

Mallt-y-Nos

Introduction:

On the CD sleeve for the Holystone album, this song is listed as "trad." with music by BarlowCree; this is an error – both words and lyrics are by BarlowCree.

The story behind the song has a number of versions. In the one we heard, Sir Robert's wife (Mallt) was called Maud; in others she is called Matilda.

Maud's great love was to hunt in the hills above Cardiff. She is brought to task by the church and told that there is no hunting in heaven. Refusing to give up her great obsession, Maud is condemned to become a tortured soul who "lives" on forever in a spectral state, riding behind the hounds of hell – the Cwn Annwn.

Rhiwbina in the song, is the area of Cardiff where BarlowCree is based – so we've injected this in to the lyrics – because we can!

Song:

Sir Robert Fitzhamon had a wife

That girl she was the passion of his life

But hunting was her first love o'er the hills

To ride behind the hounds her greatest thrill

Mmmm (2 lines of bridge)

Back in the manor sat the Lord

He scratched his head and thought about his Maud

Her passion for the chase was his concern

Worried for eternity she'd burn

Cos' the preacher said you can only hunt in hell
Give up the chase and heed the steeple bell
Maud defied the warnings that he gave
And took her love of hunting to the grave

O Mallt-y-Nos, astride her horse
Behind the hounds of hell you'll find her
O Mallt-y-Nos, race through the gorse
Hunting for souls above Rhiwbina
Ride, ride, ride Mallt-y-Nos

Sir Robert and the preacher filled the room
With wrath and tales of suffering and doom
Said Maud I have no interest in your cross
I'd rather sell my soul to hunt the fox

But the preacher said...

O Mallt-y-Nos ...

(Guitar break)

When the night is clear and death is in the air
Keep your wits about you and beware
For Maud is known to hunt beneath the moon
Riding still behind the Cwn Annwn

Cos the preacher said she could only hunt in hell
Give up the chase and heed the steeple bell
Maud defied the warnings that he gave
And took her love of hunting to the grave

O Mallt-y-Nos...

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