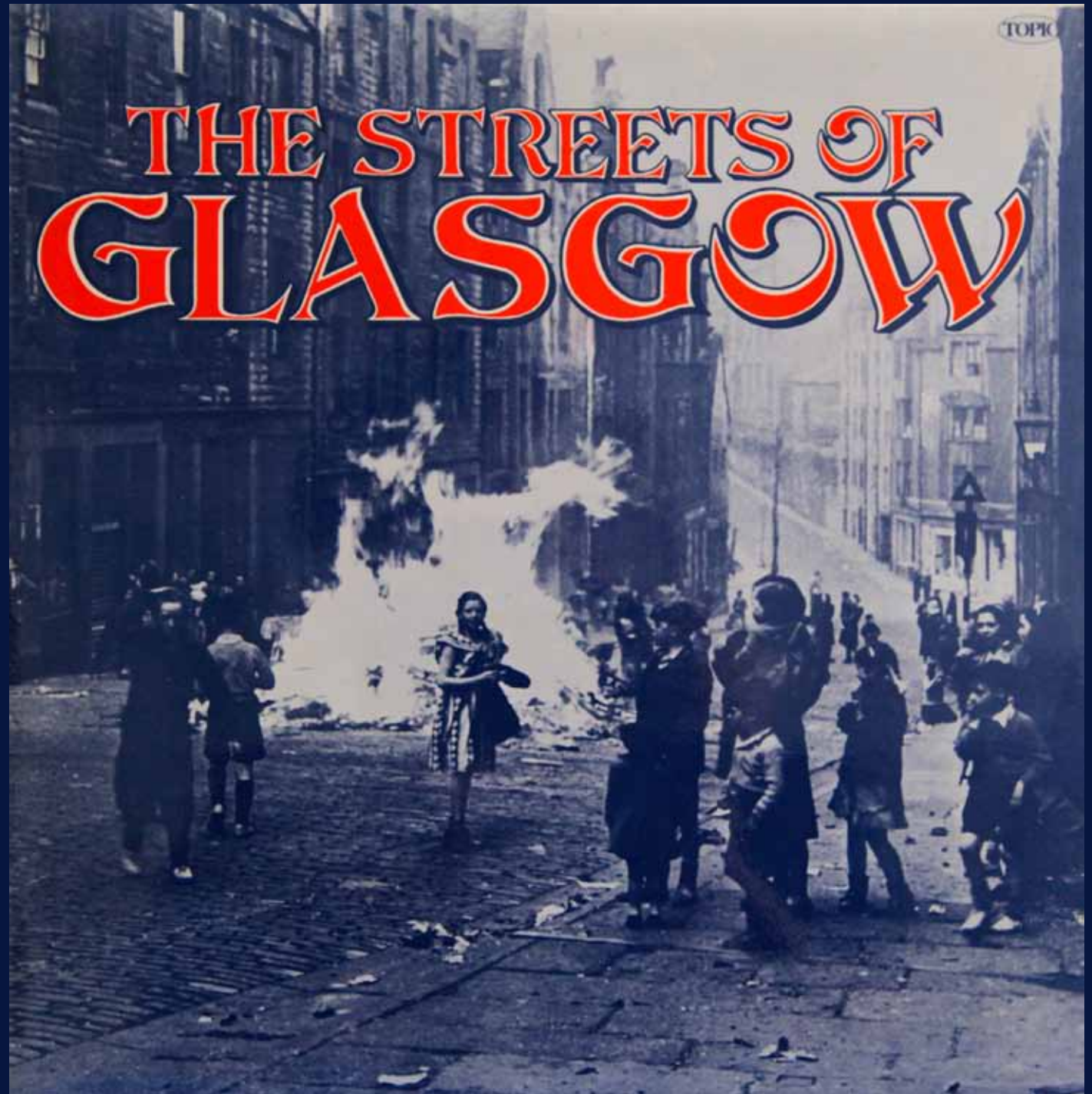


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**THE STREETS OF
GLASGOW**



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Of Glasgow, Lewis Grassic Gibbon wrote: '[It] is one of the few places in Scotland to defy personification. To image Edinburgh as a disappointed spinster with a hare-lip and inhibitions, is at least approximate to the truth. So with Dundee, a frowsy fisherwife addicted to gin and infanticide, Aberdeen a thin-lipped peasant woman who has borne eleven and buried nine. But no Scottish image of personification may display, even distortedly, the essential Glasgow. One might go further afield, to the tortured imaginings of the Asiatic mind, to find her likeness – many-armed Siva, with the waistlet of skulls.'

This record is a partial musical portrait of Glasgow, the city that more than any other in these islands, arouses shame, admiration and very real fear – the Glasgow of the old tradition, half-pastoral, half-urban, and nothing at all to do with the haggis or saffron kilts or tongued brogues; the Glasgow where the bewildered newcomer from the Highlands faces the line of a hundred grimy tenements; the Glasgow of the Hampden roar; of the bitter snarl of Orange against Green, of the shrill ironies of tough

ten-year-olds of the courts of Govan and the concrete wastes of Easterhouse; the Glasgow of the factory gate demo, the Social Security queue, and the UCS work-in.

The Clutha, Terry Dick, Flora MacNeill, Geordie McIntyre, Freddie Anderson, Mick Broderick, Gordeanna McCulloch, Duncan Cameron, John Cameron, children from Barmulloch Primary School

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1. **DANCE TUNE MEDLEY** played by The Clutha (*Calum Allan & Erlend Voy – fiddles; Ron Alexander – guitar; John Eaglesham – concertina*)
2. **FOOTBALL SONGS** Sung by Terry Dick *with chorus*
3. **MACDONALD'S FIRST VISIT TO GLASGOW** sung by Flora MacNeill
4. **THE SPORTS O' GLASGOW GREEN** sung by Geordie McIntyre
5. **LET GLASGOW FLOURISH** recited by Freddy Anderson
6. **THE COLLIER'S EIGHT HOUR DAY** sung by John Eaglesham *acc. The Clutha*
7. **THE WEEKEND SONG** sung by Gordeanna McCulloch
8. **O'REILLY AND THE BIG MACNEILL** sung by Geordie McIntyre *acc. Duncan Cameron – banjo; Johnny Cameron – guitar*
9. **BOTTLING SONGS** sung by Gordeanna McCulloch, Sheila Christie *with chorus, acc. The Clutha*
10. **THE BLEACHER LASSIE O' KELVINHAUGH** sung by Gordeanna McCulloch
11. **THREE NIGHTS AND A SUNDAY DOUBLE TIME** sung by Geordie McIntyre *acc. Johnny Cameron – acoustic guitar; Duncan Cameron –*

bass guitar

12. **CHILDREN'S STREET & PLAYGROUND SONGS** sung by children of Barmulloch Primary School
13. **THE BALLAD OF THE Q4** sung by Mick Broderick *acc. Johnny Cameron – acoustic guitar; Duncan Cameron – bass guitar*
14. **THE WORKS OUTING** sung by Geordie McIntyre *acc. Erlend Voy & John Eaglesham – concertinas*
15. **MARCH TUNE MEDLEY** played by The Clutha

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DANCE TUNE MEDLEY

Three traditional tunes, a jig, strathspey and reel, called respectively *The Roving Baker frae Milguy*, *The Soor Milk Cairt*, and *Kelvingrove*. In the course of time, each of these tunes has acquired song-words associated with Glasgow.

FOOTBALL SONG MEDLEY

To many here and abroad, Glasgow and football are synonymous. Rangers and Celtic are not the only Scottish League teams in the city, but between them they share the greatest proportion of fanatical support and the largest repertory of praise-songs (and denigration-anthems). Inevitably, in the 'Glasgow situation', some of the enthusiasm arises from sectarian rather than athletic considerations. Our little garland of football songs is but a scant sampling from a vast repertory of verses of adulation and insult.

- a) **Follow, Follow:** The Rangers' song par excellence. The tune is borrowed from a nineteenth century evangelical hymn: *We Will Follow Jesus*.
- b) **Hampden in the Sun:** a celebration of the day – unforgettable to Celtic supporters, it seems – in October 1957, when in the Scottish League Cup Final the Greens thrashed the Blues: final score, Celtic 7, Rangers 1. The verses are set

to the blissful calypso-style tune of *Island in the Sun*, popularised by Harry Belafonte.

- c) **The Only Catholic in the Rangers Team:** a satire on Glasgow Rangers' alleged policy of not signing Catholic players. The Blues' manager is reputed to have explained: 'It's not a matter of religious prejudice; merely that we haven't found a Catholic player good enough.'
- d) **Who do you think you're kidding, Willie Waddell?:** addressed to the manager of Glasgow Rangers. In the back of Celtic supporters' minds, the song sounds its peculiarly ironic overtones, for it is a parody of the old World War II Flanagan and Allen hit, *Who do you think you are kidding, Mr Hitler?*
- e) **I'd rather be a darkie:** double-edged prejudice is expressed in this Rangers' anthem. Celtic supporters have their version, suitably modified and just as intolerant. The tune originally belonged to a revival hymn published in 1868, *The old ship of Zion when she comes*.

MACDONALD'S FIRST VISIT TO GLASGOW

This is what is called a 'macaronic' song, with alternate lines in Gaelic and English, product of a time when one language was displacing the other.

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The gist of the story: Ian MacDonald, like many Highlanders, migrates to Glasgow. The first impact of the city is traumatic: *The noise of the tramway car was rumbling in my ears/When I went down the Broomielaw/My eyes were full of tears.* The bewildered newcomer is faced with a group who make fun of his country manners, and try to get his money. A fight ensues, in which the Highlander gives a good account of himself. A policeman arrives, and fortunately for MacDonald he too is a Gaelic exile. The Highlander is mildly reprimanded and told to adjust to city life. The Gaelic lines end happily: I thanked the policeman heartily and I went on my way./Many a year has passed and I'm in Glasgow till this day./I know every corner of it, I know my Glasgow well./And in friendship with my neighbours I evermore shall dwell.

THE SPORTS O'GLASGOW GREEN

Glasgow Green has been for centuries a public park and centre where orators of all political colours diagnose the social ills of Scotland and the world at large. An annual 'fun fair' is still held on the Green, but the mechanised shows of today seem but a pale reflection of the vivid live entertainment of the past, if the present bright song is anything to go by. The words are abridged from a version in John Ord's *Bothy Songs and Ballads*, and the prescribed air is the

traditional *Fye, let us a' to the Bridal*.

LET GLASGOW FLOURISH (recitation)

This recitation is an extract from a long poem sketching Glasgow's rapid development since the classic time of the Industrial Revolution, a poem largely in praise of the past, present and future of Glasgow's working men. The reciter is the author of the poem, Freddie Anderson, a native of Co. Monaghan who has lived in Glasgow for the last quarter-century and has a peerless knowledge of the city and a boundless affection for its people. Freddie is the resident bard and kenspeckle figure in the Old Scotia Inn, in Stockwell Street, Glasgow.

THE COLLIER'S EIGHT HOUR DAY

The words are on a broadside published in the late nineteenth century by Robert McIntosh, whose printshop was in Glasgow's Gallowgate. The author is noted on the leaflet as 'John Wilson, Collier'. The miners were in the forefront of the struggle for an eight-hour working day at a time when (1880s and '90s) a fifty-four hour week was common even in the best workplaces. The text has been set to the traditional tune of *The Bonny Lad that Handles the Plough* by Geordie McIntyre.

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THE WEEKEND SONG

A handsome countryside lies within easy reach of Glasgow, including famed Loch Lomond, where 'nice Glaswegians motor out and admire the scenery and calculate its horse-power', while others, humbler and less calculating, simply take advantage of a weekend off from the factory to get a lungful of clean air at the foot of the misty slopes of the Ben. Says Grassic Gibbon: 'This is the proper land and stance from which to look at Glasgow ... and ask: Why? Why did men ever allow themselves to become enslaved to a thing so foul when there was this awaiting them – hills and the splendours of freedom and silence?' The words of this song were written by Geordie McIntyre, who set them to the traditional tune of *The Verdant Braes of Skreen*.

O'REILLY AND THE BIG MACNEILL

A tall tale from the building trade, versified by Donnell Kennedy out of firsthand experience of the construction industry, and set to a traditional English melody. It's odd that the device of epic hyperbole, presenting truly gigantic folk heroes, after lying well-nigh dormant for a thousand years, should emerge in modern times as a characteristic ingredient of industrial folklore.

BOTTLING SONGS

Common to the Glasgow area is a picturesque pre-wedding ceremony, an all-feminine affair, in which the factory or office girl who is to be married is feted as she quits her workplace. A cortege of her workmates marches with her along the streets or even hurries her through the thoroughfares in a wheelbarrow. As often as not her clothes are decked with streamers and balloons and she is obliged to carry a 'chanty' (chamber-pot) with a baby doll firmly reposing in it. The procession is accompanied by 'rough music' on saucepans, tin-cans, anything to make a clatter, and by the singing of 'bottling songs' so called because they are also sung at the exclusively feminine pre-wedding party where the whisky flows as abundantly as the ditties.

- a) **Hard up, kick the can:** a straight borrowing from the playground. It may be chanted, as here, or it may be performed to a song tune – usually the melody of the children's dandling song, Katie Bird.
- b) **Ah widna get married if Ah wis you:** as ever, the advice comes late.
- c) **Aye, ye'll go:** one of the best favourites of the 'bottling' repertory. This version comes from Jean Broderick.

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THE BLEACHER LASSIE O'KELVINHAUGH

This handsome song is a distant cousin of the traditional ballad called *Hind Horn* (Child No. 17) where the 'broken token' theme is more explicit. The first three verses, and the tune of our version were collected from Harry Blake of Cambuslang in 1967. The rest of the words are from a broadside. The air is also a variant of the Irish *Boulavogue*.

THREE NIGHTS AND A SUNDAY DOUBLE TIME

Glasgow is well-served by contemporary songwriters, of whom doubtless the best known is Matt McGinn. Matt, a singularly pungent commentator in the city scene, has a vast and devoted following among the Glasgow proletariat. *Three Nights*, a bitter satire on a prevailing malady of our industrial system, ranks among his masterpieces.

CHILDREN'S STREET AND PLAYGROUND SONGS

The traditional poetry and song of grown-ups may be dwindling away but the street rhymes and game-songs of children continue to spring up in great profusion. Some of them employ ready-made, even corny melodies from the adult world – *Let's all go down the Strand*, *My old man's a dustman*, *Coming round the mountain*, *Polly Wolly Doodle* – others are based on the kind of restricted tune formula that children share with jungle savages. The humour

is anarchic, the outlook thoroughly disrespectful. Somehow it suits the air of Glasgow that in so many of its children's songs, authority is a joke, wealth does not impress nor poverty intimidate, and Barlinnie Gaol is an almost affable part of the juvenile lyrical landscape. This little set was recorded by Geordie McIntyre at Barmulloch Primary School, with a bow to the singers, to Miss Neilson (a teacher), and the headmaster, Mr Macrae. The songs are modern, but *Three Wee Mice* derives from a seventeenth century ballad describing the drowning of three children in the Thames.

THE BALLAD OF THE Q4

The 'Q4' is the liner *Queen Elizabeth II*. The rough-hewn song is by Matt McGinn, and it's a powerful paean of the craft-pride of shipyard workers. The spirit of Matt's song was kindled to a blaze during the recent dispute and 'work-in' at United Clyde Shipbuilders. Mick Broderick, who sings the song, served his apprenticeship in the famous Clydeside yard of John Brown.

THE WORKS OUTING

Donneil Kennedy wrote the words of this one. The tune is a variant of *The Soor Milk Cairt*. The theme, of a day trip by workers to coast or countryside attended by high and hilarious jinks, is one that

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proletarian song makers have constantly returned to since the earliest days of the nineteenth century.

MARCH TUNE MEDLEY

A sequence of pipe tunes, all bearing titles associated with Glasgow, mostly from the vast collection of the nineteenth century family of bagpipe-makers, Thomas, Alex, John and David Glen, whose publications span the years from 1827 to 1886. The tunes are (a) *The 93rd's Welcome to Glasgow*, (b) *The Glasgow Highlanders' Volunteer March*, (c) *The HLI's Welcome to Glasgow*, (d) *The Glasgow Keelies' March*.

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The Streets Of
Glasgow

09



Ron Alexander



Erlend Voy, Gordeanna McCulloch, Calum Allan

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