

I SAW THE WILD GEESE FLEE
JIM REID



1. THE WILD GEESE/ NORLAND WIND 2:57
"Far abune the Angus straths I saw the wild geese flee – A lang, lang skein o beatin wings wi their heids toward the sea." Set to music by Jim, this was originally written as a poem by Violet Jacob in 1915. The song is also known under the alternative title *Norland Wind*.

"Oh tell me fit was on yer road ye roarin Norland wind?
As ye come blawin frae the land that's never frae ma mind;
Ma feet they traivel England but I'm dea for the North."
"Ma man, I saw the siller tides rin up the Firth o Forth."

2. LASSIE WI THE YELLOW COATE 2:38
The Foundry Bar Band never recorded this, but it has long been a favourite at ceilidhs and Jim often sang it with the band – not only a lovely song, but a good old time waltz.

"Lassie wi the yellow coatie, wud ye wad a muirland
jockie?
Lassie wi the yellow coatie, wud ye busk and gang wi me?"

3. THE SHEARIN'S NO FOR YOU 3:41
This traditional song has rarely been published, but is in fact widely known in a number of different versions and must date back at least to the 1700s. Around 1820, Thomas Lyle of Paisley used the tune for his famous song *Kelvingrove*.

Oh the shearin's no for you ma bonnie lassie O,
Oh the shearin's no for you for yer back it winna boo,
And yer belly's rowin fu ma bonnie lassie O."

4. STOBBIE PARLIAMENT PICNIC 2:45
Stobswell in Dundee is at the junction of six main roads was a favourite meeting place (or parliament) for local worthies. Jim was born and brought up nearby and remembers hearing their tales of times past. His grandfather built the Maryfield Stables at Stobswell and ran the horse-drawn Forfar bus. The song, first published around 1908 and rewritten by Jim, is about the annual picnic outing for the old men of Stobbie.

In the shelter o the shelter at the top of Albert Street,
There's a sturdy crowd of veterans who regularly meet;
Discuss the situation in a house of common style,
An they hech an they pech an they haver an they're happy
aa the while.

5. UPON THE MOSS O BURRELDALE 1:15
The song celebrates the events at a traveller campon Burreldale Moss the night before Michael Fair - a cattle and horse market held in the 1840s at Kinkell near Inverurie in Aberdeenshire. This was likely the inspiration for the stage song composed by G.S. Morris around 1930. Jim got the song from the traditional singer the late Christina Stewart at a ceilidh in her house in Fetterangus. Jane Turriff, the well known ballad singer, was Christina Stewart's daughter.

There were Stewarts, McKenzie and McPhee,
Neatly they did plait their knees; [i.e. sit cross-legged
Neatly they did plait their knees,
Upon the Moss o Burreldale.

6. UP THE NORAN WATER 2:15
This poem, set to music by Jim, comes from the pen of the late Helen Cruickshank who published the piece under the title *Shy Geordie*. The Noran Water flows into the South Esk near Brechin.

Up the Noran Water, in by Inglismaddy,
Annie's got a bairnie that hasna got a daddy;
Some think it's Tammas's an some think it's Chay's,
An naebody expectit it wi Annie's quiet ways.

7. BOGIE'S BONNIE BELLE 2:50
A powerful love song and bothy ballad well known in various versions throughout North-East Scotland. Jim considers this his all-time favourite folk song.

Ae Witsuntide at Huntly town, 'twas there I did agree,
Wi auld Bogieside, the fairmer, a sixmonths for tae fee.

8. FLOWER OF NORTHUMBERLAND 2:46
A concise version of this popular ballad of the fair flower of Northumberland who falls in love with a prisoner and helps him gain his freedom, and escape over the border to Scotland.

A maid went by the prison door,
Maids with whites is easy won,
And she spied a prisoner a-standin there
A-wishing he was in fair Scotland.

9. THE FOUNDRY BAR

2.53

The earliest version of this song in praise of Arbroath's famous musical pub was written by the local farmer Angus McPherson. Jim later added a few verses (3, 4 & 5) because, with changes at 'The Foondry,' the original was out of date. More verses will no doubt be added in time. Apologies and thanks to Paul McCartney.

Oot alang Millgate an doun by the broo,
Ye'll find a wee door that is welcoming you;
Whar ye get the best service in Arbroath by far,
When ye met Davie Stott o the Foondry Bar.

10. BUSK BUSK BONNIE LASSIE

3.17

A lovely traditional song from the Stewart family of Blairgowrie that has become widely popular in recent years. The song has a superb chorus, so sing and join in.

"Dae ye see yon high hills, aa covered ower wi snaw?
They hae pairted mony the true love, and they'll soon pairt
us twa.

Busk, busk bonnie lassie and come awa wi me,
And I'll tak ye tae Glen Isla near bonnie Glen Shee."

11. THE SPARK AMONG THE HEATHER

2.49

From the early 1800s onwards, thousands of ordinary men, women and children were driven from their homes and their land in the highlands and islands of Scotland. These 'clearances' allowed the landlords to introduce sheep and gain greater profit. The crofters of Glendale in Skye formed a Land League in 1882 which eventually (by 1887) resulted in an Act of Parliament to stop such evictions.

The spark among the heather soon became a burning flame;
The highlanders united vowed they'd never leave their
hame.

12. ROWAN TREE

3.01

Undoubtedly one of the most popular songs among the older generation – a song that still brings tears to the eye of Scots when far away on a foreign shore.

Oh rowan tree, oh rowan tree ye'll aye be dear tae me,
Entwined ye are wi mony ties o hame and infancy.

13. BOGHEID

2.06

One of Jim's songs which, he is keen to point out, is entirely fictional. As he says, 'Bogheid's piggery is totally free from any kind of aroma!'

Frae Lunan Bay tae Dickmont Law, jist gie yer nose the
lead;
It'll aye tak you the quickest way tae the fairm they ca
Bogheid.

14. VINNEY DEN

4.25

The Vinney burn runs through the beautiful Vinney Den at Letham, Angus and all the places named in the song are in the same area. Jim wrote this new ballad in 1983 and it is widely accepted as one of his finest songs.

As I gaed ower by Bractley Brig, 'Twas on my way tae
Bowrie Fau'd,
I met wi sic a bonnie lass, wad turn the een o ony lad.

15. ROHALLION

2.33

One of Jim and the band's favourite songs. Set to music by Jim, this is another poem from Violet Jacob and brings us to the end of the album. So, take the floor, in waltz time.

Ma buits are at rest on the midden, I havenae a plack;
And ma breeks they're no dandy anes, forrit,
And they're waur at the back;

The Musicians:

Jim Reid – vocals, guitar and mouthorgan; **Bob Dewars** – accordion; **Chae Geddes** – fiddle; **Sandy Beattie** – bass

Credits:

Recorded: REL in Edinburgh in September/October 1984
Production: Peter Shephard **Photography:** Jim Reid
Sleeve notes by Jim Reid and Peter Shephard
Original design: Colin Browne/Dean Park Associates
Additional design: Geyguid Design Associates.

Online Song Book:

The Wild Geese song book can be downloaded
free from the Springthyme website:
www.springthyme.co.uk/1015/15book.pdf

JIM REID'S 'Wild Geese' album, first issued in 1984, immediately established him as one of Scotland's finest singers. Here in this re-issue is Jim's selection of songs ranging from his own compositions *Vinney Den* and *The Spark among the Heather* to the lovely traditional ballads *Bogie's Bonnie Belle* and *The Shearin's No for You*. The title song *The Wild Geese* was written as a poem by the Angus poet Violet Jacob and set to music by Jim. Old ceilidh favourites include *Lassie wi the Yellow Coatie* and *Flower of Northumberland*, and Jim gives his own treatment to the 'golden oldie' *Rowan Tree*.

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