

SQUYRE MELDRUM POEMS
By Sir David Lyndesay of the Mont
Written c1547, published c1594.

The Historie of ane nobil and wailzeand [valiant] squyre William Meldrum, vmquhyle Laird of Cleische and Bynnys.

Quho that antique stories reidis,
Considder may the famous deidis
Of our nobill progenitouris,
Quhilk suld to us be richt mirrouris,
Thair verteous deidis to ensew,
And vicious leving to eschew.
Sic men bene put in memorie
That deith suld not confound thair glorie.
Howbeit thair bodie bene absent,
Thair verteous deidis bene present.
Poetis, thair honour to avance,
Hes put thame in remembrance.
Sum wryt of preclair conquerouris,
And sum of vailyeand empriouris,
And sum of nobill michtie kingis
That royallie did reull thair ringis;
And sum of campiounis, and of knichtis
That bauldlie did defend thair richtis,
Quhilk vailyeandlie did stand in stour
For the defence of thair honour;
And sum of squyeris douchtie deidis,
That wounders wrocht in weirlie weidis.
Sum wryt of deidis amorous,
As Chauceir wrait of Troilus,
How that he luiffit Cressida;
Of Jason and of Medea.
With help of Cleo I intend —
Sa Minerve wald me sapience send —
Ane nobill squyer to discryfe
Quhais doughtines during his lyfe
I know my self: thairof I wryte,
And all his deidis I dar indyte,
And secreitis that I did not know,
That nobill squyer did me schaw.
Sa I intend, the best I can,
Descryve the deidis and the man,
Quhais youth did occupie in lufe,
Full plesantlie without reprufe;
Quhilk did as monie douchtie deidis
As monie ane that men of reidis
Quhilkis poetis puttis in memorie
For the exalting of thair glorie.
Quhairfoir I think, sa God me saif,
He suld have place amangis the laif,
That his hie honour suld not smure,
Considering quhat he did indure
Oft times for his ladeis sake.
I wait Sir Lancelote du Lake,
Quhen he did lufe King Arthuris wyfe,
Faucht never better with sword nor knyfe
For his ladie in no battell,
Nor had not half so just querrell.

The veritie, quha list declair,
 His lufe was ane adulterair
 And durst not cum into hir sicht,
 Bot lyke ane houlet on the nicht.
 With this squyer it stude not so:
 His ladie luifit him and no mo.
 Husband nor lemman had scho none,
 And so he had hir lufe alone.
 I think it is no happie lyfe,
 Ane man to jaip his maisteris wyfe
 As did Lancelote: this I conclude,
 Of sic amour culd cum na gude.

Now to my purpois will I pas,
 And shaw yow how the squyer was
 Ane gentilman of Scotland borne;
 So was his father him beforne,
 Of nobilnes lineallie descendit,
 Quhilks thair gude fame hes ever defendit.
 Gude Williame Meldrum he was namit
 Quhilk in his honour was never defamit,
 Stalwart and stout in everie stryfe,
 And borne within the schyre of Fyfe;
 To Cleische and Bynnis richt heritour,
 Quhilk stude for lufe in monie stour
 He was bot twentie yeiris of age,
 Quhen he began his vassalage:
 Proportionat weill; of mid stature;
 Feirie and wicht and micht indure;
 Ovirset with travell both nicht and day;
 Richt hardie baith in ernist and play;
 Blyith in countenance; right fair of face;
 And stude weill ay in his ladies grace,
 For he was wounder amiabill,
 And in all deidis honorabill,
 And ay his honour did avance,
 In Ingland first, and syne in France,
 And thair his manheid did assaill,
 Under the kingis greit admirall
 Quhen the greit navie of Scotland,
 Passit to the sey aganis Ingland.
 And as thay passit be Ireland coist,
 The admirall gart land his oist
 And set Craigfergus into fyre,
 And saifit nouther barne nor byre.
 It was greit pietie for to heir
 Of the pepill the bailfull cheir,
 And how the land folk wer spuilyeit;
 Fair wemen underfute wer fuilyeit.
 Bot this young squyer, bauld and wicht,
 Savit all wemen quhair he micht;
 All preistis and freiris he did save,
 Till at the last he did persave
 Behind ane garding amiabill
 Ane womanis voce richt lamentabill,
 And on that voce he followit fast,
 Till he did see hir at the last,
 Spuilyeit, naikit as scho was borne.
 Twa men of weir wer hir beforne
 Quhilk wer richt cruell men and kene,
 Partand the spuilye thame betwene.
 Ane fairer woman nor scho wes

He had not sene in onie place.
 Befoir him on hir kneis scho fell,
 Sayand: "For him that heryit Hell,
 Help me, sweit Sir — I am ane mayd!"
 Than softlie to the men he said:
 "I pray yow give againe hir sark,
 And tak to yow all uther wark."
 Hir kirtill was of scarlot reid,
 Of gold, ane garland of hir heid,
 Decorit with enamelyne,
 Belt and brochis of silver fyne.
 Of yallow taftais wes hir sark,
 Begaryit all with browderit wark
 Richt craftelie, with gold and silk.
 Than said the ladie quhyte as milk,
 "Except my sark, no thing I crave:
 Let thame go hence with all the lave."
 Quod thay to hir, "Be Sanct Fillane,
 Of this ye get nathing agane!"
 Than said the squyer courteslie,
 "Gude freindis, I pray yow hartfullie,
 Gif ye be worthie men of weir,
 Restoir to hir agane hir geir
 Or, be greit God that all hes wrocht,
 That spuilie sal be ful deir bocht!"
 Quod thay to him, "We thee defy!"
 And drew thair swordis haistely,
 And straik at him with sa greit ire
 That from his harnes flew the fyre.
 With duntis sa darflie on him dang,
 That he was never in sic ane thrang.
 Bot he him manfullie defendit,
 And with ane bolt on thame he bendit
 And hat the ane upon the heid,
 That to the ground he fell down deid,
 For to the teith he did him cleif:
 Lat him ly thair with ane mischeif.
 Than with the uther hand for hand,
 He beit him with his birneist brand:
 The uther was baith stout and strang,
 And on the squyer darflie dang,
 And than the squyer wrocht greit wonder,
 Ay till his sword did shaik in sunder.
 Than drew he furth ane sharp dagair
 And did him cleik be the collair,
 And evin in at the collerbane,
 At the first straik he hes him slane:
 He founderit fordward to the ground.
 Yit was the squyer haill and sound,
 Forquhy he was sa weill enarmit,
 He did escaip fra thame unharmit.
 And quhen he saw thay wer baith slane,
 He to that ladie past agane
 Quhair scho stude nakit on the bent,
 And said, "Take your abulyement,"
 And scho him thankit full humillie,
 And put hir claithis on spedilie.
 Than kissit he that ladie fair,
 And tuik his leif at hir but mair.
 Be that the taburne and trumpet blew
 And everie man to shipburd drew.
 That ladie was dolent in hart

From tyme scho saw he wald depart
 That hir relevit from hir harmes,
 And hint the squyer in hir armes
 And said, "Will ye byde in this land,
 I sall yow tak to my husband:
 Thocht I be cassin now in cair,
 I am," quod scho, "my fatheris air,
 The quhilk may spend of pennies round
 Of yeirle rent ane thowsand pound."
 With that hartlie scho did him kis.
 "Are ye," quod scho, "content of this?"
 "Of that," quod he, "I wald be fane
 Gif I micht in this realme remane,
 Bot I mon first pas into France.
 Sa quhen I cum agane, perchance,
 And efter that the peice be maid,
 To marie yow I will be glaid.
 Fairwell, I may no langer tarie:
 I pray God keip yow, and sweit Sanct Marie."
 Than gaif scho him ane lufe taking,
 Ane riche rubie set in ane ring.
 "I am," quod scho, "at your command,
 With yow to pas into Scotland."
 "I thank yow hartfullie," quod he,
 "Ye are ovir young to sail the see,
 And speciallie with men of weir."
 "Of that," quod scho, "tak ye na feir, [1](#)
 I sall me cleith in mennis clais,
 And ga with yow quhair evir ye pleis:
 Suld I not lufe him paramour,
 That saifit my lyfe and my honour?"
 "Ladie, I say yow in certane,
 Ye sall have lufe for lufe agane,
 Trewlie, unto my lyfis end!
 Fairweill: to God I yow commend."
 With that into his boit he past,
 And to the ship he rowit fast.
 Thay weyt thair ankeris and maid sail,
 This navie with the admirall,
 And landit in bauld Brytane.
 This admirall was erle of Arrane,
 Quhilk was baith wyse and vailyeand,
 Of the blude royall of Scotland,
 Accompanyit with monie ane knight
 Quhilk wer richt worthie men and wicht.
 Amang the laif, this young squyar
 Was with him richt familiar,
 And throw his verteous diligence,
 Of that lord he gat sic credence
 That quhen he did his courage ken,
 Gaif him cure of fyve hundreth men
 Quhilkis wer to him obedient,
 Reddie at his commandement.
 It wer to lang for to declair
 The douchtie deidis that he did thair.
 Becaus he was sa courageous,
 Ladies of him wes amorous.
 He was an munyeoun for ane dame:
 Meik in chalmer lyk ane lame,
 Bot in the feild ane campioun,
 Rampand lyke ane wyld lyoun,
 Weill practikit with speir and scheild,

And with the formest in the feild.
No chiftane was amangis thame all
In expensis mair liberall.
In everilk play he wan the pryse,
With that he was verteous and wyse,
And so, becaus he was weill prufit,
With everie man he was weill luifit.

Hary the aucht, king of England,
That tyme at Caleis wes lyand
With his trimphant ordinance,
Makand weir on the realme of France.
The King of France his greit armie
Lay neir hand by in Picardie,
Quhair aither uther did assaill,
Howbeit thair was na set battaill,
Bot thair wes daylie skirmishing,
Quhair men of armis brak monie sting.
Quhen to the squyer Meldrum
Wer tauld thir nouellis all and sum,
He thocht he wald vesie the weiris,
And waillit furth ane hundreth speiris,
And futemen quhilk wer bauld and stout,
The maist worthie of all his rout.
Quhen he come to the king of France,
He wes sone put in ordinance;
Richt so was all his companie
That on him waitit continuallie.
Thair was into the Inglis oist
Ane campoun that blew greit boist.
He was ane stout man and ane strang,
Quhilk oist wald with his conduct gang
Outthrow the greit armie of France,
His valiantnes for to avance,
And Maister Talbart was his name,
Of Scottis and Frenche quhilk spak disdane,
And on his bonnet usit to beir
Of silver fyne takinnis of weir.
And proclamatiounis he gart mak
That he wald, for his ladies saik,
With any gentilman of France
To fecht with him with speir or lance:
Bot no Frenche man in all that land
With him durst batteil hand for hand.
Than, lyke ane weiriour vailyeand,
He enterit in the Scottis band:
And quhen the squyer Meldrum
Hard tell this campoun wes cum,
Richt haistelie he past him till,
Demanding him quhat was his will.
“Forsuith, I can find none,” quod he,
“On hors nor fute dar fecht with me.”
Than said he, “It wer greit schame
Without battell ye suld pas hame:
Thairfoir to God I mak ane vow,
The morne my self sall fecht with yow,
Outher on horsbak or on fute —
Your crakkis I count thame not ane cute.
I sall be fund into the feild,
Armit on hors with speir and scheild.”
Maister Talbart said, “My gude chyld,
It wer maist lik that thow wer wyld.

Thow ar to young, and hes no might
 To fecht with me that is so wicht.
 To speik to me thow suld have feir,
 For I have sic practik in weir
 That I wald not effeirit be
 To mak debait aganis sic thre,
 For I have stand in manie stour
 And ay defendit my honour.
 Thairfoir, my barne, I counsell thee,
 Sic interprysis to let be.”
 Than said this squyer to the knight:
 “I grant ye ar baith greit and wicht.
 Young David was far les than I
 Quhen he with Golias manfullie
 Withouttin outhir speir or scheild
 He faucht and slew him in the feild.
 I traist that God salbe my gyde
 And give me grace to stanche thy pryde.
 Thocht thow be greit, like Gowmakmorne,
 Traist weill I sall yow meit the morne
 Beside Montruill, upon the grene,
 Befoir ten houris I salbe sene.
 And gif ye wyn me in the feild,
 Baith hors and geir I sall yow yeild,
 Sa that siclyke ye do to me.”
 “That I sall do, be God!” quod he,
 “And thairto I give thee my hand.”
 And swa betwene thame maid an band
 That thay suld meit upon the morne.
 Bot Talbart maid at him bot scorne,
 Lychtlyand him with wordis of pryde,
 Syne hamewart to his oist culd ryde,
 And shew the brethren of his land
 How ane young Scot had tane on hand
 To fecht with him beside Montruill,
 “Bot I traist he sall prufe the fuill.”
 Quod thay: “The morne that sall we ken:
 The Scottis ar haldin hardie men.”
 Quod he, “I compt thame not ane cute:
 He sall retorne upon his fute
 And leif with me his armour bricht,
 For weill I wait he hes no micht
 On hors nor fute to fecht with me.
 Quod thay: “The morne that sall we se.”
 Quhan to Monsour de Obenie
 Reportit was the veritie,
 How that the squyer had tane on hand
 To fecht with Talbart hand for hand,
 His greit courage he did commend,
 Sine haistelie did for him send.
 And quhen he come befor the lord,
 The veritie he did record —
 How for the honour of Scotland,
 That battell he had tane on hand:
 “And sen it givis me in my hart,
 Get I ane hors to tak my part,
 My traist is sa in Goddis grace,
 To leif him lyand in the place.
 Howbeit he stalwart be and stout,
 My lord, of him I have no dout.”
 Than send the lord out throw the land,
 And gat ane hundreth hors fra hand:

To his presence he brocht in haist,
 And bad the squyer cheis him the best.
 Of that the squyer was rejoisit,
 And cheisit the best as he suppoisit,
 And lap on him delyverlie.
 Was never hors ran mair plesantlie
 With speir and sword at his command,
 And was the best of all the land.
 He tuik his leif and went to rest,
 Syne airle in the morne him drest
 Wantonlie, in his weirlyke weid,
 All weill enarmit saif the heid.
 He lap upon his coursour wicht,
 And straucht him in his stirroppis richt.
 His speir and scheild and helme wes borne
 With squyeris that raid him beforne:
 Ane velvot cap on heid he bair,
 Ane quaif of gold to heild his hair.
 This lord of him taik sa greit joy,
 That he himself wald him convoy;
 With him ane hundreth men of armes,
 That thair suld no man do him harmes.
 The squyer buir into his scheild
 Ane otter in ane silver feild.
 His hors was bairdit full richelie,
 Coverit with satyne cramesie.
 Than fordward raid this campioun,
 With sound of trumpet and clarioun,
 And spedilie spurrit ovir the bent
 Lyke Mars the god armipotent.
 Thus leif we rydand our squyar,
 And speik of maister Talbart mair,
 Quhilk gat up airle in the morrow,
 And no maner of geir to borrow —
 Hors, harnes, speir nor scheild —
 Bot was ay reddie for the feild,
 And had sic practik into weir,
 Of our squyer he tuik na feir,
 And said unto his companyeoun,
 Or he come furth of his pavilyeoun:
 “This nicht I saw into my dreame
 Quhilk to reheirs I think greit shame.
 Me thocht I saw cum fra the see
 Ane greit otter rydand to me,
 The quhilk was blak with ane lang tail,
 And cruellie did me assaill
 And bait me till he gart me bleid,
 And drew me backward fra my steid.
 Quhat this suld mene I can not say
 Bot I was never in sic ane fray.”
 His fellow said: “Think ye not schame
 For to gif credence till ane dreame?
 Ye know it is aganis our faith!
 Thairfoir go dres yow in your graith,
 And think weill throw your hie courage
 This day ye sall wyn vassalage.”
 Than drest he him into his geir
 Wantounlie, like ane man of weir
 Quhilk had baith hardines and fors,
 And lichtlie lap upon his hors.
 His hors was bairdit full bravelie,
 And coverit wes richt courtfullie

With browderit wark and velvot grene;
 Sanct Georges croce thair micht be sene
 On hors, harnes and all his geir.
 Than raid he furth withouttin weir,
 Convoyit with his capitane,
 And with monie ane Inglisman
 Arrayit all with armes bricht:
 Micht no man see ane fairer sicht.

Than clariounis and trumpettis blew
 And weiriouris monie hither drew.
 On everie side come monie man
 To behald quha the battell wan.
 The feild wes in the medow grene,
 Quhair everie man micht weill be sene:
 The heraldis put thame sa in ordour
 That no man passit within the bordour,
 Nor preissit to cum within the grene,
 Bot heraldis and the campounis kene.
 The ordour and the circumstance
 Wer lang to put in remembrance.
 Quhen thir twa nobill men of weir
 Weir weill accowterit in thair geir,
 And in thair handis strang burdounis,
 Than trumpotis blew and clariounis,
 And heraldis cryit hie on hicht:
 "Now let thame go: God shaw the richt!"
 Than spedilie thay spurrit thair hors,
 And ran to uther with sic fors
 That baith thair speiris in sindrie flaw.
 Than said they all that stude on raw,
 Ane better cours than they twa ran
 Was not sene sen the warld began.
 Than baith the parties wer rejoisit;
 The campounis ane quhyle repoisit
 Till thay had gottin speiris new.
 Than with triumph the trumpettis blew
 And they, with all the force they can,
 Wounder rudelie at aither ran,
 And straik at uther with sa greit ire
 That fra thair harnes flew the fyre.
 Thair speiris war sa teuch and strang
 That aither uther to eirth down dang,
 Baith hors and man with speir and scheild,
 That flatlingis lay into the feild.
 Than maister Talbart was eschamit:
 "Forsuith, forever I am defamit!"
 And said this: "I had rather die,
 Without that I revengit be."
 Our young squyer, sic was his hap,
 Was first on fute, and on he lap
 Upon his hors without support.
 Of that the Scottis tuke gude comfort
 Quhen thay saw him sa feirelie
 Loup on his hors sa galyeardlie.
 The squyer liftit his visair
 Ane lytill space to take the air.
 Thay bad him wyne, and he it drank
 And humillie he did thame thank.
 Be that, Talbart on hors mountit,
 And of our squyer lytill countit,
 And cryit gif he durst undertak

To ryn anis for his ladies saik.
 The squyer answerit hie on hight:
 "That sall I do, be Marie bricht!
 I am content all day to ryn,
 Till ane of us the honour wyn."
 Of that Talbart was weill content,
 And ane greit speir in hand he hent.
 The squyer in his hand he thrang
 His speir, quhilk was baith greit and lang,
 With ane sharp heid of grundin steill,
 Of quhilk he was appleisit weill.
 That plesand feild was lang and braid,
 Quhair gay ordour and rowme was maid,
 And everie man micht have gude sicht,
 And thair was monie weirlyke knicht.
 Sum man of everie natioun
 Was in that congregatioun.
 Than trumpettis blew triumphantlie,
 And thay twa campiounis egeirle
 Thay spurrit thair hors with speir on breist,
 Pertlie to preif their pith thay preist.
 That round rinkroume wes at utterance,
 Bot Talbartis hors with ane mischance,
 He outterit, and to ryn was laith,
 Quhair of Talbart was wonder wraith.
 The squyer furth his rink he ran,
 Commendit weill with everie man,
 And him dischargit of his speir
 Honestlie, lyke an man of weir.
 Becaus that rink thay ran in vane,
 Than Talbart wald not ryn agane
 Till he had gottin ane better steid,
 Quhilk was brocht to him with gude speid,
 Quhairon he lap, and tuik his speir,
 As brym as he had bene ane beir,
 And bowtit fordwart with ane bend,
 And ran on to the rinkis end,
 And saw his hors was at command.
 Than wes he blyith, I understand,
 Traistand na mair to ryn in vane.
 Than all the trumpettis blew agane:
 Be that, with all the force they can,
 Thay richt rudelie at uther ran.
 Of that meiting ilk man thocht wounder,
 Quhilk soundit lyke ane crak of thunder,
 And nane of thame thair marrow mist.
 Sir Talbartis speir in sunder brist,
 Bot the squyer with his burdoun
 Sir Talbart to the eirth dang down.
 That straik was with sic micht and fors
 That on the ground lay man and hors,
 And throw the brydell hand him bair,
 And in the breist ane span and mair. [6](#)
 Throw curras and throw glufis of plait,
 That Talbart micht mak na debait.
 The trencheour of the squyeris speir
 Stak still into Sir Talbartis geir.
 Than everie man into that steid
 Did all beleve that he was deid.
 The squyer lap richt haistelie
 From his cursour deliverlie,
 And to Sir Talbart maid support,

And humillie did him comfort.
 Quhen Talbart saw into his scheild,
 Ane otter in ane silver feild,
 "This race," said he "I may sair rew,
 For I see weill my dreame wes trew.
 Me thocht yone otter gart me bleid,
 And buir me backward from my steid.
 Bot heir I vow to God soverane,
 That I sall never just agane."
 And sweetlie to the squyer said,
 "Thow knawis the cunnand that we maid:
 Quhilk of us twa suld tyne the feild,
 He suld baith hors and armour yeild.
 Till him that wan, quhairfoir, I will
 My hors and harnes geve thee till."
 Than said the squyer courteouslie:
 "Brother, I thank yow hartfullie —
 Of yow forsuith nathing I crave,
 For I have gottin that I wald have."
 With everie man he was commendit,
 Sa vailyeandlie he him defendit.
 The capitane of the Inglis band
 Tuke the young squyer be the hand
 And led him to the pailyeoun,
 And gart him mak collatioun.
 Quhen Talbartis woundis wes bund up fast,
 The Inglis capitane to him past
 And prudentlie did him comfort,
 Syne said: "Brother, I yow exhort
 To tak the squyer be the hand."
 And sa he did at his command,
 And said: "This bene bot chance of armes."
 With that he braisit him in his armes,
 Sayand: "Hartlie I yow forgeve,"
 And than the squyer tuik his leve,
 Commendit weill with everie man.
 Than wichtlie on his hors he wan,
 With monie ane nobill man convoyit:
 Leve we thair Talbart sair annoyit.
 Sum sayis of that discomfitour,
 He thocht sic schame and dishonour
 That he departit of that land,
 And never wes sene into England.
 Bot our squyer did still remane
 Efter the weir, quhill peice was tane.
 All capitanes of the kingis gairdis
 Gaif to the squyer riche rewairdis;
 Becaus he had sa weill debaitit,
 With everie nobill he wes weill traitit.
 Efter the weir he tuke licence,
 Syne did returne with diligence
 From Pycardie to Normandie,
 And thair ane space remanit he,
 Becaus the navie of Scotland
 Wes still upon the coist lyand.

Quhen he ane quhyle had sojornit,
 He to the court of France returnit
 For to decore his vassalege,
 From Bartanye tuke his veyage
 With aucht scoir in his companie
 Of waillit wicht men and hardie,

Enarmit weill lyke men of weir
 With hakbut, culvering, pik and speir,
 And passit up throw Normandie
 Till Ambiance in Pycardie,
 Quhair nobill Lowes, the king of France,
 Wes lyand with his ordinance
 With monie ane prince and worthie man.
 And in the court of France wes than
 Ane mervellous congregatioun
 Of monie ane divers natioun;
 Of Ingland monie ane prudent lord
 Efter the weir makand record.
 Thair wes than ane ambassadour,
 Ane lord, ane man of greit honour:
 With him was monie nobill knicht
 Of Scotland, to defend thair richt,
 Quhilk guydit thame sa honestlie,
 Inglismen had thame at invie
 And purposit to mak thame cummer,
 Becaus they wer of greiter number.
 And sa, quhairver thay with thame met,
 Upon the Scottis thay maid onset,
 And lyke wyld lyounis furious,
 Thay layd ane seige about the hous
 Thame to destroy, sa thay intendit.
 Our worthie Scottis thame weill defendit:
 The Sutheroun wes ay fyve for ane,
 Sa on ilk syde thair wes men slane.
 The Inglismen grew in greit ire,
 And cryit, "Swyith — set the hous in fyre!"
 Be that the squyer Meldrum
 Into the market streit wes cum
 With his folkis in gude array,
 And saw the toun wes in ane fray.
 He did inquyre the occasioun:
 Quod thay, "The Scottis are all put doune
 Be Inglismen into thair innis."
 Quod he: "I wald gif all the Bynnis,
 That I micht cum or thay departit!"
 With that he grew sa cruell hartit,
 That he was like ane wyld lyoun,
 And rudelie ran outthrow the toun
 With all his companie weill arrayit,
 And with baner ful braid displayit.
 And quhen thay saw the Inglis rout,
 Thay set upon thame with ane schout;
 With reird sa rudelie on thame ruschit,
 That fiftie to the cirth thay duschit.
 Thair was nocht ellis bot tak and slay.
 This squyer wounder did that day,
 And stoutlie stoppit in the stour,
 And dang on thame with dintis dour.
 Wes never man buir better hand;
 Thair micht na buckler byde his brand,
 For it was weill sevin quarter lang.
 With that sa derflie on thame dang
 That, lyke ane worthie campoun,
 Ay at ane straik he dang ane down.
 Sum wes evill hurt, and sum wes slane;
 Sum fel quhilk rais not yit agane.
 Quhen that the Sutheroun saw his micht,
 Effrayitlie thay tuke the flicht

And wist not quhair to flie for haist,
 Thus throw the toun he hes thame chaist.
 Wer not Frenchemen come to the redding,
 Thair had bene mekill mair blude shedding.
 Of this journey I mak an end,
 Quhilk everie nobill did commend.
 Quhen to the king the cace wes knawin,
 And all the suith unto him shawin,
 How this squyer sa manfullie
 On Sutheroun wan the victorie,
 He put him into ordinance.
 And sa he did remane in France
 Ane certane tyme for his plesour,
 Weill estemit in greit honour,
 Quhair he did monie ane nobill deid.
 With that, richt wantoun in his weid,
 Quhen ladies knew his hie courage,
 He was desyrit in mariage
 Be ane ladie of greit rent,
 Bot youth maid him sa insolent
 That he in France wald not remane,
 Bot come to Scotland hame agane.
 Thocht Frenche ladies did for him murne,
 The Scottis wer glaid of his returne.
 At everie lord he tuke his leve,
 Bot his departing did thame greive,
 For he was luifit with all wichtis
 Quhilk had him sene defend his richtis.
 Scottis capitanes did him convoy,
 Thocht his departing did thame noy.
 At Deip he maid him for the saill,
 Quhair he furnischit ane gay veschaill
 For his self and his men of weir
 With artailye, hakbut, bow, and speir,
 And furneist hir with gude victuall,
 With the best wyne that he culd waill.
 And quhen the schip was reddie maid,
 He lay bot ane day in the raid
 Quhill he gat wind of the southeist.
 Than thay thair ankeris weyit on haist,
 And syne maid saill, and fordwart past
 Ane day at morne, till at the last,
 Of ane greit saill thay gat ane sicht,
 And Phoebus schew his bemis bricht
 Into the morning richt airlie.
 Than past the skipper richt spedelie
 Up to the top with richt greit feir,
 And saw it wes ane man of weir,
 And cryit: "I see nocht ellis, perdie,
 Bot we mon outhir fecht or fle."
 The squyer wes in his bed lyand,
 Quhen he hard tell this new tydand.
 Be this, the Inglis artailye
 Lyke hailschot maid on thame assailye,
 And sloppit throw thair fechtung saillis,
 And divers dang out ovir the waillis.
 The Scottis agane, with all thair micht
 Of gunnis than thay leit fle ane flicht.
 Thar thay micht weill see quhair they wair:
 Heidis and armes flew in the air.
 The Scottis schip scho wes sa law,
 That monie gunnis out ovir hir flaw

Quhilk far beyond thame lichtit doun,
 Bot the Inglis greit galyeoun
 Fornent thame stude lyke ane strang castell,
 That the Scottis gunnis nicht na way fail,
 Bot hat hir ay on the richt syde
 With monie ane slop, for all hir pryde,
 That monie ane beft wer on thair bakkis.
 Than rais the reik with ugie crakkis,
 Quhilk on the sey maid sic ane sound
 That in the air it did redound,
 That men nicht weill wit on the land,
 That shippis wer on the sey fechtand.
 Be this thegyder straik the shippis
 And ather on uther laid thair clippis,
 And than began the strang battell —
 Ilk man his marrow did assaill.
 Sa rudelie thay did rushe togidder,
 That nane nicht hald thair feit for slidder,
 Sum with halbert and sum with speir,
 Bot hakbuttis did the greitest deir.
 Out of the top the grundin dartis
 Did divers peirs out throw the hartis.
 Everie man did his diligence
 Upon his fo to wirk vengeance,
 Ruschand on uther routtis rude,
 That ovir the waillis ran the blude.
 The Inglis capitane cryit hie:
 “Swyith yeild, yow doggis, or ye sall die!
 And do ye not, I mak ane vow
 That Scotland sal be quyte of yow.”
 That peirtlie answerit the squyer,
 And said, “O tratour tavernar —
 I lat thee wit, thow hes na nicht
 This day to put us to the flight.”
 Thay derflie ay at uther dang;
 The squyer thristit throw the thrang
 And in the Inglis schip he lap,
 And hat the capitane sic ane flap
 Upon his heid till he fell doun,
 Welterand intill ane deidlie swoun.
 And quhen the Scottis saw the squyer
 Had strikkin doun that rank rever,
 They left thair awin schip standand waist
 And in the Inglis schip in haist
 They followit all thair capitane,
 And sone wes all the Sutheroun slane.
 Howbeit thay wer of greiter number,
 The Scottismen put thame in sic cummer
 That thay wer fane to leif the feild,
 Cryand mercie, than did thame yeild.
 Yit wes the squyer straikand fast
 At the capitane, till at the last,
 Quhen he persavit no remeid,
 Outher to yeild or to be deid,
 He said: “O gentill capitane,
 Thoill me not for to be slane —
 My lyfe to yow sal be mair pryse
 Nor sall my deith ane thowsand syse!
 For ye may get, as I suppois,
 Thrie thowsand nobillis of the rois
 Of me, and of my companie.
 Thairfoir I cry yow loud mercie.

Except my lyfe, nothing I craif:
 Tak yow the schip and all the laif.
 I yeild to yow baith sword and knyfe —
 Thairfoir, gud maister, save my lyfe!”
 The squyer tuik him be the hand,
 And on his feit he gart him stand,
 And treittit him richt tenderly,
 And syne unto his men did cry,
 And gaif to thame richt strait command
 To straik no moir, bot hald thair hand.
 Than baith the capitanes ran and red,
 And so thair wes na mair blude shed.
 Than all the laif thay did thame yeild,
 And to the Scottis gaif sword and scheild.
 Ane nobill leiche the squyer had —
 Quhairof the Inglismen wes full glaid —
 To quhome the squyer gaif command
 The woundit men to tak on hand,
 And so he did with diligence,
 Quhairof he gat gude recompence.
 Than quhen the woundit men wer drest,
 And all the deand men confest,
 And deid men cassin in the see,
 Quhilk to behald wes greit pietie,
 Thair was slane of Inglis band
 Fyve score of men, I understand,
 The quhilk wer cruell men and kene,
 And of the Scottis wer slane fyftene.
 And quhen the Inglis capitane
 Saw how his men wer tane and slane,
 And how the Scottis, sa few in number,
 Had put thame in sa greit ane cummer,
 He grew intill ane frenesy,
 Sayand, “Fals Fortoun, I the defy!
 For I belevit this day at morne,
 That he was not in Scotland borne
 That durst have met me hand for hand
 Within the boundis of my brand.”
 The squyer bad him mak gude cheir,
 And said, “It wes bot chance of weir:
 Greit conquerouris, I yow assure,
 Hes hapnit siclike adventure.
 Thairfoir mak mirrie and go dyne,
 And let us preif the michtie wyne!”
 Sum drank wyne and sum drank aill,
 Syne put the shippis under sail,
 And waillit furth of the Inglis band
 Twa hundreth men, and put on land
 Quyetlie on the coist of Kent:
 The laif in Scotland with him went.
 The Inglis capitane, as I ges,
 He wairdit him in the Blaknes,
 And treitit him richt honestlie,
 Together with his companie,
 And held thame in that garnisoun
 Till thay had payit thair ransoun.
 Out throw the land than sprang the fame
 That squyer Meldrum wes cum hame.

Quhen they hard tell how he debaitit,
 With everie man he was sa treitit,
 That quhen he travellit throw the land,

Thay bankettit him fra hand to hand
 With greit solace, till at the last
 Out throw Straitherne the squyer past,
 And as it did approch the nicht,
 Of ane castell he gat ane sicht,
 Beside ane montane in ane vaill,
 And than, efter his greit travaill,
 He purpoisit him to repois
 Quhair ilk man did of him rejois.
 Of this trimphant plesant place,
 Ane lustie ladie wes maistres
 Quhais lord was deid schort tyme befor,
 Quhairthrow hir dolour wes the moir.
 Bot yit scho tuke sum comforting
 To heir the plesant dulce talking
 Of this young squyer of his chance,
 And how it fortunit him in France.
 This squyer and the ladie gent
 Did wesche, and then to supper went.
 During that nicht thair was nocht ellis
 Bot for to heir of his novelis.
 Eneas, quhen he fled from Troy,
 Did not Quene Dido greiter joy
 Quhen he in Carthage did arryve,
 And did the seige of Troy discryve.
 The wonderis that he did reheirs
 Wer langsum for to put in vers,
 Of quhilk this ladie did rejois.
 Thay drank, and syne went to repois.
 He fand his chalmer weill arrayit,
 With dornik work on buird displayit.
 Of venisoun he had his waill,
 Gude aquavite, wyne and aill,
 With nobill confeittis, bran and geill,
 And swa the squyer fuir richt weill.
 Sa, to heir mair of his narratioun,
 This ladie come to his collatioun,
 Sayand he was richt welcum hame.
 "Grandmercie than," quod he, "Madame."
 Thay past the time with ches and tabill,
 For he to everie game was abill.
 Than unto bed drew everie wicht:
 To chalmer went this ladie bricht,
 The quhilk this squyer did convoy,
 Syne till his bed he went with joy.
 That nicht he sleipit never ane wink,
 Bot still did on the ladie think.
 Cupido with his fyrie dart
 Did peirs him so outthrow the hart,
 Sa all that nicht he did bot murnit,
 Sumtyme sat up, and sumtyme turnit,
 Sichand with monie gant and grane,
 To fair Venus makand his mane,
 Sayand, "Ladie, quhat may this mene?
 I was ane fre man lait yistrene,
 And now ane cative, bound and thrall,
 For ane that I think flour of all.
 I pray God, sen scho knew my mynd,
 How for hir saik I am sa pynd
 Wald God I had bene yit in France
 Or I had hapnit sic mischance:
 To be subject or serviture

Till ane quhilk takis of me na cure!"
 This ladie ludgit neirhand by,
 And hard the squyer prively,
 With dreidfull hart makand his mone,
 With monie cairfull gant and grone.
 Hir hart, fulfillit with pietie,
 Thocht scho wald haif of him mercie,
 And said: "Howbeit I suld be slane,
 He sall have lufe for lufe agane.
 Wald God I micht with my honour,
 Have him to be my paramour!"
 This wes the mirrie tyme of May,
 Quhen this fair ladie, freshe and gay,
 Start up to take the hailsum air,
 With pantonis on hir feit ane pair,
 Airlie into ane cleir morning
 Befoir fair Phoebus uprising,
 Kirtill alone, withouttin klok,
 And saw the squyeris dure unlok.
 Scho slippit in or ever he wist,
 And fenyetlie past till ane kist,
 And with her keyis oppinnit the lokkis
 And maid hir to take furth ane boxe —
 Bot that was not hir erand thair.
 With that, this lustie young squyar
 Saw this ladie so plesantlie
 Cum to his chalmer quyetlie,
 In kyrtill of fine damais broun,
 Hir goldin traissis hingand down.
 Hir pappis wer hard, round and quhyte,
 Quhome to behald wes greit delyte.
 Lyke the quhyte lylie wes hir lyre;
 Hir hair was like the reid gold wyre,
 Hir schankis quhyte, withouttin hois,
 Quhairat the squyer did rejois,
 And said than, "Now, vailye quod vailye,
 Upon the ladie thow mak ane sailye!"
 Hir courtlyke kirtill was unlaist,
 And sone into his armis hir braist
 And said to hir: "Madame, gude morne —
 Help me, your man that is forlorne.
 Without ye mak me sum remeid,
 Withouttin dout, I am bot deid,
 Quhairfoir ye mon releif my harmes."
 With that he hint hir in his armes,
 And talkit with hir on the flure,
 Syne quyetlie did bar the dure.
 "Squyer," quod scho, "quhat is your will?
 Think ye my womanheid to spill?
 Na, God forbid, it wer greit syn!
 My lord and ye wes neir of kyn.
 Quhairfoir I mak yow supplicatioun:
 Pas and seik ane dispensatioun.
 Than sall I wed yow with ane ring;
 Than may ye leif at your lyking,
 For ye ar young, lustie and fair,
 And als ye ar your fatheris air.
 Thair is na ladie in all this land
 May yow refuse to hir husband.
 And gif ye lufe me as ye say,
 Haist to dispens the best ye may,
 And thair to yow I geve my hand —

I sall yow take to my husband."
 Quod he: "Quhill that I may indure,
 I vow to be your serviture,
 Bot I think greit vexatioun
 To tarie upon dispensation —"
 Than in his armis he did hir thrist,
 And aither uther sweetlie kist,
 And wame for wame thay uther braissit;
 With that hir kirtill wes unlaissit.
 Than Cupido, with his fyrie dartis,
 Inflammitt sa thir luiferis hartis,
 Thay nicht na maner of way dissever,
 Nor ane nicht not part fra ane uther,
 Bot like wodbind thay wer baith wrappit.
 Thair tenderlie he hes hir happit
 Full softlie up intill his bed —
 Judge ye gif he hir schankis shed.
 "Allace," quod scho, "quhat may this mene?"
 And with hir hair scho dicht hir ene.

I can not tell how thay did play,
 Bot I beleve scho said not nay.
 He pleisit hir sa, as I hard sane,
 That he was welcum ay agane.
 Scho rais and tendirle him kist,
 And on his hand ane ring scho thrist,
 And he gaif hir ane lufe drowrie —
 Ane ring set with ane riche rubie,
 In takin that thair lufe for ever
 Suld never from thir twa dissever.
 And than scho passit unto hir chalmer,
 And fand hir madinnis sweit as lammer
 Sleipand full sound, and nothing wist
 How that thair ladie past to the kist.
 Quod thay: "Madame, quhair have ye bene?"
 Quod scho: "Into my gardine grene,
 To heir thir mirrie birdis sang.
 I lat yow wit, I thocht not lang,
 Thocht I had taryit thair quhill none."
 Quod thai: "Quhair wes your hois and schone?
 Quhy yeid ye with your bellie bair?"
 Quod scho: "The morning wes sa fair,
 For be him that deir Jesus sauld,
 I felt na wayis ony maner of cauld."
 Quod thay: "Madame, me think ye sweit."
 Quod scho: "Ye see I sufferit heit:
 The dew did sa on flouris fleit
 That baith my lymmis ar maid weit
 Thairfoir ane quhyle I will heir ly,
 Till this dulce dew be fra me dry.
 Ryse and gar mak our denner reddie."
 "That sal be done," quod thay, "My ladie."
 Efter that scho had tane hir rest,
 Sho rais and in hir chalmer hir drest,
 And efter mes to denner went.
 Than wes the squyer diligent
 To declair monie sindrie storie
 Worthie to put in memorie.

Quhat sall we of thir luiferis say?
 Bot all this tyme of lustie May,
 They past the tyme with joy and blis,
 Full quyetlie with monie ane kis.
 Thair was na creature that knew

Yit of thir luiferis chalmer glew,
 And sa he levit plesandlie
 Ane certane time with his ladie,
 Sum time with halking and hunting,
 Sum time with wantoun hors rinning,
 And sum time, like ane man of weir,
 Full galyardlie wald ryn ane speir.
 He wan the pryse abone thame all,
 Baith at the buttis and the futeball;
 Till everie solace he was abill,
 At cartis and dyce, at ches and tabill;
 And gif ye list, I sall yow tell
 How that he seigit ane castell.
 Ane messinger come spedilie
 From the Lennox to that ladie,
 And schew how that Makfagon —
 And with him monie bauld baron —
 Hir castell had tane perfors
 And nouthir left hir kow nor hors,
 And heryit all that land about,
 Quhair of the ladie had greit dout.
 Till hir squyer scho passit in haist,
 And schew him how scho wes opprest,
 And how he waistit monie ane myle
 Betwix Dunbartane and Argyle.
 And quhen the squyer Meldrum
 Had hard thir novellis all and sum,
 Intill his hart thair grew sic ire
 That all his bodie brint in fyre,
 And swoir it suld be full deir sald,
 Gif he nicht find him in that hald.
 He and his men did them addres
 Richt haistelie in thair harnes,
 Sum with bow and sum with speir,
 And he, like Mars the god of weir,
 Come to the ladie and tuke his leif,
 And scho gaif him hir richt hand gluif,
 The quhilk he on his basnet bure
 And said: “Madame, I yow assure
 That worthie Lancelot du laik,
 Did never mair for his ladies saik
 Nor I sall do, or ellis de,
 Without that ye revengit be.”
 Than in hir armes scho him braist,
 And he his leif did take in haist,
 And raid that day and all the nicht,
 Till on the morne he gat ane sicht
 Of that castell baith fair and strang.
 Than, in the middis his men amang,
 To michtie Mars his vow he maid,
 That he suld never in hart be glaid,
 Nor yit returne furth of that land
 Quhill that strenth wer at his command.
 All the tennentis of that ladie
 Come to the squyer haistelie,
 And maid aith of fidelitie
 That they suld never fra him flie.
 Quhen to Makferland, wicht and bauld,
 The veritie all haill wes tauld
 How the young squyer Meldrum
 Wes now into the cuntrie cum,
 Purpoisand to seige that place,

Than vittaillit he that fortres
 And swoir he suld that place defend
 Bauldlie untill his lyfis end.
 Be this, the squyer wes arrayit,
 With his baner bricht displayit,
 With culvering, hakbut, bow and speir.
 Of Makfarland he tuke na feir,
 And like ane campioune courageous,
 He cryit and said, "Gif ovir the hous!"
 The capitane answerit heighly
 And said: "Tratour, we thee defy!
 We sall remane this hous within,
 Into despyte of all thy kyn."
 With that the archeris bauld and wicht
 Of braid arrowis let fle ane flicht
 Amang the squyers companie,
 And thay agane richt manfullie
 With hakbute, bow and culveryne,
 Quhilk put Makferlandis men to pyne,
 And on thair colleris laid full sikker,
 And thair began ane bailfull bikker.
 Thair was bot schot and schot agane,
 Till on ilk side thair wes men slane.
 Than cryit the squyer couragious:
 "Swyith, lay the ledderis to the house!"
 And sa thay did, and clam belyfe
 As busie beis dois to thair hyfe.
 Howbeit thair wes slane monie man,
 Yit wichtlie ovir the wallis they wan.
 The squyer, formest of them all,
 Plantit the baner ovir the wall,
 And than began the mortall fray —
 Thair wes not ellis bot tak and slay.
 Than Makferland, that maid the prais,
 From time he saw the squyeris face,
 Upon his kneis he did him yeild,
 Deliverand him baith speir and scheild.
 The squyer hartlie him ressavit,
 Commandand that he suld be savit,
 And sa did slaik that mortall feid,
 Sa that na man wes put to deid.
 In fre waird was Makferland seisit,
 And leit the laif gang quhair they pleisit.
 And sa this squyer amorous
 Seigit and wan the ladies hous,
 And left thairin ane capitane,
 Syne to Stratherne returnit agane,
 Quhair that he with his fair ladie
 Ressavit wes full plesantlie,
 And to tak rest did him convoy.
 Judge ye gif thair wes mirth and joy:
 Howbeit the chalmer dure wes cloisit,
 They did bot kis, as I suppoisit.
 Gif uther thing wes them betwene,
 Let them discover that luiferis bene,
 For I am not in lufe expart
 And never studyit in that art.

Thus they remainit in merines,
 Beleifand never to have distres.
 In that meine time this ladie fair
 Ane douchter to the squyer bair:
 Nane fund was fairer of visage.

Than tuke the squyer sic courage,
Agane the mirrie time of May,
Threttie he put in his luferay
In scarlot fyne and of hew grene,
Quhilk wes ane semelie sicht to sene.

The gentilmen in all that land
Wer glaid with him to mak ane band,
And he wald plainelie take thair partis,
And not desyring bot thair hartis.
Thus levit the squyer plesandlie,
With musick and with menstralie.
Of this ladie he wes sa glaid,
Thair nicht na sorrow mak him sad.
Ilk ane did uther consolatioun,
Taryand upon dispensatioun.
Had it cum hame, he had hir bruikit,
Bot or it come, it wes miscuikit,
And all this game he bocht ful deir,
As ye at lenth sall efter heir.

Of warldlie joy it wes weill kend
That sorrow bene the fatall end,
For jealousie and fals invie
Did him persew richt cruellie.
I mervell not thocht it be so,
For they wer ever luiferis fo,
Quhairthrow he stude in monie ane stour,
And ay defendit his honour.

Ane cruell knicht dwelt neir hand by
Quhilk at this squyer had invy,
Imaginand intill his hart
How he thir luiferis nicht depart,
And wald have had hir maryand
Ane gentilman within his land
The quhilk to him wes not in blude.
Bot finallie, for to conclude,
Thairto scho wald never assent.
Quhairfoir the knicht set his intent
This nobill squyer for to destroy,
And swore he suld never have joy
Intill his hart, without remeid,
Till ane of thame wer left for deid.
This vailyeand squyer manfully
In ernist or play did him defy,
Offerand himself for to assaill
Bodie for bodie in battaill;
The knicht thairto not condescendit,
Bot to betraie him ay intendit.

Sa it fell anis upon ane day
In Edinburgh, as I hard say:
This squyer and the ladie trew
Was thair, just matteris to persew.
That cruell knight, full of invy,
Gart hald on them ane secreit spy
Quhen thai suld pas furth of the toun,
For this squyeris confusioun,
Quhilk traistit no man suld him greive
Nor of tressoun had no beleive,
And tuik his licence from his oist
And liberallie did pay his coist
And sa departit blyith and mirrie,
With purpois to pas ovir the ferrie.

He wes bot auchtsum in his rout,
 For of danger he had no dout.
 The spy come to the knicht anone,
 And him informit how they wer gone.
 Than gadderit he his men in hy
 With thrie scoir in his company,
 Accowterit weill in feir of weir,
 Sum with bow and sum with speir,
 And on the squyer followit fast,
 Till thay did see him at the last,
 With all his men richt weill arrayit,
 With cruell men nathing effrayit.
 And quhen the ladie saw the rout,
 Got wait gif scho stude in greit dout.
 Quod scho: "Your enemeis I see —
 Thairfoir, sweit hart, I reid yow fle.
 In the cuntrey I will be kend;
 Ye ar na partie to defend.
 Ye know yone knichtis crueltie,
 That in his hart hes no mercie:
 It is bot ane that thay wald have.
 Thairfoir, deir hart, yourself ye save —
 Howbeit thay tak me with this trane,
 I sal be sone at yow agane —
 For ye war never sa hard staid."
 "Madame," quod he, "be ye not raid,
 For be the halie Trinitie,
 This day ane fute I will not fle!"
 And be he had endit this word,
 He drew ane lang twa-handit sword,
 And put his aucht men in array,
 And bad that thay suld take na fray.
 Than to the squyer cryit the knicht,
 And said: "Send me the ladie bricht!
 Do ye not sa, be Goddis corce,
 I sall hir tak away perforce!"
 The squyer said: "Be thow ane knicht,
 Cum furth to me and shaw the richt,
 Bot hand for hand, without redding,
 That thair be na mair blude shedding.
 And gif thow winnis me in the feild,
 I sall my ladie to the yeild."
 The knicht durst not for all his land
 Fecht with this squyer hand for hand.
 The squyer than saw no remeid,
 Bot outhir to fecht or to be deid.
 To hevin he liftit up his visage,
 Cryand to God with hie courage:
 "To thee my querrell I do commend."
 Syne bowtit fordwart with ane bend,
 With countenance baith bauld and stout,
 He rudelie rushit in that rout,
 With him his litill companie,
 Quhilk them defendit manfullie.
 The squyer with his birneist brand
 Amang his famen maid sic hand
 That Gaudefer, as sayis the letter,
 At Gadderis Ferrie faucht no better.
 His sword he swappit sa about,
 That he greit round maid in the rout,
 And like ane man that was dispairit,
 His wapoun sa on thame he wairit,

Quhome ever he hit, as I hard say,
 Thay did him na mair deir that day.
 Quha ever come within his boundis,
 He chaipit not but mortall woundis.
 Sum mutilate wer, and sum wer slane,
 Sum fled and come not yit agane.
 He hat the knicht abone the breis
 That he fel fordwart on his kneis:
 Wer not Thome Giffard did him save,
 The knicht had sone bene in his grave.
 Bot than the squyer with his brand
 Hat Thomas Giffard on the hand:
 From that time furth during his lyfe,
 He never weildit sword nor knyfe.
 Than come ane sort as brim as beiris,
 And in him festnit fyftene speiris
 In purpois to have borne him down,
 Bot he, as forcie campioun,
 Amang thai wicht men wrocht greit wounder,
 For all thai speiris he schure in sunder.
 Nane durst com neir him hand for hand,
 Within the boundis of his brand.
 This worthie squyer courageous
 Micht be compairit to Tydeus
 Quhilk faucht for to defend his richtis,
 And slew of Thebes fyftie knichtis.
 Rolland with Brandwell, his bricht brand,
 Faucht neuer better hand for hand,
 Nor Gawin aganis Golibras,
 Nor Olyver with Pharambras.
 I wait he faucht that day alse weill
 As did Sir Gryme aganis Graysteille,
 And I dar say, he was als abill,
 As onie knicht of the Round Tabill,
 And did his honour mair avance,
 Nor onie of thay knichtis perchance,
 The quhilk I offer me to preif
 Gif that ye pleis, sirs, with your leif.
 Amang thay knichts wes maid ane band
 That they suld fecht bot hand for hand,
 Assurit that thair suld cum no mo.
 With this squyer it stude not so:
 His stalwart stour quha wald discryfe,
 Aganis ane man thair come ay fyfe.
 Quhen that this cruell tyrane knicht
 Saw the squyer sa wounder wicht,
 And had no micht him to destroy,
 Into his hart thair grew sic noy
 That he was abill for to rage
 That no man micht his ire asswage.
 “Fy on us,” said he to his men:
 “Ay aganis ane sen we ar ten!
 Chaip he away, we are eschamit —
 Like cowertis we sal be defamit.
 I had rather be in hellis pane
 Or he suld chaip fra us unslane.”
 And callit thrie of his companie,
 Said: “Pas behind him quyetlie.”
 And sa thay did richt secreitlie,
 And come behind him cowartlie,
 And hackit on his hochis and theis
 Till that he fell upon his kneis.

Yit quhen his schankis wer schorne in sunder,
 Upon his kneis he wrocht greit wounder,
 Sweipand his sword round about,
 Not haifand of the deith na dout.
 Durst nane approche within his boundis,
 Till that his cruell mortall woundis
 Bled sa, that he did swap in swoun:
 Perforce behuifit him than fall doun.
 And quhen he lay upon the ground,
 They gaif him monie cruell wound
 That men on far nicht heir the knokkis,
 Like boucheouris hakkand on their stokks.
 And finallie, without remeid,
 They left him lyand thair for deid
 With ma woundis of sword and knyfe
 Nor ever had man that keipit lyfe.
 Quhat suld I of thir tratouris say?
 Quhen they had done they fled away.
 Bot than this lustie ladie fair,
 With dolent hart scho maid sic cair,
 Quhilk wes greit pietie for to reheirs
 And langsum for to put in vers.
 With teiris scho wuische his bludie face,
 Sichand with manie loud "allace."
 "Allace," quod scho, "that I was borne —
 In my querrell thow art forlorne!
 Sall never man efter this
 Of my bodie have mair plesour,
 For thow was gem of gentilnes,
 And verie well of worthines."
 That to the eirth scho rushit doun
 And lay intill ane deidlie swoun.
 Be that the regent of the land
 Fra Edinburgh come fast rydand:
 Sir Anthonie Darsie wes his name,
 Ane knicht of France and man of fame,
 Quhilk had the guiding haillilie
 Under Johne, Duke of Albanie,
 Quhilk wes to our young king tutour,
 And of all Scotland governour.
 Our king was bot fyve yeiris of age,
 That time quhen done wes the outrage.
 Quhen this gude knicht the squyer saw
 Thus lyand intill his deid thraw,
 "Wo is me," quod he, "to see this sicht
 On thee, quhilk worthie wes and wicht!
 Wald God that I had bene with thee
 As thow in France was anis with me
 Into the land of Picardy,
 Quhair Inglis men had greit invy
 To have me slane, sa they intendit,
 Bot manfullie thow me defendit
 And vailyeandlie did save my lyfe.
 Was never man with sword nor knyfe —
 Nocht Hercules, I dar weill say —
 That ever faucht better for ane day,
 Defendand me within ane stound:
 Thow dang seir sutheroun to the ground.
 I may thee mak no help, allace,
 Bot I sall follow on the chace
 Richt spedilie, baith day and nicht,
 Till I may get that cruell knicht.

I mak ane vow: gif I may get him,
 In till ane presoun I sall set him,
 And quhen I heir that thow beis deid,
 Than sall my handis straik of his heid.”
 With that he gave his hors the spurris,
 And spedelie flaw ovir the furris.
 He and his gaird with all thair micht
 They ran till thai ovirtuik the knicht.
 Quhen he approchit, he lichtit down,
 And like ane vailyeand campioune,
 He tuik the tyrane presonar,
 And send him backward to Dumbar,
 And thair remainit in presoun
 Ane certane time in that dungeoun.
 Let him ly thair with mekill cair,
 And speik we of our heynd squyar,
 Of quhome we can not speik bot gude.
 Quhen he lay bathand in his blude,
 His freindis and his ladie fair,
 They maid for him sic dule and cair
 Quhilk wer greit pietie to deploir:
 Of that matter I speik no moir.
 Thay send for leiches haistelie,
 Syne buir his bodie tenderlie
 To ludge into ane fair ludgyne,
 Quhair he ressavit medicyne.
 The greitest leichis of the land
 Come all to him without command,
 And all practikis on him provit,
 Becaus he was sa weill belovit.
 Thay tuik on hand his life to save,
 And he thame gaif quhat they wald have.
 Bot he sa lang lay into pane,
 He turnit to be ane chirurgiane,
 And als be his naturall ingyne,
 He lernit the art of medicyne.
 He saw thame on his bodie wrocht,
 Quhairfoir the science wes deir bocht.
 Bot efterward quhen he was haill,
 He spairit na coist nor yit travaill
 To preif his practikis on the pure,
 And on thame previt monie ane cure
 On his expensis, without rewaird —
 Of money he tuik na regaird.

Yit sum thing will we commoun mair
 Of this ladie quhilk maid greit cair,
 Quhilk to the squyer wes mair pane
 Nor all his woundis, in certane.
 And than hir freindis did conclude,
 Becaus scho micht to him na gude
 That scho suld take hir leif and go
 Till hir cuntrie, and scho did so.
 Bot thir luiferis met never agane,
 Quhilk wes to thame ane lestand pane,
 For scho aganis hir will wes maryit,
 Quhairthrow hir weird scho daylie waryit.
 Howbeit hir bodie wes absent,
 Hir tender hart wes ay present
 Baith nicht and day with hir squyar:
 Wes never creature that maid sic cair.
 Penelope for Ulisses,

I wait, had never mair distres,
 Nor Cresseid for trew Troylus
 Wes not tent part sa dolorous.
 I wait it wes aganis hir hart
 That scho did from hir lufe depart.
 Helene had not sa mekill noy
 Quhen scho perforce wes brocht to Troy.
 I leif hir than with hart full sore,
 And speik now of this squyer more.

Quhen this squyer wes hail and sound,
 And softlie nicht gang on the ground,
 To the regent he did complane.
 Bot he, allace, wes richt sone slane
 Be David Hume of Wedderburne,
 The quhilk gart monie Frenchemen murne,
 For thair was nane mair nobill knicht,
 Mair vailyeand, mair wys, mair wicht,
 And sone efter that crueltie,
 The knicht was put to libertie,
 The quhilk the squyer had opprest:
 Sa wes his matter left undrest
 Becaus the king was young of age,
 Than tyrannis rang into thair rage,
 Bot efterward, as I hard say,
 On Striviling brig upon ane day,
 This knight wes slane with crueltie,
 And that day gat na mair mercie
 Nor he gaif to the young squyar.
 I say na mair, let him ly thair:
 For cruell men, ye may weill see,
 They end oftymes with crueltie.
 For Christ to Peter said this word:
 “Quha ever straikis with ane sword,
 That man sal be with ane sword slane.”
 That saw is suith, I tell yow plane.
 He menis, quha straikis cruellie
 Aganis the law without mercie,
 Bot this squyer to nane offendit,
 Bot manfullie himself defendit.
 Wes never man with sword nor knyfe
 Micht saif thair honour and thair lyfe
 As did the squyer all his dayis,
 With monie terribill effrayis.
 Wald I at lenth his lyfe declair,
 I nicht weill writ ane uther quair.
 Bot at this time I may not mend it,
 Bot shaw yow how the squyer endit.

Thair dwelt in Fyfe ane agit lord
 That of this squyer hard record,
 And did desire richt hartfullie
 To have him in his companie,
 And send for him with diligence,
 And he come with obedience,
 And lang time did with him remane,
 Of quhome this agit lord was fane.
 Wyse men desiris commounlie
 Wyse men into thair companie,
 For he had bene in monie ane land —
 In Flanderis, France and in Ingland —
 Quhairfoir the lord gaif him the cure

Of his houshald, I yow assure,
 And in his hall cheif merschall,
 And auditour of his comptis all.
 He was ane richt courticiane,
 And in the law ane practiciane,
 Quhairfoir during this lordis lyfe,
 Tchyref depute he wes in Fyfe,
 To everie man ane equall judge,
 And of the pure he wes refuge,
 And with justice did thame support,
 And curit thair sairis with greit comfort.
 For as I did reheirs before,
 Of medicine he tuke the lore
 Quhen he saw the chirurgience
 Upon him do thair diligence.
 Experience maid him perfyte,
 And of the science tuke sic delyte
 That he did monie thriftie cure,
 And speciallie upon the pure,
 Without rewaird for his expensis,
 Without regaird or recompencis.
 To gold, to silver, or to rent,
 This nobill squyer tuke litill tent.
 Of all this warld na mair he craifit,
 Sa that his honour micht be saifit.
 And ilk yeir for his ladies saik,
 Ane banket royall wald he maik,
 And that he maid on the Sondag
 Precedand to Asch Wednisday,
 With wyld foull, venisoun and wyne;
 With tairt, and flaun, and frutage fyne;
 Of bran and geill thair wes na skant,
 And ipocras he wald not want.
 I have sene sittand at his tabill
 Lordis and lairdis honorabill,
 With knichtis and monie ane gay squyar
 Quhilk wer to lang for to declair,
 With mirth, musick and menstrallie.
 All this he did for his ladie,
 And for hir saik during his lyfe
 Wald never be weddit to ane wyfe.
 And quhen he did declyne to age,
 He faillit never of his courage.
 Of ancient storyis for to tell,
 Abone all uther he did precell,
 Sa that everilk creature
 To heir him speik thay tuke plesure.
 Bot all his deidis honorabill,
 For to descryve I am not abill.
 Of everie man he was commendit,
 And as he leivit, sa he endit,
 Plesandlie till he micht indure,
 Till dolent deith come to his dure,
 And cruellie with his mortall dart,
 He straik the squyer throw the hart.
 His saull with joy angelicall,
 Past to the hevin imperiall:
 Thus at the Struther into Fyfe,
 This nobill squyer loist his lyfe.
 I pray to Christ for to convoy
 All sic trew luiferis to his joy.
 Say ye Amen, for cheritie:

Adew! Ye sall get na mair of me.

FINIS.

The Testament of the Nobill and Vailyeand Squyer Williame Meldrum of the Bynnis

1

The holie man, Job, ground of patience,
In his greit trubill trewlie did report,
Quilk I persave now be experience,
That mennis lyfe in eirth bene wounder short.
My youth is gane and eild now dois resort,
My time is gane. I think it but ane dreame.
Yit efter deith remane sall my gude fame.

2

I persave shortlie that I man pay my det.
To me in eirth no place bene permanent.
My hart on it no mair now will I set,
Bot, with the help of God omnipotent,
With resolute mind go mak my testament,
And tak my leif at cuntriemen and kyn
And all the warld. And thus I will begyn.

3

Thrie lordis to me salbe executouris:
Lindesayis all thrie, in surname of renoun.
Of my testament thay sall have hail the cure
To put my mind till executioun.
That surname failyeit never to the croun;
Na mair will thay to me, I am richt sure,
Quhilk is the caus I give them the cure.

4

First, David, Erll of Craufuird, wise and wicht,
And Johne, Lord Lindesay, my maister speciall.
The thrid salbe ane nobill travellit knicht
Quhilk knawis the coistis of feistis funeral,
The wise Sir Walter Lindesay, they him cal,
Lord of S. Johne and knicht of Torfichane;
Be sey and land ane vailyeand capitane.

5

Thocht age hes maid my bodie impotent,
Yit in my hart hie courage doeth precell,
Quhairfoir I leif to God, with gude intent,
My spreit, the quhilk he hes maid immortall,
Intill his court perpetuallie to dwell
And nevir moir to steir furth of that steid
Till Christ descend, and judge baith quick and deid.

6

I yow beseik, my lordis executouris,
My geir geve till the nixt of my kynrent.

(It is weill kend I never tuik na cures
Of conquessing of riches, nor of rent.)
Dispone as ye think maist expedient:
I never tuik cure of gold more than of glas;
Without honour, fy, fy, upon riches!

7

I yow requeist my freindis, ane and all,
And nobill men of quhome I am descendit,
Faill not to be at my feist funerall,
Quhilk throw the warld I traist salbe commendit.
Ye know how that my fame I have defendit
During my life unto this latter hour,
Quhilk suld to yow be infinit plesour.

8

First, of my bowellis, clenge my bodie clene,
Within and out, syne wesche it weill with wyne.
Bot honestie see that nothing be sene,
Syne clois it in ane coistlie carvit schryne
Of cedar treis, or of cyper fyne.
Anoynt my corps with balme delicious,
With cynamome and spycis precious.

9

In twa caissis, of gold and precious stanis,
Inclois my hart and toung richt craftelie.
My sepulture, syne, gar mak for my banis,
Into the tempill of Mars triumphandlie,
Of marbill stanis carvit richt curiouslie,
Quhairin my kist and banis ye sall clois
In that triumphand tempill to repois.

10

Mars, Venus and Mercurius: all thre
Gave me my natural inclinatiounis,
Quhilk rang the day of my nativite,
And sa thair hevinlie constellatiounis
Did me support in monie natiounis.
Mars maid me hardie, like ane feirs lyoun,
Quhairthrow I conqueist honour and renoun.

11

Quho list to know the actis bellical,
Let thame go reid the legend of my life.
Thair sall thai find the deidis martiall,
How I have stand in monie stalwart strife
Victoriouslie, with speir, sheild, sword and knife.
Quhairfoir to Mars, the god armipotent,
My corps incloisit ye do till him present.

12

Mak offering of my toung rhetoricall
Till Mercurius, quhilk gaif me eloquence,
In his tempill to hing perpetuall.
I can mak him na better recompence,

For quhen I was brocht to the presence
Of kings, in Scotland, Ingland, and in France,
My ornate tounge my honour did avance.

13

To fresche Venus, my hart ye sall present,
Quhilk hes to me bene ay comfortabill
And in my face sic grace scho did imprent
All creatures did think me amiabill.
Wemen to me scho maid sa favorabill,
Wes never ladie that luikit in my face
Bot, honestlie, I did obtene hir grace.

14

My freind, Sir David Lyndsay of the Mont,
Sall put in ordour my processoun.
I will that thair pas formest in the front,
To beir my penseil, ane wicht campioun.
With him, ane band of Mars his religioun
(That is to say, in steid of monkis and freiris),
In gude ordour ane thowsand hagbutteris.

15

Nixt them, ane thowsand futemen in ane rout,
With speir and sheild, with buckler, bow, and brand,
In ane luferay, young stalwart men and stout.
Thridlie in ordour, thair sall cum ane band
Of nobill men, abill to wraik thair harmes,
Thair capitane with my standart in his hand,
On bairdit hors ane hundreth men of armes.

16

Amang that band my baner salbe borne,
Of silver schene, thrie otteris into sabill,
With tabroun, trumpet, clarioun, and horne,
For men of armes verie convenabill.
Nixt efter them, ane campioun honorabill
Sall beir my basnet with my funerall.
Syne, efter him, in ordour triumphall,

17

My arming, sword, my glufis of plait, and sheild,
Borne be ane forcie campioun or ane knicht
Quhilk did me serve in monie dangerous feild.
Nixt efter him, ane man in armour bricht,
Upon ane jonet, or ane cursour wicht,
The quhilk salbe ane man of greit honour,
Upon ane speir to beir my coit armour,

18

Syne, nixt my beir sall cum my corspresent
(My bairdit hors, my harnes and my speir,
With sum greit man of my awin kynrent),
As I wes wont on my bodie to beir
During my time quhen I went to the weir,
Quhilk salbe offerit with ane gay garment

To Mars his priest, at my interment.

19

Duill weidis I think hypocrisie and scorne,
With huidis heklit doun ovirthort thair ene.
With men of armes my bodie salbe borne.
Into that band see that no blak be sene.
My luferay salbe reid, blew and grene,
The reid for Mars, the grene for freshe Venus,
The blew for lufe of god, Mercurius.

20

About my beir sall ryde ane multitude,
All of ane luiferay of my cullouris thrie;
Erles and lords, knichtis, and men of gude,
Ilk barroun beirand in his hand on hie
Ane lawrer branche in signe of victorie,
Becaus I fled never out of the feild,
Nor yit as presoner unto my fois me yeild.

21

Agane that day, fail not to warne and call
All men of musick and of menstrallie
About my beir, with mirthis musical,
To dance and sing with hevinlie harmonie,
Quhais plesant sound redound sall in the sky.
My spreit, I wait, salbe with mirth and joy,
Quhairfoir, with mirth my corps ye sal convoy.

22

This beand done and all thing reulit richt,
Than plesantlie mak your progressioun,
Quhilk I beleif salbe ane plesant sicht.
Se that ye thoill na preist in my processioun
Without he be of Venus professioun.
Quhairfoir, gar warne al Venus chapel clarks,
Quhilk hes bene most exercit in hir warkis.

23

With ane bischop of that religioun,
Solemnitlie gar thame sing my saull mes,
With organe, timpane, trumpet, and clarion;
To shaw thair musick, dewlie them addres.
I will that day be hard no hevines:
I will na service of the Requiem ,
Bot Alleluya , with melodie and game.

24

Efter the evangell and the offertour,
Throw all the tempill gar proclame silence.
Than to the pulpet gar ane oratour
Pas up, and schaw in oppin audience,
Solempnitlie, with ornate eloquence,
At greit laser the legend of my life,
How I have stand in monie stalwart strife.

25

Quhen he hes red my buik fra end till end,
And of my life maid trew narratioun,
All creature, I wait, will me commend
And pray to God for my salvatioun.
Than efter this solempnizatioun
Of service, and all brocht to end,
With gravitie than with my bodie wend,

26

And clois it up into my sepulture,
Thair to repois till the greit Judgement,
The quhilk may not corrupt, I yow assure,
Be vertew of the precious oyntment
Of balme, and uther spyces redolent.
Let not be rung for me that day saull knellis,
Bot greit cannounis gar them crak for bellis.

27

Ane thousand hakbuttis gar schute, al at anis,
With swesche talburnis and trumpettis awfullie.
Lat never spair the poulder nor the stanis,
Quhais thundring sound redound sall in the sky,
That Mars may heir, quhair he triumphandle
Abone Phebus is situate full evin,
Maist awfull god under the sternie hevin.

28

And syne, hing up above my sepulture
My bricht harnes, my sheild, and als my speir,
Togidder with my courtlie coit armour
(Quhilk I wes wont upon my bodie beir
In France, in England, being at the weir),
My baner, basnet, with my temperall,
As bene the use of feastis funerall.

29

This beand done, I pray yow, tak the pane
My epitaphe to writ, upon this wyis,
Abone my grave, in goldin letteris fyne:
" The maist invincibill weiriour heir lyis,
During his time quhilk wan sic laud and pryis,
That throw the hevinis sprang his nobil fame.
Victorious William Meldrum wes his name."

30

Adew, my lordis, I may na langer tarie.
My Lord Lindesay, adew abone all uther.
I pray to God and to the Virgine Marie
With your lady to leif lang in the Struther.
Maister Patrik, with young Normand, your brother;
With my ladies, your sisteris, al adew.
My departing I wait weill ye will rew.

31

Bot maist of all, the fair ladies of France,
Quhen thai heir tell but dout that I am deid,
Extreme dolour wil change thair countenance
And for my saik will weir the murning weid.
Quhen thir novellis dois into Ingland spreide,
Of Londoun than the lustie ladies cleir
Will for my saik mak dule and drerie cheir.

32

Of Craigfergus, my dayis darling, adew.
In all Ireland of feminine the flour.
In your querrell twa men of weir I slew
Quhilk purposit to do yow dishonour.
Ye suld have bene my spous and paramour,
With rent and riches for my recompence,
Quhilk I refusit throw youth and insolence.

33

Fair weill, ye lemant lampis of lustines
Of fair Scotland, adew my ladies all.
During my youth, with ardent besines,
Ye know how I was in your service thrall.
Ten thowsand times adew, abone thame all,
Sterne of Stratherne, my ladie soverane,
For quhom I sched my blud with mekill pane.

34

Yit wald my ladie luke, at evin and morrow,
On my legend at lenth, scho wald not mis
How for hir saik I sufferit mekill sorrow.
Yit give I nicht at this time get my wis,
Of hir sweit mouth, deir God, I had ane kis.
I wis in vane. Allace, we will dissever.
I say na mair. Sweit hart, adew for ever.

35

Brether in armes, adew, in generall.
For me, I wait, your hartis bene full soir.
All trew companyeounis into speciall,
I say to yow, adew, for evermoir,
Till that we meit agane with God in gloir.
Sir curat now gif me, incontinent,
My crysme, with the holie sacrament.

36

My spreit hartlie I recommend,
In manus Tuas, Domine.
My hoip to the is till ascend,
Rex, quia redemisti me.
Fra syn resurrexisti me ,
Or ellis my saull had bene forlorne.
With sapience docuisti me .
Blist be the hour that thou wes borne.