

BOTHY BALLADS OF SCOTLAND

sung by EWAN MACCOLL,
accompanied by PEGGY SEEGER
on concertina and five-string banjo;
and on ocarina by ALF EDWARDS

FOLKWAYS RECORDS FW 8759



M
1746
M112
B749
1961

MUSIC LP

BOTHY BALLADS OF SCOTLAND

SIDE I

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- Band 2: I'M A ROVER
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Library of Congress Catalogue Card Number: R68-710

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COVER DESIGN BY RONALD CLYNE

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Introduction

In Northeast Scotland it was the practice, until fairly recent times, for male farmworkers to be accommodated in buildings separate from the farm house proper. Such buildings were known as *bothies*.

Ploughmen and other farm servants sold their services to a farmer on a seasonal basis, the transaction generally being arranged at a seasonal "feeling market", or hiring fair.

In the days before radio, television and cheap transport brought urban civilisation into every farm kitchen farm servants had, of necessity to provide their own forms of amusement and expression. Since the area where such conditions prevailed was one which was extremely rich in traditional songs and ballads, it was natural that the *bothies* should continue the tradition of song and music-making.

The gradual mechanisation of agricultural processes which began in the mid-19th century did, of course, tend to limit the thematic area of the bothy songs. The introduction, for example, of the reaping machine and the mechanical shearer made sharing and harvest songs things of the past, while the Education Act of 1872 practically abolished herding, which until this time had been largely a children's occupation. The end of the herding practice meant that no new herding songs were created and that those already in existence tended to be forgotten.

The mechanisation of ploughing, however, was a much more gradual development than, say, the mechanisation of harvesting tools for, by the end of the 19th-century almost all the large farms of Northeast Scotland were equipped with reaping machines and mechanical binders. It is true that after 1860 the plough horse was, in some places, replaced by the steam tractor and after 1900 the motor tractor made its appearance - but the change was gradual. Horses were not only an important factor in farming economy but, in addition, the possession of a good team of plough horses conferred a great deal of social prestige on their owner. The men who drove, fed and looked after the horses, that is, the ploughmen, were considered to be the aristocrats of the Scots agricultural scene and there was a good deal of competitive striving amongst them when it came to exhibiting prowess and skill with a plough and a team.

Something of the nature of a primitive secret society of ploughmen had been in existence from at least the

third quarter of the 18th-century and with initiation ceremonies, passwords and special handclaps the society played an important part in controlling entry into the craft and in maintaining a high level of skill.

The period which followed the first World War saw the mechanisation of agriculture tremendously accelerated and by the 30's there were only a handful of farms where the bothy system still operated. The second World War completed the process and today the ploughmen's "grip and word" are things of the past. The horses have been superseded by the tractor and the ploughmen by the mechanic.

The only real record we have of this ancient craft is the bothy songs for in them the ploughman reigns as undisputed hero. In the introduction to *Bothy Songs and Ballads of Aberdeen, Banff and Moray Angus and the Mearns*, John Ord writes: "Bothy song is just another name for folk-song." This is altogether too wide a definition. That they are folk-songs is true, but they are folksongs which have originated in the *bothies* and which deal exclusively with the lives and experiences of those farm servants, particularly the ploughmen, who were part of the bothy system. They are a special group of folksongs in the way the sea shanties and forebitters are a special group.

A great many other types of songs were sung in the *bothies* and farm kitchens; traditional ballads, whaling songs, broadsides and old country songs, but these are, so to speak, bothy songs by adoption. In the mouths of bothy singers they were often transformed and invested with the stylistic characteristics of the true bothy song.

If the hero of the bothy ballads is the ploughman then the villain is the farmer who employs him, or the foreman who carries out the farmer's instructions. It is the farmer who pays poor wages and provides the ploughman with a monotonous diet, it is the farmer (or the foreman) who drives him to work outdoors in all kinds of weather, it is the farmer who is responsible for all the discomforts which the ploughman suffers in the course of his work. It is the farmer, or the farmer's wife who prevents free intercourse between men and women farm servants and, because he considers the ploughman to be his inferior, prohibits social contact between ploughmen and members of his own family.

Finally, and this is the worst crime of all, it is the farmer who starves the plough horses and thus strikes directly at the ploughman's professional status.

In spite of all this, however, the bothy ballads cannot be described as "protest songs". They reflect a social attitude but it is an apolitical one. The ploughman may complain about poor food and sick horses but he accepts these things as his lot. When he is cheated out of his wages or his economic rights are attacked, he does not strike or resort to political action, he merely waits for his feeling term to expire and finds a new employer. Again, when thwarted in the pursuit of sexual fulfilment he does not insist on his human rights, but resorts to stratagems.

He does, however, manage to revenge himself upon his employer by caricaturing him and exposing his faults, by cuckolding him and by stealing his daughter's affections. These victories are, for the most part, possible only in the fantasy world of the songs.

The preoccupation with traditional balladry has created its own form of snobbery. Collectors of folk-songs and folk song anthologists have tended to be rather patronizing about the bothy songs. In fact, our native collectors have, on the whole, treated them with the same disdain with which American folklorists and musicologists have treated hillbilly music.

And yet, the fact remains that, along with the sea shanties, the bothy ballads constitute the most important body of folksongs to be created in the 19th-century.

- Ewan MacColl

SIDE I

Band 1. THE KEACH IN THE CREEL.
(Child 281)

The first printed version of this ballad did not appear until early in the nineteenth century although the theme has been part of European literature since the middle ages. Professor Child concludes his notes on the ballad with a peculiarly prim comment: "No one looks for decorum in pieces of this description but a passage in this ballad, which need not be particularized, is brutal and shameless almost beyond description."

These are harsh words for a scholar whose stock-in-trade was stories dealing with mayhem in all its forms and it is difficult to imagine what prompted them. It is, of course, possible that Child was shocked by the use of the word 'keach' on which considerable play is made in the song. Used as a noun the word denotes bustle or fluster, when used as a verb, however, it can mean 'lift' or 'hoist' or alternatively it can mean to void excrement. The ballad is widespread throughout N.E. Scotland and was a favourite in the bothies where it was generally known as The Wee Toon Clerk.

Learned from the singing of Jimmy MacBeth of Elgin.

Band 2: I'M A ROVER.

This night-visit song is almost certainly related to The Grey Cock (The Lover's Ghost), a ballad in which a girl is visited by the ghost of her dead lover. As A. L. Lloyd has observed: "Generally the song is found either with the bedroom-window theme or the cockcrow theme but not the two together. In this version the bedroom-window theme is clearly established and what remains of the cock-crow theme has lost its supernatural significance."

From the singing of James Grant of Aberdour, Banffshire.

Band 3: THE SCRANKY BLACK FARMER.

Until recently it was common for East-Anglian countrymen to spend part of the year working on the land and part working on the sea as herring-fishermen. In N. E. Scotland, however, this was never the practice, the two communities always being sharply divided. Consequently it is unusual to find in the bothy singer's repertoire a song in which the seaman's attitude to farm-work is expressed.

From the singing of James Grant of Aberdour, Banffshire.

Band 4: THE BAND OF SHEARERS.

This song was the work of Robert Hogg (a nephew of James Hogg, the Ettrick Shepherd) who was born at Stobo in Peebles, in 1799. In Ord's introduction to Bothy Songs and Ballads there is an interesting note concerning shearers: "The shearing was mostly done by women. The value of a day's work was calculated by the number of thraves cut. A thraive consisted of two stooks of twelve sheaves each. To cut seven or eight sheaves was considered a good day's work for a shearer. After the introduction of the scythe (1810), the best men cut the corn, the women gathered it into sheaves, and made the bands, while younger men, as a rule, bound and stooked the sheaves. The bandster could claim a kiss from the gatherer for each band whose knot slipped in the binding."

From the singing of James Grant of Aberdour, Banffshire.

Band 5: JOCK HAWK'S ADVENTURE IN GLASGOW.

The basic bothy theme of the farm-servant exploited by the rich farmer is, in this ballad, altered slightly to become the farm-servant exploited by city-slickers. The general bothy pattern, however, remains unchanged and, as usual, no element of self-pity is allowed to interfere with the humour.

Band 6: THE BREWER LADDIE.

The forsaken and jilted heroes (and heroines) of the bothy ballads rarely die for love; instead, they meet misfortune head on and, with a good deal of sound sense, start looking around for another sweetheart. It has been suggested that The Brewer Laddie is a bothy adaptation of an older song and this may well be the case.

Learned from my father and collated with versions in Ord's Bothy Songs and Ballads and Kidson's Traditional Tunes.

Band 7: THE WIND BLEW THE BONNIE LASSIE'S PLAIDIE AWA'

In a note given to a text of this song in Robert Ford's Vagabond Ballads it is stated: "My friend, Mr. D. Kippen of Crieff has it that the song was composed by an Irishman who lived in Crieff near to the Cross in the early years of the present century who was known by the name of Blind Bob." In most printed versions only a single refrain is given but country singers prefer to vary the chorus.

From the singing of Hughie Graham of Galloway.

Band 8: THE MONYMUSK LADS.

Rural courtship was a popular theme with the bothy singers and in this song the story is embellished with some rather sharp comment on the class structure. Learned from print: Ord's Bothy Songs and Ballads.

Band 9: THE MUCKIN' O' GEORDIE'S BYRE

This epic of domestic upheaval owes its title to a much older song (Scotts Musical Museum No. 96) and its tune has been adapted from a Gaelic melody. It is one of the few bothy ballads which have gained currency outside the bothy areas.

From the singing of Jimmy MacBeth of Elgin.

SIDE II

Band 1: BOGIE'S BONNY BELLE.

It is not often that the heroes of the bothy songs are allowed to expose their passion, their anger or their resentment, the direct expression of such feelings being either avoided entirely or burlesqued. Irony, satire and slapstick humor are the usual weapons of the bothy singer and when, as in Bogie's Bonny Belle, he abandons them in favour of the frontal assault, the effect is startling.

From the singing of Jimmy Gray of MacDuff, Banffshire.

Band 2: LAMACHREE AND MEGRUM.

The bothy ballads generally fall into a fairly simple structural pattern, consisting of four-line stanzas (A-B-A-B rhyming system) often followed by a chorus. The song given here is unique in that it makes use of a form more common to the traditional ballad - that is, a four-line stanza in which the 2nd and 4th lines are refrains. The similarity to the traditional ballad form is further strengthened by a homonymic use of place names, almost amounting to incremental repetition and through the use of a strongly hypnotic melody.

Learned from print (Miscellanea of the Rymour Club of Edinburgh).

Band 3: THE ROAD AND THE MILES TO DUNDEE.

This singularly innocent song is deservedly popular throughout the whole of northeast Scotland. It is one of those pieces which belongs to that part of a social gathering when drink and good fellowship demand the somewhat pleasant feelings of nostalgia which such a song can create.

From the singing of Rob Donald of Gardenstown, Banffshire.

Band 4: THE LOTHIAN HAIRST.

There is interesting reference to this song in Ord's introduction to Bothy Songs and Ballads: "Upwards of half a century ago for harvest contractors to visit the Lothians during the summer and undertake to cut, gather and stook grain crops at an arranged price per acre. The contractor, or maister as he was called by the workers, engaged a foreman, who was held responsible by the contractor for carrying out the various contracts. The foreman was, in every case, to act like 'Logan' in the song and to see that the male reapers visiting their female co-workers at their bothies terminated their visits at a given hour."

Learned from print: Miscellanea of the Rymour Club of Edinburgh.

Band 5: IT HAPPENED ON A DAY.

In The Brewer Laddie the jilted lover shrugs his shoulders at fate and finds himself a new sweetheart. In this song it is the girl who is jilted but she too shows that she is capable of coping with the situation.

From James Grant of Aberdour, Banffshire.

Band 6: I'M A WORKING CHAP.

It is only rarely that the bothy ballad essays a direct sociological comment and when the attempt is made the result is not usually a happy one. The Working Chap is reminiscent of

the style found in the writings of 'the fustian philosophers' who helped to pioneer the British socialist movement. "The puir needle woman... on the wa'," mentioned in the second verse, is a reference to the once ubiquitous daguerretype inspired by Thomas Hood's Song of a Shirt.

Learned from print: Ord's Bothy Songs and Ballads.

Band 7: JOHNNY SANGSTER.

According to Gavin Greig who collected the first printed version of this fine song, Johnny Sangster was the work of William Scott who was born in Petterangus in the parish of Old Deer, Aberdeenshire in 1785. Scott who began life as a herd laddie subsequently moved to Aberdeen where he was apprenticed to a tailor. Later, he worked, for a time, in London and after visiting America returned to Old Deer where he spent the remainder of his life.

Learned from print: Miscellanea of the Rymour Club, Edinburgh.

Band 8: DRUMDELGIE.

In spite of being a local song, that is, a song describing a particular set of conditions in a particular place, Drumdelgie has achieved wide popularity throughout the world of Eastern Scotland and if farm-servants can be said to have a national anthem then this is it.

Learned from Jimmie MacBeth of Elgin.

Band 9: SHE WAS A RUM ONE.

"That's a gey rauch (rough) sang" commented Rob Donald the Gamrie shepherd after hearing it for the first time, "but" he went on, "it gets richt tae the hairt o' the maitter." And he was right.

From Jeannie Robertson of Aberdeen.

THE KEACH IN THE CREEL

O, a fair young maid went up the street some fresh fish for to buy And a bonnie clerk's fall'n in love wi' her and followed her by and by,

CHORUS:

Ricky doo dum da, doo dum da,
Ricky dicky doo dum day.

"O whaur live ye, my bonnie lass, I pray ye tell to me?
And though the nicht were never sae mirk I would try and win in to thee."

"My Faither he aye locks the door and my mither keeps the key,
And though the nicht were never sae mirk, ye couldna win in tae me."

Now the clerk he had a true brother and a wily wight was he,
And he has made a lang ladder wi' thirty steps and three.

He has made a pin but and a creel,
a creel but and a pin

And he has gane to the chimley-top to let'n the bonnie clerk in.

Now, the old wife she lay wide awake though late, late was the hour,
"I'll lay my life," quo' the silly old wife, "There's a man in our dochter's bower."

The old man he gat oot o' the bed to see gin the thing was true,
She's ta'en the bonnie clerk in her airms and covered him ower wi' blue.

"What are ye daeing, my ain dochter, what are ye daeing, my doo?"
"I'm praying on the muckle book for my silly old mammie and you."

"Pray on, pray on, my ain dochter, and see that ye dae it richt,
For atween you and your auld mither I hanna aince gotten my rest."

"O, wife, O wife, ye silly old wife, an ill deith may de dee,
She's gotten the muckle book in her airms and she's praying for you and me."

The old wife she lay wide awake, no' anither word was said,
"I'll lay my life," said the silly old wife, "There's a man in our dochter's bed."

"Get up, get up, my old guid man, and see if the thing be true."
"Get up yoursel,' you silly old wife, I'll no be fashed wi' you."

"Get up yoursel', you silly old wife and may the deil tak' ye,
For atween you and your ae dochter, I hanna aince blinkit an ee."

The old wife she gat ower the bed to see gin the thing be true,
But she slippit her foot and fell into the creel and up the tow he drew.

The man that was at the chimley top, finding the creel was fu',
He wrappit the rope his shouther roond and up the tow he drew.

"O help me noo, my auld good man, O help me noo, my doo,
For he that ye wished me wi' this nicht, I fear he's gotten me noo."

"Gin he has got ye, I wish he may haud ye, I wish he may haud ye fast,
For atween you and your ae dochter, I hanna aince gotten my rest."

O, hey the blue and the bonnie bonnie blue, and I wish the blue richt weel,
And for ilka old wife that wakes at nicht, may she get a guid keach in the creel!

GLOSSARY.

whaur	where
nicht	night
mirk	dark
win in	get in
wicht	young man
creel	basket
gane	gone
dochter	daughter
daeing	doing
muckle book	Bible

ain	own
atween	between
richt	right
hanna aince	haven't yet
deith	death
dee	die
anither	another
guid	good
fashed	bothered
deil	devil
gin	if
tow	rops
fu'	full
noo	now
haud	hold
ilka	every
keach	lift

I'M A ROVER

I'm a rover and seldom sober,
I'm a rover of high degree,
It's when I'm drinking I'm always thinking
How to gain my love's company.

' There's ne'er a night I'm going to ramble
There's ne'er a night I'm going to roam,
There's ne'er a night I'm going to ramble
Into the arms of my own true love.

Though the night be as dark as dungeon,
Not a star to be seen above,
I will be guided without a stumble
Into the arms of my own true love.

He stepped up to her bedroom window,
Kneeling gently upon a stone,
He whispered through her bedroom window,
"Darling dear, do you lie alone?"

She raised her head on her snow-white pillow,
Wi' her arms around her breast,
Says, "Who is that at my bedroom window
Disturbing me at my long night's rest?"

Says I, "True love, it's thy true lover,
Open the door and let me in,
For I am come on a long journey
More than near drenched to the skin."

She opened the door with the greatest pleasure,
She opened the door and let him in:
They both shook hands and embraced each other
Till the morning they lay as one.

The cocks were crawling, the birds were whistling,
The burns they ran free abune the brae,
But remember, lass, I'm a ploughman laddie
And the farmer I must obey.

Noo, my love, I must go and leave thee
To climb the hills they are far above,
But I will climb them, the greatest pleasure
Sin' I been i' the airms o' my love.

GLOSSARY.

burns	small streams
abune	above
brae	hillside
sin'	since
airms	arms

THE SCRANKY BLACK FARMER

At the tap o' the Garioch in the
lands of Leith-hall,
A scranky black farmer in Earlsfield
did dwell;
Wi' him I engaged a servant to be,
Which makes me lament I went far
frae the sea.

I engaged wi' this farmer to drive
cart and ploo;
Hard fortune convenit an ill-fated
crew,
I ane of the number which causes
me rue
That e'er I attempted the country
to view.

It's early in the mornin' we rise
to the yoke,
The storm and the tempest can ne'er
make up stop.
While the wind it does beat and the
rain it does pour,
And ay yon black farmer on us he
does glowre.

But the time is expiring and the
day it will come,
To various countries we all must
go home;
Bonnie Jeannie must travel, bonnie
Bawbie also,
Back to the beyont o' Montrgomery
must go.

So farewell, Rhynie, and adieu to
you, Clatt,
For I hae been wi' you baith early
and late.
Baith early and late, baith empty
and fou,
So farewell, Rhynie, I'll bid you
adieu.

So farewell, Bawbie and adieu to
you all,
Likewise to the farmer that lives
at Leith-hall;
For to serve this black farmer I'm
sure it's nae sport,
So I will be going to my bonnie
seaport.

GLOSSARY.

tap	top
scranky	lean
frae	from
ploo	plough
ay	always
beyont	beyond
baith	both
fou	full

THE BAND OF SHEARERS

When simmer days and heather bells
Come reakin' ower yon heiland hills,
There's yellow corn in yonder fields,
And the autumn brings a shearin'

Sing bonnie lassie, will ye gang
And shear wi' me the hale day long
And love will cheer us as we gang
When we join yon band o' shearers.

And if the thistle it be strong
That it would hurt your milk white
hand,
It's with my hook, I'll cut it down
When we join that band o' shearers.

And if the weather it be hot,
I'll cast off my vest and coat,
And we'll count our thraves among
yon lot
When we join the band o' shearers.

And when the shearing is all done
We'll hae some rantin' rovin' fun,
We'll hae some rantin' rovin' fun
And forget a' the toils o' shearin'.

Singing bonnie laddie, I will gang
And shear wi' you the hale day lang
And love will join us hand in hand
And forget a' the toils o' shearin'.

GLOSSARY.

simmer	summer
reakin'	reaching
ower	over
hale	whole
thraves	sheaves of grain
hae	have

JOCK HAWK'S ADVENTURES IN GLASGOW

To Glesca toon I went ae nicht to
spend my penny fee,
And a bonnie lass she gied consent
to bear me company,

CHORUS:

Tum a hi, tum a doo, tum a hi tum
day,
Tum a hi, tum a doo, tum a hi tum
day.

She kent I was a ploughman chiel,
a stranger to the toon,
She said: "That needna hinder ye
to jog it up and doon."

She took off her petticoat and I
took off my sark,
And we sweated at the jobbie as
we ploughed the muckle park.

We walked up Jamaica Street and
doon the Broomielaw,
Where organ lads were playing and
fiddlers ane or twa.

We went into a tavern and I ca'd for
some gin,
And a' the folk about the place, they
smiled as we cam' in.

We hadna been in half an hour when
in cam' half a score
O' sailor lads and queans sae brow
you never saw before.

They drank the malt, they drank the
gin, they drank it a' richt free,
And ilka ane aye drank success to
the bonnie wee lass and me.

The nicht it passed wi' mirth and
sang till day was drawing near,
And then the sailors' factor cried:
"All hands on deck appear!"

The lasses gied a parting kiss, the
lads they said goodbye,
The hindmost ane as he went oot
said: "Jock, you've a' to pay."

They took my watch, they took my
chain, my spleuchan and my knife,
I wonder that they didna tak' my
little spunk o' life.

I cam' into this world a bairn sae
naked and sae bare,
I cam' oot the same frae Glesca and
I'll never gang nae mair.

GLOSSARY.

Glesca	Glasgow
ae	one
nicht	night
gied	gave
kent	knew
chiel	fellow
toon	town
doon	down
sark	shirt
Broomielaw	district of Glasgow
ane	one
twa	two
ca'd	called
abbot	around
cam'	came
quaens	girls
richt	right
ilka	every
sang	song
factor	foreman
oot	out
spleuchan	tobacco pouch
spunk	bit
bairn	child
sae	so
frae	from
mair	more

THE BREWER LADDIE

In Perth there lived a bonnie lad,
a brewer to his trade, O;
And he has courted Peggy Roy, a
young and handsome maid, O,

CHORUS:

Wi' a fal dal diddle um a di dum
doo
Wi' a fal dal diddle um a di doe.

He courted her for seven lang
years a' for to gain her
favour,
But there cam' a lad oot o'
Edinburgh toon wha swore that
he would have her.

"It's will ye gang alang wi' me,
and will ye be my honey?
It's will ye gang alang wi' me
and leave your brewer laddie?"

"O, I will gang alang wi' you,
and alang wi' you I'll ride, O;
I'll gang wi' you to the ends o'
the earth, tho' I'm spoke to
the brewer lad, O."

The brewer he cam' hame at e'en,
a-speiring for his honey.
Her faither he made this reply:
"She's no' been here since
Monday."

O, wasna that an unco ploy, wouldna
anyone been offended?
To court wi' a lad for seven years
and leave him at the end o't!

O, be it so and let her go, for it
shall never grieve me,
I'm a lad that's free, as you can
see, and a sma' thing will
relieve me.

There's as guid fish into the sea as
ever yet was taken;
I'll cast my net and try again for
I'm only aince forsaken.

She's rambled up, she's rambled
doon, she's rambled through
Kirkaldie,
And mony's the time she's rued the
day she jilted her brewer laddie.

He's taken his course and away he's
gane, the country he has fled, O,
And he's left nae sark upon her back,
nor blanket on her bed, O.

The brewer lad set up in Perth and
there he brews strong ale, O,
And he has courted anither lass and
ta'en her tae his bed, O.

Ye lovers a', where'er ye be, just
let this be a warning,
And never slight your ain true love,
for fear ye get a waun ane.

GLOSSARY

cam	came
oot	out
o'	of
toon	town
wha	who
gang	go
alang	along
hame	home
e'en	evening
a-speiring	asking
unco	uncivil
ploy	game
sma'	small
guid	good
aince	once
mony	many
gane	gone
sark	shirt
anither	another
ta'en	taken
ain	own
waur	worse
ane	one

THE WIND BLEW THE BONNIE LASSIE'S PLAIDIE AWA'

There was a bonnie lassie, and she
cam' in frae Crieff,
She fell in wi' a butcher lad when
he was selling beef;
He gied to her a middle-cut and
doon she did fa',
And the wind blew the bonnie lassie's
plaidie awa',

The wind blows east and the wind
blows west,
The wind blew the bonnie lassie's
plaidie awa',
The beef was in her basket and she
couldna rise awa,
And the wind blew the bonnie lassie's
plaidie awa'.

The plaidie it was lost and it
couldna be found;
The lassie and the butcher lad were
lyin' on the ground.
"O, what will I tell to the old folks
awa?
For I canna say the wind blew my
plaidie awa'".

The wind blows east and the wind
blows west,
The wind blew the bonnie lassie's
plaidie awa',
He's gi'en to her good measure o' the
beef and banes and a',
And the wind blew the bonnie lassie's
plaidie awa'.

Twa-three months after the plaidie it
was lost,

The lassie she began to swell about
the waist,
And Rab he was blamed for the whole
o' it a',
And the wind blawin' the bonnie
lassie's plaidie awa'.

The wind blows east and the wind blows
west,
The wind blew the bonnie lassie's
plaidie awa',
The lassie said your butcher-beef is
owre tough to chew,
And the wind blew the bonnie lassie's
plaidie awa'.

Then in cam' the auld wife, the
laddie to accuse,
The ministers and elders began to
abuse
The butcher lad for tryin' to mak'
yin into twa,
And the wind blew the bonnie
lassie's plaidie awa'.

The wind blows east and the wind
blows west,
The wind blew the bonnie lassie's
plaidie awa',
The beef was in her basket and she
couldna rise awa,
And the wind blew the bonnie lassie's
plaidie awa'.

The lassie she was sent for to come
there hersel',
She looked at the butcher lad, "Ye
ken how I fell;
The beef was the cause o't, ye
daurna say na',
For 'twas then that the wind blew
my plaidie awa'.

The wind blows east and the wind
blows west,
The wind blew the bonnie lassie's
plaidie awa',
"We baith fell to admiring for the
beef it was sae braw,
And 'twas then that the wind blew
my plaidie awa'."

Rab looked at the lassie and he
gied a wee smile,
"Ye ken, bonnie lassie, I winna you
beguile;
The minister's here and he'll mak'
ane o' us twa,
That'll pay for the plaid that the
wind blew awa'."

The wind blows east and the wind
blows west,
The wind blew the bonnie lassie's
plaidie awa',
And we shall hae the middle cut,
it's tenderest o' a',
And we'll drink to the wind that
blew your plaidie awa'.

GLOSSARY.

cam'	came
frae	from
gied	gave
doon	down
fa'	fall
awa'	away
awa'	at all
canna	can't
banes	bones
a'	all
o'	of
owre	too
chaw	chew
auld	old
yin	one
tw	two

ken	know
daurna	daren't
na	no
braw	fine
wiena	won't
ane	one
hae	have

THE MONYMUSK LADS

As I cam' in by Monymusk and doun
by Alford's dale,
A sad misfortune happened to me
and I think nae shame to tell,

CHORUS:

Fal ti doo a riddle doo
Fal ti doodle i doe.

As I gaed in by Monymusk, the moon
was shining clear,
And I held on to Lethendale to see
my Maggie dear.

I did gang when I did think that a'
were sleepin' sound;
But plague upon yon auld wife, for
she cam' slinkin' doun.

Sae cannily she slipped the lock
and set the door agee;
Then crawled upon her hands and
knees to see wha' it could be.

Then to the bells wi' a' her nicht,
sae loud she made them ring,
Till faith, I thocht about my lugs
the biggin she would bring.

And when she saw I wadna slip, she
ran to the guidman.
Says: "There's a lad into the
house an' that I winna stan'."

"For it is a most disgraceful thing,
it wad provoke a saunt,
To see a' the servant girls wi' lads
when the gentle anes maun want."

"Providence has acted wrang sic
pleasures for to gie
To ony servant lad or lass just
workin' for a fee."

The auld man he cam' ben himsel'
an' he pushed bin his heid,
Guid faith I thocht it was a ghost
just risen frae the deid.

He'd duddy drawers upon his legs,
he'd on a cap o' white,
An' he'd a face as lang's my leg
and in his hand a light.

He's ta'en my by the shouthers
braw an' push'd me out o' doors;
Thinks I, my auld lad, I'll come
back when sleepin' gars ye snore.

GLOSSARY.

doun	down
nae	no
gaed	went
slinkin'	creeping
cannily	gently
agee	ajar
wha	who
wi'	with
a'	all
nicht	might
lugs	ears
biggin	building
wadna	wouldn't
slip	escape
winna'	won't
saunt	saint
anes	ones

maun want	must do without
wrang	wrong
sic	such
gie	give
ben	in
heid	head
guid	good
thocht	thought
deid	dead
duddy	ragged
lang	long
shouthers	shoulders
braw	broad
gars	makes

THE MUCKIN' O' GEORDIE'S BYRE

In a lea-rig aul' croft ayont the hill
Just roon the neuk frae Sprottie's
mill
Tryin' a' his life the time to kill
Lived Geordie MacIntyre.
He had a wife as sweir's himsel'
A dochter as black as Auld Nick is
in hell -
There was plenty' o' fun awa' at his
mill
At the muckin' o' Geordie's byre.

CHORUS:

Whaur the graip was tint, the besom
was deen
The barra it wadna row its leen,
And siccan a sotter there never was
seen
As the muckin' o' Geordie's byre.

The dochter had to strae an' neep,
The auld wife serted to swipe the
greep,
When Geordie fell sklite on a rotten
neep
At the muckin' o' Geordie's byre.
Ben the greep cam' Geordie's soo
And she stood up ahint the coo,
The coo kickit oot an' o whit a
stew
At the muckin' o' Geordie's byre.

The auld wife she was booin' doon -
The soo was kickit on the croon
An' shoved her heid i' the wifie's
goon
An' then ben thro' Geordie's byre.
The dochter cam' thro' the barn door
An' seein' her mither, let oot a roar,
To the midden she ran an' fell ower
the boar
At the muckin' o' Geordie's byre.

The boar he leapt the midden dyke
An' ower the rigs wi' Geordie's tyke
They baith fell intil a bumbee's byke
At the muckin' o' Geordie's byre.
The cocks an' hens began to crawl
When biddy astride the soo they saw,
The postie's shelty ran awa'
At the muckin' o' Geordie's byre.

A hunder' years hae passed an' mair
Where Sprottie's was, the hill is
bare,
The croft's awa', sae ye'll see nae
mair
The muckin' o' Geordie's byre.
His fowk's a' deid an' awa lang syne -
Sae in case his memory ye should tine,
Just whistle this tune tae keep ye in
min'
O' the muckin' o' Geordie's byre.

GLOSSARY

lea-rig	set in a narrow valley
aul'	old
croft	farm
ayont	beyond

roon	round
sweir	awkward, reluctant
dochter	daughter
awa'	away
muckin'	to clear dung
byre	barn
whaur	where
graip	rake
tint	lost
besom	broom
deen	worn out
barra	barrow
row its leen	go by itself
siccan	such
sotter	mix-up
strae	put straw down
neep	dig turnips
swipe the greep	sweep the cowhouse drain
sklite	heavily
soo	sow
coo	cow
ben cam'	in came
ahint	behind
whit	what
booin'	bowing
croon	head
heid	head
goon	gown
midden	dung-heap
dyke	wall, ditch
rigs	haystack
tyke	dog
baith	both
bumbee's byke	beehive
crawl	crow
postie	postman
shelty	small pony
hunder'	hundred
mair	more
fowk'	folk
deid	dead
awa' lang syne	long gone
tine	lose, forget
min'	mind

BOGEY'S BONNIE BELLE

I gaed up tae Huntley toon the purpose
for to fee,
To Bog Heid o' Karney there I did
agree,
To drive his twa best horses that's a
task that I could do
To drive his twa best horses in the
harrow and the plow.

He had a lovely daughter and her name
was Isabel
She was neat, complete and handsome
and sure I loved her well.
Doon by the banks o' Karney it was
on the grassy green
Doon by the banks of Karney before
that we were seen.

Doon by the banks o' Karney it wason
a river side,
Doon by the banks o' Karney we watched
the small fish glide,
And six long months had gone and past,
this maiden she grow pale
And six long months had gone and past
and forth she had to tell.

And nine long months had gone and past
and she brought forth a son
It was then that I was sent for to see
fit could be done,
I promised I would marry here, but na,
that wouldna dee,
For you're nae match for Isabel and
she's nae match for thee.

So I put my young son in my arms and
joy to him I'll bring
And maybe he'll be's dear to me as
the girlie I adore.
And if he be as dear to me as the
girlie I adore

We'll roam and roam and roam again
as we used to do before.

If Bogey gets a better match, O Bogey
he can tell
It was me that took the maidenheid
o' Bogey's bonnie Belle,
She's married to a tinsmith and bides
in Huntley toon
Selling pots and pans and ladles till
all the country roond.

GLOSSARY

To fee	to hire oneself to a farmer.
Bog Heid o'	
Karney	the name of a farm and, consequently of a farmer.
Fit	what.

LAMACHREE AND MEGRUM

When first I gaed to sair the fremt,
Lamachree and Megrum,
It was to Auchtidoor I skeemt, Auld
grey Megrum.

The auld gude wife smokes in the neuk,
A-orderin' at the throwither cook.

The neist I gaed to Middlethird,
A better's nae aboon the yird.

I gaed ance to Middletack,
There I got meat to mak' me fat.

I there got buttered breid and cheese,
And oil to keep my sheen in grease.

I took a turn at Yokie's hill,
The teuchest place I e'er gaed till,

A hurb to hash and haik the loons,
There's nae his like in Buchan's
boun's.

GLOSSARY

sair fremt	serve stranger, not blood relations
skeemt	went
neuk	chimney corner
throwither	disorderly, careless
neist	next
aboon	around
yird	earth
ance	once
mak'	make
sheen	shoes
teuchest	toughest, most tedious
gaed till	went to
hurb	a term of contempt for a short, thick-set person
hash	to ill treat, abuse
haik	to beat, batter about
loons	men
boun's	bounds

THE ROAD AND THE MILES TO DUNDEE

The winter was howling o'er moor and
o'er mountain
And wild was the surge of the dark
rolling sea;
When I met about daybreak a bonnie
young lassie
Who asked me the road and the miles
to Dundee.

Says I, "My young lassie, I canna
weel tell you
The road and the distance I canna
weel gie;

But gin ye permit me to gang a wee
bittie,
I will show ye the road and the miles
to Dundee."

She fairly consented and gied me her
airm,
Nae a word did I spier wha the
lassie might be,
She appeared like an angel in feature
and form,
As she walked by my side on the road
to Dundee.

At length wi' the Howe o' St. Martin's
behind us,
And the spires o' the toon in full
view we could see,
She said, "Gentle sir, I can never
forget ye
For showing me so far on the road to
Dundee."

"This ring and this purse take, to
prove I am grateful,
And some simple token I trust you'll
gie me.
And in times to come I'll the laddie
remember
That showed me the road and the miles
to Dundee."

I took a gold pin from the scraf in
my bosom,
And said, "Take this in remembrance
o' me."
Then bravely I kissed the sweet lips
o' this lassie,
Then parted from her on the road to
Dundee.

Then here's to the lassie, I ne'er
can forget her,
And every young laddie that's
listening to me,
And never be sweir to convoy a young
lassie,
Though it's only to show her the
road to Dundee.

GLOSSARY.

Weel	well.
Gin	if.
Speir	ask.
Swear	reluctant.

THE LOTHIAN HAIRST

On August Twalt frae Aberdeen, we
sailed in the Prince,
And safe arrived on Shawfield's
shore, the harvest to commence.

For sax lang weeks the country roon
frae toon to toon we went,
We took richt weel wi' the Lothian
chiels, and wasy aye richt weel
content.

Oor gaffer, Willie Mathieson, frae
sweet Deeside he came,
Oor foremand came frae that same
place, and Logan was his name.

We followed Logan on the point,
and sae weel's he laid it doon,
And sae nimble as he led oor squad,
owre mony's the thistle's croon.

My mate and me we had nae chance for
Logan's watchful eye,
My mate and me we had nae chance,
for Logan was sae sly.

He cleared the bothy every nicht
before he went to sleep,

And not sae much as ane did leave,
but strict his rules did keep.

Fareweel, Mackenzie, Reid and Rose,
and the rest o' the merry crew,
There's Chalmers, Shepherd, Logan,
Jock, and the royal Steward too.

It's I mysel', a Hiellan lad wad wish
nae better cheer
Than a Lothian lass and a weel-made
bed, and a nicht as lang's a year.

Come fill our glass and drink it
roon before our boat shall start,
And may we safely reach the shore,
and all in friendship part.

GLOSSARY.

Twalt	twelfth.
We took richt	
weel	we got on well.
Owre	over.
Thistle	thistle.

IT HAPPENED ON A DAY

It happen'd on a day in the merry
month of May
I gaed oot to meet my bonny lad, he
promis'd to come this way.
I gaed oot to meet my bonny lad,
he promis'd to come this way,
But my bonny laddie never yet come
by me.

Oh, what have I said, love, Oh what
have I done?
And what objections to me have ye
found?
Or have ye gane courtin' another
pretty maid,
Is that the reason bonnie laddie ye
gang by me?

Ah, nothing have you said, love, or
nothing have ye done,
For no objections to you have I
found.
But I have gane a-courting another
pretty maid
That's the reason, bonnie lassie, I
gaed by ye.

Ye might hae courted six, or ye might
hae courted seven,
Ye might hae courted eight nine, or
ten or eleven
Ye might hae courted dizzens ower
again,
And been kinder to your auld lass
for all that.

The hills they are high and the
leaves they are green
Many were the happy nights you
and I hae seen;
But there's another lassie dancing
in my old sheen,
That's the reason, bonny laddie, ye
gang by me.

She thinks she's done me muckle ill,
but she's far mista'en
She is only but dancin in my old
sheen,
And if she likes to please hersel',
it's she can dance them done,
And so, neatly, bonnie laddies, I
gang by ye.

The hills they are high, but the
leaves are nae rotten
Tho, I be forsaken I'm nae
heartbroken,
I can court another lad and you'll
soon be forgotten
And so neatly, bonnie laddie, I'll
gae by ye.

GLOSSARY

oot	out
gaed, gane	went, gone
micht	might
dizzens	dozens
auld	old
sheen	shoes
muckle	much
gang	go

THE WORKING CHAP

I'm a workin' chap, as you may see,
you'll find an honest lad in me,
I'm neither haughty, mean nor proud,
nor ever tak's the thing too rude.
I never gang abune my means, nor
seek assistance frae my frien's
But day and nicht thro' thick and
thin, I'm workin' life out to
keep life in.

CHORUS:

Nae matter, frien's, whate'er befa',
the puir folks they maun work ava',
Thro' frost and snaw and rain and wind,
they're workin' life out to keep
life in.

The puir needle-woman that we saw in
reality and on the wa'
A picture sorrowful to see, I'm sure
wi' me you'll a' agree.
Her pay's scarce able to feed a mouse,
far less to keep hersel' and house,
She's naked, hungry, pale and thin,
workin' life out to keep life in.

(CHORUS)

Don't ca' a man a drunken sot because
he wears a ragged coat,
It's better far, mind, don't forget,
to rin in rags than rin in debt.
He may look seedy, very true, but
still his creditors are few
And he toddles on, devoid of sin,
workin' life out to keep life in.

(CHORUS)

But maybe, frien's, I've stayed ower,
lang, but I hope I hae said
naething wrang,
I only merely want to show the way
the puir folk hae to go.
Just look at a man wi' a housefu'
o' bairns, to rear them up it
tak's a' he earns,
Wi' a willin' heart and a coat gey
thin, he's workin' life out to
keep life in.

GLOSSARY.

snaw	snow
ava'	anyway
maun	must
puir	poor
wi'	with
a'	all
ca'	call
rin	run
ower	too
bairns	children
gey	very

JOHNNIE SANGSTER

O' a' the seasons o' the year when we
maun work the sairest,
The harvest is the only time and yet
it is the rarest,
We rise as seen the mornin' licht,
nae craters can be blither,
We buckle on oor finger-steels and
follow oot the scyther,

CHORUS:

For you, Johnnie, you, Johnnie,
You, Johnnie Sangster,
I'll trim the gavel o' my sheaf
for ye're the gallant bandster.

A mornin' piece to line oor cheek,
afore that we gae forder,
Wi' clouds o' blue tobacco reek we
then set oot in order,
The sheaves are risin' thick and
fast and Johnnie he maun bind
them,
The busy group, for fear they stick,
can scarcely look behind them.

(CHORUS)

I'll gie ye bands that winna slip,
I'll pleat them weel and thrav
them
I'm sure they winna tine the grip,
hoeover weel ye draw them.
I'll lay my leg oot owre the sheaf
and draw the band sae handy,
Wi' ilka strae as straucht's a
rash and that'll be the dandy.

(CHORUS)

If e'er it chance to be my lot to
get a gallant bandster,
I'll gar him wear a gentle coat
and bring him gowd in handfu's,
But Johnnie, he can please himsel'
I wadna wish him blinket,
Sae aifter he has brewed his ale,
he can sit doon and drink it.

(CHORUS)

A dainty cowie in the byre, for
butter and for cheese,
A grumphy feedin' in the sty wad
keep the hoose in greases,
A bonnie ewie in the bucht wad
help to creesh the ladle
And we'll get ruffs o' cannie woo'
wad halp to theek the cradle.

(CHORUS)

GLOSSARY.

o'	of
a'	all
maun	must
saiest	hardest
licht	light
craters	creatures
oor	our
finger-steels	finger stools
oot	out
gavel	end
bandster	a binder of sheaves
ford	forward
clouds	clouds
reek	smoke
winna	won't
thraw	throw
tine	loose
hoeover	however
weel	well
ilka	every
strae	straw
straucht's	straight as
rash	rush
gar	make
gowd	gold
wadna	wouldn't
blinket	weaving blinkers
cowie	cow
byre	barn
grumphy	pig
hoose	house
bucht	sheep-or cattle fold
creesh	to grease
cannie	handy
woo'	wool
theek	line

DRUMDELGIE

There's a fairmer up in Cairnie Wha's
kent baith far and wide
To be the great Drumdelgie upon sweet
Deveronside.
The fairmer o' yon muckle toon he
is baith hard and sair
And the cauldest day that ever blows
his servants get their share.

At five o'clock we quickly rise and
hurry doon the stair,
It's there to corn our horses,
likewise to straik their hair.
We've scarcely got our brose weel
supt and gi'en our pints a tie,
When the foreman cries, "Hallo, my
lads, the hour is drawing nigh!"

At sax o'clock the mull's put on to
gie us a strait wark,
It taks four o' us to mak' to her
till ye could wring our sark.
And when the water is put off we
hurry doon the stair
To get some quarters through the
fan till daylight does appear.

When daylight does begin to peep
and the sky begins to clear,
The foreman he cries out, "My lads,
ye'll stay nae langer here!
"There's sax o' you'll gae to the
ploo and twa will drive the
neeps,
"And the owson they'll be after
you wi' strae raips roun' their
queets."

But when that we were gyaun forth
and turnin' out to yoke,
The snaw dang on sae thick and
fast that we were like to choke.
The frost had been sae very hard the
ploo she wadna go,
And sae our cairting days commenced
amang the frost and snow.

Our horses being but young and sma',
the shafts they didna fill,
And they aft required the saiddler
to pull them up the hill.
But we will sing our horses' praise,
though they be young and sma',
They far outshine the Broadland's
aines that gang sae full and braw.

Sae fare ye weel, Drumdelgie, for I
maun gang awa',
Sae fare ye weel, Drumdelgie, your
weety weather and a'.
Sae fare ye weel, Drumdelgie, I bid
ye a' adieu,
I leave ye as I got ye, a maist
unceevil crew.

GLOSSARY.

fairmer	farmer
wha's	who's
kent	known
baith	both
muckle	big
toon	town
sair	strict
cauldest	coldests
blaws	blows
straik	comb
brose	oatmeal & water
gi'en our pints	
a tie	
mull	mill
wark	work
sark	shirt
sax	six
ploo	plow
twa	two
neeps	turnips
owson	ewes
strae	straw
	8

raips	ropes
queets	fetlocks
gyaun	going
snaw	snow
dang	fell
wadna	wouldn't
cairting	carting
sma'	small
aft	often
saiddler	whip
aines	ones
braw	fine or handsome
maun	must
awa'	away
weety	wet
a'	all
maist	most
unceevil	incivil

SHE WAS A RUM ONE

As I walked out one fair moon night,
One fair moon night in winter,
It was there I spied a pretty fair
maid,

CHORUS:

She was a rum one, fol tee toodle
i do aye,
But a bonny one, fol tee toodle
i doe.

She walked up and she walked down
And I walked close beside her,
And I asked to her the reason why
That she could not step no
wider.

(CHORUS)

Go away, go away, you foolish
young man
And stop such foolish talking,
It little becomes young men, she
said
To pick up young women's walking.

(CHORUS)

O I'm a doctor to my trade,
My friends they call me rare,
o,
If you'll tell me where your
trouble lies,
I'll fix it neat and fair, o.

(CHORUS)

My trouble lies between my
thighs
And there it is abiding,
It tickles me both nicht and
day
And it keeps me frae my
striding.

(CHORUS)

He laid her doon upon a bank
And he provided the plaister,
She rose up unto her feet,
Says, I hope you'll never end
it.

(CHORUS)

She gied to me my winter's beef
Likewise my winter's firin',
Far better than that she gied
to me
Was a stable for my stallion.

GLOSSARY.

pick up	to accost, or to criticise
nicht	night
frae	from
doon	down
plaister	remedy, medicament
gied	gave