An t-Each Iaruinn. Ranald Rankin.

Gaelic Society of Inverness, Volume XV, p153 (1888-89). Ranald Rankin was born in Fort William in 1811 and was a priest in Moidart until 1855 when he emigrated to Australia. The poem expresses his feelings about newly introduced trains.
Translation – Gordon Barr.

An t-Each Iaruinn	The Iron Horse
’Se ’n t-each iaruinn fhuair mo mhiann, ’Nuair a thriallainn air astar; Is e gun dìollaid a’s gun srian, Siubhal dian leinn do Ghlaschu. ’Se ’n t-each, etc	It’s the iron horse that got a hold of my feelings when I travelled a distance. He lacked a saddle and a bridle and he moved fiercely with us to Glasgow.
’S ann air a bhios an t-sitrich chruaidh, ’N àm dha gluasad o’n Chaisteal; Tothan geala tigh’nn o shroin, ’S e ro dhèonach air astar	He gave a hard growl as he moved away from The Castle. White fumes came from his nose and he was so ready for speed.
Cha’n iarr e fodar na feur, ’S chan eil siol dha mar chleachdadh; Ach an teine chur r’a thàrr, ’Se sud àbhaist mar bhraic-theist.	He doesn’t look for fodder or grass and he doesn’t usually have seeds, but he puts fire in his belly - that’s his habit-like breakfast.
Tha fuaim a chuibhleachan am chluais, Mar thorann cruaidh tigh’nn o chreachan; Mar ghille-mirein dol m’an cuairt, Chì thu coilltean, sluagh, a’s clachan.	The noise of his wheels in my ears is like thunder coming from rocks or you will see woods and rocks and people birling around like a whirligig.
Tha riadh de charbadan na dhèigh, ’San ionad fèin aig bochd a’s beartach; An uair a rachadh e na leum, B’fhaoin do mhac a fhèidh a leantuinn.	There is now a row of chariots behind her, the same place for poor and rich folk. When he began to leap, it was hopeless for a young deer to follow him.
Siud riut a nis a’ ghaoth-tuath, Dubhlan do’n luaths tha ‘nad chasan; Feuch riut Eòlas na’n speur, Ma’s tu fein is trein’ air astar.	Now you’ll have the north wind as a challenge against the speed of your feet. Try to see if you can recognise the stars while you and the train are at speed.
Tha ’n t-each aluinn, calma, treun, Tha e meamnach, gleusda, reachdmhor; An t-each a bhuidhneas geall gach reis, Chan eil feum a dhol a ghleachd ris.	The horse is beautiful, sturdy and strong. He is courageous, organised and robust. He is the horse who will win a bet at the end of every race. It is no use to go and struggle against him.

’S coma leam *coitse* nan each mall,
Chan eil ann aca culaidh-mhagaidh;
Chan fhearr leam *gige* nan each fann,
Chan eil ann ach glige-ghlaige.

I don’t care for the coaches of slow horses. They don’t have an amasing set-up. I don’t prefer the gigs of the feeble horses. There’s nothing there but glick-glack.

Mar chloich-mhuilinn dol na deann,
Sios le gleann o bhàrr leachdainn,
Tha gach cuibhle a ruith bhios ann,
Falbh le srann ’s an dol seachad.

Like a mill-stone going down a glen in a hurry from the top of a wide hill, each wheel runs away and makes a snoring sound.

M’ eudail gobha dubh a’ ghuail,
’S e thug buaidh air na h-eachaibh,
Leis a’ bhearran laidir luath,
Falbh le sluagh eadar bhailtean.

My treasured dark blacksmith of the coal, it’s he who defeated the horses and with his strong fast geldings he went with a crowd between towns.

Linn nan innleachdan a th’ann,
Gu sluagh a chur na’n deann air astar;
An litir sgrìobhas tu le peann,
Mun dean thu rann bidh i ’n Sasunn.

An age of changes is here to make a population run at speed. The letter that you are writing with a pen will be in England before you finish a verse.

Nan èireadh na mairbh o’n ùir,
Dh’fhaicinn gach nì ùir a th’againn,
Cha chreideadh iad an sealladh sùl,
Nach e druidheachdan a bh’againn.

If the dead rise out of their graves to see all the new things that we have, they would not believe the sight of their eyes or that it was nothing but witchcraft that we had.

Nì e bodaich bheinne dhùsgadh,
’S daoine-sìth bha ùin’ na’n cadal;
Teichidh iad le geilt ’sna cuiltean,
Mu’n tèid am mùchadh no’n spadadh.

He will waken up the old men of the mountains and the fairy folk that were once asleep. They will flee with terror into corners before they are smothered or flattened.

Siubhlaidh bàt’-na-smuid air chuan,
Sgoltadh stuadh, ’s ga’n cuir seachd;
Seòlaidh long o’n Airde Tuath,
Le gaoth chruaidh ’s frasan sneachda.

A steam boat can travel on the ocean cracking the waves and pushing them past. A boat can sail from Ardtoe with a strong wind and showers of snow.

Chan ionnan sud ’s mo ghearran donn,
’Nuair dheireadh fonn air gu astar;
Chan iarr e coirce no moll,
Ach uisge’ na chom ’nuair bhios tart air.

But that is not the same as my brown gelding, when a tune would turn him to speed. He doesn’t look for oats or chaff, only for water into his chest when thirst hits him.

Nam faiceadh tu Iain Ruadh is claon air,
A glaodhaich gu àird a chlaiginn,
“Mur stad sibh an t-each donn a dhaoine,
Cha bhi tuilleadh saoghail againn.”

If only you could see Iain Ruadh with a squint on him and bawling out loudly from his skull “If you don’t keep the brown horse away from people, we will not have any more world.”

Bidh an t-eagal ann, ’s chan ioghnadh;
Fear ri faoineis, ’s fear ri magadh;
Chluinnidh tu iad air gach taobh dhiot,
Fhearaibh ’sa ghaoil – “What a Rattle!”

There will be fear, and it is no surprise; some full of vanity and some busy at mockery. You will hear them, on every side of you, say to people lovingly “What a Rattle”.

Gus an rathad a bhi rèidh,
’S nach bi eis air na astar,
Nì e toll am bun gach slèibh,
’S bheir e ris ’stigh na achlais.

In order that his road will be level and that there will be no horses in the way, he will make a hole at the bottom of each mountain and he will continue on inside and up to its oxter.

A ruith troi’ uamha chreagach dhorch,
’Rinn am fudar gorm a’sgoltadh;
Gu’m bheil mòran eagal orm
Gu’m buin a thoirm uam mo chlaisteachd.

Running through a rocky, dark cave, the blue powder bursts out. I have a lot of fear that its noise will take away from me my sense of hearing.

Chì thu sluagh ann as gach àite,
A talamh Chanàan as a Sasunn,
Eadar Peairt ’sam Brumlàth,
Eadar an Spainnt a’s Braigh Lochabar.

You will see people on him from every place, from the land of Canaan, from England, between Perth and Broomilaw, and between Spain and Lochaber Brae.