

Bonnie Charlie

Verse

Chorus

1. Bonnie Chairlie's noo awa',
Safely ower the friendly main;
Mony a heart will break in twa',
Should he ne'er come back again.

Chorus:

Will ye no come back again?
Will ye no come back again?
Better lo'ed ye canna be,
Will ye no come back again?

2. Ye trusted in your Hielan' men,
They trusted you dear Chairlie.
They kent your hidin' in the glen,
Death or exile bravin'.

Chorus

3. English bribes were a' in vain
An' e'en tho puirer we may be
Siller canna buy the heart
That beats aye for thine and thee.

Chorus

4. We watched thee in the gloamin' hour,
We watched thee in the mornin' grey.
Tho' thirty thousand pounds they gie,
O there is nane that wad betray.

Chorus

5. Sweet the laverock's note and lang,
Liltin' wildly up the glen.
But aye tae me he sings ae sang,
Will ye no' come back again?

Chorus

After the defeat of Bonnie Prince Charlie at Culloden and his escape back to France, with the aid of Flora MacDonald, there were still many who hoped that he would return, some day. This song expressing that sentiment, written by Carolina Oliphant (Lady Nairne)(1766 - 1845). Different versions of the lyrics exist. These words seem to be Lady Nairne's own: they are taken from an 1869 edition of her songs. Written well after the events it commemorates (Charles Edward Stuart died in 1788), it is not a genuine Jacobite song. It is like many other songs that were composed in the late 18th or early 19th centuries, but were passed off as contemporary products of the Jacobite risings. I learned this from the Clancy Brothers recording.