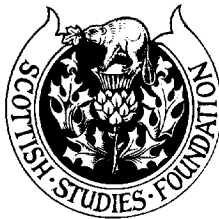


THE SECRET SONGS
OF
LADY NAIRNE



Selected songs from an “Oor Club” talk
by David Hunter on September 4, 2015





“Lady Nairne and her Son”
Painting by Sir John Watson Gordon
Courtesy of the Scottish National Portrait Gallery

Carolina Oliphant, Lady Nairne (1766–1845), songwriter, was born at the ‘Auld Hoose’ of Gask, Perthshire, on 16 August 1766, and baptized Carolina in honour of the exiled Prince Charles Edward Stuart. She was the fourth child of the three sons and four daughters of Laurence Oliphant (1724–1792), laird of Gask, and his wife, Margaret (1739–1774), the eldest daughter of Duncan Robertson of Struan, the chief of clan Donnachie.

Her parents were cousins, grandchildren of the Lord Nairne who had narrowly escaped execution after the Jacobite rising of 1715, and were married at Versailles on 9 June 1755 during nineteen years of political exile following the failure of the Jacobite rising of 1745. The Oliphants, the Robertsons, and the Nairnes had all been attainted for high treason and lost their estates. A part of Gask was bought back from the government and her parents were able to return two years before Carolina's birth.

On June 2nd, 1806, at age 41, she married her second cousin, Major William Murray Nairne, and they remained in Edinburgh until his death in 1830. It was upon coming to Edinburgh that she became involved in her lifelong project to preserve and foster the songs of Scotland.

Her creative ability, the secret part of her life, never interfered with her position as a society lady. Lady Carolina Nairne has been sadly neglected, but to her we owe immense gratitude, for, without her, much of the Scottish musical heritage would have been lost.

Front cover: *Caller Herrin'* by Sir John Everett Millais

THE AULD HOOSE

Oh, the auld hoose, the auld hoose,
What tho' the rooms were wee!
Oh! kind hearts were dwelling there,
And bairnies fu' o' glee;
The wild rose and the jessamine
Still hang upon the wa',
How mony cherish'd memories
Do they, sweet flowers, reca'!

Oh! the auld laird, the auld laird,
Sae canty, kind and crouse,
How mony did he welcome to
His ain wee dear auld hoose;
And the lady too, sae genty,
There shelter'd Scotland's heir,
And clipped a lock wi' her ain hand,
Frae his lang yellow hair.

The mavis still doth sweetly sing,
The bluebells sweetly blaw,
The bonny Earn's clear winding still,
But the auld hoose is awa'.
The auld hoose, the auld hoose,
Deserted tho' ye be,
There ne'er can be a new hoose
Will seem sae fair to me.

Still flourishing the auld pear tree
The bairnies liked to see,
And oh, how often did they speir
When ripe they a' wad be?
The voices sweet, the wee bit feet
Aye rinnin' here and there,
The merry shout-oh ! whiles we greet
To think we'll hear nae mair.

For they are a' wide scattered now,
Some to the Indies gane,
And one alas! to her lang hame;
Not here we'll meet again.

The kirkyaird, the kirkyaird!
Wi' flooers o' every hue,
Shelter'd by the holly's shade
An' the dark sombre yew.

The setting sun, the setting sun!
How glorious it gaed doon;
The cloudy splendour raised our hearts
To cloudless skies aboon!
The auld dial, the auld dial!
It told how time did pass;
The wintry winds hae dung it doon,
Now hid 'mang weeds and grass.

THE WHITE ROSE O' JUNE

Now the bright sun, and the soft summer showers,
Deck a' the woods and the gardens wi' flowers—
But bonny and sweet though the hale o' them be,
There's one aboon a' that is dearest to me;
An' oh, that's the white rose, the white rose o' June,
An' may he that should wear it come back again soon!

For it's no on my breast, and it's no in my hair,
That the emblem sae dear I venture to wear;
But it blooms in my heart, and its white leaves I weet,
When alone in the gloamin' I wander to greet,
O'er the white rose, the white rose, the white rose o' June,
An' may he that should wear it come back again soon!

Mair fragrant and rich though the red rose may be,
There is nae a spell to bind it to me—
But dear to my hert and to fond memorie,
Tho' scathed and tho' blighted the white rose may be,
O the white rose, the white rose, the white rose o' June,
O may he that should wear it come back again soon!

And oh may the true hearts thy perils who share,
Remember'd wi' tears, and remember'd in prayer,
Whom misfortune's rude blast has sent far awa,
Fair breezes bring back soon to cottage and ha';—
Then, O sing the white rose, the white rose o' June,
An' may he that should wear it -- wear Scotland's auld croon!

THE ROWAN TREE

Oh! Rowan Tree,
Oh! Rowan Tree, thou'll aye be dear to me,
Intwined thou art wi' mony ties o' hame and infancy.
Thy leaves were aye the first o' spring, thy flow'rs the simmer's pride;
There was nae sic a bonny tree, in a' the countrie side.
Oh! Rowan Tree.

How fair wert thou in simmer time, wi' a' thy clusters white,
How rich and gay thy autumn dress, wi' berries red and bright;
On thy fair stem were mony names, which now nae mair I see,
But they're engraven on my heart -- forgot they ne'er can be!
Oh! Rowan Tree.

We sat aneath thy spreading shade, the bairnies round thee ran,
They pulled thy bonny berries red, and necklaces they strang;
My mother! Oh! I see her still, she smiled our sports to see,
Wi' little Jeanie on her lap, an' Jamie at her knee!
Oh! Rowan Tree.

Oh! there arose my father's prayer, in holy evening's calm,
How sweet was then my mother's voice, in the Martyr's psalm;
Now all are gane! We meet nae mair aneath the Rowan Tree;
But hallowed thoughts around thee twine o' hame and infancy.
Oh! Rowan Tree.

THE LAND O' THE LEAL

I'm wearin' awa', John,
Like snaw-wreaths in thaw, John,
I'm wearin' awa'
To the land o' the leal.
There's nae sorrow there, John,
There's neither cauld nor care, John,
The day is aye fair
In the land o' the leal.

Our bonnie bairnie's there, John,
She was baith good and fair, John,
And oh! we grudged her sair

To the land o' the leal.
But sorrow soon wears past, John,
And joy's a-comin' fast, John,
The joy that's aye to last
In the land o' the leal.

Sae dear that joy was bought, John,
Sae free the battle fought, John,
That sinful man e'er brought,
To the land o' the leal.
Oh! dry your glist'ning e'e, John,
My soul lang's to be free, John,
And angels beckon me
To the land o' the leal.

Oh! haud ye leal and true, John,
Your day it's wearin' through, John,
And I'll welcome you
To the land o' the leal.
Now fare ye weel, my ain John,
This world's cares are vain, John,
We'll meet, and aye be fain,
In the land o' the leal.

THE LAIRD O' COCKPEN

The laird o' Cockpen, he's proud an' he's great,
His mind is ta'en up wi' things o' the State;
He wanted a wife, his braw house to keep,
But favour wi' wooin' was fashious to seek.

Down by the dyke-side a lady did dwell,
At his table head he thought she'd look well,
McClish's a daughter o' Claversha' Lee,
A penniless lass wi' a lang pedigree.

His wig was weel poudered and as good as new,
His waistcoat was white, his coat it was blue;
He put on a ring, a sword, a cocked hat,
And who could refuse the laird wi' a' that?

He took the grey mare, and rode cannily,
An' rapp'd at the yett o' Claversha' Lee;
"Gae tell Mistress Jean to come speedily ben,
She's wanted to speak to the Laird o' Cockpen".

Mistress Jean she was makin' the elderflower wine;
"An' what brings the laird here at sic a like time?"
She put off her apron, put on her silk goon,
Her mutch wi' red ribbons, and gaed awa' doon.

An' when she cam' ben, he bobbet fu' low,
An' what was his errand -- he soon let her know;
Amazed was the laird when the lady said "Naw",
And wi' a low curtsie she turned awa'.

Dumfoonter'd was he, nae sigh did he gie,
He mounted his mare -- and he rade cannily;
An' aften he thought, as he gaed through the glen,
She's daft to refuse the Laird o' Cockpen.

And now that the laird his exit had made,
Mistress Jean she reflected on what she had said;
"Oh, for ane I'll get better, it's waur I'll get ten,
I was daft to refuse the Laird o' Cockpen".

Next time that the laird and the lady was seen,
They were gaun arm-in-arm to the kirk on the green;
She now sits in the ha' like a weel-tappit hen,
But as yet there's nae chickens appear'd at Cockpen!

CALLER HERRIN'

Wha'll buy my caller herrin'?
They're bonnie fish and halesome farin';
Buy my caller herrin',
New drawn frae the Forth

When ye were sleepin' on your pillows,
Dream'd ye aught o' our puir fellows,
Darkling as they faced the billows,
And a` to fill the woven willows?
Buy my caller herrin',
New drawn frae the Forth.

Wha'll buy my caller herrin'?
They're no brought here wi' oot brave daring;
Buy my caller herrin',
Hauled through wind and rain.

Wha'll buy my caller herrin'?
Oh, ye may ca' them vulgar farin',
But wives and mithers maist despairing
Ca' them lives o' men.

When the creel o' herrin' passes,
Ladies, clad in silks and laces,
Gather in their braw pelises,
Cast their heads and screw their faces.
Buy my caller herrin',
New drawn frae the Forth.

Caller herrin's no got lightlie,
Ye can trip the spring fu' tightlie,
In spite o' tauntin', flauntin', flingin',
Gow has set you a' a-singing.
Wha'll buy my caller herrin'
New drawn frae the Forth.

Wha'll buy my caller herrin'?
They're no brought here wi' oot brave daring;
Buy my caller herrin',
Ye little ken their worth.

WHA'LL BE KING BUT CHARLIE?

The news frae Moidart cam' yestreen,
Will soon gar monie ferlie;
For ships o' war hae just came in,
And landit Royal Charlie.

Come thro' the heather, aroond him gather,
Ye're a' the welcomer early;
Aroond him cling wi' a' your kin;
For wha'll be King but Charlie?

The Hieland clans, wi' sword in hand,
Frae John o' Groats to Airlie,
Hae to a man declared to stand
Or fa' wi' Royal Charlie.

Come thro' the heather, aroond him gather,
Ye're a' the welcomer early;
Aroond him cling wi' a' your kin;
For wha'll be King but Charlie?

The lowlands a', baith great an' sma',
Wi' mony a Lord and Laird, hae
Declar'd for Scotia's king an' law,
An speir ye wha but Charlie.

Come thro' the heather, aroond him gather,
Ye're a' the welcomer early;
Aroond him cling wi' a' your kin;
For wha'll be King but Charlie?

There's no a lass in a' the land
But vows baith late an' early,
She'll ne'er to man, gie heart nor hand,
Wha wadna fecht for Charlie.

Then there's a health to Charlie's cause,
And be it fou and early;
His very name our heart's blood warms;
To arms for Royal Charlie!

Come thro' the heather, around him gather,
Come Ronald come Donald,
Come a' thegither,
And crown your rightful lawful King!
For wha'll be King but Charlie?

THE HUNDRED PIPERS

Wi' a hundred pipers an' a', an' a',
Wi' a hundred pipers an' a', an' a';
We'll up an' gie them a blaw, a blaw,
Wi' a hundred pipers an' a', an' a'.
Oh! it's owre the Border awa, awa,

It's owre the Border awa, awa,
We'll on and we'll march to Carlisle ha',
Wi' its yetts, its castell, an' a', an' a'.

Oh! our sodger lads looked braw, looked braw,
Wi' their tartans, kilts, an' a', an' a',
Wi' their bonnets, an' feathers, an' glittering gear,
An' pibrochs soundin' sweet and clear.
Will they a' return to their ain dear glen?
Will they a' return, our Hielan' men?
Second-sichted Sandy looked fu' wa',
And mothers grat when they marched awa'.

The Esk was swollen, sae red and sae deep,
But shouder to shouder the brave lads keep;
Twa thousand swam owre to English ground,
An' danced themselves dry to the pibroch's sound.
Dumfounder'd, the English saw - they saw -
Dumfounder'd, they a' heard the blaw, the blaw;
Dumfounder'd, they a' ran awa, awa,
Frae the hundred pipers an' a', an' a'.

CHARLIE IS MY DARLING

Twas on a Monday morning,
Right early in the year,
When Charlie came to oor toon,
The young Chevalier.
Oh, Charlie is my darling,
My darling, my darling;
Oh, Charlie is my darling,
The young Chevalier.

As he came marching up the street,
The pipes play'd loud and clear,
And a' the folk came running oot,
To meet the Chevalier.

Wi' Hieland bonnets on their heids,
And claymores bright and clear,
They came to fight for Scotland's right,
And the young Chevalier.

They've left their bonnie Hielan' hills,
Their wives and bairnies dear,
To draw the sword for Scotland's lord,
The young Chevalier.

Oh, there were mony beating hearts,
And mony a hope and fear,
And mony were the prayers put up
For the young Chevalier.

Oh, Charlie is my darling,
My darling, my darling;
Oh, Charlie is my darling,
The young Chevalier.

WILL YE NO COME BACK AGAIN?

Bonnie Charlie's noo awa,
Safely owre the friendly main;
Mony a heart will break in twa,
Should he ne'er come back again.

Will ye no come back again?
Will ye no come back again?
Better lo'ed ye canna be,
Will ye no come back again?

Ye trusted in your Hieland men,
They trusted you, dear Charlie;
They kent you hiding in the glen,
Death and exile braving.

English bribes were a' in vain.
Though poor and poorer we maun be;
Siller canna buy the heart,
That aye beats warm for thine an thee.

We watched thee in the gloaming hour,
We watched thee in the morning grey;
Tho' thirty thousand pounds they'd gie,
Oh! there was none that wad betray.

Sweet's the laverock's note and lang,
 Liltin' wildly up the glen;
 But aye to me he sings one sang,
 Will ye no come back again?

Will ye no come back again?
 Will ye no come back again?
 Better lo'ed ye canna be,
 Will ye no come back again?

GLOSSARY OF SCOTS WORDS

Aboon, above	Bnnt, burned	Daurna, dare not
Ablow, below	Burn, stream	Dautit, fondled
Ahint, behind	Buskit, attired	Ding, overcome
Aneath, beneath	Byre, cowhouse	Disjaskit, decayed
Auld Reekie, Edinburgh		Dookit, dove-cot
Aye, yes, always	Gallant, a stripling	Dorty, pettish
Ava', at all	Caller, fresh	Doos, pigeons
Awa', away	Cannily, cautiously	Dree, endure
Ayont, beyond	Cantrip, a spell, or charm	Dule, sorrow
	Canty, cheerful	Dung, blew down
Bairn, child	Carline, old woman	
Baith, both	Castocks, the core or	Earn, the River Earn
Battered, bent, overcome	pith	E'e, eye
Bawbee, money,	of cabbage	Eerie, dreary, afraid
earnings	Cauld, cold	Eident, diligent
Bear, barley	Claes, clothes	Eldrich, haunted
Bein, comfortable	Clavers, frivolous talk	Fain, joyful
Belyve, immediately	Cleadin', clothing	Fairnies, ferns
Ben, through, inner	Clish-ma-clavers, absurd	Farm', food,
apartment	talk	entertainment
Bield, shelter	Claymore, broad sword	Fashous, troublesome
Biggit, built	Cogie, a timber vessel	Fause, false
Birks, birch trees	Collie, a shepherd's dog	Fecht, fight
Blate, modest, bashful	Corbie, a raven	Feckless, feeble
Bleeze, blaze, make a	Coul, cap, hood	Fend, fare, shift
show	Couped, overturned	Fell, acute, mettlesome
Boukit, collected	Cour, cover	Ferlie, wonder
Braw, beautiful	Creel, basket (for fish)	Fifish, somewhat
Bricht, bright	Crouse, brisk	deranged
Bree, eyebrow		Fleeched, soothed
Barley bree, ale or beer	Daft, silly, deranged	Forth, the river Forth

Fugy, a coward	Laigh, low	Rig, a field or division of it
Gane, gone	Laird, Lord	Ronth, plenty
Gar, make	Lave, remainder	Routing, bellowing
Gate, road	Laverock, skylark	Rummulgumshion, commor
Gaun, going	Leal, loyal, true	
Grat, sobbed	Lea-rig, ridge of unploughed land	
Gawkie, a foolish person	Leddy, lady	Sair, sore
Genty, elegantly formed	Liefu', lonely	Saul, soul
Gie, give	Lightlie, to depreciate	Shanks-neggie, to travel on foot
Girn, weep	Liltin', singing cheerfully	Shaw, plantation
Glaikit, giddy	Linkin', walking smartly	Sic, such
Gloamin', twilight	Lo`ed, loved	Simmer, summer
Gowd, gold	Loun, warm	Skaith, hurt
Greet, weep	Lucky, an elderly woman	Skirlin', crying shrilly
Gruesome, unsightly		Snaw-wreaths, snow patches
Gude, good	Maen, moan	Spae, foretell
Ha', hall, mansion	Mair, more	Speir, enquire
Hae, have	Mavis, a thrush	Steek, shut
Hale, whole	Mickle, much	Steer, stir, excite
Halesome, wholesome	Minnie, mother	Sough, a rushing sound
Hame, home	Mirk, dark	Sonsie, plump
Hantle, a considerable number	Moidart, district in the West Highlands	Sud, should
Happit, wrapped	Mony, many	Swither, hesitate
Haud, hold	Mutch, a female head-dress	
Havers, foolish talk		Tapsie-teerie, topsy-turvy
Hawkie, a cow	Nae, no	Tauld, told
Hirdin', herding	Neep, turnip	Taupie, a slovenly woman
Houlit, an owl		Tautit, shaggy, rough
Hurley, a wheelbarrow	Owre, over	Tent, take heed
Ilka, each		Thewless, unprofitable
Kail, broth	Pickle, a small quantity	Thole, endure
Kebbuck, a cheese	Pibroch, pipe music	Tocher, dowry
Keek, look	Plenishing, farm stocking, or house furniture	Toom, empty
Ken, know	Poortith, poverty	Twa, two
Kimmer, crony, gossip	Prin, pin	
Kirk, Church		Unco, very
Kist, chest		
Kith, acquaintance		
Knowes, hillocks	Randy, a scold	Vogie, cheerful
Lane, alone, solitary	Rap, knock	
	Reamin', skimming	Wae, woeful

World, world
 Waur, worse
 Wean, child
 Wearin', fading
 Wee, small
 Weel, well
 Weet, wet (with tears)

Weel's me, happy am I
 Weel-tappit, well-
 topped, fancily dressed
 Wendin', waning
 Wha, who
 Woven willows, baskets
 Wud, wild, mad

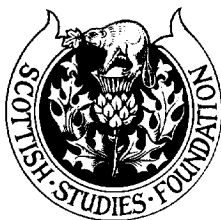
Wyled, selected
 Yestreen, last night
 Yett, gate
 Yont, beyond
 Yows, ewes

THE
MODERN
Scottish Minstrel
 BY
Charles Rogers, F.S.A., Scot.
 F. S. A., SCOT.
 VOL. I.



THE AULD HOUSE O' GASK,
 THE BIRTH PLACE OF LADY NAIRN
(Copied by permission of Patterson & Sons.)

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