Thomas Poynton, â??A Ballad written by Thomas Poynton, a Pauperâ?¦after he had read Drummond of Hawthorndenâ??s History of Scotlandâ?•

Description

THOMAS POYNTON

***â??A Ballad written by* THOMAS POYNTON, *a Pauperâ?¦ after he had read* Drummond of Hawthorndenâ??s History of Scotlandâ?•**

The beauties I sing of my Jane,
No damsel her charms can outvie;
At wake, rural feast, or beltein,
She eclipses all others when by.
Thus when Phoebus his glory displays,
The lustre of stars quickly fade,
Oâ??erwhelmâ??d in the glittering blaze,
To shine they must wait the dun shade.
At the quern, luaghahb, or the wheel,
Her music enraptures my ear;
What emotions my bosom must feel,
When with transport her sweet voice I hear!
The deeds of the mighty *Fingal*
â??Tis pleasure to hear her repeat;
But *Crimera* and Connaldâ??s sad fall
To hear her lament is more sweet.
Tâ??other day as she workâ??d at her wheel,
She sang of fair *Eleanorâ??s* fate,
Who fell by stern jealousyâ??s steel,
As on Kirtleâ??s smooth margin she sate.
Her lover to shield from the dart,
Most eagerly she interposâ??d;
The arrow transpiercâ??d her fond heart,
The fair in his arms her eyes closâ??d.
O, Fleming! how wretched thy doom,
Thy love to see wounded to death;
No wonder that, stretchâ??d on her tomb,
In grief thou surrenderâ??st thy breath.
Yet one consolation was thine,
To soften fateâ??s rigid decree,
Thy mistress her life did resign,
A martyr to love and to thee.
Would Jenny, should I haply die

A victim to love in youthâ??s bloom,
Heave oâ??er my remains a soft sigh,
And shed a fond tear on my tomb?
Would she at my Coranick weep,
Transported Iâ??d yield up my breath,
Contented I surely should sleep,
Delighted and happy in death,
If my bones they were earthâ??d in cold clay,
And my spirit in heavenly bowers,
Delighted Iâ??d look down each day,
To see Jenny my grave shew with flowers.
Inthronâ??d â??midst immortals above,
Transported Iâ??d lift from my sphere,
To hear from the lips of my love,
â??The dust of my Jammie lies here.â?•

NOTES:

Title *Drummond of Hawthorndenâ??s History of Scotland* The Scottish poet and book collector William Drummond of Hawthornden (1585-1649) whose prose work, The History of Scotland, from the year 1423 until the Year 1542, was first published in 1655. The text was republished several times in the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries.

2 *outvie* â??To outdo in a context or in rivalry; to compete successfully againstâ?• (*OED*).

3 *beltein* Alternative spelling of â??beltane,â?• the Gaelic May Day festival, widely observed in both Scotland and Ireland.

5 *Phoebus* Another name for Apollo, the Greek God of the Sun (*Encyclopedia Britannica*).

8 *dun* â??Of a dull or dingy brown color, esp. dull grayish brownâ?• (*OED*).

9 *quern* â??A simple, typically hand-operated, device for grinding corn, etc., consisting of two stones, the upper of which is rotated or rubbed on the lowerâ?• (*OED*); *luaghahb* [Unable to trace]

13 *Fingal* A Celtic warrior famous for uniting different clans to defend Scotland against invaders, widely popularized by James MacPhersonâ??s book *The Works of Ossian, Son of Fingal* (1796).

15 *Crimera and Connaldâ??s* [Unable to trace]

18 *fair Eleanorâ??s fate* A reference to the story of Ellen who, according to Scottish balladry, chose between two suitors only to sacrifice herself to save her lover when her spurned suitor sought revenge. The story may be grounded in historical fact, though the nature of those facts was much in dispute in the late eighteenth century

(see, for example, letters sent to the *GM* in 1797 (vol. 81, pp. 202, 293). Drummondâ??s text does not appear to be a source for this story.

20 *Kirtle* A small river in the historical county of Dumfriesshire, Scotland. The tragedy is said to have unfolded at Kirkconnell Chapel, located on the bank of the Kirtle, where the lovers were supposedly buried.

23 *Transpierced* â??To pierce through from side to sideâ?• (*OED*).

26 *Fleming* A reference to Ellenâ??s chosen lover, who appears as â??Williamâ?• or â??Adamâ?• in various ballads. He is said to have returned from successful military feats on the Continent and died on Ellenâ??s grave at Kirkconnell Chapel.

37 *Coranick* [Unable to trace]

Source: *The Gentlemanâ??s Magazine* (July 1783), p. 607.

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