

DIV YE MIND?

(or “What John Horne forgot”)

Donald Grant

Div ye mind yur Kaitness hoosie fan 'e rain wis pooran' doon
An' ye sat upon 'e taible if ye didna want till droon,
Fan 'e watter keepid risan' lek 'e tide upon 'e shore,
Fit wisna coman' through 'e roof cam' in ablow 'e door?
Div ye mind, boy? Eh? Div ye mind?

Div ye mind yur Kaitness hoosie fan 'e peits wis sokan' weet
An' yur e'en were nippan' in yur heid till ye wis fit till greet,
Fan 'e reek wis lek till chok' ye an' pit ye oot o' pain
An' aal 'e peits in Kaitness widna warm yur bon's again?
Div ye mind, boy? Eh? Div ye mind?

Div ye mind 'e times in Kaitness fan ye trauchled day an' nicht,
Fan ye raxed yursel till mak' ends meet bit notheen' wid come richt,
Fan aal day long ye plowtered till yur back wis lek till brek
An' ye flung yur weary carcass on 'e owld caff-seck?
Div ye mind, boy? Eh? Div ye mind?

Div ye mind 'e days in winter an' 'e bleeters ye'd till feice
Fan ye gied till get a lod o' neeps for twa-r-three howngry beyce,
Fan ivry dutch wis lek a burn an' ivry park a sea
An' ivry rod about 'e pleice wis gutters till 'e knee?
Div ye mind, boy? Eh? Div ye mind?

Div ye mind 'e smell o' Kaitness, chist lek a gas attack,
Fan 'e win' wis off 'e middeen an' 'e very peegs stood back?
An' chist in ceise 'e fowks inside wis missan' sometheen' rare
'E dowg traiked through 'e middle o'd an' brocht 'em in thur share.
Div ye mind boy? Eh? Div ye mind?

Div ye mind 'e fowk in Kaitness fa took unholy glee
In spreadan' nesty stories 'boot 'e leks o' ye an' me?
They could twist a hermless action till id wid disgrace a sent,
An' if id wisna black enough they aalwiz could invent!
Div ye mind, boy? Eh? Div ye mind?

Div ye mind 'e day in Kaitness fan ye felt ye'd hed enough
An' ye left 'e croft for iver, in 'e wurld till do yur stuff?
Ye heided bravely for 'e Sooth through drivan' win' an' rain
An' ye swore 'at dreary countryside wid no see ye again!
Div ye mind, boy? Eh? Div ye mind?

Bit spite o' win' an' rain an' muck ye canna stop away
An' many's a weary chourney hev ye hedden since 'at day!
Ye lek till see chist wance again 'e pleicie far ye steyed,
Bit faigs, ye ken a good thing an' ye'll no come hom' till bide!
'Cos ye mind, boy! Aye, ye mind!

A SHORT HISTORY OF CAITHNESS

Donald Grant

Till mak' 'e world in six short days
'E good Loard did contrive;
He spent wan day on Kaitness
An' did 'e rest in five.
An' fan He'd feeneeshed id aal off
An' blissed id wi' Hees bounty,
He looked owld Kaitness ower an' sayed,
" 'At's fit A'd call a county!"

He furnished id wi' streams an' lochs
Lek Watten, Forss an' Calder;
He didna gie id muckle trees—
He leked id better balder.
He shived a few bit pleicies in
Lek Week an' Bower an' Skirza,
'En lek a chewel in a croon
Pit in 'e toon o' Thirsa!

IV coorse He hed till people id
Wi' chiels till do id chustice,
For ye ken 'at man is made o' dust
An' ye ken fit lek 'e dust is!
He hed till mak' a noble reice
O' beeg, strong, han'some he-men,
An' so we get 'e Kaitness-fowk,
Fine wice-lek men an' weemen.

'At's how we hev 'e Sitherlands,
'E Sinclairs an' 'e Swansans,
'E Budes, Bains an' Macaphees,
'E Moads an' 'e Mansans,
'E Cormags, Cowgills, Keiths an' Gunns
An' locks o' sich-lek shither.
Ye'd think He'd picked them special-lek
Til fecht wi' wan anither!

'E Sitherlands they focht 'e Gunns,
'E Gunns they focht 'e Sinclairs,
'E Sinclairs focht 'e wild Mackays,
'E poliss focht 'e tinklers.
Now 'at more settled times hev come
Till alter 'e poseetion,
'E Cooncils fecht amowng themselfs
Till keep 'e owld tradestation.

They burnt each ither's hooses doon
Accoardan' till thur system;
They burnt each ither's kirks as weel
An' niver even missed 'em.
Wan day 'e Hakreek fowk got mad,
'E bishup pit thur birss up;
They beelt an ailiss o' a fire
An' fairly warmed hees wurshup!

Wan Earl o' Kaitness hed a son
An' grudged 'e loon hees raation;
He kept 'im in a dungeon deep
An' killed 'im o' starvation.
Anither day, till pass 'e time,
For 'e time wis long o' passan',
Wan o' 'e Gunn chiels cheised a Keith
An' shot 'im through 'e wazzan!

'E Cammals o' Glenorchy's clan
Cam' north on wan occasion
Till teich 'e deugend Sinclair tribe
Till keep thur proper station;
On Altimarlach's banks they clashed;
'E Sinclairs met disaster!
'E Cammals fairly soared them
Ablow 'e breys o' Haster!

A Dutchman cam' faç ower 'e seas
An' settled in 'iss quent land;
He sterted up a ferry boat
Till rin across 'e Pentland.
They say he chairged a groat a heid
For cerryan' them ower thence;
Ye widna get a kind look now
In Chonny Grots for fowerpence!

'E Reformation cam' an' went
Wi' fechtan' an' wi' storman';
Id didna worry Kaitness much
For they were past reforman'.
Fan fechts at hom' were gettan' scairce
An' quate times they were dreedan',
Awey they'd go an' look for wars
In Norway or in Swedan!

Bit fechts were no 'e only thing
For which they were athirstan',
An' so they beelt distilleries
At Pultneytoon an' Gerston,
An' wi' 'e product o' them both
Be sure they werna sparant!
Bit chist in ceise 'e drooth micht fail
They introduced salt herreen'.

They got three chiels fae doon 'e coast
Till set 'e fisheen' bizzan',
An' soon fae oot 'e toon o' Week
'E boats sailed by 'e dizzan.
An' fan 'e thing wis at ids heicht
They coonted ower a thoosan',
Till Week wis near as famous for
Ids fisheen' as ids boozan'.

Bit there wisna fisheen' aal year roon'
Or certan' wi' thur larries,
An' so a chiel at Casselhill
Opened 'e flagston' quarries.
They found some fossils on 'e chob
O' fish an' bonnie broon shells;
They pit 'e flagston's on 'e streets,
'E fossils on 'e cooncils!

A've gien ye bits o' history
Ye're non' 'e worse o' knowan:
A could hev gien ye better bits
But 'iss 'll keep ye goan'.
Kaitness hes hed a wild career
O' bloodshed an' commotion;
She'll mebbe no hev muckle more
If Dounreay tak's 'e notion!



