

# **The Musical Heritage of Glenmoriston**

## **A Scoping Exercise**

**Undertaken on behalf of Glenmoriston Improvement Group**

**by Munro Gauld and Ceit Langhorne**

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# The Musical Heritage of Glenmoriston

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The views and opinions set out in this report are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect those of any other involved organisation or individual.

Diagrams used in this report were created by Ceit Langhorne for previous research, and have been reproduced here with her courtesy.

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# The Musical Heritage of Glenmoriston – A Scoping Exercise

## Contents

|   |        |
|---|--------|
| 1. Introduction   | Page 1 |
| 2. Project Brief and Parameters                                   | 1      |
| 3. Background   | 1      |
| 4. Biographies of the Glenmoriston Bards                          | 2      |
| 5. Project Activities and Research                                |        |
| 5.1 Project Activities  | 4      |
| 5.2 Research Process  | 5      |
| 5.3 Research Findings   | 6      |
| 6. Common themes and subject areas explored                       |        |
| 6.1 Relationship with the Natural Environment                     | 11     |
| 6.2 The Otherworld in Glenmoriston                                | 24     |
| 6.3 The Military Life   | 31     |
| 6.4 Praise Poems  | 41     |
| 6.5 Shielings in song and music                                   | 44     |
| 6.6 Changing land use – Sheep farming                             | 50     |
| 6.7 Changing land use – Deer forests and sporting estates         | 53     |
| 7. Recommendations for future research and development activities | 58     |
| 8. Conclusion   | 60     |
| <b>Bibliography</b>   | 62     |
| <b>Appendices</b>   | 63     |

Contents and details of songs and poems in each resources document:

1. *Story and Song from Loch Ness-side*, by Alexander Macdonald (First published 1914, revised and extended Edition 1982)
2. *Urquhart and Glenmoriston in Olden Times*, by William MacKay LL.D. (1914)
3. *The Grants of Glenmoriston (Reminiscences Historical and Traditional)*, by Rev. Allan Sinclair (1887)
4. *Dain agus Orain, le Gilleasbuig Grannda, bard Ghlinnemorasdain*. (1863).  
Poems and songs by Archibald Grant of Glenmoriston (Archie Tàilleir)
5. *Coinneach 'us Coille*, by Alister (Alasdair) / Alexander Macdonald (1895)
6. *MacDonald Bards from Mediaeval Times*, by Keith Norman MacDonald (1900)
7. *Scrap of Unpublished Poetry and Folklore from Glenmoriston*, by Alexander Macdonald (1896) - Transactions of the Gaelic Society of Inverness
8. *Scrap of Unpublished Poetry and Folklore from Loch Ness-side Part 1*, by Alexander Macdonald (1893) - Transactions of the Gaelic Society of Inverness
9. *Scrap of Unpublished Gaelic Poetry and Folklore from Loch Ness-side — Part 2* by Alexander Macdonald (1899) - Transactions of the Gaelic Society of Inverness
10. *The songs and poems of Alasdair Mac Iain Bhàin*, by William Mackay (1883) - Transactions of the Gaelic Society of Inverness
11. *Archibald Grant, (Archie Tàilleir) - The Glenmoriston Bard* by Alexander Macdonald (1885) - Transactions of the Gaelic Society of Inverness

## 1. Introduction

This Scoping Study Report outlines the research carried out by musician Munro Gauld and creative practitioner/ singer Ceit Langhorne to investigate the musical and poetic heritage of Glenmoriston on behalf of the local community through the Glenmoriston Improvement Group. The project involved the research and interpretation of Glenmoriston's musical heritage, putting it into a local and wider context in order to both better understand its significance, as well as help make it more accessible. The report also identifies potential opportunities for its future research, use and development.

## 2. Project Brief and Parameters

The project brief set out the following activities:

- Research Glenmoriston's musical heritage – particularly Gaelic songs written by Glenmoriston's bards in the C19th.
- Put the poets and their songs into an historical and cultural context.
- Illustrate how Glenmoriston's musical heritage provides a unique perspective on the views of the local community at the time, and their relationships with:
  - each other
  - the land and environment
  - landowners and land management
  - the military
  - and any other aspects identified by the research
- Identify and research traditional (mainly fiddle) music connected to Glenmoriston.
- Make the findings of the research readily accessible to the Glenmoriston community in a range of suitable formats. e.g. on social media and at a series of events in the glen in summer/autumn 2021 (Covid19 permitting)

### Parameters

The parameters of the research work were set as:

- Concentrate on poems and songs about and from Glenmoriston and its immediate environs.
- Limited to the output of poets from Glenmoriston itself, or collected by / associated with Alexander Macdonald and other collectors from the Glenmoriston area.
- Examine the period from roughly post-Culloden (1745) until the death of Alexander Macdonald in 1928.

## 3. Background

Glenmoriston has a particularly rich musical heritage: -

*"Perhaps there is not a small glen in Inverness-shire —perhaps not even in any part of the Highlands of Scotland—that has produced so many singers as that little, narrow one that lies in a south-westerly direction between the western shores of Loch-Ness, and the borders of Kintail, namely, Glenmoriston."*

Alexander Macdonald, presentation to The Gaelic Society of Inverness, 24th February 1886.

## The Musical Heritage of Glenmoriston

The glen was home to a succession of poets in the late 18th and throughout the 19th century, known collectively as “The Glenmoriston Bards”. These bards wrote songs and poems in praise of Glenmoriston, its geography, environment, notable local people and events. The songs and poems provide a unique perspective of the area and local people’s relationships with each other and the world around them.

As Alexander Macdonald said at his presentation to Gaelic Society of Inverness on 24<sup>th</sup> February 1886:

*“To account for this would be undoubtedly a difficult matter, and would be considerably foreign to the object of this paper, but the fact remains none the less true, In referring to those, I do not certainly mean to insinuate that they were composers of the first magnitude, but merely sweet, homely warblers, who gave expression to their inward feelings and their impressions from without, in strains peculiarly captivating to those among whom they moved and had their being. For there are poets for each stage of culture. Some of them we find addressing themselves to poets and novelists particularly; others to thinkers and scholars; and a third class to the common, more or less uneducated, members of the human family.”*

Alexander Macdonald’s *Story and Song from Loch Ness-side (1914)* is a hugely valuable musical resource for the local area as it contains the words (and in the 1982 edition) the melodies for songs by local poets. It contains a considerable number of other locally known songs – though not originally from the glen. There are many additional songs and poems from the wider Loch Ness-side area contained in various papers and articles by him. Many of these songs, with accompanying melodies notated by him, have unique lyrics and / or melodies which do not appear to have been recorded elsewhere, and as such are a valuable and hitherto relatively unknown resource. Alexander Macdonald also published a book of his own poems in 1895 - *Coinneach ‘us Coile*.

Two other local collectors / historians - William MacKay (*Urquhart and Glenmoriston in Olden Times*) and the Rev. Allan Sinclair (*The Grants of Glenmoriston*) - published books and papers that included the lyrics of songs and poem from the Glenmoriston area. Finally *Dain agus Orain, le Gilleasbuig Grannda, bard Ghlinnemorasdain*. a book of the poems and songs by Archibald Grant of Glenmoriston (Archie Tàilleir ) was published in 1863.

These publications formed the basis of the resource for the research carried out for this project. They can all be viewed online – see weblinks in the Appendices

### 4. The Glenmoriston Bards – Brief Biographies

The principal poets from Glenmoriston, known as the “Glenmoriston Bards” were:

**Archibald Grant (Senior)** (17?? – 1805) from Tom Bheallaidh (Tombealluidh) Grandfather of Archibald Grant (Archie Tàilleir). Foster father to Angus Òg MacDonell of Glengarry who was killed after Battle of Falkirk in 1745). In *Story and Song from Loch Ness-side*, Alexander Macdonald refers to him as John Grant.

Known songs and poems:

- Bobadh is m’ annsachd – Morning lullaby
- Hò fearan hì fearan –
- Mo ghaol, mo ghaol –
- Theid an t’èideadh – Song on presenting Aonghas Òg with his first kilt
- Fhir mhòir bu mhath cumadh - Elegy on the death of the 3<sup>rd</sup> laird, John Grant of Glenmoriston in 1801.

## The Musical Heritage of Glenmoriston

**John Grant** (Roughly 1755 – 1820) Aonach. Son of Archibald Grant Snr, father of Archibald Grant (Archie Tàilleir). He joined the army in 1772 became a sergeant and was involved in the siege of Gibraltar by Spain and France in 1779.

Colonel James Grant Jacobite involved in siege of Inverness in 1746

Known songs and poems:

- ‘S ann tha ‘n diubhail an drasd - poem about drowning of Patrick Grant at Portclair on 31<sup>st</sup> December 1789
- Oran na Caorach-mhora - aka The Sheep Song or Deoch-slaime Choirneil nach maireann
- Sacred Song
- Iseabail ‘s Archie ‘n drasda bruidhinn rium

**Archibald Grant (Junior)** – The Glenmoriston Bard (known as Archie Tàilleir) (1785-1870). From Aonach, second son of John Grant. Joined the Glengarry Fencibles (raised 1795, disbanded 1802) Book of his poems and songs, *Dain agus Orain*, published in 1863 include:

- Thigeadh bho Chreagan an Fhitheach - Song comparing Colonel Alexander Ronaldson MacDonnell of Glengarry with the Lordship of the Isles
- Gu ciobach creamhach caoiricheanach
- Oran gaoil do Mhaighdean og a Chaidh dh’ America
- Mo ghaol ne fir dhonna sin
- Oran do Choire-Dho - A Coire Dho Hunting Song
- Beannachadh Bard do’n Luing - The Bard’s benediction to the ship Glenmoriston
- Oran na Faoighe (The Welcome) - Song about piper Finlay MacLeod
- Oran Mollaidh do Mhac ‘ic Phadruig - A Eulogy on James Murray Grant Esq
- Dan Posaidh - A Marriage Address

**Alexander Grant**, known as Alasdair Mac Iain Bhàin, (1772-1804) Achnanconeran. The second son of John Grant (better known as Iain Ban na Pluic) he joined the army “when very young” probably around 1790.

Known songs and poems:

- Moch 's a' mhaduinn Diciadain
- Oran an t’Saighdear
- Oran air Gleannamoireasduinn
- Oran an t Siosalaich – A eulogy on The Chisholm
- ‘N diugh ‘s mi fagail na Rìoghachd - A voyage to the West Indies
- Is Cianail na Rathad - Yoyaging
- Theid mi le m' Dheoin - I will go gladly to Glenmoriston, The Land of Young John.
- Cumha do Choirneal Grannda, Tigherna Ghlinne-Moiresstuin a Chaochail anns a Bhliadhna 1801 – Elegy to Colonel Grant of Glenmoriston

**Ewen MacDonald** (Dalcattaig- early 19th century)

Almost nothing is known about Ewen MacDonald or his life. His only known song is:

- Coire’ Iarraidh

**John MacDonald** (known as Iain Glaiseach)

Known songs:

- Oran an Eich – Comic song
- ‘S iomadh deuchainn a fhuair thu (Air faillirinn, illirinn) - Many is the hardship you endured
- Gur a diùmbach mi ‘n dràsda – Flyting poem / song
- ‘S iomadh déuchainn a fhuair thu – Comic poem / song

**Alexander (Alister / Alasdair) Macdonald** (1860 – 1928). Achnanconeran Author of *Coinneach 'us Coille* (1895) and *Story and Song from Loch Ness-side* (1914, revised and extended edition 1982): 75 songs, 2 poems and 13 charms / blessings in *Story and Song from Loch Ness-side* 73 songs in *Coinneach 'us Coille*

9 other songs and poems identified in "*MacDonald Bards from Mediaeval Times*" by Keith Norman MacDonald (1900).

According to the introduction to the Musical Appendix in the 1982 edition of SSFLNS, Alexander Macdonald wrote a weekly newspaper column for the Highland News from June 1907 until January 1912 under the title "*Guthan beag o chuil o chiùil*" with the words and music of songs from as heard by him in his native district. He also contributed music to the weekly article in the Highland News "*Clarsach nan Gàidheal*" by Henry White (Fionn) from 1896 - 1914.

According to a Radio Times article of 1960: "*From 1890 right up to his death hardly a week went by without a song from his collection appearing in one of the local Inverness-shire papers under the title of The Songs of Loch Ness-side.*"

**Mrs Cameron** na Cluinean 1746. By Janet Grant of Shewglie, wife of John Cameron of Clunes

- Oran do Dhomnuil Ban Mac Domhnuil

**Angus MacDonald** (Dates unknown). Glenmoriston

First bard to The Gaelic Society of Inverness. Known songs / poems:

- A chruit thiamhaidh nam pong broin - Elegy to James Murray Grant of Glenmoriston. TGSI Transactions Volume 9, p.53
- Lament – By Angus MacDonald on the death of his wife (in Urquhart and Glenmoriston in Olden Times)
- Lament for Sir Colin Campbell, Lord Clyde – poem? by Angus MacDonald (in Urquhart and Glenmoriston in Olden Times)

## 5 Project Activities and Research

### 5.1 Project Activities

#### Research and Interpretation

Through the music and song collections of Mackay, Macdonald and other sources, the report aims to provide an insight into the lives of Glenmoriston's people throughout history. It look to re-interpret the Gaelic song and poetry composed in Glenmoriston by the famous "Glenmoriston Bards" and through this, shed light on the lives and views of the communities in which these bards lived. The report also aims to provide an insight into the nature of the landscape and culture from which the Glenmoriston bards drew their inspiration.

Common themes from both the songs of the Bards along with other poems and songs have been identified from the available resources with an illustrative sample investigated. These themes are set out in Section 6 and are:

- The people's connection and perception of their natural world;
- Connections with the Gaelic otherworld;
- The shifting and often contentious relationship of the local community with the changing face of landownership and land management;

- Alternative perspectives of the harsh military life in early 1800s (mainly through the songs of Alasdair Iain Mac Bhàin);

### **Community engagement and consultation**

The views and knowledge of the local community were sought through consultation with identified individuals who have specific knowledge relevant to the research – in particular local Gaelic speaker, Donald MacDonald. The wider community will be engaged through local social media and websites following publication of the finalised report.

### **Transcription of solfa musical notation**

The addendum to the 1982 edition of *Story and Song from Loch Ness-side* contains tonic sol-fa music notation for 33 of the 75 songs in the book. Many of these melodies appear to be either unique (not having been recorded in any other publication), or are local versions of wider known songs. As such this collection is a valuable resource. However the tonic sol-fa notation, whilst popularly used during the 19th and early 20th centuries, is now almost completely unknown and as such is not readily accessible. Transcription of the Tonic sol-fa notation into staff notation was done for songs which are referenced in Section 6.

### **Recording**

An illustrative selection of songs and music from Glenmoriston have been recorded in digital format. These will be shared on social media and at a community event in summer/autumn 2021 if possible.

## **5.2 Research Process**

In order to fulfil the aims of the project brief, research was carried out to identify sources of songs and music connected with Glenmoriston. Given the limited time and budget (as well as travel restrictions in place due to Covid 19) this was essentially a desk exercise. Each of the documents detailed in the Appendices was investigated with songs listed and, if possible, melody to the songs identified. Where tunes were identified with reference to another song (e.g. through use of “Air Fonn” i.e. “To the tune of”) then that song melody was sourced if possible. However, this was found to be time consuming and fraught with difficulties for a number of reasons e.g. songs can have multiple titles, names vary over time, songs can use the first lines of verses or choruses as titles, Gaelic spelling has changed considerably over the last 200 years etc). As such, identification of song melodies in this report was only partially successful and considerable additional research is required. This is particularly the case for the songs of Archie Tàilleir in his book *Dain agus Orain* and for Alexander Macdonald’s *Coinneach ‘us Coille*, where it was only possible to identify a small proportion of the song melodies.

These song collections are of considerable interest and value to both a local and wider audience, and therefore we believe re-uniting song lyrics with melodies would be a worthwhile exercise. However, given the time and highly specialised expertise required for this type of research, it may be worth examining the potential for partnership working with a suitable tertiary education establishment such as Sabhal Mòr Ostaig, Glasgow University Celtic and Gaelic Studies, Edinburgh University Department of Celtic and Scottish Studies etc.

It is likely though that some of the song melodies will not be able to be traced. It may however be possible to use suitable melodies from other local Gaelic songs to fit these songs – a practice common throughout the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries and still done today.

Where Gaelic-English translations are given in the source documents then these have been used. When not available, Gaelic texts have been translated (principally by Ceit Langhorne). It should be noted however that an English translation of a Gaelic song or poem rarely does it the justice and should be considered only as a guide to the Gaelic text.

To more fully understand and catalogue the extent of Glenmoriston's musical heritage, further work would be required – particularly accessing local records, newspaper articles etc in Inverness Library, Highland Archive Centre, The Gaelic Society of Inverness library etc, as well as contacting and interviewing individuals and organisations with specific knowledge and expertise of the subject areas.

### 5.3 Research Findings

#### Gaelic Songs and Poems from Glenmoriston

Even limited to just the desk-based research undertaken, it is clear that Glenmoriston has a remarkable wealth of Gaelic songs written by its “Bards” during the latter part of the 18<sup>th</sup> and throughout the 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries. In total approximately 300 songs and poems were found. The majority of them came from three sources: 77 songs and poems from *Story and Song from Loch Ness-side* (1914) by Alexander Macdonald; another 80 songs from his 1895 book *Coinneach 'us Coille*; and 67 poems and songs by Archibald Grant of Glenmoriston in his book *Dain agus Orain*, (1863). In addition to the above, there are six presentations the Transactions of the Gaelic Society of Inverness on the music and stories from the Glenmoriston and surrounding area, and 2 other books about the area that contain the lyrics from some Glenmoriston songs: *Urquhart and Glenmoriston in Olden Times*, by William MacKay LL.D. (1914); and *The Grants of Glenmoriston (Reminiscences Historical and Traditional)*, by Rev. Allan Sinclair (1887).

The majority of the songs and the poems written by the Glenmoriston Bards record the people, events and the surrounding environment of the glen and as such they were concerned with local matters with the intended audience being the local community. In general, they did not write about weightier issues or matters of national importance, nor look to impress a wider audience. As Alexander Macdonald puts it:

*“I do not certainly mean to insinuate that they (the Glenmoriston Bards) were composers of the first magnitude, but merely sweet, homely warblers, who gave expression to their inward feelings and their impressions from without, in strains peculiarly captivating to those among whom they moved and had their being. For there are poets for each stage of culture. Some of them we find addressing themselves to poets and novelists particularly; others to thinkers and scholars; and a third class to the common, more or less uneducated, members of the human family..... The productions of all those are to be considered as being more locally interesting than otherwise so; and it is as such that they are at all times to be judged.”*

However, having said that the sheer number of poems and songs produced in this one glen gives an unusually full and vivid picture of life during the period, and that, in itself, makes the works of the Glenmoriston Bards of wider interest and significance. Of particular note are:

- The works of Archie Tàilleir (“The Glenmoriston Bard”) can be regarded, in the words of Donald Meek, as those of a “township bard” – i.e. of local scope, content and interest. However, given the number of his songs extant, they provide a good, broad picture of life in Glenmoriston during the period (roughly the first half of the C19th). Of particular interest in terms of subject matter and content is *Òran Seilge ann an Choire Dho*, ‘A Hunting Song in Coire Dho’; it is examined in *Section 6.1 Relationship with the Environment*

## The Musical Heritage of Glenmoriston

- The military songs of Alasdair Mac Iain Bhàin s they have an unusual perspective for the period – i.e. unlike the vast majority of war-related Gaelic poetry, they are not heroic anthems to noble bravery, but rather are honestly critical of the harshness and privations of life in the military.
- The songs and poems of Alexander Macdonald. Written later than the other bards (mostly late 19<sup>th</sup> Century) they aimed to be lyrical and “sing-able”. In publishing his book of songs “*Còinneach 'us Coille*” he looked to “popularize and encourage native song-singing among Highlanders at the present day” as ..... “most of the productions of our ancient bards, beautifully poetic as they certainly are, do not lend themselves readily to modern popular singing.”

### The Songs of Domhull Donn

In addition, the songs of Domhull Donn in Chapter 4 of *Story and Song from Loch Ness-side* are a valuable part of the musical heritage of Glenmoriston as, although he was not from Glenmoriston, Domhull Donn is closely connected to the area: he hid in a cave near Allt Saigh whilst wooing the daughter of Grant of Glenmoriston – the subject of at least four of his songs.

One particular song of his composition “*Nach b' fheàrr leat mi agad*” gives an insight into his foraging habits while living in this cave:

|  |   |
|--|---|
| Greis air mhucagan fàsaich,<br>Greis air fasgadh nan dòrn.             | A while seeking the wild rosehips,<br>A while on pressing them.   |
| Greis air smuraich dhubh dhrisean,<br>'S greis air bhristeadh nan cnò. | A while seeking the black brambles,<br>A while pounding the nuts. |

Source: *Story and Song from Loch Ness-side* (1982 edition)

Translation: Ceit Langhorne.

The melody to one of his songs, *Mile malachd do 'n òl* (A thousand curses on drink) is provided in the Musical Appendix to *Story and Song*.

### Mile malachd do 'n òl



Source: *Story and Song from Loch Ness-side*, Appendix to 1982 Edition

Whilst not carried out as part of this scoping exercise, sourcing the melodies for the other Domhull Donn songs (along with their full lyrics) would be a very worthwhile future exercise. It is possible that one of the Domhull Donn melodies (perhaps *Latha dhomh-sa 'siubhal bheann*) may be a tune to be found in the *Angus Fraser Collection* under the title *Domh'ull Donn Bhohtainn*. The tune was collected by the father of Captain Simon Fraser (Angus Fraser's grandfather) – as were the tunes in Simon Fraser's *Airs and Melodies* collection. One of these tunes is titled “*Rob Donn*” after the song's composer rather than the song's actual name “*S trom leam an Airigh*”. Fraser may have likewise used the name of the composer rather than the song name for the below tune.

### Domh'ull Donn Bhohtainn



Source: Angus Fraser Collection (1996)

### Fiddle tunes

Whereas there is a wealth of Gaelic song from Glenmoriston, it's notable that there is comparatively little of a tradition of either fiddle playing or composition. It is also notable that there is a considerable number of fiddle and pipe tunes from the areas surrounding Glenmoriston (Glen Garry, Glen Urquhart and Loch Ness-side). It is of course possible – perhaps even likely – that some fiddle tunes collected locally (and to found in e.g. the Simon Fraser and Angus Fraser collections) originated in Glenmoriston. However, without there being any names that specifically identify them being from the glen, it's not possible to attribute them being from there.

A search was made of various music collections (see Bibliography) and online on several traditional tune archive websites. However only three tunes that can be attributed to be from (or about) Glenmoriston were found:

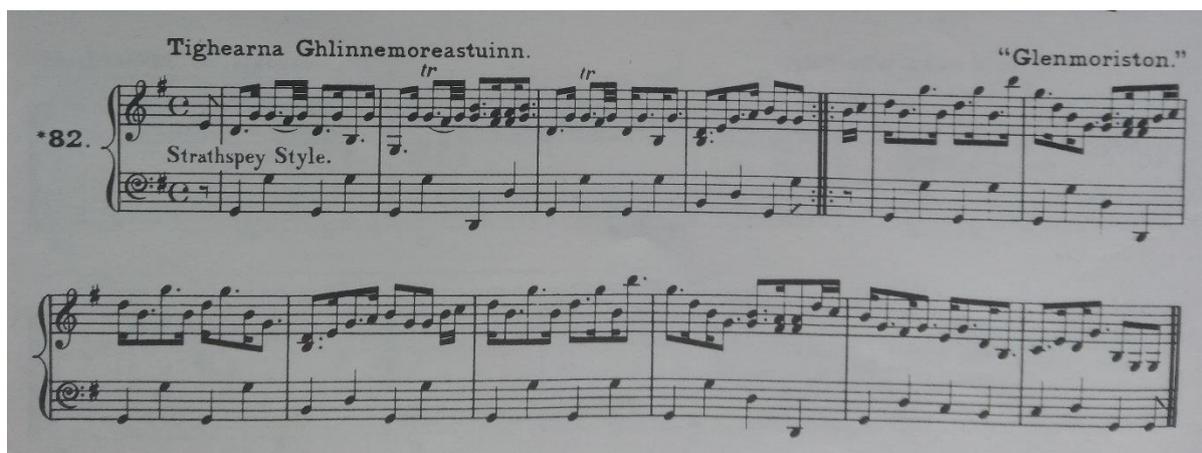
- Airidh nam Badan. A two-part jig in the Simon Fraser Collection. This tune is still popular today and part of the current traditional musician's repertoire. The background to the tune is examined in Section 6. Shielings.
- Glen Morisone's Reel: A two-part reel, sometimes played as a strathspey. The melody is to be found under the title "The Confederacy" in David Young's Duke of Perth Manuscript (also known as the Drummond Castle MS) of 1734, where it is one of the earliest examples of dotted strathspey-like rhythms. The tune is also known as "Ye're Welcome Charlie Stuart."



Source: A collection of Strathspey or old Highland Reels, Angus Cumming (1780).

- Glen Moriston (Tighearna Ghlinnmoreastuinn) Source: The *Simon Fraser Collection*. A two-part Strathspey in the key of G Major. Notes on the tune at the back of the Simon Fraser Collection state: "*The ancient family to which this air is complementary, has been long remarkable for a race of proprietors, the most beneficent and kind to their tenantry, and hospitable in the extreme to friends or strangers. The tenantry, from the above circumstances, have the appearance of a superior order of Highlanders, much given to pastime and song; and it is hoped their beautiful and romantic district, being now rendered the thoroughfare to the west coast by one of the finest roads in the island, will tend to the*

benefit of both. The editor is informed that the present proprietor has rendered smuggling an irritancy of their leases--an example worthy of imitation" (Fraser).



Source: *The Airs and Melodies peculiar to the Highlands*. Simon Fraser (1816)

According to Mary Anne Alburger (*Scottish Fiddlers and their music*, 1983), it is likely that Fraser wrote this tune himself. It certainly has all the hallmarks of his style of composition.

### Piping in Glenmoriston

Piping and pipers from Glenmoriston are detailed in Chapter 6 of *Story and song from Lochness-side*. Further comment on notable pipers from the area during the period 1745 – 1945 can be found John G. Gibson's "Old and New World Highland Bagpiping". However, neither sources identify any tunes written by these pipers, or mention any tunes about / from Glenmoriston. The only pipe tune found during this research that is linked to the Glenmoriston area is the pibroch *Cille Chrìost* - also known as *The Raid of Cill-Chirst* and more commonly in modern times, *Glen Garry's March*. This tune commemorates a raid in the early C17th by Alan Macranald and the MacDonalDs of Glengarry on Brae-Ross, Ross-shire. According to Gregory's *History of the Western Highlands and Islands* (1836) "this foray was signalled by the merciless burning of a whole congregation in the church of Kilichrist, whilst Glengarry's piper marched round the building mocking the cries of the unfortunate inmates with the well-known pibroch which has been known ever since under the name Kilichrist." Seeking revenge the MacKenzies chased the MacDonalDs back down Loch Ness killing many of them. Alan Macranald however escaped his pursuers by leaping a gorge at Alltsaigh close to Invermoriston. The accepted modern view is that there is no evidence that the burning of the church actually took place – and that several different events have been conflated.

**Cille Chrìost** Gille Chrìost H; Cill Chriosda D1; Kilchrist G; Cill Chriosda K1; Cilachrist SC. **Kilchrist**. Only the English title 'Glengarry's March' seems to have been used in modern times (perhaps because the sound of initial 'Ch' is foreign to Scots/English speech?). The names are linked by a well-known tradition of the burning of the church of Cille Chrìost by a party of MacDonalDs (D1), and by a set of words beginning *Chi mi thall ud an smùid mhòr* 'Yonder I see the great smoke'. See J. F. Campbell, *Canntaireachd: articulate music*. A. Sinclair, Glasgow (1880), p. 33-34; K. MacDonalD, 'A modern raid in Glengarry and Glenmoriston. The Burning of the Church of Gillechrìost,' *Trans. Gaelic Society of Inverness*, XV (1888–9), p. 34; R. D <https://www.electricscotland.com/gaelic/transactions15invegoog.pdf> Cannon, 'Gaelic names of pibrochs: a classification', *Scottish Studies*, 34 (2000–2006); R. Black, *The Gaelic Otherworld*. Birlinn, Edinburgh (2008), pp 117, 490.

Roderick Cannon (2009)

Source: Alltpibroch.com website: <https://www.altpibroch.com/ps170/>

The pibroch has been adapted to be played as a fiddle tune which is still popularly played in the modern repertoire: See *The Gesto Collection of Highland Music (1895)*

Source: *A Collection of the Ancient Martial Music of Caledonia*, Donald MacDonald (1820)

#### Miscellaneous – “As I gaed doun Glenmoriston”

Included in Volume 2 of 'Songs of the North' (published circa 1895) is a song “As I ga'ed doun Glenmoriston”. Lyrics are by Sir Harold Boulton (1859-1935), 2nd Baronet, of Copped Hall, born in Charlton, Kent. Boulton was an English songwriter and philanthropist, most famously author of the lyrics to the "Skye Boat Song" who first became interested in Scottish folk songs as an undergraduate at Oxford. See: [http://waltercosand.com/CosandScores/Composers%20L-P/Lawson,%20Malcolm%20Leonard/Songs\\_of\\_the\\_North.pdf](http://waltercosand.com/CosandScores/Composers%20L-P/Lawson,%20Malcolm%20Leonard/Songs_of_the_North.pdf)

The song fits into the nowadays slightly discredited late-Victorian period of romantic story and songs about the Highlands – commonly known as the ‘Celtic Twilight’ era. Given the apparent lack of any connection between Boulton and Glenmoriston, the song perhaps has limited intrinsic local value in terms of subject matter or lyrics. However, the song is “of its time” and as such, is part of the overall picture of Glenmoriston’s musical heritage. The tune is “an old Highland melody arranged by Malcolm Lawson” and as such may be of some interest.

## 6 Common Themes and Subject Areas Explored

A number of themes / subject areas which commonly appeared in songs, stories and poems were explored. Given the large number of songs and poems referenced (over 300), and the limited time available for carrying out the research and writing the report, only 7 subject themes were explored. Further research and exploration of these, and other themes, would no doubt uncover additional material and expand knowledge of Glenmoriston’s cultural heritage.

In making the choice of which subject areas to further examine, it was decided to focus on subjects where there was local songs and poems which were of either local or national significance:

- There is a strong local tradition of nature poetry / songs describing and extolling the beauty of Glenmoriston. This fits into a wider Gaelic song tradition best exemplified by the songs of Duncan Ban Macintyre. This gives an insight as to how local people perceived their natural environment 200 years ago – an issue that is still of local interest and significance
- The military songs of Alasdair Mac Iain Bhàin are notable in a national context in that: he wrote two songs about a naval voyage to the Caribbean – Gaelic poetry about the navy is exceptionally rare, and; unlike the vast majority of Gaelic military poems and songs of the era, Mac Iain Bhàin’s songs are a realistic, honest and critical reflection of the brutality of military life.
- Local songs, poems and rhymes about the “Gaelic otherworld” are an important means of understanding the legends, mythology and how the landscape of Glenmoriston was perceived in the local Gaelic culture.
- The “Glenmoriston Bards” lived through a time of unprecedented change, both in terms of society post-Culloden, but also in terms of changing land tenure and use. Traditionally the glen had a cattle-based economy, centred on small tenanted farms with communal hill grazing and shielings. At the start of the 19<sup>th</sup> century land management began to change, firstly to extensive sheep farms, and subsequently to sporting deer forests. It is instructive to see how local commentators viewed these changes through poems and songs.

For each subject area explored in this section, the theme will be examined though both the poems, and songs written by local people, as well the subject being put into a wider national and cultural context.

### 6.1 Relationship to the Natural Environment

Glenmoriston boasts some fantastic nature poetry. This section investigates four of some four hundred examples of verses that boast of a diverse and lush Glenmoriston landscape in all seasons. Traditional nature poetry in Gaelic is famously evocative in its use of complex and rhythmical vocabulary and alliteration, particularly labouring the description of woods, rivers and summer hazy coires. Alexander Macdonald, for example, is particularly dedicated to this traditional style. In his poem, ‘Am Foghar’- the Autumn (from *Coinneach ‘us Coille*):

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| <p><i>'S na chul-taice do 'n dealbh so<br/>Gheibhear geal agus dearg-fhraoch,<br/>Mar bhrata dait' air na garbh-chnuic<br/>Gu cnagach, baganta, balgach,<br/>'S e tilgeil faileas air falbh dhuibh<br/>An aghaidh soillearachd fanna-bhuidh' nam</i></p> | <p><i>As the backdrop to this image<br/>You will get white and red heather<br/>A colourful mantle on the rough hills<br/>Knobbly, neat, trim, bulging, abundant in buds,<br/>Throwing from it a shadow</i></p> |
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## The Musical Heritage of Glenmoriston

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| <i>ban-leac.</i><br><i>An aghaidh, &amp;c.</i> | <i>Against the waning yellow illumination of the pale flagstones.</i><br><i>Against, &amp;c.</i> |
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Source: *Coinneach 'us Coille*

Translation: Ceit Langhorne

Of Achnanconeran and the River Moriston, in 'Achnanconeran' Macdonald writes:

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|---|--|
| <i>Far am faight' an damh cabrach</i><br><i>'G' eirigh suas as a bhadan,</i><br><i>Gu fuasgailte, sgairteil,</i><br><i>Gu gasgagach, leumrach.</i>            | <i>Where would be got the antlered stag,</i><br><i>Rising up out of the thicket,</i><br><i>Unbounded, vigorous,</i><br><i>Striding, leaping.</i>             |
| <i>'S far am faight' eilid ghuanach,</i><br><i>'Na 'luidhe gu guamach,</i><br><i>Ann an lagan beag luachraich</i><br><i>Gun ghluasad fo 'n ghreinn oirr'.</i> | <i>Where would be got the giddy hind,</i><br><i>Lying comfortably,</i><br><i>In a rushy hollow,</i><br><i>With no intention of moving;</i>                   |
| <i>Am breac tarra-gheal,</i><br><i>A leum ris a gharbh-shruth;</i><br><i>Gu soillseanach, meanabhreac,</i><br><i>Gu deargbhallach, gleusda.</i>               | <i>The white-bellied salmon,</i><br><i>Leaping in the rapids,</i><br><i>Brilliantly sparkling, minutely speckled,</i><br><i>Red-spotted, quick and trim.</i> |

Source: *Coinneach 'us Coille*

Translation: Ceit Langhorne.

Because of the inherent rhythm and minute detail in a Gaelic nature poem, an English translation rarely does it the same justice. The reader is asked therefore to consider the English translations in this report as a guide to the Gaelic text.

### **Gleannamoireasduin- A Lovely, Lyrical Cèilidh Song.**

The following poem, from *Coinneach 'Us Coille*, was also composed by Alexander Macdonald. There is less in the way of particularly arresting adjectives in this poem as in the other examples of his poetry above. It is less complex or detailed in its descriptions of the natural environment, as the poetry of Ewan Macdonald you will read about later in this section. However, it nonetheless evokes Otherworldly qualities of nature which are already inherent in this busy summer scene, without overlaying a superficial supernatural element, as many romantics had done onto Highland landscapes before Macdonald's time.

'Gleannamoireasdain' is very lyrical, and is a particularly lovely one to interpret for the community, as it has been put to the tune of a well-known Inverness-shire Gaelic song, 'Thig Trì Nithean gun Iarraidh/ Three Things Come without Asking.' According to Bliadhna nan Òran (the BBC archive for Gaelic songs and bards), 'Thig Trì Nithean' was composed by Nighean Fhir na Reilig, the 'Daughter of the Man from Reelig,' or the 'Lady of Reelig' as Macdonald calls her (p266). Reelig is a village around seven miles from Inverness itself. The time of the birth and death of Nighean Fhir na Reilig' are unknown, but it is clear from *Story and Song* that the tune was also well-known in the Glenmoriston oral tradition (p266). The poem evokes a rich and diverse summer landscape, and describes rich biodiversity in a number of places in Glenmoriston. What we have here is essentially a very lyrical local song, that in music and in verse, celebrates an appreciation for a harmonious and ecologically complex landscape in a local Glen, through a rich and essentially local Gaelic poetry tradition. Rather than selecting a song that does the 'linguistic acrobatics', this song is simple and catching and most appropriate for reciting at a cèilidh. Needless to say, if something of the cèilidh-house of

Macdonald's day could be revitalised in Glenmoriston, it would be done most effectively through more simple lyrical songs such as this one.

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|---|---|
| <p><b>Gleannamoireasdain.</b><br/> <i>Air fonn—"Tri ni thig gun iarraidh."</i></p> <p><i>Fhir a shiubhas air thurus<br/> Do ghleannan na' monaidhean ard—<br/> Gleannamoireasdain boidheach Nan doire 's<br/> nan cro-choille lan—<br/> Thoir mo shoruidh le durachd<br/> Gun di-chuimhn' gu duthaich mo ghraidh,<br/> 'O ghlaiceagan Lunndaidh<br/> Gu Alltsaidh nan lub-choire blath.</i></p> <p><i>Tha mo chridhe gu siorraidh<br/> A togar 's a g' iarraidh bhi shuas,<br/> Feadh nam bealach 's na' mointich—<br/> Feadh nan laganaibh comhnard 's nam bruach-<br/> Feadh nan alltan 's nan easan,<br/> Nan cnocan, nam preasan, 's nan cuairt—<br/> Far an cluinninn an lar-ghaoth<br/> Ri ceol milis a lionadh mo chluais.</i></p> <p><i>'S an uair a thigeadh an Samhradh<br/> Bu bhoidheach an gleann air gach taobh,<br/> 'S na pris ghorm-dhuilleach, gheugach,<br/> A pogadh a cheile le aoidh;<br/> Agus cubhag 'us smeorach<br/> Ri aighear 'us ceol air gach craobh,<br/> 'S a g' innseadh le eibhneas<br/> Gun robh gaire na Ceit air an raon.</i></p> <p><i>Leam bu taitneach 's an am sin<br/> A bhi anns a ghleann le mo run—<br/> Feadh nam foicheagan feorach,<br/> A tional na' neoinean 's na 'm flur;<br/> Cha 'n 'eil saoibhreas air thalamh<br/> A chuirinnsa coimeas, na cuirt,<br/> Ri bhi 'n caoimhneas mo leannain<br/> A' measg nam preas barraich 's nan lub.</i></p> | <p><b>Glenmoriston.</b><br/> <i>To the tune of- "Tri ni thig gun iarraidh."</i></p> <p><i>To the man who takes a trip<br/> To the glens of the high moorland-<br/> Beautiful Glenmoriston<br/> Of the dells and woods abundant in nuts-<br/> Give my farewells and blessings<br/> That I do not forget my beloved country,<br/> From the glades of Lundy<br/> To Alltsigh of the blooming winding coires.</i></p> <p><i>My heart eternally<br/> Lifts at the thought of it and wishes to be there,<br/> Amongst the bealachs and moors-<br/> Amongst the smooth hollows and banks-<br/> Amongst the streams and waterfalls,<br/> The hills, bushes and currents-<br/> Where I would hear the western wind<br/> As sweet music filling my ears.</i></p> <p><i>When the Summer comes<br/> The glen is beautiful on all sides,<br/> The branchy and leafy bushes,<br/> Blissfully kissing eachother;<br/> The cuckoo and the thrush<br/> Cheerfully singing from every tree,<br/> Telling with joy<br/> That May is smiling upon the plain.</i></p> <p><i>I would most love at this time<br/> To be in the Glen with my love-<br/> Amongst the grassy meadows,<br/> Gathering flowers and daisies;<br/> There is no wealth on Earth<br/> That I could compare with, nor company,<br/> Than to be with the kindness of my love<br/> Amongst the bushy branching trees and the<br/> pools.</i></p> |
|---|---|

Source: *Coinneach 'us Coille*

Translation: Ceit Langhorne

### **Ewan Macdonald and the Coir-Iarairidh Poem.**

Very little is known about Ewan Macdonald, is widely accepted to be amongst the most prominent of the Glenmoriston bards, because of his following composition. This is the only song that has been attributed to him. Alexander Macdonald writes:

## The Musical Heritage of Glenmoriston

“... Ewen Macdonald, who lived at Dalcattaig. He composed a poem, on Coir’ Iarairidh, which is unmistakably one of the finest examples of descriptive poetry in the Gaelic language. It is understood to have formed the model of Duncan Ban MacIntyre’s “Coire Cheathaich.” The composition is somewhat extravagant in ideality, but in execution it is worthy of a high place among the best of its kind. The word painting is on a masterly scale ...” (p94)

Ewan MacDonald praises his beloved Coir’ Iarairidh, where he used to spend his days of youth, although his dwelling was: “fo sgàil na Sròine” - under the shadow of Sròn na Muice at Dalcattaig. However, since Iain Òg refused him access to the shieling at Ruigh Uiseag, he claims he now has to live amongst the Lowlanders. I would speculate that perhaps Ewan has been kept south of the river Moriston, where is surrounded by English-speaking folk.

From *Reminiscences of the Grants of Glenmoriston*, there is this information about Iain Òg, in succession of his father, Laird Patrick Grant:

“John, his eldest son, succeeded on the death of his father as Tenth Laird. He was served heir on the 27th of February 1795... On his return home he was appointed Major in the Strathspey Fencibles, and died in 1801 at Invermoriston, with the rank of Lieutenant-Colonel.” (p39)

It is not clear when Ewan Macdonald lived, however, his dealings with Iain Òg place him in the late eighteenth/ early nineteenth century and thus also make him a contemporary of Duncan Ban MacIntyre. However, fellow researchers to this material have suggested that MacIntyre may have inspired the composition of this poem with *Coire Cheathaich*, and not the former, as Alexander Macdonald suggests.

There is some real poetic beauty in Coir’ Iarairidh, and it can be left speak for itself here. Ewan Macdonald shows fantastic command of the language and an intimate knowledge of Coir’ Iarairidh. Coir’ Iarairidh is not on the map, however the Allt Iarairidh is on the Dundreggan Estate. *Meall Ruigh Uisdein*, just south-west on an Suidhe is also on the OS map:



Map: 6" OS 1888-1913, National Map Library

According to the Rev. Allan Sinclair in his *The Grants of Glenmoriston*, Ewen MacDonald’s Coir’ Iarairidh “..... resembles Duncan Ban M’Intyre’s poem of Coirecheathaich, but is some-what more extravagant in its poetic license. It is in the same measure, sung to the same air, and is a composition

of ability.” There are several versions of Coire Cheathaich – the ones below being collected in the mid to late 1700s and therefore contemporaneous with when Duncan Ban MacIntyre wrote his song.

**Coire a’ Cheathaich**



Source: *The Patrick MacDonald Collection* (1774)

**Coir’ a Cheathaich – The Forest of Mamlorn**



Source: *The Angus Fraser Collection* (1996 – collected mid to late 1700s)

The following translation was made by Roddy Maclean. As with all songs in this report, the English translations are merely a guide to the Gaelic and do not stand alone for their poetic merit.

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| <p><i>Mo rùn Coir’ Iarairidh sam bi an liath-chearc,<br/>         ’S an coileach ciar-dubh as ciataich pung,<br/>         Le a chearcag riabhach, gu stuirteil fiata,<br/>         Is e ga h-iarraidh air feadh nan tom.<br/>         An coire rùnach sam bi na h-ùbhlan,<br/>         A’ fàs gu cùbhraidh fo dhriùchdaibh throm,<br/>         Gu meallach, sùghmhor ri tìm na dùbhlachd,<br/>         ’S gach lusan ùrail tha fàs san fhoann.</i></p> <p><i>’S e coire an ruaidh bhuic, ’s na h-èilde ruaidhe,<br/>         A bhios a’ cluaineis am measg nan craobh,<br/>         ’S an doire ghuanaich le fallaing uaine,<br/>         Gur e as suaicheantas do gach coill’;<br/>         Cha ghabh e fuarachd, cha fhrois am fuachd e,<br/>         Fo chòmhdach uasal a latha ’s a dh’oidhch’;<br/>         Bidh ’n eilid uallach ’s a laogh mun cuairt dhith<br/>         A’ cadal uaigneach ri gualainn tuim.</i></p> | <p><i>Beloved to me is Coir’ Iarairidh where lives the grey hen,<br/>         And the dusky blackcock of the most attractive song,<br/>         His brindled little hen, so sullen and shy,<br/>         And him wanting her among all the hillocks.<br/>         The beloved corrie where are the apples<br/>         Growing fragrantly under heavy dews,<br/>         Clustered and succulent in the dark time of winter,<br/>         And each little flourishing plant that grows in the land.</i></p> <p><i>It’s the corrie of the roe buck, and of the red hind,<br/>         That gambol among the trees,<br/>         And the fancy copse with its green cloak,<br/>         It’s the flagship for every wood;<br/>         It won’t accept chilliness, the cold won’t blast it<br/>         Under its noble cover day and night;<br/>         The cheerful hind with her calf around her,<br/>         Will be sleeping secretly on the shoulder of a knoll.</i></p> |
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| <p><i>Buidhe, tiorail, torrach, sianail,<br/>Tha ruith an ìosal le mìslean feòir,<br/>On chlach as ìsle, gu bràigh na criche,<br/>Tha luachair mhìn ann, is cìob an lòn;<br/>Tha canach grinn ann, is ròs an t-sìoda,<br/>Is luaidh a mhiltich, is mèinn an òir;<br/>'S a h-uile nì air an smaoinich d' inntinn,<br/>A dh'fhaodas cinntinn an taobh-s' dhen Ròimh.</i></p>  | <p><i>Yellow, snug, productive, charmed,<br/>Are the descending slopes of sweet vernal grass,<br/>From the lowest stone to the upper part of the land,<br/>There are fine rushes and the deer grass of the damp meadow;<br/>There is lovely bog cotton, and silky rose,<br/>Its mountain grasses are to be praised, and its golden disposition,<br/>And everything your mind can think of,<br/>That can grow this side of Rome.</i></p>                    |
| <p><i>Tha sgadan garbh-ghlas a' snàmh na fairg' ann,<br/>Is bradan tarragheal is lìonmhor lann,<br/>Gu h-iteach meanbh-bhreac, gu giùrach,<br/>mealgach,<br/>Nach fhuiling anabas a dhol na chòir;<br/>A' snàmh gu luaineach, 's an sàl mun cuairt air,<br/>'S cha ghabh e fuadach bhon chuan ghlas-ghorm,<br/>Le luingeas èibhinn, a' dol fon èideadh,<br/>Le gaath gan sèideadh, is iad fo sheòl.</i></p>       | <p><i>Rough grey herring swim the sea there,<br/>And white-bellied salmon of the many scales,<br/>Finned, finely-speckled, healthily gilled and having much milt,<br/>Nothing bad will be suffered from being near it;<br/>Swimming restlessly, surrounded by seawater,<br/>It won't be driven from the grey-blue ocean,<br/>With its joyful shipping, going under canvas<br/>The wind blowing them, and their sails aloft.</i></p>                        |
| <p><i>Tha madadh ruadh ann, is e mar bhuachaill',<br/>Air caoraich shuas ud, air fuarain ghorm,<br/>Aig meud a shuairceis, cha dèan e 'm fuadach,<br/>Ged bheir thu duais dha, cha luaidh e feòil;<br/>Gum pàigh e cinnteach na thèid a dhìth dhiubh,<br/>Mur dèan e 'm pilltinn a-rithist beò,<br/>'S ged iomadh linn a tha dhe shìnns 'reachd,<br/>Cha d' rinn iad cìobair a dh'fhear de sheòrs'.</i></p>       | <p><i>The fox is there, like a shepherd,<br/>Working the sheep up there at the green springs,<br/>His civility is great, he will not 'clear' them,<br/>Even if you reward him, he will not put lead in meat;<br/>He will pay for those that go missing,<br/>If he doesn't return them alive,<br/>And though his ancestry has many centuries,<br/>They never turned his like into a shepherd.</i></p>   |
| <p><i>Tha an leathad feàrna a tha an cois a' bhràighe,<br/>Na ghleannan àlainn a dh'àrach bhò,<br/>Toil-inntinn àraich, a bhios a' tàmh ann,<br/>Cha laigh gu bràth air a' ghailleann reòit';<br/>Bidh muidhe is càis' ann gu Latha Fèill Màrtainn,<br/>'S an crodh fo dhàir a bhios mun chrò;<br/>Air Latha Fèill Brìde, bidh cur an t-sìl ann,<br/>Toirt toraidh cinnteach a-rithist na lorg.</i></p>           | <p><i>The alder slope next to the upland,<br/>Is in a gorgeous little glen where cattle are raised,<br/>There is contentment of upbringing for those who rest there,<br/>They never sleep in a frozen storm;<br/>Churning and cheese [making] will be there until Martinmas,<br/>And the cattle around the fold breeding happily;<br/>On Bride's Feast Day, there will be planting of seed,<br/>Bringing certain fertility again in her footsteps.</i></p> |
| <p><i>Gu dealtach, deurach, moch madainn Chèitein<br/>Tha 'n coire geugach fo shlèibhtean gorm,<br/>Bidh 'n smeòrach cheutach air bhàrr na gèige,<br/>'S a cruit ga gleusadh a sheinn a ceòil;<br/>Bidh 'n eala ghlè-ghèal 's na glas-ghèidh 'g èigheachd,<br/>'S a' chuthag èibhinn, bho mìlse glòir;<br/>B' ait' leam fhèin bhith air cnoc gan èisteachd,<br/>'S a ribheid fhèin ann am beul gach eòin.</i></p> | <p><i>Full of dew and droplets, early on a May morning,<br/>The branch-filled corrie sits under green hills,<br/>The delightful thrush is on the branch-end,<br/>Its harp being tuned to sing its music;<br/>The oh-so-white swan and the greylag goose are calling,<br/>And the joyful cuckoo, from its glorious sweetness;<br/>I would be cheerful if I were on a hill listening to them,<br/>And the mouth of each bird with its own reed.</i></p>      |

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| <p><i>Ged tha mo chòmhnaidh fo sgàil na Sròine<br/>'S e chleachd mi m' òige bhith 'm chòmhnaidh<br/>thall<br/>Sa choire bhòidheach, le luibhean sòghmhor<br/>Is e a leòn mi nach eil mi ann;<br/>Mo chridh' tha brònach, gun dad a sheòl air,<br/>'S a liuthad sòlais a fhuair mi ann,<br/>'S bho dhiùlt Iain Òg dhomh Ruigh' Uiseig<br/>bhòidheach,<br/>Gum b' fheudar seòladh a chòir nan Gall.</i></p> <p><i>Ged gheibhinn rìoghachd, a ni' 's a daoine,<br/>Cha trèig an gaol mi, a tha nam chom,<br/>A thug mi dh'aon, th' air a chur le saoir ann<br/>An ciste chaoil a dh'fhàg m' inntinn trom.<br/>Nam biodh tu 'n làthair, gum faighinn làrach<br/>Gun dol gu bràth às, gun mhàl, gun bhonn.<br/>A Rìgh as àirde, cuir buaidh is gràs air<br/>An linn a dh'fhàg thu aig Hannah dhonn.</i></p> | <p><i>Although my dwelling is in the shadow of the Sròn,<br/>I used to in my youth live over yonder<br/>In the beautiful corrie, with its luscious herbs,<br/>I am deeply pained that I am not there;<br/>My heart is sad and without direction,<br/>I got so much comfort and joy when I was there,<br/>[But] since Young John refused me the beautiful<br/>Shieling/Slope of [the] Skylark,<br/>I had to leave to be among Lowlanders.</i></p> <p><i>Though I should get a kingdom, her affairs and people,<br/>The love I have in my breast shall not desert me,<br/>That I gave to one who was put there by carpenters<br/>In a narrow coffin that left my mind heavy.<br/>If you were there, oh that I would get a site<br/>I'd never leave, there would be no rent or money.<br/>Oh, King on high, grant goodness and grace<br/>To the family that you left to brown-haired Hannah.</i></p> |
|--|---|

Source: *Story and Song from Lochness-side* (1982 edition)

Translator: Roddy MacLean.

### Hunting and Beautiful Natural Space in Coire Dho.

The following poem was composed by Archibald Grant a.k.a Archie Tàilleir, Archie the Taylor. The poem was titled *Òran Seilge ann an Coire Dho*, 'A Hunting Song in Coire Dho' in *Reminiscences, Historical and Traditional of the Grants of Glenmoriston* (pp87-93). However, the transcription of the poem in this report is as it was printed in the collection of Archie Tàilleir's poetry, *Dain is Òrain Ghilleasbuig Grannda- Bàrd Ghlinemorasdain* (1863) (pp48-53), and is titled *Òran do Coire Dho*- 'a Song for Coire Dho.' The Rev. Allan Sinclair, in *Reminiscences, Historical and Traditional of the Grants of Glenmoriston*, provides this introduction to the Coire Dho song, and accounts for the Seumas Òg in the poem, who succeeded his father as fourteenth laird in 1868 (p44). Sinclair writes:

*"This Coiredho song is a good specimen of a Highland hunting song. Coiredho, a wild uninhabited region between Glenmoriston and Kintail, has all along been the Glenmoriston deer forest. And when the poet's friend and patron, James Murray Grant, Esq., went on a hunting expedition to Coiredho, the bard, who knew the localities intimately, usually accompanied him. The poem gives a capital resume of such a day's sport, and the machinery of it is skilfully managed throughout — as for example when the greyhounds and the pointers are forgotten, to make necessary an allusion to the old method of deer-stalking, when perhaps for a whole day the hunter, on his back and side, pushed himself by swamp and heather till within shot of his victim. The minuteness of the Bard's topographic lore is quite remarkable, as well as his skill in weaving it into a poetic web of simple narrative and bardic flow, which will bear comparison with any production of the kind."* (p48.)

Coire Dho is a particularly interesting place in the oral tradition of Glenmoriston. It is the location of numerous Otherworld stories. It was attributed by Macdonald, to the story of 'Làir Bhàn Coire-Dho' – 'the White Mare of Coire Dho.' He summarises:

*"... caused, for years, much loss and annoyance to the farmers of of Glenmoriston and Glen Urquhart, by enticing their horses to her companionship, and thereby rendering them useless."* (p271)

## The Musical Heritage of Glenmoriston

In short, the mare is caught by the tail, by Alasdair Cùtach, and she dragged him towards the “Craach,” the dwelling place of Cailleach a’ Chràthaich, (see section 6.2 The Otherworld in Glenmoriston). The body of Alasdair Cùtach was never found.

Macdonald also situates an origin story of the four septs of Glenmoriston Macdonalds, in Coire Dho. The four sons of the chief are there accosted in Coire Dho by a white fawn and a raven, that drops a bone between them and seals their fate. (p270)

William Mackay details a rhyme connected to two spirits named Daibhidh and Mòr, who were said to terrorise the people in their shielings in Coire Dho. He has this:

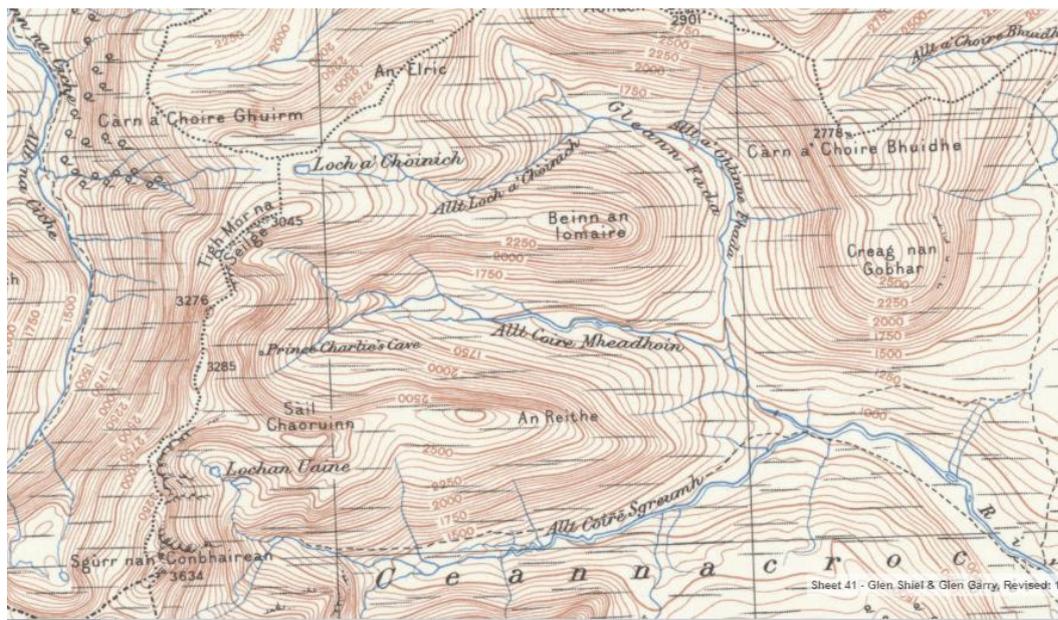
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| <p><i>“Is leams’ Doire-Dhamh is Doire-Dhaibhidh,<br/>Is Boirsgidh a bhuidh nan alltain<br/>Is Ceannachroc mhor ’le fiodh ’s le fasaich-<br/>A bhodaichibh dubh, daithte, togaibh oirbh!”</i></p> | <p><i>“Mine are Doire-Dhamh and Doire-Dhaibhidh,<br/>And yellow Boirsgidh of the streams,<br/>And wide Ceannachroc, with its woods and pasturages-<br/>Ye black and singed carles, take yourselves away!”</i></p> |
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Besides Otherworld narratives however, Coire Dho is attributed by the Rev. Allan Sinclair (1887:30) and Macdonald (1914:273-274), as being the place wherein was sourced the pine-resin candles for which Glenmoriston became famous. This suggest that, not only was Coire Dho diverse in its vegetation of flowers and plants, but that it had a reasonably extensive pine forest. Indeed the remnants of this are recorded in 'The Ancient Pinewoods of Scotland: a Travellers Guide,' by Clifton Bain (p111). The following proverb indicates this:

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| <p><i>Gleann mìn Moireasdan,<br/>Far nach ith na còin na coinnlean.</i></p> | <p><i>Fair Glenmoriston,<br/>Where the dogs don't eat the candles</i></p> |
|---|---|

Source: Story and Song from Loch Ness-side (1914)

In addition to all of this, there is extensive reference to Coire Dho in the poetry and placenames of the Glen, as being a legendary place to hunt. Sinclair states:  
*“Coiredho, a wild and uninhabited between Glenmoriston and Kintail, has all along been the Glenmoriston deer forest.”* (p86)

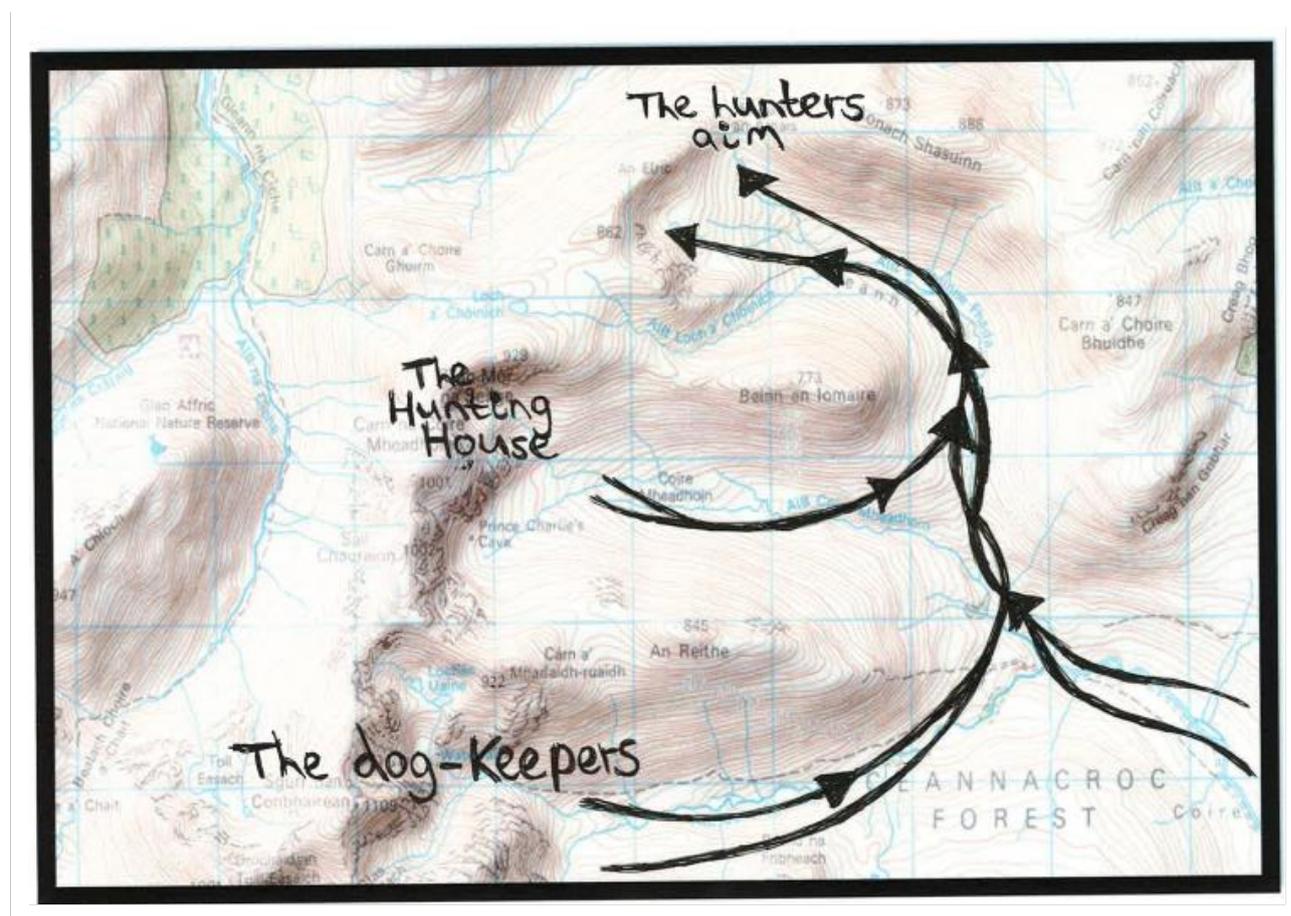


Map: OS Map 1” 1921-1930, National Map Library

## The Musical Heritage of Glenmoriston

In the upper glen and mountain range in the Ceannacroc Estate, are numerous placenames connected to the deer-drive, or *taincheall*. This was a style of hunting, practiced between 12th-17th centuries in the Gàidhealtachd, and is referred to in *Òran do Choire Dho*. John Gilbert in *Hunting and Hunting Reserves in Medieval Scotland* (1979) states that the drive in sixteenth century Scotland involved hounds and bugles, that were used to drive the prey towards the hunters (1979: 53, 55). The *eileirg*, or anglicised 'elric,' was the name given to the enclosure where the hunters waited. The *taincheall*, also deer-drive, is what describes this method of hunting overall. The placenames of the mountains above Coire Dho describe exactly this style of hunting.

The reader is asked here to imagine that a giant hunt is happening across the landscape in the same way as is denoted by the placenames. From *Sgurr nan Conbhairean*, the 'Peak of the Dog-handlers,' the hounds are released by their keepers. After forming a cordon of several miles, perhaps around the perimeter of *Coire Dho*, the hounds drive the deer north towards the hunters behind *An Elric*. *Bealach an Amais* is here interpreted as 'the Pass of the Aim', or 'the Pass from which to Aim.' (1994) This is suitably situated behind *An Elric*, where the hunters made the kill.



Courtesy of Ceit Langhorne: An illustrated map of Ceannacroc Forest, identifying the direction the hounds would run when pursuing the deer.

The presence of hunting placenames in this Glen have a further function however. They also act to evidence a local story about Fionn Mac Cumhaill (anglicised to Finn MacCool or Fingal) and his warrior-band the Fianna, or Fingalians. Macdonald has this:

*“Achngunerin, or Achnaconeran ... It’s traditions go back to the Fingalian period, when those ancient heroes hunted one day between Sgur-nan-conbhairean, at the extreme west end of Glenmoriston, and Achadh-nan-conbhairean, at the extreme north-east of the Glen.” (pp74-75)*

The way in which the Fianna are described in their hunting of magical and non-magical quarry, in literature of the Fianna (*Leabhar na Fèinne*), is precisely as described in historical sources of the *taincheall*. Tradition in Glenmoriston traces this hunt away from Ceannacroc. Achnaconeran, similar to Sgurr-nan-conbhairean, was originally Achadh nan conbhairean (Ainmean Àite na h-Alba)- the field of the dog-handlers or ‘the Hunter’s field,’ as Mackay states (p579). Mackay also details one other placename especially connected to the hunt of the Fianna in Glenmoriston:

*“ ... A tradition tells that Glenmoriston was at one time the hunting ground of the Feinne, or Fingalians, who used to meet in the morning at Sgùrr nan Conbhairean in the far west, and close the day at Ach’ nan Cobhairean (the Hunter’s Field) above Invermoriston – having followed the dogs for a distance, as the crow flies, of about twenty miles. A wood on the south side of Glenmoriston of Glenmoriston is called Coille na Feinne- the Wood of the Feinne.” (p579)*

To relate the Fianna to the *taincheall* of deer-drive style of hunting in Coire Dho, we begin to see how a kind of arena has been created in the Coire Dho mountain range in which the hunt of the Fianna, in pursuit of giant quarry, can be imagined.

Most of these placenames appear in *Òran do Choire Dho*, as do Coire Sgreamh, and Uamh Ruairidh Seilge - the cave in which Ruairidh the Hunter rested during his hunting trips. This appears on the modern OS map as ‘Prince Charlie’s Cave’ due to a succeeding legend that Bonnie Prince Charlie hid there before fleeing to France, under the protection of the Seven Men of Glenmoriston, in 1746.

Tigh Mòr na Seilge - the Great Hunting House is also described in our poem. According to Sinclair, the poet asks us not to confuse this with the ‘Hunting Hall’ in Inverness, where annual gatherings are held at the close of the shooting season. The Great Hunting House, the mountain in Coire Dho, was once instead a shelter for the deer. He claims that once they were free to roam and rest there, and weren’t harassed by the hounds and guns. Archie Tàilleir is perhaps lamenting the change of the nature of the hunt - from the large-scale *taincheall* done by the clansmen for their Grant chief ‘Seumas Òg;’ to an exclusive sport carried out by the privileged few. Notice also that he refers to the clearing of Coire Dho for sheep, and that it is a great cause for regret that the glens and straths have changed immeasurably since those days of the deer-drive. This matter is examined further in *Section 6.6 - Changing Land Use - The Introduction of Sheep*, which sets out historical and other evidence that indicates sheep were first introduced to Coire Dho around 1800. It therefore seems likely that Archie Tàilleir saw this dramatic change of environment in his lifetime.

Other placenames mentioned in Coire Dho are Carn Ghluasaid; Coire Mheadhoin (where there was a dense forest); Carn nam Fiudhaich as well as Beinn an Iomaire. *Òran do Choire Dho* certainly works to revitalise the historical and the imagined landscape that Coire Dho so represents, with regards to its combined folklore and legend and the almost indistinguishable nature of both.

The tune for this song was a little more difficult to source. *Òran do Choire Dho*, as it appears in *Dain is Òrain Ghilleasbuig Grannda- Bàrd Ghlinemorasdain*, is specified to be set to the tune of ‘*Sgian Dubh fo Sprogain Chaim.*’ On ‘Gaelic Literature of Skye: an Annotated Bibliography’ (available online), there is a selection of material connected to *Lachlann Mac Thearlaich Òig* (1665-1734) of Breakish, about whom the song ‘*Sgian Dubh*’ was composed. It has been difficult to source the tune directly under this title, however, the Bibliography has this:

## The Musical Heritage of Glenmoriston

“There are twelve stanzas, beginning ‘Dh’ innsinn sgeul mu ‘n mhalairt duibh’. The metrical pattern is the same as that of the poet’s ‘Latha siubhal sléibhe’. It seems likely that these two songs, so different in mood and theme, were composed upon the same tune.”

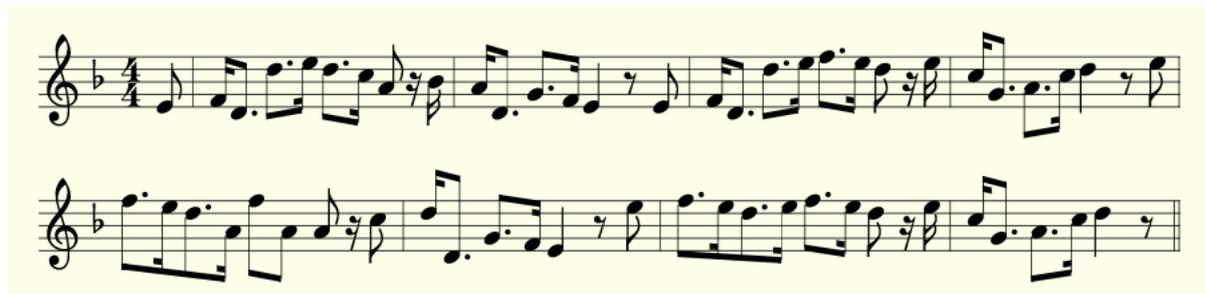
We have thus attempted to fit the song to the tune of *Latha Siubhal Sléibhe*, from the Patrick Macdonald collection with some success.

### Latha siubhall sleibh dhomh



Source: *The Patrick MacDonald Collection* (1784)

### Lath' a siubhal sleibh dhomh



Source: *The Angus Fraser Collection* (1996)

Both versions have merits in terms of potential suitability for the melody for *Oran Do Coire Dho*. The Patrick MacDonald was from a musical family from Sutherland and was the first collector to accurately notate the airs to Gaelic songs. His transcriptions are sensitive and it is generally accepted that they are an accurate representation of what he heard. Angus Fraser was the son of Captain Simon Fraser who published *Airs and Melodies Peculiar to the Highlands* in 1816. The tunes in the Angus Fraser Collection were collected by Simon Fraser and his father in the late 18th and early 19th centuries - though not published until 1996. Captain Simon Fraser, whilst musically very literate, was apt to amend the melodies of airs in order to make them more in line with “drawing room audiences”, adding variations, changing melody lines to allow classical harmonies to be added and to generally take them further from the source material. However with regards his version of *Lath' a siubhal sleibh dhomh*, it would appear that he follows a singer’s version of the tune as he notates rests, showing where a singer takes a breath. As Captain Simon Fraser lived on Loch Ness side and collected songs and melodies locally, his version could be an accurate capture of the song as sung in the Glenmoriston area. As both versions have their merits, which version to choose when looking for the melody for *Oran do Coire Dho* is perhaps largely a matter of taste.

## The Musical Heritage of Glenmoriston

The version of the poem in *The Grants of Glenmoriston, Reminiscences, Historical and Traditional*, (1887) was also consulted in comparison, in order to translate the following piece. The Gaelic text below was not transcribed according to Gaelic Orthographic Conventions; and is not standardised according to modern Gaelic.

Please note also, that *Òran do Choire Dho* is a significantly long poem in *Dàin is Òrain*, and it has been abridged to only include the verses that best capture the legendary hunt in Coire Dho, and the diverse flora and fauna that situated the deer in its own abundant environment. It is thoroughly recommended that the reader consult the original poem - either in *The Grants of Glenmoriston - Reminiscences, Historical and Traditional*, or in *Dain is Òrain Ghilleasbuig Grannda- Bàrd Ghlinemorasdain* (see Appendices 3 and 4 respectively for weblinks to online editions available from the National Library of Scotland).

| <b>Oran Do Choire Dho</b>  | <b>A Song for Coire Dho</b>  |
|--|--|
| <i>Air fonn- Sgian dubh a Sprògain Chaim</i>   | <i>To the tune of – Sgian dubh a Sprògain Chaim</i>  |
| <i>Gu 'm slan do'n fir ghleusda<br/>Chaidh shealg do Sheumas òg<br/>Thug Dòmhnall donn na bheinn iad<br/>'S cha bu leir dhoibh leis a cheo;<br/>'S nan creideadh iad mo sgialachd-sa<br/>Chan fhiach leam bhi ri bosd<br/>Mu 'n d' rainig sibh 'n t-allt-eiginn,<br/>Gu'm bu tric na feidh dha 'n leon.</i>  | <i>Farewell to the quick, agile lads<br/>Who went hunting for Seumas Òg<br/>Brown-haired Donald took them that day to the<br/>mountain<br/>Where their vision was impaired by the mist;<br/>And if they believe my story<br/>I best not boast<br/>Often before they had arrived at Allt-Eiginn<br/>The deer had been mortally wounded.</i> |
| <i>'S gur mithich dhomh bhi 'g eiridh<br/>As an deidh, s' am bi mi falbh<br/>Mur dearmad mor a dh' eirich<br/>Gu bheil mac na h-eilde marbh<br/>Faigh gach ball a dh' fheumas<br/>San leidig mi 'n t-each dearg<br/>San taruinn e na feidh dhoibh<br/>Ann s'a h-uile ceum bhios garbh.</i>                   | <i>Early in the morning, I would arise<br/>After them, I would leave<br/>Before the great omittance that arose<br/>That the son of the hind is dead<br/>Fetch every weapon that is needed<br/>In order that I fell the red horse<br/>And pull home the deer<br/>On every rough step before you.</i>  |
| <i>Ach 's iad as fearr gu tialadh,<br/>Bha riadh anns an roinn-Eorp,<br/>Air an crataich 's air an cliathaichean,<br/>Air damh riabhach croic,<br/>Mar bhi nach d' fhuair mial-choin,<br/>Gu 'n robh mhiann orm a dhol leo,<br/>'S gu'm b'fhearr leam na 'n ciadan,<br/>Gun d' fhuair mi trian na spors.</i> | <i>They are the best at the baining<br/>That was ever seen throughout Europe,<br/>On all sides and slopes<br/>Of the brindled antlered deer,<br/>If the hounds had not been sought for this task,<br/>I would have greatly liked to have gone with<br/>them,<br/>I would prefer it a hundred-fold,<br/>To get my share of the fun.</i>     |
| <i>Ach b' eolach air an fhiadhach<sup>1</sup> mi,<br/>A falbh le mial-choin sheang,</i>  | <i>But well I know the deer-forest,<br/>Often do I leave with the slender hounds</i>   |

<sup>1</sup> A note from Sinclair explains that fhiadhach means deer-forest.

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| <p><i>'S sheolainn doibh na crìochan,<br/>Anns an tric na riab mi mang,<br/>Bho 'n tha sibh fhein cho inntinneach,<br/>'S mi cinnteach as nu'r laimh,<br/>Fiachaibh na h-uillt riabhach,<br/>Agus iarribh glaic nan allt.</i></p> <p><i>Fiachaibh carn a ghluasaid<br/>Slochd Buaridh<sup>2</sup> bhiodh iad ann<br/>'S gheibhte boc us maoiseach<br/>Ann sa 'n fhiudhaich 's laogh us mang –<br/>Mur d' fhuadaich iad le caoraich iad,<br/>Dha'n saodachadh a fang.<br/>'S gur mór an t-aobhar smaoinachaidh<br/>Mar chaochail srath na 'n gleann.</i></p> <p><i>San coire sgreamhach 's cinnteach,<br/>Gur e cuille fridh nam beann,<br/>'S tha coire-mheadhoin sinnte ris,<br/>'S bu toil leam sgrìob thoir ann;<br/>Sa 'n gleann a fada 's fasach e,<br/>Tha math gu arach mhang,<br/>Se'n tigh mor is bathaich dhoibh,<br/>'S cha cheanglar iad air cheann.</i></p> <p><i>Be tigh mor na seilg e,<br/>'S cha be 'n tigh dha 'n ainm bhi ann,<br/>'S cha chluinnear braghadh urchair,<br/>Bho dha thulhainn gu dha cheann;<br/>Cha bhi coin dha 'n teirbheirt,<br/>Na ni ach leumraich dhanns,<br/>'S cha be tigh na seilg e,<br/>'S be 'n t' seirbhe bhi dol ann.</i></p> <p><i>Se bealach mor an amaisg,<br/>Far a faicte bhos is thall,<br/>Chite beinn an imire,<br/>Cuid firichean is ghleann,<br/>'S chuirainn geall 's gu'n buanaichdinn,<br/>Mun fhuaran th' aig a ceann,<br/>'S mu 'n imir bheirinn sguaban dheth,<br/>Nach buaint air machair ghall.</i></p> | <p><i>And travel widely the boundaries,<br/>Often I cut down the fawn,<br/>As you are all so wise and worldly<br/>And certain as I am of your aim,<br/>Try the brindled burns.<br/>And the glades around them.</i></p> <p><i>Try the Carn Ghluasaid<br/>In the hollow of the Cave of Ruairidh there they<br/>would be<br/>There would be got the roe-buck and the doe<br/>And in the Fhiudhaich where are the calf and<br/>the fawn-<br/>Before they cleared it for sheep,<br/>Driven straight into the fold.<br/>This is a great cause for thought<br/>As to how the Sraths and the Glens changed<br/>greatly.</i></p> <p><i>Coire Sgreamh where it is certain,<br/>There is a deer-forest in the mountains,<br/>And the Coire-Mheadhoin lying against it,<br/>I would greatly like to visit there;<br/>In the long deserted glen,<br/>A perfect place to raise fawns,<br/>The Tigh Mòr is a barn to them,<br/>It doesn't tether them head to head.</i></p> <p><i>And 'The Great Hunting House',<br/>It is no house by the name you'd expect<br/>No gory gun will be heard<br/>From gable end to gable end;<br/>No dogs harrass them,<br/>But there they leap and dance<br/>It was no 'Hunting House',<br/>There was no bitterness in going there.</i></p> <p><i>On the Pass of the Aiming,<br/>Where one would see far in all directions,<br/>Beinn an Imire can be seen<br/>Its high moorlands and glens,<br/>But I would promise that I would win there,<br/>By the spring at its summit,<br/>Around the ridge there I would pick some<br/>sheafs,<br/>That cannot be harvested on a lowland<br/>machair.</i></p> |
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<sup>2</sup> This is Slochd Ruairidh in Reminiscences (1887). Sinclair states in the footnotes (p89):

“Ruairidh nan sealg was a celebrated hunter who gave his name to a Coiredho cave, to this day called ‘Uamh Ruairidh.’”

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| <p><i>Gu ciobach, creamhach caoraicheanach,<br/>Gu seamhragach le mionnt,<br/>Tha biolaire nam bruachan ann,<br/>Se luibh us uaisle th' ann,<br/>Tha gach luibh a chualas ann,<br/>Nam buanainn e na am,<br/>'S ged dh' fhagainn air chluain e,<br/>Se 'n luchar bhiodh na bann.</i></p> <p><i>'S tha eilerig na dha ann,<br/>'S tha sgurr na dha sa ghleann,<br/>'S tha coire 'n lochan uaine,<br/>'S tha leac na'n radhag ann,<br/>'S gheibhte ri droch uair iad,<br/>Ann an allt a bhuilg dha 'n call,<br/>Cum ri allt na heirbh iad,<br/>'S tha 'n t- seibh ud anns gach ball.</i></p> <p><i>'S aig leacainn na Cloich ghlaise,<br/>Far an leighte coin a ghill,<br/>San doire dhamh bhiodh ranail,<br/>Ann an tim na daireach fhein,<br/>Se 'n aois a chum a mhan mi,<br/>Gun bhi 'n airde ri na ceum,<br/>Sann agam a tha farmad,<br/>Ris an t'sealg a rinn sibh 'n de.</i></p> | <p><i>Abounding in bulrushes, wild garlic, hazy<br/>Abouding in clovers and mint,<br/>The watercress of the banks is there,<br/>The noblest plant there is,<br/>Every plant that is known is there,<br/>If I was to harvest it in its prime,<br/>Although I would leave it on the plain,<br/>Rushes would closely bind it.</i></p> <p><i>There is an elric or two there,<br/>There is a sgurr of two in the Glen,<br/>There is a coire and a green lochan,<br/>There is a russet-coloured flagstone there,<br/>That would be found at a time of need,<br/>In the Allt a' Bhuilg where would be a loss,<br/>Keep them to Allt na h-Eirbh,<br/>The ownership of them is in every strike of the<br/>weapon.</i></p> <p><i>At the flagstone of the Grey Rock<br/>Where the dogs would be let on the hind,<br/>In the dell of the stag that would be bellowing,<br/>At the time of the rut itself,<br/>It's only age that kept me,<br/>From being higher in my step,<br/>I am greatly in envy<br/>Of the hunt you enjoyed in yesterdays.</i></p> |
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Source: *Dain is Òrain Ghilleasbuig Grannda.*

Transaltion: Ceit Langhorne.

## 6.2 The Otherworld in Glenmoriston

Glenmoriston bard Alexander Macdonald, in his compilation of history and oral literature *Story and Song from Lochness-side*, provides evidence of a rich oral tradition in Glenmoriston, connected to tales and beliefs of the Otherworld more generally. There is comparatively less evidence of songs connected to more direct local traditions about the Otherworld. What evidence we do have for local traditions connected to the Otherworld, has been detailed in stories and rhymes by William Mackay, in his historical book *Urquhart and Glenmoriston: Olden Times in a Highland Parish* and by Alexander Macdonald in *Story and Song*. I have used Macdonald's interpretations more extensively here, as he provides more musical evidence as to local versions of well-known songs and Otherworld narratives more widely circulated in the Gàidhealtachd. I highlight some of these here. As a native of Achnaconeran, you could state that he was more invested in representing his community than William Mackay would be. According to an anonymous local source, Mackay had chosen to include or omit certain key aspects of local history, apparently due to his position as solicitor for the Seafield Estate. Of the state of the Gaelic oral tradition in Glenurquhart and Glenmoriston, he had this to say: *"The ancient institution of the cèilidh, which nurtured good fellowship and good feeling, has all but disappeared. The penny newspaper has taken the place of the tale and the song; and present political and social questions ... occupy the minds of men to the almost entire exclusion of the deeds of the Fèinne, and the traditional heroes of the Parish."* (p418)

However, a reader of Alexander Macdonald's own collection of local songs, as well as his own poetry (written in a traditional style), can understand clearly his immersion in a rich music and song heritage in Glenmoriston, which he asserts as being very much alive in his own lifetime. He attributes his knowledge and the active circulation of this material, to members of his own community around him. For example, he writes:

*"Our poetry was principally Gaelic, and all things considered, we enjoyed much genuinely interesting and instructive literary entertainment. The Ossianic ballads always evoked warm enthusiasm ... our father and mother had learned many of these off by heart; and they could recite one after another of a very great number. Some of them they had acquired from their own parents, and some from a collection that had gone the round of the district, say some seventy-five or eighty years ago, or thereabout."* (p283)

In light of this, it is important to state that stories of the Otherworld pertaining to the Glenmoriston landscape need not be renegated to a frozen and romanticised past. For as long as they were still in circulation in the oral tradition, they played an active part in understanding, navigating and ultimately belonging to the Glen. It is perhaps useful to consider what the following material might tell us about Glenmoriston? Who are these stories for, and how could they be used today?

#### **Na Sithichean- the Fairies in Glenmoriston**

William Mackay identifies Dundreggan for its *sitheannan*, (1914:427-429) or fairie mounds. Mackay describes *an t-Sithean Buidhe*, 'the Yellow Fairy Hillock' in his story below (1914: 428) and details a few stories connected to the faeries in Dundreggan in general. There is also *an t-Sithean Mullach* at Dundreggan, which is attributed to the fairie stories also. An t-Sithean Mullach is located directly west of Dundreggan Lodge. But *an t-Sithean Buidhe* is not on any modern Ordnance Survey maps- where is it?

Of the fairy traditions in Glenmoriston, Mackay has this:

*The FAIRIES of Urquhart had their haunts at Tornashee, and in the beautiful sidheans or fairy-knowes of Lochletter; and the favourite retreats of their Glenmoriston brothers and sisters were the sidheans of Duldreggan. The fairies were very troublesome to the people of the Parish in Olden Times.*

*The wife of Ewen MacDonald, Duldreggan, had just given birth to his first-born, when he went out at night to attend to some necessary duties in connection with his farm. As he was crossing a small stream, known as Caochan na Sgine – The Streamlet of the Knife – he heard a peculiar rushing sound over his head, and a heavy sigh exactly the same as sighs which he had within the last hour or two heard his wife give. Instantly realising what had occurred, he threw his knife into the air in the name of the Trinity, and his wife dropped down before him. She was being carried away by the fairies, when his presence of mind saved her.*

*... A farmer slept on the Sidhean Buidhe – the Yellow Fairy-knowe- at Duldreggan, and was awakened by a child's cries coming from underneath him. Placing his ear against the sod, he heard a voice hushing the child to rest, and telling it that the white cow would spill her milk that evening, and that it then might drink its fill. The white cow was the farmer's own, and on his return home he informed his wife of what he had heard, and warned her to be careful that no milk was spilt. Notwithstanding her utmost care, however, the white cow kicked the pail, and sent its contents over the sward.*

There is a particular song in the Glenmoriston tradition which adds another dimension to the final story in Mackay's account. 'A Mhòr, a Mhòr,' the 'fairy-lover song,' is perhaps best known by the

Barra narratives of the woman whose fairy lover was killed by her relatives (Nan Mackinnon: 1964). This song has recently been made more prominent by Julie Fowlis, on her album *Alterum* (2017) – where it is called ‘Dh’ èirich mi Moch’. However this, according to Macdonald, is the local version of the story and song which is traceable throughout different areas of the Gàidhealtachd (pp238-239). In other words, this is how this particular story has evolved in Glenmoriston. When adapted into the context of the Sidhean Buidhe story, the nature of the disintegration of the woman’s relationship with her leannan-sithe becomes clear. Perhaps the human-fairy child has been left to a fairy wet-nurse, or was it in fact the father’s voice that the farmer heard at Dundreggan?

*“A very old composition has been handed down from the hoary past, which brings the common belief in the existence of this being in all its weirdness before us. The story says that a young girl had a fairy-lover (“Leannan-sith”), with whom she held appointments which eventually resulted in her becoming a mother. But she would have nothing to do with the child, and left it beside a hillock to its fate. The “father” appears to have experienced some emotion of parentage, and he appealed warmly to the mother to return and nurse her child. But he still refused, and he then composed a lullaby which conveys sentiments of tenderness and passion not at all discreditable to him, fairy as he was. The following is our version of the composition:-“*

**A Mhòr, a Mhòr**



Source: *Story and Song from Loch Ness-side*, Appendix to 1982 Edition  
 Transcription from Sol-fa notation: Munro Gauld

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| <p><i>A Mhòr a Mhòr,<br/>                 A Mhòr, a Mhòr,<br/>                 Taobh ri d’ mhacan,<br/>                 A hùbh, a hò;<br/>                 ‘S gheibh tu goidean<br/>                 Boidheach breac uam,<br/>                 A hùbh, a hò,<br/>                 A hùbh, a hò!</i></p> <p><i>Gheibheadh tu fion,<br/>                 Gheibheadh tu fion,<br/>                 ‘S gach mi a b’ ait leat,<br/>                 A hùbh, a hò;<br/>                 Ach nach éirinn<br/>                 Leat ‘s a’ mhaduinn<br/>                 A hùbh, a hò,<br/>                 A hùbh, a hò!</i></p> <p><i>Bha’n ceò s’ a’ bheinn,<br/>                 Bha’n ceò s’ a’ bheinn,<br/>                 Is uisge frasach<br/>                 A hùbh, a hò;</i></p> | <p><i>A Mhòr a Mhòr,<br/>                 A Mhòr, a Mhòr,<br/>                 Beside your young son<br/>                 A hùbh, a hò;<br/>                 From me<br/>                 You will get a beautiful brindled Bridle,<br/>                 A hùbh, a hò,<br/>                 A hùbh, a hò!</i></p> <p><i>You will get wine,<br/>                 You will get wine,<br/>                 And everything in my preference,<br/>                 A hùbh, a hò;<br/>                 Except waking with you in the morning<br/>                 A hùbh, a hò,<br/>                 A hùbh, a hò!</i></p> <p><i>There was mist on the mountain,<br/>                 There was mist on the mountain,<br/>                 And light drizzle<br/>                 The day I met</i></p> |
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## The Musical Heritage of Glenmoriston

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| <p><i>Nuair a thachair ormsa<br/>'Ghruagach thlachdhmhor,<br/>A hùbh, a hò,<br/>A hùbh, a hò!</i></p> <p><i>An daoith gheal donn,<br/>An daoith gheal donn,<br/>Rug i mac dhomh,<br/>A hùbh, a hò;<br/>'S gur neo-chaomh<br/>A rinn i altrum<br/>A hùbh, a hò,<br/>A hùbh, a hò!<br/>Tha laogh mo ghaoil,<br/>Tha laogh mo ghaoil,<br/>Ri taobh cnocain,<br/>A hùbh, a hò;<br/>Gun lèine, gun dìon,<br/>Gun fhasgadh,<br/>A hùbh, a hò,<br/>A hùbh, a hò!</i></p> <p><i>A Mhòr a Mhòr,<br/>A Mhòr, a Mhòr,<br/>Seall a d' dhéigh.<br/>A hùbh, a hò;<br/>Tha 'n rag mheirleach<br/>Beag ri cumha,<br/>A hùbh, a hò,<br/>A hùbh, a hò!</i></p> <p><i>A Mhòr a Mhòr,<br/>A Mhòr, a Mhòr,<br/>Till ri d' mhacan;<br/>A hùbh, a hò;<br/>'S gheibh thu 'n t-slatag<br/>Bhòidheach bhreac uam,<br/>A hùbh, a hò,<br/>A hùbh, a hò!</i></p> | <p><i>A pleasant young brown-haired lass,<br/>A hùbh, a hò,<br/>A hùbh, a hò!</i></p> <p><i>That pale-skinned stubborn brown-haired lass,<br/>That pale-skinned stubborn brown-haired lass,<br/>She bore me a son,<br/>A hùbh, a hò;<br/>And unkindly, unwillingly did she nurse him<br/>A hùbh, a hò,<br/>A hùbh, a hò!<br/>My love- my young calf,<br/>My love- my young calf,<br/>By the side of the hills here,<br/>A hùbh, a hò;<br/>Defenceless and without a shirt on his back,<br/>Without shelter,<br/>A hùbh, a hò,<br/>A hùbh, a hò!</i></p> <p><i>A Mhòr a Mhòr,<br/>A Mhòr, a Mhòr,<br/>Won't you look behind you?<br/>The stiff-bodied wee tike<br/>Is lamenting you,<br/>A hùbh, a hò,<br/>A hùbh, a hò!</i></p> <p><i>A Mhòr a Mhòr,<br/>A Mhòr, a Mhòr,<br/>Return to your young son;<br/>A hùbh, a hò;<br/>And you'll get a beautiful speckled<br/>Staff from me,<br/>A hùbh, a hò,<br/>A hùbh, a hò!</i></p> |
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Source: *Story and Song from Loch Ness-side*, Alexander Macdonald

Translation: Ceit Langhorne

### **The Cailleachan of Glenmoriston**

William Mackay and Alexander Macdonald denote the more remote lochs and streams of Glenmoriston, as the domains of two *cailleachan*: respectively Cailleach a' Chràthaich- by Loch a' Chràthaich- and Cailleach Allt Saigh- the Cailleach by the Alltsigh. There are also two others in Glen Urquhart. A Cailleach, translates as old woman or hag. She is a prominent figure in Scottish and Irish Gaelic tradition. She is often associated with winter and storms, and is something of a goddess figure. To help visualise who the Cailleach is, in a shared Scottish and Irish tradition, Irish academic Gearóid O' Cruailaich summarises her very nicely in *Continuity and Adaptation in Legends of Cailleach Bhéarra*:

## The Musical Heritage of Glenmoriston

“ ... the supernatural female bearing the names *Cailleach Bhearra/Bheurr* reveals a multitude of association between her and the forces of wild nature, especially the storms of the winter, the storm clouds and boiling winter sea. She is also [...] of mountain and moor and is seen frequently to personify, for instance, the life and well-being and fertility of the deer herd.” (1988: p339).

In some traditions, such as *Cailleach na Beinne Brice*, the Cailleach of Ben Breck, Loch Trèig Lochaber, the Cailleach has the ability to shape-shift, and keeps watch over her own herd of deer. The story of *Cailleach na Beinne Brice* is told in a song which Alexander Macdonald details in *Story and Song* (p231). While the story is attributed usually to Lochaber, Macdonald states it simply as the local version of the words associated with the legend. There is nothing to say that the tale couldn't also be attributed to Glenmoriston's own, Beinn Bhreac, further igniting an imaginative landscape for the community who hear it.

The following translation is from the Calum Maclean Project blogspot:

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| <p><i>Cailleach Beinn- a'- Bhric ho-rò;<br/>Bhric ho-rò, Bhric ho-rò;<br/>Cailleach Beinn-a'-Bhric ho-rò,<br/>'S cailleach mhòr an fhuarain àrd.</i></p>                                     | <p><i>The carlin of Ben Breck, ho ro,<br/>Breck ho ro, Breck ho ro;<br/>The carlin of Ben Breck ho ro,<br/>The great carlin of the mountain spring.</i></p>                       |
| <p><i>Cailleach mhòr nan ciamhag ghlas,<br/>Nan ciamhag ghlas, nan ciamhag ghlas;<br/>Cailleach mhòr nan ciamhag ghlas,<br/>B' astarach i 'n talamh garbh.</i></p>                           | <p><i>The great carlin of the grey tresses,<br/>The grey tresses, the grey tresses,<br/>The great carlin of the grey tresses,<br/>Speedy is she over wild land.</i></p>           |
| <p><i>Shiùbhladh i bho ghleann gu gleann,<br/>Bho ghleann gu gleann, bho ghleann gu<br/>gleann;<br/>Shiùbhladh i bho ghleann gu gleann,<br/>Dh' fhiachainn co 'n gleann a b' fheàrr.</i></p> | <p><i>She would travel from glen to glen.<br/>From glen to glen, from glen to glen;<br/>She would travel from glen to glen,<br/>To find the best glen.</i></p>                    |
| <p><i>Cha leiginn mo bhuidheann fhiadh,<br/>Mo bhuidheann fhiadh, mo bhuidheann fhiadh;<br/>Cha leiginn mo bhuidheann fhiadh,<br/>Dh' iarraidh sligean dubh na tràigh.</i></p>               | <p><i>I won't leave my herd of deer,<br/>My herd of deer, my herd of deer;<br/>I won't leave my herd of deer,<br/>To forage amongst the black shellfish of the<br/>shore.</i></p> |
| <p><i>B' annsa leam a' bhiolair' uain',<br/>A' bhiolair' uain,' a' bhiolair' uain',<br/>B' annsa leam a' bhiolair' uain',<br/>Bhiodh am bruach an fhuarain àird.</i></p>                     | <p><i>The green watercress is my preference,<br/>The green watercress, the green watercress,<br/>That would grow on the banks of the mountain<br/>spring.</i></p>                 |

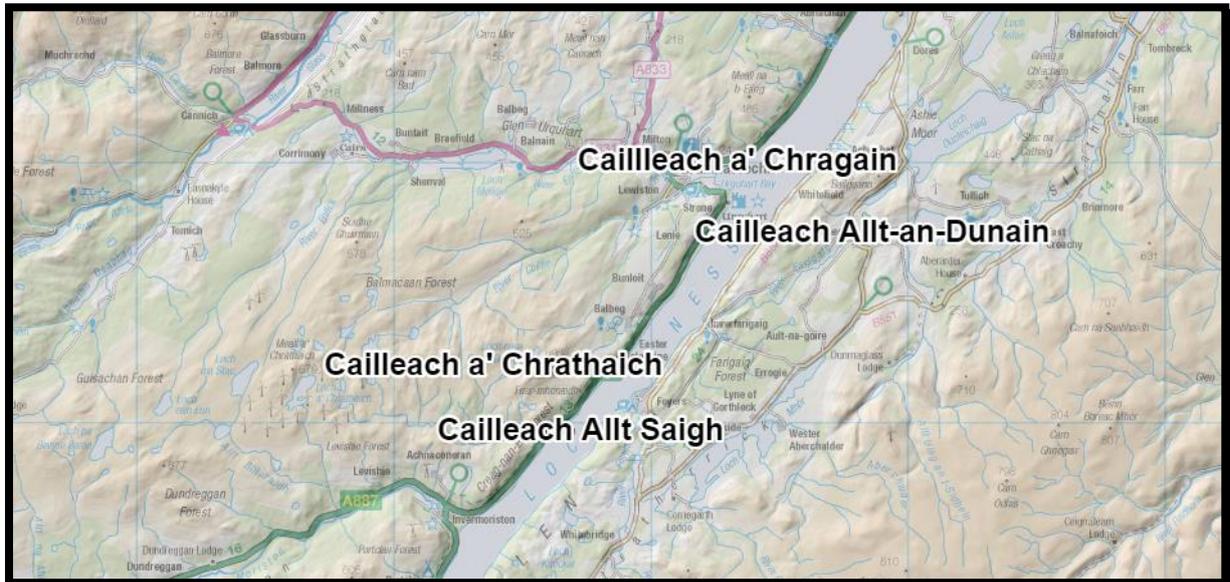
## The Musical Heritage of Glenmoriston

As to the tradition of the cailleachan in Glenmoriston, Mackay has this (pp423-425):

*The worst of these was CAILLEACH A' CHRATHAICH, .... a wild and mountainous district lying between Corrimony and Glenmoriston ... Her manner was to accost some lonely wayfarer across the wilds, and securely deprive him of his bonnet. As he travelled on in ignorance of his loss, she rubbed the bonnet with might and main. As the bonnet was worn thin by the friction, the man grew weary and faint, until at last, when a hole appeared in it, he dropped down and died. In this way fell at least five Macmillans within the last hundred and twenty years – and all were found in the heather without a mark of violence*

*CAILLEACH ALLT-AN-DUNAIN was the enemy of the MacDougalls and MacDonalds. As her name bears, her home was in ... that burn which runs from the Monadh Leumnach down through the lands of Clunebeg until it falls into the Coilty ... She slew Somerled Macdonald ... on the Bunloit road still marked by his cairn – Carn Shomhairle. She killed Dugald Macdougall about ninety years ago at Carn Dughail ... She was last seen about forty years ago by an estimable woman who still survives to tell the tale, notwithstanding that in her veins runs the blood of the Macdonalds and the Macdougalls.*

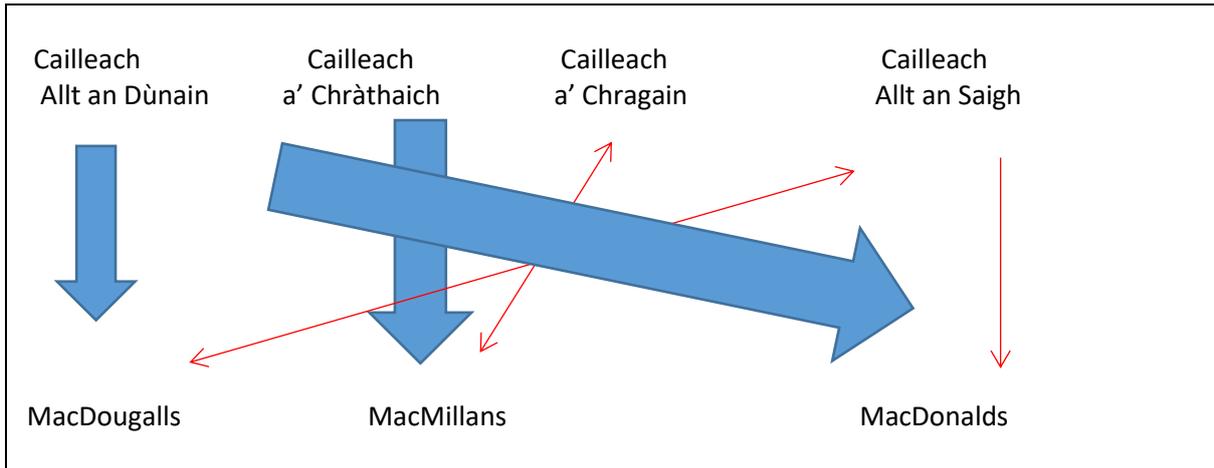
*CAILLEACH ALLT-SAIGH ... she could protect people from the malice of Cailleach Allt-an-Dùnain, by warning them of her malicious projects; and similar services were rendered to intended victims of Cailleach a' Chrathaich by a gentle spirit who inhabited CRAGAN-NA-CAILLICH, near Tornashee.*



*The locations of the cailleachan in Glenmoriston and Glen Urquhart, courtesy of Ceit Langhorne.*

To help visualise the relationship between these characters, according to William Mackay, the following diagram is added. The blue arrows indicate the clans which fall victim to the various cailleachan, and those cailleachan that save the various clans are indicated by the red arrows.

## The Musical Heritage of Glenmoriston



According to Alexander Macdonald and William Mackay, there are two verses connected to two of these cailleachan: one in Glenmoriston; and one in Glen Urquhart.

This is an account of the capture of Cailleach a' Chragain from Mackay (pp424-425):

*CRAGAN-NA-CAILLICH, near Tornashee. The latter being had a passion for riding, and it is told that she accosted Donald Macrae, Lochletter as he was passing the Cragan and begged him for a cùlag – that is, a seat behind him on his horse. He enquired, “Nach bu mhath leat bialag” – “Would you not as soon have a seat in front?” She complied with his suggestion and leapt into the saddle before him. Quietly binding her with the mares’- hair rope which served him for a rein, he took her home by force, and tied her to one of the couples of his dwelling. Instantly, the house was surrounded by hundreds of elves, who shouted and screamed and stripped the building of every clod and stick of roof. Macrae had enough of her, and he offered to let her go if she would cause the house to be restored to its former condition.*

Such a rude intervention from Donald Macrae is met with a strange prophecy from *Cailleach a' Chragain* (p417). From Mackay (p425):

*“Gach maid is sgrath,  
Gu tigh Mhic-Rath,  
Ach leum-thar-chrann is fiodhagach!”*

*“Speed wood and sod  
To the house of Macrae,  
Except honeysuckle and bird cherry!”*

See the figure below for the story of the more brutal *Cailleach a' Chràthaich*. From Alexander Macdonald (p36):

*On one occasion she accosted a man belonging to Inverwick, Glenmoriston, and gave him a most severe handling but, with the assistance of a faithful dog, he got out of her clutches. However, he lay ill for some months afterwards, while the poor dog was almost flayed in the encounter with the “cailleach.”*

The song details *Loch a' Chràthaich* as a dangerous place. It is furthermore not suggested that the community should attempt to remove or resist the *Cailleach*. From Macdonald (pp36-37):

*Cha téid mi an rathad  
A dh' oidhche no' latha;  
Cha 'n 'eil deagh bhean an tìghe*

*I shall not go the way  
By night or by day:  
She's not the best of good wives*

As such, *Cailleach a' Chràthaich* is one of a few characters in the Glen, with whom an encounter would demand a degree of courage and ingenuity from an individual!

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| <p><i>“Tha i trom air mo chinneadh<br/>Ga ’marbhadh ’s ga milleadh;<br/>’S gu’n cuireadh Dia spiorad<br/>Ni ’s fheàrr ann.”<br/>’S a’ Cràach.</i></p> | <p><i>She’s hard on my clan –<br/>Killing, destroying our men;<br/>O, that God would place a kindlier<br/>Spirit yonder<br/>That’s at the Craàch.</i></p> |
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### 6.3 The Military Life

The musical and poetic legacy of Glenmoriston relating to military matters centres on the songs of one person - Alasdair Mac Iain Bhàin. Before looking at some of his poems in detail, it is worth examining the wider context of the place of the military in society at the end of the 18th century.

The Seven Years War (1756-1763) saw the first new Highland regiments recruited after the 1745 Jacobite rebellion. The British government were extremely wary of the loyalty of Highlanders and there was still a general perception (whether right or wrong) of their being rebellious, ill-disciplined and not to be trusted in terms of their loyalty to the Hanoverian King George and the British government. However, Simon Fraser, eldest son of the disgraced (and beheaded) Jacobite Lord Lovat was keen to see the re-instatement of the family name (and their forfeited estate) and he raised a regiment – the 78<sup>th</sup> Regiment of Foot, the ‘Fraser Highlanders’. Many were recruited from the Lovat estate and it is likely that some of the 1,000 troops were Glenmoriston volunteers. They saw distinguished service for Empire in Canada against the French where they were involved in the taking of Fort Louisbourg on Cape Breton and the subsequently capture of Quebec.

The subsequent praise and respect gained for the Highland regiment’s bravery and fighting spirit did much to change English attitudes towards Highlanders. Perhaps it also gave some pride and much-needed sense of self-respect to the Gàidhealtachd which had both been repressed culturally and had suffered from considerable reprisals at the hands of the Hanoverian troops post Culloden. Highland regiments were to play an important role throughout the Empire during the rest of 18<sup>th</sup> Century and in the wars against the French until 1815 with the final defeat of Napoleon.

In terms of most of the Gaelic song connected to the military life written during this period, the vast majority fitted in with the long tradition of lauding the bravery of the Highlanders and praising their leaders. This very much fitted into the existing martial tradition.

*“While there are occasional undertones of dissent or disquiet, the great bulk of this poetry simply celebrates military triumphs and the broader military ethos, even if, at its best, verse of this kind can be vigorous, powerful and dramatically expressive, communicating all the furious intensity of warfare. Overall, there is very little questioning of the imperial enterprise in general or the role of the Gael within it; indeed, participation in the imperial military was central to the assimilation and ‘Briticisation’ of Scottish Gaeldom (see Withers 1988). Thus, although it is possible to locate and highlight some occasional dissonant notes, doing so may give a misrepresentative presentation of what is actually a very largely unvariegated corpus.”*

Wilson McLeod: Gaelic poetry and the British military, 1756-1945.

It is interesting to note that the Gaelic poets of the period didn't appear to have made any connection between their own history post-Culloden, and the fact that Highlanders were being used as colonial soldiers to create an empire to dispossess others of their land and cultures.

### **Alastair Mac Iain Bhàin**

Alasdair Mac Iain Bhàin is one of Glenmoriston's most celebrated poets. Whilst he is not well-known outwith the area, he deserves wider recognition as his songs have a unique perspective, giving an insight and a very personal view of the life of a colonial soldier.

A brief biography of is given by William MacKay in his book *Urquhart and Glenmoriston*:  
*"Alexander Grant (Alasdair Mac Iain Bhàin), the most gifted of the bards of our Parish, was the second son of John Grant, Achnagoneran, and was born about the year 1772. He early joined the army, and saw service in Denmark, Portugal, Spain, France, and the West Indies. During his wanderings he was solaced and cheered by the fellowship of the Highland muse; and his songs possess great merit, containing vivid glimpses of the life of the British soldier during the events which followed the French Revolution, and breathing burning affection to the scenes and companions of his childhood and youth. Of his native Glenmoriston, and the joy of revisiting it, he sang and dreamed for years; but his dreams and hopes were not to be realised. The longed-for furlough at last came, and the happy soldier travelled northwards; but at Seann-Talamh, above Drumnadrochit, and within a few hours' journey of his father's house, he was suddenly taken ill, and, unable to proceed further, he sought shelter under the hospitable roof of "Bean a' Ghriasaiche Ghallda," and there expired. He was buried in the first instance in Kilmore, and it is still told that while a young woman, whose heart he had won and retained, lay on his grave weeping, she imagined she heard moans from beneath her. On her reporting this the grave was opened, and it was found that the body had turned in the coffin, and was lying face downwards! It was removed to Glenmoriston, and the churchyard of Invermoriston now holds the dust of Alasdair Mac Iain Bhàin."*

William MacKenzie gives further insight to Mac Iain Bhàin's life in his presentation to the Gaelic Society of Inverness:

*"MacKenzie (who was also from Glenmoriston and had ready access to local tradition) informs us that the poet (according to him named Alexander Grant) was born around 1772 and that he was the youngest son of John Grant, a farmer from Achnagoneran. He joined the army as a young man and served in the West Indies, Denmark, Portugal, Spain and France. He was wounded while fighting in Spain and was subsequently allowed to return home, but died shortly before reaching his father's house in Achnagoneran."*

Mac Iain Bhàin composed 8 songs - 5 of which were about his military experience during the period c. 1790 to 1810. These military songs by a Glenmoriston man are not only of local interest but are also of national significance. Mac Iain Bhàin composed two songs about his voyage with the navy to the Caribbean – *An Diugh 's Mi Fagail Na Rioghachd* (Today as I am leaving the country) and *Is Cianail an Rathad 's Mi Gabhail a' Chuain* (Dreary is the ocean road I am taking). Gaelic poetry about Highlander's experience of the navy is extremely rare making Mac Iain Bhàin's voice almost uniquely and valuable. However, his poetry is also of interest in that, unlike the vast majority of contemporaneous Gaelic war poetry, his work doesn't fall into the panegyric tradition of lauding the brave deeds of warriors, magnificent victories and noble leaders. Mac Iain Bhàin's songs absolutely refute the glorification of the life of a soldier.

*"Mac Iain Bhàin emerges from these poems as a wholly reluctant soldier. Far from embracing and promoting the heroic ideals of military service, these are songs which would have been likely to dissuade any potential recruits (and indeed seem to have been composed with that purpose in mind). The hardship of service is a predominant theme in his poetry, and this is regularly contrasted with the*

## The Musical Heritage of Glenmoriston

*contented life the poet left behind in the Gàidhealtachd. Concepts of loyalty or belonging to regiment, the wider imperial army or the British state do not feature in Mac Iain Bhàin's poetry; his only allegiance is towards his homeland and its community."*

Ruairidh Iain Maciver, *The Gaelic Poet & the British military experience, 1756-1856 PhD thesis (2018)*

The below is taken from *Theid Mi le m' Dheoin*:

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| <p><i>O'n dh'èirich dhomh bhi anfhann gun spid,<br/>Gun chomas an Rìgh 'dhuaiseachadh,<br/>Tha mo dhuil anns an Tì 'tha os mo chinn,<br/>Gu'n stiùir e gu tìr m' uaigheachd mi;<br/>Tha m' aighear 's mo mhiann daonnan, gu fìor,<br/>'Toirt brosnachaidh gear gu gluasad dhomh,<br/>Cha'n àrda mo leum, dh'fhaillig mo cheum,<br/>Stràc e nach gleidh buannachd dhomh.</i></p> <p><i>'Us fhir thèid air chuairt, a null do 'n Taobh-Tuath,<br/>Thoir teachdaireachd uam, 's na dì-chuimhnich,<br/>'Us innis mar tha m' ìre 's mo chail,<br/>Sin daonnan gach là a dhùisgeas mi:<br/>Tha saighead o 'n eug, mar is barail leam fhèin,<br/>Fo m' aisnean a'm pèin dlùth riutha<br/>Ga m'sparradh cho gear, 's cho teotha ri flame,<br/>Teachdair gu feum dùsgadh dhomh.</i></p> | <p><i>Since I have become feeble and incapable of quick movement,<br/>without the ability to serve the King,<br/>my trust is in the One above,<br/>that He will guide me to the land where I should be buried.<br/>My joy in prospect and my desire, are truly,<br/>giving me a powerful incentive to go.<br/>I cannot jump high; my step has failed.<br/>My wound is a blow that is not likely to lead to a long life.</i></p> <p><i>You who are going on a visit to the North,<br/>take a message from me. Do not forget.<br/>Inform my friends of my condition,<br/>which is the same every day that I awake.<br/>There is a pain, the messenger of death in my opinion<br/>under my ribs, causing pain in the area around them,<br/>driving into me sharply, as hot as a flame,<br/>a messenger to whom I must give heed.</i></p> |
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Source: *Transactions of the Gaelic Society of Inverness*, Volume 10 (1881-83)

Translation: Translation by Iain MacLeod, courtesy of Murdo Grant of Fortrose and Lewiston.  
Glenmoriston.org

Throughout his songs there is a longing to be back home – such as the first verse of *Oran Air Gleann-Na-Moireasduinn*:

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| <p><i>Thoir mo shoraidh le failte<br/>Dh'fhios an ait 'm bheil mo mheanmhuinn,<br/>Gu Duthaich mhic Phadrùig<br/>'S an d'fhuair mi m' arach 's mi 'm leanaban;<br/>Gar am faicinn gu brath i<br/>Cha leig mi chail ud air dhearmad -<br/>Meud a' mhulaid bh'air pairt dhiubh<br/>Anns an dàmhair 'an d'fhalbh mi.</i></p> | <p><i>Take my farewell with a greeting<br/>to the place where my thoughts are,<br/>to the country of Mac Phadraig<br/>where I was brought up as a child;<br/>although I should never see it again,<br/>I shall never lose that love for it -<br/>How great the distress of some of my fellow<br/>country people was<br/>in the October in which I left!</i></p> |
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Source: *Transactions of the Gaelic Society of Inverness*, Volume 10 (1881-83)

Translation: Translation by Iain MacLeod, courtesy of Murdo Grant of Fortrose and Lewiston.  
Glenmoriston.org

And the last verse of *"Is Cianail an Rathad 's Mi Gabhail a' Chuain"*. A recording of this song, sung by Rev. William Matheson (who learnt it from a Peter Grant from Glen Urquhart), can be heard on Tobar and Dualchais: <http://tobarandualchais.co.uk/en/fullrecord/87158>

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| <p><i>Fhir a theid a dh-Alba<br/>Tha m' earbsa ro mhor<br/>Gu'n taghail thu 'n rathad</i></p> | <p><i>It is my great hope<br/>that you, who are going to Scotland<br/>will visit my friends</i></p> |
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The Musical Heritage of Glenmoriston

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| <i>Thoir naigheachd na s' beo -<br/>Thoir soraidh le durachd<br/>Do dhuthaich lain Oig*<br/>O dh' fhagas tu Rusgaich<br/>Gu Lundaidh nam bo.</i> | <i>to give the news of those of us who are alive -<br/>Give my greeting with good wishes<br/>to lain Og's country,<br/>which stretches from Ruskich<br/>to Lundie of the cattle.</i> |
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Source: *Transactions of the Gaelic Society of Inverness*, Volume 10 (1881-83)

Translation: Translation by Iain MacLeod, courtesy of Murdo Grant of Fortrose and Lewiston.  
Glenmoriston.org

Alasdair Mac Iain Bhàin doesn't identify which regiment he was part of, or the leading officers, in any of his songs – perhaps as he didn't want any repercussions from exposing the reality of military life.

It is worth including the whole of Alasdair Mac Iain Bhàin's song *Oran an t-Saighdear* as it captures the reality of being a soldier in the late 18<sup>th</sup> / early 19<sup>th</sup> century in a way that mirrors the later First World War poets' rejection of the heroic and romantic glorification of war. The below version of *Oran an t-Saighdear* is taken from William MacKenzie's address to the Gaelic Society of Inverness on 19<sup>th</sup> December 1877 as written in his "Leaves from my Celtic Portfolio" in *Transactions of the Gaelic Society of Inverness* Volume 7:

*"It is descriptive of the life of a soldier, and, I am informed, the composition of a brave Highland soldier, Alexander Grant, a Glenmoriston man, who was known in his own country as Alastair Mac Iain Bhàin. I wrote it down from the recitation of a Mrs. Macpherson from Skye."*

According to notes on the song by Murdo M Grant of Fortrose and Lewiston (see Glenmoriston.org) The soldier's song "in which he describes how the hardships of campaigns all over Europe have aged him prematurely since he was tricked by "the gold" and "the promises." Rather than the sounding of the pipes for action he would prefer "the lowing of a slim cow on its way to be milked in the glen." Probably his best-known poem."

| <b>Oran an t-Saighdear</b>   | <b>The Soldier's Song</b>   |
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| <i>Na 'm biodh duine na m' choir<br/>A dh-eisdeadh ri m' ghloir,<br/>Cha'n 'eil mo cheann sgeoil<br/>    Gun reusan;<br/>Tha m' aigne cho mor<br/>Air a lionadh le bron,<br/>'S cha'n 'eil mi an doigh<br/>    Ach eigneach<br/>Ged nach eil mi ach og<br/>'S beag m' aighir ri ceol<br/>Rinn an t-ardan 'sa' phrois<br/>    Mo threigsinn;<br/>'Dhol do 'n arm le mo dheoin -<br/>'S mi chaidh iomral 'sa' cheo,<br/>'Se mo bhargan nach d' chord<br/>    Na dheigh rium!</i> | <i>If anyone was near me<br/>who would listen to my speech,<br/>(he, or she would find that) the substance of my story<br/>is not without reason;<br/>my mind is so greatly<br/>filled with sorrow,<br/>and my condition<br/>is simply one of extreme difficulty<br/>Although I am still young<br/>I have little pleasure in music,<br/>self-esteem and pride have<br/>deserted me<br/>by enlisting voluntarily in the army -<br/>I have gone astray in the mist,<br/>the bargain which I made is one which I have certainly<br/>regretted afterwards</i> |
| <i>Fhir a shiubhlas mu thuath<br/>Thoir an t-soiridh so bhuam<br/>Far nach d' fhag mi fear fuath<br/>    Na m' dheigh ann;</i>   | <i>Will anyone of you who is travelling to the north<br/>give this blessing from me<br/>to a place where I did not leave one enemy<br/>behind me there;</i>   |

The Musical Heritage of Glenmoriston

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| <p><i>Masa math leat bhi buan,<br/>'N uair a chluinneas tu 'n duan<br/>Thoir an aire - cum cluais -<br/>A's eisd rium:<br/>Gur h-e lughad mo dhuais,<br/>'S an t-sentry cho cruaidh<br/>Chuir m' inntinn cho luath<br/>Troimhe-cheile;<br/>Thug e 'n dreach dhe mo shnuadh<br/>'S dh' fhag e tana mo ghruaidh,<br/>'S chaill mi trian de na fhuair<br/>Mi 'leursainn.</i></p>  | <p><i>if you wish to have a long life,<br/>when you hear the poem<br/>give heed to it pay close attention to it<br/>and listen to me:<br/>it is the paltriness of my wage,<br/>and sentry duty being such a hardship<br/>that has so quickly<br/>disturbed my mind;<br/>it has taken the healthy colour from my complexion<br/>and it has left my cheek thin<br/>and I have lost a third of the eyesight<br/>that I had.</i></p>   |
| <p><i>'N uair a thoisich an t-ol,<br/>'Sa laimhsich mi 'n t-or<br/>Bha moran mu'n bhord<br/>Ga m' eisdeachd;<br/>Bha danns' ann - bha ceol -<br/>'Cur na bainnse air doigh,<br/>'S e mo chall-sa bha mor<br/>'Na dheigh sin.<br/>Fhuair mi bann agus coir,<br/>Le geallannas mor,<br/>Air nighean Righ Deors'<br/>Mar cheile;<br/>'S na 'n creidinn an gloir<br/>Cha b' eagal ri m' bheo<br/>Dhomh an airgead, no 'n or,<br/>No 'n eideadh!</i></p>  | <p><i>When the drinking started,<br/>and I handled the gold<br/>there were many around the table<br/>listening to me;<br/>there was dancing there was music-<br/>arranging the wedding,<br/>and my loss was great<br/>thereafter<br/>I got a bond and a right,<br/>with great promises,<br/>to King George's daughter (i.e. his gun)<br/>as a wife;<br/>and if I were to believe their talk<br/>I would have no reason to fear for the rest of my life<br/>any shortage of silver, or gold<br/>or clothes!</i></p> |
| <p><i>'S iomadh oidhche fhliuch, fhuar,<br/>'Bha mi marcachd a' chuain<br/>Bho na fhuair mi 'n dath ruadh s'<br/>Air m' eideadh;<br/>Thug mi turus da uair<br/>Gu Righ Lochlainn nan cuach,<br/>'S ann d'a Rioghachd bu chruaidh<br/>An sgeula;<br/>Cha robh dad 'san robh luach<br/>Eadar luingeas a's shluagh<br/>Nach do ghlac sinn an cluain<br/>A cheile;<br/>Chuir sinn gaiseadh 'na Sguaib,<br/>'S chuir sinn aitreabh 'na gual,<br/>'S thug sinn creach leinn le ruaig<br/>Beum-sgeithe!</i></p> | <p><i>Many a cold, wet night,<br/>I have been riding the main<br/>since I got this red colour<br/>on my clothes;<br/>I made the journey twice<br/>to visit the King of Denmark of the drinking cups,<br/>and, for his country,<br/>the story was a hard one;<br/>there was very little of any value<br/>between ships and people<br/>that we did not take<br/>altogether;<br/>we destroyed his crops,<br/>we burnt his palace,<br/>and we took away booty as a result<br/>of our attack!</i></p>                   |
| <p><i>Ann am Portugal thall,<br/>Cha b'e m' fhortan a bh'ann,<br/>'N uair a nochd sinn co 'n lann<br/>Bu gheire<br/>'N uair a ghlac sinn 'sa' champ<br/>Sìol altrum na Fraing',<br/>Cha robh 'n tuasaid ud mall</i></p>  | <p><i>Over there in Portugal,<br/>not an occasion of good fortune for me,<br/>when we showed them whose blade.<br/>was the sharpest;<br/>when we trapped in their camp<br/>the sons of France,<br/>the struggle till they surrendered</i></p>  |

The Musical Heritage of Glenmoriston

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| <p><i>Mu'n d' gheill iad<br/>Luaidhe ghlas 'dol na deann<br/>Measg ghlac agus ghleann,<br/>Gun aon fhacal comann<br/>Ga eisdeachd;<br/>'S lionar marcaich' each seang<br/>A bha 'charcais gun cheann -<br/>Caoin air ascaoin 'se bh'ann<br/>'S cha reite.</i></p>   | <p><i>was not a short one<br/>swiftly flying grey lead<br/>among hollows and valleys,<br/>with no one paying attention<br/>to any word of command;<br/>many a rider of a slim horse<br/>was a headless corpse<br/>a confused tumult it was<br/>and not an orderly battle.</i></p>  |
| <p><i>'S iomadh glaic agus gleann<br/>Eadar 'Ghearmailt 'san Fhraing,<br/>Sasuinn - Alba gun taing -<br/>Agus Eirinn<br/>Far 'n do leig mi mo cheann,<br/>Sgath ghlac agus ghleann,<br/>Far nach freagradh dhomh mall<br/>'Bhi 'g eiridh;<br/>Fuaim feadan thri bann -<br/>Fear ga spreigeadh 'sa' champ,<br/>Ged a's beag a bha shannt<br/>Orm eisdeachd;<br/>B' fhearr liom geum aig mart seang<br/>'Dol gu eadradh 'sa' ghleann<br/>'S bean ga leigeadh am faing<br/>'S a' Cheitein.</i></p> | <p><i>In many a valley and hollow,<br/>in places including Germany and France,<br/>England - Scotland without any pleasure -<br/>and Ireland<br/>I have laid my head,<br/>a waste of valleys and hollows,<br/>where it would not be safe to be late<br/>in getting up;<br/>the sound of a full set of pipes -<br/>played by a soldier in the camp,<br/>although I had little inclination<br/>to listen to it;<br/>I would prefer the lowing of a slim cow<br/>on its way to be milked in the glen<br/>where a woman would milk it in a fold<br/>in the month of May.</i></p> |
| <p><i>'S iomadh fardach a's frog<br/>Anns do ghabh mi tra-noin,<br/>Bho na fhuair mi chiad chot'<br/>Agus leine;<br/>Agus clar agus bord<br/>Air na charadh dhomh lon -<br/>'S tric a' phaigh mi an t-or<br/>'Na eirig -<br/>Cha'n 'eil cearn' 'san Roinn Eorp<br/>Eadar traigh no tir-mor<br/>Nach 'eil larach mo bhroig<br/>'S mo cheum ann,<br/>'Siubhal fasaichean feoir<br/>Agus ard-bheannan ceò<br/>Cur mo naimhdean air fogar<br/>Na 'n eiginn!</i></p>                                 | <p><i>Many's the building and spot<br/>in which I ate my midday meal,<br/>since I received the first (military) coat<br/>and shirt;<br/>and many the board and table<br/>on which food was placed for me<br/>Many's the time I paid gold for it<br/>in payment.<br/>There isn't a part of Europe<br/>including coastland and interior territory<br/>which doesn't bear the trace of my shoe<br/>and step on it,<br/>as I travelled over grassy deserts<br/>and misty mountain tops,<br/>routing my enemies<br/>in their desperation!</i></p>                                 |
| <p><i>'S ged bha m' fhuil anns na blair<br/>'Cur mo naimhdean mu lar,<br/>'S ann a fhuair mi 'n cruaidh chas<br/>Na dheigh sin;<br/>Gu'n robh uair mar a bha<br/>Mu'n do chuireadh am blar;<br/>Gu'n robh cuan de m' fhuil blath<br/>Fo m' leine;<br/>Cha do shocraich mo shail<br/>'N uair a chuir iad mi 'n Spainnt -</i></p>   | <p><i>And although I shed blood in the field of battle<br/>subduing my foes,<br/>my real hardships<br/>came after that;<br/>there was an occasion<br/>before the battle was fought,<br/>when there was an ocean of my warm blood<br/>under my shirt;<br/>my step did not slacken<br/>when I was sent to Spain -</i></p>  |

The Musical Heritage of Glenmoriston

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| <p><i>Teas as fuachd ann am pairt<br/>A cheile;<br/>Mar ri sluagh air bheag baigh<br/>Nach gabh truas ri fear cais<br/>Ged a bhuail air am bas<br/>Na 'eiginn.</i></p>  | <p><i>Heat and cold swiftly succeeding<br/>one another;<br/>Among a people of little kindliness<br/>who do not pity a man in a poor state<br/>even if death should strike him<br/>in his distress.</i></p>  |
| <p><i>'S fhad' o 'n chuala tu chainnt<br/>Mar a theirear 'san rann:<br/>Cha dean aireachas mall<br/>Bonn feuma.<br/>'S mise dh' fhainich 'san am<br/>Chaidh mo tharruing 'san rang<br/>Nach robh cairdeas aig ceann<br/>Ri 'cheile;<br/>Cha'n fhain'chear 'san Fhraing<br/>Co-dhiu 's Gaidheal no Gall<br/>'N uair a thig e le 'pheann<br/>Mar chleireach;<br/>'S 'nuair a gheibh e 'n comann<br/>Tha e coma dhe m' chall;<br/>'S och tha mis' air mo shnaim<br/>Bho 'n cheud la!</i></p> | <p><i>It's a long time since you heard the saying<br/>as it is put in the verse:<br/>Late repentance doesn't do<br/>a bit of good;<br/>I realised<br/>when I entered the ranks<br/>that there was no kindness<br/>to be found there;<br/>you will not know in France<br/>whether he (the officer) is a Highlander or a Lowlander<br/>when he comes with his pen<br/>like a clerk;<br/>And when he receives the order<br/>he doesn't care what I will suffer;<br/>and, och, I am in bondage<br/>since the first day!</i></p> |

Source: *Transactions of the Gaelic Society of Inverness*, Volume 7, 1877-78 - Glenmoriston.org

Translation: By Iain MacLeod, courtesy of Murdo Grant of Fortrose and Lewiston.

There are various other versions of the song to be found:

- An Duanaire (1868). Its first publication: MacIver states “*Might this lack of contemporaneous publication have been due to its disparaging approach to its subject matter?*”
- A recording of song was made in 1956 under the title “Ged Nach Eil Mi Ach Òg 'S Beag M' Aighear ri Ceòl” sung by Kate MacDonald of South Uist. It can be heard on the Tobar and Dualchais website: <http://tobarandualchais.co.uk/en/fullrecord/34581>
- Two other versions were recorded in the 1950s by the Scottish Studies in Eigg.
- The song followed Highlanders when they emigrated to Canada sometime in the 18<sup>th</sup> / 19<sup>th</sup> century and is part of the Gaelic tradition of Cape Breton Island in Nova Scotia – see *Brigh an Òrain - A Story in Every Song*, by Lauchie MacLellan, John Shaw and Alistair MacLeod. It appears that there are several versions, with the song recorded to different melodies. Lauchie MacLellan: <https://www.mun.ca/folklore/leach/songs/CB/5-09.htm>

The melody, like a lot of song melodies in the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries, travelled to Ireland and is used for a song *The Pearl of the Irish Nation*.

**The Pearl of the Irish Nation**



Source: Joyce – *Old Irish Folk Music and Songs* (1909); Tunearch.org

Oran an t-saighdear is one of only two songs of Mac Iain Bhàin’s with a known melody. Given the local and wider significance of the songs it would good to do further research to see if melodies for some of the other songs could be unearthed. If this research is unfruitful, it would perhaps be possible to use the melodies of other Gaelic airs from the period and area.

**Am Breacan Dubh**

Another military song from the period appears in *Story and Song from Loch Ness-side:- Am Breacan Dubh* (The Black Kilt) – also known as *Tha mo bhreacan fliuch fo’n dile*. It also presents a more realistic view of the harsh life of a soldier. Given the uniform described, the place names mentioned and the regimental Colonel in charge, it would seem to date from the 7 Years War. The song’s composer appears to be from the Argyll / Perthshire border (confusingly there are two glens called Lochay / Lochy nearby each other next at Tyndrum on either side of the county boundary). According to Macdonald, the song was “very much in demand” in Glenmoriston.

The song has an additional local connection to Glenmoriston in that it would appear that the song was written by a sergeant in the 78<sup>th</sup> Fraser Highlanders: Verses 6 and 16 mention a “Colonel Simon Fraser”- The regiment was raised by Simon Fraser (eldest son of Jacobite Lord Simon Fraser) largely from the Fraser estates which partially neighbour Glenmoriston. As such it is quite likely that some Glenmoriston men volunteered for the regiment.

| <b>Am Breacan Dubh</b>   | <b>The Black Kilt</b>   |
|--|---|
| <i>Seist:</i><br><i>Tha mo bhreacan-sa fon dile</i><br><i>Chan fhaod mi innse mar tha e</i><br><i>Tha mo bhreacan-sa fon dile.</i> | <i>Chorus</i><br><i>My plaid is black under the deluge</i><br><i>And past telling how it is</i><br><i>My plaid is black under the deluge.</i> |
| <i>Tha mo bhreacan-sa fliuch fuar</i><br><i>’S cha an urra mi chur suas a maireach</i>   | <i>My plaid is wet and cold</i><br><i>And I cannot wear it tomorrow</i>   |
| <i>Tha mo bhreacan air a mhilleadh</i><br><i>Aig na gillean bh’ air a’ bhàrsa.</i>   | <i>My plaid has been ruined</i><br><i>By the lads who were on the march</i>   |

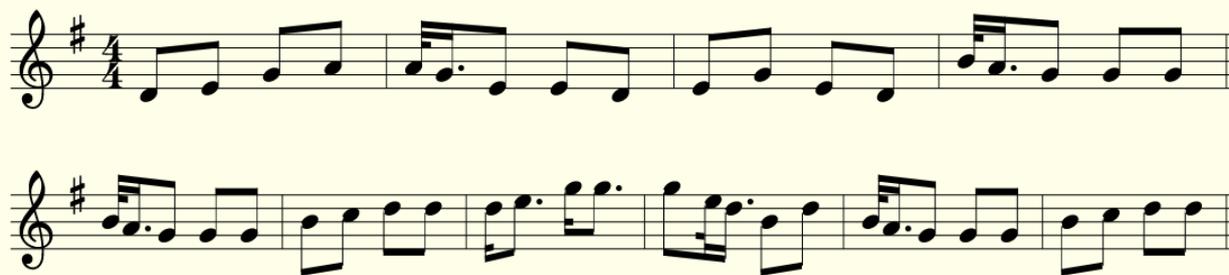
The Musical Heritage of Glenmoriston

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| <i>Tha mi nis a dol a sheòladh<br/>'S cha 'n air m' eòlas a tha mi.</i>               | <i>I am now going to sail<br/>And I am not on familiar ground</i>                                 |
| <i>Dol do dh' eilean nan eun fiadhaich<br/>Cha robh duine riamh a thàbh ann.</i>      | <i>Going to the island of the wild birds<br/>There was never anyone who lived there</i>           |
| <i>Air thoiseachd air luchd na Beurla<br/>'S nach do dh'fhàg e "Dè mu Ghàidhlig?"</i> | <i>In the company of English speakers<br/>No one ever received the least appreciation</i>         |
| <i>Cha b' ionnan agus Còirneil Friseal<br/>Gu cur misneachd anns na Gàidheal.</i>     | <i>It was not so with Colonel Fraser<br/>In encouraging the Highlanders</i>                       |
| <i>'S mòr gu'm b' annsa bhi air m' eòlas<br/>Far an robh mi òg ga m' àrach.</i>       | <i>I would much prefer to be on familiar ground<br/>Where I was reared when young</i>             |
| <i>Thoir mo shoraidh do Ghleann-Lochaidh<br/>Far an robh mi òg a' 'm phàisde.</i>     | <i>Take my greetings to Glenlochy<br/>Where I spent my childhood</i>                              |
| <i>'S soiridh eile do Ghleann Urchaidh<br/>Nan tulmanan gorma, fasaich.</i>           | <i>And further greetings to Glenorchy<br/>Of the green moorland knolls</i>                        |
| <i>Far an tric a bha mi m' choibair<br/>Ann am fridhean nam bean àrda.</i>            | <i>Where I was often as a shepherd<br/>On the moors of the high mountains</i>                     |
| <i>Far am faighte fiadh air fireach<br/>Breac air linne, 's fir ri mànrán.</i>        | <i>Where was found the deer in the wilds<br/>Salmon in the pool and men made merry</i>            |
| <i>S far am faighte gruagach bhòidheach<br/>'G iomain bhò gu bealach àiridh.</i>      | <i>Where you would find a beautiful maiden<br/>Driving cows to the shieling pass</i>              |
| <i>'Tha na nighneagan 'an gruaim rium<br/>Bho'n a fhuair mi 'n còta-sgàrlaid.</i>     | <i>The girls are displeased with me<br/>Since I got the scarlet coat</i>                          |
| <i>Bho'n a fhuair mi 'n ite phéucaig<br/>Claidheamh is crois féilidh Searsdain.</i>   | <i>Since I got the peacock's feather<br/>A sword and sergeant's kilt belt</i>                     |
| <i>Fhuair mi paidhir bhrògan ùra<br/>Boineid dhubh-ghorm 'us coc-àd innt'.</i>        | <i>I got a pair of new shoes<br/>A dark blue bonnet with a cockade</i>                            |
| <i>Mìle marphaisg air luchd mì-ruin<br/>Cha b' iad Sim a' dol do 'n bhlàr iad.</i>    | <i>A thousand shrouds on people of ill-will<br/>They were not like Simon when going to battle</i> |

Source and translation: *Story and Song from Loch Ness-side*, 1982 Edition

The melody for the song, in Solfa notation, is contained in the Appendix to the 1982 Edition of *Story and Song from Loch Ness-side*:

## The Musical Heritage of Glenmoriston



Source: *Story and Song from Loch Ness-side*, Appendix to 1982 Edition  
 Transcription: Munro Gauld

There are a number of other versions of the song – differing in both melody and words – which have been collected in Uist, Skye and Cape Breton Island, Nova Scotia:

- An Duanaire (1868)
- The Gesto Collection (1895) - see below
- Oraìn nan Eilein, Taigh na Teud (2001)
- Tobar an Dualchais has 10 recordings, including Kate MacDonald (1965) from South Uist: <http://www.tobarandualchais.co.uk/en/fullrecord/105775/5;jsessionid=1DD81B75CD1621B7C8EE5E118FC4D751>
- The song made its way to Canada and the Cape Breton Gaelic tradition with the tune and the words evolving there over time. Several oral history recordings have been made of the song: Malcolm Angus MacLeod: <https://www.mun.ca/folklore/leach/songs/CB/8-06.htm>  
 Dan Morrison: <https://www.mun.ca/folklore/leach/songs/CB/9-04.htm>
- A lovely version has been recorded by Mary Jane Lamond under the title *Tha Mo Bhreacan-sa Fo'n Dìle* where it is sung as a waulking song: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=T7M9wERORP4>
- Another version of the melody was collected by Jane Fraser Morison of Kintail Mans. She produced 2 collections of Highland Airs and Quicksteps, published by Logan & Co, Inverness in 1882. See Highland Music Trust for online version: <https://www.heallan.com/morison.asp>

**THA MO BHREACAN FLIUCH FO'N DÌLE.** Soldier's song.

Moderate.

D. G.

Thà mo bhreacan fliuch fo'n dìle –  
 FÒNN. Chu-n fhaod mi innse mar 'tha è  
 Thà mo bhreacan fliuch fo'n dìle.

|   |  |
|---|--|
| <p>Thà mo bhreacan gu fliuch fuarraidh<br/>         Chu ghabh e cur suas am màireach.<br/>         Thà mo ße.</p> <p>Thà mo bhreacan air a mhilleadh,<br/>         Aig na gillean air a' mheàradh.<br/>         Thà mo ße.</p> <p>Bidh mi màireach dol a sheòladh,<br/>         Cha-n ann air m' eòlas a thà mi.<br/>         Thà mo ße.</p> <p>Dol do dh-Eilean nan eun fìadhaich,<br/>         Cha robh duine riabh a thàmh ann.<br/>         Thà mo ße.</p> <p>Their mo sheiridh do Ghleann-Lòchaidh,<br/>         Far an robh mi èg gam àrach.<br/>         Thà mo ße.</p> <p>Soiridh eile do Ghleann-Urghaidh<br/>         Nan tulmanan bòidheach, fàsaich –<br/>         Thà mo ße.</p> | <p>Far am fàighteadh gruagach bhòidheach,<br/>         'G' iomann bhò gu bealach àiridh.<br/>         Thà mo ße.</p> <p>Thà na nìonagan an gruasim rium,<br/>         On a fhuair mi 'n còta-sgàrlaid –<br/>         Thà mo ße.</p> <p>On a fhuair mi 'n ite phéucaig,<br/>         Claidheamh, 'us erios fèilidh-Seardseinn.<br/>         Thà mo ße.</p> <p>Fhuair mi paidhir bhògan ùra,<br/>         Boineid dhùgherm 'us cec-àd iant'<br/>         Thà mo ße.</p> <p>Mìle mair 'g air luchd ar mìorain,<br/>         Cha b' iad Sìom 'a dol do'n bhàr iad –<br/>         Thà mo ße.</p> <p>Cha b' iomann iad us Còirneal-Frisell,<br/>         A thoirt mìnach do na Gàidhìl<br/>         Thà mo ße.</p> |
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Source: The Gesto Collection, K N MacDonald (1895)

## 6.4 Praise Poems and Songs

Panegyric, or praise poems to clan chiefs formed an important part of the bardic tradition in Gaelic culture and were common throughout the Highlands from the middle ages until the 19<sup>th</sup> century. These elegies and eulogies praised the clan chief's lives, their great deeds, their kindness and the fair and just management of their lands. It was a way of both cementing the role of the chief as a patron of Gaelic culture, and also maintaining the mutually dependant bonds between clan chief and their clan / tenants (in terms of, on one side, securing the chief's income and maximising the supply of available fighting men, and on the other side, access to tenancies of land and protection from raids from neighbouring clans).

The poems and songs of the early Glenmoriston Bards very much fitted into this panegyric tradition, e.g. "*A luchd comuinn mo ruin*" a poem about the MacPhadruig family (i.e. the Grants of Glenmoriston) written by Iain MacEoghain Bhàin (known locally as Iain Ruadh).

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| <i>A luchd comuinn mo ruin,<br/>Ris an leiginn gach cùis,<br/>Bha mi ma' ruibh 's an tùr mhòr àrd.</i>    | <i>My dear companions,<br/>To whom I would confide all matters,<br/>I was with you in the big high tower.</i>                              |
| <i>'S an saibhreas 's an uail.<br/>'S an robh mi cheart uair –<br/>Na maireadh e buan 's e b' fheàrr.</i> | <i>And the wealth and the pride.<br/>With which I am presently surrounded<br/>Should it last forever, that would be my<br/>preference.</i> |

Source: *Story and Song from Loch Ness-side*, Alexander Macdonald (1914)

Translation: Ceit Langhorne

Archibald Grant (Senior) from Tom Bheallaidh wrote at least 4 poems for his pupil / foster son, Angus Òg MacDonell, so the chief of the Glen Garry MacDonalds, of whom he was evidently very fond. The Rev. Allan Sinclair in *The Grants of Glenmoriston* says that the above song is a morning lullaby to Angus Òg. As Alexander Macdonald says, "*Now we fancy that we almost hear the good old Highlander breathing his strains anxiously and earnestly into the ears of the boy and saying ....*"

|   |   |
|---|---|
| <i>Bobadh 'us m' annsachd,<br/>Gaul beag agus m' annsachd;<br/>Bobadh 'us m' annsachd<br/>Moch an diugh, ho!</i>    | <i>Laddie and my beloved,<br/>Little love and my beloved;<br/>Laddie and my beloved<br/>Early this morning, ho!</i>         |
| <i>Bheir Aonghas a' Ghlinne<br/>Air a chinneadh comannda,<br/>Bobadh 'us m' annsachd<br/>Moch an diugh, ho!</i>     | <i>Angus of the Glen<br/>Will take command of his clan,<br/>Laddie and my love<br/>Early this morning, ho!</i>              |
| <i>Bheir sinn greis a's Tombealluidh<br/>Air aran 'us amhlan,<br/>Bobadh 'us m' annsachd<br/>Moch an diugh, ho!</i> | <i>We'll take a while in Tombealluidh<br/>On bread and our meals,<br/>Laddie and my beloved<br/>Early this morning, ho!</i> |

Source: *Story and Song from Loch Ness-side*, Alexander Macdonald (1914)

Translation: Munro Gauld and Ceit Langhorne.

"*Hò fearan, hì fearan*" is in the form of a luineag (a ditty – perhaps a work song) setting out Angus Òg's lineage and possessions. The melody below is from the appendix to the 1982 edition of Alexander Macdonald's *Story and Song from Loch Ness-side*:

Hò fearan, hì fearan



Source: *Story and Song from Loch Ness-side*, Appendix to 1982 Edition

Transcription: Munro Gauld

|   |   |
|---|---|
| Hò fearan, hì fearan,<br>Hò fearan, 's tu 'th'ann;<br>Aonghas Òg Ghlinnegaraidh,<br>'S rioghail fearail an dream. | Ho little man, ho little man<br>Ho little man, it is you;<br>Young Angus of Glengarry,<br>The tribe is royal and manly. |
| Gu'm bheil fraoch ort mar shuaineas -<br>'Sann duit bu dual 'chur ri crann,<br>Hò etc.                            | That you have heather as a swaddle -<br>You were accustomed to leave and sail away,<br>Ho etc.                          |
| 'S leat islean, 's leat uaislean;<br>'S leat Cuaich gu 'da cheann,<br>Ho, etc.                                    | Yours are the servants, yours are nobles;<br>Yours is Cuaich from end to ends,<br>Ho, etc.                              |
| 'S leat sid 'san Dail-Chaoruinn,<br>'S Coire-fraoich nan damh seang.<br>Ho, etc.                                  | Yours is Dal-chaoruinn,<br>And Coire-fraoich of the slender stags.<br>Ho, etc.  |
| 'S leat Cnoideart mhor mheabhreach,<br>Agus Gleabhreach nam meang,<br>Hò etc.                                     | Yours is Knoydart very pleasant,<br>And Gleabhreach of the branches,<br>Ho etc.   |

Source: *Story and Song from Loch Ness-side*, Alexander Macdonald (1914)

Translation: Ceit Langhorne.

Angus Òg was killed by the accidental discharge of a gun following the Battle of Falkirk in 1745 – no doubt a great loss for Archibald Grant.

By the latter part of the C18th the mutually dependant feudal relationship between clan chief and their clansmen began to break down.

*“The processes ... of clearance, emigration and migration, new modes of transport – accelerated the collapse of social structures which had been in serious decay since at least 1745. The older hierarchy of clan chief, tacksmen and clans-people was gradually undermined as tacksmen were phased out and chiefs became increasingly remote figures.”*

Donald Meek: *Caran an t-Saoghail – Anthology of 19th century Scottish Gaelic Verse*

This appeared to be the case in Glengarry where Colonel Alexander MacDonell first removed tenants to be replaced with sheep in 1785, and then didn't honour his pledge to provide land for returning servicemen when the Glengarry Fencibles were disbanded in 1802. This caused much bad feeling locally and a large proportion of his tenants emigrated to Canada. In the decades following Colonel MacDonnell's death in 1828 the estate was gradually broken up and sold leaving the once huge and populous estate a shadow of its former self. With this collapse in the traditional social structure came a collapse in the associated Gaelic cultural traditions - there were no more panegyric songs written for the clan chief of Clan MacDonell by his tenants.

## The Musical Heritage of Glenmoriston

In Glenmoriston however, there was initially perhaps not the same level of upheaval from clearance as in neighbouring areas, with the ties between the Laird and his tenants being retained for longer.

From the New statistical Account for Scotland, Urquhart and Glenmoriston Parish (published 1845, though this Parish's entry was written in April 1835):

*"Their attachment to their landlords is still very great; and we have no doubt that, were occasion to require it, the families of Grant of Grant and Glenmoriston could easily muster on their own estates, as they did in the last continental war, a numerous and most active and intrepid body of soldiers willing to follow wherever their superiors would lead."*

The below quote, written by the Rev. Dr. Maclachlan of Edinburgh sometime around 1843 paints a vivid picture of the area: -

*"When we enter the country of the Frasers, the same spectacle presents itself—a desolate land. With the exception of the miserable village of Fort-Augustus the native population is almost extinguished, while those who do remain are left as if, by their squalid misery, to make darkness the more visible. Across the hills, in Stratherrick, the property of Lord Lovat, with the exception of a few large sheep farmers, and a very few tenants, is one wide waste. To the north of Loch Ness, the territory of the Grants, both Glenmoriston and the Earl of Seafield, presents a pleasing feature amidst the sea of desolation."*

Perhaps the relatively less severe clearance of Glenmoriston was one of the reasons that the praise song tradition continued there, with bards writing songs, elegies and eulogies to the Grant lairds throughout the C19th. See:

- *"Cumha do Choirneal Grannda, Tigherna Ghlinne-Moireasduin a Chaochail anns a Bhladhna 1801"* (A Lament for Colonel Grant, Laird of Glenmoriston, who Died in the Year 1801) by Alexander Grant (Alasdair Mac Iain Bhàin).
- *"Oran molaidh do Mhac 'Ic Phadruig"* (Song in praise of MacPhadruig). Written by Archie Tàilleir in praise of James Murray Grant (1792-1868) who was *"the ideal of a Highland Laird — noble, generous, affable; mingling freely with his people, and able to converse in their native Gaelic — a prime accomplishment in the Bard's estimation"*. The song celebrates a rent day, which *"the Laird's hospitality and kindness always made a happy day"*. Finlay, the piper, is introduced with his piobrach strains to awaken the echoes all round. The melody that goes with the Gaelic lyrics is not given in any of the source documents.
- *"Mar Chuimhneachan air Tighearna Ghrannnd'—1881"* (In memory of Lord Grant – 1881) written by Alexander Macdonald (Coinneach 'us Coille, 1895). It is likely that this was written as a poem rather than a song as no melody is given.

By the latter part of the C19th the tradition of praise songs to landlords had largely run its course, though perhaps it could be seen as surviving in poems celebrating new Gaelic "cultural heroes" – including organisations and institutions, e.g.

- *"Oran do Chomunn Chlann Domhnuill"* (Song to the Clan Donald Society)
- *"Do na h-Uaislean a bh' aig Dinneir Comunn Gaelig Inbhirnis, 1882"* (To the gentlemen at the Inverness Gaelic Society Dinner, 1882)

Both these poems are by Alexander Macdonald, and to be found in his book, *Coinneach 'us Coille*. As poems, neither have melodies associated with them.

## 6.5 Shielings in song and music

The use of shielings to graze animals on the hill ground in the summer months was a significant part of Highland agricultural system until the latter years of the 18<sup>th</sup> century. The practice allowed the in-bye grassland to recover after the winter and for the growing of crops on the arable land. According to William MacKay in Urquhart and Glenmoriston in Olden Times: *“The principal shieling grounds were Corri-Dho, Iarairidh, Uchd Reudair, Brae Ruiskich, Glen Coilty, Corribuy, the remote pasturages of Corrimony, and Ruigh Mhullaich on the estate of Achmonie.”* There are numerous other shielings in Glenmoriston as evidenced by map and documentary records as well as place names including “ruighe” or “airigh” elements, or those referring to shieling products / activities such as chaise (cheese), buachaille (herder), na h-Imrich (of the flitting - to shielings), mheig (whey) etc.

Young people migrated to the shielings during the late spring and summer months and it appears that it was a time of changed (and perhaps more relaxed) societal rules. There are many shieling songs celebrating life on the shieling and in particular courtship and the vagaries of love. In *Story and Song from Loch Ness-side*, Alexander Macdonald includes many shieling songs which were once commonly sung in the area. Most of the songs do not originate from Glenmoriston itself - they were (and indeed still are) popular throughout the Highlands – e.g. *“An gille donn 's a' bhanarach”*, *“A nighean donn an airidh”* and *“Ged bhiodh na laigh 'an cois a' chruidh”*.

### **Tha buaidh air an uisge bheatha** (There is goodness in whisky)

However there are a few local songs connected to shielings in Alexander Macdonald’s book, including one composed by “one of Macphadruig’s herds” (i.e., a herd employed by the Grants of Glenmoriston): *“Tha buaidh air an uisge bheatha”*, sung “to a stirring air”: -

|   |   |
|---|---|
| <p><i>Gur tric a’ falbh na Sròine mi,<br/>A chuideachd air na smeòraichean:<br/>‘S e sud a dh’ fhàg cho eòlach mi<br/>Air stòpan na te ruaidhe.<br/>Tha buaidh air an uisge-bheath’,<br/>Tha buaidh air neach còir a chleith:<br/>Tha buaidh air an uisge-bheath’:<br/>‘S co math teth is fear e.</i></p> | <p><i>I often wandered around at Strone,<br/>Keeping company with the thrushes:<br/>That has left me so familiar with<br/>The flagons of the red-haired one.<br/>There is goodness in whisky,<br/>It has goodness which should not be concealed:<br/>There is goodness in whisky,<br/>It is equally good hot or cold.</i></p> |
| <p><i>Gur math an àm an Earraich e,<br/>‘S cha mhiosa an àm na gaillion e:<br/>‘S e’n cù am fear nach ceannaiche,<br/>‘S e ‘n t-ùmaidh dh’ fhanas bhuaithe.</i></p>   | <p><i>It is good in springtime,<br/>And not worse in time of storm:<br/>He is a dog who will not buy it,<br/>And a clown he is who abstains.</i></p>  |
| <p><i>Gur math an coisich oidch’ e<br/>A’ dol air thòir nam maighdeannan:<br/>‘S ann air a bhiodh an sgoinn,<br/>Gu caoimhneas ‘thoirt o ghruagaichean.</i></p>   | <p><i>How good a night walker is it,<br/>Going in quest of maidens:<br/>What vigour it would have,<br/>To induce kindness in young women.</i></p>   |

Source and Translation: *Story and Song from Loch Ness-side*, 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition 1982.

According to Alexander Macdonald, *“The ‘te ruaidhe’ (red-haired woman) referred to is the ‘Poosie Nancy’ of an establishment in the vicinity of the herd’s grounds, where he and other knowing ones, could procure ‘a wee drappie o’t’ and this little song shows clearly enough her visitors knew how to enjoy her cheer.”*

## The Musical Heritage of Glenmoriston

There are several possible locations for the Strone mentioned in the song (Sròn being a “nose”: in place names, usually meaning a “nose-shaped” ridge leading from the top of a hill):

- Strone close to Lewiston on Loch Ness. This certainly would be close enough to the inn at Lewiston for the herd to go for a dram. But is quite far away from Glenmoriston’s land for him to be herding his cattle.
- Sròn na Muic (the ‘Nose’ of the Pig) - a prominent hill above Invermoriston – certainly close to Invermoriston Inn.
- Strone to the west of Alltsaigh (marked on an 1849 Glenmoriston Estate map and referenced in *Meall na Sroine* on the current OS map). Both this and the above option would have been close enough to the inn that used to be at Rusgaich for the herd to go for a dram there.
- Sròn Badan nam Meann (the ‘nose’ of the little copse of the kid goats) – a ridge that leads north-westwards from Carn nam Feuaich in Coire Dho. This is only 3 or so miles from the inn at Aonach that was visited by Boswell and Johnston in 1773. Or a further 3 miles down the glen, the inn at Torgoyle.
- According to Donald Macdonald from Glenmoriston, the face of Sgurr na Conbhairean is sometimes referred to as “the nose”. If this where the herd was working then a dram at the inn at Aonach would have been a hard-earned 6 miles away.



Source: *Story and Song from Loch Ness-side*, Appendix to 1982 Edition  
Transcription: Munro Gauld

Another version of the melody is to be found in *The Angus Fraser Collection* where it is written as a Strathspey. The A part of the tune is considerably divergent from the above song melody, though the B-part retains much of the song’s melody and character.

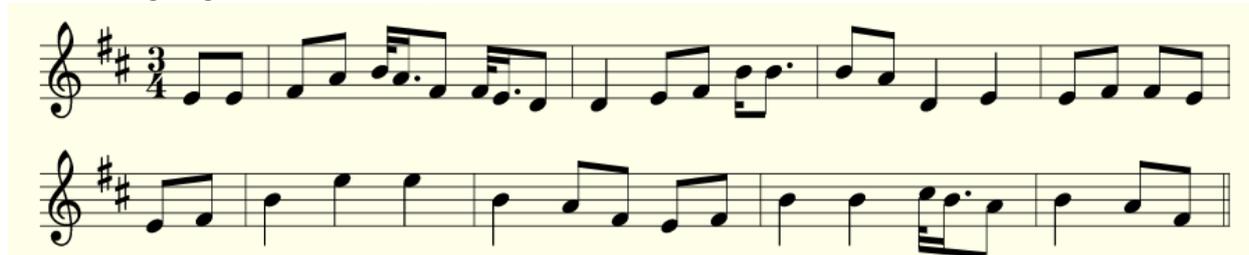
The image shows four staves of musical notation for a Strathspey version of the melody in 4/4 time. The first staff begins with a treble clef and a key signature of one flat (B-flat). The melody is written in a more complex, rhythmic style characteristic of a Strathspey, featuring many beamed eighth and sixteenth notes. The second and third staves continue the melody, and the fourth staff concludes it with a double bar line. The background of the notation is highlighted in yellow.

Source: *The Angus Fraser Collection*, Taigh na Teud (1996)

## The Musical Heritage of Glenmoriston

Alexander Macdonald includes some shieling songs from outwith Glenmoriston, complete with their melodies, which don't appear in any other musical collection and, as such, are valuable from an ethnomusicology and historical perspective. These include the below shieling songs from Highland Perthshire:

### Chunnacas gruagach 's an aonach (There was seen a maiden on the moor)



Source: *Story and Song from Loch Ness-side*, Appendix to 1982 Edition

Transcription: Munro Gauld

|   |   |
|---|---|
| <i>Chunnacas gruagach 's an aonach</i><br><i>'S gu'm bi gaolach na 'm fear i.</i>       | <i>There was seen a maiden on the moor,</i><br><i>And she was the darling of the men</i>          |
| <i>'S a chiall! Gur trom 'laigh an aois orm</i><br><i>Bho nach fhaod mi bhi ma' ri.</i> | <i>And goodness, heavy did age lie on me,</i><br><i>Since I cannot be with her.</i>               |
| <i>'S tric 's gur minig a bha mi</i><br><i>'S tu air àirigh 'm Bràigh Raineach.</i>     | <i>Many times often you and I,</i><br><i>Have been at the shieling on Brae Rannoch.</i>           |
| <i>Air chnocan an easain</i><br><i>Far 'n do leig sinn ar n' anail.</i>                 | <i>On the hillock of the waterfall,</i><br><i>Where we were resting.</i>                          |
| <i>Ann am bothan an t-sùgraidh</i><br><i>Gun da dhùnadh ach barrach.</i>                | <i>In the bothy of the dalliance,</i><br><i>With a brushwood screen for door.</i>                 |
| <i>Bhiodh mo bhéul ri d' bhéul cùbhra',</i><br><i>'S bhiodh a ruin mo làmh tharad.</i>  | <i>My mouth placed on your fragrant mouth,</i><br><i>And my hand would be round you, my love.</i> |
| <i>'S thigheadh fiadh anns a' bhùirich</i><br><i>Dha ar dùsgadh le langan.</i>          | <i>The deer would come at the rutting time,</i><br><i>To awaken us with his bellowing.</i>        |
| <i>Boc biorach an t-seilich,</i><br><i>Agus eilid an daraich.</i>                       | <i>The sharp-featured buck of the willows,</i><br><i>And the hinds of the oaks.</i>               |
| <i>Bhiodh a' chubhag 's an smùdan</i><br><i>A' seinn ciùil dhuinn air chrannaibh.</i>   | <i>The cuckoo and the ring-dove would be making</i><br><i>Music for us in the trees.</i>          |

Source and Translation: *Story and Song from Loch Ness-side*, 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition 1982.

This would seem to be part of a longer song collected in the 1880s by Henry Whyte in Glen Quaich, Perthshire under the title "*Fhir bhig na gruaige ruaidh*". (see: *Highland Monthly* August 1892). It is very similar in subject matter and some of the lyrics to the well-known song, "*Bothan Àirigh am Bràigh Raithneach*" (The Shieling bothy on Brae Rannoch). The lyrics and subject matter are very similar, though the melody differs from both the version in Captain Simon Fraser's *Airs and Melodies Peculiar to the Scottish Highlands* (1816), and the one to be found in *Songs of Gaelic Scotland* (2005) by Anne Lorne Gillies.

**Cha teid mi a Choir' Odhar** (I shall not go to Corrou)

The lovely melody to this song has lyrics which hint at a darker story of predatory behaviour towards a woman - certainly threatening enough to make the woman in the song plan to leave and hide. As is common in folk songs, there are unanswered questions: Where is "Fàsach nan aighean", or "the glen of the mists"? Was she intending to live amongst the deer, as folklore suggests happened elsewhere? (e.g. in stories and songs connected to the Cailleach Beinn A Bhric).



Source: *Story and Song from Loch Ness-side*, Appendix to 1982 Edition

Transcription: Munro Gauld

|  |  |
|--|--|
| <p><i>Cha téid mi Chir Odhar<br/>Tha 'n latha 'n diugh fuar,<br/>Cha téid mi Chir Odhar<br/>Tha 'n latha 'n diugh fuar;<br/>Cha téid mi Chir Odhar,<br/>Tha 'n latha 'n diugh fuar,<br/>'S air eagal nan gillean<br/>Bhi 'n iomall nam bruach.</i></p>           | <p><i>I shall not go to Corrou,<br/>It is cold today,<br/>I shall not go to Corrou,<br/>It is cold today,<br/>I shall not go to Corrou,<br/>It is cold today,<br/>For fear of the lads,<br/>Being behind the banks.</i></p>  |
| <p><i>O! falbhaidh mi 's fàgaidh mi<br/>Fàsach nan aighean,<br/>O! falbhaidh mi 's fàgaidh mi<br/>Fàsach nan aighean;<br/>O! falbhaidh mi 's fàgaidh mi<br/>Fàsach nan aighean,<br/>Agus bheir mi 'n ràith geamhraidh<br/>'S a glean 's am bi 'n cea'ch.</i></p> | <p><i>O, I shall go, and I shall leave,<br/>The moor of the hinds,<br/>O, I shall go, and I shall leave,<br/>The moor of the hinds,<br/>O, I shall go, and I shall leave,<br/>The moor of the hinds,<br/>And I shall spend the winter season,<br/>In the glen where is the mist.</i></p> |
| <p><i>Gu dé a ni mise<br/>Ma dheoghail na laoigh?<br/>Gu dé a ni mise<br/>Ma dheoghail na laoigh?<br/>Gu dé a ni mise<br/>Ma dheoghail na laoigh?<br/>Mar a téid mi am falach<br/>Fo bharrach nam craobh.</i></p>  | <p><i>What shall I do,<br/>If the calves have sucked?<br/>What shall I do,<br/>If the calves have sucked?<br/>What shall I do,<br/>If the calves have sucked?<br/>Perhaps I shall hide,<br/>Under the branches of the trees.</i></p>   |

Source and Translation: *Story and Song from Loch Ness-side*, 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition 1982.

**A Bhuachailleachd**

One of Alexander Macdonald's own compositions from *Coinneach 'us Coille*, this is a love song to Mairi, in Glenmoriston. He bids her lie down in the warm coire, with the humming of the falls around them, and the dew on the grass awakening around them. He cannot think of an activity that induces more pride than Màiri milking the cows and singing as she does so whilst he shepherds the herds around the fold. It is sung to the tune of one of Alasdair Mac Iain Bhàin's songs "An Diciadain a dh'

*fhalbh sinn*" (also known as "*Is cianail an rathad 's mi gabhail a' chuain*" – for melody see Tobar an Dualchais: <http://tobarandualchais.co.uk/en/fullrecord/87158>

**Airidh nam Badan** (Shieling of the Thicket)

In addition to shieling songs connected to the area, it is possible that the relatively well-known fiddle tune "*Airidh nam Badan*" is connected to a shieling in Glenmoriston: it is recorded in Captain Simon Fraser's *Airs and Melodies Peculiar to the Scottish Highlands* (1816), where it is titled *Aridh na m' badan* - "The Glen of Copsewood".



Source: *Simon Fraser Collection: Airs and Melodies Peculiar to the Highlands of Scotland* (1816)

According to the notes in the Second Edition at the end of Simon Fraser's book:

*"The Editor acquired this beautiful melody from his father, but cannot trace any anecdote regarding it. He, however, thinks it originated in the district of Glenmorison, where there is a sweet spot, which still bears the Gaelic name of it, and marches with the property on which Mr. Fraser of Culduthel, so often mentioned, then lived. It certainly bears the marks of his style."*

It has to be noted that Simon Fraser is not always necessarily the most reliable and thorough source of information - he wouldn't let a fact stand in the way of a good story. Thus, we can't be absolutely certain that the source of this tune is indeed in Glenmoriston. The first record of the tune is in *The Patrick MacDonald Collection* (1784), where it is shown as a tune collected from The Western Isles. A near identical version called *Àirigh nam badan*) was collected in 1812 and appears in the Elizabeth Ross Manuscript. It appears in numerous other later publications, usually under the title *Airidh nam Badan*.

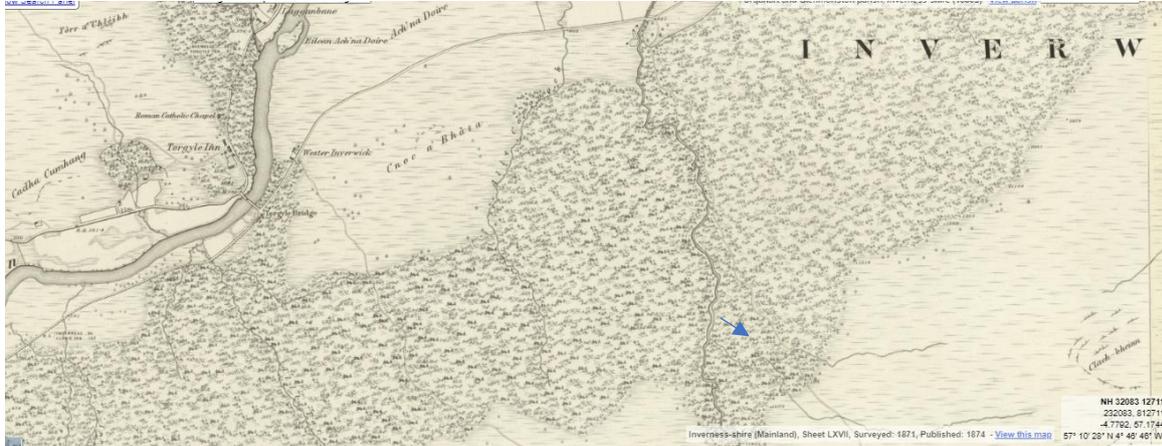
But assuming that Fraser is correct in his assertion that the tune is from Glenmoriston, then the next step is to find out where *Airidh nam Badan* might be. The Ordnance Survey's first survey map of the area - the 1874 (6" to the mile) and subsequent maps of the area do not show any place name *Airidh nam Badan*. It might have been possible to identify where the shieling was from estate maps, but unfortunately most of these were destroyed when Glenmoriston House burnt down in 1930. Old maps show that "*Culduthel*" was a property by the shore of Loch Ness, immediately to the west and close to Fort Augustus. Up until the latter part of the 18th, if not the early part of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, Fraser of Culduthel owned the land from Fort Augustus west and northwards to Glenmoriston. This

## The Musical Heritage of Glenmoriston

land was sold the land to the Lovat Frasers sometime around 1800- see:

<https://electricScotland.com/history/inverness/chapter6.htm>

The National Map Library has copies of Lovat Estate maps which show the march boundary between Grant and Lovat lands as roughly the ridge between Glenmoriston and Fort Augustus.



Source: National Map Library, OS 6" to the Mile survey (1874)



Source: National Map Library, OS 6" to the Mile survey (1874)

In this area, high up on the eastern side of Allt Phocaichain, (close to the old track that runs from Inverwick up over the hill to join the Wade Military Road) there are the remains of two buildings. According to Historic Environment Scotland's Canmore website: "*What may be two unroofed shieling-huts are depicted on the 1st edition of the OS 6-inch map (Inverness-shire 1874, sheet lxvii).*" There are no other recorded shieling sites in the immediate or wider area on Glenmoriston's southern boundary. These old maps show the area to be covered in woodland - as indeed it still is. Given the vegetation, map and documentary evidence, a good case can be made that if the shieling site of Airidh nam Badan is in Glenmoriston, then this is likely the place that inspired the tune.

### Other songs in Story and Song from Loch Ness-side connected to shielings

- Mo chiochran 's mo chumhasan – Lullaby milking song (from the Gairloch area?)
- Tha mi air o chur, ho ri – Cattle herding song from "Lurgain Duibh" (The Black Shaft /Shin?)
- An gille donn 's a' bhanarach (The brown-haired boy and the milkmaid) – Song
- A nighean donn an airidh - The brown-haired maiden of the shieling) -

- Ged bhiodh na laoigh 'an cois a' chruidh – Melody and words on p.82 of Keith Norman MacDonald's *Puirt-à-Beul*
- Luinneag Airidh (A nighean donn thaghainn thu) – For story see: <https://digital.nls.uk/early-gaelic-book-collections/archive/76447133?mode=transcription>
- Oran Gaoil Airigh (O! b'fhearr leam no mo thuarasadl) – Shieling love song
- A fhlesgaich is cummaire – Perthshire shieling song
- Air bhi dhomsa gu ciuin riut – Song about death of girl by her lover's dirk
- Na Luban Laghach (Dh' fhalabh mi no le luban laghach) – Loves sweet wiles
- Than mise 'n o 'm laighe - Na craobhan caorainn, The Rowan Trees / Cuachag nan craobh
- An gaol a chiurr – The love that pained. (First line: Gur a mor mo chuis mhulaid) – Love song from Skye
- Ghabh mi m' chead an diugh dhe m' leannan (Mairi-Anna, or Annie's Mary) – According to A MacD song composed by Capt. "Cruachan" Macintyre, living / connected with Abriachan. Melody is Gaelic air that Burns used for *Ae fon kiss*.
- Oran nighean fhir na Ruilig – song about a girl whose sweetheart transfers his affection to another girl. See Thig Tri Nithean Gun Iarraidh by Flora MacNeil on her album "*Craobh nan Ubhal*".
- Ma theid thu dh' Araigh Ghualachan Variant of: 'N uair theid thu dh' Airigh-Bhuachain' Frances Tolmie. Collection of One Hundred and Five Songs of Occupation, Journal of the Folk-Song Society, No. 16 (1911). London. pp. 268-269. Tune only, from North Uist.

## 6.6 Changing Land Use - The Introduction of Sheep

In the latter part of the 18<sup>th</sup> century and as the 19<sup>th</sup> century, Glenmoriston increasingly experienced the pressures of wider economic forces and the prevalent fashions of the landed aristocracy as to how their estates should best be managed. In this period there was a change in expectation of landowners in what they required from their estates – i.e. less about fighting men, more about maximising revenue income. This coincided with new thinking of the agricultural revolution and the growing desire for agricultural improvement that had been started on the Forfeited Estates in the decades after 1745. The result was an influx of sheep as income from sheep (principally from wool from the new Cheviot and other breeds) began to replace traditional. This had a dramatic effect on the traditional system of land holding: the removal of tacksmen as middle-men between landlord and tenants; The removal of tenants from large areas of land in order to enable the lease to sheep farming tenants from the south, and: the end of in-bye land being farmed collectively by groups of tenants, with rights to common grazing areas on hill land with shielings.

The Old Statistical Account (1797) for Urquhart and Glenmoriston Parish states that "*Most of the farmers keep sheep, but there are no regular sheep farms except Corrimony's and one in Glenmoriston, both of which turn out well.*" According to Alexander Macdonald in *Story and Song from Loch Ness-side*, sheep were introduced to the area first on the north side of Corrie Dho (but also in Glenmoriston down to Allt Saigh) by Major Alpin Grant. He lived from circa 1738 -1811, and was the fourth son of Patrick Grant, the 8<sup>th</sup> Laird. With the death of John Grant, the 10<sup>th</sup> Laird, in 1801, his son Patrick inherited the estate. However, he was only 11 years old and it is possible that Alpin Grant, as a senior uncle, took on the role of estate caretaker whilst Patrick (and then subsequently James Murray) was in his minority. Alpin Grant may have been seen as a safe pair of hands to fulfil this role being a respectable man of the area – a Justice of the Peace, 1st Lieutenant in the Inverness-shire Volunteer Infantry and subsequently Major Lieutenant in the Local Militia of Inverness-shire, and also Bailie of Inverness Town Council. It is therefore likely that sheep were introduced by him at some point in the 10-year period, 1801-1811.

## The Musical Heritage of Glenmoriston

It is interesting to note that in Archie Tàilleir's *Òran do Choire Dho* he laments the introduction of deer to Coire Dho as they have displaced the deer (see *Section 6.1 Relationship with the Environment*). This seems slightly at odds with wider and other later evidence which points towards sheep displacing cattle and small mixed tenant farms.

The widespread introduction of sheep farming to Glenmoriston must have had a huge effect locally with the loss of land by existing tenants, as well as clearance and resulting emigration. According to the New Statistical Account (published in 1845) but written by Rev. James Doune Smith, the minister of Urquhart and Glenmoriston Parish in 1835, the population of Glenmoriston was:

1811 - 689

1821 - 608

1831 - 559

*“The decrease in Glenmoriston has been occasioned by emigration consequent on the introduction of sheep-farming to the partial exclusion of cattle – that district of the parish at no time been capable of supporting an agricultural population”.*

It is doubtful whether the latter part of the above statement was accurate as Glenmoriston had supported a viable and stable agricultural population - particularly since the introduction of potatoes. According to William MacKay (*Urquhart and Glenmoriston*) the Glen was self-sufficient in terms of grain production and exported butter, cheese and cattle. It is worth taking into account that the Rev. James Doune Smith was appointed and both housed in his manse and paid his salary in large part by the landowners (as was normal practice at that time) and this perhaps may have “influenced” his views. Ten years later in 1843 the inherent conflict of interest created by this patronage was to contribute towards the split in the Church of Scotland and the creation of the Free Church of Scotland.

Unlike some other parts of the Highlands there are few Glenmoriston songs and poems relating the social and economic trauma to the community from the introduction of sheep and changing land management. This could partially be explained by the fact that the local control, power and influence of landowners was still feudal in its operation and extent: the local population was dependent upon the Grants of Glenmoriston (and the Earl of Seafield) for employment, patronage, housing and land. Anyone expressing dissenting opinions might expect to pay a high price and thus were rare and seldom made public. For whatever reason, the Bards of Glenmoriston almost uniformly continued in their praise of MacPhadruig throughout the 19th century. Certainly, Alexander Macdonald appears genuine in his respect and fondness of J. M Grant, the 12<sup>th</sup> Laird.

*“Oran nan Chaorach Mhora”* by John Grant (circa 1755-1820) is one of the few Glenmoriston songs which does criticise the Grants and changes in the land management. The song opens with John Grant harking back to a better time before the death of “the Colonel” (Lieutenant-Colonel John Grant died in 1801). It also criticises the introduction of sheep, mourning the loss of land for cultivation, the clearance of tenants (*“All owners of land .... rejecting their people”*) and the resulting emigration. Given that it appears that sheep were introduced sometime in the first decade of the 18<sup>th</sup> century, and that John Grant died in 1820, the song must have been written at some point in this period.

| <b>Oran nan Chaorach Mhora</b>   | <b>Song of the Big Sheep</b>   |
|--|--|
| <i>Deoch slainte 'Choirneil nach maireann,<br/>'Se 'chumadh seòl air a ghabhail;<br/>Na'm biodh esan os ur cionn</i> | <i>Let's drink to the late Colonel,<br/>He who would have the sail ready to be hoisted;<br/>If he were in charge of your company</i> |

## The Musical Heritage of Glenmoriston

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|---|--|
| <i>Cha bhiodh na cruinn air na spàrran.</i>   | <i>The masts would not be on the rafters.</i>  |
| <i>Bhiodh an tuath air an giullachd,<br/>'S cha bhiodh gluasad air duine;<br/>'S cha bhiodh ardan gun uaisle<br/>'Faotuinn buaidh air a chumand'.</i>         | <i>The land would be cultivated,<br/>And no one would move;<br/>And there would be no arrogance without nobility<br/>'Accepting the consequence of his command'.</i> |
| <i>Tha gach Uachdaran fearainn<br/>'S an Taobh-Tuath s' air a' mhealladh,<br/>'Bhi 'cur cùl ri 'n cuid daoine'<br/>Airson caoraich na tearra.</i>             | <i>All owners of land<br/>In the North have been deceived,<br/>'Rejecting their people'<br/>For the sheep of the tar.</i>  |
| <i>Bha sinn uair a bha sinn miobhail,<br/>'Nuair bha Frangaich cho lionmhor,<br/>Ach ged a thigeadh e 'n raoir,<br/>Cha do thoill sibh 'dhol sìos leibh.</i>  | <i>We were once so unmannerly,<br/>'When the French were so numerous,<br/>But though he would have come last night,<br/>You would not want to join them.</i>         |
| <i>Ach na'm biodh aon rud ri tharruinn,<br/>Bhiodh mo dhùil ri 'dhol thairis;<br/>O'n dh'fhalbh muinntir mo dhuthch'<br/>'S beag mo shùnn ris a ghabhail.</i> | <i>But if there were one thing to be drawn,<br/>My expectation was to go overseas;<br/>Since the people of my country left<br/>I have not the spirit.</i>            |
| <i>Bidh mi 'falbh 's cha tèid stad orm,<br/>'S bidh mi 'triusadh mo bhagaist';<br/>'S bidh mi còmhla ri càch<br/>Nach dèan m' fhagail air cladach.</i>        | <i>I will go and I will not be stopped,<br/>And I 'gather my luggage';<br/>And I'll be with the others<br/>That won't leave me on the shore.</i>                     |
| <i>Ach a Rìgh air a' chathair,<br/>'Tha 'nad bhuachaill 's 'na d' Athair;<br/>Bi do gheàrd air an treud<br/>'Chaidh air reubadh na mara.</i>                  | <i>But King on the throne,<br/>'You are our shepherd and our Father;<br/>Be the guard of your flock<br/>Gone onto the tearing of the sea.</i>                        |
| <i>'S ach a Chrìosd anns na Flaitheas,<br/>Glac a stiùir 'na do làmhnan;<br/>Agus rèitich an cuan<br/>Gus a sluagh leigeil thairis.</i>                       | <i>But Christ in Heaven,<br/>Grasp the stern in your hands;<br/>And settle the ocean<br/>To let the people safely over.</i>  |

Source: Glenmoriston.org

Translation: Ceit Langhorne and Munro Gauld

In verse 3, he refers to “*caoraich na tearra*” - sheep of the tar. This is in reference to the common practice at that time of smearing the fleeces of sheep with a mixture of butter and tar as a means of protection against damp and parasites.

In verse 4 there is a reference to the French, although it is not clear what is meant. However, a common theme of Gaelic poems of the period was to question clearance and Highland depopulation at a time when the country was looking for men to defend the country from the threat of potential French invasion during the Napoleonic Wars (1803-1815). Again, it is not clear from the poem if French invasion was no longer perceived to be a threat. If this is the case, the song would have to have been written either during the brief periods when hostilities were paused, or when the wars had finished after Waterloo in 1815.

It is perhaps telling that it was written towards the end of John Grant's life, when he was considering emigration. These factors may have emboldened him to be more forthright and critical in this song. According to Alexander Macdonald in his presentation to the Gaelic Society of Inverness in February 1886:

*“John Grant, however, did not emigrate as many others then did, though he seems to have fostered a lingering desire to leave the Glen at that time, seeing that the management of landed property was*

*anything but promising to men in his station. He reconciled himself to the altered circumstances as best he could."*

Unfortunately, it has not been possible to identify the melody that went with this song. Perhaps further research will uncover the melody - or the opportunity should be taken for a new melody to be composed.

## 6.7 Deer forests and sporting use of land

Glenmoriston has had a long tradition of hunting with accompanying legends, stories, poems and songs. The best example is probably Oran Seilge ann an Coiredho (A Coire Dho Hunting Song) by Archie Tàilleir (Archibald Grant) - see *Section 6.1 Relationship with the Environment* for a detailed examination of the poem and its significance. What is certainly apparent from the poem is that hunting was historically enjoyed by the local Glenmoriston inhabitants and in the song Archie Tàilleir is perhaps lamenting the change of the nature of the hunt - from the large-scale *taincheall* done by the clansmen, to an exclusive sport carried out by the privileged few.

As William MacKay points out in Urquhart and Glenmoriston:

*"In our Parish the royal forest of Cluny or Cluanie, which embraced the extensive mountain tracts forming the border-lands of Glenmoriston and Kintail, were, from as early as the thirteenth century at least, reserved, nominally for the King's pleasure, but really for that of his representatives in Urquhart Castle. In that wide preserve no unauthorised person was allowed to hunt or cut wood under pain of severe punishment, and in 1573 letters were issued by James the Sixth protecting it from the inroads of graziers, and cutters of timber, and peelers of trees."*

*"Contrary to what is sometimes supposed, the old Highlander was not always at liberty to take the free use of the mountains and woods and streams with which he was surrounded. An old Gaelic proverb says:"*

|   |  |
|---|--|
| <i>Breac a linne,<br/>Maid a coille,<br/>'S fiadh a fireach,<br/>Meirle as nach do ghabh duine riamh naire.</i> | <i>A fish from the pool,<br/>A tree from the wood,<br/>And a deer from the mountain,<br/>Are thefts of which no man ever was ashamed</i> |
|---|--|

*"But thefts they were considered to be notwithstanding, and from the earliest times efforts were made by the legislature and landowners to suppress them. The Scottish enactments against illegal fishing and hunting and destruction of woods, fill no small portion of the statute-book from the twelfth century to the present, and there is evidence that they were more or less rigorously enforced in the Highlands at a comparatively early period.*

Given that William MacKay was an Inverness lawyer who in all likelihood made a good part of his living from representing landowners, it is perhaps not surprising that he would seek to emphasise the absolute supremacy of private property rights and seek to downplay any rights of tenants and the local community based upon usage over time.

It is interesting to note that the same rhyme is quoted by Alexander Macdonald in *Story and Song from Loch Ness-side*, preceded by the following:

*"Access to the hills and the waters has not, at least for a long period now, been free; but there is much reason to suspect that most of the people continued long to supplement their ordinary sources from these sources."*

## The Musical Heritage of Glenmoriston

According to James Boswell's journal entry for the 1<sup>st</sup> September 1773 after he and Samuel Johnson stayed the night at the inn at Aonach: "A redcoat of the 15<sup>th</sup> Regiment, whether officer or only sergeant I could not be sure, came to the house, in (on) his way to the mountains to shoot deer, which it seems that the Laird of Glenmoriston does not seem to hinder anybody to do."

Perhaps in the days before shooting estates, the taking of a deer may have been traditionally regarded by both the Laird and people of Glenmoriston as "fair game". Certainly, it is apparent from several songs and poems that the hunting of deer was something that was enjoyed by a wider cross-section of the general population than just the landowners, as is seen in the song 'S sealgair feidh air fireach thu (You are a deer hunter in the wilds):

|  |  |
|--|--|
| <i>Air faill-ill-oro-bha,<br/>Huro-bha, huro-bho;<br/>Air faill-ill-oro-bha.</i> | <i>Air faill-ill-oro-bha,<br/>Huro-bha, huro-bho;<br/>Air faill-ill-oro-bha.</i> |
| <i>'S sealgair feidh air fireach thu<br/>Air faill-ill-oro-bha, etc.</i>         | <i>You are a hunter in the wilderness,<br/>Air faill-ill-oro-bha, etc.</i>       |
| <i>'S a' bhrìc air an linne leat.<br/>Air faill-ill-oro-bha, etc.</i>            | <i>And the trout in the pool is yours,<br/>Air faill-ill-oro-bha, etc.</i>       |
| <i>'S ann a chunna mi fhein,<br/>Air faill-ill-oro-bha, etc.</i>                 | <i>I have seen myself,<br/>Air faill-ill-oro-bha, etc.</i>                       |
| <i>Thu-sa 'dh' fhalbh bhuan an de,<br/>Air faill-ill-oro-bha, etc.</i>           | <i>You departed from me yesterday,<br/>Air faill-ill-oro-bha, etc.</i>           |
| <i>'S trie a chunna mi fhein,<br/>Air faill-ill-oro-bha, etc.</i>                | <i>I have often seen myself,<br/>Air faill-ill-oro-bha, etc.</i>                 |
| <i>Thu-sa 'sealg air na feidh<br/>Air faill-ill-oro-bha, etc.</i>                | <i>You hunting the deer,<br/>Air faill-ill-oro-bha, etc.</i>                     |

Source: *Scraps of Unpublished Poetry and Folklore from Loch Ness - Part 1. Presentation by Mr Alex. Macdonald, 19th November 1893 to the Gaelic Society of Inverness.*

Translation: Ceit Langhorne and Munro Gauld

Traditionally hunting hadn't been at the expense of / detriment to the management of the majority of the productive land for agricultural purposes – the raising of cattle and the growing of crops on the better in-bye land, and the use of the grass-growing areas of hill land for communal grazing and for summer shielings. However, by the mid-1830s the demand for land for shooting had created a sporting rental value that was far outstripping the rental that could be got from leasing the land for even extensive sheep farming:

*"Sport had also by this time come to be a considerable asset. "Even unconquerable barrenness," we are informed, is now turned to good account. At the present moment, we believe, many Highland proprietors derive a greater revenue from their moors alone, for grouse shooting, than their whole rental amounted to sixty years since. The passion entertained by English gentlemen for field-sports has been fostered by the increased means of communication northwards, and up and down the country, from the highest hill to the deepest and most distant glen. The sportsman throws himself into a steamer at London, and in forty-eight hours or less he is in Edinburgh or Aberdeen. Another*

*day and he is in the heart of moor and mountain, where he may shoot, saunter, or angle to his heart's content."*

Highland News, October 28<sup>th</sup> 1835

The demand for land for sporting use was given further impetus by Victoria and Albert's lease, and subsequent purchase of Balmoral in 1852, and by the spread of the railways. Landowners found that renting the land out for sport produced a higher income than agricultural leases and thus, with falling wool prices, large areas of land were turned into deer forests. This was apparent throughout the mid to late 1800s and given lack of legal protection for tenants' rights (lack of leases / no security of tenure, no compensation for tenant's improvements, and no formal legal rights to common grazing on commonties) landowners faced few obstacles to converting agricultural land to sporting use. The sporting use of land brought jobs and outside wealth being invested in the area, but it also caused conflict with existing land uses. In 1888 Lord Tweedmouth, owner of the neighbouring Guisachan Estate to the north of Glenmoriston, took legal action (unsuccessfully) to prevent a right of access through his land; if it had been successful it would have blocked the drove road south with considerable consequences for cattle farming. And in Glenmoriston we get a rare glimpse of the underlying (and usually unspoken) resentment at the loss of productive agricultural land to sporting use from a testament given by local Balnacarn man, Duncan MacDonald, to the Napier commission in October 1883:

*"I desire to speak on the injurious influence of the existing system of deer forests in the Scottish Highlands. In the first place, the system is grossly injurious to the interests of the nation at large. It necessitates the laying and the keeping waste of extensive and valuable tracts of good land, and is thus locking up land particularly suited for the production of corn, turnips, potatoes, and for the rearing of sheep and cattle. If this land were in occupancy as farms in moderately sized holdings—in holdings that could be worked by heads of families independently of hired labour—it would certainly be rendered more productive than it is at present."*

Source: Glenmoriston.org website

*Story and Song from Loch Ness-side* contains the lyrics of two Glenmoriston songs which suggest the depth of feeling and resentment felt by local farm tenants to the change of land use from agricultural production to sporting use, and the introduction of gamekeepers. The subject matter of these Glenmoriston songs is extremely unusual as there are very few local songs or poems (written or collected) that are critical of the changes in land use and management by the Lairds.

It is perhaps significant that these songs were written by anonymous tenants rather than by "The Bards". And perhaps also significant that it was Alexander Macdonald who recorded and put the songs into print; Macdonald worked as an accountant for the Highland Railway Co. in Inverness and was thus perhaps not as closely tied-in to the landed interests as other local poets and collectors (such as William MacKay). Accordingly, perhaps he felt less inhibited in including alternative views and dissenting voices critical of land management practices current during the 1800s.

*"After the Achnanconeran people had been deprived of their hill pastures, where their ancestors had for generations had their shielings, and which for themselves fed a considerable stock of excellent sheep and cattle, those beautiful corries and fertile glens were fenced off. There was planted in the township immediately a gamekeeper, whose duty it was to watch the forest, and prevent poaching. There were of course other keepers, here, there, and everywhere in the neighbourhood. Those keepers were one and all considerate and they and their families excellent neighbours. Still, they represented unpopular authority, and now and again an opportunity was taken of satirising the service." (Alexander Macdonald, *Story and Song from Loch Ness-side*).*

|  |   |
|--|---|
| <p><b>Na Geamearan</b></p> <p><i>Hò-rò, na geamearan,<br/>Hì-rì, na geamearan;<br/>Gasch fear tha giùlain gloine dhiubh,<br/>Gu 'n aithnich sinn a mhòr-chuis:<br/>Hò-rò, na geamearan</i></p> | <p><b>The Gamekeepers</b></p> <p><i>Ho-ro, the gamekeepers,<br/>Hi-ri, the gamekeepers;<br/>Each one who carries a spy-glass,<br/>We can recognise the arrogance:<br/>Ho-ro the gamekeepers</i></p> |
| <p><i>Ach mar bith dhomh-sa 'n tàmailte,<br/>'S gu 'n cuirt' as an àite mi.<br/>Na 'n tàchradh e 's a' Chràch orm<br/>Gu 'n d' thug mi bhàrr a chòt' i.</i></p>                                | <p><i>But if it were not for the same,<br/>And being evited from the place,<br/>Should he meet me in the Craach,<br/>I would take the spy-glass from off his coat.</i></p>                          |
| <p><i>Bu mhoch a thachair said orm,<br/>Le ghunna fada 's mial-chu aig';<br/>'S gu 'n d' fhoighnichd e gu h-iargalt diom<br/>'N robh sgial agam air ròcais.</i></p>                            | <p><i>In the early morning I met a hero,<br/>With his long gun and greyhound;<br/>And he asked me most ferociously,<br/>If I knew where to find a rook.</i></p>                                     |
| <p><i>Labhair mi gu h-uasal ris –<br/>"Cha 'n 'eil a h-aon 's na cruachan diubh;<br/>Ach fiach-sa toll na luathainn,<br/>Is cuir cuairt air lag an òtraich.</i></p>                            | <p><i>I spoke to him politely –<br/>"There are none in the stacks,<br/>But try the hole for the ashes,<br/>And round about the midden pit."</i></p>   |
| <p><i>'S choinnch gaisgeach shuas ud mi.<br/>'S e caoidh cho beag 's a fhuair e dhiu; -<br/>" 'S ann chuir 'a chlann air fuadach iad,<br/>'S gur truagh nach fhan sibh sàmhach."</i></p>       | <p><i>And I met the warrior up there,<br/>Lamenting that he had got so few –<br/>"The children have driven them out,<br/>And it is a pity you do not keep quiet."</i></p>                           |

Source and translation: *Story and Song from Loch Ness-side*, Alexander Macdonald (1982)

The song is laden with polite bitterness and simmering anger - a rare voice of dissent from the past.

*Am faca sibh na geamearan* is another song in *Story and Song from Loch Ness-side*, from this period and appears to be a *luinneag* - a song to be sung by a group of people when working. "Two or three rabbit trappers lodged for some time during a winter in the village, and this is how the event was chronicled:"

#### **Am faca sibh na geamearan**

|  |   |
|--|---|
| <p><i>Am faca sibh na geamearan,<br/>Ho-ro-u-ì,<br/>A thainig do 'n a' bhaile-sa,<br/>Ho-ro-u-ò;</i></p>                   | <p><i>Have you seen the gamekeepers?<br/>Ho-ro-u-i,<br/>Who came to this village,<br/>Ho-ro-u-o;</i></p>                  |
| <p><i>Le 'n gunnaichean is dagaichean,<br/>Ho-ro-u-ì,<br/>Le 'n cuipaichean 's le 'n abhaigean,<br/>Ho-ro-u-ò;</i></p>     | <p><i>With their guns and pistols,<br/>Ho-ro-u-i,<br/>With their whips and their terriers,<br/>Ho-ro-u-o;</i></p>         |
| <p><i>Le 'm bucaillean, 's le 'm bagaichean,<br/>Ho-ro-u-ì<br/>Le 'm briogaisean 's an spadaichean,<br/>Ho-ro-u-ò?</i></p> | <p><i>With their buckles and their bags,<br/>Ho-ro-u-i,<br/>With their trousers and their gaiters,<br/>Ho-ro-u-o;</i></p> |
| <p><i>Cha 'n fhacas riabh an leithid-sa,<br/>Ho-ro-u-ì,</i></p>  | <p><i>Their like has never been seen,<br/>Ho-ro-u-i,</i></p>  |

## The Musical Heritage of Glenmoriston

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| <p><i>‘S cha ‘n fhaic gu sior ‘s a’ bheatha-sa,<br/>Ho-ro-u-ò.</i></p>  | <p><i>And never shall be seen in this life,<br/>Ho-ro-u-o;</i></p>   |
| <p><i>‘S i Flori is bean-tighe dhaibh,<br/>Ho-ro-u-ì,<br/>‘S tha I trang a’ feidhidh dhaibh,<br/>Ho-ro-u-o;</i></p> | <p><i>Flora is their housewife,<br/>Ho-ro-u-i,<br/>And she is busy serving them,<br/>Ho-ro-u-o;</i></p>      |
| <p><i>‘S gheibh I paidheir rabaidean,<br/>Ho-ro-u-ì,<br/>A h-uile h-oidhche ‘Shathurna,<br/>Ho-ro-u-ò.</i></p>      | <p><i>And she will get a pair of rabbits,<br/>Ho-ro-u-i,<br/>On every Saturday night,<br/>Ho-ro-u-o.</i></p> |

Source and translation: *Story and Song from Loch Ness-side*, Alexander Macdonald (1982)

*Am faca sibh na geamearan* was obviously composed right at the start of sporting land management (likely around 1850): - “*Their like has never been seen ..... and never shall be seen in this life*”. In fact, the gamekeeper and sporting use of the land was to greatly increase in the latter part of the 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries, and became the norm for Glenmoriston (and much of the Highlands) for the next 175 years right up to the present day.

Unfortunately, the melodies for both these songs are not contained in the appendix of the 1982 edition of *Story and Song from Loch Ness side*, and as such, are probably lost. However, even without their melodies, these songs are a precious and rare insight into the views of the local community at a time of changing land management in Glenmoriston.

### Other songs connected to hunting and deer forests

- Oran Seilge ann an Coiredho (A Coire Dho Hunting Song) - Song by Archibald Grant (Archie Tàilleir). To be found in:
  - *Story and Song from Loch Ness-side* by Alexander Macdonald (1914)
  - *The Grants of Glenmoriston (Reminiscences Historical and Traditional)*, by Rev. Allan Sinclair (1887)
  - *Dain agus Orain*, le Gilleasbuig Grannda, bard Ghlinnemorasdain. (1863). Poems and songs by Archibald Grant of Glenmoriston (Archie Tàilleir)
- Oran (A song) – Untitled song by Archibald Grant (Archie Tàilleir) on p 45 of *Dain agus Orain*, le Gilleasbuig Grannda, bard Ghlinnemorasdain. (1863).
- Oran do Mr Arabin Sassunach a bha Sealg san àite (A song to Mr Arabin an Englishman who hunted locally) – Song by Archibald Grant (Archie Tàilleir) on p 115 of *Dain agus Orain*, le Gilleasbuig Grannda, bard Ghlinnemorasdain. (1863).

## 7. Recommendations for future research and development

Given the richness of the musical heritage of Glenmoriston, and that it is largely unknown and unutilised, there is considerable potential to extend this research as well as to develop the resource. This would not only connect the current residents of the glen to the area's cultural heritage, but it is likely to be of interest (and value) to a far wider audience. There are a number of potential ways that this could be done:

### Educational and Outreach

- Hold a "sharing event" with the findings of this first phase of the project.
- Ensure all future research includes an educational component.
- Work with local schools to develop resources that would support Education Scotland's Curriculum for Excellence.
- Teach Gaelic songs from Glenmoriston (and surrounding area?) as a way of re-establishing a tradition.
- Involve of local community groups.

### Community Cultural

- Establishing a "Glenmoriston Dùthchas Project" - with the aim of re-establishing a strong community cultural connection to place (Dùthchas - the word that describes understanding of land, people and culture).

### Creative

- Create a local map of places from the songs to establish a Gaelic "*Songline*" of Glenmoriston
- Work collaboratively with musicians and singers to raise awareness of the heritage of Gaelic songs from the area.
- Create an online resource and / or a printed booklet with songs from Glenmoriston complete with Gaelic lyrics, translations and melodies.
- Where the original melodies to Glenmoriston songs are lost, commission musicians to write new melody. This could be done via a competition with winners being awarded a grant to record, or by encouraging an established musician / singer to use the material and resource identified in this report themselves.
- Hold a local festival celebrating Glenmoriston's traditional heritage.
- Hold a celebration event / commemoration of Alexander Macdonald, his life and his work.
- Hold a concert featuring the songs, poems and music of Glenmoriston. This could be done in partnership with organisations (such as NatureScot, Tree for Life etc) and form part of the forthcoming Scotland's Year of Stories to be held in 2022. There is a potential for inclusion of such an event as part of Celtic Connections 2022.

### Research

Given the limited time available to carry out this exercise and the amount, depth and richness of the resource, much further research could usefully be carried out.

- Collaboration with a Gaelic singer to marry the song lyrics in *Story and Song from Loch Ness-side* with the melodies in the Musical Appendix along with other known melodies.
- Research and identify the tunes to songs where either it has not been possible to locate the given melody, or where no melody was provided in the various publications. A limited amount of this research was carried out as part of this phase of the project as given the

## The Musical Heritage of Glenmoriston

sheer number of songs connected to Glenmoriston (over 300) it has only been possible to identify a proportion of the melodies.

- Some of the songs without identifiable melodies are predominately of only local importance and interest. However, there are some that have a wider regional / national significance and perhaps future efforts to trace melodies should be concentrated on these songs. Alternative approaches might be to either utilise the melodies of other existing songs from the appropriate period, or for new melodies to be composed to fit these old songs. Suggestions for such songs include:
  - The Glenmoriston songs of Domhull Donn
  - Bobadh is m' annsachd – (Archibald Grant Snr)
  - Oran nan Chaorach mhor (John Grant)
  - Cnoc-na h-Ath (Alexander Macdonald)
  - Na Geamearan (Anon.)
  - Am faca sibh na geamearan (Anon.)
  - John Grant's Sacred Song (Laoidh Iain 'ic Illeasbuig) – by John Grant
  - Oran Mollaidh do Gleannmoireasduinn (A song in praise of Glenmoriston) - Alexander Grant (Alasdair Mac Iain Bhàin)
  - Cha teid mi an rathad - Song about the Cailleach a' Chraich
- Subject areas to further explore Glenmoriston's musical heritage could include
  - The Glenmoriston songs of Domhull Donn
  - Other songs and tunes that are historically connected to Glenmoriston through people or events
  - Songs of place
  - Celebrating the year
  - Love songs
  - Comical and satirical songs
  - Drinking songs
  - Fiddle and bagpipe music
  - Songs of Glenmoriston's near neighbours
- Alexander Macdonald wrote a regular column on the songs of Loch Ness-side from 1890 until his death in 1928. This could be copied, collated and published (on a dedicated website?). It would no doubt provide a treasure chest of local tunes, songs etc  
Funding from Heritage Lottery Fund. Done in collaboration with others: e.g. Community Council, local community groups, Trees for Life, Highland Archive Centre, Highland Council, An Comunn Gàidhealach, Feisean Nan Gaidheal Association, etc.
- Unearth the unpublished songs and poems of Alexander Macdonald. The titles and some of the melodies to nine unpublished songs are given, as well as a hint to there being others ("some love-songs that have not yet been printed") in "MacDonald Bards from Mediaeval Times" by Keith Norman MacDonald (1900).
- Work with Universities / Further Education colleges to carry out research (UHI, School of Scottish Studies etc).
- Establish whether there any relatives of Alexander Macdonald still living in the Inverness or wider area.

## 8. Conclusion

This research has uncovered and illustrates the depth of Glenmoriston’s musical heritage. Whilst there are few fiddle or pipe tunes from, or associated with Glenmoriston, its cultural wealth lies in the extraordinarily large number of Gaelic songs, poems and stories connected with the glen. This represents an incredibly valuable cultural resource with huge potential for future development to increase understanding and appreciation of its significance. It should be noted that this report, carried out more as a scoping exercise than an in-depth study, has been able to only touch on the local resources, and that further research would greatly enhance the understanding and potential of Glenmoriston’s musical and cultural heritage.

What is abundantly clear from the work of the Glenmoriston Bards, is that they had a deep understanding and love of their local area in terms of its history, culture and natural environment. It is also apparent that there is much that we can learn today from their intimate knowledge of Glenmoriston; and that an appreciation and understanding of this “cultural capital” is useful and applicable to both how the glen is regarded by its modern inhabitants, as well as of help in influencing local decisions, policies and practice relating to cultural heritage, education and environmental management.

In 1886 Alexander Macdonald stated that: “at this time there are few families in that Glen who cannot trace themselves directly or indirectly back to local poets as their ancestors.” Given that few of the current residents of Glenmoriston are able to trace their family connection to the glen for more than a generation, there is a danger that the ongoing link with the glen’s past will be limited, if not lost. Any such break in the thread that ties the present generations to the past inhabitants of Glenmoriston endangers the local cultural heritage - a shared sense of place, an understanding of the glen’s history, its stories and a knowledge and appreciation of its Gaelic culture. Through educational and arts projects there is the potential to re-connect local people to that past and to develop a cultural understanding and connection to place - a Glenmoriston “Dúthchas”. It is hoped that, in some small way this report will help in this process of re-weaving the tapestry of Glenmoriston’s rich cultural heritage.

It is perhaps fitting to conclude this report with one of Alexander Macdonald’s own poems – *Cnoc-na h-Ath, The Hillock of the kiln*. In the poem, Macdonald laments the loss of the people who used to throng the area in his youth. It is not entirely clear if this is a loss of population through clearance, or whether it is just part of the process of life where the locals of his youth age, or leave the glen to make their way in the world, as indeed Alexander Macdonald did. Either way, the poem can be seen as a fond reminiscence to Macdonald’s own lost youth, and very much fits into a tradition of Gaelic poems and songs in a similar vein such as *Cead Deireannach nam Beann* by Duncan Ban MacIntyre or Duncan McLean’s *Sealladh o Mhullach Shroin a’ Chlachain aig Cillfhinn*.

From its content and tone, the poem would seem to be set in Glenmoriston – perhaps the Achnanconeran of his youth. Is there a place locally known as Cnoc-na h-Ath? The poem is laden with the love that he obviously had for the area and its people. Glenmoriston is fortunate to have had such an ambassador in Alexander Macdonald; through his books, articles, poems and songs he left an enduring legacy that enriched not only his own generation, but succeeding ones right up to the present day. Let us hope that he can be the inspiration for future generations to carry on learning, cherishing and valuing Glenmoriston’s rich cultural heritage.

| <b>Cnoc-na h-Ath</b>                   | <b><i>Hillock of the Kiln</i></b> |
|--|-----------------------------------|
| <i>'S tric a bhios mi smaointeachd</i> | <i>Often do I think,</i>          |

The Musical Heritage of Glenmoriston

|   |  |
|---|--|
| <p><i>C ait' an diugh bheil na laoich,<br/>Bhiodh a cruinneachadh aon uair<br/>Aig taobh Cnoc-na-h-Ath.</i></p>   | <p><i>Where today are the heroes?<br/>Who used at one time to meet,<br/>Beside Cnoc-na h-Ath.</i></p>  |
| <p><i>C' ait an diugh bheil na fearaibh<br/>A bha fiùghantach, smearail?<br/>'S ann tha 'n t-ionndrain 's a bhail'<br/>Air laoich ghasda mo ghraidh.</i></p>                    | <p><i>Where today are the men<br/>Who were worthy and vigorous?<br/>They are much missed in the village<br/>The fine heroes whom I loved.</i></p>                        |
| <p><i>'S tric a chunna mi còmhlha<br/>Prasgan cuideachdail, còirte,<br/>Air lomagan bòidheach<br/>Cnocan còsach na h-Ath.</i></p>   | <p><i>Often did I see together<br/>A sociable, agreeable company,<br/>On the beautiful green clearings,<br/>Of the spongy hillocks of the Kiln.</i></p>                  |
| <p><i>'S iomadh màthair bha pròiseil,<br/>Agus piuthar chuir dòchas<br/>As na fleasgaichean òga<br/>Dh' fhàgadh oighean fo phràmh.</i></p>                                      | <p><i>Many were the mothers who were proud,<br/>And sisters who put their faith<br/>In the young stalwarts<br/>Who would leave maidens swooning</i></p>                  |
| <p><i>Mar ùr phris ann an gleann iad,<br/>Ri taice na'n seann-chraobh,<br/>'S grian na h-òig' orra dannsa<br/>'S iad am Bealltuinn am fais—</i></p>                             | <p><i>They are like young bushes in a glen,<br/>Beside the older trees,<br/>And the sun of youth glinting on them,<br/>In the May-day of their youth -</i></p>           |
| <p><i>Ach mar osag a Gheamhraidh<br/>Sgaoileadh tional an t-Shamhraidh,<br/>Chuir an saoghal air chall iad,<br/>'S cha 'n eil ann diu ach sgàil'.</i></p>                       | <p><i>But like the blast of winter<br/>Scattering the summer gathering,<br/>The world has set them a-wondering,<br/>And only the shadow remains.</i></p>                 |
| <p><i>Tha cuid shios 'us cuid shuas dhiu;<br/>Cuid gu deas agus tuath dhiu;<br/>Tha cuid eile thair chuan diu;<br/>'S cuid 's an uaigh dhiu' aig tàmh.</i></p>                  | <p><i>There are some down yonder and some up here;<br/>Some in the south and some in the north;<br/>Others are over the seas;<br/>And some at rest in the grave.</i></p> |
| <p><i>Thug gach bliadhna cuid fhéin bhuainn,<br/>'S ann 's beag nach d' fhalbh iad gu léir oirnn<br/>'S dh' fhàgadh sinne gu déurach,<br/>Caoidh na'n tréun fhìr a bha.</i></p> | <p><i>Each year took its quota from us,<br/>Almost all have gone from us<br/>And we have been left tearful,<br/>Lamenting the brave men of yore.</i></p>                 |

Source and translation: *Story and Song from Loch Ness-side* (1982 Edition)

## Bibliography

In addition to the books and documents referenced in the Appendices, the below are referred to in the main text of this report:

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*A Collection of Gaelic Songs*, Peter Tuner (1813)  
*Am Filidh - A collection of songs and rhymes*, edited by Seumas Munro (1840)  
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*Songs of Gaelic Scotland*, Anne Lorne Gillies (2005)  
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*The Killin Collection of Gaelic Songs*, Charles Stewart (1884)  
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- Airs and melodies peculiar to the Highlands of Scotland and the Isles* (1816) Captain Simon Fraser  
*Angus Fraser Collection of Scottish Gaelic Airs*, (1996) Taigh na Teud  
*Elizabeth Ross Manuscript* University of Edinburgh (2011)  
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- Caran an t-Saoghail – Anthology of 19th century Scottish Gaelic Verse*, Donald Meek (2003)  
*Gaelic poetry and the British military, 1756-1945*. Wilson McLeod, Celtic and Scottish Studies, University of Edinburgh [https://www.gla.ac.uk/media/Media\\_164190\\_smxx.pdf](https://www.gla.ac.uk/media/Media_164190_smxx.pdf)  
University of Aberdeen (2001)  
*Hunting and Hunting Reserves in Medieval Scotland*, John Gilbert (1979)  
*Leabhar na Fèinne: Gaelic texts, Heroic Gaelic Ballads collected in Scotland chiefly from 1512-1871*; Campbell, J.F; eds.; 1872; Spottiswoode, London.  
*Making the Fiddle Sing: Captain Simon Fraser of Knockie and his Airs and Melodies Peculiar to the Highlands of Scotland and the Isles*, Mary Anne Alburger Dissertation for the degree of PhD  
*Scottish Fiddlers and their Music*, (1983), Mary Anne Alburger  
*The Gaelic Poet and the British military experience, 1756-1856*. Ruairidh Iain Maciver, (2018)  
PhD thesis. P. 134 <http://theses.gla.ac.uk/30582/7/2018MaciverPhD.pdf>  
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## APPENDIX 1

### Story and Song from Loch-Ness side

Alexander Macdonald (1860 – 1928)

First published in 1914, re-published with additional material (translations and musical notation) in 1982. Page numbers are those of the First Edition (1914) – see:

<http://dbooks.bodleian.ox.ac.uk/books/PDFs/590635432.pdf>

80 songs – 38 of them local to Glenmoriston

18 poems

13 charms / blessings

34 have music in SOLFA notation in the Appendix to the 1982 Edition of *Story and Song from Loch Ness-side* - Highlighted below in **YELLOW**

23 others (at least) have known melodies - highlighted below in **GREEN**

\* Denotes songs local to Glenmoriston

#### Chapter 1 – Glenmoriston - its Peoples and Possessors (page 12)

- 1.1 \* Mo laochan, mo laochan – Marriage poem / song describing banter between spouses / parents from houses of MacDonald and Grant
- 1.2 \* ‘S ann tha ‘n diubhail an drasd - Poem? by John Grant (father of Archibald Grant Jnr) about drowning at Portclair

#### Chapter 2 – How the people lived (page 35)

- 2.1 \* **Am Posta Ban (The Fair Postman) – Song by Stoddart.** Melody in Appendix. Recording in 1963 of Jessie MacDonald from Glenmoriston Parish reciting song under title “*Faill ill óro bha hì, gu bheil m' inntinn fo phràmh*” with alternative titles of “*Latha Fada, Fada, Ciar*” and “*Oran na Postaigh*”  
<http://tobarandualchais.co.uk/en/fullrecord/82771>
- 2.2 \* Smeorach Thorra-Ghoill (the thrush of Torgyle). Love song by the daughter of MacDonald, the innkeeper at Torgyle. Also in *An Duanaire, A new collection of Gaelic songs and poems by Donald Campbell Macpherson* see: <https://digital.nls.uk/early-gaelic-book-collections/archive/76054484?mode=transcription>

#### Chapter 3 – Church and School (page 57)

- 3.1 Dhachaidh dhachaidh – Bell song (fragment)

#### Chapter 4 – Mainly around Invermoriston (page 73)

- 4.1.1 Song by Domhull (Donald or Dòmhnall) Donn referred to re a duel with the son of Iain Lom – in *An t’Oranaiche*. See: <http://tobarandualchais.co.uk/en/fullrecord/63852>
- 4.2 \* Na ‘n tigeadh an Samhradh - Song by Domhull re the Red Craig or Donald’s Cave
- 4.3 \* Nach b’ fhearr leat mi agad - Song about Domhull’s loneliness
- 4.4 \* Latha dhomh-sa ‘siubhal bheann – Love song by Domhull Donn. Another version in *Clarsach ‘na Coille*: <https://digital.nls.uk/early-gaelic-book-collections/archive/76034974?&mode=transcription>
- 4.5 \* **Mile malachd do ‘n òl** (A thousand curses on drink)- Song by Domhull Donn about his capture at Allt Saigh. Melody in Appendix and written out in staff notation in Section 6.5
- 4.6 Gur a mi th’ air mo sgaradh – Song by Domhull Donn written in Inverness jail before his beheading.

- 4.7 \* **Tha mo run air a' ghille** – Love song written by the daughter of Grant of Glenmoriston for Domhull Donn (see Vol XXIV Transactions of Gaelic Society of Inverness). Song is an early version (with the same melody) of well-known song of the same name.  
For melody see: A 'Choisir Chiuil – The St Columba Collection of Gaelic Song:  
<https://digital.nls.uk/early-gaelic-book-collections/archive/75753711?mode=transcription>  
Traditional version: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=foOTo5mTEx0>  
Mary Jane Lamond: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8U3OYYgWnYI>  
*An t-oranaiche* (The Gaelic songster) (1879) by Archibald Sinclair  
<https://archive.org/details/gaelicsongsterto00sincuoft/page/190/mode/2up>  
See also:  
<http://carmichaelwatson.blogspot.com/2010/07/tha-mo-run-air-ghille-i-love-lad-ii.html>  
<https://usmod.wordpress.com/2015/05/30/story-behind-the-song-tha-mo-run-air-a-ghille/>

### Chapter 5 – Our Poets (page 93)

- 5.1 \* A luchd comuinn mo ruin – Poem about the MacPhadruig family written by Iain MacEò Bhàin Bhàin (known locally as Iain Ruadh). His name was either John Grant, or MacDonald.
- 5.2 \* **Mo run Coir' Iarairidh** – Song by Ewen MacDonald in praise of Coire Iarairidh. Sung to same tune as Coire a' Cheathaich (according to Rev Alan Sinclair in *The Grants of Glenmoriston*). – see *Patrick MacDonald Collection* and *The Angus Fraser Collection*.
- 5.3 \* Bobadh is m' annsachd – Morning lullaby by Archibald Grant Snr for Angus Òg Macdonnell of Glengarry
- 5.4 \* **Hò fearan hì fearan** – Praise song by Archibald Grant Snr about Angus Òg Macdonnell of Glengarry. Melody in Appendix and Section 6.4.
- 5.5 \* Mo ghaol, mo ghaol – Song by Archibald Grant Snr about Angus Òg Macdonnell of Glengarry
- 5.6 \* Theid an t'èideadh – Short song by Archibald Grant Snr on presenting Aonghas Òg with his first kilt.
- 5.7 \* Deoch-slainte Choirneil nach maireann – Song by John Grant about the advent of sheep and its adverse effects of clearance and emigration.
- 5.8 \* **Oran an t'Saighdear** (Song of the Soldier)– by Alasdair Mac Iain Bhàin. The soldier's song in which he describes how the hardships of campaigns all over Europe have aged him prematurely since he was tricked by "the gold" and "the promises." Rather than the sounding of the pipes for action he would prefer "the lowing of a slim cow on its way to be milked in the glen." Probably his best-known poem.  
Also is printed in the seventh volume of the Society's Transactions, page 52.  
Recording of song under title "Ged Nach Eil Mi Ach Òg 'S Beag M' Aighear ri Ceòl" by Kate MacDonald of South Uist in <http://tobarandualchais.co.uk/en/fullrecord/34581>  
The melody is also known as *The Pearl of the Irish Nation* - see:  
[https://tunearch.org/wiki/Annotation:Pearl\\_of\\_the\\_Irish\\_Nation\\_\(2\)](https://tunearch.org/wiki/Annotation:Pearl_of_the_Irish_Nation_(2))  
See also, *Brigh an Òrain - A Story in Every Song*, by Lauchie MacLellan, John Shaw, Alistair MacLeod for the song as part of the Cape Breton tradition:  
[https://books.google.co.uk/books?id=SWu9\\_7sAHkIC&pg=PA410&lpg=PA410&dq=the+song+of+glenmoriston&source=bl&ots=Y4\\_uXqTOep&sig=ACfU3U0SBsWWVihM7IaQFXCDrUSgJWVsbA&hl=en&sa=X&ved=2ahUKEwj2296PwObtAhXAQEEAHQxiCSY4KBD0ATABegQIAhAC#v=onepage&q&f=false](https://books.google.co.uk/books?id=SWu9_7sAHkIC&pg=PA410&lpg=PA410&dq=the+song+of+glenmoriston&source=bl&ots=Y4_uXqTOep&sig=ACfU3U0SBsWWVihM7IaQFXCDrUSgJWVsbA&hl=en&sa=X&ved=2ahUKEwj2296PwObtAhXAQEEAHQxiCSY4KBD0ATABegQIAhAC#v=onepage&q&f=false)
- 5.9 \* Moch 's a' mhaduinn Diciadain - Song by Alasdair Mac Iain Bhàin. "Inspired by the Bard receiving tidings of Grant of Glenmoriston being seriously ill, and it reveals the nearness of landlord and people to each other in olden times" (Alexander Macdonald).

### Chapter 6 - Pipers and Fiddlers (page 108)

- 6.1 **Tha fear 'am beinn an t-Slochdain-Duibh** - " Canntaireachd," or Puirt-à-Beul, Melody is "a distant variant of " *The Marquis of Huntly's Highland Fling*," known in Gaelic under the title of "*Maighdeannan a' Choir e Dhuibh*"  
Tune in *Puirt-à-beul*, by Keith Norman MacDonald's page 89
- 6.2 **Rinn am fìdhleir mo mhealladh** - Puirt-à-beul to the same air as above.
- 6.3 **And 7 other fragments of songs to the same tune**

#### **Chapter 7 – Some of our Casual Visitors (Page 120)**

- 7.1 \* Latha dhomh 's mi tionndadh òtraich - ditty about local John Grant (Iain Cam)
- 7.2 \* 'S iomadh blàr is baiteal éitidh – Another ditty about Iain Cam.

#### **Chapter 8 – Our Aristocratic Acquaintances (page 128)**

- 8.1 \* Thigeadh bho Chreagan an Fhitheach - Song by Archie Grant comparing Colonel Alexander Ronaldson MacDonnell of Glengarry with the Lordship of the Isles
- 8.2 Deoch Slaint' an Alasdair Ghleannaich – Toast in praise of Colonel MacDonnell (author unknown). Goes before following song:
- 8.3.1 'S tim dhomh dusgadh a m' shuain. Song in praise of Colonel MacDonnell, written by a MacLean from Tiree. Source: from a collection of Gaelic song "*Clarsarch na Coille*" edited by Rev Alexander MacLean-Sinclair from Nova Scotia.  
<https://digital.nls.uk/early-gaelic-book-collections/archive/76947664?mode=transcription>
- 8.4 Turus dhobhsa mach air chuairt – Song by Alan MacDougal to Macrae "*Gleann-a-Cuaich*"

#### **Chapter 9 – Baptismal and Marriage Customs (page 139)**

- 9.1 Boiseaeg air t'aois – Blessing for bathing a child

#### **Chapter 10 – Of sickness, death, wakes and funerals (page 149)**

No songs

#### **Chapter 11 – Of dreams, omens, luck, spells and charms (page 149)**

- 11.1 A' Chullain, Challain, Chaisg – Blessing given at Christmas /New Year when visiting
- 11.2 Na falabh Diluan – Days of the week rhyme
- 11.3 Chuala mi cuthag – Bad luck rhyme
- 11.4 Tha eolas agam air an ruaidhe – Charm to release milk in women or animals
- 11.5 Deanamsa dhut-sa eolas air suil – Incantation to ward off the evil eye
- 11.6 Eolas a Chronachaidh – The Chastening Charm to ward off evil eye
- 11.7 Ni mi 'n ubhaidh rinn Peader do Phal - Charm for sprained (ankles etc) said to have been used by the Jacobite, John Roy Stewart
- 11.8 Chaidh Criosg air muin each donn – Charm (or eolas) for spraining
- 11.9 Triuir a thachair orm – A charm for bladder complaint
- 11.10 Ni mi 'n obaig a rin Calum Cille - A charm for "an tarbhan" caused by overeating in cattle.
- 11.11 St Peter sat on a new rolled stone – charm for toothache (said in English)
- 11.12 Fa fithe cuiream ort - Charm to stop haemorrhaging

#### **Chapter 12 – Hallowee'n, Rent Day, sports and pastimes etc. (page 184)**

- 12.1 \* A chionn 's gu 'm faighinn fhoutuinn – Rent day poem by Archie Tàilleir  
Oran boisilidh - Air a' chuit an uidean dhuit – Easter egg rolling rhyme
- 12.2 'N uair thig latha buidhe Bealltuin – Beltane rhyme
- 12.3 An Nollaig mu dheireadh dhe n' chiad – by Duncan Gow Badenoch (see *Turner Collection* 1813)

#### **Chapter 13 – Of the Ceilidh Part 1 (page 205)**

- 13.1 \* Cha teid mi an rathad - song about the Cailleach a' Chraich
- 13.2 **Cailleach Beinn a Bhric ho ro** - Well-known Lochaber song about the witch of Beinn a Bhric. Melody in Appendix. Also in *The Gesto Collection* page 17.
- 13.3 **A mhor a mhor** – Lullaby by Leannan-Sith to his child after the mother abandons them. Melody in Appendix. Several different songs with different melodies tell the same story: See: *Oran an t-each usige, The Gesto Collection*.  
*Dh'èirich mi moch, b' fheàrr nach do dh'èirich*, - Julie Fowlis version:  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jC-CWsQ-KTo>

#### Chapter 14 – The Ceilidh Contd. (page 241)

- 14.1 **\*Gur tric a' falbh na Sroine mi (Tha buaidh air an uisge bheatha)** - Whisky song composed by one of Macphadruig's herds. Sung to "a stirring air". Melody in Appendix and also in *The Angus Fraser Collection*. See Section 6.5 Shielings in Song and Music.
- 14.2 **Mo chiochran 's mo chumhasan** – Lullaby milking song - perhaps from the Gairloch area. Melody in Appendix.
- 14.3 **Tha mi air o chur, ho ri** – Cattle herding song from "Lurgain Duibh" (The Black Shaft /Shin?). Melody in Appendix.
- 14.2 **An gille donn 's a' bhanarach** – Song Melody in Appendix. Also in Keith Norman MacDonald's *Puirt-à-beul*, page 93 and numerous other collections.
- 14.3 **A nighean donn an airidh** Melody in Appendix. Also in Keith Norman MacDonald's *Puirt-à-beul*, page 93 and numerous other collections.
- 14.4 **Ged bhiodh na laoi gh 'an cois a' chruidh** – Melody and words on p.82 of *Puirt-à-Beul*, Keith Norman MacDonald.
- 14.5 **Cha teid mi Choir Odhar** - Perthshire shieling song. Melody in Appendix.
- 14.6 Luinneag Airidh (A nighean donn thaghainn thu) – Shieling love song
- 14.7 **Oran Gaoil Airigh (O! b'fhearr leam no mo thuarasadl)** - Melody in Appendix. Also in *The Angus Fraser Collection*, page 18
- 14.8 **Chunacas gruagach 's an aonach**– Perthshire shieling song. Melody in Appendix.
- 14.9 **A fhlesgaich is cummaire** – Perthshire shieling song. Melody in Appendix.
- 14.10 Air bhi dhomsa gu ciuin riut – Song about death of girl by her lover's dirk.
- 14.11 **\* Na Luban Laghach (Dh' fhalabh mi no le luban laghach)** – Loves sweet wiles. Melody in Appendix. A Macd uses the same chorus and melody for one of his own songs *Posadh na h-Oige 's na h-Aois* in *Coinneach 'us Coille*.
- 14.12 **Than mise 'n o 'm laighe - Na craobhan caorainn**, The Rowan Trees / Cuachag nan craobh. Melody for Cuachag nan craobh in *The Angus Fraser Collection* and *Orain an Eilein - Gaelic Songs of Skye*
- 14.13 **An gaol a chiurr** – The love that pained. (First line: Gur a mor mo chuis mhulaid) – Love song from Skye. Melody in Appendix.
- 14.14 **Ghabh mi m' chead an diugh dhe m' leannan** (Mairi-Anna, Mary-Anna, or Annie's Mary) – Love song. According to Alexander Macdonald song composed by Capt. "Cruachan" Macintyre, living / connected with Abriachan. Melody in Appendix.  
According to the musical notes in the 1982 edition of *Story and Song from Loch Ness-side*: "With reference to "Ae fon kiss", the above song is not as old as the period of Robert Burns. It was composed by Lieut. P MacIntyre, son of Alex. MacIntyre Camusnaherie, Lochaber. If anyone was borrowing the music, it was he who was borrowing from Burns."  
Lyrics also in *Am Filidh* (a collection of songs and rhymes, edited by Seumas Munro (1840), song no. 8, (page 15). <https://deriv.nls.uk/dcn23/7600/76005992.23.pdf> which identifies melody as "Mo run an diugh mar an de thu" (My love today as heretofore – the melody used by Burns for Ae fon kiss) – see *Capt. Simon Fraser's Airs and melodies peculiar to the Highlands* (1814): Tune no. 165, page 67. Fraser's notes relates that the tune "has pervaded

most of the Highlands and Islands, but its origin seems to have been traced to Appin of Dull or Strathtay.”

As was common, Burns used known existing melodies from Gaelic airs for a lot of his songs. It therefore seems likely that the tune pre-dates both MacIntyre and Burns.

Further analysis of the song appears in the Celtic Monthly of October 1895, page 9

<https://digital.nls.uk/dcn6/7584/75847258.6.pdf>

- 14.17 **Oran nighean fhir na Ruilig** – song about a girl whose sweetheart transfers his affection to another girl. For more on this song, see Section 6.1, p12. See also *Thig Tri Nithean Gun Iarraidh* by Flora MacNeil on her album “*Craobh nan Ubhal*”. For full lyrics see: <http://www.celticlyricscorner.net/macneil/thig.htm>

### Chapter 15 – Ceilidh Contd. (page 268)

- 15.1 \* **Gu ciobach creamhach caoiricheanach** – (Also known as *Oran Seilge ann an Coiredho* and *A Coiredho Hunting Song*) - Song by Archibald Grant (Archie Tàilleir) about Corie-Dho describing its flora and fauna. Sung to tune, “*Sgian dubh a sprogan chaim*”. Tune same as *Latha Siubhal sleibh dhom* in Patrick MacDonald Collection, Tune 128
- 15.2 **‘S mi m’ shuidh’ air bruaich terrain** - Song about the Murder of Keppoch by John MacDonald (Iain Lom). Melody in Appendix. Melody of *A’ Cheapach na fasach* in Patrick MacDonald and Simon Fraser Collections.

### Chapter 16 – Ceilidh Contd. (283)

- 16.1 **Conull Ghuilbinn** - Ossianic Ballad
- 16.2 **Thoir tasgaidh bhuam ‘an diomhaireachd** - by Mairi nigh’n Alasdair Ruiadh. Melody in Appendix.
- 16.3 **Seall a mach an e an la e (Cumha Iain Garbh)** – Song composed for John Garbh MacLeod of Raasay by his sister on his drowning. Melody in Appendix. Melody and words in *Orain nan Eilein - Songs from Skye*:
- 16.4 **Biodag air MacThomais** – for melody see: Keith Norman MacDonald’s *Puirt-à-Beul* page 65 / 66. Also Elizabeth Ross Manuscript No. 95 and [https://tunearch.org/wiki/Biodag\\_Air\\_Mac\\_Th%C3%B2mais](https://tunearch.org/wiki/Biodag_Air_Mac_Th%C3%B2mais)
- 16.5 **Til dachaidh tuiginn dachaidh** - Composed to air of Morair Sim (Lord Simon) – Regimental march of the Lovat Scouts. For melody see: *Simon Fraser Collection* (1816) Tune no. 131. Also recording: <http://tobarandualchais.co.uk/en/fullrecord/104153> The 2/4 march ‘*Morair Sim*’ played on the fiddle by Alex MacKenzie who had learnt it from his mother
- 16.6 **Gur mis tha fo mhulad** – Also known as “*Turus Aonghuis do ‘n Ghealaich*”. Melody in Appendix. Also, *The Patrick MacDonald Collection*, page 22.
- 16.7 **A luchd comuinn mo ruin** - Convivial song – near translation to Scots song, “*Sae will we yet*”. Melody in Appendix. Melody also known as “*The wearing o’ the green*”. See: Tony Cuffe: [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rjNv\\_ewdjp4](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rjNv_ewdjp4)  
<https://sangstories.webs.com/saewillweyet.htm>
- 16.8 **Oran a bhotuil (O! cuir a nall am bodach)** – Convivial drinking song. Melody in Appendix.
- 16.9 **Am breacan dubh** – waulking song about military life in the French-Canadian war. Melody in Appendix. See Mary Jane Lamond recording: [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=T7M9wERORP4&list=PLrdUmDyhi7xaoAP\\_1pk359Mc-zhuNL-1Y&index=41](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=T7M9wERORP4&list=PLrdUmDyhi7xaoAP_1pk359Mc-zhuNL-1Y&index=41)
- 16.10 **Air posadh piuthar Iain Bhàin** – comic song about Iain Bhàin’s sister’s wedding. Melody see: *The Patrick MacDonald Collection* (1784) Tune no. 183. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JOXlhGk6Gko>  
[https://www.bbc.co.uk/alba/oran/orain/posadh\\_piuthar\\_iain\\_Bhàin/](https://www.bbc.co.uk/alba/oran/orain/posadh_piuthar_iain_Bhàin/)

- 16.11 \* **Tha mo chridh' air an fhreach** – Song Gaelic version of “My heart is in the Highlands”. See: *An Gaidheal*, Volume 21, October 1925--September 1926. An Comunn Gàidhealach Publications: <https://digital.nls.uk/an-comunn-gaidhealach/archive/125300340?mode=transcription>  
For history and Gaelic words. For melody see:  
Ross Harris: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=i15gMKjWD84>  
Karine Polwart: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PjaJgaiFpi4>
- 16.12 \* **An nighean bhan tha 'n Acha-Luachrach** – Love song by Donald Fraser (teacher in Strath Errick) to a Miss grant of Glengarry. Melody in Appendix.
- 16.13 \* **Is ochan o, righ, Gur a sgith an galair an gràdh** – Song about Ian Og Grant Melody in Appendix.
- 16.14 **Gur mis tha fo ghruaimen (Than m' inntinn fo mhulad)** - Melody in Appendix.
- 16.15 **Gur a tu mo bhean chomain** Melody in Appendix.
- 16.16 **Fir na calpaichean troma (Air faillirinn illirinn oichirinn)** - Melody in Appendix.
- 16.7 **Ma theid thu dh' Araigh Ghualachan** Variant of: ‘N uair theid thu dh’ Airigh-Bhuachain’ Frances Tolmie. Collection of One Hundred and Five Songs of Occupation, Journal of the Folk-Song Society, No. 16 (1911). London. pp. 268-269. Tune only, from North Uist.
- 16.8 **Mo nighean donn bhoidheach, bheadarach.** Melody in Appendix.
- 16.9 **Mo chridhe trom 's duilich leam** – see:  
[https://www.bbc.co.uk/alba/oran/orain/mo\\_chridhe\\_trom\\_s\\_duilich\\_leam/](https://www.bbc.co.uk/alba/oran/orain/mo_chridhe_trom_s_duilich_leam/)  
Mairi MacInnes: [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VFm\\_30fVcFQ](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VFm_30fVcFQ)
- 16.20 \* **Braigh Rusgaich** – Beautiful home-longing song by Iain MacDhughail from Bunloit. See: Angus Nicolson: <http://tobarandualchais.co.uk/en/fullrecord/58768>  
Melody see Breabach’s version:  
[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EICWkOwxN6o&list=OLAK5uy\\_kWbWvLwW8MhYQcf-gq1tVe3Dgjf1F7sPE](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EICWkOwxN6o&list=OLAK5uy_kWbWvLwW8MhYQcf-gq1tVe3Dgjf1F7sPE)  
Another longer version from TGSi Volume, William MacKenzie, *Leaves from my Celtic Portfolio No.6*, 30<sup>th</sup> Dec 1879 p. 43  
<https://electricscotland.com/gaelic/transactionsgae09unkngoog.pdf>  
See Version in *Am Filidh Gaidhealach – the Highland Minstrel*  
<https://digital.nls.uk/early-gaelic-book-collections/archive/82527806>
- 16.21 **Mo run gach la do 'n nighean bhan** - by Angus Cameron Stratherrick. Melody in Appendix.
- 16.22 \* An tigh Mhr. Thòisich – A local ceilidh poem / song about “an old tramp woman”.
- 16.23 \* ‘S ann thainig an teachdaireachd - Response to the above poem / song by Archie Grant
- 16.24 \* Gur a diùmbach mi ‘n dràsda - Continuation of the above by Iain Glaiseach
- 16.25 \* Na toir do mhionnan – Continuation of above by Iain Glaiseach’s wife
- 16.26 \* Thill me rithisd dha na h-ionnsuidh – Local valentines teasing poem
- 16.27 \* ‘S iomadh déuchainn a fhuair thu – Comic poem / song by John MacDonald (Iain Glaiseach)
- 16.28 \* Sud a comunn ‘s suairce léinn – Flying rhyme by Archie Grant about shirt made for him by two girls
- 16.29 \* Sud a comunn ‘s fuathach léinn – Response to above rhyme by local seanachie
- 16.30 **A nighean bhuidhe bhan** Melody in Appendix.
- 16.31 **‘S ann tromsa ‘bha ‘n truaighe** - Melody in Appendix.
- 16.32 Thug thu corr is raithe bhliadhna - By Margaret MacIntyre
- 16.33 **Ho! mo nighneag ‘s boidhche chi mi - (Gur a mis fo mhulad)** - Melody in Appendix.
- 16.34 \* **Hò ro na gamearan** – Song about the introduction of gamekeepers and the resulting conflicts with local crofters.
- 16.35 \* **Am faca sibh na gamearan ho-ro-u-i** – Song about gamekeepers who come to live in the community.

## Chapter 17 - The work of the year generally (page 325)

### No Songs

**Conclusion (page 329)**

- 18.1 \* Cnoc na h Ath (Hillock of the Kiln) – Song by the author, Alexander (Alister) Macdonald of Achnanconeran, lamenting decline in the local population. Included in his book *Coinneach 'us Coille*.

## APPENDIX 2

### Urquhart and Glenmoriston in Olden Times

By William MacKay LL.D. (1914)

<https://www.electricscotland.com/books/pdf/Urquhart%20and%20Glenmoriston.pdf>

Appendix O, Page 519 (refers to page 416)

15 songs, 3 known melodies

Songs with known melodies are highlighted in GREEN

\* Denotes songs local to Glenmoriston

- \* **Corriariraidh** – Song by Ewen Macdonald. William McKay suggests melody is the same as for Duncan Ban MacIntyre's *Coire a' Cheathaich* – see *Section 6.5 Shielings* for melody.
- \* *Oran do Dhomnuil Ban Mac Dohmhnuil* – Song by Mrs Cameron ean na Cluinean 1746. By Janet Grant of Shewglie, Wife of John Cameron of Clunes. Sung to her own tune (unknown).
- \* *Sacred Song* – by John Grant Jnr of Aonach
- \* *Oran air Gleannamoireasduinn* – by Alasdair Iain Mac Bhàin
- \* *Oran an t-Siosalaich (A Song to the Chisholm)* – by Alasdair Iain Mac Bhàin. This takes the form of the customary tribute by the clan bard to his chief, only this is the head of another clan! The reason we are told is that, as a young man, at a mart, he was indebted to The Chisholm because of an act of kindness there.
- \* **Is cianail an rathad 's mi Gabhail a' Chuain**(Dreary is the Ocean Road I am Taking) by Alasdair Iain Mac Bhàin (Also known as "*An Diciadain a dh' fhalbh sinn*"). A detailed account of the ship on an expedition to the West Indies: "For seven weeks of tempestuous weather...continually pumping water out of her hour after hour."  
See Tobar an Dualchais: <http://tobarandualchais.co.uk/en/fullrecord/87158>
- \* **Oran Bhraigh Rusgaich** - Song by Iain Mac Dhughail thinking of home from his exile in Edinburgh. For Notes, see Appendix 1, Section 16.20
- \* *Oran gaoil do Mhaighdhean og a Chaidh dh' America* – Song by Archibald Grant
- *Grace before meat* – Song by Angus Macculloch
- *Song to captain Hugh Grant Lochletter* – Lewis Cameron
- *Lament* – By Angus MacDonald on the death of his wife
- *Lament for Sir Colin Campbell, Lord Clyde* – poem? by Angus MacDonald
- **A Nigheann don a' Bhroillich Bhàin** – Song by William MacKay, Blairbeg (Drumnadrochit)  
See: *An t-Oranaiche - A Ghruagaich dhonn a' Bhroillich Bhàin*  
<https://archive.org/details/gaelicsongsterto00sincuoft/page/30/mode/2up>  
[https://www.bbc.co.uk/alba/oran/orain/gruagach\\_dhonn\\_a\\_bhroillich\\_bhan/](https://www.bbc.co.uk/alba/oran/orain/gruagach_dhonn_a_bhroillich_bhan/)  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zvx85QGbfV0>
- *Thoughts on New Year's Day 1885* – Poem? by William MacKay aged 82
- *Oran air a Gleannagarradh* – Song by Hugh Fraser

## APPENDIX 3

### The Grants of Glenmoriston (Reminiscences Historical and Traditional)

By Rev. Allan Sinclair 1887

<https://archive.org/details/reminiscenceshis1887sinc/page/44/mode/2up>

Chapter – Selections from the lyrics, songs and elegies of Glenmoriston Bards. p. 45-118

18 songs. All local.

Melodies known for 4 of them.

2 poems

Songs with melodies in appendix of Story and Song of Loch Ness-side are highlighted in **YELLOW**

Songs with otherwise known melodies are highlighted in **GREEN**

All songs are local to Glenmoriston

- Fhir mhoir bu mhath cumadh – Elegy by John Grant (Mac-EoBhàinn Bhàin) on the death of the 3<sup>rd</sup> laird, John Grant of Glenmoriston. Alexander Macdonald asserts his name is John MacDonald (not Grant).
- Bobadh is m' annsachd - Morning lullaby by Archibald Grant Snr
- **Hò fearan, hì fearan** – Song by Archibald Grant Snr re young Angus Òg. Melody in Appendix to SSFLNS.
- Mo ghaol, mo ghaol, mo ghaol an guillan – Song by Archibald Grant Snr celebrating chieftain Angus Òg of Glengarry
- Theid an t'èideadh – Short song by Archibald Grant Snr on presenting Aonghas Òg with his first kilt
- Oran na Caorach-mhora (also called The Sheep Song or Deoch-slainte Choirneil nach maireann) – Song by John Grant (son of Archibald Grant Senior) about the negative effect of the introduction of sheep farming.
- John Grant's Sacred Song (Laoidh Iain 'ic Illeasbuig) – by John Grant
- **Oran Mollaidh do Choiriaraidh** (A song in praise of Coiriaraidh) – Ewen MacDonald
- Oran Mollaidh do Gleannmoireasduinn (A song in praise of Glenmoriston) - Alexander Grant (Alasdair Mac Iain Bhàin)
- Oran Mollaidh do Shiosalach Shrathghlais (A Eulogy on The Chisholm) – Song by Alexander Grant (Alasdair Mac Iain Bhàin)
- 'N diugh 's mi fagail na Rioghachd (Today as I am Leaving the Country) A voyage to the West Indies – Song by Alexander Grant (Alasdair Mac Iain Bhàin).). A graphic account of a stormy crossing of the Atlantic, 1795-96. "A month after All Saints' Day sore was the scattering and loss at sea... waves came over and swept away my bed."
- **Is Cianail na Rathad** (Dreary is the Ocean Road I am Taking) (Yoyage) – Song by Alexander Grant (Alasdair Mac Iain Bhàin) - Also known as "*An Diciadain a dh' fhalbh sinn*". A detailed account of the ship on an expedition to the West Indies: "For seven weeks of tempestuous weather...continually pumping water out of her hour after hour."  
See Tobar an Dualchais: <http://tobarandualchais.co.uk/en/fullrecord/87158>
- Cumha do Choirneal Grannda, Tigherna Ghlinne-Moireasstuin a Chaochail anns a Bhladhna 1801 – Elegy by Alexander Grant (Alasdair Mac Iain Bhàin) to Colonel Grant of Glenmoriston
- **Oran an t-Saighdear** (The Soldier's Song) – by Alexander Grant (Alasdair Mac Iain Bhàin). The soldier's song in which he describes how the hardships of campaigns all over Europe have aged him prematurely since he was tricked by "the gold" and "the promises." Rather than the sounding of the pipes for action he would prefer "the lowing of a slim cow on its way to be milked in the glen." Probably his best-known poem.

For Notes, see Appendix 1, Section 5.8

## The Musical Heritage of Glenmoriston

- **Oran Seilge ann an Coiredho** (A Coire Dho Hunting Song) - Song by Archibald Grant (Archie Tàilleir). Tune: "Sgian dubh a sprogan chaim" by Lachlann Mac Thearlaich Oig. According to *Gaelic Literature of the Isle of Skye: an annotated bibliography*, Mac Thearlaich Oig used the same tune for another of his songs, *Latha siubhal sléibhe*. This tune is in The Patrick MacDonald Collection (tune No. 128).  
See: <http://www.skyelit.co.uk/poetry/poets5.html>
- Beannachadh Bard do'n Luing (The Bard's benediction to the ship Glenmoriston) – Song by Archibald Grant (Archie Tàilleir)
- Oran na Faoighe (The Welcome) – Song by Archibald Grant (Archie Tàilleir) about piper Finlay MacLeod (whose gravestone in the cemetery in Invermoriston)
- Oran Mollaidh do Mhac 'ic Phadruig (A Eulogy on James Murray Grant Esq) – Song by Archibald Grant (Archie Tàilleir)
- Dan Posaidh (A Marriage Address) – Poem? by Archibald Grant (Archie Tàilleir)
- Oran an Eich – Comic song by John MacDonald (known as Iain Glaiseach)

## APPENDIX 4

### Dain agus Orain, le Gilleasbuig Grannda, bard Ghlinnemorasdain. Inbhirnis, 1863.

Book of 67 poems and songs by Archibald Grant of Glenmoriston (Archie Tàilleir).

<https://digital.nls.uk/early-gaelic-book-collections/archive/78765228>

<https://archive.org/details/dainagusorain00gran>

Most are songs, the majority of which have the melodies identified.

Songs with music identified: 39

Songs with no music given: 20

Poems: 8

Songs with known melodies are highlighted in **GREEN**

All songs are local to Glenmoriston

#### Preface

*“Archibald Grant, author of this book, was born at Aonach, Glenmoriston, a.d., 1785. He is descended from noble ancestors, the celebrated Archibald Grant, son of the Laird of Glenmoriston, being his great grandfather. It was a custom of those days that a person of rank would adopt a child of some other rich neighbour, and this was the man that trained up Angus Macdonald of Glengarry (who was afterwards killed at Falkirk), and being a good poet, he never took the child in his arms but he composed a song to him. Julius Macranald of Keppoch, the poetess was the author's great grandmother's sister. His father, John Grant, was a serjeant in the British army at the siege of Gibraltar, where he received great praise for his bravery, and being himself engaged for a time in the Glengarry Fencibles, he ever afterwards maintained a great regard for soldiership. His songs are of the best composition, as there is a great deal of history related in them.”*

E. M'D

- Oran do Mhac Uisdean (Song for MacHugh) - Page 5  
Tune: None given  
First line: 'S ach fhir a theid thairis (Only men will cross)
- Oran (A song) - Page 10.  
Air don bhard a bhi tighinn seachad air tigh Choire Mhoinie, thachair air an latha sin gu'n robh moran thighearnan agus dhaoine uailse cruinn ann, agus iad a dol a chluich air a bhall, agus buideal uisge bheatha gu bhi air a gheal. Chomhlaich fear do mhic an tighearna am bard, agus dh' fheoirich e co as a thainig e, dh' innis e dha dh'; fheoirich e mar an ceudna niod bu shloinneadh dha, agus dh' innis am bard bha. Nur' dh' aithnich e co bh' aige chum se e gus a faiceadh e spors an latha, agus chuir e air dara taobh a ghill e, agus choisinn am bard an taoghal tri uairean. (As the bard was passing the house of Coire Mhoinie, it happened that day that many lords and gentlemen were gathered there, and they were going to play ball (shinty? football?), and a cask of whisky was to be opened. One of the lord's sons met the bard, and inquired where he came from, and told him; he inquired likewise what his surname was, and the bard told yes. When he knew who he was, he kept him until he saw the sport of the day, and he set him on one side that he bet, and the bard won the wager three times.)  
Tune: S'i so Deoch Slainte 'n t' Siosalaich (This is Chisholm's Drink of Health) – a song by Alasdair Mac Iain Bhàin  
First line: 'Sach fhir a theid gu tuath bh' uainn (We wanted only men to go north)

## The Musical Heritage of Glenmoriston

- **Oran (A song) - Page 14**  
A rinn am Bard, air dha dhol a choimhead an drobh aige, agus iad ann a fasach gheamhreadh, dh'fhuirich e oidhche ann an tigh duin-uasail a bha faisg air an aite ann san robh iad, do bhrìgh nach b'urrainn e dhol nan coir le stoil-dheidh bha san aite. Bha gille og tapaidh san tigh a ghabh air fhein a dhol le biadh da'n ionnsuidh, agus rinn am Bard an t'oran a leanas dha.(Composed by the Bard, having gone to see his cattle, while they were in a bleak winter pasture, stayed one night in a gentleman's house near the place where they were, because he couldn't rightly go into their company with the get-up he had on at that time and place. There was a kind young lad in the house who took it upon himself to go with food to them, and the Bard composed the following song for him.)  
Tune: Mo chreach 's mo dhiobhail (My spoils and my sorrows)  
First line: Nach eil mi'n Ile, 's mo chruineag (Am I not in Islay, my darling)  
Notes: Song to a lad that brings him food from nearby gentleman's house whilst he is looking after his cattle?
- **Oran (A song) - Page 15**  
A rinn am Bard dha te mhuinntir an Eilean Sgiathanaich agus iad a freagar a cheile. (Composed by the Bard for a Skye woman in harmony with each other.)  
Tune: Ged is socrach mo leabaidh, cha'n e'n codal mo mhiann (Although my bed is comfortable, sleep is not my desire).  
First Line: 'S truagh nach robh mi sa chaileag (It's a pity I wasn't with the girl)  
Notes: Sung to the melody of song by Rob Donn MacKay. See: *100 Songs of Rob Donn MacKay* (2018) and recording by "Drine": <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=e8CLJ4GI8dE>
- **Oran Gaoil (A love song) – Page 19**  
A rinn am Bard dha leannan, maighdean og uasal, agus i air dol do dh' America. (Composed by the Bard to his sweetheart, a young noble maiden, after she had gone to America).  
Tune: Fhuair mi sgeula 'n tra so 'n de, 'S cha deach mi 'n cis ri cluintinn (I got news this morning, And I didn't go to hear it)  
First Line: 'S mor mo mhulad-sa ri sheinn (I'm really sad to sing)
- **Oran Do Dh Fhionnlath Mac Leoid (A song for Findlay MacLeod) – Page 21**  
Air dha dhol air an fhaoigh, a bhliadhna thainige dhachaidh 's an arm; ach a bha 'n deidh sin na Phiobaire aig Mac Ic Phadruig (On MacLeod's departure, the year he came home from the army; but who later became MacPhadruig's Piper.)  
Tune: A cheud Diluan don raidhe, Ged bha mi leam fhinn' (The first Monday of the season, though I was alone)  
First Line: 'S gur mise fhuair an fhaoighe (And that I got the begging)  
Notes: In the introduction to the song in *The Grants of Glenmoriston*:-  
*"The Welcome – Oran na Faoighe*  
*Finlay Macleod was piper to James Murray Grant, Esq., and a native of Glenmoriston. After studying under such masters of pipe-music as the McIntyres of Rannoch and the Macrimons of Skye, he became a famous performer on the great Highland bagpipe. When Sir Allan Cameron — Ailean nan Earrachd — raised his regiment of Cameron Highlanders, Finlay joined them, and at the close of the Peninsular War, returned home with a pension. Scarce of provender for his cattle, he ventured with his "oinseach," as he calls his bagpipe, to go the round of all the Glen farmers, great and small, for help to tide over the approaching winter; and the Bard, in easy pleasant style, chronicles the incidents of his tour — the places he visited, as well as the names and liberality of donors. Appropriately, the family Bard records in good poetry the success of the family piper's musical tour, and the liberality and friendly benevolence of the Laird's kindly tenantry."*

## The Musical Heritage of Glenmoriston

- **Oran (A song) – Page 27**  
A rinn am Bard do 'n Orcheard, air dha Cluaran a chuir ga ionnsuidh. (Composed by the Bard to the Orcheard, having sent him a thistle.)  
**Tune: A Mhari bhan og, 's tu 'n oigh th 'air m'aire.** (Fair young Mhari, you are the maiden on my mind).  
First Line: Fhir a ghiulain an duan (Men who carried the poem)  
Notes: Numerous published versions of the melody including:
  - The Songs of Duncan Ban MacIntyre, Gaelic Texts Society (1978): Tune 7 Oran d' a Chéile Nuadh—Phôda by Donnchadh Bàn Mac-an-t-Saoir (1724-1812) A Mhàri bhàn Og
  - Captain Simon Fraser Collection tune no. 47 - Mari bhan ogg
- **Oran do dh' Fhear Fothie - Page 30**  
Tune: An diugh, an diugh, gu'r sunndach rinn (Today, today we are happy).  
First line: 'S ann orm a rug an anamoiche (It was I who arrived late)
- **Oran (A song) – Page 32**  
A rinn am Bard air dha bhi g'obair ann an tigh mor, agus connsachadh a thighinn eadar na searbhantan, agus na 'm b' fhior e fhein, gur ann air a shon a bha iad a cur a mach air a cheil. (Composed by the Bard having worked in the big house, and a quarrel arose between the servants, and, if it were true himself, that it was for him that they were plotting against him.)  
Tune: Tha mis air mo mhilleadh, gu dearbh (I'm spoiled, of course)  
First line: Tha a fhleasgach a tighinn (The bachelor is coming)
- **Luinneag (A work song) – Page 34**  
A rinn am Bard dha leannan, agus a moladh a dhuthcha. (Composed by the Bard for his sweetheart, and praise for his homeland.)  
**Tune: The Birks of Aberfeldy**  
First Line: Nighneag og, is boidhche gnuis (Young girl, beautiful face)  
Notes: Tune available in numerous Scots song collections.
- **Oran do Ruairidh Moireaston, Fear Sgalasaig (A song for Rory Morrison, The man from Scalasaig) – Page 36**  
Tune: Si so deoch slainte 'n fhir aigeantaich (This is the toast to the mighty man)  
First line: 'S mor mo ghruaim bho 'n dhealaich mi (I have been very sad since I parted)
- **Oran do Chaipitean Grannda, oighre Ghlinnemoireisduin (A song for Captain Grant, heir of Glenmoriston) – Page 39**  
Tune: Gu'r a h-uasal a macan a ghluais bh' uainn air astar di-mairt (May the nobleman whose son moved from us at a distance on Tuesday)  
First line: 'S gu'm a slan do na Ghaiptean (And good health to the Captain)
- **Oran (A song) – Page 42**  
Do'n aon cheudna, air do'n Bhard a chluinntinn gu'n robh e dol a phosadh a mach an Lunnainn. (Likewise, on hearing that the Bard was going to be married in London.)  
Tune: Mo dhurachd na chomunn, tha gu'n bho, gu'n bholla gann daibh (My sincerity in fellowship, is without cattle, without boll (of oats) scarce for them)  
First line: Mo run air a chomunn sin (My preference for that community)
- **Oran (A song) – Page 43**

## The Musical Heritage of Glenmoriston

Do'n aon cheudna, 'nuair a chuala 'm Bard gu'n do phos e. (In like manner, when the Bard heard that he was married.)

Tune: Nighean bhoidheach an orfhuilt bhachalaich (The pretty girl with the wavy hair)

First Line: Sann aig an Torr a bha 'n comhlan aigeantach (It was at the Torr that the lively, spirited band was)

- Oran (A song) – Page 45

A rinn am Bard do chailinn og a dh' fheuch i fhein anabarrach caoimhneil ris, agus e air dol a'n airde do Choire-dho, comhla ri duin uasal, sheoladh uaigh dha, ris an canadh iad o' shean Uaigh Ruaridh-na-shealg; ach do bhrigh 's gu'n robh Priunns Tearlach da dhion innte, tacan de uine, theirear bho' sin rithe — Uaigh Thearlaich. (Composed by the Bard for a young girl who tried to be very kind to him, when he had gone up to Corriedo, with a nobleman, to guide him to a cave, which they called the old cave of Rory of the Hunt; but as it sheltered Prince Charles for some time, it is now called Charles' Cave.)

Tune: Si Mali chruinn donn.

First line: Mo chiall air a chailaig bu mhiann linn a farraid (My sense of the girl we longed for)

- Oran do Choire-dho (The song of Corrie-dho) – Page 48

**Tune: Sgian dubh a sprogan chaim.**

First line: Gu'm a slan do' n fir ghleusda (Farewell to the skilful men)

Notes: For tune, see Section 6.1 Relationship with the Natural Environment

From the introduction to the song in The Grants of Glenmoriston (page 86):-

<https://archive.org/details/reminiscenceshis1887sinc/page/86/mode/2up>

*“This Coiredho song is a good specimen of a Highland hunting song. Coiredho, a wild uninhabited region between Glenmoriston and Kintail, has all along been the Glenmoriston deer forest. And when the poet's friend and patron, James Murray Grant, Esq., went on a hunting expedition to Coiredho, the bard, who knew the localities intimately, usually accompanied him. The poem gives a capital resume of such a day's sport, and the machinery of it is skilfully managed throughout — as for example when the greyhounds and the pointers are forgotten, to make necessary an allusion to the old method of deer-stalking, when perhaps for a whole day the hunter, on his back and side, pushed himself by swamp and heather till within shot of his victim. The minuteness of the Bard's topographic lore is quite remarkable, as well as his skill in weaving it into a poetic web of simple narrative and bardic flow, which will bear comparison with any production of the kind.”*

- Oran do Chabtean Grand (Song for Captain Grant) – Page 54

Tune: Si naigheachd so fhuair sinn, Air moch-thra diluana. (This is the news we received, on Monday morning)

First Line: 'S na 'm b' aithne dhomh oran (If I knew a song)

- Beannachadh laird do luing ur (Laird's blessing for a new ship) – Page 57

Chaidh thogail ann an Inbhirrhoireaston (It was built in Glenmoriston)

Tune: None – poem

First Line: Beannachadh Baird don luing (Bard's blessing to the ship)

Notes: From the introduction to the song in The Grants of Glenmoriston:

*“In the beginning of this century, and not long after the opening of the Caledonian Canal, Mr Robert Sinclair, afterwards factor on the Glenmoriston estates, built a ship on the banks of Lochness, near Invermoriston. The vessel was built chiefly of native timber, as much as possible by native artisans, and named “The Glenmoriston.” It was befitting, therefore, that at its launching it should have the native Bard's benediction — “ beannachadh Baird.” So,*

## The Musical Heritage of Glenmoriston

*Archibald Grant, in presence of a large gathering of spectators, recited the following original piece, quite Ossianic in style, and containing, within so small a space, more Ossianic lore than any piece we know of the same length."*

- Rann do'n treun ghaisgeach Gordan Cuimean (Poem for the brave hero Gordon Cumming) – Page 60  
Tune: None - poem  
First line: Bha mi 'n Cillechuimean an de  
First line: I was in Kilchuimean yesterday
- Rann do phosadh Mr Pierson (Poem for the marriage of Mr Pearson) - Page 62  
Tune: None – poem  
First Line: Deoch-slaite na caraaid a dh' fhalbh (Toast to a friend who has gone)  
Notes: From the introduction to the song in The Grants of Glenmoriston:  
*DAN POSAIDH.  
A MARRIAGE ADDRESS.  
The following piece was recited by the Bard at the marriage of Miss Elizabeth Grant, second daughter of James Murray Grant, Esq., to Mr Pierson. It is in Ossianic style, and chiefly remarkable for the minute knowledge the Bard has of the bride's family connections. She is related to the Grants of Grant, the M'Gregors of Glenlyon, the Frasers of Lovat, the Mackenzies of Gairloch, Lord Seaforth, the Duke of Argyle, Locheil, Glengarry, M'Dougall, and Macleod. He shows how widely the roof-tree of his patron and chief has spread its roots; and we vouch for it, had the Bard been tested viva voce, he could in every instance give in detail the connecting links. His memory was equal to it, as well as his store of genealogical lore.*
- Oran do Mhac ic Phadruig (Song for MacPhadruig) – Page 63  
Tune: Fhir a dh' imeas a niar  
First line: Fhir ghiulain an duan (Men who carried the the poem forth)
- Oran do Dhoctair Padruig Domhnullach (Song for Dr Patrick Donald) – Page 65  
Air dha dol a mach do na h-Innseachan (On his way out to India)  
Tune: Bha mi 'n de 'm Beinn Doran  
First line: Deoch-slaite Doctair Padruig (Toast to Dr Patrick)  
Notes: Tune is by Duncan Ban MacIntyre. Numerus published versions including
  - *The Songs of Duncan Ban MacIntyre*, Gaelic Texts Society (1978):
  - *The Gesto Collection of Highland Music* (1895) Keith Norman MacDonald
- Oran do'n aon cheudna (A song for the same) – Page 68  
Tune: Gu'r cianail anu rathad, 's mi gabhail a chuain – Tune by Alastair Mac Iain Bhàin - see:  
Tobar an Dualchais: <http://tobarandualchais.co.uk/en/fullrecord/87158>  
First line: 'S beir soraidh dha'n fhleasgach (And say goodbye to the young man)
- Oran do Mhaic ic Phadruig – Page 71  
Anns a bheil a'm Bard agus Mactalamh a freagairt a cheil  
In which the Bard and Mactalamh answer each other  
Tune: None given  
First Line: Theid mi le'm dheoin dh'Inbhir a cheoil (I'll go willingly to Inver a cheoil)  
Notes: From the introduction to the song in The Grants of Glenmoriston:  
<https://archive.org/details/reminiscenceshis1887sinc/page/106/mode/2up>

## The Musical Heritage of Glenmoriston

*A EULOGY ON JAMES MURRAY GRANT, ESQ. - ORAN MOLAI DH DO MHAC-'IC-PHADRUIG. James Murray Grant, Esq., was the Bard's ideal of a Highland Laird — noble, generous, affable; mingling freely with his people, and able to converse in their native Gaelic — a prime accomplishment in the Bard's estimation. The occasion is a rent day, which the Laird's hospitality and kindness always made a happy day. Finlay, the piper, is introduced with his piobrach strains to awaken the echoes all round. So a conversation between the Bard and Mactalla (Echo, or Son of the Cave) follows, which gives further scope to his Bardic strains, in appreciation of the high qualities of his beloved patron and chief.*

- Oran do'n Bhanrigh Bhictoria (Song for Queen Victoria) – Page 74  
Tune: An diugh, 'n diugh, gur reusanach  
First line: An diugh, an diugh, gur sunndach sinn (Today, today we are happy)
- Oran do Phroinns' Albert - Page 78  
Tune: Not given  
First Line: (Chorus): Horo illeanHò i, 'S na fir threubhach og throma, 'S piob ard nan doss donna, 'S cha bu choma leam sibh (Horo illean ho i, the heroic, strong young men, And the piper of the brown base drone, And I did not care for you)  
First line (Verse): 'S fhuair sinn naigheachd o Lunnainn (And we got news from London)
- Oran don Chomunn Ossianach an Glascho (Song for the Ossianic Society of Glasgow) – Page 80  
Tune: Se feileadh preasach tlachd mo run  
First line: 'S fad air Albainn a chaidh cliu (Long has Scotland won its reputation)
- Oran da Alastair Mac Raild (Song for Alastair MacRaild) – Page 83  
Air don Bhard Geard oir fhaotainn uaithe (For the Bard to get gold from him)  
Tune: Tha tasgaidh 'uam an diamhaireachd  
First line: 'S na faighinn fear a ghiulaineadh (Don't get a man that would carry)
- Cumha (Lament) – Page 85  
Do Chloinn fear Aigais chaidh bhathadh 's iad ga fairgeadh (To the children of a man from Aigas who was drowned while they were at sea)  
Tune: Oran Mhic Aoidh Strath-haladail  
First line: 'S bochd a sgeul a fhuair mi fhein (It's a bad story I got myself)
- Oran do Cheannaichean 'n Uisgebheatha (A Song for whisky merchants) – Page 88  
Tune: None given  
First line: Bhean 'n tighe fag a siola (The housewife has left her seed)
- Cumha Mhic 'ic Alastair Ghlinnegarraidh (Clanranald's Lament for Glengarry) – Page 89  
Tune: Och, a Mhoire mo dhunach (Oh, my dear Mary)  
First Line: 'S bochd a' naigheachd ri eisdeachd (It's bad news to listen to)
- Cumha Aonghais Oig Ghlinnagarraidh (Lament for Angus Og of Glengarry) – Page 94  
Tune: Ach a Dhomhaill Ghuirm air  
First line: Gur a muldach mi (That saddened me)
- Oran do Dhomhnull Mac Rath (song for Donald MacRae) – Page 97  
Fear Inbhir Seile, nuair chuala am Bard gun do phos e. (The man of Invershiel, when the Bard heard that he was married.)

**Tune: Tha mise fo mhulad san am** (I'm sad at the moment)

First line: 'S gur mithich dhomh dusgadh am shuain (And it is time for me to wake up from my sleep)

Notes: Melody set to "Oran Eile Air An Aobhar Cheudna" by William Ross. Recorded by Arthur Cormack's album Nuair Bha Mi Òg (1992). Melody and words of "*Tha mise fo mhulad san am*" available in *Orain an Eilein - Gaelic Songs of Skye*

- Oran do Dhithis Mhaighdean Uasal (A Song for Two Gentlemen) – Page 100  
A dh'iarr air a Bhard Oran a dheanadh orra; 's gun d'thugadh iad pog an te dha. (They asked the Bard to make a song about them; and that they kissed him.)  
Tune: None given  
First Line: 'S cianail mi 's gu'n bhi mar ribh (I'm sad to be like you)
- Oran do Mhrs' Lathom (Song for Mrs Lathom) – Page 101  
Bean uasal a bha gle chaoimhneil ris a Bhard (A very kind lady to the Bard)  
**Tune: Sa chuachag na'n craobh** (In the cuckoo of the tree)  
'S fhir theid a nll do Ghleann Garradh nan tur (And men will go over to Glengarry of the towers)  
Notes: Melody used from "A chuachag nan craobh, nach truagh leat mo chaidh" by William Ross. See: *Choisir Chiuil – The St Columba Collection of Gaelic Song Part 3*, J and R Parlane, Paisley  
<https://digital.nls.uk/early-gaelic-book-collections/archive/78087197?&mode=transcription>
- Oran (A song) - Page 104  
A rinn am Bard air dha fhein agus do ghille eila dhol a reic da mhult, 's mas d'thainig iad dhachaidh dh'ol iad airgid na mult, 's na'm b'fhior e fhein leis mar bhuannaichdair an turus, gu'n leanadh iad tuille air an drobhaireachd. (The Bard made him and another lad go and sell two mules, and before they came home they drank the money of the mule, and if he himself were true with him as the winner of the journey, to pursue driving more.)  
'S iomadh caileag ghrinn, 's iomadh caileag mhiosal,  
Agus caileag bhoidheach chuireadh oirne furan.  
Many are the fair maidens, many are the fair maidens,  
And we were greeted with a beautiful cake.  
Tune: None given  
First line: C'aite bheil am fang (Where is the fank)
- Oran (a song) – Page 105  
Do dhithis Chaileagan a rinn leintean do na Bhard. (For two Girls who made shirts for the Bards.)  
Tune: None given  
First Line: Sud an comunn suairce leinn (Here's the friendly company with us)  
Oran do dh'fhear Uchdarrath (A song for an Uchdarrath man) – Page 107  
Tune: 'S teirc an diugh mo chuis ghairne (Rare is my laughter today)  
First Line: 'S beir mo shoraidh an drasda (And accept my congratulations right now)
- Cumha do Phadruig Grannda (Lament for Patrick Grant) - Page 110  
Tune: Mile marbhphaisg ort a shaoghail  
First Line: 'S bochd a naigheachd a fhuair sinn (It is bad news we got)
- Oran (a song) – Page 113

## The Musical Heritage of Glenmoriston

Do thriuir dhaoine chaidh mach don Eaglais-bhric le drobh, agus air dhoibh tilleadh dhachaidh dh' fhag Bata-na-smuid iad an Glaschu. (Three men went to Falkirk on a drove, and on their return home the steamer left Glasgow.)

Tune: None given

First line (Chorus): Teann, teann, teann, a bhodaich (Tight, tight, tight, old man)

First line (Verse): S' ghabh sibh ri port an Ghlaschu (You went to the port of Glasgow)

- Oran do Mr Arabin Sassunach a bha Sealg san aite (A song to Mr Arabin an Englishman who hunted locally) – Page 115

**Tune: Nighean na biodh faran ort** (Girl don't worry)

First line: Sud an t'slainte cheannaich mi (That's the health I bought)

Notes: Tune is to song by Uilleam Ros, Nighean na biodh faran ort:

<https://digital.nls.uk/early-gaelic-book-collections/archive/76836521?mode=transcription>

According to the above, the song is to the same woman, and to the same melody (as the previous poem – see:

<https://digital.nls.uk/early-gaelic-book-collections/archive/76836488?mode=transcription>

If so then the melody is “Lennex love to Blantyre” See:

[https://tunearch.org/wiki/Annotation:Lenox\\_Love\\_to\\_Blantyre](https://tunearch.org/wiki/Annotation:Lenox_Love_to_Blantyre)

- Oran do Bholunteers Inbhirnis (song of the Inverness Volunteers) – Page 117

**Tune: An comunn rioghail runach**

First line: San comunn rioghail fiughantach (In the mighty royal company)

Notes: For tune, see:

- Oran nam Fineachan Gaidhealach (c1745) Alasdair Mac Mhaighstir Alasdair A chomainn rìoghail rùnaich
- *The airs and melodies peculiar to the Highlands of Scotland and the Isles* (1816) Captain Simon Fraser of Knockie. TUNE No. 2: Elridh na Fineacha' Gaidhealach (The Jacobite War Song).

- Am Bard a gabhail a leisgeul, air bha feaga chur air an factor (the poet who apologied after putting a fright in the factor) – Page 120

Tune: None given

First line: Mile marbhphaisg air an daoraich (a thousand curses on drunkenness)

- Oran do Hanah Nic Rath (Song for Hannah MacRae) – Page 123

Tune: Not given

First line (Chorus): Hug ri ho, Hug riridh, Gu 'r i Hanah gradh gach ciobair, Nighean donn na 'n t-lath shuil miogach, 'S iomadh fear air thi do phosaidh (Hug ri ho, Hug riridh, Hannah is the love of every shepherd, The brown-haired girl of the moist eye, There are many men for your marriage)

First line (Verse): Mar bha Graine tha do bhreaghad (Like Graine, you are beautiful)

- Un-named - Page 124

Rinn am bard an t' oran a leanas mar gu 'm biodh e fhein agus duine coir eile bha san aite freagar a cheile, do bhrìgh 's gum b' abhaist doibh bhi ri fearas chuideachd 'nuair a thachradh iad. (The bard composed the following song as if he and another kind man were in the place to suit each other, because they used to show off when they happened.)

Tune: None given

First line: Rob: Ghilleaspaidh Bhàin thoir dhomh do lamh (Rob: Archibald took your hand)

- Oran (a song) – page 126

## The Musical Heritage of Glenmoriston

Do Nighean og a thainig a stigh do thigh a Bhaird, agis i air tighinn deth banais a Ceanntaile  
(To a young girl who came into the Bard's house, having come from her wedding in Kintail)

Tune: None given

First line: Bun an cailiim gheibh thu leànnan (At the bottom of the hill you will find a lover)

- Oran (A song) – Page 128

Do dhithis mhaighdeanan og a choinnich am Bard, agus iad a fuireach ri Bata-na-smuid (Two young maidens whom the Bard met while awaiting the steamer)

**Tune: Nighneagan an doire-dhuith (The girls of the blackbird)**

First line (Chorus): Na maighdeanan as boidhiche cruth (The maidens with the most beautiful figure)

First line (Verse): 'S gu 'n d' fharraid mi gu suairce dhiubh (I asked them kindly)

Notes: The tune for this song is given in Alexander Macdonald's paper, *Fragments of Gaelic Song and Lilt*, presented to the Gaelic Society of Inverness on 2<sup>nd</sup> February 1917 as "The Marquis of Huntly's Highland Fling," known in Gaelic under the title of "Maighdeannan a' Choir e Dhuibh"

See: <https://archive.org/details/transactions29gaeluoft/page/94/mode/2up>

- Oran do Dhomhull Cameron (Song for Donald Cameron) – Page 130

Tune: None given

First line: Gur sinne bha gu comhraideach (That we were chatty)

- Oran – Page 133

A rinn am Bard air do Chièbairean an Fha'ctair an crodh aige chur am punnd, agus am Maighstir o'n tigh somaoinaich è gu'n rachadh e gu nighean an duine uasail ga'n iarraidh, ni a thug i dha gu toileach (The Bard made the Factor's Shepherds put his cattle in the pound, and the Master from the house promised that he would go to the gentleman's daughter to fetch her, which she willingly gave him).

Tune: Dh'fhalbh mi 'n de gu sunndach, sunndach (I left yesterday happily, happily)

First line: S' f huair mi naigheachd nach bu bhinn leam (I got news that I didn't like)

- Oran (A song) – Page 137

Do Raonull Grannda, mur gu 'n deaneadh e fhein (To Ranald Grant, if he had not done it himself)

Tune: None given

First line: Nighneag a chuil doinn nach fhan thu (A brown-haired girl who didn't stay)

- Oran do Ian Siosal (Song for Ian Siosal) - Page 139

Tune: None given

First line: Beir an t 'soraidh 'uam gu 'n eislean (Take my farewell to the mourning)

- Oran (A song) – Page 140

A rinn a 'm Bard, do cheithre dhaoine bha 'g obair comhla ris (Written by the bard for four men who worked with him).

Tune: None given

First line: 'Nuair theid mi phosadh (When I get married)

- Oran (A song) – Page 143

A rinn am Bard air dha bhi dol gu fluich bhall latha na, Bliadhua Uire, e fhein agus beagan do ghillean oga. Thachair duine uasal orr, da 'm b' ainm Donnachadh na beurla. Tha 'm bard a cur an geill, gu 'n robh e na dheadh Mhaighstir sgoil, oir bha beagan ann sa phairtidh aig

## The Musical Heritage of Glenmoriston

nach robh focal beurla dol a stigh, aig nach faighte focal Gaidhlig, tighinn a mach. (The Bard made him and a few young lads go to the ball on New Year's Day, himself and a few young lads. They met a gentleman by the name of Duncan. The bard pretends to be a good schoolmaster, for there were a few in the party who did not have a word of English to go in, who could not get a word of Gaelic to come out).

Tune: None given

First line: Ged a theannain ri oran (Although I clung to a song)

- Oran (A song) – Page 145

A rinn am Bard agus e gu tinn, 's e faicinn bainis ma choinneamh. (What the Bard did when he was ill, was to see a wedding in front of him.)

Tune: Bodach na noigeanan (Old man of the wooden cups)

First line (Chorus): Hi ho tha mi air teireachadh

First line (Verse): 'S iad na tighean ud thall tha deas rium (Those houses over there are south of me)

- Oran do dh' Iain Richmond (Song from Ian Richmond) – Page 146

Tune: Giullan nam bo, tha mi 'n deidh ort (Cattle herd, I'm after you)

First line (Chorus): Sud mar a bha dh' olainn a dha (That's how it was for him)

First line (Verse): Bha mi oidhche sa Chnoc-carrach (I was one night in Cnoc Carrach)

- Oran (A song) – Page 148

Do thriuir ghillean oga chaidh air cheilidh do thigh duin' uasail, agus air dhoibh dhol dachaidh dh'fhag iad geata bhaile fosgailte. (Three young lads went to visit a gentleman's house, and on their way home they left the town gate open.)

Tune: None given

First line: Cha'u fhaicinn caileagair feill (I don't see a fair girl)

- Oran (A song) – Page 148

A rinn am Bard air turus a bha e tighinn dachaidh a Cinntaile. (Written by the Bard on his way home from Kintail.)

Tune: None given

First line (Chorus): Be sud an gille suigeartheadh (That was the cheerful boy)

First line (Verse): Gur a h-iomadh ear (or car) chuir (There was much fun and foolery)

- Oran (A song) - Page 150

Rinn am Bard do leanamh chaidh chur na uchd. (Composed by the Bard to an infant that was placed in his arms.)

Tune: None given

First line (Chorus): Ho mo nighneag 's boidhche chi mi (Ho my daughter and beauty I see)

First line (Verse): Dhe' na Feargusaich tha'n ribhinn (That is the Ferguson's maiden)

- Rann (A poem) – Page 151

Rinn am Bard 'nuair a phos Caìptcan Amori. (Composed by the Bard when Captain Amori married.)

Tune: None given - poem

First line: Deoch slainte na caraid air thus (Drink a friend's health first)

- Rann Callinn (New Year's Eve poem) – Page 153

A rinn am Bard aig tigh Chaipitean Domhuilaich, agus iad fhein o 'n tigh. (Written by the Bard at Captain Dominic's house, and themselves (away?) from home.)

## The Musical Heritage of Glenmoriston

Tune: None given - poem

First line: Cha' n' eil agam-sa a dhuan (I have no rhyme)

- Rann (A poem) – Page 153  
Do Chlachan Cuimhneachan chaidh thogail an ciadh Inbhirhmoireastan. (Memorial Stones were erected at Invermoriston pier.)  
Tune: None given – poem  
First line: Dh' innsinn so dhuibh gu reidh (I have told you this very well)
- Rann (A poem) – Page 154  
A dh' iarr a' Ministear air a Bhard a dhenadh air an t' saor, mar rachadh e a dneanadh na h-obair an latha gheall e. (What the Minister asked the Bard to do to the carpenter, as he would do the work the day he promised.)  
Tune: None given – poem  
First line: A Dhomuill mar freagair thu 'm Pearsan (Donald, as you answered Mr Pearson)
- Rann do long ur (Poem for the new ship) - Page 155  
Tune: None given – poem  
First line: Beannachadh baird do'n luing (Blessing of bards to the ship)
- Oran da Iain Colbhin (Poem for Iain Colvin) - Page 156  
Tune: Fhir leughas mo sgeoil (Men read my story)  
First line: 'S fhir a shiubhlas mu'n cuairt (It's men who walk around)
- Oran (A song) - Page 158  
Dha te bha dol mu 'n cuairt a gleidh ragachan. Thachair dhi air a slighe romh 'n duthaich gu 'n d' asaideadh i fagus dha tigh an duine choir so. (To a beggar woman who travelled around in rags. It happened that she was on her way through the country that she was delivered near the house of this good man.)  
Tune: Pog a nochd agus rog an raoir (Kiss tonight and roguery last night)  
First line: Gu 'n cuala mi naigheachd nach amhaltach leam (I have heard a story that does not displease me)
- Laodh (A lay) - Page 159  
Rinneadh le Iain Grannda, 'athair a Bhard, air leabidh bhais. (Composed by John Grant, Bard's father, on his deathbed.)  
Tune: Laoidh Mhic Ceallair (The lay of Mhic Ceallair)  
First line: Gu'r a mise tha truadh dheth (I feel sorry for him)
- Oran (A song) - Page 162  
Do 'n Oighe Mhaiseach, nighean Fhir Sgalasaig, air dhi mor chaoimhneas a nochdadh do na Bhard. (To the Beautiful Maiden, daughter of the Laird of Scalasaig, for she has shown great kindness to the Bard.)  
Tune: **Soraìdh slàn do 'n aileagan.** (Farewell to the handsome young women).  
First line: Soruidh slàn do 'n aileagan (Farewell to the handsome young women)  
Notes: For tune, see:
  - *The airs and melodies peculiar to the Highlands of Scotland and the Isles* (1816) Captain Simon Fraser of Knockie. Tune no. 4.
  - *Comh-chruinneachidh Orannaigh Gaidhealach; vol. I*, Ronald MacDonald, of the Island of Eigg, Duneidiunn [Edinburgh] (1776)

## APPENDIX 5

### Coinneach 'us Coille, by Alister (Alasdair / Alexander) Macdonald (1895)

Part 1 – 38 songs: 26 with tune identified; 8 with no tune given; 4 sung “To an old tune”

Part 2 – 35 songs

Songs with melodies in appendix of Story and Song of Loch Ness-side are highlighted in **YELLOW**

Songs with otherwise known melodies are highlighted in **GREEN**

All songs are local to Glenmoriston

#### Part One

**Orain duthch' agus duanagan gaoil** (Songs of home and love ditties)

- Mo Dhachaidh Ghaidhealach  
**Tune: "A nochd gu'r faoin mo chadal dhomh."**  
First line: Cia'rson a tha mi muladach  
Notes: For melody, see: *The Morison Collections Highland Airs and Quicksteps*, p.19  
<https://www.heallan.com/morison.asp>
- Cruinneag Dhiomhach  
Tune: None given  
First line: 'N uair chunna' mi thu 'n tos' an Diomhach
- Mo Chaileag Ghaidhealach  
Tune: " Cha ghabh mi te Ghalld',  
First line: Ged bhiodh siod' agus srol oirr'."
- Gleannamoireasdain  
**Tune: "Tri ni thig gun iarraidh."**  
First line: Fhir a shiubhas air thurus  
Notes: For melody, see well known Gaelic song – see:  
[https://www.bbc.co.uk/alba/oran/orain/thig\\_tri\\_nithean\\_gun\\_iairraidh/](https://www.bbc.co.uk/alba/oran/orain/thig_tri_nithean_gun_iairraidh/)
- Oran Leannanachd  
**Tune: " Na 'm faighinn gille ri cheannach, A bheireadh beannachd gu Mairi."**  
First line: Co do 'n innis mi 'n sgeula  
Notes: For melody see:  
[https://www.bbc.co.uk/alba/oran/orain/oran\\_leannanachd\\_nam\\_faighinn\\_gille\\_ri\\_cheannachd/](https://www.bbc.co.uk/alba/oran/orain/oran_leannanachd_nam_faighinn_gille_ri_cheannachd/)
- Am Baile Beag tha 'm bun na 'm Beann  
Tune: "A nighean bhan tha 'n Achaluachrach."  
First line: A dh' aindeoin taobh 'o 'n seid a ghaoth
- Am Fear-Fuadain  
Tune: " Tha gaol na'm boirionnach 's an oige."  
First line: Cha 'n iognadh mise bhi fo phramh
- Luinneag  
Tune: None given  
First line: 'S fada, 's fada leam a tha mi

## The Musical Heritage of Glenmoriston

- A Bhuachailleachd  
Tune: "An Diciadain a dh' fhalbh sinn."  
First line: Is toil leam thu Mhairi 's cha 'n aicheadh mi e  
Note: Melody from Alasdair Maclain Bhàin's "*Is cianail an rathad 's mi gabhail a' chuain*"
- Mo Chaileag bheag bhoidheach bhan  
Tune: None given  
First line: Mo chaileag bheag bhoidheach bhan
- Air cul Achleagan Boidheach (Behind beautiful Achleagan)  
Tune: Luinneag – To an old tune  
First line: Tha neoinean an 'us fluraichean (There are daisies and flowers)
- Focail Ghaidhlig do 'n Fhonn  
Tune: "Ye Banks and Braes o' Bonnie Doon "  
First line: O, uilte bhig a theid orm seachad  
Notes: Melody is well known Burns song
- Cnoc-na-h-Ath (Hillock of the Kiln)  
Song lamenting dwindling population - presumably of Achnanconeran  
Tune: None given  
First line: 'S tric a bhios mi smaointeachd
- Bruadar Gaoil  
Tune: " Cha d' thug mi gaol do dh' airgiod," &c.  
First line: Bhruadarich mi 'n raoir
- Tom-an-t-Sheomair  
Tune: "Bonnie Loch Lomon'."  
First line: 'Ged a bha mi ri m' la 'n iomadh aite fo n' ghrein
- Do Mhairi (For Mhairi)  
Tune: " Ann sa Mhaduinn 's mi g' eiridh."  
First line: Cha cheil mi—cha lamh mi—gu'r tu a Mhairi an ainnir
- Am Foghar  
Tune: " Tha mo chion air mo leannan."  
First line: Ged is ceutach an t-Earrach —
- Maighdeann Og Dhailchuilinn  
Tune: " Gur mor mo speis do n' chruinneag ud."  
First line: Na 'm faicinn fear air thurus
- Facail do Bhannsuir'each 'o Ghille, air dha tuiteam ann a' mi-fhortan  
Tune: " Mu 'n taice so 'n uraidh," &c.  
First line: Tha mo chridh' air a bhuaireadh
- Am Freagradh  
Tune: " Mu 'n taice so 'n uraidh," &c.  
First line: Cha 'n eisd mi ri d' uirnigh

## The Musical Heritage of Glenmoriston

- Luinneag  
Tune: " You promised that you would be mine."  
First line: Thoir aon phog a ghaoil domh—
- Mo Dhuthaich  
Tune: " Ged a tha mi car tamull."  
First line: 'S mi gu 'n reachadh le durachd
- Anna Dhail-na-Creigh (Anna from Dalnacreichtart)  
Tune: " When the kye come hame."  
First line: Ceo a bhios mi 's na caileagan a tachairt air a cheil',  
Notes: For melody see: *The Songs of Scotland*, George Farquhar Graham  
<https://digital.nls.uk/special-collections-of-printed-music/archive/91340407?&mode=transcription>
- Mairi Og an Fhuil Chlannaich  
Tune: " 'S ann fìor thoiseachd an t-Shamhraidh."  
First line: Nach gorach dhomhsa 's nach diomhain
- Duanag  
Tune: "To an old tune"  
First line: Cha teid mi 'nochd do t' ionnsaidh,
- Smuaintean Gaoil  
Tune: " Whistle o'er the lave o't."  
First line: O ! eonain bhig is binne beus,  
Notes: For melody see [https://tunearch.org/wiki/Whistle\\_o%27er](https://tunearch.org/wiki/Whistle_o%27er)
- Dealachadh (Separation)  
Tune: "Cadail cha 'n fhaigh mise."  
First line: Thoir do phog dhomh Anna (Give me your kiss Anna)  
Notes: Melody is a well-known Gaelic song – see:  
[https://www.bbc.co.uk/alba/oran/orain/cadal\\_cha\\_dean\\_mi/](https://www.bbc.co.uk/alba/oran/orain/cadal_cha_dean_mi/)
- Oran Duthcha  
Tune: None given  
First line: Cha chuir cruit no ceol pioba (No harp or pipe music)
- Cuimhneachan Gaoil (Memory of Love)  
Tune: " 'S olc a chuir a mhìre rium" (It was evil that made me mad.)  
First line: Bha mi 'n diugh an gleann nan craobh (Today I was in the glen of the trees)  
Notes: For melody see "the love that has undone me"  
<http://www.folktunefinder.com/tunes/79915>
- Mairi Ghuanach  
Tune: " Ye Banks and Braes o' Bonnie Doon."  
First line: O, uilte bhig a theid orm seachad  
Notes: Melody from Burns song
- Ealaidh Ghaoil

## The Musical Heritage of Glenmoriston

**Tune: " I'll meet thee on the lea-rig."**

First line: Oh ! Ainnir dhonn a leon mi

Notes: Melody is a Burns song – taken from an old Scottish tune “*My ain kind dearie o*”

- Smuaintean

**Tune: “The Bonnie House of Airlie.”**

First line: Fhir a dh' imicheas suas

Notes: Melody is a well-known scots song: <http://www.folktunefinder.com/tunes/141420>

- Achnanconeran

Tune: None given

First line: Ged a tha mi 's a bhaile

- Thug Mi Gaol do the Bhan

Tune: None given

First line: Tha mo chridhe 'cheart cho fuar

- Guanag na Duthcha

**Tune: " A Nighean donn an t-sugraidh."**

First line: Thoir dhomh-sa 'ghaoil do choimhneas

Notes: For melody, see *Simon Fraser Collection*, p16

- Dealachadh Eile

Tune: “To an old tune”

First line: 'S mise 'n diugh nach 'eil sitheil,

- Seonaid (Janet)

Tune: “To an old tune”

Air seann fhonn.

First line: 'Se 'm brúadar oidhch' a bh' agam-sa

- C' ait an diugh 'm beil an Ainnir? (Where is the maiden today?)

Tune: None given

First line: Tha 'Nollaig 's a Challuinn (Christmas and New Year)

### Part Two

**Dain, orain cumha agus rannan eile** (Poems, songs of lamentation and other verses)

- Sgeulachd (A tale)

Tune: None given

First line: An deigh 'bhi fichead bliadhn' air astar (After a distance of twenty years)

- Oran do Chomunn Chlann Domhnuill (Song to the Clan Donald Society)

Tune: None given

First line: Thoir tasgaidh bhuam 'us beannachadh

- Cumha Mathair (Mother's Lament)

**Tune: "Oran an t-Shamhraidh"** by Alasdair Mac Mhaigstir Alasdair.

First line: An am dhomh eirigh 's a mhaduinn

Notes: “Oran an t-Shamhraidh” by Alasdair Mac Mhaigstir Alasdair

## The Musical Heritage of Glenmoriston

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=K4f37lhnu7w>

Tune is according to, the version of the song in *The Poetical Works of Alexander Macdonald* published by Duncan MacVean (1839) sung to the tune "Through the wood, Laddie"

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8ViVz81XD9A>

- Leam Fhin  
Tune: "Eh, oro, Maol-Ruanidh"  
First line: Eh, oro, mo thruaighe mise dheth,
- Cumha Mnatha  
Tune: " Cha till mo bhean tuilleadh"  
First line: Dh' fhag mi 'n diugh anns a chlachan
- Rannan Cuimhneachain air Mairi Nic-Ealair (Verses in memory of Mary McKellar)  
Tune: None given  
First line: 'S goirt an sgrìob a thugadh oirne (The scratch we were given was painful)
- Do n' Mhiosail Ghaidhealach—1892 (To the Highland Monthly 1892)  
Tune: None given  
First line: Failt' 'us furan air a Mhiosail (Welcome and happiness to the Monthly)
- Dan  
Tune: " 'S gu'm bu tarbhach am bradan," &c.  
First line: Nam faigheadh sinn mar bu deoin leinn
- An Cuimhneachan (The memorial / momento?)  
Tune: None given  
First line: Mu 'n am so 'n de bha sinn eibhinn, aighearach (About this time we were jovial and cheerful)
- Do 'n Duilleach (To the leaf)  
Tune: None given  
First line: Ged a b' ard air craobh an de thu (Though you were high on a tree)
- Mort Ghlinnecomhann (The massacre of Glencoe)  
Tune: None given  
First line: Bha 'n sneachda geal Earraich a caitheadh feadh ghleann (The white snow of Spring was blown through a glen)
- Prionns Tearlach ann an Gleannamoireasdain—1746  
Tune: None given  
First line: O ! cìod a thig a nise dh' iom-s'— (Oh what is to come for now)
- Miann an Triuir Bhraithrean a bha 'n Coire-Dhodha  
Mar gum b'ann air a radha ru coimhearsnach leis an fhear bu deirionnaiche 'chaochail diu'  
(The Desire of the Three Brothers of Corridoe, As if told to a neighbour by the last 'died')  
Tune: None given  
First line: Cha 'n fhada 'charaide mo ghraidh
- Cumha Leannanachd  
Suggested by the Foyers Monument

## The Musical Heritage of Glenmoriston

### Tune: "Crodh Chailein"

First line: Ciamar bhios mi ach duilich

Notes: The melody used, Crodh Chailein, is probably originally from Perthshire.

See: *The Gesto Collection of Highland Music*, K N MacDonald (1895)

*The Killin Collection of Gaelic Songs*, Charles Stewart (1884)

- Am Bas  
Tune: None given  
First line: Thug mi sgrìob an raoir mar 's a'isd domh
- An Guthan Beag  
Tune: None given  
First line: Thoir leam gu 'm faca mi 'm brúadar
- Aithreachas Posaidh  
Tune: "Fiunairidh"  
First line: Cha b' ann le toil mo chairdean gaoil  
Notes: For melody, see *Soraidh slàn le Fionn-airidh*, *The Gesto Collection* p 48.
- Posadh na h-Oige 's na h-Aois  
Tune: Air Seann Fhonn (To an old tune)  
First line: Cha b' ann le m' dheoin a phos mi riamh  
Note: Has the same chorus as Na Luban Laghach (See: Appendix 1, 14.11). Melody therefore assumed to be the same
- Fàilte Phadruig Grannda do Gleannamoireasdain, 1881  
Tune: None given  
First line: 'S i an naigheachd so 'fhuair
- Gleannamoireasdain a' measg a Shluaigh  
Oran, mar gum b' ann le Mactalla Chraig-Eun  
Tune: "Tigh Mor Choire-Mhonaidh."  
First line: Leam-sa 's aighearach na m' chluais  
Notes: Tune may be from Simon Fraser Collection "Corrimony"
- Mar Chuimhneachan air Tighearna Ghrannnd'—1881  
Tune: " Sochdair Dhanachd na h-Alba."  
First line: Ciamar bhios sinn ach craiteach
- Na Laithibh' Dh'Fhalbh  
Tune: None given  
First line: Bha cridheachabh dhaoine 'reir an aoidh
- Do na h-Uaislean a bh' aig Dinneir Comunn Gaelig Inbhirnis, 1882 (To the gentlemen at the Inverness Gaelic Society Dinner, 1882)  
Tune: None given  
First line: So i slainte nan Gaidheal—
- Do na h-Uaislean a Shuidh aig Dinneir Comunn Gaelig Inbhirnis, 1886 (To the Gentlemen who sat at the Dinner of the Gaelic Society of Inverness, 1886)  
Tune: None given

## The Musical Heritage of Glenmoriston

First line: So i slainte na'm fìor Ghaidheal (This is the health of the true Gaels)

- Do Dhochas  
Tune: None given  
First line: A dhocais, a bhanacharaid ghaoil
- Oran Mulaid  
Tune: Air seann fhonn (To an old tune)  
First line: "'S truagh nach robh agam caraid
- Cumha na h-Ighnaig  
Tune: Air seann fhonn. (To an old tune)  
First line: Cha 'n 'eil m' ardach dhomh ach falamh,
- Focail Ghailig do 'n Fhonn "Under the Willow" (Gaelic Words for the Tune "Under the Willow.")  
Tune: " Under the Willow"  
Fo dhubhar na' meangan fo 'n uir 's a chill (Under the shade of the branches under the earth and his cell)
- Do 'n t-Shiataig  
Tune: " Air faillirinn &c."  
First line: Mile molachd gu siorraidh  
Notes: For tune, see *The Gesto Collection* p.7
- Apologia pro Aqua-Vitae  
Tune: None given  
First line: Latha flichneach, feadrach, fuar
- Mac-tall' Eas-nan-Smuid da 'Chairdean -1895  
Tune: " Ged is farsan" &c.  
First line: Cìod i so 'naigheachd 'tha mi cluinntinn—
- An Fhiach Dhuinn a bhi Beo?  
Tune: None given  
First line: Mu 'n t' shaoghal 's tric a th' agam smuain
- Am Feileadh Beag  
Tune: " Is toigh leam a Ghaidhealtachd"  
First line: A dh' aindeoin 's gach eideadh  
Notes: For melody see *The Celtic Lyre*, Tune no. 16. <https://digital.nls.uk/early-gaelic-book-collections/archive/78470221?mode=transcription>
- Oran (A song)  
Tune: " Ged 'tha mi gun chrodh," &c. (Although I have no cattle, etc)  
First line: Ged 'tha mi gun chuideachd agam (Although I have no company)  
Notes: For melody see *The Gesto Collection*, p. 29
- Tighinn an t-Shamhraidh—Earann  
Tune: Air seann fhonn.  
First line: Thainig caoin ghuth an t-Shamhraidh

## APPENDIX 6

### MacDonald Bards from Mediaeval Times, by Keith Norman MacDonald (1900)

Biography of Alister (Alexander) Macdonald including details of additional songs and poems not included in Coinneach 'us Coille. See:

<http://www.glenmoriston.org.uk/Glenmoriston/Bardachd/Alister%20MacDonald/>  
<https://deriv.nls.uk/dcn23/8046/80460411.23.pdf>

4 songs with melody identified

2 songs with no melody identified, though one with full words (Luinneag)

3 poems

- " Brosnachadh Chloin Dòmhnuille," 1896 (a poem);
- "Tìr nam Beann, nan Gleann, 's nan Gaisgeach,"  
Tune: Sung to the air of "E ho rò mo rùn a' chailin," by Wm. Ross
- Blàr Allt-a-Bhonnaich (Battle of Bannockburn)  
"Took Mr Theodore Napier's prize at the Highland Mòd for the best poem on that subject some two or three years ago (1896)"
- Dunnian  
Song on Dunean, Inverness  
Tune: "There grows a bonnie brier bush "
- An uair is tinne 'n gad cuaille 's ann is dualaich dha bristeadh  
Poem illustrating this well-known proverb
- Coire Lusain  
Tune: "A song to an old air, the melody being very fine"
- Cruinneag a' Chlachain (The maid of the clachan)  
A love-song  
Tune: Sung to a beautiful old air resembling a fairy whisper
- Far a' bheil Loch Nis a' sanais Crònán tairis do Chillionan (Where Loch Ness whispers to Cill Eonan — (Kilninian)
- "Luinneag  
On finding a small twig of heather under his feet in the office  
Tune: Unknown  
First line: Ged thàinig tu g' am ionnsuidh  
This is the only song in the article where the lyrics are included.
- "And some love-songs that have not yet been printed"

## APPENDIX 7

### Scraps of Unpublished Poetry and Folklore from Glenmoriston

Presentation by Alexander Macdonald GSI on 12<sup>th</sup> March 1896 to the Gaelic Society of Inverness. Transactions of the Gaelic Society of Inverness. Volume XXI page 22.

<https://electricScotland.com/gaelic/transactions21invegoog.pdf>

4 Songs with music identified in Story and Song from Loch Ness-side

1 Song with identified music

3 with no music

1 Poem

Songs with melodies in appendix of Story and Song of Loch Ness-side are highlighted in **YELLOW**

Songs with otherwise known melodies are highlighted in **GREEN**

\* Denotes songs local to Glenmoriston

- 'S ann tha 'n diubhail an drasd' – Poem by John Grant (father of Archie Tàilleir) about the drowning of a gentleman at Portclair.
- \*Gur a mor mo chilis mhulaid – Local song of unrequited love by An t-amadan ruisgte (The naked fool) as described by W MacKay in *Urquhart and Glenmoriston*. Melody in Appendix to SSFLNS and in *The Gesto collection*.
- Chunnacas gruagach 's an aonach – Perthshire shieling song. Melody in Appendix to SSFLNS.
- A fhleasgaich is cumaire – Perthshire shieling song. Melody in Appendix to SSFLNS.
- Gur tric a' falbh na Sroine mi - Whisky song composed by one of Macphadruig's herds. Sung to "a stirring air". Melody in Appendix to SSFLNS.
- A chaora crom a th' air an leachduinn – Whisky song sung to the tune "The ewie wi' the crookit horn,"
- Thug thu corr 'us raithe bhliadhna - Song by Margaret MacIntyre
- Thoir tasgaidh bhuam 'an diomhaireachd - Song, by Mairi Nigh 'n Alasdair Ruaidh  
See <https://digital.nls.uk/early-gaelic-book-collections/archive/76611669?mode=transcription>
- \* Cha teid mi an rathad - Song about the Cailleach a' Chraich

## APPENDIX 8

### Scraps of Unpublished Poetry and Folklore from Loch Ness - Part 1

Presentation by Mr Alex. Macdonald, 19<sup>th</sup> November 1893 to the Gaelic Society of Inverness.

Transactions of the Gaelic Society of Inverness. Volume XXV, p. 328 (Published 1907)

<https://archive.org/details/transactionsgae01invegoog/page/n347/mode/2up>

4 Songs with melody known

8 songs with no melody

1 poem

Songs with melodies in appendix of Story and Song of Loch Ness-side are highlighted in **YELLOW**

Songs with otherwise known melodies are highlighted in **GREEN**

\* Denotes songs local to Glenmoriston

- **Mairi Anna** – Love song to tune of Ae fon kiss. Melody also in Appendix to SSFLNS.
- \* Air faillirinn, illirinn – Humorous song by John Macdonald (“Iain Glaiseach”).
- \* Thill mi rithisd – I returned again
- \* Sid a comunn ‘s suairce leinn - Flyting song about / by Archibald Grant of Glenmoriston
- \* Sid a comunn ‘s fuathaich leinn – Song by Griogair
- \* Mo ghaol ne fir dhonna sin - Song about Archibald Grant
- \* **Tha mi n duil** – Song with local words to tune of Fear Chulcharn (The Maid of Islay).  
See: Iain MacDonald: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XcbITotyqvY>
- Chuir iad mise Dh' eilean leam fhin – “Commonly sung to a beautiful old air, conveying a melancholy sentiment of loneliness and despondency”.
- **Theid mi dhachaidh** – Song to plaintive air. Melody in Gesto collection p.33. Several versions including: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ycSrTgUuWu4>
- Ho-ro tha mi muladach (Ho ro I am sad): Song possibly originally from Perthshire?
- ‘S sealgair feidh air fireach thu (You are a wild deer hunter): Work song about a man’s love of hunting (Sung and recorded by Evelyn Campbell, Soprano circa 1947)
- Bu tu ‘n curaidh bha treun (Cha till, cha till, cha till thu tuilleadh) - Lament composed for chiefs of Grant
- O’ theid mi nochd – Love song

## APPENDIX 9

### Scraps of Unpublished Gaelic Poetry and Folklore from Loch Ness-side — Part 2

Presentation by Mr Alexander Macdonald. 2nd March 1899 to the Gaelic Society of Inverness.

Transactions of the Gaelic Society of Inverness. Volume XXIII, p. 179

<https://archive.org/details/transactions23gaeluoft/page/178>

11 songs with melody identified

9 songs without music

Songs with melodies in appendix of Story and Song of Loch Ness-side are highlighted in **YELLOW**

Songs with otherwise known melodies are highlighted in **GREEN**

\* Denotes songs local to Glenmoriston

- Conull Ghuilbinn - Ossianic ballad
- \* Is i do nighean-sa 'Dhonnchaidh – Song by Donald Macdonald, "Domhnull Donn" written by him when he was hiding in a cave on the north side of Allt Saigh waiting to see his love – the gaughter of Grant of Glenmoriston.
- \* Dh' fhalbh mi le na luban laghach – Song about a man courting a Glenmoriston woman who turns out to not to be quite as wealthy and well-born he had portrayed himself to be. Melody in Appendix to SSFLNS
- \* Moch 's a' mhaduinn Diciadain - Song by Alasdair Mac Iain Bhàin," inspired by the Bard receiving tidings of Grant of Glenmoriston being seriously ill, and it reveals the nearness of landlord and people to each other in olden times".
- Gur a tu mo nighean donn bhoidheach – A very sweet love song with words local to Loch Ness side. The melody, with different words, are on p 53 of Gesto Collection
- A luchd comuinn mo ruin – Song that was once very popular locally by an unknown author. Sung to same melody as " Sae will we yet" – with words being "somewhat in the nature of a translation, so far as they go."
- 'S ann ormsa 'bha 'n truaighe – Song from Loch Ness area about marrying for money and subsequently paying the price!
- Tha mo chridh' air an fhireach – A love song to the melody of "My heart is in the Highlands"

#### Generally well known shieling songs, but popular in the area

- An gille donn 's a' bhanarach (The brown-haired boy and the milkmaid) – shieling love song. Melody in Appendix to SSFLNS
- A nighean donn an airidh (The brown-haired girl of the shieling). Melody in Appendix to SSFLNS
- Ged bhiodh na laoigh 'an cois a' chruidh (Although the calves were with the cattle) – Melody and words on p.82 of Keith Norman MacDonald's Puirt-à-Beul
- Tha mi air mo chur, ho ri - Love song about a cattle herd on Lurgainn Duibh ..... local?

#### Puirt-à-beul

- Tha fear 'am beinn an t-Slochdain-Duibh - " Canntaireachd," or Puirt-à-Beul, Tune in Keith Norman MacDonald's Puirt-à Beul – the melody is "a distant variant of " The Marquis of Huntly's Highland Fling," known in Gaelic under the title of "Maighdeannan a' Choir e Dhuibh".
- Rinn am fiddleir mo mhealladh (The fiddler deceived me). Puirt-à-beul to the same air as above.

## The Musical Heritage of Glenmoriston

- **Gun d' chuir mo leannan culthaobh rium** – Very similar to Bhon chuir mo leannan cùlthaobh rium – see <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RWQJms9HV1c>  
See Dochas: <http://www.celticlyricscorner.net/dochas/puir2.htm>
- **Nighean na cailliche crotaiche crubaich** (The daughter of the hunchbacked old woman) – Song painting a picture of female attractiveness. Song and melody in Keith Norman MacDonald's Puirt-à-Beul

### Also

- **Mo chiaran 's mo chumhasan** – Lullaby milking song – possibly from the Gairloch area, "with the genius touch of nature about it". Melody in Appendix to SSFLNS.
- **Cha teid mi 'Choir'-Odhar** – Slightly sinister Perthshire shieling song about a woman hiding from "the lads" and spending the summer with the deer. Melody in Appendix to SSFLNS
- **Cuiridh mi mo bhriogais diom** – song commonly sung to the air of " *Seann-triubhais* "

### Songs by Thomas Macdonald, bard of Abriachan

- Oran do Ghleann Urchadain – Song in praise of Glen Urquhart. Melody unknown
- **Oran air Mr W G Stiubhart** – Song in memory of W. G. Stuart. Melody to the tune of "A' nochd gur faoin mo chadal domh." For melody see: Patrick MacDonald (Highland Vocal Airs), 1784; p. 20, No. 129. And also Morison (Highland Airs and Quicksteps, vol. 2), c. 1882; No. 21, p. 11.  
Alasdair Fraser <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Kock-XooUQU>  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Y8w2o-sZDY>

## APPENDIX 10

### The songs and poems of Alasdair Mac Iain Bhàin

Presentation by Mr Wm. Mackay on 12<sup>th</sup> December 1883 to the Gaelic Society of Inverness.

Transactions of the Gaelic Society of Inverness Volume X, p.279

<https://www.electricscotland.com/gaelic/transactions10gaeluoft.pdf>

Songs with known melodies are highlighted in **GREEN**

All songs are local to Glenmoriston

Notes taken from Glenmoriston.org provided by Murdo M Grant of Fortrose and Lewiston.

- Oran an t-Siosalaich (A Song to The Chisholm). This takes the form of the customary tribute by the clan bard to his chief, only this is the head of another clan! The reason we are told is that, as a young man, at a mart, he was indebted to The Chisholm because of an act of kindness there.
- **Is cianail an rathad 's mi gabhail a' chuain** (Dreary is the Ocean Road I am Taking) (Also known as "An Diciadain a dh' fhalbh sinn"). A detailed account of the ship on an expedition to the West Indies: "For seven weeks of tempestuous weather...continually pumping water out of her hour after hour."  
See Tobar an Dualchais: <http://tobarandualchais.co.uk/en/fullrecord/87158>
- An diugh 's mi fagail na rioghachd (Today As I Am Leaving The Country). A graphic account of a stormy crossing of the Atlantic, 1795-96. "A month after All Saints' Day sore was the scattering and loss at sea... waves came over and swept away my bed."
- Oran air Gleann-na-Moireastuinn (A Song to Glenmoriston). The bard, in saying farewell, thinks of all the beautiful places, the wildlife, the pleasures there enjoyed - and the sweetheart whom he will "love till the day I die". The song is printed in Vol. 8. of the GSI Transactions, p. 112. The version given in this paper is slightly different.
- Theid mi le 'm dheotna dhuthaich Iain Oig (Duthaich Iain Oig Colonel John Grant's country; i.e. Glenmoriston) (I will go gladly to Glenmoriston - The Land of Young John). A very moving account of how his health has failed after "A heavy piece of metal has lodged in my body. If you go into the wood you will see a tree twisted because of the way in which its own saplings have grown around it." The pain, he says, is "the messenger of death" but he still hopes to reach home and recover. We know that he expired shortly after reaching Achnaconeran. According to Alexander Macdonald, native of that part, in "Story & Song from Lochness-Side", he was "almost immediately attacked by strong colic. He lingered in agonising pain for some time, and, after great suffering, appeared to have died."
- Marbhrann do Thighearna Ghlinne-Moireastuinn (Colonel John Grant of Glenmoriston, who died in 1801). (An Elegy for The Laird of Glenmoriston). "My day of sharp sorrow concerning Iain Og, from the castle of music and from the glen rich in grass... It is a jewel that has been taken from us." He died in September, 1801.

Grant's "**Oran an t-Saighdeir**" is printed in the seventh volume of the Society's Transactions, page 52. For notes, see: Appendix 1, Section 5.8

## APPENDIX 11

### Archibald Grant, (Archie Tàilleir) - The Glenmoriston Bard

Presentation to GSI by Alexander Macdonald on 24<sup>th</sup> February 1886 to the Gaelic Society of Inverness.

Transactions of the Gaelic Society of Inverness Volume XII, p.226

<https://electricScotland.com/gaelic/transactions12gael.pdf>

<http://www.glenmoriston.org.uk/Glenmoriston/Bardachd/Archie%20Tàilleir/>

Songs with melodies in appendix of Story and Song of Loch Ness-side are highlighted in **YELLOW**

All songs are local to Glenmoriston

- Bobadh is m' annsachd – Song by Archibald Grant Snr about Angus Og Macdonnell of Glengarry
- **Hò fearan hì fearan** – Song by Archibald Grant Snr about Angus Og Macdonnell of Glengarry. Melody in Appendix to SSFLNS.
- Mo ghaol, mo ghaol – Song by Archibald Grant Snr about Angus Og Macdonnell of Glengarry
- Theid an t'èideadh – Song by Archibald Grant Snr on presenting Aonghas Og with his first kilt
- Iseabail 's Archie 'n drasda bruidhinn rium – by John Grant about his wife and son
- Deoch-slainnte Choirneil nach maireann – Song by John Grant about the advent of sheep
- A chionn 's gu faighinn fhaotainn – Song by Archie Tàilleir about rental day
- Ni mi cleas amadan Mhicleoid – Poem by Archie Tàilleir about the factor and absence of Macphadruig at rent day. (Mac-Phadruig being the name by which every Chief of the Grants of Glenmoriston is locally known)
- Tha cailleachan liath a' bhaile so (There are grey women in this village): Poem by Archie Tàilleir about the advisability of old women attending local balls.
- Gu ma fada maireann beo thu (Long live you): Poem by Archie Tàilleir about suit fitting for a young man
- 4 short poems / quotes / ditties
- 'Dol sìos no 'dol suas dhomh: Song by Archie Tàilleir about noisy woodcutters in the glen
- 'Sa ghleannan uaine sluagh gu'n chas. Extract from song by Archie Tàilleir in praise of Glenmoriston's beauty