

Folk & Traditional Song Lyrics

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Bonnie Lass o' Benachie

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Once I loved a lady fair
She was a beauty I do declare
The fairest flower in the north country
The bonnie lass o' Benachie

She was an heir o' house and lan'
And I was but a poor man's son
It was her birth and high degree
That parted my true love and me

Great knights and squires from a distance came
To court this fair and lovely dame
But all their offers proved in vain
For none her favor could obtain

But when her parents came to know
That I did love their daughter so
They judasly betrayed me
For keeping o' her company

Tw'as at Auld Rayne that I was ta'en
A prisoner for Lady Jean
In fetters strong then I was bound
And carried on to Aberdeen

I was embarked at the shore
Never to see my darling more
In Germany a soldier to be
All for the lass o' Benachie

When I arrived in foreign lands
A letter from my true love came
With her respects in each degree
Signed by the lass o' Benachie

The answer which to her I sent
Never to my true love went
For her cruel parents told her then
That in foreign lands I was slain

Which made this lady weep full sore
To think she'd never meet me more

It caused her weep most bitterly
Such tidings from high Germany

Her father said, "Your tear refrain
To weep for him it is in vain
I have a better match for thee
To enjoy the lands o' Benachie"

"He was the lover of my youth
In pledge he had my faith and troth
I've made a vow, I'll wed with none
Since my true love is dead and gone"

Oh, she's put on the robes o' green
Which was most comely to be seen
Oh had he been a crowned king
This lady fair might been his queen

Oh every finger she put a ring
On her mid finger she put three
And she is on to high Germany
In hopes her true lover to see

When she came to high Germany
By fortune her lover she did see
Upon a lofty rampart wall
As he was standing sentry

The first she met was the Colonel then
And he asked her most courteously
From whence she came and where she was boun'
Her name and from what country

"From fair Scotland," she said, "I came
In hopes my lover true to see
And now I hear he's a grenadier
Into your lordship's company."

"Wha's thy lover's name, my comely dame
Oh lady fair come tell me than
For it's a pity that thy love should be
In the station of a single man"

"Willie Knight is my lover's name
All this hardship's suffered for me
Tho' it should cost me thousands ten
A single man nae mair he'll be"

Willie Knight was called then

His own true love once more to see
And when he saw her well fared face
The tears o' joy did blin' his e'e

Wi' kisses sweet the lovers met
Most joyfully as we are told
She changed his dress from the worsted lace
To the crimson scarlet trimmed with gold

But when her parents came to know
That their daughter abroad was gone
They sent a letter on express
To call these two fond lovers home

To Willie went a free discharge
All for the sake o' Lady Jean
And now they live in sweet content
Into the shire o' Aberdeen

refers to incident in 1770 involving heiress Miss Erskine
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SOF