

FOLK MUSIC OF THE UNITED STATES

Music Division

Recording Laboratory AFS L12

# ANGLO-AMERICAN SONGS AND BALLADS

From the Archive of Folk Song

Edited by Duncan Emrich



LIBRARY OF CONGRESS WASHINGTON



## A1—LORD BATEMAN.

Sung with guitar by Pleaz Mobley of Manchester, Ky. Recorded at Harrogate, Tenn., 1943, by Artus M. Moser.

Professor Child says in his monumental work that "Lord Bateman," or "Young Beichan" as it was called, is a "favorite ballad," and as it is sung here by Pleaz Mobley there is every reason to see why this is so. Unlike most of the English ballads—with death, murder, unrequited love—"Lord Bateman" tells a story of adventure and ends happily for Lord Bateman and the Turkish lady, at least. The story of the ballad is very close to a legend told about Gilbert Beket, the father of St. Thomas, but the ballad itself does not derive from the legend, having come into existence independently. Mobley's interpretation is an unusually fine one and in itself guarantees a full and continuing life to the song.

For full references, see: Arthur Kyle Davis, *Traditional Ballads of Virginia* (Harvard University Press, 1929), pp. 158-71.

1. Lord Bateman was a noble lord,  
He held himself of high degree,  
He would not rest nor be contented  
Until he voyaged across the sea.
2. He sailed east and he sailed westward,  
Until he reached the Turkish shore,  
And there they took him and put him in  
prison,  
He never expected his freedom any more.
3. Now the Turk he had one only daughter,  
As fair a maiden as eyes did see,  
She stole the keys to her father's prison,  
Saying, "Lord Bateman I'll set free."
4. "Have you got house, have you got land, sir,  
Do you hold yourself of high degree,  
What would you give the Turkish lady  
If out of prison I'll set you free?"
5. "Well, I've got house and I've got land, love,  
Half of Northumberland belongs to me,  
I'll give it all to the Turkish lady  
If out of prison you'll set me free."
6. She took him to her father's harbor  
And gave to him a ship of fame,  
"Farewell, farewell to thee, Lord Bateman,  
I fear I'll never see you again."
7. For seven long years she kept that vow true,\*  
Then seven more, 'bout thirty-three,  
Then she gathered all her gay, fine clothing,  
Saying, "Lord Bateman I'll go see."
8. She sailed east and she sailed westward  
Until she reached the English shore,  
And when she came to Lord Bateman's castle,  
She alighted down before the door.
9. "Is this Lord Bateman's fine castle,  
And is his lordship here within?"  
"Oh, yes, oh yes," cried the proud young  
porter,  
"He's just taken his young bride in."
10. "What news, what news, my proud young  
poster,  
What news, what news do you bring to me?"  
"Oh, there's the fairest of all young ladies  
That ever my two eyes ever did see."
11. "She says for you to send a slice of cake, sir,  
And draw a glass of the strongest wine,  
And not forget the proud young lady  
That did release you when confined."
12. Lord Bateman rose from where he was  
sitting,  
His face did look as white as snow,  
Saying, "If this is the Turkish lady,  
I'm bound with her love to go."
13. And then he spoke to the young bride's  
mother,  
"She's none the better nor worse for me,  
She came to me on a horse and saddle,  
I'll send her back in chariots three."
14. "She came to me on a horse and saddle,  
I'll send her back in a chariot free,  
And I'll go marry the Turkish lady  
That crossed the roaring sea for me."

\* In a stanza omitted by Pleaz Mobley, the Turkish lady and Lord Bateman had pledged their love to each other in toasts of strong wine.

## A2—EXPERT TOWN (THE OXFORD GIRL).

Sung with guitar by Mrs. Mildred Tuttle at Farmington, Ark., 1942. Recorded by Vance Randolph.

As Belden points out, the story of the girl murdered by the man who has seduced her takes many forms in the ballads of the people. "Expert Town" has undergone changes from the time of the original *Berkshire Tragedy*; or, *The Wittam Miller* which was first published as a broadside circa 1700. In it the scene of the tragedy was at Wittam, near Oxford, although some prints located it near Wexford. From "Wexford" to "Expert" was an easy transition. In earlier versions, the miller returns from the murder and explains to his mother that the blood on his clothes comes from a nosebleed. This has been omitted in the present text, but the story loses nothing through the omission. The stanzas of murder and gore, of course, culminate with the traditional moral, while the blood-curdling detail continues into the last line where we can almost see the body of the poor wretch dangling "between the earth and sky."

For further material on this ballad, see: H. M. Belden, *Ballads and Songs Collected by the Missouri Folk-Lore Society*, University of Missouri Studies, xv, no. 1, pp. 134-36; John Harrington Cox, *Folk-Songs of the South* (Harvard University Press, 1925), pp. 311-13; Cecil J. Sharp, *English Folk Songs from the Southern Appalachians* (Oxford University Press, 1932), I, pp. 407-9.

1. It was in the city of Expert  
Once where I used to dwell,  
It was in the city of Expert Town  
I owned a flouring mill.

2. I fell in love with a nice young girl,  
Dark rolling was her hair [roving was her eye]  
I told her that I'd marry her  
If me she'd never deny.

3. I fell in love with another girl,  
I loved her just as well,  
The Devil put it in my mind  
My first true lover to kill.

4. I called down to her sister's house  
At eight o'clock one night,  
But little did the poor girl think  
I owed her in despite.

5. "We'll have a walk, we'll have a talk  
Down by the meadow field,  
We'll also have a private talk  
And set our wedding day."

6. We walked along, we talked along  
Till we came to the levellest ground,  
I picked me up a stick of wood  
And knocked the poor girl down.

7. She fell upon her bending knees  
Crying, "Lord have mercy on me!  
Oh, Willie, oh, Willie, don't murder me now,  
For I'm not prepared to die!"

8. Little attention did I pay,  
I beat her more and more,  
I beat her till the blood run down,  
Her hair was yellow as gold.

9. I picked her up by the lifeless hair,  
I swung her round and around,  
I swung her on the water top  
That flows through Expert Town.

10. Her sister swore my life away  
Without a bitter doubt  
She swore that I was the very same man  
That taken her sister out.

11. They took me on suspicion,  
Locked me up in Expert jail,  
I had no one to pay off my fine,  
No one to go my bail.

12. And now they're going to hang me  
And I'm not prepared to die;  
They're going to hang me up in the air  
Between the earth and sky.

## A3—NAOMI WISE.

Sung by Mrs. Lillian Short at Galena, Mo., 1941. Recorded by Vance Randolph.

"Naomi Wise" or, as it is otherwise known, "Oma Wise," "Omie Wise," and "Poor Oma" is a ballad of American origin and has all the char-

acteristics of being composed by a local singer. Mr. Bascom Lamar Lunsford states that "Jonathan Lewis drowned his sweetheart, Naomi Wise, in 1808, in Deep River," North Carolina. The basic theme—the murder of a girl seduced—is like that of "Expert Town" although the sharply realistic details are missing. From the opening "Come all you young people" to the closing line with the heavy accent on "fate" the ballad places strong emphasis on the moral.

For further material on "Naomi Wise," see: H. M. Belden, *Ballads and Songs Collected by the Missouri Folk-Lore Society*, University of Missouri Studies, xv, no. 1, 1940, pp. 322-24; B. L. Lunsford and L. Stringfield, *30 and 1 Folk Songs from the Southern Mountain* (New York: Carl Fischer, 1929); Cecil J. Sharp, *English Folk Songs from the Southern Appalachians* (Oxford University Press, 1932), II, p. 144; and Edward Henry Mellinger, *Folksongs from the Southern Highlands* (New York, 1938), p. 221.

1. Come all you young people, a story I will tell  
About a maid they called Naomi Wise.  
Her face was fair and handsome, she was  
loved by everyone,  
In Randolph County now her body lies.
2. They say she had a lover, young Lewis was his  
name,  
Each evening he would have her by his side.  
She learned to love and trust him, and she  
believed his words,  
He told her she was soon to be his bride.
3. One summer night he met her and took her  
for a ride,  
She thought that she was going to be wed,  
They came to old Deep River and so the story  
goes,  
"You have met your doom," these words the  
villain said.
4. She begged him just to spare her, the villain  
only laughed,  
They say that he was heartless to the core,  
And in the stream he threw her below the old  
mill dam  
And sweet Naomi's smile was seen no more.

5. Next day they found her body a-floating down  
the stream  
And all the folks for miles around did cry,  
Young Lewis left the country, they fetched  
him back again,  
But they could not prove that he caused her to  
die.

6. They say that on his deathbed young Lewis  
did confess  
And said that he had killed Naomi Wise,  
And now they know her spirit still lingers  
around the place  
To save the young girls from some villain's  
lies.

7. Young people, all take warning, and listen  
while I say,  
You must take care before it is too late,  
Don't listen to the story some villain's tongue  
will tell  
Or you are sure to meet Naomi's fate.

#### A4—EDWARD.

Sung by Charles Ingenthron of Thornton,  
Calif. Recorded at Walnut Shade, Mo.,  
1941, by Vance Randolph.

This ballad of fratricidal murder is more commonly known by those who sing it as "How Come that Blood on your Shirt sleeve?" or "What's that Blood on the end of your sword?" although Mr. Ingenthorn, the singer, titles it "The Little Yellow Dog." In early Scottish versions, the final stanza culminates with a curse in which Edward blames his mother for the wrong advice she has given him:

"The curses of hell frae me sall ye beir,  
Sic counseils ye gave to me O!"

For full references, see: Arthur Kyle Davis, *Traditional Ballads of Virginia* (Harvard University Press, 1929), pp. 120-24.

1. "Oh, what's that stain on your shirt sleeve?  
Son, please come tell me."  
"It is the blood of my little yellow dog  
That followed after me."
2. "It is too pale for your little yellow dog,  
Son, please come tell me."  
"It is the blood of my little yellow horse  
That I rode to town today."

3. "It is too pale for your little yellow horse,  
Son, please come tell me."  
"It is the blood of my own brother dear  
That rode by the side of me."
4. "Oh, what did you fall out about?  
Son, please come tell me."  
"We fell out about a sprout  
That might have made a tree."
5. "Oh, what will you do when your father  
comes home?  
Son, please come tell me."  
"I'll step on board of yondo [yonder] ship  
And sail across the sea."
6. "Oh, what will you do with Katie dear?  
Son, please come tell me."  
"I'll take her on board of yondo ship  
To bear me company."
7. "Oh, when will you come back, my dear?  
Son, please come tell me."  
"When the sun rises never to set,  
And you know that'll never be."

**A5—MY PARENTS RAISED ME  
TENDERLY.**

Sung with guitar by Pleaz Mobley of Manchester, Ky. Recorded at Harrogate, Tenn., 1943, by Artus M. Moser.

As on record AFS L1, A6, "The Rich Old Farmer," Pleaz Mobley's song is a version of "The Girl I Left Behind Me" theme which appeared as a British broadside of the eighteenth century. A comparison of the two records, tune and text, again affords an opportunity to observe what happens in oral transmission of folk songs. Mobley's version is a straightforward one, more unified than "The Rich Old Farmer," concentrating full attention on the two subjects—the girl left behind and the urge for rambling—which are tied together neatly at the end in a serio-comic moral.

For other versions, see: H. M. Belden, *Ballads and Songs Collected by the Missouri Folk-Lore Society*, University of Missouri Studies, xv, no. 1, 1940, p. 198.

1. My parents raised me tenderly  
They had no child but me,  
My mind it was on rambling,  
With them I could not agree.
  2. There was a wealthy farmer  
Who lived neighbors close by,  
He had a lovely daughter  
On her I cast my eye.
  3. She was so tall and slender,  
The fairest of the fair,  
I'm sure there is no other  
With her I could compare.
  4. I asked her if it made any difference  
If I passed over the plains,  
She says "It makes no difference,  
But you come back again."
  5. My whip I will turn over  
My team I will resign  
I willed my horse and buggy  
To the girl I left behind.
  6. I rambled through old Ioway,  
Till Utah I was bound,  
I rambled, rambled, and I rambled  
Till I'd rambled this wide world round.
  7. At last a letter came to me  
'Twas to give me to understand  
That the girl I'd left in Ioway  
Had married another man.
  8. I turned right around and 'round and 'round,  
Not knowin' what to do,  
I read it over and over  
Until I found it true.
- Spoken:* Now this is the moral.
9. If you ever court a pretty fair girl  
Just marry her when you can,  
For as sure as you go rambling,  
She'll marry another man.

### B1—FROGGIE WENT A-COURTING.

Sung with guitar by Pleaz Mobley of Manchester, Ky. Recorded at Harrogate, Tenn., 1943, by Artus M. Moser.

This nursery song, perhaps the most widely known in the language, can be traced with certainty to England of the sixteenth century. According to an entry in the Stationers' Hall Registry for 1580, Edward White was given permission to print and sell "A Moste Strange Weddinge of the ffrogge and the mowse." It is found in every section of the United States and has innumerable stanzas which are not all included in the version which Pleaz Mobley sings. Mobley's hesitation at the end is due not to any forgetfulness on his part, but to a chuckling good humor at the non-sense of the song.

For further information, see: E. E. Gardner and G. J. Chickering, *Ballads and Songs of Southern Michigan* (University of Michigan Press, 1939), pp. 455-59; George Lyman Kittredge's bibliographical note in *Journal of American Folklore*, xxxv, pp. 394-99; John Harrington Cox, *Folk-Songs of the South* (Harvard University Press, 1925), pp. 470-73; Cecil J. Sharp, *English Folk Songs from the Southern Appalachians* (Oxford University Press, 1932), II, pp. 312-23.

1. Well, Froggie went a-courting and he did ride,  
Uh-uh!  
Froggie went a-courting and he did ride,  
Sword and pistol by his side,  
Uh-uh!
2. He took little Mousie on his knee.  
Uh-uh!  
He took little Mousie on his knee,  
Saying, "Mousie, won't you marry me?"  
Uh-uh!
3. Little Mousie said, "No, couldn't do that."  
Uh-uh!  
Little Mousie said, "I couldn't do that  
Unless you ask old Uncle Rat."  
Uh-uh!
4. Well, the old Rat said it'd be all right,  
Uh-uh!  
Well, the old Rat said it'd be all right,  
Set that wedding for Tuesday night.  
Uh-uh!
5. Where shall the weddin' supper be?  
Uh-uh!  
Where shall the weddin' supper be?  
Way down yonder in a hollow tree.  
Uh-uh!
6. Well, what shall the weddin' supper be?  
Uh-uh!  
What shall the weddin' supper be?  
Two big beans and a goober pea.  
Uh-uh!
7. Well, the first come in was a bumble bee,  
Z-z-z-z!  
First come in was a bumble bee  
Tuning his fiddle on his knee.  
Uh-uh!
8. Well, the next come in was a big black snake,  
Zip!  
The next come in was a big black snake,  
Asked for that wedding cake,  
Uh-uh!
9. Well, the next come in was a big old ram,  
B-a-a-a!  
Well, the next come in was a big old ram,  
Hope, by Ned, he didn't give a ———  
Pharaoh shot old Combo. Combo! Tum-a-  
rap-trap-feeney-winkle-plennle-doodle-yalla-  
bugga-rap-trap-barney, Mister Combo.  
  
Pleaz Mobley: "You can sing the rest of it  
now, professor."  
Artus Moser: "No, you go ahead . . . go  
ahead. . . ."
10. Well, Mousie got scared and ran up the wall,  
Uh-uh!  
Mousie got scared and ran up the wall,  
Said, "The devil take the Froggie—house  
and all!"  
Uh-uh!

### B2—THE SINGING ALPHABET.

Sung by Mrs. May K. McCord at Springfield, Mo., 1941. Recorded by Vance Randolph.

In the rural schools of early America, the child's task of mastering the alphabet was enlivened and made an amusing game by the sim-

ple process of setting the twenty-six letters to music. There are several such alphabet songs. This one, sung by Mrs. May K. McCord, opens with an innocent enough nursery jingle and the children are halfway into their lesson before any awareness of "work" enters their minds.

1. Mother, may I go out to swim?  
Yes, my darling daughter,  
Hang your clothes on a hickory limb,  
But don't go near the water.
2. A-B-C-D-E-F-G-H-I-J-K-L-M  
N-O-P-Q-R-S-T-and that's the way to spell 'em!  
Then comes U and then comes V  
Let the chorus ring 'em.  
W-X and Y and Z and that's the way to sing  
'em!

### B3—ROLLY TRUDUM.

Sung by Mrs. May K. McCord at Springfield, Mo., 1941. Recorded by Vance Randolph.

Belden lists this song under the title of "Mother and Daughter," but the "rolly trudum" refrain is so individual and characteristic that it is by this that the song is generally known throughout the South. The basic theme is that of the daughter who is determined to get married and who, willy-nilly, does. The mother, in a humorous last stanza, profits by the daughter's example and sets her cap, too.

For further information, see: H. M. Belden, *Ballads and Songs Collected by the Missouri Folk-Lore Society*, University of Missouri Studies, xv, no. 1, 1940, p. 266.

1. As I went out a-walking to breathe the  
pleasant air,  
Rolly-trudum, trudum, trudum-rolly-day,  
As I went out a-walking to breathe the  
pleasant air,  
I saw a lady talking to her daughter fair,  
Rolly-trudum, trudum, trudum-rolly-day.
  2. "Now hush up, dear daughter, stop your rapid  
tongue,"  
Rolly-trudum, trudum, trudum-rolly-day,  
"Now hush up, dear daughter, stop your rapid  
tongue,  
You're talking about marrying and you know  
you are too young,"  
Rolly-trudum, trudum, trudum-rolly-day.
  3. "Oh, hush up dear mother, you know I'm a  
lady grown,"  
Rolly-trudum, trudum, trudum-rolly-day,  
"Oh, hush up dear mother, you know I'm a  
lady grown,  
I've lived seventeen years and I've lived it all  
alone,"  
Rolly-trudum, trudum, trudum-rolly-day.
  4. "Oh, if you was to marry, who would be your  
man,"  
Rolly-trudum, trudum, trudum-rolly-day,  
"Oh, if you was to marry, who would be your  
man?"  
"I love a handsome farmer and his name is—  
Sam,"  
Rolly-trudum, trudum, trudum-rolly-day.
  5. "There's doctors and lawyers and men that  
follow the plow,"  
Rolly-trudum, trudum, trudum-rolly-day,  
"There's doctors and lawyers and men that  
follow the plow,  
And I'm going to marry for the fidget's on me  
now,"  
Rolly-trudum, trudum, trudum-rolly-day.
  6. "Oh, they've gone for the parson the license  
for to fetch,"  
Rolly-trudum, trudum, trudum-rolly-day,  
"They've gone for the parson the license for to  
fetch,  
And I'm going to marry before the sun sets,"  
Rolly-trudum, trudum, trudum-rolly-day.
- [Spoken] Now the mother, she sings a verse.
7. "Oh, now my daughter's married and well for  
to do,"  
Rolly-trudum, trudum, trudum-rolly-day,  
"Now my daughter's married and well for to  
do,  
So hop along, my jolly boys, I think I'll marry,  
too,"  
Rolly-trudum, trudum, trudum-rolly-day.



#### B4—THE TREE IN THE WOOD.

Sung by Doney Hammontree at Farmington, Ark., 1941. Recorded by Vance Randolph.

This cumulative song is very popular, particularly with children, who love to watch the song grow stanza by stanza until the last where the singer—as in the case of Mr. Hammontree—virtually collapses out of breath under the weight of his own building.

For further information, see: Cecil J. Sharp, *English Folk Songs from the Southern Appalachians* (Oxford University Press, 1932), II, p. 281; Dorothy Scarborough, *A Song Catcher in Southern Mountains* (Columbia University Press, 1937), p. 359.

1. On the ground there was a tree,  
The prettiest little tree you ever did see.  
And the tree's on the ground  
And the green grass growing all around-round-  
round,  
And the green grass growing all around.
  2. On the tree there was a limb,  
The prettiest limb you ever did see.  
The limb's on the tree  
The tree's on the ground  
And the green grass growing all around-round-  
round,  
And the green grass growing all around.
  3. On that limb there was a nest,  
The prettiest little nest you ever did see.  
The nest's on the limb  
And the limb's on the tree  
And the tree's on the ground  
And the green grass growing all around-round-  
round,  
And the green grass growing all around.
  4. On that nest there was a bird,  
The prettiest little bird you ever did see.  
The bird's on the nest  
And the nest's on the limb  
And the limb's on the tree  
And the tree's on the ground  
And the green grass growing all around-round-  
round,  
And the green grass growing all around.
  5. On that bird there was a wing,  
The prettiest little wing you ever did see.  
The wing's on the bird  
And the bird's on the nest  
And the nest's on the limb  
And the limb's on the tree  
And the tree's on the ground  
And the green grass growing all around-round-  
round,  
And the green grass growing all around.
  6. On that wing there was a flea,  
The prettiest little flea you ever did see.  
The flea's on the wing  
And the wing's on the bird  
And the bird's on the nest  
And the nest's on the limb  
And the limb's on the tree  
And the tree's on the ground  
And the green grass growing all around-round-  
round,  
And the green grass growing all around.
- [A clock strikes two o'clock]
7. On that flea there was a mosquettée,  
The prettiest little mosquettée you ever did see.  
The mosquettée's on the flea  
And the flea's on the wing  
And the wing's on the bird  
And the bird's on the nest  
And the nest's on the limb  
And the limb's on the tree  
And the tree's on the ground  
And the green grass growing all around-round-  
round,  
And the green grass growing all around.

#### B5—SOURWOOD MOUNTAIN.

Sung by I. G. Greer of Thomasville, N.C., with dulcimer by Mrs. I. G. Greer. Recorded at Washington, D.C., 1945, by Duncan Emrich.

When Mr. Greer sang this song for the collection of the Archive, he introduced it very simply: "I'm going to sing for you now the great fiddle tune of the South—'Sourwood Mountain.'" Not a fiddle tune, but *the great* fiddle tune. Like all fiddle tunes to which words grow naturally, as a vine grows to a tree, "Sourwood Mountain" has

countless stanzas. Mr. Greer's version here has the basic text to which other stanzas can be added.

See: Cecil J. Sharp, *English Folk Songs from the Southern Appalachians* (Oxford University Press, 1932), II, p. 305.

1. I'se got a gal in the Sourwood Mountain,  
She's so good and kind,  
She's broke the heart of a many poor fellow  
But she's never broke this-un of mine.
2. I'se got a gal in the Sourwood Mountain,  
Hey-tank-toodle all the day,  
I'se got a gal in the Sourwood Mountain,  
Hey-tank-toodle all the day.
3. I'se got a gal in the buffalo hollow,  
A hey-tank-toodle all the day,  
Oh, she won't come and I won't follow,  
And a hey-tank-toodle all the day.
4. I'se got a gal in the Sourwood Mountain,  
Hey-tank-toodle all the day,  
I'se got a gal in the Sourwood Mountain,  
Hey-tank-toodle all the day.
5. Some of these days before very long,  
And a hey-tank-toodle all the day,  
I'll get my gal and home I'll run her,  
And a hey-tank-toodle all the day.
6. I'se got a gal in the Sourwood Mountain,  
Hey-tank-toodle all the day,  
I'se got a gal in the Sourwood Mountain,  
Hey-tank-toodle all the day.
7. Now my love's gone a floating down the river,  
Hey-tank-toodle all the day,  
If I had my boat I'd go along with her,  
A hey-tank-toodle all the day.
8. I'se got a gal in the Sourwood Mountain,  
Hey-tank-toodle all the day,  
I'se got a gal in the Sourwood Mountain,  
Hey-tank-toodle all the day.
9. An old grey goose went swimming down the  
river,  
A hey-tank-toodle all the day,  
If I was a gander, I'd go along with her,  
A hey-tank-toodle all the day.

10. Chickens a-crowing in the Sourwood  
Mountain,  
Chickens a-crowing for day,  
Oh, come, my love, and it's time for to go,  
And a hey-tank-toodle all the day.

11. I'se got a gal in the Sourwood Mountain,  
Hey-tank-toodle all the day,  
I'se got a gal in the Sourwood Mountain,  
Hey-tank-toodle all the day.

#### B6—THE DERBY RAM.

Sung by Charles Ingenthron of Thornton,  
Calif. Recorded at Walnut Shade, Mo.,  
1941, by Vance Randolph.

There is a tradition that George Washington sang this song to the children of Chief Justice Ellsworth and even a further tradition which believes that "this was the only song that George Washington ever sang." It is a "lying song" as fantastic as Paul Bunyan's Blue Ox and as popular. A last stanza, which pointedly characterizes the unknown author of the song, has been omitted by Charles Ingenthron:

The man who owned this ram, sir,  
He must have been awful rich;  
But the man who made up this song, sir,  
Was a lying son of a bitch!

For further information, see: H. M. Belden, *Ballads and Songs Collected by the Missouri Folk-Lore Society*, University of Missouri Studies, xv, no. 1, 1940, p. 224; E. E. Gardner and G. J. Chickering, *Ballads and Songs of Southern Michigan* (University of Michigan Press, 1939), pp. 460-62; Cecil J. Sharp, *English Folk Songs from the Southern Appalachians* (Oxford University Press, 1932), II, p. 184.

1. Oh, as I went down to Derby Town  
All on a summer's day,  
It's there I saw the finest ram  
That was ever fed on hay.
2. And if you don't believe me  
And think I tell a lie,  
Just you go down to Derby  
And you'll see the same as I.

3. Oh, the wool upon this ram's back  
It drug to the ground,  
And I hauled it to the market  
And it weighed ten thousand pounds.
4. And if you don't believe me  
And think I tell a lie,  
Just you go down to Derby  
And you'll see the same as I.
5. Oh, the horns upon this ram's head  
They reached to the moon,  
For the butcher went up in February  
and never got back till June.
6. And if you don't believe me  
And think I tell a lie,  
Just you go down to Derby  
And you'll see the same as I.
7. Oh, the ears upon this ram's head  
They reached to the sky,  
And the eagle built his nest there  
For I heard the young ones cry.
8. And if you don't believe me  
And think I tell a lie,  
Just you go down to Derby  
And you'll see the same as I.
9. Oh, every tooth this ram had  
Would hold a bushel of corn,  
And every foot he stood on  
Would cover an acre of ground.
10. And if you don't believe me  
And think I tell a lie,  
Just you go down to Derby  
And you'll see the same as I.

**B7—THE WIDOW'S OLD BROOM.**

Sung by Charles Ingenthron of Thornton,  
Calif. Recorded at Walnut Shade, Mo.,  
1941, by Vance Randolph.

In his Missouri collection, Professor Belden prints a single text of this song which is markedly different from the one sung here by Mr. Ingenthron. Belden feels that it originated in the variety theater of the last century and indicates that the manuscript copy which came into his hands was

written down about 1870. A comparison of his text with the one printed here will show the "folk" treatment which the song has had in oral transmission. Belden's would seem to be the earlier.

See: H. M. Belden, *Ballads and Songs Collected by the Missouri Folk-Lore Society*, University of Missouri Studies, xv, no. 1, 1940, pp. 248-49.

1. I was out in the country one beautiful night,  
And spied a fair maiden, my heart's delight,  
She was handsome and true, warm hearted  
and fair,  
A widow's lone daughter, a widow's lone heir.
2. And when we reached home, the old lady in  
bed,  
And hearing us a-talking she raised her head,  
"Who's there?" cried she. I told her my name,  
"A-courting your daughter on purpose I  
came."
3. "My daughter, my daughter, my daughter,"  
cried she,  
"Do you think that my daughter can go before  
me?  
And isn't it strange that a girl so young  
Can have all the sweethearts and I can have  
none?"
4. "I know you're a widow whose pockets are  
large,  
I know you're a widow who has a great  
charge."  
"A widow!" cried she, "You scorn my name!"  
She up with a broomstick and at me she came.
5. I flew to the door to escape in the night,  
The doors and the windows were all fast quite  
tight,  
The first thing I knew was a rap on the head  
That sent me a-reeling in under the bed.
6. And when I came out the old lady was there  
She hit me another on the head with a chair.  
"Oh, murder!" cried I, and flew to the door.  
And then the old woman she hit me one more.

7. She hit me, she kicked me, and at last I got clear,  
I mounted my horse and home I did steer,  
And when I reached home all bloody and sore,  
There never was a fellow skinned up so before.
8. "Young men, young men, be warned by me,  
A widow's lone daughter never go to see;  
As sure as you do, you'll meet your doom  
And carry some marks of the widow's old broom."

**B8—OUR GOODMAN (Child No. 274).**

Sung with guitar by Orrin Rice at Harrogate, Tenn., 1943. Recorded by Artus M. Moser.

The folk singers and tellers of tales of all countries have always loved the stories of the simple husband being outwitted by his cleverer wife. The stories find their source in the folk-tales of the Middle Ages and their flowering in Rabelais, Boccaccio, and Chaucer. Our song can be traced to England of the seventeenth century, but has its roots much earlier. As sung by Orrin Rice it becomes truly American.

Pfc. Orrin Rice, the young man who sings the song, was a member of the 325th Glider Infantry Regiment of the 82nd Airborne Division during the war. He died of wounds received in action during the Normandy invasion, on June 11, 1945.

For further information, see: H. M. Belden, *Ballads and Songs Collected by the Missouri Folk-Lore Society*, University of Missouri Studies, xv, no. 1, 1940, pp. 89-91; John Harrington Cox, *Folk-Songs of the South* (Harvard University Press, 1925), pp. 154-58; Arthur Kyle Davis, *Traditional Ballads of Virginia* (Harvard University Press, 1929), pp. 483-94.

1. The first night when I came home  
As drunk as I could be  
I found a horse in the stable  
Where my horse ought to be.
2. "Oh come here, my little wife,  
And explain this thing to me,  
How come a horse in the stable  
Where my horse ought to be?"
3. "You blind fool, you crazy fool,  
Can't you never see,  
It's nothing but a milk cow,  
You're crazy to me."

4. "I've travelled this world over,  
Ten thousand miles or more,  
But a saddle upon a milk cow,  
I never did see it before."
5. The second night when I came home,  
As drunk as I could be,  
I found a coat a-hanging on the rack  
Where my coat ought to be.
6. "Oh come here, my little wife,  
And explain this thing to me,  
How come a coat a-hanging on the rack  
Where my coat ought to be?"
7. "You blind fool, you crazy fool,  
Can't you never see,  
It's nothing but a bed quilt,  
You're crazy to me."
8. "I've travelled this world over,  
Ten thousand miles or more,  
But a pocket upon a bed quilt,  
I never did see it before."
9. The third night when I came in  
As drunk as I could be,  
I found a head a-laying on the pillow  
Where my head ought to be.
10. "Oh come here, my little wife,  
And explain this thing to me,  
How come a head a-laying on the pillow  
Where my head ought to be?"
11. "You blind, crazy fool,  
Can't you never see,  
It's nothing but a cabbage head,  
You're crazy to me."
12. "I've travelled this world over,  
Ten thousand miles or more,  
But a moustache on a cabbage head,  
Well, I never did see it before."

**B9—SWEET WILLIAM (EARL BRAND).**

Sung by I. G. Greer of Thomasville, N.C., with dulcimer by Mrs. I. G. Greer. Recorded at Washington, D.C., 1946, by Duncan Emrich.

In the southern states this song is also known as "The Seven Brothers," "The Seven Sleepers," and "Lord William." In Scotland it was known as "Earl Brand" or "The Douglas Tragedy." Sir Walter Scott feels that the story recounted here had its source in some actual event. He says that: "The ballad of the 'Douglas Tragedy' is one of the few to which popular tradition has ascribed complete locality. The farm of Blackhouse, in Selkirkshire, is said to have been the scene of this melancholy event. There are the remains of a very ancient tower, adjacent to the farmhouse, in a wild and solitary glen, upon a torrent named Douglas burn, which joins the Yarrow after passing a craggy rock called the Douglas craig. . . . From this ancient tower Lady Margaret is said to have been carried by her lover. Seven large stones, erected upon the neighboring heights of Blackhouse, are shown, as marking the spot where the seven brethren were slain; and the Douglas burn is averred to have been the stream at which the lovers stopped to drink; so minute is tradition in ascertaining the scene of a tragical tale, which, considering the rude state of former times, had probably foundation in some real event."

For full references, see: Arthur Kyle Davis, *Traditional Ballads of Virginia* (Harvard University Press, 1929), pp. 86-92.

1. Sweet William rode up to the old man's gate  
And boldly he did say,  
"The youngest daughter she must stay at  
home,  
But the oldest I'll take away."
2. "Come in, come in, all seven of my sons,  
And guard your sister 'round,  
For never shall it be said that the Stuart's son  
Has taken my daughter out of town."
3. "I thank you, sir, and it's very kind,  
I'm none of the Stuart's son,  
My father was a 'reginers team,  
My mother a Quaker's queen."
4. So he got on his snow white steed,  
And she on the dapple grey,  
He swung his bugle horn around his neck  
And they went riding away.
5. They hadn't gone more'n a mile out of town  
Till he looked back again,  
And he saw her father and seven of her  
brothers  
Come tripling over the plain.
6. "Light down, light down, Fair Ellen, said he,  
And hold my steed by the reins,  
Till I fight your father and seven of your  
brothers  
Come tripling over the plain."
7. He stood right there and he stood right still,  
Not a word did she return,  
Till she saw her father and seven of her  
brothers  
A-rolling in their own heart's blood.
8. "Slack your hand, slack your hand, Sweet  
William," said she,  
"Your wounds are very sore,  
The blood runs free from every vein,  
A father I can have no more."
9. So he got on his snow white steed,  
And she on the dapple grey,  
He swung his bugle horn around his neck  
And they went bleeding away.
10. Soon they rode up to his mother's gate,  
And tingling on the ring,  
"Oh, mother, oh, mother, asleep or awake,  
Arise and let me in.
11. Oh, mother, oh, mother, bind my head,  
My wounds are very sore,  
The blood runs free from every vein,  
For me you will bind them no more."
12. About two hours before it was day,  
The fowls began to crow,  
Sweet William died from the wounds that he  
received.  
Fair Ellen died for sorrow.







Library of Congress Catalog Card Number R53-237

Available from the Recorded Sound Section,  
Music Division, Library of Congress,  
Washington, D.C. 20540