FSA-15

"Adirondack Songs, Ballads and Fiddle Tunes"

LAWRENCE OLDER

of Middle Grove, New York

Photo by Sandy Paton

FOLK-LEGACY RECORDS, INC. SHARON, CONNECTICUT

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Recorded by Sandy Paton
Notes by Peter E. McElligott

Lawrence and Martha Older, and their son, Larry, live in a cheerful, comfortable house that Lawrence built on the side of Mt. Pleasant, Middle Grove, New York. Located in the southern Adirondacks, Mt. Pleasant has been home for most of Lawrence's fifty years, and he is on cordial terms with it and with its other inhabitants. Friendship with a mountain does not evolve suddenly; you have to live on it, work it, and occasionally fight it before you can fully appreciate it. Although Lawrence is currently employed as a machinist, he is a woodsman at heart and spent the large majority of his early days in that capacity.

By and large, the music of Lawrence Older derives from two somewhat overlapping sources: family songs and songs popular in local tradition. The majority were learned from his parents and from his uncle, Thede; the remainder have been acquired through oral transmission over the course of the years.

As Harold Thompson says in *Body, Boots and Britches*, "We don't have hill-billies in New York State, but we have mountaineers who are some of the best and happiest Americans." Certainly Lawrence Older, New York State woodsman and mountaineer, gives every appearance of being a happy and contented man, and one gets the impression that a large part of his satisfaction stems from his affinity with the woods—and from his music.

Side 1:

ONCE MORE A-LUMBERING GO
RANDY RILEY (CHILD 278)
BONNET TRIMMED IN BLUE (FIDDLE)
JED HOBSON
FLIM-A-LIM-A-LEE (CHILD 2)
DEVIL'S DREAM (FIDDLE)
WOMAN FROM YORKSHIRE
MY OLD BROWN COAT AND ME
NOT FAR FROM BALLSTON
BONAPARTE'S MARCH (FIDDLE)
OLD SHOES AND LEGGINGS
GYPSY DAVY (CHILD 200)

Side 2:

FROG IN THE SPRING
JOHNNY RANDALL (CHILD 12)
BONNIE BLACK BESS
CE POUFLAS (FIDDLE)
EN ROULANT
LA BASTRINGUE (FIDDLE)
JIM ALONG JOSIE
PAT MALONE
PEG AND AWL
JOHNSON'S ROAD (FIDDLE)
ELDER BORDEE (CHILD 167)
DERBY RAM

FOLK-LEGACY RECORDS, INC.
Sharon, Connecticut 06069

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LAWRENCE OLDER

As Harold Thompson says in Body, Boots and Britches, "We don't have hill-billies in New York State but we have mountaineers who are some of the best and happiest Americans." Certainly Lawrence Older, York State woodsman and mountaineer, gives every appearance of being a happy and contented man and one gets the obvious impression that a large part of his satisfaction derives from both his affinity with the woods, and from his music.

Lawrence and Martha Older and their son, Larry, live in a cheerful, comfortable house that Lawrence built on the side of Mt. Pleasant, Middle Grove, New York. Located in the southern Adirondacks, Mt. Pleasant has been home for most of Lawrence's fifty years, and h' is on cordial terms with it and with its other inhabitants (including nine of his brothers and sisters).

Friendship with a mountain does not evolve suddenly; you have to live on it, work it, and occasionally fight it before you can fully appreciate what it has to offer. Lawrence's family moved on Mt. Pleasant when he was nine years of age — old enough, his stepfather thought, that he should be helping in the family woodlot with the falling and cutting of pulp and cordwood and with the sugaring in early Spring. Education was a sporadic business in the one-room school house which Lawrence — and the rest of the neighbors — attended only when there wasn't other work to be done at home. Thus it went, off and on, through the sixth grade when Lawrence first struck out on his own. He got a job just over the mountain clearing land for the Sacandaga Reservoir, bought a fiddle with three dollars of his first week's pay, got fired when the foreman found out his true age, worked on a farm as a hired hand for a brief spell, and was back cutting wood on the mountain the following winter.

Although Lawrence is currently employed as a machinist, he is a woodsman at heart and spent the majority of his early days in that capacity. The occupational pattern for Lawrence and his people was to work in the woods by preference whenever there was any cutting work available, and to seek short term jobs elsewhere in the summer off-season. In Lawrence's case the part-time work was always outdoors and usually as close to the woods as he could get, for example clearing brush for a new power line going over the mountain. When the snows came, however, and it was possible to get a team and sleigh into the woods, the Olders could always be found somewhere back on the mountain, chopping pulp and cordwood.

As a woodsman, Lawrence Older must be regarded as a

"loner", a worker who preferred to chop and saw by himself or with one or two companions rather than frequent a large, company-owned camp. This, despite the fact — or perhaps because of it — that his mother worked all her life as a professional cook in the company camps and that his stepfather was frequently employed as a foreman in the same camps. Though the concept of the lone woodsman may seem strange to one accustomed to the conventional image of the hearty and gregarious lumberjack, it was, in Lawrence's locale and generation, the much more typical arrangement. In the first place, New York is not especially known for its tall timber which requires a crew to fall and move. Rather, the majority of the state's wood consumption is in the form of pulp for its numerous paper mills. Pulp and cordwood (used extensively as a fuel because it was cheaper than coal) could conveniently be chopped, sawed, split and skidded by one or two men with a team and a sleigh. Secondly, with the advent of the truck, caterpiller tractor and railroad, the need for a large camp located near a convenient river for driving the lumber was gradually eliminated. Instead, men like Lawrence Older could make a modest but comfortable living by hiring out to sub-contractors for the paper mills and working or chopping not too far from their homes.

The customary procedure was to take a team and sleigh five or ten miles back on the mountain, and, in company with either a relative or a neighbor that you got along well with, erect a bark shanty and a place for the team near the chopping. Domestic arrangements were simple: one of the partners would elect to do the cooking and would break off from work an hour or so early to get the meal started. A path was broken for the team, and after the wood was cut and sawed it was piled on the sleigh and skidded to the nearest roadside where it was stacked to await eventual transportation to the mill.

It was a lonely life in the woods and a man had to be particular with whom he chose to work, for tempers frayed easily in the cramped quarters of the shanty. Lawrence usually partnered with one of his brothers, primarily because the contract was for piecework and he knew they could set a good pace and keep it up the entire day. An efficient natural rhythm on the cross-cut saw is pretty important — especially if it has to be maintained throughout the entire winter.

There were breaks in the camp routine. Occasionally a woodsman from a nearby chopping or camp would drop in for an evening of talk. Other nights Lawrence would play the fiddle, as he says, "for my own confusion". The customary Saturday night square dance in a nearby town was a strong attraction, especially for the single man. After his marriage, Lawrence usually managed to make it home at least once a week.

By and large, the music of Lawrence Older derives from

two somewhat overlapping sources: family songs and songs popular in local tradition. A survey of Lawrence's repertoire indicates that the majority of his songs — perhaps as high as 75% of the songs he sings today — were at least originally learned from his parents. Of these songs, somewhere between one-third and one-half also appear to have been sung on a local level with varying degrees of popularity. The remainder of Lawrence's songs, those of non-family origin, have been acquired for the most part through oral transmission over the course of the years. A visiting woodsman (occasionally from Canada), local square dances (especially for the fiddle tunes) and people met — and warmed to — on the road; all of these and the other numerous opportunities for hearing someone sing a song have helped to enrich Lawrence's repertoire and increase his appreciation for the music of his people.

Since the majority of Lawrence's songs came to him through the family, it is of interest to examine this source in some depth as an example of a specific element of tradition. The Older branch of Lawrence's family has been traced back to Thomas Older, a British Regular who arrived in the State in 1749 from Morden, England, and who later served in Washington's army during the Revolution. The first evidence of a musical tradition apparently begins with Theodorus Older the first, Lawrence's great-grandfather, who settled on Pucker Creek in the town of Horicon, Warren County, in the early 1800's.

Theodorus the second, Lawrence's grandfather, was apparently a natural musician who learned songs from his father and absorbed others wherever he traveled. He served in the Civil War (joining twice in four years at the minimum legal age of eighteen) and is known to have brought new songs home with him after the fighting. An interesting story is told concerning his arrival in Keene Valley, New York, where he settled about 1870. At dusk of a winter day a powerfully built stranger stopped into Crawford's Store and, without saying a word to anyone, walked to the stove and began to warm himself. After a few minutes, with his back to the stove, he began softly singing to himself. In short order more people were entering than leaving the store and those who had business to transact did so in lowered voices. The tall stranger remained singing until 10 or 11 o'clock at night when he finally spoke to ask: "Any work around here? I'm a chopper." A job was quickly found for him in the area. Evidently his songs remained popular for a later anecdote relates how, at the completion of a barn-raising, Theodorus climbed up on a newly placed beam and sang for several hours to the assemblage below. Grandfather Theodorus, who remained a woodsman almost all of his life, apparently had more luck with his songs than with his sons, for Lawrence's father, Ben Older, and his uncles Thede and Will left home at very early ages. Not so early, however, that Ben and Thede were unable to take with them many of the family songs.

The three strongest musical influences on Lawrence Older were his parents and his Uncle Thede. Each has added a different component in the evolution of Lawrence's style as well as contributing towards his repertoire. It is from his Uncle Thede, who worked on the Erie Canal for a spell before traveling down-river to operate tugboats in New York Harbor, that Lawrence seems to have acquired the strong sense of family tradition and propriety in his singing.

"Uncle Thede only sang two kinds of songs: the family ballads and hymns. He'd never sing a song with a swear word in it. He must have learned lots of songs on the Canal and in the Harbor, but he never sang them for us."

From his father Lawrence has obviously inherited the ability to communicate with his singing. As Lawrence says: "Father always sang to an audience, even if it was only one little kid. He could kinda enclose you in a song — you were actually part of the thing." Strangely enough, however, it is from his mother, a person with almost no traditional musical heritage, that Lawrence acquired one of the strongest traditional traits: the ability to make music solely for himself. According to Lawrence: "Mother was a reversal of everything her family stood for." Her family, the Lanes, were of Scotch-Irish descent and apparently felt that appearance mattered most. His mother left home at about the age of fifteen, primarily to escape the life of sham and pretense, ("They said they'd had it once, but they didn't have it then.") and went to work as a menial or scullery maid. She picked up songs wherever she went, but she had no family songs since the Lanes were seemingly above the common music. When she sang them to her ten children she had somehow acquired the traditional manner and "even when she was holding you on her lap, she sang detached, to herself."

Thus a composite picture of Lawrence Older emerges. As a woodsman, his background, occupational pattern, and his natural affinity for his environment seem to be fairly typical of his people. As a singer, Lawrence Older also emerges as representative of a particular tradition and certain of the traditional characteristics appear to be especially strong and valid in his case. For example, in so far as it is possible to speak of a traditional manner of singing, one gets the impression that Lawrence, like his mother, sings primarily for himself. With an audience Lawrence communicates his music and establishes a close rapport, but the audience is not sung "at", rather, it is permitted to join Lawrence in a mutual appreciation and affection for the music. The distinction is subtle, but real. The proprietary interest which Lawrence takes in his songs may be partially understood in terms of the functional usage which the traditional singer makes of his music. The woodsman has few worksongs since, for the most part, his work does not require concerted group efforts. The woodsman, however, does have songs for his dancing, his bragging, and for his more

introspective or reflective moments. These songs comprise the repertoire of Lawrence Older, and these are the uses he makes of it. And finally, the sources of Lawrence's music — especially his strong family heritage — in terms of method and extent of transmission, must be regarded as predominantly traditional in the strictest sense of the term.

Peter E. McElligott
Schenectady, New York

Side I; Band 1. ONCE MORE A-LUMBERING GO

Sometimes called "Saranac River" or "The Logger's Boast", this song has also been found in Maine, Michigan and Pennsylvania. Lawrence thinks he first heard this shanty song from George Madison, a fiddler from nearby Barkersville, New York. It was sung fairly commonly in the Adirondacks where it is occasionally transformed to "No More A-Lumbering Go". Local place names are freely substituted in regional variants of the song. The town of Glens Falls, mentioned in Lawrence's last verse, was the logging center of America in the middle 1800's.

See: LOMAX III, THOMPSON.

Ye mighty sons of freedom
Who 'round the mountains range,
Come all you gallant lumber-boys
And listen to my song.
On the banks of the sweet Saranac,
Where its limpid waters flow,
We'll range the wild woods over
And once more a-lumbering go.

Once more a-lumbering go;
And we'll range the wild woods over
And once more a-lumbering go.

To the music of our axes
We'll make the woods resound,
And many a tall and lofty pine
Comes tumbling to the ground.
At night, around our good campfire,
We'll sing while cold winds blow;
And we'll range the wild woods over
And once more a-lumbering go.

You may talk about your parties,
Your parties and your plays,
But pity us poor lumber-boys,
Go jouncing on our sleighs.
But we ask no better pastime
Than to hunt the buck and doe
And we'll range the wild woods over
And once more a-lumbering go.

When Winter it is over
And the ice-bound streams are free,
We'll drive our logs to Glens Falls
And we'll haste our girls to see.
With plenty to drink and plenty to eat,
Back to the world we'll go
And we'll range the wild woods over
And once more a-lumbering go.

Side I; Band 2. RANDY RILEY (Child 278)

This ballad theme is apparently based on a medieval tale and, according to CAZDEN, was already in print by 1630 as "How the Divèll was Guld by a Scould". The tale evidently involves a contract between the devil and the farmer — the devil to assist the farmer with his plowing in return for the soul of one of his family. An element of comic relief is provided when the farmer learns that the devil does not want his son, whom he can ill spare, but rather his scolding wife. Lawrence's version is conservative in that the wife only has to demolish one little devil instead of the usual seven or nine before she is returned to the farmer. The scene of the farmer plowing with a hog (possibly suggesting his impoverishment) appears rather frequently in the ballad, although Lawrence's mixed team of hog and cow is somewhat unusual.

Lawrence learned this song from his father who occasionally sang a more recent version with the refrain as "Right leg, left leg, upper leg, under leg, old grey Randy Riley". (This refrain is still sung in Vermont — ed.) The refrain: "Sing ti-ro rattle-ing day" is frequently found in the Southern Appalachian variants, and whistling refrains have been found in Kentucky, Maine, Ireland, and Sussex, England.

See: BARRY, BREWSTER, BROWN, CAZDEN, DAVIS, HENRY, LEACH, LOMAX IV, O'LOCHLAINN, SHARP, SONGS OF ALL TIME, WELLS, and WILLIAMS.

There was an old man, he lived in a barn,
Twice fee and a high lily ho dum;
He had an odd team to plow up his farm,
With a twice fie lee fie lay fie lily ho dum.

He hadn't plowed o'er a furrow or two;
Down come the devil, right on a flue.

"Now," said old Randy, "I am undone;
Here comes the devil for my oldest son."

"No," said the devil, "I don't want your son;
Your scolding wife is the only one."

"Then," said old Randy, "with all my heart,
Oh, how I hope that you never do part."

He grabbed the old woman; slung her on his back;
Started for hell with a clickety-clack.

He set her down at the gates of hell,
Said, "I'll leave you there 'cause you look pretty well."

A little young devil came up with his ire;
She up with her rake and knocked him in the fire.

Another young devil peeked over the wall;
Said, "Take her 'way, Daddy, or she'll kill us all."

The devil come out, slung her on his back;
He says, "I'm a fool, but I'll take her back."

As she went tumbling over the hills —
"The devil won't have me; I wonder who will."

To prove that women are worse than men —
One went to hell and got kicked out again.

Side I; Band 3. **BONNET TRIMMED IN BLUE**

The fiddle was an extremely popular instrument some forty or fifty years ago in Lawrence's locale. A senior citizen of the area estimates that at one time there were upwards of one hundred good fiddlers in the neighborhood and almost every household contained an instrument. The Olders were no exception, for both Lawrence's father, Ben, and his mother played to some extent. The story is told about the day George Madison, a neighbor from nearby Barkersville, drove his team and wagon into the Older's front yard and said that he'd heard that Ben had a pretty good fiddle and could he try it? The fiddle was handed up to him and he played away for quite a spell, sitting up on the wagon seat. Later on, Lawrence's sister, Edith, taught herself to play the family fiddle, which, by this time, had only two strings left. A local virtuoso was so impressed by her performance that he promised to give her the missing strings — no mean gift in those days!

As mentioned previously, Lawrence bought his first fiddle with his first paycheck when he was about fifteen. Since that time, the fiddle has remained his favorite instrument and, on occasion, his raison d'etre. Lawrence taught himself to play in a manner which is fairly typical of his approach to any new challenge. Shortly after purchasing the instrument, he began sitting in with the bands at the local dances, keeping his eyes and ears closely fixed on the fiddler in the group. Since square dances are repetitious, and since Lawrence has an accurate ear, he was usually able to join in on the second or third

time around. That first summer on his own, Lawrence also decided to teach himself to swim. He would work at this for awhile and then he would wander over to George Madison's house and spend the rest of the evening listening to George play the fiddle and learning something of the stories associated with the tunes. His summer was well spent, for, in addition to learning the fiddle, he has thus far rescued two people from drowning, as well.

A later influence on Lawrence's fiddling has been Mr. Earl Eddy of Lake George, New York, whom Lawrence met a few years ago. Mr. Eddy is 78 years old and somewhat crippled from arthritis in his fingers, but his tecnique is vigorous and his repertoire is vast. Three of the tunes which Lawrence learned from Mr. Eddy are represented on this record.

Lawrence usually plays with his fiddle in a standard EADG violin tuning. Occasionally he will lower the fourth string to a D to get a characteristic drone effect for a particular song, and sometimes he will use an EAEA tuning for a piece with an extended range. All of the tunes on this record are in the EADG tuning.

As for the "Bonnet Trimmed in Blue": Lawrence has always known this tune as "First Lady Give Her Right Hand Across" from the opening lines of the square dance associated with it. Jean Ritchie has kindly clarified the record by supplying the title by which the tune was known in her home area of eastern Kentucky. The dance as performed in Barkersville was a very popular "cabbage" dance in which the lady and her partner of the moment "cabbage", or kiss, in the center of the square.

Side I; Band 4. JED HOBSON

Lawrence is reluctant to assign a specific source to this song, since it was sung fairly commonly on a local level. He does recall hearing his father sing it, and also Earl Randall, a neighbor, who was married to an English woman.

The song, which also appears under the titles of "Dick Darby", "Dick Darlin", "Dick German", and "Old Hewson" — "the Cobbler", is of Irish origin. FLANDERS II states that the song refers to one John Hewson, a Westminster shoemaker who aided Cromwell in the Irish Campaign of 1649-1650 and was later knighted for his services. The reference to the wife-dousing in the last verse, while seemingly indicating homicide, may also allude to Hewson's joining the Anabaptists. Lawrence's text is very close to that given in FLANDERS II, although his tune would appear to be of fairly recent vintage. The song has become quite a favorite in the folksong revival through the singing of an Irish version by Tommy Makem, invariably performed with the deliberate motions of a cobbler sewing and nailing a shoe held in his lap.

See: FLANDERS II, RANDOLPH.

They call me Jed Hobson, the cobbler;
I've spent my time in the camp;
And they called me an old agitator,
Before I had time to repent.

I've cobbled from Dublin to Dover,
Dover to King Kenyon Cove,
With a winkety, tinkety, teddy,
A winkety, tinkety ture.

My wife, she is humpsy, she's dumpsy;
Cross, irritating and slack;
And when I come home to my supper
She gives me a divilty-whack.

I've cobbled from Dublin to Dover,
Dover to King Kenyon Cove,
With a winkety, tinkety, teddy,
A winkety, tinkety ture.

But her life on earth will be over;
She soon will give up her life.
I'll give her three dips in the river
And so fondly bid her goodnight.

I've cobbled from Dublin to Dover,
Dover to King Kenyon Cove,
With a winkety, tinkety, teddy,
A winkety, tinkety ture.

Side I; Band 5. FLIM-A-LIM-A-LEE (Child 2)

Of all the Child riddle ballads (eg. #'s 1, 3, 45, 46), "The Elfin Knight" remains far and away the most popular even though its theme has made the rather abrupt transition from the supernatural to the humorous. In the earliest versions, generally characterized by the refrain "The wind hath blawn my plaid awa'", the maid desires the trumpeting Elf Knight to become her lover. The Elf, somewhat unchivalrously for a knight, counters with a request for the impossibly constructed cambric shirt and its attendant dry cleaning. The maid, however, having the usual last word, one-ups the knight by demanding in turn a series of Herculean agricultural tasks.

According to BRONSON, the second form of the ballad with the typical interlaced refrain "Parsley, sage, rosemary and thyme" and "Once he was a true lover of mine" gained dominance about the end of the 18th century. A third form with the typical refrain "Ivy, sing ivy" appeared before the middle of the last century and by this time the supernatural element had com-

pletely disappeared. WELLS states that the ballad is sometimes used today as a children's riddle game.

Lawrence's version, which he learned from his mother, closely resembles one collected by THOMPSON in a lumbercamp near Lake George, New York. The refrain, which contains no reference to plaids, rosemary and thyme, or ivy, is similar to several collected in New England (cf. BARRY, A text; BRONSON, #'s 4, 5, 6; LEACH, B text).

See: BARRY, BREWSTER, BROWN, CHASE, EDDY, FLANDERS I & II, HENRY, LEACH, LOMAX IV, RANDOLPH, SHARP, THOMPSON, WELLS.

Where are you going? I am going to the fair;
Flim-a-lim-a-lee castle-o Mollee —
If you see my girl, tell her I'll be there;
To my tassel-o, fa-lassel-o,
Flim-a-lim-a-lassel castle-o Mollee.

Similarly:

Tell her to make me a cambric shirt,
Without one stitch of needle work.

Tell her to wash it in yonder dry well,
Where never one drop of water has fell.

Tell her to hang it on yonder thorn,
Where the sun ain't shone since Adam was born.

Where are you going? I am going to the fair.
If you see my love tell him I'll be there.

Tell him to buy me an acre of land,
Between the salt sea and the salt sea sand.

Tell him to plow it with a ram's horn,
And sow it with a pepper-corn.

Tell him to reap it with a pen-knife,
And haul it in with a yoke of mice.

Tell him to reap it with a goose-quill,
And thresh it in an old egg shell.

When the fool has done his work,
Tell him to come and get his shirt.

Side I; Band 6. DEVIL'S DREAM

Despite its difficulty, this tune is reasonably well-known among fiddlers. It is related to, and sometimes called "The Devil Among the Tailors" (cf. FORD for both tunes), and

enjoyed some popularity in the Minstrel Shows. Lawrence learned the tune in Barkersville.

Side I; Band 7. WOMAN FROM YORKSHIRE

This is another of Lawrence's "family songs" which he learned when he was quite young from his father. Lawrence does not recall his uncle, Thede, ever singing the song — probably because of its humorous tenor — but he estimates that it may have entered the Older family through the wife of Theodorus the first, who was of Irish extraction. Certainly the refrain suggest such an Irish influence.

The distinction is frequently and positively drawn between the "marrowbones" song under its various guises ("The Rich Old Lady", "The Old Woman's Blind Husband", "The Woman from Dover", etc.) and the tale of "Johnny Sands" (cf. BREWSTER, BROWN, EDDY). The two songs are quite similar in plot, motif, and happy (?) ending, but differ in that the adversaries are specifically identified as Johnny Sands and Betty Hague in the latter song. Also, there is a subtle, but equally ineffective, difference in tecnique, in that the wife ties the hands of Johnny Sands before she attempts to drown him. The fairly consistent identification of Johnny Sands and Betty Hague in the variants of this song suggest that it had a printed source of recent vintage.

See: BREWSTER, BROWN, CHASE, EDDY, RANDOLPH, SHARP, etc.

There was a woman from Yorkshire,
In Yorkshire she did dwell;
Loved her husband dearly,
But another one twice as well.

To my whack fa lare a lare a laddety,
Whack fa lare a lay.

She bought three dozen marrowbones
And made him to crack them all;
Made the old man so very stone blind
He couldn't see her at all.

The old man being discouraged
To her did say,
"I would go and drown myself,
If you would show me the way."

The old woman being hard-hearted,
To him did say,
"You should go and drown yourself
And I will show you the way."

She took him by the hand
And she led him to the shore.
The old man says, "I won't jump in;
You'll have to push me o'er."

The old woman come a-running
All for to push him in;
The old man jumped a little aside
And she went headlong in.

The old woman began to beller,
To beller and to bawl.
The old man says, "I can't save you;
I can't see you at all."

The old woman begin to flounder,
To flounder and to swim;
The old man grabbed a hellova pole
And pushed her further in.

And now my song is ended
And you shall hear no more.
She must have been a blamed old fool,
Or she'd swum to the other shore.

Side I; Band 8. MY OLD BROWN COAT AND ME

Lawrence learned this from his father who sang of the fair and haughty Miss Mary Bright. Later, after hearing a recording by Doc Williams, Lawrence altered her name to Braid. The song enjoys some current popularity in the "Country and Western" repertoire.

See: RANDOLPH

Oh, the moon was out, the stars were bright,
The larks were singing free;
Come listen while I sing about
My old brown coat and me.

I lived upon my father's farm
Till I was twenty-one;
I bought a farm, then, of my own
And a man's life begun.

I fell in love with Mary Braid,
Her father owned a store;
There never was a girl beloved
So tenderly before.

Now, Mary Braid was a fair young maid,
But haughty as could be;
She oft-times said she would not wed
My old brown coat and me.

I did not stop to plead my case,
Pleading was in vain;
I bade adieu to Mary Braid,
Nor saw her face again.

There's forty summers o'er my head,
There's riches in my store;
My children play out on the green,
My wife stands in the door.

I've land enough, I've money enough,
I've houses tall and high;
There's not a squire in all this land
Can wear such clothes as I.

Now, Mary Braid was a fair young maid,
But haughty as could be;
She was wedded to a lawyer's son
Whose name was Joe Zalee (?).

He wore a coat all shiny black
And looked so very grand
That Mary fancied he would make
A noble and true man.

Now, Mary's husband, he became
A pirate on the sea;
She oft-times said she wished she'd wed
My old brown coat and me.

Now, girls, and you are called to choose
The man that bends a knee,
Think of the fate of Mary Braid,
My old brown coat and me.

Remember that an old brown coat,
And not so very grand,
Can cover up as warm a heart
As any in the land.

Side I; Band 9. NOT FAR FROM BALLSTON

This song was written by Lawrence's father, Ben Older, to celebrate one of his numerous "second best" horse trades. According to Lawrence, his father never won a trade in his life, but he was big enough to laugh at himself and, on this occasion, to commemorate the event. Ballston Spa, about ten miles from Middle Grove, is a small town where Ben Older was

working when he got married and where Joe Cole, the villain, ran a summer hotel.

Ben Older, in his younger days, was locally known for his poems and songs and on one occasion, at least, is reported to have printed a libelous broadside which caused his voluntary and intelligent absence from town for a spell. Lawrence has taken the hint and, hence, one of the names in the song has been slightly altered. As regards the horse trades, Lawrence claims that it was a rather typical requirement for all the Older kids to have to go down to the barn the following morning and help get the latest "bargain" to its feet. Apparently some degree of technique was necessary for, "If we pushed too vigorous, the horse'd go right on over and fall on his other side."

Not far from Ballston and on a small knoll
Was the fine residence of a man named Joe Cole;
And at selling old horses, he's not a bit slack,
For he sold to Ben Older an old hat-rack.

Sing whack flair a laddety, whack flair a lay;
If you don't like my shanty, pass out the back way.

His hips they stuck up and his bones they were bare;
It took him all summer to shed winter's hair.
He loaned him to Jake Carr, which turned out a sin,
For he plowed him and plowed him till he plowed off his skin.

One day when Ben had him out on the pike,
Ben opened him up, just to see what t'was like.
He got going so fast, his speed could not check;
He slewed off in a ditch and the poor steed broke his neck.

Of old Net Tweezer there's nothing to fear;
He spends all his money on whiskey and beer.
And at going to Ballston, he's not a bit slack,
For he's sure to get a jag on before he gets back.

Side I; Band 10. BONAPARTE'S MARCH

Lawrence learned this from Earl Eddy who, in turn, learned it from his uncle. Mr. Eddy characteristically pronounces it "Bonaparte's Mahtch", with an extremely broad "a". It does not appear to be melodically related to the more familiar "Bonaparte's Retreat".

Side I; Band 11. OLD SHOES AND LEGGINGS

Sometimes known as "Old Grey Beard Newly Shaven" or

"The Old Man's Courtship", this English song of the unilateral courtship of a young maid by an older man has remained popular for many years. WILLIAMS cites its appearance in print in 1730, but the predicament of the young girl being maneuvered into a marriage with a much older man by her mother is probably ageless. Most American versions conclude with the mother's surrender and dismissal of the old man after his unsatisfactory or peculiar behavior in bed. The WILLIAMS text, however, relates the successful completion of the mother's scheme, and probably the record for the most "efficient" courtship appears in THOMPSON from a New York State source in which the concluding lines of verse three are:

My mother told me to get him some bread,
I got him some bread and he asked me to wed.

Lawrence learned his version from his father.

See: BREWSTER, BROWN, EDDY, HENRY, SHARP, THOMPSON, WILLIAMS.

A man who was old come courting one day,
All three girls wouldn't have him;
He came down the lane on a walking cane,
With his old shoes on and his leggings.

Similarly:

Mother told me to hang up his hat;
I hung up his hat and he kicked at the cat.

Mother told me to give him some meat;
I gave him some meat and, oh, how he did eat.

Mother told me to show him the saw;
I showed him the saw and he danced "rye straw".

Mother told me to put him to bed;
I put him to bed and he stood on his head.

Mother told me to send him away;
I sent him away and he left us to stay.

Side I; Band 12. GYPSY DAVY (Child 200)

Lawrence recalls first hearing this song from his father when he was about six years old. It was sugaring time and Lawrence was tending the kettle fire while his father had gone to collect sap. On nis return, he was heard singing this at the top of his voice. Lawrence suspects that it was deliberately done to impress him: "You know — walking o'er the hills, singing loud and gaily."

The ballad, which can be traced back to the latter half of the 18th century, purports to relate the somewhat willing abduction of Lady Cassilis by the noted gypsy hero, Johnny Faa, who was hung in Scotland in the early 1600's. The tale, which often involves a romantic gypsy spell being cast over the lady, is apparently without foundation (cf. LEACH, GUMMERE). In some American versions, the lady later attempts a reconcilliation with her husband, which is usually fruitless.

Because of its brevity, it is difficult to ascribe a probable source to this variant. Since numerous examples of more complete texts abound, it would appear that the loss of the inner verses occurred fairly recently in its transmision. It is obviously not of the "Black Jack Davy" genre frequently found in America, and Lawrence doubts whether it was in his family for more than a single generation. A vague similarity in his refrain may be noted in the following example found in Nova Scotia (LEACH — C text):

Red Lady dingo, dingo day,
Red Lady dingo, dingo daisy,
Red Lady dingo, dingo day,
She's away with the Gypsy Daisy.

See: BARRY, BREWSTER, BROWN, DAVIS, EDDY, HENRY, LEACH, RANDOLPH, SANDBURG, SHARP, "SONGS OF ALL TIME", WELLS, etc.

He came walking o'er the hills,
Singing loud and gaily;
Made the aisles of the green woods ring
And he charmed the heart of a lady.

Rattle lattle lingo lingo ling,
Rattle lattle lingo Davy;
Rattle lattle lingo lingo ling,
She's gone with the Gypsy Davy.

Go harness up the old grey mare,
The black is not so speedy;
I'll ride all day and I'll ride all night,
Till I overtake my lady.

Last night she slept on a warm feather bed
And on her arm a baby;
Tonight she sleeps on the cold, cold ground,
Beside the Gypsy Davy.

Side II; Band 1. FROG IN THE SPRING

Like the ballads "Sir Andrew Barton" and "Henry Martin", the degree of association and/or derivation between "The Frog

in the Spring" and "The Frog's Courtship" is difficult to firmly establish. Thus, in some references, variants of both songs are included under a single heading, while other collectors make a definite and clear-cut distinction between the older and more complete "Frog's Courtship" and "The Frog in the Spring" (or "Frog in the Well", "Keemo-Kimo", or "Kitty Alone") forms. BREWSTER, BROWN and RANDOLPH, for example, state that "The Frog in the Spring" form derives from an old English nonsense rhyme, with probable minstrel influences along the way. Lawrence's version, which was very popular locally, is similar to the SHARP "A" text of "Frog in the Well".

See: BREWSTER, BROWN, CAZDEN, EDDY, HENRY, LOMAX II, RANDOLPH, SANDBURG, SHARP, "SONGS OF ALL TIME", WELLS, etc.

Oh, there was a frog lived in the spring,
King kong kitty won't you ki-me-o;
Had such a cold he could not sing,
King kong kitty won't you ki-me-o.

Ke-mo ki-mo ki-mo kee,
Away down yonder in a hollow tree,
Mouse and a bat and a bumble-bee,
King kong kitty won't you ki-me-o.
Muh-hi, muh-ho, a ricky-ticky tummy-tittle
Soup-back pennywinkle nip-cat,
Sing song kitty won't you ki-me-o.

Who's been here since I been gone?
A pretty little man with his new shoes on.

A pretty little dandy man, said she,
With a crooked back and a striped knee.

A mouse went a-swimming across the lake,
And he got swallowed by a big black snake.

Side II; Band 2. JOHNNY RANDALL (Child 12)

According to BARRY, "It is reasonably safe to assert, that of all English ballads, 'Lord Randall' holds in the United States the leading position, as regards the extent of purely traditional currency". It is hence somewhat unfortunate for comparative purposes that Lawrence's version contains only these four verses which he learned from his mother. It can well be argued whether this variant represents a completed evolution of the ballad, or whether it is a fragment due to a comparatively recent memory lapse. BRONSON, for example, lists approximately 100 variants of which roughly one-third contain six or more stanzas.

"Lord Randall" is certainly one of the most widely traveled of the classic ballads, having been found in Hungary, Scandinavia, and Italy, among other places. Interestingly enough, however, GEROULD states that no French version has been collected. Its earliest printed appearance is apparently found in a Verona broadside dated 1629 and the close similarity between British and Italian texts has led to some speculation regarding the general direction of transmission (cf. GEROULD, BARRY).

Lawrence's "Lord Randall", despite its brevity and comparatively recent melodic structure is interesting in at least two respects: the wife murderess and the cold poison motifs. The ballad exists in three general forms: the straight version (as sung by Lawrence), the "Wee Croodlin' Doo" series in which the child is poisoned by the stepmother, and the "Billy Boy" or "My Boy Willie" parodies. In the typical form the sweetheart is far and away the most common villainess and her modus operandi is nearly always the fried or speckled eels. It is perhaps significant that of the Hundred and thirty-odd versions catalogued by BRONSON, BARRY and FLANDERS, only six cite the wife as the murderess. Five of these (two are identical texts) are from Irish sources. Furthermore, in only one of these cases are the toxic eels mentioned. The others are less specific and refer to only a rather vague "poison". Based on such statistical evidence, Lawrence's version appears to derive, partially, at least, from a Celtic source.

See: BARRY, BREWSTER, BRONSON, BROWN, DAVIS, EDDY, FLANDERS I, HENRY, LEACH, RANDOLPH, SHARP, WELLS, etc.

What'd you have for your breakfast,
Johnny Randall, my son?
What'd you have for your breakfast,
My beloved sweet one?
A quart of cold poison, Mother;
Make my bed soon.
I'm sick to my heart and I long to lie down.

Similarly:

What'll you leave your dear mother?
My gold and my silver.

What'll you leave your dear father?
A pair of white horses.

What'll you leave your dear wife?
Hell's gates opened wide.

Side II; Band 3. BONNIE BLACK BESS

This is one of the Older "family songs" and, in that

capacity, dates back at least to Theodorus the second, Lawrence's grandfather. It is one of the few songs that Lawrence's Uncle Thede would sing, and was learned by Lawrence from both his father and his uncle. Lawrence has referred to the LOMAX text for completion of a few of the verses sung here.

"Bonnie Black Bess" has appeared in both traditional and broadside forms and eulogizes the famous black mare of the English highwayman, Dick Turpin (1706-1739). According to LOMAX, it gained wide popularity in the west among the cowboys. Lawrence's version, which is similar to both the LOMAX and BROWN texts, bears strong broadside characteristics. The terms "beastie" and "dee" in the seventh stanza suggest either a Scottish or North English influence in the transmission. (For a quite similar version, see Folk-Legacy's FSC-10; Tom Brandon, of Peterborough, Ontario, Canada, recorded by Edith Fowke.)

See: BROWN, LAWS (L 9), LOMAX I, RANDOLPH.

When fortune's blind goddess had fled my abode
And friends proved ungrateful, I took to the road
To plunder the wealthy and relieve my distress.
I bought thee to aid me, my Bonnie Black Bess.

No vile whip nor spur did thy sides ever gall;
For none did thee need, thou wouldst bound at my call.
And for each act of kindness thou wouldst me caress.
Thou art never unfaithful, my Bonnie Black Bess.

When dark, sable midnight her mantle had thrown
O'er the bright face of nature, how oft we have gone
To the famed Hounslow heath, though an unwelcome guest
To the minions of fortune, my Bonnie Black Bess.

How quiet thee stood when the carriage I stopped;
The inmates their gold and their jewels let drop.
No poor man I plundered nor ere caused distress,
Nor widow or orphan, my Bonnie Black Bess.

When Argus-eyed justice, they didst me pursue,
From London to Yorktown like lightning we flew.
No toll bars could stop us; the waters didst breast;
In twelve hours reached it, my Bonnie Black Bess.

But hate darkens o'er me; despair is my lot.
And the law doth pursue me for the many I've shot.
To save me, poor brute, thou hast done thy best;
Thou art worn out and weary, my Bonnie Black Bess.

Hark! They never shall have a beastie like thee,
So noble and gentle; but now thee must dee.
My dumb friend, my dumb friend, it does me distress.
There! There! I have shot thee, my Bonnie Black Bess.

In long after years, when I'm dead and gone,
This song will be handed from father to son.
My fate some will pity, and some will confess
'Twas through kindness I killed thee, my Bonnie Black
Bess.

No one can e'er say that ingratitude dwelt
In the bosom of Turpin; 'twas a vice never felt.
I will die like a man and soon be at rest;
Now, farewell forever, my Bonnie Black Bess.

Side II; Band 4. CE POUFLAS

This is another of Mr. Eddy's tunes which he says he learned from Joe Baker, a Frenchman. It should be pointed out that in the southern Adirondacks any Canadian is called a Frenchman, and almost every Canadian is called Joe Baker, whether his name be Bolduc or Thibedeau.

Side II; Band 5. EN ROULANTE

Lawrence learned this children's version of the widespread French-Canadian paddle song from Albert LaPointe, formerly of Montreal. The tune is similar to the English children's song "Skipping Lightly O'er the Green", which Lawrence learned many years ago in school. BARBEAU states that a form of "En Roulante" derives from the canoeman's song "Trois Beaux Canards", of which more than one hundred versions have been collected in Canada. Lawrence's translation is given below:

Roll the ball, my ball;
Roll on, my ball that rolls;
And she kills her white duck.
Roll, roll the ball, Mama.
Roll the ball, my ball;
Roll on, my ball that rolls.

See: BARBEAU

En roulante, la boule ma' boule;
En roulante, ma' boule qui roule.
Et elle tuer
Son canard blanc.
Rouli, roulante, la boule, mouman.
En roulante, la boule ma' boule;
En roulante, ma' boule qui roule.

Side II; Band 6. LA BASTRINGUE

Lawrence learned this popular French-Canadian tune from a friend, Joe Bolduc, of Quebec. The tune is sometimes associated with bawdy lyrics. See BOTSFORD for a bowdlerized version.

Side II; Band 7. JIM ALONG JOSIE

Widely known as a fiddle and dance tune in Lawrence's locale, "Jim Along Josie" was also popular as a play party game in the early part of the century. According to RANDOLPH, it derives from an old minstrel show song of the same name and he cites a piece with this title being published in 1840. The reference to the "load of bark" in Lawrence's version alludes to hemlock which was used for tanning purposes. The following two lines may refer to the bark, which darkens as it stands in the pile, or "rank", as it is called, or may be a vestige of its minstrel show character. They are not found in either the FORD or RANDOLPH texts.

See: FORD, RANDOLPH

Any pretty girl that wants a beau,
Just fall in the arms of Jim along Joe.

Hi Jim along and a-Jim along Josie,
Hi Jim along and a-Jim along Joe.

Hitch the oxen to the cart
And go to the mill and get a load of bark.
Some is black and some is blacker;
Some is the color of a chaw of tobaccer.

Hi Jim along and a-Jim along Josie,
Hi Jim along and a-Jim along Joe.

Any pretty girl, etc.

Side II; Band 8. PAT MALONE

This song, sometimes found under the title "The Irish Wake", appears to be related to the Irish street ballad "Finnigan's Wake" from which James Joyce borrowed the title of his famous novel. In "Finnigan's Wake", however, the profit motive is absent and the corpse is revived when, in the course of the rather rowdy wake, it is splattered with whiskey (from the Gaelic "Uisce Beata", meaning "water of life"). Lawrence's version, which he learned from his father, closely parallels the text of a Missouri variant collected by RANDOLPH, although the tunes are dissimilar. This writer, who has a healthy regard for Lawrence's imagination, is somewhat surprised that no attempt is made to collect double in-

demnity on poor Pat.

See: EDDY, LAWS (Q 18), O'LOCHLAINN, RANDOLPH

Times was hard in Irish town,
Everything was goin' down,
When Pat Malone was pressed for ready cash.
He, for life insurance, spent
Every dollar to a cent,
Until all of his affairs had gone to smash.
Then his wife spoke up and said,
"Now, dear Pat, if you were dead,
That twenty thousand dollars we might take."
So Pat laid down and tried
To make out that he had died
Until he smelled the whiskey at the wake.

Pat Malone forgot that he was dead;
He raised up in his coffin and he said,
"If the wake goes on a minute,
Sure, the corpse he must be in it!
Oh, you gotta get me drunk to keep me dead."

They gave to him a sup,
Afterwards they filled him up
And they gently laid him back upon the bed
Till the break of day. Everybody felt so gay
They forgot Pat was only playing dead.
Snatched him off the bunk,
Wasn't dead, but awful drunk,
And they threw him in his coffin with a prayer;
Till the driver of the cart says, "Bedad, before I start,
I'd like to know who'll pay the fare."

Pat Malone forgot that he was dead;
He raised up in his coffin and he said,
"If you dare to doubt me credit,
You'll be sorry that you said it!
Drive on, or else the corpse'll break your head!"

So, then they started out
On the cemetery route,
All trying the widow to console,
Until they reached the base
Of Malone's resting place
And they gently lowered Patrick in the hole.
Pat began to see,
Just as plain as one, two, three,
He'd forgot to reckon on the end;
When the sod begun to drop,
He broke off the coffin top
And quickly to the earth he did ascend.

Pat Malone forgot that he was dead;
From the cemetery quickly fled.
It's a lucky thing, by thunder;
Pat come nearly going under.
It's lucky Pat forgot that he was dead.

Side II; Band 9. PEG AND AWL

If one can believe the dates mentioned in this song, then it surely would be one of the earliest musical protests against automation on this continent. Unfortunately, the would appear to be at least a half-century ahead of its time. The listener may accredit the discrepancy to either poetic license or to a source with particularly prophetic vision, but a bad sense of timing. Lawrence does not recall where he learned this song, but he suspects that it may have been from a recording. His text is similar to that in LOMAX, but it is less complete.

See: LOMAX IV

In the year of eighteen and one,
Peg and awl,
In the year of eighteen and one,
Peg and awl,
In the year of eighteen and one
Peggin' shoes was all I done;
Hand me down my pegs,
My pegs, my pegs, my awl.

Similarly:

In the year of eighteen and two
Peggin' shoes is all I do.

They've invented a new machine,
Purtiest thing you've ever seen.

Make one hundred pair to my one;
Peggin' shoes ain't any fun.

Side II; Band 10. JOHNSON'S ROAD

Mr. Eddy, who taught this tune to Lawrence, learned it from his brother. FORD lists a similar tune under the title "Portland Fancy".

Side II; Band 11. ELDER BORDEE (Child 167)

Another of the Older "family songs", Lawrence learned this version of "Sir Andrew Barton" from his father and his Uncle Thede. THOMPSON reports a very similar title ("Elder

Bardee") and text collected in Corinth, New York. It is interesting to speculate on a possible connection here, since Theodorus the second, Lawrence's grandfather, was known to have lived for awhile in Corinth.

According to LEACH, the tale begins in 1474 with the capture of John Barton's ship by the Portugese. The Scottish king gave Barton's sons letters of reprisal against the Portugese which were renewed in 1506. These letters of marque were liberally interpreted, at least by Sir Andrew, to the extent that he was eventually preying upon English ships. Understandably perturbed, Henry VIII then permitted Sir Thomas and Sir Edward Howard, sons of the Earl of Surrey, to fit out two ships against the alleged pirate. Barton was killed by an English arrow in the battle that followed (1511). LEACH's text, which is from the Percy manuscript, is the most complete (82 verses) and contains much specific detail. Other versions of the ballad conclude with the capture and return to England of Sir Andrew, or with the historically inaccurate but eminently satisfying victory of Sir Andrew over his pursuer and the gallant last boast (BARRY, "A" text):

"Go home, go home," cried Andrew Battam,
"And tell your King for me,
If he reigns King upon dry land,
It is I who reigns King on the sea."

Two of the most interesting features of the ballad concern its relation to "Henry Martin" (Child 250) and the identity of the king's agent who is called Captain Charles Stewart in almost all of the American texts. BARRY gives an extensive discussion of the first point and concludes that the two ballads are related, but that "Andrew Barton" is of an older tradition. Three theories exist with regard to the mysterious Captain Charles Stewart. The LEACH text identifies him as Charles Howard, Lord Admiral of the Fleet. THOMPSON and others see him as the Young Pretender, Charles Stuart. BARRY surmises interestingly that he may have been the American naval hero, Captain Charles Stewart (1778-1869), who was a dashing and popular figure of the day and who was nominated as a "favorite son" candidate for the presidency in 1844. In any event, his widespread appearance in the American variants is somewhat surprising in view of BARRY's statement that "no broadside or songster text of 'Sir Andrew Barton' printed in America is known to have existed."

See: BARRY, EDDY, LEACH, RANDOLPH, THOMPSON, etc.

There were three brothers from merry Scotland,
Three loving brothers were they,
And they did cast lots to see which should go
To sail robbing all 'round the salt sea.

The lot it fell upon Elder Bordee,
The youngest of the three,
That he, to maintain the others, to sail
All robbing all 'round the salt sea.

They had not sailed one day, two, nor three,
'Fore three vessels they did espy
A-sailing far off and a-sailing far on,
And at length they came sailing close by.

"Who's there? Who's there?" cried Elder Bordee,
"Who's there that's sailing so nigh?"
"We are three merchant vessels from old England
And, if no offense, let us pass by."

"No, no, no, no," cried Elder Bordee,
"No, no, that never can be;
Your ships I will have and your cargoes, my boys,
And your body I'll cast in the sea."

And when this reached King Henry's throne,
The man that wore the crown,
To think that three of his vessels were lost
And all of his merry men drowned.

"Oh, build a ship," cried King Henry,
"Oh, build it safe and sure.
If Elder Bordee you do not bring me,
My life I'll no longer endure."

They built a ship both safe and sure,
As you will understand,
And Captain Charles Stewart they put on board
To take the bold command.

He had not sailed one day, two, nor three,
'Fore three vessels he did espy
A-sailing far off and a-sailing far on,
And at length they came sailing close by.

"Who's there? Who's there?" cried Captain Charles
Stewart,
Who's there that's sailing so nigh?"
"We're three bold robbers from merry Scotland
And, if no offense, let us pass by."

"No, no, no, no," cried Captain Charles Stewart,
"No, no, that never can be.
Your ships I will have and your cargoes, my boys,
And your bodies I'll carry with me."

Broadside to broadside, they sailed right up
And, oh, how the cannons did roar;
They took Elder Bordee and his whole company
To the land of old England's shore.

They took Elder Bordee and his whole company
To the land of old England's shore.

Side II; Band 12. DERBY RAM

"The Derby Ram" is probably one of the most popular examples of unabashed hyperbole in traditional song. Its appeal in this country is widespread, judging from its inclusion in the many collections. It is unfortunate, in a sense, that some of the very elements of its appeal, namely those verses with more or less ribald overtones, are frequently deleted in publication.

Lawrence's version was learned from his father and was popular in the community. The third and fourth verses are relatively uncommon and the chorus, which is similar to that of the SHARP "B" text, is also somewhat atypical.

See: BREWSTER, BROWN, CHASE, EDDY, HENRY, RANDOLPH, SHARP.

As I went down to Derby, sir,
All on a market day,
Saw the biggest ram, sir,
That ever did feed on hay.

He did ramble, ramble,
He did ramble till the butcher cut him down.

The horns upon that ram, sir,
They reached up to the sky;
Eagle built its nest up there,
You could hear the young ones cry.

The wool upon that ram, sir,
Hung down to the ground;
Devil took a lock of it
To make his wife a gown.

The man that killed that ram, sir,
Feared for his life;
He sent to Philadelphiay
To get a ten-foot knife.

The man that killed that ram, sir,
Was washed away in the flood
And the little boy that held the bowl
Was drownded in the blood.

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