

## The Banks O Skene

Greig~Duncan 1-164

*Maggie first heard this song from a recording of William (Cappy) McLean, made by Peter Hall in the 1970s. It's a rather unbelievable tale of a girl dressing as a man and serving a long apprenticeship, just to be near the man she fancied. Needless to say, her true gender was discovered.*

Once I was a rovin lass  
A lass about sixteen o  
I've faan in love wi' a heckler lad  
Below the Banks o Skene o

*Repeat last line of every verse*

First I cut my bonnie hair  
It wis my pride and joy o  
Then I dressed in men's attire  
Tae look jist like a boy o

Then I gaed tae the heckler lad  
Below the banks o Skene o  
I hear ye want apprentice lad's  
And here am I for ane o

For three lang years I did engage  
And worked without a fee o  
An other three I did engage  
A journeyman tae be o

Anither three I saired at it  
And pleased my master weel o  
And a' the lasses roon about  
They tried my love tae steal o

One hot day I loosed my shirt  
An' my bare breast he did see o  
An' aft times after that he said  
Will ye lie wi me o

Tae lie ae nicht wi me guid sir  
Sic a thing it canna be o  
I've niver lain wi a man afore  
An' I winna lie wi ye o

There came a ball intae our toon  
A ball o muckle fame o  
He said his apprentice lads could go  
And me alang wi them o

My maister he sat drinking ale  
Sat drinkin ale and wine o  
An' ilka gless he drank himself  
He aye gaed me the same o

But I did ken what he did want  
And what he meant tae dae o  
I didna taak a drap o it  
Jist held it tae my moo o

Pairting time it came at last  
An' we took the road our lane o  
My maister he laid hands on me  
Below the banks o Skene o

I cried oot maist bitterly  
Relief for me wis nane o  
And there he stole my maidenheid  
Amang the gowans green o

Twenty weeks have come and gone  
Twenty weeks and one o  
I had tae don my proper dress  
Below the banks o Skene o

Forty weeks have come and gone  
Forty weeks and one o  
I hid tae send for the heckler lad  
Tae come and see his son o

Fifty weeks have come and gone  
Fifty weeks and one o  
The heckler lad's made me his wife  
Below the banks o Skene o

*ae=one  
afore=before  
aft times=often  
alang=along  
ane=one  
anither=another  
aye=always  
bonnie=pretty  
canna=cannot  
dae=do  
did ken=knew  
didna=did not  
drap=drop  
faan=fallen  
fee=wage, payment*

*gaed=went, gave*  
*gless=glass*  
*gowans=daisies*  
*guid=good*  
*heckler=flax comber*  
*ilka=every*  
*intae=to*  
*jist=just*  
*lad=boy, young man*  
*lang=long*  
*lasses=girls, young women*  
*maist=most*  
*maister=master, boss*  
*moo=mouth*  
*muckle=big, great*  
*niver=never*  
*o=of*  
*our lane=by ourselves*  
*roon aboot=round about*  
*saired=suffered, put up with*  
*sic=such*  
*tae=to*  
*taak=take*  
*toon=town, farm*  
*weel=well*  
*wi=with*  
*winna=will not*  
*wis=was*