

Then Farewell, Tarbert

George Campbell Hay

Then farewell, Tarbert, for a while, farewell the hale Kintyre;
farewell the loch, farewell the Sound, farewell the Kerry Shore.
Farewell tie foreland, rock and strand, tie skerry, bight and hill;
though I should trevel twinty lands ye'd stand afore me still.

May good luck go for neebor wi the boats that sail from here,
in wind of calm tie hadd yere helm, wherever ye may steer.

The sea would be a store for ye, if thoughts could work their will.
I never watched a settin' sun and didna wish ye well.

May good luck hadd yere steerin' hand, and shine, a guidin' light
for aa the fleet, and may ye meet wi Fortune in the night.

A redded net in every stern upon yere homeward way,
and silver high in every howld afore the brekk o day.

The sea would be a store for ye, if thoughts could work their will.
I never watched a settin' sun and didna wish ye well.

I'm mindin' o ye every time I look towards the sea.

I never hear the risin' wind but aye I think on ye.

If wishin' well could keep from ill, my wish would keep ye safe
from shrouded shores by nerra seas, from shoal, from rock, from reef,
from squall, from hail, from midnight gale, from daybrekk torn wi wind,
and bring ye through the longest night that derkened kyle or sound.

When, choked wi storm, the mad Sou'-East leaps down on ye and raves,
when risin' fast below the gusts the Sound is hoarse wi waves,
when aa is blin wi night and rain, and no' a light tie see,
may guidin' Fortune swing yere stem and bring ye tie yere lee.

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Note: The Tarbert of this lyric is the one known as *Tarbert, Loch Fyne*. The ring-net method of fishing for herring seems to have originated in the Loch Fyne area. It involved two boats, and the *neebor* mentioned metaphorically above is the other boat of the pair. Each boat had an end of the ring-net. On finding a shoal, one boat dropped anchor while the other sought to encircle the herring with the net. When the herring had been trapped, the two crews came together in one boat to haul in the net and the fish.