

ANTOR

Craic of Dawn

The Verdant Braes of Screen

We found this song in Colm O Lochlainn's "More Irish Street Ballads" as well as in Éamonn Jordan's "Whistle and Sing! (Book 2)".

Apparently this song relates to Ballinascreen in Co. Derry. The tune we play in between is based on a Zwiefacher from Bavaria called "Unser oide Kath" ("Our Old Kate"). The odd variation we play here originates from a session our fiddlers had with fiddle player Chris Wood and box player Andy Cutting from England during the Folkfest Bobenheim in September 2004. As the tune is said to be well-known among Bavarian traditional musicians, it's kind of a Bavarian "Kesh Jig", we suppose.

Das Lied „The Verdant Braes of Screen“ stammt aus dem Norden Irlands. Daher tauchen Wörter wie „brae“ für „Hang“ und „wee“ für „klein“ auf. Siggie brachte uns auf die Idee, den Zwiefachen „Unser oide Kath“ in das Lied zu integrieren.

As I roved out one evening fair
By the verdant braes of Screen
I set my back to a hawthorn tree
To view the sun in the west country
And the dew on the forest green

A lad I spied by Abhann's side
And a maiden by his knee
And he was as dark as the very brown wood
And she all whey and wan to see
All whey and wan was she

Oh sit you down on the grass, he said
On the dewy grass so green
For the wee birds all have come and gone
Since I my true love have seen, he said
Since I my true love have seen

Then I'll not sit on the grass, she said
Nor be a love of thine
For I hear you love a Connaught maid
And your heart's no longer mine, she said
And your heart's no longer mine

And I will climb a high, high tree
And I'll rob a wild bird's nest
And back I'll bring whatever I do find
To the arms that I love best, she said
To the arms that I love best.

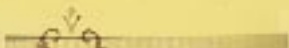


The Munster Buttermilk / Trip to Athlone / Dusty Windowsills

The first jig Greg learned from his wife Meike, a flute player, who learned it herself from flute player Tara Diamond.

Greg learned the second jig at a session in "Hiúdaí Beag's" in Bun Beag (Bunbeg), Co. Donegal, and the third one from fiddler Stephen Campbell, who lives in Cionn Caslach (Kincasslagh), Co. Donegal. The third jig was composed by Chicago whistle player Johnny Harling. One day he went to a friend's apartment to collect something, when suddenly a tune came to his mind. As he couldn't find anything to write it down on, he wrote it into the dust on a nearby windowsill.






The Gem of the Roe

The song tells the story of Finola O'Cahan, daughter of the Irish chieftain Dermot O'Cahan. When she fell in love with a young MacDonald chieftain from the Hebrides, her father agreed to the wedding, but her lover had to promise that she would be sent back home if she was in any trouble. One day, the O'Cahans heard the banshee cry the death of an O' Cahan. As nobody of the O'Cahan family in their land was found dead, they thought of Finola and sailed over to the Hebrides, where they found her husband in grief and Finola dead. Dermot O'Cahan dug up his daughter and brought her back home to Ireland. Marcus discovered the song on the debut album of "Celtic Thunder", a band from the Baltimore/Washington, D.C. area in the U.S.A.

Dieses Lied geht auf eine Zeit im Spätmittelalter zurück, in der es zahlreiche Familienbande zwischen den Clans im Norden Irlands und im Westen Schottlands gab. Hier heiratet ein Spross der MacDonalds (Lords of the Isles), die von der Insel Islay aus über einen Großteil der Hebrideninseln sowie die Halbinsel Kintyre herrschten, eine Tochter aus dem Clan der O'Cathans, die in der heutigen nordirischen Grafschaft Derry ansässig waren.





In the lands of O'Cahan,
Where bleak mountains rise,
O'er whose brown ridgy tops now
The dusky cloud flies,
Deep sunk in a valley
A wild flower did grow,
And her name was Finola, the Gem of the Roe.

From the Isles of Aebudae,
Appeared in my view,
A youth clad in tartan,
It's strange as it's true,
A star on his breastplate,
unstrung with his bow
And he sighed for Finola, the Gem of the Roe.

To the grey shore of Alba
his bride he did bear
but short were the fond years
these lovers did share
for thrice on the hillside
the banshee cried low
'twas the death of Finola, the Gem of the Roe.

No more up the streamlets
Her maidens will hie,
when wan's her red cheek
And bedim'd her blue eye,
In silent affliction
deep sorrow shall flow,
Since gone is Finola, the Gem of the Roe.



Lord Seaforth / Jimmy Lyons' / The Hare in the Corn

Greg found the first tune, a Scottish strathspey, on the debut album of Claire Mann, a young flute player from Newcastle in England.

The second tune is connected with the late Jimmy Lyons from Teileann (Teelin), Co. Donegal. Greg learned this highland from fiddle player Stephen Campbell.

Siggi found the third tune in Feldman's and O'Doherty's "The Northern Fiddler". The reel is connected to Johnny Doherty, the famous Donegal fiddler.



I Courted a Wee Girl

Wir kennen dieses Lied vom Album "At the End of the Day" der Band "Dervish" aus Sligo.

I courted a wee girl for many's the long day
And I slighted all others who came in my way.
And now she's rewarded me to the last day
For she's gone to be wed to another.

The bride and bride's party to church they did go.
The bride she rode foremost she put the best show.
And I followed after with a heart full of woe
To see my love wed to another

The bride and bride's party in church they did stand.
Gold rings on their fingers, a love by the hand.
The man she's wed to has houses and land.
He may have her since I couldn't gain her.

The next time I say her, she was seated down neat.
I sat down beside her not a bite I could eat.
For I thought my love's company far better than meat.
Since love was the cause of my ruin.

The last time I saw her she was all dressed in white
And the more I gazed on her she dazzled my sight.
I lifted my hat and I bade her goodnight,
Here's adieu to our false-hearted lovers.

I courted that wee girl for many's the long day
And I slighted all others that came in my way.
And now she's rewarded me to the last day
For she's gone to be wed to another.

So dig me a grave and dig it down deep
And strew it all over with a primrose so sweet
And lay me down easy no more to weep
Since love was the cause of my ruin.



Larry Redican's Bow / The Bird's Nest / The Man of Aran

The first reel was composed by Larry Redican, a fiddle player from Dublin, who emigrated to the U.S.A. and lived on Long Island, New York. Greg learned this reel at a session in "Hiúdai Beag's" in Bun Beag (Bunbeg), Co. Donegal.

The second and third reel Greg learned from Dublin box player Peter Browne at the annual Scoil Gheimhridh Frankie Kennedy (Frankie Kennedy Winter School) in Donegal.

The third reel was composed in 1975 by Dublin whistle player Darach de Brún for the wedding of Tommy Walsh, the Dublin box player and composer of the well-known tune "Inisheer". At first, the song was meant to be called "The Dispensation Reel", as Walsh had had to get permission from Rome to marry a Muslim from Morocco. But at least de Brún called it "The Man of Aran", since the wedding reception was held in a Dublin pub called "The Man of Aran".





Sweet Jenny of the Moor

We found this song in Colm Ó Lochlainn's "More Irish Street Ballads". It's a broken token song such as "The Dark Eyed Sailor", "The Plains of Waterloo" and a couple of other songs. The topic of this kind of song is basically always the same: a young man has to leave his girl to go to sea or war, but before they part he gives her one half of a token like a coin or a ring. On his return – many, many years later - his looks have dramatically changed, so that the girl isn't able to recognize him at all. He starts off a conversation to find out if she's been true to him. When he discovers that she has not looked at another man the last couple of decades, he shows her his half of the token. Surprise, surprise...

The jig we play in between is connected with the playing of East Galway fiddler Paddy Fahy. Greg learned it from box player Peter Browne.

In diesem Lied, das zu den "broken token songs" zählt, dreht sich wieder einmal alles um ein in zwei Teile gebrochenes Andenken, das irgendwann einmal dazu dient, sich daran zu erinnern, zu wem man gehört. Aus dem selben Grund haben wir uns T-Shirts mit „An Tor“-Aufdruck machen lassen, in denen man gerade bei Festivals bequem schlafen kann.

One morn of recreation, as I stood by the seaside,
The sun was gently rising, bedecked all his pride,
A lovely maiden sitting there at the cottage-door,
With roses blooming on her cheek, sweet Jenny of the Moor.

I stood in contemplation, as I viewed the charming scene,
And filled with admiration as in a fairy dream;
Enchanted by the fair one, as she walked along the shore,
A gathering of choice sea-weeds was Jenny of the Moor.

We both sat down together by the pleasant shady side,
I said, My dear, if you agree, I'll make of you my bride.
I've plenty at my own command, brought from a foreign shore,
And proud's the man that wins your hand, sweet Jenny of the Moor.

I have a true love of my own, so long he's been from me,
And only for him I will be, as long he's to the sea,
His vows were fondly spoken when we parted at the door,
For I will wait till he returns, said Jenny of the Moor.

If your love is a sailor, come on tell me now his name.
His name is Dennis Ryan and from Newry Town he came;
With roses I will greet him, when he returns to the shore,
We'll join our hands in wedlock bands, said Jenny of the Moor.

If Dennis was your true love, I know him very well,
he fought with me in Scotland, by a rifle-shot he fell
Behold this true-love token, which upon his hand he wore,
She fell into my arms and cried, sweet Jenny of the Moor.

Since you have proved so kind and true, look up, my girl, I cried,
See me; I'm Denis Ryan, who's standing by your side;
Now that we are united we'll be living on the shore,
I swear that I will stay with you, I'll go to sea no more.



O'Keefe's / The Old Favourite / Thadelo's

It was on Valentia Island in Kerry, where Greg learned the first slide from Vera Orschel, a German fiddle player who lived there for a couple of years. Greg got the second slide from Patsy McDonagh, a box player from Ros an Mhíl (Rossaveal), Co. Galway, and member of "Shaskeen", at the annual Feis Cheoil of the Rhine Valley Irish Association in Strasbourg, France. The third slide is named after Thadelo Sullivan, a fiddle player from Annaghbeg in the Sliabh Luachra region. Elke found it on the first album of "Beginish".

The Roving Bachelor / Give us a Drink of Water

The first tune is oft-times referred to as "Tommy Peoples'". Greg learned it from Rosses fiddler Stephen Campbell during his visit to Germany in October 2002, when he played with singer and guitarist Ian Smith at the "Irish Spirits Festival". Later on that day, Stephen, Ian and Greg joined the other musicians, who took part in that festival, to do a tour of the vineyards on a tractor trailer and to taste some local wine – a kind of amusement you can't have in the Rosses, at least not yet. The second tune Greg learned from box player Peter Browne.

"The Roving Bachelor" ist eine etwas ungewöhnliche Version eines Reels, der zumeist "Tommy Peoples'" genannt wird.

„Give us a Drink of Water“ bekam Greg vom Akkordeonisten Peter Browne bei der Frankie-Kennedy-Winterschule in Donegal vorgespielt, nachdem er ihn nach einem schönen und einfachen Stück gefragt hatte.



Welcome Home Gráinne / Winter Sun / The Donegal Tinker

The march "Welcome Home Gráinne" is associated with the playing of Donegal fiddle legend Johnny Doherty, who used to play a whole set consisting of this march, a jig and a reel. That set of tunes is still played at the session in "Hiúdaí Beag's", in Bun Beag, Co. Donegal, from time to time and it was there that Greg learned it.

"Winter Sun" was composed by Marcus and Siggí in Bobenheim, Palatinate, on the occasion of Greg's 30th birthday (which was sometime during the last century).

Elke and Siggí learned the last tune from Dublin fiddler Paul O'Shaughnessy at the Scoil Gheimhridh Frankie Kennedy (Frankie Kennedy Winter School) in Donegal.

Diese drei Reels bringen wir mit der Grafschaft Donegal in Verbindung. Während der erste und der dritte auch tatsächlich Donegal-Stücke sind, soll der zweite zumindest so klingen, als sei er während einer stürmischen Nacht in einer weißgekalkten Cottage bei einer Flasche klarer Limonade, die kein Etikett hatte, entstanden.



She is like the Swallow

Nils discovered this song on an album called "Songs from the Cold Seas", which was produced by French-Algerian composer Hector Zazou. Jane Siberry, a singer from Toronto, sings it on that album. The song is supposed to come from Newfoundland.

She's like the swallow that flies so high.
She's like the river that never runs dry.
She's like the sunshine on the Lee shore.
She loves her love but she'll love no more.

'Twas down in the garden this fair maid bent
a-pickin' a primrose just as she went.
The more she plucked and the more she pulled
until she got her apron full.

She climbed on yonder hill above,
To give a rose unto her love;
He has two hearts instead of one,
She says, Young man, what have you done?

How foolish, how foolish you must be
To think I love no one but thee.
The world's not made for one alone,
I take delight in everyone.

She took her roses and made a bed
a stony pillow for her head.
She laid her down, no more she did say
but let her roses fade away.

She's like the swallow that flies so high.
She's like the river that never runs dry.
She's like the sunshine on the Lee shore.
She loves her love but she'll love no more.



Lá Fliuch Fómhair i nGleann Leithín/ Wedding Waltz

The first waltz was composed by Marcus during a trip to the Donegal Gaeltacht in October 1999. He was sitting in front of the open fire in the house of Breege and Joe McGill and it was "a wet autumn day in Gleann Leithín" – hence the name. Gleann Leithín (Glenleighan) is a townland in Central Donegal and, according to local folklore, the glen got its name from a man called Leithín, one of Fionn Mac Cumhail's acquaintances. Marcus would like to dedicate the tune to Joe McGill, who left us in 2002.

The second waltz was composed by Nils for the wedding party of Elke and Sigg, our fiddle players, which took place in October 2004.

Elke und Sigg heirateten im Herbst 2003, fast ein Jahr später fand ihr Polterabend statt und kurz darauf ihre Hochzeitsfeier. Nun warten wir noch auf Siggis Junggesellenabschied.





AN TOR

Nils Nolte flute, lead vocals

Elke Zörntlein fiddle, backing vocals

Siggi Zörntlein fiddle, viola (5), backing vocals

Greg Ostermann box

Klaus Feketics bouzouki, 12-string guitar (9), backing vocals

Marcus Metz steel-string guitar, nylon-string guitar (5), piano (4), backing vocals

guest musicians:

Harriet Earis – harp (12)

Richard Carter – piano (11)

Olli Glassl – fretless bass (3, 9, 12)

Guido Plüschke – bodhrán (1, 2, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 12), shaker (12)

All tracks traditional except:

“Dusty Windowsills” – composed by Johnny Harling

“Larry Redican’s Bow” – composed by Larry Redican

“The Man of Aran” – composed by Darach de Brún

“Winter Sun” – composed by Marcus Metz and Siggi Zörntlein

“Lá Fliuch Fómhair i nGleann Leithín” – composed by Marcus Metz

“Wedding Waltz” – composed by Nils Nolte

Recorded at Elke’s and Siggi’s house in Lörzweiler between August 2004 and August 2005

Engineered and mixed by Nils Nolte / Nakedstreet Studios, www.nakedstreet.de

Mastered by Pauler Acoustics

Produced by An Tor

Liner notes by Marcus Metz and Klaus Feketics

Design and photography by Julia Kühn

Thanks / Dank / Buíochas / Merci:

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- 1 The Verdant Braes of Screen song 3:32 min
- 2 The Munster Buttermilk / Trip to Athlone / Dusty Windowsills jigs 5:26 min
- 3 The Gem of the Roe song 4:02 min
- 4 Lord Seaforth / Jimmy Lyons' / The Hare in the Corn strathspey / highland / reel 4:31 min
- 5 I Courted a Wee Girl song 4:45 min
- 6 Larry Redican's Bow / The Bird's Nest / The Man of Aran reels 4:40 min
- 7 Sweet Jenny of the Moor song 4:13 min
- 8 O'Keefe's / The Old Favourite / Thadelo's slides 3:30 min
- 9 The Roving Bachelor / Give us a Drink of Water slow reel / slip jig 4:26 min
- 10 Welcome Home Gráinne / Winter Sun / The Donegal Tinker march / reels 6:11 min
- 11 She is like the Swallow song 3:25 min
- 12 Lá Fliuch Fómhair i nGleann Leithín / Wedding Waltz waltzes 8:07 min

