THE FOLK SONGS OF BRITAIN VOLUME 5

12T 161

THE CHILD BALLADS No. 2

The English and Scottish Popular Ballads Numbers 110-299

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INTRODUCTION

Since the time of Bishop Percy's *Reliques* and the romantic revival it helped to stimulate, the 'popular ballad of Scotland and England has been the darling of the literary scholar. More attention has been devoted to the ballad than to all the rest of folklore put together, not because it was more important in the folk community than other forms, such as lyrics, tales and ceremonials, but because it corresponds more closely to the canons of fine-art literature. Controversy has raged round the difficult problems of ballad origins and diffusion for 200 years, yet most of the scholars involved seldom heard the ballad in context, sung by folk singers. It is our hope that this collection, taken from living tradition, performed entirely by folk singers, and presented in conjunction with other categories of material to be found in Great Britain, will help to set these matters somewhat in perspective.

Professor F. J. Child, in his five-volumed work, *The English and Scottish Popular Ballads,* assembled together the variants of all those pieces he deemed worthy of being called ballads. Although some modern scholars have cavilled at his selection, no one has seriously challenged his scholarship. In sum, what Child shows us is that certain ballads are based on themes widespread in folklore; that others are sung in several European languages and thus must have been distributed from a single point at some time in the past; and that the ballad genre is one of the culture traits common to practically the whole of Europe.

As a type, the ballad has been known in Europe since the beginning of the 12th century. Perhaps this statement will surprise some readers, who may regard the ballad as a very ancient type. Folk songs of narrative cast are old and, can be found among primitive peoples in many parts of the world, but the ballad, with its lyrical, capsuling, narrative techniques, its special stanza form and its impersonal handling of a central incident in a story, seems to be a fairly recent development.

A good deal of mystery surrounds the authorship of these remarkable sung-tales. The plain truth is that no one knows whether they were composed by minstrels, rhymed together by village poets out of a common stock of materials, or improvised verse after verse by various members of a dancing throng. Ballads may have originated in all of these ways (and in others of which we have no knowledge). More pertinent, however, is that the ballads, taken together with their tunes, cannot be separated from the whole corpus of European folklore, for they share with it a wide range of themes, emotional emphases, tunes, and literary devices. In a word, the origin of the ballad is part of the story of the rise of contemporary folk song over much of Europe.

Many of the 300-odd narrative pieces canonized by Professor Child — they are called familiarly today the 'Child ballads' — have long since passed out of oral circulation. One hundred and forty, in full or fragmentary form, have been discovered in North America, where they were brought by British emigrants. Recent research has unearthed more than fifty still in circulation in Great Britain, most of which we reproduce in these two albums (Volumes 4 and 5).

By far our best sources have been the traveller ('tinker') singers of North East Scotland, who have given us full versions of certain ballads which rarely occur elsewhere, since they are of local interest or of special relevance to their lives. In fact, it appears that travellers and gypsies have recently played the principal role in the transmission of the Child ballads in the British Isles. Round their camp fires the ballads are sung and folk tales told today as they were centuries ago. The stamp of traveller interest shows up in the popularity of such songs as *The Jolly Beggar* and *The Gypsy Laddie.*

Here then are the ancient ballads of Britain, recorded from the lips of traditional singers in all parts of the islands, singing in the ways of their forefathers. Some of the performers have fine voices; others have voices that are old or hoarse. But all possess the true ballad art in some respect — the way of spinning the story and the poem together, not with the crude drama of the concert singer, but with the subtle nuance and understatement that is fitting to ballad art. The past speaks through their lips, but if you listen with attention you will discover fantasy patterns important to the present as well.

Note: *For reasons of space it was not possible to reproduce all the stanzas of each ballad on the disc. However, all stanzas are given in the text of this booklet; those omitted from the recording appear in italics.*

For those wishing to know more about ballads, the following books may be found useful:

Francis James Child — *The English and Scottish Popular Ballads.* 5 vols., Boston, 1882-98 (later edition New York, 1965).
Gordon H. Gerould — *The Ballad of Tradition.* Oxford, 1932.
M. J. C. Hodgart — *The Ballads.* London, 1950.
McEdward Leach and *Tristram P. Coffin (eds)* — *The Critics and the Ballad.* Carbondale, Ill., 1961.
A. L. Lloyd — *Folk Song in England.* London, 1967.
Lajos Vargyas — *Researches into the Medieval History of Folk Ballad.* Budapest, 1967.

And for the music of the ballads:

Bertrand H. Bronson — *The Traditional Tunes of the Child Ballads.* Princeton, 1959, 1962, 1966. Three volumes of this important work have appeared, covering Child ballads 1-243. A fourth and final volume is in preparation.

For a study of the printed occurrences of the Child ballads in America, see Tristram P. Coffin. *The British Traditional Ballad in North America,* Philadelphia, 1950.

Volume V SIDE A

1 THE ROYAL FORESTER (The Knight and the Shepherd's Daughter) (Child 110), *sung by John Strachan, Fyvie, Aberdeenshire; recorded by Alan Lomax and Hamish Henderson.*

It is curious that while the English and Scots love such randy ballads, the Americans seem shy of them, preferring the sung-tales of tragedy and violence. They bloom particularly well in the North-east of Scotland where folk-singers and their audiences are seldom shocked by tales of rape in the woods or seduction in the meadows. One of the versions published in Child has a wonderful turnabout conclusion. The lusty lad admits he is the queen's brother, then the girl triumphs by saying that she is the daughter of the king.

References:
Sharp FSS II, pp. 2-3; *Sharp EFS* I, pp. 6-7; *Kidson TT,* pp. 19-21; *Williams* pp. 102-3; *Greig LL,* pp. 87-90; *Grainger LFS* p. 22; *FSJ* III, pp. 222-3, V, pp. 86-90, *JEFDSS* III, pp. 50-1.

1 "I am the forester o' this land as ye may plainly see,
It's the mantle o' your maidenheid that I maun hae frae thee."
Wi' my roo-rum ror-a-dee, ri-rum-ror-a-dee, right-me wa-ra-dee-an.

2 He's ta'en her by the milk-white hand by the lee-lang sleeve,
He's laid her doon upon her back and asked no man's leave.

3 "Now since ye've laid me doon, young man, you'll tak' me up again,
And since ye've ta'en your wills of me, you'll tell to me your name."

4 "Some call me James, some call me John, and begad, that's all the same,
But when I'm in the King's high court, Awillium is my name."

5 She being a good scholar she's spelled it o'er again,
Says, "Awillium, that's a Latin word, but Willie is your name."

6 When he heard his name pronounced he mounted his high horse;
But she belted up her petticoats and followed wi' a' her force.

7 He rode and she run a long summer day,
Until they come to the river—it's commonly ca'ed the Tay.

8 "The water it's too deep, my love, I'm afraid ye canna wade."
But afore he had his horse well-watered she was at the ither side.

9 He went up to the king's high door; she knocked and she went in,
Says, "There's one o' your chancellors robbed me and he's robbed me right and clean."

10 "Has he robbed ye o' your mantle, has he robbed ye o' your ring?
Has he robbed ye o' your maidenheid and another ye canna fin'?

11 If he be a married-man a-hanged he will be,
But if he be a single man, he shall marry thee."

12 Noo this couple they've got married, she lives in Huntly toon,
She's the Earl o' Airlie's daughter, and he's the blacksmith's son.

2 THE BAFFLED KNIGHT (Child 112), *sung by Emily Bishop, Bromsberrow Heath, Herefordshire; recorded by Peter Kennedy (BBC Sound Archive).*

A shepherd sees a pretty girl bathing in a brook, asks to have his will of her, and she pretends to comply by inviting him to come home with her. When she reaches her gate, she slips in, locks it, and laughs at her would-be seducer.

This story has greatly appealed to both English and Scots singers. The earliest known version was printed in Ravenscroft's *Deutromelia* in 1609, and at the end of the century the story became so popular that three broadside sequelae were published. In the first, the girl pretends her lover is near and when the knight turns round to look, she pushes him in the water. In the second, she again pretends willingness and pulls his boots halfway off, then runs away. He is thus unable to pursue her. In the third, she invites him into her castle and lets down the drawbridge, which she has sawn almost in two. It breaks when the knight is halfway across and he tumbles in the moat.

Cecil Sharp collected at least twelve versions, some with the refrain of "Blow away the morning dew," and with saucy texts. He rewrote the ballad and in its censored form it came into general use in schools. Thence it passed again into oral circulation, and the school-book versions may have influenced the present set. However, Emily Bishop, 73 at the time of recording, had a good stock of traditional songs which she learned from her father. He kept the village inn on Bromsberrow Heath and was the leader of the local team of Morris dancers.

References:
Bell BSP, pp. 82-4; *Bruce/Stokoe NM,* p. 81; *Stokoe/Reay SNE,* pp. 112-3; *Sharp FSS,* pp. 16-7; *Sharp IP,* pp. 77-81; *Baring-Gould/Sharp S,* pp. 34-5; *Whall,* pp. 24-5; *Greig LL,* pp. 90-2; *FSJ* II, pp. 18-20, III, p. 114, 257-8.

1 There was a shepherd and he kept sheep upon a hill,
And he would go each May morning all for to drink his fill.

Refrain:
So it's blow the windy morning, blow the winds-i-o,
Clear away the morning dew and sweet the winds shall blow.

2 He looked high and he looked low and he gave a downward look,
And there he spied a pretty maid a-washing at the brook.

3 And then they rode along the road till they came unto the (h)inn,
And ready was the waiting-maid to let the lady in.

4 She jumped off her milk-white steed and stepped within the (h)inn,
Crying, "You're a beggar without and I'm a maid within."

5 "You may pull off your shoes and hose and let your feet go bare,
And if you meet a pretty girl you touch her if you dare."

6 *"I won't pull off my shoes or hose or let my feet go bare,*
But If I meet with thee again, be hanged if I despair."

3 JOHNIE COCK (Child 114), *sung by John Strachan, Fyvie, Aberdeenshire; recorded by Alan Lomax and Hamish Henderson.*

This "precious specimen of an unspoiled ballad" concerns a valiant Scot who would not agree that all venison was the property of the king. That the folk singers of the North-east of Scotland still keep his memory green is evidenced in Strachan's performance, and in the account that Jeannie Robertson gives of Johnny the Brime, another name for the hero.

"It happened into Moneymusk, that's quite true. You send to Moneymusk beside Inverurie and you'll find out that Johnny the Brime was killed there for the sake of hunting venison. Long, long ago you weren't allowed to sing near that place. Johnny was a desperate hunter for deer and all the foresters were feared of him, because they could not catch him in fair play, for understand, he was a fine cracksman shot with an arrow. So, as my song tells you, the rest of the foresters wouldn't have bothered him, only the seventh one had a spite towards him; Johnny was his uncle, you understand. He wanted to get in and tackle his uncle . . ."

References:
Motherwell, Appx No. 22; *Petrie,* No. 743; *Greig LL,* pp. 92-5; *Ord,* pp. 467-9.

1 Johnie rose on a May mornin',
Called for water to wash his hands,
And he call-ed for his twa greyhounds
To be bound in iron chains, chains,
To be bound in iron chains.

2 Johnie shot, the dun deer lap,
She was wounded in the side;
And between the waters and the woods
The greyhounds laid her pride.

3 Now Johnie ate o' the venison
And the dogs drank o' the bleed;
And they all lay doon and fell asleep,
Asleep as they'd been deid.

4 And by there come a silly aul' man
And a silly aul' man was he;
And he's awa' to the king's foresters
For to tell on young Johnie.

5 Johnie shot six o' them
And the seventh he wounded sore
An' he swung his hook over his horse back
An' he swore that he would hunt more.

6 Now Johnie's guid bend-bow is broke
An' his twa grey hounds are slain
His body lies in Monymusk
An' his hunting days are dane.

Ord's version gives "the silly old man's" report of what he saw in the green woods:

7 *As I cam' in by Monymusk*
And down amang the scrogs
The bonniest youth that ever I saw
Lay sleeping a'tween his dogs.

8 *The sark that was upon his back*
Was o' the Holland fine,
And the doublet that was over that
Was o' the Lincoln twine.

9 *The buttons that were on his sleeves*
Were o' the gowd sae guid,
And the twa dogs that he lay atween
Their mouths were dyed wi' bleed.

Jeannie Robertson adds further details to Strachan's fragment, as follows:

10 *He went and tell'd the seventh forester—*
He was Johnny's sister's son—
"If that is young Johnny the Brime,
To the greenwoods we will gang."

11 *The first arrow they fired at him*
For it wounded him on the thigh,
And the second arrow they fired at him,
His hairt's blood blin'd his e'e.

12 *But Johnny rose up with an angry growl,*
For a angry man was he,
"I will kill you a', you six foresters,
An brak' the seventh one's back in three."

13 *He puts his fit upon a stone*
And his back against a tree,
And he killed a' the six foresters
And broke the seventh one's back in three
("Did you ever hear the like o' that now?")

14 *Johnny broke his back in three*
And he broke his collar bone,
And he tied him on his grey mare's back
To carry the tidings home.

Ord prints the final verses of the ballad:

15 *Then out and spak' his auld mother*
And fast her tears did fa',
Ye wadna be warned, my son Johnny,
Frae the huntin to bide awa'.

16 *But wae betide that silly auld man*
An ill death shall he dee,
For the highest tree in Monymusk
Shall be his morning's fee.

4 ROBIN HOOD AND LITTLE JOHN (Child 125), *sung by John Strachan, Fyvie, Aberdeenshire; recorded by Alan Lomax and Hamish Henderson*

Whether Robin Hood ever lived, whether his name was a pseudonym, whether he is a symbol of the resistance of the poor against oppression, a sun symbol or a phallic symbol or another form of Puck and the little people—all this and more has been conjectured, and all this and more is probably true. What matters is that he is the best loved and most appealing folk hero in English literature. Child prints 38 different Robin Hood ballads from the many chapbooks, broadsheets, and other sources that spread his legends to every shire of England centuries ago, but of this cycle only seven ballads have survived into the twentieth century in England and Scotland.

The present ballad occurs in only one version in Child. It was mentioned by Pepys in 1689 and in *Robin Hood's Garland* in 1746, and by Ritson in 1795. The earliest printed copy of the tune is preserved in the ballad opera *The Jovial Crew,* 1731. It tells of how Robin Hood first meets Little John, is outmatched by him, calls on his merry men and, when they want to punish John, he instead recruits his valiant opponent.

Reference:
Williams p. 296.

1 When Robin Hood was about twenty years old,
He happened to meet Little John;
A jolly brisk blade just fit for the trade,
And he was a sturdy young man.

2 They happened to meet in Nottingham bridge
And neither of them would give way;
Quo' brave Robin Hood, in right merry mood,
"I'll show you right Nottingham play."

3 Robin laid on sae thick and sae hard,
He made little John tae admire,
And every knock it made his bones smoke,
As if he had been in a fire.

5 THE JEW'S GARDEN (Child 155), *sung by Cecilia Costello, Birmingham; recorded by Marie Slocombe and Patrick Shuldham-Shaw (BBC Sound Archive).*

The history of this ballad shows how popular fantasy has turned a piece of anti-Semitic propaganda into a story which reflects universal fears and passions. The tale first appeared in the *Annals of Waverly* in 1255, relating how the Jews murdered a boy for ritual purposes. No matter what the Jews did, according to this chronicle, they were not able to bury him. The water and the earth rejected him; when they threw him into a well, his body floated and he was able to tell his sorrowing mother how he had come to die. The calumny was repeated by Chaucer in *The Prioress's Tale.*

Early folk ballads summarized the tale, but the miracles disappear from most modern versions. In America, the Jew's daughter becomes a wicked queen, a Negro nurse and a jeweller's daughter. Game song versions have been found in English, Scottish, Irish and American cities.

References:
Johnson VI, p. 602; *Motherwell,* App'x No. 7, p. XVII; *Bell EB* pp. 189-91; *Broadwood CS,* pp. 86-7; *Sharp FSS* III, pp. 39-41; *FSJ* I, pp. 264-5, IV, pp. 36-7, V, pp. 253-6, VI, pp. 86-8; *JEFDSS* VII (1953), p. 102.

1 It 'ails, it rains in merry Scotland,
It 'ails all over the sea,
When all the children in the town,
They like to play at ball.

2 They throwed the ball so high and so low,
They throwed it into the (h)air.
They throwed it into the Jew's garden;
The Jew he lay below.

3 'E showed 'im an apple as green as grass,
'E showed 'im a prettier thing;
'E showed 'im a cherry as red as blood,
Until he 'ticed 'im in.

4 'E laid 'im in a chair of gold
Till 'e went fast asleep.
'E laid 'im on the Jew's board,
And stabbed him like a sheep.

6 THE BATTLE OF HARLAW (Child 163), *sung by Lucy Stewart, Fetterangus, Aberdeenshire; recorded by Peter Kennedy and Hamish Henderson.*

In the 1940s a commercial recording was made of this song, which sold a fair number of copies in Scotland, and the recorded version is still easily recoverable from traditional singers in the North. The actual event, however, took place on July 24, 1411. Child gives the facts thus: "Donald of the Isles, to maintain his claim to the Earldom of Ross (legally just) invaded the country south of the mountains with ten thousand islanders in the hope of sacking Aberdeen and reducing to his power the country as far as the Tay. He was met at Harlaw, eighteen miles northwest of Aberdeen, by Alexander Stewart, Earl of Mar, and Alexander Oglivy, sheriff of Angus, and his further progress was stayed . . ."

The song was first mentioned in the *Complaint of Scotland* in 1549 and printed in a pamphlet in 1668.

References:
Johnson IV, p. 447, *VI,* p. 528; *Greig LL,* 101-6; *Ord,* 473-5.

1 "Did ye come frae the hielands, man,
Or come ye a' the way?
Spied ye MacDonald and a' his men
As they come frae the Skye?"
Wi' me durrum doo, me fol-the-day,
My diddy and my day.

2 "Oh, I come frae the hielands, man,
An' I come a' the way.
I spied MacDonald and a' his men
As they come frae the Skye."

3 "Oh, was you near MacDonald's men
Their numbers did ye see?
Come tell to me, John Hielandman,
What might their numbers be?"

4 "Oh, I was near an' near enough
Their numbers I did spy.
There was fifty-thousand hielan' men
A-marching tae Harlaw."

5 "If that be the case," Lord Forbes cried,
"We'll make a muckle speed.
We'll cry upon oor merry men
An' turn our horses' heid."

6 "Oh, no, oh, no, my brother dear,
Such things could never be,
You'll tak' your good sword in your hand
And come along wi' me".

Stanzas 7-11 omitted)

12 The first stroke Lord Forbes struck
He gar MacDonald reel;
The next strike Lord Forbes struck
The brave MacDonald he fell.

13 Oh, when they saw that he was dead
They turned and run awa'.
They buried him at Leggett's Den
A lang mile frae Harlaw.

Jeannie Robertson supplied us with verses which enlarge the picture of battle.

For they went on and further on
And doon and by Harlaw.
They baith fell fast on ilka side
Such strikes you never saw.

They fell full close on ilka side,
Such strikes you never saw,
For ilka sword gave clash for clash
At the Battle of Harlaw.

The hielan men with their long swords
They laid aboot fu' sair,
They drove back our merry men
Three acres breadth and mair.

Lord Forbes to his brother did say
"O brother, dinna you see
They've beat us back on every side
And we'll be forced to flee."

For the two brothers brave
Gaed in amongst the thrang,
They struck-ed down the hielan men
With swords both sharp and lang.

7 THE FOUR MARIES (Mary Hamilton) (Child 173), *sung by Jeannie Robertson, Aberdeen; recorded by Peter Kennedy.*

Mary Hamilton, one of Mary Stuart's four companions, bears a baby to "the highest Stuart of all," kills it and hides the body, denying its existence even to her lover. When the babe is found, Mary is taken to Edinburgh, tried, sentenced and hanged.

Sir Walter Scott maintains that this event took place at the Court of Mary Stuart, but that the "highest Stuart" was not involved, nor was the unfortunate girl Mary Hamilton. A Frenchwoman who served in the Queen's chamber had an illegitimate child by the Queen's apothecary. They murdered the baby and were both hanged in Edinburgh. "It will readily strike the reader," says Scott, "that the tale has suffered great alterations as handed down by traditions; the French waiting woman being changed into Mary Hamilton, and the Queen's apothecary into Henry Darnley. Yet this is less surprising when we recollect that one of the heaviest of the Queen's complaints against her ill-fated husband was his infidelity."

It is generally thought, however, that the actual incident occurred in the Russian Court of Peter the Great in 1718. A Mary Hamilton, daughter of a Scots-woman and wife of one of Peter's ministers, was chosen as the Empress's attendant because of her great beauty. She became involved with Ivan Orlov, a handsome aide-de-camp, and bore him an illegitimate child. While she was under the displeasure of her master and mistress for some other offence, the body of a child was found wrapped in a napkin. Under torture, she confessed to having killed two other children, one of which was rumoured to be Peter's.

References:
Greig LL, pp. 107-9; *JEFDSS* III (1936), p. 59.

Spoken: Well, when we was children, we used to hear the old people—we lived there for a while in Perthshire, in Blairgowrie in Perthshire—and we used to hear the old people just recite it like a poetry. You know, say it like a poetry. And we would say it and imitate them saying it, in their way. Not in our Aberdeenshire way, but in their Perthshire way; and we would say . . .

1 A knock come tae the kitchen door,
It sounded through a' the room
That Mary Hamilton had a wee wain
To the highest man in the toon.

2 "Where is that wain you had last nicht?
Where is that wain, I say?"
"I had nae a wain to you last nicht,
Nor yet a wain today."

3 But he searched high and he searched low,
And he searched below the bed,
And it was there he found his ain dear wain,
It was lyin' in a pool of blood.

Sung:

4 Yestreen there was four Marys,
This nicht we'll hae but three;
There was Mary Seaton, and Mary Beaton
And Mary Carmichael and me.

5 Oh, oftimes I hae dressed my queen
And put gowd in her hair;
But the little I got for my reward
Was the gallows to be my share.

6 Oh, little did my mother ken
The day she cradled me,
The land I was tae travel in
Or the death I was tae die.

7 Oh, happy, happy is the maid
That is born of beauty free;
It was my dimplin' rosy cheeks
That was the ruin o' me.

8 THE GYPSY LADDIE (Child 200), *sung in three parts by: (a) Harry Cox, Catfield, Norfolk; (b) Jeannie Robertson, Aberdeen; (c) Paddy Doran, Belfast; all recorded by Peter Kennedy.*

In Britain this ballad still tells a story of gypsy life. And gypsies and travelling folks relish it particularly.

In America, though the song is still popular, it tends to lose its special character and become merely the tale of a lady runaway. There sometimes the song has a cowboy setting.

Many old British versions, however, speak of *Johnny Faa* or *Faw*—a common gypsy name a few centuries ago. Once Johnny Faw's right and title as Earl of Little Egypt were recognized by James V in 1540. In 1609 the gypsies were expelled from Scotland, and a Faw was captured and hanged in 1624 . . . Elsewhere we are told that a certain Lady Jean Hamilton, who loved Sir John Faa of Dunbar, married instead John, the 6th Earl of Cassilis. Several years later, when the marriage had been blessed by two children, Sir John Faa came to the castle with a band of gypsies and wearing gypsy disguise. The Earl, however, returned home without warning, caught and hanged all the gypsies, including the false one, and confined his wife to a tower for the rest of her life. The ford by which the gypsy band crossed the river Doon is known as The Gypsies' Steps to this day.

The ballad emerged somewhere out of this complex of tales. Some scholars suggest it is a rationalization of an ancient Celtic tale of fairy abduction. Several versions indicate that the lady was bewitched.

References.

Johnson II, p. 189; *Baring-Gould SW* p. 100-1; *Sharp FSS* I p. 18; *Gillington SOR,* p. 12; *Joyce OIFMS,* p. 154; *Williams* 120-1; *Greig LL,* p. 126-9; *Ord,* p. 411; *JEFDSS* V (1946) pp. 14-5, VI (1951), p. 79.

Harry Cox:

1 Seven gipsies all in a gang,
They were brisk and bonny-o;
They rode till they came to the Earl o' Cassil's hall,
And there they sang so sweetly-o.
Sweetly-o, sweetly-o,
They rode till they came to the Earl o' Cassil's hall,
And there they sang so sweetly-o.

2 They sang so sweet and so complete,
Till downstairs came a lady-o;
And as soon as they saw her pretty, pretty face,
They cast their gabriel over her . . .

3 She gave to them a bottle of wine,
She gave to them some money-o;
She gave to them when far finer things,
Was the gold rings off her fingers-o . . .

Jeannie Robertson:

4 When her good lord came home that night
Asking for his lady-o,
The answers the servants gave tae him,
"She's awa' with the gipsy laddies-o."

5 "Gae saddle tae me my bonny, bonny black,
My broon it's ne'er sae speedy-o;
That I may go ridin' this long summer day
In search of my true lady-o".

6 For it's he rode East and he rode West,
And he rode through Strathbogie-o,
And there he met a gay young man
That was comin' through Strathbogie-o.

7 "For it's did ye come East or did ye come West?
And did ye come through Strathbogie-o?
And did ye see a gay lady
She was followin' three gipsy laddies-o?"

8 "For it's I've come East and I've come West,
And I've come through Strathbogie-o.
And the bonniest lady that e'er I saw,
She was following three gipsy laddies-o."

9 "For the very last night that I crossed this river
I'd dukes and lords to attend me-o.
This night I must put in my warm feet and wade,
And the gipsies wading before me-o."

Paddy Doran:

10 Oh, there were seven little gipsies standing in a row,
There were none of 'em lame nor lazy-o;
And the fairest one is among them all,
She's gone with the dark-eyed gipsy-o.

11 "Come wid me, my pretty fair maid,
Will you come wid me my true love-o?"
"Sure I wouldn't give a kiss off a gipsy laddie's lips,
Not for all Lord Cash's money-o."

12 Last night she laid in a bed of a down,
Had seven yellow gipsies around her-o;
"But tonight I am lying in a cold barn floor
And seven yellow gipsies to annoy me-o."

13 "Last night I lay in a cold barn floor,
And seven yellow gipsies to annoy me-o,
But tonight I'm lying in a bed of a down,
And me own true love 'longside me-o."

9 GEORGIE (Child 209), *sung by Harry Cox, Catfield, Norfolk; recorded by Peter Kennedy.*

If there was one tyranny that the patient folk of Great Britain resented more than any other, it was the enclosure of the free forest and the imposition of poaching laws. When a man could go to the woods and catch a hare or, once upon a time, shoot a fat buck, he could still feel himself a free man and the extra bit of meat might keep his family from starving. Thus the wealthy were never able to enforce the laws against poaching, no matter how severe they made the penalties. Many fine lads were shipped off to Australia for no worse a crime than having taken a few hares from a big estate, and in centuries past men were hanged for the same reason. This is the story that *Georgie* tells, a story which is still very real to farm labourers like Harry Cox, who has known hungry days in his life.

The song usually ends tragically. In some versions, however, Georgie's wife rescues him and they ride happily home together. In another, the hero slights his wife for another woman, they quarrel and he kills her.

References.

Johnson IV, p. 356; *Gillington SOR,* p. 6; *Broadwood TSC,* p. 32; *Kidson TT,* p. 25; *Vaughan Williams EC,* p. 47; *Sharp FSS* II, p. 5; *Greig LL,* pp. 130-3; *Ord,* pp. 408-10, 456-7; *Vaughan Williams/Lloyd,* pp. 42-3; *FSJ* I, p. 164, II, pp. 208-9, III, pp. 191-2, IV, pp. 89-90, 332-3.

1 As I walked over London Bridge
One midsummer's morning early,
And there I beheld a fair lady,
Lamenting for her Georgie.

2 *"I pray can you send me a little boy*
Who can go an errand swiftly?
Who can go ten miles in one hour
With a letter for a lady."

3 *"So come saddle me my best black horse,*
Come saddle it quite swiftly,
So I may ride to the King's Castle Gaol
And beg for the life of me Georgie."

4 So when she got to the castle door
The prisoners stood many;
They all stood around with their caps in their hands
Excepting her bonny, bonny Georgie.

5 "My Georgie never stole neither horse nor cow,
Nor done any harm to any;
He stole sixteen of the king's fat deers
Which grieved me most of any."

6 "Now six pretty babes that are born by him,
The seventh lay at my bosom;
I would freely part with six of them
To spare the life of me Georgie."

7 Now the judge he looked over his left shoulder,
He seemed so very hard-hearted;
He said, "Fair lady, you are too late,
Your Georgie is condemned already."

8 "Now me Georgie shall be hanged in the chains of gold,
Such gold as they don't hang many,
Because he come of the royal blood,
And courted a very rich lady."

9 *Now me Georgie shall be hanged in the chains of the gold,*
Such gold as you don't see any;
And on the tombstone these words should be wrote—
"Here lays the heart of a lady."

10 THE DOWIE DENS OF YARROW (Child 214), *sung by Davy Stewart, Dundee; recorded by Alan Lomax.*

Davy Stewart has been a wanderer all his life, travelling the roads of Ireland and Scotland, selling small goods and singing ballads and songs at the fairs, and to football and cinema queues. He plays his modern piano accordion like some ancient non-tempered instrument, teasing strange chords out of it that suit his outlandish tunes.

Here he sings an ancient ballad still popular among the folk of the North, and little known in England or the United States. It is a tale of prophetic dreaming and of blood vengeance. Early versions have the girl drinking the blood of her dead love and strangling herself with her own long hair. A hint of incest or at least of fraternal authority is the key to the story, for in one form the girl is already married and pregnant by her ploughboy lover, yet he is still attacked and slain.

References:

Johnson I, p. 65, V, p. 477; *Kidson TT,* pp. 21-4; *Greig LL,* pp. 141-4; *Ord,* pp. 426-7; *FSJ* V, pp. 110-5; *JEFDSS* V (1947), p. 77.

1 There were a lady into the North,
You could scarcely find her marrow.
She was courted by nine noblemen,
In the dowie dens of Yarrow.

2 Her father had a young ploughboy,
Oh, him she loved most dearly;
She dressed him up like a noble lord,
And sent him off to Yarrow.

3 *As these nine noblemen sat drinking wine,*
Drinking to their sorrows;
That the fairest maid they ever saw
Was in the dowie dens of Yarrow.

4 *"Did you come here to play cards or dice?*
Did you come here for sorrow?
Did you come here to slay us all
In the dowie dens of Yarrow?"

5 *"I neither come here to play cards or dice,*
I didn't come here for sorrow.
But one by one, as long as ye'll stand
In the dowie dens of Yarrow."

6 It's three he drew and three he slew
And three he deadly wounded.
Till her false brother, John, came running in
And pierced him through the middle.

7 "Go home, go home now, ye false young man,
And tell of your sister's sorrow,
That her true lover, John, lie dead and gone
In the dowie dens of Yarrow."

8 *"O mother dear, come read my dream,*
I hope it will prove sorrow;
That my true lover John lie dead and gone
In the dowie dens of Yarrow."

9 *"O daughter, now I will read thy dream*
The blood it proves of sorrow;
That your true lover, John, lie dead and gone
In the dowie dens of Yarrow."

10 Her hair being of three-quarters long,
And the colour of it was yellow,
She wrapped it round his middle so small,
And she carried him home from Yarrow.

11 "O mother dear, come make my bed,
Be it long and narrow,
For my true love John, died for me today,
And I will die for him tomorrow."

Volume V SIDE B

1 GLENLOGIE (Child 238), *sung by John Strachan, Fyvie, Aberdeenshire; recorded by Alan Lomax and Hamish Henderson.*

On the progress of Mary, Queen of Scots through the North, she stopped for a time at the house of Fetternear and there took a fancy to a young girl of the neighbourhood named Jean Meldrum, and made her a member of her cortege. One day, on their way through the village of Banchory, Jean's eye fell upon Sir George Gordon. She was smitten and at once wrote him a letter saying that she must have him or die. In one ballad version Sir George voices a perplexity common to many men . . .

Then reading the letter,
As he stood on the green,
Says, "I leave you to judge, sirs,
What do women mean?"

At first the knight took the whole affair as a joke, but Jean fell into a violent fever and her father, a chaplain, intervened on her behalf, so skilfully, indeed, that the knight relented and married her. At this time Jean was barely sixteen years old.

References:
Christie I, p. 282; *Moffat MS,* p. 239; *Greig LL,* pp. 190-2; *Ord,* pp. 412-5.

1 There were four and twenty nobles stood at the king's ha',
And bonny Glenlogie was floor o' them a'.
2 There were nine and nine nobles rode roon' Banchory Fair
And bonny Glenlogie was floor o' them there.
3 Doon come Jeannie Gordon, she come trippin' doonstairs,
And she's fa'en in love with Glenlogie over a' that was there.
4 She called on his footboy that stood by his side,
"Now who is that young man and far does he bide?"
5 "His name is Glenlogie when he is at hame,
And he's o' the Gay Gordons, and his name is Lord John."
6 "Glenlogie, Glenlogie, you'll be constant and kind,
I've laid my love on you and you're aye in my mind."
7 He turned him roon' quickly as the Gordons do a',
Says, "I thank you, Jeannie Gordon, but your tocher's ower sma'."
8 Her father was a chaplain and a man o' great skill,
And he penned a brave letter and he penned it richt weel.
9 When he looked on the letter a light laugh laughed he,
But when he read the letter the tear blind his e'e.
10 "Go saddle the black horse and saddle the broon,
Bonny Jean o' Bethalnie'll be dead ere I win."
11 An' pale and wan was she when Glenlogie come in,
But reid and rosy grew she when she kent it was him.
12 Oh, Bethalnie, oh, Bethalnie, it shines where it stands;
And the heather bells o'er it shines o'er Fyvie's land.

2 THE GREY COCK (Willie's Ghost) (Child 248), *sung by Cecilia Costello, Birmingham; recorded by Marie Slocombe and Patrick Shuldham-Shaw (BBC Sound Archive).*

Phillips Barry, the most assiduous ballad detective, finds here an ancient and blood-chilling ghost story, and a fascinating link between ancient belief and modern history as well. We can do no better than to quote him . . . ". . . we have in *Sweet William's Ghost* and *The Wife Of Usher's Well* the same motif of 'the red cock and the grey' warning revenant spirits to depart. Neither of these old ballads, however, has so clearly made the cock a supernatural bird, 'none other than the bird of Paradise.' In the Middle Irish *imram* entitled 'The Voyage of Snedgrus and MacRiagla,' the pilgrims visit the island of the Tree of Life, on which is a flock of birds, whose leader has *a head of gold and wings of silver.* The Irish text of *The Lover's Ghost* has quite properly kept this bit of Celtic, ultimately Oriental, folklore, though all but reduced to a literary conceit." (So has our Irish text from Birmingham).

Mrs. Cecilia Costello (*née* Kelly) was born in Northumberland of Irish parents. Her father, a Roscommon man, taught her many traditional songs and she has often been visited by collectors. In 1953 she gave a version of this ballad to Patrick Shuldham-Shaw with the final notes F-E-D, making it a pure Aeolian tune, instead of ending on the F as here, which disturbs the modal character.

References:
Joyce OIFMS, p. 219; *JEFDSS* VII (1953), pp. 97-8; *Vaughan Williams/Lloyd,* pp. 52-3.

1 I must be going, no longer staying,
The burning Thames I 'ave to cross.
Oh, I must be guided without a stumble
Into the arms of my dear lass.
2 When 'e came to 'is true love's window,
'e knelt down gently on a stone;
And it's through a pane 'e whispered slowly,
"My dear girl, are you alone?"
3 She rose 'er 'ead from 'er down-soft pillow
And snowy were 'er milk-white breast;
Sayin', "Who's there, who's there at my bedroom window,
Disturbing me from my long night's rest?"
4 *"Oh, I'm your lover and don't discover,*
I pray you rise, love, and let me in,
For I am fatigued out of my long night's journey;
Besides I am wet into the skin."
5 *Now this young girl rose and put on 'er clothing,*
Till she quickly let 'er own true love in.
Oh, they kissed, shook hands and embraced each other
Till that long night was near at an end.
6 *"Willie dear, O dearest Willie,*
Where is that colour you'd some time ago?"
"O Mary dear, the clay has changed me,
I am but the ghost of your Willie-o."
7 *"Then cock, O cock, O handsome cockerel,*
I pray you not crow until it is day.
For your wings I'll make of the very first beaten gold,
And your comb I'll make of the silver-ay."
8 *But the cock it crew and it crew so fully,*
It crew three hours before it was day.
And before it was day my love had to go away,
Not by the light of the moon or the light of day.
9 *So when she saw her love disappearing*
The tears down her pale cheeks in streams did flow;
He said, "Weep no more for me, dear Mary,
For I am no more your Willie-o."
10 *"Then it's Willie dear, O dearest Willie,*
Whenever shall I see you again?"
"When the fish they fly, love, and the seas run dry, love,
And the rocks they melt by the heat of the sun."

3 HENRY MARTIN (Child 250), *sung by Phil Tanner, Gower, South Wales; recorded by Maud Karpeles (BBC Sound Archive).*

Three separate traditions of this ballad have developed. The earliest derives from the life of John Barton, a Scot captured by Portugal in 1474. Barton's three sons were given letters of reprisal against the Portuguese, but they did not stop with forays against the ships of that country, but went on to prey on the merchant vessels of all nations, including England. Thereupon Henry VIII sent Lord Charles Howard out to capture the piratical Bartons, and, after a long chase, they were finally killed in a battle at sea.

This whole story is pretty accurately related in *Sir Andrew Barton* (Child 167). Our present ballad seems to be a later reworking of the same material, with many details omitted, and unquestioned improvements from the poetic and melodic point of view.

References:
Baring-Gould SW, p. 108; *Kidson TT,* pp. 29-32; *Baring-Gould/Sharp S* pp. 20-3; *Sharp EFS* I, pp. 1-3; *Broadwood TSC,* pp. 30-1; *FSJ* I, pp. 44, 162-3; IV, pp. 92, 301-3; VIII, pp. 182-6.

1 There lived in Scotland three brothers three,
In Scotland there lived brothers three.
And they did cast lots for to see which of them,
Which of them, which of them,
Should go sailing all on the salt sea.
2 The lot it fell out on young Henry Martin,
The youngest of these brothers three,
That he should go sailing all on the salt sea,
Salt sea, salt sea,
To maintain his two brothers and he.
3 We had not long been sailing on a cold winter's morning,
Three hours before it was day,
Before we espied a lofty tall ship,
A tall ship, a tall ship,
Coming sailing all on the salt sea.
4 "Hallo, hallo," cried bold Henry Martin,
"How dare you come sailing so nigh?"
"We're a rich merchant ship bound for old England, England, England,
Will you please for to let us pass by?"
5 "Oh, no, no, no," cried bold Henry Martin,
"That never, no never can be,
For I am turned pirate to rob the salt sea,
Salt sea, salt sea,
To maintain my two brothers and me."
6 *"Take down your toproyal, cut away your mainmast,*
Come hither in under my lee.
For I will take from you all your flowing gold,
And I'll turn your fair bodies to the sea."
7 *So then broadside and broadside we valiantly fought,*
We fought for four hours or more.
Till Henry Martin gave her a dead shot
And down to the bottom she goes.
8 *Bad news, bad news, you English heroes,*
Bad news I have for to tell;
There's one of your ships lies sunk off the land,
And all of your merry men drowned.

4 LANG JOHNNY MORE (Child 251), *sung by John Strachan, Fyvie, Aberdeenshire; recorded by Alan Lomax and Hamish Henderson.*

A tall tale from the North—a big ballad (Child prints a version of fifty stanzas)—set to a rousing Scots marching tune is here sung by the most rumbustious ballad singer we found in Aberdeenshire, backed by a chorus of his friends. We cannot vouch for the historical truth of the story, but there can be no doubt about its emotional veracity.

John Strachan was in his seventies when he sang this piece, refreshing his memory from time to time from the text in Greig's *Last Leaves of Traditional Ballads,* of which he was one of the first purchasers. Greig took his text from Peter Buchan's *Ancient Ballads,* 1828. Thus what we have here is the raciest of old Scots broadsides, sung from print, as many ballads must have been in the past, and yet in the brash and breezy manner of an oral performance.

References:
Christie I, p. 44; *Greig LL,* pp. 200-4.

1 There lives a man in Rynie's land
And another in Achindore;
But the bonniest lad amang them a'
Was lang Johnny More:
Ha-riddle-a, nilden-a-dee,
Ha-riddle-a, nilden-nee.

2 *Young Johnny was a clever youth*
Baith sturdy, stout and strong;
And the sword that hung by Johnny's side
Was fully six feet long.
3 *Johnny was a clever youth*
A sturdy, stout and wecht;
Was full three yeards about the waist,
And fourteen feet in hecht.
4 And if a' be true that they do say,
And if a' be true we hear;
Young Johnny's on to fair England
The king's standard to bear.
5 He hadna been in fair London
A year but barely three
When the fairest lady in a' London
Fell in love with young Johnny.
6 Word's gane up and word's gane doon,
And word's gane to the king,
That the muckle Scot had fa'en in love
Wi' his daughter, Lady Jean.
7 "And if a' be true that they do say,
And that ye tell to me,
This michty Scot shall stret' the rope
And hangéd he shall be."

In Greig, the ballad continues for a further thirty-six stanzas, with the account of how the English drugged the Scottish giant and bound him in chains. Johnny persuades a little boy to take a message to his uncle in Bennachie, pleading for help. The Scottish champions rally to his aid; they save Johnny from the gallows, and in fear, the King of England gives Johnny his daughter in marriage. The Scots gallop back in triumph to Bennachie.

5 WILLIE'S FATE (Child 255), *sung by Jeannie Robertson, Aberdeen; recorded by Peter Kennedy.*

As in the ballad of *George Collins,* a fairy takes vengeance on her faithless, mortal lover. She hangs the bits of Willie's body where his new sweetheart will be sure to see them. In the Child version she adorns the church with his flesh . . .

And on ilka seat o' Mary's kirk
O' Willie she hang a share;
Even abeen his love Maggie's dice,
Hanged's head and yellow hair.

This gruesome legend did not, as far as we know, survive among American singers. The ballad is very rare in surviving tradition, and we do not find a printed version subsequent to Child.

1 *For Willie's gane o'er yon high, high hill,*
And doon yon dowie den;
For it was there he met a grievious ghost
That would fear ten thousand men.
2 *For he's gane doon by Mary kirk,*
And in by Mary's stile.
Wan and weary was the ghost
On him that grimly smiled.
3 *"Oft hae ye travelled this road, Willy,*
Oft hae ye travelled and sang;
Nor thought what would come of your poor soul
When your sinful life was done.
4 *Oft hae ye travelled this road, Willy,*
Your bonny new love tae see,
Oft hae ye travelled this road, Willy,
Nor thought of pooren me.
5 Oft hae ye travelled this road, Willy,
Your bonny new love tae see.
But you'll never travel this road again,
For this nicht avenged I'll be."
6 Then she has ta'en her perjured love,
And reived him gair by gair,
And ilka side o' Mary's stile,
Of him she hung a share.
7 *His father and mither baith made moan,*
His true love muckle mair;
His faither and mither baith made moan,
And his new love reived her hair.

6 OUR GOODMAN (Child 274) *sung in three parts by: (a) Harry Cox, Catfield, Norfolk; recorded by Peter Kennedy; (b) Mary Connors, Belfast; recorded by Peter Kennedy and Sean O'Boyle; (c) in Gaelic by Colm Keane, Glinsk, Co. Galway; recorded by Alan Lomax and Seamus Ennis.*

A favourite among soldiers, sailors, hard drinkers and boon companions in Great Britain, America, Northern and Central Europe, this ballad has many tunes and many forms, some of them extremely bawdy. It appeared in print in the late 18th century in both Scotland and England and crossed language barriers in Ireland (see c). It was likewise widespread in Germany and thence it entered other parts of Europe via a 19th century broadside. Our goodman—sometimes a blind cuckold, elsewhere a blind, drunk fool, and in Negro variants, actually a blind man—generally does not punish his erring spouse. The German cuckold, however, ends the dialogue with blows, explaining that these are nothing but the caresses her mother sent her. Similarly an English broadside concludes:

My father found a whup and very glad was he,
And how came this whup here without leave of me?
O that's a nice strap-lace my auntie sent to me.
Egad! He laced her stays and out of doors went he.

References:
Johnson, p. 466; *Bell BSP,* pp. 206-8; *Ford VS* II, p. 31; *Baring-Gould SW,* pp. 60-1; *Williams,* pp. 188-90; *Greig LL,* pp. 214-6; *Hamer,* p. 24.

Harry Cox

1 I was out late one night, very late was I,
I looked into the stable, another man's horse I spy.
"Whose horse is this? Whose can it be?"
My wife she says: "It's a milking cow", that's what she said to me.

Chorus:
All the miles I've travelled, ten thousand miles and more,
A saddle on a milking cow I never saw before.

2 I was out late one night, very late was I,
I looked into the cupboard, another man's coat I spy.
"Whose coat is this, whose can it be?"
My wife she said: "It's a tablecloth," that's what she said to me.
All the miles I've travelled, ten thousand miles and more,
Buttons on a tablecloth I never saw before.

Mary Connors

3 This old man come up the town his lovin' wife to see,
He seen a man all in the bed where my old head should be.
With me skither-o-lero-lero, with me skither-o-lero-lee,
With me skither-o-lero-lero, and the blind man he can see.
4 He says unto his lovin' wife "Come quickly tell to me,
What brought this man all in the bed where my old head should be?"
5 "Get alang," she says, "You blind old man, and blind that you may be,
That is a nurse babe that my mammy sent to me."
6 'Tis miles that I have rambled, some hundred miles and more,
And whiskers on a baby's face I never see before."

Colm Keane (translation)

7 O Peggy, my friend, O Peggy of my heart,
Who is that long man stretched by your side?
O roaming rogue and crazy one,
Who would it be but the babe of the house?
I've travelled the world and returned again
But whiskers on a babe I've never seen before.

7 THE FARMER'S CURST WIFE (Child 278), *sung by Thomas Moran, Mohill, Co. Leitrim; recorded by Seamus Ennis (BBC Sound Archive).*

The motif of the curst wife who was a terror to demons runs through Oriental and European folklore, and it still provokes the laughter of modern audiences. The ballad is still much sung in Britain, and in America it is found in excellent shape and with many engaging tunes. Both men and women enjoy it. It reminds women of the strength of their spiteful anger, if once aroused. For men it conforms to an old and bitter proverb, "There are two places a man wants his wife—in bed, and in the grave." Probably the song embodies a fragment of an old folk tale theme, in which a man agrees to give the devil a member of his family for some service. Robert Burns re-wrote a version called "Kellyburn Braes".

References:
Bell BSP, pp. 204-5; *Williams,* p. 211; *Greig LL,* p. 220; *Hayward* pp. 33-5; *Hammond/Gardiner,* p. 24.

1 I know an old couple that lives near hell,
(*Whistles*)
And if they didn't leave it they're living there still,
With me whack-fol-dye-fol-iggiddy-fol-the-dol-ee.
2 The devil he came to the man at the plough,
Saying, "I've come for some of your family now."
3 "Oh, which of me family do you like best?"
"Oh, your scolding wife, it is her I like best."
4 "Take her away with all me heart,
And that you and her may never come back."
5 He got this old woman right up on his back,
And a pedlar was never more proud of his pack.
6 *He carried her on to a heap of stones,*
And he left her down there and he stamped on her bones.
7 *He carried her on till he came to Hook Hill,*
And she cried as much tears as would turn a mill.
8 He carried her on till he came to Hell's wall,
And she up with her fist and flattened them all.
9 Eight little devils come down, to put her into a sack,
And she up with her critch and broke nine of their backs.
10 The devil was looking across the wall,
Oh, sayin', "Take her away or she'll murder us all."
11 She was seven years goin' and seven more comin' back,
And she's called for the scrapings she left in the pot.

8 THE JOLLY BEGGAR (Child 279), *sung by Jeannie Robertson, Aberdeen; recorded by Peter Kennedy.*

9 THE AULD BEGGARMAN (Child 279), *sung by Maggie and Sarah Chambers, Tempo, Fermanagh, Northern Ireland; recorded by Peter Kennedy and Sean O'Boyle.*

No story is more popular among the travelling folk than this tale of the beggarman who turns out to be an aristocrat, or, in some versions, the king himself, in disguise. It is maintained by some that the hero was King James V of Scotland, indeed, that the monarch actually wrote the ballad himself. For this there is no evidence. Two forms of the story are current. In the first, the beggarman seduces the farmer's lass and when she speaks roughly to him, he insults her, summons his retainers, and rides off in high style. In the second, often called *The Gaberlunzie Man,* the beggar elopes with the girl. When he returns in the same disguise after seven years, the old woman of the house, quite naturally, refuses him lodging. He then summons the girl, by now respectably married, dressed in rich clothes and the mother of three babies, two in arms and one on the way. It would be hard to imagine a fantasy more comforting to the minds of itinerant folk, who live a life on the edge of the law and are often driven away from farms with blows and curses.

References:
Joyce AIM, p. 45; *Greig FSNE* XXX, XXXVIII; *Greig LL,* pp. 220-6; *Ord,* pp. 375-7; *Buchan,* pp. 46-7.

Jeannie Robertson

1 There was a auld beggarman and he was dressed in green,

And he was askin' lodgin' at a place near Aberdeen.

Chorus:
Nae mair I'll gang a-rovin, a-rovin in the night,
Nae mair I'll gang a-rovin', though the moon shines e'er sae bright.

2 *He widna lie in the barn nor yet into the byre,*
He widna lie in any other place but at the kitchen fire.

3 *"For if ye had been a decent lass as I took you to be,*
I would ha' made you the queen of a' the counterie."

4 *He put his hand into his pooch and gie her guineas three,*
"Oh, take this, my bonny lass, for to pay the nurse's fee."

5 He took a horn frae his side, he blew it loud and shrill,
An' four and twenty hielan' men come a-trippin' o'er the hill.

Chorus:
Nae mair I'll gang a-rovin', a-rovin' in the night,
Nae mair I'll gang a-rovin', though the moon shines e'er sae bright.

6 *He took a pen-knife frae his pooch, let a' his duddies fa',*
And he was the brawest hielan'-man that stood amongst them a'.

Maggie and Sarah Chambers

1 As I went linking o'er the lee
The finest weel that I did see,
Looking for his charity,
"Would you lodge a lame poor man?"
For the night being wet and it being cold,
She took pity on the poor old soul,
She took pity on the poor old soul
And she bade for him to sit down.

Chorus:
With his tooran nooran non ton nee,
Right ton nooran fol the doo-a-dee,
Right ton nooran nooran nee,
With his tooran nooran-i-do.

2 For he gat himself in the chimbley neuk,
With all his bags behind the crook,
All his bags behind the crook,
Right merrily he did sing.

3 *"For if I was as black as I am white,*
Like the snow that lies on yon hill-dyke,
I would dress myself so beggarlike
And away with you I'd gang."

4 *"O lassie, O lassie, you're far ower young,*
You hinna got the lilt o' the begging tongue,
You hinna got the lilt o' the begging tongue
So wi' me ye canna gang."

5 *"I'll burden my back, I'll bend my knee,*
I'll draw a black patch o'er my e'e,
And for a beggar they'll take me,
So away wi' you I'll gang."

6 For all the doors being locked quite tight,
The old woman rose in the middle of the night,
The old woman rose in the middle of the night
To find the old man gone.

7 For she ran to the cupboard, likewise to the chest,
All things there and nothing missed,
Clapping her hands and, "The dear be blessed,
Wasn't he the honest old man."

8 When the breakfast was ready and the table laid,
The old woman went to waken the maid,
The bed was there and the maid was gone,
She'd away with a lame poor man.

9 Seven years past and gone,
And this old beggar came back again,
Looking for his charity,
"Would you lodge a lame poor man?"
"For I never lodged any but the one,
And with him my one daughter did gang,
And I choose you to be the very one,
And I'll have ye to be gone."

10 "If it's your one daughter you want to see,
She has two bairns on her knee,
She has two bairns on her knee,
And a third one's comin' round.
For yonder she sits and yonder she stands,
The fairest lady in all Scotland,
She has servants at her command,
Since she went with the lame poor man."

10 THE KEACH IN THE CREEL (Child 281), *sung by Michael Gallagher, Beleek, Fermanagh, Northern Ireland; recorded by Peter Kennedy and Sean O'Boyle.*
This risqué tale, with its trick for entering the girl's bed-chamber, appears in French jest books of the 13th century. The ballad form was not discovered until the early 19th century in Britain, but its wide popularity there indicates that it is far older.
References:
Bell BSP, pp. 75-7; *Bruce/Stokoe NM,* pp. 82-4; *Stokoe/Reay SNE,* pp. 22-3; *Greig LL,* pp. 230-3; *Sam Henry* No. 201.

1 As I roved down through Newry town
Some fresh fish for to buy,
'Twas there I spied a bonny wee lass,
On her I cast a fond eye.
Hurroo-ri-ah, fol-lol-dee-da,
Hurroo-ri-ah, fol-lol-dee-di-do.

2 "How would I get to your chamber, love,
Or how would I get to your bed?"
"My father he locks the door at night
And the keys lie under his head.

3 Get a ladder newly made
With forty steps and three.
And put it to my chimney top,
And come down in a creel to me."

4 No peace nor ease could the ould wife get
With dreams running through her head;
"I'll lay my life," says the gay ould wife,
"There's a boy in me daughter's bed."

5 *Then up the stairs the ould man crept*
And into the room did steal.
Silence reigned where the daughter slept,
And he never twigged the creel.

6 *"My curse attend you, father,*
What brought you up so soon?
To put me through my evening prayers
And I just lying down."

7 *He went back to his gay ould wife,*
He went back to she;
"She has the prayer book in her hand
And she's praying for you and me."

8 No peace nor ease could that ould wife get
Till she would rise and see.
She came on a stumbling block
And into the creel went she.

9 *The lad being on the chimney top*
He gave the creel a haul,
Broke three ribs in the ould woman's side
And her bump came agin the wall.

11 THE GOLDEN VANITY (Child 286), *sung by Bill Cameron, St. Mary's, Isles of Scilly; recorded by Peter Kennedy.*
The oldest version of this song, which appears among the ballads of Samuel Pepys in 1682, names Sir Walter Raleigh as the treacherous captain. Perhaps the ballad was originally composed as an attack on that gallant and ill-starred gentleman. At any rate, it became the darling of folk singers, on land and sea, in Great Britain and the Colonies, and is still popular in schools and with modern singers of folk songs. It is the ballad par excellence of the underdog. Folk fancy has endowed the ship with a series of lovely names—*The Golden China Tree, The Golden Vallady, The Merry Golden Tree, The Golden Merrilee, The Golden Willow Tree, The Yellow Golden Tree, and many more.*

British and American versions show one important plot difference. In major part British singers end the story toughly and tragically with the boy left alone to drown. American singers tend to sentimentalize the end, or do their versions reflect changed attitudes between adults and children and between upper and lower classes? Perhaps here sentiment and democratic folkways go hand in hand.
References:
Baring-Gould SW, pp. 132-3; *Baring-Gould/Sharp S,* pp. 14-5; *Kidson GEFS,* pp. 72-3; *Broadwood CS,* pp. 182-3; *Sharp ES I,* pp. 36-7; *Williams,* pp. 199-200; *Greig LL,* pp. 238-9; *Seeger/MacColl,* p. 65; *FSJ* I, pp. 104-5; II, pp. 244.

1 I had a little ship in the North Counteree,
She went by the name of the Golden Vanity.
But I was afraid she'd be taken by the Turkish enemy
And we sank her in the lowlands, the lowlands,
And we sank her in the lowlands low.

2 Then up comes a little cabin boy,
"What would you give me the ship to destroy?"
"First I'd give you silver and then I'd give you gold,
And you shall have me daughter when I get to the shore."
So we sank her in the lowlands, the lowlands,
We sank her in the lowlands low.

3 *The boy bent his breast and away swam he,*
He swam till he came to the Turkish enemy.

4 *Some were playing cards and some were playing dice,*
He took out his auger and bored thirty times and thrice.

5 *The boy bent his breast and back swam he,*
He swam till he came to the Golden Vanity.

6 *Captain, o Captain, pull me up on board,*
And be as good to me, as good as your word.

7 *But they pulled him up on board and they sewed him in a hide,*
And they tossed him back again for to float upon the tide,
For he'd sunk her in the Lowlands, the Lowlands,
For he'd sunk her in the Lowlands low.

(*Note: Only verses 1-2 were sung by Bill Cameron. The rest are completed from other local variants.*)

12 THE TROOPER LAD (Child 299), *sung by Jimmy McBeath, Elgin, Moray; recorded by Alan Lomax.*
Related to the lyric *Seventeen Come Sunday* on the one hand, and the many songs of rape and seduction on the other (see *Captain Wedderburn's Courtship*), this randy tale may fairly be said to contain Britain's favourite folk theme. It occurs rarely in American tradition, and usually in a softened form, where the lusty trooper returns to marry the girl or promises to do so. This contrast suggests a fundamental difference in attitude toward erotic love between the two countries, a difference that shows up far more sharply in folk lore than in the most scrupulous sociological surveys.
References:
Christie II, p. 210; *Baring-Gould SW,* pp. 134-5; *Greig LL,* pp. 246-8.

1 A trooper lad come here last nicht,
And oh, but he was weary,
A trooper lad come here last nicht,
When the moon shined bright and clearly.

Chorus:
Bonnie lassie, I'll lie near ye yet,
Bonnie lassie, I'll lie near ye.
And I'll gar all your ribbons reel
In the morning ere I leave ye.

2 For she took the horse by the bridle ring
And led him till her stable;
She gied him corn and hay to eat
As muckle as he was able.

3 For she took the trooper by the hand
Led him to her chamber;
She gied him a stoup o' ale to drink,
For love it felt like tinder.

4 For she made the bed baith long and wide
And shaped it like a lady;
She took her wee coatie o'er her heid
Saying, "Trooper, are ye ready?"

5 An' he took off his belted coat,
Likewise his hat and feather.
He's leant his sword against the door,
And noo he's doon aside her.

6 *For they werena an hour into the bed,*
An hoor and but a quarter.
When the drums come sounding up the street,
And ilka beat got shorter.

7 *An' she took her wee coatie o'er her head*
And followed him up tae Sterling,
But she grew so fu' that she couldna boo,
And he left her in Dunfermline.

8 "When will ye come back again,
My ain dear sodger laddie?
When will ye come back again
And be your bairnie's daddy?"

9 "Haud your tongue, my bonny young lass,
Dinna let this partin' grieve ye,
When heather grows in yonder knowes,
It's I'll come back and see ye."

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