

## MUSIC and THE CLAN IRWIN ASSOCIATION

### Part II

I am happy to report that the Clan Irwin Music Project is flourishing in a way totally consistent with our motto of "Let Irwin Flourish". We will have a section called "Our Music" under the heading of "About Us" on the new website designed for the public eye. We will have even more information on the Members Only Website with links to recordings and scores of our special Clan music as well as ways for members to connect musically. There will soon be a Music Development Fund set up so that those members who would like to donate to the cost of keeping the project going will be able to do so and get credit for their donations.

I am pleased to have procured the services of the world-renowned Scottish Fiddler Jamie Laval, with whom some of you are already acquainted. I first heard Jamie in concert in Chattanooga, TN in 2014 at the Barking Legs Theatre. My husband Andy and I were privileged to host a home concert for Jamie in Southern California in 2013 and another one at Reflection Riding in Chattanooga in 2017. Jamie was trained as a classical musician but fell in love with Scottish fiddle music and has been doing concerts for many years, including Celtic Christmas Celebrations, in the USA as well as countries abroad, including Scotland and Brittany. He has done a remarkable job of reinventing himself during this time of pandemic, has set up a complete recording studio in his home and is writing and recording tunes for patrons. He will be helping to record and catalogue all the music we have collected that is associated with the surname Irwin, including tunes written especially for the Clan. He will even be writing some original tunes for us. You will be able to hear Jamie play in a video on our new Website.

The second tune I want share with you is an ancient Scottish ballad from Aberdeenshire. The Laird of Drum, # 236 in Francis James Child's famous book, English and Scottish Ballads, is based on Alexander Irvine, the 11th Baron of Drum and his second marriage to Margaret Coutts in 1681. It is also found in Kinloch's Ancient Scottish Ballads and is mentioned by James M. Irvine in his new book The Irvine Surname: its Origins, Diaspora and Early Branches. Our late Laird, David Charles Irvine, 26th Baron of Drum gave me a beautiful illustrated copy of this ballad shortly after we visited with him on a trip to Drum in 2007. James also kindly shared a copy with me from the book, A Short Account of the Family of Irvine of Drum in the County of Aberdeen by Captain Douglas Wimberley. This version must be the most complete one as it has 22 verses. I did not know that it had been set to music until I received the copy of the score which was in the Holly Leaf Chronicle, Vol II, no 8. This tune has been recorded by several groups and individual musicians but only one group, Jock Tamson's Bairns, includes both the A and B sections. Formed in Edinburgh in the late '70s, the group took its name from the Scottish saying, "we're all Jock Tamson's Bairns," meaning that people are all essentially the same. You can listen to this group on Utube. Our music project will be creating a new score for this ballad as the one we have is not altogether readable, having come from a very old transcript of the tune. However, I will include a popular version of the 1<sup>st</sup> section of the tune here, which is all that is on most of the current recordings.

### The Laird O' Drum



The Laird of Drum is one of the most well-known Deeside ballads of Aberdeenshire. It is a true ballad in every sense of the word, and a local one. In 1681 Alexander Irvine, Laird of Drum, had come through the troubled times of the Civil War and the Cromwellian invasion with very depleted worldly fortunes because of his fidelity to the house of Stuart. He married, as his second wife, a sixteen-year-old girl called Margaret Coutts (also called Peggy), much to the dudgeon of his relatives because she came of a poor family. Also, the Laird was sixty-three, so no doubt they thought he should have known better. The common folk, however, were on the Laird's side, as the popularity of this ballad testifies.

Until next time, I know that we have a lot of talented musicians out there among our members in the Clan Irwin Association who would like to join in the fun of this exciting new venture for our Clan. I would love to hear from you and learn what musical instrument you play, we welcome all!

Submitted by Susan Irvine McRae

Mid-South Regional Commissioner

The Laird o' Drum  
(Trad - Child #236)  
as sung by Jock Tamson's Bairns

The Laird o' Drum has a-huntin' gane  
All in the mornin' early  
And he has spied a weel-faur'd maid  
A-shearin' her faither's barley

My bonnie maid, my weel-faur'd maid  
It's will ye gang wi' me, O  
And will ye gang and be Lady o' the Drum  
And leave your shearin' a-be, O

I couldnae gang wi' you, kind sir  
Nor leave my shearin' a-be, O  
For I'm ower low tae be Lady o' the Drum  
And your miss I scorn tae be, O

My faither he's a shepherd man  
Keeps sheep on yonder hill, O  
And ye be gang and speir at him  
I'm entirely at his will, O

Drum has tae her faither gane  
Keepin' sheep on yonder hill, O  
I'm come tae marry your ae dochter  
Gin ye'll gie your guid will, O

My dochter can neither read nor write  
Nor once she bred at the school, O  
But she can work baith oot and in  
For I've learned the girlie mysel', O

She'll wark in your barn, aye and at your mill  
And brew your malt and your ale, O  
And saddle your steed in time o' need  
And draw aff your boots hersel', O

Noo I'll learn the lassie tae read and write  
And pit her tae the school, O  
And she'll never need tae saddle my steed  
Nor draw aff my boots hersel', O

But wha will bake my bridal breid  
And wha will brew my ale, O  
And wha will welcome my lowly bride  
That's mair than I can tell, O

Ah but four and twenty gentle knights  
Gae'd in at the yett o' Drum, O  
And there's never a one has lifted his hat  
When the Lady o' the Drum cam' in, O

It's up and spake his brither John  
Says, Ye've done us meikle wrang, O  
Ye've marriet a wife o' low degree  
She's a mock tae all oor kin, O

It's Peggy Coutts is a bonnie bride  
And Drum is big and gossie (?)  
But ye mecht hae chosen a higher mat'  
Than just a shepherd's lassie

It's up and spake the Laird o' Drum  
Says, I've done ye nae wrang, O  
I've marriet a wife tae wark and win  
And ye've marriet ane tae spend, O

Noo, the first time that I took me a wife  
She was far abune my degree, O  
And I dursnae gang intae the room whaur she was  
But my hand below my knee, O

It's twice he kissed her cherry cheek  
And thrice her cherry chin, O  
And twenty times her comely mou'  
And ye're welcome, my Lady Drum, O

And when had eaten and drunken weel  
And they were bound for bed, O  
The Laird o' Drum and his lady fair  
In ae bed they were laid, O

Gin ye had been o' high renown  
As ye're o' low degree, O  
We mecht hae gae'd doon tae the yett o' Drum

Amang guid companie, O

And o' a' yon four and twenty knights  
That gae'd in at the yett o' Drum, O  
There ne'er was a one wouldnae lifted his hat  
When the Lady o' the Drum cam' in, O

I tell't ye weel ere we were wed  
Ye was far abune my degree, O  
But noo we're marriet, in ae bed laid  
I'm just as guid as ye, O

And when you are dead and I am dead  
And baith in ae grave laid, O  
Ere seven years are at an end  
Weel no' ken ye your dust frae mine, O