

Texts for the Funeral in Scots

1. Dougal Graham from 'Jockey and Maggy's Courtship'

Dougal Graham (c.1724-1779) was a native of Stirlingshire and became the skellat bellman of Glasgow from about 1770. He was an accomplished writer in Scots with works published from the 1740's onwards. In this part of the story he describes the last moments of Jockey's mother, here given as *mith.*, and the subsequent complaints about being short-changed by the bellman and gravedigger, followed by the funeral refreshments.

Mith: Dear Johnny wilt thou bring me the doctor he may do me some guide, for an my heart warn a sick an' my head sae sair, I think I may grow better yet.

Jock: A weel mither, I'se bring the doctor, the minister, an' my uncle.

Mith: Na, na, bring nae ministers to me, his dry cracks'll do me but little guid, I dinna want to see his powder'd pow, an' I in sic an ill condition; get me a pint o' drams in the muckle bottle, an' set in the bole in the back side o' my bed.

Jock: A deed mither ye're in the right o't, for ye want to be weel warm'd within: to chace the call wind an' frosty water out at your back side.

Then awa he rins to draff Meg's at the Kirktown, an' brings a bottle in every hand, out wi' the cork an' gies her ane in o'er, she sets it to her gab an' squattles up a mutchkin at a waught, which was like to wirry her till she fell a rifting and roaring like an auld blunder-bush.

Mith: Hech hay, co' she, but that maks an alteration and wears awa the wind.

Wi' that her head fell to the cod and she sughte awa, like a very saint or drunken sinner.

Jock: O! Maggy, Maggy, my mither's lost her breath, (she'll no live lang without it,) I doubt she be dead already, and nae body seen her but ye and I and oursels twa: an' she had been fair o'er seen it maksna, I'll no ha'd this a fair strae death indeed, fy Maggy, cry in a' the neighbours to see her die, although she be dead. O an' she wad but shake her fit, or wag her muckle tae, it wad ay be some satisfaction: but in came the neighbours in a hush, dinging ither down in the door.

Jock: Come awa sirs, for my mither's as dead as a mauk, good be thanket for't, but I'd rather it had a been the black mare, or the muckle rigget cow, for weel a wat I'll

een miss her, for she was a bra spinner o' tow; an' cou'd a cardet to twa muckle wheels, she had nae faut but ane an that was her tongue, but she'll speak nae mair, fy gets a dale or a barn door to straught her on, for ay whan she was cauld she was unco kankert an' ill to curch, but I'se hae her yerdet on Wednesday teen.

Come, come, says Maggy, wi maun hae her drest.

Jock: What does the fool mean? Wad ye dress a dead woman, she'll never gang to kirk nor market a' her days again.

Mag: A dear John be at ease, ye ken she mauna be buried as she is, a sark an winding sheet is the least she can get.

Jock: Ah ha Maggy is that what you mean, she has a guid new windin sheet, it was never about her shoulders yet, say Maggy do't a' yoursell, and I'se gar clinkem Bell misure the grave and mak it.

Now when they brought out the corps John told the people they were welcome, to haud in a cheek o' his auld mither wast the gate; and being laid right on the spakes, ha!, ha! quoth he, this is a braw honestly indeed, its mair boukie nor my bridal was, but when they came to the grave, it was o'er short and strait about the mouth, which set John in a great passion, saying a foul fa your naughty fashions master bell man, did not I packshon wi' you for the bried o' my mither's back and the length o' her carkage? an' this hole winna haud her thou's get nae mair o' my change if I sude die the morn.

Uncle Rabbie: Whisht, whisht, stir, this sude be a day o' mourning for your mither, dinna flyte here.

Jock: What the vengeance uncle, sudna fouks die when they're auld? an' am to pay for a hole and get but haf a hole; that's the thing that vexes me, but I'se keep twopence out o' his trencher for't, an' se will I een; but gang ye hame uncle to get cog and cap for the dradgery, and I'll see her get fair play or I gae.

Hame they came in a croud and fell to the cheese and cheeks of leaves and nail, the ale was handed about in cogs and caps, lashing it down o'er like bletchers watering their webs; John blutter'd in the cog like a cow in warm water, till the barm and bubbles came belling out at his nose, saying, a guide health to you a round about, an shoon and shortly may wi a gang the gate may mither's gane, an' I wish them a burying amang the dogs that speaks against it.

NOTES:

The language is typical of the Scots found in printed form in that period. Words which were cognate with English were usually spelled the same way, though before the 18th century the Older Scots spelling system would have applied. Note the following: breath, dead, die, head, minister, neighbours and wear, pronounced in Scots with an 'ee' as *breith*, *deid*, *dee*, *heid*, *meenister*, *neebors* and *weir*; also cow, down, now, out, shoulders, town and thou, pronounced in Scots as *coo*, *doun*, *noo*, *oot*, *shouders*, *toun* and *thoo*; also brought, right and waught, pronounced in Scots as *brocht*, *richt* and *waucht* (with a 'ch' as in loch); and water pronounced as *watter*.

Source: George MacGregor (ed), *The Collected Writings of Dougal Graham 'Skellat' Bellman of Glasgow, Edited with Notes*, Volume II, (Glasgow, 1883).

2. Peter Hately Waddell – The 23rd Psalm

THE Lord *is* my herd, nae want sal fa me.

2. He louts me till lie amang green howes; he airts me atowre by the lown watirs:

3. He waukens my wa'-gaen saul; he weises me roun, for his ain name's sake, intil right roddins.

4. Na! tho' I gang thro' the dead-mirk-dail, *e'en thar*, sal I dread nae skaithin: for yersel *are* nar-by me; yer stok an' yer stey haud me baith fu' cheerie.

5. My buird ye hae hansell'd in face o' my faes; ye hae drookit my head wi' oyle; my bicker is *fu' an'* skailin.

6. E'en sae, sal gude-guidin an' gude-gree gang wi' me, ilk day o' my livin; an' evir mair syne, i' the LORD'S ain houff, *at lang last*, sal I mak bydan.

NOTES

Like Dougal Graham's text above, Peter Hately Waddell decided to spell much of his Scots using conventions normal to English, but he pointed out that readers should be careful to pronounce them as Scots. So, for example, roun is pronounced with an 'oo', dead, dread and head with an 'ee' as *deid*, *dreid* and *heid*, and right with a 'ch' (as in loch) as *richt*.

Source: Peter Hately Waddell, *The Psalms: Frae Hebrew Intil Scottis*, (1871).

3. Johnny Gibb of Gushetneuk

William Alexander was a journalist and novelist among a number of writers working in the Scots language during the late 19th century. His best known work, *Johnny Gibb of Gushetneuk in the Parish of Pyketillim* was published in 1871, and combines English narrative with dialogue in North East Scots. The story is set during the Great Disruption of the Church of Scotland in 1843. Towards the end of the novel Johnny Gibb believes himself to be dying and he makes his will during which he speaks about the role of ministers.

“Ou, we winna dee a single day seener o’ haein’ ony bit tes’ment that we’re needin’ made,” said Johnny, in discussing the point with Mrs.Gibb. “Ye’ll get the souter an’ the smith owre by – an’ Sandy Peterkin. Sandy’s gweed at the pen; an’ they’ll be the executors – Hoot, ‘ooman, dinna be snifterin that gate, aw’m nae awa’ yet. But there’s nane o’ ‘s has a siccar tack o’ life, ye ken; an’ aw’m seer it’s a gryte comfort to you an’ me tee, to hae fowk so weel wordy o’ bein’ lippen’t till in oor sma’ affairs.”

“An’ the merchan’,” suggested Mrs.Gibb, who found some difficulty in maintaining her composure, as Johnny wished her, “wudnin he be tae’en in?”

“Ye’re foryettin the trifle that’s lyin’ wi’ ‘im,” said Johnny. “There’s him an’ Willy McAul baith weel aneuch fit to be trustit. But it’s aye best to keep clear accoonts, aiven wi’ yer nerest freens. Noo, ye ken, the tae half o’ the sain’s o’ oor time’s lyin’ oot wi’ the merchan’ an’ Willy.”

“But ye wadn seek to tak’ it up!”

“Never, never. Fat better eese cud ye mak’ o’t? But nedder the taen nor the tither o’ them wud wunt to be trustee owre fat’s i’ their nain han’.”

“An’ ye wad need the minaster tee.”

“The minaster!” exclaimed Johnny Gibb. “Aw’ won’er to hear ye ‘oman. Only fat need aw say that? It’s the thing that we wus a’ brocht up wi’. The minaster to mak’ yer tes’ament an’ ‘say a prayer’, fan it comes to the push an’ ye canna better dee. An’ syne tak’ an oonwillin’ fareweel o’ the wardle. That min’s me upo’ aul’ Sprottie, fan he was makin’s will; tes’mentin’ this, an’ tes’mentin’ that, ‘an syne there’s the twal-owsen pleuch;’ but aye he pat aff sayin’ fa wud get it – sweer to think aboot partin wi’ ‘t. An’ at the lang an len’th, fan a’thing else wis will’t awa, an’ the minaster speer’t again, ‘Weel, there’s the ploo now?’ an’ says Sprottie, ‘Ou weel, Doctor, aw think aw’ll keep the pleuchie to mysel’ aifter a’.”

“Hoot man,” said Mrs.Gibb, half shocked at Johnny’s apparent levity in the circumstances.

“Weel, weel, a body cann help a bit idle thocht rennin i’ the heid. There’s nane ill o’ speakin’ o’ the aul’ amn – peer ignorant stock. He’s awa’ mony a day sin’ syne; but there’s mony ane jist as oonwillin to tyne the grip’s him, till this day. Hooever, that’s nedder here nor there, we’re nae to countenance settin’ the minaster on to ony sic thing. He’s oor spiritooal guide, an’ ochtna to be made a mere convainience for the sattlement o’ oor war’dly affairs. Fat cud that be but tryin’ to entangle him wi’ the things o’ this life – wastin’ ‘s time, that sude be gi’en to the office o’ the minastery? I won’er fat the Apos’le Paul wud hae said to be socht to dee the buzness o’ a screevener or lawyer, vreetin oot papers fa was to get this an’ an fa was to get the tither thing? Wudnin to taul the man that spak’ o’ sic a thing that his ministry o’ the gospel deman’t ither things o’ ‘im? Ah, weel, weel, I daursay there’s twa three points o’ difference atween Paul an’ a time-servin’ moderate like Maister Sleekabout; an’ a

body cud weel believe that the like o' oor pairis' minaster wud be the best han' o' the twa to seek in aboot fan a puckle gear hed to be tes'mentit."

Source: William Alexander, *Johnny Gibb of Gushetneuk in the Parish of Pyketillum*, (1871)

4. At The Hint O' Hairst, and Mary At The Grave

David Gibb Mitchell (1863-1921) was a native of Strachan in Kincardine. He became Free Church minister of Cramond, now part of Edinburgh, in 1890 and was in the habit of preaching on occasion in Scots. Some of his sermons, prayers and Bible translations were printed as two collections in 1910 and 1917 and two extracts are given here. In the first Mitchell speaks about the *hairst* (harvest) when God gathers in the faithful to heaven, and the in the second the story of Mary who goes to attend the body of Jesus after the crucifixion and how we may deal with death and sorrow.

(a) At The Hint O' Hairst

It is mair happy to gie oot than to tak in. There is mair joy i' the sparklin spirit wi' a smile, an' open haun an' kindly grace, than' i' the cauld heart, the frozen face, the dull e'e, an' the haun aye closed on itself!

There was a time langsyne whan we werena sae happy as we are the day. Providence didna think we were richt wi' only a bonnie warl' an' a hame to bide in. He sent His Son – for He ettled someting mair for us. He kent that life was something mair than the brose caup an' the cleedin. An' yet He thocht it wasna wrang to send His Son doon an' lat us ken that Providence was a Faither, an' had a Faither's hert. That there was a bonnier hame than this an' bonnier hame-haudins i' the warl' up Abune – whaur a' gang hame to be wi' Him, whan the shadows lenthen oot an' the days are drawin in!

Man gangs to his lang rest – oot o' this shiftin fit-rest – a dwallin for his body – owre to the ither warl', the hame o' his sould. It is blithe upliftin hope to ken that the God, wha has dawtit on us here, will tak us in to bide wi' Himsel owerby. A'body will forgaither frae their hamesteds there, an' a' that hae gane on aheid will be waitin for the friens wha are here.

What a bughtin-time, what a hame-bringin, an' what a harvest-hame whan we gaither ane an' a' to be for aye wi' Him.

“Ane by ane they gang awa,
The Gaitherer gaithers ane an' a,
Ane by ane mak's ane an' a'.

“Aye whan ane sits doon the cup,
Ane ahint maun tak it up,
Yet thegither they will sup.

“Gowden heided, ripe an' strang,
Shorn will be the hairst ere lang,
Syne begins a better sang.”

(a) Mary At The Grave

In the mirk mornin, Mary cam stealin oot to tend the cauld body o' her Lord. She cudna bide at hame idle. There was little she cud do; but the sma' thing she had in her mind, she had to be early at it. There may hae been a passin thocht – hoo useless this kind o' service was! But better that than naething. The warl' ocht to stan' still whan her Lord was gane!

These are the sighs an' groans that come to ilka guid hert whan the thick clouds o' death are aroun. Mary was sune to learn a new way o' servin her Saviour.

An' the same lesson has to be drawn on us in sic times o' dool. We ease oor herts by layin doon flooers, an' greetin oot oor sorrow, i' the kirkyaird. God is wae for us, an' winna grudge us oor offerans, oor tears, an' bits o' wreaths. But we canna bide by the coffin. We maun gang stracht back frae the deid to the livin, to the folk that need us. It's a time for fin'in oot new duties, an' the next step the Almichty has planned for us. We dinna forget the deid whan we gang hame an' gie oor best for the livin. Oor feelins for them that are awa dinna change whan oor han's an' feet ser' ithers!

Afore the brak o' day the mournin ane cam seekin Him wham she lo'ed. Weel wud it be for us gin something wrocht upon us to mak us gang early an' seek oor Dear Ane. There is nae time like the mornin for an eager, serious word wi' Him, wha is aye ready, an' can mak us sae rich wi' heaven's gear. The earlier we come, the mair licht will fa' upon oor souls, an' the grander a sicht will we get o' Him. The day is in fair way to end weel that has begude wi' a talk wi' Him! "My voice will ye hear i' the mornin": lat Him say that o' us, an' what winna follow! The saft sang an' joy in oor hert wud gar the warl' stan' back an' won'er.

Source: David Gibb Mitchell, *Sermons in Braid Scots* (1910) and *The Kirk i' the Clachan* (1917).

5. Lazarus Story from The New Testament in Scots

William Laughton Lorimer (1885-1967) was a noted academic and linguist who came from Strathmartine which is now part of Dundee. He had been interested in the Scots language since childhood and by 1945 had decided that he wanted to produce a translation of the New Testament directly from the Greek and Latin originals. He also read and compared with versions in many other languages and had substantially completed his Scots version by 1966. His son RLC Lorimer completed the process of editing and revision and finally saw his father's great work published in 1983. The text below is taken from John 11: 1-44 and tells the story of the death and resurrection of Lazarus.

AT THIS TIME there wis a man, Lazarus bi name, lyin síck i the clachan o Bethanie, whaur he wonned wi his sisters Martha an Mary, her at anointit the Lord wi ointment an dichtit his feet wi her hair. The twa sisters sent wurd tae Jesus, sayin, "Lord, your dear fríend her is gey an ill."

Whan Jesus hard that, he said, "This síckness is no tae end in daith; it hes faan him for God's glorie, an tae bring glorie tae the Son o God."

Nou, Jesus wis fell fain o the threesome, Martha an her sister an Lazarus; sae, whan he hard at Lazarus wis ailin, efter steyin on ither twa days i the bit whaur he wis, he said til his disciples, "Lat us gae back tae Judaea."

"Maister," the disciples said til him, "Wad ye gae back thare, whan the Jews wis for stanin ye no langsin syne?"

Jesus answer, "Is there no twal hours i the day? A man at gangs i the daytime stammers nane, because he sees the licht o the sun. But a man that gangs at nicht stammers for the want o licht." Efter sayin that, he gaed on, "Our fríend Lazarus hes faan owre, but I am gaein there tae wauken him."

"Maister" his disciples said til him, "gin he's faan owre, he'll get better."

Jesus hed meaned at he wis deid, but they thocht he wis speakin o ordnar sleep. Sae he said tae them straucht oot, "Lazarus is deid. I am gled for your sakes at I wisna by; your faith will be the steiver o it. But come, lat us awá til him."

Tamma, at hed the tae-name o "The Twin", said tae the ither disciples, "Lat us gae an díe wi him!"

Whan Jesus cam tae the bit, he faund Lazarus hed been lyin aareddies fowr days in his graff. Bethanie wis no faur – less nor twa mile – frae Jersusalem: an a guid wheen Jews hed come oot tae condole wi Martha an Mary owre their brither's daith. Whan Martha hard at Jesus wis comin, she gaed out tae meet him, while Mary bade on sittin ahame.

Martha said tae Jesus, "Lord, gin ye hed been here, my brither wadna díed: but I ken at een nou God will gíe ye onything ye seek o him."

"Your brither will rise again," Jesus said til her.

"Ou ay," said Martha, "weill-a-wat he will rise again at the resurrection on the henmaist day!"

"I am the resurrection an the life," Jesus answer: "him at believes in mw will líve, een tho he hes díed; an nae-ane at líves an hes faith in me will e'er díe avá. Believe ye that?"

"Ay, div I, Lord," she said: "I weill believe at ye ar the Christ, the Son o God, at the world hes been bidin on." Syne she gaed awá an cried her sister Mary an harkit laich in til her, "The Maister's here an is speirin for ye!"

Whan she hard that, Mary banged up an gaed awá til him. He hedna come yit tae the clachan, but wise ey at the spat whaur Martha hed met him. The Jews at wis inbye condolin wi Mary, whan they saw her rise up in heast an gae out, fallowt her, jalousin at she wis gangin tae the graff tae weep there. Sae Mary cam tae the place whaur Jesus wis. Whaniver she saw him, she flag herself doun at his feet an said, “Oh, gin ye hed been here, Lord, my brither wadna díed!”

Whan Jesus saw her an the Jews at hed come wi her greitin, he gíed a graen like his hairt wis tae brak, an wis uncolie pitten about. “Whaur hae they laired him?” he speared.

“Come an see, Lord,” they said.

Jesus fell agreitin, an the Jews said, “Man, wisna he fain o him?” But some o tem said, “Gin he gíed the blinnd man his sicht, coud he no somegate hendert this man tae díe?”

Aince mair Jesus gíed a graen like his hairt wis tae brak. He gaed up tae the graff, whilk wis a weem wi a muckle stane sittin afore the mouth o it.

“Tak awá the stane,” he said.

Martha, the corp’s sister, said til him, “Oh, sir, he maun be stinkin nou, he’s been deid fowr days!”

“Did I no tell ye,” Jesus said til her, “at gin ye believed, ye wad see a kythin o God’s glorie?” Sae they shiftit the stane.

Jesus than raised his een tae heaven an said, “Faither, I think thee at thou hes listen my prayer. Weill kent I afore at thou ey listens me; an gin I speak this gate, it is for the sake o the thrang staundin round, tae gar them trew at thou hes sent me.”

Efter he hed said that, he cried in a loud stevven, “Lazarus, come furth”; an the corp cam out the graff, his haunds an feet swealed in deid-linnens, an his face happit in a naipkin. Jesus said tae them, “Lowse him, an lat him gae hame.”

NOTES

Lorimer uses an accent to indicate both the sound ‘ee’, as in díe, síck and gíe, and the long vowel sound as in awá. He also spells the sound ‘oo’ consistently as *ou* as the custom was in Older Scots, so we find mouth, sound, and round which are pronounced as *mooth*, *soond* and *roond*.

Source: William L Lorimer, *The New Testament in Scots* (1983).