

GORDON EASTON



The Last of the Clydesdales

1: Last of the Clydesdales

Gordon left school at fourteen to work a pair of horse with his grandfather - so this song, composed by a Fife horseman Archie Webster around 1950, means a lot to him.

Noo come aa ye young plooboys an 'list tae ma tale,
Wha sit roon the table aa drinkin your ale;
I'll tak ye aa back tae yon far distant day,
When I drove the last Clydesdales tae work on Denbrae.

2: The Banks of Inverurie

One of many songs Gordon remembers from his grandmother - a bashful singer who never sang out and about but always had songs to sing when a ceilidh was held in the house.

One day as I went walking and down as I did pass,
By the banks of Inverurie I met a bonnie lass;
Her hair hung o'er her shoulder broad, her eyes white
stars did shine,
On the banks o Inverurie and oh gin she were mine.

3: The Bonnie Lass o Fyvie

A famous song dating from Jacobite times. Fyvie was a staging post on the military route between Aberdeen and the garrison at Fort George on the Moray Firth.

Now there was a troop of Irish dragoons,
And they were stationed in Fyvie O,
And the captain's faan in love wi an awfa bonnie lass,
And her name is caad Pretty Peggy O.

4: The Barnyards o Delgaty

The farm of Barnyards on the Delgaty castle estate a mile from Turriff gave rise to one of the most famous of the old bothy ballads.

As I gaed doun tae Turra market,
Turra market for tae fee,
I fell in wi a fairmer chiel,
Fae the Barnyards o Delgaty.

5: Bonnie Bessie Logan

An old song - one of his grannie's favourites.

Now Bonnie Bessie Logan she's handsome young an fair,
And the very wind that blows, it lingers in her hair;
She's aye sae fleet an bonnie as she steps ower the lea,
For bonnie Bessie Logan she's ower young for me.

6: Briggie's Gerse Park

Full of Gordon's rich Buchan dialect, the song tells the tale of Tammy Reid's attempt to clear Briggie's grass meadow of mole-hills. An old poem set to a tune *Cock o the North* by Gordon.

Noo Briggie's gerse park wis a mess wi the moles an the
nowts meat wis cut doun be half;
Wi the weather bein dry, the gerse etten sae bare, tae
keep them in meat wis a chauve;
So they got Tammy Reid a stout halflin chiel tae scatter
the heaps wi a spad,
The park it wis big, twenty acre an mair, and the heat nearly
drave Tammy mad.

7: Fee'd tae the Drum

Composed by Frank Henry brought up in the Cabrach between Huntly and Aberdeen. A young man goes to the feeing market tae look for a new job and agrees to a contract but gets more than he bargained for.

At ae Martinmas term the grieve fae the Drum,
Tappit me on the shouder and spiered gin I'd come
Tae watch his first pair for a winter half year,
Wi a big cleekit horse and a ringle ee'd meer.

8: Jimmy Raeburn

The hero of this well known transportation ballad is reputed to have been a baker in Glasgow sentenced for petty theft - a song that Gordon remembers from his grandmother and also from the singing of Jessie Murray from Portsoy.

My name is Jimmy Raeburn fae Glesga toun I came,
My place o habitation I had tae leave in shame;
Fae ma place o habitation noo I maun gyang awa,
And leave the bonnie hills an dales o Caledonia.

9: My ain Native Buchan

Composed as a poem by Alec Elphinstone and set to a tune *Bonnie Strathyre* by Gordon.

Noo there's meadows by Donside and mountains by Dee,
And there's lots o grand sights in the city tae see;
But there's naeither place that tae me can compare,
Wi ma ain native Buchan sae fresh and sae fair.
For its oft in my memory I see eence again,
The aul thackit hoosie, the wee but and ben

For as bairnies we played in the howe by the burn,
An there in my fancy I often return.

10: The Laird o Drum

The Laird had been married to a daughter of the Gordons of Hundly. While he was away to the Jacobite wars she divorced him. When he came home he fell for a young shepherd lass and asked her to marry but his brother and family did not approve. Another fine old ballad from Gordon's granny.

The Laird o Drum a huntin gaed,
'Twas in the mornin early,
An there he met wi a fair young maid,
She wis shearin her fairther's barley.

11: The Randy Piper

From the singing of Duncan Macrae in the Para Handy TV series.

A randy heilan piper chiel come down the village street,
Wi tartan kilt an rumpled hose aul bauchles on his feet;
Wi his pipes aneth his oxter, ribbons trailin in the glaur,
An when he started playin he wis heard fae near an far.

12: Yellow on the Broom

A song by Adam McNaughtan based on the life of Scots traveller Betsy Whyte.

I ken ye dinna like it lass tae winter here in toun,
The scaldies they misca us and they try tae ring us down;
It's hard tae raise three bairns in a single flae-box room,
But I'll tak ye on the road again when yellow's on the broom.

13: Mains o Pittendree

An original poem by JC Milne of Memsie was adapted by the Rev Charlie Burnie of Tyrie with a tune put to it by Gordon. A young loun leaving school to start work on the farm plans that all will 'go with a bang'.

I'll swipe the gripe and bed the kye tae keep them fine
an clean,
An touse oot their bonnie tails till they aa look like a
queen;
I'll gie them bits o ile cake and black treacle on their
streae,
And aye a shave o corn when it comes tae Hogmanay.

14: Muckin o Geordie's Byre

A cornkister by the great George Morris. He and his brother in law Willie Kemp vied to outdo each other in writing the comic cornkisters and this is one of Gordon's favourites.

At a relic aul croft upon the hill,
Jist roun the neuk fae Spottie's mill,
Tryin aa his life the time tae kill
Wis Geordie MacIntyre.

15: The Beggar Man

Gordon's fine version of the The Beggar Man - a song whose authorship is often attributed to King James VI - comes from his grandmother's repertoire.

A beggar man come ower yon lea,
He wis seekin alms for charity;
He wis seekin lodgins for charity,
Wad ye lodge a beggarman.

16: The Tyrie Song

A song in praise of Tyrie, composed in the late 1800s by a man from Rosehearty who was feed'd at Tyrie, who was also a fine musicain and led the singing as precentor at Tyrie kirk.

The leaves were fa'in frae the birk,
As I gaed doun be Tyrie kirk,
Wha hoolets cry when it is mirk,
And frichen fowk at Tyrie.
The Tyrie kirk is auld an wee,
There's naething grand for folk tae see,
Yet worthy buddies live and dee,
Around the kirk o Tyrie.

17: The Bleacher Lassic o Kelvinhaugh

A favourite old song to end the selection.

Ae simmer's evenin I went a-walkin,
Awa doun by the Broomielaw;
It wis there I met wi a fair young maiden,
She had cheeks like the rose and her skin like snaw.

Credits

Recordings by Tom Spiers. Production, design and transcriptions by Peter Shepheard. All songs copyright control or arranged Gordon Easton. Full song texts and a glossary of Scots words can be accessed online at www.springthyme.co.uk/ah05

- 1: The Last of the Clydesdales 1.52
- 2: The Banks of Inverurie 4.41
- 3: The Bonnie Lass o Fyvie 4.32
- 4: The Barnyards o Delgaty 4.10
- 5: Bonnie Bessie Logan 2.12
- 6: Briggie's Gerse Park 3.19
- 7: Fee'd tae the Drum 3.05
- 8: Jimmy Raeburn 2.29
- 9: My ain Native Buchan 2.53
- 10: The Laird o Drum 6.48
- 11: The Randy Piper 2.17
- 12: Yellow on the Broom 3.45
- 13: Mains o Pittendree 3.59
- 14: Muckin o Geordie's Byre 3.29
- 15: The Beggar Man 4.55
- 16: The Tyrie Song 5.08
- 17: The Bleacher Lassie o Kelvinhaugh 3.34

*Recorded live at the annual Fife Traditional Singing Festival
May 2004 to 2007*

AUTUMN HARVEST

Balmalcolm House, Balmalcolm, Cupar, Fife KY15 7TJ Scotland
tel: ++44 (0) 1337 830773 • internet: www.springthyme.co.uk
Autumn Harvest AH 005 ©(P)2007