

# Speed, Bonnie Boat

This beautiful song tells the story of how Prince Charles Edward Stuart (Bonnie Prince Charlie) escaped in a small boat after the defeat of his Jacobite uprising of 1745. Disguised as a serving maid, Charles was spirited from Uist to the Isle of Skye after his defeat at the Battle of Culloden in 1746. The original lyrics were penned by Sir Harold Boulton in the 1880s to an already existing folk tune. You can listen to this song here: <https://youtu.be/n1CTxa-FuKc?si=vurpkLX47Wjvs3hA>

## The Skye Boat Song

### Chorus:

**D** **A**  
Speed, bonnie boat, like a bird on the wing,  
**D** **G** **D** **A**  
Onward! the sailors cry;  
**D** **A**  
Carry the lad that's born to be King  
**D** **G** **D** **A**  
Over the sea to Skye.

**D** **A**  
Loud the winds howl, loud the waves roar,  
**Bm**  
Thunderclouds rend the air;  
**D** **A**  
Baffled, our foes stand by the shore,  
**G** **Bm** **A**  
Follow they will not dare.

### [Chorus]

Many's the lad fought on that day,  
Well the Claymore did wield,  
When the night came, silently lay  
Dead on Culloden's field.

### [Chorus]

Though the waves leap, soft shall ye sleep,  
Ocean's a royal bed.  
Rocked in the deep, Flora will keep  
Watch by your weary head.

### [Chorus]