

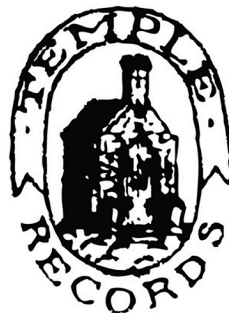
Songwords & translations for:

Christine Primrose

'S tu nam chuimbne

... and you on my mind

With notes on the songs by John MacInnes



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Tha m'eudail is m'aighear 's mo ghradh
(My treasure, my delight, my love)

William Ross (1762-91), popularly regarded as the leading Gaelic love poet, is sometimes said to be the author of this song. There is certainly a connection between it and Ross's famous last song "ORAN EILE" ("Another Song") so-called because Gaelic printed collections often have a heading "Another song by the same author", and so on until that sequence is completed. The immensely influential 19th century anthology "Sar Obair" "The Beauties of Gaelic Poetry", helped to popularise "Another Song" as a title. The exact nature of the connection between the two verses sung by Christine and the printed text of William Ross's "Oran Eile" is obscure although the melody is basically the same. We may have in this text part of a song on which Ross based his own love-song and whose melody he used, following a common practice of Gaelic song-poeting. But in some of the variants we may also have some of William Ross's own words preserved.

1. THA M'EUDAIL IS M'AIGHEAR 'S MO GHRADH

Tha m'eudail is m'aighear 's mo ghradh
Ag iomain a ghnath nam bo,
Chan iarrainn a dh'iocshlaint no shlaint
Ach faighinn, a ghraidh, ort coir,
'S cha bhi mise tuilleadh ach tinn
Gu faigh mi ort snaim nach sgaoil
Le aont a'bhodaich bha thall
'Na shuidh' ann an gleann an fhraoich.
Oir chunnaic mi mais' annad fhein
Nach fhaca mi'n te ta beo,
'S chan fhaca mi gin air an fheill
A ghabhainn romhad fhein 's tu beo,
'S tu fhein a bha labhairt le ciall
'S a labhairt le briathran sith,
'S roimh aon de do chairdean gu leir,
Gun ghoid thu dhuit fhein mo chridh.
'S tha m'eudail is m'aighear 's mo ghradh
Ag iomain a ghnath nam bo.....

MY TREASURE, MY DELIGHT, MY LOVE.

*My treasure, my delight, my love,
Does nothing but drive the cows,
I would ask neither healing nor health
But, love, to have you by right,
I'll never be well evermore
Till we're tied with a knot that won't loose,
If that old fellow agreed
Who's down in the heathery glen.
For I saw a beauty in you
Seen in no woman alive,
And none on show at the fair
That I'd rather have while you live,
You're the one who was talking with sense
And your words were so peaceful and calm
And before any one of your friends
You've stolen my heart for yourself.
Repeat Verse 1.*

Translation Tom Ross

Coinnichidh mi an Gleann an Fhraoich *(When the evening mist comes swirling near)*

Murchadh Mac Gille Mhoire (Murdo Morrison) known in his native island of Lewis as Murchadh a' Bhocs, born in 1884 and emigrated to Niagra Falls. This is an emigre song in which the poet looks forward to revisiting his homeland and his sweetheart. It was composed, ostensibly at least, as the ship was approaching harbour. In these, as in other respects, the song employs the characteristic evocative images of such praise-songs of place : the cattle and the evening milking, the sheep with their lambs, the beauty of the island in the light of the setting sun.

Murdo Morrison's songs and poems were published under the title "Fear-siubhal nan Gleann" in 1923. He himself died in 1965.

2. COINNICHIDH MI AN GLEANN AN FHRAOICH

Nuair dh'iathas ceò an fheasgair dlùth
Cur smùid air bhàrr nam beann,
'S an crodh bho'n innis cnàmh an cìr
Cho sgìth a' tighinn do'n ghleann;
'Nuair bhios a' bhanachaig 'm beul na h-oidhch'
Do'n laogh toirt deoch le mèoir,
Coinnichidh mi an gleann an fhraoich
Mo ghaol, mo rìbhinn òg.

'Nuair bhios a' ghrian 's an àirde 'n Iar
Dol sìos aig crìoch an lò,
'S a' cur an soills' air feadh nan sliabh,
'S a sgiamh air dhreach an òir;
'S nuair bhios na caoraich leis na h-uain
Cho suaimhneach aig a' chrò,
Coinnichidh mi an gleann an fhraoich
Mo ghaol, mo rìbhinn òg.

'S ged bhiodh air an fheasgar gruaim
'S an t-slighe buan gu leòr
Is tuinn nan loch a' fiodraich fuar
Le'm fuaim a measg nan còs,
Gu'n dèan na thug mi dhuit de luaidh
An ruaig chur air gach bròn;
Coinnichidh mi an gleann an fhraoich
Mo ghaol, mo rìbhinn òg.

Tha bàt' na smùid do'n chala dlùth,
'S gach ròp is stiùir air dòigh,
'S nuair ruigeas i leam tìr mo rùn
'S an robh mi 'n tùs mo lò,
'S an anmoch chiùin nuair bhios gach flùr
'S an canach ùr 'n an glòir,
Coinnichidh mi an gleann an fhraoich
Mo ghaol, mo rìbhinn òg.

Murdo Morrison (Murchadh a' Bhocs)

WHEN THE EVENING MIST COMES SWIRLING NEAR.

*When the evening mist comes swirling near
Hazing over the mountain tops,
And the cattle from grazing in the meadow
Come wearily back to the valley,
When at twilight the dairy-maid
is giving the calf a drink with her finger,
I shall meet in the heathery dale
My love, my darling girl.*

*When the sun over in the West
Is sinking down at close of day,
Spreading over the moors
Her light like airy gold,
And when the sheep beside their lambs
Are so tranquil in the fold,
I shall meet in the heathery dale
My love, my darling girl.*

*And though the evening turn surly
And the way be long and hard
And the waves of the lakes coldly lapping
And resounding in the glen
The love that I feel for you
Will put each care to flight
I shall meet in the heathery dale
My love, my darling girl.*

*The steamship now is nearing home,
Ropes and tiller all well set,
And when she bears me to the land I love
When I first saw the light
In the evening calm when every flower
And the fresh bog-cotton are glorious
I shall meet in the heathery dale
My love, my darling girl.*

Togail curs air Leodhas **(Setting a course for Lewis)**

Domhnall Mac Gille Mhoir (Donald Morrison) from Ness in Lewis, the author of a number of popular songs, used here the convention of an invitation to his girl to come and live with him in their ancestral island in the Outer Hebrides. They are to leave the Lowlands and pass the rest of their days in Lewis in tranquil happiness. The song uses the established formulas of such composition in praise of the "Homeland".

This is a very popular category in Gaelic. Landscape and community alike are celebrated: arts and crafts, social graces, and the natural beauty of the place.

3. TOGAIL CURS AIR LEODHAS

Tugainn leamsa 's dean cabhaig 's theid sinn thairis a null
Dh'eilean uasal na Gaidhlig rinn ar n-arach 'nar cloinn
Tir nan treun-fhear is calma choisinn ainm a measg Ghall
'S theid sinn comhla a leannain thir an rainich a null.

Ni sinn gluasad gu dana suas na braighean 's na caoil
Gheibh sinn aiseag gu sabhailt null gu aite mo ghaoil
'S nuair a bhuaileas i 'm bagh ann cluinn' tu Ghaidhlig gach taobh
'S gheibh sinn aoigh agus failt 'n eilean baigheil an fhraoich.

Chi thu muir, 's chi thu mointeach 's chi thu moine mu'n cuairt
Chi thu cruic ghlas is leoidean air am b'eolach mi uair
Chi thu machraichean comhnard 's tha gu leor dhiubh air tuath
Ann an Nis aite 's boidheach thogadh og ann mi suas.

Chi thu 'n t-Siumpan cho aosmhor air aodhann nan stuagh
'S tric tha solus toirt saoirsinn do na laoich th'air a chuan
'S iomadh bat bh'air a sgiursadh 's i gun churs ri droch uair
Rinn an soills' ud a stiuireadh steach an cuiltean Loch-a-Tuath.

Chi thu iasgairean turail 's fharr air stiuireadh 's cur lion
Mach a cladach Phort-nan-Giuran, b'e sud cliu bh'ac a riamh
Sud am baile rinn d'arach 's fhuair thu gradh ann is dion
'S chi thu'n dachaidh a dh'fhag thu mar a bha i bho chian.

SETTING A COURSE FOR LEWIS

*Come with me and hurry
We'll cross over with joy
To the noble Gaelic island
That nursed us as babes
The land of boldest heroes
Among strangers who won fame
We'll go together, my darling,
To yon land of bracken.*

*We'll brook no delay
Travelling high land and firths
We'll get a ferry, no problem,
Over to the land of my love
When she touches the bay there,
You'll hear Gaelic all around
We'll find hospitality and welcome
In the kindly heather isle.*

*You'll see sea
You'll see moorland
You'll see peat-banks around
You'll see verdant hills and slopes
That we once knew so well
You'll see level, sandy plain
There are plenty up North,
In Ness, a lovely spot
Where as I boy I was raised.*

*You'll see the Tiompan so ancient
Facing the huge waves
Often does its light give deliverance
To the brave lads at sea
Many a boat doomed to founder
But its light safely steered them
To the Loch a Tuath's sheltered nooks.
You'll see skillful fishermen
Non better with tiller or net
Out from Port nan Giuran shore
For which they've long had renown
There's the place you were raised in
Where you found shelter and love
You'll see the home that you left
As it was long ago.*

Translation Tom Ross

La dhomh 's mi'm Beinn a'Cheathaich **(One day on the Misty Mountain)**

"One day on the Misty Mountain" is the original on which Marjory Kennedy-Fraser based the melody of her "Kishmul's Galley". The song is of Barra provenance (Ciosamul, or in its anglicised form Kishmul, is the ancestral castle of the MacNeills) which was also known in the Gaelic community of Nova Scotia, in Canada. It is the only example on this record of a waulking song.

Waulking songs were used as an accompaniment to the fulling of new-made cloth. The great majority were composed by women and traditionally passed down in an exclusively female environment. Almost invariably they are anonymous, this being one of the exceptions : among the singers of Barra it is attributed to Nic Iain Fhinn, a 17th century poetess from the neighbouring island of Mingulay. The poetry of these songs is often "simple, sensuous and passionate" and unfolds not in a smooth linear movement but unevenly, with abrupt changes of direction, which often give a strangely surrealistic effect.

The version sung by Christine is drawn from a longer text published by J. L. Campbell and Francis Collinson in the monumental "Hebridean Folksongs".

4. LA DHOMH 'S MI'M BEINN A'CHEATHAICH 2.52

La dhomh 's mi'm Beinn a'Cheathaich a
fair all al o ro ho bhi o
hoireann is o ho ro bhi o ho
hi ri ho ro ho bha o haodh o ro.
Ruagadh nan caorach 's gam faighinn a
Cha b'e caigeann an da pheathar a
'S ann agam fhin a bha a' sealladh a
Faicinn do bhata dol seachad a
Mach bho dhuthaich Mhic Nill Bharraidh a
Mach bho Chiosamul an aighir a
Nuair bha mi nam nighinn fo lighe mo ghruaige a
B'annsa leam agam fear geal nach biodh gruaim air a
Fear buidhe donn alainn gun ardan gun uabhar a
Dhireadh am monadh 's a ghunna ri ghualainn a

ONE DAY ON THE MISTY MOUNTAIN

One day on the Misty Mountain a
Rounding up the sheep to get them a
Not the pair of the two sisters a
'Twas I myself beheld the vision a
Seeing thy galley going past me a
From McNeil of Barra's country a
Out from Ciosamal's joyful castle a
Drinking wine from dawn till nightfall a
When I was a girl 'neath the sheen of my tresses a
I'd prefer a fine man who'd never be churlish a
A handsome man, dark yellow haired, not conceited a
Who'd climb on the moor with his gun on his shoulder a

Fadachd an t-Seoladair

(The Sailor's Longing)

"The Sailor's Longing" — "FADACHD AN T-SEOLADAIR" — composed by Iain Mac Gille Fhinnein (John MacLennan) from the island of Lewis is one of thousands of Sailors' Songs in Gaelic, which range in time from the age of the sailing ships to the present day. This one was composed in wartime. Most of these songs have a strong element of nostalgia. In this song, the yearning is made all the keener by the contrast between the remembered warmth of home and the ways of the Gaelic community, with its love and hospitality, and the grim uncertainties of life in the Navy during war.

5. FADACHD AN T-SEÒLADAIR

Gu'n dean mi rann 's mo chridhe trom,
Is mi fo chuing dha m'aindeoin,
Air bòrd an luìng, 's mi sgìth is tinn,
'S an cuan 'na ghlinn dol seachad.
Thoir soraidh uamsa thar a' chuain,
Is inns do'n t-sluagh a dh'fhuirich,
Ma thig an t-sìth, dean dhaibhsan inns',
Nach bì sinn sgìth dol dhachaigh.
Bho éirigh gréin gu luighe sìos
Bidh sinn fo fhiamh 's fo eagal,
'S nuair thig an oidhch' cha chadail sinn:
Bidh mi sa' chrann ri faire.
Tha 'n geamhradh fuar 's an reothadh cruaidh,
Is smùid a' chuain 'gar dalladh.
O, bheirinn duais bhith 'm blàths mo luaidh—
'S i chuireadh gruaim bho m' fhaire.
Is truagh an dràs'd' nach robh sinn cruinn
An tìr nam beann, mar chleachd sinn:
Tha cuid nach till, nach coinnich ruinn—
Bidh 'n cuan 's na tuinn 'gam falach.
Nuair chì mi eun a' falbh air sgiath,
Bu mhiann leam bhith 'na chuideachd:
Gu'n deanainn cùrs' air tìr mo rùin,
Far bheil an sluagh ri fuireach.
Nuair bhiodh sinn cruinn an taigh MhicAoidh,
Cha b'fhad' an 'oidhch' dol seachad;
Ged bhiodh e uair cha bhiodh air gruaim
Ri éirigh suas sa' mhadainn.
Bheir mi gu ceann na beagan rainn,
'S mi cluinntinn fear le feadaig
Foirt òrdugh tèann bhith suas air ball,
'S an long a' fàgail caladh.
Iain Mac Illinnein, Tolastadh

THE SAILOR'S LONGING

*I'll sing a verse, since my heart is heavy
Yoked here against my will
On board the ship, depressed and sick
The ocean's vales going past me.
Take my greeting over the ocean
And tell the folk who remain there
If peace comes, tell them from us,
We'll not be tired going homewards.
From the sun's rise until it sets
We're apprehensive and frightened
And when night comes, we cannot sleep
I'm on the mast and watching.
The winter's cold and the frost is hard
The ocean's spray is blinding
O, I'd give a reward to be in my love's warmth
She'd take the grim thoughts from my mind.
Alas just now that we're not all together
In the land of the hills as we used to be
Some there are who'll never return, never meet again,
The sea and its waves conceal them.
When I see a bird taking to wing,
I long to fly off with it,
I'd set my course to the land I love
The land my people dwell in.
When we'd all gather in MacKay's
The night wouldn't be long in passing
Past one o'clock we wouldn't worry
About rising in the morning.
I'll bring to an end this verse or two
As I hear the whistle screeching
The order's strict, be up at once,
The ship is leaving the haven.*

Translation Tom Ross

Cumha Ruairidh Mhoir **(Ruairidh Mor's Lament)**

The pibroch (the classical music of the Scottish bagpipe) of this title is said to have been composed by Padraig Mor, one of the celebrated Mac Crimon family of the pipes in Skye, on the death of Ruairi Mor (Sir Roderick MacLeod) of Dunvegan, who died c.1630.

Pibrochs often have an associated "pibroch song" which may have a greater or lesser musical relationship (it is sometimes very tenuous) with the pipe composition.

The accepted tradition ascribes authorship of both pibroch and song "The Lament for Ruairi Mor" to Padraig. On hearing of the death of his chief, the piper asked his retainer to "lift my pipe on me and I shall go home...". He is weary and sore at heart since the man he loved is dead.

In reality, this pibroch is not contemporary with the event and in that sense is spurious, although it may well be based upon a fragment of traditional song and incorporate some element of genuine oral tradition. In its present form the composition seems to be a product of the 19th century and probably derives from the pen of the Rev. Dr. Norman Macleod, known as "Caraid nan Gaidheal" — "the friend of the Gaels", or from some other member of that ministerial dynasty.

Dougie Pincock, the piper, adds pibroch style variations on the song tune to this arrangement.

6. CUMHA RUAIRIDH MHOIR 3.57

Tog orm mo phiob is theid mi dhachaidh
Is truagh leam fhein mo leir mar thachair;
Tog orm mo phiob 's mi air mo chradh,
Mu Ruairidh Mor, mu Ruairidh Mor.

Tog orm mo phiob, tha mi sgith
'S mar faigh mi i theid mi dhachaidh;
Tog orm mo phiob — tha mi sgith
'S mi air mo chradh mu Ruairidh Mor.

Tog orm mo phiob tha mi sgith
'S mar faigh mi i theid mi dhachaidh,
Clarsach no piob cha thog mo chridh,
Cha bheo fear mo ghraidh, Ruairidh Mor.

RUAIRIDH MOR'S LAMENT

*Hand me my pipes, I'm heading for home
I'm distressed and shocked by what has happened
Hand me my pipes, I'm in grief and pain
For Ruairidh Mor, for Ruairidh Mor.*

*Hand me my pipes, I am weary
And if I don't get them I'll go home without them
Hand me my pipes, I am weary,
I'm in grief and pain for Ruairidh Mor.*

*Hand me my pipes, I am weary,
And if I don't get them I'll go home without them
Neither harp nor pipes can raise my spirits,
The man I so highly respected, Ruairidh Mor, is dead.*

Translation Tom Ross

Taladh

(The Clan MacCulloch)

This charming lullaby which derives, in variant forms, from the islands of Skye and Lewis, tells the child that at his or her wedding the pipes will be played and wine (the aristocratic drink) will be drunk and the "Children of the King" will be present.

The song that Christine sings here is a composite version, basically the Lewis variant including its melody. In the variant known in the writer's family the first kindred to be mentioned is "CLANN UILLEIM" — the "Clan William" — followed by Clan Donald and the Clan MacKenzie. In the Lewis version the MacAulays, a Lewis clan, and the mysterious "CLANN ULaidh", apparently "children" or the "Clan of Ulster", (although singers may have interpreted it as "ULaidh" — "treasure") are the guests.

It is common in Gaelic praise-poetry to list the allies and kinsfolk of the person who is being celebrated. Here we have the connection used in lullaby.

While reference to the "Kings' Children" may be no more than artistic licence, it is just possible that this is an allusion to the family of the Lord of the Isles, often referred to in Gaelic as the "King of the Isles".

* *William Matheson tells Christine that "Clann Ulaidh" in fact refers to the Clan MacCulloch.*

1. TALADH

Bidh Clann Ulaidh, laoigh 's a lurain
Bidh Clann Ulaidh air do bhanais,
Bidh Clann Ulaidh, laoigh 's a lurain
Deanamh an dainns' air do bhanais.

Bidh Clann a'Rìgh, bidh Clann a'Rìgh
Bidh Clann a'Rìgh air do bhanais
Bidh Clann a'Rìgh, seinnear a'phiob,
Olar a'fion air do bhanais.

Bidh Clann Amhlaidh na fir ghreanmhor
Bidh Clann Amhlaidh air do bhanais,
Bidh Clann Amhlaidh na fir ghreanmhor
Deanamh an dainns' air do bhanais.

Bidh Clann a'Rìgh, bidh Clann a'Rìgh
Bidh Clann a'Rìgh air do bhanais
Bidh Clann a'Rìgh, seinnear a'phiob,
Olar a'fion air do bhanais.

Bidh Clann Choinnich nam feachd soilleir
Bidh Clann Choinnich air do bhanais,
Bidh Clann Choinnich nam feachd soilleir
Deanamh an dainns' air do bhanais.

Bidh Clann a'Rìgh, bidh Clann a'Rìgh
Bidh Clann a'Rìgh air do bhanais
Bidh Clann a'Rìgh, seinnear a'phiob,
Olar a'fion air do bhanais.

Bidh Clann Dhomhnaill tha cho neonach
Bidh Clann Dhomhnaill air do bhanais,
Bidh Clann Dhomhnaill tha cho neonach
Deanamh an dainns' air do bhanais.

Bidh Clann a'Rìgh, bidh Clann a'Rìgh
Bidh Clann a'Rìgh air do bhanais
Bidh Clann a'Rìgh, seinnear a'phiob,
Olar a'fion air do bhanais.

THE CLAN McCULLOCH

*The Clan MacCulloch, my lamb, my treasure,
The Clan MacCulloch will be at your wedding
The Clan MacCulloch, my lamb, my treasure,
Will join the dancing at your wedding.*

*The King's children, the King's children,
The King's children will be at your wedding
The King's children will be there - the pipes will be played
Wine will be drunk at your wedding.*

*The Clan MacAulay - a merry crowd,
The Clan MacAulay will be at your wedding
The Clan MacAulay - a merry crowd,
Will join the dancing at your wedding.*

*The King's children, the King's children,
The King's children will be at your wedding
The King's children will be there - the pipes will be played
Wine will be drunk at your wedding.*

*The Clan Mackenzie, bright in their war-gear
The Clan Mackenzie will be at your wedding
The Clan Mackenzie, bright in their war-gear
Will join the dancing at your wedding.*

*The King's children, the King's children,
The King's children will be at your wedding
The King's children will be there - the pipes will be played
Wine will be drunk at your wedding.*

*The Clan MacDonald and it's no wonder
The Clan MacDonald will be at your wedding
The Clan MacDonald and it's no wonder
Will join the dancing at your wedding.*

*The King's children, the King's children,
The King's children will be at your wedding
The King's children will be there - the pipes will be played
Wine will be drunk at your wedding.*

Translation Tom Ross

'S daor a cheannaich mi'n t-iasgach
(Dearly have I paid for the fishing)

"IS DAORA CHEANNAICH MI AN T-IASGACH" — "Dearly have I paid for the fishing" — is a beautiful lament by a woman on the drowning of her foster son. It was first noted down in the 18th century and preserved in one of the greatest manuscript collections of Gaelic poetry, that made by the Rev. James Maclagan of Perthshire. Although the song was apparently known there, a connection with the island of Islay is suggested by tradition in Benbecula and confirmed by a reference to Port Askaig in a unique variant preserved in the writer's family in the Isle of Skye. A text of this variant was written down by Malcolm MacInnes, sometime of Ostaig, where Christine Primrose now lives.

2. 'S DAOR A CHEANNAICH MI'N T-IASGACH 3.46

'S daor a cheannaich mi'n t-iasgach
'S i so bhliadhna chuir as dhomh
Chaill mi snamhaich a'chaolais
Nach do ghlaodh riamh an t-aiseag.
'S ann aig stac beul an atha
a bhathadh an gaisgeach.
Tha do bhreacan ur uasal
air uachdar an aigeil.
Tha ruith nan tonn uaine
Mu bhruachaibh do leapa.
Tha t'fhalta donn dualach
'Na chuachaibh 's na phreasaibh.
Tha t'fhidheall gun ghleusadh
'S na teudan air lasach.
Tha do phiuthar gun bhrathair
'S tha do mhathair gun mhacan.
Tha do bhean og gun cheile
'S tha mi fhein dheth gun daltan.

DEARLY HAVE I PAID FOR THE FISHING

*It was dear I bought the fishing
This is the year that destroyed me
I've lost the swimmer of the kyle
Who never called the ferry.
By the stack at the ford's mouth
Was the champion drowned
Your handsome new plaid
Spreads on the sea bottom.
The rush of the green seas
At the brink of your bedside.
Your curled brown hair
Is matted and twisted
Your fiddle is untuned
The strings are all slackened.
Your sister is brotherless
Your mother without sons.
Your young wife has no partner
And I have lost my foster-child.*

Translation Norman M. MacDonald

O'n dh'fhag thu mi 's mulad orm
(Since you've left me, I'm sad)

Tormod Mhurchaidh mhic Coinnich (Norman Murray), a native of Lewis, was a ship's carpenter on the sailing ships.

Many sailors' songs express a generalised sense of exile and more often than not have as one focus the memory of an unnamed girl whom the sailor has left behind him. They have their own rhetorical conventions but seldom give the impression of being clichéd. This song, however, focusses on one particular terrible event.

On the first of August, 1870, Seonaid Alasdair (Janet Montgomery) from Shesadar was drowned, along with another girl, in the River Creed in the Rubha (the peninsula of Point) district of Lewis. She was seventeen years of age. Tormod's quiet, tragic song of love for Seonaid Alasdair first brought to the notice of many of us through the beautiful singing of John MacArthur, the Gaelic writer, never loses its poignant immediacy.

"The stair of Garrabost" is said to be the galley stairs of the parish church of Garrabost; and the image of the beautiful girl climbing these stairs in her elegant clothes — "the flush in your cheek disturbing my senses" — is vivid and memorable.

Norman Murray gave this song to Seonaid Alasdair's mother when he came back from the voyage on which he had heard the news of his girl's death. Then he returned to his ship. On that voyage he took ill and died. He was buried at sea.

3. O'N DH'FHAG THU MI 'S MULAD ORM

O'n dh'fhag thu mi 's mulad orm
'S duilich as do dheidh mi,
An uair bha duil gu leanadh sinn
'S dealachadh a b'fheudar.
O'n dh'fhag thu mi 's mulad orm.

Chan e 'n aois tha liathadh mo chiamhagan cho gle-gheal
No siaban nan tonn fiadhaich no'n Cuan-a-Siar le bheucaich.
O'n dh'fhag thu mi 's mulad orm.

Ged a gheibhinn caileag, te cho boidheach 's tha 'n Dun Eideann
Gum b'fhear leam Seonaid Alasdair, 's cha chaillin air an fheill i
O'n dh'fhag thu mi 's mulad orm.

Direadh staidhre Gharraboist bu shnasail thu 'na d'eideadh
An riobhadh bha 'na d'ghruaidhean a'buairadh mo cheille
O'n dh'fhag thu mi 's mulad orm.

Cha b'e meud do storais a dh'fhag cho mor nad dheidh mi
Ach thu bhith laghach doigheil is phosainn thu ro' th'eile
O'n dh'fhag thu mi 's mulad orm.

Gur mise bha gu h-aigeannach ri pasgadh a cuid bhreidean
'N uair chuala mi an eachdraidh aig a'Chaiptean 'se ga leughadh
O'n dh'fhag thu mi 's mulad orm.

'S mise tha gu craiteach a'falbh air sraid Jamaica,
'S mi smaointinn thu bhith cairte fo na fadan 's nach eirich
O'n dh'fhag thu mi 's mulad orm.

'S duilich as do dheidh mi
An uair bha duil gu leanadh sinn
'S dealachadh a b'fheudar
O'n dh'fhag thu mi 's mulad orm.

SINCE YOU'VE LEFT ME, I'M SAD.

*Since you've left me, I'm sad,
Since you gone I'm grieving,
When we thought we'd go on together
A parting came between us.
Since you've left me I'm sad.*

*It's not age that's greying my locks
Not the spray of the wild waves,
Nor the Atlantic with its roaring
Since you've left me I'm sad.*

*Although I could get a girl
As pretty as any in Edinburgh,
I'd prefer Seonaid Alasdair
And I'd not lose on the bargain.
Since you've left me I'm sad.*

*Climbing the stairs at Garrabost
How your clothes became you,
The charm in your dimpled cheeks
Confusing all my senses.
Since you've left me I'm sad.*

*It wasn't your wealth or riches
That made me so adore you
But your lovely pleasant nature
And you're the girl I'd soonest marry.
Since you've left me I'm sad.*

*I was full of vigour as I bundled up the sails,
Till I heard the news from the Captain
as he read it,
Since you've left me I'm sad.*

*How utterly wretched I am now
Walking along Jamaica Street,
I'm thinking of you lying
Under the turf and you'll never rise.
Since you've left me I'm sad.*

Gad' ionndrainn **(Missing you)**

William Campbell from Point in the island of Lewis composed this tender, sad elegy on the death of his wife, a native of Carloway in the same island, some five years ago. The poet himself gave the words to Christine, who is also from Carloway, a couple of years after the death. It is a sincere and moving tribute.

4. GAD' IONNDRAINN 3.01

Nach mis tha gu trom glas chiamhag nam cheann
Tha mi brist tha mi aonranach bronach
Or tha mathair mo chloinn bean mo ghaoil is mo mhnaoi
Anns a chladh air an aoidh fo na foidean.

Cha thuig duine gu brath meud mo mhulaid 's mo chraidh
Tha mo chlann air an fhagail gun mhathair
'S chaneil maduinn na oidhch nach bi mi dha caoidh
Air a son shil mi na deoirean gun naire.

Tha an sgiath a bha blath air a caradh 's na clair
Bha do bhas dhuinn mar dheireadh an t-saoghail
Or tha 'n dachaidh bha blath le gaol agus gradh
Air a creachadh 's na bannan air sgaoileadh.

Cha teid mionaid do bhais as mo chuimhne gu brath
Bha do chlann air do churam nad eiginn
Nuair dhuin mi do shuil gu robh boidheachd do ghnuis
Mar an ros fo'n an druichd anns a'Cheitean.

Tha mi cinnteach a luaidh gu bheil thu'm Paras ud shuas
Tha na dh'fhuiling thu nis air do chulaibh
'S gus an duin mi mo shuil anns a chadal nach duisg
Dhad ionndrainn bi mi is toirt cliu dhuit.

MISSING YOU

*O how downcast I am my hair's turning grey
I am broken, I'm sad and I'm lonely,
The mother of my children, the woman I love, my wife,
Lies under the turf in the graveyard.*

*No-one can ever fathom the depth of my anguish and pain,
My children are left unmothered,
Neither morning nor night that I don't weep for her,
For her sake my tears flowed without shame.*

*The warm, comforting wing is folded 'neath boards,
For us your death was the end of the world,
For the home that was warm with affection and love,
Has been plundered, the bonds have been broken.*

*The minute of your death I'll never forget,
In its throes all you thought of – your children,
How lovely your face as I closed your eyes,
Like a dewy rose on a May morning.*

*I am certain, my love, that you're in Heaven above,
All you suffered already forgotten,
Until I close my eyes in the sleep without rise,
I'll still miss you and always will praise you.*

Translation Tom Ross

Tom an t-Searraich **(The Foal's Hillock)**

Often referred to simply as "TOM AN T-SEARRAICH", the "Hillock of the Foal", after the place-name in the first stanza, this is a fairly characteristic example of a song in praise of homeland with its evocation of natural beauty, mixed with an emigre's sense of loss and separation from the native community.

Although poets who never left their birthplace have composed songs in praise of their own land and people, the majority of the poignant songs of remembrance of a vanished age were made by Gaels exiled in distant places throughout the world. The author of "Tom an t-Searraich", Roderick Smith from Lewis, was a police inspector in Glasgow, where he died in 1954. He was buried in the churchyard — "ann an Lionagaidh", named in the last stanza — according to the wish that he expressed in his song.

5. TOM AN T-SEARRAICH

Bha mi 'n toir air tir nam beann
'S iomadh solas fhuair mi ann;
'Nuair bha mi air forladh thall
Chaidh mi dh'ionnsaidh Tom an t-searraich.

Fhuair mi airigh gheal mo ghraidh
Caoraich laigh innte le'n al;
Chagailt a bha caomh is blath
Bha i ban fo fheur is bharran.

Tulach tiamhaidh cianail fas
Am balla crionadh sios gu lar,
Cha robh sgiamh air gnìomh nan lamh,
Bha gach ard-dorus ri talamh.

Cha robh bainne fuar no blath
Cha robh uachdar cha robh cais
Am bliochd air triall is blian 'na ait
Anns an airigh 's an robh 'm pailteas.

Ach 's e mo mhiann aig crìoch mo la
Laighe sios le mo cheud ghradh
Ann an Lionagaidh ri tamh
Leabaidh bhan ri sail na mara.

THE FOAL'S HILLOCK.

*I went in search of the land of hills,
Many joys have I had there,
When I was over on leave
I went to the Foal's Hillock.*

*I found my beloved white sheiling,
Sheep lying in it with their lambs,
The hearth that was so kind and warm,
Was bare 'neath grass and wild-weed.*

*A gloomy, dreary, abandoned mound,
The wall decaying to the ground,
The handiwork - unsightly now
The lintels all have fallen.*

*No milk, cold nor warm,
No cream, no cheese
The rich milk gone, no yield there now,
In the sheiling where there was plenty.*

*But my wish at the end of my days
Is to sleep beside my first love,
In Lionagaidh at rest
A tranquil grave beside the salt-waves.*

Translation Tom Ross

'N ath bhanais bhios agam (The next wedding I go to)

"The next wedding will be my own" is a lively song of uncertain provenance. It is said by some to be of Skye origin. The poet is a cowherd who has become sick and tired of his employment, out in the wind and rain, wandering over moorland and heather, tending his herds:

"I care not for it, it is wretched work; I care not for it, roaming the glens".

He looks forward to a more congenial life. He will settle down with his girl in a quiet little bothy : she will make tea for him; and, optimistically, he ends his song:

"And whenever I care to I will take my dram!".

6. 'N ATH BHANAIS BHIOS AGAM

'N ath bhanais bhios agam 'se 'n te agam fhin
Tha mi seachd sgith de'n aithris dhan spreidh,
Bi iad gam' cheasnachadh h-uile nith ni mi,
H-uile nith ni mi bi iad nam' dheidh

Tha mi coma dheth 's truagh an obair e
Tha mi coma dheth siubhail nan gleann
Tha mi coma dheth, tha mi glan sgith
Sud rud a mhill mi siubhal nan gleann.

Tha mi gle choma dh dh'orainn nam bard
'G orain mu'n airigh 's eirigh na grein
B'fhear leam bhi cadal gus an eirighinn trath
'S sgapadh a bhlas air mullach nan spreidh

'S olc obair e 's truagh an obair e
'S olc obair bhi togail ri gleann
'S olc obair bhi togail ri fraoch
'S uisg agus gaoth a fagail ort greann.

Posaidh mi dh'aithghearr 's bithidh mi fagail
Boglaichean Mairi 's airigh nan geum
Posaidh mi dh'aithghearr 's gabhaidh mi tamh
Am bothan beag samhach 's fois aig mo cheum

Tha mi ullamh dheth mhill e buileach mi
Tha mi ullamh de'n bhuachailleachd th'ann,
Posaidh mi buinneag a ni dhomh an ti
'S nuair thogras mi fhin gun gabh mi mo dhram.

'N ath bhanais bhios agam 'se 'n te agam fhin

THE NEXT WEDDING I'M AT

*The next wedding I'm at will be my own,
I'm sick and tired of all this patter about cattle
They interrogate me everthing I do.
Everything I do, they're after me for it.*

*I'm fed up with it, it's rotten work
I'm fed up with it, walking the glens,
I'm fed up with it, I'm sick and tired,
It's done for me, this walking the glens.*

*I'm pretty fed up with the poets and their songs,
Their songs about sheilings and sunrise at dawn,
I'd rather be sleeping till the sun was fully risen,
And spreading its warmth on the hill and the cows.*

*The work is not good it's rotten work,
The work is not good, going up the glens,
The work is not good, going up through the heather,
And rain and wind making you frown.*

*I'll marry soon and them I'll be leaving
Mary's bogs and the lowing at the sheiling
I'll marry soon and I'll settle down,
In a quiet little cottage I'll sit down and rest.*

*I'm finished with it, it's ruined me totally,
I'm finished for good with watching the cows,
I'll marry a lassie who'll make me my tea,
And when I feel like it I'll have a wee dram.*

Translation Tom Ross