìona,
 Gun luaidh air uaislean na tìre,
 Maighstir an fhuinn seo shìos uainn,
 An Leitir bheag 's an Dùin phrìseil,
 Ceist nam ban o 'n Clachan Shìorach.

Hó hì hiù rubh ó, hì hó riunn ó,
 Hì hiù rubh ó, hì hó riunn ò,
 Hì hiù rubh ó, hì hó riunn ó,
 Hì hiù rubh ó, hì hóg i hò.

Ge b' e thagradh ann an strì ort,
 Gu dearbh cha b' fhada gun dol sìos e,
 Dh' éireadh Gordanaich leat dìleas,
 Luchd nan trupa gorma cruidheach,
 'S lìonmhor aca pasgan phìcean,
 'S lìonmhor brataichean a's pìoban,
 'S lìonmhor clogaid a's culìobhair,
 'S lìonmhor bogha 's saighead dhìreach,
 'S lìonmhor dag a's sgian phrìseil,
 'S lìonmhor Spàinnteach air thaobh clì orr',
 Glac an iubhair ann am bian-ghlaic.

Ge b' e thagradh ort gun reusan,
 Bu cham a chòmhhdail dha 'nuair dh' éireadh,
 Thig iomadh connspunn leat a Èirinn,
 Thig Iarl' Antruim nan each ceumnach,
 Bheir a bharcan a's coig ceud leis,
 'S iomadh curaidh calma treubhach,
 Thig a Ìle ort na 'n dèidh sud,
 Thig luing a's [siùil] an aobhar t' fheirge.

Cha 'n iongnadh dhuit-sa bhi éibhinn,
 'S iomadh sruthan bras fo d' léinidh,
 Do shìol nan curanta gleusda,

Car thu Dhuimhne, Cholla, Sheumais,
 Shomhairle bhuidhe nan geurlann,
 'S do Dhòmhnaill Gorm a bha 'n Slèibhte,
 Car thu 'Dhonncha Ruadh na Féile.

Chuir mi iùil ort a's cha b' aithreach,
 'N tùs an t-samhraidh seo chaidh thairis,
 Air òg finealta dh' fhàs barrail,
 Bha thu càirdeach do Mhac Cailein,
 Do Dhunolla nan stuagh geala,
 Car' thu Thighearna Loch nan Eala,
 Do Dhonncha Diùrach 's do dh' Àilein.

'S ionmhuinn leam Iain as òige,
 Calpa deas air thùs na tòrach,
 'S math thig luireach dhuit a's gòirseid,
 Agus léine 'n anart Olaind,
 Còta goirid air òradh,
 'S boineid bhreac nan caitean gorma,
 'S breacan nan triuchana bòidheach.

Alasdair a chuilean chleachdaich,
 Sud am beus a gheibht' ad chaisteal,
 Bhi 'g òl fìona 's cluich air chairtean,
 Do cheathairne òg eutrom ghasda,
 'G òl air uaislean 's ga chur seachad,
 A pìosaibh òir air an lasadh.

Alasdair a chuilean bhuidhe,
 Gu 'n robh an Rìgh dhuit mar mo ghuidhe,
 Ceist nam ban o 'n Ghleannan Chumhann,
 'S o 'n Leitir an cois an Rubha,
 Slat as dìrich thu a t-uidheam.

'S Neachdunnach do shloinne dìreach,
 'S cha b' ann an cagar os 'n ìosal,
 Tha thu shliochd nam Moireacha prìseil,
 Dheanadh luchd ealaidh dhìoladh.

Oigear aigeanntach gun àrdan,
 Ceannard air feachd thu neo-chearbach,
 Gàirdean geal ga 'm math thig armachd,
 'S math thig claidhe dhuit a's targaid,
 Agus stapull de'n òr dheàlrach,
 'S pìc ùr a dh' iubhair na Meallraich,
 'S glac nan ceann sgaiteach o 'n cheàrdaich.

'S lionmhor claidhe dh' éireadh leatsa,
 Thig Mac Raghnaill ort o 'n Cheapaich,
 Mac Iain Stiùbhairt as an Apuinn,
 Thig Mac Dhòmhnaill Duibh o 'n Chorpaich,
 Thig Mac an Aba a Gleann dochairt,
 'S Tighearna Ghrannd a Bhaile Chaisteal,
 Thig Mac Shimidh a's Clann Chatain,
 'S Iarla Shìophort nan garbh-bhratach.

Dh' éireadh sud leat ann ad chabhaig,
 Alasdair Dubh Ghlinne Garaidh,
 Triath na Luib' 's na Learga mar-ris,
 'S am Mèinnearach gun ghaog mar charaid,
 Ogha Dhonncha Duibh a' Bhealaich,
 A's Mac Phàrlain as an Arair,
 'S Mac Laomainn o thaobh na mara.

Shaorainn Ealasaid o mhulad,
 Ceist nam ban o thùr nan uinneag,
 Gun gleidh an Rìgh do dhà chuilean,
 'S gun seachainn e uatha tubaist,
 'S na 'm b' àill leibh e dheanainn tuilleadh.

143. DUANAG DO DHOMHNAILL CHANA (?ante 1686)

Na h-uile rud 'bhios orm a dhìth,
Gu 'm faigh mi fhìn o m' leannan e.

Hi rì hil ò, hug ò rin ò,
Hi rì ho rò mo Chaluman.

Mo ghaol an làmh nach eil crìon,
'Bheir dhomh gach nì o 'n cheannaiche.

Ruibeinean air uachdar mo chinn,⁴
An càradh grinn air anartan.

Paideirean mu m' mhuineal bàn
Dh' fheuchainn 'm b' àillte sheallainn e.

Sguiridh mi do 'n suirghe gu bràch,
'S cha mhòr gu 'm b' fheàrr dhomh teanna' rith'.

Ge b' fhada 'bha sinn air a sgàth
Cha chluinntè pàisde 'gal againn.

Labhair mo leannan le bàigh,
"A ghràidh, na fàg mi sgannalach.

"Na leig m' uireasbhaidh fos n-àird,
'S cha phàigh thu màl no gearradh dhomh."

Chan eil Caimbeulach 'tha beò
Nach fòghnadh Dòmhnall Chana dha.

144. ORAN DO DH' ALASDAIR DUBH GHLINNE GARaidH (c. 1686)

Mo rùn an t-Alasdair òg,
 Beul meachair tana nam pòg,
 Gorm shùil an sgàthan mòr,
 'S amadan a thuirt mar ghlòir,
 Gu 'n robh mo ghilleasa còrr,
 'S còmhnard o uilinn gu bròig thu,
 'S deas thig a' chosag 'san cleòc dhuit,
 He ho, i u ho, ho hi u ho,
 Ho i hu o, hi i aig ho.

Mhoire 's iad mo rùn na gillean,
 Clann na mnà nach d' fhàs binneach,
 Preas ùr nam boineidean bileach,
 Thogadh a mach ris an fhireach,
 Choisneadh cliù le h-airm 's le h-inneal,
 Bheireadh air mac na h-éilde pilleadh,
 'S nach cumadh ri nàmhaid slinnein.
 He ho, i u ho, &c.

Mo rùn ceum eutrom air siubhal,
 'S iomadh òg a thig fo t-uidheam,
 Luchd osan gheàrr a's brògan dubha,
 Saighdean le 'm bonnaibh iubhair,
 Air nach biodh an naimhdean buidheach,
 Dh' éireadh le fear ghruaige duibhe.

M' anam a's m' eibhneas a's m' aiteas,
 Oighre 'n fhir thu thog an Caisteal,
 Thig gairm an Rìgh ort a Sasuinn,
 Their esan nach àill leis gun t-fhaicinn,
 Ghlac an t-òg na shròin a bheachd ud,
 Aig a mheud sa tha na chòir do 'n phailteas,
 Làmh dh' iomairt an òir le còir àite.

'Nuair a sgaoileadh tu an cleòca,
 Gur lionar òg bhiodh an dèidh ort,
 Clann Iain, Sìol Ailein,

'Sann ad bharraiche féin iad,
 Mur sud 's Iarla Bhrathain,
 An latha bhios feum air,
 Ma 's fíor luchd mo sheanchais;
 Gheibh thu mánran na maighdinn,
 Thig an t-eun Abrach,
 'S cha chaidil e 'n oidhche.

Mo rùn an t-òg uasal,
 Uachdar na féile;
 Dh' fhàs gu furanach urranta treubhach,
 Làmh 'bhualadh nam buillean,
 'N cumasg nan geurlann,
 'Nuair a thogadh tu 'n deaslamh,
 'S ann leats' gu 'n éireadh.

M' anam m' fheudail a's m' aiteas,
 Seobhag sùlghorm na 'n ciabh bachlach,
 Tha mo ghuidhse dhuit gun tachair,
 Freagradh 'n taobh tuath do t' fhacal,
 Frisealaich, Granntaich, a's Cataich,
 Rothaich nan cleòc 's dòigh gur leat iad.

M' fheudail a dh' fheara' na gréine,
 Thog iad ort mur aithris bhréige,
 Gu 'n dèanadh Mac Cailein éiridh,
 Air an latha chum sibh féin e,
 Gus 'n d' rinn sibh cleas na spréidhe,
 Bualadh chlaighe, sgapadh Beurla,
 Tuiteam a uilibh a chéile.

145. IORRAM DO DH' IAIN GARBH, TRIATH CHOLA (c. 1688)

'Rìgh nach èireadh i tuath,
 'S i bhith sìobhalta buan,
 Is gun togadh na h-uaislean bréid rith'.

A Rìgh 'fheartaich nan dùl,
 Cùm an soirbheas sin ciùin,
 Nuair a ghabhas mo rùn 'na dhèidh e.

Ceist mo chridhe-sa 'n t' ainm
 Leis 'n do bhaisteadh Iain Garbh;
 'S òg a rinn mi leat leanabas dèideig.

Mac na lànaine ceart,
 'Dheònaich Dia 'san aon ghlaic;
 Fhuair sibh dioladh gu pailt d' a rèir sin.

Gur h-e ogha sin Eòin
 Rì nighinn Mhic Leòid,
 'S mac na deagh mhnà o 'n Mhòrthir m' eudail.

Gun robh freagradh ad cheann,
 Agus deasbad 'na lorg
 'N Gàidhlig, Laidinn, is Fraingis 's Beurla.

Gun robh susbain ad chorp,
 Agus uaisle gun spot,
 'Fhir a b' urrainn 's gach cnoc an rèiteach.

Craobh de 'n abhall a b' fheàrr,
 Bu mhath lùthadh ri sàs,
 As a' choille a b' àirde geugan.

'S ann dhuit a b' fhasan o thùs
 A bhith dìleas do 'n chrùn,
 Gun 'bhith foilleil an cùis fo 'n ghréin dha.

Tha mi tamull gun suain,
 Agus m' aigneadh fo ghruaim,
 'S mór 'tha 'dh' ionndraichinn uam a's léir dhomh.

'N caisteal tubaisteach 'bh' ann,
 Mu 'n robh 'chaiseamachd shearbh,
 A Rìgh, bu shoilleir ar càil mu 'deidhinn.

Ceist mo chridhe-sa 'n geàrd
 'Bha mu d' thimchioll 'san àit';
 B' ann de dh' abhall do ghàraidh féin e.

Mo chreach an tànaistear òg,
 Leis an rachadh tu 'd dheòin,
 'Bhith ga t' fhaicinn gun deò bhith 'd chreubhaig.

Ceann mo thaighe gu ceart,
 Fear as urranta smachd;
 'N Rìgh, 'ga choimhead 's gach feachd 'an téid e.

'S mairg do 'n uachdaran òg
 'Bhith 'ga t' fhaicinn fo leòn;
 Ged a thuit thu bu chonnspull cheud thu.

'Bhith 'ga t' fhaicinn gun deò
 Ann an ciste nam bòrd,
 'Fhir a leanadh an tòir 's nach géilleadh.

Tha do chinneadh fo sproc
 O 'n là 'rinneadh do lot;
 'S ann 'bha 'n diùbhaltas goirt fo d' léine.

146. ORAN DO SHIR IAIN MAC-GILLEAIN, TRIATH DHUBHAIRT
(1691)

'Dheagh Mhic-Coinnich á Brathainn,
'S cian 's gur fad' 'tha thu 'd laighe,
'S nach do dh' éirich thu fhathast,
'Chur le deagh Mhac-Gilleain,
'S cha mhò 'chaidh tu roimh latha thoirt àir orr'.

'S a Mhic-Néill o'n tìr thuathaich,
Is beirt neònach a bhuail thu.
Càit' an robh thu nach cual' thu
Mac-Gilleain 'ga fhuadach
Far nach faight' ach sìol fuar airson bàidse;

So an tìr a tha bochd dheth
Le luchd reubainn is cosgraidh;
Mnathan sgìth, 's iad ri osnaich,
Fìr 'nan sìneadh fo lotaibh
Agus fithich a' ròcail 'nam bràghad.

Mnathan fionna gan rùsgadh,
'S fìr gan losgadh le fùdar.
Is gam marbhadh le fiùbhaidh,
An cuid dorsan gan dùnadh,
'S an cuirp gheala 'na 'n smùraich 'n taigh dadhte.

Bha an clann, ged bu bheag iad,
Fo gheur shàthadh nam biodag,
Iad a' rànaich 's a' clisgeadh,
Am fuil bhlàth gu dlùth shilteach,
'S iad gun sùil ri beul iochda bho 'n nàimhdean.

'Chlann ud Ailein ri Una,
'S fad' bhur cadal gun dùsgadh
Leis an ridire chliùiteach.-
'S car a 'dh-iarla na cùile,
Do Mhac Aonghuis an Dùin 's do 'dhà bhràthair.

Ach 'nan tilleadh e fallain,
 'S fhad a staigh 'rachadh 'alladh
 Ann an dùthaich Mhic-Cailein;
 Bhiodh bà bogha gan gearradh,
 'S iad a' fàgail na fal' air na blàraibh.

Tha Innse-Gall 'nis air strìochdadh,
 Air a ceangal am prìosan,
 Cuim' an ceilinn an nì sin ?
 Cuim' nach gabhteadh casg rìgh leinn,
 Is gràinne mullaich nan crìoch air ar fàgail ?

Bu tu 'n treun-fhear air thoiseach,
 'Dhol a ghabhail a' bhrosnaidh.
 'N àm do nàmhaid 'bhith 'nochdadh
 Bhiodh do rò-seoil am portaibh,
 'S bhiodh do bhrataichean rompa gan sàthadh.

Gur a lionmhor fo mhulad
 Fiùran òg is seann churaidh,
 'S nach eil ceannard fir Mhuile
 Mar a b' àbhaist, 's bu chubhaidh:
 Gur a h-e mo chreach uil' a' chruaidh chàradh.

147. ORAN DO SHIR DÒMHNALL SHLEITE (c. 1700)

Tha tasgaidh bhuam an dìomhaireachd,
 Bho cheann an fheadh seo 'bhliadhnachan,
 Chan airgead glas, 's chan iarunn e,
 Ach Ridire glic, riasanta,
 'Bheil meas is misneach iarlachan,
 Bho 'n fhuair mi 'nis le iarraidh thu,
 Gu 'n riaraichinn Sir Dòmhnall.

Mo chuid mhòr do m' arachas thu,
 Mo chleasan snuadh-ghlan, dealbhach thu,
 Mo ghibht ro-phrìseil, ainmeil thu,
 Bho 'n chuimhnich mi air seachas ort,
 B' i 'n dìochuimhn' mur a h-ainmicht' thu,
 'S na 'n leiginn bhuam an dearmad thu,
 Gu dearbh cha b' i chòir e.

Craobh de 'n abhall phrìseil thu,
 De 'n mheas 'bu bhlasda brìoghaileachd,
 Bu dosrach an àm cinntinn i,
 'S a' choill' nach robh an crìonachd innt',
 Gu 'n robh mi dhoibh cho dìcheallach,
 'S gu 'n innsinn dhoibh na b' eòl dhomh.

Bhiodh sliochd Iain mhòir Mhic Cathain leat,
 'S an dream rìoghail Leathanach,
 'Bha uasal, uallach, aighearrach,
 Bu chruadalach ri labhairt orra,
 'S fir Chinntìre 's Lathurna,
 Gur mairg luchd Beurla bhrathadh tu,
 'S na maithean sin an tòir ort.

Dh' éireadh sin a Éirinn leat
 Iarl' Antruim nan each eutroma,
 ['S an sliochd sin Mhic Féilim leat]
 Gur h-iomadh aon a dh' éireadh leat,
 Cha b' aithne cò a dh' iarradh tu,

Na 'm biodh farum air t-fheumalachd,
Gu 'n éireadh iad ga d' chòmhnaidh.

Sìol Chuinn, is Airt, is Charraig leat,
'S an Colla cìosmhor, arachasach,
'Bha sluagh-mhor, duais-mhor, armailteach,
Bha 'chruadalach is fearg orra,
Ri tarraing suas gu fearra-bhuilleach,
Le luingeas luatha, gheala-bhreideach,
Air fairrge leo' a' seòladh.

Mac Fhionghuinn, is fir an t-Sratha leat,
Mac Néill, 's na fir sin Ratharsair,
Nach diùltadh air thùs catha leat,
'S a chuireadh ruaig gun fhathamas,
'S a leanadh tòir gun athadh orra,
Na 'n d' thugte crùn no claidheamh dhiot,
Gu 'n rachadh iad ga d' chòmhnaidh.

Mac Iain 's Morair Tairbeart leat,
Fir Bhealaichean Bhràghad Albainn leat,
Bu lìonmhor curaidh calma leat,
'Dol sìos an tùs na h-armailte,
Bu bhuilleach, guineach, marbhteach iad,
Gu 'n éireadh fir nan Garbh-chrìoch leat,
'S na Camshronaich bho Lòchaidh.

Gu 'n éireadh, air chùl sin, leat,
A thaobh a mhàthair chùramaich,
Gu 'n éireadh leat na Dùghlasaich,
Le 'n còig ceud mìle dubhlannach,
Cha tilleadh luaidh no fùdar iad,
Gu bheil iad dhuit cho dùrachdach,
'S nach diùlt iad tigh'nn ga d' chòmhnaidh.

Gu 'n cuala mi aig seanachaidhean,
Mu 'n d' thàinig sibh do na talamhantan,
Gu 'n d' rinn sibh cùis a dhearbhadh ann,

Bu chliùiteach ar cùis 's b' ainmeil i,
 'S an àm sin cha bu chearbach sibh,
 Bha tuilleadh is leth na h-Alba
 Air a shealbhachadh an còir leibh.

'S a Rìgh, gu meall thu 'n staoileadh sin,
 'S gach fearann a tha 'n oighreachd dhuit,
 Do Dhùn Tuilm 'bu mheadhraiche,
 Bhiodh cèir laiste 'n lanntair ann,
 Bhiodh fìon 'bu bhlasda caoimhnealachd,
 Am pìosan daithte foidhreachail,
 'S tigh mhaiseach, aoidheil, cheòlmhor.

'S a' chùirt 'bu rìoghail saoidhleirean,
 Far am faighte gnìomh na maighdeannan,
 Air sìoda bhrataibh bhraoineasach
 Le 'n gùintean sìos air staidhreachan,
 'S an Tùr ro-chliùiteach, aoidheil ud,
 Gu 'n d' thugte cìs is aoidheachd,
 Do luchd ainneart thig air fògar.

Cha chadal ach bhi 'm dhùsgadh dhomh,
 Gur leat an Caiptein Mùideartach,
 'S na dh' éireadh leis do dh' fhiùranaibh,
 Fo d' bhrataichean bu dùthchas dha,
 Bhi 'm baitealan cha diùltadh e,
 A-rèir mo bheachd bhiodh biùthaidh
 Air a' chùis mu 'm biodh sibh deònach.

Gu math pailt an saoghal seo,
 Do 'n dalta 'rinn mo dhaoine dhomh,
 'S na chinn suas 'na h-ionracas,
 Bu mhisneachail an caonnaig thu,
 Gu measail mar a ghlaoidhte ris,
 Gun bheud, gun mhas', gun mhaolachad,
 'S i 'n aon té 'bha ga 'r mòth'chadh.

'S a' Chrìosda, dèan deagh rathad dhuit,
'S a shìochainte 'bhi 'n ceangail riut,
'S tu 'n t-sìol 'bha rìoghail, flathasach,
Bu rìomhach am mac athar thu,
Bu chliù gach cùis 'bha 'n ceangal ris,
Air a mheud 's ga 'n gabhadh tu,
Gu 'n caitheadh tu le mòrail.

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148. MULADACH MI 'S MI AIR M' AINEOIL (c. 1700)

hò ì a bhó

ho ró ghealladh o ho ì ó ho.

Muladach mì	is mì air m' aineoil.
'S glé fhada bhuam	chì mi sealladh,
Chì mi Rùm is	Eige 's Canaigh,
Eilean nam Muc,	Tìr Mhic Ailein
Ge tà, chan fhaic	mì na Hearadh
Far an d' fhuair mi	gu h-òg m' aran,
Mùirneach, meadhrach	uallach, arralach.
A nighean ud thall	a bheil thu 'd
	[fhaireachadh ?
Nach seall thu mach	a bheil a' ghealach ann
No bheil a' ghaoth	an iar gun charachadh,
Am faod am bàta	bàn do Chanaigh bhuainn,
A h-aghaidh ri h-iùil,	a cùl ri h-aineoil,
Air muir dùdlaidh	dorcha salach.
A' bhean a chuir	orms' an aithlis
Gun robh mì 'call	mo chuid leanabh,
Cha ghuidh mise	pian dha d' anam
Ach a bhith agad	fios mo ghalair -
Do chìochan làn	's do ghlùin falamh.
Chuir mi cóigear	an ùir am falach -
Una 's Sìne,	Mòr is Anna,
Ailean a' chùil	a rinn mo sgaradh,
Chuir mo chuailein	donn an tainead,
Chuir thu ceum mo	chois am maillead.
Raghnaill, a rùin,	cùm do ghealladh rium.
Cùm an dùthchas	bh' aig do sheanar rium.
Dèan do thaigh air	ceann an rathaid,
Far an dèan na	h-uaislean tathaich.
Tadhlaidh Mac Leòid	's Mac 'ill' Eathainn ort,
Tadhlaidh m' eudail	Mac 'ic Ailein ort.
Marcaich nan each	cruideach seanga.
Pòiteir an fhìona	air gach carraig dhiubh.
Chan e na càirt	ach na gallain,
Togsaidean làn	air an ceannaibh,
'S na dh' òladh càch	phàigheadh Ailean e.

149. ORAN DO MHAC LEÒID NA HEARADH

Tha mo ghaol anns na Hearadh,
 'S cuime 'm bithinn 'ga fhalachd,
 Is ga 'm bheil a chaoil mhala 's an leac còmhnard.

Tha mo chion air an Ruairidh,
 Ged nach eil thu 'n ar n-uachdar,
 Fhir 'choisinn cliù 's a b' fheàrr buaidh anns an Olaint.

Bu tu mac an laoich ghasda,
 Nach do dhearbh a bhi gealtach, 's
 'S tric a thogadh leibh creach o Chlann Dòmhnaill.

'Nuair a rachadh tu 'n fhireach,
 Bhiodh an earb air do thilleadh,
 'S gu 'm biodh trom air do ghillea le d' mhòr-choin.

Le d' ghunna chaoil ghlaice,
 Leis an fhùdar a' lasadh,
 Nàile ! bheirte leat stad air fear cròichde.

Thoir mo shoraidh le m' dhùrachd,
 Gu faichich an smùdan,
 Far am bithichear mùirneach caoin òga.

Far a loisgeas am fùdar,
 'S an luaidhe gun chunntais,
 'S bhiodh na peilearan dùbhghorm na 'm pòcaid.

150. 'N RAOIR A CHUNNAIC MI 'N AISLING (c. 1710)

'N raoir a chunnaic mi 'n aisling,
 Hò iri ri hò,
 Hò éileadh hò rotho,
 Hò iri ri hò.

'N am dhùsgadh cha b' cheart i,
 Thusa ghràidh a thigh'n dhachaigh,
 A Sheumais na brataich,
 'S tu 'bhi eadar mo ghlacaibh;
 Rinn mi m' achanaich feasgar,
 Gaoth an iar a thigh'n deiseal,
 Gu 'n tigeadh na fleasgaich,
 Is bòidhche 'nan deise,
 Di-Dòmhnach 's an eaglais;
 'S gun tigeadh na h-àrmuinn,
 Fear Bhorreraidh 's fear Bhàlaidh,
 'S fear Ghriminis làmh riu,
 Fear Mhannta cha 'n fhàg mi,
 Fir òg Thigh-a-Gheàrraidh,
 Fear Heisgeir an t-sàile,
 Agus fear Bhaile-Ràghnaill;
 'S ma 's e deireadh mo dhàin thu,
 Cha bu dheireach air chàch thu:
 'S e do bhuideal nach tràghadh,
 Togsaid mhòr air a h-eàrradh;
 Fir Uibhist a mach leat;
 Fir Thròtairnis dhachaigh.

151. MARBHRANN DO BHAINTEIGHEARNA NA COMRAICH (c. 1710)

Tha mulad, tha sgìths orm,
 tha mìghean, tha gruaim,
 Mu gach té a b' fheàrr tha dhomh,
 so 'bhith failneachadh bhuam;
 'S beag an t-ioghnadh dhomh féin sin,
 's mi 'n dèidh an sgeul so 'fhuair,
 Gu 'm bu mhaoinich do gheug-sa
 tha 'n rùm glèidhte fo stuaigh.

Fo stuaighe an rùm cumhang
 a' laighe suthain an tàmh,
 Tha bhuainne do dhìobradh,
 deagh fhlùir de na mnàibh;
 Ge do dh' fhàg thu do bhuidheann
 seal gu dubhach fo phràmh,
 Glòir is buaidhe do 'n Tì 'dh' fhulaing
 chaidh na cumha do bhàis.

Chaidh na cumha do bhàis
 dhuinn ach tràchdadh air cois,
 An nì 'dh' fhulaing ar Slàinghear
 do sìol Adhamh o thòs.
 Mar a ghuidhe luchd gràidh dhuit
 o thùs d' àraich gu h-òg,
 Gach aon mhathas 'bhi fàs riut,
 mar bu gheàrr leotha do lò.

Do lò-sa far [luathaire],
 'dh' fhàg gruamach do threubh;
 Tha 'm bròn so ro-chruaidhe
 air na h-uaislibh gu léir,
 Do nàdur 's do foighidinn,
 fàidheadh air aon sgeul,
 Chionns nach d' fhaod iad do thòrachd
 chlaon mòran do phéin.

A' phéin leinne cha 'n eòl domh
 chuir an glòir' dheth ach pàirt:
 Reul binne agus eòlais,
 air a foghlum gun sgàth;
 Le glaine gun fhòtus,
 'S i gun [do bheusail] nan gràs,
 'S geur sgaradh do dheòraibh
 an deigh òrain 's do bhàigh.

Aghmhor, socair, pailt mhaoineach,
 glic, caonbheartach, rèidh;
 Ghrinn freasdal gach aon té
 neo-chaoclach air sgeul.
 An nì ghibhte le suairceas
 do thruagh no do threun,
 Cha bheir maille na cluain air
 's bheirt' bhuat e gun bheum.

Beum cha 'n fheudar a labhairt
 a gheug thobhartaich threun,
 'S i freumhach, dìongbhailt, deagh-fhàsaicht',
 fo thùs a h-àrach i féin.
 Sgaoil i toradh gu làn trom
 's i gun samhailt an céil',
 Bu threun boladh a peura
 fad a dàil ann an crè.

Crè ghaoil gun chulbheart
 an robh mùnadh 'is beus,
 Bha aig coimeas mo rùn-sa
 'ga ghiùlan air deis;
 Gu dorus a' chrùiste
 an robh iùl do luchd teud,
 Do shàr chéile agus t' ùr mhac,
 so mhilleadh tùs air mo ghleus.

Gleus luidhe air gach aon té
 fhuair cuimhn' oirbh na ur triùir,

Ar buan sgaradh 'sa 'n aon rè
 's nach h-i 'n aois 'mhill ar cùis.
 Ach an t-aog, le iochd fuairidh,
 thug bhuainn ar cairt iùl,
 Air mo bharail, cha truagh leis
 aon nì 's cruaidh-bheartach dhuinn.

Dhuinn mór olc dhiabhail
 gun thriall thu o chàch,
 Am buird 'neat' air an dlùthadh,
 's gun ar dùil riut gu bràth.
 Ceann-uidhe luchd astair,
 'bheireadh freasdal air dàimh,
 Agus muime nam macaibh
 gu mùirneach, macnasach, sèimh.

Bu sheun dhuinn do dhùrachd
 as gach cùis mar a b' áill;
 A dheagh fhoirne mòr [tugsainn]
 gu 'm bu dlùth sin 'nad phàirt.
 Nam bithinn-s' 'am ùghdair,
 na 'm b' urra' dhùbladh an dàin,
 Ort-sa dh' éireadh gu cliùtach
 na th' air m' ùidh-sa de ghràdh.

Tha air m' ùidh-sa san uair so
 chuirear man cuairt anns gach àit',
 Cuid dhe d' àbhaistean 's dhe d' bheusan,
 bu ghlan cheutach le càch;
 Fad 's a dh' imich an sgeul ort,
 'thaobh do bheus 'is do ghnàths,
 Bha slàn filidh foirbheum dhuit
 gun an eucoir a ràdh.

Tha mi 'g ràdh air ar miosraich
 gum bu mis-chrann an àigh,
 'S mairg peur as na bhrìst thu,
 's tu tuir liosrach fo bhlàth;
 Glòir do 'n Dia so 'bha iochdmhor,

thug dhuinne gibht air ar làimh,
 Gus na sheap thu gu brìghmhor
 cuid de t' [ìogasg] fos àrd.

Ach 's ann oirne bho thrìall thu
 's mór a dhìobhail sa 'n àm,
 Cha 'n eil fàth 'bhith 'ga chunntas,
 cuid dhe ar combaist air chall;
 Gach aon fhear nì d' aithris
 de na phannal so t' ann,
 'S e is duaise dhoibh a' réir coslais
 buaidhe bhos agus thall.

Thall shealbhas buaidh àite dhuit
 ann am Pàrras Mhic Dé,
 Thaobh do chleachdaidhen gnàthaichte,
 fad do dhàil ann an crè;
 Thug Dia gibht dhuinn gun ghainne,
 le barantas treun,
 Nì 'bu doilleir air seanail
 's ann dhuit-sa Anna bu lèir.

'S lèir a' chuid de do dhìslean
 adhbhar nithean fos àird,
 Do mhnathan chaidreamh gan dìobradh,
 's t' aigeadh fìorghlan gun sgàth;
 Gach aon bha ga t' amharc
 air sìor lorg do ghràidh;
 Thug E seachd air an dìosnar,
 's chaill mi fhìn sud mar chàch.

Càch an dèidh bhi 'gad ghiùlan,
 cuid de 'n sùgradh mu làr,
 Le cridheachan brùite,
 gun an dùil riut gu bràth;
 Ge do thàrladh mi 'n taobh-sa,
 cha mhùth mi so ràit,
 Na faighinn mo dhùrachd
 b' e mo rùn a bhi 'd phàirt.

Gach aon phàirt bhua a fhuaireadh
 le suairceas no m' meinn,
 Dia nis ga phàigheadh
 na àros math fhéin;
 O Mhic Muire na dàileach
 ga bheil bàidhe air gach tréibh,
 Air deaslaimh do ghàirdean
 glac-sa sàbhailt' a' gheug.

Gheug thoirbheartach cheutach
 gu 'n [éughadh] do chàch,
 Am mùnadh 's an ceartas,
 gach aon bheart mar a b' àill;
 An grunn d cathair an reusain,
 a dh' fheudas mi ràdh,
 Cia chùis nach bu lèir dhuit,
 so-dhèanta le mnàibh.

Gu bheil mnàibh ri throm acain,
 an dèidh caidreamh do rùin,
 'N deis gabhail an cead dhuit
 anns a' chadal nach dùisg;
 Gu bheil fradharc a' sgàthan
 bho phàirte dhiubh air cùl,
 Bha do chomhairle sàr mhath,
 deanamh dhà dhaibh o thùs.

An tùs éirigh ré is là dhuit,
 do chàch gu 'm bu lèir,
 Gach cùis air a thabhairteadh
 bha ann fàsa riut féin;
 Bha do lùth 's do chiall nàdur
 gur 'n tàladh ri feum
 Gus na stiùir thu neo-cheàrr i,
 gu h-àghmhor, gun bheum.

Do bheumsa cha chualas,
 o b' fhuarachas e,

'S gu 'm faicte do shuairceas
 anns gach 'nuair mar a b' àill;
 Cha dhù dhomh bhi gruamach
 nuair a bhuaileas mi 'n t' àite,
 Anns am b' àbhaist dhomh t' fhaotainn
 gu faodalaich sàmh.

Do shèimhe 's do mhaoine,
 ri innse cè 'n luach ?
 'S mór as miste na crìochan
 do dhìobradh air luaths;
 Air Comraich nam pìos,
 atà 'chìos so glé chruaidh,
 Tha mulad, tha sgìths orm,
 tha mìghean, tha gruaim.

152. CHÌ MI, CHÌ MI, CHÌ MI THALL UD (? 1715)

Chì mi, chì mi, chì mi thall ud,
 Chì mi na féidh air a' bhealach,
 'S gun an giomanach aig baile
 'Dh' éireadh a mach ris a' bhealach,
 Le d' ghunna caol 's le d' bhreacan ballach.
 Dh' fhàgadh tu 'n damh donn gun anail
 Air an driùchd 's e 'call na fala.
 Moire ! 'S e mo rùn mo leannan:
 Sealgair ròin thu, geòidh is eala,
 'N dòbhrainn duinn 's a' bhrìc bhallaich;
 Pòiteir an fhìon 's an taigh leanna,
 Stiùireadair air luing nan crannag.
 Cha b' e sud a bha mi 'leanailt -
 'S càirdeach thu 'Mhac Leòid na Hearadh.

153. CHUNNAIC MISE MO LEANNAN (c. 1715)

Ho ro ho hì, hoireannan,
 Hò ro chall éileadh,
 Ho ro ho hì, hoireannan.

Chunnaic mise mo leannan,
 'S cha do dh' aithnich e 'n dé mi.

Chunnaic mis' e 'dol seachad
 Air each gleus nan ceum eutrom.

Cha d' fhidir, cha d' fharraid,
 Cha do ghabh e bhuam sgeula.

Nuair a chunna' mi e 'n uair sin,
 Bha mi suarach m' a dhèidhinn.

Chunnaic mise mo luaidh
 'Dol seachad buaile na spréidhe.

Rìgh ! gun cuidich an còmhlan
 Le Clann Dòmhnail nan geurlann.

Luchd nan calpannan troma,
 Cùil donna, ceum eutrom.

Luchd nam mosgaidean fùdair
 Chuireadh smùid air feadh sléibhe.

Luchd nam boghannan iubhair
 Dh' fhuiligidh luthadh 's nach leumadh.

Luchd nan claimhntean caol, geala,
 Chìteadh faileas ri gréin dhiubh.

Cha téid aon aca rùsgadh,
 Gus an crùn iad Rìgh Seumas.

Gus an cuir iad Rìgh Seòras
Air fògradh o 'n eucoir.

Thug mi Dòmhnach 'nam sheasamh
Anns an t-Seisein mu d' dhèidhinn.

Gu robh snighe mo ghruaidhean
Deanamh fuarain 'nam léinidh.

154. THA 'GHAOTH AN IAR A' GOBACHADH (? 1715)

Air faill ill ó, air faill ill o
 Air faill ill oro éileadh
 Faill i-ill u-ill agus ó
 'S na hógaidh óro éileadh.

Tha 'ghaoth an iar a' gobachadh
 'S cha b' i mo thogradh fhéin i:
 'S e 'ghaoth an ear a b' aite leam
 Is lasan oirre 'g éirigh.

Ach an tig am bàta
 Dha 'm b' àbhaist a bhith treubhach -

Tha uachdaran na tìreadh innt',
 'S a Rìgh ! na éireadh beud dhi.

Tha uachdaran na dùthchadh innt',
 'S gu bheil mo dhùrachd fhéin dhi:

Slàn gun till thu dhachaigh
 Dh' ionnsaigh d' aitreabh ann an Sléite,

Far am bì na diùcannan
 'S luchd-ciùil a' gabhail féisdean,

Far am bì na fìdhleirean
 Bu bhinne leam bhith 'g éisdeachd;

Far am bì na h-òigearan
 Ag òl air slàint' a chéile,

As deise a théid air ùrlar
 An àm a chiùil a ghleusadh.

Bidh òl is ceòl is cosgais ann
 'S bidh tostaichean a réir sin;

Bidh branndaidh dearg gun tarrainn
Ann an glainneachan gu féilleil.

Nigheanan Strath Lòchraidh
Ga pròiseil asda fhéin iad,

Gu faicte tochradh againne
Cho math 's a bhiodh aig té dhiu.

155. MARBHRANN DO MHAC MHIC AILEIN (c. 1716)

Moch 's a' mhaduinn 's mi 'm dhùisg',
 Gu bheil m' aigne gun sunnd,
 Gach aon naidheachd ga 'n cluinn' cha 'n fheàirde sinn.
 Gach aon naidheachd, &c.

Fàth mo mhulaid 's mo bheud,
 Sir Dòmhnall á Sléibht',
 'Bhi gun fhearann, 's e sgeul as cràitich' leam.
 'Bhi gun fhearann, &c.

Latha Shiorraimh, mu 'n fhraoich,
 Chaidh sgapadh 's na laoich,
 Bha fir ghasda mo ghaoil ga 'n sàrachadh.

Air ur tilleadh a nìos,
 Bha fàth ur n-ionndraichinn shìos,
 Mac Mhic Ailein, 's bu dìobhail chàirdean e.

Tha do chàirdean dheth bochd,
 'S do dhaoin'-uaisle fo sprochd,
 'S e Rìgh Seumas an t-Ochd a shàraich sinn.

'Ailein aigeantaich, fhuair thu
 'N là ud urram 's bu dual,
 Call gun bhuidhnean 's an uair 'an d' fhàg sinn thu.

Clogaid suas air do cheann,
 Sgiath nan dual air do làimh,
 Claidheamh cruadhach gun taing gu sàr-dhioladh.

Bha Mac Coinnich 's a neart,
 Mus 'n do tharruing iad ceart,
 Gu 'n d' fhuair maoim nan each glasa bàireadh oirnn.

Seumas Mòr 'an robh 'chiall,
 Air ar ceann a's sinn ciar,
 'S àrd a leumadh iad sìos 's gu 'n chràidh iad sinn.

'S gur e mo rùn am fear ruadh
Bu mhaith gu brosnachadh sluaigh,
'S cha bu chladhaire 'n uair a chnàmhain e.

'S misneachd mhaith 'an càs cruaidh,
Gur tric a choisinn e buaidh,
An Tì dhe 'n goirear an t-Uan, 's E shàbhalas,

'S a sgoilt a' Mhuir Ruadh,
'S a choisinn Pàrras da 'shluagh,
'N diugh tha 'ghàirdean cho cruaidh 's a b' àbhaist dha.

156. DÀ RENT, DÀ RENT, DÀ ROTHOND (1721)

Dà rent, dà rent, dà rothond,
 Dà rent, da ro o rothrum,
 Dà rent, do ru ho ro rinn.

A Dhòmhnuill chridhe thapaidh,
 Gur a h-ait leam féin mar 'dh' éirich.

Gur mi gun guidheadh comhairle
 Anns gach gnothach anns an téid thu.

Chaidh Caiptean Feàrna 'mhaslachadh,
 'S gun deach a mhac a reubadh,

'S chaidh luchd nan còta daithte 'bh' ann,
 G' an casaid a Dhùn Éideann.

'S olc a chinnich comhairle agaibh,

'Dol sìos troimh ghleann Srath Ghlais dhuibh,
 Anns an robh sìol cearbt' na 'r meanmhainn,

'S ann 'thug sibh màl a' Mharcais leibh
 Air chupal each 's air carbaid,

Sìos troimh Mhonadh Afaraic
 Leag sibh Walter gaolach.

Bha iomadh gunna an cupadh ann,
 'Ga cuir a mach ri aonach.

Dar chunnaic na fir chas-luatha
 Ghabh iad sgapadh 's sgaoil iad.

'S gun d' fhàg iad anns a' ghradan sin
 Am fear nach b' fhaide saoghal.

[Air fad dud duirire]

Gu 'm bu tubaisteach a chòmhdhail;

'Nuair 'choinnich prasgan allaidh sibh

Aig Ath-na-Mullaich còmhla;

'Nuair 'chunnaic sibh nach b' urrainn sibh,

'S na gillean a bh' aig Dòmhnall,

Gu 'm b' éirig sibh "commission"

A fhuair sibh 'ghibht bho Seòras.

157. DÒMHNALL RUADH GAOLACH

Och, a Dhòmhnuille Ruaidh ghaolaich
 Call o ho ri hu o,
 'S e do ghaol th' air mo mhealladh;
 I i ri ri u, io o ho hug eile,
 Call o ho i ri hu o.
 'S e do ghaol th' air mo mhealladh,
 Call o ho i ri hu o,
 'S truagh nach fhaicinn do bhàta,
 I i ri ri u, &c.
 'S truagh nach fhaicinn do bhàta,
 Call &c.
 Teachd air àird an t-siùil mhara;
 Sìil àrda r' a crannaibh;
 Sgiob' oirre 'dhaoin' uaisle,
 'Chuireadh cluain á muir greannach.

Bhiodh mo ghràdh-s' air an stiùir ann,
 Og ùr a' chùil chlannaich:
 'S e do ghràdh 'thug do 'n tìr mi,
 'Fhir na mìog-shuile meallaich.

158. MARBHRANN FÒRSAIR CHOIRE AN T-SÌTH

An raoir a bhruadair mi 'm chadal,
 Mi 'bhi 'm falach 's an luachair,

'S a bhi 'cur mo làmh tharad,
 'S ann a dh' fhairich mi bhuam thu,

Gun d' thug sud orm briosgadh;
 'S mór is misde mo shnuadh e !

'Nuair nach d' fhuaras thu agam,
 A lùb ghasda 'n robh 'n suairceas.

B' òg finealta, deas thu -
 Bian glas air do ghualainn.

'S tric a chuir thu gu stòras.
 Is e còta 'n daimh ghruamaich.

Le gunna 'bheòil thana,
 'Chuireadh sgainneart o luaidhe;

Nach do dhiùlt a-riamh teine
 Ri eilid nam fuar-bheann;

No ri damh a' chinn chabraich,
 No ri lach a' chinn uaine.

No ri fìr-eun a' chreachainn,
 ('S tu nach cleachdadh dhaibh suaibhneas !).

No sionnach na sgàirnich -
 'S e nach teàrnadh o d' luaidhe.

Lùb ùr thu 'Chloinn-Chaluim,
 'S gu 'm bu bharraicht 'measg sluaigh thu.

Gur Lochanach fìor thu,
 'S mòr is miste 'm frìth bhuait' thu.

Laigh gruaim air Mac-Cailein
 'N uair a dh' fhairich e uaith thu.

Gur e sud an sgeul deurach,
 Gun a cheum aig a' bhuachail'.

Gura sud mo sgeul deacair,
 Gu 'n do thaisg iad 's Taobh Tuath thu.

'S ann an cladh Chinn-a-Ghiùthsaidh
 A rùisg iad an uaigh dhuit.

'S truagh nach robh fir do dhùthcha
 Ga do ghiùlan air ghualainn.

'S nach robh i bean d' fhàrdaich
 'S a' ghàirich m' an cuairt dhuit.

159. A' BHEAN EUDACH

hù gó
hao ri ho ró hò gó

A bhean ud thall
Sìn do chas dhomh
An truagh leat bean òg
Cha truagh, cha truagh,
Dùil agad fhéin
Mo thruaighe 'nochd
Fear dhiubh bliadhna,
'S tìmpire beag
Ach, Iain bhig,
Chan iarr thu a nochd
Ach ma dh' iarras,
Na luidein truagh
'S lìonte m' iuthlann
'S lionmhor mo laoigh
'S e an t-àilgheas mór
'S e an duileasg donn
Thig an coite
Bidh m' athair ann,
Geala mac an t-saoir
Gheibh iad mise
Mo chòta bàn
Mo chuailein donn

hù gó

an cois na tràghad,
sìn do làmh dhomh,
's i ga bàthadh ?
's beag do chàs dhith,
a bhith nam àite.
gaoir mo phàisdean -
fear a dhà dhiubh,
an ceann na càraid.
a nì 's a nàire,
cìoch do mhàthar.
's beag as fheàrrd' thu,
feadh na làthchadh.
dùmhail m' àtha,
's m' aighean dàra.
a chuir dha 'n tràigh mi.
a rinn mo bhàthadh.
an seo a màireach.
mo thriùir bhràithrean,
air ràmh bràghad.
an dèidh mo bhàthadh,
am bàrr an t-sàile,
feadh na làthchadh.

160. GE GRIANACH AN LATHA

Ge grianach an latha, o,
'S beag m' aighear 's mór m' éislein;

Mu Mhac Dhùghaill Mhic Ruairidh, o
Cha ghluaisleadh dà fhear dheug e.
Mu Mhac Dhùghaill, &c.

Mi 'bhi cuimhneach' mo leannain, o
Cha bu ghreannach air féill thu.

'S maith a thigeadh an t-suaimehneach
Ghlas uaine gu feur dhuit.

Gur math thigeadh balg dhuit, o
Agus calg a' bhruic léith air.

Agus bogha do 'n iubhair, o
'Chuireadh siubhal fo shaighdeabh.

Crios de leathar nan aighean, o
Ceann leathann is deagh shnaim air;

Agus claidheamh geur tharad, o
Neul fala o 'dhéis air.

Mile mallachd dha 'n bhuachaille
'Chaidh 'chuirteach na spréidhe,

Chaidh 'dhùsgadh nan abhag, o
Roimh latha mu 'n d' éirich.

'S ann am bealach a' ghàraidh, o
'Fhuair mo ghràdh-s' a cheud éislein.

'S i mo ghràdh do chois lùthmhor, o
A chaidh gu glùn ann san fhéidhe.

'S ann an sin a bha triùir ort, o
Mu 'n d' fhuair thi riamh éirigh.

Truagh, a Rìgh, nach robh mis' ann, o
'S trì fichead fear treubhach;

Chuirinn sgaoileadh nam' bhràithrean, o
'S dheanainn àr air luchd m' éislein.

Mu 'n do chuir iad t' fhuil bhrùite
Air ùrlar do chléibhe;

Mu 'n robh fuil do chuirp chiùirte
A ghaoil, drùthadh fo d' léine.

Gur diumbach mi do m' mhàthair, o
'S i a nàraich o m' chéile mi;

'S cha bhuidh' mi do m' athair, o
'S tric e 'gabhail droch sgeul orm.

Truagh nach mise bha 'n Sagson, o
No air mhachair na Beurla;

Mu 'n do chuir mi riamh bac ort
Moch madainn 's tu 'g éirigh.

161. BOTHAN AIRIGH AM BRÀIGH RAITHNEACH

Gur e m' anam is m' eudail
 Chaidh an dé do Ghleann Garadh:

Fear na gruaige mar an t-òr
 Is na pòig air bhlas meala.

Is tu as feàrr do 'n tig deise
 De na sheasadh air thalamh;

Is tu as feàrr do 'n tig culaidh
 De na chunna mi dh' fhearaibh.

Is tu as feàrr do 'n tig osan
 Is bròg shocrach nam barr-iall:

Còtan Lunnainneach dùbhghorm,
 Is bidh na crùintean 'ga cheannach.

An uair a ruigeadh tu an fhéill
 Is e mo 'ghear'-sa a thig dhachaigh.

Mo chrìosan is mo chìre
 Is mo stìomag chaol cheangail,

Mo làmhainne bòidheach
 Is déis òir air am barraibh,

Mo sporan donn iallach
 Mar ri sgian nan cas ainneamh.

Thig mo chrìos a Dùn Eideann
 Is mo bhréid a Dùn Chailleann.

Cuime am bìomaid gun eudail
 Agus spréidh aig na Gallaibh ?

Gheibh sinn crodh as a' Mhaorainn
Agus caoirich a Gallaibh.

Is ann a bhios sinn 'gan àrach
Air àirigh am Bràigh Raithneach,

Ann am bothan an t-sùgraidh,
Is gur e bu dùnadh dha barrach.

Bhiodh a' chuthag 's an smùdan
A' gabhail ciùil duinn air chrannaibh;

Bhiodh an damh donn 's a' bhùireadh
'Gar dùsgadh 's a' mhadainn.

162. IS ANN FEASGAR DI-H-AOINE

Is ann feasgar Di-haoine
 'Dh' fhalbh mo ghaol thar a mhàm.
 'N uair a ghabh mi mo chead dhiot,
 Bha m' aigheadh fo phràmh,
 Ort a bhruadair mi 'm chadal
 Air lota 's taigh bhàn;
 'S nuair a dhùisg mi 's a mhadainn
 Bha thu fad' bhuam, a ghràidh.

Ach ged chaidh tu orm thairis,
 Gur mór mo bharail 's mo dhùil
 Gu 'n till thu rium fhathast
 Le aighear 's le mùirn,
 Gu 'n toir thu bho 'n chléir mi
 Le ceutadh 's le cliù;
 'S nach toir thu cion falaich
 'Nighean barain no diùc'.

Cha ruig thu leas a bhi 'm barail
 Gur h-e do bharantas cùil,
 Bheireadh dhòmhs' a bhi 'm barail
 Gu 'm bu leannan dhomh thu,
 Ach thu bhi 'shìol nam fear mòra,
 'S tu cho bòidheach 's cho cùimt';-
 'S mi gu 'n deanadh do phòsadh
 Ged bhiodh do stòras air crùn.

Ach mur h-eil do ghaol agam
 Tha mi fad' ann an call;
 'S mór is misde mo phearsa
 'N gaol beachdaidh so 'bh' ann.
 Ged bu leamsa de bheartas,
 Siorrachd Pheairt 's Innse-Gall,
 B' fheàrr leam cumhnanta t' fhacail
 Na gach pailteas fo m' làimh.

'S ma 's a beag leat mo thochradh
 Gu bheil m' fhortan aig Dia;
 Gur a lìonmhor mo chinneadh
 Gus na shireadh tu 'dhiol;
 Ma 's e lughad mo nithean
 A bhris orm do ghràdh,
 'S mairg mis' 'thug cion falaich
 Dhuit-sa thairis air chàch.

'S daor a cheannaich mi 'n grinneas
 Bha air inneal do làmh;
 'N uair a chunnaic mi 'n gille
 Chaidh mi 'n iomairt mo bhàis.
 Le ro mheud 's thug mi thlachd dhuit,
 Leig mi seachad orm càch;
 'S tha mi 'g inns' ann am chòmhradh
 Gur tus', 'Dhòmhnaill, mo ghràdh.

Chunna mise do chinneadh
 Anns gach iomairt a bh' ann,
 'S bu neo-choltach ri gillean
 Na fir ghlinneach gun mheang;
 Ged a bhiodh na dragoons,
 'S an ranc dùbailte, thall,
 Rachadh sgapadh 'sa chléith
 An àm dhuit éigheachd adbhanns'.

163. CUMHA MHIC 'IC RAOGHAILL NA CEAPAICH (1746)

'S ann tha naidheachd ro chràiteach
 An dràs san tìr Àbrach,
 Nach maireann fear t' aogasg,
 Mhic 'Ic Raoghail na Ceapaich;
 On a dh' fhalaich an ùir thu
 An ciste dlùth nan còrd breaca
 Tha do chàirdean gun sùgradh:
 'S beag an t-iongnadh e thachairt.

'S bochd an naidheachd a fhuair mi
 Mu 'n do ghluais mi 's a' mhadainn,
 Gun robh an t-òganach suairce,
 'S e gu fuar air a thasgadh
 Anns a' chiste chaol chumhann
 An dèidh a dubhadh le teàrrclais,
 'S truagh nach mise 'bha làimh riut
 Nuair a bha iad 'gad ghreasadh.

'S iomadh moch agus feasgar
 Rinn mi coinneamh is còmhdhail
 Ris an fhleasgach chiùin fharasd',
 Bu chùbhraidh [anail] ri phògadh.
 Ged a gheibhinn-sa Ìle
 Air a sgrìobhadh le còiribh,
 B' annsa laighe air do chùlaibh
 Anns an ùir 's tu bhith deònach.

Ged nach éigte mi 'd bhrataich,
 A chùirtear aigeannaich mheanmnaich,
 Cha lùgh'd' mo chùis dhiobhail
 Thu bhith dhìth air do leanaban.

.....

Bu leat Tighearna Mhùideirt,
 Is Mac Dhùghaill a Mòrair,
 Mac Dhòmhnail nan Eilean
 Cha b' ann air deireadh do thòrach.
 Agus fir Ghlinne Garaidh,
 'S Mac 'Ic Alasdair Chnòideirt,
 Clann Iain o 'n Innean
 Nach tilleadh sa' chòmhstri.

Nuair a thogteadh leat lùireach,
 Claidheamh cùl a' chinn aisnich,
 Sgiath bhreac nam ball dlùth
 Air a dùbladh fo d' achlais,
 An clogaide cruadhach
 Os cionn na cluais a b' fheàrr claisneachd,
 Nuair a ghlacadh tu 'd làimh e
 'S mairg nàmhaid a chaisgt' ort.

Tha do bhaile gun aiteas,
 Gun cheòl-gàire, gun phìob ann,
 Gun sùil thoirt air mánran,
 No gun làmh thoirt air dhìsnean,
 On chaidh ceannard a' Bhràighe
 Do 'n chiste-làir 's do 'n uaigh ìseal,
 'S iomadh neach a tha cràiteach
 Bhon a thàinig a' chrìoch ort.

164. CÒ SHEINNEADH AN FHÌDEAG AIRGID ? (c. 1715 or 1745)

Có sheinneadh an fhìdeag airgid ?

Hì rì ill iù ill eò ro,

Có theireadh nach seinninn fhìn i ?

Hò ro hu ò, hù ill eò ro,

Có theireadh nach seinninn fhìn i ?

Hì rì ill iù ill eò ro,

Có theireadh nach seinneadh, sheinneadh,

Hò ro hu ò, hù ill eò ro,

Có theireadh nach seinneadh, sheinneadh,

Hì rì ill iù ill eò ro,

Sheinneadh i Mac Leòid 's Mac Coinnich !

Hò ro hu ò, etc.

Mac mo Rìgh a' tighinn a dh' Alba

Air luing mhór nan trì chruinn airgid,

Cha bhuill ghaoisne, cha bhuill chainbe,

Streanganan de 'n t-sìoda Fhrangach,

'S ulagan òir air gach ceann dhiubh.

Nuair thig mac mo Rìgh dha 'n bhaile,

Nìtear le Clann Dòmhnall banais !

Gura h-e mo chion 's mo rùn thu,

Fìdhleireachd bu rogha ciùil dhut,

'S clàrsach bhinn 's a cruinn 'gan rùsgadh,

Ruidhle mu seach air an ùrlar.

Gura h-e mo chion 's mo roghainn

Tormod Òg nan gormshuil loinneil;

Ge b' è thrialladh gu d' thaigh thalla,

Gheibheadh e fialachd ann gun ghainne,

Cha b' fhiach leat bhith 'g òl an leanna -

Uisge beatha na treas-tarraing,

Branndaidh chruaidh a nuas o Ghallaibh !

Gura h-e mo chion 's mo ghràdh thu,

Giomanach gunna nan càrnan,

Giomanach na h-eala bàineadh,
 Nì thu mac an fhéidh a thàladh.

Clogada cruadhach mu d' ghruaig chamlaich,
 Clogada cruadhach 's suaicheantas dearg ris;
 'S b' fheàrr liom na na bhuailt' an airgiod
 Bhith far do ghluais iad dha d' mharbhadh,
 Mo sgian chli bhith 'n cridh' mo dheàrnadh.

Falbhaidh mise, fàgaidh mi 'm baile,
 Ruigidh mi tìr mor na Hearadh,
 Far an d' àraicheadh mi 'm leanabh, '
 Far an robh mi òg 'nam chaileig,
 Chan ann ri fuine nam fallaid,
 Ach ri uallach a' chruidh-bhainne.
 Hò ro hù a, hù ill eò ro.

165. ORAN DO PHRIUNNSA TEÀRLACH (c. 1746)

Fhir ud tha thall ma àiridh nan Comhaichean,
 B' fheàrr leam fhìn gu 'n cinneadh gnothach leat,
 Shiùbhlainn Gleann-laoigh a's Gleann'-comhann leat,
 Dà thaobh Loch-iall a's Gleann'-tadha leat,

Hillinn hò-rò ho bha hò,
 'S na hillinn hò-rò ho bha hì,
 Na hillinn hò-rò ho bha hò,
 Mo leann-dubh mòr on chaidh tu dhìom.

Shiùbhlainn moch leat, shiùbhlainn anamoch,
 Air feadh choilltean, chreagan, a's gharbhach,
 O ! gur h-e mo rùn an sealgair,
 'S tu mo roghainn de shluagh Alba.

A Theàrlaich òig a chuilein chiataich,
 Thug mi gaol dhut 's cha ghaol bliadhna,
 Gaol nach tugainn do dhiùc no dh' iarla,
 B' fheàrr leam fhìn nach faca mi riamh thu.

Fhleasgaich ud am beul a' ghlinne,
 Le t' fhalt dualach sìos ma d' shlinnean,
 B' annsa leam na 'chuach bu bhinne,
 'Nuair dheanadh tu rium do chòmhradh milis.

Bha do phòg mar fhion na Frainge,
 Bha do ghruaidh mar bhraoileag shàmhraidh,
 Sùil chorrach ghorm fo d' mhala ghreannmhor,
 Do chùl dualach, ruadh, a mheall mi.

A Theàrlaich òig, a mhic Rìgh Seumas,
 Chunna mi tòir mhòr an dèidh ort,
 Iadsan gu subhach a's mise gu deurach,
 Uisge mo chinn tigh'n tinn o m' léirsinn.

Mharbh iad m' athair a's mo dhà bhràthair,
Mhill iad mo chinneadh a's chreach iad mo chàirdean,
Sgrios iad mo dhùthaich, rùisg iad mo mhàthair,
'S bu laoghaid mo mhulad nan cinneadh le Teàrlach.

166. 'S ANN AN RAOIR NACH D' FHUAIR MI AN CADAL

ó ho ì o	hao ri iù
ó ho ì o	hi rì ri iù
ó ho ì o	hao ri iù

'S ann an raoir nach d' fhuair mi an cadal.

Cha b' e dochartas mo leapadh -

Gun mo chùirteir fhaotainn agam,

Cùram nan gamhna as taigh fhad' orm,

An taigh mór gun dìon gun fhasgadh.

Chaidh mi 'n tràigh. Cha d' rinn mi maorach.

Ged nach d' rinn, gun d' rinn mi caoineadh.

Chunna mi long mhór 's a' chaolas,

Ceathrar air ràmh 's fear 'ga taomadh

'S fear a' togail rithe a h-aodaich,

Bean 'na toiseach a' sìor ghlaodhaich

'S bean 'na deireadh a' sìor chaoineadh.

Dh' fhoighnich mi dhith gu dé a h-adhbhar.-

Chan e bàs a' ghamhna chaoil e,

Chan e deoghal a' chruidh laoigh e -

Mo thriùir mac 's a' chuan gun fhaotainn,

Mo thriùir bhràithrean air gach taobh dhiubh.

Chan e sin a rinn mo chaochladh

Ach am fear dha 'n tug mi naoinear.

Fhuair mi do chùl donn fo 'n fhaoilinn

Agus cirb do bhreacain chraobhaich.

'S e mo làmh a fhuair a shaothair.

Chunnacas còmhlan seach an leacach,

Ceathrair air fhichead is caiptean.

Chunnacas còmhlan seach a' bhuaile.

Shaoil mi fhìn gum b' e daoine uaisl' iad.

Cha b' iad ach na balaich shuarach.

'S ghabh iad gu doras beul uamha,

'S bha mo bhràithrean fhìn 'nan suain ann.

Ghabh iad dhaibh le sgeinean fuara.

'S e mo leaba dhaibh bu chluasag.

'S e mo bhasan dhaibh bu chuachan.

167. AN CUALA SIBHS' A' MHOIGHDEAN CHEUTACH

haghaidh ó haghaidh ó ho
 haghaidh ó ho ì i bhó
 haghaidh ó haghaidh ó ho.

An cuala sibhs' a' mhoighdean cheutach
 Air an tug Niall Bàn an éiginn
 Air taobh beinneadh ri latha gréineadh ?
 'S truagh, a rìgh, nach b' e mi fhéin i.
 Cha sracainn broilleach do léineadh,
 Nan sracadh, gum fuaighlinn fhéin i '
 Le snàthaid bhig 's le snàth glé gheal
 'S nighinn ann an sruthan sléibh i
 Air lic shleamhainn an abhainn leuma.
 Thiormaichinn air bàrr nan geug i,
 Chuirinn an t-iarann na dhèidh oirre
 'S bheirinn paisgt' an làimh do phéid i.

'S truagh gun mise 's an t-òg gasda
 Am mullach beinneadh guirme caiseadh
 Gun duin' air bith bhith nar faisge,
 Fraoch agus fianach is gasan.
 Thigeamaid gu cliùiteach dhachaigh
 Mar gum pùsamaid o 'n altair.

'S truagh nach robh mi 's tus', a ghràidhein,
 An eilein mara nach tràghadh
 'S gun an t-aiseag a bhith 'nar fàbhar
 Gus an éireadh grian a màireach.

168. THA MULAD, THA SGÌOS ORM

Tha mulad, tha sgìos orm

'S mi nìos ris an Stùic,

'S mi 'g amharc na frìthe

'S tric a dhìrich mo rùn,

'S mi 'g amharc na frìthe

'S tric a dhìrich mo rùn,

Sin an obair bu dual dhuit

'S bha thu suairc air a cùl.

'S mi a' dìreadh a' bhruthaich,

Is gun mo shiubhal am rèir,

'S tric snigh' air mo shùilean

'S e drùthadh orm fèin,

'S mi 'g amharc an fhirich

Far am pilleadh tu 'n sprèidh,

'S mi faicinn damh cabair

As tric a leag thu san fheur.

'S tric a dh' fhàg thu mi 'm chadal,

'S mi gun airsneul, gun ghruaim,

'S a thug thu 'm boc biorach

O 'n fhireach ud shuas,

Agus coileach na gèige

Seal mu 'n èireadh an sluagh;

Ri ceòth'ran na maidne

'S tric a leag thu 'm fear ruadh.

Nuair bhios mnaithean a' bhaile

Ri h-aighear dhoibh féin,

'S ann bhios mis' ann am chrùban

Agus tùchan am bheul,

O nach tig e gam dhùsgadh

'M fear gan robh an cùl rèidh;

'S ged fhaighinn gu m' roghainn

'S e thaghainn roimh cheud.

'S mi am bothan beag brùsgach
 'S gun mo shùgradh ach mall,
 'S mi gun chuideachd ach leanabh
 Is fear mo ghearain air chall.
 Nuair a dh' fhalbhadh am bainne
 'S a bhiodh an t-aran oirnn gann,
 Nuair a thigeadh tu dhachaigh
 Bu leam tacar nam beann.

Dh' fhuirich mise gun tacar
 O 'n mhadainn sin fhéin
 Anns an deachaidh do thasgaidh
 Ann an clachan nan geug;
 Dh' fhuirich m' iasg anns an aigeal
 Gun fhaicinn le leus;
 O Dhi-h-aoine roimh Inid
 'N do bhuin an iomairt riut geur.

'S beag an t-iongnadh mi liathadh
 'S a dhol bliadhn' ann an aois;
 O 'n taice seo 'n uraidh
 Mo chulaidh gun d' aom,
 On a dh' fhalbh e Gilleasbuig,
 An t-ògan gasda, glan, caoin;
 'S tric leam òigridh do sheanar
 Gam falach le h-aog.

'S beag an t-iongnadh mi sheacadh
 'S a ghlasadh mo ghruaidh:
 Thug mi giùlan do Shraithibh
 A rinn mo sgathadh gu truagh,
 Thug mi giùlan do Chaorann
 A chaochail mo shnuadh:
 Fleasgach òg a' chùil bhuidhe
 D' am bu chubhaidh bhith suairc.

Chan eil i mar thà mi
 Bean ga cràdh ann as tìr,

A' gearan a pàirtidh
 'S a càisirean chrìon;
 A' gearan a pàirtidh
 'S a càisirean chrìon;
 Ach na fiùranan àlainn
 Och mo chràdh air dol dhìom.

Ged tha mis' air mo sgàldadh
 'S air mo chràdh ann ad dhèidh,
 Bidh mo bheannachd le gràdh dhuit
 A dh' ionnsaigh àros Mhic Dè.
 Cha tug thu riamh tàir dhomh
 No tàmailt le d' bheul,
 'S truagh nach mis' tha mar thà thu
 'S tu ri àiteach am dhèidh.

169. THA 'N OIHCHE NOCHD FUAR

Tha 'n oidhche nochd fuar,
 'S beag air chadal mo luaidh,
 Chaidh m' aigne gu bruidneal orm,
 Tha 'n oidhche, &c.

Tha mo chridhe cho trom
 Ri bàrc no ri long
 Thèid air bharraibh nan tonn gun seòl.

Mìle mallachd am dhèidh
 Mhnaoi òig tha fo 'n ghrèin
 A bheireadh iomadaidh spèis 'dhuin' òg.

Ge do labhradh e fial
 Is mar a thaitneadh ri a miann
 Bhiodh aigne mar iasg air falbh.

Nuair a gheibheadh e thoil féin,
 'S mar a thaitneadh ri bheus,
 Chan iarradh e 'd dhèidh nas mò.

Bhiodh inntinn cho luath
 Ri gaoth deas, no gaoth tuath
 Thig a-staigh bhar na cuantaibh mòr.

Gum b' e Ailean mo chiall,
 Corp mar chanach san t-sliabh,
 Làmh a leagadh nam fiadh, 's gan leòn.

Nuair a lùbadh e 'n glùn
 'S a chaogadh e 'n t-sùil
 Bhiodh eilid nan stùc fo leòn.

Le (a) ghunna bheòil ùir,
 'S a luaidhe r' a chùl,
 Fùdar caillteanach ùr cruaidh gorm.

Nuair a shuidheadh e air ràimh,
 'S na h-airm ann 'na làimh,
 'S tur a thàrladh na glinn fo 'n ceò.

Nuair a shuidheadh air stiùir,
 Bòrd daraich r' a chùl,
 Dha strìochdadh an cuan 's e borb.

'S e dhubhaich mo ghruaidh
 'S a ghreas mi gu uaigh
 An gaol a thug mi dhuit luath, 's mi òg.

Nuair a thug mi dhuit gaol
 'S ann a ghabh thu rium maoim,
 Chuir sin mi gu caochladh neòil.

Mun tig ach geàrr uair
 Bithidh tusa bochd truagh,
 'S bithidh mis' anns an uaigh gun deò.

Anns a' chlachan seo shìos
 A chuireas iad mi,
 Bithidh tusa fo mhì-chion mhòir.

Bithidh clach aig mo cheann,
 'S cha dean i riut cainnt,
 Bithidh siud ort mar champar mòr.

170. O BHA MO LEANNAN ANN

LUINNEAG

O bha mo leannan ann;
 Bha mo leannan bòidheach, barail
 Anns a' bhaile ud thall.

Ged tha mi 'm ònrachd 's na gleannaibh
 Gur beag mo shunnd ris na fearaibh;
 Thug mi-fhìn mo bhòid 's mo ghealladh
 Nach deanainn mo cheann a cheangal
 Gus am faighinn féin ort sealladh,-
 Mo rùn air sealgair na h-eala.

Gur h-e mo rùn an t-òg uasal,
 'Shiùbhladh an oidhche ga fuairead;
 Is a dhùisgeadh às mo shuain mi;
 Bhiodh do dhagaichean gam fuasgladh
 Is d' adharc fùdair an taobh shuas dhiom,
 'S farum a' crathadh do ghruaige.

Gur h-e mo rùn an t-òg gasda
 'S cùrtaile 'shiùbhladh an fhaiche;
 Gura math thig dhuit 's an fhasan
 Còta is féile air a phleatadh:
 'S tric a bha mi 'n cirb do bhreacain
 'N àite nach biodh càch 'g ar faicinn.

Tha mo chion air seircein saighdeir,
 Gorm-shùil a mhealladh nam maighdean;
 Cridhe cruaidh air chùl na saighde,
 Làmh dheas a bhualadh nam poichdean;
 Dheanainn coinneamh riut 's an oidhche,
 'S cha chreidinn gu 'm biodh tu 'm foill dhomh.

Cha dean mi seudan a ghabhail
 A dh' aindeoin cò thig a' m' rathad;
 Tha mo shùil ri d' làimh-se fhathast,
 Oganaich a's deise gabhail

Fo d' ghunna, fo d' sgéith, 's fo d' chladheamh:
'S ùr a choill' an d' fhàs an t-abhall.

Mo rùn mac na mnatha Sléiteach
A chumadh 's a dh' fhuaighleadh an léine,
'Chuireadh an sìod' air a' phearlainn:
Bu mhòr m' earbs' às do làimh threubhaich;
B' fheàrr leam gu 'n deanainn beairt réidh riut,
'S cha dean mi sin gu là m' euga.

'Dhòmhnuill mhic Néill mhic Iain bhuidhe,
Chaidh do shaothair ort am mutha; ^
Dh' fhalbh a' ghruagach bhuainn air siubhal
Le fear àrd na gruaige duibhe
'Dhìreadh 's a theàrnadh am bruthach,
'S dh' fhàgadh calp an fhéidh 'na sprudhar.

Chaidh sibh air choinneamh do dh' Uibhist,
Slàn gu 'n till sibh às gun phudhar;
Càirdeas nam fear òg o 'n Bhudhainn,
'S an oighre sin o Ghleanna-Cumhann
A bha uasal mar bu chubhaidh,
Is Raghnuill o Cheapaich nan ubhall.

Gur a h-e mo cheist an gille,
Beul meachair nam briathraibh milis;
Ghabh mi mo chead dhìot 's an linne,
'S thug sin air mo shùilean sìleadh,
'S chaidh do chridhe tlàth gu tioma;
Gu ma slàn gu 'n dean thu tilleadh.

ESAN GA FREAGAIRT:

Uist a nighean 's tog de 'd ghòraich;
B' fheàrr dhuit giullan bochd a phòsadh
'Dheanadh mullan coirce 's eòrna,
Théid do 'n fheannaig 's do 'n pholl-mòine,
'S a chuireadh gach nì air do sheòl dhuit:-
'S beag a bhuineadh dhuit a' mhòrchuis.

171. CUMHA PEATHAIR

Hù ò ro hù ò,
 O ho hì ó hì ò,
 Hù o ro hù o !

Gur h-e mise 'tha fo mhulad
 Tha lionn-dubh air mo ghruaidh !

'S cha b' e cumha mo leannan,
 Ged a dh' fhanadh e bhuam.

Ach a' cumha mo bhràithrean,
 A' cnàmh anns a' chuain.

Cumha Eachann 'us Lachlainn
 'Dh' fhàg tana mo ghruag.

'S oil leam dìol ar cùil chlannaich
 'S an fheamainn 'ga luaidh.

'S tric mo shùil air an rubha,
 Fo 'n bhruthach ud shuas.

Ach am faic mi seòl bhréidgheal
 Là gréine 's a' chuan.

Chan eil long 'thig fo 'n rubha
 Nach toir sruth air mo ghruaidh.

Chan eil bàt' thig 's a' chaolas
 Nach caochail mo shnuadh.

Cha dìrich mi bruthach,
 'S cha shiubhal mi uair.

Cha dèan mi ceum idir
 Gus an tig na bheil bhuam.

Cha chaidil mi còmhnard,
A Dhòmhnach no Luain.

Tha bhur leaba 'na h-ònar
Anns an t-seòmar ud shuas.

'S cha téid mi 'ga càradh
'S sibhs', a ghràidhean, fad bhuam.

Gur h-e mis' tha fo mhulad
Air an tulaich luim, fhuar.

172. A GHAOIL LIG DHACHAIGH GU M' MHÀTHAIR MI

A ghaoil, lig dhachaidh gu m' mhàthair mi,
 A ghràidh, lig dhachaigh gu m' mhàthair mi,
 A ghaoil, lig dhachaigh gu m' mhàthair mi,
 Air tòir a chrodh-laoigh a thànaig mi.

Ise: Gur h-ann a-raoir a chuala mi
 Mo ghaol a bhi ri buachailleachd,
 'S ged fhuair thu 'n iomall na buaile mi,
 A ghaoil, lig dhachaigh mar fhuair thu mi !

Esan: Ged 's ann a-raoir a chuala tu
 Do ghaol a bhi ri buachailleachd,
 'S ged fhuair mi 'n iomall na buaile thu,
 Cha lig mi dhachaigh mar fhuair mi thu !

Ise: 'S mi dìreadh ris na gàraidhean,
 'S a' teàrnadh ris na fàirichean,
 Gun d' thachair fleasgach bàidheil rium,
 'S cha d' fheuch e bonn g' a chàirdeas rium.

Esan: 'S tu dìreadh ris na gàraidhean,
 'S a' teàrnadh ris na fàirichean,
 Gun d' thachair fleasgach bàidheil riut,
 'S cha d' fheuch e bonn g' a chàirdeas riut.

Ise: Trodaidh mo phiuthar 's mo bhràthair rium,
 Trodaidh mo chinne 's mo chàirdean rium,
 Trodaidh m' athair 's mo mhàthair rium,
 Mur téid mi dhachaigh mar thàinig mi.

Esan: Ged throdadh do phiuthar 's do bhràthair riut,
 Ged throdadh do chinne 's do chàirdean riut,
 Ged throdadh d' athair 's do mhàthair riut,
 Cha téid thu dhachaigh mar thàinig thu.

173. MO CHÙBHRACHAN

Chuirinn fhìn mo leanabh gu làr,
 Mo leanabh gu làr, mo leanabh gu làr,
 Chuirinn fhìn mo leanabh gu làr,
 'S cha bhanaltrum do [mo chùbhrachan].

Och ! mar tha mo chìochan làn,
 M' achlais fàs, mo chìochan làn,
 Och ! mar tha mo chìochan làn,
 'S mo shùil an dèidh mo chùbhrachain.

Shiubhail mi 'bheinn o cheann gu ceann,
 Bho thaobh gu taobh, gu taobh nan allt,
 Shiubhail mi 'bheinn o cheann gu ceann,
 Cha d' fhuair mi lorg mo chùbhrachain.

Fhuair mi lorg an fhéidh 's a' bheinn,
 An fhéidh 's a' bheinn, an fhéidh 's a' bheinn,
 Fhuair mi lorg an fhéidh 's a' bheinn,
 Cha d' fhuair mi lorg mo chùbhrachain.

Fhuair mi lorg a' bhrìc air an allt,
 A' bhrìc air an allt, a' bhrìc air an allt,
 Fhuair mi lorg a' bhrìc air an allt,
 Cha d' fhuair mi lorg mo chùbhrachain.

Fhuair mi lorg na h-eal' air an t-snàmh,
 Na h-eal' air an t-snàmh, na h-eal' air an t-snàmh,
 Fhuair mi lorg na h-eal' air an t-snàmh,
 Cha d' fhuair mi lorg mo chùbhrachain.

Fhuair mi lorg na lach' air an lòn,
 Na lach' air an lòn, na lach' air an lòn,
 Fhuair mi lorg na lach' air an lòn,
 Cha d' fhuair mi lorg mo chùbhrachain.

Fhuair mi lorg na bà 's a laoigh,
 Na bà 's a laoigh, na bà 's a laoigh,

Fhuair mi lorg na bà 's a laoigh,
 Cha d' fhuair mi lorg mo chùbhrachain.

Fhuair mi lorg an laoigh bhrìc, dheirg,
 An laoigh bhrìc dheirg, an laoigh bhrìc dheirg,
 Fhuair mi lorg an laoigh bhrìc, dheirg,
 Cha d' fhuair mi lorg mo chùbhrachain.

Fhuair mi 'chas 's cha d' fhuair mi 'n ceann,
 Tha mi sgìth a' siubhal bheann;
 Fhuair mi 'chas 's cha d' fhuair mi 'n ceann,
 Cha d' fhuair mi ceann mo chùbhrachain.

Tha bò mhaol dhonn a' dìreadh bheann,
 O thaobh a' ghlinn gu bruaich nan allt,
 Tha bò mhaol dhonn a' dìreadh bheann,
 Tha ise sgìth 's a laogh air chall.

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Abbreviations

Where the reference appears in italics, the publication of that name is to be found in the bibliography. Where an author's name is given, the relevant name should be consulted in the bibliography. Otherwise, the abbreviations are as follows:

- ASWP : *An Anthology of Scottish Women Poets*, ed. C. Kerrigan.
- BG : *Bàrdachd Ghàidhlig*, ed. W.J. Watson.
- BL1 : *Na Bàird Leathanach*, vol. I, ed. A. Maclean Sinclair.
- BL2 : *Na Bàird Leathanach*, vol. II, ed. A. Maclean Sinclair.
- BSC : *Bàrdachd Shìlis na Ceapaich*, ed. C. O Baoill.
- CC : *Clàrsach na Coille*, ed. A. Maclean Sinclair.
- CGV : *Carmina Gadelica*, vol. V, ed. A. Carmichael.
- FFH : *From the Farthest Hebrides*, ed. D.A. Fergusson.
- FFSU : *Folksongs and Folklore of South Uist*, M.F. Shaw.
- GB1 : *The Gaelic Bards from 1411 to 1715*, A. Maclean Sinclair.
- GB2 : *The Gaelic Bards from 1715 to 1765*, A. Maclean Sinclair.
- GC : *The Glenbard Collection of Gaelic Poetry*,
A. Maclean Sinclair.
- Gesto : *The Gesto Collection of Highland Music*, K.N. Macdonald.
- GFFB : *Gaelic Folk Songs from the Isle of Barra*, ed. J.L. Campbell.
- GSSM : *Gaelic Songs of Mary Macleod*, ed. J.C. Watson.
- HF : *Hebridean Folksongs*, J.L. Campbell & F. Collinson.
- HF45 : *Highland Songs of the Forty-five*, ed. J.L. Campbell.
- HM : The Hector Maclean of Grulin Manuscript.
- IC : *Co-chruinneachadh nuadh do dh' Orannibh Gaidhealach*.
- JM : The John Maclean Manuscript.
- LN : *Story and song from Loch Ness-side*, A. Macdonald.
- MB : *Macdonald Bards from mediaeval times*, K.N. Macdonald.
- MC : *The Macdonald Collection of Gaelic Poetry*, A.&A. Macdonald.
- MCa : *Co-chruinneacha Dhan, Orain &c. &c.*, D. MacCallum.
- MD : The Macdiarmid Manuscript.
(MD Anthology refers to D.S. Thomson, 1991)
- Me : *Comhchruinneacha do dh' Orain thaghta Ghaidhealach*,
G. Meinne
- ML : The MacLagan Manuscripts.
- MTT : *Mactalla nan Tùr*, A. Maclean Sinclair.

- NLS : National Library of Scotland Manuscripts.
- OIL : *Orain Iain Luim*, A.M. Mackenzie.
- PB : *The Poetry of Badenoch*, T. Sinton.
- S : *Cochruinneacha taoghta de shaothair nam Bàrd Gaèlach*.
- SCR : *The Scottish Celtic Review*.
- SO : *Sàr-obair nam Bàrd Gaelach*, J. Mackenzie.
- SRE : *Songs Remembered in Exile*, J.L. Campbell.
- SS : *Scottish Studies*.
- T : *Comhchruinneacha do Dh' Orain taghta, Ghaidhealach*,
P. Mac-an-Tuairneir.
- TGSI : *Transactions of the Gaelic Society of Inverness*.

Textual Sources:

Song: * indicates main source ; [] indicates secondary source used in Appendix.

1. *Bàrdachd Albannach o Leabhar Deadhan Lìos-Moir* ; p. 234
The Dean of Lismore's Book ; pp. 118-19.
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 * *Dánta Grádha* ; p. 74.

2. * *Bàrdachd Albannach o Leabhar Deadhan Lìos-Moir* ; pp. 307-8.

3. [*Poems from the Book of the Dean of Lismore* ; p. 78]
 * Unpublished transliteration by Meg Bateman.

4. * MTT; p. 92
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5. NLS MS. 50.2.20; pp. 182a-b.
 * TGSi; vol. XXVI; pp. 238-39.
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- 127 *Alasdair Mhic Cholla gasda.*
86; 89; 621.

- 128 *Clann Dòmhnuaill an cogadh Rìgh Teàrlach I.*
125; 622.
- 129 *Biodh an deoch-s' air làimh mo rùin.*
37; 74; 224; 315; 624.
- 130 *Biodh an deoch-s' air làimh mo rùin.*
75; 626.
- 131 *Crodh Chailein.*
49; 628.
- 132 *An Crònan Muileach.*
27; 267; 630.
- 133 *Rinn mi mocheirigh gu éirigh.*
162; 633.
- 134 *'S mise bhean bhoichd dhubhach dheurach.*
226; 635.
- 135 *Òran do dh' Eachann Mac-Gilleain, Triath*
Dhubhairt.
27; 243; 637.
- 136 *Eòghainn mhic Iain mhic Ailein.*
267; 640.
- 137 *Tàladh Choinnich Òig.*
199; 642.
- 138 *Gheibhte sud an Taigh na Maighe.*
201; 644.
- 139 *Òran Mór Sgorabreac.*
158; 252; 645.
- 140 *Òran Mór Sgorabreac.*
159; 646.

- 141 *Chunnacas long seach an caolas.*
271; 647.
- 142 *Luinneag Mhic Neachduinn.*
296; 648.
- 143 *Duanag do Dhòmhnaiill Chana.*
161; 651.
- 144 *Òran do dh' Alasdair Dubh Ghlinne Garaidh.*
652.
- 145 *Iorram do dh' Iain Garbh, Triath Chola.*
654.
- 146 *Òran do Shir Iain Mac-Gilleain, Triath Dhubhairt.*
271; 656.
- 147 *Òran do Shir Dòmhnall Shléite.*
320; 658.
- 148 *Muladach mi 's mi air m' aineoil.*
220; 318; 662.
- 149 *Òran do Mhac Leòid na Hearadh.*
179; 663.
- 150 *'N raoir a chunnaic mi 'n aisling.*
207; 664.
- 151 *Marbhrann do Bhaintighearna na Comraich.*
340; 665.
- 152 *Chì mi. chì mi, chì mi thall ud.*
122; 671.
- 153 *Chunnaic mise mo leannan.*
123; 174; 672.

- 154 *Tha 'ghaoth an iar a' gobachadh.*
125; 674.
- 155 *Marbhrann do Mhac Mhic Ailein.*
125; 676.
- 156 *Dà rent, dà rent, dà rothond.*
76; 678.
- 157 *Dòmhnall Ruadh Gaolach.*
178; 680.
- 158 *Marbhrann Forsair Choire an t-Sìth.*
186; 246; 681.
- 159 *A' Bhean Eudach.*
79; 191; 215; 683.
- 160 *Ge grianach an latha.*
188; 246; 684.
- 161 *Bothan Àirigh am Bràigh Raithneach.*
163; 686.
- 162 *Is ann feasgar Di-h-Aoine.*
161; 688.
- 163 *Cumha Mhic 'ic Raoghaill na Ceapaich.*
140; 690.
- 164 *Có Sheinneadh an Fhìdeag Airgid ?*
128; 692.
- 165 *Oran do Phriunnsa Teàrlach.*
142; 694.
- 166 *'S ann an raoir nach d' fhuair mi an cadal.*
260; 696.

- 167 *An cuala sibhs' a' mhoighdean cheutach.*
346; 698.
- 168 *Tha mulad, tha sgìos orm.*
699.
- 169 *Tha 'n oidhche nochd fuar.*
160; 702.
- 170 *O bha mo leannan ann.*
177; 704.
- 171 *Cumha Peathair.*
260; 706.
- 172 *A ghaoil lig dhachaigh gi m' mhàthair mi.*
51; 708.
- 173 *Mo Chùbhrachan.*
51; 709.

