SKYE BOAT SONG

Charles Edward Stuart, the Young Pretender, was routed by the Duke of Cumberland on Culloden Moor in 1745. Aided by a Jacobite heroine, Flora MacDonald, Bonnie Prince Charlie escaped to the island of Skye in the inner Hebrides. He was finally taken by a French vessel to Morlaix on the coast of Bretagne. The first half of the tune is said to be an old sea shanty; the other half is traditionally attributed to Miss MacLeod.

Words by Sir Harold Boulton, Bart., 1884

With a rocking motion

Music by Annie MacLeod

Cho. “Speed bon-nie boat, like a bird on the wing, On-ward, the sail-ors
“Car-ry the lad—that’s born to be king, O-ver the sea to

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cry! 1. Loud the winds howl, loud the waves roar, Thunder clouds rend the Skye!
2. Though the waves leap, soft shall ye sleep, Ocean's a royal air;
Bed; Rock'd in the deep, Flora will keep watch by your weary head.

3. Many's the lad fought on that day, We'll the claymore could wield, When the night came, silently lay Dead on Culloden's field.

Chorus:

4. Burn'd are our homes, exile and death. Scatter the loyal men; Yet, e'er the sword cool in the sheath, Charlie will come again.

Chorus:

"Speed, bonnie boat, like a bird on the wing, Onward!" the sailors cry. "Carry the lad that's born to be king Over the sea to Skye!"