

ARRANEYN

BEEAL-ARRISH VANNIN

Manx Traditional Songs sung in Manx Gaelic by Brian Stowell

- 1 Marish ny Fiddleryn
- 2 Ushag Veg Ruy
- 3 My Chaillin Veg Dhone
- 4 Mylecharaine
- 5 Kiark Katreeney
- 6 Arrane Sooree
- 7 Arrane Oie Vie
- 8 Ny Kirree fo Niaghtey
- 9 Berrey Dhone
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- 12 Mannin Veg Veen
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ARRANEYN BEEAL-ARRISH VANNIN is a selection of unaccompanied Manx traditional songs first released on vinyl by Kelly Recordings in Peel in the west of the Isle of Man in 1973. A groundbreaking release at the time, it provides a unique window on the early stages of that particular revival. The solo singer chosen to present thirteen songs from the Manx tradition was Brian Stowell, one of the most well-known and respected speakers of Manx Gaelic. Brian is now renowned throughout the Celtic world and beyond as a broadcaster, musician and one-time nuclear physicist. He was also the Isle of Man's first Manx Language Officer, pioneering the introduction of Manx Gaelic teaching in the Island's schools. This recording presents some of the finest Manx ballads – songs of love, songs of the sea, and narrative greats such as *Ny Kirree fo Niaghtey* (The Sheep under the Snow). The songs are performed in a straight-forward, honest style, unaccompanied and unfettered.

The original recording's set of full lyrics, translations and the extensive notes by Manx Gaelic scholar, Prof. Dr.phil. George Broderick, have been included here on this PDF file. This reissue will prove intriguing to those who already know and love Manx music and to those who have yet to discover a voice at the heart of the Celtic world.

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Sleevenotes for

ARRANEYN BEEAL-ARRISH VANNIN

Though Gaelic oral tradition (in the strictest sense of songs and stories, etc, passing by word of mouth to succeeding generations) had perished as such in the Isle of Man early in the 20th century, when Manx Gaelic ceased to be a language in everyday use, nevertheless there exist in written sources remnants of such a tradition in the form of, *inter alia*, songs and ballads, totalling some 350 in number, which otherwise would have been lost, had it not been for the diligence of men like Dr John Clague, the Gill Brothers, Arthur W. Moore (qv), etc, during the 1890s. In spite of the relatively small number of songs surviving, and the rather restrictive range of subjects dealt with, they leave sufficient evidence *per se* to indicate that there may have at one time existed a far richer oral tradition of Gaelic songs in the Isle of Man. In comparison with the vast reservoir of Gaelic traditional songs still in currency in the Hebrides and Western Ireland what is left of Manx oral tradition would appear to be meagre, but may indicate what may once have existed.

Gaelic oral tradition in Scotland embraces, among other things, a variety of work songs which cover a great many aspects of human occupation. An example is the songs connected with waulking the cloth. Though it is likely that similar activities at some time existed in Man, nevertheless no songs of this variety survive as testimony. None of the

written source material for any of the Manx songs dates from before the second half of the 18th century, though some of the songs from internal evidence, e.g. the Manannan / Traditionary Ballad, can be dated to c.1500 (cf. Thomson 1960-63). Many of the songs were recorded during the nineteenth century (for details see fn. 1 below). In addition since the fourteenth century Man, unlike Gaelic Scotland, had no Gaelic speaking aristocracy at its disposal, as it evidently once had (cf. Ó Cuív 1957) with its attendant retinue of bards who composed eulogies, elegies and religious poetry that required a high standard of achievement in metrical technique. As a result the guardians of the Gaelic culture in Man were the Manx speaking ordinary men and women. The real death-blow to Manx oral tradition was the advent into the island during the late 18th century of the Methodist revival, which led its converts to abandon much of their traditional culture as unfitting their religious profession. Coupled with this was the increasing use of English instead of Manx among the people, which lent weight to the argument that Manx Gaelic was a restricting factor in professional advancement. This attitude of the people themselves towards Manx was decisive in its demise as a spoken language (cf. Broderick 1999) and the traditional songs that were attendant upon it.

Because the songs of Manx oral tradition were the prerogative of the ordinary people, their construction is one of simplicity, though the tunes employed in their delivery may have contained adorning features, such as ornamentation, etc. There are hints that this may have been the case (see

below). The songs for the most part follow the English pattern of vowel and consonant end rhyme. Though it is true some of the songs are Manx renderings of English originals, nevertheless as can be judged from surviving ballads, such as **Fin as Oshin** (cf. Broderick 1990, (forthcoming)) they also embrace a facet of Gaelic tradition which involved a recital of the deeds of mythical characters, and which appears to have lingered on among the ordinary people. In addition to this type the extant songs include examples of such varieties as love songs (e.g. **Mârish ny Fiddleryn** (cf. Broderick 1984c), (**Eisht as nish, Graih My Chree**), chantes-fables (**Snieu, wheeyl, snieu**), pastoral songs (**Ny Kirree fo Niaghtey**) (cf. Broderick 1984a), courting songs (**My Chaillin Veg Dhone, Arrane Sooree**), narrative ballads (**Mylecharaine**) (cf. Thomson 1961), songs of the sea (**Mannin Veg Veen**), lullabies (**Ushag Veg Ruy**), parting songs (**Arrane Oie Vie**), legendary songs (**Berrey Dhone**) (cf. Broderick 1984b), and songs connected with customs (**Kiark Katreeney**), which found a place in the daily lives of the ordinary people. The Manx song tradition remained as part of their repertoire right down to the last of the native Manx Gaelic speakers (latter decades of the twentieth century) (cf. HLSM/I: Texts). Although *Yn Çheshaght Ghailckagh* (Manx Language Society) cylinder recordings were made from native Manx speakers singing Manx songs 1905-1909 (but also till 1913), regrettably none has survived (cf. Miller 2014/175). The sound-recording examples we do have are recitations only (1929-1953). To our knowledge no sound-recordings exist to tell us how the songs were actually

sung. But there is some written and oral evidence in this respect which may be of assistance (see below).

In looking at the tunes noted down in the available music collections many of them have parallels in Scotland, Ireland, Northern England, and Wales. Some songs use tunes showing parallels in Norway and Denmark, perhaps relics from the Scandinavian period in Man (10th-13th centuries) perhaps via Scotland and/or England, e.g. a tune used for **Eisht as Nish** (cf. Gilchrist 1924-26: 304-305). In other instances internal evidence in a song may indicate that the tune and refrain may have been taken over from another song; e.g. the aptness of the double refrain in **Mylecharaine** is not always obvious.

Many of the songs tell a simple story which can easily be followed, as in **Ny Kirree fo Niaghtey**, but in others obscure references in the narrative make it difficult, if not impossible, to grasp the gist of the account; e.g. what is the significance of **cooyl y dorrays** (behind the door) and **eddyr carkyl y stoyr** (between the hoops of the store) in **Berrey Dhone**? What is the connection, if any, between the dowry and its attendant curse and the sandals in **Mylecharaine**?

Songs from Manx oral tradition

Although thirteen Manx folk tunes, accompanied by English words, were published in 1820 in J. Barrow's *The Mona Melodies*, the first time any form of Manx song, so far as is known, had appeared in print, traditional songs in the Isle of

Man, in general, remained in oral tradition, or were forgotten, until the last decade of the 19th century when a serious effort was made to collect them.¹ Foremost in this field were Dr. John Clague (1842-1908), a medical practitioner from Castletown, W. H. Gill (1839-1923) and his brother the Deemster J. F. Gill (1842-1899) and Arthur W. Moore (1853-1909), Speaker of the House of Keys. Dr. Clague made his collection of some 315 Manx songs and tunes seemingly from 1893 to 1898, the Gill Brothers during Easter and summer 1895 and during the autumn of 1898. The Gill Brothers especially supplied the names of their



Peel Fishing Fleet 1880 (Manx National Heritage)

¹ Song collections were made c.1770 (*Fin as Oshin, Manannan Ballad, Baase Illiam Dhone, Ny Kirree fo Niaghtey, Mylecharaine*), c.1830 (MNH MS MD900, MS 08307), 1869 (Mona Miscellany I), 1873 (Mona Miscellany II, 1890s (Clague / Gill / Lucas), 1896 (A. W. Moore), c.1905 (Sophia Morrison & Josephine Kermode), c.1912 (William Cashen), 1912-1950s (Mona Douglas), 1929-33 (Marstrander), 1948-1953 (Irish Folklore Commission, Manx Museum, Yn Çeshaght Ghailckagh, K. H. Jackson).. For collected material made between 1929 and 1953, see HLSM/I: Texts..

informants, their address and the date of their recording (Miller 2006/54: 1-3). Clague's collection is extant in four manuscript volumes housed in the Manx National Heritage Archive (MNH MSS 448/1-3 A, 449 B). The Gill Brothers Collection, released in 2000, is also housed in the Manx National Heritage Archive (MNH MS 09702).² There is some cross-over of tunes between the Clague and Gill Collections. In fact, it is now clear when looking at the two collections that the Gill Brothers and Clague were exchanging between themselves tunes they had collected in the field (Miller 2006/50: 3).³ Only about sixty of the tunes in Clague have words associated with them, and then it is only the first stanza, or other fragments, that survive (cf. MNH MS 450 A, Broderick 1982).

Both the Gill Brothers and Clague planned to publish their material, and by October 1895 they had agreed to produce their material in three parts under the title *The Music of the Isle of Man*, the first to meet the tastes of the parlour, the second tunes only for the pianoforte, and the third the raw material for academia. The third part never appeared (Miller 2006/61: 1-2).⁴ Sophia Morrison published seventeen tunes in *Mannin* (1913-1917). In 1924-26 about 100 songs from Clague were published with notes by Miss Anne G. Gilchrist in the *Journal of the Folk Song Society*, vol 7, nos 28-30

2 The loose sheets of the collection were bound in apparent haphazard fashion by Lucinda Gill (the late Deemster Gill's second wife) in 1912 (cf. Miller 2006/59:2). For details of the Gill Brothers as collectors, see Miller (2006/50-64).

3 W. H. Gill received in all a total of 164 tunes from Clague (cf. Miller 2006/59: 1, fn. 5).

4 According to Miller (2006/61: 3), W. H. Gill had seemingly reneged on his promise to his brother the Deemster Gill and Dr. Clague that it would appear.

(Gilchrist 1924-26).⁵ This is an invaluable work for the student of Manx traditional songs.

Arthur Moore published a collection of 74 Manx Gaelic songs in his *Manx Ballads and Music* (Moore 1896) of which forty are accompanied by harmonised versions of the tunes associated with them. Some of the songs, according to Moore in his preface, were obtained orally, while others were acquired from manuscript and printed sources. Many of the tunes gathered by Moore are common with Clague, and variations on different tunes appear in both collections. Whilst Moore is undoubtedly the main reservoir of Manx Gaelic song texts, his versions are not always the best to be had. It sometimes happens that a better version of the song exists in manuscript in another, though not a song collection. Nevertheless he is an important source for Manx traditional songs, and is helpful to the student in that he provides literal rather than metrical translations. The Clague, Gill and Moore collections are the chief repositories of Manx traditional songs and tunes. Inclusive of all variations and fragments some 350 songs are extant.

How were the Manx songs sung?

Although we do not possess any sound-recordings of any Manx traditional songs at all, indicating how they may have been sung, we are fortunate in having two examples of writ-

5 For details of Gilchrist and her Manx activities, see Miller (2013). Also Miller (2015).

ten and one of oral evidence from various sources which may be enlightening:

1. from a descendant of a Manx emigré to the USA in 1827 made in 1845,

2. from one of the collectors of Manx songs, W. H. Gill, made in 1898.

3. from two old ladies from Peel in 1977 who had attended several carval singing sessions in the Methodist chapels during the 1920s/30s.

1. The first piece of evidence cited derives from the continuation of the pseudo-diary (evidently derived from Thomas Kelly's actual diary⁶ of his emigration to the USA in 1827),⁷ apparently made by a Mrs. Mary Kelly Ames Denney, a descendant of Thomas Kelly Jr. and his wife Jane Boyd Kelly (seemingly from information gleaned from them) in which under the year 1845 (West 1965: 46) she first comments on the Americans as people:

[...] How they rush around, these Americans, afraid they will die before they can finish what they have begun [...]. They try to save time but what do they do with that Time when they have it Saved? I thought it would be a Comfort in this strange

6 For details and a transcript of the actual diary, see Broderick 2002.

7 Thomas Kelly Sr. and family emigrated from Doolough, Jurby, in 1827 to Ohio USA, cf. *Isle of Man Examiner* 4/11/18/25 October 1935. In the actual diary the son Thomas Kelly Jr. mentions the death of his father Thomas Kelly Sr. as taking place on 5 January 1828, aged 67, and buried two days later in Painsville "Burying Ground", Ohio (*Diary* [38]). The last entry of the Diary (p. [38]) finishes with the shifting from Painsville to a farm recently purchased just north of Concord Township, Ohio. The pseudo-diary, written to serve the viewpoint that Manxmen left their native home reluctantly, continues to 1845. It is in this section that the above quote is to be found.

Land to sing with them the Songs of Zion, but when I had put in all the Quavers and hemi-semi-demi Quavers we loved at home, I was singing alone. The rest of the Congregation had no time for anything Extra (West 1965: 46).

Although appearing in the pseudo-diary the quote would need to refer to something that actually took place in order to be credible in its telling. In such circumstances, the fore-going suggests that back home in Jurby they used quite some ornamentation in the delivery of whatever they were singing in church/chapel, whether it be ordinary hymns or carvals. The latter were sung traditionally on St. Mary's Eve, 24 December, earlier in the churches, later in the Methodist chapels. The above note implies regular use of ornamentation, i.e. in the hymns, and probably in the carvals as well. For the latter see §3 below.

2. The second piece of written evidence derives from W. H. Gill in his "Manx Music: A Sketch", a short treatise on Manx traditional music as an Introduction to his *Manx National Music* (1898: v-x). Concerning the tunes Gill tells us (Gill 1898: viii-ix):

To estimate truly the intrinsic value of these melodies, especially the more ancient ones, one ought in strictness to see them as we found them [...], bare naked melodies, without harmony or accompaniment of any kind [...], without polish or setting. Moreover, to appreciate their full flavour, one ought to come upon them in their original wild state, [...]. They should be heard sung to Manx words and with the vocal intonation peculiar to the people [...]. It is delightful to hear these old

men expatiate upon the superior strength and beauty of their ancient language as compared with English - for they know both languages, and are keenly critical. At the end of a verse or a line they will suddenly stop singing and lose themselves in an ecstasy of admiration, commenting upon what they have been singing about, translating a Manx word here and there, explaining an idiom, or enlarging upon the incidents of the story [...] (Gill 1898: viii-ix).

Concerning the singers themselves and their songs Gill (1898: ix) notes:

In the singing of these old people, as well as in their recitation of poetry, of which latter they are particularly fond, we found at times almost a total absence of a definite metrical accent, and in its stead an ever smoothly-flowing rhythm, relieved here and there - often in the least expected places - by a pause of indefinite length. In fact such was the freedom of the "phrasing", and to such an extent was the rhythmic structure concealed, that much of their music might be appropriately represented like "plain song" without any bar-lines. Nor was this vagueness due to any lack of rhythmic sense on the part of the performer, for when a dance tune had to be sung it was rendered with due precision and clearness of accent. And yet, if the tunes could be written down, as with a phonograph, exactly as we heard them, and then reproduced faithfully, with all their vagueness of *tempo* [Gill's italics here and elsewhere], their uncertainty of intonation, their little quaverings and embellishments, quite unrepresentable by ordinary musical notation, if we had all these things faithfully registered, who would care for the result? Some would ask, "Can these dry

bones live?" Others would impatiently exclaim, "How different from the singing of trained singers!" [...] (Gill 1898: ix).

With regard to the practicalities of noting the tunes Gill (1898: ix) outlines two "practical difficulties", as he put it: The first only is given here as being relevant to the matter in hand:

[...]. First, as regards the raw material, the object was to obtain an absolutely *true record* of the melody [...] and in attaining this object the difficulty was two-fold, viz. to represent in the precise and inelastic terms of musical notation, without prejudice and uninfluenced by preconceived ideas of artistic right and wrong, the melody which, as actually heard, was often exceedingly vague and indefinite as regards both tune and time. In respect of *intonation*, the difficulty lay in discriminating between the peculiar *tonality* of the ancient "modes" and that of modern music; while as regards *time*, the difficulty was the right placing of the bar-lines with due regard to the grammatical accent as distinguished from the artistic pause and emphasis imported by the individual singer (Gill 1898: ix).

In today's terms Gill, as a trained Classical musician, was confronted with material that was difficult or nigh impossible to interpret in traditional "Classical" staff-notation, particularly in producing on paper an accurate rendering of the vagaries of the melody, often modal in delivery, as produced by the singer. A developed methodology as used today by ethnomusicologists for such material can be seen in *Tocher* (1971-2009), a cultural magazine of the School of

Scottish Studies (now the School of Celtic and Scottish Studies), University of Edinburgh. The fact that such difficulties were experienced at all would seemingly put the rendition of Manx material in a traditional music setting.

3. During the summer of 1977 Brian Stowell and I interviewed two old ladies aged c. 75-80 (whose names now escape us) then living in 7 Mona Street, Peel, who said they used to attend carval singing sessions during the 1920s/30s. Such sessions, they said, would be held on St. Mary's Eve, 24 December, in the Methodist chapel. They said that after a short service the vicar would leave the chapel and the proceedings would be taken over by the clerk. The chapel would be brightly lit with candles and adorned with holly and ivy to give a warm appearance. The clerk would then call for the first carval singer, or singers (sometimes there were two who would sing alternate verses). A carval could be short or long, short with c. twenty verses, long with up to sixty. The average carval would extend to some 35 stanzas or so. The session would last till three or four o'clock in the morning, they said.

We asked them whether the carvals were in Manx or in English. They said in English. When we asked them how the carvals were actually sung, they had some difficulty in expressing themselves, as they were not *au fait* with musical jargon, they said. We then asked then were they sung like ordinary hymns one would sing on a Sunday, they answered with a firm no, stating that there would be "frills",

as they put it, in the delivery of the tune and that the verses would be sung with some irregularity, they said.

If we take all three contributions together, the situation would seem to be as follows:

1. That the delivery of Manx traditional songs and carvals seems to have possessed a degree of ornamentation - it is difficult to say how much, but sufficient at least for it to be commented upon.
2. That there would be irregularity in the singing of each verse, suggesting that no verse was rendered the same as any other, that the verses were individual in their own right.
3. That the singer would occasionally stop suddenly in mid-song, at the end of a verse, or of a line, in order to explain the background to the verse, or add additional information or explain this or that Manx word or idiom, etc.
I personally have witnessed similarities to 1 in Conamara *sean nós* singing and to 2 and 3 in Scottish Gaelic traditional singing.
4. It is clear that Gill makes a difference between trained classical singing and Manx traditional singing, implying that the difference was considerable.
5. The difficulties Gill experienced in noting down the tunes suggest that the singer's voice affected the rendering of the tune, in such a manner as to given an impression to the layman of "deviation" or "distortion" in the singer's voice, or that ornamentation of a sort had been employed, etc.

6. The whole would give the impression of Manx traditional songs were rendered in a similar manner to those in other branches of Gaelic tradition in Ireland and in Scotland.

In the context of the Manx song revival the foregoing would need to be taken on board. To my mind a sound knowledge of Manx Gaelic would be a pre-requisite for a satisfactory interpretation and delivery of such songs, particularly in their phrasing. In the rendering of such songs the melody functions as a vehicle for the text and not vice-versa, as was seemingly the case in days gone by.

*Manx
cottage,
Bride (Manx
National
Heritage)*



Lyrics, translations and notes on the songs

1 MÂRISH NY FIDDLERYN

Mârish ny fiddleryn ec yn traa Nollick
Eisht hoshiaght veeit mee rish graih my chree.
Dy graihagh, graihagh hoie shin sheese cooidjagh,
Ghow shin yn toshiaght jeh nyn sooree.

V'ee doodee aeg, v'ee bwaagh as aalin,
Va mee kiarail dy phoosey ee,
As ta mee m'eirinagh, mooar as berchagh,
Ayns lhiatteyn glassey jeh'n chenn Renwee.

Voish yn oie shen gys kione tree bleeaney
Dy mennick va mee as my ghraih meeiteil,
Yn ghlare v'eck foalsey as chengey veeley
Nagh jinnagh ee mish dy bragh 'aagail.

My chree va gennal goll dys y valley,
Cha row nhee erbee yinnagh seaghyn dooys,
Yn chied skeeal cheayll mee moghrey Laa-Innyd
Dy row my ghraih rish fer elley poost.

**With the fiddlers at Christmas time
I then first met my heart's love.**

**Lovingly, lovingly we sat down together
and began our courtship.**

**She was a young lassie, pretty and fair;
it was my design to marry her.**

**I am a successful and wealthy farmer
on the green sides of the old Renwee.**

**From that night for three years
my love and I often used to meet.
She deceived me with smooth talk
that she would never leave me.**

**My heart was cheerful as I went home;
there was nothing at all that would cause me sorrow.
The first news I heard on the morning of Ash
Wednesday
was that my love was married to another.**

Two variants of this tune can be found in the Moore collection, viz. *Yn Chenn Dolphin* (The Old Dolphin) and *Graih My Chree* (Love of my Heart); and four others in the Clague collection, viz. *Ayns yn Ollick ec Ball ny Fiddleryn* (At the Fiddlers' Christmas Ball), *Ec Norree yn Fiddler* (At Norree the Fiddler's), *She ec ny Fiddleryn ayns yn Ollick* (It was at the Fiddlers' at Christmas), and *Yn Chenn Dolphin* (The Old Dolphin – here a different tune from that recorded by

Moore). Versions 1, 2 and 4 of the Clague collection and Moore's version of *Yn Chenn Dolphin* have a similarity to the Scottish Gaelic tunes *Mo Rùn Geal Dileas* (in Albyn's Anthology *et alibi*). The version here of *Mârish ny Fiddleryn*, taken from the Moore collection, bears a resemblance to the song *Consider all ye pretty fair maidens* (Gavin Greig MSS), *The Bleacher Lass o' Kelvinhaugh* (N. Buchan, 101 Scottish Songs), and Appalachian folk songs: see *English Folk Songs from the Southern Appalachians*.

The theme of *Mârish ny Fiddleryn* is dealt with more fully in *Ec ny Fiddleryn* (cf. Broderick 1984c), another version of the song. It tells of a man who meets his heart's love at the fiddlers' Christmas celebrations and they continue their courtship for some-time. She promises to marry him, but on the morn of Ash Wednesday he hears that she has married another. He puts a curse on her, but afterwards changes his mind and wishes her well, even though she mocks him. He goes to St Patrick's Fair where he knows she will be and takes his choice of other lassies in the hope that she will return to him, but he is unsuccessful. He is unable to do anything but think of her, not even can he take his rest, but wishes that the prevailing wind would blow so that he could hear her and that she would come to him over the high mountains. His love for her is so strong that not even if Greenland's snow were to grow red like roses would he forget her.

2 USHAG VEG RUY

Ushag veg ruy my moaney dhoo,
Ny moanee doo, ny moaney dhoo,
Ushag veg ruy ny moaney dhoo,
C'raad chaddil oo riyer syn oie?

Chaddil mish riyer er baare ny dress,
Er baare ny dress, er baare ny dress,
Chaddil mish riyer er baare ny dress,
As ogh, my chadley cho treih!

Chaddil mish riyer er baare ny crouw,
Er baare ny crouw, er baare ny crouw,
Chaddil mish riyer er baare ny crouw,
As ogh, my chadley cho treih!

Chaddil mish riyer er baare ny thooane,
Er baare ny thooane, er baare ny thooane,
Chaddil mish riyer er baare ny thooane,
As ogh, my chadley cho treih!

Chaddil mish riyer eddyr daa ghuillag,
Eddyer daa ghuillag, eddyer daa ghuillag,
Chaddil mish riyer eddyr daa ghuillag,
Myr oikan eddyr daa Ihuishag.

**Refr. Little red bird of the black peat ground,
of the black peat ground, of the black peat ground,
little red bird of the black peat ground,
where did you sleep last night?**

**Last night I slept on the top of the briar,
On the top of the briar, on the top of the briar,
Last night I slept on the top of the briar,
And oh, how miserable my sleep was.**

**Last night I slept on the top of the bush,
On the top of the bush, on the top of the bush,
Last night I slept on the top of the bush,
And oh, how miserable my sleep was.**

**Last night I slept on the point of the riblas,
On the point of the riblas, on the point of the riblas,⁸
Last night I slept on the point of the riblas,
And oh, how miserable my sleep was.**

**Last night I slept between two leaves,
Between two leaves, between two leaves,
Last night I slept between two leaves,
Like and infant between two blankets.**

⁸ A *riblas* or *thooane* was used in the construction of a thatched roof as one of many ribs supporting the sods of earth inserted under the thatch, cf. ScG. *taobhan*..

This cradle song is found in three forms in the Isle of Man, the first recalling the Scots song *Craigieburn Wood*. The second version can be found in the Moore collection. The third variant, as given here, was noted by P. W. Caine of Douglas, and sung by his father to words similar to those of the first two versions. Caine's version is reminiscent of the Gaelic air *An Còineachan*, and also has a distant similarity to the English songs *Dame, get up and bake your pies*, *Greensleeves* and *I saw three ships*. The Scottish Gaelic version *Uiseag Bheag Ruadh na Mònadh Duibh* appeared in the mid-1970s. It is a direct transliteration of the Manx version, seemingly put together by an aunt to a member of the Scottish Gaelic traditional music group *Na h-Òganaich*.

3 MY CHAILLIN VEG DHONE

C'raad t'ou goll, my chaillin veg dhone?
As c'raad t'ou goll, my chaillin veg aeg?
C'raad t'ou goll, my aalin, my eayn?
Ta mee goll dys y woaillee, dooyrt ee.

Cre'n fa t'ou goll dys shen, my chaillin veg dhone?
Cre'n fa t'ou goll dys shen, my chaillin veg aeg?
Cre'n fa t'ou goll dys shen my aalin, my eayn?
Ta mee goll dys shen dy vlieaun, dooyrt ee.

Noym kied goll mayrt, my chaillin veg dhone?

Noym kied goll mayrt, my chaillin veg aeg?
Noym kied goll mayrt, my aalin, my eayn?
Tar marym eisht, y ghooiney, dooyrt ee.

**Where are you going, my little auburn-haired lassie?
Where are you going, my little young lass?
Where are you going, my fine one, my lamb?
I'm going to the fold, she said.**

**Why do you go there, my little auburn-haired lassie?
Why do you go there, my little young lass?
Why do you go there, my fine one, my lamb?
I go there to milk, she said.**

**May I go with you, my little auburn-haired lassie?
May I go with you, my little young lass?
May I go with you, my fine one, my lamb?
Come with me then, sir, she said.**

This song is taken from the Moore collection.⁹ Two variants of it also appear in the Clague Collection, the latter in • time strongly resembles the Scottish air *The Laird o' Cockpen* or *When she cam'ben she bobbit*. And English version of this song is *Where are you going to, my pretty maid* (cf. . Gilchrist 1924-26: 139).

⁹ The text has been "cleaned up" by Moore. The original (cf. Moore MNH 221 A) is suggestive in tone.

4 MYLECHARAINE

O Vylecharaine, c'raad hooar oo dty stoyr?
My lomarcán daag oo mee.

Nagh dooar mee sy Churragh eh dowin,
dowin dy liooar?
As my lomarcán daag oo mee.

O Vylecharaine, c'raad hooar oo dty stock?
Nagh dooar mee sy Churragh eh eddyr daa vlock?

O Vylecharaine, c'raad hooar oo ny t'ayd?
Nagh dooar mee sy Churragh eh eddyr daa 'oaid?

Hug mee m'eggey-varree as my eggey-lieen,
As hug mee dow-ollee son toghyr da'n inneen.

O yishig, O yishig, ta mish goaill nearey,
T'ou goll gys y cheeill ayns dty charraneyn vane.

O yishig, O yishig, jeeagh er my vraagyn stoamey,
As uss goll mygeayrt ayns dty charraneyn vane.

She, un charrane ghoo, as fer elley bane,
V'orts, Vylecharaine, goll dy Ghoolish Jesarn.

She, daa phiyr oashyr, as un phiyr vragg
Cheau uss, Vylecharaine, ayns kiare bleeaney jeig.

O vuddee, O vuddee, cha lhiass dhyts goaill nearey,
Son t'ayms sy chishtey aym ver orts dy ghearey.

My hiaght mynney mollaht¹⁰ ort, Vylecharaine,
Son uss va'n chied ghooiney hug toghyr da mraane.

She, mollaht dagh dooinney ta ruggal inneen,
Kyndagh rish Juan Drommey as Mylecharaine.

Son hooar Juan Drommey e chooid er y chronk,
Hooar Mylecharaine e chooid er y faaie.

**O Mylecharaine, where did you find your treasure?
Alone you did leave me.**

**Did I not find it deep, deep enough in the Curragh?
And alone you did leave me.**

O Mylecharaine, where did you find your stoke?

¹⁰ A formula of some antiquity for uttering a death-curse. *Mynney.OIr. mind*, originally meant a halidom, or venerated object, upon which oaths were taken. Its meaning then became transferred to the oath itself, cf. *Annals of Ulster II, 138.4, iar sarughudh...a mhind dō*, 'after he had violated his oath'. In uttering a curse the performer would turn a swearing-stone seven times in an anticlockwise direction in the cup-shaped hollow of a larger stone. (cf. Craine 1955:23). The curse traditionally had quite some potency and was not uttered lightly.

Arraneyn Beeal-Arrish Vannin

Did I not find it in the Curragh between two blocks?

**O Mylecharaine, where did you find your goods?
Did I not find them in the Curragh between
two peat sods?**

**I gave my web of tow and my web of flax,
And I gave my ox as a dowry to my daughter.**

**Father, O father, I am ashamed:
You go to church in your white sandals.**

**Father, O father, look at my fine shoes,
And you going about in your white sandals.**

**Yes, one black sandal and the other white you wore,
Mylecharaine, as you went to Douglas on Saturday.**

**Yes, two pairs of stockings and one pair of shoes
You did wear, Mylecharaine, for fourteen years.**

**Lassie, O lassie, there's no need to feel ashamed,
For I have in my chest something that will please you.**

**My seven bitter curses on you, Mylecharaine,
For you were the first man to give women a dowry.**

**Yes, a curse on each man who begets a daughter
Because of Juan Drommey and Mylecharaine.**

**For Juan Drommey got his share on the hill
And Mylecharaine got his on the flat.**

The tune to this song exists in three variants in the Clague collection; the latter, set in the Ionian, or "major" mode and given on this record, forms the basis of the modern Manx National Anthem. A variant in the Dorian mode appears in print in Barrow 1820. Both a "major" and "minor" version can be found in the Moore collection.

Several versions of the *Mylecharaine* poem are extant in various sources, the earliest existing in two manuscripts, MacLagan 180 Glasgow University and British Museum Addl. 11215, dating from about 1770. In taking all the surviving sources into consideration four distinct versions of the poem become apparent. In all versions the poem is composed in four-line stanzas, the second and fourth lines a refrain repeated in each stanza. The MS versions attest additional refrains, presumably sung after each verse, though this is not entirely certain. This example of a double refrain alternating between the two lines of the couplet is reminiscent of Scottish and English narrative ballads. The order of the verses varies from version to version, some containing stanzas unknown to others (cf. Thomson 1961).

The song, ranging from six to twelve stanzas in all its variants, refers to a certain Mylecharaine who lived around the Curragh area of Jurby in the north-west of Man and who evidently acquired notoriety for being the first man to grant his daughter a dowry instead of expecting a bride-price for her. The name, to judge from its earliest forms, seems to represent G. *Mac Gille Chiaráin*, the final element becoming identified with the Manx word *carrane*, a sandal made of untanned hide with the hair left on, which lends particular meaning to the reference in the poem to Mylecharaine's footwear. The longest extant version, sung here, is taken from the Moore collection and gives a clearer idea of what the story is about. But in spite of this the narrative is disjointed, and it is difficult to see the connection, if any, between the dowry and the resulting curse and Mylecharaine's sandals. It may be that partial loss of the song in the course of transmission is responsible for this or that two separate songs about the same character have become united. Moreover to judge from the occasional inaptness of the refrain in some of the stanzas it is likely that it serves only as illexical vocables (the earliest versions of the song in the MSS attest a vocable refrain in the second line of each stanza; i.e. *toll loll lol dyr all tol dy rey*), a feature found in Scottish Gaelic songs. Perhaps the refrain has been taken over, as well as the tune, from another song? (cf. Thomson 1961: 10-18).

5 KIARK KATREENEY

Kiark Katreeney marroo,
Kiark Katreeney marroo;
Gow uss y kione
As goyms ny cassyn.
As vermayd ee fo'n thalloo.

**Katherine's hen is dead,
Katherine's hen is dead;
you take the head and I'll take the feet
and we'll put it under the ground.**

This version is taken from the Moore collection. It is uncertain whether any more of the song survives. According to Manx tradition the men and young boys of the village of Colby in Arbory parish on *Laa'l Katreeney*, or Catherine's feast day, that is on December 6th,¹¹ would kill a hen and walk in twos through the fair with their hats off, as though at a funeral, and sing this song. They would then adjourn to the *thie Ihonney* to get their fill before holding a wake over the dead hen. The next morning they went to "peel the hen", i.e., pluck it. They would then cut the head and feet off and bury them (cf. Paton 1939-40). Dr. Clague tells an interesting story that before there were any attorneys the people of Colby Mooar set aside their quarrels on St

11 Old Style, now 25 November.

Catherine's feast day when the parties concerned would each pluck some of the feathers from a dead hen and bury them, thus settling their differences (cf. Clague 1911: 43-45).

6 *ARRANE SOOREE*

Lesh sooree ayns y gheurey
An-vennick veign my lhie,
Agh shooyll ayns y dorraghys
S'goan fakin yn raad thie.
Veign goll gys ny uinnagyn
As crankal shirrey entreil,
Y fliaghey yeealley orrym
As my lieckanyn gaase gial.

Oh, shimmey oie liauyr geuree
Ta mee rieu er cheau
My hassoo ec ny uinnagyn
Derrey veign er creau.
My chassyn neesht veagh fliugh
As draggit, lane dy laagh;
Agh Leah yinnin jarrood eh
Dy vaikins ben aeg waagh.

Yn ushtey roie jeh my'olt,
As my 'eeacklyn snaggaree,

Yn crackan jeh my yuntyn
Bwoall' er y ghless cheu-mooie,
Gra; My ghraih as my gherjagh,
Nish lhiggys oo mee stiagh,
Dy noins agh un oor
Jeh dty heshaght villish noght?

Fow royd voish yn uinnag,
Fow royd, ta mee dy ghra.
Cha jeanym lhiggey stiagh oo,
Ta fys aym er ny share.
My dy my obbal t'ou
As dy vel oo cur mee jeh,
Son rieu va mee smooïnaghtyn
Dy re uss veagh my reih.

Oh, dy bragh, ny dy bragh, ghuilley,
Cha beeym ayd son ben,
Cha nel mee goll dy phoosey,
My haitnys hene vees aym.
Agh hug ee eisht yn 'illeag urree
As haink ee neose my whaiyl;
Lesh paagaghyn cho graihagh
Myr shoh ren shin meeiteil.

**With courting in the winter time/I'd seldom be in
bed/but walking in the darkness,/scarcely seeing the**

way home./I would go to the windows/and tap seeking to be let in;/the rain would be pouring on me/and my cheeks growing pale with cold.

Oh, many a long winter's night/I have often spent/standing at the windows/until I'd be shivering./My feet would also be wet/and bedraggled, full of mud;/but I would quickly forget it/when I would see a pretty young girl.

The water runs off my hair/and my teeth chatter,/the skin comes off my knuckles/with striking the glass outside./I say, my love, my consolation./now will you let me in,/so that I could have just one hour/of your sweet company tonight?

Get away from the window,/get away, I say./I cannot let you in,/I know better than that./Don't refuse me/and put me off,/for I have always thought/that you would be my choice.

Never, oh never, lad,/will I be your wife./I am not going to marry, my own pleasure I will have./But then she put her shawl over her/and came down to meet me;/with kisses so loving/like this we did meet.

The *Arrane Sooree* is the Manx version of the international theme of "open the door" or "cottage in the wood", where the lover, begging his girl to let him in, tells her of his pitiful condition, i.e., wet, cold and tired. (cf. Gilchrist 1924-26: 135).

The air recorded by Moore finds similarities to one of two tunes collected by Clague. Moore gives eleven verses for the song, but his air requires two in combination. Probably the words gathered by Moore originally fitted either of the airs in Clague. We have used Moore's air as the best of the three.

Variants of this air are sung to many Scottish Gaelic songs, e.g. *Balaich/Gilleann Ghleann-dail* (The Boys of Glendale), and also to songs from the North-East (of Scotland), e.g. *Queer folk I' the Shaws* (Gavin Greig, No. 121; cf. Ford 1904).

7 *ARRANE OIE VIE*

My ghuillyn vie, t-eh traagoll thie,
Ta'n stoyl ta foym greinnagh mee roym;
T'eh signal dooin dy ghleashaghey,
T'eh tayrn dys traagoll ny lhiabbagh.

My ghuillyn vie, t'eh traagoll thie,
Ta'n dooid cheet er y chiollagh;

T'eh geginagh shin dy gholl dy lhie,
T'eh bunnys traa dy ghra, Oie Vie.

**My good lads, it is time to go home,/the seat beneath
my urges me on my way./It is an indication to us to
move;/it draws on to bed-time.**

**My good lads, it is time to go home,/the blackness
comes over the hearth;/it compels us to go to bed;/it is
almost time to say, Good Night.**

This air finds a parallel in the Scottish song *The Last Guid Night*, and just as in England it became associated with execution ballads in the sense of the “last farewell”. The air to *Geordie*, a character hanged for stealing the king’s deer, is reminiscent of *Arrane Oie Vie*. In both these tunes the rhythm occurs in short phrases; in *Arrane Oie Vie* part of the rhyming mechanism is based on this process. It may be that this form belongs to an early type of folk air (cf. Gilchrist 1924-26: 187). The tune to *Arrane Oie Vie* also bears a resemblance to the English song *Barbara Allen* and to the first part of the Welsh carol *Trymder*. The *Arrane Oie Vie* was sung at the close of a carol singing in the churches on *Oie’ll Voirrey*, St Mary’s Eve (Christmas Eve), and was followed by a visit to the *thie-oast* where hot, spiced ale was consumed and all made merry.

8 NY KIRREE FO NIAGHTEY

Lurg geurey dy niaghtey as arragh dy rio
Va ny shenn chirree marroo as ny eayin beggey bio.

Oh, irree shiu, my vochillyn, as gow shiu da’n clieau,
Ta ny kirree fo niaghtey, cho downin as v’ad rieau.

Shoh dooyrt Nicholas Raby, as eh sy thie ching,
Ta ny kirree fo niaghtey ayns Braaid Farrane Fing.

Shoh dooyrt Nicholas Raby goll seose er y lout,
Dy row my hiaght bannaght er my ghaa housane mohlt.

Kirree t’ayms sy laggan, as goair sy Clieau Ruy,
Kirree feiy Coan y Chishtey nagh jig dy bragh veih.

Jirree mooinjer Skeeyll Lonan as hie ad er y chooyl,
Hooar ad ny kirree marroo ayns Laggan Varooyl.

Jirree mooinjer Skeeyll Lonan as Skeeylley
Chreest neesht,
Hooar ad ny kirree beggey ayns Laggan Agneash.

Ny muilt ayns y toshiaght, ny reaghyn sy vean,
Eisht ny kirree trome eayin cheet geiyrt orroo shen.

Arraneyn Beeal-Arrish Vannin

Ta mohlt aym's son y Nolluck as jee's son y Chaisht,
As ghaa ny tree elley son yn tra'a yiowym's baase.

**After a winter of snow and a spring of frost
The old sheep were dead and the little lambs alive.**

Refrain:

**Oh, rise up, my shepherds, and go to the mountain.
The sheep are snowed up, as deep as they ever were.**

**This is what Nicholas of Raby said as he lay
ill at home'
The sheep are snowed up in Braaid Farrane Fing.**

**This is what Nicholas of Raby said going up to the loft;
May my seven blessings be on my two
thousand wethers.**

**I have sheep in the lagan and goats on Slieau Ruy,
I have sheep throughout Coan y Chishtey that will
never survive.**

**The men of Lonan parish arose and
went off immediately.
They found the little sheep in Laggan Agneash.**

The wethers were in the forefront,

**the rams in the middle,
Then the sheep-in-lamb came on behind them.**

**I have a wether for Christmas and a pair for Easter,
And two or three others for when I die.**

This song tells the simple story of the burial in the snow of Nicholas Raby's sheep. To judge from the place-names referred to in the song it would seem that this incident occurred in the Lonan-Maughold area in the north-east of the Island, and that the Raby in question would be the quarterland of that name above Laxey. In another version of the song Raby is qualified by the name Qualtrogh, ie Qualtrough. The Manorial Roll of the Isle of Man testifies that a family of Qualtroughs farmed Raby Lonan during the 17th and early 18th centuries. The version here is found also in the Moore collection. It dates from c.1700. For an edition of the texts see Broderick (1984a).

Four versions of this tune are to be found in Clague, and it was sung in its variants not only to this song but also to *Ta mee nish keayney* (I am now crying) and *Arrane y Skeddan* (Song of the herring). Similar variations of this tune appear in Scotland in the songs *Ca' the ewes to the fold* and *On a fine summer evening*, which like *Ny Kirree fo Niaghtey* are concerned with pastoral activities. Versions of this song can also be found in the Scottish Gaelic songs *O Mhàiri, a*

Mhàiri (Sinclair's *Oranaiche*), *Srath Bàn* (Hosking, *Fine Song for Singing*) and *Oran Chailein* (Wm Ross Collection). A variant of the tune is found also in the Arran song *Arainn nam Beann* (*Ma tha an dàn domh dol theiris*) as sung by Finlay Kerr, Whitefarland, Arran, and recorded by Wilhelm Nicolaisen for the *Scottish Place-Name Survey* (University of Edinburgh) in September 1961 (cf. also Holmer 1957: 166-169).

9 *BERREY DHONE*

Vel oo sthie, Verrey Dhone? C'raad t'ou shooyll,
Mannagh vel oo ayns yn Immyr Ghlass lhiattaghey
Barooyl?

Hemmayd roin gys y clieau dy hroggal y voain,¹²
As dy yeeaghyn jig Berrey Dhone thie er yn oie.

Hooill mee Carraghyn as hooill mee Sniaul,
Agh va Berrey cooyl y dorrays as lhiack er e kione.

Hooill mee Carraghyn as hooill mee Slieau Beg,
Agh va Berrey cooyl y dorrays cho shicky as creg.

Hooill mee Beinn y Phott as hooill mee Slieau Ouyr,
Agh va Berrey cooyl y dorrays eddyr carkyl y story.

Va breechyn as jirkin eck as oanrey braew bwee,
Va breechyn as jirkin eck cour shooyll ny hoie.

Va breechyn as jirkin eck as oanrey braew glass,
Va breechyn as jirkin eck cour y goll magh.

Tra va'n sleih ayns y thie ec nyn jinnair,
Va skell bwee ayns y ghlione roie lesh y cheh.

Nagh re magh er yn oie daase ny mraane paa,
Hie kerroo jeh Berrey Dhone choud as Rhumsaa.

Hie is her cur gys y chriy, agh hooar ee voue foayr,
Haink ee thie er Mullagh Ouyr as greim eck er goayr.

**Are you at home, Berrey Dhone?
Where are you walking to,
if you are not on the Immyr Ghlass skirting Barrule?**

**Rerain:
Let us make our way to the mountain to raise the peat,
and to see if Berrey Dhone will come home at night.**

**I walked over Carraghyn and walked over Snaefell,
But Berrey was behind the door with a slab over her.**

I walked over Carraghyn and walked over Slieau Beg,

¹² Turf is still cut today in Man, though not for the want of it, under licence from the Government on the public turbaries, namely Mullagh Ouyr and Beinn y Phott.

But Berrey was behind the door as firm as a rock.

**I walked over Bein y Phott and walked over Sleau Ouyr,
But Berrey was behind the door between the
hoops of the store.**

**She had trousers and a jacket and a fine green petticoat.
She had trousers and a jacket for going out.**

**When the folk were at home having their dinner,
There was a yellow flash (of her) in the glen running off
with the hide.**

**It was late into the night when the women
became thirsty,
That a quarter of Berrey Dhone went as far as Ramsey.**

**She was sent to the gallows,
but received a pardon from them;
She came home over Mullagh Ouyr and picked up a goat.**

According to Manx tradition Berrey Dhone was a witch who haunted the hills and glens adjacent to North Barrule in the north-eastern part of the Island and is said to have run a college of witches. She also gives her name to a pool in the upper Cornaa river above the Corran where divinations were reckoned to have been practised. Whether she

ever existed or not is not known, however her legend seems to have received a certain amount of popularity during the 17th and 18th centuries. What is interesting in this respect is that the mere use of her name at this time was considered an abusive utterance punishable under ecclesiastical law. A case in point is that of a certain Ann Gelling who was presented by the church wardens of Kirk Marown before the ecclesiastical court in 1700 for putting a curse on the minister, saying that he was of the “kindred of thieves and the seed of Berrey Doane”. (v. *Chapter Court Presentments, Kirk Marown, 1700*, MNH MS 10194). *Berrey Dhone* seems to be a Manx version of Ir. *Caillech Bérrí* (‘the old woman of Béara’) (cf. Broderick 1984b).

A few versions of this song survive. The place-names in all variants indicate the north-east of Man as the scene of action. The version here, the best, appears in the Moore collection. It is rather a mysterious song and it is not at all easy to understand its obscure passages. No coherent story is traceable but it seems we have here two separate songs about the same character in combination; the first indicates her territory, the second her activities. Part of the second song in other variants also refers to an Amazonian character called *Margayd y Stomachey* who is said to have appeared in the guise of various animals, particularly an ox or bull, and who is often confused with Berrey Dhone. However, in the song a point of interest does arise: the reference in the penultimate stanza to a quarter of Berrey

Dhone going as far as Ramsey and the mention of the gallows in the last stanza suggest a possible allusion to an enactment of Sir John Stanley made in 1422 relating to the punishment of traitors to the King of Man, viz., "that they be first drawne, and then hanged and quartered and their heads stricken off, and sett upon the Castell towers (i.e., of Castle Rushen), and one quarter upon the Castle bourne, the second quarter at Hollme towne (ie, Peel), the third quarter to be sett at Ramsey, the fowerth quarter at Douglas towne." see Sloane MS. 4149 British Museum; and Mackenzie (1860: 74). For further information on traitor-trials in the Isle of Man during the 15th century, see *Journal of the Manx Museum* (Dec. 1941).

10 *EISHT AS NISH*

Keayrt va mee aeg, agh nish ta mee shenn,
Keayrt va daa vyrneen aym, agh nish cha nel unnane;
Kys ta ny guillyn aegey surranse liorish mraane.

Son ta graih mie ayn, agh foast ta graih sie,
Keayrt hug mee graih dab en aeg, agh v'eh graih ro vie;
Kys ta ny guillyn aegey surranse liorish mraane.

Va billey beg gaase ayns garey my ayrey;
V'eh skeayley ny banglaneyn echey foddey as lhean;
Kys ta ny guillyn aegey surranse liorish mraane.

V'eh goll rish y ven aeg shen v'eck rouyr deiney sooree,
Cha row's eck ayns e keeal er quoi jeu dy reih;
Kys ta ny guillyn aegey surranse liorish mraane.

Dy beigns er ve maree sy gharey shen my hoie,
Ny shooyll fo ny biljyn marish my ghraih;
Kys ta ny guillyn aegey surranse liorish mraane.

Tra va shin paitchyn ayns shen va shin cloie,
Agh tra daase ee seose, hie ee magh as yeigh mee mooie;
Kys ta ny guillyn aegey surranse liorish mraane.

Tra va mee roish nish my ghuilley beg dooie,
Va paagaghyn dy liooar aym, agh nish
cha nel mee cooie;
Kys ta ny guillyn aegey surranse liorish mraane.

**Once I was young, but now I am old;/once I had two
sweethearts, but now I have none;/how the young lads
suffer at the hands of women!**

**For there is good love, but still there is bad love;/once I
did love a young lady, but it was too good a love; how
the young lads suffer at the hands of women!**

There was a little tree growing in my father's garden/it spread its branches far and wide;/how the young lads suffer at the hands of women!

It was like that young woman who had too many suitors,/she had no idea which one to choose;/how the young lads suffer at the hands of women!

Would that I had been with her sitting in that garden,/or walking under the trees with my love;/how the young lads suffer at the hands of women!

When we were children we used to play there,/but when she grew up she went out and shut me out;/how the young lads suffer at the hands of women!

When I was a pleasant young man once upon a time,/I had plenty of kisses, but now I'm not fit;/how the young lads suffer at the hands of women!

The air here is taken from the Moore collection, however, the words come from a version of the song recorded by Mona Douglas, some of which are identical with Moore's. Another version appears in the Clague collection under the title *Ta billey beg glass ayns garey my yishig* (There is a little green tree in my father's garden). Both Moore's and Douglas's versions contain a single-line refrain attached to each

couplet, which does not fit the Clague air. It would seem that this warrants a combination of two verses in Moore and Douglas excluding the refrain. The use of a refrain in this way in Manx songs is rare, but finds similarity in some Danish and Faroese songs (cf. Gilchrist 1924-26: 304-305).

11 GRAIH MY CHREE

Oh, ghraih my chree, oh, vel oo mârym?
Ghraih my chree, oh, vel uss dooisht?
As mannagh noym graih my chree marym,
Shegin dou eisht geddyn baase fegooish.

Oh, ta my chree lesh seaghyn tooillit,
Ta my aigney trimshey lane.
Nish ta my hie jeh cadley spooillit,
My hoie gyn saveen çheet dy down.

Oh, ghraih my chree, oh, irree as tar hym,
Ghraih my chree, oh, vel uss dooisht?
As mannagh noym graih my chree mârym,
Shegin dou eisht geddyn baase fegooish.

Oh, love of my heart, oh are you with me?/My heart's love, are you awake?/And if I cannot have my heart's love with me,/then I must die without her.

Oh, my heart is burdened with sorrow,/my mind full of grief./Now my house of sleep is plundered,/and I sit unable to sleep deeply.

Oh, my sweetheart, oh, arise and come to me,/sweetheart, oh are you awake?/And if I cannot have my heart's love with me,/then I must die without her.

The air to this song, as recorded here, comes from the Moore collection, while the words are from a fuller version of the song recorded by Mona Douglas. In a recently discovered letter from Mona Douglas to Margaret Creer, Secretary of Yn Çheshaght Ghailckagh, dated 10 May 1928, in reply to a letter from Creer to Douglas concerning aspects of the Manx in some of the songs she (Douglas) recently published, with reference to *Graih my Chree* Mona Douglas explains:

The first verse is identical with that printed under the music in Moore's Ballads [1896: 120]; the second, I believe though I do not know, is an adaptation of the first four lines of Rutter's Creggyn Scarleode as printed in Moore's Ballads [p. 131], [...]; the third verse is virtually a repetition of the first (Douglas-Creer 10.05.1928 after Stephen Miller *Manx Notes* 240 (2016): 4).

That is to say, that the above song *Graih my Chree* is seemingly a concoction put together by Mona Douglas herself.

There are many variants of this air, one being a version of *Mârish ny Fiddleryn* (qv.) *Graih my Chree* is reminiscent of many British night visiting songs and finds similarities with Grey Cock variants and *Here's a health to all true lovers*. Another version of the song as collected by Prof. Jackson from native Manx speaker Thomas Leece, Kerrookeil, Kerroomoar, Malew, Christmas 1950/51 (Jackson 1955: 135-136) runs as follows:

Graih my chree, vel graih ayd orrym?
The red beg, cha nel eh follym;
As voish red beg hig graih mooar;
Voish graih mooar hig graih dy liooar.

**Love of my heart, have you love for me?
I have a little; it (my heart) is not empty
From a little thing will come a great thing;
and from a great thing will come love in plenty.**

12 MANNIN VEG VEEN

Oh, Vannin veg veen t'ayns mean y cheayin,
Aynjee ta lane eeasteeyryn;
Tra ta'n oarn cuirit as ny praaseyn soit
Goll roue dy charragh ny baatyn.

Son Feaill' Eoin beemayd goll roin

Arraneyn Beeal-Arrish Vannin

Dy yeeaghyn son warpyn¹³ skeddan,
Heear sy Chione Roauyr lesh jurnaa liauyr,
Goaill neose nyn shiauill fo'n Charran.

Heear ec y veain as shiaulley dy meen,
Yn tidey keayrt va noi ain;
Stiagh dys Purt Chiarn dy yeeaghyn ny mraane
As dy phaagey nyn myrneenyn.

Goll veih thie dy hie as jeeaghyn son jough vie,
Cha row y lheid ry gheddyn;
Eisht hrog shin shiauill erskyn nyn gione
As hie shin son y Gheaylin.

Heear ec y Chiark as magh ec y Chlett
Y keayn va gatt as freayney;
Roish rosh yn tidey yn Chiggin Vooar
Daa ghooiney gollish teaymey.

Goll seose yn roayrt ta deiney loayrt,
As mennick fliughey nyn lieckan,
Yn flod va roin as foddey voin
Adsyn shegin dooin y gheddyn.

Tra ren shin feddyn sy flod ry gheddyn,
Nagh row ad shen lesh prowal.¹⁴
Tra cheayll shin oc ny skeealyn v'oc,
Nagh cheau shin voin yn famman.

Tra va'n shibbyr eeit as y liggar roit,
As ooilley jeant dy baghtal,
Hie shin dy ronsagh row yn eeast beg fondagh
Dy heet roue hooiin dy aghtal.

Roish brishey yn laa hug shin magh coraa
Cho Leah's va shin er choontal;
Eisht yn chiead saagh haink hooiin dy bwooiaagh
Dansoor shin ee dy lowal.

Ec brishey yn lass v'eh kiune as rea,
Va'n keayn goll-rish traie gheinnee;
Dy chooilley hiauill v'oc fakin goll,
Gyllagh, jeeagh magh son wherree.

Er yn Vaie Vooar¹⁵ va sterrym dy liooar

13 A *warp* was a measure of three fish. In telling out the herring the fishermen would count 40 warps to make a "long hundred" (i.e. 120 fish), to which they added another warp for good luck, and a single herring called *tally*, thus making a total of 124 fish.

14 i.e. seeing if there were any fish caught.

15 *Vaie Vooar*, 'the big bay', i.e. from Fleshwick to Niarbyl, a rich ground for herring fishing. The men fished by night and the appearance of the dawn breaking over *Cronk yn Irree Laa* (Hill of the rising day) was the signal to return to port. This hill also goes by the name of *Cronk ayn Arrey Laa* (Hill of the Day Watch) and hills in the parishes of Bride and Jurby are similarly called. These formed the old Defence system of *watch and ward*, probably instituted by the Norsemen and which was discontinued in 1815. Here it is possible, since the formula *Irree*

Lesh earish fliugh as fliaghey;
Skeddan dy glen yiogh shin ayns shen,
Y ghobbag as y vuc-varrey.

Toshiaght yn 'ouyir bee yn oie gaase liauyr,
Faagmayd nyn mannaght ec y Chiggin;
Higmayd eisht roin dys Doolish ny lhong
As bee giense ain ayns Thie Whiggin.¹⁶

Ayns Thie Whiggin vooar ta jough dy liooar
Lesh palchey lhune as liggar,
As lhiabbee vie dy gholl dy lhie,
Tra veesmayd lesh nyn shibbyr.

Bee paart cheet thie fegooish naight mie,
Ta'n snaie ain eeit ec y ghobbag;
Agh ny mraane-oast hene goaill chymmey jin,
Gra, ta kaart ain foast sy vullag!

**Dear wee (Isle of) Man sited in the middle of the
sea,/living there are many fishermen;/when the barley
is sown and the potatoes planted,/they go to prepare
the boats.**

**We'll be away for St. John's Feastday/to look for
threes of herring./west of Contrary Head with a long
journey,/lowering our sails under Bradda.**

**West at the mine¹⁷ and sailing calmly,/the tide was
against us for a time;/we sailed into Port Erin to see
the women/and to kiss our sweethearts.**

**Going from house to house and looking for good
drink,/there was not the like to be had;/we then
hoisted sail above us/and set out for the Shoulder.¹⁸**

**West at the Hen¹⁹ and out from the Clett²⁰/the sea
began to swell and surge;/before the tide reached the
Big Chicken/two men began pouring out sweat.**

**Getting up the spring tide there are men
speaking/and wetting their cheeks often;/the fleet
before us and far from us/were those we had to reach.**

**When we reached the fleet we were heading for,/they
were already proving the herring./When we heard the
tales they had,/we cast out the tail of our nets**

Laa is not found in Manx for dayrise, but *Irree ny greiney*, and as *Arrey Laa* (day watch) and *Arrey Oie* (night watch) are attested, that the former has been confused with the latter, especially when the latter becomes redundant, and it may be that *Irree Laa* is a product of folk etymology.

16 A renowned ale-house at Douglas Harbour.

17 Below Bradda Head on the south side.

18 Fishing mark off the Calf of Man.

19 Fishing mark off the Calf of Man.

20 Fishing mark off the Calf of Man.

Arraneyn Beeal-Arrish Vannin

When we had eaten our supper and finished the liquor,/and had clearly done everything,/we went to find out whether the little fish was capable/of coming to us handily.

Before daybreak we let out a shout/as soon as we had made a count;/then the first vessel that willing came to us/we answered it according to law.

At daybreak it was calm and tranquil,/the sea was like a sandy shore;/seeing every sail they had flapping/they cried out, look for a wherrey.

In the Big Bay there was a mighty storm,/the weather was wet and rainy;/we would easily get herring there,/the dog-fish and the whale!

At the beginning of the Fall the nights grow long,/and we shall say farewell to the Chicken;/we'll then go to Douglas of the ships/and we'll have a feast at Quiggin's house.

At big Quiggin's house there is plenty of drink/with an abundance of ale and spirits,/and a good bed to sleep in/when we've had our supper.

Some will be coming home without good news/saying our line has been eaten by the dog-fish;/but the hostesses themselves will take pity on us,/saying, we have still a quart left in the cask.

The text to this song was first recorded from Mr. Harry Quilliam of Peel in 1868 and appeared in Harrison (1873). The tune can be found in both the Moore and Clague collections and is set in the Dorian mode; in the former it bears the above title, while in the latter it is called *Hug Shin seose y shiaull mean* (We hoisted the mainsail). Two variations of this tune also appear in Clague: (a) *Cha nel eh liorish Duke ny Chiarn* (it is not by Duke or Lord) and *Arrane y Clean* (Cradle song). The tune recorded here bears some similarities to the Anglo-Irish song *Verdent Braes of Skreen* (Irish Country Songs, ed. Herbert Hughes) and two north-eastern Scottish songs *False Lover Won Back* (Gavin Greig, 93) and *Greenland Fishery* (Gavin Greig, 85 and 87).

The song *Mannin Veg Veen* (its title taken from the opening words) relates the fortunes of Peel fishermen seeking the herring off the south-west coast of Man. The tune is a major variant of the Dorian air.

Herring fishing over the centuries had been of great importance for the Isle of Man, since fish was the staple diet of its inhabitants. This was recognised in a statute of 1610 whereby fishermen had to keep their boats and equipment in

good order. It further decreed that the fishing was to begin each year on 15th July and at night only; in addition fishing was not permitted between Saturday morning and Sunday night. According to the *Chronicles of Man* (cf. Broderick 1979) the herring fishery was evidently a profitable institution as we are told that Bishop Thomas (1332-48) was the “first to exact a tithe of the taxes paid to the rectors of the Island by all foreign workers in the herring fishery”. In 1839 it was reckoned that there were about 490 boats of about eight tons. They were locally built. Today very few Manx fishing boats exist, and the herring are brought in mainly by Scottish fleets. Latterly there has been a resurgence in the fishing industry concentrating on escalop fishing.

13 ARRANE QUEEYL NEEUEE

Sneeu, wheeyl, sneeu,
Roie, wheeyl, roie,
Dy chooilley vangan er y villey
Sneeu er my skyn.
Lesh y ree yn ollan [*rect.* lioree yn ollan]
As lhiam pene y snaie,
Son shenn Trit Trot cha vow ish dy braa.

Spin, wheel, spin, / Run, wheel, run
Every branch of the tree / Spins above me.
The wool belongs to her

And the thread to myself **For old Trit Trott she will never get.**

This comes from the Manx folktale of the *Ben Litcheragh* (Lazy Wife) which is the Manx version of the international folktale motif of *naming the helper* (AT Type 500). Other variations on this theme include *Tom Tit Tot* (Briggs & Tongue 1965), *Rumpelstilzchen* (Grimm Brothers, No. 55), *Whuppity Stoorie* (Petrie, 1950), *King Olav the Master Builder* (Christiansen 1964), *Purzinigele* (Zingerle 1966) and *Little Devil of the Forest* (Massignon 1968).

In the Manx version a lazy wife is given the task by her husband of making some clothes for him from wool as he is in need of new clothing, but there is no hurry on her to spin the wool and she replies *Traa dy liooar* (time enough) to his continual exhortations. But at last his patience came to an ebb and he ordered her to spin the wool within one month or be cast out on to the road. She consented but waited till the last week, and when it became clear to her that she would not be able to finish the job in time, she was away to the mountains to seek the help of the Giant. He agreed to assist on condition that at the end of the week she could guess his name. She considered this no problem until the end of the week drew near, but it happened that her husband, while on his way home, overheard the Giant singing as he was spinning, and he in turn sung the song to his wife, thus learning the Giant's name. However, she cleverly

pretended to be guessing and only on her final attempt does she answer correctly. At this the Giant in a rage called her *mummig yn aaishnee* (fortune-telling woman) and flung the wool at her.

The song given on the record is the version the lazy wife sings on her way to meet the Giant to tell him his name. The other version overheard by the husband and containing the Giant's name runs as follows:

Sneeu, wheeyl, sneeu,
'rane, wheeyl, 'rane,
Dy chooilley chlea er y thie
Sneeu er my skyn.
Lheeish yn ollan, lhiams y snaie,
²¹S'beg fys ec y ven litcheragh
Dy re Mollyndroat my anonym.

(Spin, wheel, spin,
Sing, wheel, sing,
Every beam in the house, spin above me,
The wool is hers, the thread mine,
Little does the lazy wife know
That my name is Mollyndroat.)

21 cf. W Bychan *a wydda'hi mai Trwtyn-Tratyn yw f'ennw i*. 'little was she knowing that Trwtyn-Tratyn is my name'. This appears to be all that survives of this folktale in Welsh (cf. Rhŷs 1901/I:229).

The air is also known in the Isle of Man as the dance tune *Car ny ferrishyn* ('fairy reel').

Abbreviations

AT - Aarne-Thompson, 1961 (qv).
HLSM - A Handbook of Late Spoken Manx (cf. Broderick 1984-86).
OIr. - Old Irish.
ScG. Scottish Gaelic.
W - Welsh.

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