

The remaining poems are less warlike and tell of either homely domestic incidents or the nostalgia of those who have left the Glen.

One of the best known consisted originally of seven verses, but unfortunately only two verses now survive. It tells how a Perth man found the lass of his dreams in Glenshee and how eventually, after much persuasion and maidenly hesitation, she consented to become his bride and make her home in the Fair City.

LASS O' GLENSHEE

When honey-dip'd bells on the heather were spreading,
An' Hieland hills hum'd wi' the far-travell'd bee,
I found a fair maiden, as hame I was ridin',
A-hirding her sheep on the Hill o' Glenshee.

The rose on her cheek saftly press'd by a dimple,
Blushed red wi' the light o' her lovely bit e'e;
She looked sae inchantin', sae sweet and sae simple,
My heart soon belonged to the lass o' Glenshee.

Weel Bertha may boast o' her lasses sae bonny,
Since Scotland for beauties has gi'en her the grace,
But search ilka corner I doubt if she's ony
Could stand near the lassie I brought frae Glenshee;

To match wi' my Jenny, O wha is't would venture,
She's sweet as the zephyr that plays round the pea,
She's spotless and pure as the robes o' the winter
When spread out to bleach on the hills o' Glenshee.

The author of this poem was Andrew Sharpe, a cobbler from Bridgend, Perth, so it may well tell the story of his own love. He was a man of many talents – a poet, musician and painter as well as a cobbler; but, sadly, he died in 1817 at



Glen of the Fairies

the young age of thirty five. He is buried in Kinnoull Churchyard where his tombstone can still be seen inscribed with his own words:

'Halt for a moment, passenger, and read,
Here Andrew doses in his last bed,
Silent his flute and torn off the key,
His pencils scattered, and the Muse set free.'

The next song was composed by William Thomson who was the postmaster in Kennoway, Fife, in the early years of the last century. It describes not only a lover's feelings, but also gives a vivid picture of the changing seasons in the Glen:

THE SHEPHERD OF GLENSHEE

I wander over hill and dale;
I breathe the healthful mountain gale:
Far from the city's busy throng,
I listen to the warbler's song.
I guide and tend my fleecy flocks
Amongst the muirs, around the rocks,
And wander unconfined and free,
By bank and burn amid Glenshee.

While roaming o'er the mountain side,
I mark the season's onward glide;
See winter clothe the hills with snow,
And make the rivers overflow;
Behold the sunshine and the showers
In spring renew the leafless bowers;
And list the hum of busy bee,
Among the blossoms in Glenshee.

When summer shines on howm and height,
And fills the bosom with delight;
When bloom adorns the sylvan dell,
And purple heath flowers deck the fell;
At gloaming grey amid the glade,
I wander with my mountain maid;
And there is none like her I see,
The fairest flower in all Glenshee!



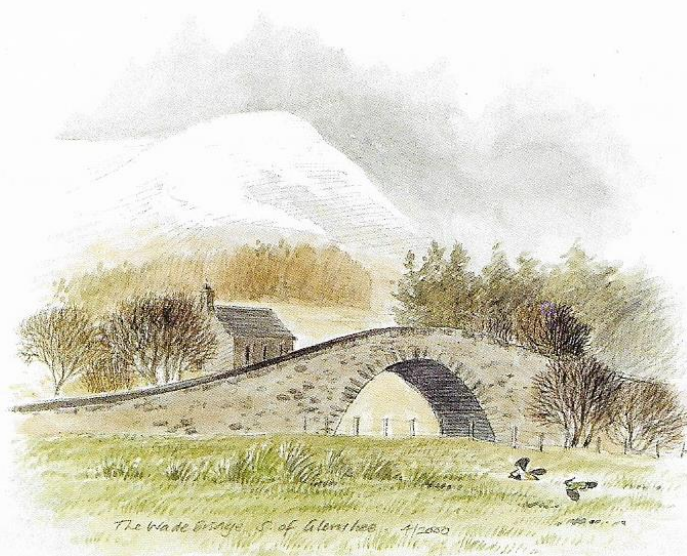
Poetry and Song

I love to mark, begemmed with dew,
In shady dell, the violet blue;
I joy to view the crystal stream
In morning's cloudless radiance gleam;
But dearer, sweeter, lovelier far
Than opening rose or shining star –
Than all I know, than all I see,
The blossom that adorns Glenshee!

The following plea by the old stone bridge at the Spital was made in the 1920s. It was almost uncanny in its foresight, but it was another sixty years before a new bridge was built to relieve the strain on its old 'humpit back'. It remains one of the most beautiful landmarks in the Glen and a fine tribute to the skill of Britain's greatest roadbuilder.

THE AULD BRIG'S PLEA

Oh! I hae viewed the swollen flood,
And hear't the Boreal blast;
And I hae stayed the summer trade
A hunner years by-past.
The lumb'rin' coach, the creakin' wain,
Hae crossed my humpit back,
And mony royal retinues
Gaed princin' ower the track.



Glen of the Fairies

But noo the cars an' charabancs
Come birlin' up the road,
And I am growin' old an frail,
An' canna' thole their load.
For motor tractor's awfu' draught
Wade never thocht to plan;
Nor dreamt to guage for mod'rn craft,
Like lang-spanned charabang.

My back is scarr'd wi' mony a tare,
Forby the strain and stress,
The burdens that I'm ca'ed to bear,
Words canna' weel express.
Folk say I'm antiquated noo,
For fashions change wi' time;
And metal girders, laid in raws,
Tak' place o' stane an' lime.

It's no for me to br'ak my he'rt,
Or raise an unco stoor;
They'll need a brig o' braider mak',
Wi' less o' curvature;
Sae, when they rule to tak' me doon,
And set the lattice trig,
I'm fain ye'll hae a kindly thocht
For Wade an' his Auld Brig!

The next four poems are from a little volume called *Songs of Glenshee* by Lady Ashmore. The first tells of an incident which took place on the road through the Glen and demonstrates very clearly why our Kings and Queens have been so much loved by their subjects. Those gracious waves will certainly have been remembered for a lifetime:

THE ROYAL ROAD

'The King and Queen are passing today' –
The word, like wildfire, went all through the land –
And gathered in groups by the King's Highway,
Are his loyal subjects on either hand.

Poetry and Song

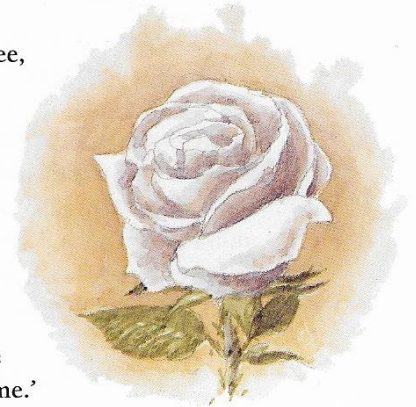
Far up in Glenshee, in a lonely spot,
Where silence is broken by mountain rills,
Stands an old grey cottage, with garden-plot,
Half hidden in a fold of the purple hills.

There a lame child waits, full of trembling hope –
She has heard by chance that the Motor Car
May pass by her home, on the heather slope,
When the King and Queen go back to Braemar.

She has heard of flags – and no flag has she –
But Oh! she can cheer as well as them all,
And throw a white rose from Prince Charlie's tree,
Where the King and Queen can see it fall.

When the longed-for moment at last has come,
The Royal Car passed and she tried to stand –
But alas! excitement had made her dumb,
And the rose was still in her small, hot hand.

She forgot to throw and forgot to cheer,
Yet the happiest heart in all Glenshee
Is the heart of the child who boasts, "Twas here
The King and the Queen waved their hands to me.'



EXILED

Over here are mighty mountains,
Waving woods and fairy fountains;
But to me,
There is nothing like the heather
And the hills we roamed together
In Glenshee.

All around are flowers in splendour,
But no blossoms bring such tender
Thoughts to me,
As the bluebells and the gowans
And the red, red of the rowans
In Glenshee.

Glen of the Fairies

Here are many waters gushing,
But no roaring river rushing
Calls to me
Like the one, when shades are falling,
That across the sea is calling
From Glenshee.

'Oh, come home!' I hear it saying,
While I keep on hoping, praying
That might be –
For such memories are waking
That my heart is almost breaking
For Glenshee!

My last poem has nothing to do with Glenshee and I include it for no reason at all, which is probably as good a reason as any. It is about a naughty (if you are a good Catholic you may say a *very* naughty) girl from Edinburgh, quite unlike the pure and chaste Kilmeny; but let us not condemn her for she seems to have found true happiness at last, and anyway, be honest, which of the two would you rather have as a companion at a ceilidh?

KISS'D YESTREEN

Kiss'd yestreen, and kiss'd yestreen,
Up the Gallowgate, down the Green;
I've woo'd wi' lords, and woo'd wi' lairds.
I've mooled wi' carles and melled wi' cairds,
I've kissed wi' priests – 'twas done i' the dark,
Twice in my gown and thrice in my sark;
But priest, nor lord, nor loon can gie
Sic kindly kisses as he gae me.