

The Gaels' Honour:

Early Music for Harp & Voice from Gaelic Scotland and Ireland
James Ruff, Tenor and Early Gaelic Harp

Lyrics and Translations

Craobh nan Ubhal

Sèist:

O chraobh nan ubhal, o

Craobh nan ubhal, geug nan abhull

O chraobh nan ubhal, o

-Aithnich fhèin a'chraobh tha leamsa...

-Chraobh as mùtha 's as mìlse ùbhlan...

-Chraobh nan ubhal, gu robh Dia leat...

-Gu robh 'n àird an ear 's an iar leat...

-Go robh gach gealach agus grian leat...

Oh Apple Tree

Chorus (after each verse):

Oh apple tree

Apple tree, branch of the apple tree

Oh apple tree

-Know the tree that is mine...

-The tallest with the sweetest apples...

-Apple tree, may God be with you...

-May the east and the west be with you...

-May every sun and moon be with you...

A Chaillíní, an bhfaca sibh Seóirse?

A chaillíní, 'chaillíní, 'bhfaca sibh Seóirse,
Seanduine liath is é 'síor-dhol ann óige?
B'aite leis cailín 'bheith aige ina sheomra,
Píopa tobac agus canna maith beorach.

Girls, have you seen George?

Girls, girls, have you seen George,
A grey old man who is always getting younger?
He loves to have a girl with him in his room,
A pipe of tobacco and a good can of beer.

Molly MacAlpin

'Sí Molly an chúil chraobhaigh
Do mhearaigh is do bhuaidhrigh mé,
'S a samhail ní léir dhom sa' tír seo;
'Sgur í seómra na séad
A chomhnuigheas an spéirbhean,
Ler cailleadh na céadta míle.

Molly Halfpenny

It is Molly of the curling hair
That has tormented me and driven me crazy,
And I know not her peer in the land;
In a jeweled room
This lady abides,
Who has slain hundreds of thousands.

Lámh an oinigh is a' réidhtigh,
Croidhe geal na féile,
A sgcapfadh dá mba léithe an saoghal so;

Bounteous, hospitable hand,
Bright, generous heart,
Who would give away the earth if it were hers;

'S go bhfuil deallra ón ngréin
Ins a' maighre gan chlaon,
Is ceó meala ar gach taobh dá n-imthigheann
sí.

Is deise 'gus is breaghtha
Gach siolla dho mo ghrádh-sa
Ná rós i ngáirdín pléisiúir;
A com atá
Mar a' tsíoda bhán,
An maighre mná sí bhuaidhrigh mé.

Ba bhinne liom a' lá
Bheinn ag cómhra dh le mo ghrádh
Ná ag ceartughadh dánta as Gaedhilge;
Seach a bhfuil mé a' rádh
'Sé mo chreach agus mo chrádh
Mar a chonaic mé le dhá bhliadhain déag thú.

Alasdair à Gleanna Garadh

Alasdair a Gleanna Garadh
Thug thu'n diugh gal air mo shùilean;
'S beag iongnadh mi bhith trom-chreuchdach,
Gur tric gar reubadh as ùr sinn.
'S deachdair dhomh-sa bhith gun osnaich
Meud an dosgaich air mo chàirdibh;
Gur tric an t-eug oirnn ag gearradh,
Taghadh nan darag is àirde.

Chaill sinn ionann agus còmhla
Sir Domhnull a mhac 's a bhràthair.
Ciod am fàth dhuinn bhith 'gar gearan?
dh'fhan Mac Mhic Ailean 's a' bhlàr uainn.
Chaill sinn darag làidir liathghlas
Bha cumail dìon air a chàirdibh,
Capull-coille bhàrr na giùsaich,
seabhag sùlghorm, lùthmhor, làidir.

Bu tu ceann air céill 's air comhairl'
Anns gach gnothuch am bi cùram,
Aghaidh shoilleir, sholta, thlachdmhor,
Cridhe fial farsaing man chùinneadh.
Bu tu rogha nan sàr-ghaisgeach,
Ar guala thaice, 's tu a b'fhiùghail;

The splendor of the sun
Is in this faultless maiden,
And a honeyed mist is wherever she walks.

Sweeter and more delightful
Is my love's breath
Than a rose in a pleasure-garden;
Her breast is
As white as silk,
It is she who has tormented me.

I would rather spend a day
Talking with my love
Than composing Irish songs;
And apart from all I have said,
I am most sad and sorry
For having known you these twelve years.

Alastair of Glengarry

Alexander of Glengarry, today you have
brought weeping to my eyes; Small wonder that
I should be sore wounded, Often are we
plundered a-new. It would be hard for me to
be without sorrow Equal to the calamity that
has come upon my kin; Death is frequently
cutting off from us, the best and tallest of the
oaks.

We lost in the same way and together Sir
Donald, his son and his brother. What reason
for us to complain? Clan Ranald remained on
the battlefield; We have lost a strong, grey oak
which protected its people, A woodcock from
the pine wood, a hawk, blue-eyed, muscular,
powerful.

You were leader in wisdom and counsel In all
matters of responsibility; A bright, pleasant,
handsome face, Heart generous and liberal with
money. You were the choicest of the warriors,
Our shoulder for support, and most worthy; A
lion courageous, manly and effective, Leader
whom James Stewart has lost.

Leomhann smiorail, fearail, feumail,
Ceann feachda chaill Seumas Stiùbhart.

Guidheam d'anam a bhith sàbhailt
Bhon a chàradh anns an ùir thu;
Guidheam sonas air na dh'fhàg thu
Ann ad àros 's ann ad dhùthaich:
Guidheam do mhac bhith nad àite
Ann an saibhreas 's ann an cùram:
Alasdair a Gleanna Garadh,
Thug thu'n diugh gal air mo shùilean.

Marbhrann

Iain Garbh Mac Ghille Chaluim

Mo bheud 's mo chràdh
Mar dh'èirich dhà
'n fhear ghleusda ghràidh
Bha treun 's an spàirn
's nach fhaicear gu bràth an Ratharsair.

Bu tù 'm fear curanta m`or
Bu mhath spionnadh is treòir
O d'uilinn gu d'dhòrn
O d'mhullach gu d'bhròig,
Mhic Mhuire, mo leòn
Thu bhi 'n innis nan ròn 's nach faighear thu.

Bu tu sealgair an fhèidh
Leis an deargta na beinn;
Bhiodh coin earbsach air èill
Aig an Albannach threun;
Càit' am faca mi fhèin
Aon duine fon ghrèin
A dheanadh riut euchd fathasach?

Spealp nach dìobradh
'n cath no strì thu,
Casan dìreach fada finealt;
Mo chreach dhiobhail
Chaidh thu dhìth oirn
Le neart sine,
Làmh nach dìobradh caitheadh oirr'.

'S e dh'fhàg silteach mo shùil
Faicinn d'fhearainn gun surd,
's do bhaile gun smùid,

I pray your soul be safe Now that you have
been buried in the soil.
I pray happiness for those you have left
In your home and in your land. I pray your son
be in your place, In wealth and responsibility.

Alexander of Glengarry today you have brought
weeping to my eyes.

Lament

for MacLeod of Raasay

My loss and my anguish
That which has befallen
The clever, well-loved man,
Strong in battle,
Who will no more be seen in Raasay.

You were a great warrior,
Vigorous and strong,
From your elbow to your fist;
From your crown to your shoe,
Son of Mary, it is my distress that you are in the
Resting place of the seals and will not be found.

You were a hunter of the deer
By whom hides were reddened;
Trusty hounds would the mighty Scotsman
Hold on leash;
Where have I beheld
Beneath the sun one man
Who would vie with you in a princely feat?

A proud gallant you were,
Who did not shrink in battle or strife,
Your limbs straight, long and shapely;
Alas, I am sadly bereft,
You were lost to us,
By strength of tempest,
You whose hand would not fail to drive her
onwards.

What has made me weep
Is seeing your land cheerless
And your homestead without smoke,

Fo charraig nan sùgh,
Dheagh Mhic Chaluim nan tùr a Ratharsair.

Mo bheud 's mo bhròn
Mar dh'èirich dò,
Muir beucach mòr
a' leum mu d'bhòrd,
Thu fhèin 's do sheòid
Nuair reub ur seòil
Nach d'fheud sibh treòir a chaitheadh or'.

Under the towered rock,
Excellent Mhic Gille Chaluim of Raasay.

It is injury and sorrow to me
What has befallen him;
A great roaring sea
Leaping about your boat;
You and your stout crew,
When your sails ripped,
That you could not bend your might upon it.

Oran Eile Air Latha Chuil-Lodair

O, gur mis' th' air mo chràdh,
Thuit mo chridhe gu làr,
'S tric snighe gu m'shàil
o m' léirsinn.

Dh'fhalbh
mo chlaistinneachd uam,
Cha chluinn mi 'san uair
Gu mall no gu luath ni's éibhinn,

Mu Phrionns' Teàrlach mo rùn,
Oighre dligheach a' chrùin,
'S e gun fhios ciod an tùbh
a théid e.

Sàr-fhuil rioghal nam buadh
Bhith 'ga dìobart 'san uair,
Us mac dìolain le shluagh
ag éirigh.

Siol nan cuilean gun bhàidh,
Dh'am maith-chinnich an t'àl,
Chuir iad sinn ann an càs
na h'éiginn.

Cha b'è 'n cruadal mar laoich
Thug dhaibh buaidh
air an fhraoch
Ach gach tubaist a dh'aom
mu'r tréinne.

Bha iad iomadaidh uainn
De gach fine mu thuath,

Another Song on the Day of Culloden

O, I am in anguish,
My heart has fallen to earth,
And often from my eyes
tears are falling.

Every pleasure has gone,
In this hour I don't hear,
either slow or quick,
any good tidings,

Of Prince Charles my beloved
Rightful heir to the crown,
And he not knowing
whom to turn to.

The true goodly royal blood,
Will now be cast out,
While the bastard offspring arises.

Race of ill-favored curs,
Whose brood has well grown,
They have put us
in sore straits of hardship.

'Twas not their valor or might
Won the day on the heath,
But each mishap
that confounded our heroes.

There were many away
Of each northern clan,

Fir nach tilleadh
ri h-uair an fheuma.

Feachd chóig brataichean sròil
Bu mhaith chuireadh an lò
Bhith 'gar dìth anns
a' chomhdhail chreuchdaich.

A Chlann Dhomhnuill
mo ghràidh,
Leam is cruaidh mar a bhà,
Nach do bhrùchd sibh
le càch do'n teugmhail.

'S ann thuit na rionnagan gasd'
Bu mhaith àluinn an dreach,
'S cha bu phaidheadh leinn mairt 'nan éirig.

Ach thig a' chuibhle
mu 'n cuairt
Car o dheas no o thuath,
'S gheibh ar n-eascàirdean
duais an eucoir.

Gum bi Uilleam Mac Dheòrs'
Mar chraoibh sheargte fo leòn,
Gun fhreumh, gun duilleach, gun
mheòirean géige.

An Suaithneas Bàn

Soraidh bhuan do'n t-Suaithneas Bàn
Gu Là Luain cha ghluais o'n bhàs;
Ghlac an uaigh an Suaithneas Bàn,
Is leacan fuaraidh tuam' a thàmh.

Air bhith dhomhsa triall thar druim
Air Dì-Dòmhnach 's comhlan liom,
Leughas litir naidheachd linn,
'S cha sgeul ait a thachair innt'.

Albainn arsaidh! 's fathunn bròin
Gach aon mhuir-bhàith' tha bàrcadh oirnn,
T' oighre rìoghal bhith 'san Ròimh
Tìrt' an caol-chist liomhta bhòrd.

Who in need's hour
would never fail us.

A host of five silken flags
Which well used to fight,
We lacked
in the bloodthirsty combat.

Clan Donald, my beloved,
Woe is me what befell:
You charged not with the rest
to the conflict.

There fell the fine stars,
Of goodly fair form,
For whom cattle we thought were no
ransom.

But the wheel yet will turn
Round from the south
or from the north,
And our foes will receive
evil's wages.

And may Prince William be
As a withered, stricken tree,
Rootless, leafless, and twigless.

The White Cockade

Farewell to the White Cockade
Till Doomsday he in death is laid,
The grave has ta'en the White Cockade,
The cold tombstone is now his shade.

As I walked across the hill
On Sunday, and a friend with me,
We read together a letter's news
No joyful tale we gathered there.

Ancient Scotland! A tale of woe
Every sea-wave breaking brings,
That thy royal heir is now in Rome
Earthed in chest of polished boards.

Tha mo chridhe gu briste, fann,
'S deòir mo shul a' ruith mar allt;
Ge do cheilinn sud air àm
Bhrùchd e mach 's cha mhisde leam.

Bha mi seal am barail chruaidh
Gun cluinnte caismeachd mu'n cuairt,
Càbhlach Theàrlaich thighinn air chuan,
Ach thrèig an dàil mi gu Là Luain.

Nis cromaidh na cruiteireann binn
Am bàrraibh dhos fo sprochd an cinn,
Gach beò bhiodh ann an srath no 'm beinn
A' caoi an comh-dhosgainn leinn.

Tha gach beinn, gach cnoc, 's gach sliabh
Air am faca sinn thu triall,
Nis air call an dreach 's am fiamh
O nach tig thu chaoidh nan cian.

Ach biodh ar n-urnaigh moch gach là
Ris an 'Tì as aird' atà,
Gun è dhìoladh oirnn gu bràth
Ar n-ecoir air an t-Suaithneas Bhàn.

Us biomaid toilicht' leis na thà,
O nach fhaod sinn bhith na 's fearr,
Cha bhi ar cuairt an seo ach gear
Us leanaidh sinn an Suaithneas Bàn.

Soraidh bhuan do'n t-Suaithneas Bhàn,
Gu Là Luain cha ghluais o'n bhàs;
Ghlac an uaigh an Suaithneas Bàn,
Is leacan fuaraidh tuam' a thàmh.

Now my heart is broken, weak,
And my tears run like a stream,
Though I hid this at the time
It's broken forth, I do not mind

For a while I had firm faith
That thy war-cry would be heard,
The fleet of Prince Charles coming o'erseas,
But now we'll ne'er meet till Doomsday.

Now the sweet harpists shall bow
In the treetops their heads of woe,
Every live thing on strath or ben
Shall mourn with us the loss they share.

Each hill-slope and mountainside
On which we ever saw thee move,
Now has lost its form and hue
Since thou ne'er shalt come again.

But let our prayers early rise
To the One who is on high,
Never on us to avenge
The wrong we did the White Cockade.

And let us be happy with what is,
Since we may not better be,
Our journey here will be but short
We too shall follow the White Cockade.

Farewell to the White Cockade
Till Doomsday he in death is laid
The grave has ta'en the White Cockade
The cold tombstone is now his shade.