

Helen of Kirkconnel

Words: Traditional

Music : Emily Smith

I wish I was whaur Helen lies For nicht and day on me
 she cries For nicht and day on me she cries I
 wish I was whaur Helen lies On fair Kirk co - nel Lea.

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I wish I was whaur Helen lies
 For nicht and day on me she cries
 For nicht and day on me she cries
 I wish I was whaur Helen lies
 On fair Kirkconnel Lea

Oh Helen fair beyond compare
 I'll mak a garland o' thy hair
 I'll mak a garland o' thy hair
 Wrapped roon' ma hairt forever mair
 On fair Kirkconnel Lea

But curse the heart that hatched the thought
 And curse the hand that fired the shot
 Aye curse the hand that fired the shot
 When in my arms my Helen dropped
 And died for sake o' me

I found ma foe behin' a wa'
 I lichtit doon my sword tae draw
 Stern was oor strife on Kirtleshaw
 As I hacked him intae pieces sma'
 Wha'd taen ma love fae me
 On fair Kirk co - nel Lea.

I wish I was whaur Helen lies
 For nicht and day on me she cries
 Oh I wish I was whaur Helen lies
 On fair Kirkconnel Lea

A beautiful version of the dramatic 16th century ballad published by Walter Scott. It tells the supposedly true story of Helen Irving who fell in love with Adam Fleming though her parents wanted her to marry another richer man. Adam's rival saw the pair on the banks of the Kirtle Water and aimed to shoot but Helen saved her lover taking the fatal blow herself and dying in his arms. Adam took his bloody revenge and fled to Spain but returned years later to die on Helen's grave where he is now buried. You can see their alleged tombstone at Kirkconnel ruined church near the village of Eaglesfield just off the M74. Dumfriesshire's own Romeo and Juliet!