

AM MINISTEAR AGUS AN CLABAN

Calum I. MacLean *

The following tale was recorded on 28th July 1955 at Muir of Ord, Ross-shire, from the dictation of Alexander Stewart, 55, travelling tinsmith. He heard the tale over forty years ago from his grandmother, Clementina Stewart, a native of Sutherlandshire. Clementina (Climidh) Stewart died in 1914 and was then aged eighty-two years.

ALEXANDER STEWART: *Well* bha fear a' fola(bh) ann a seo is e a' coiseachd. Agus tha e col(t)ach gu robh e a' coiseachd C93 †
'ro' chladh. Agus thachair *skull* ceann ris—a bheil si' a' tuigsinn? Agus dar a thachair a' *skull* ceann a bha seo ris:

"*Well*," thuirist esa', "cha d' fhuair mise cuireadh Calluinn," E238
thuirist es', "ach tha mi a' toir' cuireadh Calluinn dhut-s'." C13

Is thug e breab dha. (Tha fhios agaibh, 's e 'n fhìrinn a tha seo.)

Agus cha robh guth air seo. Dh' fhola(bh) an duine a bha seo is bha e 'na shuidhe, is cha robh guth aige ma dhéidhinn a' fac(hc)al a thuiriste, mar a chanas a chuile duine fac(hc)al fadharsach—tha fhios agu péin air sin. (Agus) (Agus) Ach aig latha na Bliadhn' Ur chunnaic e an claban ceann seo 'na shuidhe air a' bhord.

Ministear a bh' ann, ministear a bha 's an duine.

Chunnaic e an claban ceann seo 'na shuidhe air a' bhord. Agus dar a chunnaic, bha e a' cur a null a' bhiadh agus chan fhios 'm dé bha ag éirigh dha 'n-a' bhiadh 'us nach robh, ach char an oidhche seachad. Is thuirist an claban ceann ris:

"A nis," thuirist esa', "chuir mise an oidhche seachad comhla riut-s'," ars esa', "ach tha thusa a' fola(bh) is tha thu a' dol a thighinn a shealltainn oram-s'."

"Glé mhath," ars a' ministear, "fola(bh)aidh mis'."

Dh'fhola(bh) a' ministear leis a' phaunaidh aig'. (Is dòcha gun cuala siu péin an té-a seo).

Dh'fhola(bh) a' ministear leis a' phaunaidh aig'. Agus dar

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† The numbers in the margin and in the summary are the motif-numbers according to the Stith Thompson *Motif-index of Folk Literature*.

a dh' fhola(bh) e leis a' phaunaidh, shiubhail e is shiubhail e
 F137 is shiubhail e is shiubhail e is choisich e is choisich e. Is a'
 chiad rud a thachair ris, thachair boireannach, seann chailleach,
 F171.3 seann boireannach ris agus dithis chlann òg is iad a' gobhail
 V71 dhi-e ri * slat air là na Sàbaid, is iad a' gobhail dhi-e ri slat,
 C413 air an t-seann boireannach. Is char e seachad orra: cha do
 shaoil e idir dhiubh. Chum e a' dol is chum e a' dol is thachair
 boireannach eile ris is làn measair a bhainne aic(hc)' is na
 rodain a' tighinn a mach á bial is rodain a' leum a staigh 'na
 C413 bial. Char e seachad oirr': cha do sheall e i.
 F171 "Ah well," thuirist es', "tha rudan neònach a sco," thuirist
 es'.

Chum e a' dol is chum e a' dol is chunnaic e dithis ghillean
 —dhaoine—is iad a's a' *quarry*, ann an *quarry* ag obair agus
 bara ac(hc)a is iad 'g obrachdainn air latha na Sàbaid is iad
 a' toir' a mach greabhal, a' toir' a mach gaineamhach . . .
 mu seach eatorra.

Ach ràinig e taigh bòidheach, snoc. Bha an taigh seo cho
 F163.3 bòidheach is cha robh a leithid ri fhaighinn. Char e a staigh
 ann is thachair seann duine ris.

"Thàine tu," ars' es'.

"Thàinig," ars es'. "Thàine: sheas mi ri mo ghealltainneas,"
 ars es'.

"Oh well, tha thu *all right*," ars es'.

"Ach aon rud a tha mi a' dol a dh' fhaidhneachd dhi'," thuirist es'. "Car son a tha an dithis sin ag obair an diu?"

"Shin agat dithis dhaoine," ars es', "a bha ag obair air an
 C631 t-Sàbaid is bho'n bha iad 'g obair air an t-Sàbaid, chaidh a'
 Q220 cumail a' dol an diu iad." *

"O, glé mhath!" ars es'.

"Car son a tha am boireannach a bha siod," thuirist es',
 "agus na rodain a' leum 'na bial?"

"Tha, innsidh mi sin dut," ars es', "boireannach bochd a
 bha a' dol seachad," ars es', "is dithis na triùir a chloinn
 aic(hc)' agus char i a dh' iarraidh deoch bhainne. Is dar a
 char i a dh' iarraidh 'n deoch bhainne, tha e col(t)ach gun
 deach rodan a bhàthag a's a' bhainne an oidhche ro' n-a sin
 is thug i dha 'n-a' chlann aic(hc)c-s' e. Is tha sin a' toir'
 Q280 breitheanas oirr' an diu," thuirist es'. "Tha ise a' faighinn a
 breitheanas fhéin an diu."

"O, glé mhath!" ars es'. "Car son a bha am boireannach
 a bha siod, ma tha?" thuirist es'.

* *Sic.*

“Shiod agat boireannach,” thuirst es’, “a bha dona dha S12
cuid fhéi’ teaghlach is tha i a’ faighinn. . . . Shiod agat a’ rud
a bha ise a’ dèanamh air a màthair fhéin an toiseach, a’ toir’ S20
dhi gréidheadh le slat, is tha na h-oghachan aic(hc)e an diu a’
toir’ an tuarastal a staigh oirre.”

“Glé mhath!” ars es’. “*Well*,” thuirst es’, “tha mise a’ Q581
fola(bh).”

“O, a bhròinein, cha ruig thu a leas a bhith a’ fola(bh) a
seo” thuirst esa’. “Tha thusa ann a seo is bios thu ann cho
math ’s a ghobhas tu, ma dh’ fhuiricheas tu ann.”

“O, ged tha,” thuirst e, “chan fhuirich mi idir ann.”

“O, ged tha,” ars esa’, “ged nach fhuirich. . . . Ged a
dh’ fhuiricheadh tu is ged nach fhuirich thu, tha thu ann a
seo,” thuirst es’, “cho math is a bhios thu air an t-saoghal.”

“O, tha mise a’ fola(bh)!”

“O, cha ruig thu a leas fola(bh),” thuirst es’. “Chan ’eil
dad romhat a dh’ fhaithnicheas tu an diu. Ach shin agat bìdeag F377
carpet dhut,” thuirst es’, “agus c’ àit’ ’sa bith an cuir (thu) fo D1155
do thòin air muin an each, an tig thu dhe muin an each cuir
thu air a chasan e. Ma théid thu dha ’n eaglais agat fhéi’ cuir
air a dhà chas e.”

Ach dh’ fhola(bh) a’ ministear a bha seo is bha e a’ dol is
dol is dol is dol is dol. Cha robh e a’ faithneachdainn an àit’ F137
aig’ fhéin idir, idir, idir, idir. Ach air a’ cheann thall—chan
’ios ’m dé na bliadhnachan a bha e a’ fola(bh)—bha e a
dèanamh smaoinichdainn gu robh e a’ tighinn air ais
dha’n àit’ aig’ fhéi’. Ach thachair seana-bhoireannach ris. Tha
mi a’ creidsinn gu robh i corr mór is ccithir fichead bliadhna.
Is dh’ fhaidhnichd e dhith:

“An cuala si’ riamh iomradh air a leithid seo a dhuin’?”

“*Well*,” ars ise, “chuala mi m’ athair ’ga . . . gun cuala
a sheanair bruidheann gu robh a leithid sin a dhuine ’s an
àit’, ach an eaglais chan ’eil innte ach an dara leth dhith.”

Thóisich e an uair sin ag innseadh dhaibh: “A màireach
latha na Sàbaid,” ars es’, “is tigibh uile gu leur a dh’ éisneachd
rium-s’,” ars es’, “dha’n eaglais a màireach. Fiach an tig sibh
uile gu leur chon a’ chomh-thional a màireach.”

Thàinig iad uile gu leur. Char iad suas is bha iad ag
éisneachd a stòiridh is ag éisneachd mar thachair dha is mar a C423.3
char e. Is bha e fhéi’ ’sa chùbaidh is bha ’n *carpet* fo dhà chas.
Eadar a chuile rud a bh’ ann, *slide* a dhà chas air ais dhe’n
carpet is dh’ fhola(bh) e mar a dh’ fhola(bh)adh ceò ’na F378.1
laighe. Dh’ fhola(bh) an t-each is an diallaid is dh’ fhola(bh)

chu aile dad a bh' ann. Cha robh dad ann. Bha e na mìltean
bhliadhnachan air fola(bh) as an àite.

Siod an fhìrinn.

SUMMARY AND NOTES

A minister is walking through a churchyard (c93). He has received no invitation for New Year's Day and invites a skull to visit him (E238). He kicks the skull (c13). On New Year's Day he sees the skull on his table. The skull invites him to the otherworld. He travels a long, long distance (F137) on horseback. He sees an old woman being beaten with a switch (F171.3) by children on Sunday (v71). He pays no attention to them (c413). He meets a second woman carrying a basin of milk and rats spring in and out of her mouth. He pays no attention to her (c413). He remarks that strange sights (F171) are to be seen. He continues and sees two men working in a quarry on Sunday (v71). He finally reaches a beautiful house (F163.3) where an old man greets him. The old man tells him that the two men working in the quarry profaned the Sabbath (c631) by working and have been kept at work on Sunday as punishment (Q220). The woman with the basin of milk once gave milk in which a rat had been drowned to the children of a poor woman and she is now being punished for having done so (Q280). The woman being beaten with a switch was cruel to her own children (s12) and used to beat her own mother (s20). She now receives similar punishment at the hands of her own grandchildren (Q581). The minister then says he is going back to this world. The old man tells him that he need not do so and that there is nothing awaiting him on earth now that will be familiar to him (F377). He insists on returning and the old man gives him a piece of carpet (D1155) and tells him to put it underneath him on the saddle and under his feet when he dismounts. He returns after a long, long journey (F137) but recognises no place. After years of wandering, he imagines that he has reached his old home. He meets a very old woman, who tells him that her father heard his father say there was talk of such a person as he, but only a half of the church now stands. He asks all to go to hear him on the following day, Sunday. He places the carpet underneath his feet in the pulpit, and recounts his experiences in the other world (c423.3). While doing so, his feet slip off the carpet (F378.1) and he vanishes in a mist. Horse, saddle and all vanish.

The previous tale (Aarne-Thompson type 470) is rare in Scottish tradition. Only one published version is known to me. Vide *The Folklore Journal*, VI, pp. 183-5 for a version from Sutherlandshire contributed by Dempster and written in English. An unpublished Gaelic version was recorded on 1st October 1946 from the late John Macpherson, Northbay, Isle of Barra, Inverness-shire. A Shetland version was recorded on 7th June 1955 from Brucie Henderson, Arisdale, South Yell and is to be published in the next issue of *The Shetland Folk Book*. The Sutherland, Inverness and Shetland versions are all in the form of *Sagen*. For an Irish Gaelic version see *Béaloides*, X, pp. 42-4, 99. For the international distribution, published variants and an analysis of the story, see Dorothy Epplen MacKay's study, *The Double Invitation in the Legend of Don Juan*.