



INIS MEÁIN



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SEANÚS (NÓ CAISMIR) NA SGEIÐE

Tráð, fæoi lúgnar, ba ðam-ra tálra,
Ari bofo Át-cinn (I) 'r é so móri as báirteað,
Ómuo mé ari leat-taob asur ní san áððar,
So bráðainn claiðe (2) nó tom oo ðéanfað ríðat ðam.

AUTUMN WINTER 2018 COLLECTION

Raftery the Poet — *Raiftearaí an File*

In recent years we are learning more of the dark years of Gaelic literature from 1700 to 1900 (approx).

After the conquest and dispossession of the Gaelic chiefs, which took place right throughout the 17th century and the break up of the Gaelic order which followed it, men of learning, poets, musicians and scholars travelled the roads of Ireland teaching in “*hedge schools*”, holding courts of poetry and carrying on what was essentially an oral tradition, often in the old Gaelic metres and also in new rhythms for song and music.

Raftery, who was blind from a very young age, was firmly of this tradition and his compositions to memory are still recited and sung along the western seaboard of Ireland.

His longest, epic poem is *Seanchas na Sceiche*, or a *Contention with an Ancient*

Hawthorn Bush (over 100 verses). In it he berates the bush, which he found by the roadside and which failed him in his search for shelter.

This poem serves as the theme for our collection. We imagine Raftery sheltering by the bush in his long coat. His dress was often remarked upon, especially his coat – *Cóta Raiftearaí* – which is the inspiration for the key piece of our AW2018/19 collection.

Our coat is not in the coarse frieze that would have been common in the 19th century. Instead it is knitted in a beautiful soft Donegal blend of 20% Cashmere/80% Merino.

In fact we have moved a large part of the collection up into a finer softer quality blend of Donegal cashmere and merino.

A translation of the first verses of Raftery’s contention with the bush goes:

*Once in August, not far from Headford
A nasty deluge descended upon me
I pulled to one side, just in time
The shelter of a fence or a hedge would do me
And all I found there by the side of a gap
Was a battered old bush, all bent and worn...*

ANTAINE Ó RAIFTEARAÍ
1784 — 1835



















