**The Gypsy Lover**

****People who moved around the country doing casual work were not unusual throughout the centuries, especially when farming was one of the main occupations. From small holdings there was always a need for labour, particularly at harvest time, but there were always itinerant artisans, mending tools and machinery and peddling their own products – herbs, flowers, carved objects etc. The dark skinned gypsy was one of these and the lifestyle appealed to young women who were restrained from travelling and never met anyone else.

****

Left and above: Gypsy caravans on the road.

The lifestyle must have been appealing to a young girl working in the fields or confined to a house or even a castle with no freedom and no company other than that of other women.

The farmer’s daughter in ‘Bogie’s Bonnie Belle’ and the King’s daughter in ‘Willy o’ Winsbury’ are both ‘victims’ or are they ‘beneficiaries’?

‘Freeborn Man’ by Ewan McColl is a commentary on Gypsy life.

**Bogie’s Bonnie Belle**

1. As I ga’ed in by Huntley town one mornin’ for tae fae

I fell in with Bogie in Caerney and with him I did agree

Tak’ o’er his twa best horses or cart or harrow or plough

Or do anythin’ about farm work I very well could do

2. Now Bogie had a daughter her name was Isabel

She was the flower o’ the mountain and the primrose o’ the dell

And when she went out walkin’ she chose me for her guide

Down by the burn Nakerny to watch small fishes glide

3. When seven long months were past and gone this lassy lost her bloom

The red fell from her rosy cheeks and her eyes began to swoon

When nine long months were past and o’er she brought forth to me a son

And I was curtly called for to see what could be done

4. I said that I would marry her but no that would na do

For you’re no a match for ma bonny belle and she’s no a match for you

And now she’s married to a tinkler chap abides in Huntley town

He sells pots and pans and paraffin lamps and scours the country round

**Freeborn Man**

1. I’m a freeborn man of the travelling people

Got no fixed abode with nomads I am numbered

Country lanes and by-ways were always my ways

I never fancied being numbered

4. Sometimes we’d meet up with other people

Stay and talk a while as time was not our master

Then along we’d plod with our horse and dog

Nice and easy no need to go faster

5. Now ye freeborn men of the travellin’ people

Be ye tinker, rolling stone or gypsy rover

New ways are growing old ways are going

Your travellin’ days will soon be over

2. Oh we knew the woods and the resting places

Where small birds sang when winter time was over

Then we’d pack our loads and be on the road

These were good old times for the rover

3. Oh we kent life hard and we kent life easy

And kent the life when winter time was drawing

At the summer fair we'd be meeting there

Till the summer sun sets in the morning

**Willy o’ Winsbury**

1. The king has been a prisoner and a prisoner long in Spain

And Willy o’ the Winsbury has laid long with his daughter at home

2. What ails thee, what ails thee my daughter Janet you look so pale and wan

Oh have you had any sore sickness or yet been sleeping with a man

3. I have not had any sore sickness nor yet been sleeping with a man

It is for you my father dear for biding so long in Spain

4. Cast off cast off your berry brown gown you stand naked upon the stone

That I may know you by your shape whether you be a maiden or no

5. And she’s cast off her berry brown gown she’s stood naked upon the stone

Her apron hung low and her haunches were round her face was pale and wan

6. Was it with a lord or a duke or a knight or a man of birth and fame

Or was it with one of my serving men that’s lately come out of Spain

7. It wasn’t with a lord or a duke or a knight or a man of birth and fame

It was with Willy o’ Winsbury I could bide no longer alone

8. And the king’s called in his merry men all by thirty and by three

Fetch me this Willy o’ Winsbury for hanged he shall be

9. And when he came the king before he was clad all in the red silk

His hair was like the strands of gold and his skin was as white as milk

10. It is no wonder said the king that my daughter’s love you did win

If I were a woman as I am a man my bedfellow you would have been

11. And will you marry my daughter Janet by the truth of your right hand

Oh will you marry my daughter Janet I’ll make you the lord of my lands

12. Oh I will marry your daughter Janet by the truth of my right hand

Oh I will marry your daughter Janet but I’ll not be the lord of your lands

13. He’s mounted her on a milk white steed and himself on a dappled grey

And he’s made her the lady of as much land as she’ll ride on a long summer’s day

**Love – Girls**

It is the girls here who lament their lost love.

**Seeds of Love**

1. Oh I sowed the seeds of love

It was in all the spring

In April, May or sunny June

When small birds they do sing

2. Oh the willow tree will twist

And the willow tree will twine

And would I were in a young man’s arms

That ever had this heart of mine

3. The gardener as he passed by

He bid me take great care

For if I gathered the rose so red

There groweth a sharp thorn there

4. I said I’d take no care

Till I did feel the smart

And still did press the rose so dear

Till the thorn did pierce my heart

5. My garden is now run wild

When I must plant anew

And the beds that once were full of thyme

Are all o’er run with rue

**Bobby Shafto**

1. Bobby Shafto’s gone to sea

Silver buckles on his knee

He’ll come back and marry me

Bonny Bobby Shafto

2. Bobby Shafto’s bright and fair

Combing down his yellow hair

He’s my ain for ever mair

Bonny Bobby Shafto

3. Bobby Shafto’s tall and slim

Always dressed so neat and trim

Lassies they all keek at him

Bonny Bobby Shafto

**Come all ye fair and tender girls**

1. Come all ye fair and tender girls

Who flourish in your prime, prime

Beware, beware keep your gardens fair

Let no man steal your thyme, thyme

Let no man steal your thyme

2. And when your thyme is past and gone

He’ll care no more for you, you

And every place where your thyme was waste

**Early One Morning**

1. Early one morning just as the sun was rising

I heard a maiden sing in the valley below

Oh don’t deceive me

Oh never leave me

How could you use such a poor maiden so

2. Gay is the garland and fresh are the roses

I’ve culled from the garden to bind on your brow

Oh don’t deceive me

Oh never leave me

How could you use such a poor maiden so

3. Thus sang the maiden her sorrows thus bewailing

Thus sang the poor maiden in the valley below

Oh don’t deceive me

Oh never leave me

How could you use such a poor maiden so

Will all spread all way through, through

Will all spread all way through

3. A gardener’s son was passing by

Three flowers he gave to me, me

The pink the blue and the violet true

And the red, red rosy tree, tree

And the red, red rosy tree,

4. But I refused the red rose bush

And gained the willow tree, tree

So all the world could plainly see

How my love slighted me, me

How my love slighted me

Love is likened to the garden – the Rose represents love, the Thorn a pain of lost love. The garden represents life and the family, love and lost love.

The gardener is the person who controls and tends the garden – a God figure, nature.

**Tam Lin -** Child Ballad number 39

Left: Carterhaugh - near the confluence of the Yarrow Water and the Ettrick Water on the Scottish Border.

There is a warning that Tam Lin collects the virginity of any maiden who passes through the forest of Carterhaugh. The young woman, usually called Janet or Margaret, goes to Carterhaugh and plucks a double rose, Tam appears and asks her why she has come without his leave and taken what is his. She says that she owns Carterhaugh as her father has given it to her.

Janet goes home and discovers that she is pregnant; She declares that her baby's father is an elf whom she will not forsake. When she returns to Carterhaugh Tam reappears and challenges her.

She asks him whether he was ever human, He reveals that he was a mortal man, who, falling from his horse, was caught and captured by the Queen of Fairies. Every seven years, the fairies give one of their people as a tithe to Hell and Tam fears he will become the tithe that night, which is Hallowe'en. He is to ride as part of a company of elven knights. Janet will recognise him by the white horse upon which he rides. He instructs her to rescue him by pulling him down from the white horse - so Janet "catches" him this time - and holding him tightly. He warns her that the fairies will attempt to make her drop him by turning him into all manner of beasts, but that he will do her no harm. When he is finally turned into a burning coal, she is to throw him into a well, whereupon he will reappear as a naked man, and she must hide him. (in this version he is just turned into a naked knight) Janet does as she is asked and wins her knight. The Queen of Fairies is angry but acknowledges defeat.

I forbid you maidens all that wear gold in your hair  
To travel to Carter Haugh, for young Tam Lin is there.  
  
Them that go by Carter Haugh, but they leave him a pledge  
Either their mantels of green or else their maidenhead.  
  
Janet tied her kirtle green a bit above her knee  
And she's gone to Carter Haugh as fast as go can she.  
  
She doth pull the double rose, a rose but only two  
And up then came young Tam Lin, says lady pull no more.  
  
And why come you to Carter Haugh without command from me  
I'll come and go, young Janet said, and ask no leave of thee.  
  
Janet tied her kirtle green a little bit above her knee  
And she's gone to her father as fast as go can she.  
  
Then up spoke her father dear, and he spoke meek and mild  
Well alas Janet, he said, I think you go with child.  
  
Well if that be so, Janet said, myself shall bear the blame  
There's not a knight in all your halls shall get the baby's name.

For if my love were an earthly knight, as he is an elfin grey  
I'll not change my own true love for any knight you have.  
  
Janet tied her kirtle green a bit above her knee  
And she's gone to Carter Haugh as fast as go can she.  
  
Oh tell to me Tam Lin she said, why came you here to dwell  
The Queen of Fairy's caught me when from my horse I fell.  
  
And at the end of seven years she pays a tithe to hell  
I so fair and full of flesh am feared it is myself.  
  
But tonight is Halloween and the fairy court rides  
Those that would let true love win, At Miles' Cross they must hide.  
  
First let pass the horses black and let pass the brown  
Quickly run to the white steed and pull the rider down.  
  
For I ride on the white steed, the nearest to the town  
For I was an earthly knight, they give me that renown.   
  
They will turn me in your arms to a newt or a snake  
Hold me tight and fear not, I am your baby's father.

And they will turn me in your arms into a lion bold  
Hold me tight and fear not and you will love your child.  
  
And they will turn me in your arms into a naked knight  
Cloak me in your mantle and keep me out of sight.  
  
And in the middle of the night she heard the bridle ring  
She heeded what he did say and young Tam Lin did win.  
  
Then up spoke the fairy queen, an angry queen was she  
Who betide her ill-farr'd face, an ill death may she die.  
  
Oh had I known Tam Lin, she said, what this night I did see  
I'd have looked him in the eye and turned him to a tree.

**Trees they do grow high**

Marriage took place as soon as a woman was of child bearing age. Life was hard and people didn’t live long lives. Forty years would have been old. Families were large and death in child-birth very common. This song comes from Scotland though there are versions from throughout Britain.

1. Oh the trees they do grow high and the leaves they do grow green

And there’s many the cold winter night my love and I have seen

On a cold winter’s night my love while I alone have been

And my bonnie lad is young but he’s growing, growing, growing

And my bonnie lad is young but he’s growing

2. At the age of fifteen he was a married man

At the age of seventeen the father of a son

And at the age of eighteen the grass grew o’er him

And that put an end to his growing, growing, growing

And that put an end to his growing

3. But now my love is dead and in his grave does lie

The green grass grows all o’er him so very very high

I’ll just sit here and mourn his death until the day I die

And I’ll watch all o’er his child as he’s growing, growing, growing

And I’ll watch all o’er his child as he’s growing

**Water of Tyne**

I cannot get to my love, if I would dee,   
The water of Tyne runs between him and me;  
And here I must stand with a tear in my e'e,   
Both sighing and sickly my sweetheart to see.  
  
O where is the boatman? my bonny hinny!   
O where is the boatman? bring him to me,—  
To ferry me over the Tyne to my honey,  
And I will remember the boatman and thee.  
  
O bring me a boatman, I'll give any money,  
And you for your trouble rewarded shall be,—  
To ferry me over the Tyne to my honey,  
Or scull him across that rough river to me.

**Boatman**

*Hinny – some say a corruption of ‘honey’ but it is applied to both sexes and all ages. It is used in the family as a familiar form. I cannot get to my love, if I would dee, Means …I cannot get to my love for the life of me, or  I cannot get to my love however hard I try*

**Love - Boys**

It is the boy here who laments his lost love

**Country Boy**

3. I’m gonna buy us our own farm

When I’ve put by some money

We’ll put bees in sacks of corn

And they’ll make us bread and honey

We’ll have oats in all the fields

And a big ost house to dry ‘em

We’ll brew the best ale in the land

A country boy like I am

4.   Now Mary her wants family

And I will not oppose it

She's got one of 'em on the way

And I don't think that she knows it

We'll get married in a church

Before its lambing time

And settle down to raise some girls

And country boys like I am

1.   Now do I be a fair young country boy

My father came from Fareham

He had another six just like I

By Christ how he could rare 'em

Now do my mum makes dumplings nice

I'd bet you'd like to try 'em

I've never found me a better one

A country boy like I am

Chorus:

I can plough and milk a cow,

I can reap and sow

I'm fresh as a daisy which grows in the fields

And they calls I Buttercup Joe

2.   Now there's a pretty girl that I love

They calls her our Mary

Her works busy as a bumble bee

Down in old Jones's dairy

Now her can cook and her can sew

And use a smoothing iron

I'm gonna take for a wife

A country boy like I am

**Crazy Man Michael**

Michael is deceived by a vision into stabbing his lover.

He took out his dagger of fire and of steel,  
And struck down the raven through the heart-o.  
The bird fluttered long and the sky it did spin,  
And the cold earth did wonder and start-o.

“Oh, where is the raven that I struck down dead,  
That here did lie on the ground-o?  
I see but my true love with a wound so red,  
Where her lover's heart it did pound-o.'‘

Crazy Man Michael, he wanders alone,  
And he talks to the night and the day-o.  
But his eyes they are sane and his voice it is clear  
And he longs to be far away-o.

Michael he whistles the simplest of tunes,  
And begs of the wild wolves their pardon.  
For his love is flown and to every flower grown,  
And Michael must be keeper of the garden.

Within the forest and out upon the sea,  
Crazy Man Michael was walking.   
He met with a raven with eyes black as coals,  
And presently they were a-talking

“Your future, your future, I will tell to you.  
Your future, you often have asked me.  
Your true love will die by your own right hand.  
And Crazy Man Michael will cursed be.'‘

Michael he ranted and Michael he raved,  
And beat at the four winds with his fists-o.  
He laughed and he cried, he shouted and he swore,  
For his mad mind had trapped him with a kiss-o.

“You speak with an evil, you speak with a hate,  
You speak for the devil that haunts me  
For is she not the fairest in all these broad lands,  
Your sorcerer's words are to taunt me.''

**Farewell She**

1. Oh fare thee well cold winter and fare thee well cold frost

Nothing have I gained and my own true love I’ve lost

I’ll rest when I am weary I’ll drink when I’m dry

But before I’d humble to my love I’d lay me down and die

2. Last night I met my true love in yonder shady grove

I met her with a smile and she gave to me a blush

I said that I would wait for her as she did pass me by

But before I’d humble to my love I’d lay me down and die

3. Take half a pound of reason and a quarter pound of sense

A small pinch of time and so much of prudence

Put them all together and you will plainly see

She’s a cold deluded lover let her go, farewell she



**Lark in the Clear Air**

A beautiful song with self-explanatory lyrics. This version catches the feelings of the young man as he awaits the return of his true love.

I shall tell her all my love,  
All my soul's adoration,  
And I think she will hear  
And will not say me nay.  
It is this that gives my soul  
All its joyous elation,  
As I hear the sweet lark sing  
In the clear air of the day.

Dear thoughts are in my mind  
And my soul soars enchanted,  
As I hear the sweet lark sing  
In the clear air of the day.  
For a tender beaming smile  
To my hope has been granted,  
And tomorrow she shall hear  
All my fond heart would say.

**Love Farewell**

If I should fall in far off battle  
Cannons roar and rifles rattle  
Thoughts fly homeward - words unspoken  
Valiant hearts are oftimes broken  
Love Farewell  
  
Oh Judy should I die in glory  
In the Times\* you'll read my story  
But I'm so bothered by your charms dear  
I'd rather die within your arms dear  
Love Farewell

I thought I heard the Colonel crying  
March brave boys there's no denying  
Cannons roaring - drums abeating  
March brave boys there's no retreating  
Love Farewell

Chorus

Will you go or will you tarry  
Will you wait or will you marry  
Would this moment last for ever  
Kiss me now and leave me never  
Love Farewell

\*The Newspaper established 1785 – called the ‘Times’ from 1798

**Salley Gardens**

The Salley gardens are gardens planted near a ‘salley port’ or a door from which an attack can be made on a besieging army

In a field by the river  
My love and I did stand  
And on my leaning shoulder  
She laid her snow-white hand.  
She bid me take life easy,  
As the grass grows on the weirs;  
But I was young and foolish  
And now am full of tears.

Down by the salley gardens  
My love and I did meet;  
She passed the salley gardens  
With little snow-white feet.  
She bid me take love easy,  
As the leaves grow on the tree;  
But I, being young and foolish  
with her did not agree.

**Sally Wheatley**

A song sung in a ‘Geordie’ accent – from Newcastle upon Tyne in the North East of England.

Chorus:

Oh dear me, Ah divent naa what to dae

Sally's stolen my heart away completely,

An’ Ah'll niver get it back

for she gans wi' Mr. Black

An’ they say he's gan ter marry Sally Wheatley.

Noo Ah'm myest distressed and sad

Tho' Ah once'st was blithe and glad

And cud trip aboot tha toon both trim and neatly

Ah was happy neet and morn but aall soch joys Ah‘m shawn

Since Ah fell sae deep in love wi' Sally Wheatley.

Hoo Ah felt Ah divent naa, the forst time I Sally saa,

In a threesome reel she hopped aboot sae sweetly,

An’ Ah might a stood a chance had Ah asked hor up to dance

But Ah was ower shy ta speak to Sally Wheatley.

Oh dear me......

Noo as often is the case ye'll find someone in yer place

If you fail ta shove ahead and fettle reetly,

For Ah'd scarcely torned me back why an’ there was Mr. Black-

An’ ‘e wuz jiggin' roon’ tha room wi' Sally Wheatly.

Oh dear me......

And he must hev got it reet when he set hor hyem that neet

After work dressed up he gans ta see hor neetly

An’ there's great deanger in deleay and A'd not be sad todeay

If Ah had a hort Ah'd break't for Sally Wheatley

Oh dear me.....

**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

The simple story of a young man trying to persuade his true love to run away with him.

She is concerned that her parents will not approve but he eventually gets his girl.

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 wettened 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

**Wind that shakes the barley**

I bore her to some mountain stream

And many's the summer blossom

I placed with branches soft and green

About her gore-stained bosom

I wept and kissed her clay-cold corpse

Then rushed o'er vale and valley

My vengeance on the foe to wreak

While soft winds shook the barley

But blood for blood without remorse

I've taken at Oulart Hollow

And laid my true love's clay-cold corpse

Where I full soon may follow

As 'round her grave I wander drear

Noon, night and morning early

With breaking heart when e'er I hear

The wind that shakes the barley

An Irish song set at a time of conflict with the English. This relates to the rising of the ‘United Irishmen’ (verse 2 United Men) from 1798 to 1804 (during the war with Napoleon)

I sat within a valley green

I sat me with my true love

My sad heart strove to choose between

The old love and the new love

The old for her, the new that made

Me think on Ireland dearly

While soft the wind blew down the glade

And shook the golden barley

Twas hard the woeful words to frame

To break the ties that bound us

But harder still to bear the shame

Of foreign chains around us

And so I said, "The mountain glen

I'll seek at morning early

And join the bold United Men

While soft winds shake the barley“

While sad I kissed away her tears

My fond arms 'round her flinging

The foeman's shot burst on our ears

From out the wildwood ringing

A bullet pierced my true love's side

In life's young spring so early

And on my breast in blood she died

While soft winds shook the barley

**Traditional**

The songs in this section I call traditional as they have elements which we know folk songs to possess. They are songs which will generally be found in many versions from many parts of Britain and even wider. Many such songs have found their way into the folk music of America and Australasia.

**Good King Arthur’s Days**

Versions of this old nursery song are seen from Scotland to Sussex. It's hard to say how old it is, but it seems to have first appeared in print in ‘Gammer Gurton's Garland’ at the end of the eighteenth century, though it had been around long before then. This particular version of it comes from Northumberland. [ [Roud 130](http://www.vwml.org/roudnumber/130) ; G/D 3:704 ; Ballad Index [R112](https://www.fresnostate.edu/folklore/ballads/R112.html) ; trad.]

1. In good King Arthur’s days, He was a goodly king

Three sons out of four he drove from the door, Because they would not sing

Because they would not sing, because they would not sing

Three sons out of four he drove from the door

Because they would not sing

2. The first he was a miller, The second he was a weaver

The third he was a little tailor, With a broad cloth under his arm

With a broad cloth under his arm, with a broad cloth under his arm

The third he was a little tailor

With a broad cloth under his arm

3. Well the miller was drowned in his dam, The weaver was hung in his yarn

And the devil ran away with the little tailor, With a broad cloth under his arm

With a broad cloth under his arm, with a broad cloth under his arm

And the devil ran away with the little tailor

With a broad cloth under his arm

**Greensleeves**

A broadside ballad by this name was registered at the London Stationer's Company in September 1580 by Richard Jones, as "A Newe Northen Dittye of ye Ladye Greene Sleves".Six more ballads followed in less than a year, one on the same day, 3 September 1580 ("Ye Ladie Greene Sleeves answere to Donkyn hir frende" by Edward White), then on 15 and 18 September (by Henry Carr and again by White), 14 December (Richard Jones again), 13 February 1581 (Wiliam Elderton), and August 1581 (White's third contribution, "Greene Sleeves is worne awaie, Yellow Sleeves Comme to decaie, Blacke Sleeves I holde in despite, But White Sleeves is my delighte"). It then appears in the surviving *A Handful of Pleasant Delights* (1584) as *A New Courtly Sonnet of the Lady Green Sleeves. To the ‘new’ tune of Green Sleeves*.

Alas my love you do me wrong

Alas my love that you should own

A heart of wanton vanity

So must I meditate alone

Upon your insincerity

Ah Greensleeves now farewell, adieu

To god I pray to prosper thee

For I am still thy lover true

Come once again and love me

To cast me out so discourteously

For I have loved you oh so long

Delighting in your company

Chorus:

Greensleeves was all my joy

Greensleeves was my delight

Greensleeves was my heart of gold

Oh but my lady Greensleeves

If you intend thus to disdain

It doth the more enrapture me

And even so I still remain

A lover in captivity

**Hal an Tow** [ [Roud 1520](http://www.vwml.org/roudnumber/1520) ; Ballad Index [K092](https://www.fresnostate.edu/folklore/ballads/K092.html) ; trad.]

The green calendar of spring has many songs. dances and shows, particularly around the opening days of May. Here and there are clear traces of old cults and superstitions (well-dressing against droughts, etc.) but generally their original meaning is lost. So the customs are transformed into ritual spectacles, festivities, distractions, opportunities for a good time, such as the old May Games that once comprised four sections: the election and procession of the May king and queen: a sword or Morris dance of disguised men; a hobby horse dance; a Robin Hood play. The Hal-an-Tow song was sung for the procession that ushered in the summer. A variant of it still accompanies the Helston Furry Dance on May 8th.

The **Roud Folk Song Index** is a database of more than 240,000references to nearly 25,000 songs that collected from oral tradition in the English language from all over the world.

Take no scorn to wear the horn

What happened to the Spaniards

Who made so great a boast o

It's they shall eat the feathered goose

And we shall eat the roast o

And as for that good knight, St. George

St. George he was a knight o

Of all the knights of Christendom

St. George is the right o

God bless Aunt Mary Moses

In all her power and might o

May she send peace to England

Send peace by day and night o

It was the crest when you were born

Your father's father wore it

And your father wore it to

Chorus:

Hal an tow, jolly rumbalo

We were up

long before the day o

To welcome in the summer

To welcome in the may o

For summer is a comin in

And winter's gone away o

Robin Hood and Little John

Have both gone to the fair o

and we will to the merry green wood

To hunt the buck and hare o

**Lovely Joan -** ([Roud](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Roud_Folk_Song_Index" \o "Roud Folk Song Index) #592)

Come give that ring into my hand  
And I will neither stay nor stand  
For your ring is worth much more to me  
Than twenty maidenheads, said she

And as he made for the pooks of hay  
She leapt on his horse and she tore away  
He called, he called, but he called in vain  
For Joan, she ne'er looked back again

Nor did she think herself quite safe  
Until she came to her true love's gate  
She'd robbed him of his horse and ring  
And she'd left him to rage in the meadows green

I love this song – there’s no real moral, it just shows that a lady can get her own back!

A fine young man it was indeed  
Mounted on his milk-white steed  
He rode, he rode and he rode all alone  
Until he came to lovely Joan

Good morning to you, my pretty maid  
And twice good morning, sir, she said  
He tipped her the wink and she rolled a dark eye  
Says he to himself, I'll be there by and by  
  
Oh don't you think these pooks of hay  
A pretty place for us to play  
So come with me, my sweet young thing  
And I'll give to you my golden ring

So he took off his ring of gold  
Says, My pretty fair miss, do this behold  
Freely I'll give it for your maidenhead  
And her cheeks they blushed like the roses red

Ralph Vaughan Williams, the well known English composer uses ‘Lovely Joan’ in his fantasy ‘The Lark Ascending’. Included in this are many tunes from Norfolk and also ‘Greensleeves’.

**Oh No John** - (Roud 146)

Alternative titles include "No, Sir", "No, John, No", "No Sir No", "Yes Or No", "Cruel Father", "Ripest Apples", "Twenty Eighteen", "The Spanish Merchant's Daughter", "The Spanish Captain", "Spanish Lady", "Yonder Sits a Spanish Lady", "Yonder Sits a Pretty Creature", and "In Yonder Grove"

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!

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!

**Skye Boat Song**

The song tells how Bonnie Prince Charlie, disguised as a serving maid, escaped in a small boat after the defeat of his Jacobite rising of 1745, with the aid of Flora MacDonald. The song is a traditional expression of Jacobitism and its story has also entered Scotland as a national legend.

The song was first published in *Songs of the North* by Boulton and MacLeod, London, 1884, The lyrics to the song were written by Boulton.

Chorus:

Speed bonny boat like a bird on the wing

Onward the sailors cry

Carry the lad that’s born to be king

*Over the sea to Skye*

1. Loud the wind howls, loud the waves roar

Thunderclaps rend the air

Battlers of war, stand on the shore

Follow they will not dare

2. Many’s the lad fought on that day

Well the claymore did weald

The house on the Isle of Skye, North Western Scotland, where Flora MacDonald died.

When the night came silently lay

Dead on Culloden’s field

3. Though the waves leap soft shall ye sleep

Oceans a royal bed

Rocked in the deep, Flora will keep

Watch by your weary head

**Waly Waly**

"**The Water Is Wide**" (also called "**O Waly, Waly**" or simply "**Waly, Waly**") is a [folk song](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Folk_song) of Scottish origin, based on lyrics that partly date to the 1600s.] It remains popular in the 21st century. Cecil Sharp published the song in *Folk Songs From Somerset* (1906). It is related to Child Ballad 204 (Roud number 87), *Jamie Douglas*, which in turn refers to the ostensibly unhappy first marriage of James Douglas, 2nd Marquis of Douglas to Lady Barbara Erskine.

The water is wide, I can't cross over  
and neither I have wings to fly  
give me a boat that can carry two  
and both shall row - my love and I  
  
Now love is gentle, and love is kind  
the sweetest flower when first it's new  
but love grows old, and waxes cold  
and fades away like morning dew

I laid my back against an oak

Thinking it was a trusty tree

But first it bended then it broke

And thus did my true love to me

There is a ship, she sails the sea  
she's loaded deep as deep can be  
but not as deep as the love I'm in  
I know not how I sink or swim

**Widdicombe Fair**

"**Widecombe Fair**", also called **Tom Pearce** (sometimes spelt "Tam Pierce"), is a well-known Devon folk song about a man called Tom Pearce, whose horse dies after someone borrows it to travel to the fair in Widecombe with his friends. Its chorus ends with a long list of the people travelling to the fair: "*Bill Brewer, Jan Stewer, Peter Gurney, Peter Davy, Dan'l Whiddon, Harry Hawke, Old Uncle Tom Cobley and all*." Some research suggests that the names originally referred to real people. As the last name in a long list, "Uncle Tom Cobley" has come to be used as a humorous colloquialism meaning "anyone and everyone". The surname is spelt as "Cobleigh" in some references.

1. Tom Pearce, Tom Pearce lend me your grey mare

All along down along out along lee

I want for to go to Widdicombe Fair



2. And when will I see again my grey mare

All along down along out along lee

By Friday soon or Saturday noon

3. Then Friday came and Saturday noon

All along down along out along lee

But Tom Pearce’s old mare hath not trotted home

4. So Tom Pearce he got up to the top o’ the hill

All along down along out along lee

And he seed his old mare down a makin’ her will

5. So Tom Pearce’s old mare she took sick and died

All along down along out along lee

And Tom he sat down on a stone and he cried

6. But this isn’t the end of this shocking affair

All along down along out along lee

Nor, though they be dead of the horrid career

7. When the wind whistles chill on the moor of a night

All along down along out along lee

Tom Pearce’s old mare doth appear ghostly white

8. And all the long night be heard skirling and groans

All along down along out along lee

From Tom Pearce’s old mare in her rattling bones

**Yorkshire**

**On Ilkley Moor ba’t’at**

The first published version of the words appeared in 1916, when it was described as "a dialect song which, for at least two generations past, has been sung in all parts of the West Riding of Yorkshire". Arnold Kellett calculates that the song "could well have originated in the early years of the second half of the [19th] century, and not as late as 1877 ...".

In *The Yorkshire Dictionary* (Arnold Kellett, 2002) it was said the song (*i.e.*, the lyrics) probably originated from the Halifax area, based on the dialect which is not common to all areas of Yorkshire.

1. Where hast thou been since I saw thee

On Ilkley moor ba’t ‘at

Where hast thou been since I saw thee (x2)

Chorus:

On Ilkley moor ba’t ‘at (x3)

1. Tha’s been a courtin Mary Jane
2. Tha’s gonna catch thee death o’ cold
3. Then we shall have to bury thee
4. Then t’worms s’ll come an’ eat thee up
5. Then ducks’ll come an’ eat up t’worms
6. Then we shall come an’ eat up ducks
7. Then we shall all have eat’n thee
8. That ‘ow we’ll get us ow’en back

Ducks on Ilkley Moor



**Scarborough Fair**

I call this an ‘unlove’ song as his ‘lover’ is asked to do things which are clearly impossible. In fact he’s saying that he wouldn’t marry her if she were the last person on the planet!

Chorus:

Are you going to Scarborough Fair, Parsley, sage, rosemary and thyme

Remember me to one who lives there, For she once was a true love of mine

Tell her to make me a cambrick shirt

Without any seams or needlework

Tell her to wash it in yonder dry well

Where water ne’er sprung nor drop of rain fell

Tell her to dry it on yonder thorn

Which never saw blossom since Adam was born

Tell her to buy me an acre of land:   
Between the salt water and the sea strand

Tell her to plough it with a long thorn

And to sow it all over with one peppercorn

Tell her to reap it with a sickle of leather

And tie it all up with one peacock’s feather

**Liverpool**

**Seth Davy -** "Whiskey on a Sunday".

Seth Davy, sometimes spelled Seth Davey, was a black street entertainer who worked in Liverpool at the turn of the 20th century, and was immortalised in the folk song "Whiskey on a Sunday". .Little is known of Davy outside of the lyrics of the song, which themselves have been varied over the years, with his location sometimes even changed to Dublin (Beggar's Bush) or London (Shepherd's Bush) from the original Bevington Bush in Liverpool.

1. He sat on the corner of Bevington Bush

Astride of an old packing case

And the dolls on the end of his plank went on dancing

As he crooned with a smile on his face

Chorus:

Come day go day, Wished in my heart for Sunday

Drinking buttermilk all the week, Whisky on a Sunday

2. His tired old hands tapped the wooden beam

His dolls they danced the gear

A far better show than you ever would see

At the Pivvy or on New Brighton Pier

3. Then in 1908 old Seth Davy died

His song was heard no more

And the three dancing dolls in the jowler bin ended

And the plank went to mend the back door

A very clever marionette which operates a ‘jig doll’ (the dancing dolls in the song).

4. On one stormy night down Scotty Road way

With the wind coming in from the sea

You can still hear the sound of old Seth Davy

As he croons to his dancing dolls three

**Other Songs**

This is a general section where all of the songs are selected as suitable pub songs.

**All for me grog**

… is a traditional folk song that was originally popular with sailors and later adopted by folk music performers and pub singers.[[1]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/All_For_Me_Grog#cite_note-1) It tells the tale of a man who sells all his possessions, and even his wife, to pay for drink and tobacco. Although the song is effectively about a man's ruin through drink, it is upbeat and celebratory rather than regretful. It is usually performed as a raucous chorus song. Grog originally referred to a daily ration of rum that used to be given to sailors in the Royal Navy. It later came to refer to all types of drink.

(\*) = 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

**The Beggar**

3. Sometimes we call at a nobleman’s hall

To beg for ale and beer

Sometimes we are lame sometimes we are blind

Sometimes too deaf to hear

4. Sometimes we lie like hogs in a sty

With a flock of straw on the ground

Sometimes eat a crust which has rolled in the dust

And be thankful that it may be found

A traditional song but seemingly of little recorded history – and not very well known.

1. I’d just as soon be a beggar or a king

The reason I’ll tell you for why

A king can’t swagger nor drink like a beggar

Nor be half so happy as I

Chorus:

Let the back and the sides go bare my boys

Let my hands and feet go cold

But give unto the belly boys beer enough

Whether it be new or old

2. I’ve a sixpence in my pocket and I’ve worked hard for it, Kind landlord here it is

Neither Jew nor Turk will make me work

While beggin’ is as good as it is

**The Cutty Wren**

The wren is known as the King of the Birds, because there is a fable in which a competition takes place to decide which bird is supreme. It is decided that he that flies highest is the monarch. The wren craftily hitches a ride on the back of the eagle and wins.

Also the wren was sacred to the Druids and the custom of catching and killing wrens at Christmas time would not be incompatible with this history of reverence. It would be protected all year and then ritually slain as a sacrifice at the appropriate time.

As with all possible remnants of ancient religions, their meaning becomes obscured and their enactment trivialized, and so this song until recently was attached to the Christmas tradition of wassailing and the demanding of monies.

“O where are you going?” said Milder to Maulder

“O we may not tell you,” said Festle to Foes

“We're off to the woods,” said John the Red Nose (x2)

“What will you do there?” said Milder to Maulder

“O we may not tell you,” said Festle to Foes

“We'll hunt the Cutty Wren,” said John the Red Nose (x2)

“How will you shoot her?” said Milder to Maulder

“O we may not tell you,” said Festle to Foes

“With bows and with arrows,” said John the Red Nose (x2)

“That will not do then,” said Milder to Maulder

“O what will do then?” said Festle to Foes

“Big guns and big cannons,” said John the Red Nose (x2)

“How will you bring her home?” said Milder to Maulder

“O we may not tell you,” said Festle to Foes

“On four strong men's shoulders,” said John the Red Nose (x2)

“That will not do then,” said Milder to Maulder

“O what will do then?” said Festle to Foes

“Big carts and big waggons,” said John the Red Nose (x2)

“How will you cut her up?” said Milder to Maulder

“O we may not tell you,” said Festle to Foes

“With knives and with forks,” said John the Red Nose (x2)

“That will not do then,” said Milder to Maulder

“O what will do then?” said Festle to Foes

“Big hatches and cleavers,” said John the Red Nose (x2)

“Who'll get the spare ribs?” said Milder to Maulder

“O we may not tell you,” said Festle to Foes

“We'll give them all to the poor,” said John the Red Nose (x2)

“O where are you going?” said Milder to Maulder

“O we may not tell you,” said Festle to Foes

“We're off to the woods,” said John the Red Nose (x2)

**The Cobbler**

Possibly first seen in print in 1916 in Ireland

Oh me name is Dick Darby, I'm a cobbler  
I served me time at the old camp  
Some call me an old agitator  
But now I'm resolved to repent

Ah it's forty long years I have traveled  
All by the contents of me pack  
Me hammers, me awls, and me pinches  
I carry them all on me back

Oh my wife she is humpy, she's lumpy  
My wife, she's the devil, she's black  
And no matter what I may do with her  
Her tongue it goes clickety clack

It was early one fine summer's morning  
A little before it was day  
I dipped her three times in the river  
And carelessly bade her "Good day"

Chorus:

With me intwing of an ingthing of an idoo  
With me intwing of an ingthing of an iday  
With me roo boo boo roo boo boo randy  
And me lode stone keeps beating away

Now my father was hung for sheep stealing  
Me mother was burned for a witch  
My sister's a dandy housekeeper  
And I'm a mechanical switch

**Dance to your Daddy**

A song from the North East of England

"**When The Boat Comes In**" (or "**Dance Ti Thy Daddy**") is a traditional English folk song, originating in North East England. An early source for the lyrics, Joseph Robson's "Songs of the bards of the Tyne", published 1849, can be found on the FARNE archive; in FARNE's notes to the song, it is stated that these lyrics were written by William Watson around 1826.

Chorus: Dance to your Daddy, my little laddy  
Dance to your Daddy, my little man

Thou shalt have a fish and thou shalt have a fin  
Thou shalt have a codlin when the boat comes in  
Thou shalt have haddock baked in a pan, Dance to your Daddy, …

When thou art a young boy, you must sing and play  
Go along the shore and cast your shells away  
Build yourself a castle, watch the tide roll in, Dance to your Daddy, …

When thou art a young man, go unto the trades  
Find yourself a skill, and wages you’ll be paid  
Then with all your wages, buy yourself some land, Dance to your Daddy, …

When thou art a man and go to take a wife  
Find yourself a lass and love her all your life  
She shall be your wife and thou shalt be her man, Dance to your Daddy, ..

When thou art an old man, father to a son  
Sing to him the old songs, sing of all you've done  
Pass along the old ways, then let his song begin, Dance to your Daddy, …

**Dance to your Daddy 2**

Chorus:

Dance to your Daddy, my little laddy  
Dance to your Daddy, my little man

You shall have a fishy on a little dishy

You shall have a fishy when the boat comes in

You shall have a fishy on a little dishy

You shall have a haddock when the boat comes in