The Secular Poetry of John MacLean, "Bàrd Thighearna Chola", "Am Bàrd MacGilleain"

Robert Douglas Dunbar

PhD

THE UNIVERSITY OF EDINBURGH

2006

DECLARATION

I declare that this thesis has been composed by me. The thesis is my own research and the work within has not been submitted for any other degree or professional qualification.

Signed by

Date: 08/11/07

THANKS

While this Doctoral dissertation is solely my own work, I have benefited greatly from the assistance of numerous people, and I would like to offer particular thanks to my supervisors, Prof William Gillies and Prof Donald E. Meek, for their exceptional support, guidance, patience and, indeed, friendship. I should note that Prof Meek is a relation of the poet and a man of the poet's home township of Caolas, Tiree, and I would like to thank him for supporting me so generously in a project that is so close to his heart; I hope that I have done him, and the poet, justice. I would also like to thank Mr. Ronald Black, one of my supervisors during the early stages of work on this dissertation. I would also like to thank my examiners, Prof Breandán Ó Madagáin and Dr Anja Gunderloch, for their rigorous work and their excellent insights, from which I have drawn great benefit.

A number of people were very helpful in providing valuable information and comments, and I should like to give particular thanks to Mr. Seumas Watson, Dr Wilson McLeod, Prof Colm Ó Baoill, Mr. Nicholas Maclean-Bristol, and to Mrs. Maureen (Lonergan) Williams. I am also extremely grateful to Prof Alasdair Sinclair, Mr. John Sinclair and Mr. Douglas MacLean, all descendants of the poet, for providing me with valuable family information, access to documents and books, and generous hospitality. I should also like to thank the following, in no particular order: Dr Margaret MacKay; Dr John Shaw; Dr Michael Linkletter; Prof Ken Nilsen; Miss Lorrie MacKinnon; Mr. Angus MacLean and Ms Mary MacLean, Scarinish, Tiree; An Iodhlann, Tiree's history museum, and in particular Catriona McLeod, Duncan Grant and Alasdair Sinclair; Dr John Holliday, Tiree; Dr Andrew MacKillop; Mr. Allan J. Gillis, Ottawa and Judique, Cape Breton; Dr John Gibson; Mrs. Nova Bannerman and the Barney's River Station School Museum; Ms Anne Landin; Dr Dòmhnall Uilleam Stiùbhart; Prof Roibeard Ó Maolalaigh; and, Dr. Michael Newton. I would also like to thank the staff of the Public Archives of Nova Scotia, the Sound Archive and the Fr. Charles Brewer Celtic Collection of the Angus L. Macdonald Library, St. Francis Xavier University, the Beaton Institute, Cape Breton University, the National Library of Scotland, and of the Special Collections, the University of Edinburgh, the Special Collections, the University of Glasgow and the Special Libraries and Archives, the University of Aberdeen. I would like to offer particular thanks to Mr. Rodney Chaisson and the staff of the Nova Scotia Highland Village for their great kindness and support. I am certain that I have inadvertently missed at least one or two people who also deserve to be mentioned, and I can only ask your forgiveness for my absent-mindedness!

There are many friends who have provided valuable personal support at many points along the way, and I should like to offer special thanks to Dr Wilson McLeod and Dr Konstanze Glaser for innumerable kindnesses, big and small, to Seumas Watson and Frances MacEachen, for hosting me so warmly and so generously on my many trips to Cape Breton, and to Prof Cyril Byrne and Laurie Mireau for their wonderful hospitality on my many trips to Halifax, N.S. Very sadly, Prof Byrne passed away very shortly after my oral examination, and prior to the final submission of this manuscript; his loss is a huge one, and I shall miss him greatly. Thank you, Cyril; fois dha d' anam. I am also particularly indebted to Wilson and Seumas, whose friendship has helped me in more ways that I can relate.

Finally, a doctoral thesis demands much of a candidate, but also much of the candidate's family. I would like to thank my parents, Douglas and Pearl Dunbar, for their unstinting support, and for allowing my work habits to intrude so frequently on the relatively short periods we have together on trips home to Toronto. I would also like to thank my in-laws, Alex Murdo and Donella MacLeod, and my extended Lewis family, for their generosity and for allowing me to bring my work into their home and their lives. I would like to express my special thanks to my son Alasdair, who has also put up with his father's work habits. Finally, I would like to give thanks to my wife Christine, who has been closest to this process—and has suffered accordingly!—for her support and patience.

DEDICATION

I dedicate this thesis to my son, Alasdair—

do dh'Alasdair, mo mhac ionmhainn, solas mo chridhe;
agus dhan fheadhainn a thig as do dhèidh

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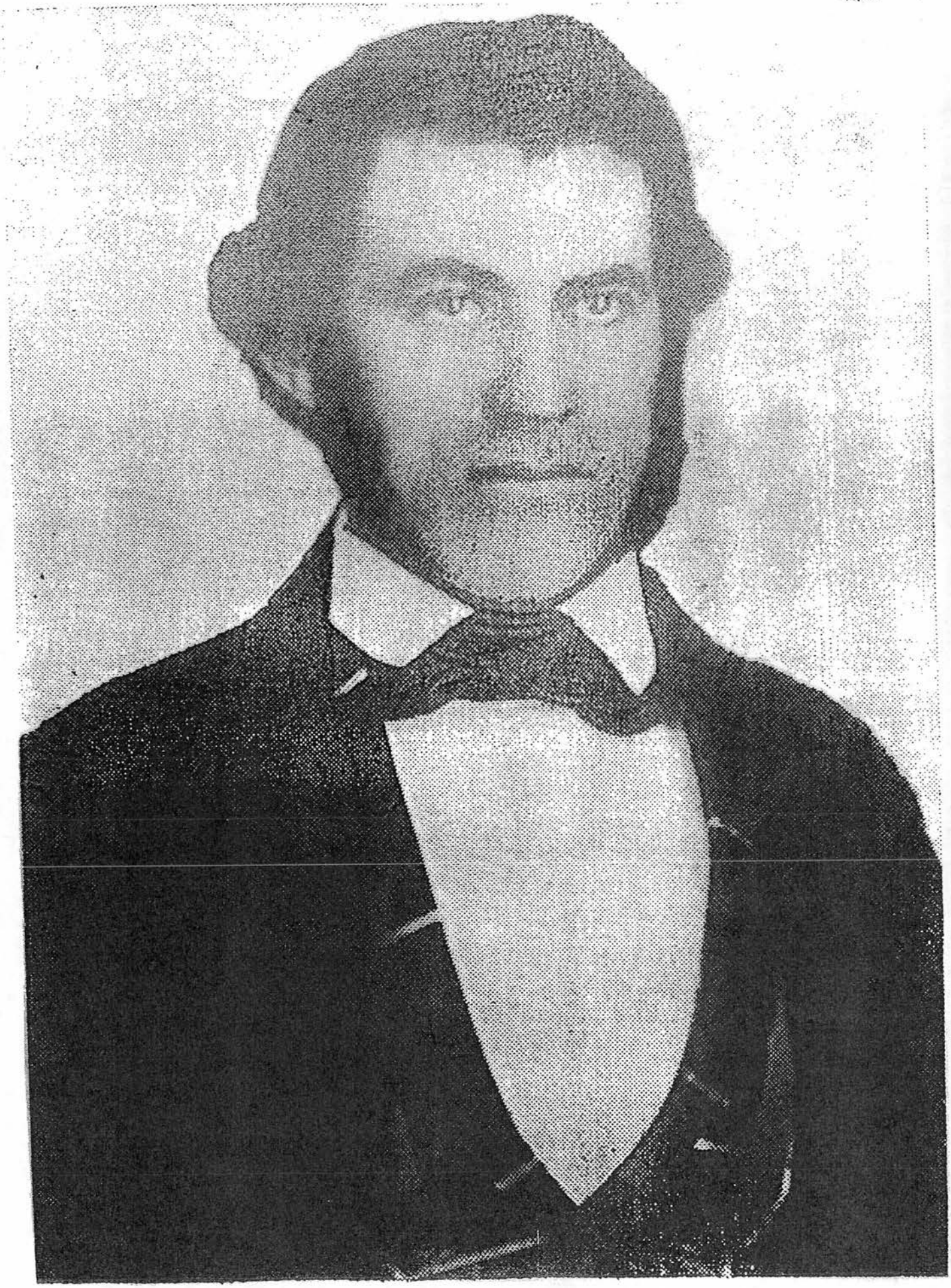
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Appendix I: The Secular Poems of John MacLean

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The Poet John MacLean?
A picture used in the leaflet produced for the unveiling of the memorial cairn to John MacLean, 9 July, 1961. Modern photography only began after the development of the daguerreotype in 1839, when the poet was 52 (see Helmut Gernsheim, *A concise History of Photography* (London: Thames and Hudson, 1965), p. 17 *et seq.*). Courtesy of John Sinclair, Hopewell, N.S.

CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

John MacLean (1787-1848) was a native of Caolas, Tiree, who emigrated to Nova Scotia, Canada, in 1819. In Scotland, he is known to this day by Gaelic speakers as "Bàrd Thighearna Chola", "The Poet to the Laird of Coll", and he was one of the last of the Gaelic poets to have served as a poet for a Highland chieftain. In Nova Scotia, he is commonly known simply as "Am Bàrd MacGilleain", "The Bard MacLean", and is regarded as perhaps the greatest of the many poets who emigrated from the Scottish Highlands in the main period of large-scale Highland emigration to North America, which lasted roughly from 1735 to 1850. He composed 44 secular poems, and 46 hymns for which we have a record; 26 of the secular poems were composed in Scotland before emigration, and 18 were composed in Canada, while most, if not all, of the hymns were composed in Canada.

In addition to being a poet, John MacLean was also a relatively early collector of Gaelic song and poetry, and much of his fieldwork, together with that of Dr. Hector MacLean of Grulin, Mull, was preserved in two manuscripts which the poet brought to Canada. These manuscripts provided much of the material for the prolific Gaelic publishing career of the poet's grandson, Rev. Alexander Maclean Sinclair, who published fifteen books between 1880 and 1904. The manuscripts have also been an extremely important source of poetry for modern Gaelic scholars.

John MacLean's poetry has never been subjected to sustained critical analysis. Indeed, many twentieth century critics have shown little interest in either his secular or his religious verse. Sorley Maclean's assessment was that John MacLean "was in every sense but the chronological, a poet of the 18th century, though he was alive until 1848".1 Similarly, Derick Thomson dealt with John MacLean in the context of his

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1 Somhairle MacGill-eain, "The Poetry of the Clearances", in William Gillies, ed., *Ris a' Bhruthaich: The Criticism and Prose Writings of Sorley Maclean* (Stornoway: Acair, 1985), at pp. 56-7.

very short assessment of the poetry of the emigrant communities—he did not consider his poetry at all in his wider consideration of Gaelic poetry of the nineteenth century. Thomson's views are similar to those of Sorley Maclean:

> His Scottish verse is very much in the panegyrist style of the eighteenth century. More interest attaches to what he wrote in Canada, and particularly to his poem "*Am Bàrd an Canada*" ("The Poet in Canada"),2 in which he gives his early reactions to his new country (contrasting it with his windswept native Tiree) and castigates the emigration agents whose picture of life in Canada was evidently too rosy . . . . It is an interesting enough testimony of disillusionment, and must have been composed very early in MacGhilleathain's sojourn in Canada. He survived there until 1848, composing some other songs in a similar vein, but in the main reverting to what must have been his natural bent in verse: a miscellany of panegyric (for persons in Scotland and Canada) and of occasional village-verse.3

The core of this thesis, contained in Chapters Three to Five, is the first attempt to redress the general lack of sustained critical analysis of the secular poetry of John MacLean. I shall argue that critical views such as those expressed by Sorley Maclean and Derick Thomson are based on certain critical assumptions that require to be reassessed. In particular, there is the assumption that Gaelic panegyric poetry somehow belongs to the eighteenth century. Therefore, a nineteenth century poet such as John MacLean who continues to compose such poetry must somehow be an anachronism. There is also a widespread critical assumption, shared by critics such as Sorley Maclean and Derick Thomson, that the Gaelic poetry of the nineteenth century was itself inferior to that of either the eighteenth or the twentieth. A closer assessment of his poetry will reveal that, in addition to being a technically gifted poet, John MacLean was thoroughly a man of his age, and that his panegyric and other poetry composed in Scotland gives us important insights into the early nineteenth century Highlands and into how Gaels were responding to the various major social and

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2 "Òran do dh' Aimearaga", poem 28 in this collection.

3 Derick Thomson, *An Introduction to Gaelic Poetry*, (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1990), at pp. 220-1.

economic changes that were taking place at the time. Critical assumptions about the alleged "inferiority" of nineteenth century Gaelic poetry are themselves being challenged by critics such as Donald Meek4 and John MacInnes,5 and closer assessment of the secular poetry composed by John MacLean in Scotland will, it is hoped, provide further evidence in support of this reassessment.

I shall also argue that the secular poetry composed by John MacLean in Canada has suffered from a general lack of sustained critical interest in Gaelic poetry of the emigrant Gaelic communities. Although several scholars have dealt with aspects of this poetic legacy, there has never been a comprehensive treatment of this material. Furthermore, such scholarship has generally been undertaken by North American or North American-based scholars; interest from within Scotland and Scottish Gaeldom has tended to be surprisingly perfunctory. It is intended that Chapter Five of this thesis will contribute to a better understanding and appreciation the work of at least one important poet living in an emigrant Gaelic community, and it is hoped that this critical analysis will provoke a more comprehensive assessment of the poetry of the emigrant communities more generally; as John Shaw has argued,6 the poetic legacy of such communities offers us a fuller understanding of the nature of those communities and an important basis for a better assessment of the poetry of the Scottish Gàidhealtachd from the period of emigration onwards.

Although Alexander Maclean Sinclair provided a brief portrait of the poet in several of his publications, we still lack a comprehensive biographical portrait of the poet. In order to understand more fully the context in which John MacLean's poetry

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4 Donald E. Meek, *Caran an t-Saoghal/The Wiles of the World: Anthology of 19th Century Scottish Gaelic Verse* (Edinburgh: Birlinn, 2003).

5 John MacInnes, "Gaelic Poetry in the Nineteenth Century", in Douglas Gifford, ed., *The History of Scottish Literature, Vol. 3: Nineteenth Century* (Aberdeen: Aberdeen University Press, 1988), at pp. 377-395.

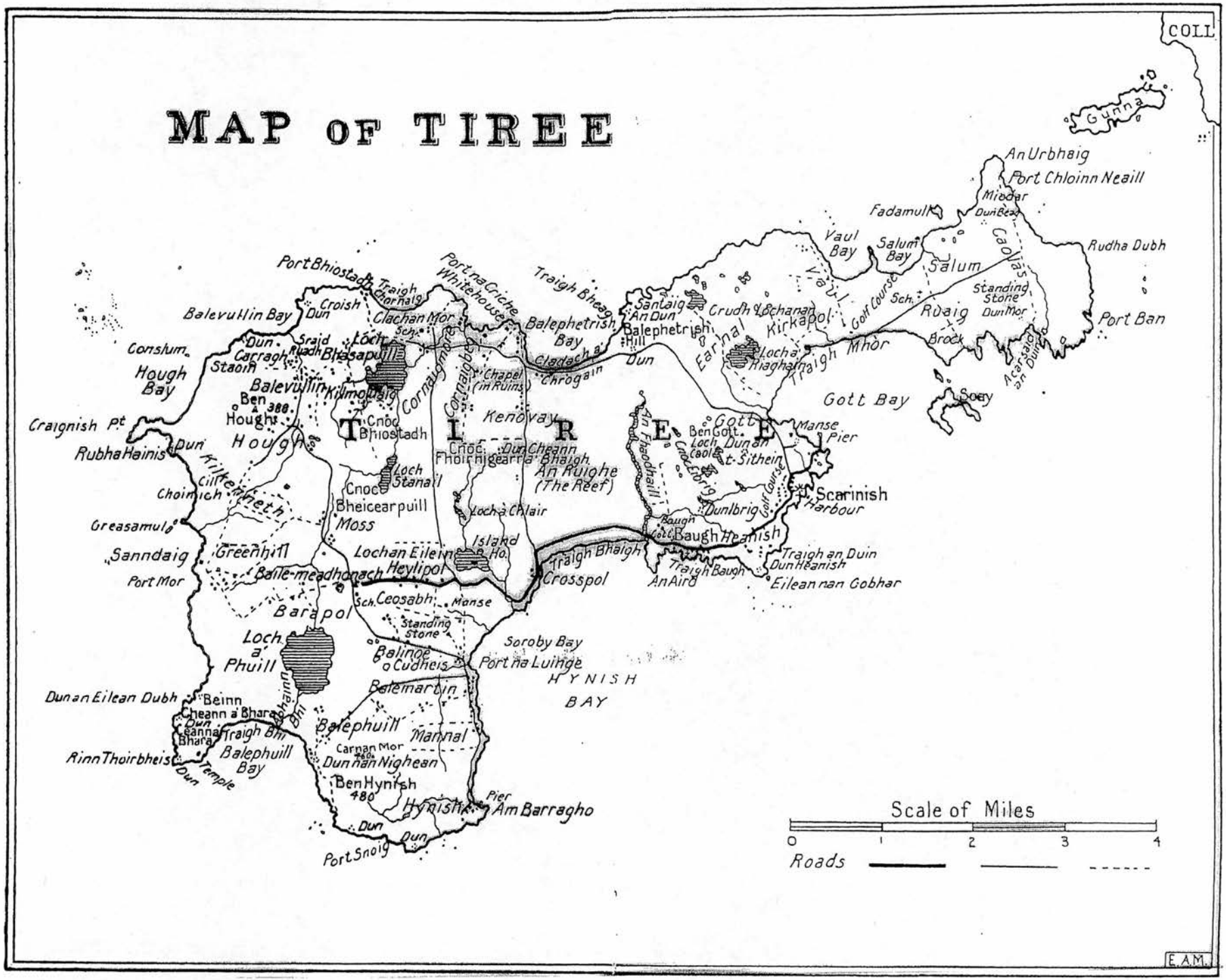
was composed, the critical assessment of his poetry will be preceded by a comprehensive biographical portrait of the poet, which is set out in Chapter Two.

Finally, although all of John MacLean's surviving poetry, both secular and spiritual, has been published, primarily by Alexander Maclean Sinclair, those versions published by Maclean Sinclair differ considerably—indeed, radically—from the versions which appear in the poet's manuscripts or in the collection of some of his poetry which the poet himself published in 1818. Furthermore, his poetry has never been properly annotated. Newly edited versions of all of the known secular poetry, together with translations, information on sources and context, and full line annotations, are contained in the Appendix to this thesis. The editorial principles upon which these editions have been based are described in Chapter Six, the final substantive chapter of this dissertation. The overriding principle has been to provide a phonologically and dialectically sensitive edition of the secular poetry, so that the poet is given as much room to speak in his own words and in his own dialect as the printed page will allow. An important subsidiary principle is to provide editions that elucidate aspects of the poetry, such as the use of elision and contractions, which may not be obvious to readers who are not fully fluent in Gaelic or are not fully familiar with patterns of elision and contraction in Gaelic poetry. Both the overriding and the subsidiary principle argue for an orthographic approach that differs in some respects from standard modern Gaelic orthography, as most recently reflected in the Gaelic Orthographic Conventions 2005 of the Scottish Qualifications Authority.7

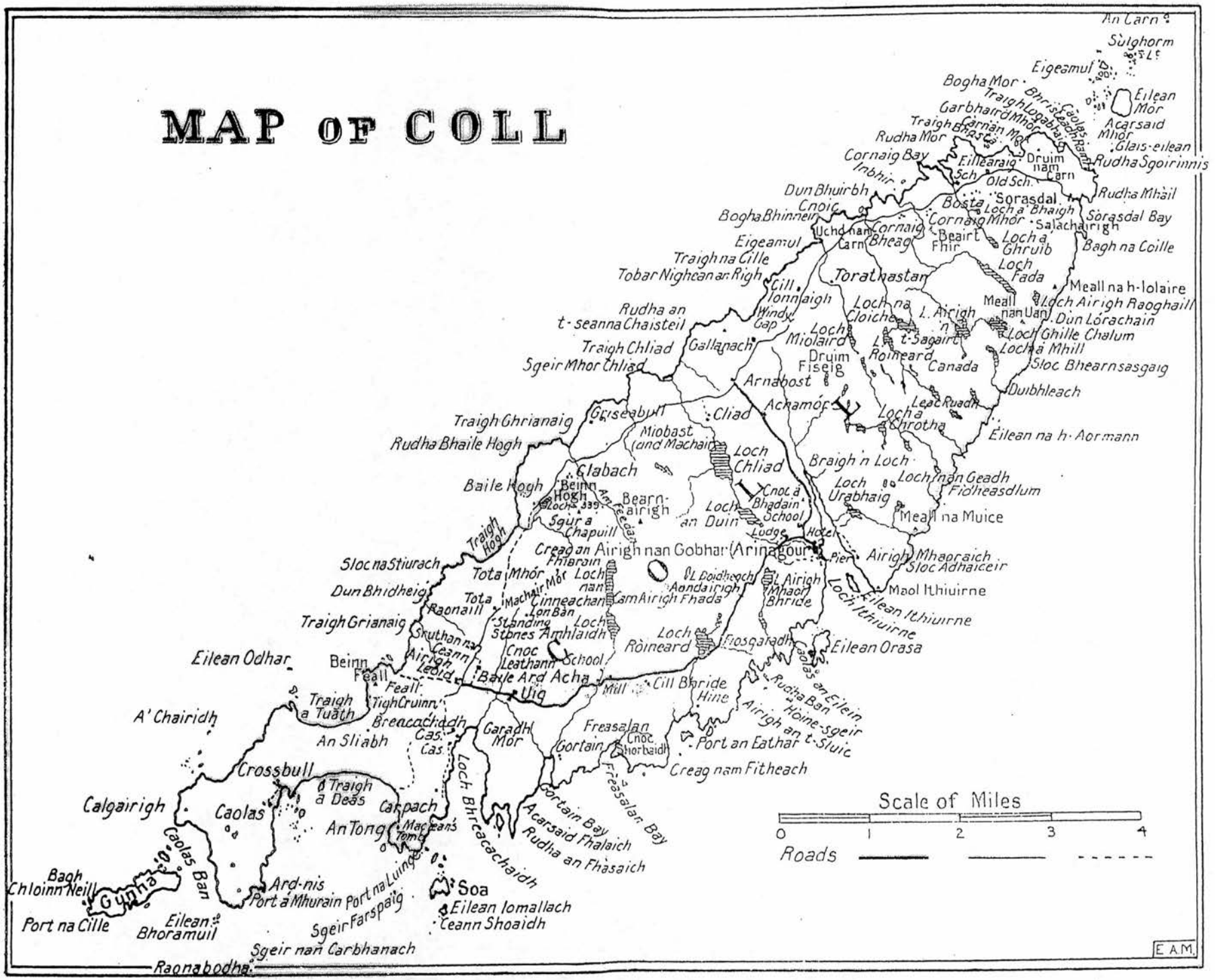
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6 John W. Shaw, "Brief Beginnings: Nova Scotian and Old World Bards Compared", (1996) 17 *Scottish Gaelic Studies* 342.

7 Ùghdarras Theisteanas na h-Alba, *Gaelic Orthographic Conventions 2005* (Glasgow, Dalkeith, August 2005).



Source: Hector MacDougall, *Handbook to the Islands of Coll and Tiree*, 1937



Source: Hector MacDougall, *Handbook to the Islands of Coll and Tiree*, 1937

CHAPTER TWO: A BIOGRAPHY OF JOHN MACLEAN

John MacLean is widely considered to have been the greatest Gaelic poet to have emigrated to North America.8 He was also considered by the Rev. Hector Cameron, editor of *Na Baird Thirisdeach* ("The Tiree Bards"), to have been the ablest and most productive of the Tiree bards.9 John MacLean is known to Nova Scotia Gaels to this day as "Bàrd Abhainn Bhàirnidh", "The Bard of Barney's River", the location of the poet's first homestead in Nova Scotia, or simply as "Am Bàrd MacGilleain", "The Bard MacLean", which is how he is recognized on his tombstone at his final resting place, the Glenbard Cemetery, Glenbard, Antigonish County, Nova Scotia. John MacLean is commonly referred to by Scottish Gaels as "Bàrd Thighearna Chola", "The Poet to the Laird of Coll", but is known to this day by his patronymic, or "sloinneadh", "Iain mac Ailein", in his native Tiree.

John MacLean is reputed to be one of the last of the "family" bards of Gaelic Scotland.10 Based on the remaining record, he began to compose extended pieces of

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8 Charles W. Dunn writes that "John MacLean was probably the most versatile and renowned of the Highland poets to come out to the New World": *Highland Settler: A Portrait of the Scottish Gael in Nova Scotia* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1980), at p. 60. Derick Thomson states that "Iain MacGhillEathain (John Maclean) is usually regarded as the main patriarch of Nova Scotia Gaelic verse": *An Introduction to Gaelic Poetry* (Edinurgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1990), at p. 220. Margaret MacDonell argues that he was "undoubtedly one of the greatest Gaelic bards who ever left Scotland": *The Emigrant Experience: Songs of Highland Emigrants in North America* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1982), at p. 68. Donald Maclean Sinclair considered John MacLean to be "the finest Gaelic poet to live and write in Canada": "John MacLean: A Centenary", 28:3 *The Dalhousie Review* 258 (1948), at p. 258; the son of Alexander Maclean Sinclair, Donald Maclean Sinclair was an important Nova Scotia tradition bearer and Gaelic scholar, and had a thorough knowledge of the Gaelic tradition in Canada, but was also a great-grandson of the poet.

9 An t-Urr. Eachann Camshron, *Na Baird Thirisdeach* (Stirling: The Tiree Association, 1932), at p. 38: "He was, undoubtedly, the ablest, as well as the most productive, of the Tiree bards."

10 "John MacLean: A Centenary", at p.262. Eric Cregeen and Donald W. MacKenzie note the following: "It may be that the title, "Bard Thighearna Chola"—"the laird of Coll's bard" was largely honorific, but it is interesting as being the latest example of the use of a traditional style of this kind in the Highlands": *Tiree Bards and their Bardachd* (Isle of Coll: Society of West Highland & Island Historical Research, 1978), at p. 8. Maighread Lobban, however, makes the claim that her great grandfather, Lachlan Livingstone (1819-1901) of Croggan, Mull, was the last of the the family poets. Not only did he make praise poems for the Maclaines of Lochbuie, but she claims that "he was *employed* by the MacLaines of Lochbuie as their bard, fisherman and piper", (emphasis added) and that the poet's bagpipes, which are still in the family, were a gift from one of the MacLaines: Maighread Dhòmhnallach Lobban, *Lachann Dubh a' Chròigain: Lachlan Livingstone and his Grandsons, Bards of Mull and Lismore* (Iona: The New Iona Press, 2004), at p. 12, 13.

poetry in the first decade of the nineteenth century, and much of it was panegyric poetry made in honour of his patron, the Laird of Coll. The early nineteenth century was an eventful period in Gaelic Scotland, filled with great political, economic and social change. Certainly, the old order of Highland society, of which family poets such as John MacLean were firmly a part, was collapsing. He was also one of the earliest and most important Gaelic bards of the Nova Scotia Gàidhealtachd. As such, his poetry and his life offer us an intriguing window on two Gaelic communities, one in many ways in crisis, the other in its birth pangs. We are able to observe how one Gael was able to cope with and make sense of these pressures and opportunities, but we also get a sense of the wider challenges which faced Gaels on both sides of the Atlantic.

Much of the biographical information that we have about John MacLean is to be found in the sketch provided by his grandson, Alexander Maclean Sinclair, in the introductory memoirs in *Clarsach na Coille*11 and in *Filidh na Coille*.12 In his *History of the Clan Gillean*,13 Maclean Sinclair provides an account of the poet's genealogy. He was also the source of the biographical information contained in the entry on John MacLean in the 1863 edition of *Sar-Obair nam Bard Gaelach* that was published in Halifax, Nova Scotia by Norman MacDonald, a native of Glenuig, Moidart, Scotland, who had emigrated to Addington Forks, Antigonish County.14

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11 The Rev. Alexander Maclean Sinclair, *Clarsach na Coille* (Glasgow: Archibald Sinclair, 1881) ("Clarsach 1881").

12 Alexander Maclean Sinclair, *Filidh na Coille: Dàin agus Òrain leis a' Bhàrd MacGilleain agus le feadhainn eile* (Charlottetown: Examiner Publishing Company, 1901).

13 Alexander Maclean Sinclair, *The Clann Gillean* (Charlottetown: Haszard and Moore, 1899).

14 Norman MacDonald, "Norman, son of Hugh, son of Ronald, son of John, son of Lachlin", born in 1820, was one of six children, and emigrated to Nova Scotia in 1843 with his mother, two sisters and two brothers. The family settled at Addington Forks, Antigonish County, which is about three miles from Glenbard, where John MacLean and his family were staying at the time. Having more formal education than the immigrants of his day usually had, he was soon installed as a teacher at the school at Beaver Meadow, Antigonish County. Alexander Maclean Sinclair was one of his pupils there. Norman MacDonald apparently had some poetic gifts, and composed Gaelic poetry himself. He was "well read and intelligent, and occupied a prominent place in the intellectual life of the community." He

Some biographical information on the poet is also contained in a 1928 edition of *Clarsach na Coille* (hereinafter, "Clarsach 1928") edited by Hector MacDougall of Coll,15 and in the Rev. Hector Cameron's *Na Baird Thirisdeach.* Finally, further information is provided by Donald Maclean Sinclair, the son of Alexander Maclean Sinclair and great-grandson of the poet, in a 1948 article "John MacLean: A Centenary"16 and in a typewritten manuscript entitled *Some Family History.*17

John MacLean was born on 8 January, 1787, at Cnoc Mhic Dhùghaill, behind Urvaig, Caolas, Tiree,18 and died on 26 January, 1848, at Addington Forks, Antigonish County, Nova Scotia, Canada, having emigrated to Pictou County, Nova Scotia, in 1819.19 By descent, the poet was a member of the Clan MacLean aristocracy. His paternal ancestors were members of the Treshnish branch of the family of the MacLeans of Ardgour, one of the major branches of the MacLeans. The poet traced himself back to Ewen, 4th MacLean of Treshnish, through him to Ewen, 2nd MacLean of Ardgour, and through Ewen of Ardgour to Lachlan Bronnach MacLean, the 7th chieftain of the MacLeans of Duart, the senior branch of the clan. Lachlan Bronnach was the son of Eachann Ruadh nan Cath, "Red Hector of the Battles", the 6th chieftain of the MacLeans, who was killed at the battle of Harlaw, in 1411.20 According to Donald Maclean Sinclair, the poet's full "sloinneadh", or patronymic, was "Iain mac Ailein mhic Iain mhic Theàrlaich mhic Lachainn mhic

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died 7 May, 1898. See Raymond A. MacLean, *History of Antigonish* (Antigonish: Casket Printing & Publishing Ltd., 1976), at vol. 1, p. 79, and vol. 2, pp. 74-75, at note 67.

15 Hector MacDougall, editor, *Clarsach na Coille* (Glasgow: Alex. MacLaren & Sons, 1928) ("Clarsach 1928").

16 28:3 *Dalhousie Review* 258 (1948).

17 Halifax, Nova Scotia, 10 June, 1979.

18 Alexander Maclean Sinclair, *The Clan Gillean*, at p. 339.

19 Clarsach 1881, at p. xiii, xvii, and xx.

20 *Some Family History*, Appendix; "John MacLean: A Centenary", at p. 258; and Clarsach 1881, at p. xiii.

Dhòmhnaill Òig mhic Iain mhic Eoghainn mhic Lachainn Fhinn".21 Almost certainly, this genealogy would have been known to the poet, and would have been a source of considerable pride to him.22 This lineage would also have given the poet's family some standing in his native community of Caolas, Tiree, for the island, though part of the estates of the Campbells of Argyll in the poet's days, was part of the old patrimony of the MacLeans of Duart, with whom the common folk continued to identify strongly. This will be explored further, shortly.

It is commonly believed that the clan system had effectively been brought to an end with the defeat of the Jacobite army at Culloden in 1746 and as a result of measures taken by the central government thereafter to weaken Gaelic society so as to ensure that it would never again be the springboard for a revolt against the holders of the British Crown, the Protestant House of Hanover. Clan chiefs were to be turned into mere landlords; they would largely cease to have regard for the traditions of Gaelic society and would henceforth measure worth only by the income that they were able to generate from the lands to which they had title.23 There is considerable evidence in the poems of John MacLean—and in the poetry of many other late eighteenth and early nineteenth century poets—of these changes, and this poetry will be considered in the next chapter. But we also see in this poetry and from other

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21 "John, son of Allan, son of John, son of Charles, son of Lachlan, son of Young Donald, son of John, son of Hugh, son of Fair Lachlan": *Some Family History*, p. 39, note (3). The sloinneadh given by Alexander Maclean Sinclair in his "Memoir" in both Clarsach 1881 and Clarsach 1928 is similar, but "Iain mhic Eoghainn" is omitted before "Lachainn Fhìnn". Alexander claimed that his source was an old Tiree man, whom he must have met on the trip he took to Scotland in 1869: Clarsach 1881, at p. xiii, and Clarsach 1928, at p. xiv.

22 Eric Cregeen noted that a depth of genealogical lore of five to seven generations was known to School of Scottish Studies informants from Tiree in the second half of the twentieth century, and that the knowledge of most would extend to nine generations: Eric R. Cregeen, "Oral Tradition and History in a Hebridean Island", (1993-99) 32 *Scottish Studies*12, at p. 32. This would almost certainly be true of skilled tradition bearers of the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, such as John MacLean.

23 This process had, in fact, begun long before Culloden, and it took until at least the first quarter of the nineteenth century for it to be effectively completed. For perhaps the leading discussion of this transformation, see Robert A. Dodgshon, *From Chiefs to Landlords: Social and Economic Change in the Western Highlands and Islands, c. 1493-1820* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1998).

sources that the memory of the old order—its poetry and oral traditions, its kinship structures and its values—lived on, particularly amongst the tenantry, and it continued to shape their perceptions of the society in which they lived and their expectations of appropriate behaviour from all ranks in society, including of the Lairds of Coll. Again, this will be explored in the next chapter. The point here, though, is that, with the survival of this more traditional Gaelic worldview amongst the common folk of the Highlands and Islands, John MacLean's genealogy would still have been of considerable relevance, both to him and to his community, in both Scotland and New Scotland.

The poet's forefathers had lived at Hynish, Tiree, for about 200 years. These Hynish MacLeans were, as noted above in respect of the poet's patronymic, a cadet branch of the Treshnish family.24 His paternal grandfather, John MacLean, had, however, lived in Hogh, Tiree, and was drowned near the Isle of Mull.25 The poet's father, Allan MacLean, was born at Hogh, but left when quite young to live with MacLean of Cornaig on the Isle of Coll, which is situated immediately to the north-east of Tiree.26 While living in Coll, he spent time working as a distiller of whisky, before returning to take up a croft at Caolas, Tiree, the poet's birthplace, where the family apparently lived in comfortable circumstances.27 Allan's trade explains his nickname, "Ailean Grùdair", "Allan the Distiller". Alexander Maclean Sinclair claims that Allan was "an industrious, honest and kind-hearted man,"28 though Maclean Sinclair, who was born in 1848 in Nova Scotia, had never met his grandfather, and provides no source for his claim. Like most of the MacLeans of

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24 Cregeen and MacKenzie, *Tiree Bards*, at pp. 7-8.
25 Clarsach, 1881, at p. xiii, and *Some Family History*, at p. 39, note (3).
26 Clarsach 1881, at p. xiii.
27 Clarsach 1881, at p. xiii, and Clarsach 1928, at p. xiv.
28 Clarsach 1881, at p. xiii.

Mull, Ardgour, Coll and Tiree, the poet's family were Protestants, and adherents of the Church of Scotland.

The poet's mother was Margaret MacFadyen. She was the daughter of Neil MacFadyen, "Niall mac Dhòmhnaill mhic Dhùghaill",29 and a granddaughter of the poet Neil Lamont, one of whose poems, "Do Shir Ailean MacIlleathain agus do dh' Eachann Chola", "To Sir Allan MacLean and to Hector of Coll", a blessing on the sea voyage of the former and a lament on the death of the latter, appears in *Na Baird Thirisdeach*.30 Like John MacLean, Neil Lamont was the poet to the Laird of Coll, and had apparently received the bard's "bàidse", the customary reward given to a laird's poet.31 Indeed, there is evidence of poetic talent on both sides of the poet's family, as the Tiree poet Archibald MacLean of Kilmoluag, also known as "Gilleasbuig Làidir", or "Strong Archibald", was the son of the brother of the poet's paternal grandfather; two of his poems are also published in *Na Baird Thirisdeach*.32 Margaret MacFadyen was the youngest of four children; her siblings were Donald, Neil and Alexander.33 Allan MacLean and Margaret MacFadyen had five children who reached maturity, of whom the poet was the third. The others were: Donald MacLean, known as "Dòmhnall Cùbair", or "Donald the Cooper", who remained in

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29 Alexander Maclean Sinclair, *The Clan Gillean*, at p. 338.

30 Camshron, *Na Baird Thirisdeach*, at pp. 1-3.

31 Cregeen and MacKenzie, *Tiree Bards*, at p. 6, 8.

32 "Do Ghilleasbuig Mac 'Illeathain, Fear Chill-mo-Luaig, 'an Tiriodh", "To Archibald MacLean, the Tacksman of Kilmoluag, in Tiree", and " Cumha do Dhomhnull Mac 'Illeathain, Fear Chornaig, an Cola", "A Lament for Donald MacLean, the Tacksman of Cornaig, in Coll": Camshron, *Na Baird Thirisdeach*, at pp. 16-24. A version of the first poem appears under the name "Cumha do Ghilleasbig MacGilleain, Fear Chill-mo-Lubhaig", in *MacTalla*, 14 Sept., 1895, vol. 4, no. 10, at p. 8. This poet was a tenant of Archibald MacLean, the tacksman of Kilmoluag, and was married to a daughter of Donald Campbell of Scamadale, with whom he had three sons and two daughters. Camshron reports that the poet was "rash and impulsive, often getting himself into troubles that a more patient person would avoid", but that he was popular with "the local potentates" and so escaped serious consequences. Camshron notes that there are "several tales of him yet related in Tiree", and that he died about 1830. One such tale, "Gilleasbuig Laidir agus Am Baillidh" ("Gilleasbuig Laidir and the Factor"), was recorded from Hector Kennedy of Helipol township, Tiree, by Margaret Mackay of the School of Scottish Studies, the University of Edinburgh, and relates how Gilleasbuig Laidir ended the practice of hanging the last man to pay his rent by threatening the factor himself with death: see *Tocher*, vol. 5 (nos. 31-37) (1979-82), at pp. 96-97.

Tiree, married a Mary MacDonald, and who was also a poet, as well as being a barrel-maker, as his nickname suggests; Charles MacLean, who married a Mary Lamont; Neil MacLean, who married a Marion MacDonald and who succeeded his father at Caolas;34 and Mary MacLean, who married a Roderick MacDonald, of Caolas, Tiree.35 Charles MacLean died alone in his boat in Tobermory Bay, Mull, in about 1811, and his body was brought home to Tiree. He was remembered in a poem composed by Donald, the "Cooper", "Tuireadh air son Brathar" ("A Lament for a Brother").36 Strangely, John MacLean does not appear to have composed a song for his dead brother. It has been suggested that there is an ancient prohibition in Gaelic culture involved; it was apparently believed that the dead may not rest and could return to haunt a close relative should the latter mourn too much.37 If this helps to explain the reticence of John MacLean to compose a lament, it evidently did not trouble his brother Donald. Donald "the Cooper" does appear to have had a great attachment to his siblings, including John, as is clear from the warmth of his correspondence to John in the late 1830s, some twenty years after John had emigrated; this correspondence will be explored further, below. Donald and his wife Mary had themselves left Caolas for Balephuil, located at the other, west end of Tiree, and established there a thriving family, all of whom were talented and given to composing songs. Five of Donald the Cooper's songs are preserved in *Na Baird Thirisdeach*,38

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33 *Some Family History*, Appendix.

34 Alexander Maclean Sinclair, *The Clan Gilleain*, at p. 338.

35 *Some Family History*, Appendix, and Clarsach 1881, at p. xiii.

36 Eachann Camshron, *Na Baird Thirisdeach*, at pp. 31-32; *MacTalla*, vol. 4, no. 27, at p. 8, 11 January, 1896.

37 Effie Rankin, *As a' Bhràighe/Beyond the Braes: The Gaelic Songs of Allan the Ridge MacDonald 1794-1868* (Sydney: University College of Cape Breton Press, 2004), at p. 20, quoting Alexander MacBain, "Highland Superstitions", (1888) 14 *TGSI* 240. Rankin notes that Allan "the Ridge" MacDonald and his wife lost four of their nine children, but he apparently composed no laments for them, his parents, or for any of his siblings who had predeceased him.

38 Camshron, *Na Baird Thirisdeach*, at pp. 31-37. The songs are "Tuireadh air son Brathar", "Lament for a Brother", "Òran nan Grùdairean", "A Song for the Distillers", "An t-Iasgach

and Cregeen notes that many of his songs were passed on orally until recent times, including one concerning the flitting from Caolas to Balephuil and the tasks which faced him in the new township.39

The Tiree of the poet's youth was a place that was undergoing some of the same transformations as many other parts of the Highlands and Islands, though they were not felt as dramatically as elsewhere, partly due to local circumstances. In 1779, shortly before the poet's birth, Tiree is said to have had a population of about 2,500, which is quite sizeable for a relatively small island of just over 10 miles in length and about 5 in breadth40, particularly considering that its present population is around 700.41 The Old Statistical Account indicates a population for the island in March, 1792 of 2,416.42 The author of the entry in the Old Statistical Account noted that almost all the population of the island was local people.43

The island enjoyed—and still enjoys—probably the best climate on the west coast of Scotland, with mild winters, relatively warm summers, and less rainfall and

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Geamhraidh", "The Winter Fishing", "Òran a' Chutter", "Song of the Cutter", and "An Imrich", "The Flitting".

39 Cregeen, "Oral Tradition and History in a Hebridean Island", at pp. 24-25. The song (SA 1971/92) appears to be "An Imrich", "The Flitting", which appears in *Na Baird Thirisdeach.* In his note, Cregeen indicates that one of the tradition-bearers he recorded, Donald Sinclair, sang this and other songs by "The Cooper"; he says he acquired them from his father, and these versions differ, Cregeen notes, from the versions published in *Na Baird Thirisdeach*: Cregeen, at note 10., p. 36.

40 An Iodhlann, *Island of Two Harvests: A Historical Guide to the Island of Tiree* (Scarinish: The Tiree and Coll Gaelic Partnership, 2003), at p. 5.

41 In Niall M. Brownlie, *Bailtean is Ath-Ghairmean a Tiriodh/Townships and Echoes from Tiree* (Glendaruel: Argyll Publishing, 1995), at p. 18-19, the figure given for the island's population at that time was about 800, but according to a 2003 account, the permanent population is now only 702:

42 The Statistical Account of Scotland of 1791-99, (Edinburgh: William Creech), (henceforth, the "Old Statistical Account", vol 10, number XXIX, "The Parish of Tiree", p. 393, at p. 403. The author of the entry for the parish, the Rev. Archibald McColl, noted that the population in 1755 had been 1,509 (p. 404), and was generally of the view that the island had become overpopulated (p. 405). Brownlie does not provide a source for his estimate for 1779 of 2,500, and given that the population was rising quite rapidly, it is unlikely that both this and the figure in the Old Statistical Account are correct. Cregeen notes that the population of the island in 1770 was between 1,700 and 1,800, suggesting that Brownlie's number may be somewhat too high: Cregeen, "Oral Tradition and History", at p. 15.

43 Old Statistical Account, vol. 10, at p. 404: "There are not 40 natives of any other parish in the two isles [note that both Tiree and Coll were within the parish]".

more sunlight than other neighbouring islands and districts on the mainland.44 Writing in the 1950s, Seumas MacThomais noted that Tiree was probably the sunniest place in Scotland, and that although summers were cool, the winters were mild, with few frosts and even less snow. Because it is so low-lying, the moist sea winds blow over the island and discharge their humidity on the higher ground of Mull and the mainland.45 Much the same picture emerges in the 1790s: the Old Statistical Account reports that durable frost or snow was very rare, and when there was frost on the mainland, Coll and Tiree would be mild, although the frequency of rain was remarked upon.46 MacThomais also noted that in the 1950s there was not a single tree in the whole island, perhaps due to the winds, which would at times be very great,47 and precisely the same report is given in the Old Statistical Account.48 Tiree has an exceptionally fertile soil,49 and at the time of the Old Statistical Account, about half the island was reckoned to have been arable;50 in this regard, Tiree was also unlike much of the Highlands and Islands,51 and it seems that it supported its population in greater comfort than was usual elsewhere in the region.52 The productivity of the land is captured in the Tiree proverb "Mura biodh eagal an dà mhàil, bheireadh Tiriodh an dà bhàrr" ("if it weren't for the fear of having to pay

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44 The average maximum temperature on Tiree in summer is just under 20° C, and it receives on average 47 inches of rain a year, a third of that on neighbouring Mull; known as the 'sunshine isle", it has a reputation for bright early summers, and a 1927 report indicated that it "enjoys during the months of April, May and June as much sunshine as any part of the British Isles", and that it has 1,400 hours of sunshine a year: An Iodhlann, *Island of Two* Harvests, at p. 6.

45 Seumas MacThomais, "Tiriodh", 11 *Gairm* 270 (1955), at pp. 270-71.

46 Old Statistical Account, vol. 10, at pp. 402-03.

47 Seumas MacThomais, "Tiriodh", at pp. 270-71.

48 Old Statistical Account, at p. 398.

49 Though the author of the entry on Tiree in the Old Statistical Account was of the view that the soil was, in the 1790s, becoming impoverished due to the pressure of population on lot sizes: vol. 10, at p. 396.

50 Old Statistical Account, vol. 10, at p. 394.

51 Tiree is said to have the most fertile soil in the Hebrides: An Iodhlann, *Island of Two Harvests*, at p. 5.

52 Eric Cregeen, "Oral Tradition and History in a Hebridean Island", at p. 16.

double the rent, Tiree would produce two harvests").53 Indeed, the Old Statistical Account notes that in the 1790s, the island was pretty much self-sufficient, in spite of the traditional agricultural practices of which the author of the entry on the parish was critical.54 It is also an exceptionally low-lying island: three quarters of the island is less than 20 metres above sea level, it has only six hills, and Beinn Haoidhnis, at 141 metres, is the highest.55 Unsurprisingly, then, it is also known as "Tìr bàrr fo thuinn" ("The land below the waves") and as "Tìr ìseal an eòrna" ("The low land of barley").56

In the poet's youth, the large majority of the population of the island of Tiree spoke only Gaelic.57 In 1770, half of Tiree was apparently held by fourteen large farmers, and the rest was let to forty-five groups of tenants who practised a form of agriculture known as "run-rig", under which the land was held on a semi-communal basis, sowing and harvesting dates were decided communally, and strips of arable were periodically reallocated by ballot.58 Holdings generally belonged to kinship groups, resulting in concentrations of closely related families in particular parts of the

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53 Brownlie, *Bailtean is Ath-Ghairmean*, at pp. 18-19, 20-21. The proverb also illustrates the lingering suspicion, bordering on hostility, that the population of the island felt for its landlords, the Campbells of Argyll, and this will be considered further, below.

54 Old Statistical Account, vol. 10, at p. 397: "The inhabitants commonly serve themselves in meal, feed, and spirits."

55 Donneil Kennedy, *The land below the waves: Tiree past and present* (The Glassary, Isle of Tiree: Tiree Publishing Company, 1994), at p. 13, and An Iodhlann, *Island of Two Harvests*, at p. 5.

56 An Iodhlann, *Island of Two Harvests*, at p. 4.

57 Old Statistical Account, vol. 10, at p. 416: "A few of the common people speak English. They all speak Gaelic . . . .". Cregeen notes that Dr. Walker found that there were "not above twenty persons in the parish" of Tiree who could understand a sermon in English when he visited there: Eric R. Cregeen, ed., *Argyll Estate Instructions 1771-1805: Mull, Morvern, Tiree* (Edinburgh: T. and A. Constable Ltd., 1964), at p. xxi.

58 Noel Banks, *Six Inner Hebrides: Eigg, Rum, Canna, Muck, Coll, Tiree* (London: David & Charles, 1977), at p. 75, and Cregeen, "Oral Tradition and History in a Hebridean Island", at p. 16. For a more comprehensive description of the system of run rig, as it survived to a relatively late date in North Uist, see Alexander Carmichael, in W. F. Skene, *Celtic* Scotland, vol. 3, ((Edinburgh: Edmonston and Douglas, 1880), at pp. 378-393; a fuller version of this report was reprinted as "Grazing and Agrestic Customs of the Outer Hebrides", *The Celtic Review* X (1914-16), pp. 40-54, 144-8, 254-62 and 358-75. For a scholarly comment on Carmichael's report, see Robert A. Dodgshon, *From Chiefs to Landlords*, at p. 143, and for his description of this system, including its survival in Tiree, see pp. 150-153.

island; regular division of holdings to support close relations enhanced this pattern,59 but also resulted in serious fragmentation of land, which put greater pressure on its productivity.60 In spite of this, as already noted, the common folk continued to enjoy a reasonably high standard of living, compared with many areas in the region. The people largely resided in "taighean-tughaidh", or thatched houses, of which a few still remain in the island. By all accounts, these houses were supremely well designed for the local environment, and were dry, snug and reasonably comfortable.61 The houses of each of each of these "run-rig" farms were all clustered tightly together, to form a small, nucleated settlement, a farm town or "tenant-stead".62 Thus, the people of these settlements lived in very close proximity to each other, and this no doubt promoted visiting of the sort that will be described below, and a real sense of communal solidarity, enhanced by the strong kinship ties referred to above. This pattern of landholding and settlement would be changed in the first decade of the nineteenth century, and this will be explored further, below.

Given that Tiree was an important source of grains, it was, not surprisingly, also full of small distilleries, or stills, of the sort that the poet's father had run on the neighbouring island of Coll.63 Indeed, until the imposition of heavy licence fees on stills by an Act of Parliament of 1786, farms in Tiree commonly had at least one still each, producing for local consumption and for export to districts in the vicinity, and until the imposition of these fees, the rents of the farms were largely paid by whisky

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59 Eric Cregeen, *Argyll Estate Instructions*, *supra*, at pp. xxi-xxii. He notes that the bonds of kinship and clan were tightly drawn, and that not infrequently, the whole or a greater part of the population of each settlement shared the same name, and that small tenants continued the ancient Celtic practice of sharing their holding of land among all their children and near relatives.

60 Eric Cregeen, "Oral Tradition and History in a Hebridean Island", at p. 16.

61 See, generally, Ailean Boyd, *Seann Taighean Tirisdeach* (Eilean Thiriodh, Earra-Ghàidheal: Cairdean nan Taighean Tugha, 1986). See also *Island of Two Harvests*, at pp. 44-5; such housing apparently went out of use in Tiree by the 1850s.

62 Eric Cregeen, *Argyll Estate Instructions*, *supra*, at p. xxi. See the map done by James Turnbull from a geometrical survey carried out in Tiree in 1768-9, as traced by James Fergusson in 1863: Eric R. Cregeen, ed., *Argyll Estate Instructions*, *supra*, map inserted in back flap.

sales.64 Illicit distilling appears to have continued to be a considerable source of income at the time of the poet's youth, and Alexander Maclean Sinclair claims that whisky drinking was carried on to a very great extent in those days.65 The author of the entry on Tiree in the Old Statistical Account noted that a few years prior to writing (which apparently took place in March, 1792), the inhabitants of the island usually sold from 200 to 300 Scotch gallons of whisky to neighbouring islands and that there were upwards of 30 stills in the parish (which included Coll), but that the number was reduced at the time of writing to three small licensed ones.66 It is not clear how many unlicensed stills may have escaped the attention of the author of the entry in the Old Statistical Account.67 Based on the instructions of James Ferrier, the Duke of Argyll's receiver-general and agent, to Malcolm McLaurin, chamberlain of Tiree in June, 1801, though, illicit distilling was still very widely practiced at the beginning of the nineteenth century. Ferrier provided McLaurin with a list of 157 persons in Tiree who had recently been convicted of illegal distilling.68 The Duke of Argyll wished to take action against such illicit distilling, and ordered that one-tenth of these persons be served with demands to pay outstanding rent, and if they failed to comply, that they be evicted; once the illicit distilling was eradicated, he intended that a legal distillery be established.69

Because of its location, Tiree was at the time also an important source of kelp, an alkaline seaweed extract produced by burning the seaweed, and used in the

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63 Clarsach 1881, at p. xiv.

64 Eric Cregeen, *Argyll Estate Instructions*, *supra*, at p. 16, note 2.

65 Clarsach 1881, at p. xiii, Clarsach 1928, at p. xiv.

66 Old Statistical Account, vol. 10, at p. 397.

67 He may have wanted to willfully overlook such information so as not to bring this industry to the attention of the excise authorities.

68 Eric Cregeen, *Argyll Estate Instructions*, *supra*, at pp. 53-4.

69 *Ibid*, at p. 57. Cregeen notes that the suppression of ale-houses and distilling was a preoccupation of the Dukes of Argyll from at least the middle of the eighteenth century, not only because "drinking and caballing" went together amongst the Jacobite supporters who populated many

manufacture of soap and glass. The production of kelp had become a very significant source of income for many West Highland estates by the 1790s.70 Indeed, by that time, the price of kelp had risen from about £2 a ton in the 1760s to about £10 a ton, partly due to increasing demand for industry, and partly due to the impact of the Napoleonic Wars on the import of kelp's main competitor, Spanish barilla. The price of kelp would double in the first decade of the nineteenth century, with huge profits for those landlords who were able to produce it from their estates.71 The rise of this industry on the west coast of the Highlands and in the Hebridean islands had generally discouraged emigration, and it became associated with rapid population increases.72 Indeed, because of the labour-intensive nature of kelping, landlords took active steps to discourage emigration.73 Cregeen notes the people of Tiree benefited more generously from the kelp boom than others in the region because the Argyll estate—as will be explored, Tiree was then owned by the Campbells of Argyll—left the kelp shores in the possession of the tenants under leases which gave them a generous share of the profits.74

Thus, during John MacLean's youth and early manhood, Tiree was generally more prosperous than many parts of the Highlands and Islands and could support a proportionally larger population. Given the need for both farm labour and manpower in the kelp industry, there was no great incentive for its landlords to displace the

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parts of the estate, but because they sought to encourage thrift, sobriety and industry: see Cregeen, *ibid*, at p. xix.

70 Robert Dodgshon, *From Chiefs to Landlords*, *supra*, at pp. 117-18.

71 See James Hunter, *The Making of the Crofting Community* (Edinburgh: John Donald, 2000), at pp. 50-51.

72 Malcolm Gray, *The Highland Economy 1750-1850* (Edinburgh: Oliver and Boyd, 1957), at pp. 124-137.

73 See James Hunter, *The Making of the Crofting Community*, at pp. 60-62; kelping landlords were instrumental in the passage of the Passenger Vessels Act of June 2003. Ostensibly aimed at improving conditions on the emigrant ships, the measures in this legislation tended to force up sharply the price of passages, thereby putting the cost of emigration beyond most of the Highland and Island tenantry, for the landlords a happy and intentional by-product of the legislation.

74 Eric Cregeen, "Oral Tradition and History in a Hebridean Island", at p. 18.

people. In this sense, Tiree people were perhaps a little more sheltered from the adverse changes that affected so many parts of the Scottish Gàidhealtachd at this time, particularly mainland districts, although the introduction of crofting in the first decade of the nineteenth century, discussed below, and the ever closer economic integration with the lowlands, meant that the island was far from immune to change. Cregeen concludes that the Napoleonic war period, which lasted until 1815, was a time of swift economic change, unusual prosperity and soaring population in Tiree.75

Importantly, though, Tiree was no longer part of the estates of the MacLeans of Duart, who had possessed the island for generations. In 1674, the MacLeans lost Tiree to the Campbells of Argyll, and in March, 1691, the MacLean chieftain, Sir Iain MacLean of Duart, was forced to hand over his castles and the superiority of all his lands to Argyll. This was a terrible blow to the pride of the MacLeans and their poets.76 Ongoing opposition to the Campbells was due to clan loyalties, politics, and economic policies. The Earls and Dukes of Argyll77 were equally stout supporters of House of Orange and then the House of Hanover, whereas the MacLeans of Duart were strong supporters of the Jacobite cause. In spite of the Campbell lordship, the people of Tiree remained steadfastly Jacobite in their sympathies. Men from Tiree supported the cause of King James VII and II at the Battle of Killiecrankie in 1689, and because of unrest on the island during and in the aftermath of the 1715 Jacobite rebellion, the 2nd Duke of Argyll planted Tiree with substantial Campbell tacksmen, primarily to keep the peace rather than to institute economic changes.78 During the Jacobite rebellion of 1745, not a man could be found on the island of Tiree for the

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75 Cregeen, "Oral Tradition and History in a Hebridean Island", at pp. 17-18.

76 Colm Ó Baoill, ed., *Gàir nan Clàrsach/The Harps' Cry: An Anthology of 17th Century Gaelic Poetry*, (Edinburgh: Birlinn, 1994), at p. 15.

77 The 10th Earl of Argyll was made the 1st Duke of Argyll on 23 June, 1701 by King William of Orange: Alastair Campbell of Airds, *A History of Clan Campbell, Volume 3: From the Restoration to the Present Day* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2004), at p. 100.

Duke of Argyll's militia, commanded by Col. John Campbell, later the 5th Duke; many supported the Jacobite cause, but apparently only four managed to join Bonnie Prince Charlie, partly because the navy was patrolling the seas around Tiree and staving in boats. The people of Tiree are said to have "relieved their frustration" at this state of affairs by threatening the factor of the Argyll estate on the island, Campbell of Barnacarry, "in such a manner that he had reason to make the best of his way" off the island, which was "constantly in flutter".79

The Campbells of Argyll were also amongst the first of the Highland aristocracy to begin to organize and manage their estates on a commercial basis, rather than according to the traditional kinship principles of Gaelic culture.80 Although the Campbells of Argyll did not institute a major overhaul of estate organisation until the first decade of the nineteenth century, MacLean tacksmen and their allies and dependents had seen the alienation of much of their land to Campbell settlers and others favoured by the Campbells of Argyll, and resentment against these incomers continued to fuel the loyalty of the people of Tiree to representatives of the MacLeans right down to the end of the eighteenth century.81 Cregeen quotes a letter from an official, a member of Campbell settlers in Mull, to the Duke of Argyll in 1771:

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78 Noel Banks, *Six Inner Hebrides*, at p. 68, 68.

79 Noel Banks, *Six Inner Hebrides*, at p. 63.

80 See, for example, Eric Cregeen, "The Changing Role of the House of Argyll and the Highlands", in I. M. Lewis, ed., *History and Social Anthropology*, ASA monograph no. 7, (London: Tavistock Publications, 1970), pp. 153-190; Allan I. Macinnes, "From Clanship to Commercial Landlordism: Landownership in Argyll from the Seventeenth to the Nineteenth Century", *History and Computing* iii (1990), pp. 176-85, and Eric Cregeen, "Tacksmen and Their Successors: A Study of Tenurial Reorganisations in Mull, Morvern and Tiree in the early Eighteenth Century", 13 *Scottish Studies* (1969), pp. 93-144. For a description of traditional Gaelic kinship principles, see Allan I. Macinnes, *Clanship, Commerce and the House of Stuart, 1603-1788* (Phantassie: Tuckwell, 1996), ch. 1, "The Traditional Basis of Clanship", pp. 1-29.

81 Eric Cregeen, "Oral Tradition and History in a Hebridean Island", at p. 16. Cregeen notes that "[t]he disaffection of most of the small tenants is an underlying current, implicit in the situation in the northern lands [which include Tiree] throughout the period of the 5th Duke's administration [i.e. 1770-1806]. . . . Usually it took the form of resentment at change, a passive withholding of co-operation from the ducal plans, and suspicion of all improvements": Eric Cregeen, *Argyll Estate Instructions*, *supra*, at p. xxiii.

> The small tenants of Tiry are disaffected to the family of Argyll. In this disposition it's thought that long leases might render them too much independent of them and encourage the people to that sort of insolence and outrage to which they are naturally prone and much incited by their chieftains of the Maclean gentry.82

At the start of the nineteenth century, John Campbell, the 5th Duke of Argyll, instituted a number of changes on Tiree under which the old "run-rig" system, with its nucleated settlements, was replaced with crofting townships. The nature and extent of the changes are made clear in the estate instructions for Tiree for the period between about 1800 and 1804.83 The old nucleated settlements were physically dismantled, and individual farms of about 25 acres were created within the townships for the previous run-rig tenants. These tenants were permitted to take the timbers of their old house to their new possession, were given a sum of money (usually 40/-) to help build their new house and to enclose their new croft with walls, and were guaranteed a period of possession of the croft (usually nineteen years). Landless cottars were settled on crofts of between 6 and 10 acres, made possible by the radical step of depriving Campbell gentry who were not resident in the island of their lands. Common grazing survived, but the crofters were able to develop their own arable as they pleased. Finally, the Duke assisted in establishment of a commercial fishery, in which the new tenant-crofters were expected to participate if they were to enjoy security of possession of their new crofts.84

Eric Cregeen notes that this division of the run-rig farms in Tiree and other improvements there provoked strong opposition amongst local people. The correspondence between the chamberlain of the island, Malcolm McLaurin and the Duke of Argyll and his agent James Ferrier showed growing unrest. The replacement

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82 Eric Cregeen, "Oral Tradition and History in a Hebridean Island", at pp. 16-17.

83 See Eric Cregeen, *Argyll Estate Instructions*, *supra*, especially Part I, Tiree, pp. 1-97.

84 Eric Cregeen, "Oral Tradition and History in a Hebridean Island", at p. 18; Eric Cregeen, *Argyll Estate Instructions*, *supra*, especially pp. 49-84.

of the run-rig system was seen as a Lowland innovation, and crofts were unpopular. Tenants protested, and talk of emigration began to circulate. There were cases of illicit distilling, barley had been secretly shipped to Ireland to be distilled, and two ships had smuggled in spirits and tobacco.85 Niall Brownlie summarizes the feelings of the people of Tiree towards the Campbells in the following terms, hinting at the real disaffection caused by the new estate policies at the start of the nineteenth century: "Cha do ghabh na Tirisdich idir gu coimhneil ris na Caimbeulaich mar uachdarain, ged a bha cùisean glè shoirbheachail gu toiseach na naoidheamh linn deug".86 Thus, Tiree people, particularly minor members of the MacLean aristocracy such as John MacLean and his family, would have felt that Campbell ownership was a sort of continuing humiliation, and this is a theme that also appears in his poetry, as will be explored in Chapter Three. Indeed, strong feelings about the Campbells survived well past the poet's time in the island; Banks reports that even at the beginning of the twentieth century, the people of Tiree, when asked who owned their island, would answer "*the MacLeans*—but the Duke has it now".87

As importantly, these changes in estate management and the opposition that they provoked would undoubtedly have had a profound impact on John MacLean in other ways, as well, occurring as they did while he was in his teens, a formative period during which his adult views and attitudes would have been taking shape. He would have experienced the destruction of the warm and intimate life of the old nucleated settlements and their replacement with the colder, more scattered pattern of township settlement ushered in by the crofting system, a pattern where walls and dykes and distances now separated the farmhouses and one which would have made the easy

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85 Eric Cregeen, *Argyll Estate Instructions*, *supra*, at p. xxxv, and p. 65, note 1.

86 "The natives did not take kindly to the Campbells as landlords, although things were favourable enough until the early 1800s": Niall Brownlie, *Bailtean is Ath-Ghairmean*, at p. 18, 19.

87 Noel Banks, *Six Inner Hebrides*, at p. 60.

social intercourse that marked the daily life of the old settlements that much more difficult. John MacLean was therefore experiencing the loss of important aspects of the old Highland way of life and their replacement by foreign institutions. He was also experiencing the power that chiefs and landlords had in either perpetuating or dismantling the old way of life. John MacLean's commitment to that older way of life and the values associated with it are very clear in all of his poetry, and as shall be explored in Chapter Three, this commitment had an impact on the sort of praise poetry he composed for noble subjects. A suspicion of the Lowlands and Lowland-inspired change is, as shall also be demonstrated in subsequent chapters, a strong feature in his poetry, and the seeds of this suspicion may well have been planted during these turbulent teenage years in Tiree. Finally, these changes may also have helped to inspire his work as a collector and publisher of Gaelic poetry, an activity in which, as we shall see, he engaged with vigour, particular in the decade or so before his decision to emigrate to Canada. In the face of changes that were shaking the foundations of estate life in Tiree, John MacLean perhaps began to sense that the old media for the preservation of Gaelic culture and Gaelic values, the ceilidh houses of the old, nucleated run-rig settlements, were themselves under threat.

The poet grew up in an environment in which traditional Gaelic oral culture was still very strong. Alexander Maclean Sinclair tells us the following about Tiree in the days of John MacLean's youth:

> There were capital dancers in the place, and certainly these men did not allow their legs to become stiff through want of exercise upon the floor. There were several poets and song-makers. Archibald MacPhail, Archibald MacLean and Donald MacDonald composed poems of much merit. There were many persons who could repeat old stories. It was a common thing for the people of a neighbourhood to meet and enjoy themselves in song-singing and story-

> telling. Dr. MacLeod, in his "Highland Parish" gives a true account of life among the Highlanders.88

In his description, Maclean Sinclair is alluding to the institution of the "cèilidh", or "house visit", which was, as just adverted to, perhaps the most important social and educational institution in Gaelic society until relatively recent times. A number of nineteenth century collectors have provided good descriptions of the "cèilidh". Alexander Carmichael noted that the "cèilidh" was

> a literary entertainment where stories and tales, poems and ballads, are rehearsed and recited, and songs are sung, conundrums are put, proverbs are quoted, and many other literary matters are related and discussed. This institution is admirably adapted to cultivate the heads and to warm the hearts of an intelligent, generous people.89

Carmichael went on to describe the "cèilidh" as he had observed it in many parts of the Hebrides. He notes that people of all ages would attend, and that many of those in attendance, particularly the women, would be taking care of household tasks such as carding, spinning and knitting. The conversation would at first be general, covering local news, the weather, the price of cattle, and would proceed to "higher" themes, such as "the clearing of the glens, the war, the parliament, the effects of the sun on the earth and the moon upon the tides." Then the man of the house would be asked to tell a story, and upon its completion, it would be discussed and commented upon, the behavior of its characters would be analysed, and so forth. Carmichael noted that if it was not too late, proverbs, riddles, conundrums and songs would follow.90 Joe Neil

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88 Clarsach 1881, at p. xiv. The reference appears to be to the Rev. Norman MacLeod, "Caraid nan Gàidheal", who left colourful sketches of life in fictional Highland townships in his series of "comhraidhean", or "conversations": see, for example, The Rev. A. Clerk, ed., *Caraid nan Gaidheal/The Friend of the Gael: A Choice Selection of Gaelic Writings by Norman MacLeod D. D.* (Edinburgh: John Grant, 1910), especially at "A' Cheud Earrann"/"The First Part", pp. 6-262.

89 Alexander Carmichael, *Carmina Gadelica, Vol. 1* (Edinburgh: Oliver and Boyd, 1928), at p. xxii.

90 Alexander Carmichael, *Carmina Gadelica, Vol. 1*, at pp. xii-xxiv. For other nineteenth century descriptions, see J. F. Campbell, *Popular Tales of the West Highlands, Vol. 2* (Edinburgh: Birlinn, 1994), at pp. 335-6, and J. F. Campbell, *Popular Tales of the West Highlands, Vol. 1* (Edinburgh: Birlinn, 1994), at pp. 3-6, and The Rev. D. MacInnes, ed., *Waifs and Strays of Celtic Tradtion, Argyllshire Series, No. II: Folk and Hero Tales* (London: Publications of the Folk-lore

MacNeil provides a very similar picture of the institution of the "cèilidh" as it existed in Cape Breton in his youth, in the early twentieth century. As in the descriptions from nineteenth century Scotland, people are gathered, usually on long winter nights, quietly engaged in household tasks such as sewing, knitting, repairing equipment, and so forth, and the evening would begin with a detailed discussion, with full commentary, on local news, progressing to the recitation of tales, although the cèilidh would also involve the playing of music and performing of dances.91

The cèilidh tradition appears to have been strong in John MacLean's day, and the island of Tiree was, and has remained, an important—indeed, a prolific—source of Gaelic oral tradition. The richness of Tiree's poetic tradition is attested to by Eachann Camshron's *Na Baird Thirisdeach*, which includes the work of 49 Tiree poets active in the period from about the middle of the eighteenth century to 1932. The depth and richness of other aspects of the Gaelic oral tradition in Tiree is illustrated in the work of John Gregorson Campbell, the Church of Scotland Minister for Tiree from 1860 until his death on 22 November, 1891.92 The Rev. Campbell was one of the most committed and outstanding collectors of Gaelic oral tradition in the nineteenth century.93 His work was largely based on oral sources, and much of it

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Society, 1890), at pp. ix-x. For a twentieth century analysis, see Thomas A. McKean, ed., *Hebridean Songmaker: Iain MacNeacail of the Isle of Skye* (Edinburgh: Polygon, 1997), chapter 3, "The Poetic Tradition, the *Baird Bhaile* and the *Taigh Ceilidh*", at pp. 93-109. These sources make clear that the "cèilidh" tended to be associated with the longer evenings of winter.

91 Joe Neil MacNeil, *Sgeul gu Latha*, Part I, "The World of the Story-Teller", especially at pp. 12-17, 22-37.

92 For a brief account of Rev. Campbell, see Hew Scott, *Fasti Ecclesiae Scoticanae: The Succession of Ministers in the Church of Scotland from the Reformation, vol. IV, Synods of Argyll and of Perth and Stirling* (Edinburgh: Oliver and Boyd, 1923), at pp. 121-122. For a more thorough biography, see "Memoir of the Late John Gregorson Campbell, Minister of Tiree", in Jessie Wallace and Duncan MacIsaac, eds., *Waifs and Strays of Celtic Tradition, Argyllshire Series.--. No. V: Clan Traditions and Popular Tales* (London: David Nutt, 1895), at pp. ix-xx. The Rev. Campbell was born in Kingairloch, in 1836, the second son of John C. Campbell, the captain of the *Cygnet*, and Helen MacGregor of the family of MacGregor of Roro in Glenlyon. He was educated at the University of Glasgow and studied law for some time, before turning to the Christian ministry.

93 For a list of his published work see "Memoir of the Late John Gregorson Campbell, Minister of Tiree", in *Waifs and Strays*, No. V; his most contributions are *Waifs and Strays of Celtic Tradition, Argyllshire Series, --. No. IV: The Fians; or, Stories, Poems, & Traditions of Fionn and his Warrior*

was, naturally, derived from Tiree; indeed, in his introduction to volume 5 of *Waifs and Strays of Celtic Tradition: Clan Traditions and Popular Tales*, Alfred Nutt listed the chief informants from whom Rev. Campbell obtained the material for volumes 4 and 5, and of the seventeen men listed, all but two were from Tiree.94 According to Alfred Nutt, Rev. Campbell was of the view that "nowhere could be found a more intelligent community than the Duke's tenantry in Tiree".95 In his introduction to this volume, Rev. Campbell made the following remarks:

> In passing, it becomes me to mention that those from whom the stories, etc., were heard, were uniformly men of retentive memories, of good intelligence, and so far as could be judged by even the most cynical, men of prudent and respectable character. Many of them did not know a word of English; some might, perhaps, conversationally, but few of them knew it as a written tongue, so that questions agitating the world of letters passed by them without exciting even a passing remark. At one time this class, and all tales, were looked upon as idle and unworthy of attention, only interfering with godliness and sanctity; and though a better state of matters now exists, it cannot but be deplored that the "rigid righteousness" and rigid wisdom have led to the loss of much valuable material.96

He went on to note the complaint of John Carswell, Bishop of Argyll to the Earl of Argyll in 1567 that his countrymen were fonder of listening to "idle tales" about the Fenians than of taking any interest in the Word of God, and made this comment:

> The same continued to be the case until very recent times, and a person who was about seventy years of age, a few years ago, in giving an account of old Highland habits to the writer, said that when, *e.g.*, the people of a place assembled to build a boundary dyke, some one would observe that they should wait till so-and-so came, and when he appeared, as the day was good and long, one or other would remark that the new comer might tell, before they began, some incident in the history of the Fian bard. The whole party then sat round

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Band (London: David Nutt, 1891), and three posthumous collections, *Waifs and Strays*, No. 5, *Superstitions of the Highlands and Islands of Scotland* (Glasgow: James MacLehose and Sons, 1902) and *Witchcraft and Second Sight in the Highlands and Islands of Scotland* (Glasgow: James MacLehose and Sons, 1902). The second and third of these posthumous collections have been revised by Ronald Black and published as a single volume collection: Ronald Black, ed., *The Gaelic Otherworld: John Gregorson Campbell's Superstitions of the Highlands and Islands of Scotland and Witchcraft and Second Sight in the Highlands and Islands of Scotland* (Edinburgh: Birlinn, 2005).

94 At p. xx; one informant, Hugh Macmillan, was from Tobermory, Mull, and one, Angus MacVurrich, was from Portree, Skye. There was one informant from Caolas, Tiree, a Duncan MacDonald.

95 At p. xii.

96 Campbell, *Waifs and Strays of Celtic Tradition, No. IV*, at p. xi.

> the storyteller, and listened to his marvellous account. By the time that he was done the sun was drawing westward, and some one would then say it was hardly worth while beginning that day, and that he might tell some other story suggested by the previous narrative. When the second story was finished the sun was well-nigh setting, and the parties separated after agreeing to meet the next day, as nothing had been done that day.97

Volume 4 of *Waifs and Strays of Celtic Tradition* contains an impressive array of Fenian lore, much of it collected in Tiree; a number of items are identified by Rev. Campbell as having been particular Tiree informants.98 Volume 5 contained extensive accounts of the MacLeans of Duart, of the Death of Lachlan MacLean, of the MacLeans of Coll and of the Browns of Tiree, as well as a number of other oral traditions, including an account of the last cattle raid in Tiree; again, this material was based wholly on oral accounts, mainly collected in Tiree, during Rev. Campbell's thirty years as parish Minister. Two posthumously published collections, *Superstitions of the Highlands and Islands of Scotland*,99 and *Witchcraft and Second Sight in the Highlands and Islands of Scotland*,100 contained a wealth of other material from the oral tradition. In the introduction to *Superstitions of the Highlands and Islands of Scotland*, it was noted that the collection had been derived "wholly from widely separated districts in the North, West and Central Highlands, and from the Islands", but that "the bulk of the information was obtained in Tiree, where the

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97 Campbell, *Waifs and Strays of Celtic Tradition, No. IV*, at pp. xi-xii.

98 Among these items were: an extensive Ossianic ballad, "Manus", collected from Malcolm MacDonald, of Scarinish, taken down in 1869 and learned by the informant about 45 years earlier (pp. 109-113); an important Fenian tale, "A' Muileartach", together with an accompanying lay, collected from Duncan MacFadyen of Caolas, and Duncan Cameron, another Tiree man (pp. 146-155); a version of "Latha Cath nan Sguab ann am Fior-Lagan Thiridhe" ("The Day of the Battle of the Sheaves, in the True Hollow of Tiree"), also collected from Duncan Cameron (pp. 172-174); and a version of "Mar a Chaidh Fionn do Righeachd nam Fear Mora" ("Fin MacCoul in the Kingdom of the Big Men"), collected from Murdoch MacIntyre, Kilkenneth, Tiree, in 1869 (pp. 184-191).

99 John Gregorson Campbell, ed., *Superstitions of the Highlands and Islands of Scotland, collected entirely from Oral Sources* (Glasgow: James MacLehose and Sons, 1900).

100 John Gregorson Campbell, ed., *Witchcraft and Second Sight in the Highlands and Islands of Scotland: Tales and Traditions Collected entirely from Oral Sources* (Glasgow: James MacLehose, 1902).

writer had most opportunity of making inquiries".101 Among the material in *Superstitions* attributed to Tiree sources are traditions relating to *sithichean* (fairies), *mnathan-sithe* ("banshees"), the *glaisteag* and *A' Ghruagach* (specters), changelings, second-sight, brownies, and urisks (or water-horses). *Witchcraft and Second Sight* includes Tiree traditions relating to black witchcraft and white witchcraft, the *corp creadha* or clay corpse, second-sight (including the *tamhasg*, or spectre of the living, *taibhsean*, or apparitions of the dead, the *tàradh*, which is a form of vision in which a longed-for destination is observed), marriage and death premonitions (or forerunners), death warnings, and hobgoblins (including *bòcan*, and the well-known Highland spectre *colann gun cheann*, or the headless body).

The depth of the Gaelic oral tradition in Tiree is attested by its continuing vigour down to the second half of the twentieth century. Fieldworkers of the School of Scottish Studies, such as Eric Cregeen, John MacInnes and Margaret Mackay, recorded a wealth of material from Tiree informants, and some of this material has been published,102 including extended profiles of two important tradition-bearers, Donald Sinclair103 and Hector Kennedy104. Cregeen described Donald Sinclair's store of oral traditions in these terms:

> Sitting beside the fire, pipe in hand, he would while away the hours for anyone willing to listen. There were tales of the Lochlannaich and of Finn and his warriors, of former chiefs and their feuds, and of the legendary witch, the "Cailleach Bheur" and more recent stories of the dukes and the factors and the

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101 At pp. vii-viii.

102 See, for example, *Tocher*, vol 1 (nos. 1-8) (1971-72), at p. 28, 61, vol. 2 (nos. 9-16) (1973-74), at p. 1, 17, vol. 3 (nos. 17-24) (1975-76), p. 27, 152, vol. 4 (nos. 25-30) (1977-78), pp. 247-8, 236-7, 382-3, vol. 5 (nos. 31-37), p. 435, vol. 6 (nos. 38-42) (1983-89), pp. 411-2, and vol. 7 (nos. 43-49) (1991-94), pp. 64-47.

103 *Tocher*, vol. 3 (nos. 17-24) (1975-76), at pp. 41-65. He was born on 6 August, 1885, at Balephuil, Tiree, and died on 3 April, 1975. Amongst the material published here is a variant of "Blar nan Sguab" ("The Battle of the Sheaves", also noted by Rev. Campbell from a Tiree account), "An Corp-Creadha Mu Dheireadh" ("The Last Clay Image Made in Tiree"), and a version of "Diarmad agus Grainne", another well-known Fenian tale.

104 *Tocher*, vol. 5 (nos. 31-37) (1979-82), at pp. 69-106. He was born about 1899, was a native of Heylipol, Tiree, and grew up in Balephuil. He belonged to the same family as John MacLean, being a descendent, like the poet, of the poet "Gilleasbuig Làidir", Archibald MacLean of Kilmoluag.

> Land-League; songs of Donnchadh Ban and Ailein Dall and Iain mac Ailein105 and great poets from the whole Gaelic world as well as songs composed by little known poets from his own island and township; traditions about ancestors and vanished customs, and reminiscences of his early days .
> . . .
> The width of his sympathies and the rich complexity of his nature were part of his greatness as a seanchaidh. Within the space of an evening you saw him as the devout Christian, wondering about life and death and the judgment; as the humorist who loved to tease and outrage and mock at the "unco' guid"; the believer in charms and spells; the man of reason deprecating "old superstitions"; the singer of songs and the teller of tales; the satirical bard, reluctant to sing his own songs; 106

Hector Kennedy also had a rich store of Gaelic oral tradition.107 Margaret Mackay reports that he grew up at a time when ceilidhing was still a central feature of life in Tiree, which Hector himself described in these terms:

> When I was young they would be telling stories about the faeries and the ghosts they were seeing in the island, and they would be going down to Moss [township, in Tiree]; the old people would come in and start talking about it.108

From this brief account, it is clear that Tiree possessed a vigorous and diverse Gaelic oral culture; given the strength of this culture in the late nineteenth century—to say nothing of the late twentieth century—it must have been exceptionally well developed at the time of the poet's youth, and he would certainly have benefited from and absorbed this rich mix.

With regard to the spiritual state of the people, while noting that the Tiree people were, at the time of the poet's youth, moral, honest, hospitable and kind to each other, Alexander Maclean Sinclair also notes that "godliness was at a very low ebb

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105 This is John MacLean, the subject of this thesis. Donald Sinclair provided a version of "Marbhrann do Mhrs. Noble", poem 44: *Tocher*, vol. 5, at pp. 50-52.

106 *Tocher*, vol. 3, at pp. 41-42.

107 Hector Kennedy had a passion for songs, and a number appear in the *Tocher* feature, including the emigration song "Manitoba" and "Oran do Shir Dòmhnall MacPhàrlain", by another John MacLean, the Balemartin Bard.

108 *Tocher*, vol. 5, at p. 70. Margaret Mackay reports that in his youth, Hector Kennedy spent a great deal of time with his maternal grandfather, Neil MacDonald, who was a noted *taibhsear*, or seer: p. 72.

among them", and, as already noted, that they were exceptionally fond of whiskey.109 The author of the entry on Tiree in the Old Statistical Account, the parish Minister, the Rev. Archibald McColl, noted that "[t]he common people are not very attentive to the ordinances of religions, but are now reforming, as the gentlemen shew them a good example". He also noted that the people of the island "still retain some Roman Catholic sayings, prayers, and oaths, as expletives; such as '*Dias Muire let* (sic),110 i.e. "God and Mary be with you. 'Air Muire', swearing by Mary, &c." He also claimed that the locals "are free of superstition, and make a considerable progress in knowledge."111 The former claim, at least, is certainly not borne out by other evidence, particularly the very extensive collection of supernatural lore made by John Gregorson Campbell in the second half of the nineteenth century, referred to above. As noted, Tiree people were Protestants, but the relatively weak state of religion that apparently existed at the time of the poet's youth was not uncommon for most parts of the Scottish Gàidhealtachd, whether Protestant or Catholic, at the end of the eighteenth and the beginning of the nineteenth century. Both denominations seemed to be afflicted by a relative lack of clergy. In Catholic areas, a separate Highland mission had been established in 1727, on the division of the Scottish mission into Highland and Lowland vicariates, and in 1731, the Highlands received their own bishop, Hugh MacDonald,112 but by the 1790s, there were still only about 20 priests for the entire region; these men were Gaelic-speaking and "showed the loyalty to their traditional faith that remains a characteristic of their modern successors in the Highlands"; however, by the end of the eighteenth century, some of the landlords who had previously adhered to the faith were changing their allegiance, and the Highland

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109 Clarsach 1881, at p. xiv.
110 "Dia is Muire leat".
111 Old Statistical Account, vol. 10, at p. 413.
112 Fiona A. MacDonald, *Missions to the Gaels* (Edinburgh: John Donald, 2006), at p. 243.

mission itself had been weakened appreciably by the end of the eighteenth century, by underfunding and the lack of status afforded it both by Rome and the Lowland District of the Roman Catholic Church.113 Likewise, the established church, the Church of Scotland, suffered from a shortage of clergy. Highland Ministers tended to be responsible for very large parishes, with the result that many people were not within easy reach of a weekly church service. There was also a lack of Gaelic-speaking clergy in the Church of Scotland, a situation that was fully resolved only in the 1840s, when there were about 230 Gaelic-speaking clergy in the Highlands.114 A Gaelic version of the New Testament had been completed in 1767, but the Old Testament was only finished in 1801, and given low levels of literacy amongst the Gaelic-speaking population at the time, effective access to the scriptures was limited.115 Protestant evangelicalism and the spiritual revival which tended to accompany it was largely a nineteenth-century phenomenon—Donald Meek notes a "palpable lack of 'vital Christianity'" in the southern districts of the Highlands before 1800, and, indeed, it was this which attracted new evangelical interest.116 Ansdell argues that it was the relative lack of any firm religious notions to counter evangelicalism that contributed to its rapid and thorough success in the Highlands in the course of the nineteenth century.117

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113 Donald E. Meek, *The Scottish Highlands: The Churches and Gaelic Culture*, Gospel and Cultures Pamphlet 11 (Geneva: WCC Publications, 1996), at pp. 16-17. See also Alasdair Roberts, "Roman Catholicism in the Highlands", in James Kirk, ed., *The Church in the Highlands* (Edinburgh: Scottish Church History Society, 1998), at p. 63 *et seq*. See also Douglas Ansdell, *The People of the Great Faith: The Highland Church 1690-1900* (Stornoway: Acair, 1998), at p. 28, who notes that, in addition to such difficulties, individual priests lacked adequate or permanent houses and that chapels "often looked more like barns than places of worship": p. 28.

114 Douglas Ansdell, *The People of the Great Faith*, at pp. 18-26.

115 Donald Meek, *The Scottish Highlands*, at p. 18.

116 Donald Meek, *The Scottish Highlands*, at p. 23. Care must be taken, however, as both evangelicalism and spiritual revival pre-dated the nineteenth century, as both Prof. Meek and John MacInnes have demonstrated: see, Donald Meek, "Gaelic Bible, revival and mission: the spiritual rebirth of the nineteenth-century Highlands", in James Kirk, ed., *The Church and the Highlands*, 114-145 at pp. 115-116, and John MacInnes, *The Evangelical Movement in the Highlands of Scotland 1688-1800*, (Aberdeen: Aberdeen University Press, 1951).

117 Douglas Ansdell, *The People of the Great Faith*, at p. 54.

There is not much evidence of sustained evangelical activity in Tiree during John MacLean's youth or early manhood. However, as is demonstrated in the biblical references in poem 7,118 "Do Thighearn' Òg Chola", probably composed in 1814 for Hugh, the future 16th Laird, the poet had clearly developed a strong and intimate knowledge of the scriptures, including the Old Testament, by the time he reached maturity, suggesting more than a passing commitment to a Christian life which must have developed while in Tiree. As shall be seen, the poet's father-in-law was a religious man, and this may have had some impact on his early spiritual development.

Any intelligent young man of John MacLean's status and background could be expected to be very well versed in all aspects of traditional oral Gaelic culture when growing up in an environment so conducive to its transmission, but there are other reasons why the poet would have been particularly well versed in his culture. One is descent—as noted, his family seems to have been filled with poetic talents. Another is personality. Alexander MacLean Sinclair tells us the following of the poet as a young man:

> In his boyhood, John MacLean, was very fond of the society of old men, and listened with the greatest attention to their conversations. In the sports and amusements which are often so attractive to young persons he took no delight. He could learn very easily; he read all the books that came his way; and he remembered whatever he heard or read. He delighted especially in history and poetry. He went several years to school, learning to read and spell in both English and Gaelic, to cipher, and to write. He was an excellent reader and a good pen-man.

The information that John MacLean spent much time with older folk is particularly interesting, as this is a pattern that appears to have been true of many of the greatest of Gaelic tradition bearers, down to the present. In *Sgeul gu Latha*, for example, the great Cape Breton informant Joe Neil MacNeil, "Eòs Nìll Bhig", reports that he spent much of his youth in the company of old people, and credits their influence on his

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118 See lines 57-64.

imagination, depth of knowledge and command of Gaelic.119 In addition to being a talented poet, John MacLean was himself reputed to be a tradition bearer of considerable skill, and was particularly well-known and valued as a singer. His powerful memory ensured that his stores of information connected with the Highland clans and poets were very great; as Alexander Maclean Sinclair says, he was a seanchaidh as well as a poet.120 Again, Alexander Maclean Sinclair tells us that the poet was well acquainted with the works of the other Highland bards. He apparently knew Alasdair Mac Mhaighstir Alasdair's "Birlinn Chlann Raghnaill" and Donnchadh Ban Mac an t-Saoir's "Moladh Beinn Dobhrain" by heart. He also had read most of the great early published collections of Gaelic poetry, such as the Eigg Collection, the Turner Collection, the Stewart Collection and Smith's *Sean Dana*, Mac Mhaighstir Alastair's Poems and Duncan Bàn MacIntyre's Poems. Maclean Sinclair surmised that the poet's knowledge of English or Scots poetry would have been limited.121 Donald Maclean Sinclair notes, however, that John MacLean received "a fair education in Gaelic and English";122 certainly, the poet was literate in English as well as Gaelic. In 1792, there were two schools operated in Tiree by the Society in Scotland for the Propagation of Christian Knowledge (the "SSPCK") and it is likely

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119 Joe Neil MacNeil, *Sgeul gu Latha/Tales Until Dawn: The World of a Cape Breton Gaelic Story-Teller*, edited and transcribed by John Shaw (Kingston and Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1987), at p. 12, 13. In his introduction to the book, Shaw notes that the training of story-tellers in Cape Breton, though never formal, began early in childhood, and notes this is true for Gaelic Scotland and Ireland as well. He makes reference to Duncan MacDonald of South Uist, who "began his career by making a conscious effort as a child to learn and to recite tales", and noted that, as a rule, "Irish reciters also began as young boys, showing a fondness for tales and an affection for the old people who used to tell them": p. xxxii. It would be surprising if this pattern was not also true of other types of tradition bearer, and it certainly appears to have been true of John MacLean.

120 Clarsach 1928, at p. xiv, xx.

121 Clarsach 1881, at p. xxiii. The basis for these claims is not clear, and may be family tradition. MacLean Sinclair also refers to a copy of Allan Ramsay's *Gentle Shepherd* as being amongst John MacLean's books, and it may be that the poet had copies of the afore-mentioned Gaelic collections in his personal collection of books.

122 *Some Family History*, at p. 3.

that John MacLean attended one of these.123 Gaelic was used in these schools, but mainly to assist in the acquisition of spoken and written competence in English. Generally, children coming to the schools spoke only Gaelic, but they are reported to have been able to read and speak English perfectly within three to four years.124

John MacLean had apparently shown poetic talent at a young age. Alexander MacLean Sinclair reports that on his tour of Scotland in 1869 he met an old man in Tiree who told him that one day, whilst returning from school, the poet addressed one schoolmate, Hector MacFadyen, in the following lines:

Nach faic thu stròthan nan spòg	Don't you see strothan of the paws
Tigh'nn 'ga mo chàineadh le shoc;	Coming to criticize me through his snout;
Crùbach, speireach, crotach, crom,	Hunched, clawed, humpbacked and bent,
'S gura h-ann 'na chom tha 'n t-olc.	It's in his body that evil must dwell.125

Turning around to another schoolmate, Ewen MacFadyen, the poet said:

Eòghainn, mur fan thu sàmhach	Ewen, if you don't shut up
Bheir mi fàsgadh air do chorp;	I'll give your body a good wringing
Cuiridh mi fàinne mu d' bhial,	I'll put a ring about your mouth
'S cha leig mi riasladh le d' shoc.	I won't stand criticism from your snout.126

Examples of the early poetic skills of John MacLean have been kept alive in the oral traditions of Tiree down to the present. This rhyme was kindly provided by Dr. John Holliday of Tiree in March, 2002; Dr. Holliday had heard it a week earlier from Angus MacLean, "Aonghas Dhòmhnaill Eòghainn Mhòir", of Sgairinis, Tiree, and it is reported to have been the very first verses composed by the poet, when he was about eight years of age:

'S e obair mu dheireadh a' bhuachailleachd	The last work to be done is herding
Seach obair a chunnaic no 'chuala mi;	Compared to any work I've seen or heard of;
Nuair 'bhios càch a' stranndachd 'sa leapaich,	When the rest are in bed asleep,
Bidh mise is 'Happer' air bhuachailleachd.	'Happer' and I will be out herding.

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123 Charles W. J. Withers, *Gaelic Scotland: The Transformation of a Culture Region* (London: Routledge, 1988), at p. 129.

124 Charles Withers, *Gaelic Scotland*, at p. 126; see, generally, Withers, at ch. 3.

125 Alexander Maclean Sinclair, *Filidh na Coille* (Charlottetown: The Examiner Publishing Company, 1901), at p. 127

126 Clarsach 1881, at p. xxi; Clarsach 1928, at p. xviii; Alexander Maclean Sinclair, *Filidh na Coille*, *ibid*, at p. 128.

'Happer' was apparently the poet's sheepdog.127 All of these accounts give us an interesting insight into the poet's personality. His high-spirited playfulness and his sense of humour, which is at times sharp and cutting, is already in evidence, as is his keen eye for human weakness and his talent at satire. All of these emerge more fully in his adult poetry, as will be demonstrated in subsequent chapters.

John MacLean had a number of different jobs in Scotland, but does not appear to have made a great success of any of them; he was apparently much more interested in poetry and in pursuits of the mind, particularly if they related to Gaelic traditional culture. As his grandson, Alexander MacLean Sinclair said of him:

> Nature gave the poet a mind of great capacity; but evidently it did not intend that he should become a wealthy man. He never attended regularly to his work; his mind was not upon it. Poetry occupied his thoughts when pegging sole-leather in Scotland, and cutting down trees in America; it took complete possession of him. He was a good poet; but a poor shoemaker, and a poor farmer. He was very fond of company. He would frequently be away from home. He was clannish, and took pleasure in visiting his friends and acquaintances.128

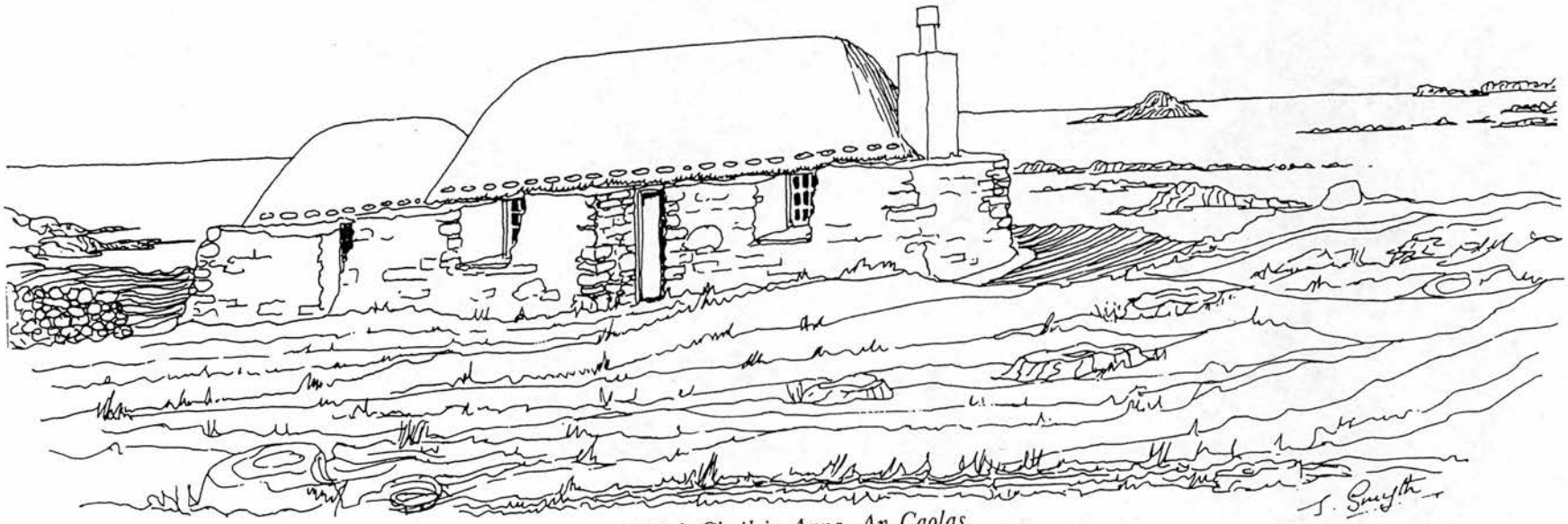
When the John MacLean was a teenager, he started to serve as an apprentice shoemaker with Neil Sinclair, a resident of Goirtean Dòmhnaill, Tiree.129 Alexander Maclean Sinclair indicates that he began his apprenticeship at the age of 16, and therefore in about the year 1803. According to a Tiree informant, Mr. Hugh MacFadyen, who was a grandson of Neil Sinclair and whom Maclean Sinclair had met on his 1869 trip to Scotland, the poet was slightly older than this when he commenced his apprenticeship, and according to Mr. MacFadyen's account, the poet

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127 Personal communication from Dr. John Holliday, in an e-mail to the author of 4 March, 2002. The author had the great pleasure of meeting Angus MacLean, who is related to the poet, in March, 2006, and hearing him recite this verse himself. The author is most grateful to this fine gentleman and his cousin, Mary MacLean, for their warm and generous hospitality and convivial conversation, and to Mr. MacLean for introducing him to other descendants of the poet and showing him the location of the poet's birthplace, a place of uncommon beauty.

128 Clarsach 1881, at p. xvi.

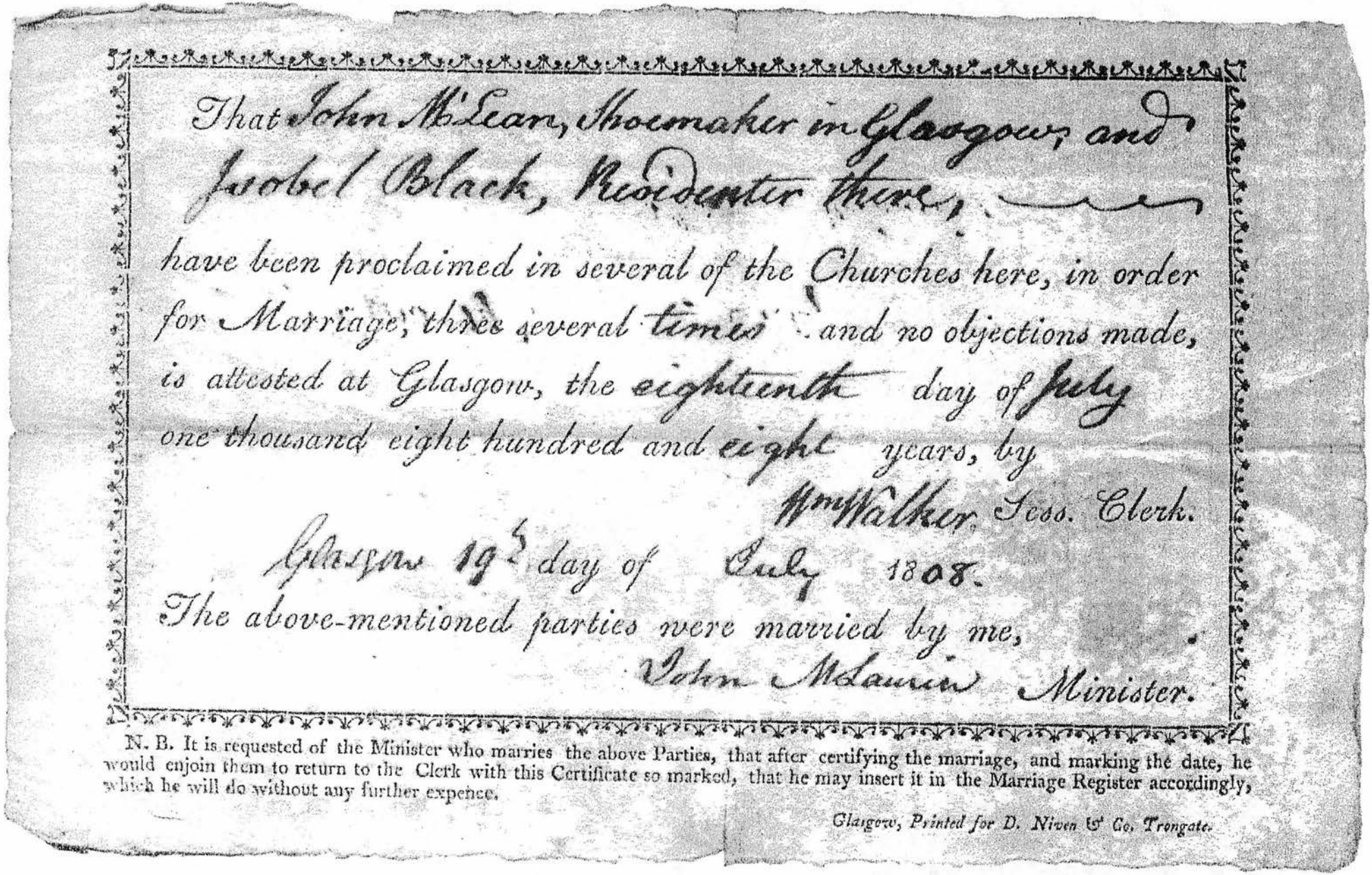
129 Clarsach 1881, at p. xiv.



Taigh Chailein Anna, An Caolas

Seann Taigh Tirisdeach/Old Tiree Home
Source: Ailean Boyd, *Seann Taighean Tirisdeach* (Eilean Thiriodh: Cairdean nan Taighean Tugha, 1986), p. 4.

1808 Marriage Certificate of John MacLean and Isabel Black.
Courtesy of John Sinclair, Hopewell, N.S.



That John M'Lean, Shoemaker in Glasgow, and
Isobel Black, Residenter there,
have been proclaimed in several of the Churches here, in order
for Marriage, three several times and no objections made,
is attested at Glasgow, the eighteenth day of July
one thousand eight hundred and eight years, by
Wm Walker Sess. Clerk.

Glasgow 19th day of July 1808.

The above-mentioned parties were married by me,
John McLaurin Minister.

N. B. It is requested of the Minister who marries the above Parties, that after certifying the marriage, and marking the date, he would enjoin them to return to the Clerk with this Certificate so marked, that he may insert it in the Marriage Register accordingly, which he will do without any further expence.

Glasgow, Printed for D. Niven & Co. Trongate.

would have begun in 1804 or 1805.130 Mr. MacFadyen, who was aged 82 at the time of Maclean Sinclair's visit, and therefore would have been about the same age as the poet, provided the following information, which was recorded by Donald Maclean Sinclair, Alexander's son:

> John MacLean learned the shoemaking with my grandfather. He went to learn when he was between 17 and 18. He took three years learning. He then went to Glasgow [i.e. in approximately 1807 or 1808] and worked a year [i.e. until about 1808 or 1809] as a journeyman. He took home a stock of leather and worked at it about a year [i.e. until about 1809 or 1810]. Then he went to Glasgow and got married. Nobody knew he was going to get married. He learned with Neil Sinclair. He used to make verses when learning his trade. He was always a good walker. We slept together [i.e. in the same room] for three years. He was a very small eater, the smallest eater I ever saw. He was not at all a good shoemaker. He was the best reader I ever heard.131

John MacLean was married in Glasgow on 19 July, 1808;132 therefore, it is likely that he had begun his apprenticeship at about the age of 16, in about 1803, as reported by Alexander Maclean Sinclair, rather than the somewhat later date provided by Mr. MacFadyen, which, as just indicated, would have placed the poet's marriage in about 1810.

The poet's spouse was Isabella Black. According to Donald Maclean Sinclair, the wedding banns were proclaimed "three several times and no objections were made, and they were married by the Rev. John MacLaurin".133 Isabella Black was born in 1786 on the Isle of Lismore, Argyllshire, and she died on 5 June, 1877, in Nova Scotia. She was the daughter of Duncan Black of Lismore, and Elizabeth MacKenzie.134 Her father was an elder in the Church of Scotland, and consequently

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130 Clarsach 1881, at p. xv.

131 *Some Family History*, p. 43, at note (9).

132 The wedding certificate still exists, and is in the possession of the poet's descendants in Nova Scotia. My thanks to the poet's great-, great-grandson, Mr. John Sinclair, now of Hopewell, Pictou County, Nova Scotia, for providing a copy of this certificate to the author of this thesis.

133 *Some Family History*, p. 39, note (4).

134 The noted Tiree tradition-bearer and informant Donald Sinclair, "Dòmhnall Chaluim Bhàin", also claims descent from these Lismore Blacks: School of Scottish Studies Sound Archive, sa1966-144, no. 5, recorded by John MacInnes in 1966.

was known as "Donnchadh Foirbheach", or "Duncan the Elder", the Gaelic word "foirbheach", or "foirfeach", meaning an elder in the Presbyterian church.135 Isabella was the third of four children of Duncan and Elizabeth; the others were Mary, who married a Duncan MacFarlane, Christy, who died unmarried, and Catherine, who married a Hugh Black. After the death of Elizabeth, Duncan Black was remarried, to a Catherine Black, from whom he had a further five children: Allan and Miles, who were twins, Archibald, Donald, and Ann.136 Although we do not know a great deal about Isabella Black, she came from an island that was, like Tiree, rich in Gaelic oral tradition, and she certainly would have been a native Gaelic speaker. Donald Maclean Sinclair does provide this brief description of his great-grandmother, Isabella Black:

> No woman could be better qualified to make a home for herself in the woods than she was. She was kind and hospitable. Her house was ever open to the stranger. It would indeed be difficult to find a house between Antigonish and New Glasgow which had freely lodged more travellers.137

After the marriage, the couple returned to Tiree, where the poet presumably continued to work as a shoemaker.138 It was here, on Christmas Day, 1809, that their first child, Christy (the mother of Alexander Maclean Sinclair), was born.139

In 1810, John MacLean was drafted into the Argyllshire Regiment of the British Militia, of which Lord John Campbell was Colonel.140 It was possible at that time to have someone serve in one's place, and according to Alexander Maclean Sinclair, the poet's father, Allan, offered to secure the poet's release.141 According to Alexander Maclean Sinclair, the poet would not at first hear of a discharge, and was

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135 Clarsach 1928, at p. xiv, xv.
136 *Some Family History*, p. 39, note (4).
137 *Some Family History*, p. 6.
138 Clarsach 1881, at p. xv.
139 Alexander Maclean Sinclair, *The Clan Gillean* (Charlottetown: Haszard and Moore, 1899), at p. 340. In 1839, Christy married John Sinclair, from Strath Halladale, Sutherland, who had emigrated to Goshen, Antigonish County. Christy died on 7 March, 1887.
140 There seems to have been heavy recruitment from Tiree into the militia from at least the early 1790s: see the Old Statistical Account, at p. 405.

keen to try the soldier's life, serving in Captain Alexander MacLean's company of the Argyllshire Regiment. However, it appears that John MacLean quickly tired of the military, and he was discharged in January, 1811. Donald Maclean Sinclair provides further details of these events, and indicates that it was Alexander MacLean, the 15th Laird of Coll, who ultimately secured the poet's release:

> [John MacLean] was glad to accept a letter from the Laird of Coll to his Colonel, Lord John Campbell of the Argyllshire Regiment, suggesting a substitute. Becoming impatient at the delay in getting out of the army, MacLean suggested that if he were a Campbell there would be no trouble in securing someone to take his place. This produced immediate action: a substitute was secured for £40, and John MacLean returned to Tiree.142

The discharge was dated Glasgow, 17 January, 1811, and was signed by Major Charles MacAlister.143 In his poem "Òran do dh'Alasdair MacGillean, Tigherna Chola", "A Song for Alexander MacLean, the Laird of Coll", an early praise poem to his patron, Alexander MacLean, the 15th MacLean of Coll, poem 1 in this collection, the poet makes clear that Tighearna Chola was instrumental in gaining his release from the Militia, and may even have paid the £40 charge. If so, this would appear to corroborate Donald Maclean Sinclair's account. Thus, it appears that the poet's father first sought to procure the poet's release, which effort was rebuffed by the poet, and that the Laird of Coll ultimately secured the release after the poet's change of heart. In spite of the fact that Allan MacLean appears to have been a man of some means, given the large amount paid for the discharge, it is more likely that the Laird of Coll provided the assistance. If so, this was apparently not the only financial favour offered by the Laird of Coll to the poet; another early poem, "Òran do Thighearna Chola", "A Song to the Laird of Coll", poem 3, was composed on the provision by the

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141 Clarsach 1881, at p. xv. Donald Maclean Sinclair suggests that it was the Laird of Coll who had offered to secure his release: "John MacLean: A Centenary", at p. 259.

142 "John MacLean: A Centenary", at p. 259; *Some Family History*, p. 4.

143 Clarsach 1881 at p. xv, and *Some Family History*, at p. 4.

15th Laird of Coll to the poet of a letter of security in order to assist him with the purchase of some shoe leather for his trade.

These events show other sides to the poet's personality, and these traits become clearer with time. One is the poet's impetuousness; when he becomes disillusioned with his state of affairs, he is willing both to express his dissatisfaction forthrightly and to take dramatic action. On this occasion, that dramatic action does not appear to have had any unforeseen or negative consequences, although one wonders whether the price that might have been paid by the poet's father to secure his release would have been lower than the price that was ultimately paid after the poet had enlisted. Also, Donald Maclean Sinclair's account illustrates a brashness, even hauteur, that bordered on recklessness. His suggestion that, had he been a Campbell, he would have secured his release already, is bold, and even foolhardy; the Argyll Regiment was raised by the Duke of Argyll, one of the most powerful men in Britain, and while there may no doubt have been an element of truth to the poet's contention, it could easily have been interpreted as insubordination, and produced a result much different from his speedy release. Again, one wonders whether such behaviour also contributed to the significant sum of £40 that was ultimately paid for the poet's release; by the early 1790s, tenants of the Earl of Breadalbane paid up to £19 for such a release, and although this price would have increased by 1810, £40 would still have been close to the top end of the market.144 John MacLean's behaviour is certainly consistent with that of a member of the MacLean aristocracy, even if he belonged to a relatively minor branch, with the heightened sense of pride that would have come with

144 See, for example, Andrew Mackillop, *'More Fruitful than the Soil': Army, Empire and the Scottish Highlands, 1715-1815* (East Linton: Tuckwell, 2000), at p. 117; the assessment that £40 would be at the upper end of the market was kindly provided by Dr. Mackillop in a personal communication of 9 February, 2005, although he also noted that the figure may also have reflected the poet's social and cultural status.

such status, and with his status as a promising young poet who had the ear of the Laird of Coll, a much more senior member of the MacLean aristocracy.

On returning to Tiree in 1811, it seems that John MacLean settled down to his trade of shoemaker, although he apparently also carried on a small merchandising business. Donald Maclean Sinclair suggests that the poet took up this second trade because he was unable to make a living as a shoemaker alone.145 This is apparently how he spent most of his days until he emigrated to Canada in 1819. Donald Maclean Sinclair indicates that the poet had a forty-acre croft at Caolas;146 this is somewhat larger than the standard size of a croft in Tiree of about twenty-five acres that resulted from the conversion of tacks to crofting tenure in the early years of the nineteenth century.147 The poet's family also continued to expand during these years: his son Charles was born at Caolas on 24 July, 1813,148 and his son Archibald was also born at Caolas, on 12 May, 1815.149 Although we do not know a great deal about his life during these years, among the poet's manuscripts in the Nova Scotia Archives and Record Management is an account book,150 mostly relating to the period May, 1815 to June, 1816, which contains much information on the price of goods, the spelling of certain family names and so on. The account book tells us that the poet sold sugar, tea, cordage, spoons, buttons, napkins, "droget, sisers, prins and nedles," flax seed, fishing lines, salt, hats and vests, and that he also made and repaired shoes. He often took goods as payment, such as a sheep, a barrel of potatoes, a hide, and eggs. It

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145 "John MacLean: A Centenary", at p. 259.

146 *Some Family History*, p. 5.

147 See Eric Cregeen, "Oral Tradition and History in a Hebridean Island", at p. 18.

148 Alexander Maclean Sinclair, *The Clan Gillean*, at p. 340. Charles never married, and succeeded his father at Glenbard, Antigonish County, Nova Scotia, upon his father's death in 1848. Charles was an elder in the congregation of Rev. Duncan Black Blair, at Barney's River, Pictou County. Charles died in 1880, and was also a poet; some of his poetry appears in Clarsach 1 and Clarsach 2.

149 *Some Family History*, p. 40, note (5), and Alexander Maclean Sinclair, *The Clan Gillean*, at p. 340. Archibald married Catherine Macphie, the daughter of Donald MacPhie, and the couple had three children. He lived at Marshy Hope, Antigonish County Archibald die on 26 January, 1899, precisely fifty-one years after the death of his father, John MacLean.

appears he did business in Tiree and in Coll. We know that, although he did not smoke, he used snuff, and his account book suggests that he may also have been fond of a dram: on 12 December, 1816, for example, he paid "Niel M'fadn for whiskey 2 shillings".151

It is not clear from the poet's account book whether he was making much money during this period, but the period following the conclusion in 1815 of the Napoleonic Wars was an economically difficult one throughout the Highlands, and it is likely that a small merchandiser and shoemaker such as John MacLean would have felt the effects. With the peace, demand for staples of the Highland and Island economy such as beef and kelp fell sharply, resulting in a harsh recession. In fact, prices for kelp had begun to fall well before the end of the Napoleonic Wars; in 1810 and 1811, certain grades of kelp were fetching only £10 per ton, down from their highs of about twice that amount only a few years earlier, and by 1815, £10 a ton was the average price of even the best qualities. At these prices, proprietors of the kelping estates could still make a profit, but as the decade progressed, they came under increasing pressure from competition from Norwegian suppliers and Spanish barilla, and in the 1820s (after the poet had emigrated), duties on these imports were removed, with the result that the bottom fell out, causing considerable hardship in the kelping areas.152 The price for cattle had been artificially pushed up by wartime demand, and with the peace in 1815, cattle prices also fell sharply. The combination of falling prices for kelp and cattle, the two staples of the local economy in islands such as Tiree, had a very serious impact on the crofting population, which relied on the

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150 MG/15G/2/3.
151 *Some Family History*, p. 40, at note 4(a).
152 James Hunter, *The Making of the Crofting Community* (Edinburgh: Birlinn, 2000), at pp. 72-73.

income from both sources to cover rents. Many fell into arrears at this time.153 This harsh economic climate would have made John MacLean's businesses particularly difficult ones. These difficulties no doubt had an impact on the poet, and may ultimately have contributed to his decision to emigrate. Donald Maclean Sinclair noted that none of the poet's ventures were very profitable, and hinted that this is what prompted him to "seek his fortune in America".154 It is also clear that emigration agents were very busy in the Highlands and Islands at this time. They tended to paint a glowing picture of life in Canada,155 and this advertising also probably had an effect, as the poet himself made clear in some very bitter poetry composed shortly after his arrival in Canada.156 Donald Maclean Sinclair also commented that "glowing accounts he had heard of America" had also convinced the poet of the merits of emigration: "he had visions of becoming independent and wealthy in the new land."157

The years from his discharge from the military in 1811 to his emigration to Canada in 1819 were ones of considerable poetic output, and John MacLean composed the bulk of his "Old World" poems during this period. Both Alexander and Donald Maclean Sinclair suggest that the poet's obsession with poetry had a negative impact on his trade: "he never attended regularly to his work; his mind was on other things."158 It was also in this period that John MacLean became a significant collector of Gaelic song and poetry. Aside from relatively early collections of Gaelic

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153 Hunter, *The Making of the Crofting Community*, at pp. 75-76.

154 *Some Family History*, p. 5; "John MacLean: A Centenary", at p. 259.

155 For a thorough discussion of the role of emigration agents in promoting Highland emigration to Canada, see Marjory Harper, *Adventurers and Exiles: The Great Scottish Exodus* (London: Profile Books, 2003), at ch. 4, "The Recruitment Business".

156 See, especially, poems 27 and 28.

157 *Some Family History*, p. 5.

158 "John MacLean: A Centenary", at p. 259; Clarsach 2, at p. xv. Alexander Maclean Sinclair suggests that poetry was a lifetime preoccupation, and distraction from work: "Poetry occupied his thoughts while pegging sole-leather in Scotland and cutting down trees in America; it took complete possession of him. He was a good poet; but a poor shoemaker, and a poor farmer."

poetry such as the Book of the Dean of Lismore and the Fernaig manuscript, concentrated efforts at transcribing Gaelic verse really started in the middle of the eighteenth century, with important collections being made by James McLagan, Jerome Stone, Alexander Pope, Dr. Alexander Irvine, Hugh MacDiarmid, and Dr. Hector MacLean. Collections were printed by Ranald MacDonald (the "Eigg Collection", 1776), Margaret Cameron (1785), John Gillies (the "Gillies Collection", 1786), A. and D. Stewart (1804), and Patrick Turner (1813).159 According to both Alexander and Donald Maclean Sinclair,160 the poet was familiar with and had copies of a number of these collections, and he was clearly inspired by the example of these early collectors. Indeed, like these other early collectors, he saw the importance of both recording songs which survived in, or sprang from, the oral tradition and having them published for a wider audience. Significantly, though, John Maclean was one of the few poets who was a collector, transcriber and publisher, not only of his own work, but that of others; indeed, many of the early collectors just referred to were ministers—literate Gaels of considerable learning, but essentially appreciators of oral tradition, and not necessarily creators. The fact that John MacLean was a collector is significant. It showed that he was very aware that a new and uncertain world was coming, one that could be inimical to the institutions that had traditionally sustained Gaelic culture. As noted earlier, as a teenager, he experienced directly the imposition of the crofting system, and he would certainly have been aware of the massive changes in estate administration being implemented throughout the Highlands that were overwhelming the old patterns of local life. In this climate, it was important to record and attempt to preserve a world that was under considerable stress. It is also

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159 See, generally, Derick S. Thomson, *The Companion to Gaelic Scotland* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1983), "folksongs, collections of", at p. 82.

160 Clarsach 2, at p. xx.

significant that he was also a publisher, as not all collectors engaged in publishing the material that they had collected. This shows that John MacLean had a particular awareness of the growing importance and potential of printed media, particularly of books, for the preservation and transmission of Gaelic culture. He was, in a very real sense, engaged in the sort of Gaelic scholarship that would become more common and more institutionalised—through, for example, the creation of Chairs of Celtic—later in the nineteenth century.

John MacLean made a trip to neighbouring islands and to the mainland in about the year 1816, for the specific purposes of writing down songs and poetry.161 This material made its way into a manuscript of approximately 93 pages of the poet's own poetry and 548 of poetry of other poets, and comes to about 15,000 lines. The collection included three poems by Archibald MacLean and nine by Archibald MacPhail, of Tiree, and two by the Cùbair Collach, as well as poems by Iain "Lom" MacDonald, Màiri nighean Alasdair Ruaidh, Eachann Bacach, Mairearad nighean Lachlainn and Alasdair MacKinnon, the Morar bard, among others.162 The poet then sought to publish a collection, based on the material in this manuscript. He had hoped to get financial help from the Highland Society of Edinburgh, but his application to them apparently received little support. He wished to meet with the Laird of Coll while in Edinburgh, in the hope that his patron would be able to assist in the venture, but the Laird appears to have been away. The poet recorded his disappointment in his praise poem "Do Thighearna Chola", "To the Laird of Coll", poem 5. In spite of this setback, he secured the services of Robert Menzies of Edinburgh, to print the book,

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161 Clarsach 1881, at p. v; "John MacLean: A Centenary", at p. 264.

162 For a complete index of the poetry contained in this manuscript, together with a record of where the poetry has been published, see Colm Ó Baoill, *MacLean Manuscripts in Nova Scotia: a catalogue of the Gaelic verse collections MG/15G/2/1 and MG/15G/2/2 in the Public Archives of Nova Scotia* (Aberdeen: Aberdeen University Department of Celtic, 2001).

which appeared in 1818 under the title *Orain Nuadh Ghaedhlach*. Apparently, some 400 copies were printed.163

The collection was dedicated to the poet's patron, Alexander MacLean, Esq., Laird of Coll, and John MacLean's preface to the collection reads as follows:

> DO 'N UASAL URRAMACH, COIRNEAL ALASDAIR MACGHILLEATHAIN,
> Tighearna Cholla, Chuimhnis, Ruim agus Eilean nam Muc.
> Tha an t-seirbhis so a leanas air a dearcadh gu h-umhail dhàsan, air son meud a thlachd do Chlann nan Gàidheal, d'an cainnt nàdurra, mhàthaireil agus d'an dùthaich. Mar dhearbhadh dhuibh gu bheil tlachd aige do gach aon dhiubh sin a dh'ainmich mi, chunnaic onair iomchuidh an t-saothair so fhaotainn an òrdugh, a chùm a sgaoileadh 'nam measg, do bhrigh gu'n robh ùghdair an leabhair neo-chomasach air a faotainn an clo-bhualadh, ged a thug e cho fada sin air adhairt i, le bhi gann de stòras, mar a tha móran eil ga thuille, agus mar is bitheanta tha tachairt, ged a bhitheas aon ni aig duine, gu'm bi ni eile bhuaithe. Tha dòchas agam a nis, bho'n a thug mi an t-seirbhis so gu crich, cho math agus a leigeadh m'eolas leam, air gach dòigh a b'fhearrr a b'urrainn mi, gu'm bi gach aon a thig i gu laimh, no a leughas i, toilichte leis a' h-uile dòigh mar a tha i air a cur an òrdugh, bho thoiseach gu deireadh. Is iomadh uair a bha mi a' smuaineachadh, mu'n do thòisich mi air an obair so, gu'm bu mhór am beud gu'm biodh na seann òrain, nach robh mi a' faicinn anns na leabhraichean a chaidh a chur a mach roimh so, air an di-chuimhneachadh; is e sin a rinn ro thoileach mi gu an cur air an adhairt gus nach robh cothrom agam air dol na b'fhaide, mur faighinn còmhnadh an uasail urramaich a dh'ainmich mi, ga bheil mi nis, le mór thaing dhàsan, ag cunntadh mar onair dhomh féin, gu'm faod mi a ràitinn, le dànadas gur mi,
> Bhur seirbhiseach umhail,
> gu latha mo bhàis,
> "IAIN MACILLEAIN."164/
> TO THE HONOURABLE GENTLEMAN, COLONEL ALEXANDER MACLEAN,
> The Laird of Coll, Quinish, Rum and the Isle of Muck,
> The following work is inscribed, humbly, for him, for the extent of his affection for the Children of the Gael, for their native mother tongue and for their country. As proof to you that he has great affection for each of these I have mentioned, his honour saw it fitting to see this work to completion, in order to circulate it amongst them, because the author of this book was unable to get it printed, although he took it forward as far as he could, owing to a lack of resources, a condition which afflicts many others, and as often happens, though a person has one thing, he lacks something else. I know hope, since I have brought this work to completion, so far as my ability would allow me, in the best manner that I could, that everyone into whose hands it comes, or who

163 *Some Family History*, at p. 4.

164 As reproduced in Clarsach 1928, at p. v; the editor of this edition, Hector MacDougall, noted that he recorded the preface according to the orthographic conventions of his day, not the poet's.

> reads it, will be pleased in every way with how it was arranged, from start to finish. Many a time I thought, before I started on this work, that it would be a great pity if many of the old songs, which I do not see in the collections that have been put out before now, were forgotten; and it is that which made me exceedingly happy to put them forward until I had no opportunity to go any further, without the support of the honourable gentleman that I named above, so that I can now consider it, with great thanks to him, to be a great honour for me, that I am able to say, with assurance, that I am
> Your humble servant
> until the day of my death,
> "JOHN MACLEAN."

From this preface, it would appear that the Laird of Coll did, ultimately, provide some assistance to John MacLean with the costs of publishing the collection. The language of the preface is appropriately subservient, given the relationship between the two men. It must, however, be placed in the context of their relationship at the time, which, if the surviving oral tradition is to be believed (as will be explored shortly), was troubled. This preface offers important evidence of two things: first, it demonstrates that John MacLean knew of and had worked with various collections that had previously been published, and second, that he consciously sought to publish poems and songs that had not previously been published in such collections, thereby filling gaps that had been left.

The collection contained 23 of the Bard's own poems and 34 by others, including poems by Mary MacLeod ("Màiri nighean Alasdair Ruaidh") (c. 1615-c. 1707), the Harris bard, Mairearad Nighean Lachlainn (c. 1660-1751), the Mull bard, and the Morar bard Alasdair MacFhionghain (Alexander MacKinnon) (1770-1814). John MacLean was a great admirer of this last poet, and on being shown some of his poems by MacKinnon's wife after his death in 1814, John MacLean composed a moving elegy, "Bàrdachd Alasdair MhicFhionghain" ("The Poetry of Alexander MacKinnon"), poem 18.

John MacLean brought his original manuscripts with him to Nova Scotia, along with an important collection of 128 handwritten pages which was apparently in progress by 1738165 and completed by 1768 by Dr. Hector MacLean of Grulin in Mull (1704-1783); eight years older than the important early collection made by Ranald MacDonald, the majority of the poems in this collection are found nowhere else.166 The Hector MacLean manuscript had been given to the Bard MacLean by Dr. Hector's daughter, "Màiri nighean an Dotair", "Mary, the Doctor's daughter".167 Dr. Johnson had met Mary MacLean on his tour of the Hebrides in 1773, and has spoken of her in complimentary terms.168 She was apparently an old woman when she passed her father's manuscript to John MacLean.169 The fact that she entrusted

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165 Derick Thomson indicates that Dr. MaccLean's work on this manuscript was in progress by 1738: Derick Thomson, *An Introduction to Gaelic Poetry*, *supra*, at p. 145.

166 "John MacLean: A Centenary", at p. 264.

167 There is some uncertainty as to the name of Dr. MacLean's daughter: Keith Sanger and Alison Kinnaird argue that her name was Christina, not Màiri. See Keith Sanger and Alison Kinnaird, *Tree of Strings/Crann nan Teud: A History of the Harp in Scotland* (Temple, Midlothian: Kinmor Music, 1992), at pp. 161-2, and note 14.

168 "The young Laird of Col, who had determined not to let us lose his company, while there was any difficulty remaining, came over with us [i.e. to Mull]. His influence soon appeared; for he procured us horses, and conducted us to the house of Doctor Maclean, where we found very kind entertainment, and very pleasing conversation. Miss Maclean, who was born, and had been bred at Glasgow, having removed with her father to Mull, added to other qualifications, a great knowledge of the Earse [i.e. Gaelic] language, which she had not learned in her childhood,but gained by study, and was the only interpreter of Earse poetry that I could ever find": Samuel Johnson and James Boswell, *A Journey to the Western Islands of Scotland* and *The Journal of a Tour to the Hebrides*, Peter Levi, ed. (London: Penguin Books, 1984), at p. 132. The date of their visit with Dr. Maclean and his daughter, Mary, was Friday, 15 October, 1773, and Boswell added the following: "Miss McLean produced some Erse poems by John M'Lean, who was a famous bard in Mull, and had died only a few years ago. He could neither read nor write. She read and translated two of them; one, a kind of elegy on Sir John M'Lean's being obliged to fly his country in 1715; another, a dialogue between two Roman Catholick young ladies, sisters, whether it was better to be a nun or to marry. I could not perceive much poetical imagery in the translation. Yet all of our company who understood Erse, seemed charmed with the original. There may, perhaps, be some choice of expression, and some excellence of arrangement, that cannot be shewn in translation. After we had exhausted the Erse poems, of which Dr. Johnson said nothing, Miss M'Lean gave us several tunes of a spinnet, which, though made so long ago, as in 1667, was still very well toned. She sung along with it. Dr. Johnson seemed pleased with the musick, though he owns he neither likes it, nor has hardly any perception of it": pp. 352-3.

169 Clarsach 1881, at p. v. Maclean Sinclair indicates that, shortly after her father's death, Mary MacLean married a Duncan MacKenzie, a man of whom her father disapproved and whom Maclean Sinclair describes as "in every respect her inferior". They apparently lived "in poor circumstances". After MacKenzie's death in 1800, Mary was supported by Alexander Maclean, the fifteenth Laird of Coll, to whom she was related through her mother, Catherine, the daughter of Donald Maclean of Coll. She later gave her father's collection to John MacLean, telling him that "she had been anxious to publish it, but that poverty had kept her from carrying out her wish". She had apparently expressed hope that the manuscript might appear in print some day. See Alexander Maclean Sinclair, *Na Baird*

such an important document to the poet indicates the respect with which he was held as both a maker of Gaelic poetry and a custodian of Gaelic tradition. Both the poet's manuscript and that of Dr. MacLean are now housed in the Nova Scotia Archives and Record Management in Halifax, and have formed the basis of several important scholarly collections.170 Thus, John MacLean's work as a collector, custodian and publisher of important poetry, much of which would otherwise have been lost, has played a crucial role in maintaining our Gaelic poetic heritage.

Shortly after he published his collection of Gaelic poetry, John MacLean decided to dispose of his forty acre croft in Caolas and emigrate to Nova Scotia. The precise reasons for his decision remain unclear. In spite of the economic and social changes sweeping the Highlands, he does not appear to have been the victim of either clearance or sharp rent increases, the most common causes of a decision to emigrate; indeed, large-scale community-based emigration from Tiree—the type of emigration generally typical in the Highlands—did not take place until much later in the nineteenth century.171 Unlike many emigrants, who departed as part of an extended family or wider community grouping, the poet seems to have been accompanied only by his immediate family—his wife Isabella, his daughter Christy, then aged nine, his son Charles, then aged six, and his son Archibald, then aged four. Indeed, Alexander Maclean Sinclair tells us that the poet's friends in Tiree all resolutely opposed his decision to emigrate.172 Apparently, MacLean of Coll was not at home when the poet reached his decision, and his daughter, Mrs. MacLeod of Talisker, wrote to him

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Leathanach/ The Maclean Bards: Vol. 1, The Old Maclean Bards, (Charlottetown: Haszard and Moore, 1898), at pp. 5-6.

170 MG/15G/2/1 and MG/15G/2/2;

171 The population of the island steadily built up, and had reached 4,500 in the 1830s. Large scale emigration appears to have taken place on from about 1848 to 1852, in the wake of the potato famine of 1846, the majority sailing to Montreal for settlement in Canada. Tiree generally did not experience the brutal clearances felt particularly on the mainland of the Highlands. See *Island of Two Harvests*, at p. 20.

about it. Coll wrote to the poet immediately, urging him to stay in Scotland. The poet had, however, apparently departed before the Laird of Coll's letter arrived.173 Alexander Maclean Sinclair claims that even if the poet had received the letter, he would not have stayed, because of his "stubbornness": "He was not a man that could easily be coaxed or advised; he was very stiff in his own opinions. When he had resolved to do a thing, it was almost useless to try to persuade him not to do it".174 If these reports are true, they suggest that the sorts of forces which often occasioned emigration from the Highlands, particularly in the period after 1815, may not have been so sharply felt in John MacLean's case.

While the poet was inspired to compose a number of poems based on events in his life, he does not appear to have composed any poems about the topic of his emigration. Therefore, we can only speculate on his reasons for emigrating to Canada in 1819. It is likely that a number of different factors gave rise to the decision. As already noted, the poet does not appear to have been particularly successful as a shoemaker or merchant. Undoubtedly, the downturn in the Highland and Islands economy after 1815 would have increased the economic pressure he felt. The prospects of better economic opportunities in the New World were attractive to many Gaels at this time, and emigration agents were active in the Highlands and Islands, promoting a generally rosy picture of an easy life in North America. As we shall see, the poet did compose songs in the New World which refer to these sorts of factors. Maclean Sinclair tells us the following:

> He had formed a very high opinion of the new world; he expected to become in it, in a short time, if not as rich yet as independent as the Laird of Coll. In his vivid imagination he saw himself in America, not handling the last, but

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172 Clarsach 1881, at p. xvi.
173 Clarsach 1881, at p. xvi.
174 Clarsach 1881, at p. xvi, xvii.

> cultivating a farm which he could call his own; his children not going off to the fishing, but living around him in good circumstances.175

John MacLean's early poetry showed a high degree of respect for the traditional values of kin-based Highland society, particularly the role of the chief, and, as already noted, this world had largely come to an end. There are many hints in the poetry that the poet recognised this, and this will be explored in subsequent chapters.176 The irrevocable decline of this world that the poet was witnessing all around him may have also had an influence on his decision to leave.

The oral tradition of Tiree and of Coll suggests another reason for the poet's decision, and one that is based on wounded pride. According to these traditions, there was a falling out between the poet and the Laird of Coll, occasioned by poem 25 in this collection. Hector MacDougall records a tradition177 that the toast to Alexander Ranaldson MacDonell, "Alastair Fiadhaich", the 15th Chief of the MacDonells of Glengarry, poem 25, displeased the Laird of Coll greatly. He was apparently particularly displeased by the poet's claim in the song "Deoch slàinte Mhic-ic-Alastair, Tighearna Ghlinne-garadh" that Glengarry, and not Coll, was "Rìgh nan Gàidheal uil'"/"the King of all the Gaels", and "nach robh coimeas dha fhèin is d' a chuid Ghàidheal"/"that he and his Gaels were beyond comparison", thereby placing Glengarry ahead of Coll, his patron. According to the oral tradition of both Coll and Tiree, related more fully in the notes to this poem, in Appendix II, there was a falling out between the poet and his patron at the time of the making of this song. According to the traditions as recorded by Hector MacDougall, there was a gathering on the mainland of the Scottish Highlands which was attended by many nobles, including Glengarry and Coll. The poet was in Coll's retinue, but was left waiting outside the

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175 Clarsach 1881, at p. xvi.

176 Both of these themes will be explored further in subsequent chapters of this thesis.

dining hall by his patron. When Glengarry arrived and noticed that the poet had been left outside, he took the poet by the arm and brought him in, "mar gum biodh fear a bhiodh co-ionnan ris fhèin an inbhe"/"as though he were a man of equal status". When they were seated at the dining table, Glengarry offered the poet a dram, and it was then that the poet composed his toast. Coll took this very badly, and he is reported to have turned to the poet, his anger clear in his face, and said "Iain, Iain, ciod a rinn thu orm a-nis; carson nach deanadh tu rann mar siud dhòmhsa?"/"John, John, what have you done to me now; why wouldn't you compose a verse like that for me?" The poet, himself reportedly greatly angered at having been left outside by his patron, replied "Cha laigheadh e ort"/"Because it would not befit you".178 MacDougall reports the following concerning this oral tradition:

> Bha an seanachas bitheanta am measg dhaoine anns a' Chaolas Thiristeach an uair a bha m' athair 'na dhuine òg—chuala mi féin e bho na seann daoine bhuaithe sin—gur ann ri linn an eu-còrdadh so, ged nach d' thainig e gu cur a mach air a chéile buileach, a dh' éirich smuain an cridhe a' Bhàird an toiseadh slàn fhàgail aig a dhreuchd mar "Bhàrd Thighearna Cholla," is falbh do America.179

Oral traditions should not easily be discounted, particularly ones such as this which survived down to Hector MacDougall's time, a century after the events they describe. Nonetheless, the events appear to have taken place in about 1815, which is about four years before the poet emigrated, and therefore it is unlikely that, even if true, the rupture would have been the immediate or sole reason behind the poet's decision to emigrate. As is acknowledged in the oral traditions related by MacDougall themselves, the relationship between the poet and Coll did not appear to

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177 Clarsach 1928, at p. 283, *et seq.*

178 Clarsach 1928, at p. 284.

179 "The oral tradition was common amongst people in Caolas, Tiree when my father was a young man—I myself heard it from the old folks there—that it was because of this falling out, though it did not result in a complete severing of the relationship between the poet and the Laird, that the thought of bidding farewell to his office of "The Poet to the Laird of Coll" and of setting off for America, first entered the poet's heart": Clarsach 1928, at p. 283.

have broken down completely, and we have seen that the laird did, for example, appear to have provided the poet with financial assistance in about 1818 for the publication of his book of poetry, and did, again according to the oral tradition, seek to convince the poet not to emigrate, albeit too late. MacDougall makes much of the line 93 from "Òran eadar Iain MacGilleain agus an Coirneal Friseal",180 poem 29, in which the poet says, in reference to the nobility, "gur sleamhainn an leac aig an dorsaibh",181 to corroborate the oral traditions regarding the change in the poet's relationship with his patron. As we will see, below, the laird also made the exceptional offer of rent-free land to the poet after he heard of the poet's harsh assessment of the New World and of his own decision to leave Scotland in perhaps the poet's most well-known song, "Òran do dh'Aimearaga",182 poem 28. Such a generous response may have been motivated by a certain sense of guilt about the laird's part in the poet's decision to emigrate, and this would also be consistent with the oral traditions. To conclude, it does appear that there had been some degree of cooling in the relationship between the poet and the Laird of Coll, which may have been precipitated by the events described in the oral tradition. However, there were probably a number of other factors at work, including the deteriorating state of the Highland economy, which would have had a particularly sharp impact on the poet's trades, and the blandishments of the emigration agents, who were very active in the Highlands and Islands at the time.

The survival of these oral traditions concerning the falling out between John MacLean and the Laird of Coll is itself interesting, and we can only speculate on the reasons for their survival. During the tenure of Hugh, the son of Alastair the 15th

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180 "A Song between John MacLean and the Colonel Fraser".
181 "Slippery is the flagstone at their doors".
182 "A Song for America".

Laird of Coll, who assumed control of the estate in 1828 and who became Laird on the death of his father in 1835, the estate fell on hard times, and the young Laird was ultimately forced to sell it. The oral traditions may have been preserved to show how the Coll family was slowly estranging itself from the people and failing to uphold time-honoured traditions. However, Alexander, the fifteenth Laird of Coll seems to have been generally well-regarded by the people of Coll and Tiree, and certainly based on the evidence of the poetry composed by John MacLean, was a relatively rare exemplar of the old mores of the Highland gentry that were rapidly passing away in the early nineteenth century. A more likely explanation for the survival of these traditions was to make sense for local people of the departure of a poet who was, by all the available evidence, well-loved and certainly regarded as one of the great poets of the community. Again, there is no evidence that the poet's departure was as a result of clearance or of a community migration. The emigration of a prominent local man, who appeared to have enjoyed a high status and the social cachet that came with being a family poet for a nobleman must have appeared in these circumstances to be somewhat surprising for some, at least, in the community. The traditions may also have been meant to keep alive a memory of certain aspects of the poet's personality, and in this sense, these traditions are also interesting, because they do suggest that the poet was a man of considerable pride, and, perhaps, a slightly inflated idea of his own status. Although, as noted, he was descended from the MacLean aristocracy, he was not, in 1815, the social equal of either the Laird of Coll or of Glengarry. His response to the Laird of Coll, in public and in front of other nobles, would have been very bold and most inappropriate. The reaction, though, is similar in nature to the challenge that the poet laid down to the Campbell gentry in the Argyll Regiment at the time of his attempted release from the military in early 1811, described above. In spite of his

conviviality, warmth and bonhomie, John MacLean emerges from these accounts as a man also possessed of a touchy pride, a quick temper, and an acerbic tongue.

Whatever the reasons behind John MacLean's decision to emigrate, we do know that he and his family sailed from Tobermory, Mull, in early August of 1819 on the ship *Economy* of Aberdeen, destined for Pictou County; the departure was apparently marked by this rhyme, reported by Alexander Maclean Sinclair: "Toiseach a' cheud mhios de 'n Fhoghar/Sheòl sinn air adhart 'nar cùrsa".183 A copy of the agreement between the poet and Simon Fraser, of Pictou, Nova Scotia, the emigration agent who was the protagonist in "Òran eadar Iain MacGilleain agus an Coirneal Friseal"/"A Song between John MacLean and the Colonel Fraser", poem 29 in this collection, survived and is quoted by Alexander Maclean Sinclair as follows:

> "Tobermory, July 29, 1819.
> It is agreed between John MacLean Bard to MacLean, of Coll, and S. Fraser of Pictou as follows: John MacLean will with his wife and three children be accommodated with a passage to North America, which amounts to Twenty-seven pounds, Six shillings, and in addition S. Fraser will endorse the said John MacLean's bill for Thirty-three pounds, Six shillings due to Mr. Robert Menzies, Printer, Edinburgh; for all which the said John MacLean will now pay Twenty-three pounds, Twelve shillings in cash and assign over to the said S. Fraser three hundred and eighty Gaelic song books in security of the balance.
>
> S. FRASER
> JOHN MACLEAN."

The song books referred to were the poet's 1818 collection. In spite of whatever assistance, financial or otherwise, that the poet may have received from the Laird of Coll in relation to the collection, the poet still owed the printer a sizeable amount of money. It would also appear that the poet had sold only about 20 copies of his book since publication a year earlier, although Simon Fraser had enough faith in the

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183 "At the start of the first month of autumn/We sailed ahead on our course": Clarsach 1881, at p. xvii, and Clarsach 1928, at p. xvi; traditionally, August was reckoned by the Gaels as the first month of autumn. See Ronald Black, ed., *The Gaelic Otherworld*, *supra*, "The Celtic Year", at p. 529, and note 12 thereto, at pp. 574-5.

collection and in its value to accept the remaining 380 copies as security and attach a value of about £37 to them.

There were apparently 285 emigrants on board the *Economy*,184 including a sizeable number of Coll people.185 According to one report, another talented poet and tradition-bearer, John MacGillivray (c. 1784-1860)186, was also on board the *Economy*.187 MacGillivray was a native of Arisaig, Scotland, and was known as "Iain a' Phìobaire" ("John, son of the Piper"); he was also known as "The Piper MacGillivray", because he had had for several years lived with, and acted as piper to, Alexander MacDonald of Glenaladale, "Alasdair Ruadh", or "Fear a' Ghlinne" (d. 1815), who maintained a galley on Loch Shiel, "An Dubh Ghleannach", which was celebrated in a song by Alexander MacKinnon, the subject of poem 18. Glenaladale also erected the famous commemorative statue at Glenfinnan.188 In addition to being

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184 Lucille H. Campey, *After the Hector: The Scottish Pioneers of Nova Scotia and Cape Breton 1773-1852* (Toronto: Natural Heritage Books, 2004), at p. 251.

185 See notes to poem, 28, "Òran do dh'Aimeireaga", at line 144.

186 There is some confusion as to both the date of his birth and death. Although his tombstone shows 12 November, 1862, an obituary for him was published on 19 April, 1860 and a lament to him appeared on 3 May, 1860, both in the Antigonish newspaper, *Casket*. The obituary indicated that he died in his seventy-fifth year, making his date of birth about 1784: "Makers of Gaelic Literature", *Celtic Heritage*, vol. 9, no. 5 (Oct./Nov., 1995), at p. 11, pp. 34-35.

187 This information is contained in a letter to the Editor of *Mosgladh*, a paper sponsored by the Scottish Catholic Society of Canada, written by a Mr. A. A. MacLellan of Grand Mira North, Cape Breton County, Cape Breton, Nova Scotia, to whom John MacLean was apparently a great-grand-uncle: April, 1931, *Mosgladh: "The Awakening"*, vol. III, no. 6, p. 1 at p. 2. However, Raymond MacLean suggests that MacGillivray had emigrated in 1818: Raymond MacLean, *History of Antigonish, vol. 1*, (Antigonish: Casket Printing & Publishing, 1976), at p. 66. Alexander MacLean Sinclair included two of MacGillivray's compositions in *Clarsach na Coille*, and provides some biographical information, but does not mention whether he was on the "Economy" with his grandfather; if he had been, one might have expected Maclean Sinclair to make note of it. Maclean Sinclair claimed that he died in the spring of 1862 (which is almost certainly incorrect) and was "about 70 years of age": see Clarsach 2, at pp. 235-6. The two poems Maclean Sinclair included are "Oran nan Gaidheal" (Clarsach 2, at p. 234) and "An Dubh-Luideach". Maclean Sinclair noted that two other poems, "S tric mi tionndadh am leaba", (p. 264) and "Thug mi 'n oidhche raoir 's an airigh" (p. 293) are in Paruig Mac-an-Tuairneir, *Comhchruinneacha do dh'orain taghta*, (Edinburgh: Stiubhard, 1813) ("Turner's Collection"), and that a hymn, "Fulangas an t-Slànuighear", is in the collection of John MacLean's spiritual songs published by Maclean Sinclair, *Dain Spioradail, le Iain Mac-Gillean*, Edinburgh: Maclachlan & Stewart, 1880). Maclean Sinclair also noted two further poems, taken down from MacGillivray's son, John, in the summer of 1875, and which he had in manuscript, "Cumha do Fhear Ghlinn-Aladail", and "Cumha an dèidh bàis triùir mhac da": Clarsach 2, at p. 236.

188 Alexander Maclean Sinclair argues (Clarsach 2, p. 236) that MacGillivray is the piper referred to in the well-known poem "An Dubh-Ghleannach", composed by the Morar poet Alexander MacKinnon, the subject of poem 18, in honour of a trip on the vessel on Loch Shiel. The relevant

an accomplished poet and piper, MacGillivray was "an excellent Gaelic scholar, and perhaps the best seanchaidh that ever came" to Nova Scotia; he had also published a Catholic catechism in Gaelic.189 While it is not certain that he was on the *Economy*, John MacGillivray did take up a farm at Highfield, near Malignant Brook, Antigonish County, which he farmed until 1840, after which he apparently turned to teaching, first at a school at McArras' Brook, and then one at Maryvale.190 Although these districts are in western Antigonish County, where John MacLean ultimately settled, they are all more than twenty miles from the poet's ultimate home in Glenbard, Antigonish County, and even further from his first home, in Upper Barney's River. Had MacLean met MacGillivray on the *Economy*, he would no doubt have been greatly encouraged to have found that another skilled tradition-bearer and poet, and one who also had a close relationship with a notable Gaelic laird, had made the same decision to emigrate.191 As shall be discussed in Chapter Five, though, there were a significant number of capable West Highland Gaelic tradition bearers in western Antigonish County in the early decades of the nineteenth century. John MacLean may well have noted this, and the attractions of being somewhat closer to such people, some of whom he may have been familiar with from his travels on the mainland in about 1816, may account for the decision, taken in 1830 or 1831, to move from his original settlement in Pictou County, a point to which reference will be made again, below. Apparently, John MacLean also made the acquaintance on board the *Economy* of a boy named Donald MacLellan (1807-1890), a native of Gleneig, Inverness-shire,

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verses are "Latha dhomh 's mi 'n cois na tràghad/Chuala mi caismeachd nan Gàidheal/ Dh'aithnich mi meòir ghrinn a' Bhràthaich/Air siunnsair ùr bu lùghor gàirich".

189 Raymond MacLean, *History of Antigonish, vol. 1*, *supra*, at p. 66.

190 Clarsach 2, at p. 236.

191 As discussed earlier, John MacLean had traveled through Moidart in about 1816, and according to the oral traditions concerning his falling out with the Laird of Coll, may have spent time at Glenfinnan. He was apparently acquainted with the poet Alexander MacKinnon, and it is possible that John MacLean had met John MacGillivray while on the mainland. As is clear from MacKinnon's "An

who was emigrating with his family and who would go on to be a fine Gaelic poet; twenty-two of his songs were published by his son, Vincent, in *Fàilte Cheap Breatuinn*,192 an important early collection of Nova Scotian Gaelic poetry. MacLellan's family settled at South-West Margaree, Inverness County, Cape Breton. As a young man, Donald MacLellan trained with a Mr. Lenoir, a French-speaking Acadian from Arichat, Cape Breton, from whom he learned both the blacksmith trade and the French language, and it is recorded that he "could understand and converse with ease and grace" in four languages—Gaelic, French, English (presumably) and although the fourth is not recorded, it is possible that he may also have learned Mi' kmaq, the langauge of the local aboriginal people.193 It appears that the young MacLellan spent some time with John MacLean while on board the *Economy*, for he apparently learned "Òran Molaidh do dh'Alastair MacDhòmhnaill, Tighearna Ghlinne Garaidh", poem 26 in this collection.194 The older poet would no doubt have enjoyed the company of the lad; as noted, MacLean himself spent much time in the company of older people, including tradition-bearers, when he was a boy, and in MacLellan, he may have seen something of his younger self, and this would, again, have been a source of pleasure and encouragement for him.

John MacLean arrived at Pictou with his wife and three children, Christy, then 9, Charles, then 6 and Archibald, then 4, about 1 October, 1819, and they stayed at the town for about a week. The *Acadian Reporter* found that the passengers "were landed in good health and spirits" and that four children were born upon the passage, and it commended the Captain (referred to as Captain Frazier) "for the kind treatment

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Dubh-Ghleannach", MacKinnon himself seems to have been familiar with the piper. All three men were participants in the same cultural milieu.

192 V. A. McI. McLellan, *Fàilte Cheap Breatuinn: A Collection of Gaelic Poetry*, (Sydney: The Island Reporter, 1891).

193 *Ibid*, at pp. iii-vi.

194 *Ibid*, at pp. v-vi.

they received from him for a passage which consisted of 5 weeks".195 If this newspaper report is correct, then the ship must have arrived in early September; the dates provided by Alexander Maclean Sinclair suggest roughly an eight week passage, and the evidence cited above is consistent with a departure at the start of August. In any case, after the week in Pictou, the poet and his family then travelled by boat to Merigomish, about twenty miles east of Pictou on the coast of the Northumberland Strait,196 where Highlanders had already established themselves.197 In fact, the first settler in this district was a non-Gael, Barnabas McGee, a native of Ireland,198 after whom Barney's River was named, who arrived in the fall of 1776 or the spring of 1777 and took up land at the mouth of that river.199 He was soon joined by two Gaels who had crossed on the *Hector* in 1773, George Morrison, who took up land immediately to the west of McGee, and Walter Murray, who took up land immediately east of McGee, on the east side of Barney's River.200 The settlement expanded significantly with the arrival of soldiers from the disbanded 82nd (Duke of Hamilton's Regiment), who began to settle from about 1784.201 This regiment was composed of both Highland and Lowland soldiers, as well as some Irishmen, and unlike many communities in eastern Nova Scotia, Merigomish remained a community in which both Gaels and non-Gaels resided.202

From there, the poet and his family went south from the coastal settlement,

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195 Lucille Campey, *After the Hector*, *supra*, at p. 169 and p. 251.

196 Clarsach 1881, at p. xvii.

197 The Merigomish district extended eastward to the mouth of Barney's River, to the settlement known as Lower Barney's River; according to Nova Scotia Crown Land Grant Map No. 93, Nova Scotia Department of Natural Resources, Halifax, Nova Scotia, this area appears to have been settled before Merigomish proper. It is also closer to the districts in which the poet spent his first year in Canada.

198 James M. Cameron, *Pictou County's History* (Kentville: Kentville Publishing, 1972), at p. 7.

199 Nova Scotia Crown Land Grant Map No. 93.

200 The Rev. George Patterson, *A History of the County of Pictou Nova Scotia* (Montreal: Dawson, 1877), at pp. 108-9. See, also, Nova Scotia Crown Land Grant Map No. 93.

201 George Patterson, *A History of the County of Pictou Nova Scotia*, *ibid*, at pp. 458-61.

and up river, to Middle Barney's River, and spent their first Canadian winter at the house of William Gordon, a native of Sutherland, where the poet tended Gordon's two or three cows.203 Mr. Gordon's farm appears to have been on a tributary of the East Branch of Barney's River, somewhat to the south of Barney's River Station, and about eight miles up river from the coast and the Merigomish settlement at the mouth of Barney's River.204 It is not clear how John MacLean located this particular holding, but an interesting account regarding the poet's choice of location has survived in Tiree oral tradition. According to the noted Tiree tradition-bearer and informant Donald Sinclair, "Dòmhnall Chaluim Bhàin" (1895-1975), a native of Balephuil, John MacLean and his wife were felling and burning some trees and clearing the land, and an Indian came by and watched them for a while. The Indian then seized one of the poet's young sons, and headed off into the woods, with the poet and his wife in hot pursuit. They followed the Indian for a considerable distance, until they came upon a river where the land was cleared and of excellent quality. The Indian stopped, and set the young boy free. The Indian had apparently seen the couple struggling mightily to clear their original plot of land; he was knowledgeable about the area, and knew that the original plot would never be particularly useful, and, feeling pity for them—and presumably unable to communicate in Gaelic or English, decided to lead them to better land by taking the boy. They became friends, and the Indian helped them erect a hut and stayed with them for a while. They did not have the same amount of cutting and clearing to do, thanks to the Indian's intervention.205 It should be noted that it is

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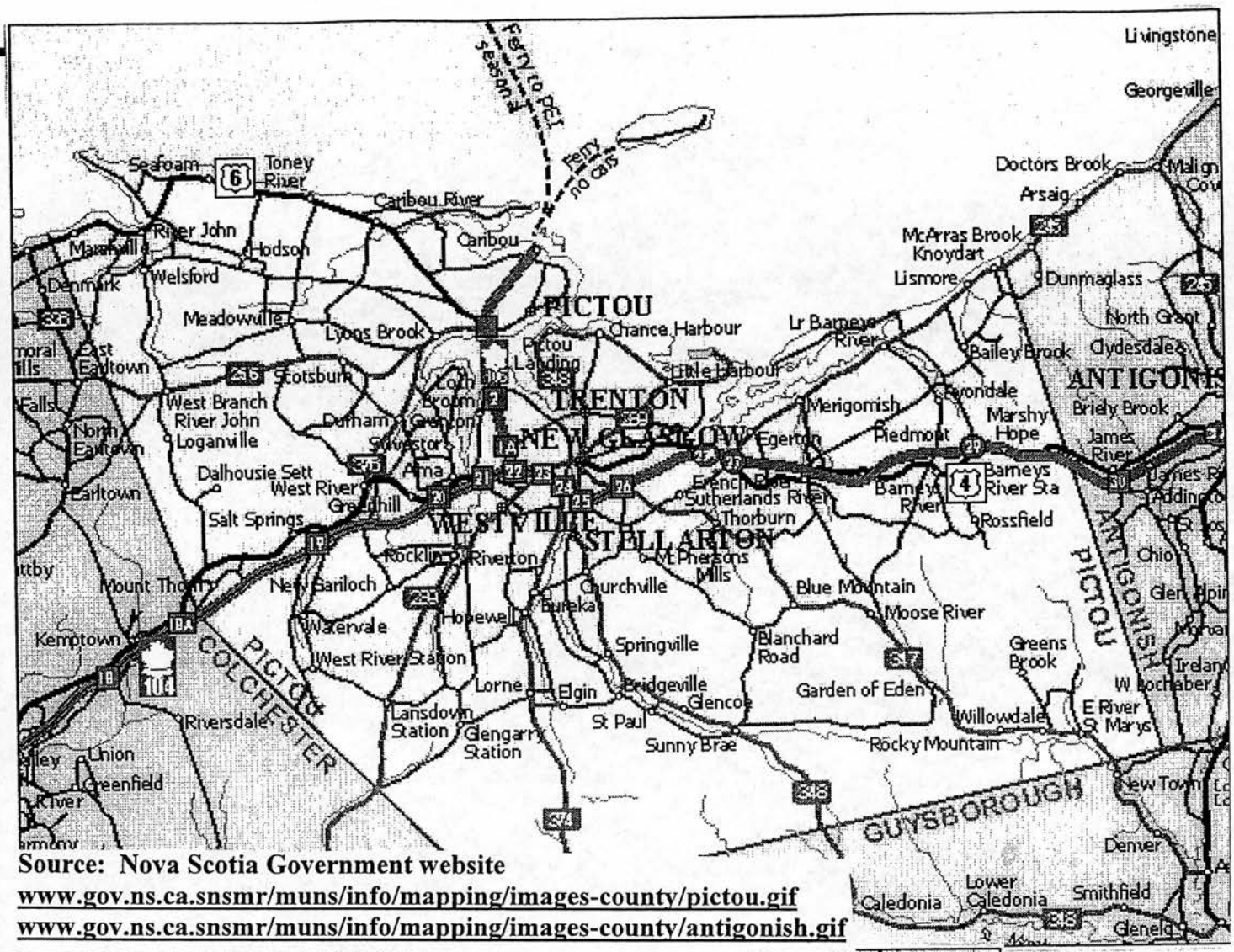
202 Nova Scotia Crown Land Grant Map No. 93 shows that the original grantees in this district, and there is a mix of Highland and Lowland/Scots-Irish surnames.

203 Clarsach 1881, at p. xvii.

204 Nova Scotia Crown Land Grant Map No. 93.

205 School of Scottish Studies Sound Archive, sa1966-14, no. 4, recorded by Dr. John MacInnes. There are a number of accounts of encounters between Gaelic settlers and Aboriginal Peoples of Eastern Canada, and this account should be viewed in the context of this genre in the oral literature of the Gael, as well as the wider literature of European-Aboriginal contact, particularly in North America.

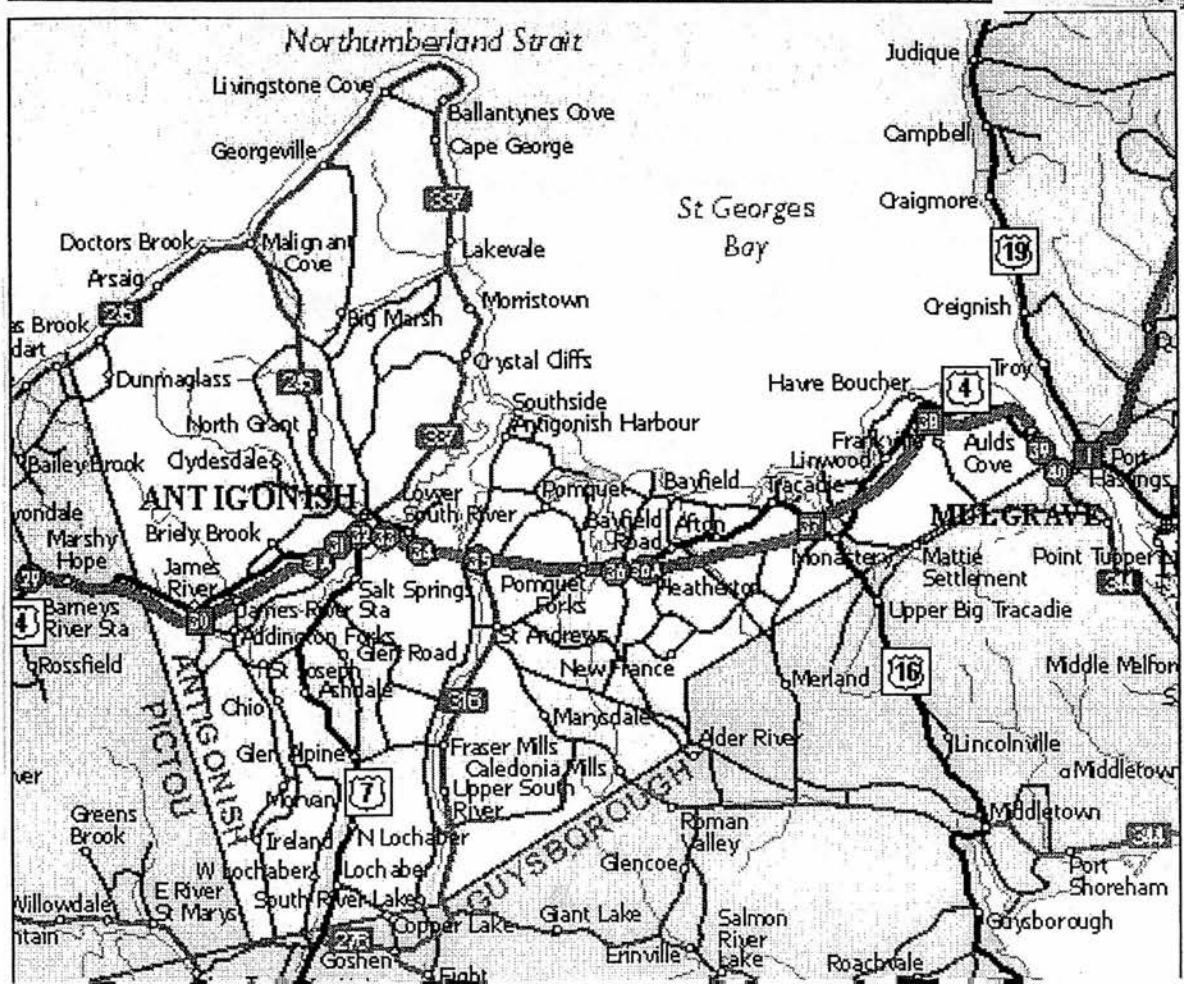
Pictou and Antigonish Counties—Modern Maps

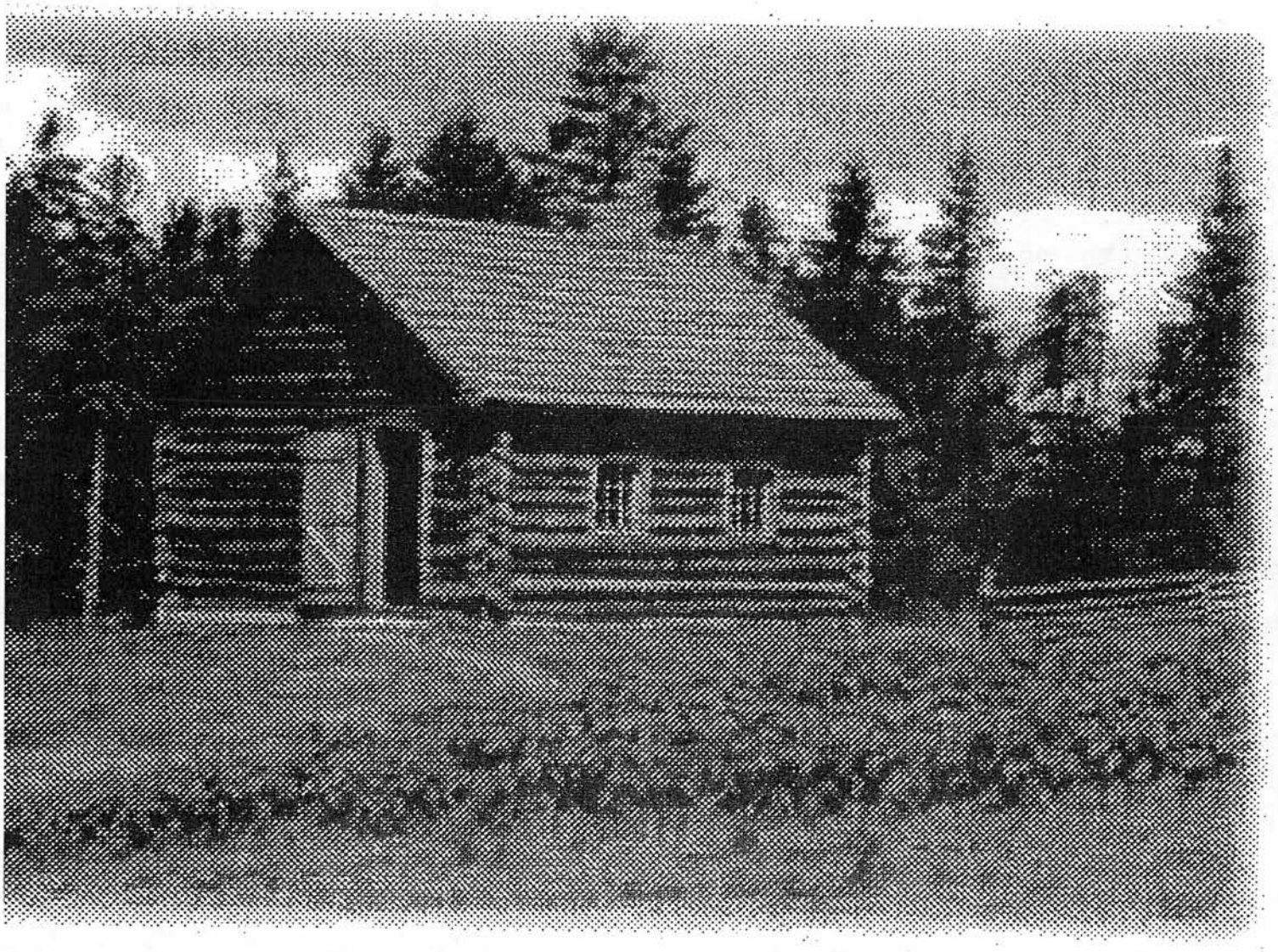


Source: Nova Scotia Government website

www.gov.ns.ca.snsmr/muns/info/mapping/images-county/pictou.gif

www.gov.ns.ca.snsmr/muns/info/mapping/images-county/antigonish.gif





Pioneer Log Cabin
The MacEachern House, c. 1810, Cape Breton
Courtesy of the Nova Scotia Highland Village Museum

not clear from the account whether it relates to the acquisition by John MacLean of his original plot, at Upper Barney's River, in 1819 or to the land to which he moved in 1830, at what is now Glenbard, as discussed below. Given that the rough, rocky land at Upper Barney's River was not particularly good, and that Glenbard, located on a river valley, was better, it is possible—indeed, likely—that Donald Sinclair's account relates to the 1830 move, rather than the original settlement at Upper Barney's River.

The next spring—that of 1820—the poet cleared some of his own land, which, according to Maclean Sinclair, was near the Gordon farm, planted potatoes in the summer, and built a small log cabin. He named this farm "Baile Chnoic".206 The Nova Scotia Land Grant Map for the area does not make reference to a John MacLean, but the information on these maps is incomplete. It is also possible that John MacLean had never registered his grant or, possibly, had never received one. As we shall see, this sparsely settled area of Pictou County began to attract more settlers from about 1830, many of whose grants are recorded on the land grant maps. It is possible that the lack of a formal grant of land in an area that was starting to attract more settlers may have been another factor in the poet's decision to relocate in about 1830 or 1831.207 With regard to the location of Baile Chnoic, while Maclean Sinclair had, as noted, claimed that the poet's farm was near the Gordon farm, he also

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In this oral tradition, like in some others, Aboriginals are, in the first instance, viewed as hostile or even threatening—this account begins with what looks to be a kidnapping—but the accounts conclude with some resolution, often in the form of the Aboriginals providing some assistance, and the establishment of ties of friendship. See, for example, the account of the first meeting between the Barra immigrants who came to Iona, Cape Breton, about 1801 and the Mi' kmaq, in Calum Iain M. MacLeòid, *Sgeulachdan à Albainn* Nuaidh (Glaschu: Gairm, 1969), at pp. 26-7. See, generally, Robert Dunbar, "Identity and Images of Other Peoples: How Other Ethnic Groups are Represented in Nova Scotia Gaelic Tradition" (unpublished, 2002; delivered at Rannsachadh na Gàidhlig 2, The University of Glasgow, July, 2002).

206 Or "Baile a' Chnoic", which translates as "The farm of the hill".

207 Uncertainty over rights to the land on which a settler was living was occasionally the reason for a decision to move; see, for example, the account of Roderick McDonald, known as the "Hunter", a native of Gairloch, Wester Ross, Scotland, who came to settle at Boular derie, Cape Breton, but after some years there left for Prince Edward Island for fear that he might someday lose his land because of uncertainty as to his title to it: Michael D. Currie, "Pioneer Days in Cape Breton", in *Teachdaire nan Gàidheal* (December, 1932), vol. 5, no. 2, at p. 11.

stated that in this initial period, the poet's "nearest neighbour" was Kenneth Cameron, a native of Lochbroom, Scotland, who was "more than two miles away". The Cameron property was about two miles down the river from the Gordon property, at the settlement known as Barney's River Station, named for the railway station that was subsequently built there.208 Thus, it is highly likely that John MacLean's property in fact bordered that of Mr. Gordon, perhaps just to the south, slightly further up river. One possible explanation for the apparent inconsistency in Maclean Sinclair's information is that William Gordon was not, in fact, in residence at his property at the time, and that he had made it available on a temporary basis for the poet's use. This hypothesis is supported by Maclean Sinclair's statement, just referred to, that the poet had tended Gordon's cows, suggesting Gordon was absent. It may also be supported by information about a new neighbour who arrived in 1821, a point to which I shall return.

The poet and his family apparently spent the summer of 1820 at Baile Chnoic. It was there, on August 2, 1820, that John MacLean's wife Isabella gave birth to their fourth child, John.209 After harvesting his first crop of potatoes in the late summer or early autumn of 1820, John MacLean put them in the cellar—presumably, of his new abode, rather than Gordon's—and returned to Middle Barney's River, where the family spent the winter of 1820-21 at the house of John Dewar, a native of Breadalbane, in Perthshire, Scotland. Dewar's property was about three miles down the East Branch of Barney's River from the Gordon farm, just north of Barney's River Station, about a mile further down river from Kenneth Cameron.210 At Middle

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208 Nova Scotia Crown Land Grant Map No. 93.

209 Donald Maclean Sinclair, *Some Family History*, *supra*, at note (5), p. 40, and Alexander Maclean Sinclair, *The Clan Gillean*, *supra*, at p. 340. The younger John MacLean married Margaret, the daughter of Duncan Robertson, and they had eight children. He succeeded his brother Charles at Glenbard, Antigonish County, and died on 15 May, 1897.

210 Nova Scotia Crown Land Grant Map No. 93.

Barney's River, the three older MacLean children could attend school, as there were no such amenities in Upper Barney's River, such was its isolation in the early years of settlement. In the spring of 1821, the poet returned to Baile Chnoic and found his potatoes safe and sound. He purchased his first heifer, and also got a new neighbour, James Robertson, a native of Atholl, Perthshire, Scotland.211 Alexander Maclean Sinclair provides some information regarding Robertson. He had apparently lived for several years in the Piedmont Valley, located relatively nearby, in the hilly uplands of eastern Pictou County, but fell into debt, and had to give up his farm. He and William Gordon exchanged farms. Thus, Robertson became a neighbour by virtue of having moved into Gordon's farm, which indeed may therefore have been vacant. According to Alexander Maclean Sinclair, Robertson was "an honest man and a good neighbour".212

Without question, these early years at Upper Barney's River would have been very difficult ones for John MacLean, and for his family. Alexander Maclean Sinclair tells us that the poet was in very poor circumstances. Until the purchase of the heifer in 1821, the family had no cows or sheep and lived mostly on potatoes; Maclean Sinclair claims that they had few clothes, and that the poet even had to haul firewood home on a hand sled. As Maclean Sinclair notes, "[i]n his expectation of ease and comfort in the new world, he was terribly disappointed".213 In Scotland, "he knew nothing of hard work or poverty, but now he had to work hard".214 Coming from an island with a mild climate, he would have been completely unaccustomed to the harsh, snowy winters and the frequent heat and humidity of the Nova Scotian summer. Also, he would have been totally unaccustomed to the landscape—at Upper Barney's

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211 Clarsach 1881, at p. xviii.
212 Clarsach 1881, at p. xviii.
213 Clarsach 1881, at p. xviii.
214 Clarsach 1881, at p. xviii.

River, he was a good distance from the sea, and surrounded by forests of a sort he would not have seen before, even on his trips to the Scottish mainland.

In most of these respects, John MacLean's experiences would have been similar to a large majority of the Highland pioneers of eastern Nova Scotia. Stephen Hornsby's description of conditions in the Highland settlements of Cape Breton at the start of the nineteenth century would generally apply with equal force to the nearby mainland districts in the period of settlement:

> Given the availability of land in the colony, there was no need for nucleated villages. . . . On most lots stood a farmhouse, several hundred yards from its nearest neighbour and within a stone's throw of uncleared forest. . . .
>
> Farmhouses varied in construction, style, and comfort. Pioneer shanties, common among the Highland Scots, were usually constructed from round logs cross-notched at the corners, their single-slope roofs from battens covered with turf or bark. The one-room interior would have had a dirt floor and minimal furnishings.215

Charles Dunn provides a further description of the humble dwellings of which John MacLean's would have been typical:

> There was nothing else for it . . . the Highlander swung his axe and levelled the trees. The straightest and soundest logs he used as timber for his dwelling, which was at first only a one-room cabin. He and his wife slept in the only bed, if they owned one at all, and sometimes enjoyed the luxury of a screen. The children found the best places they could on the floor, sleeping on straw that had been dried beside the fire. The most vital part of the house was its fireplace, a vast stone structure. Not only did it provide warmth and light for the household, but by it all the cooking was done. An iron crane held the pots over the flame; roasts were dangled on a chain and turned round and round before the glowing logs; baking was done in iron pots placed in the hot embers.216

Recollections of the construction of these log houses survives in the oral history of Nova Scotia Gaels down to the present, as is demonstrated in this report from Michael

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215 Stephen J. Hornsby, *Nineteenth-Century Cape Breton: A Historical Geography* (Montreal & Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1992), at p. 24.

216 Charles W. Dunn, *Highland Settler: A Portrait of the Scottish Gael in Cape Breton and Eastern Nova Scotia* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1953, 1980 reprint), at p. 28. Michael Currie notes, however, that "[s]ome of those log houses were strongly built, and quite comfortable to live in. With large open fire places, capable of receiving a large quantity of firewood, and as wood was

MacNeil, "Migi mac Bean Nilleig Ruairidh Eòin a' Phlant" (1917-95), of Iona, Victoria County, Cape Breton:

> Bhiodh na bothain-logaichean sin ann an toiseach. Nuair a bha thu airson gum biodh 'ad blàth agus gun cumadh 'ad amuigh an droch shìde. Cha n-ann mar a tha 'ad 'gan togail an diugh a bhiodh 'ad 'gan togail idir.
> An dràsd' tha 'ad 'gan togaill 's tha 'ad an uair sin 'gam pacadh. Ach cha b' ann mar sin a bhiodh 'ad an toiseach. An dòigh a bhiodh ac' an toiseach . . . Bhiodh 'ad a' faighinn logaichean 'gan gearradh 's a' faighinn an uair sin còinneach. Dh' fheumadh a' chòinneach a bhi bog – 'ga cumail bog.
> Rachadh a' chiad log' a leagail 's an uair sin an ath-loga 's a' chòinneach 'ga cuir fodhasin. Cha b' urrainn dha 'n loga laighe dòigheal. Chumadh a' chòinneach gun laigheadh e dòigheil, ach nuair a rachadh a' log' air muin log' a chuir an cudthrom . . . Nuair a thiormaicheadh sin, bha e dìreach mar gun cuireadh tu clòimh' ann am poca. Dh'atadh sin fo na logaichean 's bha e dìon.217

Clearing the land was an arduous business, and one to which most of the Gaels were totally unaccustomed. Michael Currie, a descendant of South Uist Gaels who had come to Cape Breton in 1832, noted that the Highlanders had no use for the axe in their homeland, and this was itself one of the basic difficulties with which they had to contend.218 After the trees were cut down, the stumps were left to rot, to ease their removal, and the cut timber was then piled up and burned, precisely in the manner described by John MacLean in "Òran do dh'Aimearaga", poem 28. The ash made for a good fertilizer, seed would often simply be scattered on the new soil that had been created in this manner, referred to by the Gaels as "coille dhubh" ("black forest") or

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plenty, these homes were good security from the rigors of winter": Michael D. Currie, "Pioneer Days in Cape Breton", in *Teachdaire nan Gàidheal*, (October, 1932), vol. 4, no. 12, at p. 9.

217 "At the start, there would be those log cabins. When you wanted them to be warm and to keep out the bad weather. They would not build them then as they build them today at all. At present, they build them and then they pack them [i.e. the cracks between the logs]. But that's not how they were at the start. The method they had at the start . . . They would get logs cut and they would then get some moss. The moss had to be damp – it had to be kept damp. The log would be laid down and then the moss would be put under the next log. They logs would not lie on each other properly. The moss would ensure that it [i.e. the log] would lie properly, and when the weight of one log would be put on top of the other . . . When that dried, it was just as though you had put wool in a sack. That would swell under the logs and it was watertight and secure." Recorded by James Watson, 10 July, 1986: Seumas Watson, "Ás a' Choillidh Dhuibh: Cunntasan Seanchais air a' Chiad Luchd-àiteachaidh an Eilean Cheap Breatainn", in Colm Ó Baoill agus Nancy R. McGuire, eds., *Rannsachadh na Gàidhlig 2000* (Obar Dheathain: An Clò Gaidhealach, 2002), p. 271 at p. 274.

218 Michael D. Currie, "Pioneer Days in Cape Breton", in *Teachdaire nan Gàidheal*, (October, 1932), vol. 4, no. 2, at p. 9.

"coille loisgte" ("burnt forest").219 The process of clearing and the effectiveness of the process of burning the trees has, like many aspects of the immigration experience, been preserved in the oral traditions of the Gaels of eastern Nova Scotia. Ena Chisholm, "Ena Nighean Iain 'ic Eòin na h-Aibhneadh", a native of Glencoe, Inverness County, Cape Breton, reported the following concerning the arrival of her people, emigrants from the Isle of Eigg, at Glencoe:

> Bha an t-àite gu math *tough*. Cha robh ann ach choille mhór. Cha robh sian ann ach coille. 'S thog iad taigh-logaichean ann. Gheàrr iad na craobhan a-nuas. Chuir iad buntata nuair a loisgeadh iad iad. 'S e a' *fertilizer* a bhiodh aca . . . a' luath bh' aca an uair ud. Cha bhiodh aon *bhug* air a' bhuntàt' an uair ud. Bha a' luath 'gam marbhadh.
> Bha coille dhubh againn fhéin. 'S e coille dhubh a bheireadh iad rith'. Bha iad againn fhéin agus bhiodh buntàta breagha ann. *Early Rose* a bheireadh iad ris a' bhuntàta, pàirt dhiubh. 'S *Calico Potatoes*. Bha buntàta gorm aca cuideachd. Buntàta *Calico* 's buntàta gorm. Bhiodh iad sin ann.220

The Gaels generally had very few agricultural implements, and tended to rely on the same sorts of instruments that they knew at home, such as the "cas chrom" (a simple hand plough), the "corran" (a sickle), a "sùist" (a flail), the "criathar" (a skin sieve) and the "brath" (a hand mill).221 Agricultural techniques were thus unsophisticated, and relied almost exclusively on the labour provided by the farmer and his family, with some help from neighbours at harvest time. Rather than rotating crops, applying manure, and leaving fields fallow, the Highland immigrant tended

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219 Charles Dunn, *Highland Settler*, *supra*, at p. 29. These practices appear to have been widespread throughout all of the areas of Highland settlement in eastern Nova Scotia: see Rev. D. J. Rankin, *A History of the County of Antigonish Nova Scotia* (Pawtucket, R.I.: Quintin Publications, 1998), at p. 41. For an account of these practices in Antigonish County, and the very heavy reliance on potatoes, see D. MacFarlane, and R.A. MacLean, eds., *Drummer on Foot* (publication details n.a.), at p. 88, "Customs and Social Conditions".

220 "It was a very tough place. There was nothing there but a great forest. Nothing but woods. They built log homes there. Trees were felled. Potatoes were planted when they had burned them [i.e. the trees]. The ash that was produced would be their only fertilizer at that time. There wouldn't be a single bug on the potatoes back then. The ash killed them. We ourselves had a black forest. Black forest is what they called it. We had them ourselves, and the potatoes there used to be beautiful. They called some of the potatoes "Early Rose". And "Calico Potatoes". They had blue potatoes as well. Calico potatoes and blue potatoes. Those used to be there.": James Watson and Ellison Robertson, eds., *Sealladh gu Taobh: Oral Tradition and Reminiscence By Cape Breton Gaels* (Sydney: University College of Cape Breton Art Gallery, 1987), at p. 11.

simply to work a patch until yields declined, then to clear additional lands, creating more "coille dhubh".222

By about 1805, much of the best land in Pictou County had already been taken up, and between 1815 and 1821, that which remained in more remote districts had also been settled.223 The conditions in Upper Barney's River would have been somewhat similar to those on the "backlands" in Cape Breton; as on the mainland, the initial settlers took up lots on water frontages, the so-called "frontlands", where soils tended to be better and farming conditions somewhat easier, whereas later arrivals, such as John MacLean, were forced to the poorer lands of the upland areas. In Cape Breton, farmers on these lands "eked out livings from small, subsistence farms"; typically, only ten to twenty acres would be cleared, and with sparse pasture and poor hay crops, the farms supported only a small number of livestock, which tended to be small and undernourished.224 The heavy reliance on potatoes, about which John MacLean complained in "Òran do dh'Aimearaga", poem 28, was also typical in these "backland" areas:

> The main cereal crop was oats; in upland areas, it was the only cereal that could be grown with much success. Potatoes were a dietary staple and the most important root crop—"the only article", according to settlers from the uplands behind Little Narrows [Victoria County, Cape Breton], "on which a poor man and family have to live upon for years on new back land farms in the Island of Cape Breton."225

Aside from potatoes, the early settlers depended on fish, which were plentiful in the lakes and rivers, and wild animals such as moose.226

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221 Charles Dunn, *Highland Settler*, *supra*, at p. 29, 30, Stephen Hornsby, *Nineteenth Century Cape Breton*, *supra*, at p. 72.

222 Stephen Hornsby, *Nineteenth Century Cape Breton*, *supra*, at p. 72.

223 D. Campbell and R. A. MacLean, *Beyond the Atlantic Roar: A Study of the Nova Scotia Scots* (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1974), at p. 43, 46.

224 Stephen Hornsby, *Nineteenth Century Cape Breton*, *supra*, at pp. 71-72.

225 *Ibid*, at p. 72.

226 Rev. D. J. Rankin, *A History of the County of Antigonish Nova Scotia* (Pawtucket, R.I.: Quintin Publications, 1998), at p. 41.

In other respects, however, John MacLean's experience was significantly different from those of most Highland immigrants. First, his physical isolation was somewhat more intense than the usual. Patterson indicates that Upper Barney's River was only sparsely settled at the time of the poet's arrival. The first settler there, William McKenzie, a native of Sutherland, had arrived only in 1807. His farm appears to have bordered that of Kenneth Cameron, until the arrival of James Robertson to the Gordon farm in 1821, the poet's closest neighbour, on the south-west, and would therefore have been slightly more distant from Baile Chnoic.227 Donald Robertson, a native of Perthshire, arrived in 1819. His farm appears to have bordered Kenneth Cameron's on the north-west, and he would therefore have been slightly further removed from Baile Chnoic than either McKenzie or Cameron.228 In the period 1819 to 1821, Angus McKay, an elder and a native of the parish of Clyne, Sutherlandshire, and Simon Bannerman, Gordon Bannerman and old John Sutherland, "of the kilt, a man who never wore trousers in his life"—and who was referred to in poem 39, "Òran don 'Chuairtear'"—and several others, also from Sutherlandshire, all settled in the woods of Upper Barney's River.229 These farms were in an even more remote location than that of John MacLean: Sutherland's farm appears to have been about two and a quarter miles south-west of Baile Chnoic, Angus McKay's about a further mile and a quarter south-west past Sutherland's, and the Bannermans about a mile further still, roughly four and a half miles away from the poet, altogether.230 Patterson noted that between the years 1830 and 1840, a number of other families came from the counties of Sutherland and Perth, and took up land in this

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227 Nova Scotia Crown Land Grant Map No. 93.
228 Nova Scotia Crown Land Grant Map No. 93.
229 George Patterson, *A History of the County of Pictou Nova Scotia*, *supra*, at pp. 283-4.
230 Nova Scotia Crown Land Grant Map No. 94.

settlement.231 By this point, however, John MacLean and his family had moved to Glenbard. Thus, for the bulk of his time at Upper Barney's River, the poet continued to be living in considerable isolation, with only Robertson, apparently, close by. While, as noted, the abundance of land ensured that farms were dispersed, with no nucleated villages,232 the homesteads would generally be separated by hundreds of yards, not one or two miles. Even by the standards of eastern Nova Scotia, then, Upper Barney's River was very sparsely settled. For a person such as John MacLean, who came from a relatively heavily and densely populated island such—as noted earlier, there was well in excess of 2,000 residents in Tiree, an island not that much larger than the Upper Barney's River region of Pictou County, during the poet's time—the physical isolation would have been felt very keenly.

As important, however, is the fact that John MacLean and his family had no close relations or people from his home community living nearby. Highland settlement of eastern Nova Scotia was overwhelmingly characterised by "chain-migration", a pattern that is characteristic of Highland emigration more generally, well into the twentieth century.233 Hornsby notes that family connections in the western Highlands and islands had been transferred to Cape Breton, and although the overwhelming majority of households comprised individual nuclear families, kin usually lived close by: "Many related families had left Scotland together and settled

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231 George Patterson, *A History of the County of Pictou Nova Scotia*, *supra*, at p. 284. Patterson refers to John McDonald, a weaver, his brother Duncan, James Forbes, William Sutherland, Donald Bruce, James Leadbetter, John Bannerman, Donald McKay, Robert Ferguson, and others. While not all of these names appear on Nova Scotia Land Grant Maps No. 93 and 94, those that do appear to be in the area roughly between Baile Chnoic and old John Sutherland's property, more than two miles distant.

232 Stephen Hornsby, *Nineteenth-Century Cape Breton*, *supra*, at p. 24.

233 As Marianne McLean remarks of Glengarry County, in eastern Ontario, "The people of western Inverness who emigrated to Upper Canada found themselves dealt a poorer or losing hand by the agricultural transformations of their native glens; in these circumstances they chose to emigrate communally so as to obtain land for their families and at the same time maintain community ties: Marianne McLean, *The People of Glengarry: Highlanders in Transition, 1745-1820* (Montreal and Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1991) at p. 10.

side by side where land was available in Cape Breton".234 Similar patterns generally existed in Pictou and Antigonish Counties. While, as noted, a significant number of Coll people came over with John MacLean and his family on the *Economy*, none of his immediate family or, apparently, close relations were on board, and none of the Coll emigrants on the *Economy* had apparently settled near the poet in Upper Barney's River. As noted, the few settlers in this district were predominantly Gaels, and therefore shared a language with the poet. However, they came primarily from Sutherlandshire and Perthshire, areas on the mainland of Scotland well removed from the poet's native Tiree and, indeed, from those parts of the West Highland mainland with which the poet would have been most familiar. This may have been significant. Although these Gaels would also have been Presbyterians, they would have spoken dialects different from that of John MacLean and his family and, crucially, would likely not have had any kinship ties or, perhaps, much knowledge of the local Inner Hebridean oral history, song tradition and so forth, which would have meant so much to the poet. Although John MacLean would have been valued as a singer, and his reputation as a poet and tradition bearer may even have been known to his new neighbours, he would have missed the company of the Tiree Gaels amongst whom he had lived, the West Coast and inner Hebridean Gaels he would have met on his travels, and, of course, patrons and supporters such as the Lairds of Coll and Glengarry. Donald Maclean Sinclair argued that the poet, although unaccustomed to hard physical labour, would "probably have felt the lack of friends far more keenly than the actual toil of chopping down trees."235

It was during the very first few hard years that the poet composed perhaps his most well-known song "Òran do dh'Ameireaga", poem 28, and although he came to

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234 Stephen Hornsby, *Nineteenth-Century Cape Breton*, *supra*, at p. 75.

amend his negative views of his new home, the poet's sentiments can be easily understood, given his circumstances. Donald Maclean Sinclair seems to suggest that the poem was composed in the spring of 1820, when the poet had cleared his lot and had built his log cabin at Baile Chnoic.236 The poem had a considerable impact when it reached Scotland, and undoubtedly caused many to reconsider emigration.237 Alexander Maclean Sinclair reports that his friends "were greatly distressed about him," and that they offered to send money to bring him back. He also reports that the Laird of Coll wrote "a kind letter" to the poet asking him to return, and even offering him a parcel of land, free of rent.238 While the provision of land to the chief's poet was once common in Gaelic society, this practice had generally fallen into disuse, particularly in the increasingly commercial period following Culloden. If this tradition is true—and there is no reason to doubt it—the offer would have been a considerable and generous one. Indeed, it might corroborate the oral traditions of Tiree and Coll, referred to above, that one of the reasons for the poet's emigration may have been a falling out between him and the Laird of Coll, in which Alexander Ranaldson MacDonell of Glengarry played a part; the generosity of the gift may have been occasioned by some feelings of guilt. In this connection, the possibility of some element of competition between the Laird of Coll and Glengarry must also be considered. Glengarry had provided a comfortable house and croft near his own residence at Invergarry for his poet, Allan MacDougall, "Ailean Dall", at around the turn of the century, some twenty years earlier, 239 and MacLean of Coll may have

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235 "John MacLean: A Centenary", at p. 260.
236 "John MacLean: A Centenary", at p. 260.
237 "John MacLean: A Centenary", at p. 260.
238 Clarsach 1881, at p. xix.
239 The gift of the house and croft apparently took place shortly after the publication of by Allan MacDougall of his 1798 collection of poetry, *Orain Ghaidhealach: Le Ailein Dughallach fear ciùil an Ionbhar Lochaidh*: John MacKenzie, ed., *Sar-Obair nam Bard Gaelach: The Beauties of Gaelic Poetry and the Lives of the Highland Bards* (Edinburgh: John Grant, 1907), at p. 324.

been concerned that the sorrowful state into which his own poet had apparently fallen would have been the subject of much adverse comment in Gaelic popular opinion.

In spite of the hardships and the powerful pull of nostalgia, John MacLean did not accept the Laird's offer; having made the break with the old country, he was apparently determined to see the adventure out, and this seems to be entirely consistent with his headstrong, determined character. In spite of the isolation, John MacLean began to establish a string of friendships which would sustain him, in both intangible and tangible ways. Travelling any considerable distance in eastern Nova Scotia during this pioneer period was extremely arduous. There were certainly no roads or railways at this point; indeed, there appears to have been no road connection to the eastern districts of Pictou County during the poet's lifetime.240 The settlers first walked on trails blazed through the forest which, with use, became paths then tracks.241 As Hornsby notes, the various small settlements in eastern Nova Scotia were isolated from each other: "Distance, forest, rough terrain, and a lack of roads hindered communication and prevented the intermingling of settlers that was common on many frontiers."242 The best means of communication was provided by water; small boats tended to ply the rivers and Northumberland straight coast, and when the rivers froze up, the ice was more easily traversed than the forests.243

In spite of this, John MacLean had established friendships in areas well removed from the Upper Barney's River settlement. Alexander Maclean Sinclair reports that during the years of the greatest hardships for the poet and his family—presumably, the early years at Upper Barney's River—"he experienced much kindness

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240 The only way from Pictou to Antigonish was along the Gulf shore or over Brown's mountain until 1851, when the road to Antigonish through Marshy Hope (which is just west of Glenbard, and at the border between Pictou and Antigonish Counties) was established: D. Campbell and R. A. MacLean, *Beyond the Atlantic Roar*, *supra*, at pp. 47-8.

241 James Cameron, *Pictou County's History*, *supra*, at p. 51.

242 Stephen Hornsby, *Nineteenth Century Cape Breton*, *supra*, at p. 24.

form Donald MacLean, Dòmhnall Mac Dhonnchaidh, "Donald, the son of Duncan", on the Gulf".244 Maclean Sinclair also notes that the Rev. Colin Grant, the parish priest of Arisaig, Nova Scotia, was also very kind to the poet, and recollects how, on one occasion, Father Grant made a gift to the poet of a snuff box which contained, along with snuff—though the poet did not smoke, he enjoyed snuff—five pounds in gold.245 Colin P. Grant was born in about 1784 in Glenmoriston, Scotland, the son of Duncan Grant, a Presbyterian, and Helena Chisholm, a Roman Catholic. He was raised as a Catholic, and finished his training at Killechiarain, at Lismore, Scotland, and was ordained by his cousin, Bishop John Chisholm, on Easter Sunday, 17 April, 1808. He served as a missionary in Strathglass and Braemar for ten years, then emigrated to Canada in August, 1818, intending to serve under Rev. Alexander MacDonell, the vicar-general of Upper Canada. Upon his arrival in Nova Scotia, though, he was asked by Bishop Edmund Burke to serve temporarily at Antigonish. In 1819, Bishop Joseph-Octave Plessis of Quebec and Rev. MacDonell gave him permission to stay in Nova Scotia, and he was incardinated into the new vicarate and posted in about July of that year at Arisaig. From then until about October, 1830, he served as parish priest at Arisaig, in the parish of St. Margaret of Scotland. At the time, this was only one of two parishes in Antigonish County, and included all the Highland Catholics residing on the Gulf of Northumberland shore from Merigomish in Pictou County all the way to Cape George, a distance of about 30 miles. He established several elementary schools in his district, enlarged the church at Arisaig,

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243 James Cameron, *Pictou County's History*, *supra*, at p. 43.

244 The identity of this Donald MacLean is not clear. There was a settler named Donald Grant who had land at Bailey's Brook, Pictou County, about six and a half miles down Barney's River from the poet and about two miles east of the river; he was not, however, on the Gulf coast, but about two miles inland: Nova Scotia Land Grant Map No. 98. There was a Donald MacLean from Barra who had settled at Cape George, Antigonish County (Raymond A. MacLean, *History of Antigonish, vol. 1*, *supra*, at p. 121), but Cape George is many miles up the coast and to the east, even well past Arisaig, a coastal community that the poet likely did frequent.

and is believed to have been responsible for the construction of a small chapel at North Side Cape George (Morar), at the east end of the parish. In spite of his strength, the heavy labour and large pastoral area took its toll, and by 1828 his health was shattered and he was seeking a replacement. On 31 October, 1830, he retired to a small farm at Malignant Cove, just to the east of Arisaig. His last years were apparently unhappy ones; he is said to have lived in poor health and severe poverty, and was even imprisoned briefly in 1838 for debt. He died at Antigonish on 31 March, 1839, intestate and without means, and was buried at the Catholic cemetery at Lower South River. Father Grant had two sisters who had also emigrated to Antigonish County; one was married to Duncan Grant of Antigonish, and the other was married to Alexander Ban Chisholm, also of Antigonish.246

The closeness of the John MacLean's relationship with Father Colin Grant is attested to by the composition by the poet of three praise poems in the priest's honour, poems 40, 41 and 42. Their relationship long pre-dated the poet's move from Upper Barney's River to Glenbard, Antigonish County, in 1830, which is somewhat closer to Fr. Grant's parish than Upper Barney's River. In 1901, Alexander Maclean Sinclair wrote the following about Fr. Grant:

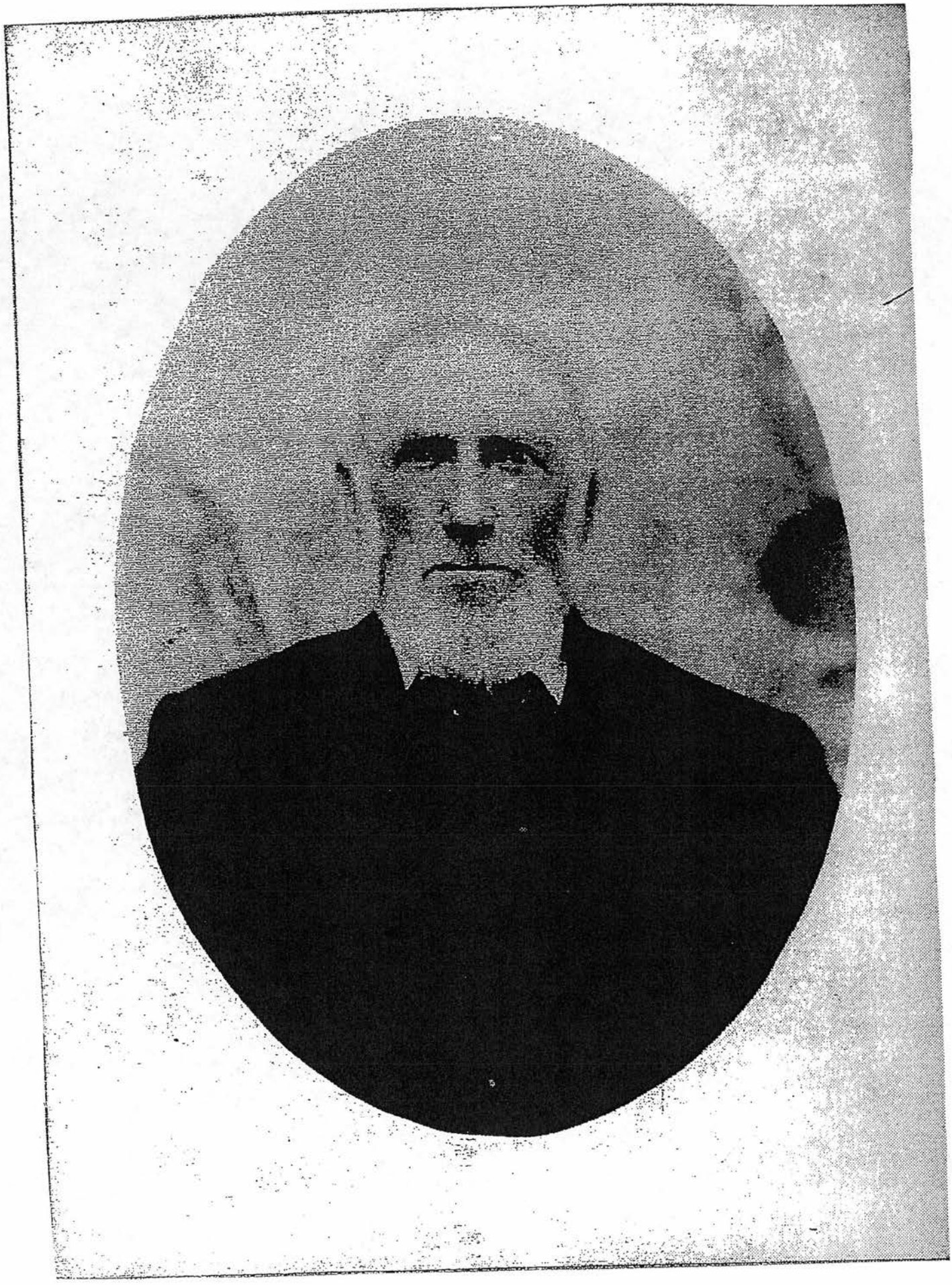
> He was a man of ability and great kindness of heart. He was a thorough gentleman in every respect. He was fond of a fast horse, and as a rider he had few equals. He intended to enter the army, but was persuaded by his mother's people to study for the priesthood. The poet [John MacLean] was intimately acquainted with him and deeply attached to him.247

Raymond MacLean adds the following about the relationship between the two men:

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245 Clarsach 1881, at p. xix.

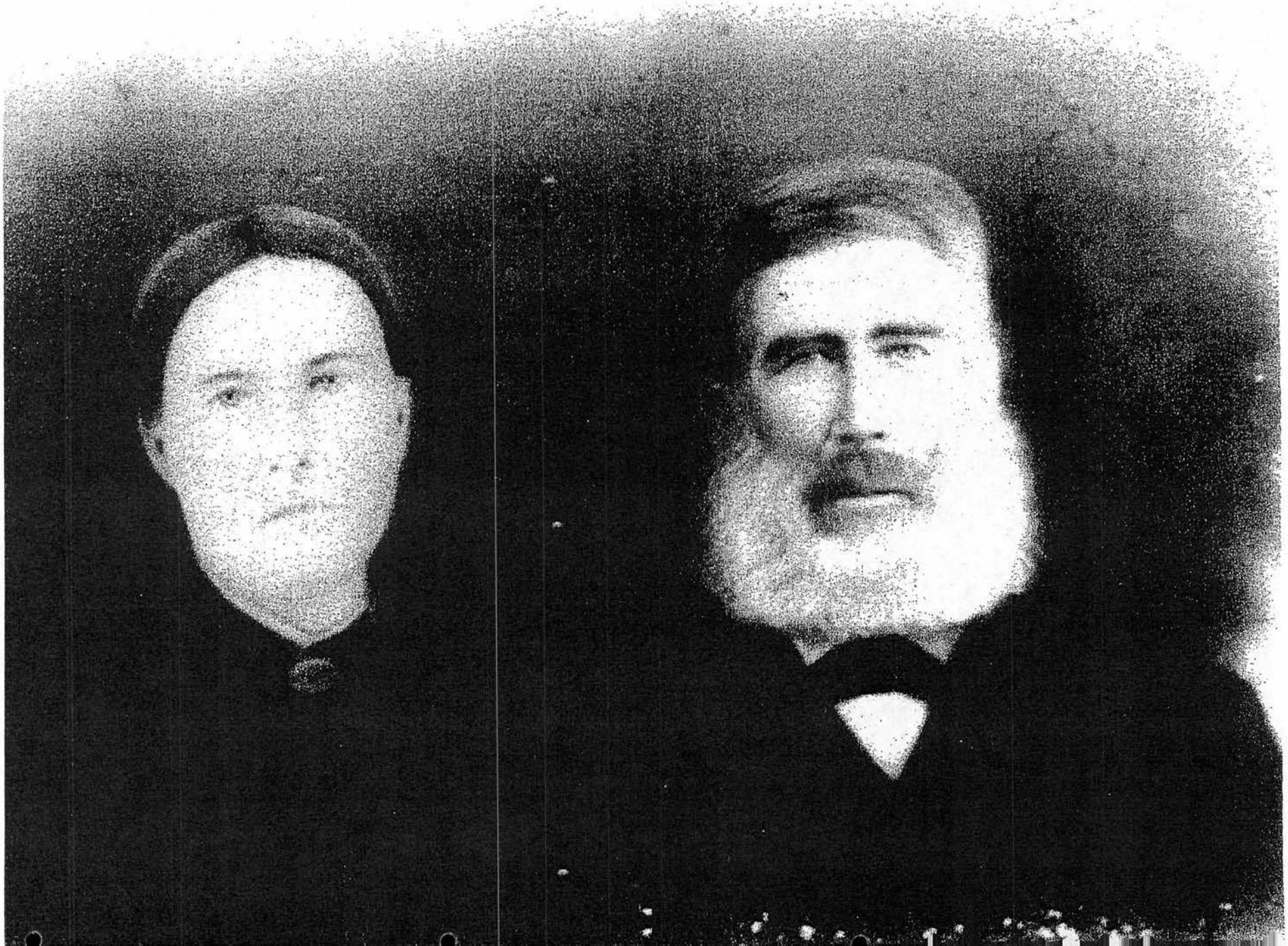
246 Biographical information on Rev. Grant is from the following sources: Francess G. Halfpenny, gen. ed., *Dictionary of Canadian Biography, Vol. VII, 1836-1850*, (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1988); at p. 355, Rev. Anthony Angus Johnston, *A History of the Catholic Church in Eastern Nova Scotia, Volume II—1827-1880*, (Antigonish: St. Francis Xavier University Press, 1971), at pp. 69-71; Rev. A. A. Johnston, *Antigonish Diocese Priests and Bishops 1786-1925*, ed. By Kathleen N. MacKenzie, (Antigonish: Casket Publishing, c. 1994), at p. 45; and Raymond A. MacLean, *History of Antigonish, vol. 1*, *supra*, at pp. 51-52, and *Volume 2*, *supra*, p. 34.



Gilleasbaig (Archie) MacLean (1815-1899), second son of the poet.
Courtesy of Nova Bannerman, Barney's River Station School Museum, N.S.

John MacLean, the poet's third son, and his wife Margaret Robertson.

Courtesy of Nova Bannerman, Barney's River Station School Museum, N.S.



> The late bard McLean of Glenbard was a frequent visitor at his house [i.e. that of Fr. Grant] in Arisaig. The bard, though a Protestant, could not but admire the fine traits of character he found in the priest, and the priest found relaxation from his duties in the intelligent converse of the genial old bard.248

These trips to Arisaig would not have been easy, and would have involved the roughly eight mile journey down Barney's River to the coast, then a further journey of about ten miles east to Arisaig. Alexander Maclean Sinclair notes in his introduction to the poem "An Adharc"/"The Horn", poem 34, that the poem was occasioned by the gift, in about the year 1827, by William Forbes to the poet of a beautiful large drinking horn, which was filled with brandy, and that the poet gave the horn to his "caraid dìleas",249 Father Grant.250 Thus, the friendship had been firmly established by 1827, it appears, and the poet's gift may have been made in part out of gratitude for the financial assistance given him by the priest.

The gift of the drinking horn was also an indication of the esteem and affection in which the poet seems to have been held by the Gaels of the new Highland districts on the eastern mainland of Nova Scotia. According to Maclean Sinclair's note to poem 34, the gift was made by William Forbes at the dockside at Pictou.251 The poet therefore occasionally must have made the long and arduous journey to the harbour, then the only town of any size in the county and the only port, a distance of about forty miles from his home, perhaps to pick up provisions. The identity of William Forbes is not entirely clear, but a William Forbes, a native of Strathglass, Scotland, lived at Beaver Meadow,252 which is the district in which Glenbard is located, about six miles east of the poet's first home at Upper Barney's River. The song was taken

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247 Rev. Anthony Angus Johnston, *A History of the Catholic Church in Eastern Nova Scotia, Volume II—1827-1880*, at p. 70.
248 Raymond MacLean, *History of Antigonish, Vol. 1*, at p. 52.
249 "loyal friend".
250 Clarsach 1928, at p. 121.
251 Clarsach 1928, at p. 121.
252 Raymond MacLean, *History of Antigonish, Vol. 1*, *supra*, at p. 78.

down by Alexander Maclean Sinclair in 1873 from a Mary Forbes, also of Beaver Meadow;253 given that there were apparently no other Forbeses in this district, Mary may well have been a relation, perhaps a daughter, and this suggests that it may well have been this William Forbes who made the gift. Thus, the poet appears to have been known and respected in Beaver Meadow well before his decision to move there, suggesting frequent visits to the district. A year earlier, in 1826, John MacLean was invited by David Murray of Merigomish to a ball that he was hosting there; only Gaelic-speakers were invited, and the invitation inspired the poet to compose poem 33, which he himself sang on the evening. Merigomish was, as noted earlier, on the coast, a distance of over eight miles from Upper Barney's River, and the invitation shows that the poet was not only known there, but also admired as a tradition-bearer, again perhaps suggesting regular visits. Alexander Maclean Sinclair said the following of his grandfather: "He was very fond of company. He would frequently be away from home. He was clannish, and took pleasure in visiting his friends and acquaintances".254 In this, John MacLean was a true Gael and was similar to many other tradition bearers. Even the great distances and difficulties of terrain in eastern Nova Scotia could not change a life-long pattern of behaviour.

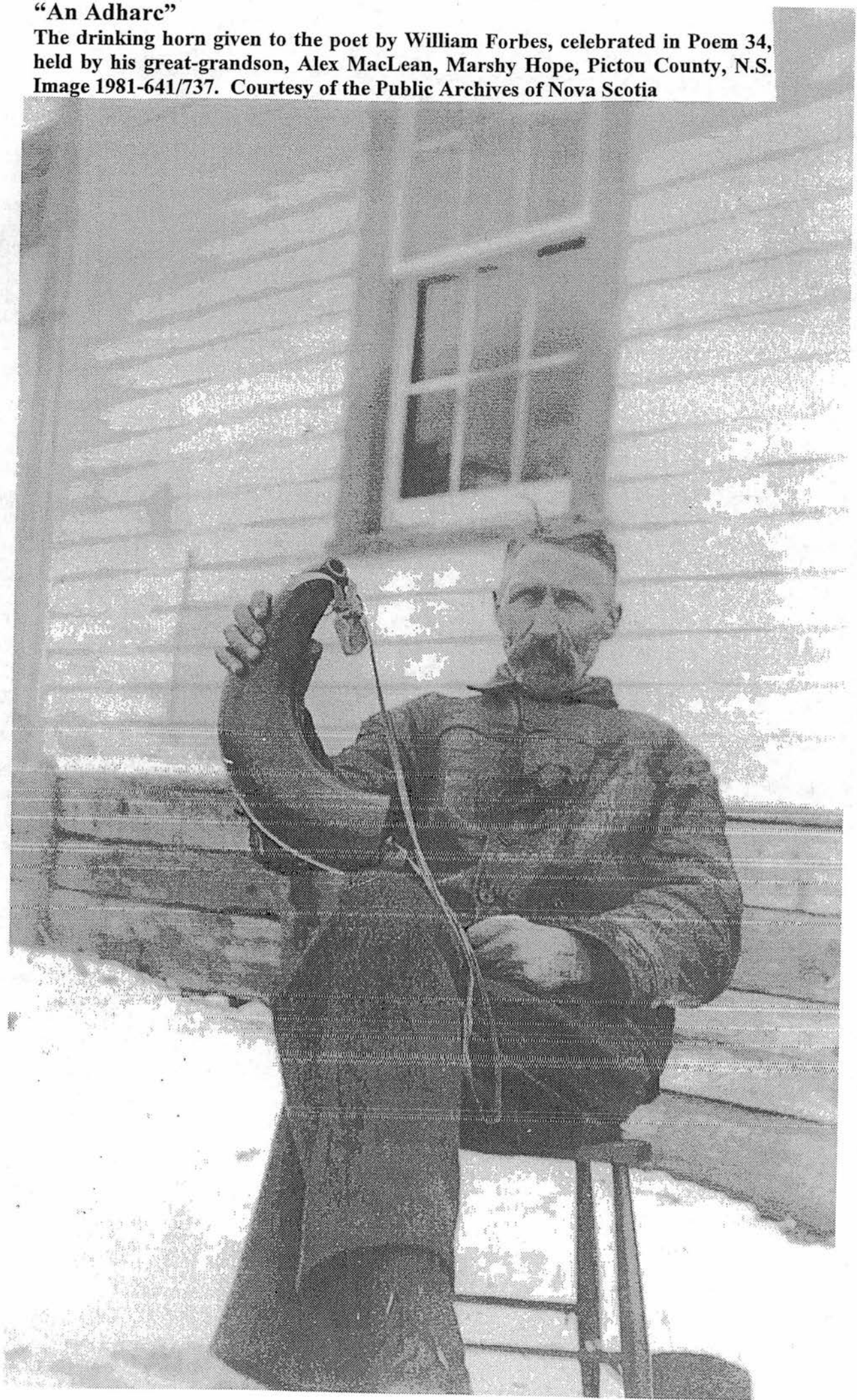
It appears that a considerable portion of the domestic tasks at Baile Chnoic fell to the poet's wife, Isabella. There is, however, no indication that she resented this, or the poet's absences. Raymond MacLean notes that she was "much better fitted for the life of the pioneer than the Bard was, for she was an active, healthy and industrious woman." "She had no skill with the lyre", Raymond MacLean continues, "but she could effectively handle the rake and the sickle."255 She also would have borne the

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253 Clarsach 2, at p. 121.
254 Clarsach 2, at p. xv.
255 Raymond MacLean, *History of Antigonish Vol 2*, *supra*, at p. 35.

"An Adharc"

The drinking horn given to the poet by William Forbes, celebrated in Poem 34, held by his great-grandson, Alex MacLean, Marshy Hope, Pictou County, N.S. Image 1981-641/737. Courtesy of the Public Archives of Nova Scotia



responsibility of caring for the family, which included two new arrivals, Allan, who was born at Baile Chnoic on 2 July, 1822,256 and Elizabeth, their sixth and final child, who was born at Baile Chnoic on 28 April, 1826.257 Christy, the eldest, would have been a teenager during these years, and was likely to have been a considerable help to Isabella with the smaller children.

In either 1830 or 1831, the poet and his family left Baile Chnoic, and moved six miles east, to the place now known as Glenbard, just inside the Antigonish County line, in the Beaver Meadow district of James River.258 As with the poet's decision to emigrate from Scotland, the reasons for this move are unclear, but given the considerable labour that the poet had expended in making Baile Chnoic a liveable farm, it is a surprising decision. It does not appear to have been a sudden or unanticipated move: Raymond MacLean states that the poet began clearing in Glenbard in 1829.259

While not common, settlers did occasionally move from the first site of settlement to find another one.260 It is likely that the main consideration was the quality of land in the two places. As noted, the land at Upper Barney's River was in the hilly upland region of eastern Pictou County, whereas the Glenbard farm was located in the valley of the James River; the so-called "intervales" along the river valleys tended to be the best land available. Interestingly, another of the most eminent of the emigrant poets, Allan MacDonald, "Ailean an Ridse", left the upland area of

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256 Donald Maclean Sinclair, *Some Family History*, *supra*, at note (5), p. 40; as an adult, Allan moved to Harvey, New Brunswick. He was married to Rebecca MacLaughlin. Allan died on 24 April, 1871.

257 Donald Maclean Sinclair, *Some Family History*, *supra*, at note (5), p. 40; Elizabeth never married, and stayed at Glenbard, where she died at age 93, on 3 November, 1919.

258 Alexander Maclean Sinclair says that the move occurred in the spring of 1830: Clarsach 1881, at p. xx. Note, however, that Donald Maclean Sinclair suggests that the move took place in 1831, rather than 1830: *Some Family History*, at p. 5, "John MacLean: A Centenary", *supra*, at p. 261. Raymond MacLean states that the move took place in January, 1831: Raymond MacLean, *History of Antigonish Vol. 1*, *supra*, at p. 78.

259 Raymond MacLean, *History of Antigonish Vol. 1*, *supra*, at p. 78.

Mabou Ridge, Inverness County, Cape Breton, to take up better land at Upper South River, Antigonish County.261 The Beaver Meadow area was not fully settled at the time of the poet's move, but there may still have been social reasons which also played a role in the decision. As noted, it was apparently a resident of Beaver Meadow, William Forbes, who had in 1827 given the poet the drinking horn filled with brandy; the poet had therefore apparently established some friendships there. By the late 1820s, Beaver Meadow had already been partially settled by people from Strathglass, Lochaber and Glencoe.262 Alexander Maclean Sinclair's recollection is that the families connected with the local school which he attended in the district, at Beaver Meadow, in the late 1840s and early 1850s "were chiefly Roman Catholics, all Highlanders except Thomas Mooney, who was an Irish Catholic" and that in the school itself, three quarters were Roman Catholics, one quarter were Presbyterians.263 The poet, while a Protestant, may have felt more comfortable in the company of these Catholic Gaels, as they would have shared more closely his West Highland/Inner Hebridean intellectual milieu than the Sutherlandshire and Perthshire Presbyterian Gaels of Upper Barney's River, and may well have been better acquainted with his artistic skills and reputation. Finally, Beaver Meadow was somewhat closer to the town of Antigonish, then the only major settlement on the eastern mainland of Nova Scotia other than the town of Pictou. As we see from poems 37 and 38, the poet knew some of the town's personalities and seemed to take

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260 Charles Dunn, *Highland Settler*, *supra*, at p. 27.

261 Effie Rankin, *As a' Bhràighe/Beyond the Braes: The Gaelic Songs of Allan the Ridge MacDonald 1794-1868* (Sydney: University College of Cape Breton Press, 2004), at p. 31. Allan had emigrated in 1816 and had settled at the South West Ridge of Mabou. According to local tradition, Allan was still clearing land and burning brush on his farm in 1847 when apparently the form of a horse ("riochd eich") was seen in the smoke. Both he and his wife interpreted this as a sinister omen, and this precipitated the move to Antigonish County. As Rankin notes, though, there were likely more prosaic reasons for the move, such as the inferior quality of the land and a series of bad harvests.

262 Raymond MacLean, *History of Antigonish Vol. 1*, *supra*, at p. 78.

pleasure from their company; both convenience to the town and access to its social opportunities may have been a subsidiary factor behind the move.

Whatever the reason, the poet's final years in Glenbard seem to have been mainly happy ones, during which he was able to continue with many aspects of the vibrant social life of visiting, exchanging stories and songs, and discussing Highland history which he would have known in Tiree. Donald Maclean Sinclair claims that the poet found life in Glenbard "a little easier", and that his last days "were spent in comparatively comfortable circumstances."264 We get a sense of the cultural life that the poet and his family would have enjoyed from Alexander Maclean Sinclair, as recorded by his son Donald. Alexander was born in 1840, and his mother, Christy, the daughter of the poet, was estranged from Alexander's father and came back to live with her parents in Glenbard. Alexander grew up in his grandfather's house, and although he does not appear to have had a large store of recollections of his grandfather, who died when Alexander was eight, he was well placed to give us a good picture of life at Glenbard in his grandfather's time. Alexander recalls a number of regular visitors to the Glenbard house who were steeped in Gaelic oral traditions:

> John MacDonald, An Tailleir (sic) Abrach ["The Lochaber Tailor"] used to go from house to house tailoring. John Campbell was a shoemaker. He used to come to our house every fall and stay several days making shoes and boots. He had many ghost stories.265

Both "An Tàillear Abrach" and another John MacDonald, nicknamed "An Dòmhnallach Ùr", indicating that he was a relative newcomer, were neighbours of the poet in Glenbard, of whom Alexander Maclean Sinclair writes:

> The one could not read at all; the other certainly was not a reader of historical books. But both had a number of stories about ghosts, strong Highlanders, and

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263 *Some Family History*, *supra*, at p. 47, note (18). Donald Maclean Sinclair notes that to the west of the poet in Glenbard were Highland Presbyterians, and to the east "a great community of Highland Roman Catholics": "John MacLean: A Centenary", at p. 261.

264 "John MacLean: A Centenary", *supra*, at p. 261.

265 *Some Family History*, *supra*, at p. 47, note (18).

> clan feuds. I listened to them many a night and became pretty well acquainted with all their lore.266

"An Dòmhnallach Ùr" was a native of Glencoe, and came to the country in about 1834, and settled at Beaver Mountain, to the rear of the poet.267 "An Taillear Abrach" was a native of Bohuntin, Lochaber, and settled on the mountain in 1843.268 He was a first cousin of Allan the Ridge MacDonald, and was a skilled tradition bearer: "He had a good memory and a great love for the history and traditions of the Highlanders. He knew a great deal about the MacDonalds of Keppoch's family and history. He could repeat portions of a great many Gaelic songs."269 Raymond MacLean, in his discussion of the neighbouring Antigonish County community of the Ohio, also paints a vivid picture of the mental life of these predominantly Catholic Highland communities into which John MacLean chose to move:

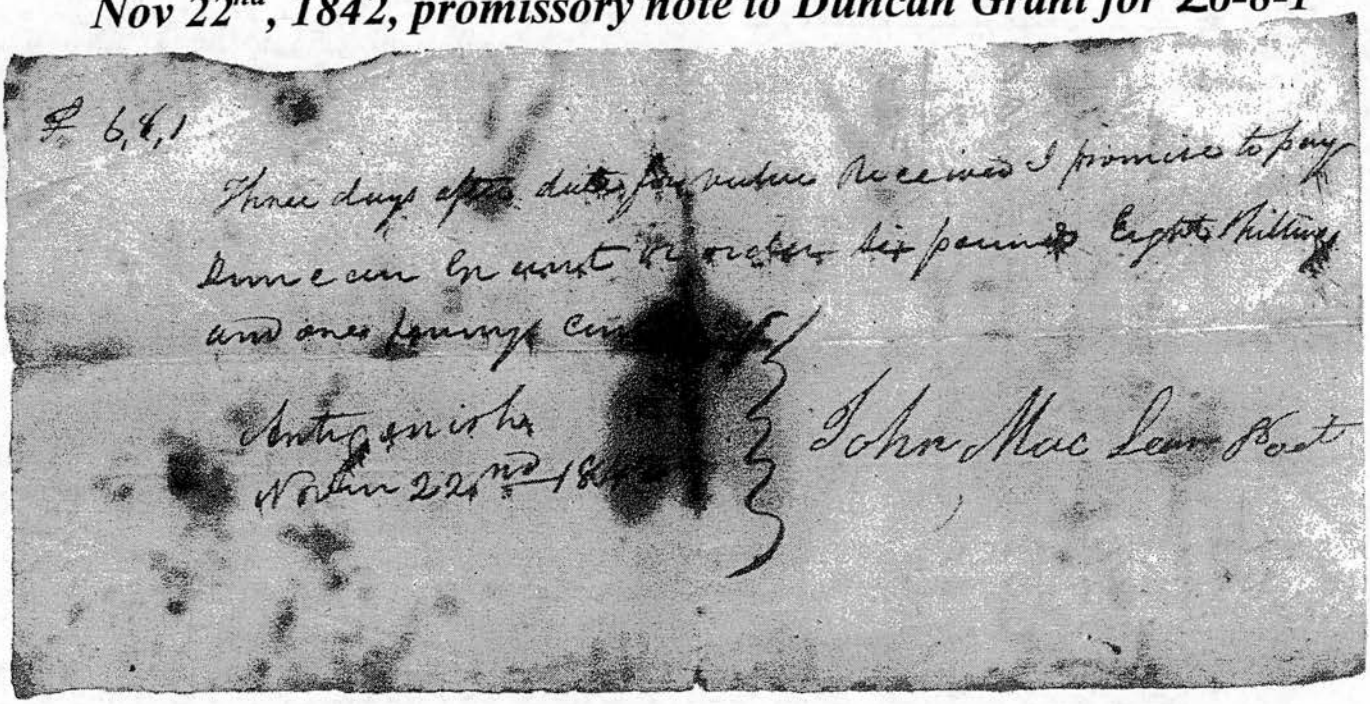
> The old race were remarkable for the simplicity and nobility of their character. Many of them were illiterate, but they were not ignorant. Mental training does not always suppose book learning. The old people at the Ohio were sturdy, honest, simple and intelligent. For twenty years I went up and down among them, and a more genial, kindly and generous people I have never come across. Many of them could compose and sing Gaelic verses, play on the bag pipes, or on the fiddle. They were full of stories about ghosts, fairies and Celtic legends.270

In fact, this is strikingly similar to the picture, described above, of Tiree during the poet's youth. It would have been a cultural milieu that was very familiar, and attractive to him. While the poet was an observant Presbyterian, the religious affiliation of most of his neighbours was apparently not of particular importance. While it is true that people of the same denominations tended to settle together, this was predominantly due to the fact that Highland immigrants tended to settle close to kin and sought to re-establish the communities from which they had emigrated. There

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266 *Ibid*, at pp. 10-11.
267 Raymond MacLean, *History of Antigonish Vol. 1*, at p. 78.
268 *Ibid.*
269 Effie Rankin, *As a' Bhràighe*, *supra*, note 105, at p. 64.

Nov 22nd, 1842, promissory note to Duncan Grant for £6-8-1

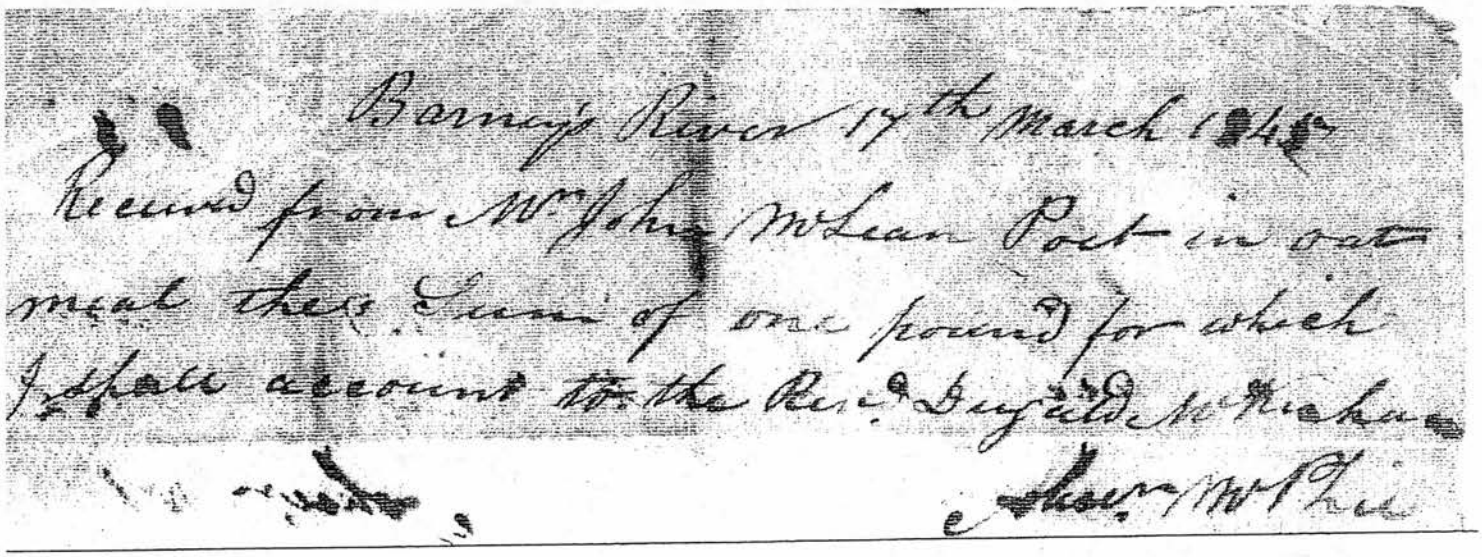


A receipt for fourteen shillings, January 24th, 1845

Courtesy of John Sinclair, Hopewell, N.S.

Apparently the poet paid his tithes in oatmeal.

Barneys' River 17th March 1845
Received from Mr John McLean Poet in oat
meal the Sum of one pound for which
I shall acccount to the Revd Dugald McKichen
McPhie



Courtesy of John Sinclair, Hopewell, N.S.

is very little evidence of any tension between Presbyterians and Catholics when they did settle in close proximity to each other; quite the opposite, as is clear in the testimony of one Gael, Alexander MacLellan ("Alastair Mhurchaidh Iain mac Iain Òig) (b. 1911), a native of New Boston, near Mira River, Cape Breton County, a descendant of Protestant Gaels from North Uist:

> *Start* 'ad àite dhaibh fhéin (na Prostanaich) dìreach mar a bha 'ad anns an t-seann dùthaich. 'S chaidh an uair sen na Papanaich 'nan àite air an taobh eile dhe 'n abhainn (Abhainn Mhira). Cho fad 's aithne dhomh, 's ann mar sen a bha an gnothuch ag obair. Ach bha 'ad a' faighinn air adhart uamhasach math 'miosg a' chéile. Bha 'ad a' cruinneachadh còmhla *steady*. Bhiodh 'ad a' céilidh. Cha robh sion ann an uair sen ach ag innse seann stòraidhean, rudan mar sen, agus ag òl tì. Dheanadh 'ad taoim mór 's bhiodh 'ad anns an taigh fad na h-oidhche. Cha chreid mi gu robh cus aca ri òl. O, bha taoimeachan mór' ac' am miosg a chéile.
>
> Agus an aon rud àm a' gheamhraidh, bha 'ad uile còmhla. Duine 'togail taigh, bha 'ad a' sin còmhla – sobhal no rud mar sen. Agus nam bitheadh duine 's an teaghlach bochd, uell, bhiodh 'ad a' cuideachadh bean an taighe cho math 's a b' urrainn dhaibh.271

Indeed, there seems to have been some concern amongst certain of the Presbyterian clergy that the Protestant and Catholic Gaels got on rather too well, with supposed "negative" effects on the moral character of the Protestants; here are comments of Rev. James MacGregor, one of the great Highland ministers, who arrived in Pictou in 1786, on the Catholic Highlanders and the "dangers" they posed to their Protestant neighbours:

> Much of their time was spent in naughty diversions, jestings which are not convenient or decent, in telling extravagant stories of miracles done by priests, and absurd tales about ghosts, witches, fairies, etc. The minds of the

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270 Raymond MacLean, *History of Antigonish Vol. 1*, *supra*, at p. 80.

271 "They started a place for themselves (the Protestants) just as they were in the old country. And then Catholics came to their place on the other side of the river (the Mira River). As far as I knew, that's how things worked out. But they got along exceptionally well together. They gathered together constantly. They would visit each other. There was nothing in it then but telling old stories, things like that, and drinking tea. They would have a great time and they would be gathered in the house all night long. I don't believe they had too much to drink. Oh, they had great times together in each other's company. And it was the same in the winter, they would all be together. If a man was building a house, they would all be together – a barn, or anything like that. And if someone in a family was in a bad way, well, they would help the woman of the house as best they could": James Watson, "Alec MacLellan Remembers Old New Boston", (1996) *Am Bràighe* 4.2, quoted in Seumas Watson, "Ás a' Choille Dhuibh", in Colm Ó Baoill agus Nancy McGuire, *Rannsachadh na Gàidhlig 2000*, at p. 277.

> Protestant Highlanders, being partly tinctured with these superstitions before the arrival of the Roman Catholics [in this case, to Pictou, in about 1791], were less prepared to resist their influence than the minds of more reasoning and sceptical Christians. They had been pretty much weaned from the remains which the first settlers brought from Scotland, but we have not got wholly over these bad lessons.272

Thoroughly immersed in all aspects of Gaelic oral culture himself, John MacLean would no doubt have found the company of such Gaels both enjoyable and enriching. Although John MacLean had, during the years at Glenbard, become an adherent of a more evangelical form of Presbyterian, and was an admirer of the missionary work of James MacGregor,273 religious affiliation seemed to play no part in determining his social circle; as noted earlier, perhaps his greatest friend was the Catholic priest of Arisaig, Antigonish County, Colin Grant. The degree to which John MacLean had happily settled into his new surroundings is evident in a couple of rhymes which Alexander Maclean Sinclair has attributed to him, both dating from the years at Glenbard; they also show the same sharp and sometimes cutting wit and improvisational skill of John MacLean that he had exhibited from his childhood days. Maclean Sinclair records that when Donald Cameron, the son of John Cameron of the "Clioradh Mòr", the Big Clearing (today known as James River Station, near Glenbard), married Mary MacPhee, some people were gathered at the groom's father's house to welcome the newlyweds home. When John Cameron, who was a near neighbour and good friend of the poet, gave him a dram, Cameron reportedly said

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272 George Patterson, *Memoirs of the Reverend James MacGregor, D. D.* (Philadelphia, 1859), pp. 257-8, as quoted in D. Campbell and R. A. MacLean, *Beyond the Atlantic Roar: A Study of the Nova Scotia Scots*, *supra*, at p. 41. Some Catholic clergy were also concerned about the "dangers" posed by the close association between Protestant and Catholic Highlanders: in 1791, a large number of Catholic Highlanders had arrived at Pictou on the ship "Dunkeld", and Rev. MacGregor had apparently preached to them; Reverend Angus MacEachern came over from Prince Edward Island and advised the Highlanders to move eastward where they could settle with other Catholics. See D. Campbell and R. A. MacLean, *Beyond the Atlantic Roar*, at p. 210, and Louise Campey, *After the Hector*, *supra*, at pp. 61-62.

273 See, for example, John MacLean's spiritual poem "Craobhsgaoileadh an t-Soisgeul san Tìr seo" ("The Propagation of the Gospel in this Country", in Donald E. Meek, ed., *Caran an t-*

to him: "Seo, Iain, cluinneam facal bhuait, agus feuch nach bi ciorram air".274 The poet took hold of the glass, and he drank a toast to the young couple in these words:

Deoch-slàinte na càraid òig	Good health to the young couple
A thàinig oirnn an-dràst' air sgrìob;	Who have come to us on a visit;
Dòmhnall Camshron 'tha mi 'gràitinn	Donald Cameron is who I'm speaking of
Agus Màiri Nic-a-Phì.	And Mary MacPhee.
Saoghal fada dhuibh 'sa phòsadh,	A long life to you both in the marriage,
'S barrachd eòlais air a mhnaoi.—	And a better acquaintance of his wife.—
Iain, ceartaich thusa an rann duinn,	John, correct the verse for us,
Ma dh'fhàg mi dad ann 'tha clì.	If I left anything in it that is wrong.275

Maclean Sinclair also records that Donald MacKenzie, a local tailor, was taking in a coat for the poet. Maclean Sinclair notes that MacKenzie, who had served twenty-one years in the army, was an old soldier and a very intelligent man. As it happened, there was a copy of the book "The Life of Joseph" in the poet's pocket. The tailor took the book out of the pocket and kept it so that he could read it. The next time after this that the poet saw the tailor, he apparently greeted him with the following verse:

'S e Dòmh'll MacCoinnich, an tàillear,	It's Donald MacKenzie, the tailor,
Duine 's tàire 'tha mun cuairt;	The most contemptible man here about;
'S beag a shaoileadh Seòras Baillidh	Little would George the Bailiff
Gun robh a' mheirle riut fuaight';	That theft would be part of your character;
Thug thu chreidsinn air le d' chràbhadh,	You led him to believe with your religiosity
Gun deanadh tu Pàp do shluagh,	That you'd make a Pope for the people,
'S mise nach faod sin a ràitinn;	I am not able to say that;
Sgob do làmh mo leabhar bhuam.	Your hand snatched my book from me.276

Alexander Maclean Sinclair reports that the poet did not work much after the move, as his children were old enough to tend the farm; his eldest son, Charles, was seventeen or eighteen at the time of the move. Maclean Sinclair notes that "[i]n fact,

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Saoghail/The Wiles of the World: Anthology of 19th Century Scottish Gaelic Verse (Edinburgh: Birlinn, 2003), pp. 72-79, esp. lines 25-40.

274 "Here you are, John, let me hear a word from you, and try to make sure that there is nothing faulty in what you say."

275 Alasdair Maclean Sinclair, *Filidh na Coille*, *supra*, at p. 128. Maclean Sinclair reports that he got this stanza while waiting for the train at the station in New Glasgow, Pictou County, on 14 July, 1890, from Donald "Ùr" Cameron, who was present when it was composed: Alexander Maclean Sinclair, *Comhchruinneachadh Ghlinn-a-Bhàird/The Glenbard Collection of Gaelic Poetry* (Charlottetown: Haszard and Moore, 1890), at p. 387, where the same account and verse as in *Filidh na Coille* appears.

276 Alexander Maclean Sinclair, *Filidh na Coille*, at p. 129. Maclean Sinclair reports that he got this stanza from Catherine Macinnis, of Fraser's Mountain, Pictou County, on 11 October, 1880: Alexander Maclean Sinclair, *Comhchruinneachadh Ghlinn-a-Bhàird/The Glenbard Collection of*

he was never a good worker; he did not know how to work", but after coming to Canada, the poet had also apparently contracted rheumatism, through exposure while driving logs down the local river, a condition from which he never fully recovered, and this would clearly have limited his ability to work.277 Nevertheless, the poet appears to have been a sturdy and robust man. Maclean Sinclair notes that his grandfather "was naturally a healthy, strong and active man; he was one of the best walkers in the country".278 Quoting a description of the poet's appearance recorded in Norman MacDonald's 1863 Nova Scotian edition of *Sàr-Obair nam Bàrd Gàidhealach*—which must therefore have been of a mature John MacLean, as he appeared in his later years in Nova Scotia—Maclean Sinclair reports the following:

> The poet was about five feet and nine inches in height, stout and well-built. He had dark hair and grey eyes, and a broad and massive forehead. His voice was soft and musical, and he was a good singer.279

This description certainly bears some resemblance to the man said to be John MacLean and pictured in a photograph used in a leaflet produced for the unveiling of the memorial cairn erected in the poet's honour, and unveiled on 9 July, 1961.280

While the standard of life enjoyed by the family at Glenbard would have been better than that of the early days at Upper Barney's River, it was still simple and relatively austere, as is clear from the following recollection of Alexander Maclean Sinclair, as recorded by his son Donald. Although he is describing the daily life he remembers in the late 1840s and early 1850s, the picture Alexander conveys would

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Gaelic Poetry (Charlottetown: Haszard and Moore, 1890), at p. 387, where the same account and verse as in *Filidh na Coille* appears.

277 Clarsach 1881, at p. xx.

278 *Ibid.*

279 *Ibid*, at p. xxv.

280 A copy of this leaflet was kindly provided to the author by Mr. John Sinclair of Hopewell, Nova Scotia, the great-great-grandson of the poet, and the picture appears at the beginning of this chapter. As noted there, modern photographic techniques were only developed in 1839, and the man in the photgraph looks to be remarkably young for a man who would have been well into his fifties by the time this technology might have arrived in eastern Nova Scotia. It is possible that the photograph is of a painting that may have been made earlier.

not have been greatly different from that of the life that the poet knew in the final years of his life:

> Glenbard was heavily wooded with beech, birch, hemlock, spruce and maple. A large brook ran through the glen. There was no house in sight. The snow fell heavily in the winter. Our nearest neighbour except one was Donald Fraser, know as Donald Lee. His house was about half a mile from our home.
> . . .
> We had porridge for breakfast. Potatoes, meat, herring, curds, tea, oatbread, flour, gruel, bread, butter were staple articles of food. We used buckwheat flour to some extent. I never saw pies, puddings or sweet bread used. There were no carpets on the floor but it was kept thoroughly clean. There was no paper on the walls and there was no paint on any thing inside the house except the doors. We had no stoves but we had two good fireplaces and plenty of good wood. The backlogs were always large and not easily taken into the house. Oxen were used for farm work.281

As noted above, John MacLean was raised as a Presbyterian, and there is, as discussed, evidence even in his earlier secular verse composed in Scotland of a good knowledge of the scriptures. We have also seen that his wife, Isabella Black, appears to have come from a religious family.282 Thus, there is no reason to believe that he was not an observant and religious man throughout his adult life. He did, however, appear to undergo, if not a conversion, at least a deepening of his commitment to a Christian life, and developed an adherence to a more evangelical form of Presbyterianism, after his arrival in Canada. It was apparently only after his arrival at Upper Barney's River that he began composing spiritual verse;283 indeed, the quantity of the religious verse composed by the poet in Nova Scotia significantly exceeds the production of secular poetry. The poet himself published a small collection of religious verse in 1835; we see in a letter of 28 March, 1838, from his brother Donald, the "Cooper", in Balephuil, Tiree, that this collection had made it to the poet's home island:

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281 *Some Family History*, p. 46, at note (17).
282 As noted, her father Duncan was apparently an elder in Lismore.
283 Clarsach 1881, at p. xxi.

> We were glad, that we got a token of your being yet alive, by a little pamphlet of poems under the title of your name. As you [xxx (*stopped?*)] writing for a long time we were doubtful wether (sic) You were living or not, But the above mentioned book rejoiced us to understand that you are yet living. And more so when we hear the tuneful sound of your *Lyre* turned Spiritually. And though in a foreign land that you could sing of the Songs of Jehovah. So near the foreign streams of Babelon (sic) (or at the streams of barney284) I expect whenever you receive this that you shall write me soon in return 285

The scribe of the letter was apparently Duncan MacDougall, the first Baptist Minister in Tiree, who had arrived there in about 1824. The letter shows that Donald the "Cooper" had himself embraced the evangelical faith—Balephuil was at that time a hotbed of Baptist activity286—and the passage quoted seems to imply that the poet's deepened commitment, as reflected in the religious verse, was perhaps slightly unexpected, and something that had happened since emigration. Alexander Maclean Sinclair notes the following in relation to his grandfather's faith and his turning to religious verse:

> His hard lot in this world no doubt tended to direct his attention to a better world. He had always led a good moral life. A more truthful, or a more honest man could not be found. He had always observed the worship of God regularly in his family. He was well-versed in the Scriptures. Boston's Fourfold State,287 Bunyan's Pilgim's Progress,288 Alleine's Alarm,289 Baxter's Call, and Doddridge's Rise and Progress of Religion in the Soul,290 were books which he carefully studied. Boston's Fourfold State was a work in which he especially delighted. He read in it very frequently.291

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284 Clearly, a reference to Barney's River, the poet's first home in Nova Scotia.

285 This letter was found by Mr. John Sinclair, the son of Donald Maclean Sinclair and great-great grandson of the poet, at the Maclean Sinclair home in Hopewell, Pictou County, Nova Scotia in August, 2000. A copy of this poem was kindly provided to me by Mr. Sinclair.

286 For these insights, I am indebted to Prof. Donald E. Meek, and in particular for his lecture "'The Sound of Your Lyre Turned Spiritually': Evangelical Calvinism and Gaelic Culture in Nineteenth-Century Gaelic Hymnology", delivered on 12 November, 2003, at the School of Celtic and Scottish Studies, the University of Edinburgh.

287 Mr. Thomas Boston (1677-1732), *Human Nature in its Four-fold State of primitive integrity, entire deprivation, begun recovery and consummate happiness or misery*; there were many editions of this work in circulation during the poet's years in Tiree and Canada, in both English and Gaelic.

288 John Bunyan (1628-88), *Pilgrim's Progress from this world to that which is to come*; again, there were several editions in circulation in the poet's time, in both English and Gaelic.

289 Joseph Alleine (1634-68), *Alarm to unconverted sinners*; again, there were many editions of this work in circulation in the poet's time, in both English and Gaelic.

290 Philip Doddridge (1702-51); there were many editions of this work in circulation in the poet's time, in both English and Gaelic.

291 Clarsach 1881, at pp. xxi-xxii.

Donald Maclean Sinclair echoes his father's assessment, no doubt based on family traditions of his father and other family members who knew the poet. He claims that his great-grandfather was "thoroughly truthful, honest and honourable, and full of kindness", and that he kept family worship regularly.292 The disruption in the Church of Scotland in 1843 was felt in the Highland Presbyterian communities of eastern Nova Scotia,293 and both Alexander and Donald Maclean Sinclair note that the poet joined the Free Church in about 1844.294 This decision is not surprising. The Rev. James MacGregor had firmly established Secessionist principles amongst many of the Highland Protestant communities in Pictou County, and these efforts were reinforced by the establishment by the Rev. Thomas McCulloch, another Secessionist minister, in 1817 of the Pictou Academy.295 The texts referred to by Alexander Maclean Sinclair in the previous quotation were all solidly evangelical works. In his religious poem "Craobhsgaoileadh an t-Soisgeul san Tìr seo",296 the poet, as noted, praised Rev. MacGregor's missionary work, but also Rev. McCulloch, the establishment of the Pictou Academy, and the work of the early Gaelic-speaking Anti-burgher clergy who had been trained there.297

In spite of this commitment to evangelical Christianity, though, the poet continued to compose secular poetry into the 1840s, and his wry commentary on the temperance movement that was being promoted by Catholic clergy in the late 1830s and early 1840s, and in particular the creation of a temperance society by Bishop

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292 *Some Family History*, *supra*, at p. 6.

293 Charles Dunn, *Highland Settler*, at p. 100; Campbell and MacLean note that a large majority of Cape Breton Presbyterians adhered to the Free Church after the split, but that things were more evenly divided in Pictou County (and, likely, in the Presbyterian enclaves in western Antigonish County, where the poet lived): D. Campbell and R. A. MacLean, *Beyond the Atlantic Roar*, at p. 204.

294 *Some Family History*, at p. 6.

295 For an excellent profile of Thomas McCulloch and the religious life of Pictou County during the early nineteenth century, see Marjory Whitelaw, *Thomas McCulloch: His Life and Times* (Halifax: Nova Scotia Museum, 1985). Secessionists were also commonly referred to as "Anti-burghers" or "Dissenters".

296 "The Propagation of the Gospel in this Country".

Fraser in 1841 (see poems 37 and 38), suggest that the poet saw no contradiction between most aspects of Gaelic secular culture, including moderate alcohol consumption, and his deep religious convictions. His close friendship with Father Colin Grant right up until the priest's death in 1839 was obviously based on personal affection and a shared enjoyment of the Gaelic language and culture, rather than shared religious convictions.

With regard to politics, we have no record of John MacLean's views while in Scotland. When he came to Canada, however, his freehold title to a farm would have entitled him to the franchise, and this may have necessitated a more active interest in politics. According to Alexander Maclean Sinclair, the poet had, in fact, taken relatively little interest in politics until the 1830 election in the colony.298 During the 1830 election campaign, however, while travelling from Merigomish to the town of Pictou, John MacLean was told that one of the Liberal candidates in the county had made disparaging remarks about the Highlands.299 This occasioned the composition of "Brosnachadh Roghanachaidh"/"The Election Exhortation", poem 35. More information concerning the circumstances of the composition of this poem can be found in the notes to it, in volume II, below; however, the insult given by the Liberal candidates caused John MacLean to turn against them. Alexander Maclean Sinclair notes that John MacLean was a Conservative in his early years in the colony, and it may simply be due to this incident that he initially gave the Conservatives his support. Some years after the 1830 election, however, John MacLean switched allegiances, and became a Liberal, apparently in support of the Liberal Party's great leader, Joseph Howe.300 His support for the Liberals is not surprising; but for the insult given to the

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297 In Donald E. Meek, *Caran an t-Saoghail*, *supra*, at pp. 72-79.
298 See the note to poem 35, in Appendix II, in volume II, below.
299 Clarsach 1928, at p. 127.
300 *Some Family History*, *supra*, at p. 6.

Gaels by the Liberal candidates in 1830, Anti-burgher Presbyterians were, for reasons discussed in the note to poem 35, the natural consistency of the Liberals, as one of the main issues in the election, also known as the "Big Election" or the "Brandy Election", was the domination of the Conservative Loyalist/Anglican Halifax elite, various preferences given to Anglicanism, and the ongoing struggle for a permanent grant for the Pictou Academy.301 Liberals, under the leader of men such as Joseph Howe and Jotham Blanchard, a graduate of the Pictou Academy, continued to struggle for "responsible" government; that is, greater control by the popularly elected Assembly of the Colony over the Council, made up of Royal appointees disproportionately drawn from the Loyalist/Anglican Halifax elite. As Campbell and MacLean note, party affiliations in Pictou (and in the border districts of Antigonish, it could be added) developed along religious and educational lines, but Anti-burghers were considered to be the ancestors of the Liberal Party and tended strongly to support Reform/Liberal candidates.302

As the March, 1838 letter of the poet's brother Donald implied, it appears that the poet had not kept up a terribly regular correspondence with his relations back in Tiree. Alexander Maclean Sinclair must have obtained some of his grandfather's correspondence to his brother, Donald—perhaps on his 1869 trip to Tiree—for he notes that John MacLean concluded his final letter to Donald with these words:

A-nis tha tòiseach tòiseachaidh,	Now is the very beginning,
Tha madainn reòta gheamhraidh ann,	It is a frosty winter morning,
Tha beagan sneachd air làr againn,	We have a little snow on the ground,
'S cha tig am blàths gu bealltainn oirnn.	And warmth will not return until spring.
Bidh mogaisean is meatagan	We'll usually wear moccasins and mittens
Mar chleachadh an dèidh shamhn' againn,	From the end of summer,
'S gach neach is neul an fhuachd orra,	Every person with an appearance of cold,

301 See the discussion in Chapter 6, below, of the circumstances surrounding the composition of poem 35. See, also: Gene Morison, "The Brandy Election of 1830", (1954), 30 *Collections of the Nova Scotia Historical Society* 151, and B. C. U. Cuthbertson, "Place, Politics and the Brandy Election of 1830", (1982) 41 *Collections of the Nova Scotia Historical Society* 5.

302 D. Campbell and R. A. MacLean, *Beyond the Atlantic Roar*, *supra*, at p. 241.

'S air chrith cho luath 's gun dannsadh iad. Shaking so quickly as if dancing.303

In a letter of 3 July, 1840, Donald again provides news from Tiree, and expresses his desire to hear more from the poet: "I would wish to heare from you how you are coming on with the Farm there and what is your Songs doing". The letter betrays considerable concern about possible further estate reorganisations on Tiree by the Duke of Argyll. Donald relates information he has heard about the poet's sons—apparently heard through the grapevine—makes reference to books that the poet had apparently sent to Tiree, and enquires as to whether the poet's daughter Christy had married, suggesting that he had heard information to that effect, although it is unclear as to the source.304 Indeed, Christy had married, but the outcome of the marriage must have been a source of considerable unhappiness to the poet and the family. Christy MacLean, the poet's eldest daughter, was apparently an intelligent and attractive young woman, and had many suitors, including Patrick Black of Lismore, Pictou County, Nova Scotia, who had composed a love song to her305, and who was apparently "a good scholar and a good singer", and a John Cameron. However, it appears that John MacLean and a friend, Donald MacKenzie, had persuaded her to marry John Sinclair, a resident of Goshen, Antigonish County, which she did in April, 1839, aged 29.306 Twelve years older than Christy, Sinclair was born on 20 May, 1797 at Breckrow, Strathhalladale, Caithness, Scotland. He had emigrated to Nova Scotia in 1831, and in 1833, he married Mary Inglis, of Lochaber, Antigonish County, with whom he had three children. Mary Inglis died on 29 December, 1837.307 We do not know why John MacLean and Donald MacKenzie were so keen on having

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303 Alexander Maclean Sinclair, *Filidh na Coille*, *supra*, at p. 129.

304 This letter was also found by Mr. John Sinclair, a grandson of Alexander Maclean Sinclair and great-great-grandson of John MacLean, at the Maclean Sinclair home in Hopewell, Pictou County, Nova Scotia in August, 2000. A copy of this letter was kindly provided to me by Mr. Sinclair.

305 It appears in Alexander Maclean Sinclair's *The Glenbard Collection*, part III, page 340.

306 Donald Maclean Sinclair, *Some Family History*, *supra*, at note (11), p. 44.

Christy marry Sinclair, but Donald Maclean Sinclair notes that Sinclair "had health and strength and he knew how to work".308 After only a few months, however, Christy had left John Sinclair, and had returned to her father's house in Glenbard. It was here, apparently, that Christy gave birth to the only child of this failed union, Alexander (Alexander Maclean Sinclair), who was born on 1 March, 1840. Donald Maclean Sinclair notes that although Christy and John Sinclair lived only about sixteen miles apart, they saw each other only one more time, on the baptism of Alexander by the Rev. Thomas Trotter; in spite of this, he claims that Christy and Sinclair "had no unkind feelings toward one another, and never a word of quarrel or disagreement". Be that as it may, the split between the two seemed complete and profound; indeed, Donald Maclean Sinclair notes that the young Alexander Maclean Sinclair did not meet his father or his step-brothers and –sister until he was twelve years of age, and Alexander Maclean Sinclair himself noted that his mother never mentioned his father to him at all, and that when he told his mother of his father's death, which occurred on 27 June, 1875, Christy "made no remark of any kind".309 It would be inappropriate to speculate on the causes of the split, but for a young, pregnant woman to leave her husband and return to her parents would certainly have been unusual, and the depth of the alienation suggests that the circumstances must have been serious. We do not know how these events affected the poet, but given that he had apparently vigorously supported the union in the first place, he must have felt some disappointment and, possibly, some guilt.

The remaining years of his life seem, however, to have passed rather uneventfully. He continued to have an interest in politics, religion, and events back in

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307 *Ibid*, at pp. 2-3.
308 *Ibid*, at p. 3.
309 *Ibid*, at note (11), p. 44.

Scotland, as is clear from his poem "Òran don 'Chuairtear'",310 poem 39. He also continued to visit his friends to the very end. Indeed, Alexander Maclean Sinclair reports that the poet composed this rhyme extemporaneously at the door, on his last visit to his friend Dugald MacEachern (1789-1880), another talented Tiree poet who had emigrated about 1820 and taught school for a number of years at the Gulf in Antigonish County:

'S mis' a fhuair an rathad cam	I've certainly taken the wrong road
'Tigh'nn a shealltainn Dhùghaill Bhric,	Coming to see speckled Donald,
B' fheàrr dhomh gu mòr na tigh'nn ann	I would have greatly preferred to coming here
Bhith le m' chlann aig taobh mo lic'.	Being with my children beside my hearth.
Cha tig mi tuilleadh a-nall	I shall not be coming over again
'Gad shealltainn, ainneamh no tric,	To see you, infrequently or often,
Ma gheibh mi dhachaidh an-dràst'	If I get home safely right now
Tha mi 'n dùil gum fàs mi glic.	I expect that I am getting wiser.311

In early 1848, John MacLean had apparently been unwell for about three weeks. On his recovery, he went visiting, as was his custom. Near the end of January, he visited Hugh MacDonald in Beaver Meadow and stayed the night with him. He apparently had with him a copy of *The Life of Joseph* in Gaelic, and he read the greater part to Mr. MacDonald and his family. Alexander Maclean Sinclair claims that this was 25 January, 1848. The next day, he went about two miles south to Addington Forks, Antigonish County, to see an old man, also named John MacLean, and then called in at the house of Ranald MacLean, also in Addington Forks, which was about three and a half miles from the poet's own house in Glenbard. The poet was joined by his son, Archibald. Alexander Maclean Sinclair concludes this account of events as follows:

> They both [i.e. the poet and his son] sat down to tea at 4 o'clock. The poet was talking about his age; suddenly he ceased talking, and fell backwards in his chair, his son taking hold of him. He never spoke; he died instantly; he had been struck with apoplexy. He was immediately taken home, the distance to his house being about four miles.312

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310 "A Song to the 'Traveller'".

311 Alexander Maclean Sinclair, *Filidh na Coille*, *supra*, at p. 130.

312 Clarsach 1881, at pp. xx-xxi. In a letter written at Big Clearing, Antigonish County (near Beaver Meadow), dated 1 February, 1848, by Donald Cameron to his uncle Duncan Cameron, then at

John MacLean had died on 26 January, 1848. He was buried the following Friday, and Alexander Maclean Sinclair, who was eight years of age at the time, reports that there was a very large crowd of people at the funeral.313 The poet apparently left no last will and testament.314

John MacLean's death inspired at least three laments, one by Alexander MacDonald, the "Keppoch Bard", who, as his nickname suggests, lived in the Keppoch, an Antigonish County community close to Glenbard, and who was one of the finest of the emigrant poets.315 Another was composed by John Cameron, a friend of John MacLean who also lived relatively close to Glenbard.316 A third lament was composed by a John MacGillivray.317 Unsurprisingly, these poems make reference to John MacLean's excellence as a poet—the Keppoch Bard refers to him as

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Beaver Dam, Wisconsin, he said "Bard MacLean choked to death last Wednesday at Ronald MacLean's": Raymond A. MacLean, *History of Antigonish Vol. 2*, *supra*, at note 63, p. 73.

313 Clarsach 1881, at p. xxi.

314 Donald Maclean Sinclair, *Some Family History*, *supra*, at p. 42, note (7).

315 "Òran Cumha", which originally appeared in the Antigonish *Casket*, Vol. 1, No. 28, 3 March, 1853; somewhat different versions, edited by Alexander Maclean Sinclair, appeared in *Clarsach na Coille* ((1881) p. 335) and in *Filidh na Coille* (p. 142). The Keppoch Bard is discussed in Chapter Five, below.

316 "Cumha do dh' Iain MacIlleathain, Bàrd Thighearna Chola", which appeared anonymously in the Antigonish *Casket* on 17 March, 1853; another version later appeared in both *Clarsach na Coille* ((1881) p. 331) and in *Filidh na Coille* (p. 138), and was attributed by Alexander Maclean Sinclair to John Cameron. Cameron was born in Dochanassie, Lochaber, and came to Canada with his parents, Alexander and Ann Cameron, in 1817. He was a merchant at Addington Forks, Antigonish County, and Maclean Sinclair says that he was "intimately acquainted with the poet". He died on 16 November, 1858. While the version published by Maclean Sinclair is similar to that which appeared in the *Casket*, some changes were made, including the inclusion of this verse, which did not appear in the version in the *Casket*: "Bha thu eòlach 'sa Bhìoball,./Thug thu tlachd bho do chrìdh' dha,/'S iomadh laoidh 'rinn thu 'sgrìobhadh/Ann am bhriathraibh ro bhrìoghail,/Gu ar stiùradh 'san t-sligh' sin/A chaidh fhosgladh le Iosa/Le 'fhuil luachmhoir do rìoghachd na glòir"/"You knew the Bible well,/You gave it your total commitment,/You wrote many a hymn/In the most meaningful language,/To guide us on that path/That was opened by Jesus/To the kingdom of glory by His blood". While it is possible that this verse had been composed by Cameron and was for some reason omitted in the earlier version, given Maclean's Sinclair's proclivities as an editor, explored in Chapter Six, below, it is likelier that he himself included these lines. As has been noted, John MacLean was a religious man, but these lines seem likely to have been added by Maclean Sinclair to further emphasise his grandfather's religious convictions.

317 "Marbhrann do 'n Bhàrd Mac-Gilleain", which appeared in *Filidh na Coille* (p. 141). Alexander Maclean Sinclair indentifies this poet only as "Iain Ruadh MacGillebhràth", and merely notes that he lived along the Antigonish County coast. It is possible that this poet is John "the Piper" MacGillivray, discussed above and in Chapter Five, below, as "the Piper" had taken up residence along the Antigonish County coast, although if this were the case, one might have expected Maclean Sinclair to identify him as such.

"ar ceann ealain" and says of him "Bu leat toiseach nam briathran"318—his MacLean ancestry,319 and the sense of loss felt by his friends, family and those left behind in Scotland. All three poems are very much in the traditional Gaelic panegyric style, about which more will be said in subsequent chapters. However, all three of these poems, composed by friends and well-known acquaintances of John MacLean, also give us some additional insights into the skills and personality of the poet.

It has already been noted that John MacLean was valued as a tradition bearer and singer, in addition to being a highly respected poet. Thus, John Cameron laments the loss of the poet's eloquence as a Gaelic speaker and his font of historical knowledge: "Dh' fhalbh a' Ghàidhlig 's an eachdraidh".320 John MacGillivray says the following: "Chaill sinn tuilleadh 's do bhàrdachd,/Ged a tha sinn 'ga h-ionndrainn,/Chaill sinn t' fhiosrachadh sàr ghasd'".321 Cameron also makes reference to John MacLean's skills as a singer:

Gheibhte òranan milis	Sweet songs would be heard
Gu ro phongail bho d' bhilibh,	Mostly accurately from your lips,
Dh' fhalbh a' cheòlraidh 's a h-uidheam	The muse and the instrument has departed
Bhon thug an t-eug bhuainn thu.	Since death has taken you away from us.322

John MacGillivray also makes reference to his skills as a singer: "Gum bu tric e 'm measg uaislean/A' seinn dhuanagan Gàidhlig".323 We also get a strong sense that John MacLean's was excellent company. Cameron notes that the poet was an

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318 "Our artistic leader" and "you were the chief of words".

319 See, for example, this reference in the Keppoch Bard's lament: "'S cha b' e 'n fuigheall bhon d' fhàs thu,/Ach an t-sàr fhuil ghlan Leathanach"/"It was not from refuse that you sprung,/But the excellent, pure blood of the MacLeans". John Cameron refers to him as a man from the family of the MacLeans of Loch Buidhe—"Fear a theaghlach loch buidhe"—although John MacLean seems to have descended from the MacLeans of Duart, not Loch Buidhe, as was noted earlier in this chapter.

320 "The Gaelic and the history have gone": *supra.* Later in the poem, Cameron adds: "'S gheibhte eachdraichean ciatach,/'S tric a dh' èisd mi bhuat briathran do bheòil"/"Excellent stories would be found,/Often did I listen to the words coming from your mouth".

321 "We have lost more than your poetry,/Though we certainly miss that,/We have also lost your most excellent knowledge".

322 The Keppoch Bard also makes reference to John MacLean's skill as a singer, although it is not clear whether the reference is to the singing of his own songs or those of others, or, indeed, to the making of songs: "'S beul thu dhèanamh nan òran,/'S bu deas òradh an deagh ghearraidhean"/"Songs flow readily from your mouth,/Skillful gildings of good phrasings".

agreeable drinking partner—"Bu tu an companach dibhe,/An àm èirigh na suidhe"324—but also makes reference to his general good sense and sobriety: "'S do gach nabaidh mun cuairt duit,/Bha do chomhairlean luachmhor,/Gu bhith 'cleachdadh na stuaime gach là".325 A similar picture emerges in the Keppoch Bard's poem:

'S nuair a shuidheadh na h-uaislean	And when the gentlemen would sit down
'S tric a fhuair do dheas labhairt dhut,	And often get the benefit of your eloquence,
Iad 'bhith mùirneach mun cuairt dhut;	They would be cheerful in your company;
'N àm 'bhith fuasgladh nan searragan,	At the time of the opening of the flagons,
'S ann 'gan tràigheadh bu dual dhut,	Draining them, as was your wont,
Le caon stuaim 's gun a lean i riut,	With kind modesty, as was always your habit
Gus na chàireadh 'san uaigh thu.	Until you were laid in the grave.

The Keppoch Bard also tells us of the poet's kindness to his fellow Gaels—"'S but u fear furanach, càirdeil/Ris gach Gàidheal 'fhuair sealladh ort"326—although he also notes the following:

Oilbheum ealamh cha b' fhiach leat,	A quick reproach was beneath you,
Ged a b' èasgaidh do theanga dhut;	Though you had a ready tongue;
Ach gu furanach, fialaidh	But you were always courteous and generous
Bha thu riamh ris gach aineolach.	Even to the ignorant.

We have already seen that the poet had a quick temper and ready tongue, so the report in the first two lines rings truthful, and might have been expected to have raised a wry smile and perhaps a chuckle from listeners who knew the poet. Also clear, however, is the poet's basic decency, particularly to those less able; one gets the sense that, when the poet did give vent to his cutting wit, it was aimed at those who, in the poet's view, needed to be taken down a peg, and not at those of more humble demeanour. All of the poems make reference to the poet's generous hospitality; although there is an element of panegyric formality in this—as we shall see in the next chapter, hospitality is a core theme in Gaelic praise poetry—it does appear that John MacLean's house was a popular one for visitors.

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323 "He was often amongst noblemen/Singing Gaelic songs".

324 "You were a good drinking companion,/When getting up or sitting down": *supra.*

325 "And for every neighbour who lived near you,/Your advice was most valuable,/To be practicing sobriety every single day": *supra.*

326 "You were a courteous, kindly man/To every Gael that encountered you".

One final point of interest in these laments is the expressions of regret that more of John MacLean's poetry had not appeared in print. John Cameron says this:

Nam faigheadh tu saoghal	If you had lived long enough
Chìte tuilleadh dha d' shaothair;	More of your work would've been seen;
Dh'fhàg thu sgrìobhte aig do theaghlach	You left your family a written record
Na bheireadh ònair do 'n adhbhar;	That would bring honour to their cause;
'S bochd nach deach an craobh-sgaoileadh	It's a shame that they were not published
Mun tàinig do chaochladh,	Before you met your end,
'S mòr a' bheàrn a-measg dhaoine do bhàs	Great is the hole that your death has left.

This same theme is picked up by the Keppoch Bard:

'S mòr dhe d' sheanachas tha 'n clòithean,	And though much of your work is in print,
'S roinn ro mhòr gun dol fhathast ann,	Too much is left unrecorded,
Bhios na cuimhneachan bròin dhoibh	That will be sad memories for them
Fhad 's beò air an talamh iad.	As long as they live.

As we shall see in Chapter Six, eighteen secular songs composed by John MacLean in Canada have survived, but only ten of these were written down, all in the Dr. Hector Maclean manuscript (along with one other, apparently composed while the poet was still in Scotland) which the poet had brought with him to Canada; of these, only six (and the one Scottish composition) appear to be in John MacLean's own hand, the rest apparently having been taken down by his son Charles. As will be discussed in Chapter Six, these poems were published in 1856 by John Boyd of Antigonish County. At the time of the poet's death, though, none of these poems had been published, as is noted in these passages. The passage in the poem by the Keppoch Bard is particularly interesting; it states that much of John MacLean's poetry was never "recorded", hinting strongly that much poetry was circulating orally in Antigonish County but had not even been taken down in manuscript form. As we shall see in Chapter Six, Maclean Sinclair appears to have taken down at least some of these songs, but is possible that some of John MacLean's secular poetry has been lost forever.

John MacLean is buried in the Glenbard Cemetery, where there is now a handsome memorial to him, erected by his descendants, which reads:

AM BARD MAC-GILLEAIN
1787-1848
'Fhir 's a' chladh 's 'tha 'dol mu'n cuairt
Stad is éisd ri guth bho 'n uaigh s':--
Cum a' Ghàidhlig suas ri d' bheò,
'S a cuid bàrdachd 's airde glòir;
Do gach nì tha math thoir gràdh
'S bi 'tigh'nn beò do Dhia gach là./

THE BARD MACLEAN
1787-1848
O man who goes about this cemetery
Stop and listen to a voice from this grave:--
Keep up the Gaelic as long as you may live,
As well as her poetry and her highest glory;
To everything that is good pay heed
And live in God each and every day.

His widow, Isabella, was buried next to John MacLean upon her death in 1877; her inscription reads: BEAN A' BHAIRD, 1786-1877. "Earb as an Tighearna le d' uile chridhe."/THE WIFE OF THE POET, 1786-1877. "Trust in the Lord with all your heart."

The Author, at the Poet's Grave, Glenbard, N.S., July, 2001.
Courtesy of John Sinclair, Hopewell, N.S.

CHAPTER THREE: A CRITICAL ASSESSMENT OF THE SECULAR POETRY OF JOHN MACLEAN— INTRODUCTION, AND CHIEFLY PRAISE POETRY

The secular poetry of John MacLean has not been subjected to any comprehensive or even sustained critical assessment. Although the earliest poetry in this collection cannot be dated with certainty, it is likely that it was composed about the years 1805 to 1807, when the poet was in his late teens. The latest composition dates from about 1843, when he was in his mid fifties. Thus, the secular poetry of John MacLean belongs to an almost forty year period spanning much of the first half of the nineteenth century. The lack of critical analysis of John MacLean may be due in part to two factors, one relating to timing, and the second relating to geography.

With regard to timing, the Gaelic poetry of the nineteenth century as a whole, and that of the first half of the century in particular, has, as Donald Meek has noted, received relatively less critical interest and attention than that of either the eighteenth or the twentieth century.327 In *The Literature of the Highlands*, for example, Magnus Maclean, writing at the beginning of the twentieth century, saw in the early nineteenth century the final days of a great era of Gaelic poetry and the beginning of a generally inferior one. He notes that at the beginning of the nineteenth century, "quite an unprecedented number of Highland bards existed", John MacLean specifically mentioned amongst them, but went on to argue that "the noontide glory had already departed", for "of the great sons of the Muses", only Duncan Ban MacIntyre remained, and he died in 1812.328 In *Bàrdachd Ghàidhlig: Specimens of Gaelic Poetry 1550-1900*,329 William J. Watson was generally dismissive of the poetry of

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327 Donald E. Meek, ed., *Caran an t-Saoghail/The Wiles of the World: Anthology of 19th Century Scottish Gaelic Verse* (Edinburgh: Birlinn, 2003), at pp. xiii-xv.

328 Magnus Maclean, LL.D., *The Literature of the Highlands* (Glasgow: Blackie and Son Limited, c. 1925), at p. 178.

329 William J. Watson, *Bàrdachd Ghàidhlig: Specimens of Gaelic Poetry 1550-1900* (Stirling: A. Learmonth & Son: 1932).

the nineteenth century:

> The poetry of the nineteenth century, with some exceptions such as Alexander Mackinnon330 and Allan MacDougall, shows increasing English influence in style, thought and metre. Much of this later poetry is pretty and witty, but it has little of the old fire and virility; often, not without reason, it expresses the wail of a dejected and harassed people.331

As Meek notes, Prof. Watson's collection, which first appeared in 1918, was the standard anthology of Gaelic poetry in schools for much of the twentieth century, and it was therefore of considerable influence in shaping critical views.332 Sorley MacLean had a broadly similar view to that of Watson with regard to the poetry of the nineteenth century:

> The period 1820 to 1860 was above all the period of the Clearances. During those years huge masses of the Highland population were uprooted, poverty was terribly increased, and the economic and social revolution was completed. There was also in those years the great emotional and intellectual change occasioned by the evangelical movement, and there was, naturally enough, a big break in the continuity of Gaelic poetry, and a characteristic 19th century Gaelic poetry emerged. How much that poetry was inferior in inspiration and tradition to the 18th century Gaelic poetry, it is not my business at present to consider, but, apart from the technical degeneration that resulted from the exaggeration of artificial metrical stresses, which as Rev. William Matheson declares, was greatly influenced by the importation of Lowland airs, there is a great decline in full-bloodedness of matter. As compared with 18th century Gaelic poetry, 19th century poetry is flabby and anaemic; it lacks power, gusto, spontaneity, joie de vivre.333

MacLean did, however, acknowledge "a certain broadening and deepening of human sympathy" and "a more tender and comprehensive sense of humanity" as compared to the poetry of the eighteenth century, and in this alone did the poetry of the nineteenth century represent an advance.334

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330 The subject of poem 18 in this collection.

331 Watson, *Bàrdachd Ghàidhlig*, *supra*, at p. xxxiii.

332 Donald Meek, *Caran an t-Saoghail*, *supra*, at p. xiv.

333 Somhairle MacGill-eain, "The Poetry of the Clearances", in William Gillies, ed., *Ris a' Bhruthaich: The Criticism and Prose Writings of Sorley Maclean* (Stornoway: Acair, 1985), p. 48, at pp. 57.

334 *Ibid.*

In *An Introduction to Gaelic Poetry*,335 still the only comprehensive modern overview of the subject, Derick Thomson's treatment of the poetry of the nineteenth century is to be found in a chapter entitled "Gaelic Poets in Lowlands and Highlands", which is located between two more sizeable chapters entitled "Poetry of the Eighteenth Century" and "Renaissance", respectively. For Thomson, the work of poets such as John Maclachlan of Rahoy, John Campbell of Ledaig, Donald MacKechnie of Jura, Malcolm MacFarlane of Lochaweside and Paisley, Neil MacLeod of Skye and John MacFadyen of Mull represents "the staple verse of the nineteenth century",336 and this verse is judged to be of limited quality. For Thomson, there were only three poets in the nineteenth century, William Livingstone of Islay, John Smith of Iarsiadar, Lewis, and Mary Macpherson, "Màiri Mhòr nan Òran", of Skye, "whose work seems to have a special individuality, strength and *gravitas* in this age of flux and resignation and triviality".337

Such assessments of the Gaelic poetry of the nineteenth century have generally represented the prevailing view, and it was only with the publication of Donald Meek's *Caran an t-Saoghail* in 2003, and the interpretative essay with which it begins, that a sustained reassessment has taken place. It should, however, be noted that other scholars, such as John MacInnes, have also provided a more nuanced and generous perspective on the poetry of the nineteenth century than those of Watson, MacLean and Thomson.338

With regard to geography, a considerable proportion of John MacLean's

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335 Derick Thomson, *An Introduction to Gaelic Poetry* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1990)

336 *Ibid*, at pp. 223-4.

337 *Ibid*, at p. 233.

338 John MacInnes, "Gaelic Poetry in the Nineteenth Century", in Douglas Gifford, ed., *The History of Scottish Literature, Vol. 3: Nineteenth Century* (Aberdeen: Aberdeen University Press, 1988), at pp. 377-395. For a thorough and wide-ranging analysis of song and poetry in nineteenth

secular poetry was composed after his emigration to Canada in 1819, and the poetry of the emigrant communities has, if anything, been subject to even less critical interest than that of the poetry of the nineteenth century. In *An Introduction to Gaelic Poetry*, Derick Thomson devotes less than two pages of the three-hundred page study to the poetry of the emigrant communities, which is in keeping with his assessment of this body of work: "The links with the Scottish tradition were closely kept; there were occasional new themes suggested by the new environment, but no new voice or style".339 Poetry from the emigrant communities has been included in important anthologies of Gaelic poetry, but no attempt has yet been made to present a representative sample of such material or to subject it to sustained critical comment. For example, William Watson's *Bàrdachd Ghàidhlig* included two poems composed by emigrant Gaels, Duncan Black Blair's "Eas Niagara"/"Niagara Falls", and John MacLean's "Am Bàrd an Canada", poem 28 in this collection, entitled here "Òran do dh' Aimearaga"/"Song to America";340 however, the sample is too small to the be the basis of a sustained analysis, and no effort was made to put this poetry in its context. Ronald Black's exhaustive anthology of twentieth century Gaelic poetry, *An Tuil*,341 included 351 poems by 100 poets; however, only three poems, all by one poet from the emigrant communities, Angus Y. MacLellan, of Inverness County, Cape Breton, were included, and once again no attempt was made in the extremely valuable introduction to the collection to place these poems in their context. In *Caran an t-Saoghail*, Donald Meek provides a somewhat broader sample of emigrant poetry,

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century Gaelic Ireland, see Breandán Ó Madagáin, "Functions of Irish Song in the Nineteenth Century", (1985) 53 *Béaloideas* 130-216.

339 *Supra*, at p. 221.

340 William Watson, *Bàrdachd Ghàidhlig*, *supra*, at p. 9 and p. 14.

341 Ronald Black, ed., *An Tuil: Anthology of 20th Century Scottish Gaelic Verse* (Edinburgh: Polygon, 1999).

including three John MacLean compositions,342 and identifies emigration as one of the thirteen major themes of poetry of the century. However, with the exception of John MacLean's "Òran don 'Chuairtear'", poem 39 in this collection, and his spiritual song, "Craobhsgaoileadh an t-Soisgeil san Tìr seo",343 the poetry generally does not deal with the post-emigration experience, and in particular with the period during which the emigrant communities, particularly those of eastern Nova Scotia, underwent a process of consolidation, development and subsequent linguistic, cultural and in some cases economic decline.

North American scholars have dealt with aspects of the poetry of the emigrant communities, but there is still no comprehensive anthology or study of this body of poetry as a whole. Margaret MacDonell's *The Emigrant Experience344* provides a reasonably comprehensive overview of the work of the poets of the emigrant generation, and includes two of John MacLean's poems;345 however, there was only a small sample of poetry composed by the post-emigration generation, and the focus of the collection as a whole is, as the title suggests, the experience of emigration itself, as perceived by the poets, rather than the post-emigration period of consolidation in the New World. Donald Fergusson's *Beyond the Hebrides/Fad air Falbh as Innse Gall*346 contains a significant amount of Gaelic poetry composed in the New World Gaelic communities, but does not set out to provide a critical assessment of this poetry. Michael Newton's *We're Indians Sure Enough347* is the first attempt to systematically record and contextualise Gaelic literature from the United States, but it

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342 Poems 27 and 39 in this collection, as well as the spiritual song "Craobhsgaoileadh an t-Soisgeil san Tìr Seo".

343 Donald Meek, *Caran an t-Saoghail*, *supra*, at p. 72.

344 Margaret MacDonell, *The Emigrant Experience* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1982).

345 "Am Mealladh", poem 27, and "Òran do'n Chuairtear", poem 39.

346 Donald A. Fergusson, *Beyond the Hebrides/Fad air Falbh as Innse Gall* (Halifax: Lawson Graphics Atlantic Ltd., 1977).

does not seek to address the record of the emigrant communities in other jurisdictions. In *Highland Settler: A Portrait of the Scottish Gael in Nova Scotia*348, Charles Dunn provides a more sustained critical assessment of the Gaelic poetry of the Nova Scotia Gàidhealtachd in a chapter entitled "The Old Tradition Flourishes",349 and John Shaw350 has usefully contrasted the development of the poetic tradition in those Nova Scotian communities with post-emigration period developments in Scotland,351 and has also explored the poetic and song traditions of one Cape Breton community.352 Finally, Effie Rankin353 has recently provided a critical analysis of the poetry of one of the other great emigrant Gaelic poets, Allan "the Ridge" MacDonald.354

Not surprisingly, given this context, the poetry of John MacLean has generally been treated in a cursory manner by critics. For example, Magnus Maclean dealt with John MacLean only briefly, and primarily as a religious poet. John MacLean is treated along with the Rev. James MacGregor, who had emigrated to Nova Scotia in 1786, and while Maclean noted that the poet "had some repute in after-life as a hymn-writer", he argued that neither he, nor MacGregor, nor Peter Grant could compare with either their predecessor, Dugald Buchanan—for Maclean, the greatest Gaelic hymn-writer—or their successor John Morrison, "Iain Gobha", the Harris

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347 Michael Newton, *We're Indians Sure Enough: The Legacy of the Scottish Highlanders in the United States* (Richmond, Va.: Saorsa Media, 2001).

348 Charles W. Dunn, *Highland Settler: A Portrait of the Scottish Gael in Nova Scotia* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1980).

349 *Ibid*, Chapter 5, pp. 58-73.

350 John Shaw is now at the University of Edinburgh and has been based in Scotland since the early 1990s, but he is a North American-trained scholar who did a significant amount of his field work and research in Nova Scotia.

351 John W. Shaw, "Brief Beginnings: Nova Scotian and Old World Bards Compared", (1996) 17 *Scottish Gaelic Studies* 342.

352 John Shaw, ed., *Brìgh an Òrain/A Story in Every Song: The Songs and Tales of Lauchie MacLellan* (Montreal & Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2000).

353 Though a North Uist Gael, Effie Rankin has lived in Nova Scotia since the 1970s.

354 Effie Rankin, *As a' Bhràighe/Beyond the Braes: The Gaelic Songs of Allan the Ridge MacDonald 1794-1868* (Sydney, Cape Breton: University College of Cape Breton Press, 2004).

blacksmith.355 Nigel MacNeill provided a slightly more detailed treatment, but focused on John MacLean as a secular rather than a religious poet. His overall assessment, based on little real critical analysis, was that John MacLean "is a bard of considerable powers, but cannot be compared with the bards like Macintyre, whose names are known wherever the Gaelic language is spoken".356 MacNeill provides brief comments on only three of the secular poems. He notes that one song, "An Gàidheal am-measg nan Gall", poem 12, "has been highly popular, mainly because of the sweet air that is attached to it", but that the song is "so painfully simple and commonplace, notwithstanding its popularity, that it can scarcely bear translation at all".357 He claims that "Bàta Thighearna Chola", poem 4, is "[o]ne of MacLean's best pieces", and that "Òran do dh' Aimearaga", poem 28, is "of more than average merit",358 but in neither case does he support his assessment with any argument whatsoever. He does note—in this case, with some justification—that John MacLean's poetry "shows little or no trace of English reading".359 This last comment is one with which Sorley Maclean would likely have agreed. His assessment was that John MacLean "was in every sense but the chronological, a poet of the 18th century, though he was alive until 1848".360 This is quite a remarkable assertion given, as noted above, that all of the poetry in this collection was composed in the nineteenth century. Derick Thomson dealt with John MacLean in the context of his very short assessment of the poetry of the emigrant communities—he did not

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355 Magnus Maclean, *The Literature of the Highlands*, *supra*, at pp. 130-1.

356 John MacMaster Campbell, ed., *The Literature of the Highlanders: Race, Language, Literature, Poetry and Music*, by Nigel MacNeill, LL.D, (Stirling: Eneas Mackay, 1929), 2nd ed., at p. 419. MacNeill comments that *Clarsach na Coille* was "edited with intelligence and care by the Rev. A. M. Sinclair of Nova Scotia"; given the discussion in Chapter Six of the editorial principles employed by Maclean Sinclair, such a judgment seems wildly generous, and one can only wonder upon what basis it was made.

357 *Ibid*, at pp. 418-9.

358 *Ibid*, at p. 419.

359 *Ibid.*

360 Somhairle MacGill-eain, "The Poetry of the Clearances", *supra*, at pp. 56-7.

consider his poetry at all in his wider consideration of Gaelic poetry of the nineteenth century, which is, once again, a quite remarkable decision, given that the majority of the poetry in this collection was composed in Scotland and related to Scottish personages, themes and issues—and made the following observations:

> Iain MacGhillEathain (John Maclean) is usually regarded as the main patriarch of Nova Scotian Gaelic verse. He had acted as bard to Maclean of Coll before leaving Scotland in 1819, and had published a collection of poetry in the previous year. His Scottish verse is very much in the panegyrist style of the eighteenth century. More interest attaches to what he wrote in Canada, and particularly to his poem "*Am Bàrd an Canada*" ("The Poet in Canada"),361 in which he gives his early reactions to his new country (contrasting it with his windswept native Tiree) and castigates the emigration agents whose picture of life in Canada was evidently too rosy . . . . He goes on with his anti-immigration propaganda, referring to the emigration agents in Scotland as cattle drovers, and saying that one sees little of the famous green dollars, and that barter is still prevalent. It is an interesting enough testimony of disillusionment, and must have been composed very early in MacGhilleathain's sojourn in Canada. He survived there until 1848, composing some other songs in a similar vein, but in the main reverting to what must have been his natural bent in verse: a miscellany of panegyric (for persons in Scotland and Canada) and of occasional village-verse.362

Thus, both these critics view much of the poetry of John MacLean as being essentially anachronistic; in spite of the fact that he was clearly a nineteenth century poet, as a panegyrist, he belongs to an eighteenth century tradition. This, however, tells us more about critical assumptions concerning the poetry of the nineteenth century than about the poetry of John MacLean, and reflects the prevailing view of the poetry of that century that was described briefly above. The fact that this prevailing view is now, as noted, undergoing a reappraisal argues for a reappraisal of these assessments of the work of John MacLean. These critical views also reflect certain assumptions about the nature of the Gaelic poetic tradition, and these assumptions also require to be reassessed.

For example, the notion that the "panegyrist style" is solely the property of the

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361 Poem 28.

eighteenth century is a critical assumption that is difficult to sustain. For one thing, the "panegyrist style" is as much property of the seventeenth as the eighteenth century in vernacular Gaelic poetry, and this poetry is itself part of a much older tradition in Gaelic.363 Furthermore, panegyric poetry composed for the subjects who tended to predominate in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries—the aristocracy in Gaelic society—continued to be composed well into the nineteenth century, as the poetry of John MacLean itself demonstrates. As we shall see, the death in 1828 of Alexander Ranaldson MacDonell, chief of the MacDonells of Glengarry, led to the composition of a number of traditional panegyrics, including poem 30. Indeed, Allan MacDougall, "Ailean Dall", one of the two poets singled out by William Watson as exceptions to the supposed mediocrity of the nineteenth century, composed a considerable amount of praise poetry in honour of Glengarry.364 Lachlann Livingstone, "Lachann Dubh a' Chròigain", who was born in Croggan, Mull in 1819, the same year that John MacLean sailed for Nova Scotia, was reportedly employed by the Maclaines of Lochbuie as a poet.365 He composed at least two traditional panegyrics for that family, and these poems must date to the middle period of the nineteenth century.366 The death in May, 1848 of Lieut.-Colonel Ranald Macdonald, Deputy-Adjutant-General of Bombay and a member of a Badenoch aristocratic family, resulted in an elegy in the

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362 Derick Thomson, *An Introduction to Gaelic Poetry*, *supra*, at pp. 220-1.

363 See, for example, John MacInnes, "The Bard Through History", in Timothy Neat, *The Voice of the Bard: Living Poets and Ancient Tradition in the Highlands and Islands of Scotland* (Edinburgh: Canongate, 1999), 321-52.

364 See John MacKenzie, ed, *Sar-Obair nam Bard Gaelach/The Beauties of Gaelic Poetry and the Lives of the Highland Bards* (Edinburgh: Norman MacLeod, 1904), at pp. 299, where MacKenzie comments that Ailean Dall's panegyrics on Glengarry were "elaborate and incessant"; see his poem "Òran do Mhac-'ic-Alasdair Ghlinne-Garaidh", at pp. 300-302 therein.

365 Maighread Dhòmhnallach Lobban, *Lachann Dubh a' Chròigain: Lachlan Livingstone and his Grandsons, Bards of Mull and Lismore* (Isle of Iona, Argyll: The New Iona Press, 2004), at pp. 12-13.

366 *Ibid*; see "A Leathanaich on Taobh sa Leamhain", at p. 40, and "Oighreachd Locha Buidhe", at p. 42.

old style, composed by Archibald Macdonald.367 Implicit in the judgment that such poetry is essentially anachronistic is the assumption that, with the death of the "old order" in Gaelic society after Culloden, such poetry no longer served a purpose. We could, of course, simply assume that the poets who composed such panegyrics were weak-minded or self-delusional. However, save for the composition of such praise poetry, there is nothing to suggest that the likes of John MacLean or Ailean Dall were prey to either of these failings; indeed, both men did compose poetry that showed a keen awareness of the realities of their age. Thus, the survival of such poetry well into the nineteenth century invites further consideration, and we must try to assess and understand the continued existence of such poetry on its own terms.

More fundamentally, however, the "panegyrist style"—as opposed to panegyrics to the traditional Gaelic aristocracy—survives to the present. The motifs, metres and language of the panegyric poetry of the eighteenth century (and, as noted, of the seventeenth and even earlier centuries) were redeployed throughout the nineteenth and the twentieth centuries in the service of an increasingly diverse range of community leaders and role models in the Gaelic societies of both the old and new worlds, such as outstanding soldiers, clergy, tradition bearers and other notable exponents of traditional community values, political leaders, local luminaries and loved ones, and even objects of practical or symbolic value to the community, such as newspapers—see, for example, poem 39 in this thesis. With respect to the nineteenth century, Donald Meek makes the following observations:

> Since the Middle Ages and earlier, the Gaelic poetic tradition functioned in terms of well-defined genres of verse, chief among them being panegyric (poetry in praise of the living and in commemoration of the dead). Satire too was a prominent form which was much feared. . . . In the nineteenth century, continuity of traditional styles can be detected; what changes is the manner in

367 See The Rev. Thomas Sinton, ed., *The Poetry of Badenoch* (Inverness: The Northern Counties Publishing Company, 1906), at pp. 302-306.

> which these styles are handled, and the purpose to which they are put. . . . As society changes from chiefs and tacksmen to landlords and crofters from the early 1800s, the older icons are replaced by newer ones. The range of traditional panegyric is diversified in response to the diversification of the century itself. Praise can be directed at such objects as the steamship and the China tea-clipper, and at such individuals as sea-captains and ministers.368

The "panegyrist style" can be seen throughout the poetry of the twentieth century as well, redeployed in the service of many new subjects, as well as more traditional ones, as is amply illustrated in Ronald Black's collection of twentieth century Gaelic poetry, *An Tuil*.369 Excellent examples of the traditional "panegyrist style" can be found, for example, in the work of Donald MacIntyre, "Dòmhnall Ruadh Phàislig", "The Paisley Bard",370 Donald John MacDonald, "Dhòmhnall Iain Dhonnchaidh",371 Donald Allan MacDonald, "Dòmhnall Ailein Dhòmhnaill na Bainich",372 John Morrison, "Seonaidh Fhionnlaigh"373, Donald MacDonald, "Dòmhnall Aonghais Bhàin",374 John Nicolson, "Iain MacNeacail, 'An Sgiobair'",375 and countless others. Even the death in 1994 of John Smith, the leader of the Labour Party, occasioned the composition of a poem having a traditional feel,376 and this surely attests to both the enduring nature and continuing relevance of the "panegyrist style" to Gaelic speakers of our own time.

In addition to being a poet of the "panegyrist style", Derick Thomson also

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368 Donald Meek, *Caran an t-Saoghail, supra*, at pp. xxv-xxvi.

369 *Supra.*

370 (1889-1964); see Somerled MacMillan, ed., *Sporan Dhòmhnaill: Gaelic Poems and Songs by the late Donald MacIntrye the Paisley Bard* (Edinburgh: Scottish Gaelic Texts Society, 1968).

371 (1919-86); see Bill Innes, ed., *Chì Mi: Dòmhnall Iain MacDhòmhnaill/The Gaelic Poetry of Donald John MacDonald* (Edinburgh: Birlinn, 1998).

372 (1906-92); see John Angus Macdonald, ed., *Òrain Dhòmhnaill Ailein Dhòmhnaill na Bainich/The Songs of Donald Allan MacDonald 1906-92* (Benbecula: Comunn Eachdraidh nan Eilean mu Dheas, 1999).

373 (1914-); see Seonaidh Moireasdan, *Tiugainn do Sgalpaigh: Bàrdachd Sheonaidh Fhionnlaigh* (An Taobh Tuath, Na Hearadh: Bill Lawson Publications, 1999).

374 (1926-2000); see Ronald Black, ed., *Smuaintean fo Éiseabhal/Thoughts Under Eiseaval: Dòmhnall Aonghais Bhàin (Donald MacDonald)* (Edinburgh: Birlinn, 2000).

375 (1903-99): see Thomas A. McKean, *Hebridean Song-Maker: Iain MacNeacail of the Isle of Skye* (Edinburgh: Polygon, 1997).

noted that John MacLean was a composer of "village verse". As Ronald Black has noted, phrases such as this were used as "loaded weapons in the tradition-innovation wars of the 1960s"—a critical battle that he explores in his introduction to *An Tuil*, and in which Thomson was a committed protagonist on the "innovation" side. His description of some of MacLean's poetry as being mere "village verse" can therefore hardly be understood as being complimentary. Ronald Black argues that phrases such as "bàrd baile", the "village poet" who composed such "village verse", seek to imply that such a poet "was the laureate of a small community and therefore narrow in his (or her) view of the world".377 However, the strand of criticism represented by Thomson is itself undergoing a reappraisal at the hands of scholars such as Black, who dislikes terms such as "village poets", and all that they imply:

> In practice, however, such poets have typically fought a war, sailed seven seas, or otherwise sweated blood far and wide for a living, and their view of their community is by no means uncritical or lacking in global perspective. What they reflect is the value of 'community' itself, in a sense which came to be far better appreciated at the end of the [twentieth] century than ever before.378

Similarly, John MacInnes comments on the relative uselessness of concepts such as "village verse" as a critical category:

> The designation 'bard baile', 'poet of a township', is now used more frequently than in the past and with a rather different denotation. Traditionally, the phrase described verse and rhyme-makers whose reputation was never likely to extend beyond the bounds of their own townships. It now seems to designate all versifiers who live in the Gaelic-speaking areas or whose outlook is said to be, somewhat imprecisely, restricted to the 'traditional'. This is a broad category and the term can easily become vague.379

Once again, then, the simple classification of much of the poetry in this collection as mere "village verse" invites a reassessment.

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376 "Tuiream Iain Mhic a' Ghobhainn QC MP", composed by Donald Alasdair MacDonald of Garrabost, Lewis: Dòmhnall Alasdair Dòmhnallach, *Bàrdachd Dhòmhnaill Alasdair, Dòmhnall Alasdair Dòmhnallach, à Garrabost, Eilean Leòdhais* (Stornoway: Acair, 1999), at p. 79.

377 Ronald Black, *An Tuil*, *supra*, at p. lxi.

378 *Ibid.*

Rev. Hector Cameron represents a perspective that would fall on the other side of the "tradition-innovation" divide to that of Thomson. His assessment of John MacLean's poetry in *Na Baird Thirisdeach*, while also short, nevertheless comes to a more balanced and nuanced judgment than those of either Sorley MacLean or Derick Thomson:

> John MacLean's poetry comes on the borderline between the hereditary and family bards, who sang their chief's and their clan's eulogies and elegies, and the freer songsters of latter days. His productions thus form two distinct categories, coterminate, generally speaking, with the period he lived in the old country, and the time of his abode in America, respectively. He is always temperate and circumspect; and though sometimes indulging a humorous vein, he seldom exceeds the bounds of propriety; he nowhere seeks to offend. He was, undoubtedly, the ablest, as well as the most productive, of the Tiree bards.380

This assessment hints at a more complex understanding of the poetry of John MacLean, and conveys the sense of the poet as being an important figure in a transitional phase in Gaelic poetry. This same sense is conveyed by Eric Cregeen and Donald W. MacKenzie, who note that it is in John MacLean "that the transition is most clearly seen from chief's bard to popular poet".381 They are of the view that "his genius blossomed" in Canada, "in the congenial company of neighbouring families of Highland stock and speech", but note also the following:

> Already before he left Tiree, he had shown himself capable of composing well and wittily on purely local subjects, comic as well as serious. He had made humorous ditties of the kind which were to become so typical of the bardachd of Tiree in the later nineteenth century. His laments had been composed to ordinary Highlanders as well as to chiefs. It is true that until the end of his life Maclean continued on occasion to apostrophise the Highland chiefs in praise-songs and elegies of more traditional style. But increasingly he cultivated a popular style of poetry, inspired by the people and scenes around him. In later life, deeply influenced by contemporary religious movements, he composed hymns of great excellence. Nothing could make him more representative of

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379 John MacInnes, "The Bard Through History", *supra*, at pp. 337-8.

380 Urr. Eachann Camshron, *Na Baird Thirisdeach: Saothair ar Co-Luchd-Duthcha aig an Tigh 's bho 'n Tigh* (Stirling: The Tiree Association, 1932), at p. 38.

381 Eric Cregeen and Donald W. MacKenzie, *Tiree Bards and their Bardachd* (Isle of Coll: Society of West Highland & Island Historical Research, 1978), at p. 7.

his age than this.382

While these critical assessments point us in a more promising direction, they themselves are too limited to do justice to the poet and to the body of secular poetry contained in this collection. In fact, there is, as will be seen, a complexity and tension in even the most traditional of the poet's panegyrics, and this, it will be argued, is highly reflective of the poet's age and context. There are also deeper affinities between the poet's praise poetry and his other secular verse than the simple bifurcation suggested by Cameron, Cregeen and MacKenzie (and, indeed, the structure of this chapter) would imply, and these affinities will also be explored. Finally, while emigration did force the poet to confront new issues, his resolution of these issues is informed by the values and perspectives that infuse even the earliest of his secular poetry composed in Scotland. There are again deep continuities as well as developments.

In spite of this, the discussion of the secular poetry of John MacLean will be organised around the two sets of basic bifurcations suggested in the various assessments just considered. The first, and most fundamental bifurcation, is that of the poetry composed in Scotland and in Canada. The second is that of panegyric poetry and other types of secular poetry. The affinities and complexities just hinted at will be explored within these general classifications. Of the forty-four poems in this collection, twenty-six were composed while the poet resided in Scotland, and eighteen were composed after his arrival in 1819 in Canada; twenty-seven of these forty-four poems could be considered to be panegyric, fifteen are non-panegyric secular poems (primarily "local" events), and two border on the panegyric, but are composed in relation to local events.

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382 *Ibid*, at pp. 8-9.

Of the twenty-six poems composed in Scotland, nineteen could be considered to be panegyric, with twelve composed in honour of the more traditional subjects of such poetry—clan chiefs—and seven in honour of less traditional subjects, or, perhaps more accurately, traditional subjects in newer social roles, a point which shall be considered further, below. Six of the poems composed in Scotland are not panegyrics, although given that some are satirical, they embody panegyric—or more accurately, mock panegyric—elements. These poems generally related to local events, and at least four of these six poems embody a significant element of social comment. Finally, one of the poems composed in Scotland, poem 17 in this collection, is about a local tragedy, and falls on the cusp between panegyric and local event.

Of the eighteen poems composed in Canada, eight are panegyric; three of these are composed in honour of clan aristocracy—two in respect of the Laird of Coll, and one in respect of Glengarry—and five were in respect of other less traditional subjects. The poems to the Laird of Coll and to Glengarry will be discussed in this chapter, primarily within the context of the praise poetry composed by John MacLean in Scotland in honour of these men. A further nine poems composed in Canada relate to local events; some are satirical, but most contain elements of social comment. Finally, one of the poems, poem 42 in this collection, relates to the death of a child, and it also falls on the cusp between panegyric and local event.

As noted, nineteen of John MacLean's twenty-six poems composed in Scotland are praise poems. Six of these were in honour of Alexander MacLean, the 15th Laird of Coll, the poet's patron, with two further poems composed to the 15th Laird after the poet emigrated to Canada. Two of the nineteen praise poems composed in Scotland were in honour of Hugh MacLean, the heir to the Laird of Coll and the future 16th Laird. Thus, ten of the forty-four poems in this collection were in

honour of the Coll family, and these will be treated together, in this chapter. Two of the twenty-six poems composed in Scotland and one of the Canadian poems were composed in honour of Alexander Ranaldson MacDonell, the Chief of the MacDonells of Glengarry, and these three poems will be treated together, also in this chapter. Of the remaining praise poems composed in Scotland, three were in respect of other, more minor lairds than Coll and Glengarry, two were in respect of renowned soldiers (although both soldiers were of aristocratic families, and, it should be noted, one of the minor lairds just mentioned was himself a soldier of some repute), two were in respect of Church of Scotland ministers, one was in respect of another poet, Alexander MacKinnon, and one in respect of the premature death of a local man. All of these poems will be considered together, in the next chapter, Chapter Four. The secular poetry composed in Canada, except for the two poems to the 15th Laird of Coll and the poem composed on the death of Glengarry (which are discussed in this chapter) will be considered in Chapter Five.

The Fifteenth Laird of Coll and his Heir

As was noted in Chapter Two, John MacLean is to this day known as "Bàrd Thighearna Chola", "The Poet to the Laird of Coll". It is not clear when this title was bestowed upon him, and whether it was bestowed by the Laird of Coll himself, by the community, or otherwise. While "official" poets of the Gaelic aristocracy once received patronage which took a material as well as an honorific form, this practice had fallen largely into desuetude by the late eighteenth century. A late survival is represented by the appointment in 1763 by Sir James MacDonald, eighth Baronet of Sleat, of John MacCodrum, "Iain mac Fhearchair", (1693-1779) of North Uist to the office of bard to the MacDonalds of Sleat, for which the poet received a croft free of

rent for life, as well as 5 bolls of mean, 5 stones of cheese, and £2 5s. sterling as emoluments of his office.383 This, however, was a tradition revived rather than maintained, as the office had evidently lapsed for well over one hundred years following the death in about 1630 of Donnchadh MacRaoiridh, "Duncan MacRuari"384, the author of four religious or elegiac poems in the Fernaig manuscript.385 Another late example is Allan MacDougall, "Ailean Dall", (c. 1750-1828), who was taken under the patronage of Alexander Ranaldson MacDonell, chief of the MacDonells of Glengarry, shortly after the appearance of a printed collection of his poems in 1798.386 Ailean Dall was given a cottage and croft close to MacDonell's own residence at Invergarry, by Loch Oich, Inverness-shire.387 It is fairly clear that John MacLean had not received any of these forms of patronage. Indeed, as noted in Chapter Two, the poet resided in Caolas, Tiree, not on the Coll estate, and would therefore have been a tenant of the Duke of Argyll. As noted elsewhere in this dissertation,388 on hearing of the poet's poor state in Canada in "Òran do dh' Ameireaga", poem 28 in this collection, Alexander MacLean, the Laird of Coll, apparently attempted to convince John MacLean to return to Scotland with the offer of a rent-free croft; this implies that such patronage had not been proffered when the poet resided in Scotland.

The Lairds of Coll had, however, a long and distinguished history of patronage of the Gaelic arts. As noted in chapter two, Neil Lamont, the maternal great-

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383 See William Matheson, ed., *The Songs of John MacCodrum, Bard to Sir James MacDonald of Sleat* (Edinburgh: Scottish Gaelic Texts Society, 1938), at pp. xxiv-xxv, and note to "Aoir nan Tàilleirean", at pp. 269-72.

384 *Ibid*, at p. xxiv.

385 Derick Thomson, ed., *The Companion to Gaelic Scotland* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1983), at p. 191.

386 Allan MacDougall, *Orain Ghaidhealach: Le Ailein Dughallach fear ciuil an Ionbhar Lochaidh, maille ri Co'-chruinneachadh oran is dhan le le Ughdairibh eile* (Edinburgh, 1798).

387 John MacKenzie, ed., *Sar-Obair nam Bard Gaelach/The Beauties of Gaelic Poetry and Lives of the Highland Bards* (Edinburgh: John Grant, 1907), at pp. 324-5.

388 See the discussion in "context" to "Òran do dh' Aimearaga", poem 28.

grandfather of John MacLean, who lived in Balevulin, Tiree, and who died in 1783,389 was reputed also to have been the poet to the Laird of Coll, and may have received patronage in the form of finery, known as the poet's "bàidse", although, once again, the fact that he did not reside on the Coll estate suggests that he may not have received other material forms of patronage.390 Hector, the 13th Laird (c. 1690-1754), maintained a harper, Murdo MacDonald, "Murchadh Dòmhnallach", who had been trained in Ireland and who was still active in Coll in 1734.391 Colm Ó Baoill has identified seventeen praise poems composed between about 1537 and 1757 in honour of members of the Coll family, the earliest two of which were composed by the 5th Laird, Hector MacLean, "An Clèireach Beag", "The Little Clerk", who died about 1583,392 and whom "A Seneachie" described as "one of the most accomplished scholars of his day" who "devoted himself much to study, and took great pleasure in poetry, specimens of which in the Gaelic and Latin languages are still extant".393

The MacLeans of Coll were one of the senior branches of the MacLeans, and historically one of the more important families in the West Highlands and Islands. There is general agreement that they emerged in the early fifteenth century, although there are two versions of their precise origins. All three of the major nineteenth century histories of the MacLeans, those of "A Seneachie",394 J. P. MacLean395 and

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389 Urr. Eachann Camshron, *Na Baird Thirisdeach*, *supra*, at p. 38.

390 Eric Cregeen and Donald W. MacKenzie, *Tiree Bards and their Bardachd*, *supra*, at pp. 5-6.

391 Colm Ó Baoill, deas., *Duanaire Colach 1537-1757* (Obar-Dheathain: An Clò Gàidhealach, 1997), at p. xxxviii. J. P. MacLean notes the following: "The last harper in Mull, and perhaps the last in the Highlands, Murdoch MacDonald, was harper to MacLean of Coll. He was brought up in the family, and "studied with Rory Dall, in Skye, and afterward in Ireland, and remained with MacLean, as harper, until 1734, as appears from an account of payments still remaining, soon after which he appears to have retired to Quinish, in Mull, where he died. He is still spoken of as Murdoch Clarsair, and his son was distinguished as Eoin MacMhurchaidh Clarsair." J. P. MacLean, *A History of the Clan MacLean from its First Settlement at Duard Castle, in the Isle of Mull, to the Present Period* (Cincinnati: Robert Clarke & Co., 1889).

392 *Ibid*, at p. xxi.

393 'A Seneachie', *An Historical and Genealogical Account of the Clan Maclean, from its First Settlement at Castle Duart, in the Isle of Mull, to the Present Period* (Edinburgh: Laing and Forbes, 1838), at p. 307.

394 *Ibid.*

Alexander Maclean Sinclair,396 agree that Iain Garbh was the first chieftain of the MacLeans of Coll, and that he was a son of Lachlan Bronnach, the chief of the MacLeans of Duart,397 and grandson of Eachann Ruadh nan Cath, "Red Hector of the Battles", the chief of the MacLeans of Duart who died at the Battle of Harlaw in 1411, fighting on behalf of the Lords of the Isles against the Scottish Crown. However, the foremost contemporary historian of the MacLeans, Nicholas Maclean-Bristol, argues convincingly that the progenitor of the MacLeans of Coll and therefore the first Chief was a Lachlan MacLean, the father of Iain Garbh, and a brother of Eachann Ruadh nan Cath.398 It is likely that all of the nineteenth century accounts are based to a certain extent on oral traditions that were extant in the MacLean lands, and which are reflected in sources such as 'A Genealogical Account of the Mac Leans', a manuscript compiled in 1734 by Dr. Hector Maclean, younger of Gruline, and in the early nineteenth century manuscript compiled by Allan Maclean of Crossapol (1760-1832).399 Maclean-Bristol's account is based on a close scrutiny of early fifteenth century charters and Papal letters. According to the standard nineteenth century MacLean histories, Alexander MacLean, "Alasdair Ruadh", the Laird of Coll during John MacLean's time and the poet's patron, would be the fourteenth MacLean of

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395 J. P. MacLean, *supra.*

396 Alexander Maclean Sinclair, *The Clan Gillean* (Charlottetown: Haszard and Moore, 1899).

397 "A Seneachie", *supra*, at p. 306, J. P. MacLean, *supra*, at p. 283, and Alexander Maclean Sinclair, *The Clan Gillean*, *supra*, at pp. 367-8. J. P. MacLean and Alexander Maclean Sinclair claim that Iain Garbh was the third son of Lachlan Bronnach, while "A Seneachie" claims that he was the second son. J. P. MacLean and "A Seneachie" are agreed that his mother, "Fionnaghal" or "Fionovala", was a daughter of Macleod of Harris; Maclean Sinclair is silent on the matter.

398 Nicholas Maclean-Bristol, *Warriors and Priests: The History of the Clan MacLean 1300-1570* (Phantassie: Tuckwell, 1995), at pp. 31-34, and Table 2, at pp. 164-6, Table 4, at pp. 170-2, and Table 7, at pp. 190-3. According to Maclean-Bristol's account, both Lachlan MacLean, progenitor of the MacLeans of Coll, and Hector Ruadh nan Cath, chieftain of the MacLeans of Duart, were sons of Lachlan Lubanach, chief of the MacLeans of Duart from 1367 to 1390. Maclean-Bristol agrees that Iain Garbh's mother, the wife of Lachlan MacLean, was a daughter of William, "Uilleam Clèireach", MacLeod of Harris, but that her name was Anna: see pp. 33-4 and p. 171.

399 Nicholas Maclean-Bristol, *Hebridean Warriors 1400-1800: The Macleans of Coll and the British Army*, unpublished manuscript, "Preface", p. 1; I would like to express my sincere thanks to Maj. Maclean-Bristol for generously providing me with copies of his manuscript, which is soon to be published.

Coll;400 however, the Maclean-Bristol account of the clan's origins is preferred here, and therefore "Alasdair Ruadh" is referred to as the fifteenth Laird of Coll throughout this dissertation.

Lachlan MacLean, the first Laird of Coll, apparently obtained his lands, which consisted of much of the Isle of Coll, Quinish in north-west Mull and Auchilenan and Drimnin in north-west Morvern, from Donald, Lord of the Isles, sometime very early in the fifteenth century.401 According to oral tradition, the Isle of Coll had previously been in the possession of the Macaulays (Mac Amhlaidh), a family of Norse origins, who continued to have several strongholds on Coll and a dwelling on a crannog in Loch Amhlaidh. Lauchlan stopped at Coll on his way to Tiree, and was refused water by a local woman, who said that he did not deserve any water while the Norse were still in possession of the island. Ashamed, Lachlan apparently went to Mac Amhlaidh's crannog dressed as a harper. While his hosts slept, he gathered up their arms and threw them into the loch, and returned with his men and slaughtered all who resided on the crannog. The other Macaulay strongholds were overcome, and they were finally defeated at Grimsary Hill; those Macaulays who survived fled to North Uist.402 Lachlan completed the construction of the first Breacachadh Castle, had a son who became Iain Garbh, the second chief, and commissioned his own effigy at Iona.403 It is because they held their lands directly from the Lords of the Isles that the MacLeans of Coll jealously guarded their independence from the MacLeans of Duart, and throughout the sixteenth century there were ongoing disputes between the two

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400 Maclean Sinclair indicates that "Alasdair Ruadh" was the fifteenth chief: Maclean Sinclair, *The Clan Gillean*, *supra*, at p. 380. This, however, is because he recognized a John, Iain Mac Iain Gairbh, as the second chief, and another John, "Iain Abrach", as the third chief, whereas neither of the other nineteenth century histories nor Maclean-Bristol recognize any John other than "Iain Abrach", who all treat as the second chief.

401 Nicholas Maclean-Bristol, *Hebridean Warriors 1400-1800*, *supra*, Part I, Chapter 1, "The making of a Military Tradition", at p. 1.

402 Nicholas Maclean-Bristol, *Warriors and Priests*, *supra*, at pp. 33-34.

families, both due to Duart assertions that the family of Coll owed them fealty and with respect to title to church lands at either end of Coll, a dispute which was ultimately resolved in favour of the Duart family in legal proceedings in 1593.404 In other respects, though, the MacLeans of Coll tended to side with their Duart kindred. Like the MacLeans of Duart and other west coast clans, they saw the growth of Campbell power as a challenge and a threat.405 Like other MacLean kindreds, they ultimately took the Royalist side in the Civil Wars of the 1640s and early 1650s, and MacLeans of Coll were prominent at the heroic and disastrous stand at the Battle of Inverkeithing, in 1651.406 In the Jacobite rebellions, the MacLeans of Coll generally took the side of the Stuart claimants, although the 13th Laird, Hector, "Eachann Mac Dhòmhnaill Mhic Eachainn Ruaidh", was circumspect about the last Jacobite rebellion and apparently "used all his influence to keep his own followers and other members of his clan from joining Prince Charles in 1745".407

It was under the second chief, Iain Garbh, that the lands of the MacLeans of Coll reached their greatest extent, and Iain Garbh remained in many ways the archetypal heroic chieftain for the MacLeans of Coll down to John MacLean's age and even thereafter. It is unclear when his father, Lachlan, the first chief, died, but Lachlan's widow—and Iain Garbh's mother—Anna, remarried. Her new husband was Roderick MacNeill, the chief of the MacNeils of Barra. As Maclean-Bristol notes, Roderick MacNeill "acted the part of the wicked stepfather" to Iain Garbh, taking the young chief to Barra where he was effectively imprisoned while MacNeill

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403 *Ibid*, at p. 37.
404 Nicholas Maclean-Bristol, *Hebridean Warriors 1400-1800*, *supra*, at chapter 1, pp. 4-6.
405 See, generally, John L. Roberts, *Feuds, Forays and Rebellions: History of the Highland Clans 1475-1625* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1999), and Allan I Macinnes, *Clanship, Commerce and the House of Stuart, 1603-1788* (Phantassie: Tuckwell, 1996).
406 Nicholas Maclean-Bristol, *Hebridean Warriors 1400-1800*, *supra*, at chapter 4.
407 Alexander Maclean Sinclair, *The Clan Gillean*, *supra*, at p. 378. On 3 July, 1753, he received from King George II a charter of the lands of Coll, Quinish and Muck.

plotted as to how to usurp Iain Garbh's patrimony. The story of Iain Garbh's escape, return to Coll at "An Acarsaid Fhalaich" ("The Anchorage of Hiding") with the help of the local people, and his ultimate victory over his stepfather, which culminated in a ferocious battle in which Iain Garbh put MacNeill to death, with the help of his servant, the "Gille Riabhach" (the "Grizzly Lad"), whose prodigious backward leap over Grishipol burn to avoid the blow of MacNeill's foster brother was crucial to the outcome, survived in oral tradition in Coll, Tiree and Mull into the twentieth century.408 As a result of Iain Garbh's victory, Roderick MacNeill's heir, Gilleonan, fled to Ireland, and Iain Garbh occupied Barra and Boisdale in South Uist, where he built the castle of Calvay. Iain Garbh's occupation of Barra was said to have lasted for seven years, and it may be that he surrendered the MacNeil lands to Gilleonan in 1427, when the latter obtained a charter from Alexander of Islay, Lord of the Isles.409

In 1431, Iain Garbh and his foster brother Donald Balloch led a force in support of the Lord of the Isles against the Royal army under the command of Alexander, Earl of Mar, whom they routed at Inverlochy, Lochaber. It is said that lands forfeited by the Captain of Clan Cameron, who had deserted the Lord of the Isles before the battle, were given to Iain Garbh, and these were apparently held for a number of years until the Camerons defeated the MacLeans of Coll at Blarnicara, near Corpach, Lochaber, an engagement that resulted in the death of the Maclean of Coll

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408 There are numerous accounts, including the following: Hector MacDougall, ed., *Clasrach na Coille, a Collection of Gaelic Poetry by the Rev. A. Maclean Sinclair LL.D.* (Glasgow: Alex. MacLaren & Sons, 1928), at pp. 263-77; Eachann M. MacDhughaill, "Seann Eachdraidh Chollach", (1927-28) 34 *Transactions of the Gaelic Society of Inverness* 170; Rev. John Gregorson Campbell, *Waifs and Strays of Celtic Tradition, Argyllshire Series—No. V: Clan Traditions and Popular Tales of the Western Highlands and Islands* (London: David Nutt, 1895), at pp. 7-12; and Ann MacKenzie, *Island Voices: Traditions of North Mull air Bilibh an t-Sluaigh* (Edinburgh: Birlinn, 2002), at pp. 139-41, which is taken from an account by Henry Whyte, "Fionn", in *The Celtic Monthly*, vol. 8, 1899-1900.

409 Nicholas Maclean-Bristol, *Warriors and Priests*, *supra*, at pp. 38-40.

chief Iain Abrach ("John of Lochaber").410 It is from this chief that the MacLean of Coll patronymic, "Mac Iain Abraich", derives.

Iain Garbh was, however, responsible for making the Isle of Rum a more permanent part of the patrimony of the MacLeans of Coll. According to oral tradition, Iain Garbh obtained Rum from Roderick, the first chief of the Clanranald MacDonalds, in return for a galley. When Roderick discovered that the galley leaked, he refused to hand over Rum, and Iain Garbh responded by seizing and imprisoning him until he relented.411 As a result, the traditional patrimony of the MacLeans of Coll is considered to be Coll, Quinish and Muck, a formula repeated in numerous royal charters to successive Lairds.

The transformation of the Highland aristocracy from clan chiefs to mere commercial landlords began well before the 1746 Battle of Culloden and its aftermath, but the prevailing view is that the convulsions of the mid-eighteenth century marked the definitive end of the old order.412 Without doubt, all of the Highland aristocracy felt both the pressures and opportunities presented by the new commercial order that Culloden finally guaranteed. However, even in the post-Culloden era, certain families showed a reluctance to embrace fully the new order, or, perhaps more accurately, to jettison fully the old order, and the MacLeans of Coll appear to be one of these. Their ability to resist the new order was undoubtedly strengthened by the policies of Hector, the 13th Laird of Coll, "Eachainn mac Dhòmhnaill mhic Eachainn Ruaidh", who, as noted above, discouraged his followers

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410 *Ibid*, at pp. 44-5, p. 91, and Nicholas Maclean-Bristol, *Hebridean Warriors 1400-1800*, chapter 1, p. 2. There is some inconsistency between Maclean-Bristol's two accounts; in *Hebridean Warriors*, he suggests that the MacLeans of Coll held these Lochaber lands for about forty years, but in *Warriors and Priests*, he places the Battle of Blarnicara in the early sixteenth century, some eighty to ninety years after the Battle of Inverlochy.

411 Nicholas Maclean-Bristol, *Warriors and Priests*, *supra*, at pp. 45-7.

412 See, for example, Allan I. Macinnes, *Clanship, Commerce and the House of Stuart, 1603-1788*, *supra*, especially Chapter 8, "The Final Convulsion: Clanship to Clearance", and Andrew

from engaging in the ultimately disastrous final Jacobite campaign of 1745-6. According to Maclean Sinclair, Hector was "richly endowed with good sense, and managed his affairs with prudence"; although he found his estates "heavily burdened with debts", he "succeeded in paying them all, and also in laying some money by", and although he built a fine residence near the old Breacachadh Castle, he "lived in a style becoming his circumstances".413 At his death in 1754, Hector left a personal estate valued at £2284.14.1. He had, by prudent management, paid off the wadsets414 and other debts accumulated by his predecessors. He had made sure that most of his income came from resources from his own hands—in particular, cattle—rather than rents. He had involved himself in many contemporary commercial enterprises, such as stock breeding, arable farming, fishing, quarrying, distilling, brewing and money lending.415 And as was also noted above, he was perhaps the last chieftain to keep a harper, Murdo MacDonald, surely an indication of his commitment to the old chiefly values.

Hugh MacLean, the 14th Laird of Coll, brother of Hector and the father of Alasdair Ruadh, the 15th Laird and patron of John MacLean, pursued similar policies on the Coll estates. He, too, was very active in the cattle trade and in money lending, having lent money to the chief of the MacQuarries and having financed trade with Gothenburg in 1764. Through his prudence and business acumen, he was therefore able to avoid the loss of his estate to indebtedness, a problem which afflicted a large

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MacKillop, *'More Fruitful than the Soil': Army, Empire and the Scottish Highlands, 1715-1815* (Phantassie: Tuckwell, 2000), especially pp. 236-8.

413 Alexander Maclean Sinclair, *The Clan Gillean, supra*, at p. 378.

414 Wadsets were a form of mortgage commonly used by Highland chieftains and lairds to raise money from their estates.

415 Nicholas Maclean-Bristol, *Hebridean Decade: Mull, Coll and Tiree, 1761-1771* (Isle of Coll: The Society of West Highland and Island Research, 1982), at p. 31.

number of his inner Hebridean and western mainland neighbours in the 1760s.416 Like Hector, Hugh was also deeply committed to the values of the old order: he continued to educate the heir of the Maclonichs, who had been loyal allies in Lochaber of the MacLeans of Coll since the time of Iain Abrach; he encouraged James Macpherson, of "Ossian" fame, to visit South Uist to collect Gaelic manuscripts; he sent Donald, his heir, and older brother of Alasdair Ruadh, to Tiree to be fostered; and, he apparently retained a piper, Neil Rankin.417 By all accounts, Hugh was greatly esteemed by his tenants, and although the population of Coll rose considerably, there had been no emigration. Maclean-Bristol, quoting other sources, makes the following points:

> Dr. Walker comments on Hugh's popularity among his tenants. 'Their chieftain', he wrote, 'for whom they have the greatest affection, governs them with great equity and mildness, and lives amongst them in this remote island, like the master of a family consisting of above a thousand people.' Pennant, who visited Rum in 1772, describes Hugh as 'a landlord mentioned by the natives with much affection'.418

In fact, Hugh was not resident in Coll throughout the year. At the instigation of his brother-in-law, Roderick Macleod, who was sub-principal of King's College, Aberdeen, Hugh purchased a home in Old Aberdeen so that his heir, Donald, "Young Coll" could be educated there, and Hugh was ultimately appointed Provost of Old Aberdeen in 1779. He continued to visit Coll, though, and maintained his interest in

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416 *Ibid*; see, in particular, pp. 19-29. In the late 1760s, even Maclaine of Lochbuie's affairs were thought to be desperate: p. 29.

417 *Ibid*, at pp. 29-30. This is commented upon by Dr. Johnson on his tour in 1773, who also notes, though, on how unusual this had become: "The solace which the bagpipe can give, they have long enjoyed; but among other changes, which the last Revolution [i.e. Culloden and its aftermath] introduced, the use of the bagpipe begins to be forgotten. Some of the chief families still entertain a piper, whose office was anciently hereditary. Macrimmon was piper to Macleod, and Rankin to Maclean of Col (sic). The tunes of the bagpipe are traditional. There has been in Sky (sic), beyond all time of memory, a college of pipers, under the direction of Macrimmon, which is not quite extinct. There was another in Mull, superintended by Rankin, which expired about sixteen years ago. To these colleges, while the pipe retained its honour, the students of musick repaired for education. I have had my dinner exhilarated by the bagpipe, at Armidale, at Dunvegan, and in Col (sic)": Peter Levi, ed., *Samuel Johnson and James Boswell, A Journey to the Western Isles of Scotland and The Journal of a Tour to the Hebrides* (London: Penguin. 1984), at p. 107.

his people there. Maclean-Bristol offers this assessment of Hugh's stewardship:

> Careful management of his affairs brought him sufficient income to live well without rack-renting his tenants. [Dr. Samuel] Johnson states that leases in Coll seemed to [be] very profitable to the tenants.419 Rents had been paid at least partly in kind until 1766, and as late as 1775 they had not been raised, for Alexander, Coll's second son [and the eventual 15th Laird], then wrote: 'My father has not yet by raising his rents and other harsh usages forced his tenants to leave their country as many other proprietors have done; in fact there are actually at present too many people on the estate; and more of the ancient attachment subsists between him and his tenants than most Highlanders can now boast of . . .'.420

These very same values seem to have been handed down to the next generation. Donald MacLean, "Young Coll", the eldest son of Hugh, the 14th Laird, who drowned in the Sound of Ulva on 25 September, 1774 and who consequently never assumed the lairdship, made a most favourable impression on Samuel Johnson and James Boswell, who met him on Skye and accompanied him to Coll in the autumn of 1773. Boswell made the following observation:

> We had a very good ride, for about three miles, to Talisker, where Colonel M'Leod introduced us to his lady. We found here Mr Donald M'Lean, the young Laird of Col (nephew to Talisker), to whom I delivered the letter with which I had been favoured by his uncle, Professor M'Leod, at Aberdeen. He was a little lively young man. We found he had been a good deal in England, studying farming, and was resolved to improve the value of his father's lands, without oppressing his tenants, or losing the ancient Highland fashions.421

This was Dr. Johnson's impression of Donald:

> We were at Col under the protection of the young laird, ... Wherever we roved, we were pleased to see the reverence with which his subjects regarded him. He did not endeavour to dazzle them by any magnificence of dress: his only distinction was a feather in his bonnet; but as soon as he appeared, they forsook their work and clustered about him: he took them by the hand, and they seemed mutually delighted. He has the proper disposition of a chieftain,

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418 *Ibid*, at p. 29.

419 Dr. Johnson had this to say about rents in Coll in 1773: "If the inhabitants of Col have nothing to give [i.e. to beggars], it is not that they are oppressed by their landlord: their leases seem to be very profitable. One farmer [identified by Peter Levi as Neil Maclean], who pays only seven pounds a year, has maintained seven daughters and three sons, of whom the eldest is educated at Aberdeen for the ministry; and now, at every vacation, opens a school in Col [identified by Levi as Donald MacLean]": Peter Levi, ed., *Samuel Johnson and James Boswell*, *supra*, at pp. 126-7.

420 *Ibid*, at p. 30.

421 Peter Levi, ed., *Samuel Johnson and James Boswell*, *supra*, at p. 310.

> and seems desirous to continue the customs of his house. The bagpiper played regularly, when dinner was served, whose person and dress made a good appearance; and he brought no disgrace upon the family of Rankin, which has long supplied the Lairds of Col with hereditary musick.422

Alexander, Alasdair Ruadh, the second son of Hugh, the 14th Laird, was born in about 1754, and he assumed the Lairdship on the death of his father on 4 May, 1786, the year before the birth of John MacLean, his future poet. He had studied law for some time, with the intention of following it as a profession, but abandoned his studies on the death of his brother Donald in 1774. He was for some time a captain in the Argyll Fencible regiment, which was embodied in April, 1778, and was appointed lieutenant-colonel in the Breadalbane Fencibles in about 1794. He married Catherine, the eldest daughter of Captain Allan Cameron of Glendessary, with whom he had one son, Hugh, the future 16th Laird, and six daughters.423 Like Donald, he was a patron of the Gaelic arts: not only did he patronise John MacLean, but he continued to patronise the Rankin piper identified by Dr. Johnson, likely Neil Rankin (d. 1819), who as just noted had served as piper to Hugh, the 14th Laird, and at least one other piper, Duncan MacMaster, who won the Highland Society of London's first prize for piping in 1805, and who was identified as "Piper to the Laird of Coll". Neil Rankin was married to Catherine MacLean, a great-granddaughter of Donald, the 12th Laird of Coll, and their son, Conduillie, who was born about 1774, and who died in 1852 in Charlottetown, Prince Edward Island, where he had earlier emigrated, had been trained by Neil. The Isle of Coll was the home of great piping in the second half of the eighteenth century and the first quarter of the ninieteenth, the period of Alexander's Lairdship.424 'A Seneachie' commented shortly after Alexander's death that he was "as much respected for the independence of his character, as he was

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422 *Ibid*, at p. 125.

423 Alexander Maclean Sinclair, *The Clan Gillean*, *supra*, at pp. 380-1.

beloved for his benevolent and generous nature", and that he "will long live in the affectionate nature of those who best knew him".425 J. P. MacLean, no doubt drawing on 'A Seneachie', repeated this assessment, and added that Alexander was "a thorough Highlander" and that "[h]e treated his tenants with great kindness".426 Maclean Sinclair added this assessment:

> Alasdair Ruadh was of an independent spirit, and somewhat quick-tempered. He was manly, obliging, and benevolent, and treated his tenants with thorough kindness. He was a chieftain of great popularity.427

Something of this benevolence and fidelity to older values is attested to by accounts from about 1811, reported by Eric Richards. Richards notes that according to an observer, the agricultural reporter James Macdonald, the Isle of Coll carried at least one third too many people. Richards notes the following:

> Its [i.e. the Isle of Coll's] proprietor was caught in a dilemma. He could not bring himself to evict the surplus people, yet there seemed no humane alternative except further sub-division and congestion, which would only depress further the average levels of welfare. The sine qua non of any agricultural improvement was the introduction of large tenants with capital. Meanwhile the condition of the people worsened and the landlord was forced to forego large amounts of rent because he was under 'the necessity of maintaining three or four hundred souls of a superfluous population'. The alternative – viz. 'forcibly driving them away from the dwellings of their fathers, without capital, trade, or any other visible means of subsistence' – was utterly unthinkable.428

The foregoing passage attests to the commitment of Alexander Maclean to the old Gaelic values, right into the second decade of the nineteenth century, but it also shows the increasing difficulties faced by those few Highland landlords who sought to mediate between these older values and the new realities and commercial imperatives

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424 John G. Gibson, *Old and New World Highland Bagpiping* (Montreal and Kingston: McGill-Queen's, 2002), at pp. 79-82.

425 'A Seneachie', *An Historical and Genealogical Account of the Clan MacLean*, *supra*, at p. 315.

426 J. P. MacLean, *A History of the Clan MacLean*, *supra*, at p. 290.

427 Alexander Maclean Sinclair, *The Clan Gillean*, *supra*, at p. 382.

of the age. The high price of cattle and of kelp during the period of the Napoleonic Wars was almost certainly a significant source of income for the Laird of Coll, and may have allowed him to pursue the policies of his forebears longer than was the case on many other neighbouring estates. However, as Richards notes, this state of affairs did not outlast the end of the Napoleonic Wars in 1815, when the demand for both cattle and kelp dropped, and depression and long-term decline set in.429

This, then, is the backdrop against which John MacLean composed much of his praise poetry in favour of Alexander MacLean, the 15th Laird of Coll, and his son and heir, Hugh. Alexander and his immediate predecessors had sought bravely to preserve many of the old values of the Gaelic Highlands and of the clan system, but economic pressures of the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries were making this an increasingly difficult task. These tensions are, as we shall see, evident in the poetry of John MacLean, who showed himself to be an astute observer of this reality.

In many respects, the praise poetry composed by John MacLean for the Coll family is typical of the broader Scottish Gaelic panegyric tradition, in terms of both the rhetorical conventions and metres it employed, and the purposes for which it was deployed. Dr. John MacInnes has argued that the panegyric tradition is fundamental to our understanding of traditional Gaelic verse as a whole, and has summarised the purposes and forms of the tradition in the following terms:

> The primary function (of *bardachd* is to be found) in clan panegyric, where the stress is on the survival of the group of warrior-hunters at the top of society. The diction is codified in sets of conventional images, most densely concentrated in the heroic elegy composed at the point of crisis brought about by the death of a leader – in other words, when it was most necessary to reaffirm the traditional values of the community.430

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428 Eric Richards, *The Highland Clearances: People, Landlords and Rural Turmoil* (Edinburgh: Birlinn, 2000), at p. 48; Richards was drawing here on J. Macdonald, *General View of the Agriculture of the Hebrides* (London, 1811), at pp. 102-7.

429 *Ibid.*

430 Dr. John MacInnes, "The Panegyric Code in Gaelic Poetry and its Historical Background", (1976-78) 50 *Transactions of the Gaelic Society of Inverness* 435, at pp. 435-6.

Implicit in MacInnes' argument here is that the Gaelic panegyric tradition is not simply about the preservation of the chiefly class, but also about the re-articulation, diffusion and defence of the values of the community, values which the chiefly class was meant to both embody and defend. MacInnes goes on to argue that the poet's role within such a tradition is different from that to which a twentieth or twenty-first century reader is accustomed, in which originality of language and observation and the expression of personal feeling and individual perception is expected.431 Referring to two typical examples of the Gaelic panegyric tradition,432 MacInnes makes the following observation:

> [T]hey resemble each other in that they both give the impression, on the one hand, that the authors were less concerned with direct personal feelings about the man or men who fell than with the social order to which all of them belonged; on the other, that there is nevertheless enough personal feeling to make us think that the poet is constrained to speak this way because it is the proper convention to follow. *Individual emotion may be present but must not obtrude. We also feel that the poems are not so much a lament for the passing of this style of life (not "the end of the world") as devices for reinforcing it by a recital of its virtues: almost as if the authors might have felt that this bardic rehearsal would help avert the threat.*433 (emphasis added)

Colm Ó Baoill has summarised the argument very effectively by noting that there is not much room in this poetic tradition for personal opinions or feelings, and that the prime role of the poet in the tradition was the maintenance and strengthening of the status quo, and of the position of the chief as the central agent in that status quo.434

What emerges from the purposes which inform this poetry is an entire

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431 See, for example, Ronald Black, ed., *An Lasair: Anthology of 18th Century Scottish Gaelic Verse* (Edinburgh: Birlinn, 2001), at "Introduction", pp. xvii-xix.

432 A poem on the Rout of Glen Fruin, found in *Scottish Gaelic Studies*, vol. 8, at p. 17, and "Saighdean Ghlinn Lìobhann", found in W. J. Watson's *Bàrdachd Ghàidhlig*, at pp. 239-41.

433 Dr. John MacInnes, "The Panegyric Code in Gaelic Poetry and its Historical Background", *supra*, at p. 446.

434 Colm Ó Baoill, ed., *Duanaire Colach 1537-1757*, *supra*, at pp. xli-xlii.

rhetorical system, explored to some extent by W. J. Watson and others,435 but systematically analysed by Dr. John MacInnes in his foundational article "The Panegyric Code in Gaelic Poetry and its Historical Background", the motifs of which have been usefully elaborated and summarised by Ronald Black.436 The commonplaces of this system of rhetoric are abundantly present in the praise poems of John MacLean for the Coll family. However, we see emerging in his deployment of these commonplaces particular concerns and preoccupations which are reflective of the poet's world and of the conditions he observed at the start of the nineteenth century. While this is, in the words of Sorley Maclean, poetry in the "panegyric style", it is clearly poetry of the nineteenth century, not the eighteenth.

MacInnes notes that a fundamental aspect of the panegyric code is the positioning of the subject of the poetry within his "dùthchas", his patrimony, and this aspect is referred to by MacInnes as "Address to subject".437 Ronald Black summarises it as "the Chief's Background: Geographical, Genealogical and Historical".438 The subject is typically referred to by his patronymic—the traditional style and title—and place-names which are part of the historical territory of the clan are frequently mentioned. In the praise poetry of John MacLean for the family of Coll, the "address to subject" manifests itself primarily in the repeated reference to their traditional territories. Thus, we have references to that territory comprising "Pàirt do Mhuile, Cola 's Rùm",439 references to Alasdair Ruadh as "Tighearna Chola is Chuimhnis",440 and references to Rum, Coll and Quinish being under his

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435 See, for example, William J. Watson, "Classic Gaelic Poetry of Panegyric in Scotland", (1914-19) 29 *Transactions of the Gaelic Society of Inverness* 194.

436 See, for example, Ronald Black, "The Panegyric Code", in *An Lasair*, *supra*, at pp. 525-7.

437 Dr. John MacInnes, "The Panegyric Code in Gaelic Poetry and its Historical Background", *supra*, at p. 450, *et seq*.

438 Ronald Black, *An Lasair*, *supra*, at p. 525.

439 "Part of Mull, Coll and Rum ": poem 1, line 40.

440 "The Laird of Coll and Quinish ": poem 32, line 91.

tribute and control.441 Indeed, two songs, poems 2 and 8, are celebrations of the extension of this patrimony, first by the purchase by Alexander MacLean, 15th Laird of Coll, of the Isle of Muck in about 1814, and then by the acquisition in about 1818 by his heir, Hugh, the future 16th laird, of certain rights in respect of lands in Mull.442 Thus, in poem 3, the poet notes the following: "Gu bheil Rùm, is Cola, is Cuimhnis/Air an dìonachadh fo 'staoidhle,/'S Eilean na' Muc, an tìr ìosal/Na bha 'dhith orra don oighreachd".443

While there are many references to the territories of the MacLeans of Coll, we tend not to see use of the traditional patronymics of their chieftains: "Mac Mhic Iain", or "Mac Iain Abraich". This may be due to the personal proclivities of the poet. It may, however, reflect a certain preoccupation with the territorial aspects of the patrimony of the MacLeans of Coll. This would certainly be in keeping with the age in which the poet lived, for the loss by neighbouring aristocratic families of traditional territories was becoming increasingly common from at least the 1760s. The poet's concern with the preservation of the territories of the Coll estate and the perceived threat to the integrity of those territories is a recurrent theme in this poetry, as we shall see. The possession of traditional lands is still seen by the poet as the key in any effort to maintain the traditional structure of the society in which he lived.

A more symbolic evocation of the patrimony of a noble family is its coat of arms, and John MacLean makes repeated reference both to the "bratach", or banner, and the "suaicheantas", the crest or coat of arms, of the MacLeans of Coll. Such symbols are not motifs highlighted by either MacInnes or Black, but for the poet,

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441 "Tha Rùm, 's Cola, 's Cuimhnis/Fo chìs agaidh gun dèidh"/"Rum, and Coll, and Quinish/Are under your tribute without contest": Poem 2, lines 69-70.

442 As is noted in the discussion of the "context" to this poem in chapter 6, below, John MacLean composed the poem on hearing that Hugh had purchased Penmore, in Mull; in fact, it appears that Hugh had purchased the northern part of Aros, in Mull, and the swathe of land south of Dervaig, Mull.

these symbols are clearly important evocations of the patrimony of the Coll family. It is possible that such references are later developments in the rhetoric of praise, and the best and most extended examples of John MacLean's use of these symbols can be found in the two poems to Alexander, the 15th Laird, one composed in Canada in 1828, on his giving up of his estates, and the other in 1835, on his death.444 In poem 31, for example, the poet devotes an entire stanza445 to a description of the coat of arms which decorates the family's standard: a tree, ship, salmon and greyhound, a beautiful eagle, a Lochaber axe held by a red hand, and the motto "ceannsaich na bàsaich".446 The poet then expressly links the coat of arms to the heroic, martial values for which, in the poet's view, it stands by way of an animal kenning (as we shall see, one of the other commonplaces of this poetry): "Gu' robh 'n dream bhon a dh'fhàs thu/Anns na blaraibh mar leòghainn".447 Similarly, the poet devotes an entire stanza in poem 32, to the crest, where it is described in virtually the same way as in poem 31.

Another of the commonplaces of traditional Gaelic praise poetry is an enumeration of relationships with those who provide support to the particular aristocratic family. MacInnes refers to this commonplace as the enumeration of "allies", and argues that its purpose was to reinforce the sense of security of the clan by reference to its mutual loyalties.448 The enumeration of allies also serves the purpose of emphasising the esteem and dignity of the particular kindred. This commonplace is employed with great regularity by John MacLean in the poetry he

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443 "That Rum, and Coll and Quinish are/Now secured under his title,/And the Isle of Muck, the low-lying land/That they had lost as part of the estate": poem 3, lines 37-40.

444 Poems 31 and 32 in this dissertation.

445 Lines 65-70.

446 "conquer or die".

447 "The folk from whom you descended/Were like lions in the battles": lines 71-2.

448 Dr. John MacInnes, "The Panegyric Code in Gaelic Poetry and its Historical Background", *supra*, at pp. 448-50.

composed for the Coll family. In particular, the poet makes the general rhetorical claim that the family's friendships are numerous, and that these powerful and important friends would willingly provide support in time of need.449 There are also frequent references to particular clans with which the MacLeans of Coll have particular relationships.

One such set of clan relationships is through marriage. For example, the MacLeans of Coll had particularly close marital relationships with the Camerons of Glendessary. Alexander, the 15th Laird, was married to Catherine, the eldest daughter of Captain Allan Cameron of Glendessary, by whom he had Hugh, the 16th Laird. Two of Alexander's younger brothers, Roderick and Allan, were also married to daughters of Capt. Cameron, Christina and Jean. Capt. Cameron's wife Sibella was herself a close relative of her three stepsons, as she was the fifth daughter of Hector, "Eachann Mac Dhòmhnaill Mhic Eachainn Ruaidh" (d. 1754), the 13th Laird and brother of Hugh, the 14th Laird and father of Alexander, Roderick, and Allan.450 The Camerons of Glendessary were a senior Cameron sept, closely related to the family of Lochiel, and the Camerons are frequently mentioned and their martial qualities praised by the poet. For example, in both of the poems John MacLean composed for Hugh, the future 16th Laird, his Cameron heritage, acquired through his mother, is highlighted:

Dream eile nach sòradh	Another family who would not shun
'Dol 'an carraid na 'n còmhstrì,	Going into a conflict or a battle,
Clann Chamshroin bho Lòchaidh,	Clan Cameron from Lochy,
Fir mhòra neo-sgàthach,	Great and brave men,
'Bha armailteach, eòlach,	Who were trained in arms, and skilful,
Ro-dhìolail do Dheòrsa,	Exceedingly vengeful for [King] George,
Ged a sheas iad thar òrdaigh	Though they stood against his order

449 See, for example, poem 3, lines 113-20, which begins: "Tha iad ann an Albainn lionmhor,/Càirdean dìleas don Tighearn' òg seo,/Nam biodh uireasaibh na feum air/Dheanadh èirigh leis 'ga chòmhnadh"/"They are numerous in Scotland,/Friends loyal to this young laird,/Who would rise if he was lacking or in need/And would rise with him to provide assistance". See also poem 3, lines 177-84.

450 Rev. Alexander Maclean Sinclair, *The Clan Gillean*, *supra*, at pp. 378-83.

Nuair a dh'fhògradh Rìgh Tearlach. When King Charles was banished.451

It is notable that the poet highlights in the last two lines their loyalty to the Stuart claimants; as MacInnes has pointed out, loyalty is itself a virtue that is commonly praised in the Gaelic panegyric tradition, and loyalty is invariably measured by loyalty to the Royalist or, from 1688, the Jacobite cause.452 In spite of the fact that by the early nineteenth century, Jacobitism had become archaic, such references show its continued symbolic potency.

The Coll family also had close marital ties with MacLeod septs. The wife of Hugh, the 14th Laird and mother of Alexander, the 15th Laird, was Janet, the third daughter of Donald Macleod, the third Macleod of Talisker, Skye. Mary, the third daughter of Hector, "Eachann Mac Dhòmhnaill mhic Eachainn Ruaidh" (d. 1754), the 13th Laird, was married in 1745 to Captain John Macleod of Talisker. The first wife of Donald, "Dòmhnall Mac Eachainn Ruaidh" (1656-1729), the 12th Laird, and mother of Hector, the 13th Laird, was Isabel, a daughter of Sir Roderick Macleod of Talisker, and his second wife was Marion, a daughter of Sir Norman Macleod of Bernera. There is some tradition that before his marriage to Isabel, Donald had been married to a daughter of John Macleod of Dunvegan. Florence, a daughter of Lachlan, "Lachann Mac Eachainn Ruaidh", the 10th Laird, was married to John Macleod of Talisker. Finally, Lachlan (b. c. 1582), the 7th Laird, was said to have

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451 Poem 8, lines 249-56; for other similar extended Cameron references, see poem 3, lines 145-52, where Lochiel is referred to by his patronymic, "MacDhòmhnaill Duibh", and not only Lochy but Lochaber are mentioned, and poem 32, lines 121-28, where the poet claims that it is not surprising that Cameron of Lochiel would be loyal to Alexander's wife (again, a daughter of Cameron of Glendessary), and his fierceness in battle are praised. For more limited references, see poem 31, lines 125-6, where the Camerons of Lochiel are referred to as "Fir mheanmnach o Lòcha"/ "Courageous men from Lochy", poem 7, lines 127-8, where reference is made to Lochiel territories, in particular Achnacarry, and poem 2, lines 167-8.

452 Dr. John MacInnes, "The Panegyric Code in Gaelic Poetry and its Historical Context", *supra*, at p. 455: "The whole concept of leadership and loyalty is given an extra dimension by Royalism, from the Montrose Wars to the Forty-Five. The subject is always *rìoghail*, loyal to the true king but also participating in kingly virtues. We might say that from the time of James VII's deposition, Jacobitism

been a particularly good friend of Sir Rory Mòr Macleod, the 16th chief at the time of James VI,453 two of whose sons, Roderick and Norman, were the progenitors of the Talisker and Bernera families, and Lachlan himself married Florence, a daughter of Tormod MacLeod of Dunvegan.454 Thus, MacLeod of Dunvegan is enumerated by John MacLean as a potential ally, and his martial qualities and the fearsome reputation of his clansmen are praised.455 In poem 31, the poet argues that all of the senior branches of the MacLeods are loyal supporters: "'S gum bu dìleas ri d' ghualainn/'Thigeadh uaislean nan Leòdach".456 In poem 32, his elegy on the death of Alexander MacLean of Coll, John MacLean makes the marital connection to the MacLeods through Alexander's mother explicit, and again highlights the ferocity of the MacLeods of Dunvegan as warriors and makes reference to their fabled "bratach shìth", or "fairy banner".457

Another family having marital links to the Macleans of Coll are the Campbells of Lochnell; the first wife of Hector, "Eachann Mac Dhòmhnaill Mhic Eachainn Ruaidh", the 13th Laird, was Janet, the fourth daughter of Alexander Campbell of Lochnell. Campbell of Lochnell is also enumerated as one of the allies of the family of Coll, and they are praised for their heroic service in the British army in the Napoleonic campaigns in Spain.458

Another fundamentally important set of relationships are those of the clan itself, and therefore various MacLean families are enumerated as allies and praised accordingly. Chief amongst these are the Maclaines of Lochbuie—"Tha ceann-

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is one of the architectonic influences on Gaelic poetry, exercising a real if usually somewhat distant control—an exact reflection of its control upon the order of society."

453 Frank Adam, revised by Sir Thomas Innes of Learney, *The Clans, Septs and Regiments of the Scottish Highlands* (Stirling: Johnston and Bacon, 1984), at p. 262.

454 Alexander Maclean Sinclair, *The Clan Gillean*, *supra*, at pp. 371-80.

455 See, for example, poem 3, lines 153-60.

456 "And standing loyally shoulder to shoulder/Would come the nobles of Clan MacLeod": lines 123-4.

feadhna à Locha Buidhe,/'Thigeadh uidheamach 'na chòmhdhail"459—and the MacLeans of Ardgour:

Th' aig a' Chòirneal Mac Mhic Eòghain	Colonel MacLean of Ardgour has
Buidheann mhòr do dh' fhearaibh calma,	A great company of bold men,
Gaisgeil, gasta an uair a thàirnte iad,	Heroic and excellent when raised,
'Fhuair an àrach 'measg nan garbh chrìoch;	Who were raised in the rough bounds.460

The nineteenth century histories of the MacLeans suggest an historic link between the MacLeans and the MacKenzies of Seaforth, although there does not seem to be much basis for such claims. Nonetheless, it is clear that John MacLean accepted such a link, for the MacKenzies of Seaforth are also frequently included by him amongst the "allies" of the Macleans of Coll:

Bhiodh MacCoinnich mòr a' tuath leibh	Great MacKenzie of the north would be with you
'S a chuid uaislean bho Cheann t-sàile,	And his nobles from Kintail,
'S beag an t-ioghnadh an t-Iarla Rìoghail	Little wonder that this Royal Earl
Seo 'bhith leibh gun dìbir càirdeis,	Is with you without forsaking friendship,
Bhon is ionann cùis mum bidh sibh	Since you are concerned about the same cause
'S a bha 'n t-sìnnsearachd on d' fhàs sibh,	And the descendants from which you sprung,
Nuair a thàinig iad don Rìoghachds',	When they first came to this Kingdom,
A bha dìleas do shliochd bhràithrean.	Were loyal to the descendants of brothers.461

John MacLean was not alone in accepting this linkage with the MacKenzies; indeed, Mull tradition in the seventeenth century was very conscious of the historical and purported genealogical links between the MacLeans and the MacKenzies,462 something hinted at, for example, in Eachann Bacach's "*Iorram* do Shir Lachann", composed in perhaps 1634 or 1635 for Sir Lachlann Maclean of Duart.463 A small

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457 Poem 32, lines 113-20.

458 Poem 3, lines 169-76.

459 "There is a chieftain in Lochbuie/Who would come well-fitted to his [i.e. the Laird of Coll's] gathering": poem 3, lines 121-2, and see also lines 123-4; for further references, see poem 32, lines 109-10; in both cases, MacLean of Lochbuie is referred to by reference to "Loch-Buidhe".

460 Poem 3, lines 129-32, and see lines 133-6; for further references, see poem 2, line 113, and poem 32 lines 111-2, and in all cases, MacLean of Ardgour is referred to by his patronymic, "Mac Mhic Eòghain".

461 Poem 3, lines 137-44. For further references, see poem 31, lines 121-2, and poem 32, lines 129-36.

462 See William Matheson, "Traditions of the Mackenzies", (1942-50) 39/40 *Transactions of the Gaelic Society of Inverness* 193, at p. 217, p. 224.

463 "Mac Coinnich bu leat-s' e,/Bha e dìleas dod' phearsain:/Bha siod sgrìbht' ann an cart Chlann Ghill-Eòin"/"MacKenzie was yours,/he was ever loyal to your person:/that has been written in the cartulary of the Macleans": see Colm Ó Baoill, ed., *Bàrdachd Chloinn Ghill-Eathain/Eachann Bacach and other Maclean Poets* (Edinburgh: The Scottish Gaelic Texts Society, 1979), at pp. 8-9.

number of other clans or their chieftains to which the Macleans of Coll had no obvious relationship through marriage or family pedigree are also occasionally enumerated by John MacLean as "allies", and this may have been due to personal friendships between Alexander Maclean of Coll and these lairds, as the poet himself implies in one case.464 Two such chieftains are MacDonald of Sleat465 and Campbell of Breadalbane.466

It is notable that John MacLean makes reference not only to Highland families with whom the Coll family share kinship, marital or friendship ties, but also to the connections of the family outside of the Gaelic Highlands. For example, the poet notes that Alexander MacLean, the 15th Laird, was respected throughout Scotland,467 but also in London468 and in Edinburgh.469 This can be seen as an aspect of the theme of "allies", as it is a device by which the poet highlights the wide influence of the subject. Similar references were, for example, employed by Màiri NicGilleathain, the Coll poetess, in her elegy for Lachlan Maclean, the Coll chief who was drowned in the River Lochy, Lochaber, in August, 1687,470 and by Mairearad nighean Lachlainn, in "Gaoir nam Ban Muileach", the elegy she composed for Sir John Maclean of Duart, who died of consumption in March, 1716, after having fought on the Jacobite side at the Battle of Sherriffmuir.471 Such references in the poetry of John MacLean are,

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464 In respect of Campbell of Breadalbane: poem 2, line 82.

465 See, for example, poem 3, lines 161-8, and poem 31, lines 127-8.

466 See poem 2, line 82.

467 "Tha e measail ann an Albainn,/'S mòr an dearbhadh air a chliù"/"He is respected in Scotland,/Great is the evidence of his fame": poem 1, lines 49-50.

468 "Nuair a thèid e bhuainn do Lunnainn,/Gheibh e urram leis gach Diùc"/"When he leaves us for London,/He'll find esteem from every Duke": poem 1, lines 51-52.

469 "'S lìonmhor feum air 'an Dun Èideann,/'S cuid d' a euchd a bhith 'nan cùirt"/"There is plenty of need for him in Edinburgh,/A share of his feats in their court": poem 1, lines 53-54.

470 "Chaidh thu tamall do dh'Eirinn,/Don Eiphid 's don Spàinn/'S an uair a chaidh thu do Lunnainn/Gun d'fhuair thu an urram far chàch"/"You went for a while to Ireland,/To Egypt and to Spain/And when you went to London/You won respect beyond all others": see Colm Ó Baoill, deas., *Duanaire Colach 1537-1757*, *supra*, at p. 12.

471 The poem begins with these lines: "'S goirt leam gaoir nam ban Muileach,/Iad ri caoineadh 's ri tuireadh/Gun Sir Iain an Lunnainn/No san Fhraing air cheann turais"/"Bitter to me is the Mull

however, also indicative of the age in which the poet lived, in which ever increasing integration within the Scottish, and British, mainstream was a fact of life for both the Highland aristocracy and the rank-and-file of Gaelic society. As we shall see, this integration was a source of considerable concern for John MacLean, and he showed a keen awareness of the potential corrupting influences of non-Gaelic society on Gaelic values and the real dangers that this integration posed to individual Gaels of both high and low station. At the same time, respect in that foreign society was a mark of some pride to the poet, and the ability to operate with some authority in that society was clearly considered by him to be a matter of increasing importance. Once again, the poet demonstrates a keen and realistic eye, and applies conventional motifs creatively in a changing context.

One might have expected that John MacLean would have enumerated regularly the MacLeans of Duart, the senior MacLean kindred, amongst the "allies", in spite of the tension which existed between the MacLeans of Coll and the family of Duart in the seventeenth century, referred to above. However, such references are few and oblique,472 although there are, as shall be demonstrated shortly, many references to general MacLean history. Indeed, the poet takes a generally critical stance in respect of the MacLeans of Duart. This can only be understood in the context of MacLean history.

The praise poetry composed by John MacLean for the Coll family can and should be placed in a wider tradition of MacLean poetry. A considerable amount of this wider tradition has been explored by Colm Ó Baoill, who notes that the central preoccupation of the MacLean poets of the seventeenth and eighteenth century is "Dol

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women's cry/As they mourn and lament/That Sir John's not in London/Or in France on a tour": See Ronald Black, *An Lasair*, *supra*, at pp. 60-1.

472 See, for example, poem 3, at lines 125-8.

sìos Chloinn Ghill-Eathain", the "decline of Clan MacLean".473 The great period of MacLean expansion in the West Highlands and inner Hebrides was the fifteenth century—the period in which the MacLeans of Coll emerge and, as explored earlier, expand—but this expansion had virtually come to an end in the sixteenth century, a period of flux in which the roots of the "dol sìos" were laid. Two factors appear to be of particular importance: first, the rise of the Campbells, and their competition with the MacDonalds, in which the MacLeans of Duart got entangled; and, second, the financial difficulties into which successive Duart chiefs fell, initiated by Eachann Òg, the 12th chief, who died in 1573, and who was said to have left the estate in debt "by his folly and extravagance".474 From about 1577 until 1598, the Duart chieftain Lachlan Mòr was engaged in a "gory war" with the MacDonalds over lands in Islay, in which the Campbells, for strategic reasons, supported the MacLeans. It ended in disaster for the MacLeans of Duart: Lachlan Mòr was heavily defeated, and lost his own life, at the Battle of Tràigh Ghruinneard in Islay on 5 August, 1598, a setback which John MacLean recalls in his elegy on the death of Alexander Maclean of Coll, poem 32:

'S iomadh call dhaibh a dh'èirich	Many of those who rose were lost
Eadar cogadh is eucoir, ri 'n àm,	Between war and crimes, in their time,
Air Tràigh Ghruinneart an Ile	On the beach of Gruinard in Islay
Thuit Sir Lachann, am mìlidh gun mheang;	Sir Lachlan fell, the faultless hero;475

As Ó Baoill notes, this defeat marked the definitive end of the expansion of MacLean power, and the beginning of the "dol sìos".476

According to Maclean Sinclair, there must have been considerable debt on the Duart estates when Sir Lachlann MacLean, the sixteenth chief, obtained possession of

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473 Colm Ó Baoill, ed., *Bàrdachd Chloinn Ghill-Eathain/Eachann Bacach and other Maclean Poets*, *supra*; see pp. xxxvii-xliii, from which this summary account is largely drawn.

474 Alexander Maclean Sinclair, *The Clan Gillean*, *supra*, at p. 106.

475 Poem 32, lines 73-6.

476 Colm Ó Baoill, *Bàrdachd Chloinn Ghill-Eathain*, *supra*, at p. xxxix.

them, which Ó Baoill estimates to be between 1630 and 1633.477 Sir Lachlann was forced to borrow money in 1634, and Gilleasbuig Caoch (1598-1661), Lord Lorn and later Marquis of Argyll, chief of the Campbells of Argyll, became surety for the loan, and Sir Lachlann accepted Gilleasbuig as his feudal superior in the lands of Aros and Brolas. Gilleasbuig sought unsuccessfully to enlist Sir Lachlann's assistance on the side of the Covenanters during the Civil Wars of the 1640s, but continued to buy up MacLean debts and forced Duart to surrender the castles of Duart and Aros in 1647. By the time that Eachann Ruadh assumed the Duart chieftainship in 1650, MacLean debts to Gilleasbuig Caoch stood at £70,000, and because of further outlays during the ongoing Civil Wars, Gilleasbuig was able to obtain a discreet of adjudication for £85,000 against the Duart estate in 1659. The restoration of the monarchy in 1660 and the subsequent forfeiture of the Argyll estates and beheading of Gilleasbuig Caoch in 1661 did little to change the picture, and when Gilleasbuig's son, Gilleasbuig Beag, was restored as 9th Earl of Argyll in 1663, he bought more MacLean debts, and by 1665 claimed £121,000 Scots against them, which claims were officially upheld. On the death of the Duart chief Sir Ailean MacLean in 1674, the tutors to his minor son, Sir Iain, refused to pay rents to Gilleasbuig Beag, who thereupon gained letters of ejection against the MacLeans of Duart, and ongoing fighting then ensued. The matter was resolved by King Charles II in 1680 in favour of the Campbells of Argyll; they took over the Duart estates, and the young MacLean chief, Sir Iain, was given an annuity.478 It was during this final period that the Campbells assumed control of the MacLean estates in Tiree, a continuing affront to the people of John MacLean's island down to the twentieth century, as was noted in

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477 Alexander Maclean Sinclair, *The Clan Gillean*, *supra*, at pp. 178-9, and Colm Ó Baoill, *Bàrdachd Chloinn Ghill-Eathain*, *supra*, at p. xl.

478 See Colm Ó Baoill, *Bàrdachd Chloinn Ghill-Eathain*, *supra*, at pp. xl-xliii.

Chapter Two.

John MacLean was intensely aware of this history, and it informs much of the praise poetry he composed for the Coll family. Unlike the MacLeans of Duart, the MacLeans of Coll had managed to keep most of their traditional clan lands and, as noted earlier, had benefited from prudent estate management. The repurchase by Alexander, the 15th Laird of Coll, of the Isle of Muck in about 1814, and the securing by Hugh MacLean, Alexander's son and heir, of grazing rights to the estate of Penmore, in Mull, in about 1818 were interpreted by John MacLean as very significant events, and resulted in the composition of poems 3 and 8. Indeed, these events clearly represented for the poet a reassertion of MacLean authority and a righting of historical wrongs and errors. Muck had traditionally been owned by another branch of the MacLeans, the MacLeans of Muck, but it had been lost to Clanranald in 1799 when he assumed the debts of Lachlan MacLean, the 6th MacLean of Muck. Alexander of Coll purchased the island from Reginald George MacDonald of Clanranald for £9,975. Penmore was even more significant, as it was part of the old Duart patrimony in Mull that had fallen into the hands of the Campbells of Argyll, the traditional MacLean nemesis. The Duke of Argyll had been hit by financial hardships in the wake of the end of the Napoleonic Wars, and these caused him to dispose of significant amounts of land, particularly in Mull, between about 1815 and 1825.479

In both of these poems, John MacLean is clear-sighted about the causes of the historical MacLean reversals: while their adversaries, particularly the Campbells, were crafty, the fault was primarily attributed to the MacLeans themselves, and in particular to their own folly and poor management. John MacLean is quite clear that

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479 Jo Currie, *Mull: The Island and Its People*, (Edinburgh: Birlinn, 2001), at pp. 221-4.

the loss of Muck was wholly attributable to MacLean weakness: ". . . chailleadh e le gòraich".480 The loss of the Mull lands was a slightly different matter—a combination of MacLean weakness and Campbell guile:

'S e rinn orra caochladh	What caused them [i.e. the MacLeans] a reversal
An gòraiche sgaomach,	Was their skittish foolishness,
Agus innleachd na feadhnach	And the ingenuity of those [i.e. the Campbells]
'Bha daonnan an sàs ann;	Who were always at their throats;481

As a MacLean poet, John MacLean cannot be expected to have harboured any sympathy for the Campbells, but he betrays a hint of admiration for the manly virtue shown by them in so ruthlessly expanding their territories at the expense of the MacLeans:

Dh'fhògradh iad thairis	They [i.e the MacLeans] were driven away
Do dhùthchannan aineoil,	To faraway lands,
Tha 'n còir aig MacCailein	Campbell of Argyll now has the title
A ghabh e le dànachd,	Which he daringly took,482

Indeed, the poet seems unwilling to ascribe blame to the Campbells, preferring to criticise the legal system that would allow them to execute their stratagems:

'S cearr an lagh ceannasach	Wrong is the authoritative law
'Bh 'ann anns na h-àmannan	That existed at those times
'An d' fhuair e 'n cuid fearainn	In which he got their lands
Gun cheannach, gun phàighe.	Without purchase or payment.483

The theme of Campbell acquisition without payment was also referred to by John MacLean in poem 32, composed on the death of Alexander MacLean, the 15th Laird of Coll, although in that poem King William (William of Orange) is the instrument of the injustice: "'S fhuair MacCailein am fearann/Bho Rìgh Uilleam, gun cheannach, 'am bann".484 There is no doubt that the Campbells ruthlessly exploited the existing legal machinery to their advantage against the MacLeans of Duart; as John Lorne Campbell and Derick Thomson noted:

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480 ". . . it was lost by folly": poem 3, line 21.
481 Poem 8, lines 37-40.
482 Poem 8, lines 41-44.
483 Poem 8, lines 45-48.

> The whole story [of the Campbell legal machinations of the 1660s and 1670s] is an excellent example of the way in which a Highland magnate who stood in with the Government could aggrandize himself and add to his possessions by using official legal processes against his neighbours; this in turn explains the Highlander's traditional attitude towards the Law.485

In these references, the poet conveys the sense that the wolf cannot be blamed for stalking the sheep; only those that allow the carnage to happen—the MacLeans themselves, or the legal machinery, or the King—can be faulted. Nonetheless, John MacLean does take pleasure at any Campbell reversal. Thus, Hugh MacLean, the young Laird, is praised for getting rights in Penmore from the Campbells:

Gun òladh le annas air,	A novel toast would be drunk to him,
Chlannaibh nan Gàidheal,	O, Children of the Gael,
'S an Diùca gu dealachadh	And the Duke [of Argyll] is to be parted
Bhuaithe 'chuid fearainn,	From his share of land,
Mar deantar a cheannach,	If it could not be purchased,
Bidh sibh falamh gu bràch dheth.	You will forever be in want of it.486

Hugh's father, Alexander, the 15th Laird, is just as worthy of praise, though, for besting the Duke of Argyll in a boat race:

Nuair 'choinnich Mac Mhic Eòbhainn e	When he met MacLean of Ardgour
'San Oban aig a' bhàl,	In Oban at the ball,
'S a dh'fhalbh iad leis na baintighearnan	And they left with the ladies
A dh'fheuchainn bàta 'Chaimbeulaich,	To attempt to race Campbell's boat,
Gun d' mhaslaidh e gu h-antoil i,	He shamed her reluctantly,
Le neo-ar-thaing 'thoirt dhà,	And no thanks given to him,
'Faotainn suas oirr' air 'n fhuaradh	Catching up to her on the windward side
'S 'tighinn mun cuairt ri 'sàil	And coming round the base of her keel.487

The reacquisition by the Coll family of parts of the broader old MacLean patrimony, particularly from the Campbells, was undoubtedly a source of pride to the poet, who, as noted in Chapter Two, was himself a minor member of the clan MacLean aristocracy. However, the question of land ownership and management was of wider importance to the poet; it was more than merely a matter of redressing the "dol sìos" that had taken place, largely at the hands of the Campbells. For John

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484 "Campbell of Argyll got title to their lands/From King William, without purchase, in a proclamation": poem 32, lines 79-80.

485 J. L. Campbell, and Derick Thomson, *Edward Lhuyd in the Scottish Highlands 1699-1700* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1963), at p. 19; for a fuller description of the Campbell methods, see pp. 18-20.

MacLean, land, and its proper management, was crucial to the maintenance of the integrity and traditional values of Gaelic society, which, it shall be argued, were the central concern of all of his poetry, whether composed in Scotland or in Canada. There is considerable evidence in the poetry composed for the MacLeans of Coll that John MacLean was keenly aware of the commercial and cultural transformation that was taking place throughout the Highlands and Islands in the early nineteenth century. Extravagant lifestyles led to indebtedness. Indebtedness led to loss of clan lands to landlords who pursued commercial estate policies, at the expense of the tenantry. Commercial estate policies led to rent increases, evictions and suffering. John MacLean saw these processes taking place, and warned against them in his poetry to the MacLean family. For John MacLean, prudence in land management was the essential value, the bulwark against change and erosion of Gaelic values and of Gaelic communities.

Alexander, the 15th Laird, had apparently given John MacLean little cause for concern, but in the poetry composed for Hugh, the heir to the estate, or in the poetry to Alexander in which the young Laird is mentioned, these concerns come to the fore, and the young Laird is repeatedly reminded to cleave to the example of his father and of his ancestors. This, of course, is also a rhetorical commonplace of panegyric poetry of this sort, but it has a particular relevance and immediacy in the poetry of John MacLean. For example, in poem 2, composed to Alexander in about 1807, the poet hopes that Alexander's health will endure and take him into old age, and that when his son, Hugh, succeeds him, he will follow his father's example: "Cuimhnichidh e cleachdainnean/An fhir a dh'fhàg fo fhacal i".488 The poet then cautions against

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486 Poem 8, 91-96.
487 Poem 2, lines 113-120.
488 "He will recall the customs/Of the man who left it [the estate] under oath": poem 2, lines 131-2.

"gòraiche", or "foolishness", which, as noted above, the poet identified as perhaps the chief plague of the MacLeans, recommends caution, and warns the young Laird to guard against loss of any of the estate:

Gun ghòraiche 'bhith 'n taice ris,	Without foolishness being associated with him,
Ach faiceallach gu leòir,	But cautious enough,
Ri cur 'na cheann gun dad a chall	To add to it without anything lost
Don gheibh e anns a' chòir.	Of that which he will get by right.489

In poem 1, composed to Alexander in about 1811, the poet turns his attention to Hugh near the end of the poem, and here, very similar themes emerge. He hopes that Alexander will live a long life, but that after he goes, the young Laird will preserve his title, and maintain the prosperity of his tenants:

Gum bu mhiann leam mar 'dh'iarrainn	It would be my desire, as I would wish
E 'bhith liath mun triall e bhuainn,	For him490 to be grey before he leaves us,
'S an Tighearn' òg a ghlèidheadh còrach	And the young Laird to preserve his title
Mun tèid còmhdach air 'san uaigh;	Before he is buried in the grave;
Mar cheann fhine e 'bhith fo 'chinneadh	To be a chieftain before his people,
Mac an ionad an fhir ruaidh,	The son in the place of the red-haired man,
Anns an teaghlach a bha greadhnach	In the family that has been magnificent
'Chumail saod air a chuid tuath.	In keeping up the prosperity of his tenants.491

The poet continues by imploring the young Laird to follow his father's example, and by hoping that Hugh demonstrates his father's virtues, chief amongst which are prudence and wisdom, and that he avoids foolishness: "Bidh e crionnta, glic 'na inntinn,/ . . . /Nach dean gòraiche dha beud".492 In poem 3, composed for Alexander in about 1814 on his purchase of the Isle of Muck, he encourages the young Laird to expand the estate, without at the same time endangering any of it—"Bidh e 'meudachadh na h-oighreachd/Gun a cuir an cuingead òirleach"493—and that he exercises sound rule, "deagh riaghailt",494 during his lairdship.

In the Gaelic panegyric tradition, the death of the chieftain was a time of crisis,

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489 Poem 2, lines 133-6.
490 Alexander, the 15th Laird.
491 Poem 1, lines 161-8.
492 "He will be mentally prudent and wise,/ . . . /That foolishness will not do him any harm": Poem 1, line 171, 176.

at which it was most essential for the poet to reaffirm the traditional values of the community,495 and in poem 32, composed on the death of Alexander, the 15th Laird of Coll, the poet, after an extensive enumeration of the Laird's chiefly virtues and of his ancestry and allies, turns to the heir, Hugh, and implores him to follow his father's example: "Cum 'ad chuimhne gach latha/Beus an fhir 'tha 'na laighe 'san ùir".496

Finally, in the two poems composed for the young Laird, Hugh, poem 7, composed on his marriage in about 1814, and poem 8, composed on his acquisition of certain land rights in a Mull estate in about 1818, the poet emphasises the importance of following the example of Alexander, and reinforces the values of prudence. In these poems, the poet's concern about the young Laird's fitness for the challenging task at hand—preserving traditional values in an increasingly commercial age—are palpable. Thus, in poem 8, the poet admonishes the young Laird to follow the example of his father, an example he observed with his own eyes:

'S e 'chunnaic 's a chual' e	It is what he has seen and heard
'S am fasan 'bu dual dha,	And the manner that was customary to him,
Bhon fhear a thog suas e,	From the man who had raised him,
'Bhith truacanta, bàigheil,	To be compassionate and merciful,
Sàr-cheannard na tuathadh	Great leader of the tenantry
Nach teannaicheadh cruaidh iad,	Who would not harshly oppress them,
Nach toir an cuid bhuatha	Who would not take their share from them,
'S a dh'fhuasgladh 'nan càs orra.	And who'd resolve their difficulties for them.497

Later in the poem, the poet admonishes the young Laird to emulate other, more martial virtues of his father, particularly his physical courage.498 However, the message concerning proper estate management based on traditional Gaelic values took precedence.

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493 "He will enlarge the estate/Without putting an inch of it into any distress": Poem 3, lines 107-8.

494 Poem 3, line 112.

495 John MacInnes, "The Panegyric Code in Gaelic Poetry and its Historical Background", *supra*, at p. 436.

496 "Keep in mind every day/The virtues of the man who is reposed in the earth": poem 32, lines 163-4.

497 Poem 8, lines 105-12.

498 Poem 8, lines 225-56.

Poem 7, in particular, is effectively an extended meditation on these themes. Almost from the start, the poet prays that God will protect the young Laird and give him prudent advice: "Gu' robh 'n t-Àrd Rìgh mar dhìon da/'S a chuir comhairlean crìonnta 'na cheann".499 After enumerating some of the great chieftains of the Coll line, the poet implores the young Laird to remember these men "with good sense", and then makes particular reference to the protection of their land:

'S 'fhir a dh'ùraich na facail	And, O man who inspired these words
Bi cuimhneach le beachd air mo rann,	Remember with good sense my rhyme,
'S air na daoine a bha romhad	And the men who came before you
A rinn feum anns gach gnothach a bh' ann,	Who were useful in everything they undertook,
A thug dhachaidh am fearann,	Who brought home their land,
'S a rinn fuasgladh 'an carraid nan lann	And made deliverance in the battle of the blades.500

This footnote is highly suggestive of the poet's main concern, the loss of clan lands, whether by way of an actual loss, to a commercial landlord, or of a metaphorical loss, through a change of estate management principles.

The poet then makes clear what he considers to be the ultimate threat: influences from outside Gaeldom, and in particular, from the Lowlands. For the poet, the Lowlands and Lowland ways are corrupting influences, sources of temptations that too often lead to poor decisions, whether of a financial or moral nature. As we shall see, this is a perception that is also prominent John MacLean's other poetry, and is fundamental to his world-view. Thus, after the poet's admonishment, there comes this warning:

B' e mo chomhairle dhàsan	It was my advice to him
Ma 's e duine e 'nì tàmh am measg Ghall,	If he's a man who'll reside amongst Lowlanders,
E 'thoirt 'aire le gliocas	That he should pay attention with wisdom
Do gach aon mar is tric 'tha 'dol ann;	To each one that usually goes there;
Cha leugh iad an gòraiche	They don't perceive their foolishness
Ach a' cluich an cuid òir 's a' cur gheall,	But gambling away their gold and placing bets,
Gur e furasta 'ghlèidheadh	That it is easier to keep it [i.e. their wealth]
Seach a bhuannachd an deaghaidh a chall.	Than to win it back after losing it.501

499 "That the High King might protect him/And put prudent advice in his head": poem 7, lines 13-4.

500 Poem 7, lines 65-70.

501 Poem 7, lines 73-80.

Prudence—here, wisdom, "gliocas"—and the avoidance of foolishness—"gòraiche"—are fundamentally important chiefly virtues in a dangerous time.

Suspicion of the Lowlands and fear of the corrupting influence of Lowlanders is an old theme in Gaelic poetry, and examples can be found from at least as early as the seventeenth century. In a poem to Sir Lachann MacLean, chief of the MacLeans of Duart, composed by Eachann Bacach in the mid-seventeenth century, the poet makes the following observation:

An Dùn Èideann nan caisteal	In Edinburgh of the castles
Tha ceannard treun na mòr aitim:	Is the mighty leader of the great sept:
'S ann de d' bheus a bhith sgapadh an òir;	It is a custom of yours to dispense gold;
Is nach b'urrainn do d' dhùthaich	And your own land could never
Chuir 'ad ghlacaibh de chùinne	Put as much money in your hands
Na chosgadh tu chrùintibh mun bhòrd.	As the crowns you'd spend round the gaming tables.502

While the poet is criticising the chieftain for aping Lowland ways rather than the Lowlands *per se*,503 suspicion of the corrupting influence of the Lowlands is implicit. In "Oran do Mhac Leòid Dhùn Bheagain", a "A Song to MacLeod of Dunvegan", composed in the 1690s, Rory Morrison, "An Clàrsair Dall" ("The Blind Harper") concludes this poem to Ruairidh, chief of the MacLeods of Dunvegan, with a warning and an exhortation to follow the good example of his father, Iain Breac (d. 1693):

Thoir teachdaireachd uam	Take this message from me
Le deatam gu Ruaidhri òg,	to young Ruaidhri with all possible speed,
Agus innis da fèin	And tell him though he is a MacLeod
Cuid d'a chunnart biodh e Mac Leòid;	something of the danger he is in;
Biodh e 'g amharc na dhèidh	Let him look back
Air an Iain a dh'eug 's nach beò:	at the Iain who died and is no more:
Gum bu shaidhbhir a chliù,	rich was his renown,
Is chan fhàgadh e 'n Dùn gun cheòl.	Without music he never left the Dùn.
A Mhic-talla 'n seo bhà	O Echo that was in the hall
Anns a' bhaile 'n robh gràdh nan cliar,	where dwelt the love of the poet-bands,
An triath tighearnail teann,	the solemn stately chief,

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502 See Colm Ó Baoill, *Bàrdachd Chloinn Ghill-Eathain: Eachann Bacach and other Maclean Poets*, *supra*, at pp. 6-7, at lines 55-60; see, also, Colm Ó Baoill, *Gàir nan Clàrsach/The Harps' Cry: An Anthology of 17th Century Gaelic Poetry* (Edinburgh: Birlinn, 1994), at pp. 88-9.

503 See Allan I. Macinnes, *Clanship, Commerce and the House of Stuart, 1603-1788*, *supra*, at pp. 73-4.

Is an cridhe gun fheall 'na chliabh --	with the guileless heart in his breast –
Ghabh e tlachd dh'a thìr fèin,	in his own land he took delight,
'S cha do chleachd e Dùn-èideann riamh;	with Edinburgh he bothered not at all;
Dh'fhàg e 'm bannach gun bheàrn,	he left the bannock without gap,
'S b'fheàrr gun aithriseadh càch a chiall.	Better if others copied his good sense.504

It is notable that both poets mention Edinburgh, the Scottish capital, where important Highland chiefs would be expected to have a residence. John MacLean is therefore following a long tradition, but the concerns upon which such warnings were based were, as has already been noted, still relevant in the early nineteenth century.

For the poet, the Lowlanders were a foreign, dangerous and, indeed, at times hostile people, and one who did not understand or appreciate the values of the Gaels. This can be seen in poem 5, a praise poem composed for Alexander, the 15th Laird, after the poet took a fruitless trip to Edinburgh in search of financial support from the Royal Highland Society for the publication of his collection of poetry, which he ultimately published himself in 1818. Alexander had not been in Edinburgh at the time, and the poet argues in the poem that if his patron had been present, his appeal for support would not have fallen upon deaf ears. He suggests that the real problem was that he was dealing with Lowland nobles, who seem to have been involved in the society at the time:

Mo thuras do Dhun Èideann bhuam	My trip to Edinburgh
'Tha 'g ùrachadh a' sgeula seo,	Is what inspires this report,
Nuair 'thug mi 'chuairt neo-fheumail 'ud	When I took that pointless trip
A shealltainn air luchd Beurla 'bh' ann,	To see some English speakers there,
Gun ìnnsinn duibh nan èisdeadh sibh	So that I could tell you, if you would listen
Mo reusan airson tòisich.	My reason for commencing.505

His implication is that such men could not appreciate the value of his work, in spite of his recognition that the society of which they apparently were members was

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504 See William Matheson, ed., *An Clarsair Dall: Òrain Ruaidhri Mhic Mhuirich agus a chuid ciùil/The Blind Harper: The Songs of Roderick Morison and his music* (Edinburgh: The Scottish Gaelic Texts Society, 1970), at pp. 70-3, lines 997-1012; see also Colm Ó Baoill, ed., *Gàir na Clàrsaich*, *supra*, at pp. 206-7.

505 Poem 5, lines 1-6.

committed to keeping up the Gaelic language.506 Lowland ignorance sometimes turned to lowland contempt, as we see in poem 31, composed by the poet in Canada on the occasion of Alexander MacLean, the 15th Laird of Coll, giving up his estates to his son in 1828. In this poem, he praises the reaction of Alexander, who had served as a Colonel, to an insult given by a lowland general, a "seanalair gallta", to Alexander's Highland soldiery:

Nuair a chruinnich iad còmhlath,	When they [the troops] gathered together
'S a thòisich an iomairt,	And the campaign commenced,
'S ann a theann e ri tàmailt	It's then that he [the general] began to insult
'Thoirt do Ghàidheil 's gach fine;	The Gaels of every clan;
Dh'èirich fearg ann 'ad aodann	Anger would rise in your face
Cha do dh'aom thu le giorag;	You did not submit with fear;
Chuir thu comharradh claon air,	You put a slanting mark on him,
'S bha 'fhuil chraobhach a' sileadh.	And his blood was streaming.507

As we shall see, defence of the Gaels against such hostility—in Scotland, primarily the hostility of Lowlanders, and in Canada, the hostility of the non-Gaels, particularly the Anglophone political class which dominated the colony of Nova Scotia—is a theme which emerges elsewhere in the poetry of John MacLean. Part of the maintenance of Gaelic ethnic solidarity is the identification of and defence against ethnic hostility.

The other threat, debt and its effects, is also evident in John MacLean's praise poetry for the Coll family. As was noted above, debt had led to the sale of many neighbouring estates, particularly in the latter part of the eighteenth century, and unsustainable debt was the root cause of the "dol sìos" of the MacLeans of Duart. The poet was keenly aware of these realities. Thus, he frequently admonishes both Alexander and Hugh to guard against incurring excessive debt. In poem 2, a panegyric composed in about 1807, the poet celebrates the fact that the traditional Coll family territories of Rum, Coll and Quinish have been secured by a direct grant

506 See lines 9-11.
507 Poem 31, lines 97-104.

of title from the King—"Tha 'n oighreachds' air a dìonachadh/Bho làimh an Rìgh dhaibh fhèin"508—but as important to him is that the estate is in sound financial shape: "Saor bho ainmheach, pailt do dh'airgead/Ri freasdladh oirbh gun èis".509 In poem 8, in which the poet celebrates Hugh's acquisition of rights in a Mull estate, his wish is that Hugh himself will have an heir to assume title to a debt-free Coll estate: "'S gun an t-ainfhiach ri phàigheadh".510 But from whence do these debts arise? As noted above, the poet was convinced that they arose from "foolishness", and as we have seen, the poet is quite clear that Highland chieftains were particularly prone to such foolishness in the gaming rooms of the Lowlands. Debt problems are enhanced by interaction with Lowlanders and the aping of their lifestyles.

One final aspect of the chief's background which features prominently in the commonplaces of Gaelic panegyric is ancestry,511 and this is marked by references to the chief's noble blood, illustrious ancestors and famous battles in which the kindred partook. All of these feature prominently in the praise poetry composed by John MacLean for the Coll family.

There are many references in the poetry of John MacLean composed for the Coll family to the nobility of the line from which Alexander, the 15th Laird, and Hugh, the young Laird, descend. These references are usually accompanied by an exhortation to cleave closely to this inheritance. The poet frequently describes the Coll line as "rìoghail", or "royal";512 as John MacInnes has noted, such descriptions

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508 "Their estate is secured/From the King's hand for themselves": poem 2, lines 65-6.

509 "Free from debt, full of money/To provide for you without difficulty": poem 2, lines 71-2.

510 "And without a debt to repay": poem 7, line 271.

511 See John MacInnes, "The Panegyric Code in Gaelic Poetry and Its Historical Background", *supra*, at pp. 450-1.

512 See, for example, poem 1, line 97, where the poet, in reference to Alexander, makes this reference: "Na stoic rìoghail às na chinn e"/"The royal stocks from which he grew". See also poem 2, line 28, where the poet claims that Alexander is of a royal kindred: "Don chinneadh a bha rìoghail"/"From the clan that was royal". In poem 3, composed in about 1814 on the purchase by Alexander MacLean of the Isle of Muck, the poet says of the MacLeans the following at lines 65-6: "Clann Ghilleain, bha iad lionmhor,/Na fir rìoghail dha' robh mòrchuis"/"Clan MacLean, they were

are claims about the loyalty of the chieftain or kindred to the true king—invariably, to the Jacobite cause—but also of their participation in kingly virtues,513 and the motif of loyalty to the true king and to the Jacobite cause also appear in John MacLean's poetry.514 Such general references to the Coll line also highlight their chiefly virtues, such as their manliness,515 bravery516—particularly in battle or in time of need517—cleverness in winning back their lands and authoritativeness in holding them,518 and even their clannishness,519 presumably a reference to their loyalty to their people and kindred, and he notes the purity of their blood520—again, a reference to the nobility of their descent.

Like many of the Highland clans, the MacLeans were thought by their tradition-bearers to have descended from the Gaels of Ireland who, according to Irish traditions, were supposed to have descended from the Milesians, the sons of Mílidh,

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numerous,/The regal men who were glorious". In the elegy composed on Alexander's death in 1835, poem 32, the poet makes this claim at line 65: "Gum bu rìoghail do shloinneadh"/"Your pedigree was royal".

513 John MacInnes, "The Panegyric Code in Gaelic Poetry and its Historical Background", *supra*, at pp. 455-6.

514 In poem 32, for example, the elegy composed on the death of Alexander MacLean in 1835, after referring to the MacLeans of Coll as "royal", the poet makes this claim: "Bha iad dìleas, an-fhoilleil don churn,/Cha do mhuth iad an cleòca"/"They were loyal and faithful to the Crown,/They were not turn-coats". The poet goes on to make reference to the Battle of Sherriffmuir, in 1715, at which the MacLeans of Coll fought for the Jacobite cause.

515 See poem 2, line 19-20: "Na h-uaislean on a ghineadh e/'Bha fearail . . .".

516 The poet refers to the MacLeans of Coll as "calma": poem 2, line 20; at line 22 in this poem, he claims they were "Neo-ghioragach gun sgàth"/"Courageous without a hint of fear", and at lines 30-1, he says this of them: "Nach strìochdadh gun cheann-fàth'/Ri aodann catha gun dad athaidh,/'S iad ri sgàth 'am blàr"/"They would not surrender without good reason/In the face of a battalion, without any fear,/While facing destruction on a battlefield".

517 See poem 2, lines 23-4: "'S e 'n cruadal fhèin 'an àm na h-èiginn/'Rinn dhaibh feum g' an geàrd"/"It was their hardiness itself in the time of need/Which has made them so useful to the guard".

518 Poem 8, lines 173-6: "'Bhuannaich le 'n tapadh/An dùthaich fo 'm focal,/'S a ghlèidh i gu smachdail/Bho neart an luchd-àicheidh"/"Who won back with their cleverness/Their country under their oath,/And kept it authoritatively/From the strength of their opponents". This is likely a reference to the feats of Iain Garbh, the second chief of the MacLeans of Coll, discussed earlier. The passage is in a poem to Hugh, the young Laird, and once again, the poet's chief concern appears to be the maintenance of clan lands.

519 See poem 2, line 19-20: "Na h-uaislean on a ghineadh e/'Bha . . . cinneadail"/"The nobles from whom he descended/Were . . . clannish".

520 See poem 1, lines 99-100: "Seo i 'n fhion-fhuil a bha prìseil,/'S i ri sìoladh ann ad ghruaidh"/"This is the pure-blood that was precious,/That is flowing in your cheeks". In poem 8, lines 242-3, the poet describes the bloodlines as "substantial": "Gur lìonmhor fuil reachdmhor/'Bh' anns na

ancient invaders from Spain, who defeated the Tuath Dé Danann, the ancient inhabitants of Ireland. The Milesians themselves traced their descent back to Egypt and to Gathelus, himself a descendant of Noah.521 This origin legend is one to which earlier Maclean poets had made reference,522 and the connection with Egypt was of particular fascination to them.523 John MacLean provides an extensive account of this origin in the elegy he composed on the death of Alexander MacLean, the 15th Laird of Coll, in 1835,524 and in this sense, he is continuing a strong Maclean poetic tradition.

Reference is more frequently made to particularly notable ancestors. As noted earlier, Iain Garbh, the second chieftain of the MacLeans of Coll, was in many ways the archetypal warrior-chief of the kindred, whose deeds and reputation have been kept alive in the oral traditions of Coll and neighbouring territories into the twentieth century. Not surprisingly, John MacLean makes repeated reference to this chieftain. In poem 2, composed in about 1807, he provides an extended recapitulation of his heroic recapture of Coll from his step-father, MacNeil of Barra,525 concluding that Alexander, the 15th Laird, possessed the same valour as his famous ancestor, "Tha 'n

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gaisgich bhon d'fhàs e"/"Plentiful is the substantial blood/That was in the heroes from whom he [here, Hugh, the young Laird] descends".

521 See the note of Alexander Maclean Sinclair in MacDougall, ed., *Clarsach na Coille*, at p. 117; see, also, E. Caerwyn Williams and Patrick K. Ford, eds., *The Irish Literary Tradition* (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 1992), at p. 6.

522 See, for example, Eachann Bacach's "A' Chnò Shamhna", composed in 1649 on the death of Sir Lachlan Maclean, the 16th Chief of the Macleans of Duart, with the following: "Thriall bhur bunadh gu Phàro"/"Your origins went back to Pharaoh": Colm Ó Baoill, ed., *Bàrdachd Chloinn Ghill-Eathain/Eachann Bacach and other Maclean Poets*, *supra*at p. 14. The poem composed by Eoin Mac Ghille-Eoin (John MacLean) in praise of the publication in 1704 of Edward Lhuyd's *Archaeologia Britannica*, in William J. Watson, ed., *Bàrdachd Ghàidhlig: Specimens of Gaelic Poetry 1550-1900* , *supra.*, at p. 155.

523 For example, Eachann Bacach begins "A' Chnò Shamhna", his elegy to Sir Lachlan Maclean of Duart, composed in about 1649, with the line "Thriall bhur bunadh gu Phàro"/"Your origins went back to Pharaoh": see Colm Ó Baoill, *Bàrdachd Chloinn Ghill-eathain/Eachann Bacach and other Maclean Poets*, *supra*, at pp. 14-5.

524 Poem 32, at lines 50-68.

525 Poem 2, lines 33-56.

cruadal 's ann an Alastair".526 In poem 32, the elegy composed on Alexander's death, the poet provides a briefer account of Iain Garbh's victory:

'S math gun d' chum na fir smearail	It is well that the courageous men who were
A bh' air Cola 'n cuid fearainn le buaidh,	In Coll victoriously retained their land,
Bhon a choisinn Iain Garbh e,	Since Rough John won it,
Cha d' rinn aon 'bha fo arm a thoirt bhuath';	No armed man could take it from them;
Thàinig Niallaich thar sàile	MacNeills came from over the sea
'Ghabhail seilbh air gu dàna 'nan uaill,	To take possession of it, boldly in their pride,
Ach chuir lannan nan sàr-laoch	But the blades of the great heroes put
Gu ceann-crìch' iad 'san àraich gun truas.	Them mercifully to death in the battlefield.527

It is noteworthy that Iain Garbh's chief legacy is expressed in terms of the acquisition and protection of clan lands. The poet is once again emphasising for Hugh, the young Laird, the fundamental importance of land, and this is certainly in keeping with the poet's preoccupation, discussed above, with land ownership and land management policies, a preoccupation which is itself reflective of the period in which the poet lived. Other illustrious Coll ancestors are also mentioned by the poet, though their feats are not celebrated to the same extent as those of Iain Garbh. In poem 2, the poet notes the descent of Alexander, the 15th Laird and the subject of the poem, from Lachlan, the father of Iain Garbh, whom he describes in the following terms:

A' saighdear sin 'bu bheachdaile	That soldier who was the most commanding
Do mhacaibh Eachainn Ruaidh,	Of the sons of Red Hector,
'Sheasadh dàna ri uchd nàmhaid,	Who would stand firm in the face of an enemy,
'Chumadh bàigh ri tuath.	Who would be merciful to tenants.528

It is interesting that the poet again highlights both Lachlan's heroic, martial virtues and other virtues relating broadly to estate management practices, in this case his kindness to the people of his estate. Again, given the uncertainty faced by the tenantry in the early nineteenth century, there is considerable contemporary relevance in the

526 "Alexander has the same valour": line 57.

527 Poem 32, lines 81-8.

528 Poem 2, lines 61-4. The reference to "Red Hector" may be to Eachann Ruadh nan Cath, "Red Hector of the Battles", the chieftain of the MacLeans of Duart who, as noted earlier, fell at the Battle of Harlaw in 1411. This suggests that John MacLean, like the 19th century MacLean historians, believed that Iain Garbh's father was Lachlan Bronnach, a son of Red Hector. As noted above, though, Maclean-Bristol has argued that there is now considerable evidence that, while Iain Garbh's father was named Lachlan, he was likely a brother rather than the son of Red Hector. It is possible, however, that the reference is to the Coll chieftain Eachann Ruadh, who died in 1651.

poet's decision to give prominence to this virtue. In poem 7, composed for Hugh, the young Laird, on his marriage in about 1814, the poet recites some of the virtues of the chiefly line who descend from Iain Garbh, then refers to some of the more recent members of the chiefly line:

Sin na h-uaislean 'bha beachdail,	Those were the nobles who were authoritative,
'Bha cruadalach, sgairteil, 's bu dual,	Who were born to be hardy and vigorous,
'Bha gu h-iriosal, bàigheil,	Who were humble and kindly,
'Chumadh taic ri fear fàilinneach, truagh;	Who'd support the frail and the pitiable;
. . .	. . .
'S ann diubh Alastair cliùiteach	The famous Alexander is one of them
'Bha iochdmhor, nach d' ionnsaich an cruas,	Who was merciful and never niggardly,
B' ann diubh Eòghann, is Eachann	Hugh and Hector were both one of them,
B' ann diubh Dòmhnall, is Lachlann nam buadh;	As were Donald, and Lachlan of the victories;529

The poet appears to be referring to Alexander, the 15th Laird, Hugh, the 14th Laird, Hector, the 12th Laird who, as noted earlier, turned around the fortunes of the Coll estates in the mid-eighteenth century, leaving them unencumbered by debt, and Donald, the 11th Laird, and Lachlan, the 9th Laird, who apparently served with distinction under General Mackay in Holland and drowned in the Lochy, Lochaber, in August 1687.530 As we shall see, mercy and kindness to the tenantry are praiseworthy chiefly virtues in the Gaelic panegyric code, but once again, the special emphasis that the poet places on them, in particular in reference to the "dùthchas", the hereditary tradition of the MacLeans of Coll, is significant. In a time of rapid commercialisation in the Highlands, it is hardly accidental that the poet has chosen to place such emphasis on this particular aspect of the code.

A final aspect of the glorification of the chief's background is the enumeration of great battles in which the kindred were involved,531 and this motif also features prominently in the poetry composed by John MacLean for the Coll family. The motif

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529 Poem 7, lines 25-8, 32-6.

530 See "A Seneachie", *An Historical and Genealogical Account of the Clan Maclean*, *supra*, at p. 310, and J. P. MacLean, *A History of the Clan MacLean*, *supra*, at pp. 287-8.

of heroic ancestors and great battles comes together in the references to Iain Garbh and his victory over MacNeil, discussed earlier.532 In poem 3, the poet praises the MacLeans for the role they played at the Battle of Inverlochy:

Bha iad misneachail le cruadal	They were courageous and brave
'Dh'fhaotainn buaidh 's a h-uile còmhdhail,	To gain victory in every combat,
'S e fear aca 'bhuail am buille	It was one of them who struck the blow
A fhuair an t-urram latha Lòcha.	That won the praise at Inverlochy.533

The reference appears to be to the first Battle of Inverlochy of 1431, in which the MacLeans fourth victoriously alongside Donald Balloch, a cousin to the Lords of the Isles, in support of the claims of the Lords against the forces of the Scottish Crown under the Earls of Mar and Caithness. Iain Garbh, the second chief, took part in the battle, and was granted lands in Lochaber by Alexander of Yle, Lord of the Isles, as reward for the part he played, and the personal reference in the foregoing passage may be to Iain Garbh.534

The name Inverlochy is doubly resonant for MacLeans, though, as the second battle of Inverlochy of 2 February, 1645 was a victory for the Royalist forces under the Marquis of Montrose and Alasdair Mac Colla Chiotaich, the archetypal MacDonald warrior. The MacLeans were staunch supporters of the Royalist cause, although they apparently played only a very small part in the Battle of Inverlochy itself.535 However, the battle was a crushing and humiliating defeat for the Campbells of Argyll, 1,500 of whom were killed after they had panicked and fled

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531 John MacInnes, "The Panegyric Code in Gaelic Poetry and its Historical Background", *supra*, at p. 451.

532 See, for example, poem 7, at line 45, or poem 32, at lines 85-88.

533 Lines 77-80.

534 Nicholas Maclean-Bristol, *Warriors and Priests*, *supra*, at p. 63.

535 In his poem "Là Inbhir Lòchaidh", John MacDonald, "Iain Lom", addressing Alasdair Mac Cholla Chiotaich, noted in reference to the MacLeans: "Alasdair nan geurlann guineach,/Nam biodh agad àrmainn Mhuile,/Thug thu air na dh'fhalbh dhiubh fuireach,/'S retreat air pràbar an duilisg"/ "Alasdair of the sharp venomous blades,/had you had the heroes of Mull,/those of them [i.e. Campbells] who escaped you would have induced to stay,/when the dulse-eating rabble was in retreat". Sir Lachlan Maclean of Duart joined Montrose's army at Inverlochy, but apparently had only about twelve of his men with him: Annie M. MacKenzie, ed., *Òrain Iain Luim: Songs of John MacDonald, Bard of Keppoch* (Edinburgh: Scottish Gaelic Texts Society, 1964), at pp. 24-5, and note to lin 259, at p. 243.

from the field of battle, and whose chief, rather than standing with his men, had already embarked on his galley in Loch Linnhe and watched the slaughter from a distance.536 John MacLean made repeated reference to another battle in the Civil Wars, the Battle of Inverkeithing of 20 July, 1651. Take for example, this passage:

Clann Ghilleain, bha iad lìonmhor,	Clan MacLean, they were numerous,
Na fir rìoghail dha' robh mòrchuis,	The regal men who were glorious,
'S e na thuit an Inbhir Chèitein	It is those who fell at Inverkeithing
'Thug an dìth orra is bu mhòr i;	That caused them such great destruction;
Bha seachd ceud ann le 'n ceann cinnidh,	Seven hundred were there with their chief,
Gun a h-aon dhiubh 'thilleadh còmhladh,	Without one of them to return together,
B' adhbhar ionndrainn sin an Rìoghachd	That was a cause of great loss to the Kingdom
A dhol sìos leis don aon seòrsa.	To lose so many of the same group.537

Inverkeithing was a defeat for the Royalist forces loyal to King Charles II at the hands of forces under the command of Oliver Cromwell. MacLean of Duart, eight of his foster brothers, and about 750 MacLeans (the poet referred to 700) fell at Inverkeithing.538 However, the brave and loyal leadership of the MacLean aristocracy and the courage of the MacLean forces were the source of great pride, all the more so because they stood in stark contrast to the behaviour of the Campbell chiefs and the flight of the Campbell forces at Inverlochy six years previously.539

In his elegy to Alexander MacLean, composed in 1835, poem 32 in this collection, John MacLean mentions the Battle of Inverkeithing in the same stanza in which he refers to the Battle of Tràigh Ghruinneart of 5 August, 1598, another defeat for the MacLeans, albeit the MacLeans of Duart, at the hands of Sir James MacDonald of Knockrinsay, Islay, chief of the MacDonalds of Dunyveg, which resulted in the death of the Duart chieftain, Lachlan Mòr MacLean, and about 280 of

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536 Nicholas Maclean-Bristol, "Notes: The Battle of Inverlochy 2 February 1645", (Feb., 2001) *West Highland Notes and Queries*, Series 3, Number 2, at pp. 3-4.

537 Poem 3, lines 65-72.

538 Nicholas Maclean-Bristol, "The Battle of Inverkeithing", found at http://www.maclean.org/Inverkeithing%203.htm, last consulted on 28 August, 2002.

539 Nicholas Maclean-Bristol, *ibid*, and Nicholas Maclean-Bristol, *Hebridean Warriors 1400-1800: The Macleans of Coll and the British Army*, unpublished manuscript, kindly provided to the author in early 2005, ch. 4, "The Battle of Inverkeithing", at p. 5.

his men.540 The poet concludes the stanza by noting that Campbell of Argyll ended up controlling the lands of the MacLeans of Duart without purchasing them,541 and thereby implying that he sees these losses as part of the "dol sìos" of the MacLeans which led to the Campbell ascendancy. One final battle to which the poet makes reference is that of Sherriffmuir, of 1715, at which the MacLeans fought on the side of the Jacobites:

Gum bu rìoghail do shloinneadh,	Your pedigree was royal,
Bha iad dìleas an-fhoilleil don chrùn,	They were loyal and faithful to the crown,
Cha do mhùth iad an cleòca	They were not turncoats,/And tumult nor
'S cha d' rinn giorag no còmhrag 'thoirt dhiubh;	strife did not take from them;
Sheas iad là Sliabh an-t-Siorra,	They stood on the day of Sherriffmuir,
Ged 'chaidh iomadh sàr-chinneadh air chùl,	Though many excellent clans turned back,
A' toirt àir le 'n cruaidh-bhuillean	Taking care with harsh blows
Air na laoich a bha 'n cuideachd an Diùc.	On the heroes who accompanied the Duke. 542

The battle itself was indecisive, but it resulted in the Jacobite rebellion losing its impetus.543 In addition to providing the poet with another opportunity to rehearse the military virtues of the clan, it also serves to highlight their loyalty to the true Royal line, in contrast to the Campbells of Argyll, to whom the poet makes specific reference, another example of his preoccupation with and hostility to the Campbell ascendancy.

The foregoing discussion illustrates both the considerable use made by John MacLean of the commonplaces of traditional Gaelic panegyric poetry relating to the chief's background and the ways in which such commonplaces are deployed by the

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540 See W.R. Kermack, *The Scottish Highlands: A Short History (c. 300-1746)* (Edinburgh and London: W. & A. K. Johnston & G. W. Bacon, 1957), at pp. 83-87, and Nicholas Maclean-Bristol, *Murder under Trust: The Crimes and Death of Sir Lachlan Mor Maclean of Duart 1558-1598* (East Linton: Tuckwell, 1999), esp. at ch. 21, pp. 238-53. For a traditional account based on Gaelic oral tradition in Islay, see "Blàr Tràigh Ghruinneart", (1992) 44 *Tocher* 110, at 110-7, recorded from Gilbert Clark, Port Charlotte, Islay, by Ian A. Fraser, SA 1968/98; see also the account provided by Prof. Donald Meek in his note to William Livingston's poem "Blàr Thràigh Ghruinneard": Donald E. Meek, *Caran an t-Saoghail*, *supra*, at pp. 449-53.

541 Poem 32, lines 73-80.

542 Poem 32, lines 65-72.

543 See Michael Lynch, *Scotland: A New History* (London: Pimlico, 1992), at p. 328, and for a more detailed account, see Bruce Lenman, *The Jacobite Risings in Britain 1689-1746* (Aberdeen: Scottish Cultural Press, 1995), ch. 5, pp. 126-54, and ch. 6, pp. 155-79.

poet to address thoroughly contemporary themes and preoccupations. While the "panegyric code" imposes certain constraints, the poetry of John MacLean shows how a skilful poet can deploy its commonplaces to meet the needs of his time and his audience. Moving on from the chief's background, though, a considerable number of the commonplaces of traditional Gaelic praise poetry relate to the social roles played by the chieftain, and MacInnes summarises these in this manner:

> The subject of a praise-poem has clearly defined obligations and accomplishments which enable him to discharge his duties to his people. He is a warrior, ruthless to his enemies and tenacious in pursuit but mild to his friends and kinsfolk. He is generous in dispensing gifts and liberal in supplying drink to warriors and men of art. He is a hunter of specific animals and birds. He is a horseman and seaman. He is a wise counsellor, he may be a courtier at the royal court; he is, like his ancestors, a Royalist.544

In his schematic organisation of the "panegyric code", Ronald Black separates the elements described by MacInnes into two categories, "personal endowments and social roles", and "physical roles".545 All of the elements described by MacInnes appear in the praise poetry composed by John MacLean for the Coll family, and, indeed, the last of these elements—royalism—has already been discussed, above.

The most fundamental of the chiefly roles is that of protector of his people, and the glorification of the chief's martial virtues is at the very core of the panegyric code in Gaelic poetry. This theme and the imagery associated with it have a prominent place in the praise poetry John MacLean composed for the Coll family. John MacInnes has argued that this "glorification of the warrior" which permeates Gaelic praise poetry is "a brief, late manifestation of an heroic age",546 and by the early nineteenth century, it had in some ways become anachronistic. Inter-clan

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544 John MacInnes, "The Panegyric Code in Gaelic Poetry and its Historical Background", *supra*, at p. 452.
545 Ronald Black, *An Lasair*, *supra*, at pp. 525-6.
546 *Ibid*, at p. 453.

warfare had ended by the end of the seventeenth century,547 and the decisive defeat at Culloden and the measures taken by the British Government in its wake had meant both the effective destruction of Jacobitism and the integration of the Highlands into British civic society. However, recruitment of Highlanders into the British army—a process that had begun before Culloden but which increased in intensity in the second half of the eighteenth century—gave both the Highland aristocracy and the broader Gaelic population a new outlet for the expression of traditional martial and heroic values, and a new reason for the poets to celebrate those values. As Donald Meek has noted, Highland chiefs had, especially after Culloden, begun raising or assisting in the raising of regiments, and the military enthusiasm of the Gaelic people was diverted into the service of the British state and Empire.548 The warrior ethos therefore remained relevant—the protection of the clan became protection of the realm—and the Napoleonic wars, in which all classes of Gaelic society participated, were in many ways the culmination of this.549 This development will be reconsidered when we consider the praise poetry that John MacLean composed for other subjects than the Coll family, in Chapter Four. Though Alexander MacLean, the 15th Laird of Coll, did not participate in the continental battles of this period, he was a military man: as noted earlier, he had been for some time a captain in the Argyll Fencible regiment, was appointed a lieutenant-colonel in the Breadalbane Fencibles in about 1794, and had served in Ireland shortly thereafter.550 Such is the centrality of the warrior motif in the poetic tradition of the Gaels, it would be surprising if it were to disappear

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547 The last of the old-style clan battles is thought to have been the Battle of Mulroy of 4 August, 1688, fought between the MacIntoshes and the MacDonalds of Keppoch in the Braes of Lochaber. See Allan I. MacInnes, *Clanship, Commerce and the House of Stuart, 1603-1788*, *supra*, at pp. 44-5, p. 123. See, also, Andrew MacKillop, *'More Fruitful than the Soil': Army, Empire and the Scottish Highlands, 1715-1815*, *supra*, at pp. 7-8.

548 Donald E. Meek, *Caran an t-Saoghail*, *supra*, at p. 295.

completely—indeed, as we shall see, it was creatively redeployed—but it was certainly not an anachronistic motif for the period in which much of the praise poetry composed by John MacLean was being written. Britain was at war until 1815, Gaels were active and generally enthusiastic protagonists in these hostilities, and even after the peace, it is not surprising that memories of almost a quarter of a century of hostilities would keep the warrior motif alive.

There are many aspects to the warrior motif in the Gaelic tradition, and many of these are evident in the praise poetry John MacLean composed for his patron and his patron's heir. The subject is described as an authoritative commander, a leader of men, as in poem 1, in which the poet says of Alexander, the 15th Laird of Coll, "Bu cheann feachd e 'dhol le 'sluagh"/"He'd be a fine commander to lead his people",551 an assessment which is borne out in poem 31, composed in about 1828 upon Alexander's relinquishing of his estates:

Gu' bu cheannard roimh shluagh thu	You were a commander of men
Nuair a ghluaiste gu feachd thu,	When you were sent into battle,
'S iad a thionail mun cuairt dhuit	As they gathered around you
'An àm fuasgladh do bhrataich.	At the time your banner was unfurled.552

The rhetorical claims in this poetry are, in the poet's view, substantiated by real events, namely the appointment of Alexander to a command in the Breadalbane Fencibles:

Bu mheasail aig Braid Albainn,	He was respected by Breadalbane,
Fear ainmeil anns gach uair,	A man renowned at every hour,
Thug e commanda an airm dha	He gave him an army command
Gum b' fhiach sin nuair 'dh'fhalbh e leis;	That was to his advantage when he left with him;
'Thoirt facial dhaibh gun chearbaich'	To give them flawless orders
Gu smachdail, calma, cruaidh,	Authoritatively, strongly, harshly,
'S e 'bhiodh dìleas leis a' mhìle ud	It is he who'd be faithful with that thousand
Nam biodh strì mun cuairt.	If there was strife round about.553

549 See, for example, Donald E. Meek, *ibid.*, and John MacInnes, "Gaelic Poetry in the Nineteenth Century", in Douglas Gifford, ed., *The History of Scottish Literature, Vol. 3: Nineteenth Century* (Aberdeen: Aberdeen University Press, 1988), pp. 377-395.

550 Alexander Maclean Sinclair, *The Clan Gillean*, *supra*, at pp. 380-1.

551 Line 95.

552 Lines 57-60.

553 Poem 2, lines 81-8.

In this passage, we are presented not only with a picture of the subject as a commander, but also with some of the values that the archetypal commander is expected to demonstrate. Loyalty, expressed in the Gaelic concept of "dìlseachd", is mentioned, and as noted earlier, this concept is a key aspect of the notion of "royalty", meaning in the context of this poetry loyalty to the true royal line. The Gaelic commander is authoritative, commanding, assertive and worthy of command—"smachdail", "beachdail", "ceannasach", and "ceannsalach"—and such descriptions of the Laird of Coll are deployed regularly by the poet.554

The archetypal Gaelic chieftain is also expected to display all of the manly virtues of a warrior, such as bravery, physical courage, strength, vigour, and physical hardiness.555 Thus, John MacLean praises Alexander, the 15th Laird for his "manliness"—"Ceannard fearainn a dh'fhàs smiorail,/Làn do dh'fhearalachd le buaidh"556—and refers to him as "the manly landlord", "'n t-uachdaran fearail",557 and Hugh, his son, is also praised for being "fearail", "manly".558 Alexander is praised for his courage—"Tha e cruadalach gun ghealtachd"559—and is described as being "[n]eo-ghioragach gun sgàth", "[c]ourageous, without a hint of fear".560 In poem 31, courage is combined with the virtues of boldness and hardiness:

B' e do chleachdainn 's do ghluasad	It was your practice and your conduct
'Bhith gu cruadalach smachdail,	To be hardily authoritative,
'Bhith gu misneachail dàna,	To be courageously bold,
Gun 'bhith sgàthach na gealtach.	Without being fearful or cowardly. 561

According to the poet, Alexander MacLean's acts are characterised by heroism: "'S

554 See, for example, poem 1, line 145, poem 2, line 58, poem 31, lines 42, 87, poem 32, lines 49, 93.
555 See Ronald Black, *An Lasair*, *supra*, motifs at 4.6, p. 526.
556 "A landlord who grew in courage": poem 1, lines 27-8.
557 Poem 31, line 11.
558 Poem 8, line 167.
559 "He is brave, without any cowardice": poem 1, line 91.
560 Poem 2, line 22.
561 Lines 41-4.

lìonmhor gnìomh is gaisgeadh/A tha 'n taice ris le cèill".562

In the Gaelic panegyric tradition, the chieftain does not retreat in fear,563 and John MacLean praises the Lairds of Coll from whom Alexander MacLean descends for their courage in the face of adversity:

Nach strìochdadh gun cheann-fàth'	Who would not surrender without good cause
Ri aodann catha gun dad athaidh,	In the face of a battalion, without any fear,
'S iad ri sgàth 'am blàr.	While facing destruction on a battlefield.564

In this system of poetry, the chieftain is a fierce fighter, a formidable foe, particularly if roused.565 John MacLean gives particularly good expression to these martial values in this passage, from the poem he composed in 1828 on receiving news that his old patron, Alexander the 15th Laird of Coll, had given up his estate to his son, highlighting also the laird's skill as a swordsman:

Cha ghabhadh tu tàmailt:	You would accept no insult:
Nuair a dh'àrdaich do spiorad,	When your spirit rose,
Nan glacadh tu stàilinn	If you were to grasp steel
Bhiodh do nàmhaid air iomain,	Your enemies would be driven away,
'S tu gun cluicheadh gu sàr-mhath	You would wield it most expertly
Leis a' ghàirdean 'robh spionnadh,	With you arm filled with strength,
'S a sheasadh do làrach	And you would stand your ground
'S nach tàirneadh gu d' shlinnean.	And would not draw back to your shoulders.566

The chieftain is feared and is tenacious in pursuit and ruthless in battle,567 and such virtues are also ascribed by the poet to Alexander MacLean:

'S mairg 's an àm sin 'chuireadh greann air	It's a pity then to cause him to scowl
'Thogail *angair* an fhir ruaidh	To raise the anger of the red-haired man
'S e 'thighinn teann air airson aimhreit	And he who approaches him for a contest
Bheirte an ceann deth b' i seo 'dhuais.	Would lose his head, as his prize.568

In the Gaelic panegyric tradition, the chieftain is dressed in a manner becoming the archetypal Highland warrior, and is possessed of the weaponry

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562 "Numerous deeds and acts of heroism/Are associated sensibly with him": poem 2, lines 97-98.
563 Ronald Black, *An Lasair*, *supra*, motif at 4.6, p. 526.
564 Poem 2, lines 30-2.
565 Ronald Black, *An Lasair*, *supra*, motif at 4.6, p. 526.
566 Poem 31, lines 105-12.
567 Ronald Black, *An Lasair*, *supra*, motif at 4.6, p. 526.
568 Poem 1, lines 85-8.

necessary for the heroic tasks at hand.569 Although John MacLean refers at one point to Alexander MacLean being fearsome when in his armour,570 there are generally few references to particular features of the chief's dress which are common in the poetry, such as his helmet, breastplate, targe or plaid; by the early nineteenth century, such descriptions may have become anachronistic. The poet does make several references to one piece of weaponry, though: the chief's sword. In some cases, the poet mentions the chief's blade of steel,571 as in this reference to the sword of Hugh MacLean, the young Laird:

Lann thana gheur ghrinn air	He has a thin, sharp, well-made sword
Don stàilinn 'bu ruighne,	Of the most indestructible steel,
Neul foladh gu roinn oirre,	The stain of blood to the hilt on it,
Na faoineachdte 'làmhan.	That would suit his hands.572

On other occasions, the reference is to the chief's basket-hilted sword, as in the elegy composed by the poet on the death of Alexander MacLean in 1835: "Gum biodh geur-lann 'chinn aisnich/Air do chruachan gu casgairt do nàmh".573 In both cases, the sword is treated as emblematic of the prowess of the chief as a warrior.

In this system of poetry, the chieftain is expected to give expression to his martial qualities not only on the battlefield, but in other pursuits. Thus, he demonstrates prowess as a hunter, as a horseman, and as a seaman.574 Thus, John MacLean celebrates Alexander MacLean's prowess as a hunter, as in this stanza from poem 1:

'S ro-mhath 'n gìomanach air gunn' e,	He's an exceptional marksmen with a gun,
Nì e fuil à frith na seilg,	He'll draw blood from the forest of the hunt,
Nuair 'rachadh e air 'uilleann,	When he would settle upon his elbow,
Cha bhiodh uireasaibh air 'arm;	There'd be no fault in his weapon;
Nuair a thàirnear i o 'lèirsinn,	When it is drawn from his sight,

569 Ronald Black, *An Lasair*, *supra*, motif at 4.7, p. 526.
570 Poem 1, line 83.
571 See, for example, poem 1, line 82, or poem 2, line 95.
572 Poem 8, line 221-4.
573 "A sharp-bladed basket-hilted sword/On your thigh in order to slaughter your enemies"; poem 32, lines 39-40. For similar references, see also poem 1, line 84, and poem 2, line 91.
574 John MacInnes, "The Panegyric Code in Gaelic Poetry and its Historical Background", *supra*, at pp. 452-4; see also Ronald Black, *An Lasair*, *supra*, motifs 4.1, 4.4 and 4.3, at p. 526.

Thèid i 'n grèim 's chan ann le cearb,	It will be caught, and not faultily,
Nàmhaid geòidh e far a sgèithidh	He is an enemy of the goose on its wing
A bhiodh anns a' speur a' falbh.	That would be flying in the sky.575

The goose is one of the animals that the noble chief is expected to hunt, as is the deer, as is made explicit in another example:

Gur nàmhaid fèidh is earbadh e	He is the enemy of the deer and the roe-deer
Le 'ghunna caol neo-dhearmadach,	With his slender, precise gun,
A' siubhal ghleann is gharbhlaichean,	Travelling valleys and rough bounds,
'S a choin ri falbh 'na dhèidh,	And his dogs following behind him,
Ri spòrs neo-ainneamh anns na beannaibh,	In plentiful sport in the mountains,
Na 'chuid fearainn fhèin.	Or in his own lands.576

John MacLean also praises his patron's skill as a horseman:

Marcaich sunntach air each siùbhlach	A cheerful horseman on a nimble horse
Leis an dùblaichte gach rèis,	With him would be repeated every race,
'Mheud 's 'bhiodh ann dhiubh anns an àm sin,	As many as there'd be at that time,
Bhuinte geall leis air gach fèill.	The prize at every fair would belong to him.577

These qualities are remembered by the poet in the poem he composed in about 1828 upon the Laird of Coll surrendering his estates to his son:

Bu tu marcaich' na' srann-each	You were the rider of the snorting horses
'Bheireadh car air a stòladh,	Who would cause her to calm down,
Nuair a rachadh tu 'dhìollaid	When you settled into the saddle
Le spuir gheur air do bhòtainn.	With sharp spurs on your boots.578

The seamanship of the subject of Gaelic praise poetry is an ancestral virtue, and is the commonplace that is employed more frequently by John MacLean in his poetry for the Coll family than either the image of the chief as hunter or as horseman; this may in part be due to the fact that the Coll family's estates were inner Hebridean rather than West Highland, and that the poet's primary audience—the seabound communities of the low-lying islands of Tiree and Coll, in particular—were better acquainted with the sea than the mountainous deer-runs of the mainland and of other islands. In this passage, not only is the chief's seamanship praised, but so is the excellence of his boat:

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575 Lines 65-72.
576 Poem 2, lines 99-104.
577 Poem 1, lines 73-6.
578 Poem 31, lines 157-60.

Sgiobair fairge e ri là gailbheach	He is a fine skipper on a stormy day
'N àm dha falbh na suidh' aig stiùir;	When it's time for him to go or to sit at the helm;
Thog e 'n fhàrdach a tha sàr-mhath,	He built the vessel that is most excellent,
'M bàta 's àille 'chaidh fo shiùil,	The most handsome boat ever under sail,
Air a ceangal suas le airgead	It is bound up with silver
Nach gabh meirg, 's a dh'fhanas ùr.	That will not rust and will stay like new.579

Here, the vessel could be interpreted as a metaphor for the entire Coll estate, the immutability of its construction expressing the poet's fervent hope that the integrity of the Coll estate and the manner of its management will be similarly maintained against the ravages of the early nineteenth century Highland and Island economy. Indeed, the seaworthiness of the ship and the fitness of its crew are important images in the poetry of John MacLean composed for the Coll family. In poem 7, the image of a crewless vessel is employed as a metaphor for the period of MacLean weakness in the face of Campbell ascendancy.580

John MacLean employs the image of the excellent skipper in rough seas in other places in the poetry he composed for the Coll family:

Gur sgiobair ri là gaillinn e	He is a fine skipper on a stormy day
Nach b' aineolach mu stiùir,	Who was not ignorant at the helm,
Nuair 'ghlacadh e 'na achlais i,	When he would grasp it under his arm,
Gu' fàgadh e na thachradh air.	He'd leave behind whatever he happened upon.581

This imagery also has an obvious metaphorical power in an age of instability in the Highlands and Islands. For the poet, Alexander, the 15th Laird of Coll, is committed to the old values of Gaelic society, and as we have seen elsewhere, the poet is keenly aware that these values are under terrible stress throughout the Highlands and Islands in the early nineteenth century. In the passage which follows the lines just quoted, the poet goes on to refer to Alexander's actual boat, apparently named "Hobart", and how the Laird is able to best Campbell of Argyll at a race held off of Oban. As noted above, the poet's celebration of a victory of the Coll family against the nemesis of the

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579 Poem 1, lines 59-64.
580 Poem 7, lines 49-52.
581 Poem 2, lines 105-8.

MacLeans has an obvious resonance for his audience.

The images and ideas associated with the seamanship of the chieftain are given their fullest expression by John MacLean in poem 4, "Bàta Thighearna Chola"/"The Laird of Coll's Boat". Though much different in scope and form, this poem is reminiscent of Alasdair Mac Mhaighstir Alasdair's "Birlinn Chlann Raghnaill", which inspired a number of similar poems. The well-made boat, the excellence of the crew and the skill and courage of the skipper, guiding her over rough and challenging seas, are all potent images for a seagoing people, and a sharp and easily understood expression of the notion of "the ship of state". Again, they allow the poet to express clearly to his audience his view that the Laird of Coll is a wise leader of his people, and a bulwark against the dangerous currents of debt, commercialisation and non-Gaelic values. Given that John MacLean's principal preoccupation is not with the martial prowess of the chief—as noted, and as shall be explored further, below, those values remained relevant in the period of the Napoleonic Wars and their aftermath—but with proper stewardship in the face of rampant commercialism, the prominence of the image of the expert seaman navigating a well-prepared boat and leading an able and loyal crew through troubled waters is not surprising, for it more appropriately expresses the values of stewardship than the image of the chief as hunter or chief as horseman.

In traditional Gaelic praise poetry, the martial motifs are accompanied by a series of motifs related to what Ronald Black has described as "personal endowments and social roles",582 but which really refer to what might be called the civic, or perhaps domestic, aspects of the social roles of the chieftain enumerated by John

582 Ronald Black, *An Lasair*, *supra*, heading 2, p. 525

MacInnes in the passage quoted above.583 Like the image of the seaman, these civic or domestic motifs have particular prominence in the poetry that John MacLean composed for the Coll family. The poet deploys the standard motifs of the panegyric code in a way which allows him to bring particular concerns and messages to bear on his audience.

As MacInnes notes, the subjects of Gaelic praise poetry are under a constant obligation to show generosity, and are praised for demonstrating this virtue.584 Thus, John MacLean praises Alexander, the 15th Laird, for having an hospitable heart;585 he says that his manner is generous;586 he describes him as the very vision of hospitality.587 The young Laird, Hugh, is also praised for these virtues: John MacLean describes him as being generous and manly,588 and claims that, like his father, he is the very heart of hospitality.589 These virtues are demonstrated in the treatment of visitors:

B' e sin an teaghlach urramach	That was the venerable family
Gum b' ainmeil aig luchd turais e,	Which was famous amongst visitors,
Gur h-ann don bheus a bhuineadh dha;	It was related to his good virtues;
Daoin' uaisle mòr' is urrachan	Great noblemen and chieftains
'Bhith 'tighinn air chuairt 'sa dh'fhuireach ann,	Coming round and staying there,
'S e caoimhneil, bàidheil, furanach,	He is genial, friendly and courteous
'Gan cuireadh ann 's gach còmhdhail.	Inviting them to every gathering.590

The chief should be liberal in his provision of food and, especially, of drink:

Bhiodh òl man bhòrd gu toirbheartach	There'd be abundant drink at the table
Gun airc, gun leòn, gun teireachdainn,	Without shortage, affliction or waste,
Gach seòrsa 'dh'fhaotainn ainmeachadh;	Each type that I could name;
Bu dripeil a chuid sheirbheiseach	His servants were most busy,
'Ga chàradh mar a b' iomchaidh,	Serving it as was befitting,
Anns an teaghlach ghreadhnach shuilbhearra,	In the merry, cheerful family,

583 John MacInnes, "The Panegyric Code in Gaelic Poetry and its Historical Background", *supra*, at pp. 452.
584 *Ibid*, at p. 456.
585 "Cridhe fialaidh 'dh'fhàs gun ghruaim"/ "A hospitable heart that grew without ill humour": poem 2, line 26
586 "'S e uachdaran na dùthcha sin/'Tha fiùghantach 'na ghnàths"/"It is the chief of that country/Who is generous in manner": poem 2, lines 73-4.
587 In poem 2, line 79: "gnùis na fèile".
588 "'S fiùghantach, fearail e"/"He is generous and manly": poem 8, line 167.
589 "'S e cridhe na fèile": poem 8, line 177.
590 Poem 5, lines 65-72.

'San caithte 'chuirm le sòlas.	In which the gathering would be spent with joy.591

Indeed, generous provision of alcohol is frequently mentioned by the poet and is clearly esteemed by him. He remarks approvingly on the large amount of brandy that will be waiting for Alexander upon his return to his home in Coll:

Bidh a bhranndaidh 'na galain	His brandy will be there in gallons
Aig a ghillean 'ga tarraing 's 'ga roinn,	With his servants drawing and pouring it,
Ann am Breacachadh thall ud,	In Breacachadh over yonder,
'S na h-uaislean aig Alastair cruinn.	And Alexander's nobles gathered around.592

He goes on in this same poem to note that every last detail will be in order in the chiefly residence, prepared for the feast:

Bidh fiontan 'gan òl leibh,	Wines will be drunk by you,
'S iad pailte gu leòir aig' air làimh,	He would have them plentifully on hand,
Ann an obair nan òr-cheard,	In the handiwork of the goldsmiths,
'S iad lìonte air a' bhòrd bho gach ceann.	Filled on the table from end to end.593

Liberality in provision of drink also features in poem 8, in praise of the young Laird:

'S lìonmhor gach talla	Plentiful is each hall
'Am biodh fìon ann an searragan,	In which wine would be in flasks,
'S gloineachan làn dheth.	And glasses would be full of it.594

As is noted in Chapter Two, the poet's father was a brewer, and the poet himself, though religious, was apparently fond of a dram. The importance he attaches to drink will be seen in other poetry composed by him, both in Scotland and the New World, and this puts his two New World poems on the temperance movement in Antigonish, composed in about 1840, both of which shall be explored below, in perspective. However, John MacLean values the hospitality of the chief in its widest sense, and the well-stocked hall, another commonplace of the motif of hospitality in Gaelic praise poetry, is mentioned, as here:

Gu 'thalla fialaidh fiùghantach,	To his hospitable, generous hall,
Gur h-e sin riamh 'bu dùthchas dha,	That was always customary to him,
Nuair 'thrialladh iad 'ga dh'ionnsaigh-san	When they would venture to him,

591 Poem 5, lines 58-64.
592 Poem 7, lines 93-6.
593 Poem 7, lines 109-12.
594 Lines 82-84.

'Bhith measail, cosgail, cùramach;	To be worthy, extravagant and solicitous;
Bu phailt' gach nì fo 'stiùbhartan	His stewards ensured everything was plentiful,
'Ga riarachadh gun cheann orra,	Sharing it out without limit,
Luchd-freasdail deas ro ionnsaichte	Skilful servants expertly trained
'Na rùm 'ga chuir 'an òrdagh.	In his chamber putting it in order.595

The chief's residence is also traditionally a place of music, particularly the pipes and the harp, and John MacLean makes repeated approving references to the presence of music in the home of the Lairds of Coll. In poem 5, for example, the presence of music is enumerated as one of the features of the hospitable home of Alexander MacLean:

Nuair 'bhiodh na h-uaislean cruinn aige	When he had the nobles gathered around,
'N àm suidhe dh'ionnsaidh 'n dìnnearach,	When they sat for their dinner,
Bhiodh ceòl 's òl an fhìona aca.	They'd have music and drinking of wine.596

Pipe music is particularly esteemed by the poet. In poem 31, it is referred to in a martial context, namely, at the time Alexander MacLean's men are preparing to enter the battle:

Pìob gu fonnmhor 'ga gleusadh	A pipe would be melodiously tuned
Aig a cèile fo 'achlais,	By his partner under his arm,
'S gearradh cliùiteach ar n-armachd	And the renowned slashing of our arms
Ri toirt dearbhadh 'nar gaisgeadh.	Provides proof of our heroism.597

Generally, though, the pipe appears in a domestic context, as an instrument of art or of entertainment rather than an instrument of war, as in poem 2, in which the poet refers to "an talla 'an cluinnte ceòl na pìob'",598 and in poem 5, in which he makes this reference: "'Na àite-còmhnaidh inntinneach,/A' chùirt 'an cluinnte 'phìobaireachd".599 Poem 7 is particularly expressive of the omnipresence of music in the house of the Lairds of Coll:

Mu laighe na grèine	At about sundown
Bhiodh fidhlean 'gan gleusadh gu teann,	Fiddles would be keenly tuned,

595 Poem 5, lines 72-9. See also poem 7, at lines 97-100, where Alexander is praised for leading the company at his table in feasting.

596 Lines 52-4; see also poem 31, in which, in reference to hospitality provided by Alexander MacLean, the Laird of Coll, to other nobles in his Edinburgh home, the poet says "Gheibhte ceòl is òl fiona"/"There would be music and drinking of wine": line 141.

597 Lines 61-4.

598 "The hall in which the music of the pipe would be heard|": line 127.

599 "In his merry dwelling-place,/The court in which piping would be heard": lines 50-1.

'S a' mhadainn ag èirigh Le pìob nan dos rèidhe is nan toll.	And rising in the morning With pipes of the polished drones and the holes.600

There are no references to the harp, which, as noted, is often referred to in traditional Gaelic panegyric, but by the poet's time, the use of the harp had become archaic. As is clear from the foregoing passage, the fiddle had by the poet's time become a popular instrument for entertainment.601

While, as noted, these motifs are a central part of an older Gaelic panegyric tradition on which John MacLean draws, the repeated reference to the pipes, particularly in a domestic context, is significant in the scheme of his praise poetry. For the poet, cultural loyalty is of fundamental importance. As we have seen, Alexander MacLean appears from all accounts to have been loyal to many aspects of the Gaelic chiefly tradition, including the Gaelic arts. The poet's emphasis on this motif, and in particular, his repeated reference to music in a domestic context, must have been intended to both praise and reinforce this cultural loyalty at a time when much of the Highland aristocracy had either disappeared through the loss of their estates or had become thoroughly anglicised. The existence of a chief who still understood and supported core aspects of the Gaelic cultural tradition was a matter for celebration and praise. Indeed, an important manifestation of this cultural loyalty was Alexander MacLean's patronage of the poet himself, and this will be discussed shortly.

In traditional Gaelic panegyric, the chief is praised for exhibiting qualities such as learning and eloquence,602 for his civility, and for his modesty,603 and these

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600 Lines 113-6.

601 Indeed, the fiddle had enjoyed widespread popularity in the Gaelic Highlands and had attained a prominence in clan life by the eighteenth century: see, for example, John G. Gibson, *Old and New World Highland Bagpiping* (Montreal and Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2002), at p. 86 and 91.

602 Ronald Black, *An Lasair*, *supra*, motif 2.5, at p. 525.

603 *Ibid*, motif 2.1.

commonplaces can be found in the poetry composed by John MacLean for the Coll family. John MacLean praises the Laird of Coll for qualities such as "eòlas", "skill, experience", "fòghlam", "learning, education", and "gliocas", "wisdom".604 The poet praises him for his great scholarship.605 He frequently claims that Alexander is civil.606 Frequent reference is also made to Alexander's humility.607

In Gaelic praise poetry, the chief is also praised for being a support to his people, for dispensing justice,608 for being merciful to the poor and to the tenantry, and for not being harsh concerning the rent.609 While there is therefore nothing unusual in the presence of these motifs in the praise poetry composed by John MacLean for the Coll family, the profusion of references in his poetry to qualities such as justice, mercy, and generosity concerning rents is notable, and is once again an understandable reflection of the poet's particular preoccupations—ones which were very contemporary and very real in a period, namely, the early nineteenth century in the Highlands and Islands, marked by commercialisation of estate management, rapid rent increases, evictions and a general abandonment of older values.

The poet repeatedly praised Alexander MacLean for being a "support" to his

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604 See, for example, poem 2, lines 75-6: " Tha misneachd agus fòghlam an,/Tha gliocas agus eòlas ann."/"There is courage and learning in him,/There is wisdom and skill in him". In poem 31, where at lines 129-30 his learning is again praised: "Bu tu 'n t-uachdaran fearainn/Dha' robh ceannas is fòghlam"/"You were the landlord/Who had superiority and learning". In the poet's elegy to Alexander MacLean, poem 32, he says of him "Bha thu fòghlaimte, fìor-ghlic"/"You were learned and truly wise": line 99. The young Laird is praised in similar terms in poem 8, lines 197-8: "Tha tuigse agus fòghlam/'Ga lìonadh gun mhòrchuis"/"Perception and learning/Fill him, but without vanity".

605 "'S àrd a sgoileireachd le iùl"/"Great is his scholarship and guidance": poem 1,line 110.

606 In poem 31, for example, the poet states: "Bha thu sìobhalta, coibhneil,/Gun fhoill na gun fhòtas"/"You were civil and kindly,/Without deceit or corruption" (lines 85-6). In poem 32, the poet states this about Alexander MacLean: "Dhan robh misneach is cruadal,/Agus eòlas da 'n rèir"/"Who had courage and hardiness,/And knowledge and civility to match" (lines 13-4); in the same poem, the poet claims "Bha thu macanta, coibhneil 'am beus"/"You were gentle and kind in virtue (line 94), and "Bha thu ceanalta, sìobhalt'"/"You were genteel and civilized" (line 139). Of the young Laird, the poet claims that he was "Ciùin, ceanalta, caoimhneil"/"Calm, mild and gentle" (poem 8, line 217).

607 For example, in poem 3, at line 91, the poet says "Tha e iriosal 'na ghiùlan"/"He is humble in his carriage"; in poem 31, at line 45, the poet makes this claim about Alexander: "Bha thu iriosal, uasal"/"You were humble and noble".

608 Ronald Black, *An Lasair*, *supra*, motif 2.6, at p. 525.

609 *Ibid*, motifs 2.1 and, especially, 2.3, at p. 525.

people, particularly in troubled times, as in poem 1, in which the poet makes this prayer:

'S e cùl taice 'mhuinntir uile e,	He was a support to all his people,
'S Rìgh nan gràs 'ga chumail suas	And with the King of grace lifting him up
Air sgiath dhìdean a dhol foidhe	On a wing of safety to go beneath him
Nuair 'bhios oirnne fòirneart cruaidh.	When we suffer harsh oppression.610

In traditional Gaelic panegyric, this motif undoubtedly referred to the protection from physical threat that the chief would provide in time of war, and was therefore a martial motif. In poetry such as this, though, composed in the early nineteenth century at a time when clan warfare was long gone and civil war was no longer a possibility, the motif clearly is tied to contemporary issues, chief amongst them being uncertainty concerning estate management. The reference to "oppression" can only be understood as oppression concerning the rents, a point which, as we shall see, the poet made explicit in this body of poetry. In poem 6, composed after the Laird of Coll had been injured in a fall from his horse, the poet prays for his recovery, and returns to the same themes, namely, the chief as a support and protector of his people against injustice:

Cò dhiubh 'ghabhas ar pàirt,	Which of them will take our part,
Ged a chaithear le càch oirnn eucoir.	When others would visit injustice upon us.
Ma 's e seo a cheann-crìch,	If this is his end,
Bidh sinn tùrsach 'ga chaoidh,	We'll be sorrowfully grieving him,
Bidh cùl-taice 'gar dìth;	We will be without a support;
Nach robh duin' ann ri 'linn	There was no one of his generation
'Bheireadh tàmailte dhuinn	Who would cause us affront
Fad 's a bhiodh e 'gar dìon mar sgèithe.	As long as he'd protect us like a shield.611

Injustice and oppression are always close at hand in this poetry, as they were in the early nineteenth century. In poem 8, a poem composed in about 1818 for Alexander's heir, Hugh MacLean, on the occasion of his acquiring land rights in certain Mull estates, the poet claims these same virtues for the young Laird,612 though given the

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610 Lines 29-32.

611 Lines 29-36.

612 "Cùl-taice nam feumach,/'Gan dìon anns gach èiginn,/Nach dìobradh 'nan èis iad,/Le ceum 'am biodh fàillinn"/"He is a supporter of the needy,/Protecting them in every difficulty,/Who would not leave them in hardship,/By way of a faulty step": line 181-4.

poet's evident concerns about the young Laird and, in particular, about his commitment to the old values, it is likely that this rhetoric is meant to encourage such behaviour in the future, when he assumes control of the estate.

The theme of justice has particular resonance, as Alexander MacLean, 15th Laird of Coll, had studied law and, before deciding on a career in the military, had entertained the idea of becoming a lawyer.613 The poet claims that Alexander had been a fair judge in the courts of the Scottish capital: "'S breitheamh ceart e nach dean eucoir,/'S tric a rèitich e dhaibh cùis".614 More generally, the poet claims that Alexander will not tolerate injustice to his people—"Bheir e 'nios sinn anns gach èiginn,/'S nach leig eucoir oirnn dlùth"615—that he is a giver of justice—"Fuasglaidh 'fhacal binn gach ceartais"616—and that he is generally a just man: "Tha e coir 's a h-uile càs".617

Rent is a very significant preoccupation in the poetry of John MacLean for the Coll family; rapid rent increases were certainly common in the early nineteenth century, and a major cause of the injustice and oppression to which the poet often referred and from which Alexander MacLean provided protection. Generosity concerning rents is an old motif in Gaelic panegyric poetry, and is a virtue for which Alexander MacLean's predecessors had also been praised.618 What is significant,

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613 Alexander Maclean Sinclair, *The Clan Gillean*, *supra*, at p. 380.

614 "He is a good judge who won't commit injustice,/Often he has settled a dispute for them": poem 1, lines 55-6; the events to which the poet is referring are not clear.

615 "He will lift us up in each difficulty/And he won't let us suffer injustice": poem 1, lines 107-8.

616 "His sweet words will release everything that is just": also poem 1, at line 111.

617 "He is just in every difficult situation": also poem 1, at line 146. See, also, poem 32, the elegy composed by John MacLean on Alexander's death in 1835, where he praises his sense of justice and honesty ("Cridhe soilleir gun fhoill thu/Dhan robh ceartas a' boillsgeadh mar ghrèin"/"You had a pure and honest heart", lines 95-6) and his honesty again ("Bha thu 'cleachdadh na firinn,/Is bha t' fhacal cho cinnteach ri d' pheann"/"You were accustomed to the truth/And your word was as certain as your pen", lines 103-4).

618 See, for example, Colm Ó Baoill, *Duanaire Colach 1537-1757*, *supra*, at p. xlvi, in reference to two passages. The first is the following lines in the poem "Cumha do Niall Òg", "Lament for Young Neil", apparently composed for the son of Niall Mòr MacLean, the youngest brother of the Coll chief Eachann mac Iain Chaim, Hector MacLean, also known as "An Clèireach Beag", who died around 1625: "Bu tu ceann an luchd muinntir/Nach robh geur orra an cùinne/Ann an eireachdas cunntais no

though, is the regularity with which this motif appears in the poetry of John MacLean; indeed, it is a major and recurring theme. In poem 1, for example, composed in about the year 1811, at the very time that James MacDonald was reporting on the reluctance of the Laird of Coll to displace his people (see above), the poet explicitly recognised the rent increases he observed all around him, and praised the Laird of Coll for resisting this trend: "'S e nach sàraicheadh le màl iad,/Ged 'bhiodh càch 'ga thogail suas".619 In poem 2, dating from about 1807, the poet claims that Alexander MacLean is not harsh concerning rents,620 and in poem 31, composed in about 1828 on the Laird's giving over of his estate to his son, the poet makes these observations about the old Laird's refusal to either displace his people or exert harshness concerning the rent:

Bu tu ceannard na tuathadh,	You were the leader of the tenantry,
Nach bu chruaidh gu cur às dhaibh,	You were not so harsh as to do away with them,
Nach dìobradh gu bràch iad,	You would never forsake them,
Ged 'bhiodh fàilinn na airc orr';	Though they would be failing or in distress;
'An àm togail a' mhàil dhiubh,	At the time of collecting the rent from them
Ghabhte 'phàirt a bhiodh aca,	Their side would be taken,
'Sa chuid eile bhiodh dàil ac'	They would get an extension for the remainder
Gus a' fàsadh iad beartach.	So that they could become better off.621

In poem 6, composed at the time of Alexander's accidental fall from his horse, John MacLean notes the Laird's reluctance to evict the tenantry, even when his tenants had fallen behind, his willingness to postpone amounts due, and his refusal to exact penalties that he could rightly have claimed from them:

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mòd"/"You were the leader of their people/Who would not be harsh with them about their coin/In the good appearances of accounts or a hearing" (lines 83-5, p. 4, and notes at pp. 54-5. The second is the following lines in the poem "Òran do Dhòmhnall MacGilleathain, Tighearn Chola", "A Song for Donald MacLean, the Laird of Coll", which Ó Baoill believes may have been composed around 1695, by the poetess Catriona NicGilleathain (Catherine MacLean): "B' e siod an t-uachdaran cliùiteach:/Cha b' fhear spùinnidh air tuath thu;/Tha thu faidhidneach iochdmhor/'S tha thu miosail aig uaislean;/'S tu ceann-uidhe nan deòraidhn,/Thoirt an lòin air bheag duais doibh"/"There was the famous nobleman:/You were not a man to plunder the tenantry;/You are patient and merciful/And you are respected by the nobility;/You are the hospitable landlord of the helpless,/Giving them provision for little reward" (lines 506-11, p. 21, and notes at pp. 69-70).

619 "He would not oppress them with rent,/Though the rest would be increasing it": poem 1, lines 45-6.

620 "Fear nach geur mun mhàl": line 80.

621 Lines 49-56.

Air an uachdaran ghast'	Concerning the excellent landlord
'Bha gu riasanta ceart,	Who was reasonably just,
Nach tug bàirlinn le smachd	Who never issued a warrant in reproof
Riamh 'sa mhàl nach biodh ac';	Ever when they did not have the rent;
'S mòr an uaisle a bha d' bheachd,	Great was the nobility in your views,
'Fhir, nach togadh na mairt na èirig.	O man, who would not lift the cattle or a fine.
'S ann a gheibheadh iad dàil	They would always get a deferment
Gus an cinneadh an t-àl,	Until the young animals had grown,
Gu ceann bliadhna na dhà,	For at least a year or two,
Nuair a dheanadh iad fàs,	When they would reach maturity,
'Tighinn a-staigh leis gu sèimh,	Coming in with him peacefully,
Gun an gabhail an sàs 'nan èiginn.	Without seizing upon them in their distress.622

In poem 3, we again see the poet praising the Laird of Coll for his mercy to and support for his people in their time of difficulty: "An cùl-taic' ri uair am fàilinn/Nach faic càs orra gun fhuasgladh".623 It is for these qualities that John MacLean claims that he is the best landlord in Scotland:

Uachdaran cho math 's 'tha 'n Albainn,	A landlord as good as any in Scotland,
Ged a sheanchaiste mun cuairt iad,	Though they would be talked about a lot,
Tha e iochdmhor, làn do cheartas,	He is merciful and full of justice,
Cha b' e 'chleachdainn a bhith cruaidh orra.	It was not his practice to be hard on them.624

All of these qualities are fondly remembered by the poet in his elegy for the Laird of Coll, composed in about 1835, soon after Alexander's death. The poet claims that Alexander's wealth did not make him greedy for more625—standing the Laird in sharp contrast with many other Highland landlords of the era—and he summarises his virtues as a landlord in the following way:

Chaill iad ceannard na tuatha,	They lost a leader of the tenantry,
'S tu nach teannaicheadh cruaidh iad mun mhàl,	You wouldn't oppress them harshly about rents,
Cha do dh'fhògair thu bhuait iad,	You did not banish them from you,
Cha do chuir thu air cuan iad thar sail;	You did not send them over the seas;
B' e toilinntinn an uasail	It was the nobleman's pleasure
A chuid dhaoine 'thigh'nn suas air a sgàth	That his people come up for his sake
Ann an cothrom, gun ghluasad,	In an opportunity, without agitation,
'S nam biodh èis orr' 's ann 'dh'fhuasgail tu 'n càs.	If they were in hardship, you would resolve their straits.626

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622 Lines 73-84.

623 "Their support in the hour of their weakness/Who won't let hardship go unresolved": lines 51-2.

624 Poem 3, lines 53-6.

625 "Cha robh beairteas 'gad lìonadh/Na 'cur eallaich air t'inntinn le sannt"/"Wealth did not fill you/Or burden your mind with greed": poem 32, lines 101-2.

626 Poem 32, lines 25-32.

John MacLean's concern about the extent to which the young Laird, Hugh, would also adhere to these values is implied in poem 8, composed in about 1818, in which he expresses the hope that the young Laird will emulate his father's virtues:

'S e 'chunnaic 's a chual' e,	It is what he has seen and heard
'S am fasan 'bu dual dha,	And the manner that was customary to him,
Bhon fhear a thog suas e	Frlom the man who raised him,
'Bhith truacanta, bàigheil,	To be compassionate and merciful,
Sàr-cheannard na tuathadh,	Great leader of the tenantry,
Nach teannaicheadh cruaidh iad,	Who would not harshly oppress them,
Nach toir an cuid bhuatha,	Who would not take their share from them,
'S a dh'fhuasgladh 'nan càs orra.	And who'd resolve their difficulties for them.627

This poem, in particular, illustrates the sometimes ambiguous nature of Gaelic praise poetry. John MacLean does not criticise expressly the subject, the young Laird, and later in the poem he makes liberal use of the motifs of this type of poetry in relation to Hugh (as we have seen in a number of examples, above). As Colm Ó Baoill has noted, the praise poet does not necessarily describe the chiefly subject as he is, but rather describes him as he should be.628 There is no reason to believe that John MacLean did not feel that Alexander, the 15th Laird, was a good chief: by praying that his son emulate him, and, indeed, by being drawn to Alexander in the first place, it is likely that the poet felt Alexander was an excellent exemplar of chiefly values. But the poet's role here is to scrutinise carefully the behaviour and the character of the subject, and the praise of chiefly virtue can both reinforce good behaviour and displays of good character and remind the subject of his duty to act correctly. Thus, the poet is acting as a witness, but also, and more importantly, as a conscience.

Two other commonplaces of traditional Gaelic praise poetry which also appear in John MacLean's compositions for the Coll family and which merit brief reference

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627 Lines 105-12.

628 Colm Ó Baoill, *Duanaire Colach 1537-1757*, *supra*, at p. xliv.

are praise of the subject's physical appearance,629 and the use of kennings,630 or metaphorical descriptions of the subject. For example, Alexander MacLean is described as being shapely, elegant and upright, and as having a mild demeanour.631 The poet is even more effusive about the young Laird's physical appearance:

Tha 'ghruaidh mar an caorann,	His cheeks are like the rowan,
'S a chneas mar an fhaoileann,	And his form is like the gull,
Sùil chorrach ghorm aobhaidh,	Blue, passionate, lovely eyes,
'S aodann is àille,	And the loveliest face,
Fo mhaladh gun chlaonadh,	Under a brow that is even,
Le gruaidh nach dean caochladh,	With a cheek that is unchanging,
Chan fhaicear air daonnan,	He is never seen
Ach aogas a' ghàire.	Without a smile on his face.632

With regard to kennings, John MacLean limits himself largely to floral kennings.633 Thus, the MacLeans from whom Alexander descend are likened to a forest free from decay,634 and their blood is likened to noble streams of pure water from the springs.635 The poet employs the oak, apple and yew trees—all "noble" trees in the Gaelic tradition636—as metaphors for the Laird and his ancestors.637

We have seen that the poetry composed by John MacLean for the Coll family was certainly within "the panegyric style" in its heavy reliance on the commonplaces of the Gaelic panegyric tradition. However, we have also seen that the poet deployed

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629 See Ronald Black, *An Lasair*, *supra*, motif 5, at p. 527.

630 *Ibid*, motif 6, at p. 527.

631 "'Se fear cumadail deas dìreach/'S aghaidh shìobhalta gun sgraing": poem 1, lines 153-4.

632 Poem 8, lines 209-16.

633 Ronald Black identifies a large number of faunal kennings, including the hawk, eagle, capercaillie, lion, bear, dragon, and stag, as well as meteorological phenomena, light-giving objects, jewels, musical instruments, and so forth: see Ronald Black, *An Lasair*, *supra*, motif 7, at p. 527.

634 "Don choille 'bha gun chrìonaich": poem 2, line 29.

635 "'S lìonmhor struthan uasal/Mu 'ghuailnean 's ann a' streap/Do dh'uisge glan nam fuaran/Don fhuil a bha gun truailleadh"/"There are many noble torrents/About his shoulders ascending/Of pure water of the springs,/And of the blood that was without impurity": poem 2, lines 161-4.

636 John MacInnes, "The Panegyric Code in Gaelic Poetry and its Historical Background", *supra*, at pp. 457-8.

637 So, in poem 31, John MacLean employs the noble oak image: "Cha b' i 'choille 'robh 'n crìonach/'As na fhreumhaicheadh òg thu,/Ach na daragaibh àrda"/"It was not in the forest in which there was rot/In which you took root as a youth,/But amongst the great oaks" (lines 75-7). In this passage in poem 6, the poet employs both the apple and the yew image: "Craobh don abhall a b' fheàrr/A rinn cinntinn fo bhlàth/Anns a' choille a b' àirde geugan./Cha b' i 'choille bheag chrìon/Ach an t-iubhar glan grin/Às na bhuaineadh na suinn"/"Tree of the finest apple/Who made to grow in bloom/In the forest of the highest branches./It was not a tiny, withered forest,/But the excellent, pure yew/From which the heroes would be plucked" (lines 64-9).

the rhetoric of that tradition in such a way as to respond to the contemporary reality in which he and his subjects were operating, the turbulent years of the early nineteenth century. Thus, we see in this particular body of poetry the realisation of the potential for dynamism in the panegyric tradition, and other aspects of this dynamism will become clear in the praise poetry John MacLean composed for other subjects. We also see in this poetry, though, the hints of an even more profound transformation that is beginning to take place. As noted earlier, Gaelic praise poetry is not "personal poetry" into which the persona, the identity of the poet obtrudes. Again, as Colm Ó Baoill notes, there is not much room in this poetic tradition for personal opinions or feelings, and the prime role of the poet was the maintenance and strengthening of the status quo, and of the position of the chief as the central agent in that status quo.638 The main exception to this is that Gaelic praise poets often employed the device of the "locative opening", whereby the poet begins a praise poem by telling the reader where he or she is or what he or she is doing when the process of composition began.

Ó Baoill notes, however, that in two songs composed by Donald Morrison in the first half of the eighteenth century to the Coll Laird Hector MacLean (c. 1690-1754), the poet begins the praise poem with a more extensive description of his own difficulties, with which the subject of the poem provided assistance. Ó Baoill reports that Donald Meek is of the view that we are seeing in these poems the beginnings of the appearance of the persona of the poet emerging in the Gaelic tradition, a mark of modernity.639 John MacLean takes this even further in many of his poems; indeed, he becomes a real protagonist in some of the poems, in the sense that the events which

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638 Colm Ó Baoill, ed., *Duanaire Colach 1537-1757*, *supra*, at pp. xli-xlii.

639 *Ibid*, at p. xliv; the poems are "Òran do dh' Eachann MacGilleathain", at pp. 38-9, and "Òran", at pp. 40-1. There are, however, earlier examples of the emergence of the persona of the poet. This is particularly clear in the poetry of John MacDonald, "Iain Lom"; while he frequently employs a locative opening, many of his elegies begin with a highly personal expression of the loss felt by the poet; in

led to the composition of the poems relate wholly to the poet. This is innovative, and is yet another sign that the poetry of John MacLean is indeed poetry in transition.

In poems 1 and 2, we find very good examples of this development. In many respects, both poems are praise poems in the classic Gaelic tradition, drawing on many of the commonplaces of that tradition. However, the poems were inspired by events in the poet's life, rather than in the life of the subject, the Laird of Coll. Poem 2 may have been composed in about 1807, in honour of the provision by Alexander MacLean to the poet of a letter of security to assist him in the purchase of shoe leather in Glasgow. The poet does not make specific reference to these events in the poem, but does make clear in the first and second verses that he came to the Laird of Coll seeking assistance on two occasions, and that the Laird provided him with the support he needed. While the poet places the Laird's behaviour squarely within the commonplaces of the Gaelic panegyric tradition—he makes specific reference in the second verse to the motif of the chief providing assistance to his followers—his tone is personal and almost conversational. Poem 1, composed in 1811, and therefore about four years later than poem 2 (if we assume that it was composed in about 1807) was occasioned by the assistance provided by Alexander MacLean in securing the poet's release from the Argyll militia.640 Unlike poem 2, the poet provides in the first three verses of the poem a very detailed description of the events which led to the composition of the poem. The tone is even more personal, and the presence of the poet as protagonist is even clearer. In a sense, this poem, like poem 2, could be viewed as an extended reflection on one of the commonplaces of the classic Gaelic panegyric tradition, the praise of the chief for being a friend, patron and benefactor of

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some cases, as in poems such as "Cumha Morair Hunndaidh", this extends over several stanzas: See Annie M. MacKenzie, *Òrain Iain Luim*, *supra*, for example at p. 48 *et seq.*

640 For a discussion of these events, see Chapter Two, above.

the artistic classes in Gaelic society, in this case, of the poet.641 As has already been noted, John MacLean certainly viewed the treatment by the Highland aristocracy of artists, particularly pipers and poets, as a crucial indicator of their loyalty to the entire Gaelic order. However, he is not merely praising the Laird of Coll for his patronage of "poets", but of a particular poet, the composer of the poem.

The reason for this development in the poetry of John MacLean is not immediately clear. As noted in Chapter Two, from an early age the poet showed a self-confidence that bordered on arrogance, and this may be explained by the fact that he appears to have been a precocious talent, and that he was very aware of the fact that he descended from other notable poets and enjoyed some status deriving from his membership in the MacLean minor aristocracy. In a few of the poems composed for the MacLeans of Coll (and elsewhere in the poetry of John MacLean), we observe the poet apologising for any failings in his craft642—another aspect of the emergence of the persona of the poet, perhaps, although such apologia, for example, for lack of genealogical knowledge, are not uncommon in Gaelic poetry of this and earlier periods643—but these apologia have a formulaic feel, and were likely ironic; the poet has little doubt of his powers. However, very many of the poets who composed traditional Gaelic panegyric in previous periods shared a similar background and, no

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641 See Ronald Black, *An Lasair*, *supra*, motif 2.2, at p. 525.

642 For example, the poet concludes poem 1 in the following way: "Nam biodh m' fhiosrachadh gu m' dhùrachd,/Chuirinn sìos a chùis na b'fheàrr,/Agus m' eòlas mar mo dhòchas,/Bhiodh e 'n òrdugh nach biodh ceàrr"/"If my skill was as I wished,/I'd record his case much better,/And if my ability was the equal of my desire,/It would be in order, with nothing wrong": lines 177-80. Similar apologia appear in poems 2 (lines 169-72) and 8 (lines 193-6).

643 See, for example, Mairearad nighean Lachlainn's "Cumha do Lachainn MacGilleain", in which the poetess makes this apology: "Mur bhith dhomhs' 'bhith òg, leanabail,/Is nach h-eòl dhomh do sheanachas/Bheirinn umad làn iomradh"/"Were it not that I am young and childish,/and do not know your genealogy,/I would give a full account of you": Rev. Alexander Maclean Sinclair, ed., *Na Bàird Leathanach/The MacLean Bards: Vol. I, The Old MacLean Bards* (Charlottetown: Haszard and Moore, 1898), at p. 180. See also Sorley Maclean, "Margaret daughter of Lachlan", in William Gillies, ed., *Ris a' Bhruthach*, *supra*, at pp. 187-8. Neither Maclean Sinclair nor Maclean are able to date this poem, but both suspect it was made early in the poetess' career, and is therefore likely of the late seventeenth century.

doubt, a similar sense of robust self-worth as John MacLean, so the vigorous emergence of the persona of the poet and the presence of the poet as a protagonist in this poetry cannot be solely attributed to such factors.

Another explanation for this development may derive from the changing circumstances of the Gaelic Highlands in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth century. As we have seen, the chief had traditionally been the focus of Gaelic praise poetry, because the chief was the ultimate protector of the community and its values. By the early nineteenth century, it had become clear that the chief could no longer be relied upon to perform this role; as we have discussed, the old chiefly class were either selling their estates or were transforming themselves into commercial, and anglophone, landlords. The existence of a few aristocratic families such as the MacLeans of Coll gave some limited cause for hope, and the poet continued to have a role in reinforcing their loyalty to traditional values. However, in this new context, there seems to have been a growing recognition that other actors within Gaelic society would now have to perform the role of protectors of the culture and the community.

Poets such as John MacLean responded by expanding the range of subjects who were worthy of praise, and this development will be considered further, in Chapter Four. But men such as John MacLean may have realised that they themselves were perhaps the ultimate guardians and protectors of the traditions of their people. As was noted in Chapter Two, inspired by the example of other collectors, John MacLean himself became a collector and publisher of Gaelic poetry. As already noted, he composed a fine panegyric in traditional strophic metres for another poet, Alexander MacKinnon, a poem which shall be discussed further, below. It is possible, then, that the emergence of the poet himself in this praise poetry is an expression of the recognition of the centrality of the poet in the preservation of Gaelic

values and of the Gaelic community. The Laird retains his power through his ownership of the land and his ability to follow good, or bad, estate management policies, but it is the poet who has authority. The Laird merits praise to the extent that he is supportive of the poet.

In this context, poem 5 is particularly interesting, and significant. As noted in Chapter Two, in about 1815, John MacLean took a trip to the West Highlands for the purpose of collecting Gaelic songs. At some point thereafter, he formed the intention to bring out a collection of his own poetry and the poetry that he had collected. This collection was ultimately published by himself, in 1818. The first five verses of poem 5 tell of the poet's trip to Edinburgh, some time between 1815 and 1818, in a failed attempt to gain financial support from the Royal Highland Society for the publication of his collection. The poet ascribes his failure to the fact that the society was mostly composed of non-Gaels who, the poet felt, clearly did not appreciate the value of this work, and to the fact that the Laird of Coll, his patron, was not there to help him. The poet implies strongly that, had his patron been present, he could have made a decisive difference.

While it is certainly possible that the absence of Alexander MacLean was decisive on this particular occasion, it is difficult to believe that this was the only time the poet tried to obtain financial assistance for the publication of his collection, or that he had not made other entreaties to his patron for assistance. It would appear that, at the time of the composition of poem 5, any such attempts must also have met with failure. As was noted in Chapter Two, and as we shall see in our discussion of the poetry John MacLean composed for Alexander Ranaldson MacDonell, chief of the MacDonells of Glengarry, according to Gaelic oral tradition, the poet had a falling out with his patron in about 1815. It is possible that the poet's failure to obtain the Laird

of Coll's support may have been due to this falling out between them. If this is the case, the poem can be read in a somewhat different light. Perhaps it was part of an attempt by the poet to shame his patron into providing the necessary support. In this context, the following lines are notable:

Nach deanainn feum gun Alastair	I'd be useless without Alexander
Bhon a bha mo phòca falamh,	Since my pocket was empty,
'S a bhith aimbeartach gun stòras.	And am poverty-stricken and without riches.
. . .	
Nuair 'thig e 'Chola chì mi e,	When he comes to Coll I'll see him,
Cha bhi mo shaothair dìomhanach	My labours will not be in vain
Gun dol gu crìch le 'chòmhnadh.	Without going to the limit with his assistance.644

Again, we see the emergence of the poet as protagonist. The chief clearly retains importance and power, but this is praiseworthy only to the extent that the chief provides support to the poet, a tradition-bearer and collector. The claim that the poet is destitute would be shocking—the good chief patronises the poet and protects him from poverty, and a chief that would allow his poet to fall into penury would be a mark of serious failure to adhere to Gaelic values—and the final lines in the quoted passage could be interpreted as an attempt by the poet to extract the support that he had failed to obtain in Edinburgh. In the remainder of the poem, the poet dwells upon the hospitality of the Laird of Coll, particularly in respect of the great and the good,645 and in the final verse, makes reference to his newly-renovated house at Breacachadh.646 The poet could be suggesting here that if the chief has the resources to entertain aristocrats and to repair his home, then he should have the resources to support the poet in his important project. If this was the poet's strategy in composing this poem, it seems to have been successful because, as was noted in Chapter Two, it appears from the preface to his 1818 collection of poetry that the poet did, in fact, ultimately receive some financial assistance from the Laird of Coll.

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644 Lines 40-2, 47-9.
645 Lines 65-71.
646 Lines 80-6.

Strong elements of personal feeling are also evident in the two praise poems composed in Canada by John MacLean for Alexander, the 15th Laird of Coll. In poem 31, composed in about 1828 upon the poet hearing that Alexander had relinquished his estate, due to ill health, to his heir, the poet devotes the first three verses to his personal feelings on the matter. The very first verse is taken up with a deep expression of his sadness at the news.647 The poet begins poem 32, his elegy on the death of Alexander in 1835, in the same way.648 In the third verse of poem 31, he expresses his regret at having left the Laird to emigrate to Canada:

Nam bithinn gun t' fhàgail,	If I had not left you,
Bu cheann-fàth dhomh 'bhith t' ionndrainn,	It would be my purpose to lament you,
'S mi gu' faodadh 'bhith dàna ort,	It is I who could be bold with you,
'S ch b' e t' àbhaist mo dhiùltadh,	And it wasn't your manner to refuse me;
Fhir a sheasadh le càirdeas	O man who would stand in friendship
Anns gach càs air mo chùlthaobh,	With me in every hardship,
Leam is duilich ri èisdeachd	It is very sad for me to hear
Gun do thrèig thu do dhùthaich.	That you have given up your lands.649

This passage seems tinged with an element of guilt, and this, together with the real feeling of sadness which is conveyed, suggests that the story of the falling out between the two men, preserved in the oral tradition (discussed in Chapter Two and to which further reference will be made below, in the context of the poetry to Glengarry), may have had some basis; indeed, the poet's admission of his tendency to boldness is highly suggestive of this. There is a further hint in the following lines in poem 32:

'S bha thu àrdanach, rìoghail	You were proud and royal
Gus gach tàmailt a dhìoladh le duais,	And repaid each reproach with a reward,
'S tu nach trèigeadh 'nam chàs mi,	You would not forsake me in my hardship,
Gheibhinn coibhneas is bàidh bhuait gach uair.	I would always find kindness and hospitality from you.650

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647 "A-nochd is luaineach mo chadal,/'S mi 'nam leabaidh a' tionndadh;/'S beag an t-ioghnadh sin dhomhsa,/Rinn a' bròn orm drùdhadh;/Bhon là 'chuala mi sgeula,/Mheudaich èislean as ùr dhomh;/Rinn a' mulad mo lìonadh,/'S trom air m' inntinn a ghiùlan/"Tonight my sleep is restless,/I lie tossing and turning in my bed;/That is little wonder to me,/Sadness has painfully engulfed me;/From the day I received word,/My grief has increased once again;/Sadness has filled me,/It is hard for my mind to bear it": lines 1-8.

648 "Thàinig sgeul thar nan cuantan/'Mheudaich mulad is gruaim dhomh le bròn,/Chuir e m' inntinn gu gluasad,/'S iomadh aon dhan do dh'fhuasgail e deòir"/"News arrived from overseas/That has increased my sadness and sorrow,/It set my mind to thinking,/Many have been moved to tears": lines 1-4.

649 Lines 17-24.

Again, the references here may be to the insult given by the poet of composing poem 25, the toast to Glengarry, and the events surrounding its composition, as reflected in the oral traditions, and to the offer apparently made by Alexander of a rent-free croft for the poet after he had heard the poet's sad complaint of his life in the new world in poem 28, "Òran do dh' America", also known as "A' Choille Ghruamach". And, the poet closes his elegy to Alexander, poem 32, the final poem he composed for Alexander and for the Coll family, with another expression of deep regret at having left the old Laird.651 These are not merely formulaic expressions of sadness that are required by tradition, but hint at the deeper relationship, and the real wounds, that may have existed between the two men. They are in keeping with the strongly personal poetry that John MacLean composed in Canada, in which the poet is not afraid to give vent to his deepest feelings.

To conclude this section, we have seen in the poetry composed by John MacLean for the Coll family that, although he is composing in the "panegyric style", he is composing poetry that is shaped by and responsive to the contemporary context in which the poet lives. Far from being anachronistic or nostalgic, a careful reading of this body of poetry shows a clear understanding of the realities of the early nineteenth century Highlands. Through their ownership of the most important resource, land, Lairds such as the MacLeans of Coll still exercised decisive power, and to the extent that they still exhibited a willingness to adhere to the old Gaelic values, they should be praised, and encouraged, in the traditional way. The poet is, however, under no illusions about the precariousness of this support. In this context, other members of

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650 Lines 141-4.

651 "Cha bhiodh eagal gu bràch dhomh/Fhad 's a bhitheadh tu làidir ri m' chùl;/B' fheàrr gun robh mi gun t' fhàgail,/Gheibhinn fasgath fo sgàile do chùirt"/"I would never again have cause to fear/As long as you were strongly behind me;/Better that I had not left you,/I would find shelter under the protection of your court": lines 173-6.

the Gaelic community, and notably, the poets themselves, took on a new prominence. In this poetry, we begin to see the emergence of both the personality and the persona of the poet. In important respects, then, this is Gaelic poetry in transition.

Alexander Ranaldson MacDonell, Chief of the MacDonells of Glengarry

Aside from the Coll family, Alexander Ranaldson MacDonell, 15th chief of the MacDonells of Glengarry, was only one of two subjects for whom John MacLean composed more than one praise poem; the other was Fr. Colin Grant, the parish priest of Arisaig, Nova Scotia, about whom more will be said in the consideration of the poet's New World poetry, below. John MacLean composed three poems for Glengarry; a short toast (poem 25) which was likely composed in about 1815, a more extended panegyric (poem 26) which was likely composed in about 1818, and an elegy (poem 30), composed sometime after Glengarry's death in 1828.

The MacDonells of Glengarry were one of the senior branches of Clan Donald. They traced their origins to Ranald, the second son of John of Islay, who became Lord of the Isles in about 1330, and his first wife (and third cousin), Amy MacRury, whom John had married in 1337. Ranald's eldest son, Allan, was the progenitor of the Clanranald MacDonalds, and his second son, Donald, who died in 1420, was the progenitor of the branch that became the MacDonells of Glengarry. It was under the fourth chief, Alexander, known as "Alasdair na Coille" or "Alexander of the Woods" that the Glengarry MacDonells acquired the lands of Glengarry, and it is from this chief that the clan took its patronymic, "Mac Mhic Alasdair".652 Like the MacLeans of Coll, the MacDonells of Glengarry strongly supported the Royalist cause in the

652 See Brian D. Osborne, *The Last of the Chiefs: Alasdair Ranaldson Macdonell of Glengarry 1773-1828* (Glendaruel: Argyll Publishing, 2001), at pp. 37-8, and Norman H. MacDonald, *The Clan Ranald of Knoydart and Glengarry: A History of the MacDonalds or MacDonells of Glengarry* (Edinburgh: Forrest Hepburn & McDonald, 1995), 2nd ed., at p. 9.

Civil Wars of the mid-seventeenth century, and, traditional in their Catholicism, they were, if anything, more staunchly Jacobite than the Coll family. Alasdair Dubh ("Black Alexander"), the 11th chief, fought with his clansmen at Sherrifmuir in 1715, and for his efforts was in the next year given a peerage, as Lord Macdonell, by the exiled Old Pretender, James VIII of Scotland and III of England. About 150 of Alasdair's men fought for the Jacobite cause at Glenshiel in 1719. John, the 12th chief, was unfit to lead the clan in the 1745 rebellion, and his eldest son Alasdair Ruadh ("Red Alexander") was unavailable, as he was serving as an officer in the French Army. Nonetheless, led by Aeneas, John's second son, a Glengarry regiment of about 500 men fought throughout the rebellion, although Aeneas himself was killed, in an accidental shooting, after the battle of Falkirk in 1746.653

Unlike the MacLeans of Coll, however, the MacDonells of Glengarry did not escape the financial problems which plagued so many of the great Highland families during the eighteenth century. The Glengarry lands were extensive, covering a wide area of the West Highlands that included Glengarry, Knoydart and North Morar, but they were not profitable; in 1761, for example, the cash income from the estate was only £761. When Duncan MacDonell, the father of Alexander Ranaldson, became the 14th chief of Glengarry in 1761, the estate was heavily indebted, and his wife, Marjory Grant, nicknamed "Marsalaidh Bhinneach", or "Light-headed Marjory", showed anything but light-headedness in her influence on the management of the estate. In particular, she was determined to clear off the debts of the estate, and under her influence, Duncan instituted a number of changes in estate management aimed at raising rents and generating other income. First, like many of the modernising landlords, he bought out the wadsets of many of the estate's tacksmen, and replaced

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653 Brian D. Osborne, *ibid*, at pp. 41-2.

them with tenancies at a newly-negotiated price, a change which led to the emigration of many of these tacksmen and their followers. Second, he introduced large-scale sheep farming. In 1782, the first sheep farmer from the Borders was given a tenancy in Glen Quoich, which was then managed by Glengarry, and in 1786, 1787 and 1788, a series of evictions took place on Glengarry lands; indeed, in 1786, Father Alexander Macdonell of Scotus led about 500 people from the Knoydart lands to Glengarry, Ontario, and further emigrations from Glengarry lands took place in the early nineteenth century.654

Alexander Ranaldson MacDonell was born on 15 September, 1773, and became the 15th Chief of Glengarry on the death of his father, Duncan, on 11 July, 1788. As he was only fourteen at the time, his mother continued to exert decisive influence, as she was one of the trustees appointed to administer the estate during her son's minority. While the financial condition of the estate had improved under Duncan's stewardship, debt problems remained, and throughout his chieftainship, Alexander Ranaldson MacDonell continued to pursue similar estate management policies, with resultant large-scale emigrations of clansmen from Glengarry lands. In spite of these efforts to increase income, Alexander pursued a lavish lifestyle that left the Glengarry estate in perilous financial conditions. After his death in January, 1828, the trustees of the estate found that Alexander's debts came to about £80,000, a staggering sum for the day, equivalent to perhaps £6 to £8 million in today's values, and one which exceeded the estate's income by between ten and twenty times. The trustees concluded that the Glengarry estate had to be sold, and the Marquis of Huntly purchased it shortly thereafter. Glengarry's son and heir, Aeneas MacDonell,

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654 See Brian D. Osborne, *ibid*, at pp. 41-5.

emigrated to Australia.655 The stewardship of Alexander Ranaldson MacDonell of Glengarry and that of Alexander MacLean of Coll could therefore not have been more different. Where the Coll family had, as we have seen, tried to maintain the old bond between Laird and clansmen to the greatest extent possible in a difficult age, had actively sought to avoid steep rent increases and to keep the people on their lands, and had generally maintained a prudent and circumspect lifestyle, Glengarry engaged in the sort of "foolishness" against which John MacLean had regularly warned. Glengarry presided over the merciless commercialisation of his clan lands, the clearance and ultimately the exile of large numbers of his clansmen, and effectively brought the Glengarry heritage to an end.

In spite of this abject record of estate administration, Alexander Ranaldson MacDonell, the 15th Chief of Glengarry, was "the idol of the bards".656 This is attributable, at least in part, to the fact that he was a Gaelic speaker, that he carefully cultivated the appearance of loyalty to many Gaelic traditions, some of which he appears to have reinvented in his own idiosyncratic way, and that he assiduously patronised the Gaelic arts and Gaelic tradition-bearers. Rev. A. and Rev. A. MacDonald say this about him:

> It was, however, as the typical Celt, the Highland chieftain and enthusiast, the patron of bards, the reviver and upholder of the ancient state and customs and language of the Gael, that Glengarry left so deep an impress on his day and generation. Wherever he went there was a Celtic *renaissance*, and men were transported to the ancient days of Gaelic chivalry and song and story.657

Glengarry also appears to have been possessed of an incredible personal charm and charisma that bewitched not only many Gaels but many others beside, including Sir Walter Scott, who counted himself a friend and who apparently used Glengarry as his

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655 See, in particular, Brian D. Osborne, *ibid*, at pp. 159-66, and Norman H. MacDonald, *supra*, at p. 155 and p. 163.

656 Norman H. MacDonald, *ibid*, at p. 151.

model for Fergus MacIvor in the novel *Waverley*.658

Although Glengarry did not have a particularly remarkable military career, and did not serve overseas during the Napoleonic Wars, in 1794 he did raise the First Fencible Regiment of Glengarry Highlanders, who were stationed in Guernsey until 1798 and were then sent to Ireland as part of the effort to suppress the rebellion there. The regiment was ultimately disbanded in 1802.659 Glengarry also gained renown for his role in a duel on 3 May, 1798, near Fort George, with Lieutenant Norman MacLeod of the 42nd Regiment, and which ultimately resulted in MacLeod's death due to the injuries he suffered. Glengarry was charged with manslaughter, but was acquitted.660 This encounter, sparked by Glengarry's petulant reaction to a rebuff by Miss Forbes of Culloden at a ball at Fort George in favour of MacLeod, earned for him the nickname "Alasdair Fiadhaich", "Wild Alexander".661 The effect of this duel on the Gaelic imagination is attested to by the composition of a praise poem, "A' Chòmhraig-dheise", "The Suited Combat", by Iain Mac-an-Tòisich, John Macintosh (d. 1852), a Lochaber poet who was chief tax collector for the western isles.662 The poem is replete with the heroic warrior imagery that formed the staple of the Gaelic panegyric tradition and was set in classic three-line strophic metres. Glengarry was a prominent participant in King George IV's famous 1822 trip to Scotland, and according to a tradition reported by Hector MacDougall in his edition of *Clarsach na Coille*, Glengarry organised a battle exercise between a troop of his tenants, kitted out in traditional highland garb, with claymores and targes, and a troop of Redcoats, as a

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657 Rev. A. and Rev. A. MacDonald, *The Clan Donald* (Inverness: The Northern Counties Publishing Company Ltd., 1900), at p. 485.

658 See Brian D. Osborne, *supra*, at pp. 14-5.

659 See Brian D. Osborne, *ibid*, at pp. 62-81, and Norman H. MacDonald, *supra*, at pp. 135-43.

660 See Brian D. Osborne, *ibid*, at pp. 83-97, and Norman H. MacDonald, *supra*, at pp. 143-5.

661 Rev. A. and Rev. A. MacDonald, *supra*, at p. 485.

662 Donald MacPherson, ed., *An Duanaire: A New Collection of Gaelic Songs and Poems* (Edinburgh: MacLachlan and Stewart, 1868), at pp. 160-163.

demonstration for the King George IV. Donald MacPherson presents a somewhat more dramatic picture of this event, noting that Glengarry had "challenged the pick of English soldiers" present, and that the Redcoats were more heavily armed, with muskets and bayonets. John MacIntosh also composed a praise poem to commemorate this event, "Oran do Mhac-ic-Alastair".663 Glengarry also engaged in protacted litigation to win for his clan the claim to the headship of Clan Donald, and this too was celebrated in Gaelic verse.664 Glengarry's involvement in the military, his conspicuous celebration of Highland dress and Highland warrior prowess, his attempts to win for his clan the headship of Clan Donald, and his undoubted bravery in the infamous duel were all in keeping with the martial ethos of the old Highlands, and all clearly fired the imagination of men like John MacLean.

But Glengarry also assiduously cultivated the image of an old-style Highland chieftain in many other ways, as well. As was mentioned earlier, Glengarry retained Allan MacDougall, known as "Ailean Dall", "Blind Allan" (1750-1828), a Glencoe native who was a renowned poet and fiddler, as his bard shortly after the publication by MacDougall of a collection of his poetry in 1798,665 and provided him with a comfortable cottage and croft near Glengarry's own residence at Invergarry. From one of Ailean Dall's compositions, "Oran do Mhac-Pharlain, Piobaire Mhic-ic-Alastair", which appeared in his 1798 collection, we know that Glengarry had by that time retained a piper named MacFarlane,666 and he apparently had another piper,

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663 Donald MacPherson, *ibid*, at pp. 157-160.

664 John Macintosh also composed "Deoch-Slàinte Mhic-ic-Alastair": see Donald MacPherson, *ibid*, at pp. 163-165. With regard to Glengarry's ongoing attempts to win recognition as the rightful head of Clan Donald, see Brian D. Osborne, *supra*, at ch. 10, "Peerage and Precedence", pp. 191-218.

665 *Orain Ghaidhealach: le Ailein Dughallach fear ciuil an Ionbhar Lochaidh, maille ri Co'-chruinneachadh oran is dhan le Ughdairibh eile.*

666 John G. Gibson, *Traditional Gaelic Bagpiping 1745-1945*, *supra*, at p. 184. Duncan MacDonell, the 14th Chief, had retained a piper, named John MacDonald, who was apparently retained by Alexander, the 15th Chief, as he was still competing in the competitions of the Gaelic Society of London in 1801.

Archie Munro, at the time of his death in 1828, and who was also a poet, as he composed an elegy on his patron's death.667 It was customary at Invergarry House for Glengarry's piper to play three times during dinner and three times more after the ladies had left the dining room, and the piper also played in front of the house six days a week.668 Glengarry wore Highland dress on all occasions, and it is in this costume that he was immortalised in a famous portrait by Henry Raeburn, from about 1812. When visiting friends in the Highlands, Glengarry would march from Invergarry House in full Highland regalia, with eagle feathers in his Glengarry bonnet, followed by his "tail", a body of retainers also fully dressed in Highland garb who were regularly posted as sentinels at his door, and Ailean Dall would prepare a "bardic oration" at the end of each journey.669 In June, 1815, Glengarry had formed the Society of True Highlanders at Inverlochy, as a

> . . . pure Highland Society, in support of the true Dress, Language, Music and Characteristics of our illustrious and ancient race in the Highlands and Islands of Scotland, with their genuine descendants wherever they may be.670

The Society recruited ninety-seven members at its inaugural meeting, which was conducted entirely in Gaelic. Glengarry served as the first "Ceann Suidhe", or President, and was instrumental in the appointment in October, 1815, of Ewen MacLachlan (1773-1822), the fine Lochaber poet and librarian of King's College, Aberdeen, as Gaelic Secretary.671 He had also keenly promoted MacLachlan, ultimately unsuccessfully, for the post of classical master at the Inverness Royal Academy in 1818/1819. Not surprisingly, MacLachlan appears to have come under Glengarry's spell. In 1812, Glengarry had erected the famous memorial beside Loch

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667 See Brian D. Osborne, *supra*, at p. 225.

668 Norman H. MacDonald, *supra*, at p. 149.

669 Norman H. MacDonald, *ibid*, and Alexander MacKenzie, *History of the MacDonalds and Lords of the Isles; with Genealogies of the Principal Families of the Name* (Inverness: A. & W. MacKenzie, 1881), at pp. 356-7.

670 Brian D. Osborne, *supra*, at p. 21, quoting the *Inverness Journal* of 15 June, 1815.

Oich at the Well of the Seven Heads to commemorate the action of his ancestor, Lord Macdonell and Aros, in avenging the murder of the boy chiefs of the MacDonalds of Keppoch in 1663, even though it was MacDonald of Sleat, rather than Lord Macdonell, who ordered the death of the murderers.672 John MacKenzie credits Ewen MacLachlan with the composition of the Gaelic inscription on the monument.673

From the perspective of the early twenty-first century, it is difficult to disagree with Ronald Black's assessment of Alexander Ranaldson MacDonell as "one of the greatest hypocrites of this hypocritical era [i.e. the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries]" for busily "raising his people's rents to levels which they could not afford while ostentatiously strutting the part of an old-style Highland chieftain",674 and it is difficult to understand how Gaels of intelligence and perception such as Ewen MacLachlan, Allan MacDougall, John MacIntosh and John MacLean, amongst others, could have been taken in by him. In his poem "Òran do na Cìobairibh Gallda",675 for example, Allan MacDougall was fiercely critical of the introduction of lowland shepherds and the practice of turning estates over to sheep which was taking place on the Glengarry estates. He saw in such practices a mortal threat to the old Highland order. Yet, at the same time, he seems to absolve Glengarry and his family of blame, preferring to ascribe guilt to the estate factors, as if they were working independently of and at counter-purposes to their employer. Allan MacDougall composed a number of poems in praise of Glengarry, including "Oran do Mhac-'ic-Alasdair Ghlinne-

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671 Brian D. Osborne, *supra*, at p. 22.
672 *Ibid*, at pp. 170-1.
673 "Clach-Cuimhne Ghlinne-Garaidh aig Tobar-nan-Ceann", in John MacKenzie, ed., *Sar-Obair nam Bard Gaelach: The Beauties of Gaelic Poetry and Lives of the Highland Bards* (Edinburgh: John Grant, 1907), at p. 368.
674 Ronald Black, *An Lasair*, *supra*, at p. 517.
675 See Donald E. Meek, ed., *Tuath is Tighearna/Tenants and Landlords* (Edinburgh; Scottish Gaelic Texts Society, 1995), at pp. 47-53.

Gharaidh".676 Glengarry's death in 1828 produced a significant output of Gaelic elegiac verse, including a lament composed by Macdonell's personal piper, Archie Munro, "Cumha Mhic 'ic Alasdair", another composed by Ailean Dall,677 an elegy by John Macintosh, "Cumha do Mhac-ic-Alastair",678 and, of course, poem 30, by John MacLean; indeed, even Sir Walter Scott composed a lament, albeit in English, "Glengarry's Death Song".679 The continuing hold that Glengarry exercised on the Highland imagination is evident in the generous words of men like Alexander Maclean Sinclair in his 1881 edition of *Clarsach na Coille* and Hector MacDougall in his 1928 edition of the same book. 680

While the outpouring of Gaelic praise poetry is difficult to defend, it is possible to explain. As we have seen, the good chief was a patron of the Gaelic arts, and the supporter of poets and musicians. He valued the Gaelic tradition, and he showed profuse hospitality to those who entered his house. While the poets could not help but be concerned about the management of the Glengarry estate—Ailean Dall certainly knew about the harsh changes that were taking place under the Glengarry family, and others poets, such as John MacLean, who were certainly aware of similar practices on other estates, cannot be presumed to be ignorant of what was transpiring—Glengarry did not easily fit the mould of a modernising landlord. His

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676 See John MacKenzie, ed., *Sar-Obair nam Bard Gaelach*, *supra*, at p. 326.

677 Ailein Dughalach, *Orain, Marbhrannan agus Duanagan Ghaidhealach* (Inbheirnis: A. Mac-an-Toisich, 1829).

678 Donald MacPherson, *An Duanaire*, *supra*, at pp. 194-97.

679 See, generally, Brian D. Osborne, *supra*, at pp. 225-227.

680 In the post-script to poem 30, Alexander Maclean Sinclair noted that Glengarry "was a genuine specimen of a Highland chief" who "claimed to be the chief of the whole MacDonald clan." MacDougall repeats this view in his note to this poem in his edition: "Cha robh ioghnadh idir ged a mhol am Bard Mac Ghilleathain Alasdair Ghlinne Garadh mar a rinn e. Is e fìor Ghàidheal a bha ann am Mac Mhic Alasdair an latha sin, is bha e dileas d'a thir is d'a theanga. A réir a bheachd-san cha robh sluagh eile air uachdar fuinn coltach ris na Gàidheil no a thigeadh suas riu; agus de na Gàidheil an coitcheanas b'iad Gàidheil Ghlinne Garadh is Chnòideart an graine-mullaich uile gu léir."/"It is no surprise at all that the Bard MacLean praised Alasdair of Glengarry as he did. MacDonell of Glengarry was a true Gael that day [i.e. the day the poet's toast, poem 25 was composed], and he was faithful to his country and to his tongue. In his opinion there was no people on the face of the earth like the Gaels

intense and, by all appearances, genuine interest in the Gaelic arts, his fluency in the language, and his warm support for the creative classes must have given these poets hope that, in spite of the other evidence, Glengarry was committed to important aspects of the old order. As noted in the discussion of the praise poetry composed by John MacLean for the Coll family, the poet himself seems to have identified the Gaelic poet as the ultimate guardian of Gaelic values, and any chieftain who so eagerly cultivated and supported such men was, from this perspective, surely deserving of praise.

Added to this was Glengarry's undoubted personal magnetism. As was noted in Chapter Two, there were at least two oral traditions concerning the first of John MacLean's poems for Alexander Ranaldson MacDonell, poem 25, the toast entitled "Deoch-Slàinte, Mhic 'Ic Alastair, Ghlinne-Garaidh", and these help to explain the attachment that the poet formed for Glengarry. According to oral tradition in Glengarry country itself,681 Glengarry and his people were on their way to Glenfinnan, Moidart, to the dedication in 1815 of the monument erected there by Alexander MacDonald of Glenaladale in memory of Prince Charles Edward Stuart and the Highlanders who served him in the last Jacobite rebellion. According to this tradition, John MacLean was in the area at the time, and happened upon Glengarry and his company at Baile na Maighe in Strathlochy, Lochaber. Glengarry knew the poet, welcomed him warmly, and produced a bottle of whisky, which was sent around the company. Glengarry himself passed the bottle to the poet. It was at this point that the poet, moved by the respect Glengarry had shown him, composed his toast.

Oral traditions from Coll and Tiree682 concerning the composition of poem

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or who could match them; and of the Gaels in general, it was the Gaels of Glengarry and of Knoydart who were the finest."

681 As recorded by Hector MacDougall in his 1928 edition of *Clarsach na Coille*, at pp. 283-4.

682 *Ibid.*

25 differ in important respects. According to these traditions, there was a gathering in a particular place (Hector MacDougall speculates that it may have been at the dinner commemorating the erection of the Glenfinnan monument, in 1815) at which many of the Highland aristocracy were gathered, Glengarry and the Laird of Coll included. As was customary, many of their retainers were present, and John MacLean was amongst Coll's company. According to the Coll and Tiree traditions, the Laird of Coll had gone into the banqueting place, leaving the poet waiting outside. Glengarry saw the poet, and apparently grabbed him by the arm and took him into the dining hall, as if the poet were his equal in status. Upon being seated, Glengarry presented the poet with a drinking-shell filled with whisky, and it was at this point that John MacLean composed his toast.

In both the Glengarry and the Coll and Tiree traditions, the Laird of Coll took the high praise which the poet offered Glengarry very badly indeed—particularly his claim that Glengarry was the King of all the Gaels683 and that he had no equal since since Fionn MacCumhaill684—and the poem and the Laird's reaction to it created a rupture between the two men that was never repaired, and which may ultimately have contributed to the poet's decision to emigrate in 1819. In the Coll and Tiree tradition, the offence was deepened by the poet's insolence at the banquet: after hearing the toast, Alexander MacLean of Coll apparently turned to the poet and, with a certain *hauteur*, asked him "John, John, what have you done to me now; Why would you not compose a verse like that for me?", to which the poet responded "It would not suit you".685 As noted in Chapter Two, these traditions, particularly the Coll and Tiree

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683 "Gur e Rìgh nan Gàidheal uile": poem 25, line 18.

684 "Chan eil coimeas do Ghleann Garaidh/'S d' chuid Ghàidheal,/Bhon a chaochail Fionn Mac Cumhail/'S feachd na Fèinne"/"There is no equal to Glengarry/And to his Gaels,/Since the death of Fionn MacCumhail/And the army of the Fenians": poem 25, lines 29-32.

685 Hector MacDougall, ed., *Clarsach na Coille* (1928 edition), at pp. 283-4.

one, are consisitent with what we know of John MacLean's character—he appears to have been proud, sensitive to a slight, and given to sharp and cutting responses—and also help to explain the depth of his real regret and sadness, expressed in poems 31 and 32, as discussed above, composed on the decision of the Laird of Coll to give over his estates in 1828, and on his death in 1835, respectively.

With regard to the three poems John MacLean composed for Alexander Ranaldson MacDonell, they are all firmly in the "panegyric style", and like the poetry composed for the Coll family, draw heavily on the commonplaces of this tradition, albeit in a somewhat different and less interesting way. As in the poetry to the Coll family, John MacLean devotes considerable space to Glengarry's background. The poet identifies him by his traditional patronymic, "Mac Mhic Alastair",686 by reference to a qualifying adjective such as "Alastair Glinneach",687 or "An Gleannach",688 or "Garranach",689 or by a qualifying phrase such as "Gleann-Garadh na' sròl".690 The poet makes ample reference to Glengarry's traditional territories, such as Glengarry itself,691 lands to which he had title, such as Knoydart,692 and the two banks of the Garry water.693 In poem 30, an elegy composed on his death, the poet makes reference to the burial ground of the Glengarry MacDonells, at Kilfinnan.694 Unlike the Coll family, which expanded their

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686 Poem 26, line 161.
687 "Alexander of the Glens", poem 25, line 1, poem 30, line 198.
688 "The Man of the Glens", poem 30, line 42.
689 "The Glengarrian", poem 30, lines 44, 75.
690 "Glengarry of the banners", poem 30, line 107.
691 Poem 25, line 19.
692 "Cnoideart", poem 26, line 158, and poem 30, line 40, where the reference is to "Cnoideart a' bharraich"/"Knoydart of the birches". This is a adjectival description which John MacIntosh also employed, in "A' Chòmhrag-Dheise", at verse eighteen: see Donald MacPherson, *An Duanaire*, *supra*, p. 160 at p. 162.
693 "dhà thaobh uisge Gharaidh": poem 30, line 39. Again, John MacIntosh also uses this reference, again at paragraph eighteen of "A' Chòmhrag-Dheise": Donald MacPherson, *An Duanaire*, *supra*, p. 160 at p. 162.
694 "Bhon là 'chàirich i 'n ulaidh/'N Cill Fhianain 'san tullaich fon fhòid"/"Since the day that she buried the precious jewel/In Kilfinnan in the tomb under the turf": poem 30, lines 20-21.

territories under Alexander MacLean, the 15th Laird, the Glengarry MacDonells had, as noted, lost part of theirs, North Morar, and there is, unsurprisingly, no reference to this traditional clan land. As in the poetry of for the Coll family, John MacLean makes extended reference to Glengarry's coat of arms695 and his standard.696 And the poet makes repeated reference to Glengarry's royal blood,697 and to his "royalty"; again, this can be interpreted as loyalty to the true royal line, the House of Stuart. As noted, the poet also referred to him as "the King of the Gaels".698

With regard to Glengarry's relationships, there is brief reference to the Forbeses,699 to whom Glengarry was attached by marriage, as his wife was Rebecca Forbes, the second daughter of Sir William Forbes of Pitsligo, a baronet, an Edinburgh banker of great wealth, and a man of high social standing and literary tastes.700 Most of the other references are to the branches of Clan Donald; the only obvious reference to "allies" outwith Clan Donald is to the Chisholms,701 another strongly Jacobite clan from the nearby West Highlands. There is relatively less direct reference to Glengarry's ancestry, or to the battles in which his ancestors were involved, than is the case in the poetry for the Coll family. The poet makes brief reference to the mythic origins of the Clan Donald in Ireland—he describes them as

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695 "B' e do shuaicheantas daor/Long is leòghann is fraoch./Bradan tarragheal is craobh/'S an làmh dhearg nach robh faoin/Leis an tionndadh na laoich nàmhadach"/"Your precious emblem was/A ship and a lion and heather,/A white-bellied salmon and a tree/And a red hand that was not trifling/With which the warlike heroes would be fetched": poem 26, lines 59-63. Again, John MacIntosh makes reference to Glengarry's crest and standard.

696 Poem 30, lines 29-36.

697 "Gura h-iomadh fuil rìoghail/A bha 'd chùislean a' sìoladh"/"There was much royal blood/That coursed through your veins": poem 30, lines 46-7. This is likely a reference to his staunchly Jacobite and Royalist ancestors, rather than a claim to descent from royal antecedents. He is called "rìoghail", "royal", at poem 26, line 21, and poem 25, line 20.

698 Poem 25, line 18.

699 Poem 30, lines 182-3.

700 Brian D. Osborne, *supra*, at p. 141; the couple were married on 20 January, 1802, in Edinburgh.

701 Poem 30, lines 185-91.

"sìol Chuinn"702—but then protests his ignorance as to the details of the lineage ("Bhon 'tha 'n eachdraidh 'gam dhìth"703). The only other specific reference to Glengarry's ancestry—other than general references to "Clan Donald"—is the claim of descent from the Earl of Ross and Islay.704 This may have been intended by the poet to bolster Glengarry's claim, dating from about 1812, to his family's peerage, allegedly conferred by King Charles II and subsequently dishonoured.705 Similarly, there is a dearth of references to great battles in which the kindred was involved; the only significant exception is the poet's extended reference to the courage displayed by Glengarry's men—though, pointedly, not Glengarry himself—at the Battle of Waterloo in 1815.706

There are a few references to particular leading branches of Clan Donald as part of the enumeration of Glengarry's allies, but these are also not numerous. John MacLean enumerates the Lord of Sleat,707 the Earl of Antrim708 and Clanranald709 as supporters. The poet was almost certainly aware of Glengarry's extended legal battle to secure his ultimately futile claim to the headship of Clan Donald.710 His enumeration of these particular families as supporters might have been intended by

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702 "The descendents of Conn": poem 26, line 153. The reference appears to be to "Conn Cétchathach", "Conn Ceud-Chathach", or Conn of the One Hundred Battles, a legendary High King of Ireland, from whom the Clan Donald claimed descent: see, for example, Rev. A. MacDonald and Rev. A. MacDonald, *The Clan Donald, Vol. I* (Inverness: The Northern Counties Publishing Company, Ltd., 1896), pp. 30-5, who note that the tradition as to the descent of the MacDonalds from Conn of the One Hundred Battles "has undoubtedly been for ages the living belief of the Clan, and without very strong evidence to the contrary, we are not disposed to surrender it", and that "[t]he tradition of its descent from Conn has certainly impressed the imagination of the race and inspired many of its singers". See, also, Donald J. MacDonald of Castleton, *Clan Donald* (Loanhead, Midlothian: MacDonald Publishers, 1978), at pp. 7-8. Again, John MacIntosh also refers to these mythic origins, and also claims Mílidh, the mythical king from whom, as we saw above, John MacLean traced the descent of the MacLeans as well, as an ancestor: see, for example, verses three and six of "Òran do Mhac-ic-Alastair", in Donald MacPherson, *An Duanaire*, *supra*, p. 155 at p. 156, and in the chorus of "Deoch-Slàinte Mhic-ic-Alastair", at p. 163.

703 "As I lack the history": line 152.

704 Poem 30, lines 48-9.

705 See Brian D. Osborne, *supra*, ch. 10.

706 Poem 26, lines 85-98.

707 Poem 30, lines 178-9.

708 Poem 30, line 181.

the poet to provide a small moral boost to this claim. Other passages in this poetry are also likely meant to reinforce Glengarry's claim, at least in the court of Gaelic public opinion. Take, for example, the following:

Fhuair mi cinnte le sgeul	I found out with certainty by a report
Gur 'th' ann dìleas dha fhèin	That most loyal to him himself
'S do gach linn 'thig 'na dhèidh	And to every generation that comes after him
'Tha Clann Dòmhnaill gu lèir,	Is all of Clan Donald,
'S e mar dhìon dhaibh ri feum;	He is like a protector to them when in need;
Le luchd-seanachais a b' fheàrr	With the choicest of chroniclers
Rinn e 'mach gur e-fhèin a b' àirde dhiubh.	He showed that he was the greatest of them.711

Indeed, the poet's claim that Glengarry is "King of the Gaels" may also have been intended to promote Glengarry's cause. The claim that Glengarry was the greatest Gael since Fionn MacCumhaill712 was likely meant to serve a similar rhetorical purpose. However, if the reinforcement of Glengarry's claim was John MacLean's intention, he was both more circumspect, restrained and tasteful than more partisan poets, such as John MacIntosh, who both composed a "toast" to Glengarry to support his claim.713 In his poem, MacIntosh also likens Glengarry to Fionn, but, after a series of kennings—Glengarry is a dragon, an eagle, a lion and a hawk—he is also compared to Conn of the One Hundred Battles and other Irish mythological heroes such as Oscar, Goll and Cuchulain, and historical warriors such as William Wallace and Clavers.714 For a man of as limited a military pedigree as Glengarry, these comparisons are excessive, even given the demands of Gaelic panegyric.

Finally, unlike the poetry he composed for the Coll family, John MacLean's poetry for Glengarry does not contain the same level of preoccupation for the future, and of concern over the heir to the estate. Indeed, the only place the heir is mentioned is in poem 30, the poet's elegy composed shortly after Glengarry's death in 1828.

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709 Poem 30, line 180.
710 See Brian D. Osborne, *supra*, ch. 10, especially p. 206 *et seq.*
711 Poem 26, lines 120-26.
712 Poem 25, lines 29-32.
713 "Deoch-Slàinte Mhic-ic-Alastair", in Donald MacPherson, *An Duanaire*, *supra*, at p. 163.

Here, the poet merely reports that there will be rejoicing when the young Chief assumes his new role, and gently admonishes the young Chief, in a rather general way, to follow his father's good example.715 He concludes by saying that, although he is in Canada, he "would be pleased" to hear that the son be gentle and mindful of his father's courteous practices.716 This hardly matches the sterner admonishments that John MacLean issued to the young Laird of Coll, or the heartfelt regret at having ever left Scotland that the Laird of Coll's death elicited. It is possible that this relative indifference may have been due to a much higher level of confidence in the heir to the Glengarry estate. This is unlikely. The better explanation is that the poet saw that the writing was on the wall for the Glengarry estate, burdened as it was with debt, and having lost the strange, antiquarian figure, Alexander Ranaldson MacDonell, that was necessary to keep the illusion going. Furthermore, the Glengarry lands were remote from the poet's own island of Tiree, and it would be surprising if he felt the same level of engagement for the mainland districts in the possession of the MacDonells that he felt for the territories under the control of the Lairds of Coll. In any case, by 1828, the poet was in Canada and had resolved to stay there. Although not completely indifferent to matters in the Old Country—as noted in Chapter Two, he kept up a fitful correspondence with his brother Donald and perhaps others, in the early 1840s, he was in receipt of, and wrote a praise poem for, the Scottish paper "Cuairtear nan Gleann", and, of course, he was sufficiently engaged to still feel moved and, in the case of the Laird of Coll, perhaps duty-bound, to compose poetry for Coll and for Glengarry—but

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714 *Ibid*, verses five and six, pp. 164-5.

715 Poem 30, lines 192-206.

716 "Ged a tha mi 'san tìr seo,/Gum bu mhath leam a chluinntinn/Thu 'bhith macanta, cuimhneach/Air na cleachdaidhean caoimhneil/'Bh' aig an fhear on a chinn thu,/'Bha mar thaice do d' mhuinntir,/'S luchd nam breacan na dìobair an coir"/"Though I am in this land,/I would be pleased to hear/That you are gentle and mindful/Of the courteous practices/Of the man from who you descend,/Who was like a support to your people,/And people of the plaids don't forsake their claim": poem 30, lines 213-219.

it is not likely that he was any longer under any illusions about the sustainability of the old order that these men represented. Perhaps it was only the sadness caused by the apparent rupture with the Laird of Coll that could produce in John MacLean the deeper emotion which is present in his elegy for Alexander MacLean, the Laird of Coll.

With regard to the large category of motifs which John MacInnes describes as "social roles", what is most striking about the poetry John MacLean composed for Glengarry is the heavy preponderance of what Ronald Black characterises as "physical roles"—the martial imagery of the heroic warrior—rather than the domestic roles which Black refers to as "personal endowments and social roles". This stands in sharp contrast to the poetry John MacLean composed for the Coll family, in which, as was demonstrated above, these latter virtues were emphasised. In the poetry for Glengarry, there are repeated references to the motif of the fierce fighter and formidable foe.717 The poet frequently portrays him as an authoritative and commanding military leader,718 demonstrating manly virtues of energy, hardiness and vigour.719 As befits a warrior chieftain—particularly one such as Glengarry who cultivated this image so carefully and had it immortalised in the famous portrait by Raeburn—John MacLean repeatedly refers to Glengarry in his full Highland garb,720

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717 Motif 4.6.9 in Black's scheme (Ronald Black, *An Lasair*, *supra*, at p. 526): see, for example, poem 25, lines 4-6, 9-12, and the extended portrait of Glengarry as fearsome warrior in verses 3 to 5, lines 2-42, poem 26. Lines 24-28 give a good taste of this: "Ge b' e 'dhùisgeadh dhuit fearg,/Cha bu shugradh do cholg;/Bhiodh a' chùis ud dha searbh,/'S thèid e 'n cunntais na' marbh,/'S e 'thigh'nn dlùth dhuit 's na h-airm-làimh' ort."/"Whatever would awaken your anger/Your wrath would be no joking matter;/That affair would be bitter for him,/And he will be counted amongst the dead,/When he approaches you and you fully armed."

718 See, for example, poem 25, lines 25-6, the extended imagery of the active, inspiring military leader in poem 26, lines 64-75, and these lines, (25-28), from the poet's elegy to Glengarry, poem 30: "Laoch gun athadh, gun chùram,/Cha bu ghealtair a lùbadh,/Ceannard feachda nach diùltadh/'Èirigh smachdail air thus a chuid slòigh."/"A hero without fear, without care,/He was not a coward who would bend,/An army commander who would not refuse/To rise authoritatively at the head of his people."

719 Poem 25, line 3: "Fuasgailteach, cruadalach, smearail".

720 See poem 30, lines 115-21, and poem 26, lines 106-12, where the imagery brings to mind the Raeburn portrait.

in which costume he was "the very image of the hero",721 and to his sword and dagger,722 his pistols and his dirk,723 indicating all the time how effective these instruments were as tools of destruction in Glengarry's skilful hands. A warrior chief is complemented by his warriors, and the poet provides an extensive reference to their fierceness and courage, and their success at the Battle of Waterloo, in poem 26.724

As noted above in relation to the praise poetry composed for the Coll family, the warrior chieftain is also portrayed in other manly roles, such as the skilful horseman and the hunter, and John MacLean employs this imagery for Glengarry. Take, for example, these lines from poem 26:

Marcaich' sunntach na steud	Lively rider of the war-horse
Leis am buannaichte 'rèis,	With whom a race would be won,
Air each cruitheach 'na leum,	On a well-shod leaping horse,
Fo 'chommanda le srèin.	Under his command with a bridle.725

The hunting imagery is also liberally employed; take, for example, these lines, also from poem 26:

Leat bu mhiann a bhith 'sealg	It was your desire to be hunting
Ann a' frìth nan damh dearg,	In the track of the red stag,
Nuair 'chìte iad air falbh,	When they would be seen at a distance,
Bhiodh do luaidhe 'nan calg;	Your lead would be buried in their hide;
Bhiodh do mhial-choin 'nan lorg,	Your greyhounds would be tracking them,
Bhiodh na stùc-bheannan gorm	The steep, blue mountains would be
'Freagradh dlùth dhuit mar thoirm tàirneanaich.	Echoing you closely like noisy thunder.726

With regard to the more domestic roles and imagery, Glengarry is extensively praised for being a patron of the Gaelic arts, particularly piping, and household imagery abounds. Glengarry's house is filled with music—"'S ann gu greadhnach 'na chùirt,/Chluinnte fuaim an luchd-ciùil/'Chuir nan uaislean air sùnnd"727—and the daily routine of piping that Glengarry kept up, referred to above, is mentioned in this

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721 "Bu tu aogasg a' ghaisgich": poem 30, line 120.
722 Poem 26, lines 113-6.
723 Poem 30, lines 122-5.
724 Lines 78-98.
725 Lines 43-6; for very similar imagery, see poem 30, lines 129-35.
726 Lines 50-56; for very similar imagery, see, again, poem 30, lines 136-42.

passage:

B' ann 'ad chleachdadh 's do d' bheusan	It was in your habits and of your virtues
Ann 'ad bhaile mòr èibhinn,	In your grand, delightful township,
Fuaim na' feadain 'gan gleusadh,	The sound of the chanters tuning up,
'S gum bu mhiann leat an èisdeachd,	That you loved to listen to them,
'S iad a' freagairt a chèile.	As they answered one another.728

The poet also speaks approvingly of the presence of musicians and poets at evening entertainments;729 indeed, Glengarry is praised for giving poets and singers a platform and for actively seeking them out:

Bhiodh na bàrdaibh 's na filean	The poets and the minstrels would be
Ann 'ad sheòmraichean grinne	In your handsome rooms
'Gabhail òranaibh binne	Singing sweet songs,
'S tu ro-eòlach 'ga' sireadh.	You'd most expertly seek them out.730

In what appears to be a reference to a piping competition, perhaps at one of the Highland games Glengarry staged, Glengarry is praised for his patronage of pipers.731 Indeed, in the elegy composed on Glengarry's death, the poet exhorts poets to wake up and praise this patron of the Gaelic arts.732 Finally, Glengarry is also regularly praised for his generosity and liberality,733 particularly in relation to drink, as we see in this passage:

Nuair a chruinnicheadh na fearaibh	When the men would gather
'An tùr Inbhir-Gharaidh,	In the tower of Invergarry,
Gum biodh surd ann 'ad thalla,	There would be liveliness in your hall,
Cha bhiodh cùis ann ri gearan,	There would be no reason to complain,
'S i do chùirt nach biodh falamh,	It is your court that would not be empty,
Rum, 's branndaidh 'na ghalain,	Rum and brandy by the gallon,

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727 "Joyful was it in his court,/The sound of musicians would be heard/To put the nobles in a good mood": poem 26, lines 127-9.

728 Poem 30, lines 143-7. For another similar passage, which contains a reference to an unidentified piper named Angus who was apparently in Glengarry's employ, see poem 26, lines 134-8.

729 "'S 'an àm cromadh na grèine,/Chluinnte faram luchd theud 's bhàrdaibh ann": poem 26, lines 139-40; see poem 30, lines 143-44, for a very similar reference.

730 Poem 30, lines 150-3.

731 Poem 30, lines 80-6.

732 Poem 30, lines 94-100.

733 See, for example, poem 30, lines 126-8: "Sporan iallach gun eura ort,/Bu tu cridhe na fèileadh,/'S tric a riaraich na feumaich le t' òr"/"You wore a ribboned purse that was generous,/You were the heart of the feast,/Often you helped the needy with your gold". This is one of the very few references in John MacLean's poetry for Glengarry to a kindness being shown to the poor; as will be discussed below, this stands in sharp contrast to the poet's compositions for the Coll family. For another reference to Glengarry's generosity, see poem 26, line 112: "'S sporran fial às 'm bu phailt pàrtachadh"/"And a generous purse, shared out most liberally".

'S gum biodh fion ann gun ghainne ri òl. And there'd be no shortage of wine to drink.734

In respect of the patronage of the Gaelic arts, John MacLean is even more profuse in his praise of Glengarry than he was of the Laird of Coll, and in this aspect of the maintenance of traditional Gaelic values, at least, Glengarry did appear to be genuinely committed. This effusive patronage of poets and musicians was clearly a key factor in the very good "press" that Glengarry received from some of the finest and most discerning Gaelic poets of the day.

What is striking in this poetry, however, is that the poet almost completely omits other aspects of the domestic role of the chief, 735 and this stands in particularly sharp contrast to the poetry composed for the Coll family, as well as some of the other poetry composed for Glengarry. As was demonstrated earlier, John MacLean singled out Alexander MacLean, the 15th Laird of Coll, for the virtue of being a support to his people, for not being grasping about the rents, for being generous and kind to the poor. As was noted, the emphasis on these values suggests that the poet was keenly aware of the changes taking place throughout the Highlands and Islands, and knew that the Laird of Coll's loyalty to the old, pre-commercial Gaelic virtues was exceptional. The almost complete absence of any of these references in the poetry composed for Glengarry736 strongly suggests that the poet was aware of what was going on the Glengarry estate. Given Glengarry's personal kindness to and flattery of the poet, and his support for certain aspects of the Gaelic tradition, the poet could, perhaps, not bring himself to censure Glengarry, but he

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734 Poem 30, lines 157-63; see also this passage from poem 26, at lines 130-3: "Bheirte a-nuas dhaibh às ùr/ Deoch gun truailleadh 'sna cùirn,/ 'Dol mun cuairt aig a bhùird/ Anns an talladh 'm bu shùnnd àbhachdach."/" There would be brought down to them again/Purest of drink in the drinking horns,/Going about at his tables/In the hall of the most joyful good cheer."

735 As just noted in the second preceding footnote, the passage in poem 30, line 128, is one of the very few references to the provision by Glengarry of any material support to the poor.

736 Exceptions are the references, both in the poet's elegy to Glengarry, poem 30, of his people losing a supporter—"Chaill iad taice ri 'n cùlthaobh" (line 24)—and the reference to him being like a sword to his people (line 175).

retained sufficient integrity that he could also not come to praise Glengarry for honouring virtues that he had clearly abandoned. This is in sharp contrast to other poets in their treatment of Glengarry. In his elegy, "Cumha do Mhac-ic-Alastair", for example, John MacIntosh claims that Glengarry would not desert those in need or fail to support the weak,737 and more controversially—and certainly, inaccurately—claims that Glengarry supported the tenantry and forgave overdue rents.738 John MacLean was apparently not willing to rewrite the record in this way. Also notable, in sharp contrast to the poetry composed for the Coll family, is the almost total absence of the poet as protagonist in this poetry. In poems 26 and 30, we have locative openings—and in poem 30, a locative ending—that are much more restrained and much more typical of the Gaelic panegyric tradition than many of the extended autobiographical openings in the poetry for the Coll family.739

In conclusion, John MacLean's weakness for Glengarry, while perhaps not laudable, was in some respects understandable. He had clearly fallen victim to a man of immense personal charm and charisma, and in this, John MacLean was no worse than other poets of considerable skill and intelligence. That he appears to have allowed Glengarry to damage his relationship with Coll, a man who was in all respects much more deserving of praise in the traditional Gaelic panegyric fashion, is, however, not to John MacLean's credit. That he could not bring himself to praise Glengarry for key Gaelic social virtues that the MacDonell chief did not have is a redeeming feature, as is the true remorse that the poet expresses in his elegy for Coll, composed in 1835.

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737 Verse three, in Donald MacPherson, *An Duanaire*, *supra*, p. 194 at p. 195.
738 Verse five, *ibid.*
739 We do have examples of the false modesty that was evident in the poetry for the Coll family: see poem 26, lines 148-52, and poem 30, lines 220-6.

CHAPTER FOUR: A CRITICAL ASSESSMENT OF THE SECULAR POETRY OF JOHN MACLEAN—OTHER POETRY COMPOSED IN SCOTLAND

In this chapter, the praise poems composed in Scotland by John MacLean for subjects other than the Macleans of Coll and Alexander Ranaldson MacDonell of Glengarry will be considered, along with the secular poems composed in Scotland by John MacLean of a non-panegyric nature.

Other Praise Poetry

As noted in Chapter Three, one of the features of nineteenth century Gaelic poetry was a significant diversification of the range of subjects in respect of whom traditional panegyric was composed. As Donald Meek has argued, as Gaelic society changed "from chiefs and tacksmen to landlords and crofters from the early 1800s, the older icons are replaced by newer ones".740 This transition is evident in the poetry of John MacLean, for, as also noted above, in addition to the praise poetry he composed for the Lairds of Coll and the Chief of Glengarry, he composed nine other poems for other subjects while in Scotland that could be described as praise poems.

Four of these poems were composed for more minor members of the Gaelic aristocracy than the Coll family and Glengarry, including poem 9, for Ranald (or Reginald) MacDonald, the Laird of Staffa, poem 20, a lament to Colin Campbell, the Laird of Barmollach in Argyll and the tacksman of Balephetrish, Tiree, poem 23, a lament to Archibald MacLean, the Laird of Scour, and poem 24, an elegy to Colonel John Cameron of Fassifern. To some degree, then, each of these poems is also composed for a traditional subject, as the men were still members of the Highland aristocracy. However, there are elements of transition in each of these poems, which

are clearest in the poems to Archibald MacLean and Colonel John Cameron, who are praised not primarily because of their pedigree, or their role as landlords, but because of newer social roles which these men are playing, in particular, that of the successful soldier in the British army.

In some respects, poem 23, the lament to Colin Campbell, the Laird of Barmollach in Argyll and the tacksman of Balephetrish, Tiree, is the most traditional of these poems, and like the poems for the Coll family and for Glengarry, it is replete with many of the commonplaces of Gaelic panegyric. However, there are aspects to the poem which are notable, and indicative of the turbulent era in which the poet lived and the transitional nature of much of his poetry. The most significant of these aspects is the special emphasis that the poet placed on the subject's kindness to the tenantry; indeed, it is perhaps partly for this reason that John MacLean chose to honour Campbell of Barmollach with a lament. After praising Campbell of Barmollach in fairly characteristic terms for "chiefly" virtues such as his generosity and hospitality to strangers, John MacLean then adds the following:

Cha robh gainne na crìne ann,	There was no parsimony or meanness in him,
Cha do chuimhnich e 'n samhladh	He did not recollect the like,
Cha do chleachd e 'bhith mi-thur,	It was not his way to be niggardly,
Cha b' fhiach leis an ganntar;	Scarcity was not worthwhile to him;
Bha e iochdmhor ri feumaich,	He was merciful to the needy,
Gnùis a b' adhbhaich a' sealltainn,	A face most joyous in appearance,
'S math a ghiùlain e 'n saoghal	Well did he endure the world
'Bha gu caochlaideach, meallta.	That was fickle and deceitful.
Cha do ghlac e 'na inntinn	He never took it into his mind
A chuir cruinn le bhith sanntach,	To put about by being greedy,
'Gabhail brath air luchd-èiginn,	And deceiving the needy,
Cha b' fhear geur-chuiseach, teann e;	He was not a sharp, tight man;
Bha e iochdmhor ri truaghain,	He was merciful to the poor,
'Toirt dhaibh fuasgladh à teanntachd,	To give them relief from adversity,
'S e gun cuidicheadh suas iad	And it was he who would help them up
Nam biodh cruaidh-chàs na call orr'.	If they suffered difficulty or loss.741

As was argued in the discussion of his poetry for the Coll family, John MacLean was

740 Donald E. Meek, *Caran an t-Saoghail*, *supra*, at p. xxvi.
741 Poem 20, lines 25-40.

keenly aware of the changes in estate practices that were sweeping through the Highlands and Islands, and those landlords who stood against these pressures, such as the Lairds of Coll, were particularly deserving of his praise. In this regard, it is notable that the poet praises Campbell of Barmollach for enduring a world that was "fickle and deceitful". For this poet, a willingness to withstand this new, cruel and, from his perspective, thoroughly un-Gaelic world was perhaps the single most important attribute of the worthy Gaelic nobleman. Chief amongst the attributes of the good Gaelic chieftain is the quality of being merciful, "iochdmhor", an adjective the poet uses twice in the two verses quoted.

Although the subject was a member of a Campbell kindred, there is some suggestion that the Barmollach family was not, perhaps, subject to the same resentment that was, as noted in Chapter Two, generally felt in Tiree for Campbell representatives in the island, and that indeed they were well-regarded by Tiree folk;742 their treatment of the tenantry, as attested to in John MacLean's poem, may have been one reason for this. Although it does not figure so prominently in John MacLean's poem, the Campbells of Barmollach seem also to have demonstrated loyalty to many aspects of the old Gaelic aristocratic tradition, and the poet would have been impressed by this. For example, Eric Cregeen has noted that a John MacDonald was listed as a 'musician' at Balephetrish in 1779; Cregeen surmises that he was, in fact, a piper and that it was "likely enough that the Barmollach family, who were then in Balephetrish, rewarded him with gifts in return for his services as a piper".743 Colin Campbell was the subject of at least one other praise poem, by Archibald MacPhail, an older contemporary of John MacLean who lived in Balephuil

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742 See, for example, Niall M. Brownlie, *Bailtean is Ath-Ghairmean a Tiriodh/Townships and Echoes from Tiree* (Glendaruel: Argyll, 1995), at pp. 28-29, and at pp. 26-27.

743 Eric Cregeen and Donald W. MacKenzie, *Tiree Bards and their Bardachd* (Isle of Coll: Society of West Highland & Island Historical Research, 1978), at p. 7.

and who died there in 1830. In this poem, "Do Chailean Caimbeul, tighearna Bharramhollaich, agus Fear Bhaile-Phetris", Colin Campbell is praised in traditional Gaelic panegyric terms for his military virtues and for the geniality of his household, which was filled with music, drink, games and sport.744

Ranald, or Reginald, MacDonald (1777-1838) was the son of Colin MacDonald,745 the Laird of Boisdale, by his second wife Isabella, the daughter of Robert Campbell of Glenfalloch.746 The MacDonalds of Boisdale were a cadet family of the Clanranald MacDonalds. Colin MacDonald made over Ulva and Staffa to Ranald upon his reaching majority; Ranald added to this estate through the acquisition of Little Colonsay in 1801, Inchkenneth and Gribun in Mull in 1803, and Burg and Gometra in 1807.747 Ranald was an Advocate and had become Sheriff-Depute of the county of Stirling,748 a point to which John MacLean refers, and praises, in the poem:

Gu reachdail, beachdail, firinneach,	Judiciously, authoritatively, truthfully,
Ro chinnteach air a pheann,	Exceedingly precise with his pen,
'S tric a rinn e gnìomh leis	Often he made use of it
A' toirt binn air beulaibh Ghall.	Giving judgment before Lowlanders.749

As noted in Chapter Three, and as will be seen below, John MacLean had a suspicion of the Lowlands and of Lowlanders, and as the preceding lines illustrate, it was clearly a source of pride that a Gael such as Ranald sat in judgment in a Lowland county such as Stirling.

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744 See Urr. Eachann Camshron/Rev. Hector Cameron, *Na Bàird Thirisdeach/The Tiree Bards* (Stirling: The Tiree Association, 1932), at pp. 8-10.

745 Colin MacDonald was staunchly anti-Catholic, and his policies on the matter of faith was in part responsible for the emigration from Uist and Moydart to Prince Edward Island in 1772 that was organized by Captain John MacDonald of Glenaladale: see John G. Gibson, *Old and New World Highland Bagpiping*, *supra*, at p. 258; see, also, Compton MacKenzie, "Catholic Barra", in John L. Campbell, ed., *The Book of Barra* (Stornoway: Acair, 1998), at pp. 20-1.

746 Alexander MacKenzie, *History of the MacDonalds and Lords of the Isles; with Genealogies of the Principal Families of the Name* (Inverness: A. & W. MacKenzie, 1881), at pp. 470-1.

747 Jo Currie, *Mull: The Island and Its People* (Edinburgh: Birlinn, 2001), at pp. 199-201.

748 Alexander MacKenzie, *History of the MacDonalds and Lords of the Isles*, *supra*, at p. 106.

749 Lines 51-4.

Ranald MacDonald exemplified one of the chiefly virtues most honoured by John MacLean: loyalty to and respect for important aspects of Gaelic culture. He was certainly a fluent Gaelic-speaker; when Marshal MacDonald, Duke of Tarentum, visited Armadale Castle, Skye, on 8 July, 1825, MacDonald of Staffa was asked by the Marshal to translate his address to Lord MacDonald's tenantry who had gathered to greet him.750 Ronald MacDonald was also a patron of and apparently keenly interested in bagpiping. He had a piper, named John MacArthur, who placed highly at piping competitions in Edinburgh in 1804 and 1806, and Sir Walter Scott mentioned the presence of a piper at Ulva House and his playing a pibroch at the mouth of the famous cavern at Staffa when Scott visited in July, 1810.751 In 1838, John MacKay produced a print which was entitled "McArthur, piper to Ranald Macdonald Esq., of Staffa", in which the piper appeared in full Highland regalia. Alexander Campbell (1746-1824), an important early collector of bagpipe music, acknowledged the help he received from Ranald MacDonald of Staffa in putting together his collection.752 A well-known strathspey and reel had been composed in Ranald MacDonald's honour.753 Finally, it appears that Ranald MacDonald was generally keen on keeping up the trappings of an old Highland landlord. Indeed, there appears to be something of Glengarry in the description of Ulva House, Staffa's residence, given by Sir Walter Scott; Scott noted that the home, Staffa's armed retainers, and the entire atmosphere, smacked of "feudal splendour".754 We have already seen that even the most astute of the poets of this period were impressed by such ostentatious displays of Gaelic

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750 "Marshal MacDonald, Duke of Tarentum, at Armadale 8th July 1825" *Clan Donald Magazine*, No. 6, online edition, available at http://www.clandonald.org.uk/cdm06/cdm06a06.htm.

751 John G. Gibson, *Old and New World Highland Bagpiping*, *supra*, at pp. 84-5.

752 John G. Gibson, *ibid*, at p. 133.

753 Daniel MacLaren, *Mr. Macdonald of Staffa's strathspey and reel, etc.* (Edinburgh: D. MacLaren, 1805?).

754 Rev. A. and Rev. A. MacDonald, *Clan Donald, Vol. III* (Inverness: Northern Counties Publishing Co., 1900), at pp. 295-6.

antiquarianism, and John MacLean was no exception, and it is not surprising that John MacLean would have chosen to compose a song in praise of a man such as Ranald MacDonald.

It was not, however, this loyalty to the Gaelic language and culture and the trappings of chiefly office that seems to have most impressed John MacLean about Ranald MacDonald, but his attitudes to his people. Like Campbell of Barmollach and the Lairds of Coll, the Laird of Staffa appears to have exemplified what John MacLean considered to be perhaps the most important of the chiefly virtues: kindness to the tenantry and loyalty to more traditional estate management practices. When he assumed his estates, Ranald MacDonald apparently found Ulva overpopulated with poor tenants, and arranged for some to go to America. However, his estate depended fairly heavily on kelp, and like many other lairds of kelping estates, was generally keen on keeping his tenantry, and was concerned about the high rate of emigration between 1800 and 1807. Sir Walter Scott visited Ranald on Ulva in 1810, and gave a favourable account of his management of his estates and his concern for his tenantry, and both he and Necker de Saussure, who had visited Ranald in 1807, compared him favourably to many of his neighbouring absentee landlords. He was apparently popular with his tenantry.755

John MacLean's poem to Ranald MacDonald, poem 9, which appears to have been one of his earliest poems,756 was inspired by a particular incident which exemplified for the poet Ronald MacDonald's virtues as a good landlord and good

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755 See, generally, Jo Currie, *Mull: The Island and its People*, *supra*. Ranald MacDonald married into wealth when he married Miss Elizabeth Seton Steuart, the only daughter and heiress of Sir Henry Seton Steuart, Baronet of Allanton, whose name Ranald assumed. Like many of the West Highland and Hebridean landlords whose estates depended on kelp, MacDonald of Staffa suffered considerable financial hardship in the depression which followed the conclusion of the Napoleonic Wars in 1815; indeed, he became bankrupt in 1817, and was only saved from ruin thanks to his father-in-law. He was, however, forced to sell off his lands.

756 See the discussion in "Context" to this poem in the Notes in the Appendix.

chieftain. Despite the fact that Ranald MacDonald seems generally to have sought to maintain his tenants on their traditional lands, he had, as just noted, found Ulva overpopulated. Consequently, he and his brother Hector757 helped poor cottars to emigrate to Canada, and had in about 1803 negotiated with an emigration agent, James Robertson of Prince Edward Island, for their accommodation. It appears that at some point thereafter, Robertson had mistreated some of the emigrant cottars on one of the emigration vessels—based on the evidence of poem 9, once at sea, Robertson sought to extract more money from his passengers, and had threatened them with an axe758—and Ranald MacDonald had commenced a law suit in respect of the harm that had been done to the passengers,759 which, on the evidence of the poem, ultimately resulted in Robertson's being dispatched to the penal colony of Botany Bay.760

Though John MacLean's poem is a praise poem, it differs from the "panegyric style" of his other poems in some significant ways. First, Ranald MacDonald is not being praised as a laird or landowner, per se, but for his defense of the emigrants. Thus, he merits praise not simply because of his station, but because of particular actions. Second, the poem has relatively few of the standard panegyric motifs; rather, a considerable portion of it is given over to an account of the events in question. It is, in a sense, similar to a piece of reportage, rather than an encomium in "the panegyric style" of the Gaelic tradition. Such panegyric motifs as are employed by the poet are those relating to social roles, particularly his "domestic" virtues; thus, John MacLean

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757 Hector MacDonald, W.S., was the third son of Colin MacDonald by his first wife, Margaret, the daughter of Campbell of Airds, Ardnamurchan. He was one of the Principal Clerks of Session, and was married to Miss Buchanan of Drumikill and the Ross Priory, Dumbartonshire, an heiress to a considerable fortune; like Ranald, Hector assumed his wife's surname. See Alexander MacKenzie, *History and Genealogy of the MacDonalds of Clanranald*, *supra*, at p. 106.

758 See lines 65-80 for the poet's descriptions of the events.

759 See "Context" to this poem, in the Notes in the Appendix.

760 Lines 89-96.

praises Ranald MacDonald's good sense and his warm generosity,761 his friendliness and clannishness and his humble manner.762 Most importantly, he is a support to his people.763 Finally, the poet has a clear point to make, and the poem has a clear didactic purpose, which is most evident in the following verses:

Nam biodh na h-uaislean eileanach	If the island nobles possessed
Le eireachdas d' a rèir,	Good breeding to match his,
Ghlèidheadh iad an ìochdarain	They would retain their tenants
Is dhìbreadh iad an sprèidh;	And they'd forsake their flocks;
Mur cailleadh iad an duinealas,	If they hadn't lost their humanity,
'S am monaidhean fo threud,	With their hills under a flock,
Cha leigeadh iad an t-uallach seo	They would not permit this burden
Mu 'ghuailnean sin leis fhèin.	To fall on that fellow's shoulders alone.
Cha do ghabh e gnothach ris	He wouldn't have had anything to do with it
Ni 's moth' na iad fhèin,	Any more than they themselves,
Mur biodh e iochdmhor, truacanta,	If he hadn't been merciful and compassionate,
Agus cruadalach 'na dhiaigh,	And a courageous protector,
Gu seasamh còir nan Gàidheal,	In defense of the rights of the Gaels,
Nach robh fàilinneach gu feum,	Who was not weak in time of need,
'S nuair 'chunnaic e 'n droch chàradh,	And when he observed their mistreatment,
Gun d' rinn a nàdar leum.	His temper would be aroused.764

This is the key passage in this poem. John MacLean is not simply praising Ranald MacDonald, but is also using him as a measuring stick by which to judge others of his status. As the preceding passage shows, the poet finds many of Ranald's contemporaries lacking; they are more concerned with their flocks, and by implication, their incomes, than their tenants. Again, we see that John MacLean is keenly aware of the changes that are taking place all around him in the Highlands and Islands, and he uses the example of Ranald MacDonald to make a very clear statement about these changes. Unlike contemporaries such as Allan MacDougall, the poet to Glengarry, who in poems such "Òran do na Cìobairibh Gallda" ("A Song to the

761 "Tha gliocas, tuigse is riasantachd/'Na chridhe fialaidh blàth"/"There is wisdom, perception and reason/In his hospitable, warm heart": lines 27-8.

762 "Tha nàdar càirdeil, cinneadail,/Ro iriseil 'na chàinnt"/"There is a friendly, clannish,/Exceedingly humble manner in his speech": lines 49-50.

763 "Na bochdan tric ag ùrnaigh leis,/Gu dùrachdach gach uair,/A chionn e 'bhith cho chùramach/'Na ghèard air cùl an t-sluaigh"/"The poor often pray for him,/Fervently every time,/Since he is so careful to be/A guard to support the people": lines 61-4.

764 Lines 33-48.

Lowland Shepherds")765 was willing to criticise these changes but was reluctant to ascribe blame to the laird, John MacLean shows no such hesitation in laying the fault where it is due. It is true that all traditional panegyric can, in a sense, be seen to be didactic—the praise poet is not merely describing the subject, but prescribing a code of conduct—but in this poem, John MacLean is far more explicit in his purpose. This poem is not merely didactic, but borders on social criticism, and in this way, it is an early example of the poetry of protest that becomes increasingly common as the nineteenth century progresses.766 The poet's words are full of bitterness at the failures of other chieftains that Ranald MacDonald's example exposes, and there is a sense of real anger at two injustices, that of Robertson, and that of the wider changes in estate management that are taking place. We see in this poem the strong presence of the poet himself—his emotions and his thoughts—and in this sense, this is a "modern" Gaelic poem, and a harbinger of the sort of poetry that will become increasingly common in the nineteenth century.767

From the commencement of the French Revolutionary Wars in the 1790s, through the period of Irish rebellion in 1798, to the conclusion of the Napoleonic Wars at Waterloo in 1815, Britain was either at war or in a state of war readiness, and British forces were deployed in Europe, North Africa and in the overseas colonies. The acknowledgement and, indeed, the celebration of the participation of the Highland soldier in the British military became an important new theme in Gaelic poetry, and the continued contribution of Gaels to British military efforts was to be one of the major themes in Gaelic poetry of the nineteenth and into the twentieth

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765 In Donald E. Meek, *Tuath is Tighearna/Tenants and Landlords* (Edinburgh: Scottish Gaelic Texts Society, 1995), at pp. 47-50.

766 See Donald E. Meek, *ibid*, especially his Introduction.

767 See Donald E. Meek, *Caran an t-Saoghail*, *supra*, at p. xxvii.

century.768 Donald Meek has noted that Gaelic society had, from the Middle Ages, a strong commitment to warfare, and part of the strategy for pacifying the Highlands in the wake of Culloden was the diversion of this military enthusiasm into the service of the British state and Empire.769 In this process, the warrior tradition of the Gaels was, as John MacInnes has argued, given a new setting, "with enough in the way of military trappings and emblems to maintain a feeling of continuity".770 It was a relatively easy matter for Gaelic poets such as John MacLean to respond to this development. The heroic, martial motifs of traditional Gaelic panegyric could be easily redeployed in the praise of the Highland soldier, fighting for the British cause.

As noted above, two of the praise poems John MacLean composed for members of the Highland aristocracy, poem 23, a lament to Archibald MacLean, the Laird of Scour, and poem 24, an elegy to Colonel John Cameron of Fassifern, were primarily in recognition of the military record of these men. The praise of participation in British military efforts is a theme that appears elsewhere in John MacLean's poetry: as we have already seen in the praise poetry for both Alexander MacLean, Laird of Coll, and Alasdair Ranaldson MacDonell, Chief of Glengarry, John MacLean makes mention of the role of both men in the British military effort. Also, Campbell of Barmollach, in addition to being a local tacksman, was also a military man, and a recognition of this role forms part of John MacLean's rhetoric of praise in the poem composed for him. However, it is only in the poems for MacLean of Scour and Cameron of Fassifern that the heroic participation in British military efforts becomes the central theme, the focus of the poem. Poem 19, John MacLean's

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768 See John MacInnes, "Gaelic Poetry in the Nineteenth Century", *supra*, at pp. 379-83, Donald E. Meek, *Caran an t-Saoghail*, *supra*, at p. xxxii, and 295-6; see, also Ronald Black's introductory essay in *An Tuil: Anthology of 20th Century Scottish Gaelic Verse* (Edinburgh: Polygon, 1999), esp. at pp. xxiv-xxv.

769 Donald E. Meek, *Caran an t-Saoghail*, *supra*, at p. 295.

770 John MacInnes, "Gaelic Poetry in the Nineteenth Century", *supra*, at p. 380.

lament for Duncan MacInnes, a local Tiree man killed in April, 1814, while fighting as part of the British siege of Toulouse, differs from the poems for MacLean of Scour and Cameron of Fassifern in that, while it also contains praise for the martial qualities that MacInnes had demonstrated, is primarily a poem of solidarity for a family and a community and a highly personalised expression of loss and bereavement.

John MacInnes has argued that initially, at least, the Gaelic response to military service in the British army was "direct, naïve, and enthusiastic".771 The historical record is, however, somewhat more ambiguous than this; as Andrew MacKillop has demonstrated, although there was very heavy, perhaps disproportionate, recruitment from the Highlands in the period from 1759 through the end of the Napoleonic Wars, Highland soldiers showed a marked preference for fencible regiments rather than those of the regular line, largely because the former allowed for more time to be spent at home and tended not to involve overseas service.772 Furthermore, MacKillop has argued that it is also far from clear that, at least in the period through 1815, this participation in the British armed forces produced a new and heightened sense of Britishness amongst the Gaels themselves.773 Indeed, it is possible, he claims, to argue that "rather than military service engendering a sense of Britain, it actually served to reinforce, modernise and entrench local identity", so that in Gaelic poetry such as John MacCodrum's "A' Choimhstrith" ("The Flyting"), composed in the earlier period of the Seven Years War (1756-63) and other poetry of that era, the central emphasis is on "the warriors of the Rough Bounds", not on any strong sense of Britishness. To the extent that there is a "British" consciousness, MacKillop argues that it is conceived largely as "a primitive

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771 *Ibid.*

772 Andrew MacKillop, *'More Fruitful than the Soil': Army, Empire and the Scottish Highlands, 1715-1815*, *supra*, pp. 225-33.

773 *Ibid*, at p. 225.

feeling of loyalty to George II".774

It is not clear whether the Gaelic sense of "Britishness" is quite so inchoate a half century later in the period of the Revolutionary and Napoleonic Wars, but the argument that the emphasis continued to be placed on "the warriors of the Rough Bounds" is borne out in the poetry composed by John MacLean during this later period. Certainly, John MacLean's poetry in praise of Highlanders as British soldiers contains little of the jingoism—the "imperialist dope" referred to by Sorley Maclean775—which becomes an increasingly prominent feature of this sort of Gaelic poetry as the nineteenth century progresses.776 Given the poet's own record of service—as noted in Chapter Two, the initial enthusiasm which led him to enlist in the Argyll militia in about 1810 did not last, and he was both happy and relieved to obtain his discharge, through the help of the Laird of Coll, in January, 1811—this is hardly surprising, and the praise poetry John MacLean composed for Highland soldiers was mostly preoccupied with the courage and excellence of the soldiers themselves, and the honour that these exploits won for the Gaels, rather than the wider advancement of British interests.

There is some evidence of an incipient sense of a British national identity in which the Gaels are participating, but it is not particularly strong. In his elegy to Colonel John Cameron of Fassifern, poem 24, for example, the poet refers to the valour and military virtues that Cameron showed "in the cause of his country"777—here, the reference to his country must, in the context of a British imperial war, almost certainly be to Britain, rather than Fassifern, or the Highlands—and the efforts of the Gaelic soldiers against the Spanish armies and in taking Paris will be read "in the

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774 *Ibid*, at p. 232.

775 Somhairle Mac Gill-eain, "The Poetry of the Clearances", in William Gillies, ed., *Ris a' Bhruthaich: The Criticism and Prose Writings of Sorley Maclean* (Stornoway: Acair, 1985), at p. 66.

776 See Donald Meek, *Caran an t-Saoghail*, *supra*, at p. xxxii.

history of the British".778 However, the focus is on the valorisation of the Gaels, rather than any overtly "British" agenda. Indeed, there seems to be at least as great a sense of "Scottishness" as of "Britishness" in this poetry.779 In this context, then, it is hardly surprising that John MacLean shows little interest in the causes of the warfare or of the merits of the British cause, and that he has relatively little to say about Britain's imperial adversaries. Reference is occasionally made to "the French",780 or the "Spanish",781 but merely as the opponents with whom the Gaels do battle; these references are generally unqualified, and carry no particular overtones, moral or otherwise, or any implications concerning their cause. Interestingly, such elements only appear in John MacLean's poem to Campbell of Barmollach, poem 20, who had served in Ireland, where he took part in the British suppression of the Irish rebellion of 1798.782 In this poem, John MacLean describes the United Irishmen as "people of ill-will"783 and as "rebels".784 Such a perspective is hardly surprising in a culture that, as we have seen in respect of the panegyric motifs, placed such emphasis on loyalty, and in particular loyalty to the established order, to kingship, and

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777 Line 43.

778 Line 125.

779 For example, Archibald MacLean of Scour is described at lines 73-4 in poem 23 as a warrior as famous as any of his generation in Scotland: "B'e sin curaidh cho ainmeil/'S a bha 'n Albainn ri 'linn"/"He was a warrior as famous/As there was in Scotland in his age". At lines 43-4 in the same poem, the poet claims that "the spirit of Scotland" would rise in MacLean's soldiers when they heard the bagpipe: "Dhùisgeadh spiorad na h-Alba annt'/Nuair a sheirmeadh a' phìob"/ "The spirit of Scotland would rise in them/When the bagpipe would sound".

780 See, for example, poem 19, line 60, and poem 23, line 135.

781 Poem 24, line 126.

782 At line 164 of this poem, we learn that Campbell of Barmollach served with Colonel Henry Morduant Clavering, a son-in-law of the Duke of Argyll, likely in the battalion raised by him in 1794, the Second Argyll Batallion, which was deployed in Ireland until it was reduced in 1802: see Michael Brander, *The Scottish Highlanders and Their Regiments* (The Gleneil Press: Haddington, 1996), at p. 209; see, also, Alastair Campbell of Airds, *A History of Clan Campbell, Volume 3: From the Restoration to the Present Day* (Edinburgh University Press: Edinburgh, 2004), at pp. 194-195.

783 Line 167: "luchd mi-rùn".

784 Lines 183-4: "B' e sin coltas an t-saighdear/'Chuireadh sgaoim fo gach reubal"/"That was the appearance of the soldier [i.e. Barmollach]/That would put fear in each rebel". Duncan Ban MacIntrye uses similar language in respect of the United Irishmen. In his "Òran a' Chaimp, 1798"/"The Song of the Camp, 1798", for example, he says "'N uair théid na loingeis bhréidgheal/An Eirinn air tìr,/Ciod é nì na reubail/A dh' éirich 'san strìth?"/"When the white-sailed ships/make a landing in Ireland,/what

to royalism in general.785 If there is only an incipient "British" identity emerging in this poetry, such passages suggest that there was no such "pan-Gaelic" or "pan-Celtic" identity. Scottish Gaeldom remained the central preoccupation, and the most fundamental point of identification, for poets like John MacLean.

Indeed, royalism in general and King George in particular emerge as much more frequent motifs in this poetry than "Britishness". It is with "George" that soldiers like Duncan MacInnes rose at Toulouse,786 and such soldiers were in the service of "King George".787 It is "George" who suffers a loss on the death of a soldier such as Cameron of Fassifern.788 Archibald MacLean, the Laird of Scour, is also in the service "of the King".789 Gaels like Archibald will be missed "if the Crown [and not the "State" or the "Nation" or "Britain"] is in difficult straits".790 His death is a loss to "the Kingdom",791 and the heroic service of the Gaels is a cause of honour "to the Kingdom".792 If anything, on the evidence of the poetry of John MacLean, it would appear that MacKillop's argument, noted above, that the central emphasis is on "the warriors of the Rough Bound", not on any sense of Britishness, which itself is conceived largely as "a primitive feeling of loyalty to George II"793, remains valid.

Just as the Gaelic military ethos was redeployed in the service of the British Crown and British State and Empire, so too were many of the commonplaces of the Gaelic panegyric code capable of easy redeployment in the praise of Gaels such as

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will those rebels do,/who rose in revolt?": Angus MacLeod, ed., *Òrain Dhonnchaidh Bhàin/The Songs of Duncan Ban Macintyre*, *supra*, at pp. 384-5.

785 See Dr. John MacInnes, "The Panegyric Code in Gaelic Poetry and its Historical Background", *supra*, at p. 455.

786 Poem 19, line 56.

787 Poem 19, line 84.

788 Poem 24, line 61.

789 Poem 23, line 76.

790 Poem 23, line 114.

791 Poem 23, line 115.

792 Poem 24, line 7, Poem 19, line 63.

Cameron of Fassifern, MacLean of Scour and Duncan MacInnes of Tiree who took up such service. Not surprisingly, the imagery of the heroic warrior predominates in this poetry; the motifs which are bound up with the domestic roles—in Ronald Black's schema, the social roles—of the Gaelic chieftain are almost totally absent from these poems. This is not a surprising development in the deployment of the panegyric code, given the context. Though men such as Cameron of Fassifern and MacLean of Scour may have been of the Gaelic aristocracy, their fame and their roles were almost totally bound up with military service, and estate management and the maintenance of a "chiefly household" were subsidiary, if they were relevant at all.

Central to these poems is the praise of the heroic, warrior virtues. Prime amongst these is personal courage. Typical is this passage, from poem 23, for Archibald MacLean of Scour:

Cha do dh'ionnsaich e gealtachd,	He never learned cowardice,
Cha bu chleachdainn da 'riamh,	It was never customary to him,
Gun leughadh e 'n giorag,	That he would think of dread
Na gun tilleadh le fiamh.	Or that he would retreat in fear.794

Elsewhere, John MacLean describes him as being without fear—"Laoch gun tionadh, gun athadh"795—and his men as showing courage in attack.796 Cameron of Fassifern is described as showing no fear or uncertainty in his command.797 Duncan MacInnes is also praised for his courage in battle, and for advancing on the enemy's fortified positions fearlessly:

Man do thòisich am baiteal,	Before the battle commenced,
Nuair a ghluais iad air astar bhon champ,	When they moved quickly from the camp,
'Dhol a dh'ionnsaidh a' chaisteil,	To go towards the castle,
Cha do smaointich thu gealltachd 'san àm.	You had no cowardly thought at the time.798

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793 Andrew MacKillop, *'More Fruitful than the Soil'*, *supra*, at p. 232.

794 Lines 33-6.

795 "A hero who was neither fearful nor timid": line 131.

796 "Bhiodh na Gàidheil ri 'chùl,/'Dol air adhairt neo-sgàthach"/"The Gaels would be at his back,/Going forward without fear": lines 30-1.

797 "'B ann d' a chruadal 's d' a chleachdainn/Gun 'bhith gealtach na luaineach/Air thoiseach na h-armailt"/"It was to his courage and his habit/Not to be cowardly or uncertain/At the head of the army": poem 24, lines 9-11.

798 Poem 19, lines 25-8.

The heroic warrior is also authoritative and commanding as well as brave, as is evident from these lines in praise of Duncan MacInnes:

Bha thu beachdail 'ad nàdar	You were of an authoritative nature
Nuair a ghlac thu le dànachd 'ad cheann,	When you boldly got it into your head,
'Dol air t' aghaidh neo-sgàthach	Going forward fearlessly
Gus na thuit thu 'sa bhlàr 'san robh 'n call.	Until you fell in the loss-filled battle.799

MacLean of Scour and Cameron of Fassifern were also praised for being authoritative800 and commanding.801 Other virtues ascribed to these men and for which they are praised include manliness,802 boldness,803 hardiness804 and heroism.805 As already noted, loyalty—"dìlseachd"—particularly to the Crown, is an important virtue for which the subject is praised.806 Above all, the chief is praised for his leadership, in which he is able to demonstrate all of these heroic, martial values, as we see in this passage from poem 24, in praise of Cameron of Fassifern:

Gum bu cheannard air feachd,	He was a leader of an army,
A' laoch gasta, deas, dealbhach,	The fine, excellent, handsome hero,
Ann an rèiseamaid Mharcais,	In Marcus' regiment,
Luchd nan tartanaibh balla-bhreac;	People of the chequered tartans;
'S e mar bhuachaille cùil dhaibh,	He was like a supportive shepherd to them,
'Ga' stiùireadh gu sealbhach,	Steering them successfully,
Dha' robh comhairle is cùram,	Who possessed council and good care,
'Na fhear-iùil do na dh'fhalbh leis.	He was a guide to those who joined him.807

MacLean of Scour is also praised for his leadership. The poet claims that when he arranged himself in the battlefield, the Gaels would be arrayed behind him.808 In MacLean of Scour, too, the poet finds the distillation of military leadership:

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799 Poem 19, lines 29-32.

800 For example, he uses adjectives such as "beachdail" (poem 23, line 102, poem 24, line 41) and "ceannsalach" (poem 23, line 105).

801 For example, he uses the adjective "smachdail": poem 23, line 105.

802 Adjectives such as "fearail" (poem 24, line 90) and "neo-leanabail" (poem 24, line 82) are deployed.

803 For example, he uses the adjective "dànachd" in poem 19, at line 30, and in poem 23, at line 103.

804 The poet uses the adjective "cruadalachd" in poem 23, at line 124, and in poem 24, at lines 8,9, and 90.

805 The poet refers to "gaisgeadh" in poem 23, at lines 65 and 130.

806 Poem 19, lines 62-3, poem 23, lines 109, 113-6, poem 24, line 42.

807 Lines 73-80.

Gum bu ghasta an ceann armailt	Excellent was the army commander
Gaisgeil, ainmeil gu feum,	Heroic and famous in time of need,
Laoch gun tiomadh, gun athadh,	A hero who was neither fearful or timid,
Ursann-chatha roimh cheud.	A bulwark in battle before hundreds.809

Cameron of Fassifern is also praised for being a bulwark in battle—"ursann-chatha".810 The quality of the leader is reflected in, and proven by, the excellence of the men he commands, another motif in this poetry, as we see in this passage of John MacLean's poem for MacLean of Scour:

Nuair a ghluaiste bhon 'champ iad	When they would be moved from the camp
Bhiodh iad sanntach gu gnìomh,	They would be desirous of action,
Dhùisgeadh spiorad na h-Alba annt'	The spirit of Scotland would rise in them
Nuair a sheirmeadh a' phìob;	When the bagpipe would sound;
Bhiodh an Còirneal air thoiseach	The Colonel would be in the van
'S e 'gam brosnachadh sìos,	He would be enticing them on,
'Dheanamh cosnadh gun chearbaich	To earn victory without fault
'S gun ar n-airm a thoirt dhibh.	And without our army taken from you.811

The archetypal Highland chieftain is portrayed in the Gaelic panegyric tradition as a ferocious warrior in battle, and this imagery is also easily redeployed by poets such as John MacLean in praise of heroes of the Revolutionary and Napoleonic Wars. Like the heroic chieftain, MacLean of Scour would tolerate no insult:

Ann an comain na tàmailt	In return for an insult
'Bheirte dhàsan 'na gheall,	That would be given to him as a wager,
Rachadh crìoch air a làithean,	A quick end would come to his days,
Am fear bhon 'toireadh e 'chainnt.	The man who would offer such talk.812

He and his men would be ruthless in battle:

Chluinnte faram an làmhach	The sound of their shooting would be heard
'Cuir an nàimhdean gu dì,	Putting their enemies to destruction,
Nuair a bhudhne' iad buaidh orr'	When they would win victory over them
Leante an ruaig air an druim;	The chase would follow hard behind them;
Gum biodh cuid dhiubh 'san uair sin	Some of them would at that time be
A sgairte' an guaillnean bho 'n cinn,	Whose heads would be severed from their shoulders,
Agus mòran air iomain	And many having been driven
Gun chead tilleadh gu strì.	With permission to return to battle.813

In everything, MacLean of Scour is described as the very embodiment of warrior who

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808 "'S 'an àm suidheachadh làraich/Bhiodh na Gàidheil ri 'chùl"/"And when arranging the battlefields/The Gaels would be at his back": lines 29-30.

809 Poem 23, lines 129-32.

810 "Ursann-chatha nam blàr": poem 24, line 69.

811 Poem 23, lines 41-8.

812 Poem 23, lines 93-6.

should be respected and feared.814 Cameron of Fassifern is praised in similar terms for his uncompromising ferociousness in battle.815

As noted earlier, John MacLean relied almost exclusively on the motifs of the heroic warrior in his poems for MacLean of Scour and Cameron of Fassifern, and this is, as also noted, hardly surprising, as these men, though members of the Highland aristocracy, were being commemorated principally for their roles as soldiers, not chieftains or landlords. John MacLean does praise his military subjects for certain mental faculties such as good sense—"ciall"816—expertise or knowledge—"eòlas"817—and learning—"foghlam"818—but these are important attributes of military men as well as chieftains and landlords; other commonplaces of the chiefly poetry, such as hospitality, kindness to the poor and weak, the liberality of the subject's home, and so forth, are absent. While John MacLean uses relatively few kennings in these poems, those which are used are appropriate to the warrior imagery: MacLean of Scour's men are likened to hungry lions,819 and Cameron of Fassifern is likened to a hawk.820 Though reference is made to Cameron of Fassifern's glorious ancestry, John MacLean has relatively little to say about the subject's background, and there is none of the extensive references to allies or clan territories that is

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813 Poem 23, lines 57-64.

814 "Nach bu shuarach ri 'shireadh/Cha bum hire 'bhiodh ann,/Ge b' e 'gheibheadh e 'n iasad,/Bhiodh a riaghailt air chall"/"It would not be trifling to search him out,/It would not be play that would be found,/Though whatever he [i.e. the opponent] would gain as credit,/His sense would be lost": poem 23, lines 85-8.

815 "'S lìonmhor blàr agus batail/'Chuir e seachad roimh 'n uair sin,/Agus nàmhaid a sgap e,/'Gan glacadh 's 'gan ruagadh"/"Plentiful were the battlefields and battles/That he took part in before then,/And the enemy that he scattered,/Capturing and chasing them": poem 24, lines 25-8.

816 Poem 23, line 104.

817 Poem 24, line 36; Duncan MacInnes of Tiree is also praised for this quality: Poem 19, line 14.

818 Poem 24, line 35.

819 Poem 23, line 52.

820 Poem 24, line 63. The poet also employs vegetal imagery in respect of Cameron of Fassifern's ancestry, a fairly common use of this imagery in Gaelic panegyric. Take, for example, the following: "Cha b' i 'choille 'robh crìonach/Às na dhìrich a' faillean,/Ach stoic uasal Chloinn Chamshroin/Bho Achadh ainmeil na Carradh/Anns na dh'fhàs an crann dìreach"/"There was no decay in the forest/From which the young sapling had sprung./But from the noble stock of Clan Cameron/From famous Achnacarry/In which the upright tree grew" (lines 95-9).

characteristic of the tradition and of his poetry for the MacLeans of Coll and for Glengarry. Again, this is hardly surprising; allies and territories are less relevant in the context of military service in the British army; to the extent that places are referred to, they are places that evoke British imperial, rather than clan, military engagements and successes. Thus, we have references to the important theatres of combat and cites of triumphs—Europe,821 Holland,822 and Paris.823 The panegyric code is easily redeployed in the service of this new sort of subject, the Gael as imperial warrior, but not all aspects of the code, such as the domestic or "social" roles, are relevant, and other motifs, such as place names, are reworked to fit the new, British context.

A final notable aspect of John MacLean's praise poetry for Gaelic soldiers is its realism. Unlike Alexander MacKinnon, the Morar poet who was greatly admired by John MacLean and for whom he composed a lament, John MacLean did not see combat first hand. However, we see the influence of poets like Alexander MacKinnon, as well as of song poetry that was in circulation at the time, in the matter-of-fact descriptions of battle and the sharp, hard imagery that he employs in describing the horrible physical suffering that warfare causes. This is particularly evident in poem 19, his poem for Duncan MacInnes, the young Tiree man who was killed at the Battle of Toulouse in April, 1814, in the description of the movement of the British troops into battle, of the bullets flying about as the subject of the poem ascended the scaffolding that had evidently been erected by the British troops as a means of storming the castle, and of the subject being struck by the fatal bullet and being felled to the ground.824 Though more limited in extent, these passages are reminiscent of the almost journalistic quality in the description of troop movements and of the battle

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821 Poem 19, line 82.
822 Poem 19, line 71.
823 Poem 24, line 128.
824 Poem 19, lines 25-40.

in poems such as "Blàr na h-Òlaind"825 and "Òran air don Bhàrd a dhol air Tìr 'san Eiphit"826 by Alexander MacKinnon.

The descriptions of the grievous wounds suffered by Duncan MacInnes are also crisp, direct and explicit. Take, for example, the following passage, in which John MacLean reflects on the thoughts of Duncan's mother when she hears of her son's death:

'S e seo 'n turas a chràidh i,	This is the trip that has pained her,
'Bhith ri smaointinn mar bha thu gun chlì,	To be reflecting on how you were motionless,
A' call na fala anns an àraich,	Losing blood on the battlefield,
'S tu cho fada bho d' chàirdean 's bho d' thìr.	And you so far from your people and your land.827

The poet picks up this imagery later in the poem:

Bha t' fhuil chraobhach a' sileadh,	Your blood was flowing freely,
'S i ri taosgadh air mhire 'feadh feòir,	And pouring wantonly through the grass,
'S i gun seòl air a dìobair',	And without a means of banishing it,
'S gun do leigheas 'an innleachd nam beò.	And without a cure in the art of the living.828

Such imagery is also evident in his poem for Cameron of Fassifern who, like Duncan MacInnes, died in action:

Bu trom creuchdadh a lotaibh,	Heavy and bloody were his wounds,
Ged 'bha dotairean làmh ris,	Although doctors were close at hand,
Cha deanadh iad feum dha	They were of no help to him
Leis a' bheum a bhith gàbhaidh,	With how dreadful was his wound,
'Fhuil a' sileadh fo 'lèinidh.	His blood flowing through his shirt.829

This imagery is similar to that which appears in Alexander MacKinnon's "Blàr na h-Òlaind" or in songs such as "An Gille Donn",830 an unattributed poem which, given its internal references, almost certainly dates from the time of the Revolutionary and Napoleonic Wars, and which is still sung, both in Scotland and in Nova Scotia. Indeed, such imagery has a long pedigree in Gaelic song. Take, for example, this

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825 See, for example, Ronald Black, *An Lasair*, *supra*, at pp. 354-61.
826 See, for example, Donald E. Meek, *Caran an t-Saoghail*, *supra*, at pp. 298-303.
827 Lines 21-4.
828 Lines 77-80.
829 Poem 24, lines 105-9.
830 See, for example, Archibald Sinclair, ed., *The Gaelic Songster/An t-Òranaiche, no co-thional taghte do òrain ùr agus shean, a' chuid mhòr dhiubh nach robh riamh roimhe ann an clò* (Glasgow:

passage from "A Mhic Iain Mhic Sheumais", a song reputedly composed *extempore* for Donald MacDonald by his foster-mother Nic Còiseam after he was injured at the Battle of Carinish, North Uist, in 1601:

Latha Blàr na Fèitheadh	The day of the Battle of the Runnel
Bha do lèine na ballan.	your shirt was blotted.
Bha an t-saighead na spreòd	The arrow stuck out of
Throimh chorp seòlta na glaineadh.	the skilled body of whiteness.
Bha fuil do chuim chùbhraidh	The blood of your sweet bosom
A' drùdhadh throimh 'n anart.	was soaking through the linen.
Bha fuil do chuirp uasail	The blood of your noble body
Air uachdar gach fearainn.	on the surface of the country.831

Such motifs were common in the poetry of Alexander MacKinnon, a first-hand observer of the carnage wrought by battle. Take, for example, these lines:

Fuil a' ruith air lotaibh frasach	Blood flowed from prolific wounds
O luchd nam breacanan féilidh	Over men wearing kilted plaids
'S i sìor thaomadh leis na glacan.	And steadily poured down the hollows.832

Like John MacLean, the composer of "An Gille Donn" reflects on the husbands who had fallen, grievously wounded, in battle, and once again, there is a similarity in the imagery, such as in this verse: "E 'na shìneadh 'san luachair,/'S 'fhuil mu 'ghuaillnean a' dòrtadh"/"He is stretched out amongst the rushes,/With blood pouring about his shoulders". Indeed, there are other echoes of songs like "An Gille Donn" in John MacLean's poetry for Gaelic soldiers in the British army. Compare, for example, this passage from his poem to Cameron of Fassifern, poem 24, in which he talks of the subject's wounds—"Gun do rinneadh a chiùrradh/Le neart fùdair is luaidhe"/"That he was grievously wounded/By the abundance of gunpowder and lead"—and this verse which appeared in a transcription of a version of "An Gille

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Alexander Sinclair, 1876-9), at pp. 456-7, or K. C. Craig, ed., *Òrain Luaidh Màiri Nighean Alasdair* (Glasgow: Alasdair Matheson, 1949), at pp. 49-51.

831 See Colm Ó Baoill, *Gàir nan Clàrsach/The Harp's Cry: An Anthology of 17th Century Gaelic Poetry* (Edinburgh: Birlinn, 1994), pp. 50-3, at pp. 52-3. See, also, Archibald Sinclair, *An t-Òranaiche*, *supra*, pp. 131-5, at p. 132.

832 Lines 109-11, in Ronald Black, *An Lasair*, *supra*, at pp. 360-1.

Donn" taken from a Cape Breton informant—"E fo fhùdar, no 'n "cannon",/Call fala le dòruinn"/"(As a result of) gunpowder or cannon-shot/he is losing blood and is in pain".833 Or compare the motif of those who have lost men in foreign fields which appears in John MacLean's poem to Duncan MacInnes—"'S iomadh aon 'bha gun bhràthair, gun mhac,/Agus bean gun fhear-pòsta"/"Many a person has been left without a brother or a son,/And many a wife without her husband"—with similar motifs from "An Gille Donn":

B' ioma tè 'bha gun chéile	Many a woman was without a spouse
'N àm éirigh Di-Dòmhnaich!	At the time of rising on Sunday!
Agus nighean fir fearainn	And the daughter of the landlord
'Bha 'na laidhe 'na h-ònrachd!	Was in her bed lying all alone!834

Like John MacLean's poems for Cameron of Fassifern and MacLean of Scour, his poem for Duncan MacInnes, poem 19, also commemorates a Gael in the service of the British army and celebrates many of the heroic qualities such men epitomise. However, this poem differs from the others in a number of respects. One of the most important differences is that the subject does not, on the evidence of the poem, at least, have any particular status, and is not being commemorated for having played any particular leadership role. It is therefore a poem which celebrates the heroic virtues of the common soldier, rather than those of the warrior chieftain. As significant is the highly personal and emotional nature of the poetry; although the poems for MacLean of Scour and for Cameron of Fassifern give expression to sadness, feeling is not conveyed in the same sustained manner. Indeed, the poet employs the last four verses of the poem to Duncan MacInnes to give expression, in various formulations, of bereavement and of an intense feeling of loss.835 The poem

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833 Helen Creighton and Calum MacLeod, eds., *Gaelic Songs in Nova Scotia* (Ottawa: National Museums of Canada, 1979), pp. 68-70, at p. 69, taken from the singing of William E. MacDonald, Marion Bridge, Cape Breton.

834 Archibald Sinclair, *An t-Òranaiche*, *supra*, at pp. 456-7.

835 Poem 19, lines 89-120.

is composed as if by the young soldier's father, and the assumption of the persona of a close family member is a technique that, as we shall see, John MacLean employs in some of his other elegies, particularly some of those composed in the New World—notably, poem 44, his lament for Mrs. Noble. However, in the very first few lines of the poem to Duncan MacInnes, one gets the feeling that the poet is letting the mask slip somewhat—the reference to the subject as the "òigear", the young man, while in part dictated by metre, sounds less like the description of a father than a family friend—and that the strong emotions have a personal quality that go beyond the formulaic:

Gur h-e mise 'th' air mo leònadh;	It is I who has been wounded;
Fhuair mi naidheachd 's bu leòr leam a meud,	I received news whose magnitude was great,
Man 'dh'èirich don òigear,	About what happened to the young man,
Chuir sin saighdean le dòrainn am chrìdh'.	It thrust a painful arrow through my heart.836

Also notable is the use of motifs that are commonplaces in the chiefly poetry for a young local man such as Duncan MacInnes. Take pathetic fallacies such as these:

Sinn mar chaoraich gun bhuachaill	We are like sheep without a shepherd
An dèidh an athar 'thoirt bhuath' anns a' ghleann,	After their father being taken away in the glen,
Na mar dhìlleachdain shuarach	Or like miserable orphans
Aig a' mhuime 'gam bualadh 's iad fann.	With their nurse, beaten and weak.
. . .	
'S e do bhàs 'bhith 'na chomain	It is your death that was to be its recompense
'Rinn ar fàgail mar cholann gun cheann.	That left us like a headless body.837

The use of motifs which are so strongly associated with poetry of the chieftain for a young man such as Duncan MacInnes, who does not appear to have been of chiefly status or have played any significant leadership role in the army, is suggestive of the transitional nature of the poem. We once again see the redeployment of the old commonplaces of Gaelic praise poetry; we also see this poetry being put to use for different purposes. As noted in Chapter Three, John MacInnes and Colm Ó Baoill

836 Poem 19, lines 1-4.

have observed that the fundamental purpose of the panegyric tradition on which poetry such as this draws was the maintenance of the status quo, and the poetry is deployed to its maximum extent at the archetypal time of crisis in the social order, the death of the chieftain.838 In poems such as the lament for Duncan MacInnes, we see a recognition that the death of a young man from the community is also a time of crisis, both for the family and for the local community. In a period in which the old chiefly order is slipping away—a fact of which, as we have seen, John MacLean was intensely aware—a poem such as this illustrates that the poet recognises that a community separate from the old chiefly order still exists, and that he has a role to play in the support of that community. The old rhetorical commonplaces are still relevant, but must be put in the service of new subjects, and in support of a different understanding of the status quo that the poet is meant to defend. Indeed, the Napoleonic Wars took a significant toll in the Highlands, and the impact of the loss of young men on an island community such as Tiree would have been significant. We see this impact, and a similar poetic response to that of John MacLean, in "Do Dhonnachadh agus do Ghilleasbuig Caimbeul, clann Baillidh Thiriodh" ("To Duncan and to Archibald Campbell, the children of the Bailiff of Tiree"), a lament composed by John MacLean's contemporary, Archibald MacPhail of Balephuil, Tiree, on the death of two sons of the two sons of the local factor, Donald Campbell.839

Thus, we see John MacLean composing laments "in the traditional panegyric style" for less traditional subjects. One such subject is young men of the community who have been taken away. Indeed, the premature loss of young men, either in battle, as in the poem to Duncan MacInnes, or at sea, as in "Call na *Cailin*", poem 17, which

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837 Poem 19, lines 45-8, 67-8.

838 John MacInnes, "The Panegyric Code in Gaelic Poetry and its Historical Background", *supra*, at p. 436.

was composed in about 1809 on the death of three young local sailors, Neil MacLean, Lachlan MacDonald and Neil MacDonald, on the rocks at "Na Suacain", Caolas, Tiree while returning home from Islay, or in other tragic circumstances, as in poem 21, a lament for John Campbell, a young merchant from Sgarinish, Tiree, who died suddenly in Greenock, while away on the mainland on business, is clearly of particular concern to the poet. In this poetry, we see the poet as therapist, giving expression to the feelings of loss and bereavement of the family, and of the wider community. The poet himself plays a role in strengthening the bonds of family and community solidarity at a time of loss and of crisis. In John MacLean's day, the loss of new community leaders, and in particular, the premature death of young men of the community, becomes an increasingly important occasion for the composition of traditional praise poetry.

Perhaps the most important category of emergent community leaders who began to fill the void being left by the old chiefly order was Ministers of the Gospels. In some respects, this was not as dramatic a transformation as one might suspect, as many of the clergy of the Established Church (and in Roman Catholic areas, of the Catholic Church) in the Highlands were drawn from the old elites of Gaelic society.840 With the loss of the tacksmen and the slow disappearance of the great Gaelic chiefly families, though, the clergy emerge as an important intellectual, moral and spiritual force. Unsurprisingly, Gaelic poets responded to the enhanced role that clergy were beginning to play in Highland communities, and we see this in the second half of the eighteenth century. Rob Donn MacKay, for example, who composed a

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839 See Urr. Eachann Camshron/Rev. Hector Cameron, *Na Bàird Thirisdeach/The Tiree Bards*, *supra*, at pp. 8-10.

840 John MacInnes, "Gaelic Poetry in the Nineteenth Century", *supra*, at p. 384. As MacInnes notes, in the nineteenth century, such Presbyterian ministers continued the significant role and function of the earlier Gaelic literati, and were, for example, among the foremost collectors of Gaelic song-poetry and oral tradition

number of traditional praise poems for the aristocracy of Sutherland, also composed an elegy on the death in 1763 of Rev. Murdoch MacDonald, Minister of Durness, Sutherland.841 It is therefore not surprising that John MacLean composed two poems to ministers, a song to the Rev. John MacLean, the Minister of Coll, poem 10, and a lament for the Rev. Edmund MacQueen, the Minister of Barra, poem 23; in this, he was once again a man of his age, responding to the changes that were taking place in the Highlands.

The emergence of clergymen as important community leaders in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth century coincided with a period of spiritual rebirth in the Protestant Highlands, marked particularly by the emergence of an evangelical movement which was to some extent separate from and which, in fact, posed a challenge to the Established Church, the Church of Scotland, or at least the so-called "Moderates" within that church.842 The praise poetry associated with clergymen—and other religious leaders—involved in the evangelical movement was in many respects radically different from the panegyric tradition that existed for the secular leaders of Gaelic society, and poems such as Lachlan McLachlan's "Cumha Mhaighstir Eachainn Mhic Phàil" ("Lament for Rev. Hector MacPhail"),843 for the minister of Resolis, Easter Ross, who died in 1774, are good examples of this.844 In addition to being an early praise poem for a minister, it is also thoroughly of the evangelical movement. In this poem, MacLachlan largely foregoes the commonplaces of the Gaelic panegyric tradition; where the subject is praised, it is for virtues that are

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841 Hew Morrison, ed., *Songs and Poems in the Gaelic Language by Rob Donn* (Edinburgh: John Grant, 1899), at pp. 20-5.

842 See John MacInnes, *The Evangelical Movement in the Highlands of Scotland 1688 to 1800* (Aberdeen: Aberdeen University Press, 1951), especially ch. 3.

843 John Rose, ed., *Metrical Reliques of "The Men" in the Highlands: or, Sacred Poetry of the North* (Inverness: MacKintosh & Co., 1851), at p. 89.

844 John MacInnes, *The Evangelical Movement in the Highlands of Scotland*, *supra*, at p. 118. Of a similar vein are poems like "Marbhrann do Mhr. Huistean Ross, Ministeir Childonnain", by Donald

tied to his ministry, and the work of his ministry is explicitly discussed. Significantly, MacLachlan laments the state of the Established Church.845 The ministry of that church is likened to candles, and the poet claims that many lanterns have gone out and many candles have lost their strength. The majority of ministers, MacLachlan claimed, disgust the people, and are likened to the sons of Eli.846 The loss of one of the few "healthy" ministers, such as Rev. MacPhail, is a sign of God's anger at the waywardness of his people.

Indeed, the "marbhrann", or elegy, became a prominent genre amongst spiritual poets of an evangelical bent, and it was used "as a very effective party propaganda weapon".847 In this sort of poetry, the death of the minister is used as an occasion for praising the qualities of mind and spirit of the "good" minister, to enumerate the sound teaching that was once heard from the pulpit, and to cast aspersions on the failings of ministers of the moderate camp. A particularly fine example of this genre is "Marbhrann air Doctair Alasdair Stiùbhard",848 an elegy composed by Rev. John MacDonald of Ferintosh, the "Apostle of the North", on the death in 1821 of Rev. Alexander Stewart, until 1805 minister of Moulin, Perthshire, then until 1820 of Dingwall, Ross-shire. Like Lachlan MacLachlan, John MacDonald focuses his praise on the pastoral qualities of Rev. Stewart, and on his effectiveness as a preacher. Rev. Stewart was a notable convert to the evangelical cause within the Established Church, and John MacDonald devotes a considerable portion of this epic

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Matheson, of Kildonan, Sutherland, who later emigrated to Canada: see John Rose, ed., *The Metrical Reliques of "The Men" in the Highlands*, *ibid*, at pp. 252-4.

845 Take, for example, these lines: "'S fad' o thainig a mi-sealbh oirnn,/Ann an Eaglais na h-Alba,/Dh'fhàs diùbhrasan a's roinnean searbh innt',/'S iomadh aon deth bònn a dh'fhalbh dh'i"/"It has been a long time since misfortune has come upon us,/In the Church of Scotland,/Differences and bitter splits have grown within her,/And many of its foundations have left her".

846 Hophni and Phinehas, two sons of Eli, himself a priest in Shiloh and a Judge of Israel, were charged with guarding the Ark of the Covenant, but the Philistines attacked the Hebrews, took the Ark of the Covenant, and put Hophni and Phinehas to death: I Samuel 4.

847 Rev. John MacInnes, "Gaelic Spiritual Verse", (1969-70) 46 *Transactions of the Gaelic Society of Inverness* 308, at p. 342.

poem to a contrast between a minister "with grace" and one "without grace". Criticism of the state of the Established Church and of the "Moderates" within that church is implicit in, and fundamental to this poetry. One of the most favoured images used by spiritual poets of this genre to mark out the unsuitable minister is that of the "stipend-lifter", the "ministear arain". Poets of an evangelical bent used references to a minister's stipend, his glebe and his general material condition as a means of criticising and stigmatising what they saw as excessive wordliness, even corruption.849

John MacLean's poems for Rev. MacLean and Rev. MacQueen are strikingly different from the praise poems of the evangelical movement. Both poems are conservative in form, content and rhetoric. In particular, they draw heavily on the motifs and the language of "the panegyric tradition", and there is an almost complete absence of specifically religious content in them. The poem for Rev. John MacLean of Coll is particularly interesting in this respect. It is one of the few poems in which the poet deployed the classic three-line strophic metre that was so characteristic of the earlier Gaelic panegyric tradition. But for the following references to Rev. MacLean's appointment, though, the poem could easily have been composed for any member of the traditional Gaelic aristocracy:

Sgeula b' ait leam a chluinntinn,	A story I enjoyed hearing,
E 'bhith socrach 'san tìr seo,	Is that he is established in this country,
Gus an rachadh a *stìpinn* nas moth'.	In order that his stipend would increase.
Le toil Sheanaidh is Clèire,	With the permission of the Synod and the Clergy,
Ann am bannaibh nach trèigeadh,	In banns that would not be forsaken,
E 'thighinn 'uige à Dun Eideann on bhòrd.	It comes to him from the table in Edinburgh.850

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848 Donald Meek, *Caran an t-Saoghail*, *supra*, at p. 226.

849 Rev. John MacInnes, "Gaelic Spiritual Verse", *supra*, at pp. 343-6. For a systematic exposition of the major failings attributed to Ministers of the Established Church by members of the evangelical movement, and an critical assessment of the justice of such claims, see Rev. Dr. Roderick MacLeod, "Ministearan an Arain? A Profile of Nineteenth Century Hebridean Moderates" (1980-82) 52 *Transactions of the Gaelic Society of Inverness* 243.

850 Poem 10, lines 40-5.

The poem appears to be occasioned by the coincidence of three pieces of good news: the minister's impending marriage and, based on the evidence of the lines just quoted, the Minister's investiture and the fact that his stipend will apparently be paid by the church authorities in Edinburgh, rather than from local sources.

The reference to Rev. MacLean's stipend is interesting, given the fact that the stipend was, as was just noted, one of the motifs used most frequently by poets of the evangelical movement to criticise and censure ministers of the moderate camp. It is therefore possible that John MacLean's reference to Rev. MacLean's stipend may have been ironic, and that the poem was, in fact, intended to satirise a moderate minister. As we shall see, much of John MacLean's non-panegyric output in Scotland was satirical, and he composed satires in Canada as well. As was noted in Chapter Two, he was capable from a young age of composing satirical rhymes extemporaneously. If the oral traditions regarding his falling out with the Laird of Coll are accurate, he was not afraid of publicly humiliating his patron, and if he was willing and capable of taking on a man of the Laird's social prominence in the company of the Laird's peers, he would certainly have been capable of satirising a Minister. There is, however, little evidence that this was John MacLean's intent. The poem to Rev. MacLean is in many respects similar to that for Rev. MacQueen, and there is no internal or other evidence that the poem to Rev. MacQueen was satirical. As noted in Chapter Two, the arrival of the evangelical movement to Tiree seems to have occurred somewhat later than the date of this poem, and therefore there may not have been as receptive an audience for such a satire. Finally, had the poet wished to satirise either man, it is likely that he would have employed a wider and more obvious range of reverse imagery that would parallel the content and structure of the sort of poems being composed by spiritual poets of an evangelical bent, and there is little

material of this nature in either poem.

It would, however, be surprising if John MacLean was not aware of the spiritual stirrings going on in the Protestant Highlands and Islands at the time, even if they had not yet reached Tiree and Coll, and it is also possible that he may have been aware of the rhetoric that was being employed by poets of the evangelical movement. If this were the case, the reference to Rev. MacLean's stipend may have been intended as a mild rebuke, or an attempt to remind the new minister to guard against the sort of worldliness that was increasingly being challenged by the poets of the evangelical movement.

The other possible explanation of the reference to Rev. MacLean's stipend is both the most obvious and the likeliest. The reference is in the context of its payment coming from the Church authorities in Edinburgh, rather than out of local sources. Not only might this have guaranteed the ongoing residence of the minister, which would have been a cause of some relief for people of the parish, it would also have been seen as an indication of Rev. MacLean's status within the hierarchy of the Established Church. There is, then, an element of praise for the young local making good on a wider stage.

As noted, aside from this brief reference to Rev. MacLean's investiture and stipend, the poem is very similar to the sort of praise poems composed for secular, aristocratic subjects. The poet is most impressed by the minister's personal background, particularly his noble descent, his personification of social virtues that are typically attributed to the good chief in the panegyric tradition, and his loyalty to tradition. There is no reference to explicitly religious virtues. For example, John MacLean praises Rev. MacLean for his noble descent: "'S furast' aithneach' bho 'nàdar/Gur h-ann don fhuil àird e"/"It's easy to recognise from his nature/That he is of

noble blood".851 He is praised for his connections to the MacLean aristocracy:

Clann Ghilleain a shìnnsreadh,	His ancestry were the MacLeans,
Cinneadh àrdanach, rìoghail,	A haughty and royal clan,
Dha 'm biodh brataichean rìomhach don t-sròl.	For whom would be elegant banners of lace.
Sin na fir a bha cliùiteach,	Those were the men that were famous,
Nach bu tais gu toirt cùis dhiubh,	And who weren't faint-hearted in getting the
Dha 'n robh Dubhairt car ùine an còir.	upper hand them,/And who for a time possessed Duart.852

He is also praised for Cameron ties:

Tha e dìleas ri 'sheanachas,	He is faithful to his traditions,
Do Loch Iall, 's do Chlann Chamshroin,	To Locheil, and to Clan Cameron,
Buidheann Abrach nach dearmadach gleòs.	The Lochaber troop, not careless in preparation.853

This extensive glorification of Rev. MacLean's descent is strongly suggestive of the traditional panegyric style, as is the praise of the subject's loyalty to the traditions of his noble forebears.

Amongst the social virtues for which Rev. MacLean is praised are his modesty854 and his generosity:

Chan eil gainne na crìne ann,	There is no lack nor niggardliness in him,
Cha do chleachd e 'bhith mi-thùr,	And he never used to be mean,
An àm suidhe na dìoladh mun bhòrd.	At the time of sitting or satisfying the table.855

Although these would be virtues that one would expect of a Minister, they are also, as we have seen, important domestic virtues of the good chief; indeed, the poet describes Rev. MacLean as "cridhe na fèile", "the heart of hospitality",856 a formula that is commonly used in his praise poetry from the Laird of Coll. Other explicitly chiefly virtues John MacLean ascribes to Rev. MacLean are nobility in carriage and urbanity in speech,857 civility,858 and a pleasing physical appearance.859 Interestingly, the

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851 Lines 10-11.
852 Lines 13-8.
853 Lines 22-4.
854 "'Tha gun mhòrchuis 'na inntinn"/ "Who is without pomp in his disposition": line 5.
855 Lines 34-6.
856 Line 37.
857 "Tha e uasal 'na thighinn/Agus suairce 'na bhruidhinn"/"He is noble in his arrival/And is urbane in his conversation": lines 7-8. See also lines 31-2: "Tha e fiùghantach, miosail,/Ann an giùlan 's am misnich"/"He is worthy and respected/In carriage and in bravery".

poet also deploys some of the rhetoric appropriate to the warrior chieftain. Of Rev. MacLean's Cameron and MacLean ancestry, the poet claims the following: "'Bhiodh cruadalach, dàna 'san tòir"/"Who would be brave and bold in the chase".860 Similarly, the poet celebrates the martial virtues of Rev. MacLean's ancestors in the following terms: "Nach gèilleadh d' an nàmhaid le 'n deòin"/"They would not willingly submit to their foes".861 Although John MacLean does not subscribe these warrior virtues to his subject directly, he does so by association. Arguably, this warrior imagery is not wholly misplaced, and the motifs of the "Holy War" in which the virtuous "Soldier of Christ" are engaged are ones which John MacLean employs in his later explicitly religious verse, composed while in Canada; however, no explicit links between the warrior virtues and the use of those virtues in the service of the Christian faith are made.862 One gets the sense from this poetry that the Minister is being praised primarily in his social role as community leader—and particularly one with ties to the Gaelic aristocracy—and inheritor and defender of Gaelic tradition, rather than as a proponent of a particular religious tradition or as exemplar of more explicitly Christian and, in particular, evangelical values. There is also, as noted, perhaps a sense of pride in the prestige that the minister has achieved in the wider social world of the Established Church. So, here, we have the minister being praised as a social figure, rather than a theological one, illustrating that ministers can play different roles, both secular and religious. Indeed, the panegyric code allows John MacLean to distance himself from theological issues that Rev. MacLean's preferment may raise, at least from the perspective of the evangelical movement.

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858 "Sin an t-òganach sìobhalt'"/"That's the civil young man": line 4.
859 "Pearsa duine cho grinn anns gach seòl"/"The appearance of a man so elegant in every way": line 6.
860 Line 21.
861 Line 10.

The poem composed for Rev. MacQueen, poem 22, is similar to that composed for Rev. MacLean in thematic, if not metrical, terms. Rev. MacQueen was almost certainly of the Gaelic learned classes and of the old Gaelic minor aristocracy. His father, Donald, was the Church of Scotland minister for North Uist from 1755 until 1770. He had been born in about 1700, and was the son of Rev. Angus MacQueen of Sleat, who belonged to a line of clergymen which went back to the beginning of the seventeenth century. Donald MacQueen had graduated from King's College, Aberdeen in 1719, and was married on 13 October, 1736 to Marjory, daughter of Lachlan Maclean of Torrestan, a cadet of the Coll family. Rev. Edmund MacQueen had one brother, Allan, who succeeded his father as minister of North Uist.863 Like his father, Rev. Edmund MacQueen had received a University education, at Edinburgh University. He was married twice, and both wives were of aristocratic families; his first wife, Mary, was the daughter of Maclean of Boreray, and his second wife, Isabella, was the daughter of Charles Maclean of Scour, and sister of Col. Archibald MacLean, the subject of poem 23. Indeed, much of the first part of the poem is given over to an extended expression of regret to Isabella MacQueen for her loss; there are descriptions of her bereavement, and she is likened to a ship without crew or without compass, masts and riggings.864 As in the poem for Rev. MacLean of Coll, there is relatively little reference to Rev. MacQueen as a clergyman, or to qualities which one would associate with a minister. Indeed, John MacLean emphasises the manly virtues of the Gaelic warrior, using many of the commonplaces

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862 Alexander Maclean Sinclair, *Dain Spioradail, le Iain Mac-Gilleain* (Edinburgh: MacLachlan and Stewart, 1880); see "An Cogadh Naomh", p. 89, and "Saighdearan Chriosda", p. 85.

863 See William Matheson, ed., *The Songs of John MacCodrum, Bard to Sir James MacDonald of Sleat* (Edinburgh: Scottish Gaelic Texts Society, 1938), at note to line 863, p. 249.

864 "'S i mar luing 'bhiodh gun chùrsa/'Ruith air cladach gun *chriù* oirre,/Gun fhear-eòlais na – stiùraidh,/'Chaill a combaiste, a siùil 's a croinn àrda"/"She's now like a ship gone off course/That ran aground without a crew on her,/Without a navigator or a helmsman,/That lost her compass, her sails and her high masts": lines 33-6.

of the Gaelic panegyric tradition, even making reference to his athleticism:

Do dh'fhear foghainteach, calma	To a strong and robust man
'Bha gu misneachail, meanmnach,	Who was courageous and bold,
Cliùiteach, miosail, ro ainmeil;	Renowned, respected and exceedingly famous;
B' e sin sgiobair na fairge	It was he who was a great skipper of the seas
Nach robh gealtach na leanabail,	Who was not cowardly or childish,
'S gum bu tric e 'ga dhearbhadh,	And often did he prove it,
'S e cho math 'san Albainn mar snàmhaich'.	He was as good a swimmer as any in Scotland.865

Praise for the physical strength and athleticism of a minister would not have been inappropriate at this time. Writing of his grandfather, Aeneas, an eighteenth century Church of Scotland minister in Wester Ross, Donald Sage wrote the following:

> In bodily stature Eneas Sage approached the gigantic. He was six feet two inches in height, with dark eyes and hair, and with more than ordinary strength. His zeal as a minister, the rough subjects he had to deal with, and the rude age he lived in, rendered this last quality of no ordinary service to him.
> . . .
> He was a man of great personal strength, and, on more than one occasion, he was compelled to use it against that opposition which a barbarous people presented to his ministerial efforts.866

Donald Sage's editor, Donald Withrington, notes that physical prowess of this sort was no oddity for a minister of this period: "The knocking down of a local bully boy was a widely successful means of conversion in the north and west Highlands in the eighteenth century".867 John MacLean concludes this section of the poem by noting that Rev. MacQueen would have made an excellent soldier, had he not been intent on the Christian ministry:

Gum bu chruaidh gun chearb e	He was brave, without defect
'Dheanadh ceannard air armachd,	Who would have made a fine army commander,
Ann an spionnadh 's an an-athadh,	In strength and in courageousness,
Nan cleachd an tùs aimsir ri blàir e.	If he had in his youth employed them in battles.
'S ann a shocraich e 'inntinn	He fixed in his mind
'Na Mhinistear sgìreachd,	As a parish Minister,
'Dhol a leughadh a' Bhìobaill	To go to proclaim the Bible
Mar theachdaire cinnteach,	As an unerring messenger,
Gu liubhairt na fìrinn	In order to deliver the truth
Air cunnart 'am binne	About the danger of their sentence

865 Lines 64-70.
866 The Rev. Donald Sage, *Memorabilia Domestica; or Parish Life in the North of Scotland* (Edinburgh: Albyn Press Limited, 1975), at p. 2, 14.
867 *Ibid*, "Introduction", p. 6.

Leis na comhairlean dìleas 'bu chàirdeil. With the most tender faithful admonition.868

In making reference here to explicitly religious virtues, the poem for Rev. MacQueen differs in at least one important respect from that made for Rev. MacLean of Coll. As we have seen, the poetry being composed during this period in praise of evangelical ministers emphasises their skill as sound preachers of the Gospels, and in this passage, John MacLean may be hinting that Rev. MacQueen has evangelical tendencies, and is praising him accordingly.

In most other respects, though, the poem is thematically similar to that composed for Rev. MacLean, as befits a man of similar background. Thus, as in the poem for Rev. MacLean, John MacLean makes reference to a number of "domestic virtues" such as wisdom (and courage),869 perceptiveness,870 and mercifulness,871 and although some of these may be ones which would be expected in a clergyman, they are all commonplaces of the Gaelic panegyric tradition. Finally, there are extended references to ancestry, though to that of Rev. MacQueen's son Charles, and to his MacLean ancestry, and not to that of Rev. MacQueen himself.872 These passages are thoroughly within the Gaelic panegyric tradition, and draw on many of the commonplaces, discussed in Chapter Three in the context of the poetry to the Coll family, which relate to the chief's background.

These two poems are also important in giving some insight into the spiritual development of John MacLean. As was noted in Chapter Two, he was apparently always a religious man, but his adherence to a more evangelical form of Presbyterianism does not appear to have occurred until later in life. As was also noted

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868 Lines 74-84.

869 "Fear na misnich 's na cèillidh"/"A man of courage and wisdom": line 12.

870 "'S math a dh'aithnich e 'n saoghal/Fad 's a bha e air faotainn"/"He perceived the world well/To the extent that it could be": lines 85-6.

871 "Bha e iochdmhor ri feumaich/'S aig gach duine bha gaol air"/"He was merciful to the needy/And he was well loved by all": lines 87-8.

there, he became an adherent of the Free Church in 1843, but on the evidence of a poem such as "Don Phàrlamaid Ùir", poem 35, which shall be discussed further, in the consideration of John MacLean's poetry composed in Canada, in Chapter Five, below, the poet did not appear to be in the evangelical camp in 1830.873 The praise poems for Rev. MacLean and Rev. MacQueen, in their lack of the hallmarks of the evangelical "marbhrann", are consistent with the view that John MacLean's acceptance of a more evangelical form of Presbyterianism did not occur until later in life. If, of course, his poem to Rev. MacLean was intended to be satirical, this may suggest that his rebirth occurred earlier, while still in Tiree. However, even if the poem was intended to satirise the minister, this does not necessarily mean that the poet had become an evangelical, but only that he disliked the worldliness and hypocrisy of a certain brand of minister. Again, though, it is most unlikely that the poem was meant to be in any way satirical. As also noted, his praise of Rev. MacQueen's preaching abilities has a hint of the evangelical to it, and this is more promising evidence of the first stirrings of John MacLean's conversion to a more evangelical form of Presbyterianism. However, the poem, like that composed for Rev. MacLean, is generally not of an evangelical bent, and it is doubtful that the passage represents anything other than stirrings.

Finally, these two poems for ministers can be seen as transitional in several senses. Praise poetry—particularly, laments—for ministers and other religious leaders

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872 Lines 99-126.

873 As shall be discussed, poem 35 was composed by the poet on learning of an insult given by Liberal candidates to the Gaels in the 1830 election campaign in the colony of Nova Scotia. One of the main election issues was the funding of the anti-Burgher educational institution, the Pictou Academy, which the Liberals supported and which the Conservatives opposed. Highlanders of anti-Burgher tendency were likely to support the Liberals, whereas adherents of the Established Church tended to vote Tory. As we shall see, MacLean Sinclair tells us that the poet was a Tory at the time, but later became a Liberal. He also noted, significantly, that the poet had no strong feelings about the 1830 election until he heard of the insult to the Gaels. All of this suggests that the poet did not have strong anti- Burgher sympathies at the time; if he did, they were clearly of less importance to him than the maintenance of ethnic solidarity and the defence of the Gaels.

became an increasingly important genre in John MacLean's era, and reflects both the rise of evangelical religion and the new importance attached to ministers as community leaders in the Gaelic areas. Like other poets, John MacLean is struggling to develop a rhetoric that is appropriate to these subjects of praise; unlike those of a more evangelical bent, the poems for Rev. MacLean and Rev. MacQueen show an intense poetic conservatism, in which the poet cleaves fairly closely to the motifs of the secular Gaelic panegyric tradition. Given his later spiritual awakening, these poems are transitional in a personal sense as well. That John MacLean has chosen to commemorate the death of two ministers shows that the church is a force not only in the life of the community, but also in his own life; however, the absence of the sort of imagery, and the sort of argument that we see in the output of men like Lachlan MacLachlan and John MacDonald suggest that John MacLean has not yet fully taken on board the concerns and perspectives of the evangelical movement.

The final praise poem for "non-traditional" subjects to be discussed is John MacLean's lament for Alexander MacKinnon, poem 18. Interestingly, the poet gave the poem the title "Bàrdachd Alastair MhicFhionghain", suggesting that the subject of the poem was the poet's work, rather than the poet himself. In his preface to this poem in the collection he himself published in 1818, John MacLean indicates that the poem was inspired by seeing MacKinnon's work after his death in 1814.874 It is likely that John MacLean came across some of MacKinnon's poetry on his trip to the

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874 "Do dh' Alastair MacIonmhuinn, a bha na Chorplair ann an Rèisemaid a Mharcuis, le Iain MacGilleain, air dha sealladh da Sheirbhis fhaicinn an dèigh a bhàis, agus e air to'irt urram dhi thair mòran eile a chunnaic e, a thaobh doimhneachd na cainnt a bha na chuid Orain, agus feothas sa bha ì air a cuir an ordugh"/"To Alexander MacKinnon, who was a Corporal in Marcus' Regiment, by John MacLean, after having seen some of his work after his death, and wishing to give it recognition beyond much else that he has seen, concerning the depth of the language that was in his poems and the excellence with which it was composed": Iain Mac Illeain, *Orain Nuadh Ghaedhlach*, (Duneudainn: R. Meinnearach, 1818), at p. 87. It is interesting that John MacLean claims to have "seen" MacKinnon's poetry, rather than having "heard" it. It is possible that he may have had access to a manuscript version of some of MacKinnon's poetry. It is also possible that he had read MacKinnon's

mainland in about 1815, but he apparently never met MacKinnon: "Ge' nach faca mi riamh thu,/Tha mi 'g ionndrainn gun thriall thu".875

As we have seen in the discussion of the poetry composed for the MacLeans of Coll and for Glengarry, respect for aspects of the Gaelic cultural tradition which John MacLean considered important, and support for the makers and preservers of that tradition, was viewed by John MacLean as a crucial aspect of the "good" chief. Indeed, in the case of Glengarry, such respect and support perhaps allowed the poet to forgive, or at least overlook, other failings. As we have also seen, support for poets, musicians and other tradition bearers is one of the commonplaces for which the chief is praised in the Gaelic panegyric tradition,876 and a profound respect for both the Gaelic language and the makers and preservers of the Gaelic cultural heritage has quite deep roots in the Gaelic poetic tradition. Take, for example, "Cumha Lachlainn Daill"/"A Lament to Blind Lachlan",877 composed by Sìleas MacDonald, "Sìleas Nighean Mhic Raghnaill", "Sìleas na Ceapaich", for Lachlan MacKinnon, whose precise identity is unknown but who was a harper and was praised by the poetess for his artistic talents, or "Moladh air Pìob-mhòir Mhic Cruimein",878 by Alexander MacDonald, "Alasdair Mac Mhaighstir Alasdair", one of many songs of praise to the bagpipe and its music, or Duncan "Bàn" MacIntyre's series of poems to the Gaelic language and the great Highland bagpipe.879 There are also poems composed to

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poem of the Battle of Holland in Patrick Turner's collection, which was published in 1813: see Paruig Mac-an-Tuairneir, *Comhchruinneacha do dh' Orain Taghta, Ghaidhealach*, *supra*, at p. 38.

875 "Though I never met you,/I am mourning your departure": poem 18, lines 4-5.

876 See, for example, Ronald Black's thematic summary of the Panegyric Code, in *An Lasair*, *supra*, at pp. 525-7, motif 2.3.

877 See Colm Ó Baoill, ed., *Bàrdachd Shìlis na Ceapaich/Poems and Songs by Sìleas MacDonald* (Edinburgh: Scottish Gaelic Texts Society, 1972), at p. 108.

878 See William J. Watson, *Bàrdachd Ghàidhlig*, *supra*, at p. 104.

879 "Rann do 'n Ghàidhlig 's do 'n Phìob-Mhòir 'sa' Bhliadhna 1781", "Rann do 'n Ghàidhlig 's do 'n Phìob-Mhòir 'sa' Bhliadhna 1782", "Rann do 'n Ghàidhlig 's do 'n Phìob-Mhòir 'sa' Bhliadhna 1783", "Rann do 'n Ghàidhlig 's do 'n Phìob-Mhòir 'sa' Bhliadhna 1784", "Rann do 'n Ghàidhlig 's do 'n Phìob-Mhòir 'sa' Bhliadhna 1785", and "Rann do 'n Ghàidhlig 's do 'n Phìob-Mhòir 'sa' Bhliadhna

commemorate those who have preserved aspects of Gaelic tradition, including non-Gaels, such as Edward Lhuyd, for whom several poems were composed in honour of publications such as his "Archaeologica Britannica" in 1704, which did much to elucidate the Celtic prehistory of Britain and Ireland.880 In a similar vein is Ewen MacLachlan's "Marbhrann do Mhr. Seumas Beattie",881 for Prof. James Beattie, Professor of Humanities and Natural History at Marischal College, Aberdeen, who died on 4 October, 1810, a classics scholar but also a friend and supporter of MacLachlan. A notable example from the end of the nineteenth century is Neil MacLeod's "John Stuart Blackie".882 Blackie (1809-95) was the Professor of Greek at the University of Edinburgh from 1852 to 1882, and he "espoused the cause of Gaelic with great passion and wrote extensively about the language and its literature".883 Prof. Blackie championed the crofters' cause in the 1870s and 1880s, and was instrumental in the establishment of the Chair of Celtic at that University, which was filled in 1882.

While poems in praise of cultural champions is therefore well-established in the Gaelic tradition, poems composed for other poets and, like John MacLean's poem, for the poetry of other poets, are not particularly common. That John MacLean composed such a poem is notable, and may be indicative of various trends that were emerging in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth century. First, as noted in Chapter Two, this period witnessed the emergence of a number of important collectors of Gaelic poetry, many of whose manuscripts were being published. As

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1789", in Angus MacLeod, ed., *Òrain Dhonnchaidh Bhàin/The Songs of Duncan Ban MacIntyre*, *supra*, at pp. 270-99

880 See, for example, a poem by Eoin Mac Ghille-Eoin, in William J. Watson, ed., *Bàrdachd Ghàidhlig*, *supra*, at p. 155.

881 See Donald E. Meek, *Caran an t-Saoghail*, *supra*, at p.210; this version updates and corrects that published in William J. Watson, *ibid*, at p. 20.

882 See Donald E. Meek, *Caran an t-Saoghail*, *supra*, at p. 218.

883 *Ibid*, at p. 431.

also noted in Chapter Two, John MacLean was aware of and apparently inspired by the work of some of these other collectors, and was himself an important collector and a publisher of Gaelic poetry. Like these other collectors, he viewed the preservation of Gaelic poetry as vitally important. Furthermore, as was argued in relation to his poetry for the MacLeans of Coll and for Glengarry, John MacLean, was keenly aware of the absolutely central role of the Gaelic poet in the establishment and maintenance of cultural and moral standards and in the preservation of traditional Gaelic values and the defence of Gaelic communities. In this era of great flux in the Highlands, the Gaelic aristocracy could no longer be counted upon to play their traditional roles of defenders of Gaelic values and Gaelic communities; as noted in Chapter Three, especially in his poetry for the young Laird of Coll, but also in other praise poems to the Coll family, we see the poet's sense of the contingent and vulnerable state of affairs even in a family as committed to the old values as the MacLeans of Coll. His concerns about the erosion of the old values in neighbouring districts is also evident in this poetry, and emerged sharply in, for example, his praise poem for Ranald MacDonald of Staffa. The Gaelic poet was always important in the establishment and maintenance of standards in Gaelic society, but this role took on a new urgency in the context of the great changes of the early nineteenth century. Third, as was also noted in Chapter Three, in the discussion of his praise poetry for Glengarry, and in the discussion in Chapter Two, John MacLean clearly had a very high opinion of his own status as an accomplished poet. The oral traditions concerning his falling out with the Laird of Coll centre on a perceived slight given by the Laird to John MacLean by not treating him with appropriate respect and leaving him standing outside a banqueting hall, and the ostentatious manner in which Glengarry responded, in which he practically treated the poet as his social equal. Clearly, John MacLean felt that such

treatment was entirely appropriate. It was not simply that John MacLean, shoemaker from Tiree and member of a cadet MacLean family had been subject to an affront by an important Chieftain, but that John MacLean, poet, and bard to an important Laird had been affronted. John MacLean had a certain arrogance, but it appears to be an arrogance rooted in a firm belief about the fundamental importance to his society of the poet, an importance to rival that even of the chief.

Thus, it is not surprising that John MacLean should want to celebrate a highly respected poet such as Alexander MacKinnon. Like the poem to Rev. John MacLean of Coll, this is one of the few praise poems in which John MacLean deployed the classic three-line strophic metre that was so characteristic of the earlier Gaelic panegyric tradition, and it is interesting that the poet saved this metre for non-traditional subjects of praise, such as a minister and a poet, rather than the traditional subjects of such poetry, the chiefly class. In the very choice of metre, it is possible that John MacLean was trying to signal a shift from an older order, in which the chieftains were central to the maintenance of the status quo and defender of the Gaelic people, to a new era in which the clergy and the artists, especially the poets, were increasingly required to play that role. This was also the only praise poem John MacLean composed for a subject whom he had never met, and this also suggests the particular esteem he attached to this particular poet, but, arguably, to Gaelic poetry in general.

It is clear that, of all his contemporaries, John MacLean had the highest regard for the work of Alexander MacKinnon. His esteem for MacKinnon is evident not only in the poem itself, the only one he composed for another poet, and the introduction to the poem in John MacLean's 1818 collection, in which he acknowledges that he gives higher regard to MacKinnon's work than that of "many

others" that he has seen because of its depth of language and its excellence of composition,884 but also in the fact that he included six of MacKinnon's poems in the book of poetry that he published in 1818.885 The poem itself is significant, because it shows the emergence of a different sort of panegyric rhetoric more appropriate to the subject; it seems less constrained by the dominant motifs of the panegyric tradition than, for example, his poems for the two Ministers. John MacLean adhered to some of the conventions of the Gaelic panegyric tradition quite closely. For example, he began with a locative opening:886 "Fhuair mi sealladh Diluain/A dhùisg mo spiorad gu gluasad".887 As is appropriate in an elegy such as this, there is reference to the lifeless body888 and to the wife's bereavement,889 as well as to the poet's personal sorrow.890 Since MacKinnon was a soldier, John MacLean praises him in traditional terms for his courage, and makes particular reference to his wounds.891 However, the bulk of the poem is given over to praise of MacKinnon's artistic talents, and we see in this a somewhat different rhetoric of praise. As in the panegyric tradition, the subject is praised for certain mental attributes; however, these are related to the exigencies of the poet's craft:

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884 Iain Mac Illeain, *Orain Nuadh Ghaedhlach* (Duneudainn: R. Meinnearach, 1818), at p. 87.

885 Iain Mac Illeain, *Orain Nuadh Ghaedhlach*, *supra*, "Oran do Bhlàr a bha ann san Ephaid", "Cumhadh do Shìom Domhnullach, Triath na Mòrthir", "Cumhadh do Shim òg Mhòrthir", "Oran le Alastair Mac Cionmhuinn, an uair a chaidh e air tir san Ephait", "Oran do Shim Domhnullach, Triath Mhòrthir", and "Oran do Dhomhnull Cameron, na, mar cho'-ainm, Domhnull mòr òg, ann an Locah Abar", at pp. 126-154.

886 See, for example, Ronald Black, *An Lasair*, *supra*, at p. xx, and John MacInnes, "The Panegyric Code in Gaelic Poetry and its Historical Background", *supra*, at pp. 462-3.

887 "I had a vision on Monday/That awoke my spirit to action": lines 1-2.

888 "'S e 'na shìneadh gun lèirsinn air bòrd"/"He was stretched out lifelessly on a table": poem 18, line 33.

889 Poem 18, lines 28-33; see, generally, Ronald Black, *An Lasair*, *supra*, at p. 526, motifs relating to death, and John MacInnes, "The Panegyric Code in Gaelic Poetry and its Historical Background", *supra*, at p. 457.

890 Poem 18, lines 4-5.

891 "B' e sin saighdear a' chruadail/Ri uchd teine agus luaidhe,/'S iomadh baiteal x's na bhuannaich e leòn"/"He was a courageous soldier/In the face of fire and of lead,/In many a battle did he earn his wounds": poem 18, lines 37-9. MacKinnon was badly injured at the Battle of Alexandria in 1801, and was about to be thrown into a mass grave when a friend discovered that he was still breathing, and had his transferred to a hospital ship: Ronald Black, *An Lasair*, *supra*, at p. 522.

B' fhiosrach, lèirsinneach t' inntinn	Your mind was expert and perceptive
Ann an gloine 's an ciatabh,	In its clarity and its pleasures,
Cha b' ann brosgalach, breugach le sgleò.	It was not fawning nor mistily deceitful.892

Perception, clarity, honesty of expression and the abhorrence of anything that is "misty" are the qualities that John MacLean values in the poet. MacKinnon's skills as a poet are later explicitly praised in these terms:

Chuir thu 'Ghàidhlig mar 'dh'earbainn	You set the Gaelic as I would expect
Ann an òrdagh gun iomluathas,	In good order, without inconsistency,
Chan fhaigh bàird oirre cearbaich no sgòd.	Poets won't find in it awkwardness or blemish.893

The high value that John MacLean attaches to technical aspects of composition are clear from this passage: consistency, order and neatness of expression are referred to, and relate to some of the mental attributes John MacLean had praised. MacKinnon's poetry is also lauded by John MacLean for being free of mistakes or errors, almost certainly in reference to some of the more traditional standards of Gaelic composition such as rhyme and metre. Restraint, in the sense of lack of poetic excess, is also praised.894 Craftsmanship and felicity of language rather than values such as innovation, important for some modern critics of Gaelic poetry, as noted at the beginning of Chapter Three, are the ones given prominence by John MacLean. As is the case in Gaelic praise poetry for the chieftain, John MacLean is providing us with the image of the good poet, and is reinforcing those values which he feels are central to the Gaelic poetic tradition. Significantly, many of these are precisely the sorts of values and qualities that are reflected in the sharp realism that is, as Sorley Maclean has argued convincingly,895 so central in much of the best traditional Gaelic poetry.

Sorley Maclean has also argued that musicality is a fundamentally important

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892 Poem 18, lines 10-2.

893 Poem 18, lines 25-7.

894 "Bha i aige gun truailleadh,/Anns gach cànmhain a fhuair e/Cha robh uireasaibh bhuaithe na còrr"/"He had it [i.e. the Muse] faultlessly,/In every language that he found/There were no failings or excesses from him": poem 18, lines 49-51.

quality of the best Gaelic poetry,896 and John MacLean provides tantalising evidence in support of this claim in this passage in his poem for Alexander MacKinnon:

Gu bhith 'g èisteachd ri t' ealdhain	To be listening to your poetry
Nuair a sheinnt' i bho t'anail,	When sung from your lips,
Chluinnte 'fuaim aig an talla le d' cheòl.	Its sound would be heard in your music at their hall.897

The word "ealdhain" is significant, as it implies artistry. John MacLean seems to be suggesting here that the artistry of MacKinnon's poetry is in its musicality; indeed, perhaps he is even suggesting that the essence of Gaelic poetry is in its manifestation in song. Based on the following lines, MacKinnon was himself apparently a talented singer:

Bhiodh na h-òranaibh grinne,	The elegant songs would be
Sunntach, fonnmhor, bu bhinne	Joyfully, tunefully, most sweetly
'Tigh'nn ro phongail bho bhilibh do bheòil.	Coming so tidily from the lips of your mouth.898

Although song, together with music in general, is an important motif in the Gaelic panegyric tradition, praise poetry specifically composed for Gaelic singers appears to be less common than that for poets and for other tradition bearers. In this passage, however, John MacLean, himself a talented singer, gives us a view of those qualities most important in a Gaelic singer, and we are perhaps seeing here the beginnings of a new rhetoric of praise appropriate to singers. Indeed, as John MacLean had never met MacKinnon, the ascription of these qualities to his singing may represent an expression of the ideal rather than the actual attributes of a Gaelic singer. Tunefulness, sweetness and joy are qualities that are specifically referred to, and the reference to tidiness in delivery may well be to clarity of diction.

In this section, we have explored the expansion of the range of subjects of

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895 Somhairle Mac Gill-eain, "Realism in Gaelic Poetry", in William Gillies, ed., *Ris a' Bhruthaich*, *supra*, at pp. 15-47.

896 Somhairle Mac Gill-eain, "Aspects of Gaelic Poetry", in William Gillies, ed., *Ris a' Bhruthaich*, *supra*, pp. 75-82, at p. 75.

897 Poem 18, lines 16-8.

898 Poem 18, lines 19-21.

John MacLean's praise poetry. In choosing to honour soldiers, he is a poet of his age; the British military effort in the Revolutionary and Napoleonic Wars created a new stage on which the Highland soldier could demonstrate his military prowess, and provided a new outlet for poets to celebrate the martial values that form one of the cornerstones of the older Gaelic panegyric tradition. The focus of this poetry remains, however, the Gaelic soldier, and not the British cause; indeed, the theme of royalism, of service to the King, is more prominent than any notion of service to a British nation. In celebrating clergymen, John MacLean is also representative of a relatively new trend in the Gaelic tradition. With the decline of the old chiefly order, new community leaders emerge, and few are more important than the clergy. However, John MacLean does not appear to have fully embraced evangelical Presbyterianism at this stage in his life, and his poetry in praise of clergy demonstrates few of the characteristics of the "marbhrannan" or "elegies" that were being composed for ministers of the evangelical movement; indeed, there is a marked conservatism in rhetoric and imagery in this poetry, which is perhaps appropriate in respect of the aristocratic pedigree of the clergymen he eulogises.

It is in his elegies for local men and in his poem for another poet, Alexander MacKinnon, that John MacLean begins to break free of some of the constraints of the traditional panegyric style. Here, we begin to see a poetry that is less the result of a sense of obligation, and more the product of the poet's own instincts and emotions. In these poems, John MacLean reaffirms the importance of the community, and recognises the fundamental importance of the poet as the guardian of community values. The recognition of the poet as a suitable subject of praise poetry had at least one notable consequence: the death of John MacLean himself in 1848 itself produced at least three elegies, including one by John Cameron, a native of Dochanassie,

Lochaber, who had emigrated to Addington Forks, Antigonish County in 1817,899 one by John "Red" MacGillivray, "Iain Ruadh MacGillebhràth", who lived on the Gulf Coast of Antigonish County and was recognised as a talented poet in the Antigonish Gàidhealtachd at the time,900 and one by Alexander MacDonald, "Bàrd na Ceapaich", "The Keppoch Bard", who was born in Moidart in 1820 and who came with his family to Keppoch, Antigonish County, in 1830, and was reckoned by Alexander Maclean Sinclair to be the finest of the Gaelic poets in Nova Scotia in the generation which succeeded John MacLean.901

Non-Panegyric Secular Poetry Composed in Scotland

Although the bulk of John MacLean's secular poetry composed in Scotland was praise poetry, we have a record of seven other poems, all of which could be described as "bàrdachd baile", or "village verse", a term which, as discussed at the outset of this chapter, is not free from controversy. Noting his dislike for the term, Ronald Black has argued that those who use it often "seek to imply that such a person is a laureate of a small community and therefore narrow in his (or her) view of the world", a view which Black rejects:

> In practice, however, such poets have typically fought a war, sailed the seven seas, or otherwise sweated blood far and wide for a living, and their view of their community is by no means uncritical or lacking in global perspective.

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899 "Marbhrann do 'n Bhàrd Mac-Gilleain", in Alexander Maclean Sinclair, ed., *Filidh na Coille: Dàin agus Òrain leis a' Bhàrd Mac-Gilleain agus le feadhainn eile* (Charlottetown: The Examiner Publishing Company, 1901), at p. 138. The poem also appears in Clarsach 1 and Clarsach 2.

900 "Marbhrann do 'n Bhàrd Mac-Gilleain", in Alexander Maclean Sinclair, *ibid*, at p. 141. It is not clear whether this John MacGillivray is a different poet from John "The Piper" MacGillivray, "Iain Pìobaire", who, in addition to being the piper to the Laird of Glenaladale in Moidart before emigrating, was also one of the fine poets to have emigrated to Antigonish County. John the Piper was born in Arisaig, Scotland, in 1774 and died at Highfield, near Maryvale, Antigonish County, on 12 November, 1862. He was the the son of Andrew "Bàn" MacGillivray, of Dunmaglass, Scotland, and had trained as a piper with the celebrated MacKay of Skye: see Raymond A. MacLean, ed., *History of Antigonish, Vol. 2*, (Antigonish: Casket Publishing, 1976), at p. 25, note 69, and pp. 54-5, note 108.

901 "Marbhrann do 'n Bhàrd Mac-Gilleain", in Alexander Maclean Sinclair, *ibid*, at p. 142. The poem also appears in Clarsach 1 and Clarsach 2.

> What they reflect is the value of 'community' itself, ...902

While John MacLean's non-panegyric poetry composed in Scotland is of a "local" nature, in that it commemorates mainly local events and personalities, it usually has a much broader purpose, in that it seeks to reinforce the values of the Gaelic community of which he is a part. That these values were not particular to Tiree and continue to have a broader resonance amongst Gaels is reflected, for example, in the fact that at least one of these poems, "An Gàidheal am measg nan Gall", poem 12, is still sung by Cape Breton Gaels, almost 3,000 miles and 200 years removed from the people and events described in the song. The survival of such a song in Cape Breton implies that its core message continues to have relevance to those who sing and listen to it. Some songs, like "Call na *Cailin*", poem 17, and the poems, discussed in the preceding section, composed for the death of Duncan MacInnes and John Campbell, are explicitly about reinforcing community solidarity at times of crisis brought on by the premature death of such young men. Community values and community solidarity are at the core of this poetry.

We have already seen that the maintenance of the Gaelic community and the preservation of Gaelic values were fundamental themes even in John MacLean's praise poetry for the Coll family, and it is therefore unsurprising that his other verse should also be firmly rooted in such themes. Donald Meek's comments on the underlying perspectives of the poets of the land struggle, poets composing in the period from about 1800 to the 1880s, fairly summarises the underlying principles of John MacLean's poetry as well, and in this, John MacLean is representative of his age:

> Although the poets [of Donald Meek's collection] use a variety of song types, and show a fair degree of individuality in the treatment of their themes, there

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902 Ronald Black, *An Tuil*, *supra*, at p. lxi.

> are certain perspectives which most hold in common and which determine their approach to the social upheavals of the nineteenth century.
>
> The poets' aims can be focused in one word — 'community'. In resorting to song, the primary motivation of the majority of poets was the preservation of the traditional Gaelic community in its local or wider Highland forms. Their perceptions of that community derived from the normal practices maintained across the centuries, and were based on such considerations as kinship, co-operation and collective defence. Maintenance of the community, as they knew it, was possible only when its ethical and social values were preserved. Violation of these values was part and parcel of the intrusion of external agencies, and had to be resisted.
>
> The poets therefore react strongly against the manner in which the traditional *mores* of their communities are breached by Lowland shepherds . . . , the intrusion of officials . . ., the arrival of gunboats . . ., and the removal of the people . . ., sometimes by force or by a failure of the traditional system of mutual support which linked tenant to landlord.903

During the period in which John MacLean lived in Tiree, the sorts of sharp external threats to community survival which had emerged elsewhere in the Highlands and Islands and which would become more intense in virtually all districts, including Tiree, as the nineteenth century progressed, had not yet been felt quite so intensely. However, the maintenance of community standards is a central theme, and the desire to fortify the community against dangers from the outside, of which, as we have already seen, the poet was deeply aware, informed his non-panegyric verse.

Eric Cregeen and Donald MacKenzie have argued that the early nineteenth century was one of transition from "the chief's bard to popular poet", that this transition was "most clearly seen" in the poetry of John MacLean,904 and that nineteenth century Tiree poets achieved this transition "with apparent ease and without any obvious hiatus".905 But as Cregeen and MacKenzie themselves acknowledge, this transition may have been less dramatic than the surviving sources allow:

> In the absence of any early surviving examples one cannot be positive, but it is

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903 Donald E. Meek, ed., *Tuath is Tighearna/Tenants and Landlords* (Edinurgh: Scottish Gaelic Texts Society, 1995), at pp. 34-5.

904 Eric Cregeen and Donald W. MacKenzie, *Tiree Bards and their Bardachd*, *supra*, at p. 7.

905 *Ibid*, at p. 10.

> highly probable that a popular song-tradition always existed alongside the more formal, aristocratic tradition, and was sustained and transmitted by local bards in informal ceilidhing and work-processes.906 Gradually one sees the more formal tradition recede and give way to the popular.907

Indeed, the "ease" of the transformation may be because the two types of poetry had, in fact, co-existed, and the fact that John MacLean composed "popular" poetry at the same time that he was acting as "the chief's bard" is perhaps less evidence of a "transformation" than a manifestation of an older co-existence. While the chiefly panegyric does recede, both generally and in the work of John MacLean, what Sorley MacLean referred to as "the panegyric style" does not, and as was noted in the preceding section, this style found its expression in respect of new subjects, the new community leaders who emerge more sharply into focus in the nineteenth century, a point Cregeen and MacKenzie acknowledge. And as just noted, there was not necessarily a sharp disjuncture between the intellectual paradigm that informs the panegyric and the "popular"; maintenance of community values, and defence of that community, are the cornerstones of both sorts of poetry, as evidenced in the work of John MacLean.

For the most part, John MacLean's non-panegyric verse was satirical in nature. Cregeen and MacKenzie note that humorous songs and satires, usually in the form of good-humoured mockery, were perhaps the most characteristic genres of popular poetry in Tiree,908 and found particular prominence in the works of various Balephuil poets, including another John MacLean, the Balemartin Bard (1827-95). It is possible that John MacLean—Bàrd Thighearna Chola, that is—helped to inspire the popularity

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906 Cregeen and MacKenzie make reference here to John MacInnes, who had argued this in "Gaelic Songs of Mary MacLeod" (1966), XI (1) *Scottish Gaelic Studies* 3-25 and in "The Oral Tradition in Scottish Gaelic Poetry" (1968), 12 (1) *Scottish Studies* 29-43, and who quoted Martin Martin's reference to the widespread practice of verse-composition among the common people of the island.

907 Eric Cregeen and Donald MacKenzie, *Tiree Bards and their Bardachd*, *supra*, at p. 10.

908 *Ibid*, at p. 16.

of this genre with his satires, and there is, as we shall see, some evidence that Bàrd Thighearna Chola did inspire some of the Balemartin Bard's compositions. However, it is possible, perhaps even likely, that Bàrd Thighearna Chola was himself participating in a well-established popular tradition in Tiree for which we simply do not have surviving written evidence. Satire was already, after all, a well-established form in the Gaelic tradition: the trained, classical Gaelic poets used it, and it was fairly widely deployed in the eighteenth century by poets such as Alexander MacDonald ("Alasdair Mac Mhaighstir Alasdair") (c.1695-c.1770), in whose hands it often descended into vituperation, and Rob Donn Mackay (1714-1778), who was perhaps the primary exponent of the form.909 As we have seen in Chapter Two, the poet was by all accounts a witty and perceptive observer of human foibles—we shall see more evidence of this in many of his non-panegyric poems—and was capable of sharp, sarcastic responses—even to the Laird of Coll—and it is therefore not surprising that satire would be one of his chosen art forms. In addition, the relationship between satire and panegyric must be considered. As critics such as John MacInnes have argued, satire is, in a sense, the converse of panegyric;910 indeed, Ronald Black has gone so far as to suggest that "Gaelic satire is a more or less systemic inversion of praise motifs".911 Like panegyric, it can be used to uphold morals and customs, and it is a mechanism for exerting social control; rather than doing so by praising virtues, the satirist is, as Cregeen and MacKenzie have noted, able to do so by condemning vice and anti-social behaviour, through "light, bantering satire, intended to making the victim the object of laughter".912 Therefore, it is again

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909 Derick Thomson, *The Companion to Gaelic Scotland* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1983), entry "humour (post-1600)", pp. 135-6.

910 John MacInnes, "The Panegyric Code in Gaelic Poetry and its Historical Background", *supra*, at pp. 459-60.

911 Ronald Black, *An Lasair*, *supra*, at p. xxiii.

912 *Ibid*, at p. 18.

not surprising that a panegyrist such as John MacLean would turn to satire as a means of giving expression to his views.

Two of John MacLean's satires are centrally concerned with one of his greatest preoccupations, the Gaels' increasing exposure to the Lowlands and the Lowlanders. As noted in the discussion of his poetry for the Coll family, the poet considered that the interaction of the chiefly class with the Lowlands and the aping by them of Lowland values was one of the primary causes of the debt into which they had fallen and the ensuing transformation of the Highlands. Thus, the Lowlands were viewed as morally suspect and a considerable threat to Highland values and the Highland way of life. Deep suspicion of the Lowlands and Lowland ways appeared to John MacLean to be the appropriate stance for Gaels such as the Lairds of Coll. It is clear that he viewed such a stance as being equally appropriate for Gaels of more humble status.

John MacLean himself knew the Lowlands. As noted in Chapter Two, he spent about a year in Glasgow, and he was married there in 1808. It is likely that he travelled to Glasgow on business from time to time thereafter, and it seems that he had visited Edinburgh at least once, in about 1817, in connection with the publication of his collection of poetry.913 However, during the poet's time in Tiree, such contacts with the Lowlands were becoming increasingly common. Indeed, Gaels had engaged in seasonal migration to the Lowlands at least since the late seventeenth century. Some were involved in the droving trade, but seasonal employment as harvest labourers and in the fishing industry, and temporary employment as domestics and in the construction trade, primarily as a means of supplementing income, became

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913 See poem 5.

increasingly common in the late eighteenth and into the nineteenth centuries.914 John MacLean was atypical of this migration in at least one sense, though; as noted in Chapter Two, he had apparently learned how to read, write, speak and understand English at school, and as also noted there, the great majority of Tiree Gaels were unilingual Gaelic speakers at this time, a pattern that would have been true for much of the Highlands.

In "An Gàidheal am measg nan Gall", "The Gael amongst the Lowlanders", poem 12, John MacLean highlights the language gap that many Gaels must have faced in the Lowlands. The poem is composed as if by a young Barraman, Angus MacNeil, who had worked as a labourer for John MacLean's father, Allan. Alexander Maclean Sinclair indicates in the preface to the poem in *Clarsach na Coille* that MacNeil had left Tiree to seek harvest employment in the Lowlands, and upon his return, he asked the poet to compose a song to his sweetheart, a woman named MacLeod, who lived in Canna. At the heart of the poem, however, is a moral message about guarding against certain foolhardy temptations. One is the desire to make money quickly:

Gur h-ann le àilgheas a dh'fhàg mi 'm fearann	It was with pleasure that I left the farm
'An deachaidh m' àrach 's mi 'm phàisde leanaibh,	Where I was raised when I was a child,
'S mi 'n dùil gun deanainn am bliadhna dh'earras	Hoping this year to make enough money
Na cheannaicheadh lìon domh gu iasgach Earraich.	That'd purchase a net for my spring fishing.915

Another is pride; John MacLean suggests that MacNeil perhaps felt that employment as a labourer with Allan MacLean was below him:

Gur mi 'bha stàtail mun d'fhàg mi Ailean	Wasn't I too proud before I left Allan
Ri togail gàraidh 's a' càradh bhealach,	To build dykes and repair gaps in walls,
. . .	
Cha ghabhainn tuarastal bhuaith' 'am sgalaig.	I wouldn't take a job from his as a labourer.916

914 Charles W. J. Withers, *Urban Highlanders: Highland-Lowland Migration and Urban Gaelic Culture, 1700-1900* (Phantassie: Tuckwell, 1998), esp. chapter 3, "Seasonal and Temporary Highland-Lowland Migration, c.1680-1900", at pp. 61-83.

915 Lines 9-12.

916 Lines 13-4, 17.

According to John MacLean, MacNeil also appeared to have other things in mind, namely, female companionship: "tigh'nn don Ghalltachd a shealltainn chaileag".917

The outcome for poor MacNeil is frustrated hopes, and repentance. He apparently does not make his quick profit, nor does he escape hard labour, has no luck with the young ladies of the Lowlands, comes to miss his Canna sweetheart and returns to the Islands. The work in the Lowlands is hard, and conditions are perhaps even rougher than at home:

Chan eil e 'còrdadh rium seòl a h-arain, 'Bhith 'falbh Didòmhnaich 's a' giùlan eallaich, 'S nach faigh mi fàrdach na àite 'm fanainn, Ach sabhal fàs airneo stàball gearrain.	It's way of life does not appeal to me, To be out on Sunday carrying a load, And I find no shelter or place to stay, But an empty barn or a gelding's stable.918

The reference here to Sunday labour would have been significant to the poet's audience. As noted, John MacLean was apparently not an adherent of a more evangelical form of Presbyterianism at this point of his life, but he was nonetheless a religious man, and breaking the Sabbath would have been offensive to him and, undoubtedly, many in his community. That such practices were permitted, even encouraged, in the Lowlands would have been a sign of moral corruption, and yet another example of the cultural and moral gap between the two parts of the country, a point that the poet is clearly signalling here.

In addition to working conditions, John MacLean raises questions about just how profitable work in the Lowlands really is. Keeping one's earnings is difficult, because MacNeil is constantly put upon by thieving Lowlanders:

Nuair 'nì sinn gluasad Diluain don bhaile, Bidh bodaich Ghallta ann an geall ar meallaidh, Cha tuig mi 'nàdar le 'n cànmhainn Ghallaich, Tha mise dall 's gun an cainnt 'am theangaidh.	When we depart on Mondays for town, Lowland geezers will try to deceive us, I understand nothing of their nature with their Lowland lingo, I'm lost without their language on my tongue.919

917 "Coming to the Lowlands to check out the women": line 18.
918 Lines 21-4.
919 Lines 25-8.

Here we see the poet's suspicion of Lowlanders: they cannot be trusted. As the quoted verse indicates, there is also a significant language barrier, which can result in ruin. This language barrier seems to have frustrated MacNeil's amorous intentions as well: "Nuair 'nì gach tè dhiubh 'am Beurla m' fharraid,/Their mis' 'an Gàidhlig gun d'fhàg mi Barraidh".920 The absence of Gaelic, and good Gaelic conversation is emphasised by the poet. MacNeil asks the poet to tell his Canna girlfriend that in spite of his difficulties, he is safe in Cadder parish,921 where Gaelic has completely disappeared.922 Earlier in the poem, MacNeil admits that he would prefer to be back with Allan MacLean in Tiree, than to be stuck in conversation with Lowlanders.923 All of these references are undoubtedly meant to reinforce the message that the Lowlands are simply foreign and unfamiliar and inhospitable territory for Gaels.924

Thus, the poet's purpose in this poem is didactic. His theme is that distant pastures are not always greener, and that there is much about home that cannot be replaced. Pride and desire and wanderlust will lead to regret. Above all, the poet conveys the sense of the Lowlands being foreign, corrupt and dangerous territory, and that Gaels must exercise caution there. Given the poet's own later experience of emigration and his own reactions to leaving home for greener pastures—themes that will be explored in the next section of this chapter—there is an irony and poignancy to this song. In emigrating in 1819, he forgot the very lessons he conveys here, and as we shall see, he, too, came to regret his errors, although, as we shall also see, he came

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920 "When each of them [Lowland women] asks me in their English,/I'll say in Gaelic that I'm from Barra": lines 19-20.

921 A parrish immediately to the north of the City of Glasgow.

922 "'S gun deachaidh 'Ghàidhlig à àite seallaidh": line 32.

923 "Gum b' fheàrr 'bhith ann, airneo 's meallta 'bharail,/Na 'bhith 'san àm 's ann an cainnt nan Gallaibh": lines 15-6.

924 For a broader consideration of Gaelic perceptions of the Lowlands, see John MacInnes, "The Gaelic Perception of the Lowlands", in William Gillies, ed., *Gaelic and Scotland/Alba agus a' Ghàidhlig* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1989), pp. 89-100; he considers briefly Gaelic attitudes to the towns and cities of the Lowlands at pp. 99-100.

to terms with his experience in a somewhat different way. Rather than return to Scotland, as he might have done on the Laird of Coll's offer of land to him, he decided to persevere.

Much the same purpose is at the core of "Òran, do Dhòmhnall MacArtair", poem 15, which was the only poem composed by John MacLean that Alexander Maclean Sinclair did not publish. It is impossible that Maclean Sinclair did not know of this poem, as it appears in John MacLean's own manuscript which was in Maclean Sinclair's possession and from which Maclean Sinclair worked,925 and it also appeared in the collection that John MacLean had published in Edinburgh in 1818.926 As will be discussed in Chapter Six, the main reason for its omission by Maclean Sinclair was its subject matter.927 Clearly, John MacLean did not share any of his grandson's reservations, and this tells us something of both the extent to which the attitudes to and understanding of the subject matter differed, perhaps not only between the two men, but within Gaelic communities in the sixty year period between 1818 and 1880. In his own introduction to the song in *Orain Nuadh Ghaedhlach*, John MacLean provides the following information about it:

> Do Dhòmhnall MacArtair, à Tiriodh, na mar cho-ainm Dòmhnall Sealgair, an uair a chaidh e 'dh'ionnsaidh na buanadh, don Ghalltachd, agus air thilltinn do Ghlaschu dh'èirich dha amas ri boireannach uasal anns an àite sin, a thug bhuaithe a chuid airgiod; agus air cluinntinn seo do dh' Iain MacGilleain,

925 MG15G/2/1, p.54.

926 Iain MacIlleain, *Orain Nuadh Ghaedhlach*, *supra*, p. 57.

927 Maclean Sinclair's decision not to publish it was honoured by Hector MacDougall, when he republished *Clarsach na Coille* in Glasgow in 1928. In the preface to this second edition, MacDougall says this about the omission: "Bha aon òran anns an t-seann leabhar nach do chuir an ceud fhear-deasachaidh anns a' "Chlàrsaich," agus ged nach eil a' bheag ann do am faighte coire smaointich mi gun robh e cho math fhàgail às a' bhualadh so mar an ceudna, agus na bh gu math fhàgail gu math. Is ann do fhear do 'm b' ainm Dòmhnull MacArtair, d' am b' fhar-ainm "Dòmhnull Sealgair," a chaidh a dh' ionnsaidh an fhoghair gu Galldachd is a chaill a chuid airgid an luid "mhnathan-uaisle" Ghlascho a rinn se e. [An uair sin, thug MacDhùghaill seachad an t-sèisd agus na ciad trì rannan, "ach eagal miothlachd a chosnadh cha teid mi na 's fhaide na sin. Tha ceithir rannan-deug ann uile gu leir."]/"There was one song in the old book [i.e. ONG] which the first editor did not put in the "Harp", and though there are not a few who could find fault, I thought it just as well to leave it out of this edition all the same, and to leave well enough alone. It is for a man by the name of Donald MarArthur, of the nickname "Donald the Hunter", that went to the harvest in the Lowlands and who lost his money in the company of "gentlewomen" of Glasgow that he [i.e. the poet] made it."

> thòisich e air deanamh an òrain seo 'leanas, mar gum biodh Dòmhnall agus ise a' freagairt a chèile.928

According to the poem itself, Donald MacArthur had in fact gone on a binge, lost his money, and had fallen in with a prostitute, and as the poet noted, he recorded this in the form of a "còmhradh", or "dialogue", between Donald and the prostitute. The "còmhradh" was used in the Gaelic poetic tradition at least from the seventeenth century,929 and in the nineteenth century it became a popular form in Gaelic prose. While sometimes humorous, the prose form was often used for moral instruction,930 and although John MacLean's poem is a hearty satire, ribald and direct in places, and scattered with racy double-entendres, it was also intended to convey moral instruction. Maclean Sinclair seems to have lost sight of this or, if he had not done so, was concerned that the manner in which the story was told was rather too explicit for his intended readership.

In part, the poem is a warning against excessive drinking, particularly when away from home and in public houses. In the second and third verses, before the "dialogue" between Donald and the prostitute begins, the poet admonishes Donald for spending too much money in the tavern, telling him that had he been present, he would have restrained him: "Bheirinn làmh air do phòca,/'S bhiodh do stòras dheth glèidhteachd".931 John MacLean refers to Donald falling asleep, and awakening to find his money gone; the poet reports that Donald was robbed by his drinking partners—"spùinn iad gu lèir thu"932—although he may simply mean that they spent

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928 To Donald MacArthur, from Tiree, or Donald the Hunter, as was his nickname, when he went to the harvest in the Lowlands; and on his return to Glasgow, he happened to meet a noble lady in that place who took from him his money; and on hearing this, John MacLean started to make this song which follows, as if Donald and her were answering each other: Iain MacIlleain, *Orain Nuadh Ghaedhlach*, *supra*, at p. 57.

929 See Sheila Kidd, "Social Control and Social Criticism: The Nineteenth Century *Còmhradh*", (2000) 20 *Scottish Gaelic Studies* 67.

930 *Ibid.*

931 Lines 19-20.

932 Line 22.

all his money for him in the pub, as in the third verse, the poet implies that, under the influence, Donald had paid the rounds, and the poet would have gained some repayment from those present.933 In the dialogue, the woman herself says that she and Donald were drinking together—she makes reference to Highland whisky, strong beer and cider934—and strongly implies that this played a part in their encounter.

Underlying all of this is the notion that excessive drinking leads to sexual desire and promiscuity, and this, in turn, leads to other problems. One is unwanted and unplanned pregnancy, as the prostitute herself reminds Donald:

Gabham fianais air t' fhocal,	Let me bear by the record of your word,
Fhuair mi glacte le grèim thu,	I found you seized by desire,
Na cuir teagamh gu bràch ann,	Never cast any doubt upon it,
Ma thig pàiste 'na dhèidh oirnn.	In case a child arrives because of it.935

Another is sexually-transmitted disease which, the prostitute reminds Donald, could be another outcome of such liaisons: "Na bi 'gearan do shaothrach/Mur d' thig gaoir ann 'ad shlèistean".936 Donald is left even more upset by the prospect of catching such a disease, which he refers to as "the noble pox",937 because he thinks there is no cure, a misconception of which the prostitute cures him in rather explicit terms:

Faigh a' *mharcairi* làidir,	Get some strong mercury,
Fan 'sa 'bhlàthas 's na bi 'g èirigh,	Stay where it's warm and don't get up,
Ceannaich *spuinnse* agus spùtan,	Buy a sponge and a syringe,
Sin a' chungaidh 'nì feum dhuit.	That's the cure that'll do you good.938

The treatment sounds unpleasant, which is likely to be the poet's point to his audience: better to use some sense and exercise some restraint than to risk pregnancy or horrible diseases and even more awful treatments.

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933 Lines 25-32.

934 "'S sinn ag òl air a' cheile/Do dh'uisge beatha math Gàidhealach,/Leann làidir is *cider*"/"We were drinking to each other/With good Highland whisky,/Strong beer and cider": lines 125-7.

935 Lines 65-8.

936 "Don't be grumbling about your dirtywork/Before a pain comes over your loins": lines 71-2.

937 Line 77: "'bhreac uasal".

938 Lines 85-8.

There is also a subtle but clear admonition to lead a Christian life. Donald admits, for example, that he was prodigal and foolish in his behaviour—presumably in reference to both his drinking and whoring—and makes reference to meeting his company on "the Sunday of the feast". Sabbath-breaking can therefore be added to Donald's moral failures. Had Donald observed the Sabbath, the poet implies, his problems may not have started in the first place. Later, the woman herself gives Donald this warning:

Nuair a thig thu don Ghalltachd,	When you come to the Lowlands,
Fuirich thall às a' cheum seo,	Keep well away from this path,
Na bi teann air a' stìopall	Don't be close to the steeple
Far an cluinn thu e 'beumadh.	Where you'll hear it tolling.939

In the context, the tolling of the bell from the steeple seems to be a metaphorical reference to keeping oneself far away from temptation, but the use of this imagery implies that Donald and Gaels like him should indeed listen to the calling of the Christian message and stay close to the Church steeple.

There is, however, also a message concerning hypocrisy, and this may have been intended for those hearing the song who might be tempted to make strong judgments about the unfortunate Donald. Donald not only notes that the purchase of the necessary cures for his venereal disease will be expensive, but will also be a source of shame to his relations at home.940 The woman tells Donald not to pay too much heed to the moralising of his relations. She argues that it is all too easy to give into temptation:

Cò 'gheibheadh o nàdar,	Who would take from his nature
Fuireach là' rium is èis air,	To be near me and in need,
Gun an obair 'ud fheuchainn,	Without trying that labour,
'S e'bhith bliadhna às a h-eugais.	And to be a year without it.941

939 Lines 115-8.
940 Lines 93-4.
941 Lines 101-4.

This could be interpreted as an attempt by the poet to make a deeper theological point about man's original sin, and perhaps the poet had in mind Jesus' admonition in John 8 to the multitude which had gathered to stone a woman accused of adultery, also a sin of a sexual nature, that "He that is without sin among you, let him first cast a stone at her". Interestingly, the poet has Donald agree with her argument, and the poor protagonist makes the following wry observation on human nature:

'S iomadh Mòrair is Diùca	Many a Lord and Duke
'Bha 'sa 'chùis sin 'an dèis-làmh,	Have been left short by that practice,
Bha iad romham 'ga dheanamh,	They were doing it before me,
'S nì na ceudan 'am dhèidh e.	And hundreds will do it after me.942

In this passage, we see that John MacLean has a moral purpose, but he himself is not a narrow moraliser. As noted, the poem is filled with direct language, frankness about sexual matters, and many humorous *double entendres*. There is no sermonising, and John MacLean does not demonise either Donald—more a figure of fun and pity—or the prostitute. Indeed, the poet repeatedly allows her to parry effectively Donald's attempts to blame her for his license—Donald suggests that he was an unwilling victim, and she makes clear that he was a more than happy participant, and the initiator of the transaction between them, an accusation that he cannot ultimately refute.943

A final aspect of the poem is that, like "An Gàidheal am measg nan Gall", it is a warning to Gaels, particularly young men, about the temptations and dangers of the Lowlands. Donald the Hunter suggests that this is not the first time he has been badly treated on his journeys away from home:

A h-uile ceum fad 's a dh'fhalbh mi	Every step that I have traveled
Eadar Albainn is Eirinn,	Between Scotland and Ireland,
Bha gach aon duin' a shin rium	Every person whom I have encountered
A' toirt dhiom leis an eucoir.	Has taken from me unjustly.944

942 Lines 109-12.
943 See verses 5-8, lines 41-72.
944 Lines 41-4.

Interestingly, the poet also refers to Ireland; it is likely that he means the urban areas in both the Lowlands and Ireland to which a young Gael would be likely to travel. The particular encounter that is the subject of the poem took place in the Lowlands, and the prostitute is clearly a Lowlander. They were able to agree on the transaction, although she seems to imply that there may have been something of a language barrier:

Bha sinn tacan a' seanachas,	We spoke for a while,
A' deanamh bargain mu dhèidhinn,	Making a deal concerning it,
Nuair a thuig mi do bhriathran,	When I understood your words,
'S tu 'ga iarraidh 'am Beurla.	You enquired about it in English.945

In this passage, she seems to suggest that she had some trouble understanding him when he approached her in English. In noting that there is no cure for venereal disease, Donald claims that he is an innocent amongst the Lowlanders.946 As discussed, the prostitute cures Donald of his misconception, and tells him of a cure for the venereal disease. The poet seems to be implying that, unlike Donald, the prostitute—and perhaps, by implication in this context, Lowlanders in general—are much less innocent about such matters. Donald notes that it will take some time and expense to gather the cure that she recommends, as he will be forced to stay around Edinburgh.947 Again, the message that the poet seems to imply is that the Lowlands are a place where such things are found, because it is a place in which the behaviour that results in the need for such cures is common. Finally, as also noted, the prostitute warns him that when he comes to the Lowlands, he should watch himself and stick to the straight and narrow. Implicit in all of these references is the idea that the Lowlands are a place of temptation and danger, a foreign and morally corrupt place that will only lead Gaels to ruin. This is a message that emerges in the poetry of John

945 Lines 53-6.
946 "A-measg nan Gall 's gun mi eòlach": line 75.
947 Lines 93-6.

MacLean in many forms, and is as relevant to the common Highlander as it is to the nobility.

The enduring impact of this particular song in Tiree is attested by a reference in the poetry of another John MacLean, "Bàrd Bhaile Mhàrtainn" (the "Balemartin Bard") (1827-95), who, aside from Bàrd Thighearna Chola, was probably the most renowned of the Tiree poets, particularly of the nineteenth century.948 The Balemartin Bard composed a series of satirical poems about his neighbour "Calum Beag", Malcolm MacArthur. Perhaps the best known of these poems is "Calum Beag",949 which Donald Meek aptly describes as "a multi-faceted satirical ballad describing an erratic voyage to Glasgow". Meek summarises the poem as follows:

> Calum is cast in the role of a clueless mariner, who narrowly narrowly escapes from the clutches of women and wild weather. Perhaps fearing their future effects in the islands, MacLean [i.e. the Balemartin Bard] satirises a range of contemporary 'weaknesses', including the fatal attraction of the Clyde seaports for sailors with a propensity to drink.950

Calum Beag's experiences in Glasgow are very reminiscent of those of Donald the Hunter, the subject of Bàrd Thighearna Chola's poem: when he reaches Glasgow, the young ladies of the city come to meet him, one of whom took him off drinking and dancing. This is what happened next:

> Ach char i thu san doilleireachd le boile Mhic-an-Tòisich,
> Nuair thug i thu don t-seòmar – bha stòiridh fo làr.
>
> 'S i mhire-chath a b' aithreach leat; 's beag earalais a dhearbh thu;
> Bha air' aic' air do phòca le seòltaichead chealgach;
> Ach chuimhnich thu sa mhionaid air d' fhear-cinnich, Dòmhnall Sealgair,
> Mar thachair ann an dearmad a' chearbaiche dha.951

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948 See Eric Cregeen and Donald MacKenzie, *Tiree Bards and their Bardachd*, *supra*, at pp. 19-22, and Hector Cameron, *Na Baird Thirisdeach*, *supra*, at pp. 142-3, and for a selection of his poetry, see Hector Cameron at pp. 143-87.

949 See Hector Cameron, *Na Baird Thirisdeach*, *supra*, at pp. 143-9, and Donald E. Meek, *Caran an t-Saoghail*, *supra*, at pp. 152-9.

950 Donald Meek, *ibid*, at p. 149.

951 "But she tricked you in the darkness with the madness of the whisky,/when she took you to the chamber – there was a cellar below./You regretted your enthusiasm; you truly were not watchful;/she eyed your pocket carefully with a deceitful cunning;/but you remembered in that minute your kinsman Donald Hunter,/and how, in his forgetfulness, misfortune came his way": see Donald Meek, *Caran an t-Saoghail*, *supra*, at pp. 154-5, at lines 47-52.

The memory of Donald Hunter and his fate is enough, and Calum Beag leaves Glasgow immediately: "Sin smaointich thu nach fanadh tu sa bhaile 'n robh na biasdan".952 Given the obvious similarities in the circumstances, the reference to "Donald Hunter", a "kinsman", must be to none other than the subject of Bàrd Thighearna Chola's poem, who was, after all, another MacArthur. The Balemartin Bard's use of the word "biasdan", "beasts", calls to mind the description given by Bàrd Thighearna Chola, who noted that Donald Hunter's money had been counted up by the "beasts", "bèistean", who had plundered him.953 These references suggest very strongly that Bàrd Thighearna Chola's song was still widely known in the second half of the nineteenth century in Tiree, and still must have retained some force as both a humorous satire and a moral tale. The Balemartin Bard is composing for much the same purposes as Bàrd Thighearna Chola, and the reference to a well-known song and a well-known character would have heightened the impact of the Balemartin Bard's satire. Here, then, we see the ongoing relevance of satires such as poem 15, "Òran, do Dhòmhnall MacArtair", to Tiree Gaels.

The other three satires composed by John MacLean, Bàrd Thighearna Chola, are all similar in that they lampoon relatively minor character faults of the subjects. The subjects of each of the poems would almost certainly have felt some discomfort, but none of these poems has much real venom. They provide us with amusing glimpses of the poet's personality and interesting pictures of life in Tiree in the early years of the nineteenth century.

According to Alexander Maclean Sinclair, "Iain 's a' Bhana-Mhaighstir", poem 13, concerns a local Tiree man, John MacFadyen, a tanner from whom John

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952 "You reached a firm conclusion then to leave that town of rascals": *Ibid*, line 53.
953 Poem 15, line 24.

MacLean purchased leather for his shoemaking trade. The poem was composed when the poet and MacFadyen failed to agree on a price; the poet blamed MacFadyen's wife for interfering in the transaction, and thereby spoiling it. Although she is portrayed in an unflattering way, it is the husband who is the real object of the satire, for being susceptible to her bossiness. The husband does the hard work involved in the tanning, but the wife keeps the accounts; the poet has her declare "Gur mise 'tha m' chlèirich/A' sgrìobhadh 's a' leughadh,/A' cuir a' chùnntais ri chèile/'S gura feumail siud dhà".954 Presumably, keeping accounts would have been a man's role, and the wife's assumption of such tasks would have been considered to be inappropriate; as noted in Chapter Two, among the papers the poet brought with him to Canada is an account book, and it is clear from that book that, unlike poor MacFadyen, the poet kept his own accounts. The reference to the wife's literacy and numeracy might also have been meant to highlight MacFadyen's illiteracy and innumeracy, and this, too, would presumably have been an insulting reversal of roles. The poet portrays MacFadyen as being subservient to the wife in matters of business: she tells her husband not to extend the poet credit and admonishes him not to be foolish about extending extra time for payment,955 and commands him not to let the tanned leather go to the poet unless he pays up front.956 The poet extracts his revenge through the satire, but also through the withdrawal of his custom; he says that he would not be so foolish as to try to purchase any more leather from MacFadyen and his wife, and would rather go to Oban.957 The poem is premised on certain assumptions about appropriate male and female roles, and in particular, on the idea that it is inappropriate

954 "It is I who is the clerk,/Writing and reading,/Putting the account together/And that is most useful to him": lines 61-4.
955 Lines 53-56.
956 "Na leig bhuait/Gun phàigheadh air uachdar": lines 69-70.

for a wife to involve herself too closely in the husband's trade. To accuse the poet of sexism would, however, be anachronistic; he is a product of his age, and the poem would have worked as a satire only to the extent that his audience would have shared his assumptions. Thus, the poem provides us with an interesting insight into contemporary social roles.

Underlying the poem, however, is the suggestion of real hardship, and it is likely that it was composed in the lean years following the end of the Napoleonic wars in 1815. As noted in Chapter Two, these appeared to be years of some difficulty for John MacLean, and there is an edge to the poem that suggests that both the poet and MacFadyen may have been feeling the pinch of real economic hardship. The poet's reference to going to Oban may suggest that provisioners were actively undercutting each other at the time. Some of the arguments made by MacFadyen and his wife for a higher price also suggest real hardship, and the poet does not discount these arguments in the poem. It may be that MacFadyen may not have been in the dire straits that the poet implies, thereby adding to the satirical effect. However, for such claims of hardship to have worked as a satirical device, they must have been based on conditions that did, in fact, exist for many traders in MacFadyen's position. One of MacFadyen's complaints is that much of his profit is eaten up by high wages: "Ge' h-ainmeil a' bhuannachd,/Chan eil i ach suarach,/Tha sin a' tighinn bhuamsa/Ann an tuarastal chàich".958 Similarly, key provisions such as peat and tan are scarce, expensive and heavily taxed.959 Tanning itself involves hard work, including digging up the tanning agent:

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957 "B' fheàrr leam falbh leis a' gheòlaich/Agus sgrìob 'thoirt don Oban,/Mu' faicte 'ga chòir mi/Na mu feòraichinn è"/"I'd prefer to leave with the yawl/And to take a trip to Oban,/Before I'm seen in his company/Or before I would ask for him": lines 45-8.

958 "Although the profit sounds famous,/It is really only trifling,/And that is going out/On the wages of others": lines 77-80.

959 Lines 93-6, and 101-4.

"Cha b' ann le bhith diomhain	"It is not by being lazy
A dh'obraich mi-fhìn e,	That I worked it myself;
B' iad righinn 'ga spìonadh	They would be tough plucking it
A sgìthich mo làmh;	That so tired my hand;
'Ga tharraing le dìcheall	Pulling it diligently
À claisean 's à digean	Out of gutters and out of ditches
A shàraich mo dhriom,	That has so exhausted my back
Gus nach dìrich mi è."	That I cannot straighten it".960

Similarly, the production of lime for the tanning process, which apparently required the burning of sea shells, was difficult:

'S a' siubhal Tràigh Chòrnaig	And wandering Cornaig beach
A' toirt shligean a-nìos às	Tugging shells up from it
Le ìnean mo làimh.	With the nails of my hands.961

The description of the work bears some similarity with that involved in the production of kelp, an activity in which many islanders would have been involved and on which they would have been dependant in the second decade of the nineteenth century. MacFadyen's complaints would not likely have impressed listeners familiar with kelping, and the reference may therefore be another satirical device. It depends, however, on an understanding of and an intimate acquaintance with hardship.

John MacLean indicated that "Moladh Dhòmhnaill MhicUalraig", poem 16, was composed upon the subject, Donald Kennedy, asking the poet to praise him.962 Alexander Maclean Sinclair elaborated on this, indicating that Donald Kennedy, who was of Coll stock, was a tailor and a fiddler, and had the reputation of being both hard and vain. According to Maclean Sinclair, he came across the poet one day in an inn, asked him to make a praise poem for him, and promised a reward for it.963 The poem that John MacLean produced is a mock panegyric, in which many of the commonplaces of the panegyric code are employed, but cleverly subverted, in ways that sometimes border on the ludicrous. Although, as we have seen, John MacLean,

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960 Lines 81-88.
961 Lines 110-2.
962 Iain Mac Illeain, *Orain Nuadh Ghaedhlach*, *supra*, at p. 104.
963 Alexander Maclean Sinclair, *Clarsach na Coille*, *supra*, at p. 52.

like many of his contemporaries, was eagerly extending the range of subjects in respect of whom praise poems were composed, it is clear that the poet did not consider a tailor and an apparently mediocre fiddler to be amongst the acceptable candidates for serious praise. That such a man would ask the Poet to the Laird of Coll to compose a song in his honour, and would be willing to pay for the privilege, was clearly interpreted by the poet as being wholly inappropriate. Not only did it suggest excessive arrogance, which the poet was undoubtedly seeking to censure, it also showed a lack of decorum and a callous disregard for the social order. The poet's satire would clearly have had the effect of putting the subject of the poem in his place. Thus, we see in this poem, just as we see in his other praise poems, particularly to the Coll family and Glengarry, that John MacLean clearly had a strong attachment to the social hierarchies within Gaeldom, and that he was a man of a strongly conservative disposition. Given the role of the poet in Gaelic society, discussed at the outset of this chapter, this is hardly surprising. Also, as was discussed in both Chapter Two and in Chapter Three, John MacLean himself had a very healthy sense of his own status and importance within the Gaelic social hierarchy. It is likely that he viewed a request for praise from a man such as Donald Kennedy as an insult to his own dignity, and further reason for the sort of strong satire which he produced.

As noted, John MacLean's method is to take many of the stereotypes of the Gaelic panegyric tradition, and subvert them, at first subtly, and as the poem progresses, more outrageously. Thus, the poet draws on the stereotype of the chief's generosity, particularly in the provision of drink.964 However, in the panegyric tradition, the locus of such hospitality is the chief's well-appointed house; Donald

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964 Motifs 2.2 and 3.2 in Ronald Black's schematic representation of the panegyric code, in Ronald Black, *An Lasair*, *supra*, at p. 525, 526.

Kennedy's is the "taigh-òsta", the tavern.965 The motif is further subverted by reference to the rather uncouth and almost desperate way in which the alcohol is consumed.966 Similarly, Kennedy's prodigality—something praised in the chief—is undermined by the suggestion that Kennedy was in fact quite watchful of getting proper change back from any payment.967 We have seen that the praise of the chief's noble ancestry is a central motif in the Gaelic panegyric tradition; again, John MacLean both employs the appropriate rhetoric, but then subverts it by implying not that Kennedy's ancestors were noble warriors, but cattle rustlers

Tha thu 'shliochd nam fear mòra	You are the descendant of the great men
Ri 'm feòraich nach suarach,	Who were not trifling when called upon,
'Bheireadh creach às na cròithean,	Who would raid the stables,
'Chuireadh tòir air na buailtean.	And would chase the cattle folds.

The word "creach" is significant, as it describes the sort of cattle raid which, from the time of the Irish mythological cycle, involved some danger, the possibility of armed conflict, and was therefore meant to test the warrior mettle of the young nobleman; indeed, Martin Martin, writing in the 1690s, spoke of the "creach" as being an almost ritualised but nonetheless potentially dangerous rite of passage, albeit one which had passed into desuetude.968 Plundering a stable or a cattle fold would hardly have been an act of the same boldness, and the image would likely have seemed both ridiculous and comical to the listener.

Later in the poem, John MacLean employs the well-known chiefly image of the excellent skipper, courageous and able in rough seas,969 and then subverts it by

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965 "Nuair a bhiodh tu 's taigh-òsta,/Ri òl na' deoch-slàinte"/"When you would be in the hostelry,/Drinking the toasts": lines 19-20.

966 "Ach am botal air sgòrnan,/'S dheante mòran diubh thràigheadh"/"But for the bottle to be hoisted to the gullets,/And many of them would be drained": lines 23-4.

967 "Cha do dh'iarr thu riamh mùthadh/Gus an cunntadh iad slàn e": You never asked for change/Until they had counted it fully": lines 31-2.

968 For a good discussion, see John MacInnes, "Droving", in Sue Jane Taylor, *Bho Dhrobhadh Gaidhealach gu Fasaichean Astrailia/From Highland Drove to the Australian Outback* (Dornoch, Sutherland: No. 19 Dornoch Studio, 1998), pp. 10-32, especially at p. 11 *et seq.*

969 Ronald Black, ed., *An Lasair*, *supra*, motif 4.3, at p. 526

making claims that are either ludicrous—that Kennedy often sailed to London, protected by the King's escort970—or mocking—the poet claims that Kennedy would return from the Indies loaded with hogsheads, not filled with fine wine for the chief's table, as would be the case in the panegyric tradition, but with brandy and sugar for his shops.971 The poet is bringing home the point that Kennedy is not a chiefly man of action or of studied leisure, but a mere domesticated trader, the sort of man who would never have merited a real panegyric in the old, heroic style. In similar fashion, the poet uses the image of the skilled huntsman on the trail of the red deer and of the rooster in the hills, but also of the brown hens nursing their broods, which would be a less appropriate object of the hunt.972 John MacLean praises him as a "drover of cattle" who would drive a good bargain,973 and mentions some reverse suffered at Dumbarton. Not only is droving not an occupation that would be the subject of a real panegyric, but the image of the drove brings to mind the imagery of the warrior driving his enemies from the field of battle, and in this way, the poet again uses the commonplaces of the panegyric tradition to lampoon his subject.

John MacLean turned up the heat in places by 'sending up' Donald Kennedy's musical talents in a more direct fashion, and by treating his profession, tailoring, in a manner more befitting a man of more noble status. He speaks of Kennedy's excellence as a fiddler, claiming that his skill surpassed even that of a certain Charles MacCeòraidh.974 Alexander Maclean Sinclair indicated that MacCeòraidh was a Tiree man who had emigrated to Bruce County, Ontario, Canada, and whom he

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970 "'S tric a sheòl thu a Lunnainn/Bhiodh long ghunnach bhon Rìgh leat"/"Often you sailed to London,/You would have an armed boat from the King": lines 117-8.

971 Lines 121-8.

972 As Ronald Black notes in his schematic representation of the panegyric code, the deer and the blackcock are often referred to as objects of the hunter, and although the moorhen is also identified by him as a further such object, a hen nursing her brood would likely have been considered to be an inappropriate object of the hunt, as it conveys the image of a vulnerable beast in a feminine role rather than a feral one.

described as "just a poor fiddler".975 It is not clear from this whether Maclean Sinclair meant that MacCeòraidh was materially poor, but also a fiddler, or whether he was a fiddler of poor ability, although John MacLean's reference to him argues for the latter. Perhaps playing on the similarity between Charles' surname and the Gaelic word for the Muses, "Ceòlraidh", John MacLean claims that his artistry surpasses even that of Homer.976 He then describes Kennedy's profession in mock heroic terms:

Bu tu tàillear nan uaislean	You were the tailor of the nobility
A dh'fhuaidheadh gu finealt',	Who would sew elegantly,
Gu fasanta, spòrsail,	Fashionably and sportively,
Cha bu chlòithean bu nì leat,	It was not tweed that was your thing,
Ach deiseachan Gallta,	But Lowland suits,
A' tilgeadh tholl leis an t-sìoda	Casting holes with the silk
'S a' cur phutanaibh airgead	And putting silver buttons
'Nan gealla-bhroilleach rìomhach.	In their gorgeous white breast.977

Here, Kennedy is not being praised for being of the nobility, but of being a tailor to the nobility, and in this context, the use of noble motifs for someone who is implicitly of subservient social status would have been ludicrous and, likely, hilarious to early nineteenth century Highland audiences. The reference to Kennedy making clothing in the Lowland style may also be significant. The Disarming and Disclothing Acts introduced after Culloden and which were in force between 1747 and 1782 prohibited men from wearing traditional Highland garb, and the anger and humiliation that this provoked led to an outpouring of Gaelic poetry and song,978 all complaining of the new and foreign lowland fashions that were being forced upon the Gaels, as we see in these lines from "Soraidh leis a' bhreacan ùr", a very well-known song still sung

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973 "Bu tu dròbhair na' mart": see lines 137-144.

974 See lines 65-80.

975 Alexander Maclean Sincalir, *Clarsach na Coille*, *supra*, at p. 52.

976 "Thug e barrachd air Hòmer,/Ged bu bhòstail 'sa Ghrèig e"/"He has surpassed Homer,/Though he was boasted of in Greece": lines 79-80.

977 Lines 89-96.

978 See, for example, Duncan Bàn MacIntyre's "Òran do'n Bhriogais", or John MacCodrum's "Òran an aghaidh an Eididh Ghallda", both in John Lorne Campbell, ed., *Highland Songs of the Forty-Five* (Edinburgh: Scottish Gaelic Texts Society, 1984), at p. 218 and p. 248, respectively.

today:

Chuir mi bhriogais ghlas mum cheann	I put on the grey trousers
'n àite 'n fhèilidh bhig a bh' ann	instead of the kilt I once wore
son bhith coltach ris a' Ghall	in order to be like the Lowlander
bha 'n taobh thall de dh'Uisge Chluaidh.	who lives on the far side of the River Clyde.979

Memories of the Disarming and Disclothing Acts would still have been relatively fresh, and a Highland audience would certainly have been well acquainted with themes of the songs on the new garb. As we shall see when we consider the poetry John MacLean composed in Canada, he praised an old emigrant Sutherland Gael for never wearing anything other than the traditional Highland garb, the kilt, and this suggests that he himself considered the question of clothing still to be of cultural significance. In this context, then, the description of Kennedy as being a purveyor of foreign, Lowland fashion—and his apparent disdain for the familiar and homely tweed—would appear to be a negative one, replete with lack of respect for Gaelic tradition.

John MacLean concludes the poem with one final sting. After drawing on many of the commonplaces of the panegyric tradition in application to Donald Kennedy, he brings him down to earth by suggesting that, in fact, Kennedy is not much different from other humble islanders, forced to the Lowlands in some hardship, in search of employment:

'S beag a shaoil mi gum faicinn	Little did I think that I would see
Fear cho beartach 's a bha thu	A man as wealthy as you were
'Giùlan pòc' air a shlinnean,	Carrying a satchel on his shoulder,
Beagan mine is càise ann,	A little flour and cheese in it,
'Dol a dh'ionnsaidh an fhoghair	Departing for the harvest
Ann an diaigh 'bhith 'd stàta,	In a desire to be a big shot,
'S a bhith 'laighe gu Samhainn	And to be lying until November
Ann an sabhal na 'n stàpall.	In a barn or in a stable.980

Here, again, we get a picture of the condition in which many islanders found

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979 See Anne Lorne Gillies, ed., *The Songs of Gaelic Scotland* (Edinburgh: Birlinn, 2005), at p. 194.

980 Lines 153-60.

themselves in the hard years after 1815. The poet's intention would not have been to satirise his fellow islanders who were forced into seasonal employment, but to lampoon the pretensions of Kennedy.

The last of the three satires, "Àiridh a' Chaolais", poem 14, is a more gentle one. Alexander Maclean Sinclair indicates that the song was written for four shepherds in Caolas, Tiree who were building a shieling and who were neglecting their work.981 This, however, is not suggested terribly clearly in the poem itself, and Maclean Sinclair's differs considerably from the version in the poet's own manuscript. Rather, the poet seems to be satirising those involved for their workmanship. He refers repeatedly to the amounts that must have been spent on the shieling, implying that it must not have looked very promising at all. Like many satires, the full impact of the poem depends on intimate knowledge of the personalities and the reputations of those involved, and often on particular local events, all of which are mostly lost to us with the passage of almost two centuries from the events behind the song. There were undoubtedly many songs like this, as there still are in those remaining Gaelic communities in which traditional verse is still composed. As we saw in Chapter Two, even his grandson, Alexander Maclean Sinclair, noted that the poet was fonder of conviviality and conversation than hard graft, and so it would not be surprising were giving those involved a rather a light-hearted teasing, rather than engaging in a more serious attempt to chastise socially unacceptable behaviour. We certainly get yet another good glimpse of the playful side of the poet's personality. As in the other satirical songs, we also get a snapshot of an aspect of island life early in the nineteenth century, the happy days at the shieling, and the humour to which local events gave rise.

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981 Alexander Maclean Sinclair, *Clarsach na Coille*, *supra*, at p. 49.

There were two other non-panegyric poems composed by John MacLean while still in Scotland. One, "Call na *Cailin*", poem 17, concerns the drowing of three Tiree men, Neil MacLean, Lachlan MacDonald and Neil MacDonald, the son of James, son of Calum, three men of Tiree extraction, who had set off for Islay in March, 1809 on business, but who were lost at sea at "Na Suacain", rocks off the coast at Caolas.982 Like the poem for Duncan MacInnes, poem 19, and for Iain Campbell, poem 21, this is a poem about the premature loss of young men of the community, and its principal aim is to show solidarity for the family and for the community at a time of loss. Each of the men is praised, but although there are clear references to, and affinities with, the rhetorical commonplaces of the panegyric tradition, the focus of the praise is on the actual daily roles of the drowned men. Lachlan and Neil were apparently seamen by trade, and they are praised for their strength, courage and skill:

Bha sibh foghainteach, calma,	You were strong and courageous,
Cha bu chearbach ur gnìomh,	And your deeds were not clumsy,
'Nur deagh sgiobairean fairge,	You were excellent seamen,
'S tric a dhearbh sibh gun b' fhìor;	Often you proved it to be true;
Nuair 'bhiodh Lachlann 'ga stiùradh,	When Lachlan would be steering her,
'Glèidheadh cùrsa gu grinn,	Holding the course nicely,
Agus Niall air a h-ùrlar,	And Neil on her deck
A' cuir sùigh anns na buill.	Putting a billow in the sails.983

Such imagery draws on some of the physical virtues in the panegyric tradition, but are not mere rhetorical devices; these men were, in fact, men of the sea. Neil MacLean, "Niall Bàn", was a bailiff, and John MacLean praised him at more considerable length. There are again many of the panegyric commonplaces. He is, for example, praised for his penmanship, but the poet also uses the imagery to make a point about the fairness with which Neil dispatched his duties:

Làmh bu ghrinn' air a' sgrìobhadh,	The loveliest of writing hands,
Bhiodh e cinnteach bho d' mheòir,	It would be certain from your fingers,
Cha bhiodh mearachd 'ad chùnntais,	There'd be no mistake in your accounts,
'S tu nach mùchadh a' choir.	And you would not quash a deed.984

982 Alexander Maclean Sinclair, *Clarsach na Coille*, *supra*, at p. 58.
983 Lines 33-40.

He is likewise praised for his wisdom in dispensing justice and in implementing rules, and the poet stresses the high regard in which he was held by the tenantry:

'S mòr 'tha ionndrainn nan daoine ort,	Greatly do the people miss you,
'S iad gun mhaor ann ad àite,	They have no bailiff to replace you,
Bhon a dhùineadh fo lic thu	Since you were covered by a gravestone
Ann an ciste nan clàr;	In a coffin made of boards;
Chaill an tuath am fear comhairle	The tenants have lost their adviser
Anns gach gnothach a b' fheàrr	The finest in every business,
'S tu gun deanadh an ceartas,	It was you who would render justice,
Bho 's e 'chleachd thu mar ghnàths.	As this was your customary practice.985

Once again, we see the theme of just treatment of the tenantry emerging in the poetry of John MacLean. Take, as another example, the following: "Cha bhiodh t' fhocal 'gan dìteadh/Na 'cur sios air an cùl".986

At the centre of the poem, though, is repeated expression of sympathy for the families of the men in their time of suffering. Typical is this passage, addressed to the fathers of the two MacDonald men, James, father of Neil, and Donald, father of Lachlan:

Ach, a Sheumais 's a Dhòmhnaill,	But, O James and Donald,
'S goirt 'tha dòrainn ur crìdh',	Painful is the anguish of your hearts,
Fhuair sibh greadan am bliadhna	You had a bitter sorrow this year
A rinn ur liathadh roimhn' tìm;	That turned you grey before your time;
Mun a dh'fhalbh leis a' *Chailin*	Before leaving with the *Cailin*
Às a' chala seo shìos,	From this harbour down here,
'S iad ri feitheamh 'an àite	And they were to wait in a place
'An deachaidh 'm bàthadh aig tìr.	Beside where they were drowned.987

Successive verses are given over to descriptions of the grief of mothers, brothers and sisters, and to the daughter and, this next verse, to the wife of Neil MacLean:

Tha do chèile 'na h-ònrachd,	Your spouse is on her own,
'S tric na deòir air a gruaidh,	Often are the tears on her cheeks,
Gum b' e mi-fhortan mòr dhi	It was a great misfortune for her
Nach robh 'm pòsadh ud buan;	That that marriage was not to last forever;
Thug i gaol duit an toiseach,	She gave you her love at the outset,
Cha do choisinn thu 'fuath;	And you did not earn her hatred;
Na' faigheadh i 'h-òrdagh,	If she had got her way,
Bhiodh i còmhl' riut 'san uaigh.	She would be with you in the grave.988

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984 Lines 105-8.
985 Lines 97-104.
986 "Your word would not condemn them/Nor put them down behind their backs": lines 133-4.
987 Lines 25-32.
988 Lines 57-64.

Near the end of the poem, the poet refers to the sense of loss suffered by the community as a whole:

Gum biodh saodhachd na dòrainn	Whether it be pain or torment
'Thàinig oirnne don bhàgh,	That has come to us from the bay,
B' fheàrr nach faca sinn riamh i	It would be better had we never seen it
Mun do dh'iath i mòr-bhàs;	Before she encompassed a great death;
'S e ur turas do dh'Ile	It was your trip to Islay
'S nach do thill sibh às slàn,	From which you did not return safely,
'Dh'fhàg ur muinntir fo mhulad	That left your people in sadness
'S gach aon duine d' ur luchd-dàimh.	As well as every one of your relations.989

Again, we see here the poet acting as spokesman for the community at a time of crisis. In much of John MacLean's Scottish poetry, we have observed the poet in his traditional role of poet to the Laird. In this poem, composed in 1809, we see the emergence of John MacLean as a poet of the people. In Canada, freed from landlords and from nobility, we see the poet blossom in this role.

One further notable aspect of this poem is the manner in which John MacLean combines a sharpness and realism of imagery with an emotional intensity. We see this in the description of the loss of the boat, caused by an accidental collision with a submerged rock at "Na Suacain":

Gur e 'n oidhche 'bhith dorcha	It is that the evening was dark
'S a' stoirm a bhith àrd,	And that the storm was great,
A chuir sibhse 'ga h-ionnsaidh	That sent you towards it
Ann an tùs a' mhuir-tràigh;	At the start of the ebb-tide;
Gum bu chruaidh leam ur glaodhaich	Harsh for me was your shrieking
Nuair a sgaoil i 'na clàir,	When she burst into pieces,
'S nach robh duine 'gur n-èisdeachd	And that no one could hear you
'Dheanamh feum dhuibh 'nur càs.	To assist you in your need.990

The description of the brothers and father of Neil MacDonald searching the shore for the bodies has a similar quality to it:

'S truagh leam t' athair 's do bhràithrean	I am sorry for your father and your brothers
'Bhith 'cur aisig air seòl,	Who are putting a ferry under sail,
'Dhol 'gad iarraidh le sgrìobain,	To go to find you with a hoe,
'S tu 'bhith 't shìneadh 'san ròd.	With you stretched out in the seaweed.991

989 Lines 145-52.
990 Lines 17-24.
991 Lines 53-6.

At the end of the poem, the poet expresses his thanks to God for returning the bodies to the families:

Taing don Tì 'rinn ur lot,	Thanks be to the One who wounded you,
Gun chuir E 'n corpadh gu tìr.	He has brought their corpses back to land,
Thug E toileachadh mòr dhuibh,	He has given great satisfaction to you,
Ged 'bhios bròn orra 'chaoidh.	Though they'll be grieving forever.992

While, as noted above, John MacLean does not seem to have adopted a more evangelical form of Presbyterianism until somewhat later in his life, probably after several years in Canada, this passage is suggestive of the deep religious commitment that John MacLean had apparently already developed by 1809, and a belief in a merciful God.

Finally, there is one poem which could be described as private, and in which there are no real undercurrents, only personal warmth and feeling. This is "Duanag do Chaileig Bhig", poem 11, a short ditty composed by John MacLean for his neice, Mòr, the daughter of his brother Donald, "The Cooper", who was himself a talented poet, as was noted in Chapter Two. The poem was composed when Mòr was about ten years of age and was staying with her grandfather, Allan MacLean, and is an expression of the love and warmth between Mòr and Allan. In it the poet imagines the little girl on her wedding day, and the sadness that her grandfather will feel at losing her, but that he will continue to take care of her and to make sure that she is well-provided for with a new coat and gown when she is betrothed. John MacLean did not include this poem in his own book of poetry, published in 1818, nor does it appear in the manuscript sources; it appears that Alexander Maclean Sinclair recovered it from the oral tradition. It is possible, even likely, that the poet composed many such ditties, but given that he did not preserve them with the bulk of his poetry in his manuscripts, it seems likely that the poet did not intend for them to be remembered as part of his

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992 Lines 157-60.

"public" body of work. The poem nonetheless gives us a touching glimpse of the warmth of the inner life of the poet's extended family, and the closeness of their relationships.

This poem also gives us a sharper view of the poet as a man, rather than as a purveyor of praise, an upholder of community values, or a spokesman for community sentiment. To an extent, we have seen the persona of the poet lurking even in the poetry he composed for the Coll family. As we shall see, though, emigration freed John MacLean from these other roles, at least for a time. Thus liberated, an even more personal poetry emerges in Canada, a poetry shot through with subjective perceptions and emotions. While John MacLean did, in time, reassume his "professional" persona in the New World, and went on to play the role that is expected of the poet in his new Gaelic community—indeed, he becomes the poet laureate of that community—the presence of the man remains close to the surface of the Nova Scotian poetry.

CHAPTER FIVE: A CRITICAL ASSESSMENT OF THE SECULAR POETRY OF JOHN MACLEAN—SECULAR POETRY COMPOSED IN CANADA

Emigration from the Highlands and Islands of Scotland to North America had begun by the 1730s, and by the 1750s, there existed reasonably well-established Gaelic communities in Georgia and North Carolina. In the 1760s and 1770s, Gaels continued crossing the seas, establishing communities in the Mohawk River Valley of Upper New York State, in Prince Edward Island and, with the arrival of the ship *Hector*, in 1773, in Pictou County, Nova Scotia. The flow of Highland emigrants to North America was much reduced during the period of the American Revolutionary War, but on its conclusion, large scale Gaelic emigration resumed, primarily to eastern Nova Scotia, P.E.I. and Glengarry County, in eastern Ontario, where many of the Highlanders in the Mohawk River settlement had relocated. By the time John MacLean arrived at the harbour of Pictou in 1819, the Highland communities of the mainland counties of Pictou and Antigonish were, as was noted in Chapter Two, well-established, and the Highland settlement of Cape Breton, which began in about 1801, was well under way.993

Not surprisingly, given these patterns of emigration and settlement, John MacLean was neither the first nor the only Gaelic poet to have come to the New World. Such poets were active almost from the start of the period of Highland emigration.994 Based on a consultation of leading printed sources, about thirty such emigrant poets have been identified, and they mark the beginning of a considerable legacy of poetic activity in the emigrant communities. Indeed, a recent survey of

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993 For an overview of Highland emigration to North America, see James Hunter, *A Dance Called America: The Scottish Highlands, the United States and Canada* (Edinburgh: Mainstream, 1994), especially chapters 1-6.

primarily Nova Scotian printed records from about 1900 has led to the identification of almost 200 Gaelic poets composing in the Nova Scotia Gàidhealtachd alone.995 Both of these numbers almost certainly understate considerably the extent of poetic activity; much poetry was not written down and has been forgotten or lost as the language itself receded in these communities, and where the poetry has been written down, manuscripts have been lost or destroyed.

For many of the emigrant poets, only one or two of their songs and poems remain, but for a small number, a more extensive record survives. Such survivals may be explained by three factors. The first is the volume and quality of the poetic output itself, which meant that the poetry of some poets was more likely to have been kept alive in the oral tradition and to have featured more prominently in the printed sources, particularly the New World printed sources that began to emerge in the early 1830s.996 The second is that many of these poets were, like John MacLean, literate Gaels of what could be described as the old Highland "learned stratum" and had, also like MacLean, actively transcribed their poetry and songs. The third is that some of these poets also belonged to families who actively maintained their poetic record. As we will see in Chapter Two, John MacLean's manuscripts were carefully preserved by his son Charles, his grandson Alexander Maclean Sinclair and his great-grandson Donald Maclean Sinclair, and are now kept at the Nova Scotia Archives and Record Management ("NSARM"), in Halifax.997 NSARM also houses important papers and manuscripts of other emigrant poets, such as the Rev. James MacGregor and the Dr.

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994 See, for example, Michael Newton, *We're Indians Sure Enough: The Legacy of the Scottish Highlanders in the United States* (Saorsa Media, 2001), in which a surprisingly large record of poetic activity in the United States, from about the 1750s, has been identified.

995 Michael Kennedy, *Gaelic Nova Scotia: An Economic, Cultural and Social Impact Study* (Halifax: Nova Scotia Museum, 2002), at p. 125.

996 See, for example, Kenneth Nilsen, "Some Notes on Pre-*Mac-Talla* Gaelic Publishing in Nova Scotia (with references to early Gaelic publishing in Prince Edward Island, Quebec and Ontario)", in

Rev. Duncan Black Blair. Similarly, two manuscripts of poetry of Allan "the Ridge" MacDonald and other poets, including other members of the family of Allan "the Ridge", were preserved by his descendants, and are now housed in the Fr. Charles Brewer Special Collection of the Library of St. Francis Xavier University, in Antigonish, Nova Scotia.998

The first emigrant poet for whom we have a significant record is John MacRae, "Iain MacMhurchaidh", a native of Kintail, whose dates are unclear but who is thought to have emigrated to North Carolina in about 1774 and to have died in about 1780.999 Another prolific and important emigrant poet is the aforementioned Allan MacDonald, "Ailean a' Ridse" ("Allan the Ridge") (1794-1868),1000 a native of the Braes of Lochaber who emigrated to Canada in 1816, settling at Mabou Ridge, Cape Breton (or "Am Màm", as it was known to New World Gaels), from which he and his descendants derived the nick-name. Like John MacLean, Allan "the Ridge" did not settle permanently at his first location; in 1847, over 30 years after first coming to Nova Scotia, he left his farm at Mabou Ridge and crossed over the mainland, settling at South River, Antigonish County. As with John MacLean, it is not clear why Allan "the Ridge" moved after having undertaken the back-breaking work of clearing the forest and establishing a pioneer farm. An interesting oral tradition concerning Allan the Ridge's departure was recorded in the Inverness, Cape Breton, parish of Judique in the 1970s:

Colm Ó Baoill and Nancy R. McGuire, eds., *Rannsachadh na Gaidhlig 2000* (Obar Dheathain: An Clò Gaidhealach, 2002), at p. 127 *et seq.*

997 Formerly, the Public Archives of Nova Scotia ("PANS").

998 See Effie Rankin, *As a' Bhràighe/Beyond the Braes: The Gaelic Songs of Allan the Ridge MacDonald 1794-1868* (Sydney, Cape Breton: University College of Cape Breton Press, 2004), at p. 208.

999 For a brief biographical profile of this poet, see Margaret MacDonell, *The Emigrant Experience: Songs of the Highland Emigrants in North America* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1982), at pp. 26-32.

1000 For a full biographical profile, as well as the complete collection of the poet's work, see Effie Rankin, ed., *Às a' Bhràighe/Beyond the Braes*, *supra.*

> [A]s Allan was burning a pile of stumps [at Mabou Ridge] left over from clearing land his wife, standing in the doorway, perceived the shape of a horse (*riochd eich*) in the flames. Both agreed that this was a serious portent of ill-luck and that they must leave the farm immediately.1001

John MacLean had also first settled in a relatively less productive upland area, and both poets may have had more prosaic reasons for relocating, such as the availability of better land; indeed, in the 1840s, there had been a number of bad harvests, and many Cape Breton settlers began looking for better land.1002 That both men should end up in Antigonish County is not surprising; in addition to having somewhat better farmland, it had well-established communities of predominantly West Highland Gaels from Clanranald, Glengarry, Cameron, Chisholm and Keppoch MacDonald territories, and it appears to have been a real centre of a vibrant Gaelic oral culture at the time, which would no doubt have been appealing to both poets. Allan "the Ridge" had a cousin, John MacDonald, "John the Hunter" (1795-1853), also a talented poet from the Braes of Lochaber, who had emigrated in 1834; like Allan "the Ridge", he settled at Mabou Ridge, but unlike his cousin, he stayed there.

Two other of the most important emigrant poets, John MacGillivray and Alexander MacDonald, also settled in Antigonish County. John MacGillivray (c.1784-1860),1003 "Iain mac Anndra Bhàin 'ic Dhòmhnaill 'ic Eòghainn", was also known as "Iain a' Phìobaire" ("John of the Piper"), or, in English, simply as "The Piper MacGillivray". He was a native of Arisaig, Scotland, and for several years he had lived with and had been patronised by Alexander MacDonald, "Alasdair Ruadh",

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1001 John Shaw, "Brief Beginnings: Nova Scotian and Old World Bards Compared", (1996) 17 *Scottish Gaelic Studies* 342, at p. 347; see, also, Effie Rankin, *Às a' Bhràighe/Beyond the Braes*, *supra*, at p. 31, and note 103.

1002 Effie Rankin, *ibid.*

1003 There is some confusion as to both the date of his birth and of his death. Although his tombstone shows 12 November, 1862 as the date of his death, an obituary was published on 19 April, 1860, and a lament for the poet appeared on 3 May, 1860, both in the Antigonish *Casket*, suggesting a death in the late winter or early spring of 1860. The obituary indicated that he died in his seventy-sixth year, making his date of birth about 1784: see Lorrie MacKinnon, "Makers of Gaelic Literature", (Oct./Nov., 1995) 9:5 *Celtic Heritage* 11, 34-35.

or "Fear a' Ghlinne" (d.1815), the Laird of Glenaladale, Moidart, who maintained a galley on Loch Shiel, "An Dubh Ghleannach", which was memorialised by the poet Allan MacDougall, "Ailean Dall". Indeed, the Piper MacGillivray was himself referred to in this poem: "Dh'fhaighnich mi meòir ghrinn a' Bhràighich".1004 It was also Fear a' Ghlinne who erected the famous commemorative statue at Glenfinnan, Moidart, to the Highlanders who fought in the Jacobite rebellions. There is an etching of the Piper MacGillivray, made while he was still in the service of Fear a' Ghlinne, in the National Museum of Scotland, although he was mistakenly identified as "John MacDonald, Piper to Glenaladale".1005 The Piper MacGillivray seems to have emigrated to Canada in 1818, a year before John MacLean—although, as noted in Chapter Two, a descendant of the poet, A. A. MacLellan, claimed that the Piper MacGillivray was on board the *Economy* with John MacLean in 18191006—and took up a farm at Highfield, near Malignant Brook, Antigonish County, where his primary activity was farming, until 1840, when he began teaching at a school at MacCara's Brook, and then at Maryvale, Antigonish County. His house caught fire a few years before his death and, sadly, his manuscripts were destroyed; in spite of this, a number of his songs have survived.1007

Alexander MacDonald, "Alasdair Ailein Mhòir"1008 (1820-1904), was also known as "Bàrd na Ceapaich", "The Keppoch Bard", in honour of the district in which he settled, the Keppoch, Antigonish County. Along with John MacLean, Allan the Ridge MacDonald and John the Piper MacGillivray, he was one of the four major poets to settle in Antigonish County in the early years of the nineteenth century,

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1004 Hector MacDougall, ed., *Clarsach na Coille*, *supra*, at p. 236.
1005 Hugh Cheape, "The Piper MacGillivray of Moidart and Antigonish", (July, 1994) *The Clansman* 5, 14.
1006 *Mosgladh*, April, 1931, vol. III, no. 6, p. 1 at p. 2.
1007 See, generally, Hector MacDougall, ed., *Clarsach na Coille*, *supra*, at p. 235.

although he was a much younger man than the other three, and unlike them, emigrated as a boy, so that he only began composing poetry in Canada. Born at Glenuig, Moidart, on 15 July, 1820, he came to Keppoch, Antigonish County, in about 1829 or 1830—at about the same time that John MacLean was moving from Barney's River, Pictou County, to Beaver Meadow, Antigonish County, which is near the Keppoch. Alexander MacDonald left the Keppoch in 1880 to be with his sons, who had moved to Springhill Mines, Nova Scotia, which is where he died on 10 March, 1904.1009 Hector MacDougall reports that Alexander Maclean Sinclair had a particularly high opinion of the Keppoch Bard:

> Is e bard comharraichte a bha an Alasdair MacDhòmhnaill. Am beachd ceud fhear-deasachaidh an leabhair so [i.e. Alexander Maclean Sinclair], b' e bard Gàidhlig a b' fheàrr an America an uair a bhe e beo.1010

Other emigrant poets for whom we have a reasonably good record were clergymen, and men of considerable formal learning. These include the Rev. James MacGregor (1759-1830), a native of St. Fillans, Loch Earn, Perthshire, who studied literature at Edinburgh University and theology with the Rev. William Moncrieff at Alloa. He emigrated to Pictou in 1786, where he was an important pioneer minister.1011 The Rev. Duncan Black Blair (1815-1893), a native of Strachur, Cowal, had also studied at Edinburgh University, and had received his licence to preach from Divinity Hall, Edinburgh. He emigrated to Canada in 1846, settling at Upper Barney's River, Pictou County, where he served as Minister to the congregation of Barney's River and Blue Mountain.1012 A third emigrant clergyman poet for whom we have a decent record is Fr. Allan MacLean (1811-1872), a native of

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1008 His patronymic, or "sloinneadh", according to Major Calum MacLeod: Calum Iain M. MacLeòid, *Bàrdachd à Albainn Nuaidh* (Glaschu: Gairm, 1970), at p. 30.
1009 See Calum I. M. MacLeòid, *Bàrdachd à Albainn Nuaidh*, *supra*, at p. 30.
1010 Hector MacDougall, ed., *Clarsach na Coille*, *supra*, at p. 250.
1011 See Alexander Maclean Sinclair, *Clarsach na Coille*, *supra*, at pp. 145-7.
1012 See Margaret MacDonell, *The Emigrant Experience*, *supra*, at p. 100.

Moidart, who had apparently trained for the Catholic priesthood at the Scots College in Spain, and who emigrated to Cape Breton in 1857, where he served as priest in the Inverness County parish of Judique.1013

This relatively small group of emigrant poets for whom we have a more extensive record were in some respects similar. Like John MacLean, many of them were of the old Gaelic learned stratum, belonged to families in which there was an existing poetic or Gaelic arts tradition, and were themselves skilled in more than one aspect of the Gaelic tradition. The Piper MacGillivray was of an old Mull and North Argyll family, and was, in addition to being a talented poet, a highly skilled musician: he was, as noted, a renowned piper who was patronised by MacDonald of Glenaladale.1014 He had already composed poetry of note before emigration, two pieces of which were included in Patrick Turner's collection,1015 an elegy composed on the death of Simon, the heir to MacDonald of Morar,1016 the first line of which is "'S tric mi tionndadh am leabaidh", and the well-known song "Òran Allabain Suireadh",1017 the first line of which is "Thug mi 'n oidhche a-raoir 'san airigh". Maclean Sinclair noted that John MacGillivray was a good Gaelic scholar, and "perhaps the best seanachaidh that has ever come to this country". In addition to his poetry, the Piper MacGillivray also published a Gaelic catechism. Allan "the Ridge MacDonald" and his cousin John "the Hunter" MacDonald were both members of the MacDonalds of Bohuntin, styled in Gaelic "Sliochd an Taighe", a branch of Clan Donald of Keppoch which had produced a number of outstanding poets as well as

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1013 Lorrie MacKinnon, "Makers of Gaelic Literature", (Aug./Sept. 1994) *The Clansman*, at pp. 15-6.

1014 See Hugh Cheape, "The Piper MacGillivray of Moidart and Antigonish", *supra.*

1015 Paruig Mac-an-Tuairneir, *Comhchruinneacha do dh' Orain Taghta, Ghaidhealach, nach robh riamh roimhe Clo-bhuailte gus a nis, air an Tional o Mheodhair, air feadh Gaidhealtachd a's Eileine na h-Alba* (Duneidionn: T. Stiubhard, 1813).

warriors over the centuries;1018 the Ridges descended from Dòmhnall Donn, Alexander of Bohuntin and Dòmhnall Gruamach, sons of John, the fourth chief of Bohuntin, and in Nova Scotia they were noted for a remarkable knowledge of clan history and genealogy. John MacRae was a bard of considerable merit and great popularity in his native Kintail, and like John MacLean was more given to poetic and social pursuits than hard labour. A ground officer, deer stalker and forester on the Earl of Seaforth's estates in Kintail and Lochalsh, he was reputedly a grand-nephew of Duncan MacRae, "Donnchadh nam Pìos", himself a notable composer of mainly religious verse and the compiler of the Fernaig Manuscript.1019 The Keppoch Bard's uncle and several siblings were apparently of the officer class in the British army,1020 suggesting that they, too, were of the Gaelic middle classes.

Many of the other emigrant poets for whom we have some record were certainly of humbler origins and would have had much less formal education than, for example, the clergymen poets such as James MacGregor, Duncan Black Blair and Allan MacLean. The New World environment was, however, a great social leveller. Aside from the clergymen poets, the emigrant poets were all mainly pioneer farmers. They moved from a society which, in spite of the decline of the old clan system, was still an hierarchical one, to a society in which virtually all of the settlers had similar opportunities—including the ownership of their own land—and faced many of the same challenges, including the clearing, planting and maintenance of that land in a strange and, for much of the year, climactically challenging and hostile environment. The lives of the emigrant poets were filled with incredibly hard toil, and material

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1016 "Cumha do Shiom og, Mac Mhic Dhughaill Mhor-Thir, a mhilleadh ann am bliadhna 1812, le urchair thubaisteach o ghunna fhein"/"Lament to young Simon, MacDonald of Morar, who was ruined in the years 1812, by an accidental shot from his own gun": *ibid*, at p. 264.

1017 *Ibid*, at p. 293.

1018 See Effie Rankin, *Às a' Bhràighe/Beyond the Braes*, *supra*, at pp. 7-9.

1019 Margaret MacDonell, *The Emigrant Experience*, *supra*, at p. 26.

progress no longer turned on patronage. In short, they moved into a hard but, in many respects, a more democratic environment.

As noted at the outset of this chapter, the Gaelic poetry of the New World communities has never received sustained critical analysis, and even the more limited corpus of poetry associated with the poets of the emigrant generation has not been dealt with comprehensively. Margaret MacDonell's *The Emigrant Experience*1021 gives a good and representative sample of some of the poetry of the emigrant generation, but the focus is mainly on the response of the poets to emigration and settlement itself, rather than the broader experience of these poets in the post-settlement period, and this body of poetry therefore represents only part of the output of the poets of the emigrant generation. Michael Kennedy has provided a useful exploration of attitudes towards emigration as reflected in the poetry of the emigrant generation,1022 but this again represents only part of the output of such poets. John Shaw has also explored perceptively the emigration theme,1023 as part of a wider comparison of mostly nineteenth century New World and Old World verse, and Charles Dunn has provided an overview, albeit in the context of a book that has a much broader focus than on just the poetic/song-making tradition;1024 however, neither of these accounts is exhaustive. Consideration of the poetry of the emigrant generation, and the poetry of the New World Gaelic communities more generally, has received even less critical attention in Scotland. As noted at the outset, the only major comprehensive study of Gaelic poetry, Derick Thomson's *An Introduction to Gaelic*

1020 Lorrie MacKinnon, "Makers of Gaelic Literature", (Feb./March, 1994) *The Clansman*, p. 26.
1021 *Supra.*
1022 Michael Kennedy, "'Lochaber no More': A Critical Examination of Highland Emigration Mythology", in Marjory Harper and Michael E. Vance, eds., *Myth, Migration and the Making of Memory: Scotia and Nova Scotia, c. 1700-1990* (Halifax, N.S.: Fernwood, 1999).
1023 John W. Shaw, "Brief Beginnings: Nova Scotian and Old World Bards Compared", (1996) 17 *Scottish Gaelic Studies* 342.
1024 Charles W. Dunn, *Highland Settler*, *supra.*

Poetry, dedicates less than two pages to the poetry of the emigrant communities, which is, as was also noted, in keeping with his assessment of this body of work: "The links with the Scottish tradition were closely kept; there were occasional new themes suggested by the new environment, but no new voice or style".1025

The critical assumptions which find expression in Thomson's assessment have been explored in Chapter Three, but even on its own terms, the assessment could be challenged. As we shall see, the poetry of the emigrant generation, as epitomised by that of John MacLean, does exhibit strong elements of conservatism, particularly in terms of form, metre and even language. This is hardly surprising, given the extent to which poets such as John MacLean were so thoroughly immersed in a poetic tradition that itself tended towards conservatism. In this sense, Thomson's comment that "links with the Scottish tradition were closely kept" is justifiable. His argument that there were "occasional new themes suggested by the new environment" is somewhat more problematic. The idea that the "new environment" would lead to thematic developments is unsurprising and, as we shall see, is certainly borne out. However, given that this new environment was radically different from that of the land which the emigrant poets left behind, the argument that it threw up "*occasional* new themes" is surprising, and difficult to sustain. The break with the homeland, the shock of the new environment, the massive challenges involved in establishing new communities, the egalitarian environment in which the poets became immersed, the encounters with Gaelic settlers from other areas of the Highlands and Islands, the encounters with other ethnic groups, even the right to vote (which was generally available to the Gaelic settlers, as they were now landholders, and which would not have been available in Scotland until later in the nineteenth century) could all be expected to

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1025 *Ibid*, at p. 221.

have a profound effect on the emigrant poet. As we shall see, the best of them, such as John MacLean, responded to the new environment by taking on a new and distinctively North American Gaelic voice, or voices. While poets like John MacLean continue to play their traditional role of spokespersons for and defenders of their communities and their communities' core values, the shock of the new allows a much more personal voice to emerge.

The poetry of the emigrant generation is centrally concerned with two overriding issues. First, we see poets such as John MacLean engaging in a struggle to make sense of the experience of emigration and settlement. Although forced emigration did occur, in most cases, and particularly in the period of emigration to eastern Nova Scotia to which many of the emigrant poets belonged, emigration was the result of an active personal or communal choice;1026 as noted in Chapter Two, this certainly seems to have been true for John MacLean. On the one hand, the poets' decision to emigrate gave rise to a very personal poetry, filled with subjectivity and feeling. It is a poetry in which the identity and psyche of the poet come clearly into view, and in this sense, at least, this poetry has a contemporary feel. This is evident in the poetry of John MacLean. On the other hand, even while trying to make sense of the experience of emigration on a personal level, the emigrant poets did not forget their traditional role as spokespeople for the community, and we see in the poetry that they are also trying to make sense of this experience for those who have made a similar decision, or who are in Scotland considering such a decision. What emerges,

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1026 Without minimising the impact of the massive social and economic changes which swept the Highlands in the second half of the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, historians of Highland emigration to the New World are increasingly highlighting the degree to which Gaels were, in the words of Michael Kennedy, "and active people making a positive decision to start a new life": Michael Kennedy, "'Lochaber no More'", *supra*, at p. 279. See, also, Marianne McLean, *The People of Glengarry: Highlanders in Transition, 1745-1820*, (Montreal and Kingston: McGill-Queen's, 1991), and Lucille H, Campey, *After the Hector: The Scottish Pioneers of Nova Scotia and Cape Breton, 1773-1852*, (Toronto: Natural Heritage Books, 2004).

is a profound and deadly serious debate—sometimes between two poets, sometimes within the work of one poet—involving two fundamental questions: did we make a mistake in emigrating, and would others at home in Scotland be making a mistake if they were to follow us?

The second overriding issue confronted by the emigrant poets is that of community building. For most of the emigrant poets, like for most of the Highland emigrants as a whole, emigration was an irreversible act, a final solution to the stresses they felt in the old country. In choosing to emigrate, though, Gaels were not choosing to abandon their traditional way of life; indeed, in emigrating, the were calculating that they could better maintain that way of life in a new land than in the rapidly changing Highlands and Islands where, as we have seen in the Scottish poetry of John MacLean, outside forces and foreign values were increasingly intruding, much to the chagrin of the poets and of the people. The poets, like their fellows, sought to lay the foundations for a sustainable Gaelic community in the New World. They therefore used poetry in the way that it had traditionally been used in the Old Country—to define and reinforce the values of their society, and to help interpret and form opinions about the world in which they lived in a manner consistent with those values.

Of the eighteen poems composed by John MacLean in the New World for which we have a record, three concern the experience of emigration, and all were almost certainly composed in the early years of his residence in Nova Scotia. Three other poems were praise poems, two for Alexander, the fifteenth Laird of Coll, one composed on the giving up of his estate in 1828 and the other on his death in 1835, and one for Alexander Ranaldson MacDonell, chief of Glengarry, on his death in 1828. All three of these poems were considered in Chapter Two, in the context of

John MacLean's body of work for these two subjects, and these poems will therefore be considered only briefly here. Praise poetry to lairds and landlords was wholly irrelevant in the New World setting, and these poems are rooted in John MacLean's sense of loyalty and gratitude to these men, and as the final acts in the poet's Old Country role of poet to the Laird. In a way, they are the poet's farewell not only to supporters and patrons, but also to this old role. The remaining twelve poems composed in Nova Scotia are all, in a sense, poems about community building. Four could be said to be poems of social comment. Four others are about community events and, in one case, a community institution. Finally, four are praise poems, all in respect of people with whom the poet had a personal relationship, although one of the poems of social comment and one of the community poems could also be described as praise poems. The poems concerning the experience of emigration will be considered first.

The Experience of Emigration and Settlement

In the period of rapid social and economic change which swept the Highlands in the second half of the eighteenth century, emigration became an increasingly popular option for Gaels, and one which the poets increasingly acknowledged and, indeed, espoused. Rapid rent increases all over the Highlands from about 1770 led to extensive migrations to America, such as the one from North Uist in the early 1770s that John MacCodrum, "Iain mac Fhearchair" (1693-1779), lamented in his "Òran do na Fògarraich" ("A Song to the Exiles").1027 MacCodrum was very critical of the landlords for their greed and for abandoning the old chiefly virtues. His advice to the tenantry is clear:

Triallaibh nis fhearaibh,
Gu dùthaich gun ghainne,
Cuiribh cùl ris an fhearann
  Chaidh thairis am màl oirbh
Gu dùthaich a' bhainne,
Gu dùthaich na meala,
Gu dùthaich an ceannaich sibh
  Fearann gu 'r n-àilgheas,
Gu dùthaich gun aineis
Gun chrìonadh gun standard,
Far an cnuasaich sibh barrachd
  'S a mhaireas ri 'r làithean—
Se 'n saighdear glic fearail
Nuair chitheadh e barrachd
A theicheadh le 'anam
  'S nach fanadh air làraich.

Go now, my lads,
To a realm without want,
Abandon the land
  Whose rent's gone too high for you
To the land of milk,
To the land of honey,
To a land where you'll buy
  All the land you desire,
To a land without poverty,
Without blight or rationing.
Where you will glean more
  Than can last all your days—
It's the wise manly soldier
When he saw more arriving
Who'd escape with his life
  And not stay on the field.1028

In poems like this, we begin to see the emergence of a distinct code of rhetoric concerning emigration, in which conditions in Scotland are criticised and those in the New World are praised. John MacCodrum did not emigrate himself, but many of the themes he explored were picked up by the emigrant poets.

The biblical metaphor of the delivery of the Israelites to the Promised Land from their bondage in Egypt, alluded to in John MacCodrum's description of the New World as the land of milk and honey,1029 became one of the commonplaces in the poetry of emigration. In another poem composed at about the same time as that of MacCodrum, Donald Matheson (1719-1982), a native of Kildonan, who did ultimately emigrate, to South Carolina, employed similar biblical imagery:

Ach tha mi 'faicinn faileas
De nithean bh' ann bho chèin,
Dar bha poball Israel
'San Eiphit ann am pèin;
Thug e le làmh làidir iad
A mach bho Pharaoh fèin
'S dh'fhosgail e an cuan doibh
Dar luathaich e 'n dèidh.

But I see a reflection
Of what happened long ago,
When the people of Israel were
In Egypt in distress;
He brought them with a strong hand
Away from Pharaoh himself;
And he divided the sea for them
When he pursued them.1030

1027 See William Matheson, *The Songs of John MacCodrum*, *supra*, at pp. 196-203, or Ronald Black, *An Lasair*, *supra*, at pp. 286-93.

1028 William Matheson, *ibid*, at p200-03; Ronald Black, *ibid*, at 290-3.

1029 In Exodus 3:8, God promises to Moses to deliver his people to Canaan, the land of milk and honey.

1030 "Tha mi 'faicinn iongantas", composed sometime between 1768 and 1771: see Margaret MacDonell, *The Emigrant Experience*, *supra*, at pp. 20-26.

The blame for the affliction of the Gaels is laid at the feet of the landlords, but for Matheson, God has again provided his people a refuge, in the New World:

Tha uachdarain 'nan daorsainn	Landlords are enslaving
Do dhaoine anns an àm,	The people at this time,
'Gam fuadachadh 's 'gan teannachadh	Evicting them and forcing them
Gu tìr ni maith do 'n chlann	To a goodly land for their children
Ach moladh 'bhith gu bràch	But everlasting praise
Don Tì is àirde glòir,	To Him of highest glory,
Fhuair a-mach am fosgladh ud	Who opened a way out there
'S dheasaich dhoibh an lòn.	And prepared a livelihood for them.

This biblical motif is employed by Anna Gillis, a Catholic from Morar, who emigrated to Glengarry, Ontario, in about 1786, when she likened Father Alexander (Scotus) MacDonald, who lead Knoydart emigrants to Glengarry in 1786, to Moses:

Maighstir Alasdair òg	Young Father Alexander
Mac Fear Scotais na sròil,	Son of Scotus of the banners
Sagart beannaicht' 'bha mòr le èibhneas.	The holy priest, full of kindness.
Dh'fhalbh e leinne mar naomh	Like a saint he brought us out
Gus ar beatha 'bhith saor	So that we would be free
Mar dh' fhalbh iad le Maois on Eipheit.	Like those who followed Moses out of Egypt.1031

John MacCodrum had also contrasted the hardship of life in Scotland—particularly, the rent increases imposed on the Gaels—with the freedom from such exactions that the Gaels would enjoy overseas, where they could become owners of their own land. These themes of Old World hardship and New World opportunity also become dominant ones in the emerging rhetorical commonplaces of emigration poetry. The economic hardships imposed by rent increases and the abandonment of the old chiefly virtues are themes which are particularly prominent in the poetry of emigration. John MacRae, for example, provided a fairly complete record of the Kintail emigrants' complaints:

H-uile cùis 'ga theannachadh,	Everything is being tightened,
An t-àrdachdainn 's e ghreannaich sinn;	The raising of rents has irritated us;
Lìn mhòra 'bhith 'gan tarrainn,	Great nets are being hauled,
'S iad a' sailleadh na cuid èisg oirnn.	And they are prospering from our fish.

1031 "Canada Àrd" ("Upper Canada"), in Margaret MacDonell, *The Emigrant Experience*, *supra*, p. 134 at p. 136.

Gur iomadh latha sàraichte	Many a toilsome day
Bha mi 'deanamh dìge 's gàrraidhnean;	I made dykes and hedges;
An crodh a' faighinn bàis oirnn	Our cattle were dying on us
'S mi 'pàigheadh mail gu h-èigneach.	While I paid rent with great difficulty.1032

Calum Bàn MacMhannain (1758-1829), who left Skye for Prince Edward Island in 1803, commented on the rapaciousness he experienced prior to his departure:

Ged a rachamaid gu fèill	Although we might go to market
'S ged a reiceamaid treud	And although we might sell our herd
'S ged a gheibheamaid feich gu leòir air,	And although we'd get a good enough price for it,
Thig am Bàillidh mun cuairt	The bailiff will come around
Leis na sumanaidh chruaidh	With the cruel summons
'S bheir e h-uile dad uainn dheth còmhla.	And take the whole amount from us.1033

He is harshly critical of the factor:

B' e sin fitheach gun àgh	It is a miserable vulture
Tha air tighinn an dràsd',	Who has come to us now
'S e 'na Bhàillidh an àite 'n Leòdaich;	As bailiff in place of MacLeod;1034
Umaidh àrdanach, cruaidh,	A haughty, harsh brute,
'S e gun iochd ris an tuath,	Without clemency for the tenantry,
E gun taise, gun truas, gun tròcair.	Without compassion, pity or mercy.
'S beag an t-ìoghnadh e fhèin	Little wonder that he himself,
'Bhi gun chàirdeas fon ghrèin . . .	Has no friends under the sun . . . 1035

However, the landlord, probably the second Lord MacDonald, who succeeded the unpopular Sir Alexander,1036 does not escape identification as a culprit: if they came to the New World, the poet says, "'N sin cha bhiodh iad an taing MhicDhòmhnaill".1037

The replacement of tenantry by sheep and the consequent loss of fighting men to the Kingdom also emerge as important themes in the poetry of emigration. In "An Imrich" ("The Emigration"), for example, Rory Roy MacKenzie, a gentleman from Wester Ross who claimed descent from the the MacKenzies of Applecross and who

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1032 "Nise bhon a thachair sinn" ("Now that we have met"), in Margaret MacDonell, *The Emigrant Experience*, *supra*, at pp. 40-42.

1033 "Imrich nan Eileanach" ("Emigration of the Islanders"), in Margaret MacDonell, *The Emigrant Experience*, *supra*, p. 106 at p. 110.

1034 Margaret MacDonell was unable to identify either the factor in question or the MacLeod he replaced.

1035 Margaret MacDonell, *The Emigrant Experience*, *supra*, at pp. 110-1.

1036 Margaret MacDonell, *The Emigrant Experience*, *supra*, at n. 7, p. 216. She notes that Sir Alexander presided over massive emigration from Skye in the late eighteenth century.

1037 "There they'd not be beholden to MacDonald": *ibid*, pp. 112-3.

was one of the Earl of Selkirk's colonists who came to Prince Edward Island at the beginning of the nineteenth century, commented on the conditions which led to emigration. These included oppressive rents, indifferent landlords, and poor housing, as well as the following: "'N dràsd 's ann tha sinn 'nar crùban/'M bothan ùdlaidh gun taing,/'Us na bailtean fo chaoraich/Aig luchd-maoine gun dàimh".1038 He goes on to comment that the loss of tenantry will leave the country exposed should the French invade, and the theme that the incoming shepherds and sheep will not be able to defend the kingdom is frequently explored in the poetry. This theme, and the general replacement of the old chiefly values, such as the protection of the poor, by commercial ones is evident in these lines composed by Donald Chisholm (1735-1810), also known as "Dòmhnall Gobha", or Donald the Blacksmith, who was forced to emigrate from his native Strathglass at the age of sixty-eight owing to the predations inflicted on Strathglass at the turn of the nineteenth century by his chief, which left the glen largely emptied of people:

'N tàcharan seo th' air ar ceann	The coward who now rules us
Sgiot e 'dhaoine 's tha iad gann;	He evicted his people, and few remain;
'S fheàrr leis caoraich chuir am fang fank	He prefers sheep to put in a
Na fir an camp fo fhèileadh.	Than kilted men in the army camp.
Comann càirdeil chan eil ann,	There is no cordial agreement,
Chan eil èisdeachd aig fear fann;	There's no hearing for the poor man,
Mur cuir thu caoraich ri gleann	If you do not put sheep in the glen
Bidh tu air cheann na dèirce.	You'll bring yourself to penury.1039

The whole gamut of oppression is laid bare by Allan "the Ridge" MacDonald, who is likewise clear-sighted about the cause of the problems and is unafraid of laying the blame squarely on the landlords and their betrayal of traditional values:

Fhuair na h-uaislean i dhaibh fèin	The landlords got it (i.e. the land) for themselves
Gu'n aoibhneas a chuir suas;	To increase their pleasure;
Tha clann na tuath aca nan 'slèibhean'	They have the tenantry like slaves

1038 "Now we are cramped/In gloomy huts without recompense,/And the fields are occupied by sheep/Owned by the unfriendly rich": Margaret MacDonell, *The Emigrant Experience*, *supra*, at p.

1039 "Bha mi òg ann a' Strathglais" ("I was young in Strathglas"): Margaret MacDonell, *The Emigrant Experience*, *supra*, p. 64 at p. 66.

Ann an èiginn cruaidh:	In dire distress:
'S ged thèid fear gu fèill le bhreacan	Though one might wear tartan to a fair
Ann an dreach corr' uair,	Resplendent once in a while,
Chuid eile 'n tìm bi e na chìleig	The rest of the time a wretch he'll be
Sgàthach, dìblidh, truagh.	Fearful, wretched and poor.1040

This poem is a response to his cousin, John the Hunter MacDonald, and his famous poem of dispraise of the New World, "Òran do dh' America" ("Song to America"),1041 to which we shall return, below, and is an excellent example of the tradition of flyting, which continued to be used in the emigrant tradition by later generations of poets. Interestingly, it contains an early oblique reference—the poem was composed in about 1835—to one aspect of the commercialization of the Highland estates, namely the creation of sporting estates. In response to John "the Hunter"'s celebration of the deer hunt, Allan retorts:

Ge mòr do bhòsd a fear na cròic	Though you brag greatly about the stag
Ma ni thu leòn dhut fhèin,	Should you kill it for your use,
Ged is staoigeach, tioram fheòil,	Even though its meat be poor and dry,
Bi tòireachd as do dhèidh;	You will be prosecuted:
Theid breith air amhaich ort gu grad	They will swiftly grab you by the neck
Is gad a chuir ad' mhèill,	And put a whip to your cheek,
'S d' fhògairt thar a' chuain air falbh	You will be banished overseas
Chiunn thu bhi sealg an fhèidh.	Since you were hunting the deer.1042

Allan the Ridge comments on the desertion of the old values, and the logical conclusion to which this state of affairs necessarily leads, emigration:

Si 'n tìr a dh'fhàg thu 'n tìr gun chàirdeas	The land you left is a land without charity
Tìr gun bhàigh ri tuath,	Without compassion for tenants,
Ach gu tùrsach iad ga fàgail	But they are anguished leaving it
'S ànraidh thar a' chuain:	And distressed at the sea-crossing:
Daoine bochda, sìol nan coitear	Poor people, the seed of cottars
Bha gun stoc gun bhuar,	Without stock or cattle,
'S mairg a chàin iad tìr an àigh	Too bad some condemned the wonderful land
'S an d'fhàs iad nan daoin' uaisl'.	Where they became gentlemen.1043

John MacRae also argued, in terms that echo John MacCodrum, that there was one sensible response to the new environment of the Highlands:

Falbhamaid 's bitheadh beannachd Dhè leinn;	Let us depart with God's blessing;

1040 "Moladh Albainn Nuaidh" ("In Praise of Nova Scotia"), in Effie Rankin, *Às a' Bhràighe*, *supra*, p. 76 at pp. 76-7.
1041 Margaret MacDonell, *The Emigrant Experience*, *supra*, at p. 80
1042 *Ibid*, at pp. 78-9.
1043 *Ibid.*

Triallamaid 's riadhamaid barca.	Let us go and charter a vessel.
B' fhearr na 'bhith 'fuireach fo uachdarain Nach fhuiling tuath a bhith aca.	Better than to be living under landlords Who will not tolerate having tenants.1044

This poem, likely composed before emigration, also illustrates the high expectations that many an emigrant had of the New World, and given this rhetoric, it is not surprising that, as we shall see, some emigrants, and some poets, John MacLean included, were disappointed with what they found. Take this passage, from the same poem by John MacRae:

Falbhaidh sinn uile gu lèir ('S beag mo spèis do dh' fhear gun tapadh)	Let us all go together (I have little esteem for a man without courage)
Far am faigh sinn dheth gach seòrsa An t-sealg is bòidhche 'tha ri fhaicinn.	To where we'll find every kind Of the finest game to be seen.
Gheibh sinn fiadh 'us boc 'us maoisleach, 'S comas na dh' fhaodar thoirt asda.	We shall get deer, buck and doe, And the right to take as many as we wish.
Gheibh sinn coileach-dubh 'us liath-chearc, Lachan, ialtan, 'us glas-gheòidh.	We shall get woodcock and woodhen, Teals, ducks and wild geese.
Gheibh sinn bradan agus ban-iasg, Glas-iasg ma 's e 's fheàrr a thaitneas,	We shall get salmon and spawning fish, And white fish if it pleases us better.
Nach saoil thu nach iad siud 'tha uallach, Cha bhi buachaille gun each ac'.	Imagine how prosperous they are over there, Even every herdsman has a horse.1045

Donald Chisholm of Strathglass is somewhat more realistic in his expectations: "Gheibh sinn acraichean bhon rìgh,/Tighearnan gun dean e dhinn;/Cha b' ionnan 's a bhith mar bha 'n linn/Bha 'pàigheadh cìs do Cheusar".1046 Similarly, Rory Roy MacKenzie has relatively reasonable expectations: "Gheibh sinn fearann 'us àiteach/Anns na fàsaichean thall;/Bidh na coilltean 'gan rùsgadh/Ged bhiodh

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1044 "Sgeula a fhuair mi bho Dhi-Domhnaich": Margaret MacDonell, *The Emigrant Experience*, *supra*, at pp. 34-36.

1045 *Ibid.*

1046 "We shall get grants from the king,/He will make us into landlords;/We shall not be like the generations/Who were paying tribute to Caesar": Margaret MacDonell, *The Emigrant Experience*, *supra*, at p. 66.

cùinneamh oirnn gann".1047 For both poets, ownership of land was the key, and would be worth any of the hardships that would undoubtedly meet them.

For many of the emigrant poets, however, the conditions in the New World were a shock and a disappointment, and there emerges a distinct rhetoric of dispraise. For others, such dispraise was not merited, and although some of the difficulties of the New World are acknowledged, these poets express a general satisfaction with their lot. Amongst poets who took to the New World more readily, or who came to appreciate the benefits the New World ultimately brought, there emerges a distinct rhetoric of praise in response to the critics.

The rhetoric of dispraise has both a social and a material element. On the social side, a prominent theme is the supposed coarseness of appearance and manners of the people of New World communities. Thus, in the well-known lullaby, "Dean cadalan samhach, a' chuilean mo rùn", attributed to John MacRae, the poet comments:

'S ro bheag orm fèin na daoine seo th' ann,	Little do I like the people who are here,
Le 'n còtaichean dròg aid, ad mhòr air an ceann;	With their drugget coats and tall hats;
Le 'm briogaisean goirid, 's iad sgaoilte gu 'm bonn;	Their short breeches, split to the ends;
Chan fhaicear an t-osan, 's i 'bhochdainn a th' ann.	Hose are never seen, and that is a pity.1048

One of the best known poems of dispraise is John "the Hunter" MacDonald's "Òran do dh' America"/"Song for America". Margaret MacDonell summarises this poet's outlook nicely: "Like many of his kinsmen, he had had great expectations of wealth and opportunity in America, but he found the climate disagreeable, life primitive and the residents rude and intemperate".1049 He arrived in Cape Breton in 1834, and his first winter was a particularly harsh one—remembered long afterwards as "geamhradh

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1047 "We shall get land and a home/In the wilderness yonder;/The forests will be cleared/Though money will be scarce": *ibid*, at pp. 116-7.
1048 *Ibid*, at p. 42
1049 *Ibid*, at pp. 80-81.

an t-sneachda mhòir"1050—which may have coloured his perceptions. He begins his poem by reminiscing on those aspects of life in Scotland he prized the most, which included sturdy and handsome MacDonald warriors outfitted in traditional highland garb. The appearance of those in the new world suffers by comparison:

Cha b' e a chleachd mi-fhìn;	It is not what I have been accustomed to;
A bhith 'faicinn dhaoine cairtidh,	To be looking at swarthy folk,
Grannda, glas, gun bhrìgh,	Ugly, drab and without substance,
Le triùsair fharsainn, sgiùrsair casaig,	With wide trousers, and a loutish long coat,
'S cha b' e 'm fasan grinn.	Their style was certainly unpleasant.1051

The coarseness of the behaviour of new world people is also a feature in the rhetoric of dispraise, as we see in this passage from a poem composed by John MacRae:

'S e th' againn anns an àite seo	What we have in this place
Tarraing dhòrn 'us làmh,	Is the constant sparring of fists and hands,
Agus cleas nan con 'bhith sàs	In the manner of dogs to be involved,
Anns gach àite le 'n ceann.	Head first in every place.1052

John "the Hunter" is also distressed at the behaviour he sees:

Chi thu còmhlan ac' ag òl	You'll see groups of them drinking
'San stòr ma thèid thu ann,	At the store if you venture in,
Iad ri bòilich 'us ri bòsd,	They are rowdy and boastful,
'S iad gòrach leis an dram;	And they are foolish with the drink;
An àite rapach, poll fo 'n casan,	The place untidy, mud under their feet,
Stòpan glas ri 'n ceann,	Glass flagons raised to their heads,
Rùsgadh dheacaid dhiubh 's 'gan stracadh,	Peeling off and tearing their jackets,
'S iad mar phaca cheàrd.	They're just like a pack of tinkers.1053

One of the most prominent themes in the poetry of dispraise is the loss of the broader social milieu in the Highlands, such as the enjoyment of the Gaelic arts of song, poetry and conversation, lubricated by drink, and the old chiefly pursuits such as the hunt of the deer and the fishing of trout and salmon. Take, for example, this passage from John MacRae's "Gur muladach a tha mi":

Gur muladach a tha mi,	Lonely I am,
'S mi 'n diugh gun adhbhar gàire;	For today I have no cause for laughter;
Cha b' ionnan 's mar a bha mi	This is not how I once was,
'S an àite bho thall;	In that place over there [i.e. Scotland]

1050 "The winter of the great snow".
1051 *Ibid*, at p. 84.
1052 "Gur muladach a tha mi": *ibid*, at p. 46.
1053 *Ibid*, at p. 84.

Far am faighinn mànran,	Where I would hear love songs,
Mire, 'us ceol-gàire,	Sport and cheery music,
Agus cuideachd mar a b' àill leam	And company that was to my liking
Aig àilleas mo dhram.	When I enjoyed my drink.
. . .	
Mo shoraidh gu Sguir-ùrain	Farewell to Sguir-ùrain
'S an coire th' air a cùlaibh;	And to the corrie that's behind it;
Gur tric a bha mi dlùth ann	Often I was deep within it
Air chùl agh 'us mhang;	Behind does and fawns,
Ag amharc air mo ghlùinean	On my knees peering
An damh a' dol 's a' bhùirich	At the stag bellowing
'S a chèil' aige 'ga dùsgadh	And waking his mate
Air ùrlar nan allt.	At the bottom of the streams.
. . .	
Mo shoraidh leis an fhiadhach	Farewell to the deer forest,
Ged 's tric a bha mo mhiann ann;	Often did I enjoy it;
Cha mhò ni mi iasgach,	No longer shall I fish
Air ìochdar nan allt.	In the lower streams.1054

John "the Hunter" devotes several verses in his "Òran do dh' America" to the theme of the joys of the hunt, of which the following is representative:

'S tric a dhìrich mi ri màm	Often did I climb through the pass
'S mo ghunna 'm làimh air ghleus,	With my gun ready in hand,
Mo mhiann 's an àm 'bhith siubhal bheann	It was my delight then to traverse the bens
'S mo chuilean seang air èill;	With my slender hound in a leash;
Dìreadh ghlacagan 's a' gharbhlach,	Roaming the dells on the wild moors,
Sealg air mac an fhèidh;	Stalking the young deer,
'S tric a leag mi e le m' luaidhe,	Often did I fell him with my lead,
Ged bu luath a cheum.	Though his stride was swift.1055

Dr. John Shaw has argued that the poets who engage in this sort of nostalgia tended to be of the "middle classes",1056 men who enjoyed social privileges which may not have been open to many other emigrant Gaels of more humble origins.1057 He concludes:

> The oral prose items recorded in the field in Cape Breton show that the initial experiences of the less articulate and well connected arrivals were primarily concerned with the realistic business of survival. Among the less distinguished majority there is no evidence of a lack of social awareness, yet there is little evidence of lingering nostalgia.1058

1054 *Ibid*, at pp. 46-50; the same poet explores many of the same themes in "'S mi air fògradh bho fhoghair" ("I've been a fugitive since autumn").

1055 *Ibid*, at p. 82.

1056 The usefulness of contemporary social scientific descriptors such as "middle class" in respect of Gaelic society of the late eighteenth and early nineteenth century is questionable and may be misleading. There was certainly social stratification in Gaelic society of the time, but kin status is a more useful guide. I have preferred concepts such as membership of the old Gaelic aristocracy or minor aristocracy, or membership in the learned classes.

1057 John Shaw, "Brief Beginnings", *supra*, at p. 343.

1058 *Ibid*, at p. 344.

Even amongst poets from a more privileged background, though, there was no unanimity. In the poetry of Allan "the Ridge", who, like his cousin John "the Hunter", had an aristocratic pedigree, there is little evidence of a lingering nostalgia for the old life. As noted earlier, he responded to his cousin's dispraise with a spirited defence of the New World and a hearty condemnation of the Old. Time may also have been a factor; although John "the Hunter" did not appear to reconcile himself to his new existence, and was engaging in dispraise many years after immigration to Nova Scotia,1059 other poets, John MacLean included, as we shall see, took on a much more balanced view with time, partly due to the improvement in their material conditions, and partly because of the new social and economic opportunities that could be derived from their new surroundings.

One would expect that the trauma induced by the actual physical break with the homeland would be a significant theme for a people so deeply and intimately bound to particular places and with such a deep sense of intergenerational solidarity as the Gaels, and this theme does emerge in some of the poetry of the emigrant generation. John "the Hunter" MacDonald, for example, ends his poem "Òran do dh' America" by expressing his wish that he could be buried back in the churchyard of St. Cairrail's in the Braes of Lochaber:

Cille Choraill, Cill' as bòidhche	At St. Cairrail's, the most beautiful chapel
Air 'n do chuir mi eòlas riamh;	That I ever knew;
Lagan bòidheach, grianail, còmhnard,	A pretty, sunny, smooth enclosure,
Far 'm bheil còmhnaidh chiad.	Where hundreds now lie.
Tom nan aingeal, glac an Dòmhnaich,	The hillock of the angels, Sunday's dell,
'S an robh mo sheòrs' bho chian;	Where my kin have lain for years;
'S truagh, a Rìgh, gun mi 's a' chòmhlan	It's a shame, O Lord, that I'm not with them
Mar bu deòn le m' mhiann.	As ardently as I long to be.1060

This is not, however, a theme that emerges very frequently, even in the rhetoric of dispraise. The break with a living community, rather than with one's ancestral

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1059 *Ibid*, at pp. 343-4.

homeland, is a much more common preoccupation for the poets who employ the rhetoric of dispraise, and as we shall see, the need to rebuild community becomes the prime preoccupation of the poets of the emigrant generation.

One other significant recurrent social theme is loneliness. Although the Gaels were attracted by large amounts of land available at little or no cost, a 100 or 200 acre lot meant physical isolation from one's nearest neighbours. This was exacerbated by the virgin forest, with which the Gaels would have been largely unfamiliar. The Highland settlers cleared the forest only slowly, a few acres at a time, and its ongoing presence would have intensified the feeling of isolation from other human beings. This is clear in the complaint of a Maclean from Raasay who had emigrated to Prince Edward Island:

Gur diombach dhe mo chàirdean mi	I am offended at my relatives
Na thàinig romham fhèin,	Who came out before me,
Nach d' innis cor an àite dhomh	Who did not tell me of the state of the place
'S mar a shàraich e iad fhèin.	And how it has tried them.
A' dol troimh choill' an fhàsaich seo	Going through this wilderness
Gun chàil ach rathad *blaze*	There is nothing but a blazed trail;
O, 's muladach an t-àite seo	Oh, this is truly a lonesome place
A' tàmh aig fear leis fhèin.	For the one who lives by himself.1061

The Gaels came to a country which was largely unsettled by Europeans, and densely populated settlements were rare and distant: only Pictou predated the arrival of the Gaels, and at the time of the earliest settlement in eastern Nova Scotia, the towns of Antigonish and Sydney, the only other towns of note, were exceptionally small. Remote from urban centers, the Gaels were also remote from markets and the goods that could be found there, meaning that the first settlers had to be almost completely self-sufficient. This is something that Gaels from even the most remote corners of the Gàidhealtachd would not have been accustomed to. Thus, the same Maclean from Raasay comments:

1060 Margaret MacDonell, *The Emigrant Experience*, *supra*, at p. 86.
1061 *Ibid*, at p. 120.

'S e th' ann a sin cùis smaointinn	It's a cause for great concern
Mar a smaoinicheas sibh fhèin	As you may surmise
Cion caisbheart agus aodach	The lack of footwear and clothing
Air gach aon a bhios 'nam feum.	For each one who needs them.
'S gun dad aig fear ri fhaotainn	No one can procure anything
Ach le 'shaothair as a' ghèig;	But through his labours in the forest;
O, 's cianail fad an fhaoillich	O, the length of the winter is depressing
Leth a shaoghal ann gu rè.	It's fully half one's lifetime.1062

With regard to the material aspects of the rhetoric of dispraise, many of the emigrant poets were surprised and disappointed at the hardships of the New World. The enticing picture painted by those who had gone before, by emigration agents and, as we have seen, by some poets themselves would certainly have played a part in heightening expectations. Poets, such as John "the Hunter" MacDonald, make clear that they were motivated in part by the expectation of ease and prosperity:

'S truagh, a Rìgh, gun d' chuir mi cùl	Alas, O Lord, that I've turned my back
Ri m' dhùthaich le m' thoil fhìn,	On my country of my own free will,
Le bhith an dùil 's an àit' as ùr	Expecting that in this new place
Nach faicinn tùrn 'gam dhìth;	I'd never go without a job;
Ach coir air fearann, òr, 'us earras	But a deed to property, gold and riches
'Bhith aig gach fear a bh' innt'.	Would be the lot of everyone there.
Bha 'chùis gu buileach orm am falach,	The real situation was hidden from me,
'S mheall mo bharail mi.	And my opinions deceived me.1063

There were certainly hardships in the New World. A widespread complaint in the rhetoric of dispraise is, for example, climate and the harsh environment. The limitless forest and the beasts of the forests were recurrent themes. The Gaels were generally unfamiliar with both, and animals such as the fox and the wolf appear to have caused considerable fear; they are part of the metaphorical as well as real threat posed by the challenge of the virgin forest. Thus, in "Dean Cadalan Samhach, a Chuilean mo rùin", John MacRae makes the following reference: "Fo dhubhar nan craobh, cha bhi h-aon again beò;/Madaidh allaidh 'us bèistean ag èigheach 's gach fròig.1064 Kenneth MacDonald comments on the beasts he encountered in Boularderie, Cape

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1062 *Ibid.*

1063 *Ibid*, at p. 84.

1064 "Under the trees, none of us will be left alive/With wolves and beasts howling in every lair": *ibid*, at p. 42.

Breton: Coinean agus madadh-ruadh,/Ar leam gur h-uamhasach iad".1065 The Maclean from Raasay claims it is far better to be in Scotland: "Shiùbhlainn greis dhen anmoch ann/'S dh'fhalbhainn 's mi leam fhèin,/Gun eagal orm gu marbhte mi/Le garbh-bhiasd dhubh nan geug".1066 Other forms of animal life were not threatening, but were unpleasant: "Cha cluinn sibh cuthag no gug-gùg ann,/Madainn chiùin air bràigh glinne;/Ach drumaireachd nan coilich-ruadha,/'S siud a' fuaim 'tha fuathach dhuinne".1067

The Gaels were also unprepared for the extreme temperatures—both the bitter winter cold and snow, and the oppressive summer heat and humidity. The cold is the main complaint of Kenneth MacDonald, a native of Gairloch who settled in Boularderie, Cape Breton, in 1842:

Tha Ceap Breatunn seo cho fuar	This Cape Breton is so cold
Reòthadh e na cluasan fhèin;	That one's very ears would freeze;
Thèid e cho domhain 'san tuaigh	It [the frost] penetrates the axe so deeply
'S i 'n lasair a dh'fhuasglas innt' e.	That only a flame can thaw it out.
Mogais chaisionn air an t-sluagh,	People wear white-soled moccasins
'Gan cumail bhon fhuachd gu lèir,	To protect them from the cold;
'Gan gearradh à seiche chruaidh	These are cut from a stiff hide
'S 'gam fuaigheal umpa le èill.	And sewn up with a thread.
Nuair a thig an còta bàn	When the white blanket [of snow] comes
Falaichidh e na màgain fhèin;	It will conceal all the ground beasts;
Fuirichidh e leth bhliadhna slàn	It will stay for a full half year
'S bidh 'n talamh 'na thàmh gun fheum.	And the land remains dormant and lifeless.1068

The Maclean from Raasay also remarks on the dangers of the cold: "Ged dheanadh fear a dhìchioll ann/'S an t-sìde a bhith 'ga rèir,/Cùis eagail fuachd an fhaoillich ann/Oir reòthaidh daoine 's sprèidh".1069

1065 "The rabbit and the red fox/Certainly seem strange to me": *ibid*, at p. 100.

1066 "I would roam a while in the dusk there [i.e. in Scotland]/And go about alone/Without fear of being killed/By wild beasts in the forests": *ibid*, at p. 122.

1067 "You'll not hear the cuckoo nor his 'coo-coo' here/On a fine morning in the upper glen,/But only the drumming of the red cock [woodpecker?],/and that sound is unpleasant to us", in "O, Tha mise fo ghruaimean"/"O, I am melancholy", *ibid*, at p. 138.

1068 *Ibid*, at p. 98.

1069 "Though one might do one's best here/When the weather is favourable,/The cold of winter is a fearful thing/As it will freeze men and beasts": *ibid*, at pp. 120-122.

However, the harsh environment may have been tolerable if the expectations of many Gaels of economic improvement—based on the poetic record of the emigrant generation, one of the main factors for leaving Scotland—had not also been frustrated. The difficult economic circumstances experienced by many emigrants—often exacerbated by grasping commercial interests—are also a significant theme in the rhetoric of dispraise. And while most emigrants were able to obtain land cheaply or free, this was not the case for all, as is attested to by one Prince Edward Island settler:

Dh'fhalbh sinn às an àite sin	We have left that place [i.e. Scotland]
Gun d' ràinig sinn seo fhèin	And we arrived over here [i.e. P.E.I.]
An dùil gum faighte fàbhar ann	Thinking that we'd find favour here
'S nach biodh am màl cho treun.	And that the rent wouldn't be so exacting.
'S tha *Peters* 'gar sàrachadh	But Peters is oppressing us
'S mur tig am bàs air fhèin,	And if he doesn't die
O, 's fheudar dhuinn gum fàg sinn seo	O, we will have to leave this place
'S *Cunnard* a tha 'na bhèist	And Cunnard, himself a beast.1070

The poetic record is, however, far from one-sided, and there also emerged in the poetry of the emigrant generation a distinct rhetoric of praise, sometimes in direct response to the rhetoric of dispraise. As noted, for a large majority of Gaels, the reason for emigration was economic, and it is clear that they were not simply pushed by the deteriorating conditions in the Highlands and Islands, but also pulled by the possibility of good land. This is celebrated in perhaps the first poem ever composed in Cape Breton, "O, 's Alainn an t-Àite",1071 by Micheal MacDonald, a native of South Uist who had emigrated to Prince Edward Island with the Glenaladale pioneers in 1772, but who ended up in Judique, Cape Breton. The poem is said to be composed while MacDonald spent a lonely winter in Cape Breton in 1775, but even in those hard circumstances, he saw the promise of this land:

O, 's àlainn an t-àite	O, fair is the place
Th' agam 'n cois na tràghad	That I have here by the sea
Nuair thig e gu bhith 'g àiteach ann	When it comes time to till it
Leis a' chrann , Leis a' chrann, O.	With the plow, with the plow, O.
Nì mi 'n t-àran leis na gearrain	I shall make my livelihood with the horses

1070 *Ibid*, at p. 122.
1071 "O, Fair is the place": *ibid*, at pp. 58-60.

'S an crodh-bainne chuir mun bhaile;	And put the cattle about the farm;
'S cha bhi annas oirnn's an earrach,	And there'll be no want in springtime,
Chuirinn geall, chuirinn geall.	I'll wager, I'll wager.1072

The simple productivity of the land, hinted at in Michael MacDonald's poetry, is a recurrent theme. Thus, in Allan "the Ridge" MacDonald's poetic response to his cousin John "the Hunter", the poet speaks at length of the benefits of the new land: "Gheibh thu mil air bharr nan lusan,/Siùcar agus tì,/'S fheàrr dhut sid na 'n tìr a dh'fhàg thu/Aig a' ghràisg na frìth".1073 This is reminiscent of John MacRae's "Dèan Cadalan Sàmhach, a Chuilean mo Rùin", in which the poet comments on the productivity of the Carolinas in springtime: "Nuair dh'fhalbhas an dùlachd 's a thionndaidh 's am blàths,/Bithidh cnothan, bidh ùbhlan, 's bithidh an siùcar a' fàs".1074 Duncan Black Blair makes similar observations in his poem "Bràigh Abhainn Bharnaidh", likely composed in the second half of the nineteenth century, in which he praises the very district that, as we shall see, John MacLean found so intolerable in his early years there: "Thig an àird' leam gu Bràigh'/Abhainn Bhàrnaidh don choille;/Far am fàs an subh lair,/'S cnothan làna gun ghainne".1075 Anna Gillis comments on the fecundity of nature in Glengarry County, Ontario: "Gu bheil cruithneachd a' fàs,/Luchdmhor, lìonte gu 'bhàrr,/Ach trì mìosan thoirt dha de thearmunn./ . . . Gheibh sinn mil agus fìon,/'S gach ni eile gu 'r miann,/Cha bhi uireasbhuidh sìon fon ghrèin oirnn".1076

1072 *Ibid*, at p. 58.

1073 "You shall have honey from the flowers,/Sugar and also tea,/Much better that than the land you left/To the rabble in its mountains". In "Moladh Albainn Nuaidh, in Effie Rankin, *As a' Bhràighe*, *supra*, at p. 78.

1074 "When winter departs and warmth returns,/Nuts, apples and sugar will grow": Margaret MacDonell, *supra*, at p. 42.

1075 "Come with me to Upper/Barney's River in the forest;/Where strawberries grow/And an abundance of ripe nuts": *ibid*, at p. 100.

1076 "Wheat grows/Abundantly, ready to harvest,/With only three months to bring it to full season./ . . . We shall have berries and wine/And all else that we desire,/We shall lack nothing under the sun": *ibid*, at p. 134, 136

The bounty of nature was a theme that had both a literal and metaphorical truth for the emigrant generation. There is evidence from both the poetry and other sources, including oral tradition, that making the land productive was a greater challenge than some of these passages suggest, and certainly much of the land settled by Gaels was not always favourable, particularly the upland "rear" lands in Nova Scotia which were settled by later settlers, and by John MacLean in 1819. Nonetheless, the possibilities for self-sufficiency which were created by title to one's own land, however inadequate it may have been, were of importance to the land-starved Gaelic settlers. Indeed, Gaels came in the expectation of improving their material condition, and were especially desirous of having title to their own land, free of the oppressions of landlords and rental obligations. Calum Bàn MacMhannain advertised these advantages to his former countrymen in Skye:

Ach ma thèid thu gu bràth	But if you ever go
A null thairis air sail,	Over across the sea,
Thoir mo shoraidh gu càirdean eòlach.	Bring my greetings to my friends.
Thoir dhaibh cuireadh gun dàil	Invite them, without delay
Iad a thèicheadh on mhàl,	To flee from the rents,
'S iad a thighinn cho tràth 's bu choir dhaibh.	And to come as early as they are able.
'Us nam faigheadh iad àm	And if they could find a time
'S dòigh air tighinn a-nall,	And a means to come over
'N sin cha bhiodh iad an taing MhicDhòmhnaill.	They'd not be beholden to MacDonald.
'S ann a gheibheadh iad àit'	They would get land
Anns an cuireadh iad bàrr	In which to sow crops
'S ro-mhath chinneadh buntàta 's eòrn' ann.	And potatoes and barley would grow very well there.1077

That these goals of material improvement and self-sufficiency were realized is made clear by Allan "the Ridge" MacDonald, who composed the following lines to his cousin, John "the Hunter", about 20 years after his arrival in Cape Breton:

'S tu rinn glic 's nach deach am mearachd	You acted wisely and did not err
'S cha robh do bharail faoin,	Neither was your opinion vain,
Tighinn do dhùthaich nam fear glana	Coming to the land of fine men
Coibhneil, tairis, caomh :	Kindly, gentle and civil:
Far am faigh thu òr a mhaireas	Here you will find lasting gold
Còir air fearann saor,	Unbounded right to land,
Gach nì bu mhath leat bhith mu d' bhaile	All you would want upon your farm

1077 *Ibid*, at pp.110-112.

Earras is crodh laoigh.	Of property and cattle.1078

Significantly, the poet also defended the virtue of the New World Gaels, which had, as we saw earlier, come under attack by John "the Hunter":

Gheibh thu ruma, fìon is beòir	You will get rum and wine and beer
'S an stòr ma thèid thu ann	In the store should you visit
Chì thu còmhlan dhaoine còire	You will see a goodly company of men
'S iad ag òl san àm:	Drinking there on occasion:
Daoine dàna, fearail, fialaidh	Brave, manly and generous ones
Riaraicheas an dram,	Who will share the drink,
Gach fear dhiubh triall air each le dhìollaid	Each one travels on his saddled horse
'S bu mhiann leam bhith nan ceann.	How I'd love to be among them!1079

The reference to the saddled horse is also significant; the possession of both a saddle and a horse would be yet another marker of the relative prosperity of the New World Gaels.

The emigrant poets even came to be reconciled to some aspects of New World life that the Gaelic immigrants had found most difficult. The winters were no less harsh than they had been upon arrival, but with established communities and reasonably comfortable lodgings, they became bearable: "Bidh sneachd trom air gach gleann,/'S cathadh teann mu gach dorus;/Ach bidh lòn againn 's blàths,/'S bidh sinn mànranach, sona".1080 Iain Sinclair, who emigrated from Glendaruel to Prince Edward Island in 1840, advises his friends at the Cowal Society of Glasgow in 1874 as follows:

Ged tha 'n geamhradh cruaidh,	Although the winter is hard,
Reòta, fuar, sneachdach, gaillionnach,	Frosty, cold, snowy, stormy,
Bidh aca taighean blàth,	They will have warm houses,
S teine làidir a gharas iad.	And a roaring fire to warm them.
'S cha bhi cùram fuachd daibh	They will not fear the cold,
'S coille bhuan ri gearradh ac'.	For they have an inexhaustible forest to cut.
Ma thig sibh nall à Còmh'll,	If you come over from Cowal
Tha mi 'n dòchas nach aithreach leibh.	I am confident that you'll have no regrets.1081

1078 Effie Rankin, *As a' Bhràighe*, *supra*, at pp. 78-80.

1079 *Ibid*, at p. 80.

1080 "There is deep snow in every valley/and drifts at every door;/but we have food and comfort/and we are contented and happy": Duncan Black Blair, "Bràigh Abhainn Bharnaidh"/"Upper Barney's River", in Margaret MacDonell, *supra*, at p.102.

1081 In "Moladh agus Soraidh Chomhail"/"Praise and a Greeting to Cowal",*ibid*, at p. 124-128.

There is an acceptance in this poetry of the charges leveled by the poets of dispraise, but a balanced assessment emerges in which the initial struggles will come to fruition and a new equilibrium will be reached which is, on balance, better than that which existed in Scotland for them. Thus, Iain Sinclair, again writing to his friends in Cowal, says the following:

Ma 's e 's gum bidh iad grìdeil	If they are hardy
'Us dìchiollach, oidhirpeach,	Diligent and willing to exert themselves,
Gun mi-fhortan 'bhith 'n dàn dhaibh,	There'll be no mischief in store for them,
Ach slàn, làidir, adhartach,	And if they're healthy, strong, progressive,
Mum bidh iad fad' 'san tìr seo	Before long in this country
Cho cinnteach 's tha coill' innte,	As sure as there's a forest here,
Bidh aca crodh 'us caoraich,	They will have sheep and cattle,
Biadh, aodach, 's mòr ghoireasan.	Food, clothing and abundant comforts.1082

Allan the Ridge MacDonald composes the following, about twenty years after his arrival in Cape Breton, in response to the accusation of his cousin, John "the Hunter", that the New World is disappointing:

Nis bhon thàinig thu thar sàile,	Now that you have come across the sea,
Chum an àite ghrinn,	To this fair land,
Cha bhi fàilinn ort ri d' là	You'll want for nothing for the rest of your life
'S gach aon nì 'fàs dhuinn fhìn.	Everything prospers for us.

Allan the Ridge had absolutely no regrets about his decision, and he rejects his cousin John the Hunter's nostalgia for their homeland out of hand:

Searbh do ghlòir leam cainnt do bheòil	Offensive to me is the way you talk
Oir bha mi eòlach thall,	For I also knew the life over there,
An Albainn fhuar ge fada bhuam i	In cold Scotland, though far from me
Suarach leam an call;	I consider that no great loss;
B' e fàth a' ghruaim an càradh cruaidh	The harsh treatment suffered by the poor
Bh' air truaghain bhochd a bh' ann.	There is a cause for sorrow.

As John Shaw has noted, the poets who deploy the rhetoric of praise make clear that emigration was generally regarded as a hiatus rather than as a fatal blow to their social and cultural integrity, and this is a theme which shall be explored further, in the context of the poetry composed by John MacLean in the period after he had established himself at Barney's River, Pictou County.

In the period immediately after his arrival in Nova Scotia, the poetry of John

MacLean was shot through with the rhetoric of dispraise; indeed, his "Òran do dh' Aimeireaga", perhaps better known as "A' Choille Ghruamach", poem 28, is the most powerful and representative poem of this genre. As noted earlier, John MacLean composed three poems that are specifically concerned with the experience of emigration from Scotland and settlement in the New World. He never composed any poetry prior to emigration which gives us any clues as to the reasons for his decision, or as to his goals, his hopes and his dreams. Once in Canada, however, the poet responds to his new circumstances in a highly personal and extremely forthcoming manner, and as we shall see, we get very clear hints about his aspirations.

It is not clear whether the first of John MacLean's New World poems was "Òran do dh'Aimearaga" or "Am Mealladh". Both are songs which express the poet's disappointment with the New World, but "Òran do dh'Aimearaga" is a much more well-developed and powerful song. "Am Mealladh", poem 27, was not amongst the songs in John MacLean's manuscripts, and perhaps the poet had chosen to omit it because he was not himself particularly satisfied with it; Alexander Maclean Sinclair indicated that he recovered a couple of verses while in Tiree in 1869, and the rest from Duncan Cameron of Caledonia, Nova Scotia. The poem takes the form of a conversation between a more established settler and the poet. It would seem that the poem may have been composed some time after John MacLean's arrival—the reference to the spring freeze in the very last line of the poem suggests that it may have been composed at least at the end of the poet's first winter in Nova Scotia, in the spring of 1820. However, the poet conveys the sense that he had just arrived—the established settler addresses him as though he had not yet experienced the rigours of the new land or begun the process of settlement—and is seeking to convey his first

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1082 *Ibid*, at p. 128

impressions, upon arrival at the town of Pictou, in October, 1819.

The rhetoric of dispraise is not as fully developed in "Am Mealladh" as in "Òran do dh'Aimearaga". From the title itself, and the line "O, gur mise 'th' air mo mhealladh", which is repeated twice in the chorus, the poet clearly expresses the sense that he has been deceived in coming to the New World; however, he does not ascribe blame for his deception to emigration agents, as he does in "Òran do dh'Aimearaga" and his other poem on the theme of emigration and settlement, "Òran eadar Iain MacGilleain agus an Còirneal Friseal", poem 29, and "Am Mealladh" lack the bitterness concerning his "deception" that is so evident in "Òran do dh'Aimearaga". We do get a sense of some of his primary motivations in emigrating: the desire for land and for a more prosperous and easier life in Canada, themes which he explores elsewhere:

Na mo chrìdh' thuirt mi gu cianail,	In my heart I said sadly to myself,
"'S bochd gun d' fhàg mi tìr na ciatachd,	"It's a pity that I left the agreeable land
'Thigh'nn a thàmh don àird-an-iar seo,	To come to stay in this westerly land,
Ged bu mhiadhail mi air fearann."	Though I longed for farmland."
'S ann 'shaoil leamsa leis a' ghòraich',	I had most foolishly thought,
Nuair a dh'fhalbh mi leis a' Chòirneal,	When I left with the Colonel,
A bhith ann 'am spuir 's 'am bhòtainn,	To be dressed in spurs and riding boots,
'Trusadh òir air bhàrr gach meangain.	Gathering gold from the tips of every branch.
Fhuair mi 'mach nach eil na cluaintean	I discovered that distant meadows
'Tha fad' às cho gorm 's a chualas.	Are not as green as one has heard.1083

Other elements of the rhetoric of dispraise are introduced. On his first trip to Church, the poet is shocked by the congregation's "Sunday's best": "Bha na mocaisean gu pailt ann,/BròGan cairte bha glè ainneamh".1084 As noted earlier, the roughness of footwear in the New World is a recurrent theme in the rhetoric of dispraise, and a marker of the settlers' material poverty, and it is not surprising that John MacLean, a shoemaker by trade, would have taken particular interest in this subject. At the end of

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1083 Lines 21-30, poem 27.
1084 Lines 10-20, poem 27.

the poem, he makes reference to the frightful winter cold, another central theme in the rhetoric of dispraise: "Saoil sibh fhèin nach cùis ro-chruaidh/'Bhith 'call nan cluas le fuachd an Earraich".1085 Finally, the image of the primaeval forest as an implacable barrier is raised by the established settler, who offers the poet this warning:

Thug e leis gu cùlthaobh fàil mi	He took me behind a hedge
'Shealltainn coille nach robh geàrrta,	To show me an uncut virgin forest,
"'S mise 'm fear nach dean a h-àiteach,	"I'm not the one who could clear it,
Cha tugadh an Fhèinn aist' aran."	Even the Fenians couldn't make it fertile."1086

John MacLean makes the "the gloomy forest", "a' choille ghruamach", the central image in perhaps his most famous composition, "Òran do dh'Aimearaga", poem 28. In this poem, likely composed in 1820 or 1821 during the poet's first extremely hard years at Barney's River, he gives perhaps the fullest and clearest expression to the rhetoric of dispraise that we find in the poetry of the emigrant generation, and its archetypal status in the genre is suggested by the fact that later poets, notably John "the Hunter" MacDonald, use the same title for their poems of dispraise. As noted at the outset of this chapter, the poetry of John MacLean has received little sustained critical comment, but the quality of this poem has been praised by a wide range of twentieth century critics. Somhairle MacGill-eain's assessment is typical:

> In 'Am Bàrd an Canada' [i.e. "Òran do dh'Aimearaga, poem 28], [John MacLean] dwells with an astonishing concentration of realistic detail on the hardships of settlers in Canada. Very strictly, the poem is not a poem of the Clearances, inasmuch as Maclean himself was not evicted, but its truth would have been even keener in the case of victims of the Clearances than in Maclean's own case. Its sombre but powerful note makes it a bitterly pointed retort to the idyllic picture of America in the 'Oran eadar Dòmhnall agus Dùghall' of the Stewarts' Collection.1087

For the poet, the forest is an exhausting and an almost insuperable barrier, and

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1085 Lines 31-2, poem 27.
1086 Lines 13-6, poem 27.
1087 Somhairle Mac Gill-eain, "The Poetry of the Clearances", in William Gillies, ed., *Ris a' Bhruthaich: The Criticism and Prose Writings of Sorley Maclean* (Stornoway: Acair, 1985), p. 48, at pp. 56-7.

encapsulates the intense hardship that faces the settler:

Mun dean mi àiteach 's mun tog mi bàrr ann	Before I till the soil and harvest a crop
'S a' choille ghàbhaidh 'chuir às a bonn	And dig the frightful forest from its root
Le neart mo ghàirdean, gum bi mi sàraichte,	By the strength of my arms, I'll be exhausted
Is treis air fàilinn mu' fàs a' chlann.	And long in decline, before I raise my hand.1088

Later in the poem, the poet gives an extensive description of the backbreaking labour that is required to clear the forest and make the land ready for planting.1089 John MacLean associates entry into the forest with physical darkness—"Nuair 'thig sibh innte gur beag 'chi sibh/Ach coille dhìreach 'toirt dhibh a' speur"1090—although these lines can also be read as a metaphorical descent into a sort of spiritual darkness brought on by the experience of emigration. The gloom of the forest, referred to in the first line of the poem, gives clear expression to John MacLean's state of mind.

John MacLean's complaints about the material and social conditions of the New World are highly representative of the rhetoric of dispraise employed by many of the emigrant poets. The depth of detail and the vividness of description—both elements referred to by Somhairle MacGill-eain—the completeness of the argument, and the vehemence of language are, however, unusual in this new tradition, and make this poem the outstanding example of the genre. With regard to the material conditions, like many other emigrant poets, John MacLean found both the intense winter cold and the oppressive summer heat of the New World to be unbearable; this is hardly surprising, given that he came from an island, Tiree, with a generally mild and moderate climate. His description of the Nova Scotia winter is particularly vivid, and at the end of the first verse quoted here, he ties in one of the other commonplaces of the rhetoric of dispraise, the poor and shocking footwear of the people of the New

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1088 Lines 21-4, poem 28.

1089 Lines 89-96, poem 28. The poet alludes to the process of making the "black forest", the "coille dhubh", described in Chapter Two.

1090 "On your arrival, you will see little,/But a towering forest, that blocks out the sky": lines 47-8, poem 28.

World:

Nuair 'thig an geamhradh is àm na dùbhlachd,	When winter, and the darkness comes
Bidh sneachda 'dlùthadh ri cùl nan geug	Snow packs together behind the branches,
Gu domhain dùmhail 'dol far na glùine	Deeply and thickly, going above the knee
Ge math an triùbhsair cha dean i feum,	No matter how good the trouser, it won't suffice,
Gun stocain dhùbailt' 'sa mhogais chlùdaich	Without doubled stockings in a ragged moccasin
'Bhios air a dùnadh gu dlùth le èill;	Which will be tightly bound with thongs;
B' e 'm fasan ùr dhuinn an cosg le fionndadh	It was our new fashion, to wear them with hair
Mar 'chaidh a rùsgadh don bhrùid an dè.	As though just skinned from the beast yesterday.
Mur bi mi eòlach airson mo chòmhdaich	If I'm not careful about my clothing
Gu' faigh mi reòta mo shròn 's mo bheul;	I will find my nose and mouth frozen;
Le gaoth a tuath 'bhios gu neamhail fuaraidh	With a northern wind that is cold and biting
Gum bi mo chluasan 'an cunnart geur;	My ears will be in sharp danger;
Bidh e cho fuath'sach, cha seas an tuagh ris,	It'll be so awful, the axe won't stand it,
Gu' mill e 'chruaidh ged a bha i geur;	It will spoil the blade, though it was sharp;
Mur toir mi blàths dhi gum brist 'stàilinn,	Unless I warm it, the steel will fracture,
Gun dol don cheàrdaich cha gheàrr i beum.	Without going to the smithy, it will cut no mark.1091

His complaint about the summer is, by comparison, much less extensive, and focuses primarily on the effects on him of the heat: "Nuair 'thig an sàmhradh 's a' miosa Chèitein,/Bidh teas na grèine 'gam fhàgail fann".1092 However, this passage leads to a consideration of the new and distasteful fauna which the settlers encountered. Chief amongst these are bears, which were a constant threat to the settlers and the little livestock that they possessed: "Na mathain bhèisteil gun dean iad èirigh/'Dhol feadh an treud 's gura mòr an call".1093 In the Nova Scotia Gaelic tradition, there are numerous songs about bears, often entitled "Òran a' Mhathain" ("The Song of the Bear"),1094 and generally of a humorous nature, some of which describe the trials of

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1091 Lines 49-64, poem 28.

1092 "When summer comes, and the month of May,/The heat of the sun will leave me weak": lines 65-6, poem 28.

1093 "The beastly bears, they too will rise [in springtime]/To go through the herd, causing massive loss": lines 69-70. These lines bring to mind the recollections of a Cape Breton informant, Donald Angus Beaton, recorded in the 1980s, who recalled oral traditions about his ancestor "Fionnlagh Mòr" Beaton who arrived at Mabou Coal Mines, Cape Breton and had to spend their first evening in their new home sleeping under their overturned boat for shelter. They woke the next day to find that all of their provisions had been scavenged by a bear. See James Watson and Ellison Robertson, eds., *Sealladh gu Taobh: Oral Tradition and Reminiscence by Cape Breton Gaels* (Sydney: Ellison Robertson and University College of Cape Breton Art Gallery, 1987), pp. 3-4.

1094 See, for example, Helen Creighton and Calum MacLeod, eds., *Gaelic Songs in Nova Scotia* (Ottawa: National Museums of Canada, 1979), at pp. 86-9, and *Mac-Talla* 12, 6:48, 18 September, 1903, a version of which appears in John Shaw, ed., *Brìgh an Òrain/A Story in Every Song: The Songs*

living by stealing farmers' sheep.1095 Such songs are based not only on a close acquaintance with bears, which posed an ongoing threat to livestock well after the period of initial settlement, but also on an intense awareness of the folk traditions articulated in songs such as "Òran do dh'Aimearaga", and of the fear with which the emigrant generation viewed these strange animals. If the bear represented the greater threat, the mosquito, a beast which was also unknown in Scotland, represented the greater source of annoyance and discomfort, as evidenced in these lines:

'S a' chuileag ineach gu socach 'puinnsean	And the taloned insect, its poison snoutily
'Gam lot gu lìonmhor le rinn an lainn.	Wounding me profusely with the barb of its lance.
Gun dean i m' aodann gu h-olc a chaobadh	It will make my face come up lumpy
Chan fhaic mi saoghal, 's ann 'bhios mi dall;	I'll not see the world, I will be blind;
Gun at mo shùilean le neart a cungaidh,	My eyes will swell with the strength of its poison,
Gu guineach drùidhteach le sùgh a teang'.	Its tongue's juice venomous and penetrating.1096

Indeed, beasts such as the mosquito are likened to the plagues of locusts of the Old Testament:

Chan fhaigh mi àireamh dhiubh anns an dànachd,	I cannot enumerate them in verses,
Gach beothach gràineil a thogas ceann,	Every odious beast that rears its head,
'S cho liutha plàigh ann 's a bh' air rìgh Phàroah,	And plagues as numerous as came to Pharaoh,
Airson nan tràillean nuair 'bhàth e 'n camp.	For the slaves when he drowned his men.1097

John MacLean's use of such imagery is significant. As we have seen, many of the emigrant poets who encouraged emigration or praised the New World likened emigration from Scotland to the deliverance of the Israelites to the Promised Land. Here, the poet is likening the New World to the horrors of Egypt, thereby turning the rhetoric of praise motif on its head.

John MacLean devotes considerable attention to the material hardship of the settlers, but unlike John "the Hunter" MacDonald or John MacRae, he does not

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and Tales of Lauchie MacLellan (Montreal & Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2000), at pp. 276-8.

1095 John Shaw, "Brief Beginnings", *supra*, at p. 351.

1096 Lines 71-6, poem 28.

criticise the settlers themselves for any lack of civility. This is consistent with his Scottish poetry, in which he shows a deep concern with the condition of the tenantry; part of the poet's purpose in this poem is to protect the tenantry from what he views as deplorable conditions in the New World, and from making the same mistake as him. It is also consistent with, and exemplary of what we know about John MacLean as a man; although he enjoyed the company of the nobility, he was also a man of the community in Caolas, and mixed with Gaels of all classes. Thus, John MacLean uses his own circumstances to illustrate the hardships that settlers can expect to face. He complains about the meagre diet—"Gun dad as fheàrr na buntàta lom"1098—and the general poverty of conditions:

> 'S an car a fhuair mi cha b' ann gu m' bhuannachd, The misfortune that his me has brought no profit,
> 'Tigh'nn far a' chuain air a' chuairt 'bha meallt';Coming over the ocean on a deceptive course
> Gu tìr nan craobh anns nach eil an t-saorsainn, To the land of the trees where there is no freedom,
> Gun mhart gun chaora 's mo dh'aodach gann. No cattle or sheep and few clothes on my back.1099

In this passage, the poet is also responding to the claim that the New World provides freedom from the effects of landlordism; his point is that there is no freedom where one cannot feed or clothe oneself. The poet argues that there is a hardship in the New World about which Gaels in Scotland are not aware: "Seo i 'n dùthaich 'sa bheil an cruadal/Gun fhios don t-sluagh a tha 'tigh'nn a-nall".1100 This theme is developed later in the poem:

> Ge mòr a' seanachas a bh' aca 'an Albainn, Though great the talk they had in Scotland,
> Tha 'chùis a' dearbhadh nach robh e fìor; Matters prove that it wasn't true;
> Na dolair ghorma, chan fhaic mi 'falbh iad The green dollars, I don't see them tendered
> Ged 'bha iad ainmeil a bhith 'san tìr. Although they were reputedly in this land.1101

1097 Lines 77-80, poem 28.
1098 Line 20, poem 28.
1099 Lines 85-8, poem 28.
1100 "This is the land in which there is hardship/Unknown to those who are coming over the sea": lines 25-6, poem 28.
1101 Lines 97-100, poem 28.

The poet argues that the emigrant will find the most primitive economy imaginable—one based on barter rather than cash:

Ma nì iad bargain chan fhaigh iad airgead,	If they make a bargain, they won't get money,
Ach 's èiginn ainmeachadh anns a' phrìs;	Though it must be named in the price;
Ma gheibh iad cùnnradh air feadh na bùthan	If they get a bargain in any of the shops
Gu' pàigh e 'null le flùr na ìm.	It is paid for with butter or flour.1102

Indeed, the poet goes on to note that there are no markets, fair days or trysts, making the point that things are much more primitive than at home. In this environment, the poet observes that many a settler has fallen into debt and has ultimately succumbed to financial ruin:

Cha chulaidh-fharmaid iad leis an ainbhfhiach,	They're not to be envied, as they're indebted
A' reic na shealbhaich iad ann an còir,	Selling whatever they own in their possession,
Bidh fear na' fiachan is cromadh cinn air	The indebted man will hold his head down
'Ga chur don phrìosan mun dìol e 'n stòr.	Put in prison if he doesn't repay all his goods.

Mu' tig an cùisean à taigh na cùrtach	Before the lawsuits emerge from the courthouse
Gun tèid an dùblachadh aig a' mhòd;	They will be doubled at the trial;
Tha lagh a' giùlan o làimh na *jury*	Law that's delivered by the hand of the jury
Gun tèid a spùinneadh 's nach fiù e 'n còrr;	Demands he be plundered, as he's worth no more;
Bidh earraid siùbhlach air feadh na dùthchadh,	The travelling sheriff will be about the country
'Gan ruith le cunntasan air an tòir;	Chasing and harrying them with their accounts;
Gur mòr mo chùram gun tig e 'm ionnsaigh,	My great worry is that he'll come my way,
Cha ghabh e diùltadh 's bidh diùbhail oirnn.	He can't be denied, and we'll be ruined.1103

Here the poet is again turning the stereotypes of the poets who praise the New World on their heads. As we have seen, those poets make much of the harsh treatment of the tenantry and the ceaseless harrying of them by the estate agents. Here, John MacLean is saying that the emigrant will be subjected to similar treatment by a new class of oppressors, and the debtor's prison of which he speaks may well have been a more fearful outcome for his audience that even eviction by a grounds officer. Implicit is the message that John MacLean had made explicit at the end of "Am Mealladh", poem 27: the grass is not always greener on far away meadows.

As in much of the poetry of dispraise of the New World, "Òran do dh'Aimearaga" is shot through with a profound sense of frustrated expectations

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1102 Lines 97-104, poem 28.

brought about by the disjunction between the idea and the reality of the New World. At the heart of the poem is the argument that this disjunction has been manufactured for the purposes of deceiving poor and vulnerable Gaels. The theme of deception was introduced by John MacLean in "Am Mealladh", poem 27, but in "Òran do dh'Aimearaga", he both expands on the extent of the deception and attributes blame for it: it is laid squarely at the feet of the emigration agents in Scotland who, in the poet's view, have been encouraging emigration by painting a wholly unfounded picture of what the emigrants might expect. He makes his accusation clear early in the poem—"Gur olc a fhuaras oirnn luchd a' bhuairidh/A rinn le 'n tuairisgeul ur toirt ann"1104—and expands on it in subsequent verses. The poet tells his audience what they might expect to hear from the agents:

Bidh gealladh làidir 'ga thoirt an tràth sin,	A firm promise will then be offered
Bidh cliù an àite 'ga chur a' meud;	The reputation of the place will be enhanced;
Bidh iad a' gràitinn gum bidh ur càirdean	They will claim that your relations
Gu sona, saidhbhir gun dad do dh'èis.	Are happy and wealthy, in need of nothing.1105

Such promises he describes as "naidheachd mheallta",1106 and accuses the agents of trying to stoke the lust of the Gaels.1107 By using verbs such as "sanntaich" and adjectives such as "meallta", the poet introduces the notion of temptation and desire; such imagery calls to mind the biblical story of Adam and Eve, and introduces a deeper moral quality to the argument that would resonate with his audience. He concludes the argument in the most forceful terms, accusing the emigration agents and other promoters of emigration to the New World of simply being liars:

Nuair thèid na dròbhairean sin 'gar n-iarraidh	When those drovers come to get us
'S ann leis na briagan a nì iad feum,	It is with lies that they succeed,

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1103 Lines 109-120, poem 28.

1104 "What evil tactics were used by the enticers/Who by their yarns, took you over here": lines 27-8, poem 28.

1105 Lines 33-6, poem 28.

1106 Line 37, poem 28. Later in the poem, John MacLean describes emigration in the same language, as "a' chuairt 'bha meallt'"/ "the trip that was deceptive": line 86.

1107 "Feuch a' sanntaich sibh 'dol 'na dèidh"/"To see if you'll crave to seek it [the misleading story of New World prosperity"] out": line 38, poem 28.

Gun fhacal fìrinn a bhith 'ga ìnnse,	Without uttering a truthful word,
'S an cridhe 'dìteadh na their am beul.	Their heart condemning what their mouths say.1108

The reference to "drovers" is also highly charged; the implication is that the agents look upon the emigrant Gaels as nothing more than cattle, going to the market and then to the slaughter.

John MacLean intended "Òran do dh'Aimearaga" to be a warning to those back in Scotland who might have been considering emigration. This is clear from these lines:

Chan fhaigh mi ìnnse dhuibh ann 'am Ghàidhlig	My Gaelic fails me when I try to tell you
Chan dean mo nàdar a chuir air dòigh	Nor can my nature arrange in form
Gach fios a b' àill leam 'thoirt do na càirdean	All I'd wish conveyed to my relations
'San tìr a dh'fhàg mi 'rinn m' àrach òg;	In the land I left, where I was once a boy;
Gach aon a leughas e tuigibh reusan,	Each one who reads, let him heed reason,
Na tugaibh èisdeachd do luchd a' bhòsd,	Pay no attention to the people of the boasts,
Na fàidhean brèige a bhios 'gar teumadh,	The false prophets who will tempt you,
Gun aca spies dhiubh ach dèidh ur n-òir.	With no regard for you, only after your gold.1109

The poet goes on in the next verse to claim that it would take him a month to put into writing everything that is on his mind, and his comment in the passage just quoted, after expressing with such clarity and detail the horrors of the New World, that his Gaelic is not sufficient to relate all that is on his mind, would certainly have distressed a Scottish audience, particularly one familiar with his poetic talents. Alexander Maclean Sinclair notes that the poem was no doubt "the means to keep many persons from emigrating",1110 and it appears that John MacLean had indeed sent a copy in a letter to his brother Donald, in Tiree, where it circulated amongst family and friends, and in the wider community.1111 In this way, we see that John MacLean had a clear didactic purpose in composing this poem and that he is assuming the traditional role of the poet in Gaelic society, that of spokesman for his society, who helps to reinforce

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1108 Lines 41-4, poem 28.
1109 Lines 121-8, poem 28.
1110 Alexander Maclean Sinclair, *Clarsach na Coille*, 1881, *supra*, at p. xix.
1111 Anne Lorne Gillies, ed., *Songs of Gaelic Scotland* (Edinburgh: Birlinn, 2005), at p. 253.

its values and guide its decisions.

What is most significant about the poem, though, is its highly personal tone, and its exploration of psychological issues such as loneliness, physical and mental isolation, loss and remorse at the personal choices one has made. While the poet did have a social purpose and even a sense of obligation to his home community in composing the poem, and was therefore fulfilling one of the traditional roles of the poet in Gaelic society, the poem is first and foremost an expression of deep personal feeling, and this depth of feeling also mark it off from much of the other emigrant poetry of dispraise of the New World. The poet is writing not only for his community, but also for himself.

John MacLean begins the poem with a statement about his intense loneliness—"Gu bheil mi 'm ònrachd 'sa choill' ghruamaich"—and proceeds to explain its effects on him: he claims that he is no longer able to put together a song, that his mental skills have deserted him, and that he has even lost the command of Gaelic that he once had.1112 In one sense, each of these claims is belied by the song itself: it is technically of a very high order in terms of the execution of its demanding metre, rich in terms of its language, rigorous in terms of its argument, and powerful in terms of its emotional directness. However, these claims are a powerful rhetorical device. For a gifted and highly respected poet to fear the loss of his most prized mental faculties due to the loneliness of his new environment would convey a very powerful message to his audience. Such claims also convey powerfully the poet's highly troubled emotional state; his sense of despair was undoubtedly deeply felt.

The physical isolation of Upper Barney's River was part of the reason for John MacLean's profound sense of loneliness: "Chan ioghnadh dhomhsa ged 'tha mi

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1112 Lines 5-10, poem 28.

brònach,/'S ann 'tha mo chòmhnaidh air cùl nam beann".1113 However, his main complaint is the loss of community that he is experiencing in the New World. He has no one with whom to converse: "'S e 'mheudaich bròn dhomh 's a lughdaich sòlas/Gun duine còmhl' rium a nì rium cainnt".1114 He was a gifted singer, and yet there is no one who asks him for a song: "Air bheag thoilinntinn 'sa choille chruinn seo,/Gun duine faighneachd an seinn mi ceòl".1115 It is the social aspects of life in Tiree which the poet misses more than anything else:

Cha b' e sin m' àbhaist an tùs mo làithean,	That wasn't my custom in my old days,
'S ann bhithinn ràbhartach aig gach bòrd;	At every table, I'd love to chat;
Gu cridheil sunntach 'an comann cùirteil	In hearty spirits, in jovial company
A' ruith ar n-ùine gun chùram oirnn.	Spending our time without a care.1116

Such recollections allow him to give vent to his loneliness and to his deep sorrow and sense of loss in the very final lines of the poem:

Nuair 'thug mi cùl ruibh bha mi 'gur n-ionndrainn	When I turned away from you, I missed you dearly
Gun shil mo shùilean gu dlùth le deòir,	And my eyes shed tears in copious floods,
Air moch Diardaoin a' dol seach an Caolas	Early that Tuesday as we passed Caolas
'S a' long fo 'h-aodach 's a' ghaoth on chòrs.	The ship under sail and the wind off the coast.1117

Breandán Ó Madagáin has observed that the use of song composition as a means of therapy was one of the functions of song in the nineteenth century Irish tradition: "[t]he catharsis of the creative endeavour brings a degree of control over the emotions so expressed".1118 It is possible that John MacLean had a similar purpose in mind, and that this poem may have been a means through which he was trying to reconcile himself to his new reality. The centrality of the poet's feelings and perceptions in this poem is very different from the norms of the panegyric tradition in

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1113 "I'm not surprised that I am doleful,/I have my home in the back of beyond": lines 17-8, poem 28.
1114 Lines 11-2, poem 28.
1115 Lines 135-6, poem 28.
1116 Lines 137-40, poem 28.
1117 Lines 141-4, poem 28.
1118 Breandán Ó Madagáin, "Functions of Irish Song in the Nineteenth Century", (1985) 53 *Béaloideas* 130, at p. 148, and generally at pp. 148-51.

which John MacLean was so thoroughly steeped, and these are features which give the poem a sensibility that critics such as Derick Thomson would describe as "modern", and the intense expression of loneliness, isolation, loss and remorse certainly has resonance for audiences in an increasingly rootless age such as our own.

The poem is still remembered, sung and quoted by Nova Scotia Gaels. However, it is not understood by them as an anti-emigration song: for the descendents of the emigrant generation, the "gloomy forest" is home, and the vast majority would be of the view that their ancestors did not err in coming to the New World. As John Shaw has argued, the surviving oral traditions of Gaelic Nova Scotia do not suggest any real nostalgia for Scotland.1119 Rather, the poem is understood as a testimonial to the courage, determination and resourcefulness of the emigrant generation who established the foundations of the New World Gàidhealtachd. We see this, for example, in the recollection of a Kingsville, Inverness County, Cape Breton Gael, James MacKay, who recorded the following in Glendale, Cape Breton, in 1987:

> Bho 'n àm a bha mi glé òg thànaig roinn do dh' atharrachadh air cor an t-sluaigh, agus air an teachd air tir. 'S an àm mo sheanair bha gach àit' an deifir suidheachadh. Aig an àm sin bha a' chuid bu mhotha do 'n t-sluagh a toirt am beòshlàint' as an talamh. Bha saothair glé mhór air a' sin. Cha robh na h-innleachdan a tha aig feadhainn an diugh aca. Bha am fearann ri réiteach "le neart an gaoirdeanan" mar a thuirt am Bàrd MacGilleathain. Bho 'n àm a chuireadh iad a' choille thar a buinn leis an tuaigh bha obair mhór air toirt gu ìre barr a thoirt. Le cinnt bha na coimhearsnaich teann air a' chéile. Bhiodh iad tric am pàirt ri gach obair. . . .1120

Writing in the Antigonish *Casket* on 18 December, 1918, William D. Cameron,

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1119 John Shaw, "Brief Beginnings", *supra.*

1120 "Since the time that I was very young, many changes have come upon the condition of the people and their way of life. In my father's time, each place was in a different situation. At that time, the majority of the people earned their living from the land. That involved a great deal of labour. They did not have some of the machinery that some have today. They had to clear their land, "with the strength of their arms", as the Bard MacLean said. From the time that they knocked down the forest with their axe there was a great deal of work involved in bringing forward a crop. Certainly, neighbours were close to each other. They would often help each other with each task . . .": James Watson and Ellison Robertson, eds., *Sealladh gu Taobh: Oral Tradition and Reminiscence by Cape Breton Gaels* (Sydney: Ellison Robertson and University College of Cape Breton Art Gallery, 1987), at pp. 26-7.

"Drummer on Foot", quoted lines 89 to 96 from "Òran do dh'Aimearaga", which make reference to the difficult work of clearing the forest and preparing the "coille dhubh" for planting, to illustrate that the men in pioneer days were by no means idle: "They were engaged in the labor so vividly depicted by the Bard McLean" in those lines.1121

"Òran do dh'Aimearaga" was not John MacLean's final word on the subject of emigration, and like many other settlers who were initially disappointed with their new home, he became reconciled to the New World. This reconciliation was recorded by John MacLean in "Òran eadar Iain MacGilleain agus an Còirneal Friseal", poem 29. Like "Am Mealladh", poem 27, the poem is a "còmhradh", a fictional conversation or dialogue, a form which John MacLean employed both in his Scottish and his Nova Scotian poetry. It is likely that this poem was composed a few years after John MacLean had arrived in Nova Scotia. The poet speaks of a reversal in prices,1122 and this may be a reference to a recession which afflicted the colony of Nova Scotia starting in about 1825; if this is the case, it is likely that the poem was composed at about this time.

The Colonel Fraser with whom the poet engages in the dialogue was a Pictou County Gael named Simon Fraser, who was also known as Captain Fraser or Major Fraser. As noted in Chapter Two, the poet entered into a contract with Fraser on 29 July, 1819 at Tobermory to sail with his family to Nova Scotia on the ship *Economy*, and they departed shortly thereafter, arriving in Pictou about the beginning of October of that year. Simon Fraser was the son of Captain John Fraser, who had served in the 82nd Regiment in the American War of Independence and who had received 700 acres,

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1121 D. MacFarlane and R. A. MacLean, eds., *Drummer on Foot* (Antigonish, date unknown).
1122 At line 64.

a very sizeable land grant, at Fraser's Point, on the south side of Pictou harbour.1123 Captain John Fraser was appointed a magistrate at Pictou on 15 October, 1784, and his wife and two sons, Simon and John, joined John Fraser some time thereafter. Simon Fraser's brother John was at one point the only lawyer in the town of Pictou; he was also the first collector of customs, and was therefore usually referred to as "Collector Fraser".1124 Simon Fraser was one of the most active of the emigration agents in the Highlands; his ships ran so regularly to Pictou that he earned the nickname "Nova Scotia" and he was credited (with considerable exaggeration) with having single-handedly peopled Nova Scotia with emigrant Scots. Edward Fraser of Reelig, the customs collector at Inverness, Scotland, claimed that "during the peace after the American Wars, Major Simon Fraser and others carried out 4,000" emigrants, which is likely an underestimate.1125 Simon Fraser was not, however, alone: others based in Pictou were also very active in the emigration trade, including George and Hugh Dunoon, and James Logan. Simon Fraser reportedly entered into the business of transporting emigrants to Canada in 1790, and was exceedingly active over the next thirty or more years.

Lucille Campey offers a balanced portrait of Simon Fraser. She notes that the Scottish establishment castigated him for being "an irresponsible rogue". According to the portrait they painted, he "persuaded unsuspecting and vulnerable people to emigrate, took their money and profited from their foolishness and misfortune". This is certainly consistent with the argument developed by John MacLean in "Am Mealladh" and in "Òran do dh'Aimearaga", and it is certainly possible that his poetry

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1123 Lucille H. Campey, *After the Hector: The Scottish Pioneers of Nova Scotia and Cape Breton 1773-1852* (Toronto: Natural Heritage Books, 2004), at p. 169 and p. 251.

1124 The Rev. George Patterson, *A History of the County of Pictou, Nova Scotia* (Montreal: Dawson Brothers, 1877), at Appendix F, "List of Grantees of the 82nd Regiment, at pp. 458-461, p. 114, p. 115 and p. 217.

1125 Lucille Campey, *After the Hector*, *supra*, at p. 63.

helped form the establishment view or was useful propaganda for them. Campey argues that, however comforting this portrayal was to the many people in Scotland who disapproved of emigration, "it was a travesty of what was actually taking place" and that "the feverish growth in the numbers wishing to emigrate was being stimulated by the considerable success of emigrant Scots and the growing realization that Nova Scotia and Cape Breton offered potentially great advantages to enterprising people".1126

Simon Fraser's record as an emigration agent is not altogether clear, as illustrated by his involvement in the the emigration in 1817 of Barra people to Sydney, Cape Breton, on the "William Tell" and the "Hope", as related by Campey. Upon arriving in Cape Breton, the emigrants claimed that Simon Fraser had told them to expect "provisions for three years, what land they wanted, and farming and agricultural utensils". Unable to offer any of these items, the Lieutenant-Governor of Cape Breton, Major-General George Robert Ainslie, felt that the emigrants "had been much deceived", and directed them to join their countrymen from Barra, who were settled on the Bras d' Or lake, and they took this advice and settled near Grand Narrows. Roderick MacNeil, the landlord in Barra, was, like Ainslie, furious at Simon Fraser, alleging that he had exploited the tenants to make money: "Mr. Fraser acts as a job to get money and his profits would be better in the pockets of the passengers". But Campey argues that Fraser was "much maligned"; he had worked closely with the Colonial Office in helping the Barra folk to secure the land at Grand Narrows, he had sent them salt from Greenock to help them preserve their meat for the sea crossing, and thus, in her estimation, his role as an agent "had thus extended

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1126 *Ibid*, at p. 56, 55.

far beyond the task of just chartering ships".1127 John MacLean may have been justifiably disappointed with the conditions which he found in Nova Scotia, but there is no evidence that he had any cause for complaint with respect to the passage to North America that Simon Fraser had provided: the *Acadian* Reporter found that the passengers "were landed in good health and spirits" and that four children were born upon the passage, and it commended the Captain (referred to as Captain Frazier) "for the kind treatment they received from him for a passage".1128 Based on "Òran eadar Iain MacGilleain agus an Còirneal Friseal", the poet's obvious resentment of Simon Fraser, expressed so vehemently in "Òran do dh'Aimearaga", had clearly receded, and he, like Campey, seems to have come to a more balanced estimation of Fraser's work as an emigration agent, and the merits of the New World more generally.

John MacLean began the poem by rehearsing some of the themes he had explored in "Òran do dh'Aimearaga": he expresses his great sorrow, he claims that his mental faculties have been smothered, and that he no longer has opportunities for conversation and mirth.1129 He then lays the blame for his predicament at the feet of "the Colonel", Simon Fraser, who enticed the poet to Nova Scotia through "mòran brosgail is bòilich",1130 stories of how the emigrants' relations in the New World were so much better off there and how the emigrants would never be in want. Instead, the poet claims, what awaited them was hard work and hardship.1131 At this point, the Colonel responds, and there follows a debate between the two men, each responding in turn to what the other has said.

Through the persona of "the poet", John MacLean repeats many of the complaints that he had made in "Òran do dh'Aimearaga", and many of the themes of

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1127 *Ibid*, at p. 103
1128 *Ibid* , at p. 169 and p. 251.
1129 Lines 1-6, poem 29.
1130 "Much lively talk and boasting": line 11, poem 29.

the rhetoric of dispraise are rehearsed yet again. Significantly, "the Colonel" does not deny all of the charges laid by "the poet"—although he vehemently denies the poet's accusation that he has been spreading deception about the New World1132—but argues that in time, things change, and that in the long run, the poet, like many other emigrants, will recognise that he is better off in Nova Scotia than he would have been in Scotland. Thus, in response to the poet's complaint about the hardship of the early years and the hard labour involved in clearing the forest, the Colonel makes the following points:

Ged 'tha uireasaibh an-dràst' ort,	Though you are in want right now,
Gheibh thu ann an àird ri tìm air,	You'll make the best of it in time;
Nuair a bhios an crodh 's na caoraich	When the cattle and sheep
Air na raointean dhuit a' cinntinn,	Are multiplying in your fields,
Bidh tu pailt 'am biadh 's 'an aodaich,	You'll have plenty of food and clothing,
'S thèid leagadh nan craobh air dìochuimhn';	And the felling of trees will be forgotten;
Bidh tu 'sin saidhbhir socrach,	You'll then be prosperous and at ease
'S thèid a' bhochdainn às do chuimhne.	And poverty will be long forgotten.
. . .	. . .
Na fir a chì thu 'san àite	The men you seen in this place,
B' aithne dhaibh do chàs nuair 'shìn iad;	They knew your hardship when they arrived;
Nuair a rèitich iad a' fearann,	When they had leveled their land,
Thug iad aire dha le crìonnachd;	They paid attention to it with prudence;
Rinn iad beartas air a thàilleabh,	They became wealthy because of it,
Ged a thàinig iad 's e dhith orra.	Though they had arrived in need.1133

The poet responds by arguing that few settlers have become wealthy, and many have fallen into debt and have faced imprisonment. As in "Òran do dh'Aimearaga", he turns the rhetoric of the proponents of emigration on its head by noting that in the New World, the sheriff will be in hot pursuit of the indebted settler—"Bidh a' siorram air an tòrachd"1134—the proponents of emigration tended to frame the oppressions of the landlords in similar terms—and he likens the sheriff to "drovers",1135 another motif that he has used in "Òran do dh'Aimearaga", poem 28, and which would resonate with a Highland audience. Significantly, the Colonel does not deny that

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1131 Lines 17-24, poem 29.
1132 Lines 41-2, poem 29.
1133 Lines 25-32, 43-8, poem 29.
1134 Line 53, poem 29.

some settlers have fallen into these difficulties, and admits that it has not been easy for them to climb out from under it.1136 This is a very effective rhetorical device: in both "Òran do dh'Aimearaga" and this poem, John MacLean accuses emigration agents such as the Colonel of deceiving the emigrant Gaels, and by attributing such candour to the Colonel, John MacLean effectively undermines his own charges.

At this point, the Colonel turns the conversation to the question of land, and the tide of the argument begins to turn. The Colonel draws upon many of the commonplaces in the rhetoric employed by the pro-emigration poets, arguing that the poet will not miss many aspects of life in Scotland, such as the threat of clearance if rent is not paid, the power of the landlord to raise rents, and the threatening presence of the factor bearing a summons of removal.1137 Significantly, the poet does not respond to these claims; instead, he says that there is much that he will miss, and makes specific reference to the nobles with whom he associated while in Scotland: "Gheibhinn meas a-measg nan uaislean/'Bha mun cuairt dhomh 'n Earraghàidheal".1138 The Colonel's response is powerfully effective. First, he says that it may have been good for the poet, a privileged member of the community and himself of the MacLean aristocracy, to have enjoyed the company of the nobles, but that this is not the case for his more humble countrymen, who are "in the service" of the nobles and are little more than slaves.1139 By allowing the Colonel to play the class card in this way, John MacLean is once again undermining his own arguments both in this poem and in "Òran do dh'Aimearaga"; most of his audience, both in

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1135 Line 55, poem 29.
1136 Lines 57-62, poem 29.
1137 Lines 74-80, poem 29.
1138 "I would find respect amongst the nobles/Who surrounded my in Argyll": lines 85-6, poem 29.
1139 "Ged bu mhath 'bhith 'measg nan uaislean,/Gur h-ann fada bhuait 's fheàrr iad;/'S a' luchd muinntir 'tha 'nan seirbhis,/Chan àirde 'n ainm na na tràillean"/"Though it was good to be amongst the

Canada and Scotland, will have known that he enjoyed a privileged position compared to most, and that his experience is not representative of theirs. John MacLean then allows the Colonel to deliver the *coup de grace*:

Sleamhainn an leac aig an dorsaibh	Slippery is the stone at their doorsteps,
Mura choisicheas tu fàilidh;	Unless you walk in a gentle manner;
Nan tuiteadh tu uair gun fhios dhuit,	If you were to fall without knowing it,
Rachadh bristeadh air a' chàirdeas.	The fellowship would be broken.1140

Hector MacDougall argued in his note to this poem in the 1928 edition of *Clarsach na Coille1141* that this was a reference to John MacLean's alleged falling out with the Laird of Coll, referred to in Chapters Two and Three, and kept alive in the oral traditions of Tiree, Coll and Glengarry. John MacLean's audience would likely have been aware of these oral traditions, and he is clearly exploiting this to make the point that even a person of his social prominence, a member of the minor MacLean aristocracy, and a celebrated poet to the Laird, is not free from the uncertainty of landlordism that existed in Scotland.

The poet's only response is that a man of means in Scotland has no difficulties with the rent.1142 He says that such men are merry throughout the summer, with their cattle in the glens, a reference to the old Highland custom of taking cattle to the summer grazings at the upland shielings. The poet adds that such men need only go to the cattle market if they need some cash to deal with the rent.1143 In putting such a response in the mouth of the poet, John MacLean is further undermining his own case. He knows, and his audience in both Scotland and Canada will have known, that in the 1820s there are very few tenants left in the Highlands who could be described as "wealthy" or "rich". He and his audience will also have known that the practice of

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nobles,/It is better for them to be far from you;/Your countrymen who are in their service/Have no better name than the slaves": lines 89-92, poem 29.

1140 Lines 93-6, poem 29.

1141 At p. 283.

1142 "'S iomadh fear stòrasach stochdail/'Tha glè shocrach a' toirt mail dhaibh"/"Many a wealthy, rich man/Finds no trouble in giving them rents": lines 97-8, poem 29.

summer grazing at the shieling was becoming a thing of the past—he himself signals this by referring to the glens to which the "merry" tenants retreated as being empty or desolate,1144 itself a reminder to his audience of the real conditions in the Highlands, in which the old practices of grazing of cattle in the summer shielings had been brought to an end by the clearance of these glens to make way for sheep farms. Finally, he and his audience will have known that since the end of the Napoleonic Wars, Britain had entered a period of prolonged recession in prices for goods, and in particular, a sharp decline in demand for and prices of cattle. Thus, the poet's response would have been interpreted as that of a man thoroughly out of touch with the people; his audience would at this point have been more suspicious of the honesty of the poet than of the forthright figure of the Colonel. In response, the Colonel is able to hammer home his advantage by rehearsing a number of the most effective arguments in the rhetoric of the pro-emigration poets:

Ged 'tha toileachadh 'sna glinn sin,	Though there is pleasure in those glens,
Tha cusbann an Rìgh ri 'phàigheadh;	The King's excise tax must be paid;
Chan fhaod e iasg 'thoirt à linne,	He may no take a fish from a pool,
Na fiadh on fhìreach as àirde;	Nor a deer from the highest moor;
Ma mharbhas e eun 'san doire,	If he kills a bird in the grove,
Thèid a choireachadh mar mhèirleach,	He will be condemned as a thief;
Tàirnidh iad a-staigh gu binn e,	They will bring him in to judgment,
Thèid a dhìteadh 's cuirear càin air.	He'll be convicted and will be given a fine.1145

From this point, the poet never recovers. Unable to answer the Colonel's arguments, he is thrown back on lamenting the hardships of his present situation in the New World, hauling firewood through the deep snows.1146 The Colonel's response is simple: cheer up, as things will be better soon, and remember the ultimate reward for emigration, which is freedom from landlordism, and title to one's own land which

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1143 Lines 99-104, poem 29.
1144 ". . . 'sna gleannan fàsach": line 100, poem 29.
1145 Lines 105-12, poem 29.
1146 Lines 113-20, poem 29.

can be passed on to one's descendants.1147 He finishes his argument by reminding the poet of the Biblical story of Adam and Eve:

Airson toileachadh do nàdair,	In order to satisfy your nature,
Chan eil stàth dhuit a bhith 'strì ris;	It's no use for you to be fighting it;
Sin an ceum nach tèid thu dh'àicheadh,	That's the step you cannot deny,
Bhon a dh' fhàillinich ar sinnsreabh;	Since our ancestors failed;
Ged a bha pailteas aig Adhamh,	Though Adam had plenitude,
Bha craobh 'sa ghàradh a dhìth air;	He still wanted a tree in the garden,
Dh'fhàg a' meas fo iochd a' bhàis e,	The fruit left him in the mercy of death,
Nuair a ghabh e pàirt on mhnaoi dheth.	When he took a bite of it from his wife.1148

In "Òran do dh'Aimearaga", John MacLean set on its head the imagery of the New World as the Promised Land. Here, he may be trying to reverse his position by implying that the New World is, indeed, the Promised Land, even the Garden of Eden.

At this point in the poem, the poet relents, and acknowledges an important moral and theological point: human beings, no matter their station, never seem to be satisfied with their lot. John MacLean's message is that, on balance, he and his fellow settlers should be satisfied with and grateful. While he concludes by saying that he will never forget the land of the Gaels, he will not go on criticising the New World, for fear that his audience will grow tired of hearing him complain or will find fault with his Gaelic. Once again, we see here the poet turning a claim made in "Òran do dh'Aimearaga" on its head—the claim that in the New World, there is nobody about to even hear his Gaelic. Like "Òran do dh'Aimearaga", this poem is both a personal and a public exercise. In it, he seeks to entertain and instruct fellow Gaels, but also works out a subjective and intimate reconciliation with his circumstances. From this point forward, John MacLean is true to the promise he makes at the end of the poem. He leaves behind the first of the two great topics that confronted the poets of the emigrant generation, that of making sense of the experience of emigration itself. In "Òran do dh'Aimearaga", he created the archetypal anti-emigration song. In this

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1147 Lines 121-8, poem 29.
1148 Lines 153-60, poem 29.

poem, he has forcefully answered his own creation. While other poets of the emigrant generation would revisit the debate—John "the Hunter" MacDonald composed his denunciation and his cousin Allan "the Ridge" his response to it in the 1830s—John MacLean has fully canvassed the themes and has come to a resolution that is both characteristic and representative of that to which the vast majority of New World Gaels and their descendants ultimately came. At the end of the poem, he says farewell to Scotland.1149 It is an important moment in his life and in his poetry, for he now turned to the second great topic, that of community building.

The Poetry of Community Building

We saw in "Òran do dh'Aimearaga" that amongst the most profound causes of John MacLean's desperate sadness was the sense of loss of community, and in particular, the loss of companionship of other Gaels with whom he could converse and who appreciated his artistic skills. In "Òran do dh'Aimearaga", John MacLean claimed that the loss of such a community threatened to smother his creativity. "Òran a' Bhàl Ghàidhealaich", "Song of the Highland Ball", poem 33, was inspired by an invitation to John MacLean to attend a ball that was held at the start of spring in the year 1826 at the house of David Murray, in Merigomish, Pictou County. According to the introductory note in both editions of *Clarsach na Coille*, only Gaelic speakers were permitted to attend the ball. The song was composed in thanks for the invitation, and the poet sang it himself at the event. The song represents a further stage in John MacLean's reconciliation with life in the New World.

In spite of his isolation at Upper Barney's River, John MacLean had by this time made a string of friendships with other emigrant Gaels, including a particularly

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1149 "Soraidh bhuam gu tìr nan Gàidheal": line 175, poem 29.

close one with a Roman Catholic priest from Glenmoriston, Fr. Colin Grant, which will be explored below. Events such as "Am Bàl Gàidhealach", "The Highland Ball", showed the poet that a healthy new Gaelic community could be created in the New World, and this poem is indicative of John MacLean's willingness to play a part in building this community. Indeed, the rediscovery of community has reawakened his muse:

Fhuair mi sgeul a bha ro bhinn,	I got news that was most sweet,
Dh'ùraich gleus air teud mo chin,	And which renewed my poetic muse,
'S bidh mi 'nis a' dol 'ga sheinn,	I am now going to sing a verse,
Ged tha mi 'sa choill' a' falach.	Though I'm hidden in the forest.1150

He is still "hidden in the forest", but the gloom has receded, as we can see from the chorus:

Bithibh aotrom 's togaibh fonn,	Be lighthearted and raise a tune,
Cridheil, sunntach gun 'bhith trom,	Cheerful and happy, without being sad,
'G òl deoch-slàinte na bheil thall,	Drinking a toast to those over there,
Ann an tìr nam beann 's nan gleannaibh.	In the land of the mountains and glens.1151

While the poet refers to the homeland, he does so without any sense of nostalgia or loss. John Shaw has argued that

> . . . the song literature [of the emigrant Gaels] makes clear that the relocation [to the New World] was regarded by the immigrants themselves in terms of their social and cultural integrity as an hiatus rather than a near-fatal blow. In fact the evidence shows that the necessary networks of family, community and culture re-established themselves with resiliency and in a remarkably short time; we may suppose that rapid social re-integration and general lack of nostalgia in the population contributed strongly to the sense of vigour and developing purpose expressed by the bards of the region.1152

This argument is certainly borne out by "Òran a' Bhàl Ghàidhealaich", which is a testament to the resiliency of both John MacLean but also of the new New World Gaelic community which he celebrates in this song.

The song is both an exhortation to the Gaels of the New World to remember the land and virtues of their forefathers, and an extended reflection on many of those

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1150 Lines 5-8, poem 33.
1151 Lines 1-4, poem 33.

virtues. In this sense, it is a very conscious attempt at community-building. For John MacLean, both the fact of the ball and his invitation to attend illustrated for him that the New World Gaels had, indeed, not forgotten those virtues, and lines such as the following are in sharp contrast to the negative portrayal of the New World Gaels that emerged in some of the poetry of dispraise, for example in John "the Hunter" MacDonald's "Òran do dh'Aimearaga":

Nuair a thèid an comann cruinn,	When the company comes together,
Bidh iad siobhalta le loinn,	They will be civil and in good form,
Cliùiteach, ciallach, fialaidh, grinn,	Distinguished, tactful, hospitable and fine,
'S bheir iad coibhneas do dh'fhear aineoil.	They'll offer kindness to the stranger.1153

In verses such as this, John MacLean is both praising the Gaels of the New World and holding up and reinforcing certain standards of conduct which are expected of them. In this sense, John MacLean is reassuming the traditional role of the poet in Gaelic society, that of spokesman for his community and guardian of its values. We see this also in this verse:

Cha bhi sgùbaireachd mun chlàr,	There'll be no churlishness around the table,
Ann an cuideachda mo ghràidh,	In the company that I adore,
Aig a bheil an inntinn àrd,	Who possess lofty minds,
'S nach gabh tàmailt bho na Gallaibh.	And who won't take an insult from the Lowlander.1154

In addition to the social virtues which the poet seeks to reinforce, we also see in this passage evidence of the cultural divide which John MacLean perceived between the Gaels and other Scots, and this sense of ethnic identification and ethnic solidarity in the face of outside threats is a theme that we have seen in the Scottish poetry and which will re-emerge elsewhere in his Canadian poetry. The poet was clearly inspired by the commitment that his fellow settlers had to the perpetuation of Gaelic language in the New World, as evidenced by the fact that attendance was restricted to Gaelic speakers, and he ties his praise of the language to his praise of the martial values of

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1152 John Shaw, "Brief Beginnings", *supra*, at p. 347.
1153 Lines 13-6, poem 33.

the Gaels themselves:

Cànain ghasta, bhlasta, bhinn,	A delightful, eloquent, dulcet language,
'S i bha 'n cleachdadh aig na suinn,	She was used by the warriors,
'Dhearbh an gaisgeadh 'm feachd an rìgh,	Who proved their heroism in the king's army,
'S iomadh tìr 'n d' thug iad deannal.	In many a land they've done battle.1155

Praise of the Gaelic language and generalised exhortations to its perpetuation in the New World become relatively common in the Gaelic tradition of Nova Scotia.1156 John MacLean goes on to praise the successes of Highland soldiers in the Napoleonic Wars, memories of which would still have been fresh in the minds of many of the emigrants; indeed, such memories were actively reinforced in publications such as the Rev. Norman MacLeod's "Cuairtear nan Gleann",1157 poem 39, which, as we shall see, was both read and celebrated by John MacLean. As in his Scottish verse, John MacLean makes specific reference to Highland garb and the weaponry of the Highland soldier; in the New World, the traditional costume continues to be of at least symbolic importance to the poet, a marker of cultural identity and a measure of loyalty to a broader tradition. More generally, the celebration of the martial virtues of the Gaels which we see in this poem became an ongoing theme in the Gaelic tradition in Nova Scotia; as was the case for Scottish Gaels, British imperial campaigns of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries gave New World Gaels the stage upon which

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1154 Lines 21-4, poem 33.

1155 Lines 29-32, poem 33.

1156 See, for example, "Òran do 'n Ghàidhlig" and "Cumaidh Suas a' Ghàidhlig", in Donald A. Fergusson, ed, *Beyond the Hebrides/Fad air Falbh as Innse Gall* (Halifax: Lawson Graphics Atlantic Ltd., 1977), at p. 129, 307, "Moladh na Gàidhlig", composed by Calum MacNeill of Irontown, Victoria County, Cape Breton, in Calum Iain M. MacLeòid, *Bàrdachd à Albainn Nuaidh* (Glaschu: Gairm, 1970), at p. 58, the numerous songs in praise of local Gaelic societies and Mods, such as "Do Chomunn Gàidhlig Boston", "Òran do Chomunn Gàidhealach Antigonish", "Òran do 'n Mhòd" and "Òran do Mhòd Gàidhealach Cheap Breatuinn", all in Donald Fergusson, at p. 122, 302, 126 and 127, all of which contain praise of the Gaelic language, and songs such as "An tè a chaill a' Ghàidhlig", in Helen Creighton and Calum Macleod, *Gaelic Songs in Nova Scotia*, *supra*, at p. 26, which criticise lack of attention to the language.

1157 See, for example, "Guth bho MhacTalla: Trì Làithean ann am Baile-Mór *Bhrussels*, (Jan. 1842) *Cuairtear nan Gleann*, at p. 305, or "Guth bho MhacTalla: Blàr *Waterloo*", (March, 1842) *Cuairtear nan Gleann* 14.

to apply these virtues.1158

A notable feature of "Òran a' Bhàl Ghàidhealaich" is what John Shaw has described as "a strong attachment to the content of Gaelic culture as manifest in social gatherings".1159 John MacLean provides a detailed description of both the content and etiquette he expects to see at the gathering. Though "Òran a' Bhàl Ghàidhealaich" is not a drinking song, it begins and ends with a toast, and drink is central to the proceedings. As was clear in John MacLean's Scottish poetry, he clearly considered that the consumption of alcohol on appropriate occasions such as social gatherings was an important part of the Gaelic cultural tradition, and he expects that the evening will begin with a round of drink, and some music:

Nuair a shuidheas iad mu 'n bhòrd,	When they sit around the table,
Bheir iad tacan air an òl,	They'll spend a while drinking,
'S fidheall thèud bhon gleusar ceòl,	And a well-strung fiddle, tuned for music,
'Cuir nan òganach 'nan deannaibh.	Will set all the young men in motion.1160

The reference illustrates the prominence of fiddle music at the time of emigration, and the fiddle tradition has gone on to be the dominant one in the musical heritage of the Nova Scotia Gàidhealtachd.1161 Once the music has ended, the company will turn to Gaelic poetry:

Nuair a thèid an fhidheall 'na tàmh,	When the fiddle is put aside,
Bheir iad treis air cainnt nam bard,	They'll spend a while on the language of the bards,
Dhùisgeas fonn neo-throm 'nan càil,	A joyful tune will awaken their spirits,
Anns a' Ghàidhlig as ghlain' gearradh.	In a Gaelic of the neatest composition.1162

As in "Bàrdachd Alasdair MhicFhionghain", poem 19, John MacLean gives us a sense

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1158 See, for example, "Òran do 'n Chogadh Ruiseanach" and "Òran do 'n Transvaal", concerning Gaelic participation in the Crimean and Boer Wars, in Donald A. Fergusson, ed., *Beyond the Hebrides*, *supra*, at p. 102, 105, "Sìol nam Fear Fearail", by Kenneth Ferguson of Ardoise, Richmond County, Cape Breton, in Calum Iain M. Macleòid, ed., *Bàrdachd à Albainn Nuaidh*, *supra*, at p. 50, and "Rèisimeid Ghàidhealach Eilein Cheap Breatainn (the 185th Battalion)", composed by D. D. MacKenzie of South West Margaree, Inverness County, Cape Breton, in Helen Creighton and Calum Macleod, eds., *Gaelic Songs in Nova Scotia*, *supra*, at p. 244, both concerning participation in the First World War.

1159 John Shaw, "Brief Beginnings", *supra*, at p. 352.

1160 Lines 17-20, poem 33.

of what he appreciates in Gaelic poetry; the reference here is to the neatness of the composition, thereby emphasising the construction of the verse rather than its actual content, and this is consistent with the values he praised in Alexander MacKinnon's poetry. As John Shaw has noted, the attachment to and recognition of the content of Gaelic culture that is exemplified in this poem become a prominent element in the Gaelic poetry of the Nova Scotian Gàidhealtachd1163 and, he argues, a distinctive one, in comparison with the poetry of the Scottish Gàidhealtachd, where references "to the content of Gaelic culture, when they occur, are noticeably less specific".1164

"Òran don 'Chuairtear'", poem 39, is a song in the panegyric style, but in praise of a new subject, in this case the Gaelic journal "Cuairtear nan Gleann" ("The Traveller of the Glens"), published in Scotland by the Rev. Dr. Norman MacLeod (1783-1862) between 1840 and 1843.1165 In his post-script to the song in both editions of *Clarsach na Coille*, Alexander Maclean Sinclair indicates that John MacLean made this song in 1842. As we saw in Chapter Four, like many of the Gaelic poets of the nineteenth century, John MacLean consciously expanded the range of subjects in respect of which praise poetry was composed, and this poem can be understood as a further example of this. It is an early example of a genre of praise

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1161 See, for example, the liner notes by John Shaw accompanying *Gaelic Tradition in Cape Breton, volume 2: Cape Breton Scottish Fiddle*, Topic Records, Topic 12TS353, 1977.

1162 Lines 25-8, poem 33.

1163 Shaw notes that "Donald MacLellan has *Rann do dh'Fhidheall* (Verse to a Violin) as well as a verse to a dancing master [in Vincent MacLellan, ed., *Fàilte Cheap Breatuinn* (Sydney, 1891), at p. 34, 23]; Alasdair 'The Ridge' MacDonald mentions dancing on the patterned hardwood floors [Margaret MacDonell, *Songs Remembered in Exile*, *supra*, at pp. 176-79] in Mabou; and Malcolm (Calum Eòghainn) Gillis (d. 1929 age 73) in his song on a dance names the tunes played [Hector MacDougall, ed., *Smeorach nan Cnoc 's nan Gleann* (Glasgow: Alexander MacLaren and Sons, 1939), at pp. 44-5]". He also notes that "[t]he theme has continued into [the twentieth] century with Hugh Francis MacKenzie's (1895-1971) description of old men passing on historical legends, and Dan Alex MacDonald's (Framboise, Richmond Co.) reference to the use of the *cromadh* to measure the web during waulking or milling [Helen Creighton and Calum Macleod, *Gaelic Songs in Nova Scotia*, *supra*, at p. 290, 49]". *Ibid.*

1164 John Shaw, "Brief Beginnings", *supra*, at p. 352.

1165 For an extended biographical sketch of Dr. MacLeod and a representative sample of his prose writings, see Rev. A. Clerk, ed., *Caraid nan Gaidheal/The Friend of the Gael: A Choice Selection of the Gaelic Writings by Norman MacLeod D. D.* (Edinburgh: John Grant, 1910).

poetry, poems composed to honour Gaelic publications, which developed through the nineteenth and into the twentieth centuries in both Scotland and Canada in response to the appearance, from the late 1820s, of an increasing number of such publications.1166 Like "Òran don 'Chuairtear'", most of these poems celebrate the publication as an important institution in the life of the Gaelic community. Not only is the publication praised, but so is the Gaelic language itself, and important Gaelic cultural values are also rehearsed. Finally, these poems often contain exhortations to the community to remain true to their language and values. Thus, poems such as "Òran don 'Chuairteir'" should also be understood as conscious attempts at community-building.

The poem takes the form of a toast to the Gaelic journal, once again signaling the importance of drink in Gaelic society on appropriate social occasions. The journal is personified, with the poet addressing it as one would a Highland warrior-hero of old, and John MacLean deploys many of the commonplaces of the panegyric code that would be appropriate for such a subject. For example, he dresses the paper in suitable Highland garb:

> 'S e 'n 'Cuairtear Gàidh'lach' an t-àrmann ainmeil
> The 'Highland Traveller' is the handsome hero,
> Nuair 'thèid an t-ailleagan sin fo armaibh,
> When that little jewel appears in armour,
> Le 'phearsa bhòidhich 'an còmhdach balla-bhreac,
> With his beautiful body in speckled covering,
> Mar 'chleachd a shìnn'saibh gu dìreadh garbhlaich.
> Like what his ancestors wore when climbing roughlands.1167

Again in this poem, we see the importance to the poet of the traditional Highland costume;1168 loyalty to the old clothing is an important indicator of a deeper loyalty

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1166 For examples from the Canadian Gaelic tradition, see "Òran do'n *Mhac-Talla*", by Archibald MacLellan of Broad Cove, Inverness County, Cape Breton, which appeared in the pages of Jonathan MacKinnon's "Mac-Talla", which was published between 1892 and 1904 in Sydney, Cape Breton, or "Fàilt' *Teachdaire nan Gàidheal*", composed by the Rev. Norman MacDonald, minister at Catalone, Cape Breton, in honour of the early twentieth century Sydney, Nova Scotia publication "Teachaire nan

to the Gaelic tradition, and the reference to Highland dress allows John MacLean to turn to and single out for special praise a real-life exemplar of such cultural loyalty, "Iain Muillear", John Sutherland, also known as "Bodach an Fhéilidh", "The Old Fellow of the Kilt", who emigrated to Upper Barney's River, Nova Scotia from Sutherland as an old man and who lived to the age of 107:1169

> Nuair 'chì mi 'n Cuairtear 'tha uasal, rìoghail, When I see the Traveller, noble and regal,
> Bidh mi 'ga shàmhladh ri Iain Muillear, I liken him to John the Miller,
> Tha fichead geamhradh on 'tha e 's tìr seo He has been in this country for twenty winters
> 'S cha d' chuir e riamh air a shliasaid cuibhreach. And he has never put cover on his thighs.
>
> Tha còrr is ciad bho tha ciall is cuimhne aige, He's more than 100 and still has memory and sense,
> 'S tric a shealg e damh dearg 'sna frìthean, Often he hunted the roe-deer in the hills,
> Air slios Beinn Armainn a b' àird ri 'dhìreadh, On the slope of Ben Armine, the highest to climb
> As dèidh an t-seòrs' siud b' e 'n còmhlan fiachail. And after that sort, the company was worthy.1170

For the poet, John Sutherland is, like "Cuairtear nan Gleann", an exemplar of the highest of Gaelic virtues, and he is being held up to the community for his loyalty to tradition. Significantly, the poet uses the adjective "rìoghail"; as we have seen in the consideration of the conventions of the "panegyric code" in Chapter Three, this adjective is also used by the poets to praise loyalty to the true order of things. The theme of faithfulness to both the oral traditions and language of the Gael appears elsewhere in this poem:

> Gu' robh thu dìleas do Rìgh na Fèinne, You were faithful to the King of the Fenians,
> 'S bu daoine calma 'nan aimsir fhèin iad, They were powerful men in their own time,
> Rinn Oisean dànachd dhaibh air a rèir sin, Ossian made verse for them on account of that,
> 'S gur h-i 'bh'aig Pàdraig a bheannaich Eirinn. And Patrick who blessed Ireland spoke it.1171

Gàidheal", which originally appeared in the pages of that publication (vol. IV:10, Foghar, 1932, p. 3), and which was also published in Donald A. Fergusson, ed., *Beyond the Hebrides*, *supra*, at p. 124.

1167 Lines 5-8, poem 39.

1168 There are other extended references to the "Cuairtear" coming dressed in true Highland costume later in the poem, at lines 53-60.

1169 According to Alexander Maclean Sinclair, Sutherland was born in the Parish of Clyne, Sutherland in 1735, and had been a forester in the service of William, Earl of Sutherland, and a notable deer hunter: See *Filidh na Coille*, *supra*, at p. 195. According to the information Maclean Sinclair provided in the post-script to the song in both editions of *Clarsach na* Coille, John Sutherland had apparently been subjected to clearance in about 1820. He wore the kilt in winter and summer probably he never had a pair of trousers on.

1170 Lines 65-72, poem 39.

1171 Lines 37-40, poem 39.

Indeed, the poem becomes at this point a panegyric to the Gaelic language, with the poet repeating the theory that was being put about at the time that Gaelic was, in fact the oldest language in the world, the one spoken in the Garden of Eden, the one from which all other languages sprang.1172 Building on the Garden of Eden motif, the poet uses the sort of vegetal kennings appropriate to the heroic Gaelic chieftain to describe the Gaelic language:

> Bu lus 'bha prìosail i 'chinn 'sa ghàradh,
> She was the most precious plant that grew in the garden,
> 'S bu ghlan gun truailleadh a fuaim an là sin,
> Pure and unpolluted was her sound that day,
> Bha 'stoc gun chrìonadh 'na bhrìgh 's 'na àileadh,
> Her stock was without fault in vigour and in scent,
> Ged 'thàinig siantan a mhill am blàth oirr'.
> Though storms have come which spoiled her bloom.1173

In the last line of this passage, John MacLean hints at the sociolinguistic stresses under which the Gaelic language is beginning to labour. He then urges his listeners not to forsake the language:

> A Chuairteir èibhinn na trèig gu bràch i, O joyful Traveller, never forsake her,
> 'S na leig air dìochuimhn' ri linn an àil s' i; And don't forget her because of the young;
> Bidh sinn 'ga seinn anns na coilltean fàsaich, We will sing in the forest of the wasteland,
> Mar 'bha Clann Israel aig bràighean Bhabalon. As did the Children of Israel on the banks of Babylon.1174

Composing in 1842, twenty-three years after his arrival in Canada, John MacLean is still turning the pro-emigration rhetoric, which likened the New World to the Promised Land, on its head. This suggests that, although, as we have seen, John

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1172 Lines 41-4, poem 39. The reference is to the theory of Lachlan Maclean (1798-1848), a native of Coll, author of "The History of the Celtic Language", who, in 1837 in "Adhamh agus Eubh", attempted to prove that Gaelic ws the original language of mankind; see Rev. Donald MacLean, *Typographia Scoto-Gadelica* (Edinburgh, 1915), at p. 262. Lachlan Maclean was a shopkeeper in Glasgow and a Gaelic enthusiast who had two nicknames, "Lachlann na Gàidhlig" ("Lachlan of the Gaelic") and "Lachann nam Mogan", ("Lachlan of the Stockings"—though "mogan" can also mean spirits distilled from oats"). He composed hymns and was a frequent contributor Rev. Dr. Norman MacLeod's periodicals, including "Cuartear nan Gleann". He also edited "Teachdaire Ur Gaidhealach" ("The New Highland Messenger"), which ran between 1835 and 1836. Prof. Donald MacKinnon, the first Chair of Celtic at Edinburgh University, cited him as amongst the four best Gaelic prose writers. See Derick S. Thomson, *The Companion to Gaelic Scotland* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1983), at p. p. 181; see also Eachann MacDhughaill, "Lachlann nam Mogan", (1951) 46 *An Gaidheal* 31, and Donald John Macleod, "Gaelic Prose", (1977) 49 *Transactions of the Gaelic Society of Inverness* 207.

1173 Lines 45-8, poem 39.

MacLean had reconciled himself to the New World many years previously, he still suffered from pangs of nostalgia that were no doubt brought on and intensified by the arrival of this paper from Scotland, and at the end of the poem, he asks the journal to bring word back to Tiree to let his kinsfolk know that he is well.1175 This shows the importance that journals such as "Cuairtear nan Gleann" themselves played in binding together an increasingly far-flung world-wide Gaelic community. Indeed, earlier in the poem, John MacLean describes in considerable detail how young and old would gather around once a month upon the arrival of "Cuairtear nan Gleann", to get news and to then comment upon it.1176 The passage quoted also suggests, however, a serious concern about the cultural loyalty of the Gaels, and this is another sign that language shift is already a concern; indeed, John MacLean had already hinted at this earlier in the poem:

> 'S a Chuairteir àlainn, cha tugainn fuath dhuit,
> And, O lovely Traveller, I would never abhor you,
> Gu' robh do chàirdeas ri sàr-dhaoine uasal,
> You were related to great gentlemen,
> Ged a rinn pàirt dhiubh do chàradh suarach,
> Although some of them treated you meanly,
> A chaill an Gàidhlig 's na b' fheàrr cha d' fhuair iad.
> Who lost their Gaelic and found no better.1177

Such concerns, and the attendant exhortations to linguistic loyalty they inspire, increase in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, both in Scotland and Canada, as the language comes under ever greater stress from English. Indeed, this poetry has fairly deep roots in the Gaelic poetic tradition, which are manifested in at least two ways.

1174 Lines 49-52, poem 39.

1175 "Bhon 'tha thu 'siubhladh a-measg nan Gàidheal/Gun cuir thu cùramach e 'sa mhàileid,/'S aig cnoc Mhic Dhùghaill a nì 'fhàgail/'S thoir fios 'gan ionnsaidh gu bheil mi 'm slàinte"/"Since you are traveling amongst the Gaels/Put it [i.e. the song the poet is composing] in your suitcase,/And at MacDougall's Hill [in Caolas, Tiree] you will leave it/And take word to them that I am in good health": lines 77-80, poem 39.

1176 Lines 16-28, poem 39. Given relatively low levels of literacy in Gaelic, it was common for periodicals such as this to be read communally, usually at the cèilidh-house; a literate Gael would read from the paper, and those gathered would discuss what it had to say, in precisely the manner John MacLean describes. See, generally, Charles Dunn, *Highland Settler*, *supra*.

1177 Lines 37-40, poem 39.

First, there are poems, an early example of which is Alastair Mac Mhaighstir Alasdair's "Moladh na Sean Chànain Gàidhlig", in which the poets praise the antiquity, beauty, civility and nobility of the Gaelic language and, by implication, its related culture and its speakers. This sort of poetry becomes increasingly common in the nineteenth and into the twentieth century, and often takes the form of a rallying cry. In this sense, it is similar to the passages in this and in other poems composed by John MacLean. It is notable that this poetry seems to become more conspicuous in those periods in which Gaelic speakers are coming into ever increasing contact with English speakers, and in which Gaelic communities are becoming ever more tightly integrated into the wider culture in which English is dominant and has much greater prestige. In a sense, then, this poetry is deployed as a sort of cultural defence mechanism. The second type of poetry in this category is also occasioned by contacts with the dominant culture, and is an often impassioned, even bitter, response to some slight by an outsider; the greater the prominence of the opponent, the greater the vituperative content of the poem. A good early example is Seumas Mac an t-Saoir's "Òran don Ollamh MacIain" ("A Song to Doctor Johnson"),1178 occasioned by the famous lexicographer's critical comments on the Gaelic language in his "A Journey to the Western Islands of Scotland", published shortly after Johnson's famous expedition of 1773. This tradition continues down to our own day, as is evident in a biting satire composed by Donald Alastair MacDonald of Garrabost, Lewis,1179 in 1994 upon reading an article by Tom Morton in "The Scotsman" in which Morton had claimed that Gaelic had no future, was irrelevant, and depended for its culture on "one or two sorrowing poets and an endless grim howl of lamenting singers, all chundering on

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1178 Ronald Black, ed., *An Lasair*, *supra*, at pp. 292-9.

1179 Dòmhnall Alasdair Dòmhnallach, *Bàrdachd Dhòmhnaill Alasdair* (Stornoway: Acair, 1998), at p. 98.

endlessly about the Clearances to audiences crying whisky tears by the bottle full".1180 John MacLean's election song, "Don Phàrlamaid Ùr", poem 35, which shall be discussed next, fits firmly within this tradition.

In "Òran a' Bhàl Ghàidhealaich", we saw the re-emergence of John MacLean as the spokesman for his people and the interpreter and defender of their values. It is therefore not surprising to find that, where events impinged upon this New World Gaelic community and its core values, John MacLean responded with songs that could be described as broadly political in nature. One of these songs related to the 1830 election for the Nova Scotian colonial assembly, and two others concerned the temperance movement that was gathering steam in the colony from the late 1820s and which reached a watershed in 1840. In both cases, John MacLean's focus is not the wider aspects of either of these events, but on their implications for the Gaelic community of the colony, and his concern is once again with the defence of that community and its values.

"Don Phàrlamaid Ùir", poem 35, is a very early example of a type of song which would become increasingly popular in the Nova Scotian Gaelic tradition: the election song.1181 It was composed at the end of September, 1830, during the poll

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1180 Quoted by Farquhar MacIntosh, "The Prospects for Gaelic", in Ronald Black, William Gillies and Roibeard Ó Maolalaigh, eds., *Celtic Connections: Proceedings of the Tenth International Congress of Celtic Studies*, vol. 1 (East Linton: Tuckwell, 1999), p. 457 at 458.

1181 Many of these were humorous, and are concerned with local elections: see, for example, "Òran do Chomhairle Cheap Breatuinn", in Donald A. Fergusson, ed., *Beyond the Hebrides*, *supra*, at p. 178, "Òran an election", by Angus Campbell, Salmon River, Cape Breton, in Helen Creighton and Calum Macleod, *Gaelic Songs in Nova Scotia*, *supra*, at p. 94. However, Nova Scotian Gaelic poets showed a keen and well-informed interest in provincial and national politics as well; a good example is Kenneth Ferguson's "Coileach as a' *Chronicle*", a satire inspired by a political cartoon in the Halifax *Chronicle*, a Liberal-leaning newspaper, about the selection of William Lyon MacKenzie King, the Liberal Party of Canada's most successful leader and Canada's longest serving Prime Minister, to lead that party (Donald Fergusson, *Beyond the Hebrides*, *supra*, at p. 160). Nova Scotia Gaels were also energetic participants in politics, and none achieved greater success than Angus L. MacDonald, who was the Liberal Premier (Prime Minister) of the Province of Nova Scotia and who served in the federal Cabinet of MacKenzie King during World War Two; his first election as Premier, in 1933 at the age of 43, inspired the poem "An Sgiobair Ùr", composed by Angus Y. MacLellan, a renowned poet and lightkeeper of Margaree Island, Cape Breton (Helen Creighton and Calum MacLeod, *Gaelic Songs in Nova Scotia*, *supra*, at p. 209).

which was being held in Pictou as part of the election for the Nova Scotia Assembly of that year, known as "the Big Election" or "the Brandy Election". The election was a significant one, for it involved important issues of constitutional principle concerning the power of the Colonial Assembly, which was popularly elected, and the Council, which was appointed by the Crown. Like other British North American colonies of the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, Nova Scotia was governed by a relatively small oligarchy, centred on Halifax, which was held together by ties of friendship, intermarriage and patronage. The core members of this ruling elite were English-speaking Loyalists who had fled the American colonies after the American Revolutionary War, as well as settlers from England, and they favoured the position of the Anglican Church.1182 Throughout the second half of the 1820s, a number of issues had caused friction between the Assembly and the Council, many of which focused on matters relating to religion. The Dissenters, particularly Presbyterians and Baptists, had three particular grievances. The first was the restriction of marriage by license to Anglican clergymen, the second was the restriction of incorporation to Anglican congregations, and the third was the refusal of academic privileges and a permanent grant to the Pictou Academy.1183 The Academy had been established in the town of Pictou in 1816 by the Rev. Thomas McCulloch (1776-1843), a native of Fereneze, near Paisley, Scotland, who had graduated from Glasgow University in 1792 and had served as a minister of the Secession Church before emigrating to Pictou in November, 1803.1184 Recognising

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1182 See B. C. U. Cuthbertson, "Place, Politics and the Brandy Election of 1830", (1982) 41 *Collections of the N. S. Hist. Soc'y* 5, at p. 5.

1183 See Gene Morison, "The Brandy Election of 1830", (1954) 30 *Collections of the N. S. Hist. Soc'y* 151, at p. 154 and at pp. 163-4.

1184 For a bibliographical sketch, see Francess G. Halpenny, general editor, *Dictionary of Canadian Biography, Volume VII, 1836 to 1850* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1988), at pp. 529-41; for a fuller profile, see Marjory Whitelaw, *Thomas McCulloch: His Life and Times*, (Halifax: Nova Scotia Museum, 1985).

the general lack of Presbyterian ministers in Nova Scotia,1185 and realising, like his contemporary and fellow dissenter, the Rev. James MacGregor, that Nova Scotia would never be adequately served by relying upon ministers formed in Scotland, Rev. McCulloch set out to establish an institution in Nova Scotia, Pictou Academy, for the training of ministers. While men like Rev. James MacGregor, a native Gaelic-speaker from Perthshire, Scotland who had emigrated to Pictou in 1786, had ministered widely to the Protestant Highlanders of Pictou County, that community was deeply riven by the same religious differences as in the Old Country, and the clergy of the Kirk, under the leadership of another emigrant Gael, the Rev. John MacKenzie, were bitterly opposed to Rev. McCulloch and to the Secession Church.1186

In the winter and early spring of 1830, tensions between the Assembly and the Council came to a head over the question of increased revenues for road construction in the province. The revenues were funded in part out of excise taxes collected on imports of alcohol. The Assembly had discovered that four pence of an 1826 tax of two shillings and four pence on brandy, gin and cordials had never been collected, and sought to amend already approved revenue bills to add the additional four pence tax on brandy. The Council refused the amendment. The death of King George IV in August, 1830, meant that an assembly election had to be called. The key battleground was Halifax County, which had two members of the assembly representing the town of Halifax and four representing the country districts, which at that time included Colchester and Pictou Counties. As Maclean Sinclair noted, the election pitted pro-Assembly candidates, referred to by him as "Liberals", S.G.W. Archibald, a lawyer and Dissenter from Truro, William Lawson, a Halifax County merchant and also a

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1185 The sole seat of higher learning, King's College, at Windsor, Nova Scotia, had effectively excluded dissenters from admission.

1186 see Gene Morison, "The Brandy Election of 1830", *supra*, at p. 157.

Dissenter, George Smith and Jotham Blanchard, another prominent Dissenter and keen supporter of Pictou Academy, against four supporters of the Council, described by Maclean Sinclair as "Conservatives", John Alexander Barry, a merchant and politician, Hugh Hartshorne, Henry Blackadar and John Leander Starr, also a merchant and politician. Pictou County was divided into those of the Secession Church, favouring Pictou Academy, who supported the pro-Assembly candidates, and those of the Kirk, who supported the pro-Council candidates. The polls came to Pictou on 27 September, and the election there lasted a week. Gene Morison provides the following account:

> Rev. John McKenzie led the Kirkmen. The Kirkmen or Highlanders came to the polls armed with sticks and their ministers exhorted them in Gaelic in the taverns, on the streets, and on the hustings. When a party of armed sailors and Highlanders carrying banners with the names of Hartshorne, Barry, Blackadar, and Starr paraded in the vicinity of Pictou Academy and the homes of Blanchard and Smith, the rioting resulted in the death of one man.1187

Cuthbertson adds the following details about the poll in Pictou:

> There was almost continuous rioting for nearly a week while the poll was conducted; one man was killed and numerous injured. Archibald, at one point, was driven off into the woods by a mob of gaelic (sic) speaking Highlanders thoroughly rumed (sic) up.1188

Although we cannot be sure, it is possible that these scenes of violence, in which Highlanders were apparently centrally involved, inspired the derogatory comments of one of the pro-Assembly candidates about the Gaels, and it is tempting to speculate, given Cuthbertson's account, that Archibald may have been the source of these comments. It was these comments, rather than any of the big issues of the election, which inspired John MacLean to compose his poem:

Gur mòr an t-adhbhar nàire dhiubh,	Great is the cause of shame to them [the Gaels of old],
Ma ghèilleas sibh do Lasonach,	If you submit to Lawson,
Do Dheòrsa na do dh'Archibald,	To George or to Archibald,
'S an tàir a thug na h-uaislean.	And the offence these nobles caused.

1187 Gene Morison, "The Brandy Election of 1830", *supra*, at p. 181.
1188 Cuthbertson, *supra*, at p. 18.

'S e 'thuirt iad gu mi-chiatach,	What they said most improperly,
Gur pronnasg a bha 'dhith orra,	Was that they needed sulphur,
'S gun glanadh iad a' sgrìobach	So that they could clean out the mange
Do na Gàidheil mhiothair shuarach.	Of the beggarly, worthless Gaels.1189

John MacLean went on to recount the martial virtues of their ancestors, making explicit reference to recent British victories in the Napoleonic Wars in which the Gaels played a prominent role, such as Fontenoy,1190 the Battle of Aboukir Bay (Alexandria)1191 and Waterloo.1192 He emphasised that such Gaels would never have put up with an insult of the sort proferred by the Liberal candidates:

Cha chualas riamh an tàmailte	The insult was never heard
Aig an t-sinnsearachd on tàinig sibh;	By the ancestry from which you've come;
An àm dol sios 'sna blàraibh	At the time of descending on the battlefields
Bu neo-sgàthach gu cur ruaig iad.	They were fearless in giving chase.1193

He challenged the New World Gaels to emulate the martial virtues of their countrymen:

Ma dhearbh sibh riamh ur duinealas,	If you've even proven your manliness,
'S e seo an t-àm dhuibh cruinneachadh,	This is the time for you to gather,
'S a shealltainn dhaibh gur urrainn sibh	And to show them that you are able
An urram a thoirt bhuatha.	To take respect away from them.
'S a' mhuinntir a bha 'g earbsa ruibh,	And the people who put their trust in you,
Na leigibh dhiubh le dearmad iad,	Don't relinquish them by inattention,
Bhon 'tha iad fhèin ag earbsa asaibh,	For they themselves are depending on you,
Gun dearbh sibh mar bu dual dhuibh.	To prove yourselves as is your custom.1194

As Maclean Sinclair noted, the poem is a true "Brosnachadh Catha", an exhortation to battle. According to his foreward in both editions of *Clarsach na Coille*, it was sung by the poet at an election rally in Pictou and it had, he reported, "a most exciting effect". One can only wonder whether the song contributed in any way to the violence described above. In the election itself, the pro-Council candidates captured the most votes in Pictou County, suggesting the influence of the Kirk

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1189 Lines 13-20, poem 35.
1190 Line 49, poem 35.
1191 Line 53, poem 35.
1192 Line 57, poem 35.
1193 Lines 33-6, poem 35.
1194 Lines 21-8, poem 35.

amongst the Highlanders there. Again, one wonders whether John MacLean's song, which was a powerful piece of propaganda against the pro-Assembly party, also contributed to this outcome. However, the four pro-Assembly candidates who had delivered the insult to the Gaels prevailed in the election as a whole, on the strength of particularly strong support in Truro, a hot-bed of Dissenter feeling.

"Don Phàrlamaid Ùir" gives us some insight into the development of John MacLean's political and religious ideas, while at the same time illustrating the deep continuities in his most fundamental beliefs. Maclean Sinclair noted in the post-script to the poem in both editions of *Clarsach na Coille* that the poet was, at this time, a "conservative"—that is, a supporter of the pro-Council candidates who were apparently the choice of the majority of the Highlanders of Pictou County. This general political orientation is not surprising, as Maclean Sinclair also indicated that John MacLean was a member of the Church of Scotland at this time,1195 and as we have seen, Kirkmen generally supported to pro-Council party. Maclean Sinclair also indicated that the poet later became a "liberal"—that is, a supporter of the pro-Assembly and pro-Dissenter cause—and that at the Disruption in 1843, he joined the Free Church. As we have seen, church and political affiliation were closely linked, and it would appear, therefore, that although the poet appears to have begun to compose religious verse in the 1820s, he must not have undergone a transformation in his religious views until some time after 1830. Given that, again according to Maclean Sinclair, until the slur on the Gaels, John MacLean had not taken much interest in the 1830 election—one which, as noted, involved high principle—it is clear that at this time he was not greatly politicised at all. The poet's only concern was therefore ethnic solidarity, and the defence of the reputation of his people from a

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1195 Hector MacDougall, *Clarsach na Coille*, *supra*, at p. xx.

perceived slight by the non-Gael. As we have seen from his Scottish poetry, John MacLean was keenly aware of the ethnic distinctiveness of the Gaels and of the hostility of the non-Gael that his countrymen sometimes suffered, and this remained a preoccupation in the New World. Even if his politics and religious views had been different, one gets the sense that his commitment to his community would have taken precedence. Once again, we see here poetry of community-building.

The two other poems of a political nature composed by John MacLean were inspired by the temperance movement. The first, "Diteadh Mhic-an-Tòisich", "Ferintosh's Conviction", poem 37, was in response to the decision of Bishop William Fraser, the Roman Catholic Bishop of Antigonish to to take a pledge of abstinence at the Cathedral Church of St. Ninian's on 1 January, 1841, and to administer the pledge to his congregation and form a large temperance society. The pledge administered by the Bishop was apparently for two years—not the three reported by Maclean Sinclair in his foreward to the song in both editions of *Clarsach na Coille*—and it appears to have been generally taken by the people. Although there was a lasting tradition in Antigonish that "few Catholics ever broke the pledge given them by their Bishop",1196 on the evidence of the second of John MacLean's songs, "Aiseirigh Mhic an Toisich"/"Ferintosh's Resurrection", poem 38, there appears to have been a considerable amount of backsliding.

The nineteenth century in many rural areas of Gaelic Nova Scotia has been described as "something of an alcoholic free-for-all", and it has been noted that "whisky, rum, alcohol, all were rooted almost as prerequisites of hospitality in the Highland mind and could never have been eradicated piecemeal".1197 As already

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1196 See Rev. A. A. Johnston, *A History of the Catholic Church in Eastern Nova Scotia, Vol. II—1827-1880*, (Antigonish: St. Francis Xavier Press, 1971), at pp. 114-6, 170-1.

1197 See John G. Gibson, *Traditional Gaelic Bagpiping, 1745-1945*, (Montreal and Kingston: McGill-Queen's, 1998), at p. 202.

noted, the consumption of alcohol on social occasions was perceived by the poets to be an important part of the Gaelic cultural tradition. We have seen that, in the "panegyric code", the provision of alcohol was expected of the chieftain and the liberal consumption of it was expected of the heroic Gaelic warrior class. Drinking songs are extremely common in the Nova Scotian Gaelic tradition (as they are in the Gaelic tradition of Scotland),1198 and poets such as Allan "the Ridge" MacDonald composed a number of them.1199 Excessive consumption of alcohol was a widespread and at times a serious problem in the Highland emigrant communities of Eastern Nova Scotia, and resulted in problems—particularly, indebtedness and violence—that even poets positively disposed to the drinking culture, such as Allan "the Ridge", had to acknowledge:

Bu choir dhomh gun sguirinn	I ought to abstain
'S nach òlainn deur tuilleadh	Never to drink another drop
Tha chrònag ri cumail	The family circle must be maintained
Ceit Mhuirich 's a' chlann.	Kate MacPherson and the children.
'S tric a bha sinn anmoch	Often we were late
An stòr Ailein Chamshroin	In Allan Cameron's store
Dh'fhàg sid mi 'san ainfhiach	That put me in debt
'S an t-airgiod air chall.	With all my money gone.1200

Indeed, many of the Nova Scotia drinking songs are humorous satires of some of the problems which can accompany excessive drinking. However, both Protestant and Roman Catholic clergy responded to the evils associated with heavy drinking through more forceful means of social control, and increasingly began to promote temperance.

1198 See, for example, "Mar a sguir Tearlach dhe 'n Deoch-Làidir", "A Bhean an Taighe, Ghaoil an Fhortain", "Dàn do Sheann Ford", "An Ruma Bàn", "Tha mi an-diugh gu tinn", and "Deoch-Slàinte Luchd nam Brachanan", all in Donald A. Fergusson, ed., *Beyond the Hebrides*, *supra*, at p. 138, 141, 157, 163, 166, and 174, and "Òran na Poite Duibhe", in Helen Creighton and Calum Macleod, *Gaelic Songs in Nova Scotia*, *supra*, at p. 74. Drinking songs were extremely popular in many local communities; in a recent genealogical history of one Cape Breton parish, at least three such locally composed songs were recorded, all of which are still being sung: see "Òran na Poite Duibhe" (a different song from that recorded by Creighton and Macleod), "Bean an Taighe, Fàg an Sìola", and "Òran Briùthais", in The Glendale Gaelic and Historical Society, *Cuir is Buain: A Genealogical History of Glendale and Neighbouring Communities* (Glendale, Cape Breton: Glendale Gaelic and Historical Society, 2001), at p. 120, 128 and 130.

1199 See "Seònaid na Sùil Airgid", "Tha mi 'n Diugh gu Tinn", "A' Phoit Bheag", "Throd mo Bhean" and "Òran dhan Deoch", all in Effie Rankin, *As a'Bhràighe*, *supra*, at pp. 136-51.

The first temperance society appears to have been established by Protestants, at West River, Pictou County, in January, 1828.1201 In the 1830s, the movement gained strength, and received support from some local media,1202 and with the arrival in Cape Breton in 1838 of an Irish Priest, Father James D. Drummond, who held total abstinence meetings right from the time of his arrival, the temperance movement also gained support in Highland Catholic communities. While drinking songs predominate in the Gaelic tradition of Nova Scotia, there is also a tradition of support for temperance in the Gaelic song tradition.1203

John MacLean did not compose any songs that could be described as "drinking songs", but as we have seen, he composed at least two songs, "Deoch-Slàinte, Mhic 'Ic Alastair, Ghlinne-Garaidh", poem 25, and "Òran a' Bhàl Ghàidhealaich", poem 33, which take the form of drinking toasts. The drinking motif is, as has been noted, a common one in his poetry, and, as we shall see, he also composed a poem, "An Adharc", poem 34, on the receipt by him of the gift of a drinking horn which had been filled with brandy. We have noticed that John MacLean appears to have been an observant Churchgoer throughout his life, and that in the years following emigration, particularly in the 1830s, he adhered to a more evangelical form of Presbyterianism, which culminated in his decision to join the Free Church when that body was created in 1843. However, there is no evidence that John MacLean ever saw any necessary conflict between the principles of his faith and the culture of his people, of which song, secular poetry, storytelling, instrumental music, dance and social drinking formed a fundamental part. As was noted in Chapter Two, his father was a brewer,

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1200 "Tha mi 'n diugh gu tinn", in Effie Rankin, *ibid*, at p. 140.

1201 Rev. A. A. Johnston, *A History of the Catholic Church in Eastern Nova Scotia, Vol. II*, *supra*, at p. 62.

1202 See D. Campbell and R. A. MacLean, *Beyond the Atlantic Roar: A Study of the Nova Scotia Scots* (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart Limited, 1974), at p. 223.

and the poet was himself fond of a drink. It is not surprising, then, that both "Diteadh Mhic-an-Tòisich" and "Aiseirigh Mhic-an-Tòisich" are light-hearted, humorous songs, and while the poet does recognise the existence of some of the social evils which drink has occasioned, his general tone is one of permissiveness. Indeed, both poems convey the sense that the poet himself viewed such prohibitions on drinking as slightly un-Gaelic, that some of the moralising about drink by some in the community—even some of the clergy—was mildly hypocritical, and, given his intimate acquaintance with his countrymen and his culture and the important role that social drinking played in that culture, that such campaigns would ultimately be futile.

John MacLean does not, however, denounce the temperance movement outright or criticise it in a harsh manner; nor does he make any specific reference to Bishop Fraser. This may have been due in part to the fact that, as noted, John MacLean did seem to recognise in places in both of these songs that excessive drinking was causing problems, and we do get the sense from these passages that, while he may have been tolerant of social drinking, he was less so of some of its excesses. His light touch may also have been in deference to the many Catholic neighbours and friends who may have taken the pledge of abstinence. Finally, it would appear that Bishop Fraser was both a highly respected figure and an emblematic Highlander amongst the Gaels of eastern Nova Scotia; there are numerous accounts of Bishop Fraser in the Gaelic oral traditions of Antigonish County, and he was renown for his physical strength, his skill as horseman, his fairness and generosity, and his interest in many aspects of Gaelic cultural tradition.1204 John

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1203 See, for example, songs like "Òran Stuamachd" or "Comunn na Stuamachd", both of which appeared in the pages of *Mac-Talla*.

1204 See Kenneth E. Nilsen, "The Priest in the Gaelic Folklore of Nova Scotia" (1996-1997) 64-65 *Béaloideas* 171, at pp. 180-185. Nilsen relates the story, reported by an Antigonish County informant, Danny Cameron, of an incident involving a group of people who had come to Bishop Fraser with news that a man of ill repute was about to arrive at Pictou from Scotland. They wanted the Bishop to go to

MacLean would have been loathe to criticise a man such as Bishop Fraser who was such a fine exemplar of values which were admired in the Gaelic community and which the poet himself held dear. Thus, the tensions which John MacLean felt about the temperance issue result in two songs which convey a certain ambiguity.

This is illustrated by the first poem, "Diteadh Mhic-an-Tòisich". In the poem, alcohol is personified as "Mac-an-Tòisich", and the premise is that this poor fellow, beloved by all, is charged by the clergy with a capital offence, is tried, and is sentenced to death at the gallows, resulting in generalised sadness. The humour inherent in this premise is heightened by the fact that John MacLean made the poem in the name of Donald MacGillivray, who was generally known by the nickname Donald "Vamy"; indeed, the song is also known as "Donald Vamy's Song". Donald "Vamy" MacGillivray was the eldest son of John "Vamy" MacGillivray, one of three brothers who emigrated from Dunmaglass, Inverness-shire, Scotland, to Dunmaglass, in western Antigonish County.1205 As Rev. Rankin notes, Donald "Vamy" was "famous in story", and was never married. Many Gaelic communities in eastern Nova Scotia had characters who gained renown as "wise fools", "amadain ghlic"; although rather slow in some respects, they had quick wits, and humorous stories of them are still told amongst Gaelic speakers. Donald "Vamy" had a renown that went beyond the local, and traditions of him have been recorded as recently as the 1980s not only from local Antigonish informants such as Danny Cameron but also from at least one

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Pictou and prevent the man from landing. The Bishop said that he had no knowledge of the man and could not judge him on hearsay. Nevertheless, the Bishop accompanied the group to Pictou, where the boat had just arrived. They saw the man in question dressed in Highland garb, playing the pipes, making his way to shore. When the company saw the man, they said to the Bishop "There he is, Bishop Fraser. That's him. Make him go back to Scotland." The Bishop calmly turned to his companions and said—"I can't do that. I don't know anything about the man. But I do know this, "tha lùdag aige cho milis is a chuala mi riamh!" [he has the sweetest little finger I have ever heard!]". As Nilsen notes, in addition to his sense of fair play, we learn from this story that the Bishop had a good ear for music. Nilsen adds that the Bishop was reported to have been an excellent singer as well: Kenneth Nilsen, p. 183.

Cape Breton informant, Joe Neil MacNeil, a native of Middle Cape, Cape Breton County. The use of Donald "Vamy" was a useful device for the poet, and not simply for humorous purposes. It would have distanced the poet somewhat from the issue, and would have allowed him to mask his real views to some extent, while still permitting him to score some points a little more sharply than he might have dared had he composed the song in his own name. The fact that a character of fun such as Donald "Vamy" was defending "Mac-an-Tòisich" would have both weakened and strengthened the argument implicit in the poem; on the one hand, an "amadan glic" could never be taken too seriously, particularly when pronouncing on an important social or political issue, but on the other hand, "amadain ghlic" were also very effective in lampooning social mores, and the sharp observations of the "amadain ghlic" may well have acted as a mechanism of social control in much the same way as a satire.

Donald "Vamy" begins by noting the popularity of "Mac-an-Tòisich" amongst all social classes—"Bu chompanach e don rìgh,/Do dh'uaislean grinn 's do chumantan"1206—and by hinting at the hypocrisy of some of the clergy who have gathered against him:

Gur a diombach mi don chlèir	I am indignant at the clergy
'Chuir an tòrachd às a dhèidh,	Who gave chase after him,
Gum bu dìleas e dhaibh fhèin	He was loyal to they themselves
Ged 'thug iad beum na dunach dha.	Though they gave him a disastrous blow.1207

"Mac-an-Tòisich" is put on trial, and Donald "Vamy" is the first to come to his defence, followed by a long list of other supporting witnesses, described at some length over a number of verses. Those listed appear to have been fairly well-known Antigonish County personalities, many of them prominent people in the town of

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1205 See Rev. D. J. Rankin, *A History of the County of Antigonish Nova Scotia* (Pawtucket: Quintin Publishing, 1998), at pp. 279-80.
1206 Lines 11-2, poem 37.

Antigonish. Some are what might be called "usual suspects", such as William Gillies and Paddy Byrne, both local tavern owners, but others appear to be upstanding members of the community, such as John Thomas Hill, the first lawyer in the town of Antigonish, and Samuel Symonds, the local jail warden. Despite this, the judge condemns "Mac-an-Tòisich" to deal, and the poor fellow is led away in chains, as "hundreds" ran about, vowing firmly to be his enemy, clearly a reference to those taking the pledge of abstinence. Donald "Vamy"'s views—and, perhaps, those of John MacLean—are clear:

'S fhad on chuala mi 'bhith 'g ràdh	Long it's been since I've heard it said
Gun tèid neart thar ceart an àird,	That power gets the upper hand on justice,
'S ann mar sin tha 'chùis an-dràst',	That's the way that the case is now,
Bha 'bhinn ud ceàrr, 's bu ghuineach i.	That judgment was wrong, and malicious.
Bha lagh Chill-ma-cheallaig cam	Kilmacheallag's law was crooked
Nuair a chroch e 'n t-each ri crann,	When he hung the horse from a tree,
Ach nas caime tha 'n lagh teann	But what's more crooked is that the law is quick
'Chuir slabhraidh mun fhear churanta.	To put a chain about the valiant man.1208

The reference in the second of these verses is to to "Lagh Chille Mo Cheallaig", the Law of Kilmacheallag, and concerns the well-known story in Gaelic tradition of a man who was said to have been tried at the parish of Kilmacheallag by a jury of women for the crime of stealing a horse, for which he was acquitted and the horse itself was condemned to be hanged, for allowing itself to be taken away. The man had been tried before for stealing the same horse, and got off, and the horse liked him so well that he ran away from his proper master and came back to the thief.1209

1207 Lines 13-6, poem 37.

1208 Lines 65-72, poem 37.

1209 The tale is told in full in *An* Gàidheal, Vol. I, p. 146. Its memory is perpetuated a proverbial saying, "Cha tugadh 'an Cille-mo-cheallaig breith bu chlaoine"/"No worse judgment was given in Kilmacheallag": Alexander Nicolson, *Gaelic Proverbs*, (Glasgow: Caledonian Press, 1951), at p. 134. The story is referred to by Iain Lom MacDonald in his poem "Iorram do Shìol Dùghaill", composed on the occasion of his being expelled from Locaber by the murderers of Alexander, the young chief of the MacDonalds of Keppoch, and his brother Ranald in 1663: "Cleas na bìnne nach maireann/Bha 'n cladh Sgìre Mo-Cheallaig,/'N uair a dhìt iad an gearran 'sa' mhòd./Lùb dham 's cha bu bheag i/Fhuair am mèirleach a ghoid e,/'Ga shaoradh o leadairt nan còrd"/"Like that judgement of former days which was pronounced in the parish churchyard of Cill Mo-Cheallaig, when they condemned the gelding in the court./The thief who stole it found awaiting him a bent noose, and a large one at that, setting him free from the chafing of cords." See Annie M. MacKenzie ed., *Òrain Iain Luim: Songs of John*

The poem concludes with an extended consideration of all that has been lost since the demise of "Mac-an-Tòisich". He is praised in mock panegyric terms: "'Mhic-an-Tòisich, bha thu riamh/Fearail, fiùghantach, is fial".1210 The association between drinking and important aspects of Gaelic culture is made explicit in a number of places. Take, for example, this passage, in which Donald "Vamy" describes the effects of prohibition on a well-known local piper:

Raghnall Cùbair tha fo leòn	Ronald the Cooper is wounded
Bhon a chuala e mun mhòd,	Since he heard about the trial,
'S tric 'na mheòir a chuir thu ceòl	Often you put music in his fingers
A dh'fhògradh bròn gu buileach bhuainn.	Driving sadness away from us completely.
Màla 'phìoba chrup e 'suas	The bag of his pipe he would shrink up
'Ga fhliùchadh le uisge fuar,	Wetting it with cold water
Bhon 'theirig iocshlàinte nam buadh	Since the virtuous salve has departed
A bheireadh fuasgladh muineil dha.	That would bring relief to his breast.1211

The link to music is also seen in this passage, in which the poet contemplates the reaction that would occur should "Mac-an-Tòisich" somehow miraculously reappear:

Ach ma thig thu slàn x'nar ceann	But if you come safely before us (again)
Le d' shuaicheantas àrd ri crann,	With your badge high upon a mast,
Gur curaideach a bhios do chlann	Your followers will be most skillfully
A' dannsadh Ruidhle Thulaichean.	Dancing the Reel of Tulloch.1212

The poet also makes reference to the well-known medicinal values of alcohol:

Sin an iocshlàint' 'san robh 'm feum	That's the cure which was useful
'Dh'fhògradh aiceidean bho chlèibh,	It would banish pains from the chest,
'S b'ainmeil i air leigheas chreuchd,	It was renowned as a cure for wounds,
Gum b' fheàrr na lèigh nam Muileach i.	It was better than the Beatons' cures.1213

The importance of alcohol in the everyday lives of the people is emphasised when the poet notes that no wedding, ball, Christmas or Easter gathering would be complete without "mac-an-Tòisich". He also hints that the pledge of abstinence may not have been quite as effective as was being reported:

MacDonald, Bard of Keppoch (Edinburgh: Scottish Gaelic Texts Society, 1964), at pp. 115-6, lines 1495-1500, and note at pp. 283-4. See, also, John MacKenzie, *Sar-Obair nam Bard Gaelach* (Edinburgh: MacLachlan & Stewart, 1872), at p. 38.

1210 Lines 81-2, poem 37.
1211 Lines 85-92, poem 37.
1212 Lines 149-52, poem 37.
1213 Lines 93-6, poem 37.

Thuirt MacMhuirich rium Dimàirt	Currie said to me on Tuesday
Gun d' fheuch e cuislean do làmh,	That he tried the pulse of your hand,
'S gun èireadh tu fhathast slàn,	And that you rose up, still in good health,
Do chur gu bàs nach b' urrainn dhaibh.	They weren't able to put you to death.1214

Dr. William Currie was one of two doctors in the town of Antigonish at the time the poem was composed, and after its founding in 1852, he helped in the editorial department of the newspaper the Antigonish *Casket*, and is said to have suggested the name of that newspaper. Once again, by including a prominent local citizen and medical man amongst the sympathizers and implying here that he has continued sampling alcohol, the poet is perhaps signaling his own sympathies.

As noted, though, poet also recognised the problems that often accompanied excess consumption of alcohol, and he takes time to remind his audience that the merriment can lead to these less salutary aspects of the drinking culture:

Greis air iomairt 's greis air òl,	A spell playing cards, a spell of drinking,
Greis air aighear 's greis air ceòl,	A spell of mirth, and a spell of music,
Greis eile air bualadh nan dòrn	Another spell of fisticuffs
'S gun chòmhdach air am mullaichean.	Without cover on the knuckles.
Chuireadh tu 'n daorach 'nan ceann,	You would put drunkenness in their heads,
Thuiteadh iad a-bhos is thall,	They would fall here and there,
Nuair 'ghlacadh iad thu air làimh,	When they would take you in hand,
Cha cheannsaicheadh Cù Chullainn iad.	Cuchullin would be unable to subdue them.
Dh'fhàgadh tu 'm fear glic gun chiall,	You would leave the wise man senseless,
Dheanadh tu 'n spìocaire fial,	You would make the miser generous,
Dh'fhuasgladh tu sporan nan iall,	You would open the closed purse,
'S cha bhiodh an gnìomh sin furasta.	And that deed would not be easy.1215

At the end, however, Donald "Vamy" hopes for the return of "Mac-an-Tòisich", pledging not to forsake him by taking the pledge, and turns the standard rhetorical assumptions on their head by labeling those who have done so "riff raff".1216

According to Alexander Maclean Sinclair's note on this poem in both editions of *Clarsach na Coille*, the second of the temperance songs, "Aiseirigh Mhic-an-Tòisich", poem 38, was likely composed a few months after "Diteadh Mhic-an-

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1214 Lines 97-100, poem 37.
1215 Lines 117-128, poem 37.

Tòisich", upon the discovery that many who had stopped drinking at the time the first song was composed did not keep to their pledge very long, and had started drinking as they had before. Once again, John MacLean did not compose it under his own name, but under that of "Ronald the Cooper, Ferintosh's piper," one of the characters referred to in "Diteadh Mhic-an-Tòisich". Maclean Sinclair indicates in the post-script to that poem that Ronald the Cooper was a piper, but provides no further information. It has not been possible to identify a piper with the name "Ronald" and the nickname "Cooper", and it is possible that the character is imaginary. Once again, this was a useful fiction for John MacLean, both for comedic effect and in that it allowed him to distance himself somewhat from the views expressed in the poem. And, as in "Diteadh Mhic-an-Tòisich", the poet's position on the matter is in places ambiguous.

The return of Ferintosh brings with it the return of happiness and of music, and we see here once again the close relationship that the poet draws between drink and other aspects of traditional culture:

Gun cuir mi 'phìob 'an òrdugh dhuit	I shall tune up the bagpipe for you
'S gu' seinn mi binn an t-òran seo,	In order to sing sweetly this song,
Gun tàinig lùths 'am mheòirean	Vigour has returned to my fingers
Bhon a thòisich mi ri cainnt ort.	Since I began to speak of you again.

The Piper, the narrator of the poem, then recounts how his pipes had become dried up and ineffective during the period of abstinence, a metaphor for both abstinence itself and the effects on aspects of the cultural life of the people. It is only the return of alcohol which brings the pipes—and by implication, cultural life—back to life:

Nuair 'tharraing mi 'gam ionnsaigh i,	When I drew her [the pipes] toward me,
Cha robh a cliabh ach tùchanach,	Her chest was filled with hoarseness,
Cha b' ioghnadh dhi 's bu tùrsach	It's little wonder that she's been mournful
Ri ionndrainn na bh' air chall oirnn.	Longing for what had been lost to us.
Bha 'n gaothaire 's droch àileadh dheth,	A foul odour coming from the mouthpiece,

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1216 "Cha tèid m' ainm-s' air pàipear bàn/A-measg na gràisg nach buineadh dhuit"/ "My name will neve go on the blank page/Amongst the riff-raff that would not touch you": lines 159-60, poem 37.

'S a siunnsair, thàinig sgàineadh ann,	And the chanter, it had been cracked,
Cha robh na duis ach càrsanach,	The drones were only just wheezing,
'S a' mhàla 's e air crampadh.	And her bag had stiffened up.
Na ribheidean air tiormachadh,	The reeds had all dried up,
Gach gleus a bh' innte is meirg orra,	Every screw in her had rusted,
Nuair 'fhuair i 'n iocshlàint iorailteach,	When she received the ingenious balm,
Gu freagradh gairm nam beann dhi.	She would echo through the hills.1217

At this point, the poem becomes a mock "gathering of the clans", playing on the commonplaces of poems of the "Òran nam Fineachan Gàidhealach", composed by John MacCodrum and by Iain Dubh mac Iain mhic Ailein, with the poet enumerating the various local characters (rather than famous clans) who will appear under Ferintosh's standard, itself held aloft by Donald "Vamy" MacGillivray.1218 In places, the poet also employs mock panegyric motifs: he claims that bonfires of joy will be lit for Ferintosh, that wax candles will be lit for him, and that gold cups will be filled with wine, which will be liberally shared out.1219 Although the reference is not specific, John MacLean seems to place himself amongst those gathered to celebrate Ferintosh's return, thereby, perhaps, signalling his own orientation on the question of abstinence:

Nuair 'chruinnicheas na h-Àrmainn	When the Heroes gather round
Mun cuairt don bhòrd mar 'b' àbhaist dhaibh,	About your table as they used to do,
Gur cinnteach gum bi 'm bard againn,	For certain we'll have our poet with us,
'S gun dean e 'n Gàidhlig rann dhuinn.	And he'll make us a verse in Gaelic.1220

Later, the poet says that if the proponents of abstinence come back "to do battle with" the supporters of Ferintosh, violence will ensue, with grievous results for those supporting temperance:

Mun tèid na cuirp seo 'thiodhlacadh	Before these bodies are buried
Gum b' fheàird' sinn Iain Mac Iosaig,	We'd be better for having John MacIsaac,
Gu' fuaigh e dhaibh an lion-aodach	He would sew for them their death shrouds

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1217 Lines 13-24, poem 38.

1218 Lines 29-64, poem 38.

1219 "Gu' loisgear teintean èibhneis dhuit/Feadh ghleann is bheann is rèidhleanaibh,/Gu' lasair coinnlean cèire dhuit,/Ri deàrrsadh anns gach lanntair./Bidh fìon 'an gnìomh nan òr-cheardan/Gu fial 'ga dhìol gun sòradh ann"/"Bonfires of joy will be kindled for you/Throughout the dales and hills and plains,/Wax candles will be lit for you/To shine in every lantern./Wine will be put in the goldsmith's cups/Generously shared out, without sparing": lines 93-8, poem 38.

1220 Lines 89-92, poem 38.

Ro ghrinn 'san fhasan ghallta.	Exceedingly well in the Lowland fashion.1221

The reference to the burial of proponents of temperance in "the Lowland fashion" may be another signal of John MacLean's true views on the matter; he seems to be implying that there is something un-Gaelic about those promoting abstinence. He also has a keen eye for the hypocrisy of some of those promoting temperance, in particular, the clergy:

Ged 'chaidh a' chlèir gu 'n dùbhlan oirnn	Though the clergy was roused against us
'Gad fhuadach às na dùthchannan,	Chasing you out of the countries,
Bu tric iad fhèin a' sùgradh riut	Often they themselves were courting you
'S tu 'g ionnsachadh dhaibh dannsa.	And you were teaching them to dance.
Nuair 'dh'èireadh iad air ùrlar leat	When they would rise to the floor with you
Bu lapach mu na glùinean iad,	They would be feeble at the knees,
Gun càineadh iad 'sa chùbaid thu	They would condemn you from the pulpit
'S gu' racht' 'an cùil s'gad shealltainn.	And then would repair to a dark corner to see you.1222

Once again, though, John MacLean does not hesitate to rehearse the ill effects of drink. He suggests that violence often accompanies heavy drinking:

Air eagal 's gum bi cunnart ann,	Afraid that there will be some danger,
Mar 'dh'èireas 's tric na buillean ann,	As often there will be fisticuffs
Gun tig an lèigh Mhuirich ann,	Doctor Currie will come by,
'S gur h-urramach le lann e.	He is renowned with a scalpel.1223

And, he is quick to satirise the bad side-effects of excessive drink, including hangovers and, later, the excessive expenditure on drink and its adverse effects on the household economy:

Nuair 'dhùisgeas iad a-màireach	When they would wake the next day
Gum biodh goirteas cinn 'ga' sàrachadh,	Painful heads would fatigue them,
Ag innse gu' robh tàmailt orr'	They'll say that they were ashamed
Mar 'dh'fhàg thu iad 'nan anntlachd.	By how you left them dissatisfied.
. . .	. . .
Bha mòran dhaoine a' gràitinn rium	Many people were telling me
Gu' robh do ghealladh fàillinneach,	That your pledge was weak,
Gu' rùisg thu 'bhean 's na pàisdean	That you unclothe the wife and the children
Aig na pàrantan 'bha 'n geall ort.	Of the parents who were too fond of you.1224

1221 Lines 85-8, poem 38.
1222 Lines 149-56, poem 38.
1223 Lines 65-8, poem 38.
1224 Lines 125-8, 133-6, poem 38.

Thus, in spite of the general light-hearted tenor of both poems, and in spite of the general tone of permissiveness, John MacLean shows that he is a sharp observer of human behaviour; the weaknesses of both those promoting abstinence and those who indulge in drink are subject to gentle satire. We see in this once again how the poet is subtly defining the proper limits of behaviour; once again, John MacLean is acting as the guardian of community values.

We see some of the same levity and ambiguity in "An Adharc", poem 34. In the introduction to this poem in both editions of *Clarsach na Coille*, Maclean Sinclair claims that the poem was composed in about the year 1827, when William Forbes gave John MacLean a large drinking horn, full of brandy. Maclean Sinclair reports that the poet did not keep it very long, giving it to his friend, Fr. Colin Grant, the Priest of Arisaig, to whom we will return, below. As we shall see, the priest had made a gift to the poet of £5 in gold, a significant amount, particularly in rural Nova Scotia at that time. The gift of the horn may have been in tribute to the priest's kindness to the poet. What is clear from the information provided by Maclean Sinclair is that a strong friendship between the poet and the priest had been established by the time the poet had written this song, in 1827. Although Maclean Sinclair claimed not to have known what happened to the drinking horn, by the twentieth century, it had been recovered by John MacLean's descendants and was kept on display by them at Glenbard.

"An Adharc" takes the form of a light-hearted dialogue between the drinking horn and the poet. The drinking horn's complaint against the poet is that, unlike its previous owner, William Forbes, John MacLean does not keep the horn filled with liquor, as he should:

Gur neònach leam Uilleam	It's strange to me that William
'Chuir a thuras fo m' cheann,	Has put me on his journey,

Chaidh mo ghibht ort mar leannan,	I was given to you, like a sweetheart,
'S tha mi falamh 'san àm.	And now I am completely empty.1225

The drinking horn claims that John MacLean's excuse for not replenishing her is that alcohol is expensive, and contrasts such behaviour with Forbes' liberality, thereby implying that the poet is cheap:

'S gur e 'mheudaich mo bhròn	And what has increased my sadness
'Thu 'bhith ag ìnnse dhomh daondan	Is you forever telling me
Gu bheil e daor aig MacLeòid;	That MacLeod's is expensive;
Dar bha mis' aig mo chiad fhear	When I was with my first man
Bha e fialaidh gu leòr,	He was generous enough,
Cha do chaomhainn e riamh orm	Never did he economise with
A mheud 's gu' iarrainn ri 'òl.	His measure when I wanted a drink.1226

As has been noted elsewhere, the poet was himself fond of a dram, and so it is likely that the poet was poking fun at himself in these passages. Although the poet's purpose is primarily humorous and playful, in those passages in which the poet castigates the drinking horn for being too fond of drink1227 and in which he claims that too close an association with a "woman" such as the drinking horn—a feminine noun in Gaelic—can lead a man astray,1228 it is possible that the poet is trying to make a more serious point about excessive consumption of alcohol. Indeed, the claims about the negative effects of the drinking horn on the household economy mirror those which the poet raised in the songs on the temperance movement:

Cha bhoireannach beusach	It is not a virtuous woman
'Ghabhas dèidh air an òl,	Who takes a longing for drink,
Mu thug thusa do spies dha,	If you gave your affection to it,
Gu' bi èis air do lòn;	Your provisions will be wanting;
Dheanainn biadh agus aodach	I would make food and clothing
'Chuir daondan 'ad choir,	To always put before you,
Ciamar 'chumas sinn teaghlach	How will we ever keep a household
Ma bhios thu 'glaodhaich na' stop?	If you're shouting for more drink?1229

1225 Lines 5-8, poem 34.

1226 Lines 18-24, poem 34.

1227 Lines 57-64, poem 34.

1228 "'S iomadh fear a chaidh a mhealladh/'Fhuair a leannan air fèill,/'S e 'ga taghadh air àilleachd/'S gun a' nadir dha rèir"/"Many a man has been deceived/Who wond his lover at a fair,/Who chose her just for her beauty/Withouth the good character to match": lines 77-80, poem 34.

1229 Lines 57-64, poem 34.

Thus, even in a light-hearted, mildly self-deprecating song such as this, the poet seems to have a wider social purpose in mind, and we see him once again employing his poetry as a subtle method of social control.

We see a similar use of verse in "Rafail Dhòmhnaill Iain Bhàin", poem 36, a mild satire composed in honour of a raffle for a watch. According to Alexander Maclean Sinclair's post-script to this poem in both versions of *Clarsach na Coille*, the raffle was held in 1831, shortly after John MacLean had moved to Glenbard, Antigonish County, at the house of the father of one of the young men of the district, Donald MacDonald, "Dòmhnall Iain Bhàin". Maclean Sinclair indicates that Donald MacDonald charged a half dollar for admission, information which is undoubtedly based on that conveyed by the poet himself1230—a fairly sizeable sum in 1831, particularly in eastern Nova Scotia, where cash was relatively scarce—and that most of the young people of the district were present. In this poem, the poet claims that he was not present at the raffle, but wishes that he had gone; he claims that it was his wife who dissuaded him:

Labhair a' bhean rium le gruaim,	The wife said to me with a frown,
"Gura tusa 'ad dhuine thruagh;	"Aren't you a pitiful fellow;
Dùil agad gu' toir thu buaidh	Expecting that you'll have success
Gu dè buaireadh 'tha 'nad cheann?"	What foolishness is in your head?"1231

No doubt, the poet would have enjoyed the company at a gathering such as this, but it is likely that the wife's views on the essential foolishness of gambling scarce resources on a watch—a timepiece would hardly be a priority in a pioneer farming community such as this—were in fact shared by the poet. Indeed, the poet has some of the protagonists complaining about the problems that they had encountered with

1230 Line 11, poem 36.
1231 Lines 13-16, poem 36.

watches, thereby implying that they are a poor investment.1232 In subsequent verses, John MacLean paints a picture of the near hysteria that the chance to gamble for the watch apparently causes, and he lists some of the older men of the district and enumerates what they are prepared to gamble away, which include a sturdy cow1233 and a white horse,1234 and has this to say about the uproar that the gambling causes:

B' e sin trod na' ban mun sgarbh	Like women fighting over who'll have the scart
'Chaidh air iteig leis a' stoirm;	Which has flown away with the storm;
'S ann 'bu choltaich' iad ri arm	They look like an army
'Dheanadh marbhadh le 'chuid lann.	That would slaughter with its blades.1235

Once again, the poem is light-hearted and humorous. Although satiric, it is a relatively gentle one, meant to entertain rather than to cut. However, like his other poems of this nature, composed both in Scotland and Canada, John MacLean has a more serious underlying purpose, which is social commentary and social control. While social gatherings like this were undoubtedly important in terms of community building, gambling and drink could get out of hand, with serious financial and other consequences. John MacLean's poetry is not censorious, and he is trying to entertain rather than browbeat his audience; however, he does try to remind his audience that some balance is necessary when it comes to certain pastimes. We see here a poet who is fully committed to community building through the reinforcement of older Gaelic values. We also see a poet who is concerned with the well-being of his new community.

New World Panegyric Poetry and Laments

1232 One protagonist claims: "Bha tè agam dhiubh le uaill,/Chuir mi bhuam i, dh'fhàs i mall": lines 35-6, poem 36; a second protagonist says he will not take part in the raffle, because a watch that he had previously won broke down: "Cha tèid mi tuillidh 'na dhàil/Bhon a dh'fheuch mi i mar-tha,/Bidh i tric a' dol gu ceàrd,/Tha i fàilinneach 's gach ball"/"I shall never again join in/Since I have already given one a try,/It often goes to get repaired/It is faulty, every single part". See lines37-40, poem 36

1233 "Ged a chosdadh e 'bhò chruaidh"/"Even if it cost him his sturdy cow": line 23, poem 36.

1234 "Ged a chosgadh e an t-each bàn"/"Even if it cost him the white horse": line 27, poem 36.

1235 Lines 61-4, poem 36.

Eight of the eighteen secular poems composed by John MacLean in Canada were praise poems or laments. Two of these were composed for his former patron, Alexander Maclean, the fifteenth Laird of Coll: poem 31, composed in 1828, on the Laird's decision to turn his estate over to his son Hugh, and poem 32, composed on his death in 1835. One of the poems was composed for Alexander Ranaldson MacDonell, the Chief of the MacDonells of Glengarry, on his death in 1828. All three of these poems were considered in Chapter Three, in the context of the poetry composed by John MacLean in Scotland. While some emigrant poets composed poetry in praise of the clans1236 and Old Country songs commemorating clans continued to be sung in the New World,1237 poetry such as these three poems, made for specific chiefs or for the nobility, is unusual in the emigrant tradition. This is not surprising. MacDonald of Glenaladale, who led an emigration from Clanranald estates to Prince Edward Island in 1771, sought to import the system of land tenure which had existed in the Highlands, but he failed. As we have seen from the poetic record, one of the chief attractions that the New World offered Gaels was title to their own land and freedom from the system of landholding which had existed in the Highlands. The landed nobility played no role in the New World Gaelic communities; they were left behind in the Old Country, and there was no reason for the poets to compose poetry in praise of them.

That John MacLean composed three such poems was due to his sense of obligation and to deep and intimate personal feelings. With respect to Alexander Maclean, the Laird of Coll, this was born of the sense of obligation that came with being the poet to the Laird, and, as suggested above, it may also have been due to the

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1236 See, for example, Alexander "The Ridge" MacDonald's "Sliochd an Taighe", composed for the MacDonalds of Bohuntin, from whom the poet descended: see Effie Rankin, *As a' Bhràighe*, *supra*, at p. 124.

sense of regret that the poet may have felt in relation to the falling out that the two men appeared, based on Old World oral traditions, to have had. With respect to Alexander Ranaldson MacDonell, the poet's response may have been due in part to MacDonell's personal magnetism—as noted in Chapter Three, several of the finest poets of this period composed poetry on his death—but John MacLean was also likely inspired by a sense of personal gratitude for the esteem in which the poet was held by MacDonell of Glengarry and the kindnesses that Glengarry had shown him. Through the act of composition, John MacLean is also making a point about the importance of loyalty, a value which, as we have seen, is central to the panegyric code and to the old Gaelic world view. Although formulaic praise poetry for clan chiefs and landlords was anachronistic in a New World context, all three of these poems are in two important senses typical of the praise poetry that John MacLean composed in the New World. First, each of these three poems drew heavily on the conventions of traditional Gaelic panegyric, and as we shall see, this is also true of much of the praise poetry John MacLean composed in Canada for other, non-traditional subjects. As just noted, these three poems are also highly personal ones which sprang out of the poet's intense feelings for both the Laird of Coll and for Glengarry, and much of his other New World praise poetry was composed for subjects with whom the poet had a close personal relationship. Thus, most of the New World praise poems, including those composed for the Laird of Coll and Glengarry, were poems inspired as much by friendship as by any sense of duty.

All of the other praise poems or laments composed by John MacLean in Canada were in respect of subjects with whom the poet had some sort of significant personal relationship. One poem, "Òran do Leanabh-Gille", poem 43, was composed

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1237 See, for example, "Caismeachd Chloinn Chamshroin", in Helen Creighton and Calum

on the death of the son of a local Antigonish County man, John Chisholm, who, according to the information provided by Alexander Maclean Sinclair in the introduction to the poem in both editions of *Clarsach na Coille*, was drowned while returning one day from the local school. The song was composed as if by Chisholm for his son. This was a technique that John MacLean had employed in Scotland; as was noted in Chapter Four, the lament he composed on the death of Duncan MacInnes of Tiree, poem 19, was written as if by the father of the dead man. It was also not the first poem John MacLean composed on the premature death of a young local man by drowning; "Call na *Cailin*", poem 17, was composed to commemorate the loss of three young Tiree men who drowned at sea. Like both of those poems, "Òran do Leanabh-Gille" is meant to show solidarity for the family and for the community at a time of loss. As John MacInnes has noted in respect of the panegyric tradition, the death of a chieftain marked a particularly intense point of crisis in traditional Gaelic communities, and poets were expected to reinforce the traditional values of the community at such times. With the passing of the chiefly order, the premature loss of young men seems to have replaced the loss of the chief as the archetypal moment of community crisis, both in Old Country and New World Gaelic communities, and poems such as "Òran do Leanabh-Gille" are well-represented in the poetry of the emigrant generation and in subsequent periods in the New World Gaelic tradition. Songs about death by drowning are particularly represented in the Nova Scotia Gaelic tradition,1238 and this is not surprising, as travel by water was, in the early period of

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Macleod, *Gaelic Songs in Nova Scotia*, *supra*, at p. 32.

1238 There are many examples: "Cumha do Shandaidh Bàn", composed by Allan "The Ridge" MacDonald on the death in 1833 of a young man named Alexander MacDonald, who died off the coast of Merigomish, Pictou County (Effie Rankin, *As a' Bhràighe*, *supra*, at p. 108); "Òran nan Granndach", said to have been composed by John "The Piper" MacGillivray, on the drowning, perhaps in 1831, of four men, including two Grants, near Arisaig, Antigonish County (see John Shaw, ed. *Brìgh an Òrain/A Story in Every Song*, *supra*, at p. 249); "Bàthadh nam Fear", composed by Alexander MacDonald, the Keppoch Bard, composed on the death at sea of five Arisaig, Antigonish County men

settlement, the easiest and quickest means of transport, and fishing remained an important activity.

One notable feature of "Òran do Leanabh-Gille" is John MacLean's choice of metre; he employs a three-line strophic metre that was, as was noted in Chapter Four, characteristic of a considerable amount of the older Gaelic panegyric style. The metre was employed elsewhere by John MacLean, and, indeed, the metre in "Òran do Leanabh-Gille" is the same as that employed in "Bàrdachd Alastair MhicFhinoghain", poem 18.1239 As was the case in respect of "Bàrdachd Alastair MhicFhionghain", the poet may have chosen this rather old metre as a mark of particular respect for the subject and, in this case, the subject's family and community. In "Òran do Leanabh-Gille", John MacLean gives expression to the strong feelings of sorrow that would have been experienced by the family. The poem is, as noted, written as if by the father, and the intensity of his feelings of loss and his profound grief are given clear expression by the poet in these lines:

Tha mo chridh' air a mhùchadh,	My heart has been smothered,
'S trom an t-eallach a dhrùidh air,	Heavy is the load that has born in on it,
'S tric a shileadh gu siùbhlach mo dheòir.	Often would my tears flow freely.
Ann am chadal 's am dhùsgadh	In my sleep and in my waking
Thig thu m' aire, 's mi t' ionndrainn,	You are on my mind, and I miss you,
Bhon a dhalladh do shùilean fo sgleò.	Since your eyes were blinded in darkness.1240

The poet also gives expression to the feelings of loss of the mother:

Fhuair do mhàthair a deuchainn,	Your mother has been tested,
Mar gu' sàithte i le iarainn,	Like she has been pierced with iron,

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(Helen Creighton and Calum Macleod, *Gaelic Songs in Nova Scotia*, *supra*, at p. 136); "Òran Gillean Alasdair Mhòir", for two MacDonalds who drowned off Cape Mabou, Cape Breton, in 1848, apparently composed by their sister (Donald Fergusson, *Beyond the Hebrides*, *supra*, at p. 92); "Cumha nam Bràithrean", composed by Peigi Ailein Nic an t-Saoir (Peggy MacIntyre) on the drowning of two brothers at Big Pond, Cape Breton County, in about 1859, while they were trying to save their herring nets from the encroachment of the ice (Calum Iain M. MacLeoid, *Bàrdachd à Albainn Nuaidh*, *supra*, at p. 44); and "Tuireadh", a lament composed for the loss in August, 1893 of the steamship "Dorcas", with all hands on board, including many young Richmond County, Cape Breton Gaels (Donald Fergusson, *Beyond the Hebrides*, *supra*, at p. 94).

1239 In both poems, there are seven syllables per line in the first two lines of a stanza, and each of these lines ends in a di-syllable, with a vowel rhyme between the first syllable of each of di-syllables in the first two lines; the final line has nine syllables, ends in a monosyllabic word, and there is a vowel rhyme between the final monosyllabic words in each verse.

1240 Lines 19-24, poem 43.

Thug an t-earrach seo 'ciad laogh bhon 'chrò. This spring has taken her first calf from the flock.1241

This sort of poetry performed some very important social functions, perhaps the most important of which was the expression of intense emotion in an appropriate way on behalf of the family and community. This is a function that was also important in the Irish tradition of the nineteenth century:

> Fundamental to the tradition of Irish song was its function as an instrument for the direct expression of emotion, using the enhanced powers of both verse and music, on occasions when feelings were such that ordinary speech was inadequate.1242

Another important function was the cathartic effect of such poetry; the act of composition allowed the poet him- or herself come to terms with intense emotions,1243 and it is likely that the repetition of the poem, and in particular the singing of the poem, perhaps in a communal context, allowed for those in attendance to also participate in and benefit from a similar catharsis.

Although there is relatively little praise for the subject of the poem, this is not surprising, given that the subject of the poem was a child; however, the poet does refer to the child with both warmth and an appropriate recognition of the child's potential:

Chaill i 'h-àilleagan ciatach	She has lost her handsome young fellow
'S gun e 'dh'aois ach ochd bliadhna,	He was only eight years of age,
Thuit 'gheug mu' do chrìon i 'sna meòir.	The stalk has fallen before its branches decayed.
Nam bu ghibht a bhiodh buan thu	If you had been an enduring gift
Gu' bu taic thu ri m' ghuallainn,	You woul have been a support at my shoulder,
'S geàrr am faileas a fhuair sinn don òg.	Short is the time that we had with the youth.1244

1241 Lines 25-7, poem 43.
1242 Breandán Ó Madagáin, "Functions of Irish Song in the Nineteenth Century", *supra*, at p. 144.
1243 *Ibid*, at pp. 148-151.
1244 Lines 28-33, poem 43.

In other respects, though, "Òran do Leanbh-Gille" is typical of the tradition of Gaelic laments, and of Gaelic poetry more generally, and this is clearest in the direct, realistic and unromanticised description of the circumstances of the subject's death:

Bha thu d' shìneadh an oidhch' ud	You were laid out that evening
Fo na bruachan 'san droighnich,	Under the river bank, amongst the ferns,
Dh'fhàg sin againne cuimhneachan sgeòil.	That left for us memories of the news.1245

In one respect though, the poem is perhaps less typical of both the wider Gaelic tradition and his own laments, and is reflective of the personal perspective of the poet himself. We see this in the religious themes that dominate the final seven verses of the poem. In each of these verses the poet addresses an omnipotent God.1246 He speaks of man's sinfulness and weakness,1247 and asks God to help us hear His word,1248 to exercise good judgment,1249 and to be thankful, even in the face of a terrible blow such as this:

Dean sinn taingeil 'san uair seo	Make us thankful at this time
Don t-slat smachdaich a bhuail sinn,	To the commanding rod that has struck us,
Faodaidh buille nas cruaidhe tigh'nn oirnn.	An even harsher blow may befall us.1250

The poet finishes the poem with this plea:

Thoir dhuinn neart gu bhith 'g earbsa	Give us the strength to trust
Gun tu-fhèin 'thug air falbh e,	That it was yourself who took him away,
'S gum bu leatsa mo leanaban le còir.	And that my child is rightfully with you.
Thug thu seachad e 'n iasad	You gave him to us temporarily
'S thug leat mar an ceunda e,	And you have taken him like the rest,
'S dean a mhathadh, 's e m' iarrtas, air bròn.	Forgive him, that's my request, in sorrow.1251

As has been noted elsewhere in this dissertation, John MacLean was always a religious man, but there did seem to be a deepening of his religious commitment after

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1245 Lines 49-51, poem 43

1246 "Ach a Rìgh 'tha 'gar riaghladh/'S a thug gealach is grian dhuinn,/Thoir dhuinn gliocas gu t' iarraidh ri 'r beò"/"But O Lord who rules us/And who gave us the moon and the sun,/Give us the wisdom to search for you evermore": lines 55-7, poem 43.

1247 See, for example, line 60, where the poet says "Ged 'tha innleachd ar peacannan mòr" ("Though the designs of our sins are very great"), or line 63, where he says "Ged 'tha fàillinn le laigse oirnn an tòir" (")Though failings through weakness pursue us").

1248 "Gu bhith 'g èisteachd ri t' fhacal" (To listen to your word"): line 53, poem 43.

1249 "Gu bhith lèirsinneach, fiosrach" ("To be discerning and knowledgable": line 61, poem 43.

1250 Lines 64-6, poem 43.

1251 Lines 67-72, poem 43.

his arrival in Canada, and which became ever more apparent in the years following his relocation to Glenbard. The increasing importance of religion in his life is reflected in the large amount of religious poetry he composed in Canada, and in the years after about 1830, his religious verse far exceeded his secular verse. Although we have seen hints of his faith elsewhere in his secular poetry, these passages represent the most significant sustained examples of religious content in his secular verse. These passages do not simply give recognition to religious feeling, but contain significant doctrinal content as well, and in this sense, the poem could be seen as a link between his secular poetry and his religious poetry, a significant amount of which was expository, and such expository verse was an important part of the tradition of Protestant Gaelic religious verse in the nineteenth century. It also marks an important evolution in his thinking. For the first time, religious themes are explicitly explored by John MacLean in a lament, and it seems to suggest that he now sees that the role of the poet goes beyond that of merely acting as the means of building social solidarity; the poet must also try to make sense of the larger theological and existential questions that death poses. Once again, then, this poetry can be seen as being transitional poetry; the attempt to grapple with philosophical issues in a lament has a very contemporary, "modern" feel.

A final notable point about this poem is that it is highly likely that the dead boy and his family were Roman Catholics,1252 and it is therefore perhaps somewhat curious that the poet would choose to marry his secular and religious verse, which did fit into a Protestant tradition, in this particular poem. Religion was, however, an important part of the life of both the Catholic and Protestant Gaelic communities in

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1252 Chisholm was, and is, a very common Antigonish County surname, and the vast majority of the early immigrants who bore that name were Roman Catholics from Strathglass. As noted in Chapter Two, about three quarters of the population in the vicinity of Glenbard, which is likely where this poem was composed, were Roman Catholic Gaels.

the New World, and this content would likely have been of comfort to both the family of the dead boy and to the community as a whole. Regardless of his strong conviction to the Protestant faith, John MacLean chose to spend the latter years of his life in a predominantly Roman Catholic community, and he had many close Roman Catholic friends, perhaps none closer than Fr. Colin Grant, a Roman Catholic priest and the subject of three of the remaining four praise poems.

These other four praise poems were of a more personal nature; although there was an important social, communal element to them, as the subjects of the poetry were prominent "community builders" in the New World Gàidhealtachd, and the poet was, to a certain extent, praising them as such and rehearsing the important community-building virtues they possessed, the poet also had very personal reasons for composing such poetry. This is clearest in the three praise poems that John MacLean composed for Fr. Colin Grant. As was noted in Chapter Two, Colin P. Grant was born in about 1784 in Glenmoriston, Scotland, the son of Duncan Grant, a Presbyterian, and Helena Chisholm, a Roman Catholic. He was apparently an excellent horseman and had first intended to join the army, but was persuaded by his mother's side of the family to enter the priesthood. His training was completed at the College of Killechiarain, in Lismore, Scotland, and he was ordained by his cousin, Bishop John Chisholm, on Easter Sunday, 17 April, 1808. Fr. Grant served as a missionary at Strathglass and at Braemar, but left Scotland in 1818. Upon his arrival in Nova Scotia, he served in the town of Antigonish and its environs for about a year, and then in about July of 1819 was installed as priest in the parish of St. Margaret of Scotland, in Arisaig, Antigonish County, where he served until February, 1829.

By all accounts, Colin Grant was a man of splendid physique and of great kindness. At the dedication of the present parish church in Arisaig in the late 1870s, Fr. Ronald Macdonald described Fr. Grant in the following terms:

> So long as care for the sick and dying is one of the indispensable functions of the ministry, so long shall the name of Father Grant remain associated with all that is courageous and self-sacrificing in the life of the devoted priest. In the discharge of his duty, personal comfort was never taken into account—nothing was to him an inconvenience, and no time unseasonable.1253

As was noted in Chapter Two, Fr. Grant established a number of elementary schools and is also believed to have been responsible for the construction of a small chapel in his parish. Heavy labour and the very large size of the parish affected Fr. Grant's health, and in February, 1829, he resigned his charge. Upon his retirement in October, 1830, he purchased a small farm at Malignant Cove, near Arisaig, and as was noted in Chapter Two, his final years were ones of considerable hardship. He died on 31 March, 1839, and was buried in the old cemetery at Lower South River, Antigonish County. In December, 1887, a monument was erected over his grave, bearing the inscription "A man of splendid physique and a thorough gentleman." He was a second cousin of Bishop William Fraser, who had spearheaded the temperance movement commemorated by John MacLean in poems 37 and 38.1254

In spite of the fact that Fr. Grant was a Catholic and the poet was a Protestant, the two men enjoyed a friendship which seems to have been profound. As noted in Chapter Two, Raymond MacLean provided the following picture of their relationship:

> The late bard McLean (sic) of Glenbard was a frequent visitor at his house [i.e. that of Fr. Grant] in Arisaig. The bard, though a Protestant, could not but

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1253 See Rev. Anthony Angus Johnston, *A History of the Catholic Church in Eastern Nova Scotia, Volume II—1827-1880*, *supra*, at p. 69.

1254 The foregoing information on Fr. Grant draws heavily on the following sources: Rev. A. A. Johnston, *A History of the Catholic Church in Eastern Nova Scotia, Vol. II—1827-1880*, *supra*, at pp. 69-71, Kathleen M. MacKenzie, ed., Rev. A. A. Johnston, *Antigonish Diocese Priests and Bishops 1786-1925* (Antigonish: The Casket Printing and Publishing Co., c. 1994), at p. 45, and Francess G. Halpenny, gen. ed., *Dictionary of Canadian Biography, Vol. VII, 1836 to 1850* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1988), at p. 355.

> admire the fine traits of character he found in the priest, and the priest found relaxation from his duties in the intelligent converse of the genial old bard.1255

In the introduction to poem 40 in both editions of *Clarsach na Coille* Alexander Maclean Sinclair noted that John MacLean "was deeply attached" to Fr. Grant, and these feelings seem to have been fully reciprocated; in his "Memoir" in both editions of *Clarsach na Coille*, Maclean Sinclair noted that during the years of the poet's greatest hardships, in the 1820s at Upper Barney's River, Fr. Grant was very kind to the poet, and noted that "[u]pon one occasion, Mr. Grant made him a present of a snuff-box, which contained together with the snuff five pounds in gold". As noted, the poet tried to repay Fr. Grant for such kindness through the gift of the drinking horn which the poet had himself received from William Forbes. In many respects, the friendship would not have been surprising. Both men came from the Gaelic learned classes and minor aristocracy, and both were men of considerable mental skills. As noted elsewhere in this thesis, the poet's reputation was well-known in mainland districts such as Glengarry and Glenmoriston—indeed, the survival of oral traditions there into the twentieth century concerning the poet's falling out with the Laird of Coll suggest strongly that John MacLean was highly esteemed in those districts—and the poet would have been impressed by a man as physically and mentally impressive as Colin Grant, and one who appears to have been knowledgable about and interested in all aspects of the Gaelic oral tradition. Finally, their close friendship speaks volumes of the religious tolerance of the two men; other scholars have noted that, in spite of the strong commitment of most New World Gaels to their particular Church, there is little evidence of any sectarian hostilities.1256

1255 Raymond MacLean, *History of Antigonish, Vol. 1*, at p. 52.

1256 See Charles Dunn, *Highland Settler*, *supra*; see also the discussion of this subject in Chapter Two.

The emergence of clergymen as important subjects of Gaelic praise poetry in the nineteenth century has already been discussed, and in a sense, the three poems John MacLean composed for Colin Grant could be viewed as a continuation of this tradition in the New World. Indeed, praise poetry for clergy was an important part of the New World Gaelic tradition from the start. As already noted, Allan "The Ridge" MacDonald composed an elegy on the death of Bishop William Fraser in 1851, one of several elegies composed on this occasion.1257 Such traditions were maintained in Roman Catholic communities,1258 in which praise could extend from the clergy to events of religious significance such as the construction of a church,1259 and in Protestant communities,1260 in which elders as well as ministers could be praised.1261 However, John MacLean's three poems for Colin Grant are in many respects different from all such poetry. Generally, such poetry was composed by poets who were co-religionists, and sought to praise the clergyman as a representative of the particular religious tradition. John MacLean was not a Roman Catholic, and he was praising Colin Grant not so much as a leader of his particular flock, but as a close personal friend.

1257 John Boyd, the first editor of the Antigonish newspaper the *Casket* and the editor of an early collection of John MacLean's New World secular poetry, Boide, *Orain Ghaelach le Iain Mac Illeathain, Bard Thighearn Cholla* (Antigonish: 1856), also composed an elegy to Bishop Fraser, "Marbhrann don Easbuig Fhriseal" (April, 1932, *Mosgladh* VI:17, at p. 5), and another unattributed elegy to Bishop Fraser, entitled simply "Cumha", appeared in the very first edition of *Mosgladh* (Spring, 1922, I:1 *Mosgladh*, at p. 33.

1258 See, for example, "Òran do Mhaighstir Dòmhnall Siosal", composed by Archibald MacLellan, "Gilleasbuig Mac an Tàilleir", of Dunvegan, Cape Breton, on the death in 1896 of Fr. Donald Chisholm, parish priest at Broad Cover from 1876 to 1896: John Shaw, ed., *Brigh an Òrain*, *supra*, at p. 244.

1259 See, for example, "Òran do Theampull an Naoimh Truinnein", composed in about 1872 by Alexander MacDonald, the "Keppoch Bard", on the construction of the Holy Trinity Church in Antigonish: Calum I. M. Macleoid, *Bàrdachd à Albainn Nuaidh*, *supra*, at p. 37.

1260 See, for example, "Do 'n Urramach Iain Friseal", composed by Mrs. Donald MacLeod, of North Shore, Victoria County, Cape Breton, on the departure of Rev. John Fraser for Loch Lomond, Cape Breton: Helen Creighton and Calum MacLeod, *Gaelic Songs in Nova Scotia*, *supra*, at p. 266.

1261 See, for example, "Na h-Eildearan", in Donald Fergusson, *Beyond the Hebrides*, *supra*, at p. 288.

Yet, there is some reference to Colin Grant's excellence as a religious leader. In "Òran do Mhaighstir Cailean Grannta", poem 41, composed, based on internal evidence in the poem itself, in about 1825 after the priest had been injured in a fall from his horse, John MacLean provides an extended reflection on Colin Grant's qualities as a clergyman:

'S e 'mheudaich bròn do d' luchd-dùthcha	What has increased your countrymen's sorrow
'Bhith 'gad ionndrainn Didòmhnaich,	Is to be missing you on Sundays,
'N àm dhaibh tional ri chèile	At the time they gather together
Gu bhith 'g èisteachd do chòmhraidh;	To listen to your homily;
Nuair a chàireadh tu lèine ort	When you would put on your vestments
'Dhol a leughadh na còrach,	To go to read the scripture,
'S tu 'ga mìneacheadh fairis	And you would explain it to them
'Thoirt don aineolach eòlas.	To bring knowledge to the ignorant.1262

In this same poem, John MacLean went on to emphasise Colin Grant's eloquence, and again highlighted his skill as a preacher:

Gu 'bhith 'sealltainn 'sa sgàthan	To be looking in the mirror
A chaidh fhàgail g' ar seòladh,	That was left for our instruction,
'S ro mhath 'liubhradh tu pàirt dheth	Excellently would you offer part of it
Air gach Sàbaid don chòmhlan.	Each Sunday to the congregation.1263

In "Marbhrann do Mhaighstir Cailean Grannta, Sagart Arasaig", poem 42, composed on the priest's death in 1839, John MacLean says that Fr. Grant will leave a gap in the clergy.1264 However, such reflections are not as extended as in the praise poetry written by co-religionists for their parish priest or minister; a good example is Archibald MacLellan's "Òran do Mhaighstir Dòmhnall Siosal", in which the poet makes reference to his devotion to the priestly calling, to the offering of the Sacraments, to his pastoral care and ability to instruct his flock.1265

By the same token, much of the other praise poetry composed for clergy lacks references to feelings of friendship between the poet and the subject, and this highly personal connection is evident in the poetry John MacLean composed for Fr. Grant.

1262 Lines 33-40, poem 41.
1263 Lines 45-8, poem 41.
1264 "'S gura beàrn thu 'as a' chlèir"/"You have left a gap in the clergy": line 214, poem 42.
1265 In John Shaw, ed., *Brìgh an Òrain*, *supra*, at pp. 244-7.

John MacLean praises Colin Grant for the quality of loyalty—as was discussed in Chapter Three, this quality also features prominently in the "panegyric code"—but the poet praises the subject's loyalty as a friend, rather than loyalty to the community as a whole or to the rightful king, as is usually the case in the panegyric tradition.1266 The closeness of the relationship is attested to by the direct expression of intense sadness felt by the poet on the priest's death:

Bidh tu 'm chuimhne là 's a dh'oidhche	You'll be in my memory day and night
'S tric a' tigh'nn fo m' shuim do chall,	Often do I reflect on your loss,
Chuir sin mulad mòr air m' inntinn,	It put great sadness in my mind,
'S tu 'bhith dhìth oirnn brìgh mo rann.	Our being without you is the essence of my rhyme.1267

In most respects, however, John MacLean draws primarily on the techniques and motifs of the Gaelic panegyric tradition, and this is a pattern which is true to a considerable extent of Allan "the Ridge" MacDonald's lament composed on the death of Bishop Fraser.1268 It may be that these poets, so thoroughly versed in the archetypes of the Gaelic panegyric tradition, were struggling to break out of the confines of that rhetoric to develop a system of rhetoric more appropriate for the clergy. However, some of the commonplaces of the "panegyric code", such as generosity, liberality, the protection of the poor and the weak, eloquence, intelligence, good judgment, justice, and humility would all have been appropriate for a Christian clergyman, and all of these motifs can be found in the poetry composed by John MacLean for Colin Grant.1269 Even some of the physical attributes of the chieftain that figure prominently in the "panegyric code", such as authority, and courage, would

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1266 Take, for example, this passage: "Bha thu dìleas air mo chùlthaobh/'Sheasamh cùis dhomh 's mi bhi 'n càs"/"You were loyal in support of me/To stand by me when I was in need": lines 23-4, poem 42. This is almost certainly in reference to the support given by Fr. Grant, including the gift of gold and snuff, in the early, difficult years at Upper Barney's River.

1267 Lines 29-32, poem 42.

1268 In Effie Rankin, *As a' Bhràighe*, *supra*, at pp. 110-5.

1269 Take, for example: knowledge, lines 7, 9, 28, and 74 in poem 40, line 52, poem 42; urbanity and gentility, line 16, poem 40, lines 45-6, poem 42; kindness, lines 42, 173, poem 42; humility, line

be appropriate to a religious leader, and these motifs also appear in the poetry John MacLean composed for Colin Grant.1270 Indeed, the image of the Gaelic heroic warrior could easily be redeployed in respect of a "Soldier of Christ" such as a clergyman. In places, however, the warrior motif has a literal truth for John MacLean, in passages such as the following, in which he says that Colin Grant would have made an excellent soldier but for his decision to embark on the priesthood:

Fhreagradh tu air thus na h-armailt,	You would've been suitable at the head of an army
'S ann ad làimh a b' earbsaich' lann,	In your hand a sword would be most trustworthy,
'S mura cuireadh Clèir na h-Alba	And if the Clergy of Scotland hadn't bound you
Ceangal tràth ort, dh'fhalbh thu ann.	Early on, you would have signed up.
Bha thu cruadalach gun ghealltach,	You were courageous, without cowardice
Nan èireadh tu 'feachd na strì,	If you rose in war or strife,
Nan cleachdadh tu làitheabh t' òige,	Had you used your days of youth
'Dhol gu seirbheis Dheòrsa Rìgh;	To go into th eservice of George, the King;
B' airidh thu air àite Còirneil	You were worthy of the rank of Colonel
'S gun cois'neadh tu 'n còrr le d' ghnìomh,	And you would've earned more with your exploits,
Le lann stàilinn air do chruachan,	With a blade of steel on your thigh,
'S cha bu dualchas dhuit 'bhith clì.	It wasn't in your inherited nature to be feeble.1271

The poet also employs many of the standard motifs relating to the physical prowess of the chieftain. He repeatedly describes Colin Grant as an excellent skipper;1272 as was noted in Chapter Three, the image of the ship can be likened to the ship of state. Such imagery works very well in relation to the clergy, where effective management of the pastoral charge could easily be understood in terms of this "ship of state" imagery. The poet also describes Colin Grant as an excellent hunter1273 and as an excellent rider;1274 again, this last image may have a literal truth, because as Alexander Maclean Sinclair noted in respect of Fr. Grant, he was indeed renowned as an excellent horseman. The poet pulls together all of this imagery, so typical of that

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17, poem 40, lines 55-6, poem 41, lines 16, 174-5, poem 42; justice, line 44, poem 42; and, support for the poor and weak, lines 39-40, poem 42.

1270 Take, for example: authority, line 137, poem 40, line 43, poem 42; courageousness, line 37, poem 40, lines 49-51, poem 42.

1271 Lines 53-64, poem 42.

1272 Lines 41-56, poem 40, lines 67-72, poem 42.

1273 Lines 57-64, poem 40, lines 81-8, poem 42.

1274 Lines 65-72, poem 40, lines 17-24, poem 41.

which was deployed in respect of the physical exploits of the ideal chief, in his description of Fr. Grant as being skilled in every manly activity.1275 It is certain that the poet knew that Fr. Grant came from a family which had a military pedigree, and that the priest's brother had an admirable record of military service, and the poet may also have been reminding his audience of this, thereby highlighting Fr. Grant's claims for respect based on family virtue.

As we have seen in Chapter Three, the excellent physical appearance of the subject is another commonplace in the Gaelic panegyric tradition, and this element also features in the poetry John MacLean composed for Colin Grant. Again, descriptions such as the following likely had a literal as well as metaphorical truth, as Alexander Maclean Sinclair indiated that Colin Grant was both handsome and physically imposing:

Nuair a bha e beò 'na slàinte,	When he was alive and in good health,
Bu deas, dàicheil cumadh 'bhall,	Handsome and graceful the shape of his limbs,
Don duine-uasail 'tha mi 'gràitinn,	Of the noble man I am speaking,
'S tric a dh'fhàiltich mi air làimh;	Often did I welcome him with a handshake;
Pearsa ghrinn gun fhoill, gun fhàillinn,	A lovely form, without deceit or fault,
Bho d' mhullach gu d' shàil gun mheang,	From your top to your heels, without blemish,
Gnùis a b' àille 's fiamh a' ghàire oirre,	The most beautiful face, a hint of a smile on it,
'S cridhe blàth, bu chàirdeil cainnt.	And a warm heart, friendly was your speech.1276

Finally, just as in the poetry that John MacLean composed for the Laird of Coll and for Glengarry, he praises at length Colin Grant's ancestry. Numerous references are made to the clan Grant and to their prowess as warriors.1277 The manly, warrior virtues of his mother's people, the Chisholms, are also rehearsed at length,1278 as are the Patersons, with whom Colin Grant had some undetermined connection.1279 References are also made to renowned families—primarily

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1275 "Gach fearaghleus mun robh thu teòma"/"In every manly activity you were skilful": line 65, poem 42.
1276 Lines 9-16, poem 42; see also, lines 25-7, 29-32, poem 40.
1277 Lines 22 and 77-88, poem 40, lines 96-104, poem 42.
1278 Lines 97-104, poem 40, lines 113-120, poem 4.
1279 Line 89, poem 40, lines 105-112, poem 42.

Jacobite—with whom Colin Grant had some connection, such as the Frasers,1280 the Glengarry MacDonells,1281 MacLean of Ardgour,1282 the Campbells of Barcaldine,1283 the Sinclairs,1284 the Camerons,1285 and the MacKenzies of Brahan.1286 John MacLean also employs kennings which are well-known in the Gaelic panegyric tradition to emphasise the nobility and purity of Colin Grant's descent: his ancestry is likened to water flowing from the purest of fresh water wells, and very common vegetal imagery is also deployed:

Do na meuraibh a b' àirde	From the loftiest of branches
Don chraoibh a fhreumhaich fo bhlàth anns a' ghleann,	Of the tree that grew from blossoms in the glen,
Tha i fhathast 'san àite sin	The tree is still in that place
'Am prìsealachd stàta gun chall,	In a precious state, without any loss,
Ri sìor-bhuannachd gu làthail	To ever prosper daily
'S gura daingeann 'na làraich a bonn.	Firm are the roots in the place.1287

The close adherence to the commonplaces of the panegyric code in the poems of John MacLean for Colin Grant and in poems such as Allan "the Ridge" MacDonald's lament for Bishop Fraser would also have served other purposes: the full deployment of the old rhetorical system in all of its splendour would no doubt have flattered the subjects and those close to the subjects—this was, of course, one of the aims of such poetry—but more importantly, the deployment of such rhetoric would have made the point very clearly to the wider audience that men such as these were the natural and rightful successors of the heroic chiefly class in Gaelic society, and are owed the same esteem, respect and admiration. It should again be noted, though, that in spite of the relatively formulaic nature of much of the poetry in the three poems to Colin Grant, the poetry was inspired by intense feelings of personal

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1280 Lines 113-120, poem 40, lines 129-136, poem 42.
1281 Lines 121-128, poem 40, lines 141-144, poem 4.
1282 Lines 145-152, poem 42.
1283 Lines 153-6, poem 42.
1284 Lines 157-160, poem 42.
1285 Lines 137-40, poem 42.
1286 Lines 121-8, poem 42.
1287 Lines 91-6, poem 40; for similar vegetal imagery, see line 36, poem 40.

friendship. The poet consciously chose to honour Colin Grant in this way based solely on their personal relationship, which had been enhanced by the many kindnesses the priest showed to the poet. John MacLean was honouring Colin Grant in the best way he knew: through the composition of three classic praise poems in the traditional fashion, executed to with a high degree of technical skill.

The last poem in this collection is poem 44, "Marbhrann do bhean-uasail òig, chliùitich a bha pòsta aig Dotair Iain Noble" (or "Marbhrann do Mhrs. Noble"). The song was composed for Julia MacNiven, the wife of Dr. Iain Noble, who died and was buried at Whycocomagh, Cape Breton, in June, 1843. As such, this poem may be the last secular poem composed by John MacLean. The poem was composed as if by Dr. Noble, and we have seen that John MacLean had used this convention before, as had other emigrant poets.1288 Alexander Maclean Sinclair claimed in the introduction to this song in both editions of *Clarsach na Coille* that it was Dr. Noble who had requested the poet to make the song, and although the poet himself made no reference to this in the manuscript version of the song,1289 it was not uncommon for such requests to be made, and as we saw earlier, John MacLean had made two other songs in response to similar requests.1290

Julia MacNiven was the daughter of Colin MacNiven, who had from the end of the eighteenth century been the tacksman of Grianal, Tiree. His social status is reflected in the praise poem composed in his honour by Archibald MacPhail (Gilleasbaig MacPhàil), a Tiree poet, "Òran do Chailain Mac-Niomhain, Fear

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1288 See, for example, Allan "the Ridge" MacDonald's "Cumha do dh' Iain Dòmhnallach (Tàillear)", which was composed as if by the subject's widow: Effie Rankin, *As a' Bhràighe*, *supra*, at p. 114.

1289 In MG15G/2/2.

1290 "Cumha, do Dhonnchadh MacAonghais, à Tiriodh", poem 19, was apparently made in response to a request by the father of the man who had died; by contrast, the satire "Moladh Dhòmhnaill MhicUalraig", poem 16, was made in response to a request by the subject of the poem

Ghrianail an Tirithe".1291 He had, however, apparently fallen into arrears with his rent, likely in the lean years following the end of the Napoleonic Wars in 1815, had lost the Grianal farm, and had emigrated to Nova Scotia.1292 It is likely that Colin MacNiven arrived at Whycocomagh sometime after 1821.1293 Although Whycocomagh came to be predominantly a Skye settlement, a significant number of Tiree and Coll settlers came to this part of Cape Breton, particularly in the districts of Orangedale and River Denys, which are to the south of Whycocomagh, and they would have been acquainted with him and aware of his social prominence, in spite of the hard times which had befallen him.1294

John Noble was also a prominent man in many of the Highland settlements of western Cape Breton Island. Accordingly to Alexander Maclean Sinclair, Noble was born in Inverness-shire, Scotland1295 about 1790.1296 It is likely that he was a Gaelic speaker.1297 He trained as a doctor, and after his arrival in Nova Scotia in about 1822, he was the first physician in what is now Inverness County. After Julia MacNiven's death in 1843, he moved with his family to London, Ontario, where he died.1298

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himself for a praise poem, and as was noted in the discussion of this poem, such a request for self-praise was inappropriate, and sparked the resulting satire.

1291 *Mac-Talla* 4:2, 28 September, 1895, at p. 8.

1292 Niall M. Brownlie, *Bailtean is Ath-Ghairmean a Tiriodh/Townships and Echoes from Tiree* (Glendaruel: Argyll Publishing, 1995), at pp. 58-59.

1293 J. L. MacDougall indicates that the first settler in Whycocomagh was John MacKinnon, also of Tiree, who arrived in the spring of 1821: J. L. MacDougall, *History of Inverness County Nova Scotia* (Halifax: Sandy Group, 1999) (reprint), at p. 459. Therefore, Colin MacNiven must have arrived thereafter. As we shall see, Julia MacNiven married in 1823, meaning that the family was in Nova Scotia prior to that date.

1294 J. L. MacDougall refers to Colin MacNiven as "Captain" MacNiven, suggesting military service but also implying a certain elevated social standing that was apparently still remembered and acknowledged when MacDougall was writing, in the early twentieth century (his *History* was published in 1922). See *ibid*, at . 475.

1295 According to J. L. MacDougall, he was from Inverness: *ibid.*

1296 Alexander Maclean Sinclair, *Filidh na Coille*, *supra*, at p. 195.

1297 Maclean Sinclair tells us nothing of his father, but mentioned that his mother, Janet Robertson, was from Dingwall; he may have provided such information to highlight John Noble's Gaelic pedigree.

1298 Fergusson claims that he died in 1851 (Donald Fergusson, *Beyond the Hebrides*, *supra*, at p. 91), while MacDougall puts his death at 1854. After his death, the family then moved to Minnesota and

John Noble and Julia MacNiven married at Pictou in 1823. He had a house near the crossroads at Little Judique, in the district of Port Hood, Inverness County, Cape Breton, and he and his wife resided both there, and at Port Hood. By 1824, they had moved back to be with her family in the Whycocomagh district, because it was there, at MacNiven's Island—now known as MacInnis' Island, but initially named for her father—located on the south side of Whycocomagh Bay, that Julia MacNiven gave birth to the first of their nine children, Flora, on 1 February. The family may well have moved back to the Judique district of Cape Breton, for it was at Little Judique that Julia MacNiven apparently gave birth to James Thomas Noble on 26 May, 1843. The baby died shortly after his birth, and Julia died of birth complications shortly thereafter. The baby and mother were buried together, the first people to be buried at the Stewartdale Cemetary, at Whycocomagh.1299 The request from John Noble to John MacLean to compose an elegy for Julia must have come shortly after this time.

As we have seen, Julia MacNiven came from a prominent family and married a prominent man. There are a number of indications that both her and her husband were warmly admired as well as respected in the Gaelic communities in which they resided for their contributions to those communities. Julia had apparently acted as midwife at many of the births in the Judique and Long Point districts of Inverness County, and, as a result, many grateful mothers named their girls "Julia" in her honour, especially the MacDougalls of Judique Intervale, the MacDonells of Indian Point and the Chisholms of Long Point. The name Julia had not been common in this

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later to the State of Washington where two sons were living at the time MacDougall wrote: .J. L. MacDougall, *History of Inverness County Nova Scotia*, *supra*, at p. 475.

1299 The information in this paragraph is drawn from Donald Fergusson, *Beyond the Hebrides*, *supra*, at p. 91, J.L. MacDougall, *History of Inverness County*, *supra*, at p. 475, and Alexander Maclean Sinclair, *Filidh na Coille*, *supra*.

area of Cape Breton before this period.1300 Julia MacNiven was also remembered in the Whycocomagh area; the Gaelic name for Little Narrows, a narrows on a branch of Lake Bras d'Or just north of Whycocomagh, is to this day "Caolas Silis" in her honour,1301 and the car ferry which still plys this small stretch of water is called "Caolas Silis".

As we have seen in Chapter Two, John MacLean enjoyed visiting, and seems to have visited extensively and widely, even in the harsh, early years in the remoteness of Upper Barney's River. However, it is not likely that he would have traveled as far afield as Cape Breton—at least, he would not have done so very frequently—and we have no record that he had done so. That Dr. Noble would have specifically requested that John MacLean compose such an elegy is highly indicative of the poet's renown, which seems to have spread quickly and extensively amongst the scattered Highland settlements of eastern Nova Scotia. There is, however, a strong Tiree connection that would help to explain both the request, and the poet's evident enthusiasm for the task: it is quite possible that the MacNiven family would have known John MacLean before the poet left Tiree, and it is certain that they would have been well aware of his reputation, as would the many Tiree and Coll people who had settled Whycocomagh and the districts to the south. Indeed, as was noted in Chapter Two, John MacLean had traveled to the west Highlands while he lived in Scotland, and was apparently well-known in many west Highland districts, including Glengarry, and many Glengarrians had settled in the Judique district as well. Given the social standing of both Julia MacNiven and John Noble, and given Julia's Tiree credentials, the poet would undoubtedly have looked favourably and, indeed, would no doubt have been

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1300 My thanks to Allan J. Gillis, of Ottawa, Ontario, and a native of Judique and a genealogist of the area, for the foregoing information, which he generously provided by personal communication.

1301 See Donald A. Fergusson, *Fad air Falbh as Innse Gall*, *supra*, at p. 91.

flattered by Noble's request. However, the poet's acceptance of the request can also be seen as a final example of his desire to build community through his verse; John Noble and Julia MacNiven were community-builders in those Highland districts in which they lived, and by honouring Julia, and indirectly, John through the composition of a praise poem, John MacLean was again able to reinforce virtues and signal the emergence of a new sorts of community leaders who were the appropriate subject of panegyric verse in the context of nineteenth century New World Gàidhealtachd communities.

The poem has been recorded in the latter half of the twentieth century from both New World1302 and Scottish informants,1303 suggesting the high regard in which the poem was held in Gaelic-speaking communities on both sides of the Atlantic, and critics well-versed in the old Gaelic poetic tradition have praised the poem in the highest terms: for example, Norman MacDonald of Antigonish County commented in his 1863 edtion of *Sàr-Obair nam Bàrd Gaelach* that the poem was "perhaps unsurpassed by anything of the kind in the language" and that it "abounds with exceedingly beautiful similes", and Hector Cameron noted in *Na Bàird Thirisdeach* that the elegy was "perhaps the finest in the Gaelic language".

Certainly, John MacLean shows once again a deft grasp of the commonplaces of the Gaelic panegyric tradition, which he deployed in a selective and entirely appropriate way. Those elements of the "panegyric code" which are more appropriate for the masculine heroic warrior-chief are completely absent. As part of the poet's expression of solidarity with Julia MacNiven's mother, there is a fleeting reference to a brother of the subject who had died, and therefore a passing reference to the

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1302 The version in Donald Fergusson's *Beyond the Hebrides* was recorded from the singing of Archibald A. MacKenzie, a native of Christmas Island, Cape Breton who was living in Halifax, Nova Scotia: See Fergusson, *Beyond the Hebrides*, *supra*, at p. 91.

MacNiven name,1304 but there is none of the praise of ancestors and of clan that is, as we have seen, an appropriate part of the tradition. This is perhaps in keeping with the premise of the poem; it is meant to be an intimate elegy from a man to his wife. However, the praise of personal beauty, an important motif in the panegyric tradition, is completely appropriate in a poem such as this:

Chaill mi cèile glan m' òige,	I have lost the pure spouse of my youth,
Càite 'faic mi cho bòidhche 'san tìr,	Where shall I see one so beautiful on earth,
Bha do nàdar 's do bheusan	Your nature and your virtues
A' co-fhreagradh dha chèil' anns gach nì.	Matched each other in every way.1305

Also appropriate are references to personal qualities which are expected in a community leader—indeed, these are hinted at in the preceding passage—and the enumeration of these is entirely consistent with the panegyric tradition:

'S i do shùil 'bu ghlan sealladh,	Your eyes were of the purest appearance
Cha robh gruaim air do mhalaidh na sgraing,	There was never a frown or a scowl on your brow,
Bha thu fiùghantach fialaidh	You were liberal and generous
'S tu 'bu shìobhalta briathran is cainnt;	Your words and conversation were most civil;
'S i do làmh nach biodh dìomhain	Your hand would not be idle
'S bu ghlan obair bho d' mheuran gun mheang,	Purest was the work of your faultless fingers.1306

Again, by praising such virtues, the poet is also reinforcing them as appropriate standards for the community as a whole; in elegy, we see the poet as community builder, and the last lines quoted, which may be in reference to Julia MacNiven's work as a midwife, illustrate the poet praising the work of community building.

Other aspects of the Gaelic panegyric tradition are present. One example is the use of kennings. Thus, her family is likened to a ship without a skipper1307—this well-known image, which appears frequently in John MacLean's work, has been used as a metaphorical allusion to the ship of state, but is just as appropriate to the

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1303 A version was collected from Donald Sinclair, "Dòmhnall Chaluim Bhàin", of Balephuil, Tiree, and was published in *Tocher*: *Tocher* 18 (1975), p. 50.
1304 See line 139, poem 44.
1305 Lines 21-4, poem 44.
1306 Lines 81-6, poem 44.
1307 Lines 58-66, poem 44.

stewardship role of the wife and mother in the good and well-organised household economy. She is likened to a felled apple tree, a tree which is associated with nobility and purity in the Gaelic tradition: "Thuit craobh-ubhail mo ghàraidh/'S gun do fhroiseadh am blàth feadh an fheòir".1308 Elsewhere, the poet refers to a candle as having been snuffed out, and a mirror as having been broken. There are also references to meteorological phenomena such as the changing of the seasons as metaphors for the passage of time and for decline and death (as well, where appropriate, for birth and life), also common in the Gaelic tradition:

Thèirig sàmhradh mo làithean,	The summor of my days has departed
Tha mi uireasach, cràiteach gu leòr;	I m now destitute and miserable enough;
Thàinig geamhradh 'na àite,	Winter has come in its place,
Dhòirt na tuiltean gu làr bho na neòil.	The showers have fallen to earth from the clouds.1309

And, the image of the wheel of fortune, also a very well-known, powerful and almost mystical image in the Gaelic tradition, is present: "Rinn a' chuibhle orm tionndadh/Bhon a dhalladh do shùilean fo sgleò".1310

The two most notable features of this poem, however, are the depth and intensity of personal feeling which is expressed, and the incisive reflections on the human condition which appear in several places. Both these features give the poem a contemporary feeling. Indeed the first three verses are an extended reflection on and expression of the husband's sorrow, and the husband's loneliness and profound sadness is repeatedly expressed and is the theme which binds the poem together. For example, such emotions are given expression in the third verse:

'S beag an t-ioghnadh sin dhomhsa	Little surprise is it to me
'Bhith fo mhulad 's am bròn air mo chlaoidh;	To be saddened and exhausted by sorrow;
Tha mi 'nis ann am ònrachd	I am now on my own
'S bean mo thaighe 'bhith 'n còmhnaidh	Forever to be without a wife.1311

1308 "The apple tree of my garden has fallen/And the blossoms have been scattered in the grass": lines 67-8, poem 44.
1309 Lines 89-92, poem 44.
1310 Lines 79-80, poem 44.
1311 Lines 17-20, poem 44.

'gam dhìth.

The image of the husband's profound loneliness reemerges near the end of the poem:

B' e seo sàmhradh a' chruadail	That was the summer of hardship
'Dh'fhàg mo leaba 's mo chluasagan lom	That has left my bed and my pillows empty,
Tha mo chòmhnaidh cho uaigneach	My homestead is as lonesome
'S ged a bhithinn 'an uaimhe nan toll.	As though I were in a deep cave.1312

Sleeplessness is another recurrent theme. The poem opens with the lines "A-nochd 's luaineach mo chadal/'S mi ri gluasad 'am leabaidh gun tàmh",1313 and similar imagery appears elsewhere: "Ged a thèid mi 'sa' leabaidh/Cha tig buaireadh a' chadail 'am cheann".1314

However, the poet makes a more profound point about the meaninglessness and hollowness of worldly things in the face of death and the loss of a loved one:

Chuir a' bhliadhna seo 'an èis mi,	This year has left me in hardship,
'S chan e beartas na sprèidh 'tha 'gam dhìth;	And it is not for lack of riches or cattle;
'S e ar sgaradh o chèile	It is our separation from one another
'Dh'fhàg mi airtnealach, èisleanach, tinn,	That has left me weary, sorrowful and ill,
Dh'fhalbh mo lathaichean èibhinn,	My light-hearted days have departed,
Chan eil leigheas aig lèigh dhomh ri tìm.	There is no doctor's cure for me in time.1315

Indeed, the powerless of mankind in the face of death is evident in these lines, where, in reference to the painful destruction wreaked upon him by the grim messenger of death:

Thilg e saighdean a lot thu,	He cast arrows which bruised you,
'S cha robh feum ann am dhotaireachd ann,	And there was no use in my medical skills,
'S on a dh'fhàg mi 'sa chnoc thu	And since I left you in the graveyard
Gura dilleachdainn bhochda do chlann.	Your children have become poor orphans.1316

The last line again conveys the message that, in the face of death, we are all rendered "poor orphans", in spite of the relative lack of material want that John Noble's family probably enjoyed. It is also notable that the poet conveys in both of the preceding passages the futility of medicine in both the face of death and the face of profound

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1312 Lines 153-6, poem 44.
1313 "Tonight my sleep is uneasy/I cast about restlessly in my bed": lines 1-2, poem 44.
1314 "Though I shall go to the bed/The temptation of sleep does not enter my head": lines 105-6, poem 44.
1315 Lines 43-8, poem 44.
1316 Lines 53-6, poem 44.

sorrow; putting these words in the mouth of a well-respected doctor would have had a powerful emotional and intellectual effect on his audience. The uncertainty and shortness of human existence is emphasised near the end of the poem:

> 'S ann 'tha sean-fhacal dearbhte, The proverb has certainly been proven,
> Dh'fhiosraich pàirt e 'bhith searbh anns gach linn, Certainly part of it is bitter in every age,
> Gum bi sùil ri beul fairge That the approach of the sea will be expected
> 'S nach bi sùil ri beul roilgeadh a-chaoidh But the approach of the grave will never be.1317

A similar point is brought home forcefully in the final verse:

> Tha ar beatha neo-chinnteach, Our life is uncertain,
> Air a coimeas 'san fhìrinn ri sgàil, It can truthfully be likened to a shade,
> Sinn ar coigrich 'san tìr seo, And we are all strangers in this land
> 'S thèid sinn uile gu sìorraidheachd gun dàil. And we will all go to eternity without delay.1318

These are likely the last lines of secular poetry that John MacLean composed, and are a fitting epitaph for his body of work and, indeed, for his life. He was, as is reflected his early Canadian poetry, a well-known "stranger" in his new home, and like many emigrants, perhaps felt himself to be a lifelong stranger in the new home. Like most emigrants, he no doubt felt that, with the passage of time, he had also become a stranger to his native land, and for John MacLean, like the overwhelming majority of Gaelic emigrants, there was no going back to the world that they had known and, despite their many and varying reasons for leaving it, had loved. He is also making the deeper point that we are also only temporary residents of this world and, in keeping with his deep religious faith, he concludes by reminding his audience that we are all destined to return to an otherwordly home. This placing of emigration in a spiritual context is reminiscent of, and perhaps to some extent inspired by, Rev. Norman MacLeod, who in the first issue of "Cuairtear nan Gleann" reminded his readers of the following:

> Cha 'n fhaod sinn dhì-chuimhneachadh gu bheil imrich gu mór is cudthromaich' ann tha feitheamh oirnn gu léir, imrich air an éiginn duinn dol agus o nach 'eil saorsadh aig neach a rugadh le mnaoi. Tha sinn uile 'nar

1317 Lines 171-4, poem 44.
1318 Lines 181-4, poem 44.

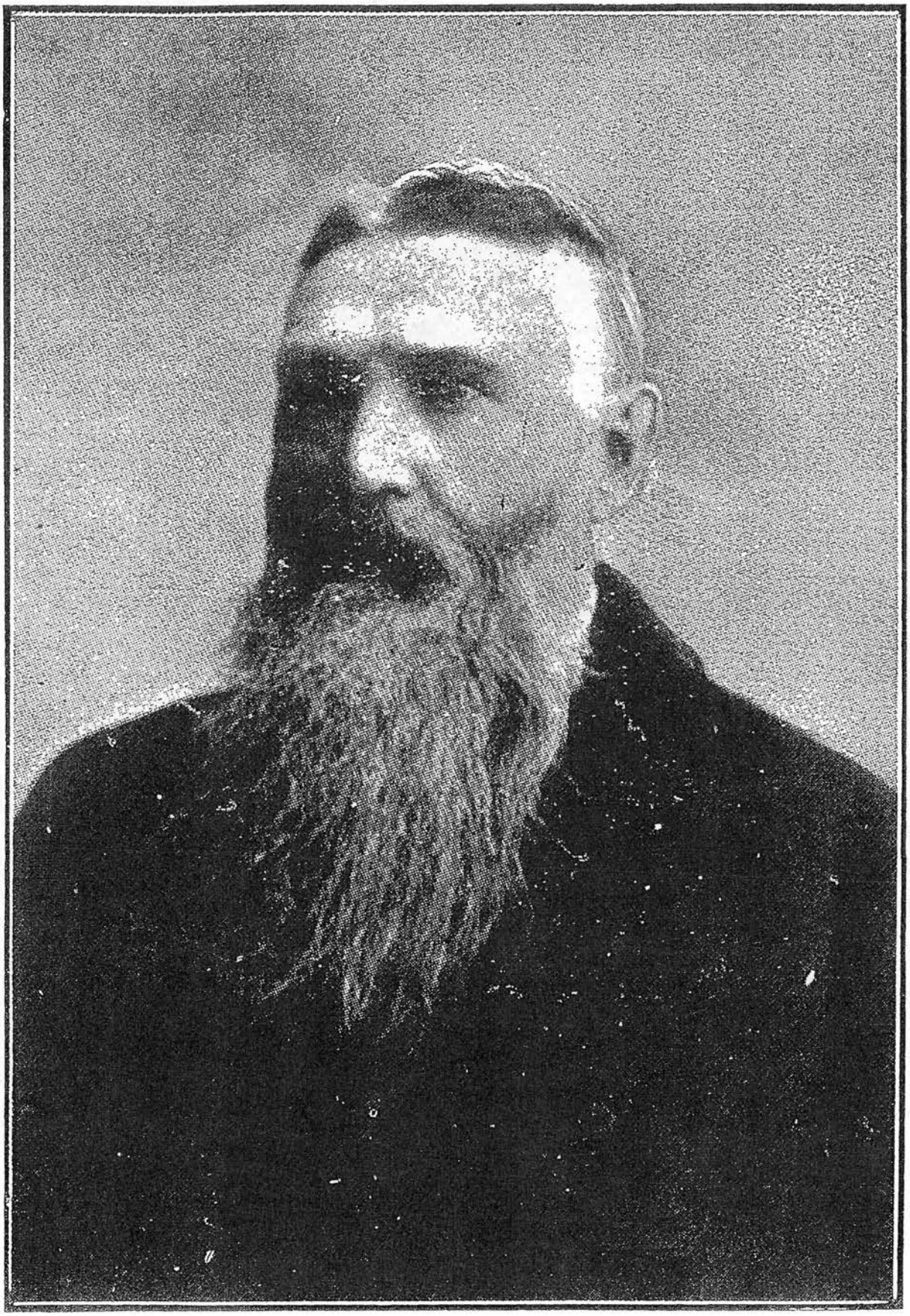
luchd-cuairt san t-saoghal-sa, 's oilthirich sinn gu léir, dachaidh bhuan cha 'n eil aig a h-aon.1319

In this poem, we see the richness and complexity of John MacLean's poetry being given perhaps its fullest expression. He continues to be a panegyrist, but one who deploys the commonplaces of the tradition in a measured and appropriate way. It is deployed not for a chieftain or laird, but a woman of standing who derives at least part of that standing from her role as a community-builder in the New World. We see the poet continuing to reinforce through praise those values which are, in his view, the building blocks of any Gaelic community. We also see the emergence of the subjective, personal voice, and the expression in the first person of strong feeling. We also see the poet reflecting on the more profound mysteries and deeper truths of the human experience. We see, then, a poet rooted firmly in the Gaelic panegyric tradition, but also a poet who is fully representative of his age, the early nineteenth century, a period of great transition for Gaels such as John MacLean. We also see the emergence of the personal voice, one grappling with metaphysical questions of universal relevance, all features of a poetry which has an ongoing relevance and, in places, a "contemporary", or better, a timeless feel. Finally, we see in this poem the poet's commitment to and solidarity with members of his community, particularly in their time of need. As we have seen throughout this chapter, concern for and solidarity with his fellow Gaels, the maintenance of their deepest values, and the protection and the recreation of viable communities, firmly rooted in those values, were the themes that ultimately inspired John MacLean. He deserves his prominent place amongst both the Gaelic poets of the nineteenth century and of the New World, and he—and

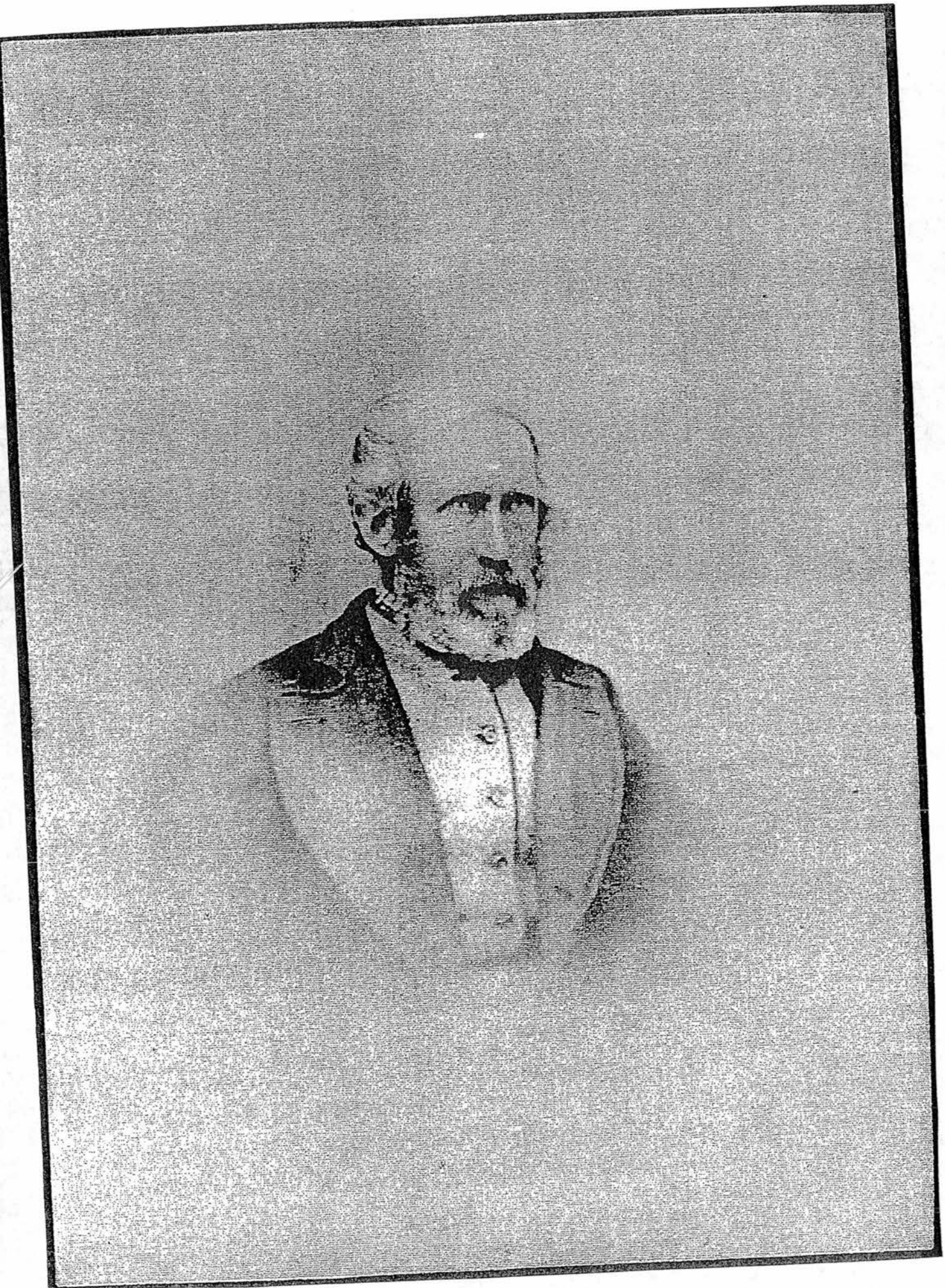
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1319 "We cannot forget that a much more important journey awaits us all, a journey which we must make and from which no person born of woman is exempt. We are all travellers in this world, we are all pilgrims, not one of us has a permanent home": "Cuairtear nan Gleann", no. 1 (1940), at p. 11. See Sheila M. Kidd, "Caraid nan Gaidheal and 'Friend of Emigration': Gaelic Emigration Literature of the 1840s", (April, 2002) 81 *Scottish Historical Review* 52, at p. 63.

these other nineteenth century and New World poets—merits a more prominent one in the wider Gaelic tradition.



Alexander Maclean Sinclair, LL.D.
Frontispiece, *Clarsach na Coille*, Hector MacDougall edition, 1928



Charles MacLean (1813-1880), eldest son of the poet.
Courtesy of Nova Bannerman, Barney's River Station School Museum, N.S.

CHAPTER SIX: SOURCES OF THE POETRY, AND EDITORIAL AND TRANSLATION PRINCIPLES EMPLOYED

We know of ninety secular and spiritual poems that have been attributed to John MacLean. It seems certain, though, that his output exceeded this number: Alexander Maclean Sinclair, the poet's grandson, notes that it was not until after the poet had composed and sung his songs that he wrote them down, with the result that some songs were lost.1320 John MacLean composed at least forty-four secular poems and songs, twenty-six of which were composed before he left for the New World in 1819, and eighteen of which were composed in Nova Scotia. All of the secular poems which are known to us but one, "Òran, do Dhòmhnall MacArtair", poem 15 in this collection, were published by Maclean Sinclair, in *Clarsach na Coille*, the first edition of which appeared in 1881,1321 and the second edition, edited by Hector MacDougall, a native of Eilearaig, Coll, in 1928.1322 Hector MacDougall made a number of minor spelling changes, to reflect slightly different orthographic conventions from those employed by Maclean Sinclair, but the versions in the second edition are all based closely on those in the first edition.1323 A lesser number of poems from this same body of work were also published by Maclean Sinclair in *Filidh na Coille*,1324 but these versions are also essentially identical to those in the first edition of *Clarsach na Coille*.

1320 Alexander MacLean Sinclair, *Clarsach na Coille* (Glasgow: Archibald Sinclair, 1881) (henceforth, CC1), at p. xxi.

1321 CC1.

1322 (Glasgow: Alexander MacLaren & Sons, 1928); henceforth CC2.

1323 Hector MacDougall included a second version of "Oran Molaidh do dh' Alasdair MacDhòmhnaill, Tighearna Ghlinne-Garadh", poem 26 in this collection, which is apparently based on the version that survived in the oral tradition in Glengarry itself; as noted in chapter 6, this version is very close to the version that appears in the MSS and in *Orain Nuadh Ghaidhealach*, an edition of his poetry that the poet himself published in 1818; see, *infra*. In his introduction, MacDougall also made reference to the existence of "Òran do Dhòmhnall MacArtair", and quoted the first three verses, but declined to publish the entire text, out of deference to the sensibilities of the first editor.

1324 (Charlottetown: Examiner Publishing Co., 1901); henceforth FC.

Some of the secular poetry has appeared in other sources, such as Norman MacDonald's 1863 edition of Mackenzie's *Sàr-Obair nam Bàrd Gàidhealach*, published in Halifax, Nova Scotia1325, and Hector Cameron's *Na Bàird Thirisdeach.*1326 Some of the poems were published in newspapers, most notably in the Antigonish *Casket*1327 and in *Mac-Talla*,1328 and in other Gaelic periodicals such as *An Gàidheal.*1329 A few of the poems have also appeared in other collections, such as Archibald Sinclair's *An t-Òranaiche*,1330 W.J. Watson's *Bàrdachd Ghàidhlig*,1331 Sr. Margaret MacDonell's *The Emigrant Experience*,1332 Helen Creighton's and Calum MacLeod's *Gaelic Songs in Nova Scotia*,1333 Donald Fergusson's *Beyond the Hebrides/Fad air Falbh as Innse Gall*,1334 and Donald Meek's *Caran an t-Saoghail/The Wiles of the World: Anthology of 19th Century Scottish Gaelic Verse.*1335 With a few exceptions, referred to in the notes to the poems in Appendix II, the versions of the poems in all of these sources are based closely on Maclean Sinclair versions.

A number of John MacLean's songs have been recorded: some were recorded from Donald Sinclair, Tiree, by School of Scottish Studies fieldworkers, several were collected by Dr. John Shaw from Cape Breton informants as part of St. Francis Xavier's Gaelic Folklore Project, a small number were collected by MacEdward Leach from Cape Breton informants, some were recorded by Maureen Williams (née Lonergan) from Cape Breton informants, and some have been recorded in private

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1325 Henceforth referred to as SO.
1326 (Glasgow: The Tiree Association, 1932); henceforth referred to as BT.
1327 Henceforth referred to as *Casket*.
1328 Henceforth referred to as *MT*.
1329 Published between 1871 and 1877.
1330 (Glasgow: Alexander Sinclair, 1876-9); henceforth referred to as Oranaiche.
1331 (Stirling: A. Learmonth & Son, 1932); henceforth referred to as BG.
1332 (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1982); henceforth referred to as EE.
1333 (Ottawa: National Museum of Canada, 1964; reprinted, 1979); henceforth referred to as GSNS.
1334 (Halifax: Prof. Donald A. Fergusson, 1977); henceforth referred to as BH.

collections from Cape Breton informants. A few of the songs have also been recorded on contemporary commercial recordings of Gaelic song. All of these versions are described in the notes in Appendix II.

John MacLean composed at least forty-six spiritual poems and hymns, all of which appear to have been composed in Nova Scotia; Maclean Sinclair indicates that the poet only began to compose religious verse four to five years after his arrival at Baile Chnoic in 1819, and that much of it was composed after the poet had moved to Glenbard, in 1830.1336 This poetry can be found in the *Dain Spioradail; a collection of Gaelic Hymns*,1337 also edited by Maclean Sinclair. An edition of some of this religious poetry was apparently published in 1835 by Maurice Ogle,1338 but Maclean Sinclair states that the hymns "were very inaccurately printed",1339 and proofs for correction were apparently not issued. According to the Rev. Donald Maclean, 400 copies of this edition were printed at 1s. per copy; very few copies were sold in Scotland, and almost the entire stock was shipped to Canada.1340 At the time Rev. Maclean was writing, in the early teens of the twentieth century, the 1835 edition was already "excessively rare", with only two known copies in Canada and one in Scotland.1341 I have as yet been unable to locate any of these copies.1342 Rev. Maclean made the following comment on the later 1880 Maclean Sinclair edition:

1335 (Edinburgh: Birlinn, 2003).

1336 See pp. xviii-xix, CC2, p. x, *Dain Spioradail, infra.*

1337 *Dain Spioradail le Iain Mac-Gilleain, maille ri beagan de Laoidhean Mhic Griogair, nach robh gus a so air an Clo-bhualadh* (Edinburgh: MacLachlan & Stewart, 1880); henceforth referred to as DS.

1338 *Laoidhean Spioradail le Iain Mac Gilleain; a rugadh ann an eilean Thireadh 'Sa tha 'n drast ann an America mu Thuath* (Glascho: Clodh-bhuailte le Bell agus Bain, agus r'an reic le M. Ogle agus a Mhac, 1835).

1339 CC2, at p. xix.

1340 The Rev. Donald Maclean, *Typographica Scoto-Gadelica, or Books Printed in the Gaelic of Scotland from the Year 1567 to the Year 1914, with Bibliographical and Biographical Notes* (Edinburgh: John Grant, 1915), at p. 261.

1341 *Ibid. Typographica Scoto-Gadelica* was, as just noted, published in 1915.

1342 The collections of the National Library of Scotland and the libraries of Glasgow, Edinburgh and Aberdeen University have all been searched, as has the Public Archives of Nova Scotia, the Special Collections, St. Francis Xavier University, and the Beaton Institute, University College of Cape Breton.

"The Editor [i.e. Maclean Sinclair] made very considerable changes on both the text and orthography of the Glasgow Edition [i.e. the 1835 collection], and not always for the better".1343 As we shall see, this comment is not surprising, given the editorial principles employed by Maclean Sinclair in respect of the secular poems.

A considerable amount of the poetry published by Maclean Sinclair is contained in handwritten manuscripts which are now located in the Nova Scotia Archives and Record Management ("NSARM"), Halifax, Nova Scotia, Canada. Manuscript MG15, Series "G", volume 2, number 1 (MG15G/2/1), was brought by the poet to Canada in 1819, and contains most of the secular poems composed by John MacLean in Scotland, as well as a large number of other poems which were collected by John MacLean, both in Tiree and on his trips to the mainland of the Highlands. The sole scribe of almost all of the poetry in this manuscript is John MacLean. The first part of the manuscript contains twenty of the twenty-six poems attributed to John MacLean and composed in Scotland, and these versions are identified in the notes in Appendix II. The rest of the manuscript contains a large amount of poetry composed by other Scottish Gaelic poets, including three poems attributed to Archibald Maclean, two to An Cùbar Collach, nine to Archibald MacPhail of Tiree, two to Iain Lom MacDonald, two to Eachann Bacach, two to Donald Morrison, four to Catrìona nighean Eòghainn mhic Lachlainn, five to Mairghread nighean Lachlainn, two to Calum Mac an Fhleisdeir, eleven to Dòmhnall mac Iain Òig and six to Alexander MacKinnon, the subject of poem 18 in this collection.1344 A small amount of additional material at the end of this manuscript appears to have been added, probably after the poet had emigrated to Canada,

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1343 *Ibid.*

1344 For a comprehensive listing, see Colm Ó Baoill, *Maclean Manuscripts in Nova Scotia, a catalogue of the Gaelic verse collections MG15G/2/1 and MG15G/2/2 in the Public Archives of Nova Scotia* (Aberdeen: Aberdeen University Department of Celtic, 2001).

including some apparently added by Maclean Sinclair, and amongst this material are two further songs attributed to John MacLean, both of which appear to have been composed in Canada; these are poems 34 and 36 in this collection. In both cases, as is discussed in the notes to these songs in Appendix II, the scribe is difficult to identify. The scribe of poem 36 appears to me to be John MacLean (a view shared by Ó Baoill), but the scribe of poem 34 is less clear (Ó Baoill merely notes that he was unable to identify the scribe). As discussed in Appendix II, it is unlikely that the scribe of this poem was John MacLean; as noted there, Maclean Sinclair himself claims to have taken this poem down in 1873, and the scribe may therefore have been Maclean Sinclair.

The second handwritten manuscript in the PANS is manuscript MG15, Series "G", volume 2, number 2 (MG15G/2/2). The first part of this manuscript was written mainly by Dr. Hector Maclean of Grulin, Mull (1704-1783).1345 This manuscript was given to John MacLean by Dr. Hector Maclean's daughter while the poet was still in Scotland, and he brought it with him to Nova Scotia in 1819. After the poet's death in 1848, the manuscript appears to have passed to the poet's son Charles, and from him to Alexander Maclean Sinclair. It is not clear whether the manuscript passed to Maclean Sinclair on Charles' death in 1880 or before, although at least one poem had been inserted by Maclean Sinclair on 30 October, 1860, suggesting that Maclean Sinclair had access to the manuscript by that time.1346 After the material that had been transcribed primarily by Dr. Hector Maclean, there is added a significant amount of poetry that is attributable to three main scribes: John MacLean, his son Charles, and his grandson Alexander Maclean Sinclair. There are fourteen poems in this

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1345 See Nicholas Maclean-Bristol, "The MacLeans from 1560-1707: A Re-Appraisal", in Lorraine Maclean, ed., *The Seventeenth Century in the Highlands* (Inverness: Inverness Field Club, 1986), for a description of the life and work of Dr. Maclean.

1346 Colm Ó Baoill, *Maclean Manuscripts in Nova Scotia*, *supra*, pp. 36-7, and p. 55.

section of the manuscript, all of which are attributed to John MacLean. Seven of these poems are in John MacLean's hand; six are poems that were composed in Canada, and one, the first one in this section of the manuscript, poem 24 in this collection, was probably composed while the poet was still in Scotland.1347 Four of these poems appear to me to have been written down by the poet's son Charles, and are all poems composed in Canada. The final three poems, also composed by the poet in Canada, appear to me to have been written down by Maclean Sinclair; again, the circumstances surrounding the composition and recording of this material in the manuscript will be discussed in the notes to the poems in Appendix II.

Some of the religious poetry of John MacLean is to be found in Manuscript MG1, volume 2660, Series "A" (MG1/2660/A), which also contains an account book kept by the poet, with entries mainly for the period May, 1815 to June, 1816. Most of the rest of John MacLean's religious poetry, together with some other material, can be found in Manuscript MG15, Series "G", volumes 22-24 (MG15G/22-24).

In 1818, John MacLean himself published a collection of twenty-two of his own poems, all composed in Scotland, and thirty-four by others, in *Orain Nuadh Ghaedhlach*.1348 These versions are closely based on those in MS15G/2/1. In 1856, John Boyd, of Antigonish County, the founder and first editor and publisher of the *Casket*, published eleven of John MacLean's poems, in a collection entitled *Orain Ghaelach le Iain Mac Illeathain, Bard Thighearn Cholla*.1349 These eleven poems

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1347 The dating of this material is discussed further in the notes to the poems, in chapter 6.

1348 (Edinburgh: R. Menzies, 1818); henceforth referred to as ONG.

1349 (Antigonish: Iain Boide, 1856); henceforth referred to as JB. John Boyd, nicknamed "Printer", was born at South River, Antigonish County, in 1823, the son of John Boyd "Bard" and Mary (MacDonald) Boyd. His grandfather, Hugh Boyd, "Pioneer", came to Nova Scotia in 1801, and was married to Mary MacFarlane, the daughter of Dougald MacFarlane of Glenorchy and Margaret MacDonell of Chrolem, or Scothouse, Knoydart. Boyd was involved in various Gaelic publishing ventures, the most notable being the newspaper *Casket*, first published on 24 June, 1852. For a profile of Boyd and of the paper he founded, see R.A.MacLean, *The Casket: 1852-1992, From Gutenberg to Internet: The Story of a Small-Town Weekly* (Antigonish: Casket Printing and Publishing, c. 1992), particularly pp. 13-15.

are the seven in MG15G/2/2 which appear to have been written down by John MacLean himself, and the four in MG15G/2/2 which appear to have been recorded by his son Charles, discussed above. As already discussed, ten of these were composed in Canada, and one appears to have been composed in Scotland, shortly before the poet's departure. All eleven poems are closely based on the versions in MG15G/2/2, and it is possible—indeed, likely, given the close relationship of the published versions to the MSS texts, and the fact that Boyd was based in Antigonish County, in close proximity to the poet and his family—that Boyd had access to and made use of that manuscript.

In determining the form of the poetry for a modern edition of John MacLean's poetry in Appendix I to this thesis, the overriding concern has been to allow the poet to speak to the greatest extent possible in his own voice. As a consequence, the following considerations apply. First, the version of a poem found in MG15G/2/1 or MG15G/2/2 has been preferred to the Maclean Sinclair version and versions based on and closely resembling the Maclean Sinclair versions. A large majority of the versions which appear in these manuscript sources were written in the poet's own hand, and can therefore generally be considered to represent accurately the poet's preferred version, at least at the time he transcribed the poetry. The fact that the poet apparently wrote down his poems only after he had composed them, combined with the general neatness and consistency of penmanship in the poet's manuscripts and the almost complete absence of corrections (indeed, the poet's manuscripts almost have the appearance of a hand-written draft of a document ready for publication), tends to support this working assumption. It does not appear that alternative manuscript versions of any of the songs have survived, nor is there any evidence in the manuscript or other sources to suggest that the poet made subsequent adjustments to the texts or

that these manuscript versions were considered by the poet to be less than authoritative. Where, however, the poet himself published a poem, most notably in ONG, that published version will be preferred, on the assumption that the published version most closely represents the poet's own "final draft" of the poem.1350 The ONG versions are in any case very close to the manuscript versions, and this further strengthens the working assumption, just described, that the manuscript versions had been transcribed by the poet with care and reliably reflect his poetic intentions. Even where the ONG version forms the basis of the version which appears in the present edition, however, the hand-written manuscript versions have been consulted, particularly in order to assist in the resolution of any ambiguity in the ONG version, and any divergences between these two sources will be noted in Appendix II.

Second, as noted above, four of the poems in MG15G/2/2 were apparently transcribed by Charles MacLean, the son of the poet, and three other poems in that manuscript appear to have been transcribed by Alexander Maclean Sinclair; as also noted above, the identity of the scribe of two of the poems in MG15G/2/1 is difficult to determine. Nevertheless, these versions are preferred to the later published Maclean Sinclair versions, and to versions based on the published Maclean Sinclair versions. Because we do not have a version of these poems that is attributable to the poet himself, we cannot be certain that these versions are closer the poet's original compositions than the published Maclean Sinclair versions. Nonetheless, the Maclean Sinclair published versions suffer from a number of shortcomings, which will be described more thoroughly below. The manuscript versions differ markedly from the Maclean Sinclair published versions (as is noted in Appendix II), and it is likely that

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1350 The poems published by John MacLean in ONG are, indeed, the only examples we have of what Donald Meek has described as "extended composition" (Donald E. Meek, *Tuath is Tighearna: Tenants and Landlords* (Edinburgh: Scottish Gaelic Texts Society, 1995), p. 42), and even these published versions tend to be very loyal to the hand-written manuscript versions.

these manuscript versions are closer to the versions that were in circulation during the poet's lifetime or shortly after his death. The versions of the four poems which were transcribed by Charles MacLean are very similar to those published by John Boyd in 1856; it is likely that the Boyd versions were based on the hand-written manuscripts, and therefore the Charles MacLean transcriptions are very likely to predate 1856. Charles MacLean does not appear to have edited or published any poetry, and we do not have any evidence of any editorial principles that he may have been employing when transcribing the poetry. However, we have no reason to suspect that the poet's son would have departed markedly from versions which he had heard from his father or which were in circulation during his father's lifetime or in the period shortly after his father's death, in 1848. Unlike Maclean Sinclair, he was not engaged in any publication project, and did not need to form the sort of editorial principles that Maclean Sinclair had clearly formed by the time he began publishing on his own in 1880.

With regard to the manuscript versions that appear to have been transcribed by Maclean Sinclair himself, these are also preferred to the versions which he later published. As already noted, it appears that Maclean Sinclair transcribed these poems in the manuscripts from about 1860 to 1873, when he was between 20 and 33 years of age. He began publishing Gaelic poetry himself only in 1880, at the age of 40, and although he clearly had a lifelong interest in Gaelic oral tradition, it appears that he began to take a more serious interest in exploring that tradition in a more scholarly fashion only in the 1870s. Maclean Sinclair left Glenbard, Antigonish County, the thoroughly Gaelic-speaking community in which he was raised, in 1856, at the age of 16, to attend the Pictou Academy, in the predominantly English-speaking town of Pictou. From then until his ordination as a Presbyterian Minister in 1866 and his

induction into the pastoral charge of the congregation of Springville and Sunny Brae, on the upper East River of Pictou County—one of the oldest Highland settlements of that county—on 25 July of that year, Maclean Sinclair appears to have been away from home, except during school vacations, and his time was mostly devoted to his studies.1351 Maclean Sinclair's devotion to the serious collection and publication of material from the Gaelic oral tradition was ascribed by Maclean Sinclair himself to a particular event in 1874, which he described as follows:

> On April 26th, 1874, the late Finlay Grant came to see me and stayed with me all night. As it was somewhat stormy next day it was not desirable for him to go home. I got a notebook, questioned him on the early history of the East River and took down all the facts good and bad, serious and comical, that he gave. He started with Angus MacPherson in the Marsh and gave me an account of all the old settlers down to Duncan Cruikshank's and Black David MacIntosh's and up through Cummings Mountain and Ben Heela. He is thus my first professor in local history. Indeed prior to April 27, 1874, I took no interest in the local history of the East River or any other locality. I was too busy studying general history and other things that I required to know.1352

It was after this point that Alexander Maclean Sinclair became Gaelic editor of a local paper, the *Pictou News*, and began contributing a series of articles on the Highland families of the East River of Pictou County to another local publication, the *Eastern Chronicle*.1353 Because his serious work as a Gaelic scholar and publisher appears to have commenced only in about 1874, the manuscript versions for which Maclean Sinclair was responsible and which seem to predate this year would therefore have likely been less affected by the editorial principles that Maclean Sinclair had probably developed some time after his 1874 moment of awakening and that he later articulated

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1351 Donald Maclean Sinclair, *Some Family History* (unpublished manuscript, Halifax, Nova Scotia, 1979), pp. 10-18. After completing his studies at the Pictou Academy in 1859, Maclean Sinclair entered the Free Church College in Halifax, Nova Scotia. In 1861, he attended the Normal School in Truro, Nova Scotia, where he trained as a grammar school teacher, but in 1863 he returned to Halifax to attend the Theological Hall of the Presbyterian Church and to take classes in chemistry and political economy at Dalhousie College (later to become Dalhousie University). Springville and Sunny Brae were known as "Strath Beag" in Gaelic, and the fact that this congregation and the district in which it was located, to which Maclean Sinclair ministered until 1888, was still Gaelic-speaking during his time there is attested to by the fact that he conducted services regularly in both English and Gaelic.

1352 Donald Maclean Sinclair, *ibid*, at p. 17.

in and applied to his published versions. It is therefore probable that these manuscript versions for which he was responsible more closely resemble versions that were in popular circulation in the years from about 1860 to 1873. Again, we cannot be certain that these versions reflected perfectly the poet's original compositions, but it is possible—given what we know of Maclean Sinclair's editorial methods, discussed below, perhaps even likely—that such versions as had entered the oral tradition from which Maclean Sinclair appears to have been drawing were closer to the originals than the versions published by Maclean Sinclair from 1881, although versions which entered into the oral tradition would also likely have begun to diverge from the poet's original form.

As noted, eleven of the poems in MG15G/2/2, including the seven transcribed by John MacLean and the four transcribed by Charles MacLean, were published by John Boyd in 1856. The Boyd texts are very similar to the manuscript versions, and are, as noted, most likely to be based on the manuscript versions. There is no reason to prefer the Boyd versions, but those versions are nonetheless referred to in Appendix II, and have been used in helping to interpret any ambiguities in the manuscript versions. The fact that Boyd seems to have followed those manuscript versions very closely strengthens their value as reasonably authoritative versions, and as he was based in Antigonish, was likely to be familiar with the poet and his family, and presumably had access to oral versions current during the poet's lifetime or shortly after his death, any insights that Boyd had into such ambiguities are potentially useful in resolving them.

A third consideration that is relevant to the form of the poetry that appears in this edition is that, in some cases, noted in Appendix II, the only extant version of a

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1353 *Ibid*, at pp. 17-18.

poem is that which was first published by Alexander Maclean Sinclair. In such cases, this version is printed as is, modified only to the extent required by the orthographic principles which are described below. Such versions must, however, be treated with caution. As noted, a comparison of versions published by Maclean Sinclair with those which exist in the manuscripts or which appear in ONG reveals that Maclean Sinclair had frequently substantially reworked the earlier version (which had appeared in the manuscripts or in ONG). As a result, any texts published by Maclean Sinclair fall under suspicion that they do not reflect reliably the poet's work. Charles Dunn has noted that Maclean Sinclair took "liberties" with the published songs which would "shock . . . rigorously trained editors of the present age", such as rearranging them "in a more artistic form" and the "smoothing out of grammatical irregularities".1354 Maclean Sinclair himself wrote the following with respect to his editorial principles:

> To prepare a collection of Gaelic poems for the press is by no means an easy work. The first difficulty is the fact that, with a very few exceptions, our Gaelic poets and song-makers were uneducated persons, and consequently frequently violated the rules of grammar and composition, and even the rules of prosody. The second difficulty is that in handing down songs from one person to another, words, lines and verses become lost. The third difficulty is that in the case of old poems one frequently meets with words which he does not understand, and which he cannot find in any dictionary.1355

The final two difficulties identified by Maclean Sinclair appear to be directed at the older songs in the published collections rather than those of John MacLean, although the second difficulty may apply to the small number of John MacLean poems which Maclean Sinclair himself took down from informants (and to those poems transcribed by Charles MacLean, if Charles had been relying on oral sources). There is no reason to suspect, however, that Maclean Sinclair's published versions accurately reflect his grandfather's intentions. He was a boy of eight years of age when John MacLean

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1354 *Highland Settler: A Portrait of the Scottish Gael in Nova Scotia* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1953, 1980 reprint), at pp. 81-2.

died, and I am aware of no evidence which suggests that the often substantial changes that Maclean Sinclair made were based on any information which may have been transmitted to him, for example by his mother, Christy, or his uncle, Charles, concerning his grandfather's intentions and wishes. The fact that Maclean Sinclair seems to have taken a similar approach to the work of other poets strongly suggests that the changes made to John MacLean's poetry reflect the application of Maclean Sinclair's own editorial principles rather than the application of any special knowledge of or insight into John MacLean's intentions. Colm Ó Baoill, for example, provides the following quote from a letter from Maclean Sinclair to Counnduillie Morrison, dated 26 January, 1898, in reference to the forthcoming publication by Maclean Sinclair of *Na Baird Leathanach/The MacLean Bards: Vol. I, the Old MacLean Bard*:1356

> I have made a few trifling changes in the songs you sent me, partly to remove mistakes in composition, and partly to avoid repetitions in ideas or words. I have also thrown in a verse or two. I have not, however, changed the meaning of the songs. I have weakened the statement about Calum in Mrs MacAskill's lines 'Chuir mi suas mo ghùn bainnse' [*BL*, p. 258]. I did not want to make it quite so clear as she made it that she cared nothing for Calum. The sheets are going off to Glasgow this week, where the book will be bound.1357

One is forced to the same conclusion as that reached by Ó Baoill: "Because of this attitude to sources, I have assumed . . . that significant divergences [in the versions in Maclean Sinclair's collections] from the older sources are due to changes made by him without authority".1358

The discrepancies between the versions published by Maclean Sinclair and the original manuscript versions or versions in ONG have, nonetheless, been noted in Appendix II, for the following reasons. First, such notations may be of some use to

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1355 Clarsach 1, p. vi.
1356 (Charlottetown: Haszard and Moore, 1898).
1357 Colm Ó Baoill, *Bàrdachd Chloinn Ghill-Eathain: Eachann Bacach and Other Maclean Poets*, (Edinburgh: The Scottish Gaelic Texts Society, 1979), pp. xxxii-xxxiii.

those researching either Maclean Sinclair himself or, more generally, the development of editorial principles in Gaelic publishing. Second, as noted earlier in this chapter and in Appendix II, some of John MacLean's poetry is still sung, or has been sung recently enough for it to have been recorded. An analysis of whether the versions which are sung are closer to the poet's original versions or those which appear in Maclean Sinclair's publications (or, indeed, versions which appear in other sources) may provide some evidence with respect to how these songs have been transmitted; it may, for example, give us an idea of the extent to which printed, as opposed to oral, sources influenced how songs were passed on in Nova Scotia and Scotland. Finally, any differences between the edited texts which appear in this edition and versions printed in the other published sources referred to above, and between the edited texts and versions recorded from oral informants, are also noted in Appendix II.

With respect to the notations in Appendix II, in addition to acknowledging the source of the version of the poem which appears in this edition, the source or sources for other texts of the poem, both printed and otherwise recorded, will be noted. John MacLean usually included in the manuscripts and in ONG the tune to which the poem was composed, possibly implying that he meant the poem to be sung, or at least as a guide to prosody, and where the tune is provided, it will also be noted. Where possible, the date of composition and the context in which the poem was composed will also be described. Finally, line annotations will be given, in which matters such as editorial decisions, the identity of persons, places and events referred to, matters of historical and biographical interest, and matters of language and idiom will be discussed.

1358 *Ibid*, at p. xxxiii.

With respect to orthographic matters, the conventions employed by the poet in both the manuscripts and ONG depart considerably from modern Gaelic orthographic conventions, as do, to a significantly lesser extent, those employed by Maclean Sinclair. The orthographic conventions employed in this edition generally follow the *Gaelic Orthographic Conventions 2005* (GOC) circulated by the Scottish Qualifications Authority,1359 with a number of modifications.1360 It was considered appropriate to follow GOC, where possible, for three principal reasons. First, there is as yet no body in Scotland having the authority to pronounce upon orthography and wider linguistic considerations in respect of Gaelic, such as a Gaelic Academy. In the absence of such a body and of explicitly agreed orthographic standards, the Scottish Qualifications Authority and its predecessor, the Scottish Certificate of Education Examination Board, established committees comprised of persons involved in Gaelic education at the primary, secondary and tertiary levels, as well as others having relevant expertise, to consider matters relating to Gaelic orthography for the purposes of standards in Gaelic education, and both versions of GOC were completed after a period of wider consultation in which Gaelic educationalists, academics, broadcasters and publishers, amongst others, took part. Second, GOC remain perhaps the single most comprehensive and systematic consideration and explicit articulation of orthographic standards for Gaelic. Third, GOC are meant to be followed in Gaelic primary and secondary education, and may therefore represent the standards with

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1359 Ùghdarras Theisteanas na h-Alba, (Glasgow/Dalkeith, August, 2005). These update the earlier *Gaelic Orthographic Conventions* of the Scottish Certificate of Education Examination Board, (Dalkeith, August, 1981).

1360 Both the Board of Celtic Studies (Scotland), in its *Computer-Assisted Learning for Gaelic: Towards a Common Teaching Course*, written by Wilson McLeod (January, 1998) ("CALG"), and the editor and management committee of *Faclair na Pàrlamaid/Dictionary of Terms* (Dun Èideann: Riaghaltas na h-Alba, 2001) ("Faclair") have given systematic consideration to orthographic matters in general and the suitability of GOC in particular, and in some cases, the approach taken in CALG or Faclair will be preferred to that of GOC. It must be remembered, though, that the principles developed in CALG and for the purposes of the Faclair were not developed for the specific purpose of editing Gaelic poetry. The same is true of GOC, though.

which present and future generations of Gaelic will be most familiar. Based on the composition and mandate of the committees, the nature of the bodies which appointed them, the purposes for which the committees were struck, the consultation which was carried out, and status which GOC have attained in both Gaelic education and the wider world of Gaelic letters, GOC have, in my view, significant authority. At the same time, GOC do not command universal acceptance amongst academics or in the wider Gaelic world of letters for all purposes. GOC are also not a fully comprehensive set of standards, in that they have not addressed all questions of Gaelic orthography, and are ambiguous in respect of some of the matters that they have addressed. GOC have therefore not yet assumed the status of being uniquely authoritative for all purposes. Thus, some departures from GOC have been considered appropriate for this edition.

A first issue relates to the use of apostrophes. The poet generally did not use apostrophes at all in the two manuscript sources, but did in some cases in ONG; for example, the poet even omitted apostrophes to mark the verbal noun particle *a'*, so that verbal noun particles often appeared as *a*. In this edition, apostrophes are employed wherever GOC would require them, and additionally where they can help to resolve ambiguity or otherwise to assist in determining or clarifying meaning, or to assist learners and other potential users of these texts in understanding the way in which the Gaelic language works in poetic texts. Thus, apostrophes are used to distinguish possessive forms with certain prepositions from forms of the article (e.g., *'nam*, *'nad*, etc., from *nam*, the genitive plural article) and verbal noun objects from other words (e.g., *'gad* from *gad*, which is a form of the word *ged*, "although"); indeed, the poet generally omitted apostrophes before verbal noun objects in the

manuscripts, and apostrophes are used in this edition to mark all verbal noun objects.1361

Apostrophes are also generally used in this edition to mark elision; the alternatives of replacing elided vowels (which is recommended in CALG) or leaving elision unmarked have both been rejected. The case made in CALG for replacement of elided vowels was particularly strong, as this would certainly assist learners and other users of the poetic texts in understanding the material. While, however, one may generally accept the principle expressed in CALG that "Gaelic orthography should not be viewed as an exercise in phonetic transcription",1362 there are good reasons for departing from it when dealing with many Gaelic poetic texts, and these texts in particular. First, the principles in CALG were not, of course, developed for the purposes of editions of poetry. Second, the poet himself tended to indicate elision in both the manuscripts and ONG, generally simply through the omission of the relevant vowel. This resulted in frequent omission of the verbal noun particle *a'* and the infinitive particle *a* or *a dh'*. Third, as most of this body of poetry appears to have been meant to be sung, it is appropriate to indicate elision in the texts in order to provide guidance to any readers who may wish to use the texts for that purpose. The case for something approaching "phonetic transcription" of song texts is strong. The approach taken by the poet himself of simply leaving elision unmarked has also been rejected, because of another principle expressed in CALG, that "spellings that make plain the grammatical structure of phrases are to be preferred."1363 As already noted, the orthographic principles in CALG were developed for the specific purpose of the instruction of learners of Gaelic in the language; as such, they are intended to

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1361 See, for example, CALG, para. 3.2.6.
1362 CALG, para. 3.2.8.
1363 *Ibid.*

elucidate meaning, and that can include the interpretation and elucidation of poetic meaning. The twin goals of elucidating meaning and providing phonetic transcriptions argue for the marking of elision with apostrophes; indeed, this was once a fairly widely accepted practice in the edition of Gaelic poetic texts, particularly as reflected in the publications of the Scottish Gaelic Texts Society.1364

Apostrophes will also be used in any contraction of the copula form (e.g., *'s e*); where in the manuscript sources the poet contracted a copula form by way of an omission of a vowel, he generally did not mark such contractions with apostrophes. While GOC has little to say on the use of apostrophes in these circumstances, CALG concluded against this approach, and while the arguments in CALG are strong, they are not convincing here, where the poet has clearly indicated a shortening of the copula form and where the marking of such shortening may be appropriate to the proper phrasing of the poem when sung as a song.1365 The poet also generally did not mark in the manuscript other contractions with apostrophes, and in the edited texts, all contractions, including contractions of prepositional pronouns, are marked with an apostrophe. Similarly, the poet frequently, though not generally, omitted relative pronouns, even in the absence of elision, particularly the relative pronoun *a*, and such omissions are also marked in the texts by an apostrophe. Where it is not clear whether such an omission was intended by the poet, the ambiguity is discussed in the relevant note.

1364 See, for example, the use of apostrophes to mark elision in the song texts in William Matheson, ed., *The Blind Harper (An Clarsair Dall): The Songs of Roderick Morison and his Music* (Edinburgh: The Scottish Gaelic Texts Society, 1970), at pp. 3-79. It should be noted that the editorial practices elaborated by a succession of the publications of the Scottish Gaelic Texts Society, at least until Derick S. Thomson's *The MacDiarmid MSS Anthology* (Edinburgh: Scottish Gaelic Texts Society, 1992), represent the "default position", as it were, for the representation of definitive texts of Scottish Gaelic poetry, and the following discussion of particular editorial issues is also informed by a consideration of these practices.

1365 Again, it is important to note that the orthographic conventions in CALG were developed for a particular purpose in mind, namely the instruction of students in Scottish Gaelic, and not for the editing of Gaelic poetry.

A second issue is the use by the poet in both the manuscripts and ONG of spellings or forms of words which differ from those that now generally prevail. While there are arguments for bringing spelling and lexical usage into line with these prevailing norms in certain contexts—for example, in the education system, in the media and in official documents—these arguments are less compelling when it comes to Gaelic song and poetry. The rich dialectal diversity of Gaelic is one aspect of the language that has suffered with its contraction, and is, in the view of the author of this thesis, much to be regretted. Furthermore, the forms used by the poet may be much more appropriate than currently prevailing forms in preserving the rhythm and rhyme of the poetry, and the fluidity of the poetry when sung. Also, the overriding objective of allowing John MacLean to speak to the greatest extent possible in his own voice argues strongly in favour of a phonologically and dialectally sensitive edition, so that the poet is given as much room to speak in his own dialect as the printed page will permit. Thus, where the poet's spelling or word form reflects the Gaelic of the his own dialect, that form will generally be retained so as to reflect those dialectal features. Only where the retention of the poet's form may cause undue confusion with another commonly-used word, or where the poet has himself not shown consistency in the use of a particular form, will the currently prevailing form will be preferred, but the poet's form will be noted in Appendix II.

A difficulty, however, is that a systematic study of the Gaelic dialects of Tiree has never been published or, to the author's knowledge, even attempted, and it is therefore difficult to determine in all cases whether a form used by the poet is reflective of his dialect or is reflective of the particular orthographic conventions the poet chose to employ. There have been studies of certain Argyllshire dialects, but these have focused primarily on the dialects of south Argyllshire, and Islay in

particular,1366 which differ in important respects from the dialects of north Argyllshire. As such, these studies are of only limited value here. Even if there were a study of contemporary Tiree dialects, we could not be certain that these have remained completely unchanged from the poet's time. The five volume *Survey of the Gaelic Dialects of Scotland* (the "Dialect Survey") does, however, contain a very large amount of dialectal information, and included dialectal information derived from one informant from Tiree, Lachlan MacDonald (informant number 84), and one from Coll, John MacKinnon (informant number 85). Mr. MacDonald was born, raised and lived in Balemartine, Tiree, and was seventy-five years of age when recorded in July 1958. Balemartine is nearer the west end of Tiree, and the poet's native township, Caolas, is at the extreme easterly end. Mr. MacKinnon was seventy years of age when recorded, also in July, 1958. He had been born and raised at Sorisdale, had lived in Oban and Glasgow, but returned to Coll in 1918, and resided at Arinagour.1367 Where possible, the information derived from these informants has been used in making decisions regarding the poet's spellings and word forms, as this information represents our best available published evidence on these matters. In cases where there is little evidence as to whether the form chosen by the poet reflects his dialect, the presumption will be that it does, unless there is good reason for believing that the poet's choice had been influenced by then-current orthographic conventions.1368

Certain forms that are consistently applied by the poet in the manuscripts and in ONG seem clearly to reflect Tiree Gaelic. For example, the poet consistently employs *gu bràch* for *gu bràth*, ("forever"), and although there is no information in

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1366 See, for example, Nils M. Holmer, *Studies on Argyllshire Gaelic* (Uppsala: Almqvist & Wiksells Boktryckeri-A.-B., 1938).

1367 Cathair Ó Dochartaigh, ed., *Survey of the Gaelic Dialects of Scotland; questionnaire materials collected for the Linguistic Survey of Scotland*, (Dublin: School of Celtic Studies, Dublin Institute for Advanced Studies, 1997), at pp. 87-8.

the Dialect Survey on the pronunciation of this word, the transformation of a silent consonant cluster at the end of word into the palatal fricative *ch* does appear to be widespread in the Tiree and Coll dialects,1369 among others, and therefore the form employed by the poet for this word is retained. Similarly, the poet consistently employs *ràitinn* and *ghràitinn* for the verbal noun and infinitive forms of *abair* ("to speak"), and although there is once again no information in the Dialect Survey, the consistency of usage suggests that these forms may be dialectal,1370 and these have therefore been been retained. The poet consistently uses *thair* for *thar* ("over"), and *far* for *bhàrr* ("from") and although the Dialect Survey again contains no evidence for Tiree usage, *thair* and *far* are recognised forms in Dwelly, and it is assumed that this reflects the poet's dialect and therefore such forms are retained in the texts. The poet generally uses the preposition *do* for "of/from", in preference for the preposition *de*, which is usually ascribed this meaning; while there is no evidence in the Dialect Survey as to this usage, this substitution of *do* for *de* is relatively common in many dialects, is assumed to reflect the poet's usage and is therefore retained in the edited texts. The poet tends to use both *o* and *bho*, and as both are commonly-used forms of this preposition, the poet's choice is followed, and so both forms are used in the edited texts. Also, the poet often, though not always, fails to lenite nouns following the preposition *gun* ("without"), and as this practice may reflect dialect, it is retained, though once again, there is no evidence in the Dialect Survey or other sources.

1368 The author is also grateful to Prof. Donald Meek, a native speaker of Caolas, Tiree, Gaelic, who provided valuable advice in a number of cases.

1369 According to the Dialect Survey, for example, *-idh* and *-igh* endings tend to be rendered as *-ich*; eg: ionnsaidh—ionnsaiç (vol IV, p 156, word 530), ithidh—içiç (vol. IV, p. 166, word 535); nighniç (vol. IV, p. 414, word 659), chaidh-xaç (Vol. V, p. 24, word 687, *rach*), cruaidh—cruaiç (Vol. III, p. 72, word 262. The poet did occasionally render words such as *chaidh* as *chaich*, but did so inconsistently, and generally employed the standard form. In such cases, the standard form is retained.

1370 As confirmed by Prof. Donald Meek, a native of the poet's home township of Caolas, Tiree.

The poet generally uses *na* for *no* ("or"), *man* for *mun* ("before"), *uath(a)* for *bhuapa/uapa*, and once again, there is no evidence from Tiree in the Dialect Survey as to these usages. With respect to all of these forms, though, there is evidence from other parts of Argyllshire that such spellings do reflect pronunciation in those dialects,1371 and although, as noted, there are differences between the south Argyllshire dialects from which these examples were taken and that of Tiree, fairly consistent spelling by the poet in the manuscripts may reflect similar pronunciation in the poet's dialect, and therefore such forms are retained.

The poet often used forms of various prepositional pronouns which do not correspond to present prevailing practice, such as: *domh* for *dhomh*, *duit* for *dhut*, *da* for *dha*, *di* for *dhi*, *duinn* for *dhuinn*, *duibh* for *dhuibh*, *dhoibh* or *doibh* for *dhaibh*, all of which are derived from the preposition *do* ("to/for"); *diom* for *dhiom*, *deth* for *dheth*, *dith* for *dhi*, *diubh* or *diu* for *dhiubh*, which are derived from the preposition *de* ("of/from"); and *foidhe* for *fodha* ("under him"). Existing evidence suggests, however, that the presently prevailing forms generally represent the pronunciation in both Tiree and other Argyllshire dialects,1372 except where prepositional pronouns based on the prepositions *do* and *de* follow the consonants l, n, s and t, in which case the prepositional pronouns are not lenited. Closer analysis of the manuscript sources and ONG indeed indicates that John MacLean departed from the present prevailing practice and did not aspirate the prepositional pronouns for the prepositions *do* and *de* only where they followed these four consonants. Thus, John MacLean's practice is interpreted as reflecting his dialect, and his spellings of these prepositional pronouns is retained. Additionally, *dhuit* does seem to reflect the pronunciation of the second

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1371 See Prof. Holmer's study, *supra*, based largely on Islay dialects, at p. 194 (*na*), p. 189 (*man*), p. 197 (*uaiçë*).

1372 Dialect Survey, *supra*, at vol. III, p. 146, word no. 299, vol. III, p. 184, word no. 318, and vol. III, p. 186, word no. 319; Holmer, *supra*, at p. 155.

person singular prepositional pronoun form of *do* in south Argyllshire dialects,1373 and given the consistent slenderisation by the poet in the manuscripts, it is assumed that this reflects or reflected pronunciation in his dialect, and is therefore retained in the edited texts. Similarly, *foidhe* was generally used by the poet, and given the significant difference in sound from the presently prevailing form that this form implies, it is again assumed that this reflects or reflected pronunciation in the poet's dialect, and is therefore retained.

The poet frequently used the now-archaic form of the reflexive pronoun *fèin* rather than the currently prevailing form *fhèin*, but it is likely that this represented adherence to a perceived orthographic norm rather than a dialectical feature; while there is no evidence in the Dialect Survey as to pronunciation in Tiree, south Argyllshire dialects appear to lenite this pronoun.1374 Thus, the currently prevailing form *fhèin* will be used in the edited texts. The poet also tended to spell the preterite form of the verb *faigh* ("to get") as *thuair* rather than the currently prevailing (though illogical and misleading) form *fhuair*; given that the poet's spelling would produce the same pronunciation as the currently prevailing form, the latter form is preferred in the edited texts.

A number of other spellings which differ from currently prevailing spellings were frequently used by the poet, particularly in the manuscripts, and although they may represent dialectal features, the presently prevailing forms are preferred in the edited texts. For example, the poet generally used *bo* for the past and conditional copula verbal form *bu*, *go* for the conjunction *gu*, and *gad* for the conjunction *ged* ("although"). In all cases, the vowel is generally unstressed, and therefore any phonic differences that may be present in the dialect could be expected to be minimal.

1373 Holmer, *ibid.*

Unfortunately, the Dialect Survey has no entries for these words, but *bu* and *gu* appear to be pronounced as non-stressed vowels in south Argyllshire dialects. There is no evidence in the sources referred to above for the pronunciation of *ged*, and in this case the currently prevailing form is preferred. In a few cases, there is evidence to suggest that the poet's spelling in the manuscripts does reflect Tiree dialectal patterns, but the currently prevailing form is nonetheless preferred in the edited texts. For example, the poet often used *–ia-* spellings for the vowel cluster now normally rendered as *–eu-*, and although this does appear to reflect Tiree dialects,1375 the currently prevailing form, which can accommodate such a pronunciation, is favoured. The poet frequently used *biodh* where the future form of the verb, *bidh*, was clearly appropriate. Again, the poet's spelling does appear to accord more closely with pronunciation in Tiree dialects,1376 but it creates confusion, as *biodh* is either a dependent conditional or an imperative form of the same verb; for this reason, the currently prevailing spelling is preferred. The poet also often employed *rodh* for the dependent preterite form of the substantive verb, *robh*; this may also represent pronunciation in the dialect, but there is no evidence for this in the Dialect Survey, and so the currently prevailing form is retained. The poet often used *du* for the standard spelling of the second person singular personal pronoun *tu*; there is evidence that this reflects the Tiree dialect, at least in conjunction with future forms of the verb, but the standard spelling is preserved in the edited texts. Like *rodh*, *du* may simply create confusion for some users of the texts. Finally, the poet frequently omitted the final consonant in conjunctions such as *gun* or in the genitive of the plural article, *nan* or *nam*; there is some evidence for the dropping of the consonant in south Argyllshire dialects in these

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1374 Holmer, *supra*, at p. 167.

1375 Dialect Survey, *supra*; see, for example, -ia- pronunciation for *beul* (vol. II, pp. 194, word no. 97), *deug* (vol. III, p. 164, word no. 308), and *feur*.

and other circumstances,1377 and this is not uncommon in many dialects, so this practice will be reflected in the edited texts, but where such dropping has occurred, it is marked with an apostrophe, to minimise the confusion of some users of the texts.

With regard to other orthographical matters, the following conventions have been applied to the edited texts. First, the approach taken in CALG to spacing following apostrophes has generally been followed, for the reasons set out therein.1378 Second, the recommendation in Faclair na Pàrlamaid that the term for "out of" should be written with a grave accent, *à*, *às*, has been accepted, for the reason set out therein.1379 Third, the poet generally omitted all accents in the manuscript sources, and accents have been added where they appear in currently prevailing forms and according to the relevant rules in GOC, except where the word is unaccented in the form used in the poet's dialect. Accents over capitalised letters have been employed, simply because modern word-processing technology makes this possible. Fourth, the poet generally omitted all hyphens, and these have been added where they would appear in currently prevailing practice. Finally, where the poet has used English loan words or English or other non-Gaelic names, these will be marked by the use of italics, but such loan words and names will generally be rendered according to the orthographic principles described here.

With respect to the order of the poems in Appendix I, four options were considered. First, as the poet transcribed a majority of the poetry in this collection, and as he published a majority of the poetry composed in Scotland in ONG, the order chosen by the poet could have been followed. As noted earlier, the poet composed the

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1376 Dialect Survey, *supra*, at vol. II, p. 204, word no. 102; this appears to be common in other future forms, for example, *cuiridh* and *buailidh*.

1377 Holmer, *supra*, at p. 177, which acknowledges the omission of the final consonant in the conjunction *gu 'n* (*gun*), and of the consonant in *an* in *an-seo* and *an-sin* (p. 122).

1378 CALG, para. 3.2.18.

1379 Faclair na Pàrlamaid, p. xi, item 4.

poetry first, then wrote it down afterwards. The consistency of penmanship, the lack of corrections, and the way that one poem often follows immediately on another rather than on a separate page suggests that the poet's work in the manuscripts was undertaken as a single project, which possibly involved the re-writing of poetry that had been previously committed to paper. Thus, the order chosen in the manuscripts and in ONG could be said to represent the way in which the poet himself wanted the material presented. However, not all of the poetry attributed to the poet was written by him in the manuscripts. It is impossible to determine why such poetry was omitted by him, but in the absence of any evidence that the poetry was not, in fact, composed by him, there is no compelling reason to omit it. It may be that the poet chose not to record such poetry—perhaps, because he was not satisfied with it, or thought that the subject matter of the poem was not sufficiently important—but we have no evidence of this. Even if this were the case, such poetry would still be important in any assessment of the work of the poet as a whole.

All but one of the poems attributed to the poet were published by Alexander Maclean Sinclair in CC1, and a second option would be to follow the order used by him. Maclean Sinclair employed a chronological approach to a certain degree—for example, he divided the poetry into those poems composed in Scotland and those composed in Nova Scotia, with the former preceding the latter in CC1. However, within the two sections, Maclean Sinclair did not follow a strictly chronological approach. Rather, he appears to have divided the Scottish poetry into roughly three categories, organised primarily by subject matter. First came the poetry in praise of the Laird of Coll and his heir. Then came a mix of poems, all of which, however, were not praise poems, but of generally a more local nature. Finally, came praise poems for people other than the Laird of Coll and his family. With regard to the

Canadian poetry, a similarly loose thematic grouping appears to have been used. First came the poetry concerning emigration and the poet's reactions to the new world. Then came the final praise poems for the Laird of Coll and MacDonell of Glengarry. Then came a mix of poems, again mainly of a more local nature. Finally, there were a series of praise poems for new world friends, as well as two laments. The approach taken by Maclean Sinclair has much to recommend it. The separation of Old World and New World poems is generally justifiable, both on chronological and thematic grounds. While it is possible to date many of the poems, particularly praise poems which commemorate particular events, it is not possible to date all of the poetry, and therefore a chronological approach within each of the two major divisions is difficult. Given this problem, a rough thematic organisation of the poetry is understandable.

The third and fourth options for the organisation of the poetry would be a strict chronological approach or a strict thematic approach. A strict chronological approach has much to recommend it; in particular, it arranges the poetry in the order it was actually composed, and allows us to view how the poetry developed and the poet's vision changed over time. The major barrier to the use of this approach with respect to this body of work is, as noted earlier, that it is not possible to date accurately all of the poetry. A thematic approach has some attractions, in that it allows us to view how the poet dealt with certain discrete sets of subject matter. However, the identification of relevant themes is not as obvious as one might hope, and can sometimes be arbitrary. One obvious category for this body of poetry would be praise poetry. However, the poet composed praise poetry in respect of a wide range of persons, and even with respect to some of the praise poetry for his patron, the Laird of Coll, the nature of the praise poetry differs in some respects. Should all of this poetry be treated together, or subdivided according to personalities? Should the Old World and

New World praise poetry be grouped together? With regard to the other poetry, the poet composed a range of material on different themes, and grouping this material together in a meaningful thematic pattern would be difficult. Finally, virtually all of the poetry in this collection does not have a single theme. Some of the non-praise poetry is, for example, concerned with the gap the poet perceived between the people of the Highlands and the Lowlands, and the dangers of Lowlanders and their values. However, this is a theme which, as discussed in preceding chapters, emerges in some of the praise poetry as well. Owing to these complexities, a thematic approach has generally been rejected.

If it had been possible to date accurately all or a large majority of the poems, the texts in Appendix I would have been organised based primarily on the chronological order in which they have been composed. However, many of the poems could not be dated with sufficient precision to allow for a precise chronological ordering. Thus, the order used by Maclean Sinclair in CC1 and CC2 has been followed. As noted earlier, Maclean Sinclair published all of the secular poems but one, "Òran, do Dhòmhnall MacArtair", poem 15, and it has been included with the other poetry of a local or satirical nature. The most important chronological division in this body is between the secular poetry composed in Scotland and that composed in Canada, and, as noted earlier, Maclean Sinclair respected this division in CC1 and CC2.

The poems in Appendix I are all accompanied by translations into English. The main reason for doing so is that some readers of this thesis may not be Gaelic speakers. This is particularly true of virtually all of the poet's descendants in Canada, and other persons, both in Canada and Scotland, who have provided the author of this thesis with assistance and advice. It is hoped that translations will prove useful to

such readers. The various and potentially conflicting demands placed on any translator, such as the need to convey meaning, the desirability of conveying rhythm and rhyme (assonance), and so forth, have been discussed on occasion in editions of Gaelic poetry.1380 Here, the primary reason for providing translations is, as just noted, for the benefit of non-Gaelic speaking users of the texts, or users who have some command of Gaelic but, perhaps, an insufficient command to make sense of the poetry. Consequently, the primary emphasis in translation is placed on attempting properly to convey meaning, and while literal translations will generally be attempted, given the structural differences between Gaelic and English, this will not always be possible, and in such cases, a more idiomatic approach will be taken. This approach is informed by the aims articulated by editors and translators in recent collections of Gaelic poetry aimed at a mixed Gaelic/non-Gaelic speaking readership. For example, Ronald Black described his approach in the following terms: "I have tried to be literal without being slavish, and to convey some idea of the rhythm of the original without descending into doggerel".1381 Prof. Donald Meek has articulated a broadly similar approach:

> In making the translations, my main concern has been to convey accurately the sense of the original texts, but I have also tried to reflect the style and structure of each item. Where rhyme and assonance have emerged without damaging the sense of the lines, I have utilised this as a means of providing a deeper 'feel' for the overall style of each piece . . . but, in general, I have resisted the temptation to sacrifice sense to form.

The editor of the present collection would subscribe to the general approach that both of these scholars have taken.

1380 See, for example, "Translator's Note", by Meg Bateman, in Colm Ó Baoill, ed., *Gàir na Clàrsach/The Harps' Cry*, (Edinburgh: Birlinn, 1994), pp. 41-43, and Donald E. Meek, *Tuath is Tighearna*, *supra*, note 16, at p. 46.

1381 Ronald Black, *An Lasair: Anthology of 18th Century Scottish Gaelic Verse* (Edinburgh: Birlinn, 2001), at p. 1.

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APPENDIX I

THE SECULAR POEMS OF JOHN MACLEAN "BÀRD THIGHEARNA CHOLA", "AM BÀRD MACGILLEAIN"

1. Òran do dh'Alastair MacGilleain

'S ann a chiad Diluain don ràidhe
'Fhuair mi 'bhàirlinn 'bha dhomh searbh,
'S mis' a dh'fhaodadh sin a ghràitinn,
Dh'fhàg i 'n càs mi nach robh soirbh;
Dh'iarr i ormsa dol do dh'Aros
Feuch am pàighinn, air neo falbh,
'S iad 'gam chuir do dh'arm Rìgh Deòrsa
'Ghiùlan Seònaid 's còta dearg.

Nuair a fhuair mi fios an là sin
Gun do thàirneadh mi fon chrann,
Chaidh mi 'shealltainn air a' Bhàillidh
Feuch am b'fheàird' mi dol 'na chainnt;
Thuirt e rium, "Cha ghabh mi bàigh riut,
Chan fhaigh thu fàbhar o m' làimh,
Chan eil còir agam na càirdeas,
Dol 'nad phàirt 's cha tèid mi ann."

'S ann an sin bu mhath na càirdean,
Nuair nach seasadh càch ar cùis,
Rinn mi 'n smaointean seo gu' faodainn
A dhol thar a' chaoil a-null,
'Dhol a shealltainn an fhir ainmeil,
Nach cuir ri luchd-leanmhainn cùl,
'S chuir e litir ann am phòca,
'Dh'ionnsaidh 'Chòirneil 'bh' os mo chionn.

'S ann da fhèin 'bu chòir a dheanamh,
Cridhe fialaidh 'dh'fhàs gun ghruaim,
Ceannard fearainn a dh'fhàs smiorail,
Làn do dh'fhearalachd le buaidh;
'S e cùl taice 'mhuinntir uile e,
'S Rìgh nan gràs 'ga chumail suas
Air sgiath dhìdean a dhol foidhe
Nuair 'bhios oirnne fòirneart cruaidh.

Gum b' e m' èibhneas agus m' aighear
An sàr-Leathanach mo rùn
'Fhaicinn dhachaidh slàn aig 'aitreabh,
Far na chleachd e 'bhith le mùirn;
'S adhbhar sòlais e dha sheòrsa
Gur buan a chòir o thùs
Air an oighreachd seo dham buin e,
Pàirt do Mhuile, Cola 's Rùm.

Càite 'n aithne dhomh ri 'ghràitinn
Anns a' Ghàidhealtachd mun cuairt,
Aon cho ainmeil ris an ceartair
Airson ceartais 'thoirt d' a thuath;
'S e nach sàraicheadh le màl iad,
Ged 'bhiodh càch 'ga thogail suas,
'S ionann sin 's mar 'dh'èireas dhàsan,
Gheibh e blàths an àite buan.

Tha e measail ann an Albainn,
'S mòr an dearbhadh air a chliù,
Nuair a thèid e bhuainn do Lunnainn,
Gheibh e urram leis gach Diùc;

1. A Song for Alastair MacLean

It was on the first Monday of the season
That I received a notice that was bitter,
And it is I who might say so,
As it left me in difficult straits;
It directed that I go to Aros
To determine whether I'd pay,
Or depart in King George's service
To carry a musket and wear a red coat.

When I received word on that day
That I had been selected by lottery,
I went to see the Bailiff
To see if it would be better for me to speak to him;
He said, "I won't have mercy for you,
You won't find any favours from me,
I don't have the authority nor personal reasons,
To take your side, and so I won't do it."

It is then that friends are advantageous,
When others would not give us support,
I considered that I could go
Across the narrows to the other side,
To see the renowned man,
Who won't turn his back on his followers,
And he put a letter in my pocket
To the Colonel who was in charge.

It was his own manner to do this,
A hospitable heart that grew without ill humour,
A landlord who grew in courage,
Filled with virtuous manliness;
He was a support to all his people
With the King of grace lifting him up
On a wing of safety to go beneath him
When we suffer harsh oppression.

It'd be my pleasure and my joy
To see the great MacLean my beloved
At home safely at his dwelling,
Where he used to joyfully dwell;
He is a cause of joy to his family
That his title has endured from the start
To this estate to which he belongs,
A part of Mull, and Coll and Rhum.

Where is there one I know of
In the Highlands round about,
Who can be said to be as renowned at present
For giving justice to his tenants;
He would not oppress them with rent,
Though the rest would be increasing it,
That's exactly what will happen to him,
He'll be treated warmly in a lasting place.

He is respected in Scotland,
Great is the evidence of his fame;
When he leaves us for London,
He'll find esteem from every Duke.

'S lìonmhor feum air 'an Dun Èideann,
'S cuid d' a euchd a bhith 'nan cùirt,
'S breitheamh ceart e nach dean eucoir,
'S tric a rèitich e dhaibh cùis.

Chan eil buaidh a bh' air duin'-uasal
Nach eil fuaighte ris le tùrn,
Sgiobair fairge e ri là gailbheach,
'N àm dha falbh na suidh' aig stiùir;
Thog e 'n fhàrdach a tha sàr-mhath,
'M bàta 's àille 'chaidh fo shiùil,
Air a ceangal suas le airgead
Nach gabh meirg, 's a dh'fhanas ùr.

'S ro-mhath 'n gìomanach air gunn' e,
Nì e fuil à frith na seilg,
Nuair 'rachadh e air 'uileann,
Cha bhiodh uireasbhaidh air 'arm;
Nuair a thàirnear i o 'lèirsinn,
Thèid i 'n grèim 's chan ann le cearb,
Nàmhaid geòidh e far a sgèithidh,
A bhiodh anns a' speur a' falbh.

Marcaich sunntach air each siùbhlach
Leis an dùblaichte gach rèis,
'Mheud 's 'bhiodh ann diubh anns an àm sin,
Bhuinte geall leis air gach fèill;
Sàr-chommandair ann an campa e,
Dh'iomain 'nàimhdean le ratreut,
'N àm dha tòiseachadh 'toirt òrduigh,
Nuair a chonnsaichte e gu feum.

Gura math 'thig air an càradh,
A lann stàilinn ann an truaill,
Cha bu leanabail e fon armachd,
Claidhe ceanna-bheartach 'nan dual;
'S mairg 'san àm sin 'chuireadh greann air,
'Thogail *angair* an fhir ruaidh,
'S e 'thighinn teann air airson aimhreit,
Bheirte an ceann deth b' i seo 'dhuais.

Tha e sìobhalta r' a fhaicinn,
Tha e tlachdmhor mar bu dual,
Tha e cruadalach gun ghealtachd,
Bu cheann feachd e 'dhol le 'sluagh;
Tha e iochdmhor ris na càirdean,
Ma bhios iad an sàs na 'n cruas,
'S beag an t-ioghnadh leinn mar 'tha e,
'S e 'rinn fàs à freumh nam buadh.

Na stuic rìoghail às na chinn e
Nach robh dìobarach na fuar,
Seo i 'n fhion-fhuil a bha prìseil,
'S i ri sìoladh ann 'ad ghruaidh;
Lean e 'n dùthchas mar bu dùth dha,
'S e mo dhùrachd dha 'bhith buan,
'S gàradh dìon' e do na nì às,
'S math a b'fhiach dhaibh e le 'uaill.

There is plenty of need for him in Edinburgh,
A share of his feats in their court,
He is a good judge who won't commit injustice
Often he has settled a dispute for them.

There was never a virtue of a nobleman
That is not knitted to him by a feat,
He is a fine skipper on a stormy day
When it's time for him to go or sit at the helm;
He built the vessel that is most excellent,
The most handsome boat ever under sail,
It is bound up with silver
That will not rust and will stay like new.

He is an exceptional marksman with a gun,
He'll draw blood from the forest of the hunt,
When he would settle upon his elbow,
There'd be no fault in his weapon;
When it is drawn from his sight,
It will be caught, and not faultily,
He is an enemy of the goose on its wing
That would be flying in the sky.

A cheerful horseman on a nimble horse
With him would be repeated every race,
As many as there'd be at that time,
The prize at every fair would belong to him;
He is an excellent camp commander,
Who drove his enemies to retreat,
At the time he started to give orders,
When he would be challenged to act.

Well does this profile befit him,
His steel blade in a sheath,
He is manly in the suit of armour,
A basket-hilted sword was their birthright;
It's a pity then to cause him to scowl,
To raise the anger of the red-headed man,
And he who approaches him for a contest,
Would lose his head, as his prize.

He is placid to appearances;
He is handsome as was natural,
He is brave, without any cowardice,
He'd be a fine commander to lead his people;
He is merciful to his friends
If they are in adversity or hardship,
It is no surprise to us what he's like,
As he grew from virtuous roots.

The royal stocks from which he grew
Were not lacking or cold
This is the pure-blood that was precious
That is flowing in your cheeks;
He kept to his heritage that was his inheritance
It is my wish for him to endure,
He's a wall of defence for those in need,
His nobility is of great value to them.

'S adhbhar misnich dhuinn gu lèir,
An deagh-fhear treun a bhith ri 'r cùl,
Bheir e 'nios sinn anns gach èiginn
'S nach leig eucoir oirnn dlùth;
Tighearna Chola dhan gèill onair,
'S àrd a sgoileireachd le iùl,
Fuasglaidh 'fhacal binn gach ceartais,
'S òg a ghlac e 'm beachd le tùr.

Fhuair e-fhèin rogha cèile,
'Bhaintighearn' èibhinn a b' fheàrr dealbh,
Gnùis na fèile làn do cheutaibh,
'S fhada bho chèile 'chaidh a h-ainm;
B' is' an reula mar ghath grèine,
Bha gach treun-fhear air a lorg,
Maise fèachdaig oirr' a-rèir sin,
Cha bhi 'bhreug ach sgeula dearbhte.

Bean a b' àille 'sheall an sgathan,
Coltas Bainrìgh flathail suairc,
Fiamh 'ghàire oirre b' e 'h-àbhaist,
Cò 'ghabh gràin oirre na fuath;
'S i ar dùthaich a bha deurach
Nuair a fhuair iad sgeul a chruais
Gun do dh'eug i, ceann na cèillidh
'Bhaintighearn' èibhinn geug nam buadh.

Thug e riarachadh d' a inntinn
A toirt don tìr an dèidh a bàis,
Dhearbh e 'n gaol a bh' ac' araon,
Cha dean e caochladh às gu bràch;
'S iomadh cùis a bha 'toirt cliù dhi,
B' ise 'm *biùti* 'bha air càch,
'S fhurast' ìnnse leis na chì e,
Dh'fhàg e sgrìobhte e ann an clàr.

'S goirt a ràinig iad a nodar
Nuair a chàirich e 'san Tung,
Bean is bràthair, 's nighean àlainn,
Gun fiamh gàire air às an cionn;
B' e 'n cruaidh chàs dha nuair dh'fhàg e
'N ciste chlàr iad anns an ùir,
Cha bu neònach e 'bhith brònach
Nuair 'chuir e fon fhòid an triùir.

Tha e ceannsalach gun mhòrchuis,
Tha e còir 's a h-uile càs,
Fhuair e eòlas na Roinn Eòrpa,
'Gabhail fòghlum anns gach ceàrn;
Fhad 's a dh'fhalbh e b' fhear co-ainme
Do na mòr-fhearaibh a b' àird,
Seo i 'n fhìrinn, is cha bu bhòsd e,
Dh'fhaoidte sibh gu leòir dhi 'ghràdh.

'S e fear cumadail deas dìreach
'S 'aghaidh shìobhalta gun sgraing,
Beul na firinn 'labhras cinnteach,
Bheir e 'nìos gach neach le 'chainnt;
'N àm 'dol cruinn daibh don taigh-sgrìobhaidh,

It is cause for courage for us altogether,
That the great hero is giving us support,
He will lift us up in each difficulty
And he won't let us suffer injustice;
The Laird of Coll to whom honour yields
Great is his scholarship and guidance,
His sweet words will release all that is just,
He learned good sense at an early age.

He himself found the choicest spouse,
The delightful lady of the finest appearance,
Countenance of hospitality, filled with joys,
Far beyond them has her name spread;
She was the star that was like a ray of sunshine
Whom each stalwart was pursuing,
She has the beauty of a peacock to match that,
This is no lie, but a proven report.

The loveliest woman who gazed on a mirror
The vision of a stately, courtly queen,
Smiling, as was usual for her,
Who would despise or hate her;
It was our country that was tearful
When they received word of his distress
That she had died, the wise head
The joyful princess, the maid of virtue.

It gave comfort to his thoughts
To take her home after her death,
It proved the love that they all had,
And this will never, ever change;
Many things brought her renown,
Hers' was the beauty that outdid all others,
It is easy to report for him who has seen it,
He has left it written on the record.

Painfully did his notary reach them
When he laid [them] in Tung,
A wife and a brother and a lovely daughter,
Without a smile for their sake;
It was hard for him when he left
Them in a wooden coffin in the ground,
It was no wonder that he was saddened
When he laid the three to rest.

He is authoritative, without pomp,
He is just in every situation,
He came to know Europe,
Taking instruction in every quarter;
Everywhere he goes, his surname is the equal
Of the greatest lords,
It is the truth that I am telling you;
Perhaps enough of it has been told you.

He's a shapely, elegant upright man
And his face is mild, without a frown,
The mouth of truth that speaks unerringly,
He lifts up everyone with his speech;
When it's time to gather in the records-house,

Gheibh e cìs o na bhios ann,
Toiseach bruidhne ri uchd binne,
'S leis gach nì 'san cuir e ceann.

Gum bu mhiann leam mar 'dh'iarrainn
E 'bhith liath mun triall e bhuainn,
'S an Tighearn' òg a ghlèidheadh còrach
Man tèid còmhdach air 'san uaigh;
Mar cheann fhine e 'bhith ro 'chinneadh,
Mac an ionad an fhir ruaidh,
Anns an teaghlach a bha greadhnach
'Chumail saod air a chuid tuath.

Ma leanas e dùthchas 'athar,
Am mac rathail 'thig 'na dhèidh,
Bidh e crionnta, glic 'na inntinn,
Agus cuimhneach air a bheus;
Saoghal buan dha anns an dòigh sin
'Chumail còrach ri 'luchd feum,
Tha mi 'n dòchas 'fhad 's a 's beò e
Nach dean gòraiche dha beud.

Nam biodh m' fhiosrachadh gu m' dhùrachd,
Chuirinn sìos a chùis na b' fheàrr,
Agus m' eòlas mar mo dhòchas,
Bhiodh e 'n òrdagh nach biodh ceàrr;
Rinn mi 'n dìcheall seo 'chuir crìoch air,
Chan e sgìos a thug dhomh tàmh,
Bu toilinntinn leam 'bhith 'g ìnnse,
Sgeula cinnteach air le dàn.

He receives the tribute of those who are there,
The first to speak in the face of a judgement,
And in everything to which he sets his mind.

It would be my desire, as I would wish
For him to be grey, before he leaves us,
And the young Laird to preserve title
Before he his buried in the grave;
To be chieftain before his people,
The son in the place of the red-headed man,
In the family that has been magnificent
In keeping up the prosperity of his tenants.

If he follows his father's inheritance,
The fortunate son who will come after him,
He will be mentally prudent and wise,
And mindful of his virtue;
A long life to him in this way
To keep justice amongst his dependants,
I am hopeful that as long as he lives
That foolishness will not do him any harm.

If my skill was as I wished,
I'd record his case much better,
And if my ability was the equal of my desire,
It would be in order, with nothing wrong;
I did my best here to bring it to an end,
It isn't tiredness that has caused me to stop,
It would be a great pleasure for me to tell
A perfect tale of him in a song.

2. Òran do Thighearna Chola

Gur neònach dhomh 'bhith dìomhaineach
Gun inntreachadh air dàn
'Tha 'gluasad ann am inntinn,
Mun Chòirneal uasal, phrìseil,
A' fear 'thug dhomhsa an cuimhneachan
Nach diochuimhnich mi dhà,
'S ann a ràinig mi dà uair e
'Dh'fhuasgladh air mo chàs.

Fhuair mi seo gun diùltadh dhomh,
Cha b' fhiù leis fhèin a ghràdh,
Gun dìobradh e na leanmhainich
A thagradh air is earbs' ac' às;
Nuair dh'fhiosraich e le seanachas dhiom
'S a thug mi 'n dearbhadh dha,
Gu' b' e mo reusan dol 'na dhèidh
Mun deach e ceum 'am phàirt.

Chan neònach leam gad 'rinn e siud
Na 'n cuimhnicheadh e càch,
Na h-uaislean on a ghineadh e
'Bha fearail, calma, cinneadail;
Tha 'nàdarrachd 's air fhilleadh ann,
Neo-ghioragach gun sgàth,
'S e 'n cruadal fhèin an àm na h-èiginn
'Rinn daibh feum g' an geàrd.

Gur h-iomadh buaidh ri ìnnse
'Bh' air an t-sìnnsearachd on d' fhàs,
An Leathanach glan rìomhach,
Don chinneadh a bha rìoghail,
Don choille 'bha gun chrìonaich,
Nach strìochdadh gun cheann-fàth'
Ri aodann catha gun dad athaidh,
'S iad ri sgàth 'am blàr.

Nuair 'thànaig feachd nan nàimhdean
'S a champaich iad mun cuairt,
'S a chaidh an t-oighre air fògair'
Gun ann ach leanabh gòrach
Do rìoghachdan thair eòlas,
'S an tòir ac' air 'ga ruaig,
B' e fhèin, Iain Garbh, a sheas an t-ainm
Nuair 'dh'fhàs e 'n inbhe suas.

Nuair thànaig e gu spionnadh
Ann a' spioradalachd mhòir,
Smaointich e gun tilleadh e
Don dùthaich às na dh'iomaich e;
'S ann thug e bàta is gillean leis
'Thighinn 'iomairc fo sheòl,
Le neart Iain Ghairbh, man d' rinn e falbh,
Gun do shealbhaich e 'na chòir.

B' e sin an leòmhann euchdach
A thug le 'thrèine buaidh,
Nuair 'cheannsaich e gu lèir iad,
'Gan sgapadh às a chèile;

2. A Song for the Laird of Coll

It is strange for me to be idle
And not to start on a poem
That is running about my brain,
About the noble, precious Colonel,
The man who gave me the token of respect
That I shall not forget,
I came to him two times
To resolve my difficulty.

I received this without denial
It wouldn't be worth it to say,
That he'd forsake his clanspeople
Who would plead with him trustingly;
When he enquired of me, conversationally
And I gave him the proof,
That I had reason for pursuing him
Before he took a step on my behalf.

I didn't surprise me that he did that
Or that he would remember the rest,
The nobles from whom he descended
Were manly, brave, and clannish;
Their natural qualities are contained in him,
Courageous without a hint of fear,
It was their hardiness itself in the time of need
Which made them so useful to their guard.

There is many a virtue to report
That was possessed by the ancestry from whom
The pure fine MacLean had sprung
From the clan that was royal,
From the forest that was without decay,
That would not surrender without good reason
In the face of a battalion, without any fear,
While facing destruction on a battlefield.

When the army of the enemies came
And they encamped round about,
And the heir went into exile
When he was just a foolish child
To unknown Kingdoms,
They were in hot pursuit of him,
He himself was Iain Garbh, who proved the name
When he grew in maturity.

When he reached full strength
In great spiritedness,
He thought that he would return
To the country from which he departed;
He took a boat and some young men with him
To come to march under sail,
With Iain Garbh's strength, before he departed,
To win back that to which he was entitled.

He was the heroic lion
Who won victory with his power,
When he conquered them all,
Tearing them limb from limb;

'S e 'g ùrachadh a chreuchdan,
Mar sheòbhag speur air luaths,
Sheas e 'n t-àite 's ghlèidh e 'n làrach,
Ghabh Clann Nèill an ruaig.

Tha 'n cruadal 's ann an Alastair
'Bu cheannasach air sluagh,
Bu dùthchas dha gun tachradh e,
'S an càirdeas a bh' aig Lachainn ris;
A' saighdear sin 'bu bheachdaile
Do mhacaibh Eachainn Ruaidh,
'Sheasadh dàna ri uchd nàmhaid
'Chumadh bàigh ri tuath.

Tha 'n oighreachds' air a dìonachadh,
Bho làimh an Rìgh dhaibh fhèin,
Gur math leam gura cinnteach e
Nach breug a th' ann ach firinn,
Tha Rùm, 's Cola, 's Cuimhnis,
Fo chìs agaibh gun dèidh,
Saor bho ainmheach, pailt do dh'airgead,
Ri freasdladh oirbh gun èis.

'S e uachdarain na dùthcha sin
'Tha fiùghantach 'nan gnàths;
Tha misneachd agus fòghlam ann,
Tha gliocas agus eòlas ann;
Tha onair agus mòralachd
'Nan còmhnaidh ann a' tàmh,
A' cur le chèile 'an gnùis na fèile,
Fear nach geur mun mhàl.

Bu mheasail aig Braid Albainn,
Fear ainmeil anns gach uair,
Thug e commanda an airm dha,
Gum b' fhiach dha sin nuair 'dh'fhalbh e leis;
'Thoirt facail dhaibh gun chearbaich',
Gu smachdail, calma, cruaidh,
'S e 'bhiodh dìleas leis a' mhìle ud,
Nam biodh strì mun cuairt.

Nuair ghluaiseadh e ron champa sin
Air cabhsair na air sràid,
Le 'chlaidheamh caol cinn-airgid;
A h-aon a chuireadh fearg air,
Gu' faodadh e 'bhith earbsach
Mun dealaicheadh iad gu bràch,
'S e 'thighinn a-nall le cruas a lann,
Gun cuirte 'cheann ri làr.

'S lìonmhor gnìomh is gaisgeadh
A tha 'n taice ris le cèill,
Gur nàmhaid fèidh is earbadh e,
Le 'ghunna caol neo-dhearmadach,
A' siubhal ghleann is gharbhlaichean,
'S a choin ri falbh 'na dhèidh,
Ri spòrs neo-ainneamh anns na beannaibh,
Na chuid fearainn fhèin.

Reopening his wounds,
Like a sky hawk at full speed,
He stood his place and held the field of battle,
And Clan MacNeil took flight.

This same valour is in Alastair
He was assertive in leading his people,
It was natural for him that it would come to pass
The relationship Lachlan had to him,; That solider
who was the most commanding
Of the sons of Red Hector,
Who would stand firm in the face of an enemy
And who would be merciful to tenants.

Their estate is secured,
From the King's hand to they themselves,
I'm pleased that it's assured
That it's not a mistake but the truth
That Rum, and Coll, and Quinish,
Under your tribute without contest,
Free from debt, full of money,
To provide for you without difficulty.

It is the chiefs of that country,
Who are generous in manner,
There is courage and learning there,
There is wisdom and skill there;
There is honour and majesty
Always residing there within,
Putting together in the very vision of hospitality,
A man who is not harsh concerning the rent.

He was respected by Breadalbane,
A man renowned at every hour,
He gave him an army command,
That was to his advantage when he left with him;
To give them flawless orders
Authoritatively, strongly, harshly,
It is he who would be faithful with that thousand
If there was strife round about.

When he would stir before that camp
Whether on pavement or on a street,
With his silver-headed rapier;
The one who would anger him,
He could be certain
That before they'd part forever,
He'd come over with the strength of his blade,
That his head would be felled to the ground.

Numerous deeds and acts of heroism
Are associated sensibly with him,
He is the enemy of the deer and roe-deer,
With his slender, precise gun,
Travelling valleys and rough grounds,
And his dogs following behind him,
In plentiful sport in the mountains,
Or in his own lands.

Gur sgiobair ri là gaillinn e
Nach b' aineolach mu stiùir,
Nuair 'ghlacadh e 'na achlais i,
Gu' fàgadh e na thachradh air,
Le àrdraich èibhinn, acfhuinneach,
A mharcaicheadh na sùigh,
'Dh'fhàgadh 'Hobart' bhàn gach bàta,
'S i 'bhith làn 'na siùil.

He is a fine skipper on a stormy day
Who was not ignorant at the helm,
When he would grasp it under his arm,
He'd leave behind whatever he happened upon,
With a delightful galley all fitted out,
That would ride the wave,
Hobart would leave every boat downwind,
If her sails were filled.

Nuair choinnich Mac Mhic Eòbhain e
'San Oban aig a' bhàl,
'S a dh'fhalbh iad leis na baintighearnan
A dh'fheuchainn bàta 'Chaimbeulaich;
Gun d' mhaslaich e gu h-antoil i,
Le neo-ar-thaing 'thoirt dha,
'Faotainn suas oirr' air 'n fhuaradh
'S 'tighinn mun cuairt ri sàil.

When he met MacLean of Ardgour
In Oban at the ball,
And they left with the ladies
To attempt to race Campbell's boat;
He shamed her reluctantly
And no thanks given to him,
Catching up to her on the windward side
And coming around the low end of her keel.

'S e ceann an teaghlaich onaraich
A th' ann an Cola e fhèin,
Guma fada dhasan
'Bhith maireann buan 'na shlàinte,
'S a mhac a bhith gu sabhailte
'S an àite sin 'na dhèidh,
'S an talla 'an cluinnte ceòl na pìob',
'An cosgta fion is cèir.

It is the head of the honourable family
That is Coll himself,
May it be long for him
That his health endures everlastingly,
And that his son will safely
Be in his place after him,
In the hall in which pipe music would be heard,
In which wine and wax would be consumed.

'S an uair a gheibh an Tighearna seo
Suidheachadh fo sgòd,
Cuimhnichidh e cleachdainnean
An fhir a dh'fhàg fo fhacal I;
Gun ghòraiche 'bhith 'n taice ris,
Ach faiceallach gu leòir,
Ri cur 'na cheann gun dad a chall
Don gheibh e anns a' chòir.

And when this Lord
Succeeds to the title,
He will recall the customs
Of the man who left it [the estate] under oath;
Without foolishness being associated with him,
But cautious enough,
To add to it without anything lost
Of that which he will get by right.

Nam biodh e gu m' chomhairle
'S a ghnothach a bhith 'm rèir,
Bhiomaid uile air sòlas
Nuair 'chluinneamaid a chòrdadh
Miss Clephane a bhith pòsta ris
Mar dh'òrdaichinn on chlèir,
'S gun glèidhte daonann anns an teaghlach
Ainm nan daoine 'dh'eug.

If he would ask my advice
And his affairs would be as I'd wish,
We would all be joyful
When we would hear that Miss Clephane
Is to be married to him
As I would ordain it from the clergy,
And the name of the men who have died
Would forever be preserved in the family.

Ma thèid fear eile fuadain ann
Nach buainear às a phòr,
Bidh sinne aige suarach,
Cha ghabh e blàths na truas dhinn,
'Gar seasamh nuair is cruaidh i,
'Gar toirt a-nuas air mòd,
'S ann tha 'sa chìll na ghabhadh ruinn
Gun chuimhn' air Eachann òg.

If an imposter is put there
Who is not of the race,
We will be nothing to him,
He won't have any warmth or pity for us,
Supporting us when things are harsh,
Bringing us up to a court,
In the grave are those who would've accepted us
Without a memory of young Hector.

Chan fhaodadh seo 'bhith deante
Gun mhiannachadh dhaibh fhèin,
A dh'aindeoin stoc na stòrais,
Mur deanadh gaol iad deònach;
Gur dìomhain duinn 'bhith comhradh

This needn't be done
Without it being desired by themselves,
In spite of capital or wealth,
If affection could not make them willing;
It's pointless for us to be conversing

Air gòraichead gun fheum,
Ged tha ar nàdarachd ag ràdh
Gu' freagradh iad da chèil.

'S lionmhor struthan uasal
Mu 'ghuailnean 's ann a' streap
Do dh'uisge glan nam fuaran,
Don fhuil a bha gun truailleadh,
Do Chlann Ghilleain nuair ghluaiste iad
'Bha cruadalach gu feum,
Iad fhèin 's Clann Chamshroin,
Cinneadh ainmeil feachd nan armaibh geur.

'S on tha mi gann do dh'fhiosrachadh,
Gur mòr is mist' mi e,
Na' faighinn eachdraidh shònraichte
A bheireadh tuille eòlais domh,
'S a dh'ìnnsidh dhomh mar 'thòisich iad
Nuair sheòl iad às a Spàinn,
A-nall do dh'Èirinn às an Eiphit,
Na fir threun 'bha dàn.

Slàn iomra' do na h-àrmainn
A tha mi 'n dràst' a' luaidh,
Nam bithinn 'san taigh-thàirne,
Ged chuirinn òr 'ga pàigheadh,
Gun cosgainn an deoch-slàinte
'S gum biodh i làn mun cuairt;
Mo dhùrachd dhuibh 's mo bheannachd leibh
Don oighre 's don fhear ruadh.

About useless folly,
Although our nature tells us
They are well-suited to each other.

There are many noble torrents
About his shoulders ascending
Of pure water of the springs,
And of the blood that was without impurity,
Of Clan MacLean when they would be moved
Who were courageous in time of need,
They themselves and Clan Cameron,
A famous tribe of the band of the sharp arms.

And as I am lacking in knowledge,
Greatly I am the worse for it,
If I could get a special history
That would give me additional knowledge,
And that'll tell me how they began
When they sailed away from Spain
Over to Ireland, out of Egypt,
The strong men who were bold.

A parting farewell to the heroes
Who I am now praising,
If I were in the ale-house
Although I myself would pay it with gold,
I would buy the toast
And if it would be full round about;
My greetings and my blessings to you
To the heir and to the red-haired man.

3. Òran do Thighearna Chola, nuair a cheannaich e Eilean nam Muc

Thàinig naidheachd à Dun Èideann,
Thug an sgeula dhomh toilinntinn,
Gun deach Alastair air chuairt,
An-diugh a chuala mi le cinnt' e,
Nuair a chaidh e 'measg nan uaislean,
Fhuair e buaidh air na bha cruinn ann,
Thug e dhachaidh còir an àite,
Ged a b' fhada càch a' strì ris.

Bha gach tighearn' airson a fhaotainn,
'S iad 'ga dhaoradh ann am prìs air,
Cha robh an gnothach dhaibh 'na shùgradh
Bhon a ghlac e 'chùis 'na inntinn;
Bhiodh e dimeasach ri 'bheò leis
Bhon a bha e 'n còir a shinnsearaibh,
Gu' leigeadh e bhuaithe an t-àite,
Ged a dh'àrdaicheadh e mìle air.

Rinn e gnìomh a bha neo-chearbach
Nuair a dh'fhalbh e air an t-saothair;
Bha mòran ann do luchd-airgid,
Thug e tairgse a chuir ma sgaoil iad;
Ged a chailleadh e le gòraich',
'S fhad' on 'bha e 'n tòir air fhaotainn,
'S iomadh fear aig a' robh sùil ann,
Nan leigte 'gan ionnsaidh saor e.

Cha robh stàth dhaibh dol 'na charaibh
Gus a cheannach mar a shaoil iad,
Cha bu ghliocas daibh ach gòraich',
A bhith 'tòiseachadh ri faoineis;
Tha màl fiù aig' air an fhearann,
Agus barantas gu 'fhaotainn,
Ged a reic e 'n ceann gach ùin' e,
Bhiodh e 'dùblachadh air daonnan.

Nuair a thàinig litir sgrìobhte
Don tìr a dh'ionnsaidh na Baintighearn',
Bha gach duine a chuala 'n cùnntas
A' toirt cliù dha mar a rinn e;
Gu bheil Rùm, is Cola, is Cùimhnis
Air an dìonachadh fo staoidhle,
'S Eilean na' Muc, an tìr iosal
Na bha 'dhìth orra don oighreachd.

Tha 'chuid tuathadh uil' air sòlas
Ris an dòigh 's a bheil e 'gluasad,
Thàinig teachdaireachd d' an ionnsaidh
'Thaobh na h-ionndrainn a bha bhuatha;
Loisg a dhùthchannan le chèile
Teinntean èibhneis air gach cruachan,
'S iad ag òl air a dheoch-slàinte
Don dibhe làidir 'bha gun truailleadh.

Bu bheag ioghnadh mar a bha iad
Ag òl deoch-slàinte 'n àrmainn uasail,
An cùl-taic' ri uair am fàilinn

3. A Song to the Laird of Coll, when he purchased the Isle of Muck

News arrived from Edinburgh,
The story gave me satisfaction,
That Alastair had gone on a journey,
Today I heard it with certainty,
When he went amongst the nobility,
He won victory over those who were gathered,
He took home title to the place,
Though the rest had long striven against him.

Each laird wanted to have it,
And were bidding up its price,
It was not an easy business for them
Since he set his mind on the matter;
It would have been humiliating for him
Since it had been owned by his ancestors,
If he had let the place get away from him,
Even if its' price went up a thousand.

He did a deed that was tidy
When he went to engage in the matter,
Many of the moneyed-classes were gathered
He made an offer that released them;
Though it had been lost by folly,
He had been trying to get it for ages,
Many a person had an eye on it,
If it had gone to them cheaply.

No use to them to go in its direction
To buy it as they thought they would,
It wouldn't we wise, it would be foolish
To enter into such silliness;
He has a feu rent of the land,
And a pledge to get it,
If he were to sell it in a while,
It would always double its price.

When a written message came
To the country to the Lady,
Every person who heard the account
Gave praise to him for what he'd done;
That Rum, and Coll, and Quinish are
Now secured under his title,
And the Isle of Muck, the low-lying land
That they had lost as part of the estate.

His tenants are all rejoicing
About the way in which he is proceeding,
A message had arrived for them
About the missing thing that they wanted;
All his lands all together
Fires of joy on every hilltop,
With them drinking to his good health
Of strong spirits of great purity.

It was little surprise that they were drinking
To the good health of the noble chieftain,
Their support in the hour of their weakness

Nach faic càs orra gun fhuasgladh;
Uachdaran cho math 's 'tha 'n Albainn,
Ged a sheanchaiste mun cuairt iad,
Tha e iochdmhor, làn do cheartas,
Cha b' e 'chleachdainn a bhith cruaidh' orra.

'S iomadh àite 'bheil meas is onair
Aig Tighearna Chola ri fhaotainn,
Dh'iarradh Morairean nan cùirt e,
'S e bu dùthchas da o dhaoine;
Na fir fhoghainteach neo-sgàthach
Nach gabhadh ro nàmhaid aomadh,
Cha bhiodh gealtachd air an giùlan
A thoirt cùl ri luchd an adhbhair.

Clann Ghilleain, bha iad lìonmhor,
Na fir rìoghail dha' robh mòrchuis,
'S e na thuit an Inbhir Chèitein
'Thug an dìth orra is bu mhòr i;
Bha seachd ceud ann le 'n ceann cinnidh,
Gun a h-aon diubh 'thilleadh còmhladh,
B' adhbhar ionndrainn sin an Rìoghachd
A dhol sios leis don aon seòrsa.

Cha do dh'ionnsaidh iad le giorag
Ann an iomairt na 'n tùs còmhraig,
Gun tàirneadh iad ceum an t-slinnean,
'S grad a thilleadh iad an tòrachd;
Bha iad misneachail le cruadal
'Dh'fhaotainn buaidh 's a h-uile còmhdhail,
'S e fear aca 'bhuail am buille,
A fhuair an t-urram latha Lòcha.

Chan eil feum a bhith 'ga iomradh
Na 'bhith ag ainmeachadh nas mòtha air,
Ma na dh'èirich dhaibh 'san àm sin,
Thàinig càlltachd na bu leòir orra;
Ach na dh'fhuirich, biodh iad crionna,
'S na leigibh dad dhibh le gòraich',
Bhiodh an cinneadh uil' air èibhneas,
Na leanadh sibh beus a' Chòirneil.

Beus a''Chòirneil 's a dheagh bheairtean,
'S math ri 'n cleachdainn anns gach seòl iad,
Tha e iriosal 'na ghiùlan,
Cosgail, ceannsalach neo-stròthail,
Fhuair e 'nis a dh'ionnsaidh 'làimhe;
Mar a b' àill leis o Chlann Dòmhnaill,
B' e toilinntinn a luchd muinntir,
Gun cuireadh e 'n t-oighre 'phòsadh.

Bhon a bhuannaich e le 'thapadh
Na thug Lachlann daibh le gòraich',
Ged a bha e treis a dhìth orra
Bhon a thill e far bu chòir dha;
Cha reicear tuille an dràst' e,
'S ann a cheanglas an Tighearn' òg e
Ris a' chrùn gu daingeann làidir,
Gun dad fàillinn o Righ Deòrsa.

Who won't let hardship go unresolved;
A landlord as good as any in Scotland,
Though landlords would be discussed round about,
He is merciful and full of justice,
It was not his practice to be hard on them.

Many a place can be found in which there is,
Respect and honour for the Laird of Coll,
The law Lords would request for him,
This was customary for him from such people;
The courageous men who were not timid
Who would not bend before an enemy,
There'd be no cowardice in their carriage
Or turning of backs on their supporters.

Clan MacLean, they were numerous,
The regal men who were glorious,
It is those who fell at Inverkeithing
That caused them such great destruction;
Seven hundred were there with their chief,
Without one of them to return together,
That was a great cause of loss to the Kingdom
To lose so many of the same group.

They did not attack with dread
In a conflict nor in the heart of battle,
They would draw the shoulder a step closer,
And would instantly return to the pursuit;
They were courageous and brave
To gain victory in every combat,
It was one of them who struck the blow
That won the praise at Inverlochy.

There's no use in reporting it
Nor speaking any more upon it,
About what happened to them at that time,
They have suffered a greater loss;
But of those that remain, let them be prudent,
And don't foolishly let away from you anything,
The whole clan would be rejoicing,
If you followed in the Colonel's virtue.

The Colonel's virtue and his good works,
It is good to employ them in every enterprise,
He is humble in his carriage,
Profuse and commanding but not dissolute;
He has now got in hand,
As he had desired from Clan Donald,
It would be a cause for joy to his people,
That he could have his heir married off.

Since he has won with his cleverness
That which Lachlann had foolishly given them,
Though it was lost to them for a while
Since it has returned to where it should be;
It will now never again be sold,
The young Laird will certainly bind it
Securely, strongly to the crown,
Without anything lacking from King George.

Ma bhios Eòbhann fearail, cliùiteach,
Mar bu dùthchas dha o 'sheòrsa,
Bidh e 'meudachadh na h-oighreachd
Gun a cuir an cuingead òirleach,;
Ceum air adhart dha 'sa 'chùis sin
Gus an giùlaineadh e 'n cleòca,
Mar bu mhiann leam e 'ga dheanamh
Le deagh riaghailt fad 's a 's beò e.

If Hugh is manly and renowned,
As would be customary from his sort,
He will enlarge the estate
Without putting an inch of it into any distress;
Let him advance in this matter
So that he would carry the mantle,
As I would desire for him to do
In good rule for as long as he lives.

Tha iad ann an Albainn lìonmhor,
Càirdean dìleas don Tighearn' òg seo,
Nam biodh uireasaibh na feum air,
Dheanadh èirigh leis 'ga chòmhnadh;
Fineachan 'tha làidir, treubhach,
'S iad nach gèilleadh anns a' chomhstrì,
Gus an strìochdadh iad an nàmhaid,
'S mòr an àireamh dhiubh 'bhiodh leònta.

They are numerous in Scotland,
Friends loyal to this young Laird,
Who would if he was lacking or in need,
And would rise with him to provide assistance;
Clans who are strong and gallant,
They would not bend in the battle,
Until they had struck the enemy,
Great numbers of them would be wounded.

Tha ceann-feadhna à Locha Buidhe
'Thigeadh uidheamach 'na chòmhdhail,
Le 'chuid daoine fhèin man cuairt dha
Air an tarraing suas an òrdagh;
Dh'èireadh à dùthaich shìol Eachainn
Na fir bheachdail, neartmhor, eòlach,
Don fhuil àird nach gabhadh lùbadh,
Cha bu chùram dhaibh cion eòlais.

There is a chieftain in Lochbuie
Who would come well-fitted to his assembly,
With his own people round about him
Drawn up in good order;
From the country of the seed of Hector
Would rise the authoritative, powerful, skilful men,
Of noble blood, who would not bend,
They wouldn't suffer a lack of expertise.

Th' aig a' Chòirneal Mac Mhic Eòghain
Buidheann mhòr do dh'fhearaibh calma,
Gaisgeil, gasta an uair a thàirnte iad,
'Fhuair an àrach 'measg nan garbh chrìoch;
Le rèiseamaid air a' chùl sin,
'S iad cho ionnsaichte fon armaibh,
'S iad nach diùltadh nam bu chruaidh i
Dol air ghluasad leis à Albainn.

Colonel MacLean of Ardgour has
A great company of bold men,
Heroic and excellent when they are raised,
And who were raised in the rough bounds;
With a regiment behind those ones,
Who were so learned, in full arms,
And would not refuse if it were hard
To go abroad with him on an excursion.

Bhiodh MacCoinnich mòr a' tuath leibh
'S a chuid uaislean bho Cheann t-sàile,
'S beag ioghnadh an t-Iarla Rìoghail
Seo 'bhith leibh gun dibir càirdeis,
Bhon is ionann cùis mum bidh sibh
'S a bha 'n t-sìnnsearachd on d' fhàs sibh,
Nuair a thàinig iad don Rìoghachds'
A bha dìleas do shliochd bhràithrean.

Great MacKenzie of the north would be with you
And his nobles from Kintail,
Little wonder for this Royal Earl
To be with you without foresaking friendship,
Since you are concerned about the same cause
And the ancestry from which you sprung,
When they first came to this Kingdom
Were loyal to the descendants of brothers.

Cinneadh eile d' a luchd leanmhainn
Ro ainmeil seo thig 'am pàirt ruibh,
MacDhòmhnaill Duibh, le Clann Chamshroin,
Buidheann anabarrach gun fhàillinn,
À Loch Abar, timcheall Lòcha,
Gheibhte mòran diubh 'san àite,
Dhol fo bhrataich le Loch Iall,
Nach gabhadh fiamh a' seasamh làrach.

Another clan of his supporters who were
Exceedingly famous and who will support you,
Is Cameron of Lochiel, with Clan Cameron,
An excellent troop, without fault,
From Lochaber, round about Loch Lochy,
Many of them will be found in the place,
Who would come out under Lochiel's banner,
Who' d take not fright in standing their ground.

MacLeòid Dhun Bheagain 's a dhaoine,
Nach bu tais ri aodann làmhaich,
Luchd iomairt nan lann 'sa chaonnaig
'Bualadh beum le faobhar stàlainn,
'Geàrradh smuais le cruaidh nach maoladh,

MacLeod of Dunvegan and his people,
Who were not faint-hearted in the face of firing,
Skilful swordsmen in the fray
Striking a blow with a steel blade,
Cutting marrow with steel that wouldn't blunt,

'S iad cho fòghlaimte air claidhean,
Leis an dearbh iad pàirt d' an cruadal
Nuair a dhuisgear suas an àrdan.

Thigeadh am Mòrair,# à Slèibhte,
Ceannard cheud dham beus 'bhith àghmhor,
Leis an dean Clann Dòmhnaill èirigh,
Na laoich ghleusta 'ghèilleadh dhasan,
Saighdearaibh cho math 's a' chualas,
'S tric a fhuair iad buaidh 'sna blàraibh,
Nàmhaid a' ruith 's iad cuir ruaig orra,
'S cuid gun ghluasad a's an àraich.

Bhiodh Loch nan Ealadh, 's a shluagh leis,
'S ann leis fhèin a ghluaiseadh àrmainn,
Ceann armailt 'san t-seirbhis Rìoghail,
'S ainmeil a gnìomh leis a phàirte,
'S a' dol sìos ri uchd an fhuathais,
'S e 'bhith cruadalach an àbhaist,
'Thoirt teineadh air feachd na Frainge
Ann an campaichean na Spàinne.

'S beag an t-ioghnadh e 'bhith uasal,
'S e ceangailte buan an càirdeas
Ris na fir, cho math ri 'n iarraidh,
'S a bha riamh a-measg nan Gàidheal;
Tha e dìleas air gach taobh dheth
Do gach aon a bha mi 'gràitinn,
Do mhòran tuilleadh do dh'anabharr,
Ge' nach d' ainmich mi ach pàirt dhiubh.

'S iomadh àite 's a bheil caraid
A tha 'tarraing mar luchd dàimh ris,
Ge' nach urrainn dhomhsa an ìnnse
Gus an cuimhnich mi nas fhèarr iad;
Guma slàn don Tighearn' ainmeil
A dh'ùraich seanchas an dràst' dhomh,
Nuair a chualas à Dun Èideann
Le deagh sgeul mar dh'èirich dhasan.

Guma buan am fear a cheannaich
Bho Mhac Mhic Ailein an t-àite,
Air chùmhnant e dh'fhaotainn tuilleadh,
'S e 'bhith comasach gu phàigheadh;
'S mi gun cosgadh i le dùrachd,
Mar cho-dhùnadh air mo Ghàidhlig:
Deoch-slàinte 'n Alastair cheunta,
Mo chùil-taice nuair 'thrèigeadh càch mi.

They were so knowledgeable about swords,
With which they proved some of their hardiness
When their wrath will have been raised.

The Lord, from Sleat would come,
A leader of hundreds whose virtue is to be blessed,
With whom Clan Donald will rise,
The skilful lads would submit to him,
Soldiers as good as any that have been heard,
Often they have been victorious on the battlefields,
Enemies in flight and they in chase after them,
And some of them lying lifeless on the field.

Lochnell and his people would be with him,
It's with him himself that warriors would move,
A commander is the Royal service,
Famous was its deeds with his share,
And going down into the face of dread,
To be courageous was their habit,
To raise fire on the French army
In the army camps of Spain.

Little wonder that he is noble,
Enduringly bound is the relationship
To the men, as good as could be desired,
That have ever been amongst the Gaels;
He is loyal on every side of him
To each one of whom I've been speaking,
To many still of the excess,
Though I've only mentioned some of them.

In many a place that there is a friend
Who is drawing near to him like a relation,
Though I am not able to tell of them
Until I can remember them better;
Fare thee well to the famous Laird
Who has renewed for me the poetic muse,
When a good report was heard from Edinburgh
Of how things have transpired for him.

Long life to the man who purchased
From Clanranald the place,
On condition that he would get more,
Should he be able to pay for it;
It's me who would spend it with good wishes,
As a conclusion to my Gaelic:
To the Good health of the same Alastair,
My support when all others would desert me.

4. Bàta Thighearna Chola

Cha dean mi 'n diugh fàilte
Ris a' bhàta seo 'tighinn,
Bho nach biodh mo ghràidh oirre,
Fear àrd a' chùil bhuidhe:
Sin an tighearna dùthcha,
'Chuireadh sunnd air mo chridhe,
Nuair a bhiodh e 'ga stiùireadh
An àm na siùil a chuir rithe.

'N àm na siùil a chuir rithe,
Bhiodh e 'na shuidhe 'ga stiùireadh,
'S e 'b' urrainn 'ga seòladh
Gu còrsa na dùthchadh;
B' e sin sgiobair a' bhàta,
'S i air bhàrr nan tonn dùbh-ghlas,
Gu gleidheadh an fhuaraidh,
'S i 'ruith suas air gach sùgh dhiubh.

'S i 'ruith suas air gach sùgh dhiubh,
'S gum bu shunndach a h-astar,
Nuair a rachadh i 'n òrdagh
Le còrcaich mar acfhuinn,
Stèidh is cupaill mhath làidir,
Deagh chàball is acair,
'S iad a' tarraing nam ball sin,
'S fir air cheann gach aon slaite.

'S fir air cheann gach aon slaite
An uair a phaisgte 'cuid aodaich,
An àm an caladh sin fhàgail,
Bhiodh iadsan 'ga sgaoileadh;
Nuair a thogadh i 'sgiathan,
Bhiodh a cliathach ri saothair,
'S cha bhi 'sgiobair fo chùram,
Ged a lùb e 'croinn chaola.

'S e gun lùbadh 'croinn chaola,
'S a bheireadh aodach bho 'slatan;
Bu leis urram 'ga stiùireadh,
Gu glèidheadh 'cùrsa mar chaiptean;
'N àm dha suidhe 'na cheabainn,
'S a thàirneadh e 'chairt ann,
Bha e eòlach 's gach àite
'An tigeadh bàta gu acair.

Chan eil àit' an tèid acair
Ann an caladh na bàgh,
Nach faic e mu 'choinneamh
Glan soilleir, 's nach lèir dha,
'S tu 'bheireadh i sàbhailt'
Bho bhàrr nam beann beucail,
Nuair a thig a' mhuir ghàbhaidh,
Bhiodh do làmh 'sa chrann-céilidh.

Bhiodh do làmh 'sa chrann-céilidh,
Bu mhath d' fheum air 'san àm sin,
'S i 'dh'fhalbhadh gu siùbhlach,
'S a' riof-chùil a bhith teann innt',

4. The Laird of Coll's Boat

I shall not welcome today
This boat that is coming,
As she wouldn't be carrying my beloved,
The tall man of the yellow tresses:
That is the laird of the country
Who could put joy in my heart;
When he would be steering her
At the time her sails are raised.

At the time her sails are raised,
He'd be sitting at the helm,
He could sail her most excellently
Towards the coast of the country;
He was the skipper of the boat,
On the crest of the dark grey waves,
To retain the draft of the wind,
While she skimmed across each roll.

She skimmed across each roll,
Her speed was most lively,
When she was put in order
With good ropes for her rigging,
Stays and good strong couples,
A good cable and anchor,
They were pulling those ropes,
And men at the end of each of the gaffs.

And men at the end of each of the gaffs
When her sails would be unwrapped,
At the time of leaving that harbour,
They would be spreading them out;
When she would lift her wings,
Her sides would be hard at work,
And her skipper won't be anxious,
Though he would often bend her slender masts.

He would often bend her slender masts,
And make sails billow from her gaffs;
His was the honour to be at the helm,
To keep her course as captain;
When it was time for him to sit in his cabin,
And he would take out his charts,
He was knowledgeable about each place,
In which a boat could come to anchorage.

There is not place in which to anchor
In a harbour or a bay,
That he doesn't see before him,
Very clearly, and which he doesn't perceive,
You bringing her safely
From the tops of the roaring waves,
When the perilous seas come
Your hand would be on the whipstaff.

Your hand would be on the whipstaff,
Great was your need of it at that time,
She would proceed swiftly,
And the rear reef is tight in her,

Bho 'gualainn gu 'sliasaid,
Nuair a dh'fhiaradh tu 'n ceann i,
'S deas a thig i mun cuairt dhuit
Ann am fuar-shruth nam beann sin.

Ann am fuar-shruth nam beann sin,
Ged 'bhiodh greann air gach linne,
Nan glèidheadh i 'n criù dhut,
Cha b' fhiù leat a tilleadh;
Ruith 'chuip air gach bòrd dhi,
'S tu 'toirt òrdaighean do d' ghillean,
'S i 'ghluaiseadh gu meanmnach,
'S i 'cuir fairge fo slinnein.

'S i 'cuir fairge fo slinnein
Gu mireagach bòidheach,
Nuair a gheibheadh i 'h-aodach,
Bhiodh i eutrom gun mhòrchuis;
Bhiodh a toiseach 's a gualann
Ri bualadh nam bòc-thonn,
'S i 'ga' sgoltadh bho chèile,
Aon diubh 'leumadh 'na còmhdhail.

A h-aon diubh 'leumadh 'na còmhdhail,
Bhiodh i 'n connsachadh cruaidh ris,
'S i gu àrdanach, eutrom,
Nuair a dh'èireadh i suas air;
Gum bu bhinn leis an crònan
A bhiodh ri bòrdaibh a fuaraidh
'S i 'gan gearradh le sèirean,
'S iad ag èirigh le nuallan.

'S iad ag èirigh le nuallan
Anns a' chuan a bhiodh fiadhaich,
Far an deanadh iad dùsgadh
Bhon 'ghrùnnd a bhiodh iargalt',
Anns na sruthan 'bu làidir,
Ged 'bhiodh bàirlinn gun chiall ann,
Gun deanadh i fàgail
Gach bàta 'théid 'ga feuchainn.

Cha deach bàta 'ga feuchainn
Seo dheanadh oirre buidhinn,
Nuair a thèid i le 'h-àlach,
Na h-àsaig fo uidheim;
Nuair a sgaoileadh i 'cleòca
'S a bhiodh a sgòid ann an ruighe,
'S i 'dh'iarradh gach seòladh,
'S gun i còmhnard 'na suidhe.

Gun i còmhnard 'na suidhe,
'S i ri guidhe na gaoitheadh,
Nuair a bhiodh i gu fulang
Air a h-uilinn ri gaoirich;
'S iad a b' fhiach thair gach duine
'Dh'fhaotainn urram na' saoraibh,
A rinn suas i cho chiatach,
'S nach liathadh an aois i.

From her shoulders to her sides,
When you would bend her ahead,
Neatly does she come around for you
In the cold current of those waves.

In the cold currents of those waves,
Though there would be a scowl on every sound,
If she could preserve the crew for you,
It'd not be worth it for you to return her;
The foam ran over each plank in her,
While you give orders to your lads,
And she would move boldly,
She's putting sea under her shoulders.

She is putting sea under her shoulders
Sportingly and handsomely,
When she would get fully under sails,
She would be light, without being pompous;
Her bow and her shoulder would be,
Pounding the swelling waves,
And splitting them apart,
Any one of them that would leap to meet her.

One of them would leap to accommodate her,
And she would be in a hard struggle with it.
It is she who is haughty and giddy,
When she rise upon it;
Melodious to him was the murmuring
About the boards of her windward side,
While she cuts them with a wheezing sound,
As they rise with much roaring.

As they rise with much roaring
In the sea that would be ferocious,
Where they would cause an awakening
From the bottom that would be turbulent,
In the very strongest of currents,
Though there would be incredible surge,
She'd be able to leave behind
Each boat that goes against her.

No boat that has tried this against her
Has been able to defeat her,
When she sets out with her crew,
And her rigging in full dress;
When she would spread out her cloak
And her sheets would be fully stretched,
And she would wish every sailing,
As she would not be sitting levelly.

She would not be sitting levelly,
And she beseeching the breeze,
When she was to endure
On her elbow, wailing;
They deserved above all others
To get the respect of the joiners,
Who did her up so handsomely,
So that age would not grizzle her.

Cha liathar le aois i,
Cha chaochail i 'coltas,
Bu mhath leagadh na fiùbhaidh
'Bha 'na h-ùrlar cho socrach;
Am fear a rinn às a h-ùr i,
'S a dhùlth i le 'locair,
Cha robh sgar dhi gun sùdh air,
Leig e bùird thar a lotaibh.

Leig e bùird thar 'lotaibh
Mun deanadh postadh i fhaotainn
Anns na cuairteagan dùbh-ghlas
'Thig le bùirein m' a h-aodann;
Aig feabhas a dlùthaich,
Bheir i cliù do na saoraibh,
Ged a bhiodh i 'muigh ràithe,
Cha tèid làmh 'na pìob-thaosgaidh.

Cha tèid làmh 'na piob-thaosgaidh
Bhon 'tha saorsainneachd ghast' oirre,
Chan eil calp innt' gun lann air
M' an ceann air a chalcadh;
Gach reang 'bha 'na cliathaich
Ris a' bheul air a sgathadh,
'S math a shnaidh e le 'thàl i
Ann an tàthadh a saidhean.

'S ro-mhath 'thàthadh a saidhean,
'S i gun athadh do chuantan,
Deagh ghreim aic' as' t-sàile
Eadar 'shàil agus 'ghualann;
Tha gach maide 'san iùbhraich,
Cho chuimte mun cuairt dhi,
'S ged a bhiodh i 'ga tionndadh
Car ùine 'am beairt tuairneir.

Cha robh ise 'am beairt tuairneir,
Cha b' e dualchas a seòrs' e,
Ged a ruidhte i le molltair,
Tha gach ball dhi cho bòidhche;
Sguiridh mis' is gun tàmh mi
Bho nach bàrd mi 'nì òrain,
Chuir mi crìoch air an fhàilte
Rinn mi 'n bhàta a bha 'm chòmhdhail.

She'll not be grizzled with age,
And her appearance will not change,
The timbers were well cut
That so smoothly formed her deck;
The man who built her from scratch,
And who built her with his plane,
There wasn't a joint of her without substance,
He put planks over her wounds.

He put planks over her wounds
Before she received a tramping
In the dark-grey eddies
That come with bellows about her prow;
For the excellence of her construction,
She'll bring renown to the joiners,
Though she'd sail for an entire season,
No hand will be put to her baling pump.

No hand will be put to her baling pump
As her joinery was excellent,
There isn't a nail in her that isn't clinched
And isn't caulked about its head;
Every rib in her side
Is lopped off at the opening,
He hewed her well with his adze
In the joining of her beams.

Her beams were joined most excellently,
She has no fear of the seas,
She has good hold of the sea
Between its heel and its shoulder;
Every timber in the vessel is,
As handsome about her
And though she would be turned
For a while in a turner's lathe.

She was not in a turner's lathe,
It would not be the custom of her sort,
Though she'd be minted in a mould,
Every bit of her is so beautiful;
I'll stop so that I may rest
Since I'm not poet enough to make a song,
I put an end on the salute
About the boat that was before me.

5. Do Thighearna Chola

Fonn. Mo thuras do Dhun Èideann bhuam
'Tha 'g ùrachadh a' sgeula seo,
Nuair 'thug mi 'chuairt neo-fheumail 'ud
A shealltainn air luchd Beurla 'bh' ann,
Gun ìnnsinn duibh nan èisdeadh sibh
Mo reusan airson tòisich.
Gun innsinn, &.

Tha Comunn Gàidhealach Rìoghail ann,
Daoine uaisle suairce sìobhalta,
Tha 'n tòir air cainnt an sìnnsearachd,
A chumail suas, 's nach diobrar i;
Ged leigeadh treis air diochuimhn' i,
Gu bheil i 'nis air cinntinn
Anns gach tìr 'san robh a h-eòlas.

Bha cuid do dhaoine 'g ìnnse dhomh,
Nam b' urrainn mi 'ga sgrìobhadh
Rud don chànain ghasta, phrìosail 'ud
A thug na bàird bho 'n inntinnean,
A labhradh pongail brìoghail i,
Gun tugte duais is fiachan domh
Nan cuirinn cruinn na h-òrain.

Ged 'rinn mi suas an ealaidh 'ud,
Bhon ràinig mi 's mi aineolach
'S nach robh fear-dàimh no càraid ann
A ghabh mo phàirt na 'shealladh orm;
Cha tug iad mòran geallaidh dhomh,
'S e 'thuirt iad, "rinneadh mearachd oirnn,
'Gar mealladh anns an t-seòl sin."

Gur ann an sin a dh'ionndraich mi
Fear ruadh dhan dual 'bhith ceannsgalach,
Nach robh e dlùth na teann orm
Am-measg nan uaislean Gallta sin
'Bha 'g iomachd air na cabhsairean;
Ged 'bha mi tric a' shealltainn orr',
Chan fhaicinn ann an Còirneal,

Gun chuimhnich mi air seanfhacal,
'Chainnt a thuirt an t-amadan
'Bha aig MacLeòid na Hearadh
Nuair a bha e-fhèin 'sa 'bhaile seo;
Nach deanainn feum gun Alastair,
Bhon a bha mo phòca falamh,
'S a bhith aimbeartach gun stòras.

Nuair 'thilleas e don rìoghachdsa
Gu cliùiteach mar is miannach leinn,
Don dùthaich às na dh'imich e
Gu 'aitreabh a chuir dìon oirre;
Nuair 'thig e 'Chola chì mi e,
Cha bhi mo shaothair dìomhanach
Gun dol gu crìch le 'chòmhnadh.

'Na àite-còmhnaidh ìnntinneach,
A' chùirt 'an cluinnte 'phìobaireachd,

5. To the Laird of Coll

Chorus. My trip away to Edinburgh
Is what inspires this report,
When I took that pointless trip
To see some English speakers there,
So that I could tell them, if they would listen
My reason for commencing.
So that I could tell, &.

There is a Royal Highland Society there,
Urbane and civil noblemen,
Who wish to keep their ancestors' language,
So that it will not be abandoned;
Although she was forgotten for a while,
She has now prospered
In each place in which she was known.

Some people were telling me,
That if I could write out something
Of that excellent, precious language
That the poets gave from their imaginations,
Who'd speak it so articulately and meaningfully,
That a present and costs would be given to me
If I would make a collection of the songs.

Alhough I have done up that musical collection,
Since I came without knowing anyone
And there was no relation or friend here
Who took my part nor who would look after me;
They did not give me many promises,
What they said was "we were mistaken
And deceived in that endeavour."

It was then that I began to miss
A red-haired man who'd always take command,
Who was not around or close by
Amongst those Lowland nobles
Who were walking on the sidewalks;
Although I often went to see them,
I could not see there the Colonel.

I remember the proverb,
The expression that the fool had said
That MacLeod of Harris had
When he himself was in this town;
I'd be useless without Alexander,
Since my pocket was empty,
And am poverty-stricken and without riches.

When he returns to his kingdom
Celebrated as we would wish,
To the country which he had departed
To his residence to protect it;
When he comes to Coll I'll see him,
My labours will not be in vain
Without going to the limit with his assistance.

In his merry dwelling-place,
The court in which the piping would be heard,

Nuair 'bhiodh na h-uaislean cruinn aige
'N àm suidhe dh'ionnsaidh 'n dìnnearach,
Bhiodh ceòl 's òl an fhìon' aca
'Ga leigeil ann am piosaibh dhaibh,
Gach deoch bu bhlasta brìoghalachd
'Ga chuir 'an gnìomh nan òir-cheard.

Bhiodh òl ma 'n bhòrd gu toirbheartach,
Gun airc, gun leòn, gun teireachdainn,
Gach seòrsa 'dh'fhaotainn ainmeachadh;
Bu dripeil a chuid sheirbheiseach
'Ga chàradh mar a b' iomchaidh,
Anns an teaghlach ghreadhnach shuilbhearra
'San caithte 'chuirm le sòlas.

B' e sin an teaghlach urramach,
Gum b' ainmeil aig luchd turais e,
Gur h-ann don bheus a bhuineadh dha;
Daoin' uaisle mòr' is urrachan
'Bhith 'tighinn air chuairt 's a dh'fhuireach ann,
'S e caoimhneil, bàidheil, furanach,
'Gan cuireadh ann 's gach còmhdhail.

Gu 'thalla fialaidh fiùghantach,
Gur h-e sin riamh 'bu dùthchas dha
Nuair 'thrialladh iad 'ga dh'ionnsaigh-san
'Bhith measail, cosgail, cùramach;
Bu phailt' gach nì fo 'stiùbhartan
'Ga riarachadh gun cheann orra,
Luchd-freasdail deas ro ionnsaichte
'Na rùm 'ga chuir an òrdagh.

'San tùr 'bu lìonmhor uinneagan
'Sam biodh gach nì gun uireasaibh,
Dh'ath-nuadhaich e 'bhon-uiridh e,
Gur bòidheach mar a chumadh e
Gu ceàrnach, stuadhach, turaideach,
Air àird' 'chuir e tuille ris,
'S gun d' fhàg e 'mhullach còmhnard.

When he had the nobles gathered around
When they sat for their dinner,
They'd have music and drinking of the wine
Poured into silver cups for them,
Each drink of the most delicious juiciness
Served in the handiwork of the goldsmiths.

There'd be abundant drink about the table,
Without shortage, without affliction, without waste,
Each type that I could name;
His servants were most busy
Serving it as was befitting,
In the merry, cheerful family
In which the gathering would be spent with joy.

That was the venerable family,
Which was famous amongst visitors,
It was related to his good virtues;
Great noblemen and chieftains
Come on a journey and will stay there,
He is genial, friendly, courteous,
Inviting them to every gathering.

To his hospitable, generous hall,
That was always customary for him
When they would venture to him
To be worthy, extravagant and solicitous;
His stewards ensured everything was plentiful
Sharing it out without limit,
Skilful servants expertly trained
In his chamber putting it in order.

In the castle the windows were numerous
In which everything would be faultless,
He renovated it the year before last,
Handsomely has it been kept up
Angularly, gabled, turreted,
To its height he has added more,
And he has left its roof level.

6. Do Thighearna Chola

Thàinig naidheachd don tìr
Nach bu mhist sinn 'gar dìth,
Ged nach biodh i cho fìor,
Bha i muladach dhuinn,
Nuair a chualas le cinnt
Gu' robh Alastair tinn fo èislean.

'S e 'na laighe fo bhròn,
Làn do thrioblaid gu leòir,
Gun toilinntinn, gun cheòl
Bhon a rinneadh a leòn
Ann an cunnart ro mhòr,
Chan eil sùil e 'bhith beò 'na dhèidh sin.

'S mòr mo chùram an dràst'
Gur h-e teachdaire bhon bhàs
Seo 'thàinig 'na dhàil,
'Rinn a leagadh gu làr
Leis na stallachan àrd',
'Chuir an t-saighead an sàs, bu gheur i.

Tha sin cruadalach leam
A bhith 'smaointinn 'san àm
Gun do bhuail i 'na cheann,
'Na ghualainn 's 'na làimh,
Gun do thuit e 'sa 'ghleann,
'S e gun chlaisteachd, gun chainnt, gun léirsinn.

Gura soilleir a' bheàrn
A's ar cinneadh gu bràch,
Mura dh'èireadh e slàn
Bho na h-acaidean cràidh,
Cò dhiubh 'ghabhas ar pàirt,
Ged a chaithear le càch oirnn eucoir.

Ma 's e seo a cheann-crìch,
Bidh sinn tùrsach 'ga chaoidh,
Bidh cùl-taice 'gar dìth,
Nach robh duin' ann ri 'linn
'Bheireadh tàmailte dhuinn
Fad 's a bhiodh e 'gar dìon mar sgèithe.

Gur h-e turas gun bhuaidh
A thug Alastair bhuainn
Nuair a chaidh e air chuairt
Leis a' bhàta mu thuath,
Chan e cunnart nan stuadh
'Dh'fhàg a chinneadh cho truagh m' a dhèidhinn.

'S beag an t-ioghnadh siud daibh
A bhith 'g ionndrainn mar chall,
E bhith brùite anns gach ball,
Air a chiùrradh gu trom
Bhon a dhìrich e 'bheann
'S nach do theirinn e thall leis fhèin i.

Gur h-e 'n tuisleadh a bhith ann
'Thighinn gun fhios air fo bhonn,

6. To the Laird of Coll

News came to the district
That we'd be better for not having,
Though it was not completely true,
It was still sad to us,
When it was heard with certainty
That Alastair was ill with an infirmity.

He was lying in sadness,
Filled with plenty of troubles,
Without contentment or music
Since he was injured
In exceptional danger,
It's unexpected he'd be alive after that.

Great is my worry now
That it was a messenger of death
That came here to meet him,
And that felled him to the ground
From the high sea rocks,
Which put the arrow into him sharply.

That is hardship for me
To be reflecting at the time
That it struck him in his head,
And on his shoulder and his hand,
That he fell in the glen,
Left without hearing, speech or vision.

Gaping is the hole
Forever in our clan,
If he were not returned to health
From his painful wounds,
Which of them will take our part,
When others would visit injustice upon us.

If this is his end,
We'll be sorrowfully grieving him,
We will be without a support,
There was no one of his generation
Who would cause us affront
As long as he'd protect us like a shield.

It was a fruitless journey
That took Alastair from us
When he went on a trip
By boat to the north,
It was not the danger of the waves
That left his clan so distressed about him.

It's little wonder for them
To be lamenting it as a loss,
For his every limb to be bruised,
He was seriously wounded
Since he climbed the mountain
And didn't he descend it all by himself.

It is the stumble that he had
That came suddenly under foot,

	Dh'ùraich goirteas d' a chom	That caused the injuries to his body
	'S a dh'fhàg asta gun fhonn,	And which left them without pleasure,
	Nach do choisich e teann,	That he couldn't walk upright,
	Ach 'ga ghiùlan gu mall air èididh.	But was carried slowly on a stretcher.
55.	'S truagh nach robh mi 'ga chòir	It's a pity that I was not with him
	'S a bhith sgileil gu leòir	And to be skilful enough
	Ann an ionnsachadh mòr	In great learning
	Mar 'bha 'n t-Ollamh MacEòin;	As was the Doctor Johnson;
	Dheanainn leigheas d' a leòin,	I would prepare a cure for his wounds,
60.	'S bheirinn fuasgladh d' a dhòrainn chreuchdaich.	And would remedy his grievous wounds.
	Tha mi 'smaointinn gun tàmh	I am reflecting without rest
	Thu 'bhith d' shìneadh 'sa 'chàrn,	Of you stretched out in the burial cairn,
	'Fhir a dh'fhuasgladh mo chàs,	O man, who'd resolve my difficulties,
	Craobh don abhall a b' fheàrr	Tree of the finest apple
65.	A rinn cinntinn fo bhlàth	Who made to grow in bloom
	Anns a' choille a b' àirde geugan.	In the forest of the highest branches.
	Cha b' i 'choille bheag chrìon	It was not a tiny, withered forest
	Ach an t-iubhar glan grìnn,	But the excellent, pure yew,
	Às na bhuaineadh na suinn;	From which the heroes would be plucked;
70.	'S fear dhiubh 'n coltas dol dìnn,	It's one of those who looked to be leaving us,
	Tha 'chuid tuathadh 'an teinn,	His tenants are distressed,
	Mur' tig ath-sgeul as binn leò èisdeachd.	If a second report didn't come, the sweetest to hear.
	Air an uachdaran ghast'	Concerning the excellent landlord
	'Bha gu riasanta ceart,	Who was reasonably just,
75.	Nach tug bàirlinn le smachd	Who never issued a warrant in reproof
	Riamh 'sa 'mhàl nach biodh ac';	Ever when they didn't have the rent;
	'S mòr an uaisle a bha d' bheachd,	Great was the nobility in your views,
	'Fhir, nach togadh na mairt na èirig.	O man, who would not lift the cattle or a fine.
	'S ann a gheibheadh iad dàil	They would always get a deferment
80.	Gus an cinneadh an t-àl,	Until the young animals had grown,
	Gu ceann bliadhna na dhà,	For at least a year or two,
	Nuair a dheanadh iad fàs,	When they would reach maturity,
	'Tighinn a-staigh leis gu sèimh,	Coming in with him peacefully,
	Gun an gabhail an sàs 'nan èiginn.	Without seizing upon them in their distress.
85.	'S iomadh aon 'tha fo sprochd	Many a person is dejected
	Bhon a ghluais e gu port,	Since he went to the port,
	'Ga bheil cuimhneachan goirt,	Of whom there are sore memories,
	Gu' robh 'n diùbhail 'san t-sloc	That harm was in the hollow
	Ann a' fiaradh a' chnoic	In the bend of the hill
90.	Far na rinneadh a lot 's b' e 'm beud e.	Where he was injured, and more was the pity.
	Fhuair a dhùthaich an dràst'	His country now has
	Adhbhar ghearain gach là	A reason to complain each day
	Bhon a dh'èirich siud dhà;	Since that happened to him;
	Cha bhi sunnd ac' air stàth	They'll have no reason for joy
95.	Gus an tèid e nas fheàrr,	Until he gets better,
	'S e 'thighinn dachaidh gu 'àite fhèin orra.	And he returns to his own place for them.
	'Chuir na h-aitreibh air dòigh,	To put the dwelling in order,
	Teaghlach tlachdmhor na' stòr	The delightful family of the treasure
	Nan clach snaidhte bhon òrd,	Of the stones carved from the hammer,
100.	'S a thoirt misneach 'nam bròn,	And to bring courage to them in their sadness,
	Do na baintighearnan òg',	To the young ladies,

'S e 'gam faicinn air seòl mun eug e.

Tha mo dhuil anns an Rìgh
'Ga bheil neart air gach nì
Gun tig esan don tìr,
Far am faic mi e 'rìst
Ann an spionnadh gun dìth
An dèidh 'n anshocair dhìon a thrèigsinn.

Bidh mi 'sgur dheth 'san àm
Bho nach leasaich e 'n call
A tha 'n Cola seo thall;
Cuiream crìoch air mo rann,
Labhrainn tuilleadh do m' chainnt
Nam biodh cuideachadh ann na feum dha.

He sees them departing before he dies.

My trust is in the King
Who has power over every thing
That he will come to the earth,
And that we will see each other again
In vigour without lack
After the keen distress has subsided.

I'll be finishing now
Since it will not improve the loss
That is experienced over here in Coll;
I'll put an end to my verse,
I would speak more of my discourse
If there would be of any assistance or use.

7. Do Thighearn' Òg Chola

'S an diugh chuala mi sgeula
'Rinn m' inntinn a ghleusadh gu fonn
Air an uachdaran chliùiteach,
Gur e oighre na dùthchadh ud thall;
Mas a fìor mo luchd seanchais,
Mar is urrainn mi dhearbhadh o 'n càinnt,
Air a dhol do Dhun Èideann,
Gun do ghlacadh leis cèile ann air làimh.

Gur h-i naigheachd seo 'thàinig
'Thug toilinntinn d' a chàirdean 'san àm,
Nuair a chual' iad gun d' phòs e
Ri tè 'ga bheil stòras neo-ghann;
Gu' robh 'n t-Àrd Rìgh mar dhìon da
'S a chuir comhairlean crìonnta 'na cheann;
Saoghal fada le buaidh dha
'S don chèile seo 'fhuair e le bann.

Mar tha aon anns an làthair
'Bhios a' farraid mun àrmann gun chearb
Dhan do rinneadh an ealaidh,
Cha chùm mi siud aineolach oirbh;
Tighearna Chola, tha mi 'gràitinn,
Eòghann òg, is chan àicheam dhuibh 'ainm,
Sàr-Leathanach prìosail
Do na h-uaislean a chinn bho Iain Garbh.

Sin na h-uaislean 'bha beachdail,
'Bha cruadalach, sgairteil, 's bu dual,
'Bha gu h-iriosal, bàigheil,
'Chumadh taic ri fear fàilinneach truagh,
'Bha smachdail, ro-dhàna
Nuair a leumadh an t-àrdan ruibh suas;
Cha bu shùgradh ur miothlachd,
Gus an deanadh i sìothladh a nuas.

'S ann diubh Alastair cliùiteach
'Bha iochdmhor, nach d' ionnsaich an cruas,
B' ann diubh Eòghann, is Eachann,
B' ann diubh Dòmhnall, is Lachlann nam buadh;
Bha 'n dùthchas bhon Chorpaich,
'S an còmhnaidh fo Chaisteal nan stuadh,
Leis an deante an t-òl farsaing
Ann an teaghlach na' cosgas gun ghruaim.

'S iad na fir 'tha mi 'gràitinn,
Bu tighearnail gnàths a' cuir suas,
'G a' robh còir air an àite,
Nach leigeadh le càch a thoirt bhuaibh,
Gu' robh fios aig MacNèill air,
Mun do thuit e 'san àraich le 'shluagh,
Ge' nach b'urrainn da ìnnse,
Nuair a chuir sibh ceann crìch air gu 'uaigh.

Chuala mis' iad ag ìnnse
Gu' robh saothach an fhìona gun *chriù*,
'S gun do chruinnich gach bàillidh
Gus a ghlèidheadh gu sàbhailt' don Diùc;

7. To the Young Laird of Coll

And today I heard a story
That set my mind ready for a song
About the renowned landlord,
He is heir to the country over yonder;
If my informants are correct,
As best as I can determine from their report,
He has gone to Edinburgh,
Where he has taken a spouse by the hand.

This is the news that has come
That has now brought happiness to his friends,
When they had heard he had married
To a woman whose wealth is not lacking;
That the High King might protect him
And put prudent advice in his head;
Long life and success to him
And to this spouse who he got in matrimony.

If there is anyone present
Who is asking after the faultless hero
To whom the song was made,
I won't keep you in ignorance of it,
The Laird of Coll, I am saying,
Young Hugh, I will not deny his name,
The precious great MacLean
Of the nobles who descended from Iain Garbh.

Those were the nobles who were authoritative,
Who were born to be hardy and vigorous,
Who were humble and kindly,
Who'd support the frail and pitiable,
Who were commanding and exceedingly bold
When your pride would be aroused,
There would be no joy in your displeasure,
Until it had had subsided somewhat.

The famous Alastair is one of them
Who was merciful and was never niggardly,
Hugh and Hector were both one of them,
As were Donald and Lachlan of the victories;
Their hereditary territory was from Corpach,
And their abode was in the Castle of the pillars,
With whom drink would be made plentiful
In the family of the happy expenditure.

They are the men about whom I'm speaking,
Lordly were the habits established,
Who had title to the place,
Who would not let others take it from you,
MacNeil took notice of it,
Before he fell in the battlefield with his people,
Though he could not tell about it,
When you made his grave his journey's end.

I heard them saying,
That the wine vessel was without a crew,
That each baillie had gathered
In order to preserve it safely for the Duke;

Gu' robh Eachann 'sa leum sin
Air tighinn à Dun Èideann às ùr;
Leig e fhaicinn a chòir dhaibh,
Chuir e dhachaidh le gròcadh an triùir.

'S ann a thionndaidh i ceàrr orra
Mar a dh'èirich do Hàman bho thùs,
Nuair a fhreagair a' Bhànrigh
Ann an dùil e 'bhith stàtail 'na cùirt;
Am beagan 'bha à-san
Gus a' *ghibht* air a' phàrant a-null,
Bhon a b' e Mordecai,
'Thug e dhaibh e 'san àird bhos an cionn.

'S fhir a dh'ùraich na facail,
Bi cuimhneach le beachd air mo rann,
'S air na daoine a bha romhad
A rinn feum anns gach gnothach a bh' ann;
A thug dhachaidh am fearann,
'S a rinn fuasgladh an carraid nan lann,
Air a tharraing gu rìoghail,
Fad 'bhios duilleach a' cinntinn ro chrann.

B' e mo chomhairle dhà-san,
Ma 's e duine e 'ni tàmh am-measg Ghall,
E 'thoirt 'aire le gliocas
Do gach aon mar is tric 'tha 'dol ann;
Cha leugh iad an gòraich'
Ach a' cluich an cuid òir 's a' cur gheall,
Gur e furasda 'ghlèidheadh
Seach a bhuannachd an deaghaidh a chall.

Tha e 'n dràst' ann a' Lunnainn
'S ma thèid e gun fhuireach don Fhraing,
Gu ma sàbhailte 'thuras
Ann an àirde is an urram gun taing;
'S e 'thighinn dachaidh gun chunnart
Don àite dham buineadh e 'nall,
Gu caisteal an tuinnidh,
Gu teaghlach nan uinneag nach gann.

'S air an tighinn gu baile
Don lànain 'tha ceanalta grinn,
Cluinnear losgadh nan *cannon*,
Bidh sùrd air luchd-ealaidh a' seinn;
Bidh a bhranndaidh 'na galain
Aig a ghillean 'ga tarraing 's 'ga roinn,
Ann am Breacachadh thall ud,
'S na h-uaislean aig Alastair cruinn.

Bidh comunn na fèille
Gu h-aighearach èibhinn neo-throm,
Ri caitheadh na fèisde
Bidh Alastair fhèin air an ceann;
Nuair 'thig Eòghann air eòlas,
Gun lion e le sòlas ar com,
Bidh a Bhaintighearna mar-ris
Mar is miann leis gach caraid 'bhios ann.

That Hector had in that moment,
Just returned again from Edinburgh;
He let them see his title,
He sent the three roaring homewards.

It turned against them
As happened to Haman at the beginning,
When the Queen responded
Expecting himself to win status in her court;
The little that they were
Going to bestow on the parent,
Since he was Mordecai,
He gave it to them in the heights above.

And, O man who inspired the words,
Remember with good sense my rhyme,
And the men who came before you
Who were useful in everything they undertook.
Who brought home their land,
And made deliverance in the battle of the blades,
Drawn up regally,
As long as foliage grows on the tree.

It was my advice to him,
If he is a man who will reside amongst Lowlanders
That he should pay attention with wisdom
To each one that usually goes there;
They don't perceive their foolishness,
But gambling away their gold and placing bets,
That it is easier to keep it [their wealth]
Than to win it back after losing it.

He is now in London
And if he goes without delay to France,
May his journey be safe,
In excellence and in honour without limit;
And that he returns home without danger
To the place over yonder to which he belongs,
To the castle of the abode,
To the family of the plentiful windows.

And on the return to home,
To the genteel and elegant couples,
Firing of the cannons will be heard,
Musicians will eagerly sing;
His brandy will be there in gallons
With his servants drawing and pouring it,
In Breachachadh over yonder,
And Alastair's nobles gathered around.

The company of feast will be
Joyfully and lightheartedly happy,
Enjoying the feasting
Alastair himself will be leading them;
When Hugh reaches maturity,
He will fill our breast with joy,
His Lady will be with him
As every friend who's there would desire.

105.	Bidh an teaghlach 'an òrdugh	The household will be in order
	'S gach uidheam is còir air an ceann,	And every accoutrement properly in its place,
	Ann an seòmar na fialachd,	In the room of the hospitality,
	'S e bu chleachdainn di riamh a bhith ann;	It was its custom to always be there;
	Bidh fiontan 'gan òl leibh,	Wines will be drunk by you,
110.	'S iad pailte gu leòir aig' air làimh,	He would have them plentifully on hand,
	Ann an obair nan òir-cheard,	In the handiwork of the goldsmiths,
	'S iad lionte air a' bhòrd bho gach ceann.	Filled on the table from end to end.
	Mu laighe na grèine	At about sundown
	Bhiodh fidhlean 'gan gleusadh gu teann,	Fiddles would be keenly tuned,
115.	'S a' mhaduinn ag èiridh	And in the morning rising
	Le pìob nan dos rèidhe is nan toll;	With pipes of the polished drones and the holes;
	Air faiche na tulaich	On the field of the hillock
	Gu nochdar an *cullar* ri crann,	Their colours will be displayed on a pole,
	Sin an suaicheant' as luraich',	That's the loveliest ensign,
120.	Cho bhòidhche 's a chunnadh le Gall.	As beautiful as would be seen by a Lowlander.
	'S a' bhàintighearn' a fhuair e,	And the Lady he found,
	'S ann aic' tha 'n duine uasal gun mheang,	She has the faultless nobleman,
	Don fhuil àrdanaich uabhraich	Of the noble, proud blood
	'Tha 'dìreadh mu 'ghuailleann 's mu 'cheann;	That's coursing through his shoulders and head;
125.	Clann Ghilleain 'bha ainmeil	Clan MacLean that was renowned
	'S bu mheasail fo 'n airm anns a' chàmp,	And who were respected in their arms in the camp,
	'S Loch Iall an taobh eile	And Camerons of Lochiel on the other side
	Bho Achadh na Carradh 's bhon Ghleann.	From Achnacarry and from the Great glen.
	'S e mo dhùrachd don dithist	It's my wish for the two
130.	Air a bheil mi ri bruidheann 's a' càinnt,	About whom I'm to address and am speaking of,
	Iad a' liathadh mun eug iad	That they become old before they die
	Ann an cuideachd a chèile le laoinn;	In each other's company in splendour;
	Gach rathad a thèid iad	That in each road that they take
	A' chùis a bhith rèidh dhaibh gun chall,	That things be settled for them, without loss,
135.	Ann an slàinte 's an sonas	In good health and in happiness
	Gus am buaidheadh le onair an clann.	Until their children succeed them with honour.
	Gu ma h-èibhinn don òigear	Much joy to the young man
	Air an èireadh an t-òran le fonn,	For whom would be raised the song tunefully,
	Bho thoiseach mo thòisich,	From the beginning of my beginning,
140.	Bha cinntinn air dòigh 's a' dol leam;	There was a prospering in how it grew on me;
	Tha 'bhuaidhean cho lìonmhor,	His virtues are so plentiful,
	Chan urrainn mi 'n ìnnse ach gann,	That I can only relate a few of them,
	Cò 'dh'fhaodas a dhìteadh	Whoever can condemn it [the poem]
	Na 'ghràitinn nach fìrinn a th' ann	Or say there is not truth in it.

8. Do Thighearn' Òg Chola

An diugh chuala mi sgeula
Thug toilinntinn domh 's èibhneas
Bho chùirtear na fèile
'Tha 'n Dun Èideann an dràst';
Gur binn leam ri èisdeachd
Gum faic iad le 'n lèirsinn
Gach aon a nì feum dheth
'S a leughas do chàch e;
An sgeul 'tha mi 'cluinntinn
Bho Thighearna Chùinnis
Gun do mheudaich e 'oighreachd,
A's an roinn a bha làì' ris;
'S urramach, cliùiteach
Do dh'fhear a chuir sùil ann,
Gun d' fhuair e 'ga ionnsaidh
A' chùis mar a b' àill leis.

Mo dhùrachd 's mo roghainn
'Gluasad air adhart
Na bhuinnig e 'ghlèidheadh
Gun dèidh aig càch air;
Saor bho gach duine,
Gun dealachadh tuille ris,
B' ait leam na h-uiread
Fo chomas an àrmainn;
B' fheàrr leam gum b' urrainn
'Sealltainn air uile
Na reicear à Muile
'Bhith 'cruinneachadh màil dha;
'Tilgeadh 'ga ionnsaidh,
Is fhaotainn bhon Diùca
Do dh'fhearann a dhùthchais
'Bha 'n tùs aig a chàirdean.

Bha e treis aig na daoine sin
Tacan do 'n saoghal,
Gu aighearach, greadhnach,
Nan teaghlaichean stàtail;
'S e rinn orra caochladh
An gòraiche sgaomach,
Agus ìnnleachd na feadhnach
'Bha daonnan an sàs ann;
Dh'fhògradh iad thairis
Do dhùthchannan aineoil,
Tha 'n còir aig MacCailein
A ghabh e le dànachd,
'S cearr an lagh ceannasach
'Bh' ann anns na h-àmannan
'An d' fhuair e 'n cuid fearainn,
Gun cheannach, gun phàighe.

Nam biodh an ceann-cinnidh
Ann an àite na 'n ionad,
Tha 'n t-àm aige tilleadh
Don innis a dh'fhàg iad;
'Gluasad neo-lapach,
Gu cruadalach, sgairteil,
Gu Dubhart a' chaisteil,

8. To the Young Laird of Coll

Today I heard a story
That gave me satisfaction and joy
From a courtier of the hospitality
Who is in Edinburgh right now;
It is sweet for me to hear
That they will see with their perception
Each one who will profit from it
And who will report it to others;
The news that I am hearing
From the Laird of Quinish
Is that he increased his estate
From the lands that were near him;
Honourable and famous
Is the man who turned his eye to it,
Who was able to arrange for himself
The matter in the way he had desired.

My wish and my preference
In moving along
Is that which he acquired to keep
Without the rest longing for it;
Free from every person,
Without ever losing it again,
I'd be overjoyed if as much
Were under control of the warrior;
I'd prefer it if it were possible
Looking at everything
That is sold in Mull
To be gathering rent for him;
And producing it for him,
And to get from the Duke
Of the lands of his inheritance
That his relations owned from the start.

Those people had it for a while
A little of their time,
Joyfully and merrily,
Of the stately families;
What caused them a reversal
Was their skittish foolishness,
And the ingenuity of those
Who were always at their throats;
They were driven away
To faraway lands,
Campbell of Argyll now has the title
Which he daringly took,
Wrong is the authoritative law
That existed at those times
In which he got their lands,
Without purchase or payment.

If the chief had been
In their place or in their position,
It's time that he returned
To the isle that they had left,
Moving unfalteringly,
Bravely and vigorously,
To Duart of the castle,

	A b' fhaicilleach làmhach	Of the most careful volleys
	A dh'ùrachadh chleachdainn	To renew practices,
	Nan cùirtearaibh gasta	Of the excellent courtiers
	'Bha 'staigh air na geataichean,	Who were attending at the gates,
60.	Acfhainneach, làidir;	Well-equipped and strong;
	A rùsgadh na brataich	To unfurl the banner
	Os ceann nam fear-feachda	Above the warriors
	Nach tionndadh le gealtachd	Who would not turn in fear
	Bho bhaiteal an nàmhaid.	From battle with their enemies.
65.	Nan dùisgeadh e fhathast	If he were yet be aroused
	'S gun tionndadh e 'n rathad-s',	And if he were to take this road,
	Ceannard nan Leathanach,	The Chieftain of the MacLeans,
	B' aighearach à-san;	They would be joyful;
	B' èibhinn an sealladh	Pleasant would be the sight
70.	'S bu shùrdail am baile,	And the farm would be active,
	Nan ùraichte 'n t-seann-obair	If the old work were to be renewed
	Glan air an làraich;	Neatly on their building;
	Chìte, mar dhealanaich,	There would be seen, like lightening,
	Baoisge bhon ghearasdan,	Flashing from the fortress,
75.	Fhreagradh mac-talla	There would respond an echo
	Nam beannaibh a b' àirde	Of the highest mountains
	Do bhùireadh a' *channain*,	To the bellowing of the cannon,
	Nuair bhrùchdadh an anail	When their vapour would burst forth
	A-null thar na mara	Out over the sea
80.	Gu fearann Chinn-Ghèarrloch.	To the estate of Kingairloch.
	Nam b' fhìor mar a chanadh leam,	If what was told by me is true,
	'S lìonmhor gach talla	Plentiful is each hall
	'Am biodh fion ann an searragan	In which wine would be in flasks
	'S gloineachan làn dheth;	And glasses would be full of it;
85.	Ceannardan fearail	Manly chieftains
	'Ga dhìoladh à 'n sporrain	Replenishing it from their sporrans
	Gu h-inntinneach, toileach,	Merrily and happily,
	Ann an onair a shlàinte;	In honour of his good health;
	Air chùmhnant e 'theannadh	On condition that he would go
90.	Gu 'dhùthaich 'na dheannaibh	To his country in haste
	Gun òladh le annas air;	A novel toast would be drunk to him;
	'Chlannaibh nan Gàidheal,	O, Children of the Gael,
	'S an Diùca gu dealachadh	And the Duke to be parted
	Bhuaithe 'chuid fearainn;	From his share of land;
95.	Mar deantar a cheannach,	If it could not be purchased,
	Bidh sibh falamh gu bràch dheth.	You will forever be in want of it.
	Guma slàn don duin' uasal	Good health to the nobleman
	'Rinn beagan deth 'bhuannachd,	Who won a share of it,
	Guma beartach, sean, buan e	May he be wealthy, old and enduring
100.	'Na uachdaran àghmhòr,	A renowned landlord,
	Air cheann a chuid dhaoine,	Leading his people,
	'Gan dìon anns gach adhbhar,	Protecting them in every cause,
	Toilinntinn 'na theaghlach,	Happiness to his family,
	Gun chaochladh gun fhàilinn;	Without reversal or defect;
105.	'S e 'chunnaic 's a chual' e,	It is what he has seen and heard,
	'S am fasan 'bu dual dha,	And the manner that was customary to him,
	Bhon fhear a thog suas e	From the man who raised him
	'Bhith truacanta, bàigheil;	To be compassionate and merciful;
	Sàr-cheannard na tuathadh	Great leader of the tenantry
110.	Nach teannaicheadh cruaidh iad,	Who would not harshly oppress them,
	Nach toir an cuid bhuatha	Who would not take their share from them

'S a dh'fhuasgladh 'nan càs orra.

Tha mòrchuis nach mist' e ann,
Eòlas le gliocas aig',
Gu ceannsalach, misneachail,
Measail 's gach àite;
'S cliù dha nach bristeadh,
Am beus a tha 'nis aige,
'Bhuaidhean 's a *ghibhtean*,
Cho trice ri 'n àireamh;
Ionnsaichte, fiosrach,
'Thoirt òrdaigh d' a fhleasgaich
As bòidhche 'nì seasamh
Fo dheiseachan sgàrlaid,
Àrmaichte, crioslaichte,
Thair fairge nan sirte iad;
Gur h-earbsach tha mise
Nach clisge bu ghnàths daibh.

'S i 'n Reiseamaid ghasda i
Nan trèinfhearaibh sgairteil,
Gum b' fheàrr i 'na coltas
Na 'n cuirte don Spàinn iad;
B' ainmeil an cosnadh
Le 'n ceannardan rompa,
Cha diùltadh iad nochda'
Air chnocaibh ri nàmhaid;
'S e 'labhair neo-shìobhailt'
Am fear a chuir sìos iad
Nuair 'thuirt e gu mìobhail,
Nach b' fhiach iad mar *phàrtaidh*;
Nam b' aithne dhan fhìrinn
'S gun deanadh e 'h-ìnnse,
'S mòr urram na Rìoghachd
'Bheil 'cinntinn nan Gàidheal.

Na saighdeara' cruadalach,
Acfhainneach, fuasgailteach
Deas-fhoclach, luath-làmhach,
'Chuairteachadh làraich
As dèidh an luchd-fuatha,
'Gan sgapa', 's 'gan ruagadh,
Bhiodh cuid dhiubh 'san uair sin
Gun ghluasad bhon àraich;
An onair a fhuair iad,
Cha dealaich i bhuatha,
Ge' tric a' dol suas i,
Cha chuala sinn tàmailt
Nan curaidhean calma
Fo 'm brataichean ball-bhreac;
Sliochd rìoghail na h-Alba
Dhan seanchas a' Ghàidhlig.

'S e Eòghann mac Alastair
A dh'ùraich dhomh 'n ealaidh seo;
Buaidh air gach bealach
Don fhear 'tha mi 'gràitinn;
A h-aon air an aineal e,
'S uasal ri fharraid e,

And who'd resolve their difficulties for them.

There is majesty in him that he's not the worse for,
He has knowledge and wisdom,
Commandingly, courageously,
Respected in every place;
And praise for him would not break,
The virtue he now possesses,
His talents and his gifts,
So often are enumerated;
Learned and skilful,
To give orders to his young men
The most handsome who will line up
In scarlet uniforms,
Well-armed and girded,
They are sought after overseas;
Confident am I
That fear is not in them.

It is the excellent regiment
Of the vigorous champions,
It [the regiment] would look better
If they were sent to Spain,
Famous was their service
With their leaders before them,
Which they'd not refuse to demonstrate
On hills before an enemy;
What was spoken most uncivilly
By the man who put down on them
When he said most rudely
That they weren't worth much as a unit;
If he knew the truth
And was willing to tell it,
Great respect of the Kingdom
For the Gaels is increasing.

The hardy soldiers,
Expert and nimble,
Eloquent and rapid of hand,
Who would encircle the battlefield
In pursuit of their enemies,
Scattering them and pursuing them,
Some of them then would be
Carried motionless from the field;
The honour that they received,
Will never leave them,
However often will it increase,
We have never heard a reproach
Of the resolute heroes
Under their speckled banners;
The regal offspring of Scotland
Whose discourse is the Gaelic.

It is Hugh, son of Alastair
Who inspired me in this song;
Success in each mountain pass
To the man of whom I speak,
He is the one who is not known,
He is the gentleman to enquire,

'S fiùghantach fearail e,
'S ceanalta 'na nadir;
Leathanach sgairteil
'Tha sìobhalta tlachdmhor,
Do shìol nam fear gasta
'Tha 'n caisteal nan tràighead,
'Bhuannaich le 'n tapadh
An dùthaich fo 'm focal,
'S a ghlèidh i gu smachdail
Bho neart an luchd-àicheidh.

'S e cridhe na fèile
'Tha ìriosal, spèiseil,
Gu cinneadal, ceutach,
Nach trèigeadh a chàirdeas;
Cùl-taice nam feumach,
'Gan dìon anns gach èiginn,
Nach dìobradh 'nan èis iad
Le ceum 'am biodh fàillinn;
Bu dùthchas da fhèin
'Bhith cruadalach gleusta,
Gun mhùthadh air fheuchainn
'S gun ghèilleadh do thàmailt;
'S e fiosrach le lèirsinn
Gu ceartas a rèiteach,
Chan fhaigheadh fear-eucoraich
Èisdeachd 'na làthair.

'S iomadh nì 'tha ri fheòraich
'Bheireadh cliù dha 'san òran
Nach leig aineolas domhsa
'Chuir an òrdugh mar 'b' àill leam;
Tha tuigse agus fòghlam
'Ga lìonadh gun mhòrchuis
'Nan caoilean fo 'chòta,
'Toirt eòlais d' a nadar;
'S beag ìoghnadh an òg-bhean
A fhuair e ri 'phòsadh
'Bhith inntinneach sòlasach
Is bòichead an àrmainn;
Nuair a bhuinnig i còir air
Gun a mealladh 'na dòchas,
'S gum bu lìonmhor an tòir air
Gu leòir a thug gràdh dha.

Tha 'ghruaidh mar an caorann
'S a chneas mar an fhaoileann,
Sùil chorrach ghorm aobhaidh
'S an aodann is àille,
Fo mhaladh gun chlaonadh
Le gruaidh nach dean caochladh,
Chan fhaicear air daonnan
Ach aogas a' ghàire;
Ciùin, ceanalta, caoimhneil,
Gu flàthasach, aoidheil,
Ro smachdail mar shaighdear
Nach faodte tighinn cearr air;
Lann thana gheur ghrinn air
Don stàilinn bu ruighne,

He is generous and manly,
And amiable in his nature;
A vivacious MacLean
Who is civil and pleasant,
Of the stock of excellent men
Who inhabit the castle of the strands,
Who won with their cleverness
Their country back under their oath,
And who kept it in authoritatively
From the strength of their opponents.

He is the heart of hospitality
Who is humble and esteemed,
Clannishly and handsomely,
He would not forsake his relations;
He is the support of the needy,
Protecting them in every difficulty,
Who would not leave them in hardship
In a way that would be faulty;
It was hereditary for he himself
To be courageous and skilful,
Without alteration in the attempt
And without yielding to insult;
He is knowledgeable and visionary
In rendering justice,
A criminal would not receive
A hearing is his presence.

Many a thing is to be investigated
That would bring fame to him in the song
My ignorance won't allow me
To put in order as I would have desired;
Perception and learning
Fill him, but without vanity
In the waists under his coat,
Bringing skill to his nature;
Little wonder that the young wife
Who he found to marry him
Is sensible and cheerful,
And the beauty of the chieftain,
When she won the right to him,
She was not deceived in her hopes,
Though many were in pursuit of him
And enough would give him their love.

His cheeks are like the rowan
And his form is like the gull,
Blue, passionate, lovely eyes
And the loveliest face,
Under a brow that is even
With a cheek that is unchanging,
He is never seen
Without a smile on his face;
Calm, mild and gentle,
Splendidly and kindly,
Exceedingly commanding as a soldier
No misfortune could befall him;
He has a thin, sharp, well-made sword
Of the most indestructible steel,

Neul foladh gu roinn oirre
Na faoineachdte' 'làmhan.

Mac an athar a dhearbh
'Bhith cruadalach calma,
Nuair a bha e 'sna h-Earraghàidhealaich,
'S b' ainmeil a *phàrtaidh*;
Thug e 'nuas bhon *hailbeart*
Fear don mhuinntir a dh'fhalbh leis,
Nuair a dh'èirich a mheanmna,
Chan fhairdeadh o chàch e;
Thuirt am Maidseir MacComaraidh,
'S e 'labhairt le feirg ris,
"Ma 's duine mar 'h-ainm thu,
Dean mo choinneachadh-sa 'màireach";
Rinn e seasamh mar 'dh'earbainn
Le 'chlaidheamh chinn-airgid,
Theich an gealtair le 'eanchainn,
Chaidh e iomrall air a' phàirc.

'S beag an t-ioghnadh a mhac
A bhith gu h-àrdanach beachdail,
Gur lìonmhor fuil reachdmhor
'Bh' anns na gaisgich bhon d' fhàs e;
Clann Ghilleain nan caisteal
'Chaidh an dìobradh gun cheartas,
Thàinig dìth air an aitreabh
Bhon a ghlacadh le càch i;
Dream eile nach sòradh
'Dol 'an carraid na 'n còmhstri,
Clann Chamshroin bho Lòchaidh,
Fir mhòra neo-sgàthach,
'Bha armailteach, eòlach;
Ro-dhìolail do Dheòrsa,
Ged a sheas iad thar ordaigh
Nuair a dh'fhògradh Rìgh Tearlach,

'S a Thighearna òig gun robh d' iomradh
Mar a b' ait le d' luchd-ionmhainn;
Saoghal fada gun iomagain
Ann an iomlaineachd slàinte,
Mar a dh'fhaodainn a sheanchas
Air na faichean gorma
'An cluinnte faram nan dos àrda;
Le 'mhacaibh m' a thimcheall
Air an suidheachadh iomchaidh,
Mun caochail ar aimsir
Na mun gairmear le bàs e;
Agus 'oighre 'ga leanmhainn,
'Gabhail liuthairt 's seilbh ann,
Fear 'an ionad gach aon againn,
'S gun an t-ainfhiach ri phàigheadh.

The stain of blood to the hilt on it
That would suit his hands.

Son of the father who proved,
To be courageous and daring,
When he was in the Argyll Highlanders,
Famous was his company,
He took down from his halbert
One of the people who set out with him,
When his courage arose,
He would not ask more from others;
The major Montgomery said,
And he spoke angrily to him,
"If you are the man you're reputed to be,
Be sure to meet me tomorrow";
He stood firm as I would expect
With his silver-headed sword,
The coward fled with his wits,
He went astray on the battlefield.

Little wonder that his son
Is proudly authoritative,
Plentiful is the substantial blood
That was in the heroes from whom he descends;
Clan MacLean of the castles
Who were unjustly banished,
A defect came upon their residence
Since it was captured by the others;
Another family who would not shun
Going into a conflict or a battle,
Clan Cameron from Lochy,
Great and brave men,
Who were trained in arms and skilful;
Exceedingly vengeful for George,
Though they stood against his order
When King Charles was banished.

And O young Laird that your report
As your followers would desire;
A long life to you without worry
In the fullness of good health,
So that I might report
On the green battlefields in which
The noise of the high drones would be heard,
With his sons round about him
In a suitable setting,
Before our age changes,
Or before he is called by death;
And an heir to follow him,
Taking delivery and ownership of it,
A man in the place of each one of us,
And without a debt to repay.

9. Do Raghnall Domhnallach, Tighearna Staffa

Gu' robh mi treis a' fuireach
Feuch an cluinninn dad bho chàch,
'S o nach d' rinn iad ullamh e,
Cha dean mi tuille tàmh;
Bidh mi 'nis a' tòiseachadh
Gu seòl a chuir air dàn,
Bhon 'tha mi 'n dùil gun d' fhalbh
Na bha do sheanachas aig na bàird.

'S cinnteach mi nach d' fhalbh e,
Ged 'thug dearmad orra an dràst',
Gun Raghnall òg a chuimhneachadh
'G a bheil an inntinn àrd;
Am fear a tha cho saothreachail
Airson nan daoine 'tha 'n càs,
Ri toirt a-mach a cheartais daibh,
'S tha sin 'na bheachd a ghnàth.

'S e fhèin am fior dhuin' uasal,
Air nach faodar gluasad ceàrr,
Do Dhòmhnallaich a' chruadail,
'S tric a bhuannaich anns na blàir;
Gur h-ann air Staffa 'staoilear e,
Ma dh'fhaoineachdas sibh e,
'S tha 'n oighreachd sin am bann da
Fad 's a bhuaileas tonn ri tràigh.

'S fear-laghadh fiosrach ionnsaicht' e
'Fhuair cliù 's bu dùthchas da,
Tha gliocas, tuigse is riasantachd
'Na chridhe fialaidh blàth;
Dhearbh e gur i 'n fhirinn seo
Nuair 'sheas e dìleas, dàn,
Air taobh nan daoine 'chiosnaicheadh
A bh' air an luing an sàs.

Nam biodh na h-uaislean eileanach
Le eireachdas d' a rèir,
Ghleidheadh iad an ìochdarain
Is dhìbreadh iad an sprèidh;
Mur cailleadh iad an duinealas
'S am monaidhean fo threud,
Cha leigeadh iad an t-uallach seo
Mu 'ghuailnean sin leis fhèin.

Cha do ghabh e gnothach ris
Ni 's moth' na iad fhèin,
Mur biodh e iochdmhor, truacanta
Agus cruadalach 'na dhiaigh;
Gu seasamh còir nan Gàidheal
Nach robh fàilinneach gu feum,
'S nuair 'chunnaic e 'n droch chàradh,
Gun d' rinn a nàdar leum.

Tha nàdar càirdeil, cinneadail,
Ro iriseil 'na chàinnt,
Gu reachdail, beachdail, fìrinneach,

9. To Ronald MacDonald, the Laird of Staffa

I was staying for a while
To see if I could hear anything from the rest,
And since they did not finish it,
I can no longer delay;
I will now be starting
To set in order a song,
Since I expect the language
Of the bards has deserted them.

I'm certain it has not departed,
Though they have neglected it right now,
To remember young Ronald
Of the exalted mind;
The man who is so hard-working
On behalf of those in difficult straits,
To bring forth his justice for them,
That is, in his view, his duty.

He is himself the true nobleman
Who could not make an errant move,
Of the MacDonalds of the valour,
Who were often victorious in battle;
It is Staffa that he is styled,
If you were to ask him,
And that estate is bound to him
As long as waves strike the shore.

He's a knowledgeable and educated lawyer
Who won fame as was befitted him,
There is wisdom, perception and reason
In his hospitable, warm heart;
He proved that this was the truth
When he stood faithfully and bravely,
Beside the men who were oppressed
Who were engaged on the vessel.

If the island nobles possessed
Good breeding to match his,
They would retain their tenants
And they'd forsake their cattle;
If they hadn't lost their humanity
With their hills under a flock,
They would not permit this burden
To fall to that fellow's shoulders alone.

He would not have anything to do with it
Any more than they themselves,
If he hadn't been merciful and compassionate
And a courageous protector;
In defence of the rights of the Gaels
Who was not weak in time of need,
And when he observed mistreatment,
His temper would be aroused.

There is a friendly, clannish,
Exceedingly humble manner in his speech,
Judiciously, authoritatively, truthfully,

Ro chìnnteach air a pheann;
'S tric a rinn e gnìomh leis,
A' toirt bìnn air beulaibh Ghall,
Ged 'tha e treis 'ga shàrachadh,
Gun tig e 'n àird gun chall.

Gun dìrich e 's chan ìoghnadh leam,
Ged 'bhuinneadh e le buaidh,
Tha beannachdan gach duine leis
Airson a chumail suas;
Na bochdan tric ag ùrnaigh leis
Gu dùrachdach gach uair,
A chionn e 'bhith cho chùramach
'Na ghèard air cùl an t-sluaigh.

Bha 'n Robastanach dalma
Nuair a dh'fhalbh e thar a' chuain,
A' bristeadh orra an cumhnantan
'S an cuid a' spùinneadh bhuath';
Nuair 'fhuair e bho làimh sgrìobhaidh
Gun do thill iad ri an-uair,
Dh'iarr e air an stiùramaich'
A cùrsa 'chuir mun cuairt.

Bha na Gàidheil ghleusta aige
'Gan èigneachadh air bòrd,
Chuir e ann an teanntachd iad,
'S gur gann a bha iad beò;
B' i sin an naigheachd uamhasach,
Bha 'n tuagh aige 'na dhòrn,
A' maoidheadh air a cheann 'thoirt diubh,
Mur tionndadh iad le 'n deòin.

Nuair chuala Raghnall Dòmhnallach
An seòl a rinn a' bhèist,
Ghabh e mòran tàmailte
Na Gàidheil 'bhith fo 'mhèinn;
Nam faicinn 'gan *commandachadh*
Le Gall a bha fon 'ghrèin,
Gu h-eucorach 's na gealltanais
A' bhann a dhol mu rèir.

'S ann a' sin an thòisich e
Ri còrnsachadh gu geur,
Cha sguir e dhith gu' fògrar e
Air chòrsa *Bhot'ney Bay*,
Gus a' faigh e àilgheas dheth,
Gu bràch cha bhi iad rèidh,
'S bu lugha dha 'na thoillteanas
Am ball 'bhith 'ga chuir eug.

Exceedingly precise with his pen;
Often he made use of it,
Giving judgment before Lowlanders,
Though he is for a while exhausted,
He'll recover without detriment.

That he climbs is no surprise to me,
But he would win success,
He has every man's best wishes
That he will be kept up;
The poor often pray for him
Fervently every time,
Since he is so careful to be
A guard to support the people.

The Robertson was impudent
When he departed over the sea,
Breaking all their contracts on them
And robbing them of their share;
When he found some handwriting
That they had returned in bad weather,
He ordered the helmsman
To turn the boat's course about.

His adventurous Gaels
Were sorely oppressed on board,
He put them in distress,
And they hardly stayed alive;
The awful report that was received,
Was that he had his axe in his fist,
Threatening to take their head off,
If they didn't willingly turn.

When Ronald MacDonald heard
Of the sailing that the beast had conducted,
He was greatly affronted
That the Gaels were at his mercy;
If I had seen them commanded
By any Lowlander under the sun,
Unjustly, and going according,
The bond was being set free.

It was then that he started
To quarrel sharply with him,
And he did not cease until he
Was exiled to the coast of Botany Bay,
Until he gets his pleasure from it,
They will never be at peace,
The least for him would be his just reward,
To be put to death on the spot.

10. Duanag, do Mhaighstir Iain Mac-Gilleain, Ministear Chola

Thoir mo shoraidh le dùrachd
Thar an aiseig a-null
Gu Maighstir Iain 'tha 'n tùr Àiridh Leòid.
Thoir mo shoraidh le dùrachd.

Sin an t-òganach sìobhalt'
'Tha gun mhòrchuis 'na inntinn,
Pearsa duine cho grinn anns gach seòl.
Sin, &c.

Tha e uasal 'na thighinn
Agus suairce 'na bhruidhinn
'S tha e fiùghantach, cridheil gu leòir.
Tha, &c.

'S furast' aithneach' bho 'nàdar
Gur h-ann don fhuil àird e
Nach gèilleadh d' an nàmhaid le 'n deòin.
'S furast', &c.

Clann Ghilleain a shinnsreadh,
Cinneadh àrdanach, rìoghail,
'G am biodh brataichean rìomhach don t-sròl.
Clann, &c.

Sin na fir a bha cliùiteach
Nach bu tais gu toirt cùis dhiubh
'G an robh Dubhairt car ùine an còir.
Sin, &c.

Tha e dùbailte an càirdeas
Do na fir 'tha mi 'gràitinn
'Bhiodh cruadalach, dàna 'san tòir.
Tha, &c.

Tha e dìleas ri 'sheanachas
Do Loch Iall, 's do Chlann Chamshroin,
Buidheann Abrach nach dearmadach gleòs.
Tha, &c.

'S ann a dhearbh iad sin fheuchainn
Nuair 'bha 'n Rìoghachds' 'ga riasladh,
Sheas iad Eòbhann trì bliadhna agus còrr.
'S ann,&c.

Gu bheil uaisle gun dìbear'
Anns gach taobh bhon a chinn e,
Mar a dh'fhaodas mi ìnnse gun bhòst.
Gu bheil, &c.

Tha e fiughantach, miosail
Ann an giùlan 's am misnich,
Chan eil aon dad as misd' e 'g a chòir.
Tha, &c.

Chan eil gainne na crine ann,
Cha do chleachd e 'bhith mi-thur,

10. A Little Song, to Rev. John MacLean, the Minister of Coll

Take my compliments with good wishes
Over the crossing over yonder
To Reverend John who is in the tower of Arileod.
Take, &c.

That's the civil young man,
Who is without pomp in his disposition,
The appearance of a man so elegant in every way.
That's, &c.

He is noble in his arrival
And is urbane in his conversation
He is generous and cheerful enough.
He is, &c.

It's easy to recognise from his nature
That he is of noble blood
Who would not willingly submit to their foes.
It's easy, &c.

His ancestors were the MacLeans,
A haughty and royal clan,
Who possessed elegant banners of lace.
His ancestors, &c.

Those were the men that were famous
And who were not easy to be vanquished
And who for a time possessed Duart.
Those were, &c.

He is related on both sides
To the men of whom I am speaking
Who would be brave and bold in the chase.
He is, &c.

He is faithful to his traditions
To Locheil, and to Clan Cameron,
The Lochaber troop, not careless in preparation.
He is, &c.

They certainly proved that in their efforts,
When this Kingdom was torn apart,
They stood by Hugh for three years and more.
They, &c.

There is nobility without fault
On each side from which he descends,
As I may say without boasting.
There is, &c.

He is worthy and respected
In carriage and in bravery,
There's not a thing he's the worse for in his manner./He is, &c.

There is no lack nor niggardliness in him,
And he never used to be mean,

An àm suidhe na dìoladh mun bhòrd.
Chan eil, &c.

B' e sin cridhe na fèile,
Bha mi tacan an dè leis,
'S gur math leam deagh sgeul air ri 'bheò.
B' e sin, &c.

Sgeula b' ait leam a chluinntinn
E 'bhith socrach 'san tìr seo
Gus an rachadh a *stìpinn* nas moth'.
Sgeula, &c.

Le toil Sheanaidh is Clèire
Ann am bannaibh nach trèigeadh
E 'thighinn 'uige à Dun Eideann on bhòrd.
Le toil, &c.

'S e 'bhith 'rithist 'na dhèidh sin
Air a phòsadh ri cèile,
An tè bu mhiannaich leis fhèin ge b' i òigh.
'S e 'bhith, &c.

Le toilinntinn 'na theaghlach,
Mar bu dual da o 'dhaoine,
'Bhith gu fiughantach faoilidh air chòir.
Le, &c.

'S on a rinn mi siud ìnnse,
Bheir mi 'nis gu ceann crìch e,
Bidh mi 'sgur gus an cuimhnich mi 'n còrr.
'S on, &c.

At the time of sitting or satisfying about the table.
There is, &c.

He was the heart of hospitality,
I was with him a while yesterday,
A good report of him while alive pleases me.
He was, &c.

A story I enjoyed listening to
Is that he is established in this country
In order that his stipend would increase.
A story, &c.

With the permission of the Synod and Clergy
On conditions that would not be dissolved
It comes to him from the board in Edinburgh.
With the permission, &c.

And again after that to be
Married to each other,
The woman he most desired, though only a maiden.
And again, &c.

With happiness in his family,
As is customary for him from his people,
To be worthily generous as usual.
With, &c.

And since I have given a report of that,
I will now bring it to a close,
I will stop until I can recall all the rest.
And since, &c.

11. Duanag do Chaileig Bhig

Gur h-e mise tha fo phràmh,
Tha mi muladach gach là,
'S Ailean, mac a' chlachair bhàin,
An dràst' a' tigh'nn gu d' phòsadh.

Gur h-i Mòr a' mhaighdeann ghrinn,
Cas as deise 'théid tron ruidhl',
'S lìonmhor fear a th' ort 'n tì,
Bhon 'rinn mi fhìn duit bròGan.

Nuair 'thèid Ailean ann 'ad dhàil,
Cha bhi easbhaidh ort, a' ghràidh,
Gheibh sibh craoit anns a' Phort-Bhàn,
Na àit' ann an Cùl-Bhòdaidh.

Nuair a rèiticheas tu, 'rùin,
Thèid do sheanair leat don bhùth,
'S cha bhi caomhn' aig' air na crùin,
Bheir e gùn us còt' dhuit.

Mòr.—A' cheud uair 'chunnaic mi e,
'S ann a bha sinn aig a' bhàl,
'S mòr a thug mi dha do ghràidh,
S cha chluinneadh càch ar còmhradh.

Ailean.--Thug mi 'Mhòir an gaol 'tha buan,
'S mi nach caochail rithe 'n gruaim,
'S binn ri èisdeachd guth mo luaidh,
Nuair 'bhios i 'lu'adh nan clòithean.

11. A Little Song to a Little Girl

It is me who is dejected,
I am sorrowful each day,
And Allan, son of the fair-headed mason,
Who is now coming to your wedding.

She is Marion, the beautiful maiden,
The most excellent foot that has danced a reel,
Numerous men are longing for you,
Since I myself made shoes for you.

When Allan is in your company,
You'll want for nothing, my darling,
You'll get a croft in Port Ban,
Or a place in Cùl-Bhòdaidh.

When you are betrothed, my dear,
Your grandfather will accompany you to the store,
There'll be no meanness with the crowns,
He'll give you a gown and a coat.

Marion.--The very first time I saw him,
It was when we were at the ball,
Great is the amount of love I gave him,
And the rest would not hear our conversation.

Allan.--I gave to Marion (my) eternal love,
And I will not turn on her in a scowl,
It is sweet to hear my beloved's voice,
When she is fulling the tweeds.

12. An Gàidheal am-measg nan Gall

1. *Luinneag.* Och, o, a' rùin, gur tu th' air m' aire,
Och, o, a' ghaoil, gur tu th' air m' aire
'S tusa, 'rùin, 's gur tu th' air m' aire,
'S gur h-e do shùgradh 'tha tigh'nn fanear dhomh.

Cha togar fonn leam ach trom air aineoil,
Cha dean mi òran 'san dòigh is math leam,
Gur mi 'bha gòrach nuair 'thug mi 'n gealladh
Don nionaig òig a bha 'chòmnaidh 'n Canaidh.

Gur h-ann le àilgheas a dh'fhàg mi 'm fearann
An deachaidh m' àrach 's mi 'm phàiste leanaibh,
'S mi 'n dùil gun deanainn am bliadhna dh'earras
Na cheannaicheadh lìon domh gu iasgach Earraich.

Gur mi 'bha stàtail mun d' fhàg mi Ailean
Ri togail gàraidh 's a' càradh bhealach,
Gum b' fheàrr 'bhith ann, airneo 's meallta 'bharail,
Na 'bhith 'san àm 's ann an cainnt nan Gallaibh.

Cha ghabhainn tuarastal bhuaith' 'am sgalaig,
Ach tigh'nn don Ghalltachd a shealltainn chaileag,
Nuair 'nì gach tè dhiubh 'am Beurla m' fharraid,
Their mis' 'an Gàidhlig gun d' fhàg mi Barraidh.

Chan eil e 'còrdadh rium seòl a h-arain
'Bhith falbh Didòmhnaich 's a' giùlan eallaich,
'S nach faigh mi fàrdach na àite 'm fanainn,
Ach sabhal fàs airneo stàball gearrain.

Nuair 'nì sinn gluasad Diluain don bhaile,
Bidh bodaich Ghallta ann an geall ar meallaidh,
Cha tuig mi 'nàdar le 'n cànmhainn Ghallaich,
Tha mise dall 's gun an cainnt 'am theangaidh.

Thoir soraidh bhuamsa thar chuan gu m' leannan,
Is ìnnsibh fhèin dhi gu bheil mi fallain,
Gu bheil mi 'n dràst' ann an *Càdar* paraist',
'S gun deachaidh 'Ghàidhlig à àite seallaidh.

'S tu, 'Chatriona, 'tha tigh'nn air m' aire,
Chan e do stòras a rinn mo mhealladh,
Ach thu 'bhith bòidheach gun bhòsd, gun bharrachd,
Don fhìne mhòr, bho MhacLeòid na Hearadh.

12. The Gael amongst the Lowlanders

Och, my dear, it is you who I'm thinking of,
Och, my love, it is you who I'm thinking of,
It's you, my dear, who I'm thinking of,
It is your company that is on my mind. *[Chorus]*

I can't raise a tune, sorrowful in strange parts,
I can't make a song in the way I like,
It was me who was foolish when I gave a promise
To the young maiden who resides in Canna.

It was with pleasure that I left the farm
Where I was raised when I was a little child,
In the hopes this year I'd make enough money
That'd purchase a net for me for the Spring fishing.

Wasn't I proud before I left Allan
Building dykes and repairing the gaps in the walls,
It's better to be there, or my opinion is mistaken,
Than to be at present conversing with Lowlanders.

I wouldn't take a job from him as a labourer,
But came to the Lowlands to check out the women,
And when each of them asks me in their English,
I'll say in Gaelic that I'm from Barra.

It's way of life does not appeal to me
To be out on Sundays carrying a load,
And I find no shelter nor a place to stay,
But an empty barn or a gelding's stable.

When we depart on Mondays for town,
Lowland geezers will try to deceive us,
I understand nothing of their nature with their Lowland lingo,/I'm lost without their language on my tongue.

Take my greetings over seas to my sweetheart,
And tell her yourself that I am healthy,
That I am now in Cadder Parish,
And that the Gaelic has disappeared.

It is you, Catherine, who is on my mind,
It is not your wealth that has deceived me,
But that you are beautiful, without being arrogant or superior,
Of that great clan, the MacLeods of Harris.

13. Iain 's a' Bhana-Mhaighstir

Chaidh mi 'shealltainn ort, 'Iain
'S tu bòidheach 's tu modhail,
'S gun d' thàinig thu dhachaidh,
Na bu ghasta na càch;
'S cha robh 'h-aon air 'bhanais
A dhannsadh cho math riut,
'S do ghruaidhean air laiseadh
Le maise thar chàich.

Thug mi sgrìob a's a' bhaile
'Dhol a shealltainn mo charaid,
Gu leithreach a cheannach
On fhear 'tha mi 'g ràdh;
'S on 'bha mi cho fheumail,
'S nach tiginn as 'eugmhais,
Gun do reic e rium daor e
'S gun fhaotainn air dàil.

Thuirt ise anns an àm sin
"Ged 'gheobhadh tu bonn air,
'S beag a phàigheas e 'n calldach
A th' ann mar a thà;
Seo craicionn a' ghamhna
A fhuair bàs ann a's t-sàmhradh,
A chairt thu le eubhain
Mun do thionndaidh am blàths."

'S thuirt i 'rithist "gur neònach
Thu 'ga sheachnadh le d' ghòraich'
'S do phiuthair gun bhròg an
'S i reòta a's a' làr,
'S gu' faoda' tu 'n deanamh,
Ge' nach pàigheadh i 'm bliadhna iad,
On a bha i 'gan iarraidh
Nam bu riaraicheadh e."

Nuair 'chaidh mi 'ga iarraidh,
Rinn mi labhairt le reusan,
Gun tugainn dha 'fhiachan
A riarachadh, is ghabh e
Ochd sgillinn deug air;
'S fheàrr gun chuinnseas a dh'iarr e,
Ged a mhinichte e ciatach,
Dè 'dh'iarrainn air clàr.

'S ge' nach biodh iad às aonais
Do leithreach a's 'n dùthaich,
Cha tèid mi 'ga ionnsaidh
'Dh'iarradh cùnnraidh gu bràch;
B' fheàrr leam falbh leis a' gheòlaich
Agus sgrìob 'thoirt don Oban,
Mu' faicte 'ga chòir mi
Na mu feòraichinn è.

Thuirt ise gu fiùbhaidh
"On 'tha thu 'nad ghreusaich',

13. John and the Master's Wife

I went to see you, John
You were handsome and polite,
And you were coming home,
More excellent than the rest;
There were none at the wedding
Who could dance as well as you,
Your cheeks were alight
With a beauty that exceeded the rest.

I took a trip to the village
To go do see my friend,
In order to buy some leather
From the man of whom I speak;
And since I was in such need
And I could not return without it,
He sold it to me at a high price
And I got from him no time to pay.

She said at that time
"Though you'd get some money for it,
It would hardly pay for the loss,
That has already been suffered;
Here's the skin of the stirk
That died in the summer,
That you tanned with a root
Before the summer warmth had departed."

And she said again "that it was strange
For you to foolishly pass it up,
While your sister is shoeless,
Frozen on the bare ground,
You could make them,
Though she couldn't pay for them this year,
Since she was wanting them,
If he could get his way."

When I went to get it,
I spoke most reasonably,
I would pay him that which would
Settle his debts, and he took
Eighteen shillings for it;
Better without conscience what he wanted,
Though it was explained nicely
What I would like on the record.

Though they would not do without
Your leather in the country,
I won't ever go to him
Looking to do business again;
I'd prefer leave with the yawl
And to take a trip to Oban,
Before I'm seen in his company
Or before I would ask for him.

She said most earnestly
"Since you are a shoemaker,

Bheir thus' air le riaghailt,
'S gun dean e dhuit stà;
Na toir creideas ri d' bheò dha
Mur a pàigh e e còmhla,
Gabh mo chomhairle, Iain Òig,
'S na bi gòrach mu d' dhàil."

"Ged is esan 'bhios daonnan
A' cairteadh 's ag aoladh
Gach craicionn 's gach laoicinn
As saoire a gheibh e,
Gur mise 'tha m' chlèirich,
A' sgrìobhadh 's a' leughadh,
A' cuir a' chùnntais ri chèile
'S gura feumail siud dhà."

Nuair a chaidh mi 'na sheanachas
Gu deanamh na bargain,
Gun do rinn mi dha 'thairgse
Fiachan airgid a b'fheàrr;
'S thuirt is' "Na leig bhuait
Gun phàigheadh air uachdar",
'S bha mis' anns an uair sin
Gu cruaidh ann 'am chàs.

Thuirt esan gu h-uasal
"Ge' daor leat na fhuair thu,
Tha gach nì 'tha mun cuairt dha
'Cuir suas air an-àird;
Ge' h-ainmeil a' bhuannachd,
Chan eil i ach suarach,
Tha sin a' tighinn bhuamsa
Ann an tuarastal chàich."

"Cha b' ann le bhith diomhain
A dh'obraich mi-fhìn e,
B' iad righinn 'ga spìonadh
A sgìthich mo làmh;
'Ga tharraing le dìcheall
À claisean 's à digean
A shàraich mo dhriom,
Gus nach dìrich mi è."

"Chan urrainn mi ìnnse
Na bheil a' cuir prìs air,
'Bhith 'cuir shligean 'an grìosaich
Nan teinntean air blàr;
'S nach faighear ri ceannach
A' mhoine anns an fhearann,
Ach daonnan 'ga tarraing,
A' toirt faraidh do chàch."

"Gura trioblaideach dhomhsa
'Bhith 'siubhail le m' chrogan,
Ag iarraidh an t-seòrsa ud
Feadh mòintich is bhlàr,
'S a' chàirt, 's i cho prìseil,
Ge' pailt i 'sa rìoghachd,
'S bidh cusbann a' Rìgh oirre

Take it with you and be sensible,
And it'll be to your advantage;
Don't ever in your life give him credit
Unless he pays it at the same time,
Take my advice, O young John,
And don't be foolish about giving time."

Although it's he who is always
Tanning and liming
Each hide and calf-skin
As cheaply as he can get it,
It is I who is the clerk,
Writing and reading,
Putting the account together
And that is most useful to him."

When I went to discuss with him
In order to make a deal,
I made him an offer
Of the best value of money;
And she said "Don't let it go
Without payment up front",
And I was then certainly
In very dire straits.

He said most haughtily
"Although what you got seems costly,
Every thing about it
Is putting up the price greatly;
Although the profit sounds famous,
It is really only trifling,
And that is going out
On the wages of others.

"It is not by being lazy
That I worked it myself,
They would be tough plucking it
That so tired my hand;
Pulling it diligently
Out of gutters and out of ditches
That has so exhausted my back
That I cannot straighten it."

"I cannot fully recount
All that is adding to the price,
To be putting shells in the embers
Of the fires in a field;
And there is not enough peat
In the land to be purchased,
But always importing it,
Giving fares to others."

"It is most troubling to me
To be travelling about with my little dish,
Asking for that sort
Over moorland and fields,
And the dye, it's so expensive,
Though it's plentiful in the country,
And there'll be the King's excise on it

'Mheudachadh 'màil."

"Dèan labhairt le firinn
Agus smaointich 'ad inntinnn,
Gu math draghail domh-fhìn e
Mun do mhìnich mi e,
'Ga cheangal le sìomain
'S a' siubhal tràigh Chòrnaig,
A' toirt shligean a-nìos às
Le ìnean mo làmh."

To increase the tax."

"So speak with honesty
And give a thought in your mind,
It is most worrisome to me
Before I explained it,
Tying it up with ropes,
And wandering Cornaig beach
Tugging shells up from it
With the nails of my hands."

14. Àiridh a' Chaolais

Seisd. Balach na h-aimhreite, ho rò,
Mac an fhir Ghallta, ho ro èile,
'Thàinig le anntlachd, hu ru bhi ò,
'S a chuireadh na glinn o riaghailt oirnn.

Nuair 'thàinig an cuairtear
Gu sunntach don bhaile,
Rinn e bothag an t-sùgraidh
Air chùlaibh a' bharradh;
Bidh esan gun chùram
'S a' chuile ris a' stalla,
Bidh poit agus bula aige
'S dlùth 'nì e 'gharadh.

Sin an taigh 'robh 'n àsaig
Aig a' phàirtidh 's bu mhath leò,
Bha còrn airson càise aca
'Bhlàiticheadh bainne;
Bha gloine mar sgathan
Air a chàradh 'sa bhalladh,
Agus cairteal a' gharaidh
Gu h-àrd air na sparraibh.

Nuair 'shuidhich e-fhèin i
Bha 'stèidh air a geàrradh,
Gun ghlaodhadh a-nuas
Air a' bhuachaill' aig Ailean;
'S e cuireadh a fhuair e
'N àm gluasad on bhealach
"Na' faigheadh tu lànan,
Bu phàirt i mun talla."

"Chan eil agamsa dòigh
Air dol còmh' riut mun ghàradh
On 'tha mi gun stòras,
'S mo phòca 'bhith falamh;
Nan tugadh tu dàil domh,
Ged 'tha mi gun earras,
Gu' faicinn thu pàighte
Mu' fàgainn am baile"

Nuair 'thàinig Am Bloinigein
Gu stoirmeil 'nar caramh,
Thuirt esan 'san àm
"Mura meall thu mi 'm bharail
Gun do ràinig i 'bonn,
Bha i trom air do sporran;
Mun d' fhuair thu air dòigh i
'S i *stòiri* fon talamh."

"Cha robh i cho daor dhomh
'S a shaoileas tu, 'charaid;
Tha 'chlachaireachd làidir,
'S gur h-àlainn a tarraing;
Bha mis' 'ga càrbhadh
'S Iain Camshron 'ga spalladh,
'S chuir na ciùilean-dùin ceann oirre
Le crann-tàirnean darraich.

14. The Shieling of Caolas

Chorus. Lad of the quarrel, ho rò,
Son of the Lowlander, ho ro èile,
Who came bringing discontent, hu rù bhi ò,
And brought us disorder in the glens,

When the visitor came
Happily to the village,
He made a bothy of diversion
Behind the hill;
He'll have no worries
With its 'ben' at the precipice,
It'll have a pot and pot-hook
And it'll be cosy and warm.

That was the house where the party
Had the stuff they liked,
They have a vessel for cheese
That would warm the milk;
There is a drinking-glass like a mirror
Placed in the wall,
And there's a warming quarter gill
Up there amongst the joists.

When he built it himself
Its foundation was well cut,
Allan's cowherd
Would be called down;
It's an invitation he received
When it was time to move from the gate,
"If you would get a roof brace,
It'd be part of the hall."

I have no way
To go with you about the garden
Since I have no money,
And my pocket is empty;
If you could give me some time,
Since I have no wealth,
I would see that you are paid
Before I left the village."

When 'The Fat Boy' came
Stormily towards us,
He said at the time
"Unless you're deceiving me
That when it reached its base,
It was heavy on your purse;
Before you got it in order
It'll be a story below ground."

"It wasn't so expensive for me
As you think, my friend;
The stonemasonry is strong,
And it has been drawn beautifully;
I was carving it
And John Cameron was striking it,
And the heap-sticks put a roof on her
With wooden pegs of oak."

'S ann 'sna craoitean seo shuas
'Tha na buachaillean ro-mhath,
'S e Donnchadh is Blòinigean—
'S gum b' fhoirmeil na gallain—
'Chuir ceann air an àirigh;
Bha 'n àite math seallaidh
Gu' coinneachadh nan uaiselan
A ghluaiseadh on bhaile.

'S Iain mac Eachainn a' gràitinn
Gun shàraich sibh tana e
Le feabhas na h-àirigh
'S aig blàthaich an aingil;
Tha 'n coirce a bha làmh ruibh
'Na chnàmhaig gun geàrradh,
'S gun do mheasadh oirbh mala,
Thèid a phàigheadh 'san earrach.

Rud eile a tha 'm dhìth-sa
'Tha priseil 'san fhearrann,
Chaidh a' pheasair a spìonadh
A-nise às an talamh;
Bha 'm pocannan lìonte,
'S iad dinnte, air a' sparradh,
'Mheasadh peice is rud crìon orra
Nach b' fhiach dhomh tighinn thairis.

'S tha 'm Bloinigein a' gràitinn
Nach pàigh e ri 'mhaireann,
E gu sumanadh làidir
O fhear àite mhic Chailein;
"Ma bheirear gu cùirt mi
Mun chùis a bha cronail;
On 'tha 'n Ceart ann a's dùthaich
Thèid gach cùis dheanamh soilleir."

Ma 's a h-èiginn domh 'phàigheadh,
'S 'm bàrr a bha 's talamh,
'S mi gun chòta, gun lèine,
'S gu' feumainn an ceannach;
Tha mo thuarastal bhuamsa
'S gum b' fhuar air 'shon mi,
Liuthad latha fliuch, ànradh
Gun àirigh 'gam gharadh.

It is in these crofts up here
That the excellent cowherds are found,
It is Duncan and Fat Boy—
And clever are these young men—
Who put a roof on the shieling;
Their place was quite a vision
For gatherings of the nobles
Who would come out from the village.

And John the son of Hector was saying
That you have completely exhausted him
With the excellence of the shieling
And with the buttermilk from the angel;
The oats that you had
Have become refuse, uncut,
And as you have had to reckon a half boll,
It'll be paid in the spring.

One other thing that I lack
That is valuable on the farm,
The peas have now
Been plucked from the ground;
They were in fully loaded bags,
They were crammed and shoved full,
They've been judged a peck with some decay
It's not worth it for me to mention it.

And the Fat Boy is saying
That he'll never be able to pay it in his life,
To the harsh summons
Of Campbell of Argyll's placeman;
"If I am taken to court
Concerning this pernicious case;
Since there is Justice in this land,
Every matter will be clarified."

If it is difficult for me to pay it,
With the harvest still in the ground,
And me without a coat or a shirt,
And I would have to purchase them;
My wages are gone
And for its sake I am now cold,
So many wet, stormy days
Without a shieling to keep me warm.

15. Òran, do Dhòmhnall MacArtair

Luinneag. Their mi o ho ro ladai bhig,
Hòg i o èile,
Their mi o ho ro ladai bhig,
Hòg i o èile,
Air fail irin 'r lirin,
Hù o ro èile,
Gura goirt leam a' spùinneadh,
A bh' air cùirteir na fèilidh.

Thàinig naidheachd don dùthaich,
Tha mi 'n dùil nach eil breug ann,
Chuala mis' iad 'ga 'ghràitinn,
Cha do dh'aicheadh e-fhèin i;
Gu' robh Dòmhnall 'na shìneadh,
Fo bhìnn aig luchd Beurla,
Gun chomas am bacail,
Bha e creachte mun d' èirich.

Ach nam bithinn-sa teann ort,
Ann an àm thu 'bhith t' èiginn,
Bheirinn làmh air do phòca,
'S bhiodh do stòras dheth glèidhteach;
Gura truagh nach do dhùisg thu
Man do spùinn iad gu lèir thu,
Gun do phàipearan ùra
'Bhith 'gan cùnntadh aig bèistean.

Bhithinn cinnteach à pàirt diubh
Na fàgte agad-fhèin iad,
Nuair a bhiodh tu 's taigh-òsta,
Ge b' e 'dh'òladh 's tu 'dh'èigheadh,
Bheirte a chùnntais à 'làthair,
Bhiodh iad pàighte 'na h-èirig,
Mach à sporan an fhuasglaidh,
Cha robh cruaidh-shnaim le èil air.

Esan. Bha mi 'n toiseach mo thòisich
Cosgail, gòrach 'sa cheum sin,
Nuair a thachrainn 'an còmhdhail
Là Dòmhnaich na fèille,
Ri toirt sheatachan rìomhach
Do na h-ìonagan spèiseil
Bhon a leig mi 'nis dhìom e,
Rinn na strìopaichean beud dhomh.

A h-uile ceum fad 's a dh'fhalbh mi
Eadar Albainn is Eirinn,
Bha gach aon duine a shìn rium
A' toirt dhiom leis an eucoir;
Bidh mi coimheas gu dìlinn
Ris gach nì 'nì dhomh èiridh,
Mo mhealladh le strìopaich
'S a bhith 'dhìth na bha feumail.

Ise. Cha robh e 'gad dhith-sa,
Thug mi-fhèin do thoil fhèin duit,
Gus an robh thu cho sgith dheth,
'S nach trìd ort ach lèine,

15. A Song, to Donald MacArthur

I say o ho ro ladai bhig,
Hòg i o èile,
I say o ho ro ladai bhig,
Hòg i o èile,
Air fail irin 'r lirin,
Hù o ro èile,
Painful for me is the robbery,
Of the hospitable courtier.

News has come to our district,
I'm sure that it's the truth,
I heard them reporting it,
He himself did not deny it;
That Donald was pursued,
Condemned by Lowlanders,
Unable to prevent them,
He was robbed before he arose.

But if I had been nearby,
At the time you were in distress,
I'd put a hand in your pocket,
And your money would be in safe keeping;
It's a shame you didn't wake up
Before they robbed you completely,
And your new notes would not
Be being counted by beastly people.

I'd have been sure that some of them
Of those that would be left to you,
When you'd be in the alehouse,
Whatever would be drunk, and you shouting,
His remaining accounts would taken from those present,/They'd be paid as a reparation,
Out of the purse of the resolution,
It's string was not knotted tightly.

He. I was at from the very start
Prodigal and foolish on that path,
When I happened to meet them
The Sunday of the feast,
To give fine sets
To the beloved young ladies
Since I have now relinquished it,
The whores have done me harm.

Every step that I have travelled
Between Scotland and Ireland,
Every person whom I have encountered
Has taken from me unjustly;
I'll be endlessly indifferent
To everything that befalls me,
Deceived by whores
And to lack what was necessary.

She. You lacked for nothing,
I myself gave you your every desire,
Until you were so tired of it,
And nothing on you but your shirt,

Bha sinn tacan a' seanachas,
A' deanamh bargain mu dhèidhinn,
Nuair a thuig mi do bhriathran,
'S tu 'ga iarraidh 'am Beurla.

Esan. Cha robh mis' 'ga iarraidh,
Na bi 'deanamh droch sgeul,
Chaidh mi seachad ort anmoch,
Thug thu tairgse dhiot fhèin domh
Ann an doras Mhic Mhaolain
Far na shlaoid thu fo sgèith mi,
Nuair a chaidh sinn 'an uaigneas,
Rinn thu, 'ghruagach, mo theumadh.

Ise. Gabham fianais air t' fhocal,
Fhuair mi glacte le grèim thu,
Na cuir teagamh gu bràch ann,
Ma thig pàiste 'na dhèidh oirnn;
Bhon a 's tu 'rinn an t-seirbhis,
'Dh'fhàg sinn ainmeil le chèile,
Na bi 'gearan do shaothrach
Mur d' thig gaoir ann 'ad shlèistean.

Esan. Ged a dh'èiridh sin dhomhsa,
Chan eil seòl air a thrèigsinn,
A-measg nan Gall 's gun mi eòlach,
Gheobhadh dòigh gu bhith lèighiste;
Ach ma fhuair mi 'bhreac uasal
Airson ruaig 'thoirt don tè 'ud,
B' e seo foghar a' chruadail,
'S nach do bhuannaich mi seud air.

Ise. Bheir mi comhairle 'n tùs ort,
Gabh 'ad ionnsaigh le cèill i,
Bheir mi sgil dhuit 's na diùlt i,
'S chan eil cùram fon ghrèin duit,
Faigh a' *mharcairi* làidir,
Fan 'sa 'bhlàthas 's na bi 'g èirigh,
Ceannaich *spuinnse* agus spùtan,
Sin a' chungaidh 'nì feum dhuit.

Esan. Gu dè mar 'cheannaicheas mi 'n àsaig,
Tha mi 'm chàs mar dhìol-dèirc',
Bhon a ghoid thu mo chùinneadh,
Gheibheadh cùngaidh bho lèigh dhomh?
Bheir gach aon duine 'am chàirdean,
Mòran tàmailte is beum dhomh,
'S a bhith fada 'ga chruinneachadh,
A' fuireach timcheall Dhun Eideann,

Ise. Na toir feairt air do chàirdean,
Cha bhi nàrachan treubhach,
Gur fasa rud iarraidh
Na dheanamh 'na dhèidh sin;
Cò 'gheibheadh o nàdar
Fuireach là' rium is èis air,
Gun an obair 'ud fheuchainn,
'S e 'bhith bliadhna às a h-eugais.

We spoke for a while,
Making a deal concerning it,
When I understood your words,
You enquired about it in English.

He. I wasn't enquiring about it,
Don't be making up lies,
I went past you quite late,
You yourself propositioned me
At MacMillan's door
Where you took me under your wing,
And when we went to a quiet place,
You beguiled me, young woman.

She. Let me bear record of your word,
I found you seized by desire,
Never cast any doubt upon it,
In case a child arrives because of it;
Because it was you who did the work,
That's left us both infamous,
Don't be grumbling about your dirty-work
Before a pain comes over your loins.

He. Though that will befall me,
There's no way to get rid of it,
Me an innocent amongst the Lowlanders,
A way to be cured would be found;
But if I caught the noble pox
For giving chase to that woman,
This would be the harvest of adversity,
And I haven't profited at all.

She. I'll give you advice straight away,
And sensibly you should take it,
I'll give you knowledge and don't refuse it,
There's no cure for you under the sun,
Get some strong mercury,
Stay where it's warm and don't get up,
Buy a sponge and a syringe,
That's the cure that'll do you good.

He. How can I purchase the implements,
I'm as hard up as an object of charity,
Since you stole my change,
That would get me a doctor's cure?
Every one of my relations will,
Greatly reproach and shame me,
And will long be gathering it,
Staying round about Edinburgh.

She. Pay no heed to your relations,
The ashamed won't be clannish,
It is easier to desire a thing
Than to do after that;
Who would take from his nature
To be near me and in need,
Without trying that labour,
And to be a year without it.

Esan. Tha thu 'gràitinn na fìrinn,
Cha bhi mi 'toirt gèill daibh,
Cha ghabh mi mar spìd e,
Ged a chìte mi 'streup riut;
'S iomadh Mòrair is Diùca
'Bha 'sa 'chùis sin 'an dèis-làmh,
Bha iad romham 'ga dheanamh,
'S nì na ceudan 'am dhèidh e.

Ise. Their mi 'nis riut an fhìrinn
Le sìochainnt 's le rèite,
Nuair a thig thu don Ghalltachd,
Fuirich thall às a' cheum seo;
Na bi teann air a' stìopall
Far an cluinn thu e 'beumadh,
'S ann a ghlac mi 'san lìon thu,
Le toilinntinn a' chiad uair,

Esan. Bha toilinntinn gu leòr ort
'S mis' gòrach neo-stèidheil,
Nuair a dh'fhuirich mi comhl' riut,
'S sinn ag òl air a' chèile,
Do dh'uisge beatha math Gàidhealach,
Leann làidir is *cider*,
Bha mo chuid-s' air do chliathaich,
Mun do dh'iarr thu gu èirigh.

Ise. Nan tugainn-sa bhuait e,
Bheirte duais air a' rèir dhomh,
Nuair a sheasadh mi comhl' riut
Ann an seòmar a' Chlèirich,
'S fada chluinnte do staraaich,
'S na maoir dhearga 'cuir rèis riut,
'S tu 'gam iarraidh 'sna cùiltean
Far na dh'ionndrainn thu 'n dè mi.

Esan. Chan ionndrainn mi 'n t-airgead,
Ach na iomraidh 'ad bheul air;
Bhon a fhuair mi mo shlàinte,
'S nach eil fàilinn na èiric,
Tha mi 'smaointinn gum pòs mi
Ri bean òg a bheir sprèidh dhomh;
Na innis ri d' bheò e,
'S cha bhi Dòmhnall an dèidh air.

He. You are telling the truth,
I will pay them no heed,
I will not consider it a shame,
That I had been seen mounting you;
Many a Lord and Duke
Have been left short by that practice,
They were doing it before me,
And hundreds will do it after me.

She. Now I'll tell you the truth
In peace and reconciliation,
When you come to the Lowlands,
Keep well away from this path;
Don't be close to the steeple
Where you'll hear it tolling,
That's where I caught you in the net,
With gratification the first time.

He. You were certainly contented
And I was foolish and insensible,
When I stayed with you,
And we were drinking to each other,
With good Highland whisky,
Strong beer and cider,
My share was on your side,
Before you asked to arise.

She. If I had taken it from you,
There would be a gift to match for me,
When I would stand with you
In the room of the Clergyman,
Your volleys would be heard far and wide,
With the redcoats chasing you,
And you seeking me in secluded places
Where you longed for me yesterday.

He. I will not miss the money,
But don't let your mouth repeat it;
Since I regained my health,
And there is no stain nor penalty,
I'm thinking that I'll marry
A young woman who'll give me cattle;
Don't mention it on your life,
And Donald won't be after it.

16. Moladh Dhòmhnaill MhicUalraig

Thoir mo shoraidh le dùrachd
A-null thar an t-sàile,
'S dean a h-aiseag le cùram
A dh'ionnsaidh an tàilleir;
Gur e Dòmhnall MacUalraig,
Am fleasgach suairc 'tha mi 'gràitinn,
'S mòr 'tha do cheanal 's do dh'uaisle
'Am fear do ghluasaid 's do nàdair.
Mo rùn geal, òg.

Gun d'aithnich mi-fhèin siud
Mun do thill mi Dimàirt bhuait,
Le dearbhadh 's le fìrinn,
Dh'fhaodainn ìnnse air fear t' àbhaist;
Nach bu sgrubaire crìon thu
Ri dol sgrìob don taigh-thàirne,
Ach gu fiùghantach cosgail,
'S cha bu bhrosgal domh 'ghràitinn.

Mun abair mi breugan,
B' e do bheus anns gach àite,
Nuair a bhiodh tu 's taigh-òsta,
Ri òl na' deoch-slàinte;
Cha bu nì leat an stòpan
Air a' bhòrd a bhith 'd làthair,
Ach am botal air sgòrnan,
'S dheante mòran diubh thràigheadh.

Air a' mheud 's dham biodh comhl' riut
Do luchd-eòlais 's do chàirdean,
Cha b' fhiach leatsa feòraich
'An àm còrdaidh man phàigheadh;
Rachadh làmh ann 'd phòca,
'S chuirte an t-òr air a' chlàr dhaibh,
Cha do dh'iarr thu riamh mùthadh
Gus an cunntadh iad slàn e.

'S beag an t-ioghnadh a' mhòr-chuis
A bhith 'ad phòraibh a' gluasad;
Tha thu 'shliochd nam fear cliùiteach
'Bheireadh cùis d' a luchd-fuatha,
'Bha gu cruadalach, sgairteil
'An àm nan glas-lann a bhualadh,
'S nach bu tais ann an comhstrì,
Nuair a thòisicheadh tuasaid.

Tha thu 'shliochd nam fear mòra
Ri 'm feòraich nach suarach,
'Bheireadh creach às na cròithean,
'Chuireadh tòir air na buailtean;
Tha do shloinne ri 'ìnnse,
Do dh'fhìor chlann MhicUalraig
Bho Ghleann Garaidh 's bho Lòchaidh,
'Thigeadh connspainn a' chruadail.

Càite a bheil e ri 'ìnnse
Fear do ghnìomh ann an Albainn,
Tha thu teòma air gach oilean,

16. In Praise of Donald Kennedy

Take my greetings with good wishes
Over the sea,
And carry them with care
To the tailor;
He is Donald Kennedy,
The civil young man about whom I speak,
Great is the grace and nobility
In a man of your carriage and nature.
My fair young darling.

I myself recognised this
Before I returned Tuesday from you,
With conviction and with truth,
I could speak of a man of your manner;
That you weren't a niggardly miser
To go for a wander to the tavern,
But generously and extravagantly,
And it isn't flattery for me to say so.

Before I utter a lie,
It was your virtue in every place,
When you would be in the hostelry,
Drinking the toasts;
It was not your practice for the flagons
To be sitting on the table in your presence,
But for the bottle hoisted to the gullets,
And many of them would be drained.

Of the number who would be with you
Of friends and relations,
You shouldn't bother to ask
When settling on the payment;
A hand would go into your pocket,
And the gold would be put on the table for them,
You never asked for change
Until they had counted it fully.

Little wonder at the splendour
That moves in your pores;
You are the descendant of the famous men
Who would take a matter to his enemies,
They were hardy and brisk
At the time of the beating of the grey blades
They were not weak in a battle,
When a brawl would commence.

You are the descendant of the great men
Who were not trifling when called upon,
Who would raid the stables,
And would chase the herds of cattle;
Your patronymic is to be reported
Of the true Clan Kennedy
From Glengarry and Glen Lochy,
Would come the heroes of courage.

Where is there to be told
A man of your exploits in Scotland,
You are skilful in each instruction,

Cha bu mhearachd dhomh 'sheanachas;
'S iomadh cùis 'tha 'toirt meas da
Nach bi mis' a' toirt ainm air,
Mun saoil càch gur bòsd
A bhith 'g ràdh mòran do dh'anabharr.

Tha thu 'd dhamhsair air ùrlar
'Choisinn cliù am-measg Ghàidheal,
Nuair a chaidh tu 'Dhun Éideann
Bha luchd-Beurla fo thàmailt;
Thàinig fios ort am bliadhna
'Dhol 'gad fheuchainn don bhàl ann,
Thug sin onair don Diùchda
Is don dùthaich a dh'fhàg thu.

Bu leat urram a-rithist
Air an fhiodhaill a ghleusadh,
Nuair a ghlac thu 'nad làimh i
Cha bhiodh càch ach mar bheus duit;
Cha do dh'amais aon riamh ort
A rinn t' fheuchainn 'sa cheum sin
Ach Teàrlach MacCeòraidh,
'S e bu bhòidhche ceòl èisdeachd.

Thuirt na h-uaislean 'bha làthair,
'S iad na Gàidheil 'tha gleusta,
'S mòr am meas do dh'aon àite,
'An deach an àrach le chèile;
Chan eil coimeas do Theàrlach
Fad 's a bha sinn na 'thèid sinn,
Thug e barrachd air Hòmer,
Ged bu bhòstail 'sa Ghrèig e.

Ged 'fhuair Teàrlach an t-urram
Thair gach duine air ceòl èisdeachd,
Cha bu choimeas e 'Dhòmhnall
Ann am fòghlam 'na dhèidh sin;
Tha gach grinneas 'na inntinn,
Tha mi cinnteach nach breug e,
Gur mi-fhèin 'bha ort eòlach
Bhon a b' òg sinn le chèile.

Bu tu tàillear nan uaislean
A dh'fhuaidheadh gu fìnealt',
Gu fasanta, spòrsail,
Cha bu chlòithean 'bu nì leat,
Ach deiseachan Gallta,
A' tilgeadh tholl leis an t-sìoda
'S a' cur phutanaibh airgead
'Nan geala-bhroilleach rìomhach.

Gun robh Tighearn' na h-Àirde
Gu h-àraidh dhomh 'g ìnnse,
Gur tu 'dheanadh dha 'n còta
'S ro-mhath 'chòirdeadh ri 'inntinn;
Gun 'bhith cumhann na farsainn
Ach a phearsa 'ga lionadh,
'S mar a ruigeadh e 'n cruachan,
Rachadh cuairt ris gu h-ìosal.

It was not a mistake for me to report it;
Many things bring him respect
That I won't mention them,
Before the rest think that it is a boast
To be saying too much more.

You are a fine dancer on the floor
Who won renown amongst the Gaels,
When you went to Edinburgh
English-speakers were affronted;
News came to you this year
To go to compete in a ball there,
That gave honour to the Duke
And to the country that you left.

You were also respected
On the well tuned fiddle,
When you took it in hand
The rest would be but a bass to you;
No one ever chanced upon you
Who could challenge you in that path
But Charles MacCeòraidh,
His was the most beautiful music to hear.

The nobles who were present said,
It's the Gaels who are able,
And great is the regard for the only place
Where they were raised together;
There's no match for Charles
From as far as we've been or will go,
He has surpassed Homer,
Though he was boasted of in Greece.

Though Charles won the praise
Of every man who has heard music,
He was no comparison to Donald
In learning beyond that;
There is every elegance in his mind,
I'm sure it is no lie,
It is I who knew you
Since we were young together.

You were the tailor of the nobility
Who would sew elegantly,
Fashionably and sportively,
It was not tweed that was your thing,
But Lowland suits,
Casting holes with the silk
And putting silver buttons
In their gorgeous white breast.

The Lord of the Heights
Was especially telling me,
That it's you who'd make him a coat
And that it would please him exceptionally;
It was neither narrow nor wide
But just fitted his frame,
And as it didn't reach his thighs,
There'll be another layer of cloth down below.

Bu tu sgiobair na mara
Ri là greannach gu fuaraidh,
Nach leughadh an giorag,
'S nach tilleadh gun fhuathas;
Cha do sheasadh e 'm bàta
Na thug bàrr air a' chuan ort
Eadar Eirinn 's Albainn,
'S tric a dhearbh thu na chual' iad.

You were the excellent sea skipper
On a rough, damp, chilly day,
Who would not think of fear,
And would not turn without a great number;
He has not stood in a boat
Or has surpassed you at sea
Between Ireland and Scotland
You often proved that which they have heard.

Ged a bhiodh tu air uairean
'Dol man cuairt anns an rioghachd,
Chan eil ann ach nì suarach
Ri luaidh anns an tìm seo;
'S tric a sheòl thu a Lunnain,
Bhiodh long ghunnach bhon Rìgh leat,
'S lìonmhor turas air bhuannachd
'Thug thu bhuainn do na h-Innsibh.

Although you would at times
Be going about in the kingdom,
There's nothing but despicable news
To report at this time;
Often you sailed to London,
You would have an armed boat from the King,
And many a profitable journey
That took you from us to the Indies.

Nuair a thigeadh tu dhachaidh,
Bhiodh do thoisgeidean lìonte
Do bhranndaidh 's do shiùcar,
Gheibhte cùnnradh 's gach nì bhuait;
Fir 'ga tharrain' gu d' stòraibh,
Sin an lòd a bhiodh prìseil,
'S ann 'ad bhùthaibh le chèile
'Bhiodh na clèirich a' sgrìobhadh.

When you would return home,
Your hogsheads would be filled
With brandy and with sugar,
A bargain would be found for your every need;
Men would be dragging it to your stores,
That was the precious load,
It was together in your shops
That the clerks would be writing.

Bu tu 'n giomanach gunna
'Bheireadh fuil air an ruadh-bhoc,
Air an fhiadh anns a' mhonadh
'Bhiodh air uileann nam fuar-bheann;
Bu tu nàmhaid a' choilich,
'S moich a ghoireadh 'sna bruachan,
'S na circeige duinne
'Bheireadh gur às an luachair.

You were a masterly marksman
Who would bring blood from roe buck,
And the deer in the hill
That'd be on the slope the cold mountains;
You were the foe of the cockerel,
That would crow early in the hills,
And of the little brown hen
That'd bring a brood from the rushes.

Bu tu dròbhair na' mart
'Dheanadh ceartas is pàigheadh,
Nuair a thigeadh tu 'n dùthaich
Bheirte cùnnradh is dàil duit;
Gus an ruigeadh tu Dùnaidh
Far an liubhaireadh tu 'chàch iad
'S ann air monadh Dhùn Bhreatainn
'Fhuair thu 'm bristeadh nach b' fheàirrd' thu.

You were a drover of cattle
Who would do equity and would pay,
When you would come to your country
You'd get a bargain and good friendship;
Until you reached Dounie
Where you'd deliver them to others,
It was on the hill of Dumbarton,
That you had the break you were the worse for.

Bhon a rinneadh do bhriste
'S mòr is miste na Gàidheil,
Gun do lughdaich e misneach
Agus meas do na cearnans'
Thu 'bhith 'n uiridh ag iasgach
'S 'dol am bliadhna do *Chàdar*,
Chuir sin crìoch air gach gnothach
'Bha roimh seo 'd làmhan.

Since you suffered your break
The Gaels are greatly worse off,
It has lowered the spirits
And the esteem of these parts
That you were fishing last year
And going this year to Cadder,
That put an end to all business
That was up till now in your hands.

'S beag a shaoil mi gum faicinn
Fear cho beartach 's a bha thu
'Giùlan pòc' air a shlinnean,
Beagan mine is càise ann,
'Dol a dh'ionnsaidh an fhoghair

Little did I think that I would see
A man as wealthy as you were
Carrying a satchel on his shoulder,
A little flour and cheese in it,
Departing for the harvest

Ann an diaigh 'bhith 'd stàta
'S a bhith 'laighe gu Samhainn
Ann an sabhal na 'n stàpall.

Gu bheil mise fo mhulad,
Chan urrainn mi àicheadh,
'S iad ag ìnnse mar sgial domh
Gun do liath thu, 's cha nàr dhuit,
Bho nach striochd thu aig baile,
'Dheanamh arain le d' shnàthaid,
Cha b' i obair a chleachd thu
A bhith 'm baiteal a' chàrlaich.

Bhon a chum mi mo ghealladh
'S nach robh mearachd 'am Ghàidhlig,
Gu bheil fios aig na h-eòlaich
Nach e 'm bòsd 'bha mi 'gràitinn;
Tha mi cinnteach, a' dhaoine,
Gum bidh 'n t-saothair seo pàighte,
Nuair a chì mi na h-uaislean,
Dòmhnall MacUlraig 's Teàrlach,
Mo rùn geal, òg.

In a desire to be a big shot
And to be lying until November
In a barn or in a stable.

It is me who is sad,
I cannot deny it,
While they tell me as news
That you have greyed and it isn't a shame for you,
Since you did not succumb at home
To make your livelihood with your needle,
The work that you practised was not
To be struggling with the cart-load.

Since I have kept my promise
And there's no error in my Gaelic,
Experts will know
That I'm not relating vain boasts;
I'm certain, people,
That this labour will be rewarded,
When I see those nobles,
Donald Kennedy and Charles.
My fair young darling.

17. Call na *Cailin*

'S ann Disathairne 'chualas
Sgeul bu chruaidh a bhith fìor,
Gun do chailleadh na daoine
'Dh'fhàg an Caolas bhuainn fhèin,
'Dh'fhalbh 'sa mhaduinn Didòmhnaich
Fo sheòl às an tìr,
Ged a thill sibh gu còrsa,
Gum bu bhrònach siud dhuinn.

Ged a thill sibh d' ar n-ionnsaidh
Ann an ùine ro gheàrr,
Ann an àite toilinntinn,
Bha sinn lìonte le cràdh;
Cha b' e gainnead ur n-eòlais
Ach còmhnadh nan gràths
'Chuir air call aig na Suacain
Nuair a bhuail i ri 'h-eàrr.

Gur e 'n oidhche 'bhith dorcha
'S a' stoirm a bhith àrd
A chuir sibhse 'ga h-ionnsaidh
Ann an tùs a' mhuir-tràigh';
Gum bu chruaidh leam ur glaodhaich
Nuair a sgaoil i 'na clàir,
'S nach robh duine 'gur n-èisdeachd
'Dheanamh feum dhuibh 'nur càs.

Ach, a Sheumais 's a Dhòmhnaill,
'S goirt 'tha dòrainn ur crìdh',
Fhuair sibh greadan am bliadhna
A rinn ur liathadh roimhn' tìm;
Mun a dh'fhalbh leis a' *Chailin*
Às a' chala seo shìos,
'S iad ri feitheamh 'an àite
'An deachaidh 'm bàthadh aig tìr.

Bha sibh foghainteach, calma,
Cha bu chearbach ur gnìomh,
'Nur deagh sgiobairean fairge,
'S tric a dhearbh sibh gum b' fhìor;
Nuair 'bhiodh Lachlann 'ga stiùradh,
'Glèidheadh cùrsa gu grinn,
Agus Niall air a h-ùrlar
A' cuir sùigh anns na buill.

Tha do mhàthair gu tùrsach,
'S i 'gad ionndrainn, a Nèill,
'S beag an t-ioghnadh dhi fhèin siud,
Chaill i 'h-èibhneas gu bràch;
Com na' ciatabh gun bhruaidlean,
Anns gach gluasad a b' fheàrr,
Cha robh coire ort ri fhaotainn,
Ach do shaoghal 'bhith geàrr.

'S trom an sac s' oirre air drùghadh,
Tha i brùite gu leòir,
'S i ri smaointinn mar 'bha thu
Ann an sàs gun 'bhith 'd chòir;

17. The Loss of the *Cailin*

It was Saturday that was heard
Too harsh a story to be true,
That the men were lost
Who sailed away from Caolas,
Who departed Sunday morning
From the land under sail,
Though you returned to a coast
That was most sad for us.

Though you returned towards us
In too short a time,
Instead of pleasure
We were filled with pain;
It wasn't a failing in your knowledge
But the assistance of the elements,
That caused the loss at the "Suacain"
When she struck a submerged rock.

It is that the evening was dark
And the storm was great
That sent you towards it
At the start of the ebb tide;
Harsh for me was your shrieking
When she burst into pieces,
And that no one could hear you
To assist you in your need.

But, O James and O Donald,
Painful is the anguish of your hearts,
You had a bitter sorrow this year
That turned you grey before your time;
Before leaving with the *Cailin*
From this harbour down here,
And they were to wait in a place
Beside where they were drowned.

You were strong and courageous,
And your deeds were not clumsy,
You were excellent seamen,
Often you proved it to be true;
When Lachlan would be steering her,
Holding the course nicely,
And Neil on her deck
Putting a billow in the sails.

Your mother is sorrowful,
She is lamenting you, Neil,
That is little wonder to her herself,
She has lost her joy forever;
Breast of the joys, without grief,
In every gesture the best,
There was no fault to be found in you,
But that your life would be too short.

Heavy is the burden bearing down on her,
She is well enough bruised,
Reflecting on how you were
In difficulties without her being with you;

'S truagh leam t' athair 's do bhràithrean
'Bhith 'cur aisig air seòl,
'Dhol 'gad iarraidh le sgrìobain,
'S tu 'bhith 't shìneadh 'san ròd.

Tha do chèile 'na h-ònrachd,
'S tric na deòir air a gruaidh,
Gum b' e mi-fhortan mòr dhi
Nach robh 'm pòsadh 'ud buan;
Thug i gaol duit an toiseach,
Cha do choisinn thu 'fuath;
Na' faigheadh i 'h-òrdagh,
Bhiodh i còmhl' riut 'san uaigh.

Gu bheil Fionghal, a nighean,
Tric ri snighe gu trom,
Chan i 'chiad chreach a leòn i,
Ge' bu mhòr i 'san àm,
Ach a' cuimhneachadh Lachlainn
'Bhith fo fhasga' nan tonn,
'S i gun mhac ann 'ad àite,
'S bochd an làrach 's i lom.

Tha do pheathraichean deurach,
'S iad fo èislean gach là,
Chaill iad ceannard na riaghailt,
Làmh a dheanadh dhaibh stàth;
Bho nach d' thàinig thu dhachaidh
Bithidh an aitreabh gun àird,
'S e do thàmh anns an fheamainn
Cùis an gearain an dràst'.

'S iad mar dhìnnleachdain òga,
'S math an còir air bhith truagh,
'S mòr an t-adhbhar a th' aca,
'S an cùl-taic anns a' chuan;
Bhon a rinneadh do mhilleadh,
'S tu air iomain nan stuadh,
'S bochd a' mhoch-èiridh mhadainn
Feadh gach cladaich mun cuairt.

Leam is duilich ri ìnnse
Nach do thill thu, 'Nèill Bhàin,
Nuair a ghluais thu air astar
Do Phort-Asgaig le d' bhàt';
Ghabh iad cead dhiot an là 'ud,
Cha chùis aighear dhaibh e,
Fhuair iad clisgeadh gun fhios daibh
'Thug a' misneach gu làr.

'S mòr 'tha ionndrainn nan daoine ort,
'S iad gun mhaor ann 'ad àite,
Bhon a dhùineadh fo lic thu
Ann an ciste nan clàr;
Chaill an tuath am fear comhairle,
Anns gach gnothach a b' fheàrr,
'S tu gun deanadh an ceartas,
Bho 's e 'chleachd thu mar ghnàths.

I am sorry for your father and your brothers
Who are putting a ferry under sail,
To go to find you with a hoe,
With you stretched out in the seaweed.

Your spouse is on her own,
Often are the tears on her cheeks,
It was a great misfortune for her,
That the marriage was not to last forever;
She gave you her love at the outset,
And you did not earn her hatred;
If she had got her way,
She would be with you in the grave.

Flora, his daughter, is
Often crying heavily,
This is not the first disaster that has hurt her,
Though it was great at the time,
But remembering Lachlan
Who is under the shelter of the waves,
She has no son to take your place,
Poor is the empty abode.

Your sisters are tearful,
They are grieved every day;
They lost the fount of all wisdom,
A hand of good use to them;
Since you have not come home
Their dwelling will be without happiness,
It is your repose in the seaweed
That's the cause of their complaint right now.

They are like young orphans,
They have every right to be miserable,
They have very good reason,
With their supporter under the waves;
Since your destruction,
And your being driven by the waves,
Poor is the early sunrise of morning
On every beach round about.

It is difficult for me to relate
That you did not return, Fair Neil,
When you departed in haste
From Port Askaig with your boat;
They took leave of you on that day,
It was no cause of joy for them,
They got an unexpected surprise
That brought their courage to the ground.

Greatly do the people miss you,
They have no bailiff to replace you,
Since you were covered by a gravestone
In a coffin made of boards;
The tenants lost their advisor,
The finest in every business,
It was you who would render justice,
As this was your customary practice.

Làmh bu ghrinn' air a' sgriobhadh,
Bhiodh e cinnteach bho d' mheòir,
Cha bhiodh mearachd 'ad chùnntais,
'S tu nach mùchadh a' chòir,
'S goirt an t-saighead 'tha sàite
Anns an tè 'dh' àraich thu òg,
'S e do chumhadh 's a chnàmh i
Bhon a chaidh tu fon fhòid.

The loveliest of writing hands,
It would be certain from your fingers,
There'd be no mistake in your accounts,
And you would not quash a deed;
Painful is the arrow that was thrust
Into the woman who reared you as a child,
It is lamenting you that has consumed her
Since you were buried in the ground.

B' e sin cridhe na fèilidh
Nach tug spèis do 'bhith crìon,
'Fhir a b' àilliche cumachd
Bho do mhullach gu d' bhuinn,
Nuair a chruinnich do chàirdean
'Dhol 'gad chàradh 'sa 'chill,
'S iad a dh'fhaodadh a ghràitinn
Gum bu bheàrn thu 'gan dìth.

It was he who was the heart of the feast
You did not like to be niggardly,
O man of the most handsome appearance
From your top to your bottom;
When your friends gathered
To go to lay you in the churchyard,
It is they who could say
That you are the gap they are missing.

'Fhir bu ghlice le riaghailt,
'S mòr a' chiall a bha 'd cheann,
'Bha gu lèirsinneach, fiosrach,
'S tu fìor thuigseach 'ad chainnt;
Bha thu miosail aig uaislean,
Ghlèidh thu 'n tuath air do làimh,
'S ro mhath 'ghiùlain thu 'n saoghal,
Gus na chaochail thu ann.

O man, who was wisest with rules,
Great was the sense in your head,
Who was perceptive and learned,
And you were most judicious in speech;
You were admired by the nobles,
You kept the tenantry in your hand,
Excellently did you carry yourself in life
Until the day that you died.

'S ro math 'ghlèidh thu do phosta,
Cha do choisinn thu diumb,
Gu' robh gaol aig gach duine ort
Bhon a chunnaic iad thu;
Cha bhiodh t' fhocal 'gan dìteadh
Na 'cuir sìos air an cùl,
'S adhbhar mulaid do d' chàirdean
Bhon a chaidh tu 'sa 'ghrunnd.

Well did you keep your post
You did not earn disdain,
Everyone loved you
From the first time they saw you;
Your word would not condemn them
Nor put them down behind their backs,
It's been a cause of grief to your friends
Since you went to the bottom.

Fear a chunnaic seo iomchaidh
'Tigh'nn mu thimcheall air call,
'S e 'chuir mac ann 'ad àite
Bhon 'bha 'n dàn dha 'bhith ann;
'S e fear t' ainme e ri chluinntinn
Bhon a chrìochnaich t' àm,
Gur gibht e le d' mhuinntir,
'Bhith mar chuimhneachan ann.

A man who saw this as fitting
Happening about upon the loss,
It is he who'd put a son in your place
Since it was his destiny to be there;
It was a man of your name to be heard
Since your time has ended,
That it is like a gift to your people
To be a memorial in your place.

Gum biodh saodhachd na dòrainn
'Thàinig oirnne don bhàgh,
B' fheàrr nach faca sinn riamh i
Mun do dh'iath i mòr-bhàs;
'S e ur turas do dh'Ile
'S nach do thill sibh às slàn,
'Dh'fhàg ur muinntir fo mhulad,
'S gach aon duine d' ur luchd-dàimh.

Whether it be pain or torment
That has come to us from the bay,
It would be better had we never seen it
Before she encompassed a great death;
It is your trip to Islay
From which you did not return safely
That left your people in sadness
As well as every one of your relations.

Tha ur pàranta' cianail,
Fhuair iad deuchainn 'gan claoidh,
Ach bhon 'sguir sibh 'gan iasgach,
Thug e riarachadh dhuibh;
Taing don Tì 'rinn ur lot,

Your parents are mournful,
They've had a test that is oppressing them,
But since you have stopped fishing them
It gave satisfaction to you;
Thanks be to the One who wounded you,

Gun chuir E 'n corpadh gu tìr,
Thug E toileachadh mòr dhuibh,
Ged 'bhios bròn orra 'chaoidh.

He has brought their corpses back to land,
He has given great satisfaction to you,
Thought they'll be grieving forever.

18. Bàrdachd Alastair MhicFhionghain

Fhuair mi sealladh Diluain
A dhùisg mo spiorad gu gluasad
Do dh'fhear 'chàradh nan duanag air dòigh.
Fhuair mi, &c.

Ge' nach faca mi riamh thu,
Tha mi 'g ionndrainn gun thriall thu,
Fhir bu chomasaich' briathran 's glòir.

Ghabh mi beachd air do sheanachas,
Mar 'chinn e bho t' eanchainn,
Dh'fhàg thu sgrìobht' e gun dearmad bho d' mheòir.

B' fhiosrach, lèirsinneach t' inntinn
Ann an gloine 's 'an ciatabh,
Cha b' ann brosgalach, breugach le sgleò.

'S mòr an tlachd 'bha aig uaislean
Dhiot 'nan comann air uairibh,
'S lìonmhor cuireadh a fhuair thu gu 'm bòrd.

Gu bhith 'g èisteachd ri t' ealdhain
Nuair a sheinnt' i bho t' anail,
Chluinnte 'fuaim aig an talla le d' cheòl.

Bhiodh na h-òranaibh grinne,
Sunntach, fonnmhor, bu bhinne
'Tigh'nn ro phongail bho bhilibh do bheòil.

Càite 'n cualas ach ainmig
Riamh 'sna cearnan seo 'dh'Albainn
Aon 'thug bàrr air MacFhionghain 'bha còrr.

Chuir thu 'Ghàidhlig mar dh'earbainn
Ann an òrdagh gun iomluathas,
Chan fhaigh bàird oirre cearbaich na sgòd.

'S beag an t-ioghnadh d' a chèile
'Bhith gu tùrsach bhon 'dh'eug thu,
'Bhith fo mhulad 's fo èislean ri 'beò.

Bha 'n cead deireannach deurach
A ghabh ise d' a cèile
'S e 'na shìneadh gun lèirsinn air bòrd.

Am fear a b' urrainn thoirt sgeula
Mu na blàir 'bha 'san Eiphit,
B' adhbar eagail 's dèistinn a ghlòir.

B' e sin saighdear a' chruadail
Ri uchd teine agus luaidhe,
'S iomadh baiteal 's na bhuannaich e leòn.

'S fear 'bu deise gu fuasgladh,
Air ceistean 'bu chruaidhe,
Cha robh 'n aineol air gluasad dha 'n còir.

18. The Poetry of Alexander MacKinnon

I had a vision on Monday
That awoke my spirit to action
Of a man who put the songs in good form.
I got &c..

Though I never met you,
I am mourning your departure,
O man of the most able words and speech.

I considered your discourse,
As it sprang from your mind,
Your hand has left a flawless written record of it.

Your mind was expert and perceptive
In its clarity and its pleasures,
It was not fawning or mistily deceitful.

Great was the pleasure that the nobles
Often received from you in their company,
You received many invitations to their table.

To be listening to your poetry
When it would be sung from your lips,
Its sound would be hear in your music in their hall.

The elegant songs would be
Joyfully, tunefully, most sweetly
Coming so tidily from the lips of your mouth.

Where was heard but infrequently
Ever in these parts of Scotland
Anyone who was better than the great MacKinnon.

You set the Gaelic as I would have expected
In good order without inconsistency,
Poets won't find in it awkwardness nor blemish.

It's little wonder for your wife
To be mournful since you died,
To be in grief and in sorrow as long as she lives.

The final leave was tearful
That she took from her spouse
With him stretched out lifelessly on a table.

The man who was able to tell a tale
About the battles that took place in Egypt,
The source of fear and of abhorrence in his poetry.

He was a courageous soldier
In the face of fire and of lead,
In many a battle did he earn his wounds.

And he was the man most ready to resolve
The most difficult of questions,
He showed no ignorance in their presence.

Rinn a' Cheòlraidh dha luasgadh
Ann an tàlantan uaigneach,
Thug i gibht da nach d' fhuaradh le seòl.

'Dh'aindeòin eòlais an t-sluaigh seo,
Cha toir innleachdan suas i,
Cha dean fòghlam a buannachd nas mò.

Bha i aige gun truailleadh
Anns gach cànmhain a fhuair e
Cha robh uireasaibh bhuaithe na còrr.

'S mòr am beud anns an uair seo
Nach robh a chainnt 'n clò-bualaidh
Mun do chàireadh 'san uaigh e fon fhòid.

Nam biodh sin air a dheanamh,
'S iomadh fear dham biodh dìleab
'Dh'fhàg an t-Alasdair grinn nach eil beò.
Nam biodh, &c.

The Muse had touched him
With the mysterious talents,
It gave him a gift which did not cool with use.

In spite of the skill of this people,
Ingenuity cannot take it [the Muse] up,
Learning will not win it [the Muse] either.

He had it [the Muse] faultlessly
In every language that he found
There were no failings or excesses from him.

Great is the loss at this time
That his poetry was not in print
Before he was laid in his grave in the ground.

Had that been done,
To many a person there would be a legacy
Left by the fine Alasdair who is no longer alive.
Had that, &c.

19. Cumha, do Dhonnachadh Mac-Aonghais, à Tiriodh

Gur h-e mise 'th' air mo leònadh;
Fhuair mi naidheachd 's bu leòr leam a meud,
Mun 'dh'èirich don òigear,
Chuir sin saighdean le dòrainn 'am chrìdh';
Thàinig doille air mo lèirsinn
Nuair a chuala mi sgeula le cinnt;
Cha dean mi car èibhinn,
'S bidh a mulad 'gam theumadh leam fhèin.

'S beag an t-ioghnadh sin dhòmhsa
'Bhith fo mhulad an còmhnaidh le sgìos;
Tha mi 'nis ann am ònrachd,
Mar bha Oisean, 's am bròn air mo chlaoidh,
A' caoidh an àilleagain bhòidhich,
Dhan robh tuigse agus eòlas le gnìomh;
Ged is bochd mi 'gad àireamh,
'S truaighe an tè 'bha 'gad àrach air chìch.

Fhuair i riasan na dhà air
'Bhith gu h-èisleineach, fàilinneach, tinn,
'S nach eil duine aic' a' làthair
Do na chunnaic na dh'àraich i 'chloinn;
'S e seo 'n turas a chràidh i,
'Bhith ri smaointinn mar 'bha thu gun chlì,
A' call na fala anns an àraich,
'S tu cho fada bho d' chàirdean 's bho d' thìr.

Mun do thòisich am baiteal,
Nuair a ghluais iad air astar bhon champ,
'Dhol a dh'ionnsaidh a' chaisteil,
Cha do smaointich thu gealltachd 'san àm;
Bha thu beachdail 'ad nàdar
Nuair a ghlac thu le dànachd 'ad cheann,
'Dol air t' aghaidh neo-sgàthach
Gus na thuit thu 'sa 'bhlàr 'an robh 'n call.

Nuair a theann iad ri seasamh
'Thoirt a' bhaile gu gèill d' an *comannd*,
Bha do spiorad ag èirigh,
Chan i 'mhisneach a thrèig no do lann;
Nuair a dhìrich thu 'm fàradh,
Thàinig peileir bho d' nàmhaid 'na dheann,
Mun do bhuinig thu 'n àirde,
Rinn do leagadh gu làr aig a bhonn..

'S bochd an leagadh a fhuair thu,
Dh'fhàg e sinne ann an cruaidh-chàs nach gann,
Bho nach d' thàinig thu bhuaithe
Gun do ruighinn le luaidhe cho teann;
Sinn mar chaoraich gun bhuachaill
An dèidh an athar 'thoirt bhuath' anns a' ghleann,
Na mar dhilleachdain shuarach
Aig a' muime 'gam bualadh 's iad fann.

'S ionann sin 's mar a tha sinn,
Gun toilinntinn, gun slàinte, gun neart;
Cha tig feobhas gu bràch oirnn

19. A Lament, for Duncan MacInnes, of Tiree

It is I who has been wounded;
I received news whose magnitude was great,
About what happened to the young man,
It thrust a painful arrow through my heart;
My vision was dimmed
When I heard the news with certainty;
I cannot make a joyful bar of music,
Its sorrow will wound me in my loneliness.

It is of little surprise to me
To always be sorrowful and weary;
I am now all alone,
As was Ossian, and sadness has fatigued me,
Mourning the handsome young jewel,
Who was active, knowledgeable and perceptive;
Though I am poor at recounting you,
Pitiful is the woman who suckled you.

She found a reason or two
To be sorrowful, weak, and ill,
And she has no one about her
Of the children that she gave birth to and raised;
This is the trip that has pained her
To be reflecting on how you were motionless,
Losing blood on the battlefield,
And you so far from your people and your land.

Before the battle commenced,
When they moved quickly from the camp,
To go towards the castle,
You had no cowardly thought at the time;
You were of an authoritative nature
When you boldly got it into your head,
Going forward fearlessly
Until you fell in the loss-filled battle.

When you started the siege
To bring the town to surrender to our command
Your spirit was rising,
It was not courage that fled nor your blade;
When you climbed the ladder,
Bullets came from your enemies with great speed,
Before you had conquered the height,
You were felled to the ground at its base.

It is a pity the felling that you received,
It left us in very great hardship,
Since you did not return from it
Without being so severely struck by lead;
We are like sheep without a shepherd
After their father being taken away in the glen,
Or like miserable orphans
With their nurse, beaten and weak.

That is exactly how we are,
Without contentment, health or strength:
We will never recover

Bhon a bhuannaich am bàs ar cùl-taic';
'S o Dhidòmhnaich na Càisge
'S iomadh aon 'bha gun bhràthair, gun mhac,
Agus bean gun fhear-pòsta
Do na dh'èireadh le Deòrs' ann 'na fheachd.

Chaidh iad uile gu tapadh
Gus an nàmhaid a ghlacadh gun taing;
Chuir iad rompa le 'n cruadal
Gum buidhne' iad buaidh air an Fhraing;
Sin an latha 'thug dìth orra,
Nuair a sheas iad cho dìleas fon chrann
'Dh'fhaotainn onair don Rìoghachd,
Ged a rinneadh na mìltean diubh 'chall.

'S daor a phàighe sinn an onair
'Chaidh a bhuannachd 'sa 'choinneimh ud thall;
'S e do bhàs 'bhith 'na chomain
'Rinn ar fàgail mar cholainn gun cheann;
'S e 'thug sgrìob oirnn d' ar lomadh
Nach do thìll thu on turas a-nall
Air an deach thu don Olaint,
Thug sin cuimhneachain bròin duinn nach gann.

Ged a thèid mi 'san leaba,
Cha tig buaireadh a' chadail dham chòir
Ach a' smaointinn gu h-uaigneach
Air a' bhuille bhon d' fhuair thu do leòn;
Bha t' fhuil chraobhach a' sileadh,
'S i ri taosgadh air mhire 'feadh feòir,
'S i gun seòl air a dìobair',
'S gun do leigheas 'an innleachd nam beò.

Nuair a chuala sinn iomradh
Gu' robh sìth air a gairm 'san Roinn Eòrp',
Bha mi cinnteach is earbsach
Gu' fàgadh tu seirbhis Righ Deòrs';
Nam faigheadh tu 'shaoghal
Tigh'nn 'gam shealltainn man caochl'inn fon fhòid,
Dh'fhàsainn aigeannach, eutrom,
Chuirinn cùl ris an aois, 's bhithinn òg.

M' adhbhar gearain is m' ionndrainn
Nach do thill thu gu d' dhùthaich a nall;
'S ann an làraich na dunach
Bha thu t' shìneadh air t' uilinn gun chainnt;
'S e cho tric 's tha mi t' iargainn
A bhrosnaich gu liathadh mo cheann,
A chuir mo shùilean 'an doillead,
'S a chuir m' astar a' moillead gun fhonn.

Seo a' bhliadhna 'chuir às domh,
'Dh'fhàg mi èisleineach airsneulach trom,
'S a lughadaich mo mhisneach;
Tha mo chridh' air a bhristeadh 'am chom.
'S e mo smaointeannan trice
Nach tig sgrìobhadh na litir bho d' làimh;
Chuir mo shùilean cho silteach
'S bidh mi 'giùlan gun fhios na bheil ann.

Since death has vanquished our supporter;
And since Easter Sunday
Many a person has been without a brother or a son,
And many a wife without her husband
Of those who rose with George there, in his army.

You all went smartly
To capture their enemy in spite of it;
They decided, with their valour
That they would claim victory over France;
That was the day that brought them destruction,
When they stood so loyally under the standard
To win honour for the Kingdom
Though thousands of them were caused to be lost.

Greatly we paid for the honour
That was won in that encounter over yonder;
It is your death that was to be its recompense
That left us like a headless body;
What caused us the bereavement of our calamity
Was that you didn't return from the journey
On which you went to Holland,
That is what gave us so many sorrowful memories.

Though I will go to the bed,
The temptation of sleep will not come to me,
But reflecting with melancholy
Of the blow which caused your wounds;
Your blood was flowing freely,
And pouring wantonly through the grass,
And without a means of banishing it,
And without your cure in the art of the living.

When we heard a report
That peace had been announced in Europe,
I was certain and confident
That you would leave the service of King George;
And if you had (a full) lifetime,
To come to see me before I'm buried under ground,
I would grow giddy and light-hearted,
I would forget my old age, and would be young.

The reason for my complaint and my longing
Is that you didn't return to your country;
It is in the battlefield of woe
You were stretched out speechlessly on your back;
It is so often that I'm grieving for you
That hurriedly has caused my hair to turn grey
That has blinded my eyes,
And has slowed my unhappy pace.

This is the year that has done me in,
That's left me sorrowful, melancholy and gloomy,
And that has lessened my courage;
My heart is broken in my breast.
My frequent reflections are that
No writing or letter will come in your hand;
My eyes ran so moistly,
And I'll endure, without knowing what is there.

Chan urrainn mi 'ghiùlan,
Ged a bhios mi 'ga mhùchadh gun taing;
'S e 'bhith brònach is dù dhomh,
Bhon a rinneadh do dhùnadh gu teann
Ann an leaba na h-ùrach,
'S tu 'bhith d' chadal gun sùsan, gun srann;
'S e 'rinn goirt orm drùghadh
Thu 'bhith t' shìneadh fo shùgradh nan lann.

'S e mo chreach mar a dh'èirich,
Thàinig teachdair' bhon eug air do cheann,
Chuir sin buaireadh is teumadh
Ann am ìnntinn nach feumainn 'bhith ann,
Gur a duilich dhomh 'n cùnntadh,
'S iad cho lìonmhor a' dùsgadh 'san àm,
Gheibhinn cuimhneachan tùrsach,
Ged a leanainn as ùr air mo chainnt.

I cannot bear it,
Though I try to unstintingly repress it;
To be sorrowful befits my condition,
Since you were securely enclosed
In a bed of the earth,
And for you to be at sleep, not snoring or snorting;
What has caused pain to pierce me,
Is that you are laying under the play of the blades.

What has happened is my ruin,
A messenger from death has come upon your head,
That has put disturbance and suffering
In my mind that should not be there;
It is difficult for me to count them,
So plentifully are they awakening right now,
I would have sorrowful memories,
Though I would continue again in my discourse.

20. Cumha, do Chailean Caimbeul

Thàinig naigheachd don dùthaich
Nach bu shunndach ri ìnnse,
Tha mi 'smaointinn an còmhnaidh
Meud a bròin gun toilinntinn;
Sgeula bàis an duin' uasail
'Chaidh thar chuan bho cheann miosa,
Leam is duilich e 'ghluasad
Air a' chuairt nach do thill e.

'S iomadh aon a tha tùrsach
Bhon a dhùineadh 'sa 'chill e,
Ann an ciste chaoil, chuimte
An dèidh a dlùthadh gu dìonach;
Ann an cadal nach dùisg e,
'S mòr an ionndrainn, tha 'dhìth orra,
Bhon a chàireadh 'san uaigh e
Ann an suain far nach cluinn e.

'S ann fon fhòid sin am falach
'Tha 'm fear ceanalta, cliùiteach;
Cridhe farsainn na fialachd,
Làmh a riaraicheadh cùinneadh,
'Bha gu fiùghantach, cosgail,
Nach robh gortach na cunntach,
'S a bha measail gun mhòrchuis
'S mòran eòlais 'ga ghiùlan.

Cha robh gainne na crìne ann,
Cha do chuimhnich e 'n samhladh,
Cha do chleachd e 'bhith mi-thur,
Cha b' fhiach leis an ganntar;
Bha e ìochdmhor ri feumaich,
Gnùis a b' adhbhaich a' sealltainn,
'S math a ghiùlain e 'n saoghal
'Bha gu caochlaideach, meallta.

Cha do ghlac e 'na inntinn
A chuir cruinn le bhith sanntach,
'Gabhail brath air luchd-èiginn,
Cha b' fhear geur-chuiseach teann e;
Bha e ìochdmhor ri truaghain,
'Thoirt dhaibh fuasgladh à teanntachd,
'S e gun cuidicheadh suas iad
Nam biodh cruaidh-chàs na call orr'.

Gur lìonmhor iad deurach
Bhon a dh'eug e 's cha neònach,
A' sìor-chumhadh m' a dhèidhinn,
Fhuair iad reusan gu leòir air;
'S mòr a' bhearn a's na h-uaislean
E 'bhith uath' bho nach beò e,
'S nach faicear e tuille
Far an cruinnich iad còmhladh.

'An àm suidheachadh cùirte
Na cùis dham biodh aca,
'S e dham b' urrainn a rèiteach,
Bha gach ceutabh le tlachd air;

20. A Lament, to Colin Campbell

News came to the country
That was not joyful to relate,
I am thinking continually of
The size of its sorrow, without contentment;
A tale of death of the nobleman
Who went overseas a month ago;
I am sorry that he left
On the journey from which he did not return.

Many a person is sorrowful
Since he was shut in the churchyard,
In a narrow, well-made coffin,
After it was securely closed;
In a sleep from which he won't awaken,
Great is their longing, they need him,
Since he was buried in the grave,
In a slumber of silence.

That genteel, famous man
Is concealed under that turf;
Generous heart of hospitality,
A hand that would share out coinage,
Who was liberal and profuse,
Who was not miserly or thrifty,
And who was respectable, without being pompous
And much knowledge he carried.

There was no parsimony or meanness in him,
He did not recollect the like,
It was not his way to be niggardly,
Scarcity was not worthwhile to him;
He was merciful to the needy,
A face most joyous in appearance,
Well did he endure the world
That was fickle and deceitful.

He never took it into his mind
To put about by being greedy,
And deceiving the needy,
He was not a sharp, tight man;
He was merciful to the poor
To give them relief from adversity,
And it was he who would help them up
If they suffered difficulty or loss.

Numerous were they who were tearful
Since he died, and little wonder,
Constantly lamenting about him,
They had a good enough reason to;
Great is the hole left in the nobility
He away from them since he died,
And he will not be seen again
In the places they all gather.

At the time of a court hearing
Or a case that they would have,
It is he that could resolve it,
He enjoyed delighted approbation;

Cha b' fhear fàbhair na fuath e
Ach a' gluasad 'sa 'cheartas,
'Na fhior-nàmhaid don eucoir,
'S e le cèill a' cuir casg oirr'.

Gun robh ciall agus gliocas,
Mòran tuigse air a fastadh
Ann an com an duin' uasail
A bha cruadalach, sgairteil;
Am fear ceanalta, ciatach
'Chaidh Diciadain a phasgaidh,
Fo lic air a chàradh
'An Cille Mhàrtainn 'n fhasgaidh.

'An Cille Mhàrtainn 'na laidhe
Tha fear an taighe air a chòmhdach
Aig an taoghaileadh luchd-rathaid,
'Dheante 'm beatha le sòlas;
'S adhbhar mulaid d' a chàirdean
Gun do chàireadh fon fhòid e,
'S do na tighearnan Gàidhealach
A mheud 's a thàr dhiubh air eòlas.

Barr a' mholaich a staoileadh,
B' e sin oighreachd ri ìnnse,
Gun robh toiseach a dhaoine
'Mach à Teaghlach MhicIomhair;
Nam b' aithne dhomh seanachas
'S a leanmhainn gu 'shìnnsearra',
Bha e dìleas ri iarraidh
Do shliochd Dhiarmaid bho Dhùini.

'S ann an toiseach an t-sàmhraidh,
B' e sin àm na toilinntinn,
Thàinig fios gun do phòs e
Ri bean òig d' a fhuil dhìrich;
Nighean fir Chille Mhàrtainn,
Bu cheum àrd e ri dhìreadh,
Thagh e i 's cha bu chall da,
Às an dream a bha fiachail.

Aige fhèin 'bha 'bhean uasal
Nuair a bhuannaich e Sìlis,
Ann an giùlan 's an gluasad
'Bha suairce 'na h-ìnntinn;
Nan tige' i 'n àite,
Bhiodh a càirdean ann lìonmhor,
A-rèir a coltais 's a nàdair,
Dh'fhaoidte 'ghràitinn gum b' fhior e.

Nam bu mhaireann e 'làthair,
'S a làithean a shìneadh,
'S iomadh tè ann an Albainn
Dham biodh farmad ri 'mhnaoi-sa;
Gum b' e mi-fhortan cruaidh dhi
A ro-luath 's a chaidh crìoch air,
Bhon a chaidh e 'san anart,
Thàinig smal air a h-inntinn.

He was not a man of favour or aversion
But acted in justice,
He was a true enemy of injustice,
And with good sense prevents it.

There was sense and wisdom,
And much judgement is bound up
In the breast of the nobleman
Who was vigorous and energetic;
The handsome and comely man
Who was covered on Wednesday,
Who was buried under flag-stones
In Kilmartin of the shelter.

In Kilmartin in repose
Is the man of the house sheltered
With whom tourists would visit,
Their lives used to be made joyful;
It is a cause of grief to his friends
That he was laid under the turf,
And also to the Highland Lairds,
As many as came to know him.

Barmollach is his title,
That was an inheritance to be told,
That the beginnings of his people
Descended from the family of MacIver;
If I knew the oral traditions
And his kinship ties to his ancestors,
He was faithful when sought out
To the progeny of Diarmaid O' Dhuin.

It was at the start of summer,
That was the time of contentment,
News came that he had married
A young woman of his very own blood,
The daughter of the laird of Kilmartin;
It was a great step to climb,
He chose her and it was no loss to him
From the tribe that was worthy.

He himself had the noble wife
When he won Julia,
In carriage and in movement
Who was civil in her temperament;
If she were to come to the place,
Her friends would be there in numbers,
Based on her appearance and her nature,
It could be said that this would be true.

If he had be present longer,
And had his days been extended,
Many a woman in Scotland
Who would be jealous of his wife;
It was a hard misfortune for her
How quickly his life ended,
Since he was put in the burial shroud,
Sorrow came over her mind.

Chaidh a sgaradh bho 'ceannard,
'S òg a' bhantrach 'na dhèidh i,
Air a fàgail 'na h-ònrachd,
Tha i bronach fo èislein;
Nam bu *ghibht* a bhiodh buan dhi,
Am fear a fhuair i bhon 'chlèir,
Gum biodh an taigheadas cliùiteach,
Nam biodh ùine le chèile ac'.

She was separated from her leader,
Young was the widow left behind by him,
Left all on her own,
She is sorrowful and in grief;
Were it to be an enduring gift for her,
The man she got from the clergy,
The household would have been renowned,
If they had had the time together.

A' cheud Dihaoine don gheamhradh
Fhuair a' Bhaintighearna deuchainn,
'Bha 'ga fhaicinn 'san t-seòmar
Gun a chòmhdach ach lèine,
'Na shìneadh gun tionndadh,
'S a chainnt air a thrèigsinn,
Gun chlàisteachd, gun chòmhradh,
Agus sgleò air a lèirsinn.

The first Friday of the winter
The Lady suffered a trial,
Who saw him in the room
With no covering but a shroud,
Stretched out, without movement,
And his speech having departed,
No hearing, no conversation,
And darkness descended on his vision.

Bhon a chaidh e 'san tulaich,
Dh'fhàg a mulad i claoidhte,
'S nach robh aice d' a làithean
Suas air ràidhe agus miosa;
B' fheàrr gun cinneadh leis oighre
'S cha bhiodh roinn air a dhìleab,
Nam biodh mac air a ghiùlan,
Bhiomaid sunntach ri 'chluinntinn.

Since he went to the burial mound,
Her sorrow has left her exhausted,
She did not have more days with him
Than a season and a month;
It'd be better had he fathered an heir
So there'd be no division of his legacy,
If there had been a son borne,
We would be overjoyed to hear it.

Nam biodh oighre 'na ionad,
Bhiodh a chinneadh 's a dhìllsean
Ann an aighear 's an èibhneas;
B' e sin sgeul an toilinntinn
E 'bhith buan aig a mhàthair
Ann an àite na dh'imich,
Dhùisgeadh fonn anns a' bhaile,
Ged 'tha smal air a chrìochan.

If there'd been an heir in his place,
His kindred and his orphans
Would be happy and joyful;
It would be the tale of their contentment
For him to have survived with his mother
In their place, than to have departed;
Delight would break out in the township,
Instead of sorrow about its borders.

'S ann a dh'atharraich 'aogas
Mar gun caochladh na sìontan,
Tha lionn-dubh air an teaghlach
Ann an adhbhar a mhuinntireadh;
Bhon a ghluais e gu port,
Am fear a chosgadh am fìon ann,
Bhon Dimairt air na sheòl e,
Tha na seòmraichean diamhair.

Its appearance has certainly changed
As the elements would change,
The family has become depressed
In the cause of its servant;
Since he has gone to the port,
The man who would pay for the wine there,
From the Tuesday that he sailed,
The rooms have been lonely.

Bha mi leò anns a' bhàta
Nuair a dh'fhàg iad an tìr seo,
Gum bu phailte gach seòrsa
'Bha air bòrd anns a' ghnìomhaich;
Cha bhiodh duine a bhiodh làmh-ris
Ann am fàilinn na 'n iotadh,
'S e 'ga riarachadh saidhbhir
Às a làimh 'bu ghlan sìneadh.

I was with them in the boat
The day he left this land,
There was plenty of every sort
On a table in the business;
No one who would be with him
Was in want of anything, or thirsty,
While he distributes plentifully
From his hand of the purest giving.

Gun robh misneach 's eòlas
Mar ri fòghlam dha rèir sin
Anns an uachdaran ghasta,
Sàr-mharcaich nan steuda,
Agus sgiobair na mara

There was courage and knowledge
Along with learning to match that
In the excellent nobleman,
Exceptional rider of the steeds,
And a great sea skipper

Ri là greannach a' sèideadh,
'Stiùradh mion-shùileach, cinnteach,
'S e ri dìobair na dh'èireadh.

Bha e measail 'an Albainn
Agus ainmeil 'an Eirinn,
Thug an Diùc dha tairgse
Nuair a dh'fhalbh e le *Clèbher*,
Cha deanadh e 'dhiùltadh,
Chaidh e null, 's gun robh feum air,
A chuir casg air luchd mi-rùn
'Bha 'san Rìoghachd sin ag èiridh.

Gum bu ghasda an ceann-armailt,
An t-òg meanmnach nach trèigeadh,
Dhan robh 'phearsa dheas, dhealbhach,
Bhòidheach, chruinne-bhallach, eutrom,
A sheasadh inich air cabhsair,
Ann an àm a bhith 'g èigheach,
'S e 'toirt facail *comanndadh*,
'S gu mo cheannard roimh cheud e.

Thigeadh culaidh a' Ghàidheil
Air an àrmunn mar èideadh;
Còta goirid den sgàrlaid,
Osan geàrr agus 'fhèile,
Lann thana gheur stàilinn
Air cùl àlainn a shlèisde:
B' e sin coltas an t-saighdeir
'Chuireadh sgaoim fo gach reubal.

Rinn mi labhairt le dìcheall
Air a ghnìomhannan euchdach,
Cha do dh'aithris mi trian diubh
Don bu mhiann leam a leughadh;
Chan urrainn mi 'n ìnnse,
'S cha chuir m' inntinn an cèill iad,
Ged a b' ait leam an seanachas
'S gum biodh iomradh 'na dhèidh air.

When a wild day is blowing,
Steering sharp-eyed and certain,
And escaping from the waves that would rise.

He was respected in Scotland
And renowned in Ireland,
The Duke made him an offer
When he set off with Clavering,
He would not refuse him,
He went over, and he was needed,
To put down people of ill-will
Who were rebelling in that Kingdom.

He was excellent at the head of an army,
The brave youth who would not desert,
Who had the shapely, handsome
Beautiful, neat-limbed, light appearance,
Who would stand firmly on a pavement,
At the time to be calling,
Giving words of command,
And to my leader he was before a hundred.

The costume of the Gael
Would suit the hero as clothing;
A short coat of scarlet
Short hose and his kilt,
A thin, sharp blade of steel
On the lovely backside of his thighs:
That was the appearance of the soldier
That would put fear in each rebel.

I have spoken with diligence
About his valorous deeds,
I haven't reported a third of them
Of which I would want to read;
I am not able to relate them,
And my mind cannot express them,
Though I'd be joyful to report them
So that there would be a record of him.

21. Cumhadh, do dh'Iain Caimbeul

An sgeul a thàinig à Grianaig,
Gun do mheudaich e dhomh bròn;
'S tric a' tighinn fo shuim dhomh e,
'Ga chuimhneachadh gach lò;
Mun òigear uasal shìbhealta
'Bh' air chuairt 'san talamh ìosail seo,
Dihaoine chaidh a thiodhlacadh
'An dìomhaireachd fon fhòid.

Didòmhnaich dh'fhàg e Glaschu,
'S e làidir, bras 's gach dòigh,
Gu fallain, slàn neo-airsnealach,
'S e 'g astrachadh gun leòn;
Diluain a bhuail an acaid e,
Dimàirt bha 'm bàs an taice ris,
Diciadain sin a b' fhaisge
Chaidh a phàsgadh air a' bhòrd.

'S ann gun fhios d' a chàirdean
'Bha deuchainn ghàbhaidh 'n òig,
Gun duine aca 'bhith là' ris
'Ga chàradh mar bu chòir;
Bha 'n t-eug a' streap le spàirn ris,
Bha saighead gheàrr 'n sàs aig' ann,
'Ga bhuannachd gus na thàlaidh e
Ri ùine gheàrr gu leòir.

'S muladach a mhàthair,
Air a sàrachadh le bròn,
'S 'athair, chan e is feàrr 'tha dheth,
'S an cràdh an dèidh a leòn;
Ri smaointeachadh an àilleagain
A dh'imich air na bàtaichean,
Nuair 'ghluais e roimh Fhèill Màrtainn
Às a' Ghàidhealtachd le 'dhròbh.

B' e sin an gluasad èisleanach
'Dh'fhàg iadsan deurach, trom,
A h-uile là a dh'èireas iad
'Nan cridhe fhèin tha toll;
'S e 'g ùrachadh neo-èibhinn daibh
A' cuimhneachadh mar 'dh'èirich dha,
Gun fhuasgladh 'bhith aig lèigh dha
Nuair 'bha e 'n èiginn theann.

Gun d' rinn am bàs a chuartachadh
'S e fada bhuaibh 'san àm,
Bu ghrad a rinn e 'bhualadh
'S gum bu chruadalach ur call;
'S e sin a dh'fhàg 'san uair seo sibh
Mar luing an dèidh a fuadachadh,
'S a siùil 's a buill air fuasgladh,
'S i 'sa chuan air bhàrr nan tonn.

B' e seo an geamhradh deurach
'Thug sgrìob gheur orra 'bha lom,
Bhon 'chaill iad an t-òg ceutach
Às a dhèidh gu bheil iad fann;

21. A Lament to John Campbell

The news that came from Greenock,
Has made my sorrow grow;
Often he comes to my attention,
I remember him each day;
About the noble, civil young man
Who was with us on this low island,
Friday he was buried
In secrecy under the sod.

He left Glasgow on Sunday,
He was completely strong and swift,
Healthily, fitly and merrily,
He was journeying without harm;
But on Monday a pain struck him,
By Tuesday he was at death's door,
And on that nearest Wednesday,
He was wrapped in sheets on the table.

Unbeknownst to his friends
Was the young man's terrible distress,
Without any of them with him
Caring for him as they should have;
Death was struggling violently with him,
He was in the grasp of its sharp arrow,
Winning him until he was hushed to sleep
In a time that was short enough.

Sorrowful is his mother,
Exhausted by her sadness,
And his father, he is no better for it
He is in pain after his injury;
To be considering of the little jewel
Who departed with the boats,
When he set out before Martinmas
From the Highlands with his drove.

That was the sorrowful departure
That left them tearful and sad,
Every day that they arise
In their hearts there is a hole;
It is unhappily refreshing for them
To be remembering what happened to him,
Without a surgeon having any cure for him
When he was in keen distress.

Death had enveloped him
And he was far from you at the time,
Suddenly did it strike him
And grievous was your loss;
It is this that has left you at this time
Like a ship driven off its course,
Its sails and its ropes undone,
While at sea, tossed on the waves.

This was the tearful winter
That brought a sharp, cutting calamity to them,
Since they lost the handsome youth
After his loss they are feeble;

'S e 'dh'fhàg gun lùths gun lèirsinn iad
Bhon 'phaisgeadh anns na lèintean e,
'Na shìneadh air an dèile
'S gun iad fhèin 'bhith bhos a cheann.

'S ann fo na bùird 'na shìneadh
'Tha 'm fear 'bu shìobhailt' cainnt,
'S an cridhe glan 'bha firinneach
Gun fhoill, gun ghiamh, gun mheang;
Tha 'phàrantan mar dhìnnleachdain
'Ga iargainn gus an crìochnaich iad,
Tha 'm bròn an dèidh an ciosnachadh,
'S gun d' fhàg e tinn an clann.

Gur i creach na Ciadaoin ud
'Thug bhuatha 'm bliadhna 'chìs,
Bu daor am pàigheadh ainmhidh dhi,
Cha b' airgead 's cha bu nì,
Ach Iain òg à Sgàirinis
Gun iad fhèin 'bhith 'n àite seanachais da
Mun do ghiùlaineadh air falbh e
Ann an ciste mhairbh don chill.

Gur h-ann 'an tùs a' gheamhraidh
An dèidh shamhna teann air mìos,
Bha dùil ac' anns na tràthaibh sin
E 'thigh'nn gach là don tìr;
Bu chruaidh am fios a ràinig iad
Gur anns an uaigh a chàireadh e,
Bha bròn an ionad gàirdeachais
'S cha b' ioghnadh e air chinnt.

Bidh cuimhne ac' air a' bhliadhna
'N ochd ceud deug 's an t-seachd deug,
Gun d' fhuair iad mòran reusain
A bhith cianail às a dhèidh;
Ged bhiodh iad òg gun liathadh iad
Ri caoidh an fhir a riaraich iad,
Gun deach gach cùis bho riaghailt
Bhon a thriall e gus an fhèill.

Tha 'bhùth an dèidh a ghlasadh
Far 'm bu chleachdainn leis a bhith,
'S a leabhraichean an tasgaidh ann
Bho làimh bu ghasda 'sgrìobh;
Bu ghrinn e-fhèin 'gan ceartachadh
'S bu shìobhalta ri 'fhaicinn e,
Bu bhòidhche cumadh pearsa
Don fhear dheas 'bu sgairteil gnìomh.

Bu tùrail, eòlach, tapaidh e,
Bu bheachdail air gach nì,
Gu ciallach, fialaidh, faicilleach,
Le aoidh, le tlachd 's le sìth;
Nan deanadh daoine ceartas ris,
Cha bhiodh e cruaidh 'nan airc orra,
'S e math do thuath nam bailtean
'Bheireadh luach dha 'steach gun strì.

What has left them without strength or sight
Since he was wrapped in the burial shrouds,
Stretched out on the coffin,
And without they themselves being at his side.

It is under the boards stretched out
That is the man of the most civil conversation,
The pure heart that was honest
Without deceit, fault, or blemish;
His parents are like orphans
Bewailing his loss until they die,
Their sorrow has worn them out
And it has left their children sick.

It is the plunder of that Wednesday
That took from them this year the heavy tax,
Costly was the brutal payment for it,
But not in money or worldly goods,
But young John from Scaranish
They were not present to converse with him
Before he was carried away
In the coffin of the dead to the graveyard.

It is at the start of winter
Almost a month after Hallowtide,
They expected at those times
That he would return each day to the island;
Hard was the news that reached them
That he was buried in the grave,
There was sadness in the place of happiness
And that would certainly be no surprise.

They will remember the year
Eighteen hundred and seventeen,
They had much reason
To be mournful after him;
Though they would be young they'd turn grey
Lamenting the man who pleased them,
Every thing has become disorderly
Since he left to go to the fair.

His shop has been locked
Where he had formerly used to be
And his books are stored there
Which were written in the most excellent hand;
He was himself excellent at correcting them
And he was the most civil to be seen,
Most beautiful was the appearance
Of the fine man of the vivacious deeds.

He was shrewd, knowledgeable and clever,
He was authoritative in every way,
Sensibly, hospitably, observantly,
With joy, with pleasure and with peace;
If people did justice to him,
He would not be harsh on them in their distress,
It is kindness to the tenants of the farms
That would value in to him without strife.

Gun chàireadh anns an tulaich e
'S ro dhuilich leam gur fìor,
'S e 'dh'fhàg a chàirdean uireasach
Mun turas nach do thill;
'S e 'm bàs 'thug stràc na dunach dhaibh,
Gu bràch chan fhaic iad tuille e,
Tha 'mhàthair tric a' tuireadh air,
'S a mulad air a claoidh.

That he was placed in the tomb
It's too hard for me that it's true,
It is what has left his relations destitute
About the trip from which he didn't return;
It is the death that was a disastrous blow for them,
They will never see him ever again,
His mother frequently mourns him,
And her grief has worn her out.

Cho fad 's a bhios i 's t-saoghal seo,
Chan fhàg a' ghaoid ud i,
Gur cràiteach, goirt a smaointeannan
'S chan fhaod i 'n cumail sìos;
B' e seo an geamhradh caochlaideach
'Leig fuaradh 'dh'ionnsaidh 'n teaghlaich ud,
'Chuir saighead anns gach taobh aice,
M' an laogh 'bha air a cìch.

As long as she is in this world,
That stain will not leave her,
Her thoughts are tortured and painful
And she cannot keep thinking them;
This was the fickle winter,
That unleashed a blast upon that family,
That put an arrow in both her sides,
Concerning the calf that she had weaned.

Gu bheil an fheòil cho lag-chùiseach,
'S i grad gu dùsgadh suas,
'S e buaireadh 'bhith 'nar n-aignean
A dhìt air fad an sluagh;
Ach biodh ar dùil a' neartachadh
'San Aon a fhuair a mhaslachadh,
'Thoirt saorsa dhuinn 'nar peacaidhean,
Am beachd sin a chuir bhuaibh.

That the flesh is so weak,
And quick to be aroused,
And that temptation is in our dispositions
That completely condemned the people;
But let our hopes be strengthened
In the One who was disgraced,
To give freedom to us from our sins,
To put that behaviour away from you.

Chan eil stà 'bhith 'cuimhneachadh
Na 'caoidh na chaidh 'san uaigh,
Nam b' urrainn sibh a chuidhteachadh,
Bhiodh sìth agaibh mar dhuais;
Ach biodh ur n-ùrnaigh dìcheallach
Gu dùrachdach bho 'r n-ìnntinn,
Gun gabh e còmhnaidh shìorraidh
Leis an Tì sin a thug buaidh.

There is no use in remembering
Or lamenting he who was buried,
If you were able to part with him
You would have peace as your reward;
But let your prayers be diligent,
Fervently from your mind,
That he will find eternal rest
With that Being who won victory.

22. Cumhadh, do Mhaighstir Eamann MacCuinn, Ministear Bharra

An sgeul 'thàinig à Uibhist
A mheudaich bròn do bhean chuibhir,
Chuir e 'sùilean go snighe,
'S goirt a ràinig e 'cridhe;
Gu robh 'cèile gun bhruidheann,
Air a chàradh 'na uidheam
Ge' nach b' ann airson tighinn 'na shlàinte.

'S beag an t-ioghnadh dhi-fhèin siud
'Bhith gu muladach, deurach,
A' sìor-chumhadh mu dhèi'nnibh
On a bhuannaich an t-eug e,
Fear na misnich 's na cèillidh
Air a phasgadh 'sna lèintean,
'S iad 'ga ghiùlan air spèicean gu 'bhàta.

A thigh'nn air aiseag don dùthaich,
'S e fon bhòrd gun chead tionnda'
Ann an ciste chaoil, chuimte,
An dèidh a sparradh 's a dlùthach;
'Dhol a leigeal 'san tunga
'An Cill' a' Bharra gun dùsgadh
Far na ghabh i 'n cead tùrsach dheth 'là sin.

B' e 'n cead deireannach cianail
A ghabh ise Diciadaoin,
Chaill i companach ciatach
'Bha gu fiùghantach, fialaidh;
'S beag an t-ioghnadh i 'liathadh
'S gur a tric i 'ga iargainn
Bhon a chuir iad 'san lìon-aodach bhàis e.

Fo na clàir air an dùnadh,
Ann an leaba na h-ùrach
Chuir i adhbhar a h-ionndrainn;
'S i mar luing 'bhiodh gun chùrsa
'Ruith air cladach gun *chriù* oirre,
Gun fhear-eòlais na -stiùraidh,
'Chaill a combaiste, a siùil 's a croinn àrda.

Na mar chraoibh air a rùsgadh
'Bhiodh gun duilleach, gun ùbhlan,
Ach an dèidh a spùineadh
'S a stoc mar bu dù dha
Ri crìonadh 's ri sùghadh
Ann an toiseach na dùbhlachd,
Cha chuir Earrach no Lùnasdal blàth air.

'S ann mu thràthaibh na Bealltainn,
Ann an toiseach an t-Samhraidh,
'Thàinig di-chuimhn' 'bha teann oirre
'Dh'fhàg gu h-èisleanach fann i,
Fhuair i reusan nach gann air,
Fear a taighe 's a ceannard 'ga fàgail
Fear a taighe 's a ceannard 'ga fàgail.

22. A Lament, for Mr. Edmund MacQueen, the Minister of Barra

The news that came from Uist
That increased the sorrow of the elegant wife,
It caused her eyes to well up with tears,
Painfully it reached her heart;
That her spouse was without speech,
Laid out in his full dress,
Though not to bring him back to full health.

That is little wonder to her herself
To be sorrowfully and tearfully
Ever lamenting about him
Since death has claimed him;
A man of courage and wisdom
Wrapped up in the burial shrouds,
And them carrying him on props to his boat.

To come by ferry to his country
Him under a lid, robbed of motion
In a narrow, well-made coffin,
Closed shut and tightly sealed;
To go to be lowered in the grave
In Kilbarr's churchyard to rest,
Where she took her sad leave of him that day.

It was the last melancholy farewell
That she took on Wednesday,
She lost a handsome companion
Who was liberal and hospitable;
It is little surprise that she is greying
And is often bewailing him,
Since they put him in the death shroud.

Under the tightly sealed boards,
In a bed of the soil
She placed the source of her longing;
She's now like a ship gone off course
That ran aground without a crew on her,
Without a navigator or a helmsman
That lost her compass, her sails and her high masts.

Or like a tree that has been sheared
That would be without leaves, without apples,
But after its plundering
And its trunk, as would be natural
Is to wither and to dry up
At the start of the winter,
Neither Spring nor Summer will make it bloom.

It was about the beginning of Beltaine,
At the start of the Summer,
That came an oblivion that was intense for her
That left her wretched and weak,
She found an abundant reason for this,
The man of her house and her chief has left her,
The man of her house and her chief has left her.

'S on a chuir iad 'san uaigh e,
Tha i brònach, ro uaigneach,
Gun toilinntinn ri uaislean,
'S i gun chèile ri 'guallainn,
Na 'na leaba air 'cluasaig;
'S goirt an t-saighead seo 'bhuail i
Nuair a thog iad air ghluasad o thràigh e.

'S ann 'ga ghiùlan aig fearaibh
Ann an cùis gun 'bhith maireann
'Dhol 'san tunga am falach,
Bha 'n duin' uasal ri 'fharraid;
Maighstir Eamann à Barra,
Cha robh a leithid ach ainneamh
On a dh'eug Maighstir Ailean, a bhràthair.

Do dh'fhear foghainteach, calma,
'Bha gu misneachail, meanmnach,
Cliùiteach, miosail, ro ainmeil;
B' e sin sgiobair na fairge
Nach robh gealtach na leanabail,
'S gum bu tric e 'ga dhearbhadh,
'S e cho math 'san Albainn mar snàmhaich'.

Bha gach buaidh air a dh'anabharr,
Nam b' aithne dhomh a sheanachas,
'S an ìnnse gun dearmad,
Gum bu chruaidh gun chearb e
'Dheanadh ceannard air armachd,
Ann an spionnadh 's an an-athadh,
Nan cleachd an tùs 'aimsir ri blàir e.

'S ann a shocraich e 'inntinn
'Na Mhinistear sgìreachd,
'Dhol a leughadh a' Bhìobaill
Mar theachdaire cinnteach;
Gu liubhairt na fìrinn
Air cunnart 'am binne,
Leis na comhairlean dìleas 'bu chàirdeil.

'S math a dh'aithnich e 'n saoghal
Fad 's a bha e air faotainn,
Bha e ìochdmhor ri feumaich
'S aig gach duine bha gaol air,
Gus an dàinig an t-aog air
'Chuir fo bhuilleabh nan saor e
'S a chuir sgapadh 'san teaghlach a dh'fhàg e.

O, 's e 's crìoch dhuinn gu h-uile
'Dhol don taobh sin air thuras,
Thig am bàs air gach duine,
Chan eil stà 'bhith 'gan tuire;
Chan iarramaid tuille
Ach Teàrlach a dh'fhuireach
'Thoirt toilinntinn 'na mulad d' a mhàthair.

Gus am fàsadh e fearail,
Mar bu dual da o sheanair
'Choisinn buaidh air na Gallaibh,

Since he was put in the grave,
She is sorrowful and exceedingly lonesome
Without pleasure in the company of nobles
With no spouse by her side,
Or in her bed resting on her pillow;
Painful is the arrow that has struck her
When they lifted to move him from shore.

He is carried by men
In the event, no longer alive
To go into the darkness of the grave
He was a gentleman to his backbone;
Reverend Edmund from Barra,
His like was only rarely found
Since the death of his brother, Mister Allan.

To a strong and robust man
Who was courageous and bold,
Renowned, respected and exceedingly famous;
It was he who was a great skipper of the seas
Who was not cowardly or childish,
And often did he prove it,
As he was as good a swimmer as any in Scotland.

He had every virtue to excess,
If I had the capability to express it
And to relate them without neglect,
He was brave, without defect
Who would have made a fine army commander
In strength and in courageousness
If he had in his youth employed them in battles.

He had fixed in his mind
As a parish Minister,
To proclaim the Bible
As an unerring messenger;
In delivering preaching
About the danger of their fate,
With the most tender faithful counsellor.

He perceived the world well
To the extent that it could be,
He was merciful to the needy,
And he was well loved by all,
Until death came upon him,
Which put him under the blows of the joiners
And which has scattered the family he has left.

O, it is the end for us all
To go to that side on a voyage,
Death will come to every man
It's no use to us to mourn them;
We would not want more
Than for Charles to stay
To give comfort to the sadness of his mother.

In order that he may become manly,
As is his legacy from his grandfather
Who won victory over the Lowlanders,

'S a thug cùis diubh 'gan aindeoin,
'S a fhuair cliù do MhacCailean
Nuair a thilg e 'chlach-eallaich,
Chuir e suas air an fhearainn thar chàich i.

Gur mòr mo chùis-mhulaid
A bhith 'cluinntinn à Muile
A' mac a thàinig on duine ud,
Mar 'bha Còirneal na Sgurra,
'Bhith 'na shìneadh air uilinn
'An seòmar nan uinneag,
'S nach tig timcheall le furan a chàirdean.

'S ann a dh'fhalbh iad gu buileach
Às an àite seo tuillle,
Sliochd Nèill bhàin 'bu mhòr urram
'S a thug bàrr air na h-uiread
Ann an àilleachd 's a' spionnadh,
O nach fhaodar an cumail,
Gu dè feum 'nì e dhuinne 'bhith 'gan àireamh.

Gum b' iad sin an sliochd uasal,
Clann Ghilleain a' chruadail,
A bha 'n Dubhairt na' stuaidheabh,
Chaidh Sir Iain a ghluasad
Leis a' ghòraich' air fuadach,
Chaill iad còir air bhon uair sin;
B' e 'bhith rìoghail gun bhuannachd do chàch e.

Who won victory over them in spite of them
And who won renown for Campbell of Argyll
When he threw the heavy-stone,
He put it up on the field past the rest.

Great is my reason of sorrow
To be hearing from Mull
The son who descended from that man,
As did the Colonel of Scour,
To be stretched out on his elbow
In the room of the many windows
And who will not come round to the welcome of his relations.

They have all completely departed
From this place forever,
The descendants of fair Neil of the greatest respect,
And who surpassed so many
In handsomeness and in strength,
Since one is unable to keep them
What good will it do us to be numbering them.

It was they who were the noble tribe,
Clan MacLean of the virtue,
Who were in Duart of the gables,
Sir Iain was moved,
Because of foolishness banished,
They have lost title to it from that time;
It was for him to be regal without profit for the rest.

23. Cumhadh, do Ghilleasbaig MacGilleain, Fear na Sgurra

Fhuair mi sgeula nach b' ait leam,
Am bròn a bh' ac' anns an Sgùrr
'Thug air falbh an toilinntinn
A' cheud mhìos don bhliadhn' ùir;
Gun robh an Còirneal gasta
An dèidh a thasgaidh 'san ùir,
'S iomadh aon 'bha 'ga acain,
Agus fras air an sùil.

'S beag an t-ioghnadh dhaibh fhèin siud
A bhith deurach, gun sunnd,
Bhon a chàireadh fo lic' e
Chaidh a' misneach air chùl;
Gur e sealladh a fhuair iad
'S goirt a dh'fhuasgail dhaibh tùrs',
Nuair a chladhaicheadh uaigh dha
'S a chorp uasal 'na grunnd.

Bha 'chorp uasal 'na shìneadh
'S gun do dhìon air ach buird,
Nuair a leagadh 'sa 'chill e
Gum bu chianail a sùrd;
Bu mhòr mulad na h-oidhch' ud,
'S iad ri cuimhneachainn ùr,
Air na dh'fhàg iad gun ghluasad
'Na leab' uaignich 'san tùng'.

'Na leab' uaignich 'sa 'chaibeal
Ann an cadal nach dùisg,
Chuir iad ceannard na h-armailt,
'S tric a dhearbh e le cliù;
'S 'an àm suidheachadh làraich
Bhiodh na Gàidheil ri 'chùl.
'Dol air adhairt neo-sgàthach,
'S e nach àicheadh a ghnùis.

Cha do dh'ionnsaich e gealtachd,
Cha bu chleachdainn da 'riamh
Gun leughadh e 'n giorag,
Na gun tilleadh le fiamh;
'Dol an còmhdhail a' bhaiteil
Bhiodh a thaic deich ceud,
Air an cruinneachadh fo bhrataich
Do dh'fhir thlachdmhor, 's b' e 'mhiann.

Nuair a gluaiste bhon 'champ iad
Bhiodh iad sanntach gu gnìomh,
Dhùisgeadh spiorad na h-Alba annt'
Nuair a sheirmeadh a' phìob;
Bhiodh an Còirneal air thoiseach
'S e 'gam brosnachadh sìos,
'Dheanamh cosnadh gun chearbaich
'S gun ar n-airm a thoirt dhibh.

Chìte deàrrsadh an teine
'Cuir am peileirean cian,
'S iad mar chuileanan òga,

23. A Lament, to Archibald MacLean, the Laird of Scour

I received news that did not please me,
Of their sadness in Scour
That took away their happiness
In the first month of the new year;
That the excellent Colonel
Had been laid in the earth,
Many a person was bewailing him,
And heavy tears were in their eyes.

That is little surprise for them
To be tearful and without joy,
Since he was buried under the tombstone
Their courage has perished;
It is the sight that they got
That painfully did cause them grief,
When a grave was dug for him
And his noble body was placed at its bottom.

His noble body was stretched out
Without any protection but the coffin lid,
When he was lowered into the grave
Mournful was her disposition;
Great was the sadness of that evening,
As they remembered once again,
The one they had left motionless
In his lonely bed in the graveyard.

In his lonely bed in the burial ground
In a sleep from which he would not wake,
They placed the commander of the army,
Often he demonstrated it, with renown;
And when arranging the battlefield
The Gaels would be at his back,
Going forward without fear,
Something that his face would not betray.

He never learned cowardice,
It was never customary to him
That he would think of dread,
Or that he would retreat in fear;
Going to encounter the battle
His support would number one thousand,
Gathered under a banner
Of the handsome men, as was his wish.

When they would be moved from the camp
They would be desirous for action,
The spirit of Scotland would rise in them
When the bagpipe would sound;
The Colonel would be in the van
He would be enciting them on,
To earn victory without fault
And without our army taken from you.

The gleaming of the fire would be seen
Shooting their bullets a great distance
And they were like young pups

Na mar leòghainn gun bhiadh;
Gus an cluinneadh iad facal
'Tigh'nn le spraic às a' bhial
'Toirt dhaibh òrdagh 'bhith aca
'Dhol a shracadh am bian.

Chluinnte faram an làmhaich
'Cuir an nàimhdean gu dì,
Nuair a bhuidhne' iad buaidh orr'
Leante an ruaig air an druim;
Gum biodh cuid dhiubh 'san uair sin
A sgairte' an guaillnean bho 'n cinn,
Agus mòran air iomain
Gun chead tilleadh gu strì.

'S ann le cruadal a ghaisgeadh
Rachadh neart dhiubh fo dhìon,
'S ann 'am priosanaibh glaiste
'S cuid 'an tasgaidh 'sa 'chill;
'S tric a chonnsaich e feachd dhiubh
Gus am faighte iad fo 'chìs,
Ceum air adhairt a b' ait leis
'N àm am bratach 'thoirt sios.

B' e sin curaidh cho ainmeil
'S a bha 'n Albainn ri 'linn,
'S òg a chaidh e thar fairge
'Dheanamh seribhis don Rìgh;
Ged a thill e gun 'mharbhadh
Chaidh gu h-an'manta 'chlaoidh
Le bhith daonnan 'an cunnart,
A' bualadh bhuillean cho dian.

Caite 'm fac' e air astar
A h-aon dham paisgeadh e 'lann,
Gus am feuchadh e 'spionnadh
A bha 'na shlinneinean 's 'na làimh;
Nach bu shuarach ri 'shireadh
Cha bu mhire 'bhiodh ann,
Ge' b' e 'gheibheadh e 'n iasad,
Bhiodh a riaghailt air chall.

'S bhiodh an t-iasad gun phàighe
Ann an làraich nam bonn,
Dheante liubhairt bho 'ghàirdean
Cha b' ann fàilinneach, fann;
Ann an comain na tàmailt
'Bheirte dhàsan 'na gheall,
Rachadh crìoch air a làithean,
Am fear bhon tàradh e 'chainnt.

Chan eil beò air a chinneadh,
Ged 'tha iomadh fear treun,
Leithid Còirneil na Sgurra
Ann an cumachd 's a' meud;
Bha e àrd ann an spiorad,
'S ann an spionnadh dha rèir,
Beachdail, misneachail, dàna,
'S e 'toirt bàrr air an cèill.

Or like lions without food;
Until they heard word
Coming like a reproof from his mouth
Giving them an order to be at them
To go to tear at their skins.

The sound of their shooting would be heard
Putting their enemies to destruction,
When they would win victory over them
The chase would follow hard behind them;
Some of them would at that time be
Whose heads would be severed from their shoulders,/And many having been driven
Without permission to return to battle.

It is with the bravery of his heroism
That many would come under his protection,
In locked prisons
And some stored up in the graveyard;
Often did he conquer an army of them
Until they would be found in his thrall,
A bold step forward was his preference
At the time of bringing down their banner.

He was a warrior as famous
As their was in Scotland in his age,
When young he went overseas
In the service of the King;
Though he returned without being killed
He was courageously exhausted
By being always in danger,
Striking blows so eagerly.

Where did he see at a distance
One for whom he would sheathe his sword,
In order that he would test his strength
That was in his thighs and his hands;
It would not be trifling to search him out
It would not be play that would be found
Though whatever he'd get as credit
His sense would be lost.

The credit would be without repayment
Right on the spot,
A delivery from his arms would be given
That would not be faint or weak;
In return for an insult
That would be given to him as a wager,
A quick end would come to his days,
The man from whom he'd induce such talk

There are none left in his kindred,
Though there is many a strong man,
Like the Colonel of Scour
In power and in size;
He was great in spirit
And in strength to match,
Authoritative, courageous and bold,
He exceeded them in good sense.

Bha e ceannsalach, smachdail
Ann an cleachda' 's am beus,
'Chumail onair a dhùthchadh
Air an cùl mar fhear-glèidht';
Bha e dìleas fon bhrataich,
Chuir e 'n reachd sin an cèill,
'S iomadh nàmhaid a sgap e
Às an cairtealan fhèin.

He was authoritative and commanding
In habit and in virtue,
To keep the honour of his country
In support of them as a protector;
He was loyal under the banner
He gave expression to that authority,
Many an enemy he scattered
Out of their very own quarters.

Ma thig cogadh as ùr oirnn
'S gum bidh 'n Crùn ann an èis,
'S mòr an ionndrainn bhon Rìoghachd
Gun do strìochd e don eug;
Gun a mhac a bhith làthair
A sheasamh 'àite roimhn' treud,
Ann an ionad an àrmainn
Nach robh sgàthach roimh bheud.

If war afflicts us again
And the Crown is in difficult straits,
Great will be the regret in the Kingdom
That he has submitted to death;
Without his son to be present
To stand in his place before his followers,
In the place of the warrior
Who was never fearful in the face of a blow.

Cò 'nì an claidheamh a ghiùlan
Leis nach diùltadh e beum,
'Thoirt do dh'aon 'thigeadh dlùth air
Ann an cùisibh neo-rèidh;
Cha bhi cruadal air chall air
Ann an aimhreit na 'n streup,
Cha do thachair gin thall ris
Air na sheall e 'na dhèidh.

Who will be able to carry the sword
With which he would not refuse to strike a blow,
To anyone who would draw near to him
In matters that are not peaceful;
Hardiness will not be lost on him
In a quarrel or a skirmish
He has never met anyone
On whom he looked back.

Gum bu ghasta an ceann armailt,
Gaisgeil, ainmeil gu feum,
Laoch gun tiomadh, gun athadh,
Ursann-chatha roimh cheud;
Ann an dùthchannan ainmeil
Dheante soilleir leis euchd,
Bhiodh na Frangaich gun anail
A' call na fala air an fheur.

Excellent was the army commander,
Heroic and famous in time of need,
A hero who was neither fearful nor timid,
A bulwark in battle before hundreds;
In many famous countries
Valiant feats would made clear by him,
The Frenchmen would be lifeless
Losing blood on the grass.

Cò 'b' urrainn a sheanachas
Na 'thoirt dearbhaidh gu lèir,
Fad 's a rinn e do dh'astar
Air a thapadh 's gach cearn;
Ach na fir a bha còmhl' ris
Anns a' chomhraig iad fhèin,
Dh'innse' iadsan bho 'n eòlas
Nach robh sgleò ann am sgeul.

Who could give a proper account
Or provide complete proof,
Of all the distance he travelled,
Of his skill in each locale;
But the men who were with him
In the battle, they themselves,
They would attest, from their knowledge
That there was no inaccuracy in my tale.

24. Marbhrann do Chòirneal Iain Camshroin an Fhàsaich Fheàrna

Latha dhomhsa air a' Chorpaich
'S mi ri astar mun cuairt ann,
Fhuair mi sealladh do sgrìobhadh
A chuir m' inntinn gu gluasad;
Cliù a' Chòirnealair phrìseil
'Tha 'na shìneadh 'san fhuar-lic,
Bu mhòr onair don rìoghachd,
'S fhad 'bhios cuimhne air a chruadal.

'B ann d' a chruadal 's d' a chleachdainn
Gun 'bhith gealtach na luaineach
Air thoiseach na h-armailt,
'S gum bu chalma 'an ceann sluaigh e;
Sin a' chùis a bha dearbhte
A-rèir an t-seanachais a fhuair mi,
Nuair a ghiùlain iad marbh e
Dh'ionns' an talmhanta on 'ghluais e.

Sin an giùlan 'bha brònach
Mu Shrath Lòchaidh do dh'uaislean,
Ursainn-chatha nan còmhrag
'Bhith fo bhòrdaibh 'an uaigneas;
'S e 'chuir fras air an sùilean
Anns gach dùthaich mun cuairt dhaibh,
Gun do rinneadh a chiùrradh
Le neart fùdair is luaidhe.

'S lìonmhor blàr agus batail
'Chuir e seachad roimh 'n uair sin,
Agus nàmhaid a sgap e,
'Gan glacadh 's 'gan ruagadh;
'S iomadh naidheachd na leughadh
Timcheall trèinead an uasail,
Gus an làrach mu dhèireadh
Na rinn am peilear a bhualadh.

'S ann le buille na dòrainn
'Thuit an Còirnealair ainmeil,
'G a' robh misneach is fòghlam
'S mòran eòlais a dh'anabharr;
'An àm tarraing 'an òrdan
Le fir mhòra neo-chearbach,
Seasach, ceannasach, dìleas,
Nach do strìochd gun a mharbhadh.

Bha e àrdanach, beachdail,
Rìoghail, reachdmhor, ro-mheanmnach,
Ann an adhbhar a dhùthcha
Rinn e 'chùis sin a dhearbhadh;
Gun aomadh 's gun lùbadh
Gus na bhrùchd air an t-anabharr
'Rinn a leagadh 'san àraich,
'S a thug beàrn à Cloinn Chamshroin.

'S mòr 'tha diùbhail a chinnidh,
Seo i 'n iomairt 'bha searbh dhaibh,
Mun òganach inich

24. An Elegy to Colonel John Cameron of Fassifern

I was one day in Corpach
On a journey round about there,
I got a glance of some writing
Which put my mind into motion;
The fame of the precious Colonel
Who is stretched out under the cold stones,
Great was his fame in the kingdom,
And long will his courage be remembered.

It was to his courage and his habit
Not to be cowardly or uncertain
At the head of the army,
And he was resolute in leading his people;
That was the matter which was proven
According to the reports that I received,
When they carried his lifeless body
Back to the lands from which he came.

That was the sad carriage
About Strath Lochy of the nobles,
A champion of the battles
To be alone in a casket;
What has put tears in their eyes
In every district round about the,
That he was grievously wounded
By the abundance of powder and lead.

Plentiful were the battlefields and battles
That he took part in before then,
And the enemy that he scattered,
Capturing and chasing them;
Many were the notices and reports
Concerning the strength of the nobleman,
Until the final battle
In which a bullet struck him.

It was with the blow of anguish
That the famous Colonel fell,
He possessed courage and learning
And much knowledge that was exceptional;
When it came time to draw up in order
With great and faultless men,
Firm, superior and loyal,
Who would not yield without being killed.

He was haughty and commanding,
Kingly, energetic and exceptionally courageous,
In the cause of his country
He had proved his case;
Without yielding, without bending,
Until the atrocity burst upon him
That caused his fall in the field
And that left a hole in Clan Cameron.

Great is the loss to his clan,
This was a bitter campaign for them,
Concerning the lively young man

Rinn i 'mhilleadh far fairge;
Ged 'bha sùil aige tilleadh
Ris an ionad on 'dh'fhalbh e,
Chaidh a shaoghal 'an giorrad,
Gun tigh'nn tuillidh do dh' Albainn.

Tha Fàsa' Feàrna dheth brònach,
'S gach aon beò d' a luchd-leanmhainn,
Bhon a chailleadh an Còirneal
Ann an comhstrì na h-armachd;
'S mòr a dhìol e do Dheòrsa,
Cha b' e stòras na airgead,
Ach seòbhag na h-ealtainn
'Fhuair an teachdaire on t-sealgair.

B' e sin an teachdaire dàna
'Thug am bàs do dh' Iain Camshron;
'S trom a dhrùidh e 'na chàirdean
An leòn craiteach a dhearg air;
Ursainn-chatha nam blàraibh
A bhith gun chàileachd, gun seanachas,
Leis a' suidhichte làrach
'S tric a bha i 'na earbsa.

Gum bu cheannard air feachda,
A' laoch gasta, deas, dealbhach,
Ann an rèiseamaid Mharcais,
Luchd nan tartanaibh balla-bhreac;
'S e mar bhuachaille cùil dhaibh,
'Ga' stiùireadh gu sealbhach,
'G a' robh comhairle is cùram
'Na fhear-iùil do na dh'fhalbh leis.

Gum bu mheasail an Diùca
Air fear a ghiùlain neo-leanabail,
'G a' robh spiorad a' Ghàidheil
'Tighinn a' làthair fo armaibh;
Lann stàilinn chruaidh, gheur air,
'S a làmh threubhach 'na ceanna-bheairt
Ann an còmhlan nach gèilleadh
Nuair a leumadh an fhearg ris.

Gur h-e 'n dùthchas 'bu dual dha
'Bhith gu cruadalach, fearail,
Mar 'bha dream on a chinn e
Anns gach strì agus carraid;
Bha sin aige mar dhìleab
Le còir chinnteach gun cheannach,
Cha b' i 'choille 'robh crìonach
Às na dhìrich a' faillean.

Ach stuic uasal Chloinn Chamshroin
Bho Achadh ainmeil na Carradh
Anns na dh'fhàs an crann dìreach;
Bu ghlan sìoladh na fala
'Rinn do chùislean a lìonadh,
Fo shlios min-gheal mar chanach
'Chaidh a reubadh le mì-rùin,
Gus na dhìobair e 'n anail.

The overseas campaign that destroyed him;
Although he had intended to return
To the place from which he left,
His life was greatly shortened,
And he will not return to Scotland again.

Fassifern has been saddened by it,
Every living one of his followers,
Since the Colonel has died
In a battle of the arms;
Greatly did it cost King George,
It was not in wealth or money,
But the hawk of the flock
Who the hunter's messenger found.

That was the bold messenger
That brought death to John Cameron;
Heavily did it pierce his friends
The grievous wound that drew his blood;
The champion of the battlefields
To be lifeless and speechless,
With him the battlefield would be arranged,
Often it would be entrusted to him.

He was a leader of the army,
The fine, excellent, handsome hero,
In Marcus' regiment,
People of the chequered tartans;
He was like a supportive shepherd to them
Steering them successfully,
Who possessed council and good care,
He was a guide to those who joined him.

The Duke was full of respect
For a man of his manly demeanour,
In whom was the spirit of the Gael
Appearing before him in full arms;
He wore a blade of sharp, hard steel,
His gallant hand was on its hilt,
In battle who would not submit
When his anger would rise.

It was his hereditary heritage
To be brave and manly,
Like the folk from who he descended
In every battle and conflict;
It was his as a legacy
With a sure right that could not be bought,
There was no decay in the forest
From which the young sapling had sprung.

But from the noble stock of Clan Cameron
From famous Achnacarry
In which the upright tree grew;
Pure was the blood that pumped
That filled up your veins,
Under a cheek as fine and white as bog-cotton
That was torn apart by ill-will,
Until the breath of life left him.

Bu trom chreuchdach a lotaibh,
Ged 'bha dotairean làmh ris,
Cha deanadh iad feum dha
Leis a' bheum a bhith gàbhaibh,
'Fhuil a' sileadh fo 'lèinidh;
'S goirt a' sgeul e d' a chàirdean,
Ged a fhuair iad 'na èirig,
Ridir eubhach d' a phàrant.

Sin an t-ainm a bha daor dha,
Nuair a chaochail an t-àrmainn,
Leis na bhuannaicheadh urram
Anns gach cunnart na thàr e;
Ged a gheibheadh e tuillidh,
'S mòr 'na chomain a phàigh e,
B' fheàrr aon sealladh don Chòirneal
Fhaicinn beò na na dh'fhàg e.

'S iomadh luaidh a bha sìnte ris,
Nan deanainn-sa 'n àireamh,
Ge' nach h-urrainn mi 'n ìnns'
Mar bu mhiann leam 'an tràth seo;
'Leughadh eachdraidh na' Breatannach
Mar 'ghleachd iad na Spàinnich,
Gus na choisinn iad sìochaint
Nuair a chiosnaich iad *Paris*.

Chì sibh sgrìobhte anns an t-seanchas
Mar a dhearbh e 'bhith àdhmhor,
Àrd-chonnspann na troide
'Dhol a chogadh ri nàmhaid;
Air each aigeannach, shrianach
Roimh dheich ceud do na Gàidheil,
'S iad ag imeachd 'na dheòidhinn,
Cha b' ann cladhaire sgàthach.

'S iad a' gluasad ro àrdan
Air fòghlam ri làmhaich,
Luchd an èilidhe cuaiche
'S na' suaicheantas àrda;
Fo na brataichean buadhar
'Sam biodh cluarain an fhàsaich,
Nuair a nochdte roimh 'n t-sluagh i,
Bhiodh luchd-fuath anns an àraich.

Nuair a sgaoil e a shìoda
Gu dol sìos mar a b' àbhaist,
'S pìob na' feadannaibh siùbhlach
Ri cur sunnd air do *phàrti*,
Chuir thu romhad 'ad inntinn
Gum biodh sìth leat a' latha sin,
Ge' nach faca tu crìoch orra,
'S ann 'ad ghnìomh nach robh fàilinn.

Rinn mi labhairt le dìcheall
Air cliù cinnteach an àrmainn,
Mur 'bhith giorrad 's tha 'm eòlas
Bhiodh e 'n òrdan na b' fheàrr dheth;
Fhir a shiùbhlas air t' adhart

Heavy and bloody were his wounds,
Although doctors were close at hand,
They were of no help to him
With how dreadful was his wound,
His blood flowing through his shirt;
Painful is the news to his friends,
Though they got it as compensation for him,
A wailing knight for his parent.

That was the title which was costly to him,
When the hero died,
With whom respect was won
In every danger that befell him;
Though he could have had more,
Greatly was the debt for what he paid,
It would be better to get see the Colonel
Alive once more than what he has left.

Many praises were extended to him,
If I were to count them,
Though I could not say
As I would like to at this time;
To read the history of the British
And how they wrestled with the Spanish,
Until they had won the peace
When they subdued Paris.

You will see written in the report
How he proved to be magnificent,
A great hero of the strife
Who went to fight the enemy;
On a bridled and spirited horse
Before a thousand Gaels,
While they moved along after him,
He was not a timid coward.

It was they who stirred in wrath
Well learned in shooting,
People of the plaited kilts
And of the proud badges;
Under the victorious flags
On which there was the wild thistle,
When it was shown before the people,
Enemies would be laying on the field.

When you spread out your silk banner
In order to descend as was usual,
The pipes of the nimble chanters
To put your party in a good frame of mind,
You decided in you mind
That you would have peace on that day,
Though you did not see their end,
In your deeds there was no weakness.

I have spoken diligently
Of the certain fame of the hero,
But for the limitations of my skill
It would be in better shape;
O man who moves forward

Às mo dhèidhinn don àite,
Thoir an aire do sgrìobhadh
'S nì thu fìrinn do m' Ghàidhlig.

After me to the place,
Pay attention to what is written
And be faithful to my Gaelic.

25. Deoch-Slàinte, Mhic 'Ic Alastair, Ghlinne-Garaidh

'N deoch-s' air slàinte Alastair Ghlinnich,
Sìol nan connspann a bha fuileach,
Fuasgailteach, cruadalach, smearail,
Nach gabhadh roimh nàmhaid iomain,
'Chuireadh ruaig le buaidh 's a leanadh,
'S cha b' e 'dhùthchas ceum an t-slinnein,
'S lann thana 'na làimh an tarraing,
D' a luchd mi-rùin b' adhbhar gioraig;
Ge' b' e spìonadh calg fo 'mhaladh,
Dhùisgeadh 'fhearg le meanmn' 'na spiorad
Bhiodh a cheann 'na dheann ri talamh,
'Fhuil 'ga call mar allt a' sileadh;
Nuair a chàireadh an laoch loinneil
Suas 'am fraoch 's an t-aodach cuimir,
Chan eil aogas dha na coimeas,
'S 'as gach taobh tha 'dhaoine 'tional;
Faodaidh mi 'ghràitinn 's cha bharail,
Gur e Rìgh nan Gàidheal uile,
'N t-uasal sìobhailt' bho Ghleann Garaidh,
Cliùiteach, rìoghail, lìonte 'dh'urram;
Nan dùisgeadh e 'n strì na 'n carraid
Bhiomaid dìleas dha gu h-uile,
Fo 'bhrataichean balla-bhreac soilleir,
Gàidheil Alba, bu shearbh buillean;
'Nis bhon 'tha ar ceannard smachdail,
Reachdmhor, làidir,
Mar bu dualchas da bho 'shinnsireabh,
'S mar a b' àbhaist,
Chan eil coimeas do Ghleann Garaidh
'S d' a chuid Ghàidheal,
Bhon a chaochail Fionn Mac Cumhail
'S feachd na Fèinne.

25. A Toast, to the Son of the son of Alasdair, of Glengarry

A toast to Alexander of the Glens
Descendent of the heroes who were bloody,
Active, hardy and vigorous,
Who would not be driven by enemies,
Who'd give chase in victory and would pursue,
The shoulder path was not in his instincts,
And a thin blade drawn in his hand,
To enemies was a cause of dread;
Whoever plucked a bristle under his brow,
Anger and pride would awaken in his spirit,
And his head would be hurriedly to the ground,
And blood being lost like a stream flowing;
When the splendid hero would be placed,
Up in the heather and the elegant clothing,
There is not likeness of him nor a comparison,
And on all sides do his people gather;
I may say, and it is not just an opinion,
That he is the king of all the Gaels,
The civil nobleman from Glengarry,
Renowned, regal, filled with dignity;
If he aroused the conflict or the battle
We all would be completely loyal to him,
Under his chequered, bright banners,
The Gaels of Scotland, most bitter the blows;
Now, since our commander is authoritative
Commanding and strong,
As is hereditary to him from his ancestors,
And as was customary
There is no equal to Glengarry
And his Gaels,
Since the death of Fionn MacCool
And the army of the Fenians.

26. Òran Molaidh do dh'Alastair Mac Dhòmhnaill, Tighearna Ghlinne Garaidh

'S tìm dhomh dùsgadh à suain
Agus sealltainn mun cuairt,
Tha mo dhìochuimhne buan,
'S mi gun chuimhne 'san uair
Air na dhìoladh dhomh 'n duais,
Gleanna Garaidh bho thuath
'Nis 'tha 'g ùrachadh suas càileachd dhomh.

Nam biodh m' inntinn air ghleus
Ann a' fiosrachadh geur
'S ann an eòlas d' a rèir,
Mar a ghluaiseadh mo bheul
Air cliù an fhir-fhèil',
'G a' robh 'n dùthchas mar bheus
'Bhith ceannsalach, treun, tàbhachdach.

Ann an uaisle le tlachd,
Ann an àrdan 's an reachd,
Ann an cruadal le smachd,
Seasmhach, firinneach, ceart,
Gura lìonmhor 's cha tearc
Iad a' dìreadh 'na bheachd,
'S gur rìoghail a' mac Gàidheil e.

An t-òg uasal gun chearb
'Choisinn cliù le deagh ainm,
Ge b' e 'dhùisgeadh dhuit fearg,
Cha bu shugradh do cholg;
Bhiodh a' chùis ud dha searbh,
'S thèid e 'n cunntais na' marbh,
'S e 'thigh'nn dlùth dhuit 'sna h-airm-làimh' ort.

Lann stàilinn chruaidh gheur
Leis am buaileadh tu beum
Nuair a thairnte i bho d' sgèith;
Bhiodh mar dhuais aige an t-eug
'S 'fhuil a' brùchdadh air feur,
Ach ma thionndas e d' mheinn,
Gheibh e sìochaint 's cha trèig càirdeas e.

Ge b' e 'thairgeadh tigh'nn fiar
Air an leòmhann gun fhiamh,
Fuilteach, mòralach, dian,
A fhuair 'fhòghlam ri gnìomh;
Ann an còmhrag nach strìochd,
Cha do shabhail e 'riamh
Aon a chonnsaich na dh'iarr làmhan air.

Marcaich' sunntach na steud
Leis am buannaichte 'rèis,
Air each cruitheach 'na leum,
Fo 'chommanda le srèin;
Agus nàmhaid an fhèidh,
Ged 'bu luaineach a cheum,
'S ann bho d' chuimse 'bhiodh teum talaidh air.

26. A Song of Praise, to Alastair MacDonell, Chief of Glengarry

It is time for me to awake from slumber
And to take a look round about,
My forgetfulness is perpetual,
And I have no recollection at present
Of that which was rendered to me as a prize,
Glengarry from the north
Who is now refreshing my ability for me.

If my intellect were in tune
In shrewd experience
And with skill to match,
As my mouth would be stirred
By the fame of the generous man
To whom heredity is like a virtue
To be commanding, strong and effective.

In nobility with pleasure,
In pride and in power,
In courage with authority,
Steadfast, truthful and just,
Plentiful and not scarce
They are emerging in his behaviour,
He is a regal son of a Gael.

The young noble without defect
Who won fame with his good name,
Whatever would awaken your anger
Your wrath would be no joking matter;
That affair would be bitter for him,
And he will be counted amongst the dead,
When he approaches you and you are armed.

A blade of hard, sharp steel
With which you would strike a blow
When you'd draw it from your side;
His reward would be death,
And his blood spurting on the grass,
But if he threw himself on your mercy,
He'll find peace, and friendship won't desert him.

Whatever endeavour would come round
About the fearless lion,
Bloody, majestic and keen,
Who gained his knowledge through action;
In a battle he would not submit
He has never spared
Anyone who disputed or wanted to battle him.

Lively rider of the war-horse
With whom a race would be won,
On a well-shod leaping horse,
Under his command with a bridle;
And an enemy of the deer,
No matter how fleeting his step,
Under your aim there'd be an enticing taste of him.

Leat bu mhiann a bhith 'sealg
Ann a' frìth nan damh dearg,
Nuair 'chìte iad air falbh,
Bhiodh do luaidhe 'nan calg;
Bhiodh do mhial-choin 'nan lorg,
Bhiodh na stùc-bheannan gorm
'Freagradh dlùth dhuit mar thoirm tàirneanaich.

It was your desire to be hunting
In the track of the red stag,
When they would be seen at a distance
Your lead would be buried in their hide;
Your greyhounds would be tracking them
The steep, blue mountains would be
Echoing you closely like noisy thunder.

Nuair 'chruinnicheadh do dhaoine
Mu d' thimcheall air raoin,
B' e do shuaicheantas daor
Long is leòghann is fraoch,
Bradan tarragheal is craobh
'S an làmh dhearg nach robh faoin,
Leis an tionndadh na laoich nàmhadach.

When your people would gather
About you on a field,
Your precious emblem was
A ship and a lion and heather,
A white-bellied salmon and a tree
And a red hand that was not trifling,
With which the warlike heroes would be fetched.

Le ceann-feadhna nam buadh
'Rachadh sanntach 'san ruaig,
Gur e 'n dùthchas 'bu dual da
'Bhith ceannsalach, cruaidh,
Cha b' ann gamhlasach, fuar;
'S mairg a dhùisgeadh dha gruaim
'S dusan mìle do shluagh Gàidhealach leis.

With a virtuous chieftain
Who would go lustily into the pursuit,
It is this heredity that was his birthright
To be commanding and firm,
And not vindictive or cold;
It is woeful when his sternness would be raised
And twelve thousand Highlanders with him.

'S e air thoiseach roimhn' champ
'Gan sìor-bhrosnachadh teann,
Cha b' ann gealtach na fann
'Bhiodh gaisgich nan lann
Nuair a chluinneadh iad srann
Aig a bhrataich ri crann,
'S iad nach tilleadh is call làraich air.

He'd be at the head of the camp
Forever encouraging them keenly,
It was not cowardly or weakly
That the heroes of the blades would be
When they would hear the whistling
Of his banner on the pole,
It is they who'd not return defeated in battle.

Na fir cholgaradh, ghleust'
Bheachdail, mheanmnach gu feum,
Nach robh anfhann 'sa streup,
'S an ceann-armailt dha rèir
Sliochd nan garbhchrìoch nach gèill,
'Chuireadh doirbh an ratreut,
'S iad ri losgadh nan deigh làmhaichean.

The fierce and skilful men
Sure and courageous in time of need,
Who were not feeble in the skirmish,
And their commander to match
People of the rough bounds who won't yield,
Who would make difficult the retreat,
While firing their most fit volleys.

'S ann a chomhdaich iad cùis
Ann am blàr *Waterloo*,
Nuair a dh'ainmich an Diùc
Gu' robh earbsa 'nan turn;
Chuir iad Frangaich 'an cùil,
Ghlèidh iad sìochaint don Chrùn,
Thug sin ònair is cliù 's càirdeas dhaibh.

They certainly proved a case
At the battle of Waterloo,
When the Duke reported
That he trusted in their feats;
They put the French on their back foot,
Kept the peace for the Crown,
That brought honour, fame and friendship to them.

Sheas iad dìleas an grunnd
Ann am bràithreachas dlùth,
Cha robh fàilinn ri chunntais
'S na h-àrmainn nach diùlt
'Dhol an làthair air thus,
Cha robh sgàthaich 'nan gnùis,
Na fir-chogaidh nach lùb sàrachadh.

They loyally stood their ground
In close brotherhood,
There was no defect to recount
Of the warriors who will not refuse
To go to be present in the vanguard,
There was no fear in their faces,
The warriors who won't bend under oppression

'S lìonmhor àite a' bheil meas
Air an uasal seo 'nis;
Tha mi 'gràite' bho cheann treis

Many is the place where there's respect
Now for this nobleman;
I have been saying for a while

Gur e 'n Dòmhnallach deas;
Fear cho bòidhche 's a sheasas
'Tha beò na 'chaidh às
Nuair a chàireas e 'n deise Gàidhealach air.

Bonaid dhubh-ghorm air 'fhalt,
Breacan guailleadh 's e paisgte
Os ceann èileadh nam pleat
Nach tèid sios air a bhac;
Osan geàrr nam ball-breac
Air a chalpannan gast'
'S sporan fial às 'm bu phailt pàrtachadh.

Biodag gheur air a chrios,
Claidheamh caol 'na làimh dheis,
Nì fear 'adhbair a sgrios
'S e cho fòghlaimte leis;
Ge b' e 'thòisicheadh ris
Ann an caonnaig na 'n teas,
Cha bu smaointinn ro ghlic dhasan sin.

Fhuair mi cinnte le sgeul
Gur 'th' ann dìleas da fhèin
'S do gach linn 'thig 'na dhèidh
'Tha Clann Dòmhnaill gu lèir,
'S e mar dhìon daibh ri feum;
Le luchd-seanachais a b' fheàrr
Rinn e 'mach gur e-fhèin a b' àirde dhiubh.

'S ann gu greadhnach 'na chùirt,
Chluinnte fuaim an luchd-ciùil
'Chuir nan uaislean air sùnnd;
Bheirte a-nuas daibh às ùr
Deoch gun truailleadh 'sna cùirn,
'Dol mun cuairt aig a bhùird;
Anns an talladh 'm bu shùnnd àbhachdach.

Sheinnte pìob nan dos rèidh,
'S i aig Aonghas air ghleus;
Nuair a thàirneadh e ceum
Bhiodh a feadain da rèir,
Cruaidh, sgalanta, geur;
'S 'an àm cromadh don ghrèin
Chluinnte faram luchd theud 's bhàrdaibh ann.

Cha do dh'imich e fiar
Do na dh'fhuirich na dh'eug,
Aon duine le 'bheul
A chuireadh e 'n cèill
Ann an coinnimh ri chèil'
Mar a bhuineadh dha 'bheus;
Nì mi sguir bhon a ghèill pàirt dheth leam.

Bheir mi 'nis e gu crìch,
'S nach fear oileanta mi,
Ma mì-thràchd 'am ghnìomh
'S ann le doille gun chìnnt,
Bhon 'tha 'n eachdraidh 'gam dhìth
Mar a thàinig sìol Chuinn

That the MacDonell is excellent;
A man as handsome as any who stand
Who are alive or departed
When he puts on the Highland garb.

A dark blue bonnet on his pate,
A shoulder tartan, folded
Over a kilt of the pleats
That will not go down past his haunch;
Short hose of the chequers
On his excellent calves,
And a generous purse, shared out most liberally.

A sharp dagger on his belt,
A narrow sword in his right hand,
A man of his will cause destruction
As he is so well trained with it;
Whoever would start with him
In a skirmish or in heat of battle,
That would not be too wise a thought for him.

I found out with certainty by a report
That most loyal to him himself
And to every generation that comes after him
Is all of Clan Donald,
He is like a protector to them when in need;
With the choicest of chroniclers
He showed that he was the greatest of them.

Joyful was it in his court,
The sound of musicians would be heard
To put the nobles in a good mood;
There would be brought down to them again
Purest of drink in the drinking horns,
Going about at his tables
In the hall of most joyful good cheer.

A bagpipe of the polished drones would sound,
Angus would have them well-tuned;
When he would take a step
It's chanter would match it fittingly,
Harsh, shrill and sharp;
And at the time of the setting of the sun
The sound of harpers and poets would be heard.

He did not come unjustly
Of those who stayed or who died,
A single man with his mouth
Who would express
And put together in a meeting
Of how virtue attached to him;
I'll stop now as some of it has yielded to me.

I shall now bring it to a close,
And I am not a well-educated man,
If I have mishandled in my work
It is with stupidity and uncertainty,
As I lack the history
Of how the descendants of Conn came

'S gach dream eile ri linn 'bha dàimheil daibh.
And every other tribe who were related to them.

Ach lìon gu sòradh a' chuach
'S aisig còmhnard mun cuairt
Tòsta a' Chòirneil as uaisle
Dha bheil Cnòideart an dual
Ann an còirichean buan,
An Ceanna-cinnidh 'thug buaidh,
Mac Mhic Alastair, buan shlàinte dha.

But fill without delay the drinking cup
And send it smoothly about,
A toast to the noblest Colonel
To whom Knoydart traditionally belonged
In everlasting rights,
The Chieftain who won victory,
Laird of Glengarry, everlasting good health to him.

'S an uair a chaoch'leas e fhèin,
Mar is dù dhuinn gu lèir,
Ann an cùrsa 'dol eug,
Gu' robh oighre 'na dhèidh
'Bhios mar cheann air an treud
'Gabhail fasgath fo 'sgèith,
'N Inbhir-Ghàraidh gun cheum fàilinneach.

When he himself dies,
As is the destiny of us all,
In the course of going to die,
There was an heir to follow him
Who will be like the head of the herd
Taking shelter under his wing,
In Invergarry without a failing step.

27. Am Mealladh

O, gur mise 'th 'air mo mhealladh,
'S fad' on 'dh'fhàg mi gràdh gach caraid,
O, gur mise 'th 'air mo mhealladh.

Latha grianach, ciatach, àghmhor,
Chaidh mi 'mach a ghabhail sràide
'Dh'fhaotainn seallaidh air an àite,
Tìr nan craobhan àrd 's nan gleannan.

Cha b' fhada 'chaidh mi air m' eòlas
Nuair a thachair duine còir rium
A thuirt rium, "A fhleasgaich òig
Dean suidhe còmhl' rium is leig t' anail."

Thuirt e rium is fiamh a' ghàir' air,
"Cuin' a thàinig thu don àite?
Am buin thu 'chuideachd a' Mhàidseir
A thàinig Dimàirt don chala?"

Thug e leis gu cùlthaobh fàil mi
'Shealltainn coille nach robh geàrrta,
"'S mise 'm fear nach dean a h-àiteach,
Cha tugadh an Fhèinn aist' aran."

A' chiad Didòmhnaich a b' fhaisge,
Chaidh mi don t-searmon 'gam faicinn;
Bha na mocaisean gu pailt ann,
Bròg an cairte bha glè ainneamh.

'Na mo chrìdh' thuirt mi gu cianail,
"'S bochd gun d' fhàg mi tìr na ciatachd
'Thigh'nn a thàmh don àird-an-iar seo,
Ged bu mhiadhail mi air fearann."

'S ann 'shaoil leamsa leis a' ghòraich',
Nuair a dh'fhalbh mi leis a' Chòirneal,
A bhith ann 'am spuir 's 'am bhòtainn,
'Trusadh òir air bhàrr gach meangain.

Fhuair mi 'mach nach eil na cluaintean
'Tha fad' às cho gorm 's a chualas;
Saoil sibh fhèin nach cùis ro-chruaidh
'Bhith 'call nan cluas le fuachd an Earraich.

27. The Deception

Oh, how I have been deceived,
It is so long since I left the love of each relation,
Oh, how I have been deceived.

On a sunny, pleasant, beautiful day,
I went out to take a stroll
To take a good look at the place,
Land of the great trees and of the glens.

I didn't get far on my travels
When I happened on a decent fellow
Who said to me, "Oh, young man
Sit down with me and catch your breath."

He said to me, with a faint smile,
"When did you come to this country?
Are you one of the Major's people
Who reached the harbour last Tuesday?"

He took me behind a hedge
To show me an uncut virgin forest,
"I'm not the one who could clear it,
Even the Fenians couldn't make it fertile."

The first Sunday thereafter,
I went to the service to see them gathered;
Rough moccasins were plentiful,
But tanned leather shoes were very rare.

In my heart I said sadly to myself,
"It's a pity that I left the agreeable land
To come to stay in this westerly land,
Though I longed for arable land."

I had most foolishly thought,
When I departed with the Colonel,
To be dressed in spurs and riding boots,
Gathering gold from the tips of every branch.

I discovered that distant meadows
Are not as green as one has heard;
Do you yourself think that it's just too much
To lose one's ears in the Spring freeze.

28. Òran do dh'Aimeireaga

Gu bheil mi 'm ònrachd 'sa choill' ghruamaich,
Mo smaointinn luaineach, cha tog mi fonn;
Fhuair mi 'n t-àite-s' 'n aghaidh nàdair,
On thrèig gach tàlant a bha 'nam cheann;
Cha dean mi òran a chuir air dòigh ann,
Nuair 'nì mi tòiseachadh bidh mi trom;
Chaill mi 'Ghàidhlig seach mar a b' àbhaist domh
Nuair a bha mi 'san dùthaich thall.

Chan fhaigh mi m' inntinn leam ann an òrdan,
Ged 'bha mi eòlach air deanamh rann;
'S e 'mheudaich bròn domh 's a lughdaich sòlas
Gun duine còmhl' rium a nì rium cainnt;
Gach là 's oidhche 's gach car a nì mi
Gum bi mi 'cuimhneachadh anns gach àm,
An tìr a dh'fhàg mi 'bha 'n taic an t-sàile,
Ged tha mi 'n dràst' ann am bràighe ghleann.

Chan ioghnadh dhomhsa ged 'tha mi brònach,
'S ann 'tha mo chòmhnaidh air cùl nam beann,
A' meadhan fàsaich air Abhainn Bhàrnaidh,
Gun dad as fheàrr na buntàta lom;
Mun dean mi àiteach 's mun tog mi bàrr ann
'S a' choille ghàbhaidh 'chur às a bonn
Le neart mo ghàirdean, gum bi mi sàraichte,
Is treis air fàilinn mu' fàs a' chlann.

Seo i 'n dùthaich 'sa bheil an cruadal
Gun fhios don t-sluagh a tha 'tigh'nn a-nall;
Gur olc a fhuaras oirnn luchd a' bhuairidh
A rinn le 'n tuairisgeul ar toirt ann;
Ma nì iad buannachd cha mhair i buan daibh,
Cha dean i suas iad 's chan ioghnadh leam,
'S gach mollachd truaghain a bhios 'ga ruagadh
Bhon 'chaidh am fuadach a chur fo 'n ceann.

Bidh gealladh làidir 'ga thoirt an tràth sin,
Bidh cliù an àite 'ga chur a' meud;
Bidh iad a' gràitinn gum bidh ur càirdean
Gu sona, saidhbhir gun dad do dh' èis;
Gach naidheachd mheallta 'ga toirt ar n-ionnsaigh-
se,
Feuch a' sanntaich sibh 'dol 'na dèidh;
Ma thig sibh sàbhailt nuair 'chì sibh iadsan,
Chan fheàrr na stàtachan na sibh fhèin.

Nuair thèid na dròbhairean sin 'gur n-iarraidh,
'S ann leis na briagan a nì iad feum,
Gun fhacal fìrinn a bhith 'ga ìnnse,
'S an cridhe 'dìteadh na their am beul;
Ri cur a' fiachaibh gu bheil 'san tìr seo
Gach nì as prìseil a tha fon ghrèin;
Nuair 'thig sibh innte gur beag 'chì sibh
Ach coille dhìreach 'toirt dhibh a' speur.

Nuair 'thig an geamhradh is àm na dùbhlachd,
Bidh sneachda 'dlùthadh ri cùl nan geug,

28. A Song to America

I am all alone in the gloomy forest,
My thoughts are restless, I can raise no song;
I have found this place to conflict with nature,
Since all my mental skills have forsaken me;
I am unable to construct a song here,
I get despondent when I try my hand;
I've lost the Gaelic as I once had it
When I lived over in that other land.

I cannot get my thoughts in order,
Though I once knew how to make a verse;
What's increased my sorrow and decreased my solace/Is having no one with whom I can converse/Each day and night, and in every task I do
I keep remembering time and again,
The land that I left, hard by the ocean,
Though I now on the top of glens.

I'm not surprised that I am doleful,
I have my home in the back of beyond,
In the middle of a wilderness, on Barney's River,
With nothing better than threadbare potatoes;
Before I till the soil and harvest a crop
And dig the frightful forest from its root
By strength of my arms, I will be exhausted,
And long in decline, before I raise my brood.

This is the land in which there is hardship
Unknown to those who are coming over the sea;
What evil tactics were used by the enticers
Who by their yarns, took us over here;
If they make a profit, it won't be lasting,
It will not raise their status, and little wonder to me,
While every cursed wretch is pursued
Since they settled upon eviction as a stratagem.

A firm promise will then be offered,
The reputation of the place will be enhanced;
They will claim that your relations
Are happy and wealthy, in need of nothing;
Every misleading story will be laid before you,

To see if you'll crave to seek it out;
If you arrive safely, when you see them,
The swells are no better than yourselves.

When those drovers come to get you,
It is with lies that they succeed,
Without uttering a truthful word,
Their heart condemning what their mouths say;
They make pretences that this land possesses
The most precious gem under the sun;
On your arrival, you will see little
But a towering forest that blocks off the sky.

When winter, and the time of darkness comes,
Snow packs together behind the branches,

	Gu domhain dùmhail do far na glùine,	Deeply and thickly, to above the knee,
	Ge' math an triùbhsair cha dean i feum,	No matter how good the trouser, it will not suffice,
	Gun stocain dhùbailt' 'sa mhogais chlùdaich	Without doubled stockings in a ragged moccasin
	'Bhios air a dùnadh gu dlùth le èill;	Which will be tightly bound with thongs;
55.	B' e 'm fasan ùr dhuinn an cosg le fionntach	It was our new fashion, to wear them hoarily,
	Mar 'chaidh a rùsgadh don bhrùid an dè.	As though just skinned from the beast yesterday.
	Mur bi mi eòlach airson mo chòmhdaich	If I'm not careful about my clothing
	Gu' faigh mi reòta mo shròn 's mo bheul;	I will find my nose and mouth frozen;
	Le gaoth a tuath 'bhios gu neamhail fuaraidh	With a northern wind that is cold and biting
60.	Gum bi mo chluasan 'an cunnart geur;	My ears will be in sharp danger;
	Bidh e cho fuath'sach, cha seas an tuagh ris,	It'll be so awful, the axe won't stand it,
	Gu' mill e 'chruaidh ged a bha i geur;	It will spoil the blade, though it was sharp;
	Mur toir mi blàths di gum brist 'stàilinn,	Unless I warm it, the steel will fracture,
	Gun dol don cheàrdaich cha gheàrr i beum.	Without going to the smithy, it will cut no mark.
65.	Nuair 'thig an sàmhradh 's a' miosa Chèitein,	When summer comes and the month of May,
	Bidh teas na grèine 'gam fhàgail fann;	The heat of the sun will leave me weak;
	Gun cuir i spèirid 'sa h-uile creutair	It puts strength into every creature
	A bhios fo èislean air feadh nan toll;	Which had been drowsy in all the hollows;
	Na mathain bhèisteil gun dean iad èirigh	The beastly bears, they too will rise
70.	'Dhol feadh an treud 's gura mòr an call;	To go through the herd, causing massive loss;
	'S a' chuileag ineach gu socach 'puinnsean	And the taloned insect, its poison snoutily
	'Gam lot gu lìonmhor le rinn an lainn.	Wounding me profusely with the barb of its lance.
	Gun dean i m' aodann gu h-olc a chaobadh,	It will make my face come up lumpy
	Chan fhaic mi saoghal, 's ann 'bhios mi dall;	I'll not see the world, I will be blind;
75.	Gun at mo shùilean le neart a cungaidh,	My eyes will swell with the strength of its poison,
	Gu guineach drùidhteach le sùgh a teang';	Its tongue's juice venomous and penetrating;
	Chan fhaigh mi àireamh dhiubh anns an dànachd,	I cannot enumerate them in verses,
	Gach beothach gràineil a thogas ceann,	Every odious beast that rears its head,
	'S cho liutha plàigh ann 's a bh' air rìgh Phàraoh	And plagues as numerous as came to Pharaoh
80.	Airson nan tràillean nuair 'bhàth e 'n camp'.	For the slaves when he drowned his men.
	Gur iomadh caochladh 'tigh'nn air an t-saoghal,	Many a change is coming over my world,
	'S ro-bheag a shaoil mi nuair 'bha mi thall;	That I scarcely imagined when in that isle;
	Bu bheachd dhomh 'n uair sin mun d' rinn mi gluasad,	It was my intention before I left it,
	Gu' fàsainn uasal nuair 'thiginn ann;	That when I came here I'd reach a noble style;
85.	'S an car a fhuair mi cha b' ann gu m' bhuannachd,	The misfortune that hit me has brought no profit,
	'Tigh'nn fàr a' chuain air a' chuairt 'bha meallt',	Coming over the ocean on a deceptive course,
	Gu tìr nan craobh anns nach eil an t-saorsainn,	To the land of the trees where there's no freedom/No cattle or sheep and few clothes on my back.
	Gun mhart gun chaora 's mo dh' aodach gann.	
	Gur iomadh ceum anns am bidh mi 'n dèis làimh	In many pursuits I'll lag behind,
90.	Mu dean mi saidhbhir mo theachd-an-tìr;	Before my livelihood makes any wealth;
	Bidh 'n obair èiginn mun toir mi feum às,	The work will be difficult before I prosper,
	Mu dean mi rèiteach airson a' chroinn;	Before I make ready the land for the plough;
	'Cur sgonn na' teinntean air muin a chèile	Putting fire logs on top of each other
	Gu lasaich fèithean a bha 'nam dhruim,	I'll inflame some muscles that were in my back,
95.	'S a h-uile ball diom cho dubh a' sealltainn,	And every part of me looking so blackened,
	Bidh mi 'gam shamhlachadh ris an t-suip.	I'll compare myself to the chimney sweep.
	Ge' mòr a' seanachas a bh' aca 'an Albainn,	Though great the talk they had in Scotland
	Tha 'chùis a' dearbhadh nach robh e fìor;	Matters prove that it wasn't true;
	Na dolair ghorma, chan fhaic mi 'falbh iad	The green dollars, I don't see them tendered,
100.	Ged 'bha iad ainmeil a bhith 'san tìr;	Although they were reputedly in this land;
	Ma nì iad bargain chan fhaigh iad airgead,	If they make a bargain, they won't get money,
	Ach 's èiginn ainmneachadh anns a' phrìs;	Though it must be named in the price;

Ma gheibh iad cùnnradh air feadh nam bùthan
Gu' pàigh e 'null le flùr na ìm.

Chan fhaic mi margadh na là fèilidh,
Na iomain feudalach ann an dròbh,
Na nì 'nì feum dhaibh a-measg a chèile,
Ach iad 'nan èiginn 's a h-uile dòigh;
Cha chulaidh fharmaid iad leis an ainbhfhiach,
A' reic na shealbhaich iad ann an còir;
Bidh fear na' fiachan is cromadh cinn air
'Ga chur don phrìosan mun dìol e 'n stòr.

Mu' tig an cùisean à taigh na cùrtach,
Gun tèid an dùblachadh aig a' mhòd;
Tha lagh a' giùlan o làimh na *jury*
Gun tèid a spùinneadh 's nach fiù e 'n còrr;
Bidh earraid siùbhlach air feadh na dùthchadh
'Gan ruith le cunntasan air an tòir;
Gur mòr mo chùram gun tig e 'm ionnsaigh,
Cha ghabh e diùltadh 's bidh diùbhail oirnn.

Chan fhaigh mi ìnnse dhuibh ann 'am Ghàidhlig,
Cha dean mo nàdar a chuir air dòigh
Gach fios a b' àill leam 'thoirt do na càirdean
'San tìr a dh'fhàg mi 'rinn m' àrach òg;
Gach aon a leughas e tuigibh reusan,
Na tugaibh èisdeachd do luchd a' bhòsd,
Na fàidhean brèige a bhios 'gur teumadh,
Gun aca spèis diubh ach dèidh ur n-òir.

Ged bhithinn dìchiollach ann a sgrìobhadh,
Gun gabhainn mìosa ris agus còrr,
Mun cuirinn crìoch air na bheil air m' inntinn,
'S mun tugainn duibh e le cainnt mo bheòil;
Tha mulad dìomhair an dèidh mo lìonadh
Bhon 's èiginn strìochdadh an seo ri m' bheò,
Air bheag thoilinntinn 'sa choille chruinn seo,
Gun duine faighneachd an seinn mi ceòl.

Cha b' e sin m' àbhaist an tùs mo làithean,
'S ann bhithinn ràbhartach aig gach bòrd;
Gu cridheil sùnndach 'an comann cùirteil
A' ruith ar n-ùine gun chùram oirnn;
Nuair thug mi cùl ruibh bha mi 'gur n-ionndrainn,
Gun shil mo shùilean gu dlùth le deòir,
Air moch Diardaoin a' dol seach an Caolas,
'S a' long fo 'h-aodach 's a' ghaoth on chòrs'.

If they get a bargain in any of the shops
It is paid for with butter or flour.

I see no market or a fair day,
Nor the driving of cattle in a drove,
Or anything to help them amongst each other,
As they are in hardship in every way;
They're not to be envied as they're indebted,
Selling whatever they own in their possession;
The indebted man will hold his head down
Put in prison if he doesn't repay all his goods.

Before the lawsuits emerge from the courthouse,
They will be doubled at the trial;
Law that's delivered by the hand of the jury
Demands he be plundered, as he's worth no more;
The travelling sheriff will be about the country
Chasing and harrying them with their accounts;
My great worry is that he'll come my way,
He can't be denied, and we'll be ruined.

My Gaelic fails me when I try to tell you,
Nor can my nature arrange in form
All I'd wish conveyed to my relations
In the land I left, where I was once a boy;
Each one who reads, let him heed reason,
Pay no attention to the people of the boasts,
The false prophets who will tempt you,
With no regard for you, only after your gold.

Though I should be diligent in writing it,
I would need a month on it or more,
Before I could express all that is on my mind,
And present it to you in my own words;
A subconscious sadness has filled my being
Since I must submit here all my life long,
With little pleasure in this constricting forest,
And no one asking if I'll sing a song.

That wasn't my custom in my old days,
At every table, I'd love to chat;
In hearty spirits, in jovial company
Spending our time without a care;
When I turned away from you, I missed you dearly,
And my eyes shed tears in copious floods,
Early that Thursday as we passed Caolas,
The ship under sail and the wind off the coast.

29. Òran eadar Iain MacGilleain agus an Coirneal Friseal

AM BÀRD.

'S mòr mo mhulad 's cha lugh' m' èislean,
Chan eil feum dhomh 'bhith 'ga chùnntais;
On 'thàinig mi don tìr seo
Gu bheil m' inntinn air a mùchadh;
Chaill mi mo shùgradh 's mo sheanachas
On a dh'fhalbh mi às an dùthaich;
Toiseach a' chiad mhìos an fhoghair,
Sheòl sinn air adhart 'nar cùrsa.

Gura diombach mi don Chòirneal
'Rinn mo threòrachadh an tùs ann;
Le mòran brosgail is bòilich,
'S e 'cuir sgleò dheth feadh na dùthcha,
Ag ìnnse dhuinn gu' robh ar càirdean
Ann na b' fheàrr na bh' air a chunntais,
'S nach biodh uireasaibh gu bràch oirnn
Nan tigeamaid sàbhailt aon uair.

Gun do dh'aithnich mi on uair sin
Gum bu chruadalach a' chùis domh,
'Teannadh ri rèiteach na coillidh
'S gun mi goireasach 'ga ionnsaigh;
Fear nach dean obair le tuaigh ann,
'S nach urrainn an uaisle a ghiùlan,
B' fheàrr a dha fuireach 'an Albainn;
Mun deanadh e 'n fhairge stiùireadh.

AN COIRNEAL.

Ged 'tha uireasaibh an dràst' ort,
Gheibh thu ann an àird ri tìm air;
Nuair a bhios an crodh 's na caoraich
Air na raointean dhuit a' cinntinn,
Bidh tu pailt 'am biadh 's 'an aodach,
'S thèid leagadh nan craobh air dìochuimhn';
Bidh tu 'sin saidhbhir socrach,
'S thèid a' bhochdainn às do chuimhne.

AM BÀRD.

Chuala mi seanfhocal roimhe
Tha sin mar choimhearta fìor dha;
'Chaora bhios gu bàs le gorta,
'S coltach dhi gun dean i crìonadh'
Mu' faigh i feur ùr an t-sàmhraidh,
Cuiridh an geamhradh gu crìch i;
'S ann mar sin a dh'èirich dhomhsa,
Na bi 'cur do sgleò dhomh fiachaibh.

AN COIRNEAL.

Cha sgleò a th' agam 'ga sheanachas,
Ach cùis a dhearbhas mi fìor dhuit;
Na fir a chì thu 'san àite
B' aithne dhaibh do chàs nuair 'shìn iad;
Nuair a rèitich iad a' fearann,
Thug iad aire dha le crìonnachd;
Rinn iad beartas air a thàilleabh,
Ged a thàinig iad 's e dhith orra.

29. A Song between John MacLean and the Colonel Fraser

THE POET.

Great is my sadness, not less my sorrow,
It does me no good to report it;
Since I have come to this land
My creativity has been smothered;
I have lost my mirth and my conversation
Since I set out from the country;
At the start of the first month of autumn,
We sailed out on our course.

I am indignant with the Colonel
Who at the start led me here;
With much lively talk and boasting,
He painted a false picture throughout the country,
Telling us that our relations there
Were better off than had been reckoned,
And that we would never be in want
If we were to safely journey there.

I have recongnised since that time
That matters have been difficult for me,
Starting to level the forest
Ill prepared for the task;
A man who is unable to work with an axe,
And is unable to carry his dignity,
He'd be better to stay in Scotland,
Before he set out on the seas.

THE COLONEL.

Though you are in want right now,
You'll make the best of it in time;
When the cattle and sheep
Are multiplying in your fields,
You'll have plenty of food and clothing,
And the felling of trees will be forgotten;
You'll then be prosperous and at ease,
And poverty will be long forgotten.

THE POET.

I heard a proverb once before,
That is like a true comparison for it;
Sheep will be dying with hunger,
It looks like she will wither;
Before she gets the summer hay,
The winter will finish her off;
That is what has befallen me,
Don't be offering your obligatory deceptions.

THE COLONEL.

It isn't lies that I have to relate,
But something that will prove me correct;
The men you see in this place,
They knew your hardship when they arrived;
When they had levelled their land,
They paid attention to it with prudence;
They became wealthy because of it,
Though they had arrived in need.

AM BÀRD.
Chan eil ach beagan diubh beartach,
Ged 'tha pailte diubh fo fhiachan;
Tha 'bhochdainne an dèidh a' leònadh,
'S tric iad fo chòmhlaidh a' phrìosain;
Bidh a' siorram air an tòrachd,
Nuair a nì e m pòca a sgrìobadh,
Bheir e leis an cuid mar dhròbhair,
Chan fheòraich e ciod is prìs daibh.

AN COIRNEAL.
Tha cuid dhiubh mar 'tha thu 'gràitinn,
Chan fhaod mi àicheadh nach fìor e;
Daoine 'bha tuillidh is spòrsail,
'S a bha mòr-chuiseach 'nan inntinn,
'Thuit gun fhios daibh 'an ainfhiach;
Chan eil e cho soirbh dìreadh
On a dh'atharraich an saoghal,
'S a rinn caochladh air na prìsean.

AM BÀRD.
'S mòr a dh'atharraich an saoghal,
'S mis' a dh'fhaodadh sin a ghràitinn;
Thug e car dhomh nach do shaoil mi,
Chuir e 'n aois mi na bu tràithe;
'Tigh'nn don choillidh fad o dhaoinibh,
'Leagadh nan craobh 'as an làraich;
Ged a fhuair mi fearann saor ann,
'S goirt a shaothrachadh gu 'àiteach.

AN COIRNEAL.
Cha chunnt mi gur obair chruaidh e,
'S nach bi uachdaran gu bràch ort
A mhaoidheas do chur air fògar
Mura dean thu 'n còrr 'thoirt dhàsan;
Cha bhi 'na chomas do dhaoradh,
Chan fhaic thu maor leis a' bhàirlinn;
Gu de 'nis a bhiodh tu 'g ionndrainn
Bhon thàinig thu 'n dùthaich àghmhor.

AM BÀRD.
'S iomadh rud a tha mi 'g ionndrainn,
Nach dean 'san àm seo bonn stàth' dhomh;
Nam bithinn 'an tìr mo dhùthchais,
Far an robh mi 'n tùs mo làithean,
Gheibhinn meas am-measg nan uaislean
'Bha mun cuairt domh 'n Earraghàidheal;
B' fheàrr gu' d' fhuirich mi ri m' bheò ann,
Mun d' thàinig mi 'chòmhnaich 'a bhràighe.

AN COIRNEAL.
Ged bu mhath 'bhith 'measg nan uaislean,
Gur h-ann fada bhuait 's fheàrr iad;
'S a' luchd muinntir 'tha 'nan seirbhis,
Chan àirde 'n ainm na na tràillean;
Sleamhainn an leac aig an dorsaibh
Mura choisicheas tu fàilidh;
Nan tuiteadh tu uair gun fhios dhuit,
Rachadh bristeadh air a' chàirdeas.

THE POET.
There are only a few who are wealthy,
Though many of them are indebted;
Poverty has come to afflict them,
And often they pass under the prison gates;
The sheriff will be on their heels,
When he empties all their pockets,
He'll take with him his share like a drover,
He won't ask them what is their price.

THE COLONEL.
Some of them are as you say,
I cannot deny that it is true;
Men who were exceptionally merry,
And who were of a proud disposition,
Have fallen unknowingly into debt;
It isn't so easy to climb out
Since their world has changed,
And a reversal has come over the prices.

THE POET.
Their world has changed greatly,
And I myself might say so;
I've been deceived in an unexpected way,
It has prematurely aged me;
Coming to the forest, far from people,
Felling the trees where they stand,
Although I got land cheaply there,
Painfully I laboured to cultivate it.

THE COLONEL.
I wouldn't reckon it is hard work,
And you'll never again be subject to a landlord
Who threatens to put you in exile
If you don't give the surplus to him;
It won't be in his power to raise the price,
You won't see the bailiff with a summons;
So what is it that you would be missing
Since you came to this blessed country.

THE POET.
There are many things for which I long,
That will do me no good at this time;
If I were in the land of my heritage,
Where I had been in my young days,
I would find respect amongst the nobles
Who surrounded me in Argyll;
Better had I stayed there for good,
Before I came to live in the brae.

THE COLONEL.
Though it was good to be amongst the nobles,
It is better for them to be far from you;
Your countrymen who are in their service,
Have no better name than the slaves;
Slippery is the stone at their doorsteps,
Unless you walk in a gentle manner;
If you were to fall without knowing it,
The fellowship would be broken.

AM BÀRD.
'S iomadh fear stòrasach stochdail
'Tha glè shocrach a' toirt màil daibh;
'S inntinneach iad fad an t-samhraidh,
Le 'n cuid 'sna gleannan fàsaich;
Nuair 'thèid e dh'ionnsaigh a' mhargaidh,
Gheibh e 'n t-airgead 's cha bhi dàil ann;
'S na' faiceadh tus' e air tilleadh,
Chunntadh e gini ri t' fhàirdean.

AN COIRNEAL.
Ged 'tha toileachadh 'sna glinn sin,
Tha cusbann an Rìgh ri 'phàigheadh;
Chan fhaod e iasg 'thoirt à linne,
Na fiadh on fhireach as àirde;
Ma mharbhas e eun 'san doire,
Thèid a choireachadh mar mhèirleach,
Tàirnidh iad a-staigh gu binn e,
Thèid a dhìteadh 's cuirear càin air.

AM BÀRD.
'S furasta dha sin a phàigheadh,
Seach mar 'tha mi anns an tìr seo;
Liuthad là bho Fheill Màrtainn,
Fhuair mi sàrachadh is mì-mhodh;
Gur tric a' chuing air mhuineal,
'Tarraing 'chonnaidh le dìcheall,
'S a' sneachda dhomh mu chruachain,
'S cuid do dh'uairean bidh mi 'n iosal.

AN COIRNEAL.
Tog do mhisneach 's na bi bròn ort,
Ged 'tha sin an còmhnaidh sgìth leat;
Bidh tu fhathast ma 's a beò thu,
Cho dòigheil 's is math le t' inntinn;
Gu dè 'dh'iarradh tu ach fhaotainn
Fearann saor is còir on Rìgh air,
'Bhios an dèidh do bhàis mar oighreachd
Aig do chloinn ma bhios iad crìonnta.

AM BÀRD.
Nuair a chunntas mi mo shaothair,
Bidh e nas daoire na fhiach dhomh;
Mun dean mi 'ghlanadh 's a rèiteach,
'S a chur ri chèile 'na thinntean,
Gur coltaiche mi 'san uair sin
Ri fear à toll guail a' dìreadh;
Bidh mi cho dubh ris na tràillean
'Tha aig stàtachan nan Innsean.

AN COIRNEAL.
Ged a shiùbhladh tu Roinn-Eòrpa,
'S a bhith 'feòraich anns gach Rìoghachd,
Chan fhaic tu duine gun stòras,
A' tigh'nn beò ann le 'bhith dìomhain;
Tha mi 'n dùil gu' robh thu gòrach
Nuair a thòisich thu ri dìteadh;
'S iomadh aon dhan d' rinn i fuasgladh
'Bha 'na thruaghan a' tigh'nn innte.

THE POET.
Many a wealthy, rich man
Finds no trouble in giving them rents;
They are merry throughout the summer
With their share in the desolate glens.
When he goes to the market,
He'll get the money without delay;
And if you were to see him returning,
He would count a guinea for your farthing.

THE COLONEL.
Though there is pleasure in those glens,
The King's excise tax must be paid;
He may not take a fish from a pool,
Nor a deer from the highest moor;
If he kills a bird in the grove,
He will be condemned as a thief;
They will bring him in to judgment,
He'll be convicted and will be subjected to a fine.

THE POET.
It is easy enough for him to pay it,
Compared to me in this land;
Several days from Martinmas,
I suffered harassment and bad manners;
Often the yoke is about the neck,
Hauling the firewood diligently,
And with the snow up to one's thighs,
And from time to time I'll be very low.

THE COLONEL.
Raise your courage and don't be sorrowful
Though you'll always be tired of that;
You will still be, if you survive,
So very joyful and sound of mind;
What could you want but to get
Cheap land with full title from the King to it,
That will be an inheritance after your death
For your children if they are prudent.

THE POET.
When I take account of my labour,
It will be more costly that it was worth to me;
Before I clear and level it,
And put together in its hearth,
I was like, at that time
A man who is climbing out of a coalpit;
I was a black as the slaves
Who are at the swells in the West Indies.

THE COLONEL.
Though you could travel throughout Europe,
And could enquire in every Kingdom,
You will not see a man without a store,
Making a good living there by being idle;
I do believe that you were foolish
When you started to condemn it;
It has provided many a man with assistance
Who was a poor soul when he arrived.

AM BÀRD.

Gu dè mar 'dh'fhaodainnsa a moladh,
'S gun mi toilicht' ann am inntinn,
Bhon a thig toiseach na dùlachd,
Bidh a' chùis 'na h-adhbhar claoidh dhomh;
Ag èirigh 'sna madainnean reòta,
Gum bi crith air m' fheòil 's air m' fhiaclan;
'S gaoth a tuath le fuachd 'gam leònadh,
Mura bi mo chòmhdach cinnteach.

AN COIRNEAL.

Airson toileachadh do nàdair,
Chan eil stàth dhuit a bhith 'strì ris;
Sin an ceum nach tèid thu dh'àicheadh,
Bhon a dh'fhàilinnich ar sinnsreabh;
Ged a bha pailteas aig Adhamh,
Bha craobh 'sa ghàradh a dhìth air;
Dh'fhàg a' meas fo iochd a' bhàis e,
Nuair a ghabh e pàirt on mhnaoi dheth.

AM BÀRD.

'S e 'nì mi tuilleadh mar roghainn
Gun chuir 'ad aghaidh nas dìne;
Tha 'n duine 'g iarraidh àilgheas,
Eadar e 'bhith àrd is iosal;
Cluinnidh mi gearan on Diùca
Cho math riù-san 'tha toirt cìs dà,
'S on bhaigeir 'tha 'cosg na lùirich,
'S on fhear 'tha crùn an Rìgh air.

Cha lean mi nas fhaide a' seanachas,
Mun cinn iad searbh dheth le 'chluinntinn,
Mu' faigh iad coire do m' Ghàidhlig,
Cha bhi mi 'gràitinn na 'g ìnnse;
Olc air na math mur bhios mo chàradh
'San àite seo, 's èiginn striochdadh;
Soraidh bhuam gu tìr nan Gàidheal,
Nach leig mi gu bràch air diochuimhn'.

THE POET.

How on earth can I praise it,
When I am so unhappy here,
Since the start of winter arrived,
It has been a cause of vexation to me;
Rising on the frozen mornings,
There is a shiver in my flesh and teeth;
And the north wind wounding me with its cold,
If my clothing isn't secure.

THE COLONEL.

In order to satisfy your nature,
It's no use for you to be fighting it;
That's the step you cannot deny,
Since our ancestors failed;
Though Adam had plenitude,
He still wanted a tree in the garden;
The fruit left him in the mercy of death,
When he took part of it from his wife.

THE POET.

What I shall do henceforth as a choice
Is to stop disagreeing with you so vehemently;
Mankind wishes to satisfy his longing,
Between being lofty and lowly:
I hear a complaint from the Duke
As well as those who pay him tribute,
And from the beggar who wears tattered clothing,
And from the man who wears the King's crown.

I will not go further in relating,
Before they grow tired of it hearing it,
Before they find fault with my Gaelic,
I will not speaking or telling it;
For better or worse, if I'm not removed,
In this place, hardship will yield;
A farewell from me to the land of the Gaels,
That I will never forget.

30. Òran do dh'Alastair MacDhòmhaill, Tighearna Ghlinne-Garaidh, an dèidh a bhàis

Ged is fad' air a' chuairt mi
'Seo 'n Amaireaga Thuathaich,
Gur h-i naidheachd seo 'fhuair mi
A chuir m' inntinn gu gluasad;
'S iomadh aon 'tha fo ghruaman
Feadh gach dùthcha 'san cual' iad
Bàs an Alastair uasail nach beò. (2)

Bàs a' Ghàidheal 'bu ghlaine,
Gur h-e Dòmhnallach loinneil
'Bha mar leòghann 'an coille,
Nam biodh fòirneart dha goirid;
'S goirt 'tha gàir do chuid cloinne,
Thàinig cràdh orra, soilleir
Bhon là 'smàladh an coinneal le bròn. (2)

Tha do chèile fo mhulad,
'S i gu h-èisleineach duilich,
Fhuair i reusan air tuillidh,
'S trom a creuchdadh on bhuillidh
'Chuir thu t' shìneadh air t' uilinn;
Bhon là 'chàirich i 'n ulaidh
'An Cill Fhianain 'san tullaich fon fhòid. (2)

Tha do dhaoine gu tùrsach
Bhon là 'dh'fholaich an ùir thu;
Chaill iad taice ri 'n cùlthaobh,
Laoch gun athadh, gun chùram,
Cha bu ghealtair a lùbadh,
Ceannard feachda nach diùltadh
'Èirigh smachdail air thùs a chuid slòigh. (2)

'San àm fuasgladh do bhrataich,
B' e do shuaicheantas taitneach;
Mathain fhiadhaich a' chasgraidh,
Saighdean cinnteach 'nan achlais,
Iolair ìnneach an astair,
Fitheach fior-dhubh na h-ealtain;
Air bhàrr stìoball do chaisteil,
Bhon chreig dhìonaich 's bu ghasta le d' sheòid.

Leat a dh'èireadh na fearaibh
A bhiodh treun anns a' charraid,
Bho dhà thaobh uisge Gharaidh
Agus Cnòideart a' bharraich:
Bha do chòir air na fearainn,
B' e do staoileadh An Gleannach
'S tu seachd-deug dha' robh ceannas don t-seòrs'. (2)
Bu tu 'n Garranach prìseil,
Nam b' aithne dhomh t' ìnnse,
Gura h-iomadh fuil rìoghail
A bha 'd chùislean a' sioladh;
Iarla Rois agus Ile
Bhon a fhriamhaich do shìnnsreabh,
Cha b' i choille 'robh 'n crìonach

30. A Song to Alastair MacDonell, The Chief of Glengarry, upon his death

Though I am far away on my journey
Here in North America,
It is this news that I've received
That has set my mind in motion;
Many a person is overcome with sadness
In each district where they heard
Of the death of the noble Alastair, now departed.

The death of the purest Gael,
It is the splendid Macdonell
Who was like a lion in a forest,
If violence was close at hand;
Painful is the cry of your children,
Anguish has overcome them, clearly
Since the day the candle was sadly snuffed out.

Your spouse is in grief,
She is sorrowfully sorry,
She had good reason for it and more,
Heavily was she wounded by the blow
That left you stretched out on your back;
Since the day she buried the precious jewel
In Kilfinnan in the tomb under the turf.

Your people are sorrowful
Since the day the clay hid you:
They lost a support from their side,
A hero without fear, without care,
He was not a coward who would bend,
An army commander who would not refuse
To rise authoritatively at the head of his people.

At the time of loosening your banner,
Your standard was delightful;
Ferocious bears of the slaughter,
Sure arrows through their bosom,
The clawed eagle of the speed,
The deep-black raven of the flock;
At the top of the steeple of your castle
From the secure rock that was most excellent with your warriors.
With you would rise the men
Who would be strong in the conflict;
From both sides of the Garry water
And from Knoydart of the birches:
You had title to the lands,
Your title was The Gleannach,
You were the seventeenth who had a chieftainship of this sort.
You were the precious Glengarrian,
If I knew how to tell of you
That there was much royal blood
That coursed through your veins;
The Earl of Ross and of Islay
From whom your ancestors descended,
This wasn't a withered forest

'S na rinn Alastair cinntinn an tòs.	In which Alastair grew in the beginning.
Ach Clann-Dòmhnaill nam buillean,	But Clan Donald of the blows
'S tha gu leòr dhiubh fo mhulad	And many of them are in grief
'Chaidh a leònadh on uiridh,	Who were wounded from last year,
Chaill iad leòghann nan curan;	They lost the lion of the brave men;
Bu mhòr fòghlum is urram,	Great was the learning and honour,
'S tric a chomhdaich e Lunnainn,	Often did he cover London
Gum b' e 'bheus a bhith duineil 's bu chòir. (2)	It was his virtue to be manly and justly so.
'S iad na Gàidheil gu h-uilidh	It is the Gaels altogether
'Fhuair a' stràc a bha duilich;	Who suffered a blow that was grievous;
Bhiodh tu dàimheil gu 'n cuireadh	You would affectionately invite them
Air do shràidean le furan;	To your streets with hospitality;
Fear do nàdair chan urrainn	A man of your nature will never
Tigh'nn 'ad àite dhaibh tuillidh	Come to replace you for them ever again
Mur lean Aonghas na chunnaic e t' sheòl. (2)	Unless Angus emulates what he saw of your manner.
Thuit gu làr an crann mullaich,	The highest tree has fallen to the ground,
Craobh a b' àilliche duilleach,	A tree of the most beautiful leaf,
Nach robh sgàthach 'sa chunnart,	That was not fearful amidst dangers,
'Sheasadh dàna ri cumasg;	That would stand boldly before tumult;
Bha thu làidir mar churaidh	You were strong as a warrior
'Chuir a stàilinn gu 'fulang;	Who put his steel to the test:
'S bu tu 'n t-àrmann dham buineadh 'bhith mòr. (2)	And you were the chieftain who was destined to be great.
'S adhbhar acain do cheudan	It is a cause of wailing to hundreds
Gun do bhuannaich an t-eug thu,	That death has overcome you,
An t-uasal Garranach euchdach	The noble, valorous Glengarrian
Dha' robh misneach nach trèigeadh,	Whom courage would not forsake,
Bha thu measail dha rèir sin;	You were respected on account of that;
Cha b' e fasan luchd-Beurla,	It was not the fashion of English speakers,
'Chuir thu 'n cleachdadh bhon dh'èirich thu òg. (2)	That put you in a practice since you were raised from youth.
Fhuair thu 'mach à Dun-èideann	You got out from Edinburgh
Do na Gàidheil 'bha 'n dèidh air	To the Gaels who had been playing
Cluich na pìob' air a' rèidhlean,	The pipes on the grounds,
'Bhith 'nan dùthchannan fhèin ac'	To have in their own countries
'S iad a' feuchainn a chèile;	And competing with each other ;
'S ge b' e 'bhuannaicheadh tè dhiubh	And whoever would win one of them,
'S tu gu liubhradh dha fhèin i le còir. (2)	You would properly be offering it to him.
'S ann an toiseach an t-samhraidh,	At the beginning of the summer,
Seo i 'bhliadhna 'bhios ionndrainn	This is the year in which will be missed
Air an fhear a th' air chall orra,	The man whom they have lost,
'Thug a' fasan 'an ionnsaigh;	Who gave them his manner;
Bha thu tlachdmhor ri t' shealltainn,	You were delightful to behold,
Bha thu sgairteil mar dhiùnlaoch,	You were bold as a hero,
Bha thu smachdail, glan, ceannsgalach, còir. (2)	You were commanding, pure, authoritative and just.
Ma tha bàird na luchd-facail	If poets or wordsmiths are
'Measg nan Gàidheal mar 'chleachd iad,	Amongst the Gaels as the used to be,
'S tìm dhaibh dùsgadh an ceairtuair;	It is presently time for them to awake;
Chan ann sunntach le aiteas,	It isn't joyful with gladness,
Ach 'dh'ionndrainn gu' fac' iad	But to lament that they saw
Thu 'gad dhùnadh 'an tasgaidh	You enclosed in the vault
Ann an caol-chiste ghlaiste nam bòrd. (2x)	In a sealed, tight coffin of the boards.
Tha mi cinnteach 's cha bharail,	I'm certain, and it is not just an opinion,

Ma tha beò ann an Albainn,
Gur h-e 'm bròn a th' air aire;
Chaidh an ceòl às a charaibh,
Dh'fhalbh a shòlas ri mhaireann,
Chaill e 'dhòchas ri la-luain
Bhon a chaochail Gleann-Garaidh na' sròl. (2)

If there is anyone alive in Scotland,
It is sadness that is on his mind;
The essence has gone from his music,
His solace has eternally departed,
He has forever lost his hope
Since Glengarry of the banners has died.

Cha do dh'fhàg thu fear t' fhasain
Ann an Albainn na Sasainn,
Ged 'bha 'n dùthchannan farsaing;
Mura toisich do mhac air,
Cha b' fhiù leat a chlaistinn
Do chainnt dhùthchais 'mhasgadh
Na 'bhith 'giùlan na casaig' na 'chleòc. (2)

You did not leave a person of your sort
In Scotland or in England,
Though their lands are extensive;
If your son does not start on it,
It's not worth your while to listen
To flattering talk of heredity,
Nor to be wearing the cassock or a cloak.

B' fheàrr leat èileadh don bhreacan,
Osan geàrr agus gartan,
Còt' air fhiaradh don tartan;
Sin an còmhdach a chleachd thu,
Ghabh thu mòran do thlachd ann;
Bu tu aogasg a' ghaisgich,
'S claidheamh caol a' chinn-aisnich 'ad dhòrn. (2)

You preferred a kilt of the plaids,
Short hose and garters,
A coat patterned with the tartan;
That was the clothing you wore,
You took much pleasure from it;
You were the image of the hero,
With a thin basket-hilted sword in your fist.

Paidhir dhagaichean glèidhte ort,
'S gum bu ghast' thu gu feum leò;
Biodag ghuineach gu reubadh
Anns a' làimh a bha treubhach;
Sporan iallach gun eura ort,
Bu tu cridhe na fèileadh,
'S tric a riaraich na feumaich le t' òr. (2)

A pair of cocked pistols were kept on you,
And you were excellent in putting them to use;
A sharp-pointed dirk for rending
In the hand that was gallant;
You wore a ribboned purse that was generous,
You were the heart of the feast,
Often you helped the needy with your gold.

Bu tu marcaich' na rèise,
Sunntach, aigeannach, eutrom,
Air each cruitheach a' leumadh
Siùbhlach, astarach, gleusta;
Ge b' e 'chasadh ort eucoir,
Nuair a rachadh tu t' èideadh
'S tu fo t' armaibh, cha ghèilleadh tu beò. (2)

You were a fine horseman in the race
Joyful, spirited, lively,
On a shodden horse, leaping,
Nimble, speedy, eager;
Whoever would commit a crime against you,
When you would put on your Highland garb
And were dressed in your armour, you'd never surrender alive.

Bu tu'n giomanach gunn',
Cas a dhìreadh a' mhunaidh;
Cha bu sgìth leat do thuras
Ann am frìth nan damh donna;
Nuair a chìte e air mullach,
Làmh bu chinntiche buille thu,
'S bhiodh do mhial-choin 'na mhuineal ri spòrs. (2)

You were an expert marksman with a gun
A foot that would climb the mountain,
You would not tire of your course
In the forest of the red deer;
When it would be spotted on a crest,
Yours was the hand of the surest blow,
And your greyhound would be at his neck having sport.

B' ann 'ad chleachdadh 's do d' bheusan
Ann 'ad bhaile mòr èibhinn,
Fuaim na' feadain 'gan gleusadh,
'S gum bu mhiann leat an èisdeachd,
'S iad a' freagairt a chèile;
'An àm cromadh na grèine,
Chluinnte caithream nan teudan ri ceòl. (2)

It was in your habits and of your virtues
In your grand, delightful township,
The sound of the chanters tuning up,
That you loved to listen to them,
As they answered one another;
At the time of the setting of the sun,
The joyful music of the strings would be heard.

Bhiodh na bàrdaibh 's na filean
Ann 'ad sheòmraichean grinne
'Gabhail òranaibh binne,
'S tu ro-eòlach 'ga' sireadh;

The poets and the minstrels would be
In your handsome rooms
Singing sweet songs,
You most expertly would seek them out;

Bha mi còmhl' ruibh 'san iomairt,
'S cuid do dh'uaislean do chinnidh,
Anns an uair sin ri tional 'gad chòir. (2)

Nuair a chruinnicheadh na fearaibh
'An tùr Inbhir-Gharaidh,
Gum biodh sùrd ann 'ad thalla,
Cha bhiodh cùis ann ri gearan,
'S i do chùirt nach biodh falamh,
Rum', 's branndaidh 'na ghalain.
'S gum biodh fìon ann gun ghainne ri òl. (2)

'Nis on 'thriall an ceann-uidhe
'Bha gu fialaidh 'n àm suidhe,
Làmh a' riarachadh dibhe,
Air na dheanadh dhiubh tighinn,
Bhiodh le riaghailt 'na uidheam;
Creagan grianach a' fhithich,
An-diugh as cianail am bruidhinn 's am bròn. (2)

Thàinig smal air an teaghlach
'Bha gu h-aighearach, greadhnach;
Thàinig aithgheàrra caochladh,
Thuit ceann-taighe nach aomadh;
Nam bu chlaidheamh le daoinibh,
Rinn do shnaidheadh bhon t-saoghal,
Dhùisgeadh bras ann 'ad adhbhar gu leòir. (2)

Bhiodh Morair à Shlèite ann
Gus an togadh e t' èirig,
Mac Mhic Ailein nan geur-lann,
Is Iarla Aontraim à Èirinn,
Dheanadh Foirbeisich èirigh
Bhon thug iadsan duit cèile,
Agus iomadach treun-fhear a' chòrr. (2)

Bhiodh Strath-Ghlais le 'chuid dhaoine
'Tigh'nn 'ad thagar 's cha b' ioghnadh,
Na fir aigeanntach aotrom
'Dheanadh fuil anns a' chaonnaig;
Nuair a thàirneadh iad faobhar,
'S mire-chatha nan aodann,
'Sheasadh dìleas 'sa raoin air do thòir. (2)

'S ged a dh'fhalbh an Ceann-fine,
'S adhbhar sòlais don chinneadh
Gu bheil oighre 'na ionad
'Tha 'na òganach inich,
'S air tigh'nn dhasan gu spionnadh;
Cluinnear làmhach 'san fhireach,
'S b' ann do dh'àbhaist a' Ghlinnich nach beò. (2)

Gum bi sùrd ann 'ad bhaile,
Losgadh fùdair à cannain,
'Freagradh dlùth aig mac-talla,
'S teinntean èibhneis mar dhealain
Ri cuir smùid do na beannaibh;
'S e tigh'nn 'dh'ionnsaidh'chuid fearainn,
Gheibh e 'dhùthchannan fairis fo 'sgòd. (2)

I was with you in the endeavour,
And with some of the nobles of your kindred,
At that time to gather in your presence.

When the men would gather
In the tower of Invergarry
There would be liveliness in your hall,
There would be no reason to complain,
It is your court that would not be empty,
Rum and brandy by the gallon,
And there would be no shortage of wine there to drink.

Now since the hospitable host has departed
Who was liberal at dinner time,
A hand dispensing drink,
To those who would come,
Would be sensibly furnished;
Sunny precipices of the raven,
Today most mournful is their talk and their sorrow.

Sorrow has overcome the family
That had been joyful and cheerful;
Suddenly there came a reversal,
The householder who would not yield has fallen;
If like a sword to his people,
You were hewed from the world,
Many would awaken swiftly to your cause.

The Lord of Sleat would be there
In order that he would raise your ransom,
Clanranald of the sharp blades,
And the Earl of Antrim from Ireland,
The Forbeses would rise
Since they gave you a spouse,
And many another powerful man.

Strathglas with his people would
Come in your course and little wonder,
The spirited, lively men
Who would shed blood in the fray;
When they would unsheathe a blade,
With battle frenzy in their faces,
Who would stand faithfully in the field in your pursuit.

Although the chieftain has departed,
It is a cause of joy to the kindred
That there's an heir to replace him
Who is a lively young man,
And who has come to full strength;
Shooting will be heard in the deer-forest,
As was usual to the deceased Gleannach.

There will be good cheer in your township,
The firing of powder from cannons
Would be repeated closely by an echo,
And fires of happiness like lightning
To put smoke on the hills;
And as he approaches his lands,
He will take over the territories under his rule.

	'Leantail dùthchas an athar	Adhering to the birthright of the father
	'Bha gu fiùghantach flàthail,	Who was generously noble,
	Nuair 'thig ùine dhuit fhathast	When the time yet comes for you
	Suidhe sunntach 'na chathair,	To sit happily in his seat,
210.	Dean le cùram a caitheamh;	Enjoy it with great care;
	'S e mo dhùrachd le mathas	It is my wish with goodwill
	Dhuit gun giùlain thu 'chlaidheamh 's a chòt. (2)	That you will carry his sword and his coat.
	Ged a tha mi 'san tìr seo,	Though I am in this land,
	Gum bu mhath leam a chluinntinn	I would be pleased to hear
215.	Thu 'bhith macanta, cuimhneach	That you are gentle and mindful
	Air na cleachdaidhean caoimhneil	Of the courteous practices
	'Bh' aig an fhear on a chinn thu,	Of the man from whom you descend,
	'Bha mar thaice do d' mhuinntir	Who was like a support to your people
	'S luchd nam breacan na diobair an còir. (2)	And people of the plaids don't foresake their claim.
220.	Nuair 'ruigeas mo sheanachas	When my chronicle reaches
	Gleanna-garaidh don Inbhir	Glengarry of Invergarry
	A' laoich aigeanntaich mheanmnaich,	Of the gallant and bold hero,
	Gabh mo lethsgeul 's mi cearbach	Please excuse my clumsiness
	Mura rinn mi do leanmhainn	If I did not trace you properly,
225.	'S mi gu eachdraidh na h-Alba	In the history of Scotland,
	Air na fineachan ainmeil bu mhath. (2)	And the famous clans as I should.

31. Òran do dh'Alastair MacGilleain, Tighearna Chola

A-nochd is luaineach mo chadal,
'S mi 'nam leabaidh a' tionndadh;
'S beag an t-ioghnadh sin domhsa,
Rinn a' bròn orm drùdhadh;
Bhon là 'chuala mi sgeula,
Mheudaich èislean as ùr dhomh;
Rinn a' mulad mo lìonadh,
'S trom air m' inntinn a ghiùlan.

Fhuair mi naidheachd à Albainn
A tha 'dearbhadh mun 'chùis domh,
Gu' robh 'n t-uachdaran fearail
Dhan robh ceannas na dùthchadh
Ann an deireadh a làithean;
Thrèig a shlàinte 's a lùths e,
'S ged a tha mi far fairge,
Rinn e seanachas domh dùsgadh.

Nam bithinn gun t' fhàgail,
Bu cheann-fàth dhomh 'bhith t' ionndrainn,
'S mi gu' faodadh 'bhith dàna ort,
'S cha b' e t' àbhaist mo dhiùltadh;
Fhir a sheasadh le càirdeas
Anns gach càs air mo chùlthaobh,
Leam is duilich ri èisdeachd
Gun do thrèig thu do dhùthaich.

Gum bu bhochd do chuid dhaoine
'N àm an glaodhaich gu t' fhaicinn,
'Gabhail beannachd le chèile,
Cha sgeul èibhneis a bh' aca;
Cha bu shubhach an fhèisde
'Bha mu rèidhleanaibh t' aitreibh
Nuair a bha thu ri falbh às,
Ged a dh'earb thu ri d' mhac iad,

S' math do mhac a bhith 'làthair
Roimh 'luchd-dàimh mar chùl-taice,
Ann an ionad an àrmainn
Nach do ghnàthaich ach ceartas;
Gura h-ainbhfhiach ri 'bheò air
'Dol fo d' chleòca 'na ghlacadh,
Mura seasadh e t' àite dhaibh
'An nàdar 's 'an cleachdadh.

B' e do chleachdainn 's do ghluasad
'Bhith gu cruadalach smachdail,
'Bhith gu misneachail dàna
Gun 'bhith sgàthach na gealtach;
Bha thu iriosal, uasal,
Bha gach buaidh agus tlachd ort;
Far an tionndadh tu t' aghaidh,
Bu tu roghainn a' ghaisgich.

Bu tu ceannard na tuathadh,
Nach bu chruaidh gu cur às daibh,
Nach dìobradh gu bràch iad,

31. A Song to Alastair MacLean, The Laird of Coll

Tonight my sleep is restless,
I lie tossing and turning in my bed;
That is little wonder to me,
Sadness has painfully engulfed me;
From the day I received word,
My grief has increased once again;
Sadness has filled me,
It is hard for my mind to bear it.

I got news from Scotland
That proves the matter for me,
That the manly landlord
Who had chieftainship of the country
Was at the end of his days;
His health and his strength have left him,
And though I am now overseas,
He has awakened my discourse.

If I had not left you,
It would be my purpose to lament you,
It is I who could be bold with you,
And it was not your manner to refuse me;
O man who would stand in friendship
With me in every hardship,
It is very sad for me to hear
That you have given up your lands.

Your people would be sad
At the time of their calling to see you,
Taking leave of each other,
It was not a happy tale for them;
You took leave of each other,
That was held on the grounds of your residence
When you were to leave it,
Though you have entrusted them to your son.

It is good that your son is present
Before his relations as their support,
In the place of the chieftain
Who practised nothing but justice;
It will be his lifetime obligation
To be embraced in your mantle,
If he would stand in your place for them
In nature and in practice.

It was your practice and your conduct
To be hardily authoritative,
To be courageously bold,
Without being fearful or cowardly;
You were humble and noble,
You had every virtue and inclination;
Where you would turn your face,
You would be the choicest of heroes.

You were the leader of the tenantry,
Who was not so hard as to do away with them,
Who would never forsake them,

Ged 'bhiodh fàilinn na airc orr';
'An àm togail a' mhàil diubh
Ghabhte 'phàirt a bhiodh aca,
'Sa chuid eile bhiodh dàil ac'
Gus a' fàsadh iad beartach.

Though they would be failing or in distress;
At the time of collecting the rent from them
Their side would be taken,
They would get an extension for the remainder
So that they could become better off.

Gu' bu cheannard roimh shluagh thu
Nuair a ghluaiste gu feachd thu,
'S iad a thionail mun cuairt duit
'An àm fuasgladh do bhrataich;
Pìob gu fonnmhor 'ga gleusadh
Aig a cèile fo 'achlais,
'S gearradh cliùiteach ar n-armachd
Ri toirt dearbhadh 'nar gaisgeadh.

You were a commander of men
When you were sent to battle,
As they gathered around you
At the time your banner was unfurled;
A pipe would be melodiously tuned
By its partner under his arm,
And the renowned slashing of our arms
Provides proof of our heroism.

Craobh, long, bradan is mial-chu,
'S an t-eun fiadhaich bu bhòidhche,
A' làmh-dhearg 's an tuagh Abrach
Air a tarraing 'an òrdan,
Agus "ceannsaich na bàsaich"
Sgrìobhte làmh ris a' comhdach;
Gu' robh 'n dream bhon a dh'fhàs thu
Anns na blaraibh mar leòghainn.

A tree, ship, salmon and greyhound,
And the most beautiful eagle,
The red hand and the Lochaber axe
Wielded in good order,
And "conquer or die"
Written near to the cover
The folk from whom you descend
Were like lions in the battles.

Lean thu dùthchas do shinns'raibh,
'S gum bu rìoghail a' seòrsa,
Cha b' i 'choille 'robh 'n crìonach
'As na fhreumhaicheadh òg thu,
Ach na daragaibh àrda;
'Bhiodh ar nàmhaid 'nam bochdainn,
Clann-Ghilleain nan geur lann
'Bhualadh beum anns a' chòmhail.

You followed the heritage of your forebears,
They were a royal lineage,
It was not the forest in which there was rot
In which you took root as a youth,
But amongst the great oaks;
Our enemies would be in trouble,
Clan MacLean of the sharp blades
Who would strike blows in the fray.

Bu tu 'n t-Alastair cliùiteach
Nach lùbadh le gòraich,
'S nach leigeadh le cearbaich
Aon nì 'shealbhaich thu 'n còir bhuait;
Bha thu sìobhalta, coibhneil,
Gun fhoill na gun fhòtas,
Bha thu smachdail mar shaighdear,
'S tu nach fuilingeadh fear bòsdail.

You were the famous Alastair
Who would not foolishly submit
And who would not clumsily lose
Anything that you had won title to from them;
You were civil and kindly,
Without deceit or corruption,
You were authoritative as a soldier,
And you would not suffer a braggart.

Nuair a bha thu 'sa champa,
'S tu 'san àm sin 'ad chòirneal
'S a bha seanailear gallta
'Tighinn a shealltainn do chòmhlain;
Thug e urram do d' dhaoinibh
Ann an aogasg 's a' fòghlam;
'S math a b' airidh iad 'fhaotainn
'S tu 'bhith daonnan 'ga sealladh.

When you were in the camp,
You were a colonel at that time,
And there was a lowland general
Coming to look over your company;
He paid respect to your people
For their appearance and skill;
They were very worthy to receive it
And for you always to be demonstrating it.

Nuair a chruinnich iad còmhlath,
'S a thisich an iomairt,
'S ann a theann e ri tàmailt
'Thoirt do Ghàidheil 's gach fine;
Dh'èirich fearg ann 'ad aodann,
Cha do dh'aom thu le giorag;
Chuir thu comharradh claon air
'S bha 'fhuil chraobhach a' sileadh.

When they gathered together,
And the campaign commenced,
It's then that he began to insult
The Gaels of every clan;
Anger would rise in your face,
You did not submit with fear;
You put a slanting mark on him
And his blood was streaming.

Cha ghabhadh tu tàmailt:
Nuair a dh'àrdaich do spiorad,
Nan glacadh tu stàilinn,
Bhiodh do nàmhaid air iomain,
'S tu gun cluicheadh gu sàr-mhath
Leis a' ghàirdean 'robh spionnadh,
'S a sheasadh do làrach
'S nach tàirneadh gu d' shlinnean.

Nan tigeadh ort cruadal
Gun gluaiseadh 'gad chòmhnadh
Do chinneadh mòr fhèin leat,
Builleach, beumanach, stròiceach,
Neartmhor, cruadalach, gleusda,
Beachdail, treun anns an tòrachd,
Nach tilleadh gun reusan
'S nach gèilleadh gun chòmhrag.

Bhiodh MacCoinnich a Tuath leibh,
Sin an dualchas 'bu chòir dha,
'S gum bu dìleas ri d' ghualainn
'Thigeadh uaislean nan Leòdach;
Bu leat càirdeas Chlann Chamshroin,
Na fir mheanmnach o Lòcha,
'S a' Mhorair à Slèibhte
Leis an èibhte Clann Dòmhnaill.

Bu tu 'n t-uachdaran fearainn
Dha' robh ceannas is fòghlam;
Bha thu 'dhuine cho ainmeil
'S a bha 'n Albainn fad m' eòlais,
Do dh' fhear urrad ri t' oighreachd,
'S gu' robh roinn ni bu lear ann;
Rinn thu tuilleadh a bhuannachd,
Chuir thu suas na bu mhath i.

Nuair a bhiodh tu 'n Dun Èideann
Cha bu bheus leat 'bhith t' ònrachd;
Gum biodh tathaich na' uaislean
Tric mun cuairt air do bhòrdaibh;
Gheibhte ceòl is òl fiona
'Ad theaghlach phrìseil gun sòradh,
'Ga chaitheadh 's 'ga dhìoladh
Aig fear fialaidh le 'stòras.

'N àm 'bhith 'tarruing a dh'ionnsaigh
Ionad dùthchais do chòmhnaidh,
Bhiodh do bhàta fo 'h-uidheam
Roimh na sruthaibh 'ad chòmhdhail;
Nuair a chìte i air sàile
'Tighinn an àirde ri Sòaidh,
Chluinnte losgadh nan canan
Ann 'ad bhaile le sòlas.

Bu leat urram 'ga stiùireadh
'S i ri giùlan gu leòr dheth,
'S tu gu feuchadh a h-acfhainn
Nuair a ghlacadh tu 'dhorn i;
Bu tu marcaich' na' srann-each

You would accept no insult:
When your spirit rose,
If you were to grasp steel,
Your enemies would be driven away,
You would wield it most expertly
With the arm filled with strength,
And would stand your ground
And would not draw back to your shoulders.

If hardship were to befall you
Your own great kindred
Would come to your assistance,
Striking, destructive, wounding,
Powerful, hardy, skilful,
Authoritative, strong in the chase,
They would not retreat without good cause,
And they would not surrender without a fight.

MacKenzie of the North would be with you,
That was the tradition he should follow,
And standing loyally shoulder to shoulder
Would come the nobles of Clan MacLeod;
You were related to Clan Cameron,
The courageous men from Lochy,
And the Lord from Sleat
With whom would rise Clan Donald.

You were the landlord
Who had superiority and learning;
You were so renowned a man
As existed in Scotland, to my knowledge,
Of a man whose estate equalled yours
There were many who were no more discernible;
You made more of a success,
You increased it even better.

When you would be in Edinburgh
It was not your custom to be on your own;
There would often be the hosting
Of nobles at your tables;
There would be music and the drinking of wine
From your precious family without hesitation,
Expended and satisfied
By the man who was generous with his wealth.

When it was time to be moving towards
The hereditary place of your residence,
Your boat would be fitted out
Before the currents in your favourable wind;
When she would be seen on the seas
Coming up on Soay,
The firing of cannons would be heard
In your township with rejoicing.

You had the honour of steering her
While she carried enough of it,
And you would test her harness
When you took her in hand;
You were the rider of the snorting horses

'Bheireadh car air a stòladh
Nuair a rachadh tu 'dhìollaid
Le spuir gheur air do bhòtainn.

Mu labhrainn gu h-iomlan
Air gach fearra-ghleus 's bu nòs duit,
Cha b' fhuilear dhomh aimsir
'Chur mo sheanachais 'an òrdan;
Sguiridh mi 'ga iomradh,
'S chan ainmich mi 'n còrr dheth,
Gus an seinn mi do mharbhrann
An dèidh dhuit falbh ma 's a beò mi.

Who would cause her to calm down
When you settled into the saddle
With sharp spurs on your boots.

Before I relate completely
Of every manly activity in your nature,
I would need more time
To put my account in good order;
I will now stop reporting,
And I will not mention the rest of it,
Until I sing your elegy
After you depart, should I live long enough.

32. Marbhrann do dh'Alastair MacGilleain, Tighearna Chola

Thàinig sgeul thar nan cuantan
'Mheudaich mulad is gruaim dhomh le bròn,
Chuir e m' inntinn gu gluasad,
'S iomadh aon dhan do dh'fhuasgail e deòir;
Gun robh 'n t-Alastair prìseil
Air a chàradh gu h-iosal fon fhòid,
Ann an leaba na h-ùrach,
Ann an suain às nach dùisg e le ceòl.

'N t-ochd ceud deug seo 'rinn imeachd,
'S an còig deug thar a fichead 'na dèidh;
Ann an toiseach an t-samhraidh
Chaill do dhùthchannan ceannard 'bha treun,
Dhan robh misneach is cruadal,
Agus eòlas is suairceas da 'n rèir;
Bha thu iochdmhor ri truaghain,
Gun 'bhith tais ann an cruaidh-chas na 'n streup.

Nuair a chunnacas do bhàta
'Tigh'nn gu rudha na h-àirde fo sheòl,
'S iomadh aon a bha cràiteach
Thu 'bhith t' shineadh fo chlàraibh air bòrd;
Cha bu shunntach an fhàilte
'Bh' aig do mhuinntir a' fàsgadh nan dòrn;
'S iomadh cuimhneachan càirdeil
'Bh' aca 'n oidhch' ud mun àrmann nach beò.

Chaill iad ceannard na tuatha,
'S tu nach teannaicheadh cruaidh iad mun mhàl,
Cha do dh'fhògair thu bhuait iad,
Cha do chuir thu air cuan iad thar sàil;
B' e toilinntinn an uasail
A chuid dhaoine 'thigh'nn suas air a sgàth
Ann an cothrom, gun ghluasad,
'S nam biodh èis orr' 's ann 'dh'fhuasgladh tu 'n càs.

Nuair a dh'iarrte gu feachd iad,
Bhiodh do chòmhlan 'am Breacachadh tràth,
Bhiodh do phiob a' toirt caismeachd,
'S fir a' cruinneachadh mu chaisteal na tràgh';
Nuair a rùisgte do bhratach,
Dham bu dùchasach tapachd 'sna blàir,
Gum biodh geur-lann 'chinn aisnich
Air do chruachan gu casgairt do nàmh.

B' e do shuaicheantas cliùiteach,
'S e air thòiseach os ceann do chuid sluaigh,
An làmh dhearg mar bu dùthchas,
'S an tuagh Abrach 'thoirt cùis do d' luchd-fuath';
Craobh, long, bradan is mial-chu
'Chuireadh stad air an fhiadh aig a luaths;
'S an t-eun iteagach fiadhaich,
Nach robh leithid 's an ianlaith 'dol suas.

Dhuit bu dual a bhith beachdail,
'S gun do chinn thu bho ghaisgich nach b' fhann,

32. An Elegy to Alastair MacLean, The Laird of Coll

News arrived from overseas
That increased my sadness and sorrow,
It set my mind to thinking,
Many have been moved to tears;
That the precious Alastair
Has been buried beneath the ground,
In a bed of earth,
In a slumber out of which he will not awake.

These eighteen hundred have passed,
And thirty five more after that;
At the start of the summer
Your lands have lost a leader who was strong,
Who had courage and hardiness,
And knowledge and civility to match;
You were merciful to the poor,
Without being weak in hardship or strife.

When your boat was seen
Coming to the point of the headlands under sails,
Many a person was miserable
That you were laid out in a coffin on board;
Unhappy was the welcome
Of your people, clenching their fists;
Many a friendly reminiscence
They had that night of the deceased chieftain.

They lost a leader of the tenantry,
You wouldn't oppress them harshly about rents,
You did not banish them from you,
You did not send them over the seas;
It was the nobleman's pleasure
That his people come up for his sake
In an opportunity, without agitation,
If they were in hardship, you'd resolve their straits.

When they would be called to arms,
Your company would quickly be at Breacachadh,
Your piper would be playing a march,
And men would gather round the castle on the strand;/When your banner would be unfurled
To whom was inherent boldness in the battlefields,
A sharp-bladed basket-hilted sword
On your thigh in order to slaughter your enemies.

It was your famous crest,
It is before and over head your people,
The red hand as was customary,
And the Lochaber axe taking matters to your enemies/A tree, a vessel, a salmon and a greyhound
That would stop the deer at its speed;
And the feathered, wild bird,
Never has its like taken flight.

It was your heritage to be authoritative,
You grew from heroes who were not weak,

Clann Ghilleain nan caisteal,
Nach biodh iosal fo mhasladh do chainnt;
Fir a dh'fheuchadh an stàilinn.
Faobhar fulangach, làidir, gun mheang,
An dèidh fhadhairt, bhon cheàrdaich,
'S cha bu lapach do làmhsa 'na cheann.

Do shliochd Mhìlidh na fèile,
'Dheanamh gnìomh anns na teugbhailean garg',
Is Gatheluis an treun-fhear,
Bu mhòr urram 'san Eiphit is sealbh;
Bha na curaidhean gleusda,
Mar a b' eòl do luchd-sgeula gun chearb,
'S gur h-e 'ghnìomharan euchdach
'Choisinn Muile don cheud-fhear don ainm.

Gum bu rìoghail do shloinneadh,
Bha iad dìleas an-fhoilleil don chrùn,
Cha do mhùth iad an cleòca,
'S cha d' rinn giorag no còmhrag 'thoirt diubh;
Sheas iad là Sliabh-an-t-Siorra,
Ged 'chaidh iomadh sàr-chinneadh air chùl,
A' toirt àir le 'n cruaidh-bhuillean
Air na laoich a bha 'n cuideachd an Diùc.

'S iomadh call daibh a dh'èirich,
Eadar cogadh is eucoir, ri 'n àm,
Air tràigh Ghruinneart an Ile
Thuit Sir Lachann, am mìlidh gun mheang;
Ann am blàr Inbhir Chèitinn
Thuit Sir Eachann le 'cheudan mu 'chrann,
'S fhuair MacCailein am fearann
Bho Rìgh Uilleam, gun cheannach, 'am bann.

'S math gun d' chum na fir smearail
A bh' air Cola 'n cuid fearainn le buaidh;
Bhon a choisinn Iain Garbh e,
Cha d' rinn aon 'bha fo arm a thoirt bhuaith';
Thàinig Niallaich thar sàile
'Ghabhail seilbh air gu dàna 'nan uaill,
Ach chuir lannan nan sàr-laoch
Gu ceann-crìch' iad 'san àraich gun truas.

Gura mòr an luchd-leanmhainn
A bh' aig Alastair ainmeil seo 'dh'eug;
Tighearna Chola agus Chuimhnis,
'S e do bhàs 'chuir 'am chuimhne mo sgeul;
Bha thu smachdail mar shaighdear,
Bha thu macanta, coibhneil 'am beus,
Cridhe soilleir gun fhoill thu
Dhan robh ceartas a' boillsgeadh mar ghrèin.

'S iomadh buaidh 'bha riut sìnte
Nach tèid agams' air ìnnse 'nam rann;
Bha thu fòghlaimte, fior-ghlic,
Bha thu dàimheil, gun chrìne dhuit teann;
Cha robh beairteas 'gad lìonadh,
Na 'cur eallaich air t' inntinn le sannt;
Bha thu 'cleachdadh na fìrinn,

Clan MacLean of the castles,
Would not be lessened by shame of your speech;
Men who were tested by steel.
A hardy, strong edge without blemish,
After tempering, from the smithy,
Your hand was not feeble at its head.

Your progeny of Mílidh of the hospitality
Who would accomplish deeds in the fierce battles,
And Gathelus, the strong man,
Was highly respected and successful in Egypt;
The heroes were expert,
As was known to skilful storytellers,
It was his heroic exploits
That won Mull for the first man of the name.

Your pedigree was royal,
They were loyal and faithful to the crown,
They were not turncoats,
And tumult nor strife did not take from them;
They stood on the day of Sherriffmuir,
Though many excellent clans turned back,
Taking care with harsh blows
On the heroes who accompanied the Duke.

Many of those who rose were lost
Between war and criminal acts, in their time,
On the beach of Gruinard in Islay
Sir Lachlan fell, the faultless hero;
In the battle of Inverkeithing
Sir Hector fell with his hundreds about his standard,/Campbell of Argyll got title to their lands
From King William, without purchase, in a proclamation.

It is well that the courageous men who were
In Coll victoriously kept their land;
Since Rough John won it,
No armed man could take it from him;
MacNeills came from over the sea
To take possession of it, boldly in their pride,
But the blades of the great heroes put
Them unmercifully to death in the battlefield.

Great were the followers
That this famous Alastair had who died;
The Laird of Coll and Quinish,
Your death has brought to mind my tale;
You were an authoritative soldier,
You were gentle and kind in virtue,
You had a pure and honest heart
In which justice shone like the sun.

Many a virtue was given to you
That I cannot recount in my verse;
You were learned, truly wise,
You were kind, without meanness at all;
Wealth did not fill you
Or burden your mind with greed;
You were accustomed to the truth,

Is bha t' fhacal cho cinnteach ri d' pheann,
And your word was as certain as your pen,

Nam b' e claidheamh le eu-ceart
'Chuir fo chumhachd an eug thu 'sa chill,
Bhiodh do chinneadh mòr fhèin
A' dòrtadh fala ann 'ad èirig gu dian;
Bhiodh Loch-Buidhe nan treun-fhear,
'S e air thòiseach nan ceud a' dol sìos;
'S Mac Mhic Eòbhainn bhon Àirde,
'S e gun athadh do nàmhaid 'san strì.

If it had been an unjust sword
That had put you in the grip of death in the grave,
Your clan, itself great, would be
Fervently spilling blood to recompense you;
Lochbuie of the strong men would be
Ahead of hundreds going down;
And MacLean of Ardgour from Aird would be
Without fear of your enemies in the battle.

Dh'èireadh cinneadh do mhàthar,
'S cha bhiodh cruadal mar chàs air na seòid;
Mu Dhun Bheagain, mar b' àbhaist,
Bhiodh 'gan tional crois-tàra MhicLeòid,
Bratach shìth' nan trì sealladh
Nuair a chìt' i air bealach roimh 'shlòigh,
B' adhbhar gioraig do d' nàmhaid,
Gum biodh cuid dhiubh 'san àraich gun deò.

Your mother's clan would also rise,
And hardship would be no difficulty for these heroes;/About Dunvegan, as was usual,
Would gather under MacLeod's fiery cross,
The fairy banner of the three visions
When seen on a pass before his people,
Would be a cause of fear to you enemies,
Many of them would be lifeless in the battlefield.

Bhiodh Loch Iall 'dol 'na èideadh
Le clann Chamshron bu treun anns an tòir,
Is cha b' ioghnadh dha fhèin siud,
'S gum bu dìleas e 'n tè 'bha riut pòst';
Leis na buillean 'bhiodh creuchdach
Le neart churaidh 'bhiodh reubadh air feòil;
Ge b' e 'bheireadh dhaibh reusan
Bhiodh an àlachd air sliabh aig na h-eòin.

Cameron of Locheil would get into his garb
With clan Cameron, strongest in the pursuit,
It is no surprise to him that
He was loyal to the women you married;
With the blows that would be destructive
With the strength of heroes who'd be rending flesh;
Whatever would give them a reason
Their carcasses would be on the heath, left to the birds.

Bhiodh MacCoinnich air ghluasad
Ann 'ad adhbhar, 's bu dual da 'bhith ann;
Is gun robh sibh 'shliochd bhràithrean
A bha ainmeil ri 'n là anns a' champ;
Nuair a sgaoileadh e 'shìoda
Ri cròic chabraich fear-frithe nam beann,
Os ceann lasgairean Shìophort,
Biodh a nàimhdean 'nan sìneadh gun cheann.

MacKenzie would have departed
In your cause, it was his custom to be there;
And you were the descendants of brothers
Who were famous in their day in the camp;
When he would unfurl his silk
On the antlers of the one of the mountain passes
Above the young men of Seaforth,
His enemies would be stretched out, headless.

Ciamar 'sguireas mi 'dh'ìnnse
Cliù 'n fhir eireachdail fhìor a chaidh bhuainn';
Bha thu ceanalta, siobhalt',
Fhir a b' aille 's a b' fhìnealta snuadh;
'S bha thu àrdanach, rìoghail,
Gus gach tàmailt a dhìoladh le duais;
'S tu nach trèigeadh 'nam chàs mi,
Gheibhinn coibhneas is bàigh bhuait gach uair.

How can I stop recounting
The renown of the handsome true man who has left us;/You were genteel and civilised,
O loveliest man of the most handsome appearance;
You were proud and royal,
And repaid each reproach with a fitting reward;
You would not forsake me in my hardship,
I would always find kindness and hospitality from you.

'Nis on dh'fhalbh an triath calma,
A bha cliùiteach 'an Albainn ri là;
Guidheam buaidh leis an treunfhear
'Tha mar dhìon do luchd-feuma 'na àit';
Tha mo dhòchas 'san Fhreasdal
Nach tig fàilinn am feasda 'na dhàil,
Eòghan òg, am fear fiachail
A tha cinneadail, dìleas, làn bàigh.

Now since the brave lord has departed,
Who was renowned throughout Scotland in his day;
I pray for victory to the great man
Who is a protector to the needy in his place;
My hope is in Providence
That a failing will never come upon him,
Young Hugh, the worthy man
Who is clannish, loyal and full of mercy.

Fhuair thu baintighearna chliùiteach
Bho Chlann Dhonnchaidh à Strùthan, fo d' sgèith;
Dham bheil creideamh le cùram,

You found a renowned lady
Of Clan Robertson of Struan under your wing;
Who has faith and attentiveness,

Agus eòlas is giùlan d' a rèir
Bhiodh i 'sgaoileadh a' Bhiobail
Air na bochdan a chitheadh i 'na fheum,
Mar a dh'fhaodas mi ìnnse,
Gu bheil cuid diubh 'sna crìochan seo fhèin.

'Nis bhon tha thu 'd cheann-uidhe,
Is gun d' fhuair thu 'bhith t' shuidh' air an stiùir,
Cum 'ad chuimhne gach latha
Beus an fhir 'tha 'na laighe 'san ùir;
'S nuair a ghlacas an t-eug thu,
Biodh do mhac ann 'ad dhèidh mar cheann-iùil,
'Na fhear foghainteach, smachdail,
Le toilinntinn 'an caisteal Druim Fionn.

Mur 'bhiodh gainnead mo stòrais,
Phillinn fhathast air m' eòlas a-null,
Gus an ruiginn an t-àite
Far 'n do shuidhich thu làrach as ùr;
Cha bhiodh eagal gu bràch dhomh,
Fhad 's a bhitheadh tu làidir ri m' chùl;
B' fheàrr gun robh mi gun t' fhàgail,
Gheibhinn fasgath fo sgàile do chùirt'.

And knowledge and a befitting carriage
She would spread the Scriptures
To the poor she would see in need,
And as I may recount,
That some of them are even in these parts.

Now that you are at your destination,
And have got to be seated at the helm,
Keep in mind every day
The virtues of the man who is reposed in the earth;
And when death gets hold of you
Your son would follow you as chieftain,
A powerful, authoritative man,
With contentment in the castle of Drumfin.

If there weren't a shortage in my wealth,
I would yet return to my acquaintances over there,
Until I had reached the place
Where you had constructed a building once again;
I would never again have cause to fear
As long as you were strongly behind me;
Better that I had not left you,
I would find shelter under the protection of your court.

33. Òran a' Bhàil Gàidhealaich

Fonn. Bithibh aotrom 's togaibh fonn,
Cridheil, sunntach gun 'bhith trom,
'G òl deoch-slàinte na bheil thall,
Ann an tìr nam beann 's nan gleannaibh.

Fhuair mi sgeul a bha ro bhinn,
Dh'ùraich gleus air teud mo chinn,
'S bidh mi 'nis a' dol 'ga sheinn,
Ged tha mi 'sa choill' a' falach.
Bithibh aotrom &c.

Gur h-i sgeul a fhuair mi 'n dràst',
'S gun a dhùisg i mi gu dàn,
'Bhith 'gam iarraidh 'dh'ionnsaidh bàil
'Th' aig na Gàidheil tùs an earraich.

Nuair a thèid an comann cruinn,
Bidh iad sìobhalta le loinn,
Cliùiteach, ciallach, fialaidh, grinn,
'S bheir iad coibhneas do dh'fhear aineoil.

Nuair a shuidheas iad mun bhòrd,
Bheir iad tacan air an òl,
'S fidheall thèud bhon gleusar ceòl,
'Cuir nan òganach 'nan deannaibh.

Cha bhi sgrùbaireachd man chlàr,
Ann an cuideachda mo ghràidh,
Aig a bheil an inntinn àrd,
'S nach gabh tàmailt bho na Gallaibh.

Nuair a thèid an fhidheal 'na tàmh
Bheir iad treis air cainnt nam bàrd,
Dhùisgeas fonn neo-throm 'nan càil
Anns a' Ghàidhlig as ghlain' gearradh.

Cànain ghasta, bhlasta, bhinn,
'S i bha 'n cleachdadh aig na suinn,
'Dhearbh an gaisgeadh 'm feachd an rìgh,
'S iomadh tìr 'n d' thug iad deannal.

Luchd nam breacan dathte 'bh' ann,
Bha iad fuasgailte 's gach àm,
'S nuair a ghluaiseadh iad bhon champ
Chuireadh ruaig gu teann r' a leanadh.

'S gun b' e sin 'n t-èideadh cuinne,
Breacan an èileadh ghrinn,
Osain gheàrr mun 'chalpa chruinn,
'S boineid ghorm os cionn na mala.

Claidheamh cruaidh air chniochdan fìor
Stàilinn ghlas mar ealtainn ghèarr,
A' làimh nan gaisgeach nach tais fiamh,
'S nach bidh riamalach gu 'tarrain'.

'S bhon a chinn sinn fhèin bhon dream,
'Dh'àraicheadh fo sgèith nam beann,

33. Song of the Highland Ball

Chorus. Be lighthearted and raise tune,
Cheerful and happy, without being sad,
Drinking a toast to those over there,
In the land of the mountains and glens.

I got news that was most sweet,
And which renewed my poetic muse,
I am now going to sing a verse,
Though I'm hidden in the forest.

It is news that I just received,
Which inspired me to a song,
Being invited to a ball
That the Gaels'll have at the start of spring.

When the company comes together,
They will be civil and in good form,
Distinguished, tactful, hospitable and fine,
They'll offer kindness to the stranger.

When they sit around the table,
They'll spend a while drinking,
And a well-strung fiddle, tuned for music
Will set all the young men in motion.

There'll be no churlishness around the table,
In the company that I adore,
Who possess most lofty minds,
And won't take an insult from the Lowlander.

When the fiddle is put aside,
They'll spend a while on the language of the bards,
A joyful tune will awaken their spirits,
In a Gaelic of the neatest composition.

A delightful, eloquent, dulcet language,
She was used by the warriors,
Who proved their heroism in the king's army,
In many a land they've done battle.

The people of the coloured plaids were there,
They were unconstrained at all times,
When they would set off from camp
There'd be a chase with them in hot pursuit.

Wasn't that the angled costume,
Tartan of the handsome kilt,
Short hose around their firm calves,
And a blue bonnet upon the brow.

A steel sword on true soldiers,
Grey steel, sharp as a razor,
In the hands of the hardy heroes,
And who won't be slow in drawing it.

And since you yourselves sprang for the folk
Who were raised in the shadow of the hills,

'Bhuannaich anns an Eiphit 'gheall,
'S a chuir Frangaich às an t-sealladh.

Ged 'tha sibh 'an tìr nan craobh,
Cuimhnichibh air beus nan laoch;
Leòghainn bhorb 'bu ghairge fraoch,
'S iad nach aomadh a's a' charraid.

Ged 'tha sibh 'an Albainn Ùir
'Caitheamh an oidhche le sunnd,
'S an deoch-slàinte a thig air thùs,
Olaidh-sa gu 'ghrunnd gach fear i.

Gu tìr na' Gàidheal gasta, treun,
'Rachadh acfhuinneach air ghleus;
Tha iad fuasgailte gu feum,
Tha sealgairean air fèidh 'sna beannaibh.

Soraidh bhuam far chuan a-null,
Don tìr ìosal 'n robh mi 'n tùs,
'S tric a dh'fheuch iad i fo 'siùil,
'S iad 'ga stiùireadh 'dh'ionnsaidh cala.

Bho nach ruig sinn orra 'n dràst',
Lion bho ghrunnd a' chuach gu 'stràc,
'S cuir man cuairt i 'nuas gun dàil
Ann an onair àrd nam fearaibh.

Who won in Egypt its prize,
And banished Frenchmen from view.

Though you are in the land of the trees,
Think upon the virtue of the heroes;
Wild lions of the fiercest wrath,
They would not bend in the conflict.

Though you are in New Scotland
Spending the evening joyfully,
And the toast which comes at the start,
Each man will drink it to the dregs.

To the land of the excellent, hearty Gaels,
Who'd go well-equipped and prepared;
They are active in time of need,
The hunters chase deer in the hills.

Farewell from me over across the sea,
To the low-lying land where I was young,
Often they'd see her under sail,
As they steer her toward harbour.

Since we cannot reach her right now,
Fill the cup from its bottom to its rim,
And send it around without delay,
In a great tribute to these men.

34. An Adharc

AN ADHARC.
Gura muladach 'tha mi
Ann a' fàsach na' beann,
Anns an tìr seo air m' aineoil
'S nach eil caraid dhomh teann;
Gur neònach leam Uilleam
'Chuir a thuras fo m' cheann,
Chaidh mo ghibht ort mar leannan,
'S tha mi falamh 'san àm.

AM BÀRD.
Na bi 'gearan cho tràth
Mu' bi càch oirnn a' cainnt,
Gura iomadach fhàilinnean
'Thug air làimh a bhios gann;
O nach gabh thu lethsgeul
Ged a tha thu grèis gun a' dram,
Gheibh sinn fathast gach goireas
Nuair 'thèid a' choille às a bonn.

AN ADHARC.
B' fhearr leam fhaicinn na chluinntinn,
'S gur e 'mheudaich mo bhròn
'Thu 'bhith ag ìnnse dhomh daondan
Gu bheil e daor aig MacLeòid;
Dar bha mis' aig mo chiad fhear,
Bha e fialaidh gu leòr,
Cha do chaomhainn e riamh orm
A mheud 's gu iarrainn ri 'òl.

AM BÀRD.
Bheirinn comhairl' nach mist' iad
Air na fleasgaichean òg',
Gun iad a phòsadh ri banntraich
Ged robh iad sanntach air òr;
Gheibh i cleachda bho 'chiad fhir
A bhios i 'g iarraidh ri 'beò,
Ged a bhiodh i 'na caillich
'S aogasg sean air a sròin.

AN ADHARC.
Chan eil mis' ann am chaillich,
Ach 's tusa a' balach gun tùr;
Cha d' fhuair thu mi falamh
Cha b' ionann caladh nach b' fhiù;
Tha do uaille ann a' Uilleam,
Ma chuireas thu [ligh' (?)] ri 'chùl,
Ma bheir thusa dha 'ghealladh
Nach bidh mi falamh 'sa chùil.

AM BÀRD.
Ciamar 'bheirinn thu 'follais
Anns a' chomann an dràst'?
'S duilich dhomhsa a bhith 'ad chomain,
'S nach bhoine air do chlàr;
Thèid mi dachaidh gun fios leat,
Cha bhi mis' fo' 'ad stràic;
Na bi 'maoidheadh do thochar,

34. The Drinking Horn

THE HORN.
Oh, woe is me
In the wilderness of the hills,
In this distant, foreign land
I have no relation nearby;
It's strange to me that William
Has put me on his journey,
I was given to you, like a sweetheart,
And now I am completely empty.

THE POET.
Don't be complaining so soon
Before others speak about us,
There are many failings
That was forced on an empty hand;
Since you won't accept an apology
Though you've been without a dram for a while,
We will still get every advantage
Once the forest has been felled.

THE HORN.
I would prefer seeing to hearing,
And what has increased my sadness
Is you forever telling me
That MacLeod's is expensive;
When I was with my first man,
He was generous enough,
Never did he ever economise with
His measure when I wanted a drink.

THE POET.
I'd give advice to the young men
That they would not be the worse for,
To avoid marrying a widow
Though they lusted after gold;
She will used by the first ones
That she wants so long as she lives,
Though she would be an old hag
And an aged appearance on her face.

THE HORN.
I'm not an old hag
But you are the lad with no sense;
I wasn't empty when you found me
Compared to a young girl of no value;
There is sufficient pride in William that,
If you put [flood (?)] behind him,
If you give him your promise
I will not be empty in the rear.

THE POET.
How could I take you into the open
In society right now?
It's hard for me to be in your company
Without a drop left in you;
I will go home with you unknowingly,
I will not go under in your sway;
Don't be threatening your dowry,

Ged a lìon e botail na dhà.

AN ADHARC.
'S math a thochar a fhuair thu
Cheangal suas air do thaobh
Bhon duine onarach uasal,
Man a ghluais 's tu faoin;
Ged 'èirich domh tuaileas
Mu toirt fuadach bho m' ghaol,
Gur e 'fhàgail a' bhliadhna
'Rinn mo liathadh 's cha aois

AM BÀRD.
Cha bhoireannach beusach
'Ghabhas dèidh air an òl,
Mu thug thusa do spèis dha,
Gu' bi èis air do lòn;
Dheanainn biadh agus aodach
'Chuir daondan 'ad choir,
Ciamar 'chumas sinn teaghlach
Ma bhios thu 'glaodhaich na' stop?

AN ADHARC.
Ged a bhithinns' air padhadh,
Cha dean mi 'ghabhail leam fhèin,
Chan eil mi trom air tombaca,
Cha do rinn mi cleachd den a' *tea*;
'S mòr gu' b' fheàrr leam stuth làidir,
Rud as àille na fion
Ris an abair iad branndaidh,
Cha bhiodh mo cheann leatha tinn.

AM BÀRD.
Chan fhaighinns' thu glaiste
Na' biodh do chleachd aig chèil',
Tha e dhomhsa 'na mhasla'
A bhith 'gad fhaicinn 'am dhèidh;
'S iomadh fear a chaidh a mhealladh
'Fhuair a leannan air fèill,
'S e 'ga taghadh air àilleachd
'S gun a' nadar dha rèir.

AN ADHARC.
Nuair a bha mi aig Uilleam,
Sin an duine 'bha grinn,
Bha mi fada 'na theaghlach
'S bha rud daondan bho m' làimh;
'S iomadh conaltra' ciatach
Anns a' 'iarrte mo chainnt,
'S dar a thigeadh luchd-eòlais,
Bheirte à seòmbar mi 'nall;

AM BÀRD.
'S èiginn domhsa 'bhith sàmhach
Ged 's nàr e ri luaidh;
Tha seanfhocal a' gràitinn
Nach bi dànachd gun 'dhuais;
Mur faigh fear an deagh-nàdair
Air bean àrdanaich buaidh,

Though it would pay for a bottle or two.

THE HORN.
It is good to tie up by your side
His dowry that you received
From the honourable, noble man
Before you foolishly stir;
Though I have been reproached
About being taken from my beloved,
It is his departure this year
That has caused me to age and not my years.

THE POET.
It is not a virtuous woman
Who takes a longing for drink,
If you gave your affection to it,
Your provisions will be wanting;
I would make food and clothing
To always put before you,
How will we ever keep a household
If you're shouting for more drink?

THE HORN.
Though I might be thirsty,
I would not drink it by myself,
I'm not heavy on tobacco,
I've never used any tea;
I greatly prefer the strong stuff
A thing more preferred than wine,
Which they call brandy
It would never cause me a hangover.

THE POET.
I would not find you sealed
If you were used by both,
It is to me an insult
To be seeing you after me;
Many a man has been deceived
Who won his lover at a fair,
Who chose her just for her beauty
Without the good character to match.

THE HORN.
When I was with William,
There's the man who was fine,
I had long been in his household
And something was always in beyond my grasp;
Many a pleasant conversation
In which my discourse was desired,
And when acquaintances would come,
I would be produced from a room.

THE POET.
It is difficult for me to be quiet
Though it is a disgrace to recount
There is a proverb that says
Boldness won't go unrewarded;
If a good natured man does not win
Over a proud woman,

95. Nì i burraidh na tràill deth,
'Na chuis-ghàire do shluagh.

She will make a buffoon and slave of him,
An object of laughter for people.

35. Don Phàrlamaid Ùir

Deoch-slàinte luchd nam breacanaibh,
'S e cur mun cuairt a b' aite leinn,
'S gun òlamaid gu sgairteil i,
Air lasgairean a' chruadail.

Tha naidheachd ùr an dràst' againn,
A' chùirt a th' aig a' Phàrlamaid,
Gach aon diubh 'g iarraidh chàirdean,
Feuch cò 's fheàrr aca 'nì buannachd.
Deoch-slàinte luchd nam breacanaibh. (7c)

'S a Ghàidheil bithibh ceannsgalach,
'Is cuimhnichibh 'ur ceannardaibh,
Is tric 'thug buaidh 'sna campaichean
Ag iomairt lann le 'n cruadal.

Gur mòr an t-adhbhar nàire dhiubh,
Ma ghèilleas sibh do Lasonach
Do Dheòrsa na do dh'Archibald,
'S an tàir a thug na h-uaislean.

'S e 'thuirt iad gu mi-chiatach,
Gur pronnasg a bha 'dhìth orra,
'S gun glanadh iad a' sgrìobach
Do na Gàidheil mhiothair shuarach.

Ma dhearbh sibh riamh ur duinealas,
'S e seo an t-àm dhuibh cruinneachadh,
'S a shealltainn daibh gur urrainn sibh,
An urram a thoirt bhuatha.

'S a' mhuinntir a bha 'g earbsa ruibh,
Na leigibh dhiubh le dearmad iad,
Bhon 'tha iad fhèin ag earbsa asaibh,
Gun dearbh sibh mar bu dual duibh.

'S a' mhuinntir a bha 'gràitinn ruibh,
Nach b' fhiach sibh fhèin a' Ghàidhealtachd,
Bidh cuimhne agaibh an dràst' orra,
Nuair 'dh'àrdaichear an cluarain.

Cha chualas riamh an tàmailte
Aig an t-sinnsearachd on tàinig sibh;
'An àm dol sios 'sna blàraibh
Bu neo-sgàthach gu cur ruaig iad.

Nuair rùisgeadh iad am brataichean
'S a sheinnte 'phìob gu tartarach,
Bha cliù air luchd nam breacan
Anns gach baiteal, mar 'chualas.

B' e sin an còmhdach cleachdte dhaibh,
An t-osan grinn 's na gartananaibh,
A' còta geàrr 's am breacan
Air a phasgadh far an guailleadh.

Lann thana, gheur do stàilinn,
Air an cruachan ann a' sgàbardaibh,

35. To the New Parliament

A toast to the people of the plaids,
We'd be glad to pass it around,
And we would drink it lustily,
To the courageous champions.

We now have recent news,
From the court at the Parliament,
Each side is gathering its friends,
To see who can best win victory.
A toast to the people of the plaids (etc)

And Gaels, be assertive,
And remember your leaders,
Who often won victory in the camps
Wielding blades with courage.

Great is the cause of shame to them,
If you submit to Lawson,
To George or to Archibald,
And the offence these nobles caused.

What they said most improperly,
Was that they needed sulphur,
So that they could clean out the mange
Of the beggarly, worthless Gaels.

If you've ever proven your manliness,
This is the time for you to gather,
And to show them that you are able
To take respect away from them.

And the people who put their trust in you,
Don't relinquish them by inattention,
For they themselves are depending on you,
To prove yourselves as is your custom.

And the people who were saying to you,
That you aren't worthy Highlanders,
May you remember them now,
When their thistles are raised high.

The insult was never heard
By the ancestry from which you've come;
At the time of descending on the battlefields
They were fearless in giving chase.

When they would unfurl their banners
And the pipe would be sounded noisily,
The people of the plaids were renowned
In every battle, as has been heard.

That was their customary costume,
The handsome hose and the garters,
The short coat and the plaid
Folded over their shoulder.

A thin, sharp blade of steel,
On their thighs in their scabbards,

'S gum b' adhbhar gioraig nàmhaid iad
Nuair 'thairneadh iad gu 'm bualadh,

'S a' latha 'bha *Fontenòi* ann,
Gun d' rinn iad gnìomh mar leòghanaibh,
Chuir sin an gorm ri 'n còtaichibh,
'S tha còir ac' air on uair sin.

Nuair 'bha iad anns an Eiphit,
Gum bu ghaisgeil 'an àm èirigh iad,
'S gu' faicear air an èideadh e,
Aig luchd nan èileadh cuaiche.

'S aig *Waterloo* gum b' ainmeil iad,
'S gun d' rinn iad cùis a dhearbhadh ann,
'S gu bheil e sgrìobhte 'an airgead,
Air an ceannabheirt mar a ghluais iad.

Cha robh ur cruadal fàilinneach,
Gum b' e ur beus 'bhith tàbhachdach,
Gu beachdail, reachdmhor, àrdanach,
Gu dàna 'dol 'san tuasaid.

Bu teoma air gnìomh na fairge sibh,
Bu mhiosail 'shiubhal garbhlaich iad,
Bu mhiann leibh a bhith 'sealgaireachd
Air earbaichean 'sna bruachan.

Bhon gach euchd an taice ruibh,
Cha chualas riamh fo mhasladh iad,
Gu h-iomadh tìr a dh'ast'raich iad,
Gu' robh an cleachdadh uasal.

Ma nì sibh gu 'eireachdail,
'S gun toir sibh cùis mu dheireadh dhiubh,
Gun dean mi òran eile dhuibh,
'S cha cheileam air an t-sluagh e.

Sguiridh mi 'san àite seo,
Cha dean mi tuillidh ghràitinn ruibh,
Ach cuimhnichibh na Gàidheil,
'S an deoch-slàinte cuir mun cuairt i.

And they were a cause of dread for enemies
When they'd be drawn to give blows.

And the day of the battle of Fontenoy,
They carried out their deeds like lions,
That added the blue to their coats,
And they've been entitled to it ever since.

When they were in Egypt,
They were heroic when it was time to rise,
And it can be seen in their uniforms,
Of the people of the plaited kilts.

And they were renowned at Waterloo,
And did something that would prove it there,
And it is inscribed in silver,
On their helmets as they advanced.

Your courage never failed,
It was your virtue to be effectual,
Authoritatively, stoutly and haughtily,
Boldly going into the fray.

You were expert in exploits at sea,
They were admired crossing rough bounds,
You loved to be in the hunt
For roe deer on the higher ground.

For every exploit that is credited to you,
They have never suffered mockery,
To many a land they have travelled,
Their behaviour was always noble,

If you act handsomely,
And take the cause from them in the end,
I will make another song for you
And I won't conceal it from the people.

I'll stop at this point,
I won't tell you any more,
But remember the Gaels,
And pass around the toast.

36. Rafail Dhòmhnaill Iain Bhàin

Fonn. Tha mi seo 'sa choille chruim
'S theannaich mi ri thogail fuinn,
Tha na gillean òga cruinn
'S b' fheàrr leam fhèin gu' robh mi ann.

Gur a h-inntinneach a' dràst'
A' chuideachd a tha 'thaigh Iain Bhàin
'Cluich na' dìsinn air a' chlàr,
Ged a thàmh mi gun 'dhol ann.
Tha mi seo 'sa choille chruim (7c.).

"Saoil thu, a bhean, a' tèid mi shìos,
Feuch a choisinn mi dhomh fhèin?
Suarach leth-dollar 'gam dhìth
Seach uaireadair ghrinn 'am làimh."

Labhair a' bhean rium le gruaim,
"Gura tusa 'ad dhuine thruagh;
Dùil agad gu' toir thu buaidh
Gu dè buaireadh 'tha 'nad cheann?"

Thuirt a' Frisealach rium fhèin
Gu' robh esan air a thì,
'S chuir e cabhag air a' mhnaoi
'S gu' biodh ruidhle aca roimh àm.

Thuirt Iain Camshron rium Diluain
Gu' b' fheàrr leis aig' i na luach
Ged a chosdadh e 'bhò chruaidh
'Thug e bho Iain Ruadh 'sa Ghleann.

Tha Gleanna Comhann ag ràdh
Nach leig esan i le càch,
Ged a chosgadh i an t-each bàn,
'S gu' bu làidir e 'sa cheann.

'S fear eile ann 'tha air a tòir,
Nì e 'ceannach le 'chuid òir,
Tha e a' bhliadhna air dhol gu spòrs,
Seumas Dòmhnallach ud thall.

Thuirt Eòghann "gu' robh mi uair,
Dar 'bha mi 'sa' dùthaich shuas,
Bha tè agam dhiubh le uaill,
Chuir mi bhuam i, dh'fhàs i mall."

"Cha tèid mi tuillidh 'na dhàil
Bhon a dh'fheuch mi i mar-thà,
Bidh i tric a' dol gu ceàrd,
Tha i fàilinneach 's gach ball."

Bha Alastair donn 'na leum,
Coltach ri duine às a chèill,
'S dùil aige gu' rinn e feum
Gus do leugh iad dha na bha ann.

Sin dar 'labhair Uilleam Sè
"Cuir a-nall i, chaill thu 'rèis,

36. Donald son of Fair John's Raffle

Chorus. I am here in the bending wood
And I have started to raise some tunes,
The young men are gathered round
I myself would have preferred to be with them.

Merry right now
Is the company at Fair John's house
Casting the dice on the board,
Though I decided not to go.
I am here in the bending wood (etc.).

"Do you think, wife, that I should go down,
To try to win it for myself?
Trifling is a half-dollar I'd be without
Compared to the neat watch that I could have."

The wife said to me with a frown,
Aren't you a pitiful fellow;
Expecting that you'll have success
What foolishness is in your head?"

Fraser said to me myself
That he had designs on it,
And he hurried his wife
That they'd dance a reel before long.

John Cameron said to me Monday,
That he'd prefer to have it than wages
Even if it cost him his sturdy cow
That he took from Red John in the Glen.

Glencoe says
That he would not let others have it,
Even if it cost him the white horse
And he's certainly pig-headed.

There's another fellow who is after it
And who will buy it with his share of gold,
He has this year taken to sport,
That is James MacDonald over yonder.

Hugh said "that I was once
When I was up in the country,
And I proudly had one of them,
That I got rid of, because it became slow."

"I shall never again join in
Since I have already given one a try,
It often goes to get repaired
It is faulty, every single part."

Brown Alastair was jumping about,
Looking like a madman,
He thought that he had done well
Until they read to him what he had.

It was then that William Shea said
"Hand it over, you've lost the contest,

Na biodh sùil agad 'na dèidh
On a tha do Bheurla gann."

Sin dar 'thuirt Alastair òg,
"Cha leig mi leat i dha mo dheòin,
'S ann domh as freagarraich' spòrs,
Bhon fhuair mi air dòigh an dann.

Bha Uilleam 'am misnich mhòir
Gus na thilg e air a' bhòrd,
Shaoil e gun robh i 'na dhòrn,
Cha robh a' siud ach dòchas fann.

Ma thèid na bodaich gu feirg
'S eagal leam gu' bi iad searbh,
Bhon a rinn a mhinsneach falbh
'S a' fear dearg a bhith cho meallt'.

B' e sin trod na' ban mun sgarbh
'Chaidh air iteig leis a' stoirm;
'S ann 'bu choltaich' iad ri arm
'Dheanadh marbhadh le 'chuid lann.

'S e bha toilicht' a' gille òg
A thug dachaidh i 'na phòc',
Dh'fhàg e na bodaich fo bhròn,
'S cha dean ceòl a chuir a dhanns'.

Don't you even be looking for it
Since your English is so poor."

That was when young Alastair said
I will not willingly let you have it,
The game is most suited to me,
Since I got the dice in order.

William was in great cheer
Until he tossed the dice on the table,
He thought that it was in his hands,
That was nothing but a weak hope.

If the old fellows get angry
I'm afraid that they will get bitter,
Since his good cheer has gone away
And the impetuous man to be so beguiled.

Like women fighting over who'll have the scart
Which has flown away with the storm;
They look like an army
That would slaughter with its blades.

Happy was the young fellow
Who took it home in his pocket,
He left the old fellows in dejection,
And no music will get him dancing.

37. Diteadh Mhic an Tòisich

Tha mi sgìth bhon tìm seo 'n dè
Chan eil m' inntinn leam air ghleus
'S beag an t-ioghnadh sin domh fhèin
'S gun d' fhuair mi sgeul 'tha muladach.

Cha tig dhomhsa 'bhith 'nam thàmh
'S Mac an Tòisich, fear mo ghràidh,
Aig a nàimhdean ann an càs,
Am fleasgach àlainn urramach.

Ged a fhuair iad e fo chìs,
Cha robh 'leithid anns an tìr,
Bu chompanach e don Rìgh,
Do dh'uaislean grinn 's do chumantan.

Gur a diombach mi don chlèir
'Chuir an tòrachd às a dhèidh,
Gum bu dìleas e dhaibh fhèin
Ged 'thug iad beum na dunach dha.

A' chiad latha don bhliadhna ùir,
'S ann a shuidhich iad a' chùirt,
'S iad ag iarraidh fear mo rùin
A chuir 'an cùil 's a chumail ann.

Chaidh mi-fhèin a-staigh 'nam dheann,
Bha mo bhoineid ann am làimh,
Bha mi sìobhalt ann am chainnt
'S cha tugainn taing do dhuin' aca.

Thuirt a nàimhdean 's fearg 'nan gnùis
Gun robh e gun mheas, gun chliù,
Gun goideadh e an cuid 'sa chùil,
Ged 'bhiodh an sùil air furachail.

Thuirt mi-fhèin, gur cruaidh an càs
Mac an Tòisich 'chuir gu bàs,
'S gun chòir' aca, dh'fhear mo ghràidh,
Ach e 'bhith fàilteach, furanach.

Dh'iarr mi orra 'chuir mu sgaoil,
'Leigeadh às duinn air an raon,
Cha ghlachdte e a-ris le maoir,
Cha bhiodh e faoin a chuireadh ris.

Gun robh fianaisean gu leòir
Gus a shaoradh aig a' mhòd,
Fear na misnich, Uilleam òg,
Bha deònach 'dol an urras air.

Tòmas air a' chnoc ud shuas
Thàinig oirnn le 'lagh a-nuas,
Dh'fheuch an dionadh e' m fear ruadh
'S e 'ruith cho luath 's a b' urrainn da.

Thàinig Pàdraig às a dhèidh
Ged 'bha bacaiche 'na cheum,
Gun robh bat' aige fo sgèith

37. Ferintosh's Condemnation

I've been tired since this time yesterday
My mind is not in good shape
Little surprise is that to me
As I've received news that is sorrowful.

I am not able to be at rest
While Ferintosh, my beloved friend,
Is in difficulty in the hands of his enemies,
The lovely, honourable young man.

Though they have got him in submission,
There was never his like in the land,
He was a friend to the King,
To handsome nobles and to the common man.

I am indignant at the clergy
Who gave chase after him,
He was loyal to themselves
Though they gave to him a disastrous blow.

On the first day of the new year
They set up the court
And they wanted to put my dear man
In a closet and keep him there.

I myself went rushing in,
My bonnet was in my hand,
I was civil in my speech
And I would not give thanks to any of them.

His enemies said, with anger in their faces
That he was esteem or good repute,
That he had wrongfully taken a share behind him
Though they kept their eye attentively upon him.

I myself said, that hard was the case
To put Ferintosh to death,
They had no right, my beloved man,
As he was only welcoming and hospitable.

I asked them to release him,
To let him out to us on the field,
He would not be caught again by a constable,
It wouldn't be a weakling that stands against him.

There were plenty of witnesses
To free him at the trial,
A man of courage, young William,
Was willing to become a surety for him.

Thomas who lives on yonder hill
Who came down on us with his law
He would try to protect the red-haired man
Running as quickly as he could.

Paddy came after him
Though there was lameness in his leg,
He had a walking stick under his arm

'S mur biodh iad rèidh, bhiodh fuil aige.

Dh'èirich Somhairle 'sa chùirt,
'S labhair e le sgairt mun chùis,
Thuirt e "chogainn ris a' chrùn
Mun cuirinn diomb a' churaidh rium."

Chreid am breitheamh a luchd-fuath'
'S thuirt e, 's 'fhuil a' leum gu 'ghruaidh,
"'S fad on thoill e 'chroich mar dhuais,
Is gheibh e bhuams' na bhuineas dha."

Nuair a fhuaradh e fo shreing,
Bha na ceudan 'dol 'nan deann,
'S iad a' bòideachadh gu teann
A bhith 'nan nàimhdean tuilleadh dha.

'S iomadh aon 'bha 'chridhe fann
'S a bh' air chrith gu dlùth 's gach ball,
'Cur a laimhe ris a' pheann
'S e 'dol 'sa bhann 'bha cunnartach.

'S fad on chuala mi 'bhith 'g ràdh
Gun tèid neart thar ceart an àird,
'S ann mar sin tha 'chùis an-dràst',
Bha 'bhinn ud ceàrr, 's bu ghuineach i.

Bha lagh Chill-ma-cheallaig cam
Nuair a chroch e 'n t-each ri crann,
Ach nas caime tha 'n lagh teann
'Chuir slabhraidh mun fhear churanta.

Dheanainn iasgach leis an tàbh
Air a' charraig mar ri càch,
'S ged nach biodh mo lòpan làn,
Bhiodh cuid an tràth' na tuilleadh ann.

Gur a tric a thug mi sgrìob
Gu Rudha Arasaig ud shios,
'S 'an taigh Ealasaid gum bith'nn
Nuair 'bhiodh na linn an cur agam.

'Mhic an Tòisich, bha thu riamh
Fearail, fiùghantach, is fial,
Cha bhiodh tlachd ach far an iarrt' thu
Dh'aindeoin breug a chuireadh ort.

Raghnall Cùbair tha fo leòn
Bhon a chuala e mun mhòd,
'S tric 'na mheòir a chuir thu ceòl
A dh'fhògradh bròn gu buileach bhuainn.

Màla 'phìoba chrup e 'suas
'Ga fhliuchadh le uisge fuar,
Bhon 'threirig iocshlàinte nam buadh
A bheireadh fuasgladh muineil da.

Sin an iocshlàint' 'san robh 'm feum
'Dh'fhògradh aiceidean bho chlèibh,

And if they wouldn't be finished, he'd have blood.

Sam got up in the court,
And he spoke with vigour about the case,
He said "I would do battle with the crown
Before I'd bring on myself the hero's ire."

The judge believed his enemies
And he said, blood flushing his cheeks,
"He has long deserved the gallows as his prize,
He'll get from me what's coming to him."

When he was put in chains,
Hundreds were rushing about,
They were vowing firmly
To be his enemies evermore.

Many a one was weak of heart
And were trembling closely all over,
Putting his hand to his pen
Accepting the interdict that was dangerous.

Long it's been since I've heard it said
That power gets the upper hand on justice,
That's the way that the case is now,
That judgment was wrong, and malicious.

Kilmacheallag's law was crooked
When he hung the horse from a tree,
But what's more crooked is that the law is quick
To put a chain about the valiant man.

I would fish with the spoon-net
On the rocks, like the rest,
And though my basket would not be full,
There'd be a meal's worth or more in it.

Often I would take a trip
Down to Arisaig point over yonder,
And in Elizabeth's house I would be
When I would have the nets set.

O Ferintosh, you were always
Manly, liberal and generous,
There'd only be joy but where you were wanted
Despite the lies that you were accused of.

Ronald the Cooper is wounded
Since he heard about the trial,
Often you put music in his fingers
Driving sadness away from us completely.

The bag of his pipe he would shrink up
Wetting it with cold water
Since the virtuous salve has departed
That would bring relief to his breast.

That's the cure which was useful
It would banish pains from the chest,

'S b' ainmeil i air leigheas chreuchd,
Gum b' fheàrr na lèigh nam Muileach i.

Thuirt MacMhuirich rium Dimàirt
Gun d' fheuch e cuislean do làmh,
'S gun èireadh tu fhathast slàn,
Do chur gu bàs nach b' urrainn daibh.

B' fheàrr gum biodh an sgeul sin fior,
'S iomadh aon dham biodh e binn,
Ged 'bhiodh 'bhranndaidh gini 'phinnt
Gun cosdainn trì le sulas riut,

Ged a bhithinn 'san taigh bhàn
Gun dùil ri tigh'nn às gu bràch,
Nam faicinn thu air an t-sràid
Gun leumainn àrd troimh' uinneagan.

Cha bhiodh banais 's cha bhiodh bàl,
Cha bhiodh Nollaig 's cha bhiodh Càisg
Nach biodh tus' air ceann a' chlàir
'S do chàirdean a' cuir furain ort.

'S ann ad chomann nach biodh sgraing
Nuair a theannadh daoin' ri cainnt,
Cha bhiodh òr 'ad phòca gann
'S gun tugte *dram* don 'h-uile fear.

Greis air iomairt 's greis air òl,
Greis air aighear 's greis air ceòl,
Greis eile air bualadh nan dòrn
'S gun chòmhdach air am mullaichean.

Chuireadh tu 'n daorach 'nan ceann,
Thuiteadh iad a-bhos is thall,
Nuair 'ghlacadh iad thu air làimh,
Cha cheannsaicheadh Cù Chullainn iad.

Dh'fhàgadh tu 'm fear glic gun chiall,
Dheanadh tu 'n spìocaire fial,
Dh'fhuasgladh tu sporan nan iall
'S cha bhiodh an gnìomh sin furasta.

Cò a chunntadh e 'na chall
'Bhith 'sgapadh airgid ann 'ad gheall,
Ged a bhiodh e 'n ath-là fann
'S a làmh mu cheann 's e 'turraman.

'S mist' na mnathan tu 'gan dìth,
B' fheàird' iad ac' thu 'g òl na *ti*
Dh'fhiosraicheadh tu dhaibh le cinnt
A' bhrìgh a bhiodh 'sna duilleagan.

'S mòr am beud thu 'bhith air chall,
Bu tu ceann-cinnidh gach dream,
Chiosnaicheadh tu feachd na Fraing'
Gun deann a chur à gunn' orra.

Dheanadh tu cogagh is sìth,

It was renowned as a cure for wounds,
It was better than the Beatons' cures.

Currie said to me on Tuesday
That he tried the pulse of your hand,
And that you rose up still in good health,
They weren't able to put you to death.

It would be better if that story were true,
For many a person it would be sweet,
Though brandy would be a guinea a pint
I would buy three with joy for you.

Though I could be in the white house
Without any hope of ever coming out,
If I were to see you on the street
I would leap high through the windows.

There'd be no wedding nor any ball,
There'd be no Christmas nor Eastertide
At which you wouldn't be at the head of the table
And your friends around you welcoming you.

In your company there would be no scowl
When people would begin to converse,
And gold in your pocket would not be scarce
With every man being given a dram.

A spell playing cards, a spell of drinking
A spell of mirth and a spell of music
Another spell of fisticuffs
Without a cover on the knuckles.

You would put drunkenness in their heads
They would fall here and there,
Whey they would catch you in hand,
Cuchullin would be unable to subdue them.

You would leave the wise man senseless;
You would make the miser generous,
You would open the closed purse
And that deed would not be easy.

Who would reckon it a loss
To be spreading money in your desire,
Though he would be weak the next day
His hand about his head as he staggered about.

The women are even worse off without you,
They would prefer to drink you than tea,
You would inform them certainly
Of the meaning that would be in the leaves.

Great is the pity that you are lost,
You were the chieftain of every troop,
You would subdue the army of France
Without shooting a thing from guns at them.

You would make war and peace,

'S e do spiorad nach robh clì,
Chan fhacas tu air do dhriom,
Ge tric 'an strì nam buillean thu.

'S lionmhor mais' ort, fhir mo ghràidh,
Nach urrainn domh 'luaidh 'am dhàn,
Ma thèid d' fhògradh 'null thar sàil',
Bidh sinn ri 'r là dheth uireasach.

Ach ma thig thu slàn 'nar ceann
Le d' shuaicheantas àrd ri crann,
Gur curaideach a bhios do chlann
A' dannsadh Ruidhle Thulaichean.

Bidh sinn èibhinn thu bhi beò,
Cha bhi duine sean na òg
Nach tionndaidh fo d' bhrataich shròil,
'S gu mòd cha toirear tuilleadh thu.

Siud ort fhèin, a charaid ghràidh,
'S mi nach trèigeadh thu gu bràch,
Cha tèid m' ainm-s' air pàipear bàn
A-measg na' gràisg nach buineadh dhuit.

It is your spirit that was never feeble,
You were never seen on your back,
Although you were often involved in fisticuffs.

So plentiful are your beauties, my beloved man,
That I cannot praise them all in my verse,
If you are banished beyond the sea,
We will all be destitute in time.

But if you come safely before us (again)
With your badge high upon a mast
Your followers will be most skilfully
Dancing the Reel of Tulloch.

We will be delighted that you are alive,
There will be no one, young or old,
That will not turn out under your satin banner,
And to a court you will never again be brought.

There's to you, beloved friend,
I would never forsake you as long as I live,
My name will not go on the blank page
Amongst the riff-raff that would not touch you.

38. Aisèirigh Mhic an Tòisich

Fonn. Ho rò, gum b' èibhinn leam
A chluinntinn gun do dh'èirich thu,
'S ann leam a b' aite an sgeula sin
Bhon 'chaidh an t-eug cho teann ort.

1. 'Sa mhadainn an àm èirigh dhomh,
Gun d' fhuair mi naidheachd èibhinneis,
Gur lionmhor fear a leughas i
Nach tugadh beum d' ar ceannard.

5. Gun tàinig Mac an Tòisich oirnn
Gu 'dhùthchas mar bu deònach leinn,
Ge' thug iad ionnsaigh ghòrach ort
Gu bheil thu beò gun taing dhaibh.

Gun cuir mi 'phìob 'an òrdagh dhuit
10. 'S gu' seinn mi binn an t-òran seo,
Gun tàinig lùths 'am mheòirean
Bhon a thòisich mi ri cainnt ort.

Nuair 'tharraing mi 'gam ionnsaigh i
Cha robh a cliabh ach tùchanach,
15. Cha b' ioghnadh dhi 's bu tùrsach
Ri ionndrainn na bh' air chall oirnn.

Bha 'n gaothaire 's droch àileadh dheth,
'S a siunnsair, thàinig sgàineadh ann,
Cha robh na duis ach càrsanach,
20. 'S a' mhàla 's e air crampadh.

Na ribheidean air tiormachadh,
Gach gleus a bh' innte is meirg orra,
Nuair 'fhuair i 'n ìocshlàint iorailteach,
Gu freagradh gairm nam beann di.

25. Gun chuir mi suas gu rìomhach i
Le riobainean don t-sìoda oirre,
B' i fhèin mo chèile shìobhailte
Cho finealta ri baintighearn'.

Thoir fios gu Dòmhnall Mhamaidh bhuam
30. Mo chòmhlachadh 'an Arasaig,
Gun tèid sinn sìos a-màireach ann
'S gun tàmh sinn ann gu Bealltainn.

Bidh càirdean Mhic an Tòisich ann
'Nan comann sunntach, sòlasach,
35. Gu toirt a-mach a chòraichean
Ma thòisicheas an aimhreit.

Bidh Dòmhnall 'na fhear-brataich ann
Nuair 'rùisgear suas gu tapaidh i,
Bidh ruaig air sluagh 'bheir masladh dhuit
40. Mun 'paisgear ris a' chrann i.

Thèid cruinneachadh air na fineachan,
Bho 'tha gach dream air tilleadh ris,
Bidh Uilleam Òg 'na shinealair

38. Ferintosh's Resurrection

Chorus. Ho ro, how delightful it was for me
To hear that you have arisen,
For me that story was most joyful
Since you came so close to death.

In the morning at the time I rise,
I received news of joy,
There are many men who will read it
Who would not have struck a blow against our leader.
Ferintosh has come back to us
Back to his country, as we had desired,
Though they made a foolish attack on you,
You are now alive, no thanks to them.

I shall tune up the bagpipe for you
In order to sing sweetly this song,
Vigour has returned to my fingers
Since I began to speak of you again.

When I drew her toward me
Her chest was filled with hoarseness,
It's little wonder that she's been mournful
Longing for what had been lost to us.

A foul odour coming from the mouthpiece,
And the chanter, it had been cracked,
The drones were only just wheezing,
And her bag had stiffened up.

The reeds had all dried up,
Every screw in her had rusted,
When she received the ingenious balm,
She would echo through the hills.

I have dressed her up handsomely
With ribbons of silk on her,
She herself was my courteous partner,
As elegant as any queen.

Bring news to Donald Vamy from me
To meet up with me in Arisaig,
To go down there tomorrow
And we'll stay down there until May-day.

The friends of Ferintosh will be there
The happy, cheerful company,
In order to defend his rights
Should any trouble start.

Donald will be there as standard-bearer
When it is cleverly unfurled,
Those who reproached you will be chased away
Before she is hoisted upon her pole.

The various clans will be gathered up
Since every troop has returned to him,
Young William will be the general

'S na gillean fo 'chomannda.

Bidh Somhairle 'na chlèireach ann,
'S an Còirneal ceann na rèisimeid,
Gur mairg a thairgeadh eucoir dhuit
'S gach treunfhear a bhios teann ort.

Gun tig am Maidseir Alastair
Le 'gheàrd on Tobar Shalainn oirnn,
'S gun òrdaich e na searragan
'Bhiodh 'n tarraing air a' chabhsair.

Bidh Tòmas agus Padraig ann,
Cho dìleas duit 's a b' àbhaist daibh,
'S a dh'aindeòin clèir na cràbhaichean
Chan àicheidh iad na gheall iad.

Bidh Uisdean is Niall Camshron ann,
Bu chùirteil leat 'san anmoch iad,
Aig ceann do bhùird a' seanachas riut
Gun dearmad air a' bhranndaidh.

Gun tig Raghnall Tuairnear oirnn
'S gu' faigh e post on uachdaran,
'S ann 'chuir a bheairt droch thuainealaich
'Na chluasan le 'cuid sranntraich.

Air eagal 's gum bi cunnart ann,
Mar 'dh'èireas 's tric na buillean ann,
Gun tig an lèigh Mhuirich ann,
'S gur h-urramach le lann e.

Gach aon a bh' ann am miothlachd riut,
'Gad fhuadach às na crìochan seo
Gu' feum iad a bhith sìobhalta
Mun ciosnaichear fo sreaing iad.

Ma thionndas iad 'am batail ruinn,
Gu' smùidear leis na slacain iad,
Le buillean dhòrn 's le bataichean
Do ghlas-darach 's do challtainn.

Tha Aonghas Gobha làmh ruinn,
Gur fòghantach 'na cheàrdaich e,
Tha mòran ghlasan làmh aige
Gu pàirt dhiubh 'chur air slabhraidh.

Thig Lachainn Saor a chlisgeadh oirnn,
Gu bheil mi 'n dùil nach mist' sinn,
Gu 'n càradh anns na cisteachan
Mu thàrlas briste cheann ann.

Mun tèid na cuirp seo 'thiodhlacadh
Gum b' fheàird' sinn Iain Mac Iosaig,
Gu' fuaigh e dhaibh an lìon-aodach
Ro ghrinn 'san fhasan ghallta.

Nuair 'chruinnicheas na h-Àrmainn
Mun cuairt don bhòrd mar 'b' àbhaist daibh,

And the lads will be under his command.

Sam will be there as the clerk,
And the Colonel as head of the regiment,
It's deplorable that injustice would be done to you
With every strong fellow who'll support you.

Major Alasdair will also come to us
With his guard from Saltsprings,
He will order the skin bottles
That would be quaffed on the pavement.

Thomas and Paddy will be there
As faithful to you as they ever were,
And in spite of clergy or worshippers
They won't recant what they had promised.

Hugh and Neil Cameron will be there,
They were courteous to you in the wee hours,
At the head of your table conversing with you,
Without shortage of the brandy.

We shall speak of Ronald the Turner
That he'll get a job from the laird,
His lathe has put a bad bit of dizziness
In his ears with its loud humming.

Afraid that there will be some danger,
As often there will be fisticuffs
Doctor Currie will come by,
He is renowned with a scalpel.

Every one who had resented you,
Who had chased you from these parts,
Will now need to be courteous
Before they are subdued under rope.

If they return to battle us,
They will be smashed with the clubs,
With blows from fists and cudgels
Of peeled oak and of hazel.

Angus Smith is with us,
He is powerful in his forge
He has many handcuffs ready
To put some of them in fetters.

Lachlan the joiner will come to surprise us
I expect we won't be the worse for it,
To place them in the coffins
If the breaking of skulls should transpire.

Before these bodies are buried
We'd be better for having John MacIsaac,
He would sew for them their death shrouds
Exceedingly well in the Lowland fashion.

When the Heroes gather round
About your table as they used to do,

Gur cinnteach gum bi 'm bàrd againn,
'S gun dean e 'n Gàidhlig rann duinn.

Gu' loisgear teintean èibhneis dhuit
Feadh ghleann is bheann is rèidhleanaibh,
Gu' lasar coinnlean cèire dhuit,
Ri deàrrsadh anns gach lanntair.

Bidh fìon 'an gnìomh nan òr-cheàrdan
Gu fial 'ga dhìol gun sòradh ann,
Gun ìotadh airson seòrsa orra,
Bha d' stòraichean gun ghanntar.

Ach spìocairean chan fharraid sinn,
Chan fhaod iad tigh'nn a' sealladh dhuinn,
Gur tric a thug thu 'n car asta
Nuair 'mhealladh tu le dram iad.

Nuair dhùisgeadh tu gu mòrchuis iad,
Gu rùraicheadh tu 'm pòcanan,
Nan cunntadh e 'chuid stòrais duit
Bhiodh bròn air fad a' gheamhraidh.

Bhiodh airteal agus èislean orra,
Fo sprochd cho bochd 's a dh'èirich dhaibh,
Ach 's tusa a' fear a lèigh'seadh iad
'S a bheireadh rèite à aimhreit.

Air eagal 's gum bi deireas ann
Mun tèid ar leòn le peilearan,
Gu' sònraichear taigh-eiridinn
'S gur h-eireachdail do chlann ann.

Gu' faicte pàirt 'na sìneadh dhiubh
Bhiodh sgròbadh leis na fìnean ann,
'S tu fhèin le d' bheusan sìobhalta
'Gan cuir gu sìth gun an-toil.

'Nan leapaichean gu' suaineadh tu
'Nan cadal air an cluasaig iad,
Bhiodh breisleach agus bruadar orr'
'S iad fo ghruaim a' dranndan.

Nuair 'dhùisgeadh iad a-màireach
Gum biodh goirteas cinn 'ga' sàrachadh,
Ag innse gu' robh tàmailt orr'
Mar 'dh'fhàg thu iad 'nan anntlachd.

Nuair 'thigeadh tu 'chuir fàilt' orra
'S e t' fhaicinn a bheir slàinte dhaibh,
Gum pògadh iad le càirdeas thu,
Bhiodh crathadh làmh gu teann ann.

Bha mòran dhaoine a' gràitinn rium
Gu' robh do ghealladh fàillinneach,
Gu' rùisg thu 'bhean 's na pàisdean
Aig na pàrantan 'bha 'n geall ort.

Cha robh thu riamh cho eucorach

For certain we'll have our Poet with us,
And he'll make us a verse in Gaelic.

Bonfires of joy will be kindled for you
Throughout the dales and hills and plains,
Wax candles will be lit for you
To shine in every lantern.

Wine will be put in the goldsmith's cups
Generously shared out, without sparing,
Without them thirsting for any type,
Your stores were without scarcity.

But misers, we'll not invite them,
They can't come near to us,
Often you have fooled them
When you deceived them with a dram.

When you would arouse them to boasting,
You would search through their pockets,
If he were to count the wealth he's spent on you
He'd be dejected all winter long.

They would be depressed and aggrieved,
Under a bitterness as great as ever afflicted them,
But you're the fellow who would cure them
And would turn conflict into agreement.

In fear that there will be a deficiency
Before we're injured with bullets,
A hospital will be specified
That is beautiful to children in it.

A portion of them would be seen laid out,
There would be scraping by their fingernails there,
And you yourself with your civilised virtues
Making them peaceful, in spite of themselves.

You would wrap them up in their beds
Putting them to sleep on their pillows,
They would have dreams and nightmares
As they in gloom are growling.

When they would wake the next day
Painful heads would fatigue them,
They'll say that they were shamed
By how you left them dissatisfied.

When you would go to welcome them
Seeing you brings health to them,
They would kiss you in friendship,
And there would be great shaking of hands.

Many people were telling me
That your pledge was weak,
That you unclothe the wife and the children
Of the parents who were too fond of you.

You were never so unjust

'S gu' rùisgeadh tu gun èideadh iad,
Gu' falbhainn a's mo lèinidh leat
Gun èisdeachd ri d' luchd-gannlais.

Gur lìonmhor buaidh ri àireamh,
Nach innseadh fear le 'thàlantan,
Bha 'n t-sinnsearachd bhon tàinig thu
'San Àiric air na beanntan.

Nuair 'fhuair thu aiste sàbhailte
Bha Noah 'togail gàraidh dhuit,
Gu h-uasal nuair a phàigh thu e
Bha càrd agaibh 'san àm sin.

Ged 'chaidh a' chlèir gu 'n dùbhlan oirnn
'Gad fhuadach às na dùthchannan,
Bu tric iad fhèin a' sùgradh riut
'S tu 'g ionnsachadh dhaibh dannsa.

Nuair 'dh'èireadh iad air ùrlar leat
Bu lapach mu na glùinean iad,
Gun càineadh iad 'sa chùbaid thu
'S gu' racht' 'an cùil 'gad shealltainn.

Bu tric 'an cùirt na' rìghrean thu
'Gad iarraidh 'dh'ionnsaigh an dinnearach,
Bu chompanach do dh Iompair' thu
Gu brìodalach a' cainnt ris.

Gu' robh do nàdar iriseal
'S tu 'dh'fhuasgladh cas air iomadh fear,
Gur h-àlainn an ceann-cinnidh thu
Nuair 'thionaladh do champa.

Deoch-slàinte Mhic an Tòisich ann
'Ga lìonadh, cò nach òladh i?
Bhon 'thill thu ruinn b' e sòlas e
Seach t' fhògar bhuainn le ainneart.

Bu bhlasda le d' chuid uaislean i,
Gum b' fhallain teth na fuar dhaibh i;
Nuair 'thòisich na tuasaidean,
Cha bhiodh fear suarach ann diubh.

Air chùmhnanta thu thigh'nn sàbhailte
Gun òlainn fhèin 's gum pàidhinn i;
Ach teisteanas 'bheir tàmailt ort
Gu bràch cha chuir mi peann ris.

That you would strip them without clothing,
That I would leave and with you my shirt
Without listening to those who engage in ill-will.

Many are the victories to be recounted
That a man without his talents could not recite,
The ancestry from which you came
Were in the Ark on the mountains.

When you got out of her safely
Noah was building a garden for you,
Nobly when you paid him
You had a quart at that time.

Though the clergy was roused against us
Chasing you out of the countries,
Often they themselves were courting you
And you were teaching them to dance.

When they would rise to the floor with you
They would be feeble at the knees,
They would condemn you from the pulpit
And then would repair to a dark corner to pay you a visit.

You were often in the courts of kings
Who asked you to their dinner,
You were a companion to an Emperor
Speaking to him most flatteringly.

Your nature was most humble
And you'd resolve many a man's difficulties,
You are a most lovely chieftain
When your camp would gather.

A toast here to Ferintosh
Filling the cup, who would not drink it?
Since you returned to us, all has been joy
Instead of your being driven harshly away.

It would be sweet to your nobles,
It would be healthy for them, hot or cold;
When the fray commenced,
None of them would be worthless.

On condition that you return safely
I myself would drink and pay for it;
But any testimony that brings disrepute to you
Never will I record it with my pen.

39. Òran don 'Chuairtear'

Deoch slàinte 'Chuairteir a ghluais à Albainn,
Bho thìr na' mòr-bheann 's a sheòl an fhairge
Don dùthaich choilltich 'thoirt dhuinn a seanchais,
'S a' fear nach òl i, bidh mòran feirg ris.

'S e 'n 'Cuairtear Gàidh'lach' an t-àrmann ainmeil,
Nuair 'thèid an t-ailleagan sin fo armaibh,
Le 'phearsa bhòidhich 'an còmhdach balla-bhreac
Mar 'chleachd a shìnns'raibh gu dìreadh garbhlaich.

B' e sin an t-èideadh 'bha eutrom, uallach
Gu siubhal bheann agus ghleann is chruachan,
Gu seasamh làraich an làthair cruadail,
Bu tric a nàmhaid an càs 'ga ruagadh.

'S a' Cuairtear àlainn 'tha 'tàmh 'sna gleanntan,
Dha bheil a' Ghàidhlig 's as fheàrr a labhras i,
Nach gabh tàmailt, ge b' e 'nì sealltainn ris,
'S mòr d' a chàirdean 'tha 'n dràst' an geall air.

Nuair 'thig an Cuairtear ud uair 'sa mhìosa,
Gum bi na h-òganaich le toilinntinn
A' tional còmhl' ris 'na chòmhradh sìobhalt',
'S bidh naidheadhd ùr aig' air cliù a' sìnns'raibh.

Gur lionmhor maighdean 'tha ann an dèidh air,
'S a bhios le coibhneas a' faighneachd sgeul deth,
Le solas choinnlean a bhios 'ga léughadh,
'S bhiodh eachdraidh ghaoil aige do gach tè dhiubh.

Chan ioghnadh òigridh 'thoirt mòran spèis da
Nuair 'tha na seann daoine 'tha 'call a' lèirsinn,
'S an ceann air liathadh cho dian an dèidh air,
'S nach dean iad 'fhaicinn mur 'cleachd iad speuclair.

Gun ghabh iad tlachd dhiot le beachd nach trèig iad,
Bhon 's Gàidheal gast' thu 'tha sgairteil gleusta;
'S tu oighre an Teachdaire 'chleachd 'bhith beusach,
'S cha d' fhàg e masla air a mhac dha dhèidh-san.

'S a Chuairteir àlainn cha tugainn fuath dhuit,
Gu' robh do chàirdeas ri sàr-dhaoine uasal,
Ged a rinn pàirt dhiubh do chàradh suarach,
A chaill an Gàidhlig 's na b' fheàrr cha d' fhuair iad.

Gu' robh thu dìleas do Rìgh na Fèinne,
'S bu daoine calma 'nan aimsir fhèin iad,
Rinn Oisean dànachd dhaibh air a rèir sin,
'S gur h-i 'bh' aig Pàdraig a bheannaich Eirinn.

Gur mòr na fiachan fo bheil na Gàidheil

39. A Song to the 'Traveller'

A toast to the Traveller that has come from Scotland,/From the land of the mountains and has sailed the seas/To the forested country to give us its accounts/There will be much anger towards the man who does not drink it.

The 'Highland Traveller' is the handsome hero,
When that little jewel appears in armour,
With his beautiful body in speckled covering
Like what his ancestors wore when climbing roughlands.

That's the costume that was light and airy
For traversing mountain and glen and hill,
And for standing firm in the face of adversity,
Often did he put his enemy put in hard chase.

And the lovely Traveller reposes in the glens,
Who has Gaelic and speaks it best of all,
Who'll not be insulted, whoever looks at him,
He has many friends who now chase after him.

When yonder Traveller comes once a month,
The young men will, with much satisfaction
Gather round him in civilised conversation,
And he'll have news of their ancestors' renown.

Many a maiden is also after him
Who will kindly ask of news from him,
By candlelight will it be read,
There'd be a story of love for each one of them.

Little wonder that young people give him much respect/When the old folk are losing their vision,
Their head has greyed, so eagerly do they await him/They can't see him if they don't use their specs.

They took pleasure from you and won't easily forsake you,
As you are an excellent Gael, lively and skilful
You're the heir to the Messenger which had been virtuous,/He left no disgrace for his son who follows him.

And, O lovely Traveller, I would never abhor you,
You were related to great gentlemen,
Although some of them treated you meanly,
Who lost their Gaelic and found no better.

You were faithful to the King of the Fenians,
They were powerful men in their own time,
Ossian made verse for them on account of that,
And Patrick who blessed Ireland also spoke it.

Great are the debts upon the Gaels

Don fhear a dh'inntrich air leabhar nàdair,
'S a dhearbh le firinn gur h-i 'bh' aig Adhamh,
'S e bainne cìche a lìon gach cànain.

Bu lus 'bha prìosail i 'chinn 'sa ghàradh
'S bu ghlan gun truailleadh a fuaim an là sin.
Bha 'stoc gun chrìonadh 'na bhrìgh 's 'na àileadh,
Ged 'thàinig siantan a mhill am blàth oirr',

A Chuairteir èibhinn na trèig gu bràch i,
'S na leig air dìochuimhn' ri linn an àil s' i;
Bidh sinn 'ga seinn anns na coilltean fàsaich,
Mar 'bha Clann Israel aig bràighean Bhabalon.

Nuair 'thig e 'n tìr seo mu thìm na samhna,
Cha lagaich fuachd e 'n gruaim geamhraidh,
Bidh èileadh cuaiche mu chruachainn teanntaidh,
'S a bhreacan guaille gu h-uallach, greannar.

Bidh bonaid ghorm agus gearra-chòt' ùr air,
Bidh osain dhealbhach mu 'chalpaibh dùmhail,
Bidh gartain stiallach far fiar-bhrèid cùil air,
'S a bhròGan èilleadh,'s b' e 'n t-èideadh dùthchais.

Bidh lann gheur stàilinn 'n crois-bràiste an airgid,
'S a dhag air ghleusadh nach leum le cearbaich,
'S a bhiodag dhualach do chruaidh na Gearmailt,
'S a sporan iallach do bhian an t-sheana-bhruic.

Nuair 'chì mi 'n Cuairtear 'tha uasal, rìoghail,
Bidh mi 'ga shàmhladh ri Iain Muillear,
Tha fichead geamhradh on 'tha e 's tìr seo
'S cha d' chuir e riamh air a shliasaid cuibhreach.

Tha còrr is ciad bho tha ciall is cuimhne aige,
'S tric a shealg e damh dearg 'sna frìthean,
Air slios Beinn Armainn a b' àird ri 'dhìreadh,
As dèidh an t-seòrs' siud b' e 'n còmhlan fiachail.

'S a Chuairteir shìobhalt', ma nì thu m' iarrtas,
'S gun cuir thu 'n t-òran seo 'n clò nan iarann,
'S gun dean thu 'ghiùlain 'sa chùrsa 'n iar leat,
Don eilean iosail, don tìr on 'thriall mi.

Bhon 'tha thu 'siubhladh a-measg nan Gàidheal
Gun cuir thu cùramach e 'sa mhàileid,
'S aig cnoc Mhic Dhùghaill a nì 'fhàgail
'S thoir fios 'gan ionnsaigh gu bheil mi 'm shlàinte.

Nuair 'bhios mi còmhla ri comann càirdeil,
'Nar suidhe còmhnard mu bhòrd taigh-thàirne,
Gun gabh mi 'n t-òran, gun òl, 's gum pàigh mi
Deoch-slàinte 'Chuairteir le buaidh don Ghàidhig.

To the man who entered in the book of nature,
Who truthfully proved that Adam spoke it
The mothers' milk which fed every language.

She was the most precious plant that grew in the garden/Pure and unpolluted was her sound that day,/Her stock was without fault in vigour and in scent/Though storms have come which spoiled her bloom.
O joyful Traveller, never forsake her
And don't forget her because of the young;
We will sing in the forest wasteland
As did the Children of Israel in the braes of Babylon.
When he comes to this country around All Hallows,/Cold will not weaken him in the gloom of winter,/A plaited kilt will be on his compact thighs,
And his shoulder plaid gaily and neatly.

He'll wear a blue bonnets and new short-coat,
And he'll have comely hose about his thick calves,
And striped garters over a slanting back-cloth,
And thonged shoes, this is the hereditary costume.

He'll have a sharp blade of steel in a silver cross brooch/And his pistol at the ready that'll not faultily fire/And his braided dirk made of German steel,/And his thonged purse of old badger-pelts.

When I see the Traveller, noble and regal,
I liken him to John the Miller,
He has been in this country for twenty winters
And he has never put cover on his thighs.

He's kept his memory over one hundred years and more,/Often he hunted the roe-deer in the hills,
On the slope of Ben Armine, the highest to climb,
And after that sort, the company was worthy.

O mannerly Traveller, if you fulfil my request,
And you put this song in the iron print-blocks,
And if you carry it with you on your westward course/To the low-lying island, the land from which I travelled/
Since your are travelling amongst the Gaels
Put it carefully in your suitcase,
And at MacDougall's Hill you will leave it
And take word to them that I am in good health.

When I am with friendly company
Sitting down about the tavern table,
I'll sing a song, and drink and pay for
A toast to the Traveller and to success for the Gaelic.

40. Òran do Mhaighstir Cailean Grannta, Sagairt Arasaig

Gu bheil m' inntinn air dùsgadh
'S i 'gam bhrosnachadh sunntach gu dàn
Nam biodh fiosrachadh rèidh dhomh
Na gun ùraicheadh gèire ann am chàil;
Tha mi 'n comain an uasail,
Nì nach h-urrainn mi 'luaidh air an dràst',
Air na bhuannaich mi 'n t-eòlas
Nuair a bha mi 'na chòmhradh Dimàirt,

Bidh an t-eòlas seo cuimhneach,
'S cha leig mi air diochuimhn' mar 'bha;
Cho fad' is as beò mi
Gum bidh mi 'ga chòmhradh ri càch;
Ma 's maireannach ann mi,
Gun tèid mi 'ga shealltainn gun dàil,
An duine-uasail as grinne
'S a' fear suairce 'bu cheanalta gnàths.

'S e gun mhòrchuis 'na ghiùlan
'S gur a lìonmhor ri 'chunntais air buaidh;
Fear do chleachdainn 's do nàdair
Chan eòl domh 'san àit' mun cuairt;
Maighstir Cailean, an Granntach,
'S ann do chinneadh 'bha ceannsgalach, cruaidh,
'Tha pears' eaglais na sgìreachd
Agus comhairleach dìleas d' a shluagh.

Gnùis as aoibheile sealladh,
Sùil as blàithe fon mhaillidh gun ghruaim;
'S e cho bòidhche air a bhallaibh
Agus fòghlam 'cuir tarachd air suas;
Pearsa chumadail, dhìreach,
'S aghaidh fhlathail 'bu shìobhalta snuadh;
Cha b' i fòtas na fala
A rinn sìoladh cho fallain 'ad ghruaidh.

Ach na sruthannaibh rìomhach
Às na tobraichean fior-uisg' a b' fheàrr
'Rinn do chuislean a lìonadh,
Cha bu stocaibh don chrìonaich on d' fhàs
A' fear misneachail, meanmnach;
Fhuair mi teisteanas dearbhte
Bho chàch thu 'bhith teòm' air gach feara-ghleus,
'S cuim nach deanainn-sa seanachas diubh pàirt?

Bu tu sgiobair na maradh
Air chuan duthar, glas, greannach, na' stuadh,
Ann ad bhàta 's glan sealladh
'N àm dhi gluasad on chaladh gu cuan;
'S i 'na siubhal gu h-eutrom,
Air bhàrr suigh nuair a shèideadh i cruaidh,
'S gillean gleust' air a darach
'S i gun èislean gu 'n gearradh le fuaim.

Nuair a rachadh do mhaighdean
Fo 'siùil gheala ri croinn air an t-snàmh;
Bu leat urram 'ga stiùireadh,

40. Song to Father Colin Grant, the Priest of Arasaig

My imagination has been awakened
And it gleefully encourages me to compose
If I had polished expertise
Or if acuteness would be renewed in my temper;
I am in the company of the nobleman,
Something that I'm unable to report right now,
Of the knowledge that I gained
When I conversed with him on Tuesday.

This knowledge will be long remembered,
I will never forget how it was;
As long as I live
I'll be speaking about it to others;
If I should last for a while,
I will go to visit him without delay,
The most excellent nobleman
The urbane man of the most genteel manners.

There is no arrogance in his bearing
There is much to be told of his virtues;
A man of your habits and nature
I know of none in these parts round about;
Father Colin, the Grant,
Who is of an authoritative and hardy clan,
Who is the clergyman of the parish
And a faithful advisor to his people.

A face of the most handsome appearance,
The kindest eye under a faultless brow;
His every limb is so lovely
And skill guides his every move;
A shapely and well-proportioned appearance
A magnificent of the most mild hue;
There was not an impurity of the blood
That pulsed so healthily through your cheeks.

But the excellent streams
From the best fresh water springs
That have filled up your veins,
Not from trunks of withered trees that grew
The courageous, spirited man;
I received proven testimony
From others that you were expert in every manly
exploit,/Why should I not report some of them?

You were a skilful sea skipper
On the rough, grey, fierce sea of the high waves,
On your boat of the freshest appearance
When departing the harbour for the open sea;
She is moving along giddily,
On top of a wave when it was blowing hard,
And skilful lads on her oaken decks
She was noisily slicing them without a worry.

When your vessel would be outfitted
Under her white sails on masts upon the waves;
You would have the honour of steering her

'S tu gun ghealtachd, gun ghiùlan ro-àrd;
Nuair a dh'iarradh i fuaradh
'S tu gun dìobradh o ghualainn gu sàil,
'Fhir a dh'fheuchadh a fiùbhaidh
'S i 'ruith cinnteach 'na cùrsa gu tràigh.

Bu tu 'n giomanach gunna
'Shiubhail frìthe le d' chuileanaibh seang',
Bhiodh mac èilde 'na chunnart
Ged 'bu luaineach air mullach an eang;
Bhiodh do luaidhe 'na chulaidh,
'S cha bu bhuannachd dha 'thuras don ghleann;
'S tric bho chuimse do bhuillidh
Chaidh a thilgeadh air uilinn nam beann.

Bu tu marcaiche sunntach
Air each ceumanach, cruitheach 'chinn àird,
Criosach, dìollaideach, srianach,
Tha mi 'n dùil nach do dh'fheuch e na b' fheàrr;
'S e 'ruith dìreach, gun fhiaradh
Nuair a bheanadh ri 'chliathaich do shàil,
Siùbhlach, aigiontach, fiadhaich,
Sranntrach, faramach, dian air an làr.

Gur tu 'n Gàidheal glan, ciatach
Bho 'bheil eòlas ri iarraidh 's gach àm;
Cridh' farsainn na fialachd,
Làmh a' phailteis nach riaraicheadh gann;
'S beag an t-ìoghnadh an uaisle
'Bhith ri dìreadh mu d' ghuaillean 's mu d' cheann,
'S gun do bhuaineadh do shinns'reabh
Bho chaisteal 's o thìr Thighearna Ghrannt.

B' e sin tòiseach do sheanachais,
Furast' 'innse 's a dhearbhadh le cainnt,
Bho Shrath Spè nan sàr-gaisgeach
'S beachdail àrdanach reachdmhor an dream;
Luchd a bhualadh 'nan glas lann
Nuair a ruisgeadh e 'bhratach ri crann,
Ceannard treubhach 'nan taice
'Choisinn cliù le 'mhòr-fheachd anns a' champa.

'S ann bho theaghlach Mhic Phàdraig
A linnsgear do chàirdean gun fheall,
Do na meuraibh a b' àirde
Don chraoibh a fhreumhaich fo bhlàth anns a' ghleann;
Tha i fhathast 'san àite sin
'Am prìsealachd stàta gun chall
Ri sìor-bhuannachd gu làthail,
'S gura daingeann 'na làraich a bonn.

Cha b' e cinneadh do mhàthar
'Bu taise nuair 'thàirnte gu strì,
Na Siosalaich dhàna
Nach gèilleadh do nàmhaid gu 'n sìth;
Nuair a dhùisgear an àrdan
Cha ghiùlain iad tàmailt na spìd,
'S iad a sheasadh an làrach

You were fearless, without a haughty bearing;
When she would need a windward blast
You would be unfailing, from shoulder to keel,
Oh Man, who would test her timbers
When she was on a course certain to run ashore.

You were an excellent huntsman
Who stalked the deer-forest with your lean hounds,
The hind's calf would be in danger
Though he'd be fleeting on the top of the point;
Your lead would be in his garment,
Unprofitable to him his trip to the glen;
Often from the sure aim of your shots
He'd be shot on the high angles of the hills.

You were a lively horseman
On the pacy, well-shod horse of the proud head,
Girdled, saddled and harnessed,
I'm sure that it had never beheld any better;
It trots straight, without straying,
With a simply touch of your heel to its side,
Nimble, spirited and wild
Snorting, noisy, eager on the ground.

You are the handsome, real Gael
From whom there's always knowledge to be found;/Open heart of generosity,
Hand of plenty that would not share illiberally;
Little wonder that nobility
Would encircle your shoulders and your head,
As your ancestors had been plucked
From the castle and the land of the Laird of Grant.

That was the beginning of your story,
Easy to recount and to prove by an account,
From Strathspey of the great heroes
Sure, haughty, commanding was their band;
People who would pound on their grey sword
When he would unfurl his banner on a mast,
An heroic chieftain who would support them
Who won fame with his great army in the camp.

It is from the family of Paterson
That your guileless relations descended,
From the loftiest of branches
Of the tree that grew from blossoms in the glen;
The tree is still in that place
In a precious state, without any loss
To ever prosper daily,
Firm are the roots in the place.

It was not the clan of your mother
That was weak when entering the fray,
The bold Chisholms who would not
Yield to an enemy until there was a truce;
When their wrath is awakened
They will not endure insult or spite,
It is they who would stand their ground

Gus an cuireadh pàirt diubh gu dìth.

In order to put many of them to death.

Gura lìonmhor luchd-leanmhainn duit
'Thàirneadh fear-seanachais mun cuairt,
Do na fineachan ainmeil
Cho math 's a bha 'n Albainn ri luaidh;
Clann Choinnich nan garbh-chath
'Bheireadh brosnachadh calma don t-sluagh,
'Dol air adhart fo 'n armaibh,
'S a chuireadh air galla-bhodaich ruaig.

Numerous are your supporters
That a storyteller could draw round,
From the famous clans
As good as there were in Scotland to praise;
The MacKenzies of the vicious battles
Would give resolute encouragement to the people,
Going forward in their armour,
And would give chase to the aging Lowlanders.

Tha do chàirdeas air 'fhilleadh
Ri teaghlach Mhic Shìmidh bhon Àird;
Cha bu tàire iad ri sireadh
'An àm cruadail 'an iomairt na spàirn;
Na fir ghleusta gun tiomadh
Nach gèilleadh le giorag do chàch,
Na Frisealaich ainmeil
'Bha ceannsgalach, earbsach 's gach càs.

Your kinship is connected
To the family of Lord Lovat from Aird;
They would not be bad to seek out
In time of need in a battle campaign;
The skilful and hardy men
Who would not surrender with fright to the rest,
The renowned Frasers who were
Commanding and trustworthy in every tight spot.

Tha Gleann-Garaidh dhuit dìleas,
Leòghann fulannach, rìoghail gun sgàth,
Le 'chuid dhaoine nach dìobradh
Nuair a sgaoileadh e 'shìoda anns na blàir.
Bhiodh a' fitheach 's a' fireun
'S bradan tarragheal an fhìor-uisg' an àird,
'S an dà mhàthan le saighdean:
Sin do shuaicheantas roinnte bho chàch.

Glengarry is loyal to you,
A hardy, regal lion without fear,
With his people who would not desert
When he would unfurl his colours in the battlefield;
The raven and the eagle would be
With a white-bellied freshwater salmon on high,/And the two bears with arrows:
There was your crest set apart from the rest.

Clann Chamshroin bho Lòchaidh,
Na h-Abraich 'bu mhòralach triall,
Bha iad dàimheil gu leòr dhuit
'S gum bu mheasail a' seòrsa sin riamh;
Cha bu shùgradh 'an còmhstri,
'S iad a chumadh a' chòmhdhail gun fiamh,
'Chuireadh nàimhdean air fògar
'S iad 'gan iomain le òrdan Loch-Iall.

Clan Cameron from Loch Lochy,
The Lochaber folk of the proudest procession,
Are close enough to you in relationship
And that sort were always respected;
It would not be mirthful in battle,
As they would keep the engagement without fear,
Their enemies would be put to flight
Driven off under orders of Lochiel.

'S beag an t-ioghnadh thu 'bhith beachdail
'S gum bu lìonmhor fear-feachda nach fann
A bha dlùth dhuit 'an càirdeas
Ann an dùthchannan àrda nam beann;
Ge b' e sloinneadh do shinns'raibh
Ris gach fine 'bu phrìosail a bh' ann,
Luchd na' breacan 's na' pìoban
'Sheasadh onair na Rìoghachd gun chall,

Little wonder that you are authoritative
And that there were many a strong soldier
Who was closely related to you
In the high country of the mountains;
Whatever was your ancestors' kindred
To every worthy clan that ever existed,
People of the tartans and of the pipes
Who'd defend the kingdom's honour without loss.

'S mo dhùrachd do Chailean,
A dh'ùraich dhomh 'n càilean an dràst',
Agus giùlain mo bheannachd
'Ga ionnsaigh 's gur math leam e slàn;
'Na theaghlach gun ainnis
Far an tadhaileadh luchd-aineoil gu tàmh
Aig an uasal 'bu ghlaine,
'S cha bhiodh caomhnadh air gach goireas a b' fheàrr.
'San àm suidhe mu d' bhòrdaibh
Gum bu chliùiteach do sheòl ris an dàimh,
Rum is branndaidh 'ga tharraing,

And my greetings to Colin
Who has refreshed my mental faculties just now,
And bear my blessings
To him, I hope that he is well;
In his family without destitution
Where strangers would stop for a rest
With the purest of noblemen,
There would be no skimping on any of the best delicacies.
At the time of sitting down about your table
Famous were your habits with the guests,
Rum and brandy would be drawn,

Agus fion ann an gloineachan làn;
Leann làidir na' searrag
Anns na cuachan 'cuir fairis fo bhàrr,
'S iad ag òl air gach annas
'Bhiodh 'an òrdan 'san talla air a' chlàr.

Rinn mi 'm beagan seo 'ghràitinn
'S tha mi 'n dùil nach robh fàillinn 'am chainnt,
Anns na dh'ainmich mi 'sa Ghàidhlig
Mun cuairt air an Àrmann gun mheang;
Gun òl mi 'dheoch-slàinte
Bhon a fhuair mi mo dhànachd gu ceann,
Dh'fhaotainn tuillidh dhuibh ìnnse
Ach bidh mi tarraing gu crìche le m' rann.

And wine in glasses filled to the top;
Strong ale of the skin bottles
In the cups overflowing at the top,
They are drinking every delicacy
That would be set in order on tables in the hall.

I have put together this little bit to tell
And I hope there was no mistake in my report,
In what I recounted in Gaelic
Concerning the faultless hero;
I will drink his toast
Since I have brought my poetry to an end,
I could tell you much more
But I'll be drawing my rhyme to a close.

41. Òran do Mhaighstir Cailean Grannta

An ochd ceud deug seo 'rinn imeachd
'S an coig thar fhichead a bhliadhna,
Ann an tràthaibh na Bealltainn,
Tùs an t-samhraidh, Diciadain;
'Cheathramh latha don mhìosa,
Fhuair mi cìnnte le sgeula,
Gu' robh 'n t-uasal glan innich
Air leaba tinnis is iargainn.

Nam b' fhear-sgile na lèigh mi
Airson feum dhuit a dheanamh,
Gu' robh 'n t-àm dhomh 'bhith 'g èirigh,
'S dol 'am eideadh gun m' iarraidh;
Bheirinn slàinte do d' chreuchdan
Bhon eugmhail seo 'phian thu,
Is gu' fàgainn thu lèighste,
Gun èislean, gun fhiabhras.

Bu tu marcaiche sàr-mhath
Air each àrd-cheannach, fiadhaich,
Chan fhaca mi t' àicheadh
Anns an àite 'ga fheuchainn;
Ged a dh'èirich an dràst' dhuit
Tigh'nn gu làr às do dhiollaid,
Nuair a leum e cho sgàthach,
Ge b' e càs a chuir fiamh air.

Ge b' e càs a chuir fiamh air,
'S goirt a dh'fheuch e ri d' chiùrradh,
Nuair a mhìll e do phearsa,
Dh'fhàg e t' asnaichean brùite,
Do chnàmhan a bhristeadh,
Ged bu tric e 'gad ghiùlan;
'S tu 'bhith 'd laighe 'san t-seombar
'Mheudaich bròn do d' luchd-duthchadh.

'S e 'mheudaich bròn do d' luchd-dùthcha
'Bhith 'gad ionndrainn Didòmhnaich,
'N àm dhaibh tional ri chèile
Gu bhith 'g èisteachd do chòmhraidh;
Nuair a chàireadh tu lèine ort
'Dhol a leughadh na còrach,
'S tu 'ga mìneacheadh fairis
'Thoirt don aineolach eòlas.

Gum bu deas-fhoclach cainnt duit
Agus ceann-labhairt shònraichte,
Fhuair thu 'ghibht sin bho nàdar,
Mar ri àrdachadh fòghlaim;
Gu bhith 'sealltainn 'sa sgàthan
A chaidh fhàgail g' ar seòladh,
'S ro mhath 'liubhradh tu pàirt dheth
Air gach Sàbaid don chòmhlan.

Gu' faic mi thu d' shlàinte
Tha mi làidir 'an dòchas,
Gun aiceid, gun fhàillinn
Ged a shàraich an leòn thu;

41. A Song to Father Colin Grant

These eighteen hundred
And twenty five years have departed,
In the season of May,
The start of summer, Wednesday;
On the fourth day of the month,
I found out for certain the news
That the fine, generous nobleman
Was in his bed of illness and pain.

If I were a man of learning or a doctor
To be of some use to you,
It would be time for me to get up
And get dressed without being called;
I would bring healing to your wounds
From this infirmity that pains you,
And I would leave you healed,
Without affliction and without a fever.

You were a most excellent horseman
On a strong-willed wild horse,
I didn't see you denied
In the place where you tested him;
Though it has just now happened to you
Falling to the ground from your saddle,
When he jumped so skittishly,
Whatever fright caused him fear.

Whatever fright caused him fear,
Sorely he tried to injure you,
When he injured your body,
He left your ribs bruised,
And left your bones broken,
Though he carried you often;
And that you are lying in your quarters
Has increased your countrymen's sorrow.

What has increased your countrymen's sorrow
Is to be missing you on Sundays,
At the time they gather together
To listen to your homily;
When you would put on your vestments
To go to read the scripture,
And you would explain it to them
To bring knowledge to the ignorant.

You were always eloquent in your address
And an exceptional spokesperson,
You received that gift from nature
As well as heightened learning;
To be looking in the mirror
That was left for our instruction,
Excellently would you offer part of it
Each Sunday to the congregation.

That I'll see you in good health
I am hoping with all my strength,
Without injury, without disability,
Although the wound has exhausted you;

Gu' faigh mi bhuait fàilte
Mar a b' àbhaist 'nad sheòmbar,
Caoimhneil, iriosal, càirdeil,
'S tu gun àrdan, gun mhòrchuis.

That I'll get a welcome from you
Just like I always got in your quarters,
Kindly, humble and friendly,
And you without haughtiness or arrogance.

42. Marbhrann do Mhaighstir Cailean Grannta, Sagairt Arasaig

Moch Diluain 'an àm dhomh èirigh
Fhuair mi sgeul nach b' èibhinn leam,
Sgeul 'tha fìor le 'bhith 'ga èisdeachd
'Mheudaich èislean domh nach gann;
Mun duine-uasail 'thug mi spèis da,
Sgar an t-eug bhuainn anns an àm,
Air a phasgadh anns na lèintean,
Dh'fhàg e 'shùil gun lèirsinn, dall

Nuair a bha e beò 'na shlàinte,
Bu deas dàicheil cumadh 'bhall,
Don duine-uasail 'tha mi 'gràitinn,
'S tric a dh'fhàiltich mi air làimh;
Pearsa ghrinn gun fhoill, gun fhàillinn,
Bho d' mhullach gu d' shàil gun mheang,
Gnùis a b' àille 's fiamh a' ghàire oirre,
'S cridhe blàth, bu chàirdeil cainnt.

'S iomadh aon a tha 'gad ionndrainn
Bhon a dhùineadh thu fon chlàr,
Ann an cadal far nach dùisg thu
A' leabaidh chaoil 'sa chruisle lair;
Ge' nach robh mi 'n càirdeas dlùth dhuit,
'S mòr an diùbhail leam do bhàs,
Bha thu dìleas air mo chùlthaobh
'Sheasamh cùis domh 's mi bhi 'n cas.

'S adhbhar bròin domh 'bhith 'ga ìnnse
Gu bheil thu 'sa chill ud thall,
Air do thasgadh glaiste, dìonach
'S gur 'h-iosal leam do cheann;
Bidh tu 'm chuimhne là 's a dh'oidhche,
'S tric a' tigh'nn fo m' shuim do chall,
Chuir sin mulad mòr air m' inntinn,
'S tu 'bhith dhìth oirnn brìgh mo rann.

Brìgh mo sgeula thu 'bhith gun èirigh
'Mheudaich èislean domh as ùr,
A chuir an òrain seo ri chèile
Bhon a chaidh tu-fhèin fon ùir;
Bhuail an t-eug a shaighdean geur ort,
Dh'fhàg sin deurach iomadh sùil,
'Fhir nach euradh càs an fheumaich,
'S gum bu ghlan do bheus 's do chliù.

Bha do bheus 's do chliù gun mhearachd,
Bha thu ceanalt' air gach dòigh,
Bha thu spracail, bha thu smachdail,
Bha thu tlachdmhor, bha thu coir;
Bha thu sìobhalta gun mhiothlachd,
'S tu gun mhiorùn do neach beò,
Spiorad Gàidheil a' comh-fhàs riut
Bhon a dh'àraicheadh thu òg.

Bha thu gu spioradail meanmnach,
Cha robh thu cearbach na fann,
Bha thu gu misneachdail, calma,

42. Lament for Father Colin Grant, the Priest of Arisaig

Early on Monday at the time I arose
I got news that was not happy,
News that is true to hear
That greatly increased my deep grief;
About the nobleman to whom I gave affection,
Death has separated him from us now,
Folded up in the burial shrouds,
It has left his eyes sightless and blind.

When he was alive and in good health,
Handsome and graceful the shape of his limbs,
Of the noble man I am speaking.
Often did I welcome him with a handshake;
A lovely form without deceit or fault,
From your top to your heels, without blemish,
The most beautiful face, a hint of a smile on it,
And a warm heart, friendly was your speech.

Many a person is missing you
Since you were closed within the boards,
In a sleep from which you will not awake
In a thin bed in the centre of the vault;
Though I was not closely related to you,
Great is the loss to me that is your death,
You were loyal in support of me
To stand by me when I was in need.

It is a cause of sorrow for me to report
That you are in that graveyard there,
Buried, locked away securely
Your end has brought me low;
You'll be in my memory day and night,
Often do I reflect on your loss,
It put great sadness in my mind,
Our being without you is the essence of my rhyme.

The essence of my news is that you won't rise
That has increased my grief once again,
To put this song together
Since you were buried in the ground;
Death has rained its sharp spears on you,
That has left many eyes tearful,
O man who wouldn't refuse a beggar in distress,
Purest were your virtues and your renown.

Your virtue and your renown was without fault,
You were affable in every way;
You were powerful, you were commanding,
You were delightful, you were just;
You were civilised, without unpleasantness,
You felt no malice to any living person,
The spirit of the Gaels grew with you
Since you were raised as a young boy.

You were spirited and courageous,
You were not awkward or weak,
You were courageous and daring,

'S fòghlam àrd neo-leanabaidh 'ad cheann;
Fhreagradh tu air thùs na h-armailt,
'S ann ad làimh a b' earbsaich' lann,
'S mura cuireadh Clèir na h-Alba
Ceangal tràth ort, dh'fhalbh thu ann.

Bha thu cruadalach gun ghealltachd
Nan èireadh tu 'feachd na strì,
Nan cleachdadh tu làitheabh t' òige
'Dhol gu seirbheis Dheòrsa 'Rìgh;
B' airidh thu air àite Còirneil
'S gun cois'neadh tu 'n còrr le d' ghnìomh,
Le lann stàilinn air do chruachan,
'S cha bu dualchas dhuit 'bhith clì.

Gach fearaghleus mun robh thu teòma
Cha robh fòghlam ort a dhìth,
Bu tu stiùramaich' a' bhàta
'Sheòladh àrd i 'm bàrr gach tuinn;
'Sealltainn gu cùramach, beachdail
Mun gèilleadh a beirt na 'cruinn,
Bu duine-uasail thu ri t' fhaicinn
'N àm dhuit acrachadh aig tìr.

Bu tu giomanach a' ghunna
'S tric a rinn fuil anns a' bheinn;
Nuair a dhìreadh tu ri mullach
Gum biodh cunnart air na féidh;
Bhiodh do luaidhe dlùth 'na' culaidh,
Bhiodh iad uireasbhach 'ad dhèidh;
Bhiodh do mhial-chù seang 'na muineal,
Ged bu chuireadach a' cheum.

Bu tu marcaich' air each srèine,
Cò 'bhuidh'neadh ort rèis na geall
Nuair a rachadh tu 'nad dhìollaid
Le d' spuir gheur ri 'chliathaich teann?
Làidir, lùthar, eutrom, siùbhlach,
'Gearradh shùrdagan le srannt,
Gu' bu phàirt do d' chulaidh-shùgraidh
'Bhith 'ga chur gu dlùth 'na dheann.

Bu tu ceann-uidhe na fialachd,
'S tric a riaraich aig do bhòrd,
Searragan làn do stuth làidir,
Nuair a thràighte iad, gheibhte an còrr;
Bha do bheus gun bheum ri chosnadh,
Cuirmeil, cosgail mar bu chòir,
Com na glaine 's inntinn shoilleir,
Dùthchasach bhon t-sloinneadh mhòr.

Chaidh do shinnsearachd a bhuain
Bhon chinneadh uasal a bha thall,
Bho Shrath-Spè nan gaisgeach buadhar
'Rachadh fuasgailteach don champ;
Nuair a sheinnte 'phìob roimh 'n t-sluagh sin
Fo shuaicheantas Tighearna Ghrannt',
Bhiodh "Creag-Eileachaidh" 'ga bualadh
Fo mheòir bhinn 'bu luath air crann.

With advanced mature learning in your head;
You would've been suitable at the head of an army,
In your hand a sword would be most trustworthy,
And if the Clergy of Scotland had not bound you
Early on, you would have signed up.

You were courageous, without cowardice
If you rose in war or strife,
Had you used your days of youth
To go into the service of George, the King;
You were worthy of the rank of Colonel
And you would've earned more with your exploits,
With a blade of steel on your thigh,
It wasn't in your inherited nature to be feeble.

In every manly activity you were skilful
You were not lacking in training,
You would be the helmsman of a boat,
Who would sail her high on the crest of each wave;
Observing carefully and judiciously
That her riggings or her masts would not yield,
You were a noble man to behold
When you would bring the boat to land.

You were masterly with a gun
Often you made blood in the hills;
When you would ascend to the tops
There would be danger for the deer;
Your lead would be deep in their coats,
They would be maimed after you;
Your lean greyhound would be on his neck,
Though his pace would be wily.

You were the horseman on the bridled horse,
Who would defeat you in a race or a wager
When you got into your saddle
With your sharp spur pressed to his side?
Strong, nimble, giddy and swift,
Cutting leaps with a snort,
It was part of your object of mirth
To be putting him hurriedly in motion.

You were the source of hospitality
Who often shared liberally at your table,
Stoups filled with hard liquour,
When they were emptied, more would be found;
Your virtue was without insult earned,
Convivial, profuse as would be proper,
Bosom of righteousness and clear of mind,
Inherited from the great clan.

Your ancestry was drawn
From the noble clan that lived over there,
From Strathspey of the triumphant heroes
Who would go actively to the camp;
When the pipe was sounded before that people
Under the standard of the Laird of Grant,
"Creagallachie" would be struck up
Under sweet fingers that were quick on the chanter.

Chinn thu à teaghlach MhicPhàdraig
'Tha 'fuireach 'nan tàmh 'sa ghleann,
'Am bun Mhoireastan mar 'b' àbhaist,
Ann an dùthaich àird nam beann;
Gu robh rìoghalachd 'nan àrmainn sin
A' tàrmachadh gu teann,
Ann ad inntinn a thaobh nàdair,
'S mairg a bheireadh tàir don dream.

You descended from the Paterson family
Who were residing in the glen,
At the foot of Glen Moriston as was usual,
In the high country of the hills;
There was royalty in those heroes
Originating close by,
In your mind, in respect of disposition,
Often you would reproach the troop.

Na fir dhàna luthar, làidir
'Sheasadh dàna ri uchd sluaigh,
Siosalach cinneadh do mhàthar
'Thoirt à sgàbartan an cruaidh;
Nuair a ghluaiseadh iad air falbh
Bho chaisteal Earaghlais na' stuadh,
Le 'n torc fiadhaich, dh'èireadh calg air,
'S bhiodh iad searbh-bhuilleach 'san ruaig.

The bold, agile and strong men
Who would stand boldly in the face of an enemy,
The Chisholms, the kindred of your mother
Who take from scabbards their steel;
When they would move away
From the castle of Erchless of the columns,
With their wild boar on which rage would grow,
And they'd strike bitter blows in the chase.

Gum bu lionsgaireach do chàirdean
Nam b' urrainn mi 'n àireamh sios,
'B ann diubh MacCoinnich à Brathainn,
Ursann-chatha 'dhol 'sa strì
Le laoich threun gun fhiamh, gun athadh
'Dheanadh sgathadh gun 'bhith sgìth,
Cròic an fhèidh 's a cheann 'ga chrathadh
Tùs an latha 'gan cuir cruinn.

Numerous were your relations
If I could enumerate them below,
One of them was MacKenzie from Brahan,
Battle-support to go into the fray
With strong, fearless, bold heroes
Would butcher without being tired,
A deer's antler and head would be shaken
At the start of the day they would be put about.

Frisealaich bho Chaisteal Dunaidh
Cha bu shùgradh 'dol 'nan dàil,
Gun eagal roimh losgadh fùdair,
'S iad cho ionnsaichte ri blàir;
'S àm an dèidh a' lann 'san lùth-chleas
'Chìte a chùnntais air an làr,
Do na nàimhdean air a' sgiùrsadh,
Reubte, ciùrrte, gun 'bhith slàn.

Frasers of Lovat from Dounie Castle
It was not merriment to go to meet them,
Fearless in the face of firing of gunpower,
They were so skilled in the battlefield;
And a time after the swords in the manly feats
Its accounts would be seen on the ground,
Of the enemies who had been scourged,
Torn, wounded, and broken apart.

MacDhòmhnaill Duibh bho Srath-Lòchaidh,
Gu' robh 'seòrsa ud dhuit 'an dàimh,
Camshronaich 'bu gharg 'sa chòmhrag
'S tric a chòmhdaich sin air càch;
Mac Mhic Alastair 's Clann Dòmhnaill
Aig am biodh an ro-sheòl àrd,
Fuileach, guineach mar na leòghainn
'Chur luchd-còmnsaiche fo sàil.

Cameron of Lochiel from Strath Lochy
That sort were connected with you,
Camerons who were fierce in combat
Often that would protect the rest;
Glengarry and Clan Donald
Who would possess the highest of topsails,
Cruel and ferocious like the lions
To put their enemies under heel.

Mac Mhic Eòbhain bho Àird-Ghobhar,
Ceannard foghainteach gu leòr,
Cinneadh Leathanach mu' cuairt dha
Rachadh iad cruadalach 'san tòir;
Bha iad dìleas do na Rìghrean
Ged a dhìobradh iad bho 'n coir,
'Sheas le Stiùbhartaich a' Chrùin
'S nach robh a' giùlan an dà chleòc.

MacLean from Ardgour,
A valorous enough chieftain,
The MacLeans would be round about him
They would go heartily into the chase;
They were loyal to the Kings
Though they would abandon their title,
They stood with the Stewarts of the Crown
And did not carry the two cloaks.

Caimbeulaich on Bhàrra-challtainn,
Sliochd Dhiarmaid na' lann 's na' sròl,
Cinneadh ainmeil 's tric a dhearbh iad
Le 'n Diùc Earraghàidh'lach 'bhith mòr;
Mac-na-Ceàrda, Morair Ghallaibh

The Campbells of Barcaldine
Descendants of Diarmaid of the swords and banners,/A famous clan, as they did often prove,
With their Duke of Argyll to be great;
Sinclair, the Lord of Caithness

Dìleas dhuit 's b' e 'm barant slòigh,
'S beag an t-ioghnadh thu 'bhith fearail
'S gach fuil cheannasach 'bha 'd phòr.

'S lìonmhor fuil uasal 'bha 'd chuislean,
Gun cheum thuislich 'bhith 'gad choir
Bho na Gàidheil, 's càit' an cuirt' iad
Nach biodh ùr-sgeul air na seòid;
'S ann fo làmhach an cuid musgaid
'Chìte 'chuspaireachd air feòil,
Fuil an nàmh le bàs gun fhurtachd
'Falbh na tuiltean air feadh feòir.

'S duilich leam a bhith ri seanachas
Ort an-diugh 's tu marbh 'san uaigh,
Càite a' faic mi fear do choltais
Ged a chruinnicheadh pailteas sluaigh;
Bha thu càirdeil, fialaidh, pàirteach,
Ceallach nàrach, làn do stuaim,
Bho mhullach do chinn gu d' shàiltean,
Cha robh fàillinn dhuit mun cuairt.

Ged 'tha mòran do d' luchd-eòlais
Fo mhulad mu d' chòmhnaidh bhuan,
'S i do phiuthar a tha brònach,
'S tric na deòir a' ruith le 'gruaidh,
'Caoidh nam bràithrean 'rinn a fàgail
Nach robh 'n àicheadh 'san taobh tuath,
B' ann diubh Cailean agus Pàdraig,
B' iad na h-àilleagain gun ghruaim.

Chuala mise daoine a' gràitinn
A bha 'làthair anns an àm,
Nuair 'bha Pàdraig far an t-sàile
Gum bu treun a làmh 'sa lann;
Mar cheann-feadhna sgairteil teòma
'Thàirneadh faobhar gun 'bhith mall,
'N àm 'dhol sìos 'am blàr na' mìltean,
Dhearbh e 'ghnìomh 'sna h-Innsean thall.

'S ann o Dhimàirt mu Chàisg an-uiridh
'Fhuair i 'bhuille 'rinn a leòn,
Maighstir Cailean 'bhith gun anail
'S do shùil cheanalta fo sgleò;
Cùis as mist' i riut a-nis
Do chuir fo lic 'an ciste bhòrd,
B' ionndrainn thu à tìr 's à cinneadh
'N àm dhaibh tional 's gun tu beò.

'S beag an t-ioghnadh mar-a tha i,
Rinn do bhàs a fàgail truagh,
Bhon 'chunnaic i 'bhith 'd chàradh
'N deise bhàin, gun chàil 's tu fuar,
'S tu gun chainnt' 'ad chulaidh-aifrionn
Ged a rinn iad a cur suas,
'S gura tric a leugh thu 'n Fhìrinn,
'S ann bho d' bheul 'bu bhinn a fuaim.

Bidh mi 'nis a' tigh'nn gu dùnadh,

Faithful to you, their people were their support,
Little wonder that you are manly
With all the superior blood in your veins.

Plenty was the noble blood in your veins,
Your title was without a faulty pedigree
From the Gaels, and wherever they would be put
There would not be a tale of the heroes;
It was from the firing of their muskets
The firing on bodies would be seen,
And the blood of their enemies, dying uncomfortably/Floods would flow over the grasses.

It is hard for me to be speaking of you
Today with you dead in the grave,
Where will I see a man of your appearance
Even if plenty of people would gather;
You were kind, generous and liberal,
A humble churchman, full of moderation,
From the top of your head to your heels,
There was not a blemish anywhere on you.

Though many of your acquaintances
Are sad about your eternal rest,
It is your sister who is saddened,
Often the tears run down her cheeks,
Lamenting the brothers who have left her
There were none refusing in the northern bounds,
It was of them, Colin and Peter,
They were the happy fine young lads.

I have heard people reporting
Who were present at the time,
When Patrick was overseas
That his hand was strong when holding a sword;
As a lively, skilful leader
Who would quickly draw his sword,
At the time to enter the battlefield of thousands,
He proved himself in deeds in yonder India.

It was from Tuesday after Easter last year
harsh blow that left her wounded;
Father Colin to be without the breath of life
And your comely eye was left glazed over;
The worst thing for you right now
To be under a tombstone in a wooden coffin,
Your kindred and your countrymen missed you
When they gathered, and you no longer alive.

Little wonder how she is,
Your death has left her badly off,
Since she saw you being buried
In white clothing, unconscious and cold,
And you speechless in your vestments
Though they were able to put it up,
Often you read the Bible,
From your mouth it sounded so sweet.

I will now begin to close,

'S adhbhar cùraim dhuinn an t-eug,
'Bha ri sealg ort greis mun d' fhalbh thu,
'S cràiteach, garbh a thug e 'm beum;
Mhill do shlàinte, ghèill thu dhasan,
'S gura beàrn thu 'as a' chlèir,
Chuir e thu gu cadal sìorraidh
'S bidh sinn uile 'triall 'ad dhèidh.

Death is a cause for concern for us all,
It stalked you well before you departed,
Painfully and roughly did it strike its blow;
Your health was ruined, and you submitted to it,
You have left a gap in the clergy,
It has put you into eternal sleep,
And we will all be following behind you.

43. Òran do Leanabh-Gille

A-nochd is luaineach mo smaointinn,
'S mi fo bhruaidhlean 's chan ioghnadh,
Fhuair mi sgeula 'chuir gaoir ann am fheòil.
A-nochd is luaineach 7c.

Fhuair mi sgeula Dihaoine
'Rinn mo lot anns gach taobh dhiom,
Chan eil m' aiceid gun adhbhar gu leòr.

Sgeula bàis mo chiad leanaibh,
Tha mi cràiteach 'ga ghearan,
Thu 'bhith bàite 's e 'n aineolas oirnn.

Thu 'bhith bàite gun fhios duinn,
Gur e 'shàraich mo mhisneach,
'S mi 'gad chàradh 'an ciste nam bòrd.

'S e 'chuir èislean 'am bhallaibh
Nach toir lèigh às mo charaibh,
Gun do dh'fhàg mi thu 'falach fon fhòd.

Ann an leaba na h-ùrach,
Fo na clàir air an dùnadh,
An dèidh a' sparradh 's an dlùthadh 'an òrd.

Tha mo chrìdh' air a mhùchadh,
'S trom an t-eallach a dhrùidh air,
'S tric a shileadh gu siùbhlach mo dheòir.

Ann am chadal 's am dhùsgadh
Thig thu m' aire, 's mi t' ionndrainn
Bhon a dhalladh do shùilean fo sgleò.

Fhuair do mhàthair a deuchainn,
Mar gu' sàithte i le iarann,
Thug an t-earrach seo 'ciad laogh bhon chrò.

Chaill i 'h-àilleagan ciatach
'S gun e 'dh'aois ach ochd bliadhna,
Thuit 'gheug mu' do chrìon i 'sna meòir.

Nam bu ghibht a bhiodh buan thu
Gu' bu taic thu ri m' ghuallainn,
'S geàrr am faileas a fhuair sinn don òg.

Nam bu bhàs air a' chluasaig
Gun 'bhith d' shlainte 'thug bhuainn thu,
Cha bhiodh m' inntinn fo smuairean cho mòr.

Gun do bhualadh 'san anmoch
Mar am peilear bhon t-sealgair,
'S goirt a dh'fhairich mi cuimse do leòin.

'Dol a-null air a' chraoibh sin
Thilg am bàs ort a shaighdean,
'S thuit thu 'n iochdar na h-aibhne gun deò.

Sin a' chraobh 'rinn mo dhiùbhail,

43. A Song for a Young Boy

Tonight my thoughts are restless,
I am aggrieved, and little wonder,
I received news that has put a pain in my flesh.
Tonight my thoughts are restless (etc.)

I got news on Friday
That wounded me on each side,
My pain is not without good reason.

The news of the death of my first child,
I am tortured lamenting him,
That you were drown, unbeknownst to us.

For you were drown without our knowing,
That is what has exhausted my courage,
As I lowered you in the coffin of the boards.

What overwhelmed me with grief
Was that a cure can't relieve my cares,
That I left you hidden under the turf.

In a bed of the earth,
Under the staves well sealed,
After they were nailed and closed in good order.

My heart has been smothered,
Heavy is the load that has born in on it,
Often would my tears flow freely.

In my sleep and in my waking
You are on my mind, and I miss you
Since your eyes were blinded in darkness.

Your mother has been tested,
Like she has been pierced with iron;
This spring has taken her first calf from the flock.

She has lost her handsome young fellow,
He was only eight years of age,
The stalk has fallen before its branches decayed.

If you had been an enduring gift
You would have been a support at my shoulder,
Short is the time that we had with the youth.

If it had been a peaceful death in bed
Or your health that had taken you away,
My mind would not be troubled as greatly.

You were struck down in the night
As if by a bullet from a hunter,
Painful to me was the aim of your injury.

Going past that tree over there
Death cast its arrows upon you,
And you fell to the bottom of the river, lifeless.

That's the tree that has destroyed me,

Ge' nach tèid mi 'ga h-ionnsaigh
Gheibh mi sealladh as ùr dhi gach là.

Le 'bhith 'smaointinn mu d' dhèibh'nneabh,
Nuair a bha thu 'nad èiginn
Anns na sruithean leat fhèin 's gun mi d' chòir.

Bha thu d' shìneadh an oidhch' ud
Fo na bruachan 'san droighnich,
Dh'fhàg sin againne cuimhneachan sgeòil.

'S daor a phàigh sinn am bliadhna
'S goil nach feàirrd' sinn a' chiad ghreis,
'S e do bhàs ar cùis-iargain as mò'.

Ach a Rìgh 'tha 'gar riaghladh
'S a thug gealach is grian duinn,
Thoir dhuinn gliocas gu t' iarraidh ri 'r beò.

Gu bhith 'g èisteachd ri t' fhacal,
'S gu bhith dìleas fo d' bhrataich,
Ged 'tha innleachd ar peacannan mòr.

Gu bhith lèirsinneach, fiosrach
Nach eil aon nì gun fhios duit,
Ged 'tha fàillinn le laigse oirnn an tòir.

Dean sinn taingeal 'san uair seo
Don t-slat smachdaich a bhuail sinn,
Faodaidh buille nas cruaidhe tigh'nn oirnn.

Thoir dhuinn neart gu bhith 'g earbsa
Gun tu-fhèin 'thug air falbh e,
'S gum bu leatsa mo leanaban le còir.

Thug thu seachad e 'n iasad
'S thug leat mar an ceunda e,
'S dean a mhathadh, 's e m' iarrtas, air bròn.

Though I will not go near it
I get a fresh view of it each day.

In thinking about you
When you were in trouble
In the currents, by yourself, without me with you.

You were laid out that evening
Under the river bank, amongst the bracken,
That left for us memories of the news.

Dearly have we paid this year
And grief that we're not the better for it at first,
Your death is the cause of our greatest sorrow.

But O Lord who rules us
And who gave us the moon and the sun,
Give us the wisdom to search for you evermore.

To listen to your word,
And to be dutiful beneath your banner,
Though the designs of our sins are very great.

To be discerning and knowledgeable
That there isn't anything that you don't know,
Though failings through weakness pursue us.

Make us thankful at this time
To the commanding rod that has struck us,
An even harsher blow may befall yet.

Give us the strength to trust
That it was yourself who took him away,
And that my child is rightfully with you.

You gave him to us temporarily
And you have taken him like the rest
Forgive him, that's my sorrowful request.

44. Marbhrann do bhean-uasail òig chliùitich a bha pòsta aig Dotair Iain Noble

A-nochd 's luaineach mo chadal
'S mi ri gluasad 'am leabaidh gun tàmh
Leis a' bhruaillean s' th' air m' aigneadh,
O, cha dualchas domh fada 'bhith slàn;
Chuir mi cèile mo leapadh
Ann an ciste chaoil, ghlaiste nan clàr;
'S trom a' chìs 'thug an t-eug dhiom
'S bidh mi 'cumhadh mu d' dhèidh'nnibh gu bràch.

B' i seo bliadhna mo chlisgidh,
'N ochd ceud deug 's an dà fhichead 's a trì,
An dàrna mìosa don t-sàmhradh
'S e 'cheud là dheth 'thug teann oirnn sgrìob;
Nuair 'chàirich mi, 'ghaoil, thu,
Ann an lèine don chaol-anart ghrinn,
'S tu gun chlaisteachd gun lèirsinn,
'S goirt an t-saighead 'bha 'reubadh mo chrìdh'.

'S beag an t-ioghnadh sin dhomhsa
'Bhith fo mhulad 's am bròn air mo chlaoidh;
Tha mi 'nis ann am ònrachd
'S bean mo thaighe 'bhith 'n còmhnaidh 'gam dhìth;
Chaill mi cèile glan m' òige,
Càite 'faic mi cho bòidhche 'san tìr,
Bha do nàdar 's do bheusan
A' co-fhreagradh dha chèil' anns gach nì.

'S i do ghnùis a bha àlainn
'S gum b' e teisteanas chàich ort gum b' fhìor;
Bha do phearsa gun fhàilinn
Bho d' mhullach gu sàiltean do bhuinn,
Bha do ghruaidh mar na ròsan,
Slios mar eala na' lòn air na tuinn;
'S e 'bhith d' chumhadh mo chòmhradh,
Is cha tèid thu ri m' bheò às mo chuimhn'.

'S e 'bhith brònach is gnàths dhomh
Bhon a rinn mi do chàradh 'san ùir,
Bheir gach aon rud o' d' fhàg thu
Ann am shealladh gach là thu às ùr;
Bheir e laigse air mo nàdar
Agus sileadh gu làr air mo shùil,
Chaidh mo mhisneach gu fàillinn
Bhon a chuir mi thu 'n càradh 'sna bùird.

'An àm laighe agus èirigh
'S tu mo leabhar 'ga leughadh 's mi sgìth;
Chuir a' bhliadhna seo 'an èis mi,
'S chan e beartas na sprèidh 'tha 'gam dhìth,
'S e ar sgaradh o chèile
'Dh'fhàg mi airtnealach, èisleanach, tinn,
Dh'fhalbh mo lathaichean èibhinn,
Chan eil leigheas aig lèigh dhomh ri tìm.

44. Lament for a renowned young noblewoman who was married to Dr. John Noble

Tonight my sleep is uneasy,
I cast about restlessly in my bed
With the grief that is on my mind,
O, it's unlikely that I'll be healthy for long;
I have put my bedtime partner
In a narrow coffin, closed in by boards;
Heavy is the tribute death has taken from me
I will be mourning you forever.

This was the year of my shock,
Eighteen hundred and forty three,
The second month of summer
The first day of which has brought calamity to us;
When I buried you, my love,
In a shroud of elegant fine linen,
You are without hearing or vision,
Painful is the arrow which has pierced my heart.

Little surprise is it to me
To be saddened and exhausted by sorrow;
I am now on my own
Forever to be without my wife;

I have lost the pure spouse of my youth,
Where shall I see one so beautiful on earth,
Your nature and your virtues
Matched each other in every way.

Your countenance was lovely
Others will testify to this was true;
Your appearance was faultless
From your head to the heels of your feet,
Your cheeks were like the roses
A side like the swan of the ponds on the waves;
My conversation is to be mourning you,
I won't forget you as long as I live.

To be sorrowful is usual for me
Since I buried you in the ground,
Every single thing since you departed
Brings you back each day to my sight;
It brings a weakness to my nature
And causes my eyes to shed tears to the ground,
My courage has been failing
Since I enclosed you within the boards.

At bedtime and when rising
You are my book which is read in my tiredness;
This year has left me in hardship,
And it is not for lack of riches or cattle,
It is our separation from one another
That has left me weary, sorrowful and ill,
My light-hearted days have departed
There is no doctor's cure for me in time.

'S goirt an leagadh 'fhuair mi
Bhon a rinn mi 'bhean-uasail a chall,
Leis an teachdaire ghruamach
A bha 'sealltainn mun cuairt duit 'san àm;
Thilg e saighdean a lot thu,
'S cha robh feum ann am dhotaireachd ann,
'S on a dh'fhàg mi 'sa chnoc thu
Gura dìlleachdainn bhochda do chlann.

Leam is duilich do phàisdean,
Gura lag iad 's gun mhàthair ri 'n cùl;
Sinn mar luing air a fuadach
Ann an ànradh a' chuain far a cùrs';
Ann an cunnart gach stuaidheadh
Bhrist na ceanglaichean, dh'fhuasgail an stiùir,
Tha 'chairt-iùil air a srachadh
Dh'fhalbh a combaist', na slatan, 's na siùil.

Thàinig dìth air an àrdraich
Nuair a dh'èireadh muir-bàite fo chròice;
Thuit craobh-ubhail mo ghàraidh
'S gun do fhroiseadh am blàth feadh an fheòir;
Chaidh mo choinneal a smàladh
Bu ghlan solas a' deàrrsadh mun bhòrd;
Bhrist an gloine 'bha 'm sgàthan
Dh'fhalbh a' daoimean 'am fhàinneachan òir.

Tha mo chridhe air a mhùchadh
'S mi gun mhànran, gun sùgradh, gun cheòl;
'S trom an t-eallach a dhrùidh air
Ged is èiginn domh 'ghiùlan le bròn;
Bha mi roimhe seo sunntach
Nuair a fhuair mi le cùmhnant ort còir;
Rinn a' chuibhle orm tionndadh
Bhon a dhalladh do shùilean fo sgleò.

'S i do shùil 'bu ghlan sealladh,
Cha robh gruaim air do mhalaidh na sgraing,
Bha thu fiùghantach fialaidh,
'S tu 'bu shìobhalta briathran is cainnt;
'S i do làmh nach biodh dìomhain
'S bu ghlan obair bho d' mheuran gun mheang,
'S ann a-nochd 'tha mi cianail,
'S e 'bhith t' ionndrainn a liath mi gun taing.

Theirig sàmhradh mo làithean,
Tha mi uireasach, cràiteach gu leòr;
Thàinig geamhradh 'na àite,
Dhòirt na tuiltean gu làr bho na neòil;
'S mi mar dhuine ann am fiabhras,
Na fear-seachrain air sliabh ann a' ceò;
Chuir mi iuchair mo riaghailt
Ann an tasgaidh 'sa bhliadhna 'bha còrr.

Iuchair ghleusta agus 'ghliocais,
Dha' robh ciall agus tuigse gu leòr;
Fad 's a bha thu air faotainn
'S tu gu' cumadh an teaghlach air dòigh;
Ach a-nis, bhon a sgaoil e

I've suffered a painful destruction
Since I have lost my noblewoman,
With the gloomy messenger
That was appearing round about you at the time;
He cast arrows which bruised you,
And there was no need for my medical skills,
Since I have left you in the graveyard
Your children have become poor orphans.

I am sorry for the children
They are weak without a mother to support them;
We are like a ship which has been driven
In the tempest of the sea from its course;
In the danger of each wave
Which broke the bounds and undid the helm,
The map has been torn up
And her compass, the yard arms and the sails lost.

Want has come to the galley
When a drowning sea would rise in rage;
The apple tree of my garden has fallen
And the blossoms have been scattered in the grass;
My candle has been extinguished
It was a pure light shining about the table;
The glass that was my mirror has broken
The diamond in my rings of gold has gone.

My heart has been smothered
I am without melody, mirth or music;
Heavy is the weight that has bored in
It is difficult for me to bear it with sadness;
Before this I had been happy
When I took as my wife by marriage deed;
The wheel has turned on me
Since your eyes were blinded by death.

Your eyes were of the purest appearance
There was never a frown or a scowl on your brow,
You were liberal and generous,
Your words and conversation were most civil;
Your hand would not be idle
Purest was the work of your faultless fingers,
Tonight I am mournful
Missing you has grizzled me thanklessly.

The summer of my days has departed,
I am now destitute and miserable enough;
Winter has come in its place,
The showers have fallen to earth from the clouds;
I am like a man with a fever,
Or someone lost on a hillside in a fog;
I have placed the key of my reason
In a depository this year that was too much.

Skilled key of the wisdom,
Who had plenty of sense and understanding;
As long as you were found
It is you who would keep the family in good order;
But now, since he has scattered

Gun tèid 'sgapadh 's gach aon do na meòir,
'S mis' 'am thruaghan ri 'm shaoghal
'S nach eil leigheas ri fhaotainn do m' leòn.

Ged a thèid mi 'sa' leabaidh
Cha tig buaireadh a' chadail 'am cheann,
'S ann tha m' inntinn cho luaineach
Ris na duilleagan uaine air chrann;
'Bhith 'gad fhaicinn 'am bruadar
Nuair a dhùisgeadh mi suas gun tu ann;
'S e mo smaointinnean uaigneach
Thu 'bhith t' shìneadh 'san fhuar-lic ud thall.

Tha do pheathraichean bochd dheth,
Tha do bhràithrean fo sprochd às do dhèidh,
'S e do chàradh 'san tulaich
'Rinn am fàgail fo mhulad gu lèir;
Tha stoc sàraichte 'fulaing
Air na dh'fhàs thu gu luireach mar gheug,
'S thuit an àilleagain dhonna,
Sgar a' bheàrn 'as a' comann thu-fhèin.

Tha do mhàthair gu tùrsach
Bhon a rinn i do dhùnadh 'san uaigh,
'S e 'rinn goirt oirre drùdhadh
A bhith t' fhaicinn 'gad ghiùlan aig sluagh;
'S tric a nead air a spùinneadh
Bhon a thàinig i 'n dùthaich 's air chuairt,
Chaill i 'companach cliùiteach,
Fear 'bu fhlathala ghnùis 's bu ghlan snuadh.

'Chneidh as ùire 's as gèire,
Fhuair i roimhe seo deuchainn 'bha teann,
Chaidh a lot anns gach sgèitheadh
'S beag an t-ioghnadh a ceum a bhith mall;
Fear a taighe 's a mac
'Bhith 'na' sìneadh fo shlacraich nan tonn,
'S thàinig aighearra lèir-chreach
Mar gun tuiteadh beum-slèibhe le gleann.

B' e 'n duine-uasail deas, tlachdmhor
'Dheanadh ceannard air feachdan 'an campa,
'Sàr MhacCnuimhein a bh' aice,
Rinn i 'n uair sin a ghlacadh air làimh;
Dha' robh inntinn na lèirsinn
Agus cridhe na fèile neo-ghann,
'S tha mi cinnteach 'am sgeula
Nach robh mearachd ri leughadh 'am rann.

B' e sin sgiobair a' bhàta
An uair a thogte siùil àrda ri crann,
'S tu gu' feuchadh a h-asaig
'S i ri astar air sàile 'na deann;
Gun 'bhith gealltach na sgàthach,
Gu' robh misneach gun dànachd 'ad cheann;
Gus an deachaidh do bhathadh
'S gum bu dùthchas am bàs sin do d' dhream.

B' e seo sàmhradh a' chruadail

Each of the branches will be scattered,
And I am the pitiful one for as long as I live
And there is no cure to be found for my wounds.

Though I shall go to the bed
The temptation of sleep does not enter my head,
And my mind is as restless
As the green leaves on the tree;
To see you in a dream
When I wake up without you there;
It is my lonely thoughts
Of you lying under those cold grave stones.

Your sisters are badly off,
Your brothers are dejected for you,
It's your burial in the graveyard
That has left them totally devastated;
The weary tree trunk is suffering
On which you grew prettily like a leaf,
Their dear young men have fallen,
You have opened a hole in their company yourself.

Your mother is sorrowful
Since she closed you up in the grave,
What has pierced her so painfully
Is to see you carried by pallbearers;
Often has her nest been plundered
Since she came to this country on a trip,
She lost her famous companion,
A man of most stately appearance and purest form.

The most recent and sharpest wound
She already had a trial that was severe,
Each of her wings has been injured
It's no wonder that her step is slow;
The man of her house and her son
To be laid out under the pounding of the waves,
And sudden destruction came quickly
As if a mountain torrent had fallen onto a valley.

He was the accomplished and lovely nobleman
Who'd make a fine troop commander in camp,
Her excellent MacNiven,
Who she then took into her possession;
Who had a visionary intellect
And a generous heart of the feast,
And I am certain in my report
That there was no error to be read in my verse.

He was the skipper of the boat
When the high sails would be raised on a mast,
It was you who would test her apparatus
At speed on the seas in haste;
Without being fearful or timid,
There was courage without audacity in your leadership;--/Until you were drowned
And hereditary was that death to your people.

This was the summer of hardship

'Dh'fhàg mo leaba 's mo chluasagan lom,
Tha mo chòmhnaidh cho uaigneach
'S ged a bhithinn 'an uaimhe nan toll;
Gun 'bhith t' fhaicinn ri m' ghualainn
'S e 'chuir aiceid buan ann am chom;
Tha mo chridhe fo smuairean
'S e mar chudthrom na luaidhe 's gach àm.

Ach 's e adhbhar mo ghearain
Bean mo ghaoil 'chuir a' falach 'sa chill;
'S e èisteachd gàirich do leanaibh
Nuair a bha thu 'san anart gun chlìth;
Fuaim an ùird ris an tarraing
'Bh' aig na saoraibh 'gad sparradh fo dhìon,
Chuir sin gaoir ann am bhallaibh,
Bhon a dh'èirich mo ghalair ri linn.

Gu de stà dhomh 'bhith 'g iomradh
Air do bheus bhon a dh'fhalbh thu 's nach till,
'S ann 'tha sean-fhacal dearbhte,
Dh'fhiosraich pàirt e 'bhith searbh anns gach linn,
Gum bi sùil ri beul fairge
'S nach bi sùil ri beul roilgeadh a-chaoidh;
Dh'fhàg sin mis' mar bhalbhan,
'S bidh mi 'tarraing le m' sheanachas gu crìch.

Bidh mi 'nis a' co-dhùnadh,
Chan eil feum dhomh 'bhith t' ionndrainn, a ghràidh;
Ged a leanainn as ùr air
Gheibhinn cuimhneachan tùrsach mu d' bhàs;
Tha ar beatha neo-chinnteach,
Air a coimeas 'san fhìrinn ri sgàil,
Sinn ar coigrich 'san tìr seo,
'S thèid sinn uile gu sìorraidheachd gun dàil.

That has left my bed and my pillows empty,
My homestead is as lonesome
As though I were in a deep cave;
Not seeing you around me
Is what has put an eternal pain in my breast;
My heart is aggrieved
It is like the weight of lead at all times.

But the reason of my complaint is
My beloved wife to hide away in the graveyard;
It is hearing the crying of your children
When you were in the shroud without vigour;
The sound of the hammers on the nails
Of the joiners sealing you under a lid,
That put a cry of woe all through me
Since my affliction has risen because of it.

What profit is it for me to be reporting
Of your virtue since you've left and won't return,
The proverb has certainly been proven,
Certainly part of it is bitter in each age,
That the approach of the sea will be expected
But the approach of the grave never will be;
That has left me like a speechless person
And I will be drawing my report to an end.

I will now be concluding
It's of no use to me to be mourning you, my dear;
Though I would follow again
I would find a sad reminder of your death;
Our life is uncertain,
It can truthfully be likened to a shade,
And we are all strangers in this land,
And we will all go to eternity without delay.

APPENDIX II:
NOTES TO THE EDITED POEMS

Note: As work on the texts and line annotations progressed, the approach to style and content of line annotations evolved. The notes for poems 13 and 14, and 23 to 44 have been brought into line with the format used at the end of the research; those for poems 1 to 12 reflect the format with which the author commenced, and 15 to 22 an intermediate stage in the development of the format.

A. SECULAR POEMS COMPOSED IN SCOTLAND

1. Òran do dh'Alasdair MacGilleain

Tune: "Mile marbhphaisg ort, a shaoghail"
No. of lines: 184
Sources: ONG, p. 13, MG15G/2/1, CC1, p. 1, CC2, p. 1, FC, p. 17
Date: c. 1811
Context: A panegyric composed for Alexander MacLean, 15th MacLean of Coll, on the occasion of the chief's paying to release the poet from his commission in the army. MacLean Sinclair informs us that the poet was discharged from the Argyleshire Regiment of the British Militia on 17 January, 1811. The introduction to this poem in ONG states the following: "Do dh'Alastair MacGilleain, Tighearna Chola, le Iain MacGilleain, an uair a bha e air a tharruin fo' chrann na Malisi, agus esan air cuir litir leis a dh'ionnsaidh a Choirneil"/To Alexander MacLean, the Laird of Coll, by John MacLean, when he was chosen by lot for the Militia, and he having sent a letter to the Colonel". The introduction in CC2 provides: "Thàirneadh am Bàrd leis a' chrann do 'n fheachd-dùthcha. Thairg athair pàidheadh air a shon, ach chan aontaicheadh e ris a' sin. Ann an ùine ghoirid dh'fhàs e sgìth de 'n t-saighdearachd. Thug Tighearna Cholla dha litir a dh' ionnsaidh Còirneal an fheachda, 's fhuair e a shaorsa le duine eile a chur 'na àite"/The poet was chosen by lot for the army. His father offered to pay for his release, but he would not agree to that. He quickly grew tired of the soldier's life. The Laird of Coll gave him a letter to take to the army Colonel, and he was released, with another man put in his place". In the post-script to this poem in CC2, Maclean Sinclair tells us: "Alexander, the 15th MacLean of Coll, was a thorough Highlander. He was a man of a very independent spirit. He was naturally benevolent, and treated his tenants with great kindness. He studied law for some time. He was Lieutenant-Colonel of the Breadalbane Fencible Regiment. His mother was a daughter of MacLeod of Talisker. He was married to a daughter of Cameron of Glendessary. She died February 10, 1802. She was 46 years of age. He died himself in the year 1835."
Line Annotations:
3: "ghràitinn", rather than "ràdh", is used by the poet, and is common in the poet's work and dialect. **5:** Maclean Sinclair's versions have "Àros", which is a place in Mull, and the site of a castle. The poet himself uses the lower case, which is significant, since he usually used the upper case when referring to a place or person. Nonetheless, I interpret this as a reference to the place, rather than the noun "Bros", meaning "place of abode". The castle of Aros had apparently ceased to be used by 1680, and although Hugh MacLean, the 16th Laird of Coll, had purchased lands in Aros, that transaction did not occur until 1821. It is likely, however, that the Campbell Colonel in the Argyll Militia, referred to in line 24, was based in the place

known as "Aros", although I have found no evidence to support his. **7:** King George III, who reigned from 1760 until his death in 1820. The infinitive is normally "chur", but the poet tends to use "chuir", which has been retained, because the slenderisation of the final "r" is presumably dialectical. **8:** "Seònaid", the Gaelic female form of "Janet", was a common nickname given by Gaels to the musket used in the British army. **11:** ONG has "Bhàili". The bailiff was a common administrative position on a Highland estate. It is not clear which bailiff is being referred to, but it is likely that it is the bailiff for the poet's home township of Tiree, and therefore in the service of Campbell of Argyll. This assumption is reinforced by the reference in line 20 to the poet's having to cross the strait to see the Laird of Coll. The bailiff may well have himself been a Campbell, as he makes clear at line 15 that he feels no bonds of kinship for the poet. **18:** ONG has "air cuis"; "air" is interpreted here as the first person plural possessive pronoun, "ar". The Maclean Sinclair versions have "ar cùis". **19:** ONG has no article before "smaointinn", whereas Maclean Sinclair includes it, which may be justified, as smaointinn is qualified by "seo". ONG has "gu faodainn", which Maclean Sinclair regularises as "gum faodainn"; while this correction may be justified, the poet consistently omits the "m" in "gum", and as this is probably indicative of dialect, I consistently follow the poet, indicating elision with an apostrophe. **24:** The Colonel was a Campbell. Hector MacDougall, who revised and edited CC2, provides the following note, presumably based on a Coll tradition with which he would have been familiar: "Bha e air a ràdh nach robh Tighearna Cholla ro thoileach anns a' cheud toiseach gnothach a ghabhail ris a' chùis, no ni a dheanamh as leth a' Bhàird gu fhaotainn ma réir. An uair a chunnaic am Bàrd so bha e ro dhiumbach, agus arsa esan--"Na'm bu Chaimbeulach mi an diugh cha bhithinn gun fear fhaotainn, agus an dà cheann Cholla, a ghabhadh mo leisgeul." An uair a chuala Alasdair Ruadh so cha bu lugha àrdan féin a chionn na Caimbeulaich a chur air thoiseach air, agus thug e seachad an litir a thug fuasgladh do'n Bhàrd."/"It is said that the Laird of Coll was not too pleased at first to get involved in the matter, nor to do anything for the poet to get free. When the poet saw this, he was indignant, and he said--"If I were a Campbell today, I wouldn't be without someone, from one end of Coll to the other, who would take to my defence." When Red Alexander [i.e. the Laird of Coll] heard this, his own pride was hurt because of the adverse comparison to the Campbells, and he gave the letter which freed the poet." ONG has "mo cheann"; "mo chionn" better suits the rhyming pattern suggested by the metre. **31:** The Maclean Sinclair versions have "ar sgiath dhìdein gu 'dhol foidhe", whereas ONG has "air sgiath dhidean a dhol foithe", which is preferred, as the Maclean Sinclair versions unnecessarily change the meaning of the line, without curing any obvious defect. **33:** Maclean Sinclair versions substitute "aighear" for "adhair" in ONG, and this may be an acceptable emendation. While there is a word "adhair", meaning "fire", which could have been intended, it is more likely that the poet meant "aighear", "joy", which would have been a more likely companion to "èibhneas", particularly given the tendency of this poet, and other Gaelic poets, to use two nouns or adjectives to strengthen the thought being conveyed. **37:** ONG has "ga sheòrsa", which is interpreted as "dha sheòrsa". **38:** Maclean Sinclair versions have "gu 'bheil còir aig fear le iùl". **39:** ONG has "ga m buin"; "gam" is interpreted as "dham", a contraction of the preposition "do" and the relative pronoun "am". **40:** The Lairds of Coll traditionally held lands in Mull as well as the islands of Coll and Rhum. **46:** ONG has "Gad". **50:** Maclean Sinclair versions replace "'S mòr" with "Is iomadh". **51:** ONG has "Lunnuin". **53:** ONG has "an Dunèdin", and "an" in ONG is interpreted as a contraction of the prepositional phrase "ann an". **58:** Maclean Sinclair versions

replace "le tùrn" with "gu dlùth". **60:** Maclean Sinclair versions have "Gu 'm bu chalm' e aig an stiùir". **61:** Maclean Sinclair versions replace "an fhàrdach", meaning "house, dwelling, lodgings, quarters, hearth, home", with "àrdrach", meaning "galley"; given that "fàrdach" also means "vessel, boat" in the poet's dialect, the ONG version is retained. **66:** Maclean Sinclair versions have "Bheirear fuil leis air na féidh". **67-72:** These lines have been omitted in Maclean Sinclair versions. **75-76:** These lines have been omitted in Maclean Sinclair versions. **75:** ONG has "diu", "ann san". **79-80:** These lines have been omitted in Maclean Sinclair versions. **83:** Maclean Sinclair versions have "Gur neo-leanabail . . ." **84:** Maclean Sinclair versions replace this line with "'S curaidh calm' e mar bu dual". **85:** In Maclean Sinclair versions, "'S mairg" is followed by "le greann air airson aimhreit'. ONG has "sa 'n"; this is interpreted as a contraction of "anns an". **86:** Maclean Sinclair versions replace "Thogail angair" with "Thigeadh teann air" and change the genitive "an fhir ruaidh" which appears in ONG to the dative; while the word "angar", meaning "stall for cattle", is possible in ONG, it is more likely, given the context, that the poet is using an English loan word, anger. He did, of course, also speak English, and uses English loan words elsewhere. **87:** Maclean Sinclair versions replace this line with "Bhiodh, gun dàil ann, fhuil na deann-ruith". **90:** In Maclean Sinclair versions, "tlachdmhor" is followed by "fearail, suairc". **92:** Maclean Sinclair versions replace this line with "Tha e sgairteil a thoirt buaidh". **95:** In Maclean Sinclair versions, the word "leinn" is omitted. **98:** Maclean Sinclair versions replace "Nach robh" with "Cha robh". **99:** Maclean Sinclair versions replace "Seo i 'n" with "Gur h-i 'n". **99:** ONG has "prìosail". **100:** Maclean Sinclair versions read "A tha sìoladh anns gach gruaidh". **100:** ONG has "ann a'd ghruaidh"; this could be interpreted as "ann 'nad ghruaidh", and that the poet intended the "n" in "'nad" to be elided. This is normal in the poet's dialect. **101:** Maclean Sinclair versions have "a bha dùth dha" instead of "mar bu dùth dha". **104:** Maclean Sinclair versions replace this line with "Gheibh iad dìleas e gach uair". **104:** ONG reads "dhoibh", "le uaill", "with nobility", which can be interpreted as "le a uaill", "with his nobility", and the elided "a" is marked with an apostrophe. **108:** Maclean Sinclair versions replace "'S nach leig . . ." with "'S chan fhaigh . . .", and add the word "tigh'nn" after "eucoir". **110:** ONG has "sgoileireachd", rather than the standard "sgoilearachd", which has the effect of slenderising the "r"; this has not been emended, on the basis that it may reflect dialect. **111:** Maclean Sinclair versions have "fuasgailidh". ONG simply has "fhacal"; the possessive pronoun "a", "his", seems to be implied, and is marked by the apostrophe. **112:** Maclean Sinclair versions replace this line with "'S geur a bheachdaicheas e cùis". ONG has "a glachd"; given the context, this is a relative clause and the verb should be in the simple past tense. **113:** Maclean Sinclair versions add the possessive pronoun "a", "his", before "rogha cèile". Alexander MacLean, the 15th Laird of Coll, was married to Catherine Cameron, the eldest daughter of Cameron of Glendessary. **116:** Maclean Sinclair versions replace this line with "Gruaidhean réidhe mar ròs dearg". **117:** Maclean Sinclair versions replace "B' ise 'n reula" with "Gu 'm bu reul i". ONG reads "B' ish an reula"; as the poet is suggesting that the "e" in "ise" is elided, this has been marked with an apostrophe. **119:** Maclean Sinclair versions replace this line with "Coltas ban-rìgh'nn flathail àlainn". ONG reads "Maise fèachdaig"; "fèachdaig" means "peacock" or "hen" in the poet's dialect. **120:** Maclean Sinclair versions replace this line with "'S iomadh àit' 's an robh oirr' ainm". **125:** Maclean Sinclair versions read "'S i a dhùthaich"; ONG capitalises the "d" in "dùthaich"--indeed, the poet tended to capitalise any object which related to the Lairds of Coll, perhaps out of respect, and perhaps, as in this

case, that he was talking of the country which belonged to the Laird, rather than the country as a whole. **126:** Maclean Sinclair versions read "sgeul a chràidh". ONG has "sgeula chruais", which has been interpreted here as "word of *his* distress", and hence "sgeul *a* chruais". **127:** ONG has "ceann na cèillidh"; the word "cèillidh" appears to be a dialectical form of "cèille", the genitive of "ciall", a feminine noun meaning "wisdom" or "sense", and "cèillidh" has therefore been retained as dialectical. **128:** Maclean Sinclair versions replace this line with "'Gheug ùr cheutach 's i fo bhlàth". **130:** Maclean Sinclair versions read "'Toirt", the verbal noun. **132:** Maclean Sinclair versions add "'S" before "cha dean". **132:** Maclean Sinclair versions change "gu bràch" with the more standard "gu bràth", but this emendation has been rejected, on the basis that "gu bràch" may more accurately reflect the poet's dialect. **134:** The word "biùti" which appears in ONG appears to be the English loan word "beauty", and has therefore been italicised. **137:** ONG has "nodar", by which the poet appears to mean "notary", which, because it is indicative of pronunciation in the poet's dialect, is preferred to the standard "nòtair". **138:** ONG has "s an tùng". "s an" is a contraction of the prepositional phrase "anns an", and "tùng" is a word for "tomb" or "family burial ground" more commonly used in Argyllshire Gaelic, but "An Tunga" is the name of the traditional burial ground of the MacLeans of Coll. **142:** ONG has "'N", a contraction of "Ann an", "In a/an". **145:** Maclean Sinclair versions replace "ceannsalach" with "ceannsgalach". **146:** Maclean Sinclair versions read "Tha e còrr 's a h-uile gnàth". In ONG, the poet uses "còr", and Maclean Sinclair's interpretation, "còrr", meaning "excellent" or "extraordinary", may be a sensible emendation; however, "cβir", "just" is also a sensible interpretation. **147:** Maclean Sinclair versions read "'S fairsaing eòlas 's an Roinn Eòrpa". **148:** Maclean Sinclair versions replace "'Gabhail fòghlam . . ." with "'S bha e 'fòghlum . . .". **149:** Maclean Sinclair has "b'fhear co-ainm e". **150:** Maclean Sinclair versions have "moraraibh". **151:** Maclean Sinclair versions have "'S e an fhìrinn . . .", and replace "is cha bu bhòsd e" with "'tha mi 'g innse". **152:** ONG has "ghrà", which is interpreted as the infinitive "a ghràdh". The preceding "dhi" would cause the "a" in the infinitive form to be elided, and this is marked with an apostrphe. **153:** Maclean Sinclair versions replace "'S e fear . . ." with "Pearsa . . .". **154:** ONG reads "'S aghaidh", which is interpreted to mean "his face", rather than "a face". If this meaning is correct, "aghaidh" should be preceded by the male possessive pronoun, "a", but this would be elided, and the elision is marked with an apostrophe. **156:** ONG has "doibh". **157:** Maclean Sinclair versions replace "'dol cruinn doibh don . . ." with "bhi cruinn anns an . . .". **158:** Maclean Sinclair versions replace "o" with "de". **160:** ONG has "sa n"; this is a contraction of the prepositional phrase "anns an". **161:** ONG has "Gum bo mhiann . . ." **164:** ONG has "sa 'n", a contraction of the prepositional phrase "anns an". **169:** ONG has "dùchas athair"; as "athair", "father", is in a genitive relationship to "dùthchas", it has been altered to "athar", the genitive form. **170:** ONG has "dheigh". **173:** ONG has "ann sa 'n", which is the prepositional phrase "anns an". **178:** Maclean Sinclair versions replace "Chuirinn sìos a' chùis na . . ." with "Bhiodh a chliù a sios ni . . .". **184:** Maclean Sinclair versions replace "le dàn" with "'an dàn".

Alternative Versions: In the Maclean Sinclair versions, there are, in addition to the many emendations and other changes referred to in the line annotations, a number of changes to the overall structure of the poem. In the MacLean Sinclair versions, the following changes are made: (1) the present verse 20 (lines 153-160) comes after verse 7; (2) lines 75, 76, 79 and 80 in present verse 10 are omitted; (3) the present verses 11 and 12 (lines 81-88, and lines 89-96) are reversed; (4) the present verse 19

(lines 145-152) comes after verse 12; (5) the first four lines of the present verse 16 (lines 121-124) are omitted, the last four lines of the present verse 17 (lines 133-136) are omitted, and the last four lines of present verse 16 and the first four verses of present verse 17 are combined to form a single verse; (6) the present verse 18 (lines 137-144) is omitted; (7) the present verse 21 (lines 161-168) is omitted; (8) the present verse 22 (lines 169-176) is omitted; and (9) the present verse 23 (lines 177-184) is radically altered, with lines 183 and 184 appearing directly after lines 177 and 178, the present lines 179-182 are omitted, and the final four lines, which appear nowhere in ONG are added by Maclean Sinclair, apparently ("Gu m bu mhiann leam, 's co nach iarradh,/E bhi liath mu 'n tig am bàs,/'S Eòbhan 'bhi na dhéigh gu buadhmhor/Mar cheann sluaigh a seasamh àit"). With these changes and omissions, the Maclean Sinclair versions contain only 144 lines.

2. Òran do Thighearna Chola

Tune: "A' chomain rìoghail rùnaich"
No. of lines: 184
Sources: ONG, p. 20, MG15G/2/1, p.8, CC1, p. 7, CC2, p. 14
Date: Possibly c. 1807
Context: A panegyric composed for Alexander MacLean, 15th MacLean of Coll, on the occasion of the chief's providing the poet with a letter of security to assist in the purchase by the poet of leather in Glasgow. MacLean Sinclair indicates that upon completion of his apprenticeship in Glasgow, the poet returned to Tiree with a stock of leather. The poem may relate to this event. The introductory note in CC2 states: "Air do 'n Bhàrd litir-urrais fhaotainn bhuaithe, agus e a' dol do Ghlascho a dh' iarraidh stoc leathraich/On the Poet having received a letter of guarantee from him [i.e. the Laird of Coll], while going to Glasgow to get a stock of leather." This is essentially the same introduction as given by the poet himself in ONG.

Line Annotations:
1: Maclean Sinclair versions have "diomhanach", which is the standard form, but the slenderised "diomhaineach" used by the poet is kept, on the basis that this may reflect dialect. **3:** Maclean Sinclair versions replace this line with "Mu chliù an uasail phrìseil ud". **4:** Maclean Sinclair versions replace this line with "Tha 'm Breac-achadh na fiachalachd". The colonel referred to here is the subject of the poem, the 15th Laird of Coll. **5:** Maclean Sinclair versions have "Am fear", which is an appropriate correction, but the ONG "A fear" has been left, indicative of pronunciation in the poet's dialect, which he chose to reflect in his transcriptions. **8:** ONG has "Dh'fhuasgladh", which is interpreted by Maclean Sinclair as the infinitive, and the elision of the "a" has been indicated by an apostrophe. **9:** Maclean Sinclair versions replace this line with "'S e féin an t-uachdaran urramach". **10:** Maclean Sinclair versions replace this line with "Chan urrainn duine 'ràdh". **11:** Maclean Sinclair versions have "Gu 'n dìobair . . .". **12:** Maclean Sinclair versions have "A thagras ris . . ." **15:** Maclean Sinclair versions have "Gu dé . . ."; ONG has "Gu b'e . . .", and this has been interpreted here as "Gum b'e . . ." with the eclipsis of the the "m" in "Gum" being marked with an apostrphe. **16:** Maclean Sinclair versions have "Bu ghrad a cheum nam phàirt". **17:** ONG has "Gad". **18:** Maclean Sinclair versions have "Nan" rather than "na 'n", which appears in ONG. In ONG and the manuscript sources, the poet often uses "na 'n" for either "no an", "or the", or "nan", the genitive plural article, or "'nan", "in their", or "nan", "if"and the meaning must be determined

from the context. Here, "na 'n", or "na an", "or would . . ." is preferred. **20:** Maclean Sinclair versions replace "calma" with "daimheil". **21:** Maclean Sinclair versions replace this line with "'Bha calma 'n àm na h-iomairte". In ONG, this line begins "Tha naduirachd 's . . .". "Naduirachd" is interpreted as "nadarrachd", and, given the preceding references to the subject's ancestors, and the context of the line, it is possible that this word would be preceded by the third person plural possessive pronoun "an". The "a" in "an" would arguably be elided by the final vowel in the verb "tha" which precedes it, and the "n" in "an" would arguably be eclipsed by the first consonant in the noun which follows, "nadarrachd"; therefore, this third person plural possessive pronoun is indicated by the apostrophe. **24:** Maclean Sinclair versions have "gu 'n geàrd", "to the guard". ONG has "ga 'n . . .", and this could be interpreted as Maclean Sinclair suggests, rather than as "dha 'n . . .", "to the", which is always pronounced as "do 'n" in the poet's dialect. The poet occasionally uses the letter "g" to indicate a "gh" or "dh" sound, but here Maclean Sinclair is followed, except that the "u" in "gu" is treated as being elided, rather than the "a" in "an". ONG has "doibh". **27:** In Maclean Sinclair versions, this line reads "Am fàillein maiseach finealta", which does not appear in ONG or the poet's manuscripts. This line appears instead as line 29 in the Maclean Sinclair versions, and there, Maclean Sinclair turns the singular "An Leathanach" into the plural "Na Leathanaich", and replaces "glan rìomhach" with "sean rìoghail". **28:** This line is omitted in the Maclean Sinclair versions. **29:** This line appears as line 28 in the Maclean Sinclair versions [i.e. it immediately precedes the present line 27], and reads "Bu choille 'bha gun chrìonaich innt'". **30:** In Maclean Sinclair versions, the first word of this line is preceded by "'S iad". **31:** In Maclean Sinclair versions, the word order of this line is reversed, and reads "Gun dad athaidh 'n aodann catha". ONG has "athich" for "athaidh". "Athich" could be the genitive of "athach", a masculine noun meaning "giant" or "champion", but Maclean Sinclair's interpretation that this word should be the genitive of "athadh", "fear", makes more sense in the context, and is accepted, and is consistent with the strong palatalisation in the poet's dialect. **32:** In Maclean Sinclair versions, this line reads "Bhiodh ri sgàth na sàir". **33:** ONG has "feachd na nàimhdean", but as "nàimhdean", "enemies", is in a genitive relationship with "feachd", "army", the genitive plural article, "nan" is required. **35:** ONG has ". . . air fògar'"; presumably, the poet meant "air fògairt", and was indicating with the apostrophe that the pronunciation of the final "t" was to be dropped. **39:** The Iain Garbh referred to here was the 1st Laird of Coll, and the founder of the family. He was the second son of Lachlan Bronnach, the chief of the MacLeans of Duart, and the daughter of Fionnghal, the daughter of MacLeod of Harris. Maclean Sinclair notes in the post-script to CC2, at p. 263, that oral tradition in Coll records that Lachlan Bronnach was himself considered to be the first Laird of Coll, because it was he who drove the Norse from the island. As Lachlan lived in the late fourteenth and early fifteenth century, Maclean Sinclair notes that this tradition cannot be correct, as the Norse had been driven from the island much earlier. Maclean Sinclair notes that the MacLeans were actually granted Coll by the Lords of the Isles in about 1431. Iain Garbh, nicknamed "garbh", or "rough", because of his great size and strength, Maclean Sinclair tells us, was a prototypical heroic warrior, whose deeds survived in Coll oral tradition. Indeed, the events described in these three verses, verses 5-7, lines 33-56, are based on those oral traditions, and are explained by Maclean Sinclair in post-script I to CC2. A Gaelic version of these events is also to be found in volume 34 of the *Transactions of the Gaelic Society of Inverness*. According to these traditions, Iain Garbh's father, Lachlan Bronnach, was killed in battle when Iain was still a small boy. Iain's mother remarried, taking

MacNeil of Barra, "Gille Eoinein MacNèill Bharraigh" for her husband. MacNeil sent Iain Garbh to Barra, in an attempt to consolidate his hold on Coll, and brought many of his supporters to Coll with him. When Iain Garbh reached maturity and learned of his inheritance, and the alleged suffering of the people of Coll under MacNeil of Barra, he returned to the island, and conquered MacNeil and his supporters. **44:** ONG has "iomaich", which is likely the dialectical version of "imich", "to go, depart". **46:** ONG has "iomaric", which is the dialectical version of "imrich", "to march". **49:** Maclean Sinclair versions replace this line with "Bu tric a dh' fheuch an gaisgeach ud". **50:** Maclean Sinclair versions replace this line with "Iain Garbh, a neart 's a chruas". ONG has "le thrèine"; the masculine possessive pronoun "a", "his" is clearly implied, and this is marked with the apostrophe. **51:** Maclean Sinclair versions replace this line with "Bu sheobhag luath gu reubadh e". **52:** Maclean Sinclair versions replace this line with "Bu leoghann colgarr' creuchdach e". **53:** Maclean Sinclair versions replace this line with "An Grisiboll nan euchdan". **54:** Maclean Sinclair versions replace this line with "Is e toirt le 'thréine buaidh". ONG has "sheobhaig", which could be a genitive singular or a nominative plural of "seobhag", but neither seems appropriate here, and so this word is changed to "seobhag". **56:** "Clann Nèill" are the MacNeils of Barra, who, according to Coll tradition, were chased from Coll by Iain Garbh: see note to line 39. **57:** Maclean Sinclair versions replace this line with "Gur h-iomadh curaidh neartmhor". The "Alastair" in this version is the subject of the poem, Alexander MacLean, the 15th Laird of Coll, and a descendant of the heroes mentioned in these verses. **58:** Maclean Sinclair versions replace this line with "A bha 'm Breac-Achadh le buaidh". **59:** Maclean Sinclair versions replace this line with "Gur lionmhor blàr 's na thaisbeanadh". **60:** Maclean Sinclair versions replace this line with "Le Lachainn a' chruaidh-sgairtealachd". The Lachlan referred to in both versions is Lachlan Bronnach, a fifteenth century chieftain of the MacLeans of Duart, and father of Iain Garbh, the first Laird of Coll. **61:** ONG has "A saoighd-fhear"; "A" is likely "An", the article "the", and the "n" has been elided, which is therefore marked with an apostrophe. **62:** The Eachann Ruadh, or "Red Hector" referred to here is Eachann Ruadh nan Cath, who was chieftain of the MacLeans of Duart in the late fourteenth and early fifteenth century, and who was killed at the Battle of Harlaw in 1411. He was the father of Lachlan Bronnach, and therefore grandfather of Iain Garbh, and so also an ancestor of the subject of the poem. **63:** Maclean Sinclair versions replace "'Sheasadh . . ." with "Bhiodh e . . .". **64:** Maclean Sinclair versions replace "'Chumadh . . ." with "'S làn de . . .". **65:** ONG has "Tha 'n oighreachds' . . .", and the "'n" is interpreted as "an", the third person possessive pronoun "their", but which has been elided, which is marked with an apostrophe. **66:** ONG has "dhoibh". **69:** ONG has "Cala", but this must certainly be "Cola", "Coll". The reference here is to the isle of Rhum, Coll and Cuinish, in Mull, in which the Lairds of Coll traditionally held eighteen merklands of property. These are the traditional contours of the Coll estate when this family's strength was at its greatest extent. **71:** ONG has "ainmheach", which is interpreted as "ainfhiach", "debt"; however, the ONG spelling is retained, as it reflects the pronunciation in the poet's dialect. **73:** Maclean Sinclair versions replace this line with "'S e Tighearna Chola 'n diùlannach". ONG uses the plural "uachdarain", and in spite of the references in subsequent lines to a single male subject—presumably, the subject of the poem—the plural is retained, on the basis that it is a reference to all of the MacLeans of Coll, of which the current one is in the same mould. **74:** ONG has "na 'n gnàs", which should be interpreted as "'nan gnàths", "in their manner/habit/custom"; again, in spite of the singular references in the

subsequent lines, this is retained, for the same reasons as given in the note on line 73. **75:** Maclean Sinclair versions replace this line with "Tha fearalachd a' còmhnaidh ann". **76:** Maclean Sinclair versions reverse the order of this line and the next line. **78:** ONG has "Na 'n còmhnaidh . . .". Maclean Sinclair has omitted this line entirely. Commonly, the poet uses the same formulation, "na 'n", for different purposes, and the context offers clarification; often, "nan", the genitive plural, is clearly meant"; sometimes "'nan", "in their" is clearly meant; sometimes "nan", a form of the relative pronoun is intended; and sometimes, "na 'n" is used for "no an", "or the". Here, none of these alternatives seems completely satisfactory, but given the reference in the previous line to two qualities which the subject of the poem possesses, the plural form "'nan", "in their", is arguably the best interpretation.. **79:** Maclean Sinclair versions replace this line with "Gnùis na fèile, com nam beusan". **81:** "Braid Albainn" is a reference to Campbell of Breadalbane, likely John, the 4th Earl of Breadalbane: see, generally, Andrew MacKillop, *'More Fruitful than the Soil': Army, Empire and the Scottish Highlands, 1715-1815* (East Linton: Tuckwell, 2000), chapter 4, for a profile of this clan in the period 1745-1802. The subject of the poem had served as lieutenant-colonel in the Breadalbane Fencible regiment. The closeness of the relationship between the two lairds may be indicated by the fact that the Laird of Coll named the youngest of his six daughters "Breadalbane", who is described by "A Seneachie", the author of *An Historical and Genealogical Account of the Clan Maclean"* (Edinburgh: Laing and Forbes, 1838), as "an amiable and accomplished lady, whose unwearied exertions for the good of her fellow-creatures in the land of her birth, merits a higher reward than this world can bestow upon her": p. 314. **82:** In Maclean Sinclair versions, this line reads "Am fear ainmeil 'tha mi luaidh". **83:** Maclean Sinclair versions replace this line with "A dhaoine treuna, colgarra". **84:** Maclean Sinclair versions replace this line with "A' bhuidheann chliùiteach, dh'earb e ris". ONG has "dhoibh". **87:** ONG has "'S le 'bhiodh dìleas"; Maclean Sinclair interprets the word "le", "with", as "e", "he", which is a defensible emendation, given the context. **89:** ONG has "roi champa sin", and it would appear that the preposition "roimh", or "ro", "before", should be accompanied with the article in this context, "ron", or "roimhn". **90:** ONG has "caubhsair" for "cabhsair". **93:** "Gu faodadh . . . " should be "Gum faodadh" in standard Gaelic; the elision of the "m", as indicated in ONG, may be dialectical, and is marked here with an apostrophe. **94:** ONG has "mun dealachadh iad", but has been emended to "dealaicheadh" here, as the conditional tense of the verb "dealaich" clearly seems to be intended from the context. **97:** Maclean Sinclair versions replace "gaisgeadh" with the more standard "gaisge", but the ONG usage has been preferred, as indicating dialect. **99:** Maclean Sinclair versions replace "earbadh" with the more standard "earba", but the ONG usage has been preferred, as indicating dialect. **101:** Maclean Sinclair versions replace "ghleann" with "bheann". **103:** Maclean Sinclair versions alter this line slightly, making it read ""Spors neo-ainneamh aig' 's na beannaibh". **105:** ONG has "gail-shion" for "gaillinn"; this reflects the pronunciation in the poet's dialect. **106:** Maclean Sinclair versions omit the past tense of the copula verb form "bu", or here "b'", perhaps because the preceding line was in the present. **107:** Maclean Sinclair versions replace this line with "Mar steud-each lùghar, astarach". **108:** Maclean Sinclair versions replace this line with "'S an rèis, 's e dian luath, tartarach". In ONG, the line begins "Gu fàgadh e . . .", and standard Gaelic would be "Gum . . .", but the "m" would appear to be elided in the poet's dialect, and this is marked with an apostrophe. **109:** ONG has "le àrdroich . . ."; "àrdroich" is interpreted here as "àrdraich", "an eight-oared galley. Maclean Sinclair versions replace this with

"Bhiodh iùbhrach . . .". **110:** In Maclean Sinclair versions, this line reads" "A' marcachd thar gach sùgh". **111:** The reference to "Hobart" is unclear, although given the context, it would appear to be to the name of a boat. The Laird of Coll's eldest daughter, Jannette, was married to the Honourable George Vere Hobart, the second son of the Earl of Buckinghamshire, who was for a short period governor of the British Caribbean island of Grenada, before dying from a fever. It is possible that the boat may have been named in his honour, or that of his family. **113:** "Mac Mhic Eòbhain" is the Chieftain of the Macleans of Ardgour. Like the MacLeans of Coll, this branch of the MacLeans also descended from Lachlan Bronnach, fifteenth century MacLean Chieftain of the MacLeans of Duart, through Iain Garbh's brother, Donald. Thus, MacLean of Ardgour and the subject of the poem are distant relatives. The events described in this verse are not altogether clear, but it is likely a reference to the Argyllshire Gathering **117:** Although ONG reads "Gu 'n mhaslaich", as this is a simple past, the auxiliary "do" is required. **118:** Maclean Sinclair versions replace this line with "A' reubadh thonn gu dàn". **119:** Maclean Sinclair versions replace "'Faotainn" with "Fhuair e". In ONG, "oirr'" appears as "orra", which literally means "on them", rather than "on her". The poet often used "orra" to refer to both "oirre" and "orra"; this probably reflects dialect, but here "orra" is emended to reflect the probably meaning, based on the context. **120:** In Maclean Sinclair versions, this line reads "'S chuir e cuairt gu sàil". **121:** In ONG and the manuscripts, the first letters in "ceann" and "teaghlaich" are in the upper case. **124:** In ONG, "maithreann" for "maireann". **125:** In ONG, the first letter in "mac" is in the upper case. The son to which the poet refers would be the 15th Laird of Coll's only son, Hugh, who would become the 16th Laird, and about whom the poet also composed poetry. **130:** In ONG, "suicheadhach", which could relate to the verb "such", "suck or imbibe, saturate or fill", but a misspelling of "suidheachadh" seems more likely, given the context. **137:** ONG has "go" for "gu". **138:** ONG has "Sa ghnothaich"; interpreted here as "'S a . . .", "And his . . .", rather than "Anns a' . . .", "In the . . .". **141:** Miss Clephane is an English title, and is therefore italicised. Miss Clephane may have been a daughter of General Maclean Clephane, who also served as a governor of Grenada. If this is the case, though, these wedding plans must have fallen through, as Hugh was married twice, first to Janet, the daughter of James Dennistoun of Colgrain, and then upon her death to a Miss Robertson of Edinburgh. **141:** ONG has "as a phor", the meaning of which could be "anns a' . . .", "in the", or "Bs a' . . .", "out of the/from the", or "Bs a . . .", "out of his/from his"; given contextual references in the preceding and following lines to a male subject, the latter interpretation is preferred here. **142:** In ONG, the first letter of "chlèir", "clergy", is capitalised. **143:** In ONG, the first letter of "teaghlach", "family", is capitalised. **147:** ONG has "Biodh". **152:** The identity of this "Eachann òg", "young Hector", is not clear. Several of the MacLeans of Duart were styled "Eachann òg", but it is not clear why any of them would have been chosen here. Three Lairds of Coll were named Hector, though one, the 5th Laird, was styled "Eachann Ruadh", or "Hector Roy". The other two Hectors, the 4th Laird and the 11th Laird, were highly regarded chieftains, especially the 4th Laird, who was known for both great scholarship--he composed poetry in both Gaelic and Latin--and piety. The reference may be to either of these chiefs, although neither were apparently styled "Eachann òg". **154:** ONG has "dhoibh". **158:** ONG has "gβraicheadh", which has been interpreted here as "gβraichead", or "folly". **159:** In ONG, this line reads "Ga 'd tha air nàdurachd a gràth". "Ga 'd" is the poet's usual rendering of "ged". "A gràth" has been interpreted as the verbal noun "ag ràdh"; while the poet often uses "ràitinn" for "ràdh", this is not always the case, and the

verbal noun of the verb to go makes perhaps more sense than some alternatives, such as "grath", "fear, terror, abhorrence", or "gnàth", "custom, usage", or "a soothing voice, bleating, lowing". The word "air" does not make obvious sense, and the poet may have meant "ar", the first person plural possessive pronoun, "our", which he commonly does. **160:** ONG has "Gu freagradh"; standard Gaelic would be "Gum freagradh", but the "m" may be elided in the dialect, and this is shown by way of an apostrophe. **162:** ONG has "Mo" for "Mu"; it also reads ". . . san a streap", which has been interpreted here as ". . . 's ann a'streap", "and ascending". **167:** The reference to Clan Cameron here is likely due in part to the fact that the subject of the poem was married to Catherine Cameron, the eldest daughter of Allan Cameron of Glendessary. The closeness of the MacLeans of Coll and the Camerons of Glendessary is reflected in the fact that two of the subject's younger brothers, Roderick and Allan, were married to two other daughters of Allan Cameron of Glendessary; Roderick was married to the youngest daughter, Christianna, and Allan was married to Jean. The MacLeans of Coll also had ties of marriage to the Camerons of Lochiel. **171:** ONG has "Na faighinn . . ."; standard Gaelic would be "Nam faighinn . . .", and it is likely that the "m" has heen elided in the poet's dialect. This is marked with an apostrophe. **175-176:** The references here to a journey from Egypt to Ireland, by way of Spain, seems to be to the path that was believed in Gaelic oral tradition to have been taken by the Gaels, from their ancient origins in the Holy Land. **177:** ONG has "iomra'", which should be "iomradh", "report", in standard Gaelic, but the elision of the final "dh" is dialectical, and has therefore been retained, and marked with the apostrophe. Additionally, in the Maclean Sinclair versions, "do na h-àrmainn" is replaced by "ré a làithean air". **178:** Maclean Sinclair versions replace this line with "Is a chliù a ghnàth 'dol suas". **180:** ONG has "Gad". Maclean Sinclair versions replace this line with "Mar-ri cuideachd shunndaich mhànranaich". **181:** Maclean Sinclair versions replace "cosgainn" with "òlainn", and "an deoch-slàinte" with "a dheoch-slàinte". **183:** Maclean Sinclair versions replace this line with "Am fiùbhaibh gasd' aig a bheil tlachd". **184:** Maclean Sinclair versions replace this line with "'S gach ni 'tha ceart 's bu dual".

Alternative Versions: In the Maclean Sinclair versions, there are, in addition to the many emendations and other changes referred to in the line annotations, a number of changes to the overall structure of the poem. In the MacLean Sinclair versions, the following changes are made: (1) the present verses 5 and 6 (lines 41 to 56) are omitted; (2) the present verse 9 (lines 65 to 72) is omitted; (3) the present verse 12 (lines 89 to 96) is omitted; and (4) the present verses 16 through 22 (lines 121 through 176) are omitted. With these changes and omissions, the Maclean Sinclair versions contain only 96 lines. It should also be noted that the version in CC2, which was re-edited by Hector MacDougall, contained all of the original verses, with only relatively minor alterations. He notes in the introduction that his version is "[m]ar a bha e an leabhar a' Bhàird e féin/As it was in the poet's own book".

3. Òran do Thighearna Chola (nuair a cheannaich e Eilean nam Muc)

Tune: "Deoch-slàinte an Rìgh is fheàrr leinn"
No. of lines: 200
Sources: ONG, p. 32, MG15G/2/1, p.15, CC1, p. 11, CC2, p. 19.
Date: c. 1814 (presumably shortly after date of purchase--see below)

Context: A panegyric composed for Alexander MacLean, 15th MacLean of Coll, on his purchase of Muck for £9,975 from Reginald George MacDonald of Clanranald. Muck had traditionally been MacLean territory, but had been acquired by Clanranald in 1799 when he assumed the debts of its previous proprietor, Lachlan Maclean, 6th Maclean of Muck, described in other sources as an "absentee" owner who had become Governor of the Tower of London. The introduction in ONG reads: "Oran Do dh' Alastair MacGilleain, Tighearna Chola, le Iain MacGilleain, an uair a chual e gu 'n do cheannaich e Eilean na Muc/A Song to Alexander MacLean, the Laird of Coll, by John MacLean, when he heard that he had purchased the Isle of Muck".

Line Annotations:
8: ONG has "Gad". "A stri" is interpreted as the verbal noun, and not the infinitive. **11:** Maclean Sinclair versions have "na shùgradh", whereas ONG has "na sùgradh". Maclean Sinclair is therefore interpreting the "na" as the possessive prepositional pronoun "in his/in its", which is correct in this context. ONG has "dhoibh". **12:** ONG and Maclean Sinclair versions have "Bho na ghlachd", which is interpreted here as "Bhon a ghlac". **14:** ONG and Maclean Sinclair versions have "Bho na bha", which is interpreted here as "Bhon a bha". **15:** Maclean Sinclair versions have "Gu 'n leigeadh . . .", which is closer to the standard Gaelic "Gun . . .", but the ONG version has been retained, on the assumption that the "n" is elided in the poet's dialect, and this elision is marked with an apostrophe. **16:** ONG has "Gad". **18:** Maclean Sinclair versions replace "Nuair a . . ." with "'S math gu'n d' . . .". **19:** Maclean Sinclair versions replace "ann do" with "cruinn do", but corrects "luchd airgiod" in ONG with the correct "luchd-airgid". **20:** Maclean Sinclair versions have the standard "mu sgaoil" rather than "ma sgaoil", as in ONG, but the latter is retained, as reflective of dialect. **21:** ONG has "Gad". Maclean Sinclair versions replace this line with "Aige fhéin tha 'n t-eilean bòidheach". **23:** Maclean Sinclair versions have the standard "aig an robh" instead of ONG's "aig a robh", but the latter is kept, on the assumption that the elision of the "n" in the auxiliary "an" is dialectical, and this is marked with an apostrophe. **25:** ONG has "dhoibh". **27:** ONG has "doibh". **29:** ONG has "mal fiu", and the meaning of "fiu" is not entirely clear. It is likely the word "feu", a real property term, with the result that "màl fiu" would mean the rent of a feu. It is likely not the Gaelic word "fiù", an adjective meaning "worthy, estimable". ONG also has "aig air", and "aig" is interpreted here as "aige", with the "e" elided because of the "a" in "air". **31:** ONG has "Gad". **37:** As noted in the note to line 69 in poem 2, the islands of Rhum and Coll and approximately 18 merklands of property in Cuinish, in Mull, were the traditional contours of the Coll estate when this family's strength was at its greatest extent. **38:** The reference to "style" is to the formal title of the Chieftain or Laird. **39:** As noted above in discussing the context of this poem, the Isle of Muck had traditionally been part of the broader MacLean patrimony, owned by the MacLeans of Muck, a cadet of the Coll family. **41:** Maclean Sinclair versions have "tuatha" for "tuathadh"; both are acceptable forms of the genitive singular of this noun, but ONG is preferred, as more accurately reflecting pronunciation in the poet's dialect. **43:** Maclean Sinclair versions of this line read "'N oidhche 'thàinig fios g' an ionnsaidh". **45:** Maclean Sinclair versions replace this line with "Chìte deàrrsadh ris na speuran". **53:** In Maclean Sinclair versions, line 55 in the present version replaces line 53. **54:** ONG has "Gad". This line is omitted in Maclean Sinclair versions. **55:** In Maclean Sinclair versions, line 53 in the present version replaces line 55. **56:** In Maclean Sinclair versions, this line replaces line 54, and a new line, not found in ONG or the manuscript sources appears at line 56: "'S aobhar farmaid, a chuid

tuatha". **59:** ONG reads "Mòrfhearan" for "Mòrairean". **65:** Maclean Sinclair versions have ". . . a bha lìonmhor". **66:** ONG has . . . ga robh . . .". Maclean Sinclair interprets this as "dhan robh", which is accepted here, although the "n" is omitted, as in ONG, to reflect an elision which may be dialectical, and which is marked with an apostrophe. **67:** The Battle of Inverkeithing took place in July, 1651, and was a massive defeat for the royalist forces supporting King Charles II, at the hands of English forces loyal to Oliver Cromwell. The Macleans were strong supporters of the King Charles, and suffered particularly heavily in the fighting. Eight foster-brothers of Maclean of Duart were said to have fallen in the fighting, and apparently insufficient men were left to till the fields of the Macleans of Duart, and a generation later, these estates had still not recovered: see Allan I. Macinnes, *Clanship, Commerce and the House of Stuart, 1603-1788*, (East Linton: Tuckwell, 1996), at pp. 14, 30-31. **70:** ONG has "diu". **80:** This appears to be a reference to the battle of Inverlochy of 1431, in which the Macleans fought alongside Donald Balloch, a cousin to the Lords of the Isles, in support of the Lords against the royal forces under the command of the Earls of Marr and Caithness. The battle resulted in victory for the forces of the Lordship. It is not clear to whom reference is being made, but Lachlan Bronnach, Chief of the Macleans of Duart, certainly took part, as did Iain Garbh, who was granted lands in Lochaber by Alexander de Yle, Lord of the Isles, as a reward for his efforts: Nicholas Maclean-Bristol, *Warriors and Priests: The History of the Clan MacLean 1300-1570* (East Linton: Tuckwell, 1995), at p. 63. **82:** ONG uses "*nis* mò" rather than "*nas* motha". **83:** ONG uses "Ma"; "Mu", "about", is probably intended. ONG has "dhoibh". **84:** ONG uses "*ni* bu leòir" rather than "*na* bu leòir". **88:** The reference may be to the subject of the poem, Alexander, the 15th Laird of Coll, who was lieutenant-colonel in the Breadalbane Fencible regiment, and the comments in these lines would therefore be aimed at the young heir, Hugh. **93:** Maclean Sinclair versions read ""Fhuair e 'nis a dh' ionnsaidh làimhe". **94:** The reference here is to the MacDonalds of Clanranald, from whom the Isle of Muck had been purchased. **97:** Maclean Sinclair versions read "Bhuannaich e air ais le 'thapadh". **98:** The reference here is to Lachlan Maclean, 6th Maclean of Muck, who lost Muck to Clanranald in 1799 when Clanranald assumed his debts. ONG has "doibh". **99:** ONG has "Gad". **105:** The "Eòbhann", or "Hugh", referred to here is Hugh MacLean, son of the subject of the poem, and heir to the estate of Coll. **107:** ONG has "Biodh". **108:** ONG has "cuimhnead", which is interpreted by Maclean Sinclair as "cuingead". **109:** Maclean Sinclair versions have ". . . mo dhùrachd" for ". . . 's a' chùis sin". **113:** Maclean Sinclair versions have "'S lionmhor caraid ann an Albainn". **114:** Maclean Sinclair versions replace this line with "Aig fear ainmeil nan deagh-dhòighean". **116:** Maclean Sinclair versions have ". . . gu chòmhradh". **118:** Maclean Sinclair versions replace "chòmhstri" with "chòmhrag". **119:** Maclean Sinclair versions replace this line with "Bhiodh iad dian mar theine lasrach". **120:** Maclean Sinclair versions replace this line with "Roimh ghaoith bhrais a' losgadh còmhlaich". **121:** This is a reference to the chief of the Macleans of Lochbuie; the chieftain at the time this poem was composed would have been Murdoch, who had served as a lieutenant in the 42nd Royal Highlandersand saw service in the peninsular wars. **123:** Maclean Sinclair versions have "mu 'n cuairt" for "ma 'n cuairt" in ONG, and although this is closer to standard written Gaelic, "man" is retained as reflecting dialect. **125:** The reference to "shiol Eachainn", the "progeny of Hector", is unclear, but is possibly to the MacLeans of Duart. **126:** Maclean Sinclair versions have "cròdha" for "eòlach". **127:** Maclean Sinclair versions have "Daragan . . ." for "Don fhuil àird . . .". **128:** ONG has "dhoibh". **129:** "Mac Mhic Eòghainn" is a reference

to the Chief of the MacLeans of Ardgour, who, like the Lairds of Coll, trace their ancestry back to Lachlan Bronnach. The chief at the time this poem was composed was Alexander, the 13th MacLean of Ardgour, who served as an officer in a number of regiments. **136:** This is a reference to the chief of the MacKenzies, Earls of Seaforth. **140:** ONG reads "gu 'n dibir càirdeas". "Gu 'n" is interpreted here as "gun", "without"; the poet often used "gu 'n" in both ONG and the manuscripts for "gun". "Dibir" is a noun, rather than the verb "diobair", and as "càirdeas" is in a genitive relationship with "dibir", it has been corrected accordingly. **147:** "MacDhòmhnaill Duibh" is Cameron of Lochiel, chieftain of Clan Cameron. **148:** Maclean Sinclair versions read "Buidheann cholgarra 's an àraich". **149:** These are the traditional lands of the Camerons of Lochiel. **150:** ONG has "diu". **153:** The reference here is to the chief of the MacLeods of Dunvegan. **155:** Maclean Sinclair versions read "'Dheanadh euchdan anns a' chaonnaig". **156:** Maclean Sinclair versions have "'Ghearradh smuais . . ." for "Bualadh beum . . .". **159:** ONG has "da 'n"; this is a contraction of the preposition "do" and the third person plural possessive pronoun "an", and is marked accordingly. **161:** The reference is Lord MacDonald of Sleat, Skye. ONG has "Mòr'fhear" for "Mòrair". **169:** This is a reference to the chief of the Campbells of Lochnell. **184:** ONG has "Ga", which is likely "Gad", the poet's preferred form of "ged", "although", and in which the "d" has been elided. This is marked with an apostrophe. **187:** The same comment made in the note to line 184 applies here. **188:** ONG has "ni 's" for "nas". **189:** ONG has "Gu *mo* slàn . . .". **194:** "Mac Mhic Ailein" is the title of the chief of the Clanranald MacDonalds, from whom the subject of the poem purchased the island of Muck.

Alternative Versions: In the Maclean Sinclair versions, there are, in addition to the many emendations and other changes referred to in the line annotations, a number of changes to the overall structure of the poem. In the MacLean Sinclair versions, the following changes are made: (1) the present verses 4 and 5 (lines 25 to 40) are omitted; (2) the present verse 8 (lines 57 to 64) are omitted; (3) the last four lines in present verse 9 (lines 69 to 72) are omitted; (4) the present verse 11 (lines 81 to 88) is omitted; (5) the first four and last two lines of the present verse 12 (lines 89 to 92, and lines 95 and 96) are omitted; (5) lines 3 to 5 of the present verse 13 (lines 99 to 101) are omitted; (6) lines 6 to 8 of the present verse 14 (lines 110 to 112) are omitted; (7) the present verses 17 and 18 (lines 129 to 144) are omitted; (8) lines 1 and 2 and 5 to 8 of the present verse 19 (lines 145 and 146, and lines 149 to 152) are omitted; (9) lines 5 to 8 of the present verse 20 (lines 157 to 160) are omitted; (10) the present verses 21 to 24 (lines 161 to 192) are omitted; and (11) lines 3 to 6 of the present verse 25 (lines 195 to 198) are omitted. With these changes and omissions, the Maclean Sinclair versions contain only 104 lines. In CC2, Hector MacDougall publishes the Maclean Sinclair version of the poem, rather than the original, but notes the following: "Tha cóig rannan air fhichead anns an òran so, mar a tha e ann an ceud leabhar a' Bhàird [i.e. ONG] e féin; tha cuid de na rannan a tha air am fàgail as--an t-òran uile gu léir, faodar a ràdh--'na dheagh bhàrdachd/There are twenty five verses in this song, as it appears in the Poet's own first book; those of the verses that are left out--the whole of the song, it may be said--are good poetry."

4. Bata Thighearna Chola

Tune: "Nam faighinn gille airson cheanniach" [Maclean Sinclair versions have "'Nam faighinn gille r' a cheannach"].
No. of lines: 144
Sources: ONG, p. 52, MG15G/2/1, p.27, CC1, p. 15, CC2, p. 23, FC, p. 25
Date: Uncertain, but likely between 1811 and 1819. Based on the Coll tradition related below, it appears that the poet was engaged in the trade of shoemaking at the time the poem was made, and since he began that trade on his return to Tiree from the Argyll militia in 1811, the poem was therefore likely composed between 1811 and his departure for Nova Scotia in 1819.
Context: A panegyric composed for Alexander MacLean, 15th MacLean of Coll. Song nominally in praise of the chief's galley, but also praise of the skipper. In the post-script to CC2, Hector MacDougall relates the following tradition, told to him by Mr. Conn MacGhille-Mhoire (Gilmour), from Ceann a' Gharbhair (Kengharair), Mull, concerning the circumstances surrounding the composition of this song in praise of the Boat of the Laird of Coll: "Bha Tighearna Cholla anns a' Bheinn-mhollaich, no Cuinnis, mar a theirear ris an diugh, le a bhirlinn. Chuala e gu'n robh am Bàrd air a rathad gu Poll-làthaich, far an robh a' bhirlinn aig laimhrig is as an robh i ri seoladh is as am biodh mar an ceudna, a' Phacaid Chollach a' seoladh do'n eilean sin is do Thirithe anns an am ud; a réir choltais bha eallach leathraich aig a' Bhàrd gu thoirt dhachaidh do Thirithe, or b'i a' ghréasachd a bu cheaird dha. An uair a bha am Bàrd dlùth air an laimhrig mhothaich e birlinn Thighearna Cholla ag cur ri cuan is ged a dh'fheuch e ri aire an sgiobaidh a tharruing cha d'thug iad aomadh, is thug e an aire gu'n do rinn i air ceann an ear Cholla. Dh'fheith am Bàrd far an robh e feuch ciod idir a bu chiall do'n chleas a rinneadh air. Is e a thachair gu'n deach a' bhirlinn a stigh do Shórasdal, an ceann an ear Cholla, chaidh Tighearna Cholla e féin air tir an sin is thill e a' bhirlinn is an sgioba a dh'iarraidh a' Bhàird do'n phort cheudna a dh'fhàg i. Bha esan a' feitheamh air an ceann, agus an uair a thainig iad gu ruig an laimhreag bha e air a ràdh gu'n do chuir e fàilte orra leis an òran seo."/"The Laird of Coll was in Cuinish, as it is called today, with his galley. He heard that the poet was on the road to Pollachie, where the galley was at the quay and out of which it was about to sail and out of which the "Coll Packet" would also be sailing to that island and to Tiree at that time; apparently, the poet had a load of leather to take home to Tiree, since shoemaking was his trade. When the poet was close to the quay, he noticed that the Laird of Coll's galley was putting out to sea and although he tried to catch the attention of the crew, they gave no notice, and he noticed that the vessel was making for the east end of Coll. The poet waited where he was to find out what on earth was the meaning of the trick that was played on him. What happened was that the galley landed at Sorasdal, at the east end of Coll, the Laird of Coll put to shore there and he sent his galley and crew back to bring the poet back to the port that it had just left. He was waiting at the other end, and when they reached the quay, it is said that the poet greeted them with this song."

MacDougall remarks the following: "Faodar a ràdh, a thaobh na h-iomradh so air a shon sin, gu bheil suaip mhór aice ris an sgeul a tha air a h-innseadh mu òran Leathanach eile, agus òran Collach, "Ged a dh'fhàg thu ri port mi," a rinneadh leis a' bhan-bhàrd, Catriona Nighean Eoghain Mhic Lachuinn, agus a chithear anns an leabhar, 'Na Bàird Leathanach'"./"It may be said, concerning this report for the sake of that, that it has a great likeness to the story that is told about another MacLean song, and a Coll song, "Though you left me at port," that was made by the poetess, Catherine the daughter of Hugh the son of Lachlan, and that can be seen in the book 'The Maclean Bards'": CC2, at p. 278.

Line Annotations:
1: Maclean Sinclair versions have "mise an diugh" for "mi 'n diugh". **3:** Maclean Sinclair versions read "'S gun i 'giùlan mo ghràidh oirre". ONG has "mo ghràdh", but this should be "mo ghràidh", as in Maclean Sinclair versions, because it is a proper noun following a verbal noun, and should therefore be in the genitive case. ONG also has "orra" for "oirre"; as the reference is clearly to the boat, which is commonly referred as a female object, "oirre" is preferred. The poet often has "orra" for "oirre", and this likely reflects his dialect. **5:** In ONG, the "t" in "tighearna" and the "d" in "duthcha" are capitalised. In Maclean Sinclair versions, these two words are not connected by a hyphen; given that "tighearna" is preceded by the article, "an", the hyphenation given in ONG is correct. **7:** Maclean Sinclair versions replace this line with ""Gur-a flathail, deas, suairc e". **8:** Maclean Sinclair versions replace this line with "'Chan e gruaim air a chìthear". **9:** As the last line of one verse becomes the first line in the next, Maclean Sinclair versions replace this also with "'Chan e gruaim air a chithear". **10:** Maclean Sinclair versions read "'S e 'na shuidhe 'na iùbhraich". **11:** In Maclean Sinclair versions, this line is moved to line 13. Maclean Sinclair versions include the relative pronoun "a" after "'S e . . .", left out in ONG, and it is marked here with an apostrophe. **12:** In Maclean Sinclair versions, this line is moved to line 14, and "'Dh' ionnsaidh" replaces "Gu", and "dùthcha" replaces "dùthchadh". The latter, "dùthchadh", is preferred, as it reflects the poet's dialect. **13:** In Maclean Sinclair versions, this line is moved to line 10. **14:** In Maclean Sinclair versions, this line is moved to line 11. **15:** Maclean Sinclair versions read "'S math a ghleidheadh i 'm fuaradh". **16:** Maclean Sinclair versions replace ". . . gach sùgh dhiubh" with ". . . na sùghan". **17:** Maclean Sinclair versions make the same change as in line 16; as noted, in this poem, the last line of one verse becomes the first line of the next. **18:** Maclean Sinclair versions omit the "'S" before "gum bu . . .". **19:** Maclean Sinclair versions read "'S i gun chearb ann an òrdugh". **20:** Maclean Sinclair versions add the adjective "deagh-" to "còrcaich", which causes aspiration to it. **21:** Maclean Sinclair has "Stadh", "a ship's stay", for "Stèigh", the word used in ONG (rendered here as "Stèidh"). It is likely that "Stèidh" here is simply the English "stay" used as a loan word, and is therefore italicised here. **22:** Maclean Sinclair versions have "Agus . . ." for "Deagh . . .", and as a result, "càball" is not aspirated in Maclean Sinclair versions. **23:** Maclean Sinclair versions replace this line with "'S air bòrd na fir ghleusda". **24:** Maclean Sinclair versions replace this line with "'Dheanamh feum air ceann slaite". **25:** Maclean Sinclair versions make the same change as in line 24. **26:** In Maclean Sinclair versions, this line is moved to line 28, and "'N àm cur rithe . . ." replaces "An uair a phaisgte . . .". **27:** Maclean Sinclair versions replace this line with "Leis na lasgairean aotram". **28:** Maclean Sinclair versions replace this line with "A bhiodh aighearach, cridheil". **29:** ONG simply has "i sgathan", but it is likely that "a", the third person singular female possessive pronoun "her" is implied here and is simply elided, and this is marked with an apostrophe. **31:** ONG simply has "bhi sgiobair . . .". Maclean Sinclair versions add the article "'n sgiobair", but it is likely that "a", "her" is implied here and simply elided by "bhi", and this is marked with an apostrophe. **32:** Maclean Sinclair versions have "a", the third person singular female possessive pronoun, for "e", which appears in ONG. The "e" would be a reference to "sgiobair", in the previous line, and is therefore retained; however, "a" is also likely implied here in reference to "croinn", and is simply elided by "e", and this is marked with an apostrophe. **33:** Maclean Sinclair versions replace "'S e gun lùbadh . . ." with "'S tric a lùb a . . .". Again, it is likely that "a", "her", is also likely implied here, and

is elided by "lùbadh", and this is marked with an apostrophe. **34:** Maclean Sinclair versions replace "'S a bheireadh . . ." with "'S bheirte . . .". Also, ONG simply has "bho slatan", but it is likely that "a", "her", is implied here and is simply elided, and this is marked with an apostrophe. **35:** Maclean Sinclair versions replace " . . . 'ga stiùireadh" with " . . . an stiùiridh". **36:** Maclean Sinclair versions replace "Gu glèidheadh . . ." with "'Ghlèidheadh . . .". ONG simply has "glèidheadh cursa", and it is possible that "a", "her" is once again implied here and is simply elided, and this is marked with an apostrophe. **37:** Maclean Sinclair versions read "'N uair a thèid e da . . .". **38:** Maclean Sinclair versions read "Is a thàirneas . . .". ONG simply has "e chàirt"; given the aspiration of "càirt", the third person singular male possessive pronoun "a", "his", is clearly implied and is simply elided, and this is marked with an apostrophe. **39:** Maclean Sinclair versions replace "Bha" with "Tha". **40:** Maclean Sinclair versions replace "An tigeadh . . ." with "'S an tig . . .". Given the preceding line, it is likely that "An" is a contraction of "Ann an", in which, and this is marked with an apostrophe. **42:** Maclean Sinclair versions read "Ann am fasgath nach léir dha". ONG has "bèaigh" for "bàgh", which is the standard Gaelic version. "Bèaigh" may be an English loan word, but "bàgh" arguably forms a better end rhyme with line 44. **43:** Maclean Sinclair versions replace this line with "'S e a chleachdadh a bhàta". ONG has "mo choinneamh"; "mu *a* choinneamh", "before *him*, is probably intended, and the "a", "his" is elided, and this is marked with an apostrophe. **44:** Maclean Sinclair versions replace this line with "Dh' aindheoin ànnraidh 's cruaidh-éiginn". ONG has "léur" for the standard "lèir". **45:** Maclean Sinclair versions read "'Thoirt gu h-eòlach làn-shàbhailte". ONG has "tu bheireadh"; the relative pronoun, "a", is clearly implied, and elided by "tu", and this is marked with an apostrophe. ONG also has "sàbhail", but the standard Gaelic "sàbhailt'" is preferred. **46:** Maclean Sinclair version read "Thar bhàrr nan tonn beucail". Here, "beann", "mountain", is interpreted as "great wave". See, also, line 56. **48:** Maclean Sinclair has "Bidh a . . ." for "Bhiodh do . . ." and "céile" for "chèilidh". "Chèilidh" is preferred as reflective of the poet's dialect. It is not clear what "crann-chèilidh" means; it may be that the poet intended "crann-deiridh", "mizzen mast", although this is unlikely, given the rest of the line, which implies something relevant to the steering of the boat. **49:** Maclean Sinclair versions make the same change as in line 48. **50:** Maclean Sinclair versions read "'S gur math 'fheum anns an àm sin". **51:** Maclean Sinclair versions read "'S grinn a dh' fhalbhadh an iùbhrach". ONG has "'S i dh' fhalbhadh"; the relative article "a" before "dh' fhalbhadh" is implied, but is elided, and this is marked with an apostrophe. **52:** Maclean Sinclair has "'S an" for "Sa" in ONG, and while "an" is the correct rendering of the singular nominal article, the ommission of the "n" is dialectical, and this is reflected with the apostrophe. **53:** ONG has "Bho ghualain", implying the third person singular male possessive pronoun "a", "his" before "gualainn"; however, it is likely that the reference is to the boat, which is usually treated as a female (as it has been elsewhere in the poem by the poet), and so "a gualainn", "her shoulders", is preferred here, and the elision of the "a", "her", is marked with an apostrophe. **54:** Maclean Sinclair versions replace "dh'fhiaradh tu" with "dh' iarras e"; "'n ceann" is interpreted here as the adverb "ahead". **55:** Maclean Sinclair versions replace "dhuit" with "dha". **56:** Maclean Sinclair versions read "Anns na fuar-shruthaibh beanntach". **57:** Maclean Sinclair versions make the same change as in line 56. **58:** ONG has "Gad". **59:** Maclean Sinclair versions replace this line with "Fhad 's a chumadh i 'dhaoine". **60:** Maclean Sinclair versions read "Cha bhiodh smaoin aig' air tilleadh". **61:** Maclean Sinclair replaces "chuip" in ONG with "cuip". It is likely that "a' chuip", "the foam" is intended by the poet in ONG,

and that the article is elided by "ruith", and this is marked with an apostrophe. **62:** Maclean Sinclair versions read "'S e 'toirt òrdagh d' a ghillean". **63:** Maclean Sinclair replaces "ghluaiseadh" in ONG with "a' gluasad". The relative pronoun "a" is implied, and is elided by the "i", "she", which precedes it, and this is marked with an apostrophe. **64:** Maclean Sinclair replaces "'S i 'cuir" with "'S a 'cur". ONG has "fodh slinnein"; it is likely that "a", "her", is implied before "slinnein" and that it is elided by "fo", and this is marked with an apostrophe. **65:** Maclean Sinclair versions make the same change as in line 64. **68:** Maclean Sinclair replaces the dialectical "eutrom" with the standard "aotrom". **69:** ONG has "sa gualann". It is likely that "sa" is not a contraction of "anns a'", otherwise "gualann" would be both aspirated and slenderised; rather, the contraction of "agus", "'s", and the third person singular feminine possessive pronoun "a", "her", is intended. **70:** Maclean Sinclair versions replace "Ri bualadh" with "A' sior-bhualadh". **71:** Maclean Sinclair versions have "'gan sgoltadh" for "'ga sgoltadh". This is an acceptable emendation, as the boat, the subject of the phrase, is splitting the great waves, which is plural. However, the omission of the "n" in "'gan" may reflect the poet's dialect, and therefore it is omitted, but is marked with an apostrophe. **72:** Maclean Sinclair versions read "'S tric a leum iad na còmhdhail". ONG has "diu" for "diubh", and although "dhiubh" is the standard Gaelic form, "diubh" reflects the poet's dialect. **73:** Maclean Sinclair versions make the same change as in line 72. **74:** Maclean Sinclair versions replace "Bhiodh i" with "'S bidh i", and "ris" with "riuth'". **75:** Maclean Sinclair versions replace "gu" with "'bhios". **76:** Maclean Sinclair versions replace "'èireadh" with "éireas", and "air" with "orr'". **78:** Maclean Sinclair versions omit the relative pronoun "A", and replace "ri" with "mu". **79:** Maclean Sinclair versions read "'S i a' gearradh nam beucthonn". **81:** Maclean Sinclair versions replace "'S iad" with "Bhiodh". **82:** Maclean Sinclair versions replace this line with "Tonnan buaireasach, iargalt". **83:** Maclean Sinclair versions replace this line with "'N uair 'bhiodh gruaim air na speuran". **84:** Maclean Sinclair versions replace this line with "Agus séideadh cruaidh, dian ann". **85:** Maclean Sinclair versions replace this line with "Tha i cumadail, làidir". ONG read "srùithean bu làdir", but it is likely that the relative pronoun is implied, but not pronounced, and this is marked with an apostrophe. **86:** Maclean Sinclair replaces this line with "'Dhol a shnàmh a' chuain fhiadhaich". ONG reads "Ge d' bhiodh . . ."; the relative pronoun is clearly implied, but is not pronounced, and this is marked with the apostrophe. ONG has the word "bàlin", which I have been unable to identify, but have interpreted as "bàirlinn", or "surge", which, I suggest, is a sensible emendation, given the context. **87:** Maclean Sinclair replaces this line with "Gur a h-ealamh a dh' fhàgas i". **88:** Maclean Sinclair has "bàt'" for "bàta". Although the relative pronoun "a" is omitted in ONG between "bàta" and "thèid", it is implied, and likely elided by the final "a" in "bàta", and this elision is indicated with an apostrophe. **89:** Maclean Sinclair versions replace "Cha deach bàta . . ." with "Chan eil bàt' théid". **90:** Maclean Sinclair versions replace "Seo dheanadh oirre . . ." with "Air nach dean ise . . .". ONG has "orra" for "oirre", but given the context, the Laird's boat, a singular feminine object, is being referred to. **92:** Maclean Sinclair versions replace "Na h-àsuig . . ." with "'S a cuid àsuig . . .". ONG has "àsig", which Maclean Sinclair interprets as "àsuig" (also "àsuing"), "apparatus", which appears to be correct. **93:** Maclean Sinclair versions replace "cleòca" with "cleòc". **94:** Maclean Sinclair versions replace "sgòid", the plural, with "sgòd", the singular, and "ruighe" with "righeadh". **95:** Maclean Sinclair versions add the relative pronoun "a" before "dh'iarradh", which is marked here with the apostrophe, to indicate the elision implied in the omission of this pronoun in ONG. **98:** Maclean Sinclair versions read "'S a

làn-ghuidhe de ghaoith aic'". **99:** Maclean Sinclair versions read "Bhiodh i leum thar nan stuadhan". ONG reads "Nuair bhiodh . . ."; the relative pronoun, "a", is omitted, but is implied, and this is marked with an apostrophe before "bhiodh". **100:** Maclean Sinclair versions replace this line with "Mmar each luath-chasach, aotrom". ONG has "Air a h-uilean . . .", and as "uileann" is a feminine noun, it should be in its dative form, "uilinn". **101:** Maclean Sinclair versions replace this line with "Aig ro-fheabhas a dlùthaidh". **102:** Maclean Sinclair versions read "'S aobhar cliù do na saoir i". ONG has "urram na saoirabh"; the "na" should be the genitive plural article "nan", but the final "n" in "nan" is not pronounced in the poet's dialect, and this is marked with an apostrophe. **103:** Maclean Sinclair versions omit the relative pronoun "A", and replace "suas" with "as ùr". ONG aspirates "ciatach"; in standard Gaelic, "ciatach" would not be aspirated after "cho", but aspiration does occur after "cho" in this dialect, and therefore this is retained. See also line 134. **104:** Maclean Sinclair versions replace "'S" with "Is", and "liathadh an . . ." with "liathar le . . .". **105:** Maclean Sinclair versions read "Cha tig liathadh le aois oirre". **106:** Maclean Sinclair versions insert "Is" at the start of the line, before "cha". ONG reads "cha chaochail i coltas; as "a", "her", is implied here, but is elided by "i", this is marked with an apostrophe before "coltas". **107:** In Maclean Sinclair versions, this line is moved to line 109, and in it, "Bu mhath . . ." is replaced by "'S math a . . .". **108:** In Maclean Sinclair versions, this line is mover to line 110, and in it, "'Bha . . ." is changed to "'Tha . . .". The relative pronoun "A" is implied at the beginning of the line, and this is marked with the apostrophe. **109:** In Maclean Sinclair versions, this line is moved to line 107, and is replaced by "Tha am fiodh innt' is feàrr". **110:** In Maclean Sinclair versions, this line is moved to line 108, and is replaced by "A bha 's an àrd-choille dhosraich". ONG has "le locair"; it is likely that "a", "his", is implied, and this is marked with an apostrophe before "locair". In some dialects, "locair", a joiner's plane, is masculine and is not spelled with an "i"; in the poet's dialect, it appears to be feminine, and is slenderised. **111:** Maclean Sinclair versions replace the past tense dependant form "robh" with the present "eil". **112:** Maclean Sinclair versions replace "Leig e" with "Chuireadh". **113:** Maclean Sinclair versions make the same change as in line 112. **114:** Maclean Sinclair versions read "'S cha dean postadh i ao-dian". **115:** ONG reads "dùlghlass"; I follow Maclean Sinclair's interpretation as "dubh-ghlas". **116:** Maclean Sinclair has "mu 'h-aodann"; though this is an acceptable interpretation of "ma h-aodann" in ONG, it is likely that the unstressed "u" is elided in the poet's dialect, and this is marked with the apostrophe. **117:** In Maclean Sinclair versions, this line is moved to line 118, and is replaced by "A' gleachd ri àrd thuinn 's ri gaoithibh". ONG has "feothas" for "feabhas". ONG also has "dlùthaich", which from the context appears to be a noun in the genitive case. It is likely that this is the genitive of "dlùthadh", "joining" or "construction", but the "ch" ending which appears in ONG is indicative of the poet's dialect. **118:** In Maclean Sinclair versions, this line is moved to line 119, and is replaced by "Cha tig failinn an clàr dhi". ONG has "saorabh" for "saoraibh". **119:** In Maclean Sinclair versions, this line is moved to line 117. ONG reads "i muigh"; the particle "a" in "a-muigh" is elided by the preceding "i", but this elision is marked with an apostrophe here. **120:** Maclean Sinclair versions insert "'S" at the start of the line before "cha", and reduce "na" to "n". **122:** The relative article "a" should appear between "Bhon" and "tha", and is unpronounced in the poet's dialect; this is marked with an apostrophe. ONG has "orra", but from the context, the reference appears to be to the boat, and therefore "oirre", "on her", is appropriate. **124:** Maclean Sinclair versions replace "M' an ceann . . ." with "'S e gu teann . . .". **125:** Maclean Sinclair versions

insert "Tha" before "gach" at the beginning of the line, and replace "'bha" with "'tha". ONG has ". . . reang bha . . ."; the relative pronoun, "a", is omitted, but is implied, and this is marked with the apostrophe. **127:** Maclean Sinclair versions read "'S 'shnaidh an tàl i gu sàr-mhath". ONG has "le thàl"; the third person singular male possessive pronoun, "a", "his", is implied here, but elided because of the preceding vowel in "le", and this elision is marked with an apostrophe. **129:** ONG has "ro-mhath thàthadh"; the particle "a" before "thàthadh" is implied, but is elided by the preceding vowel sound, and this is marked with an apostrophe, as in the Maclean Sinclair versions. **130:** Maclean Sinclair versions read "'S chan eil athadh do chuan aic'". **131:** Maclean Sinclair versions read "Tha deagh-ghreim air an t-sàile aic'". ONG has "a s' t-sàile"; the "a s'" is interpreted as the contraction of "anns an", and rendered as "as'". **133:** Maclean Sinclair versions replace "'san iùbhraich" with "innt' cho còmhnard". **134:** Maclean Sinclair versions read "Is cho bòidheach mu 'n cuairt d' a". **135:** Maclean Sinclair versions read "'S ged-a bhiodhte 'gan tionndadh". **136:** Maclean Sinclair versions replace "Car . . ." with "Greis de dh' . . .". **137:** ONG has "am beairt tuairneir"; the "am" is interpreted as the contraction of "ann am", "in a", and is marked as such by the apostrophe. **140:** ONG has "cho bòiche"; although "cho" tends to cause aspiration in the following adjective in the poet's dialect, this is not the case here, apparently; labials may form an exception to this dialectical rule. **142:** ONG has "ni òrain"; as "òran", "song", appears to be in a genitive relationship with "ni", I interpret this to mean "anything of a song".

Alternative Versions: In the Maclean Sinclair versions, there are, in addition to the many emendations and other changes referred to in the line annotations, a number of changes to the overall structure of the poem. In the MacLean Sinclair versions, the following changes are made: the last verse (lines 137-144) were omitted. With these changes and omissions, the Maclean Sinclair versions contain 136 lines. It should also be noted that the version in CC2, which was re-edited by Hector MacDougall, contained all of the original verses, with only relatively minor alterations.

5. Do Thighearna Chola

Tune: "Tha tasgaidh bhuam an dìomhaireachd"
No. of lines: 86
Sources: ONG, p. 83, MG15G/2/1, p. 75, CC1, p. 20, CC2, p. 27,
Date: Uncertain, but between 1815 and 1818.
Context: A panegyric composed in praise of Alexander MacLean, 15th MacLean of Coll. The song was composed after the poet had toured the mainland Highlands in 1815, on which tour he collected a considerable amount of poetry, which he hoped to have published in Edinburgh. After being encouraged in this project by unnamed Edinburgh nobles, his hopes of having the collection published were frustrated (poetry from this collection, together with some of his own poems, were published by the poet himself in 1818). In the introduction in CC2, Hector MacDougall essentially expresses this same information: "Air do'n Bhàrd mòran de òrain a chruinneachadh feadh na dùthcha chaidh e leo do Dhunéideann, ann an dùil gu'm faigheadh e cuideachadh gu 'n cur a mach, bho 'n Chomunn Ghàidhealach. Cha d' thug a' chuideachd fheumail sin mòran misnich dha. Nuair a dh'fhàg e 'n tigh bha dùil aige gu 'n tachradh Tighearna Cholla air an Dunéideann; an uair a ràinig e, is ann a bha esan an Sasunn."/"Upon the Poet having collected many songs throughout the country

he went with them to Edinburgh, in the hope that he would get assistance in publishing them, from the Highland Society. This useful organisation did not give him much encouragement. When he left home, he had hoped that the Laird of Coll would meet him in Edinburgh; when he arrived, he [Coll] was in England."

It is likely that the Gaelic Society to which the poet made his request was the Highland Society of Edinburgh, founded in 1784, and renamed The Highland Society of Scotland at Edinburgh under its Royal Charter of Incorporation in 1787. For a detailed consideration of the society, and an inventory of its Gaelic-related papers, see Ronald Black, "The Gaelic Academy: The Cultural Commitment of theHighland Society of Scotland" (1986) XIV SGS, pt. II, 1-38, and "The Gaelic Academy: Appendix: The Ingliston Papers" (1988) XV SGS 103-121. The inventory compiled by Mr. Black reveals no correspondence from John MacLean, nor any reference to his manuscript or his request for assistance in publication. The request would have been made sometime between 1815, the year of the poet's tour of the West Highlands during which much of the poetry was collected, and 1818, the year in which he managed to publish his collection. Although the Society's main preoccupation at this time was the publication of a Gaelic Dictionary, it had subsidised Gaelic publishing, and this may explain why John Maclean made his request in the first place. It seems that, if his request had been made to the Society and if they had decided not to provide him with any assistance, he would have been in good company, as a number of other valuable projects were not provided with assistance: see Black, "The Gaelic Academy", esp. at pp. 13-15.

Line Annotations:

1: ONG has "Dhunèudainn". **2:** ONG has "a sgeula"; as it the object of the verbal noun "ag ùrachadh", "sgeula" is correctly in a genitive form. In many dialects, "sgeul", "story", is a feminine noun, and would require the feminine genitive article "na". The "a" could be interpreted as the masculine genitive article "an", which is possible, as "sgeul" is apparently a masculine noun in certain dialects, and may be in the poet's dialect. If so, the "n" appears to have been dropped, which would not be uncommon in this dialect, and this is therefore marked with an apostrophe. **3:** ONG has "chuairt", without the article. It is likely that the feminine nominative article "a'", which accompanies aspiration of the noun, is implied, but is elided by the preceding vowel, and this elision is marked with an apostrophe. **4:** The relative pronoun "a" is implied before "bha", but would be elided because of the preceding vowel; its presence is marked with an apostrophe. **5:** ONG has "éisdidh"; given the preceding conjunction, "nan", this is likely intended to be the conditional "éisdeadh". ONG also has "duibh"; while the standard Gaelic would be "dhuibh", "to them", this is likely indicative of the poet's dialect, and is retained. **8:** Maclean Sinclair versions begin with this line, but replace it completely with "An ceanna-bhaile na rioghachd seo". The "Comunn Gàidhealach Rìoghail", or "Royal Highland Society" to which the poet is referring is, as noted above, likely the Highland Society of Scotland in Edinburgh, and would be referred to as "Royal" by virtue of its Royal charter, received in 1787. **9:** Maclean Sinclair versions replace "Daoine uaisle . . ." with "Tha uaislean . . .". **10:** Maclean Sinclair versions replace "an", "their", with "ar", "our". Given its relation to the preceding line, it should commence with the relative pronoun "A", although this is omitted in ONG. It is likely implied by the poet, and this is indicated with an apostrophe before "Tha", as it was in Maclean Sinclair versions. **11:** Maclean Sinclair versions replace the passive "dìobrar" with the future "dìobair". **14:** ONG has "an" rather than "'san", as in the Maclean Sinclair versions, but this

emendation seems appropriate, given the context, which seems to require "in which"/"anns an", which is contracted to "'san". **15:** Maclean Sinclair versions replace "do" with the standard "de", "of"; "do" is retained, as it is indicative of the poet's dialect. **16:** Maclean Sinclair versions almost totally replace this line, and read "Na 'n cuirinn cruinn an sgrìobhainnean". While "b'urrainn *dhomh*" is standard, "b'urrainn *mi*" is retained, as it is a correct form in many dialects. **17:** Maclean Sinclair versions replace "Rud don chànain ghasta . . ." with "Na h-òrain bhlasda, . . .". ONG has "phrìosail"; while "phrìseil" would be standard, the original has been retained, as indicative of dialect. While "de 'n", "of the" is meant by the poet, "de" is commonly replaced by "do" in his dialect. Also, the contraction "don" is commonly used in this dialect, rather than the standard "dhan". **18:** Maclean Sinclair versions read "'A dh' fhàg na bàird mar dhìleab dhuinn". **19:** Maclean Sinclair versions replace this line with "'S a gheibhear anns na crìochaibh seo". ONG has "brìoghail", rather than the more common "brìghmhor", and this is reflective of the poet's dialect. **20:** ONG has "d' thugte"; Maclean Sinclair versions have "tugteadh". The dialectical "domh", which appears in ONG, is preferred to the standard "dhomh" of the Maclean Sinclair versions. **21:** Maclean Sinclair versions replace this line with "Bho 'n chomunn rìoghail, chòir ud". **22:** Maclean Sinclair versions replace this line with "Ged sgrìobh mi sios na h-ealaidhean". **24:** ONG has "carraid", for "càraid", but it is clear from the context that "strife", "carraid" is not intended. **25:** ONG has "na shealladh"; the relative article "a", is implied, and would be elided by the preceding vowel, and this is marked with an apostrophe. **26:** ONG has "d' thug" for "tug". **27:** Maclean Sinclair versions replace "'S e . . ." with "'S ann . . .". **29:** ONG has "Gur th' ann . . .", which Maclean Sinclair interprets, correctly in my view, as "Gur' h-ann . . .". ONG has "inndraich", which Maclean Sinclair interprets, again correctly, I think, as "ionndraich", a form of "ionndrainnn", "to miss, to long for", in some dialects. **30:** ONG has "ga 'n", which Maclean Sinclair interprets, correctly in my view, as "dhan". The spelling used by the poet likely reflects the pronunciation in his dialect, but in this case, the standard spelling is preferred, as "gan" may cause confusion with the pronoun object of the verbal noun "'gan". **31:** Maclean Sinclair versions replace this line with "'S a sheasadh 'n àm na teanntachd mi". **33:** ONG has "iomachd", which Maclean Sinclair interprets, correctly in my view, as "imeachd". While thepoet's rendering of theis verbal noun likely reflects the pronunciation in his dialect, there is generally no marked slenderisation of the consonant "m" in most dialects of standard Gaelic, in spite of the standard spelling, which is used here. **34:** ONG has "Gad". **35:** The Colonel referred to here isAlexander, the 15th Laird of Coll, who was for some years Lieutenant-Colonel of the Breadalbane Fencible regiment: "A Seneachie", *An Historical and Genealogical Account of the Clan Maclean* (London: Smith, Elder and Co., 1838), at p. 313. **37:** ONG simply has "Chainnt"; the article, "A'", is clearly implied, and is marked with an apostrophe. The reference seems to be to the proverb "MacLeòid no 'n t-airgead". Alexander Nicolson explains that MacLeod of MacLeod was once on a visit to Edinburgh, and was suddenly called away, leaving his servant behind him, without any money. The servant now found that nothing but MacLeod's note, or hard cash, would avail him anywhere. See Alexander Nicolson, *Gaelic Proverbs and Familiar Phrases* (Edinburgh: Birlinn, 2003), p. 345. **36-39:** The historical events adverted in these lines are not clear. The Coll family did seem to have a close relationship with the MacLeods of Talisker; Donald, the 10th Laird, was married to a daughter of Sir Rory MacLeod of Talisker, Hugh, the 13th Laird, was married to Janette, the eldest daughter of MacLeod of Talisker, and Catherine, the third child of Alexander, the 15th Laird, was married to a

Major MacLeod of Talisker: A Seneachie, *The Clan Maclean*, 310, 312, and 314. **43:** Maclean Sinclair replaces "Rìoghachdsa", in ONG, with "rioghachd seo". The reference is likely to the Laird's estate, rather than to Britain--see the comment on line 46--and therefore "kingdom is being used figuratively; thus, the lower case is used. As noted elsewhere, in both ONG and the MSS, the poet usually capitalised general references to the Laird of Coll's territories, and this adds further support to this interpretation. **45:** In ONG, the poet capitalises the initial letter in "dùthaich", as he tends to do when making general reference to the Laird of Coll's country. ONG also has "iomaich" for "imich"; as with "imeachd" in line 33, this is probably dialectical, but has been rendered here in the standard, rather than the dialectical form, for the reasons given at line 33. **46:** In ONG, the poet uses "a chuir", which Maclean Sinclair interprets as the infinitive "a chur" rather than the past tense of the verb after a relative pronoun; this is, in my view, a correct interpretation, given that there is no obvious subject, but the poet's spelling has been retained, as this is reflective of his dialect, in which the verbal noun and infinitive, "a'cur" and "a chur", are slenderised. Maclean Sinclair versions have "aitribh" for "aitreabh". Also, ONG simply reads "Gu aitreabh . . .", but the third person singular male possessive pronoun, "a", "his", is clearly implied; it is elided by the preceding vowel (or subsumed into the subsequent vowel), and this is marked with an apostrophe. Finally, ONG reads "orra", which Maclean Sinclair interprets as "oirre"; as noted elsewhere, the poet usually renders "oirre" as "orra", and it is likely that he intended this here. The reference is apparently to "rìoghachdsa", or "dùthaich", both of which are feminine nouns, rather than "aitreabh", a masculine one. The "kingdom" which the Laird of Coll would be protecting is likely his own territories, rather than the UK as a whole. **47:** Maclean Sinclair versions replace "'Nuair 'thig e Chola . . ." with "Théid mi a null is . . .". ONG has "'N uair thig . . ."; the relative pronoun "a" is clearly implied, but not voiced, and this is marked with an apostrophe. ONG also has " . . . thig e Chola . . ."; it is likely that "a", "to", is implied here "to Coll", but that the preceding vowel causes elision, and this is also marked with an apostrophe. **49:** Maclean Sinclair versions replace "Gun dol . . ." with "Théid i . . .". ONG simply has "le chòmhnaidh"; the third person singular male possessive pronoun, "a", "his", which causes aspiration, is clearly implied, but elision is caused by the preceding vowel, and this is marked with an apostrophe. **50:** Maclean Sinclair versions replace "'Na" with "Gu". ONG simply has "Na", but this seems to be a contraction of "ann a", "in his", and this is marked by the insertion of the apostrophe. **51:** ONG simply has "A chùirt"; "A" could be interpreted as the article before a feminine noun, in which case an apostrophe is needed, or as the third person singular male possessive pronoun "his", in which case no apostrophe would be needed. ONG has "an cluinnte"; the "an appears to be a contration of "ann an", and this is marked with an apostrophe. Finally, ONG has no article before "phìobaireachd", but the aspiration of this feminine noun clearly implies one, and the article "a'" would be elided by the preceding vowel, so this is also marked with an apostrophe. **52:** The relative article, "a", is omitted in both ONG and Maclean Sinclair versions, but is required, and is marked here with an apostrophe. **53:** Maclean Sinclair versions read "'Nan suidhe aig bòrd na dìnnearach". The "'n" in ONG is interpreted as a contraction of the third person plural possessive pronoun "an", not the article, which would be "na", as in Maclean Sinclair versions. **54:** ONG has "òl an fhion aca"; given the genitive relationship with "òl", "drinking", "fion", a masculine noun, should be in its genitive form, "fiona"; this would be unpronounced, by virtue of the subsequent stressed vowel in "aca", and the dropping of the "a" in "fiona" is therefore marked with an apostrophe. **55:** ONG has "dhoibh". **56:** In

Maclean Sinclair versions, "'S" is inserted before "Gach" at the beginning of the line, and "bhlasta" is rendered as "bhlaisde". **57:** Maclean Sinclair versions replace "'Ga chuir . . ." with "A' dol . . .". ONG has "an gnìomh"; I interpret the "an" as a contraction of "ann an", rather than as an article, which would not be permissible, given the genitive relationship of "òir-cheard" to "gnìomh", and so this contraction is marked with an apostrophe. **58:** Maclean Sinclair versions have the standard "mu" for the dialectical "ma", and the standard "toirbheairteach" for "toirbheartach", which reflects the poet's dialect. **59:** Maclean Sinclair versions read "Gun airc, gun seòrsa 'teirgsinn ann". **60:** Maclean Sinclair versions read "Gach aon bhiodh sunndach, seanachasach", thereby changing the reference in this line from the drinks to the company. The line implies a knowledge by the poet himself of a wide range of drinks, and one wonders whether Maclean sinclair was trying to play this down. In ONG, "dh'fhaotainn" should be preceded by the relative pronoun "a", which would be elided by the preceding vowel, and this is marked with an apostrophe. **61:** ONG has "dreapail" for the standard "dripeil"; while this likely indicates the pronounciation in the poet's dialect, in many dialects the "p" is not slenderised in speech, and so the standard written form is retained here. **62:** In Maclean Sinclair versions, this line reads "Gach nì bhiodh mar-a b' iomchaidh dhaibh". **63:** In Maclean Sinclair versions, "Anns an . . ." is contracted to "'S an . . .". **64:** In ONG, the article before "chuirm" is omitted, but the aspiration of this feminine noun clearly implies the article "a'"; it would be elided by the preceding vowel, and this is makred with an apostrophe. **66:** Maclean Sinclair versions replace "Gum b' . . ." with "Gur h- . . .", and "e" with "iad". The reference to visitors could be to the most famous visitors to the Coll family, Samuel Johnson and James Boswell, who spent a few days on Coll in early October, 1773, and had the company of Donald Maclean, "young Coll", elder brother of Alexander, the 15th Laird of Coll, and until his death in 1774, the heir to the Coll estate. Johnson and Boswell referred at length to both the island and young Coll in their accounto fo their tour: see Samuel Johnson and James Boswell, *A Journey to the Western Islands of Scotland* and *The Journal of a Tour to the Hebrides* (Penguin: London, 1984), edited and annotated by Peter Levi, especially at pp. 119-132, and pp. 329-352. **68:** Maclean Sinclair versions read "Gur tric daoin' uaisle urramach". ONG has "mòr", but as it qualifies a plural noun, "Daoin' uaisle", it should be "mòra"; it is likely that it is elided with the following vowel, and this is therefore marked with an apostrophe. **69:** Maclean Sinclair versions read "Air chuairt a' fuireach còmhla ris". **71:** Maclean Sinclair versions replace "Gu" with "'Na". ONG has "Go thalla". The third person singular masculine possessive pronoun "a", "his", is implied by the aspiration of "talla", and this is marked with an apostrophe. While "Go" likely reflects the poet's dialect, the vowel is unstressed, and therefore the standard spelling "Gu" is retained here. **74:** The relative pronoun "a" is required before "thrialladh"; it is likely not pronounced in the poet's dialect, but it is indicated by the insertion of the apostrophe. **75:** ONG simply has "Bhi", but the particle "a" would precede it, and this is marked with an apostrophe. **76:** Maclean sinclair versions replace "Bu phàilt' . . ." with "'S gur pailt' . . .", and "stiùbhartan" with "stiùbhartaibh". ONG has "Bo", which likely reflects the poet's dialect, but as this is an unstressed vowel, the standard "Bu" is used. The third person singular masculine possessive pronoun, "a", "his", seems implied before "stiùbhartan", and would be elided by the preceding vowel; it is indicated here with an apostrophe. **79:** Maclean Sinclair versions have "'Chur rùm na cuirm an òrdagh". ONG simply has "Na", but this appears to be a contraction of "Ann a", "in his", and therefore this is indicated by the apostrophe. **80:** In Maclean Sinclair versions, this line and line 81 are reversed. Maclean Sinclair replaces "bu

lìonmhor" with "'an lìonmhor". **81:** In Maclean Sinclair versions, this line reads "Gach nì tha 'ghnàth gun uireasbhuidh". **82:** The poet refers to renovations to the Laird of Coll's castle at Breachachadh, "bhon uiridh", "the year before last". "Bhon uiridh" should be "a' bhon uiridh", but the article, "a'" would be elided by the preceding vowel, and this is marked with an apostrophe. The author has been unable to determine the date of these renovations; this information would certainly help to date the poem.

Alternative Versions: In the Maclean Sinclair versions, there are, in addition to the many emendations and other changes referred to in the line annotations, a number of changes to the overall structure of the poem. In the MacLean Sinclair versions, the following changes are made: (1) the entire first verse (lines 1-7) is omitted; (2) the entire verse 6 (lines 36-42) is omitted; (3) the present verse 7 (lines 43-49) comes at the end of the poem, after the present final verse, although the order of the lines, other than lines one, six and seven of the verse, are changed, so that line four of this verse is moved to line two, and line five is moved to line four, lines two and three of the present verse seven (lines 44 and 45) are omitted, and Maclean Sinclair added one line, line five, which did not appear in ONG or the MSS; (4) lines three, four, six and seven of the present verse 8 (lines 52, 53, 56 and 57) form lines one, two, five and six of another verse, verse six in Maclean Sinclair versions, to which Maclean Sinclair added three lines which did not appear in ONG or the MSS; (5) lines one, three, six and seven of present verse 10 (lines 65, 67, 70 and 71) are omitted in Maclean Sinclair versions, and the other three lines of the present verse 10 form the final three lines of a different verse, verse eight in Maclean Sinclair versions, which are preceded by four lines which do not appear in ONG or the MSS; and (6) lines two, three, four, six and seven of present verse 11 (lines 73, 74, 75, 77 and 78) are omitted from Maclean Sinclair versions, and the other three lines of the present verse 11 again form the final three lines of a different verse, verse five in Maclean Sinclair versions, which are again preceded by four lines which do not appear in ONG or the MSS. With these changes and omissions, the Maclean Sinclair versions contain 71 lines.

6. Do Thighearna Chola

Tune: "Gur h-e mise th' air mo chràdh"; note that the last line of each verse is repeated, although this has not been shown in the edited version.
No. of lines: 114
Sources: ONG, p. 72, MG15G/2/1, p. 39, CC1, p. 23, CC2, p. 29
Date: Uncertain.
Context: A panegyric composed in praise of Alexander MacLean, 15th MacLean of Coll, on the occasion of the chief's serious injury from a fall, taken while away in Skye. The preface in CC2 is similar to that in ONG, which provides: "Òran do dh' Alastair MacGilleain, Tighearna Chola, air dha dol air chuairt do 'n Eilean Sgiathanach, agus e bhi coiseachd ann feadh na h-oidhche, agus thuit e le creagan ard gu 'n fhios da leis an doracha, a chuir cunnart bais air"/"A song to Alasdair MacLean, the Laird of Colll, after his having gone on a tour to the Isle of Skye, and while walking throughout the night, he fell from a high cliff, which he did not see because of the darkness, and which left him in danger of dying." The poem was probably composed shortly after these events, but it has not been possible to date them.

Line Annotations:

1: Both ONG and Maclean Sinclair versions have "naigheachd" for "naidheachd". **2:** ONG has "bu" for "bu"; although this is indicative of the poet's dialect, the vowel is in any case unstressed, and therefore the standard form is used. **3:** ONG has "Gad". **5:** Maclean Sinclair versions replace "Nuair . . ." with "'S ann . . .". **6:** Maclean Sinclair versions change the past tense dependent form "robh" to the present "bheil". ONG has "Gu robh . . .", and although "gun" is standard, the final consonant is not pronounced in the poet's dialect, and is therefore omitted here but marked with an apostrophe. **7:** ONG has "na luighe . . .". **10:** ONG has "Bho na . . .". **12:** ONG has "e bhi"; the relative pronoun "a" is required before the infinitive "bhith", but would be elided by the preceding vowel, and this is marked with an apostrophe. **14:** Maclean Sinclair versions replace "bho 'n" in ONG with "o 'n", and omit the final "e" in "teachdaire", marking it with an apostrophe. **15:** Maclean Sinclair versions omit "Seo" at the start of this line, and insert "ealamh" after "thàinig". ONG omits the relative pronoun "a" which seems to be implied after "Seo", and this is marked with an apostrophe before "thàinig". **16:** Maclean Sinclair versions replace "Rinn a leagadh . . ." with "'Us a leag e . . .". ONG omits the relative pronoun "a" which seems to be implied before "Rinn", and this is marked with an apostrophe. **17:** ONG has "Le na stalacanan"; Maclean Sinclair versions correct by changing "Le" to "leis", and interpret "stalacanan" to mean "stallachan", "precipices", which, given the context, seems to be correct. **18:** Maclean Sinclair versions read "'Cur nan saighdean an sàs gu geur ann". In ONG, "Chuir" appears to be the past tense, and therefore the relative pronoun, "a", should precede it; this is marked with an apostrophe. ONG has "ann t-saighead"; "ann" should likely be interpreted as the article, "an", rather than the preposition "ann", "in", as the preposition would either require the definite article "an" after it or, if indefinite, the "t" prefix would not be necessary. The "t" prefix is consistent with the idea that "ann" in ONG is the article "an", as "saighead", "arrow", is feminine. **19:** Maclean Sinclair versions replace "sin" with "e". **20:** Maclean Sinclair versions replace "'san" with "'s gach". **21:** Maclean Sinclair versions replace "i" with "iad". **22:** Maclean Sinclair versions insert "'Us" at the start of this line. ONG has "na ghualann", but as "gualann", "shoulder" is feminine, it should be slenderised, as in Maclean Sinclair versions. In ONG, "na" appears to be the contraction of "ann a", "in his", rather than the plural nominative article, which would require a different form of the nouns. Because it is a contraction, this is marked by the apostrophe, "'na". **23:** Maclean Sinclair versions insert "'S" at the start of this line. **26:** "As" appears to be a contraction of "anns", and this is indicated with the apostrophe, "A's". ONG has "air cinneach", which Maclean Sinclair versions interpret as "ar cinneadh", "our kindred". While this interpretation of "air" seems correct, "cinneach", meaning "nation" or "surname", could be intended; alternatively, the spelling in ONG may simply reflect the pronunciation of "cinneadh" in the poet's dialect. **27:** Maclean Sinclair versions read "Mur a h-éirich . . .". ONG has "Mar a h-èireadh . . .". "Mar a" appears to be dialectical for "Mura". I interpret "h-èireadh" as the conditional "dh'èireadh", which is consistent with "Mara/Mura". **29:** Maclean Sinclair replaces "Cò dhiubh" with "Cò a . . .". The relative pronoun "a" is required, but would be elided by the preceding vowel sound, and is therefore marked with an apostrophe. In ONG, the poet has "air", which Maclean Sinclair interprets, correctly in my view, as "ar", "our". **30:** ONG has "Gad". Maclean Sinclair versions replace "le càch" with "gach là". **32:** Maclean Sinclair versions replace "tùrsach" with "tùirseach"; although this is a standard form, "tùrsach" is retained, as it more accurately reflects the poet's dialect. **33:** Maclean Sinclair versions read "Ar cùl-taic

bidh 'g ar dìth". **34:** Maclean Sinclair versions replace "Nach robh . . ." with "Cha robh . . .", and have "r' a linn" for "ri linn" in ONG. While this is a correct interpretation of ONG, as the third person singular masculine possessive pronoun "a", "his", seems to be implied in ONG, it is likely that it does not appear in ONG because it would be elided by the preceding vowel, and this is marked with an apostrophe. **35:** Maclean Sinclair versions read "Dh' fhaodadh tàmailt 'toirt dhuinn". The relative pronoun "A" is omitted in ONG, and this is marked with an apostrophe. **36:** Maclean Sinclair versions read "Bho 'n 'bha esan na dhion mar sgèith dhuinn". **37:** Maclean Sinclair versions insert the article "'n" before "turas". **40:** ONG has "mo" for "mu"; although this likely reflects the pronunciation in the poet's dialect, this is in any case an unstressed vowel, and is left in the standard written form. **42:** The relative pronoun "A" is omitted in ONG, but is indicated here, as in the Maclean Sinclair versions, with an apostrophe. The poet capitalises "cinneadh" in ONG. Maclean sinclair has "mu dhèidhinn" for "ma dhèibhinn" in ONG; although this is an acceptable interpretation, in the poet's dialect, the third person singular masculine possessive pronoun "a", which is implied in Maclean sinclair, is probably pronounced, and the unstressed vowel in "mu" is likely elided, and this is marked with an apostrophe. **43:** ONG has "doibh". **47:** ONG reads "Bho na . . .", and indicates no article before "bheinn"; the article "a'" would be elided by the preceding vowel, and this is marked with an apostrophe. ONG has "bheinn", but "bheann" better suits the rhyme pattern that is suggested by the metre. **50:** ONG omits the relative pronoun "A" at the start of this line, and it is marked with an apostrophe. ONG has "fodh bonn"; "fodh" should aspirate "bonn". **51:** ONG has "da chom"; "da" is interpreted as "do a", with the unstressed vowel in "do" elided. **52:** ONG has "asdas gu 'n fhònn", and the meaning of "asdas" is not clear. I have interpreted this as "asta", "out of them/from them"; the "s" may indicate the emphatic, "asta-san". While "astas", meaning a spear or javelin or missile weapon, may be a possibility, this makes less sense, given the context, that "asta". **54:** ONG has "èididh". It is unlikely that this is the noun "èideadh", "clothing, apparel, armour", because it is a masculine noun, and the preposition "air" would not cause slenderisation. The word "èitidh" is the same as "eige" in some dialects, which means "web", as in weaving, or cloth, and this may be the meaning here; the reference may be that the subject of the poem was being carried on a web of cloth being used as a stretcher. **58:** Maclean Sinclair versions read "Mar na Muilich nach beò". The reference in ONG to "an t-Olla MacEòin" is almost certainly to Dr. Samuel Johnson who, as noted in the note to line 66 in Poem 5, had visited the Highlands and Islands in 1773 and had spent some time in Coll. The reference in Maclean Sinclair versions is, as Maclean Sinclair himself made clear in a footnote in CC1, to the Beaton family of physicians; the note in CC2 provides: "Bha Clann Bheathain an Eilein Mhuilich 'nan leighean ainmeil. Sgrìobh iad mu'n cùngaidhean an Gàidhlig is an Laideann"/"The Beaton clan of the Isle of Mull were famous doctors. The wrote about medicines in Gaelic and Latin". The Beatons were active from the fourteenth to the eighteenth century, some of whom resided in Dervaig, Mull: see John Bannerman, *The Beatons: A Medical Kindred in the Classical Gaelic Tradition* (Edinburgh: John Donald, 1998). Indeed, the earliest Beaton to act as a physician to the MacLeans of Duart was James Beaton, "an t-Ollamh mòr"/"The great doctor": see Bannerman at 49. In this context, Maclean Sinclair's rewriting of this line is most interesting. Perhaps he considered his grandfather's preference in ONG for the great English lexicographer as a model of learning to be inappropriate, given Dr. Johnson's at times condescending, though not altogether unsympathetic views of the Gaels, and particularly when there were

indigenous models of learning at hand, such as the Beatons. The relative pronoun "a" before "bha" was omitted in ONG, and is marked with an apostrophe. **59:** ONG has "da leòin"; "da" is interpreted here as "do a", with the unstressed vowel in "do" being elided, and this is marked with an apostrophe. ONG has "dorinn". **60:** ONG again has "da" for "d' a", and this is changed for the reasons described in the note to line 59. **62:** The particle "a" in the infinitive "bhith" was omitted in ONG; this is likely because it would have been elided by the preceding vowel, but this is marked with an apostrophe. **63:** "Dh' fhuasgaileadh" is the conditional in standard Gaelic, but the ONG spelling is retained, as indicative of the pronunciation in the poet's dialect. **64:** Maclean Sinclair versions replace "don" with "de 'n", "of the"; "do" commonly replaces "de" in the poet's dialect, and therefore "don" is retained. **67:** ONG has "Cha bi"; this could not be the future tense of "to be", which would be "cha bhi", and must therefore be the negative past/conditional of the copula. No article precedes "choille" in ONG, but the aspiration of this feminine noun implies the article; it would be elided by the preceding vowel, and this is marked with an apostrophe. **69:** "As" in ONG may be interpreted here as "out of", "às". **71:** In ONG, "cuid" is simply aspirated, implying that it is preceded by either the article "a'" or the third person singular male possessive pronoun, "a", "his", which is more likely, given the context. It would be elided by the preceding vowel, but is marked with an apostrophe. ONG has "an teinn"; I interpret the "an" as a contraction of "ann an", "in", and indicate this with an apostrophe. **72:** ONG has "Mar tig", which I interpret as the conjunction "mur", "if not", as it is pronounced in the poet's dialect. The relative pronoun "a" would, however, be required, and this is indicated with an apostrophe. ONG also has "ais binn"; "ais", the adverb "backwards" or "back", is clearly inappropriate here, and it is likely that the poet simply misspelled the superlative "as". **73:** Maclean Sinclair versions read "Bu tu 'n t-uachdaran gasd'". The final vowel in "gasta" does not appear in ONG; this is presumably to preserve the end-rhyme pattern, and is marked with an apostrophe. **74:** Maclean Sinclair versions replace "gu" with "thu". The ONG spelling "riasanta" is preferred to the standard "reusanta", used by Maclean Sinclair, as it is indicative of the poet's dialect. ONG omits the relative pronoun "A" which should precede "bha" at the start of the line, and it is indicated with an apostrophe. **75:** ONG has "d' thug" for "tug". **76:** The final vowel in "aca" does not appear in ONG; this is also presumably to preserve the end-rhyme pattern, and is marked with an apostrophe. **78:** "Èirig" was an old celtic burden which was apparently still being collected in the poet's time. **79:** "Dàil" is also a legal term, and was a temporary relief from the payment of a rent or other obligation. **84:** ONG has "na 'n", which I interpret as the contraction of "ann an", "in their", and therefore render it as "'nan". **85:** ONG omits the relative pronoun "a", which is required before "tha", and this is marked with an apostrophe. **86:** ONG has "Bho na", which I interpret as "Bhon a". **88:** ONG omits the "n" in "Gun"; this is likely dialectical, and the omission is marked with an apostrophe. **89:** ONG has "ann a . . ."; given that "cnoc" is in a genitive relationship with "fiaradh", "fiaradh" should be preceded by the indefinite "ann am", "in". The omission of the "m" in "am" is likely dialectical, and this is marked with an apostrophe. "Cnoic" appears in ONG and is the genitive singular in some dialects, including apparently the poet's, and is therefore preferred to the standard "cnuic". **91:** In ONG, the poet capitalises "dùthaich", which is his normal practice when referring in a general way to the Laird of Coll's lands or possessions. **93:** ONG has "Bho na", which I interpret as "Bhon a". **94:** Maclean Sinclair versions insert "'S" at the start of this line. **95:** Maclean Sinclair versions have ". . . thu ni 's . . ." for ". . . e na 's . . .". **96:** The infinitive "thighinn" requires the particle "a" to precede it; it is omitted in

ONG, likely because the preceding vowel would elide it, and this is marked with an apostrophe. Likewise, the context suggest that reference is being made to the Laird's place, and therefore that "a", "his" is implied before "àite". It would be elided by the preceding vowel, and this is marked with an apostrophe before "àite". **97:** Given the lack of a subject and presence of the genitive article, "na", "Chuir" is interpreted as being the infinitive; the slenderisation of the infinitive, "chur", is normal in the poet's dialect. If "Chuir" is the infinitive, the particle "A" would be required, and this is indicated with an apostrophe. Commonly, "aitreabh" is a masculine noun, but the use of the female genitive article "na" suggests that it is feminine in the poet's dialect; if so, the noun should be slenderised, and ONG has "na h-aitreabh". **98:** ONG has "na stòr"; "stòr" is clearly in a genitive relationhship with "teaghlach", and as "stòr", "treasure", is commonly a masculine noun, the article "na", which is the genitive feminine singular article, creates some confusion. It is possible that "stòr" is also feminine in the poet's dialect, but if this were the case, it would be slenderised, "stòir". In my view, the better interpretation is that "stòr" is the genitive plural "of the treasures/riches", which makes sense in the context, and that the final "n" in the genitive plural article "nan" is simply not pronounced, which is common in many dialects. This is marked with an apostrophe. **99:** ONG has "Na 'n", which I have interpreted as the genitive plural article; the noun, "clach", appears to be in a genitive relationship with "teaghlach" in the preceding line. **101:** ONG has "òg"; given that the noun which it qualifies is plural, this should be the plural, "òga". The omission of the final vowel is presumably to preserve the end-rhyme pattern, and is marked with an apostrophe. **102:** ONG has "mu 'n"; his is likely intended to be the conjunction "mun". **103:** Maclean Sinclair versions have "Tì" for "Rìgh". **104:** Maclean Sinclair versions read "A tha riaghladh gach nì". **105:** Maclean Sinclair versions read "Gu 'n tig ath-sgeul 'bhios binn". ONG has "d' thig" for "tig". **106:** Maclean Sinclair versions read "'Us gu 'm faic sinn a-rìsd". ONG omits the particle "a" in "a-rithist" and uses "rist". The particle would be elided by the preceding vowel, and this is marked by an apostrophe. "Rithist" is left as a monosyllable with a long vowel, "rìst", partly because this may reflect pronunciation in the poet's dialect, and partly because it is consistent with the rhyming pattern of monosyllabic words ending all lines in a verse but the final line. **107:** ONG has "gu 'n", which Maclean Sinclair interprets, correctly in my view, as "gun", "without". **108:** Maclean Sinclair versions replace this line with "Mar bu mhiann leinn 'n ad thìr fhéin thu". ONG has "sa 'n"; this is likely a contraction of "anns an", and this is indicated with the apostrophe. **111:** ONG has "n"; from the context, this appears to be a contraction of "ann an", and this contraction is marked with an apostrophe. **114:** ONG has "Na 'm", which is interpreted as "If", "Nam".

Alternative Versions: In the Maclean Sinclair versions, there are, in addition to the many emendations and other changes referred to in the line annotations, a number of changes to the overall structure of the poem. In the MacLean Sinclair versions, the following changes are made: (1) verses 2 (lines 6-12), 8 (lines 43-48), 9 (lines 49-54), 12 through 17 (lines 67-101) (except lines 73 and 74 in verse 13 and lines 94 and 95, in verse 16), and 19 (lines 109-114) are omitted; (2) a verse is added after verse 11 in which lines lines 94 and 95 are included as the fourth and fifth lines in the verse, but which includes four other lines which do not appear in ONG; and (3) a second verse is added after verse 11 in which lines 73 and 74 are included as the first and second lines in the verse, but which includes four other lines which do not appear in

ONG. With these changes and omissions, the Maclean Sinclair versions contain 77 lines.

7. Do Thighearna Òg Chola

Tune: "Ged a dh'fhàg thu ri port mi"
No. of lines: 144
Sources: ONG, p. 77, MG15G/2/1, p. 44, CC1, p. 26, CC2, p. 32,
Date: Likely in 1814, based on the context.
Context: The introductions to this poem in CC1 and CC2, in ONG and in the MSS all indicate that it was composed upon the poet hearing the Hugh MacLean, eldest son of Alexander, the 15th MacLean of Coll and heir to the estate (and ultimately the 16th MacLean of Coll), had married. Hugh MacLean married twice, first in 1814 to Jannet, the daughter of James Dennistoun of Colgrain, esq., by whom he had four daughters, and then in 1825, to Jane Robertson, of Edinburgh, by whom he had four sons and two daughters: see J. P. MacLean, *A History of the Clan MacLean* (Cincinnati: Robert Clarke & Co., 1889), at pp. 291-292, and "A Seneachie", *An Historical and Genealogical Account of the Clan Maclean* (London: Smith, elder & Co., 1838), at pp. 315-316. As this poem appeared in ONG, which was published in 1818 (as well as in the MSS which the poet brought with him to Nova Scotia in 1819), it must have been made on the occasion of Hugh's first marriage in 1814. Verse 2 suggests that the wedding took place in Edinburgh, without much notice to Hugh's friends and relations.

Line Annotations:
1: The MSS has "S an diugh . . .". ONG and the Maclean Sinclair versions have "An diugh". While ONG is generally preferred to the MSS version, for the reasons set out in chapter four, the clause introduced in line 1 by the relative pronoun "a" suggests that the line should commence with the copula formation "'S ann an diugh", of which the "S an" in the MSS may be a contraction, and therefore this is marked with an apostrophe and rendered as "'San", but should likely be pronounced "Saun-diugh". **2:** Maclean Sinclair versions add the relative pronoun "A" to the beginning of this line. As this line introduces a clause which relates to line 1, this is an appropriate emendation, but it is marked here simply with an apostrophe, as the relative pronoun would likely be elided by the vowel at the end of line 1. **3:** Maclean Sinclair versions change "uachdaran òg" to "fhiùran òg". **4:** Maclean Sinclair versions read "Tha 'na oighre air an dùthaich ud thall". In ONG, the "d" in "dùthchadh" is capitalised, which is the poet's practice when making general reference to the Laird of Coll's territories or estate; "dùthchadh" is preferred to the standard genitive form, "dùthcha", as it is reflective of the poet's dialect. **6:** Although "is urrainn *dhomh*" is standard, "is urrainn *mi*" is acceptable, as it is used in some dialects, including the poet's. Because "càinnt" is not aspirated, the "o 'n" which precedes it in ONG is interpreted as the contraction of "o an", "from their". **9:** Maclean Sinclair versions have "an éibhneis" for "seo thàinig". **10:** Maclean Sinclair versions replace this line with "'Thàinig uime á Dunéideann a nall". The relative pronoun "A" should precede "Thug" but was omitted in ONG, and is marked with an apostrophe. The "d' a" in ONG is interpreted as a contraction of "do a", "to his"; the unstressed vowel in "do" would in any case be elided by "a". **11:** Maclean Sinclair versions replace this line with "Gu 'n do cheangladh e 'm posadh ann". ONG has " chual" for "chuala", and as the final vowel

would be elided by the first vowel sound in "iad", this is marked with an apostrophe. ONG also has "gu 'n phòs"; as this is clearly a reference to an event which has occurred, this would be in the past tense, and would require the particle "do"--"gun do phòs". It is likely that the particle is omitted in order to maintain the rhythm of the line, and therefore a contracted version, "d'" has been added to this line. **13:** In Maclean Sinclair versions, this line and line 15 are reversed. Maclean Sinclair versions have "Gu 'n" for "Gu" in ONG; although correct, the omission of the"n" is dialectical, and this is marked with an apostrophe. Maclean Sinclair versions also have the standard "dha" for the dialectical "da". **14:** In Maclean Sinclair versions, this line and line 16 are reversed. Maclean Sinclair versions change "a chuir", which I interpret as the relative pronoun followed by the preterite, rather than an infinitive, to "a' cur", and aspirate the following plural noun "comhairlean", which in ONG appears to be the object of the verb. **16:** Maclean Sinclair versions read "'S do na cheile sin 'fhuair e air làimh". **17:** ONG has "ann 's an . . .". **18:** ONG omits the relative pronoun "A" at the beginning of the line; it is marked with an apostrophe. ONG has "armunn". **19:** ONG has "Ga 'n do rinneadh"; "Ga 'n" is likely indicative of the pronunciation of "Dhan", "To whom", in the poet's dialect. **22:** "Eòghan òg", "Young Hugh", is the subject of the poem. ONG simply has "ainm"; the third person singular masculine possessive pronoun "a", "his", seems to be implied here, and is marked with an apostrophe. **23:** ONG has "prìosail", instead of the standard "prìseil", and this is dialectical. **24:** ONG has "do", which is dialectical for "de", "of". According to some clan histories ("A Seneachie", *An Historical and Genealogical Acoount of the Clan Maclean*, (London: Smith, Elder and Co., 1838), at p. 306, and J. P. MacLean, *A History of the Clan MacLean* (Cincinnati: Robert Clarke & Co., 1889), at p. 283) and, based on this line, apparently the poet himself, Iain Garbh, ("Rugged John"), was the founder and first MacLean of Coll. According to both oral tradition current in Coll in the 1920s (see Eachann M. MacDhughaill, "Seann Eachdraidh Chollach", (1927-28) 34 *TGSI* 170 at p. 178) and the most recent--and definitive--history of the early MacLeans (Nicholas Maclean-Bristol, *Warriors and Priests: This History of the Clan MacLean 1300-1570* (Phantassie: Tuckwell, 1995), at pp. 190-191), Iain Garbh was the 2nd chief, although there is disagreement between MacDhughaill and Maclean-Bristol as to who was the first Maclean of Coll, and therefore who was Iain Garbh's father. In the oral tradition recounted by MacDhughaill, Lachlan Bronnach, chief of the MacLeans of Duart (and himself the son of Eachann Ruadh nan Cath, ("Red Hector of the Battles"), who fought and died at Harlaw in 1411) was considered to be the progenitor (MacDhughaill, at p. 178), and this is accepted by "A Seneachie" and by J. P. MacLean, who report that Iain Garbh was Lachlan Bronnach's son by Fionnaghal, daughter of MacLeod of Harris. However, Maclean-Bristol argues that it was another Lachlan, a son of Lachlan Lubanach (and brother or Eachann Ruadh nan Cath), born in about 1403, who was the first MacLean of Coll (Maclean-Bristol, at p. 33, 35). According to Maclean-Bristol, Iain Garbh's mother was Anna MacLeod, a daughter of William MacLeod, "Uilleam Clèireach", or "William the Clerk"), also a chief of the MacLeods of Harris.

Called Iain "Garbh" because of "his gigantic stature and great strength", he was also known as "Iain Teomachd",("Shrewd John") because of "his cunning and craft": J. P. MacLean, at p. 283. He was married to Isabella, daughter of Fraser of Lovat. He received from MacDonald, Lord of the Isles, a charter of the twenty pound lands of Coll and of eighteen merklands in Cuinish, Mull, shortly after the Battle of Inverlochy in 1431. He also received the six merklands of Rum from Ailean MacRuairidh, the Chief of the MacDonalds of Clanranald. Alexander, the 3rd Lord of

the Isles, granted him the twenty pound land of Lochiel, in Lochaber, and six merkland in Drimnin and Achalennon, Morvern (see both "A Seneachie" at p. 306 and J. P. MacLean, at p. 283). Both "A Seneachie" and J. P. MacLean note that he was "feared by his enemies and respected by his friends".

Iain Garbh was one of the great warrior chiefs of the West Highlands and Islands, and oral traditions concerning him survived in Coll certainly into the twentieth century. Such traditions would have been common in the poet's home island of Tiree, as well, during the time of his youth. After the death of his father, Iain Garbh's mother was remarried, to Roderick MacNeil, MacNeil of Barra. MacNeil was reputed to be the classic "evil stepfather", sending Iain Garbh to be raised on Barra, and setting up many of his own retinue on Coll. Iain Garbh reportedly escaped from his confinement, and heroically reclaimed Coll. For a good account of these oral traditions, see MacDhughaill, at pp. 178-201; see also Hector MacDougall, *Handbook to the Islands of Coll and Tiree* (Glasgow: Archibald Sinclair, 1937), at pp. 21-22, Maclean-Bristol, who provides a useful summary of the events and their historical background at pp. 37-41, as well as Ann MacKenzie, *Island Voices: Traditions of North Mull, Air Bilibh an t-Sluaigh* (Edinburgh: Birlinn, 2002), at p. 139, Fionn [Henry Whyte], "The Grizzly Lad's Leap (Leum a' Ghille Riabhaich)", (1899-1900), 8 *The Celtic Monthly* 174-175, John Gregorson Campbell, *Clan Traditions and Popular Tales* (London, 1895), Charles MacLean, *The Isle of Mull: Placenames, Meanings and Stories* (Dumfries: MacLean Publications, 1997), at 152. **25:** ONG simply reads "bha"; the relative pronoun "a" is required, and is marked with an apostrophe. **26:** Maclean Sinclair versions have "Bha iad . . .". The relative pronoun "A" is required at the beginning of the line, and this is marked with an apostrophe. **27:** Maclean Sinclair versions read "Bha iad iriosal, bàigheal". Again, the relative pronoun "A" is required at the beginning of the line, and is marked with an apostrophe. **28:** Maclean Sinclair versions have "Chumail" for "Chumadh". Again,the relative pronoun "A" is required at the beginning of the line, and is marked with an apostrophe. **29:** Maclean Sinclair versions read "'S bha iad . . .". The relative pronoun, "A", is required at the beginning of the line, and is marked with an apostrophe. **30:** Maclean Sinclair versions have "riuth'" for "ruibh". **31:** Maclean Sinclair versions replace this line with "Gu 'n do dh' aithnich Mac-Nèill sin". ONG has "bo" for "bu", and although this reflects the poet's dialect, as this is an unstressed vowel, the standard form has been used. ONG has "air", interpreted in the context as "ur", the second person plural possessive pronoun. **32:** Maclean Sinclair versions replace this line with "'N uair a thuit e 'san àraich le 'shluagh". ONG has "deanabh" for "deanadh", but from the context, the conditional form is clearly implied, and therefore "deanadh" is used. The "i", "her/it" being referred to is unclear, but it is likely that the reference is to "miothlachd". **33:** ONG has "diu"; the standard is "dhiubh", but "diubh" is used to indicate the poet's dialect. The Alastair being referred to is likely the subject of the poem, the 15th Laird of Coll; this interpretation is reinforced by the fact that the copula is in the present. **34:** The relative pronoun "A" is required at the beginning of this line, and is marked with an apostrophe. **35:** Given the past tense of the copula, the "Eòghan", "Hugh", and the "Eachann", "Hector", being referred to here are likely past Lairds of Coll. It is likely that the Hugh is the 13th Laird (rather than his youngest son, Hugh, or Hugh, the heir and future 16th Laird). The reference to Hector is more complex, as Hector was the name of the 4th, 5th and 11th Laird of Coll, although given that the poet seems to be working backward from the then-present incumbent, the reference is likely to the 11th Laird. J. P. MacLean provides a good description of Hector, the 11th Laird of Coll: pp. 288-

289. He tells us that the estate had been heavily indebted, tu that "through the judicious management of his father and himself, he left it free of all incumbrance, and a handsome fortune besides. He sought to improve the estate and bring it up to a high state". He apparently opposed the 1745 rising, not because he was opposed to the House of Stuart, but that he knew the rising would be futile. He also tells us that the last harper in Mull, and perhaps the last in the Highland, Murdoch MacDonald, was harper to Hector MacLean of Coll: He was brought up in the family, and "studied with Rory Dall, in Skye, and afterward in Ireland,and remained with MacLean, as harper, untile 1734 . . .". **36:** The reference to "Dòmhnall", "Donald", is likely to the 10th Laird, who died in April, 1729, aged 73: see J. P. MacLean, at p. 288. There were two Lachlans who were Lairds of Coll, the 6th and the 8th chief. Given that the poet seems to be working backwards from the incumbent, this reference is likely to the 8th Laird. He apparently served with distinction under General Mackay in Holland, and drowned in the Lochy, Lochaber, in August 1687. He was married to Marion, daughter of John Dubh Muideartach Captain of Claranald: "A Seneachie", at p. 310, and J. P. MacLean, at p. 287-288. **37:** Corpach is west of Fort William in Lochaber. This is the eastern limits of the Lochiel estate, and given that the Lairds of Coll had lands in Lochiel, this may be a reference to this mainland part of their territories. **40:** In ONG, "teaghlach" is capitalised; the poet tended to capitalise references to the Laird of Coll's family and territory. ONG has "na cosgas . . .". "Cosgas" appears to be in a genitive relationship with "teaghlach", and therefore the genitive plural article "nan" is required. It is likely that the final "n" in "nan" is not pronounced in the poet's dialect, as is common in many dialects, and this is marked with an apostrophe. **41:** ONG omits the relative pronoun "a" before "tha", as is required, and this is marked with an apostrophe. **42:** ONG has "Bho tighearnail . . .", which is difficult to interpret. In particular, if "tighearnail", "lordly", was qualifying "gnàths", "manners, habits, practices", it would follow it, not precede it. It is possible that the poet intended "Bo tighearnail", or "Bu tighearnail", which, as a copula makes somewhat more sense. **43:** ONG has "Ga robh . . .". This appears to be a contraction of "Aig", "'G", combined with the relative pronoun "an", the omission of the final consonant being dialectal, and this is marked accordingly. **45:** ONG has "Gu robh . . .". "Gun robh" is standard, but it is likely that the "n" is not pronounced in the poet's dialect, and this is marked with an apostrophe. The reference to MacNeil is probably to Roderick MacNeil of Barra, and to the events described in the note to line 24. MacNeil was, according to oral traditions of the island, displaced from Coll by Iain Garbh. **46:** ONG has "le shluagh". The aspiration to "shluagh" is likely due to an implied "a", "his", and this is marked by an apostrophe. **47:** ONG has "Ga"; this is likely "gad", dialectal for "ged", with the final consonant unsounded, and this is marked with an apostrophe. ONG has "da" for "dha", which reflects the poet's dialect. **48:** ONG has "gu uaigh". It is likely that the third person singular masculine possessive pronoun "a", "his", is implied, and this is marked with an apostrophe. **50:** Maclean Sinclair versions have "'N uair bha saoitheach . . .". ONG has "Gu robh"; the standard is "gun robh", but the "n" is not pronounced in the poet's dialect, and this is marked with an apostrophe. **51:** Maclean Sinclair versions omit the "'S" at the beginning of the line. **52:** ONG has "don Diuchd". It is not clear whether this means "do", "to/for", or "de" "of/from", but "de" is commonly rendered as "do" in the poet's dialect. The Duke being referred to is likely the Duke of Argyll, the chief of the Campbells of Argyll: see the note to line 56. In the context, it is likely that "don", "for the", is meant here. **53:** Maclean Sinclair versions read "Thàinig Eachunn na leum orr'". ONG has "Gu robh"; again, the omission of the "n" in "gun" is dialectical,

and is marked with an apostrophe. It is not clear which "Eachann", "Hector" is being referred to, although there were a number of Coll chieftains named Hector, including the 4th, 5th and 11th. **55:** ONG has “dhoibh”. Maclean Sinclair versions replace this line with "Thug e gròcadh gu cruaidh orr'". **56:** Maclean Sinclair versions replace this line with "'S dh' fheum iad tilleadh gun bhuannachd, gun chliù". The events referred to in this verse are not entirely clear, but MacDougall offers some guidance in a note to the last two lines of this verse which appeared in CC2 (Note IV), at pp. 278-279. He reports the following: "A thaobh ciall an ruinn so (sic), bha e air a ràdh gu'n d'thàinig comunn an Diùc gu ruige Colla (sic) a ghabhail còir air an luing so (sic). B'e, a réir coltais, mac a b'òige Thighearna Cholla a bha anns an "Eachann" a bha an so (sic) a bha air ùr thighinn a Dun-eideann. Is docha gu'n deach e ann a dh' aon ghnothach a dh'iarraidh còir a' chladaich mur an robh e aca roimhe sin. An uair a chuir e na daoine eile air cheann an gnothaich, bha e air a ràdh gu'n d'thubhairt aon dhiubh facail thàireil 'ga thaobh, mar so (sic): 'Falbhamaid; is ann mu dheireadh a rug i an t-oighre'. Leum i suas air Eachann is mhionnaich e am fear eile; 'Cha b'ann a mhic na g--- ach an toiseach," arsa esan. Leis nach robh na seann daoine ro chinnteach co an t-Eachann a bha an so (sic), chan eil e ro fhurasda a thuigsinn ciod làn bhrigh nam facal a bha eatorra. Is docha gur e Eachann Cholla, bràthair Alasdair Ruaidh a bha ann. Bha e anns an Arm is ràinig e àrd inbhe ann. Rinneadh Lieutenant-General dheth anns a' bhliadhna 1821, is chaochail e anns a' bhliadhna 1849. Cha robh an t-ainm "Eachann" air aon de chloinn Alasdair Ruaidh. Leis gu bheil am Bàrd ag ràdh, 'Chuala mis' iad ag innseadh,' is docha gu'n do thachair an long-bhristeadh ud na b' fhaide air ais na an t-àm anns an robh e féin (sic) beo, agus theagamh anns an àm anns am biodh Eachann Cholla 'na dhuine òg"/"Concerning the meaning of these lines, it was said that the Duke's company (i.e. the Duke of Argyll) to Coll to take ownership of this vessel. It was, apparently, the youngest son of the Laird of Coll who this "Hector" was that had just come from Edinburgh. Perhaps he had gone there solely to get the ownership of the shore, if they did not already have it. When he had sent the other men on business, it was said that one of them uttered insulting words concerning him: 'Let's go; finally, she's taken hold of the heir'. This enraged Hector and he cursed the other fellow; 'this was only, you son of a b---, only the beginning', he said. As the old folks were not too sure who this Hector was, it is not so easy to understand what is the full meaning of the exchange between them. It is possible that he was Hector of Coll, brother of Red Alastair [the 15th Laird of Coll]. He was in the Army and he reached a very high position in it. He was made Lieutenant-General in the year 1821, and he died in the year 1849. None of the children of Red alastair [the 15th Laird] was named Hector. As the poet says, 'I heard them saying', perhaps that shipwreck happened further back than at the time he [the poet] was himself alive, and perhaps at a time when Hector of Coll a young man. **58:** The reference is to the story in the Book of Esther in the Old Testament, at verse 3:1 to 9:27. Haman the Agagite was made chief minister of King Ahasuerus of Persia, who commanded all of his staff and courtiers to bow down before Haman. Mordecai, a Jew who served at the king's court, refused. Haman's anger at him turned to a hatred of the Jewish race, and obtain a royal decree to have the authorities slaughter all the Jews within the kingdom on a certain day. Mordecai instructed Queen Esther, the Jewish bride of King Ahasuerus, and Mordecai's neice, to intercede with the king. Meanwhile, Haman's wife and friends suggested that Haman should build a gallows and then persuade the king to have Mordecai hanged. However, the king came across an entry in the court records which indicated that Mordecai had foiled a plot on the king's life. The next day, the king asked Haman what he would do for a man he

wanted to honour. Haman, thinking that the king was speaking about Haman himself, suggested that such a man should be led through the city square on the king's horse, and dressed in royal robes with a crown on his head. To his dismay, Haman was told by the king to arange such honours for Mordecai. At dinner, Queen Esther accused Haman of organising a mass murder of the Jews. This enraged the king, who rushed from the room. Haman threw himself onto the couch and begged the queen to save his life. At that moment, the king returned, and thinking that Haman was assaulting the queen, ordered Haman to be seized. Haman was hung on the gallows which he had prepared for Mordecai. King Ahasuerus gave Haman's home to Queen Esther and appointed Mordecai Chief Minister in place of Haman: see also Joan Comay, *Who's Who in the Old Testament* (London: Routledge, 2002), at pp. 125-6, and W. R. F. Browning, *Oxford Dictionary of the Bible* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997). The reference also calls to mind the Gaelic proverb: "A' chroich a rinn Hàman do Mhordecai, fhuair a chnàmhan fhèin sìneadh oirre", roughly translated as "The misfortune he had planned for others became his own". See Iain MacIlleathainn agus Maletta NicPhàil, *Seanfhacail is Seanchas: Proverbs and Folklore in Gaelic and English* (Stornoway: John Maclean and Maletta MacPhail, 2005), p. 111. MacIlleathainn and NicPhàil note with respect to this proverb: "This saying is rooted in the biblical story related in the Book of Esther, in which the scheming Haman's plans are thwarted and they rebound on himself." **59:** ONG has "a Bhànrigh", and it is not clear whether the "a" is intended to be the female nominative article "a'" or the third person singular masculine possessive pronoun "a", "his". **60:** ONG omits the particle "a" before the infinitive "bhith", and this is marked with an apostrophe. Although "na" is the feminine singular article in the genitive, the noun "cùirt" does not appear to be in a genitive relationship with another noun, and therefore this is interpreted as the contraction of "ann ", "in her", and this is marked with an apostrophe. **61:** ONG omits the relative pronoun "a" before "bha", and this is marked with an apostrophe. It is not clear whether "Am" is the article, so that "Am beagan" means "The little", or is the contraction of "Ann am", so that "Am beagan" means "In a little (bit/while)". Arguably, the latter is more sensible in the context. It is not clear who are the people being referred to; those in the biblical story, or, the Campbell supporters in the previous verse. ONG has "iadsan", but the rhyming pattern that is suggested by the metre suggests that this would be pronounced "à-san", and this is marked accordingly. **62:** ONG has "a ghibht", and while it is clear that "gibht" is the English loan word "gift", it is not clear whether "a" is the feminine singular nominative article "a'" or the third person singular masculine possessive pronoun "a", "his"; in the context, either is possible, although it is likely that the former may be intended, because there is no obvious male referrent in the clause of which this line forms a part. ONG also has "air a phàrante nùll", and the "a" presents the same problem, although here it is even less clear what the poet intended. The issue is related to the next one, which is how "phàrante nùll" is to be interpreted. It may be that "parent" is a dative singular, "phàrant", and that the final "e" is actually the "a" in " a null", "over". It may also be that the poet was using the dative plural "pàrantan", and that the "n" in the noun, as well as the "a" in "a null" have been omitted because they would be elided in the combination "pàrantan a null". If this were the case, though, the "a" which precedes the noun "pàrantan" would have to be the third person singular masculine possessive, "a", "his", because the dative plural article would be "na". The refernce to "parent" has no obvious tie to the biblical story, where none of the main protagonists were in a parent-child relationship; for example, Queen Esther was Mordecai's neice. **63:** See the note to line 58 for the reference. ONG has "Bho

na . . ." for "Bhon a . . ." **64:** ONG uses "dhoibh" rather than the standard "dhaibh", and is preferred because it is reflective of the poet's dialect. **65:** Maclean Sinclair versions omit the "'S" at the beginning of this line, and add "seo" to the end of it, after "facail". **69:** Maclean Sinclair versions read "Chum iad aca 'n cuid fearainn". **70:** Maclean Sinclair versions read "'S rinn iad fhuasgladh an carraid nan lann". ONG has "a charaid", and it is not clear why "caraid", which Maclean Sinclair interprets, correctly, given the context, as "carraid", "conflict, strife", is aspirated. The "a" may be the third person singular masculine possessive, "his", but this would not be appropriate, given that the line forms a clause to an earlier statement in which the subject, Young Hugh's predecessors, was plural. I therefore accept Maclean Sinclair's emendation. **71:** Maclean Sinclair replaces this line with "Biodh an sliochd ann gu buadhach". **72:** Maclean Sinclair versions read "'Fhad 's bhios duilleach a' gluasad air crann". ONG has "Fad bhios . . .", and as the relative pronoun "a" would be required before the verb, this is marked with an apostrophe. **73:** Maclean Sinclair versions change "e" to "i", and replace "dhasan" with "gràidh dha". **74:** ONG has "Mas a . . .", which Maclean Sinclair interprets, correctly in my view, as "Ma 's e . . ." A relative pronoun would be required before the verb "ni", and this would likely be elided by the preceding vowel, but is marked with an apostrophe. **75:** Maclean Sinclair replaces this line with "E bhith fuathach air dòighean". ONG omits the particle "a" before the infinitive "thoirt"; this would likely be elided by the preceding vowel, and is marked with an apostrophe. **76:** Maclean Sinclair versions read "Cuid de dh' uachdaran òg tha 'dol ann". ONG omits the relative pronoun "a" before the verb "tha", and this is marked with an apostrophe. The particle "a" in the verbal noun "a' dol" is elided by the final vowel in "tha", and this is also marked with an apostrophe. **77:** Maclean Sinclair versions read "Bidh iad amaideach gòrach". The "an" which precedes "gòraich'" in ONG is interpreted as the third person plural possessive pronoun "an", "their", rather than the singular nominative article "an", as the noun "gòraiche", "foolishness", is feminine, and would take the feminie singular article "a'", not "an", and would be aspirated. **78:** Maclean Sinclair versions read "A' sior chluich . . .". **79:** Maclean Sinclair versions read "'S furasd' stòras a ghleidheadh". ONG omits the particle "a" before the infinitive "ghlèidheadh", and it would in any case be elided by the preceding vowel, but is marked here with an apostrophe. **80:** ONG has "an diaighidh". **82:** Maclean Sinclair versions have "Is" for "'S". **83:** ONG simply has "sàbhailte thuras"; as "sàbhailte", an adjective, would not cause the aspiration of "turas", and as the reference is clearly to Young Hugh's trip, the third person singular masculine possessive pronoun "a", "his", is clearly implied. It would be elided by the final e in the adjective, and it is marked with an apostrophe. **84:** Maclean Sinclair versions have "'s" for "is". ONG has "gu 'n taing". In ONG, the poet often spelled "gun", "without", or the conjunction "gun", as "gu 'n", and Maclean Sinclair interprets "gu 'n" here as "gun", apparently "without". **85:** ONG omits the particle "a" before the infinitive "thighinn", which would have been elided by the preceding vowel; it is marked with an apostrophe. **86:** ONG has "ga 'm buineadh . . .", which I interpret as "dham buineadh e", "to which he belonged". The "dha" sound would be pronounced more like a "ga" in the poet's dialect, but the standard spelling is used to avoid confusion with the third person plural pronoun object of the verbal noun "gam". ONG also omits the particle "a" before "nall", likely because the preceding vowel would cause elision, and this is marked with an apostrophe. **87:** ONG has "caisteal na tuinnidh". The noun "tuinnidh" is in a genitive relationship to "caisteal", and is feminine, as indicated by the feminine singular genitive article "na". However, I have not been able to locate such a word.

The noun may be "tuinneadh", "abode, dwelling, place of rest", but this is a masculine noun, and therefore the article would be "an". **88:** In ONG, the first letter in "teaghlach" is capitalised; it was the poet's practice to generally capitalise references to the Coll family or their possessions. **89:** In ONG, the first letter in "baile" is capitalised, again apparently because it was a reference to the future Laird's home. **91:** ONG has "cannan", which is interpreted as the English loan word "cannon", and is therefore italicised. **93:** ONG has "a bhraundi"; the noun "branndaidh", "brandy" is feminine, and therefore "a" could be either the third person singular masculine possessive pronoun "a", "his", or the feminine nominative article "a'", "the". Maclean Sinclair treats it as "his", which I accept. **94:** ONG has "aig a ghillean", and it is clear that "a" is the third person singular male possessive pronoun, "his", because the dative plural article before "gillean" would be "na", not "a'". **95:** Breachachadh is the seat of the Lairds of Coll, a stately home in Coll. **96:** Maclean Sinclair versions replace "'S na . . ." with "Bidh na . . .". The Alastair or Alexander referred to here is almost certainly the 15th Laird, and father of Young Hugh. **97:** ONG has "fèile"; I accept the emendation in Maclean Sinclair versions to "fèille". Maclean Sinclair versions have "Gu 'm bi . . .". **98:** Maclean Sinclair versions replace "Gu h- . . ." with "Sunndach" and read "Sunndach aighearach . . .". **100:** The reference to Alastair is again almost certainly to the 15th Laird of Coll. **101:** The Eoghan, Hugh, referred to here is the subject of the poem, young Hugh. ONG omits the relative pronoun "a" before the verb "thig", and this is marked with an apostrophe. **102:** ONG has "air com". The poet often had "air" for the first person plural possessive pronoun "ar", "our", and given the context, it is likely that "our" was intended. The poet's spelling reflects his dialect, but the standard "ar" is preferred because "air" is both the common prepostion "on" and the prepositional pronoun "on him". **103:** ONG has "Biodh". ONG has "a Bhaintighearna"; the "a" is, given the context, the possessive pronoun "a", "his", rather than the female nominative article "a'". **104:** ONG has "bhi 's ann", by which the poet likely means "bhios ann"; the verb should be preceded by the relative pronoun "a", and this is marked with an apostrophe before the verb. **105:** Maclean Sinclair versions read "Bidh gach ni ann an òrdugh". The "an" in "an òrdugh" in ONG is interpreted as a contraction of "ann an", "in", and this is marked with the apostrophe. **106:** Maclean Sinclair versions have "Bidh" for "'S" at the start of the line, "a' s còrr" for "is còir", and "cionn" for "ceann". **107:** Maclean Sinclair versions have "talla" for "seòmar". **108:** Maclean Sinclair versions have "'S gu 'm bu . . ." for "'S e bu . . .". The dialectical "di" is retained for "dhi", "to her/it". **110:** Although the poet often used "air" in both ONG and in the MSS for "ar", "our", and occasionally "ur", "your", "air", "on" seems the most appropriate interpretation here: "air làimh", "on/at hand". **112:** ONG has "air a bhòrd", and the "a" could be interpreted as either "a", "his", or as the dative male article, "a'". Either would be an acceptable interpretation. **113:** Maclean Sinclair versions read "Aig àm . . ." for "Mu . . .". ONG has "Mo" for "Mu", and while this represents the pronunciation in the poet's dialect, the vowel is in any case unstressed, and therefore the standard is used here; although not likely, given the context, "mo" might in some cases also be confused with the first person singular possessive pronoun "mo", "my". **114:** Maclean Sinclair replaces "Bhiodh" with "Cluinnear". ONG has "filean", which Maclean Sinclair interprets, correctly in my view and given the context, as "fidhlean", "fiddles". **115:** Maclean Sinclair versions have "Anns a' . . ." for "'S a' . . .". **116:** Maclean Sinclair versions replace "Le . . ." at the start of the line with "Cluinnear . . .", and " . . . is nan toll" with "air an lom". **117:** The noun "tulach", "hill, hillock" is normally a masculine noun, and therefore the masculine singular genitive article,

"an", should be used rather than the feminine singular genitive article "na", which appears in ONG; however, "na" is left, because of the possibility that "tulach" may have been treated as a feminine noun in the poet's dialect. **118:** ONG ha "an cullar"; "cullar" is most likely the English loan word "colour"; as loan words are often treated as feminine nouns, I have interpreted "an" as the third person pllural possessive pronoun, "their", rather than the singular nominative article "an", which, for a feminine noun would be "a'" and would cause aspiration. **119:** ONG has "suaicheanta s luraich". The first word is clearly a noun, and should therefore be "suaicheantas", rather than the adjective "suaicheanta". The "s luraich" is clearly the superlative "as luraiche"; there would be elision between the "as" in "suaicheantas" and the superlative article "as", and this is marked with an apostrophe, as is the dropping of the final "e" in "luraiche". **120:** In the poet's dialect, "cho" tends to aspirate the adjective which follows, as is shown in ONG. ONG has "cunnadh", which appears to be dialectical for "cunntadh", "to count, to reckon, to be measured". **121:** ONG has "a Bhaintighearn". The poet tends to capitalise the first letter of any noun which refers to the Coll family. The "a" could be the third person singular male possessive pronoun "a", "his", or the feminine nominative article "a'", which is preferred here, in the context of this line. The final "a" in "bhàintighearna" is elided by the subsequent vowel, and this is marked with an apostrophe. **122:** Maclean Sinclair versions read "Aice fhéin tha 'n duin' uasal gun mheang". ONG has "gu 'n mhang", which I interpret as "gun mheang", "without fault" or "faultless". **123:** ONG has "Do 'n", which is dialectical for "De 'n", "of the". **124:** ONG omits the relative pronoun "a" which should precede "Tha" at the start of the line, as well as the particle "a'" which should precede the verbal noun "dìreadh", but which would be elided by the preceding vowel in "Tha". Both are marked with an apostrophe. **125:** ONG omits the relative pronoun "a" which should precede the verb "bha", and this is marked with an apostrophe. **126:** ONG has "fodh 'n airm"; I interpret the "'n" as being the third person plural possessive pronoun "an", the vowel in which is elided by the preceding vowel, rather than the article "an", primarily due to the context. **127:** The reference seems to be to Cameron of Lochiel, chief of Clan Cameron, although this chief is traditionally styled as "Mac Dhòmhnaill Dhuibh". The MacLeans of Coll had traditionally held lands in Lochiel, and the Camerons were, like the MacLeans of Coll, Jacobites and traditional allies. The Coll family also had marital ties with the Camerons, albeit the Camerons of Glendessary: Alexander, the 15th Laird, was married to Catherine, the eldest daughter of Captain Allan Cameron of Glendessary, and Alexander's brother Roderick was married to Christianna, another daughter of Allan Cameron: see J. P. MacLean at pp. 290-291, and "A Seneachie" at pp. 313-314. **128:** The reference seems to be to Achnacarry, in Lochaber, which was part of the traditional Cameron territories. The glen to which reference is being made is unclear, although because the poet has capitalised the first letter in ONG, it may arguably be a reference to the Great Glen, at Lochaber. **130:** ONG has " . . . s a càinnt". As the "c" in "càinnt" is not aspirated, I interpret this to be a verbal noun. **131:** ONG has "a liathadh", which I interpret to be a verbal noun. ONG has "ma 'n", which is the poet's dialect for "mun". **132:** ONG has "laoinn", which is unclear, but which I interpret as being dialectical for "loinn", "good condition, joy, gladness". **134:** ONG has "dhoibh". **139:** Maclean Sinclair versions replace this line with "Ann an labhairt mu dhéidhinn". **140:** Maclean Sinclair versions replace this line with "Bha gach facal gu réidh a' dol leam". **141:** Maclean Sinclair versions read "Tha a bhuadhan . . .". ONG omits the "a", "his", but this is implied by the aspiration of the noun, and is therefore indicated with an apostrophe. **142:** Maclean Sinclair versions read "'Us nach urrainn

mi 'n inns' ann am rann". Although "chan urrainn dhomh" is standard, "chan urrainn mi" is used in many dialects, including the poet's, and is therefore retained. **143:** ONG omits the relative pronoun "a" before the verb "dh' fhaodas", and it would be elided by the preceding vowel. It is marked with an apostrophe. **144:** The particle "a" before the infinitive "ghràitinn" is omitted in ONG, and is marked here with an apostrophe.

Alternative Versions: In the Maclean Sinclair versions, there are, in addition to the many emendations and other changes referred to in the line annotations, a number of changes to the overall structure of the poem. In the MacLean Sinclair versions, the following changes are made: (1) the last four lines of verse one (lines 5-8), verses 3 (lines 17-24), 5 (lines 33-40), 6 (lines 41-48), 8 (lines 57-64), the last four lines of verse 11 (lines 85-88), the first four lines of verse 12 (lines 89-92), the last six lines of verse 13 (lines 99-104), the last four lines of verse 14 (lines 109-112), the last four lines of verse 15 (lines 117-120), every line but the second of verse 16 (lines 121 and 123-128), and verse 17 were omitted in Maclean Sinclair versions; (2) the first four lines of verse 2 (lines 9-12) are added to the end of the first four lines of verse 1 (lines 1-4) to form a new verse one; (3) the first four lines of verse 11 (lines 81-84) were added to the last four lines of verse two (lines 13-16) (rearranged in the manner described above at those lines) to form a new verse 2; (4) verse 10 (lines 73-80) was moved up to verse 2 in Maclean Sinclair versions; (5) verse 9 (lines 65-72) was moved up to verse 4 in Maclean Sinclair versions; (6) verse 4 (lines 25-32) then came after the verse 4 just referred to, to form verse 5 in Maclean Sinclair versions; (7) verse 7 (lines 49-56) became verse 6 in Maclean Sinclair versions; (8) five lines which were not in ONG or the MSS were added to line 6 of verse 11 (line 86), line 8 of verse 13 (line 104) and line 3 of verse 12 (line 91) to form verse 7 in Maclean Sinclair versions; (9) lines seven and eight of verse 12 (lines 95 and 96), lines one and two of verse 14 (lines 105 and 106), lines five and six of verse 12 (lines 93 and 94), a line which did not appear in ONG or the MSS, and line four of verse 12 (line 92) were put together to form verse 8 in Maclean Sinclair versions; (10) four lines which were not in ONG or the MSS were added to lines three and four of verse 14 (lines 107 and 108) and to lines one and two of verse 13 (lines 97 and 98) to form verse 9 in Maclean Sinclair versions; (11) four lines which were not in ONG or the MSS were added to lines one to four in verse 15 (lines 113-116) to form verse 10 in Maclean Sinclair versions; and (12) a new line which was not in ONG or the MSS was added to lines one to six of verse 18 (with the changes referred to in the notes to those lines, above) (lines 136-141) and to line two of verse 16 (line 122) to form verse 11, the final verse in Maclean Sinclair versions. With these changes and omissions, the Maclean Sinclair versions contain 88 lines.

8. Do Thighearna Òg Chola

Tune: "Air tuiteam am chadal domh"
No. of lines: 271
Sources: ONG, p.111, CC1, p. 30, CC2, p. 34
Date: About 1818.
Context: The poet tells us the following in his preface in ONG: "Do dh' Eoghann MacGilleain, Tighearna òg Chola, air dha chluinntinn gun do cheannaich e a' Bheinn mhòr, ann am Muile"/"To Hugh MacLean, the young Laird of Coll [i.e. the

future 16th Laird], on his hearing that he had purchased Penmore, in Mull". Hugh MacLean had purchased purchased the northern part of Aros, in Mull, together with the swathe of land south of Dervaig, Mull, in about 1818, although it appears that Penmore, which was part of the Mornish estate, was in fact purchased by Hugh's cousin, Captain Allan MacAskill; Hugh had tried to purchase Penmore, and had failed to do so, although an arrangement was apparently made with MacAskill that the Coll family would retain the grazing rights to Penmore: see Jo Currie, *Mull: The Island and Its People* (Edinburgh: Birlinn, 2001), pp. 222-223. The circumstances of these transactions would have been of great significance and of considerable pride to MacLeans such as the poet. The territories had been owned by the Duke of Argyll, but financial hardships in the wake of the end of the Napoleonic wars led the Duke to dispose of significant amounts of land, particularly in Mull, from about 1815 to about 1825: see Currie, at pp. 221-224 and at p. 417. Thus, the purchase represented a reacquisition of traditional MacLean territories from their nemesis, Campbell of Argyll. In the longer term, though, these purchases probably contributed to the financial hardships which ultimately overcame the MacLeans of Coll: "Every seller was in need of money, and every would-be buyer was short of money. Cattle prices had plummeted, food was scarce, yet land not only held its price, but was fetching sums which Donald Maclean WS considered quite mad". (Currie, at p. 222).

Line Annotations:

1: Maclean Sinclair versions have "'N diugh . . ." for "An diugh . . ." and "sgeul" for "sgeula". **2:** Maclean Sinclair has the standard "dhomh" for the dialectical "domh". **3:** Maclean Sinclair versions have "féille" for "fèile". **4:** Maclean Sinclair versions have " . . . an dràsda". **9:** Maclean Sinclair versions have "'S e 'n sgeul . . ." for "An sgeul . . .". ONG omits the relative pronoun "a" before the verb "tha", and this is marked with an apostrophe. **10:** Maclean Sinclair versions have "Chuimhnis" for "Chùinnis". This is a reference to Quinish, in North Mull, which was part of the estate of the MacLeans of Coll; and the Laird of Quinish would be the Laird of Coll, although given that the poem is to the heir to the estate, it is likely that Hugh was holding Quinish from his father. **11:** Maclean Sinclair versions have ". . . d' mheudaich . . .". It is likely that the third person singular male possessive pronoun "a", "his", is implied before "oighreachd", and is marked with an apostrophe. **12:** Maclean Sinclair versions replace "As an roinn . . ." with "Bho 'n roinn . . .", and have the standard "làmh ris" for "lai ris", which appears in ONG and which I interpret at "làimh ris", although "a'laighe ris", "lying with it" could also be a possible meaning. **16:** ONG has "A chuis", and "A" could be interpreted as the female nominative article "A'", "The matter", or the third person singular male possessive pronoun "A", "His matter"; given the context, the former is preferred. **17:** ONG has "raoghainn", which is interpreted as "roghainn", "preference". **18:** ONG has "Gluasad", which could be a contraction of the verbal noun "A'gluasad", "moving", or simly the noun "Glusad", "movement"; given the context, the former is arguably the better interpretation, and the omission of the particle "A'" is marked with an apostrophe. **19:** ONG simply has "ghlèidheadh"; this appears to be an infinitive, and therefore the particle "a" should precede it; "a" would be elided by the preceding vowel, however, and this is marked with an apostrophe. **20:** ONG has "Gu 'n dèigh", which is interpreted as "Gun dèidh", "without contest". "Dèigh" likely is "dèidh", which means "wish, desire, longing", but can also mean "contention". It is possible, though, that "dèigh" is an archaic form of "èigh", a "cry" or "call" or "shout" or "claim"; if the poet intended this, the meaning would still be much the same. **22:** ONG has "Gu 'n",

which must be interpreted in this context as "Gun", without, rather than the affirmative conjunction "Gun", "so that", "in order that". **23:** ONG has "urrad", which is interpreted as "uiread". **24:** ONG has "armunn". **26:** ONG has "Sealltainn"; in the context, this is likely verbal noun "A'sealltainn", "looking", with the particle omitted, and this is marked with an apostrophe. **27:** ONG has "a Muile"; the "a" is interpreted as the preposition "à", "from", "out of". **28:** ONG has "Bhi . . ."; this is interpreted as the infinitive "A bhith", "To be", and the omission of the particle is marked with an apostrophe. **29:** ONG has "Tilgeadh ga . . .". "Tilgeadh" is interpreted as the verbal noun "A'tilgeadh", and the omission of the particle is marked with an apostrophe. The "ga" is interpreted as third person singular masculine pronoun object "'ga". Maclean Sinclair versions read "E dh' fhaotainn d' a ionnsaidh". **30:** ONG has "Diùchda"; this is clearly a reference to the Duke of Argyll who, as noted above, was selling considerable amounts of land in Mull, and it was from him that the lands in question were purchased. Maclean Sinclair seems to conflate this line and line 31 with "De dh' fhearann an diùc". **34:** ONG has "do 'n saoghal". The "'n" is interpreted as a contraction of the third person plural possessive pronoun "an", "their", rather than of the article "an", as the article, when combined with the preposition "do", would have caused the particle "t-" to be added before "saoghal". "Saoghal" has a range of meanings, including "world, life, time", but it can also mean "wealth, riches, substance, living", and this is therefore a nice *double entendre*. **36:** The reference to the stately families is to the various branches of Macleans; it is they who suffered the foolish reversals described in the subsequent lines and which resulted in the Duke of Argyll gaining title to their lands, referred to in line 43. **37:** Maclean Sinclair versions read "'S e 'thug orr' 'n caochladh". **39:** Maclean Sinclair has "'Us" for "Agus", and "na 'm" for "na". **40:** ONG has "Bha" at the start of the line; as this appears to form a clause of the statement in the previous line, the relative pronoun "a" would be required, and is omitted; this is marked with an apostrophe. Maclean Sinclair versions have "annt'" for "ann". **41:** Maclean Sinclair versions read "Mo thruaigh' chaidh iad thairis". **42:** Maclean Sinclair versions have "dhùthchannaibh". **43:** "MacCailein" is the traditional Gaelic title for the chiefs of the Campbells of Argyll. **46:** ONG has "Bha" at the start of the line; as this appears to form a clause of the statement in the previous line, the relative pronoun "a" would be required, and is omitted; this is marked with an apostrophe. ONG has "an 's na . . .", which would clearly be "anns na . . ." **47:** ONG has "An d' fhuair e . . ."; this appears to be a clause which makes reference to the preceding line, and the "An" is therefore interpreted as a contraction of "Ann an", "In which". **48:** ONG has "gu 'n", but given the aspiration of the subsequent nouns and the context, this is clearly "gun", "without", rather than the affirmative conjunction. Maclean Sinclair versions have the standard "phàigheadh" for "phàighe". **49:** Maclean Sinclair versions read "'Nam faict' ar ceann-cinneadh". In ONG, the poet capitalises the "c" in "ceann-cinnidh", which he tends to do in respect of any reference to the MacLeans of Coll, and here MacLean nobles in general, and has "cinneadh" for "cinnidh". The chieftain being referred to here would appear to be the chief of the Macleans as a whole, which is consistent with the reference to Duart, the seat of the chiefs of the MacLeans, in line 55. The poet uses "Tighearna" rather than "Ceann-cinnidh" for the cadet branches of the MacLeans, such as the MacLeans of Coll. **50:** Maclean Sinclair versions replace this line with "Am mòrachd 's an spionnadh". ONG has "na 'n", which is often used by the poet for the genitive plural article "nan". Here, though, because of the similarity in meaning between the two nouns, "àite" and "ionad", it is likely that the poet is simply using the second noun to emphasise the first, which is common in

Gaelic poet, and therefore "na 'n" is interpreted as "na an", "na" being "no", "or", in the poet's dialect and "'n" being a contraction of the third person plural possessive pronoun "an", their. **51:** Maclean Sinclair versions read "Gu buadhach air tilleadh". **52:** Maclean Sinclair versions read "Do dh' innis nan àrd-bheann". **53:** ONG simply has "Gluasad"; this is interpreted as the verbal noun "A'gluasad", "Moving", rather than the noun "Gluasad", "A move", and the omission of the particle "A'" is marked with an apostrophe. **55:** ONG has "Duthairt a Chaistail"; it is not clear whether the "a" is intended to be the third person singular male possessive pronoun "a", "his", or the masculine genitive singular article "'a", "of the". **58:** ONG has "Na 'n", which is interpreted as the genitive plural article "nan"; "cùirtearaibh", "courtiers", seems to be in a genitive relationship with "chleachdainn", "practices", of the preceding line. It is possible that "Na 'n" could be the contraction "'Nan", "in their"; this may have made sense had the noun been "cùirtean", "courts", rather than "cùirtearaibh", "courtiers", but does not seem to be supportable based on the existing line. **59:** The verb "Bha" should be preceded by the relative article "A", as this is a clause which refers to the preceding line; this is marked with an apostrophe. **60:** ONG has "acfhuinneach". **61:** ONG has "A rusgadh"; Maclean Sinclair versions interpret this as the verbal noun "A'rusgadh", "Unfurling", which is acceptable, but the infintive is preferred, as this, like the infintive at line 57, seem to refer back to "'Gluasad", at line 53. **64:** Maclean Sinclair versions have "Am baiteal bho nàmhaid". **65:** ONG has "Na 'n", which appears to be the conjunction "Nan". **66:** ONG has "rathad seo", but "rathad-s'" better suits the rhythm suggested by the metre. **67:** ONG has "na 'n", which, given the context, is clearly the genitive plural article "nan". **68:** ONG has "iadsan", but "à-san", a common pronunciation in the poet's dialect, better suits the rhyme pattern that is suggested by the metre. **69:** Maclean Sinclair versions reverse the order of this and the next line, and read "Gu 'm b' éibhinn a shealladh". **70:** Maclean Sinclair versions read "Bu shùrdail a bhaile". **71:** Maclean Sinclair versions have "Gu 'n ùraichteadh . . .". ONG has "Na 'n", which is interpreted to be the conditional conjuntion "Nan". **72:** It is not clear whether the word "an" is the article "the" or the third person possessive pronoun "their". **73:** Maclean Sinclair versions have "Chiteadh". **74:** Maclean Sinclair versions have the standard "Boillsgeadh", but the ONG form, "Baoisge", is a recognised spelling and reflects the poet's dialect. **75:** Maclean Sinclair versions replace "Fhreagradh . . ." with "'S chluinnte . . ." **76:** ONG has "Na 'm"; as the noun "beannaibh", "mountains", seems to be in a genitive relationship with "mac-talla", "echo", this is interpreted as the genitive plural article "Nam". **77:** Maclean Sinclair versions read "A' freagairt nan canan". "Chanain" is clearly the english loan word "cannon", and this is indicated by italics. **78:** Maclean Sinclair versions read "A' brùchdadh an analach". **79:** Maclean Sinclair versions omit the particle "A" in "A null". **80:** Maclean Sinclair versions have "Chinn-gheárlaich". Kingairloch is on the mainland, in Ardgour, and lies to the east of Duart, in Mull. **81:** ONG has "Na 'm . . .". **83:** ONG has "Am biodh . . ."; as this line appears to form a clause, "Am" is interpreted as a contraction of "Ann am", "in which", and this is marked with an apostrophe. **86:** ONG has "Ga dhìoladh . . ."; "Ga" is interpreted as the third person singular masculine pronoun object, and this is marked accordingly with an apostrophe. ONG also has " . . . a 'n sporrain". Given the context, the "a" is interpreted as the preposition "à", "out of, from", and the "'n" is interpreted as the third person plural possessive pronoun "an", "their"; the vowel in "an" would be elided by the preceding vowel, and this is marked with an apostrophe. **89:** The verb "theannadh" appears to be in the infinitive, and would require the particle "a", which is omitted in ONG; it would be elided by the preceding vowel, and

this is marked with an apostrophe. **90:** ONG has "Gu Dhùthaich . . .". As noted elsewhere, references to the title and possessions of the MacLeans were usually capitalised by the poet. The aspiration of "dùthaich" implies that it is preceded by the third person singular masculine possessive pronoun, "a", "his", which would be elided by the preceding vowel; it is marked with an apostrophe. ONG has ". . . na dheannaibh"; the "na" is clearly a contraction of "ann a", "in his", and this is marked with an apostrophe. **91:** ONG has "Gu 'n . . ."; here, this would appear to be the conjunction "Gun", rather than "without". **92:** In ONG, as "Chlannaibh" is aspirated, which would indicate the vocative case; it is therefore likely that this line reports the toast referred to in the previous line which was actually pronounced, and the omission of the vocative particle "A" is marked. **93:** ONG has "Diùchda"; the reference is again to the Duke of Argyll. **94:** The aspiration of "chuid" implies that it is preceded by the third person singular masculine possessive pronoun, "a", "his", which would be elided by the preceding vowel; it is marked with an apostrophe. **97:** ONG has "Gu mo slàn . . .". In the poet's dialect, the standard "ma" would be pronounced "mo"; however, as the vowel is in any case unstressed, and as "mo" could be confused with the first person possessive pronoun, the standard "ma" is used. **98:** As this line is a clause which follows from the preceding one, the relative article "A" is required at the start of the line, before the verb, and the omission of this in ONG is marked with an apostrophe. The aspiration of "buannachd" also implies the third person singular possessive pronoun "a", "his", or in this case, "its". **100:** ONG has "Na uachdaran . . .". The "na" appears to be a contraction of "Ann a", "in his", and this is marked with an apostrophe. **101:** ONG has " . . . a chuid daoine". As "daoine" is in a genitive relationship with "cuid", it should, as a plural, be aspirated. **102:** ONG has "Gan dìon . . ."; the "Gan" appears to be the third person plural pronoun object of the verbal noun, and this is marked with an apostrophe. **103:** ONG has ". . . na theaghlach". The "na" appears to be a contraction of "ann a", "in his", and this is marked with an apostrophe. **104:** ONG has "Gu 'n . . . gu 'n . . .". Given the aspiration of the nouns which follow, and the context, "gu 'n" appears to be the preposition "gun", "without". **105:** ONG has "chunnaig", which reflects the poet's dialect; Maclean Sinclair versions replace this with the standard "chunnaic". **106:** Maclean Sinclair versions have the copula, "'S e . . .", for "'S . . .", the contraction of "agus", "and". The clause "bu dual dha" should be preceded by the relative pronoun "a", and the omission of this in ONG and in Maclean Sinclair versions is marked by an apostrophe. **108:** The infinitive at the beginning of the line should be preceded by the particle "a", and this is marked with an apostrophe. **109:** Maclean Sinclair versions have "tuatha" for "tuathadh", which is an acceptable genitive form of "tuath", "tenantry", and reflects the poet's dialect. **110:** Maclean Sinclair versions read "Nach teannaich gu cruaidh iad". **111:** ONG has "Nach d' thoir . . .", which is changed to the standard in Maclean Sinclair versions and here also. **112:** ONG has "na 'n càs . . .". Given the context, this appears to be a contraction of "ann an", "in their" (rather than, for example, the genitive plural article "nan"), and this is marked with an apostrophe. **113:** Maclean Sinclair versions read "Tha mòrachd nach misde e ann". **114:** Maclean Sinclair versions read "'Us tuigse agus gliocas"; in ONG, the line concludes with "aig"; as the preposition "at" does not, standing by itself, make sense, this is likely "aige", "at him", and the omission of the final vowel is marked with an apostrophe. **115:** In Maclean Sinclair versions, this line reads "Meanmnachd 'us misneach". **116:** In Maclean Sinclair versions, "Measail . . ." is replaced with "'S tha meas air . . ." **117:** Maclean Sinclair versions completely replace this line with "Thug siubhal 'us fòghlam". **118:** Maclean Sinclair versions completely replace this line with "Dha fiosrachadh 's

eòlas". ONG has "nis"; the particle "a" which precedes "nis" in "a-nis" is elided by the preceding vowel, and this is marked with an apostrophe. **119:** Maclean Sinclair versions completely replace this line with "'S tha géir' ann gu h-òirdhearc". In ONG, the aspiration of "Buaidhean" implies a preceding third person singular male possessive pronoun "A", and this is marked with an apostrpophe. **120:** Maclean Sinclair versions completely replace this line with "Mar lòchran a' deàrrsadh". **121:** Maclean Sinclair versions read "'S fear ionnsaichte deas e". **122:** ONG omits the particle "A" which should precede the infinitive "thoirt", and this is marked with an apostrophe. ONG has "da", which Maclean Sinclair versions interpret, correctly in my view, as "d' a", or the contraction of "do a", "to his". **124:** Maclean Sinclair versions have "Fo 'n deiseachan . . .". **125:** Maclean Sinclair versions reverse the order of this and the next line, add "Gu h- . . ." before "armaichte", and drop the final vowel in "crioslaichte". **126:** ONG has "na 'n", which is interpreted as the conjunction "nan". **128:** ONG has "clisge", "doibh". Maclean Sinclair versions have the standard "clisgeadh" and "dhaibh" for the dialectical "chlisge" and "doibh". **129:** Maclean Sinclair versions read "'S iad fhéin na fir ghasda". **130:** Maclean Sinclair versions read "Tha leòghanta sgairteil". ONG has "Na 'n", which appears to be the genitive plural article "Nan", as "trèinfhearaibh" appears to be in a genitive relationship with "Reiseamaid" in the preceding line. **131:** Maclean Sinclair versions add "'S", "And" to the start of this line, and change "i na coltas" to "iad na 'n coltas". The "i" in ONG appears to the regiment, mentioned in line 129; the "na" in ONG is a contraction of "ann a", "in her/its", and this is marked with an apostrophe. **132:** ONG and Maclean Sinclair versions have "Na 'n cuirte . . ."; this is interpreted as the conditional conjunction "Nan" rather than the comparative "na an . . .". **133:** Maclean Sinclair versions have "Bu chliùiteach . . ." for "B' ainmeil . . ." **134:** ONG capitalises the "c" in "ceannardan". The "'n" is clearly a contraction of "an", the third person plural possessive pronoun, the vowel in which is elided by the preceding vowel, in "le". **135:** ONG has "nochda", which is "nochdadh", and the omission of the ending is marked. Maclean Sinclair versions substitute the standard "nochdadh" for "nochda". **136:** In Maclean Sinclair versions, the standard "cnocaibh" is used; ONG aspirates this noun, and it may be because the preposition "air" may cause lenition in the poet's dialect. As Dwelly notes, "air" causes aspiration in some set phrases, and that sometimes "air" misrepresents the pre-modern Gaelic "ar", "before, against, beside", or "for", "upon", and this latter may be the meaning here. **137:** ONG omits the relative pronoun "a", which should appear before the verb "labhair", and this is marked with an apostrophe. **139:** ONG again omits the relative pronoun "a", which should appear before the verb "thuirt", and this is marked with an apostrophe. ONG has "mi-mhail" for "mìomhail", a dialectical variant of the more common "mi-mhodhail", "disrespectful, unmannerly". **140:** ONG has "phàrti", which appears to be the english loan word "party", and is therefore italicised. **141:** ONG has "Na 'm . . .", which appears to be the conditional conjunction "Nam". **142:** ONG has " . . . e h-innse"; this clearly implies the third person singular feminine possessive pronoun "a", "her/its", and this is marked with an apostrophe. **144:** ONG omits the relative pronoun "A" which should precede the verb "Bheil" at the start of this line. **145:** ONG has "acfhuinneach". Maclean Sinclair versions have "Gur saighdearan cruadalach". **146:** Maclean Sinclair versions have the standard "deas-fhaclach". **148:** ONG omits the relative pronoun "A" which should precede the conditional "chuairteachadh", and this is marked with an apostrophe. The form of the verb looks more like the infinitive than the standard form of the conditional, "cuairticheadh", but the context seems to suggest the conditional, and the spelling is

left as in ONG on the basis that it may simply reflect the pronunciation of the conditional in the poet's dialect. **149:** ONG has "Ga 'n . . . ga 'n . . ."; this clearly seems to be the third person plural pronoun object of the verbal noun, and this is marked with an apostrophe. ONG has "sgapa", which is likely a contraction of the standard "sgapadh". **155:** ONG has "Ga tric . . .". Although "Ga" could be "Gu", the context seems to suggest that this is a contraction of "Ged", or "Gad" in the poet's dialect, and this is marked with an apostrophe. **157:** ONG has "Na 'n"; this seems to be the genitive plural article, given the apparent genitive relationship between "curaidhean" and "tàmailt" in the preceding line. **160:** ONG has "Ga 'n seanchas"; "Ga 'n" is interpreted here as "Dhan", to whom, rendered as it might be sounded in the poet's dialect, rather than the third person plural object pronoun "'Gan". **161:** Maclean Sinclair versions read "Do dh' Eòbhan mac Alastair". The reference is to Hugh, the heir to the Coll estate and future 16th Laird of Coll, and his father, the then-present Laird. **164:** ONG omits the relative pronoun "a", which should precede the verb "tha", and this is marked with an apostrophe". The particle "a" is also omitted before the verbal noun "gràitinn", and this is also marked with an apostrophe. **165:** ONG has "aineal", which is dialectical for "aineòl". **168:** Maclean Sinclair versions have "A' s ceanalta nàdar". ONG has "na nàdur", and the "na" appears to be a contraction of "ann a", "in his", and is therefore marked with an apostrophe. **169:** Maclean Sinclair versions read "Is Leathanach gasd' e". **170:** ONG omits the relative pronoun "A" which is required at the beginning of this line, and this is marked with an apostrophe. **171:** Maclean Sinclair versions read "De shiol nam fear smachdail". ONG has "na 'm", which is, given the context, clearly the genitive plural article "nam". **172:** Maclean Sinclair versions read "Bha 'n caisteal na tràghad". ONG omits the relative pronoun "A" which is required at the beginning of this line, and this is marked with an apostrophe. "Tràighead" is dialectical for the more standard genitive forms of the noun "tràigh", "sea-shore", such as "tràgh" and "tràghad". **173:** ONG omits the relative pronoun "A" which is required at the beginning of this line, and is marked with an apostrophe. Maclean Sinclair versions include it. **174:** In ONG, the "d" in "dùthaich" is capitalised, as is the poet's practice when referring to the MacLean noble families or their possessions. Maclean Sinclair versions have the standard "facal" for the dialectical "focal". **175:** Maclean Sinclair versions have "sgairteil" for "smachdail". **176:** ONG has "luchd-àicheadh"; the standard genitive "àicheidh" is used here, as in Maclean Sinclair versions. **177:** Maclean Sinclair versions have "féille" for "fèile". **178:** Maclean Sinclair versions have the standard "iriseal"; "iriosail" more accurately reflects the pronunciation in the poet's dialect--rendered as "iorasal" in ONG. ONG omits the relative pronoun "A", required at the start of the line before the verb "Tha", and this is mrked with an apostrophe. **179:** Maclean Sinclair versions replace "Gu" with "'Us". **180:** Maclean Sinclair versions read "Cha tréig e a chàirdean". **181:** ONG has "na 'm", which, given the context, is clearly the genitive plural article "nam". **182:** ONG has "Gan dìon . . .". "Gan" is clearly the third person plural pronoun object of the verbal noun, and this is marked with an apostrophe. **183:** Maclean Sinclair versions read "Cha dìobradh e 'n éis iad". ONG has "nan", and in the context, this is clearly a contraction of "ann an", "in their", and this is marked with an apostrophe. **184:** ONG has "am biodh"; given the context, "am" is interpreted as a contraction of the prepositional phrase "ann am". Maclean Sinclair versions insert "'s . . ." before "am biodh . . .". **185:** ONG has "da" for the standard "dha"; this is retained as indicative of the poet's dialect. **186:** ONG omits the particle "A" before the infinitive at the start of the line, and this is marked with an apostrophe. **187:** ONG has "Gu 'n . . ."; given the aspiration of the subsequent noun,

this is clearly the preposition "gun", "without". **188:** ONG has "gu 'n", and this is again the preposition "gun", "without". **189:** Maclean Sinclair versions read "Gur soilleir a léirsinn". **191:** Maclean Sinclair versions have ". . .-eucorach" for ". . .-eucoraich". **192:** ONG has "na"; this appears to be a contraction of "ann a", "in his", and is marked with an apostrophe. **193:** ONG omits the relative pronoun "a" before the verb "tha", and this is marked with an apostrophe. **194:** ONG omits the relative pronoun "A" at the start of the line, and this is marked with an apostrophe. ONG has "san", which is a contraction of "anns an", "in the", and this is marked with an apostrophe. **196:** ONG omits the relative pronoun "A" at the start of this line, and this is marked with an apostrophe. **198:** ONG has "Ga lionadh . . .". The "Ga" is interpreted as the third person singular masculine pronoun object, and is therefore preceded by an apostrophe. **199:** ONG has "Na 'n", which is interpreted here to be the the contraction of "ann an", "in their", and this is therefore indicated with an apostrophe. ONG has "fo chòta", and although the preposition "fo" causes aspiration, the context seems to imply the third person singular male possessive pronoun "a", "his", and this is marked by an apostrophe. **200:** ONG has "Toirt"; as this appears to be the verbal noun, the particle "A'" should precede it, and its omission in ONG is marked with an apostrophe. ONG also has "da", which is interpreted as being the contraction of the preposition "do", "to, for", and the third person singular male possessive pronoun "a", "his"; the vowel in the preposition would be elided by "a", and this is marked by an apostrophe. **202:** Maclean Sinclair versions have ". . . r' a phòsadh"; while this is a correct interpretation of ONG, ONG omits the third person singular masculine possessive pronoun "a", and this elision is marked with an apostrophe. **203:** ONG omits the particle "A" which should precede the infinitive at the beginning of this line, and this is marked with an apostrophe. **204:** ONG has "armuinn". Maclean Sinclair versions have "'S" for "Is". **205:** ONG has "bhuighinnig", which is interpreted as the preterite of the verb "buinnig", more commonly rendered "buidhinn", "to gain, win, acquire, conquer". **206:** ONG has "na dòchas"; "na" is interpreted as the contraction of "ann a", "in her", and this is marked with an apostrophe. **209:** ONG has "ghruaidh"; the aspiration, together with the context, implies that the third person singular masculine possessive pronoun, "a", "his" precedes the noun, but would have been elided by the preceding vowel in "Tha", and this is marked with an apostrophe. **210:** Maclean Sinclair versions have "faoilinn" for "faoileann". **211:** Maclean Sinclair versions reverse the order of "chorrach", and "ghorm", and replace "aobhaidh" with "aobhach". **212:** ONG has "San", which Maclean Sinclair interprets as "Is an", "And the", rather than as the contraction "Anns an", "'San", and this interpretation is accepted. Maclean Sinclair versions also have ". . . a' s àille" for ". . . is àille". **216:** ONG has "aogas a ghàire". The "a" could be interpreted as the third person singular masculine possessive pronoun, or the masculine singular genitive article "a'", which is preferred here, as the reference to a male subject, "air", "on him", in the preceding line would make a second such reference unnecessary. **217:** ONG has "caoineil". **218:** Maclean Sinclair versions read "'Tha flathasach caoimhneil". **219:** Maclean Sinclair versions insert "'S", the contraction of "Agus", "And", at the start of this line. **220:** Maclean Sinclair versions have "Chan fhaodteadh . . ." for "Nach faodte". **221:** Maclean Sinclair has "grinn" for "ghrinn", an error given that this adjective qualifies a feminine noun. **222:** Maclean Sinclair correctly interprets the preposition "Do" to be "De", "Of", but in the poet's dialect, "de" is usually pronounced "do". **223:** Maclean Sinclair versions add "'S", the contraction of "Agus", "And", to the start of this line. They also have the standard "fala", the genitive of "fuil", "blood", but the ONG

original is left, on the basis that it more accurately reflects the poet's dialect. ONG has "orra", but given that the reference is to "lann", "blade", a singular feminine noun, it is clear that the poet intends "oirre", "on her/it". As noted elsewhere, the poet often spelled "oirre" as "orra" in his MSS and in ONG. **224:** Maclean Sinclair versions read "'N am faoighneachdteadh làmhainn". ONG has "faoineachde". This is clearly a conditional or past habitual impersonal form of a verb, but the meaning of the verb is not altogether clear. It may be "faoinich", another form of the verb "faighnich", "to ask, enquire, question", although this does not seem to give an entirely satisfactory solution. It may also be a form of "foghain", "to suffice, be sufficient; avail; do for, kill; finish", which may give an acceptable solution, but is clearly not as close to the sound or appearance of the word used by the poet. **225:** Maclean Sinclair versions replace this line with "Sàr-mhac an fhir ainmeil". The change is significant, and may hold the clue as to the meaning of this entire verse. In a note at the end of this poem in CC1, which is repeated in CC2, Maclean Sinclair tells us that the reference in this verse is to the following incident:"--John MacDonald, of Hogh in Tiree, was in the Laird of Coll's regiment. He neglected the performance of some duty at a bridge, and Major Montgomery ordered him to be whipped. MacLean of Coll went twice to the Major, and humbly pled with him to forgive MacDonald, but the Major was inexorable. When the flogging was to begin MacLean went and with his sword cut the cords with which MacDonald was tied to the whipping-post. Montgomery challenged MacLean: the challenge was at once accepted. As MacLean was quite young, there was some fear among the soldiers that he might possibly be killed; so they sent word to Montgomery that if he killed MacLean he would be shot. The duel was not fought. In a further note in CC2, at pp. 279-280, Hector MacDougall says the following: "Is docha gu 'n saoileadh an leughadair a thaobh an fho-sgriobhaidh an rosg a tha aig bonn an òrain so, gur e Eoghan Cholla a bha Mgr. MacGhilleathain Mac na Ceardach ag ciallachadh, is mu an robh an sgeul so air a h-innseadh; agus chan eil mi eadhon cinnteach nach b'e sin a bheachd mar an ceudna. Ann an Leabhar Eachdraidh Chlann Ghilleathain le I.P. Mac Ghilleathain, tha an t-ùghdar sin ag ràdh gur e Eoghan Cholla a rinn an gniomh so. A réir mar a tha an iomradh air a cur sios shaoilte gur ann an Réiseamaid nan Geard a bha iad le chéile, Mac Ghilleathain agus an Dòmhnullach. A mach bho an Réiseamaid féin, tha so ag co-aontachadh le briathran a' Bhàird anns an t-seathamh rann mar a tha iad air an cur sios an so [i.e. ann an CC1 is CC2, seach mar ann an ONG]; ach an Leabhar Eachdraidh nan Leathanach a chuir Mgr. MacG. Mac na Ceardach a mach anns a' bhliadhna 1899, tha e ag innseadh na sgeoil so co-cheangailte ri ainm Alasdair Ruaidh, athair Eoghain, is ag ràdh gur ann am *Fencibles* Earraghàidheal a bha iad, is Alasdair 'na Chaiptein 'san am.

"Tha atharrachadh nach beag air an rann so a tha a' buintinn ris a' chùis seach mar a bha e an leabhar a' Bhàird e féin [i.e. ONG], agus le amharc air a' cheathramh sin mar a bha e anns an t-seann leabhar, is gach aon a chur an coimeas r'a chéile, faodar a thuigsinn mar a tha brigh cuid de na facail air an tilgeadh an cruth eadar-dhealaichte le eadhon aon lìde bheag. [Tha MacDhùghaill ag ath-aithris an earrainn gu ìre mhòr mar a tha i an seo, aig loidhnichean 225-240]

"Is e a' chùis uile gu léir an e "am mac" no "an t-athair" a "dhearbh a bhi cruadalach, calma" [faic loidhne 226] agus chan eil teagamh air an t-saoghal nach b'e "an t-athair" a bha ann. Thogadh an "Argyll Fencible Regiment", no na "Western Fencibles," mar a theirt rithe air uairean, anns a' bhliadhna 1778, agus chuireadh masgaoil i an 1783. Bha Eoghan MacComaraidh á Coilfield--an déidh sin, 12mh Iarla Eglinton--'na Mhàidsear oirre, aagus tha "Alasdair MacGhilleathain" air aon de na h-

ainmeannan a bha innte mar Chaipteinean. Chan eil teagamh air an t-saoghal mar sin nach bu i so a' cheart Réiseamaid, agus nach b'ann uair eiginn taobh a stigh nan cóig bliadhna so a thachair an gnothach air an d'thug am Bàrd iomradh anns an rann so. Bha Alasdair Ruadh car mu cheithir bliadhna fichead an uair a thogadh an Réiseamaid so, agus dh' fhalbh móran leis a Colla is a Tirithe an uair a thogadh i; chan eil teagamh nach ann leis féin anns an dòigh so a dh'fhalbh an Dòmhnullach a sheas esan ann an dòigh cho gaisgeil mar a tha eadhon am Bàrd ag ràdh"./(translation):

"Perhaps the reader might think, concerning the foonote in the text that is at the end of this song, that it is Hugh, the heir to the Laird of Coll, that Mr. Maclean Sinclair meant, and about whom this story is related; and I am not even sure that this was not the poet's opinion as well. In the Book of the History of the Clan MacLean by J. P. MacLean, that author says that it was Hugh who performed this deed [related in the poem and in the note]. According to how the report has been put down in print, one would think that the MacLean and the MacDonald were in the Guards' Regiment together. Apart from the Regiment itself, this accords with the words of the poet in the seventh verse as they are put down here [in CC1 and CC2, rather than ONG; the verse was the seventh one in the Maclean Sinclair versions]; but in the Bood of the History of the MacLeans that Mr. Maclean Sinclair put out in theyear 1899, he tells this story in connection with the name of Red Alexander [i.e. Alexander MacLean, the 15th Laird of Coll, and father of Hugh, the subject of the poem], and says that they were in the Argyll *Fencibles*, with Alexander as a captain at the time.

"There is a large amendment in this verse that pertains to this matter as it appeared in the poet's own book [i.e. in ONG], and by looking at that verse as it was in the old book [i.e. ONG], and each version compared to the other, it can be understood how the meaning of some of the words can be cast into a different form by even one small syllable. [MacDougall largely repeats the passage as it appears here, at lines 225-240].

"The whole issue is whether it is "the son" no "the father" who "proved to be courageous and daring," [see line 226] and there is no doubt in the world that it was "the father" who was involved. The "Argyll Fencible Regiment", or the "Western Fencibles", as it was called at times, was raised in the year 1778, and was disbanded in 1783. Hugh Montgomery of Coilfield--after that, the 12th Earl Eglinton--was a Major in it, agu "Alexander MacLean" is one of the names which was a captain in it. There is no doubt in the world therefore that this was not the very regiment, and that it was not at some time within these five years [i.e. 1778-1783] that the events on which the Bard comments in this passage took place. Red Alexander was about twenty-four years of age when this regiment was raised, and many from Coll and Tiree went with him when it was raised; there is therefore no doubt that it was because of him in that the MacDonald got away in this way and who assisted in such an heroic manner, as even the Bard says. **226:** Maclean Sinclair versions have "'Tha" for "Bhi", which appears in ONG. The infinitive should be preceded by the particle "A", which was omitted in ONG, and this is marked with an apostrophe. **227:** Maclean Sinclair versions reverse this line and the next, and read "'S na h-Earraghàidh'lich àghmhor". ONG has "s na", interpreted here as a contraction of "anns na", "in the", and this is marked with an apostrophe. **228:** Maclean Sinclair versons replace this line with "Mar rinn e a dhearbhadh". ONG has "phàirti", which is interpreted as the english loan word "party", and is therefore put in italics. **229:** Maclean Sinclair versions read "Gu 'n gheàrr e bho 'n taileabart". ONG has "nuas"; the particle "a" which precedes "nuas" is omitted, and is likely elided by the preceding vowel, and this is marked with an apostrophe. ONG has "hailbeart", and while "taileabart" is the Gaelic rendering of

the english word "halbert", the poet appears simply to us the english loan word, and this is marked by italics. **230:** Maclean Sinclair versions replace "don mhuinntir" with "dhiubhsan". The "do 'n" used in ONG would be "de 'n", "of the", in standard Gaelic, but as noted elsewhere, "do" is generally used in place of "de" in the poet's dialect. The reference in this line is to the MacDonald referred to in the footnote to Maclean Sinclair versions. **231:** Maclean Sinclair versions omit the relative pronoun "a" before the verb. **232:** Maclean Sinclair versions read "Chan fharraideadh e fàbhar". "Fhairdeadh" is an acceptable form of the conditional of "farraid", to enquire, "farraideadh". **233:** Maclean Sinclair versions reverse the order of this and the next line, and this line reads "Am maidsear Montgomri". ONG has "MacComari", and the spelling used by MacDougall in his note is preferred. **234:** Maclean Sinclair versions read "A' labhairt le feirg, thuirt". ONG has omits the particle "a'" before the verbal noun "labhairt"; it would have been elided by the preceding vowel, but is marked here with an apostrophe. **235:** Maclean Sinclair versions have "Ma 's duin' thu mar d' ainm". **236:** ONG and Maclean Sinclair versions omit the particle "a" before "màireach"; it would be elided by the preceding vowel, and is marked with an apostrophe. **237:** Maclean Sinclair versions read "Gu 'n sheas e mar dh' earbainn". ONG omits the relative pronoun "a" before the verb "dh' earbainn", and this is marked with an apostrophe. **238:** ONG has "chinn-airgiod"; as "airgead" should be in the genitive case, the Maclean Sinclair version is preferred. The aspiration of "chlaidheamh", together with the context, implies that it is preceded by the third person singular masculine possessive pronoun "a", which would be elided by the preceding vowel, and this is marked with an apostrophe. Maclean Sinclair versions slenderise "claidheamh", without reason, as it is a masculine noun in the dative, not genitive, case. **239:** Maclean Sinclair versions read "'S le cùram á eanchainn". The context suggests that "eanchainn" should be preceded by the third person singular masculine possessive pronoun "a", "his", but this would be elided by the preceding vowel, and this is marked with an apostrophe. **240:** This line is omitted in Maclean Sinclair versions. ONG has ". . . air a phàirc". It is not clear whether the "a" is the third person singular masculine possessive pronoun "a", "his", or the dative masculine article "a'"; arguably, the latter makes somewhat more sense in the context. **244:** ONG omits the relative pronoun "A", which should precede the verb at the start of the line, and this is marked with an apostrophe. ONG has "Bh' ann 's na . . .", which is interpreted as "Bh' anns na . . ." **245:** ONG has "na 'n", which, in the context, is clearly the genitive plural article "nan". **246:** ONG omits the relative pronoun "A", which should precede the verb at the start of the line, and this is marked with an apostrophe. ONG has "gu 'n", which, in the context, appears to be the preposition "gun", "without", rather than the conjunction. **248:** ONG has "Bho na . . .", which is interpreted as "Bhon a . . .". **250:** ONG omits the particle "A'" before the verbal noun at the start of this line, and this is marked with an apostrophe. ONG has “an carraid”; “an” is interpreted as a contraction of “ann an”, and is marked accordingly. ONG also has "na 'n", which, given the context, is likely not the genitive plural article "nan", but the dialectical "na", "no", "or" and the article "an", the "a" in which would be elided by the preceding vowel. **251:** ONG has "Chameroin". The Camerons were, like the MacLeans of Coll, another traditionally strongly Jacobite clan, and also apparently had close ties with the MacLeans of Coll. **253:** ONG omits the relative pronoun "A", which should precede the verb at the start of the line, and this is marked with an apostrophe. **254:** ONG has "dhiolail", and the meaning of this adjective, "diolail", is not altogether clear. I interpret it as deriving from the verb "dìol", "to avenge, revenge; pay, render; fill, satisfy. The references in this line and lines 255 and 256 is

clearly to the participation of the MacLeans in the last Jacobite uprising in 1745-46; the "George" referred to here is clearly to King George, the Hanoverian King of Great Britain, and the reference in line 256 is likely to Prince Charles Edward Stuart, "Bonnie Prince Charlie", rather than to his father, who for the Jacobites was the rightful king of Great Britain; the Prince, not his father, had been driven abroad, and upon his father's death, Jacobites would have recognised Prince Charles as King. **255:** ONG has "Gad". **257:** ONG has ". . . t iomradh". It is likely that this is a contraction of "do iomradh", "your report". **259:** ONG has "gu 'n", which, given the context, is the preposition "gun", "without", rather than the conjunction. **262:** ONG has "faichenan". **263:** ONG has "An cluinnte"; "An" is interpreted as a contraction of the prepositional phrase "Ann an". ONG has "foirm". "Foirm" means "form, manner, fashion", which does not make too much sense in the context of a reference to the drones of the bagpipe. More likely, this is "faram", "noise", or "fuirm", one of whose meanings is "noise". ONG has "na 'n"; given the context, this would clearly be the genetive plural article "nan". **264:** The aspiration of "mhacaibh" in ONG, together with the context, suggests that this is preceded by the third person singular masculine possessive pronoun "a"; it would be elided by the preceding vowel, and is therefore marked with an apostrophe. ONG has "ma thiomchioll"; the "ma" is likely a contraction of "mu a", "about his", and the elision of the vowel in "mu" is marked with an apostrophe. **266:** ONG has "Man", which is dialectical for the standard "Mun", "Before". ONG has "air aimsir"; "air", the preposition "on", does not make much sense here. The poet sometimes rendered the first person plural possessive pronoun "ar", "our", as "air", and this is the interpretation given here. **267:** The poet often uses "Na" for "No", "Or"; again, "man" is dialectical for "mun", "before". **268:** ONG simply has "Agus oighre . . ."; it may be that the indefinite noun "an heir", was intended, but it is likely that the third person singular masculine possessive pronoun, "a", "his", is implied, given the context; it would be elided by the preceding vowel, and is marked here with an apostrophe. ONG has "ga"; this is clearly the third person singular masculine pronoun object "'ga". **269:** ONG omits the particle "A'" before the verbal noun at the start of the line, and it is marked with an apostrophe. **270:** ONG has "fear an ionad", and the "an" is interpreted as a contraction of "ann an", "in", and this is marked with an apostrophe. ONG has "aonaghin". This is interpreted as "aon againn", and the aspiration of the "g" in "againn" is dialectal.

Alternative Versions: In the Maclean Sinclair versions, there are, in addition to the many emendations and other changes referred to in the line annotations, a number of changes to the overall structure of the poem. In the MacLean Sinclair versions, the following changes are made: (1) lines five to eight and thirteen to sixteen of verse 1 (lines 5-8, 13-16), lines one to twelve of verse 2 (lines 17-28), lines one to four and twelve to fifteen of verse 3 (lines 33-36, 44-47), lines five, six, eight and nine to twelve of verse 4 (lines 53, 54, 56, 57-60), lines one to four of verse 5 (lines 65-68), verse 6 (lines 81-96), lines one to eight of verse 7 (lines 97-104), lines nine to sixteen of verse 9 (lines 137-144), lines four to thirteen of verse 10 (lines 148-157), lines two aand four to seven of verse 11 (lines 162, 164-167), lines nine to twelve of verse 12 (lines 185-188), lines one to eight and thirteen to sixteen of verse 13 (lines 193-200, 205-208), lines five to nine of verse 14 (lines 213-217), verse 16 (lines 241-256), and verse 17 (lines 257-271) have all been omitted in Maclean Sinclair versions; (2) lines one to four and nine to twelve of verse 1, five lines which did not appear in ONG, and lines thirteen to sixteen of verse 2 were combined in that order to form a new verse one in Maclean Sinclair versions; (3) eight lines which did not appear in ONG, lines

five to eight in verse 3, lines nine to eleven in verse 3, and line sixteen in verse 3 were combined in that order to form a new verse two; (4) lines one to four, then line seven of verse 4, then three lines which did not appear in ONG, then lines thirteen to sixteen of verse 4, then lines five to eight of verse 5, were combined in that order to form a new verse three; (5) lines nine to sixteen of verse 5, then eight lines which did not appear in ONG, were combined to form a new verse four; (6) line one and three from verse 11, a line which did not appear in ONG, line eight from verse 11, lines one through eight of verse 12, and lines thirteen to sixteen of verse 12, were combined in that order to form a new verse five; (7) lines nine to sixteen of verse 11, a line which did not appear in ONG, and lines ten to sixteen of verse 14 were combined in that order to form a new verse six; (8) lines one to fifteen of verse 15 together with a final line which did not appear in ONG are combined to form a new verse seven; (9) three lines which did not appear in ONG, then line sixteen from verse 10, then four other lines which did not appear in ONG form the final eight lines of verse 9, which is also verse nine in Maclean Sinclair versions; (10) line fifteen from verse 10, a new line which did not appear in ONG, line fourteen from verse 10, another line which did not appear in ONG, lines one to three from verse 10, then eight lines which did not appear in ONG are combined in that order to form verse ten in Maclean Sinclair versions; and (11) lines nine to twelve in verse 13, lines one to four in verse 14, lines thirteen to sixteen in verse 7, and lines nine to twelve in verse 7, are combined to form a new verse eleven, which is the final verse in Maclean Sinclair versions. With these changes and omissions, the Maclean Sinclair versions contain 176 lines.

9. Do Raghnall Domhnallach, Tighearna Staffa

Tune: "Gur mise a tha gu fastalach"
No. of lines: 96
Sources: ONG, p. 40, MG15G/2/1, p. 32, CC1, p. 37, CC2, p. 39, 281
Date: Uncertain, but perhaps from as early as 1803-1807; see "context", below.
Context: The introduction to this song in CC1 and CC2 indicates that the song was composed when Ranald MacDonald, the Laird of Staffa, was involved in a law suit with a man named Robertson, who had caused harm to passengers on a vessel who were being brought to America ("Do Raonull Domhnullach Tighearna Stafa, an uair a bha e an lagh ris an Robastanach, airson eucoir a dheanamh air daoine bochda a bha e toirt do America"). Ranald MacDonald also held Ulva, and acquired Little Colonsay in 1801, Inchkenneth with Gribun, Mull, in 1803, and Burg and Gometra in 1807: see Jo Currie, *Mull: The Island and Its People* (Edinburgh: Birlinn, 2001), pp. 199-201, and especially p. 200. It is not clear when the events described in the poem or the alleged law suit took place, although Ranald and his brother Hector were 'helping poor cottars to move to America' and had in about 1803 apparently negotiated with an emigration agent, James Robertson of Prince Edward Island, for their accommodation: Jo Currie, at p. 269.

Ranald MacDonald (1777-1838) was the son of Colin MacDonald of Boisdale, and was of the Clanranald MacDonald gentry. Colin had made over Ulva and Staffa to Ranald on Ranald's reaching majority, and Ranald assumed the estate when his father died in 1800. Currie indicates that he was "a slim, comely young man, trained for the law, but, because of his position as proprietor of the popular island of Staffa, rather more interested in his role as a Highland host than his legal career" (p. 199).

Currie notes that he "found Ulva overpopulated with poor tenants, and arranged for some of them to go to America, although no documentation survives of the actual names or numbers" (p. 200). His estate's economy depended fairly heavily on the harvesting of kelp, though, and there is considerable evidence to suggest that, while trying to relieve the worst hardships imposed by overpopulation, he was generally keen on keeping his tenantry, and was, like other lairds, concerned about the high rate of emigration between about 1800 and 1807. Sir Walter Scott visited Ranald in Ulva in 1810, and gave a favourable account of the laird's management of his estates and his concern for his population, and both Scott and Necker de Saussure, who visited Ranald in 1807, compared him favourably to many of his neighbouring absentee landlords. He was apparently popular with his tenantry. Ranald married into wealth; in 1812, he married Miss Elizabeth Seton Steuart, the only daughter and heiress of Sir Henry Seton Steuart of Allanton. In the wake of the end of the Napoleonic wars in 1815, Ranald suffered considerable financial hardship, which apparently resulted in his bankruptcy in 1817, from which he escaped only due to his father in law. He was forced to sell off his lands, although the collapse and the large number of estates coming onto the market in the area after 1815 meant that it took some time to liquidate his holdings. See, generally, Currie, pp. 199-210.

Based on the foregoing, it is likely that the events in the poem took place in the first decade of the nineteenth century. Almost certainly, it would have been composed prior to Ranald's financial reversals, and given the lack of reference to a spouse, which would have been conventional in such praise poetry, it is likely that the poem predates Ranald's marriage in 1812. The most likely dates are between 1803, when Ranald apparently entered into relations with Robertson, and 1807, when the emigrations had apparently reached their peak.

Line Annotations:

1: Maclean Sinclair versions have "Gu 'n robh . . ."; while this correctly renders the conjunction, the "n" is omitted, as in ONG, as this likely reflects the pronunciation in the poet's dialect. **2:** Maclean Sinclair versions have "Dh' fheuch" and the infinitive "chluinntinn" rather than the conditional "chluinninn", as in ONG. **3:** Maclean Sinclair versions have "Ach bho nach . . .". ONG has "'S on nach"; the "n" in "on" appears to be superfluous. **4:** Maclean Sinclair versions have the standard "tuilleadh". ONG has "tàmh"; in Maclean Sinclair versions, the noun is slenderised, no doubt because Maclean Sinclair considered that "tàmh" was in a genetive relationship with "tuilleadh". While this would be the case in many dialects, this is not universal, particularly if "tuille" is understood to be an adverb rather than a noun, and therefore the treatment in ONG is left. **5:** Maclean Sinclair versions add the particle "a" to "nis". While this is correct, it appears that the "a" in "a nis" would be elided by the preceding vowel, and this is marked with an apostrophe. **6:** Maclean Sinclair versions have the standard infinitive "chur", but the spelling in ONG, "chuir", reflects the pronunciation in the poet's dialect, and is retained. **7:** Maclean Sinclair versions read "'S ann 'shaoileadh neach gu 'n d' fhalbh". ONG has "Bho 'n tha", which is interpreted as "Bhon a tha"; the omission of the relative pronoun "a" is marked with an apostrophe. **8:** Maclean Sinclair versions have the standard "de", "of", for the dialectical "do", which is retained. **9:** Maclean Sinclair versions have "Is" for "'S". **10:** ONG has "Gad". Maclean Sinclair versions have the standard "Ged" for the dialectical "Gad", and has the contraction "'n dràsd'". **11:** ONG has "Raonull" for the now-standard "Raghnall". **12:** Maclean Sinclair versions have "Dha" for "Ga" in ONG; this is interpreted as a contraction of "Aig a . . ." (and this is marked with an

apostrophe), rather than of "Do a", which seems to be Maclean Sinclair's interpretation. **13:** Maclean Sinclair versions have the standard "saothrachail", but the ONG spelling is retained, as it seems to more accurately reflect pronunciation in the poet's dialect. **14:** ONG has "na 'n", which is clearly the genitive plural article "nan". Maclean Sinclair versions contract "daoine" to "daoin'". ONG omits the relative pronoun "a" before the verb "tha", and this is marked with an apostrophe. **15:** ONG has "doibh". Maclean Sinclair versions have the standard "dhaibh" for the dialectical "doibh". **17:** Maclean Sinclair versions contract "dhuine" to "dhuin'". **19:** Maclean Sinclair versions have the standard "De", "Of", for the dialectical "Do". ONG has "a chruadail"; as the noun is in the genitive, the "a" is interpreted as the masculine genitive article "a'". **20:** ONG has "buannaich"; it is more likely that the poet intended the preterite "bhuannaich" (the treatment given in Maclean Sinclair versions) than the future, which, because of the relative pronoun "a" would be "buannaicheas" and would be aspirated in any case. **21:** Maclean Sinclair versions have "staoillear"; ONG omits the relative pronoun "a" before this future passive, and this is marked with an apostrophe. **22:** Maclean Sinclair versions have "dh' fhaighneachdas", which represents standard spelling; the spelling in ONG is preferred, as reflective of dialect; also "faoineachd" is a form of "faighnich": see Dwelly, p. 414. **23:** Maclean Sinclair versions replace "da", "to him", with "aig'", "at him" (or, "his"). **24:** Maclean Sinclair versions have the standard "Fhad 's". **25:** Maclean Sinclair versions have the standard "fear-lagha"; the genetive of lagh is pronounced "laghadh" in some dialects. As noted above, Ranald MacDonald was trained as a lawyer. **26:** Maclean Sinclair versions have ". . . bu dù sin dha". **28:** ONG has "Na"; this is clearly a contraction of "Ann a", "In his", and this is marked with an apostrophe. **29:** Maclean Sinclair versions replace this line with "Gur glan a dhearbh e 'fhiachalachd". **30:** ONG omits the relative pronoun "a" before the verb "sheas", and this is marked with an apostrophe. **31:** ONG has "na 'n", which, given the context, is clearly the genitive plural article "nan". **32:** Maclean Sinclair versions replace "A bh' air . . ." with "'S iad air . . .". **33:** ONG has "Na 'm", which is clearly the conditional conjuntion "Nam", as in Maclean Sinclair versions. Maclean Sinclair versions replace "eileanach" with "eile". **34:** Maclean Sinclair versions relace "Le . . ." with "Ann an . . .". ONG has "da", which Maclean Sinclair versions correctly interpret as a contraction of "do a", "d' a". **35:** Maclean Sinclair versions read "Bhiodh meas ac' air an iochdarain". **36:** Maclean Sinclair versions read "'Us dh' iobradh iad an spreidh". **37:** Maclean Sinclair versions replace this line with "Na 'm biodh iad mar bu chòir dhaibh". **38:** Maclean Sinclair versions replace this line with "Ann an tròcair, iochd, is eud". ONG has "'S a monadhchin . . ."; the noun is interpreted as "monaidhean", "hills", and "'S a" is interpreted as "'S am", "And their". **40:** Maclean Sinclair versions have "Mu 'ghuaillibh-san . . .". **41:** ONG has "gnomhach" for "gnothach". **42:** ONG has "Ni 's mò . . .". **44:** ONG has ". . . na dhiaghidh". "Diaigh" is a form of "dèidh", which I interpret here as a noun rather than as a preposition "after". While "dèidh" is most commonly interpreted as "wish, desire, longing; love, fondness", it can also mean "protector, defender", which I think makes somewhat more sense here. **45:** ONG has "na 'n", which, given the context, is clearly the genitive plural article "nan". **47:** ONG has "chunnaig"; the relative pronoun, "a" is omitted, and is marked with an apostrophe. ONG does not aspirate "càradh", as it should do, as "droch" causes aspiration. **50:** ONG has "ioriseal", and "na chàinnt"; the "na" is a contraction of "ann a", "ann his", and this is marked with an apostrophe. **52:** ONG has "air a pheann"; "a" could be interpreted as the dative masculine article "a'", or the third person singular male possessive pronoun "a", "his",

which is preferred here. **55:** ONG has "Ga d' tha . . .". **56:** ONG has "Gun d' thig . . ." This is clearly a future formation (the past would be "thàinig"), and is given the standard spelling, as this would not misrepresent the pronunciation implied in the poet's spelling. **58:** ONG has "Ga d' bhuighneadh . . ."; "Ga d'" is "Ged", "Although". **63:** ONG omits the particle "a" before the infinitive, and this is marked with an apostrophe. Although "cho" does not cause aspiration in standard Gaelic, it does in certain dialects, including the poet's. **64:** ONG has "Na", which is clearly the contraction of "Ann a", "In his", and this is marked with an apostrophe. **65:** Maclean Sinclair versions replace "dalma" with "eucorach". **66:** ONG has "thar a chuain"; "a" is clearly the masculine singular genitive article "a'". **67:** Maclean Sinclair replaces this line with "Gu dalma bhrist e 'chumhnantan". ONG has "orra", and while the poet usually used "orra" for "oirre", "on her/it", here the third person plural prepositional pronoun "orra" does seem to be intended. **68:** Maclean Sinclair versions have "'ga spùinneadh", and the standard "bhuap'" for the dialectical "bhuatha", contracted to "bhuath'" in ONG. **69:** Maclean Sinclair versions read "'Us b' éiginn dhaibh a sgrìobhadh dha". **70:** Maclean Sinclair versions omit "do" before "thill". It is likely that "an-uair" means unfavourable weather here. **71:** Maclean Sinclair versions read "B' e òrdagh do an stiùramaiche". ONG has "a" for "an"; it is likely that the "n" is not pronounced here in the poet's dialect. **72:** ONG has "A cùrsa"; the lack of aspiration suggests that the "A" is the third person singular feminine possessive pronoun "A", "Her"; Maclean Sinclair versions have "An", reflecting his interpretation of this as the article, with the "n" unpronounced, which is a possibility, given the pronunciation in the poet's dialect. ONG omits the particle"a", which should come before the infinitive, and this is marked with an apostrophe; Maclean Sinclair has the standard form of the infinitive "chur", but ONG is retained, as reflective of the poet's dialect. ONG has "ma 'n" for "mun"; Maclean Sinclair versions have "mu 'n". **75:** Maclean Sinclair versions have "Chuir e gu mòr an . . .". **76:** Maclean Sinclair versions add "'S" at the beginning of this line, and replaces "bha" with "dh' fhan". **78:** ONG has "na dhòrn"; "na" is a contraction of "ann a", "in his", and this is marked with an apostrophe. **79:** Maclean Sinclair versions have "'S e maoidheadh . . .". ONG omits the particle "a" before the infinitive "thoirt", and this is marked with an apostrophe. ONG has "air a cheann", and the "a" could be interpreted either as the masculine dative singular article "a'" or as the third person singular masculine possessive pronoun "a", "his". Maclean Sinclair has the standard "dhiubh" for the dialectical "diubh". **80:** ONG has "Mar", but the context suggests "Mur". Maclean Sinclair versions replace "le 'n" with "'gan". **81:** ONG has "Raonull" for "Raghnall". **82:** Maclean Sinclair versions read "Mu olc 's mu sheòl na béist'". ONG has "a bhèist"; as "bèist" is a feminine noun, the "a" would appear to be the feminine nominative article "a'". **84:** ONG omits the particle "a" before the infinitive "bhith", and this is indicated with an apostrophe. ONG has "fodh mhèinn", and while the preposition "fo" would cause aspiration by itself, given the context, it is likely that the third person singular possessive pronoun "a", "his", is implied; it would be elided by the preceding vowel, and is marked here with an apostrophe. **85:** ONG has "Na 'm"; this appears to be the conditional conjunction "Nam". ONG has "ga 'n", which, given the context, would appear to the be third person plural pronoun object "'gan", "at their". ONG has "commandachadh", which appears to be the english word "command" turned into a verbal noun, and is therefore italicised. **88:** ONG has "A bh' ann"; this is interpreted as the noun "A' bhann", "the bond". **89:** Maclean Sinclair versions have "Gu dian na aghaidh thòisich e". ONG has "a sin", which should be "an sin", but the "n" is apparently not pronounced here in the poet's dialect, and this is marked with

an apostrophe. **91:** Maclean Sinclair versions have "'S cha sguir e dheth 's am fògrar e". ONG has "gu fog' rar e"; it is likely that the "gu" is the conjunction "gum", and that the "m" is not pronounced in the poet's dialect; this omission is marked with an apostrophe. The "e" seems to refer to Robertson. **92:** Maclean Sinclair has "Gu còrsa". ONG has "Air chòrs a", and has "Bhotani Bèi", which is the Australian penal colony "Botany Bay". **93:** ONG has "Gu s a faigh"; the "a" should be "am", but again the "m" is apparently not pronounced here in the poet's dialect, and this is marked by an apostrophe. ONG has "ailghios". **95:** ONG has "laogha" for "lugha". ONG has "na thoillteannas"; the aspiration of "toillteanas" suggests that "na" is a contraction of "ann a", "in his", and this is marked with an apostrophe. **96:** ONG has "Am bàul bhi . . ."; the particle "a" is omitted before the infinitive, and is marked with an apostrophe. ONG has "ga chuir", and "ga" is the third person singular masculine pronoun object, and is so marked with an apostrophe.

Alternative Versions: In the Maclean Sinclair versions, there are, in addition to the many emendations and other changes referred to in the line annotations, a number of changes to the overall structure of the poem. In the MacLean Sinclair versions, the following changes are made: (1) verses 6 (lines 41-48), 7 (lines 49-56), and 8 (lines 57-64), line two of verse 9 (line 66), line one of verse 10 (line 73), lines three to eight in verse 11 (lines 83-88), and lines five to eight of verse 12 (lines 93-96) are all omitted in Maclean Sinclair versions; (2) line one of verse 9 (line 65) is followed by lines two to eight of verse 10 (lines 74-80) to create a new verse five in Maclean Sinclair versions; (3) lines seven and eight of verse 9, then lines five and six of verse 9, then lines three and four of verse 9, then two lines which did not appear in ONG or in the MSS are combined in that order to create a new verse six in Maclean Sinclair versions; (4) lines one and two of verse 11, together with two lines which did not appear in ONG or in the MSS, together with lines one to four in verse 12 are combined in that order to create a new verse seven in Maclean Sinclair versions; (5) verse 5 is verse eight in Maclean Sinclair versions; and (6) an entirely new verse nine, which does not appear in ONG or in the MSS, is added as a final verse in Maclean Sinclair versions. With these changes and omissions, the Maclean Sinclair versions contain 72 lines.

10. Duanag, do Mhaighstir Iain MacGilleain, Ministear Chola

Tune: "'S iad mo rùn na fir ghealadh"
No. of lines: 54
Sources: ONG, p. 44, MG15G/2/1, p. 36, CC1, p. 40, CC2, p. 41
Date: About 1813
Context: The introduction to CC1, CC2, ONG and the MSS simply indicate that this is a song to John MacLean, the Minister of Coll. Based on the internal evidence from lines 43 to 45, it appears that the poem was composed at about the time of the subject's installation as minister of Coll and about the time of his marriage, which, based on lines 46-48, appeared to be imminent. *Fasti Ecclesiae Scoticanae* contains very little information on this Minister. His predecessor, Neil MacLean, was transferred to the Small Isles as of 16 June, 1811, and that John MacLean was installed at some point in the year 1813. It records that John MacLean was succeeded by Archibald Nichol in the year 1836, but provides no other biographical information at all: Hew Scott, D.D., ed., *Fasti Ecclesiae Scoticanae: The Succession of Ministers*

in the Church of Scotland from the Reformation, vol. IV, Synods of Argyll, and of Perth and Stirling (Edinburgh: Oliver and Boyd, 1923).

Line Annotations:
2: ONG has "thar an aiseag . . .". "Aiseag" should be in the genitive, as in Maclean Sinclair versions. **3:** ONG has "Go". ONG omits the relative pronoun "a" before the verb "tha", and this is marked with an apostrophe. ONG has "Airleoid" and Maclean Sinclair versions have "Airileòid"; this appears to be Àiridh Leòid", "MacLeod's shieling", on the southwest side of Coll, near Tràigh Ghrianaig; given the context, this must be where the manse was located. **4:** ONG has "sibhealt'". **5:** As this verse seems to form a clause which refers to line 4, the relative pronoun "A", omitted in ONG, would be required at the start of the line, and this is marked with an apostrophe. **6:** Maclean Sinclair versions read "Tha e eireachdail, grinn air gach seòl". ONG has "ann 's", which is clearly "anns". **7:** ONG has "na thighinn"; "na" appears to be a contraction of "ann a", "in his", and this is marked with an apostrophe. "Tighinn" can, in some circumstances, mean "speech", but the more common meaning is preferred here, not least because the reference in the next line to speech would be superfluous (although it must also be borne in mind that the repetition of nouns and adjectives with similar meanings in order to emphasise the quality is common in Gaelic praise poetry). **8:** ONG has "na bhruigheann"; the "na" is again a contraction of "ann a", "in his", and this is marked with an apostrophe. Maclean Sinclair versions have "'na bruidheann". While "bruigheann" in ONG is clearly the noun "bruidheann", "speech, talk, conversation", this is a feminine noun and should therefore be slenderised after "'na". **10:** Maclean Sinclair versions have "athneachadh"; while this is the standard rendering of the noun, the poet is indicating in ONG that the final syllable is dropped, for metrical purposes, and this is indicated here with an apostrophe. It is also likely that, although not indicated in ONG, the third person singular masculine possessive pronoun "a", "his", is implied before "nàdar", but would be elided by the preceding vowel, and this is marked with the apostrophe. **11:** Maclean Sinclair versions have "Gur a h-ann . . .", and the standard "de 'n", "of the", for the dialectical "do 'n" in ONG. **12:** Maclean Sinclair versions replace this line with "'Thug do dh' Alb' iomadh sàr bu mhòr glòir". ONG has "da 'n", which is interpreted as "do an", "to their", and it would appear that the "o" in the preposition "do" is elided, and this is marked with an apostrophe. **13:** ONG has "shinns'rreabh", an archaic form of the dative or, occasionally, the genitive plural. Maclean Sinclair versions have "sinnsreadh", "ancestry". The noun does not appear to be in a dative or genitive relationship, and therefore Maclean Sinclair's emendation is accepted here. **15:** ONG has "Ga 'm", which Maclean Sinclair versions interpret as "Dha 'm", the contraction of the prepostion "do", "for, to" and the relative pronoun "am". It is as likely that the "G" is a contraction of "Aig", and this is the interpretation given here. **16:** Maclean Sinclair versions replace "na fir" with "an dream". **17:** ONG has "dhiu". Maclean Sinclair versions add "'S", the contraction of "Agus", "And", at the start of this line. **18:** ONG has "Ga 'n robh . . .". Maclean Sinclair versions interpret this as the conjunction "Gu 'n robh . . .". Given the context, "Ga 'n" is interpreted as the contraction of the preposition "Aig", combined with the relative pronoun "an", to form "'G an robh", "For whom". "Dubhairt" is a reference to Duart Castle in Mull, the traditional seat of the main branch of the Macleans, with the result that the subject of th poem must have been a member of this family. **19:** Maclean Sinclair versions contract "dùbailte" to "dùbailt'". **20:** Maclean Sinclair versions have "Ris" for "Do"; ONG omits the particle "a'" before the dialectical version of the verbal noun "gràitinn", and this is

marked with an apostrophe. **21:** ONG omits the relative pronoun "A" at the beginning of this line; it is added in Maclean Sinclair versions, and is marked here with an apostrophe. ONG has "sa 'n", which appears to be the contraction of "anns an", "in the", and this is marked with an apostrophe. **22:** Maclean Sinclair versions add "'S", the contraction of "Agus", "And", at the start of the line; they also have "r' a" for "ri" in ONG; this is a correct interpretation of what is clearly the contraction of "ri a", "to his"--it is the third person singular masculine possessive pronoun "a", "his" which would cause aspiration of the noun--but it is likely that "a" is elided in the poet' s dialect, as indicated in ONG, and this is marked with an apostrophe. **23:** This is a reference to the chief of Clan Cameron; the subject of the poem is apparently also related to this important Highland noble family. **24:** Maclean Sinclair versions read "Buidheann Abrach tha calm' air gach dòigh". ONG uses "gleòs", which means "lamentation", and does not seem particularly appropriate here. The word is interpreted to mean "gleus", "order, manner, trim; means; activity, action; readiness, preparation", which makes more sense. The spelling may represent the pronunciation in the poet's dialect, but is likely meant to preserve the end rhyme, in which the last vowel in the third line of each verse of the poem is a long "ò". The Maclean Sinclair version preserves this rhyme. **25:** Maclean Sinclair versions read "'S gun do rinn iad sinn fhiachainn". **26:** ONG omits the relative pronoun "a" which should precede the verb "bha", and this is marked with an apostrophe. ONG also has "Rioghachd 's", which is interpreted as a contraction of "rioghachdsa", and the dropping of the final vowel is marked with an apostrophe. ONG has "ga riasladh"; the "ga" is clearly the third person singular masculine object pronoun, and this is therefore marked with an apostrophe. **27:** ONG has "Eòbhan". Maclean Sinclair versions have "bliadh'". **28:** ONG has "gu 'n dibear'"; "gu 'n" appears to be the preposition "gun", without, and "dibear'" is "dibeart", "fault", although the poet clearly does not pronounce the final "t" in the noun, and this is marked with an apostrophe. **29:** ONG has "Ann 's", which is clearly "Anns", "In"; it also has "bho na . . .", which is clearly "bhon a . . .". **30:** ONG has "gu 'n", which, given the context and the aspiration of the noun which follows, is the preposition "gun", "without". **31:** Maclean Sinclair versions have "Tha e ionnsaichte, fiosrach". **32:** Maclean Sinclair versions have "Tha e caoimhneil, làn misnich". ONG has "'sa misnich"; the "'sa" causes no aspiration, but does cause slenderisation of the noun "misneach", suggesting that the noun is preceded by a preposition. Given the spelling in ONG, the "'sa" is therefore interpreted as a contraction of "agus am", "and in", and this is marked with an apostrophe "'s am". **33:** ONG has "i 's mist". Maclean Sinclair versions have the standard "a's misd'". ONG has "ga chòir"; the "ga" is interpreted as a contraction of "aig a", "at his", or in this case "in his", and this is marked with an apostrophe. **34:** ONG has "gaoinne", which Maclean Sinclair interprets, correctly in my view, as "gainne", "insufficiency". Maclean Sinclair versions replace the dialectical "na" with the standard "no", "or". **35:** Maclean Sinclair versions replace the dialectical "mi-thur" with the standard "miodhair". **36:** ONG has "ma 'n". Maclean Sinclair versions replace this with "mu 'n". **37:** Maclean Sinclair versions replace "B'e" with "'S e", and have "féille" for "fèile". **39:** Maclean Sinclair versions have "'S gur-a math . . ."; they also have "r' a" for "ri" in ONG, and while this is a correct interpretation of what is clearly the contraction of "ri a", "to his"--it is the third person singular masculine possessive pronoun "a", "his" which would cause aspiration of the noun--it is likely that "a" is elided in the poet' s dialect, as indicated in ONG, and this is marked with an apostrophe. **40:** Maclean Sinclair versions have "b' aite". **41:** ONG omits the particle "a" which should precede the infinitive "bhith", and this is marked with an

apostrophe. **42:** ONG has "stìpain", which is clearly the english loan word "stipend", and while Maclean Sinclair's orthography is preferred, it is marked in italics to indicate an English borrowing. ONG has "na smò", which is clearly a contraction of the comparative "nas motha", and is marked as such with an apostrophe. Maclean Sinclair has "ni's mò", which may be a truer representation of the poet's dialect. **45:** ONG omits the particle "a" before the infinitive "thighinn", (rendered as "thigh'nn" in ONG), and this is marked with an apostrophe. The "E", "He", or here "It", clearly refers to the agreement of the clergy referred to in line 43, which is coming to him, "'uige", referring to the subject of the poem. ONG has "uige", which is a contraction of "thuige", "to him", and this reflects the pronunciation in the poet's dialect and is marked with an apostrophe. **46:** Maclean Sinclair versions change this line almost completely, to "'S gu 'm bu mhath leam an déidh sin". ONG omits the particle "a" before the infinitive "bhith", which would be elided by the preceding vowel, and is therefore marked with an apostrophe. ONG also omits the particle "a" in "a-rithist", which would also be elided by the preceding vowel sound, and this is also marked with an apostrophe. ONG has "dhèigh". **47:** Maclean Sinclair versions read "E bhith pòsda ri cèile". ONG has "Air a phòsadh"; given the context, which is clearly a passive construction, the "a" is interpreted as "a", "his", the third person singular masculine possessive pronoun. **48:** Maclean Sinclair versions have "'N tè". ONG has "ge b' e òigh"; Maclean Sinclair versions emend to "ge b'i òigh", and as the reference is to a maiden, "òigh", this emendation to the past tense feminine is accepted. **49:** ONG has "na theaghlach"; given the aspiration of the noun, "na" is clearly a contraction of "ann a", "in his", and this is marked with an apostrophe. **50:** ONG has "o dhaoine". Although the preposition "o", "from" could cause aspiration, it is likely, given the context, that the third person singular masculine possessive pronoun "a", "his", is implied here, and would be elided by the preceding vowel, and this is marked with an apostrophe. **51:** ONG omits the particle "A", which should precede the infinitive at the beginning of this line, and this is marked with an apostrophe. ONG has "faolidh", which is clearly the adverb "faoilidh". ONG has "air chòir", which would appear to mean "as usual". **53:** ONG omits the particle "a" in "a-nis", and this is marked with an apostrophe. **54:** ONG has "sgur"; this is clearly the verbal noun, and the particle "a'" is omitted as it would be elided by the preceding vowel, and this is indicated with an apostrophe. ONG has "'n còr", which is interpreted here as "an còrr", "the rest", which seems appropriate in the context.

Alternative Versions: In the Maclean Sinclair versions, in addition to the many emendations and other changes referred to in the line annotations, verses 10, 15, 17 and 18 are omitted. In Maclean Sinclair versions, the last line of each verse is repeated; in ONG, the first line of the verse is repeated at the end of the verse, but the line is not repeated in full in ONG or here. With these changes and omissions, the Maclean Sinclair versions contain 56 lines (again, this is because the repeated third line was counted, whereas here the repeated first line is not).

11. Duanag do Chaileig Bhig

Tune: None given in any of the sources
No. of lines: 24
Sources: CC1, p. 42, CC2, p. 43.
Date: Uncertain.

Context: The introduction to this song in CC1 and CC2 contains the following information: "Rinneadh an duanag so do Mhòir NicGhilleathain, nighean Dhòmhnuill Chùbair, bràthair a' Bhàird. Cha robh innte ach caileag mu dheich bliadhna dh' aois. Bha i a' fuireach an àite a seanar, athair a' Bhàird."/"This little song was made for Marion MacLean, the daughter of Donald "the Cooper", the brother of the poet. She was only a little girl of about ten years of age at the time. She was staying at her grandfather's place, the father of the poet, at the time". As this song does not appear in ONG and as I have not been able to find it in the MSS, the Maclean Sinclair versions are the only ones extant; given the editorial changes made to other poems, these versions must be treated with caution.

Line Annotations:
4: Maclean Sinclair versions have "ga d'"; it is likely that this is "gu do", "to your", and is marked accordingly. **6:** Maclean Sinclair versions have "a 's", "troimh 'n". **8:** Maclean Sinclair versions have "Bho 'n"; they omit the relative pronoun "a" which should precede the verb "rinn", and this is marked with an apostrophe. Maclean Sinclair versions have "dhuit", but as this follows the consonant "n", it would be pronounced "duit" in the poet's dialect. **9:** Maclean Sinclair versions omit the relative pronoun "a" which should precede the verb "thèid", and this is marked with an apostrophe. "Ann ad" is a contraction of "ann do", "in your", and this is marked with an apostrophe. **11:** Port Ban is at the eastern end of Tiree, in the township of Caolas, the poet's home township. **12:** Maclean Sinclair versions have "No", but as the poet consistently used the dialectical "na" for "or", this has been changed to reflect this. Cùl-Bhòdaidh is in Balephuil, Tiree. **15:** Maclean Sinclair versions have "aig air"; "aig" appears to be the prepositional pronoun "aige", "at him", and the final "e" would likely be elided by the subsequent vowel, and this is marked with an apostrophe. **19:** Maclean Sinclair versions have the standard "de", "of", but the poet consistently used "do", which is preferred in his dialect, and this has been changed to reflect this. **21:** The Maclean Sinclair versions omit the relative pronoun before "tha", and this is marked. **23:** Maclean Sinclair versions have "r' a"; the poet tended to elide the "a" when the preposition "ri" was followed by the third person singular male possessive pronoun "a", and this has been changed to reflect this. **24:** Maclean Sinclair versions omit the relative pronoun "a" before the verb "bhios", and this is marked with an apostrophe.

Alternative Versions: As noted, the only versions of this poem are those found in CC1 and CC2.

12. An Gàidheal am-measg nan Gall

Tune: None given, although likely the tune which matches the first line of the chorus, "Och, o, a' rùin, gur tu th' air m' aire"
No. of lines: 36
Sources: ONG, p. 64, MG15G/2/1, p. 59, *An Gàidheal*, Vol. 1, p. 10 (Dara mìos at t-Sàmhraidh, 1871), CC1, p. 43, CC2, p. 44, FC, p. 29, *MT*, Vol. 6, No. 35, p. 280 (25 Feb., 1898).
Date: Unclear from either text or other sources, but as it appears in ONG, it is clearly made while the poet was still in Tiree, and before 1818.

Context: The introduction to ONG, which follows the introduction in the MSS, provides the following information: "Do dh' Aonghas MacNeil, an uair a dh' fhalbh e dh' ionnsuidh na buanadh, agus e g' innse mar a dh' éirich dha, le Iain MacGilleain, mar gu 'm b' e féin a dheanadh e"/"To Angus MacNeil, when he left for the harvest, and with him relating what happened to him, by John MacLean, as if he himself [i.e. Angus MacNeil] had made it". The introduction to CC1 and CC2 provides a little more information: "Rinneadh an t-òran so do Aonghas MacNèill, gille mhuinntir Bharra. Bha e 'na sgalaig aig Ailein MacGhilleathain athair a' Bhàird ré dha no trì bhliadhnaichean. Dh' fhàg e Ailein is chaidh e do 'n Ghalldachd a dh' ionnsaidh na buana. Nuair a thill e air ais do Thir-ithe thòisich e air iarraidh air a' Bhàrd òran a sgrìobhadh dha air leannan a bha aige ann an Cana. Chaidh an t-òran a dheanamh, ach cha do phòs Aonghas Catriona NicLeòid. Thréig e i airson seann mhaighdinn leis an d' fhuair e beagan airgid"/"This song was made for Angus MacNeil, a lad of Barra people. He was a labourer for Allan MacLean, the father of the poet, for two or three years. He left Allan and went to the Lowlands to get work at the harvest. When he came back to Tiree he started asking the poet to write a song for him for a sweetheart he had in Canna. The song was made, but Angus did not marry Catherine MacLeod [presumably, the name of the Canna woman]. He left her for an old maid with whom he got a little money."

Line Annotations:

1: Maclean Sinclair versions have ". . . gur-a tu . . ." at lines 1 to 3. **3:** Maclean Sinclair versions have "Gur tu mo rùn gur-a tu th' air m' aire". **5:** Maclean Sinclair versions add "m'", a contraction of the first person singular possessive pronoun, before "aineoil". **6:** Maclean Sinclair versions have "bu mhath . . ." for "is math . . .". ONG has "sa 'n", which is a contraction of "anns an", "in the", and is marked accordingly. **7:** ONG omits the relative pronoun "a" before the verb "bha", and this is marked **8:** Maclean Sinclair versions have "tha" for "bha". Maclean Sinclair versions have "Cana" for "Canna", and ONG has "Canna"; the standard form is used here, partly because it is consistent with the sound pattern at the end of the last line of each of the other verses. **10:** ONG has "An"; this is a contraction of the prepositional phrase "Ann an", and is marked accordingly. Maclean Sinclair versions read "'S an deachaidh m' Brach 'n uair 'bha mi 'm leanabh". **12:** Maclean Sinclair versions have the standard "dhomh" for "domh". **13:** ONG omits the relative pronoun "a" before the verb "bha", and this is marked with an apostrophe. Atypically, ONG uses the standard "mu 'n", "before", and also atypically, Maclean Sinclair versions have the dialectical form usually employed by the poet, "ma 'n". **14:** Maclean Sinclair versions have "A' togail ghàradh . . .". **15:** Maclean Sinclair versions have "Ach . . ." for "Gum . . ." at the start of this line. ONG omits the particle "a" which should precede the infinitive, "bhith", and this is marked. Maclean Sinclair inserts the first person singular possessive pronoun "mo", "my", before "barail"; ONG has "mealta bharail". The noun "barail", a feminine noun, is in the nominative case here, and is aspirated presumably because the feminine article "a'" had preceded it; the article may have been omitted in ONG because it would be elided by the final vowel of the preceding adjective, and this is marked. **16:** Maclean Sinclair versions have ". . . taing nan Gallaibh". ONG omits the particle "a" which should precede the infinitive "bhith", and this is marked. ONG has "sa 'n", which is a contraction of "anns an", "in the", and this is marked, and also has "na 'n" before "Gallaibh", which is the genitive plural article "nan". **17:** Maclean Sinclair versions have ". . . bhuaite 'm sgalag". ONG has "bhuaith' am . . .", indicating the poet's view that the final vowel in

"bhuaithe" would be elided, not the vowel in "am"; in the context, "am" would appear to be a contraction of "ann mo", "in my", and is marked accordingly, and as "sgalag" is a feminine noun, it should be slenderised, as it is in ONG. **19:** The "am" which precedes "Beurla" cannot be an article; as it is a feminine noun, the article would be "a'" and would cause aspiration. Thus, the "am" is a contraction of either "ann am", the indefinite form "in", or "ann am", "in their". In either case, the contraction is marked. **20:** The "an" which precedes Gàidhlig" cannot be the article; as the noun is feminine, the article would be "a'" and would cause aspiration. The "an" is therefore a contraction of "ann an", the indefinite form "in", and this is marked with an apostrophe. **21:** Maclean Sinclair versions have ". . . seòl an arain", whereas ONG has ". . . seòl a h-arrain". Maclean Sinclair interprets "arraign" as the genitive form of "aran", "bread", or more likely here, given the context, "livelihood", preceded by the article "an", presumably assuming that ONG was erroneous. I interpret "a h- . . ." as the third person singular feminine possessive pronoun, "her" or "its", which I interpret here as referring to "Galldachd", the Lowlands, referred to in the preceding verse as the place the young Barraman went to make some money. Finally, ONG omits the particle "a'" before the verbal noun "còrdadh"; it is presumably elided by the preceding vowel, but is marked. **22:** ONG omits the particle "A" before the infinitive "Bhith" at the start of this line, and the verbal noun particle "a'" before "falbh", and both are marked. **23:** Maclean Sinclair has the conditional "nach faighinn" for "nach faigh mi", and the standard "neo" for the dialectical "na", "or". **24:** ONG has "stabull ghearran", the genitive plural of "gearran", "a gelding"; however, the genitive singular "gearrain", preserves the pattern of end-rhymes, and this is accordingly emended. **25:** ONG omits the relative pronoun "a" before the verb "nì", and this is marked. **26:** Maclean Sinclair versions remove the final "a" in "Ghallda". ONG has ". . . air meallaidh", which Maclean Sinclair interprets as ". . . ar mealladh". If "mealladh" is in a genitive relationship with "an geall", which it appears to be, the slenderisation in ONG is appropriate. The context, however, suggests that Maclean Sinclair versions are correct in interpreting "air" as the first person plural possessive pronoun "our"; the poet often used "air" for "ar", and the standard form "ar", is retained, to avoid confusion with the common preposition "air", "on". **27:** Maclean Sinclair versions add "'n", which appears to be a contraction of the third person plural possessive pronoun "their", before "nadir", which seems to be a sensible emendation, given the context. It is likely that both the vowel and consonant in "an", "their" would have been elided, by the preceding vowel and subsequent consonant, and that the pronunciation of "an" would have affected the rhythm. The omission is therefore marked with an apostrophe. ONG has "cànmhuinn", which Maclean Sinclair versions correctly interpret as "cànain"; nonetheless, "cànmhuinn" is an acceptable form of "cànain" (see, for example, Dwelly, at p. 159), and probably reflects the poet's dialect, and is therefore retained. **28:** The "am" which precedes "theangaidh" is interpreted as a contraction of "ann mo", "in my", which is marked. This explains both the aspiration and slenderisation of the noun. **29:** Maclean Sinclair has "thar cuan". This is incorrect, as the preposition "thar" takes the genitive, and "chuan" is the genitive plural, "seas"; the genetive singular would have been "cuain". **30:** Maclean Sinclair versions have "'Us" for "Is". **31:** Maclean Sinclair has "*Ca' der parish*", treating both words as english loan words, whereas ONG has "Càdar paraist'", and while the first word still seems to be an English loan word, presumably for Cadder, a parish to the north of Glasgow, "paraist'" is a contraction of the Gaelic "parasite", "parish", and therefore only the first word is italicised to indicate its status as a loan word. **32:** ONG simply has ". . . a àite seallaidh"; Maclean Sinclair

interprets the "a" as the preposition "à", "out of, from", and this is accepted here. **34:** Maclean Sinclair versions add "'S", the contraction of "Agus", to the start of this line. The line is explained by the introduction to the poem in CC1 and CC2, and is significant because, we are told, it was the wealth of another, less attractive woman that drew him away from this Catherine MacLeod. **36:** Maclean Sinclair has "De", "Of", for the dialectal "Do", and has "o" for "bho".

Alternative Versions: In the Maclean Sinclair versions, there are no other changes than those indicated in the line annotations. As Maclean Sinclair versions did not omit any of the verses, they also contain 36 lines.

Recorded Versions:

This song has been recorded by Mary Jane Lamond, of Glendale, Cape Breton, on a commercial recording, *Mary Jane Lamond, Stòras*, (turtlemusik, 2005, 02-06363), track 9. In the liner notes, the singer indicates that she learned the song from the singing of Peter MacLean, "Peadair 'Jack' Pheadair", of Rear Christmas Island, Cape Breton County, Cape Breton, N.S. Mr. MacLean is a native Gaelic speaker, and one of the last remaining exponents of a traditional singing style from his district. His mother was a well-known singer who had a large store of songs current in the late nineteenth and first half of the twentieth century in the Christmas Island district, and Mr. MacLean may have acquired the air from her. Christmas Island was settled primarily by Barra Gaels. The version sung by Mary Jane Lamond follows closely the version in CC2. Mary Jane Lamon sings the chours and five verses, and these are based closely on verses 1, 3, 6, 7 and 8 in CC2, in that order. Mary Jane Lamond's version differs from CC2 in the following respects: **Chorus: Lines 1, 2,** omit Och. **Line 2,** *a ruin* for *a ghaoil*, **Line 3,** *Tu-fhèin a* for *Gur tu mo*, omit *'s*, *a* before *ruin*. **Line 4,** omit *'S*; **Verse 1: Line 4**, *Dha 'n* for *Do 'n*; **Verse 6: Line 2**, *mealladh* for *meallaidh*. **Verse 7: Line 1**, *dha m'* for *gu m'*; **Verse 8: Line 2**, omit *'S*, **Line 4,** *Dhe 'n* for *De 'n*.

A version of this song was recorded by Seumas Watson, of Queensville, Cape Breton, from the singing of Peter MacLean, "Peadar 'Jack' Pheadair", at the Nova Scotia Highland Village in 2004, and Mr. Watson kindly permitted me to hear this recording. The version sung by Peter MacLean also follows closely the version in CC2. Peter MacLean sings the chorus, and four verses, and these are based closely on verses 6, 4, 8 and 7, in that order. Not surprisingly, given that Mary Jane Lamond apparently learned the song from Peter MacLean's singing, the air is essentially the same. Peter MacLean's version differs from CC2 in the following respects: **Chorus: Lines 1,, 2,** Omit *Och*, **Line 1,** *'s gur e tu* for *gur a tu th'*, **Line 2,** *a ruin, 's gur e tu* for *a ghaoil, gur a tu th'*, **Line 3,** *Tu fhèin, a rùn, 's gur e tu* for *Gur tu mo rùn, 's gur a tu th'*; **Verse 6: Line 1,** *dhan* for *do 'n*, **Line 3,** *Gallda* for *Ghallaich*, **Line 4,** *am theanga* for *amd theangaidh*; **Verse 4: Line 2,** omits *Ach*, *dhan* for *do 'n*, **Line 4,** *Barraidh* for *Barra*; **Verse 8: Line 1**, Omits *Is*, **Line 3,** *gun bhòid, gun bhearra* for *gun bhòsd gun bharrachd*; **Verse 7: Line 1,** *far* for *thar*, **Line 4,** Omit *'S* at the start of the line, *às àite sealladh* for *á àite seallaidh*. When asked about the story behind the song, Peter MacLean thought that the poet composed it while in Canada to a woman back in Scotland. He says the following: "Feumaidh gun robh e [i.e. am bard] 'feuchainn ri ìnnse nuair a dh'fhàg e thall is nuair a bha e 'bhos is nuair a bha e 'cuimhneachadh riutha gur a dh'fhàs e eòlach air an dùthaich is air na daoine"/"It must be that he was trying to relate, when he had left over there [i.e. Scotland] and when he was here [i.e.

in Nova Scotia] and when he was recalling to them that he had become accustomed to the country [i.e. Canada] and to the people". As noted in the "context", the poem was composed by the poet while he was still in Scotland, and has a different story behind it. It is interesting that, while the version of the song closely resembles that in CC2, and was therefore perhaps influenced by the text, the oral traditions concerning the reasons for the poem's composition seem to differ from the information in the text. It is not clear how this particular song became popular in Christmas Island, which is, as noted, a settlement composed primarily of people of Barra descent. The subject of the poem, Angus MacNeil, was from Barra, and it may have entered the Barra tradition because of this link. Alternatively, it may have been transmitted in Nova Scotia.

A version of this song was also recorded by Dr. John Shaw from the singing of Mary Ann MacMillan, of Beinn Eòin, Cape Breton County, Cape Breton, on 7 February, 1980. St. Francis Xavier Gaelic Folklore Project, Item 1419, Reel 249. The version sung by Mary Ann MacMillan bears some resemblance to the CC2 version, but there are more substantial departures. She sings a verse in some ways similar to verse 3, then the chorus, then a verse similar to verse 8, then a verse based loosely on verse 6, then a verse that bears some similarities to verse 4: **Verse 3: Line 1,** *'S ann le boir'naich a dh'fhàg mi Ailean*, **Line 2,** *'Togail [fuinn?] is tu 'càradh bhealach*, **Line 3,** *B' fheàrr 'bhith ann na 'bhith 'n tìr [na Hearadh? an fhear ud/]*, **Line 4,** *'S cha dean mi òran 'san dòigh 'bu mhath leam*; **Chorus: Line 1,** *Och, a rùin, 's gur e tu air m' [ainge]*, **Line 2,** *Och, a rùin, 's gur e tu air m' [ainge]*, **Line 3,** *Gur thu fhèin, a ruin, gur a tu air m' [aigne]*, **Line 4,** *'S e do shùgradh 'tha 'tigh'nn fanear domh*; **Verse 8: Line 1,** *'S tu, Catriona, 'tha 'tigh'nn fanear dhomh*, **Line 2,** *Chan ei do stòras a rinn mo mhealladh*, **Line 3,** *Ach thu 'bhith bòidheach, gun bhòsd, gun [smearail]*, **Line 4,** *De 'n chine' mhòr, a' Chlann MhicLeòid na Hearadh*; **Verse 6: Line 1,** *'S ma nì mi gluasad Diluain dhan bhaile*, **Line 2,** *Bidh bodaich Galld' ann an geall mo leantail*, **Line 3,** *Cha thuig mi 'ad le 'n cuid cànail Geangach* (this is an interesting emendation; *Geangach* is a common noun and adjective in Cape Breton meaning "Yankee", that is, "American"; although the poem was composed in Scotland, the poem seems to be undergoing a revision in the oral culture of the informant's district, at least, that would be of relevance to a Cape Breton audience, where from the 1880s the main destination of emigration from the Nova Scotia Gàidhealtachd was New England, and in particular, Boston, which, like the Lowlands of Scotland, wuold have been a foreign and thoroughly anglophone environment for the Gaels), **Line 4,** *Tha mis' air chall gun an cainnt 'nam theangaidh*; **Verse 2:** The informant interrupts the song, here, to make the following comment: "Seo an ceathramh as toil leamsa"/"This is the verse I like the best"; **Line 1,** *'T-eilean bòidheach 's an t-eilean àlainn*, **Line 2,** *Far an deachaidh m' àrach nuair 'bha mi m' leanabh*, **Line 3,** *'S beag an t-ioghnadh gach aon a dh'fhàs ann*, **Line 4,** *Gheobhte biadh ann is chan iarrte pàigheadh*; the informant concludes the song with the comment "Nach eil sin ceart"/"Isn't that the truth". This verse differs substantially from verse 2 in CC2. Overall, Mary Ann MacMillan's version departs much more significantly from CC2 (and from ONG) than is true of Peter MacLean's version; this may imply that printed versions had a more profound or at least a more recent impact on the Christmas Island versions, and acted as more of a standardising influence.

There is evidence that this song was widely sung in Gaelic Scotland in the late nineteenth century. Nigel MacNeill claimed that this song "has been highly popular, mainly because of the sweet air that is attached to it": John MacMaster Campbell,

ed., *The Literature of the Highlanders: Race, Language, Literature, Poetry and Music*, by Nigel MacNeill, LL.D. (Stirling: Eneas Mackay, 1929),2nd ed., p. 419.

13. Iain 's a' Bhana-Mhaighstir

Tune: None given; in MG15G/2/1, simply "luineag air founn" (i.e. "luinneag air fonn")
No. of lines: 112
Sources: MG15G/2/1, CC1, p. 45, CC2, p. 46
Date: Unclear, although it might be roughly established on internal evidence of events described (if such can be determined); certainly, while the poet was still engaged as a shoemaker in Tiree, and therefore between early 1811 and 1819. However, given the references in the poem to the hardship faced by the merchant and the tension over prices which lies at the heart of the poem, it is possible, even likely that the poem was composed in the hard, recessionary years which followed the end of the Napoleonic Wars in 1815.
Context: In the MSS, the poet provides this introduction: "Oran do dhIain Machd Phàdain, fear chairsteadh leithir nuair a chaich, an t-udar a chennich pios a bha feumal da, bhuaidhe, agus nach rodh iad a corsdadh mun phriosh, le dianadas na mna, le Iain Machd Illeain, agus e ginshe n t' shenachaish a bha edar e fein, s an duine, agus a bhean" (i.e. Òran do dh' Iain MacPhàidein, fear-càirteadh leathair, nuair a chaidh an t-ùghdar a cheannach pios a bha feumail dha bhuaithe, agus nach robh iad a' còrdadh mun phrìs, le dianadas na mnà, le Iain MacIlleain, agus e 'g ìnnse 'n t-seachachais a bha eadar e-fhèin, 's an duine, agus a' bhean"/"A Song to John MacFadyen, a leather tanner, when the author went to buy from him a piece that he needed, and they weren't agreeing on a price, because of the wife's strong-headedness, by John MacLean, reporting the conversation between himself, the man and his wife"). Maclean Sinclair versions provide similar information, likely derived from the MSS, in the introduction to this song: "Chaidh am Bàrd uair a cheannach leathraich bho Iain MacPhàidein, fear-cairtidh-leathraich, an Tirithe, ach cha robh iad ag còrdadh mu 'n phrìs le deanadas bean Iain. Bhiodh i sparradh a teangadh far nach bu chòir di"./"The poet once went to purchase leather from John MacFadyen, a leather tanner in Tiree, but they were not able to agree on a price because of the strong-headedness of John's wife. She would be sticking her tongue in where she had no right to".

Line Annotations:
1: MSS, *chai, sheultain orst.* **2:** MSS, *du boiach, du Modhal.* **3:** MSS, *gu n dani du dhachich.* **4:** MSS, *bo ghasda.* **5:** MSS, *rodh h-aon*; "h" suggests the presence of the particle "a" before it, and its omission, due to elision by the preceding vowel sound, is marked. MSS, *bhanish*; the aspiration suggests the presence of the article "a'", the omission of which is marked. **6:** MSS, *dhaunsadh.* **7:** MSS, *laisheaodh.* **8:** MSS, *maishe.* **9:** MSS, *as a bhala*; "as" is interpreted as a contraction of the preposition "anns", and is marked accordingly. **10:** MSS, *sheultain, charid.* **11:** MSS, *Go leirrach a chenneach.* **12:** MSS, *o n, grà.* **13:** The relative pronoun "a" before the verb "tha" is omitted in the MSS, and this is marked. MSS, *fheomal.* **14:** MSS, *Snach diggein as eagaish.* The omission of the possessive pronoun "a" before "eughmhais" is marked. **15:** MSS, *reichd.* **16:** MSS, *aotain.* **17:** MSS, *Thuirst ishe aun san aum shin.* **18:** MSS, *gad gheubhidh du bounn.* **19:** MSS, *chaultach.* **20:** MSS, *aunn.* **21:** MSS, *Sheo craichdinn a ghaunna.* **22:** MSS, *ann as t' saunradh*;

"as" is interpreted as a contraction of "anns", and is marked accordingly. **23:** MSS, *chairst u, eubhnin*; in the MSS, the poet notes with an asterisk the following with regard to "eubhnin": "sheorsa do rud a ni cairsteadh" (i.e. "seòrsa do rud a nì càirteadh"/"A sort of thing that will act as a tanning agent"). In a note in Maclean Sinclair versions, Maclean Sinclair indicates that "eubhuin" is a root found on Kennavarra Hill in Tiree which grows in long strings above the ground, and which has a blue flower. It is used for tanning fishing nets and lines when oak bark cannot be obtained. Beinn Cheann a' Bhara, or Kenavara Hill is located at the south-west end of Tiree. Niall Brownlie tells us the following: "Ged nach eil innte ach cnoc, chan eil a' bheinn seo gun a glòir is a maise fhèin, oir tha sluic is stallachan cas-chreagach air an taobh an iar dhith. Chan eil i doirbh a streap bho cheann an iar Thràgha Bhì, tràigh gheal airgeadach cho bòidheach is a tha san eilean"/"Kenavara is only a hillock, but it still has its own beauty, for on its western extremity it drops to the sea in a series of spectacular cliffs and gullies. It is quite easy to ascend from Travee, one of the most beautiful beaches on the island": Niall M. Brownlie, *Bailtean is Ath-Ghairmean a Tiriodh/Townships and Echoes from Tiree* (Glendaruel: Argyll Publishing, 1995), pp. 76-77. **24:** MSS, *Man, thiundaich, blàus*. **25:** MSS, *thuirst i riaist*; the omission of the particle "a-" before "rithist", due to elision by the preceding vowel, is marked. **26:** MSS, *U, led ghorich*. **27:** MSS, *phiuar*. **28:** MSS, *as*; interpreted as a contraction of "anns", and is marked accordingly. **29:** MSS, *faoda du 'n diabh*; "faoda" is interpreted as the conditional "faodadh", and the omission of "dh", due to the elision caused by the subsequent consonant, is marked, and "diabh" is interpreted as "deanamh". **30:** MSS, *Ga* or *Go* (unclear), *bliana*. **31:** MSS, *o na, iaridh*. **32:** MSS, *bo riarachadh a*. **33:** MSS, *chaich*; the omission in the MSS of the relative pronoun "a", which should precede the verb, is marked. MSS, *iarruidh*. **34:** MSS, *Rinn labhairst le riasan*; the context implies the need for the subject "mi", which is omitted after the verb in the MSS. **35:** MSS, *dugain, fhiachan*; the aspiration of the noun implies the presence of the third person masculine possessive pronoun "a", the omission of which is marked. **36:** MSS, *riarachidh as*; "riarachidh" is interpreted as the verbal noun, and "as" is interpreted as a contraction of "agus". **37:** MSS, *diag iar*; "iar" is interpreted as a misspelling of "air". **38:** MSS, *S fhar, chuinsheas a dhiar*. **39:** MSS, *gad*. **40:** MSS, *iarruin*. **41:** MSS, *Sga*; interpreted as "'S ged". MSS, *as ionaish*. **42:** MSS, *leirrich a s Duthich*. **43:** MSS, *deid, innsich*. **44:** MSS, *Dhiarruidh cunrich, bràch*. **45:** MSS, *fobh*; interpreted as "falbh". MSS, *a gheolich*; interpreted here as "geòlach", "yawl". **46:** MSS, *thoirst do 'n oban*. **47:** MSS, *Mu*; the omission of the particle "am", likely due to elision with the preceding vowel and subsequent consonant, is marked. MSS, *ga choir*. **48:** MSS, *ma feorichin*. **49:** MSS, *Thuirst ishe, fiubhaich*. **50:** MSS, *on tha n' ad ghriasaich*; the context implies the presence of the personal pronoun "thu" after the verb "that", and accordingly an emendation has been made. **51:** MSS, *Their* or *Fheir usa* (unclear); interpreted as "Bheir". **52:** MSS, *S gun e dhuit sta*; the context suggests that a verb has been omitted; as in the Maclean Sinclair versions, it is interpreted as "dean", and the poem is amended accordingly. **53:** MSS, *doir, 'd bheo*. **54:** MSS, *Mar a paich e a*; "a" is interpreted as "e", "him", as the context would suggest. **56:** MSS, *mud dhail*; "mud" is interpreted as "mu do", and the omission of the vowel in "do", which is likely a dialectal feature, is marked. **57:** MSS, *Gad is sh e shan bhios daonan*; "sh e shan" is interpreted as "esan"; the omission of the relative pronoun before the verb "bhios" is marked. **58:** MSS, *A cairsteadh sa g aoladh*; "sa" is interpreted as "'s ag", "'s" being a contraction of "agus". **59:** MSS, *craichdionn sgach laoichdean*. **60:** MSS, *A saoire*; this is interpreted as the superlative "as saoire", and the omission of the "s"

after "A" is due to elision by the subsequent consonant. **61:** MSS, *mishe*; the omission of the relative pronoun "a" before the verb "tha" is marked. **62:** MSS, *sa lebhadh*; "sa" is a contraction of "'s", itself a contraction of "agus", and the verbal noun particle "a'". **63:** MSS, *A cuir*; this is a verbal noun, and is marked accordingly. MSS, *a chuntish.* **64:** MSS, *Sgur a feomal shid.* **65:** MSS, *chai, na*; "na" is a contraction of the preposition "ann" and the third person singular masculine possessive pronoun "a", and is marked accordingly. **66:** MSS, *Go dianabh, baragain.* **67:** MSS, *thairgshe.* **68:** MSS, *Airgid, a bear.* **69:** MSS, *thuirst is, lig.* **71:** MSS, *mish aun sa 'n uairshin.* **72:** MSS, *cruaich aun am chaus*; "am" is a contraction of the preposition "ann" and the first person singular possessive pronoun "mo", and is marked accordingly. **73:** MSS, *Thuirst.* **74:** MSS, *Ga*; this is "Ged", and the omission of the final consonant, due to elision by the subsequent consonant, is marked. MSS, *u.* **75:** MSS, *ma n cuairst*; the omission of the relative pronoun "a" before the verb "tha" is marked. **76:** MSS, *Cuir*; this appears to be a verbal noun, and the omission of the verbal noun particle "A'" is marked. MSS, *a 'n aird.* **77:** MSS, *Ga h-ainmeal*; "Ga" is "Ged", and the omission of the final consonant, perhaps a dialectical feature, is marked. MSS, *bhuanachd.* **78:** MSS, *Cha neil.* **79:** MSS, *shin a tine*; "a tine" appears to be the verbal noun "a' tighinn". **80:** MSS, *Aun, chàih*; given the context, the latter appears to be "chàich". **81:** MSS, *baun, bhi.* **82:** MSS, *dhoibreich, h' fhine e.* **83:** MSS, *Boad*; interpreted as a misspelling of the past copula construction "B' iad". MSS, *nighein.* **85:** MSS, *tharring, diochaill.* **86:** MSS, *A claishean s a*; "A" is interpreted as the preposition "À", "Out of, from", "s" is a contraction of "agus", and "a" is the verbal noun particle. **87:** MSS, *sharich.* **88:** MSS, *gos, a*; "a" is interpreted as "às", "out of it". **89:** MSS, *Cha n urrin, inshe.* **90:** MSS, *a cuir prishe*; "a cuir" is the verbal noun, and is marked accordingly. **91:** MSS, *Bhi cuir*; "cuir" is the verbal noun, and the omission of the verbal noun particle "a'", due to elision by the preceding vowel, is marked. MSS, *sh'ligean an grisich*; "an" is a contraction of the prepositional phrase "ann an", and is marked accordingly. **92:** MSS, *tintean.* **93:** MSS, *Snach, cennach.* **94:** MSS, *aun sa n' fherran.* **95:** MSS, *daonan, tarring.* **96:** MSS, *A toirst farrich*; "A toirst" is the verbal noun, and is marked accordingly. **97:** MSS, *Gur a.* **98:** MSS, *Bhi shiubhal*; this is a verbal noun construction, and the omission of the verbal noun particle "a'" before "shiubhal", caused by elision by the preceding vowel, is marked. **99:** MSS, *A giarridh*; this is the verbal noun "Ag iarraidh". MSS, *an t' sheorsa ad.* **100:** MSS, *Feodh.* **101:** MSS, *Sa chairst si*; "Sa" is a contraction of "'S", itself a contraction of "Agus", and the feminine nominative article "a'", and "si" is a contraction of "'s", "agus", and the third person feminine personal pronoun "i". MSS, *prioshal.* **102:** MSS, *Ga*; this is "Ged", and the omission of the final consonant, apparently a dialectical feature, is marked. MSS, *sa Righachd*; "sa" is a contraction of the prepositional phrase "anns a'", "in the". **103:** MSS, *bich cusban a Righ orra*; "a" is the genitive masculine article "an", and the omission of the final consonant, a dialectical feature, is marked, while "orra" is interpreted as the third person singular feminine prepositional pronoun "oirre", in reference to "càirt", at line 101, rather than the third person plural prepositional pronoun "orra". **104:** MSS, *Mhiodachadh*; interpreted as the infinitive, and the omission of the infinitive article "A" is marked. **105:** MSS, *Dian labhairs, fhirin.* **106:** MSS, *a t-intin*; "a t-" is interpreted as a contraction of the preposition "ann" and the second person singular possessive pronoun "do", and is marked accordingly. **107:** MSS, *Gu ma draoghal, fhine e.* **108:** MSS, *Ma 'n.* **109:** MSS, *shiomain.* **110:** MSS, *Sa shiubhal*; "Sa" is a contraction of "'S", itself a contraction of "Agus", and the verbal noun particle "a'". MSS, *traich crionaig*; Maclean Sinclair

versions have "tràigh Chrionaig". I have not found such a place name in Tiree, and it may be that the reference is to "Tràigh Chòrnaig", a beach which is on the north coast of Tiree. It is less likely that this is a reference to another beach on the north shore of Tiree, "Cladach a' Chròġain". A final possibility is "Tràigh Grianaig", on the north coast of Coll, but this is the least likely possibility, as both the poet and the subject were resident on Tiree. **111:** MSS, *A toirst, a nios as.* **112:** MSS, *fhionnain.*

Maclean Sinclair Versions:
Maclean Sinclair versions have four lines for each verse, rather than eight lines as in the MSS, and each line includes two lines from the MSS. Also, Maclean Sinclair versions introduce a chorus, which does not exist in the MSS. It is: CC1, *O seinnibh gu h-eutrom, gu h-aighearach, éibhinn,/Air cliù an fhir fhéile is ceutaiche gnàths;/'S na fàgaibh a chéile gun innseadh mu déibhinn;/'S i féin a bhean bheusach, 's gur feumail i dhà.*
1. This is the first part of line 5, although *mise o 'n bhaile* for *mi 'shealltainn ort, Iain.* **2-8:** These lines are omitted. **9:** This is also the first part of line 5, although *Chaidh mise o 'n* for *Thug mi sgrìob a's a'.* **10:** This is the second part of line 5, although *Dhol* is omitted. **11:** This is the first part of line 6, although *'S* is inserted before *gu, leathar* for *leithreach.* **12:** This is the second part of line 6, *o 'n* for *On.* **13-16:** These are omitted. **17:** This is the first part of line 9, although it is changed almost completely to *A bhean thuirt le greann oirr'.* **18:** This is the second part of line 9, *gheibheadh* for *gheobhadh.* **19:** This is the first part of line 10, but it is changed significantly to *Cha phàigh e an call.* **20:** This is the second part of line 10, *th' agad* for *a th'.* **21:** This is the first part of line 11, *Sin craiceann* for *Seo craicionn.* **22:** This is the second part of line 11, omit *A, anns an* for *ann a's.* **23:** This is the first part of line 12, insert *'S* at the start of the line, *eubhuin* for *eubhain.* **24:** This is the second part of line 12, *mu 'n d'* for *Mun do.* **25:** This is the first part of line 13, although it is almost completely changed; *"Nach biodh e dhuit* for *'S thuirt i 'rithist "gur.* **26:** This is the second part of line 13, *a* for *Thu 'ga, gòraich* for *d' ghòraich'.* **27:** This is the first part of line 14. **28:** This is the second part of line 14, but changed significantly to *air reòtachd an lair* for *'S i reòta a's a' làr.* **29-36:** These are omitted. **37:** This is the second part of line 15, but *gun* before *ochd, diag* for *deug*; insert a new first part of line 15 which does not appear in the MSS: *Na toir e dha 'm bliadhna.* **38-50:** These are omitted. **46:** *don Oban* is mentioned, in the first part of a new line 44. **51:** This is the first part of line 16, *esan as* for *thus' air le.* **52:** This is the second part of line 16, *gu 'n* for *gun, dha* for *dhuit.* **53-56:** These are omitted. **57:** This is the first part of line 17, *'s tusa* for *is esan.* **58:** This is the second part of line 17, *ag cartadh* for *a' cairteadh.* **59:** This is the first part of line 18, *craicinn* for *craiciionn*, omits *gach* before *laoicinn*; this is followed by a second part of line 18 which is not in the MSS: *bheir daoine do 'n àit.* **60:** This is omitted. **61:** This is the first part of line 19, *Is mis' tha 'nam* for *Gur mise 'th m'.* **62:** This is the second part of line 19, *'sa* for *'s a'.* **63:** This is the first part of line 20, *'S a chunntadh* for *A' cuir a' chùnntais.* **64:** This is the second part of line 20, *gur* for *'s gura, mi ghnàth* for *siud dhà.* This line 20 is followed by a new line 21 and 22, neither of which are in the MSS: *Nuair fhuair e bho chéile, an t-òrdugh bha feumail/Thuirt Iain, "cha bhreugan a dh' éisd thu bho m' ghràdh.* **65:** This is the first part of line 7, omit *a* before *chaidh.* **66:** This is the second part of line 7, *a dheanamh ris* for *Gu deanamh na.* **67-76:** These are omitted. **77:** This is the first part of line 23, *Ged 's* for *Ge 'h-.* **78:** This is the second part of line 23. **79:** This is the first part of line 24, but it is almost completely changed, and reads: *Tha mòran dol*

bhuam di. **80:** This is the second part of line 24, *an* for *ann an*, *tuarasdal* for *tuarastal.* **81:** This is the first part of line 37, *bhi* for *bhith*, and is followed by a second part that does not appear in the MSS: *a dh' fhàg mi cho mìn e.* **82:** This is omitted. **83:** This is the first part of line 38, but is almost completely changed, and reads: *'Ga spionadh 's 'ga sgrìobadh.* **84:** This is the second part of line 38, but is almost completely changed, and reads: *bu sgìth bha mo làmh.* **85:** This is the first part of line 28, inserts *'S* before *'ga*, *tharruing* for *tharraing.* **86:** This is the second part of line 28, but is almost completely changed, and reads: *á dìgibh dubh, grand.* **87:** This is the first part of line 27, but is almost completely changed, and reads: *Bu ghoirt bha mo dhriom deth.* **88:** This is omitted. **89:** This is the first part of line 25, *innseadh* for *ìnnse.* **90:** This is the second part of line 25, *gach nì tha cur* for *Na bheil a' cuir.* **91:** This is the second part of line 31, but is almost completely changed, and reads: *an losgadh gu grìosaich*; it is preceded by a first part of line 31 which does not appear in the MSS, and is: *'S bu chosdail gu cinnteach.* It is followed by a line 32 which also does not appear in the MSS, and is: *'S an toirt gu aol brìoghmhor, geal, mìn air an làr.* **92:** This is omitted. **93-94:** These are line 33, but are significantly reworked, and read: *A' mhòine 'san fhearann chan fhaigh mi r'a ceannach;.* **95:** This is the first part of line 34, but is almost completely changed, and reads: *Tha againn ri tarruing.* **96:** This is the second part of line 34, but is also almost completely changed, and reads: *'s tha 'm faradh fìor-àrd.* **97-100:** These are omitted. **101:** This is the first part of line 35, *tha i* for *'s i.* **102:** This is the second part of line 35, *'san* for *'sa.* **103:** This is the first part of line 36, *'S tha cuspuinn* for *'S bidh cusbann, rìgh* for *Rìgh.* **104:** This is the second part of line 36, *mhiodachadh* for *'Mheudachadh.* **105:** This is the first part of line 39, but is almost completely changed, and reads: *'Nis chì thu le fìrinn.* This is followed by a second part of line 39 which does not appear in the MSS, and is: *gur fiach na tha dhìth ort.* This line 39 is followed by nine new lines, lines 40 through 48, which do not appear in the MSS, and which are: *Gach bonn a chaidh innseadh le m' mhnaoi mar a thà."/Bho 'n bha mi 'nam éiginn, gu 'm b' fheudar dhomh géilleadh/Do Iain 's da chléireadh, bean bheusach an àigh;/Cha cheannaich mi 'n còrr bhuap, cha bhi mi cho gòrach,/'S ann théid mi do 'n Oban; 's e mòran is feàrr./O Iain! 'S tu 'n truaghan; air thaod tha thu gluasad/An déidh na té buaireanta 'fhuair thu air làimh:/Do thriubhas math clòtha thoir dh' ise mar chòmhdach,/'S cuir umad a còta-s' mar 's coir dhuit gun dàil.* This is where the poem concludes in Maclean Sinclair versions. **106:** This is omitted. **107:** This is the first part of line 29, but is almost completely changed, and reads: *Bu draghail an nì dhomh.* **108:** this is omitted. **109:** This is the second part of line 27. **110:** This is the second part of line 29, *bhi* for *'s a'*, *Chrionaig* for *Chòrnaig.* **111:** This is the first part of line 30, omit *A'* before *toirt*, *a nios aisd* for *a-nìos às.* **112:** This is the second part of line 30, *ìghnean* for *ìnean.*

With these changes, there are 48 lines (or 96, as they have two lines for every one in the MSS) in Maclean Sinclair versions.

14. Àiridh a' Chaolais

Tune: In MG15G/2/1, the poet notes the following: "Air founn [i.e. fonn] Balach na h-aimhreite, ho rò . . . " (followed by the rest of the chorus)
No. of lines: 92
Sources: MG15G/2/1, p. 71, CC1, p. 49, CC2, p. 47

Date: Unclear; as it relates to a particular event, it could potentially be dated, but given the transient nature of the event, it is unlikely a precise date can be determined.

Context: In the MSS, the poet provides the following introduction: "Oran do Chearrar Bhuachailean, agus do dh' airi bha iad a togal, le Iain Machd Illean" ("Òran do cheathrar bhuachaillean, agus do dh' àirigh a bha iad a' togail, le Iain MacIlleain"/"A song to four shepherds, and to a shieling that they were building, by John MacLean". Maclean Sinclair versions provide the following information, likely drawn largely from the MSS, in the introduction to this song: "Rinneadh an t-òrain seo do cheathrar bhuachaillean anns a' Chaolas, an Tirithe a bha 'togail àirigh agus a' deanamh dearmaid air an obair."/"This song was written for four shepherds in Caolas, Tiree who were building a shieling and who were neglecting their work."

Line Annotations:

1: MSS, *h aimreite*. **2:** MSS, *Machd a n, ghaulta*. **3:** MSS, *Thanig, auntlachd*. **4:** MSS, *Sa chuiridh*; "Sa" is a contraction of "'S", itself a contraction of "Agus", and the relative pronoun "a", and "chuiridh" is interpreted as the conditional form of the verb, "chuireadh". MSS, *riailt oirn*. **5:** MSS, *thanig*; the omission of the relative pronoun "a" before this verb is marked. MSS, *curstair*. **6:** MSS, *suntach*. **7:** MSS, *an t' sugraich*. **8:** MSS, *chulabh a bharradh*. **9:** MSS, *Biodh essan*. **10:** MSS, *Sa chule*; "Sa" is a contraction of "'S", itself a contraction of "Agus", and the feminine nominative article "a'", and "chule" is interpreted as "cuile", a feminine noun meaning "store room" or "cellar", or, as here the colloquial Scots "ben", as in "butt and ben". MSS, *a stalla*; "a" is the article "an", and the omission of the consonant, likely a dialectal feature, is marked. **11:** MSS, *Bidh, bule*; "bule" is interpreted as "bula", "pot-hook". **12:** The omission of the relative pronoun "a" before the verb "nì" is marked. MSS, *gharradh*; the aspiration suggests the presence of the third person singular masculine possessive pronoun, and its omission is marked. **13:** MSS, *Shin, rogh, n' ashig*; the omission of the preposition and relative pronoun "ann an" before "robh" is marked, and "ashig" is interpreted as "àsaig", "apparatus, utensils" or, colloquially, as here, "stuff". **14:** MSS, *a pharsti, sbo mhath*. **15:** MSS, *air son caishe achda*. **16:** MSS, *Bhlaiticheadh baine*. **18:** MSS, *sa bhalladh*; "sa" is a contraction of the prepositional phrase "anns a'", "in the". **19:** MSS, *carstal a gharich*. **20:** MSS, *Gu haurd, sparrabh*. **21:** MSS, *shuichidh e fe i*; the omission of the relative pronoun "a" before the verb is marke. **22:** MSS, *steigh, gerradh*. **23:** MSS, *ghlaodhadh a nus*. **24:** MSS, *a bhuachill, Allain*. **25:** MSS, *She*; this is interpreted as the copula, "'S e". MSS, *cuirreadh*. **26:** MSS, *Naum, on bhellach*. **27:** MSS, *Na faidh du*; based on the context, this is interpreted as the conjunction "Nam", and the omission of the final consonant, likely a dialectal feature, is marked, and the conditional from of the verb, "faigheadh". **28:** MSS, *phairst, Talla*. **29:** MSS, *Cha neil*. **30:** MSS, *comhriut*; this is interpreted as "còmhla riut", and the omission of the last syllable in "còmhla", which is likely a dialectal feature, is marked. MSS, *gharri*. **31:** The omission of the relative pronoun "a" before the verb "tha" is marked. **32:** MSS, *Smo phochda bhi fallabh*. **33:** MSS, *duga du*; "duga" is interpreted at the conditional of the verb "thoir", which is "tugadh", and the omission of the final consonant sound, which may be dialectal and due to elision with the subsequent consonant, is marked. **34:** MSS, *ga 'd tha*; the omission of the relative pronoun "a" before "tha" is marked. MSS, *gu 'n*; this is interpreted as the preposition "gun", "without", rather than the conjunction. **35:** MSS, *gu faichdin u paite*; "gu" is the conjunction "gum", and the omission of the final consonant, likely a dialectal

feature caused by elision with the subsequent consonant, is marked. **36:** MSS, *Ma fagin am bala*; "Ma" is interpreted as the preposition "Mum", and the omission of the final consonant, again likely dialectal, is marked. **37:** MSS, *thanig*; the omission of the relative pronoun "a" before this verb is marked. MSS, *blonigein.* **38:** MSS, *stoirmeal nar carrabh*; "nar" is a contraction of the preposition "ann" and the first person plural possessive pronoun "ar", and is marked accordingly. **39:** MSS, *Thuirst essan sa n' aum.* **40:** MSS, *Mur a, u, 'm bharral.* **41:** MSS, *ranig i bounn*; the context seems to imply the presence of the third person singular feminine possessive pronoun "a", "its/her", in reference to the "bothag", "hut", and this is marked. **42:** MSS, *troum.* **43:** MSS, *Mum duair u, doich.* **44:** MSS, *stori, talabh.* **45:** MSS, *rodh.* **46:** MSS, *Sa shaolas du charrid*; "sa" is a contraction of "'S", itself a contraction of "Agus", and the relative pronoun "a", and "charrid" is the vocative "a charaid", and the omission of the vocative particle "a" is marked. **47:** MSS, *ladir*; in the MSS, the feminine nominative article "a'" is omitted before "chlachaireachd", due to elision by the preceding vowel, and this omission is marked. **48:** MSS, *gur h-alin.* **49:** MSS, *mish, carabhadh.* **50:** MSS, *Camaron.* **51:** MSS, *ciullain duin*; the meaning here is unclear. The best possibility for "ciullain", given the context, would appear to be "ciùilean", meaning sticks that are placed over a kiln. "Duin" is likely unclear, but could be the genitive of "dùn", "fort, heap" perhaps forming a compound with the preceding word to mean something like "heap-sticks". **52:** MSS, *crauntairnean darrich.* **53:** MSS, *Saun sna craoitean sheo thuas.* **54:** This line appears to be a clause, and the omission in the MSS of the relative pronoun "A" before the verb "tha" is marked. MSS, *buachilean romhath.* **55:** MSS, *She Donachadh, blonigein*; "She" is the copula, "'S e". **56:** MSS, *Sgum, fhoirmeal.* **57:** MSS, *airi*; this line appears to be a clause, and the omission of the relative pronoun "A" before the verb "chuir" is marked. **58:** MSS, *sheallich.* **59:** MSS, *Go coineachadh na 'n*; "na 'n" is interpreted here as the genitive plural article "nan". The reference to "uaislean" is clearly a satirical reference to the lads of the village. **60:** MSS, *ghluaisheadh on bhala.* **61:** MSS, *Machd Eachinn a graitin.* **62:** MSS, *sharich shibh thana*; "thana" is interpreted as "tana", "thin". **63:** MSS, *feobhas, airi.* **64:** MSS, *blathich on aingill*; the meaning of this is not entirely clear, but is interpreted as "blathaich on aingill", "buttermilk of the angel" or "buttermilk from the angel". **65:** MSS, *coirchge, lanruibh*; given the context, "coirchge" is interpreted as "coirce", "oats", and "lanruibh" as "làmh ruibh", "close to you". **66:** MSS, *Na chramhaig*; "na" is interpreted as a contraction of the preposition "ann", "in", and the third person singular masculine possessive pronoun "a", "his/its", and "chramhaig" is interpreted as "càmhag", meaning "dead embers", but also "refuse", which is the meaning suggested by the context. **67:** MSS, *mhissadh*; while the manuscript is not completely clear, this is interpreted as "mheasadh". In a note in the MSS, the poet indicates that "mala" is a "leth bholla", or half a boll of meal. **68:** MSS, *sa 'n errach.* **69:** MSS, *m dhisa*; "m" is interpreted as a contraction of the preposition "ann", "in", and the first person singular possessive pronoun "mo", and is marked accordingly, and "dhisa" is interpreted as "dhìth-sa". **70:** MSS, *priosal sa 'n fherran.* **71:** MSS, *Chaich a phessair.* **72:** MSS, *as a' n tallabh.* **73:** MSS, *m pochdanan lionte*; "m" is interpreted as a contraction of the prepositional phrase "ann am", and is marked accordingly. **74:** MSS, *dinte*; interpreted as the past participle of the verb "dinn", "to cram". MSS, *air a sparradh*; the context suggests that "a" should be interpreted as the third person plural possessive pronoun "am", in reference to the filled bags, and the omission of the consonant, perhaps a dialectal feature, is marked. **75:** MSS, *Mhiosadh peichge*; "peichge" is interpreted as "piece" or "peic", a peck. **76:** MSS, *b*

fhioch, tine fhairis; interpreted as "tighinn thairis". **77:** MSS, *a graitin.* **78:** MSS, *pagh, ri mhairrion*; the aspiration of "mairrionn", interpreted as "maireann", implies the presence of the third person singular masculine possessive pronoun, "a", "his", and its omission is marked. **80:** MSS, *fhear aite Mhichd Callain*; the reference is to "Mac Cailein", which is the title of the Duke of Argyll, and his "fear aite" would be his placeman or local agent in Tiree. Tiree people were, of course, tenants of the Duke. **81:** MSS, *fheirir go cuirst.* **82:** MSS, *chuish, cronnal.* **83:** MSS, *n Cearst aun a 's Duthich.* **84:** MSS, *dhianabh.* **85:** MSS, *Mas a h-eigin.* **86:** MSS, *S 'm bar, s' tallabh.* **87:** MSS, *Smi, gu leine*; given the context, "gu" is interpreted as "gun", the preposition "gun", without. **88:** MSS, *gu fheimin an cennach.* **89:** MSS, *thuarasdal.* **90:** MSS, *gu m, air shon*; the aspiration of "son" implies the presences of the third person singular masculine possessive pronoun, which refers to "tuarastal" in the preceding line, and its omission, likely a dialectal feature, is marked. **91:** MSS, *Liubhad la a, anrach*; "la a" is interpreted as "latha", and the space may indicate a glottal stop that is dialectal. **92:** MSS, *Gu n*; given the context, this is interpreted as the preposition "gun", without, rather than a conjunction. MSS, *airi ga gharradh*; given the context, "ga" is interpreted as the first person singular verbal noun object, "gam", rather than the third person singular verbal noun object, with the reference being to the 'Fat Boy' himself.

Maclean Sinclair Versions:
2: *Ghallda* for *Ghallta.* **5:** Replace this line with *Le sùnnd chuir an t-àrmunn.* **6:** *A thàinig do 'n* for *Gu sunntach don.* **7:** *A suas àite* for *Rinn e bothag an t-.* **8:** *chùlthaobh* for *chùlaibh, bharra* for *bharradh.* **9:** *'S chan fhaicear air* for *Bidh esan gun.* **10:** *chùl* for *chuile, an stalla* for *a' stalla.* **11:** *bùl aig'* for *bula aige.* **12:** Insert *gur* before *dlùth.* **13-14:** These are omitted. **15:** This is line 49, *Tha* for *Bha, càis* for *càise.* **16:** This is line 48, *Bhlàiteachadh* for *'Bhlàiticheadh.* **17:** This is line 49, *Tha* for *Bha.* **18:** This is line 50, *An càramh* for *Air a chàradh, bhalla* for *bhalladh.* **19:** This is line 51, *'S tha* for *Agus.* **20:** This is line 52. This line is followed by 12 new lines, lines 53 to 64, which do not appear in the MSS, and which are: *'S iad féin na fir éibhinn,/Gun éislean, gun ghalair;/Tha sgil aca air eubhach,/Air leum 's air cur char dhiubh;/Gur tric a bhios uaislean,/Air chuairt leis na gallain,/'S gur h-iomadh té bhòidheach,/Tha 'n tòir air gach fear dhiubh./Na creidibh gach nì/A théid ìnnseadh 's a' bhaile,/Mu dhéibhinn nam buachaillean/Luath-chasach, meara;.* **21:** This is line 13, *'m bonn* for *–fhèin e.* This is followed by a new line, line 14, which does not appear in the MSS, and reads: *Aig taigh fonnmhor na caithreim.* **22:** This is line 32, *Tha 'n* for *Bha.* **23:** This is line 15, *ghladh e* for *ghlaodhadh.* **24:** This is line 16, *o bhuachail', Ailein.* This is followed by two new lines, lines 17 and 18, which do not appear in the MSS, and read: *Nuair thàinig e làmh ris/Gu blàth thuirt e, "Charaid.* **25-26:** These are omitted. **27:** This is line 19, but is considerably changed, and reads: *Ma gheibh thu na lànain.* **28:** This is line 20, *Gur pàirt iad* for *Bu phàirt i.* **29-36:** These are omitted. **37:** This is line 21, but is considerably changed, and reads: *A-nuas thàinig Bloinigein.* **38:** This is line 22, *'nan* for *'nar.* **39:** This is line 23, but it is almost completely changed, and reads: *Is thuirt e, "'S àlainn.* **40:** This is omitted. **41:** This is line 25, and is almost completely changed, and reads: *Gu dearbh bidh i bonn.* **42:** This is line 26, *Bidh* for *Bha, 'ur* for *do.* **43:** This is line 27, *Mu 'n cuir sibh* for *Mun d' fhuair thu.* **44:** This is line 28, *fo 'n* for *fon.* After line 28, there are three new lines, lines 29 to 31, which do not appear in the MSS, and which read: *'Na dhéidh thàinig Iain,/'S bu chridheil am fear e,/Is thubhairt e, "'S ceutach.* This is

then followed by line 22 in the MSS, and this is followed by four new lines, lines 33 to 36, which do not appear in the MSS, and which read: *Bheir mise dhuibh còmhnadh,/B' e 'n sòlas bhi ma'-ruibh;/'S bidh againn an àirigh/Is feàrr tha 's an fhearann.* **45-46:** These are omitted. **47:** This is line 41. **48:** This is line 42, *àluinn* for *àlainn*, *tarruing* for *tarraing*. **49:** This is line 43, *Rinn Donnchadh an* for *Bha mis' 'ga*. **50:** This is line 44, *an* for *'ga*. These lines are followed by two new lines, lines 45 and 46, which do not appear in the MSS, and which read: *'S ann aca tha 'n eàrnais,/Nas fheàrr tha glé ainneamh.* **51-52:** These are omitted. **53:** This is line 37, and *'S ann* is omitted. **54:** This is line 38. **55-56:** These are omitted. **57:** This is line 39, but is almost completely changed, and reads: *'S ann aca tha 'n àirigh.* **58:** This is line 40, *Tha* for *Bha*. **59:** This line is omitted, though line 57 in the Maclean Sinclair versions do make reference to "uaislean". **60:** This is omitted. **61-70:** These are omitted. **71:** This is line 65, but is substantially changed, and reads: *A' pheasair cha spion iad.* **72:** This is line 66, *A nios* for *A-nise*. These lines are followed by two new lines, which do not appear in the MSS, and these read: *'S cha leig iad an fheudail/Aon cheum as an sealladh.* These are the final two lines in Maclean Sinclair versions. **73-92:** These are omitted.

With these changes, there are 68 lines in Maclean Sinclair versions.

Recorded Versions:

A version of this song was recorded from the singing of Donald Sinclair, "Dòmhnall Chaluim Bhàin" (1895-1975), of Balephuil, Tiree, in 1968 by John MacInnes of the School of Scottish Studies, and is available at the School's sound archives, sa1968-22; it is also available on-line as part of the Tiree Project, http://www.tiriodh.ed.ac.uk. Donald Sinclair sings the chorus and six verses. The chorus and four verses follow the CC1 and CC2 versions closely; Donald Sinclair's verse 1 is verse 2 in CC1 and CC2, his verse 2 is verse 6 in CC1 and CC2, and his verses 5 and 6 are verses 7 and 8 in CC1 and CC2. Donald Sinclair's third and fourth verses do not resemble any of the verses in CC1 and CC2, nor do they seem to correspond with verses in the MSS. In addition to singing the song, Donald Sinclair provides a little further information about the circumstances surrounding the composition of the song. He noted that it was about four herdsmen who were so intent on building their hut that they neglected the sheep. One of the lads was especially fond of tea, and they would gather to make the tea and forget about their duties

15. Òran, do Dhòmhnall MacArtair

Tune: None given, although likely the tune which matches the first line of the chorus, "Their mi o ho ro ladai bhig".
No. of lines: 144
Sources: ONG, p. 57, MG15G/2/1, p. 54
Date: Unclear; as it relates to a particular event, it could potentially be dated, but given the transient nature of the event, it is unlikely a precise date can be determined at this point.
Context: In the introduction to this song in ONG, the poet provides the following information: "Do Dhòmhnall MacArtair, à Tiriodh, na mar cho-ainm Dòmhnall Sealgair, an uair a chaidh e 'dh' ionnsaidh na buanadh, don Ghalltachd,

agus air thilltinn do Ghlaschu dh'èirich dha amas ri boireannach uasal anns an àite sin, a thug bhuaithe a chuid airgiod (sic); agus air cluinntinn seo do dh' Iain MacGilleain, thòisich e air deanamh an òrain seo 'leanas, mar gum biodh Dòmhnall agus ise a'freagairt a chèile."/"To Donald MacArthur, from Tiree, or Donald the Hunter, as was his nickname, when he went to the harvest in the Lowlands; and on his return to Glasgow, he happened to meet a noble lady in that place who took from him his money; and on hearing this, John MacLean started to make this song which follows, as if Donald and her were answering each other". This is the only song made by John MacLean which he himself published in ONG and which was not published at all in Maclean Sinclair versions. In the preface to CC2, MacDougall says this about the omission: "Bha aon òran anns an t-seann leabhar nach do chuir an ceud fhear-deasachaidh anns a' "Chlàrsaich," agus ged nach eil a' bheag ann do am faighte coire smaointich mi gun robh e cho math fhàgail às a' bhualadh so mar an ceudna, agus na bh gu math fhàgail gu math. Is ann do fhear do 'm b' ainm Dòmhnull MacArtair, d' am b' fhar-ainm "Dòmhnull Sealgair," a chaidh a dh' ionnsaidh an fhoghair gu Galldachd is a chaill a chuid airgid an luid "mhnathan-uaisle" Ghlascho a rinn se e (sic). [An uair sin, thug MacDhùghaill seachad an t-sèisd agus na ciad trì rannan, "ach eagal miothlachd a chosnadh cha teid mi na 's fhaide na sin. Tha ceithir rannan-deug ann uile gu leir."]/"There was one song in the old book [i.e. ONG] which the first editor did not put in the "Harp", and though there are not a few who could find fault, I thought it just as well to leave it out of this edition all the same, and to leave well enough alone. It is for a man by the name of Donald MarArthur, of the nickname "Donald the Hunter", that went to the harvest in the Lowlands and who lost his money in the company of "gentlewomen" of Glasgow that he [i.e. the poet] made it. [MacDougall then gave the chorus and the first three verses, "but out of fear of causing upset, I will not go farther than that. There are fourteen verses in it altogether."]: CC2, at p. ix. As to why Maclean Sinclair decided to omit this poem from his collections, prurience may have been among the reasons; in his forward in CC1, Maclean Sinclair says: "I have tried to make this Collection a work which may be read and sung by all persons, and in any company. I would rather burn all the songs in my possession than publish one which would have a tendency to do harm, or contain indelicate expressions": CC2, at p. vii.

Line Annotations:

7: ONG, *a spùinneadh*; this could be interpreted as a verbal noun "a' spùinneadh", but it is more likely simply a simple noun, and that the poet does not pronounce the "n" in the article "an" which would precede it; this is marked with an apostrophe. **8:** ONG, *cùirteir*; as this is a nominative, it should be the standard "cùirtear", but the slenderisation may be dialectical, and is therefore left. ONG, *fèilidh*; this appears to be the genitive of "fial", "generosity, hospitality"; although the standard genitive form would be "fèile", "fèilidh" is retained as indicative of the poet's dialect. **9:** ONG, *Dùthaich*; capitalisation was the poet's practice when making reference to the family or territory of the Lairds of Coll, but also seems to be his practice when referring to his own island. **12:** ONG, *aichaidh e-féin e*. Given the context, *aichaidh* is interpreted as the preterite of the verb "àicheadh", "to deny, refuse, disavow". The "e", "it", is interpreted as a reference to *naidheachd*, in line 9, which is feminine, and therefore "e" is changed to "I". **13:** ONG, *Gu robh . . . . Gu* is clearly the conjunction "Gun", and the final consonant is likely omitted in the poet's dialect, and this omission is marked with an apostrophe. ONG, . . . *na shìneadh*; the aspiration caused by *na* suggests that this is a contraction of "ann a", "in his", and this is marked

with an apostrophe. **15:** ONG, *bacail*; is dialectical for the standard "bacadh". **16:** ONG, *creachde*; this is interpreted as the the past participle of "creach", "to plunder, pillage, rob, ruin". **17:** ONG, *na m bighinnsa*; *na m* is interpreted as the conditional conjunction "nam", and *bighinnsa* as the emphatic first person conditional, "bithinnsa", of the verb "to be". **18:** ONG, . . . *bhi t-eigin. bhi* is the infinitive "bhith", and should be preceded by the particle "a", whose omission is marked with an apostrophe. The *t* in *t eigin* is interpreted as being a contraction of the second person singular possessive pronun "do", and is marked with an apostrophe; although the contraction is often "d'", it is pronounced "t'" in some dialects. **19:** ONG, *phoca*; this is interpreted as "phòca", "pocket", not "phoca", "bag". **20:** ONG, *glèiteach.* **21:** ONG, *Gur a.* **22:** ONG, *Ma 'n*; this is dialectical for "mun". **24:** ONG, *Bhi*; this infinitive should be preceded by the relative pronoun "A", whose omission is marked. **25:** ONG, *Bhighinn, diu.* **27:** ONG, *s taigh-òsta*; *s* appears to be a contraction of "anns an", and this is marked. **28:** ONG, *Ga b'e.* The relative pronoun "a" is omitted before the noun *dh' òladh*, and this omission is marked. **29:** ONG, . . . *a chùnntais a lathair*, and it is not clear how *a* should be interpreted in both cases. Given that *cùnntais* is a masculine plural noun, it would appear that the aspiration could only be explained if *a* were interpreted as the third person singular masculine possessive pronoun "a", "his". The second *a* is less clear, although it is arguably the preposition "à", "out of". It may be that "a", his, is also implied here, which would give the meaning "out of his presence"; the third person singular masculine possessive pronoun would be elided by the preposition, and this is marked with an apostrophe. **30:** ONG, *na h-eirig*; *na* would appear to be the contraction of "ann a", "in its/her", and this is marked with an apostrophe. **31:** ONG, *a*; given the context, this is interpreted as "à", "out of". **32:** ONG, *éil*; as it follows the preposition "le", "with", this is interpreted as the dative of "iall", a feminine noun mening "lace; leash; string; ribbon". **34:** ONG, *s a cheum . . .*; *s a* would be the contraction of "anns a'", "in the", and this is marked with an apostrophe. **35:** ONG, *an còdhail*; given the general context, which is part of a discussion of a plural referrent group of unscrupulous women, *an* is interpreted here as a contraction of "ann an", "in their". **37:** ONG, *shetachan*; it is unclear what this means, though the aspiration of the noun following the infinitive indicates that this is the genitive plural of the noun. It could be that this is a plural from of "seud", "jewel", which would go well with the adjective which follows it, although this would have a somewhat different sound, and the plural is, in any case, "seòid". It could be that this is a plural form of "seat", a "satiety of food, a bellyful", and given the reference in the previous line to a feast, this may make some sense, although the plural of "seat" is "seata". Finally, this may be a Gaelicisation of the English loan word "sets", which is the interpretation ultimately settled on, and the word is italicised accordingly. **38:** ONG, *ionagan*; dialectical for "nionagan". **39:** ONG, *nis*; the particle "a-", which should precede *nis*, is omitted, and as it would be elided by the preceding vowel, it is marked. **44:** ONG, *dhiomh.* **48:** ONG, . . . *a bhi dhi . . .*; *dhi* would appear from the context to be "a dhìth", "lacking", rather than "dhi", the prepositional pronoun "to/for her". Indeed, this interpretation is reinforced by the response from the female in the next line. The particle "a" would be elided by the preceding vowel, and this is marked with an apostrophe. **49:** ONG, . . . *ga d' dhì.* **53:** ONG, *a seanachas*; given the context, this appears to be the verbal noun, and this is marked accordingly. **54:** ONG, *mo dhèibhinn.* **56:** ONG, *am beurla*; *am* appears to be a contraction of "ann am", "in". **57:** ONG,. . . *mis ga . . . .* The final vowel in the emphatic personal pronoun is not pronounced, and this is marked with an apostrophe, and the *ga* is the

object pronoun of the verbal noun and is marked as such with an apostrophe. **58:** ONG, *Na bi deanamh . . .*; *deanamh* appears to be the verbal noun, and the omission of the particle "a'", likely due to elision, is marked. **61:** The identity of the MacMillan being referred to here is unclear. **62:** ONG, *shlaoid.* ONG, *fodh sgè*; *sgè* would appear to be "sgèith". **64:** The noun *teumadh* appears to have a double meaning here; *teumadh* means "beguiling, tempting", but also means "biting, wounding, stinging; snatching". ONG, *ghruagach*; as this is in the vocative, it should be preceded by the particle "a", and this omission is marked. **65:** ONG, . . . *air t-fhocal*; *t* is clearly a contraction of "do", "your", and this is marked. **66:** *grèim* appears to have a double meaning here; it means "hold, grasp, custody" as well as "throb, pang", and perhaps, as here, sexual desire. **68:** ONG, *na dheidh oirn*; *na* is a contraction of "ann a", "in its". **69:** ONG, *Bho na.* **70:** The relative pronoun "A", which should precede *dh'fhàg*, is omitted in ONG, and this is marked. **71:** The particle "a'", which should precede the verbal noun *gearan*, is omitted in ONG, probably due to elision, and this is marked. **73:** ONG, *Ge do.* ONG, *dh' èiridh*; the standard form of the verb is "èirich", and *dh' èireidhh*" is apparently a form of the future affirmative in the active voice in some dialects (see, for example, Dwelly, at p. 391), and is therefore retained here. **75:** ONG, *na 'n Gall*; *na 'n* is the plural genitive article "nan". **76:** ONG, *Gheabhadh, go bhi.* **77:** ONG, *bhreac uasal*; the aspiration of "breac", a feminine noun, suggests the presence of the article, "a'", which would be elided by the preceding vowel, and this is marked. The word "breac" generally means "smallpox"; thus, this would translate literally as "the noble smallpox". Given the context of illicit sexual relations with prostitutes, and the reference in line 72 to pains in the subject's loins, it is highly likely that this is a reference to a sexually transmitted disease. **78:** The omission in ONG of the infinitive particle "a" is omitted before *thoirt* is marked. **79:** ONG, *a chruadail*; given that "cruadal" is in a genitive relationship and is a masculine noun, *a* would be the masculine genitive article "a'". Here, "cruadal" would seem to mean "hardship, distress, difficulty", given the context, but given that it also means "valour" and even "firmness", one wonders whether once again a double meaning is intended by the poet, in keeping with the satirical nature of the poem. **82:** ONG, *Gabh a t-ionnsuidh . . .*; the combination *a t-* appears to be a contraction of "ann do", "in your", as in here "in your direction", "towards you", and this contraction is marked. **85:** ONG, *a mharcari*; this would appear to be an English loan word, probably "mercury", and is therefore marked as such with italics. Mercury was apparently considered to be cure for sexually transmitted diseases. **86:** ONG, *sa*; probably a contraction of "anns a'", "in the", and is marked accordingly. **87:** ONG, *spuinse*; apparently, another English loan word, likely "sponge". As the person giving the advice is a lowland prostitute, it is likely that these English loan words are intended by the poet to give the poem flavour, and emphasise the fact that this is a Highland-Lowland encounter. As this appears to be a loan word, it is again marked in italics. *Spùtan* means "a little spout", but also "syringe"; again, the poet is likely describing then-current methods of treating a sexually transmitted disease. **88:** ONG, *a chungaidh*; as "cungaidh", "cure", is a feminine noun, *a* is the feminine article "a'". This line makes clear that the preceding lines were describing a treatment for a sexually transmitted disease. **89:** ONG, *àsig*; this is the dialectical "àsaig", a form of the feminine noun "àsuing", meaning "apparatus, tools, implements, instruments, utensils". ONG, *cheannachas*; probably the future relative "cheannaicheas", and not the passive, and should be preceded by the relative pronoun "a", the omission of which is marked. **90:** ONG, *deirc*; the omission of final vowel in "deirce" is marked. **91:** ONG, *Bho na . . . .* **93:** ONG,

am; given the aspiration of the subsequent noun, this appears to be a contraction of "ann mo", "in my", and is marked; this interpretation is strengthened by the reference in her response in line 97 to "your relations", "do chàirdean". **95:** ONG, *bhi*, *ga*; this is third person singular masculine pronoun object "'ga". **96:** ONG, *A fuireach . . .* ; this appears to be a verbal noun, and is marked as such. **97:** ONG, *Na d' thoir . . . .* **98:** ONG, *nàrachan*; the meaning is not immediately clear. Given the circumstances, it may be a plural noun derived from the noun "nàire", and could mean "those shamed", which is the interpretation chosen here. It could, however, also be a reference to "nathraichean", the plural of "nathair", "snake"; indeed, it could be intended by the poet as a play on both words. **100:** ONG, *Na dheanabh na dhèigh sin*; *na dhèigh* would appear to be "'na dhèidh", "after it", and "na" would be a contraction of "ann a", "'na". **101:** The omission in ONG of the relative pronoun "a" before "gheibhadh", probably due to elision, is marked. ONG, *o nàdur*; from the context, the third person singular masculine possessive pronoun "a", "his", seems to be implied, but would be elided by the preceding vowel, and this is marked. **102:** ONG, *là'rium*; this appears to be a contraction of "làmh rium", and is marked as such with an apostrophe. **104:** ONG, *eugais*. **106:** The omission in ONG of the particle "a" before the verbal noun *toirt* is marked. ONG, *doibh*. **108:** ONG, *Ga do*; interpreted as "Ged a". The noun "streup" has a number of meanings, including "strife, contention, quarrel", but can also mean "rough play or horseplay", and the verb "streup" means to "climb, scale, mount with difficulty", and it is possible that the poet intended the word to have a double or even a triple meaning here. It is treated as a verbal noun, and the omission in ONG of the particle "a'" is marked. **109:** ONG, *Mòr'ear is Diùchde*. **110:** The relative pronoun "A" at the beginning of the line is omitted in ONG, and this is marked. ONG, . . . *sa chùis sinn . . .* ; given the aspiration of the noun, *sa* is interpreted as the contraction of "anns a'", "in the", and this is marked, and *sinn* is interpreted as "sin", "that", rather than the first person plural personal pronoun. **111:** ONG, *ga dheanabh*; given the aspiration of the verbal noun, *ga* is interpreted as the third person singular masculine pronoun object, and this is marked. **112:** ONG, *ciadan, am dhèigh*; given the aspiration of "dèidh", *am* is interpreted as a contraction of "ann mo", "in my", ("'am dhèidh", "after me"), and this is marked. **113:** The particle "a" is omitted in ONG before "nis", probably due to elision, and this is marked. **116:** ONG, *as a cheum so*; it is not clear whether *as a* is a contraction of "anns a" . . . seo", "in this", or "às a' . . . seo", "out of this . . .", although given that this line is a command and a warning, it seems likely that the latter is intended. **117:** ONG, *Na*; interpreted here as the negative imperative, although it is also frequently used by the poet for "no", "or". ONG, *Stìopall*; this appears to be dialectical for "stìoball". **118:** The particle "a'" is omitted in ONG before the verbal noun "beumadh", and this is marked. The verbal noun *beumadh* can mean "resounding", but can also mean "reproaching, vilifying", and given the context of the poem, a double meaning may have been intended by the poet. **119:** ONG, *san*; this is the contraction "anns an", "in the", and this is marked with an apostrophe. **120:** ONG, *a cheud uair*; *a* appears to be the article "a'", and is marked. **122:** ONG, *mis*; a contraction of the emphatic first person pronoun "mise", and this is marked. ONG, *neo stèighail*; interpreted here as "neo-stèidheil", "unsteady", or "of poor judgement", "senseless", which is appropriate, given the context. **123:** ONG, *col' riut*. **124:** ONG, . . . *a g' òl air a chéile*; *a g'* is clearly the verbal noun particle "ag", and *a* is clearly the dative article "a'". **126:** ONG, *liunn, sèdar*; the latter appears to be an English loan word for "cider", and is therefore put in italics. **127:** ONG, . . . *mo chuid s' air . . . .* The *s'* could be a contraction of "agus", but this is unlikely,

given the context. It is more likely that this is a contraction of the emphatic suffix "-sa", as in "chuid-sa", and that the vowel is elided by the vowel which starts the next word, and this is marked accordingly. **129:** ONG, *Na 'n d' thugainnsa*; *Na 'n* is clearly the conditional conjuntion "Nan". **131:** ONG, *col' riut, . . a sheasamh mi . . .*; this clearly cannot be the infinitive, and must be some other form of the verb, likely either "sheasas", the relative future, or "sheasadh", the conditional, which is preferred here, although "sheasainn" would be the standard form. **132:** ONG, . . . *a Chlèirich*; *a* is clearly the masculine genitive article "a'", and is marked accordingly. **133:** ONG, *'S fada.* ONG, *starraraich*; a form of the noun "dairirich" or "dairireach", meaning "a loud, rattling noise; noise of shooting". **134:** ONG, . . . *cuir rèis riut*; *cuir* is clearly the verbal noun, spelled as pronounced in the poet's dialect. The particle "a'", omitted in ONG, would be elided by the preceding vowel, and this is marked. **135:** ONG, *ga m' iarruidh*; *ga m'* is clearly the first person singular pronoun object "'gam", and is marked as such. ONG, . . . *'s na . . .*; given the context, *'s* is likely part of a contraction of "anns na", "in the", than a contraction of "agus", "and". **138:** ONG, . . . *a d' bheul . . .* ; given the context, *a* is likely the preposition "à", "from, out of", rather than as part of a contraction of "ann ad", "in your". **139:** ONG, *Bho na . . . .* **140:** ONG, *fàilinn na èiric.* It is likely that *èiric* is "èirig", "ransom, fine, reparation". It is not clear whether *na* is simply dialectical for "no", "or", or a contraction such as "ann an"; given that "èirig" is a feminine noun, however, the contraction of "ann an" would be "na h-"; thus, "na", "or", is how this is interpreted. **144:** ONG, *an dèigh.*

Alternative Versions: As this song was omitted from Maclean Sinclair versions, those in ONG and in the poet's MSS are the only ones extant.

16. Moladh Dhòmhnaill MhicUalraig

Tune: "Mo rùn geal, òg"
No. of lines: 176
Sources: ONG, p. 104, MG15G/2/1, p. 86, CC1, p. 52, CC2, p. 49.
Date: Unclear from either text or other sources, but as it appears in ONG, it clearly was made while the poet was still in Tiree, and before 1818.
Context: ONG provides the following introductory information: "Oran do Dhómhnall MacUalraig, Tàillear, air dha iarruidh air Iain MacGillain a mholadh"/"A song to Donald Kennedy, upon his asking John MacLean to praise him". The following introduction is provided in CC1 and CC2: "Bha Dòmhnull MacUalraig 'na thàillear agus 'na fhìdhleir. Bha e cruaidh agus mór as féin. Thachair e air a' Bhàrd latha 'san taigh-òsda, agus thòisich e air iarraidh air òran-molaidh a dheanamh dhà, ag gealltainn duais dha air a shon. B' ann a mhuinntir Cholla an tàillear. Cha robh e aon chuid cho beairteach no cho bochd 's a tha 'n t-òran ag ràdh"/"Donald Kennedy was a tailor and a fiddler. He was hard and was vain. He came across the poet one day in the inn, and he started to ask him to make a praise poem for him, and promised a reward for it. The tailor was of Coll people. He was neither as rich nor as poor as the song makes out. Charles MacCeoraidh was of Tiree people. He was just a poor fiddler. He died about five years ago [i.e. c. 1875], in Bruce County, Ontario".

Line Annotations:

4: ONG has "tàileir" for "tàilleir". **5:** ONG has "Gu 'r e". **6:** ONG has "gràtin". **7:** ONG omits the relative pronoun "a" which should precede the verb "tha", for the purposes of rhythm, and this omission is marked with an apostrophe. ONG has "cheanail"; as this appears to be the masculine noun "ceanal" rather than the adjective "ceanail", the slenderisation is removed. McLS interprets "do" in 1818 as the preposition "de", "of", rather than the second person singular possessive pronoun "do". Given the direct reference to the subject in line 8, this interpretation makes sense, but as the preposition "de" is rendered as "do" in the poet's dialect, "do" is retained. **8:** ONG has "Am fear"; "Am" is interpreted, given the context, as a contraction of "Ann am", and this is marked by an apostrophe. As the poet appears to be addressing the subject directly, the "do" in ONG would appear to be the second person singular possessive pronoun, rather than the preposition "de", which would be superfluous in any case as the slenderisation in ONG of "gluasad" and "nadar" implies that they are in a genetive relationship with the noun "fear". ONG has "nàduir" for "nàdair". **9:** ONG has "Gu 'n". ONG has "fèin". ONG has "sud". **10:** ONG has "Ma 'n". **14:** ONG has "do 'n". **16:** ONG has "bhrosgull" for "bhrosgal"; the "domh" in ONG is retained, rather than the standard "dhomh", "to me, for me", as reflective of the poet's dialect. ONG has "ghratin", which appears to be the infinitive "a ghràitinn", and the omission of the particle "a" is marked with an apostrophe; the dialectical form of the infinitive, "ghràitinn", is retained. **17:** ONG has "Mu 'n". **18:** ONG has "ann 's". **19:** ONG has "'N uair a bhi tu stigh-òsda". The word "bhi" looks like the infinitive "bhith", but the infinitive is inappropriate. The poet may have intended the relative future form of the verb, "bhios", however, the conditional, "bhiodh", would be more appropriate, given the past/conditional forms of the copula used in this stanza; this is the interpretation reached by McLS. "Stigh-òsda" appears to be a contraction of "anns an taigh-òsda", and this is marked with an apostrophe. **20:** ONG has "na", which, given the context, appears to be a contraction of the genitive plural article "nan", and this contraction is marked with an apostrophe. **22:** ONG has "Air a bhord"; the "a" would appear to be the masculine dative article "a'", and accordingly the apostrophe is added. ONG has "bhi". **24:** ONG has "diu". ONG has "tràigheadh", which is interpreted as "tràghadh"; the ONG spelling is retained, as indicative of the poet's dialect. **25:** ONG has "Air a mheud"; the "a" would appear the masculine dative article "a'", and an apostrophe is therefore added. ONG has "ga 'm", which is interpreted here as a contraction of the preposition, "do", with the relative pronoun "am", "dham", but as pronounced in the poet's diaalect, "gam". **26:** ONG has "Do"; given the context, this would appear to be the preposition "de", "of", rather than the second person singular possessive pronoun "do", "your", and "de" tends to become "do" in the poet's dialect. **27:** ONG has "An àm cordadh . . ."; "cordadh" is interpreted here as the noun "còrdadh", and is slenderised because it appears to be in a genetive relationship with the noun "àm". The word "An" appears to be a contraction of "Ann an", and this is marked with an apostrophe. ONG has "ma 'n" for "man", which would appear to be dialectical of "mun". **29:** ONG has "láimh", which is interpreted as a plural form of "làmh". ONG has "phòcadh", which is interpreted as the old dative plural "phòcaibh", but is left as in ONG, as indicative of dialect, and for the end rhyme with line 31. **30:** ONG has "dhoibh". **31:** ONG has "mughadh", which would appeart to be "mùthadh". **33:** ONG has "a mhòr-chuis". It is not clear whether the "a" is the feminine nominative article "a'" or the third person singular masculine possessive pronoun "a", his. McLS interprets this as the article, which is the better interpretation, given the direct presonal reference to the subject in the next line. **34:** ONG has "bhi a d' phorabh"; "a

d'" appears to be a contraction of "ann do", and is marked as such with an apostrophe. **35:** ONG has "na 'm", which would appear to be the genitive plural article "nam". **36:** ONG omits the relative pronoun "A" before "Bheireadh", and it is marked with an apostrophe. ONG has "da luchd-fuatha"; "da" appears to be a contraction of "do a", "to his", and this is marked with an apostrophe. **37:** Because there is no pronoun to accompany the verb "bha", this would appear to be a clause, and the verb should be preceded by the relative pronoun "A", whose omission is marked with an apostrophe. **38:** ONG has "An àm na 'n . . .". "An" appears to be a contraction of "Ann an", and this is marked with an apostrophe, and "na 'n" appears to be the genitive plural article "nan". **41:** ONG has "Tha thu shliochd . . .". The aspiration of "sliochd" seems to be caused by an omitted word, which I interpret as the preposition "do" or "de", "of", given the context, and this omission is marked with an apostrophe. ONG also has "na 'm", which, given the context, appears to be the genitive plural article "nam". **42:** ONG has "suarrach" for "suarach". **43:** As this line appears to be a clause, the relative pronoun "A" should precede the verb, and its omission in ONG is marked with an apostrophe. ONG has "as na còithean"; "as" could be interpreted as a contraction of the preposition "anns" or the preposition "às", which is preferred here, as it fits more easily with the verb, the conditional form of "thoir", "to take". **44:** This line also appears to be a clause, and so the relative pronoun "A" should precede the verb, and its omission in ONG is marked with an apostrophe. **45:** ONG has "shloinne" for the standard "sloinneadh", but the ONG form is retained, as indicative of the poet's dialect. **46:** ONG has "Do"; given the context, this would appear to be the preposition "de", "of", rather than the second person singular possessive pronoun "do", "your", and "de" tends to become "do" in the poet's dialect. **48:** ONG has "connsbuinn" for "connspainn". **52:** ONG has "sheanchas"; the aspiration is likely caused by the third person singular masculine possessive pronoun, "a", "his", or here, "its", which may have been elided, and this omission is marked with an apostrophe. **54:** ONG has "mis a toirt"; "mis" is the emphatic "mise", but the final "e" would be elided by the following vowel, and this elision is marked with an apostrophe. **55:** ONG has "ma 'n". **56:** ONG has "A bhi gràth . . ."; "bhi" is the infinitive "bhith", and "gràth" appears to be "ag ràdh"; the elision of the "a" in the particle "ag" is marked with an apostrophe. **59:** ONG has "tu" rather than the standard "thu", but this is left, as indicative of dialect. The aspiration of "Dun Eideann" is likely caused by the preposition "a", "to", which would be elided by the preceding vowel, and this elision is marked with an apostrophe. **60:** ONG has "fodh". **62:** ONG has "Dhol ga t-fheuchainn . . .". "Dhol" is the infinitive, and the omission of the particle "A" before the infinitive is marked with an apostrophe; "ga t-fheuchainn" is interpreted as "'gad fheuchainn". **63:** ONG has "do 'n". The reference to a Duke is unclear, though it is likely that this would be the Duke of Argyll, the chief of the Campbells, who held title to Tiree. Given the resentment with which Campbell ownership of Tiree was viewed among Tiree people and, almost certainly, by the poet himself, this reference would hardly have been complementary. For resentment of the Cambells amongst Tiree folk, see Niall Brownlie, *Bailtean is Ath-Ghairmean/Townships and Echoes* (Glendaruel: Argyll Publishing, 1995), at 18-19. **64:** ONG has "do 'n". In ONG, the initial letter in "dùthaich" is capitalised, as was the poet's practice when referring to either his home island, Tiree, or lands which comprised the hereditary estates of the MacLeans of Coll, or of the MacLeans generally. **66:** ONG has "fhidhaill" for "fhiodhaill". **67:** ONG has "na d'"; this appears to be a contraction of "ann ad", "in your", and is rendered as "'nad". **68:** The word "beus" commonly means "virtue, behaviour, deeds, custom", but can also mean a base violin, and it is likely, given the

context, that this is what was intended by the poet. It could also be a sonic play on the English word "base". **70:** ONG has "t-fheuchainn"; the "t-" is a contraction of the second person singular possessive pronoun "do", "your". ONG has "sa". **71:** The introduction to this poem in CC1 and CC2 indicates, as noted above, that the individual referred to here actually lived in Tiree, and was a poor fiddler. "MacCeòraidh" is an obscure surname or patronymic, and I have found no record of such a name in Tiree. **73:** The verb "bha" should be preceded by the relative pronoun "a", and its omission in ONG is indicated here with an apostrophe. **74:** The verb "tha" should be preceded by the relative pronoun "a", and its omission in ONG is indicated here with an apostrophe. **75:** ONG has "a meas"; given the plural referrent in the preceding line, "a" should be interpreted as the third person plural possessive pronoun "am", "their", and this is the interpretation given in McLS versions. **76:** ONG has "An deach . . ."; "An" is interpreted as a contraction of "Ann an", "In which", and this is marked with an apostrophe. **78:** ONG has "Fad sa . . ."; "sa" is interpreted as a contraction of "agus a", and this contraction is marked with an apostrophe. While "Fhad" is more commonly used than "Fad", the ONG spelling is retained, to reflect dialect. **80:** ONG has "ge 'd". ONG has "sa", which is interpreted as a contraction of "anns a'", and this is marked with an apostrophe. **81:** ONG has "Ge 'd". **82:** ONG has "thair", which is preferred to the standard "thar", as indicative of the poet's dialect. **83:** In ONG, "Dòmhnall" is aspirated, implying the elision or other omission of a preceding word. While the vocative is a possibility, the context suggests that Donald is being spoken of, not addressed, and there is no slenderisation of the name in ONG, as would occur in the vocative case. It is likely that the omitted word is "do" or "a", "to", and this is marked with an apostrophe. **84:** ONG has "na dheigh sin". **85:** ONG has "na inntinn"; "na" is a contraction of "ann a", "in his", and this is marked with an apostrophe. **87:** The verb "bha" should be preceded by the relative pronoun "a", and its omission in ONG is indicated here with an apostrophe. **88:** ONG has "Bho na". **89:** ONG has "na 'n"; this appears to be the genitive plural article "nan". **93:** ONG has "deisachan". **95:** ONG has "phutanadh"; this clearly appears to be a genitive plural, and is likely the now archaic form "phutanaibh". ONG has "airgiod", but as "airgiod", or the standard "airgead" seems to be in a genetive relationship with "phutanaibh", it is slenderised. **96:** ONG has "na 'n"; while the poet often rendered the genitive plural article "nan" in this way, this would not appear to be the intention here. Given the context, it would appear that this is a contraction of "Ann an", "Nan", and this is indicated with the apostrophe. ONG also has "riomheach" for "riomhach". **97:** ONG has "Gu 'n". **99:** ONG omits the relative pronoun "a" before the verb "dheanadh", and this omission is marked with an apostrophe. **100:** ONG has the non-standard forms "maith" for "math" and "còirdeadh" for "còrdadh", but these are retained, as indicative of dialect. **101:** ONG has "Gu 'n bhi"; "Gu 'n" is interpreted here as the preposition "gun", "without". ONG has "bhi"; the infinitive, "bhith", should be preceded by the particle "a", and its omission is marked by an apostrophe. ONG has "cumhan" for "cumhann". **102:** ONG has "a phearsa"; it would not appear that "a" is the feminine nominative article "a'", as "pearsa" is a masculine noun, so it would appear that "a" is the third person singular possessive pronoun, "his". ONG has "ga lionadh"; "ga" would appear to be the third person singular masculine pronoun object, and this is marked with an apostrophe. **103:** ONG has "mar", which would appear to be the conjunction "mur", "if not", rather than the preposition "mar", "as, like". **108:** ONG has "gu 'n"; the aspiration, and context, suggest that this is the preposition "gun", without, and this is the McLS interpretation. **112:** ONG has "na chual iad"; the elision of the final vowel

in "chuala" is marked with an apostrophe. **113:** ONG has "Ge do". **114:** ONG has "Dol"; this is a verbal noun, and the omission of the particle "a'" is marked with an apostrophe. **115:** ONG has "Cha 'n". ONG has "suarrach" for "suarach". **116:** ONG has "luaith", which is interpreted as "luaidh", "praise". ONG has "ann san", "so". **117:** ONG has "a Lunnin"; McLS interprets "a" as "à", "from", or "out of", which appears to be correct, "do na h-Innsibh", "to the Indies", in line 120, implies movement away. **118:** ONG has "bho 'n". **120:** ONG omits the relative pronoun "a" at the start of this line, and this is marked with an apostrophe. **121:** ONG has "'N uair". **122:** ONG has "thoisgaidean" for "tosgaidean", though "togsaidean" is more commonly used for "hogsheads"; the ONG spelling appears to reflect usage in the poet's dialect, and is therefore retained. ONG has "lionte", for the more common "lìonta", but the original is retained, as indicative of pronunciation. **123:** ONG has "bhranndi" for "bhranndaidh". **124:** ONG has "bh' uait". **125:** ONG has "ga tharrainn"; "ga" is third person singular pronoun object of the verbal noun, and is marked with a preceding apostrophe"; the final consonant in the verbal noun "tarraing" has been elided in ONG, and this is marked with an apostrophe. **126:** ONG has "prìsail" for "prìseil". **127:** ONG has "a d'"; this would appear to be a contraction of "ann do", "in your", and while the more common form of this contraction is "'nad", "'ad" is retained, partly owing to dialect and because the final consonant in the preceding "ann" would cause elision. **130:** The relative pronoun "a" should precede the verb "bhiodh", and its omission is marked with an apostrophe. **131:** ONG has "ann san". **132:** ONG omits the relative pronoun "a" which should appear before the verb, and this omission is marked with an apostrophe. ONG also has "na 'n fuar-bheann"; "na 'n" is interpreted as the plural genitive article, and should be "nam" as it precedes a noun beginning with "f". **133:** ONG has "coilaich", which would appeart to be "choilich", "cockerel". **134:** ONG has "'s na", which would appear to be a contraction of "anns na", and is marked "'sna". **135:** ONG has "circaige duinn"; this is interpreted as "cearcaige duinne", the genitive of "cearcag donn", the little brown hen, and it would appear to be in a genitive relationship with "nàmhaid" in line 133. **136:** ONG has "gu 'r e". ONG omits the relative pronoun "a" which would appear to be required before the verb, and this omission is marked with an apostrophe. ONG has "as an luachair"; given the context, "as" is interpreted as "às", "out of", rather than as a contraction of "anns an", "in the". **137:** ONG has "na"; this would appear to be the genitive plural article "nam", but ONG omits the final consonant, due to elision caused by the first consonant in the next word, and this omission is marked with an apostrophe. **138:** ONG omits the relative pronoun "a" which should precede the verb, and this omission is marked with an apostrophe. **139:** ONG has "'N uair". In ONG, the initial letter in "dùthaich" is capitalised; see comment at line 64. **141:** It is not clear whether "Dunaidh" refers to Dounie in Rossshire, or Doune, in Dumbartonshire; however, given the references to the cattle drove and to Dumbarton at line 143, it is likely Doune, which was an important location both as a cattle market and for its hiring fair (see Charles W. J. Withers, *Urban Highlanders: Highland-Lowland Migration and Urban Gaelic Culture, 1700-1900* (Phantassie: Tuckwell, 1998), at p. 64). **142:** ONG has "liùtharadh", which is interpreted as "liubhaireadh", the conditional of "liubhair", "to deliver". ONG has "chach", and it is not clear why it is aspirated; the aspiration may be caused by "a", the preposition "to", which is elided by the preceding vowel, in "tu", and this elision is marked with an apostrophe. **143:** ONG has "Dùn Breatinn". **144:** ONG has "Thuair"; ONG omits the relative pronoun "A" which should precede this verb, and this omission is marked. "Bristeadh" (more commonly "briseadh") can mean a

bankruptcy, and, given the references in lines 145 to 160, it would appear that the subject has, indeed, suffered a financial reversal, which would appear to be the result of the transaction at Dumbarton. **145:** ONG has "Bho na". **146:** ONG has "Gáedheil". **147:** ONG has "Gu 'n". ONG has "laoghadaich", which is interpreted as "lughdaich". **148:** ONG has "do na"; given the context, "do" is the partative "of", which is commonly "de", but is fairly consistently "do" in the poet's dialect. ONG has "cearnan 's"; the "'s" is difficult to interpret, but it may be a contraction of "agus", but is more likely the abbreviated form of "-seo" which is attached to a noun. **149:** ONG has "bhi" ONG has "'n uraidh", which would appear to be "'n uiridh", "last year". ONG has "a g' iasgach"; "a g'" is the verbal noun particle "ag". **150:** ONG has "do chàdar", which is clearly a place name, and there are several possibilities, including Cawdor, Nairnshire, several Calders in both the highlands and in the Lowlands, including in Lothian and Strathclyde, and Cadder, a parish in Kirkintilloch: See, for example, W. J. Watson, *The Celtic Placenames of Scotland* (Edinburgh: Birlinn, 1993), at 197, 222 and 455. **152:** ONG omits the relative pronoun "a" which should precede the verb, and this omission is marked with an apostrophe. ONG has " so 'd làmhan"; the "'d" is interpreted as a contraction of "ann do", which is normally rendered "'nad", but frequently "'ad", or here "'d", in the poet's dialect. **154:** ONG has "sa bha . . ."; "sa" is interpreted as a contraction of "agus a bha . . .", and is rendered "'s a bha . . .". **157:** ONG has "Dol"; this appears to be a verbal noun, and the particle "a' " has been omitted, and this omission is marked with an apostrophe. **158:** ONG has "diaigh", which is a dialectical variant for "dèidh", "desire, wish". **163:** ONG has "a g'" for the verbal noun particle "ag". **159:** ONG has "bhi". **161:** ONG has "fodh". **162:** ONG has "Cha 'n". **164:** ONG has "Gu 'n". **166:** ONG has "Dheanamh"; this is interpreted as the infinitive, which should be preceded by the particle "a", and its omission is marked with an apostrophe. **168:** ONG has "bhi". ONG has "bateal" for "baiteal", and "chàrluich" for "chàrlaich". **169:** ONG has "Bho na". **170:** ONG has "am Ghaedhlig"; "am" appears to be a contraction of "ann mo", which more commonly is rendered "'nam", but apparently "am" in the poet's dialect, and the contraction is marked with an apostrophe. **172:** The verbal noun particle, "a'", is omitted in ONG before "gràitinn", and is marked here with an apostrophe. Also, the relative pronoun "a" should appear before the verb "bha", and its omission is marked with an apostrophe. **174:** ONG has "Gu 'm". **175:** ONG has "'N uair". **176:** ONG has "Mac Ualrig".

Maclean Sinclair Versions:

4: Have "tàilear". **5:** Have "Gur h-e". **6:** Have "'g ràitinn". **7:** Have "de" for "do". **9:** Have "do dh' aithnich" fo "d'aithnich". **10:** Have "Mu 'n". **11:** Have "làn-dearbhadh". **12:** Have "inns'", and "d'" for "t'". **14:** Have "dhol". **16:** Have "dhomh". **17:** Have "Mur-a h-abair". **20:** Have "'S tu ri òl nan" for "Ri òl na'". **21:** Have "Nach" for "Cha". **23:** Have "na botail" for "am botal". **24:** Have "dheantadh", "dhiubh", and "thràghadh". **26:** Have "De" for "Do", "de" for "do". **27:** Replace this line with "'S tu nach rachadh a dh' fheòraich". **28:** Have "mu 'n" for "man". **29:** Have the singular "làmh" and the singular "phòca". **30:** Have "leat" for "dhoibh". **32:** Have "'S ann a chunntadh tu slàn e". **36:** Have "de 'n" for "d' a". **37:** Have "Bha iad cruadalach . . .". **38:** Have "'N àm" for "'An àm". **39:** Have "'S cha bu tais iad le 'n dòrnaibh" for this line. **42:** Have "Ri àm" for "Ri 'm". **44:** Add "'S", "And", before the verb at the start of this line. **45:** Have "shloinneadh r' a inns' leinn". **46:** Have "De" for "Do". **49:** Omit the relative pronoun "a" and has "r' a" for "ri". **51:** Have "teòm'". **52:** Replace this line with "'S mòr do chomasan eanchainn".

53: Have "ni" for "cùis" and "ort" for "da". **54:** Have "mise" for "mis'" and omits the relative pronoun "a". **55:** Have "Mu 'n" for "Man", and replaces "càch gur bòsd" with "cuid de m' luchd-éisdeachd". **56:** Replace this line with "'Gur h-e breugan tha 'm sheanachas", which bears some resemblance to line 52, which McLS had replaced. **59:** Have "thu" for "tu". **62:** Have "ga d' fhiachainn". **67:** Have "glacadh tu d' . . ." for "ghlac thu 'nad . . .". **68:** Have "dhuit" for "duit". **70:** Have "d'" for "t'". **71:** Have "Ach Mac-Ceòraidh a' ghrinneis" for this line. **72:** Replace "bhòidhche" with "bhinne". **74:** Replace this line with "Aig a bhàl ruibh ag éisdeachd". **75:** Have "meas iad do 'n" for "meas do dh'". **76:** Have "'N" for "An". **78:** Have "no" for "na". **82:** Have "thar" for "thair", and "duin'" for "duine". **85:** Have "ad" for "'na". **86:** Replaces this line with "Tha thu finealta gleusda". **90:** Have "Gur tu dh' fhuaidheadh" for "A dh'fhuaidheadh". **91:** Place "Is", "And", at the start of this line. **92:** Place "'S", "And", at the start of this line. **93:** Have "Gur h-e" for "Ach". **94:** Have "'S tu cur tholl" for "A'tilgeadh tholl". **95:** Replace this line with"A bhios agad fo d' mheuran". **96:** Replace this line with "'S bidh iad deante gu rìomhach". **97:** Have "Tighearn'". **98:** Rearrange this line to "Dhomh gu h-àraidh ag ìnnse". **100:** Have the standard "math", "còrdadh", and "r' a" for "ri". **101:** Have "no" for "na". **103:** Have "mur" for "mar". **106:** Have "'g a fuairead!" for "gu fuaraidh". **107:** Add "'S tu . . ." before "nach". **108:** Have "Is" for "'S". **110:** Have "'Bheireadh" for "Na thug". **111:** Have "is" for "'s". **112:** Have "do chruadal" for "na chual' iad". **113-116:** Remove these lines. **117-120:** Become the first four lines of McLS' verse 15, to which McLS adds a new line five in McLS verse 15, which is "Bu tu 'm marsanta cliùiteach". Lines six to eight in McLS' verse 15 are lines 124, 127 and 128, respectively. **120:** Have "Innsean" for "Innsibh". **121-123:** Remove these lines. **124:** Have "Gheibhteadh". **125-126:** Remove these lines. **131:** Replace this line with "'S iomadh fiadh fo do bhuille". **132:** Have "Thuit air uilinn . . .". **134:** Have "moch" for "moich". **137:** Have the standard "nam" for "na'". **138:** Have the relative pronoun, "A", at the start of this line. **140:** Have "Bheirteadh", and "dhuit" for "duit". **141:** Replace this line with "'S iomadh uan 'thug thu Dhùnaidh". **142:** Replace this line with "'S iomadh crùn 'thug thu 'n àit so". **145-152:** Remove these lines. **153-160:** These come after lines 161-168, not before (i.e. the order of these two verses is reversed). **153:** Have "leam" for "mi". **154:** Have "beairteach" for "beartach". **155:** Have "Falbh le pochd'" for "'Giùlan pòc'", and "shlinnein" for "shlinnean". **156:** Have "càis" for "càise". **157:** Have "na buana" for "an fhoghair". **158:** Replace this line with "Ach mo thruaighe do chàradh". **159:** Replace this line with "Gu 'm bu trom ort bhith laidhe". **160:** Have "no" for "na" and "stàbull" for "stàpall". **161-168:** Have these lines before 153-160, as noted above. **161:** Have "Gur-a mis' tha . . ." for "Gu bheil mise . . .". **162:** Replace with "'S mi nach urrainn sin àicheadh". **163:** Have "dhomh" for "domh". **165:** Have "Bho na . . ." for "Bho nach . . .". **167:** Replace with "Tha nis crioch air gach gnothach". **168:** Replace with "A bha roimhe seo 'd làmhan". **169-176:** Rearrange order of this verse, so that lines 173-176 are the first four lines, not the last for, line 169 is replaced and is the fifth, not the first line of the verse, line 170 is replaced and is the sixth, not the second line of the verse, and lines 171 and 172 become the final two lines in the verse. **169:** Replace with "Gheibh mi gloin' air muin gloine". **170:** Replace with "De dhibh shoilleir nan Gàidheal". **171:** Add "'S", "And", at the start of the line. **172:** Have "Nach h-e sgleò" for "Nach e 'm bòsd", and have "'g ràitinn" for "'gràitinn". **176:** Have Mac-Ulraig is".

With these changes and omissions, the Maclean Sinclair versions contain 160 lines, or 20 rather than 22 verses.

Recorded Versions:
A version of this song was recorded in 1974 from the singing of Sister Jane MacKenzie, Sister of Saint Martha, of Christmas Island, Cape Breton County, Cape Breton, by Maureen Lonergan (Williams), and included in her 1974 M.A. Dissertation in Celtic Studies at St. Francis Xavier University, entitled "The Scholar, Poet and Local Bard", under the direction of Prof. C. I. N. MacLeod. The text for the song is taken from CC2, and it follows the McLS version very closely. Sister MacKenzie was of Barra descent, and was a member of a well-known family of tradition bearers. One brother was Archie Alex MacKenzie, himself a talented singer and poet, who was also recorded by Maureen Lonergan, and another was Hugh Francis MacKenzie (1895-1971), a fine Gaelic poet, fiddler, piper and singer. They were all children of Archibald J. MacKenzie, "Eairdsidh Sheumais" (1861-1939), himself a poet and well-known singer and tradition bearer. He was well known for poems such as "Fàilt' a Bhonnaich Choirce", "An Tulach Bhòidheach" and "Òran na h-aois", as well as for many humorous and original stories, and for his *History of Christmas Island Parish*, published in 1926, which is a valuable source for the history of the Gaelic settlement in central Cape Breton: see entry in Derick S. Thomson, *The Companion to Gaelic Scotland* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1983), p. 176. Sister MacKenzie sings six verses, and these are based very closely on verses 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, and 18 in CC2, in that order. Sister MacKenzie's version differs from CC2 in the following respects: **Verse 3: Line 8,** *dheante* for *dheanteadh*, add *oirnn* at the end of the line; **Verse 4: Line 4,** *còrdadh* for *còrdaidh*, **Line 8,** *a' cùnntadh* for *a chùnntadh*; **Verse 5: Line 4,** *do 'n* for *de 'n*; **Verse 18: Line 6**, *Deanamh* for *Dheanamh*, omit *d'*. **Line 7,** *Thàinig* for *Tha nis*.

17. Call na *Cailin*

Tune: ONG indicates "Gur h-e mis' th' air mo leònadh"; no tune is given in CC1 or CC2.
No. of lines: 160
Sources: ONG, p. 66, MG15G/2/1, p. 61, CC1, p. 58, CC2, p. 54.
Date: c. spring, 1809.
Context: ONG provides the following introductory information: "Cumhadh Do Nial MacGilleain, do Lachunn agus do Nial Domhnallach, chaidh a bhàthadh tighinn a Ila"/"A Lament for Neil MacLean, to Lachlan and to Neil MacDonald, who were drowned returning from Islay". McLS provides the following introductory information in CC1: "Chaidh Niall Mac-Gilleain, "am maor Bàn"; Lachainn Dòmhnullach, mac Dhòmhnuill mhic Chaluim; agus Niall Dòmhnullach, mac Sheumais mhic Chaluim, triùir dhaoine a mhuinntir Thirithe, air ghnothach do dh' Ile. 'N uair a bha iad a tighinn dachaidh chaidh an call aig na Suacain an Tirithe. B'e *A' Chailin* ainm a' bhàta aca"/"Neil MacLean, the "Fair bailiff"; Lachlan MacDonald, the son of Donald, son of Calum; and and Neil MacDonald, the son of James, son of Calum, three men of Tiree extraction, went on business to Islay. When they were returning home, they were lost at "Na Suacain", Tiree. The *Cailin* was the name of their boat". As a post-script, McLS indicates the following: "Neil McLean and those with him were drowned in March, 1809. Mr. McLean had gone to Islay for

Macintosh, the receiver of wreck, a ship with a cargo of linseed having been cast ashore in Tiree." This information allows us to date the poem, suggesting that is was likely composed reasonably shortly after the events described, in perhaps the spring of 1809. CC2 has the same introductory information and post-script as CC1. "Na Suacain" forms part of the shoreline at Caolas, Tiree described by Brownlie as "rocky and extremely treacherous": Niall M. Brownlie, *Bailtean is Ath-Ghairmean a Tiriodh/Townships and Echoes from Tiree*, *supra*, at pp. 132-135.

Line Annotations:
1: ONG omits the relative pronoun "a" before the verb, and this omission is marked. **2:** ONG has "bhi". **3:** ONG has "Gu 'n". **4:** ONG omits the relative pronoun "A" before the verb, and this omission is marked. In ONG, "caolas", "narrow", is in lower case, but the reference by the poet to his "caolas" indicates he is speaking of his native township "Caolas" rather than any narrows, and is thus capitalised. **5:** Because there is no subject, this line must be a clause; thus, a relative pronoun "a" before the verb, and this omission in ONG is marked. ONG has "sa". **6:** ONG has "Fodh". ONG has "as"; given the implied movement away from Caolas, this is interpreted as "às", "out of". **7:** ONG has "Ge do". **8:** ONG has "Gu 'm bo", "sud". **9:** ONG has "dar 'n ionnsuidh"; "dar" appears to be a contraction of "do ar", and the elision of the vowel in "do" is marked. **9:** ONG has "Ga 'd". **13:** ONG has "gaoinneadh air 'n eòlais"; "gaoinneadh" is interpreted by McLS as "gainnead", and "air" as "ur", both of which appear appropriate. **14:** ONG has "na 'n gnàs"; "na 'n" appears, from the context, to be the genitive plural article "nan", and "gnàths", which can mean "nature", is interpreted here as "the elements". **15:** Because there is no subject, this line must be a clause; thus, a relative pronoun "a" before the verb, and this omission in ONG is marked. ONG has "suacan" in the lower case, but this is a reference to a piece of rocky shore at Caolas, Tiree known as "na Suacain"; see "context" to this song, above. **16:** ONG has "'N uair". ONG has "ri h-earr"; the presence of the "h" before "earr" implies the third person singular possessive pronoun "a", "her", which would be elided by the preceding vowel in "ri", and this is marked. **17:** ONG has "Gu 'r". ONG has "bhi"; the omission of the infinitive particle "a" is marked. **18:** ONG has "a stoirm"; the "a" is clearly the article "an", "the", and the absence of the "n" appears to be reflective of dialect, and is marked. ONG has "bhi". **21:** ONG has "Gu 'm bo". ONG has "air", which is interpreted here as the second person plural possessive pronoun, "ur", "your". **22:** ONG has "'N uair". ONG has "na clàir"; "na" could be the nominative plural article, but in the context, it would appear to be the contraction of "ann a", "'na", "in her", the "her" being the boat. **23:** ONG has "gar 'n èisdeachd"; given the context, in which the poet is speaking of the subjects, "gur n-" would appear to be more appropriate, and McLS also interprets the line in this way. **24:** The verb appears to be in the infinitive, and should therefore be preceded by the particle "A", and the omission of it in ONG is marked. ONG has "nar càs"; again, given the context, "'nur", "in your", would be more appropriate, and McLS also interprets the line in this way. **25:** The "Seumas" and the "Donald" being referred to here are the fathers of two of the subjects; see the patronymics of the two MacDonalds given in CC1 and CC2, in "context", above. ONG has "sa"; given the context, this would appear to be "'s a'", the "'s" being the contraction of "agus", "and", and "a'" being the vocative article. **26:** ONG omits the relative pronoun "a" before the verb, and this is marked. ONG has "air crìdhe"; "air" has been interpreted as "ur", which is McLS' interpretation, and which is appropriate, since the poet is addressing the two fathers. **28:** ONG has "air", which is again interpreted as "ur", for the same reasons as

discussed in respect of line 26. ONG has "roi n tìm". **29:** ONG has "mu na". **30:** ONG has "As"; given the implied motion away from the harbour, this is interpreted as "Às", "Out of". ONG has "so". **31:** ONG has "an àite"; "an" appears to be a contraction of "ann an", and this is marked. The persons referred to as waiting at the shore would appear, based on the context, to be the two fathers, who may therefore have witnessed the drownings. **32:** ONG has "An deachidh"; "An" is interpreted to be a contraction of "Ann an", and this is marked. **34:** ONG has "air", which is again interpreted as "ur", "your". **35:** ONG has "Nar", but given the context, in which the poet is addressing the subjects, "'Nur", "In your" seems more appropriate. **36:** ONG has "gu 'm". **37:** ONG has "'N uair". ONG omits the relative pronoun "a" which should precede the verb, and this omission is marked with an apostrophe. ONG has "Lachluinn"; there does not appear to be any need for slenderisation. **38:** ONG omits the particle "A'" before the verbal noun, and this omission is marked with an apostrophe. **40:** ONG has "A cuir", which is clearly the verbal noun, and this is indicated with the insertion of an apostrophe. ONG has "ann 's na . . ."; "ann 's" is clearly "anns". **42:** ONG has "ga t-iundrainn", which is the verbal noun preceded by the second person pronoun object, "'gad ionndrainn". **43:** ONG has "fèin sud". **44:** ONG has ". . . i h-èibhneas"; the "h" implies the third person singular feminine possessive pronoun, "a", "her", which would be elided by the preceding vowel, and this elision is marked with an apostrophe. ONG has "bràch", which is retained, as dialectical for "bràth". **45:** ONG has "na ciatabh"; "ciatabh" appears to be a genitive plural of "ceutabh", "joy", and "na" should therefore be the genitive plural article "nan", and the omission of the final "n" is likely dialectical, and marked with an apostrophe. ONG has "gu 'n", but the aspiration of the next word would suggest that this is the preposition "gun", without, which causes aspiration, rather than the conjunction "gun". ONG has "bhruaidhlain"; McLS interprets this as "bruaillean", grief, but it could be "bhruaidlean", another word for grief or melancholy. **46:** ONG has "Ann 's", which is clearly "Anns". **48:** ONG has "bhi"; the omission of the infinitive particle "a" is marked. **49:** ONG has "orra"; given the reference is clearly to the mother, this should be the third person singular prepositional pronoun form of "air", "oirre", which is the interpretation given by McLS. **51:** ONG omits the relative pronoun "a", which should precede the verb, and this omission is marked with an apostrophe. **52:** ONG has "gu 'n", that would appear to be the preposition "gun", "without". ONG omits the particle "a" that should precede the infinitive, and this omission is marked with an apostrophe. **54:** ONG has "Bhi"; the omission of the infinitive particle "A" is marked. ONG also omits the particle "a'" before the verbal noun, and this omission is also marked. ONG has "àsig", which is interpreted as the genitive of "aiseag", "aisig", "ferry". **55:** ONG omits the particle "A" that should precede the infinitive, and this omission is marked with an apostrophe. ONG has "ga t-iarruidh"; "ga t-" is the verbal noun with second person singular object pronoun, "'gad". **56:** ONG omits the particle "a" that should precede the infinitive, and this omission is marked with an apostrophe. ONG has "t-shìneadh sa n"; the "t-" is a contraction of the second person singular possessive pronoun "do", pronounced as "t" in the poet's dialect. However, the construction "ann do", "in your", is implied here. Commonly, this construction is contracted to "'nad", but in the poet's dialect, is commonly rendered as "'ad", and the "a" would be elided here by the preceding vowel in "tu", and this is also marked. **59:** ONG has "dhith". **60:** ONG has "m pòsadh"; "m" is the nominative article "am", but the vowel is elided by the final vowel sound in the verb, and this elision is marked with an apostrophe. **62:** Though not indicated in ONG, the context suggests that the third person singular possessive pronoun, "a",

"her" is implied before the noun "fuath"; it would have been elided by the final vowel in "thu", and its elision is marked with an apostrophe. **63:** ONG has "Na faigheadh"; "na" would appear to be the conjunction "nam", and the non-pronunciation of the final "m" may be dialectical, and is marked with an apostrophe. ONG has "i h-ordugh". the "h" implies the third person singular feminine possessive pronoun, "a", "her", and it would be elided by "i", and this elision is marked with an apostrophe. **64:** ONG has "col", "sa n". **67:** ONG has "Cha 'ni". In ONG, "cheud"; the aspiration is due to the implied article "a'", "the", which would be elided by the preceding vowel, "i", and this elision is marked with an apostrophe. **68:** ONG has "Ga bo"; given the context, this appears to be "Ged", and the omission of the final consonant, probably a dialectal feature, is marked. ONG has "sa n". **70:** ONG omits the particle "A" before the infinitive, and this is marked with an apostrophe. ONG has "fasga", which would appear to be the noun "fasgadh", "shelter, cover", and the omission of the final "dh" appears to be dialectical and is marked with an apostrophe. ONG has "na 'n", which, given the context, is interpreted as the genitive plural article "nan". **71:** ONG has "ann a t-"; the "a t-" appears to be a contraction of "ann do", which is commonly rendered as "'nad", but "'ad" in the poet's dialect. **74:** ONG has "fodh èislein"; as "èislean" is a masculine noun, it is not clear why it has been slenderised. **76:** ONG has "dhoibh stà" for "stàth". **78:** ONG has "gu 'n"; given the context, this is clearly the preposition "without". **79:** ONG has "ann sa 'n". **80:** ONG has "an dràst"; the omission of the final "a" is marked with an apostrophe. **81:** ONG has "dhìnnleachdain"; this appears to be "dìlleachdain", "orphans", but is retained as indicative of dialect. **82:** ONG has "bhi". **84:** ONG has "Sa 'n cùl taic"; given the context, "Sa 'n" is interpreted as being "'S an", "And their". ONG has "ann sa". **85:** ONG has "Bho na". **88:** ONG has "mo 'n". **90:** ONG has "Neil Bhàin", omitting the vocative article, "a'", which is marked with an apostrophe. **91:** ONG has "'N uair". ONG has "asdar" for "astar". **92:** ONG has "Port Asgais", which is likely "Port Asgaig", or Port Askaig, in Islay. ONG has "bhàt"; the final "a" in "bàta" has been omitted, for reasons of rhythm, and this omission is marked with an apostrophe. **94:** ONG has "dhoibh". **95:** ONG has "gu 'n"; given the aspiration of the next word, and the context, this would be the preposition "gun", "without". ONG has "doibh". **96:** ONG omits the relative pronoun "A" before the verb, and this is marked with an apostrophe. ONG has "a misneach"; the "a" could be interpreted as the third person singular feminine possessive pronoun, but it is unclear to whom this would refer. Given the plural referrents, for example at lines 93 and 94, it is likelier that this is the third person plural possessive pronoun "am", with the "m" elided by the next consonant, and this elision is marked with an apostrophe. **97:** ONG omits the relative pronoun "a" before the verb, and this omission is marked with an apostrophe. ONG has "iundrainn na 'n daoine"; the "na 'n" appears to be the genitive plural article "nan". **98:** ONG has "gu 'n mhaor"; given the aspiration and the context, "gu 'n" is interpreted as the preposition "gun", "without". ONG has "a t-àite"; "a t-" appears to be a contraction of "ann do", which is commonly rendered as "'nad", but "'ad" in the poet's dialect. The reference here is apparently to Neil MacLean, who is described in the introduction in CC1 and CC2 as "am maor bàn". **99:** ONG has "Bho na", "fodh". **100:** ONG has "na 'n"; from the context, this appears to be the genitive plural article. **102:** ONG has "Ann 's". ONG has "gnomhach" for "gnothach". **103:** ONG has "gu 'n". **104:** ONG omits the relative pronoun "a" before the verb, and this is marked with an apostrophe. **105:** ONG has "grìnn", but the preceding superlative "bu" would cause aspiration. Also, as this is a superlative, "grinne" should be required; the final "e" would likely be elided by the subsequent vowel, and this elision is marked with an

apostrophe. **107:** ONG has "ad"; this appears to be a contraction of "ann do", which is commonly rendered as "'nad", but "'ad" in the poet's dialect. **109:** ONG omits the relative pronoun "a" before the verb, and this is marked with an apostrophe. **110:** ONG has "Ann sa 'n". ONG omits the relative pronoun "a" before the verb, and this is marked with an apostrophe. **111:** ONG has "sa", which is interpreted here as "'s a", the "'s" being the contraction of "agus", "and", and the "a" being the relative pronoun. **112:** ONG has "Bho na", "fodh 'n". **114:** ONG has "bhi"; the omission of the infinitive particle "a" is marked. **115:** ONG has "àiliche" and "cummachd". **116:** ONG has "go". **117:** ONG has "'N uair". **118:** ONG omits the particle "A" before the infinitive, and this is marked with an apostrophe. **119:** ONG has "gràtin". **120:** ONG has "Gu 'm bo". ONG has "ga 'n di"; "ga 'n" is interpreted as the third person plural object pronoun "'gan", and "di" is interpreted as "dith", conveying the sense of something missed. **121:** ONG has "bu glice", and the superlative should cause lenition. **122:** ONG has "d' cheann"; the "d'" is interpreted as a contraction of "ann do", which is commonly rendered as "'nad", but "'ad" in the poet's dialect. The "a" in "'ad" would be elided by the final vowel in the preceding word, and this is marked with an apostrophe. **123:** ONG omits the relative pronoun "A" which should precede the verb, and this line appears to be a clause, and this omission is marked with an apostrophe. **124:** ONG has "a d'", and this is interpreted as a contraction of "ann do", which is commonly rendered as "'nad", but "'ad" in the poet's dialect. **127:** ONG omits the relative pronoun "a" which should precede the verb, and this is marked with an apostrophe. **129:** ONG omits the relative pronoun "a" before the verb, and this omission is marked with an apostrophe. **131:** ONG has "Gu" for the conjunction "Gun", and the omission of the final "n" in pronunciation is marked with an apostrophe. **132:** ONG has "Bho na", "chunnaig". **133:** ONG has "focal" for the more common "facal", but is retained as indicative of dialect. ONG has "ga 'n", which is the third person plural pronoun object of the verbal noun "'gan". **134:** ONG has "cuir"; from the context, this would appear to be a verbal noun, and the omission of the verbal noun particle "a'", and this omission is marked with an apostrophe. **136:** ONG has "Bho na", "tu sa". **137:** ONG has "chunnaig so" and "iomchuidh". **138:** ONG has "Tigh 'nn", which appears to be a verbal noun, and the omission of the verbal noun article "'A" is marked with an apostrophe. ONG has "mo", which given the next word, which ONG has as "tiomchioll", would appear to be "mu"; although "mo" may represent pronunciation in the poet's dialect, the standard is preferred here, to avoid confusion with the first person singular possessive pronoun, "mo", "my". **139:** ONG omits the relative pronoun "a" before the verb, and this omission is marked with an apostrophe. ONG has "a t-", and this is interpreted as a contraction of "ann do", which is commonly rendered as "'nad", but "'ad" in the poet's dialect. **140:** ONG has "Bho 'n". ONG omits the relative pronoun "a" before the verb, and this omission is marked. ONG has "bhi"; the omission of the infinitive particle "a" is marked. **141:** ONG has "t-ainme"; the "t-" is interpreted as a contraction of the second person singular possessive pronoun "do", which is pronounced as "t'" in the poet's dialect. **142:** ONG has "Bho na". ONG omits the particle "A" which should precede the infinitive, and this omission is marked with an apostrophe. ONG has "t-àm"; the "t-" is interpreted as a contraction of the second person singular possessive pronoun "do", which is pronounced as "t'" in the poet's dialect. **144:** ONG has "Bhi"; the omission of the infinitive particle "A" is marked. **145:** ONG has "Gu 'm". ONG has "saoghach"; this is interpreted as "saoghachd", which means "pain". ONG has "dòrinn", which is interpreted as "dòruinn", "torment". **146:** This is clearly a clause and therefore there should be the relative pronoun "A" before the verb, and its

omission in ONG is marked with an apostrophe. ONG has “do ’n”. **147:** ONG has "riabh". It is not clear to what the third person singular feminine object pronoun "i" refers; it could be to the pain and torment, at line 145, both of which are feminine nouns, or perhaps it could refer to the boat which carried the subjects, which is also a feminine noun. **148:** ONG has “Mu ’n”. **149:** ONG has "air", which, given the context, is interpreted as the second person plural possessive pronoun "ur". ONG has "Ila", which is clearly the subjects' destination, "Ile", or Islay. **150:** ONG has "as"; given the imlied motion away from Islay, implied by the verb, "till", "to return", "as" is interpreted as "às", "out of, from". **151:** ONG omits the relative pronoun "A", which should precede the verb, as there is no subject. ONG has "air", which, given the context, is interpreted as the second person plural possessive pronoun "ur". ONG has “fodh”. **152:** ONG has "da 'r"; given the context, though, it would appear that this is a contraction of "do", "to", and "ur", the second person plural possessive pronoun "ur", rather than the first person plural possessive pronoun "ar", and this is marked as "d' ur". **153:** ONG has "air", which is interpreted here as the second person plural possessive pronoun "ur". ONG has "paranta", which is interpreted as "parantan", "parents", but the omission of the final consonant may be dialectical, and its omission is marked with an apostrophe. **154:** ONG has “Thuair”. ONG has "ga 'n"; this is interpreted as the third person plural object pronoun of the verbal noun, "'gan". **155:** ONG omits the relative pronoun "a" which should precede the verb, and this omission is marked with an apostrophe. ONG again has "ga 'n", which is again interpreted as "'gan", for the reasons given at line 154. **157:** ONG has “do ’n”. ONG omits the relative pronoun "a" which should precede the verb, and this omission is marked with an apostrophe. ONG has "air", which, given the context, is interpreted as the second person plural possessive pronoun "ur". **158:** ONG has "corpadh", which is interpreted as "corpaibh", and archaic plural form. **160:** ONG omits the relative pronun "a" before the verb, and omits the particle "a" before "chaoidh", which would have been elided by the preceding vowel; both omissions are marked with an apostrophe.

Maclean Sinclair Versions:

4: Have "fhìn". **6:** Have "àrd-sheòl" for "sheòl". **8:** Have the standard "bu", and "siud". **9:** Have "g' ar n-ionnsaidh". **13:** Reverse the order of this line and line 15, and add "'S", the contraction of "Agus", "And", at the start of the line. **14:** Replace this line with "Anns na stuadhan gun bhàigh". **15:** Reverse the order of this line and line 13, as noted at 13, and have "Chaidh ur" for "Chuir air". **16:** Replace this line with "'Chuir fo sheòl sibh do 'n àit'". **17:** Have "Gur h-e 'n . . ." **18:** Have "Is an stoirm . . .". **19:** Change to "'Chuir a' 'Chailin' 'g an ionnsaidh". **21:** Have "bu" for "bo". **24:** Have "Dheanadh". **25:** Have "Och" for "Ach". **26:** Have "goirt leam" for "goirt 'tha". **28:** Omit the relative pronoun before the verb, replacing it with an apostrophe. **29-32:** Omit these lines. **33-36:** These lines become the final four lines of the preceding verse, following upon lines 25-28, and therefore effectively replacing lines 29-32. **33:** Change this line almost completely to "Thugadh bhuainn na fir chalma". **34:** Have "Nach robh cearbach . . .". **35:** Replace "'Nur" with "Bu". **36:** Replace "sibh" with "iad". **37-40:** Omit these lines. **41:** Have "trom" for "gu". **43:** Have "sin" for "siud". **44:** Have the standard "bràth" for "bràch". **45:** Have "bhruaillean". **47:** Have "r' a faotainn". **49:** Insert "tha" after "trom". **52:** Have "'s gun i d' . . ." for "gun 'bhith d' . . ." **53:** Have "d'" for "t'". **54:** Have "A' cur . . ." for "'Bhith 'cur . . .". **55:** Have "ga d'". **56:** Have "'S tu 'n ad shìneadh . . .". **59:** Insert "'m" after "Gum b' e". **61:** Have "dhuit" for "duit". **62:** Insert "'S", the contraction

of "Agus", "And", at the start of this line. **63:** Have "Na am . . ." for "Na . . .". **64:** Replace ". . . 'san uaigh" with "'s a' chuan". **65:** Replace "a nighean" with "nighean Iain". **66:** Replace "ri snighe" with "a' snidheadh". **68:** Have the standard "Ged bu". **69:** Have "'bhi 'cuimhneachadh", and "Lachainn" for "Lachlainn". **70:** Have "fo shlachdraich", for "fo fhasga'". **71:** Have "aic' n d' àite" for "ann 'ad àite". **72:** Have "a" for "an". **76:** Have "dhaibh". **77:** Have "tàinig" for "d' thàinig". **78:** Have "Bidh". **79:** Have "anns an". **80:** Have "'s ann cràidh" for "an dràst'". **81-84:** Omit these lines. **85-88:** These form the first four lines of a separate verse, to which the following four lines are added: "'S iad 'g ad iarraidh gu d' chàradh/Ann an sàmhchair na h-uaigh'.--/'S aobhar bròin iad r' am faicinn,/'S an cùl-taic' aca bhuap'." **87:** Have "am moch-èiridh". **88:** Change this line to "Air a' chladach lom, fhuar." **89:** Have "r' a ìnnse". **91:** Replace this line with "Mar-a iarramaid d' fhaicinn". **92:** Have "Bho" for "Do". **93:** Replace this line with line 101. **94:** Replace this line with line 102. **95:** Have "dhaibh" for "doibh". **96:** Have "am" for "a". **97-100:** Omit these lines. **101:** Replace line 93. **102:** Replace line 94. **103-104:** Omit these lines. **107:** Have "cunntas". **109:** Replace this line with line 123, as amended, below. **110:** Replace this line with line 124, as amended, below. **111:** Replace with "B' aobhar mulaid do 'n àite". **112:** Replace with "Thu bhi bàite 's an ròd". **113:** Have "Bu tu" for "B' e sin", and "féile" for "fèilidh". **114:** Have "tug" for "d' thug". **115:** Have "b' àluinne" for "b' àilliche". **116:** Have "do" for "d'" and "gu" for "go". **120:** Have "bu" for "bo", and "'g an dìth". **121-128:** Omit these lines. **129:** Have "'S math a . . ." for "'S ro mhath . . .". **131:** Replace this with "Bha thu measail aig uaislean". ONG is similar to the line with which McLS versions replace 135. **132:** Replace this with "'S chuir an tuath annad ùidh". **133:** Have "d' fhacal 'g an . . ." for "t' fhocal 'gan . . .". **134:** Have "No cur . . ." for "Na 'cuir . . .". **135:** Replace with "Aig gach duine bha gaol ort". **136:** Replace with "Bu tu 'm maor a b' fheàrr cliù". **137-154:** Omit these lines. **155:** Have "'Sguir an càirdean 'g an iasgach" for this line. This is the seventh line in a wholly reworked final verse in the McLS versions, the first line of which is line 157, and the eighth line of which is line 156, both as reworked in the notes to those lines. Lines two through six of the McLS versions are: Stiùir na cruinne 'na dhòrn,/'S a thug leis ás an t-saoghal seo/Na daoine ud le còir,/Gu 'n do thilg e gu cladach/An cuirp gheala 'san ròd;--". **156:** Have "Fhuair iad riarachadh mòr" for this line. This is the eigth line in a wholly reworked final verse in the McLS versions, the other lines of which are set out in the note to line 155. **157:** Have "Taing do 'n Tì sin tha cumail" for this line. This is the first line in a wholly reworked final verse in the McLS versions, the other lines of which are set out in the note to line 155. **158-160:** Omit these lines

With these changes and omissions, the McLS versions contain 120 lines.

18. Bàrdachd Alastair MhicFhionghain

Tune: "Gur a muladach, sgith mi".
No. of lines: 57
Sources: ONG, p. 87, CC1, p. 62, CC2, p. 58.
Date: Likely spring, 1814, based on the date of death of the subject.
Context: ONG provides the following introductory information: "Oran do dh' Alastair MacIonmhuinn, a bha na Chorplair ann an Rèisemaid (sic) a Mharcuis, le Iain MacGilleain, air dha sealladh da Sheirbhis fhaicinn an dèigh (sic) a bhàis, agus e

toirt urram dhi thair mòran eile a chunnaic e, a thaobh doimhneachd na cainnt a bha na chuid Orain, agus feothas (sic) sa bha ì (sic)air a cuir an ordugh. Aon sa bith (sic) a leughas orain ann san (sic) Leabhar so (sic), chi e gu bheil so (sic) fior (sic)"/"A song to Alastair MacKinnon, who was a corporal in the Marquis' Regiment, by John MacLean, upon his seeing a glimpse of his service after his [MacKinnon's] death, and paying greater respect to it [MacKinnon's poetry] than much else he [MacLean] has seen, with respect to the depth of the language that was in his [MacKinnon's] songs, and the excellence with which it [the poetry] was put together. Any one at all who reads [his] songs in this Book will see that this is true". The high regard in which John MacLean held Alastair MacKinnon's poetry is attested to by the fact that at least six of MacKinnon's songs were included by him in ONG.

In CC2 (which follows CC1), McLS added the following, in which somewhat more detail is given of the circumstances in which John MacLean came to see the poetry, the date of MacKinnon's death (1814), and in which McLS himself expresses his high regard for MacKinnon's poetry: "Goirid an déid bàis MhicFhionghainn fhuair am Bàrd sealladh bho bhantraich de na h-òrain a dh' fhàg e sgrìobhte. Chòrd iad ris gu h-anabarrach math airson doimhneachd an cainnte, agus airson an t-snais leis a bheil iad air an cur r'a chéile. Có an neach aig am biodh tuigse do bhàrdachd ris nach còrdadh òrain MhicFhionghainn! Tha e duilich a leithid de bhàrdachd fhaighinn. 'S gann gu bheil Oisein féin air thoiseach air ann an toirt iomraidh air blàr. Chaochail e 's a bhliadhna 1814."/"Shortly after MacKinnon's death, the Poet got from his [MacKinnon's] widow a look at the songs he had left in written form. They pleased him [MacLean] greatly for the depth of their language, and for the elegance with which they were put together. What person having any understanding of poetry would not be pleased by MacKinnon's songs! It is difficult to find his quality of poetry. Ossian himself could hardly have surpassed him in giving an impression of battle. He died in the year 1814".

A biographical sketch of Alastair MacKinnon is given by Ronald Black in *An Lasair: Anthology of 18th Century Scottish Gaelic Verse* (Edinburgh: Birlinn, 2001), at pp. 521-525, in the notes to MacKinnon's "Blàr na h-Òlaind", perhaps his best known song, together with the sea-song "An Dubh-ghleannach". MacKinnon was born in 1770 and died at Fort William in 1814, and had been a soldier for much of his life. He was enlisted in the 92nd Regiment, the Gordon Highlanders, when it was raised in 1794; its first commander was George, Marquis of Huntly, and this would appear to be the Marquis referred to in John MacLean's introductory comments in ONG. He fought at the Battle of Egmont, in Holland, on 2 October, 1799 (about which he composed "Blàr na h-Òlaind"), and also at the Battle of Alexandria, in 1801, about which he composed two songs which appeared in ONG, and at which he was severly wounded, thrown into a mass grave as dead, and only saved by a friend, a Sergeant MacLean. MacKinnon was then discharged with a pension, but upon his recovery, he joined the 6th Royal Veteran Battalion, in which he served for the rest of his life.

Line Annotations:

1: ONG has "Thuair". **3:** ONG has "chàradh na 'n duanag . . .". The "na 'n" would appear to be the genitive plural article, "nan", and "chàradh" would appear to be the infinitive of the verb "càraich", "to place, put", and the omission of the infinitive particle, "a", is marked with an apostrophe. The infinitive is somewhat awkward in the context, and the conditional "a chàraicheadh", would seem more appropriate, but would affect the rhythm of the line, and would require that "duanag" be in the plural

nominative, "na duanagan", further affecting the rhythm. **4:** ONG has "Ga"; this is the conjunction "Ged", and the omission of the final consonant, probably dialectal, is marked. **5:** ONG has "iundrain". ONG (and McLS versions) also has "gu 'n", which is interpreted here as the conjuction "gun", rather than the preposition, "gun", "without". **6:** ONG has "chomasaich"; the omission of the final "e" in this superlative is marked with an apostrophe; the superlative construction should also be preceded by the relative pronoun "a", and its omission is marked with an apostrophe. **8:** ONG omits the relative pronoun "a" before the verb, and this is marked with an apostrophe. ONG has "eanachainn". **9:** ONG has "gu 'n"; given the context, this appears to be the preposition "gun", "without", which is the interpretation given by McLS. **10:** ONG has "t-inntinn"; "t-" is a contraction of the second person singular possessive pronoun "do", pronounced as "t" in the poet's dialect. **11:** ONG has "ciatabh", which is an archaic dative plural form. **12:** ONG has "brosgullach". **13:** ONG omits the relative pronoun "a" which should precede the noun, and this is marked with an apostrophe. **14:** ONG has "na 'n"; McLS interprets this as the genitive plural article, "nan", but the absence of a clear genitive relationship, together with the context, suggests that this is a contraction of "ann an", "in their", which is "'nan". ONG has "uairibh", which is an archaic dative plural form (see note to line 11). **15:** ONG has "thuair". ONG has "gu 'm"; given the references in the preceding line, this refers to be "gu am", "to their", with the "am" being the third person plural possessive pronoun. The vowel in "am" is elided by the preceding vowel, and this is marked with an apostrophe. **16:** ONG has "bhi". ONG has "t-ealdhain"; "t-" is a contraction of the second person singular possessive pronoun "do", pronounced as "t" in the poet's dialect. **17:** ONG has "'N uair". ONG has "t-anail"; "t-" is again a contraction of "do", "your", as pronounced in the poet's dialect. **19:** ONG has "òranaibh", an archaic dative plural form (see note to line 11). **20:** ONG and McLS versions have "sunndach". **21:** ONG omits the verbal noun particle "A'", and this is marked with an apostrophe; ONG also has "bhilibh", an archaic dative plural form. **22:** ONG has "C' àite". **23:** ONG has "'s na", "so". **24:** ONG omits the relative pronoun "a" before both verbs, and these omissions are marked with an apostrophe. ONG has "MacIonmhuinn". **25:** ONG has "Ghàelig"; the aspiration implies the feminine nominative article, "a'", which would be elided by the preceding vowel, and this is marked with an apostrophe. ONG has "earbinn". **26:** ONG has "òrdugh". ONG has "gu 'n iomluath"; "gu 'n" is interpreted as the preposition "gun", without, and "iomluath" is an adjective, and is interpreted as "iomluathas", the noun from which the adjective derives, but the original is retained as indicative of dialect, and the omission of the final syllable is marked with an apostrophe. **27:** ONG has "Cha 'n". ONG has "orra"; given that the reference appears to MacKinnon's Gaelic (see line 25), a feminine noun, this is interpreted as "oirre", "on her/it". **28:** ONG has "da", which, especially given the lenition of the following noun, is interpreted as a contraction of "do a", "to his", and the elision of the vowel in "do", is marked with an apostrophe. **29:** ONG has "Bhi"; the omission of the infinitive particle "A" is marked. ONG also omits the relative pronoun before the past tense of the verb, and this omission is marked. ONG has "bho 'n". **30:** ONG has "Bhi"; the omission of the infinitive particle "A" is marked. ONG has "fodh", "fodh". ONG has "eislein", but as this is a masculine noun, there is no need for the slenderisation in the dative. ONG has "ri beò"; the third person singular feminine possessive pronoun "a", "her" is implied here, and its omission is marked with an apostrophe. **32:** ONG has "da", which is interpreted as a contraction of "do a", "to her", and the elision of the vowel in "do" is marked with an apostrophe. **33:** ONG has "na shineadh"; "na" is interpreted, given

the lenition of the verbal noun, as a contraction of "ann a", "in his", and this is marked with an apostrophe. ONG has "gu 'n", which, given the context, is interpreted as the preposition "gun", "without". **35:** ONG has "Ma na". ONG has "san Ephait"; "san" is interpreted as a contraction of "anns an", and this is marked with an apostrophe, "'san". ONG omits the relative pronoun "a" before the verb, and this is marked with an apostrophe. **36:** ONG has "deistinn", which is interpreted as "dèisinn", "disgust, abhorrence", as rendered in the poet's dialect. **37:** ONG has "saoighdear a chruadail"; given the context, "a" is the genitive singular masculine article, and is marked as such with an apostrophe, "a'". **39:** ONG has "'s na". **40:** ONG omits the relative pronoun "a" which should precede the past tense of the copula, and its omission is marked with an apostrophe. **41:** ONG omits the relative pronoun "a" which should precede the past tense of the superlative, and this omission is marked. ONG has "bo". **42:** ONG has "'n aineal"; "'n" is interpreted as a contraction of "ann an", and "aineal" as "aineol", "ignorance. ONG has "ga 'n còir"; "ga 'n" is interpreted as a contraction of the preposition "do", "to", and the third person plural possessive pronoun "an", "their", and is rendered as "dha 'n", while "còrr" is interpreted as "còir", meaning here "presence". **43:** ONG has "a Cheòlraidh"; "a" is interpreted as the feminine nominative article "a'". **45:** The word "fuaradh" would appear to be a conditional of either the verb "fuar", meaning "to get before the wind of another boat", or the verb "fuaraich", "to cool", and although the latter may have been intended, the former is also suggested by the word "seòl", which could have a double meaning here, as "seòl" also means "to sail", or the noun "sail". **46:** ONG omits the particle "A'" before "dh' aindeòin", and this omission is marked. ONG has "so". **48:** ONG has "ni smò"; "ni" is the comparative particle "na", as pronounced in the poet's dialecct. **49:** ONG has "gu 'n", which, given the context, appears to be the preposition "gun", "without". **50:** ONG has "cànmhuin", which is dialectical for "cànain". **51:** ONG has "uireasaibh", which is an archaic plural form. ONG has "bh' uaithe". **52:** ONG has "ann san", "so". **54:** ONG has "Man", "fo 'n". **55:** ONG has "Na 'm"; this is the conditional conjunction "Nam". **56:** ONG has "ga 'm biodh . . .". Given the context, this would appear to be a contraction of the preposition "do", "to", and the conditional relative pronoun "am", and this contraction is rendered as "dham". **57:** As this line would appear to be a clause, it should begin with the relative pronoun "A", and as it is omitted in ONG, its omission is marked here with an apostrophe.

Maclean Sinclair Versions:

3: Replace this line with "Leugh mi dàin a' bhàird luachmhoir nach beò". **4:** Have standard "Ged" for "Ga'". **6:** Have "'us" for "'s". **8:** Have the relative pronoun "a" before the verb, and "d'" for "t'". **10-12:** Omit these lines. **13-15:** These are the seventh verse, and follow lines 46-48, which are the sixth verse. **13:** Have "a bh' aig". **16-18:** Omit these lines. **19-21:** These are the eighth verse, and follow lines 13-15. **19:** Have "na h-òrain bu ghrinne". **20:** Have "le binneas" for "bu bhinne". **21:** Have "gu pongail" for "ro phongail". **22-24:** These are the eleventh verse, and follow lines 37-39. **22:** Have "Càit' an . . .". **23:** Have "cearnaibh" for "cearnan". **24:** Have "Aon thug bàrr ort 'chur seanachais air dòigh" for this line. **25-27:** These lines are verse four, and follow lines 7-9. **25:** Have "Tha do shaothair mar dh' earbainn" for this line. **26:** Have "iomrall" for "iomluath'". **27:** Have the singular "sgòd" for the plural "sgòid". **28-33:** Omit these lines. **34-36:** These lines are verse nine, and follow lines 19-21. **34:** Have "'S tric a thug thu dhaibh sgeula" for this line. **35:** Have "Mu 'n blàir 'bha 's an Eiphit" for this line. **36:** Replace this line with "'S cha bhiodh mearachd no breug ann no sgleò". **37-39:** These lines are verse ten, and

follow lines 34-36. **37:** Have "Bu tu . . ." for "B' e sin . . .". **38:** Have "tein'" for "teine". **39:** Have "'S iomadh cath anns na bhuannaich thu leòn" for this line. **40-42:** Omit these lines. **43-45:** These lines are verse five, and follow lines 25-27. **43:** Have "Thug a' cheòlraidh le spéis dhuit" for this line. **44:** Replace this line with "Gach buaidh inntinn 'bha feumail". **45:** Replace this line with "A chur ealaidh gu ceutaich air dòigh". **46-48:** These lines are verse six, and follow lines 43-45. **46:** Replace this line with "Thug iad gibht dhuit an uaigneas". **47:** Have "'Nach toir innleachd a nuas oirnn" for this line. **48:** Have "'S nach dean . . ." for "Cha dean . . .", "a bhuannachd", and "ni 'smo". **49-57:** Omit these lines, but add this final verse which follows lines 22-24: "'S mòr an dileab a dh' fhàg thu/Na do dhéidh aig na Gàidheil,--/Dh' eug thu-fhéin ach do dhàin mairidh beò".

With these changes and omissions, the Maclean Sinclair versions contain 36 lines.

19. Cumha, do Dhonnchadh MacAonghais, à Tiriodh

Tune: "Gur e mise 'th' air mo leònadh".
No. of lines: 120
Sources: ONG, p. 47, MG15G/2/1, p. 49, CC1, p. 65, CC2, p. 59, FC, p. 22.
Date: Likely spring, 1814, based on the date of death of the subject.
Context: ONG provides the following introductory information: "Cumhadh do Dhonnchadh MacAonaghais, a Tirreadh, chaidh a mharbhadh anns an Olaint, air iarrtas Athair, mar gu 'm b' e féin a dheanadh e, le Iain MacGilleain"/"Lament to Duncan MacInnes, from Tiree, who was killed in Holland, on the request of his Father, as though it was him who made it, by John MacLean". MG15G/2/1 provides essentially the same introductory information. Both CC1 and CC2 have essentially the same introductory information. FC, however, provides some additional information in the post-script, and indicates that the subject actually seems to have been killed at the Battle of Toulouse, on Sunday, 10 April, 1814, rather than in Holland, as the poet had thought. McLS provides no source for this information.

Strangely, many of the references in the poem itself are consistent with the subject's having died at Toulouse. At line 53, the poet indicates that the subject died on Easter Sunday, and the Battle of Toulouse did, in fact, take place on Easter Sunday. At line 27, the poet refers to an attack on a castle, and at lines 37 to 40, the imagery suggests that the subject and his fellow soldiers were trying to scale an embankment or a height when the fatal shots were fired; there do appear to have been scaffolds erected at Toulouse, consistent with the reference at line 37 to a ladder. At line 64, there is a reference to thousands of soldiers lost, and the losses at Toulouse on the British side were appalling, amounting to about 4,600 slain or wounded. Finally, there were Highland soldiers in action at Toulouse, in the Black Watch (the 42nd Highland Regiment) and the 79th Highland Regiment, serving as part of Pack's Brigade, and both suffered heavy losses, the Black Watch suffering 414 casualties, including 54 dead,including 19 dead, out of 750 present, and the 79th 214 out of 484. For accounts of the Battle, see, for example, Charles Oman, *A History of the Peninsular War, vol. VII* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1930), at pp. 465-495, and Appendix X, at pp. 556-561. The only ambiguous reference is that to the subject departing for Holland, at line 71, but the subject's regiment may have left first for Holland, and then moved on to France.

Line Annotations:

1: ONG has "mis th' air"; both the final vowel in the emphatic "mise" and relative pronoun "a" which should precede the verb have been elided, and both elisions are marked with an apostrophe. **3:** ONG has "Ma 'n". ONG has "do 'n òigfhear". **4:** ONG has "saoighdean". ONG has "am chri'"; "am" is a contraction of "ann mo", "in my", and is marked with an apostophe, "'am". **6:** ONG has "'N uair". **8:** ONG has "a mulad". The "a" could be interpreted as the third person singular feminine possessive pronoun "a", "its/her", and the feminine referrent could be "sgeula", the news referred to at line 6. Alternatively, "a" could be the nominative article, "am", with the consonant elided by the same consonant at the beginning of the next word. Either interpretation seems acceptable, but the latter is arguably more straightforward and is the one accepted in McLS versions (which have "am"), and the elision is therefore marked with an apostrophe. ONG has "ga 'm"; this would appear to be the first person object pronoun of the verbal noun, which is suggested by the lenition of the verbal noun, and this is marked as "'gam". ONG has "fèin". **10:** ONG has "Bhi"; the omission of the infintive particle "A" is marked. ONG has "fodh". **12:** ONG omits the relative pronoun "a" before the verb, and this omission is marked with an apostrophe. ONG has "Oissain". ONG has "sa 'm bròn . . ."; "sa 'm" is interpreted as "'s am", with the "'s" being the contraction of "agus", "and", and "am" interpreted as the article. **14:** ONG has "Ga 'n rabh"; "Ga 'n" is interpreted as the contraction of "Do", "to", and the relative pronoun "an", "whom", which is rendered as "Dhan". **15:** ONG has "Ge 'd". ONG has "ga t-àireamh"; "ga t-" is interpreted as the second person singular object pronoun before the verbal noun, "'gad". **16:** ONG omits the relative pronoun "a" before the verb "bha", and this omission is marked with an apostrophe. ONG has "ga t-àrach"; "ga t-" is again interpreted as the second person singular object pronoun before the verbal noun, "'gad". **17:** ONG has "Thuair". **18:** ONG has "Bhi"; the omission of the infinitive particle "A" is marked. **19:** ONG has "aic a làthair". The elision of the final consonant in "aice" is marked with an apostrophe. The "a" is interpreted as the contraction "ann an", or simply "an", which usually accompanies the noun, and the omission of the consonant, which is probably dialectical, is marked with an apostrophe. **20:** ONG has "chunnaig". ONG also has ""dh' àraich ì chloinn"; the initial lenition and slenderisation of "clann" suggests that a preposition precedes the noun, and it is likely the partative preposition "a", "of", which would be elided by "i", and this elision is marked with an apostrophe. **21:** ONG has "so". **22:** ONG has "Bhi"; the omission of the infinitive particle "A" is marked. ONG also omits the relative pronoun before the verb "bha", and this omission is marked with an apostrophe. Finally, ONG has "gu 'n", which, given the context and the lenition of the noun, suggests this is the preposition "gun", "without". **23:** ONG has "ann 's an". **25:** ONG has "Ma 'n". **26:** ONG has "'N uair", "bho 'n". **27:** ONG omits the particle "A" before the infinitive, and this omission is marked with an apostrophe. ONG has "ionnsuidh", and "Chaistail". **28:** ONG has "sa". **29:** ONG has "a d' nàdur"; "a d'" is interpreted as a contraction of "ann do", "in your", which is commonly rendered as "'nad", but "'ad" in the poet's dialect. **30:** ONG has "'N uair". ONG has "a d' cheann", and is marked "'ad", for the reasons given at line 29. **31:** ONG omits the verbal noun particle "A'", and this omission is marked with an apostrophe. ONG has "t-aghaidh"; "t-" is a contraction of the second person singular possessive pronoun "do", pronounced as "t'" in the poet's dialect. **32:** ONG has "Gu 's", "sa", "rabh". **33:** ONG has "'N uair". **34:** ONG omits the particle "A" before the infinitive, and this omission is marked with an apostrophe. ONG has "a bhaile"; given that this follows the infinitive, "a" is interpreted as the

genitive masculine singular article "a'". ONG has "da 'n"; given the context, this appears to be a contraction of "do", "to", and "an", the third person plural possessive pronoun, "their", and this is rendered as "d' an". "Command" appears to be an English loan word, and is italicised for that reason. **35:** ONG has "a g' èiridh". **36:** ONG has "Cha ni", which is interpreted as the negative form of the copula "Chan i". ONG has "mhisneach"; the aspiration of this feminine noun implies the feminine nominative article "a'", which would be elided by the preceding vowel, and this elision is marked with an apostrophe. **37:** ONG has "'N uair". **38:** ONG has "nàmhuid". ONG has "na dheann"; "na" appears to be the contraction of "ann a", "in its", and this is rendered "'na". **39:** ONG has "bhuidhnnic", which is intepreted as the preterite of "buinig", "to conquer". **40:** ONG has "aig a bhonn"; "a" is interpreted as the dative article "a'", as the alternative, that it is the third person possessive pronoun, would make less sense, as the noun to which it would refer, presumably "àirde" in line 39, is feminine, and the feminine possessive pronoun would not cause lenition. **41:** ONG has "thuair". **43:** ONG has "bhuaidhe". **46:** ONG has "dèigh". ONG omits the particle "a" before the infinitive "thoirt", and this is marked with an apostrophe. ONG has "bhuath", which is interpreted as the third person plural preposition pronoun "from them", commonly rendered "bhuapa", but apparently "bhuatha" in the poet's dialect, and the omission of the final vowel is marked. ONG has "ann sa". **48:** ONG has "Aig a muime". The "a" could be interpreted as the third person singular feminine possessive plural, but the absence of any obvious female referrent suggests that this is likely "am", the third person plural possessive pronoun, which has an obvious referrent (orphans, in line 47), and the final consonant of which would be elided by the consonant which begins the next word, and this omission is marked with an apostrophe. ONG has "ga 'm", which is interpreted as the third person plural object pronoun of the verbal noun, and marked "'gam". **49:** ONG has "ionnan". **51:** ONG has "d'thig2, "oirn". **52:** ONG has "Bho na". ONG has "air cùl taic"; "air" is interpreted as the first person plural possessive pronoun "ar", "our", which is the interpretation also given by McLS. **53:** In ONG, the first letter of "Càisge" is not capitalised. **54:** ONG omits the relative pronoun "a" before the verb, and this omission is marked with an apostrophe. **55:** ONG has "gu 'n", which, given the aspiration of the following noun and the preceding line, suggests that this is the preposition "gun", "without". **56:** ONG has "ann na fheachd"; this could be interpreted as "ann a", "in his", or as "ann 'na", the "'na" being the contraction of "ann a", "in his", and the "ann" being interpreted as "there". Given that the poet actually uses "na", the latter interpretation is preferred. The "George" being referred to here could be the King, George III, or it could be British commander at Toulouse, although the former is likelier, as there does not appear to have been any senior commander having "George" as a forename. **58:** ONG has "nàmhuid", and "gu 'n", which, given the context, is interpreted as the preposition "gun", "without"; however, "gun taing" is a colloquial expression, used frequently by the poet, to mean "in spite of it", or "anyway". **60:** ONG has "Gu 'm". ONG has "buidhne"; this would appear to be the conditional of the verb "buidhinn", "to gain, profit, win", which would be "buidhneadh", and the omission of the final consonant sound, possibly dialectical, is marked with an apostrophe. **61:** ONG omits the relative pronoun "a" before the verb, and this omission is marked with an apostrophe. **62:** ONG has "'N uair", "fo 'n". **63:** ONG omits the particle "A" before the infinitive, and this omission is marked with an apostrophe; ONG also has "fhaotuinn". ONG has "do 'n". **64:** ONG has "Ga 'd". ONG omits the infinitive particle "a" before "chall", and this omission is marked. ONG has "diu". **65:** ONG has "phàidhe". **66:** ONG omits the relative

pronoun "A" before the verb, "chaidh", and this omission is marked with an apostrophe. ONG has “sa choinneamh”; as this is a feminine noun in the dative case, it should be slenderised; however, it may be treated as a masculine noun by the poet, and see note to line 67. **67:** ONG has “bhi”; the omission of the infinitive particle “a” is marked. ONG has "na chomain"; the lenition of the noun suggests that "na" is a contraction of "ann a", "in his/its", which is rendered as "'na". The context suggests that the referent would be "coinneamh", from the preceding line, yet the lenition would suggest that this noun, normally feminine, is treated as a masculine noun in the poet's dialect. **68:** ONG omits the relative pronoun "A", which should precede the verb, and its omission is marked with an apostrophe. ONG has "air", and given the context, this would appear to be the first person plural possessive pronoun "ar". **69:** ONG omits the relative pronoun "a" before the verb, and this omission is marked. **71:** ONG has “do ’n”. **73:** ONG has “Ga ’d”, “san”. **74:** ONG has “d’thig”. ONG has "a chadail"; given the context and the lenition of the noun, "a" would appear to be the masculine genitive article "a'". ONG has "ga 'm chòir"; "ga 'm" appears to be a contraction of "do mo", "to my", and is rendered as "dham'". **75:** ONG has "smaointean". **76:** ONG has "Air a bhuille"; given the context, the "a" would appear to be the dative article "a'". ONG has “thuair”, “bho ’n”. **77:** ONG has "t-fhuil"; "t-" is a contraction of the second person singular possessive pronoun "do", pronounced as "t'" in the poet's dialect. ONG has "a sileadh"; this is clearly the verbal noun. **79:** ONG has "gu 'n"; given the context, this appears to be the preposition "gun", "without". ONG has "air a dìobar". While "a" could be interpreted as the article, "an", it is more likely, given the context, that it is the third person singular feminine possessive pronoun, "a", "her/its", the reference being to "fuil", "blood", at line 77. The word "dìobar" appears to be the verbal noun form of "dìobair", "abandon, banish, expel", and although it is commonly rendered as "dìobradh", or "dìobairt", it may be "dìobar" in the poet's dialect. **80:** ONG has "gu 'n"; given the context, this would appear to be the preposition "gun", "without". ONG has "na 'm"; given the context, this would appear to be the genitive pluaral article "nam". **81:** ONG has “’N uair”. **82:** ONG has "Gu robh"; "Gu" would appear to be the conjunction "Gun", and the omission of the final consonant, likely dialectical, is marked with an apostrophe. ONG has "air a gairm"; given the context, and the non-lenition of the noun, the "a" is interpreted as the third person singular feminine possessive pronoun "a", "her/its", the reference being to "sìth", "peace" in line 81. ONG has “san”. **84:** ONG has "Gu fàgadh"; "Gu" would again appear to be the conjunction "Gum", and the omission of the final consonant is marked with an apostrophe, for the same reasons as given at line 82. **85:** ONG has "Na 'm"; given the context, this would appear to be the conjunction "Nam". ONG has "shaoghal", and it is unclear why this noun is lenited; it is possible that the second person singular possessive pronoun "do", which causes lenition, is implied, and its omission is marked with an apostrophe. **86:** ONG has "ga 'm shealltuin"; "ga 'm" appears to be the first person singular object pronoun of the verbal noun, "'gam". ONG has "mo 'n"; "mo" is interpreted as the preposition "mu", "before", and as it is normally rendered as "ma" in the poet's dialect, it is rendered as "man" here. **88:** ONG has "bhighinn". **89:** ONG has "ghearain". If this is the genitive plural, it should be "ghearan", and if the genitive singular, it should be "gearain"; McLS interprets this as the genitive plural, "gearain", which makes slightly more sense, "the reason of my complaint (rather than complaints)", and is amended accordingly. ONG has "iundrain". **90:** ONG has "Dùthaich"; the poet usually capitalised this word when the reference is to the subject's own territory. **92:** ONG has "t-shìneadh" and "t-uileann"; "t-" is a contraction of the second person singular

possessive pronoun "do", pronounced as "t'" in the poet's dialect. The noun "uileann" is normally feminine, and should therefore be "uilinn" in the dative, an emendation made in McLS versions. ONG has "gu 'n"; given the lenition of the noun and the context, this would appear to be the preposition "gun", "without". **93:** ONG omits the relative pronoun "a" before the verb, "tha", and this omission is marked with an apostrophe. ONG has "t-iargain"; "t-" is a contraction of the second person singular possessive pronoun "do", pronounced as "t'" in the poet's dialect. **94:** ONG has "bhrosnuich". **95:** ONG has "an doillead"; "an" appears to be a contraction of "ann an", "in", and this is marked with an apostrophe. **96:** ONG has "Sa"; this is interpreted as "'S a", the "'S" being the contraction of "Agus", "And", and the "a" being the relative pronoun. ONG has "a moillead"; given that there is no aspiration, "a" could be interpreted as the third person singular feminine possessive pronoun, but this does not make sense, given the context. It is likely that this is "am", the contraction of "ann am", and that the consonant is elided by the first consonant in "moillead", and this is marked with an apostrophe. ONG has "gu 'n"; given the context and the lenition of the noun, this is interpreted as the preposition "gun", "without". **97:** ONG has "So". ONG has "bhliadhna". The aspiration would be caused by the feminine nominative article, "a'", which is omitted here; the omission is marked with an apostrophe. ONG also omits the relative pronoun "a" before the verb, and this omission is also marked with an apostrophe. **98:** The absence of a subject suggests that this line is a clause, and should commence with the relative pronoun "A"; its omission is marked with an apostrophe. ONG has "eislineach". **99:** ONG has "laghaduich". **100:** ONG has "chridh"; the final vowel in "chridhe" would be elided by the next vowel, and this is marked with an apostrophe. ONG has "air a bhristeadh"; this appears to be a passive construction, and therefore the "a" is interpreted as the third person singular masculine possessive pronoun, referring to "cridhe", a masculine noun, rather than the dative article "a'". ONG has "am", which is interpreted as a contraction of "ann mo", commonly rendered as "'nam", but in the poet's dialect as "'am". **102:** ONG has "d'thig". **104:** ONG has "bi", which is the future "bidh". ONG has "giùlan"; given the context, this appears to be a verbal noun, and the omission of the verbal noun article "a'", which would be elided by the preceding vowel in "mi", is marked with an apostrophe. ONG has "gu 'n" which, given the context and the lenition of the noun, is interpreted as the preposition "gun", "without". **105:** ONG has "Cha 'n". ONG has "ghiùlan"; this is an infinitive, and given the context and the construction, the third person singular possessive pronoun "a" (rather than the infinitive particle, "a") is implied, but would be elided by the final vowel in "mi", and its omission is marked with an apostrophe. **106:** ONG has "Ge do". ONG has "ga mhùchadh"; the "ga" would be the third person singular masculine object pronoun of the verbal noun, and is marked "'ga". ONG has "gu 'n" which, given the context, would appear to be the prepostion "gun", "without". **107:** ONG has "bhi"; the omission of the infinitive particle "a" is marked. ONG has "dù". **108:** ONG has "Bho na". **110:** ONG has "bhi"; the omission of the infinitive particle "a" is marked. ONG has "sùsan", the meaning of which is unclear. It could be the word "sùsdal", meaning "bustling, noisy"; a better possibility, given the immediate context, may be the word "surram", meaning snoring, or the sound one makes while asleep. **111:** ONG has "drùghadh", the meaning of which is unclear; it is interpreted here, though, as "drùidheadh", "soaking, penetrating, oozing", which seems acceptable in the context, but the spelling is left as in ONG, to reflect the poet's likely pronunciation. **112:** ONG has "bhi"; the omission of the infinitive particle "a" is marked. ONG has "t-shìneadh"; "t-" is a contraction of the second person singular

possessive pronoun "do", pronounced as "t'" in the poet's dialect. ONG has "na 'n lonn"; given the context, this appears to be the genitive plural article "nan". **114:** ONG has "teachdair"; the omission of the final "e" ("teachdaire") is marked. ONG has "bho 'n". **116:** ONG has "a m' ìnntinn"; "a m'" is interpreted as being a contraction of "ann mo", "in my", which is commonly rendered as "'nam", but "'am" in the poet's dialect. ONG has "bhi"; the omission of the infinitive particle "a" is marked. **118:** ONG has "a dùsgadh"; this appears to be a verbal noun, and is therefore rendered "a'dùsgadh". ONG has "sa 'n". **120:** ONG has "Ge do". ONG has "leaninn", which is interpreted here as the conditional of "lean", "to follow, continue".

Maclean Sinclair Versions:

2: Have "bu bhrònach dhomh i". **3:** Have "Mara-a" for "Man". **4:** Have "i" for "sin". **6:** Put "'n", the article, before "sgeula". **7:** Put "Is", the contraction of "Agus", "And", before the verb at the start of this line. **8:** Have "am" for "a'", and "fhìn". **10:** Have "'s mi sgìth" for "le sgìos". **11:** Have "an" for "ann". **12:** Have "chlaoidh". **13:** Omit the verbal noun particle "A'". **14:** Have "'us" for "agus". **15:** Have "Ge" for "Ged is", and "mise" for "mi". **16:** Have "tè a rinn d' àrach". **17:** Have "reusan no". **18:** Have "Air bhith". **19:** Have "Chan eil" for "'S nach eil", and "aice làthair". **20:** Replace this line with "De 'chuid cloinne 'thoirt gàirdeachais d' i". **21:** Replace this line with "'S e seo 'm buille bu chràitich'". **22:** Have "'S i a' smaointinn", and "gun" for "'san". **23:** Omit the verbal noun particle "A'", and contract "anns an" to "'san". **25:** Have the standard "Mu 'n". **26:** Have "'S tu a' gluasad . . ." for "Nuair a ghluais iad . . .". **28-31:** Replace these lines with "Cha robh smaointinnean gealtach ad cheann./Bha thu 'gluasad neo-sgàthach,/Mar-a bhuineadh do Ghàidheal gun mheang,/A' cur naimhdean fo shàiltean". **33:** Have ". . . sibh ri séisdeadh" for " . . . iad ri seasamh". **34:** Have "d' ar" for "d' an". **36:** Have "Cha ni" for "Chan i". **39-40:** Replace these lines with "'Thug a dh' ionnsaidh an làir thu./'S gu 'm bu teachdaire bàis dhuit a bh' ann". **42:** Have "Chuir" for "Dh'fhàg". **43:** Have "'S truagh nach tàinig . . .". **45-46:** Replace these lines with "'S ann is coltach ri uain sinn./Bhiodh gun aodhair aig fuarain nam beann". **47:** Have "No ri dilleachdain . . .". **48:** Have "am" for "a'". **49:** Replace this line with "Tha sinn uireasbhach cràiteach". **51:** Have "tig" for "dig", and the standard "bràth". **53:** Have "'S o" for "Bho". **54:** Have ". . . a tha cràiteach an airc" for ". . . 'bha gun bhràthair, gun mhac". **55:** Have "'S iomadh bean . . ." for "Agus bean . . .". **56:** Replace this line with "'S iomadh màthair ri bròn mu 'n cuid mac". **57:** Have "sibh" for "iad". **59:** Have " . . . sibh roimhibh" for "iad rompa", and "le 'r" for "le 'n". **60:** Have ". . . biodh agaibh làn-bhuaidh . . ." for ". . . buidhne iad buaidh . . .". **61:** Have "oirbh" for "orra". **62:** Have "Air dhuibh seasamh . . ." for "Nuair a sheas iad . . .". **64:** Have "Gun do . . ." for "Gad a . . ." and "a chall" for "diubh 'chall". **67:** Have "na comain". **69-72:** Replace these lines with: "Feachd Rìgh Deòrsa fhuair urram/Mar-a b' àbhaist an cumasg nan lann,/Ach tha sinne gun sòlas/'S nach tig thusa bho 'n Olaint a nall." **73:** Have "Ged-a", and "do 'n leaba" for "'san leaba". **74:** Have "tig" for "dig", and "am chòir" for "dham chòir". **77:** Have "d'" for "t'". **79:** Replace this line with "Bha do spiorad gad dhìobradh". **82:** Have "Gun" for "Gu'". **83:** Have ". . . gu 'n tilleadh" for ". . . is earbsach". **84-85:** Replace these lines with "Tu g' ar-n ionnsaidh gun mhilleadh, gun leòn./Nan do dh' fhuirich thu 'lathair,". **86:** Put "'S", the contraction of "Agus", "And", at the start of the line, and have ". . . ged tha mi gun treòir" for ". . . man caochl'inn fon fhòid". **87:** Have the standard "aotrom" for "eatrom". **91:** Have "dunaich'". **92:** Have "d'" for "t'". **94:** Have "Chuir le cabhaig . . ." for "A bhrosnaich . . .". **95:** Omit the

relative pronoun "A" before the verb. **97:** Include the article "a'" before "bhliadhna", and have the standard "dhomh". **98:** Have "Tha" for "Dh'fhàg". **99:** Have "Dh' fhalbh mo shlàint 's . . ." for "'S a lughadaich . . .". **100:** Have ". . . chridhe gu bristeadh . . .". **101:** Replace this line with "'S e bhith brònach a's dù dhomh". **102:** Have "'S nach tig litir ga m' ionnsaidh o d' làimh" for this line. **103-104:** Replace these lines with "Gur tric snighe le m' shùilean/'S tusa 'n leaba na h-ùrach gun srann". **105-120:** Omit these lines.

With these changes and omissions, the Maclean Sinclair versions contain 104 lines.

20. Cumha, do Chailean Caimbeul

Tune: "Chunnaic mis' thu, Ailein"
No. of lines: 192
Sources: ONG, p. 91, MG15G/2/1, p. 79, CC1, p. 69, CC2, p. 62, FC, p. 31.
Date: Unclear.
Context: ONG provides the following introductory information: "Cumhadh do Chailean Caimbeul, Tighearna Bharamholaich, 'n Earaghàedheal, agus Fear Bhaile Phetris 'n Tirreadh, an uair a chaidh e do dh' Ionmaraora, còmhladh ri mòran do dhaoine uaisle na sioramachd, agus a bhuail galar a bhàis e, agus bha e marbh an ùine cheithir làithean. Le Iain MacGilleain"/"A Lament to Colin Campbell, the Laird of Barmolloch [in Glassary, Argyll], and the Tenant [i.e. Tacksman] of Balephetrish [Tiree], when he went to Inveraray, together with many other noblemen of the county, when he was struck by a terminal illness, and he was dead within four days". MG15G/2/1 has essentially the same introductory information, but tells us that the purpose of the subject's trip to Inveraray was to attend a ball. CC1 and CC2 also have essentially the same introductory information, adding only the following additional information about the purpose of his visit to Inveraray, which is somewhat different to that given by the poet himself in MG15G/2/1, and that the subject died there: "Chaidh an duin-uasal so air ghnothach do Inbhir-Aora. Anns a' bhaile sin bhuail galar a bhàis e, . . .".//"This nobleman went on business to Inveraray. It was in that town that his terminal illness struck him, . . .". Brownlie indicates that Balephetrish was tenanted from 1754 until 1779 by the Rev. Charles Campbell, of Barmollach in Glassary, who had three sons and a daughter; at the time of his death, his wife was 36 and his youngest son was 4. He was succeeded by a newphew, also named Colin Campbell, then by an uncle of the poet Dr. John MacLachlan of Rahoy, then by another Colin Campbell who, Brownlie indicates, was the father of Colina, "the much esteemed wife of Dr. Buchanan" (this is Dr. Alasdair Buchanan, described by Brownlee as Tiree's favourite physician: Niall M. Brownlie, *Bailtean is Ath-Ghairmean a Tiriodh/Townships and Echoes from Tiree* (Glendaruel: Argyll, 1995), pp. 28-29, and pp. 26-27. It would appear that the subject of this poem is the last mentioned Colin Campbell. In FC, however, Maclean Sinclair identifies the subject of the poem as "Calum Caimbeul", and in the postscript to the poem, at pp. 34-35, he indicates that the Campbells of Barmollach were Macivers, that Malcolm Campbell, or Maciver, was the laird of Barmollach in 1715 and that the Rev. Charles Campbell, laird of Barmollach, was minister of Tiree from 1754 to 1779. He indicates that "Malcolm" Campbell (presumably, the subject of the poem) was laird of Barmollach and tacksman of Balephetrish, and that he married Julia, daughter of Campbell of Kilmartin, that he died about four months after his marriage, and that his wife had one

daughter by him. This is presumably the Colina mentioned by Brownlie. The Campbells of Barmollach seem to have been well-liked by the local population, and seem to have demonstrated loyalty to many aspects of the old Gaelic aristrocratic tradition. Eric Cregeen noted that a John MacDonald was listed as a 'musician' at Balephetrish in 1779; Cregeen surmises that he was, in fact, a piper and that it was "likely enough that the Barmollach family, who were then in Balephetrish, rewarded him with gifts in return for his services as a piper": Eric Cregeen and Donald W. MacKenzie, *Tiree Bards and their Bardachd* (Isle of Coll: Society of West Highland & Island Historical Research, 1978), p. 7. The popularity of the subject of this poem, Colin Campbell, is evidenced by another praise poem composed in his honour, by Archibald MacPhail, an older contemporary of John MacLean who lived in Balephuil and who died there in 1830. In this poem, "Do Chailean Caimbeul, tighearna Bharramhollaich, agus Fear Bhaile-Phetris", Colin Campbell is praised in traditional Gaelic panegyric for his military virtues and for the geniality of his household, which was filled with music, drink, games and sport. See Urr. Eachann Camshron/Rev. Hector Cameron, *Na Bàird Thirisdeach/The Tiree Bards* (The Tiree Association, 1932), pp. 8-10.

Line Annotations:
1: "do 'n Dùthaich" in ONG; the poet tended to capitalise reference to his native island and township. **3:** ONG omits the particle "a'" before the verbal noun, and this omission is marked with an apostrophe. **4:** The non-aspiration of "bròin" in ONG suggests that the preceding "a", is the third person singular feminine possessive pronoun, "her", rather than the genitive article; the reference would appear to be to "naigheachd", "news". **5:** ONG has "duin"; the final "e" would be elided by the vowel in "uasal", and its omission is marked with an apostrophe. **6:** This line is a clause; ONG omits the relative pronoun which should precede the verb, and its omission is marked with an apostrophe. **7:** The infinitive "ghluasad" should be preceded by the particle "a", and its omission, which is due to the elision caused by the preceding vowel, is marked with an apostrophe. **8:** It is not clear whether the "a" is intended to be the third person singular masculine possessive pronoun or the dative article "a'", but McLS prefers the latter interpretation, which is the more sensible interpretation, given the context. **10:** ONG has "Bho na". ONG has "dlùthach sa"; "dlùthadh" is the more common form of this verbal noun, but the spelling in ONG is retained, as it would appear to reflect pronunciation in the poet's dialect. **14:** ONG has "iundrain"; the preceding "an" must be the third person plural possessive pronoun rather than the article, as the proper article preceding a masculine noun beginning with a vowel is "an t-". ONG has "tha dhì orra"; "dhì" is interpreted as "a dhith", expressing a lack or deficiency, and the omission of the particle "a" is marked with an apostrophe. This line seems to express two separate ideas, and that "tha 'dhith orra" is a separate clause; therefore a comma is added after "ionndrainn" to reflect this. **15:** ONG has "Bho na", "san". **17:** ONG has "fo x'n". **18:** This line would appear to be a clause, and should begin with the relative pronoun "A"; its omission in ONG is marked with an apostrophe. **21:** This line would appear to be a clause, and should begin with the relative pronoun "A"; its omission in ONG is marked with an apostrophe. **23:** ONG has "gu 'n"; the aspiration of the following noun, together with the context, suggest that this is the preposition "without" and not a conjunction. **24:** ONG has "ga"; this is third person verbal noun object, and is marked "'ga". **25:** ONG has ""crìone". **26:** ONG has "samhlach", which would be the noun "samhladh", rather than the adjective "samhlach"; the spelling in ONG would appear

to be dialectical, and is left. **27:** ONG has “bhi”; the omission of the infinitive particle “a” is marked. **30:** ONG has "aobhaidh"; this is interpreted as the superlative of the adjective "aobhach" or "adhbhach". ONG has "a sealltuinn"; "a" is interpreted as the third person singular feminine possessive pronoun, referring to "gnùis". **31:** ONG has "n saoghal"; "n" is interpreted as the contraction of "ann an", "in a", and this is marked with an apostrophe. **32:** This line appears to be a clause, and the verb should therefore be preceded by the relative pronoun "A", the omission of which in ONG is marked with an apostrophe. **34:** ONG has “bhi”. **35:** ONG has "Gabhail", which appears to be a verbal noun, and the omission in ONG of the verbal noun particle "a'" is marked with an apostrophe. ONG has "eigin", which is interpreted by McLS as "èiginn", which seems preferable to interpreting this as the suffix "-eigin", "some". **38:** ONG omits the particle "a" before the infinitive, and this is marked with an apostrophe. ONG also has "a teanntachd"; the "a" is interpreted by McLS as "à", "out of, from", and given the context, this appears correct. **38:** ONG has “dhoibh”. **39:** ONG has “gu 'n”; this is interpreted as the conjunction “gun”. **40:** ONG has "Na 'm"; given the context, this would appear to be the conjunction "Nam". **42:** ONG has “Bho na”. ONG has "dheug"; given the context, this is the dependent form of the past tense, "dh' eug". **43:** ONG has "a sior chumhadh"; given that this appears to be a verbal noun, the "a" is interpreted as the verbal noun particle "a'". ONG has "ma dhei'bhinn"; "dhei'bhinn" is interpreted as "dhèidhinn", and "ma" is interpreted as a contraction of "mu a", "about his", and the elision of the vowel in "mu" is marked with an apostrophe. **44:** ONG has “Thuair”. **45:** ONG has "a bhearn"; the "a" is interpreted as the feminine nominative article, "a'". ONG has "as", which could be interpreted as "às", "out of", but given the context, this would appear to be a contraction of "anns", and this is marked with an apostrophe. **46:** ONG has “Bhi uath”; the omission of the infinitive particle “A” is marked. **49:** ONG has "An àm". "An" is interpreted as a contraction of "Ann an", and this is marked with an apostrophe; if it were the article, the noun would have been preceded by "t-". **50:** ONG has "ga 'm biodh"; "ga 'm" is interpreted as a contraction of the preposition "do" and the relative pronoun "am". **51:** ONG has "Se ga 'm b' urrainn . . .". "Se" is interpreted as the copula, and "ga 'm" is interpreted as a contraction of "do" and the relative pronoun "am". **52:** ONG has "ceutabh", which is interpreted here as "admiration". **54:** ONG has "a gluasad sa"; this is a verbal noun, and so "a" is the verbal noun particle "a'". **55:** ONG has "Na"; given the aspiration of the noun prefix, this is interpreted as a contraction of "Ann a", "in his", and this is marked with an apostrophe. ONG has "do 'n eacoir". **56:** ONG has "a cuir". This is interpreted as a verbal noun, and the verbal noun particle "a'" is marked. The verbal noun is normally rendered "cur", but its slenderisation, as this seems to be indicative of the poet's dialect. **57:** ONG has “Gu 'n”. **59:** ONG has "duin uasail"; the final vowel in "duine" is elided by the subsequent vowel, and this is marked with an apostrophe. **60:** ONG has "sgairtail". **62:** This line appears to be a clause, and the relative pronoun "a" should precede the verb; its omission is marked with an apostrophe. This is a passive construction, and there is no need for the slenderisation of "pàsgadh" in ONG; however, slenderisation preserves the end-rhyme with line 64, and is retained. **63:** ONG has “Fodh”. **64:** ONG has "An Cill-a-Mhàirtuin"; "An" is interpreted as a contraction of "Ann an", "In", and this is marked with an apostrophe. The reference here would appear to be Kilmartin, in Glassary, Argyll, which is the same parish as Barmollach; as noted in the introduction, the subject was married to the daughter of Campbell of Kilmartin. ONG has "n fasgaidh"; this would appear to be the genitive, but if so, "fasgaidh" should be aspirated. **65:** ONG has "An", which would again

appear to be a contraction of "Ann an", and ths is marked with an apostrophe. ONG has "na laidhe", and "na" is interpreted as a contraction of "ann a", "in his", and this is marked with an apostrophe. **66:** ONG has "fear an tighe". **68:** This is a clause, and the relative pronoun "A" should precede the verb, and its omission is marked with an apostrophe. **69:** ONG has "da"; this appears to be a contraction of the preposition "do" and the possessive pronoun "a", and this is marked with an apostrophe. **70:** ONG has "Gu 'n", "fo 'n". **72:** ONG has "dhiu", which is interpreted as "dhiubh". **73:** ONG has "Baromolach". The subject of the poem was the laird of Barmollach, Argyll. **75:** ONG has "Gu 'n". **76:** ONG omits the particle "A-" which should precede "Mach", and this omission is marked with an apostrophe. ONG has "a", which is interpreted as "à", "out of". ONG has "MhicImhair"; the reference is to the Macivers of Argyll, and McLS indicates in the postscript to this poem in FC that the Campbells of Barmollach were originally Macivers who had assumed the surname Campbell about 200 years before he was writing, or in about 1700 (FC, at p. 35). **77:** ONG has "Na 'm", which is interpreted here as the conditional conjunction "Nam", although "Na am b' aithne dhomh", "Or if I knew . . ." is also possible. **78:** ONG has "a leanmhuinn"; the "a" is interpreted as the third person singular masculine possessive pronoun, "his", rather than the verbal noun or infinitive article. ONG also has "gu h-sìnnsearra"; "sìnnsearra" is interpreted as a contraction of the dative plural "sìnnsearaibh", and the elision of the ending is marked with an apostrophe. The insertion of the "h-" is more difficult to explain; it is possible that the poet intended the lenition of the noun, which could have been caused by the implied presence of the third person singular possessive pronoun. **80:** The reference here is to the progeny of Diarmid O' Dhuine or Diarmid MacDuibhn, who according to common oral traditions of the Campbells was the progenitor of the Campbells of Argyll, who are known in Gaelic as "sliochd Dhiarmaid O Dhuibhne": see, for example, *The House of Argyll and the Collateral Branches of the Clan Campbell from the year 420 to the present time* (Glasgow: John Tweed, 1871), at pp. 1-6 and p. 12, and Dwelly, at p. 1009. For a discussion of the origins of the Campbells of Argyll, and of oral traditions relating to Diarmaid, a mythical hero of the Fenian sagas who led one of the Fenian warrior band who fell victim to Fionn MacCumhaill because of his romance with Fionn's lover, Grainne, see Alistair Campbell of Airds, *A History of Clan Campbell, Volume I: From Origins to Flodden* (Polygon: Edinburgh, 2000), ch. 1. **83:** ONG has "gu 'n". **84:** ONG has "Ri bean òg da fhuil dìrich". As bean is in the dative, the adjective "òg" should be slenderised, although, strictly speaking, "bean" should be rendered as "mnaoi", as in McLS versions. The "da" is interpreted as a contraction of "do" or "de", "of", and the third person singular masculine possessive pronoun, "a", "his", which would cause the lenition of the subsequent noun. As the noun is a feminine dative, the adjective "dìrich" should be lenited as well as slenderised. As noted by Maclean Sinclair in FC, the subject of the poem was married to the daughter of Campbell of Kilmartin shortly before his death, a fact confirmed in these lines. **85:** ONG has "Chill Mhàrtuin". **87:** ONG has "Thaogh", which is interpreted as "Thagh". **88:** ONG has "As", which is interpreted as "Às", "Out of/From", rather than as a contraction of "Anns", "In". **89:** ONG has "fèin". ONG omits the relative pronoun "a" which should precede the verb, and this omission is marked with an apostrophe. ONG also omits the feminine nominative article "a'" which should precede "bhean", and its omission is marked with an apostrophe. **90:** ONG has "'N uair". **92:** ONG omits the relative pronoun "A" which should precede the verb, and this omission is marked with an apostrophe. ONG has "na h-inntinn"; "na" is interpreted as a contraction of "ann a", "in her", and this contraction is marked with an

apostrophe. **93:** ONG has "Na 'n d'thige"; "Na 'n" is interpreted as the conditional conjunction "Nan", and "d'thige" is interpreted as the dependent conditional form "tigeadh", and the omission of the final consonant sound is marked with an apostrophe. ONG has "'n àite"; "'n" is interpreted as a contraction of "ann an", and this is marked with an apostrophe. **96:** ONG has "dh' fhaoite". ONG has "gu 'm". ONG has "ghràtin", which is interpreted as the infinitive, and the omission of the infinitive particle "a", which would result from the elision caused by the vowel at the end of the preceding word, is marked with an apostrophe. **97:** ONG has "Na 'm", which is interpreted as the conditional conjunction "Nam". ONG has "làthair", which is normally preceded by the contration "an", and its omission here is marked with an apostrophe. **100:** ONG has "Ga 'm bi"; "Ga 'm" is interpreted as a contraction of the preposition "Do" and the conditional conjunction "am", and is rendered as "Dham". Although "bi" in ONG suggests the future tense, "bidh", the use of the conditional throughout this stanza suggests that the conditional form "biodh" is appropriate. The lenition of "mhnaoi" suggests that the third person singular possessive pronoun, "a", "his" is implied, and its omission, which would result from the elision caused by the preceding vowel, is marked with an apostrophe. ONG has "mhnaoi san"; "san" appears to be the emphatic suffix, but given that the possessive appears to be the third person singular masculine, the proper emphatic suffix would be "-sa". **101:** ONG has "Gu 'm". ONG has "dh' i"; this would appear to be the third person feminine prepositional pronoun "dhi". **103:** ONG has "Bho na". **105:** ONG has "bho ceannard"; as the preposition "bho" would cause lenition of the noun, it would appear that the third person singular feminine possessive pronoun, which does not cause lenition, is implied, and its omission is marked with an apostrophe. **106:** ONG has "a bhantrach"; although the "a" could be the third person singular masculine possessive pronoun, which would cause lenition, as the noun is feminine, the "a" could also be the feminine article "a'" which, given the context, is preferred. **107:** ONG has "na", which is interpreted as a contraction of "ann a", "in her", and this contraction is marked with an apostrophe. ONG has "aonrachd". **108:** The word "èislean" is commonly masculine, and therefore its slenderisation in ONG is not necessary where, as here, the noun is in the dative; however, the ONG spelling is retined, as indicative of dialect. **109:** ONG has "Na 'm", which is interpreted as the conditional conjuntion "Nam". The word "gibht" is an English loan word, "gift", and is therefore marked in italics. **110:** ONG has "thuair", "bho 'n". **111:** ONG has "Gu 'm". ONG has "tighedas cliùteach". **112:** ONG has "Na 'm", which is interpreted as the conditional conjunction "Nam". **113:** ONG has "do 'n". **114:** ONG has "Thuair a Bhan tighearna"; "a" could be interpreted as the third person singular possessive pronoun, but here it is interpreted as the feminine nominative article "a'". **115:** This line appears to be a clause, and therefore the relative pronoun "A" should precede the verb, and its omission is marked with an apostrophe. ONG has "ga fhaicinn san"; "ga" is the third person singular verbal noun object, and this is marked by the insertion of an apostrophe. **116:** ONG has "Gu 'n"; this is interpreted as the preposition "Without" rather than as a conjunction. **117:** ONG has "Na", which is a contraction of "Ann a", "In his", and this is marked. ONG has "gu 'n"; this is interpreted as the preposition "without", rather than as a conjunction. **118:** ONG has "a" twice in this line; both cause lenition in the subsequent noun, and both are interpreted as the third person singular possessive pronoun "a", "his". **119:** ONG has "Gu 'n", "gu 'n"; in both cases, this is interpreted as the preposition "without" rather than as a conjuntction. **121:** ONG has "Bho na", "san". **123:** ONG has "da"; this is a contraction of the preposition "do", here "of", and "a", his, and this contraction is

marked with an apostrophe. **125:** ONG has “gu ’n”; given the context, this is interpreted as a conjunction. **127:** ONG has "Na ;m", which is the conditional conjunction "Nam". ONG has "air a giùlan"; "a" would appear to the the third person possessive pronoun, but given the use of the masculine possessive pronoun in the preceding line, and the context, this should arguably also be interpreted as the masculine possessive pronoun, and therefore the subsequent noun is lenited. **128:** ONG has "Bhi mid", which would appear to be the first person plural form of the conditional, "Bhiomaid". ONG has "ri chluinntinn"; the particle "a" before the verb is omitted, which would be due to the elision caused by the preceding vowel, and its omission is marked with an apostrophe. **129:** ONG has "Na 'm", which is the conditional conjunction "Nam". ONG has "na", which is interpreted as the contraction of "ann a", "in his", and this is marked with an apostrophe. **130:** ONG has "chinneach"; this would appear to be "cinneadh", "kindred", but the spelling is left as in ONG, as indicative of the pronunciation in the poet's dialect. The lenition of the two nouns following "a" suggest that these are the third person singular masculine possessive pronoun. **133:** ONG has “Ga’ d”. ONG has “bhi”; the omission of the infinitive particle “a” is marked. **135:** ONG has “ann sa”. **136:** ONG omits the relative pronoun "a" which should precede the verb, and this omission is marked with an apostrophe. ONG has "air a chrìochan"; although the "a" could be interpreted as the dative article, "a'", here it appears to be the third person masculine possessive pronoun, referring to "baile", "township", in the preceding line. **137:** Given the context, the third person singular masculine possessive pronoun is also implied here, before "aogas", and its omission, which would be due to the elision caused by the surrounding vowels, is marked with an apostrophe. **138:** ONG has “gu ’n”; given the context, this is interpreted as a conjunction. **140:** ONG has "a mhuinntireach". The noun appears to be in a genitive relationship with the noun "adhbhar", and should be slenderised. The "a" could be interpreted as the masculine singular genitive article "a'", but it is interpreted here as the third person singular possessive pronoun, referring to "teaghlach", in the preceding line. The servant referred to is interpreted as the subject of the poem. **141:** ONG has “Bho na”. **143:** ONG has “Bho ’n”. **145:** ONG has “ann sa”. **146:** ONG has “’N uair”. **147:** ONG has “Gu ’m”. **148:** ONG omits the relative pronoun "A" which should precede the verb. ONG has “ann sa”. **146:** ONG has “so”. **149:** ONG has "a bhidh"; given the conditional tense which precedes it, this is interpreted as the conditional "bhiodh". **150:** The "'n" which precedes "iotadh" is interpreted as a contractiono of "ann an", "in". **151:** ONG has "ga riarachadh"; "ga" is the third person singular pronoun object of the verbal noun, and this is indicated by the insertion of an apostrophe. **152:** ONG has "As"; this is interpreted as "Às", "Out of/From", rather than as a contraction of "Anns". The particle "a" should appear before the superlative, and its omission is marked with an apostrophe. **153:** ONG has “Gu ’n”. **154:** ONG has "ga rèir sin"; "ga" is interpreted here as "dha", a contraction of the preposition "do" and the third person singular masculine possessive pronoun "a". **155:** ONG has “Ann san”. **156:** ONG has "na 'n", which is the plural genitive article "nan". **158:** ONG has "a sèideadh", which is interpreted here, as in McLS, as the verbal noun, and an apostrophe is inserted to indicate this. **159:** ONG has "Stiùradh"; this is interpreted as a verbal noun, and the omission of the verbal noun particle "a'" is marked with an apostrophe. ONG has "men-shùileach", and "men" is interpreted as "mion", an adjective. **160:** ONG has "dìbear", the meaning of which is not clear, although the verb may be "dìobair", meaning "to desert, quit, abandon, forsake, fail", but also "depart", which meaning is perhaps more sensible here, given the context. **161:** ONG has "an Albainn"; "an" is a

contraction of "ann an", "in", and this is marked with an apostrophe. **162:** ONG has "an Eirinn"; "an" is a contraction of "ann an", "in", and this is marked with an apostrophe. **163:** ONG has "Diùchd". Given the events described in this verse, and which are further explained in the note for line 164, the reference here would appear to be to John Campbell, the 5th Duke of Argyll (1723-1806), who was the colonel of the Argyllshire Fencibles: see Eric R. Cregeen, ed., *Argyll Estate Instructions: Mull, Morvern, Tiree, 1771-1805*, Scottish Historical Society, Fourth Series, Vol. I (T. and A. Constable Ltd.: Edinburgh, 1964), Introduction, pp. ix-xxxix, for a good portrait of the Duke. **164:** ONG has "'N uair". "Clèbher" would appear to be a reference to Colonel Henry Morduant Clavering, a son-in-law of the Duke of Argyll, who raised the Second Argyll Batallion in 1794 and which served in Ireland until it was reduced in 1802. The Second Argyll Regiment was one of three batallions which formed part of the Argyll Fencibles; the first batallion was raised by the Marquess of Lorne in 1793, and was disbanded in 1799, and the third was raised by Colonel Archibald Macneil of Colonsay in 1799 and was disbanded in 1802. Fencible regiments were raised for the internal defence of the country, but unlike the militia, were formed by ordinary recruiting methods, and as in regiments of the line, the officers were appointed and their commissions signed by the King: see Michael Brander, *The Scottish Highlanders and Their Regiments* (The Gleneil Press: Haddington, 1996), p. 209; see, also, Alastair Campbell of Airds, *A History of Clan Campbell, Volume 3: From the Restoration to the Present Day* (Edinburgh University Press: Edinburgh, 2004) pp. 194-195. In the years 1793 to 1795, Britain was generally on the military offensive in Europe. The government considered that fencible regiments diverted manpower from the line regiments serving overseas, and as a result, from about 1794 pressure was put on landlords to raise fencible regiments for service in Ireland, allowing line troops there to be redeployed on the continent: see Andrew MacKillop, *'More Fruitful than the Soil': Army, Empire and the Scottish Highlands, 1715-1815* (Tuckwell Press: Phintassie, 2000), p. 73, 113. Republican ideals had a significant impact in Ireland, and by 1797, Ireland, and especially Ulster, "was in a state of submerged civil war in which political and sectarian differences mutually inflamed one another". Rebellion, inspired by the United Irishmen led by the likes of Wolfe Tone, broke out on 24 May, 1798; centred primarily on Antrim, Down and Wexford, it had largely been suppressed within six weeks: see, generally, J. C. Beckett, *A Short History of Ireland* (The Cresset Library: London, 1987), at pp. 119-120. It would appear, from the references in this verse, that the subject served in Ireland in these fencible regiments, and was therefore involved in the suppression of this rising. **165:** ONG has "e dhiùltadh"; the aspiration of the noun is likely due to the third person singular masculine possessive pronoun, "a", "his", the omission of which would result from the elision caused by the preceding personal pronoun "e", and this omission is therefore marked with an apostrophe. **166:** ONG has "e null"; "null" is usually preceded by the particle "a", and its omission, due to the elision caused by the preceding vowel, is marked. ONG has "gu 'n". **168:** This line is a clause, and ONG omits the relative pronoun "A" which should precede the verb; this omission is marked with an apostrophe. ONG has "san". **169:** ONG has "Gu 'm". **171:** ONG has "Ga 'n robh"; "Ga 'n" is interpreted by McLS as "Dhan", a contraction of the preposition "do", and the relative pronoun "an", and I accept this interpretation. The aspiration of "phearsa" suggests the presence of the feminine article "a'", and its omission, due here to the elision caused by the preceding vowel sound in the verb, is marked with an apostrophe. **173:** ONG has "càbhsair". **174:** ONG has " bhi". **175:** ONG has "to'irt"; this is a verbal noun, and should be preceded by the verbal noun

particle "a'", the omisssion of which, due to the aspiration caused by the preceding vowel, is marked with an apostrophe. The word "commandadh", is based on an English loan word, command, and is therefore marked in italics. **177:** ONG has "culadh", which McLS correctly emends to "culaidh", "costume". **178:** ONG has "èididh", a genitive form which is not required in this context; McLS correctly emends this to "èideadh". **179:** ONG has "de 'n". **180:** ONG has "agus fhèile"; the aspiration of the noun may be caused by the third person singular masculine possessive pronoun, "a", "his"; and its omission is marked here with an apostrophe. **183:** ONG has "an t-saighd' ear"; given that this noun appears to be in a genitive relationship with "coltas", it should be slenderised, as in McLS versions. **184:** This line is a clause, and the noun should be preceded by the relative pronoun "A"; its omission in ONG is marked with an apostrophe. ONG has "rèbal". **186:** ONG has "air a ghnìomhannan"; "a" could be interpreted as the dative article "a'", but in the context, would appear to be the third person singular masculine possessive pronoun "a", "his". **188:** ONG has "Do 'n". **189:** ONG has "Cha 'n". **190:** ONG has "an gèill iad"; "an gèill" would appear to be "an cèill"; the poet's spelling would appear to indicate the pronunciation of this in his dialect, where "an" appears to cause eclipsis. **191:** ONG has "Ga 'd". **192:** ONG has "gu 'm".

Maclean Sinclair Versions:

2: Have "r' a h-ìnnse". **4:** Have "Meud a' bhròin". **6:** Have "chuain". **8:** Insert "dheth" after "chuairt" and have "nach till" for "nach do thill". **10:** Have "'s a' chill". **12:** Have "Air" for "An dèidh" and the standard "dlùthadh". **13-14:** These lines follow lines 15 and 16, and are replaced with: "Gu bheil beàrn ás na h-uaislean/'Tha mu 'n cuairt dhuinn 's an tìr seo". **15-16:** These lines are lines 13 and 14, and have at line 15 "Bho na chàradh 's an . . .". **17:** Have "ann" for "sin". **21:** Have "Bha e" for "Bha gu". **22:** Have "Gun bhith" for "Nach robh", and the standard "no" for "na". **23:** Have "Bha e measail . . .". **24:** Have "'na ghiùlan". **25-32:** Omit these lines. **33-40:** Are verse four in McLS versions. **34:** Have "'Bhith 'cur" for "A chuir". **35:** Add "'S" before "'gabhail". **38:** Have "fuasglaidh". **39-40:** Replace these lines with: "Bha e aoibheil ro-thaitneach,/'S e nach altrumadh gamhlas". **41-48:** Omit these lines. **49-56:** Are verse five in McLS versions. **49-52:** Replace these lines with: "Anns a' chùirt dheante gnìomh leis,/'S iomadh ni 'bha 'cur tlachd air,/Bha e faighidneach, eòlach,/Glic, 'us teom', agus smachdail". **53:** Have the standard "no" for "na". **54:** Have "'s a'" for "'sa". **56:** Have the standard "a' cur". **57-64:** Omit these lines. **65-72:** Are verse six. **65:** Have "'N" for "An". **66:** Have "taigh'". **67:** Insert "'S" at start of line, have "dheanta", and "am" for "'m". **72:** Replace with: "Dha 'm b' àbhaist 'bhith còmhl' ris". **73-80:** Omit these lines. **81:** Omit "an" in "an toiseach". **82:** Insert "'S" at start of the line. **84:** Replace this line with: "Ri mnaoi òig, mhaisich, fhìnealt'". **85:** Have "Chill-a-Mhàrtainn". **86:** Have "r' a dhìreadh". **87:** Have standard "dha" for "da". **91:** Have "Tha i suairc na gluasad". **92:** Replace this with: "Tha i trucant' gun chrìne". **93-96:** Omit these lines. **97-104:** Contain an entirely new verse 13 which did not exist in ONG: "Chan eil éibhneas 'an còmhradh,/Chan eil ceòl ann an teudan,/Chan eil àilleachd am blàth dhi,/'S i gun mhànran a céile./Gu 'm b' e 'n càs bhith 'ga fhaicinn,/'S e gun chlaisteachd gun léirsinn,/Air an éislinn na shìneadh/Agus cìs aig an eug air". **97-100:** Omit these lines. **101-104:** Are lines 93-96, in verse twelve. **102:** Have "Cho ro-luath". **103:** Have "Bho na". **105-120:** Omit these lines. **121:** Have "'s an" for "'san". **122:** Have "am mulad". **123:** Have "de" for "d' a". **124:** Have "ràidh'". **125-128:** Omit these lines, replacing them with lines 120-132. **130:** Have the standard "chinneadh".

131: Replace this line with "Taingeil, aighearach, éibhinn". **132:** Have "na toilinntinn". **133-144:** Omit these lines. **145-152:** These lines are verse seven in McLS versions. **145:** Have "leis" for "leò". **146:** Have "An là . . ." for "Nuair a . . .", and replace "iad" with "e". **147:** Insert "'S" at start of this line, and "bha" before "gach seòrsa". **148:** Replace "'Bha" with "Aig'". **150:** Have the standard "no" for "na". **151:** Have "'S e toirt seachad gu saibhir". **152:** Have "an làimh". **153-156:** Omit these lines. **157-158:** These two lines are the first lines in verse eight in McLS versions, and are followed by these six lines which do not exist in ONG: "Cha bhiodh mearachd mu 'n stiùireadh/'S eithir shiùbhlach gu gleusta/Thar nan tonnan a' gluasad/Mar each luath 's e cur réise:/Bhiodh e furachail, cinnteach,/'S bhiodh gach nì mar a dh' fheumadh". **157:** Have "Gu 'm b' e sgiobair na mar' e". **158:** Have "'S a' ghaoth ghreannach . . ." for "Ri là greannach . . .". **159-160:** Omit these lines. **161-162:** These two lines are the first two lines in verse nine in McLS versions. **163-166:** Omit these lines. **167-168:** These two lines are the third and fourth lines in verse nine in McLS versions, in which they follow directly lines 161 and 162. **167:** Have "'S e cur . . ." for "A chuir . . .". **168:** Have "'s an tìr sin" for "'san Rìoghachd sin". **169-172:** These lines are the final four in verse nine in McLS versions, in which they follow lines 167 and 168. **169:** Have "'n ceann-armailt" for "an ceann-armailt". **170:** Have "géilleadh" for "trèigeadh". **171:** Have "Dha 'n". **173-176:** Omit these lines. **177-184:** Are verse ten in McLS versions. **180:** Have "féile". **185-192:** Omit these lines.

With these changes and omissions, Maclean Sinclair versions contain 112 lines.

21. Cumhadh, do dh'Iain Caimbeul

Tune: "Carson nach toisichinn 'sa champ"
No. of lines: 136
Sources: ONG, p. 121, CC1, p. 73, CC2, p. 66.
Date: c. 1817, the year of the death of the subject; the reference at line 31 suggest that the subject left Tiree on his final journey just before Martinmas, which is held on 11 November, and the references at lines 73 and 74, suggest that he died about a month after the start of November ("samhain" is 1 November), and the poem was probably composed shortly thereafter, in late 1817 or early 1818.
Context: CC1 gives the following introductory information: "Bha 'n duine òg so na cheannaiche ann an Sgairinnis an Tirithe. Chaidh e le dròbh gu margaidh Dhùini. As a sin chaidh e do Ghlaschu a cheannach bathar. Dh' fhás e tinn ann an Grianaig 'se air an t-slighe dhachaidh. Bha e na chorp ann ceann trì làithean. 'S ann 's a' bhliadhna 1817 a chaochaochail Iain òg Sgairinnis"/"This young man was a trader in Sgarinish in Tiree. He went with a drove of cattle to the cattle fair of Doune. From there, he went to Glasgow to purchase goods. He became ill in Greenock, where he was on his way home. He was dead within three days. It was in the year 1817 that Young John of Sgarinish died". The introduction in CC2 is virtually the same.

Line Annotations:
1: ONG has "a Grianaig"; "a" is interpreted as the preposition "à", "out of, from". **2:** ONG, "Gu 'n". **3:** ONG has "a tighinn", which is interpreted as a verbal noun. ONG has "fodh". **4:** ONG has "Ga chuimhneachadh"; "Ga" is interpreted as the third

person singular masculine pronoun object of the verbal noun, and this is marked with an apostrophe. **5:** ONG has "Ma 'n". **6:** This is a clause, and ONG omits the relative pronoun "A" before the verb, and this omission is marked with an apostrophe. ONG has "san iosal so"; as this adjective qualifies a feminine noun in the dative case, it should be slenderised. **7:** ONG has "thiolacadh". **8:** ONG has "An"; given the context, this appears to be a contraction of "Ann an", "In", and this is marked. ONG has "fodh 'n". **9:** ONG has "Glascho". **10:** The "'s" is interpreted as a contraction of "anns". **12:** ONG has "g' astrachadh". **17:** ONG has "gu 'n"; given the aspiration of the following noun and the context, this is the preposition "without". ONG has "da", which is a contraction of the preposition "do", "to", and the third person singular masculine possessive pronoun "a", "his". **18:** This line appears to be a clause, and therefore the relative pronoun "A" should precede the verb, and its omission is marked with an apostrophe. **19:** ONG has "bhi"; the of the infinitive particle "a" marked. ONG has "la' ris", which would appear to be a contraction of "làmh ris", and therefore an accent is added. **20:** ONG has "Ga chàradh"; "Ga" is interpreted as the third person singular masculine pronoun object of the verbal noun, and this is marked with an apostrophe. **21:** ONG has "a streap", which is interpreted as a verbal noun, and "spairn", which is interpreted as "spàirn". **22:** ONG has "aig ann"; "aig" is interpreted as the third person singular masculine prepositional pronoun "aige" rather than the preposition "aig", and the omission of the final vowel, which would be due to the elision caused by the following vowel, is marked with an apostrophe. **23:** ONG has "Ga bhuannachd"; "Ga" is interpreted as the third person singular masculine pronoun object of the verbal noun, and this is marked with an apostrophe. **27:** ONG omits the relative pronoun "a" which should precede the vowel "tha", and this omission is marked with an apostrophe. **28:** ONG has "deigh". **30:** ONG has "bàtachean". **31:** ONG has "'N uair". ONG omits the relative pronoun "a" before the verb "ghluais", and this omission is marked with an apostrophe. **32:** ONG has "As a Ghaedhealtachd"; "As" is interpreted as the preposition "Às", and "a" is the dative article "a'". ONG has "le dhròbh"; the aspiration of the noun suggests the omission of the third person singular masculine possessive pronoun, "a", "his", which is consistent with the context, and this omission is marked with an apostrophe. **34:** This line is a clause, and the verb should be preceded by the relative pronoun "A", the omission of which is marked with an apostrophe. **36:** ONG has "Na 'n"; this appears to be a contraction of the preposition "Ann", "In" and the third person plural possessive pronoun "an", "their", and this contraction is marked with an apostrophe, "'Nan". **37:** ONG has "g' ùrachadh"; "g'" is interpreted as the verbal noun particle "ag", and the omission of the vowel, due to the elision caused by the preceding vowel, is marked. ONG has "doibh". **38:** ONG has "A cuimhneachadh", which is interpreted as the verbal noun. **39:** ONG has "Gu 'n"; given the context, and the aspiration of the following noun, this is interpreted as the preposition "without". ONG has "bhi"; the omission of the infinitive particle "a" is marked. **40:** ONG has "'N uair". The omission of the relative pronoun before the verb "bha" is marked. ONG has "'n èigin"; "'n" is interpreted as a contraction of "ann an", "in". **41:** ONG has "Gu 'n". **42:** ONG has "bh' uaibh", "san". **43:** The aspiration of the noun "bualadh" implies the presence of the third person singular masculine possessive pronoun, "a", "his", which would be fitting in this context, and its omission, due to the elision caused by the preceding vowel, is marked with an apostrophe. **44:** ONG has "gu 'm". ONG has "air call"; "air" is interpreted as the second person plural possessive pronoun, "ur", "your", rather than the preposition "air", "on", and this is consistent with the second person plural prepositional pronoun "bhuaibh" at line 42.

45: ONG has “san”, “so”. **46:** ONG has “deigh”. **48:** ONG has “sa”, “air bhàr”. ONG has "na 'n" tonn; "na 'n" is interpreted as the genitive plural article "nan". **49:** ONG has “so”, “Geamhradh”. **50:** This line contains a clause and a subclause, and so both verbs should be preceded by the relative pronoun "a"; its omission in ONG in both cases is marked with an apostrophe. **51:** ONG has “Bho ’n”. ONG omits the relative pronoun "a" before the verb "chaill", and this omission is marked with an apostrophe. **52:** ONG has “dheigh”. **53:** ONG omits the relative pronoun "a" before the verb "dh'fhàg", and this omission is marked with an apostrophe. **54:** ONG omits the relative pronoun "a" before the verb "phaisgeadh", and this omission is marked with an apostrophe. ONG has "leinntin". **55:** ONG has "Na shìneadh"; "Na" is interpreted as a contraction of the preposition "ann", "in", and the third person singular masculine possessive pronoun "a", "his", and this contraction is marked with an apostrophe. **56:** ONG has “bhi”; the omission of the infinitive particle “a” is marked. ONG has “bh’ os”, which is interpreted as “bhos”, a dialectical variant of the preposition “os”, “over”. **57:** ONG has “fodh”. ONG has "na shineadh"; "na" is a contraction of the preposition "ann" and the third person singular masculine possessive pronoun, "a", and this contraction is marked with an apostrophe. **58:** This line is a clause, and the omission of the relative particle "A" before the verb "tha" is marked with an apostrophe, as is the omission of the superlative particle "a" before "bu". ONG has "shibhailt". **59:** The omission of the relative pronoun "a" before the verb "bha" is marked with an apostrophe. **60:** ONG has "faoill" and "ghiobh". **61:** ONG has "Tha phàrantan"; the aspiration of the noun, together with the context, suggests the omission of the third person singular masculine possessive pronoun, "a", which is due to the elision caused by the preceding vowel, and this omission is marked with an apostrophe. **62:** ONG has "ga iargainn"; "ga" is the third person singular verbal noun object, and this is marked with an apostrophe. **63:** Given the context, "'m" before "bròn" is interpreted as the third person plural possessive pronoun rather than the article. ONG has “deigh”. **64:** ONG has “gu ’n”. As "clann" is a feminine noun, the "an" which precedes it must be the third person plural possessive pronoun rather than the article, which would be "a'" and would cause aspiration of the noun. **65:** ONG has "Ciadain". **66:** This line is a clause, and the omission of the relative pronoun "A" at the start of the line, before the verb, is marked. ONG has "chìs"; the aspiration of this feminine noun would be caused by the article, "a'", the omission of which would be due to the elision caused by the preceding vowel, and this omission is marked. ONG has “bh’ uatha”. **69:** ONG has "a Sgàirinis"; the "a" is interpreted as "à", "from". **70:** ONG has “fèin”. ONG has “bhi”; the omission of the infinitive particle “a” is marked. **71:** ONG has “Ma ’n”. **72:** ONG has “do ’n”. **73:** ONG has "a Gheamhraidh"; the "a" is the genitive article "a'", and is marked as such. **74:** ONG has “deigh”. **75:** ONG has “ann ’s”, “tràthibh”. **76:** ONG omits the infinitive particle "a" before "thigh'nn", and this is marked with an apostrophe. ONG has “do ’n”. **78:** ONG has “ann san”. **81:** ONG has "air a bhliadhna"; "a" is the dative article "a'", and is marked as such. **82:** ONG has "ciad". **83:** ONG has “Gu ’n”, “thuair”, “riasain”. **84:** ONG has “bhi”, “dheigh”. **85:** ONG has “Ge ’d”, “gu ’n”. **86:** ONG has "riathraich". **87:** ONG has “Gu ’n”. **89:** ONG has "'Bhùth"; as this is a masculine noun in the poet's dialect, the apostrophe would appear to be marking the omission of the third person singular masculine possessive pronoun "a". **88:** ONG has “Bho na”. **89:** ONG has “deigh”. **90:** ONG has “bhi”. **92:** ONG simply has "sgrìobh"; as the related noun is "sgrìobhadh", this would appear to be a verbal form, apparently the preterite, and this would require a relative pronoun, the omission of which is marked by an apostrophe.

93: ONG has “fèin”. ONG has "ga 'n ceartachadh"; "ga 'n" is the third person plural verbal noun object, apparently referring to "books" in line 91, and this is marked as "'gan". **94:** ONG has "shìbhealta". **96:** ONG has “Do ’n”, “sgairtail”. The omission of the superlative particle "a" before "bu" is marked with an apostrophe. **99:** ONG has "fialuidh". **101:** ONG has "Na 'n", which is the conditional conjunction "Nan". **102:** ONG has "na 'n". Given the context, this would appear to be a contraction of the preposition "ann" and the third person plural possessive pronoun "an", and is marked "'nan". It would not appear to be the genitive plural article, as the noun "airc" does not appear to be in a genitive relationship with any other verb. **103:** ONG has "na 'm"; this could be a contraction of the preposition "ann" and the third person plural possessive pronoun "am", "'nam", but is interpreted here as the genitive plural article "nam". **104:** This line is a clause, and therefore the relative article "A" should precede the verb; its omission is marked with an apostrophe. **105:** ONG has “Gu ’n”, “ann san”. **107:** ONG omits the relative pronoun "a" before the verb, "dh'fhàg", and this omission is marked by an apostrophe. **108:** ONG has “Ma ’n”. **109:** ONG has "stràchd". ONG omits the relative pronoun "a" before the verb "thug", and this omission is marked. ONG has “dhoibh”. **110:** ONG has “cha ’n”. **111:** The aspiration of "màthair", together with the context, suggests the presence of the third person singular masculine possessive pronoun, "a", which is omitted due to the elision caused by the preceding vowel, and this omission is marked with an apostrophe. **113:** The "'s" is interpreted as a contraction of "anns an". ONG has “so”. **114:** ONG has “Cha ’n”. ONG has "a ghaoid"; given that this is a feminine noun, the "a" is interpreted as the feminine nominative article "a'". **116:** ONG has “cha ’n”. **117:** ONG has “so”, “an Geamhradh”. **118:** This line would appear to be a clause, and the omission of the relative pronoun "A" before the verb in ONG is marked with an apostrophe. **119:** This line would appear to be a clause, and the omission of the relative pronoun "A" before the verb in ONG is marked with an apostrophe. ONG has “ann ’s”. **120:** ONG has "M' an", which is interpreted as a contraction of the preposition "Mu", "concerning, and the article "an". The omission of the relative pronoun "a" before the verb, "bha", is marked with an apostrophe. **122:** ONG has "dusgadh". **123:** ONG has “bhi”; the omission of the infinitive particle “a” is marked. **125:** ONG has "air dùil"; given the context, "air" would appear to be the first person plural possessive pronoun "ar" rather than the preposition "air". ONG has "a neartachadh"; this is a verbal noun and the particle "a" is marked "a'". **126:** ONG has “San”, “thuair”. **127:** ONG has "Thoirt", which appears to be an infinitive; the omission of the infintive particle "A" is marked with an apostrophe. ONG has "na 'r", which is interpreted as a contraction of the preposition "ann" and the first person plural possessive pronoun "ar", and is marked "'nar". **128:** ONG has “bh’ uaibh”. **129:** ONG has “Cha ’n”. ONG has “bhi”; the omission of the infinitive particle “a” is marked. ONG has "cuimhneachadh"; this appears to be a verbal noun, and the omission of the verbal noun particle "a'", due to the elision caused by the preceding vowel sound, is marked with an apostrophe. **130:** ONG has "Na caoidh"; "Na" is interpreted as the conjunction "or", and "caoidh", given the context, is interpreted a verbal noun, and the omission of the verbal noun particle "a'", which is due to the elision caused by the preceding vowel sound, is marked. ONG has “san”. **131:** ONG has "Na 'm", which is interpreted as the conditional conjunction "Nam". ONG has "chuiteachadh". **132:** ONG has "sith". **133:** ONG has "air n' ùrnaigh"; "air" is, given the context, interpreted as the second person plural possessive pronoun "ur", rather than the preposition "air", and as such "n'" is marked as "n-". **134:** ONG has "durachdach". ONG has "bho 'r n' inntinn"; consistent with line 133, "'r" is

interpreted as the second person plural possessive pronoun, and as such "n'" is marked as "n-". **135:** ONG has "Gu 'n", "còmhnuidh", "shiorruidh".

Maclean Sinclair Versions:

1: Have "'S e 'n" for "An", and add "oirnn" after "Grianaig". **2:** Replace this line with "Fàth m' iargainn 'us mo bhròin". **3:** Have "Gur" for "'S". **5:** Have "An t-òigear" for "Man òigear". **6:** Have "'s an" for "'san". **7:** Replace this line with "Tha 'n diùgh gu ùir a' crìonadh". **8:** Have "Ann an" for "An". **10:** Have this line as line 12. **11:** Replace this line with "Bha e gun bhròn, gun airsneulachd". **12:** Have this line as line 10, and have "Is" for "'S". **13:** Have "ghrad" after "Di-luain", and omit the relative pronoun "a". **15:** Have ". . . chaidh a phasgadh" (from line 16) for ". . . sin a b' fhaisge". **16:** Have "'S e gun chlaisteachd" for "Chaidh a phasgadh". **17:** Have "Is" for "'S". **18:** Insert the relative pronoun "A" before the verb "Bha" **19:** Replace this line with "Cha robh a h-aon diugh làmh ris". **20:** Have "Gus a" for "'Ga". **21:** Have "gu làidir" for "le spàirn". **22:** Have ". . . gheur an sàs . . .". **23:** Replace this line with "'S aig crìch bha thìm 's an fhàsach seo". **25:** Have "Is" for "'S". **27:** Have "Is" for "'S" and "'s" for "is". **29:** Have "A' smaointinn air" for "Ri smaointeachadh". **30:** Have "leis" for "air". **33:** Omit this line. **34:** Have this as line 4 of verse 7 (line 52), which is verse 5 in McLS versions, but have "Tha iad neo-éibhinn . . ." for "'Dh'fhàg iadsan deurach, . . .". **35:** Have this as line 3 of verse 7 (line 51), which is verse 5 in McLS versions, but have "latha" for "là" and omit the relative pronoun "a". **36-48:** Omit these lines. **51:** Replace this with line 35, as amended. **52:** Replace this with line 34, as amended. **54:** Reverse this line with line 55, and have "'G' a phasgadh" for "Bhon 'phaisgeadh" and omit "e". **55:** Reverse this line with line 54, and replace it with "Gu 'n robh am fear nach tréigeadh iad". **56:** Replace this line with "Is gun aon diubh fhéin air teann". **58:** Add the relative pronoun "A" at the beginning of this line. **61:** Have "dhìlleachdain" for "dhìnnleachdain". **62:** Reverse this line with line 63, and replace it with "Tha 'n deòir a' ruith gu dian fhrasach". **63:** Reverse this line with line 62, and have "'S" for "Tha". **64:** Replace this line with "Gach là nan cridh' tha toll". **65-72:** Omit these lines. **73:** Have "air" for "'an". **75:** Have ". . . aca 'bhith 'fàilteachadh" for ". . . ac' anns na tràthaibh sin". **76:** Have "An àilleagain . . ." for "E thigh'inn gach là . . .". **78:** Replace this line with "'S a' chiste chaoil gu 'n d' chàradh e". **80:** Replace this line with "Bu chràiteach a bha 'n crìdh". **82:** Replace this line with "'S iad iargainneach, gun fheum". **88:** Have "Bho na" for "Bhon a". **94:** Have "r' a fhaicinn" for "ri 'fhaicinn". **95:** Have "bhòidheach" for "bhòidhche" and "cuma" for "cumadh". **99:** Have "Bu chiallach" for "Gu ciallach", and "faicleach" for "faicilleach". **102:** Have "nan" for "'nan". **103:** Have "Bu mhath . . ." for "'S e math . . .", and add "e" at the end of the line. **104:** Replace this line with "Chan fhaict' e 'gan cur sios". **105-128:** Omit these lines. **129:** Add "Ach" before "Chan eil . . ." at the start of this line. **130:** Replace this line with "'S a' caoidh na thugadh bhuainn". **131-136:** Omit these lines, and replace them with the following: "Chan eil neach àrd no iosal ann/Nach téid ri tìm do 'n uaigh./Dean deas, a Rìgh nan rìghrean sinn,/Gu dhol a staigh do 'n t-sìorruidheachd,/Air sgàth na beatha phrìseil sin/Mar iobairt 'thugadh suas."

With these changes and omissions, the Maclean Sinclair versions contain 88 lines.

22. Cumhadh, do Mhaighstir Eamann MacCuinn, Ministear Bharra

Tune: "Gaoir nam ban Muileach"
No. of lines: 126
Sources: ONG, p. 27, MG15G/2/1, p. 22, CC1, p. 77, CC2, p. 68.
Date: Given the date of death of the subject (see "Context"), likely summer or autumn, 1812
Context: Edmund MacQueen was born in 1742, the son of Donald MacQueen, the minister of North Uist from 1755 until 1770. Donald MacQueen had been born in about 1700, and was the son of Rev. Angus MacQueen of Sleat, who belonged to a line of clergymen which went back to the beginning of the seventeenth century. Donald MacQueen had graduated from King's College, Aberdeen in 1719, and was married on 13 October, 1736 to Marjory, daughter of Lachlan Maclean of Torrestan, a cadet of the Coll family. Rev. Edmund MacQueen had one brother, Allan, who succeeded his father as minister of North Uist: See William Matheson, ed., *The Songs of John MacCodrum, Bard to Sir James MacDonald of Sleat* (Edinburgh: Scottish Gaelic Texts Society, 1938), at note to line 863, p. 249. Like his father, Edmund MacQueen had received a university education, at Edinburgh. He was licensed to preach by the presbytery of Uist on 17 December, 1769, and was ordained on 18 June, 1774, when he was installed as the minister of the parish of Barra, which post he held until his death on 15 June, 1812. John Lorne Campbell indicates that he was minister of Barra from 1774 to 1813, but this latter date refers to the date of the installation of his successor, the Rev. Alexander Nicholson, rather than to the date of MacQueen's death: see John Lorne Campbell, *The Book of Barra* (Acair: Stornoway, 1998), at p. 235. James Hall represented him "as having an easy life and not having half a dozen hearers on Sunday", which is not surprising on a strongly Roman Catholic island such as Barra: see Hew Scott, D. D., *Fasti Ecclesiae Scoticanae*, Vol. VII, "Synods of Ross, Sutherland and Caithness, Glenila, Orkney and of Shetland, the Church in England, Ireland and Overseas" (Oliver & Boyd: Edinburgh, 1928), at pp. 185-6. According to *The Statistical Account of Scotland, 1791-1799* (the "Old Statistical Account"), vol. 13, p. 326 *et seq.*, in which the entry for the Parrish of Barra was prepared by Rev. MacQueen (where he is identified as the Rev. Mr. *Edward* MacQueen), there were 1,604 persons in the parish, and only 80 were Protestants; there was no manse, and the glebe was a small farm given by the heritor, and the number of Protestants were always so small that it was thought unnecessary to put the heritor to the expense of building a church: p. 338. Rev. MacQueen indicated that he preached two Sundays a month at Borve, a mile and a half from his glebe house, one Sunday at Kilbar, 3 miles distant, and one Sunday at "Watersay" (Vatersay), five miles distant (including a ferry of one mile). According to Compton MacKenzie, none of the Barra Protestants were native to the island, but were largely North Uist Gaels who had been "planted" there from time to time: *The Book of Barra*, p. 21. Kenneth Macaulay, the author of History of St. Kilda, reported that Rev. MacQueen kept a school at Portree and was a "lively young man". He was married twice: first, on 21 August, 1788 to Mary, the daughter of Maclean of Boreray, from whom he had three children, Marion (born 13 June, 1791), Donald (born 3 January, 1794), and Ewen (born 13 September, 1795), and then on 20 May, 1801, to Isabella, the daughter of Charles Maclean of Scour, with whom he had one child, Charles (born 1803): see, again, *Fasti Ecclesiae Scoticanae*, at pp. 185-6. Charles Maclean of Scour, Mull, was married to Catherine, the daughter of Lachlan Maclean, the third chief of the Macleans of Muck. Isabella was one of three children; the others were Archibald, the subject of poem 23, and Mary: Rev. Alexander Maclean Sinclair, *The Clan Gillean* (Haszard and Moore: Charlottetown, 1899), at p. 321. Like the Macleans of

Treshnish, from whom the poet himself descended, through the Macleans of Hynish, in Tiree, the Macleans of Scour (the people to whom the subject's second wife belonged) and the Macleans of Boreray (the people to whom the subject's first wife belonged) all trace their origins to the Macleans of Ardgour, and so the poet had a family connection to both of the subject's spouses: see *The Clan Gillean*, at ch. XIII.

In his entry in the Old Statistical Account, we get a taste of Rev. MacQueen's interests and personality, and of his life in Barra. For example, he showed some interest in customary practices, making reference to things such as the traditional manner in which St. Barr's feast day was kept and to a healing well, "tobbar nam buadh" (sic), "the well of virtues"; he also showed some interest in the history of the island and its lairds, the MacNeils of Barra. He noted that over 200 residents of the parish had left for Prince Edward Island (then known as the island of St. John's) and Nova Scotia in the last two years. He clearly disapproved of this emigration: he was highly critical of an emigration agent, identified by him only as "a Mr. F***", by whom the people had been "inveigled thither", but he notes that at the time of writing, "[t]he spirit for emigration is now happily and totally suppressed". He clearly disapproved of the dominant religion, the strength of which is attributed to the absence of a minister in previous times, "so that the inhabitants were exposed to the artifices of the priests [who had come from Ireland], who taking advantage of the absence of the minister, and the ignorance of the times, perverted the people". Nonetheless, he appeared to be well-disposed to the people, and noted that Gaelic was the only language commonly spoken there "and I believe the purest dialect of it to be met with in any country", in spite of the entry of English loan words, attributed to "their frequent excursions to Glasgow". Finally, he also noted the difficulties that the remoteness of his parish imposed upon him in the exercise of his duties: "What renders this parish singularly troublesome, is its distance from the seats of Presbytery and Synod", the Presbytery being in North Uist, a distance of 40 miles, together with a ferry of 8 miles, and the Synod being in Glenelg, "on the continent of Scotland", "at a distance of 30 leagues by sea".

Line Annotations:

1: ONG omits the relative pronoun "a" before the verb "thàinig", and this omission is marked with an apostrophe. **3:** The context suggests that the third person singular possessive pronoun "a", "her", precedes "sùilean"; its omission in ONG would be due to the elision caused by the preceding vowel sound, and is marked by an apostrophe. **4:** ONG has "ràinig"; again, the context suggests the third person singular possessive pronoun before "cridhe", and its omission is marked with an apostrophe. **5:** The context suggests that the third person singular possessive pronoun "a", "her", precedes "cèile"; its omission in ONG would be due to the elision caused by the preceding vowel sound, and is marked by an apostrophe. **6:** ONG has "na uigheam"; "na" appears to be a contraction of the preposition "ann" and the third person singular possessive pronoun "a", "his", and this is marked by an apostrophe. **7:** ONG has "Ga"; this is "Ged", and the omission of the final consonant, probably a dialectal feature, is marked. ONG has "na slàinte"; "na" is interpreted as a contraction of the preposition "ann" and the third person singular possessive pronoun "a", "his", and this is marked by an apostrophe. This would cause aspiration of the noun, which is indicated. **8:** ONG has "t-ionadh". ONG has "dhith fèin sud". **9:** ONG has "Bhi"; the omission of the infinitive particle "A" is marked. **10:** ONG has "dhéinibh". **11:** ONG has "O 'n", "bhuanaich". **12:** ONG has "cèillidh", which is interpreted as a dialectical form of "cèile", "spouse". **13:** ONG has "'s na". **14:** ONG has "ga

ghiulan"; "ga" is interpreted as the third person singular masculine verbal noun object pronoun. ONG has "gu bhata"; the aspiration of the noun, in the context, suggests the presence of the third person singular possessive pronoun "a", "his", the omission of which would be due to the elision caused by the preceding vowel sound, and this is marked with an apostrophe. **15:** ONG has "do 'n Dùthaich". **16:** ONG has "fo 'n". ONG has "gu 'n"; both the context and the aspiration of the following noun suggests that this is the preposition "without". ONG has "tionnda"; the standard form would be the genitive of the noun, "tionndaidh", but "tionnda" is preferred. **18:** ONG has "deigh". ONG has "dlùthach", which is preferred here to the standard "dlùthadh", as it reflects pronunciation in the poet's dialect. **19:** ONG omits the particle "A" before the infinitive "Dhol", and this is marked. ONG has "a lega", which is interpreted as "a leigeal". ONG has "san". **20:** ONG has "An", which is interpreted as a contraction of "Ann an", "In", and this is marked with an apostrophe. ONG has "a' Bharra"; the standard form of the place name is "Barradih", but "Barra" is retained, as reflective of the poet's pronunciation. **21:** ONG has ". . . dheth là sin"; the article "an" should precede "là", and its omission, which appears to be due to the demands of rhythm, is marked with an apostrophe. **23:** ONG has "Di-ciadain". **24:** The context suggests that "companach" should be preceded by the third person singular possessive pronoun, "a", "her", and its omission here, due to the elision caused by the preceding vowel, is marked with an apostrophe. **25:** ONG omits the relative pronoun "A" which should precede the verb "Bha", and this is marked with an apostrophe. **26:** ONG has "liathadh", which appears, in the context, to be a verbal noun; the omission of the verbal noun particle "a'", due to the elision caused by the preceding vowel sound, is marked here with an apostrophe. **27:** ONG has "ga iargain"; "ga" is the third person singular masculine verbal noun pronoun object, and this is marked with an apostrophe. **28:** ONG has "Bho na", "san". **29:** Reverse the order of this line and line 30. **30:** Reverse the order of this line and line 29. ONG has "leba". **31:** ONG has "aobhar" and "iundrain". **32:** ONG omits the relative pronoun "a" before the verb "bhiodh", and this is marked. ONG has "gu 'n"; both the context and the aspiration of the following noun suggests that this is the preposition "without". **33:** ONG has "Rith"; this is interpreted as the preterite of the verb "Ruith". This line appears to be a clause, and the omission of the relative pronoun "A" before the verb is marked with an apostrophe. ONG has "orra"; given that the reference seems to be to "luing", a feminine singular noun, this is interpreted as the prepositional pronoun "oirre", "on her". The poet commonly rendered "oirre" as "orra", and while the latter may better reflect pronunciation in the poet's dialect, the standard form is preferred to avoid confusion with the third person plural form of the prepositional pronoun. **34:** ONG has "na stiùraidh". Given the slenderisation, this masculine noun appears to be in the genitive, It is interpreted here as being in a genitive relationship with "fear", rather than the compound noun "fear-eòlais", and therefore itself forming a compound noun "fear-stiùraidh". The form "stiùraidh" is preferred to the standard "stiùiridh" on the basis that this may more accurately reflect pronunciation in the poet's dialect. Given this interpretation, "na" is the conjunction "no". **35:** This line is a clause, and the omission of the relative pronoun "A" before the verb is marked with an apostrophe. ONG has "crainn" for "croinn". **37:** This line is a clause, and the omission of the relative pronoun "A" before the verb is marked. ONG has "gu 'n", "gu 'n"; in both cases, the context suggests that these are the preposition "without". **38:** ONG has "an deighaidh" for "an dèidh". ONG has "spùinneadh". **42:** ONG has "Errach" and "blà". Given the use of the third person singular masculine prepositional pronoun "air", the reference is interpreted to be to "stoc", at line 39, rather than the feminine

noun "craobh" at line 36. **43:** ONG has “mo thràithibh” and “Bealtuinn”; “mo” is the preposition “mu”, rather than the first person singular possessive pronoun. **45:** This line is a clause, and contains a sub-clause, and the omission of the relative pronoun "a" before both verbs is marked with an apostrophe. ONG has "dichuimhn", which McLS interprets as "deuchainn", "test, trial", which may fit the sense of the line better than "di-chuimhn'", in its standard meaning or "forgetfulness". However, it is unlikely that the poet would have so mis-spelled a relatively common word, and according to Dwelly, "di-chuimhne" does have one less common meaning, "oblivion", which would be consistent with the sense of the line. **46:** This line is a clause, and so the omission of the relative pronoun "A" before the verb at the start of the line is marked with an apostrophe. **47:** ONG has "riasan". **48, 49:** ONG repeats line 48 at 49. **50:** ONG has “o ’n”, “sa ’n”. **52:** ONG has “Gu ’n”; the context suggests that this is the preposition “without”. **53:** ONG has “gu ’n”; the context, together with the aspiration of the following noun, suggests that this is the preposition “without”. Given the context, the third person singular feminine possessive pronoun "a", "her", is implied before the noun "guallainn"; its omission, due to the elision caused by the preceding vowel sound, is marked. **54:** ONG has "Na na"; the first is interpreted as the conjunction "No", "Or", and the second is interpreted as a contraction of the preposition "ann", "in", and the third person singular feminine possessive pronoun "a", "her", and this contraction is marked "'na". Given the context, the third person singular feminine possessive pronoun is implied before the noun "cluasaig"; its omission, due to the elision caused by the preceding vowel sound, is marked with an apostrophe. **55:** The omission in ONG of the relative pronoun "a" before the verb "bhuail", due to the elision caused by the preceding vowel sound, is marked. ONG has “so”. **57:** ONG has "ga ghiulan"; "ga" is interpreted as the third person singular masculine verbal noun pronoun object, and this is marked with an apostrophe. ONG has "fearabh". **58:** ONG has “bhi”; the omission of the infinitive particle “a” is marked. **59:** ONG omits the particle "A" before the infinitive, and this is marked. ONG has “sa ’n”. **61:** ONG has "Emunn a Barra"; "a" is interpreted as the preposition "à", "from". **62:** ONG has "lethid". **63:** ONG has “O ’n”. **64:** ONG has "calama". **65:** This line is a clause, and the omission of the relative pronoun "A" before the verb is marked with an apostrophe. **66:** ONG has "cliùteach", "miosal", "ainmail". **68:** ONG has "lenabail". **69:** ONG has “gu ’m”. ONG has "ga dhearbhadh"; "ga" is the third person singular masculine pronoun object of the verbal noun, and this is marked with an apostrophe. **70:** ONG has “’s an”. ONG has "snàmhuich"; the omission of the final "e" in this noun is marked. **72:** ONG has "Na 'm", which is the conditional conjunction "Nam". **73:** ONG has “gu ’n”; the context suggests that this is the preposition “without”. **74:** ONG has “Gu ’m”. **75:** This line is a clause, and the omission of the relative pronoun "A" before the verb is marked with an apostrophe. ONG has "Ceannard" and "aramachd". **76:** ONG has “sa ’n anathadh”, the meaning of “anathadh” is unclear. McLS interprets this as “anfhadh”, “rage, fury”. It may also be a noun form of the adjective “an-athach”, “bold, courageous, fearless”, which is somewhat more consistent with the context. **77:** ONG has "Na 'n cleachd . . ."; "Na 'n" would appear to be the conditional conjunction--"Na an", "Or the" would make less sense in the context--but the verb is not in a conditional form. **78:** ONG has "'S an a shocraich . . ."; given that this appears to be a copula idiom, "an" should be "ann". Given the context, the third person singular masculine possessive pronoun "a", "his", appears to be implied; its omission, due to the elision caused by the preceding vowel, is marked with an apostrophe. **79:** ONG has "Na Mhinisteir"; "Na" appears to be contraction of the preposition "ann", "in",

and the third person singular masculine possessive pronoun "a", "his", and this contraction is marked with an apostrophe. There is no need for the slenderisation of the noun in ONG, although this may be an indication of palatalisation in the dialect. **80:** ONG omits the particle "A" before the infinitive, and this omission is marked with an apostrophe. ONG has "a bhìobuil"; as the noun appears to be in a genitive relationship with the infinitive, the "a" is interpreted as the masculine singular genitive article "a'". **82:** ONG has "Go liuthairt". **83:** ONG has "a 'm binne"; "a 'm" is interpreted as a contraction of the preposition "ann am", "in", and this is indicated with an apostrophe. **84:** ONG omits the superlative particle "a" before "bu", and this omission is marked by an apostrophe. ONG has "chàirdail". **86:** ONG has ". . . sa bha"; "sa" is treated as the contraction of "agus", "'s" followed by the relative pronoun "a". ONG has "faotuinn". **89:** ONG has "d'thàinig". **90:** This line is a clause, and the omission of the relative pronoun "A" before the verb is marked with an apostrophe. ONG has "na 'n", which, given the context, is interpreted as the genitive plural article. The reference is to the closing of the coffin lid by the joiners. **93:** ONG omits the particle "A" before the infinitive, and this is marked. ONG has "do 'n". **94:** ONG has "a' m bàs"; "a' m" is the article, "am". **95:** ONG omits the particle "a" before the infinitive, and this is marked with an apostrophe. ONG has "ga 'n tuire"; "tuire" is a form of the verbal noun "tuireadh", "mourning", and "ga 'n" is the third person plural pronoun object of the verbal noun, "'gan". **97:** The reference to "Tearlach" would appear to be to the subject's son Charles, who was born in 1803 to the subject's second wife, Isabella, the daughter of Charles Maclean of Scour. Charles would have been approximately 9 years of age when his father died. **98:** ONG omits the particle "A" before the infinitive, and this is marked with an apostrophe. ONG has "na mulad"; the noun is not in the genitive case, and so "na" cannot be an article. Given the meaning of the preceding word, "toilinntinn", it is unlikely that "na" is the dialectical form of "no", "or". It would appear that "na" is a contraction of the preposition "ann", "in", and the third person singular feminine possessive pronoun, "a", "her", and this is marked "'na". ONG has "da mhàthair"; "da" would appear to be a contraction of the preposition "do", "to", and the third person singular masculine possessive pronoun "a", "his", and is marked "d' a". **99:** The reference would again be to the subject's son Charles. **100:** The context suggests the presence of the third person singular masculine possessive pronoun, "a", "his", before "sheanair, although the preposition "o" would also cause the aspiration; the preposition would cause the elision of "a", and its omission is marked with an apostrophe. The reference is to Charles Maclean of Scour, the father of the subject's second wife, Isabella. **101:** This is a clause, and the omission of the relative pronoun "A" before the verb is marked with an apostrophe. **102:** ONG has "Sa . . ."; the "S" is a contraction of "Agus", "And", and this is marked, while the "a" is separate, and is a relative pronoun. ONG has "diu". ONG has "ga 'n aindeoin"; "ga 'n" would appear to be the third person plural object pronoun, and this is marked "'gan". **103:** ONG has "Sa . . ."; the "S" is a contraction of "Agus", "And", and this is marked, while the "a" is separate, and is a relative pronoun. ONG has "thuair". "MacCailean" is a reference to Campbell of Argyll--commonly, "MacCailean Mòr"—and although the particular events are unclear, the references appear to be to feats of strength performed by Charles Maclean of Scour. McLS indicates in *The Clan Gillean*, however, that Charles was possessed of extraordinary strength—which is adverted to in lines 104 and 105—and that he was for some time in the army: p. 321. **104:** ONG has "'N uair". ONG has ". . . e chlach-eallaich"; the aspiration of the noun, which is a feminine noun, suggests the presence of the nominative feminine article "a'", and its omission, which would be

due to the elision caused by the preceding vowel, is marked with an apostrophe. **105:** ONG has "fhearthuinn". Dwelly indictes that the word "fearthuinn", a feminine noun, means rain. McLS interprets the word as "fearainn", which, if interpreted as a field, may make more sense, as the reference here seems to be the throwing of a heavy stone some distance as a feat of strength. However, given that a word "fearthainn" exists, the meaning ascribed to it is preferred; although it seems somewhat less appropriate, it does not render the sentence confused. **106:** ONG has "chuis mhulaid". **107:** ONG has "bhi". ONG has "cluinntinn"; this appears to be a verbal noun, and the omission of the verbal noun particle, "a'", would be due to the elision caused by the preceding vowel sound, and its omission is marked with an apostrophe. ONG has "a Muile"; "a" is interpreted as the preposition "à", "from". **108:** ONG has "A mac". The word "A" could be interpreted as the third person singular feminine possessive pronoun, but it is not clear to whom it is referring. It is possible that this is the article "Am", and that the "m" was not written because of the elision that would be caused by the subsequent consonant sound. This interpretation is preferred, and the omission of the "m" is marked with an apostrophe. The identity of the person being referred to is not clear; see the note for line 109 for a discussion. ONG has "o 'n". **109:** ONG has "Mar tha"; the omission of the relative pronoun "a" before the verb is marked with an apostrophe. The Colonel of Scour referred to here would appear to be Archibald, the brother of Isabella, the second wife of the subject, and himself the subject of poem 23. He was appointed lieutenant-colonel in the 79th, or Cameron Highlanders, in 1801: see McLS, *The Clan Gillean*, at p. 321. Thus, the person to whom reference is made in these lines, who appears to have died at about the same time as the subject of this poem, must be a close relation of the Colonel, but would not be the Colonel himself (who died in 1817, five years after the subject of this poem). Archibald had no brother, so the person being referred to must be another close relative, but this is puzzling, as these lines suggest that the person being referred to is a son of Charles Maclean of Scour. **110:** ONG has "Bhi"; the omission of the infinitive particle "A" is marked. ONG has "na shineadh"; "na" is a contraction of the preposition "ann", "in", and the third person singular masculine possessive pronoun "a", "his", and this is marked with an apostrophe. ONG has "air ulean"; "ulean" appears to be the feminine noun "uileann", "elbow", and as it is in the dative, it should be slenderised. **111:** ONG has "An seomar"; "An" appears to be a contraction of the preposition "Ann an", "in", and this is marked with an apostrophe. ONG has "na 'n uinneag"; given the context, "na 'n" is the genitive plural article "nan". **112:** ONG has "d'thig tiomchioll". **114:** ONG has "As an àite so . . ."; "As" is interpreted as the preposition "Às", "Out of, from". **115:** "Sliochd Nèill Bhàin", or the offspring of Neil Bàn, is how the Macleans of Boreray, the family of the subject's first wife, are known. Niall Bàn, from whom they took their name, was the second son of Donald, the first Maclean of Ardgour. The Macleans of Scour, the family of the subject's second wife, descend from Tearlach Mac Nèill Bhàin, who was the third sond of the second Niall Bàn of Boreray, a descendant of the progenitor. The poet's family, the Macleans of Treshnish, also ultimately descend from the Ardgour family. See, generally, McLS, *The Clan Gillean*, at pp. 315-317, 321-322. ONG omits the comparative particle "a" before "bu", and this omission is marked with an apostrophe. **116:** ONG has "Sa"; the "S" is "'S", a contraction of "Agus", "And", and the "a" is the relative pronoun, and should be separated from "'S". ONG has "bàr" for "bàrr" and "urad" for "uiread". **117:** ONG has "sa spionnadh"; "sa" appears to be "'s", a contraction of "agus", "and", and "a" appears to be the article, the standard form of which would be "an", and the omission of the "n" is marked with an apostrophe. **118:**

ONG has "O' n ach"; this would appear to be the preposition "O", "From, since", and the negative conjunction "nach". **119:** ONG has "ni a dhuinne . . ."; the "a" is interpreted as the indefinite pronoun "e", "it". ONG has "bhith"; the omission of the infinitive particle "a" is marked. ONG has "ga' n àireamh"; "ga' n" appears to be the third person plural object pronoun, "'gan". **120:** ONG has "Gu 'm". **121:** ONG has "a chruadail"; as "cruadal" is in a genitive relationship with "Clann Ghilleain", "a" is interpreted as the masculine singular genitive article "a'". **122:** The "'n" in ONG is interpreted as a contraction of "ann an", "in". Duart is the seat of the Clan MacLean. ONG has "na stuaidhabh"; the noun is in a genitive plural form, and the proper form of the genitive article preceding it would be "nan", so that the omission of the final "n" in "nan" is marked with an apostrophe. **123:** The reference to Sir Iain is likely to Sir John MacLean (born c. 1670, died 12 March, 1716), the fourth baronet and nineteenth chief of the Clan MacLean: for a detailed discussion, see McLS, *The Clan Gillean*, ch. IX, pp. 202-236, and p. 253. **124:** ONG has "Leis a ghoraich". The "a" could be interpreted as the third person singular masculine possessive pronoun, with the result that this could be translated as "by his foolishness", the reference being to Sir John. However, it is more likely that the "a" is simply the dative masculine article "a'". If "a" were a possessive pronoun, the preposition would be "Le" rather than "Leis". Furthermore, the passive construction of line 123 suggests that Sir John is the object of the acts being described here, rather than the subject. Indeed, it appears that the events being referred to here and in lines 125 and 126 revolve around the loss by the MacLeans of Duart of their title to Duart, as well as Tiree and other possessions, in 1674, to the Campbells of Argyll. Immediately upon the death of Sir John's father, Sir Allan MacLean, Archibald, the ninth Earl of Argyll procured letters of ejection against the MacLeans of Duart, and this had resulted from the significant debts into which the family had fallen: see McLS, *The Clan Gillean*, at p. 202, *et seq.* Sir Iain was only four years of age at the time, and his remaining estates were managed for some time thereafter by his tutors. The infant Sir John could hardly be faulted for these events. McLS is, however, critical of Sir John's actions in adulthood. In particular, McLS was of the view that Sir John might have won back title to at least some of his hereditary lands had he continued to cultivate King William after the Glorious Revolution. McLS describes how Sir John had in 1692 followed King William to the continent with the intention of joining him there and providing him with military assistance, only to end up joining the exiled James at the Stuart court in exile at St. Germain, in France. McLS wrotethat "[t]his foolish step ruined [Sir John's] prospects. Had he followed King William he might possibly have recovered a part of his estate from the grasp of Argyll": see McLS, *The Clan Gillean*, at 225. It is not clear that the poet shared these views, and it is unlikely these events, but rather the earlier ones leading up to 1674, to which the poet was referring. **125:** ONG has "bho 'n". The reference here would appear to be the loss by the MacLeans of their title to the Duart and other estates, in 1674. **126:** ONG has "Be bhi"; this is the past tense of the copula, "B' e", and the omission of the infinitive particle "a", possibly due to elision, is marked. ONG has "gu 'n"; the context, together with the aspiration of the following noun, suggests that this is the preposition "without".

Maclean Sinclair Versions:

1: Have "Thàinig sgeula bho Uibhist" for this line. **2:** Omit the relative pronoun "A". **3:** Have the standard "gu". **5:** Have "Bha a cèile . . ." and "gun bhruidhinn". **6:** Have "uidhim". **7:** Have the standard "Ged". **8:** This is line 10, and is replaced by "Dh' fhalbh a h-aighear 's a h-éibhneas". **9:** This is line 8, and have "Tha i . . ." for

"'Bhith gu . . .". **10:** This is line 9, and have "-chumha" and "dhéidhinn". **11:** This is line 13, and is replaced by "'S a làmh fhuar aig an eug air". **12:** This is line 12, and add "'S" before "fear" and have "céille" for "cèillidh". **13:** This is line 13, and have ". . . 's na . . ." for "'sna". **14:** Have "'S fir . . ." for "'S iad". **15:** This is line 17, and is replaced by "Bha 'n duin' eireachdail, cliùiteach". **16:** This is line 18, and is replaced by "'Dol 'na bhàta gu dhùthaich". **17:** This is line 15. **18:** This is line 16, and is replaced by "'S i gu teann air a dlùthadh". **19:** Have "'Chum" for "'Dhol" and "'s an" for "'san". **20:** Replace this line with "'S e an suain ás nach dùisg e". **21:** Replace this line with "Gus an gairmear gu cunntas sliochd Adhaimh". **22:** Have "muladach" for "direannach". **23:** Omit the relative pronoun "A" and have "a bhean dheth" for "ise". **24:** Add an apostrophe before "companach", indicating that McLS interprets the third person singular feminine possessive pronoun "a", "her" to be implied here, but elided by the preceding vowel sound. **25:** Have "Am fear" for "'Bha gu". **27:** Have "'S i gu brònach . . ." for "'S gur tric i . . .". **28:** Have "Bho na chuireadh 's an . . ." for "Bhon a chuir iad 'san . . ." and "eudach" for "aodach". **29:** This is line 30. **30:** This is line 29. **31:** Have "Dh' fhàg" for "Chuir". **34:** Have the standard "no" for "na". **35:** Omit the final "e" in "combaiste". **36:** Have the standard "No" for "Na". **38:** Have "gu glan air" for "an dèidh". **39:** Have "'Us an . . ." for "'S a . . .". **40:** Have "A' sìor-chrionadh 'sa . . ." for "Ri crìonadh 's ri . . .". **42:** Add "'S" before "Cha chuir" and have the standard "no" for "na". **44:** Replace this line with "'N uair bha 'n saoghal a' sealltuinn". **45:** This is line 46, and have "Fhuair i 'n deuchainn . . ." for "Thàinig di-chuimhn'". **46:** This is line 47, and add the relative pronoun "A" before "Dh'fhàg" and omit "gu h-" before "éisleanach". **47:** This is line 48, and replace it with "'Dh' fhàg mar choluinn gun cheann i". **48:** This is line 49, and replace it with "Chaill gach lus agus crann dhi an àilleachd". **49:** This is line 45, and replace it with "Maiseach, éibhinn neo-fhallsail". **50:** This is line 53, and replace it with "'S tric na deòir air a gruaidhean". **51:** This is line 50. **52:** This is line 51. **53:** This is line 52. **54:** Replace this line with "'Caoidh an fhir nach robh gruamach". **55:** Omit "seo" and add the relative pronoun "a" before "bhuail". **56:** Have "bho" for "o". **57:** This is line 58, and have "'S e . . ." for "'S ann . . .". **58:** This is line 57, and is replaced by "'S iomadh sùil a bha galach". **59:** Have "'s a' chrùisle" for "'san tunga". **60:** Have "B' e" for "Bha" and "r' a fharraid" for "ri fharraid". **61:** Have "Eamunn". **62:** Omit the third person singular possessive pronoun "a" before "leithid". **63:** Have "Bho na" for "On a". **64:** This is line 66, and have "Bha e . . ." for "Do dh' fhear . . .". **65:** This is line 64, and replace it with "Bha e taitneach 'na sheanachas". **66:** This is line 65, and replace it with "Bha e measail ro-ainmeil". **67:** Have "'S gu 'm bu . . ." for "B' e sin . . ." and "air" for "na". **68:** Have the standard "no" for "na". **69:** Have "Mar is tric rinn e . . ." for "'S gum bu tric e 'ga . . .". **70:** Have "'s a bha 'n" for "'san", and "shnàmhaich'". **71:** Replace this line with "Bha e misneachail meanmnach". **72:** Replace this line with "Bha e cumadail 'dealbhach". **73:** This is line 77, and is replaced with "'Bhith ri sgathadh 'us marbhadh 's na blàraibh". **74:** This is line 73. **75:** This is line 74, and have "Ceannard" for "ceannard", and "armailt" for "armachd". **76:** This is line 75, and have "anfhadh" for "an-athadh". **77:** This is line 76, and have "Nan do chleachd e 'n tùs . . ." and omit "ri blàir e". **79:** This is line 83, and is replaced by "Thugadh seachad ri thìm leis". **80:** This is line 79, and have "Bhìobuill". **82:** This is line 80, and have "'Us a" for "Go". **83:** This is line 84, and is replaced by "'S e ag innse mu 'n Tì sin 'thug gràdh dhuinn". **84:** This is line 82, and have "'S iomadh comhairle dhìleas" for this line. **85:** Have "maith" for "math". **86:** Have "Fhad" for "Fad". **87:** Have "Bha e truacanta daonnach" for this line. **88:** This is line 90, and omit "'S" at the start of this line. **89:** This is line 88, and replace it

with "'Dheanamh feum 'bha e saoithreach". **90:** This is line 89, and replace it with "Bha e iriosal aoidheil". **91:** Replace this line with "Gus na chuireadh 's a chaol-leaba chlàr e". **92:** This is line 95, and replace it with "Cha dean fòghlum no urram". **93:** Replace this line with "'N fhir 'chaidh null air a thuras". **95:** This is line 92, and have ". . . dhuinn 'bhith tuireadh" for "'bhith 'gan tuire". **96:** Replace this line with "Neach a theàrnadh bho 'bhuille". **97:** Have "Guidheam" for "Ach". **99:** Have "'S e bhith cruadalach . . ." for "Gus am fàsadh e . . .". **100:** Have "dhual" for "dual" and "d' a" for "da". **102:** Have ". . . a dh' aindeoin" for "'gan aindeoin". **103:** Have "Mhac-Cailean". **104:** Omit the apostrophe before "chlach-eallaich". **105:** Have "fearann" for "fearthainn". **106:** Replace this line with "Faiceam àrd e an urram". **107:** This is line 108, and replace it with "'Tha 'n diugh, aobhar mo mhulaid". **108:** This is line 111, and replace it with "'S ann a dh' fhalbh 'uainn gu buileach". **109:** This is line 107. **110:** This is line 109, and have "'Se na . . ." for "'Bhith 'na . . .". **111:** This is line 110, and have "Ann an" for "'An". **112:** Replace this with "Sliochd Nèill Bhàin a bha curanta dàicheil", although "Sliochd Nèill Bhàin" does appear at line 115. **113-126:** Omit these lines.

With these changes and omissions, the Maclean Sinclair versions contain 112 lines.

23. Cumha, do Ghilleasbaig MacGilleain, Fear na Sgurra

Tune: "Ged 'tha 'Cheapach 'na fàsach"
No. of lines: 144
Sources: ONG, p. 98, CC1, p. 81, CC2, p. 72, FC, p. 35.
Date: c. 1817; see information in "Context".
Context: The post-script to CC1 indicates that the great grandfather of the subject, Charles MacLean, was a son of MacLean of Boreraig, a branch of the Ardgour family, who had settled in Tiree and had several sons. The subject's grandfather, Archibald, became minister of Kilfinchan in Mull, and Archibald's brother, Donald, settled in Kilmoluaig. The Rev. Archibald MacLean married a daughter of MacLean of Scamadale, and had a large family. His eldest son was Charles, the father of the subject, and he married Catherine, the daughter of MacLean of Muck. The post-script also indicates that the subject was "a mild and benevolent man", "an officer of the most undaunted courage", and "was noted for his immense strength". The introduction in ONG provides: "Cumhadh do Ghilleaspuig MacGilleain, fear na Sgurra, ann san (sic) Ros Mhuileach, bha na Choirneal ann an Réisemaid Fir na 'n Earrachd, le Iain MacGilleain"/"A lament for Archibald MacLean, the Laird of Scour, in the Ross of Mull, who was a Colonel in the Regiment of the Laird of Erracht, by John MacLean". The subject was for some time in the 71st regiment, was then appointed Lieutenant-Colonel of the 79th or Cameron Highlanders in 1801, and served in the West Indies, Holland and Egypt. The Laird of Erracht was Cameron of Erracht, and the reference in ONG to the Regiment of the Laird of Erracht is likely to the 79th Highlanders. Archibald retired from the army in 1807, died in 1817, and was never married. CC2 contains essentially the same information in the post-script. Maclean Sinclair provides the following information about the subject in *The Clan Gillean* at pp. 321-322: "Archibald, the second Maclean of Scour, was a mild and kind-hearted man. He was known as Gilleasbuig na Sgurra, or Archibald of Scour. He was for some time in the 71st regiment. He was appointed lieutenant-colonel in the 79th, or Cameron Highlanders, in 1801. He served in

America, Holland, and Egypt. He was noted for his great strength. He was an officer of the most undaunted courage. He retired from the army in 1807. He died, unmarried, in 1817." Like the Macleans of Treshnish, from whom the poet descended, the Macleans of Scour descended from the Macleans of Ardgour, and so the poet and the subject would be related.

Line Annotations:
1: ONG, *Thuair, àit*; there is no need for the accent, as the adjective here is "ait". **2:** ONG, *a bh' ac; ac* is the third person prepositional pronoun "aca", and the omission of the final vowel, due to elision, is marked. ONG, *ann san Sgùr*; given that "Sgurra" is used elsewhere, the latter form is preferred. **3:** This is a clause, and ONG omits the relative pronoun which should precede the verb *thug*, and this is marked. ONG, *toil-inntinn*. **4:** ONG, *A cheud mhios do 'n*; *A* is the article, "A'". **5:** ONG, *Gu 'n*. The reference to the colonel is to the subject of the poem. **6:** ONG, *deigh, san*. **7:** The relative pronoun "a" is omitted in ONG before the verb *bha*, and this is marked. ONG, *ga acain*; *ga* is the third person singular masculine pronoun object of the verbal noun, and is marked "'ga". **9:** ONG, *dhoibh fèin sud*. **10:** ONG, *bhi, gu 'n*; in the context, this is interpreted as the preposition "without". **11:** ONG, *Bho na, fodh*. **12:** ONG, *chaidh a misneach*; given that *a* does not aspirate the following noun, this suggests that it is the third person singular feminine possessive pronoun, "a", "her". However, there is no obvious referrent for this, given that the other references in the verse are to third person plurals, *a* here is interpreted as a contraction of the third person plural possessive pronoun "am"; the "m" would be elided by the subsequent consonant, and this elision is marked. **13:** ONG, *thuair*. **14:** ONG, *dhoibh turs*; this would appear to be "tùrsa", "sadness", and the omission of the final vowel is marked. **15:** ONG, *'N uair, chlaodhaicheadh*; this would appear to be a conditional form of the verb "cladhaich", "to dig". **16:** ONG, *a chorp*; given the aspiration it causes, *a* would appear to be the third person singular masculine possessive pronoun "a", "his". ONG, *na grunnd*; *na* is a contraction of the preposition "ann", "in", and the third person singular feminine possessive pronoun "a", "her", or here, "its", and is marked "'na". **17:** ONG, *Bha chorp*; the aspiration of the noun implies the presence of the third person singular masculine possessive pronoun, "a", "his", the omission of which is due to elision by the preceding vowel, and this is marked. ONG, *na shìneadh*; *na* is a contraction of the preposition "ann" and the third person singular masculine possessive pronoun "a", "his/its", and this is marked. **18:** ONG, *gu 'n, dhion*. **19:** ONG, *'N uair, sa*. **20:** ONG, *Gu 'm*. **22:** ONG, *cuimhneachain*; this is interpreted as a non-standard verbal noun form of "cuimhneachadh", rather than a noun. **24:** ONG, *Na leab'*; *Na* is a contraction of the preposition "ann" and the third person singular masculine possessive pronoun, "a", "his", and this is marked. ONG, *uaignaich*; the adjective qualifies a feminine noun in the dative case, and should be slenderised, as indicated in ONG, but as "uaignich". **25:** ONG, *Na leab uaignich*; this is the same as line 24, and is marked in the same way. ONG, *sa*. **29:** ONG, *'S an àm*; *an* is interpreted as a contraction of "ann an", "in", and this is marked with an apostrophe. **30:** ONG, *Gàedheil*. ONG, *ri chùl*; the aspiration of the noun is caused by the third person singular masculine possessive pronoun "a", "his", which is omitted here due to the elision caused by the preceding vowel sound, and this is marked. **31:** ONG, *Dol*; this is a verbal noun, and the omission of the verbal noun particle "A'", is marked. **32:** ONG, *a ghnùis*; given the context, *a* is interpreted as the third person singular masculine possessive pronoun, rather than the feminine nominative article "a'". **33:** ONG, *ionnsuich*. **34:** ONG, *chleachduinn, riomh*. **35:**

ONG, *Gu 'n, lèibheadh.* **36:** ONG, *gu 'n.* **37:** ONG, *Dol*; this is a verbal noun, and the omission of the verbal noun particle "A'" is marked with an apostrophe. ONG, *còdhail.* ONG, *a bhaiteail*; the noun is in a genitive relationship, and therefore *a* is interpreted as the genitive singular masculine article "a'". **39:** ONG, *fodh bhrataich*; although the presence of the third person singular masculine possessive pronoun, "a", "his", could be implied, given the reference in line 40, this is unlikely. **40:** ONG, *'s b' e mhiann*; the aspiration of "miann" would be caused by the third person singular masculine possessive pronoun "a", the omission of which would be due to the elision caused by the preceding vowel sound, and this is marked. **41:** ONG, *'N uair, bho 'n.* **44:** ONG, *'N uair, a phìob*; *a* is interpreted as the feminine nominative article "a'", rather than as the third person singular masculine possessive pronoun, which does not fit the context as well. **45:** The Colonel referred to here is the subject of the poem; see "context", above. **46:** ONG, *ga 'm*; this is the third person plural object pronoun of the verbal noun, and is marked "'gam". ONG, *sios.* **47:** ONG, *Dheanamh*; this would appear to be an infinitive, and the omission of the infinitive particle "A" is marked. *gu 'n chearbaich*; *chearbaich* appears to be the noun "cearbachd", and given the context and the aspiration of this noun, *gu 'n* is interpreted as the preposition "without". **48:** ONG, *'S gu 'n ar 'n airm a thoirt dhibh*; *gu 'n* could be interpreted either as a conjunction, or as the preposition "without", and given the context, the latter is preferred. **49:** ONG, *dearsadh.* **50:** ONG, *Cuir*; this appears to be the verbal noun, and the omission of the verbal noun particle "A'" is marked. **52:** ONG, *gu 'n*; given the context and the aspiration of the following noun, this is interpreted as the preposition "without". **54:** ONG, *Tigh'nn*; this is the verbal noun, and the omission of the verbal noun particle "A'" is marked. ONG, *as a bheul*; *as* is interpreted as a form of the preposition "à", "out of", and *a* is interpreted as the dative singular article "a'"; the reference is to words coming from the subject's mouth, but *a* would not be the third person singular masculine possessive pronoun, or the preposition would simply take the form "à"; "às" requires the article. **55:** ONG, *To'irt dhoibh*; this is a verbal noun, and the omission of the verbal noun particle "A'" is marked. ONG, *bhi*; the omission of the infinitive particle "a" is marked. **56:** ONG, *Dhol*; the omission of the infinitive particle "A" is marked. ONG, *a shrachdach*; interpreted as "a shracadh". **57:** Given the context and plural referrents in the preceding lines, "an" is interpreted as the third person plural possessive pronoun rather than as a genitive singular article. **58:** ONG, *Cuir*; the omission of the verbal noun particle "A'" is marked. ONG, *dì*; interpreted as "dìth". **59:** ONG, *'N uair, bhuidhne*; this is clearly a verbal form, and is interpreted as a conditional conjugation of "bhuidhinn", "to win", and the omission of the conditional ending "-adh", demanded by the metre and by the elision potentially caused by "iad", is marked. **61:** ONG, *Gu 'm, dhiu, san.* **62:** ONG, *A sgairte . . . .* This is interpreted as the passive of the verb "sgar", "to sever, disjoin, tear asunder", and the omission of the passive ending "-adh" is marked. **64:** ONG, *Gu 'n*; given the context and the aspiration of the following noun, this is interpreted as the preposition "without". **65:** ONG, *cruadal a ghaisgeadh.* Given the genitive relationship, *a* could be interpreted as the genitive masculine singular article "a'", but given the context, *a* is interpreted as the third person singular masculine possessive pronoun, "his". **66:** ONG, *fodh dhion*; although this preposition would cause aspiration of the noun, the context suggests the presence of the third person singular masculine possessive pronoun "a", "his", and its omission, due to the elision caused by the preceding vowel sound, is marked. **67:** ONG, *am priosanabh*; *am* is interpreted as a contraction of "ann am", "in", and this is marked. **68:** ONG, *an tasgaidh sa*; *an* is interpreted as a contraction

of "ann an", "in", and this is marked. **69:** ONG, *dhiu*. **70:** ONG, *fodh chìs*; although this preposition would cause aspiration of the noun, the context suggests the presence of the third person singular masculine possessive pronoun "a", "his", and its omission, due to the elision caused by the preceding vowel sound, is marked. **72:** ONG, *am bratach*; as this is a feminine noun, *am* must be the third person plural possessive pronoun rather than the article, which would be "a'" and would cause lenition of the noun. ONG, *thòirt*; the omission of the infintive particle "a" is marked. **73:** ONG, *ainmail*. **74:** ONG, *ri linn*; the context suggests the presence of the third person singular possessive pronoun "a", "his", and its omission, due to the elision caused by the preceding vowel, is marked. **76:** ONG, *Dheanamh*; the omission of the infinitive particle "a" is marked. ONG, *do 'n*. **77:** ONG, *Ga 'd, gu 'n mharbhadh*; given the context, *gu 'n* is interpreted as the preposition "without", and although the preposition "gun" would cause aspiration of the noun, the context implies the presence of the third person singular masculine possessive pronoun, "a", "his", and its omission is marked. **78:** ONG, *gu h-annanta chlaoidh*. This line contains a passive construction, and implies the presence of the third person singular masculine possessive pronoun before "chlaoidh", and its omission is marked. The meaning of *annanta* is unclear; an adjective, one possibility is "anamanta", "courageous, bold", and the omission of the mediate vowel is marked. **79:** ONG, *bhi, an cunnart*; *an* appears to be a contraction of "ann an", "in", and this is marked. **80:** ONG, *A bualadh*; this is a verbal noun, and the verbal noun particle is marked accordingly. **81:** ONG, *C' àite, fac*; this is "faca", the dependent preterite form of the verb "faic", and the omission of the final vowel, due to elision caused by the subsequent vowel is marked. **82:** ONG, *ga 'm*; this appears to be "dham", a contraction of the preposition "do", "for", and the relative pronoun "am", rather than the third person plural object pronoun, as the verb is in the conditional tense and is not a verbal noun. **83:** ONG, *a spionnadh*; given the context, the third person singular possessive pronoun "a", "his", would seem to be implied, and its omission, due to the elision caused by the preceding vowel sound, is marked. **84:** ONG, *na . . . na . . .*; in both cases, *na* is interpreted as a contraction of the preposition "ann", "in", and the third person singular masculine possessive pronoun "a", "his", and this is marked. **85:** ONG, *shuarrach, ri shireadh*; the aspiration of the verbal noun suggests the presence of the third person singular masculine possessive pronoun "a", "his", and its omission, due to the elision caused by the preceding vowel sound, is marked. **86:** The relative pronoun "a" is omitted in ONG before the verb "bhiodh", and this is marked. **87:** ONG, *Ga*; this is "Ged", and the omission of the final consonant, probably a dialectal feature, is marked. The relative pronoun "a" is omitted in ONG before the verb "gheibheadh", and this is marked. **89:** ONG, *gu 'n*; given the context, and the aspiration of the following noun, this is interpreted as the preposition "without". **90:** ONG, *na 'm*; given the context, this would appear to be the genitive plural article "nam". **91:** ONG, *liuthairt*. ONG, *bho ghairdean*; although the preposition "bho" would cause aspiration, the context suggests the presence of the third person singular masculine possessive pronoun "a" before the noun, the omission of which would be due to the elision caused by the preceding vowel sound, and this is marked. **93:** Given the apparent genitive relationship between *tàmailt* and *comain*, *na* is interpreted as the feminine singular genitive article rather that a form of "no", "or". **94:** This line is a clause, and the omission of the relative pronoun "A" before the verb is marked. ONG, *na gheall*; given aspiration of the noun "geall", *na* is interpreted as a contraction of the preposition "ann", "in", and the third person singular masculine possessive pronoun "a", and this is marked. **96:** ONG, *bho 'n, e chainnt*; the aspiration of the noun would be caused by the third

person singular masculine possessive pronoun "a", "his", and its omission, due to the elision caused by the preceding vowel sound, is marked. **97:** ONG, *Cha 'n, air a chinneach*; *chinneach* may reflect the pronunciation of the noun "cinneadh", "kindred", in the poet's dialect; *a* could be interpreted as the masculine dative article "a'", but given the context, would appear to be the third person singular possessive pronoun "a", "his". **98:** ONG, *Ga 'd*. The relative pronoun "a" is omitted in ONG before the verb *tha*, and this is marked. **100:** ONG, *s a meud*; given that the noun is not aspirated, *a* would appear to be the masculine nominative article "am", and the omission of the consonant would be due to the elision, and is marked. **102:** ONG, *ga rèir*; *ga* would appear to be a contraction of the preposition "do" and the particle "a" in "a-rèir", and is marked here as "dha". **104:** The omission in ONG of the verbal noun particle "a'" before *toirt*, possibly due to the elision, is marked. **106:** ONG, *ann an cleachda*; *cleachda* would appear to be the noun "cleachdadh", and the omission of the ending "-adh", which may be dialectical, is marked. **107:** The infinitive particle "A" is omitted in ONG, and this is marked. **108:** ONG, *fhear-ghleidht*; the omission of the final vowel in *ghlèidhte* is marked. **109:** ONG, *fodh 'n*. **111:** ONG, *nàmhuid*. **112:** ONG, *As an . . .* ; *As* is the preposition "Às", "Out of/from". ONG, *fèin*. **113:** ONG, *oirn*. **114:** ONG, *'S gu 'm bi*. **115:** ONG, *iundrain, bho 'n*. **116:** ONG, *Gu 'n, do 'n*. **117:** ONG, *Gu 'n, a bhi*; given the context, *Gu 'n* is interpreted as the preposition "without". **118:** ONG, *A sheasamh àite*; the context suggests that the third person singular masculine possessive pronoun is implied before *àite*, and its omission, due to elision, is marked. ONG, *roimh 'n*. **120:** ONG, *roimh bheud*. **121:** ONG omits the relative pronoun "a" before *nì*, and this is marked. **123:** ONG omits the infinitive particle "A" before *Thoirt*, and omits the relative pronoun "a" before *thigeadh*, and both omissions are marked. **124:** ONG, *cuiseamh*; McLS versions interpret this as *cùisibh*, an archaic dative plural form, and this is an appropriate interpretation. ONG, *neo re*; McLS versions interpret *re* as *rèidh*, which is appropriate. **128:** ONG, *na dhèigh*; *na* is a contraction of the preposition "ann", and the third person singular masculine possessive pronoun, and is marked accordingly. **129:** ONG, *Gu 'm, gasda, armailt*. **130:** ONG, *Gaisgail, ainmail*. **131:** ONG, *gu 'n, gu 'n*; in both cases, interpreted as the preposition "gun", "without". **132:** ONG, *Ursann chatha, roimh*. **133:** ONG, *duthchanan ainmail*. **135:** ONG, *gu 'n*; this is interpreted as the preposition "gun", "without". The reference is to the French army, the enemy in the Napoleonic Wars. **136:** ONG, *a call*; this is a verbal noun, and the particle is marked accordingly. **137:** ONG, *Co b urrainn*; the omission of the relative pronoun "a" before the copula is marked. **138:** The omission of the infinitive particle "a" before *thoirt* is marked. **139:** ONG, *Fad sa*. **141:** ONG, *col' ris*. **142:** ONG, *Ann sa chomhraig, iad fein*. **143:** ONG, *Dh' innse*; the context suggests that this should be the conditional form, "Dh'ìnnseadh", and the omission of the ending is marked. ONG, *bho 'n*; *'n* is interpreted here as the third person plural possessive pronoun rather than the article, in reference to those who are attesting to the matters about which the poet is composing. **144:** ONG, *ann am*; *am* is interpreted as a contraction of the preposition "ann" and the first person singular possessive pronoun, and is marked accordingly.

<u>Maclean Sinclair Versions:</u>

1: Replace this line with *'N diugh cha chluinnear ceòl-theudan* [CC2, *ceòl theudan*]. **2:** Replace this line with *No gàire éibhinn 's an Sgùr*. **3:** Replace this with *Laidh* [CC2, *Laigh*] *dubh-bhròn air na crìochan*. **4:** *de 'n* for *don*. **5:** Replace this line with *Shéid an stoirm de* [CC2, *deth*] *na beannaibh*. **6:** This is line 8. CC1, *déigh*. *'s*

an. Line 6 is *'S thuit an darag gun lùb.* **7:** This is the third line in verse 2. Line 7 is *Tha 'n laoch ainmeil bu tlachdmhoire.* **8:** This is the fourth line in verse 2. It is followed by the following four lines, all of which are not in the MSS, which complete verse 2: *Bha e measail 's gach àite,/Bha e àrd ann an cliù;/Bha e uasal 'na nàdar* [CC2, *nàdur*],*/Caoimhneil* [CC2, *Coibhneil*], *bàigheil* [CC2, *bàidheil*], *gun tnù.* These lines are followed by the following verse 3, all of which is not in the MSS: *Tha na saighdearan calma/'S tric 'bha 'g earbsa na* [CC2, *'na*] *iùl/A* [CC2, *A'*] *sior-smaointinn mu chaoimhneas* [CC2, *coibhneas*]*/'S iad gun aoibhneas, gun sùnnd./Tha na bochdain am Muile/'S fiamh a' mhulaid 'nan gnùis;/Tha na dìlleachdain duilich/'S Fear na Sgurra 's an ùir.* **9-16:** This verse is omitted. **17:** This line is omitted. **18:** This is the second line in verse 2. **19:** This is the first line in verse 2. CC1, *'N uair, 's a.* **20-24:** These lines are omitted. **25-32:** This verse is omitted. **33-40:** This is verse 7. **34:** *chleachdadh.* CC1, *d'a.* **35:** Replace this with *A bhi leughadh a* [CC2, *a'*] *ghioraig.* **36:** *'S e nach* for *Na gun.* **37:** *A* [CC2, *A'*] *dol sios do na bhaiteal* [CC2, *baiteil*]. **38:** *thaice* for *thaic, ciad* for *ceud.* **39:** Replace this line with *De dh' fhir* [CC2, *De fhir*] *fhoghainteach* [CC2, *fhoghainnnteach*], *ionnsaichte* [CC2, *ionnsaicht'*]. **40:** Replace this with *De* [CC2, *D'a*] *luchd-dùthcha, 's b' e 'mhiann.* **41-48:** This is verse 8. **41:** *An àm gluasad* [CC2, *gluasaid*] for *Nuair a gluaiste, champa.* **43:** *Alb'* for *Alba.* **44:** CC1, *'N uair.* **46:** *'g am.* **47:** Replace this line with *Ceum air adhart a b' ait leis.* **48:** Replace this line with *Ann an slachdraich* [CC2, *slacraich*] *na strì* [CC2, *strìth*]. **49-56:** This is verse 9. **49:** CC1, *deàrsadh,* CC2, *téine.* **50:** CC1, *'Cur,* CC2, *Cur.* **51:** *No* for *Na.* **54:** CC2, *Tigh'nn. as* for *às.* **55:** *cead dol a shracadh* for *òrdagh 'bhith aca.* **56:** Replace this line with *Leis na glas-lannan giar'.* **57-64:** This verse is omitted. **65-72:** This verse is omitted. **73-80:** This is verse 4. **74:** *r'a linn* for *ri 'linn.* **76:** *do 'n.* **77:** CC1, *Ged-a.* **78:** Replace this line with *Dh' fhàgadh anmhunn* [CC2, *anfhann*] *e 's claoidht'.* **79:** *bhi, an.* **80:** CC1, *'Bualadh,* CC2, *Bualadh* for *A' bualadh.* **81-88:** This is verse 6. **81:** *C' àit' am* for *Caite 'm.* **82:** *Aon da 'm* [CC2, *d'am*] for *A h-aon dham.* **83:** Replace this line with *Co a sheasadh roimh 'n spionnadh.* **84:** Omit *A* before *bha, shlinnein.* CC1, *na, na* for *'na, 'na.* **85:** Replace this line with *Far am biodh e 's an iomairt.* **86:** *e mire* for *bum hire.* **87:** Replace this line with *Thigeadh trom-bhuillean bàsmhor.* **88:** Replace this line with *Bho na* [CC2, *Bho'n*] *ghàirdean nach b' fhann.* **89-96:** This verse is omitted. **97-104:** This is verse 11. **97:** CC1, *Cha 'n.* **98:** *iomad* for *iomadh.* **99:** CC1, *Coirneal,* CC2, *Còirneal.* **100:** *am* for *a'.* **102:** *d'a* for *dha.* **103:** CC1, *dàn* for *dàna.* **104:** CC1, *'Us,* CC2, *Is* for *'S; ann* for *air.* **105:** This is the fifth line in verse 5. *ceannsgalach.* **106-112:** These lines are omitted. **113-116:** These are the first four lines in verse 5. **114:** *gu 'm bi.* CC1, *crùn.* **115:** *call e do 'n rìoghachd* for *ionndrainn bhon Rìoghachd.* **116:** *Gu 'n, do 'n.* **117-120:** These lines are omitted. **121-128:** This is vers 12. **121:** *'n* for *an.* **125:** *bhiodh* for *bhi.* **126:** *no* for *na.* **128:** *'n do sheall* for *na sheall.* **129:** This line is omitted. **130:** This is the sixth line in verse 5. *Bha e sgairteil* for *Gaisgeil, ainmeil.* **131:** This is the seventh line in verse 5. *tioma* for *tiomadh.* **132:** This is the eighth line in verse 5. *nan euchd* for *ro cheud.* **133-136:** These lines are omitted. **137-144:** This is verse 13. **137:** Insert *a* before *b' urrainn*; *làn-eachdraidh* for *a sheanachas.* **138:** Replace this line with *'Thoirt mu thapadh an tréin.* **139:** Omit this line. **140:** Omit this line. **141:** This is the third line in the verse, rather than the fifth. **142:** This is the fourth line in the verse, rather than the sixth. Replace with *Anns na còmhragan geur.* **143:** This is the fifth line in the verse, rather than the seventh, *Dh' innseadh* for *Dh' ìnnse'.* For the seventh line, *Fear a choltais cha 'n* [CC2, *chan*] *fhac' iad.* **144:** This is the

sixth line in the verse, rather than the eighth; CC1, *'eil*, CC2, *eil* for *robh.* For the eighth line, *Air an astar gu léir.*

With these changes and omissions, the Maclean Sinclair versions contain 104 lines.

24. Marbhrann do Chòirneal Iain Camshron an Fhàsaich Fheàrna

Tune: "Latha dhomhs' air a' Chorpaich"
No. of lines: 88
Sources: MG15G/2/2, p. 127, JB, p. 31, CC1, p. 85, CC2, p. 75, FC, p. 44
Date: Given the date of the death of the subject, probably sometime during the summer or perhaps autumn of 1815.
Context: The subject of this song, Colonel John Cameron of Fassifern, was born on 16 August, 1771 and was killed on 16 June, 1815, at the Battle of Quatre Bras, which took place the day before the Battle of Waterloo. The first son of Ewen Cameron, the second laird of Fassifern, and Louisa, the daughter of Duncan Campbell of Barcaldine and Glenure, he was one of the most famous soldiers of his day. The Camerons of Fassifern were one of the senior branches of the clan. The progenitor of the Fassifern family was the subject's grandfather, John Cameron (d. 1785), was the second son, of John Cameron of Lochiel, (c. 1663-1747), the17th chief of the Camerons of Lochiel, and the brother of Donald Cameron of Locheil, "The Gentle Lochiel" (c. 1695-1748), the 19th chief of the Camerons of Lochiel. Unlike "The Gentle Lochiel", John Cameron of Fassifern was not keen on the 1745 Jacobite rising, took no part in it, and unsuccessfully sought to convince his brother to do the same; he was the only member of the family not attainted after the failure of the Rising, and both represented the chief in negotiations with the Government and the military and surreptitiously transmitted money to The Gentle Lochiel's widow, in France. John Cameron of Fassifern was viewed with suspicion, imprisioned three times and was finally banished for a period. The subject's father, Sir Ewen Cameron (1740-1828), was the chief factor and later Trustee of the Locheil estate. He was educated at Aberdeen University with the intention of entering the law, but chose instead to enter the army. His father purchased a commission for him in the 26th Regiment, the Cameronians, in 1793, but he did not serve with them, and instead became a lieutenant in an independent company which later became part of the 93rd Regiment. In 1794, the Marquess of Huntly raise the 92nd Regiment, the Gordon Highlanders, and he offered the subject of the poem a captain's commission, and he recruited about 100 men, most from Lochaber and many from the Lochiel estate. He served with this regiment in many of the campaigns of the day, including in Corsica, the Low Countries and in Egypt. In 1809, he was given command of the 2nd Batallion of the 92nd Regiment, and in 1810, he and his regiment went to Portugal to take part in the Peninsular War under Sir Arthur Wellesley, commander-in-chief of the Allied Army. John Stewart of Ardvorlich made the following comments: "It was in these operations that [John Cameron's] abilities as a soldier, his disregard of danger and fatigue, and his power of leadership were first recognised. The 92nd were engaged in nearly all the great battles of that glorious campaign. They played a particularly courageous part at Fuentes d' Onore, Maya, Arivette, Aire, and the crossing of the river Nive. Letters from his superior officers speak of his valour and ability, and are full of praise for Colonel John and the 92nd." With the end of the Peninsular War in 1814, the subject returned home, intent on retiring, but he was recalled to command

the 92nd in the campaign which ended at Waterloo, and he was killed at the Battle of Quatre Bras, the day before the great battle, leading his men in a charge against the enemy. Stewart of Ardvorlich adds the following: "It is, however, as the 'beau ideal' of an officer and commander that John Cameron should also be remembered. In an age when the common soldier was looked down upon as 'the brutal and licentious soldier'; the riff-raff of the country; mere canon fodder; he took the greatest interest in the welfare of his men, particularly those who came from his native Lochaber. This undoubtedly came from his upbringing in the traditions of the patriarchal chieftain; the father and protector of his people. It was the ideal relationship between officer and man. This feeling existed in all the Highland regiments in those early days, and largely accounts for their superb esprit de corps. Colonel John's letters home bear witness to this camaraderie between officer and man." See John Stewart of Ardvorlich, *The Camerons: A History of Clan Cameron* (Jamieson & Munro: Stirling, 1974), at pp. 217-219, from which the foregoing information and quotes was drawn; see also Alexander MacKenzie, *History of the Camerons; with Genealogies of the Principal Families of the Name* (A. & W. MacKenzie: Inverness, 1884), esp. pp. 281-308 for a fuller account of the life of Colonel John Cameron of Fassifern, who adds at p. 305 that "Colonel Cameron had the reputation of being a very strict, indeed severe, disciplinarian, though most attentive to the welfare of his men in every respect. His love of the music, language and traditions of his home and early youth continued with him to the last." It is a measure of the great respect with which the subject of the poem was held by the British establishment that his father, Ewen Cameron of Fassifern, was created a baronet in recognition of Colonel John Cameron's outstanding services. Deeply suspected in the aftermath of Culloden, the reputation of the Camerons of Fassifern had been completely vindicated within the space of two generations.

Line Annotations:
1: MSS, *La.* Corpach is a village at the north end of Loch Linnhe, in the heart of Cameron country and close to Fassifern. **2:** MSS, *Smi, asdar.* **4:** MSS, *m intinn, go.* **5:** MSS, *Choirnelair, phriosail.* **6:** The relative pronoun "A" is omitted in the MSS before the verb *Tha.* MSS, *na*; this is a contraction of the preposition "ann" and the third person singular masculine possessive pronoun, and is marked. MSS, *san*; this is a contraction of "anns an". **7:** MSS, *Bu mhor onair*; the context implies the presence of the third person singular masculine possessive pronoun "a" before *onair*, and its omission, probably due to elision, is marked. MSS, *do n Righeachd.* **8:** MSS, *bhis*; the relative pronoun "a" is omitted before this verb, and this is marked. **9:** MSS, *da, da chleachdain*; in both cases, *da* is interpreted as a combination of the preposition "do", the vowel in which is elided, and "a", the third person singular masculine possessive pronoun. **10:** In the MSS, this line is inserted by virtue of a note in the margin. MSS, *bhi*; the omission of the infinitive particle "a" is marked. **12:** MSS, *gu m.* MSS, *an*; this is interpreted as a contraction of the prepositional phrase "ann an", and is marked. MSS, *sluaidh.* **13:** MSS, *a chuis*; *a* is interpreted as the nominative singular feminine article "a'". **14:** MSS, *an tsheanachais.* **15:** MSS, *N uair.* **16:** MSS, *Dh fhios*; JB interprets this as "Dh' ionns", a contraction of "A dh' ionnsaidh", which makes sense in the context, and the omission of the particle "A" and "-aidh" is marked. MSS, *talbhanta.* The relative pronoun "a" is omitted in the MSS before *ghluais*, and this is marked. **17:** The relative pronoun "a" is omitted in the MSS before *bha*, and this is marked. **18:** MSS, *lòchi, do dh uaislein.* Strathlochy is a glen of about six miles in length, running into the Great Glen from the north side of Loch

Lochy, and formed part of the estate of Cameron of Locheil: John Stewart of Ardvorlich, *The Camerons: A History of Clan Cameron* (Stirling: The Clan Cameron Association, 1974), p. 95.**19:** MSS, *Ursan chatha, na n comhrag*; *na n* is interpreted as the genitive plural article "nan". **20:** MSS, *Bhi*; the omission of the infinitive particle "A" is marked. MSS, *bhordabh an*; *an* is interpreted as a contraction of the prepositional phrase "ann an", and marked accordingly. **21:** MSS, *S e chuir*; the omission of the relative pronoun "a" before *chuir* is marked. **22:** MSS, *doibh*. **23:** MSS, *reineadh*; JM interprets this as *rinneadh*, which is sensible in the context. MSS, *chiuradh*. **25:** MSS, *Slionmhor, batal*. **26:** The relative pronoun "A" is omitted in the MSS before the verb *Chuir*. MSS, *roi n*. **27:** MSS, *namhuid*. **28:** MSS, *Gan*; this is the third person plural verbal noun object, and is marked accordingly. MSS, *sga*; this is a combination of "'s", a contraction of "agus", and the third person plural verbal noun object "'gan", as in JB, and the omission of the final consonant is dialectal. **29:** MSS, *Siomadh naigheachd, leubhadh*. **30:** MSS, *Tiomachioll, treneid*. **31:** MSS, *Gos*. **32:** MSS, *an pelair*. **33:** MSS, *buile, doruinn*. **34:** The relative pronoun "A" is omitted in the MSS before the verb *Thuit*, and this is marked. MSS, *Coirnelair, ainmeal*. **35:** MSS, *Ga rodh*; *Ga* is a contraction of the preposition "Aig" and the relative pronoun "an", and the omission of the final consonant is dialectal, and is marked accordingly. MSS, *folum*. **36:** MSS, *anabhar*. **37:** MSS, *An am*; *An* is a contraction of the prepositional phrase "Ann an", and is marked accordingly. MSS, *tarruing*. MSS, *an ordan*; *an* is a contraction of the prepositional phrase "ann an", and is marked accordingly. **39:** MSS, *Seasach*; this is a dialectal form of "seasmhach". **40:** MSS, *Striochd*. MSS, *a mharbhadh*; JB, *do mharbhadh*. **43:** MSS, *aobhar a dhucha*. **44:** MSS, *Rinn e chuis*; the lenition of the noun implies the presence of the feminine nominative article "a'", the omission of which, due to elision, is marked. **45:** MSS, *gu lubadh*. **46:** MSS, *Gos, anabhar*. **47:** The relative pronoun which should precede the verb *Rinn* is omitted in the MSS, and this is marked. MSS, *sa n*; this is a contraction of "anns an". **48:** MSS, *Sa*; the context suggests that this is a combination of "'S", a contraction of "Agus", and the relative pronoun "a". MSS, *a Cloinn Chamesroinn*; *a* is interpreted as the preposition "à", "out of". **49:** MSS, *Smor tha*; the omission of the relative pronoun "a" before the verb *tha* is marked. MSS, *diubhail Chinnidh*; both the lenition of *Chinnidh* and the context implies the presence of the third person singular masculine possessive pronoun "a", "his"—this is the interpretation in JB, where "a" is added—and its omission in the MSS version is marked. **50:** MSS, *So i n*; *n* is the article "an", and the omission of the vowel, due to elision, is marked. The MSS omits the relative pronoun "a" before the verb *bha*, and this is marked. **51:** MSS, *innich*. **52:** MSS, *Rinn i mhilleadh*; the aspiration of "milleadh" implies the presence of the third person singular masculine possessive pronoun "a", and its omission, due to elision, is marked. MSS, *far fairge*; JB interprets *far* as *thar*. **53:** The relative pronoun "a" is omitted before the verb *bha*, and this is marked. **54:** MSS, *on dhalbh e*; *dhalbh* is interpreted as "dh' fhalbh", and the omission of the relative pronoun "a" before this verb is marked. **55:** MSS, *an giorrad*; *an* is interpreted as a contraction of the prepositional phrase "ann an". **56:** MSS, *Gun tin tuillidh*; *tin* is interpreted in JB as *tighinn*, which is correct, but the MSS spelling suggests that the medial vowel sound is omitted, and it is therefore spelled as "tigh'nn". MSS, *dh Albinn*. **57:** MSS, *fassa fearna*. **58:** MSS, *da*; this is interpreted as a combination of the preposition "do" and the third person singular masculine possessive pronoun "a", "his". MSS, *leanmhuin*. **59:** MSS, *Bho na*. **60:** MSS, *costri*. **61:** The reference is to King George III (1738-1820). **62:** MSS, *bu storas*; *bu* is interpreted in JB as *b' e*, which , given the context,

appears to be an correct emendation. MSS, *airgiod*. **63:** MSS, *sheobhag*. **64:** MSS, *Fuair*; the omission of the relative pronoun "A" before this verb is marked. MSS, *teacaire, o n*. **65:** MSS, *teacaire*. **66:** The omission of the relative pronoun "A" before the verb *Thug* is marked. MSS, *Cameshron*. **67:** MSS, *Strom, dhruigh, na chairdean*; the aspiration of the noun suggests that *na* is a contraction of the preposition "ann" and the third person singular masculine possessive pronoun "a", and this is marked. **69:** MSS, *Ursan chatha, na m*; given the context, *na m* is interpreted as the genitive plural article. MSS and JB, *blar*; given that the line requires another syllable to conform to the metre, this is interpreted as *blàraibh*. **70:** MSS, *bhi, caileachd*; the latter is interpreted here as "energy". **71:** MSS, *Leis a sud-hichte*; JB, *Leis an suidhichte*. As in JB, *a* in the MSS is interpreted as "an", but the omission of the final consonant, which may be dialectal, is marked. **72:** MSS, *Strichd*; JB interprets this as "'S tric". MSS, *na earbsa*; in the context, *na* is interpreted as a contraction of the preposition "ann" and the third person singular masculine possessive pronoun "a", "his". **73:** MSS, *bo, cheanntart*. **74:** MSS, *A laoch*; *A* is interpreted here as the article "An", and the omission of the final consonant, perhaps a dialectal feature, is marked. MSS, *gasda*. **75:** MSS, *reishamaid*. The reference to *Marcas* is unclear, but it is likely that this is a reference to George Gordon (1770-1838), the 5th Duke of Gordon and the 8th Marquess of Huntly, who raised the 92nd Regiment, the Gordon Highlanders, in 1794, in which the subject served, after Huntly offered him a captain's commission. The subject served with the regiment in Corsica, the Low Countries and in Egypt. **76:** MSS, *tartanabh, ballabhreachd*. **77:** MSS, *mur*; the context suggests that this is *mar*, as in JB. **78:** MSS, *Ga stiuradh*; *Ga* is interpreted as the third person plural verbal noun object, "'Gan", in reference to the regiment the subject led, and the omission of the final consonant, possibly a dialectal feature, is marked. **79:** MSS, *Ga robh*; *Ga* appears to be a contraction of the preposition "Aig", and the relative pronoun "an", and is marked accordingly. The omission of the final consonant, likely a dialectal feature, is marked. **80:** MSS, *Na fhear*; *Na* is a contraction of the preposition "Ann" and the third person singular masculine possessive pronoun. **81:** MSS, *bo mhiasail, Diuchda*. JB, *mhiosal, Diuchda*. The reference is almost certainly to Sir Arthur Wellesley, the 1st Marquess of Wellington, (1769-1852), who waas made 1st Duke of Wellington on 11 May, 1814. The Duke of Wellington commanded the Allied forces during the Peninsular War (in Spain and Portugal) (1808-14), and commanded the Anglo-Allied forces at Waterloo in 1815. He later served as Prime Minister between 1828 and 1830, and again in November and December, 1834. **82:** MSS, *fear a ghiulan*; *a* is interpreted as the third person singular masculine possessive pronoun rather than the genitive article "a'". **83:** MSS, *Ga robh*; *Ga* is interpreted as a contraction of the preposition "Aig" and the relative pronoun "an", "'G an", and the omission of the consonant in "an", likely dialectal, is marked. MSS, *a ghael*. **84:** MSS, *Tighinn a lathair*; *a* is interpreted as a contraction of the prepositional phrase "ann an", and is marked accordingly. *Tighinn* appears to be a verbal noun, and the omission in the MSS of the verbal noun particle "A'" is marked. MSS, *armabh*. **85:** MSS, *stalain, geur*; as *geur* is describing a feminine noun, it should be lenited, as in JB. **86:** MSS, *Sa*; this is interpreted as a combination of "'S", a contraction of "Agus", and the third person singular masculine possessive pronoun, in reference to the subject of the poem. MSS, *treubhach*; as this adjective describes a feminine noun, it should be aspirated, as in JB, *threibheach*. MSS, *na ceanna bhairt*; *na* is a contraction of the preposition "ann" and the third person singular feminine possessive pronoun "a", in reference to *Lann* in line 85, and this contraction is marked. **87:**

MSS, *geillidh*; given the context, this should be the conditional form of the verb "gèill". **89:** MSS, *n duchas*; *n* is the article "an", and the omission of the vowel, due to elision, is marked. The relative pronoun "a" is omitted in the MSS before the past copula *bu*, and this is marked. **90:** MSS, *Bhi*; the omission of the infinitive particle "A" in the MSS is marked. MSS, *ferrail*. **91:** MSS, *Mur*; the context suggests that this is "Mar". The relative pronoun "a" is omitted in the MSS before the verb *bha*, and this is marked. MSS, *on a*. **92:** MSS, *Ann sgach*. **93:** MSS, *dhilib*. MSS, *Bha sin*; JB interprets *sin* as *sinn*, the first person plural personal pronoun, but the context suggests that *sin*, in referenece to the qualities mentioned at lines 89 and 90, is correct. **95:** MSS, *Cha bi choille robh*; *bi* is interpreted as the past/conditional form of the copula, and the aspiration of *choille* implies the presence of the feminine nominative article, the omission of which, likely due to elision, is marked. The context suggests that *robh* should be preceded by the prepositional phrase "ann an", "in which", and its omission, likely for metrical reasons, is also marked. **96:** MSS, *As*; this could be interpreted as a contraction of the preposition "Anns", or the preposition "Às", and given the context, the latter interpretation is preferred. MSS, *a faillein*; *a* is interpreted as the article "am", and the omission of the consonant, likely a dialectal feature, is marked. **98:** MSS, *ainmeal*. Achnacarry is the seat of the Camerons of Locheil. The old house was destroyed by the Government forces after Culloden in 1746, and rebuilding was begun by Donald Cameron of Locheil, the 22nd Chief (1769-1832) in about 1802, under the direction of the architect James Gillespie (later known as James Gillespie Graham). Work on the new house was completed by Donald Cameron, the 23rd Chief (1796-1858), sometime after he resumed work on the house in 1837: See John Stewart of Ardvorlich, *The* Camerons, supra, at pp. 147-8, pp. 155-6. **100:** MSS, *falla*. **101:** The relative pronoun "A" is omitted in the MSS before the verb *Rinn*, and this is marked. **102:** MSS, *mingheal*. **103:** The relative pronoun "A" is omitted in the MSS before the verb *Chaidh*, and this is marked. MSS, *rubadh*; an *e* is inserted in another hand to form *reubadh*. **104:** MSS, *Gos*, *n anail*; *n* is interpreted as the article "an", and the omission of the vowel, likely due to elision, is marked. **105:** MSS, *a lotabh*; *a* is interpreted as the third person singular masculine possessive pronoun, in reference to the subject. **106:** The relative pronoun "a" is omitted in the MSS before the verb *bha*, and this is marked. MSS, *dotarain*, *rish*. **107:** MSS, *deunadh*. **108:** MSS, *Leis a bheum*; *a* is interpreted as the dative article "a'", rather than the third person singular masculine possessive pronoun. MSS, *a bhi gabhi*. **109:** MSS, *Fhuil*; the aspiration of this noun implies the presence of the third person singular masculine possessive pronoun "A", in reference to the subject of the poem, and its omission is marked. MSS, *a silleadh*; this appears to be a verbal noun, and *a* is marked accordingly. MSS, *fo leinidh*; the context suggests the presence of the third person singular masculine possessive pronoun "a", again in reference to the subject, before *leinidh*, and its omission, likely due to elision, is marked. **110:** MSS, *Sgoirt a sgeul*; *a* is interpreted as the article "an", rather than the third person singular masculine possessive pronoun, and the omission of the final consonant, likely a dialectal feature, is marked. MSS, *da*; this appears to be a combination of the preposition "do" and the third person singular masculine possessive pronoun, and is marked accordingly. **111:** MSS, *na eirig*; *na* is interpreted as a contraction of the preposition "ann" and the third person singular masculine possessive pronoun, and is marked accordingly. **112:** MSS, *Ridair*; JB, *Ridir*. **114:** MSS, *t armun*. **115:** MSS, *bhuanaichdeadh*, *uram*. **116:** MSS, *Ann sgach*, *cunart na thar e*. **117:** MSS, *gheibhadh*. **118:** MSS, *Smor*, *na chomaine phaigh e*; *na* is interpreted as a contraction of the preposition "ann" and the third person singular masculine

possessive pronoun, and the final *e* in *chomaine* is interpreted as the relative pronoun "a", which should precede *phaigh*, rather than some ending to the noun. **119:** MSS, *do n.* **121:** MSS, *Siomadh.* **122:** MSS, *deanain sa, n aireabh*; *n* is interpreted as "an", the third person plural possessive pronoun, and the omission of the final consonant, probably a dialectal feature, is marked. **123:** MSS, *Ge, h urain, n inns*; *n* appears to be "an", the third person plural possessive pronoun, in reference to *luaidh* in line 121, and the omission of the vowel, due to elision, is marked. **124:** MSS, *an tra so*; *an* is interpreted as a contraction of the prepositional phrase "ann an", and this is marked. **125:** MSS, *Leubhadh*; this is interpreted as an infinitive form, and the omission of the infinitive particle "A" in the MSS is marked. MSS, *eachdridh na brettanach*; given the context, *na* appears to be the genitive plural article "nam", and the omission of the final consonant, a common dialectal feature, is marked. **126:** This line is inserted along the margin of the MSS. The omission in the MSS of the relative pronoun "a" before *ghleachd* is marked. MSS, *spainich.* This is a reference to the Peninsular War of 1808-1814. **127:** MSS, *Gos, choishin.* **128:** MSS, *Paris*; this is a loanword, and is marked accordingly. This is almost certainly a reference to the ultimate victory over the French, completed at Waterloo in 1815. **129:** MSS, *an san, t sheanchas.* **130:** MSS, *bhi*; the omission of the infinitive particle "a" in the MSS is marked. MSS, *adhmhor.* **131:** MSS, *Ard chonnbun*; in the MSS, an *s* is inserted before the *b* in *chonnbun.* **132:** The infinitive particle "A" is omitted in the MSS before *Dhol*, and this is marked. **133:** MSS, *aigionnach.* **134:** MSS, *Roi, do na Gael.* **135:** MSS, *aig iomachd*; JB interprets this as *ag imeachd.* MSS, *na dheoighin*; JB interprets this as *na dheighidh*; *na* is interpreted as a contraction of the preposition "ann" and the third person singular masculine possessive pronoun "a", and is marked accordingly. For *dheoighin*, see line 158. **136:** MSS, *bann*; this is the copula form *b' ann.* MSS, *claoghara.* **137:** MSS, *a gluasad*; this appears to be a verbal noun, and *a* is marked accordingly. **138:** MSS, *A folum*; *A* is altered to *Air* in the MSS in another hand, and JB retains *Air.* MSS, *lamhaich*; there is no reason for the slenderisation of this masculine noun. **139:** MSS, *Luchd na eiliche cuaiche*; *eiliche* is interpreted as the genitive of "fèile" or "èile", "kilt". **140:** MSS, *Sna suaicheantas*; *Sna* is interpreted as a combination of "'S", a contraction of "Agus", and the genitive plural article "nan", and the omission of the final consonant in the article, a dialectal feature, is marked. **141:** MSS, *bratuichin.* **142:** MSS, *Sam*; this is a contraction of the preposition "Anns" and the the relative pronoun "am". MSS, *fhasich.* **143:** MSS, *nochte, roi n.* **144:** MSS, *Bhodh*; an *i* is inserted in the MSS, in another hand, to form *Bhiodh.* MSS, *an san.* **146:** MSS, *Go dol.* **147:** MSS, *na fedanabh*; given the context, *na* appears to be the genitive plural article "nam", and the omission of the final consonant, a dialectal feature, is marked. **148:** MSS, *sunt, do pharti. pharti* is a loanword, and is accordingly italicised. **149:** MSS, *a t intinn*; *a t* is interpreted as "'ad", a contraction of the preposition "ann" and the second person singular possessive pronoun "do". **150:** MSS, *Gu m, a la sin*; *a* is interpreted as the article "an", and the omission of the consonant, probably a dialectal feature, is marked. **151:** MSS, *Ga nach*; *Ga* is interpreted as "Ged", and the omission of the final consonant, probably a dialectal feature, is marked. **152:** MSS, *Sann, ad gniomh*; *ad* is interpreted as a contraction of the preposition "ann" and the second person singular possessive pronoun "do", and this would require lenition of *gniomh.* MSS, *rodh.* The MSS omits "nach" before *rodh*, and JB adds *nach*, a defensible emendation. **153:** MSS, *dichioll.* **154:** MSS, *armuin.* **155:** MSS, *bhi*; the infinitive particle "a" is omitted in the MSS, and this is marked. MSS, *ghiorrad*; there does not appear to be any reason for lenition. MSS, *m eolas*; *m* is interpreted, in the context, as

a contraction of the preposition "ann" and the first person singular possessive pronoun "mo", and is marked accordingly. **156:** MSS, *n ordan*; *n* is interpreted as a contraction of the prepositional phrase "ann an". **157:** MSS, *shibhlas*; JB interprets this as *shiubhlas*. MSS, *air t aghart*. *t* is a contraction of "do", the second person singular possessive pronoun. **158:** MSS, *As mo dheighin, do n*. **160:** MSS, *Sni, do m gaelic*; *m* appears to be a contraction of the first person singular possessive pronoun "mo", and it would cause aspiration of the noun, as in JB, which has *Ghaelic*.

Maclean Sinclair Versions:

1: CC1, *dhomhs'*, CC2, *dhòmhs'*. **2:** *mu 'n*. **5:** *Chòrneleir*. **6:** CC1, *na* for *'na. fo 'n* for *'san*. **8:** *chuimhn'*. **9:** This line is omitted. **10:** This is the second line in verse 3. *A bhith* for *Gun 'bhith, no* for *na*. **11-16:** This verse is omitted. **17:** This is the first line of verse 2. *'S iomadh cridhe* for *Sin an giùlan*. **18:** Replace this line with *'An strath-Lòchaidh* [CC2, *strath Lòchaidh*] *'s mu 'n cuairt d'a* [CC2, *da*]. This line is followed by two new lines, the third and fourth lines in verse 2, which do not appear in the MSS: *'N uair* [CC2, *Nuair*] *a chàireadh 's a'* [CC2, *'sa*] *'chill e/Anns an tìr bho 'n do ghluais e*. **19:** This is the fifth line in verse 2. *Ursann* for *Ursainn, nam baiteal* for *nan còmhrag*. This line is followed by two new lines, the sixth and seventh lines in verse 2, which do not appear in the MSS: *'Fhuair* [CC2, *Fhuair*] *a chleachdadh ri cruadal,/Fear na léirsinn 's an àraich*. **20:** This is the eighth line in verse 2; *Bha fo 'n chlàr ann an* for *'Bhith fo bhòrdaibh 'an*. This verse is followed by a new verse 3, only the second line of which is in the MSS, at line 10, above. The first line of this new verse 3 is *Anns na blàir cha do chleachd e*. This is followed by line 10, and then the remaining six lines in this new verse 3 are: *'S e air ceann nam fear còdha,/Feachd a' Ghòrdanaich uasail;/Chìte fonn air ag éiridh* [CC2, *éirigh*]*/'S fuaim nan geur-lann mu 'n cuairt da,/Fead nam peileirean millteach/Bhiodh mar bhinn-cheòl d'a chluasan*. **21-24:** These lines are omitted. **25-32:** This verse is omitted. **33-40:** This verse is omitted. **41-48:** This is verse 4. **43:** Replace this line with *'N aghaidh* Ney *us* [CC2, *is*] *fhir bhrasa*. The reference here is to Michel Ney (1769-1815), Marshal of France and commander of Napoleon's forces in the Waterloo campaign. **44:** CC1, *'ghaisge* , CC2, *ghaisge*, for *'chùis sin*. **45:** Replace this line with *Cha do dh' aom 's cha do lùb e*. **46:** CC1, *Ged-a*, CC2, *Ged a* for *Gus na*; *anabarr* for *anabharr*. **47:** Replace this line with *Sheas e daingeann, mar charraig*. **48:** Replace this line with *Roimh thuinn ghreannach na fairge*. **49-56:** This verse is omitted. **57-64:** This verse is omitted. **65-72:** This verse is omitted. **73-80:** This verse is omitted. **81-82:** These lines are omitted. **83:** This is the first line in verse 5, and reads *Spiorad àrd an fhìor-Ghàidheil*. **84-88:** These lines are omitted. **89:** This line is omitted. **90:** This is the second line in verse 5, and reads *Bha 's an* [CC2, *'san*] *àrmunn dheas fhearail*. **91-92:** These lines are omitted. **93:** This is the third line in verse 5, and reads *Thàinig sin air mar dhìleib*. **94:** This is the fourth line in verse 5; *chinntich* for *chinnteach*. The remaining four lines of verse 5, none of which are in the MSS, are: *Mar dhian-theine 'feadh* [CC2, *feadh*] *asbhuain/Bhiodh e bras anns a' charraid,/'S tric a thugadh àrd-chliù dha/Leis an Diùchda* [CC2, *Diùca*] *mhòr, allail*. These four lines are followed by the first verse of a new verse 6, which is *B'e an laoch e r'a fhaicinn*. **95-96:** These lines are omitted. **97-102:** These lines are omitted. **103:** This is the eighth line in verse 10; *gu gàbhaidh* for *le mì-rùin*. **104:** This line is omitted. **105-112:** This verse is omitted. **113-120:** This verse is omitted. **121-124:** These lines are omitted. **125:** This is the first line of verse 11, and reads *Leughaibh eachdraidh nam Breat'nach*. **126:** This is split to form two lines in verse 11; the first part of this line is the first part of the second line of verse

11, which reads *Mar a gleachd* [CC2, *gleac*] *iad gun fhàilinn*, and the final part of this line is the final part of the fourth line in verse 11, which reads *'S thall am fearann nan Spàinneach.* The third line in verse 11 does not appear in the MSS, and is the following: *Ann an Eiphit nan carragh.* **127:** This is the fifth line in verse 11, and *'S* is inserted before *Gus.* **128:** This is the sixth line in verse 11, and it is followed by two lines which do not appear in the MSS: *'S chi 'ur* [CC2, *bhur*] *sùil gur h-i 'n fhìrinn/Bha mi 'g innse* [CC2, *innseadh*] *nam* [CC2, *'nam*] *dhàn dhuibh.* **129-131:** These lines are omitted. **132:** This is the second line in verse 6; CC2, *Dol. Ghleachd* [CC2, *ghleac*] *ris an* for *a chogadh ri.* **133:** This is the third line in verse 6; *fiadhaich* for *shrianach.* **134:** This is the fourth line in verse 6; *ciad* for *ceud.* **135-136:** These lines are omitted. **137:** This is the first verse in verse 7, and reads *'S iad a ghluaiseadh gu h-òrdail.* This line is followed by two lines, the second and third lines in verse 7, which are not in the MSS: *'Sios* [CC2, *Sios*] *do chòmhdhail nan sàr laoch;/Bhiodh iad calma mar leòghainn.* **138:** This is the fourth line in verse 7, and reads *'S iad làn fhòghluimt' ri làmhach.* It is followed by the following four lines, which complete verse 7, and which do not appear in the MSS: *Anns a' bhlàir bhiodh iad euchdach/Leis na geur-lannan sàthach,/Bhiodh an nàimhdean a tuiteam* [CC2, *a' tuiteam*]*,/Cha bhiodh furtachd o'n bhàs daibh.* This new verse 7 is then followed by a new verse 8, which also does not appear in the MSS, and which is: *Ann am* Brussels *chaidh innseadh/Gu 'n robh 'n t-Iompaire mòrail,/'Tigh'nn* [CC2, *Tigh'nn*] *air aghaidh le miltean/'Chur* [CC2, *Chur*] *fo chìs na Roinn-Eòrpa:/Leum an gaisgeach 'na éideadh/'Chur* [CC2, *Chur*] *a threun-laoich an òrdagh* [CC2, *òrdugh*]*,/'S anam uile na lasair/Gu bhi mach anns a' chòmhdhail.* **139:** This is the fifth line in verse 6; *nam féileachan* [CC2, *féilidhean*] for *an èilidhe.* **140:** This line is omitted. **141:** This is the seventh line in verse 6, and reads *Luchd nam brataichean buadhmhor.* **142:** This is the eighth line in verse 6; *'S am* for *'Sam, cluaran* for *cluarain.* **143-144:** These lines are omitted. **145-152:** This is verse 9. **145:** CC1, *'N uair. e a* for *thu do.* **146:** CC1, *'dhol*, CC2, *dhol* for *dol.* **147:** *nam feadannan* [CC2, *feadanan*] for *na' feadannaibh.* **148:** CC1, *A' cur*, CC2, *Ag cur* for *Ri cur*; *phàirtidh* for phàrti. **149:** *e roimhe 'na* for *thu romhad 'ad.* **150:** *Gu 'm*; *ac' an là* for *leat a' latha.* **151:** This line reads *'S ged nach fac' e aig crìch i.* **152:** CC1, *na*, CC2, *'na*, for *'ad.* This line is followed by a new verse 10, the first seven lines of which do not appear in the MSS, and are: *Bha na Frangaich na'n* [CC2, *'nan*] *éiginn* [CC2, *éigin*]*,/'S iad a' géilleadh* [CC2, *ag géilleadh*] *'s gach àite;/Bha na Gàidheil le iolach/'Dol* [CC2, *Dol*] *'g an iomain o'n àraich,/'N uair* [CC2, *Nuair*] *a thuit e o'* [CC2, *o*] *dhìollaid,/'S a lann lìobharra làmh-ris,/Bhrùchd a bheatha tròimh 'chreuchdan.* The eighth line in this new verse 10 is line 103. **153-160:** This verse is omitted.

With these changes and omissions, the Maclean Sinclair versions contain 88 lines.

25. Deoch-Slàinte, Mhic 'Ic Alastair, Ghlinne-Garaidh

Tune: None
No. of lines: 32
Sources: ONG, p. 247, CC1, p. 89, CC2, p. 78, FC, p. 38.
Date: Likely late 1815; see information in "Context".

Context: The subject of this poem, Colonel Alasdair Ranaldson Macdonell, "Alasdair Fiadhaich", the 15th Chief of the Macdonells of Glengarry, whose chiefs were known as "Mac Mhic Alasdair" in the Gaelic tradition, was born on 15 September, 1773, succeeded his father as chief on 11 July, 1788, and died on 17 January, 1828. For a thorough account of Col. Macdonell, see Brian D. Osborne, *The Last of the Chiefs: Alasdair Ranaldson Macdonell of Glengarry 1773-1828* (Argyll Publishing: Glendaruel, 2001), the source of much of the following, unless otherwise indicated. For a thorough, though more concise account, see Norman H. MacDonald, *The Clan Ranald of Knoydart & Glengarry: A History of the MacDonalds or MacDonells of Glengarry* (Forrest, Hepburn & McDonald: Edinburgh, 1979), at ch. 10, pp. 132-157. Col. Macdonell remains a controversial figure. On the one hand, he carefully cultivated the image of himself as a traditional Highland chieftain, and was given to considerable displays of hospitality very much in the old tradition. He was memorialised in full Highland regalia in Henry Raeburn's famous portrait, made in about 1812. He also made a point of attracting and supporting Gaelic artists. For example, Macdonell had a hand in the selection in 1815 of Ewen MacLachlan, the distinguished Gaelic poet and librarian of King's College, Aberdeen, by the Society of True Highlanders, of which Macdonell was a founding member, as the Society's Gaelic Secretary; he had also keenly promoted MacLachlan, ultimately unsuccessfully, for the post of classical master at the Inverness Royal Academy in 1818/1819. For biographical information on Ewen MacLachlan, see John MacKenzie, ed., *Sar-Obair nam Bard Gaelach: The Beauties of Gaelic Poetry and Lives of the Highland Bards* (John Grant: Edinburgh, 1907, as well as several earlier editions), at p. 348, *et seq*. Macdonell retained a personal piper, as well as a household bard, the blind poet Allan MacDougall, "Ailean Dall", "Blind Allan" (c. 1750-1828), a native of Glencoe, who was renowned as both a poet and as a fiddler, and to whom Macdonell had provided a comfortable cottage and croft near Macdonell's residence, near Invergarry, by Loch Oich, shortly after the publication in 1798 of a collection of MacDougall's poetry, *Orain Ghaidhealach: le Ailein Dughallach fear ciuil an Ionbhar Lochaidh, maille ri Co'-chruinneachadh oran id shan le Ughdairibh eile*. For biographical information on MacDougall, see MacKenzie, *Sar-Obair* (1907), at p. 323 *et seq*, and Ronald Black, ed., *An Lasair: Anthology of 18th Century Scottish Gaelic Verse* (Birlinn: Edinburgh, 2001), at pp. 517-518. On the other hand, Col. Macdonell presided over a very substantial depopulation of his Glengarry estates, and although the process had started under his father, Duncan, he continued it, apparently with enthusiasm, and he had substantially converted his estates to sheep runs by the 1820s: see Osborne, *The Last of the Chiefs*, especially ch. 9. Ronald Black, with some justice, has characterised Col. MacDonell as "one of the greatest hypocrites of this hypocritical era [the late 18th, early 19th century]" for busily "raising his people's rents to levels which they could not afford while ostentatiously strutting the part of an old-style Highland chieftain": Black, *An Lasair*, at p. 517.

This is one of three compositions by John MacLean in praise of Col. MacDonell; see also poem 26 and poem 30, composed on Macdonell's death in 1828. MacDougall also composed several praise poems, including "Oran do Mhac 'ic Alasdair Ghlinne-Garaidh", which appears in *Sar-Obair* (1907) at p. 326. Given Macdonell's estate practices, the outpouring of such poetry, particularly from poets such as these who seem to be keenly aware and sharply critical of the changes taking place in the Highlands generally, suggests that Macdonell was a charismatic individual who had a powerful effect on the artists with whom he came into contact.

Indeed, in his "Òran do na Cìobairibh Gallda", MacDougall makes a strong statement against the introduction of lowland shepherds and, by implication, the practice of turning estates over to sheep which was taking place on the Glengarry estates. Yet, at the same time, he seems to absolve Col. Macdonell and his family of blame. See Donald E. Meek, *Tuath is Tighearna/Tenants and Landlords* (Scottish Gaelic Texts Society: Edinburgh, 1995), at pp. 47-53 for the poem, commentary and further biographical information on both MacDougall and Col. Macdonell. The favourable view in which Col. Macdonell was held is also evident in oral traditions collected in the west Highlands by Hector MacDougall of Coll, editor of CC2, and preserved therein in the end-notes to this poem, at p. 285. One account involves an English ground officer, "Am Bàillidh Sasunnnach", who was apparently in Macdonell's employ for a short time, and who was very harsh to the tenantry and had taken to shooting their goats for sport. This awoke the anger of a tenant, identified as "Alasdair Mòr a' Bhòcain" ("Great Alasdair of the Ghost"), and Alasdair Mòr let the Englishman known that he would flatten him if he did not leave Glengarry without delay. The Englishman went to Macdonell and let him know of these serious threats and of how Alasdair intended to kill him if the Englishman was not gone by the next day. Macdonell reportedly said "Matà, ma thubhairt Alasdair Mòr sin, ni se e gun teagamh, agus gu cinnteach is fearr dhuit falbh—is fearr dhuit falbh direach cho luath 's is urrainn dhuit, oir an rud a their Alasdair ni se e." ("Well, if Alasdair Mòr said that, he will do it without doubt, and it would certainly be best for you to leave—to leave as quickly as possible, because whatever Alasdair says, he does"). The Englishman received no further support, and left. Another oral tradition reported there involves a man identified as "Alasdair Dubh na Biodaig", with whom Macdonell was out fishing on Loch Oich. Macdonell almost fell overboard, and Alasdair Dubh mocked Macdonell, saying "Bu mhath ann thu, is cha b' fhearr as thu" ("It was well you are in, and you'd not be better out". This could be interpreted in two ways, and Macdonell, taking it the wrong way, reportedly grabbed Alasdair Dubh, lifted him up, and submersed him in the lake until he was almost drowned. When Alasdair Dubh was brought back into the boat, he checked his pockets, and shouted out "Mo leabhar, mo leabhar; mo bhean 's mo chlann is mo chòig ceud punnd Sasunnach!" ("My book, my book; my wife and my children and my five hundred English pounds!"), suggesting that this is how much money he had with him and that he lost it in the lake. It is reported that Macdonell paid Alasdair Dubh the five hundred pounds, even though he knew very well that Alasdair Dubh did not have that sum, nor anything close to it, in his worldly possessions.

MacDougall also recounts some very interesting oral traditions he heard in both the west Highlands and in Tiree and Coll concerning the background to this particular poem: CC2 at pp. 283-284. MacDougall reports that it is said that this poem did not please the Laird of Coll at all; he did not like it that John MacLean had composed this sort of praise poem for Macdonell of Glengarry and that lines such as line 18 ("Gur e Rìgh nan Gàidheal uile"/"He is the King of all the Gaels") and lines 29 and 30 ("Chan eil coimeas do Ghleann Garaidh/'S d' a chuid Gàidheal"/"There is no equal to Glengarry/And his Gaels") put Macdonell of Glengarry ahead of the Laird of Coll himself. MacDougall reports that it was often said amongst the people of Caolas, Tiree, when MacDougall's father was a young man (reports that MacDougall himself had heard from old people since then) that it was because of this disagreement between John MacLean and the Laird of Coll, even though they did not fall out with each other completely, that the poet began thinking of giving up his position as "The Poet to the Laird of Coll" and leaving for America. MacDougall notes the line "gur

sleamhainn an leac aig an dorsaibh" ("slippery is the stone at their [i.e. the nobles'] doorstep") in the poem "Òran eadar Iain MacGilleain agus an Coirneal Friseal" (also known as "Seann Albainn agus Albainn Ùr"), poem 29, and that his father said that this poem was the "slipperiness" to which the poet referred.

MacDougall notes that there are two traditions as to when and where the present poem was made. He reports that it is the tradition in Glengarry that Macdonell and his people were on the way to Glenfinnan, Moidart, to the dedication of the monument erected there by Alexander MacDonald of Glenaladale in memory of Prince Charles Edward Stuart. The Glenfinnan monument was erected in 1815, suggesting that the events described, and the poem, date from that year (see The National Trust for Scotland website: www.nts.org.uk). It is said that the poet was in this area at that very time, and at Baile na Maighe in Strathlochy, Lochaber, he and Macdonell's company happened upon each other. Macdonell of Glengarry knew the poet, and he stopped where they met. He welcomed the poet warmly and the next thing he did was to produce some whisky; the bottle went round the party and when it was passed to the poet by Macdonell of Glengarry himself, the poet spontaneously composed and gave this poem, the "toast". MacDougall reports that there is another tradition of these events in Coll and Tiree. There was a gathering being held in a particular place—MacDougall says that it was not reported in the oral tradition where, but he says that it may have been at the very dinner held in Glenfinnan to commerate the completion of the Glenfinnan monument, noted above—and many of the nobles had gathered. There were clan chiefs from all over, and Macdonell of Glengarry and the Laird of Coll were amongst them. As was customary, many of their retainers were present, and John Maclean was present in the retinue of the Laird of Coll (referred to by MacDougall by his traditional patronymic of "Mac Iain Abraich"; MacLean of Coll was also known by "Mac Mhic Iain"). After the nobles had gone into the room where the dinner was being held, the Laird of Coll himself entered, but left John MacLean waiting outside. As MacDougall says, perhaps this was wholly appropriate, but as Macdonell of Glengarry was even slower in going in, he noticed that the poet had been left outside. At that point, Macdonell of Glengarry grabbed the poet under the arm and took him into the dining hall, as if the poet were his equal in status. It was at the table in the dining room, and after they had been seated, that Macdonell had offered the poet the drinking-shell ("an t-slige") and to which the poet responded by offering this poem as a toast. Apparently the Laird of Coll took the high praise which the poet had offered to "Alexander of the Glens", Macdonell of Glengarry, instead of himself very badly indeed, especially since the two chiefs were named Alexander, and as the tale was told to MacDougall, the Laird of Coll turned to John MacLean, and with a little haughtiness obvious in his face, said to him: "Iain, Iain, ciod a rinn thu orm a nis; Carson nach deanadh tu rann mar sud dhòmhsa?" ("John, John, what have you done to me now; Why would you not compose a verse like that for me?"). "Cha laigheadh e ort" ("It would not suit you") was the poet's response, as his own pride and haughtiness had been awakened just the same by the way that his own chieftain had left him outside waiting, and that it was Macdonell of Glengarry who had brought him in: CC2, pp. 283-284. MacDougall concludes as follows, at p. 284: "Is e sin na caochladh dhòighean air an robh eachdraidh an "t-sleamhnachaidh" so air innseadh, is mar a bha e 'na aobhar air a' Bhàrd a thogail ris a' Chuan an Iar is air "a' Choille Ghruamaich" taobh eile an t-sàile, le chùl ris "a' chomunn chùirteil" a bha cho dlùth d' a chridhe is cho "cridheil sunndach," mar a thubhairt e féin e." ("Those are the different ways in which the history of this "slipperiness" were told, and of how it was the reason for the poet taking to the

Atlantic and going to "the Gloomy Forest" [see poem 28] on the other side of the sea, turning his back to "the courtly company" that was so dear to his heart and that was so "merry and cheerful," as he himself said.")

Line Annotations:
2: ONG, *na 'n*; this is the genitive plural article "nan". ONG, *consbunn*. **4:** ONG, *roi*. **5:** The relative pronoun "A", which should precede the verb, is omitted in ONG, and this is marked. **6:** ONG, *dhùchas*; the aspiration of this noun implies the presence of the third person singular masculine possessive pronoun, "a", "his", and its omission in ONG, probably due to elision, is marked. **7:** ONG, *na làimh*; *na* is a contraction of "ann a", "in his", and this is marked. **8:** ONG, *Da*; this is interpreted as a contraction of the preposition "Do" and the third person singular masculine possessive pronoun "a". ONG, *aobhar ghioraig*; the slenderisation of "giorag", a feminine noun, suggests the genitive singular, while the aspiration suggests the genitive plural. A possible explanation is that the third person singular masculine possessive pronoun, "a", which would cause aspiration, is implied. The better interpretation, though, would be that this should be a genitive singular, "gioraig". **9:** ONG, *spionadh*, *foidh*. While this preposition would cause aspiration of the noun, it is likely, given the context, that the third person singular masculine possessive pronoun is implied here, and its omission, which would be caused by elision, is marked. **10:** ONG, *fhearg*; the aspiration of this noun implies the presence of the third person singular possessive pronoun "a", and its omission, probably due to the elision, is marked. ONG, *na spiorad*; *na* is a contraction of "ann a", "in his", and this is marked. **11:** ONG, *na dheann*; *na* is a contraction of "ann a", "in his", and this is marked. **12:** The aspiration of the noun "fuil" in ONG implies the presence of the third person singular masculine possessive pronoun, "a", and its omission, which is likely due to elision, is marked. ONG, *ga call*; *ga* would appear to be the third person singular feminine verbal noun object, and this is marked. **14:** ONG, *am fraoch*; *am* appears, given the context, to be a contraction of "ann am", "in", and this is marked. **16:** ONG, *as gach taobh*; *as* would appear to be a contraction of "anns", and this is marked with an apostrophe. ONG, *dhaoine*, and the aspiration implies the presence of the third person singular masculine possessive pronoun, "a", the omission of which, probably due to elision, is marked. ONG, *tionnal*; this appear to be a verbal noun, and the omission of the verbal noun particle "a'", probably due to the elision, is marked. **17:** ONG, *Faoduidh*, *ghratinn*; the omission of the infinitive particle "a", which is due to elision, is marked. **18:** ONG, *na 'n*, which is the genitive plural article "nan". **19:** ONG, *Ghleann Garraidh*. **20:** ONG, *lionte dh' urram*; the insertion of the particle "dh" implies the presence of the preposition "a" or "de", both of which would mean in this context "of", and this omission is marked. **21:** ONG, *Na 'n*; this is the conditional conjunction "Nan". ONG, *na 'n carraid*; while *na 'n* could be the genitive plural article "nan", it is interpreted here as "no an", "or the". **22:** ONG, *Bhiodh mid*; this is the first person plural of the conditional, "Bhiomaid". **23:** ONG, *Fodh*. **24:** ONG, *Alaba*, *bo*. **25:** ONG, *Nis bho 'n*; this should be preceded by the particle "A-", and its omission is marked. The omission of the relative pronoun "a" in ONG before the verb *tha* is marked. ONG, *air Ceannard*; *air* would appear to be the first person plural possessive pronoun "ar", rather than the preposition "air", "on", which is the interpretation given by McLS. **26:** ONG, *Reachd mhor ladair*. **27:** The aspiration of the noun "sinnsireabh" may be caused by the preceding preposition, *bho*, but given the context, the third person singular masculine possessive pronoun, "a", is implied, and its omission, which would be due to elision, is marked. **28:** ONG, *mor a*

b' àbhaist; given the context, *mor* is more likely a misspelling of "mar", "as", rather than the adjective "mòr", "great". This is the interpretation given in McLS versions. **29:** ONG, *Ghleann Garraidh.* **30:** ONG, *da chuid Gaedheal*; *da* is probably a contraction of the prepostion "do", here "of", and "a", "his". *Gaedheal* is in a genitive relationship with "cuid", and should either be slenderised, if singular, or aspirated, if plural. It is probable, given the context, that the plural is intended, and therefore it is aspirated here; this is also the interpretation given in McLS versions. **31:** ONG, *Bho na, Fiunn Mac Cuthail.* Fionn Mac Cumhaill is the central figure in the "Fionn Cycle", one of the three groups of Old Irish mythological prose tales and which belongs, in its developed form, to the twelth century, although it certainly has older elements. Fionn was the leader of the Fianna, a band of elite warriors whose members were chosen by rigorous ordeals of strength and valour and whose conduct was controlled by strict rules and codes. The Fianna were pledged to support the High King of Ireland against any invaders. Thus, Fionn Mac Cumhaill is the model of Gaelic martial abilities and values, *par excellence*. See, for example, Miranda Jane Green, *Celtic Myths* (British Museum Press: London, 1993), at pp. 9-10, and 20 for a useful short introduction. Tales from the "Fionn Cycle", or "Fenian Tales", were very popular in the Scottish Gaelic tradition, and excellent versions have been recorded as late as the 1970s and 1980s as far afield as in Gaelic settlements in Canada: see, for example, Joe Neil MacNeil, *Sgeul gu Latha/Tales Until Dawn* (McGill-Queen's: Kingston and Montreal, 1987). There is strong evidence for a considerable and impressive survival of Fenian Tales in Argyllshire, including in the poet's native Tiree, from the nineteenth century: see, for example, John Gregorson Campbell, ed., *Waifs and Strays of Celtic Tradition, Argyllshire Series--No. IV: The Fians; or, Stories, Poems, and Traditions of Fionn and his Warrior Band* (David Nutt: London, 1891). Campbell was the minister of Tiree, and had been there for about thirty-five years when this collection was published; substantial information in this collection was gleaned from Tiree informants.

Maclean Sinclair Versions:

1: *slàint', ghlinnich.* **3:** *smiorail.* **4:** Insert "'S" at the start of this line. **6:** Omit "'S" at the start of this line. **9:** *mhala.* **11:** Insert "'S" at the start of this line. **12:** Insert "'S" at the start of this line. **13:** *chàireas.* **15:** *no.* **18:** *Gur h-e, uil'.* **19:** *siobhalt', Ghleann-Gairidh.* **21:** *no.* **22:** *Bhiodhmaid.* **24:** *Gàidheal.* **27:**"*shinnsreadh.* **29:** *Ghleann-Gairidh.* **32:** Change this line to *'S a laoich àghmhor.* MacDougall notes in the end-note to this poem in CC2, at p. 283, that it is the original in ONG which the old people of his district, and the old people he met in Glengarry, still remembered, rather than the McLS version.

With these changes and omissions, the Maclean Sinclair versions contain 32 lines.

26. Òran Molaidh do dh'Alastair MacDhòmhnaill, Tighearn Ghlinne-Garaidh

Tune: "'S tìm dhomh dùsgadh à suain".
No. of lines: 168

Sources: ONG, p. 248, CC1, p. 90, CC2, p. 79 (on p. 83, there is another version of the same song, as it was known in Glengarry itself ("An t-òran molaidh ceudna, mar a bha e aca an Gleann-garadh"), and is similar to the version in ONG), FC, p. 39.
Date: Unertain, though from internal references, certainly after 1814 (Waterloo) and 1818, and likely after the preceding song.
Context: None of the sources provide any additional information as to the context in which this poem was composed. Given that it does not appear in the manuscript that John MacLean compiled himself while in Scotland, MG15G/2/1, and that it is the second last poem in ONG, at the very end of the book, and separated from all of the rest of his own compositions, which come at the front of the book, it is possible that the poem was composed shortly before ONG went to the printers, and was included as a later addition, and if this is the case, it would suggest a composition in perhaps 1817 or 1818. For more on the relationship between John MacLean and Alastair MacDonell, Chief of Glengarry, see the discussion of the context to poem 25. If the oral tradition is to be believed, the poet, like many of his contemporaries, came under the spell of Glengarry, likely around 1815, and the poet's affection for Glengarry is obvious from this poem. The reference at line 5 of the poem may imply that it was composed in thanks for some favour provided to the poet, perhaps of a financial nature, although this is far from clear.

Line Annotations:
1: ONG, *tiom, a suain*; *a* is interpreted as "à", "out of, from". **2:** ONG, *sealltuin, mo 'n cuairt*. **4:** ONG, *gu 'n*; interpreted as the preposition "gun", "without". ONG, *'s an*; interpreted as a contraction of "anns an". **6:** ONG, *Gleanna Garraidh*. **7:** The particle "A-" is omitted in ONG before *Nis*, and this is marked. ONG, *g' urachadh*; *g'* is interpreted as the verbal noun particle "ag", and the omission of the vowel, due to elision, is marked. **8:** ONG, *Na 'm*; this is the conditional conjunction "Nam". **9:** ONG, *Ann a*; *a* is interprested here as the article "am", and the omission of the consonant, probably a dialectal feature, is marked. **10:** ONG, *da reir*; *da* is interpreted as a combination of the preposition "do", the omission of the vowel in which is due to elision, and the third person possessive pronoun "a", and this is marked accordingly. **12:** ONG, *fhir fheill*; *fheill* is interpreted as the genitive form of the adjective "fial". **13:** ONG, *Ga robh*; *Ga* is interpreted as a combination of the preposition "Aig", and the relative pronoun "an", and the omission of the vowels in the former and the consonant in the latter, probably dialectal features, is marked. ONG, *duchas*. **14:** ONG, *Bhi*; the omission of the infinitive particle "A" is marked. ONG, *trein*. **15:** ONG, *an, an*; in both cases, *an* is interpreted as a contraction of the prepositional phrase "ann an", and is marked accordingly. **18:** ONG, *seasbhach*. **20:** ONG, *a direadh*; this is interpreted as a verbal noun, and is marked accordingly. ONG, *na bheachd*; *na* is interpreted as a contraction of the preposition "ann" and the third person singular masculine possessive pronoun "a", and is marked accordingly. **21:** ONG, *Rioghal, a mac Gaedheil*; the meaning of *a* is unclear, but it may be the nominative article "am", and the omission of the final consonant, caused by elision, is marked. **23:** This line is a clause, and the omission in ONG of the relative pronoun "A" before *Choisinn* is marked. **24:** ONG, *Ge be*. The relative pronoun "a" is omitted before the verb *dhùisgeadh*, and this is marked. **25:** ONG, *Cha bo*. **26:** ONG, *a chuis*; *a* appears to be the feminine nominative article "a'". **27:** ONG, *na marbh*; given the context, *na* is probably the genitive plural article "nam", and the omission of the final consonant, probably a dialectal feature, is marked. **28:** In ONG, *thigh'nn* appears to be an infinitive, and the omission of the infinitive particle "a" is

marked. ONG, *h-airm laimh*. **29:** ONG, *stalinn*. **31:** ONG, *'N uair, bho d' sge*. **33:** ONG, *S fhuil*; the aspiration of *fuil* implies the presence of the third person singular masculine possessive pronoun, the omission of which is marked. ONG, *a bruchdadh*; this is a verbal noun, and *a* is marked accordingly. **35:** ONG, *siochainnt*. **36:** ONG, *Ge be thairgeadh*; the aspiration of *tairgeadh* implies the presence of the third person singular masculine possessive pronoun, the omission of which, probably due to elision, is marked. **37:** ONG, *Leomhan*. **39:** ONG, *thuair, fholum*; the lenition of *folum* implies the presence of the third person singular masculine possessive pronoun "a", the omission of which is marked. **42:** ONG, *chonnsuich*. **43:** ONG, *Marcaich sunndach, na steud*; *na* is the genitive plural article "nan", and the omission of the final consonant, a dialectal feature, is marked. **45:** ONG, *na leum*; *na* is a contraction of the preposition "ann" and the third person singular masculine possessive pronoun, and is marked accordingly. **46:** ONG, *Fodh chomnanda*; the aspiration of the noun may be caused by the preposition alone, but given the context, is is probable that the third person singular masculine possessive pronoun, "a", referring to the subject of the poem, is implied, and its omission, due to elision, is marked. **47:** ONG, *namhuid*. **48:** ONG, *Ge d*. **49:** The relative pronoun "a", which should precede the verb *bhiodh*, is omitted in ONG, and this is marked. **50:** ONG, *bhi*; the omission of the infinitive particle "a" is marked. ONG, *sealg*; given the context, this is a verbal noun, and the omission of the verbal noun particle "a'", probably due to elision, is marked. **51:** ONG, *Ann a frith*; *a* appears to be the nominative article "am", and the omission of the consonant, probably a dialectal feature, is marked. ONG, *na 'n*; given the context, in which *damh* is in a genitive relationship with *frith*, this is the genitive plural article "nan". **52:** ONG, *'N uair*. **53:** ONG, *na 'n*; given the context, this appears to be a contraction of the preposition "ann", "in", and the third person plural possessive pronoun "an", "their", and is marked accordingly. **54:** ONG, *mhiol-choin, na n lorg*; *na n* appears to be a contraction of the preposition "ann", "in" and the third person plural possessive pronoun "an", "their", and is marked accordingly. **55:** ONG, *stuchd bheannan*. **56:** ONG, *Freagradh dlu*; *Freagradh* appears to be a verbal noun, and the omission of the verbal noun particle "A'" is marked. **57:** ONG, *'N uair*. The relative pronoun "a" is omitted before the verb form *chruinnicheadh*. **58:** ONG, *Ma d' thiomchioll*; *Ma* is the preposition "Mu". **59:** ONG, *Be*. **60:** ONG, *Leoghan*. **61:** ONG, *taragheal*. **62:** ONG, *na m buagh*; given the context, *na m* appears to be the genitive plural article "nam". **65:** The omission in ONG of the relative pronoun "A" which should precede the verb *Rachadh* is marked. ONG, *san*; this is a contraction of the prepositional phrase "anns an", and is marked accordingly. **66:** ONG, *duchas, bo dual*. The omission in ONG of the relative pronoun "a" before the copula *bo* is marked. **67:** ONG, *Bhi ceansallach*; the omission of the infinitive particle "A" in ONG is marked. **70:** ONG, *do shluadh Gaedhlach*. **71:** ONG, *roimh 'n*. **72:** ONG, *Ga 'n*; this is the third person plural verbal noun object, "'Gan". ONG, *sior bhrosnachadh*. **74:** The omission of the relative pronoun "A" before the verb *Bhiodh* is marked. ONG, *na 'n*; given the context, this is the genitive plural article "nan". **75:** ONG, *'N uair*. **76:** ONG, *Aig a bhrataich*; *a* is interpreted as the third person singular masculine possessive pronoun, in reference to the subject of the poem, rather than as a dative article "a'". **78:** ONG, *cholgaradh ghleusd*. **80:** ONG, *anafhann sa*; *sa* is interpreted as a contraction of the prepositional phrase "anns a'", and is marked accordingly. **81:** ONG, *ceann armailt*. ONG, *ga reir*; *ga* is interpreted here as a contraction of the preposition "do" and the third person singular masculine possessive pronoun "a", and is marked "dha". **82:** ONG, *na 'n*; given the context, this is interpreted as the genitive plural article "nan". **83:** The omission in ONG of

the relative pronoun "A" before the verb *Chuireadh* is marked. **84:** ONG, *na 'n*; given the context, this is interpreted as the genitive plural article "nan". ONG, *lamhuichean*. **86:** The reference is to the Battle of Waterloo, fought on June 18, 1815, which resulted in victory for the British and Allied forces over the French army of Napoleon Bonaparte. **87:** ONG, *'N uair*, *Diùchd*. The reference would be to the Duke of Wellington, who, with the Prussian general Gebhard von Blücher. For more information on the Duke of Wellington, see line 81, poem 24. Maclean Sinclair notes the following in a footnote to this line: "In his letter giving an account of the battle of Waterloo, the Duke of Wellington says:—"I must particularly mention the 28th, 42nd, 76th, and 92nd regiments, and the battalion of Hanoverians." These are the only corps he notices by name." See CC1, p. 93, CC2, p. 81. The subject of the poem did not have a particularly notable military career, and certainly was not himself in active service at Waterloo, although Highland regiments did perform admirably in the battle and in the campaigns of the Napoleonic War, and undoubtedly many men from the Glengarry estates acquitted themselves honourably. **88:** ONG, *Gu robh*; *Gu* is the conjunction "Gun", and the omission of the final consonant, probably dialectal, is marked. ONG, *na n*; this appears to be a contraction of the preposition "ann", "in", and the third person plural possessive pronoun "an", and is marked accordingly. **89:** ONG, *an cuil*; *an* is a contraction of the prepositional phrase "ann an". **90:** ONG, *siochainnt*, *do 'n*. **91:** ONG, *cair deas dhoibh*. **95:** ONG, *armuinn*. **96:** ONG, *Dol*; the context suggests that this should be the infinitive form of the verb, "Dhol", and the omission of the infinitive particle "A" is marked. ONG, *a lathair*; *a* appears to be a contraction of the prepositional phrase "ann an", and this is marked. **97:** ONG, *na 'n*; this appears to be a contraction of the preposition "ann" and the third person plural possessive pronoun "an", and this is marked accordingly. **99:** ONG, *Slionmhor*, *a bheil*; *a* appears to be a contraction of the prepositional phrase "ann am", "in which", and is marked accordingly. **100:** ONG, *so nis*; the omission of the particle "a-" before *nis* is marked. **101:** ONG, *graite*; this appears to be the verbal noun "gràitinn", and the omission of the verbal noun particle "a'", likely due to elision, is marked, as is the omission of the final consonant cluster in the verbal noun itself, perhaps a dialectal feature. **102:** ONG, *Domhnullach*. **103:** ONG, *sa sheasas*; *sa* is a combination of "'s", a contraction of "agus", and the relative pronoun "a", and is marked accordingly. **104:** ONG, *na chaidh as*; the omission of the relative pronoun "a" before the verb is marked, and *as* is interpreted as the preposition "às". **105:** ONG, *'N uair*, *'n deise Gaedhlach*; *deise* is a feminine noun, and so the adjective should be aspirated. The description the poet gives in these lines bears a striking resemblance to Henry Raeburn's famous portrait of Glengarry, which he painted in 1812. **106:** ONG, *Bonnaid dhughorm*, *air fhalt*; the aspiration of the noun implies the presence of the third person singular masculine possessive pronoun "a", and its omission, possibly due to elision, is marked. **107:** ONG, *Breachdan*. **108:** ONG, *na 'm pleat*; given the context, *na 'm* appears to be the genitive plural article "nam". **109:** ONG, *d' theid*, *air a bhac*; given the context, *a* is interpreted as the third person singular masculine possessive pronoun, rather than the dative article "a'". **110:** ONG, *na 'm*; given the context, this appears to be the genitive plural article "nam". ONG, *breachd*. **111:** ONG, *gasd*. **112:** ONG, *sporran*, *as m bu*; given the context, *as* is interpreted as the preposition "às", "out of, from", rather than as a contraction of "anns", "in", and *m* is the relative pronoun "am", and the omission of the vowel is marked. **114:** ONG, *na laimh dheis*; *na* is interpreted as a contraction of the preposition "ann" and the third person singular masculine possessive pronoun, and is marked accordingly. **115:** ONG, *fear aobhair*; given the context, the third person

singular masculine possessive pronoun "a" is arguably implied before *aobhair*, and its omission, possibly due to elision, is marked. **116:** ONG, *foluimte*. **117:** ONG, *Ge be*. The relative pronoun "a" which should precede the verb *thoisicheadh* is omitted in ONG, and this is marked. **118:** ONG, *caonnag*; this is a feminine noun in the dative case, and should be slenderised. ONG, *na 'n*; in the context, *na* is the conjunction "no", "or", and *'n* is interpreted as a contraction of the prepositional phrase "ann an". **119:** ONG, *bo smaointin*. **120:** ONG, *Thuair*. **121:** The relative pronoun "a", which should precede the verb *Tha*, is omitted in ONG, and this is marked. **122:** The relative pronoun "a" which should precede the verb *thig* is omitted in ONG, and this is marked. ONG, *na dheigh*; *na* is a contraction of the preposition "ann" and the third person singular masculine possessive pronoun "a", "his". **123:** The relative pronoun "A" which should precede *Tha* is omitted in ONG, and this is marked. ONG, *Domhnuill*. MacDonell claimed the headship of Clan Donald and entered into litigation and prolonged lobbying—ultimately unsuccessful—to win recognition as the chief of the entire clan. See Brian D. Osborne, *The Last of the Chiefs*, pp. 206-18. The poet's claim here that all of Clan Donald is loyal to Glengarry could be interpreted as helpful propaganda, designed to reinforce MacDonell's claims, at least in the court of Gaelic public opinion. **124:** ONG, *doibh*. **126:** The particle "a-" which should precede *mach* is omitted in ONG, and this is marked. ONG, *fein, dhiu*. **127:** ONG, *na chuirt*; *na* is a contraction of the preposition "ann" and the third person singular masculine possessive pronoun. **129:** The omission in ONG of the relative pronoun "A" before *Chuir* is marked. ONG, *na 'n*; given the context, this is the genitive plural article "nan". **130:** ONG, *a nuas doibh*. **131:** ONG, *gu 'n*; given the context, this is the preposition "gun", "without", rather than a conjunction. ONG, *'s na*; given the context, this is interpreted as a contraction of "anns na", rather than a contraction of "agus", with the plural article "na", as the ONG marking implies, and is marked accordingly. **132:** ONG, *Dol ma n cuirt*; *Dol* appears to be a verbal noun, and the omission of the verbal noun article "A'" is marked. ONG, *aig a bhuird*; *a* is interpreted as the third person singular masculine possessive pronoun rather than the dative article "a'". **133:** ONG, *Ann sa 'n talladh*. **134:** ONG, *na 'n dos re*; given the context, *na 'n* appears to be the genitive plural article "nan". **136:** ONG, *'N uair*. **137:** ONG, *a feadain*; *a* appears to be the third person singular feminine possessive pronoun, referring to the bagpipe, at line 134. ONG, *ga reir*; *ga* is interpreted as a contraction of the preposition "do" and the third person singular possessive pronoun "a", and is marked "dha". **139:** ONG, *'S an am*; *an* is interpreted as a contraction of the prepositional phrase "ann an", and is marked accordingly. ONG, *do 'n*. **140:** ONG, *fathram*. **141:** ONG, *feur*; the context suggests that this is not the noun "feur", "grass", but the adjective "fiar", "unjust". **143:** ONG, *le bheul*; the aspiration of the noun implies the presence of the third person singular masculine possessive pronoun, and its omission, probably due to elision, is marked. **144:** ONG, *'n geill*; this is interpreted as "an cèill", the spelling in ONG representing the eclipsis which occurs in the poet's dialect, and the omission of the vowel in "an", probably due to elision, is marked. **145:** ONG, *coinnibh, ri cheil*. **146:** ONG, *da bheus*; *da* is interpreted as the third person singular masculine prepositional pronoun of "do", "dha", and the lenition of the noun is attributed to the presence of the third person singular masculine possessive pronoun, the omission of which, caused by elision, is marked. **147:** ONG, *bho na, pairt de leam*. **148:** The omission of the particle "a-" before *nis* is marked. **149:** ONG, *oillanta*. **150:** ONG, *M'a me thrachd am ghniomh*. *M' a* is interpreted as the conjunction "Ma", "If". *me thrachd* is interpreted as "mì-thràchd". *am* is a contraction of the preposition "ann"

and the first person singular possessive pronoun "mo", and is marked accordingly. **152:** ONG, *Bho 'n tha*; the omission of the relative pronoun "a" before the verb is marked. ONG, *eachdri, ga 'm dhith*; *ga 'm* is interpreted as a contraction of the preposition "aig" and the first person singular possessive pronoun "mo", and is marked accordingly. **153:** ONG, *siol Chuinn*. The reference appears to be to "Conn Cétchathach", "Conn Ceud-Chathach", or Conn of the One Hundred Battles, a legendary High King of Ireland, from whom the Clan Donald claimed descent: see, for example, Rev. A. MacDonald and Rev. A. MacDonald, *The Clan Donald, Vol. I* (Inverness: The Northern Counties Publishing Company, Ltd., 1896), pp. 30-5, who note that the tradition as to the descent of the MacDonalds from Conn of the One Hundred Battles "has undoubtedly been for ages the living belief of the Clan, and without very strong evidence to the contrary, we are not disposed to surrender it", and that "[t]he tradition of its descent from Conn has certainly impressed the imagination of the race and inspired many of its singers". See, also, Donald J. MacDonald of Castleton, *Clan Donald* (Loanhead, Midlothian: MacDonald Publishers, 1978), at pp. 7-8. In his note at the end of this poem, however, Maclean Sinclair dismissed such claims in these emphatic terms: "The Macdonalds are descended from Somhairle Mor Mac Gille-Bride, a brave warrior who ruled over the greater part of Argyll-shire, and the Western Coast of Inverness-shire. The statement that Somhairle was descended from Conn Ceud-Chathach, a king of Ireland who is said to have reigned about the year 125 is an unfounded fable." He then goes on to trace MacDonald origins back to Somhairle. See CC1, pp. 95-6, and CC2, p. 88. **154:** The relative pronoun "a" is omitted before the verb *bha*, and this is marked. ONG, *doibh*. **156:** ONG, *'s aisaig, mo 'n cuairt*. **157:** ONG, *Tosta a Choirneil*; *a* is interpreted as the genitive masculine singular article. ONG, *is uaisle*; *is* is the comparative particle *as*. **158:** ONG, *Da bheil*; *Da* is interpreted as a contraction of the preposition "Do", and the relative pronoun "a", and is rendered "Dha". **160:** ONG, *An Ceanna Cinnidh*. The relative pronoun "a" which should precede the verb *tha* is omitted in ONG, and this is marked. **162:** ONG, *a chaochlas, fein*. **164:** ONG, *dol*; this is a verbal noun, and the omission of the verbal noun particle "a'" is marked. **165:** ONG, *Gu robh*; *Gu* is the conjunction "Gun", and the omission of the final consonant, probably a dialectal feature, is marked. ONG, *na dheigh*; *na* is interpreted as a contraction of the preposition "ann" and the third person singular masculine possessive pronoun, and is marked accordingly. **166:** The relative pronoun "A" which should precede the dependent form of the verb *Bhios* is omitted in ONG, and this is marked. **167:** ONG, *Gahbail fasgath*; *Gabhail* is a verbal noun, and the omission of the verbal noun particle "A'" in ONG is marked. *fasgath* is a dialectal form of "fasgadh", and is left. **168:** ONG, *Ionmhor Gharridh gu 'n*; given the lenition of the subsequent noun, and given the context, *gu 'n* is interpreted as the preposition "gun", "without". ONG, *failineach*.

Maclean Sinclair Versions:

1: *á* for *à*. **2:** *mu 'n*. **3:** *dhi-chuimhne*. **4:** This line is omitted. **5:** This is line 4. It is followed by a new line 5, which is not in ONG, which is: *'S e laoch cliùiteach nam buadh*. **6:** CC1, *Gleanna-Gairidh*, CC2, *Gleanna-Garadh*; *Thuath*. **7:** *Tha 'n diugh* for *'Nis 'tha*. CC1, *càilleachd*. **8:** CC1, *N'am*, CC2, *Na'm* for *Nam*. **9:** This is line 10, and reads *Ann am briathran deas réidh*. **10:** This is line 9; *Agus m'* for *'S ann an*; *d'a* for *d' a*. **11:** Replace this line with *Bhiodh gu siùbhlach mo bheul*. **12:** *A' seinn* for *Air*; *fhir-fhéil*. **13:** *Dha* for *Dha' robh*. **14:** *A bhi* for *'Bhith*. **15:** Replace this line with *'S iomadh ni 'tha 'cur* [CC2, *tha cur*] *tlachd*. **16:** This is line 18, which

reads *'Thoirt gu ùmhlachd d'a reachd.* Replace line 16 with *Air an uachdaran ghasd'.* **17:** *'S a bheil* for *Ann an.* **18:** This line is omitted. **19:** This line is omitted. **20:** This is line 19; *Tha e uasal* for *Iad a' dìreadh.* This is followed by a new line 20, which is not in ONG, which is: *Cha 'n 'eil* [CC2, *Chan eil*] *crìneachd air faisg.* **21:** CC1, *gur-a*, CC2, *gur a*; *am* for *a'.* **23:** This is line 27, and is reworked as *'S iomadh àit' 's a bheil ainm.* It is followed by a new line 28, which is not in ONG, and which is: *Air an laoch ghuineach chalm' àrdanach.* **24:** *b'e* for *b' e*; *dha* for *dhuit.* **25:** This is line 23; *a chalg* for *do cholg.* **26:** This is line 25; *a dhànachd* for *a' chùis ud.* **27:** This is line 26; *Chùirte* for *'S thèid, cunntas nam* for *cunntais na'.* **28:** This line is omitted. **29-35:** This verse is omitted. **36-42:** This verse is omitted. **43-49:** There are small elements of these lines in a new verse 5 which, apart from these small elements, does not resemble anything in ONG. This new verse 5 is as follows: *Gur-a sunndach* [CC2, *Gur a sùnndach*] *a ghleus/'S e na* [CC2, *'na*] *dhiollaid le 'shréin* [CC2, *shréin*]*,/Bhiodh each seang nan dlùth-cheum/Ealamh, fuaimear, 'na leum,/'S uile neart ann am feum/Mar chu* [CC2, *chù*] *luath a' ruith féidh:/'S e 'bhi* [CC2, *bhi*] *'buadhach 's an réis 's àbhaist da.* **50-56:** This is verse 6. **50:** *Leis* for *Leat*, *bhi.* **51:** *am* for *a'.* **52:** *'N uair* [CC2, *Nuair*] *a chìt'* for *Nuair x'chìte.* **53:** *a* for *do*, *nan* for *'nan.* **54:** *a* for *do.* **55:** Insert *'S* before *Bhiodh*; CC1, *stùchd-.* **56:** CC1, *'Freagairt*, CC2, *Freagairt*, for *'Freagradh*; *dha* for *dhuit.* **57-63:** This is verse 7. **57:** CC1, *'N uair*; *a* for *do.* **58:** This line reads *Mu 'thuimchioll* [CC2, *thimchioll*] *air raon.* **59:** *B'e* for *B' e*, *a* for *do.* **60:** CC1, *us, us* for *is, is.* **61:** CC1, *Bradal. tarrgheal* for *tarragheal.* CC1, *us.* **62:** *làmh-dhearg.* **63:** *éireadh* for *tionndadh, nàmhaideach.* **64-70:** This is verse 8. This is the second line in the verse (i.e. line 65); *Do cheann-* for *Le ceann-.* **65:** This is the fifth line in the verse (i.e. line 68); *'S a dhol* for *Rachadh, 's an* for *'san.* **66:** This is the first line in the verse (i.e. line 64); *h-e* for *e*, *bu* for *'bu*, omit *dha.* **67:** *Ach àrd mòralach* for *'Bhith ceannsalach.* **68:** This is the third line in the verse (i.e. line 66); *Gun 'bhi* [CC2, *bhi*] for *Cha b' ann.* **70:** *mile de* for *mile do.* **71-77:** This is verse 9. **71:** This is the sixth line in the verse (i.e. line 76), and it reads *Bhiodh an gluasad bho x'n champ.* **72:** This line is omitted. **73:** This is the second line in the verse (i.e. line 72); *Nach biodh* for *Cha b' ann*, *no* for *na.* **74:** This is the first line in the verse (i.e. line 71); *B' iad sin* for *'Bhiodh.* **75:** This is the third line in the verse (i.e. line 73); CC1, *'N uair.* **76:** This is the fourth line in the verse (i.e. line 74). **77:** CC1, *'us.* **78-84:** This is verse 10. **78:** This line is omitted. **79:** This is the fifth line in the verse (i.e. line 81); *Tha iad meanmnach* for *Bheachdail, mheanmnach.* This line is followed by two new lines, the sixth and seventh lines in the verse, which are not in ONG, and which are: *Mar fheachd leoghann a leum* [CC2, *a' leum*]*/Am measg chaorach air réidh fàsachail.* **80:** This is the second line in the verse (i.e. line 79) and is almost totally reworked as *Tha 'toirt dearbhaidh 's gach streup.* This line is followed by two new lines, the third and fourth lines in the verse, which are not in ONG, and which are: *A bhi 'shiol* [CC2, *shiol*] *nam fear treun/A bha cliùiteach 's an Fhéinn.* **81:** This line is omitted. **82:** This is the first line of the verse (i.e. line 78); *garbh-chrìoch, géill.* **83-84:** These lines are omitted. **85-98:** These two verses are verses 11 and 12, but the two verses are significantly rearranged so that most of the lines in the second set of verses in ONG are verse 11, and most of the lines in the first set of verses in ONG are verse 12. **85:** This line is omitted. **86:** This is the first line in verse 11. It is followed by a line, the second line in verse 11, which does not appear in ONG, and is *Chaidh am feuchainn gu'n cùl.* **87:** This resembles the fourth line in verse 12, which reads *Thugadh sgeul leis an Diùchd* [CC2, *Diùc*]. **88:** This is the third line in verse 12, which was reworked as *Air an cruadal 's an tùrn.* **89:** This is the fifth line in verse

12; *an* for *'an*. **90:** This is the sixth line in verse 12; *'S ghléidh* for *Ghlèidh, do 'n* for *don*, CC1, *churn*. **91:** This is the seventh line in verse 12; *urram 'us* [CC2, *is*] for *ònair is*. **92:** This is the fifth line in verse 11; insert *'S* before *Sheas*. **93:** This is the sixth line in verse 11. **94:** This is the first line in verse 12; *r' a chunntas* [CC2, *chùnntas*] for *ri chunntais*. **95:** This is the third line in verse 12; *àrmuinn*. **96:** This is the third line in verse 11; CC1, *'Dol*, CC2, *Dol*; *an* for *a'*. **97:** This is the fourth line in verse 11; *gealtachd nan* [CC2, *'nan*] for *sgàthaich 'nan*. **98:** This is the seventh and last line in verse 11. **99-105:** There are small elements of these lines in a new verse 13 which, apart from these small elements, does not resemble anything in ONG. This new verse 13 is as follows: *Anns a' bhlàir dheante gnìomh/Leis an treun-laoch gun fhiamh/Bhiodh e colgarra dian/Mar shean-tigeir o 'n t-sliabh.—/C'àit'* [CC2, *C'àit*] *am faicear measg chiad/Fear cho dìreach, deas, briagh'/'S e air éideadh mar thriath Gàidhealach*. **106-112:** This is verse 14. **106:** *Boineid dhùghorm, fhalt* for *'fhalt*. **107:** *guaille, paisgt'*. **108:** *fèileadh*. **109:** *téid*. **111:** *gasd'*. **112:** *as* for *às*. **113-119:** This is verse 15. **114:** This is the third line in the verse, not the second (i.e. line 115); *'n a* for *'na*. **115:** This is the second line in the verse, not the third (i.e. line 114), and is almost completely reworked as *x'Dheanadh reubadh 'us* [CC1, *is*] *sgrios*. **116:** *lan-fhòghluimte* for *cho fòghlaimte*. **117-118:** These lines are omitted. **119:** This is the fifth line in the verse (i.e. line 117); *ro-ghlic*, and omit *dhàsan sin*. This line is followed by two new lines, the sixth and seventh lines in the verse, which do not appear in ONG, and which are: *Dol a chonnsachadh ris/Air an lo magus teas àrdain air*. **120-126:** This is verse 16. **120-122:** These lines are omitted. **123:** This is the first line in the verse (i.e. line 120); *Bidh* for *'Tha, Clann-Dòmhnuill* [CC2, *Clann Dòmhnuill*], *léir*. This line is followed by four lines, lines two to five in the verse, which are not in ONG, and which are: *Gineal* [CC2, *Gineil*] *chuinn nam mor-* [CC2, *mór-*] *euchd/Mar an triath 'toirt dha géill/'S iad am fasgath fo sgéith./Ann an connsachadh* [CC2, *cònsachadh*] *geur*. **124:** This line is omitted. **125:** *gu réidh* for *a b' fheàrr*. **126:** CC1, *e-féin*, CC2, *e féin*, *'s* for *a b'*. **127-133:** This is verse 17. **128:** *Chluinnteadh* for *Chluinnte*. **129:** CC1, *'Cur*, CC2, *Cur* for *'Chuir*; *gu* for *air*. **130:** This line is omitted. **131:** This is the fourth line in the verse (i.e line 130); insert *'S* before *Deoch*; *'s na* for *'sna*. **132:** This is the fifth line in the verse (i.e. line 131); CC2, *Dol*; *mu 'n*. This is followed by the following line, the sixth line in the verse, which is not in ONG: *Chìteadh fonn air gach gnùis*. **133:** Replace this line with *Sud an taigh* [CC2, *tigh*] *'s am bi mhùirn àbhachdach*. **134-140:** This is verse 18. **134:** This is the third line of the verse (i.e. line 136); *Pìob mhòr* for *Sheinnte pìob*; *réidh*. **135:** This is the first line of the verse (i.e. line 134); *Chìt'* for *'S i*. It is followed by a second line which does not appear in ONG, and which is: *Mach aig dorus na féile*. **136:** This is the fourth line of the verse (i.e. line 137); CC1, *'S 'n uair*, CC2, *'S nuair*; *thàirneadh*. **137:** This is the fifth line of the verse (i.e. line 138); *d'a*. **138:** This is the sixth line of the verse (i.e. line 139); *A guth* for *Cruaidh*. This is followed by a final line in the verse which is not in ONG, and is: *'Thogadh* [CC2, *Thogadh*] *inntinn gach treun Gàidhealach*. This verse is then followed by a verse which is not in ONG, and which is: *Bho na* [CC2, *Bho 'n a*] *dh' fhalbh na fir ghleusda,/Nan* [CC2, *'Nan*] *dàin a thug sgeul,/Air na suinn 'bha* [CC2, *bha*] *'s an Fhéinn,/C'àit an d' imich e feur/Neach a chuireadh an céill/Uile-bhuadhan an tréin?—/Bidh mi sgur bho na* [CC2, *bho 'n a*] *ghéill pàirt diubh leam*. **139-40:** These lines are omitted. **141-7:** This verse is omitted. **148-54:** This verse is omitted. **155-61:** This is verse 20. **155:** *Lion* for *Ach lion*. **156:** *mu 'n*. **157:** *Slàinte* for *Tòsta a'*; CC1, *a's uaisl'*, CC2, *is uaisl'*, for *as uaisle*. **158:** CC1, *Dha 'bheil*, CC2, *Dha bheil*. This line is followed by a line which is not in ONG, and which is *'S Gleann-a-*

Gairidh [CC2, *Gleann-a-Garadh*] *an t-sluaigh.* **159:** This is the sixth line in this verse (i.e. line 160). Omit *an*; *còraichean* for *còirichean.* **160:** This line is omitted. **162-8:** This is verse 21. **162:** CC1, *'S 'n uair*, CC2, *'S nuair* for *'S an uair*; *féin* for *fhèin.* **163:** *Oir* for *Mar*; *léir.* **164:** *dol* for *'dol.* **165:** *Gu 'n* for *Gu'*; CC1, *dhéigh*, CC2, *dhéidh.* **166:** *Bhios* for *'Bhios.* **167:** Replace this line with *'S e na* [CC2, *'na*] *dhion daibh ri 'm feum.* **168:** CC1, *'N Inbher-Ghàiridh*, CC2, *'N Inbhir-Gharadh.*

With these changes and omissions, the Maclean Sinclair versions contain 147 lines.

Recorded Versions:

A version of this song was recorded from the singing of William Matheson, and can be found on *William Matheson, Gaelic Bards and Minstrels*, Scottish Tradition 16, School of Scottish Studies, University of Edinburgh, (Greentrax Recordings, 2000, CDTRAX 9016D), track 16, CD 1. Rev. Matheson learned the tune for the song from "An Ciùrair Boyd", Mr. Archibald Boyd, of Castlebay, Barra, but apparently of North Uist descent. The text for the song is taken from CC2, and it follows the McLS version very closely. Rev. Matheson sings nine verses, and these are based closely on verses 1, 2, 3, 5, 6, 7, 9, 11 and 20 in CC2, in that order. Rev. Matheson's version differs from CC2 in the following respects: **Verse 1: Line 1,** *o m' shuain* for *á suain*; **Line 3**, *dhìochuimhn' san uair* for *dhì-chuimh-sa buan*, **Line 4,** *mo dhuais* for *dhomh 'n duais*, **Line 7,** *nis ag* for *Tha 'n diugh 'g*; **Verse 2: Line 3,** *ann am fiosrachadh geur* for *Ann am briathran deas réidh* (This is, in fact, line 9 from ONG, which, interestingly, does not appear in McLS versions), **Line 4,** *mar a ghluaiseadh* for *Bhiodh gu siùbhlach*, **Line 5,** *dh'ìnnsinn* for *A' seinn.* **Line 6,** *dham bu dùthchas* for *Dha 'n dùthchas*, **Line 7,** *bhith gu* for *A bhi*; **Verse 3: Line 3,** *is* for *le*, **Line 4**, *da* for *gu*, *thar fheachd* for *d'a reachd*, **Line 6,** *crìonachd* for *crìneachd*; **Verse 5: Line 4,** *fuaimmhor* for *fuaimear*; **Verse 6: Line 1**, *Leat* for *Leis*, **Line 4,** *do luaidhe* for *a luaidhe*, **Line 5,** *do mhìolchoin* for *a mhial-choin*, **Line 6,** *feadh nan stùcbheanna garbh* for *'S bhiodh na stùc-bheannan gorm* (the CC2 version of this line is essentially the same as ONG, and therefore Rev. Matheson's line differs from that found in any other versions), **Line 7,** *dhaibh* for *dha*; **Verse 7: Line 1,** *do dhaoine* for *a dhaoin'*, **Line 2,** *d' thimcheall* for *thimchioll*, **Line 3,** *do shuaicheantas* for *a shuaicheantas*; **Verse 9: Line 4,** *do bhrataich* for *a bhrataich*; **Verse 20: Line 3,** *slàint' a' Chòirneil as uaisl'* for *Slàinte Chòirneil is uaisl'*, **Line 7,** *dhut* for *dha.*

27. Am Mealladh

Tune: "Hùgaibh air nigh'nn donn nam meall-shùil"
No. of lines: 32
Sources: CC1, p. 96, CC2, p. 88, FC, p. 47, BT, p. 78.
Date: Uncertain; given the subject matter, likely shortly after the poet's arrival in Canada, in 1819. As the poet arrived in October, 1819, the references to a cold spring, at line 32, may indicate that the poem may have been composed after the poet's first winter in Canada, and therefore sometime after the spring of 1820.
Context: In his introduction to the song in CC1 and CC2, Maclean Sinclair indicates the following: "Fhuair mi rann no dhà de 'n duanaig so (sic) an Tir-ithe 'sa bhliadhna 1869. Fhuair mi chuid eile bho Dhonnachadh Camshron an Caledonia, an Nobha Scotia"/"I got a verse or tow of this ditty in Tiree in the year 1869. I got another portion from Duncan Cameron in Caledonia, Nova Scotia". As CC1 was published in 1881, the portion obtained from Mr. Cameron would likely have been collected between 1869 and 1881. It is not clear whether Mr. Cameron resided in what is now Caledonia Mills, Antigonish County, or Caledonia, Guysborough County, which is south of Sunny Brae, Upper East River, Pictou County, where Maclean Sinclair was Minister until 1888, although given the proximity to Sunny Brae, Mr. Cameron was likely to have resided at the latter.

Line Annotations:
2: CC1, 2, omit the particle "a-" before *mach.* **8:** CC1, *us* for is. CC1, 2, *d'* for "t'". **9:** CC1, *us* for is. **11:** The aspiration of *chuideachd* implies the presence of the preposition "a" or "do", "to". **11:** The reference to *Am Maidsear*, "The Major" is to Simon Fraser, sometimes known as Major Fraser, sometimes as Colonel Fraser. Simon Fraser was the son of Capt. John Fraser, a member of the disbanded 82nd Regiment (the Duke of Hamilton's Regiment) who was settled at Fisher's Grant, between Pictou and Merigomish harbour, Pictou County, Nova Scotia, in about 1784. Simon Fraser was one of the most important emigration agents active in the Highlands and Islands in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, and was the agent who arranged the poet's passage in 1819. For more on Simon Fraser, see the notes to Poem 29. **13:** CC1, 2 notes that the word *fàl* here means a hedge; its more common meaning is a dyke or ditch. **16:** CC1, 2, *an Fhéinn.* Given the passive construction, this cannot be a genitive form; it appears that McLS is treating it as a feminine collective noun. The reference is to the Fenians, the warrior band of Gaelic mythology. In the heroic society of the ancient Gaelic epics, farming activity would have been beneath the Fenians. The reference is therefore ironic. The poet may be implying that the harsh manual labour involved in clearing the forest is an activity that also should be frowned upon as beneath the dignity of someone like him; as a poet and noted tradition bearer, he was someone of some status in Gaelic society. **18:** CC1, *g 'am.* CC2: *g' am.* This is clearly the third person plural object of the verbal noun, "'gam". **19:** CC1, *moccaisean.* CC2: *mogaisean.* **21:** CC1, 2, *Na mo.* This is a contraction of "Ann mo", and is marked accordingly. **23:** CC1, 2, *so.* **25:** The relative pronoun "a" is omitted before the verb, and this is marked. **26:** This is another reference to Simon Fraser; see line 11, and notes to Poem 29. **27:** CC1, 2: *am spùir* and *am bhòtuinn*; *am* appears to be a contraction of the preposition "ann", "in" and the first person singular possessive pronoun "mo". CC1, 2, *bhi.* **29:** The particle "a-" is omitted in CC1 and 2 before mach, and this is marked. **30:** This line

appears to be a clause, and the omission of the relative pronoun "a" is marked. **31:** CC1, 2, *féin*. **32:** CC1, 2 have *call*; this appears to be a verbal noun, and the omission of the verbal noun particle "a'" is marked. CC1, 2, *bhi*.

Maclean Sinclair Versions:
The only existing versions are Maclean Sinclair versions.

Recorded Versions:
A version of this song was recorded in 1974 from the singing of Sister Jane MacKenzie, Sister of Saint Martha, of Christmas Island, Cape Breton County, Cape Breton, by Maureen Lonergan (Williams), and included in her 1974 M.A. Dissertation in Celtic Studies at St. Francis Xavier University, entitled "The Scholar, Poet and Local Bard", under the direction of Prof. C. I. N. MacLeod. The text for the song is taken from CC2, and it follows the McLS version very closely. For more information on Sister MacKenzie, see the note to "Recorded Versions", poem 16, above. Sister MacKenzie sings the chorus and all eight verses that are in CC1 and CC2, in precisely the same order. Sister MacKenzie's version differs from CC2 in the following, very minor, respects: **Verse 2: Line 3,** Add *'S* at the start of the line; **Verse 4: Line 4,** *na Fèinn* for *an Fheinn*; **Verse 6: Line 3,** *'Tigh'nn* for *Thigh'nn*; **Verse 7: Line 3,** *'nam* for *am*. Margaret MacDonell includes an air for this song in *The Emigrant Experience: Songs of the Highland Emigrants in North America* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1982), p. 191. She relies on the air to which the poem was composed, "Hugaibh air nigh'n donn nam meall-shuil", as noted in CC1 and CC2, which was published in K.N. MacDonald, *The Gesto Collection of Highland Music* (Leipzig, 1895), p. 10, rather than oral sources.

28. Òran do dh'Aimeireaga

Tune: "Coire Cheathaich"; Donald Maclean Sinclair notes that the song can also be sung to "The Flowers of the Forest", an eight phrased lament: *Some Family History*, note (6), pp. 41-42. He notes that the metre of the song "is known as *ochtfhoclach coronnach*, that is, an eight phrased lament."
No. of lines: 144
Sources: MG15G/2/2, p. 132, JB, p. 16, CC1, p. 98, CC2, p. 90, FC, p. 48, BG, p. 14, BT, p. 74, An t-Òranaiche, p. 313, SO 1863, p. 324, *The Gaelic Bards from 1765 to 1825* (Sydney, Cape Breton, 1896), at p. 156, *MT*, Vol. IV, No. 29 at p. 8 (25 Jan., 1896) and Vol. IV, No. 31 at p. 8 (8 Feb., 1896), *Sydney Post Record*, 23 April, 1921, *Am Mosgladh*, Vol. 1, No. 9, Oct. 1928, at p. 4, 5, 6, *Casket*, 14 November, 1935, GSNS, p. 296, Caran an t-Saoghail, p. 64.
Date: Uncertain; given the subject matter, likely shortly after the poet's arrival in Canada, in 1819. As the poet arrived in October, 1819, the references to both winter and summer, and to the labours involved in clearing the land, the poem must have been composed no earlier than the late summer of 1820. The extended comment on social and economic conditions of the settlers would suggest that the poem was composed after the poet had a sufficient amount of time to learn of and reflect on the full state of conditions which the settlers faced, and therefore the poem may have been composed even later than 1820. Watson dates the poem as about 1821 (c. 1821): Watson, *Bàrdachd Ghàidhlig*, at p. x, though he provides no evidence to support this date.

Context: The title to the song given by the poet in MG15G/2/2 is "Òran do dh' America". It is perhaps the poet's best known composition, but under the title "A' Choille Ghruamach" ("The Gloomy Forest"), which is the title given by McLS; indeed, Meek notes that the song was always known in Tiree as "A' Choille Ghruamach": Meek, 2003, at p. 405. This may suggest that the later printed sources, particularly the McLS editions, had an impact on oral transmission. In *Bàrdachd Ghàidhlig*, Watson gives another title, "Am Bàrd an Canada" ("The Poet in Canada"). McLS makes the following comments on the song: "When the poet sent to Tiree his poem on America, his friends were greatly distressed about him. They offered to send money to bring him back. MacLean of Coll, his old friend, wrote him a kind letter asking him to return, and offering to give him a piece of land free of rent. A more truthful poem than his description of America was never penned; yet it is almost a pity that he sent it home. It was no doubt the means of keeping many persons from emigrating. Though the poet was disappointed the first few years he was in this country [i.e. Canada], he afterwards saw reasons for thankfulness that he had come": CC2, at p. xvii. It would be fair to say that this tends to be the view that most Nova Scotia Gaels have of the song. The effect of the song on those in Scotland is indicated in this passage from the Gaelic Column of the Sydney, Nova Scotia newspaper the *Sydney Post Record*, dated 23 April, 1921: " . . . Tha e air innse gu'n deach an t-oran so a sheinn aig banais ann an Tobair-Mhoire, beagan an deidh do'n bhard a dheanamh 's a chur a nunn gu chairdean. Cha chualas am Muile e gu sin, agus mar chaidh am fear-seinn air adhart, dhruigh an dan air a luchd-eisdeachd air dhoigh 's nach robh suil thioram sa chuideachd n uair a bha e ullamh. Cha'n eil teagamh nach do chuir tilleadh air iomadh duine 's teaghlach bho thighin air imrich do'n duthaich so . . . ."/" . . . It is reported that this song was sung at a wedding in Tobermoray, a short time after the poet had made it and had sent it over to his friends. It had not been heard in Mull until then, and as the singer proceeded, the song affected its listeners to such an extent that there was not a dry eye amongst those in attendance when it was finished. There is not doubt that it caused many a man and family to reconsider emigration to this country [i.e. Canada]". Given the similarities in the following comments from the same anonymous column and those of Maclean Sinclair in *Clarsach na Coille*, it is possible that he wrote them, although the writer may simply have been echoing those comments from a book which had been in print for about 40 years at that time: "Tha direach mu cheud bliadhna o'n rinn e an t-oran briagha so. Tha e na oran cho firinnach sa rinneadh riamh. Cha 'n fhaighear ann an sgriobhadh sam bidh cunntas cho mionaideach agus cho ceart air cor an t-sluagh ri linn an ceud shuidheachadh san duthaich . . ."/It is just about one hundred years since he [i.e. the poet] made this beautiful song. It is as honest a song as has ever been made. As detailed and correct account of the condition of the people at the time of the first settlement in this country cannot be found in writing . . .".

Donald Maclean Sinclair notes that "[o]nce, while visiting a certain Alexander Matheson, better known as Sandy Big Willian, at his home in Glen William, Prince Edward Island, I asked him if he knew 'A' Choille Ghruamach'. "Yes", he replied, "would you like to hear it?" He then proceededto sing the eighteen stanzas of eight lines each as I followed along from the printed version in "Clarsach na Coille". When he finished I remarked that his rendering differed somewhat from that in the book. "What knows the book?", replied Sandy. "I knows." I asked him how long since he had sung it. "About forty years." Sandy Big William had a most retentive memory, as had manyh of the old Highlanders. Since many of them could not read or write, they were obliged to depend on memory": *Some Family History*, note (6), at p. 42.

Donald Maclean Sinclair does not indicate whether the version that Alexander Matheson sang was closer to the version in the poet's manuscripts, but the fact that his version differed somewhat from the printed version in CC1 is significant. Donald was writing in 1979, and we do not know when this meeting with Matheson occurred, although it seems like it had occurred some time before. If Matheson had not sung the song for forty years, he would therefore likely have acquired the song early in the twentieth century, at the latest. That the version which he acquired differed from the printed version in CC1 may therefore be less likely to be due to alterations due to the oral transmission of the printed version than to an origin in an oral tradition based perhaps more closely on the original composition, as reflected in the poet's manuscripts.

Line Annotations:
1: MSS, *m*; a contraction of "ann mo", "in my", marked with an apostrophe. MSS, *s a*. MSS, *choill* for "choille". JB, *choille*. **3:** MSS, *-aite s'*; "s'" is a contraction of the suffix "sa" which is used for "seo". JB, *an fhaoghaidh* for "an aghaidh". **4:** MSS, *bh an am cheann*. **5:** MSS, *deun*. **6:** MSS, *N uair, biodh*. **7:** MSS, *ghaelic*. MSS omits the feminine singular article "a'", which is marked. **8:** MSS, *N uair, s an*. **9:** MSS, *Cha n*. MSS, *m intinn*; "m" is a contraction of "mo", "my". **10:** MSS, *deunamh*. **11:** MSS, *Se*. MSS, *sa*, which is "'s", the contraction of "agus", "and", and the relative pronoun "a". MSS, *laoghdaich*. **12:** MSS, *colrum* for "comhla rium". Meek notes in *Caran an t-Saoghail* that, based on information in Alexander Maclean Sinclair's introduction in CC2 at p. xvii, the poet's nearest neighbour, Kenneth Cameron from Lochbroom, was more than two miles away. **13:** MSS, *oiche*. **14:** MSS, *cuimhneachadh*; this is a verbal noun, and the verbal noun particle is omitted. MSS: *an s gach am*; "an s" is "anns". **15:** MSS, *a dhag mi*; "dhag" is the preterite of "fàg", "dh'fhàg". MSS, *n taic*; "n" is a contraction of "ann an". MSS, *an t saile*. **16:** MSS, *Gad, n drast*. MSS, *an am*; "an" is the preposition "ann". **17:** MSS, *Cha n ionadh*. **18:** MSS, *S an tha*; "S an" is the copula form "Is ann". MSS, *mo chonidh, air cull*. MSS: *na m beann*; "na m" is the genitive plural article "nam". **19:** MSS, *A meodhon*; "A" is a contraction of "ann am", "in", usually rendered "am", and the omission of the "m" is due to elision. MSS, *abhain bharni*; this is a reference to Barney's River, in eastern Pictou County, Nova Scotia, on the upper reaches of which the poet had settled. Lonergan notes that Donald Maclean Sinclair, great grandson of the poet, discovered that the original farm, "Baile Chnoic", was located in the area of the present day Barney's River Station on the Canadian National Railway line, at Weaver's Mountain, and that foundations were still visible. The spot is about six miles west of Glenbard, to which the poet moved in 1830 or 1831: Lonergan, 1977, at p. 119. The whole area was named for Barnabas McGee, who was reputedly the first settler in Merigomish township in 1776 or 1777: James M. Cameron, *Pictou County's History*, (Kentville: Pictou County Historical Society, 1972), at p. 268. **20:** MSS, *fherr, bunta lom*. **21:** MSS, *s*; a contraction of "agus". MSS, *bar* for "bàrr". MSS, *deun*. **22:** MSS, *Sa choille ghabhi*; *Sa* is interpreted as "'S", a contraction of "Agus", and the feminine article "a'"; *ghabhi* is "ghàbhaidh". MSS omits the infinitive particle "a" before the infinitive *chur*. **23:** MSS, *mo ghardain, saruchte*. **24:** MSS omits the relative pronoun "am" before the verb *fàs*. **25:** MSS, *So i n*; *n* is a contraction of "an", the article. MSS: *s a bheil*; *s a* is a contraction of "anns a'". **26:** MSS, *tha tin*; this would appear to be the verbal noun "tighinn", but the additional syllable implied by the medial "-ghi" is apparently omitted in the poet's spoken dialect. MSS, *a nall*. **27:** MSS, *oirn, luchd a bhuairidh*; *a* is the masculine singular

genitive article "a'". **28:** MSS, *le n*; *n* is the third person plural possessive pronoun "an", "their", and the "a" would be elided. MSS, *tuaireasgeul, air toirt*; given that the poem is directed to potential emigrants (see, also, line 35), *air* is likely the second person plural possessive pronoun "ur", "your", although the poet is not consistent in the poem. Meek notes that Colonel Simon Fraser, of Pictou, Nova Scotia, was the emigration agent who enticed the poet to emigrate, and it was with him that the poet reached an agreement at Tobermory on 29 July, 1819. Citing Alexander Maclean Sinclair's memoir, at p. xvi, in CC2, Meek notes that the poet, his wife and three children sailed with Fraser from Tobermory in early August of that year on the ship *Economy* and arrived in Pictou in early October: Meek, *Caran an t-Saoghail*, at p. 405. **29:** MSS, *Mu nì . . .*; as in McLS versions, *Mu*, "before" is emended to "Ma", "if", which seems to better convey the idea of conditionality implied in this line. MSS, *buanach, doibh*. **30:** MSS, *s*; this is a contraction of "agus". MSS, *cha n, deun, ionadh*. **31:** MSS, *S*; this is a contraction of "Agus". MSS, *molachd*. MSS: *ga*, which is the third person singular personal pronoun object of the verbal noun. McLS versions emend to "'gan", but it is interpreted here as a passive form, the referent being to "truaghain". **32:** MSS, *a fuadach*; the non-aspiration of the noun "fuadach" suggests that "a" may be the third person singular feminine possessive pronoun. There is, however, no clear feminine referent, and in McLS versions, *a* is emended to "am", which is either the nominative article or the third person plural possessive pronoun. I accept the emendation, but interpret the omission of the "m" in "am" as being due to elision. MSS, *fo n ceann*; *n* is interpreted as "an", "their", and the "a" in "an" is elided. **33:** MSS: *Biodh, tra*. **34:** MSS, *Biodh, cliudh, a meud*; *a* appears to be a contraction of the prepositional phrase "ann am". **35:** MSS: *Biodh, a gratin*. MSS: *air cairdean*; given the context, *air* would appear to be "ur", "your". **36:** MSS, *saibhir*. **37:** MSS, *ga thoirt*; as the reference seems to be to *naidheachd*, a feminine noun, the aspiration of the verbal noun is removed, as in McLS versions. MSS, *iunnsaidh se*. **38:** MSS, *a nntaic*; *a* appears to be the relative pronoun, which should be "an", and the omission of "n" from "an" is interpreted as a dialectical feature. The MSS omits the verbal noun particle "a'" before *dol*. MSS, *na deigh*. **39:** MSS, *Mu thig*; as in McLS versions, *Mu*, "before" is emended to "Ma", "if", which seems to better convey the idea of conditionality implied in this line, though JB leaves as *Mu*. MSS omits the relative pronoun "a" before the verb *chì*. **40:** MSS, *cha n*. **41:** MSS, *N uair, drabharain*. MSS, *gar n iaruidh*; McLS versions emend *gar* to "gur", which is appropriate, given that the poem is addressed here to others, rather than a group of which the poet forms a part; however, the poet is not consistent here (see, for example, line 37), and JB has *ga 'r*. **42:** MSS, *S ann, briagan*. **43:** MSS, *Gun facal*; as the context suggests that *Gun* is the preposition "without" rather than a conjunction, the noun should be aspirated, as in McLS versions. MSS, *firinn*; this should be the genitive form "firinne", and the omission of the final "e" would be due to the elision, or may be dialectical. MSS, *bhi*. **44:** MSS, *Sa n*; *S* is a contraction of "Agus", and *a n* would appear to be the third person plural possessive pronoun "an". MSS omits the verbal noun particle "a'" before *dìtead*'. MSS, *feir*, which McLS versions emend to "their". **45:** MSS, *so*. MSS, *a fiochabh*; *a* appears to be "am", a contraction of "ann am", "in their", and the omission of the "m" would be due to the elision caused by the subsequent consonant. MSS, *sa n*. **46:** MSS, *Gach a s prioshala tha*. McLS versions add "nì" after "Gach", which is acceptable, as the phrase in the MSS would require a noun to make it complete. The *a s* is interpreted as the superlative "as". The final "a" in *prioshala* is interpreted as a separate word, the relative pronoun. **47:** MSS, *N uair, inte*. The MSS omits the relative pronoun "a"

before the verb *thig* and the verb *chì*. **48:** MSS omits the verbal noun particle "a'". MSS, *a speur*; *a* is interpreted as the nominative article, with the omission of the "n" interpreted as possibly dialectical. JB emends to *na speur*. **49:** MSS, *N uair, dulachd*. The MSS omits the relative pronoun before the verb *thig*. **50:** MSS, *Biodh*. MSS omits the verbal noun article "a'" before *dlùthadh*. MSS, *na n*; this is the genitive plural article "nan". **51:** MSS, *Go, do, dumhal*. JB interprets "do" as *dol*, which seems appropriate in the setting, but this would be a verbal noun, and the verbal noun article "a'" is omitted in both the MSS and in JB. **52:** MSS, *Ga*; "Ged", "No matter", is intended, and the omission of the final consonant, likely a dialectical feature, is marked. MSS, *deun*. **53:** MSS, *dhubailt* for "dhùbailte", the final "e" is omitted. MSS, *sa*; this appears to be a contraction of "anns a'", "in the". MSS, *chladaich*; McLS emends to "chlùdaich", which makes sense in the context, as "chladaich", "of the shore", does not. In reference to this passage, Dunn notes that these "were a kind of shoe made by hand from soft leather, particularly that which was taken from the leg and knee of slaughtered cows" and that "[i]nelegant as they may have seemed to a man of MacLean's background, they were ideal foot-wear for deep snow, according to the testimony of those who remember wearing them, as long as the wearer did not object to the rather gamey smell that lingered with them": Charles Dunn, *Highland Settler: A Portrait of the Scottish Gael in Nova Scotia*, (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1980), at pp. 31-32. As Meek notes, the poet was a shoemaker by trade, and this may also be reflected in his comments on such unconventional footwear: Meek, 2003, at p. 405. Finally, in a note to this passage in CC2, MacDougall says the following: "A reir coltais bha na "moccassins" aig na h-Innseanaich Ruadha air an cur gu feum leis na Gàidheil mar an ceudna an uair a chaidh iad do Chanada an toiseach. Tha am focal so cho coltach ris a' Ghàidhlig is gu'n do ghabhadh a nis a steach innte e mar gu'm buineadh e riamh dhi. Tha am focal so an diugh ri a chluinntinn anns ha h-eileanan far an robh an sluagh eolach air "a' Choille Ghruamaich" mar gu'm b'fhior fhocal Gàidhlig a bhiodh ann. An aon eadar-dhealachadh 'ga thaobh is è gu'n cuirear gu feum e a thaobh còmhdaich lunndaich sam bith, biodh e 'na bhròig, 'na stocainn, 'na bhriogais no ni sam bith eile a bhiodh léibeisdeach mu na casan"/"Apparently the "moccasins" of the Red Indians were used by the Gaels in the same way when they first went to Canada. This word is so close to the Gaelic that it has now been absorbed into the language as though it had always been a part of it. This word is now heard in the islands in which the people knew "The Gloomy Forest" as though it were a real Gaelic word. The only difference in this respect is that it can be used in reference to any musty covering at all, whether it be a shoe, a stocking, a pair of trousers, or anything else that would be of poor quality about the feet. **55:** MSS, *Be*. MSS, *fiunntach*; this may be "fiuntach", an adjective meaning "worthy, deserving", but this does not fit the context. JB interprets this as *fiunntadh*, the meaning of which is also not clear, but which resembles "fionndadh", a noun meaning "fur", or "fionndach", an adjective meaning "hairy". Given the context, and the presence of the preposition "le", it is interpreted as the noun "fionndadh". **56:** MSS, *Mur*; McLS versions emend to "Mar", which makes better sense in the context. **57:** MSS, *mo chodaich*. **58:** MSS, *Gu*; this is the conjunction "Gum", and the omission of the "m" may be due to elision. MSS, *s mo*; "s" is a contraction of "agus". **59:** MSS, *fuarith*. **60:** MSS, *an cunart*; *an* appears to be a contraction of "ann an". **61:** MSS, *Biodh*. MSS, *fuasach*; this is "fuathasach", but the additional syllable implied by the medial "-tha" is apparently omitted in the poet's spoken dialect. MSS, *tuadh*. **62:** MSS, *Gu*; this is the conjunction "Gum", and the omission of the "m" may be due to elision. The aspiration in the MSS of

cruaidh, a feminine noun, implies the presence of either the nominative article "a'" or the third person singular masculine possessive pronoun "a", "his/its". The noun appears to refer to "tuagh", "axe", in the previous line, and therefore the omitted item is interpreted as the masculine possessive pronoun. The omission of either would be due to the elision. MSS, *ga do*; this is interpreted as the conjunction "ged", often rendered as "gad" by the poet, perhaps reflecting dialect, and the relative pronoun "a". **63:** MSS, *doir*. MSS, *dith*, interpreted as the third person prepositional pronoun form of the preposition "do", which is "dhi". MSS, *blas*; given the context, this is interpreted, as in McLS versions, as "blàths", "warmth", rather than "blas", "taste". MSS, *stalain*; given the context, the third person singular possessive pronoun "a", "its", seems to be implied, which is the interpretation in JB, where it is added, but it is omitted in the MSS, and this omission is marked. **65:** MSS, *N uair*. The MSS omits the relative pronoun "a" before the verb *thig,* and this is marked. MSS, *sa miosa ceitein*. If *sa* were a contraction of "anns an", this would cause lenition of the noun; given the genitive relationship between "miosa" and "ceitein", implied by the slenderisation of "ceitean", the prepositional phrase would in any case be "ann am". Thus, *sa* is interpreted as the union of two separate contractions, *s* being the contraction of "agus", and *a* being "am", a contraction of "ann am". The omission of "m" in the contraction may be due to the elision. As *ceitean* is a proper name, in addition to being slenderised, it should also be lenited. **66:** MSS, *Biodh*. MSS, *ga m*; this is the first person singular personal pronoun object of the verbal noun "'gam". MSS, *teis*. **67:** MSS, *Gun chuir*; given the context, the verb should be in the future form. MSS, *sperid*. MSS, *sa h uile*; *sa* is a contraction of "anns a'". **68:** MSS, *na n*; this is the genitive plural article "nan". **69:** MSS: *bheisdeal*, *deun*, *eiridh*. **70:** MSS, *s* is a contraction of "agus". **71:** MSS, *Sa chuileag*; *Sa* appears to be a union of "S", a contraction of "Agus", and the feminine article "a'". The noun *puinnsean* appears to form part of the clause at line 72, and the context seems to imply the third person singular feminine possessive pronoun "a", "her/its", which would refer to "cuileag", a feminine noun. As Meek notes, the reference is likely to the mosquito (Meek, *Caran an t-Saoghail*, at p. 405), an insect not known in Scotland, and whose name would not have been known in Gaelic. Modern Gaelic uses the loan word "mosgìoto": Boyd Robertson and Ian MacDonald, *Teach Yourself Gaelic Dictionary*, (London: Hodder Headline, 2004), at p. 221. The emigrant poets often came across beasts that were unknown in the homeland and for which no Gaelic name exists. For another example, in the Glengarry, Ontario song "Tha mise fo ghruaimean"/"I am melancholy", the poet, an anonymous emigrant to Glengarry, describes but is unable to name the firefly, another insect unknown in Scotland: see Margaret MacDonell, *The Emigrant Experience*, (Toronto: University of Toronto, 1982), at p. 138, lines 6-9. **72:** MSS: rinn an lann; "rinn" is interpreted as the noun "point, barb", rather than "roinn", "share", as in McLS versions. As "lann" appears to be in a genitive relationship with "rinn", and as it appears from the context to be singular, it should be slenderised. **73:** MSS, *m aodun*; *m* is a contraction of "mo", "my". **74:** MSS, *san bhios*; *san* appears to be the copula formulation "'s ann". MSS, *cha n*. **75:** MSS, *shulan*, *cungi*. **76:** MSS, *druiteach*. MSS: *teang*, omitting the final "a" in "teanga". In these lines, the poet is describing the stinging and swelling that usually accompanies a mosquito bite. **77:** MSS, *Cha n*, *aireabh*, *danach*. JB has *an Gaelic* for "anns an dànachd". **78:** MSS, *graineal*. **79:** MSS, *S*; this is a contraction of "Agus". MSS, *liubha*, *ann sa*. **80:** MSS, *N uair*, *trailean*. The MSS omits the relative pronoun "a" before the verb *bhàth*. MSS: *n camp*; *n* is the article "an", the "a" is omitted due to elision, and the final "a" in *campa* is omitted. As Meek notes, the references in lines 79 and 80 are to

the Pharaoh's soldiers, who pursued the Israelites across the Red Sea and were drowned when the ocean, which had been miraculously parted to allow the Israelites safe passage, closed over them (Meek, *Caran an t-Saoghail*, at p. 406). **81:** MSS, *tinn*; this would appear to be the verbal noun "tighinn", but the additional syllable implied by the medial "-ghi" is apparently omitted in the poet's spoken dialect. The MSS omits the verbal noun particle "a'". **82:** MSS, *S*; this is a contraction of "Agus". **83:** MSS, *nuair sin*; "nuair" is a union of "an uair", and the omission of the "a" in "an" may be due to the elision caused by the preceding vowel. MSS, *mun drinn*; *drinn* is a union of the past tense dependent form particle "do" and the verb. **84:** MSS, *Gu fasin*. *Gu* is the conjunction "Gum", and the omission of the "m" may be due to elision; *fasin* is the first person singular of the conditional form of the verb "fàs". MSS, *thigin*; the first person singular of the conditional form of the verb "thig". **85:** MSS, *S a n*; *S* is a contraction of "Agus", and *a n* appears to be the nominative masculine article "an". MSS, *fuair*; this is the preterite, and should be aspirated. MSS: *go m*; *m* is a contraction of "mo", "my". MSS, *bhuanachd*. **86:** MSS, *Tighn, air a chuairt*. The MSS omits the final "a" in *meallta*. **87:** MSS, *Go, an s* for "anns". **88:** MSS, *s mi*; *s* is a contraction of "agus", and given the context and aspiration of the subsequent noun, *mi* appears to be a misspelling of "mo", "my", though JB leaves as "mi". **89:** MSS, *an sa m bi* for "anns am bidh". MSS, *n deish laimh*; *n* appears to be a contraction of "ann an". **90:** MSS, *deun, saibhir*. **91:** MSS, *Bi n*; *n* appears to be a contraction of "ann an". MSS, *doir, eigin*. MSS, *as*; interpreted as the preposition "às". **92:** MSS, *deun, a chroinn*; *a* is the genitive singular masculine article "a'". **93:** MSS, *Cur*; this is the verbal noun, and the verbal noun particle "A'" is omitted. MSS, *na teinntin*; the plural noun is in a genitive relationship with *sgonn*, and "na" would therefore be the genitive plural article "nan", which is the interpretation in JB, and the omission in the MSS of the final "n" may reflect the practice in the poet's dialect. JB, *Ga cur nan . . .* for *Cur sgonn na' . . . .* **94:** MSS, *lasasaich, a bh an am druim*; *bh an am* appears to be the verbal form "bha" and "ann am", which, in the context, would be the form of the contraction of the preposition "ann" and the possessive pronoun "mo" frequently used by the poet. The possessive pronoun should cause lenition of *druim*. JB interprets "Gu" as the conjunction "Gun". **95:** MSS, *Sa h uile*; *Sa* is a union of "S", a contraction of "Agus", and the particle "a". MSS, *a sealltuin*; this is a verbal noun, and "a" appears to be the verbal noun particle "a'". **96:** MSS, *Bi*. MSS: *ga m*, which is the first person singular personal pronoun object of the verbal noun. **97:** MSS, *Ga*; this is interpreted as the conjunction "Ged", and the omission of the final consonant, likely a dialectical feature, is marked. MSS, *a seanachas*; *a* appears to be the article "an", which is the interpretation in JB, with the "n" omitted, perhaps reflecting pronunciation in the poet's dialect. MSS, *a bh achda*; *bh* is the verb "bha", the final "a" of which is omitted due to elision by the succeeding vowel. MSS, *an*; a contraction of "ann an". **98:** The MSS omits the feminine nominative article "a'" before the noun *cùis*, likely due to elision. MSS, *a dearbhadh*; this appears to be a verbal noun, and the *a* is the verbal noun particle "a'". **99:** MSS, *cha n*. MSS, *folbh*; the MSS omits the verbal noun particle which should precede this verbal noun. **100:** The MSS omits the relative pronoun "a" before the verb *bha*. MSS, *ainmeal, bhi, sa n*. **101:** MSS, *Mu*; the context suggests this is "Ma", "If". MSS, *baragain, airgiod*. JB also has *Mu*. MSS, *cha n*. **102:** MSS, *an sa* for "anns a'". **103:** MSS, *Mu dheibh*. The context suggests that *Mu* is "Ma", "If"; *dheibh* appears to be "gheibh", the future form of the verb "faigh". MSS, *cunradh, buthain*. **104:** MSS, *Gu*; this is the conjunction "Gum", which is the interpretation in JB, and the omission of the "m"

may be due to elision. The particle "a-" is omitted before *null*. **105:** MSS, *cha n.* **107:** MSS, *ni ni*; the first *ni* appears to be the noun "ni", "thing", and the second appears to be the future form of the verb "dean". **108:** MSS, *na n eigin*; *na n* appears to be a contraction of "ann an", "in their". MSS, *sa*; this appears to be a contraction of "anns a'". **109:** MSS, *chullaidh, ainefioch.* JB omits *iad.* **110:** MSS, *a reic*; this is a verbal noun, and the *a* is the verbal noun particle "a'". MSS, *na sheallabhuich.* JB has *na shealbhaicheas*, and omits "ann". **111:** MSS, *Biodh.* MSS, *fear na fiachan*; given the genitive relationship between the two nouns, *na* is the genitive plural article "nam", and the final "m" is omitted due to the elision. **112:** MSS, *Ga*; this is the third person singular masculine pronoun object of the verbal noun. MSS, *e stor*; the context suggests the presence of the third person singular masculine possessive pronoun "a", his, and its omission is due to its elision. Lonergan notes that until 1831, a creditor could retain a debtor in gaol after the surrender of his property by supplying eight pounds of bread per week for his maintenance. He could be held indefinitely if no one paid his claim in order to obtain his release. Later this power was revoked, and the insolvent person could be discharged by the authority of two magistrates: Lonergan, 1977, at p. 120, quoting George Patterson, *A History of the County of Pictou, Nova Scotia*, (Montreal, 1877) at p. 383. JB has *mur* for *mun.* **133:** MSS, *dig.* **114:** MSS, *deid.* JB adds *ac'* before *aig a' mhòd.* **115:** MSS, *laogh.* MSS, *a giulan*; this is the verbal noun, and the "a" is the verbal noun particle "a'". **116:** MSS, *spuineadh.* MSS, *s nach*; *s* is a contraction of "agus". MSS, *e n cor*; *n* is the article "an", and the omission of the "a" is due to elision by the preceding vowel. **117:** MSS, *Biodh, erraid, duchadh.* **118:** MSS, *Gan*; this is the third person plural pronoun object of the verbal noun. MSS, *le n*; *n* appears to be the third person plural possessive pronoun "an", and the omission of the "a" is caused by the elision. MSS, *cuntanishean*; JB, *cunntasaibh.* **119:** MSS, *dig.* MSS, *e m iunnsaidh*; *m* is the particle "am", and the omission of the "a" is caused by elision. **120:** MSS, *Biodh.* MSS, *s*; a contraction of "agus". MSS, *oirn.* **121:** MSS, *Cha n.* MSS, *an am ghalic*; *an am* is a contraction of the preposition "ann" and the possessive pronoun "mo". JB, *ann an Gaelic.* **122:** MSS, *deun.* **123:** The MSS omits the infinitive particle "a" before *thoirt.* **124:** MSS, *m arach*; *m* is "mo", and the omission of the "o" is caused by elision by the succeeding vowel. **125:** MSS, *leubhas.* **126:** MSS, *dugaibh, eisdeach.* MSS, *luchd a bhosd*; *a* is the genitive singular masculine article "a'". **127:** MSS, *faidhein.* MSS, *gar*; this is a verbal noun object, but the context, in which the poet is addressing others, suggests that it should be the second person plural verbal noun object, "'gur". However, JB also has *gar*, and therefore it is retained. The verb "teum" has at least two meanings, "sting" as well as "tempt", and it is likely that the poet is making a play on words. **128:** MSS, *deigh.* MSS, *air n oir*; given the context, *air* is second person plural possessive pronoun "ur", rather than the preposition "air". JB has *dibh* for *diubh.* **129:** MSS, *bhighin*; this is the first person singular conditional form of the verb "bi". MSS, *an a sgriobhadh*; "an" is the preposition "ann", and "a" appears to be the third person singular possessive pronoun "its". **130:** MSS, *gabhain*; this is the first person singular conditional form of the verb "gabh". MSS, *cor.* **131:** MSS, *cuirin*; this is the first person singular conditional form of the verb "cuir". MSS, *m inntinn*; *m* is "mo", and the omission of the "o" is caused by elision by the succeeding vowel. **132:** MSS, *dugainn.* **133:** MSS, *deigh.* Meek translates *diomhair* as "subconscious" (Meek, *Caran an t-Saoghail*, at p. 406), but it could be translated as "lonely". **134:** MSS, *so ri m bheo*; *m* is "mo", and the "o" is omitted to reduce the line by a syllable for the purposes of metre. **135:** MSS, *sa*; a contraction of "anns a'". MSS, *chuirin*; JB, *chroinn.* This should be *chruinn*, as in

McLS versions. MSS, *so*. **136:** MSS, *Gum*; the context suggests that this is the preposition "gun", "without", which is the interpretation in JB. MSS, *faoineachd* for *faighneachd*. MSS, *a seinn*; *a* is the relative pronoun "an", and the omission of the "n" is perhaps due to the poet's dialect, but "an" is substituted to avoid confusion with the verbal noun form "a' seinn". **137:** MSS, *m abhaist*; "m" is "mo", and the "o" is omitted due to elision. MSS, *laithein*. **138:** MSS, *bhighin*; this is the first person singular conditional form of the verb "bi. **139:** MSS, *criodhal* for *crìdheil*. MSS, *an comun*; *an* is a contraction of "ann an". MSS, *cuirteal*. **140:** MSS, *A ruith*; this is a verbal noun, and the *A* is the verbal noun particle "A'". MSS, *air n uine*; the context suggests that *air* is the first person plural possessive pronoun, "ar", not the preposition "air". JB, *an uine*, *oirn*. **141:** MSS, *cull*. MSS, *gar n iuntrin*; the context suggests that *gar* is the second person plural verbal noun object, "gur", rather than the first person plural form. **142:** MSS, *shuilein*. **143:** MSS, *diardaoin*. MSS, *a dol*; this is a verbal noun, and *a* is the verbal noun particle "a'". MSS, *an caolis*; this is a reference to the poet's native township of Caolas, Tiree. JB, *caolais*. **144:** MSS, *S a loung*; *S* is a contraction of "Agus", and *a* should be the article "an", and the omission of the "n" may be dialectical. MSS, *fo h aodach*; the *h* particle implies the presence of the third person singular feminine possessive pronoun "a", "her/its", and its omission is due to elision. MSS, *s a ghaoth*; *s* is a contraction of "agus", and *a* is the feminine nominative article "a'". Meek notes of lines 143 and 144 that the poet's departure for Canada was remembered in Coll and Tiree tradition to Meek's time. He continues: "The *Economy* apparently sailed close to the north shores of these islands to allow the emigrants one last sighting of their native areas. She would have been sufficiently near the Sound of Gunna, which separates the two islands, for MacLean to see Caolas. The wind was evidently blowing from a southerly or south-westerly direction. The Thursday in question appears to have been 5 August 1819": Meek, *Caran an t-Saoghail*, at p. 406, relying on information provided in CC2, at p. 287. MacDougall's note in CC2 is as follows: "B'ann air an luing "Economy" a Abar-dheadhainn a sheol am Bàrd is a theaghlach a Tobar-Mhoire an toiseach a' mhiosa Lùghnasdal, 1819. Is ann a mach siar thar a' Chuain Chollaich is a mach an Cuan Barrach a lean i. Bha eilthirich a' falbh á Colla mar an ceudna is an uair a chunnacas an long a' togail a nall thar a' Chùirn an cromadh na gréine chruinnich daoine gu mullach nan cnoc a ghabhail seallaidh oirre 'san dol seachad. Bha sluagh gu leor an Colla an uair sin, is bha grunnan mór dhaoine ai Beinn Ghriseabuil le torr mór connaidh cruinn aca deas gu teine a chur ris an uair a bhiodhan long a' dol seachad. Bha feathachadh gaoithe bho'n deas thar an fhearainn, is tha e coltach gu'n do lean sgiobair na luinge cho dlùth air a' chladach 's a dhùraichdeadh e dol, is gu'm faicte na daoine air bòrd oirre thar einn Ghriseabuil. Chan eil móran bhliadhnaichean bho'n a shiubhail seann bhoireannach, is i suas ri ceud bliadhna a dh'aois ann an Sórasdal ann ceann sear an eilein, is bhiodh i ag innseadh dhuinn gu'n robh i air Beinn Ghriseabuil am feasgar ud is i 'na ceithir bliadhna-deug an uair sin. Bha a màthair leatha air a' Bheinn is ballachan beag mic aice air a gualainn. Bha bràthair dhi féin air an luing, is an uair a chuir e fios chuice an déidh dha ruigheachd thall bha e ag innseadh dhi gu'n d' aithnich e i air a' Bheinn is an leanabh aice air a gualainn.

Theagamh gur e maduinn tràth an larna-mhàireach an "Diar-daoin" a bha am Bàrd "a' dol seach an Caolas," am baile àghmhor anns an d' fhuair e féin àrach. Theagamh air an taobh eile gur ann air Diar-daoin a dh'fhàg e Tirithe 's a rinn e air Tobar-Mhoire gu dol air bòrd 'san luing. B'ann air an t-seachdamh la fichead de'n Iuchar a chuir e a làmh ri paipear an Tobar-Mhoire co-cheangailte ri a thurus, agus is

ann air Diar-daoin a thuit an latha sin de'n mhiosa air a' cheart bhliadhna ud. B'e Diar-daoin a rithist an cóigeamh latha de'n Lùghnasdal."/

"It was on the ship *Economy* out of Aberdeen that the poet and his family sailed from Tobermory at the start of the month of August, 1819. She followed a westerly path over the Horn of Coll and out on the Sea of Barra. There were also some emigrants from Coll on board and when the ship was seen sailing past the Horn at sunset, people climbed to the top of the hills to take a look at her as she sailed past. There was quite a lot of people in Coll at that time, and there were large groups of people on Ben Grishebol with a large amount of fuel with them ready to be fired up when the boat would pass. There was a gentle wind from the south across the land, and it appears that the skipper of the ship tracked the cost as closely as he would wish to go, and the people on board had been seen from Ben Grishebol. Not many years have passed since the death of an old woman, aged over one hundred years in Sorasdal on the east side of the island, and she would tell us that she was on Ben Grishebol that afternoon, aged fourteen at the time. Her mother was with her on the hill and and a little son on her shoulders. She herself had a brother on the ship, and he sent word to her after he reached the other side telling her that he spotted her on the hill with a child with her on her shoulders.

Perhaps it was early the next morning the "Thursday" that the poet was "going past Caolas", the pleasant township in which he himself was raised. Perhaps, though, it was on Thursday that he left Tiree for Tobermory to board the ship. It was on the twenty-seventh day of July that he signed a paper in Tobermory in relation to his trip [this is the agreement with Simon Fraser referred to in chapter 2], and that day of the month falls on a Thursday in that very year. The next Thursday was the fifth of August." (CC2, at p. 287).

Maclean Sinclair Versions:

4: *Gu 'n* for *On*; *tàlanta 'bha.* **5:** *chur.* **9:** *òrdagh.* **13:** *latha.* **15:** *tha* for *bha.* **17:** *ged.* **18:** *chòmhnuidh.* **19:** *Am meadhon.* **20:** "is feàrr". **24:** *mu m' fàs.* **25:** *'S i so an dùthaich . . . .* **27:** *h-olc.* **31:** *mallachd.* **32:** *Bho 'n chaidh.* **34:** *'g a chuir*; *am meud.* **35:** *gu bheil* for *gum bidh.* **36:** *saoibhir*; *a dh' éis.* **37:** *'g a toirt*; *gu 'r n-ionnsaidh-se.* **40:** *féin.* **45:** *am fiachaibh.* **46:** *is prìseile.* **48:** *nan speur.* **51:** *thar* for *far.* **52:** *'S ge math.* **55:** *a cosg* for *an cosg.* **56:** *de 'n* for *don.* **59:** *a bhios neamhail* for *'bhios gu neamhail.* **61:** *Tha 'n reothadh . . .* for *Bidh e cho . . ..* **64:** *'S gun* for *Gun.* **65:** *céitean.* **67:** *'s na'*, "and the", for *'sa*, "in the". **70:** *gur-a.* **71:** *puinsiont* for *'puinnsean.* **72:** *roinn a lainn.* **74:** *'n saoghal.* **76:** *Ro-ghuineach, druidteach tha sùgh a teang'.* **77:** *dhuibh* for *dhiubh*; *ann* for *anns.* **78:** *beathach.* **79:** *liugha.* **81:** *Gur h-iomadh.* **84:** *Gu 'm* for *Gu.* **85:** *An car* for *'S an car*; *gu* for *go.* **86:** *thar* for *far.* **89:** *Gur h-iomadh*; *bi* for *bidh.* **90:** *saoibhir.* **91:** *éigneach* for *èiginn*; *mu 'n*; *aisd'* for *às.* **92:** *'S mu 'n* for *Mu.* **93:** *nan* for *na'*; *teintean.* **94:** *Gu 'n d'* for *Gu.* **97:** *an* for *a'*; *'n Albainn* for *'an Albainn.* **99:** *dollair.* **101:** *nìtear* for *nì iad*; *fhaighear* for *fhaigh iad*; *airgiod.* **102:** *Ged* for *Ach.* **103:** *gheibhear* for *gheibh iad*; *bùithean.* **104:** *pàighear null e* for *pàigh e null*; *no* for *na.* **105:** *no* for *na*; *latha faille.* **106:** *No* for *Na.* **107:** *No* for *Na*; *dhuinn* for *dhaibh.* **108:** *Tha 'n sluagh* for *Ach iad*; *'s na h-uile.* **109:** *ainbheach.* **110:** *shealbhaicheas*; *ann* is omitted. **111:** *nam* for *na'.* **112:** *mur* for *mun*; *'n stòr.* **113:** *na cùisean* for *an cùisean.* **115:** *'n lagh.* **117:** *dùthcha.* **118:** *cunntasaibh.* **121:** *anns an dàn so* for ann *'am Ghàidhlig.* **122:** *chur* for *chuir.* **126:** *'S na* for *Na.* **128:** *dhibh* for *diubh.* **129:** *an sgrìobhadh.* **139:** *comunn.* **142:** *Diar-daoin.* **144:** *an long.*

There are also 144 lines in McLS versions.

Recorded Versions:

This poem has certainly been the most frequently and widely recorded of all of John MacLean's poems; it has been recorded on commercial recordings of Gaelic song from Scotland, as well as on archival recordings from both Scotland and Canada. In all cases, the air to which it is sung is almost identical, and the words in all of the following recorded versions follow closely those of the McLS versions, particular those in CC1 and CC2, once again suggesting the impact of the printed versions on the oral tradition and the wider song tradition.

Commercial recordings have been made of this song in Scotland, all under the title "A' Choille Ghruamach", by Arthur Cormack on *Ruith na Gaoith* (Temple Records, 1989, COMD2032) and by Norman MacKinnon on *Tìr a' Mhurain* (Watercolour Music, 1998, NORMCAS024). Both follow CC1 and CC2 very closely. For example, Arthur Cormack sings five verses; his verses 1 and 2 are verses 1 and 2 in CC1 and CC2, his verse 3 is verse 11 in CC1 and CC2, his verse 4 is verse 16 in CC1 and CC2, and his verse 5 is verse 17 in CC1 and CC2, and his verses differ from these McLS versions in the following very minor respects: **Verse 2: Line 7,** *bha 'n* for *tha 'n*; **Verse 11: Line 2,** *tha* for *bha*, **Line 4,** *a-nall* for *ann*; **Verse 16: Line 3**, *mo chàirdean* for *na càirdean*; **Verse 17: Line 7,** *thoilinntinn* for *toilinntinn*.

Several versions of this song have been recorded from Nova Scotia informants, all of which are to be found in archival sources. In a 2004 conversation conducted and recorded by Seumas Watson of the Nova Scotia Highland Village Museum with two excellent local tradition bearers, Peter MacLean ("Peadar 'Jack' Pheadair Chaluim Ghobha"), of Rear Christmas Island, Cape Breton County, Cape Breton, and Malcolm "Maxie" MacNeil ("Calum Mac Dhòmhnaill Aonghais Iain Aonghais Eòin"), of Highland Hill, Iona, Victoria County, Cape Breton, it was noted by both men that many of John MacLean's songs were well known in the central Cape Breton area in which they lived, but that this song, "A' Choille Ghruamach", and poem 33, "Òran a' Bhàil Ghàidhealaich", were the two most well-known of the poet's songs. At this recording session, Peter MacLean sang two verses, verse 1 and 3 in CC1 and CC2, with very minor differences to the words which are found there. Peter MacLean recorded three verses of this song, verses 1, 2 and 3 in the CC1 and CC2 versions, for Ms Anne Landin of South Carolina; Ms Landin kindly provided me a copy of this recording, and the three verses are almost identical to the McLS version. A slightly more extended version was recorded in 1974 from the singing of Archie Alex MacKenzie, of Christmas Island, Cape Breton County, Cape Breton, by Maureen Lonergan (Williams), and included in her 1974 M.A. Dissertation in Celtic Studies at St. Francis Xavier University, entitled "The Scholar, Poet and Local Bard", under the direction of Prof. C. I. N. MacLeod. The text for the song is taken from CC2, and it follows the McLS version very closely. For more information on Archie Alex MacKenzie, see the note to "Recorded Versions", poem 16, above. He sings the the first four verses in CC1 and CC2, in precisely the same order. Archie Alex MacKenzie's version differs from CC2 in the following, very minor, respects: **Verse 1: Lines 1-3** are missing from the recording, **Line 4,** *chionn* at for *cheann*; **Verse 2: Line 1,** *'an òrdan* for *an òrdugh*, **Line 7,** *Mun* for *An*; **Verse 3: Line 3,** *meadhoin* for *meadhon*; **Verse 4: Line 1,** *'S e* for *'S i*, **Line 3,** *a fhuair* for *a fhuaras*, **Line 4,** *iad* for *le 'n*, **Line 6,** omit *iad*, **Line 8,** insert *iad* before *am fuadach*.

Two versions of the song were recorded by Dr. John Shaw as part of the St. Francis Xavier Gaelic Folklore Project. One informant was John MacNeil, from St. Rose, Inverness County, Cape Breton, who was recorded on 18 February, 1978 (Reel 30, Item A02, Item 0152). John MacNeil notes the following: "Bha e 'fuireach ann am Barney's River. . . . Cha chuala mise a h-uile riamh e. Chuala mi beagan cheathramhan dheth. Rinn e *job* a bha dìreach gàbhaidh math"/"He was living at Barney's River. . . . I have never heard all of it. I have heard a few verses of it. He did just and excellent job". He sang five verses, all of which follow CC1 and CC2 relatively closely; his verse 1 is verse 3 in McLS versions, his verse 2 is verse 9 in McLS versions, his verse 3 is verse 7 in McLS versions, his verse 4 is verse 17 in McLS versions, and his verse 5 is verse 18 in McLS versions. His versions differ in the following respects: **Verse 3: Line 1,** *a bhith tùrsach, bhrònach* for *ged tha mi bhrònach*, **Line 5,** *àite* for *àiteach*, *'s an tog mi* for *'s mu 'n tog mi*, **Line 6,** *chur far a beinn* for *chur as a bonn*, **Line 7,** *ghaoirdean* for *ghairdean*, **Line 8,** *mu fàs* for *mu 'm fàs*; **Verse 9: Line 2,** *'gar fàgail* for *'gam fàgail*, **Line 3,** *'s a h-uile* for *'s na h-uile*, **Line 4,** *nan tom* for *nan toll*, **Line 5,** *Am mathan beisteal* for *Na mathain bheisteil*, *dean e* for *dean iad*, **Line 6,** *air an treud* for *feadh an treud*, *a chall* for *an call*, **Line 7,** omit *'S* before *a' chuileag*, *le socair puinnsean* for *gu socach puinnsiont'*, **Line 8,** *le loinn* for *le roinn*; **Verse 7: Line 1,** insert *a* before *thig*, *mìos* for *àm*, **Line 2,** *a' dùnadh mu chùl nan ceum* for *dlùthadh ri cùl nan geug*, **Line 3,** *dùinte 'dol far nan glùinean* for *dùmhail dol thar na glùine*, **Line 4,** *Ge 's math* for *'S ge math*, **Line 5,** *Ar stocain* for *Gun stocain*, *chlùdach* for *chlùdaich*, **Line 7,** *'bhith 'cosg* for *dhuinn a cosg*, **Line 8,** *chaidh sibh rùsgadh* for *chaidh a rùsgadh*, *dhen* for *de 'n*; **Verse 17: Line 4,** omits *mu 'n* before *tugainn*, **Line 5,** *liathadh* for *lìonadh*, **Line 6,** *'s fheudar* for *'s éiginn*, *a' seo* for *an seo*, **Line 7,** *chruinn-sa* for *chruinn seo*, **Line 8,** *a' seinn mi* for *an seinn mi*; **Verse 18, Line 1,** *siud a b' àbhaist* for *sin m' àbhaist*, **Line 3,** *cùbhraidh* for *cùirteil*, **Line 4,** *na h-ùine* for *ar n-ùine*, **Line 5,** *mo chùl* for *cùl*, **Line 7,** *a' dol* cross *an Caolas* for *a' dol seach an Caolas*.

The second informant was John Shaw, of Indian Brook, Victoria County, Cape Breton, a descendant of Lewis and Harris emigrants, who was recorded by Dr. John Shaw on 5 February, 1981 (Reel 310, Item A04, Item 1807). John Shaw sang four verses, all of which follow CC1 and CC2 relatively closely; his verse 1 is verse 1 in McLS versions, his verse 2 is verse 2 in McLS versions, his verse 3 is verse 17 in McLS versions, and his verse 4 is verse 18 in McLS versions. His versions differ in the following respects: **Verse 1: Line 1,** *Gum bheil* for *Gu bheil*, *ònair*, for *ònrachd*, *ghruamach* for *ghruamaich*, **Line 2,** add *'s* before *cha tog*, **Line 3,** *'n t-aghaidh* for *'n aghaidh*, **Line 6,** *Ma* for *Nuair*, **Line 7,** add *On* before *chaill*, omit *dhomh* at end of the line; **Verse 2: Line 1,** *dhuibh* for *leam*, **Line 3**, replaces with *'S e lagaich sòlas 's a mheudaich bròn dhomh*, **Line 5,** omit *gach* before *car*, **Line 6,** omit *Gu 'm* before *bi mi*, **Line 7,** omit *bha* before *'n taic*, and *an taic* for *'n taic*, **Line 8,** *Gus* for *Ged*; **Verse 17: Line 1,** *ann a' sgrìobhadh*, **Line 2,** *mìosan* for *mìosa*, *is* for *agus*, **Line 3,** replace with *Man cuir mi sìos dhuibh na th' air m' inntinn*, **Line 4,** replace with *Man toir mi dhuibh ann le roinn mo bheòil*, **Line 5,** *an deis* for *an déidh*, **Line 6,** omit *Bho 'n* before *'s èiginn*, *a' seo* for *an seo*, **Line 8,** *a' seinn* for *an seinn*; **Verse 18: Line 1,** *Chan e a b' àbhaist* for *Cha b'e sin m' àbhaist*, **Line 2,** *mun a' bhòrd* for *aig gach bòrd*, **Line 3,** *cliùiteach* for *cùirteil*, **Line 6,** *Shìl* for *Gu 'n d'shil*, **Line 7,** *'bhith 'dol sìos an Caolas* for *a' dol seach an Caolas*, **Line 8,** *A' long* for *An long*, *'na chòrs* for *o'n chòrs*.

A version of this poem was also collected by MacEdward Leach from Angus MacIsaac of Giant's Lake, Nova Scotia (Accession No. 78-054 CB 1 Tape 1 Track 4, available at http://collections.ic.gc.ca/leach/songs/CB/1-04.htm). Angus MacIsaac sang five verses, all of which follow CC1 and CC2 relatively closely; the first two lines of his verse 1 are the first two lines of verse 1 in McLS versions, with the third to eighth line in his verse 1 being the third to eighth lines of verse 3 in McLS versions, his verse 2 is verse 6 in McLS versions, his verse 3 is verse 5 in McLS versions, his verse 4 is verse 9 in McLS versions, and his verse 5 is verse 7 in McLS versions. His versions differ in the following respects: **Verse 1: Line 1,** *'S tha mise 'm ònar* for *Gu bheil mi 'm ònrachd*, **Line 2,** *Tha m' inntinn* for *Mo smaointinn*, *thog* for *tog*; **Verse 3: Line 3,** *fàsach* for *fàsaich*, *an* for *air*, **Line 4,** *as fheàrr* for *is feàrr*, **Line 5,** *àit' ann* for *àitich*, *cuir* for *tog*, **Line 6,** *chuir far a' bonn* for *chur as a bonn*, **Line 7,** *ghàirdean* for *ghàirdein*, *sàraicht'* for *sàruichte*, **Line 8,** *a' fàilig mu* for *air fàilinn mu 'm*; **Verse 6:** Replace with *'S dar thig na dròbhairean 'nis 'gan iarraidh*, **Line 3,** *focal fìrinn aca* for *gacal fìrinn a bhi*, **Line 4,** *Ach cruithidh dìteadh mar* for *'S an cridhe dìteadh na*, **Line 5,** replace with *Dè 's fheàirrd' 'bhith 'g ìnnse gum beil 'san tìr seo*, **Line 7,** replace with *Dar chì sibh 'n t-àite sin gun dad a chì sibh*, **Line 8,** *na speur* for *nan speur*; **Verse 5: Line 2,** *an cèill* for *am meud*, **Line 3,** *ag rathainn gum beil 'san àite sin* for *ag ràitinn gu bheil ur càirdean*, **Line 4,** *a ghèill* for *a dh'èis*, **Line 5,** *meallta* for *mheallta*, *'ga chuir 'gan ionnsaidh* for *'g a toirt g' ur n-ionnasaidh-se*, **Line 6,** *iad tighinn* for *sibh dol*, **Line 7,** replace with *'S dar a thig iad sin an t-àite*, **Line 8,** *iad fhèin* for *sibh féin*; **Verse 9: Line 1,** *'S dar* for *Nuair*, *is mìosa Chèitein* for *'s am miosa céitean*, **Line 2,** *'gar fàgail* for *'g am fhàgail*, **Line 3,** *iad* for *i*, *'s a h-uile* for *'s na h-uile*, **Line 4,** *tom* for *toll*, **Line 5,** replace with *Am mathan beisdeil dar nì e èirigh*, **Line 6,** *Dhol* for *Air*, *gur mòr a chall* for *'s gur a mòr an call*, **Line 7,** *puinnsean* for *puinsiont*, **Line 8,** *'Gar lota* for *'Gam lot gu*; **Verse 7: Line 1,** *'S dar* for *Nuair*, *'s mìosa Dùdlachd* for *is àm na dùdhlachd*, **Line 2,** *dùinte gu bàrr* for *dlùthadh ri cùl*, **Line 3,** *far nan glùinean* for *thar na glùine*, **Line 4,** *Ged 's math* for *'S ge math*, **Line 5,** *A' stocainn* for *Gun stocainn*, *ludach* for *chlùdaich*, **Line 6,** *An dèidh* for *Bhios air*, **Line 7,** *On 's e* for *B'e 'm*, *'ga cosg* for *a cosg*, **Line 8,** *dhùsgadh* for *rùsgadh*, *do 'm brùid* for *de 'n bhrùid.*

29. Òran eadar Iain MacGilleain agus an Còirneal Friseal

Tune: "Mìosa deireannach an Fhoghair"
No. of lines: 176
Sources: MG15G/2/2, p. 137, JB, p. 53, CC1, p. 103, CC2, p. 94, FC, p. 53, BT, p. 73, SO 1863, p. 326.
Date: The date of the poem is uncertain, but it is clear from the tone that the poet had become somewhat satisfied with, or at least reconciled, to the new world, and therefore it must have been composed after poem 27, "Am Mealladh", and poem 28, "Òran do dh' Ameireaga". It is likely that it would have been composed sometime in the mid-1820s, as the question of emigration is still a preoccupation of the poet—in subsequent poems, he generally does not return to the subject—but he seems to have reconciled himself somewhat. If, as suggested below, the references at lines 63 and 64 to reversals in economic conditions are to the recession which afflicted the colony of Nova Scotia starting in about 1825, it is likely that the poem was composed sometime shortly thereafter, perhaps in 1826 or so. It is also likely

that it was during this period that the poet began the composition of religious verse, and it may be that his reconciliation with the New World may have been related to a spiritual renewal, a theme that is explored more thoroughly in chapter 3 of this thesis. It should be noted, though, that Biblical references appear in earlier poems—see, for example, poem 28, at lines 79 and 80—including references evidencing a very thorough knowledge of the Old Testament in pre-emigration songs—and an acknowledgement of his ongoing trust in God—see, for example, poem 6, at lines 103 to 108—all of which suggests an ongoing commitment to the Christian message that began long before emigration to Canada.

Context: The poem is a fictional conversation between the poet and Simon Fraser, the emigration agent with whom the poet contracted to sail to Nova Scotia in 1819. As noted in chapter 2, the poet entered into a contract with Fraser on 29 July, 1819 at Tobermory to sail with his family to Nova Scotia on the ship *Economy*, and they departed shortly thereafter, arriving in Pictou about the beginning of October of that year. The *Acadian* Reporter found that the passengers "were landed in good health and spirits" and that four children were born upon the passage, and it commended the Captain (referred to as Captain Frazier) "for the kind treatment they received from him for a passage": see Lucille H. Campey, *After the Hector: The Scottish Pioneers of Nova Scotia and Cape Breton 1773-1852*, (Toronto: Natural Heritage Books, 2004), at p. 169 and p. 251. Simon Fraser, known as Captain Fraser and Major Fraser, was the son of Captain John Fraser, who had served in the 82nd Regiment, also known as the Duke of Hamilton's Regiment, in the American War of Independence. The main body of this regiment had been employed in garrison duty in Halifax, but some members saw active service in the Southern States. Members of the Regiment were given land grants as part of Fisher's grant, an area between Pictou and Merigomish, Pictou County, in about 1784. Captain John Fraser received 700 acres, a very sizeable grant, at Fraser's Point (named for him), which is on the south side of Pictou harbour. Captain John Fraser was appointed a magistrate at Pictou on 15 October, 1784. He was clearly a man of some means. His wife and his two sons, John and Simon, followed sometime thereafter from Scotland. Simon Fraser's brother John was at one point the only lawyer in the town of Pictou, and he was also the first collector of customs and was therefore usually referred to as "Collector Fraser": see The Rev. George Patterson, *A History of the County of Pictou Nova Scotia*, (Montreal: Dawson Brothers, 1877), at Appendix F, "List of Grantees of the 82nd Regiment, at pp. 458-461, p. 114, p. 115 and p. 217. Simon Fraser was one of the most active of the emigration agents in the Highlands; his ships ran so regularly to Pictou that he earned the nickname "Nova Scotia" and was credited (with considerable exaggeration) with having single-handedly peopled Nova Scotia with emigrant Scots. Edward Fraser of Reelig, the customs collector at Inverness, Scotland, claimed that "during the peace after the American Wars, Major Simon Fraser and others carried out 4,000" emigrants, which is likely an underestimate: see Lucille Campey, *After the Hector*, at p. 63. He was not, however, alone: others based in Pictou were also very active in the emigration trade, including George and Hugh Dunoon, and James Logan. Simon Fraser reportedly entered into the business of transporting emigrants to Canada in 1790, and was exceedingly active over the next thirty or more years in this business. Lucille Campey offers a balanced portrait of Simon Fraser. She notes that the Scottish establishment castigated him for being "an irresponsible rogue". According to the portrait they painted, he "persuaded unsuspecting and vulnerable people to emigrate, took their money and profited from their foolishness and misfortune". However, she argues that, however comforting this

portrayal was to the many people in Scotland who disapproved of emigration, "it was a travesty of what was actually taking place", and that "the feverish growth in the numbers wishing to emigrate was being stimulated by the considerable success of emigrant Scots and the growing realization that Nova Scotia and Cape Breton offered potentially great advantages to enterprising people": see Campey, *After the Hector*, at p. 56, 55. Simon Fraser's record as an emigration agent is not altogether clear, as illustrated by his involvement in the the emigration in 1817 of Barra people to Sydney, Cape Breton, on the "William Tell" and the "Hope", as related by Campey. Upon arriving in Cape Breton, the emigrants claimed that Simon Fraser had told them to expect "provisions for three years, what land they wanted, and farming and agricultural utensils". Unable to offer any of these items, the Lieutenant-Governor of Cape Breton, Major-General George Robert Ainslie, felt that the emigrants "had been much deceived", and directed them to join their countrymen from Barra, who were settled on the Bras d' Or lake, and they took this advice and settled near Grand Narrows. Roderick MacNeil, the landlord in Barra, was, like Ainslie, furious at Simon Fraser, alleging that he had exploited the tenants to make money: "Mr. Fraser acts as a job to get money and his profits would be better in the pockets of the passengers". But Campey argues that Fraser was "much maligned"; he had worked closely with the Colonial Office in helping the Barra folk to secure the land at Grand Narrows, he had sent them salt from Greenock to help them preserve their meat for the sea crossing, and thus, in her estimation, his role as an agent "had thus extended far beyond the task of just chartering ships": Campey, *After the Hector*, at p. 103. Based on this poem, the poet's obvious resentment of Simon Fraser, illustrated in poems 27and 28 had dissipated somewhat, and he, like Campey, seems to have come to a more balanced estimation of Fraser's work as an emigration agent.

Line Annotations:
1: MSS, *S mor mhulad.* McLS versions emend by adding the first person singular possessive pronoun, "mo", which, given both the aspiration of the noun and the context, is appropriate. MSS, *cha laogh m eislein*; JB has *lagha* for *laugh*, which appears to be "lugha", the comparative form of "beag", and the final vowel is omitted for purposes of metre, while "m" is "mo", the omission of the vowel caused by elision by the succeeding vowel. **2:** MSS, *cha n.* MSS, *bhi ga chuntais*; *ga* is the third person singular verbal noun object. JB has *chunntas*, which appears to be a correct emendation, as there is no need here for slenderisation. **3:** MSS, *thanig*; the omission of the relative pronoun "a" before this verb is marked. MSS, *so*. **4:** MSS, *m intinn*; *m* is "mo", the omission of the vowel caused by elision. **5:** MSS, *s*; this is a contraction of "agus". **6:** MSS, *fholbh*. **7:** MSS, *Toisheach, a cheud.* MSS, *an fhoghar*; *foghar* is in a genitive relationship with the preceding noun, and should therefore be slenderised. As noted above, the poet, his wife and three children sailed from Tobermory on the ship *Economy*, near the beginning of August, 1819. In the traditional Gaelic calendar, Lùnastal, the first of August, marked the beginning of autumn, and August would be the first month of autumn: see John Gregorson Campbell, *Witchcraft and Second Sight in the Highlands & Islands of Scotland: Tales and Traditions Collected entirely from Oral Sources* (Glasgow: James MacLehose and Sons, 1902), at pp. 277-279. JB has *de 'n fhoghar*. **8:** MSS, *nar*; this is a contraction of the preposition "ann", "in", and the first person plural possessive pronoun "ar". **9:** MSS, *diumbach*. **10:** JB, *air thùs*. **11:** MSS, *mor an*; though this could be two separate words, "mòr", "great", and "an", which could be either the article or the third person plural possessive pronoun, it is interpreted as a

single word *mòran*, "much", which makes somewhat better sense, given the preposition "le". MSS, *bolich*. **12:** Given the lack of aspiration of *cuir* in the MSS, this is interpreted as a verbal noun rather than the preterite, and MSS omits the verbal noun particle "a'". MSS, *feodh*, *ducha*. **13:** MSS, *dhuin*. MSS, *air cairdean*; given the context, *air* is the first person plural possessive pronoun "ar", rather than the preposition "air". MSS, gu; this is the conjunction "gun", and the omission of the final "n" may be dialectical. **14:** MSS, *ni b fhearr*, *chunntais*; JB, *chunntas*; this appears to be a correct emendation, as there is no need here for slenderisation. **15:** MSS, *S nach*; *S* is a contraction of "Agus". MSS, *uireasabh*, *oirn*. **16:** MSS, *Na n digimeid*; *Na n* is the conditional conjunction "Nan", "If". **18:** MSS, *a chuis*; *cùis* is a feminine noun, and *a* is interpreted as the feminine nominative article "a'". **19:** MSS, *Teannadh*; this appears to be a verbal noun, and the verbal noun particle "A'" is omitted. **20:** MSS, *S*; this is a contraction of "Agus". MSS, *goirreasach*. MSS, *ga ionnsaigh*; *ga* is the third person singular masculine verbal noun object, the reference being to *rèiteach* at line 19. **22:** MSS, *S nach*; *S* is a contraction of "Agus". MSS, *urin* for "urrainn". JB omits "a" before *ghiùlan*. **23:** MSS, *a* appears before *dha*; it is unclear why this is included, and may be an error. MSS, *an Alabinn*; *an* is a contraction of "ann an", "in". **24:** MSS, *deunadh e n*; *n* is the article "an", and the omission of "a" is caused by elision. MSS, *stiuradh*. **25:** The MSS omits the relative pronoun "a" before the verb *tha*. MSS, *uireasadh*; this is probably a misspelling of "uireasabh", used at line 15. MSS, *an drast*; the omission of the final "a" in "dràsta" is caused by elision. **26:** MSS, *Dheibh*. JB has *ceann* for *ann*. **27:** MSS, *bhio*; this is clearly the relative future form of the verb "bi", "bhios". MSS, *s na*; *s* is a contraction of "agus". MSS, *caoirich*. **28:** MSS, *a cintin*; this is a verbal noun, and "a" is the verbal noun particle "a'". **29:** MSS, *Biodh du*. MSS, *am biadh*; the context suggests that "am" is a contraction of "ann am", "in", rather than the nominative article. MSS, *sa n aodach*; the context suggests that *sa n* is a union of "s", a contraction of "agus", and "an", which itself would appear to be a contraction of "ann an", "in". The context does not support an interpretation of *sa n* as a contraction of "anns an", "in the". **30:** MSS, *S*; a contraction of "Agus". MSS, *dichuin*, is "dìochuimhne", "forgetfulness", and the omission of the final "e" would appear to be dialectical, and consistent with the metre. **31:** MSS, *Bi*, *du*. MSS: *sin*; this would appear to be a contraction of "an-sin", "there". MSS, *saibhir*. JB adds *gu* before *saidhbhir*. **32:** MSS, *S*; a contraction of "Agus". MSS, *a bhochdain*; *a* is the feminine nominative article "a'". **33:** MSS, *sean fhocal*. MSS: *raimhe*; this would appear to be a misspelling of "roimhe". **34:** JB has *na* for *mar*. **35:** The aspiration of *Chaora* implies the presence of the feminine nominative article "A'", and this is marked. The proverb referred to in lines 35 to 38 is likely "Faodaidh a' chaora dol bàs a' feitheamh ris an fheur ùr"/"The sheep may die waiting for the new grass": Alexander Nicolson, *Gaelic Proverbs* (Edinburgh: Birlinn, 2003), at p. 197. **36:** MSS, *dhith*; the context suggests this is the third person singular prepositional pronoun form of "dhi", rather than the noun "dhìth", "a lack". **37:** MSS, *an t sannridh*; *sannridh* appears to be the genitive form of "samhradh". JB has *Ma* for *Mu*. **38:** MSS, *Curidh*. MSS, *geannradh*, which is "geamhradh". **39:** MSS, *a dh eiridh*; the context suggests that this is not an infinitive of the verb, nor is it the future tense, the dependent form of which would be "èireas", and therefore could be a misspelling of the preterite form, "èirich". JB, however, interprets this as *èireadh*, a past passive form, which also fits the context. **40:** MSS, *Na bi cur*; *cur* would be a verbal noun, and the verbal noun particle "a'" is omitted, due to elision. MSS, *fiachab*. **41:** MSS, *sgleoth*. MSS, *ga sheanachas*; *ga* is the third person singular

masculine verbal noun object. **43:** MSS, *sa n.* **44:** MSS, *do cha nuair*; the meaning of *cha* is not clear, but it would appear to be a misspelling of "càs", which is the interpretation in McLS versions. The relative pronoun "a" is omitted in the MSS before the verb *shin*, and this is marked. **45:** MSS, *a fearan*; *a* is probably "am", which in the context could be either the nominative singular article or, more likely, given the context, the third person plural possessive pronoun, referring to the men referred to at line 43. The omission of the "m" may be due to elision. **46:** MSS, *crionachd.* **47:** MSS, *air a thuileabh*; *thuileabh* is probably "tàilleabh", or "sàilleabh", "consequence, result". **48:** The particle "a" is omitted before *dhith*, "for want of", in the MSS, and this would be due to elision, and is marked. **49:** MSS, *began diu.* **50:** MSS, *diu, fhiochan.* **51:** MSS, *bhocaine*; the aspiration of this feminine noun implies the presence of the article, "a'", and its omission would be due to elision. MSS, *an deigh.* MSS, *a leonadh*; it is not clear whether *a* is the verbal noun article, or "an", the third person plural possessive pronoun, referring to those the Colonel claimed in the preceding stanza were getting richer. The latter interpretation is preferred, owing to the context, and the omission of the "n" in "an" may be dialectical. Normally, such an omission would be marked in this collection with an apostrophe, but here, to avoid confusion with the verbal noun, "a" is emended to "an". **52:** MSS, *chomhlaich*; this is a noun, and McLS interprets this as "còmhlaidh", "door frame", which is a sensible emendation. JB also has *chomhlaich*, however. The debt problems described in this verse were certainly very real. In addition to any debts which the immigrants incurred with respect to their passage and the costs of acquiring land, there were considerable other expenses which had to be incurred, including basic utensils, seed and livestock, farm implements, and the cost of supporting the family until the first harvest. Hornsby reckons that in Cape Breton in the 1820s and 1830s, a settler needed £50 to £60 to begin farming—and there is no reason to suspect that similar amounts would not also be required in Pictou and Antigonish Counties at the time the poet was writing. Hornsby notes that the vast majority of settlers from Scotland would not have brought such sums: Stephen J. Hornsby, *Nineteenth-Century Cape Breton: A Historical Geography* (Montreal & Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1992), at pp. 57-58. The Rev. John Stewart made these observations in Cape Breton in the 1830s: "Many of our people left their country without the means of paying their passages, the Captain accepting their note of hand for payment when they can; when they have been here a few years, round comes the Captain's agent for principal and interest. Money they cannot have, - their cow is taken, or perhaps their land on which they have been toiling, and the unhappy fmily must begin a new lot in the forest; and at this moment a majority of the settlers have not paid for their grants of land, which may sink them into ruin again. Shopkeepers, too, very frequently cause this relapse into abject poverty. The land is taken in security for the value of articles provided, - many wants must be supplied before the first difficulties of settlement are got over, - the account swells, heavy interest (6 percent) accumulates. Often does the bear take the cow intended for the creditor, the land must go and hard labour with every deprivation be encountered again: Anon., *Sketch of Missionary Proceedings at Cape Breton, From August 1833, to December, 1837* (n.d.), at p. 19. See also the note at line 112, to poem 28. **53:** MSS, *a siorram*; *a* is likely the masculine nominative article "an", and the omission of the "n" may be dialectical. **54:** MSS, *ni e m poca*; given the context, *m* appears to be "am", the third person plural possessive pronoun, and the omission of the "a" would be due to elision. **56:** MSS, *Cha n, doibh.* **57:** MSS, *dhiu, gratin.* MSS omits the relative pronoun "a" before the verb *tha*, and the verbal noun particle "a'" before *gràitinn.* JB omits *tha.*

58: MSS, *Cha n.* **59:** JB has *tuille* for "tuilleadh". **60:** MSS, *Sa bha*; *Sa* is the union of "S", a contraction of "Agus", and the relative pronoun "a". MSS, *nan inntin*; *nan* is a contraction of the preposition "ann" and the third person plural possessive pronoun "an". **61:** MSS, *an ainifhioch*; *an* is a contraction of "ann an", "into". JB has *ann an*, which is consistent with this interpretation. MSS, *doibh.* **62:** MSS, *Cha n.* **64:** MSS, *S a rinn*; *S* is a contraction of "Agus". MSS, *priosain*; this is interpreted as "prices", or "prìsean". The growth of the local economy in eastern Nova Scotia was dependent to a considerable extent on the timber trade with Britain, and as a result of a financial crisis in Britain in 1825-26, demand dropped, causing an economic crisis in Nova Scotia. Pictou merchants had stocks of timber that they could not sell at any price, and many went under. Farmers depended on sales of timber from cleared land to supplement their income and provide what little cash they had, and demand virtually ceased. For several years, Pictou's trade was progress and economic development virtually stopped. Economic problems were compounded by a decline in fishing catches, thought to be due to overfishing, and in 1833, Pictou's fishing export business ceased. See James M. Cameron, *Pictou County's History* (Kentville: Pictou County Historical Society, 1972), at pp. 215-6. It is likely that the references here are to the reverses in prices brought on by the 1826-26 collapse in the timber trade. **65:** MSS, *an s saoghal*; the *s* would appear to be a misprint, and "an" would, given the context, appear to be the third person plural possessive pronoun rather than the article. **66:** MSS, *a dhaodadh, a ghratin.* JB has *mise* and omits the relative pronoun "a". **67:** MSS, *shoil*; McLS interprets this as "shaoil", which fits the context. **68:** MSS, *n aois*; *n* appears to be a contraction of "ann an". JB omits *mi.* **69:** MSS, *Tighn.* MSS, *fad dhaoinibh*; McLS emends by adding the preposition "o", "from", which is required to make sense of the phrase. **70:** MSS, *Leagadh*; this appears to be a verbal noun, as is implied from the genitive plural article which follows it, and the omission in the MSS of the verbal noun particle "A'" is marked. MSS, *as an larich*; *as* would appear to be a contraction of the preposition "anns", "in", rather than the preposition "às", "out of". **71:** MSS, *fuair*; this should be the preterite form, "fhuair". MSS, *fearran.* **72:** MSS, *Sgoirt*; the *S* is a separate word, the contraction of the copula verbal form "Is". MSS, *a shaoireachadh*; this appears to be an infinitive, rather than a conditional form, and the "a" is interpreted as the third person singular masculine possessive pronoun, referring to *fearann* in line 71. MSS, *go aiteach*; the context implies the presence of the third person singular masculine possessive pronoun, and its omission would be due to elision caused by the preceding vowel. **73:** MSS, *chunt.* **74:** MSS, *S nach bu. S* is a contraction of "Agus"; *bu* does not make sense in the context, and McLS emends to "bi", the future dependent form of the verb, which does. **75:** MSS, *A mhuidheas*; JB interprets this as *mhaoigheas.* **76:** MSS, *Mar a*; given the context, this would appear to be the conjunction "mur", unless, and the relative pronoun "a", which can be combined. JB has *Mar a*, however. MSS, *n cor*; *n* is the article "an", and the "a" is omitted due to elision. MSS omits the infinitive particle "a" before *thoirt.* **77:** MSS, *na chomas*; *na* is a contraction of the preposition "ann" and the third person singular masculine possessive pronoun "a", "his". **78:** MSS, *Cha n.* MSS, *leis a bhairlin*; *a* is the dative article "a'". **79:** The particle "a-" before "nis" is omitted in the MSS, likely due to elision. MSS, *a bhi du*; given the juxtaposition with the personal pronoun "tu", *bhi* could not be the infinitive, and would be either the future form "bhios" or, as in McLS versions, the conditional "bhiodh". MSS, *g iuntrinn*; *g* is the verbal noun particle "ag", and the omission of the "a" is due to elision by the preceding vowel sound. **80:** MSS, *thanig.* MSS, *n duthaich*; *n* is the article "an", and the omission of the "a" is due to elision. JB has

agh'or for *àghmhor*. **81:** MSS, *g iuntrin*; *g* is the verbal noun particle "ag", and the "a" is omitted due to elision. **82:** MSS, *deun sa n, so, sta*. **83:** MSS, *bighin*. MSS, *an tir*; *an* is a contraction of "ann an", "in". MSS, *dhuchais*. **84:** MSS, *a n rodh*; *a n* is the relative pronoun "an". MSS, *n tus*; *n* is a contraction of "ann an". **85:** MSS, *Ghebhin*. MSS, *mios*; McLS interprets this as "meas", which is appropriate in the context. MSS, *a measg*. MSS, *na n*; as "a-measg" requires the genitive, this is the genitive plural article "nan". **86:** MSS, *n Erraghael*; *n* is a contraction of "ann an", "in". JB, *an*. Tiree and Coll, together with the surrounding districts of Mull, Ardgour and Lorne, are all in the county of Argyll, Scotland. **87:** MSS, *gu d fhuirich*; *gu* is the conjunction "gun", but the omission of the "n" appears to be dialectical, and *d* is preterite particle "do", and the omission of the "o" is due to elision. MSS, *ri m bheo an*; *m* is a contraction of "mo", "my", and *an* is the prepositional pronoun "ann", "in it". **88:** MSS, *danig*. MSS, *chonich*; McLS, JB interpret this as *chòmhnaidh*, "to stay, dwell", which is appropriate, given the context, but the MSS omits the infinitive particle "a", which would be caused by elision. Also, the infinitive can be rendered as "chòmhnaich", which is consistent with the MSS spelling. MSS, *n bhraidhe*; given the aspiration of the feminine noun, *n* is probably the feminine nominative article "a'". **89:** MSS, *bhi*. MSS, *measg*; the particle "a-" which precedes it is omitted, due to elision. MSS, *n uaislein*; given that the noun must be in the genitive, *n* may be the genitive plural article "nan", which is the interpretation in McLS versions. JB has *a bhi* for *'bhith*. **91:** MSS, *Sa luchd muintir*; *Sa* is the union of "S", a contraction of "agus", and "a", which would appear to be the article "an", and the omission of the "n" may be due to elision, or non-pronunciation in the poet's dialect. MSS, *na seirbhais*; given the context and the plural referents, namely, the nobles referred to in line 89, this would appear to be a contraction of the preposition "ann", "in", and the third person plural possessive pronoun "an", "their", which is the interpretation in McLS versions. **92:** MSS, *Cha n*. MSS, *n ainm*; given the context, *n* appears to be "an", a contraction of "ann an", which is the interpretation in JB, and the "a" is omitted due to elision caused by the preceding vowel. **93:** MSS, *Sleamhain an an loachd*; *loachd* is interpreted in McLS versions as *leac*, "stone", which is appropriate in the context, and the second *an* appears to be a misprint. MS, *dorsabh*. As discussed in the note to "Deoch-Slàinte Mhic 'ic Alastair, Tighearna Ghlinne-Garadh", poem 25 in this collection, according to the oral traditions of Coll and Tiree recorded by MacDougall in the note in CC2 to that poem, that poem may have caused the falling out between the poet and his patron, the Laird of Coll, that may eventually have led to the poet's decision to emigrate. MacDougall notes the following with regard to line 93 in the present poem: "Bha m' athair ag ràdh gur i an "deoch-slàinte" so an "sleamhnachadh" a bha e ag ciallachadh anns an rainn sin"/"My father reported that it was this "toast" [i.e. poem 25] the "slipperiness" that he [i.e. the poet] meant in this verse": CC2, at p. 283. This may be the case, but the line is also based on a well-known proverb, "Is sleamhainn an leac aig dorus an taighe mhòir"/ "Slippery is the flag-stone at the mansion house door", T. D. MacDonald, *Gaelic Proverbs and Proverbial Sayings with English Translations*, (Stirling: Eneas Mackay, 1926), at p. 48, or "Is sleamhainn leac doras an taighe mhòir", Alexander Nicolson, *Gaelic Proverbs* (Edinburgh: Birlinn, 2003), at p. 320. As MacDonald notes, the proverb conveys "[a] hint of the uncertainty of depending on favours from those in high places, and that one's own efforts should be depended upon as the means to success". **94:** MSS, *Mar a*; given the context, this would appear to be the conjunction "mur", "unless", and the relative pronoun "a", which can be combined, although JB leaves as *Mar a*. MSS, *coisiche du*; given the context, this would appear to be the relative

future form, "coisicheas". MSS, *faili*; interpreted as the adjective "fàilidh", "gentle, unperceived", as in McLS versions. **95:** MSS, *du*. MSS, *gu n fios*; *gu n* would, given the context, appear to be the preposition "gun", "without", and this would require aspiration of the noun. **96:** MSS, *air a chairdeas*; *a* is the dative article "a'". **97:** MSS, *storasach*. JB omits *fear*, and has *storas* for *storasach*. **98:** MSS, *shochdrach*. MSS, *a toirt*; this is the verbal noun, and "a" is the verbal noun particle "a'". MSS, *doibh*. **99:** MSS, *sannrich*, which is "samhraidh", as in McLS versions. **100:** MSS, *Le n*; *n* is "an", the third person plural possessive pronoun, and the "a" is omitted due to elision. MSS, *s nagleanann*; JB emends to *glenntan*. MSS, *fasich*. **101:** MSS, *dh iunnsaigh*; the particle "a", which should precede this, is omitted in the MSS, likely due to elision. **102:** MSS, *Dheibh*. MSS, *e n t airgiod s*; *n* is the article "an", and the "a" is omitted due to elision, and "s" is a contraction of "agus". MSS, *daillan*; this is correctly interpreted in McLS versions as a union of the word "dàil" and the preposition "ann". **103:** MSS, *S na faicidh dus*. *S* is a contraction of "Agus"; *na* would be the conjunction "nam", and the omission of the "m" may be due to elision, or may be dialectical; and *dus* would be the emphatic form of the second person singular personal pronoun "tusa", the final "a" of which is omitted due to elision. **104:** MSS, *Chuntach*. MSS, *ri t fhardin*; *t* is a form of "do", the second person singular possessive pronoun, and the "o" is omitted due to elision. **105:** MSS, *toilleachadh*. MSS, *s na glinn sinn*; *s na* is interpreted as a contraction of the preposition "anns" and the dative plural article "na". **106:** MSS, *cusban*. The third person singular masculine possessive pronoun "a", "its", which is implied before the verbal noun and which would cause its aspiration, is omitted in the MSS, likely due to elision. **107:** MSS, *Cha n*. The infinitive particle "a" before *thoirt* is omitted in the MSS. MSS, *a lingidh*; "a" appears to be the preposition "à", "out of", and McLS interprets "lingidh" as "linne", which, given the reference, discussed at line 108, appears appropriate. **108:** MSS, *is airde*; *is* appears to be the superlative "as". Lines 107 to 110 draw on the very well known Gaelic proverb "Breac à linne, slat à coille, 's fiadh à fireach—meirle nach do ghabh duine riamh nàir' aiste"/"A trout from the pool, a wand from the wood, a deer from the mountain—thefts no man was ever ashamed of", or its variant "Slat à coille, fiadh à doire, breac à buinne—trì rudan às nach do ghabh Gàidheal nàire riamh"/"A wand from the wood, a deer from the dell, a trout from the The proverb expresses both the idea that, for the Gael, the produce of the commons belonged to the community as a whole, not the landlord who may have happened to have title. The fact that taking the common was viewed by the landlord and the law of Scotland as a theft was considered a grave injustice by the Gael, and a sign of the landlords' greed and corruption. **109:** MSS, *Mu*; the context implies the conjunction "Ma", "If", though JB retains *Mu*. MSS, *mharabhas*. MSS, *sa n*. **110:** MSS, *mar meirleach*; *mar* causes lenition. **111:** MSS, *Tairnigh*; this appears to be the future of "tarraing". MSS, *go, a stigh*. **112:** MSS, *s cuirear*; *s* is a contraction of "agus". **114:** MSS, *mur tha*; given the context, *mur* appears to be "mar", "as, like", and the relative pronoun "a" which should precede the verb is omitted in the MSS. MSS, *an sa n*; this is "anns an", "in". MSS, *so*. **115:** MSS, *Liubhad*. MSS, *fheill martin*; this is Martinmas, which falls on 11 November. **116:** MSS, *mimhodh*. JB, *miobhadh*. **117:** MSS, *a chuing*; *a* is the feminine nominative article "a'". **118:** MSS, *Tarruing*; this is a verbal noun, and the verbal noun particle "A'" is omitted in the MSS. MSS, *chonaidh*; this is the genitive form of "connadh", "fuel", and its aspiration implies the presence of the genitive masculine article "a'", which is omitted. MSS, *diochal*. **119:** MSS, *Sa sneach e dhomh mu cruachain*. JB has *mu na cruachan*. In McLS versions, *sneach e* is interpreted as "sneachda", which makes this

passage somewhat clearer. *Sa* appears to be a union of "S", a contraction of "Agus", and the masculine nominative article "an", the "n" in which is omitted, perhaps because it is not pronounced in the poet's dialect. The preposition *mu* should cause aspiration. **120:** MSS, *S cuid*; *S* is a contraction of "Agus". MSS, *dh uirean, bi.* MSS, *n iosail*; ***n*** is the article "an", and the "a" is omitted due to elision. **121:** MSS, *s*; a contraction of "agus". MSS, *na biodh*; given the context, *biodh* is likely the second person singular form of the imperative, "bi". **122:** MSS, *an comhnidh.* **123:** MSS, *Bi du, fathathast.* MSS, *mus a beo thu*; McLS interprets this as *ma 's a*, which makes this clearer, as the conjunction "ma" makes more sense here than the preposition "mu", "before, about". **124:** MSS, *sa s math*; *sa s* is interpreted as a union of "s", a contraction of "agus", and the copula verbal form "is". MSS, *intinn.* **125:** MSS, *dh iaradh, fhaotuin.* **126:** MSS, *Fearran.* **127:** MSS, *an deigh, aoireachd.* **128:** MSS, *mu bhios*; given the context, *mu* appear to be the conjunction "ma", "if", rather than the preposition "mu", "before, about", though JB retains *mu.* MSS, *crionda.* **129:** MSS, *chuntas.* MSS, *mo shaothais*; this would appear to be a misspelling of "saothair". **130:** MSS, *Biodh.* MSS, *na s daire*; given the context, *na s* appears to be the comparative particle, and *daire* the comparative of "daor", "expensive". MSS, *fhioch dhoh.* **131:** MSS, *mi ghlanadh*; the aspiration of the verbal noun "glanadh" implies the presence of the third person singular masculine possessive pronoun "a", "his/its", which is referring here to *fearann*, at line 126. MSS, *sa reiteach*; *sa* would appear to be a union of "s", a contraction of "agus", and "a", "its", again referring to *fearann.* **132:** MSS, *Sa chur*; *Sa* is again a contraction of "Agus" and "a", "its", although given the reference in this line to a hearth or fireplace, it is unlikely that the reference is to *fearann*, but perhaps the wood that has been produced from the process of clearing described in these lines. MSS, *na thintinn*; given the aspiration that it causes in the succeeding noun, *na* would be a contraction of the preposition "ann", "in", and the possessive pronoun "a", "his/its". **133:** MSS, *sa n.* **134:** MSS, *a*; given the context, and in particular to both climbing and to a hole, this is interpreted as the preposition "à", "out of". MSS, *a diredh*; this is a verbal noun, and *a* is the verbal noun particle "a'". **135:** MSS, *dugh, trailean.* **136:** MSS, *Innsein*; there is no need for slenderisation. **137:** MSS, *Ge do*; this is "Ged a". MSS, *do*; this must be "tu". **138:** MSS, *Sa bhi*; *Sa* is the union of "S", a contraction of "Agus", and the infinitive particle "a". MSS, *feorich*; this is a verbal noun, and the omission in the MSS of the verbal noun particle is probably due to elision caused by the preceding vowel sound. MSS, *ann s*; this is the preposition "anns". MSS, *Righeachd.* **139:** MSS, *Cha n.* MSS, *tu*; JB correctly emends to *thu.* **140:** MSS, *A tighn*; this is a verbal noun, and *A* is the verbal noun article "A'". MSS, *bhi.* **141:** MSS, *n duil*; *n* is a contraction of "ann an", "in". MSS, *gu rodh*; *gu* is the conjunction "gun", the interpretation in JB, but the omission of the "n" appears to be dialectical. **142:** MSS, *dideadh*; McLS interprets this as *dìteadh*, which is appropriate in the context. **143:** MSS, *ga n drinn; ga n* is a contraction of the preposition "do" and the relative pronoun "an", and *drinn* is a union of the preterite particle "do", which is contracted, and the the preterite of "dean". **144:** MSS, *na thrughan*; *na* is a contraction of the preposition "ann", "in", and the possessive pronoun "a", "his". **145:** MSS, *dh fhaodinsa.* JB omits "a" before *moladh.* **146:** MSS, *S*; a contraction of "Agus". MSS, *an am*; this is a contraction of the preposition "ann" and the possessive pronoun "mo". MSS, *toilicht.* **147:** MSS, *Bho a*; this should be "Bhon". JB omits the relative pronoun "a". **148:** MSS, *Biiodh.* MSS, *a chuis*; *a* is the feminine nominative article "a'". MSS, *na aobhar*; *na* is a contraction of the preposition "ann", "in", and the possessive pronoun "a". However, the referent for

the possessive pronoun appears to be *cùis*, a feminine noun, and so the noun *adhbhar* should be preceded by "h-", as in McLS versions. **149:** MSS, *s na madinin*; JB, *maidinn*. **150:** MSS, *m fheoil, m fhiaclan*; *m* is the possessive pronoun "mo", and the "o" is omitted due to elision. MSS, *s*; a contraction of "agus". **151:** MSS, *S*; a contraction of "Agus". MSS, *ga m*; this is the first person singular personal pronoun object of the verbal noun. **152:** MSS, *Mar a*, which JB retains. **153:** MSS, *toilleachadh*. **154:** MSS, *Cha n, sta, bhi strigh*. **155:** MSS, *deid, dh aicheadh*. **156:** MSS, *dh fhalinich*. MSS, *air shinnreabh*; given the context, *air* is interpreted as the possessive pronoun "ar", "our", and there is no reason for the aspiration of the noun. **157:** MSS, *Abhadh*, which McLS versions interprets as *Adhamh*, "Adam". This is a reference to the Book of Genesis and Adam's temptation by Eve, to which he submitted. **158:** MSS, *s a*. **159:** MSS, *Dh fhag*. MSS, *a meas*; *a* appears to be the masculine nominative article "am", and the "m" is omitted due to elision caused by the succeeding consonant. MSS, *iochd a bhais*; *a* is the genitive singular masculine article "a'". **160:** MSS, *mhaoidh*; McLS interprets this as *mhnaoi*; the reference is to Eve. **161:** MSS, *raoghain*. **162:** MSS, *a t aoghaidh*; *a t* is a contraction of the preposition "ann" and the possessive pronoun "do", "your". MSS, *ni s dini*; this is interpreted in McLS versions as *nas dine*, which clarifies the meaning in a sensible way. JB, *nas diona*. **163:** MSS, *n duine*; *n* is the article "an", and the "a" is omitted due to elision. MSS, *g iaruidh*; *g* is the verbal noun particle "ag", and the "a" is omitted due to elision. MSS, *ailghios*. **164:** MSS, *Edar, bhi*; the infinitive particle "a" before the infinitive in the MSS. **165:** MSS, *gearran*. **166:** MSS, *riu-san*. **167:** MSS, *S*; a contraction of "Agus". MSS, *tha cosg*; the verbal noun particle "a'" is omitted before "cosg" in the MSS, and this may be due to elision. MSS, *luthraich*. **168:** MSS, *a crun a n Righ*. The meaning of *a* is not clear, but in the context, it may be the verb "tha". The *a n* is the nominative article "an". JB inserts the relative pronoun *a* before "tha". **169:** MSS, *ni s*; given the context, this is the comparative particle "nas". MSS, *a seanachas*; this is a verbal noun, and *a* is the verbal noun particle "a'". **170:** MSS, *le chluinntinn*; the aspiration of the verbal noun implies the presence of the third person singular masculine possessive pronoun "a", "his/its", and its omission is due to elision caused by the preceding vowel. **171:** MSS: *s a n, do m ghailic*; *m* is the possessive pronoun "mo", and the "o" is omitted. **172:** MSS, *gratin*. The verbal noun particle "a'" is omitted in the MSS before "gràitinn". MSS, *g innse*; *g* is the verbal noun particle "ag", and the "a" is omitted due to elision. **173:** JB has *air mhaith* for *air na math*; *air na* is "air neo", "or", but "neo", or "no" is rendered as *na*. **174:** MSS, *so, stricochdach*. **175:** MSS, *Soirridh*. MSS, *go tir na n gael*; *na n* is the genitive plural article "nan". **176:** MSS, *lig, diochuinn*.

<u>Maclean Sinclair Versions:</u>

In McLS versions, the poem is given as "Seann Albainn agus Albainn Ùr". **2:** *Cha 'n eil éibhneas a tigh' nn dlùth dhomh*. **3:** *Bho 'n a; do 'n; so*. **6:** *Bho 'n a; mo dhùthaich*. **7:** *A cheud; de 'n Fhoghar*. **9:** *Gur a; de 'n*. **10:** *do 'n dùthaich s'* for *an tùs ann*. **12:** *cur; gu luath-shiùlach* for *feadh na dùthcha*. **13:** *'G innse; gu 'n*. **14:** *Innt' na* for *Ann na; chunntas*. **15:** *uireasbhuidh; bràth*. **17:** *Gu 'n; o 'n*. **18:** *Gu 'm*. **19:** *coille*. **20:** *g' a*. **21:** *M fear;* omit *ann*. **22:** *Is* for *'S*; omits *a* before *ghiùlan*. **23:** *ann an* for *'an*. **24:** *S gun an fhaige gharbh a stiùireadh*. **25:** *uireasbhuidh; an dràsd*. **26:** *ceann* for *ann*. **28:** *ag cinntinn*. **31:** *Bidh tu sona, saibhir, socrach*. **32:** *Cha bhi bhochduinn cur ort mì-ghean*. **33:** *Chuala mi an tùs mo làithean*. **34:** *Sean-fhacal tha làn de fhìrinn*. **35:** *dol* for *gu*. **36:** *Réir gach*

coltais ni i crìonadh. **37:** *Mu 'n tig am* for *Mu' faigh i*; *'san t-samhradh.* **39:** *éireas.* **40:** *'m* before *fiachaibh.* **43:** *'s an* for *'san.* **45:** *am* for *a'* before *fearann.* **47:** *beairteas*; *thàileamh* or *thàile.* **48:** *orr'.* **49:** *diubh*; *beairteach.* **50:** *pailteas*; *diubh.* **51:** *bhochduinn.* **53:** *am* for *a'.* **54:** Add *'S* before *nuair*; omit *a* before *sgrìobadh.* **56:** Add *'S* before *chan*; *dha* for *dhaibh.* **57:** *'g ràitinn.* **59:** *tuilleadh a's* or *tuille is.* **61:** *ann an ainbhfhiach* or *ann an ainbheach.* **62:** Add *'S* before *chan.* **63:** *Bho na.* **64:** *'S thàinig* for *'S a rinn.* **66:** *mise* for *mis' a*; *sinn* for *sin*; *ràitinn.* **69:** *do 'n*; *choille.* **70:** *as.* **71:** Omit *ann.* **72:** *Is* for *'S*; *shaoithreachadh.* **74:** *bràth.* **75:** *fògradh* for *fògar.* **76:** *Mur a.* **77:** *'n comas neach* for *'na chomas.* **78:** Add *'m* before *maor.* **80:** *Bho 'n.* **82:** *'s an* for *'san*; *so.* **83:** *Na 'm*; *ann an* for *'an.* **86:** *mu 'n.* **87:** *gu 'n* for *gu'*; *innt'* for *ann.* **88:** *'S nach d'* for *Mun*; add *s'* after *bhràighe.* **89:** *bhi.* **90:** *'S e bhi fada bhuath' is feàrr dhuit.* **91:** *An* for *'S a'.* **92:** *àirde an*; no for *na.* **93:** Add *'S* before *sleamhainn.* **94:** *Dh' fheumadh tu coiseachd gu fàilidh.* **97:** *iomad* for *iomadh.* **98:** *daibh.* **99:** i*ad inntinneach* for *inntinneach iad.* **100:** *anns na gleanntan.* **101:** Add the relative pronoun *a* before *théid*; *iad* for *e*; omit the article *a'* before *mhargaidh.* **102:** *iad airgiod* for *e 'n t-airgead.* **103:** *na 'm* for *na'*; *iad* for *e.* **104:** *iad* for *e*; *d' fhàirdein.* **105:** *'s na* for *'sna.* **106:** *cuspunn*; *r' a* for *ri.* **107:** *iad* for *e*; *á.* **108:** *No* for *Na*; *o 'n*; *is* or *a 's* for *as.* **109:** *iad* for *e*; *'s an* for *'san.* **110:** *an coireachadh*; *mhéirlich.* **111:** *Is tàirnear a stigh*; *iad* for *e.* **112:** *an dìteadh*; *orr'* for *air.* **113:** *furasda*; *phàidheadh.* **114:** *so* for *seo.* **115:** *Cia liugh' latha*; *Màrtuinn.* **117:** Add *mo* before *mhuineal.* **118:** *Tarruinn*; add *a'* before *chonnaidh.* **119:** *an* for *a'*; *mu na cruachan.* **120:** *de* for *do.* **121:** *biodh* for *bi.* **123:** Add a comma after *fhathast.* **124:** *d'* for *t'.* **126:** *bho 'n* for *on.* **130:** *na 's* for *nas.* **131:** *'S tric 'nam fhallus mi 'ga réiteach.* **132:** *Cur mhaidean r'a chéile 'nan teintean.* **133:** *'s an* for *'san.* **134:** *á*; *toll-guail.* **137:** Add *'n* before *Roinn-Eòrpa.* **138:** *bhi.* **139:** *fhaiceadh tu fear* for *fhaic thu duine.* **140:** *innt'* for *ann*; *bhi.* **141:** *Tha e gòrach dhuit bhi càineadh.* **142:** *Tìr an àigh so is ga dìteadh.* **143:** *dhan.* **145:** *Cia mar dh' fhaodas mi a moladh.* **147:** dùdhlachd. **148:** *aobhar.* **150:** *Gu 'm.* **152:** *Mur a.* **154:** *bhi strìgh.* **156:** *Bho na.* **159:** *am* for *a'.* **160:** *o 'n.* **162:** *chur*; *na 's.* **163:** *an* for *'n*; *ag* for *'g.* **164:** *bhi.* **165:** *o 'n.* **166:** *riusan.* **167:** *o 'n.* **168:** *bho 'n.* **169:** *na 's* for *nas.* **170:** *Mu 'n.* **171:** *Mu 'm.* **172:** *no* for *na.* **173:** *mhath 's mar* for *na math mur.* **174:** *'S an* for *'San*; *so* for *seo.* **176:** *bràth.*

There are also 176 lines in McLS versions.

Recorded Versions:

A version of this song was recorded in 1974 from the singing of Sister Jane MacKenzie, Sister of Saint Martha, of Christmas Island, Cape Breton County, Cape Breton, by Maureen Lonergan (Williams), and included in her 1974 M.A. Dissertation in Celtic Studies at St. Francis Xavier University, entitled "The Scholar, Poet and Local Bard", under the direction of Prof. C. I. N. MacLeod. The text for the song is taken from CC2, and it follows the McLS version very closely. For more information on Sister MacKenzie, see the note to "Recorded Versions", poem 16, above. Sister MacKenzie sings twelve of the verses that are in CC1 and CC2, in the following order: verse 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 13, 14, 15, 20, 21 and 22. Sister MacKenzie's version differs from CC2 in the following, very minor, respects: **Verse 1: Line 3,** *thàna* for *thàinig*, **Line 8,** *air ar adhart* for *air adhart*; **Verse 2: Line 2,** *dhan dùthaich 's* for *do 'n dùthaich 's*, **Line 6,** *na 's fheàrr* for *na b' fheàrr*, *air a cùnntas* for *air a chùnntas*, **Line 7,** *bràch* for *bràth*; **Verse3: Line 5,** *Fear* for *'M fear*, **Line 7,** *'S fheàrr* for *B'*

fheàrr, **Line 8,** *Gun* for *'S gun*; **Verse 4: Line 4,** *a' cinntinn* for *ag cinntinn*, **Line 5,** *thu* for *tu*, **Line 7,** *thu* for *tu*, *socraich* for *socrach*; **Verse 5: Line 2,** *de dh'fhìrinn* for *de fhìrinn*, **Line 4,** *coltas* for *coltais*; **Verse 6: Line 8,** *an dìth* for *e dhìth*; **Verse 13: Line 1,** *iomadh* for *iomad*, **Line 2,** *dhaibh* for *daibh*, **Line 3,** *'S tha* for *'S iad*, **Line 5,** *mhargaid* for *mhargaidh*, **Line 8,** *'Cùnntadh* for *Chùnntadh*; **Verse 14: Line 1,** *toileachas* for *toileachadh*; **Verse 15: Line 8,** *de dh'uairean* for *de uairean*, *mi iseal* for *mi 'n iosal*; **Verse 20: Line 5,** *Adam* for *Adhamh*; **Verse 21: Line 3,** *àilgheachas* for *àilgheis*; **Verse 22: Line 1,** *'n t-seanachas* for *'n seanachas*, **Line 3,** *dhe m'* for *do m'*, **Line 7,** *ghuam* for *bhuam*; **Line 8,** *bràch 'an* for *bràth air*.

A version of the song was also recorded by Dr. John Shaw as part of the St. Francis Xavier Gaelic Folklore Project. The informant was Joe Allan MacLean, from Rear Christmas Island, Cape Breton County, Cape Breton, who was recorded on 14 March, 1980 (Reel 258, Item A04, Item 1486). Joe Allan MacLean was of Barra descent. Joe Allan MacLean noted the following regarding the origins of the song: "Tha siud ann [inaudible; "an òran"?] ris a chanadh 'ad 'am Bàrd agus an Còirneal'. Agus thàinig 'ad a-nall às an t-seann dùthaich gu àite ris an canadh iad Lìosmor [in Antigonish County]. Cha chreid mi gur ann shuas gu ruige Antigonish a tha sin. Agus, an dèidh dhaibh tighinn . . . , an dèidh dhan bhàrd a bha seo tighinn, cha robh [an t-àite?] 'còrdadh ris agus *start* e 'deanamh òran."/"That is in [inaudible; a song?] which they called 'The Poet and the Colonel'. And they came over from the old country to a place they called Lismore. I believe that it is up towards Antigonish. And, after they came . . . , after this poet had come, the [place?] didn't agree with him, and he started to make songs". Joe Allan MacLean sang eight verses, all of which follow CC1 and CC2 relatively closely, in the following order: verse 1, 3, the first four lines of verse 6 with the last five lines of verse 4, 5, 6, 7, 8 and 9. His versions differ in the following respects: **Verse 1: Line 2,** *air tighinn* for *a' tighinn*, **Line 3,** *thàna* for *thàinig*, *dhan* for *do 'n*, **Line 4,** *air a mhùchadh* for *air a mùchadh*, **Line 6,** *On a* for *Bho 'n a*, *as an dùthaich* for *as mo dhùthaich*, **Line 7,** *dhan* for *de 'n*, **Line 8,** *air aghaidh'na cùrsa* for *air adhart 'nar cùrsa*; **Verse 3: Line 2,** *a' chùiseadh* for *a' chùis dhomh*, **Line 7,** *thall an* for *ann an*; **Line 8,** *an stiùireadh* for *a' stiùradh*; **Verse 16: Line 1,** *na bidh* for *na biodh*, **Line 2,** *Gad a tha thu* for *Ged tha sin*, *sgìth ann* for *sgìth leat*, **Line 3,** *ma 's e beò thu* for *ma 's a beò thu*, **Line 4,** *t' inntinn* for *d' inntinn*; **Verse 4: Line 6,** *'S leagadh* for *'S thèid leagadh*, *diochuimhn'* for *dì-chuimhn'*, **Line 7,** replace with *Bidh tu fhèin gu saidhbhir, socair*, **Line 8,** replace with *'S thèid do bhochdainn às do chuimhne*; **Verse 5: Line 1,** replace with *Chuala mi seanfhacal reimhid*, **Line 2,** *neart* for *làn*, **Line 3,** replace with *"Chaora 'thèid 'am bàs le gorta*, **Line 4,** *A-rèir* for *Réir*, *nì 'n* for *ni i*, **Line 5,** replace with *Mun àm am feur ùr an t-samhraidh*, **Line 6,** *crìoch* for *crìch*, **Line 7,** replace with *Sin agaibh mar 'dh'èireas dhomhsa*; **Verse 6: Line 1,** *tha mi dhut a' seanachas* for *th' agam 'ga sheanachas*, **Line 2,** *dha* for *dhuit*, **Line 3,** replace with *An fheadhainn a thàinig dhan àite*, **Line 4,** *dhuinn an càs* for *dhaibh do chàs*, **Line 7,** *thàilleabh* for *thàile*, **Line 8,** *'s èis orr'* for *'s e dhìth orr'*; **Verse 7: Line 1,** replace with *Ged 'tha beagan dhiubh tha beairteach*, **Line 2,** omit *Ged* at the start of the line, **Line 4,** *'san a' phrìosain* for *a' phrìosain*, **Line 6,** omit *'S* before *nuair*; **Verse 8: Line 3,** replace with *An fheadhainn a tha tuille is pròiseil*, **Line 5,** replace with *Thuit iad gun fhiosta 'san ainbheach*, **Line 7,** *On* for *Bho 'n*, *a' saoghal* for *an saoghal*, **Line 8,** omit *'S* before *thàinig*; **Verse 9: Line 1,** *On a* for *'S mòr a*, **Line 2,** *sin* for *sinn*, *a ghràitinn* for *a ràitinn*, **Line 3,** *dhiom* for *dhomh*, **Line 5,** *fad bho dhaoine* for *fad o dhaoinibh*, **Line**

6, *anns a' làraich* for *as an làraich*, **Line 7,** *Gad* for *Ged*, *saor ann* for *saor*, **Line 8,** *a shaothraich mi* for *a shaoithreachadh.*

30. Òran do dh'Alastair MacDhòmhnaill, Tighearna Ghlinne-Garaidh, an dèidh a' bhàis

Tune: "Oidhche dhomh 'san taigh-dhige [-dhibhe]"
No. of lines: 226; MSS provides directions at stanza 1-2 to repeat the final line of each stanza.
Sources: MG15G/2/2, p. 143, JB, p. 21, CC1, p. 111, CC2, p. 100, FC, p. 73, BT, p. 110.
Date: c. 1828, likely shortly after the death of the subject, which was in January, 1828.
Context: The subject of this poem, Alasdair Ranaldson Macdonell of Glengarry, was born on 15 September, 1773, the first child of Duncan, "Donnchadh Mac Aonghais, fourth titular Lord MacDonell, and 14th Chief of the Macdonells of Glengarry, and Marjory, "Marsalaidh Bhinneach", or "Lightheaded Marjory", the eldest daughter of Sir Ludovick Grant of Dalvey. Alasdair Macdonell became the 15th Chief of the Macdonells of Glengarry on the death of his father in 1788, and he himself died on 17 January, 1828. He was also the subject of poems 25 and 26, above. As is suggested in the notes to those poems, the poet knew the subject and was fond of him for his generous treatment. In the post-script to this poem in McLS versions, Alexander Maclean Sinclair noted that Colonel Alexander Ranaldson Macdonell of Glengarry "was a genuine specimen of a Highland chief" who "claimed to beh the chief of the whole MacDonald clan." MacDougall repeats this view in his note in CC2: "Cha robh ioghnadh idir ged a mhol am Bard Mac Ghilleathain Alasdair Ghlinne Garadh mar a rinn e. Is e fìor Ghàidheal a bha ann am Mac Mhic Alasdair an latha sin, is bha e dileas d'a thir is d'a theanga. A réir a bheachd-san cha robh sluagh eile air uachdar fuinn coltach ris na Gàidheil no a thigeadh suas riu; agus de na Gàidheil an coitcheanas b'iad Gàidheil Ghlinne Garadh is Chnòideart an graine-mullaich uile gu léir."/"It is no surprise at all that the Bard MacLean praised Alasdair of Glengarry as he did. MacDonell of Glengarry was a true Gael that day [i.e. the day the poet's toast, poem 25 was composed], and he was faithful to his country and to his tongue. In his opinion there was no people on the face of the earth like the Gaels or who could match them; and of the Gaels in general, it was the Gaels of Glengarry and of Knoydart who were the finest." MacDougall goes on to report the tradition that in 1822 Alasdair Macdonell organised a battle exercise between a troop of his Glengarry tenants, kitted out in traditional highland garb, with claymores and targes, and a troop of Redcoats, as a demonstration for King George IV on his famous tour to Edinburgh. For a song on this event, see "Oran do Mhac-ic-Alastair", by Iain Mac-an-Tòisich, John Macintosh, a Lochaber man who was chief tax collector for the western isles, and who died in 1852 in Glasgow: Donald MacPherson, *An Duanaire: A New Collection of Gaelic Songs and Poems* (Edinburgh: MacLachlan and Stewart, 1868), at pp. 157-160; Macintosh also composed A' Chòmhraig-dheise", "The Suited Combat", at pp. 160-163 of MacPherson, which appears to be in honour of the fatal duel of May 1798 between Macdonell and Lieut. Norman MacLeod of the Black Watch, which resulted in MacLeod's death (see Brian D. Osborne, *The Last of the Chiefs: Alasdair Ranaldson Macdonell of Glengarry 1773-1828* (Argyll Publishing: Glendaruel, 2001), at ch. 5, "The Duel and the Trial", at pp. 83-95, for a full account;

see also Norman H. MacDonald, *The Clan Ranald of Knoydart and Glengarry: A History of the MacDonalds or MacDonells of Glengarry*, (Edinburgh: Norman H. MacDonald, 1995, 2nd ed.), at pp. 143-145), and "Deoch-Slàinte Mhic-ic-Alastair", MacPherson, at pp. 163-165, with regard to Macdonell's ongoing attempts to win recognition as the rightful head of Clan Donald (see Osborne, ch. 10, "Peerage and Precedence", at pp. 191-218, with respect to these ongoing efforts). MacDougall also has two other reports of Macdonell from oral traditions he had heard, and which were discussed in the note to poem 25: CC2, at pp. 284-286. MacDougall's warm assessment of Alasdair Macdonell, from the early part of the 20th century, is consistent with that of the praise poets, such as John MacLean, who were Macdonell's contemporaries, and suggests the ongoing hold of Macdonell on the Gaelic imagination. As noted at poem 25, however, a harsher assessment has emerged, based on a closer scrutiny of Macdonell's actual record: see, Osborne, for example, for a full and current assessment.

The circumstances surrounding Macdonell's death, together with reactions to it, are described in some detail by Osborne in ch. 11, "The Last of the Chiefs", at pp. 219-235. Macdonell was in very serious financial difficulties at the time, and in January, 1828, he set out from Glengarry House, on Loch Oich, to see his lawyers in Edinburgh. He was accompanied by his daughters Marsali, aged 15, and Jemima, aged 13. On Wednesday, 16 January, they boarded the steamship *Stirling* at the Laggan Locks, between Loch Oich and Loch Lochy, and sailed down through the Caledonian Canal, spending that evening at Corpach because of bad weather. Despite the continuing very bad weather, the ship set off down Loch Linnhe the next day, 17 January, 1828, heading for the Crinan Canal. About six miles south of Fort William, the engines failed, and the boat drifted onto the rocks at Inverscaddle Bay, Ardgour. While helping one of his daughters ashore, Macdonell slipped on the rocks and struck his head. He was taken to a farmhouse, had his wounds dressed, but suffered convulsions and is reported to have died at about 10 p.m. MacDougall provides a similar account in his note in CC2, adding that after his injury, he remained conscious: "An uair a fhuaradh gabhail aige dh' iarr e sgàthan gus am faiceadh e le a shùilean féin mar a bha a cheann. An uair a sheall e air a lotan cho mean is a leigeadh an sgàthan leis, arsa esan—"Chuireadh Gàidheal cruaidh so dheth fhathast!" Ach misneachail, treun gan robh e, dh'fhoghainn an greadadh cruaidh so dha, is chaidh crioch air an oidhche sin féin."/"Once he was treated he asked for a mirror so that he could see with his own eyes how his head was. When he looked at the mirror as soon as he let go of the mirror, he said—"A tough Gael would shake this off yet!" But however courageous and hardy he was, this dreadful wound killed him, and he died that very night": CC2, at pp. 285-86.

Alasdair Macdonell's death inspired many elegies such as this poem. Macdonell's personal piper, Archie Munro, composed a lament entitled "Cumha Mhic 'ic Alasdair", as did his personal poet, "Ailean Dall", "Blind Allan", Allan MacDougall (see Allan MacDougall, *Orain, Marbhrannan agus Duanagan Ghaidhealach*, (Inbheirnis: A. Mac-an-Toisich, 1829), and Sir Walter Scott composed a poem in English, "Glengarry's Death Song": see Osborne, at pp. 225-227. John Macintosh, the Lochaber poet referred to above, also composed an elegy, "Cumha do Mhac-ic-Alastair", on Macdonell's death, and a hymn, "Laoidh": see MacPherson, at pp. 194-97, at pp. 200-202.

Alasdair Maclean Sinclair notes in the post-script to the present poem that Alasdair Macdonell left the estate "very much in debt", and that his son, Angus, was obliged to sell it to the Marquis of Huntly, who himself sold it in 1840 for £91,000:

CC2, at p. 106. Osborne notes that after his death, Macdonell's debts were found to be around £80,000, a sum of perhaps £6 to £8 million in today's values, and that this exceeded the estate's income by between ten and twenty times.

Line Annotations:
1: MSS, *fad*; a contraction of "fada". MSS, *air a chuairt*; *a* is the dative article "a'". **2:** MSS, *So n Ameriga*; given the context, *n* is a contraction of "ann an", "in". **3:** MSS, *so fuair*; given the context, this is the preterite, "fhuair"; the relative pronoun "a" is omitted in the MSS before this verb, and this is marked. **4:** MSS, *m intinn*; *m* is "mo", "my", and the "o" is omitted due to elision. MSS, *go*; JB has *fo* for *gu*. **6:** MSS, *Feodhd, ducha*. MSS, *sa n cual*; the final "a" in "cuala" is elided. **7:** MSS, *Alaisteir*. **8:** MSS, *a ghaidheil*; *a* is the genitive masculine article "a'". MSS, *ghloine*; JB, *ghloinne*. **9:** MSS, *Donallach, loinneal*. **10:** MSS, *leoghun*. MSS, *an coillidh*; given that the noun is not aspirated, *an* appears to be a contraction of "ann an", rather than a form of an article. **11:** MSS, *Na m*; this is the conditional conjunction "Nam". MSS, *goirrid*. **14:** MSS, *smaladh*; the context suggest this is a past passive form of the verb. MSS, *coineal*. **16:** MSS, *duillich*. **17:** JB, *tuilleadh*. **18:** MSS, *bhuilidh*; this is a form of "buille", and while it may reflect the poet's dialect, it also preserves the end-rhyme necessary for this metre. **20:** MSS, *n ullaidh*; *n* appears to be a contraction of "ann an", "in". **21:** MSS, *An*; this appears to be a contraction of "Ann an", "In". MSS, *Cill ionainn*; JB, *cill iomhnais*. Osborne notes that Alasdair Macdonell was buried in the graveyard of Kilfinnan, overlooking the north end of Loch Lochy: Osborne, *The Last of the Chiefs*, at p. 224. Dwelly gives "Cill Fhianan" for Kilfinnan. MSS, *sa n tullaich*. **24:** MSS, *ri n*; *n* appears to be the third person plural possessive pronoun "an", "their", and the "a" is omitted due to elision. JB, *coalthaobh*. **27:** MSS, *ceanntart*; the meaning of this word is unclear, but McLS emends it to *ceannard*, which is consistent with the context and particularly with the reference to *feachd*, a troop or army. The military record of Alasdair Macdonell of Glengarry was not outstanding in any way; it appears that neither he nor the men he led fought outwith Britain and Ireland, and only ever saw limited action in Ireland during the rebellion there, between 1798 and 1800. In 1793, Macdonell obtained a captaincy in the *Grant* or *Strathspey Fencibles*, raised by Sir John Grant of Grant in that year, and brought with him a company of about 100 men, all of whom were from his own estates. In 1794, he raised his own fencible regiment, the *1st (Fencible) Regiment Glengarry Highlanders*. Fencible regiments were meant for domestic service, and were only legally bound to seve in the district or at most the country in which they were raised. In spite of this, the Glengarry Fencibles offered to extend their services to any part of Great Britain or Ireland, or even the Channel Islands, and they were ordered to Guernsey in the summer of 1795, where they stayed until the summer of 1798, when they were moved to Ireland to take part in putting down the rebellion there. The Glengarry Fencibles were disbanded on 1 July, 1802. In 1803, Macdonell was appointed Colonel of the *Glengarry, Morar and Letterfinlay Volunteers*, and in 1808 was appointed Lieutenant-Colonel-Commander of the *2nd Inverness Local Militia*: see Brian D. Osborne, *The Last of the Chiefs*, at chapters 4, "Colonel of Fencibles", pp. 55-81, and 7, "The Volunteers", pp. 121-139, and Norman MacDonald, *The Clan Ranald of Knoydart and Glengarry*, at pp. 135-143. **28:** MSS, *eiridh*; this appears to be an infinitive rather than an imperative, and the infinitive particle "A" is omitted. **29:** MSS, *S an*; *S* is a contraction of "Agus", and *an* is a contraction of "ann an", "in". **30:** Lines 31 to 36 describe the coat of arms of the Macdonells of Glengarry. For a good illustration, see the frontispiece of Norman

H. MacDonald, *The Clan Ranald of Knoydart and Glengarry*. **31:** MSS, *fhiabhaich*; this would appear to be the adjective "fiadhaich", "wild, ferocious" as in McLS versions, rather than "fiamhaich", "fearful, timid, modest, shy". MSS, *a chasgraidh*; given the genitive relationship between "casgradh" and "mathain", *a* is the genitive masculine singular article "a'". JB, though, has *a chasgradh*. Perhaps significantly, the subject of the poem bore the nickname "Alasdair Fiadhaich" ("Ferocious Alexander"), which he earned due to the renowned duel, discussed above: Norman H. MacDonald, *The Clan Ranald of Knoydart and Glengarry*, at p. 132. **32:** MSS, *na n*; this appears to be a contraction of the preposition "ann" and the third person plural possessive pronoun "an", "in their", rather than the genitive plural article "nan". JB, *na d*. **34:** MSS, *fir dhudh*; McLS interprets this as *fior-dhubh*. **35:** MSS, *bhar, stiobuil*. MSS, *do chaisteal*; given the genitive relationship with "stìoball", *caisteal* should be slenderised. **36:** MSS, *dhionuich*. The motto of the Macdonells of Glengarry is "Creagan an Fhithich" ("The Cliffs of the Raven"). JB omits *le*. **37:** MSS, *ferrabh*. **38:** MSS, *an sa*. **39:** MSS, *gharraidh*. **40:** MSS, *cnoideart a bharrich*; given the genitive relationship between the two nouns, *a* is the genitive masculine singular article "a'". **41:** MSS, *feirrin*. Alasdair Macdonell's estate included the lands on both sides of the river Garry, as is noted in line 39, and Knoydart, as is noted in line 40. **42:** MSS, *stoilleadh, an gleannach*. **43:** MSS, *du*. MSS, *ga rodh*; *ga* is a contraction of the preposition "do", "for, to", and the relative pronoun "an", "dhan", the "n" in which is omitted. **44:** MSS, *n*; this is the article "an", and the "a" is elided. MSS, *prioshail*; JB, *priosail*. **45:** MSS, *Na m*; this is the conditional conjunction "Nam"; in JB, this is *Ma m*. **46:** MSS, *Gur a*. **47:** MSS, *d chuislean*; *d* appears to be a contraction of "'ad", itself a contraction of the preposition "ann" and the second person singular possessive pronoun "do". MSS, *a sioladh*; this appears to be a verbal noun, and *a* is the verbal noun particle "a'". **48:** MSS, *Iarla rois, Iola*. The reference here is to the Lords of the Isles, who were known as the Earls of Ross and Islay. Like the other eight major branches of the Clan Donald, Alasdair MacDonell claimed descent through Donald of Islay, progenitor of the Clan Donald, and John of Islay, who claimed the title "Dominus Insularum", "Lord of the Isles", in 1354. In the early fifteenth century, John's heir, Donald, claimed the Earldom of Ross by virtue of his marriage to an heiress to the Earldom, and this claim was ultimately recognised by the Scottish Crown sometime after the death of James I in 1437. See, generally, I. F. Grant, *The Lordship of the Isles* (Edinburgh: The Mercat Press, 1935); see also Norman MacDonald, *The Clan Ranald of Knoydart and Glengarry*, at pp. 7-10, and Brian D. Osborne, *The Last of the Chiefs*, at pp. 37-47. The progenitior of the Macdonells of Glengarry, Ranald, was another son of John of Islay, and therefore a brother of Donald, rather than a descendant, but as noted above, Alasdair Macdonell of Glengarry sought the title to the headship of Clan Donald through the courts, and here John MacLean may be trying to rhetorically reinforce these claims, at least in the court of popular opinion in the Gaelic world. **49:** MSS, *Bho na*. JB, *shinnsreadh*. **50:** MSS, *choille*; the aspiration implies the presence of the feminine nominative article "a'" before the noun, and it would be omitted due to elision. MSS, *rodh*. MSS, *n crionach*; *n* is the article "an", which is the interpretation in JB, and the "a" is omitted due to elision. **51:** MSS, *S n a rinn*; *S n a* appears to be a contraction of the preposition "Anns", and the relative pronoun "na". JB, though, has *'S an d' rinn . . . .* MSS, *Alistair, cintinn*. **52:** MSS, *clann Donuil na m buillin*; given the context, na m is intererpeted as the genitive plural article. **53:** MSS, *S*; this is a contraction of "Agus". **54:** MSS, *uirridh*. **55:** MSS, *leoghun*. MSS, *currin*; McLS interprets this as *curaidh*, "brave man, hero", but "curan", having much the

same meaning, is closer to "currin". JB, *currainn*, which has no clear meaning. **56:** MSS, *uram*. **57:** MSS, *chomhduich*, *Lunnain*. **58:** MSS, *bhi*. MSS, *bheus*; the aspiration of this masculine noun implies the presence of the third person singular masculine possessive pronoun, "a", "his", which is omitted due to elision. MSS, *duineol*. **59:** MSS, *na gall*; given the context, this should be "Gàidheil", "Gaels", not "Gall", "Lowlanders, foreigners". MSS: uillidh. **60:** MSS, *s strac*; given the context, *s* appears to be a misprint, and is interpreted as a contraction of "an", the article. MSS, *duillich*. **61:** MSS, *Bhi du*; given the presence of the personal pronoun, *Bhi* would not appear to be the infinitive, and is interpreted as the conditional form, as in McLS versions. MSS, *gu n cuireadh*; given the context, *n* is interpreted as a contraction of the third person plural possessive pronoun "an". JB, *ga n cuireadh*, thus interpreting this as the third person plural verbal noun object, which better fits the context. **62:** MSS, *shraidein*; this is a dative plural, and does not require to be slenderised. **63:** MSS, *cha n urin*. **64:** MSS, *Tighn*. MSS, *a t aite dhoibh*; *a t* is interpreted as a contraction of the preposition "ann" and the second person singular possessive pronoun "do". **65:** MSS, *Aonaghas*. The reference is to Aeneas Ranaldson Macdonell, the third son of Alasdair Macdonell, born 29 July, 1808, and heir to the estate and title. He died in 1851: See Norman MacDonald, *The Clan Ranald of Knoydart and Glengarry*, at p. 157, pp. 163-165. MSS, *chunig*. JB, *Mar* for *Mur*. **66:** MSS, *go*. MSS, *mullich*. **67:** MSS, *ailiche*; this is the superlative of "àilleach". **68:** MSS, *rodh, s a*. **70:** MSS, *churridh*. **71:** MSS, *stalain*. MSS, *go fullan*; given the context, this is not "fullan", "ornament", but likely "fulang", the interpretation given in McLS versions. Given the context, it is possible that the third person singular possessive pronoun, "her, its", in reference to the feminine noun *stàilinn*, "steel". **72:** MSS, *du*. MSS, *n t armun*; *n* is the article "an", and the "a" is omitted due to elision. MSS, *ga m buineadh*; *ga m* appears to be a contraction of the preposition "do", "to", and the relative pronoun "am". MSS, *bhi*. **73:** MSS, *aobhar, achdain*. **74:** MSS, *bhuanic*. **76:** MSS, *Ga rodh*; *Ga* appears to be a contraction of the preposition "do" and the relative pronoun "an", in which the omission of the "n" may be dialectical. **77:** MSS, *miosail*. **78:** MSS, *luc beurla*. **79:** MSS, *n cleachdadh*; *n* appears to be a contraction of "ann an", "in". **80:** The particle "a-" is omitted in the MSS before *mach*, due to elision. MSS, *a*, interpreted as à. MSS, *Duneadain*. **81:** MSS, *gael*. MSS, *n deigh*; *n* is the article "an", the "a" of which is omitted due to elision. **82:** MSS, *piob*; the final "a" in "pìoba" is omitted due to elision. MSS, *air a reilein*; *a* is likely the article "an", in which the omission of the "n" may be dialectical. **83:** MSS, *Bhi*. The infinitive particle "A" is omitted in the MSS, and this is marked. MSS, *na n*; this appears to be a contraction of the preposition "ann" and the third person plural possessive pronoun "an". MSS, *duchanan fein*. MSS, *ac*; this is "aca", and the final "a" is omitted, for purposes of metre. **84:** MSS, *a feuchain*; *a* is the verbal noun particle "a'". **85:** MSS, *bhuanichdeadh*. **86:** MSS, *du, fein*. **87:** MSS, *an tsannruich*. **88:** MSS, *So*. MSS, *bhladhna*; the aspiration of this feminine noun implies the presence of the feminine nominative article, "a'", the omission of which is due to elision. MSS, *iuntrinn*. **89:** MSS, *air a n fhear*. **90:** MSS, *a fasan*; given the non-aspiration of the noun, *a* is interpreted as "am", and given the context, this would be the third person plural possessive pronoun rather than the article. The omission of the "m" may be dialectical. MSS, *a n iunnsaidh*. JB, *ga 'n ionnsuidh*. **91:** MSS, *tlacmhor, shealltuin*. **92:** MSS, *sgairteal, dhiunlach*. **93:** MSS, *ceansgalach*. JB has *sgairteal* for *smachdail*, which is probably a typographical error. **95:** The particle "A", which should precede *measg*, is omitted in the MSS. MSS, *na n gael*; given that "a-measg"

requires the genitive, *na n* is the genitive plural article. MSS, *chleac*. **96:** MSS, *dhoibh, an geart*. **97:** MSS, *Cha n*. **98:** MSS, *dh iuntrinn*; in the context, this is the infinitive, and the infinitive particle "a" is omitted. MSS, *gu fac*; *gu* is the conjunction "gum", which is the interpretation in JB, the "m" in which is omitted due to elision in the dialect, and the "a" in "faca" is also omitted due to elision. **99:** MSS, *an tasgaidh*; *an* appears to be a contraction of "ann an", "in". **100:** MSS, *na m bord*; *na m* is the genitive plural article. **102:** MSS, *Mu*; given the context, this is the conjunction "ma", "if", rather than the preposition "mu". **103:** MSS, *Gur h e m*; *m* is the article "am", and the "a" is omitted due to elision. **104:** MSS, *as a charabh*; given the context, *as* is interpreted as the preposition "às", rather than a contraction of "anns", and as the noun is in a dative plural, the "a", which causes its aspiration, must be the third person singular possessive pronoun, "his". JB has *charamh* for *charaibh*. **105:** MSS, *ri mhairrion*. **106:** The aspiration of the noun *dòchas* implies the presence of the third person singular masculine possessive pronoun "a", "his", the omission of which would be due to elision. MSS, *ri lallain*; interpreted as "là-luain", "eternity, the last day". JB interprets this as *ri eallain*, the meaning of which is unclear. **107:** MSS, *na srol*; the noun appears to be in a genitive relationship, and would be a plural, so *na* is the genitive plural article "nan", which is the interpretation in JB, and the omission of the final "n" may reflect pronunciation in the poet's dialect. **109:** MSS, *Alabinn, sassun*. **110:** MSS, *n duchan*; *n* is "an", and given that the noun is plural, this is the third person plural possessive pronoun, "their" rather than the singular article "an", a reading which is consistent with the context. **111:** JB, *Mar a* for *Mura*. **112:** MSS, *a chlaistin*. **113:** MSS, *mhasgogh*; the meaning of this word is unclear. It could be interpreted as the adjective "masgulach" rather than the noun "masgadh", "mixing, steeping, infusing", however JB has *mhasgadh*. Given the aspiration, this could be the infinitive form of the verb, and the infinitive particle "a" has been omitted. **114:** MSS, *bhi*; the omission of the infinitive particle "a" before this is marked. The noun particle "a'" before the verbal noun *giùlan* is omitted in the MSS, because of elision. The aspiration of the noun "cleòc" implies the presence of either the genitive masculine article "a'" or the third person singular masculine possessive pronoun "a", "his", and given the context, the former is preferred. **115:** MSS, *B fhear*. MSS, *eiliadh*; this is dialectical for "fèileadh". MSS, *bhreachdan*. **116:** MSS, *geur*; McLS interpret this as *geàrr*. **117:** MSS, *Cot*; the final "a" in this noun, "Còta" is omitted due to elision. **118:** MSS, *a chlachd*. **119:** JB replaces *ann* with *dheth*. **120:** MSS, du. MSS, *a ghaisgich*; given that this masculine noun is in the genitive singular form and relationship, "a" is the masculine singular genitive article "a'". **121:** MSS, *claidheabh*. MSS, *a d dhorn*; *a d* is a contraction of the preposition "ann" and the second person singular possessive pronoun "do". **122:** MSS, *gleite*; McLS versions interpret this as "gleusta", but the omission of an "s" in the MSS argues for "glèidhte", and this is the interpretation in JB. **123:** MSS omits the "a" in "gasta", likely due to elision. MSS, *go*. **124:** MSS, *go*. **125:** MSS, *Ann s sa laimh*. JB omits this line, which may be a typographical error. **126:** MSS, *iollach*. MSS, *era*; JB has *eire*, "burden", for *era*, and this seems incorrect in the context. **127:** MSS, *na feilladh*. **128:** MSS, *riathruich*. **129:** MSS, *du*. MSS omits the final "e" in "marcaiche". **130:** MSS, *aigionach*; JB, *aigeantach*. MSS, *eutrun*. **131:** MSS, *a leumadh*; this is a verbal noun, and *a* is the verbal noun particle "a'". **134:** MSS, *du*. **135:** MSS, *du, armabh, du*. MSS, *gheilidh*; given that this is a negative form, this verbal form must, given the spelling, be the conditional rather than the future form, which would be "ghèill". JB omits the *t'* before *armaibh*. **136:** MSS, *du*. MSS, *n*; this is the article "an", and the "a" is omitted due to elision. JB omits

this "n". MSS omits the final "a" in "gunna"; JB has *gunna*. The subject of the poem is reported to have been "a great sportsman of the old school, and as early as 1802, strictly observed 'the glorious twelfth' of August 'in the hills'. He 'never permitted anyone to hunt in Glenquoich, even in pursuit of a wounded stag, and thus when the deer were disturbed from the neighbouring hills they made towards this spot as their refuge . . . With romantic ardour . . . He would go forth in his kilt and remain in the hills for a week together, sleeping in the open air. When a stag was at bay, he would sometimes have a close engagement with him, using his gun-stock or sgian dubh, and, though often in peril, was ever successful . . . .": see Norman MacDonald, *The Clan Ranald of Knoydart and Glengarry*, at p. 150. **137:** MSS, *a mhunnaidh*; given that this masculine noun is in a genitive relationship, *a* is the masculine singular genitive article "a'". **138:** MSS, *thurar*; McLS versions interpret this as *thuras*. **139:** MSS, *ann an frith*. MSS, *na n*; given the genitive relationship between *damh* and *frith*, this is the genitive plural article "nan". **141:** MSS, *bu chintiche buile*. **142:** MSS, *na mhuineal*; given the context, *na* appears to be a contraction of the preposition "ann" and the third person singular possessive pronoun "a", "his/its", which likely refers to one of the deer mentioned at line 140. **143:** MSS, *ad*; this is a contraction of the preposition "ann" and the second person singular possessive pronoun "do". MSS, *d bheusan*; *d* is a contraction of "do", "your". JB omits this *d'*. **144:** MSS, *ann ad*; *ad* is a contraction of the preposition "ann", "in", and the second person singular possessive pronoun "do". **145:** MSS, *na fedin*; *na* is interpreted as the genitive plural article "nam",and the omission of the final consonant is dialectical. MSS, *ga n*. **147:** MSS, *a fregairt*; this is a verbal noun, and the *a* is the verbal noun particle "a'". **148:** MSS, *An am*; *An* is a contraction of "Ann an", "in". **149:** MSS, *Chluinte*. MSS, *na n*; given the genitive relationship between the two nouns, this is the genitive plural article "nan". Norman MacDonald reports that at "Invergarry House, it was customary for the Chief's piper to play three times during dinner and three times more after the ladies had left the dining room. He also played in front of the house six days a week": *The Clan Ranald of Knoydart and Glengarry*, at p. 149. JB omits *ceòl*. **150:** MSS, *bardabh*. MSS, *s na fillen*; *s* is a contraction of "agus". As noted, the subject of the poem patronised poets, most notably Allan Dall MacDougall, but was also very supportive of Ewen MacLachlan. **151:** MSS, *Ann ad*; *ad* is a contraction of the preposition "ann", "in" and the second person singular possessive pronoun "do". **152:** The verbal noun particle "A'", which should precede *Gabhail*, is omitted in the MSS. MSS, *oranabh*. **153:** MSS, *ga sirreadh*. **154:** MSS, *colruibh, sa n*. **155:** MSS, *do chinidh*. **156:** MSS, *An s a n, ga d*. **157:** MSS, *chruinicheadh, na ferrabh*. **158:** MSS, *An tur*; given the context, *An* is a contraction of "Ann an", "In". MSS, *Inmhor gharidh*. This is a reference to the subject's house at Invergarry. **159:** MSS, *an ad*; this is a contraction of the preposition "ann", and the second person singular possessive pronoun. **160:** MSS, *an*; this is the preposition "ann". **161:** MSS, *nach bidh*; given the conditional form used at line 160, this should also be in the conditional form, as in McLS versions. **162:** MSS, *branndi*. MSS, *na ghallain*; given the aspiration, *na* is the contraction of "ann", "in", and the third person singular masculine possessive pronoun "a", "his", referring to brandy. **163:** MSS, *an*; this is the preposition "ann". **164:** The particle "A-" is omitted in the MSS before "Nis". MSS, *a n*; this is the article "an". **165:** MSS, *fialluidh*. MSS, *n am suidhe*; *n* is a contraction of "ann an", and *am* is "àm". **166:** MSS, *a riathrachadh dibhe*; as the noun is in the genitive case, *a riathrachadh* is interpreted as a verbal noun, rather than a conditional form, and *a* is the verbal noun particle "a'". **167:** MSS, *dhianadh dhiu*; JB interprets this as *dheanadh dhiubh*. **168:** MSS, *le riadhailt*. MSS, *na uidheam*;

na is interpreted as a contraction of the preposition "ann", "in", and the third person singular masculine possessive pronoun "a", "his". **169:** MSS, *a fhithich*; McLS versions interpret *a* as the genitive article "an", rather than the third person masculine possessive pronoun "a", and this better suits the metre and the context. "Creagan an fhithich" is, as noted at line 36, above, the motto of the Macdonells of Glengarry. **170:** MSS, *a s cianal*; this appears to be the superlative "as cianail". MSS, *a m bruidhin*; *a m* appears to be the third person plural possessive pronoun "am". MSS, *sa m bron*; *sa m* appears to be a union of "s", the contraction of "agus", "and", and the third person plural possessive pronoun "am". **171:** MSS, *Thanig*. MSS, *teoghlach*. **172:** MSS, *greonach*. **173:** MSS, *Thanig*. MSS, *aigheara*; JB, *aighearra*. **175:** MSS, *Na m*; this appears to be the conjunction "Nam". MSS, *claidheabh*. **176:** MSS, *snaigh*; McLS versions interpret this as "snaidheadh", which better fits the metre. JB, *snaighe*; this fits the metre, and is closer to the MSS. JB, *o 'n* for *bhon*. **177:** MSS, *an a t aobhar*; *an* appears to be a contraction of the preposition "ann", and *a t* appears to be a form of the second person singular possessive pronoun, "do", which accompanies this preposition in the poet's dialect. JB, *Dhusgadh*. JB omits *ann*. **178:** MSS, *Mor fhear*. MSS, *a Sleite*; *a* is interpreted as the preposition "à", from. JB omits *a*. The reference is to MacDonald of Sleat, one of the senior families of Clan Donald. **179:** MSS, *euraig*. **180:** The reference is to MacDonald of Clanranald, another of the senior families of Clandonald. It was with him that Alasdair Macdonell disputed the headship of Clan Donald. JB, *Mac-ic-Ailein*. **181:** MSS, *Iarla Iuntrum*; JB, *Anntruim*. MSS, *a Eirinn*; *a* is interpreted as the preposition "à", "from". The Earls of Antrim were also a senior Clan Donald family, and Norman MacDonald reports that Alasdair Macdonell kept up friendly relations with the Antrim family: *The Clan Ranald of Knoydart and Glengarry*, at p. 150. **182:** MSS, *Dhianadh, Foibeisich, eiridh*. On 20 January, 1802, Alexander Macdonell was married to Rebecca, a daughter of the renowned Edinburgh banker Sir William Forbes of Pitsligo: CC2, at p. 106. **184:** MSS, *a chor*; this is interpreted as the adjective "còrr" rather than the noun "cor", "condition, state, circumstance; method, manner; custom". **185:** MSS, *le chuid*; the aspiration of "cuid" implies the presence of the third person singular masculine possessive pronoun "a", "his". MSS, *daoine*; as this plural noun is in a genitive relationship, it should be lenited. The reference is to the Laird of Strathglass, the chief of the Chisholms. **186:** MSS, *Tighn*. MSS, *ad*; this is a contraction of the preposition "ann", "in", and the second person singular possessive pronouon "do". MSS, *ionadh*. **187:** MSS, *aigiontach*. JB, *eutrom*. **188:** MSS, *Dhianadh*. MSS, *an sa*; this is a union of the preposition "anns" and the dative article "a'". MSS, *chaontaig*; JB, *chaontaig*. McLS interpret this as *chaonnaig*. **190:** MSS, *na n aodun*; *na n* is a contraction of the preposition "ann" and the third person plural possessive pronoun "an", "their". **191:** MSS, *s a*. **192:** MSS, *S*; this is a contraction of "Agus". MSS, *dh fholbh*. MSS, *a n Ceann Finne*; *a n* is the third person plural possessive pronoun "an", "their". **194:** MSS, *na ionnad*; *na* is a contraction of the preposition "ann", "in" and the third person singular masculine possessive pronoun "a". This is a reference to his son and heir Aeneas Ranaldson Macdonell: see the reference at line 65, above. **195:** MSS, *na oganach*; *na* is a contraction of the preposition "ann" and the third person singular masculine possessive pronoun "a". MSS, *innich*.**196:** MSS, *tighn, go*. **197:** MSS, *sa n*. **198:** MSS, *a ghlinnich*; *a* is the genitive masculine singular article "a'". **199:** MSS, *an ad*; *an* is the preposition "ann", and *ad* is the form of the second person singular possessive pronoun that is apparently used in the poet's dialect after this preposition. **200:** MSS, *a cannain*; *a* is interpreted as the preposition "à", "from". **201:** MSS, *dlu*. **202:** MSS, *S tinntein*; *S*

is a contraction of "Agus". MSS, *eibhnis*, *mar dheallain*. **203:** MSS, *beannabh*. **204:** MSS, *S e tigh*; *S* is a contraction of "Agus", and *tigh*, given the context, is interpreted as a misspelling of the verbal noun "tighinn", as in McLS versions. MSS, *dh uinnsidh*; the particle "a" which should precede this is omitted in the MSS, perhaps due to elision. MSS, *chuid ferreain;* the aspiration of *cuid* implies the presence of the third person singular masculine possessive pronoun "a", which would be omitted due to elision. **205:** MSS, *Dheibh*. MSS, *dhuchan*; the aspiration of the noun implies the presence of the third person singular masculine possessive pronoun "a", which would be omitted due to elision. MSS, *fo sgod*; for consistency, it is likely that the third person singular masculine possessive pronoun would also appear before the noun, and its omission would again be due to elision. **206:** MSS, *Leantal*; this appears to be a verbal noun, and the verbal noun particle "A'" is omitted. MSS, *a n athair*; *a n* is the third person plural possessive pronoun "an". **207:** MSS, *fiubhantach*. **208:** MSS, *th fhathast*; the *th* seems superfluous, and is likely a misprint. **209:** MSS, *n chathair*; *n* would appear to the contraction "'na", formed from the preposition "ann" and the third person singular masculine possessive pronoun. JB, *an cathair*. **210:** MSS, *cuiram*. MSS, *a caitheabh*; given the context, *a* is interpreted as the third person singular feminine possessive pronoun "a", "her, its", referring to *cathair*, rather than the verbal noun particle "a'". **212:** MSS, *giulan*; the context suggests that this should be the future dependent form of the verb "giùlain" rather than a verbal noun or infinitive form. MSS, *chlaidheabh*; the aspiration of this masculine noun implies the presence of the third person singular masculine possessive pronoun, omitted due to elision. MSS, *sa chot*; *sa* could be a contraction of the preposition "anns" and the dative masculine article "a'", but given the context, it is interpreted as a union of "s", a contraction of "agus", and the third person singular masculine possessive pronoun. **213:** MSS, *sa n, so*. **214:** MSS, *a chluintin*. **215:** MSS, *bhi*; the infinitive particle "a" is omitted in the MSS, and this is marked. **216:** MSS, *cleachdaichean*; JB, *cleachdanan*. MSS, *coimhneil*. **217:** MSS, *Bh aig*; the "a" in "Bha" is omitted due to elision. MSS, *a n fhear*; *a n* is masculine dative article "an". MSS, *o na chinn*. **218:** MSS, *dod*; this is the union of the preposition "do", "to, for", and the second person singular possessive pronoun "do", the "o" of which is omitted, for metrical reasons. MSS, *mhuintir*. **219:** MSS, *na m*; given the context, this is the genitive plural article "nam". MSS, *dibir*. **221:** MSS, *Ionmhor*. **222:** MSS, *A laoich*; the slenderisation of the noun and the adjectives which follow it suggest that the noun is in the genitive case, and the *A* is therefore interpreted as the masculine genitive article "A'". MSS, *aigiontaich*. **223:** MSS, *leisgeul*. **224:** MSS, *Mur a*; JB, *Mar a*. MSS, *leanmhuin*. JB interprets *gu* as "gun", apparently the preposition "without". **225:** MSS, *eachdridh, Alaba*. **226:** MSS, *ainmeal*. JB, *bu mho*.

Maclean Sinclair Versions:

1: *fada*. **2:** *An America*. **3:** *Chuir an* for *Gur h-i*, and *a* for *seo*. **4:** *M' inntinn uile* for *A chuir m' inntinn*. **6:** *'s an cualas* for *'san cual' iad*. **7:** Replace with *Gu 'n robh 'n t-Alasdair uasal gun deò*. **8:** Replace with *Dh' fhalbh an Gàidheal bu ghloinne*. **9:** *An sàr-Dhòmhnullach* for *Gur h-e Dòmhnallach*. **11:** *Na 'm*. **13:** *orr', tha* for *orra*. **14:** *Bho 'n*. **16:** This is line 18, and have *Tha i* for *'S i gu h-*. **17:** This line is omitted. **18:** This is line 16, and have *o 'n bhuille*. **19:** This is line 17, and have *d'* for *t'*; for this line, have *'S tric gu deurach i 'tuireadh*. **20:** *Bho 'n*. **21:** *Cill-Fhionain* or *Cill-Ionain*; *'s an*; *fo 'n*. **23:** *Bho 'n*; *fhalaich*. **26:** *e lùbadh*. **28:** *Eirigh*. **29:** Omit this line. **32:** *Saighead chinnteach*. **35:** *Air creig dhionaich* for *Air bhàrr stìoball*, but see line 36. **36:** *An àm gluasaid fo bhrataich* for *Bhon chreig*

dhìonaich 's bu ghasta. **39:** *Gharadh.* **40:** *Is bho* or *'Us bho*, with *Cnòideart* aspirated. **42:** *'An Gleannach'.* **43:** *aig* for *do*; *gu 'n* for *dha'*; *de 'n* for *don.* **45:** Omit this line. **46:** *Gur a.* **47:** *d'* for *'d*, interpreting this as the second person singular possessive pronoun rather than a contraction of that pronoun with the preposition *ann.* **48:** *Bho* precedes *Iarla.* **49:** *'S ann* for *Bhon.* **50:** Add *'n* before *robh.* **51:** *'S an d' rinn* for *'S na rinn.* **52:** *Tha* for *Ach*; *Dhòmhnuill* for *-Dòmhnaill.* **53:** Replace with *Air an lionadh le mulad.* **54:** *an* for *a*; *o 'n.* **55:** *curaidh* for *curan.* **56:** This is line 57, have *'us* for *is*; for this line, have *Thuit am fiubhaidh deas, cuimir.* **57:** Omit this line. **58:** *Gu 'm*; *bhi.* **59:** Replace with *Gàidheil Albann fhuair uile.* **60:** Replace with *Buille tha cràiteach r 'a fhulang.* **61:** *'g an* for *gu 'n.* **64:** *'na d'* for *'ad*; *tuille* for *tuillidh.* **65:** *d'* for *t'.* **66-72:** This verse follows line 107, and is verse 12. **67:** *àluinne* for *àilliche.* **68:** *Fear neo-sgàthach* for *Nach robh sgàthach.* **69:** *dàn anns gach* for *dàna ri.* **71:** *Chur na* for *'Chuir a'.* **72:** *'S* precedes *bu*; *àrmunn*; *d' am* for *dham*; *bhi.* **73-79:** This verse follows line 72, and is verse 13. **73:** *aobhar.* **74:** *Gu 'n*; add *thu* after *an t-eug.* **76:** *Dha 'n* for *Dha'.* **77:** *'S a bha* for *Bha thu*; *d' a* for *dha.* **79:** *bho 'n.* **80-86:** This verse follows line 79, and is verse 14. **82:** *an* for *a'.* **83:** *Bhi*; *féin.* **85:** *bhuineadh 's an deuchainn* for *'bhuannaicheadh tè dhiubh.* **86:** Replace with *Bheirte dhuais dha gun éis le làn-chòir.* **87-93:** Omit these lines. **94-100:** This verse follows line 65, and is verse 10. **94:** *no* for *na.* **95:** *Thall 'nam measg mar a* for *'Measg nan Gàidheil mar.* **96:** Replace with *Aobhar dùsgaidh tha aca.* **97:** *'S* before *chan*; *sunndach.* **98:** Replace with *Ach a chaoidh an t-sàr-ghaisgich.* **99:** *Chaidh a* for Thu 'gad. **101-107:** This verse follows line 99, and is verse 11. **102:** *an t-Ailein* for *an Albainn*, and MacDougall notes that this is a reference to "Ailean Dall" who also composed an elegy for Alastair Macdonell and who died the year after him. This is Allan MacDougall, "Blind Allan", the poet to Macdonell, referred to above, in the discussion of the context to this poem. **104:** *as* for *às.* **106:** Replace with *Chan eil sùnnd air gu ealaidh.* **107:** *Bho na* or *Bho 'n a.* **108-114:** This verse follows line 86, and is verse 15. **108:** *d'* for *t'.* **109:** *no 'n Sasunn* for *na Sasainn.* **110:** Replace with *Bha thu d' Ghàidheal fior-reachdmhor.* **111:** Omit this line. **112:** Omit this line. **113:** This is line 111, and have *dhùthchasach chleachd thu* for *dhùthchais mhasgulach*; this line is followed by the following two lines: *Bha i agad gun mheasgadh;/Air ceann dhaoine chan fhaight' thu,.* **114:** *'S tu ag* for *Na 'bhith*; *no 'n cleòc* for *na 'chleòc.* **115-121:** This verse follows line 114, and is verse 16. **115:** *féileadh.* **117:** *de 'n* for *don.* **119:** *de* for *do.* **121:** *ad* or *a' d'.* **122-128:** This verse follows line 121, and is verse 17. **122:** *Paidhear dhagachan gleusta ort.* **123:** *gu 'm*; *ghasd.* **125:** *an* for *a'.* **126:** *eur'* for *era*; MacDougall indicates in a note that "eura" is a synonym for "diultach", and translates it as "refusal": CC2, at p. 104. **127:** *féile* for *fèileadh.* **128:** *d'* for *t'.* **129-135:** This verse follows line 128, and is verse 18. **130:** *sunndach.* **131:** *a leumadh*, implying that this is a conditional form of the verb "leum" rather than the verbal noun. **133:** *Có a* for *G' e b' e.* **134:** Replace with *'S tu fo d' airm ann ad éideadh*, but see line 135. **135:** Replace with *Bha thu d' shaighdear nach géilleadh 's tu beò.* **136-142:** This verse follows line 135, and is verse 19. **136:** *gunna.* **140:** This is reversed with line 141; *iad* for *e.* **141:** This is reversed with line 140. **142:** *'nam muineal.* **143-149:** This verse follows line 142, and is verse 20. **143:** This is reversed with line 144, and is replaced by *Chìte mach air an réidhlean.* **144:** This is reversed with line 143; *ad* for *'ad.* **145:** *Feadain ghrinne* for *Fuaim na feadain.* **146:** *leat* for *gum*; *bhi 'gan* for *leat an.* **148:** Add *'S* before *'an.* **150-156:** This verse follows line 149, and is verse 21. **150:** *bàird.* **152:** *òranan.* **153:** *'gan* for *'ga'.* **154:** This is reversed with line 155, and is

replaced by *Bhiodh an làthair 'n àm iomairt.* **155:** This is reversed with line 154, and is replaced by *'S iomadh uasal dhe d' chinneadh.* **156:** Replace this with *Bha mi còmhl' ruibh aig tional bha mòr.* **157-163:** This verse follows line 156, and is verse 22. **158:** *Ann an* for *'An.* **159:** *Gu 'm.* **162:** *Ruma.* **163:** *Agus fion bhiodh* for *'S gum biodh fion ann*; insert 'n before *òl.* **164-170:** This verse follows line 163, and is verse 23. **164:** *Bu tu féin* for *'Nis on 'thriall.* **165:** *A bha* for *'Bha gu.* **166:** *a riarachadh*, perhaps implying that this is interpreted as a conditional form of the verb "riaraich", though the conditional should be spelled "riaraicheadh". **167:** Replace this with *Ann an seòmar na h-uidhim.* **168:** Replace this with *'N diugh is cianail am bruidhinn.* **169:** Insert *'N* before *creagan.* **170:** Replace this with *Tha, bho 'n thriall thu, gach cridhe fo bhròn.* **171-176:** This verse follows line 170, and is verse 24. **172:** *A bha* for *'Bha gu h-.* **173:** *aithghearr orr',* for *aithgheàrra an.* **175:** *daoine* for *daoinibh.* **176:** *bho 'n.* **177:** *ad aobhar.* **178-184:** This verse follows line 177, and is verse 25. **178:** Replace with *Dh' éireadh Dòmhnullach Shléite.* **180:** *Mac 'ic Ailein.* **181:** *Anntruim.* **182:** Replace with *Triath nam Foirbeiseach gleusda.* **183:** *Bho 'n.* **184:** *a chòrr.* **185-191:** This verse follows line 184, and is verse 26. **186:** *ad.* **187:** *aigeannach.* **191:** Replace with *Bhiodh an nàimhdean 's na raointean gun deò.* **192-199:** This verse follows line 191, and is verse 27. **192:** *Nis o 'n* for *'S ged a*; *ceann-fine.* **193:** *aobhar*; *do 'n.* **195:** *innidh* in CC1. **196:** *spionadh* in CC1. **197:** *'s an.* **198:** *dh'* is omitted in CC2. **199-205:** This verse follows line 198, and is verse 28. **199:** *Gu 'm*; *orr' 'n* in CC1, *orr' 'na* in CC2 for *ann 'ad.* **200:** This is moved to line 201 in this verse, and replaces it with *Bidh 's a bhuirich na canain.* **201:** This is moved to line 202 in this verse, and insert *'S* before *freagradh.* **202:** This is moved to line 203 in this verse, and remove *'S* before *teinntean.* **203:** This is moved to line 204 in this verse, and have *Bidh cur sùnnd de* for *Ri cuir smùid do.* **204:** This is moved to line 200 in this verse. **205:** *thairis* for *fairis.* **206-212:** Omit these lines. **213-219:** This verse follows line 205, and is verse 29. **213:** *Ged-a* in CC1; *'s an*; *so* for *seo.* **214:** *Gu 'm*; *mhaith* in CC1. **215:** *bhi*; *cuimneach* in CC1. **216:** *cleachduinnean.* **217:** *bho na* in CC1, *bho 'n do* in CC2. **218:** *'S tu* for *'Bha*; *dha* for *do.* **220-226:** Omit these lines.

With these changes and omissions, McLS versions contain 203 lines.

31. Òran do dh'Alastair MacGilleain, Tighearn Chola

Tune: "Chan e cumha fear Ile a tha mi a' sìor-acain"
No. of lines: 168
Sources: MG15G/2/2, p. 156, JB, p. 37, CC1, p. 119, CC2, p. 107, FC, p. 80, BT, p. 102.
Date: c. 1828
Context: The title to the song given by the poet in MG15G/2/2 is "Òran do dh' Alisteir Mac Gilleain Tighearna Chola air dha chuid ferrin [i.e. fearainn] thoirt suas da mhac"/"A song to Alastair MacLean the Laird of Coll upon his giving up his lands to his son". In *The Clan Gillean*, Alexander Maclean Sinclair reports that Alexander MacLean, the Laird of Coll, handed over his estates to Hugh, his eldest son, in 1828, and left Coll to live in Quinish, Mull, which was part of his estate: *The Clan Gillean*, at p. 383. The Laird of Coll was born around 1754, and therefore would have been about 74 at the time.

Line Annotations:
1: MSS, *A nochd, i s.* JB, *as luineach.* **2:** MSS, *na m*; this is a contraction of the preposition "ann" and the first person singular possessive pronoun "mo". MSS, *leabidh a tiundadh.* **3:** MSS, *an t ionadh.* **4:** MSS, *a bron*; *a* appears to be the article "am", and the omission of the "m" is due to elision. **6:** MSS, *eislein.* **7:** MSS, *a mulad*; *a*appears to be the article "am", and the omission of the "m" is due to elision. **9:** MSS, *a Alabinn*; *a* is the preposition "à", "from, out of". **10:** MSS, *a thu dearbhadh*; JB interprets *thu* as *thug*, the preterite of the verb "thoir", which is appropriate in the context. **11:** MSS, *Gu robh*; *Gu* is the conjunction "Gun", which is the interpretation in JB, and the omission of the "n" may be dialectical. MSS, *ferrail.* **12:** MSS, *Ga n rodh*; *Ga n* appears to be a contraction of the preposition "Do", "to", and the relative pronoun "an". MSS, *duchadh.* **14:** MSS, *s a luths*; *s* is a contraction of "agus". **15:** MSS, *far*; this is dialectical for "bhàrr". **17:** MSS, *Na m bighein*; *Na m* is the conditional conjunction "Nam". **18:** MSS, *bhi*; the infinitive particle "a" is omitted in the MSS. MSS, *iuintrin.* **19:** MSS, *gu faodadh*; *gu* is the conjunction "gum", and the omission of the "m" may be dialectical. MSS, *bhi*; the relative pronoun "a" is omitted in the MSS. **21:** MSS, *F(i)r*; this would appear to be the vocative "Fhir". **22:** MSS, *Ann s*; this is the preposition "Anns". MSS, *chullthaobh.* **23:** MSS, *duillich.* **25:** MSS, *bhoc.* MSS, *chuid daoine*; *daoine* is in a genitive relationship, and should be aspirated. **26:** MSS, *Nam*; this would appear to be the union of "N", a contraction of the prepositional phrase "Ann an", "In", and the noun "àm", rather than the conditional pronoun "Nam". MSS, *glaoidhich.* MSS, *go.* **27:** MSS, *Gabhail*; given the context, this appears to be a verbal noun, and the verbal noun particle "A'" is omitted in the MSS. **28:** MSS, *eibhnish*; JB, *nas eibhneach.* MSS, *bh aca.* **29:** MSS, *a n*; this is the article "an". **30:** MSS, *reidhleineabh.* MSS, *aitreabh*; this noun would appear to be in a genitive relationship with "rèidhleanaibh" and should therefore be slenderised. **31:** MSS, *folbh as*; *as* appears to be the preposition "às", "out of, from", rather than a contraction of "anns". **32:** MSS, *Ge do earb*; JB adds, correctly, *dh'* before *earb.* MSS, *ri d mhaciad*; *mhaciad* is interpreted as two separate words, as in McLS versions. **33:** MSS, *bhi*; *go.* MSS omits the article "an" before *lathair.* **34:** MSS, *Roidh.* MSS, *luchd daimh*; given the context, the third person singular masculine possessive pronoun appears to be implied before this, and is omitted likely due to elision. MSS, *chul taice.* **35:** MSS, *armuin.* **36:** MSS, *ghnathich.* **37:** MSS, *Gur a h ainmhfhioch.* MSS, *ri bheo*; the aspiration of the noun implies the presence of the third person singular masculine possessive pronoun "a", his, which is omitted due to elision. **38:** MSS, *Dol*; this appears to be a verbal noun, and the verbal noun particle "A'" is omitted. MSS, *na ghlachdadh*; *na* is a contraction of the preposition "ann" and the third person singular masculine possessive pronoun "a". JB, *glacaibh.* **39:** MSS, *Mur a seasabh e*; *seasabh* appears to be the conditional form "seasadh". **40:** MSS, *An nadir*; *An* appears to be a contraction of the preposition "Ann an", "In". MSS, *sa n*; this appears to be a union of "s", a contraction of "agus", and the article "an". JB, *cleachdain.* **41:** MSS, *Be, cleachduin.* **42:** MSS, *Bhi*; the infinitive particle "A" is omitted in the MSS. **43:** MSS, *Bhi*; the infinitive particle "A" is omitted in the MSS. **44:** MSS, *bhi*; the infinitive particle "a" is omitted in the MSS. **45:** MSS, *ioraiseal.* **46:** MSS, *tlac.* **47:** MSS, *tiunntadh du, aoghaidh.* **48:** MSS, *du, raoghain.* MSS, *a ghaisgidh*; the noun is in the genitive case, and *a* is the masculine genitive article "a'". **49:** MSS, *du cennart.* **50:** MSS, *go.* MSS, *as*; this is the preposition "às". MSS, *doibh.* **53:** MSS, *An am*; *An* is a contraction of the preposition "Ann". MSS, *diu.* **54:** MSS, *phairt*; the aspiration of this feminine noun implies the presence of the feminine

nominative article "a'", which is omitted due to elision. **55:** MSS, *Sa chuid*; the aspiration of the noun suggests that *Sa* is a contraction of the prepositional pronoun "Anns a'". JB omits "ac'". **56:** MSS, *Go s a*; *Go s* is interpreted as the conjunction "Gus", and "a" is the relative pronoun "am", and the omission of the "m" is likely dialectical, due to elision. **57:** MSS, *Gu bu Chennard*; *Gu* appears to be the conjunction "Gum", which is the interpretation in JB, and the omission of the "m" is likely dialectical, due to elision. MSS, *roi shludh*. **58:** MSS, *go*. **59:** MSS, *a thional*; given the context, this would not be a verbal noun, but would appear to be the preterite form, which is consistent with the context and references. JB emends to *tional*, interpreting this as a verbal noun. **60:** MSS, *A n am*; *A n* appears to be a contraction of the preposition "Ann an", "In". **61:** MSS, *fonnbhor*. MSS, *ga gleusadh*; given the context, *ga* is the third person singular verbal noun object. **62:** MSS, *aig a ceula*; McLS interprets *ceula* as *cèile*. MSS, *fo achlais*; given the context, the third person singular masculine possessive pronoun "a" appears to be implied before the noun, and is omitted due to elision. **63:** MSS, *air n armachd*; *air* appears to be the first person plural possessive pronoun "ar". **64:** MSS, *nar gaisgeadh*; *nar* is a contraction of the preposition "ann" and the first person plural possessive pronoun "ar". JB, *ma 'r*; a contraction of the preposition "mu", "about", and the first person plural possessive pronoun "ar". **65:** MSS, *loung*. The references in this verse are to the coat of arms of the Lairds of Coll. **66:** MSS, *an t eun, bhoiche*. **67:** MSS, *A lamh dhearg*; given the context, *A* appears to be the article "An" rather than the third person singular possessive pronoun, and the omission of the "n" may be dialectical. MSS, *s an*; *s* is a contraction of "agus". MSS, *tuadh*. **68:** MSS, *an ordan*; *an* appears to be a contraction of the preposition "ann an", "in". JB has *an tarruing* for *a tarraing*. **69:** This appears to be a quote from the clan motto, and is therefore marked as such. MSS, *ceannsuich, basich*. **70:** MSS, *lannris*; this is interpreted in JB as "làmh ris". MSS, *a chomdaich*; *a* is interpreted as the dative masculine article "a'". **71:** MSS, *Gu rodh*; *Gu* is the conjunction "Gun", which is the interpretation in JB, and the omission of the "n" may be dialectical, caused by elision with the subsequent consonant. MSS, *n dream*; *n* is the article "an", and the omission of the "a" may be due to elision. MSS, *bho na*. **72:** MSS, *Ann s na blarabh*; *Ann s* is the preposition "Anns". JB, *Ann an blaraibh*. MSS, *ma leoghuin*; given the context, *ma* would appear to be the conjunction "mar". **73:** MSS, *Leann*. MSS, *shinnshreabh*; this is "sinnsearaibh", but the metre requires a syllable to be dropped, resulting in a contraction. **74:** MSS, *S gu m*; *S* is a contraction of "Agus". MSS, *a seorsa*; *a* would appear to be the third person plural possessive pronoun "an", and the omission of the "n" would appear to be dialectical. McLS versions interpret this as *an*. Given the context, and the non-aspiration of the noun, *a* would not appear to be the third person singular masculine possessive pronoun. **75:** MSS, *choille*; the aspiration of the noun implies the presence of the feminine nominative article "a'", which is omitted due to elision. MSS, *ro n crionach*; McLS versions interpret *ro* as the dependent form of the preterite, "robh", but the MSS omits the relative pronoun "an" which should precede it. *n* appears to be the article "an", and the omission of the "a" is due to elision. **76:** MSS, *As na riamhuichadh*; *As* appears to be a contraction of the preposition "Anns", and "riamhuichadh" appears to be the conditional form of the verb "freumhaich", which is the interpretation in McLS versions. **77:** MSS, *daragabh*. **78:** MSS, *air namhuid*; given the context, *air* appears to be the first person plural possessive pronoun "ar". MSS, *na m bochdain*; given the context *na m* appears to be a contraction of the preposition "ann" and the third person plural possessive pronoun "am". **79:** MSS, *na n*; this appears to be the genitive plural

article "nan". **80:** MSS, *ann s a*; this is the preposition "anns" and the dative article "a'". MSS, *cothail*; McLS interprets as *còmhdhail*, which is appropriate, given the context, but JB has *chomhail*, another acceptable form of this noun and which is closer to the MSS. **81:** MSS, *du n t Alasteir*. MSS, *cliuteach*. **82:** MSS, *goruich*. **83:** MSS, *S*; this is a contraction of "Agus". MSS, *ligeadh*, *cearbuich*. **84:** MSS, *A on*. MSS, *n coir bh uait*; *n* is the article "an", and the "a" is omitted due to elision. **85:** MSS, *siobhalta*. MSS, *coimhneal*. **86:** MSS, *fhotus*. **88:** MSS, *nach fhuilleadh*; McLS interprets this as *fuilingeadh*, which is appropriate, given the context. **89:** MSS, *chanmpa*. **90:** MSS, *du sa n*. *sa n* is a contraction of the prepositional phrase "anns an". MSS, *a d choirneal*; *a d* is a contraction of the preposition "ann" and the second person singular possessive pronoun. **91:** MSS, *sionalar gallta*. **92:** MSS, *Tighin*; this appears to be a verbal noun, and the verbal noun particle "A'" which should precede it is omitted. MSS, *a shealltuin*. **93:** MSS, *uram*. MSS, *do d*; *d* is the second person singular possessive pronoun. MSS, *dhaoinibh*. **94:** MSS, *sa folum*; given that the noun is not lenited, *sa* appears to be the union of "s", a contraction of "agus", and "a", which is the article "am", and the omission of the "m" is likely dialectical, and caused by elision in the poet's dialect. MSS: foghlum. **95:** MSS, *fhaotuin*; the aspiration of the verbal noun implies the presence of the third person singular masculine possessive pronoun, the omission of which is due to elision. **96:** MSS, *du bhi*; the infinitive particle "a" is omitted in the MSS, likely due to elision. MSS, *ga sealadh*; McLS versions have *gan*, but *ga* is interpreted here as the third person singular feminine verbal noun object pronoun. JB, *seòladh* for *sealadh*. **97:** MSS, *comhlath*. **98:** MSS, *S a*; *S* appears to be a contraction of "Agus", and the *a* is the relative pronoun. MSS, *a n iomairt*; *a n* is the article "an". **99:** MSS, *thiann*. **100:** MSS, *Thoirt*; this appears to be an infinitive, and the infinitive particle "A" which should precede it is omitted. **101:** MSS, *an a t aodun*; *an* is the preposition "ann", "in" and *a t* is the form of the second person singular possessive pronoun which accompanies the preposition "ann" in this dialect. **103:** MSS, *comharath*; McLS versions interpret this as *comharradh*. **104:** MSS, *S bha fhuil*; *S* is a contraction of "Agus", and the aspiration of the noun implies the presence of the third person singular masculine possessive pronoun, which is omitted due to elision. The MSS version ends with *chraobhadh*, and omits *a' sileadh*, which both JB and McLS versions include. This emendation would be required both to complete the meaning of the line and to satisfy the metre. **105:** MSS, *du*. **106:** MSS, *arduich*. **107:** MSS, *glachadh du staillein*. **108:** MSS, *namhuid*. **109:** MSS, *S du*; *S* is a contraction of "Agus". **110:** MSS, *Leis a ghairdein*; *a* is the dative masculine article "a'". MSS, *rodh*; the relative pronoun "an" is omitted before this verb; JB adds it, as *'n*. **111:** MSS, *Sa sheasadh*; *Sa* is the union of "S", a contraction of "Agus", and the relative pronoun "a". **112:** MSS, *go*, *shlinnein*. **113:** MSS, *digiedh*. **114:** MSS, *ga d*; this is the second person singular personal pronoun object of the verbal noun, "'gad". MSS, *chonadh*; McLS interprets this as *còmhnadh*, but "conbhadh", "rage, fury", or "cònadh", "assistance, aid, relief", may also be appropriate. **115:** MSS, *fein*. **116:** MSS, *beumanach*. **118:** MSS, *ann s an*; this is the prepositional form "anns" with the article "an". **122:** MSS, *buchoir*. **123:** MSS, *bo*. MSS, *rid ghualin*; *rid* is the union of the preposition "ri" and the second person singular possessive pronoun "do", the "o" in which is omitted for the purposes of metre. **124:** MSS, *Thigead*, *uaislein*. **125:** MSS, *Chlann Chameroin*. **126:** MSS, *Locha*; the correct spelling is *Lochaidh*, as in McLS versions, but the MSS spelling better preserves the end rhyme. JB, *meanach* for *meanmnach*. **127:** MSS, *a Mhorrair*. MSS, *a Sleite*; *a* is interpreted as the preposition "à", "from". **128:** MSS,

Donuill. JB, *Cloinn Domhnull*. **129:** MSS, *Bu du n t*; *n* is the article "an", and the "a" is omitted due to elision. MSS, *ferrin*. **130:** MSS, *Ga rodh*; *Ga* is a contraction of the preposition "Do" and the relative pronoun "an", the "n" in which is omitted, perhaps due to omission in the poet's dialect. **131:** MSS, *dhuine*; the aspiration of this noun, together with the context, implies the presence of second person possessive pronoun "do", together with the preposition "ann" , and this contraction, "'ad" is omitted in the MSS. JB interprets the aspiration in this way, and adds *d'*. **132:** MSS, *S a bha*; *S* is a contraction of "agus". MSS, *n Alabinn*; *n* is a contraction of the prepositional phrase "ann an", "in". MSS, *fad m eolais*; *m* is the first person singular possessive pronoun "mo", and the "o" is omitted due to elision. **133:** MSS, *Do dh fhear, uthard*. **134:** MSS, *S gu rodh*; *S* is a contraction of "Agus", and *gu* is the conjunction "gun", which is the interpretation in JB, and the omission of the "n" may be dialectical. MSS, *nib u lear an*; *ni* appears to be a dialectical variant of the comparative particle "na", and McLS versions interpret *lear* as the adjective *leoir*, "sufficiency". JB, *leir* for *lear*. **135:** MSS, *tuilleadh a bhuanachd*; *a* appears to be a form of the preposition "de", "of". **136:** JB, *na bu mho*. **137:** MSS, *du n Duneudain*; *n* is a contraction of the prepositional phrase "ann an", "in". **138:** MSS, bo. MSS, *bhi*; the infinitive particle "a" is omitted in the MSS. **139:** MSS, *na riaislin*; McLS and JB interpret this as *nan uaislean*, a genitive formation, but the *n* is the genitive article "nan" is omitted, perhaps due to dialect. **140:** MSS, *bhordabh*. **142:** MSS, *A d theoghlach*; *A d* is a contraction of the preposition "Ann", "in" and the second person singular possessive pronoun "do". MSS, *prishail*; this should be aspirated, as in McLS versions. MSS, *gu soradh*; the context suggest that *gu* is the preposition "gun", "without", as in McLS versions, and the omission of the "n" may be dialectical. **143:** MSS, *Ga, ga*; in both cases this is the third person masculine object of the verbal noun, "'ga". **144:** MSS, *fialuidh*. MSS, *le storas*; the context implies the third person singular possessive pronoun "a", "his", and its omission may be due to elision. **145:** MSS, *Nam bhi*. Given the context, and the presence of the infinitive "bhith", *Nam* is interpreted as a union of "N", a contraction of "Ann an", and the noun "àm". The infinitive particle "a" is omitted. MSS, *tarruing*; this is a verbal noun, and the verbal noun particle "a'" is omitted. MSS, *a dh iunnsuigh*. **146:** MSS, *duchais, do chomhnidh*. **147:** MSS, *fo h uidheam*; the particle *h* implies the presence of the third person singular feminine possessive pronoun "a", "her/its", omitted due to elision. JB omits "h-". **148:** MSS, *Roi na sruitheabh*. MSS, *ad chothail*; *ad* is a contraction of the preposition "ann" and the second person singular possessive pronoun "do". McLS versions interpret *chothail* as *chòmhdhail*. **150:** MSS, *Tighinn*; this appears to be a verbal noun, and the verbal noun particle "a'" is omitted. MSS, *a n airde*. MSS, *soeadh*; McLS interprets this as *Sòaidh*, which is correct, as the reference would appear to be to the small island of Soay, or Soa, which lies at the mouth of Loch Bhreacachadh, on which the Laird's castle was situated. One would have to round Soay to enter the Loch. JB has *socadh*, from the verb "soc", "to fit a plough with a sock, to point", and this seems strained. **151:** MSS, *cannan*. **152:** MSS, *ann ad bhaile*; *ad* is the contraction that the poet often uses when the second person singular possessive pronoun appears with the preposition "ann". **153:** MSS, *uram, ga stiuradh*. **155:** MSS, *du*. MSS, *a h achain*; this is interpreted as "acfhuinn", "apparatus, harness". Given the references to the Laird's skills as a horseman at lines 157-160, this interpretation could quite literally refer to the harness of a horse, but could also be in reference to the rigging of the ship referred to in the previous verse; in any case, it ties together quite nicely the two sets of imagery. JB, *achdainn*; the meaning of this is unclear. **156:** MSS, *ghlachdadh du*; given the

presence of the personal pronoun, this is interpreted as a conditional form rather than the infinitive. MSS, *dhor i.* The aspiration of the noun (in the context of the direct address to the subject of the poem) implies the presence of the second person singular possessive pronoun "do", likely contracted with the preposition "ann", to form "ad", and its omission would appear to be due to the need to preserve the metre. Given the context, *dhor* is interpreted as "dorn", "fist". **157:** MSS, *du marcaich*; the final "e" in this noun is omitted. MSS, *na sran each*; given the lack of slenderisation in the compound noun, it is interpreted as a genitive plural form, and *na* is the article "nan", the omission of the final "n" in which may be dialectical. **158:** MSS, *Bheiridh.* MSS, *air a stoladh*; given the context, *a* is interpreted as the third person singular feminine possessive pronoun, in reference to the horse. **159:** MSS, *du dhiollaid.* The aspiration of the noun (in the context of the direct address to the subject of the poem) implies the presence of the second person singular possessive pronoun "do", likely contracted with the preposition "ann", to form "ad", and its omission would appear to be due to the need to preserve the metre. This is the interpretation in JB, where *d'* is added. **160:** MSS, *sbuir giar*; as the noun is plural, its slenderisation would cause the adjective to lenite. MSS, *bhotain.* **161:** MSS, *labhrin.* **162:** MSS, *fearraghleas.* JB omits *'s.* **163:** MSS, *Cha b fhullair*; JB, *cha b' uilear.* **164:** MSS, *Chur*; this is an infinitive, and the infinitive particle "a" which should precede it is omitted. MSS, *an ordan*; *an* appears to be a contraction of "ann an", "in". JB, *Chuir*; this is how the infinitive is normally rendered by the poet, and the slenderisation may be dialectical. **165:** MSS, *sguirridh*; "mi" is omitted in the MSS, but this appears to be a simple transcription error, as the first person singular article is implied and required, both in terms of grammar and metre. **166:** MSS, *Cha n.* MSS, *n cor dheth*; *n* appears to be the article "an", and the omission of the "a" would be due to elision. **167:** MSS, *Gos a*; *a* is the future form of the relative pronoun, "an", and the omission of the "n" would appear to be dialectical, but is rendered as "an" here, to avoid confusion with the verbal noun particle "a'". **168:** MSS, *An deigh, folbh.* MSS, *mus a beo mi*; McLS versions interpret this as *ma 's beò mi.*

Maclean Sinclair Versions:

1: *An nochd*; *'s.* **4:** *'S goirt tha 'm bròn orm air drùdhadh.* **5:** Omit this line. **6:** Omit this line. **7:** *am mulad.* **9:** This is line 5, in verse 1; *litir* for *naigheachd.* Replace with *Tighearna Cholla thug suas fhearann.* **10:** Replace this with *An triath ceanalta, cliùiteach.* **11:** Replace this with *Leag an aois a trom-làmh air.* **12:** Replace this with line 14; insert *'S* before *thrèig*, and have *'s a lùgh e* for *'s a lùths e.* **13:** Replace this with line 15; omit *'S* before *ged*, have *thar* for *far.* **14:** Replace this with *'S treis o'n dh' fhalbh mi á m' dhùthaich.* **15:** Replace this with *Bidh mi glacadh mo chlàrsaich.* **16:** Replace this with *'S a' seinn dàin mu 'n t-sàr-dhiùlnach.* **17:** *Na am* in CC1, *Na'm* in CC2 for *Nam*; *d'* for *t'.* **18:** *bhi*; *d'* for *t'.* **19:** *gu 'm* for *gu'*; *'bhi dàn.* **20:** *d'* for *t'.* **23:** *r'a* for *ri.* **24:** *Gu 'n* for *Gun.* **25:** *Gu 'm* for *Gum.* **26:** *d'* for *t'.* **27:** This is line 29; *Gabh sibh* for *'Gabhail.* **28:** This is line 30; *éibhneach* for *èibhneis.* **29:** This is line 31. **30:** This is line 32. **31:** This is line 27; *bhuap* for *às*; *'N uair* in CC1. **32:** This is line 28; *dh' earb.* **33:** *bhi.* **35:** *armuinn.* **37:** *r'a* for *ri.* **38:** *Dhol*; *chleòc-sa*; *ghlacaibh.* **39:** *B' fheàrr gu 'n* for *Mura*; *d'* for *t'*; omit *dhaibh.* **40:** *Ann an* for *'An*; *an* for *'an.* **41:** *chleachdadh.* **42:** *A bhi.* **43:** *A bhi.* **44:** *bhi*; *no* for *na.* **47:** *d'* for *t'.* **49:** *tuatha.* **50:** *biodh cruaidh* for *bu chruaidh*; *daibh.* **51:** *'S tu nach* for *Nach*; *bràth.* **52:** *no* for *na.* **53:** *An.* **55:** Add *ac'* after *dàil.* **56:** *am* for a'; *beairteach.* **57:** Replace with *Nuair a chruinnicheadh do dhaoine*, *'N uair* in CC1. **58:** Replace with line 60; *An* for *'An*, *sgaoileadh* for

fuasgladh. **59:** Replace with line 61; add *'S* before *pìob*; *'g a* for *'ga*. **60:** Replace with line 62; *achlais* for *'achlais*. **61:** Replace with *Bhiodh tu eòlach gu 'n stiùireadh*, or *stiùradh* in CC2. **62:** Replace with *'S tu gun chùram roimh lasair*. **63:** Replace with *Mar ghaoith ghuinich air fairge*. **64:** Replace with *Bhiodh tu garg anns a' bhaiteal*, *'garg* in CC1. **65:** This is line 67; replace with *Bha do shuaicheantas cliùiteach*. **66:** This is line 68; *ian* for *eun*. Replace with *'G innse biùthais do sheòrsa*, or *'G innseadh* in CC2. **67:** This is line 69; *An* for *A'*. **68:** This is line 70; *an* for *a*, *le seòltachd* for *'an òrdan*. **69:** This is line 71; *no* for *na*. **70:** This is line 72, have *Sgriobht' gu dàn' ann an òrdugh*. **71:** Omit this line. **72:** Omit this line. **73:** *shinnsre*. **74:** *gu 'm*, *an seòrs' iad* for *a' seòrsa*. **75:** Insert *'n* before *robh*. **76:** *As* for *'As*; *fhreumhaicheadh*. **77:** *daragan*. **78:** *air* for *ar*; *bòcain* for *bochdainn*. **80:** *Bhuaileadh*. **81:** *Alasdair*. **82:** Add *Riamh* before *nach*. **83:** *Is* for *'S*. **85:** *caoimhneil* in CC1. **86:** Add *'S tu* before *gun*, omit *na*; *fhiamh fòtuis* for *fhòtas*. **88:** *fulaingeadh* in CC1, *fuilingeadh* in CC2. **89:** *'N uair*, *'s a* in CC1. **90:** *'s an* for *'san*; *ad* for *'ad*. **91:** *Thug an* for *'S a bha*, *Gallda*. **92:** *A bha sealltuinn*, *sealltainn* in CC2, for *'Thighinn a shealltainn*. **93:** *Mòran urraim* for *Thug e urram*; *dhaoine*. **94:** *am* for *a'*, *fòghlum*. **95:** *fhaotuinn* in CC1. **96:** *bhi*; *'g an* for *'ga*. **97:** *'N uair* in CC1. **101:** *Thoirt* for *'Thoirt*. **102:** *éirich*. **104:** *fhuil* for *'fhuil*; add *a' sileadh* after *chraobhach*. **105:** *Có bho 'n gabhadh* for *Cha ghabhadh*. **106:** *Bha thu àrd ann an* for *Nuair a dh'àrdaich do*. **107:** *Nuair a ghlacadh*, or *'N uair* in CC1, for *Nan glacadh*. **109:** *gu 'n*. **110:** Insert *'n* before *robh*. **111:** *Laoch thu* for *'S a*. **112:** *Is* for *'S*; *shlinnein* in CC2 **113:** Replace with *'S iomadh gaisgeach a dh' éireadh*. **114:** *Nam biodh feum orr'*, or *Na 'm* in CC1, for *Gun gluaiseadh*, *'ga d'* for *'gad*. **115:** Insert *Bhiodh* before *Do*, *féin*. **116:** *beumannach*. **117:** *gleusda*. **119:** Replace with *Chìte mar dhealan an t-sléibhe*, *Chìt'* in CC2. **120:** Replace with *'N lannan geur anns a' chòmhraig*. **121:** *Mac-Coinnich* in CC1, *Mac Coinnich* in CC2, *leat* for *leibh*. **122:** *bu* for *'bu*. **123:** *gu 'm*. **125:** *Chloinn*. **126:** *Lòchaidh*. **127:** *Is* for *'S*, *á*, *Sléibhte*. **128:** *éibhte*; *Dòmhnuill*. **129-136:** This verse is reversed with lines 137-144. **130:** Insert *'n* before *robh*, *fòghlum*. **131:** Insert *d'* before *dhuine*. **133:** *De* for *Do*; *d'* for *t'*. **134:** Insert *'n* before *robh*, *leòir* for *lear*. **135:** *tuille*. **136:** *mhò* for *mhath*. **137-144:** This verse is reversed with lines 129-136. **137:** *'N uair* in CC1. **138:** *bhi*, *d'* for *t'*. **139:** *Gu 'm*; *nan* for *na'*. **140:** *mu 'n*. **141:** *us* for *is* in CC1. **142:** *Ad* for *'Ad*. **143:** *'S tu a* for *'Ga*; *a* for *'ga*. **144:** *Fhir a b' fhialaidh* for *Aig fear fialaidh*; insert *d'* before *stòras*. **145:** *bhi*. **147:** *na h-uidhim* in CC1, *na h-uidheam* in CC2 for *fo 'h-uidheam*. **148:** Troimh for *Roimh*; *a' d'* in CC1, *ad* in CC2, for *'ad*. **149:** Insert *'S* before *Nuair*; *'N uair* in CC1. **150:** *A' tigh'nn* for *'Tighinn*; *àird*; *ceann Shòaidh* for *Sòaidh*. **152:** *ad* for *'ad*. **153:** Replace with *Nuair a ghlacteadh an stiùir leat*, *'N uair . . .* in CC1. **154:** Replace with *Chìteadh d' iùbhrach ghrinn bhòidheach*. **155:** Replace with *Mar an eala gheal cheutach*. **156:** Replace with *Dol gu réidh thar nam bòc-thonn*. **157:** *nan steud-each* for *na' srann-each*. **158:** Replace with line 160; insert *d'* before *spuir*, *bhòtuinn*. **159:** Replace with *'S bu tu 'n giomanach sealbhach*. **160:** This is line 158; replace with *Dhol a shealg nan damh cròcach*. **161:** Replace with line 163; *Dhomhsa ghabhabh e aimsir* for *Cha b' fhuilear dhomh aimsir*. **162:** Replace with line 164; *an* for *'an*, *òrdugh* for *òrdan*. **163:** Replace with line 161; insert *an* before *labhrainn*. **164:** Replace with line 162; *fear-* for *fearra-*, omit *'s* before *bu*. **165:** *A nis sguiream 'gan*, *gan* in CC1, for *Sguiridh mi 'ga*. **166:** *Is* for *'S*, *cha 'n* in CC1, *diubh* for *dheth*. **167:** mharbh-rann. **168:** *'N déigh* in CC1, *'N déidh* in CC2.

There are also 168 lines in McLS versions.

32. Marbhrann do dh'Alastair MacGilleain, Tighearna Chola

Tune: none given
No. of lines: 176
Sources: CC1, p. 125, CC2, p. 111, FC, p. 80, Na Bàird Tirisdeach, p. 104.
Date: c. 1835 (see discussion in "Context").
Context: As noted in relation to poem 31, Alexander MacLean, the 15th Laird of Coll, handed his estates over to Hugh, his eldest son. He then left Coll and went to live in Quinish, Mull, which was part of the estates. He died on 10 April, 1835. See Alexander Maclean Sinclair, *The Clan Gillean*, (Charlottetown: Haszard and Moore, 1899), at p. 383. This poem was likely composed relatively shortly thereafter, upon the poet having received word from Scotland. This poem does not appear in either of the manuscripts that had been in the possession of the poet, MS15G/2/1 and MS15G/2/2. In his introduction to the poem in CC1 (which is reprinted in CC2), Alexander Maclean Sinclair relates the following: "Until the night of January 1st, 1880, I did not know that there was one line of this poem in existence. On that night, Archibald MacLean, one of the poet's sons, told me that his father sent the poem by him, over forty years ago [i.e. before 1840], to Hugh MacLean, Eoghan Og, in Cape Breton. He also gave me a verse of it which he remembered, the sixth verse. I wrote to Mr. Stephen MacLean, Eoghan Og's son, about the poem. He replied that the manuscript was lost, but that his aunt, Mary MacLean, and his niece, Catherine MacLean, knew the poem by heart. Mr. MacLean took the poem down, and sent it to me. To him, and especially to the ladies who preserved it from oblivion, I am greatly obliged." The bulk of Alexander Maclean Sinclair's papers were given by his family to the Public Archives of Nova Scotia, and are contained in the Alexander Maclean Sinclair Collection, manuscript file MG1, vol. 2660, which contains some 626 separate entries. Unfortunately, Mr. Stephen MacLean's transcription of this poem does not appear to be amongst the items contained in this collection. Therefore, the only version of this poem appears to be that which appears in CC1, and which has been reproduced in the other sources listed. Given the nature of the transmission of this poem, it is difficult to say how closely this version resembles that which was composed by the poet in the 1830s, but given the large number of editorial changes made by Alexander Maclean Sinclair to virtually every poem in this collection, we can be reasonably sure that this version differs to some degree from the poet's original composition.

Archibald MacLean was the third child and second son of the poet. He was born in Tiree in 1815, was married to Catherine Macphie, by whom he had three children, Isabel, Mary, and Christy-Ann, and he died on 26 January, 1899. He was apparently with the poet when he died at Addington Forks, in January, 1848. See Alexander Maclean Sinclair, *The Clan Gillean*, at p. 340. Hugh MacLean may well be the eldest son of Hugh "Ban" MacLean, a native of Eigg, Scotland, who was born in 1759 and who emigrated to Pictou in the 1790s, ultimately settling at Judique Intervale, Inverness County, Cape Breton. J. L. MacDougall notes in his *History of Inverness County Nova Scotia* (Sandy Group: 1999, 2nd ed.; 1st ed., Truro, NS: 1922), at pp. 205-206, that this family "appeared to be peculiarly gifted mentally" and that Hugh, known as "Eoghan Òg", and his brother Alexander "were recognized poets in their day". They were apparently particularly gifted at satire, as MacDougall notes: "Woe unto the man who came under the fire of their satire". He lived at Sight Point,

Inverness County, Cape Breton for a time, and his "vitriolic songs" caused "annoyance" to certain of his neighbours there. While there were many "Hugh MacLeans" in Inverness County alone in the early nineteenth century—and a survey of the three other counties of Cape Breton, all of which had large highland immigrant communities in the 1830s, would undoubtedly reveal many more—there are several reasons to believe that Maclean Sinclair's correspondent was the son of Hugh MacLean of Judique Intervale. First, Eoghan Òg MacLean did, in fact, have a son named Stephen. Second, Eoghan Òg MacLean had a sister named Mary, and this would have been Stephen's aunt to whom Maclean Sinclair makes reference. See J. L. MacDougall, *History of Inverness County*, at pp. 206-207. MacDougall does not name any of Stephen's nieces, but he did have a cousin named Catherine, a daughter of Eoghan Òg's brother Alexander, mentioned above, and it is possible that Catherine was a common family name.

Eoghan Òg was married to Flora MacRae of Beaver Meadow, Antigonish County. She may be a daughter of Murdock MacRae, a native of Kintail, Scotland, who settled in Beaver Meadow in 1811: Raymond A. MacLean, *History of Antigonish, vol. 1*, (Antigonish: Casket, c. 1976), at p 77). Raymond MacLean notes that Murdock MacRae had "several daughters", but names only one, Ann, who was married to Angus Fraser, a brother of Bishop Fraser of Antigonish. This information conflicts with that of Reverend D. J. Rankin in *A History of the County of Antigonish Nova Scotia* (Pawtucket, R.I, U.S.A.: Quintin, 1998; a reprint; originally Toronto: MacMillan, 1924), at p. 349, who claims that Murdock MacRae had only one daughter, Ann. Given that there were no other MacRaes in the vicinity of Beaver Meadow, it is likely that Flora was, indeed, a daughter of Murdock MacRae. Murdock was reputed to have had more money than the other settlers in Beaver Meadow, and for this reason came to be known as "Murchadh nan Ciad", "Murdock of the Hundreds": Raymond MacLean, *History of Antigonish, vol.* 2, (Antigonish: Casket, c. 1976), at pp. 70-71. What is significant is that Beaver Meadow was the small community in which the poet and his descendants lived and in which Maclean Sinclair grew up, part of which became known as Glenbard. It is therefore possible, and perhaps likely, that it is through this connection that the poet's family came into contact with the MacLeans of Judique Intervale, Cape Breton, and that the songs of the poet may have been transmitted to this part of Cape Breton in the first place.

In the post-script to this poem, Alexander Maclean Sinclair makes the following claim: "John MacLean was the last of the family bards. This poem may therefore be looked upon as the last of its kind; the last lamentation over a chieftain by his bard. There is thus a peculiar feeling of sadness connected with it. The poet was deeply attached to the old laird. He felt it was his duty to sing his "marbhrann." He was thoroughly in earnest. He speaks of the deceased as he knew him. He ascribes no quality to him except what he believed him to possess. He lauds his ancestors, and exhorts his successor as he considered his bard should do. That Alexander MacLean of Coll deserved the poet's praise we have no reason to doubt. He really possessed many qualities of the greatest excellence. The poet had good reasons for regretting that he left the old country. It is a blessing, however, for his descendants that he left it. Better have a farm which one can call his own and be independent, than be under the best landlord": CC2, at p. 116.

Line Annotations:
2: This line appears to be a clause, and the omission of the relative pronoun "A" is marked. CC1, *domh.* **4:** CC1, 2, *dha n.* **5:** CC1, 2, *Gu 'n.* **6:** CC2, *chàireadh.*

CC1, 2, *fo 'n.* **8:** CC1, 2, *as.* **9:** CC1, 2, *so.* **12:** The omikssion of the relative pronoun "a" before *bha* is marked. **13:** CC1, 2, *Dha 'n.* **14:** CC1, 2, *d'an.* **16:** CC1, 2, *bhi*; *no 'n.* **17:** CC1, *'N uair.* **18:** CC1, 2 omit the verbal noun particle "A'" before *Tigh'nn*, and this is marked. CC1, 2, *Rudha na h-Airde*; this suggests a place name, but I have been unable to locate this place name in Coll. **20:** CC1, 2, *bhi*; *d'.* The poet used *t'* for *d'.* **22:** This line appears to be a clause, and the omission of the relative pronoun "a" is marked. **24:** This line appears to be a clause, and the omission of the relative pronoun "a" is marked. CC1, 2, *mu 'n.* **26:** CC1, 2, *mu 'n.* **30:** CC1, 2 omit the infinitive particle "a" before *thigh'nn.* **32:** CC1, 2, *na 'm*; omit the infinitive particle "a" before *dh'fhuasgladh.* **33:** CC1, *'N uair.* CC2, *dh' iarrteadh.* **34:** CC1, *Breac-Achadh.* CC1, 2, *am*; this is a contraction of "ann am", "in" or "at". The reference is to the house of the Laird of Coll, in Coll. **36:** CC1, *a cruinneachadh.* CC2, *ag cruinneachadh.* **37:** CC1, *'N uair.* **38:** CC1, 2, Dha *'m*; *'s na.* CC1, *duchasach.* **39:** CC1, 2, *Gu 'm*; *chinn aisnich.* The slenderisation of *ceann* implies the genitive, and its aspiration implies the presence of the genitive masculine singular article "a'", which is omitted. **42:** CC1, *os ceann.* **44:** CC1, 2, *dhe d'*; the poet used *do* for *de*, and *t'* for *d'.* **46:** This line appears to be a clause, and the omission of the relative pronoun "a" is marked. CC1, 2, *luath's.* **47:** CC1, *ian.* **49:** CC1, 2, *bhi.* **50:** CC1, 2, *gu 'n.* **51:** CC1, 2, *Ghilleathain.* **55:** CC1, 2, *bho 'n.* **57:** The reference is to Milidh, or Miled, and this, together with references to Gathelus in line 59, are drawn from the Old Irish stories about the origins of the Gaels. According to the legends of the so-called "mythological cycle", the sons or progeny of Miled, also known as the Milesians, were the last of the waves of invaders to have arrived in Ireland, and they defeated the previous inhabitants, the Tuatha de Danann, or the people of the god Dana. The Milesians represent, in Irish legend, the Celtic peoples, and from them the leading families of Gaelic Ireland were supposed to have been descended. The Milesians were reckoned to have come to Ireland from Spain. See, for example, T.W. Rolleston, *Celtic Myths and Legends* (New York: Dover, 1990), at pp. 94-96, 130-137. As is discussed at line 59, the Milesians had mythological links that go back to the ancient Hebrews of the Old Testament, and it has been suggested that the Milesian mythological stories were late and probably spurious traditions intended to confer Christian respectability on the immediate forbears of the Celts in Ireland: see, for example, Nora Chadwick, *The Celts* (London: Pelican, 1971, 1987 reprint), at p. 170, and Rolleston, at pp. 137-139. **58:** CC1, *Dheanamh.* CC2, *Dheanadh.* This line appears to be a clause, and the CC2 form, in the conditional, is preferred. The omission of the relative pronoun "a" in CC2 is marked. **59:** Alexander Maclean Sinclair notes in the post-script to this poem that, according to the legendary history of Ireland, as recorded in *The History of Ireland* (or *Foras Feasa ar Éirinn* of Dr. Geoffrey Keating (*Séathrún Céitinn*), written in the early seventeenth century (see J. E. Caerwyn Williams and Patrick K. Ford, *The Irish Literary Tradition*, (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 1992), at p. 6), the Gaels are descended from Gathelus, or Gaidheal Glas, son of Niul, son of Fenius Farsa, son of Baath, son of Magog, son of Japhet, son of Noah. Niul was married to Scota, a daughter of Pharaoh; it was by her he had Gathelus, who was reputedly intimately acquainted with Moses. Gathelus was in his eightieth year when the children of Israel left Egypt, and his descendants arrived in Spain. Maclean Sinclair went on to note that Milidh, or Miled, referred to at line 57, was the most eminent of the kings of the descendants of Gathelus in Spain, and had distinguished himself as a warrior in Scythia and in Egypt against the Ethiopians. The sons of Milidh reputedly sailed to Ireland in the year 500 B.C., where they conquered the Tuath de Danann: see CC2, at

p. 117. **60:** CC1, 2, *'s an.* For the meaning of the reference to Egypt, see the note to line 59. **61:** CC1, 2, *gleusda.* **63:** CC1, 2, *ghniomharan*; the aspiration of the noun suggests the presence of of the third person singular masculine possessive pronoun, the omission of which is likely due to elision. It is not clear to whom reference is being made, but the mention in line 64 of Mull suggests that it may be to the progenitor of the MacLeans, which Alexander Maclean Sinclair believed to be Gille eoin, or Gilleain na Tuaighe, "Gilleain of the Axe": see Alexander Maclean Sinclair, *The Clan Gilleain*, at p. 40. However, it is likely that the first MacLeans to have possessions in Mull were Hector Reganach and Lachlan Lubanach, sons of John Dubh ("Black John"): see Nicholas Maclean-Bristol, *Warriors and Priests: The History of the Clan MacLean 1300-1570* (Phantassie: Tuckwell, 1995), at pp. 18-30, 161-165. **64:** This line appears to be a clause, and the relative pronoun "a" is omitted. CC1, 2, *do 'n.* CC1, 2, *de 'n*; the poet prefers *do* to *de.* **65:** CC1, 2, *Gu 'm.* **66:** CC1, 2, *do 'n.* **68:** CC1, 2, *thoirt*; the omission of the infinitive particle "a" is marked. CC1, *diu*, CC2, *diubh.* **69:** The reference is to the Battle of Sherrifmuir, the final battle of the Jacobite rising of 1715, which took place on 13 November, 1715. The Jacobite army of 4,000, commanded by the Earl of Mar, were fought to a stalemate by the 1,000 man Government army, led by the Duke of Argyll. See Michael Lynch, *Scotland: A New History* (London: Pimlico, 1992), at p. 328. For a more detailed account of the battle and the circumstances surrounding the 1715 rising, see Bruce Lenman, *The Jacobite Risings in Britain 1689-1746* (Aberdeen: Scottish Cultural Press, 1995), ch. 6, pp. 126-54, and with regard to the battle itself and its aftermath, ch. 6, pp. 155-79. The MacLeans were keen supporters of the Jacobites, and fought under the Earl of Mar at Sherrifmuir. **70:** CC1 and 2 omit the relative pronoun "a" which should precede *chaidh.* **71:** CC1, *A toirt.* **72:** The reference is to the soldiers in the Government army led by the Duke of Argyll. **73:** CC1, *daibh.* **75:** CC1, *Gruineart.* CC2, *Ghruinneirt.* The reference is to the Battle of Tràigh Ghruinneart of 5 August, 1598, at which Sir Lachlan Mòr Maclean, chief of the clan, landed at Tràigh Ghruinneart, Islay, with a contingent of warriors and engaged in battle with Sir James Macdonald of Knockrinsay, Islay, his nephew, and a contingent of Macdonalds. Lachlan Mòr was killed, along with a large number of his men, and the battle was a grievous defeat for the MacLeans. Kermack suggests that 280 MacLeans fell at the battle: W.R. Kermack, *The Scottish Highlands: A Short History (c. 300-1746)*, (Edinburgh and London: W. & A. K. Johnston & G. W. Bacon, 1957). For a traditional account based on Gaelic oral tradition in Islay, see "Blàr Tràigh Ghruinneart", (1992) 44 *Tocher* 110, at 110-117, recorded from Gilbert Clark, Port Charlotte, Islay, by Ian A. Fraser, SA 1968/98, which also provides a description of the circumstances of the battle. For a more detailed account, see Nicholas Maclean-Bristol, *Murder under Trust: The Crimes and Death of Sir Lachlan Mor Maclean of Duart 1558-1598*, (East Linton: Tuckwell, 1999), esp. at ch. 21, pp. 238-53. See, also, Donald E. Meek, *Caran an t-Saoghail*, the note to poem 55, William Livingstone's "Blàr Tràigh Ghruinneard", at pp. 449-53. **76:** CC1, 2, *Lachuinn.* The reference is to Sir Lachlan Mòr Maclean; see note at line 75. **77:** CC1, 2, *le cheudan*; *mu chrann.* The aspiration, particularly of the first noun, suggests the presence of the third person singular masculine possessive pronoun, the omission of which is due to elision. The reference is to the Battle of Inverkeithing, which took place on 20 July, 1651 at Inverkeithing, in Fife. The battle was between a Royalist army, composed largely of Highlanders, fighting in support of King Charles II and the army of Sir Oliver Cromwell, and resulted in a decisive victory for Cromwell's forces: Michael Lynch, *Scotland: A New History*, at p. 282. The rout was already on when the

Macleans reached Inverkeithing. They stood their ground in the face of the advancing Cromwellian cavalry, and suffered grievous losses. Altogether, 750 Macleans were slaughtered including their chief, the 27 year-old Sir Hector, and eight of his men who are said to have "thrown themselves between their chief and the enemy pike-men, crying out as they did so: 'Another for Hector'"; only 40 eventually found their way back to Mull: see Nicholas Maclean-Bristol, "The Battle of Inverkeithing", found at http://www.maclean.org/Inverkeithing%203.htm, last consulted 28 August, 2002. As Maclean-Bristol notes, the battle was a "great disaster" for the Macleans, but their sacrifice "earned them the sympathy of the Cavalier party in Scotland as well as the embarrassed gratitude of the royal family", and that "[e]ven after 1689 the crown bent over backwards to forgive the Macleans, when other clans felt the full force of governmental wrath. For a poem on Sir Hector and his death at Inverkeithing, see "Òran do Shir Eachann", in Colm Ó Baoill, *Bàrdachd Chloinn Ghill-eathain: Eachann Bacach and Other Maclean Poets*, (Edinburgh: Scottish Gaelic Texts Society, 1979), at pp. 34-43, and for further background on these events, see the note thereto, at pp. 196-199. **79:** CC1, *MacCailean*. "MacCailein" is the traditional Gaelic style for the Earl (later, the Duke) of Argyll, the chief of the Campbells of Argyll. Sir John Maclean of Duart, the 19th chief of the clan, was a staunch supporter of King James II, and held out for him until 1691. In 1692, he was allowed a safe-conduct to the court of William of Orange, in exchange for acknowledging his claim to the crown and surrendering both Cairnburgh and Duart Castles to the Government, which took place on 31 March, 1691. These were subsequently given over to the Earl of Argyll: see Bruce Lenman, *The Jacobite Risings in Britain 1689-1746*, at p. 48, and Alexander Maclean Sinclair, *The Clan Gillean*, at pp. 224-5. **80:** The reference is to King William of Orange. CC1, 2, *am bann*. Given the context, this would appear to be a contraction of "ann am", "in a". **81:** CC1, 2, *gu 'n*. **83:** CC1, 2, *Bho 'n*. The reference is to Iain Garbh, or "John Garbh", the third son of Lachlan Bronnach of Duart, the first MacLean of Coll. He received a charter from Alexander, Lord of the Isles, of the twenty pound lands of Coll, the eighteen marklands of Quinish in Mull, and the six marklands of the Isle of Rum. He received afterwards a charter from Alexander of the Isles of twenty pound lands in Lochaber of Cameron of Lochiel, who had deserted the Lord of the Isles before the first Battle of Inverlochy in 1431. Both charters were confirmed by King James II: Alexander Maclean Sinclair, *The Clan Gillean*, at p. 367. Iain Garbh appears to have been chief from 1443 to 1469: see Nicholas Maclean-Bristol, *Warriors and Priests*, pp. 190-1. **84:** CC1 and 2 omit the relative pronoun "a" which should precede *bha*. CC1, *bhuaith'*. **85-88:** The references here are to the tradition that Gilleonan Macneil of Barra, the chief of the MacNeils of Barra, claimed the island of Coll and sought to keep John Garbh from getting possession of it. John Garbh, with about 50 men, sailed from Mull and landed at Acarsaid Fhalaich, "the hidden anchorage", marched to Grishipol, and attacked and defeated Macneil, who had about 120 men with him, all of whom were slaughtered. Macneil was said to have been killed by one of John Garbh's followers, An Gille Riabhach, "The Speckled Lad": Alexander Maclean Sinclair, *The Clan Gillean*, at pp. 367-8. The story was well known in Coll and Tiree, and apparently survived in the oral tradition there into the twentieth century. For one account, see John Gregorson Campbell, *Waifs and Strays of Celtic Tradition, Argyllshire Series—No. V: Clan Traditions and Popular Tales of the Western Highlands and Islands* (London: David Nutt, 1895), at pp. 7-12. For a Gaelic version, see Eachann M. MacDhughaill, "Seann Eachdraidh Chollach", (1927-8) 34 *Transactions of the Gaelic Society of Inverness* 170, at pp. 178-201, and for an English version, see Betty MacDougall, *Folklore from*

Coll, (1978), at pp. 7-12. **85:** CC1 and 2 omit the infinitive particle "A" before *Ghabhail*. **86:** CC1, *nan*. **88:** CC1, 2, *'s an*. **89:** CC1, *Gur-a*. CC2, *Gur a*. **90:** CC1, 2, *so* for *seo*. CC1 and 2 omit the relative pronoun "a" before *dh'eug*. **91:** CC1, 2, *Cholla*. **92:** CC1 and 2 omit the relative pronoun "a" which should precede *chuir*. CC1, 2, *am*; given the aspiration caused to the noun, this is a contraction of the preposition "ann" and the first person singular possessive pronoun "mo". **94:** CC1, *caoimhneil*. CC1, 2, *am beus*; *am* is a contraction of "ann am", "in". **96:** CC1, 2, *Da 'n*; this is a contraction of the preposition "do", and the relative pronoun "an". **97:** CC1 and 2 omit the relative pronoun "a" which should precede *bha*. **98:** CC1, *'n am rann*; this is a contraction of the preposition "ann", "in", and the first person singular possessive pronoun "mo". **99:** CC1, 2, *fòghluimte*. **101:** CC1, 2, *'g ad*; this is the second person singular pronoun object of the verbal noun, *'gad*. **102:** CC1, 2, *No*; the poet preferred *na*. CC1 and 2 omit the verbal noun particle "a'" before *cur*. CC1, 2, *d'*; the poet preferred *t'*. **104:** CC1, 2, *d'*; the poet preferred *t'*. **105:** CC1, 2, *Na 'm*. **106:** CC1 and 2 omit the relative pronoun "A" which should precede *Chuir*. CC1, *'s a*. CC2, *éig*. **108:** CC1, *A dortadh*. CC1, 2, *ad*; this is a contraction of the preposition "ann", "in", and the second person singular possessive pronoun "do". **109:** The reference is to Maclaine of Lochbuie, one of the other senior cadet families of the Clan MacLean. **111:** *Mac Mhic Eòghain* is the traditional patronymic of the MacLeans of Ardgour, another of the senior cadet families of the Clan MacLean. CC1, 2, *bho 'n*. **112:** CC1, 2, *'s an*. **113:** Alexander MacLean's mother was Janet, the daughter of Donald Macleod, the third Macleod of Talisker, in Skye: Alexander Maclean Sinclair, *The Clan Gillean*, at p. 379. **116:** CC1, 2, *'g an tional*; this is the third person plural pronoun object of the verbal noun. **117:** The reference is to the fairy banner which is still in the possession of the MacLeods of Dunvegan. There are many traditions relating to this piece of faded cloth, but it is said to have supernatural powers, and to have protected the MacLeods in battle on various occasions. **118:** CC1, *'N uair*. Given the context, the third person singular masculine possessive pronoun, referring to MacLeod of Dunvegan, seems to be implied, and its omission may be due to elision. **119:** CC1, 2, *B' aobhar giorag*; given the genitive relationship between the nouns, *giorag* should be slenderised. **120:** CC1, 2, *Gu 'm*. CC1, 2, *diubh*. CC1, 2, *'s an*. **121:** The reference is to Cameron of Lochiel, the chief of the Camerons. CC1, 2 omit the verbal noun particle "a'" before *dol*. **123:** CC1, 2, *féin*. **124:** CC1, 2, *gu 'm*. CC1 and 2 omit the relative pronoun "a" which should precede *bha*. CC1, 2, *posd'*. Alexander MacLean was married to Catherine, the eldest daughter of Captain Allan Cameron of Glendessary: Alexander Maclean Sinclair, *The Clan Gillean*, p. 382. **125:** CC1 and 2 omit the relative pronoun "a" which should precede *bhiodh*. **126:** CC1 and 2 omit the relative pronoun "a" which should precede *bhiodh*. **127:** CC1 and 2 omit the relative pronoun "a" which should precede *bheireadh*. CC1, 2, *doibh*. CC1, 2, *riasan*. **128:** In a note to the poem, Alexander Maclean Sinclair indicates that *alachd* is another word for "ablach", "carcass": CC2, at p. 115. **130:** CC1, 2, *Ann ad aobhar*; *ad* is a contracted form of the second person singular possessive pronoun "do". CC1, 2, *bhi*; the infinitive particle "a" is omitted. **131:** CC1, 2, *shliochd*; the aspiration implies the presence of a word which, given the context, may be the preposition "de", "of". The reference in these lines is unclear. In particular, a blood relationship between the MacLeans of Coll and the MacKenzies of Seaforth is implied, but is not established in the various genealogies of the MacLeans of Coll. **133:** CC1, *'N uair*. **135:** CC1, 2, *Shi-phort*. **136:** CC1, *nan*. **137:** CC1, 2, *Cia mar*; both omit the relative pronoun "a" which should precede *sguireas*. CC1 and 2 also omit the infinitive particle "a" which should

precede *dh' innseadh.* CC1, *dh' innse.* **139:** CC1, 2, *siobhalt.* **143:** CC1, *na m'*; this is a contraction of the preposition "ann", "in" and the first person singular possessive pronoun "mo". **144:** CC1, *caoimhneas*; *bàigh.* **145:** CC1 and 2 omit the particle "A-" before *Nis.* **146:** CC1, 2, *an Albainn*; *an* is a contraction of "ann an", "in". CC1, 2, *ri là*; the context implies the presence of the third person singular masculine possessive pronoun, "a", "his", and its omission may be due to elision. **148:** This line appears to be a clause, and CC1 and 2 omit the relative pronoun "a" which should precede *Tha.* CC1, *do.* CC2, *d' a*; this would be "to his", and this seems repetitive, given the reference later in the line, and so CC1 is preferred. CC1, *na àit*; *na* is a contraction of the preposition "ann" and the third person singular masculine possessive pronoun. **149:** CC1, 2, *'s an.* **151:** The reference is to Alexander's heir, Hugh, the sixteenth Laird of Coll, his only son, born in 1782. **152:** CC1, *bàigh.* **154:** CC1, 2, *d'*; the poet preferred *t'.* Hugh MacLean was married twice; first, in 1814, to Janet Dennistoun, by whom he had four daughters, and second, in 1825, to Jane Robertson, to whom the poet is referring here, by whom he had six children, including Alexander, who succeeded Hugh as Laird: Alexander Maclean Sinclair, *The Clan Gillean*, at pp. 382-3. **155:** CC1, 2, *D' am*; this is a contraction of the preposition "do" and the relative pronoun "am". CC1, 2, *creidimh*; this appears to be a genitive form, and is not necessary in the context. **157:** CC1, 2, *sgaoileadh*; this is a verbal noun, and should be preceded by the verbal noun particle "a'", which is omitted, perhaps due to elision. **158:** CC1, *na fheum*; na is a contraction of the preposition "ann", "in" and the third person singular masculine possessive pronoun. **160:** CC1, 2, *diubh*; *'s na*, which is a contraction of "anns na"; *so* for *seo.* **161:** CC1 and 2 omit the particle "A-" before *Nis.* CC1, 2, *bho 'n.* CC1, 2, *d'*; the poet favoured *t'.* **162:** CC1, 2, *gu 'n.* CC1, 2, *bhi*; both omit the infinitive particle which should precede this, perhaps due to elision. CC1, 2, *d'*; the poet favoured *t'.* **163:** CC1, 2, *ad*; this is a contraction of the preposition "ann" and the second person singular possessive pronoun "do". **164:** CC1 and 2 omit the relative pronoun "a" which should precede *tha.* CC1, *na laidhe*; *na* is a contraction of the preposition "ann" and the third person singular masculine possessive pronoun. CC1, 2, *'s na*; this is a contraction of "anns na", "in the". **165:** CC1, *'n uair.* **166:** CC1, 2, *ann ad*; *ad* is a form of the second person singular possessive pronoun. **167:** CC1, Na *fhear*; *Na* is a contraction of the preposition "ann" and the third person singular masculine possessive pronoun. CC2, *foghainnteach.* **168:** CC1, 2, *an Caisteal Dhruim Fionn*; *an* is a contraction of "ann an", "in". The reference is to the Castle of Drumfin, which he built on the property of Ben More, near Tobermory, Mull, which Hugh had purchased: Alexander Maclean Sinclair, *The Clan Gillean*, at p. 383. **169:** CC1, 2, *biodh*; the context suggests that this should be the conditional form of the verb, and it should be preceded by the relative pronoun "a", which is omitted. **170:** CC1, 2, *a null.* **172:** This appears to be a reference to the newly-build Castle of Drumfin. **173:** CC1, 2, *gu bràth*; *domh.* **175:** CC1, 2, *gu 'n.* CC1, 2, *d'*; the poet preferred *t'.*

Maclean Sinclair Versions:

The only existing versions are Maclean Sinclair versions.

33. Òran a' Bhàil Ghàidhealaich

Tune: Not given, but is sung to a well-known air in Nova Scotia, "Bithibh aotram is togaibh fonn"
No. of lines: 68
Sources: MG15G/2/2, p. 226 (marked p. 118 and 154), CC1, p. 134, CC2, p. 118, FC, p. 66, BT, p. 101, An t-Òranaiche, p. 485, *MT*, Vol. 5, No. 15, p. 112 (17 Oct., 1896), *Casket* 25 Oct., 1928.
Date: Spring 1826 (see discussion in "context").
Context: Alexander Maclean Sinclair provides the following information in the preface to the poem in CC1 and 2: "Beagan bhliadhnachan an déidh do 'n Bhàrd tighinn do America bha bàl aig na Gàidheil an tigh Dhaibhidh Mhic Mhuirich ["Mhurraidh" in CC1 and FC] am Merigomish. Chan fhaodadh duine bhi aig a' bhàl ach feadhainn a labhradh Gàidhlig. Thugadh cuireadh do 'n Bhàrd. Phàidh e a luchd cuiridh leis an òran so a sheinn aig a' bhàl. . . . 'S ann toiseach an Earraidh 'sa bhliadhna 1826 a bha am bàl ann."/"A few years after the Bard came to America the Gaels held a ball at the house of David Murray in Merigomish. No one but those who spoke Gaelic was permitted to attend the ball. An invitation was given to the Bard. He paid those who invited him by singing this song at the ball. It was at the beginning of Spring in the year 1826 that the ball was held". Merigomish is likely a corruption of the Mi 'kmaq word "Malegomich", meaning a place of merrymaking, or "Mallogomichk", meaning a hardwood grove. It was apparently a camping place for the Mi 'kmaq before the arrival of Europeans, and remained an important Mi 'kmaq settlement until the arrival of the British settlers, from the 1770s. It had previously been settled by Acadians, but they fled after the 1755 expulsion of the Acadians by the British, and the area was subsequently settled by a mixture of Highlanders and English-speaking United Empire Loyalists who fled from the American colonies to Nova Scotia and other parts of British North America in the wake of the American War of Independence: see James M. Cameron, *Pictou County's History*, (Kentville: Kentville Publishing, 1972), at p. 278, p. 2. By the mid-1780s, it was a growing settlement, populated by a number of Highland families, including a few of the Hector settlers who had sailed from Loch Broom to Pictou County in 1773, and disbanded soldiers of the 82nd, or Hamilton Regiment, who had received a land grant in the early 1780s: Donald MacKay, *Scotland Farewell: The People of the Hector*, (Scarborough: McGraw-Hill Ryerson, 1980), at pp. 151, 165-8. Merigomish is located on the eastern coast of Pictou County, and would be approximately fifteen miles from Upper Barney's River, where the poet was living at the time. The precise identity of David Murray, the host of the ball, is unclear. However, there were two Murray families in Merigomish who had come over on the Hector from Sutherland-shire, and a Walter Murray, also from Sutherland-shire, had settled in Merigomish and many of his descendants continued to live there at the time that George Patterson wrote his history of the county: see George Patterson, *A History of the County of Pictou Nova Scotia*, (Montreal: Dawson Brothers, 1877), at p. 286.

With regard to the version in MG15G/2/2, Alexander Maclean Sinclair identified himself at p. i of the MG15G/2/2 as the scribe, and at the conclusion of the poem in the MSS, he wrote the following: "This song was composed by John McLean, Bard; it was inserted here by A. McLean Sinclair on Tuesday. October 30th, 1860". In the preface to the poem in CC1 and 2, Maclean Sinclair notes the following: "Fhuair mi an t-òran so [sic] bho Ghilleasbuig MacGhilleathain 's an Eilean Mhór"/"I got this song from Archibald MacLean in the Big Island". There are at least two places in Nova Scotia bearing the Gaelic place name "An t-Eilean Mòr"; one is Big Island, Pictou County, and the other is Boularderie Island, Victoria County,

Cape Breton: Comhairle na Gàidhlig, Alba Nuadh, "Ainmean Ghàidhlig Albainn Nuaidh", at http://www.chebucto.ns.ca/~ag371/Gaelic/ainmean.htm, last checked 28/01/05. It is likely that Archibald MacLean was a resident of the former; it forms part of the Merigomish district (it had previously been known as Merigomish Island: Cameron, at p. 268), the place at which the ball took place, and is close to the poet's first home of Upper Barney's River. Although a number of the poet's compositions, including this one, travelled widely throughout the Gaelic speaking districts of eastern Nova Scotia, Boularderie Island is quite remote from the poet's districts, and it is less likely that the poem would have travelled there by 1860. In spite of the fact that the poem in the MSS appears to have been written down by Alexander Maclean Sinclair, there are, as we shall see, a number of differences between the MSS version and the later Alexander Maclean Sinclair versions which appeared in print. In terms of orthographic practices, the MSS version is generally closer to those in the poems in MS15G/2/2 which appear in the poet's own hand. Maclean Sinclair was only twenty when he recorded the poem, and his own editorial career was about twenty years away. Thus, while it is not possible to know how closely the MSS version corresponds to the poem as originally composed by the poet in about 1826, there is good reason to believe that it is a reasonably faithful version.

Line Annotations:

1: MSS, *Beabh eatrom*; *togibh*. **2:** MSS, *Criodhal*, *sunndach*, *bhi*. **3:** MSS, *'G h ol*; *slainnte*. **4:** MSS, *gleannabh*. **5:** MSS, *rho*. **6:** MSS, *Dh uiridh*; McLS interprets this as *Dh' uraich*. **7:** MSS, *nis a dol*; the particle "a-" which should precede "nis" is omitted, likely due to elision, and *a dol* is interpreted as a verbal noun. **8:** MSS, *a falach*; *a* is interpreted as "am", a contraction of the "ann am", "in", and the omission of the "m" is likely dialectical, caused perhaps by elision. **9:** MSS, *sgeula fhuair*; McLS interprets this as *sgeul a fhuair*. **11:** MSS, *Bhi*; the infinitive particle "A" is omitted. MSS, *iaridh*. The particle "a" is omitted in the MSS before *dh' ionnsaidh*. MSS, *bal*; as *dh' ionnsaidh* requires the genitive, this should be slenderised. **12:** MSS, *Thaing*; McLS interprets this as *Th' aig*. MSS, *earrich*. **13:** MSS, *comunn*. **14:** MSS, *Biodh*, *sibhealta*. **15:** MSS, *fialich*, or *fialioh*. **16:** MSS, *coimhneas*. MSS, *do ofhear ainneal*. **17:** MSS, *shuigheus*. **19:** MSS, *figheal*. **20:** MSS, *Cuir*; this appears to be the verbal noun "A' cur", which is often slenderised in the poet's dialect, and the verbal noun particle "A'" is omitted. MSS, *nan dennabh*; *nan* is a contraction of the preposition "ann" and the third person plural possessive pronoun "an", "their". **21:** MSS, *sgrubaireach*. **23:** MSS, *inntin*. **24:** MSS, *Gallabh*. **25:** MSS, *an fhigheal*. MSS, *na tamh*; *na* is a contraction of the preposition "ann" and the third person singular feminine possessive pronoun "a". **26:** MSS, *barsd*. **27:** MSS, *Dhuisgheus*. MSS, *nan cail*; *nan* is a contraction of the preposition "ann" and the third person plural possessive pronoun "an". **28:** MSS, *a Ghaelig*. MSS, *is ghlan*; this is the superlative "as ghlaine", and the final "e" is omitted. MSS, *gerradh*. **29:** MSS, *blasda*, *gasda*. **30:** MSS, *Si*; this is the copula form "Is i", with the verbal particle contracted to "'S". MSS, *bha n cleachdadh*; *n* is a contraction of "an", the article, and the "a" is omitted due to elision. **31:** MSS, *goisgeadh*. MSS, *m feachd*; *m* is "am", a contraction of "ann am", "in", and the "a" is omitted due to elision. **32:** MSS, *n dug*; *n* is the relative pronoun "an", and the "a" is omitted. **33:** MSS, *breacan daithan bh ann*; the meaning of *daithan* is unclear, but given the context, is interpreted as "dathte", "coloured", here. **34:** MSS, *s gach am*; *s* appears to be a contraction of "anns". **35:** MSS, *S nuair*; *S* is a contraction of "Agus". **36:** MSS, *ra leanadh*; *ra* would appear to be a contraction of the preposition "ri" and the third

person singular masculine possessive pronoun "a". *Leanadh* would appear to be a dialectical form of "leantainn" or "leanachd". **37:** MSS, *S gun be*; *S* is a contraction of "Agus" and *be* is the past or conditional form of the copula. MSS, *n teadhadh cuinna*; *n* is a contraction of the article "an". McLS interprets *teadhadh* as *t-èideadh*, which appears to be correct, given the references in subsequent lines and the previous verse. The meaning of *cuinna* is unclear. It could be the adjective "caoin", "pleasant, delightful", but there is no reason for the final vowel which appears in the MSS. It could be the genitive form of the noun "caoin", meaning the exterior surface of cloth, or the "right" side of the cloth, which makes some sense in the context. It could also be the genitive form of the noun "cuinne", "corner, angle", which appears closest to the form in the MSS, although it translates less easily than "caoin". **38:** MSS, *an ealadh*; *ealadh* is interpreted as "èileadh", a common Argyllshire form of "fèileadh", "kilt". **39:** MSS, *O san gherr*; given the aspiration of the adjective "geàrr", *O san* is "Osain", the plural form of "Osan". MSS, *mu n chalpa*. Given the aspiration of the noun, *mu n* is interpreted as the adjective "mu" with the article "an"; when contracted, it is usually rendered as "mun a'", and the article form "a'" is omitted. **40:** MSS, *S bonaid*; *S* is a contraction of "Agus". MSS, *os cian*. **41:** MSS, *Claibh cruach*; *cruach* means "pile, heap", and this would not appear to be the word, given the context. Given the context, "cruaidh", meaning "steel", is preferred. MSS, *chniachan*; the meaning of this noun is also not clear, but given the references in surrounding lines, it is interpreted as the plural of "cniochd", "soldier, knight". **42:** MSS, *Stailin, ealtain ghiarr*. **43:** MSS, *A laimh*; given the context, *A* is interpreted as a contraction of "Ann an", "In". MSS, *goisgeach*. **44:** MSS, *S nach bi*; *S* is a contraction of "Agus". MSS, *riamalach*; this appears to be an adjective, but its meaning is unclear. It may be a form of "riamannach", meaning "dilatory": J.L. Campbell, ed., *Gaelic Words and Expressions from South Uist and Eriskay, collected by Rev. Fr. Allan McDonald of Eriskay (1859-1905)* (Dublin: Dublin Institute of Advanced Studies, 1991), at p. 201. MSS, *gu tarruin*; given the context, the third person singular feminine possessive pronoun "a", "her/its" seems to be implied, in reference to "claidheamh", at line 41, and its omission is due to elision. The final "g" in "tarraing" is omitted in the MSS. **45:** MSS, *S bhon*; *S* is a contraction of "Agus". MSS, *fein*. **46:** MSS, *Dh aincheadh*; McLS interprets this as *Dh' àraicheadh*, a past passive form of the verb "àraich", which is consistent with the context. This line appears to be a clause, and the relative pronoun which should precede the verb is omitted in the MSS. MSS, *bho sgi*; McLS interprets this as *fo sgèith*, which again fits the context. **47:** MSS, *Bhuaineach*; this would appear to be the past tense of the verb "Buannaich", "to win", and as this line appears to be a clause, it should be preceded by the relative pronoun "A", which is omitted in the MSS. MSS, *ann san*; this is "anns an", "in the". MSS, *Eiphad*. This appears to be a reference to the victory of the British Expeditionary Force at Aboukir Bay, near Alexandria, in 1801, during the Napoleonic Wars, for which the 42nd Highland Regiment under the command of Sir Ralph Abercrombie earned great praise: see Andrew MacKillop, *'More Fruitful than the Soil'*, at p. 225, and for a comment on the significance of this battle to the Gaelic psyche, see John MacInnes, "Gaelic Poetry in the Nineteenth Century", in Douglas Gifford, ed., *The History of Scottish Literature, vol. 3, Nineteenth Century* (Aberdeen: Aberdeen University Press, 1988), 377-395, at pp. 379-383. For a poem on the battle, see Alexander MacKinnon, the subject of poem 18 in this collection, a participant in the battle, "Òran air don Bhàrd a dhol air Tìr san Eiphit", in Donald Meek, ed., *Caran an t-Saoghail*, at p. 298 and note at p. 444. MSS, *gheall*; the reason for the aspiration is unclear, but it may imply the presence of the third person singular masculine

possessive pronoun, in reference, perhaps, to "dream", "folk, troop", at line 45, and the omission of which may be due to elision. **48:** MSS, *Sa chuir*; *Sa* appears to be the union of "S", a contraction of "Agus", and the relative pronoun "a". MSS, *Frangichas*; this appears to be the union of "Frangaich", "Frenchmen", and the preposition "às", "out of". MSS, *an t shealladh.* **49:** MSS, *an tir*; *an* is a contraction of "ann an", "in". **50:** MSS, *Cuineachibh.* **51:** MSS, *ba ghairghe.* **52:** MSS, *as a charraid*; *as* is a contraction of the preposition "anns", and *a* is the dative article "a'". **53:** MSS, *an Alabainn uir*; *an* is a contraction of "ann an", "in". "New Scotland" is Nova Scotia. **54:** MSS, *Caitheamh*; this appears to be a verbal noun, and the verbal noun particle "A'" is omitted. MSS, *oiche.* **55:** MSS, *S an deoch slainnte*; *S* is a contraction of "Agus". MSS, *a thugar thus*; McLS interprets this as *thig air*, which, given the context, seems to be an appropriate emendation. **56:** MSS, *Olaidh sa.* MSS, *gu ghrunnd*; the aspiration of the noun suggests the presence of the third person singular masculine possessive pronoun, which is likely a reference to "deoch-slàinte" in line 55, and whose omission is due to elision. **57:** MSS, *na Gaidheal*; *Gàidheal* appears to be in a genitive relationship with the preceding noun, *tìr*, and the lack of slenderisation indicates that this is a plural form. Therefore *na* should be the genitive plural article "nan"; the final "n" is often omitted by the poet, and may be dialectical. MSS, *ghasda threun*; if *Gàidheal* is a genitive plural, there is no need for aspiration. **58:** This appears to be a clause, and the relative pronoun "A" which should precede *Rachadh* is omitted in the MSS. MSS, *acainneach.* This could be the adjective "acaineach", "plaintive, distressful, sobbing, wailing, weeping", but given the context, this is most unlikely. McLS interprets this as *acfhuinneach*, "well equipped", which appears to be a better interpretation. **60:** MSS, *feigh*; *s na beannabh.* **61:** MSS, *Soiribh*; *bhar.* **62:** MSS, iosul. MSS, *n robh*; *n* is a contraction of "ann an", "in which". MSS, *n tus*; *n* is the article "an", and the "a" is omitted due to elision. **63:** MSS, *S trichd*; *S* is a contraction of the copula verbal form "Is". MSS, *dfhiuch.* MSS, *fo siull*; the non-aspiration of the noun implies the presence of the third person singular feminine possessive pronoun "a", "her/its", likely in reference to the boat on which the sails would be set. **64:** MSS, *S iad*; *S* is a contraction of "Agus". MSS, *ga stiuradh*; *ga* is the third person singular feminine verbal noun object, and is again in reference to the boat. MSS, *dhuinsaidh calla*; the particle "a" which should precede *dh' ionnsaidh*, is omitted, likely due to elision. **65:** MSS, *n drasd*; *n* is a contraction of "an", and the final "a" in "dràsta" is omitted. **66:** MSS, *Lionn.* MSS: *a chuach*; *a* would appear to be the feminine nominative article "a'". MSS, *gu straichd*; *straichd* appears to be the masculine noun "stràc", which means a ruler for measuring the contents of a vessel level with the brim. It does not require to be slenderised. Given the context, the third person singular feminine possessive pronoun, in reference to *cuach*, may be implied, and its omission may be due to elision. **67:** MSS, *S cuir*; *S* is a contraction of "Agus". MSS omits the particle "a-" before *nuas*, likely due to elision. **68:** MSS, *arsd*; *fearrabh.*

Maclean Sinclair Versions:

2: *sunndach.* **5:** *tha leam binn* for *bha ro bhinn.* **7:** *'g a.* **8:** CC1, *'s a'.* CC1 and 2, *am falach.* **9:** *Gur h-e*; *dràsd.* **10:** *'S a dhùisg m' inntinn suas gu dàn.* **11:** *Bhi*; *bhàil.* **13:** CC1, *'N uair.* CC1, 2, *comunn.* **16:** CC1, *caoimhneas.* CC2, *coibhneas.* **17:** CC1, *'N uair.* CC1, 2, *mu 'n.* **19:** CC1, *fiodhall.* CC2: *fiodhull.* CC1, 2: *bho 'n.* **20:** *Cur.* **21:** *mu 'n* for *man.* **25:** CC1: *'N uair.* CC1, 2, *fhiodh'l.* **28:** CC1, *a's glan.* CC2, *is glan.* **29:** *Chànain.* **31:** *gaisge.* **32:** *'s an.* CC1, *tug.* CC2, *d' thug.* **33:** *. . . bha 's gach àm* for *. . . daite 'bh' ann.* **34:** Replace this line with

Fuasgailteach an strì nan lann. **35:** Omit *'S* before *nuair*; *bho 'n.* CC1, *'N uair.* **36:** Replace with *Chuirte 'n ruaig, 's bu teann an leanachd.* **37:** Replace this line with *'S ann ac' fèin tha 'n t-éideadh grin!* **38:** Replace this line with *Breacan guaille, féile cuim.* **39:** *Osan geàrr mu 'n . . ..* **40:** *os ceann.* **41:** Omit this line. **42:** This is line 41; *giar* for *gear.* CC1, *ealtuinn.* Replace this line with *Chleachdadh anns na baiteil riamh.* **43:** *Leis na gaisgich . . .* for *A' làimh nan gaisgeach . . . .* **44:** *biodh*; *a' tarruing.* After this line, insert the following new verse 11: *Bha iad firinneach gun fhoill,/'N àm dol sios is pìob 'ga seinn;/Rùisgte* [CC2: Rùisgteadh] *brataichean ri croinn,/Aig na saighdeiribh* [CC2: saighdearaibh] *nach mealladh.* **45-48:** This is verse 13, lines 49-52, rather than verse 12. **45:** CC1, *bho na.* CC2, *bho 'n a.* CC1, 2, *sibh féin o 'n.* **47:** *geall.* **48:** *as.* **49-52:** This is verse 14, lines 53-56, rather than verse 13. **52:** *as.* **53-56:** This is verse 15, lines 57-60, rather than verse 14. **54:** *Caithibh.* **55:** *air tùs.* **56:** *Olaidh sinn*; *grunnd.* **57-60:** This is verse 16, lines 61-64, rather than verse 15. **57:** Replace this line with *Olaibh air na Gàidheil threun.* **59:** *'S a tha fuasgailteach . . .* for *Tha iad fuasgailte . . . .* **60:** Omit *Tha*; *'s na.* **61-64:** This is verse 17, lines 65-68, rather than verse 16. **61:** *do 'n t-sluagh* for *far chuan.* **62:** *Tha 's an tìr 's an . . .* for *Don tìr iosal 'n . . . .* **63:** *bàt' fo shiùil* for *i fo 'siùil.* **64:** *'g a.* **65-68:** This is verse 18, lines 69-72, rather than verse 17. **65:** *dràsd.* **66:** Replace with *Lion a' chuach a suas fo stràic.* **67:** *mu 'n* for *man.*

With these changes, there are 72 lines in Maclean Sinclair versions.

Recorded Versions:

As noted above in respect of poem 28, in a 2004 conversation conducted and recorded by Seumas Watson of the Nova Scotia Highland Village Museum with two local tradition bearers, Peter MacLean ("Peadar 'Jack' Pheadair Chaluim Ghobha"), of Rear Christmas Island, Cape Breton County, Cape Breton, and Malcolm "Maxie" MacNeil ("Calum Mac Dhòmhnaill Aonghais Iain Aonghais Eòin"), of Highland Hill, Iona, Victoria County, Cape Breton, it was noted by both men that this song, along with poem 28, were the two most well-known of the poet's songs. Certainly, several versions have been recorded from Nova Scotia informants, some of which are to be found in archival sources, and some on home-made tapes which have kindly been provided to the author. The song is generally sung to one of two airs, both of which are similar. One of the airs is virtually the same as that used for the well-known Cape Breton anthem "'S e Ceap Breatainn, tìr mo ghràidh"; the other is similar. At this recording session, Peter MacLean sang the chorus, as well as seven verses; these were verses 1 to 7 of the McLS version in CC1 and CC2, with only very minor departures from the verses as they appear in those sources, as follows: **Verse 7: Line 3**, is replaced by *Dhearbh na gaisgich anns gach linn*, **Line 4,** is replaced with *'S e 'bha cinnteach 'an àm 'bhith 'tarraing.* Peter MacLean sang a longer version of this song for the CD which accompanied a republication of Archibald Sinclair's *An t-Òranaiche* (Trueman Matheson, ed., St. Andrew's, Antigonish County: Sìol Cultural Enterprises, 2004); on this recording, Peter MacLean sang the chorus and all 17 verses that are in CC1 and CC2; once again, the singer followed the McLS version very closely, with only very minor changes, the most significant of which were: **Verse 4: Line 3,** *fiodhull nan teud* for *fiodhull theud*; **Verse 7: Line 3,** *na gaisgich* for *an gaisge*;**Verse 10: Line 4**, *'S a bhi* for *'S nach biodh*; **Verse 11: Line 2**, *'phìob* for *pìob*; **Verse 12: Line 4,** replace with *Chuir sibh Frangaich anns an t-sealladh*; **Verse 14: Line 2,** *Caidlidh* for *Caithibh*; **Line 4,** *gu fearainn* for *gach fear i*; **Verse 15: Line 2,** *innealach* for *acfhuinneach*, **Line 3,** *bha* for *tha*, **Line 4,** *nam* for *'s na*;

Verse 17: Line 2, *gu straigh* for *fo stràic.* Peter MacLean sings this song to the air which most closely resembles "'S e Ceap Breatainn, tìr mo ghràidh". On an undated recording provided to the author by Anne Landin, Angus Rankin of Mabou Ridge, Inverness County, Cape Breton, a man of Brae Lochaber descent, sings the song to this same air; his version also follows the CC1 and CC2 versions extremely closely, and he sang the chorus and nine verses from CC1 and CC2, in the following order: verse 1, 3, 4, 6, 5, 9, 14 (twice), 15 and 17.

A somewhat shorter version was recorded in 1974 from the singing of Sister Jane MacKenzie, of Christmas Island, Cape Breton County, Cape Breton, by Maureen Lonergan (Williams), and included in her 1974 M.A. Dissertation in Celtic Studies at St. Francis Xavier University, entitled "The Scholar, Poet and Local Bard", under the direction of Prof. C. I. N. MacLeod. The text for the song is taken from CC2, and it follows the McLS version very closely. For more information on Sister Jane MacKenzie, see the note to "Recorded Versions", poem 16, above. She sings the the chorus, and eight verses, which include the first seven verses in CC1 and CC2, and the ninth verse in CC1 and CC2, in precisely that order. Sister Jane MacKenzie's version differs from CC2 in only very minor respects. Although she, like Peter MacLean, was from Christmas Island, Cape Breton, she sang the song to the second slightly different air. On an copy of an undated recording made in Mabou, Inverness County, Cape Breton, provided to the author by Seumas Watson and Frances MacEachen of Queensville, Cape Breton, a singer believed to be Finlay Cameron of Mabou, like Angus Rankin, of Lochaber descent, also sings the song to this second, somewhat different air; like the other singers, he follows the CC1 and CC2 versions closely.

Three versions of this song were recorded by MacEdward Leach. One was sung by an unidentified male Cape Breton informant (Accession No. 78-054 CB 1 Tape 5 Track 5, available on-line at http://collections.ic.gc.ca/leach/songs/CB/5-05.htm), one was recorded from Malcolm MacLellan, from Piper's Glen, Inverness County, Cape Breton (Tape T-2019, Side 1 Sp. 7 ½ Track A-5), and one was recorded from John MacLeod, of North Shore, Victoria County, Cape Breton (Tape T-2022, Side 1, Sp. 7 ½, Track A-2).

34. An Adharc

Tune: None given.
No. of lines: 96
Sources: MG15G/2/1, p. 647 (see discussion in "context"), CC 1, p. 137, CC 2, p. 121, FC, p. 68, BT, p. 99. The version of this song found in manuscript MG15G/2/1, the manuscript compiled by John MacLean, the poet, primarily in Scotland, is found at the end of this manuscript, but the identity of the scribe is not clear, and the date "1827" is written at the top of p. 649 of the manuscript, on which the song ends. Colm Ó Baoill was also not able to identify the scribe: see Colm Ó Baoill, *Maclean Manuscripts in Nova Scotia*, (Aberdeen: Aberdeen University Department of Celtic, 2001), at p. 35. In CC1 and CC2, Alexander Maclean Sinclair provides the following information: "Sgrìobhadh an t-òran so (sic) o bheul-aithris Mhàiri Fhoirbeis ann am Magh-an-Leas-leathainn, 'sa bhliadhna 1873. Tha cuid mhath dhe air chall"/"This song was written down from the singing of Mary Forbes in

Beaver Meadow [Antigonish County], in the year 1873. A good portion of it has been lost." If true, the scribe cannot be John MacLean, and is likely either Charles MacLean, the son of the poet, or Alexander Maclean Sinclair, the grandson. It is likely that the scribe was Charles, though. First, Maclean Sinclair uses a passive construction—"This song was written down"—rather than an active voice, and he also does not claim to be the scribe—he may, for example, have said, "the editor took this down . . .". Second, Maclean Sinclair was living and working at the Upper East River of Pictou County in 1873; it is possible that he took the song down on a visit back to Glenbard, but it is perhaps likelier that someone living at Glenbard—such as Charles—took it down. As noted, it is possible—even likely—that Mary Forbes was a daughter of the donor of the drinking horn, William Forbes. Beaver Meadow is part of James River, the community to which the poet moved in 1830 or 1831, and is just to the west of Glenbard, where the poet and his family settled.

Date: c. 1827 (see discussion in "context").

Context: Maclean Sinclair provides the following information about this song in the introduction to it in CC1 and CC2: "Mu 'n bhliadhna 1827 thug Uilleam Foirbeis, aig àite lionaidh nan soithichean am Pictou, do 'n bhàrd adharc mhòr bhriagha, 's i làn de bhranndaidh. Cha do ghleidh am bard i ro fhada. Thug e i d'a charaid dileas Maighstir Cailein Grannda, Sagairt Arasaig. Chan eil fios gu dé dh' éirich dhi"/"In about the year 1827, William Forbes gave, at the place where ships are loaded at Pictou, to the poet a large, beautiful drinking horn, full of brandy. The poet did not keep it very long. He gave it to his faithful friend, Father Colin Grant, the Priest of Arisaig. It is not known what has happened to it [i.e. the horn]". The identity of "William Forbes" is not entirely clear, but a man of that name, a native of Strathglas, Scotland, lived at Beaver Meadow, Antigonish County: Raymond MacLean, ed., *History of Antigonish, vol. 1*, (Antigonish: Casket Publishing, 1976), at p. 78. As we shall see, Alexander Maclean Sinclair notes that an incomplete version of this song was taken down from the singing of a Mary Forbes of Beaver Meadow, Antigonish County. Neither Raymond MacLean nor Rev. D. J. Rankin, in his *A History of the County of Antigonish Nova Scotia*, (Pawtucket, R.I.: Quintin Publications, 1998), at p. 131, provide any information on William Forbes' descendants (except that his farm was taken over by a son, John), but it is possible that Mary Forbes was a daughter. The Rev. Colin P. Grant was a native of Glenmoriston, Scotland, was, as noted by Maclean Sinclair, the parish priest of Arisaig, Nova Scotia, and a close friend and patron of the poet. Additional information on Father Grant is provided in the notes to poem 40. As we shall see there, the priest had made a gift to the poet of £5 in gold, a significant amount, particularly in rural Nova Scotia at that time. The gift of the horn may have been in tribute to the priest's kindness to the poet, and this may help us date poem 40. What is clear from the information provided by Maclean Sinclair is that a strong friendship between the poet and the priest had been established by the time the poet wrote this song, in 1827.

Line Annotations:

1: MSS, *gur a.* **2:** MSS, *a fasach. a* is interpreted as the particle "am", and the omission of the final consonant is due to elision. MSS, *na bhean. m* is added in another hand to *na* to form *nam. na* is interpreted as the genitive plural article "nam", the omission of the final consonant is dialectical. *bhean* suggests the nominative or dative of the noun "bean", "wife", but given the context, this is unlikely, and McLS interprets this as "beann". **3:** MSS, *ann sa thir sho. n* is added in another hand to *sa* to form *san.* MSS, *mannal.* Interpreted as "m' aineoil", as in McLS versions. **4:**

MSS, *charid*. There is no need for aspiration here. MSS, *dhomh* ___. This is one of several places where a word has been lost on the edge of the MSS page. McLS, who has "teann", is followed. **5:** MSS, *lem*. The "William" referred to would appear to be William Forbes, who made the gift of the drinking horn to the poet. **6:** MSS, *ch*__. Part of the word is lost on the edge of the MSS page. McLS, who has "cheann", is followed. **7:** MSS, *chaich*. **8:** MSS, *fa*___ *sa(n) a*__. McLS, who has "falamh" and "àm", is followed. **9:** MSS, *gheran*. This appears to be a verbal noun; the verbal noun particle is omitted, and there is no reason for elision. In the MSS, an illegible word is crossed out and replaced with *trathail* in another hand. **10:** MSS, *Mu bi*. The omission of the relative pronoun "am" before the verb, which would be reduced to "m" by elision, is likely dialectical, and is marked. MSS, *chach orn a c*___. There is no need to aspirate "cach". Part of the last word in the MSS is lost, and McLS, who has "a' cainnt", is followed. **11:** MSS, *imadach fhailinean*, and the second word is crossed out for *failinn* in another hand. **12:** MSS, *Thug*. **13:** MSS, *gab*. MSS, *leisgal*; *mo* is inserted before *leisgal* in another hand. **14:** MSS, *gresh gu a draum*. McLS interprets *gu* as the preposition "gun" rather than the conjunction "gu", which is appropriate in the context. **15:** MSS, *ghibh sin fasd*. MSS, *gorish*, which is crossed out, and *ghaoris* is added in another hand. This appears to be "goireas", and there is no need for slenderisation. **16:** MSS, *as a boun*. **17:** MSS, *Bear lem feachin na chluintinn*. **18:** MSS, *e midich*. This is interpreted as the preterite of "meudaich", as in McLS, and the relative pronoun is omitted, due to elision caused by the preceding vowel. **19:** MSS, *a g inse domh daondan*. **20:** MSS, *a daor*. Given the context, *a* is interpreted as the pronoun "e", "he, it", the implied reference being to alcohol. McLS alters lines 19 and 20, and makes this explicit. It is possible that *daor* is a noun, and that *a* is the article "an", the omission of the consonant being dialectical, but "daor", "slave, thrall" would make this line much more difficult to interpret. It is not possible to determine the MacLeod to whom reference is made. There appear to have been no MacLeods living at or near Beaver Meadow at the time; the only MacLeods in Antigonish County at the time appear to have been some descendants of Neil MacLeod of Cliadal, Eigg, Scotland, who had property at Knoydart, Antigonish County: Rev. D. J. Rankin, *A History of the County of Antigonish Nova Scotia*, (Pawtucket, R.I.: Quintin Publications, 1998), at pp. 317-321. **21:** MSS, *dar bha mish. nuair* is inserted above *dar* in another hand. MSS, *mo ced fhear. ced* is crossed out, and replaced with *chiad* in another hand. **22:** MSS, *feullaidh*[?]. The spelling in the MSS is unclear, and is changed to *fiallaidh* in another hand. **23:** MSS, *chuinn e*. McLS interprets this as "chaomhain". MSS, *reabh orm*. **24:** *a mhead s ga irrainn*. MSS. *ga* appears to be the conjunction "gun", and the omission of the final consonant, likely a dialectical feature, is marked. **25:** MSS, There is a margin note on p. 647 of the MSS indicating that this verse, which is at the end of the song in the MSS, comes before the verse which starts at line 33, which follows line 24 in the MSS. MSS, __*eirinn*. The first part of the first word is lost in the MSS; McLS has "Bheirinn", which is followed. MSS: *mei*__, and *–st* has been added, in another hand. **26:** MSS, ___ *na fleisgaichan og*. The first word of this line is lost in the MSS; McLS has "air" for the first word, and this is followed. **27:** MSS, ___ *iad*. The first word of this line is lost; McLS has "gun", and this is followed. MSS, *bandrach*. This appears to be "banntrach", "widow", and as it is a feminine noun in the dative case, it should be slenderised. **28:** MSS, __*d*. The first word is all but lost in the MSS; McLS provides no guidance, but given the context, "Ged" is the likeliest possibility. **29:** MSS, __*eibh*. The first part of this word is lost in the MSS; this line appeas to be a clause, and the lost word may be the relative

pronoun "A". McLS has "Gheibh", which is followed. MSS, *bho cheud fhir.* **30:** MSS, ___ *bheis.* The first word is lost in the MSS; McLS provides no guidance. MSS, *ghrighraich ri beo.* McLS interprets *ghrighraich* as "g' iarraidh". The third person singular feminine possessive pronoun "a", "her", is implied before "beò", and its omission, caused by the preceding vowel, is marked. **31:** MSS, __*d.* The first part of the first word is missing in the MSS; McLS has "Ged", which is followed. MSS, *na chaillaich. na* appears to be a contraction of the preposition "ann" and the third person singular feminine possessive pronoun "a", and there is no need for aspiration. **32:** MSS, ___ *aoghas shean.* The first part of this line is lost in the MSS; McLS has "'S aogasg", which is followed. MSS, *air a shroin.* Given the feminine referents in this verse, there is no need for aspiration of the noun. **33:** MSS, *cha neal mish.* MSS, *challaich.* **34:** MSS, *s dusa a ballach. n* is added in another hand to *a* to form the article *an. a* appears to be the article "am", and the omission of the consonant, which is likely dialectical, is marked. **35:** MSS, *dhuair.* MSS, *folabh.* **36:** MSS, *b ionnan calla*[?]. It is not clear whether the word is "culla", a form of "culladh", meaning "hood, cowl", "calla", a form of "caladh", meaning "harbour", or "caile", a form of "caileag", a "young girl", but the latter is the likeliest possibility, given the context. **37:** MSS, *uaile.* In the MSS, *dh* is added before *uaile* and *s* is inserted into *uaile* to form *uaisle*, both in another hand. It is possible that the poet intended "uaisle", "pride", but "uaille" can convey the same meaning, and is closer to "uaile". The reference is again to William Forbes, who made the gift of the horn to the poet. **38:** MSS, *na chuires. chuires* is the relative future of "cuir", suggesting that *na* should be interpreted as "ma". MSS, *thu llich*[?] *ri chul. i* is inserted in another hand after *thu.* The word which appears in the MSS to be *llich* is difficult to read, but could be "lighe", "a flood", or "lìgh", "water, sea". The aspiration of *chul* implies the presence of the third person singular masculine possessive pronoun, the omission of which, due to elision caused by the preceding vowel, is marked. **39:** MSS, *ghealladh.* It is not clear why this masculine noun, clearly in the nominative case, is aspirated; perhaps the second person singular possessive pronoun is implied, and its omission, for the purposes of preserving the rhythm of the line, is marked. **40:** MSS, *bi falabh s a.* **41:** MSS, *Ca mar bhirin.* The omission of the relative pronoun before the verb is marked. *folash.* The context suggests that this noun should be preceded "am", a contraction of "ann am", "in", and its omission is marked. **42:** MSS, *ann sa choman.* **43:** MSS, *s dhuilich domsa, bhi.* MSS, *a chommain. a* is unclear, and given the context, is interpreted as "'ad", a contraction of the preposition "ann", "in", and the second person singular possessive pronoun "do". **44:** MSS, *chlair.* **46:** MSS, *fo ad. fo* is interpreted as "fodha", and the omission of the final syllable "-dha", likely caused by elision by the next vowel sound, is marked. *ad* is interpreted as a contraction of the preposition "ann" and the second person singular possessive pronoun "do". **47:** MSS, *moidhadh.* McLS interprets this as a verbal noun, "maoidheadh", "threatening", which fits the context. The omission of the verbal noun particle is marked. *thochair.* MSS. **48:** MSS, *ged do lean.* MSS, *botal na gha.* **51:** MSS, *fa* ___[an indecipherable word, which has been crossed out]. *n* is inserted after *fa* in another hand. *fa* appears elsewhere in the MSS: see poem **[36]**, line 24, for example, and is interpreted there, as here, as "bho". **52:** MSS, *gluash a*[?] *du. gluash a* is interpreted here as the preterite and "'s", a contraction of "agus". MSS, *fhaoin.* **53:** MSS, *gad eirich domh thualas.* The omission of the relative pronoun "a" before the verb and the particle "dh'" is marked. *thualas* is interpreted as "tuaileas", "slander, libel, defamation". **54:** MSS, *ma tobhard. ma* appears to be the preposition "mu", "before", rather than the conjunction "ma", "if". *tobhard* appears

to be the infinitive "toirt". MSS: *bho m ghaol*. *m* is a contraction of the first person singular possessive pronoun. **55:** MSS, *fhagal a bhlinda*. The aspiration of the infinitive "fhàgail" implies the presence of the third person singular masculine possessive pronoun. *a bhlinda* is interpreted as "a' bhliadhna", "the year".**56:** The relative pronoun is omitted at the start of the line in the MSS. MSS, *liadhadh*. MSS, *s cha aoish*. **57:** MSS, *cha bhornich*. *bhornich* is difficult to decipher, and may be *bhornach*; it is also changed to *bhoireanach* in another hand. MSS, *besach*. **58:** The relative pronoun is omitted at the start of this line in the MSS. MSS, *a n ol*. *a n* is interpreted as the article "an". **59:** MSS, *speis di*. *di* is crossed out, and *dha* is inserted in another hand. As the reference would appear to be to "òl", "drink", in the previous line, a masculine noun, this emendation appears to be justified. **60:** MSS, *gu bi*. MSS, *loan*. **61:** MSS, *dheanan*. **62:** *A* was inserted before *chuir* in the MSS in another hand. Given the context, *chuir* is interpreted as the infinitive, rather than the preterite; the poet often slenderised the infinitive "chur", and this appears to be dialectical. MSS, *ad choir*. *ad* appears to be a contraction of the preposition "ann" and the second person singular possessive pronoun, and this is marked. **63:** MSS, *Camar*. MSS, *chummis sin*; the relative pronoun is omitted before the verb, and this is marked. MSS, *taghleach*. **64:** MSS, *bhis*. MSS, *ghlaoich*; this is interpreted as the verbal noun "glaodhaich", and the omission of the verbal noun particle "a'" is marked. MSS, *na stop*. *na* is the genitive article "nan". The poet frequently omits the final consonant in the genitive article "nan"; this omission is dialectical, and is marked. **65:** In the MSS, an indecipherable word is crossed out after *ged a*. MSS, *biodhins*. **66:** MSS, *ghabhal*. The aspiration of this verbal noun implies the presence of the third person singular masculine possessive pronoun; the reference is likely to "stop", a masculine noun, at line 64. MSS, *leum, fein*. **67:** MSS, *cha eil*. MSS, *throum*. MSS, *tombaco*. **68:** MSS, *de a tea*. **69:** An indecipherable word is crossed out at the start of this line. MSS, *gu bear leum*. The omission of the final consonant in the conjunction "gum" is dialectical, and is marked. MSS, *Suth ladair*. A "t" is added in another hand to *Suth*. **70:** A word is crossed out in the MSS, and *fion* is inserted in another hand. The crossed out word appears to be *fion* as well. **71:** MSS, *rish*. MSS, *braundi*. **72:** MSS, *biodh*. MSS, *mo ceann*. MSS, *le a*; interpreted as "leatha", in reference to "branndaidh". **73:** MSS, *cha fhaghins*. MSS, *ghlaisde*. **74:** MSS, *na biodh*; *m* is added to *na* in another hand, and this appears to be a correct emendation, but it is likely that the final consonant in this conjunction would be elided in the poet's dialect. MSS, *aig cheil*. The word *ceil* is written in the margin beside *cheil*. The aspiration of this noun implies the presence of the third person singular possessive pronoun, the omission of which is marked. **75:** MSS, *dhomsa na mhasla*. *mhasla* appears to be a contraction of the verbal noun "masladh", and this is marked. **76:** MSS, *bhi ged feichain am deich*. *ged* appears to be the second person singular verbal noun object " 'gad", and this would require the aspiration of the verbal noun. *deich* is crossed out and *dheigh* is inserted in another hand; the aspiration appears to be a proper emendation, as *am* would appear to be a contraction of the preposition "ann", and the first person singular possessive pronoun "mo". **77:** MSS, *siomad feir*. MSS, *chaich*. MSS, *mhelladh*. **78:** The relative pronoun is omitted at the start of this line, and this is marked. MSS, *lenan*. **79:** MSS, *ga taoghadh*. MSS, *aileachd*. **80:** MSS, *a nadair ga reir*. *a* is interpreted as the article "an"; the omission of the consonant is due to elision, and is marked. *ga* is interpreted is a contraction of the preposition "do", and the third person singular possessive pronoun "a". **81:** MSS, *uillam*. This again appears to be a reference to William Forbes, the man who made the gift of the drinking horn to the poet. **82:** MSS, *shin a duine*. *a* is

interpreted as the article "an", and the omission of the final consonant is marked. The relative pronoun is omitted before the verb, and this is marked. MSS, *grein*, interpreted as "grinn". **83:** M"SS, *na theolach*; *na* is a contraction of the preposition "ann" and the third person singular masculine possessive pronoun, the reference again being to William Forbes. **84:** MSS, *fa m*; *fa* appears to be a dialectical version of the preposition "bho", and *m* is a contraction of the first person singular possessive pronoun, and is marked. **85:** MSS, *siomadh conaldra ceutach*; *conaldra* appears to be a contraction of "conaltradh", and this is marked. **86:** MSS, *aun s a iarte mo chiant*. The omission of the particle "dh" before the passive "iarrte" is marked. *chiant* appears to be a misspelling of "chainnt". **87:** MSS, *thiga*. This appears to be a contraction of the conditional form "thigeadh". MSS, *luchd eolas*; the second noun is in a genitive relationship, and should be slenderised. **88:** MSS, *a sheompar*. Seompar is interpreted as dialectical for "seòmar". Given that motion is implicit in this line, *a* is interpreted as the preposition "à", "from, out of". MSS, *naul*. The omission of the particle "a" before "nall" is marked. **89:** MSS, *dhomsa*. MSS, bhi; the omission of the infinitive particle "a" is marked. **90:** MSS, *luaich*. **91:** MSS, *senfochal aig graiten*. **92:** MSS, *a*[?] *nac bi*. MSS, *gu dhuais*; the aspiration of the noun suggests that *gu* is the preposition *gun*, and this is McLS' interpretation. The proverb referred to is unclear, but would appear to be "Cha bhi dànachd gun duais"; it does not seem to appear in major Gaelic proverbial collections, such as Alexander Nicolson, *Gaelic Proverbs and Familiar Phrases*, (Edinburgh: Birlinn, 2003), Donald E. Meek, *The Campbell Collection of Gaelic Proverbs and Proverbial Sayings*, (Inverness: Gaelic Society of Inverness, 1978), and T. D. MacDonald, *Gaelic Proverbs and Proverbial Sayings*, (Stirling: Eneas Mackay, [1926]). **93:** MSS, *feir*. *an* is inserted in another hand. MSS, *deo nadair*. **94:** MSS, *air bean ardannach buaich*; given that *ardannach* qualifies a dative feminine noun, it should be slenderised. **95:** MSS, *burric*. MSS, *thrail*; there is no need for the aspiration here. **96:** MSS, *na chuish*; given the aspiration of the noun, *na* is interpreted here as a contraction of the preposition "ann" and the third person singular masculine possessive pronoun, "a", rather than "na", "or". MSS, *do sluadh*; the preposition *do* should cause aspiration. There are a few lines at the end of the last page of the poem in the MSS, but they do not appear to constitute a verse, and there is nothing on the subsequent page. The following are the lines: *feir eile tha air a thoir/ni e chennach le* [illegible word]*/tha a blanda air dhol go spors/Seumas Donlach ad haul*.

Maclean Sinclair Versions:

1: CC1, *Gur-a*. **2:** *am* for *a'*, *nam* for *na'*. **4:** CC1, *cha 'n*, CC2, *chan* for *nach*. *orm* for *dhomh*. **5:** CC1, *Gur-a*, CC2, *Gur a*. **6:** *an turais*. **7:** Replace this line with *Thug e dhuit mi mar leannan*. **8:** *'s an*. **10:** *Mu 'm*. **11:** CC1, *Gur-a h-*, CC2, *Gur a h-*. *fàilinn* for *fhàilinnean*. **12:** *Thig* for *Thug*. **13:** Replace this line with *Gabh mo lethsgeul ged tha thu*. **14:** Replace this line with *Greis an dràsd gun an dram*. **16:** Omit *Nuair*. *choill'* . **18:** *h-e* for *e*. **19:** *bhi*. *cho daor 's tha* for *dhomh daondan*. **20:** *Stuth mo ghaoil* for *Gu bheil e daor*. **21:** *Nuair* for *Dar*, *mise* for *mis'*. **22:** *'s gach dòigh* for *gu leòr*. **24:** Omit *A*. *gan* for *gu*. *r'a* for *ri*. **25:** *misd e*. **26:** *an fhleasgach dheas* for *na fleasgaichean*. **27:** *e* for *iad a*. **28:** Replace this line with *'S e an geall air a h-òr*. **29:** *chleachdadh*, *fhear*. **30:** *r' a* for *ri*. **31:** CC1, *Ged-a*. **33:** CC1, *Cha 'n*. *mise 'nam*. **34:** Replace this line with *Uist, a bhalaich gun tùr*. **35:** Replace this line with *Cha 'n ann falamh a bha mi*. CC2, *Chan*, *bhà*. **36:** Replace this line with *'N latha dh' fhàg mi mo rùn*. **37:** Replace this line with *Gheibh thu tuilleadh bho Uilleam*. CC2, *tuille*. **38:** Replace this line with *Fear an fhurain 's na*

mùirn. **39:** Replace this line with *'S thoir dha gealladh teann làidir.* **40:** Replace this line with *Nach téid m' fhàgail an cùil.* CC2, *teid.* **41:** CC1, *'m folais.* CC2, *'m follais.* **42:** *Ann an comunn, dràsd.* **43:** *'bhi d'* for *a bhith 'ad.* **44:** *nach h-eil boine* for *bhoine.* CC2 has *eil* for *h-eil.* **46:** *mise, d'* for *'ad.* **47:** *thochraidh.* **48:** Replace this line with *Airson botail no dhà.* **49:** *an tochradh.* **50:** *Ceangailt'.* **51:** *Bho 'n duin', ghasda* for *uasal.* **52:** Replace this line with *'S rinn thu sgapadh gu faoin.* **53:** Replace this line with *Dhòmhsa dh' éirich a' bhochduinn.* **54:** Replace this line with *Thug thu leat mi o m' ghaol.* CC2 has *bho* for *o.* **55:** *h-e* for *e. a liath mi* for *a' bhliadhna.* **56:** Replace this line with *Am bliadhna 's cha 'n aois.* CC2, *chan.* **57:** *Cha 'n iad boirinnich bheusach.* CC2, *chan, bhoireannaich.* **58:** Replace this line with *Bhios an déidh air an òl.* **59:** *Ma* for *Mu.* **60:** *Gu 'm.* **61:** This line is omitted, and replaced by line 63. **62:** This line is omitted, and replaced by line 64. **63:** This line is line 61. Line 63 is *'Sguir de 'n òl agus chi thu.* **64:** This is line 62. Line 64 is *Nach bi dìth oirnn ri 'r beò.* **65:** This is line 69. Omit *Ach, a. bhithinn. phadhadh.* **66:** This is line 70. *Deoch cha ghabhainn* for *Cha dean mi 'ghabhail.* **67:** This is line 71, but is *'S riamh cha d' iarr mi tombac' ort* there. Line 67 is *Tha i fallain do m' bhroilleach.* **68:** This is line 72, but is *'S cha do chleachd mi an ti* there. Line 68 is *'S ni i sona mo chrìdh.* **69:** This line is omitted. **70:** This is line 66, but is *'S is a's blaisde na m' fion* there. CC2, *is* for *a's.* **71:** This is line 65, but is *Tha a' bhranndaidh leam taitneach* there. **72:** This line is omitted. **73:** Replace this line with *'S maith tha fios aig gach neach.* CC2, *math.* **74:** Replace this line with *Nach eil do chleachdadh aig céill.* **75:** *'S tha* for *Tha. masladh.* **76:** *Bhi* for *A bhith, 'nam* for *'am.* **77:** Omit the relative pronoun *a* before the verb. **78:** *aig* for *air.* **80:** *'ga* for *dha.* **81:** *B' e mo mhiann bhi* for *Nuair a bha mi.* **82:** *tha* for *bha.* **84:** *daonnan fo.* **85:** This is line 87, *conaltradh.* **86:** This is line 88, *an d' iarradh* for *a' 'iarrte.* **87:** This is line 85, *'N uair* for *Dar.* CC2, *Nuair.* **88:** This is line 86, *seòmar.* **89:** CC1, *éigin. bhi.* **90:** *is, r' a* for *ri.* **91:** Insert the article *an* before *sean fhacal. 'g ràitinn* for *a' gràitinn.* **92:** *duais.* **93:** CC1, *Mar, deadh-.* **94:** *mnaoi* for *bean.* **95:** CC1, *'us* for *na.* CC2, *is* for *na.* **96:** CC1, *'Us cuis-.* CC2, *Is cuis-. do 'n t-sluagh.* McLS versions add two further verses after line 96. The first verse is as follows: *Bha mi féin agus Uilleam/Riamh, mar bhuineadh dhuinn, réidh;/'S mi nach faiceadh air gruaman,/'S I an uaisle dha 's beus./Tha e' chinneadh nan sàr-laoch/Anns na blàir a bhiodh treun;/Air na Foirbeisich uallach,/'S tric a chualas deadh-sgeul.* [CC2, *deagh-*]. The second verse is as follows: *Bho na chaidh thu gu eachdraidh,* [CC2, *Bho 'n a]/'S gu cinn-fheachd nach robh clì,/Bha mo chinneadhs' cho beachdail,* [CC2, *chinneadh-s']/Ri dream chleachd a bhi strì,/Ged-a chaill iad le 'n gòraiche* [CC2, *Ged a]/An coir air an tìr,/Ann an aobhar righ Seumas* [CC2, *Righ]/'S bochd a dh' éirich sud duinn.*

With these changes, there are 112 lines in McLS versions.

35. Don Phàrlamaid Ùir

Tune: None given. The song is sung to the well-known air "Deoch-slàinte luchd nam breacannan", which is the first line of the song.
No. of lines: 80
Sources: MG15G/2/2, p. 199, CC1, p. 142, CC2, p. 124, FC, p. 85, BT, p. 97. With respect to MG15G/2/2, the manuscript containing Dr. Hector Maclean's collection, immediately after the Hector Maclean collection, John MacLean had added

seven of his own compositions, and after these, his son Charles MacLean had added a further four. The version of this song found in that manuscript appears after those eleven songs, and immediately after a page which had been written by Alexander Maclean Sinclair. The song itself appears to be in the poet's hand. At the end of the song on p. 201 is written "Iain Mac Illeain", and, in what appears to be Maclean Sinclair's hand, "To / Mr Hugh Mac Intosh, Post, Pictou". At p. 202 of the manuscript, there is a scrap of paper on which is written, upside-down, in what appears to be Charles MacLean's hand "Mr Hugh Mac Intosh / Post Pictou. At page 210 of the manuscript, Maclean Sinclair notes the following: "The pages from 199 to 210 were not originally a part of this book. They were inserted when it was rebound in 1891." The song at pp. 203-210 is poem 38, and it also appears to be in the poet's hand. Based on the foregoing, it would appear that the version of this song at pp. 199-201 of MG15G/2/2 was composed by the poet, and may have been sent, perhaps by the poet, to a Hugh MacIntosh of Pictou; the identity of this Hugh MacIntosh is not clear. Given that the note at p. 202 seems to have been written by Charles MacLean, it is possible that it was Charles who first recovered this song, perhaps from Mr. MacIntosh, and that it was ultimately added in 1891 by Maclean Sinclair. Given the divergences with the published Maclean Sinclair versions, and given the editorial principles applied by Maclean Sinclair, as discussed in Chapter Four, the manuscript version is treated as the most authoritative of the existing versions.

Date: c. the very end of September, or the very beginning of October, 1930 (see discussion in "context").

Context: This song is entitled "Brosnachadh Roghnachaidh" in CC1 and CC2. Maclean Sinclair provides the following information in the post-script to the song in MSS: "In the year 1830, 'the Big Election' was held in Pictou. At that time Halifax, Colchester, and Pictou constituted but one county. The Conservative candidates were Hartshorne, Blackadder, Barry, and Starr; the Liberal candidates were Archibald, Blanchard, Lawson and George Smith. The election, in Pictou alone, lasted about a week. Both parties kept open houses, and liquor flowed freely. In a riot which took place, a man Irving was killed. The Liberals won the election. The poet was a Conservative. He went up from Merigomish to Pictou in a schooner. He took no special interest in the election, until he was told that one of the Liberal candidates had made some insulting reference to the Highlanders. He then went to work and composed this song. He spent the greater part of the night at it. He sang it the next day. Thousands were present. It had a most exciting effect. It was a real 'brosnachadh-catha' ['incitement to battle]. The poet, some years after 'the Big Election,' became a Liberal in politics."

The election of 1830 in the Colony of Nova Scotia, also known as 'the Brandy Election' was a significant one, for it involved important issues of constitutional principle concerning the power of the colonial assembly, which was popularly elected, and the council, which was appointed by the Crown. Like other British North American colonies of the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, Nova Scotia was governed by a relatively small oligarchy, centred on Halifax, which was held together by ties of friendship, intermarriage and patronage. The core of this ruling elite were English-speaking Loyalists who had fled the American colonies after the American Revolutionary War, as well as settlers from England. Strongly Anglican, they favoured the position of the established Church: see B. C. U. Cuthbertson, "Place, Politics and the Brandy Election of 1830", (1982), 41 *Collections of the N. S. Hist. Soc'y* 5, at p. 5. Throughout the second half of the 1820s, a number of issues had caused friction within the assembly between the assembly and the council. The

Dissenters, particularly Presbyterians and Baptists, had three particular grievances. The first was the restriction of marriage by license to Anglican clergymen, the second was the restriction of incorporation to Anglican congregations, and the third was the refusal of academic privileges and a permanent grant to the Pictou Academy. In 1827, a newspaper, the *Colonial Patriot*, was established by Rev. McCulloch at Pictou to advance the Dissenter cause and that of the assembly, and it was edited by Jotham Blanchard, a former student of McCulloch at the Pictou Academy who, like McCulloch and the other dissenters, was a "radical democrat" and who, as noted by Maclean Sinclair, went on to be one of the Liberal candidates in the 1830 election: see Gene Morison, "The Brandy Election of 1830", (1954) 30 *Collections of the N. S. Hist. Soc'y* 151, at p. 154 and at pp. 163-4. The Academy was established in the town of Pictou by 1816 by the Rev. Thomas McCulloch (1776-1843), a native of Fereneze, near Paisley, Scotland. Rev. McCulloch graduated from Glasgow University in 1792, and then attended the theological hall of the General Associate Synod in Whitburn (Lothian), where Ministers of the Secession Church trained. He was licensed by the Presbytery of Kilmarnock, and called in 1799 to Stewarton, Glasgow, before emigrating to Pictou in November, 1803. Since King's College, at Windsor, Nova Scotia, had effectively excluded dissenters, recognising the general lack of Presbyterian ministers in Nova Scotia, and realising, like his contemporary and fellow dissenter the Rev. James MacGregor that Nova Scotia would never be adequately served by relying upon ministers formed in Scotland, Rev. McCulloch set out to establish an institution in Nova Scotia for the training of ministers. This was the Pictou Academy. For a bibliographical sketch, see Francess G. Halpenny, general editor, *Dictionary of Canadian Biography, Volume VII, 1836 to 1850*, (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1988), at pp. 529-41; for a fuller profile, see Marjory Whitelaw, *Thomas McCulloch: His Life and Times*, (Halifax: Nova Scotia Museum, 1985). While men like Rev. James MacGregor, a native Gaelic-speaker from Perthshire, Scotland, who had emigrated to Pictou in 1786, had ministered widely to the Protestant Highlanders of Pictou County, that community was deeply riven by the same religious differences as in the old country. In particular, the clergy of the Kirk, under the leadership of another emigrant Gael, the Rev. John MacKenzie, were bitterly opposed to the Rev. McCulloch of the Secession Church: see Morison, at p. 157.

In the winter and early spring of 1830, tensions between the assembly and the council came to a head over the question of increased revenues for road construction in the province. The revenues were funded in part out of excise taxes collected on imports of alcohol. The assembly had discovered that four pence of an 1826 tax of two shillings and four pence on brandy, gin and cordials had never been collected, and sought to amend already approved revenue bills to add the additional four pence tax on brandy. The council refused the amendment. The death of King George IV in August, 1830, meant that an assembly election had to be called, and writs were issued that same month. The key battleground was Halifax County, which had two members of the assembly representing the town of Halifax and four representing the country districts, which at that time included Colchester and Pictou Counties. As Maclean Sinclair noted, the election pitted pro-assembly candidates, referred to by him as "Liberals", S.G.W. Archibald, a lawyer and Dissenter from Truro, William Lawson, a Halifax County merchant and also a Dissenter, George Smith and Jotham Blanchard, against four supporters of the council, described by Maclean Sinclair as "Conservatives", John Alexander Barry, a merchant and politician, Hugh Hartshorne, Henry Blackadar and John Leander Starr, also a merchant and politician. Pictou

County was divided into those of the Secession Church, favouring Pictou Academy, who supported the pro-assembly candidates, and those of the Kirk, who supported the pro-council candidates. The polls came to Pictou on 27 September, and the election there lasted a week. Morison provides the following account: "Rev. John McKenzie led the Kirkmen. The Kirkmen or Highlanders came to the polls armed with sticks and their ministers exhorted them in Gaelic in the taverns, on the streets, and on the hustings. When a party of armed sailors and Highlanders carrying banners with the names of Hartshorne, Barry, Blackadar, and Starr paraded in the vicinity of Pictou Academy and the homes of Blanchard and Smith, the rioting resulted in the death of one man": Morison, at p. 181. Although we cannot be sure, it is possible that these scenes of violence, in which Highlanders were apparently involved, inspired the derogatory comments of one of the pro-assembly candidates, which served as the poet's inspiration for this song. Cuthbertson adds the following details about the poll in Pictou: "There was almost continuous rioting for nearly a week while the poll was conducted; one man was killed and numerous injured. Archibald, at one point, was driven off into the woods by a mob of gaelic speaking Highlanders thoroughly rumed up": Cuthbertson, at p. 18. Although we cannot know for sure, it is tempting to speculate, given this account, that Archibald may have been the source of the comments. One can also only wonder whether the poet's song, which Maclean Sinclair reported had "a most exciting effect", was in any way involved in the events Cuthbertson described. The pro-council candidates captured the most votes in Pictou County, suggesting the influence of the Kirk amongst the Highlanders there, but, on the strength of particularly strong support in Truro, a hot-bed of Dissenter feeling, the four pro-assembly candidates prevailed in the election. For a full account of the election and the issues involved therein, see either Morison or Cuthbertson.

A final point of interest is the insight that this song gives us into the development of the poet's political and, perhaps, religious ideas. Maclean Sinclair notes that the poet was, at this time a "conservative"—that is, a supporter of the pro-council candidates who were supported by Kirkmen and apparently a majority of the Highlanders of Pictou County—but that he had taken no particular interest in the election until news of the ethnic slight on the Gaels. This is not surprising, as Maclean Sinclair also indicated that he was a member of the Church of Scotland: CC2, at p. xx. As noted, Maclean Sinclair also tells us that the poet later became a "liberal"—that is, a supporter of the pro-assembly and pro-Dissenter cause—and that at the Disruption in 1843, he joined the Free Church. As we have seen, church and political affiliation were closely linked, and it would appear, therefore, that although the poet appears to have begun to compose religious verse in the 1820s, he must have undergone a transformation in views sometime after 1830. Given that, according to Maclean Sinclair, the poet had not taken much interest at all in the 1830 election, which, as noted, involved high principle, it is clear that at this time, the poet's main concern was ethnic solidarity, and the defence of the reputation of his people from a perceived slight by a non-Gael.

Line Annotations:

1: MSS, *na m breacanabh*. **3:** MSS, *gu n*. MSS, *sgartail*. **4:** MSS, *naigheachd*. **6:** MSS, *A chuirt*; *A* appears to be the article, "A'". **7:** MSS, *dui*. McLS interprets this as the prepositional pronoun "diubh", "of them", formed from the preposition "de", but the MSS spelling may imply "dhuibh", "to you", and as "do", the preposition from which this prepositional pronoun derives, is used in place of "de" in the poet's dialect, it may be interpreted here as "of you". MSS, *chardain*. **9:** MSS, *S a*

ghaidheal. This appears to be in the vocative case, and the noun is slenderised. MSS, *biodh*; the poet generally uses *biodh* for the future tense of "bi", but the context suggests that this is a command, and should be interpreted here as "bithibh", as in McLS. **10:** MSS, *air ceanntartabh*. *air* is interpreted as the second person plural possessive pronoun, "ur", which is consistent with the context, a direct address to a group. *ceanntartabh* is interpreted as the dative plural form of "ceannard", "leader, chief". **11:** MSS, *s na campuichean*; *s na* is "'sna", a contraction of "anns na". **12:** MSS, *n cruadail*. **13:** MSS, *Mu gheillis, do n*. The reference is to William Lawson, one of the four anti-council candidates for the Nova Scotia Assembly in the 1830 election. Lawson was baptised on 14 March, 1772 in Halifax, and died there on 29 August, 1848. He was born into a prominent Halifax family which had come to the town from Boston in 1750. His father, John Lawson, was a leading merchant in Halifax, and the family connections helped him throughout his career. By 1800, he had entered into a successful trading business with Charles Ramage Prescott, and from 1811, he carried this business on by himself. He served as a member of the Nova Scotia Assembly from 1806 to 1836, and in spite of his stance in the 1830 election, was appointed to the Legislative Council in January, 1838, on which he served until 1845. He is perhaps best remembered, however, for founding in 1832 and serving as director and first president of the Bank of Nova Scotia, now one of Canada's five largest financial institutions. Lawson had a reputation for being outspoken and forthright. Joseph Howe, the monumental reforming Nova Scotian journalist and politician, stated in 1837 that Lawson, "though wealthy and fairly entitled to the notice of the Government", had never been made a member of the old Council because "he was too plain spoken and would not bend to the views of that body". In 1812, he was forced to apologise to the Assembly for uttering "divers words, reflecting upon [Lewis Morris Wilkins] in his character of Speaker, and upon the House": see Francess G. Halpenny, gen. ed. *Dictionary of Canadian Biography, Volume VII, 1836-1850*, (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1988), at pp. 491-3. Given the reputation for forthrightness, and his establishment upbringing in a thoroughly anglophone and anglophile colonial capital, it would not be surprising if it had been Lawson who had disparaged the Gaels, and this may be why the poet mentioned him first. **15:** The reference to "George" is to George Smith, another of the four anti-council candidates. Smith has no separate entry in the *Dictionary of Canadian Biography*, but he was a merchant based in the town of Pictou. In 1813, he entered into partnership with Edward Mortimer, a secessionist Presbyterian and a financial backer of the Pictou Academy, and they were involved in trade between the colony and Scotland. On Mortimer's premature death in 1819, Smith succeeded Mortimer in the Nova Scotia Assembly, and carried on the fight there for the cause of proper annual funding for the Pictou Academy. In 1823, he began a shipbuilding enterprise in partnership with an Alexander Campbell of Pictou: Francess G. Halpenny, gen. ed., *The Dictionary of Canadian Biography*, *Volume V*, at p. 611, p. 612, and *Volume VIII*, p. 122. The reference to "Archibald" is to Samuel George William Archibald. Archibald was born on 5 February, 1777 in Truro, Nova Scotia, the third son of Samuel Archibald of Truro and Rachel Todd of Massachusetts. He died in Halifax on 28 January, 1846, from a massive stroke. He was the grandson of David Archibald of Londonderry in what is now Northern Ireland, one of four brothers who helped to found Truro. He was apparently christened Samuel *George Washington* Archibald, an indication of his family's political sympathies, and apparently changed his name to further his chances. In 1792, he went to Massachusetts, where he studied at Haverhill and Andover colleges until 1796. On

his return, he considered the Presbyterian ministry, but later began to study law, and was admitted to the bar in 1805. A year later, he was elected to the Nova Scotia Assembly for Halifax County. Archibald was a secessionist Presbterian with a deep religious faith, and for two decades he supported Thomas McCulloch and his efforts to have Pictou Academy given a permanent annual grant. He held the Speakership of the Nova Scotia Assembly from 1824 until 1841. His great ambition was to become chief justice for the colony, but he never achieved this goal, and it is commonly thought that his participation on the pro-secessionist cause in the 1830 election, in which he assumed the leadership in arguing the assembly's case with regard to its tax-raising powers, doomed his chances. In 1830, he also suffered the death of his second son, and of his first wife, Elizabeth Dickson, with whom he had had fifteen children. He remarried, in 1832 to Joanna Brinley, with whom he had a further three children. Archibald had never been a populist, and as the 1830s progressed, found himself increasingly out of step with the reformist majority in the Assembly. In 1840, he was finally appointed to the Council, to the position of attorney general, and as he could not sit on both the council and in the assembly, he gave up the speakership of the latter. He was apparently a man of great personal charm, and Joseph Howe described him thus: "There was no venom or malignity about Judge Archibald—to give pleasure and to share it, was a necessity of his nature—but it never gave him pleasure to give others pain." See, generally, Francess G. Halpenny, gen. ed., *Dictionary of Canadian Biography, Volume VII, 1836 to 1850*, (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1988), at pp. 21-5. **17:** MSS, *S e thubhair*. **18:** MSS, *pronasg*. The particle "a" is omitted before *dhith*, and this is marked. **19:** MSS, *a sgriobach*. *a* is interpreted as the article, "an", and the omission of the consonant, likely dialectical, is marked. **20:** MSS, *Gael*. **21:** MSS, *Mu*. McLS interprets this as "Ma", which, given the context, is appropriate. MSS, *riabh air*. Given the context, in which the poet is addressing the Gaels, *air* is interpreted as the second person plural possessive pronoun, "ur", which the poet commonly renders as *air*. **23:** MSS, *shealltuin*. MSS, *gur urin*. **24:** MSS, *Ann uram*. Given the context, *Ann* appears to be the third person plural possessive pronoun, referring to the Gaels. **25:** MSS, *Sa mhuintir*. *Sa* is interpreted as two words, " 'S", a contraction of "Agus", and the feminine nominative article "a'". **26:** MSS, *ligibh*. MSS, *dhiobh*. **27:** The relative pronoun "a" is omitted before the verb in the MSS, and this is marked. MSS, *fein*. **28:** MSS, *bo*. **29:** MSS, *graitin*. **30:** MSS, *fhioch, fein*. MSS, *na Ghaeltachd*. The noun is in the nominative case, and so *na*, the genitive feminine article, should be replaced by the nominative feminine "a'". **31:** MSS, *Biodh*. **32:** MSS, *dh arduichear*. Maureen Lonergan speculates that the reference may, in fact, be to the pro-council "conservative" candidates who the poet is supporting; she notes that the four pro-council candidates appeared with Scotch bonnets on their heads and that one of them, Barry, had a thistle on his bosom: Maureen Lonergan, *The Canadian Songs of John Maclean (Am Bard MacGilleathain)*, unpublished M.A. thesis at the Department of Celtic, University of Glasgow, 1977, at p. 126. Her information is from George MacLaren, *The Pictou Book*, privately printed, first edition, 1954, at p. 191. **33:** MSS, *riabh*. **34:** MSS, *sinnshearachd, dainig*. **35:** MSS, *an am*; *an* is interpreted as a contraction of the prepositional phrase "ann an", and is marked accordingly, and *am* is interpreted as "àm". MSS, *s na*. **38:** In the MSS, the feminine article "a'" is omitted before *phiob*, and this is marked. **40:** MSS, *batal*. In the MSS, the relative pronoun is omitted before the verb. **41:** MSS, *cleachde, doibh*. **42:** MSS, *gartanabh*. **43:** MSS, *A cota*. The non-aspiration of the noun suggests that *A* is the article "An", and the omission of the consonant, likely dialectical, is marked. MSS,

sam breachdan. *Sam* is interpreted as two separate words, "'s", a contraction of "agus", and the article "am". **44:** MSS, *far*; this is a dialectical variant of "bhàrr". MSS, *an guaileadh.* As the noun is in the genitive case, *an* must be the third person plural possessive pronoun rather than the feminine genitive article "na". MSS, *air a phasgadh.* *a* is interpreted here as the third person singular masculine possessive pronoun, referring to "breacan" in line 43, rather than the dative article "a'". **45:** MSS, *stailin.* **46:** MSS, *an a sgabartabh.* *an a* is interpreted as "Ann", and "an", the third person plural possessive pronoun, referring to the Highland soldiers, and the omission of the consonant, likely a dialectical feature, is marked. **47:** MSS, *aobhar, namhuid.* **48:** The relative pronoun "a" is omitted in the MSS before the noun, and this is marked. MSS, *go m*; *m* is interpreted as the third person plural possessive pronoun "am", referring to the enemies, in line 47, and the omission of the vowel, due to elision, is marked. **49:** MSS, *Sa la.* *Sa* is interpreted as two separate words, "'S", a contraction of "Agus", an "an", the article, and the omission of the consonant, which is likely dialectical, is marked. The reference is to the Battle of Fontenoy, which took place on 11 May, 1745, less than a year before Culloden. It was a battle in the War of Austrian Succession and pitted the British, Hanoverians, Austrians and Dutch against the French, at the village of Fontenoy, on the Scheldt estuary in Flanders. The British were lead by the Duke of Cumberland, the second son of King George II, who led the government forces at Culloden. The battle was a French victory. The Highland Regiment, the Black Watch, participated in the battle and fought bitterly but failed to breach the French lines. The Black Watch suffered relatively few casualties, and so it came to them and one other regiment, Lord Howard's 19th of Foot, the "Green Howards", to conduct a fighting withdrawal. They showed so aggressive a temper and fired to such good effect that the French could do little to stop the retirement, and Cumberland himself was most impressed with the Black Watch. In a pamphlet published in Paris soon after the battle, an anonymous author wrote: "The British behaved well, and could be exceeded in ardour by none but our own officers, who animated the troops by their example when the Highland furies rushed in upon us with more violence than ever did the sea driven by tempest . . . . In short, we gained the victory, but may I never see such another!". See Eric and Andro Linklater, *The Black Watch: The History of the Royal Highland Regiment*, (London: Barrie & Jenkins, 1977), at pp. 23-8. **50:** MSS, *drinn.* MSS, *leoghunabh.* **51:** MSS, *cotichibh.* The reference to the "blue" (or green) being added to the coats of the Highland soldiers is unclear. The implication is that it may be some sort of military award for valour. It does appear that the British soldiers wore blue or buff facings on their red coats at Fontenoy, and it may be this to which the poet is referring, although it does not appear that the Black Watch were singled out for this costume: Eric and Andro Linklater, *The Black Watch*, at p. 25. **52:** MSS, *o n nuair sin.* **53:** The relative pronoun "a" is omitted in the MSS before the verb, and this is marked. MSS, *an san Ephaid.* The reference is to the exploits of the 42nd Royal Highland Regiment, the Black Watch, at the Battle of Aboukir Bay on 8 March, 1801, and of the Black Watch and Gordon Highlanders, the 92nd Regiment, at the Battle of Alexandria on 21 March, 1801. The British, led by Sir Ralph Abercromby, defeated the French Napoleonic army in these two decisive battles, and the Highland soldiers won great fame for their exploits. See Eric and Andro Linklater, *The Black Watch*, at pp. 46-52. **54:** MSS, *ghaisgeal.* MSS, *an am.* *an* appears to be a contraction of the prepositional phrase "ann an", "in", and *am* is interpreted as "àm". **55:** MSS, *gu faicear*; *gu* is interpreted as the conjunction "gum", and the omission of the consonant, likely dialectical, is marked. The reference here is unclear, but it may refer to the fact that as a mark of distinction

for their service in Egypt, a sphinx was added to the regimental arms of the Black Watch: Eric and Andro Linklater, *The Black Watch*, at p. 52. **57:** MSS, *ainmeal*. The reference is to the Battle of Waterloo, which took place on 18 June, 1815, near the village of Waterloo, Belgium, some thirteen miles south of Brussels, in which British, Prussian, Dutch, Belgian and Prussian forces under the command of Arthur Wellesley, the Duke of Wellington, Marshal Gebhard Leberecht von Blücher and William, the Prince of Orange, defeated the French, under the command of Emperor Napoleon Bonaparte. A number of Highland Regiments played a role in this famous battle, which brought the Napoleonic wars to an end, including the 42nd Highlanders (the Royal Highland Regiment, the Black Watch), th 71st Highland Light Infantry, the 73rd Highlanders, the 79th Highlanders (the Cameron Highlanders) and the 92nd Highlanders (the Gordon Highlanders). The 73rd Highlanders played a particularly important part in the victory, although the Black Watch itself was not involved until later in the battle. The Highland troops had also seen action in the battles of Ligny and Quatre-Bras, which took place two days before Waterloo in the same vicinity. See Eric and Andro Linklater, *The Black* Watch, at pp. 76-83. **58:** MSS, *drinn*. **59:** MSS, *an airgiod*; *an* is interpreted as a contraction of "ann an", and is marked. The reference appears to be to the so-called "Waterloo Medal". It was awarded to anyone who had taken part in the battles of Ligny, Quatre Bras or Waterloo, and was the first medal issued by the British Government to all soldiers present at a battle, and the first campaign medal awarded to the next-of-kin of men killed in action. It was a silver medal, and all participants, regardless of rank got the same one. See Lawrence L. Gordon, *British Battles and Medals*, (London: Spink, 1971). **61:** MSS, *rodh*. MSS, *air cruadal*. Given the context, *air* is interpreted as the second person plural possessive pronoun, referring to the Highlanders being addressed by the poet; he often used *air* for "ur". **62:** MSS, *air beus*. Given the context, *air* is again interpreted as "ur". MSS, *bhi*; the omission of the infinitive particle "a" is marked. **64:** MSS, *dana dol san*. *dol* is a verbal noun, and the omission of the verbal noun particle "a'", due to elision by the preceding vowel, is marked. *san* is a contraction of "anns an", and is marked accordingly. **66:** MSS, *Bha mhiosa*. McLS emends to "Cha mhiosa", but given the copula construction in lines 65 and 67, it is likelier that the poet intended to follow the pattern, and so "Bu" is preferred. Given the context, *mhiosa* is interpreted as "mhiosail" rather than as "mhiosa", "worse", the comparative of "bochd". MSS, *shiubhal*. This is an infinitive, and the omission of the particle "a", due to elision by the preceding vowel sound, is marked. **67:** MSS, *bhi sealgaireachd*. This is a verbal noun, and the omission of the verbal noun particle "a'", due to elision by the preceding vowel, is marked. **68:** MSS, *Fir earbachan s na*. It is likely that *earbachan* is "earbaichean", the plural of "earb", "roe deer". McLS emends *Fir* to "Air", which, given the context, is defensible if, indeed, *earbachan* is "roe deer". *S na* is "'sna", a contraction of "anns na". **70:** MSS, *riabh*. **71:** MSS, *Ga h iomadh*. *Ga* is interpreted as the preposition "Gu", "To". MSS, *a dhastnich*. This is interpreted as the preterite of "astaraich", and the omission of the medial vowel in the MSS is interpreted as reflecting the intended pronunciation; thus, the medial vowel is omitted, and marked as such. **72:** MSS, *Gu rodh*; *Gu* is the conjunction "Gun", and the omission of the final consonant, which appears to be dialectical, is marked. **73:** MSS, *Mu ni*. McLS interprets *Mu* as "Ma", which is appropriate in the circumstances. MSS, *gu earachdail*; *earachdail* should be preceded by "h-", and its omission, possibly dialectical, is marked. **74:** MSS, *doir*, *dhiu*. **75:** MSS, *dhiubh*. McLS interprets this as "dhuibh", "for you", rather than "dhiubh", "for them", and this appears to be a defensible emendation, as the poet seems to be addressing the

Highlanders directly in this verse. **77:** MSS, *san.* This is a contraction of "anns an". MSS, *so.* **78:** MSS, *deun, ghratin.* **79:** MSS, *na gael.* **80:** MSS, *s an*; this is "'san", a contraction of "anns an".

Maclean Sinclair Versions:

1: *breacanan.* **2:** *'cur mu 'n.* **3:** *gu 'n.* **5:** CC1, *naigheachd.* **7:** *taobh tha cruinneachadh* for *aon dhiubh 'g iarraidh.* **8:** *Dh' fheuch.* **10:** CC1, *'Us. ceannardan.* **11:** CC1, *A's tric. 's na.* **12:** *le cruadal* (i.e. omit *'n* after *le*). **13:** *aobhar, dhuibh* for *dhiubh.* **14:** *do 'n* for *do.* **15:** *no* for *na.* **17:** *'S ann thubhairt* for *'S e 'thuirt.* **19:** *gu 'n, an* for *a'.* **20:** CC1, *De.* CC2, *Deth. mhiodhair.* **22:** *so.* **23:** *'Us* [CC2, *Is*] *fheuchainn. h-urrainn.* **24:** *t-urram.* **25-28:** These are verse eighteen. **25:** Replace this line with *A shliochd nan laoch a b' ainmeile.* **26:** *dhibh* for *dhiubh. dearmadachd* for *dearmad iad.* **27:** Replace this line with *Na daoin' tha 'n diugh ag earbs' asaibh.* **28:** *Gu 'n.* **29-32:** These are verse nineteen. **29:** Omit *'S* at the start of the line. Insert *ud* after *mhuinntir.* Omit the relative pronoun *a* before *bha.* **30:** *féin, no* for *a'.* **31:** *Biodh cuimhn', dràsd.* **32:** *'Us* [CC2, *Is*] *àrdaicheabh* [CC2, *àrdaichbh*] for *Nuair 'dh'àrdaichear.* **33-36:** These are verse seven. **33:** *aon* for *an.* **34:** *bho 'n d' thàinig.* **35:** *'s na.* **37-40:** These are verse eight. **37:** CC1, *'N uair.* **39:** *Bhiodh* for *Bha.* **40:** CC1, *mar-a.* CC2, *mar a.* **41-44:** These are verse nine. **41:** *sud* for *sin.* **42:** *gartanan.* **43:** *An* for *A'.* **44:** *thar an guala.* After line 44, the following eight lines (2 verses) are added: *Le 'n claidhean dhion na sàr-fhearaibh,/Gach beinn 'us* [CC2, *is*] *gleann a dh' àitich iad,/Bho fheachd na Ròimhe àilleasaich,/Gu calma, dàna, buadhach./Aig Allt-a'-Bhonnaich b' fheumail iad,/Bu ghuineach, fuileach, treubhach iad,/'Cur* [CC2, *Cur*] *as gu bras le 'n geur-lannan,/Da 'n naimhdean féineil, uaibhreach.* **45-48:** This verse is omitted. **49-52:** These are verse twelve. **49:** *an là.* **50:** *Gu 'n, leòghannan.* **51:** *còtaichean.* **52:** *o 'n.* **53-56:** These are verse thirteen. **53:** Replace this line with *Bu lasgarra 's an Eiphit iad.* **54:** Replace this line with *Bu sgairteil, neartmhor, creuchdach iad:.* **55:** Replace this line with *Thuig Bonipart an tréinead.* **56:** *A tha 'n* for *Aig, nam féileadh* for *nan èileadh.* **57-60:** These are verse fourteen. **57:** *gu 'm.* **58:** *Rinn iad an gaisge* for *'S gun d' rinn iad cùis a.* **59:** *airgiod.* **60:** CC1, *mar-a.* **61-64:** These are verse fifteen. **61:** *na Gàidheil* for *ur cruadal.* **62:** Replace this line with *B' e 'm beus 'bhi seasmhach tàbhachdach.* **63:** *Bhi* for *Gu.* **64:** CC1, *Bhi dàn a' dol*, CC2, *Bhi dàna dol* for *Gu dàna 'dol. 's an.* **65-68:** These are verse sixteen. **65:** *teom, sibh* for *iad.* **66:** *Cha mhiosa* for *Bu mhiosail.* **67:** *leotha bhi* for *leibh a bhith.* **68:** *earbachan, 's na.* **69-72:** These are verse seventeen. **69:** This is the third line in the verse (line 71), and is replaced with *Gach beus a b' fheàrr bha 'n taice riubh* [CC2, *riu*]. **71:** This is the first line in the verse (line 69) *Ged 's* for *Gu h-. dh' astaraich.* **72:** *Bha 'n* for *Gu' robh an.* Insert *daonnan* before *uasal.* **73-76:** These are verse twenty. **73:** Insert *gnìomh* before *gu h-eireachdail.* **74:** *gu 'n.* **75:** *Gu 'n.* **76:** *cheil mi* for *cheileam.* **77-80:** These are verse twenty-one. **77:** Replace this line with *Bi'bh dìleas ann am bràithreachas.* **78:** Replace this line with *'S gach cridh'* [CC2, *crìdh*] *gun lùb, gun fhàilinn ann;.* **79:** Replace this line with *Ho rò airson nan Gàidheal.* **80:** *mu 'n.*

With these changes, there are 84 lines in McLS versions.

Recorded Versions:

A version of this song was recorded in 1974 from the singing of Sister Jane MacKenzie, of Christmas Island, Cape Breton County, Cape Breton, by Maureen

Lonergan (Williams), and included in her 1974 M.A. Dissertation in Celtic Studies at St. Francis Xavier University, entitled "The Scholar, Poet and Local Bard", under the direction of Prof. C. I. N. MacLeod. The text for the song is taken from CC1 and CC2, and it follows the McLS version very closely. For more information on Sister Jane MacKenzie, see the note to "Recorded Versions", poem 16, above. She sings the the chorus, and all twenty verses which appear in CC1 and CC2, in precisely the order set out in both books. Sister Jane MacKenzie's version differs from CC2 in only very minor respects, the most important being the following: **Verse 1: Line 4**, *Feuch* for *Dh'fheuch*; **Verse 5: Line 3,** *feuchainn* for *fheuchainn*, **Line 4,** *ghuapa* for *bhuapa*; **Verse 8: Line 4,** *air an guailnean* for *thar an guala*; **Verse 9: Line 3,** *feachd* for *fheachd*; **Verse 13: Line 2**, *dearbhadh* for *dhearbhadh*; **Verse 16: Line 3,** *'s fheàrr* for *b' fheàrr*; **Verse 17: Line 4,** *dhuibh* for *duibh*; **Verse 20: Line 1,** *Bidh* for *Bi'bh*, **Line 2,** *fàilinn* for *fhàilinn*. A version of the song was recorded in Autumn, 2004 by Seumas Watson from the singing of Peter MacLean ("Peadar 'Jack' Pheadair Chaluim Ghobha"), of Rear Christmas Island, Cape Breton County, Cape Breton; a copy of this tape was kindly provided to the author. The version of the song closely resembles McLS versions; Peter MacLean sang the chorus, and seven verses, which were verses 1, 5, 4, 3, 12, 11 and 19 from CC1 and CC2. The words sung by Peter MacLean are almost identical to those which appear in McLS sources, and the air to which he sings is almost identical to that sung by Sister MacKenzie. A version of this song was recorded as part of the St. Francis Xavier Gaelic Folklore Project by Dr. John Shaw, from the singing of Joe Allan MacLean, also of Rear Christmas Island, Cape Breton County, on 25 April, 1979 (Reel No. 209, Item A-02, Item No. 1110). Joe Allan MacLean provided some background information on the song; he noted that the poet had gone to a tavern where there was much conversation regarding an election, and those gathered told the poet that he should make a song for the election, which the poet did. Joe Allan MacLean sang the chorus and four verses, which closely resembled verses 1, 2, 18 and 19 in CC1 and CC2.

36. Rafail Dhòmhnaill Iain Bhàin

Tune: None given, although likely sung to the tune "Tha mi seo 'sa choille chruinn", a well-known tune in Nova Scotia
No. of lines: 68
Sources: MG15G/2/1, p. 651, CC1, p. 146, CC2, p. 128, FC, p. 88.
Date: c. 1831 (see "context").
Context: Alexander Maclean Sinclair notes in the post-script to this poem in CC1 and CC2 the following: "About the year 1831 Donald MacDonald, Beaver Meadow, Dòmhnull Iain Bhàin, had a raffle on a watch in his father's house. Every person who attended had to pay half a dollar. The young people in the neighbourhood were present. Those mentioned in the song are the old and middle-aged men who lived near. Some of them were not at the raffle. The poet himself was not there. All the men referred to are now dead [i.e., in 1881]." Beaver Meadow, Antigonish County, is immediately to the west of Glenbard, and the protagonists were therefore all neighbours of the poet. John MacDonald, "Iain Bàn, the father of the man who held the raffle, was the son of Donald MacDonald, a native of Ionarchannich, Strathglass. John MacDonald was for a few years in a Fencible Regiment in Scotland, was discharged in 1802, and came to Nova Scotia in 1803, he and his brother Hugh,

nicknamed "Eòghann Mòr" [MacLean's *History of Antigonish* identifies him as "Boghan Mòr", but this is almost certainly a typographical error; given the name Hugh, "Eòghann" must have been intended], buying the farm of Hugh Fraser, also a native of Strathglass, and the first settler in Beaver Meadow. John MacDonald married Flora MacKenzie, and Donald, who held the raffle, appears to be the oldest seven sons and several daughters: Raymond A. MacLean, ed., *History of Antigonish, vol. 1*, (Antigonish: Casket Printing & Publishing, 1976), at p. 77. Raymond MacLean supplies no dates, and it is not clear whether John and Flora were married before or after emigration in 1803, or whether their offspring were born in Canada or Scotland. MacKenzie is a relatively rare Antigonish County surname, and there do no appear to be any emigrants or offspring of emigrants named Flora, making it likely that John and Flora had, indeed, married in Scotland: see Raymond A. MacLean, and Rev. D. J. Rankin, *A History of the County of Antigonish Nova Scotia*, (Pawtucket, R.I.: Quintin Publications, 1998), at pp. 301-4. It is likely that, having been discharged from a fencible regiment in 1802, John MacDonald was still a relatively young man when he emigrated, and so it is likely that Donald MacDonald, the sponsor of the raffle, was born either relatively shortly before or shortly after emigration. As a result, he would likely have been in his late twenties or early thirties in 1831.

Line Annotations:

1: MSS, *sho, chruim*. The meaning of *chruim* is unclear, though it is interpreted as a dative feminine form of the adjective "crom", "bent, curved, sloping". It could be that the poet misspelled "cruinn", but as he uses that adjective at line three, he is too accomplished a poet to have used the same word to form this end rhyme. **2:** MSS, *thennaich*. MSS, *fhounn*. McLS emends this to the singular genitive form, "fuinn", and although it is likely that the poet is referring to the raising of just one tune, namely the one being composed, the genitive plural form used by the poet better preserves the end rhyme with line 4. **3:** MSS, *gillian og a*. **4:** MSS, *S bhear*. MSS, *thfean*, interpreted as "fhèin". MSS, *gu robh*; the poet commonly omitted the final consonant in the conjunction "gun", and as this is likely a dialectical feature, it is marked. **5:** MSS, *gur ahintneach*. MSS, *a drasd*; the omission of the consonant in "an" is likely a dialectical feature, and is marked. **6:** MSS, *a chuideach*. MSS, *thigh*. The aspiration of this noun, "taigh", implies the presence of a preposition which causes aspiration, perhaps "a", "to", and its omission, due in part to elision by the preceding vowel, is marked. The reference is to the house of John MacDonald; see "context", above. **7:** MSS, *cluich na dishinn*. As "dìsinn" is a masculine noun, it is likely that *na* is the genitive plural article "nan", rather than the genitive feminine article "na", and the omission of the final consonant, a dialectical feature, is marked. MSS, *air a chlar*; *a* is interpreted as the dative singular article "a'". **8:** The infinitive particle "a" is omitted before "dhol", and this is marked. **9:** MSS, *saol*. MSS, *a deid*; *a* is the relative pronoun "an", and the omission of the consonant, likely dialectical, is marked. **10:** MSS, *feiach a choshin*. MSS, *thfeàn*, interpreted as "fhèin". **11:** MSS, *leath dollar*. MSS, *ga m dhith*; *ga m* is interpreted as a contraction of the particle "a" and the first person singular possessive pronoun. **12:** MSS, *uairadair ghrinn*; "uaireadair" is normally a masculine noun, but the aspiration of the adjective indicates that it may be feminine in the poet's dialect. This seems to be confirmed by the use of the third person singular feminine pronoun to describe the watch, at line 22. MSS, *a m laimh*; *a m* is a contraction of the preposition "ann" and the first person singular possessive pronoun. **13:** A margin note in the MSS indicates that a verse further

down on the page in the MSS, the sixth verse on the page, is verse three, lines 13-16. MSS, *ghruaim*; there is no need for aspiration of the noun following the simple preposition "le". **14:** MSS, *gur a dusa.* MSS, *dhine thruadh.* The aspiration of the noun immediately after the personal pronoun *dusa* implies the presence of some word or words; it is likely that, given the wife is addressing the poet directly, it is a contraction of the preposition "ann" and the second person singular possessive pronoun, and therefore this contraction, "'ad" is inserted. **15:** MSS, *dhual agad gu dobhair thu baich.* As in McLS versions, *dhual* is interpreted as "dùil", "expectation", which is more appropriate in the context than "dual", "due, hereditary right"; it is not clear why either should be aspirated. *Gu dobhair* appears to be the conjunction "gun" with the dependent future form of the verb "thoir"; the omission of the consonant in "gun" is likely dialectical, and is marked. As in McLS versions, *baich* is interpreted as "buaidh". **16:** MSS, *bhuaradh.* The relative pronoun "a" is omitted in the MSS before the verb *tha.* MSS, *na d*; this is a contraction of the preposition "ann" and the second person singular possessive pronoun. **17:** The following four lines are the third verse on the page in the MSS, but a margin note indicates that they are the fourth. MSS, *thubhard a Frioshallach rum thfean. a* is likely the article "am", and the omission of the consonant, which is likely a dialectical feature, is marked. *thfean* is "fhèin". There were several Frasers in the area of Glenbard, and it is difficult to determine the identity of the man being referred to. Hugh Fraser, a son of James Fraser, "Seumas Mòr, was the first settler in Beaver Meadow, where Glenbard is located, but he had sold his property to Iain Bàn MacDonald and his brother Hugh, "Boghan Mòr", in 1803, and moved to Sunny Brae, Pictou County, over thirty miles away, and he is therefore likely not the man. A Donald Fraser settled near the poet in 1833 and an Alexander Fraser had moved into the district in 1832, but McLS indicates that the events took place, and therefore the song was likely written, in about 1831. The first settler in the West River district as a whole, which neighbours Beaver Valley, was Alexander Fraser, who had come from Scotland in about 1795. He had four sons, John, who assumed the homestead, Alexander, Malcolm and Donald, and one of these men could be the Fraser being referred to here. See Raymond A. MacLean, ed., *History of Antigonish, Vol. 1*, (Antigonish: Casket, 1976), at pp. 76-8, *Vol. 2*, at p. 68. It is possible, however, that the man was John Fraser, who came from Strathglass with his sister Janet and settled at James River, near Glenbard. See Rev. D. J. Rankin, *A History of the County of Antigonish Nova Scotia*, (Pawtucket: Quintin Publications, 1998), at pp. 136-7. **18:** MSS, *gu robh*; the poet commonly omits the final consonant in the conjunction "gum"; this is likely dialectical, and is marked. **19:** MSS, *caffag air a mnoigh*; *mnoigh*, interpreted as "mnaoi", the dative of "bean", "wife", should be aspirated, whether *a* is interpreted as the dative article "a'" or as the third person singular masculine possessive pronoun. **20:** MSS, *S gu biodh riolla achadh roimh aum.* The poet commonly omits the final consonant in the conjunction "gum", and this is marked. *riolla achadh* is interpreted as "ruidhle aca", as in McLS versions. *aum* is interpreted as "àm". **21:** MSS, *thubhard.* MSS, *Cammron.* MSS, *dhi luain.* The man referred to here would appear to be John Cameron, a native of Lochaber, who settled at the "Big Clearing", "An Clerramore", at James River, just to the east of Glenbard, and in the vicinity of the poet. See Raymond A. MacLean, ed., *History of Antigonish, Vol. 1*, at p. 78. **22:** MSS, *gu bear.* The poet commonly omits the final consonant in the conjunction "gum", and this is marked. MSS, *aig i*; *aig* is interpreted as the third person singular masculine prepositional pronoun "aige", indicating possession by the man referred to in line 21. The reference to the thing to be

possessed, indicated by the third person singular feminine pronoun *i*, is to the watch, referred to at line 12. As noted there, although this noun is masculine in standard Gaelic, it appears to be feminine in the poet's dialect. **23:** MSS, *a cosdadh*; the context suggests that the verb is in the conditional, rather than a verbal noun form, and therefore it should be aspirated. MSS, *e bho cruaich.* McLS interprets this as "bhò chruaidh, which seems appropriate, for two reasons: first, it is consistent with the next line, in which the thing spent by Cameron was taken from another neighbour, and in a farming community in which cash was scarce, a cow is a likely possibility; and second, "-aidh" endings are commonly rendered as "aich" in the poet's dialect (see Chapter four, above). The aspiration of the noun, "bhò", implies the presence of the feminine article, "a'" or the third person singular masculine possessive pronoun, "a", either of which would be elided by the preceding vowel, and this is marked. **24:** MSS, *fa Iain ruadh*; the poet commonly uses *fa* for the preposition "bho". It has not been possible to identify the man to whom reference is made, or the valley in which he apparently resided. **25:** MSS, *glenn a comhan.* MSS, *a ghra*; although the aspiration of *ghra* suggests an infinitive, the context suggests that this is a verbal noun. The reference appears to be to John MacDonald, whose father, Alexander lived at Clachaig, Glencoe, Scotland; John emigrated and settled at Beaver Meadow, and was an immediate neighbour of Iain Bàn. He was apparently known as "Glencoe". See Raymond MacLean, ed., *History of Antigonish, Vol. 1*, at p. 78. **27:** MSS, *an teach ban*; *an teach* is interpreted as the noun "an t-each", "the horse", rather than "an teach", "the house". **28:** MSS, *s gu bo ladhair e sa ch___* [the last part of this word is missing in the MSS]. The poet commonly omits the final consonant in the conjunction "gum", and this is marked. McLS interprets *ladhair* as "làidir", which fits the context better than alternatives such as "ladar", "a ladle, soup spoon", or "ladhair", "hoof, toe, claw". *sa* is a contraction of "anns a'". **29:** A margin note in the MSS indicates that the next verse in the manuscript is verse three (see the note at line 13, above), then on p. 652 of the MSS, the next verse is marked "8" and on p. 653 of the MSS, the last verse in the MSS is marked "7". The verses have been arranged accordingly, although it is not possible to determine whether the margin notes were made by the poet. The structure based on this numbering is still not identical to that used by McLS, however. **29:** MSS, *air a thoir.* McLS emends to "toir". The possessive pronoun *a* seems to refer to the watch, the central motif in the poem, and as the poet has generally treated it as a feminine object, "toir" is an appropriate emendation, consistent with *a* being the third person singular feminine possessive pronoun, rather than the masculine, which would cause aspiration. **30:** MSS, *ni e chennach.* The aspiration of the verbal noun implies the presence of the third person singular masculine possessive pronoun, "a". However, as noted at line 29, the reference appears to be to the watch, which the poet has treated as a feminine noun, so the implied possessive pronoun should be the third person singular feminine, "a", which would not cause aspiration, and so "ceannach" is used. The omission of the possessive pronoun is due to elision, and is marked. MSS, *le chuid or*; the aspiration of *chuid* implies the third person singular masculine possessive pronoun, in reference to James MacDonald, referred to at line 32, and its omission, due to elision by the preceding vowel, is marked. **31:** MSS, *a bhleanda.* MSS, *air dhol*; the aspiration of the verbal noun implies the presence of the third person singular possessive pronoun, again in reference to MacDonald, and its omission, due to elision, is marked. MSS, *gu sporsa.* McLS emends to "spors", which is appropriate, as it maintains the end-rhyme and the rhythm. **32:** MSS, *Dhonalach ad haul.* There is no need for the aspiration of the surname "Dòmhnallach". The reference is likely to James

MacDonald, "Seumas Mòr", a native of Strathglass who settled in James River, close to the poet. **33:** MSS, *thubhart eabhan.* McLS interprets *eabhan* as the masculine name "Eòbhann". MSS, *gu robh*; the poet commonly omits the final consonant in the conjunction "gun", and this omission, which is likely dialectical, is marked. The reference is likely to Hugh MacDonald, "Eòghann Mòr", the brother of John MacDonald, "Iain Bàn", at whose house the raffle was held. Like John, Hugh was a native of Strathglass, and lived beside his brother, on part of the farm that the two brothers had purchased in 1803 from James Fraser, the original settler. See Raymond A. MacLean, ed., *History of Antigonish, Vol. 1*, at p. 77. **34:** MSS, *dhar.* The relative pronoun "a" is omitted in the MSS before the verb, and this is marked. MSS, *sa duaich huas*; *sa* is a contraction of "anns an", but the poet has omitted the final consonant in this contraction "'san", which he commonly does, and this dialectical feature is marked. **35:** MSS, *ti*; McLS interprets this as "tè", "her", or "it", in reference to a feminine item, and since the reference is to the watch motif, which the poet treats as a feminine noun, this seems correct. MSS, *dheu le uail*; *dheu* is interpreted as "dhiubh". **36:** MSS, *gh fhas i maul.* **37:** MSS, *deid.* MSS, *thuillich*; this is interpreted as "tuillidh", as the ending "-idh" is pronounced "-ich" in the poet's dialect (see Chapter Four). MSS, *na dhail*; *na* is a contraction of the preposition "ann" and the third person singular masculine possessive pronoun. The reference appears to be to the raffle. **38:** MSS, *fa na fheach*; *fa* is commonly used by the poet for the preposition "bho", and *na* appears to be the combination of the final consonant in the preposition "bhon" and the relative pronoun "a". The preterite form of the verb, implied by its aspiration, should be preceded by the particle "dh", and its omission is marked. **39:** MSS, *Beich i threach. Beich* appears to be "Bidh", the future form of the verb "bi"; as noted, "-idh" endings are pronounced "-ich" in the poet's dialect. McLS interprets *threach* as "tric", which is appropriate. MSS, *a dhoul*; this suggests the infinitive "a dhol", but the context suggests that this should be a verbal noun, "a' dol". **40:** MSS, *failleanach.* MSS, *s gach baul*; *s* is interpreted as a contraction of "anns". **41:** MSS, *Alasdair dhoun*; there is no need for the aspiration of the adjective. MSS, *na leam*; *na* is a contraction of the preposition "ann" and the third person singular possessive pronoun. The reference may be to Alasdair MacDonald, "Alaistair Donn", a native of Strathglass who lived in the valley of the Ohio River, not distant from Glenbard. Bishop William Fraser (see note to poem 37, "context") apparently celebrated Mass regularly at the house of Alaistair Donn until Old St. Bean's Church was built in 1841. The only difficulty with this attribution is that this particular Alasdair Donn apparently died in 1883, and McLS claimed that all of the characters were dead at the time of publication of CC1 in 1881. He may simply be mistaken; he was living at Sunnybrae, Pictou County, in 1881, a distance of about 30 miles from Glenbard, and may simply have assumed that all were dead. Most of the settlers in the Ohio River valley area where this Alasdair Donn lived were Strathglass people, and Rev. Ronald MacGillivray (1835-1892) said the following about these settlers: "The old race were remarkable for the simplicity and nobility of their character. Many of them were illiterate, but they were not ignorant. Mental training does not always suppose book learning. The old people at the Ohio were sturdy, honest, simple and intelligent. For twenty years I went up and down among them, and a more genial, kindly, generous people I have never come across. Many of them could compose and sing Gaelic verses, play on the bag pipes, or on the fiddle. They were full of stories about ghosts, fairies, and Celtic legends." See Raymond A. MacLean, *History of Antigonish, Vol . 1*, at p,. 80, and *Vol. 2*, at p. 76, note 74, and p. 77, note 82. **42:** MSS, *dhuine*; there is no need for the aspiration of this noun. MSS,

as a cheil; *cheil* is interpreted as "chèill", the dative of "ciall", "sense". **43:** MSS, *s dhul aige a.* McLS interprets *dhul* as "dùil", which is appropriate in the context. There is no reason for the inclusion of *a*, and this is treated as a spelling mistake. MSS, *rinn a feaim*; *a* is interpreted as the third person singular personal pronoun "e", in reference to Alasdair, at line 41. McLS interprets *feaim* as "feum", which is also appropriate in the context. **44:** MSS, *ghos do leugh ead.* MSS, *gha na bha ann. gha* is interpreted as "dha". **45:** MSS, *Shin.* In the MSS, the relative pronoun "a" is omitted before the verb. MSS, *ullam she*; McLS interprets this as "Uilleam Shè". The reference appears to be to William Shea, who was married to a daughter of Laughlin MacDonald from Moidart, Scotland, from whom Shea obtained possession of a property at the lower end of the Ohio River settlement. See Raymond A. MacLean, ed., *History of Antigonish, Vol. 1*, at p. 80. In his history of Antigonish County, Rev. Rankin mentions only a Walter Shea, who had emigrated from Wexford or Waterford to Newfoundland, and from there to Antigonish Harbour, but this does not appear to be the same man. See Rev. D. J. Rankin, *A History of the County of Antigonish Nova Scotia*, at pp. 357-8. **46:** MSS, *chuir a naul*; as this appears to be in the voice of William Shea, and it is likely that the verb is in the imperative. MSS, *chail thu reish.* The object should be preceded by an article, and its omission is marked. **47:** MSS, *sull.* MSS, *na deich*; *na* is interpreted as a contraction of the preposition "ann" and the third person singular feminine possessive pronoun, in reference to the watch, while *deich* is interpreted as "dèidh" as, once again, the "-idh" ending is pronounced "-ich" in the poet's dialect. **48:** MSS, *Ona.* MSS, *do berla*; *do* appears to be the second person singular possessive pronoun, and it would aspirate the noun. MSS, *ghaun*; there is no reason for this adjective to be aspirated. **49:** MSS, *Shin.* In the MSS, the next word, *labhair*, is crossed out, and is replaced by *dar thubharsd.* It is difficult to identify the hand, although the orthography and the use of "dar" for "nuair" is somewhat characteristic of the poet. Alaistair Donn, referred to at line 41, had a son named Alasdair, to whom he left the northern portion of his property in the Ohio River valley, and this may be the "Alasdair òg to whom reference is being made. See Raymond A. MacLean, ed., *History of Antigonish, Vol. 2*, at p. 77. **50:** MSS, *gha mo dheion.* **51:** MSS, *Saun.* MSS, *freagraich.* MSS, *sporsa.* McLS emends to "spors", which is appropriate, as it maintains the end-rhyme and the rhythm. **52:** MSS, *fa n thuair.* The poet frequently uses *fa* for "bho". MSS, *air dhoich an daumb. Dhoich* is interpreted as "dòigh", but the meaning of *daumb* is unclear. McLS interprets it as "dam", the meaning of which is itself unclear, but could be "dàm", "reservoir, mill-dam; black mud", although this does not seem to fit the context. It is interpreted here as "dann", meaning "dice". **53:** MSS, *a misnich mhoir.* McLS interprets *a* as "'am", a contraction of "ann am", "in", and this fits the context of lines 53 and 54. If this interpretation is correct, the omission of the final consonant would be due to elision caused by the subsequent consonant, but this is not marked here, as "'a'" could cause readers some confusion. The reference here is likely once again to William Shea, first referred to at line 45. **54:** MSS, [__]os n[__] thilg; part of two words are missing in the MSS, and given the context, they are interpreted as *Gos* ("Gus", "until") and *na.* MSS, *air a bhoard.* **55:** MSS, *Shaol.* MSS, *na ghoarn*; *na* is interpreted as a contraction of the preposition "ann", "in", and the third person singular possessive pronoun, which would cause the aspiration of the following noun, interpreted as "dòrn", which is McLS's interpretation. **56:** MSS, *a shud.* MSS, *faun.* **57:** MSS, [___] *theid.* McLS interprets the missing word as "Ma", which is appropriate in the context. MSS, *feirag.* **58:** MSS, *S eaghal.* MSS, *gu bi*; *gu* is the conjunction "gum", and the omission of the final consonant, which

appears to be dialectical, is marked. MSS, *sheirbh*. **59:** MSS, *fa na rinn*; the poet commonly uses *fa* for "bho", and *na* is a combination of the final consonant in the prepositional phrase "bhon" and the relative pronoun "a". MSS, *a mhisnach*; *a* is interpreted as the third person singular masculine possessive pronoun, referring to William's courage, rather than the feminine nominative article "a'". **60:** MSS, *a fear deiarg*; *a* is interpreted at the article "am", and the omission of the final consonant, likely a dialectical feature, is marked. MSS, *bhi, meulta*. **61:** MSS, *be shin throd na bhan mun scarabh*. There is no need to aspirate "trod". *na bhan* seems to be the genitive "nam ban", which is the interpretation in McLS, but the omission of the final consonant in the genitive plural article appears to be dialectical, and is marked. **62:** MSS, *chaich*; this is dialectical for "chaidh", as in the poet's dialect "-idh" is pronounced "-ich" (see Chapter Four). MSS, eitiag. MSS, *leis a sthoirm*; *a* is interpreted as the article "an", and the omission of the final consonant is a dialectical feature and is marked. The reference in lines 61 and 62 brings to mind the proverbial saying "Trod nam ban mun sgarbh, 's an sgarbh air an loch" ("The women disputing who shall have the scart [cormorant], and the scart out on the loch"): see Edward Dwelly, *The Illustrated Gaelic-English Dictionary*, (Edinburgh: Birlinn, 1993), at p. 816, under "sgarbh". Dwelly explains the proverb thusly: "disposing of the hare before it is caught". "Counting the chickens before the eggs are hatched" would also be an appropriate interpretation". **63:** MSS, *Saun bu choltaich*; the relative pronoun "a" before *bu* is omitted, and this is marked. The final vowel in the comparative form, "coltaiche", is omitted, and this is marked. MSS, *aram*. **64:** MSS, *marradh*; interpreted here as "marbhadh". MSS, *le chuid laund*. The aspiration of "cuid" implies the presence of the third person singular masculine possessive pronoun, likely a reference to "arm" in line 63, and its omission, due to elision by the preceding vowel sound, is marked. *laund* is interpreted as "lann", "blade", and as it is in a genitive relationship with "cuid", it is the genitive plural form, "blades". **65:** MSS, *tholaid*. McLS interprets this as "toilichte" which, in the context of the following lines, seems appropriate. MSS, *a ghillie og*. The aspiration of the masculine noun suggests a genitive form, but the noun does not appear to be in a genitive relationship with another noun. It is more likely that this is a misspelling of the nominative form, and that *a* is the nominative article "am", the omission of the final consonant of which is dialectical, and is marked. **66:** MSS, *dachaich*; this is "dachaidh", and as noted elsewhere, "-idh" endings are pronounced "-ich" in the poet's dialect. MSS, *na phoac*; the aspiration of the noun implies that *na* is a contraction of the preposition "ann" and the third person singular possessive pronoun, referring to the young man. **67:** MSS, *ghfhag*. MSS, *fa bhraon*. While the poet has used *fa* for the preposition "bho" elsewhere, "fo", "under", seems appropriate here. **68:** MSS, *S cha dhean*. MSS, *ceiol*. MSS, *a chir a dhaunsa*. McLS interprets *a chir* as "an cur", "an" being the third person plural possessive pronoun and "cur" being the infinitive. While the interpretation of *chir* as a form of the verb "cuir" seems appropriate in the context, the aspiration suggests that *a* is the third person singular masculine possessive pronoun, and the reference is likely to an old man, as representative of them all. The poet usually slenderises the verbal noun "cur", and this dialectical feature is maintained. The final vowel in *dannsa* is omitted in order to preserve the metre, which requires that the final line of each verse end in a word of a single syllable.

Maclean Sinclair Versions:

1: *so*. **2:** *togail fuinn*. **4:** *féin gu 'n*. **5:** CC1, *Gur-a. dràsd*. **6:** Omit the article "A'" before *chuideachd*. *'n taigh*. **7:** *nan disnean*. **8:** *tha* for *thàmh*. *gun dol*. **9:**

Omit the vocative article "a" before *bhean. an téid. shios.* **10:** Replace with *Dh' fheuch an coisinn mi 's an strì.* **11:** *'g am dhìth.* **14:** Replace with *Saoil nach tusa 'n duine truagh.* **15:** *gu 'n.* **16:** *Ciod am* for *Gu dè. 'n ad.* **17:** *am* for *a'. fhìn.* **18:** *Gu 'n, tì.* **20:** *gu 'm.* **21:** *Di-luain.* **22:** *Gu 'm, aig.* **23:** *i* for *e.* **24:** CC1, *'s a'.* **25:** *Gleann-a-Comhann.* **27:** *chosdadh, 'n* for *an.* **28:** CC1, *gur-a.* CC2, *gur a.* **29:** *Tha* for *'S. eil'. th'* for *tha.* **30:** Insert *'S* before *nì. a ceannach.* **31:** *am bliadhna, dol, spòrs.* **32:** *Dòmhnullach.* **33:** *Bha ars'* for *Thuirt. Mòr, ann* for *gu' robh mi.* **34:** CC1, *'N uair.* CC2, *Nuair, 's an.* **35:** Insert *Is* before *Bha. té.* Omit *dhiubh.* **37:** Replace this line with *Uaireadairean's ni gun stà.* **38:** This is line 39, and replace it with *'S iad le fuachd no stùr 'nan tàmh.* **39:** This is line 38, *iad* for *i.* **40:** *iad* for *i.* After this line, add a new verse, verse eleven: *Thuirt Murachadh, 's e 'g éirigh suas,/"Ged-a* [CC2, *Ged a*] *thilginn 's a dà uair,/Cha bhi 'n t-uaireadair so bhuam;"/'S ann bha 'n uaisl' air dol 'na cheann!".* **41-44:** These are verse thirteen. **42:** *duin' as a chéill.* **43:** *gu 'n d' rinn.* **44:** *Gus na leughadh* for *Gus do leugh iad. bh'* for *bha.* **45-48:** These are verse fourteen. **45:** *An sin* for *Sin dar.* **46:** Insert *'n* before *rèis.* **47:** CC1, *déigh.* **48:** CC1, *Bho na,* CC2, *Bho 'n,* for *On a.* **49-52:** These are verse fifteen. **49:** *Thuirt* for *Sin dar.* Insert *gu fòil* after *Alasdair òg.* **50:** *mise i* for *mi, le 'm* for *i dha mo.* **51:** CC1, 2, *dhomh, 's freagarraiche spors.* **52:** *Bho 'n, an dam.* **53-56:** These are verse twelve. **54:** CC1, *'N uair,* CC2, *Nuair.* **55:** *leis* for *e, gu 'n.* **56:** *'n sud, meallt'* for *fann.* **57-60:** Theser are verse sixteen. **57:** *théid.* **58:** *gu 'm.* **59:** CC1, *Bho na,* CC2, *Bho 'n a, am misneach.* **60:** *gu bheil am fear* for *a' fear,* omit *a bhith.* **61-64:** These are verse seventeen. **61:** *mu 'n.* **62:** *an* for *a'.* **63:** *choltach.* **64:** *'n cuid* for *'chuid.* **65-68:** These are verse eighteen. **65:** *tha* for *bha, an* for *a'.* **66:** *dhachaidh.* **68:** *dhanns'.*

With these changes, there are 72 lines in McLS versions.

Recorded Versions:

A version of this song was recorded in 1974 from the singing of Sister Jane MacKenzie, of Christmas Island, Cape Breton County, Cape Breton, by Maureen Lonergan (Williams), and included in her 1974 M.A. Dissertation in Celtic Studies at St. Francis Xavier University, entitled "The Scholar, Poet and Local Bard", under the direction of Prof. C. I. N. MacLeod. The text for the song is taken from CC1 and CC2, and it follows the McLS version very closely. For more information on Sister Jane MacKenzie, see the note to "Recorded Versions", poem 16, above. She sings the the chorus, and all seventeen verses which appear in CC1 and CC2, in precisely the order set out in both books. Sister Jane MacKenzie's version differs from CC2 in only very minor respects.

37. Diteadh Mhic an Tòisich

Tune: None given.
No. of lines: 160
Sources: *An Gaidheal* 5 (Dara mìos an Fhoghair, 1876): 262-4, CC1, p. 149, CC2, p. 130, FC, p. 107, BT, p. 92.
Date: Likely early 1841 (see discussion in "context").
Context: In the introduction to this song in CC1 and CC2, Maclean Sinclair provides the following information: "Anns a' bhliadhna 1841 chuir an t-Easbuig Friseal nach maireann Comunn Stuamachd air chois an *Antigonish.* Thàinig a' chuid

mhòr de na bha 's na sgìreachdan a bha fo a chùram fo ghealladh sgur de 'n òl fad thrì bliadhna. Tha duine no dha an làthair (Bliadhna 1881) nach d' òl boinne bho 'n uair sin. 'S ann air latha na bliadhna ùire a chuir daoine an ainm ris a' ghealladh ann am baile *Antigonish*. Tha an t-òran so (sic) air a dheanamh ann an ainm Dhòmhnuill Mhic Ghille-bhràth ris an abairte gu coitchionn "Dòmhnull Mhamaidh". 'S e mar sin "Òran Dhòmhnuill Mhamaidh" an t-ainm fo bheil e dol."/"In the year 1841 the late Bishop Fraser established a Temperance Society in Antigonish. The majority of those from districts in his pastoral care took a vow to stop drinking for three years. There are a few people at present (in the year 1881) who have not drunk a drop since then. It was on New Year's Day 1841 that people put their name to the vow at the town of Antigonish. This song is made in the name of Donald MacGillivray who was generally known by the nickname Donald "Vamy". It is for this reason that it goes under the name of "Donald Vamy's Song".

Donald "Vamy" MacGillivray was the eldest son of John "Vamy" MacGillivray and a Miss MacDonald, a native of Knoydart, Scotland. John was one of three brothers who emigrated from Dunmaglass, Inverness-shire, Scotland, to Dunmaglass, Antigonish County. They were nicknamed "Vamy" after the name of a river near their former home in Scotland. Dunmaglass, Scotland, is to the east of Loch Ness, about 12 miles south of the city of Inverness, on the upper reaches of the Nairn River. Dunmaglass, Nova Scotia, is about five miles inland from Arisaig, in western Antigonish County. See Rev. D. J. Rankin, *A History of the County of Antigonish Nova Scotia* (Pawtucket: Quintin Publishing, 1998), at pp. 279-80. As Rev. Rankin notes, Donald "Vamy" was "famous in story", and was never married. Many Gaelic communities in eastern Nova Scotia had characters who gained renown as "wise fools", "amadain ghlic"; although rather slow in some respects, they had quick wits, and humorous stories of them are still told amongst Gaelic speakers. Donald "Vamy" had a renown that went beyond the local, and traditions of him have been recorded in the 1980s from at least one Cape Breton informant, Joe Neil MacNeil, a native of Middle Cape, Cape Breton County. The following anecdote was recorded by Calum Iain MacLeòid from Niall Steele, a resident of New Glasgow, Nova Scotia and was published in 1969: "O chionn faisg air ciad bliadhna air ais bha duine a' còmhnuidh an Arasaig, am Mórroinn na h-Albann Nuaidhe, ris an canadh iad Dòmhnall Mhamaidh. Ged a bha e car faoin an cuid de dhòighean, bha e neo-eisimealach is ainmeil air son a bhi glé dheas-bhriathrach. Thachair dha a bhi air cuairt feadh na dùthcha aon uair, rud air an robh e glé dhéidheil. Có dhiùbh, oidhche de na h-oidhcheanan thachair dha a bhi an tigh-faire aig ám na h-ùrnaigh? Bha Dòmhnall casruisgte 's e 'na shuidhe faisg air an teine, 'nuair a thàinig bodach mór a stigh, 's mar a thuit am breamas anns a' chùis, sheas e air òrdagan Dhòmhnaill. Thug Dòmhnall leum 'na sheasamh gu grad, 's e toirt sùl' air a' bhodach o shàil gu mullach a chinn, thuirt e, "A Fhreasdail 'gar dìon o do leithid, 's truime thu na 'n each, 's truime thu na 'n damh; 's truime thu na 'n elephant mhór a bha a' tarruing bagaichean an airm 's an àird an ear; a dhiabhoil bodaich tha thu ann."/"Since about one hundred years ago there was a man staying in Arisaig, in the Province of Nova Scotia, they called Donald Vamy. Although he was rather foolish in some respects, he was independent and renowned for being eloquent. He happened to be out and about in the country once, something which he loved to do. Anyhow, one evening he happened to be at a wake house at the time for making prayers? Donald was bare-footed and was seated near the fire, when a very large man came in, and by mischance, he stepped on Donald's toes. Donald leapt to his feet suddenly, and while eyeing the man up from top to bottom, he say, "Heaven protect us for your sort,

you're heavier than a horse, heavier than an ox; you're heavier than the great elephant that was hauling army baggage in the orient; you are a devil of an old fellow." See Calum Iain M. MacLeòid, *Sgeulachdan à Albainn Nuaidh* (Glaschu: Gairm, 1969), at p. 146.

Essentially the same account was recorded from Joe Neil MacNeil, and I am grateful to Seumas Watson of Queensville, Cape Breton, for the transcription, which is as follows: "Bha naidheachd eile ann nuair a bha e [Dòmhnall Mhamaidh] aig taigh-faire. Bhiodh esan air falbh 's cha bhiodh e 'cuir air a bhròg an. An àm an t-samhraidh dh'fhalbhadh e cas-rùisgte, 's thàinig e dh'ionnsaidh an taighe-fair' a bha seo, agus chaidh e air a ghlùn taobh an àite 's a' robh an giùlan. Bha giùlan duin' air an eislinn, airneo bha e anns a' chiste. Co-dhiubh bha e ri taobh na ciste na ri taobh na h-eislinn agus a' gabhail ùrnaigh. Thànaig bodach mór a-staigh agus sheas e air té dhe na casan aig Dòmhnall Mhamaidh. Agus dh'éirich Dòmhnall Mhamaidh 'na sheasamh 's thug e suil air a' bhodach 's thuirt e, "Am Freasdail gun dìon sinn bho do leithid. 'S tu a 's truime na 'n camhal agus 's tu a 's truime na 'n t-each, 's tu a 's truime na 'n eilibheant mhór a bhiodh a' tarruing bagaichean nan airm anns an Aird an Ear. 'S tu an diabhol, a' bhodaich!"

Another tradition of Donald "Vamy" was recorded on 10 January, 1991, by Prof. Ken Nilsen of St. Francis Xavier University from Danny Cameron, born in Boston in 1898, but raised in Beaver Meadow, Antigonish County, where Glenbard is located: Bha rud eile ann, dar a bha mi san ospadal, cha b'urrainn dhomh am biadh a bh' aca ith'. Cha robh e *fit* airson a' chù. Cha robh blas idir dheth. Tha e coltach ris a' fear a bha shuas ann am British Columbia, Dòmhnall Mhàmaidh, se MacGille Bhràth a bh' ann, bha e bliadhna ann am British Columbia is bha e ag obair, thàinig e dhachaidh co-dhiubh is bha iad a' foighneachd dhe mu dhéidhinn a' West. "O, bha a' West àit' breagha a th' ann ach tha cron ann cuideachd is tha rudan math ann, ach tha cron ann coltach ris a h-uile h-àit' eile." "Ciamar a bha am biadh, a Dhòmhnaill?" "Cha robh e math idir." "Nach robh?" "Cha robh, bha e duilich biadh math fhaighinn. Bheil fhios agad, nam biodh iasg bhuat, cha robh thu 'faighinn iasg math." "A' faigh thu iasg idir?" "O, gheobhadh tu seòrsa dheth, gheobhadh tu an toiseach, gheobhadh tu am muntàt' is iad grod agus iad bog agus gheobhadh tu a' sin trosg 'chaidh mharbhardh leis an dealanach!" Ach, co-dhiubh bha Dòmhnall Mhàmaidh bodh, cha bu thoil leis idir e./There was another thing, when I was in the hospital, I couldn't eat their food. It wasn't fit for the dog. It's likethe man who was up there in British Columbia, Donald Vamy, he was a MacGillivray, he was in British Columbia for a year and he was working, and he came back anyhow and they were asking him about the West. "O, the West was a beautiful place but there are some bad things and some good things there, but the bad things are like every other place." "How was the food, Donald?" "It wasn't any good at all." "Wasn't it?" "No, it was difficult to find any good food at all. You know, if you wanted to eat fish, you wouldn't get any good fish at all." "Did you get any fish at all?" "O, you would get something like it, you would first get, you would get the potatoes, and they were rotten and runny, and you would then get some codfish that was like it was killed by lightning!" But no matter how badly off Donald Vamy was, he didn't like it at all. Published in the Antigonish *Casket*, 16 March, 1994.

Bishop William Fraser was born in 1779 at Craskie, Glencannich, Scotland, the eldest of twelve children of John Fraser and Jane Chisholm. John Fraser was descended from a chief of Clan Chisholm and from a chief of the Camerons of Lochiel, and was a first cousin of the *Easbuigean bana*, Bishops John and Aeneas Chisholm, fourth and fifth vicars Apostolic of the Highland District of Scotland. Jane

Chisholm had been a Presbyterian but converted to Catholicism before her marriage. After attending elementary school in his own district, William Fraser was sent to the seminary of Samalaman, in Moidart, and then at the age of 15, in January, 1794, he was sent to the Royal Scots College at Valladolid, Spain. He was ordained there and returned to Scotland on 2 September, 1804. Upon his return, he was put in charge of all the missions to Lochaber, and in 1814 he was placed in charge of the College of Killechiarain, Lismore, which was the seminary for the Highlands. His name had been put forward to succeed his cousin Aeneas Chisholm as Vicar Apostolic upon Chisholm's death in 1818, but he was not appointed. William Fraser had been encouraged to come to Nova Scotia by a sister and four brothers who were already settled in Antigonish, and by the Vicar Apostolic of Nova Scotia, and in the summer of 1822, he sailed to Nova Scotia, apparently on the "Commerce". From October of that year until late 1823, William Fraser acted as priest at both Grand Narrows and East Bay; at the beginning of January, 1824, he took charge of the parish of Antigonish. On 7 December, 1824, Pope Leo XII gave his approval to the appointment of William Fraser as Bishop, the second Vicar Apostolic of Nova Scotia, to replace Bishop Burke, who had died on 29 November, 1820, but owing to a number of delays, he was not consecrated as Bishop until 24 June, 1827, at the Cathedral Church of St. Ninian's, in Antigonish, which he had built. The foregoing is based on Rev. Angus Anthony Johnston, *A History of the Catholic Church in Eastern Nova Scotia, Vol. 1—1611-1827* (Antigonish: St. Francis Xavier University Press, 1960), at pp. 431-437, 457-466, and 511-518, and *A History of the Catholic Church in Eastern Nova Scotia, Vol. II—1827-1880* (Antigonish: St. Francis Xavier University Press, 1971), at pp. 228-231. Regardless of their views on his drive for temperance, Bishop Fraser seems to have been held in high regard by the Catholic Gaels of Eastern Nova Scotia; on his death on 4 October, 1851 in Antigonish, an elegy, "Cumha do 'n Easbaig Friseal", was composed by Allan MacDonald (1794-1868), "Allan the Ridge", a native of Allt an t-Srathan, Brae Lochaber, Scotland, who had emigrated first to Mabou Ridge, Inverness County in 1816, and moved again in 1847 to South River, Antignoish County. Like John MacLean, Allan the Ridge was one of the great emigrant poets. See Effie Rankin, *As a' Bhràighe/Beyond the Braes: The Gaelic Songs of Allan the Ridge MacDonald 1794-1868* (Sydney: University College of Cape Breton Press, 2004), pp. 110-115, and associated notes at pp. 169-170, which give further information on the bishop.

The nineteenth century in many rural areas of Gaelic Nova Scotia have been described as "something of an alcoholic free-for-all", and that "whisky, rum, alcohol, all were rooted almost as prerequisites of hospitality in the Highland mind and could never have been eradicated piecemeal": see John G. Gibson, *Traditional Gaelic Bagpiping, 1745-1945*, (Montreal and Kingston: McGill-Queen's, 1998), at p. 202. Excessive consumption of alcohol was a widespread and at times serious problem in the Highland emigrant communities of Eastern Nova Scotia: see, for example, Charles W. Dunn, *Highland Settler: A Portrait of the Scottish Gael in Cape Breton and Eastern Nova Scotia* (Wreck Cove, Cape Breton: Breton Books, 2003), at pp. 105-6. Both Protestant and Roman Catholic clergy responded through the promotion of temperance. The first temperance society appears to have been established by Protestants, at West River, Pictou County, in January, 1828: Rev. A. A. Johnston, *A History of the Catholic Church in Eastern Nova Scotia, Vol. II*, at p. 62. In the 1830s, the temperance movement gained strength, and received support from some local media: see D. Campbell and R. A. MacLean, *Beyond the Atlantic Roar: A Study of the Nova Scotia Scots* (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart Limited, 1974), at p. 223. It

appears the Bishop Fraser's initiative was inspired by the earlier work of Father James D. Drummond, an Irish priest who arrived in Cape Breton in 1838 and who held total abstinence meetings right from the time of his arrival. On 1 January, 1841, Bishop Fraser did indeed take the pledge of abstinence at the Cathedral Church of St. Ninian's, administered the pledge to his congregation and formed a large temperance society. The pledge administered by the Bishop was apparently for two years—not the three reported by Maclean Sinclair—and it appears to have been generally taken by the people; there was a lasting tradition in Antigonish that "few Catholics ever broke the pledge given them by their Bishop": see Rev. A. A. Johnston, *A History of the Catholic Church in Eastern Nova Scotia, Vol. II—1827-1880*, at pp. 114-6, 170-1.

Line Annotations:
1: CC1, 2, *bho 'n, so*. **2:** CC1, *Cha 'n*. **3:** CC1, 2, *féin*. **4:** CC1, 2, *gu 'n*. **5:** CC1, 2, *bhi*. **5:** The omission in CC1, 2 of the infinitive particle "a" is marked. **6:** CC1, *Mac-an-Tòisich*. **7:** CC1, *a'*. **8:** CC1, 2, *àluinn*. **9:** CC1, *Ged-a*. **11:** CC1, 2, *do 'n*. **13:** CC1, *Gur*-a. CC1, 2, *de 'n*. The poet typically used "do" for the preposition "de". **14:** CC1, *dhéigh*. **15:** CC1, 2, *Gu 'm, féin*. **16:** The omission in CC1, 2 of the relative pronoun "a" before the verb is marked. **17:** CC1, *A* for *A'*. CC1, 2, *de 'n*. The poet typically used "do". **18:** CC1, *a* for *a'*. **20:** CC1, 2, *chur*. The poet typically slenderised the infinitive and verbal noun forms of "cur". CC1, 2. *an*; this is a contraction of "ann an", and is marked. **21:** CC1, 2, *mi-féin, a stigh*. CC1, *nam*. **25:** CC1, *nan* for *'nan*. **26:** CC1, 2, *Gu 'n*. **27:** CC1, 2, *Gu 'n, 's a* for *'sa*. **28:** The omission in CC1, 2 of the relative pronoun "a" before the verb is marked. **29:** CC1, 2, *féin*. **30:** CC1, *Mac-an-Tòisich*. CC1, 2, *chur*. The poet typically slenderised the infinitive noun forms. **32:** CC1, 2, *bhi*. The omission in CC1, 2 of the infinitive particle "a" is marked. **33:** CC1, 2, *chur*. The poet typically slenderised the inifitive form. CC1, 2 omit the infinitive particle, and this is marked. **34:** CC1, 2 omit the initive particle, and this is marked. CC1, 2, *duinn*. **35:** CC1, 2, *a ris*. **37:** CC1, 2, *Gu 'n, fianuisean*. **38:** CC1, *a* for *a'*. **39:** According to McLS in CC1, the reference is to William Gillies, who kept a tavern in Antigonish. **40:** CC1, 2 omit the verbal noun particle "a'", and this is marked. **41:** According to McLS in CC1, the reference is to John Thomas Hill, a lawyer. Hill (1779-1852) was the son of Sheriff John Thomas Hill and Mary Palmer, and was the first lawyer in Antigonish. He was admitted to the Bar of Nova Scotia in 1810 and moved from Halifax to Antigonish in about 1820. See David Graham Whidden, *The History of the Town of Antigonish* (Antigonish: The Casket, 1934), at p. 89. **42:** The context suggests the presence of the third person singular masculine possessive pronoun, "a", before *lagh*, in reference to Hill, and its omission in CC1, 2, possibly due to elision by the preceding vowel. **43:** The reference to the red-haired man is presumably to "Ferintosh", the accused; that is, alcoholic beverages. **44:** CC1, 2 omit the verbal noun particle "a'", and this is marked. **45:** CC1, 2, *Pàdruig*. CC1, *dhéigh*. According to McLS in CC1, the reference is to a Paddy Byrne, an Irishman who was a noted tavern-keeper. **46:** CC1 and 2 omit the relative particle "a" before the verb, and this is marked. **47:** CC1, 2, *Gu 'n*. **49:** CC1, 2, *'s a* for *'sa*. According to McLS in CC1, the reference is to Samuel Symonds, who was for a time jail-keeper in Antigonish. He was the son of a Nathaniel Symonds. See David Whidden, *The History of the Town of Antigonish*, at p. 68. Nathaniel Symonds was born 12 October, 1763, at Middleton, Massachusetts. He was first married to Elizabeth, a daughter of Jotham Blanchard, who died on 25 September, 1808, and was the first adult buried in the Presbyterian graveyard in the town of Antigonish, and then to Mary E. Irish on 2

January, 1809. Nathaniel himself died on 15 July, 1822, but it is not clear when Samuel was born. Nathaniel was apparently a builder, as he won the contract to build the Roman Catholic Church at Arisaig, Antigonish County, in 1807. See Raymond A. MacLean, *History of Antigonish, Vol. 1*, at p. 49, and *Vol. 2*, at p. 33. **50:** CC1, 2, *mu 'n.* **51:** CC1, *a* for *a'*. **52:** CC1, 2, *Mu 'n.* CC1, *a* for *a'*. **53:** McLS notes in the post-script in CC1 and 2 that the judge referred to "was, of course, Bishop Fraser," and who McLS describes as "a genuine Highlander, and a gentleman for whom all entertained the highest respect." **54:** The aspiration of "fuil" and "gruaidh" in CC1 and 2 implies the presence of the third person singular masculine possessive pronoun; its omission is marked in both places. CC1, *a leam.* **55:** CC1, 2, *o 'n.* **56:** CC1, 2, *bhuam-s'*. **57:** CC1, *'N uair.* **58:** CC1, 2, *dol*; the omission of the verbal noun particle "a'" is marked. CC1, *nan* for *'nan.* **59:** CC1, *a* for the verbal noun particle *a'*. **60:** CC1, 2, *bhi.* CC2, *tuille.* **61:** CC1 and 2 omit the relative pronoun "a" before the verb, and this is marked. **62:** CC1, 2, *'Sa*; this appears to be two separate words, "'S", a contraction of "Agus", and the relative pronoun "a". **63:** CC1, *a* for *a'*. **64:** CC1, 2 omit the verbal noun particle "a'", and this is marked. CC1, 2, *'s a* for *'sa.* **65:** CC1, 2, *o 'n, bhi.* **66:** CC1, 2, *Gu 'n.* **67:** CC1 and 2 omit the relative pronoun "a" before the verb, and this is marked. **68:** CC1, 2, *bhinn*; the aspiration suggests the presence of either the third person singular masculine possessive pronoun, or the feminine nominative article, both of which would be elided by the preceding vowel sound, and this is marked. **69-70:** The reference is to "Lagh Chille Mo Cheallaig", the Law of Kilmacheallag, and concerns the story in Gaelic tradition of a man who was said to have been tried at the parish of Kilmacheallag by a jury of women for the crime of stealing a horse, for which he was acquitted and the horse itself was condemned to be hanged, for allowing itself to be taken away. The man had been tried before for stealing the same horse, and got off, and the horse liked him so well that he ran away from his proper master and came back to the thief. The tales is told in full in *An* Gàidheal, Vol. I, p. 146. The is perpetuated a proverbial saying, "Cha tugadh 'an Cille-mo-cheallaig breith bu chlaoine"/"No worse judgment was given in Kilmacheallag": Alexander Nicolson, *Gaelic Proverbs*, (Glasgow: Caledonian Press, 1951), at p. 134. The story is referred to by Iain Lom MacDonald in his poem "Iorram do Shìol Dùghaill", composed on the occasion of his being expelled from Locaber by the murderers of Alexander, the young chief of the MacDonalds of Keppoch, and his brother Ranald in 1663: "Cleas na bìnne nach maireann/Bha 'n cladh Sgìre Mo-Cheallaig,/'N uair a dhìt iad an gearran 'sa' mhòd./Lùb dham 's cha bu bheag i/Fhuair am mèirleach a ghoid e,/'Ga shaoradh o leadairt nan còrd"/"Like that judgement of former days which was pronounced in the parish churchyard of Cill Mo-Cheallaig, when they condemned the gelding in the court./The thief who stole it found awaiting him a bent noose, and a large one at that, setting him free from the chafing of cords." See Annie M. MacKenzie ed., *Òrain Iain Luim: Songs of John MacDonald, Bard of Keppoch* (Edinburgh: Scottish Gaelic Texts Society, 1964), at pp. 115-6, lines 1495-1500, and note at pp. 283-4. See, also, John MacKenzie, *Sar-Obair nam Bard Gaelach* (Edinburgh: MacLachlan & Stewart, 1872), at p. 38. Ronald Black has claimed that Kilmacheallag has never been identified, and that it is generally thought to be mythical: see Ronald Black, "The Horse People of Kintyre", available at http://www.kintyremag.co.uk/1999/36/page6.html, last consulted 7 May, 2005. It is certainly likely that the "trial" is mythical, but W. J. Watson has this to say about "Cill-Mo-Cheallaig": "Cill-Mo-Cheallaig in Islay is 'my-Cellóc's church'; Gorman has four saints of this name; there are six in Rawl. . . . The saint commemorated may

be Cellach, abbot of Hí, from 802 to 815": W. J. Watson, *The Celtic Place-Names of Scotland* (Edinburgh: Birlinn, 2004). **70:** CC1, *'N uair*. **71:** CC1, *ni 's*, CC2, *na 's* for *nas*. **72:** CC1 and 2 omit the relative pronoun "A" before the verb. CC1, 2, *mu 'n*. **74:** CC2, *ma' ri*. **76:** CC1, 2, *no* for *na*. CC2, *tuille*. **77:** CC1, *Gur-a*. **78:** The reference is to Arisaig Point, Antigonish County, which is on the Northumberland Strait coast, at Arisaig. **79:** CC1, 2, *'S an*; *an* is interpreted as a contraction of "ann an". CC1, 2, *gu 'm*. According to McLS in the post-script to this poem in CC1 and 2, "Ealasaid" kept a tavern in Arisaig, Antigonish County. **80:** CC1, *'N uair*. **81:** CC1, *'Mhic-an-Toisich*. **82:** CC1, *'us* for *is*. **83:** CC1 omits *thu* and has *iarrte*. **84:** CC1 has *Thu* at the beginning of the line. CC1, 2, *briag*. **85:** CC1, *Raoghal*, CC2, *Raonull*. McLS indicates in the post-script to this poem in CC1 and CC2 that Ronald the Cooper was a piper, but provides no further information. Poem 38 was composed as if by Ronald the Cooper, Piper to Ferintosh (see "context", poem 38) and it is likely that this is the same character. It has not been possible to further identify this character, and he may be a fictional character. The inability of McLS to provide further details suggests strongly that this is the case, as McLS was thoroughly knowledgeable about local personalities and local families. **86:** CC1, *Bho na*, CC2, *Bho 'n a*. CC1, 2, *mu 'n*. **89:** CC1, 2, *Màla phioba*; the aspiration of *pìob*, a feminine noun which is here in a genitive relationship, implies the presence of the third person singular masculine possessive pronoun, in reference to Ronald the Cooper, and its omission is marked. **91:** CC1, 2, *Bho 'n*. CC1, 2 omit the relative pronoun "a" before the verb, and this is marked. **93:** CC1, 2, *'s an* for *'san*. **96:** CC1, 2, *Gu 'm*. The reference here is to the Beatons of Mull, the most famous family of hereditary physicians in the Highlands. See John Bannerman, *The Beatons: A Medical Kindred in the Classical Gaelic Tradition* (Edinburgh: John Donald, 1998). **97:** CC1, 2, *Di-màirt*. McLS indicates in the post-script to this poem in CC1 and 2 that the reference is to a Dr. Currie, whom he describes as "a gentleman of very good talents" who had "studied medicine in Edinburgh". Dr. William Currie was one of two doctors in the town of Antigonish at the time the poem was composed. After its founding in 1852, he helped in the editorial department of the newspaper the Antigonish *Casket*, and he is said to have suggested the name of that newspaper. See Maureen Lonergan, *supra*, at p. 127, and David Whidden, *The History of the Town of Antigonish*, *supra*, at p. 113. **98:** CC1, 2, *Gu 'n*. **99:** CC1, 2, *Gu 'n*. **101:** CC1, 2, *gu 'm*. **102:** CC1, 2, *dha 'm*. **103:** CC1, 2, *gini phinnt*; the aspiration of *pinnt* implies the presence of the masculine singular genitive article "a'", the omission of which , likely due to elision by the preceding vowel, is marked. **104:** CC1, 2, *Gu 'n*. **105:** CC1, *Ged-a*. CC1, 2, *'s an* for *'san*. CC1, 2, *tigh*. **106:** CC1, 2, *bràth*; the poet commonly used "bràch". **108:** CC1, 2, *Gu 'n*. **112:** CC1, *a' cur*, CC2, *ag cur*; the poet commonly slenderised this verbal noun, which appears to be a dialectical feature. **113:** CC1, 2, *ad*; this is a contraction of the preposition "ann" and the second person singular possessive pronoun "do", and is marked. CC1, 2, *chomunn*. **114:** CC1, *'N uair*. **115:** CC1, 2, *ad*; this is a contraction of the preposition "ann" and the second person singular possessive pronoun "do", and is marked. **116:** CC1, 2, *Gu 'n*. CC1, 2, *do 'n h-uile*; "h-" implies the presence of the article "a'", the omission of which is marked. **121:** CC1, *nan*; this is a contraction of the preposition "ann" and the third person plural possessive pronoun "an", and is marked. **122:** CC1, 2, *a bhos*. CC1, *'us*. **123:** CC1, *'N uair*. Both CC1 and 2 omit the relative pronoun "a" before the verb, and this is marked. **124:** CC1, *Cochullain*. This is the reference to the warrior-hero of the Old Irish Ulster Cycle. He was the greatest of the Knights of the Red Branch, the warrior band loyal to Conchobar mac Nessa, reputedly king of the Ulaids

of northeast Ireland at about the beginning of the first century B.C. **130:** CC1, 2, *Bhi.* Both CC1 and 2 omit the verbal noun particle "a'", and this is marked. CC1, *'n ad*, CC2, *ann ad.* **131:** CC1, *Ged-a.* **132:** CC1, 2, *'se*; this is interpreted as two separate words, *'s*, a contraction of "agus", and the third person singular pronoun *e*. Both CC1 and 2 omit the verbal noun particle "a'", and this is marked. CC1, 2, *turaman.* **133:** CC1, 2, *misd'*. CC1, 2, *'g an.* **136:** CC1, 2, *'s na* for *'sna.* **137:** CC1, 2, *bhi.* Both CC1 and 2 omit the infinitive particle "a", and this is marked. **141:** CC1, *'us.* **143:** CC1, *Cha 'n.* **144:** CC1, 2, *an strì*; *an* is interpreted as a contraction of "ann an", and is marked. **146:** CC1, *h-urrainn.* CC1 and 2 omit the relative pronoun "a" before the verb, and this is marked. CC1, 2, *am dhàn*; *am* is interpreted as a contraction of the preposition "ann", and the first person singular possessive pronoun "mo", and this is marked. **147:** CC1, 2, *null*; the omission of the particle "a-" which should precede it is marked. **148:** CC2, *uireasbhach.* **149:** CC1, 2, *'n ar* for *'nar.* **152:** CC2, *Ruithle-*. The Reel of Tulloch is both a traditional Highland dance, and also a tune: see, for example, J. F. and T. M. Flett, *Traditional Step-Dancing in Scotland* (Edinburgh: Scottish Cultural Press, 1996), at p. 30, and Kathleen E. Dunlay, "The Playing of Traditional Scottish Dance Music: Old and New World Styles and Practices", in Cyril J. Byrne, Margaret Harry, and Pádraig Ó Siadhail, eds., *Celtic Languages and Celtic Peoples: Proceedings of the Second North American Congress of Celtic Studies* (Halifax: D'Arcy McGee Chair of Irish Studies, 1992), p. 173 at p. 175, with respect to the dance, while versions of both the reel and strathspey of that name can be found in Keith Norman MacDonald, *The Gesto Collection of Highland Music* (Leipzig: Brandstetter, 1898), at p. 152. The tune remains very popular amongst Cape Breton musicians, and a fine version can be heard on a recent collection of fiddle music of one of the great Gaelic-speaking fiddlers of the twentieth century, Dan Hughie MacEachern, a native of Queensville, Inverness County, Cape Breton: see Dan Hughie MacEachern, *The Land of My Love* (2003), CD 2, track 11; other excellent recordings include a version on the piano by Doug MacPhee, of New Waterford, Cape Breton County on Doug MacPhee, *The Reel of Tulloch* (DMP6-27-2, 1985), track 7, and a version on fiddle and piano by David Greenberg and Doug MacPhee on *Tunes until Dawn* (Marquis 81245), track 7. **153:** CC1, 2, *bhi.* Both CC1 and 2 omit the infinitive particle "a", and this is marked. **154:** CC1, 2, *no*; the poet generally used *na.* **156:** CC2, *tuille.* **157:** CC1, 2, *Sud, féin.* **159:** CC1, *ainm s'*. CC1, 2, *pàipeir.* **160:** CC1, 2, *Am measg.*

Maclean Sinclair Versions:

The only existing versions are Maclean Sinclair versions.

Recorded Versions:

Two versions of this song were recorded as part of the St. Francis Xavier Gaelic Folklore Project by Dr. John Shaw. One version was recorded from the singing of Joe Allan MacLean, of Rear Christmas Island, Cape Breton County, on 24 January, 1980 (Tape 246, Item A-04, Item No. 1393). The words were difficult to discern in places, partly owing to the weakness of the informant's voice (he himself noted "Tha an anail agam cho goirid"/"My breath is so short"). Joe Allan MacLean sang the chorus and eight verses, some of which resembled verses in CC1 and CC2. The first two lines of the chorus differed from that in CC1 and CC—lines 1 and 2 were *'S ann as dèigh bhon tìm seo an-dè/*[*Leig*?] *mo shunnd orm gu lèir*—while lines 3 and 4 resembled lines 3 and 4 in the chorus in CC1 and CC2. Joe Allan MacLean's first verse seemed

to be an amalgam of various lines from different verses, while the other verses resembled some degree the following verses in CC1 and CC2; verse 4, 5, 8, 9, 19, 10, and parts of 11. The second version was recorded from Johnny Williams, "Seònaidh Aonghais Bhig", of Melford, Inverness County, Cape Breton, on 18 January, 1980 (Reel 244, Item A-06, Item 1382). Johnny Williams sang the chorus and eight verses, most of which resemble to a certain degree certain verses in CC1 and CC2. After the chorus, he sings verse 4, verse 26, verse 9, verse 27, then a verse from another song, "Òran a' Phiocnaic", a song composed in Mr. Williams' district by Sìne MacInnes, "Sìne Henny", then a verse containing elements of verse 5 from CC1 and CC2, then a verse based on verse 11 in CC1 and CC2, and a final verse which differs from anything in CC1 and CC2.

38. Aisèirigh Mhic an Tòisich

Tune: None given.
No. of lines: 180
Sources: MG15G/2/2, p. 203 CC1, p. 155, CC2, p. 136, FC p. 113, BT, p. 94. With respect to MG15G/2/2, the manuscript containing Dr. Hector Maclean's collection, immediately after the Hector Maclean collection, John MacLean had added seven of his own compositions, and after these, his son Charles MacLean had added a further four. The version of this song found in that manuscript appears after those eleven songs, and poem 35, which appears between p. 199 and p. 202. As with poem 35, this song appears to be in the poet's hand. At page 210 of the manuscript, Alexander Maclean Sinclair noted the following: "The pages from 199 to 210 were not originally a part of this book. They were inserted when it was rebound in 1891." He added, with respect to this song, the following: "I got this song in Pictou from Dougald McEachern. It is in the poet's handwriting. It was written down for Dougald in a book he had. These leaves have been torn out of the book." Given the divergences with the published Maclean Sinclair versions, and given the editorial principles applied by Maclean Sinclair, as discussed in Chapter Four, the manuscript version is treated as the most authoritative of the existing versions.
Date: Early 1840s; likely fairly soon after poem 37.
Context: The version in MS15G/2/2 concludes with the following words: Aiseiridh Mhic Intoisich Le Raonull Cubair Piobaire Mhic Intoisich Air fonn."/"Ferintosh's Resurrection By Ronald the Cooper Ferintosh's Piper to the tune." The tune is not provided. In fact, the author is certainly John MacLean. Maclean Sinclair provides the following information about this song in the introduction to it in CC1 and CC2: "Cha b' fhada chùm a' chuid mhór de na sguir de 'n òl aig àm "Diteadh Mhic an Tòisich" ri 'n gealladh. Thòisich iad air òl mar a b' àbhaist daibh. B' e sin aobhar an òrain so (sic). Tha e air a dheanamh mar gu 'm b' ann le "Raonull Cùbair, pìobaire Mhic an Tòisich."/"The majority who had stopped drinking at the time of "Ferintosh's Conviction" did not keep to their pledge very long. They started drinking as they had before. That was the reason for this song. It is made as though by "Ronald the Cooper, Ferintosh's piper." The pledge is that referred to in the "context" to poem 37, namely, the pledge of abstinence taken by Bishop Fraser on 1 January, 1841, at the Cathedral Church of St. Ninian's, and administered by him to his congregation on that day. As noted in the "context" to poem 37, the pledge appears to have been generally taken by the people and that there was a lasting tradition in Antigonish that "few Catholics ever broke the pledge given them by their Bishop":

see Rev. A. A. Johnston, *A History of the Catholic Church in Eastern Nova Scotia, Vol. II—1827-1880*, at pp. 114-6, 170-1. The poem itself, together with Maclean Sinclair's introductory comments, suggest otherwise. "Ronald the Cooper" would appear to be the same character referred to at line 85 in poem 37; as noted in the line annotation to that poem, Maclean Sinclair indicates in the post-script to that poem in CC1 and CC2 that Ronald the Cooper was a piper, but provides no further information. It has not been possible to identify a piper with the name "Ronald" and the nickname "Cooper", and it is possible that the character is imaginary.

Line Annotations:
Fonn line 1: MSS, *eibhin*. **Fonn line 2:** MSS, *eiridh*; interpreted as *èirich*, as in McLS versions. **Fonn line 3:** MSS, *a n*; this is the article *an*. **Fonn line 4:** MSS, *Bho n*. The relative pronoun "a" is omitted before the noun in the MSS, and this is marked. **1:** MSS, *S a mhadin*. MSS, *eiridh*. **2:** MSS, *naidheachd eibhineas*; *eibhineas* is likely the noun "èibhneas", but it is in a genitive relationship with the preceding noun, and should be slenderised. The metre of the line would require eight beats, and "èibhneas" would provide only seven. It is likely for this reason that the poet inserted the medial "i". McLS emends this noun to the adjective "èibhinneach", which better fits the metre, however, the noun is retained, with the medial vowel as in the MSS, but slenderised, as is required by the genitive relationship. **4:** MSS, *dugadh*. MSS, *da r*; this is a contraction of the preposition "do" and the first person plural possessive pronoun "ar", and the omission of the vowel in "do", due to elision, is marked. MSS, *ceanntard*. **5:** MSS, *dainig, Mac Intoisich*. The reference is to "Ferintosh", a byname for hard liquor. MSS, *oirn*. **6:** MSS, *Go dhuchas*; the aspiration of the noun implies the presence of the third person singular masculine possessive pronoun, in reference to Ferintosh, and its omission, due to elision by the preceding vowel, is marked. **7:** MSS, *Ge*; this is the conjunction "ged", and the omission of the final consonant, likely dialectical, is marked. MSS, *iunnsuidh ghorach*; "ionnsaigh" is usually a masculine noun, but the aspiration of the adjective suggests that it is treated as a feminine noun in the poet's dialect. **8:** MSS, *dhoibh*. **9:** MSS, *phiob*; the aspiration of this feminine noun implies the presence of the article "a'", the omission of which, due to elision by the preceding vowel, is marked. **10:** MSS, *gu seinn*; the omission of the final consonant in the conjunction "gun", likely a dialectical feature, is marked. MSS, *an ordugh*; *an* is a contraction of "ann an", and is marked accordingly. **11:** MSS, *am mheorin*; given that it aspirates the noun, *am* is interpreted as a contraction of the preposition "ann" and the first person singular possessive pronoun "mo", and this is marked. MSS, *so*. **12:** MSS, *Bho na*. **13:** MSS, *tharuing*; the omission of the relative pronoun "a" before this verb is marked. MSS, *ga m iunsuidh*; *ga m* is the first person singular verbal noun object "'gam". The reference is to the bagpipe, a feminine noun. **14:** MSS, *rodh*. **15:** MSS, *b ionadh dhith*. **16:** MSS, *iuntrin*. **17:** MSS, *n gaoitheire*; *n* is the article "an", in which the vowel is elided by the preceding vowel sound, and this is marked. MSS, *aileadh*; this is a form of "àile", "air, atmosphere". **19:** MSS, *rodh*. **20:** MSS, *S a mhadh*. The meaning of the noun, *madh*, is unclear. "Magh", "a field, a surface", or "madh", which shares those meanings, and can also mean "ecstasy", seem inappropriate. McLS interprets the noun as "màla", which means the bag of a bagpipe, and this fits the context perfectly; it is also a feminine noun, which is consistent with its aspiration in the MSS, and so the McLS emendation is accepted. *S a* is interpreted as "'S", a contraction of "Agus", and the feminine nominative article "a'". MSS, *craumpadh*. **21:** MSS, *rifaidean*. **22:** MSS, *merg*. In the MSS, the final vowel in the verb "bha"

is omitted, due to elision by the succeeding vowel, and this is marked. **23:** The relative pronoun "a" is omitted before the verb in the MSS, and this is marked. MSS, *i n iochdlain ioraideach.* The reference is to the bagpipe, a feminine noun. The *n* is the article "an", the vowel in which would be elided by the preceding vowel, and this is marked. McLS interprets *iochdlain* as "iocshlàint", "balm, remedy, nectar, healing draught", which fits the context. McLS interprets *ioraideach* as "iomraiteach", "famous, renowned, celebrated", which also fits the context, but so does "iorailteach", "ingenious, well-contrived", which seems closer to the MSS, and is preferred. **24:** MSS, *fregradh.* MSS, *na m beann dith*; *na m* is interpreted as the genitive plural article "nam", and "dith" as the third person singular feminine prepositional pronoun form of "de". **25:** MSS, *riomhadh.* This should be an adjective rather than a noun, and the McLS emendation to "rìomhach" is accepted. **26:** MSS, *riobainein.* MSS, *do n t-shide.* McLS interprets *shide* as "sìoda", "silk", which fits the context. MSS, *orra*; given the context, this is interpreted as "oirre", the third person singular feminine prepositional pronoun, in reference to the bagpipe, a feminine noun. **27:** MSS, *fein, shiobhailte.* **28:** MSS, *baintighearn*; the omission of the final vowel in "baintighearna" is marked. **29:** MSS, *go Donull mhami bh uam.* The reference is to Donald "Vamy" MacGillivray, the putative composer of poem 37. Donald "Vamy" was a well-known character, and for more information on him, see "context" to poem 37. **30:** MSS, *an Arasaig*; *an* is interpreted as a contraction of "ann an", and is marked accordingly. **31:** MSS, *deid.* The personal pronoun "sinn", which is implied by the context, is omitted in the MSS, and is added. MSS, *a maireach.* **32:** MSS, *go bealtinn.* **33:** MSS, *mhic Intoisich.* **34:** MSS, *Na n commun*; *Na n* is a contraction of the preposition "ann" and the third person plural possessive pronoun, and this is marked. MSS, *suntach.* **35:** MSS, *a mach*; *a choirichein.* **36:** MSS, *thosichis.* **37:** MSS, *Donul.* This would appear to be another reference to Donald "Vamy" MacGillivray. MSS, *na fhear bratuich*; *na* causes lenition of "fear", and is therefore interpreted as a contraction of the preposition "ann" and the third person singular masculine possessive pronoun. **38:** MSS, *ruisgeir.* The relative pronoun "a" is omitted in the MSS before this verb, and this is marked. MSS, *go tapadh*; this is a noun, and the context requires the adjective "tapaidh". **39:** MSS, *Biodh.* MSS, *sluadh.* The relative pronoun "a" is omitted in the MSS before the verb, and this is marked. **40:** The relative pronoun "a" is omitted in the MSS before the verb, and this is marked. **41:** MSS, *cruineachadh.* **42:** The relative pronoun "a" is omitted before the verb in the MSS, and this is marked. **43:** MSS, *Biodh.* MSS, *na shinealair*; *na* is a contraction of the preposition "ann" and the third person singular masculine possessive pronoun, and this is marked. The word *sinealair* appears to be a dialectical form of "seanailear", "general", and is likely a humorous play on the nickname given to the character referred to as "The Colonel" at line 46. The identity of the "William" referred to here is unclear, although Maureen Lonergan suggests that it is to William Gillies, the Antigonish tavern-keeper referred to at line 39 in poem 37: see Maureen Lonergan, *The Canadian Songs of John Maclean (Am Bard MacGilleathain)*, at p. 126. **44:** MSS, *gillein.* MSS, *fo chomanta.* It is possible that the preposition *fo* causes the aspiration here by itself, but given the context, the third person singular masculine possessive pronoun, in reference to "Young William", is implied here, and its omission, due to elision by the preceding vowel, is marked. **45:** MSS, *Biodh.* MSS, *na chleireach*; *na* appears to be a contraction of the preposition "ann" and the third person singular masculine possessive pronoun, and this is marked. The reference would appear to be to Samuel Symonds, for a time jail-keeper in the town of Antigonish; see the note to line 49 in poem 37. **46:** MSS, *Sa n Coirneal*; *Sa n*

appears to be "'S", a contraction of "Agus", and "an", the article. In the post-script to this song in CC1 and CC2, McLS indicates that the reference is to "Colonel" Munro, "a Scotsman" who at one time owned nearly all the lands on which the town of Antigonish now stands. McLS indicates that he was a Colonel of the militia, and that his uncle was the Rev. James Munro a naitve of Orbiston, near Elgin, Scotland, who was the first Protestant Minister of Antigonish, who had visited and preached at Antigonish in 1797, had settled there in the summer of 1807, and who died in 1819. Rev. D. J. Rankin provides a more detailed sketch of the Minister, whose surname he spells Munroe; Rev. Rankin indicates his birthdate as 1758, at Orbliston (not Orbiston), which he indicates is in Speyside, about seven miles south of Elgin, his date of settlement at Antigonish was 1808, and his precise date of death was 17 May, 1819. He does not provide more information on the nephew, "The Colonel": see Rev. D. J. Rankin, *A History of the County of Antigonish*, at pp. 23-6. The "Colonel" referred to here is likely James Munroe, an "old soldier" who was the second teacher at the school at Beaver Meadow, near the poet's home at Glenbard: see Raymond A. MacLean, ed., *History of Antigonish, Vol. 1*, at p. 79. **47:** MSS, *Gur mair*; "mair" is a verb, and a verb does not fit the context. McLS interprets this is "mairg", an adjective, and this seems to be a sensible emendation. **49:** MSS, *dig*. MSS, *Maidseir Alisteir*. In the post-script to this poem in CC1 and CC2, McLS indicates that "Am Maidseir Alasdair" was Alexander Cameron, whom he describes as a native of Lochaber and "a good-hearted sort of man." This Alexander Cameron appears to have been a neighbour of the poet who resided in Beaver Meadow, Antigonish County, immediately south of William Forbes, the donor of the drinking horn that forms the subject of poem 34. He was the son of Duncan Cameron, "Donnachadh Mac Iain Mhic Iain Bhàin", who lived in Dochannassie, Loch Lochy, Lochaber, Scotland. Alexander came to Nova Scotia in 1818 and settled Old Mountain, Pictou County, about four miles west of Beaver Meadow, where he lived for about twelve years and cleared about 100 acres of forest. The land there was, however, poor, and Alexander, described as an "expert axeman", moved to Beaver Meadow. He named his farm there "Dochannassie". He was married to Ann Cameron. He is said to have died on 16 November, 1893, at the age of 84, although he must have been older than this if he emigrated in 1818 and cleared land there between his time of arrival and about 1830. See Raymond A. MacLean, ed., *History of Antigonish, Vol. 1*, p. 78, and *Vol. 2*, p. 73, at note 58. **50:** MSS, *Le gheard*; the aspiration of the noun implies the presence of the third person singular masculine possessive pronoun, which may be omitted due to elision by the preceding vowel, and this is marked. MSS, *tobar shallin oirn*; *tobar shallin* is interpreted as "tobar shalainn", which could be translated as "salt spring". This would appear to be a reference to Saltsprings, Antigonish County. **51:** MSS, *searagun*. **52:** The relative pronoun "A" which should precede the verb is omitted in the MSS, and this is marked. MSS, *n taruing*; *n* is "an", the third person plural possessive pronoun, in reference to Cameron's "guard", at line 50, and the omission of the vowel is marked. MSS, *chausair*. **53:** MSS, *Biodh*. The reference to "Thomas" would appear to be to the same "Thomas" referred to at line 41, poem 37; as noted in the line annotation there, the character is John Thomas Hill, the first lawyer in Antigonish. The reference to "Paddy" would appear to be the same "Paddy" referred to at line 45, poem 37; as noted in the line annotation there, the character is Paddy Byrne, an Irishman who was a noted tavern-keeper in Antigonish. **54:** MSS, *abhuist*, *doibh*. **55:** MSS, *crabhuichean*. **56:** MSS, *Cha aicheidh*. McLS emends *Cha* to "Chan". **57:** MSS, *Uisdein, Niall Cameron*. In the post-script to this poem in CC1 and CC2, McLS indicates that "Hugh" is Hugh MacLennan, a merchant

in Antigonish. In the post-script, McLS indicates that Neil Cameron was a native of Lochaber, Scotland, and kept a tavern in Antigonish. **58:** MSS, *sa n*; this is a contraction of "anns an", and is marked accordingly. **59:** MSS, *cean do bhuird.* MSS, *a seanachais*; this appears to be a verbal noun, and *a* is interpreted as the verbal noun article "a'". **60:** MSS, *air a bhraunndi*; *a* is interpreted as the article "a'". **61:** MSS, *dig Raonul tuairneir oirn.* In the post-script to this poem in CC1 and CC2, McLS indicates that "Ronald the Turner" was Ranald MacLean, who lived at Addington Forks, Antigonish County, and that it was at his house that the poet died in January, 1848. Ranald MacLean appears to be the son of Angus MacLean, a native of Moidart, Scotland, who had 400 acres of land in this district, that went to Ranald and two brothers, Angus and Donald: Raymond A. MacLean, *History of Antigonish, Vol. 1*, at p. 81. **62:** MSS, *gu faigh*; *gu* is the conjunction "gum", and the omission of the final consonant, likely a dialectical feature, is marked. **63:** The relative pronoun "a" is omitted before the verb, and this is marked. MSS, *a bheirt*; *a* is interpreted as the third person singular masculine possessive pronoun, in reference to Ranald, rather than the feminine article. MSS, *thuaneilich.* This noun, translated as "dizziness", can also be translated as "staggering", and is probably intended as a pun. **64:** MSS, *Na chluasan*; the aspiration of the noun suggests that *Na* is a contraction of the preposition "ann" and the third person singular masculine possessive pronoun, and this is marked. MSS, *le cuid*; given the context, it would appear that the third person singular feminine possessive pronoun, in reference to the lathe, is implied, and its omission, due to elision by the preceding vowel, is marked. MSS, *sranntrich.* **66:** MSS, *Mu dh eireas s trig na builleín.* The preposition "mu" does not fit the context of the line particularly well, and is emended to "mar", "since, as". The omission of the relative pronoun "a" before the verb is marked. *s trig* is interpreted as the copula "is tric", and the omission of the vowel is marked. **67:** MSS, *dig.* MSS, *leigh Mhurrich.* This reference would appear to be to Doctor William Currie, one of two doctors in the town of Antigonish at the time, and who is referred to at line 97 in poem 37. **68:** MSS, *h urammach.* **69:** MSS, *miolachd.* **70:** MSS, *Gad t fhaodadh*; given the context, *Gad t* is interpreted as the second person singular verbal noun object, "'Gad". MSS, *so.* **71:** MSS, *Gu*; this is the conjunction "gum", and the omission of the final consonant, a dialectical feature, is marked. MSS, *Bhi.* **72:** MSS, *sraing.* **73:** MSS, *Mu thiondas*; McLS interprets *Mu* as "Ma", "If", which is more appropriate in the context. MSS, *am batal ruin*; *am* is interpreted as a contraction of "ann am", and this is marked. **74:** MSS, *Gu*; this is the conjunction "Gun", and the omission of the final consonant, a dialectical feature, is marked. MSS, *slachdain.* **75:** MSS, *buillin.* **76:** MSS, *So ghlasdach.* McLS interprets *ghlasdach* as "glas-darach". The aspiration of *ghlasdach*, and the use of "do" later in the line, suggests that *So* is a mis-spelling of "Do". MSS, *do chulltuin.* **77:** MSS, *Aonaghus gobha.* In the post-script to the poem, McLS indicates that the reference to is to Angus Smith, who was still living at the time of publication of CC1 in 1881. It is possible that Angus Smith was a son of John Smith, "Iain Saor", a native of Moidart, Scotland, who emigrated in about 1800 to Pictou, stayed at Merigomish for about three years, then at Moidart (now known as MacAra's Brook), Antigonish County, with relatives for a further two years, before settling in the lower part of the West River, Antigonish County, in the summer of 1805. John Smith was the first of a line of carpenters who are reported to have done useful work in the town of Antigonish and its environs. See Raymond A. MacLean, *History of Antigonish, Vol. 1*, at p. 77, and *Vol. 2*, at p. 68, note 43. MSS, *lanraruin*; McLS interprets this as "làmh ruin", which fits the context. **78:** MSS, *na chearduich*; *na* is a contraction of the

preposition "ann" and the third person singular masculine possessive pronoun, in reference to Angus, and is marked. **80:** MSS, *Go*. The infinitive particle "a" is omitted before the infinitive, and this omission, likely due to elision by the preceding vowel, is marked. MSS, *slabhruidh*. **81:** MSS, *Lachuin*. In the post-script to this poem, McLS identifies this as Lachlan MacLean, "Lachainn Mac Nèill mhic Lachainn mhic Aonghais Òig", a native of Coll, who died on 3 July, 1855. He settled at Keppoch, Antigonish County, not far from Glenbard. He was married, and had five sons and three daughters. See Rev. D. J. Rankin, *A History of the County of Antigonish Nova Scotia*, at pp. 309-10, and Maureen Lonergan, at p. 127, note 85. MSS, *a chisgeadh oirn*; McLS interprets *chisgeadh* as "chlisgeadh". **82:** MSS, *bh eil*. MSS, *n duil*; *n* is a contraction of "ann an", and is marked. MSS, *mist*. **83:** MSS, *Go n caradh*; *n* is "an", the third person plural possessive pronoun, and the omission of the vowel, due to elision by the preceding vowel, is marked. **84:** MSS, *Nu tharlas*; McLS interprets *Nu* as a mis-spelling of "Ma", but it could also be "Mu". **85:** MSS, *deid*. MSS, *so thiolacadh*; the aspiration, and context, implies the presence of the third person singular masculine possessive pronoun, and its omission, due to elision by the preceding vowel, is marked. **86:** MSS, *b fheird*. In the post-script to CC1 and CC2, McLS indicates that the reference is to John MacIsaac, a native of Moidart, who was still alive when CC1 was published in 1881. There were many MacIsaacs—indeed, many John MacIsaacs—in Antigonish County, mainly from Moidart and Eigg. It is possible, however, that this John MacIsaac is one of five brothers who came from Moidart in 1801 on the ship "Nora" and settled in South River, Antigonish County. Rev. Rankin indicates that there were six brothers who came, accompanied by their father, also named John, and that the younger John was married to an Ann MacIsaac, they resided at South River, and had no children: Rev. D. J. Rankin, *History of the County of Antigonish Nova Scotia*, p. 292-2. If this is the John MacIsaac to whom the poet refers, he must have been very young when he emigrated. See Raymond A. MacLean, *History of Antigonish, Vol. 1*, p. 87. Maureen Lonergan indicates, however, that the John MacIsaac to whom reference is made here was the son of Ronald MacIsaac, a native of Rudha na Faochaig, Moidart, Scotland, and who settled at Arisaig, Antigonish County in about 1790. This John was apparently nicknamed "An Tàillear MacIsaic"—this would explain the reference to his weaving in line 87—and married Catherine MacDonald of Moidart (now MacAra's Brook), Antigonish County, and had six children. They resided at Doctor's Brook, near Arisaig, Antigonish County. See Maureen Lonergan, *The Canadian Songs of John Maclean (Am Bard MacGilleathain)*, at p. 127, note 90. She cites Rev. Rankin's *History of the County of Antigonish Nova Scotia* as her source, although some of the information, including the nickname and the place of residence, is not found in Rev. Rankin's history. **87:** MSS, *Gu*; this is the conjunction "Gum", and the omission of the final consonant, a dialectical feature, is marked. MSS, *dhoibh*. **88:** MSS, *sa n*; this is a contraction of "anns an", and is marked accordingly. **89:** MSS, *chruinicheas*. The relative pronoun "A", which should precede this verb, is omitted, and this is marked. MSS, *na h Armuin*. **90:** MSS, *doib*. **91:** MSS, *cinteach*. MSS, *m bard again*; *m* is the article "am", and the omission of the vowel, due to elision by the preceding vowel, is marked. **92:** MSS, *gu m*; this should be "gun". MSS, *n Gaelic*; *n* is a contraction of "ann an", and this is marked. MSS, *duin*. **93:** MSS, *Gu*; this is the conjunction "Gun", and the omission of the final consonant, which is a dialectical feature, is marked. MSS, *tinntean*. **94:** MSS, *Feodh, reileineabh*. **95:** MSS, *Gu*; this is the conjunction "Gun", and the omission of the final consonant, which is dialectical, is marked. MSS, *coinnlein*. **96:** MSS, *dearsadh, ann s*,

launntair. **97:** MSS, *Biodh*. MSS, *an gniomh*; *an* is interpreted as a contraction of "ann an", and this is marked. MSS, *oircheardan*. **98:** MSS, *ga dhiol*; *ga* is the third person singular masculine verbal noun pronoun object, and is marked. MSS, *go soradh*; given the meaning of *soradh*, "grudging, sparing", and the context, which implies the opposite, it is likely that *go* is meant to be the preposition "gun", "without". **101:** MSS, *cha n*. **102:** MSS, *Cha n, tighn*. MSS, *a selladh*; this appears to be a verbal noun, but *a* is interpreted here as a contraction of "ann an", as in "ann an sealladh", "into view". MSS, *dhuin*. **103:** MSS, *a thu u n car*; *thu* is interpreted as "thug", the preterite of the verb "thoir", *u* is the second person singular pronoun "thu", and *n* is the article "an", the omission of the vowel, due to elision by the preceding vowel, is marked. **104:** MSS, *du*. The relative pronoun "a" is omitted in the MSS, and this is marked. **105:** MSS, *dhuisgead du*; this is the conditional form of the verb "dhùisg". The relative pronoun "a" is omitted before the verb in the MSS, and this is marked. MSS, *go*. **106:** MSS, *Gu rurichidh du*. *Gu* is the conjunction "Gun", and the omission of the final consonant, a dialectical feature, is marked. In the MSS, the verb appears to be in the future tense, but as this is a dependent clause, the future form would simply be "rùraich", and it is likely that this is a conditional form, which is consistent with line 105, and is McLS' interpretation. MSS, *m*; this appears to be "am", the third person plural possessive pronoun, the omission of the vowel, due to elision, is marked. **107:** MSS, *cuntadh*. MSS, *e chuid storuis*; the aspiration of "cuid" is likely due to the presence of the third person singular masculine possessive pronoun, and its omission, due to elision by the third person singular personal pronoun, is marked. **108:** MSS, *gheannruidh*. **109:** MSS, *airteal*; dialectical for "airtneal". MSS, *eislein, ora*. **110:** MSS, *sproc*. MSS, *sa*; the is a combination of "'s", a contraction of "agus", and the relative pronoun "a". MSS, *dhoibh*. **111:** MSS, *dusa*. MSS, *a fear*; *a* appears to be the article "am", and the omission of the consonant, a dialectical feature, is marked. MSS, *leisidh*; this looks like the future independent verb form, but the dependent form is required, and it is therefore likelier that this is a conditional form, which is consistent with the tense at lines 109 and 112, and is McLS' interpretation. **112:** MSS, *Sa*; this is a combination of "'S", a contraction of "agus", and the relative pronoun "a". **114:** MSS, *deid air leon*; the context suggests that *air* is the first person plural possessive pronoun "ar", rather than the preposition "air". MSS, *pelairein*. **115:** MSS, *Gu*; this is the conjunction "Gun", and the omission of the final consonant, a dialectical feature, is marked. MSS, *tigh eireidein*. **116:** MSS, *eareachdail*. **117:** MSS, *Gu*; this is the conjunction "Gum", and the omission of the final consonant, a dialectical feature, is marked. MSS, *na sineadh*; *na* is a contraction of the preposition "ann" and the third person singular feminine possessive pronoun "a", in reference to "pàirt", a feminine noun. MSS, *dhiu*. **118:** MSS, *finean*; this is interpreted as "fingernails". **119:** MSS, *du fein*. **120:** MSS, *Ga n cuir go*; *Ga n* is the third person plural pronoun object of the verbal noun, and this is marked. MSS, *ga n antoil*; *ga n* also looks like the third person plural pronoun object, but "an-toil" is a noun, and so it is interpreted here as the preposition "gun", "without". **121:** MSS, *Na leapuichean*; McLS interprets *Na* as "'Nan", a contraction of the preposition "ann" and the third person plural possessive pronoun, and this seems preferable to interpreting it as the plural article. MSS, *gu suaineandh du*; this is the conjunction "gun", and the omission of the final consonant, a dialectical feature, is marked. **122:** MSS, *Nan*; this is also interpreted as the contraction of the preposition "ann" and the third person plural possessive pronoun. **123:** MSS, *orr*. **124:** MSS, *a drantann*; this is a verbal noun, and . *a* is the verbal noun particle "a'". **125:** MSS, *dhuigeadh*; McLS interprets this as "dhùisgeadh",

which is appropriate in the context. The relative pronoun "a" which should precede the verb is omitted in the MSS, and this is marked. **126:** MSS, *ga sarachadh*; *ga* is a pronoun object of the verbal noun, but given the context, it is more likely "'gan", the third person plural object, rather than "'ga", the third person feminine singular. **127:** MSS, *gu rodh*; this is the conjunction "gun", and the omission of the final consonant, a dialectical feature, is marked. MSS, *orr*. **128:** The relative pronoun "a", which should precede the verb, is omitted in the MSS, and this is marked. MSS, *na n*; given the context, this is a contraction of the preposition "ann", and the third person plural possessive pronoun, and is marked. **129:** The relative pronoun "a" is omitted before the verb in the MSS, and this is marked. MSS, *du*. MSS, *chuir*; this is the infinitive "chur", which is usually slenderised in the poet's dialect, and the omission of the infinitive particle "a" is marked. **130:** MSS, *Se t fhaicin*; *Se* is the copula. MSS, *dhoibh*. **131:** MSS, *cairteas*. **133:** MSS, *a gratin*; this is the verbal noun, and *a* is the verbal noun particle "a'". **134:** MSS, *Gu rodh*; this is the conjunction "Gun", and the omission of the final consonant, a dialectical feature, is marked. MSS, *faileanach*. **135:** MSS, *Gu*; this is the conjunction "Gun", and the omission of the final consonant, a dialectical feature, is marked. The aspiration of "bean" in the MSS implies the presence of the feminine article "a'", and its omission, due to elision by the preceding vowel, is marked. **136:** The relative pronoun "a" is omitted in the MSS, before the verb, and this is marked. MSS, *bha n*; *n* appears to be a contraction of "ann an", and is marked. **137:** MSS, *rodh*, *riabh*. **138:** MSS, *gu*; this is the conjunction "gun", and the omission of the final consonant, a dialectical feature, is marked. **139:** MSS, *Gu folabhain*; *Gu* is the conjunction "Gum", and the omission of the final consonant, a dialectical feature, is marked. MSS, *as mo leinidh*; *as* is interpreted as a contraction of "agus", rather than, for example, the preposition "anns", which would be "ann" prior to the possessive pronoun. MSS, *du*. **140:** MSS, *luchd gannlais*; "gannlas" is a dialectical form of "gamhlas". **142:** MSS, *le thalantan*; the aspiration of the noun implies the presence of the third person singular masculine possessive pronoun, the omission of which, due to elision by the preceding vowel, is marked. **143:** MSS, *n t shinnshearachd*, *dainig*. **144:** MSS, *Arichd*. McLS interprets this as "Àirc", and given the reference at line 146, the reference appears to be to Noah's Ark, which, according to the Book of Genesis, chs. 6-9, came to rest on Mount Ararat, the massive mountain located in what is now north-east Turkey. *Àiric* better represents the Tiree pronunciation, which is reflected in the MSS. **145:** MSS, *fuair*; the context suggests that this should be the preterite form, "fhuair", and the omission of the relative pronoun "a" before the verb is marked. **146:** MSS, *togail*; the context suggests that this is a verbal noun, and the omission of the verbal noun particle "a'", due to elision caused by the preceding vowel, is marked. MSS, *garidh*. **147:** MSS, *phaidh*. **148:** MSS, *card*; this appears to be "card", an English gallon or four Scots pints. MSS, *agabh*. MSS, *sa n*; the is a contraction of "anns an". **149:** The relative pronoun "a" which should precede the verb is omitted in the MSS, and this is marked. MSS, *gu n*; here, likely neither the conjunction "gun" or the preposition "gun", "without", but "gu an", "an" being the third person plural possessive pronoun. **150:** MSS, *Gach d fhuadach*; the meaning of *Gach d* is unclear, but McLS interprets this as the second person singular verbal noun object "'Gad". MSS, *duchanan*. **151:** MSS, *fein a sugradh*; this is a verbal noun form, and *a* is the verbal noun particle "a'". **152:** MSS, *du g iunnsachadh*, *dhoibh*. **153:** The relative pronoun "a" is omitted in the MSS before the verb, and this is marked. **155:** MSS, *sa*; this is a contraction of "anns a'". **156:** MSS, *S gu rachd*; McLS interprets this as the passive form "rachte", which is defensible. *gu* is the conjunction "gun", and the

omission of the final consonant, a dialectical feature, is marked. MSS, *a n chul*; it is unclear why the noun is aspirated, and *a n* appears to be a contraction of "ann an", and is marked. MSS, *ga t shealltuin*; *ga t* appears to be the second person singular verbal noun object, "'gad". **157:** MSS, *an cuirt*; *an* appears to be a contraction of "ann an", which is marked. MSS, *na Righrean*; *na* appears to be the genitive plural article "nan", and the omission of the final consonant, a dialectical feature, is marked. **158:** MSS, *Gad t iarriudh*; *Gad t* is interpreted as the second person singular verbal noun object "'Gad". MSS, *dh iunnsuidh*; the particle "a", which should precede this, is omitted, and this is marked. MSS, *an dinearach.* **159:** MSS, *choumpanach.* MSS, *do dh Pompair*; *Pompair* appears to be a mis-spelling of "Iompaire". **160:** MSS, *a cainnt*; this is a verbal noun, and *a* is the verbal noun particle "a'". **161:** MSS, *Gu rodh*; this is the conjunction "Gun", and the omission of the final consonant, a dialectical feature, is marked. MSS, *ioriseal.* **162:** MSS, *du.* The relative pronoun "a" is omitted before the verb, and this is marked. **163:** MSS, *Gur h aluin.* **164:** The relative pronoun "a" is omitted in the MSS before the verb, and this is marked. MSS, *Chaumpa.* **165:** MSS, *Mhic Intoisich.* **166:** MSS, *Ga lionadh*; *Ga* is the third person singular object of the verbal noun, and is marked accordingly. **167:** The relative pronoun "a" is omitted in the MSS before the verb, and this is marked. **169:** MSS, *bhlata*; this appears to be "bhlasta". MSS, *uaislein.* **170:** MSS, *fhallan, teith, dhoibh.* **171:** The relative pronoun "a" is omitted in the MSS before the verb, and this is marked. MSS, *tuasaidein.* **173:** MSS, *thigh sabhailte*; the meaning of *thigh* is unclear, but it would not appear to be a form of "taigh", "house, dwelling". McLS interprets this as "thighinn" which, given the context, is possible. **174:** MSS, *ollin fein, paidhin.* **175:** MSS, *teisteneas.* The relative pronoun "a" is omitted before the verb in the MSS, and this is marked.

Maclean Sinclair Versions:

Fonn line 1: *ho ró gur h-éibhinn* for *gum b' èibhinn.* **Fonn line 2:** *gu 'n.* **Fonn line 3:** *is ait* for *a b' aite.* **Fonn line 4:** *Bho 'n.* **1:** CC1, *'S a. mhaduinn.* CC1, *éiridh.* **2:** *Gu 'n.* **3:** CC1, *naigheachd.* **4:** Insert *'S* before *gur.* **5:** *Gu 'n.* CC2, *d'thàinig.* **7:** *Ged* for *Ge'.* **9:** *Gu 'n.* **10:** *gu 'n, so.* **11:** *Gu 'n.* CC2, *d'thàinig.* **12:** CC1, *Bho na,* CC2, *Bho 'n a.* **13:** CC1, *'N uair. tharruing.* CC1, *g' am,* CC2, *'g am. ionnsaidh.* **15:** CC1, *dh' i.* Omit *'s.* **17:** *fhàileadh.* **18:** *an* for *a.* **22:** *innt'* for *innte.* **23:** CC1, *'N uair.* CC1, *iochshlàint. iomraideach.* **24:** *Gu 'm, di.* **25:** *Gu 'n cuir.* **26:** *ribeinean de 'n t-sìod'.* **27:** *'Si féin, sìobhalta.* **29:** *Dòmhnull.* **30:** CC1, *Arisaig.* **31:** *Gu 'n.* Insert *mi* before *sios. am maireach.* **32:** *gu 'n.* CC1, *sin. Bealtuinn.* **34:** *comunn, sunndach.* **35:** *a mach.* **36:** CC1, *thoiseachas.* **37:** *Dòmhnull. mar is taitneach leis* for *'na fhear-brataich ann.* **38:** Replace this line with *A' cumail suas do bhrataich dhaibh.* CC2, *Ag cumail.* **40:** *Mu 'm.* **41:** This is line 42. *'S ann chruinneachas sinn* for *Thèid cruinneachadh air.* **42:** This is line 41. *Bho 'n. riut* for *ris.* **46:** Replace this line with *'S do 'n chòirneil bheirear réiseamaid.* **48:** *treun-fheur.* **49:** *Gu 'n.* **50:** *o' n, ann.* **51:** *gux'n.* **52:** *Bhi 'n tarruing.* **53:** *Padruig.* **55:** CC1, *aindheoin. no.* **56:** CC1, *Cha 'n.* **57:** *'s an.* **61:** Replace *Gun tig Raghnall* with *Le fonn thig Raoghal.* CC2, *Raonull.* **62:** *gu 'm, o 'n.* **63:** *a' bheairt.* **65:** *gu 'm.* **66:** Replace this line with *Le tinneas 's builean fuileachdach.* **67:** *Gu 'n.* CC2, *Mac-Mhuirich,* CC2, *Mac Mhuirich.* **69-72:** This is verse 18, and follows line 113. **70:** CC1, *Ga 'd,* CC2, *'Ga 'd. so.* **71:** *Gu 'm, bhi.* **72:** *Mu 'n, shreaing.* **73-76:** This is verse 19, and follows line 72. **73:** *baiteal.* **74:** *Gu 'n.* CC1, *slachdain,* CC2, *slacain.* **76:** *De, de, challtuinn.* **77-80:** This is verse 18, and comes after line 69. **78:** CC1, *'Us,* CC2, *Is.* CC1, *fòghainteach,* CC2,

fòghainnteach. **79:** *aig'* for *aige.* **80:** *Gu 'd luchd càinidh* for *Gu pàirt dhiubh.* **81-84:** This is verse 19, and comes after line 80. **81:** *Lachuinn.* **82:** Insert *'S* before *gu. misd'.* **83:** *Gu* for *Gu 'n. chorp 's na* for *anns na.* **84:** *Ma* for *Mu. bristeadh.* **85-88:** This is verse 20, and comes after line 84. **85:** Replace this line with *'Us ma bhios mairbh r'an tiodhlacadh.* CC2, *Is.* **86:** *Gur feàird* for *Gum b' fheàird'. Mac Iosaic ann* for *Mac Iosaig.* **87:** *Gu 'm, lion-eudach*; CC2, *lion eudach.* **88:** *Gu grinn 's an, Ghallda.* **89-92:** This is verse 21, and comes after line 88. **89:** CC1, *'N uair. àrmuinn.* **90:** *Mu 'n, do 'n.* **91:** *gu 'm, Bàrd.* **92:** *gu 'n.* **93-96:** This is verse 22, and comes after line 92. **93:** *Gu 'n.* **94:** *bheann 'us ghleann* for *ghleann is bheann*; CC2, *is.* **95:** *Gu 'n.* **96:** CC1, *Bidh*, CC2, *'S bidh* for *Ri, bho* for *anns.* **97-100:** This is verse 23, and comes after line 96. **98:** *gu 'n, air* for *ann.* **99:** *air son seòrs'.* **100:** CC2, *Bho* for *Bha.* **101-104:** This is verse 24, and comes after line 100. **101:** CC1, *dha 'n* for *chan.* **102:** CC1, *Cha 'n. an* for *a'.* **103:** *asda.* **104:** CC1, *'N uair.* **105-108:** This is verse 25, and comes after line 104. **105:** CC1, *'N uair.* **106:** *Gu 'n.* **107:** *Na 'n, iad de 'n stòras* for *e 'chuid stòrais.* **108:** *orr'* for *air.* **109-112:** This is verse 26, and comes after line 108. **109:** *airsneal.* CC2, *éislein.* **111:** *am fear* for *a' fear.* **112:** *réit.* **113-116:** This is verse 29, and comes after line 76. **113:** Replace this line with *'S ma thachras le neart pheileirean.* **114:** Replace this line with *Gu 'm fagar cuid dhinn deireasach.* **115:** *Gu 'n.* **117:** Replace this line with *Bidh bruidhinn àrd gu dian aca.* **118:** *Bidh* for *Bhiodh, h-ìnean ac'* for *fineun ann.* **119:** *féin.* **120:** *'G an cuir* for *'Gan cuir, 'g an* for *gun.* **121:** *gu 'n.* **123:** *orra.* **125:** CC1, *'N uair. dhùisgeas, am maireach.* **126:** *Gu 'm bi, 'g an.* **127:** *bheil* for *robh.* **129:** CC1, *'N uair.* Replace *'thigeadh tu 'chuir* with *thig thu dlùth chur.* **130:** *Bheir d' aghaidh mhùirneach* for *'S e t' fhaicinn a bheir.* **131:** *'S ann phògas* for *Gum pògadh.* **132:** *Bidh* for *Bhiodh.* **133:** *'gràitinn* for *a' gràitinn.* **134:** *Gu 'n, fàilinneach.* **135:** *'S gu 'n rùisgeadh tu* for *Gu' rùisg thu 'bhean 's.* **137:** CC1, *eucoireach.* **138:** *gu 'n.* **139:** *Gu 'm, as, léine.* **140:** *-gamhlais.* **141:** Add *ort* at end of the line. **143:** *bho 'n.* **144:** *'S an àirc, h-àrd-bheanntan* for *bheanntan.* **145:** CC1, *'N uair. aisde.* **146:** *Chaidh* for *Bha. thogail.* **147:** Insert *'S* before *gu. thug thu phàigheadh dha* for *nuair a phàigh thu e.* **148:** *'s an.* **150:** *'Ga d.* CC1, *dùchannan.* **151:** *féin.* **153:** CC1, *'N uair.* **155:** *Gu 'n, 's a.* **156:** *gu 'n rachta 'n chùil 'g ad.* CC2, *rachteadh.* **157:** *nan* for *na'.* **158:** *'Ga d', ionnsaidh.* Omit *an. dinneireach.* **159:** *Iompaire.* **161:** *Gu bheil* for *Gu' robh. iriosal.* **162:** Replace this line with *'Us bàigheil, càirdeil, mireagach.* CC2, *Is.* **163:** *àluinn.* **164:** CC1, *'N uair. thionalas.* This line is followed by a new verse, which is: *Bu ghaisgeach mòr rìgh Alasdair,/Bhiodh buaidh 's a bhlàr a dh' aindeoin aig',/Ach cheannsaich thus' gu h-ealamh e,/Gur fearail dh' iomairt lainn thu.* **165-168:** This is verse 43. **165:** Omit *ann.* **166:** Replace this line with *Cuir mu 'n cuairt oirnn; cò nach òladh i?* **167:** *Bho 'n.* Insert *'n* before *sòlas.* **168:** *d' fhògradh.* **169-172:** This is verse 44. **170:** *Gu 'm.* **171:** CC1, *'N uair. thòiseachadh.* **172:** CC1, *diu*, CC2, *diubh.* **173-176:** This is verse 45. **173:** *chùmhnant'.* **174:** *Gu 'n, féin, gu 'm.* **176:** *bràth.*

With these changes, there are 184 lines in McLS versions.

39. Òran don 'Chuairtear'

Tune: None given.
No. of lines: 84

Sources: MG15G/2/2, p. 178, CC1, p. 163, CC2, p. 142, FC, p. 104, JB, p. 65, SO 1863, p. 329, BT, p. 91, Caran an t-Saoghail, p. 202.
Date: c. 1842.
Context: Maclean Sinclair indicates in the post-script to this song in CC1 and CC2 that it was composed in about the year 1842. The "Cuairtear" is the Gaelic journal "Cuairtear nan Gleann" ("The Traveller of the Glens"), published by the Rev. Dr. Norman MacLeod (1783-1862) between 1840 and 1843. Rev. MacLeod had published another Gaelic journal, "An Teachdaire Gaelach" ("The Highland Messenger") between 1829 and 1831. Prof. Donald Meek provides the following comments on Rev. MacLeod: "MacLeod was known to Highlanders as *Caraid nan Gàidheal* ('The Highlanders' Friend') because of his efforts to relieve poverty at the time of the Potato Famine [in the late 1840s], and his commitment to education, through schools and Gaelic literacy, in the Highlands. Son of the Rev. Norman MacLeod, minister of Morvern, Argyll, he too became a minister, serving at Campbeltown and Campsie, and latterly at St Columba's, Glasgow. MacLeod made an immense contribution to Gaelic literature through his periodicals, for which he himself wrote assiduously, while providing, as this song [i.e. Òran don 'Chuairtear'] suggests, a place for the contributions of others. While his main interest lay in educating 'ordinary' Gaels, he enjoyed a close relationship with the upper echelons of Gaelic society, and encouraged John Francis Campbell of Islay . . . to gather Gaelic folklore . . . ." As to the journal itself, Prof. Meek adds: "*Cuairtear nan Gleann* showed a strong interest in emigration and in overseas communities of Gaels, as is demonstrated by its range of articles actually promoting emigration. At the same time, as MacLean's song shows [i.e., this song, Òran don 'Chuairtear'] shows, it provided a significant link between exiled Gaels and their homeland." See Donald E. Meek, *Caran an t-Saoghal*, at p. 432. For an extended biographical sketch of Dr. MacLeod and a representative sample of his prose writings, see Rev. A. Clerk, ed., *Caraid nan Gaidheal/The Friend of the Gael: A Choice Selection of the Gaelic Writings by Norman MacLeod D. D.* (Edinburgh: John Grant, 1910).

Line Annotations:
1: MSS, *a Alabin.* The "Traveller" is the Gaelic journal "Cuairtear nan Gleann". **2:** MSS, *na mor bheann*; *na* is the genitive plural article "nam", and the omission of the final consonant, which is likely a dialectical feature, is marked. MSS, *sa*; this is a combination of "'s", a contraction of "agus", and the relative pronoun "a". MSS, *a n fhairge*; *a n* is the article "an". **3:** MSS, *thoir*; this is the infinitive "thoirt", and the omission of the infinitive particle "a" is marked. MSS, *a seanachais*; *a* is interpreted as the third person singular possessive pronoun, in reference to the journal. While "cuairtear" is a masculine noun, "iris", the word for journal, is feminine, and therefore *a* is interpreted as the third person singular feminine possessive pronoun, which is consistent with the non-aspiration of the noun. **4:** MSS, *a fear*; *a* is the article "am", and the omission of the final consonant, likely a dialectical feature, is marked. MSS, *biodh.* **5:** MSS, *gaelach, armunn.* Note that the "Cuairtear" is now characterised as a male figure; in the first verse, it was characterised as a female. **6:** The relative pronoun "a" is omitted before the verb in the MSS, and this is marked. MSS, *an t aileagain.* MSS, *fo armubh.* **7:** MSS, *le phearsa bhoidheich.* The aspiration of the noun implies the presence of the third person singular masculine possessive pronoun, in reference to the "Cuairtear". MSS, *an comhdach bala bhreachd*; *an* is interpreted as a contraction of "ann an", and is marked appropriately. **8:** MSS, *Mur chleachd*; *Mur* is interpreted as "Mar", as in McLS. The omission of the relative pronoun before

the verb is marked. MSS, *a shinnshreabh, garbhluich.* **9:** The relative pronoun "a" is omitted before the verb in the MSS, and this is marked. MSS, *Go, ualach.* **11:** MSS, *Go, lạrich.* **12:** MSS, *a namhuid.* **13:** MSS, *a cuairtear aluin*; given that the noun is not aspirated, *a* is interpreted as the nominative, rather than the vocative, article "an", and the omission of the consonant, likely dialectical, is marked. MSS, *tha tamh*; the relative pronoun "a" before the verb is omitted, as is the verbal noun particle "a'" before the verbal noun, which would have been elided by the preceding vowel, and both omissions are marked. MSS, *s na*; this is a contraction of "anns na". **14:** MSS, *Ga bheil a Ghaelic*; *Ga* is interpreted as the contraction of the preposition "do" and the relative pronoun "a". MSS, *s a s-fearr.* **15:** MSS, *tamilt, sealltuin.* **16:** MSS, *da chairdean*; *da* is a contraction of the preposition "do" and the third person singular masculine possessive pronoun, and this is marked. The relative pronoun "a" is omitted before the verb, and this is marked. MSS, *n drast.* **17:** The relative pronoun "a" is omitted before the verb, and this is marked. MSS, *ad uair*; *ad* is unclear, and McLS interprets it as "ud", which is appropriate in the context. MSS, *sa mhiosa*; *sa* is a contraction of "anns a'" and is marked. **18:** MSS, *toilintin.* **19:** *A tional*; this is a verbal noun, and *A* is the verbal noun particle "A'". MSS, *colris.* MSS, *na choradh siobhalt*; *na* is a contraction of the preposition "ann" and the third person singular masculine possessive pronoun, while *choradh* is interpreted as "còmhradh", as in McLS versions. **20:** MSS, *biodh.* MSS, *aig*; this is interpreted as "aige", the third person singular masculine prepositional pronoun of "aig", and the omission of the final vowel, caused by elision, is marked. MSS, *a sinnsreabh*; given that this plural noun is in a genitive relationship, the *a* cannot be an article (which would be "nan"), and as it does not cause aspiration, it is interpreted as the third person plural possessive pronoun, "an", in reference to the young men at line 18, and the omission of the final consonant, a dialectical feature, is marked. **21:** MSS, *maoidean.* The relative pronoun "a" is omitted before the verb in the MSS, and this is marked. MSS, *deigh.* **22:** MSS, *S a bhos*; *bhos* is interpreted as the depedent future form of the verb "bi", "to be". MSS, *caoibhneas.* MSS, *a faoineachd*; this is a verbal noun, and the *a* is the verbal noun particle "a'". **23:** MSS, *solus, ga leubhadh.* **24:** MSS, *eachruidh, dhiu.* **25:** MSS, *Cha n ionadh.* MSS, *thoirt*; the omission of the infinitive particle "a" is marked. **26:** The relative pronoun "a" is omitted in the MSS, and this is marked. MSS, *tha call*; the relative pronoun "a" is omitted before the verb, and the verbal noun particle "a'" is omitted before the verbal noun, due to elision by the preceding vowel, and both omissions are marked. MSS, *a leirsinn*; *a* is interpreted as the third person plural possessive pronoun "an", and the omission of the consonant, a dialectical feature, is marked. **27:** MSS, *S a n ceann*; *S* is a contraction of "Agus", and *a n* is interpreted as the third person plural possessive pronoun "an". MSS, *deigh.* MSS, *chodian*; this is two separate words, "cho" and "dian". **28:** MSS, *dian*; this is interpreted as the verb "dean". MSS, *fhaicinn*; the aspiration of this implies the presence of the third person singular masculine possessive pronoun, in reference to "The Traveller". The relative pronoun "a" is omitted before the verb "cleachd", and this is marked. **30:** MSS, *s gael.* The relative pronoun "a" is omitted before the verb, and this is marked. MSS, *sgairteal.* **31:** MSS, *teacaire*; this is a reference to Rev. Dr. Norman MacLeod's first publication, "An Teachdaire Gaelach", which ran between 1829 and 1831. MSS, *chleach bhi*; the relative pronoun "a" is omitted before the verb, and the infinitive particle "a" is omitted before the infinitive, and in both cases the omission is marked. **32:** MSS, *cha dhag.* MSS, *masla*; this is a form of the noun "masladh". MSS, *dha dheigh san*; *dha* is interpreted as a contraction of the preposition "do" and the third person singular masculine possessive

pronoun, referring to the "Traveller". **33:** MSS, *S a chuairtear*; this appears to be a direct address, and therefore the noun should be in the vocative case, and slenderised. MSS, *alluin*. **34:** MSS, *Gu rodh*; this is the conjunction "Gun", and the omission of the final consonant, a dialectical feature, is marked. **35:** MSS, *Ge do, pairst, dhiu, surach*. **36:** MSS, *an Gaelic*; *an* is interpreted here as the third person plural possessive pronoun. MSS, *cha duair*. **37:** MSS, *Gu rodh*; this is the conjunction "Gun", and the omission of the final consonant, a dialectical feature, is marked. MSS, *diolas*. It is not clear whether, in referring to the "King of the Fenians", the poet means Fionn Mac Cumhaill, the leader of heroic Fenian warriors in the Old Irish Fionn, or Ossianic Cylce of tales or, perhaps, Conchobar mac Nessa, the King of Ulster in the Old Irish Ulster Cyle of tales, who had his royal seat at Emain Macha, and in whose service the Fenians fought. See Miranda J. Green, *Dictionary of Celtic Myth and Legend*, (London: Thames and Hudson, 1992), "Conchobar mac Nessa", pp. 65-66, "Finn mac Cumhaill", at pp. 98-9, or Bernhard Maier, *Dictionary of Celtic Religion and Culture*, (Woodbridge, Suffolk: The Boydell Press, 1997), "Finn Mac Cumaill", at p. 118, "Conchobar mac Nesa", at p. 80. For a fuller account of the relationship between Conchobar and the Fenians, see Francis J. Byrne, *Irish Kings and High* Kings, (Dublin: Four Courts Press, 1973, 2001), p. 32, pp. 50-2. **38:** MSS, *calama*. MSS, *na n aimsir fein*; *na n* is a contraction of the preposition "ann" and the third person plural possessive pronoun. **39:** MSS, *dhoibh*. The reference is to Ossian ("Oisin"), who, in the Old Irish Fionn Cycle of tales, is the son of Fionn mac Cumhaill and Sava, who was reared amongst the Fenians and became one of its bravest champions. In James Macpherson's *The Works of Ossian*, Ossian is assimilated thoroughly into the Scottish Highland tradition; he was said to be the son of the Scottish king Fingal and lived in the west Highlands in the third century A.D, and as an aged, blind man, he composed songs concerning the heroic deeds of Fingal and his warriors. The reference to the composition of verse by Ossian suggests that the poet is referring to the Macpherson character rather than the hero of the older Irish folklore. See Miranda J. Green, *Dictionary of Celtic Myth and Legend*, "Oisin", at p. 166, and especially Bernhard Maier, *Dictionary of Celtic Religion and Culture*, "Ossian", at pp. 218-9. **40:** The relative pronoun is omitted before the verb, and this is marked. MSS, *Padruig a bhennaich Eirin*. The reference is to St. Patrick, the patron saint of Ireland, who is said to have converted Ireland to Christianity in the fifth century A.D. It is believed that he was from a family of Romanised British Celts who was abducted by Irish pirates at the age of 16 and spent six years in Ireland as a slave, before escaping. Inspired by a vision, he returned to Ireland to spread Christianity there. There is a considerable literature on St. Patrick, but for a brief summary and introduction, see Bernhard Maier, *Dictionary of Celtic Religion and Culture*, "Patrick", at pp. 220-1. For an accessible account, see, also John J. Ó Ríordáin, *Early Irish Saints*, (Dublin: The Columba Press, 2001), at pp. 15-20. **41:** MSS, *fiochan, na Gael*. **42:** MSS, *leobhar*. **43:** The relative pronoun "a" is omitted before the verb, and this is marked. In the post-script to this poem in CC1 and CC2, McLS notes that the person referred to here is Lachlan Maclean (1798-1848), a native of Coll, author of "The History of the Celtic Language" an, in 1837, "Adhamh agus Eubh", in which he attempted to prove that Gaelic ws the original language of mankind; see, also, Rev. Donald MacLean, *Typographia Scoto-Gadelica*, (Edinburgh, 1915), at p. 262. Lachlan Maclean was a shopkeeper in Glasgow and a Gaelic enthusiast who had two nicknames, "Lachlann na Gàidhlig" ("Lachlan of the Gaelic") and "Lachann nam Mogan", ("Lachlan of the Stockings"—though "mogan" can also mean spirits distilled from oats"). He composed hymns and was a frequent

contributor Rev. Dr. Norman MacLeod's periodicals, including "Cuartear nan Gleann". He also edited "Teachdaire Ur Gaidhealach" ("The New Highland Messenger"), which ran between 1835 and 1836. Prof. Donald MacKinnon, the first Chair of Celtic at Edinburgh University, cited him as amongst the four best Gaelic prose writers. See Derick S. Thomson, *The Companion to Gaelic Scotland*, (Oxford: Blackwell, 1983), at p. p. 181; see also Eachann MacDhughaill, "Lachlann nam Mogan", (1951), 46 *An Gaidheal* 31, and Donald John Macleod, "Gaelic Prose", (1977) 49 *Transactions of the Gaelic Society of Inverness* 207. **44:** MSS, *baine ciche, cannain.* **45:** The relative pronoun "a" is omitted before both verbs, "bha" and "chinn" in the MSS, and this is marked. MSS, *sa*; this is a contraction of "anns a", and is marked. The poet treats "lus", "flower, plant", as a feminine noun; it is commonly treated as a masculine. **46:** MSS, *truaileadh, an la shin.* **47:** MSS, *Bha stochd*; the context implies the presence of the third person singular feminine possessive pronoun before the noun, in reference to "lus", and its omission, likely due to elision by the preceding vowel, is marked. MSS, *na bhriodh s na aileadh*; *na* is a contraction of the preposition "ann" and the third person singular masculine possessive pronoun, in reference not to "lus", which the poet treats as feminine, but "stoc". **48:** MSS, *Ged thanig*; the omission of the relative pronoun "a" before the verb is marked. MSS, *siontan.* MSS, *a m blath orr*; *a m* is interpreted as the article "am", and given that the reference appears to be to "lus", which the poet treats as a feminine noun, *orr* is interpreted as a contraction of the third person singular feminine prepositional pronoun "oirre" rather than the third person plural form "orra". **49:** MSS, *A Chuairtear*; this appears to be a direct address to the journal, and therefore the noun is in the vocative case and should be slenderised. MSS, *eibhin.* **50:** MSS, *na lig air diochuin.* **51:** MSS, *Biodh.* MSS, *ga seinn*; *ga* is the third person singular feminine verbal noun object, and this is marked. MSS, *an s na*; this is "anns na". MSS, *coilltein fasich.* **52:** MSS, *Mur bha*; given the context, *Mur* is interpreted as "Mar", "Like", and the omission of the relative pronoun "a" before the verb is marked. MSS, *braighnes Bhabilon*; *braighnes* is interpreted as "bràighean". The reference is to the deportation of the Jews to Babylon after the capture of Jerusalem and the destruction of the Temple in 586 B.C. by King Nebuchadnezzar: 2 Kgs 24: 10-25: 21. In Christian spirituality, Babylon is synonymous with a state or place of exile, of longing for release, even therefore of a kind of hope: see W. R. F. Browning, *A Dictionary of the Bible*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1996), at pp. 33-4. **53:** The relative pronoun "a" is omitted in the MSS, and this is marked. MSS, *n tir so*; *n* is the article "an", and the omission of the vowel, due to elision by the preceding vowel, is marked. MSS, *mo thiom*; given the context, *mo* is interpreted as "mu", "about", rather than "mo", the first person singular possessive pronoun. The poet tends to render the vowel "u" when it is in a final position as an "o": e.g. "go" for "gu". **54:** MSS, *n gruaim geamhruich*; *n* is interpreted as a contraction of "ann an", and is marked accordingly. **55:** MSS, *Biodh.* **56:** MSS, *s a bhreacan*; *s* is a contraction of "agus" and *a* is the third person singular masculine possessive pronoun, which causes aspiration. MSS, *guaile, gu h ualach.* **57:** MSS, *Biodh, gearrachoat.* **58:** MSS, *Biodh, chalapabh.* **59:** MSS, *Biodh, fiar bhreid cuill.* **60:** MSS, *eileadh*; this is likely the genitive of "iall". MSS, *s b e n t eideadh duchais.* **61:** MSS, *Biodh, stallain.* MSS, *n crois broisde*; McLS interprets *crois* as "crios", "belt" which, given the context, is defensible, but *crois broiste* is interpreted here as a compound noun, "cross-broach", as "bròiste" appears to be a form of "bràiste", "broach". *n* is interpreted as a contraction of "ann an". **62:** MSS, *S a dhag, nach leim, le cenabich*; McLS interprets *cenabich* as "cearbaich", which fits the context. **64:** MSS, *Sa*; this is

two separate words, "'S", a contraction of "agus", and the third person singular masculine possessive pronoun "a", which causes lenition, and this follows the pattern in lines 61 and 62. MSS, *an tseanna bhruic*. **65:** The relative pronoun "a" is omitted before both verbs, "chi" and "tha", in the MSS, and this is marked. MSS, *n luairtear*; *n* is the article "an", and the omission of the vowel, due to elision by the preceding vowel, is marked, while the latter word is clearly a misspelling of "Cuairtear". MSS, *Righail*. **66:** MSS, *Biodh, ga shamhlach*. MSS, *Iain muilleir*. In the post-script to the poem in CC1 and CC2, McLS provides the following information on the person referred to here: "The "Iain Muilleir" referred to was a native of Sutherlandshire. His name was John Sutherland; and he was commonly known as "Bodach an Fhéilidh." He was driven to this country when an old man by the Sutherland clearings. He wore the kilt in winter and summer; probably he never had a pair of trousers on. He was like his countryman, Rob Donn, a noted deer-hunter. He lived to the patriarchal age of one hundred and seven years." In FC (p. 195), McLS adds that Sutherland was born in the parish of Clyne in 1735, that he was for a long time a forester in the service of William, Earl of Sutherland, that he was evicted from his home by the infamous Patrick Seller in 1820, and that he settled in Barney's River. He therefore arrived in Barney's River at about the same time as the poet, and he lived in the upper settlement there, not far distant from the poet. There were very significant clearances in Sutherland in the years 1818 and 1819, though primarily in Strathnaver and Kildonan, and a final round of clearances in 1820, planned for Whitsunday of that year, and John Sutherland may well have been a victim of this last set of clearances. However, it appears that Patrick Sellar played no direct part in these, or other, Sutherland clearances after 1816, and therefore this aspect of the tradition reported by McLS appears to be faulty. These later clearances were generally overseen by Francis Suther, a Lowland Scot and protégé of James Loch, the infamous Sutherland estate factor. See Eric Richards, *The Highland Clearances* (Edinburgh: Birlinn, 2002, 2005), at ch. 10, pp. 153-66, and ch. 11, at pp. 167-83, and in particular at pp. 152-5 with respect to Patrick Sellar. George Patterson provides further information: "About this time [i.e. 1819-1821] Angus McKay, the elder, a native of the parish of Clyne, Sutherlandshire and with him Simon Bannerman, Gordon Bannerman, old John Sutherland, of the kilt, a man who never wore trousers in his life, with his family, who were numerous and several others, all from Sutherlandshir, settled in the upper woods of Barney's river." See Rev. George Patterson, *A History of the County of Pictou, Nova Scotia* (Montreal: Dawson, 1877), at p. 283. **67:** MSS, *fithead*. The relative pronoun "a" is omitted in the MSS before the verb, and this is marked. MSS, *s tir so*; *s* is a contraction of "anns an", and is marked accordingly. **68:** MSS, *riobh*. MSS, *air a leasaid*; McLS interprets *leasaid* as "shliasaid", which, given the reference to John Sutherland and his refusal to wear trousers, even in winter, this interpretation is appropriate. MSS, *cuibhreach*; interpreted here as "cover". **69:** MSS, *cor is ciad*; the reference seems to be to John Sutherland's age. **70:** MSS, *s na*; this is a contraction of "anns na". **71:** MSS, *beinn Armuin*. The reference is to Ben Armine, in Clyne parish, Sutherlandshire, Scotland; it is located on the southeast shore of Loch Coire an Fheàrna, about 21 miles west north-west of the village of Helmsdale: Francis H. Groome, ed., *The Ordinance Gazetteer of Scotland: A Survey of Scottish Topography, Statistical, Biographical and Historical* (Edinburgh: Grange Publishing Works, 1882-5). MSS, *a b ard ri dhireadh*. **72:** MSS, *a s deigh an t sheors iad*; McLS interprets *iad* as "ud", which seems appropriate, but *iad* may have been a misspelling of "sud"—that is, "siud"—and this is the interpretation taken here. MSS, *be n, fiochail*. **73:** MSS, *Sa Chuairtean*; *Sa* is interpreted as two words, " 'S", a

contraction of agus, and "a", the vocative article, while *Chuairtean* is interpreted as a misspelling of "Cuairtear", and as this appears to be a form of direct address, it should be in the vocative case, and therefore slenderised. MSS, *mu ni*; McLS interprets *mu* as "ma", "if", which is appropriate in the context. MSS, *m iartas*. **74:** MSS, *n t oran so*, *n clo*; in both cases, *n* is the article, and in both cases the vowel is omitted, due to elision by the preceding vowel, and this is marked. MSS, *iaran*. **75:** MSS, *dian*. MSS, *ghiulan*; the aspiration implies the presence of the third person singular masculine possessive pronoun, in reference to "òran", the song, and its omission, due to elision by the preceding vowel, is marked. MSS, *sa*; a contraction of "anns a'". **76:** The relative pronoun "a" is omitted before the verb in the MSS, and this is marked. The reference is to the poet's native island of Tiree. **77:** The relative pronoun "a" is omitted in the MSS before the verb, and this is marked. MSS, *siubhlach*; given the context, this appears to be the verbal noun "siubhladh" rather than the adjective "siubhlach", and the omission of the verbal noun particle "a'" is marked. MSS, *a measg na n gaill*; given the context, and the reference to his native Tiree, *gaill* would appear to be "Gàidheal", rather than a form of "Gall", "Lowlander, foreigner". **78:** MSS, *sa mhalaid*; *sa* is a contraction of "anns a'". **79:** MSS, *cnochd Mhic Dhughail*; this is a reference to a hill in the poet's native township of Caolas, Tiree. MSS, *a n u fhagail*; *n u* is interpreted as "nì thu", and the aspiration of "fàgail" is due to the presence of the third person singular masculine possessive pronoun, again in reference to the poet's song. **80:** MSS, *ga n iunnsuidh*, *mi m slainte*; *m* is interpreted as a contraction of the preposition "ann" and the first person singular possessive pronoun "mo", and is marked accordingly. **81:** The relative pronoun "a" is omitted in the MSS before the verb, and this is marked. MSS, *comun cairdeal*. **82:** MSS, *conart*, *tigh thairne*. **83:** MSS, *paeigh*. **84:** MSS, *Chuairtear*; this appears to be a form of direct address, and should be in the vocative; therefore, it is slenderised, and the omission of the vocative article "a" is marked. MSS, *ghaelic*.

Maclean Sinclair Versions:

2: *nam*. **3:** *Do 'n*. Insert *'s* before *thoirt*. CC1, *sheanachas*, CC2, *sheanachais*. **4:** *am*. **5-8:** This is verse five, and follows line 12. **5:** *àrmunn*, *dealbhach*. **6:** This line comes after line 8, and is replaced with *'S e fearail, gleusda gu feum le armaibh*. **7:** This line comes after line 5. **8:** This line comes after line 7. CC1, *shinnsreabh*, CC2, *shinnsribh*. *gharbhlach*. **9-12:** This is verse nine, and follows lin 64. **9:** *'S e* for *'B e*, *tha* for *bha*, *eutrom* for *aotrom*. **11:** Insert *'S* before *gu* at start of the line. **12:** *an* for *a*, *air ruaig leis* for *'ga ruagadh*. **13-16:** This is verse twelve, and follows line 72. **13:** *a Chuairteir àluinn*, *'s na*. **14:** *'Ga* for *Dha*. CC1, *'s a 's feàrr*, CC2, *'s is feàrr*. **15:** Insert *'S* before *nach* at start of the line. *ge be*. *riut* for *ris*. **16:** *de* for *d' a*, *ort* for *air*. **17-20:** This is verse two, and follows line 4. **17:** CC1, *'N uair*, *'s a*. **18:** *Gu 'm*. **19:** *eòlais bho* for *còmhl' ris 'na*. **20:** *an sinnsribh*. **21-24:** This is verse three, and follows line 20. **21:** CC1, *déigh*. **22:** *caoimhneas*. **24:** *bidh* for *bhiodh*. **25-28:** This is verse four, and follows line 24. **25:** CC1, *Cha 'n*. **26:** CC1, *'N uair*. *daoin'*, *an* for *a'*. **27:** *cinn* for *ceann*. CC1, *déigh*. **28:** CC1, *mar*. **29-32:** This is verse thirteen, and follows line 16. **29:** *Gu 'n*. **30:** *Bho 'n*, *gasd'*, *gleusda*. **31:** *oighr'*, *bhi*. **32:** *d' fhàgadh masl'*, *a' mhac* for *a mhac*. CC1, *dhéigh leis*, CC2, *dhéidh leis*. **33-36:** This is verse fourteen, and follows line 32. **33:** *ghràdhaich* for *àlainn*, *d' thugainn*. **34:** *Gu 'n*, *sàr-dhaoin'*. **35:** CC1, *Ged-a*. **37-40:** This is verse fifteen, and follows line 36. **37:** Replace this line with *'S i Ghàidhlig bhrìoghmhor bh' aig suinn na Féinne*. **38:** *féin*. **39:** Insert *'S* before *rinn*. **40:** *Padruig*. **41-44:** This is verse sixteen, and follows line 40. **42:** *Do 'n*. **44:** CC2, *bainn' a cìche*. **45-**

48: This is verse seventeen, and follows line 44. **45:** *prìseil.* CC1, *'s a'* for *'sa.* **46:** This line follows line 48. Omit *'S* before *bu.* **47:** This line follows line 45. CC1, *'s stochd*, CC2, *'n stoc* for *'stoc. am brìgh* for *'na bhrìgh. an àilleachd* for *'na àileadh.* **48:** This line follows line 47. *'S cha robh ann* for *Ged thàinig, a blàithean* for *am blàth oirr'.* **49-52:** This is verse eighteen, and follows line 48. **49:** *bràth.* **51:** *coilltibh.* **52:** Replace this line with *Mar sheinn na h-Eabhraich an cainnt am Bàb'lon.* **53-56:** This is verse six, and follows line 6. **53:** CC1, *'N uair. so* for *seo.* **54:** This line follows line 56. Insert *'S* before *cha. no* for *'n, a' gheamhraidh.* **55:** This line follows line 53. *féileadh* for *èileadh, theannta* for *teanntaidh.* **56:** This line follows line 55. **57-60:** This is verse seven, and follows line 56. **57:** *boineid.* **59:** *gartan, thar* for *far.* **60:** *éille* for *èilleadh.* **61-64:** This is verse eight, and follows line 60. **61:** *crios-bràiste airgid air* for *crois-bròiste an airgid.* **62:** This line and line 63 are reversed. *Is dag* for *'S a dhag.* **63:** This line and line 62 are reversed. *'S biodag* for *'S a bhiodag. dhuallach. le* for *do.* **64:** *Le* for *'S a, de* for *do.* **65-68:** This is verse ten, and follows line 12. **65:** CC1, *'N uair.* **66:** *shàmhlachadh, Muilleir.* **67:** *bho 'n, so* for *seo.* **69-72:** This is verse verse eleven, and follows line 68. **69:** Insert *'n* before *tha. cuimhn' aig'.* **70:** *Is* for *'S.* Insert *'n* before *damh. 's na* for *'sna.* **71:** *Armuin. árd r' a dìreadh.* **72:** CC1, *'S an déigh*, CC2, *'S an déidh. ud* for *siud.* **73-76:** This is also verse 19, and follows line 52. **74:** *gu 'n, so* for *seo, iarunn.* **75:** *A' d' chaoimhneas giùlan* for *'S gun dean thu 'ghiùlan. do 'n* for *'sa, e* for *leat.* **76:** *Do 'n, iosal. An* for *don, o'n* for *on.* **77:** Replace this line with *Am baile gaolach a' Chaolais àillidh.* **78:** Replace this line with *'S an robh mi 'còmhnaidh 'n am* [CC2, *'nam*] *òige fàg e.* **79:** Omit *'S* before *aig. Dhùgh'll far an dlù* [CC2, *dlùth*] *mo chàirdean* for *Dhùghaill a nì thu 'fhàgail.* **80:** CC1, *gu 'n ionnsaidh*, CC2, *g' an ionnsaidh. shlàinte.* **81:** CC1, *'N uair. comunn.* **82:** *'N ar.* **83:** *Gu 'n, gu 'n, gu 'm pàidh.* **84:** *do 'n* for *don.*

With these changes, there are still 84 lines in McLS versions.

40. Òran do Mhaighstir Cailean Grannta, Sagairt Arasaig

Tune: "Ged a dh'fhàg thu ri port, chan eil mi dheth socrach na slàn"
No. of lines: 168
Sources: MG15G/2/2, p. 150, JB, p. 60, CC1, p. 167, CC2, p. 145, FC, p. 59, BT, p. 87. The MSS indicates that further stanzas, at pp. 110 and 115 of the MSS are to be inserted. The stanzas at those pages are, like the rest of the poem at p. 150, *et seq*, are in the poet's hand.
Date: Unknown, though likely no later than the mid-1820s—perhaps 1824 or early 1825—and likely before the subject's fall from a horse, described in poem 41 and the subsequent break in the subject's health in the late 1820s (see discussion in "context").
Context: In the post-script to this poem in CC1 and CC2, Maclean Sinclair provides the following information: "The Rev. Mr. Grant was a man of many excellent qualities. The poet was deeply attached to him. His father was a Presbyterian and his mother a Roman Catholic. He was educated in Lismore. His brother, Peter, was an officer in the army. Peter belonged to the same church as his father. His sister was married to Alexander Chisholm, an uncle of the present Chisholm of Strath-Glas [i.e. in 1881]. Duncan Chisholm, merchant, Antigonish, was their son." As is noted below at line 80, though, part of Maclean Sinclair's

information appears to be incorrect; the husband of Margaret Grant, Rev. Grant's sister, may have been an uncle of Chisholm of Strathglass, but his name was Duncan "Mòr" Chisholm, not Alexander. It appears that Maclean Sinclair was confusing the son, Duncan, to whom Margaret Grant was married, and his father, Alexander. In his "Memoir" in CC1 and CC2, Maclean Sinclair notes that during the years of the poet's greatest hardships, in the 1820s while at "Baile Chnoic" in Upper Barney's River, Rev. Grant was very kind to the poet, and noted that "[u]pon one occasion, Mr. Grant made him a present of a snuff-box, which contained together with the snuff five pounds in gold": CC2, at p. xvii.

Colin P. Grant was born in about 1784 in Glenmoriston, Scotland, the son of Duncan Grant, a Presbyterian, and Helena Chisholm, a Roman Catholic. He was apparently an excellent horseman and had first intended to join the army, but was persuaded by his mother's side of the family to enter the priesthood. His training was completed at the College of Killechiarain, in Lismore, Scotland, and he, together with Alexander MacDonell, who would also serve in Nova Scotia, was ordained by his cousin, Bishop John Chisholm, on Easter Sunday, 17 April, 1808. Fr. Grant served as a missionary at Strathglass and from about 1810 at Braemar, until 1818, when he left Scotland, intending to go to Glengarry, Upper Canada (now, Ontario), to serve under the Rev. Alexander McDonell, the Vicar General of Upper Canada. Upon his arrival in Nova Scotia, however, he was asked by Bishop Edmund Burke to serve temporarily at Arisaig and Antigonish, and in 1819, Bishop Joseph-Octave Plessis of Quebec and Bishop McDonell of Upper Canada gave permission for Fr. Grant to serve in Nova Scotia. He served in the town of Antigonish and its environs for about a year, and then in about July of 1819 was installed as priest in the parish of St. Margaret of Scotland, in Arisaig, Antigonish County, where he served until February, 1829.

By all accounts, Fr. Grant was a man of splendid physique and of great kindness. At the dedication of the present parish church in Arisaig in the late 1870s, Fr. Ronald Macdonald described Fr. Grant in the following terms: "So long as care for the sick and dying is one of the indispensable functions of the ministry, so long shall the name of Father Grant remain associated with all that is courageous and self-sacrificing in the life of the devoted priest. In the discharge of his duty, personal comfort was never taken into account—nothing was to him an inconvenience, and no time unseasonable": see Rev. Anthony Angus Johnston, *A History of the Catholic Church in Eastern Nova Scotia, Volume II—1827-1880*, (Antigonish: St. Francis Xavier University Press, 1971), at p. 69. Fr. Grant was keenly interested in education, and during his time as parish priest, he established a number of elementary schools, including ones at Arisaig, MacAra's Brook, and at Cape St. George; he is also believed to have been responsible for the construction of a small chapel at North Side Cape George (Morar). Heavy labour and the very large size of the parish affected Fr. Grant's health, and by 1828, he was seeking a replacement. In February, 1829, he resigned his charge because of poor health, but continued to attend to parochial duties until October, 1830, when a replacement, Rev. William Bernard MacLeod, was found. Upon his retirement, he purchased a small farm at Malignant Cove, near Arisaig, and his final years were difficult ones, in which he lived in considerable poverty. Indeed, he was briefly imprisoned in 1838 for debt. He died on 31 March, 1839, and was buried in the old cemetery at Lower South River, Antigonish County. In December, 1887, a monument was erected over his grave, bearing the inscription "A man of splendid physique and a thorough gentleman." He was a second cousin of Bishop William Fraser, who was involved in the temperance movement

commemorated by John MacLean in poems 37 and 38. See, Rev. A. A. Johnston, *A History of the Catholic Church in Eastern Nova Scotia, Vol. II—1827-1880*, at pp. 69-71, Kathleen M. MacKenzie, ed., Rev. A. A. Johnston, *Antigonish Diocese Priests and Bishops 1786-1925*, (Antigonish: The Casket Printing and Publishing Co., c. 1994), at p. 45, and Francess G. Halpenny, gen. ed., *Dictionary of Canadian Biography, Vol. VII, 1836 to 1850*, (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1988), at p. 355.

It is likely that this poem was composed in the 1820s, during "the years of the poet's greatest hardships", in the words of Maclean Sinclair. It is possible that the poem was inspired by the priest's gift of the snuff box, with the gold coins, that Maclean Sinclair described. From poem 34, "An Adharc", we know that the poet gave the drinking horn described in that poem to Fr. Grant, in appreciation of his friendship, and that this took place in about 1827. Thus, the friendship was well-established by that time. It is likely that this poem was composed in about that same period. As noted above, by 1828 his health was suffering. From poem 41, we know that Fr. Grant suffered serious injuries from a fall from his horse, apparently in about 1825, and once again, the composition of a poem on this event suggests that the friendship had been established even before that event. There is no reference to either the fall or the subsequent health problems in this poem. Indeed, the poet celebrates Fr. Grant's physical prowess and magnificence, and it is unlikely that he would have done so, at least to the same extent, at the time the priest was going through intense physical difficulties. Therefore, it is possible that the poem was composed no later than perhaps 1824 or early 1825.

Line Annotations:

1: MSS, *bh eil, intinn.* **2:** MSS, *ga m, go.* **3:** MSS, *Na m.* This is interpreted as the conjunction "Nam". MSS, *re.* **4:** MSS, *uricheachd.* MSS, *an am.* **5:** MSS, *n comaine n*; interpreted as "ann an comain an", and the contraction of "ann an" is marked. **6:** MSS, *h urin. luaidh* is interpreted as an infinitive, and the omission of the infinitive particle "a", is marked. **7:** MSS, *bhuanichd*; interpreted as "bhuannaich", as in McLS versions. MSS, *n t eolus.* **9:** MSS, *Biodh, a n t ealus so.* **10:** MSS, *lig, diochuinn.* The relative pronoun is omitted before the verb "bha", and this is marked. **11:** MSS, *fad*; this is "fada", and the omission of the final vowel, due to elision by the succeeding vowel, is marked. MSS, *a s beo mi.* **12:** MSS, *bi.* **13:** MSS, *Mu s*; given the context, *Mu* is interpreted as the conjunction "Ma", "If", rather than the preposition "Mu", "About, Before", and the *s* is interpreted as the copula form of the verb. MSS, *maireanach.* **14:** MSS, *shealltuin.* **15:** MSS, *duine uasal.* **16:** MSS, *S a fear*; *a* is the article "am", and the omission of the consonant, likely a dialectical feature, is marked. MSS, *bu chennealta gnas*; the MSS omits the comparative particle "a", and this is marked. **18:** MSS, *ri chunntais*; the aspiration implies the presence of the third person singular masculine possessive pronoun "a", and its omission is marked. **19:** MSS, *chleachduin.* **20:** MSS, *sa n*; this is a contraction of "anns an". **21:** MSS, *Callain, granntach.* **22:** MSS, *S an*; this is interpreted as the copula form "'S ann". MSS, *chineadh.* In the MSS, the relative pronoun is omitted before the verb. **23:** This appears to be a clause and the relative pronoun "A" is omitted before the verb at the start of the line, and this is marked. MSS, *pears*; this is "pearsa", and the omission of the final consonant, due to elision by the subsequent vowel, is marked. MSS, *sgiorachd.* **24:** MSS, *da shluagh*; *da* is a contraction of the preposition "do" and the third person singular masculine possessive pronoun. **25:** MSS, *is aibheale.* **26:** MSS, *is blath.* **27:** MSS, *Se*; this is the copula.

MSS, *boiche, a bhallabh.* **28:** MSS, *foghlum, cuir*; *cuir* is interpreted as the verbal noun, which for this verb is usually slenderised in the poet's dialect, and the omission of the verbal noun particle "a'" is marked. **29:** MSS, *cumadail*; the aspiration of *dhireach* suggests that this adjective should also be aspirated. **30:** The relative pronoun "a" is omitted before the copula in the MSS, and this is marked. MSS, *snuagh.* **31:** MSS, *fotus na falla*; *na* is clearly the feminine singular genitive article. **32:** MSS, *fallan.* MSS, *ad*; this is a contraction of the preposition "ann" and the second person singular possessive pronoun, and this is marked. **33:** MSS, *sruthanabh.* **34:** MSS, *As, tobrichean, fior-uisg.* **35:** This line is interpreted as a clause, and the omission of the relative pronoun "A" at the start of the line, before the verb, is marked. MSS, *chuislin.* **36:** MSS, *stochdabh.* MSS, *chionich*; McLS interprets this as "crìonaich", which is appropriate in the context of these references. **37:** MSS, *A fear*; *A* is interpreted as the article "Am", and the omission of the consonant, a dialectical feature, is marked. MSS, *misneachal.* **38:** MSS, *Fuair*; the preterite form is required by the context. MSS, *teisteaneas.* **39:** MSS, *bhi*; the omission of the infinitive particle "a" is marked. MSS, *teom*; this is "teòma", and the omission of the final vowel is marked. MSS, *feraghleus.* **40:** MSS, *S cum.* MSS, *dianain s a*; *s a* is interpreted as the emphatic suffix "-sa". MSS, *sheanas.* **41:** MSS, *du.* **42:** MSS, *dughor.* MSS, *na stuagh*; the noun appears to be in a genitive relationship with "cuan", and *na* is therefore interpreted as the genitive plural article "nan", and the omission of the final consonant, likely a dialectical feature, is marked. **43:** MSS, *An ad.* **44:** MSS, *Nam dhith*; *Nam* is interpreted as a contraction of "N", itself a contraction of the preposition "Ann an", and therefore marked accordingly, and "àm". MSS, *go.* **45:** MSS, *S i na siubhal*; *na* is interpreted as a contraction of the preposition "ann" and the third person singular feminine possessive pronoun "a", in reference to the boat, and this is marked. **46:** MSS, *bhar suidh.* MSS, *sheididh*; the context suggests the conditional form of the verb; as this is a clause, the future form would terminate in "-eas". **47:** MSS, *gillin, gleusd*; this is "gleusta", and the omission of the final vowel is marked. **48:** MSS, *eislin, gu n*; this is interpreted as "gu an", "an" being the third person plural possessive pronoun. **49:** MSS, *mhaoidean.* **50:** MSS, *Fo siull*; the non-aspiration of the noun implies the presence of the third person singular feminine possessive pronoun, in reference to the boat, and its omission, likely due to elision by the preceding vowel, is marked. MSS, *ghealla.* **51:** MSS, *uram, stiuradh.* **52:** MSS, *du.* **53:** MSS, *dh iaruidh i*; this should be the conditional "iarradh", as the relative future form of the verb would terminate in "-eas". **54:** MSS, *du, ghualin.* MSS, *suil*; *suil* is interpreted here as "sail", the low point of the boat's keel, and not "sùil", "eye". **55:** MSS, *dh fhiachadh, fiubhi.* **56:** MSS, *ruith*; this appears to be a verbal noun, and the omission of the verbal noun particle "a'" is marked. MSS, *na cura*; *na* is interpreted as a contraction of the preposition "ann" and the third person singular feminine possessive pronoun, and this is marked, while *cura* is interpreted as a misspelling of "cùrsa". MSS, *go.* **57:** MSS, *du.* **58:** MSS, *shiubhal*; the context suggests this is the preterite, and as it appears to be a clause, the omission in the MSS of the relative pronoun "A" which should precede it is marked. MSS, *d chuilleinibh*; *d* is the second person singular possessive pronoun, and the omission of the final vowel is marked. **59:** MSS, *elite, na chunnart*; *na* is a contraction of the preposition "ann" and the third person masculine possessive pronoun. **60:** The relative pronoun "a" is omitted before the copula "bu". MSS, *mulach.* **61:** MSS, *na chullidh*; *na* is a contraction of the preposition "ann" and the third person singular masculine possessive pronoun. **62:** MSS, *bhuanachd.* The aspiration in the MSS of *thuras* implies the presence of the third person singular

masculine possessive pronoun, and its omission is marked. **64:** MSS, *uillin*; *na m beann*; *na m* is the genitive plural article "nam". **65:** MSS, *du*. **66:** In the MSS, the masculine genitive article is omitted before *chinn*, and this is marked. **67:** MSS, *diolaideachd*, *strinnach*. **68:** MSS, *fhiach*, *na b fherr*. **70:** MSS, *bhennadh*. The aspiration of *chliathaich* in the MSS implies the presence of the third person singular masculine possessive pronoun, and the omission of which, due to elision by the preceding vowel, is marked. **71:** MSS, *fiabhuich*. **72:** MSS, *fathromach*. **73:** MSS, *du n Gael*. **74:** MSS, *Bho bheil*; the omission of the relative pronoun "a" before the verb is marked. MSS, *iaruidh s*; *s* is interpreted here as a contraction of "anns", and is marked accordingly. **75:** MSS, *cridh*; the omission of the final vowel in "cridhe" is marked. MSS, *farsuin*. **76:** MSS, *a phailteas*; McLS interprets this as a genitive, "phailteis", which seems to be correct. MSS, *riathruitheadh*; interpreted as the conditional of "riaraich", as in McLS versions. **77:** MSS, *a n t ionadh*. **78:** MSS, *Bhi*; the omission of the infinitive particle in the MSS is marked. MSS, *d ghuailean*, *d cheann*. **79:** MSS, *shinnshreabh*; this is a contraction of "sinnsearaibh", and is marked. **80:** I have been unable to determine Rev. Grant's precise connection to the Lairds of Grant. However, his career aspirations—first the military, then the clergy—suggests that he was at least of the Gaelic middle classes. According to Maclean Sinclair, Rev. Grant's brother, Peter, like his father, a Presbyterian, was an officer in the army, and a sister was married to Alexander Chisholm, an uncle of Chisholm of Strathglass, the chief of the clan, at the time Maclean Sinclair was writing in 1881. This information is also consistent with a family background in the minor central Highland aristocracy, at very least. It should be noted, however, that part of Maclean Sinclair's information appears to be incorrect; the husband of Margaret Grant, Rev. Grant's sister, may have been an uncle of Chisholm of Strathglass, but his name was Duncan "Mòr" Chisholm, not Alexander. Margaret and Donald Mòr were apparently married in Scotland, and had at least one son, John, who was ordained at St. Andrews, Prince Edward Island, by Bishop MacEachern on 6 January, 1825, apparently only the second priest to receive holy orders in the diocese. John Chisholm was born at Invercannnich, Strathglass, Scotland on 15 July, 1800 and they apparently emigrated to Canada "on the last sailing of the ship 'Aurora'", and settled at the north side of Antigonish Harbour. Ships named "Aurora" sailed in 1802, 1816 and 1827, and as John was ordained in Canada in 1825, the sailing was one of the first two. It is likely, though, that it was the 1802 sailing; the ship, the "Aurora" of Greenock, set out from Fort William, sailed to Pictou and had 82 passengers above 16 years and 46 below, and who were mostly Catholics from Inverness-shire who settled in Antigonish: see Lucille H. Campey, *After the Hector: The Scottish Pioneers of Nova Scotia and Cape Breton 1773-1852*, (Toronto: Natural Heritage Books, 2004), Appendix II, particularly p. 237. Another son of Margaret and Donald Mòr, Alexander "Mòr", was an inventor of something called the "Chisholm Mathematical Scale and Key". See, Raymond A. MacLean, ed., *History of Antigonish, vol. 2*, at note 57, p. 94, and Rev. D. J. Rankin, *A History of the County of Antigonish Nova Scotia*, at p. 103. **81:** MSS, *toisheach*. **82:** MSS, *Fhurast*. This is "Furasta"; there is no need for aspiration, and the omission of the final vowel, due to elision by the subsequent vowel, is marked. The MSS omits the infinitive particle "a" before "ìnnse", and this is marked. MSS, *sa*; this is a combination of "'s", a contraction of "agus", and the relative pronoun "a". **83:** MSS, *shrath spe na n*; *na n* is the genitive plural article "nan". Although Rev. Grant was a native of Glenmoriston, the Lairds of Grant were from Strathspey. **84:** MSS, reachmhor. **85:** MSS, *na n glas lann*; *na n* does not appear to be the genitive plural article, because there is no genitive referent, and it does not follow a verbal

noun or infinitive, as the context suggests that "bual" is in the conditional tense. Given this, *na n* is interpreted as "'nan", a contraction of the preposition "ann" and the third person plural possessive pronoun, referring to "people", or the warrior band in line 84. **86:** MSS, *e bhratach*; the aspiration of the noun implies the presence of the third person singular masculine possessive pronoun, and its omission, due to elision by the preceding vowel, is marked. **87:** MSS, *Ceantart*. **88:** MSS, *Choishin*; the omission in the MSS of the relative pronoun "A" before the verb is marked. MSS, *le mhor fheachd*; the aspiration of *mhor* implies the presence of the third person singular masculine possessive pronoun, the omission of which, due to elision by the preceding vowel, is marked. MSS, *an sa chaumpa*. **89:** MSS, *theoghlach, Mhic Phadruic*. McLS provides the following information in a note to this poem at p. 194, FC: "Allan MacLean of Ardgour and Patrick Campbell of Barcaldine married daughters of Sir Ewen Cameron of Lochiel. Their descendants were thus related to the descendants of John Grant of Glenmoriston who married Janet, a daughter of Sir Ewen Cameron of Lochiel and grand-daughter of Sir Lachlan MacLean of Duart." The reference may therefore be to the Campbells of Barcaldine, who go by the patronymic "Sliochd Phara bhig": Dwelly, p. 1009. **91:** MSS, *miarabh*. **92:** MSS, *a riamhuich*; given the vegetal references, this is interpreted as "fhreumhaich", as in McLS versions. MSS, *fo blath*; *fo* requires aspiration. MSS, *an sa*. **93:** MSS, *fathast*. MSS, *sa n*; this is a contraction of "anns an". **94:** MSS, *Am priosaileachd*; *Am* is a contraction of the prepositional phrase "Ann am", and is marked accordingly. **95:** MSS, *bhuanachd*. **96:** MSS, *daiginn na larich*; *na* is interpreted as a contraction of the preposition "ann" and the third person singular feminine possessive pronoun, as in CC2. **97:** MSS, *Cinneadh*. Rev. Grant's mother was, as noted in the "context" to this poem, a Chisholm, and it is possible that she was also a member of the Highland aristocracy; as also noted in the "context", above, Rev. Grant was ordained by a cousin, John Chisholm, and his very high church office—he was the fourth Vicar Apostolic of the Highland District—may imply such a background. **98:** MSS, *go strigh*. **99:** In FC at p. 194, McLS provides the following information on this reference: "Colin Òg Chisholm married in 1749 Margaret, daughter of Alexander MacKenzie, third of Ballone, by whom he had Helen, mother of Colin", the subject of the poem. **100:** MSS, *geileadh*. MSS, *gu n*; this is interpreted as "gu an", "to the", and the omission of the vowel in "an", due to elision by the preceding vowel, is marked. **101:** MSS, *a n*; interpreted here as "an", "their". **103:** MSS, *shesadh*. MSS, *a n*; interpreted as "an", "their". **104:** MSS, *Gos a n*; interpreted here as "an", "their". MSS, *go*. **105:** MSS, *luchd leanmhuin*. **106:** This line appears to be a clause, and the omission in the MSS of the relative pronoun "A" before the verb at the start of the line is marked. **107:** MSS, *Fineachan ainmeal*. **108:** MSS, *sa*; this is a combination of "'s", a contraction of agus, and the relative pronoun "a". MSS, *n Alabinn*; *n* is a contraction of the prepositional phrase "ann an", and is marked accordingly. **109:** The reference to the MacKenzies is likely due to the fact that Rev. Grant's maternal grandmother was, as noted at line 99, apparently the daughter of MacKenzie of Ballone. **110:** This line appears to be a clause, and the omission in the MSS of the relative pronoun "A" before the verb at the start of the line is marked. **111:** MSS, *Dol*; this is a verbal noun, and the omission of the verbal noun particle "A'" is marked with an apostrophe. MSS, *fo n*; *n* is interpreted here as the third person plural possessive pronoun, in reference to the MacKenzie warriors, and not the article. **112:** MSS, *chuiridh*; this should be the conditional, as the proper future ending would be "-eas". MSS, *gallabhoduich*. **113:** MSS, *air fhilleadh*; the aspiration implies the presence of the third person singular masculine possessive

pronoun, in reference to "kinship", and its omission is marked. **114:** MSS, *teoghlach*. The nature of Rev. Grant's family connections to the Frasers of Lovat is unclear, though a connection through the Chisholms is both possible and likely, given the relative physical proximity of these two noble families, in Strathglass and Aird. **115:** MSS, *taire*. **116:** MSS, *An am cruadal*; *An* is a contraction of the prepositional phrase "Ann an", and is marked accordingly, while *cruadal*, as it is in a genitive relationship, should be slenderised. **117:** MSS, *ghlusda*. **119:** MSS, *friosailich ainmeal*. **120:** This is a clause, and the relative pronoun "A" which should preceded the verb at the start of the line is omitted in the MSS, and this is marked. MSS, *s gach*; *s* is a contraction of the preposition "anns", and is marked accordingly. **121:** MSS, *gleann gairridh*; it is not clear that there is any family connection between Rev. Grant and the MacDonells of Glengarry, but as a prominent Jacobite clan from the central Highland districts to which most of the other aristocratic families named in the poem belong, it is not surprising that they would be listed in a list of "allies" and friends such as this. **122:** MSS, *Leoghunn fullanach, sga*; *fulannach* is a dialectical form of "fulangach". **123:** MSS, *Le chuid daoine*; the aspiration of *chuid*, together with the context, implies the presence of the third person singular masculine possessive pronoun, and its omission is marked, while *daoine*, as it is in a genitive relationship with *chuid*, should be aspirated. **124:** MSS, *shioda*; the aspiration implies the presence of the third person singular masculine possessive pronoun, and its omission is marked. MSS, *an s na*. **125:** MSS, *a fitheach, a fir-eun*; in both cases, *a* is interpreted as the article "am", and the omission of the consonant, a dialectical feature, is marked. **126:** MSS, *taragheal, a n fhior uisg, a n aird*; the omission of the final vowel in "uisge", due to elision by the following vowel, is marked. **127:** MSS, *S a n da*; *a n* is the article. **129:** MSS, *Chameroin*. The reference to the Camerons seems to be due in part to the information at line 89, which discloses some connection. **130:** The comparative particle "a" which should precede the copula is omitted in the MSS, and this is marked. **131:** MSS, *daimheal*. **132:** MSS, *a seorsa sin*; *a* seems to be the article "an", and the omission of the consonant, a dialectical feature, is marked. MSS, *riabh*. **133:** MSS, *an connstrigh*; *an* is a contraction of the prepositional phrase "ann an", and this is marked. **134:** MSS, *a chothail*; McLS interprets this as "a' chòmhdhail", which seems appropriate. **135:** MSS, *Chuirridh*; the aspiration and context suggest that this is a conditional form, and the omission of the relative pronoun before the verb is marked. **136:** MSS, *ga n*; this is the third person plural verbal noun object "'gan". The reference is to Cameron of Lochiel, the chief of the clan. **137:** MSS, *a n t ionadh*. MSS, *bhi*; the infinitive particle "a" is omitted in the MSS, and this is marked. **138:** MSS, *fionmhor*; this appears to be a misspelling, and is likely "lionmhor", as in McLS versions. **139:** MSS, *dlu, an cairdeas*; *an* appears to be a contraction of the prepositional phrase "ann an", and is marked. **140:** MSS, *duchan*; given the plural ending on the adjective, "àrda", this is interpreted as the plural of "dùthaich". MSS, *na m*; this is the genitive plural article. **141:** MSS, *shloinneadh*; there is no need for the aspiration. MSS, *shinshreabh*; this is a contraction of "shinnsearaibh", and is marked accordingly. **142:** MSS, *finne*. MSS, *bu priosailea*; the noun should be aspirated after this comparative form, the comparative particle "a" should precede it, and its omission is marked, and the final "a" is the relative pronoun, which should be separated from the adjective. **143:** MSS, *na breachdan s na pioban*; *na* is in both cases the genitive plural article "nam", and the omission of the final consonant, a dialectical feature, is marked. **144:** This line is a clause, and the omission in the MSS of the relative pronoun "A" at the start of the line before the verb is marked. **145:** MSS, *Challain*. **146:** MSS, *dhurich, callain, an*

drast; *callain* is interpreted as "càilean", in reference to Rev. Grant's mental powers, and the omission of the final vowel in "dràsta" is marked. **148:** MSS, *iunnsuidh*. **149:** MSS, *Na theoghlach*; *Na* is a contraction of the preposition "Ann" and the third person singular masculine possessive pronoun. **150:** MSS, *taoghlaidh*; the context suggests that this should be in the conditional rather than future form, the ending to which in a dependent clause such as this would, in any case, be "-eas". MSS, *luchd ainneal*. MSS, *go*. **151:** The comparative particle "a" is omitted in the MSS before the copula, and this is marked. **152:** MSS, *ciuna*; McLS interprets this as "caomhnadh", which, in the circumstances, is appropriate. **153:** MSS, *sa n*; this is a contraction of "anns an". MSS, *bhordabh*. **154:** MSS, *cliuteach*. The word "dàimh" is interpreted as "guests", but it can also mean poets and learned people, as well as persons who eat or otherwise help themselves to excess, and the poet may well be making a little joke on himself here. **155:** MSS, *braundi*, *tharruing*. **157:** MSS, *Liunn*, *na searrag*; *na* appears to the genitive plural article "nan", and the omission of the final consonant, likely a dialectical feature, is marked. **158:** MSS, *Ann s*, *fairis*, *fo bhar*. MSS, *cuir*; this appears to be a verbal noun form, which is typically slenderised for this verb in the poet's dialect, and the omission of the verbal noun particle "a'" is marked. **159:** MSS, *a g ol*. **160:** MSS, *an ordan*; *an* is interpreted as a contraction of the prepositional phrase "ann an". **161:** MSS, *so*. MSS, *ghraitin*; the omission of the infinitive particle is marked. MSS, *m beagan*; *m* appears to be a contraction of the article "am". **162:** MSS, *nach ro*, *an chaint*; the aspiration of *chaint* suggests that *an* is *am*, a contraction of the preposition "ann", and the first person singular possessive pronoun, and this is marked. **163:** MSS, *mi ghailig*; the aspiration of the noun implies the presence of another word, which has been omitted from the MSS. While it may be the feminine article "a'", the context suggests that it may be the contraction "'sa", for "anns a". **164:** MSS, *Armun*. **165:** MSS, *dheoch slainte*; the aspiration of *deoch* implies the presence of the third person singular masculine possessive pronoun, in reference to Rev. Grant. **166:** MSS, *Bho na*. MSS, *fuair*; this should be aspirated, as it clearly the preterite form is intended. MSS, *mo dhana*. MSS, *go*. **167:** MSS, *Dh fhaoduin*. MSS, *dhiubh*; given the context, "dhuibh", "to you", is likely intended, and this is a misspelling. **168:** MSS, *biodh*, *tarruing*, *go*.

Maclean Sinclair Versions:

2: CC1, *ga m'*, CC2, *'ga m* **3:** CC1, *N' am*, CC2 *Na 'm*. **4:** *No gu 'n*. **6:** *nach urrainn*. **7:** Omit *'n t-* before *eòlas*. **8:** CC1, *'N uair*. **9:** Replace this line with *'S e e-féin am fear fiachail*. **10:** Replace *'S* with *Chaoidh*. **11:** Replace this line with *'S bidh mi còmhradh mu bheusan*. **12:** Replace this line with *Ri 'm luchd eòlais le éibhneas 's gach àit*. **13:** *maireann an neart* for *maireannach ann*. **14:** Replace this line with *Théid mi sùnndach 'ga fhaicinn gun dàil*. **15:** *-uasal is*. **16:** *am* for *a'*. CC1, *a's ceanalta*, CC2, *is ceanalta* for *bu cheanalta*. CC2, *gnàth's*. **17:** This is line 25; replace *'S e gun mhòrchuis* with *Cha 'n* [CC2 *Chan*] *eil mòrchuis*. **18:** This is line 26. CC1, *gur-a. chùnntas*. **19:** This is line 17; replace *chleachdainn* with *choltais*. CC1, *nàdur-sa*, CC2, *nàduir*. **20:** This is line 18. CC1, *Cha 'n. 's an, mu 'n*. **21:** This is line 29, *Granndach*. **22:** This is line 30; replace *'S ann do* with *Tha de 'n*. Line 22 is *Aigne fior-ghlan, gun chrìne, gun chruas*, which does not appear in the MSS. **23:** This is line 27; *Sar-* for *Tha*. **24:** This is line 28, *comhairliche* for *comhairleach*. CC1, *da*, CC2, *d'a*. **25:** This is line 19. CC1, *a's*, CC2, *is* for *as*. **26:** This is line 20. CC1, *a's*, CC2, *is* for *as*. *fo mhala*. **27:** This is line 23; replace *'S e cho bòidhche* with *Bòidheach uile*. **28:** This is line 24; *fòghlum cur barrachd*. **29:** This is line 21. **30:** Omit this line. **31:** *b' e fòtus*. **32:** CC1, *fallan*. *'na* for *'ad*.

33: *Gur h-iad* for *Ach na. sruthanan.* **34:** *-uisge*, omit *a* before *b' fheàrr.* **35:** Replace this with *Cha chraobh mheanbh thu bho chrìonaich a dh' fhàs.* **37:** Omit this line. **38:** This is line 37; *cinnteach* for *dearbhte.* Line 38 is *Bho d' luchd-eòlais 's an tìr anns gach àit.* **39:** Omit *Bho chàch. bhi. fear-ghleus.* **40:** *sheanachas diubh.* **41:** *mara.* **42:** *nan* for *na'.* **44:** *on chala.* **46:** Replace this line with *'Gearradh thonnan gun éislean le fuaim*, parts of which are in line 48 in the MSS. **47:** *gleusd'.* **48:** Replace this line with *Leis am b' éibhinn gaoth sgalanta, chruaidh.* **49:** CC1, *'N uair.* **50:** *shiùil.* **51:** CC1, *an stiùiridh*, CC2, *an stiùraidh.* **53:** Omit this line. **54:** Omit this line. **55:** This line is 53, replace *Fhir a dh' fheuchadh* with *'S tu gu 'm feuchadh.* Line 55 is *Mar luath-iolair nan sléibhtean.* **56:** This is line 54. Line 56 is *Leum air uan gus a reubadh d'a h-àl.* **58:** *'Shiubhal, chuileanan.* **59:** Replace this line with *An damh donn bhiodh an cunnart.* **62:** *do 'n.* **63:** *fo* for *bho, bhuille.* **64:** Replace *Chaidh a thilgeadh* with *Thilgeadh fiadh*, insert *àrd-* before *uilinn.* **65:** Insert *'m* before *marcaiche, ceutach* for *sunntach.* **66:** Parts of this are line 68, which reads *Cruidheach, ceumanta, briagh a' chinn àird.* **67:** Replace *Criosach* with *Air each.* CC1, *diolaideach.* **68:** This is line 66, and replace *e* with *thu.* **70:** This line reads *Air dhuit beannachd ri chliathaich le d' shàil.* **71:** *aigeannach.* **72:** *Srannach, farumach.* **74:** *r'a iarraidh.* **75:** *Cridhe farsuing.* **78:** *Bhi.* **79:** *gu 'n.* **80:** *bho* for *o, Ghrannd.* **81-88:** This verse is omitted. **89-96:** This is verse 11. **89:** Replace *'S ann* with *Mach. Phàdruig.* **90:** Replace *A linnsgear* with *'S ann a lionsgair.* **91:** *De* for *Do, meòir ud* for *meuraibh.* **92:** *De 'n* for *Don.* **93:** *'s an.* **94:** *Ann am prìsealachd stàtail.* **96:** CC1, *gur-a.* **97-104:** This is verse 12. **97:** *Ann an* for *Cha b' e.* **98:** *Cha bhiodh* for *Bu.* CC1, *'n uair. 'thàirnteadh.* **99:** Insert *Bhiodh* at start of line. **100:** Replace this line with *Guineach calma do 'n bhlàir a' dol sios.* **101:** CC1, *'N uair.* **102:** This line reads *'S iad nach giùlain le tàmailt no spìd.* **103:** Replace with *Chluinnteadh farum an làmhaich.* **104:** Replace with *Cur an nàimhdean 's an àraich gu dìth.* **105-112:** This verse is omitted. **113-120:** This is verse 14. **114:** *luchd-leanmhuinn* for *teaghlach, bho 'n.* **115:** This line reads *Nach bu shuarach r' an sireadh.* **117:** *ghleusda, tioma.* **118:** Insert *'S iad* at the start of the line, replace *do chàch* with *'s a* [CC2, *'sa*] *bhlàir.* **119:** Insert *Bhiodh* at the start of the line. CC1, *Friseilich.* **120:** *Calma* for *'Bha.* **121-128:** This is verse 15. **122:** *fulangach.* **123:** CC1, *daoine.* **124:** CC1, *'N uair. 's a* [CC2, *'sa*] *bhlàir* for *anns na blàir.* **125:** *am* for *a'*, both times. **126:** *-uisge 'n* for *–uisg' an.* **127:** Insert *'n* after *le.* **128:** *a* for *do.* **129-136:** This is verse 16. **129:** Insert *Tha* at the start of the line. **130:** *Bhuidheann Abrach* for *Na h-Abraich.* **131:** This line reads *Dlùth gu leòir dhuit an càirdeas.* **132:** *gu 'm, na h-àrmuinn* for *a' seòrsa.* **134:** *fhiamh.* **135:** *Bhiodh an* for *'Chuireadh.* **136:** *'g an.* **137-144:** This is verse 13. **137:** *bhi.* **138:** *gu 'm.* **140:** *dùthchannaibh.* **141:** Replace with *Bha thu 'n daimh ris na treun-laoich.* **142:** Replace with *Thig bho Bhrathuinn nan steud is nan lann.* **143:** Replace with *'S ris na Leathanaich rioghail.* **144:** *rioghachd.* **145-152:** This is verse 17. **145:** Replace *'S* with *Thoir, gu* for *do. Cailein.* **146:** Replace with *Am fear fiùghantach, fearail, le gràdh.* **147:** Replace with *Gu ma fada 'na sgìre e.* **148:** Replace with *Ann an sonas 's an sìth, is an slàint'.* **149:** Replace *theaghlach* with *thaigh greadhnach.* **150:** Replace *Far an tadhaileadh* with *'S tric a thaoghaileadh* [CC2, *thadh'leadh*]. **151:** Insert *'S* at the start of the line. **152:** Omit *'S* at the beginning of the line, *aon ghoireas fo làimh* for *gach goireas a b' fheàrr.* **153-160:** This is verse 18. **153:** *An* for *'San.* **154:** *Gu 'm, na dàimh* for *an dàimh.* **155:** This line reads *Bhiodh a' branndaidh gun ghainne.* **156:** *'S le* for *Agus, blasda bhiodh* for *ann an.* **157:** Insert *Bhiodh* at the start of the line, *nan* for *na'.* **158:** *cur thairis.* **159:** Replace this line with *'S bhiodh gach duine làn sòlais.* **160:** Replace this line

with *Sunndach, bruidhneach ag òl nan deoch-slàint'*. **161-168:** This is verse 19. **161:** *so ràitinn*. **162:** Replace this line with *Mu 'n duin'-uasal tha 'n Arisaig* [CC2, *Arasaig*] *thall*. **163:** Replace this line with *'S tha mi 'n dùil gur-a* [CC2, *gur a*] *firinn*. **164:** Replace this line with *Tha 's gach ni chuir mi sios ann am chainnt*. **165:** This is line 167, and reads *Olam nis a dheoch-slàinte*. **166:** This is line 168. *Bho na, an dàn so* for *mo dhànachd*. **167:** This is line 165; *tuilleadh*. **168:** This is line 166; *tarruing, crìch le mo* for *gu crìche le m'*.

With these changes, there are 152 lines in McLS versions.

41. Òran do Mhaighstir Cailean Grannta

Tune: "Na' faighinn gille airson ceannaich, A bheireadh beannachd gu Màiri"
No. of lines: 56
Sources: MG15G/2/2, p. 162, JB, p. 51, FC, p. 64.
Date: c. 1825 (see discussion in "context").
Context: As noted in the discussion to the "context" of poem 41, the subject of this song, Rev. Colin P. Grant, the resident priest of St. Margaret of Scotland parish in Arisaig, Antigonish County, was a skilled horseman. This poem was composed after Fr. Grant had suffered serious injuries after a fall from his horse. A note to this song in the MSS, in what appears to be the poet's hand, provides the following information: "Do Mhaighsteir Callain Granta / Sagairt Arasaig / Nuair a thuit e far an eich aige / S e bhi ann an coltas bais agus / Cuid da chnamhan Air am bristeadh"/"To Father Colin Grant / the Priest of Arisaig / When he fell from his horse / And he looked to be dying with / Some of his being broken." The first two lines of the poem suggest that the accident took place in 1825. As noted in the discussion of poem 40, Fr. Grant's health deteriorated in the late 1820s, and in 1828 he signalled his intention to give up his charge of his parish. The accident commemorated in this poem evidently predates those events. For additional information on Fr. Grant, and on his close relationship with the poet, see the discussion of the "context" to poem 40.

Line Annotations:
1: MSS, *so*. The relative pronoun "a" is omitted in the MSS, and this is marked. **2:** MSS, *S a n*; *S* is a contraction of "Agus", and is marked, and *a n* is the article "an". MSS, *fithead*. **3:** MSS, *traithibh, beultinn*. **4:** MSS, *samhrich, diceudin*. **5:** MSS, *Chearabh*; the aspiration implies the presence of the feminine article "A'", the omission of which is marked. *do n*; *do* is dialectical for "de", "of". **6:** MSS, *Fuair*; the context suggests that this is the preterite form of the verb, "Fhuair". **7:** MSS, *Gu rodh*; this is the conjunction "Gun", and the omission of the final consonant, a dialectical feature, is marked. **9:** MSS, *Na m*; this is the conditional conjunction, "Nam". **10:** MSS, *dheanabh*. **11:** MSS, *Gu rodh*; this is the conjunction "Gun", and the omission of the final consonant, a dialectical feature, is marked. MSS, *bhi*; the omission of the infinitive particle "a" in the MSS is marked. MSS, *g eiridh*. **12:** MSS, *a m eideadh*; *a m* is a contraction of "ann am", and is marked. MSS, *iaruidh*. **13:** MSS, *Bheirrin, chreuchan*. **14:** MSS, *eugbhail so*. The relative pronoun "a" is omitted before the verb *phian*, and this is marked. **15:** MSS, *Gu*; this is the conjunction "Gum", and the omission of the final consonant, a dialectical feature, is marked. MSS, *fagain, leiste*. **16:** MSS, *fhiabhrus, eislein*. **17:** MSS, *du, sar mhath*. **18:** MSS, *fiadhuich*. **19:** MSS, *Cha n*. **20:** MSS, *fhiachuin*. **22:** MSS, *Tighn go*.

MSS, *as*; this is interpreted as "às". MSS, *dhioluid*. **26:** MSS, *dh fhiach*, *chiuradh*; McLS interprets the latter as "chiùrradh". **28:** MSS, *t asnuichin*. **30:** MSS, *ga d*; this is the second person singular pronoun object of the verbal noun, and is marked. **31:** MSS, *bhi*; the omission of the infinitive particle "a" in the MSS is marked. MSS, *laidhe*. MSS, *s a n t sheompar*; *s a n* is a contraction of "anns an", and is marked. **32:** MSS, *Mhioduich*, *luchd duchadh*. **33:** MSS, *mhiodaich*, *luchd ducha*. The relative pronoun "a" is omitted before the verb, and this is marked. **34:** MSS, *Bhi*; the omission of the infinitive particle "A" in the MSS is marked. MSS, *ga t iuntrin*; *ga t* is the second person singular pronoun object of the verbal noun, "'gad". MSS, *didonich*. **35:** MSS, *N am*; *N* is treated as a contraction of the preposition "Ann an". MSS, *dhoibh*. **36:** MSS, *Go bhi*; the infinitive particle "a" is omitted in the MSS, and this is marked. MSS, *do chomhradh*; the noun is in a genitive relationship, and should be slenderised. **37:** MSS, *du*. **38:** The infinitive particle "A" is omitted at the start of the line, and this is marked. MSS, *leubhadh*. **39:** MSS, *ga mineachadh*; *ga* is the third person singular feminine pronoun object of the verbal noun, in reference to "coir", at line 38, and is marked accordingly. MSS, *fairris*. **40:** The infinitive particle "A" is omitted in the MSS, and this is marked. MSS, *eolais*; the slenderisation of the noun does not appear to be required in the context. **41:** MSS, *deas fhoclach*. **42:** MSS, *shonnruichte*. **43:** MSS, *ghibht*; the aspiration of the noun implies the presence of the article "a'", the omission of which, due to elision by the preceding vowel, is marked. **44:** MSS, *foghlum*; this noun appears to be in a genitive relationship, and should therefore be slenderised. **45:** MSS, *Go bhi*; the infinitive particle "a" is omitted in the MSS, and this is marked. MSS, *sa*; this is a contraction of "anns a'". MSS, *sealltuin*; this is a verbal noun, and the omission of the verbal noun particle "a'" in the MSS is marked. **46:** MSS, *ga r sheoladh*; the context suggests that *ga r* is a contraction of the preposition "gu" and the first person plural possessive pronoun "ar", and this is marked. There is no reason for the aspiration for the verbal noun. **47:** The relative pronoun "a" is omitted in the MSS, and this is marked. MSS, *du*. **49:** MSS, *Gu*; this is the conjunction "Gun", and the omission of the final consonant, which is dialectical, is marked. **50:** MSS, *an dochas*; *an* is interpreted as a contraction of the prepositional phrase "ann an". **52:** MSS, *Ged do*; this is interpreted as the conjunction "Ged" and the relative pronoun "a". MSS, *sharuich*. **53:** MSS, *Gu*; this is the conjunction "Gum", and the omission of the final consonant is dialectical, and is marked. MSS, *bh uait*. **54:** MSS, *na d sheompar*; *na d* is a contraction of the preposition "ann" and the second person singular possessive pronoun, and this is marked. **55:** MSS, *Caoimhneal*, *ioraisil*, *cairdeal*. **56:** MSS, *du*.

Maclean Sinclair Versions:

1: FC, *'N* for *An*. *so*. **2:** FC, *ar* for *thar*. **5:** FC, *'N ceathramh*, *de 'n*. **6:** FC, *sgiala*. **7:** FC, *Gun*. **8:** FC, *leab'*. **9:** FC, *no* for *na*. **10:** FC, *air son*. **11:** FC, *Gun*. **12:** FC, *a' m'* for *'am*. **14:** FC, *Bho 'n chruaidh eucail so* for *Bhon eugmhail seo*. **15:** FC, *gum*. **16:** FC, *Saor bho* for *Gun*, *éislein*, *'s bho* for *gun*, *fhiabhrus*. **17:** FC inserts *'m* before *marcaiche*. **18:** FC inserts *t'* before *each*. **19:** FC inserts *Riamh* at the start of the line, before *cha 'n*. **20:** FC inserts *t'* before *fhiachainn*. **21:** FC, *Geda*, *dràsd'*. **26:** FC, *dh' fhiach*. **27:** FC omits *Nuair a* before *mhill*, and inserts *coltas* before *do phearsa*. **28:** FC, *asnaichean*. **29:** FC inserts *Is* at the start of the line, replace *a bhristeadh* with *gun d' bhrisd e*. **30:** FC, *ga d'* for *'gad*. **31:** FC, *Thu* for *'S tu*, *seòmar*. **32:** FC replace *Mheudaich* with *Thug sin*, *-duthcha*. **33:** FC replaces *'S e 'mheudaich* with *Thug e*. **34:** FC, *Bhi*, *ga 'd* for *'gad*. **37:** FC, *'n*

léin' for *lèine*. **39:** FC, *gum* for *'ga*, *thairis*. **40:** FC, *do 'n*, *eòlais*. **41:** FC, *-fhaclach*. **44:** FC, *foghluim*. **45:** FC, *'san* for *'sa'*. **46:** FC, *gu 'r* for *g' ar*. **47:** FC, *deth* for *dheth*. **48:** FC, *do 'n*. **49:** FC replaces this line with *Tha mi 'n dòchas gum faic mi*. **50:** FC omits this line. **51:** In FC, this is line 50, and reads *Thu gun aiceid, gu doruinn*. **52:** FC omits this line. **53:** In FC, this is line 51, and FC replaces *Gu'* with *Is gum*. **54:** In FC, this is line 52, and FC has *Mara*, *na d'* for *'nad*, and *seòmar*. **55:** In FC, this is line 53. **56:** In FC, this is line 54. In FC, this line is followed by the following two final lines: *'N Tì 'tha riaghladh 'sna h-àrdaibh/Thoirt duit slàinte agus sòlais*.

There are also 56 lines in McLS versions.

42. Marbhrann do Mhaighstir Cailean Grannta, Sagairt Arasaig

Tune: According to CC1, CC2, "Mîle marbhaisg ort a shaoghail", JB, "Mîle marbhaisg ort a shaoghail, 'S carach baoghalach do dhail, &c."
No. of lines: 216
Sources: MG15G/2/2, p. 169, JB, p. 3, CC 1, p. 173, CC 2, p. 150, FC, p. 98, BT, p. 89, *Casket*, 7 Oct. 1926. The version of this song found in manuscript MG15G/2/2 is in the hand of Charles MacLean, the poet's son; substantially the same version appears in John Boyd's 1856 edition of the poet's songs, suggesting that the poem was written down by Charles before that date, and it is likely that John Boyd was working from the MSS version.
Date: 1839, but more likely in early1840 (see discussion in "context").
Context: In the introduction to this poem in CC1 and CC2, Maclean Sinclair simply provides the following information: "Do Mhaighstir Cailein Grannda, Sagairt Arasaig, a chaochail 's a bhliadhna 1839"/"For Father Colin Grant, the Priest of Arisaig, who died in the year 1839." As noted in the discussion to the "context" of poem 40, Rev. Colin P. Grant died on 31 March, 1839, and was buried in the old cemetery at Lower South River, Antigonish County. It is therefore likely that this poem was composed shortly thereafter, in the early spring of 1839. See, however, line 193, below, which refers to the death occurring at Easter time "last year"; this may suggest that the poem was composed in 1840, perhaps early in the year. See, also, the discussion at line 157, below. For additional information on Fr. Grant, and on his close relationship with the poet, see the discussion of the "context" to poem 40.

Line Annotations:
1: MSS, *diluain*, *a n am*; *a n* is a "an" a contraction of "ann an", and is marked. MSS, *eiridh*. **2:** MSS, *Fuair*; this is the preterite form, and should be aspirated. MSS, *b-eibhinn*. **3:** The relative pronoun which should precede the verb is omitted in the MSS, and this is marked. The infinitive particle "a" is also omitted, and this is marked. **4:** MSS, *Mhiodaich*; the omission of the relative pronoun "A" is marked. MSS, *eislein*. **5:** MSS, *duine uasal*. The relative pronoun "a" which should precede the verb is omitted in the MSS, and this is marked. **6:** MSS, *bh-uainn*, *an sa n am*. **7:** MSS, *ann s*, *leintinn*. **8:** MSS, *shuil*; the aspiration of this noun implies the presence of the third person singular masculine possessive pronoun, and its omission, due to elision by the preceding vowel, is marked. MSS, *leirsin*. **10:** MSS, *daicheal*, *cummadh*. MSS, *bhall*; the aspiration of this noun could imply that it is a genitive plural, but given the context, it is likelier that the third person singular masculine

possessive pronoun is implied, and its omission is marked. **11:** MSS, *duine uasal*. The relative pronoun "a" which should precede the verb is omitted in the MSS, and this is marked. The verbal noun particle "a'" is omitted in the MSS before *gràitinn*, and this is marked. **13:** MSS, *fhailin*, *shaill*. **14:** MSS, *go*. **15:** MSS, *orra*; given the context, the reference seems to be to "gnùis", a singular feminine noun, and this should therefore be *oirre*, the third person singular feminine form of the prepositional pronoun. **16:** MSS, *bla*, *chairdeal*. **17:** MSS, *ga t-iunntinn*. **18:** MSS, *Bho na*. **20:** MSS, *A leabidh*; *A* would appear to be a contraction of either "Ann an" or "Ann" and the third person singular masculine possessive pronoun, and in either case this is marked. MSS, *sa chruiste*; *sa* is a contraction of "anns a'". McLS interprets *chruiste* as *chruisle*, which is a defensible interpretation. **21:** MSS, *Ga*; this appears to be the conjunction "Ged", and the omission of the final consonant, likely a dialectical feature, is marked. MSS, *rodh*. MSS, *dlu*, *n cairdeas*; *n* appears to be a contraction of the prepositional phrase "ann an". **22:** MSS, *duimhail*. **24:** MSS, *sheasabh*; this appears to be an infinitive, and the omission in the MSS of the infinitive particle "A" is marked. MSS, *bhi*; the omission of the infinitive particle here is also marked. MSS, *n cas*; *n* is a contraction of the prepositional phrase "ann an". **25:** MSS, *aobhar*. The infinitive particle is omitted in the MSS, and this is marked. **26:** MSS, *sa chill*; *sa* is a contraction of "anns a'", and this is marked. MSS, *ad thall*; *ad* is interpreted by McLS as the demonstrative *ud*, and this appears correct. **27:** MSS, *thasgaidh*; there is no need for the slenderisation of this noun. **28:** MSS, *gur h-iosal*; *h-* implies the presence of the third person singular feminine possessive pronoun, and its omission is marked. **29:** MSS, *Biodh du*. MSS, *m chuimhne*; *m* appears to be a contraction of the preposition "ann" and the first person singular possessive pronoun. MSS, *s d dh aoiche*; *d* appears to be a misspelling, and is likely the particle *a*. **30:** MSS, *fo m*; *m* is the first person singular possessive pronoun "mo", and the omission of the vowel, due to elision by the subsequent vowel, is marked. MSS, tighn. **31:** MSS, *intinn*. **32:** MSS, *du bhi*; the infinitive particle "a" is omitted in the MSS, and this is marked. MSS, *oirn*. **33:** MSS, *Briogh*, *eiridh*. MSS, *bhi*; the infinitive particle "a" is omitted in the MSS, and this is marked. **34:** This line appears to be a clause, and the omission of the relative pronoun "A" at the start of the line in the MSS is marked. MSS, *eislein*. MSS, *so*. **35:** MSS, *A cuir*; given the context, this would appear to be an infinitive rather than a verbal noun, and the verb is therefore lenited. **36:** MSS, *Bho na*, *du fein*. **37:** MSS, *bhual*. **38:** MSS, *Dhfhag*. **39:** MSS, *an fhemich*. **40:** MSS, *bo*. **42:** MSS, *ceannealt*. **43:** MSS, *sprachdail*. **45:** MSS, *shiobhailte*, *mhiolachd*. **46:** MSS, *du*. MSS, *mhioruin*; there is no need here for slenderisation. **47:** MSS, *gael*; this is in a genitive relationship, and should be slenderised. MSS, *a comh fhas*; this is a verbal noun, and is marked accordingly. **48:** MSS, *Bho na*, *dh aricheadh*. **50:** MSS, *rodh*, *cearabach*. **51:** MSS, *misneachail*, *calama*. **52:** MSS, *faolum*, *neo leanabidh*. MSS, *ad*; this is a contraction of the preposition "ann" and the second person singular possessive pronoun. **53:** MSS, *du*. **54:** MSS, *ad laimh*; *ad* is a contraction of the preposition "ann" and the second person singular possessive pronoun. MSS, *a b earbsach*. **55:** MSS, *S mur a*, *Alaba*. **56:** MSS, *tra*, *dh fholbh*. The reference in lines 52 to 56 appears to be to Rev. Grant's original intention of pursuing a career in the military rather than the Catholic clergy, as is noted in the "context" to poem 40. **58:** MSS, *Na n*, *du strigh*. **59:** MSS, *Na n*, *du*, *laithibh*. **60:** MSS, *Dol go*; the context suggests that this should be an infinitive, and the omission of the infinitive particle is also marked. MSS, *sheirbhais*. MSS, *Dheorsa Righ*; the reference is likely to King George III, and it would seem that the article, "an" is implied before *Rìgh*, and this omission is marked. **61:** MSS,

Bairridh, *Coirneil*. **62:** MSS, *coisnidh du*; the context suggests that this is a conditional form of the verb "coisinn", "coisinneadh", and the omission of the medial vowel is marked. MSS, *n cor*; *n* is the article "an", and the omission of the vowel, caused by elision by the preceding vowel, is marked. MSS, *le d gniomh*; *d* is the second person singular possessive pronoun, and the omission of the vowel is marked, and it would also cause aspiration of the noun. **63:** MSS, *stalain*, *do cruachan*; *do* would cause aspiration. **64:** MSS, *bhi*; the infinitive particle "a" is omitted, and this is marked. MSS, *clith*. **65:** MSS, *ferraghleus*. **66:** MSS, *rodh faolum*. **67:** MSS, *du*, *stiuramaich*; the omission of the final vowel in this noun, "stiùramaiche", due to elision by the subsequent vowel, is marked. **68:** The omission of the relative pronoun at the beginning of the line is marked. MSS, *m bar*; *m* is a contraction of the prepositional phrase "ann am". **69:** MSS, *Sealltuin*; this is a verbal noun, and the omission of the verbal noun particle "A'" is marked. **70:** MSS, *na croinn*; the context suggests the presence of the third person singular feminine possessive pronoun, in reference to the boat, before the noun, and its omission is marked. **71:** MSS, *duine uasal*, *fhaicin*. **72:** MSS, *Nam*; this appears to be a combination of " 'N", a contraction of the prepositional phrase "Ann an", and the noun "àm". MSS, *achdrachadh*. **73:** MSS, *du*. **74:** MSS, *an sa*. **75:** MSS, *du*. **77:** MSS, *dlu*, *na cullaidh*; *na* appears to be a contraction of the preposition "ann" and the third person plural possessive pronoun "an", in reference to the deer, and the omission of the final consonant in this contraction, usually "'nan", is dialectical and is marked. **78:** MSS, *uirreasach ad dheigh*; *ad* is a contraction of the preposition "ann" and the second person singular possessive pronoun, and this is marked. **80:** MSS, *bo*. The comparative particle "a" is omitted in the MSS before the copula, and this is marked. MSS, *chuirreadach*. **81:** MSS, *du*. **82:** MSS, *Co bhuighnead*; this appears to be a conditional form of the verb "bhuidhinn", "bhuidhinneadh", and the omission of the medial vowel is marked. **83:** MSS, *na d*; this is a contraction of the preposition "ann" and the second person singular possessive pronoun. MSS, *dhiolaid*. **84:** MSS, *ri chliathaich*; the aspiration of the noun implies the presence of the third person singular masculine possessive pronoun. **86:** MSS, *Gerradh*; this is a verbal noun, and the omission of the verbal noun particle "A'" is marked. MSS, *srannt*; this appears to be a dialectical form. **87:** MSS, *Go bo*; *Go* is the conjunction "Gum", and the omission of the final consonant, likely a dialectical feature, is marked. MSS, *d chuillidh shugraidh*; *d* is the second person singular possessive pronoun, and the omission of the final vowel is marked. **88:** MSS, *Bhi*; the omission in the MSS of the infinitive particle "A" is marked. MSS, *ga chur*; *ga* is the third person singular masculine object pronoun, and this is marked. MSS, *na dheann*; *na* is a contraction of the preposition "ann" and the third person singular masculine possessive pronoun, and is marked. **89:** MSS, *du*, *fialuichd*. **90:** MSS, *a riathruich*. **91:** MSS, *Serragan*. **92:** MSS, *thraite*, *an cor*. **94:** MSS, *Cuirmeal*. MSS, *mur*; the context suggests this is "mar", "as". **95:** MSS, *Coum*, *gloine*, *intinn*. **96:** MSS, *Duchasach*. MSS, *bho n sloinneadh*; the particle *t-* requires to be inserted before the noun in the dative case. **97:** MSS, *shinnshearachd*. **99:** MSS, *shrath spe*, *buaghar*; the latter is *buadhar*, a form of "buadhmhor". **100:** This line is a clause, and the omission in the MSS of the relative pronoun "A" at the start of the line before the verb is marked. **101:** MSS, *phiob*; the aspiration of this feminine noun implies the presence of the feminine nominative article "a'", the omission of which in the MSS, due to elision by the preceding vowel, is marked. MSS, *roi n t sluadh*. **102:** MSS, *Ghraunt*. **103:** MSS, *creageallachaidh*. The reference is to the pipe tune "Stad 'Chreag Ealachaidh"/"Stand Fast, Craigellachie", the march associated with the chiefs of Clan

Grant. "Creag Ealachaidh" is also the war-cry of the Grants. It is for a rock which stands at the edge of Grant territory in Strathspey, about which John Ruskin made the following comments in *Two Paths*: "There is nothing remarkable in either its height or form; it is darkened with a few scattered pines and birch trees, and touched along the summit with a flush of heather; but it constitutes a sort of headland or leading promontory in the group of hills to which it belongs—a sort of initialletter of the mountains; and thus stands in the mind of the inhabitants of the district—the Clan Grant—for a type of the country upon themselves. Their sense of this is beautifully indicated by the war-cry of the clan, 'Stand Fast, Craigellachie!' You may think long over these words without exhausting the deep wells of feeling and thought contained in them—the love of the native land and the assurance of faithfulness to it. See, generally, Sir Thomas Innes of Learney, *The Clans, Septs and Regiments of the Scottish Highlands*, by Frank Adam, (Stirling: Johnston and Bacon, 1984), 8th ed., at p. 544, p. 548, and for the Ruskin quote, at p. 606. **104:** The comparative particle "a" which should precede the copula form is omitted in the MSS, and this is marked. **105:** MSS, *teoghlach*, *Phadruig*. **106:** This is a clause, and the MSS omits the relative pronoun "A" which should precede the verb at the start of the line, and this is marked. MSS, *fuireach*; this is a verbal noun, and the omission of the verbal noun particle "a'", due to elision by the preceding vowel, is marked. MSS, *nan tamh*; *nan* is a contraction of the preposition "ann" and the third person plural possessive pronoun. MSS, *sa*; this is a contraction of the prepositional phrase "anns a'", and is marked. **107:** MSS, *Am bun*; *Am* is a contraction of the prepositional phrase "Ann am". MSS, *mur b abhaist*; *mur* is interpreted as the conjunction *mar*, "as", rather than the conjunction "mur", "if not, unless". The omission of the particle "a" before *b' abhaist* is marked. **108:** MSS, *na n beann*; given the context, *na n* appears to be the genitive plural article, but should be *nam* as it precedes the letter "b". **109:** MSS, *Gu rodh*; *Gu* is the conjunction "Gun", and the omission of the final consonant, a dialectical feature, is marked. MSS, *Rioghaileachd*. MSS, *nan armun*; *nan* is a contraction of the preposition "ann" and the third person plural possessive pronoun. **110:** MSS, *A tarmachadh*; this is a verbal noun, and is marked accordingly. **111:** MSS, *Ann a t intinn*; *a t* is *ad*, the form of the second person singular possessive pronoun used after the preposition "ann". **114:** This line is a clause, and the omission of the relative pronoun "A" before the verb at the start of the line in the MSS is marked. MSS, *sluaidh*. **115:** MSS, *Shishalaich Cinneadh*. MSS, *mhathair*; this noun is in a genitive relationship, and should be in the genitive form *mhàthar*. **116:** The infinitive particle "A" is omitted in the MSS before *thoirt*, and this is marked. **117:** MSS, *folbh*. **118:** MSS, *Eirecheileis*. This is a reference to the Castle of Erchless, which, according to Dwelly, is "Earghlais"; it is the seat of the chiefs of the Chisholms, and is located at the foot of Strathglass, near the settlement of Struy, by the Rivers Glass and Farrar, about 10 miles west-southwest of Beauly, in the parish of Kiltarlity. See Sir Thomas Innes of Learney, *The Clans, Septs and Regiments of the Scottish Highlands*, 8th ed., at p. 210, for a sketch of the castle, and the website of the Royal Commission on the Ancient and Historical Monuments of Scotland for further information,http://www.rcahms.gov.uk/pls/portal/newcanmore.details_gis?inumlink=12399. MSS, *na stuagh*; the context suggests that the noun is in a genitive relationship with "castle", and *na* is interpreted as the genitive plural article "nan", and the omission of the final consonant, a dialectical feature, is marked. **119:** MSS, *Le n*; *n* is the third person plural possessive pronoun "an", and the omission of the vowel, due to elision by the preceding vowel sound, is marked. MSS, *feadhuich*. **120:** MSS, *searbhuileach sa n*. *sa n* is a contraction of "anns an". **121:** MSS, *bo*.

122: MSS, *na m b urin*; *na m* is the conjunction "nam". MSS, *n aireabh*; *n* is the third person plural possessive pronoun "an", in reference to "relations", and the omission of the vowel, due to elision by the preceding vowel, is marked. **123:** MSS, *B an, Brathuin.* **124:** MSS, *Ursan, dhol*; the latter is an infinitive, and the omission of the infinitive particle "a" in the MSS is marked. MSS, *sa strigh*; *sa* is a contraction of the prepositional phrase "anns a'", and is marked. **126:** MSS, *Dianadh*; the context suggests that this line is a clause, and that this is a conditional form of the verb, and should be aspirated, and the omission of the relative pronoun "A" which should precede it is marked. MSS, *bhi*; the infinitive particle "a" is omitted in the MSS, and this is marked. **127:** MSS, *a n*; this is the article *an.* MSS, *sa*; this is a contraction of the prepositional phrase "anns a'" and is marked. **128:** MSS, *ladha.* MSS, *ga n*; this is the third person plural verbal noun object *'gan.* **129:** MSS, *Friosaileich, Duini*; the latter is a reference to the Castle Dounie, the seat of the Frasers of Lovat from 1511 until it was burned down in 1746, in the wake of Culloden. The Castle was located beside Beaufort Castle, about 13 miles west of Inverness in Kiltarlity Parish, which was built in 1882 to replace it. See Sir Thomas Innes of Learney, *The Clans, Septs and Regiments of the Scottish Highlands*, 8th ed., at p. 135. **130:** MSS, *dol*; this is a verbal noun, and the omission in the MSS of the verbal noun particle "a'" is marked. MSS, *nan*; this is a contraction of the preposition "ann" and the third person plural possessive pronoun, and is marked. **131:** MSS, *egal roi.* **132:** MSS, *iunsichte.* **133:** MSS, *am an deigh.* MSS, *a lann*; *a* would appear to be the third person plural possessive pronoun "an", and the omission of the consonant, likely a dialectical feature, is marked. MSS, *sa n luchleas*; *sa n* is a contraction of "anns an". **134:** MSS, *a chuntais.* **135:** MSS, *air a sgiursadh*; *a* is interpreted as the third person plural possessive pronoun "an", and the omission of the consonant, a dialectical feature, is marked. **136:** MSS, *ciurte.* MSS, *bhi*; the omission of the infinitive particle "a" is marked. **137:** MSS, *Dhonuil Duidh, srath locha*; the reference hers is to the traditional patronymic of Cameron of Lochiel, the chief of the Camerons, "Mac Dhòmhnaill Duibh". See Dwelly, at p. 1009, or Sir Thomas Innes of Learney, *The Clans, Septs and Regiments of the Scottish Highlands*, 8th ed., at p. 539. **138:** MSS, *Go rodh*; *Go* is the conjunction "Gun", and the omission of the final consonant, a dialectical feature, is marked. MSS, *seorsa iad.* The context suggests that the article "an" should accompany the noun *seòrsa*, and its omission is marked. The word *iad* is interpreted as the demonstrative *ud*, rather than the third person plural personal pronoun *iad.* MSS, *an daimh*; *an* appears to be a contraction of the prepositional phrase "ann an", and this is marked. **139:** MSS, *Caimeronaich, sa*; this latter is a contraction of the prepositional phrase "anns a'". The comparative particle "a" is omitted in the MSS before the copula, and this is marked. **141:** MSS, *s Clan Donuil.* The reference here is to MacDonell of Glengarry, whose traditional patronymic is *Mac Mhic Alastair.* **142:** MSS, *rosheol.* **143:** MSS, *na Leoghun*; the nominative plural article "na" indicates that the noun is a plural and should be slenderised. **144:** The infinitive particle "A" is omitted in the MSS, and this is marked. **145:** MSS, *Mac Mhic Eobhain*; this is the traditional patronymic of the chief of the MacLeans of Ardgour. **146:** MSS, *ceannart foigheantach.* **147:** MSS, *Leadhanach, mu cuairt*; *mu* should be *mun*, and the omission of the final consonant, likely a dialectical feature, is marked. **148:** MSS, *Rachadhadh*; this is interpreted as a combination of the conditional form of the verb "rach", *rachadh*, and *ad*, a contraction of the third person plural personal pronoun, which is marked accordingly. MSS, *san*; this is a contraction of "anns an", and is marked. **151:** MSS, *stiubhartaich a Chruin*; this is a reference to the Royal Stuarts—James the II and VII, and his

successors; like the clans enumerated before in this poem, the MacLeans of Ardgour were Jacobites. **152:** MSS, *rodh a giulan*; this is a verbal noun, and is marked accordingly. MSS, *chleochd.* **153:** MSS, *Bharachaultin.* **154:** MSS, *na lann is na srol*; both nouns appear to be in a genitive relationship, and in both cases *na* is interpreted as the genitive plural article "nan", and the omission of the final consonant, a dialectical feature, is marked in both cases. **155:** MSS, *ainemeal.* **156:** MSS, *Le n*; *n* is interpreted as "an", in this case the third person plural possessive pronoun, and the omission of the vowel, due to elision by the preceding vowel, is marked. MSS, *Earraghaelach*; this is "Earraghàidhealach", and the spelling and metre suggests the omission of the medial vowel, which is marked. MSS, *bhi*; the omission of the inifinitive particle "a" is marked. **157:** MSS, *Mac na Ceardadh morfhear ghallabh.* The reference here is to the Sinclairs, Earls of Caithness, however the reasons for the poet's decision to include them in this enumeration are perplexing. It appears that the Sinclairs were supporters of the cause of Prince Charles Edward Stuart, "Bonnie Prince Charlie", but they were not one of the major protagonists in that cause. Unlike many of the other clans enumerated in this poem, with whom Rev. Grant appears to have had some personal connection, the Sinclairs would have been very remote from Rev. Grant's country of origin, and there is no indication of any family tie. In April, 1839, shortly after the time of Rev. Grant's death, and therefore at about the time that this poem may have been composed, the poet's daughter Christy was marrying John Sinclair, a native of Breckrow, Strathalladale, Caithness. Donald Maclean Sinclair notes that the poet was and his friend Donald MacKenzie were very keen to have Christy marry Sinclair (see *Some Family History*, at pp. 2-3), and it may be possible that the inclusion of this reference was part of the poet's campaign to convince his daughter or to confirm her in her decision. We know that Christy had left John Sinclair in early 1840, before the birth of their son Alexander Maclean Sinclair, and if, as the reference at line 193, below, suggests, the poem was composed in the year after Rev. Grant's death, it may be that the poet was trying to convince his daughter to stay with Sinclair. **158:** MSS, *s b e m*; *b e* is the copula *b' e*, and *m* is interpreted as the third person plural possessive pronoun "am", in reference to the Sinclairs, and the omission of the vowel, due to elision by the preceding vowel, is marked. **159:** MSS, *an t ionadh, ferral.* MSS, bhi; the omission of the infinitive particle "a" is marked. **160:** The relative pronoun "a" is omitted before *bha*, and this is marked. MSS, *d phor*; *d* is interpreted as a contraction of "'ad", itself a contraction of the preposition "ann" and the second person singular possessive pronoun, and this is marked. **161:** MSS, *d chuislean*; *d* is interpreted as a contraction of "'ad", itself a contraction of the preposition "ann" and the second person singular possessive pronoun, and this is marked. **162:** MSS, *cheim thuislich.* MSS, bhi; the omission of the infinitive particle "a" is marked. **163:** MSS, *Bho nag ail, s cait, cuirt*; the last word is interpreted as the passive form of the verb, "cuirte", and the omission of the final vowel, due to elision by the following vowel, is marked. **164:** MSS, *ursgeal, sheoid.* **165:** MSS, *lamach.* **166:** This line is a clause, and the omission in the MSS of the relative pronoun "A", which should precede the verb, is marked. MSS, *chuspaireachd*; the aspiration of this feminine noun implies the presence of the nominative feminine article "a'", and its omission, due to elision by the preceding vowel, is marked. **167:** MSS, *a namh*; given the context, it which a group, the Gaels, is being referred to, it is likely that *a* is the third person plural possessive pronoun "an", and the omission of the consonant, a dialectical feature, is marked. MSS, *fhuntachd*; McLS interprets this as *fhurtachd* which, given the context, is a sensible interpretation. **168:** MSS, *Folbh*; this appears to be a verbal noun, and

the omission in the MSS of the verbal noun particle "A'" is marked. MSS, *na tuiltin*; *na* is interpreted as a contraction of the preposition "ann" and the third person singular feminine possessive pronoun, in reference to "blood" in line 167. MSS, *feodh*. **169:** MSS, *duillich, bhi*. **170:** MSS, *du, sa n*; *sa n* is a contraction of "anns an". **171:** In the MSS, this line is *Caite a faic mi do choltais*. The *a* is the relative pronoun "am", and the omission of the consonant, a dialectical feature, is marked. The slenderisation of *choltais* suggests that is in a genitive relationship, but there is no noun to which it refers. This, and the irregular rhythm which the line would produce, suggests that the poet mistakenly omitted a one syllable word, and given the context, in which the poet is referring to the subject of the poem, the word is likely "fear". **172:** MSS, *Ge do*. MSS, *chruinniche*; this is likely the conditional form, *chruinnicheadh*. MSS, *sluaidh*. **173:** MSS, *cairdeal, fialuidh*. **174:** MSS, *cealach*; rather than an adjective, this is interpreted as the noun *ceallach*, meaning "churchman". **175:** MSS, *So mhullach*; given the aspiration and the context, *So* is interpreted as the preposition "Bho". MSS, *do chin*. MSS, *go*. **176:** MSS, *rodh faillin*. **177:** The relative pronoun "a" is omitted in the MSS before the verb, and this is marked. **178:** MSS, *chonidh*. **179:** The reference seems to be to Rev. Grant's sister Margaret who, as noted in the "context" to poem 40 and at line 80 thereto, was married to Duncan Mòr Chisholm and resided at Antigonish. **180:** MSS, *a rith*; this is a verbal noun, and the particle is marked accordingly. MSS, *le* gruaidh; given the context, it is likely that the third person singular feminine possessive pronoun "a", and its omission, due to elision by the preceding vowel, is marked. **181:** MSS, *Caoith*; this is a verbal noun, and the omission in the MSS of the verbal noun particle "A'" is marked. MSS, *na m*; this is the genitive plural article *nam*. The relative pronoun "a", which should precede the noun *rinn* is omitted in the MSS, and this is marked. **182:** MSS, *rodh*. MSS, *n aicheadh*; *n* is a contraction of the prepositional phrase "ann an", and is marked accordingly. **183:** MSS, *Callain, Patric*. The reference here is to Rev. Grant and his brother, Peter. For further information on Peter Grant, see "context" to poem 40; he was, however, an officer in the army, and given the reference here, must have predeceased Colin Grant. **184:** MSS, *na h-Ailigain*. **185:** MSS, *Chualadh mis a, a graitin*; the latter is a verbal noun, and the particle "a'" is marked accordingly. **186:** In the MSS, the particle "an" which should precede *làthair* is omitted, and this is marked. MSS, *an sa n am*; this is *anns an àm*. **187:** The relative pronoun "a" which should precede the verb is omitted in the MSS, and this is marked. MSS, *Patric, far*. The reference is once again to Rev. Grant's brother Peter. **188:** MSS, *sa*; this is a contraction of the prepositional phrase "anns a'". **189:** MSS, *feodhna, sgairteal*. **190:** This line appears to be a clause and the omission of the relative pronoun "A" before the verb at the start of the line is marked. MSS, bhi; the omission of the infinitive particle "a" is marked. **191:** MSS, *Nam*; this appears to be a combination of *'N*, itself a contraction of the prepositional phrase "Ann an", which is marked accordingly, and the noun *àm*. The particle "a" is omitted in the MSS before the infinitive *dhol*, and this is marked. MSS, *am blar na miltean*; *am* is a contraction of the prepositional phrase "ann am", and given the genitive relationship between the two nouns, *na* is the genitive plural article "nam", and the omission of the final consonant is dialectical. **192:** MSS, *ghniomh*; the aspiration of this masculine noun implies the presence of the third person singular masculine possessive pronoun, and its omission, due to elision by the preceding vowel, is marked. MSS, *s n a*; the is a contraction of "anns na". **193:** MSS, *a n urridh*. Rev. Grant died on 31 March, 1839, which was Easter Sunday that year, so it is likely that the reference is to the Tuesday after Easter, or 2 April. The poet says that the death took place "last year", which

strongly suggests that he is composing this poem in 1840 rather than in 1839. **194:** This is a clause, and the relative pronoun "A" which should precede the verb at the beginning of the line is omitted in the MSS, as is the relative pronoun which should precede the second verb later in the line, and in both cases, the omission is marked. MSS, *bhuile*; the aspiration of this feminine noun implies the presence of the article, "a'", the omission of which may be due to elision by the preceding vowel, and it is marked. MSS, *lean*; the context suggests that this is *leòn*. **195:** MSS, *Maighsteir Caillan*. MSS, bhi; the omission of the infinitive particle "a" is marked. **197:** MSS, *a s mist i*. MSS, *ruit i nis*. **198:** MSS, *an ciste*; *an* is a contraction of the prepositional phrase "ann an", and is marked. **199:** MSS, *B runtrinn*; this is interpreted as a misspelling of *iuntrinn*, *ionndrainn*. **200:** MSS, *Nam*; this appears to be a combination of *'N*, itself a contraction of the prepositional phrase "Ann an", which is marked accordingly, and the noun *àm*. MSS, *dhoibh*. **200:** MSS, *du*. **201:** MSS, *ionadh*. **202:** MSS, *a fagail*; here, *a* is interpreted as the third person singular feminine possessive pronoun, in reference to Rev. Grant's sister. MSS, *truadh*. **203:** MSS, *Bho n chunig*; the omission of the relative pronoun "a" here is marked. MSS, bhi; the omission of the infinitive particle "a" is marked. MSS, *d charadh*; *d* is a contraction of the preposition "ann" and the second person singular possessive pronoun, and is marked accordingly. **204:** MSS, *N deise*; *N* is a contraction of the prepositional phrase "Ann an", and is marked. MSS, *du*. **205:** MSS, *du*, *chaint*. MSS, *a d chulaich aifroin*; *a d* is a contraction of the preposition "ann" and the second person singular possessive pronoun, and is marked. **207:** MSS, *leibh*; the context suggests that this is the verb "leugh", "read", rather than the prepositional pronoun "leibh", "with you". MSS, *n fhirin*. **208:** MSS, *S an bho*. The superlative particle "a" is omitted in the MSS before the copula, and this is marked. **209:** The particle "a-" is omitted in the MSS before *nis*, likely due to elision caused by the preceding vowel, and this is marked. MSS, *a tighn*; this is a verbal noun, and is marked accordingly. MSS, go. **210:** MSS, *aobhar curam*; given the genitive relationship between these two nouns, *curam* should be slenderised. MSS, *dhuin*. **211:** This line appears to be a clause, and the omission in the MSS of the relative pronoun "A" at the beginning of the line is marked. MSS, *d fholbh*. **214:** MSS, *beann*; McLS interprets this as *beàrn*, which appears to be appropriate in the circumstances. MSS, *as a chleir*; *as* is a contraction of the preposition "anns", and this is marked. **215:** MSS, *go*, *sioruidh*. **216:** MSS, *biodh*, *uille*. MSS, *triall*; this appears to be a verbal noun, and the omission of the verbal noun particle "a'", due to elision by the preceding vowel, is marked. MSS, *ad dheigh*; *ad* is a contraction of the preposition "ann" and the second person singular possessive pronoun.

Maclean Sinclair Versions:

1: *Di-luain*. CC1, *éiridh*. **3:** *ri bhi* for *le 'bhith*. **5:** This is line 7, replace *Mun duine-uasail* with *Tha'n duin'uasal*. **6:** This is omitted. **7:** This is line 5. **8:** This is line 6, where *Dh'fhàg e 'shùil* is replaced by *'S a shùil bhlàth*. Line 8 is *'S trom mo cheum 's nach eil e ann*. **9:** CC1, *'N uair*. **11:** *Do 'n duin'-uasal*. **15:** *oirr'* for *oirre*. **18:** *Bho 'n, fo 'n*. **20:** *'N* for *A'*. CC1, *'s a'* for *'sa*. **21:** *Ged* for *Ge'*. **24:** *bhi*. **25:** *aobhar, a bhi 'g innseadh* for *'bhith 'ga ìnnse*. **26:** CC1, *'s a'*. **27:** *a h-iosal*. **31:** *e* for *sin*. **32:** *bhi*. **33-38:** These lines are omitted. **39:** Replace *'Fhir* with *'S tu*. **40:** *Gu 'm* for *'S gum, r'a luaidh* for *'s do chliù*. **47:** *bha co-fhàs* for *a' comh-fhàs*. **48:** CC1, *Bho na*, CC2, *Bho 'n a*. **49:** *Bu tu 'm fear* for *Bha thug u*. **50:** *no* for *na*. **51:** Replace this line with *Bu tu 'm fear cruadalach, calma*. **52:** *eòlas* for *fòghlam*. **54:** *b' earbsach* for *b' earbsaich'*. **55:** Replace with *Bhiodh tu gaisgeil*

mar bu dual dhuit. **56:** Replace with *A thoirt buaidh a mach gun taing*. **57-64:** This verse is omitted. **65-72:** This is verse 8. **65:** Insert *Mu* before *Gach, fear-ghleus, bha* for *mun robh*. **67:** *stiùramaiche bhàta*. **68:** Replace this line with *Cha bhiodh fàillinn ann ad ghnìomh*. **69:** Replace this line with *'S i a' leum gu siùbhlach aotrom*. **70:** Replace this line with *Thar nan tonnan craosach dian*. **71:** Insert *'S* before *Bu, duin'-uasal, d'* for *t'*. **72:** CC1, *'Nam*. **73-80:** This is verse 9. **75:** CC1, *'N uair*. **76:** *Gu 'm*. **77:** *'nan* for *'na*. **78:** CC1, *déigh*. **79:** *mhial-choin sheang 'nam muineal*. **80:** *churaideach an ceum*. **81-88:** This is verse 10. **81:** Insert *m'* before *marcaiche*, which is *marcaich'*. **82:** *no* for *na*. **83:** CC1, *'N uair*. *'n ad*. CC1, *dhiolaid*. **84:** *ghéir* for *gheur*. **85:** *Bhiodh e lùthmhor* for *Làidir, lùthar*. **86:** *srann* for *srannt*. **87:** *'S gu 'm* for *Gu', dhe* for *do*. **88:** *Bhi*. **89-96:** This is verse 11. **91:** *de* for *do*. **92:** CC1, *'S n' uair*, CC2, *'S nuair. thràight', gheibht'*. **93:** *a* for *ri*. **95:** Insert *'s* before *inntinn*. **96:** Replace with *Bha thu d' chliù dha d' shloinneadh mòr*. **98:** *Bho 'n*. **99:** *An Strath-Spé, buadhmhor* for *buadhar*. **100:** *do 'n*. **101:** CC1, *'N uair. pìob* for *'phìob*. **102:** *Ghrannd*. **103:** CC1, *Creag-eileachaidh*, CC2, *"Creag-ealachaidh"*. **105:** *Mhic Phàdruig*. **106:** This line reads *Aig a bheil an tàmh 's a'* [CC2, *'sa*] *Ghleann*. **109:** *Gu 'n* for *Gu'*. **110:** CC2 inserts *Sin* at the start of this line. **112:** *do 'n*. **113:** This is line 115. CC1, *luthor*, CC2, *lùthmhor* for *luthar*. **114:** This is line 116, replace *'Sheasadh dàna* with *Nach biodh sgàthach*. **115:** This is line 113, and read *Fuil nan Siosalach bho d' mhàthair*. **116:** This is line 114, and replace with *Bha a' deàrrsadh ann ad ghruaidh*. **117:** *fo 'n airm* for *air falbh*. **118:** *Eirichealais nan*. **119:** *agus colg* for *'dh'èireadh calg*. **120:** Replace with *Chuirt' le searbh bhuillean an ruaig*. **121:** *Gu 'm, lionsgarach*. **122:** *'N am*. **123:** Read *Mac Coinnich mòrail o Bhrathainn*. **124:** *'s an* for *'sa*. **126:** *bhi*. **127:** *bhiodh àrd an crathadh* for *'s a cheann 'ga chrathadh*. **128:** *cur* for *cuir*. **129:** *Mac Shimi* for *Frisealaich, Dùini*. **130:** This is line 132. *dol* for *'dol*. **131:** *B' fhaoin aig fhiùran* for *Gun eagal roimh*. **132:** This is line 130, and read *A fhuair ionnsachadh ri blàir*. **133:** *'S ann* for *'S àm*. CC1, *déigh. an lann, 's an*. **134:** *'n cùnntas* for *a chùnntais*. **135:** *De* for *Do, an* for *a'*. **136:** CC1, *Reubhte. bhi*. **137:** *Mac Dhòmhnuill-duibh, Shrath-*. **138:** Replace this line with *Triath a chòmhdaicheadh le 'shàir*. **139:** *A bhi calma garbh 's a'* [CC2, *'sa*] for *Camshronaich 'bu gharg 'sa*. **140:** Replace this line with *'S fuil 'ga dòrtadh ris an làr*. **141:** *Dòmhnuill*. **143:** *'S a bhiodh* for *Fuileach*. **144:** *-connsachaidh* for *–connsaiche, fo 'n* for *fo*. **145:** CC1, *Mac-Mhic-Eòbhain*. **146:** *leòir*. **147:** *Bhiodh na Leathanaich* for *Cinneadh Leathanach, mu 'n* for *mu*. **148:** Omit *'ad, 's an* for *'san*. **149:** *rìghrean*. **151:** *Lean iad* for *Sheas le*. CC1, *chrùn*. **152:** *Gun a bhi giùlan* for *'S nach robh a' giùlan*. **153:** *o'n, Bharra-challtuinn*. **154:** *nan* for *na', nan* for *na'*. **156:** *-Earraghàidhealach bhi*. **158:** Replace this line with *Fiùbhaidh allail air gach dòigh*. **159:** *bhi*. **160:** *d'* for *'d*. **161-168:** This is verse 12. **161:** *Gach* for *'S lìonmhor, a b' uaisle* for *uasal, d'* for *'d*. **162:** *tuislidh* for *thuislich, bhi ga d'* for *bhith 'gad*. **163:** *c' àit*. **165:** *fo làmhaich*. **167:** *'S fuil an* for *Fuil a'*. **169-176:** Omit this verse. **177-184:** This is verse 21. **177:** *dhe* for *do*. **179:** *a's* [CC2, *is*] *ro-bhrònaich'* for *a tha brònach*. **182:** *'s an* for *'san*. **183:** Omit *B' ann dhiubh, àluinn* for *àlainn. Pàdruig*. **185-192:** This is verse 22. **185:** CC1, *'gràitinn*, CC2, *'g ràitinn* for *a' gràitinn*. **186:** Replace this line with *Bha le Pàdruig anns a' champ*. **187:** CC1, *'N uair a*, CC2, *Nuair a. e thar* for *Pàdraig far*. **188:** *Gu 'm, 's a* for *'sa*. **189:** *Bu* for *Mar, teom e* for *teòma*. **190:** *bhi*. **191:** CC1, *'Nàm. nam* for *na'*. **192:** *'s na* for *'sna*. **193-200:** This is verse 23. **193:** This line reads *'S ann Di-màirt mu 'n Chàisg a fhuair i*. **194:** This line reads *'Bhuille chruaidh a rinn a leòn*. **195:** This is line 197, *bha* for *'bhith*. Line 195 is *Dh' fhalbh air sgéith a h-éibhneas bhuaipe*, which does not appear in the MSS. **196:**

This is line 198, *a shùil* for *do shùil*. Line 196 is *'S thuit mu 'n cuairt d' i neòil a' bhròin*, which does not appear in the MSS. **197:** Omit this line. **198:** Omit this line. **199:** CC1, *ionndruinn*. **200:** CC1, *'Nam*. **201-208:** This is verse 24. **202:** Replace this line with *Chaidh an sàs innt' saighdean cruaidh*. **203:** *An là* for *Bhon, bhi d'* for *'bhith 'd*. **205:** *Gun smid chainnte* for *'S tu gun chainnt'*. **207:** CC1, *leubh*. **208:** *o* for *bho*. **209-216:** This is verse 25. **209:** *a tigh'nn*. **210:** *aobhar*. **211:** *e* for *ri, mu 'n*. **213:** *Bhrist* for *Mhill*. **214:** CC1, *gur-a*. *ás* for *'as*. **215:** *bhliadhnan* for *sìorraidh*. **216:** CC1, *déigh*.

With these changes, there are 200 lines in McLS versions.

43. Òran do Leanabh-Gille

Tune: "'S trom 's gur h-èisleanach m' aigneadh, An diugh is èiginn dhomh àicheadh".
No. of lines: 72
Sources: MG15G/2/2, p. 165, JB. P. 12, CC 1, p. 180, CC 2, p. 155, FC, p. 119, BT, p. 85. The version of this song found in manuscript MG15G/2/2 is in the hand of Charles MacLean, the poet's son; substantially the same version appears in John Boyd's 1856 edition of the poet's songs, suggesting that the poem was written down by Charles before that date, and it is likely that John Boyd was working from the MSS version. In CC1 and CC2, the poem is entitled "Tuireadh airson Leinibh-gille", and in FC, it is entitled "Tuireadh airson Gille Big".
Date: Unclear, though possibly in the 1830s (see "context", below).
Context: The following information is provided in the MSS concerning the circumstances under which this song was composed: "Oran / Do leannabh gille le / Iain shiosal Chaidh a bhathadh / Air abhainn s e tighinn dachaidh / As a sgoil le Iain Mac Gilleain."/"A song / to a male child of / John Chisholm who was drowned / on a river while coming home / From school by John MacLean." In the introduction to this song in CC1 and CC2, Maclean Sinclair repeats and expands on this information: "Rinneadh an tuireadh so do leanabh-gille le Iain Siosal, a chaidh a bhàthadh 's e tighinn dhachaidh as an sgoil. Tha e air a dheanamh mar gu 'm b' ann le athair. 'S ann air iarrtas athar a rinneadh e."/"This lament was made for a male child of John Chisholm, who was drowned while coming home from school. It is made as if by his father. It was made on the request of the father." It has not been possible to identify either the identity of the child, his father, John Chisholm, or the date of the drowning, with any certainty. The foregoing circumstances, together with the intimacy with which the poem was written, suggest that the poet knew the father, and son, and it is therefore likely that John Chisholm was a neighbour. There were a very large number of Chisholms—and John Chisholms—in Antigonish County in the poet's day, and there were a large number of Strathglass people, including many Chisholms, in the Ohio River valley district, very close to the poet's home in Glenbard. There was a John Chisholm, known as "Seoc Buidhe", who was the first teacher at the Beaver Meadow school, in the poet's immediate vicinity, but there is no record of his having a family. Rev. D. J. Rankin indicates that an Alexander Chisholm came to the Ohio from Strathglass in 1832, and that he and his wife, Isabella Chisholm, brought three children with them, one of whom was named John, and that two other sons were born after the arrival of the family. Rev. Rankin notes that this John was married twice, first to a Margaret Carter, and that all of their children except one daughter died. Rev.

Rankin does not provide dates. It is possible that this John is the father of the drowned boy. If so, the poem may well have been composed in the late 1830s or even in the 1840s. Given that Alexander had three children when he arrived in 1832 and that a further two were born after arrival, it is likely that the older children were relatively young at the time of arrival in 1832, and if so, it is unlikely that John would have had a child until at least the late 1830s. Again, though, it is almost impossible to determine whether this was, in fact, the John Chisholm to whom reference is made.

Line Annotations:
1: MSS, *A nochd, a s luaineach, smaointin.* **2:** MSS, *bhruaidhlein, cha n ionadh.* **3:** The relative pronoun "a" is omitted in the MSS before the verb. **4:** MSS, *di h aoine.* **5:** The relative pronoun "A" is omitted before the verb at the beginning of the line. MSS, *ann s.* **6:** MSS, *Cha n.* MSS, *m aichaid*; McLS interprets this as *aiceid.* MSS, *aobhar.* **7:** MSS, *leinnibh.* **9:** MSS, *bhi*; the omission of the infinitive particle "a" is marked. MSS, *s e n.* MSS, *oirn.* **10:** MSS, *bhi*; the omission of the infinitive particle "a" is marked. **11:** The relative pronoun "a" is omitted in the MSS before the verb. MSS, *sharuich.* **12:** MSS, *an ciste*; *an* is interpreted as a contraction of the preposition "ann an", and this is marked. MSS, *na m*; this appears to be the genitive plural article *nam.* **13:** The relative pronoun "a" is omitted in the MSS before the verb. MSS, *eislein.* MSS, *am bhallabh*; given the aspiration it causes, *am* is interpreted as a contraction of the preposition "ann" and the first person singular possessive pronoun "mo". **14:** MSS, *charraibh*; interpreted here as a plural of "care", which can mean "care" as well as "twist, bend; trick, fraud". **15:** MSS, *fhallach*; there is no need for the aspiration here, although, given the context, "am", a contraction of the preposition "ann am", is likely implied, and its omission is marked. MSS, *fod.* **18:** MSS, *deigh.* MSS, *sa n*; interpreted here as *'s*, a contraction of "agus", and *an*, the third person plural possessive pronoun. MSS, *a sparadh*; given the context, *a* is interpreted as "an", the third person plural possessive pronoun, and the omission of the final consonant, likely a dialectical feature, is marked. MSS, *a n ord*; *a n* is interpreted as a contraction of the preposition "ann an", and *ord* as *òrd*, meaning in these circumstances "order". **19:** MSS, *chridh*; the omission of the final vowel in this word, "cridhe", is marked. **21:** MSS, *S trich, shilleadh, shiubhlach, mo dhoir.* **22:** MSS, *sa m dhusgadh*; *sa m* is interpreted as a combination of *'s*, a contraction of "agus", and *am*, a contraction of the preposition "ann" and the first person singular possessive pronoun. **23:** MSS, *iuntrin.* **24:** MSS, *bho na.* **25:** MSS, *diachuinn.* **26:** MSS, *gu saite*; *gu* is interpreted as the conjunction "gun", and the omission of the final consonant, a dialectical feature, is marked. MSS, *iarunn.* **27:** MSS, *so ciad*; given the context, the third person singular feminine possessive pronoun "a" is implied, in reference to the mother, and its omission, due to elision by the preceding vowel, is marked. **28:** MSS, *h aileagan*; the *h* implies the presence of the third person singular feminine possessive pronoun, and its omission, due to elision by the preceding vowel, is marked. **29:** MSS, *dh aois*; the particle *dh* implies the presence of *a*, and its omission, caused by the preceding vowel, *e*, is marked. **30:** MSS, *gheug*; the aspiration of this feminine noun implies the presence of the article "a'", the omission of which is marked. MSS, *mu do*; *mu* is the conjunction "mun", and the omission of the final consonant, a dialectical feature, is marked. MSS, *s na*; this is a contraction of "anns na". **31:** MSS, *Na m*; this is the conjunction *Nam.* MSS, *ghit*; as in McLS, this is interpreted as *ghibht*, and the aspiration implies the presence of the article, "a'", the omission of which, due to elision by the preceding vowel, is marked. **32:** MSS, *Gu bu*; *Gu* is the conjunction "Gum", and the omission of the final

consonant, a dialectical feature, is marked. MSS, *m ghualin*. **33:** MSS, *S gear*. MSS, *a faithleas*; *a* is interpreted as the article, "am", and the omission of the final consonant, a dialectical feature, is marked. McLS interprets *faithleas* as *faileas*, which, given the context, seems appropriate. **34:** MSS, *Na m bo*; *Na m* is the conjunction *Nam*. **35:** MSS, *bhi*; the omission of the infinitive particle "a" is marked. The relative pronoun "a" is omitted before the verb, and this is also marked. MSS, *bh uainn*. **36:** MSS, *m intinn, smuairein*. **37:** MSS, *sa n anamoch sa n* is a contraction of "anns an". **38:** MSS, *a m peileir*; *a m* is the article *am*. MSS, *t shealgair*. **40:** MSS, *Dol*; this is a verbal noun, and the omission of the verbal noun particle "A'" is marked. MSS, *air chraoibh*; the aspiration of the noun implies the presence of the article "a'", which is inserted in order to maintain the proper rhythm in this line. **41:** MSS, *a m bas*; *a m* is the article *am*. MSS, *a shaoidean*; given that the *a* causes aspiration, it is interpreted as the third person singular masculine possessive pronoun, in reference to *bàs*, "death". **42:** MSS, *n iocar*; *n* is interpreted as a contraction of the preposition "ann an", and this is marked. **43:** The relative pronoun "a" is omitted in the MSS before the verb, and this is marked. **44:** MSS, *Ga*; this is interpreted as "Ged", and the omission of the final consonant, likely a dialectical feature, is marked. MSS, *deid, ga h iunnsaidh*. **45:** MSS, *dhith*. **46:** MSS, *bhi*; the omission of the infinitive particle "a" is marked. MSS, *smaointin, dheinibh*. **47:** MSS, *na t eigin*; *na t* is interpreted as a contraction of the preposition "ann" and the second person singular possessive pronoun. **48:** MSS, *sruithein, fein*. **49:** MSS, *d shionadh, an oichead*. **50:** MSS, *sa n*; this is a contraction of "anns an". **51:** MSS, *againe*. **52:** MSS, *phaidh*. **53:** MSS, *S goil*; McLS interprets this as "Sgoil", but it is interpreted here as a copula formation, with "goil" here meaning "grief". MSS, *feird sin*; in the context, *sin* is interpreted as *sinn*, the first person plural personal pronoun. **54:** MSS, *air cuis eargain is mo*. In the context, *air* is interpreted as the first person plural possessive pronoun "ar" rather than the preposition "air". McLS interprets *eargain* as *iargain*, which is appropriate in the circumstances. **55:** The relative pronoun "a" is omitted before the verb. MSS, *Rialadh*. **56:** MSS, *Is*. **57:** MSS, *dhuin, gliochdas, go t irruidh*. MSS, *ri r*; *r* is interpreted as the first person plural possessive pronoun "a", and the omission of the vowel, due to elision by the preceding vowel sound, is marked. **58:** MSS, *Go bhi*. **59:** MSS, *go bhi*. MSS, *fod bhratuich*; *fod* is interpreted as a combination of the preposition *fo* and a contraction the second person singular possessive pronoun "do", and this is marked. **60:** The relative pronoun "a" is omitted in the MSS before the verb, and this is marked. MSS, *air peacaichean*; given the context, *air* is interpreted as the first person plural possessive pronoun, *ar*, as in McLS versions, rather than as the preposition "air". **61:** MSS, *Go bhi*. **62:** MSS, *Nach h eil*. **63:** The relative pronoun "a" is omitted in the MSS before the verb. MSS, *luigshe, oirn*. **64:** MSS, *sin*; given the context, this is interpreted as the first person plural personal pronoun *sinn*. MSS, *sa nuair so*; this is interpreted as *'san*, a contraction of the prepositional phrase "anns an" and *uair*. **65:** MSS, *smachuich*; McLS interprets this as *smachdaich*, which is appropriate in the context. MSS, *a bual sin*; given the context, *bual* should be in the preterite form, *bhuail*, and *sin* is interpreted as the first person plural personal pronoun *sinn*. **66:** MSS, *Faoduidh, na s, tighn oirn*. **67:** MSS, *go bhi, g earbsa*. **68:** MSS, *du fein*. In the MSS, the relative pronoun "a" is omitted before the verb, and this is marked. MSS, *folbh*. **70:** MSS, *n iasad*; *n* is interpreted here as a contraction of the preposition "ann an", and is marked accordingly. **71:** MSS, *ceanda*; this is interpreted as a dialectical version of *ceudna*. **72:** MSS, *s e m iartas*. MSS, *air bron*; in the context, *air* is interpreted as the

preposition "air", meaning "in sadness", rather than the first person plural possessive pronoun *ar*, which is McLS' interpretation.

Maclean Sinclair Versions:
1: *An nochd 's.* **2:** CC1, *cha 'n.* **3:** *buille* for *sgeula.* **4:** *Di-haoine.* **6:** CC1, *Cha 'n. aobhar.* **7:** *cheud leinibh.* **8:** *'gad* for *'ga.* **9:** *Bha thu* for *Thu 'bhith.* **10:** Replace this line with *Thàinig iosal mo mhisneach.* **11:** Replace this line with *Bha mo shùilean dlùth-shilteach.* **12:** *an* for *'an.* **13:** *gaoir ann am* for *èislean 'am.* **15:** *Gu 'n, 'm falach fo 'n bhòrd* for *'falach fon fhòd.* **18:** CC1, *'N déigh,* CC2, *'N déidh. le* for *'an.* **19:** *chridhe.* **21:** *a' sileadh.* **24:** CC1, *Bho na,* CC2, *Bho 'n a.* **25:** *diachainn.* **26:** *gu 'n sàithte, iarunn.* **27:** *so* for *seo, bho 'n.* **30:** *a' gheug, mu 'n, 's na.* **31:** *Na 'm.* **32:** *Gu 'm.* **33:** *sin de 'n òg.* **34:** *Na 'm.* **35:** *bhi.* **37:** *Chaidh* for *Gun, 's an anamoch.* **38:** *peileir.* **40:** *ud* for *sin.* **43:** *Sud* for *Sin.* **44:** *Ged, ionnsaidh.* **45:** *lò* for *là.* **46:** *bhi, dhéibhinn.* **47:** CC1, *'Nuair. 'n ad éigin* [CC2, *éiginn*]. **48:** *féin.* **50:** *'s an.* CC1, *draoighnich.* **51:** *bròin* for *sgeòil.* **52:** *phàidh.* **53:** *Sgoil.* CC1, *feàird.* **54:** *Lìon* for *'S e, sinn le iargain ro mhòr* for *ar cùis-iargain as mò.* **55:** *'g ar.* **56:** CC1, *'us.* **57:** *d'* for *t', r' ar* for *ri 'r.* **58:** *bhi, d'* for *t'.* **59:** *bhi.* **61:** Replace this line with *Gu bhi creidsinn gun fhàillinn.* **62:** Replace this line with *Nach tig sgiorradh no bàs oirnn.* **63:** Replace this line with *Ach le d' thoil-s' ann am fàsach a' bhròin-s'.* **64:** *'s an* for *'san, so* for *seo.* **65:** *Fo 'n t-slait* for *Don t-slat.* **66:** CC1, *ni 's,* CC2, *na 's* for *nas. teachd* for *tigh'n.* **67:** *bhi.* **68:** Replace this line with *Anns gach càs riut gun dearmad.* **69:** *'S ann leat féin bha* for *'S gum bu leatsa.* **71:** Insert *thu* after *thug, ciadn'* for *ceunda.* **72:** Omit *'S* at the start of the line, *mhaitheadh* for *mhathadh, ar* for *air.*

There are also 72 lines in McLS versions.

44. Marbhrann do bhean-uasail òig chliùitich a bha pòsta aig Dotair Iain Noble

Tune: "Gur h-e mise air mo leònadh/'S mi ri amharc nan seòl air Chuan Sgìth." The air was noted from the singing of Archie A. MacKenzie, of Christmas Island, Cape Breton, in Donald A. Fergusson, *Beyond the Hebrides/Fad air Falbh as Innse Gall*, (Halifax: Prof. Donald A. Fergusson, 1977), at p. 89 *et seq.* A much different air was noted from the singing of Donald Sinclair, "Dòmhnall Chaluim Bhàin", of Balephuil, Tiree, at *Tocher* 18 (1975), p. 50.
No. of lines: 184
Sources: MG15G/2/2, p. 182, JB, p. 43, SO 1863, p. 328, CC 1, p. 183, CC 2, p. 158, FC, p. 122, BT, p. 80, *Tocher* 18, p. 50, *Beyond the Hebrides*, p. 89. The scribe of the version of this song found in manuscript MG15G/2/2 is Charles MacLean, the poet's son.
Date: c. 1843 (see discussion in "context").
Context: The foreward to this poem in MG15G/2/2 indicates the following: "Oran/Do Bhean Uasal Oig chliutich/A bha posta aig Doghtair/Iain Noble ann a Cape [altered to Ceape] Breatan/A Chaochail air a chiad latha do/Mhios meadhanach an t samhraidh/Aunsa Bhliadhna 1843 – le Iain Mac Gilleain . . . ."/"A song for a renowned young woman who was married to Doctor John Noble in Cape Breton, who died on the first day of the middle month of summer in the year 1843 – by John MacLean." In CC1 and 2, McLS provides the following information: "Marbh-rann

Do mhnaoi-uasail òig, chliùitich a bha pòsda aig Dotair Iain Noble ann an Hogomah an Cape-Breatunn. Rinn am Bàrd am marbh-rann so air dian-iarrtas an Dotair, agus mar gu 'm b' ann leis féin."/"Elegy to a renowned young noblewoman who was married to Doctor John Noble in Whycocomagh in Cape Breton. The Poet made this elegy at the keen request of the Doctor, and as though it was made by him himself." At p. 127 of FC, Alexander Maclean Sinclair provides the following information: "Mrs. Noble is buried at Whycomagh [sic], Cape Breton. The following is the inscription on her tombstone:-'Sacred to the memory of the lamented, Julian [sic] MacNiven, wife of John Noble, surgeon. She was born in Tiree, Argyleshire, Scotland, and died 1st June, 1843, in the 38th year of her age'." In a further note to this song at p. 195 of FC, Maclean Sinclair provides further information: "Dr. John Noble was born in Inverness-shire, Scotland, about the year 1790. His mother, Janet Robertson, belonged to Dingwall. He was a graduate of White Hall, London, England. He was the first doctor in the northern parts of Cape Breton. He had ten of a family. He died in London, Ontario, about the year 1851. The Hon. John A. R. Noble of Minnesota is his son." In his *History of Inverness County*, written in 1922, J. L. MacDougall provides this information: "It may not be amiss to state here that Dr. John Noble came from Inveress, Scotland, about 1822, and is said to have been the first physician to settle in this County. He married Julia, daughter of Captain McNiven of Whycocomagh. His wife died in 1843. Dr. Noble resided for a time at Judique and Port Hood. After his wife's death he moved to London, Ontario, where he died about 1854. The family then moved to Minnesota and later to the State of Washington where two sons are still living": J. L. MacDougall, *History of Inverness County Nova Scotia*, (Halifax: Sandy Group, 1999) (reprint), at p. 475.

The subject of this poem, Julia MacNiven, was the daughter of Colin MacNiven, who had been the tacksman of Grianal ("Greenhill"), Tiree. Niall Brownlie notes that Colin MacNiven held the lease of this estate at the end of the eighteenth century, but he lost the farm when he fell into arrears with his rent, and he emigrated to Nova Scotia: Niall M. Brownlie, *Bailtean is Ath-Ghairmean a Tiriodh/Townships and Echoes from Tiree*, (Glendaruel: Argyll Publishing, 1995), at pp. 58-59. It is likely that MacNiven arrived at Whycocomagh sometime after 1821; J. L. MacDougall indicates that the first settler in Whycocomagh was John MacKinnon, also of Tiree, who arrived in the spring of 1821: p. 459. J. L. MacDougall's history reveals a significant number of Tiree, and Coll, settlers in this part of Inverness County, particularly in the districts of Orangedale and River Denys, which are to the south of Whycocomagh, on the other side of the Mi' kmaq Reserve which lies immediately to the south of the settlement of Whycocomagh. It is possible, however, that Colin MacNiven had been in Nova Scotia much earlier—likely in Pictou County—as Allan J. Gillis has noted that a Captain MacNiven had been involved, either as an emigration agent or as a ship's captain, in bringing Highlanders and Islanders to Pictou in the early 1800s. There was, however, another emigration agent of the surname MacNiven who was active in Nova Scotia; this is Archibald MacNiven, who was a native of Skye, and who had, by the early years of the nineteenth century, taken over from Simon Fraser (for whom, see poems 26, 27 and 28) as the principal emigration agent from the western Highlands and Islands of Scotland. In the most recent history of emigration to Nova Scotia, there is no mention of a Colin MacNiven, although he may have worked as an emigration agent, as the record is incomplete. See Lucille H. Campey, *After the Hector: The Scottish Pioneers of Nova Scotia and Cape Breton 1773-1852*, (Toronto: Natural Heritage Books, 2004), at p. 139, 169, 217, 219, 254 and 269. However, it was at Pictou that

Julia MacNiven and Dr. John Noble were married in 1823. Dr. Noble had a house near the crossroads at Little Judique, in the district of Port Hood, Inverness County, Cape Breton, and he was, as noted above, the first medical man to reside and practise in the county. Julia apparently acted as midwife at many of the births in the Judique and Long Point districts of Inverness County, and, as a result, many of the grateful mothers named their girls "Julia" in her honour, especially the MacDougalls of Judique Intervale, the MacDonells of Indian Point and the Chisholms of Long Point. The name Julia had not been common in this area of Cape Breton before this period. Also, there is a road in Judique that is still called "the Doctor's Road" after Dr. John Noble. Julia MacNiven gave birth to nine children, starting with Flora Noble, born on Feb. 1, 1824 as MacNiven's Island (now known as MacInnis' Island: Donald A. Fergusson, *Fad air Falbh as Innse Gall*, p. 91), on the south side of Whycocomagh Bay, Cape Breton, and the last of whom was James Thomas Noble, born on 26 May, 1843, at Little Judique. The baby died shortly after his birth, and Julia died of birth complications shortly thereafter. The baby and mother were buried together, the first people to be buried at the Stewartdale Cemetary, Whycocomagh. (My thanks to Allan J. Gillis, of Ottawa, Ontario, and a native of Judique and well-known genealogist of the area, for the foregoing information, which he generously provided by personal communication). Julia MacNiven was also remembered in the Whycocomagh area; the Gaelic name for Little Narrows, a narrows on a branch of the Bras d'Or Lake just north of Whycocomagh, is to this day "Caolas Silis" in her honour, and the ferry which plys this small stretch of water is called "Caolas Silis" to this very day. See, again, Donald A. Fergusson, *Fad air Falbh as Innse Gall*, at p. 91.

Line Annotations:

2: MSS, *am leibidh*; *am* is a contraction of the preposition "ann" and the first person singular possessive pronoun, and this is marked. **3:** MSS, *Leis a bhruidhlein.* **4:** MSS, *bhi*; the omission of the infinitive particle "a" is marked. **6:** MSS, *na n*; this is the genitive plural article *nan.* **7:** The relative pronoun "a" is omitted in the MSS before the verb, *thug*, and this is marked. **8:** MSS, *biodh.* MSS, *cumhadh*; this is a verbal noun, and the omission of the verbal noun particle "a'" in the MSS, due to elision by the preceding vowel sound, is marked. MSS, *mu d dhenibh.* **9:** MSS, *sho.* MSS, *bhleadhna*; the aspiration of this noun implies the presence of the feminine article, "a'", but as the noun "clisgeadh" is in a genitive relationship with it, no article would be present, and it should not be aspirated. **10:** MSS, *Nochd*; this is a combination of *N*, which is a contraction of "An", and the omission of the initial vowel is marked, and *ochd*, the number eight. MSS, *diag.* MSS, *s an*, *s a*; in both cases, the *s* is a contraction of agus, and is marked accordingly. MSS, *dha*; there is no reason for aspiration here. **12:** MSS, *Se chiad*; *Se* is the copula, and the aspiration of *cheud* implies the presence of the article, "a'", the omission of which, due to elision by the preceding vowel, is marked. The relative pronoun "a" is omitted before the verb *thug*, and this omission is marked. MSS, *orrn.* As noted above, Julia MacNiven died on 1 June, 1843. **13:** The relative pronoun "a" is omitted in the MSS before the verb *chàraich*, and this omission is marked. The vocative particle "a" is also omitted before *ghaoil*, and this is marked. **15:** MSS, *du*, *leirsin.* **16:** The relative pronoun "a" is omitted in the MSS before the verb *bha*, and this is marked. MSS, *reubadh*; this is a verbal noun, and the omission of the verbal noun particle "a'" is marked. MSS, *chri.* **17:** MSS, *ionadh.* **18:** MSS, Bhi; the omission of the infinitive particle "A" is marked. MSS, *sa m*; this appears to be a combination of *s*, a contraction of "agus", marked accordingly, and the article *am.* **19:** MSS, *nis*; the omission in the

MSS of the particle "a-" is marked. MSS, *an am*; *an* is the preposition *ann*. **20:** MSS, *bhi*; the omission of the infinitive particle "a" is marked. MSS, *n comhnidh*; *n* is "an", and the omission of the vowel, due to elision by the preceding vowel sound, is marked. **22:** MSS, *Caite faic*; the verb should be preceded by the relative pronoun "am", but in the poet's dialect, "am" would generally be reduced to "a'", and this would be elided by the preceding vowel sound, and this is marked. MSS, *boiche*. MSS, *s ann*; this is likely a contraction of "anns an", and is marked accordingly. **24:** MSS, *A co reagradh*; this is a verbal noun, and is marked accordingly. MSS, *da cheil*; *da* is a combination of the preposition "do" and the particle "a" which precedes "chèile", and is rendered as *dha*, while the omission of the final vowel in "chèile" is marked. MSS, *an sgach ni*. **25:** MSS, *do gnuis*; *do* causes aspiration. MSS, *aluinn*. **26:** MSS, *b fheor*. **28:** MSS, *go*. **30:** MSS, *S lios, ela na lon*; *na* is the genitive plural article "nan", and the omission of the final consonant, a dialectical feature, is marked. **31:** MSS, *bhi*; the omission of the infinitive particle "a" is marked. **32:** MSS, *deid, as mo chiumhnn*. **33:** MSS, *bhidh*; this is the infinitive, and the omission of the particle "a" in the MSS is marked. MSS, *is ghnas*; there is no need for the aspiration of *gnàths*. **34:** MSS, *Bho na, sa n*; this is a contraction of "anns an". **35:** MSS, *o d-fhag thu*; *o* should be *on*, and the omission of the consonant, likely a dialectical feature, is marked. **36:** MSS, *An am*; *An* is the preposition *Ann*. **37:** MSS, *luigse*. **38:** MSS, *silleadh go*. **39:** MSS, *Chaich*. MSS, *mo maisneach*; *maisneach* is interpreted as *misneach*, and should be aspirated. MSS, *go fhallinn*; there is no need for aspiration here. **40:** MSS, *Bho na, n-caradh*; *n* is a contraction of the prepositional phrase "ann an", and is marked. MSS, *s an-buird*; the noun is in the nominative plural form, and *an*, which appears to be the article, should be *na*, while *s* is a contraction of "anns", and this contraction is marked. **41:** MSS, *An am laidhe*; *An* is a contraction of the prepositional phrase "Ann an", and this is marked. MSS, *eiridh*. **42:** MSS, *du*. MSS, *ga leubhadh*; *ga* is the third person singular masculine verbal noun object. **43:** MSS, *so an eis*; *an* is a contraction of the prepositional phrase "ann an". **44:** MSS, *cha n*. The relative pronoun "a" before the verb *tha* is omitted in the MSS, and this is marked. MSS, *ga m dheith*. **45:** MSS, *air sgarradh*; given the context, *air* is the first person plural possessive pronoun *ar*. **46:** This line is a clause, and the omission in the MSS of the relative pronoun "A" at the beginning of the line is marked. MSS, *airthealach*; this is interpreted as *airtnealach*, as in McLS versions. **47:** MSS, *D fholbh, lathichein*. **48:** MSS, *Cha neil, ri tiom*. **49:** MSS, *S gort, a n*; this is the article *an*. The relative pronoun "a" is omitted before the verb *fhuair*, and this is marked. **50:** MSS, *Bho na, bhean uasal*; the aspiration of *bhean* implies the presence of the nominative feminine article "a'", the omission of which in the MSS is marked. **51:** MSS, *teacaire*. **52:** MSS, *sealltuin*; this is a verbal noun, and the omission of the verbal noun particle "a'" in the MSS, due to elision by the preceding vowel, is marked. MSS, *sa n*; this is a contraction of "anns an". **53:** MSS, *Thilge*; this is a combination of the verb *Thilg* and the personal pronoun *e*. MSS, *saighdein*. **54:** MSS, *rodh, dhoghtaireachd*. **55:** MSS, *S o na, sa chnoch*; *sa* is a contraction of "anns a'", and is marked accordingly. **56:** MSS, *Gur a dinnleachdann bhochda*. **57:** MSS, *duillich, phaisdein*. **58:** MSS, *Gur a, ri n cull*; *n* is "an", the third person plural possessive pronoun, and the omission of the vowel, due to elision by the preceding vowel sound, is marked. **59:** MSS, *mur*; the context suggests that this is the conjunction *mar*, "as, like", rather than the conjunction "mur", "if not, except, unless". **60:** MSS, *anrath, far a curs*; the omission of the final vowel in "cùrsa" is marked. **62:** MSS, *ceanglaichein*. **63:** MSS, *chairt uil*; *uil* is interpreted as *iùil*, and the aspiration of the noun implies the presence of the feminine nominative

article "a'", the omission of which in the MSS, due to elision by the preceding vowel, is marked. **64:** MSS, *Dholbh, a coumpaist*; the omission of the final vowel in "combaiste" is marked. **65:** MSS, *Thanig*. **66:** MSS, *dh eiridh*; the context suggests that this is the conditional form, *dh' èireadh*. MSS, *muir baite*. **67:** MSS, *craobh ubhal*; *ubhal* is in a genitive relationship, and should be slenderised. MSS, *gharridh*. **68:** MSS, *fhrioshidh, feodh*. **69:** MSS, *solus, a dearsadh*; this is a verbal noun, and is marked accordingly. **71:** MSS, *glanne*. MSS, *m sgathan*; *m* is a contraction of the preposition "ann" and the first person singular possessive pronoun, and this is marked. **72:** MSS, *Dhfholbh a doimean*; *a* appears to be the article "an", and the omission of the consonant, a dialectical feature, is marked. MSS, *a m fhaineachan*; *a m* is a contraction of the preposition "ann" and the first person singular possessive pronoun, and is marked. **74:** MSS, *gun mharan*. **76:** MSS, *eigin, ghiulan*; the aspiration of the noun *giùlan* implies the presence of the third person singular masculine possessive pronoun, in reference to "burden", in line 75, and this omission in the MSS is marked. **77:** MSS, *roidhe so*. **79:** MSS, *tiunladh*; this is interpreted as *tionndadh*, as in McLS versions. **80:** MSS, *Bho na*. **81:** The superlative particle "a" is omitted in the MSS before the copula, and this is marked. **82:** MSS, *rodh, mhallaidh*. **83:** MSS, *fialluidh*. **84:** MSS, *du, bo*. The superlative particle "a" is omitted in the MSS before the copula, and this is marked. **86:** MSS, *bo, mhiaran*. **87:** MSS, *a noc*. The relative pronoun "a" is omitted in the MSS before the verb *tha*, and this is marked. **88:** MSS, *bhi*; the omission of the infinitive particle "a" is marked. MSS, *iuntrin*. **89:** MSS, *laithein*. **91:** MSS, *Thanaig, na aite*; *na* is a contraction of the preposition "ann" and the third person singular masculine possessive pronoun, and this is marked. **92:** MSS, *Dhort, go* . **93:** MSS, *aun fiabhras*; the omission of *am* in the MSS, which is needed with the preposition *ann*, is corrected. **94:** MSS, *sleabh, ann a ceo*; *a* is the particle "an" in the prepositional phrase "ann an", and the omission of the consonant, a dialectical feature, is marked. **95:** MSS, *riadhailt*. **96:** MSS, *sa*; this is a contraction of "anns a'" and is marked. The omission in the MSS of the relative pronoun "a" before the verb *bha* is marked. **97:** MSS, *ghliochdais*; the aspiration implies the presence of the genitive masculine article "a'", the omission of which is marked. **98:** MSS, *Ga robh*; *Ga* is interpreted as the combination of the preposition "do" and the relative pronoun "an", to form "dhan", and the omission of the final consonant, likely a dialectical feature, is marked. **99:** MSS, *sa*; this is a combination of *s*, a contraction of "agus", which is marked accordingly, and the relative pronoun "a". **100:** MSS, *du gu cumadh*; *gu* is the conjunction *gun*, and the omission of the final consonant, a dialectical feature, is marked. MSS, *teoghlach*. **101:** MSS, *Bho na*. **102:** MSS, *deid*. The third person singular masculine possessive pronoun, which is required in the passive construction used in this line, is omitted in the MSS, and this is marked. **103:** MSS, *mish, an thruaghan*; the aspiration of the noun implies that *an* is *am*, the contraction of the preposition "ann" and the first person singular possessive pronoun, and this is marked accordingly. **105:** MSS, *Gad a, sa leibidh*; *sa* is a contraction of "anns an", and this is marked. **106:** MSS, *dig buareadh, am*; *am* is a contraction of the preposition "ann" and the first person singular possessive pronoun, and is marked accordingly. **107:** MSS, *S an tha*; *S an* is the copula form, *'S ann*, and the omission in the MSS of the relative pronoun before *tha* is marked. MSS, *intinn*. **108:** MSS, *aine*; this is interpreted as *uaine*. **109:** MSS, *Bhi*; the omission of the infinitive particle "A" is marked. MSS, *ga t fhaicin*; *ga t* is the second person singular verbal noun object. MSS, *am*; this is a contraction of the preposition "ann" and the first person singular possessive pronoun. **110:** MSS, *du aun*. **111:** MSS, *smaointinean*. **112:** MSS, *bhi*; the omission of the infinitive particle "a" is omitted in

the MSS before the infinitive, and this is marked. MSS, *shinneadh sa n*; *sa n* is a contraction of "anns an". MSS, *lichd.* **113:** MSS, *pheathraichean*; the aspiration of this noun implies the presence of the third person singular masculine possessive pronoun, but the context, combined with the fact that the subject of the poem is feminine, suggests that the omitted word is the second person singular possessive pronoun, as in line 114, which is added. **114:** MSS, *bhraithrein*; again, the aspiration implies a missing word, and consistent with line 113, it is assumed to be the second person singular possessive pronoun, and is added. MSS, *as do dheigh.* **115:** MSS, *sa n thulaich*; there is no need for aspiration. **116:** This is a clause, and the omission in the MSS of the relative pronoun "A" before the verb at the start of the line is marked. **117:** MSS, *sarichte, fullan*; the latter is interpreted as the verbal noun *fulaing*, and the omission of the verbal noun particle "a'", due to elision by the preceding vowel, is marked. **118:** MSS, *gu lurrach.* **119:** MSS, *a n*; this is *an*, the third person plural possessive pronoun. **120:** MSS, *Sgar a bearn*; this is a feminine noun, and *a* is interpreted as the nominative article, and is marked accordingly, and the noun should therefore be aspirated. MSS, *as a commun*; *as* is interpreted as a contraction of the preposition "anns", and is marked accordingly. The non-aspiration of the noun *comann* suggests that *a* may be the third person plural possessive pronoun *an*, and the omission of the consonant, a dialectical feature, is marked. **121:** MSS, *gu thursach*; there is no need for aspiration here. *tùrsach* appears to be a dialectical variant of *tùirseach.* **122:** MSS, *Bho na, sa n*; *sa n* is a contraction of "anns an". **123:** MSS, *Se rinn*; *Se* is the copula *'S e*, and the omission in the MSS of the relative pronoun "a" before *rinn*, possibly due to elision by the preceding vowel, is marked. MSS, *orra*; as the reference is to the subject's mother, it is likely that this is *oirre*, the third person singular feminine prepositional pronoun of "air". MSS, *drughadh.* **124:** MSS, *bhi.* **125:** MSS, *spuineadh.* **126:** MSS, *Bho na, thanig.* The reference seems to be to the emigration to Nova Scotia of Colin MacNiven and his wife and family. **127:** MSS, *i coumpanach cliuteach*; given the context, the third person singular feminine possessive pronoun "a" is implied, and its omission in the MSS, due to elision by the preceding vowel, is marked. It would appear from these lines that Colin MacNiven had predeceased his daughter Julia. **128:** The omission in the MSS of the superlative particle "a" before the copula is marked. MSS, *snuagh.* **129:** MSS, *Chneidh*; the aspiration of this feminine noun implies the presence of the article "A'", and its omission in the MSS is marked. *Cneidh* is a dialectical form of "Cneadh". MSS, *is uire s i sgeire.* **130:** MSS, *so deuchain.* The omission in the MSS of the relative pronoun "a" before the verb *bha* is marked. **131:** MSS, *ans, sgeithich*; the latter is interpreted as *sgèitheadh*, an archaic dative form of "sgiath". **132:** MSS, *ionadh, bhi maul.* **134:** MSS, *Bhi*; the omission of the infinitive particle "A" is marked. MSS, *na sinneadh*; given the context, *na* is a contraction of the preposition "ann" and the third person plural possessive pronoun, in reference to her husband Colin, and a son, who is not identified, *'nan*, and the omission of the final consonant, which is likely a dialectical feature, is marked. MSS, *shlachdrich nan thonn*; there is no need for the aspiration of *tonn.* **135:** MSS, *thanig, aigheara.* **136:** MSS, *Mur*; the context suggests that this is the conjunction *Mar*, "as, even, like", rather than the conjunction *Mur*, "if not, except, unless". **137:** MSS. *n duine uasal.* The reference is to Colin MacNiven. **138:** MSS, *Dhianadh*; this is a clause, and the omission of the relative pronoun "A" before the verb is marked. MSS, *ceanntart, feachdann, an caumpa*; *an* is a contraction of the prepositional phrase "ann an", and is marked accordingly. **139:** MSS, *Sar Mac Cnuimhein*; *Sar* should cause the aspiration of *Mac.* The reference is to Colin MacNiven, the father of Julia. Colin MacNiven was the subject of a praise

poem composed by Archibald MacPhail, of Bailephuil, Tiree, who died in about the year 1830. See "Do Chailein Mac Naoimhein, Fear-Ghrianail", at BT, p. 4, CC1, p. 235, CC1, p. 177. **140:** MSS, *n uair sin, ghlachdadh.* **141:** MSS, *Ga rodh*; *Ga* is a contraction of the preposition "Do" and the relative pronoun "an", to form "Dhan", and the omission of the final consonant, a dialectical feature, is marked. MSS, *inntinn na lerisin.* **142:** MSS, *neo ghaun.* **143:** MSS, *am sgeula*; *am* is a contraction of the preposition "ann" and the first person possessive pronoun, and is marked accordingly. **144:** MSS, *rodh merachd, leubhadh, am raun*; *am* is a contraction of the preposition "ann" and the first person singular possessive pronoun. **146:** MSS, *suil*; given the reference to a boat, this should be *siùil*, "sails", as in McLS versions. **147:** MSS, *du gu fiachadh*; *gu* is the conjunction "gum", and the omission of the final consonant, a dialectical feature, is marked. MSS, *a h asig.* **148:** MSS, *na dream*; *na* is a contraction of the preposition "ann" and the third person singular feminine possessive pronoun, in reference to the boat, and *dream* is interpreted as *deann*, as in McLS versions. **149:** MSS, *bhi*; the omission of the infinitive particle "a" is marked. **150:** MSS, *Gu rodh*; *Gu* is the conjunction "Gun", and the omission of the final consonant, a dialectical feature, is marked. MSS, *ad*; this is a contraction of the preposition "ann" and the second person singular possessive pronoun, and is marked accordingly. **151:** MSS, *Gos, deachidh.* **152:** MSS, *bu duchas, dhreum.* **153:** MSS, *Be so*; *Be* is the copula. MSS, *a chruaidal.* **154:** This line is a clause, and the omission in the MSS of the relative pronoun "A" at the start of the line before the verb is marked. MSS, *mo leba.* **155:** MSS, *comhnidh*; the presence of the first person singular possessive pronoun would cause aspiration. **156:** MSS, *bhidhin ann uaimhe*; *ann* is *'an*, a contraction of the prepositional phrase "ann an". **157:** The particle "a" is omitted in the MSS before the infinitive, and this is marked. MSS, *fhaichdin, ghuailin.* **158:** MSS, *Se chuir*; *Se* is the copula, and the omission in the MSS of the relative pronoun "a" before *chuir* is marked. MSS, *aichdeid, aun am choum.* **159:** MSS, *smuairein.* **160:** MSS, *Se*; this is the copula. MSS, *chutrom, s gach am*; *s* is a contraction of the preposition "anns", and is marked accordingly. **161:** MSS, *aobhar mo gerrain*; *mo* would cause aspiration in *gearain.* **162:** MSS, *ghaoel.* The particle "a" is omitted in the MSS before the infinitive *chuir*, and this is marked. MSS, *a falach*; *a* is "am", itself a contraction of the prepositional phrase "ann am", and the omission of the consonant, likely a dialectical feature, is marked. MSS, *sa chill*; *sa* is a contraction of the prepositional phrase "anns a'". **163:** MSS, *gairrich, leanabh*; the latter noun is in a genitive relationship, and should therefore be slenderised. **164:** MSS, *sa n*; this is a contraction of "anns an". **165:** MSS, *tarrin.* **166:** This is a clause, and the omission in the MSS of the relative pronoun "A" before the verb at the start of the line is marked. MSS, *saoribh.* **167:** MSS, *bhallabh.* **168:** MSS, *Bho na dh eiridh*; given the context, the verb should be in the preterite, *dh' èirich.* **169:** MSS, *bhi*; the omission of the infinitive particle "a" is marked. MSS, *g-iomradh.* **170:** MSS, *bho na dh fholbh.* **171:** The relative pronoun "a" is omitted in the MSS before the verb *tha*, and this is marked. MSS, *fhocal, deirbhte.* **172:** MSS, *Dh fhiosaraich.* MSS, *bhi*; the omission of the infinitive particle "a" is marked. MSS, *ann s.* **173:** MSS, *firge.* This line and the next paraphrases the proverb "Bidh dúil ri fear-fairge, ach cha bhi ri fear-reilige"/"There is hope of the man at sea, but none of the man in the churchyard": see Alexander Nicolson, ed., *A Collection of Gaelic Proverbs and Familiar Phrases*, (Edinburgh: Birlinn, 1996), at p. 70. It is therefore possible that the poet intended *dúil* for *súil*, although the use of the latter at both lines suggests that *súil* is, in fact, intended. **174:** MSS, *roilgeadh*; this is interpreted as a dative form of the noun "roileag", a dialectical version of "rèilig". **175:** MSS, *mish.*

176: MSS, *biodh.* MSS, *tharruin go*; given the context, this is interpreted as a verbal noun, which would not be aspirated, and the omission in the MSS of the verbal noun particle "a'" is marked. **177:** MSS, *Biodh.* MSS, *nis*; the omission in the MSS of the particle "a-" is marked. MSS, *a codhunadh*; this is a verbal noun, and is marked accordingly. **178:** MSS, *Cha neil.* MSS, *bhi*; the omission of the infinitive particle "a" is marked. MSS, *iuntrinn.* **179:** MSS, *leannin.* **180:** MSS, *Gheibhin.* **181:** MSS, *air beatha*; *air* is interpreted, given the context, as *ar*, the first person plural possessive pronoun. **182:** MSS, *sa n fhirin*; *sa n* is a contraction of "anns an". **183:** MSS, *air choigrich sa n*; given the context, *air* is interpreted as the first person plural possessive pronoun *ar*, and there is no need for the aspiration of the noun. *sa n* is a contraction of "anns an". MSS, *so.* **184:** MSS, *go shioruichd.*

Maclean Sinclair Versions:

1: *An nochd.* **4:** *dualach* for *dualchas, bhi.* **5:** *leapa.* **8:** Omit *'S* before *bidh, cumha, dhéibhinn* for *dhèidh'nnibh, bràth.* **9:** *Bi* for *B' i, so.* **11:** *'N dara, de 'n.* **12:** *'S a'* for *'S e, orm* for *oirnn.* **13:** CC1, *'N uair.* Insert the relative pronoun *a* before *chàirich.* **14:** *de 'n.* **18:** *Bhi.* **19:** *an* for *'bhith 'n.* **22:** *'S c' àite m'* for *Càite, bòidheach 's an* for *bòiche 'san.* **24:** CC1, *A co-fhreagradh,* CC2, *Ag co-fhreagradh.* **25:** *àluinn.* **26:** *gu 'm, gu 'm.* **28:** *do* for *d'.* **31:** *bhi d' chumha.* **33:** *bhi.* **34:** CC1, *Bho na,* CC2, *Bho 'n a. 's an* for *'san.* **35:** *a dh' fhàg* for *o d' fhàg.* **39:** *fàilinn.* **40:** *Bho na, 's na* for *'sna.* **41:** CC1, *laidhe, éiridh.* **42:** *'g a.* **43:** *so 'n éis.* **44:** *beairteas no.* **46:** *airsnealach, éisleineach.* **48:** CC1, *Cha 'n.* **49:** Insert the relative pronoun *a* before *fhuair.* **50:** CC1, *Bho na,* CC2, *Bho 'n a, -uasal.* **52:** Replace this line with *Aig gach dorus tha bualadh 'na àm.* **55:** *Is bho 'n* for *'S on a.* CC1, *'s a'* for *'sa.* **56:** CC1, *Gur-a,* CC2, *Gur a.* **58:** CC1, *Gur-a,* CC2, *Gur a.* **59:** Insert *'S* before *Sinn.* **60:** CC1, *ànnradh,* CC2, *ànnrath. thar* for *far.* **61:** *Tha i 'n* for *Ann an, stuaighe* for *stuaigheadh.* **64:** *a' chombiast.* **66:** CC1, *'N uair. dh' éirich, chròic.* **67:** *craobh ubhal.* **68:** *gu 'n.* **70:** *solus, mu 'n.* **72:** *an* for *a'.* CC1, *am fhàinne glan,* CC2, *á m' fhàinne glan* for *'an fhàinneachan.* **73:** *chridh'.* **76:** CC1, *éigin domh,* CC2, *éiginn domh.* **77:** *so sùnndach.* **78:** CC1, *'N uair.* **80:** CC1, *Bho na,* CC2, *Bho 'n a.* **82:** *mhala no.* **84:** CC1, *'us.* **86:** *mhiaran.* **87:** *an nochd.* **88:** *bhi d'.* **90:** *leòir.* **94:** *No* for *Na, an* for *a'.* **96:** CC1, *'s a'* for *'sa.* **97:** This line reads *Bha thu gleusda, làn gliocais.* **98:** Replace this line with *Bha thu cùramach, tuigseach, gun phròis.* **99:** *Fhad* for *Fad.* CC1, *faotuinn.* **100:** *gu 'n.* **101:** This line reads *Ach a nis, bho na* [CC2, *bho 'n a*] *chaochail thu.* **102:** *Théid* for *Gun tèid, de* for *do.* **103:** *mise an truaghan.* **105:** CC1, *Ged-a,* CC2, *Ged a. 's an* for *'san.* **108:** Insert *a'* before *chrann.* **109:** Replace this line with *Bidh tu 'm bhruadaran còmhl' rium.* **110:** This line reads *'S bidh mi dùsgadh gu deòir 's gun thu ann.* **111:** *iad* for *e.* **112:** *bhi d', fo 'n* for *'san.* **113-120:** This verse is omitted. **121:** This is the first line in verse 15, *fo éislean* for *gu tùrsach.* **122-124:** These lines are omitted. **125:** This is the fifth line in verse 15. **126:** This is the sixth lin in verse 15. CC1, *Bho na,* CC2, *Bho 'n a. so nall* for *'s air chuairt.* **127-128:** Omit these lines. **129:** This is the seventh line in verse 15. *Chneadh.* CC1, *a's, i's,* CC2, *is, 'si 's.* **130:** Omit this line. **131:** This is the eighth line in verse 15, and reads *'S goirt an lot tha fo sgéith aig an àm s'.* **132:** This is the second line in verse 15. *bhi.* This line is followed by two lines, the third and fourth lines in verse 15, which are not in the MSS, and are *'S i mar chraoibh dheth 'n do ghearradh/A meòir àrda, ghrinn, fhallain gun mheang.* **133:** This is the third line in verse 16. CC1, *Fear-a-taighe.* CC2 adds *bha* after *mac.* **134:** This is the fourth line in verse 16, and reads *Bha còmhla sìnte fo shlachdraich nan tonn.* **135:** This is the first line in verse 16, and reads *Thàinig*

creach a bha geur oirr'. **136:** This is the second line in verse 16, *gu 'n*. **137:** This is the fifth line in verse 16. *'S bu* for *B' e 'n, uasal* for *–uasail*. **138:** This is the sixth line in verse 16. *ann an camp* for *'an campa*. **139:** This is the seventh line in verse 16. CC1, *-Mhac-Cnuimhean*, CC2, *Mhac Naomhain*. This line is followed by an eighth line in verse 16 which is not in the MSS, and which is *Bha e suairce 'na chleachdadh 's gach àm*. **140:** This line is omitted. **141:** This is the seventh line in verse 17, and reads *Inntinn shoilleir na léirsinn*. **142:** This is the eighth line in verse 17. **143-144:** These lines are omitted. **145-152:** This is verse 17. **146:** CC1, *'N uair*, CC2, *Nuair*. **147:** *'S e gu 'm*. **149:** Replace this line with *Fhad 's a bha e an làthair*. **150:** *Gu 'n, 'na* for *'ad*. **151-152:** Omit these lines. **153-160:** This is verse 19. **153:** *so*. **156:** CC1, *ged-a*, CC2, *ged a. uamha* for *uaimhe*. **157:** *bhi d'*. CC1, *ghuallainn*. **158:** Insert *'n* before *aiceid*, and omit *tha*. **161-168:** This is verse 18. **161:** *aobhar*. **162:** *a bhi 'm* for *'chuir a'*. CC1, *'s a'* for *'sa*. **163:** Omit *'S e*, insert *'G* before *èisdeachd, leinibh* for *leanaibh*. **164:** CC1, *'N uair. 's an* for *'san*. **165:** Insert *'S* before *Fuaim*. **166:** *Aig na saoir ga do* for *'Bh' aig na saoraibh 'gad, dhion* for *dhìon*. **167:** *Thàinig* for *Chuir sin*. **168:** This line reads *'S dh' éirich càdh a bhios maireann am chrìdh'*. **169-176:** This is verse 20. **169:** Insert *'n* before *stà, bhi*. **170:** CC1, *Bho na*, CC2, *Bho 'n a*. **171:** Insert *'n* before *sean-fhacal*. **172:** *bhi*. **173:** *Gu 'm*. **174:** *réidh-lice* for *roilgeadh*, omit the particle *a-* before *chaoidh*. **175:** *mise*. **176:** *'tarruing*. **177-184:** This is verse 21. **177:** CC1, *a co-dhùnadh*, CC2, *ag co-dhùnadh*. **178:** CC1, *Cha 'n. bhi d'*. **179:** CC1, *Ged-a*, CC2, *Ged a. thu* for *air*. **180:** *cuimhneachain thùrsach*. **181:** CC2, *chinnteaich*. **182:** *'s an* for *'san*. **183:** This line reads *'S coigrich sinn anns an tìr so*. **184:** *sìorruidheachd*.

With these changes, there are 168 lines in McLS versions.

Recorded Versions:

A version of this song was recorded in 1974 from the singing of Sister Jane MacKenzie, of Christmas Island, Cape Breton County, Cape Breton, by Maureen Lonergan (Williams), and included in her 1974 M.A. Dissertation in Celtic Studies at St. Francis Xavier University, entitled "The Scholar, Poet and Local Bard", under the direction of Prof. C. I. N. MacLeod. The text for the song is taken from CC1 and CC2, and it follows the McLS version very closely. For more information on Sister Jane MacKenzie, see the note to "Recorded Versions", poem 16, above. She sings twelve verses, all of which closely resemble verses in CC1 and CC2; indeed, she sings verses 1 to 11 in CC1 and CC2 in the order which they appear therein, and verse 21, the final verse in CC1 and CC2, is the verse on which she also concludes. Sister Jane MacKenzie's version differs from CC2 in only very minor respects. The version of the song which appears in Donald Fergusson's *Beyond the Hebrides/Fad air Falbh as Innse Gall* (Halifax: Prof. Donald A. Fergusson, 1977) is taken from the singing of Jane MacKenzie's brother, Archie Alex MacKenzie; this version, for which the tune has been transcribed, contains seven verses, all of which closely resemble verses in CC1 and CC2, and they are verse 1, 2, 4, 8, 9, 11 and 20. Finally, a version of this song was recorded from the singing of Donald Sinclair, "Dòmhnall Chaluim Bhàin", of Balephuil, Tiree, by John MacInnes of the School of Scottish Studies (School of Scottish Studies sound archive SA 1966/107. There is some variation in the rhythm from verse to verse, although the tune does not change much, but the air is considerably different from that of the Cape Breton informants. Donald Sinclair sings five verses, all of which closely resemble verses in CC1 and CC2; in particular, he sings verses 2, 8, 11 and 9 with only minor modifications, but his final verse