

Marbhrann do Thighearna Ghlinn-Alladail

An Elegy to the Lord of Glenaladale.

Orain le Raoghall Donullach (1821), pp61-66.

National Library of Scotland – Shelfmark ABS.1.206.089

Translation and some alteration of Gaelic spelling by Gordon C Barr and Meg Bateman.

'S iomadh fear a bha duilich,
Agus bean a bha tuireadh,
Mu cheann teaghlaich na h-urram,
A tha 'n Dùn Eideann a' fuireach;
Na thaigh geamhraidh, 's nach ùrrainn a ghluasad.

It's many a man who was sorry and many a woman
who was lamenting about the head of the family of
honour who is staying in Edinburgh in his winter
home (i.e. his grave) and who cannot move away.

Tha do mhàthair gad ghearan,
'S gu robh cridhe air a sgarradh !
Ge nach d' fhàg thu i falamh;
Dh' fhàg i 'm pluran bha fallain,
An ciste chaoil air a sparradh fo fhuair lic.

Your mother is groaning for you and her heart is
broken. Although you have not left her empty, she
left our flower which was healthy in the narrow
coffin thrust below a cold slab.

Cha b' e faillean gun sùgh e,
'N uair a cheannaich e Mùideart,
Eagal gaill thighinn a duthaich;
Ach slat don iubhar nach lùbadh,
Ge nach d' fhan thu ri cunntas na buantachd.

He was not a sapling without sap when he bought
Moidart for fear of Galls coming to the country.
But he was a rod of yew which would not bend up
although you did not attain any kind of perpetuity.

Craobh an abhal a b' ùire,
Air am fàsadh na h-ubhlan;
Gu robh na freumhaichean dlutha.
Tha Clainn Donuill a' cuntas,
Gur a lùgha an cliu do thoirt uatha.

The freshest apple tree on which apples could
grow. How dense were the roots. Clan MacDonald
is saying that we almost took their reputation away
from them.

Fhuair thu eolas air mach-thir,
A's fhuair thu fòlum gach fasain;
Cha b' ann cearr thug thu leat e;
'S òg a d' fhag thu do bhailtean;
Gu b' e diubhail nan creach a thug uath thu.

You got knowledge of the wider world and you got
education of every fashion; it is not wrong that you
adopted it. You left your townships when young.
What a devil of plunder it was that took you away.

Bha thu cinneadail, coimhneil,
Lom làn spiorad mar shaighdear;
Gu robh d' aghaidh a soillseadh,
Mar dhearsa maidne baoisgeadh,
'N uair a shuidheadh tu 'n measg nan daoine uaisle.

You were clanish, courteous, full of spirit as a
soldier. How your face would appear like the
shining of a glittering morning when you sat
among the noble men.

Bha do chairdeas cho lionar,
A Clainn Donuill ri iarraidh;
A's thu Chlainn Ghrigair na biatachd,
Daoine foghainteach, fialaidh,
A choisneadh nan ciad anns gach cruadal.

Your kingship was so numerous, Clan Donald so
sought after, and you, Clan Gregor, are a
hospitable, brave and generous people who would
win in their hundreds during every battle.

Tha do chàirdeas ri Gleannaibh,
Far an d'fhàs na fir ghlana,
'S moch a dh'èireas bho 'n leannain,
A losgadh fudair le deireas,
'S an cuid fiadh a call fala air an luachair.

Bu leat cairdeas Chlainn Ghrigair,
Luchd nan claidheanan sgiobalt,
Bu mhòr cliù anns gach trioblaid,
Le n' cuid saighdearan fhìnealt,
Am àm a bhi tilleadh na ruaige.

Bha do chàirdeas o'n Gharbh-bheinn,
Bho cheann Loch Seile na sealgair;
Far am bu tric na daimh dhearga,
Gu robh frìth ann cho ainmeil,
Gus an d'thainig am meanbh chro 'gam fuadach.

Cha b'e fearann nan caorach,
Bha mairsin aig daoine -
Cha bhiodh ciobair a glaothaich;
Ach bainne 's uachdar ga thaoma;
'S gu biodh craobh le n' cuid laogh air na
buailtean.

'N uair a thainig am Prionnsa,
Far na sheas e 'nad dhuthaich,
Thog thu clach agus tùr ann,
Bha mar chuimhneachan dùbhailt;
Bu tu lamh a dhìola nan crùn gan toirt uait ann.

Bu tu taghadh an t-sealgair;
Agus sgiobair na fairge,
Ged bhi la cas, garbh, ann,
Ged a dh'èireadh i gailbheach,
'S tu gun dìobradh an t-anbharr fo guailleann.

Nuair a sheoladh do Choire ,
Nunn 's a nall roimh chaol Muile,
Bhi tu fein ann mar dhuine,
'S tu gu stiùradh a mhuir dhaibh,
Ged bhi siuil ann an cunnart thoirt uait.

Cha b'e coltas na gorta,
Bhiodh na deire 's na toiseach,
Aig luchd thragha nam botal,
'N uair a liont air do chosg iad;
Cha be 'n sgrubaire bochd gan toirt uait thu.

'Nuair a thilleadh tu dhachaidh,
Cha b'e iomal na h-airce,
A bhiodh aig do Stiuart ri sgapa;
Gu biodh fion ann co pailte,
Ris a' bhurn a bha glacadh nam fuaran.

Your relationship is close to the Glen folk where
the righteous men grew up and you will rise early
from their sweethearts to fire powder with injury
and for their own deer to lose blood in the rushes.

You had friendship from Clan Gregor, a group
with neat swords. The group of fine soldiers had a
great reputation in every trouble, at the time of
turning the rout (?).

Yours kin was from "Garven", from the end of
Loch Shiel of the hunters, where there were red
stags frequently. How really famous was the deer
forest, until the sheep chased them out.

It was not sheep farm land which was helpful to
people and there were no gamekeepers shouting
out, but there was milk and cream pouring out, and
there would be cattle and their offspring on the
fields.

When the Prince came and stood up in your
country, you lifted stones and a tower there which
was like a doubled memorial. You were a hand
which took revenge for the crowns being taken
away from you.

You were the choice of the hunter and the ocean
skipper even if it was a rough day and it rose up
stormy; it is you who would cast the most from her
shoulders. (i.e. it's you who would sail furthest –
you who would put the most sea below her prow).

When your "Coire" sailed back and forth before
the Sound of Mull, you yourself would be manly as
a crew member and it's you who would directly
navigate the sea for them, even though the sails
were in danger of falling away from her.

Either at the stern or the prow there was no sign of
famine on the people who would drain bottles
when they filled them up at your cost. You weren't
the poor miser taking them away from you.

When you returned home, it wasn't the remnants
of poverty that your Stewart would have to
dispense. Wine would be as plentiful as a burn
which was flowing out from wells.

Gu biodh piobaireachd fheadan,
Agus fìdhlean gam freagairt;
Mar bu bhinn le luchd leadan,
'Nad sheòmar gu leadur,
'Nuair a thisicheadh beadrachd dhaoin buaisle.

There would be piping of chanters and fiddles
answering them in your room as sweetly as
harmonious music when the bleathers of highest
gentlemen would begin.

'S ann 'sa Mhorairne ghleannach,
A shuidh teaghlach na 'm beannachd;
Bha do mhathair cho banail,
'S gu robh sìoth air a teangaidh,
Ghleidh i urram nam ban air uaisle.

It was in Glen Morar that the family of the
blessings stayed. Your mother was so womanly
that there was peace on her tongue. She was a lady
most respected for nobility.

Ged a luidheadh i 'san oidhche,
Cha b'è 'n cadal a rinn i ;
Ach bhi smuaintin an oighre,
Tighearna òg nam fear faineach,
A bha 's na gleannaibh gun fhoill ga chuid tuatha.

Although she would lie down at night she did not
fall asleep but would think of their heir, the young
lord of the curled hair, who was in the glens with
no deceit to his own dependants.

'S iomadh fear ga robh cliù ort,
'Nuair a dh'fhagadh tu dàthaich,
Eadar Eirinn a's Mùideart,
Làmh a dhìoladh luchd ciùil thu,
'S e do sporan nach diultadh am fuasgladh.

There was many a man between Ireland and
Moidart praising you when you left the country and
you had a hand which would pay musicians. It is
your sporan which did not stop being opened up.

Dh'fhag thu d'oighreachd, 's do choille,
Dara taobh do Loch Seile;
'S math na daoine aig am bheil e,
Air a sgrìobha cho soilleir,
'S nach bi dùil aig fear eile thoirt uatha.

You left your estate and your woodland on the
other side of Loch Shiel. The people who have it
are good and have it written very clearly that no
other man can think of taking it away from them.

Ged a dh'fhalbh a'chraobh mhullaich,
'S math an fhreumhach a d'fhuireach,
Gus na smeuran a chumail,
'S iad do chairdean bha duilich,
'S ceann feadhna air a shumanach uatha.

Although the top tree has gone, it's a good root
which has continued on in order to keep away the
brambles. They are your friends who were sorry
when their chieftain was summoned from them.