THE MONA MELODIES, A Collection of

ANCIENT & ORIGINAL AIRS
of the Isle of Man.

ARRANGED FOR THE VOICE.

with a Piano Forte, accompaniment.

BY AN AMATEUR,

The Chards by M. I. B.

Dedicated by Permission. To Her Royal Highness

THE DUCHESS OF KENT,
By Her Royal Highnels's Grateful

and Devoted Humble Servant.

C.S. GEORGE.

Price 8/-

London Published at Mitchell's Musical Library & Instrument Warehouses.

159 New Bond St. Jopposite Clifford St./&13. Southampton Row Rufsell Square.

A notice was published dated the 18th of July 1820 to announce that *The Mona Melodies* was now available. *The Mona Melodies* was the first published collection of music from the Isle of Man.

The notice said that copies could be collected from the house of Charles Barrow in Douglas. Charles Barrow was a music teacher, piano tuner, seller of musical requirements and sheet music, and he was also the organist in St George's Church, so eminently respectable. Except the reason he was in Douglas was that, after a career in music in London, partly through his wife's family connections, Charles Barrow had suddenly been appointed in 1801 to work in the Navy Pay Office in Somerset House in the Strand. Between 1803 and 1810, in addition to his salary of £330 per year in the Navy Pay Office, it was found that he'd systematically embezzled twice that amount per year, amounting to about £5,700 in total. In early 1811, Charles Barrow fled to Douglas with his wife and at least one son, John, to put himself beyond the law.

Rather than as Barrow the Embezzler, Charles Barrow was known in Douglas as a musician, and took part in concerts in Douglas and Castletown as well as teaching the piano, in a Castletown and particularly a Douglas which had a large number of people who'd come to the Island to escape debts or to eke out their limited means in a place where the cost of living was inexpensive. Charles Barrow's seems to be the guiding hand on *The Mona Melodies*. He says that some gentlemen brought him their transcriptions of Manx songs, perhaps heard from Manx people in the market place or the taverns, perhaps from servants or tradespeople. And it looks as though Charles Barrow identified an opportunity.

Romantic nationalism had been developing particularly in the eighteenth century, and the work of Robert Burns particularly in collecting and adding to Scottish balladry led to settings being made by Josef Haydn. Songs with a national provenance, with Haydnesque settings became the order of the day. In 1807/08 came the first set of the *Irish Melodies* – a series that was to continue until 1834 - with lyrics nothing to do with the original Irish language songs, but redolent of a romantic Ireland, written in English by Thomas Moore.

I think we can surmise that Charles Barrow saw that these songs from the Isle of Man were different, and that perhaps there'd be a market for them in that same spirit of romantic nationalism. *The Mona Melodies* points out that it's in the same format as the Irish Melodies. And, like the Irish Melodies, it was decided that lyrics in Gaelic wouldn't do, so it was out with the Manx language. And when it came to it, it was decided even a translation of the words was inappropriate, so the tunes would get completely new lyrics.

According to one authority, Charles Barrow's son, John Barrow, had written what was described as a small collection of poems from the Manx tradition. Again, I think we can surmise that Charles Barrow decided to use these as the new, English lyrics for the melodies. Some of John Barrow's pieces refer to Manx history and folklore which had been referenced in books about the Island in the early nineteenth century. The reason I feel that these poems may have been used as a matter of pragmatism is that some of them change the rhyming scheme of the original tune. Illiam Dhone, for example, we know in the Manx has a rhyming scheme of a-a-b-b, but the song to that tune in *The Mona Melodies* becomes a-b-a-b. Perhaps because of that, and perhaps because of limitations of poems pressed into service as lyrics – and perhaps because poetry wasn't John Barrow's forte in any case - some of the words sit a bit uncomfortably in the music.

Charles Barrow arranged the melodies and accompaniments in sub-Haydn style, though not perhaps understanding how to adapt the harmonies for modal tunes.

Nevertheless, here we have lyrics in English and Haydnesque settings. How was this now to be promoted? Rather than take a chance on the open market, subscriptions were to be invited, and here we have a third name to add, that of Catherine St George. As a widow, Catherine Maddocks came to Douglas with her nine children sometime in about 1807/08. She ran a school for young ladies, and continued to do so after her marriage when she became Mrs St George in 1809.

In 1800 Mrs St George had written a novel called Edwardina and had secured as patron Mrs Souter Johnson, whose husband was the commanding officer of the Royal Marines. The idea was to secure a prestigious patron, and that would inspire others to become subscribers, mainly, I suppose, for the snob value. In 1817 Mrs St George wrote another novel, and this time notably secured as patron Princess Charlotte, who was the heir presumptive of George IV, being the only legitimate child of the king and Caroline of Brunswick.

I think we have to surmise that, noting Mrs St George's success in obtaining patrons, she was enlisted to do so for *The Mona Melodies*, and she succeeded in dedicating *The Mona Melodies* to Her Royal Highness the Duchess of Kent. The Duchess of Kent was Princess Elizabeth of Saxe-Coburg-Saalfeld, and she was married to George IV's brother Edward, Duke of Kent. The Kents subscribed for several copies, and among other subscribers were various other royal highnesses, honourables, ambassadors and ladies and gentlemen. The list of subscribers in *The Mona Melodies* shows about 280 subscription copies.

I mentioned that in 1820 *The Mona Melodies* was advertised as now available. That's scarcely true today. Another copy has very recently been found. There are otherwise only two complete copies one in the Manx Museum and one in the University of Glasgow Euing Collection - and three partial copies, one of which is in the Manx Museum. However, there are two editions identifiable, one naming Catherine St George, but the other not – perhaps the difference between the subscription copies and those for general sale.

Whilst there may be some imperfections in the lyrics or the arrangements, *The Mona Melodies* brings us the first published music from the Isle of Man and presents it in an enjoyable form, together with some background information. Later collectors also found some of these tunes in forms which suggest that *The Mona Melodies* weren't by any means travesties, so 200 years on, we owe a debt of gratitude –

to Charles Barrow, the musical arranger and driving force behind the project;

to his son John Barrow for providing lyrics which enabled the project to go forward; and

to Catherine St George for encouraging subscribers to enable the work to be published,

bringing us the first ever printed collection of music from the Isle of Man in *The Mona Melodies*.

Robert Corteen Carswell RBV 2020

MONA MELODIES 1820

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Transcribed and edited by Culture Vannin in 2020 in recognition of the 200th anniversary of the book.

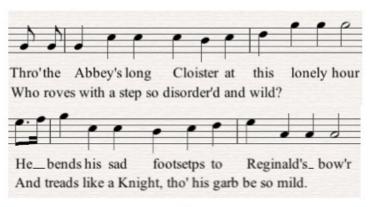
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Brown William or Air "Illiam Dhoan"

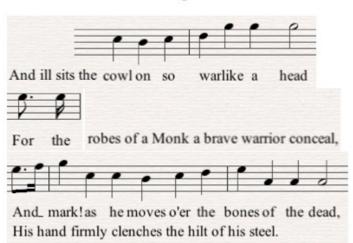




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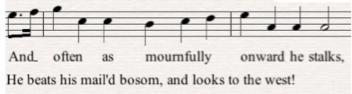
3



4



'Tis Ivar's lone track ev'ry night, where he walks, Religion and vengeance dividing his breast;





"ILLIAM DHOAN". Anglice "BROWN WILLIAM"

This was a nick-name, given by the Manks, to their Countryman, - a Captain William Christian, - on account of the color of his hair, which was a brownish red. The fate of this young man appears to be, even at this day, a subject of mournful recollection on the Island: and the circumstances connected with it may be briefly stated in the following words. The Isle of Man was almost the last place in the British Dominions, which yielded to the authority of Cromwell. In July 1649 Gen. Ireton summoned it in the Protector's name: and it being then the Royalty of the House of Derby, inherited from the Stanley's, tempore Edw: 4th he proposed to James, the seventh Earl of Derby, as the recompense of his surrender, the restoration of his large estates in England. The spirited and memorable reply of the Earl has been too often quoted to make it necessary that we should repeat it. It was not forgotten, however, by his implacable enemies. After the battle of Worcester, when he was taken Prisoner, (under a promise of quarter) he was tried by a Court Martial condemned, and executed at Bolton, in Lancashire, in the year 1651. The Countess of Derby, on hearing the disastrous intelligence of her husband's fate, retired into Castle Rushen, (on the south side of the Isle of Man) determined to defend herself to the last extremity. This heroic resolution, she was prevented from maintaining however, through the less noble, but more prudent conduct of Captain Christian, in whom she chiefly confided. Being a native of the Isle, he was attached to its welfare, which he considered to be identified with its tranquility, and was desirous to save his Countrymen from the miseries of war: he therefore surrendered the Castle to Colonel Birch and Duckesfield, on whose arrival, with ten armed vessels, the whole Island submitted to the government of the Commonwealth. On the accession of Charles the 2d the Island was restored with all its rights, regalities &c. to Charles the eighth Earl of Derby who immediately caused Captain Christian to be executed for treason, by reason of having surrendered up the Country to the Commonwealth. The song of Illiam Dhoan originated from this circumstance.

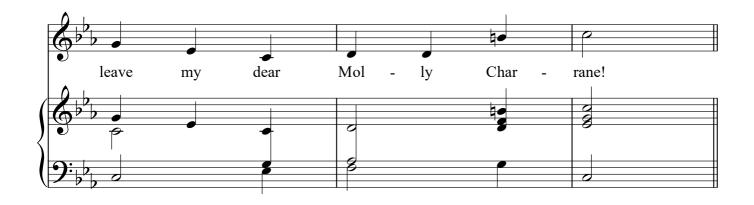
The subject of the annexed melody is taken from a more ancient and more favorite tradition. Under the reign of Reginald a descendant from the Norwegian Conquerors of Mona, Ivar, a young and gallant Knight was enamoured of the beautiful Matilda, by whom he was reciprocally and ardently beloved. Nothing being wanting to complete their happiness, but the consent of the King, Ivar, according to the custom of the Island, presented his bride to the eyes of an amorous and unprincipled Tyrant. The passions of Reginald were immediately enflamed by the modesty and beauty of Matilda, and he instantly accused Ivar of feigned treason, banished him from his presence, and forcibly detained the unhappy maiden. She remained some time, insensible; and when she recovered from the excess of grief and indignation, into which his cruelty had plunged her lover and herself, she was insulted by the caresses and proffered love of the King. Rejecting them with scorn and contempt, she was imprisoned in a solitary chamber of Castle Rushen; the tyrant hoping to subdue her chastity by his severity. In the mean time, the unfortunate Ivar, failing in a desperate attempt to avenge his injuries, assumed the monastic habit; and retired into Rushen Abbey, where he dedicated his life to piety. His heart, however, was unalterably dedicated to Matilda; and in the wildest and most gloomy solitude, he loved

to indulge, without restraint, his tears, his sighs, his recollections of her lovely person. In one of these solitary rambles, he discovered a grotto, which had been long unfrequented; the gloom and silence of this lone retirement, being in unison with the anguish of his mind, he wandered on without reflecting whither it might lead him; as he paced along the subterranean passage, indulging in his reverie of woe, he was aroused by the shrieks of a female: he rushed forward, until he heard a voice, nearly exhausted, exclaim, "Mother of God! save Matilda!" - And through a chink in the barrier, which now alone separated them, he saw the virgin with dishevilled hair, and throbbing bosom, almost on the point of falling a victim to the base and violent designs of Reginald, whose insolence and caresses she had continued to meet with unbending hatred and contempt. Animated by his love, and burning with his wrongs, the desperate Ivar forced a passage through the barrier, rushed upon the Tyrant, and seizing his sword, which was carelessly thrown upon a table, plunged it into Reginald's heart. The lovers, thus wonderfully reunited, escaped through the subterranean passage to the sea shore; and finding a boat, embarked and were safely landed on the coast of Ireland, where they passed the remainder of their lives, in all the raptures of a generous love, heightened by mutual admiration and gratitude.

This tradition is extracted from two or three sources: Wood's Isle of Man; - Beauties of England and Wales, art: Lancashire, Isle of Mann &c. and receives some confirmation from the still existing vestiges of an underground passage leading from Rushen Abbey to the Castle.

Air. Molly Charrane







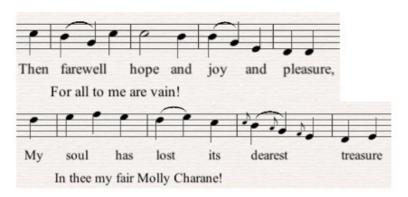
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Oh! bright are thy charms, and brilliant thine eyes, Thine heart without a stain;



Are thine, my sweet Molly Charane!

3

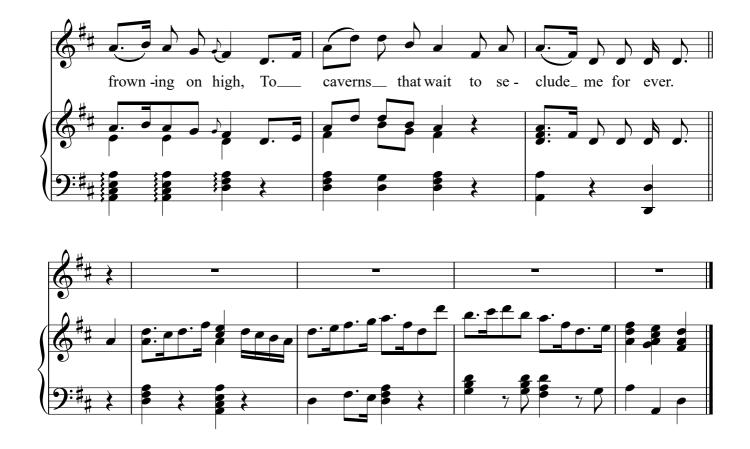


This is, of all others, the favourite Air of the Manks. The Father of Molly Charrane, in "olden times," is said to have been a husbandman, who, digging in a peat bog, had the good fortune to discover a valuable treasure, which had been there, apparently for ages. Out of his abundant generosity, occasioned by this accession of wealth, he gave his daughter a handsome portion, upon her marriage. Being the first Manks damsel who was ever gifted with a marriage dowry. Molly Charrane was immediately, celebrated as the fortunate bride, *par excellence*: but the example, thus for the first time, set by the Manks Father, appears to have been rewarded with a greater degree of caution than the beauty of his daughter.

False Isabel

Air. "Isbel Falsey"



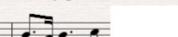


2

There the red Deer shall pause, as he bounds from the hill,



And fearlessly gaze at an outcast like me;



Togeth - er we'll drink from the same limpid rill,



While the timorous Hare at my step shall not flee.

3 To my feet the fleet Hawk shall his quarry pursue, And the Eagle his eyry shall build close to mine; With the rocks_ and the skies and the o-cean in view, On my lonely cold couch of green turf I'll recline Oh! Isabel lovely and faithless and flown, In the silence of solitude still will my mind the rapturous hours it has known When my laurels were blooming, and thou, love, wert kind! 5 forgotten! in this wild desert scene, I will learn from the torments of mem'ry to fly; sorrow__ and anguish one pause intervene, If 'mid

Maiden! how

sweet 'tis to die!

It shall teach me, false

The Storm is Up

Air. "Callin Veg Dhoan" (My Little Brown Girl)





That peaceful rill, that oer its bed Pursued its playful, murm'ring course. In clouds hath veil'd its lofty head, Its swollen waves are dark and hoarse!

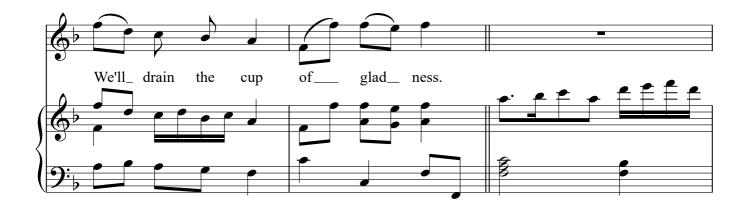
3
A genial sun will soon renew
The faded beauties of to day;
Their charms shall soon salute the view,
And clouds and tempests fade away!



The Praise of Wine

Air. Skilley Brishey (Kirk Bride)







2

The heedless bird that wets his wing,



But, ere again he upward spring,



His drooping plu mage dries for flight.

3

So, Joy too soon will fleet away,



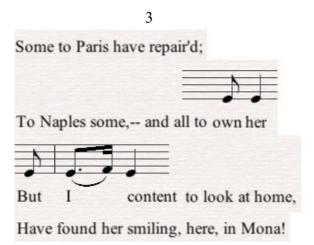
Air. "Berry Dowin"

("The Brown Oxen")





'Tis sweet to kneel to such a Saint, And low I bend the knee before her; None will doubt my vow sincere Who knows how warmly I adore her!



Air. "My Hen Whoomey Vien"

(My Dear Old Man.)

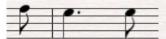




I spoke not;-- for thou read'st my mind,



I pray'd not; -- for thine eye was kind;



And all my silent tongue design'd,

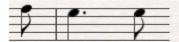
Beam'd in one look of thine.

3

Tho dark has been my wayward fate,



And Joy's approach is slow and late,

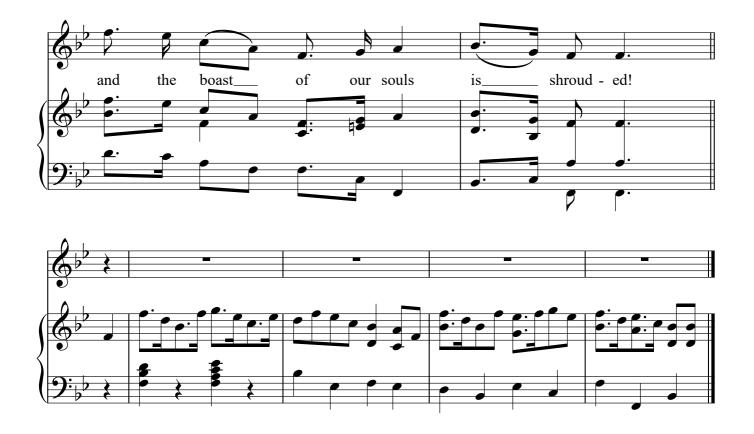


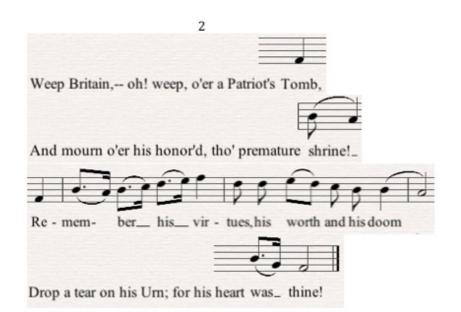
My heart not yet is desolate,

While yet it beats for thee!

Air. "O Sheign Doin"









This plaintive air has been selected for the purpose of paying a feeble tribute of regret to the revered memory of a late beloved and lamented Prince. We forbear to make any more direct allusion to that great public calamity, which will ever make the 23rd of January a day of painful but affectionate recollection, lest we should intrude upon the sacredness of domestic affliction or wound the delicacy of private sorrow!

Air. "Ne Kirree Fo'n Sniaghtey"

("The Sheep Under the Snow")





2

Ye dark wild rocks! - the storm for ever braving; Ye lonely shores! - with fairy voices ringing; Ye restless tides! - the pebbly beach still laving; Ye sounding caves! - where Mermaids oft are singing;

3

Obey your mistress! Guard my soul's best treasure, The mortal youth, whose charms my love inspire! Oh! drown each wand'ring wish in sounds of pleasure, And bid him own for me, an equal fire! - The voice was hush'd; - no human sounds were breathing; But heav'nly music trembles o'er the deep! And soon, in many a vagrant circlet wreathing, The Ocean MISTS invested in every steep!

5

That fair Sea Nymph with deathless love was glowing;And thus her jealous care the boy obscuring,- Her veil of vapors round the Island throwing,
She bade the spell-- bound mists be ever during!

The reader will remember the fable of the Sea Nymph, who, being enamoured of a beautiful youth, a native of England or of Ireland (of course, a matter of warm dispute among antiquaries) conveyed him to the Isle of Mann, and conjured up a mist which she made to hover, perpetually, round the Island, that no rival fair one might elope with her beautiful charge. We must not venture to trespass so far upon a readers patience as to expect the story, more at length; but we may observe, *en passant* that her spell seems to have been pretty well accomplished; and that all who have ever visited the Island, would recognize no great impropriety in its title, were it called Isle of Mists.

Air. "My Graih Nagh Nare Doin Farraghten"

("Had we not better wait, my dear")





2

Those laurels, planted by a Freeman's hand, Long since had wither'd 'neath a Despot's frown; But Honor's stream refresh'd the parching land, And fire and sword were vain, to keep thee down!

3

Thy gales of spring were breath'd in Nation's pray'rs:-Thy quick'ning show'rs - the blood by heroes shed;-Thine ev'ning dews - indignant Glory's tears; Thy blossoms, - those, which grace the mighty dead!

4

Then FREEDOM! Mountain Goddess! still retain That verdant wreath,- and freemen ask no more;- Let slaves embrace their Tyrant's golden chain, And dream; that to be free is to be poor! -

5

Yes! let them scorn our vales and mountains bleak; And fields, beneath whose soil, no treasures lie; For gold and bondage,- let Peruvia speak! - We boast - one little Isle, and LIBERTY!

Hunt the Wren



Manks Dances

Tapsagyn Jeargey Red Cockade







[Manks Dances]

Wandescope The Wanderer



