

[Page 32 - Mary MacMillan at Ben Eoin](#)ISSUE : [Issue 39](#)

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He was still breathing. And he had to put two more bullets in him before he killed him. Four bullets he put in the bear--a monster of a thing. So--well, I call him my grandfather, Mac- Isaac out there--he had a double team of horses and a sloven. It's an old sleigh that they used to haul wood and what-have- you. It took 7 men to haul that bear on the sloven--they were going to bury him somewheres in a swamp--7 men. And the poor horses had a hard time to haul him. He was terrible--no wonder--he had all the sheep. So anyway, there was a man out there, he was a composer, a bard, as I call him--and he composed a song. And it was the bear that was supposed to have composed the song. I have a few verses of it. And that will be the end of her. Oran a Mhathain

1. Gur e mis tha fo elginn Seo nam shineadh 'san Ion Mi cho teann air tigh Mhicheal 'G eisdeachd pioban Mhic Leoid Tha na fearaibh nan deannaibh Tighinn 'gam fheannadh 's mi beo Ma thug mi bhuaithe-san gamhainn Cha robh e reamhar gu leoir. 2. 'Se Ragnall Og leis na caran Rinn mo mhealladh ron am Nuair a dh'fhalbh e 'sa mhadainn Bu mhor aisling mu'm chall; Cha bu choir dha bhi gearain Nach tug mi bhean bhuaith' 'sa chlann Ach ma chaidh mi dha'n bhathaich 'S daor a phaigh mi 'ga chionn. 3. Truagh nach mise bha dluth duit Nuair chaidh am fudar na cheo Fhir oig gur ni duilich B'e do dhurachd mo leon: Gun tugainn ort leis na dubhain Mhora dhubha nam spoig Gun gearrainn dhiotsa na lamhan Eadar chnamhan is fheoil. 4. Gur e mis tha fo eiginn 'S bochd Micheal ri sheinn' 'S truagh nach robh mi -3 mile bhua Mu'n do dhirich thu bheinn Le'd ghunna dubailt 's le'd chrios Mharbh thu mise le foill 'S ann le solus na gealaich Thilg thu fairis mi'n raoir. I wish you knew what that meant... (You're remembering very well.) Oh, not too good, dear, not too good. I know anoth? er verse, if I could think of it. And those are songs that had been composed here, right around this neighbourhood. And nobody knows them but old Mary Ann. See, I don't know what's the matter with the people here, if they lost their Gaelic, or they don't want to hear it. They don't remember. But I do. But I lost a lot of it. (Well, if you don't use it that often....) No, dear, I see or hear not a word of Gae? lic. Not a word. Not a word of Gaelic. The Bear Song

1. I am in sore straits, lying here in the mire, so close to Michael's house listening to MacLeod's pipes: the men are rushing out to skin me alive. If I stole a yearling from him, it wasn't that far. 2. It was young Ronald with guile who deceived me be? fore my time. When he left in the morning, great was his dream of my destruction. He shouldn't com? plain since I didn't deprive him of wife or chil? dren, and if I made a trip to the byre, I paid dearly for it. 3. Pity that I wasn't close to you when the powder ig? nited • young man, it is a sad thing that you de? sired to harm me: I would attack you with the great black claws in my paw, I'd cut your hands off, both flesh and bones. 4. I am in distress, what a pity that Michael sings of it. I wish I were 3 miles from you before you ascended the mountain. With your double musket and belt, you treacherously slew me • by the light of the moon, you knocked me over last night. Our thanks to Pam Newton, Point Edward, who inter? viewed Mary MacMillan; and to Effie MacCorquodale Rankin, Mabou, who transcribed and translated the Gaelic song.



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