

BROADSIDE BALLADS (LONDON: 1600-1700)

Volume Two: Female Frollicks and Politicke

SUNG BY EWAN MACCOLL

With accompaniments by: Peggy Seeger, guitar, banjo and autoharp
Alf Edwards, English concertina, ocarina and tabor
Alfie Kahn, piccolo, flute and tin whistle

THE ELECTION,
AN ENGRAVING FROM THE PICTURE BY HOGARTH

FOLKWAYS RECORDS FW 3044

COVER DESIGN BY RONALD CLYNE



SIDE I

THE FEMALE FROLICK
GIVE ME MY YELLOW ROSE
A KING AND NO KING

SIDE II

CONSTANCE OF CLEVELAND

BROADSIDE BALLADS (LONDON: 1600-1700)

DESCRIPTIVE NOTES ARE INSIDE POCKET

BROADSIDE BALLADS

London: (1600-1700)

sung by EWAN MacCOLL

Notes by EWAN MacCOLL

Vol. II

FOLKWAYS RECORDS Album # FW 3044

©1962 by Folkways Records & Service Corp., 121 W. 47th St. NYC USA



BROADSIDE BALLADS

The term 'Broadside Ballad' is here used to designate any song -- narrative or otherwise - which made its first appearance on the penny or half-penny sheets.

The songs which make up these two albums do not, for the most part, have much in common with the Traditional Ballads.

Professor Child has characterized the broadsides as "veritable dunghills", and for three hundred years contemptuous literary men have castigated the authors of these 'vile ballads'; and yet even the most awkward of their verses has its occasional flash of humour, its sudden, brief flicker of light, making the dead past live again for a moment. If our view of the past, occasioned by these momentary illuminations, is sometimes an oblique one, then it is none the less interesting on that account.

The broadsides flourished from 1500-1700, that is until the first cheap books began to make their appearance. By the beginning of the 18th century, the black-letter ballads had virtually disappeared. The white-letter productions, however, persisted until the mid-nineteenth century, and indeed, even today it is not unusual for one to be accosted in the

London streets by a 'soft touch man' who in return for a shilling will slip you an envelope containing a miniature photostat copy of a ballad dealing with the 'Loss of the Royal Sovereign' in World War II, or with the 'Sinking of the Scharnhorst'.

In the days before TV, radio and newspapers, the broadsides helped both to mould and reflect public opinion; their authors acted as political commentators, journalists, comic-strip writers, P.R. men for both parties, and for all those ambitious place-seekers who could afford to hire a pen.

That they were popular with the masses, no one can doubt; that they were unpopular with the establishment is born out by successive acts of legislation against 'pipers, fiddlers and minstrels' and by the many repressive laws directed against them both in England and Scotland.

In 1574 (in Scotland) they were again branded with the opprobrious title of vagabonds and threatened with severe penalties; and the regent Morton induced the Privy Council to issue an edict that "nane tak upon hand to emprint or sell whatsoever book, ballet, or other werk" without its being examined and licensed under pain of death and confiscation of goods.

In August 1579, two poets of Edinburgh, (William Turnbull, Schoolmaster and William Scot, notar, "baith weel belovit of the common people for their common offices") were hanged for writing a satirical ballad against the Earl of Morton, and in October of the same year, the Estates passed an act against beggars and "sic as make themselves fules and are bards... minstrels, sangsters, and tale-tellers, not avowed in special service by some of the lords of parliament or great burghs."

Seventy-five years later, Captain Bentham was appointed provost-marshal to the revolutionary army in England, with power to seize upon all ballad-singers, and five years after that date there were no more entries of ballads at Stationers' Hall.

The heat was still on a century later and in July 1763, we are told that "yesterday evening two women were sent to Bridewell by Lord Bute's order, for singing political ballads before his lordship's door in South Audley Street".

Even in the mid-nineteenth century the attacks on the ballad-mongers continued, though by this time the fraternity was somewhat reduced in size; yet it was still sufficiently large for the owners of factories and workshops like the Vulcan foundry of Newton-Le-Willows, Cheshire to deem it necessary to issue the following warning on a cast-iron notice board: TAKE NOTICE. PRIVATE PROPERTY. We do hereby caution all HAWKERS, RAG AND BONE DEALERS, BALLAD SINGERS & From trespassing on these premises. Any person or persons of the above description found hereon after this notice will be prosecuted with the utmost rigor of the LAW. VULCAN FOUNDRY MAY 1st. 1835.

They have departed now; it is no longer necessary for the authorities to brand "bardis and ballet-singers" on the cheek and scourge them through the streets. The descendents of Elderton, Deloney, Johnson, Munday and Martin Parker now work for the establishment, as the hired men of television, radio, the press and Tin Pan Alley; they have learned how to write without offending anybody or anything, except, occasionally, one's sense of the ridiculous.

The Accompaniments

The broadsides were, for the most part, sung on the streets and in the taverns of Britain's cities. If they had accompaniments at all, these would probably have been of a most rudimentary nature. To have presented them in these albums with the sophisticated virginals and lute would have been as incongruous as arranging the St. Louis Blues for the serpent and three Alpine horns. It is much more likely that instruments such as the pipe and tabor and fiddle were used. For this present recording we have made no attempt to provide "authentic" accompaniment. We have used instead the concertina, the guitar, the ocarina, flute, piccolo, tin whistle, autoharp, tabor and, for two songs, the banjo; all of them instruments which have been widely used by street singers of our own time.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

BALLAD OF TRADITION, THE, G.H. Gerould (Oxford University Press, 1932).

BALLADS AND SONGS, W.H. Logan, (William Paterson, Edinburgh, 1864).

BALLAD TREE, THE, E.K. Wells (New York, Ronald Press Co., 1950).

BLACK LETTER BALLADS AND BROADSIDES, (John Lilly, London, 1867).

CATALOGUE OF ENGLISH BROADSIDE BALLADS, (J.R. Smith, London, 1856).

COLLECTION OF OLD BALLADS, A, (London, 1723).

DANCING MASTER, THE, John Playford (reprint Hugh Mellor, London, 1933).

FOLK SONGS OF THE UPPER THAMES, Alfred Williams (Duckworth, London, 1923).

OLD BALLADS, Thomas Evans (R.H. Evans, London, 1810).

PEPYS BALLADS, THE, H.E. Rollins (Harvard University Press, Cambridge, Mass. 1929).

POPULAR MUSIC OF THE OLDEN TIME, W. Chappell (Chappell and Co., London).

RELIQUES OF ANCIENT ENGLISH POETRY, Thomas Percy (edition of Bickers and Son, London, 1876).





THE FEMALE FROLIC

Rollins sets the date of this very popular broadside ballad at "about 1690". It continued to be popular throughout the eighteenth century and Logan's 'Pedlar's Pack' includes a reprint of a stall copy bearing the date 1796. The Roaring Girls were favourite characters with the London street poets and at least one of these bobbed-hair bandits, Silva the female highwayman, has passed into the English tradition song repertoire.

From the Pepys collection.

OR: An Account of a young Gentlewoman, who went upon the Road to rob in Man's Cloaths, well mounted on a Mare, etc.

You Gallants of every Station,
Give ear to'a Frolicksome Song;
The like was ne'er seen in the Nation,
'Twas done by a Female so young.

She bought her a Mare and a Bridle,
A Saddle and Pistols also,
She resolved she would not be idle,
For upon the Pad she did go.

She Cloathed her self in great Splendor,
For Breeches and Sword she had on,
Her Body appear'd very slender;
She show'd like a pretty Young-man.

And then like a Padder so witty,
She mounted with speed on her Mare;
She left all her Friends in the City,
And steered her Course towards Ware.

The first that she met was a Grocer
Was walking with Cane in his Hand,

She soon to the Spark came up closer,
And boldly she bid him to stand.

She took from him but a Guinea,
And then met a Taylor with Shears,
And because the poor Rogue had no Money,
She genteely clipt of his Ears.

The next that she met was a Tanner.
For loss of his money he cry'd,
And because he bawled in this manner,
She handsomely tanned his Hide.

She rode about seven-miles farther,
And then a Stage Coach she did Rob;
The Passengers all cry'd out Murther:
But this was a Fifty-pound Jobb.

And then she robb'd a Welsh Miller,
She fac'd him and gave him the Word:
Hur Splutter'd, and swore hur would kill hur,
If that hur had got but hur Sword.

And then she came up with a Quaker,
She told him, she must have his Coin:
Quoth he, Thou silly Wise-acre
Thou shalt have no Money of mine.

She show'd him a Pistol to prove him;
He told her by Yea and by Nay,
That since the good Spirit did move him,
She might take his money away.

An Excise-man she then next accoasted,
And bid him Deliver with speed;
He often of Valour had boasted,
But he was a coward indeed.

She Rifled him then of his Money
Oh! This was a very rich Prize,
She took from him Four-score Guineys,
Which he had receiv'd for Excise.

The next that she met was a Padder,
Well mounted upon a bay Nag;
Oh! This made her so much the gladder,
She told him she wanted a bag.

He thought she would certainly fight him,
Prepared himself out of hand:
And she was resolved to fright him,
She damn'd him, and bid him to stand.

He presently drew out his Rapier
And bid her to stand on her guard;
But quickly away she did Caper,
The High-way-man, follow'd her hard.

He followed and soon overtook her,
And searched her Breeches with speed;
And as he did well overlook her,
He found her a Woman indeed!

The High-way-man stood all amazed;
But she had no cause to complain.
Tho' with her he did what he pleased,
He gave her the Money again.

GIVE ME MY YELLOW HOSE

The tune to which this excellent song is set - Peg a Ramsey - is at least as old as Shakespeare's time. In *Twelfth Night*, act II sc. 3. Sir Toby Belch says: "Malvolio's a Peg-a-Ramsey...", and Thomas Nashe mentions it as a dance tune in 'Have with you to Saffron-walden' 1596. Burton, in his *Anatomy of Melancholy*, 1621, quotes a stanza of the Yellow Hose text and makes the following comment: "So long as we are lovers, we may kiss at our pleasure, nothing is so sweet, we are in heaven as we think; but when we are once tied and have lost our liberty, marriage is an hell. 'Give me my yellow hose again'. A mouse in a trap lives as merrily."

From Evans' Old Ballads.

When I was a bachelor,
I lived a merry life,
But now I am a married man,
And troubled with a wife,
I cannot do as I have done,
Because I live in fear;
If I but go to Islington
My wife is watching there.
Give me my yellow hose again,
Give me my yellow hose,
For now my wife she watcheth me,
See yonder where she goes.

But when I was apprentice bound,
And my indentures made,
In many faults I have been found,
Yet never thus afraid;
For if I chance now by the way
A woman for to kiss,
The rest are ready for to say,
Thy wife shall know of this.
Give me my yellow hose etc.

Thus when I come in company,
I pass my mirth in fear,
For one or other merrily
Will say my wife is there;
And then my look doth make them laugh,
To see my woeful case,
How I stand like John-Hold-My-Staff,
And dare not show my face.
Give me my yellow hose again etc.

Then comes a handsome woman in,
And shakes me by the hand,
But how my wife she did begin,
Now you shall understand;
Fair dame (quoth she) why dost thou so,
He gave his hand to me,
And thou shalt know, before thou go,
He is no man for thee,
Give me my yellow hose again, etc.

Good wife (quoth she) now do not scold,
I will do so no more,
I thought I might have been so bold,
I knowing him before,
With that my wife was almost mad,
Yet many did intreat her,
And I, God knows, was very sad,
For fear she would have beat her.
Give me my yellow hose again etc.

Thus marriage is an enterprise,
Experience doth show,
But scolding is an exercise,
That married men do know;



For all this while there were no blows
Yet still their tongues were talking,
And very fain would yellow hose
Have had her fists a walking.
Give me my yellow hose again, etc.

In comes a neighbour of our town,
An honest man God wot
And he must needs go sit him down,
And call in for his pot.
And said to me, I am the man
Which gave to you your wife,
And I will do the best I can,
To mend this wicked life.
Give me my yellow hose etc.

I gave him thanks and bade him go,
And so he did indeed,
And told my wife she was a shrew,
But that was more than need.
Saith he, thou hast an honest man,
And one that loves thee well,
Saith she, you are a fool, good Sir,
It's more than you can tell.
Give me my yellow hose again, etc.

And yet in truth he loveth me,
But many more beside,
And I may say, good Sir, to thee,
That cannot I abide.
For though he loves me as his life,
Yet now, Sir, wot you what,
They say he loves his neighbour's wife,
I pray you, how like you that?
Give me my yellow hose again, etc.

Now comes my neighbour's wife apace,
To talk a word or two,
My wife then meets her face to face,
And saith, Dame is it you,
That makes so much of my good man,
As if he were your own,
Then clamp as closely as you can?
I know it will be known.
Give me my yellow hose again, etc.

Now when I saw the woman gone,
I call'd my wife aside,
And said, why art thou such a one,
That thou canst not abide
A woman for to talk with me,
This is a woeful case,
That I must keep no company,
Except you be in place.
Give me my yellow hose again, etc.

This maketh bachelors to halt,
So long before they wed,
Because they hear that women now
Will be their husband's head.
And seven long year I tarried
For Jackaman my wife,
But now that I am married,
I'm weary of my life.
Give me my yellow hose again, etc.

But now I see she is so hot,
And lives so much at ease,
I will go get a soldier's coat,
And sail beyond the seas:
To serve my captain where and when,
Though it be to my pain,
Thus farewell, gentle Jakaman,
Till we two meet again.
Give me my yellow hose again.



A KING AND NO KING

William of Orange entered London in December 1688 and, in the twelve months which followed, streets poets hailed 'the glorious revolution' in a series of scurrilous songs and ballads directed against James II, his queen - Mary of Modena, the exiled papal nuncio, the Earl of Tyrconnel and the Irish rebels. Here, in typical goodnight style, James II laments his fate, as usual throwing most of the blame on 'Shuffling Mall' - his queen, and on Petre his one-time confessor. The tune was probably composed by Thomas Farmer for D'Urfey's popular stage song 'Sawney was tall and of a noble race'.

From the Pepys collection.

OR: King James's Wish. Being an Excellent New Copy of Verses, of the Never to be forgotten by his Unholiness the POPE, our late King James. Sent in a Letter to that Damn'd Cursed Whore of Babylon, who is Harlot to Antichrist, Dutchess of Hell, and Countess of Purgatory. Translated out of Irish into French, by the Pretended Prince of Wales, and Englished by his supposed Mother, The Italian Dutchess.

My Wretched Fate, I do declare,
And of my Queen, with grief, complain,
Who's brought me into such a Snare,
I fear shall ne're be free again.

I Wish I had ne're been Crown'd King,
How happy then should I have Liv'd,
And Plenty I had of e'ry thing,
Bad Counsel taken; from those did give.

I Wish I ne're Consented then,
Poor Monmouth's Life to take away;
Nor in the West Destroy'd those Men,
Thus Bad Counsel I did Obery.

I Wish I had not sent to the Tower
Those Seven Bishops me Counsel gave;
But now at last I am out of Power,
And you no more K. James shall have.

I Wish I had been Rul'd by them,
And their good Counsel I had tain,
But 'twas my Queen that Ruled then,
Which causeth me thus to complain.

A False Pretended Prince of Wales,
Our Mother-Church bid us Contrive,
And fill'd us up with Damn'd False Tales,
That the Hereticks all should lose their Lives.

Then all our Rogueries did come out,
And to an Orange it was sent;
And in my Nations it made a Rout,
And all for a Free Parliament.

Away I went for fear of the Worst,
For well I knew what I had done;
My Conscience would my Friends not Trust,
But with all speed to France must run.

I Wish I had been true to those,
That Counsell'd me always for good;
But I was led like a Bear by the Nose
By Petres, and those cursed brood.



THE CHALLENGE AT THE CORONATION OF JAMES II.



THE SEVEN BISHOPS GOING TO THE TOWER.



POPE INNOCENT XI. RECEIVING THE AMBASSADOR OF JAMES II., 1687.

I am a King and yet am none,
Which makes me out of my Wit
Cause I belong'd to the Beast of Rome;
Our cursed designs are all beshit.

Trust not the Devil, nor the Pope,
Nor Lewis the Great, with my false Bride,
For if you do your Boom's a Rope,
With other Tortures, what e'er betide.

Now I'll close up all with a Wish,
That I the Popedom shortly gain;
There shall be no Popes but I their Saint,
And then I shall have no cause to complain.

CONSTANCE OF CLEVELAND

The ballad of Constance of Cleveland was entered at Stationers' Hall on June 11th 1603 to Wm. White as "Of the fayre Lady Constance of Cleveland and of her disloyal Knight". Collier, in his notes to the Roxburghe Ballads, points out that a play by Drayton, Munday and Hathway 'Constance of Rome' is mentioned in Henslowe's diary under the year 1600. 'Crimson Velvet', the tune to which the ballad is set, was, as Collier remarks, "Highly popular in the reigns of Elizabeth and her successor".

From Collier's 'Roxburghe Ballads'.

It was a youthfull knight lov'd a gallant lady,
Fair she was and bright, and of vertues rare:
Herself, she did behave so courteously as may be;
Wedded they were brave; joy without compare.

Here began the grief, pain without relief,
Her husband soon her love forsook,
To womenh lewd of mind, being bad inclin'd,
He only lent a pleasant look.

The lady she sate weeping,
While that he was keeping
Company with others moe:

Her words: "My love, beleeve not,
Come to me and grieve not,
Wantons will thee overthrow."

His fair Ladie's words nothing he regarded;
Wantonnesse affords such delightfull sport.
While they dance and sing, with great mirth
prepared,
She her hands did wring in most grievous sort.
"O what hap had I thus to wail and cry,
Unrespected every day,
Living in disdain, while that others gain
All the right I should enjoy!
I am left forsaken
Others they are taken:

Ah, my love, why dos't thou so?
Her flatteries beleeve not,
Come to me and grieve not;
Wantons will thee overthrow."

The Knight with his fair peece at length the Lady
spied,
Who did him daily fleece of his wealth and store:
Secretly she stood, while she her fashions tryed,
With a patient mind while deep the strumpet swore.
"O Sir Knight, O Sir Knight," quoth she,
"so dearly I love thee
My life doth rest at thy dispose
By day and eke by night, for thy sweet
delight,



Thou shalt me in thy arms inclose.
I am thine for ever;
Still I will persevere,
True to thee where ere I go."
"Her flatteries beleeve not,
Come to me and grieve not;
Wantons will thee overthrow."

The vertuous Lady mild enters then among them
Being big with child as ever she might be;
With distilling tears she looked then upon them;
Filled full of fears, thus replied she:

"Ah, my love and dear! Wherefore stay you
here,
Refusing me, your loving wife,
For an harlot's sake, which each one will take
Whose vile deeds provoke much strife?
Many can accuse her:
O, my love, refuse her!
With thy lady home return.
Her flatteries beleeve not,
Come to me and Grieve not,
Wantons will thee overthrow."

All in a fury then, the angry Knight up started,
Very furious when he heard his Ladie's speech.
With many bitter terms his wife he ever thwarted,
Using hard extreame, while she did him beseech.

From her neck so white, he took away in
spite,
Her curious chain of purest gold,
Her jewels and her rings, and all such
costly things
As he about her did behold.
The harlot in her presence
He did gently reverence,
And to her he gave them all:
He sent away his lady
Full of woe as may be,
Who in a swoond with grief did fall.

At the ladie's wrong the harlot fleer'd and laughed;
Enticements are so strong they overcome the wise.
The Knight nothing regarded to see the Lady scoffed:
Thus was she rewarded for her enterprise.

The harlot, all this space, did him oft embrace,
She flatters him and thus doth say:
"For thee Ile dye and live, for thee my faith
Ile give,
No woe shall work my love's decay.
Thou shalt be my treasure,
Thou shalt be my pleasure,
Thou shalt be my heart's delight:
I will be thy darling,
I will be thy worldling,
In despite of fortune's spight."

Thus did he remain in wastfull great expences,
Till it bred his pain and consumed him quite;
When his lands were spent, troubled in his sences,
Then he did repent of his late lewd life.

For relief he hies for relief he flies
To them on whom he spend his gold.
They do him deny, they do him defy,
They will not once his face behold.

Being thus distressed,
Being thus oppressed,
In the fields that night he lay;
Which the harlot knowing,
Through her malice growing,
Sought to take his life away.

A young and proper lad they had slain in secret
For the gold he had, whom they did convey.
By a ruffian lewd, to that place directly,
Where the youthful Knight fast a sleeping lay.

The bloody dagger than, wherewith they
kill'd the man,
Hard by the Knight he likewise laid,
Sprinkling him with blood, as he
thought it good,
And then lo longer there he stayd.
The Knight being so abused,
Was forthwith accused
For this murder which was done;
And he was condemned
That had not offended;
Shamefull death he might not shun.

When the Lady bright understood the matter,
That her wedded Knight was condemn'd to dye.
To the Kint she went with all the speed that
might be,

Where she did lament her hard destiny.
"Noble King!" quoth she, "Pitty take on me,
And pardon my poor husband's life;

Else I am undone, with my little son
Let mercy mitigate this grief."

"Lady fair, content thee,
Soon wouldst repent thee
If should he be saved so:
Sore hath he abus'd thee,
Sore hath he misus'd thee;
Therefore, Lady, let him go."

"O, my liege!" quoth she, "Grant your gracious
favour.

Dear he is to me, though he did no wrong."
The King reply'd again, with a stern behaviour
"A subject he hath slain, dye he shall ere long:
Except that thou canst find any one so kind
That will dye and set him free."
"Noble King!" she said, "Glad am I apaid;
That same person will I be.

I will suffer duly,
I will suffer truly,
For my love and husband's sake."
The King thereat amazed,
Though he her beauty praised
He bad from thence they should her take.

It was the King's command, on the morrow after
She should out of hand to the scaffold go.
Her husband was to bear the sword before her,
He must eke, alas! give the deadly blow.

He refus'd the deed; she bid him to proceed,
With a thousand kisses sweet.

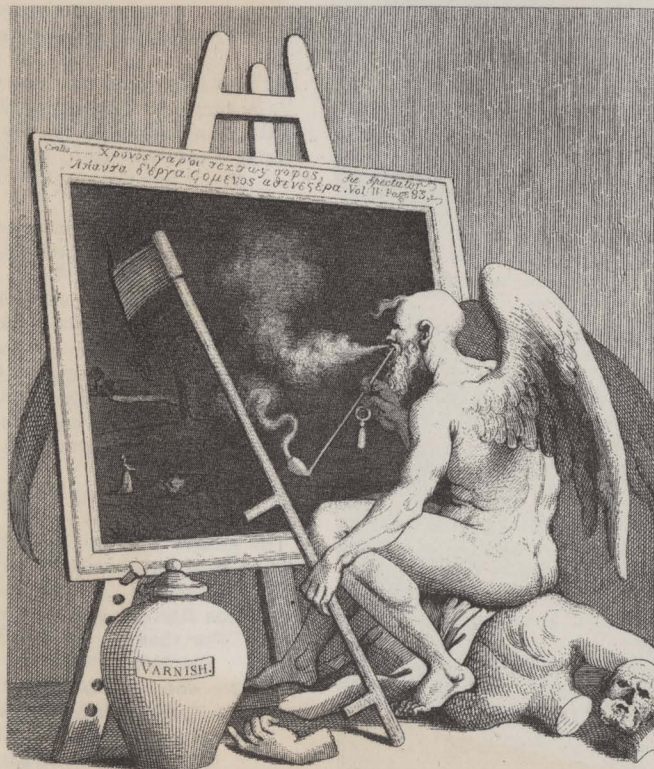
In this woefull case they did both embrace
Which moved the ruffians in that place

Straight for to discover
This concealed murder,
Whereby the lady saved was.

The harlot then was hanged,
As she well deserved,
This did vertue bring to passe.

EWAN MACCOLL

Ewan MacColl is that rare combination of traditional and revival singer at one and the same time. Born in Auchtermoidy, Perthshire, Scotland on January 29, 1915 (on Bobby Burns' birthday), MacColl learned most of his songs from his father and other members of his family, as well as from Scottish and English neighbors of childhood days. "My old man was the best singer I ever heard," he says. Unlike so many traditional singers whose music was kept alive in relatively isolated rural areas, the MacColl family was a product of the industrial age. His father was an iron-moulder who worked at his trade irregularly as a result of being blacklisted for trade union organizing activities. His mother, from whom he also learned many songs worked on and off as a charwoman in all the industrial cities of England and Scotland as the MacColls moved from town to town trying to escape the penalties of the father's trade union activities. One writer has called him the "Folk singer of the Industrial Age." During the 1930s, MacColl found himself in the burgeoning British workers' theatre movement. His natural political inclinations, together with an instinctive flair for drama and song led him to the "agit-prop" performing groups of the depression era whose stage was more often a street before a factory gate or a union meeting hall than a formal theater. In the years since then, he has become the leading presenter of folk songs on British radio and television, either writing or appearing in more than 50 different BBC programs. Song-writer, recording and concert artist (he has toured throughout Europe and Canada), Ewan MacColl is a towering figure in the world of folk music.



As Statues moulder into Worth. P.W.