

"Traditional English Love Songs"

sung by

HARRY COX

Recorded and edited by Peter Kennedy

Notes by Peter Kennedy and Francis Collinson

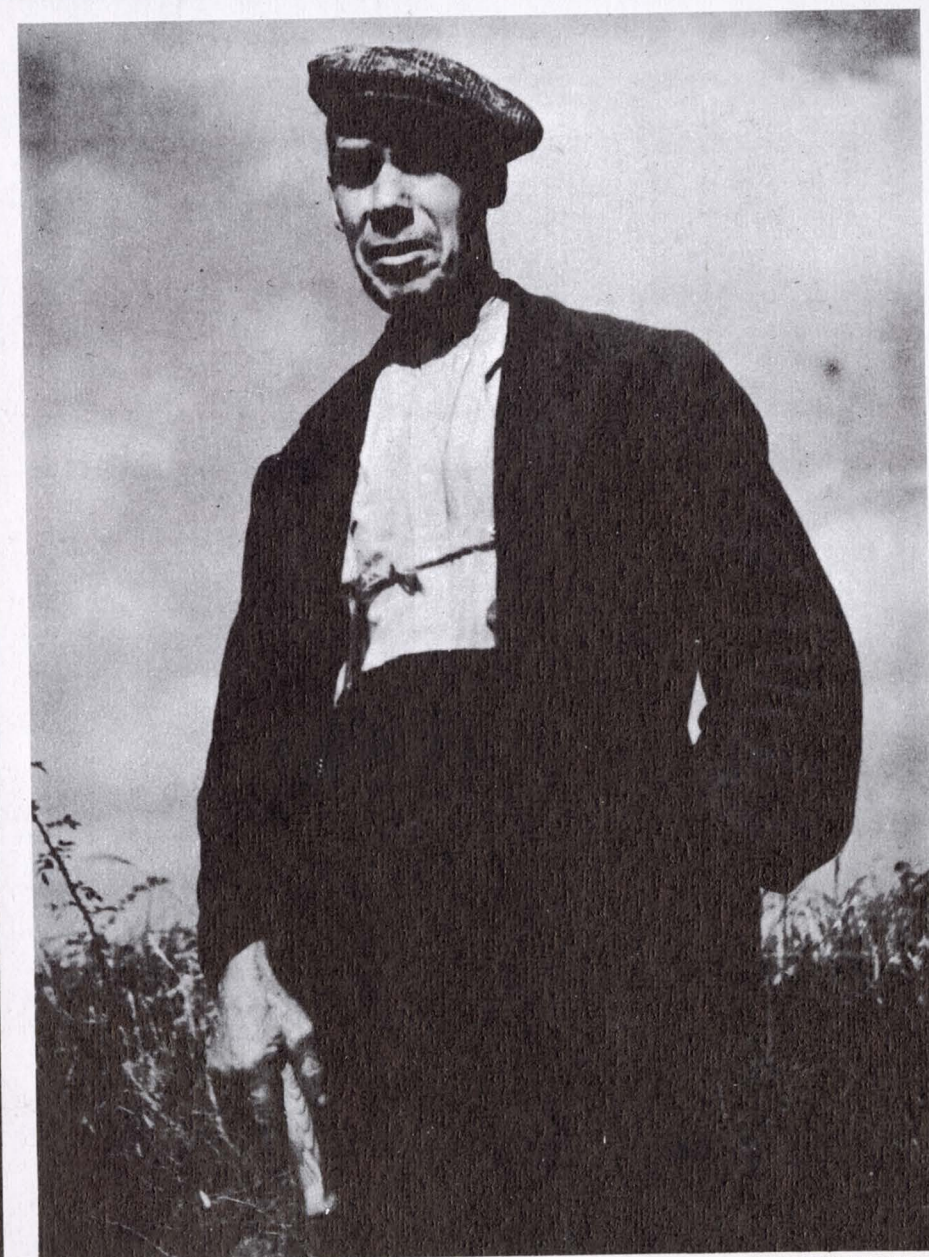


PHOTO BY PETER KENNEDY

Side 1:

SEVENTEEN COME SUNDAY
THE SPOTTED COW
NEXT MONDAY MORNING
THE GREASY COOK
COLIN AND PHOEBE
THE BIRMINGHAM MAN
A WEEK OF MATRIMONY

Side 2:

THE BONNY LABOURING BOY
THE FEMALE DRUMMER
THE SQUIRE AND THE GYPSY
MARROWBONES
THE GROGGY OLD TAILOR
UP TO THE RIGS OF LONDON
THE OLD GERMAN MUSICIANER



FOLK-LEGACY RECORDS, INC. SHARON, CONNECTICUT



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Harry Fred Fox was born on October 10, 1885, at Barton Turf, near Yarmouth, Norfolk. Now a widower and a retired farm worker, he lives with his married daughter at Catfield. He was thirty-five when he first sang to the composer, the late E. J. Moeran, with a number of other traditional singers in the Hickling and Barton area.

About his family and working life, Harry Cox says: "I was born at Barton, and my father was born there. Grandfather, he was a farm worker same as I am, but my father he took up a different life. He got sick of farm work and he took off to sea when he was a young man, and he had a good many years at it. He was short, thick and strong, very tough sort of a kid he'd been, a sort of fighting man in his time. Been through several 'batters,' gunning, poacher, old hares and things. He'd been through all that, do anything, wasn't afraid of anything night or day.

"We were a family of thirteen, father came out of thirteen, too. We used to eat turnips sometimes, had to get what you could. I'm like my uncle: 'Seen more dinner times than I've seen dinners'; that's what he used to tell us. I have been hungry. My mother used to say, 'Eat that and your two elbows, there's no more.' That was the kind of way they used to go on when we were young. Bread and lard very often, and I was getting old before I see anything like butter—didn't know what butter was.

"I've done all farm work, anything put before me. As soon as I could do anything at all I took to stock-feeding. I took delight in feeding cattle. I fed sometimes seven months at a stretch, Sundays and all, no rest, never had a holiday, nowhere to go. All I used to do then, of a night, when I got home, was to get round the fire and have a song or two. Something to cheer yourself up, that was all the frolic we had. I always took delight in all I done, and if you don't do that you never get anywhere. And I used to think I was as good as the next, never afraid of anyone or anything, not on the job, that's the life I had. I'm quite satisfied with life, I never crave for anything else. I'm happy."

Regarding his singing, Francis Collinson says: "As a stylist, Harry Cox must surely stand possessed of a more complete range of the traditional singer's technique and artistic devices than anyone in England today—his command of melodic decoration, his power of varying the melody from verse to verse often in sympathy with the meaning of the words and the rise and fall of their prosody; the characteristic tenutos, the folk singer's uninhibited tonal modification of the scalar intervals according to the context and direction of the melody, and finally the singing with closed eyes, completely wrapt in the mood of the song—I have not seen these things equalled anywhere except amongst the older Gaelic singers of the Hebrides.

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FSB-20



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FOLK-LEGACY RECORDS, INC.

SHARON, CONNECTICUT 06069

Produced by the same

and by

HARRY COX

Produced and edited by

Peter Kennedy

Directed by Peter Kennedy

and Patrick Collinson

1980-81



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HARRY COX

Harry Fred Cox was born on October 10th, 1885, at Barton Turf, near Yarmouth, Norfolk, England. Now a widower and a retired farm worker he lives with his married daughter at Catfield. He was thirty-five when he first sang to the composer, the late E. J. Moeran, with a number of other traditional singers in the Hickling and Barton area, and some of his songs were published in the Folk Song Journals of 1922 and 1931. In the 1930's he made a record for the English Folk Dance and Song Society containing the songs "Down by the Riverside" ("The Bold Fisherman") and "The Pretty Ploughboy". In 1942 he was visited by Francis Collinson who was then collecting material for the Country Magazine broadcasts, and three years later he took part in one of a number of East Anglian public-house recordings made by Mr. Moeran in conjunction with the B.B.C. Three of his songs were contributed to the Journal of 1946 by Mr. Collinson, and two of them were subsequently arranged and published, with others, in Songs from the Countryside (1946) and Folk Songs from "Country Magazine" (1952).

Naturally Harry Cox was included in the B.B.C.'s Folk Music Recording Scheme and I recorded several songs when I was sent by the B.B.C. to East Anglia in the autumn of 1953, and again in 1956. His version of "The Foggy Dew" is now widely known since its inclusion on the H.M.V. records "Folk Songs Today" and "The Barley Mow".

At the first hearing of Harry Cox you may remark on the "dry" impersonality and monotony of his style; for many of us in the Society it has taken five, ten or even twenty years to appreciate the subtleties of his performances. How impressed you may be, at first, with the tricks and dramatic effects of a concert singer of folk songs, but how soon tire of repeat performances! With a traditional singer of Harry Cox's calibre the process is reversed. Each time you hear him the songs grow on you, for he presents them with complete selflessness and sincerity. To watch him, with his eyes closed or looking into the distance beyond the company, you realize that he is living the story of each song. Contrary to what so many have said of traditional singers he is, in fact, giving an artistic performance into which he pours as much, if not more nervous energy than the best stage singers. Each song is imbued, however, with the same dry cynicism as when he tells a story or speaks about his family background and hard-working country life, as in the narrative which follows.

Peter Kennedy

About his family and working life HARRY COX says:

"I was born at Barton, and my father was born there. I was always told his father, where he come from, so they say,

he was born in a cave somewhere — I don't know where, I never could trace him. I knew him, but not a lot; he was a singer and a dancer. He went to a proper dancing school when he was young. He could dance, my old grandfather could; he was a real tap dancer. They trained 'em that time of day. He went in for that, he was a singer of old songs; a lot they came down from him.

"Grandfather, he was a farm worker same as I am, but my father he took up a different life. He got sick of farm work and he took off to sea when he was a young man, and he had a good many years at it. (Father's been dead thirty-five years and he was ninety-two when he died.) He went to sea as a boy, and when he first went they never came back to Yarmouth except at Christmas time — the boat lay outside the harbour and the fish was ferried in, and then off they go again. They were blowing about out there perhaps for a week and not getting anywhere. I've heard him say he'd be standing there his eyes full of salt, all open on the deck, nowhere to get in under — just had to take it, ton of water over the top of 'em, smothered head to foot. That was the life. He was short, thick and strong, very tough sort of kid he'd been, a sort of fighting man in his time. Been through several 'batters', gunning, poacher, old hares and things. He'd been through all that, do anything, wasn't afraid of anything night or day, he didn't care. He used to leave his old hares in the churchyard and they were safe there till he came back. They daresn't go in, they were afraid of seeing things about there.

"We were a family of thirteen, father came out of thirteen, too. We used to eat turnips sometimes, had to get what you could. Well, you never got only ten shillings a week, that was a labourer's money, you just got what you could get. I'm like my uncle: 'Seen more dinner times than I've seen dinners'; that's what he used to tell us. I have been hungry. We used to have it 'lotted out to us. My mother used to say, 'Eat that and your two elbows, there's no more'. That's what we used to get, you know you couldn't eat your elbows. That was the kind of way they used to go on when we were young. Bread and lard very often, and I was getting old before I see anything like butter — didn't know what butter was.

"My mother (Sarah Nobbs) belonged Smallborough. She used to have to work to find us things to wear. She done a lot, else we shan't be where we are now. My mother earned as much as he did on the farm, she used to be a-going all the year long. My mother had thirteen in our family and four died, and that left nine, three boys lived and the rest were girls. I used to go along with my father everywhere, I was his boy.

"I went to school until I was thirteen. I never learnt nothing. I've learnt more since I left than ever I done there, I learnt better by myself. I think if I'd be going there now

I don't think I'd know'd nothing. I got half a crown a week when I first began work and I was about seventeen before I got nine and sixpence; I've done as much then as I've done since, in a week. You paid seven shillings for your board and then you had the rest. I don't think I ever had a suit of clothes; odd things, anything, you had to wear. Lot of 'em used to wear 'second slops'.

"I've done all farm work, anything put before me. As soon as I could do anything at all I took to stock-feeding. I took delight in feeding cattle. I fed sometimes seven months at a stretch, Sundays and all, no rest, never had a holiday, nowhere to go. All I used to do then, of a night, when I got home, was to get round the fire and have a song or two. Something to cheer yourself up, that was all the frolic we had.

"Well then, the next big job you'd come into, there'd be hoeing to do. You'd have another two or three months of hoeing, roots. Carry on at that, happy enough, getting in a gang, have a club, have a gallon of beer, happy as the birds in the wood. We didn't know anything else, we were all alike, jog along through that time of the year. When you'd got through, then you'd know the next job what's coming on; you'd get your scything out, hay and corn, mowing all day long. I always did like an old scythe. Half past five in the morning until eight at nights.

"Hoeing, mowing, tying-up; you used to have to tie it up with your hands then; nothing come and picked it up like they do now. Used to think nothing of it, you'd take delight in it. I liked tying up corn, I used to tie it up as quick as the next one. I was never afraid of anyone on that job, I could do that as quick as lightning. I took delight in the job, I don't care what it is. I don't mind tying up faggots, wood-cutting. I take delight in anything where a hook is concerned, anything where there's hooking, chopping or cutting wood or anything.

"I've served my time in thatching, I don't suppose I'll do any more. I like braiding, I used to braid a lot, plaiting, mats and things. I always took delight in all I done, and if you don't do that you never get anywhere. And I used to think I was as good as the next, never was afraid of anyone or anything, not on the job, that's the life I had. I'm quite satisfied with life, I never crave for anything else. I'm happy."

On learning his songs:

"I learnt off my father, he used to sing these old songs. He'd sing all night and knew more songs than I ever shall. Father learnt his songs at sea. When he heard a song he liked he got them to learn him it, asked 'em to keep singing tham over to him till he got it. Sometimes he'd give people a couple of shillings to keep reading over a new one, keep reading

till he'd picked it up, that's how he learnt them.

"I used to go everywhere along of him. He used to play the fiddle at nights, up at 'The White Horse'. I used to go along of him and sit on the window-board, back of him — 'a little old customer' I was. He used to play there every Saturday night, he used to get a shilling for his time. If he could gather another one that would sort of add a little more to it, to go round. They used to allow him a pint or two of beer. He used to go there and draw the custom. Of course if there was music there, that time of day, the people would stop there in these pubs.

"He used to play so many tunes, I didn't know him to have a name for any of them — 'The Yarmouth Hornpipe', things like that. I used to get my feet down between other people's backs, I weren't an annoyance to anyone. I heard all sorts of things. I heard 'em singing songs right from little. If there's anyone singing these old songs I'd sit there for a week. My ears were open.

"The first pub I started singing I was about eleven, went on with my father. They kidded me up to singing there, sung two or three of my 'piece songs', I made a gathering, went round with the hat, I got a few pennies, copper or two, not a lot, but I got some at any rate. I gradually got worked into it and I grew older and I used to go to these 'ere pubs and they would never let me earn a rest. 'Give us a song', always that. I like when you're in company to have a go on some of them.

"Up to the present I ain't forgot anything yet, I got a good memory. I don't forget, I mean I ain't lost nothing. I have been mixed up sometimes for just one line but you go out of doors that'll come to you, nobody can tell you. I like old songs. I wouldn't listen to a song like they make today — never pick up one to learn, 'cause there ain't one worth it, not to my knowledge, they're out of my line, and they can do what they like but they can't sing a song not where there's sense in it, not like I can."

A REMINISCENCE
by Francis Collinson

It was in the spring of 1942 that I first met Harry Cox. The B.B.C. had asked me to go down and see him (I remember they described him as 'a gold-mine of folk song by the name of Harry Cox') and to try to note down from him a few songs which could be used in a new series of country programmes with which I was to be musically concerned — for the next thirteen years, though I did not know it then!

It was war-time and the district of Potter Heigham and Catfield where Harry Cox lived was in the midst of the secret air-fields from which the R.A.F. were mounting their strategic bomber offensive, and was hedged round by the strictest of security precautions. I had first, therefore, to persuade the local police, Home Guard, and not the least the vigilantly patriotic habitués of the bar parlour of the inn at Catfield that I was not an enemy agent before I was allowed to walk the mile or so along the road, which at one point skirted one of the air-fields, to Harry Cox's pleasing little flower-surrounded house of 'Sunnyside'.

I found Harry Cox at home and willing to sing for me. He was tall, rather spare, extremely lithe and active looking, and he wore a sailor's blue jersey. He might have been of any age in the early to middle forties. (I was quite astounded to learn subsequently that he was then nearer sixty than fifty.)

For his own good reasons he preferred not to sing folk songs in his own house. I suggested that we might walk back to the inn where a singer's thirst might be conveniently slaked as the need arose, but he chose instead to sing in his wood- and farm-worker's implement shed at the back of the house. He did, however, allow me to borrow his bicycle and take a half-gallon stone-ware jar to the village to be filled with cider. (Has anyone ever tried to ride a bicycle along a bumpy country lane and across a railway line with a half-gallon stone 'pig' full of cider in one hand?)

It was, of course, before the days of tape-recorders, and unless one had a phonograph and wax cylinders (both cumbersome and fragile) the only way to collect folk songs then was to write them down as the singer sang them. With the airs of Harry Cox's songs this was a task reasonable enough for a musician; but to comprehend the words, sung in his broadest of Norfolk dialects, the like of which I had never heard before, was quite another matter, and was in fact almost completely beyond me. In the end we made the compromise that I would write down the tune and he would get his daughter to write out the words and send them to me.

As far as I remember I wrote down from him at that first meeting about a dozen songs, including the lilting "Bonny Labouring Boy", his glorious five-beats-in-the-bar melody of "The Bold Fisherman" and the powerfully dramatic hanging-ballad of "Newlyn Town".

It was on this occasion that Harry told me the story of how his father, also a great folk singer, had once counted the number of songs he knew by cutting a notch in the handle of his hoe as he sang each one; and when he had sung them all he found that he had cut a hundred and five notches!

This visit was the first of many; indeed, for some years afterwards I made a point of trying to go and visit Harry Cox once during the year. In the end I must have noted fully sixty songs; and always his daughter kindly and industriously copied out the words — some of them extending to several pages of notepaper — and sent them to me.

As a stylist, Harry Cox must surely stand possessed of a more complete range of the traditional singers' technique and artistic devices than anyone in England today — his command of melodic decoration, his power of varying the melody from verse to verse often in dramatic sympathy with the meaning of the words and the rise and fall of their prosody; the characteristic tenutos, the folk singer's uninhibited tonal modification of the scalar intervals according to the context and direction of the melody, and finally the singing with closed eyes, completely wrapt in the mood of the song — I have not seen these things equalled anywhere except amongst the older Gaelic singers of the Hebrides.

THE SONGS

Side I; Band 1. SEVENTEEN COME SUNDAY

Harry learned this version from Charlie Chettleburgh of Sutton, Norfolk. The tune is similar to the one collected by Cecil Sharp in Somerset which was used in Vaughan Williams' "Folk Song Suite". Sharp had to "soften" the words slightly when he published them, but Baring-Gould was constrained to publish a re-written text. The song is known in Ireland and Scotland (a Lowland Scots version has a chorus "With my roving/rolling eye"), and is very widespread in England. Verse two is sometimes sung as the refrain in Southern England.

As I walked out one May morning,
One May morning so early,
I overtook a fair young maid
Just as the day was dawning.

With my doo-rum-a-da,
Fal-the-riddle-a,
Fal-the-ral-liddle-i-o.

Her shoes were black, her stockings white
And her buckles shone like silver,
She had a dark and a rolling eye
And her hair hung down her back.

"Oh, how old are you, my pretty fair maid?
How old are you, my honey?"
She answered me, quite cheerfully,
"I'm seventeen come Sunday."

I said, "My dear, can you love me?
Can you love me, my honey?"
She answered me, quite cheerfully,
"I dare not for my mammy.

"If you come round to my mammy's house
When the moon shines bright and clearly,
I will come down and let you in
So my mammy shall not hear you."

I did go down to her mammy's house
As the moon shone bright and clearly;
She did come down and let me in
And she laid in my arms till the morning.

I said, "My dear, will you marry me?
It's now your chance, nor never,
And if you do not marry me
Then I'm undone forever."

"The pipes and drums are my delight
As through the woods we ramble;
The pipes and drums are my delight
And I'm happy with my soldier."

Side I; Band 2. THE SPOTTED COW

This is the perfect model of what the tourist might expect of an English country song (!) and therefore a great favourite among printers of chapbooks, garlands and broadsides. Single versions have been collected in the north, south, east and west of England, but it is not widespread.

One morning in the month of May
As from my cott I strayed,
Just at the dawning of the day
I met with a charming maid.

"My pretty maid, now whither you stray
So early, tell me now."
The maid replied, "Kind sir," she cried,
"I have lost my spotted cow."

"So, no longer weep, no longer mourn,
Your cow is not lost, my dear.
I saw her down in yonder grove;
Come, love, and I'll show you where."

"Oh, I must confess you're very kind,
Very kind," said she.
"It's there you're sure the cow to find;
Come, sweetheart, walk with me."

So, if I should cross the farmer's glen
Or go and view the plough,
She'd come and call the gentle swain,
"I have lost my spotted cow."

Side I; Band 3. NEXT MONDAY MORNING

This song has been collected in a number of different localities in England and Ireland. Cecil Sharp published a tuneful English version under the title "The Sign of the Bonny Blue Bell" and encountered one version in Tennessee while collecting in the Southern Appalachians.

As I was a-walking one morning in Spring,
I heard a fair damsel so sweetly did sing
As she was a-milking, when this she did sing:
"I'm going to get married next Monday morning."

"Oh, where is your dwelling, fair maid?" I recall.
"I dwell in yon house; I'm the fairest of all.
I dwell in yon cott at the foot of yon hill
And I'm going to get married next Monday morning."

"Oh, fifteen years old is too young for to marry;
A year or two longer I'll have you now tarry.
For young men are false, their vows to fulfil,
So put off your wedding next Monday morning."

"Oh, you talk like a man without sense, without
skill;
Three years I've now tarried against my own will.
I have made a vow that I mean to fulfil;
I'm going to get married next Monday morning."

"So, next Sunday night I mean to prepare,
To comb out my locks and to curl up my hair,
And six pretty maids, so neat and so trim,
Shall dance at my wedding next Monday morning."

"So, next Monday night when I go to bed,
So close to my true-love I will lay my head.
If a maid I remain when I rise again,
I shall wish I shall never have seen Monday morning."

"Now, my husband he gave me two far finer things;
Two precious jewels give me adorning.
So, I shall be his bride next Monday morning."
(title spoken at end)

Side I; Band 4. THE GREASY COOK

Harry learned this from his father. This theme of master returning to discover a concealed male lover, perhaps more

typical of French folk song, is very popular in Southern England. Harry Cox does not include the first verse which is found in other versions:

"It's a pity you should tease me so
Or tempt me for to sing;
You know it never lay within my power
To do such a mortal thing.
But, since that you do plague me so,
I'll see what I can do,
And when I come to the chorus,
You must all help me, too."

I fell in love with a greasy cook
And that I can't deny;
I fell in love with a greasy cook
And I'll tell you the reason why.
(repeats last line)

Plum-pudding, roast beef, but plenty
Plum-pudding and roast beef;
And when my belly was empty
She would give to me relief.

I kindly was invited
Some supper for to take,
And kindly did accept it
All for my stomach's sake.

Now, after teas was over,
The cupboard she got the keys;
One pocket she crammed with butter
And the other she crammed with cheese.

Her master, smelling of the cheese,
Came rap-tap at the door;
I had nowhere to hide my face,
But up the chimney crawled.

I had not been sitting there very long,
A-sitting at my ease;
The fire melted my butter
And likewise toasted my cheese.

Every drop that fell in the fire
It caused the old fire to rear.
The old woman looked up at the chimney top
And (she) swore the old devil was there.

Her master got to the chimney top,
A bucket of water let fall,
And I came tumbling after,
My butter and cheese and all.

The dogs they barked, the children screamed;
Up flew the windows all.
The old woman cried out, "Well done! Well done!
There go butter and cheese and all!"

Side I; Band 5. COLIN AND PHOEBE

The Vauxhall Gardens version of this song was called "Corydon and Phoebe". Harry Cox is certainly a repository of this type of English broadside and frequently, after singing such a song, will remark, "Now that's what I call a song!"

"Well, well, dearest Phoebe, and why in such haste?
Through fields and through meadows all day have I chased,
In search of the fair one who does me disdain,
And who will reward me for all my past pain."

"Go, go, boldest Colin; how dare you be seen
With a burden like me and not scarcely sixteen.
To be seen with the fair one, I am so afraid
That the world would soon call me no longer a maid."

"Never mind what the world say, for it all proves a lie.
We are not all alone, there's that couple hard by.
Let them judge of our actions; be you cheerful, my dear,
For no harm is intended to my Phoebe, I'll swear."

"Say, say, boldest Colin, and say what you will;
You may swear, lie and flatter, and prove your best skill,
And before I will be conquered, I will let you to know,
That I will die a virgin. So, I pray, let me go."

"Come, come, dearest Phoebe, such thoughts I now have;
I come here to see if tomorrow you'd wed.
So, since you so slighted me, I will bid you adieu,
And will go and seek some other girl more kinder than you."

"Stay, stay, dearest Colin, just one moment stay;
I will venture to wed, if you mean what you say.
Let tomorrow first come, love, and in church you will find
That the girl you thought cruel will always prove kind."

Side I; Band 6. THE BIRMINGHAM MAN

Although Harry sings "Burningham", he explains that he is not sure whether it shouldn't be a local place called "Burnham" (i.e. Burnham-on-Crouch). Broadside and other versions call it "Birmingham". A Dorset version has "Man of Dover". The last two verses of Harry's version are consistently sung in what would appear to be the reverse order. A broadside in the Sharp collection titles this song "The Merry Jilt".

In Birmingham town there lived a man,
And he had such a lovely wife;
And so dearly she loved company,
As dearly as she loved her life, boys, life,
As dearly as she loved her life.

And this poor man he goes to sea
His living for to get;
And where he spent one penny, she spent two,
And it's all for the wants of wit.

When this poor man came home from sea,
It being late in the night;
Enquiring for his own dear wife,
Was his joy and his heart's delight.

"Oh, she's just gone to her sister's home.
Shall I go fetch her in?"
Saying, "Oh, my dear, I will go myself
And ask myself to drink."

As he was a-going along the road
He heard such a dis-a-mal noise,
And who should it be but his own dear wife
Along with the Birmingham boys.

So this poor man stood thinking;
His heart was nearly broke.
Then he went back and sent the maid
While he prepared a rope.

Then she came jumping, skipping in,
Gave him such a joyful kiss;
Saying, "You're welcome home, kind husband, dear;
Long time you have been missed."

"So, we'll bar the door so neat and snug,
And let us go to bed,
For the pain that do lay in my breast
I can no longer rest."

So, he took a stick and he beat her so,
Till she was wonderful sore.
"Oh, forbear, forbear," she cried, "husband dear;
I'll never do so no more."

"For if you do, I'll make you rue
And curse the hour we're born;
For deceiving of your husband dear,
I'll make you wear the horns."

So, come all you women of Birmingham
And listen unto me,
And don't you spend your money a-waste
When your husband is on the sea.

Side I; Band 7. BETSY, THE SERVANT MAID
(Mistitled "A Week of Matrimony" on disc and jacket)

Harry Cox says, "That's what I call a song. That song has been in my family over two hundred year ago. My old grandfa' sung that. That's a good song; it's a long song. Yes, I know people be sent off to America when they'd be a-getting too thick. I know'd things to happen like that, in my time, where they thinks she weren't good enough for him. Cleared her out. That's almost like in the Slave times!" Although widely circulated on printed broadsheets, and reported from more than half a dozen singers in the United States and Canada, Harry is the only English traditional singer from whom the song has been collected. Two variants, printed in the Journal of American Folklore, December, 1899, were in oral circulation in Massachusetts around 1800.

A thresher's daughter living near,
When shocking news you soon shall hear,
When up to London she did go
To seek for service, as you shall know.

She went till she came to a Squire's hall
And there she did both knock and call.
"I hear you want a servant," she said,
"And I am Betsy, the servant maid."

This squire had one only son
And Betsy's heart so soon he won;
And Betsy, being so blithe and fair,
Soon drew his heart into a snare.

On Sunday evenings he took his time,
Unto sweet Betsy he told his mind.
He swore, by oaths and powers above,
"It is you, sweet Betsy, it is you I love."

The old woman, hearing her son say so,
It filled her mind with grief and woe.
"We must contrive — send her away
For to be a slave in Amerikee."

On Monday morning madam arose.
"Betsy, Betsy, pack up your clothes,
For I am going some friends to see
And no one but Betsy shall go with me."

They went till they came to a seaport town
Where ships were sailing up and down.
A boat was hailed, and in she went,
And the poor girl sai-ed with a discontent.

A few days later the old woman returned.
"Oh, you're welcome home, Mother," cried her son.
"You're welcome home, Mother, on every side,
But where is Betsy, the servant maid?"

"Oh, son, oh, son, oh, son," said she,
"Your chief delight is on the sea.
I would rather see my son lay dead
Than you should wed with the servant maid."

A few days later, her son fell sick;
So sick in bed, so sad was he,
Nothing would cure him that could be tried.
He called for Betsy and then he died.

The old woman, seeing her son laid dead,
She wrang her hands and tore her head.
"If I could see my son rise again,
I would send for Betsy across the main."

Side II; Band 1. THE BONNY LABOURING BOY

One of the most common songs on the early nineteenth century ballad sheets, versions have been collected in Southern England. One American version has been published by Gardner and Chickering in Ballads and Songs of Southern Michigan (Ann Arbor, 1939) and Edith Fowke has recently collected a version in Ontario, Canada. The sixth verse is sometimes sung as a refrain.

As I strolled out one morning,
All in the bloom of Spring,
I heard a lovely maid complain
And griev-i-ous did she sing.
How cruel were her parents,
They did her so annoy,
And they would not let her marry
The bonny labouring boy.

Young Johnny was her true love's name,
As you may plainly see.
Her parents they employed him
The labouring boy to be,
To harrow, plough and sow the seed
Upon her father's land;
And soon she fell in love with him,
As you may understand.

She courted him for twelve long months,
But little did she know
That her cruel parents
Did prove her overthrow.
They watched them close one evening,
Down in a shady grove,
A-pleading their joys together
In the constant bonds of love.

Her father stepped up to her
And took her by the hand;
He swore he'd send young Johnny
Unto some foreign land.
He locked her up in her bedroom,
Her comfort to annoy,
And he kep' her there to weep and mourn
For her bonny labouring boy.

Her mother came next morning
And unto her did say,
"Your father he is intend not
To see you thrown away."
So boldly she made answer,
Unto her did reply,
"It's single I will still remain
For my bonny labouring boy.

"His cheeks are like the roses red,
His eyes are black as sloes;
He's mild in his behaviour,
Wherever he may go.
He's manly, neat and handsome,
His skin as white as snow.
For the sake of my parents' malice,
With my labouring boy will go."

So, come fill your glasses to the brim
And let them go merrily round.
Here's health to every labouring boy
That plough and till the ground.
For when his work is over
It's home he goes with joy;
Then happy is the girl who gets
The bonny labouring boy.

Side II; Band 2. THE FEMALE DRUMMER

There are two distinct "Female Drummer" songs printed on English broadsides, each with the same theme. It has also been collected in Northern Ireland and in Northeast Scotland. Just as there is an English song about a female cabin boy, so here is one about a female drummer boy, the soldier's wishful

thinking! There are many other English traditional songs in which young girls disguise themselves as soldiers to fight for the Queen. Usually it is to seek their serving true-loves and to test their sexual fidelity.

I'm going to be a soldier,
In uniform quite new,
And, if they let me have a drum,
I'll be a drummer, too,
To rush into the battlefield
With a broadsword in my hand,
To hear the cannons rattle
and the music sound so grand.
The music sound so grand,
The music sound so grand,
To hear the cannons rattle
And the music sound so grand.

When I was a young girl,
The age of sixteen,
From my home I ran away
To go and serve the Queen.
The officer who enlisted me
Said, "You are a nice young man.
I think you'd make a drummer, so
Just step this way, young man."

They led me to my office
And lit me up to bed,
But laying by a soldier's side
I never felt afraid.
Pulling off my old red coat,
I oftentimes used to smile
To think myself a drummer,
Yet a female all the while.

My waist, long and slender,
And fingers long and small,
So, very soon they taught me
How to play the best of all.
I played all on my kettle-drum
As other drummers played,
I played all on my kettle drum,
And I'll beat the drum again.

They sent me up to London
To be guard o'er the Tower;
And there I might have been until
This very day and hour.
A young girl fell in love with me;
She said I was a maid.
She went straightway to my officer,
My sec-e-ret betrayed.

My officer he sent for me,
To hear if this was true.
And I, all for to be to him
A tale already new.
"Here's a pension for your reward,"
He smiling, as he said,
"It's a pity we should lose you,
Such a drummer as you've made."

So, fare you well, my officer,
You have been kind to me.
Fare you well, my comrades,
You ne'er forgot shall be.
Should the British Army
Fall short of any man,
I'll put on my hat and feather
And I'll beat the drum again.

Side II; Band 3. THE SQUIRE AND THE GYPSY

There are a number of songs about Squires falling in love with dark gypsy girls and about ladies of high degree going off with dark-eyed gypsies. This is probably only the first three verses of what may have been a longer ballad, but it might appear to strike a more prudent note, implying that each should stick to his particular station; however, no doubt in the end she rode in his carriage!

One Spring morning early
A young Squire was straying
Over the beauty that nature gave birth.
The old folks were blown far,
The young ones were playing,
And there he beheld such a dark gypsy lass.
Struck with such beauty,
He seemed most delighted;
He forgot his descending and family pride.
But, let her be what she may,
Either wealthy or lowly,
He swore by the powers he would make her his bride.

Now here's to your horses,
Your carriage and splendours,
Here's to your horses in green wooded dells.
Behind the campfires
Two bright eyes were shining,
And that's where he first saw his own gypay girl.
"Say with me now,
In a few months I will marry you.
The smoke shall be your descending and shall be
your guide."
"May I tell your fortune?"
"My dearie, I know it.
The fortune I crave for is you for my bride."

"Do you wish to insult me
 By your grand proposal?
 Do you wish a poor girl in misery be seen?"
 "Through dirt and through mires,
 And I am light-hearted,
 You may ride upon my mead that stands on the green."
 "I'm a poor gypsy girl
 And you a Squire."
 "With wealth and great beauty, it is your command.
 And there's more honest such
 In the poor and the lowly
 Than all those proud ladies that walks through our
 land."

Side II; Band 4. MARROWBONES

American versions of this song were published under the
 over-all title of "The Rich Old Lady". A Scots version col-
 lected by Gavin Greig is called "The Wily Auld Carle" and in
 Ireland it is often known as "The Blind Man He Can See". Ev-
 erywhere a similar story, but a different title! This is a
 very wide-spread song in many different forms. Folk-Legacy
 has recorded two other versions — one from New York (FSA-15)
 and one from Ontario, Canada (FSC-10).

There was an old woman in Yorkshire,
 In Yorkshire she did dwell;
 She loved her husband dearly,
 And the lodger twice as well.
 Tiddly-whack, come diddle-um-day;
 Tooral-looral-day.

She sent for the doctor
 And ask him, oh, so kind,
 Which was the narrowest way
 To send her old husband blind.

He told her to get some marrowbones
 And scrape it fine and small;
 Rub it in the old man's eyes
 Till he can't see at all.

The old man said, "I'll go drown myself,
 For I can't see one mite."
 The old woman said, "Then I'll go with you,
 'Fraid you shouldn't go right."

So, arm in arm they went
 Until they came to the brim;
 The old man put his foot to one side,
 Popped the old woman in.

How the old woman did scream!
How the old woman did bawl!
The old man said, "I can't help you,
For I can't see at all."

She swam around and swam around
Until she came to the brim;
The old man got the linen prop
And pushed her further in.

So, now my song is ended
And I can't sing no more.
My old woman is drowned
And I am safe on shore.

Side II; Band 5. THE GROGGY OLD TAILOR

Harry learned this song from Charlie Chettleburgh of the neighboring village of Sutton. It also goes by the titles of "The Drover" or "The Game Cock". Like "The Greasy Cook" on Side I and the song "The Molecatcher", this has the "discovered lover" theme which is so popular with country singers in the Southern part of England.

In fair London town a damsel did dwell;
With her wit and her beauty, none could her excel.
Her wit and her beauty, none could her excel,
And her husband he was a bold drover.
Fal-the-ral-looral-i-day.

A groggy old tailor he liv-ed close by;
All on the fair damsel he cast a sly eye.
"Ten guineas I'll give if I can with you lay,
For your husband he is a bold drover."

The bargain was made and upstairs they did run.
They hopped into bed; soon the music begun.
They huddled, they cuddled; they both fell asleep
And they never once thought of the drover.

In the middle of the night the old drover returned
And he knocked at the door with the palm of his
hand.
"Oh, hide me! Oh, hide me!" the old tailor he
cried,
"For I hear the loud knock of the drover."

"There's a rustic old cupboard hangs over the door,
And it's there you can get in, so snug and secure.
Then I will go down and I'll undo the door
And I'll let in my husband, the drover."

She undone the door and her husband walked in.
With her kiss and her compliments, she welcomed
him in.

"Your kiss and your compliments, now, I don't
give a pin;
I will strike up a light," said the drover.

"Oh, husband, dear husband, there's no firestuff;
And if you come to bed, you'll be quite warm
enough."

"There's a rustic old cupboard hangs over the door,
And this night I will burn," said the drover.

"Oh, husband, dear husband, now grant my desire,
For the cupboard is too good to be burned by the
fire.

In it I've a game-cock I much so admire."

"Then I'll fight your game-cock," said the drover.

So, in half, the old cupboard went down on the
floor.

He kicked it, he knocked it, went o'er, o'er and
o'er,

Heels over lugs and right out of the door,
And away went the groggy old tailor.

He knocked the old cupboard well down on the floor;
He kicked it, he knocked it, went o'er, o'er and
o'er,

Heels over lugs and right out of the door,
And, "I've cooked your game-cock," said the drover.

Side II; Band 6. UP TO THE RIGS OF LONDON

Another song which is typical of Southern English bawdy
verse is this one in which the rakes get the better of the
London whores. There is double meaning in Harry Cox's ending
remark, "That's 'London Town'!"

As I walked London streets so gay,
In Cheapside I lost my way,
And a fair young maid I chanced to meet;
With kisses, oh, she did me treat.
I was up to the Rigs,
Down to the Jigs,
Up to the Rigs of London town.

She took me to a house of fame;
She asked me there what was my name,
And aloud for supper she did call.
She said, "Old man, you will pay for all.

Now, supper being over, the table cleared,
She called me her jewel, then her dear.
The chambermaids prepared for bed;
The waiters brought in white and red.

Now, it was the hour 'twixt one and two.
She asked me if to bed I'd go,
And so, very soon I gave consent
And straightway to my bed I went.

Now, she thought by me she'd work her will;
Times she frisk-ed, I laid still
And, as soon as she had got to sleep,
Out of bed I gently creep.

I searched her pockets and there I found
A silver ring and five hundred pounds.
I thought the gold looked very nice;
Said I to myself, "This'll buy a brush."

Now, you sharks and flats, wheresoever you be,
Mind you take advice by me,
And treat them well, whate'er betide,
But look out and keep well in Cheapside.

Side II; Band 7. THE OLD GERMAN MUSICIANER

Along with the sexual implication of the song "The Drummer Maid" and of songs like "The Nightingale" in which soldiers take out their fiddles, the English folksinger kept himself up to date with the importation of the German piano-forte. In a version of "The Banks of the Roses" the young man takes out a "German flute and plays a charming tune." As yet, no song had been collected about "an American organist."

I'm a poor married man and I'm near broken-hearted.
My wife she has left me and she's gone away.
We had a misfortune, so she and I parted;
Now I'll tell you what happened to her the other day.

Women are weak; they should mind their possessions.
I think, now, with grief; mad me it will send,
For she's gone away with a German Musicianer
Who goes about crying, "Pianos to mend."

Fol-the-rol, fol-the-rol, fol-the-rol laddie;
All sorts of tunes and things he could play.
"There's many a good tune played on an old fiddle,"

And this, to my wife, the old German did say.

It happened one day, this old German Musicianer
Came through our streets crying, "Pianos to mend."
My wife's piano being out of condition,
Straightway the boy for the old German did send.
He knocked at the door and he said, most politely,
"I think, ma'am, it's here you are needing repairs.
Please, ma'am, I've called to mend your piano."
"All right," said my wife, "will you please walk
upstairs?"

She took him upstairs, showed him her piano,
And with the old German seemed greatly amused.
And, when he had seen it, he said to my Hannah,
"I think, ma'am, your music's not very much use."
He touched it, he handled it both over and under,
Sharp as a needle and light as a cork.
With all sorts of tools he pulled it asunder
And rattled away with his old tuning fork.

When I came home she told me the story
And said the old German had been there all day.
He'd worked very hard to mend her piano
And, do what she would, he'd not taken her pay.
I thought it was strange when she told me the story
And said the old German was ever so kind.
Would ever you believe that this old German sausage,
Before going away, left his trade-mark behind?

I swore and I tore at my darling wife, Hannah;
With grief and with rage I'm sure no one can tell.
I told her to hoop (?) it and take her piano,
And likewise to take the old German as well.
So, come all young married men, don't take too much
spooning,
For all women want is to handle your pill.
So, if ever your wife's piano want(s) tuning,
Just take my tip. boys, and tune her yourself.

(title spoken at end)

FOLK-LEGACY RECORDS, INC., was established in 1961 by Lee B. Haggerty, Mary W. Haggerty and Sandy Paton. Although we will, from time to time, issue records of exceptional "interpreters" of traditional music and tales, our primary purpose is to make good field recordings of authentic traditional artists available to the general public. Collectors with tapes of such artists are urged to contact the company. For additional information and complete catalogs, write:

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Sharon, Connecticut 06069

It happened one day, that the doctor said to me,
"Come through and see me," I went to him,
my wife's hand being in his hand,
He said to me, "The boy has the old disease and is
in danger of his life and he will, most probably,
die. I think you had better go and see the doctor
at once, as he has called to see you."
"All right," said my wife, "Will you please tell
me?"

The next day, I went to the doctor and he said to me,
"The boy has the old disease and is in danger of his life
and he will, most probably, die. I think you had better
go and see the doctor at once, as he has called to see you."
I went to the doctor and he said to me, "The boy has the
old disease and is in danger of his life and he will, most
probably, die. I think you had better go and see the doctor
at once, as he has called to see you."

When I came home the boy was the same
and the doctor said to me, "The boy has the old disease
and is in danger of his life and he will, most probably,
die. I think you had better go and see the doctor at once,
as he has called to see you."
I went to the doctor and he said to me, "The boy has the
old disease and is in danger of his life and he will, most
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