

Yowie wi the Crookit Horn

Rev. John Skinner (1721 – 1807)

Although Tom has known of this song for many years, he was never inclined to learn it until he heard it being sung by Elizabeth Stewart of Mintlaw. Although attributed to the Rev Skinner of Longside, near Peterhead, it is thought to be based on a much older song. The final verse in Tom's version is taken from the singing of Jeannie Robertson and makes it fairly clear that it is about an illicit still, not a pretty little ewe.

Gin I wis able tae rehearse
My yowie's praise in proper verse
I'd sing it oot as loud an fierce
As iver piper's drone could blaa

*My yowie wi the crookit horn
My yowie wi the crookit horn
O sic'n a yowie ne'er wis born
Here aboot or far awa*

Faan ither yowies loup't the dyke
An ate the kail for aa the tyke
My yowie niver did the like
But baid ahin the barn waa

She needed neither carf nor keel
Tae mark upon her hip or heel
Her crookit horn it did as weel
To ken her oot among them aa

But last Saiterday, for aa my keepin
I canna spik oot withoot greetin
There cam a nickum faan I wis sleepin
An he stow my yowie horn an aa

An gin I hid the loon faa did it
I hae sworn an nae jst said it
That though the deil himsel forbid it
I wid gie his neck a thraw

Aa that kint her wid hae sworn
That sic a yow wis niver born
But now my yowie and her horn
Are ta'en fae me an stown awa

The nicht is cauld the hoolets screamin
Thirsty men and thirsty weemin
There's thirsty men and thirsty weemin
Since my ewie's stown awa

aa = all
ahin = behind
awa = away
baid = stayed, remained
blaa = blow
carf = notch
crookit = crooked
faa = who
faan = when
fae = from
for aa the tyke = despite the dog
gie = give
gin = if
greetin = weeping
hae = have
hoolets = owls
ither = other
keel = coloured mark
ken = know
kint = knew
loon = boy
loup't = jumped
nae = not
nickum = mischievous boy
sic = such
spik = speak
stow, stown = stole, stolen
thraw = twist
waa = wall
weemin = women
wid = would
yowie / yow = ewe