

**POEMS OF OSSIAN
LATELY
DISCOVER'D**

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Poems of Ossian Lately Discover'd by Edmund de Harold

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EDMUND DE HAROLD

**POEMS OF OSSIAN
LATELY
DISCOVER'D**

P O E M S
O F
O S S I A N
L A T E L Y D I S C O V E R ' D

B Y

EDMOND BARON DE HAROLD,
COLONEL COMMANDER OF THE REGIMENT
OF KONIGSFELD, GENTLEMAN OF THE BED
CHAMBER OF HIS MOST S. H. THE ELECTOR
PALATIN, MEMBER OF THE GERMAN SOCIETY
OF MANHEIM, OF THE ROYAL ANTIQUARI-
AN SOCIETY OF LONDON, AND OF THE
ACADEMY OF DUSSELDORF.

DUSSELDORF

BY JOHN CRETEN DANZER

1 7 8 7.

P R E F A C E

T O T H E P O E M S

D I S C O V E R ' D B Y

EDMOND BARON DE HAROLD,
Gentleman of the bed Chamber, and Colonel Comman-
der of the Regiment of Konigsfeld, in the Service
of his M. S. H. the Elector Palatin.

The great Approbation; which the Poems given to the Public by Mr. Macpherfon have receiv'd, induc'd me to enquire whether any more of this kind of poetry subsisted. My endeavours woud have been fruitless had I expected to find complete pieces, for none such certainly exist: but in searching with assiduity and care, I found, by the help of

my friends, several fragments of old traditional songs, which were very sublime, and particularly remarkable for their simplicity and elegance. I compil'd these fragments, which are the more valuable as the taste for this species of ancient poetry every day decreases in the country, and that the old language threatens visibly to be soon extinguish'd, for it loses ground in proportion as the english tongue becomes predominant, the progress of which is very sensible to any person who has been occupied in disquisitions of this nature. From these fragments I have compos'd the following Poems. They are all founded on tradition; but the dress they now appear in is mine. It will appear singular to some that Ossian, at times, especially in the songs of Comfert, seems rather to be an Hibernian than a Scotchman, and that some of these poems formally contradict passages of great importance in those handed to the public by Mr. Macpherfon,

especially that very remarkable one of Euir-allen, where the description of her marriage with Ossian is essentially different in all its parts from that given in the former poems. I will submit the solution of this problem to the public. I am interested in no polemical dispute or party, and give these poems such as they are found in the mouths of the people; and do not pretend to ascertain what was the native country of Ossian. I honor and revere equally a Bard of his exalted talents were he born in Ireland or in Scotland. It is certain that the Scotch and Irish were united at some early period: That they proceed from the same origin is indisputable; nay I believe that it is prov'd beyond any possibility of negating it, that the Scotch derive their origin from the Irish. This truth has been brought in question but of late days; and all ancient tradition, and the general consent of the Scotch nation, and of their oldest historians

agree to confirm the certitude of this assertion. If any man still doubts of it, he will find, in Macgeogehans history of Ireland, an entire conviction, establish'd by the most elaborate discussion, and most incontrovertible proofs.

I must again observe that the reader will find a very essential difference between these Poems and those of Mr. Macpherson. In his there is no mention of the Divinity: In these the chief characteristic is, the many solemn descriptions of the Almighty Being, which give a degree of elevation to them, unattainable by any other method. It is worthy of observation how the Bard gains in sublimity by his magnificent display of the power, bounty, eternity, and justice of God: and every reader must rejoice to find the venerable old warrior occupied in descriptions so worthy his great and comprehensive genius, and to see him freed from the

imputation of Atheism with which he had been branded by many sagacious and impartial men. One of the poems (Lamor) is of a more ancient date than that of Ossian: That of Sitric must be plac'd in the 9th. century. — It will perhaps not be entirely useless to inform the public that I labor'd under many difficulties in collecting the materials of these poems, and that I have written them far from my native country, from which I have been absent almost since my infancy, which subjected me to many essential difficulties in this undertaking: to the candid this will have some weight, and induce them to overlook or pardon the inaccuracies of language, which may have escap'd me especially in a work of so great length: to these who are not so, any thing I can say or write in their favor will be but little attended to. — If they please men of taste. I shall be fully paid for all the trouble, labour and time, spent upon them. At any

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rate, I will enjoy the satisfaction of being
assur'd that my intentions were pure in
writing them, as they are entirely calcula-
ted to promote humanity, Valor, and
Virtue.
