

# 'Singlish Folk' Broadsheet No. 13

## Only Our Rivers Run Free

When apples still grow in November  
When blossoms still bloom from each tree,  
When leaves are still green in December,  
It's then that our land will be free.  
I wander her hills and her valleys,  
And still through my sorrow I see  
A land that has never known freedom  
And only her rivers run free.

I drink to the death of her manhood,  
Those men who would rather have died  
Than to live in the cold chains of bondage,  
To bring back their rights were denied.  
Oh were are you now when we need you,  
What burns where the flame used to be,  
Are ye gone like the snows of last winter,  
And will only our rivers run free.

How sweet is life but we're crying  
How mellow the wine that were dry,  
How fragrant the rose, but it's dying,  
How gentle the wind but it sighs.  
What good is in youth when it's aging,  
What joy is in eyes that can't see,  
When there's sorrow and sunshine and flowers,  
And still only our rivers run free.

## All for me Grog ( \* = clap )

Well it's all for me grog, me jolly jolly grog  
It's all for me beer and tobacco  
For I spent all me tin with the lassies drinking gin  
Far across the western ocean I must wander

Where are me boots, me noggin', noggin' boots?  
They're all gone for beer and tobacco  
For the heels they are worn out and the toes are kicked  
about  
And the soles are looking out for better weather

Where is me shirt, my noggin', noggin' shirt?  
It's all gone for beer and tobacco  
For the collar is all worn, and the sleeves they are all torn  
And the tail is looking out for better weather

I'm sick in the head and I haven't been to bed  
Since first I came ashore with me slumber  
For I spent all me dough on the lassies movin' slow  
Far across the Western Ocean I must wander

Where is me bed, me noggin' noggin' bed  
It's all gone for beer and tobacco  
Well I lent it to a whore and now the sheets are all tore  
And the springs are looking out for better weather.

Where is me wench, me noggin' noggin' wench  
She's all gone for beer and tobacco  
Well her (\*) is all worn out and her (\*) is knocked about  
And her (\*) is looking out for better whether.

## Contents:

### Page 1:

All for me Grog  
Only Our Rivers Run Free  
When I First Came to This Land

### Page 2:

Bound for the Rio Grande  
Cripple Creek  
Dalesman's Litany  
Last thing on my mind  
Little Boxes

### Page 3:

Oh No John  
Shanendoah  
Sheffield Grinders  
Shoals of herring

### Page 4:

Jug o' Punch  
Parting Glass  
Plaisir d'Amour  
When a man's in love  
Woad

## When I First Came to This Land

When I first came to this land, I was not a wealthy man  
So I built myself a shack, I did what I could  
And I called my shack, "Pain in my back"  
But the land was sweet and good and I did what I could

When I first came to this land, I was not a wealthy man,  
So I got myself a farm, I did what I could  
And I called my farm, "Muscle in my arm"  
And I called my shack, "Pain in my back"  
But the land was sweet and good and I did what I could

When I first came to this land, I was not a wealthy man,  
So I got myself a cow, I did what I could  
And I called my cow, "no milk now"  
And I called my farm, "Muscle in my arm"  
And I called my shack, "Pain in my back"  
But the land was sweet and good and I did what I could

When I first came to this land, I was not a wealthy man,  
So I got myself a wife, I did what I could  
And I called my wife, "Sharp as a knife"  
And I called my cow, "No milk now"  
And I called my farm, "Muscle in my arm"  
And I called my shack, "Pain in my back"  
But the land was sweet and good and I did what I could

When I first came to this land, I was not a wealthy man  
So I got myself a son, I did what I could  
And I called my son, "My work's done"  
But the land was sweet and good and I did what I could

### Cripple Creek

1. Cripple Creek's wide and Cripple Creek's deep  
I'll wade Cripple Creek as I sleep  
Roll my breechers to my knees  
I'll wade Cripple Creek as I please

#### **Chorus:**

Goin' down Cripple Creek goin' in a run  
Goin' down Cripple Creek to have a little fun  
Goin' down Cripple Creek I'm goin' in a whorl  
Goin' down Cripple Creek to find my girl

2. I've got a gal and she loves me  
She's as sweet as sweet can be  
She's got eyes of baby blue  
Makes my gun shoot straight and true

3. I went down to cripple creek  
See what the boys were havin' to drink  
I got drunk and fell against the wall  
Old corn liquor was the cause of it all

### Little boxes

1. Little boxes on the hillside  
Little boxes made of ticky tacky  
Little boxes, little boxes, little boxes all the same  
There's a green one and a pink one a blue one and a  
yellow one  
And they're all made out of ticky tacky  
And they all look just the same

2. Now the people in the houses  
All go to the University  
Where they're all put in boxes little boxes all the same  
And there's doctors and lawyers and business executives  
And they're all made out of ticky tacky  
And they all look just the same

3. And they all go to the golf course  
And drink their Martini dry  
And they all have pretty children and they all go to school  
And they all go to summer camp  
And then to the University  
Where they're all put in boxes  
And all come out the same

### Rio Grand

Our ship went bumpering out over the bar  
Away Rio  
And pointed her nose to the southern star  
And we're bound for the Rio Grand

**Refrain:** Away love away, Away Rio  
I'll sing you a song of the fish of the sea  
And we're bound for the Rio Grand

Well here's good luck to Sally and good luck to Sue  
Away Rio  
And you who are listening good luck to you  
And we're bound for the Rio Grand

I said farewell to Kitty my dear, Away Rio  
And she waved her hand as we passed the south pier  
And we're bound for the Rio Grand

### Last thing on my mind

It's a lesson too late for the learnin'  
Made of sand, made of sand  
In a wink of an eye my soul is turning  
In your hand, in your hand

Are you going away with no words of farewell  
Can there be not a trace left behind  
I could have loved you better  
I didn't mean to be unkind  
You know that was the last thing on my mind

You got reason aplenty for going  
This I know, this I know  
For the weeds have been steadily growin'  
Please don't go, please don't go

As I lie in my bed in the morning  
Without you, without you  
Each song in my breast dies of abornin'  
Without you, without you

Darling, that was the last thing on my mind

### Dalesman's Litany

It's hard when a man can't find his work  
in the place he was bred and born  
When I was young I used to lie  
among the stoops and the corn  
But I was forced to flee to the town  
and that's my litany  
From Hull and Halifax and hell oh Lord deliver me

I've been in Sheffield late at night  
it was just like being in hell  
Furnaces thrust great tongues of fire  
just as the cold grey fell  
I've worked dark coal down Barnsley pit  
as black as ebony  
From Sheffield, Barnsley, Rotherham o Lord deliver me

I've been where fogs crept o'er Leeds brig  
as thick as doss house soup  
I seen where folks is stowed away  
like chickens in a coop  
I seen snow float down Barnsley beck  
as black as ebony  
From Hunslet, Allbeck, Whipsey Slack oh Lord deliver me

And now my life it is all done  
to the moors I will go back  
There's forty miles of Emsley moor  
'twixt me and the coal pit slack  
And oft at night as I sit by the fire  
I'll laugh and shout with glee  
From Hull and Halifax and hell o Lord deliver me

-----

The oak and the ash and the bonnie birchen tree  
Away Rio  
They're all growing green in the North country  
And we're bound for the Rio Grande

Oh, New York is no place for me  
Away Rio  
So I'll pack up me bags and go back to the sea  
And we're bound for the Rio Grande

### Oh No John

On yonder hill there stands a creature,  
Who she is I do not know  
I will court her for her beauty,  
She must answer yes or no  
Oh no John, No John, No John, No!

On her bosom are bunches of posies,  
On her breast where flowers grow  
If I should chance to touch that posy,  
She must answer yes or no  
Oh no John, No John, No John, No!

Madam I am come for to court you,  
If your favour I can gain  
If you will but entertain me,  
Perhaps then I might come again  
Oh no John, No John, No John, No!

My husband was a Spanish captain,  
Went to sea a month ago  
The very last time we kissed and parted,  
Bid me always answer no.  
Oh no John, No John, No John, No!

Madam in your face is beauty,  
In your bosom flowers grow  
In your bedroom there is pleasure,  
Shall I view it, yes or no  
Oh no John, No John, No John, No!

Madam shall I tie your garter,  
Tie it a little above your knee  
If my hand should slip a little farther,  
Would you think it amiss of me  
Oh no John, No John, No John, No!

My love and I went to bed together,  
There we lay till cocks did crow;  
Unclose your arms my dearest jewel,  
Unclose your arms and let me go  
Oh no John, No John, No John, No!

### Shenandoah

1. Oh Shenandoah I long to hear you  
Away you rollin' river  
Oh Shenandoah I long to hear you  
Away I'm bound to go, cross the wide Missouri

2. Oh Shenandoah I love your daughter  
Away you rollin' river  
She sent me sailing 'cross the water  
Away I'm bound to go, cross the wide Missouri

3. Oh Shenandoah I took a notion  
Away you rollin' river  
To sail across the briny ocean  
Away I'm bound to go, cross the wide Missouri

4. Oh Shenandoah I long to hear you  
Away you rollin' river  
Oh Shenandoah I long to hear you  
Away I'm bound to go, cross the wide Missouri

### Shoals of Herring - Ewan McColl

With our nets and gear we're faring  
On the wild and wasteful ocean  
It's there on the deep that we harvest and reap our bread  
As we hunt the bonny shoals of herring

Oh, it was a fine and a pleasant day  
Out of Yarmouth harbour I was faring  
As a cabin boy on a sailing lugger  
For to go and hunt the shoals of herring

Now the work was hard and the hours were long  
And the treatment sure it took some bearing  
There was little kindness and the kicks were many  
As we hunted for the shoals of herring

Oh, we fished the Swarth and the Broken Bank  
I was cook and I'd a quarter's sharing  
And I used to sleep standing on me feet  
And I'd dream about the shoals of herring

Well, we left the home grounds in the month of June  
And to canny Shiels we soon was bearing  
With a hundred cran of the silver darlings  
That we'd taken from the shoals of herring

Now you're up on deck, you're a fisherman  
You can swear and show a manly bearing  
Take you turn on watch with the other fellows  
While you're following the shoals of herring

In the stormy seas and the living gale  
Just to earn your daily bread you're daring  
From the Dover Straits to the Faroe Islands  
While you're following the shoals of herring

Well, I earned me cape and I paid me way  
And I earned the gear that I was wearing  
Sailed a million miles, caught ten million fishes  
We was following the shoals of herring

### Sheffield grinders

1. To be a Sheffield grinder it is no easy trade  
There's more than you'd imagine to the grinding of a blade  
The youngest one amongst us is old at thirty two  
There are few who face such hardships as we poor grinders do

2. And every working day we are breathing dust and steel  
And a broken stone may give us a wound which will not heal  
There's many an honest grinder been struck down by such a blow  
There are few who face such hardships as we poor grinders do

3. When the country goes to war our masters quickly cry  
Orders countermanded your goods you must lay by  
Your prices you must settle or you'll be stinted too  
There are few who face such hardships as we poor grinders do

4. To be a Sheffield grinder it is no easy trade  
There's more than you'd imagine to the grinding of a blade  
The youngest one amongst us is old at thirty two  
There are few who face such hardships as we poor grinders do

### Plaisir d'amour

1. Plaisir d'amour ne dure qu'un moment  
Chagrin d'amour dure toute la vie
2. The joys of love are but a moment long  
The pain of love endures a whole life long
3. Her eyes met mine I saw the light in them shine  
She gave me heaven right then when her eyes met mine
4. But now she's gone like a dream that fades into night  
But the memories tap at my heart strings my love loves me
5. Plaisir d'amour ne dure qu'un moment  
Chagrin d'amour dure toute la vie

### Jug Of Punch

As I was sitting with my jug and spoon  
One evening in the month of June  
A birdie sat on an ivy bunch  
And the song he sang was "A Jug Of Punch."

Too ra loo ra loo, too ra loo ra lay,  
too ra loo ra loo, too ra loo ra lay  
A birdie sat on an ivy bunch  
And the song he sang was "A Jug Of Punch."

What more diversion can a man desire?  
Than to sit him down by an alehouse fire  
Upon his knee a pretty wench  
And upon the table a jug of punch.

Let the doctors come with all their art  
They'll make no impression upon my heart  
Even a cripple forgets his hunch  
When he's snug outside of a jug of punch.

And if I get drunk, well, me money's me own  
And them don't like me they can leave me alone  
I'll tune me fiddle and I'll rosin me bow  
And I'll be welcome where'er I go.

And when I'm dead and in my grave  
No costly tombstone will I crave  
Just lay me down in my native peat  
With a jug of punch at my head and feet.

### Woad (tune – Men of Harlech)

What's the use of wearing braces,  
coats and ties and shoes with laces  
Hats and spats you buy in places  
down on Scotty road  
What's the use of shirts of cotton,  
studs that only get forgotten  
These affairs are simply rotten  
better far is woad

Woad's the stuff to show them,  
woad to beat the foemen  
Boil it to a brilliant blue  
and rub it on your back and your abdomen  
Ancient Britain never hit on  
anything as good as woad to fit on  
Neck or knees or where you sit on,  
tailors you be blowed

### Parting glass

1. Of all the money that e'er I had I've spent it in good company  
And of all the harm that e'er I've done, alas it was to none but me  
And all I've done for want of whit to memory now I can't recall  
So fill to me the parting glass, good night and joy be with you all
2. If I had money enough to spend and leisure time to sit a while  
There is a fair maid in the town who surely has my heart beguiled  
Her rosy cheeks, her ruby lips my own she has my heart in thrall  
So fill to me the parting glass, good night and joy be with you all
3. Now of all the friends that e'er I've had they're sorry for my going away  
And of all the sweethearts that e'er I've known would wish me one more day to stay  
But since it falls unto my luck that I should rise and you should not  
Then I'll gently rise and I'll softly call "Goodnight and joy be with you all"

### When a Man's in love

1. When a man's in love he feels no cold like a man no long ago  
Like a hero bold to see his love he ploughed through frost and snow  
The moon it gently shed its light along my weary way  
Until I came to that fond spot where all my treasures lay
2. I came to my love's window saying "My love, are you within?"  
Slyly she undid the latch and slyly I crept in  
Her hand was soft her breath was sweet her tongue did gently glide  
I gave a kiss and nought amiss I asked her to be my bride
3. Take me to your chamber love oh take me to your bed  
Take me to your chamber love where I might lay my head  
To take you to my chamber love my parents would not agree  
So sit you down by yonder fire and I'll sit down by thee
4. Many's the cold and stormy night I came to visit you  
Lashed about by cold winter winds and wetted by the morning dew  
Tonight our courtship's at an end between my love and me  
Fare thee well my favourite girl alas fare well to thee
5. Many's the night I've courted you against your father's will  
You never said you'd marry me so now my love be still  
Tonight I'm going across the sea to far Columbia's shore  
And never, never will I see my own true love evermore
6. Are you going to leave me now whatever will I do  
I'll break every bond of love to come along with you  
Perhaps my parents they'll forget and maybe they'll forgive  
For now I am resolved my love to come with you and live  
Repeat:  
Perhaps my parents they'll forget and maybe they'll forgive  
For now I am resolved my love to come with you and live



Romans came across the channel  
all dressed up in tin and flannel  
Half a pint of woad per man'll  
dress us more than these

Romans keep your armours,  
Saxons your pyjamas  
Hairy coats were meant for goats,  
gorillas, yaks, retriever dogs and llamas  
Tramp up Snowdon with your woad on  
never mind if you get rained or blowed on  
Never want a button sewed on,  
go it ancient Bs