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Song to America (Excerpt) A) By John MacDonald (John the Hunter) I left my country and my homeland, I left merri? ment behind: I left the dear beloved place and my fond friends there: I left enjoyment where it was available, in the land of hills and cairns. My cause of despondency is that I could not always stay there. B) I left behind the men who wore the tartan, most handsome in form and hue: fine strong sturdy war? riors, lads of fairest aspect: brave, robust, large-limbed handsome men, the ruddy cheeked, kilted ones who would be victorious in time of need. C) MacDonalds would be finely dressed, taking no back? ward step: their kilts and garters, tartan coats, hose speckled and spotted, in new dark-blue col? oured bonnets, first in the ranks: they were the warriors who would never yield, courageous in armed battle. D) Often I ascended the ridge with my gun primed in my hand, it was my desire then to travel the moun? tains with my lean hound on leash: climbing de? files and rough lands while hunting the son of the stag: often I felled him with my bullet tho' his pace was swift. E) On a still morning it was my desire to travel, dog at heel with my trusty double gun: when I would take aim, blasting lead and powder, that was the trade I loved among the winding passes on the high hills where the lean stag grows. F) That was my joy and solace, the bellowing of the deer: to be closing in on the most handsome one a- round Holy Cross: traversing crags and hunting them in valleys when their hides were most bright, often did I wound the son of the hind a while be? fore sunrise. G) Now everything that once existed is gone: I am here tied down and enclosed in the land of snow and withered grass, it was not what I was used to: to be seeing swarthy men, ugly, sallow and worth? less with baggy trousers, ill-fitting jackets, that was no neat style. H) You will see a group of them drinking in the store if you go there, shouting and boasting and silly with drink: in a filthy place, mud under foot, grey tankards raised to their mouths, stripping and tearing jackets off them, just like a pack of tinkers. I) Alas, o Lord, that I turned my back on my own coun? try • of my own free will: expecting in this new place that I should see no want; but right to land, gold and riches possessed by all • the matter was completely hidden to me and my expectations de? ceived me. Moladh Alba Nuaidh/In Praise of Nova Scotia Freagairt do dh'Iain Sealgair le Ailean a' Ridge A Reply to John the Hunter by Allan the Ridge A) Chuir thu boilich sios is bosd A) You set down ranting and boasting Air cuisean mor 'nad rann Of great things in your verse, Searbh a' ghloir leam cainnt do bheoil Bitter to me the sound of your speech Oir tha mi eolach thall. Since I am familiar yonder.<sup>1</sup> Air Albainn fhuar, ge fada bhuam i, Cold Scotland, though it be far from me, Suarach leam an call. Small to me the loss of it B' e fath an gruaim an caradh cruaidh The reason for their sorrow was the hardship Bh' air truaghain bhochda bh'ann. Its poor wretched inhabitants suffered.<sup>2</sup> B) Fhuair na h-uaislean i dhaibh fhein. Gun eibhneas a chuir suas. Tha clann na tuath aca 'sna sleibhtean Ann an eiginn ehruaidh, 'S ged theid fear gu feill le bhraean Ann an dreach corr' uair, 'Chuid eile 'n tim bidh e 'na chileig Sgathach, diblidh, truagh. C) 'S aobhar



broin do dh'fhear a phosas 'S e gun doigh ann dha, Ach bean 'na h-onar 's isean og  
'Am bothan frogach, fail. Bidh e 'na Romanach dubh, doithte 'G iomain drobh do  
chach, Bidh iadsan gortach 's esan bochd, A' falbh le phocan ban. D) Ge mor do  
bhosd a fear na croice Ma ni thu leon dhuit fhein. Ged is staogach, tioram fheoil  
Bidh torachd as do dheigh. Theid breith air amhaich ort gu grad Is gad a chur 'ad  
mheill, 'S d' thogairt thar a' chuain air falbh Chionn thu 'bhi 'sealg an fheidh. B)  
The aristocracy got it for themselves Without promoting happiness. They have the  
tenantry in the hills In dire distress: And though one might attend a fair in a plaid,  
Resplendent once in a while. For the rest of the time he will be timid, Fearful,  
wretched and poor. C) A cause of grief to him who marries. Who cannot do  
anything about it. But have a wife and young child alone In a barren hut full of  
holes He will be a dark, swarthy gipsy Driving herds for others<sup>3</sup> While they will be  
needy and he poor, Going about with empty pockets. D) Though you boast greatly  
of the antlered one. If you wound him for yourself' Though his flesh cut up will be  
dry. The pursuit will be after you. You will quickly be seized by the thi'oat And a  
bit put in your mouth. And you will be deported across the sea. Since you were  
hunting deer.' CONTINUED Notes: 1. I.e., Scotland. 2. The emigrants. 3. Probably  
refers to the large herds of sheep which were brought into the Highlands as the  
people were cleared. 4. I.e., your own use. 5. Refers to restrictions on hunting game  
in Scotland, still in effect in many places. (39)