

Travel Tales

Amelia Earhart: Find Me the Lass That's Gone

Part 4

by
Lew Toulmin

This sweet, sad, serious song is adapted from the Skye Boat Song, about Bonnie Prince Charlie, written in 1884 by Sir Harold Boulton, and sung to the same tune. My version below also draws on the beautiful version written by Bear McCreary and sung by Raya Yarbrough for the current TV series *Outlander*.

I wrote and first sang this song on the ship *Reef Endeavour*, off Nikumaroro atoll in the Republic of Kiribati, on 2 July 2017, the 80th anniversary of the disappearance of Amelia Earhart and Fred Noonan. The song was sung for the TIGHAR/National Geographic Society team searching for the lost aviators.

Chords are shown in brackets; the “F” chord (which is difficult on some instruments) can use the “Fmaj7” chord instead. The chorus varies somewhat each time, and hence is presented here for each time it is sung. “Millie” in the song is Amelia’s childhood nickname; “Fred” is of course navigator Fred Noonan. TIGHAR is The International Group for Historic Aircraft Recovery, that provided the expertise for the expedition, and “our canine friends” refers to the four forensic dogs used in the effort.

AMELIA EARHART: FIND ME THE LASS THAT IS GONE

CHORUS:

[C] Sing me a [Am] song of a [Dm] lass that is [G] gone.
[C] Say, could that [F] lass be [C] I? [G]
[C] Merry of [Am] soul she [Dm] flew for a [G] day,
[C] over the [F] sea and [C] sky. [G]

[Am] Billow and breeze, [Dm] islands and seas,
[Am] skies full of [F] rain and [Am] sun
[Am] All that was good, [Dm] all that was fair,
[Am] all that was [F] she -- is [Am] gone. [G]

[C] Sing me a [Am] song of a [Dm] lass that is [G] gone.
[C] Where did that [F] lassie [C] fly? [G]
[C] Merry of [Am] soul she [Dm] flew for a [G] day,
[C] over the [F] sea and [C] sky. [G]

[Am] Far back in time, [Dm] found task sublime:
[Am] change the [F] domain of [Am] man.
[Am] Circle the globe, [Dm] over the rime.

[Am] Can she [F] complete her [Am] plan? [G]

[C] Sing me a [Am] song of a [Dm] lass that is [G] gone.
[C] Why did she [F] have to [C] die? [G]
[C] Merry of [Am] soul she [Dm] flew for a [G] day,
[C] over the [F] sea and [C] sky. [G]

[Am] To Niku land, by [Dm] fate's forceful hand,
[Am] is that her [F] final [Am] end?
[Am] From the sky downed, [Dm] can she be found,
[Am] by our [F] canine [Am] friends? [G]

[C] Sing me a [Am] song of a [Dm] lass that is [G] gone.
[C] Where does [F] her body [C] lie? [G]
[C] Merry of [Am] soul she [Dm] flew for a [G] day,
[C] over the [F] sea and [C] sky. [G]

[Am] Give me again, [Dm] all that I prize!
[Am] Give me that [F] face that [Am] shone.
[Am] Give me her eyes, [Dm] give me her soul,
[Am] find me [F] the lass that's [Am] gone. [G]

[C] Sing me a [Am] song of a [Dm] lass that is [G] gone.
[C] Hear all [F] the angels [C] cry! [G]
[C] Merry of [Am] soul she [Dm] flew for a [G] day,
[C] over the [F] sea and [C] sky. [G]

[Am] Dear Millie's gone, [Dm] as is our Fred,
[Am] sought for by [F] TIGHAR's [Am] men.
[Am] Our heroes are where? [Dm] But do not despair,
[Am] they will [F] come home [Am] again! [G]

[C] Sing me a [Am] song of a [Dm] lass that is [G] gone.
[C] Say, could that [F] lass be [C] I? [G]
[C] Merry of [Am] soul she [Dm] flew for a [G] day,
[C] over the [F] sea and [C] sky. [G]

Words in the story above: 644

Photos:

- A. A 1940 British government telegram from the Gardner Island (now Nikumaroro) administrator, stating that human remains including a skull, bones and a shoe from an apparent castaway have been found by a working party, and that there is a slight chance that the remains could be Amelia Earhart. This information was never passed on to US authorities.
- B. A follow-up 1940 British official telegram, listing the human bones found in the SE corner of Niku under a Ren tree, along with remains of a fire, bird and turtle bones, and with all bones damaged by crabs. This is the “Seven Site” that TIGHAR has focused on (named for its shape as seen from the air). The bones were measured in Fiji but disappeared in WW II, and have not been found, despite TIGHAR searches in the Kiribati post office and archives, the Fiji main hospital, Fiji Prime Minister’s Office, Fiji Intelligence Service building, and other locations across the Pacific.
- C. Remnants of an apparent woman’s compact found at the Seven Site on Niku. Chemical analysis (lower right) shows that it consistent with American compacts from the 1930s, of the type used by Amelia Earhart. This is one of many pieces of evidence (but not “smoking gun” proof) that point to Niku as the correct site.
- D. Amelia Earhart and her beloved Lockheed Electra 10E.
- E. Amelia Earhart, with her arresting “face that shone” from the song.

V1 column submitted 9 September 2021 to Montgomery Community Media

--end--