

A Mhic Iain 'ic Sheumais



This song is part of our “Feuds and Fights” series. It dates from 1601, when a raiding band of MacLeods from Skye was defeated by Donald MacDonald (Dòmhnall mac Iain ‘ic Sheumais) at the Battle of Càirinis in North Uist. Mac Iain was wounded in the thigh by an arrow. As his foster mother pulled out the arrow and dressed his wound, she sang this song with her companions, to cover his screams and take his mind off the pain!

A Mhic Iain 'ic Sheumais tha do sgeul air m'aire
AIR FARAIL AIL O
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Latha Blar a' Chéithe bha feum air mo leanabh

HI O HAO RI A BHO
HI EILE E HO
HAO RI A BHO RO HO UO
CHALL EILE
BHO HIRI OHO HI OHO

Bha smal air na speuran 's na reultan 'gam falach.
Latha Blàr na Féithe bha do léine salach;
Bha 'n saighead 'na spreòd 'n corp seòlta na glaine;
Bha fuil do chuim chùbhraidh a'drùdhadh ro 'n anart;
Bha fuil do chuirp uasail air uachdar an fhearainn
'S bha mise 'ga sùghadh gus na thùch air m'anail.

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*Son of John, son of James, your story is on my mind.
On the day of the Battle of the Landing place there was need for my baby.
The skies were obscured and the stars were hidden.
On the day of the Battle of the Ditch your shirt was soiled.
The arrow was projecting from your clean-cut body.
The blood of your fragrant breast was dripping through the linen.
The blood of your noble body was on the ground,
And I was sucking your blood until it stopped my breath.*

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The battle took place around the old church of Teampull na Trionaid.