

# Loch Boisdale

By Ian B. Stoughton Holborn

(Where Prince Charlie bade farewell to the MacLeods)

Far far aloft, dark in the dusky sky,  
The topsail stands and all the shrouds grow dim.  
Into night's interlude the day must die,  
And down the past our thoughts return to him.

Save for the swirl of water at her bow  
And the dull surge on the receding shore—  
No sound:—while one blue shadow even now  
Hides Calvay's ruined Isle and stern Ben More.

So must it then have been, when hope was spent,  
And all love's daring loyalty had failed;  
And eyes were wet in sad bewilderment  
That in the days of death had never quailed.

With what full heart his backward glances turned,  
When the slow hesitant farewells were said,  
With what full hearts they twain despairing yearned  
After the sail that through the darkness sped.

A hope, a dim ideal, a useless quest,  
A sacrifice to what might never be:  
This is to touch life's essence at its best,  
Dying for dreams more real than sight can see.

Hail to the lad who can no more return,  
And fling away the self and all its gains;  
Each sober calculating caution spurn,  
For once let generous passion seize the reins!

Ah Donald! could we grasp thee by the hand,  
Or, Murdoch, see thee in thy boyhood's grace,  
Proud, by thy prince, doom-girt to take thy stand,  
Love gleaming through the beauty of thy face;

Then might we yet on some romantic morn  
Bring back the old world's chivalry again,  
And fight a lost Culloden more forlorn,  
Yet clean by death our narrowed lives from stain.

