

Scottish Evening Saturday 27th February

Ode to a Casserole Haggis
By Jim McAuslan

I have been told that this is not a Burns' supper, but the blessing of haggis being on the menu confirms that it is a Scottish occasion. I expect that some, if not all of you, know that cooking haggis can be a traumatic experience. When the lid finally comes off the pot it can be a disastrous scene of haggis porridge with bits of skin blended into it. Mrs Beaton or the TV flamby programmes don't offer any help with this, but the Scottish housewives can usually dry the product down to fit into a flat serving dish to put on the table. This has inspired me to comment, in the form of a short Ode to a Casseroled Haggis.

Fair fa' your honest sonsie face
Great Chieftain o' the pudding race
But what do you think you're playing at
Lying there sae square and flat?

Oh what a price ye had to pay
For no runnin roun the ither way.

Or, perhaps, it was when boozing at the nappy
Getting fu' and unco happy
And whilst ye made yer homeward path
Were chased by warlocks in a wrath
And kelpit runnin as ye could
Must mak the brig afore they should
But nannie grabbed ye from ahin
And, ye iin fright, jumped oot yer skin,
While Nannie gawkin like a loon
Was left wae but a burst balloon

So here ye are in flattened state
Wae clappy shot a' o'er yer pate
Makin like a French ragout
Or fricassee wid mak ye spew
When a' the time ye'd rather try
To look like faither's shepherd's pie

But, however ye try to play the scenes
Ye canna change yer natural genes
Sp when my spoon sae rustic labour dight
An cut ye up with ready sleight
Trenching your gushing entrails bricht
Like ony ditch
And then O' what a glorious sicht
Warm, reekin, rich.