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1738  
M13  
E58  
1961  
v.1



MUSIC LP

The English and Scottish Popular Ballads (Child Ballads)  
Sung and with Notes by Ewan MacColl Folkways Records FG 3509



JOHNNIE O' BREADISLEY (Child #114)  
 (Johnie Cock)  
 THE DOWIE DENS O' YARROW (Child #214)  
 LORD RANDALL (Child #12)  
 SIR PATRICK SPENS (Child #58)  
 THE BURNING O' AUCHENDOUN (Child #183)  
 (Willie Macintosh)  
 OUR GOODMAN (Child #274)  
 THE RANTIN LADDIE (Child #240)  
 BAWBEE ALLAN (Child #84)  
 (Barbara Allan)  
 THE BROWN GIRL (Child #73)  
 (Lord Thomas and Fair Anne)  
 THE THREE RAVENS (Child #26)  
 THE BONNIE EARL O' MURRAY (Child #181)  
 THE BATTLE OF HARLAW (Child #163)  
 THOMAS RHYMER (Child #37)

DESCRIPTIVE NOTES ARE INSIDE POCKET

# The English and Scottish Popular Ballads (Child Ballads)

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FOLKWAYS FG 3509



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ENGLISH AND SCOTTISH POPULAR BALLADS

# CHILD BALLADS

sung by Ewan MacColl

## TRADITIONAL BALLADS by EWAN MACCOLL

"Defined in its simplest terms, the ballad is a folk-song that tells a story. Whatever may be added to this statement is by way of amplification, to explain and clarify, merely, since the whole truth of the matter is in it. What we have come to call a ballad is always a narrative, is always sung to a rounded melody, and is always learned from the lips of others rather than by reading."

Gerould: The Ballad of Tradition.

Gerould might also have added that the traditional ballad form is one which has proved extremely durable. Not only has it survived social upheaval, revolutions in science and technology, profound changes in public taste and fashion; it has even survived the collectors, anthologists, 'improvers' and concert singers.

This extraordinary capacity for survival appears to have escaped the notice of the most brilliant ballad scholars. Professor Child in a letter to the Danish savant, Svend Gruntvig, wrote: "The sources of British ballads are dried up forever. Thirty five years later Cecil Sharp observed: "The English ballad is moribund, its account is well nigh closed."

Fortunately, these obituary notices have proved premature for while it is true that the TV set has usurped the function of the village storyteller and ballad singer, it is equally true that the occasional intelligent use of TV and radio has introduced the traditional ballad and ballad singer to a large new audience. Furthermore, with the advent of the tape-recorder and the LP disc, the story of the complete ballad form (words and music together) has reached a completely new stage.

## SIDE I, Band 1: JOHNNIE O' BREADISLEY (114)

The Debatable Land, as the lands fringing the English-Scottish border were sometimes called, are the scene of some of the greatest popular ballads. Child described this stirring piece as a "precious specimen of the unspoiled traditional ballad".

Child published 13 texts.  
Learned from the singing of John Strachan of Eyvie, Aberdeenshire.

Johnnie rose on a May morning,  
C'd for water to wash his hands,  
Says, Gae lowse to me my twa grey dogs  
That lie bound in iron chains,  
That lie bound in iron chains.

Ye'll busk, ye'll busk my noble dogs,  
Ye'll busk and mak them boun',  
For I'm awa to the Broadspear Hill  
To ding the dun deer doon, doon,  
To ding the dun deer doon.

When Johnnie's mither she heard o' this,  
Her hands wi' dool she wrang.  
Says, Johnnie, for your venison  
To the green woods dinna gang, gang,  
To the green woods dinna gang.

It's we hae plenty o' guid white breid  
And plenty o' guid reid wine;  
So, Johnnie, for your venison  
To the green woods dinna gang, gang,  
To the green woods dinna gang.

But Johnnie has breskit his guid benbow,  
His arrows one by one,  
And he's awa to the gay green woods  
To pull the dun deer doon, doon,  
To pull the dun deer doon.

Johnnie shot - the dun deer lap,  
She was wounded in the side,  
And atween the water and the wood  
The greyhounds laid her pride, pride,  
The greyhounds laid her pride.

Johnnie ate o' the venison,  
And the dogs drank o' the bleid,  
An' they a' lay doon and fell asleep,  
Asleep as though they'd been deid, deid,  
Asleep as though they'd been deid.

Then by there cam a silly auld man,  
And a silly auld man was he,  
And he's awa to the king's forester,  
For to tell on young Johnnie, -ie.  
For to tell on young Johnnie.

Then up and spak the King's forester,  
And an agry ma was he:  
Says, if this be Johnnie o' Breadisley,  
My faith, we'll gar him iee, iee,  
My faith, we'll gar him dee.

Stand oot, stand oot, my noble dogs,  
Stand oot and dinna flee.  
Stand fast, stand fast, my guid grey hounds  
And we will mak them dee, dee,  
And we will mak them dee.

Johnnie shot sax o' them,  
And the seventh he wounded sair,  
And he swung his hough ow'r his horse back,  
And he swore that he would hunt mair, mair,  
And he swore that he would hunt mair.

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SIDE I, Band 2: THE DOWIE DENS OF YARROW (214)

Sir Walter Scott in whose Minstrelsy of the Scottish Border this tragic ballad was first published, claimed that it referred to a duel fought at the beginning of the 17th. century between John Scott of Tushielaw and Walter Scott of Thirlstane. Child and other authorities have drawn attention to the inaccuracies of this theory.

Child published 19 texts.  
Learned from the singer's father.

There was a lady in the North,  
I ne'er could find her marrow;  
She was courted by nine gentlemen  
And a ploughboy lad frae Yarrow.

These nine sat drinking at the wine,  
Sat drinking wine at Yarrow;  
They ha'e made a vow among themselves  
To fecht for her on Yarrow.

She's washed his face and kaimed his hair,  
As oft she's done afore O,  
And made him like a knight sae bricht,  
To fecht for her on Yarrow.

As he walked up by the high, high hills  
And doon by the houms o' Yarrow,  
There he saw nine armed men  
Come to fecht wi' him on Yarrow.

And there they flew and there he slew,  
And there he wounded sairly,  
Till her brither, John, came in beyond  
And wounded him maist foully.

"O faither, dear, I dreamed a dream,  
A dream i' dule and sorrow;  
I dreamed I was pu'ing the heather bells  
On the dowie dens o' Yarrow."

"O, dochter dear, I read your dream,  
I doubt it will bring sorrow, -  
For your ain true love lies pale and wan  
On the dowie dens o' Yarrow."

As she walked up yon high, high hill  
And doon by the houms o' Yarrow;  
And there she saw her ain true love  
Lying pale and wan on Yarrow.

Her hair it being three-quarters lang,  
The colour it was yellow,  
She wrappit it roond his middle sae sma'  
And bore him doon to Yarrow.

"O, faither dear, ye've seiven sons,  
Ye may wed them a tomorrow,  
But the fairest flooer among them a'  
Was the lad I wooed on Yarrow."

SIDE I, Band 3: LORD RANDALL (12)

Known throughout Europe and America in substantially the same form, Randall is a perfect example of the question-and-answer ballad. The name of the hero varies a good deal from version to version.

Child published 15 texts.  
Learned from the singer's mother.

O where hae ye been, Lord Randall my son?  
O where hae ye been, my bonnie young man?  
I've been tae the wild wood mither, mak' my bed soon,  
For I'm weary wi' hunting and I fain would lie doon.

"Whaur gat ye your supper, Lord Randall, my son?  
Whaur gat ye your supper, my bonnie young man?"  
"I dined wi' my true love, mither, mak' my bed soon,  
For I'm weary wi' hunting and I fain would lie doon."

"What happened to your bloodhounds, Lord Randall,  
my son?

What happened to your bloodhounds, my bonnie young man?"

"O, they swelled and they died, mither, mak' my bed soon,  
For I'm weary wi' hunting and I fain would lie doon."

"What had ye to your supper, Lord Randall, my son?

What had ye to your supper, my bonnie young man?"  
"I had eels boiled in bro', mither, mak' my bed soon,

For I'm weary wi' hunting and I fain would lie doon."

"O, I fear that ye are poisoned, Lord Randall, my son!

I fear that ye are poisoned, my bonnie young man!"

"O, aye, I am poisoned, mither, mak' my bed soon,

For I'm sick at the heart and I fain would lie doon."

"What will ye leave your brither, Lord Randall, my son?

What will ye leave your brither, my bonnie young man?"

"My horse and my saddle that hings in yon stable,  
For I'm sick at the heart and I fain would lie doon."

"What will ye leave your sweetheart, Lord Randall, my son?

What will ye leave your sweetheart, my bonnie young man?"

"The tow and the halter that hings on yon tree,  
And there let her hang for the poisoning of me."

SIDE I, Band 4: SIR PATRICK SPENS (58)

Motherwell has suggested that this fine ballad may be based upon the events following the marriage of Margaret, daughter of Alexander III of Scotland to Eric, King of Norway in 1281. Many of the nobles who conducted the young queen to Norway were drowned on the return voyage.

Child publishes 18 versions of this ballad.  
Learned from the singer's father.

The King sits in Dunfermline toon,  
A-drinking at the wine,  
And he has called for the finest skipper  
In Fife and all the land.

Then oot it spak an auld carle,  
Stood by the King's ain knee;  
Said, "Patrick Spens is the strangest sailor  
That ever sailed the sea."

The King has screvit a braid letter  
And signed it wi' his ain hand;  
And sent it to young Patrick Spens,  
Was walking on Leith Sands.

To Norrowa', to Norrowa',  
To Norrowa' ower the faem;  
The King's dochter o' Norrowa',  
'Tis ye mun bring her hame.

When he leukit the letter on  
A muckle laugh gaed he,  
But ere he'd done the reading o't  
The tears blinded his e'e.

O, wha is it's done this fell deed  
And tolt the King o' me?  
Although it were my ain faither  
An ill deith may he dee!

They hadna been in Norrowa'  
A week but barely three,  
When a' the lords o' Norrowa'  
Did up and spak sae free.



"These outland Scots waste our King's dowl  
And swallow our Queen's fee."  
"Weary fa' the tongue that spak  
Sic a muckle lee."

"How can this be?" said Patrick Spens,  
"I pray ye tell to me.  
The bows o' my ship are wrocht wi' gowd  
And there's twal kists o' white money."

"Tak tent! Tak tent, my guidmen a',  
And mind ye be weel forn,  
For come it wind or come it hail,  
Oor guid ship sails the morn."

Then oot it spak the weatherman  
"I fear we'll a' be drooned,  
For I saw the new mune late yestreen  
Wi' the auld mune in her airms."

They hadna sailed abune an hour,  
An hour but and a half,  
When the lift grew laich an' the wind blew haich,  
And the ship it was a wrack.

"O where will I get a bonnie lad  
To tak' my steer in hand,  
While I climb up the high tapmast  
To see if I can spy land."

He hadna gane a step, a step,  
A step but barely ane,  
When the bows o' our guidly ship did brak,  
And the saut sea it cam' in.

O laith, laith were our guid Scots lords  
To wat their cork-heeled shoon,  
But lang ere a' the play was dune  
They wat their hats abune.

O lang, lang will the ladies sit  
Wi' their fans intil their hands  
Before they see Sir Patrick Spens  
Come sailing to the land.

Half owner, half owner to Aberdour,  
Where the sea's sae wide and deep,  
It's there lies young Sir Patrick Spens  
Wi' the Scots lords at his feet.

# SIDE I, Band 5: THE BURNING OF AUCHENDOWN (183)

Following the murder of the Earl of Murray, the  
Macintoshes of the Clan Chattan pillaged a castle  
and killed four men on an estate belonging to the  
Earl of Huntley. In retaliation, Huntley laid  
waste the lands of Clan Chattan. Returning home  
from this engagement he surprised the Macintoshes  
spoiling his lands at Cabrach and, in the ensuing  
fight, killed sixty of them.

Child published 2 texts.  
Learned from the singer's father in a fragmentary  
form and collated with verses from Child's texts.

As I cam' in by Fiddich Side  
On a May mornin',  
I spied Willie Mackintosh  
An hour before the dawnin'.

Turn again, turn again, turn again I bid ye,  
If ye beurn Auchendown, Huntley he will heid ye!  
Heid me or hang me, that shall never fear me;  
I'll burn Auchendown tho' the life leaves me.

As I cam' in by Fiddich Side  
On a May mornin',  
Auchendown was in a bleeze  
An hour before the dawnin'.

Crawin', crawin',  
For a' youn crouse crawin',  
Ye brunt your crop and tint your wings  
An hour before the dawnin'

# SIDE I, Band 6: OUR GUDEMAN (274)

This is one of the most popular humorous ballads in  
the Child collection and is still fairly widespread  
in the Scots and English oral traditions. Child  
states that the Dutch, German, Scandinavian and  
Hungarian versions all derive from a single broadside.

Child published 2 texts.  
Learned from the singer's father.

Hame cam' oor gudeman at e'en,<sup>1</sup>  
And hame cam' he,  
And he saw a muckle<sup>2</sup> horse  
Where nae horse should be.  
"How cam' this muckle horse here,  
How cam' this to be?  
How cam' this muckle horse here  
Wi'oot<sup>3</sup> the leave o' me?"  
"A horse?" quo' she.  
"Ay, a horse," quo' he.  
"Ye auld blin'<sup>4</sup> doited<sup>5</sup> carle,<sup>6</sup>  
For unco<sup>7</sup> blin' ye be,  
It's but a bonnie milk coo<sup>8</sup>  
My minnie<sup>9</sup> sent to me."  
"O, far ha'e I traivelled,  
And far'er hae I been,  
But a saddle on a milk coo  
Saw I never nane."<sup>10</sup>

Hame cam' oor guideman at e'en,  
And hame cam' he,  
Saw a pair o' muckle shoon<sup>11</sup>  
Where nae shoon should be.  
"What's this and wha's this,  
How cam' this to be?  
How cam' these muckle shoon here  
Wi'oot the leave o' me?"  
"Shoon?" quo' she,  
"Ay, shoon," quo' he.  
"Ye auld, blin' doited carle,  
And blin'er may ye be,  
It's but a pair o' water stoups<sup>12</sup>  
My minnie sent to me."  
"Far hae I traivelled  
And far'er hae I been,  
But siller<sup>13</sup> spurs on water stoups  
Saw I never nane."

Hame cam' oor gudeman at e'en,  
And hame cam' he,  
And he saw a braw<sup>14</sup> plaidie,  
Where nae plaidie should be.  
"How's this, and what's this,  
How cam' this to be?  
How cam' this braw plaid here,  
Wi'oot the leave of me?"  
"A plaidie?" quo' she,  
"Ay, a plaidie," quo' he.  
"Ye auld blin' doited carle,  
And blin'er may ye be,  
It's just a bonnie blanket,  
My minnie sent tae me."  
"Far hae I travelled  
And far'er hae I been,  
But a blanket o' sic<sup>15</sup> muckle worth,  
Saw I never nane."

Hame cam' oor gudeman at e'en,  
And hame cam' he,  
And he saw a hielan'<sup>16</sup> bonnet  
Where nae bonnet it should be.  
"How's this and what's this,  
How cam' this to be,  
How cam' this hielan' bonnet here  
Wi'oot the leave of me?"  
"A bonnet?" quo' she,  
"Ay, a bonnet," quo' he.  
"Ye auld blin' doited carle,  
And blin'er may ye be,  
It's but a tappit<sup>17</sup> clockin'<sup>18</sup> hen  
My minnie sent to me."  
"Far hae I travelled  
And far'er hae I been,  
But a white cockade on a clockin' hen,  
Saw I never nane."

Hame cam' oor gudeman at e'en,  
 And hame cam' he,  
 And he got a man into the bed,  
 Where nae man should be.  
 "How's this and what's this,  
 How cam' this to be?  
 How cam' this man here,  
 My minnie sent tae me."  
 Wi'oot the leave o' me?"  
 "A man?" quo' she,  
 "Ay, a man," quo' he.  
 "Ye auld blin' doited carle,  
 And blin'er may ye be,  
 It's but a bonnie milkmaid  
 My minnie sent tae me."  
 "Far hae I travelled,  
 And far'er hae I been,  
 But whiskers on a milkmaid  
 Saw I never nane."

- 1 evening
- 2 big, great
- 3 with out
- 4 blind
- 5 foolish
- 6 old man
- 7 extremely
- 8 cow
- 9 mother
- 10 none
- 11 shoes
- 12 jugs
- 13 silver
- 14 handsome
- 15 such
- 16 highland
- 17 crested
- 18 brooding

SIDE I, Band 7: THE RANTIN' LADDIE (240)

This ballad is rare outside of Scotland, only one complete text having been reported from the United States. There appears to be no historical basis for the events described in the ballad.

Child published 4 texts.  
 Learned from the singer's father.

"Oft hae<sup>1</sup> I played at the cards and dice  
 Wi' my ain dear rantin<sup>2</sup> laddie,  
 But noo I maun<sup>3</sup> sit in my faither's ha'  
 And sing ba to my bastard baby.

"If I'd been wise as I've been nice,  
 And done what my bonnie lad tauld me,  
 I'd ha' been married a year or mair,  
 And been wi' my rantin laddie.

"My faither dear he knows me not,  
 An' my mither she ignores me,  
 My friends and relations a' slight me,  
 And the servants they quite hate me.

"Gin<sup>4</sup> I had ane horse at my command,  
 As oft times I've had mony,  
 I would ride it on to the gates o' Aboyne  
 Wi' a letter to my rantin laddie."

"Is your love a laird or is he a lord,  
 Or is he but a caddie,<sup>5</sup>  
 That ye sae aft ca' on his name,  
 Your ain dear rantin laddie?"

Then oot and spak' a kitchie boy,  
 Says "Though I'm but a caddie,  
 It's I will run to the gates o' Aboyne,  
 Wi' a letter for your rantin laddie.

When he was near the banks o' Dee,  
 The birds they sang sae bonny,  
 And there he spied the Earl o' Aboyne,  
 That they ca' the rantin laddie.

And when he looked the letter on,  
 But O, and he was sorry,  
 "They've been cruel and fell<sup>6</sup> unkind,  
 Tae my ain dear rantin lassie."

"My faither dear, he knows me not,  
 My mither she ignores me,  
 My frien's and relations a' slight me,  
 And the servants they quite hate me."

"Gae get to me five hundred men,  
 And they'll ride oot sae bonnie,  
 And we'll bring the bonnie lassie back to Aboyne,  
 My ain dear rantin lassie."

When she was up ahint<sup>7</sup> his back,  
 Wrapped in a hielan' plaidie,  
 The birds in the trees sang not sae sweet,  
 As the bonnie, bonnie rantin lassie.

And they rode on through Buchanshire,  
 And Buchan it shone bonnie,  
 "Rejoice, rejoice, ye bonnie mays<sup>8</sup>  
 And see that ye be na' sorry."

Gin ye lay your love on a lowland lad,  
 Be sure that he'll betray ye,  
 But lay your love on a hielan' lad,  
 He'll do a' he can to raise ye.

- 1 have
- 2 jovial
- 3 must
- 4 if
- 5 errand boy
- 6 dreadfully
- 7 behind
- 8 maids

SIDE II, Band 1: BAWBEЕ ALLAN (84)

This is by far the most widespread of all the traditional ballads. It has been printed in chapbooks and broadsides and, on more than one occasion, has been used as a stage song. In spite of all this, however, its oral transmission has continued to produce an incredible number of variants.

Child published 4 versions.  
 Learned from the singer's mother.

It fell aboot the Marinmus time,  
 When the green leaves they were fallin',  
 Then Sir John Graeme o' the North Country,  
 Fell in love wi' Bawbee Allan.

He's sent his man through a' the toon,  
 Tae the place where she was dwallin';  
 "Coem doon, come doon to my master daer,  
 Gin your name be Bawbee Allan."

O, hooly, hooly rose she up,  
 And slowly she gaed to him,  
 And when she cam' to his bedside,  
 "Young man, I think you're dyin'."

"It's I am sick and very sick,  
 And it's a' for Bawbee Allan",  
 "It's better for me ye'll never be,  
 For bonnie Bawbee Allan."

"When ye were in the tavern, sir,  
 And at the wine was swillin',  
 Ye made the toasts gang roond and roond,  
 And ye slighted Bawbee Allan."

He's turned his face unto the wa',  
 And death was wi' him dealin';  
 "Then fare ye weel, my dear friends a',  
 But be kind to Bawbee Allan."



"Then pit your hand aneist the wa',  
And there you'll find a token;  
Wi' my gold watch and my gold ring,  
Gie that to Bawbee Allan."

Then pit your hand aneist my side,  
And there ye'll find a warran';  
And there ye'll get my blude red sark,  
It bled for Bawbee Allan."

She hadna gane a step a step,  
When she heard the deithbell knellin',  
And ilka clap te deid bell gied,  
Said 'Wae to Bawbee Allan.'

"O, mither, dear, you'll mak' my bed,  
Ye'll mak' it saft and narrow;  
My love has died for me this day,  
I'll die for him tomorrow."

SIDE II, Band 2: LORD THOMAS AND FAIR ANNIE (73)

Bishop Percy included a Scots version of this fine ballad in his Reliques of Ancient English Poetry and Child described it as "one of the most beautiful of our ballads, and indeed of all ballads."

Child published 8 texts.  
Learned from the singer's mother in fragmentary form and collated with stanzas in Greig's Traditional Ballads and Ballad Airs.

SIDE II, Band 3: THE THREE RAVENS (26)

The first printed copy of this ballad is in Ravenscroft's Melismata, London 1611. In The Popular Music of the Olden Time, 1855, Chappell remarks that the ballad was still so popular in some parts of the country that he had "been favoured with a variety of copies of it, written down from memory, and all differing in some respects, both as to words and tune, but with sufficient resemblance to prove a similar origin."

Motherwell in his Minsreels, 1827, describes it as being "very popular in Scotland", where it is more commonly known as The Twa Corbies.

The version given here is from Kidson's Traditional Tunes, 1891, and comes from the village of Stoney-Middleton, Derbyshire.

Child published 4 texts.

There were three ravens on a tree,  
A-down, a-down, a derry down,  
There were three ravens on a tree,  
Heigh ho!  
The middlemost raven said to me,  
"There lies a dead man at yon tree,"  
A down, a down, a derry down,  
Heigh ho!

There comes a lady full of woe,  
A-down, a-down, a derry down,  
There comes his lady full of woe,  
Heigh ho!  
There comes his lady full of woe,  
Riding fast as she can go,  
A down, a down, a derry down,  
Heigh ho!

"Who's this that's killed my own true love,  
A-down, a-down, a derry down,  
Who's this that's killed my own true love,  
Heigh ho!  
I hope in heaven he'll never rest,  
Nor e'er enjoy that blessed place,  
A-down, a-down, a derry down,  
Heigh ho!

SIDE II, Band 4: THE BONNIE EARL OF MURRAY (181)

James Stewart, Earl of Murray, was murdered by the Earl of Huntley in 1592, after having been accused

of conspiring with Bothwell against the king. The death of this very popular figure provoked a public outcry but Huntley was never punished for his part in the deed.

Child published only 2 texts of the ballad.  
Learned by the singer from Private MacDonald, a soldier in the British Army, who learned it at school.

Ye hielan's<sup>1</sup> and ye lawlan's,<sup>2</sup>  
O, wnaure<sup>3</sup> hae ye been?  
They hae ta'en<sup>4</sup> the Earl o' Murray  
And laid him on the green.  
He was a braw<sup>5</sup> callant<sup>6</sup>  
And he played at the ring,  
And the bonnie Earl o' Murray,  
He nicht<sup>7</sup> hae been a king.

O, lang<sup>8</sup> will his ladie  
Look frae<sup>9</sup> the castle doon,<sup>10</sup>  
Ere the bonnie Earl o' Murray  
Comes soondin'<sup>11</sup> through the toon.

O, wael<sup>12</sup> betide ye Huntley  
And whaurfore did ye sae?<sup>13</sup>  
I bade ye bring him tae me  
And forbade ye him to slay.  
He was a braw callant  
And he played at the ba',<sup>14</sup>  
And the bonnie Earl o' Murray  
Was the floocer<sup>15</sup> amang them a'.<sup>16</sup>

- 1 Highlands
- 2 Lowlands
- 3 where
- 4 taken
- 5 handsome
- 6 gallant
- 7 might
- 8 long
- 9 from
- 10 down
- 11 with the sounds of trumpets or pipes
- 12 woe
- 13 why did you do so?
- 14 ball
- 15 flower
- 16 all

SIDE II, Band 5: THE BATTLE OF HARLAW (163)

The battle of Harlaw took place on July 24, 1411, when an army of Highlanders led by Donald of the Isles was beaten by the Earl of Mar's Lowland forces.

Child published 2 versions.  
Learned from Jeannie Robertson of Dundee.

As I cam by the Geerie, man  
And in by Netherha',  
There were fifty thoosand Hielan' men  
A-marchin' tae Harlaw.

CHORUS:  
Singing duddie-i-o  
Sing fal a do  
Sing diddie-i-o-i-ay.

An' did you come fae the Hielan's, man?  
An' did ye come a' the way?  
An' did ye see MacDonald and his men  
As they marched fae Skye?

For I cam fae the Hielan's, man,  
An' I come a' the way,  
An' I saw MacDonald and his men  
As they marched frae Skye.

Was ye near and near enough?  
Did ye their numbers see?  
And tell to me, John Hielan'man,  
What might their numbers be?

I was near and near enough,  
And I their numbers saw,  
There was fifty thoosand Hielan' men  
A-marching fae Harlaw.

For they went on and further on,  
And doon and by Balquhain,  
It's there I met Sir James the Rose  
And Sir John the Graeme.

If that be true, said Sir James the Rose,  
We'll no' come muckle speed,  
We'll call upon wor merry men  
And we'll turn wor horses' heids.

They went on and further on  
And doon and by Harlaw,  
They baith fell fast on ilka side,  
Sic straits ye never saw.

The Hielan' men wi' their lang swords,  
They laid aboot fu' sair,  
An' they drove back wor merry men  
Three acres breadth and mair.  
Lord Forbes unto his brother did say,  
"O, brither, dinna ye see,  
For they beat us back on every side  
And we'll be forced to flee."

"O, nay, O, nay, my brither dear,  
O, nay, that maunna be,  
Ye'll tak' your guid sword in your hand,  
And ye'll gan in wi' me."

Then the twa brithers brave  
Went in amangst the thrang,  
They swabbed doon the Heilan' men  
Wi' swords baith sharp and lang.

The first straik Lord Forbes gied,  
The brave MacDonald reeled,  
The second straik Lord Forbes fied,  
The brave MacDonald fell.

Whit a cry amang the Heilan' men  
When they see'd their leader fa',  
They lifted him and buried him  
A lang mile frae Harlaw.

#### Glossary

Cam.....	Came.
Tae.....	To.
Fae.....	From
Muckle.....	Great, much.
Wor.....	Our.
Heids.....	Heads.
Baith.....	Both.
Ilka.....	Every.
Sic.....	Such.
Straiks.....	Strokes.
Fu'.....	Full.
Mair.....	More
Dinna.....	Do not.
Guid.....	Good.
Swabbed.....	Beat.
Gied.....	Gave.
Amang.....	Amongst.
Lang.....	Long.

SIDE II, Band 6: THOMAS RYMOUR (37)

Thomas of Erceldoune, the 13th. Century poet, was author of a long poem describing a visit to Elfland and the supernatural events which took place there. The poem served as a basis for the 15th. century romance which, in turn, probably provided the raw material for this ballad.

Child published 3 texts.  
Learned from print.

True Thomas lay on Huntlie bank,  
A ferlie he spied wi' his e'e,  
And there he saw a lady bright,  
Come riding down by the Eildon Tree.

Her skirt was o' the grass-green silk,  
Her mantle o' the velvet fyne,  
At ilka tett of her horse's mane  
Hung fifty siller bells and nine.

True Thomas he pull'd aff his cap  
And louted low down to his knee:  
"All hail, thou mighty Queen of Heaven!  
For thy peer on earth I never did see."

"O no, O no, Thomas", she said,  
That name does not belong to me;  
I am but the queen of fair Eifland  
That am hither come to visit thee.

"Harp and carp, Thomas", she said,  
"Harp and carp along wi' me,  
And if ye dare to kiss my lips,  
Sure of your body I will be."

"Betide me weal, betide me woe,  
That weird shall never daunt me;  
Syne he has kissed her rosy lips,  
All underneath the Eildon Tree.

"Now ye maun go wi' me," she said,  
"True Thomas, ye maun go wi' me,  
And ye maun serve me seven years,  
Thro' weal and woe, as say chance to be."

She mounted on her milk-white steed,  
She's ta'en True Thomas up behind,  
And aye whene'er her bridle rung  
The steed flew faster than the wind.

O they rade on, and farther on -  
The steed gaed swifter than the wind  
Until they reached a desert wide,  
And living land was left behind.

"Light down, light down now, True Thomas,  
And lean your head upon my knee;  
Abide and rest a little space,  
And I will show you ferlies three.

"O see ye not yon narrow road,  
So thick beset with thorns and briars?  
That is the path of righteousness,  
Tho' after it but few enquires.

"And see ye not that braid, braid road  
That lies across that lily leven?  
That is the path of wickedness,  
Tho' some call it the road to heaves.

"And see ye not that bonny road  
That winds about the fernie brae?  
That is the road to fair Elfland  
Where thou and I this night maun gae.

"But, Thomas, ye maun hold your tongue,  
Whatever ye may hear or see,  
For if you speak word in Elflin land  
Ye'll ne'er get back to your ain countrie."

Syne they came on to a garden green,  
And she pu'd an apple frae a tree;  
"Take this for thy wages, True Thomas,  
It will give the tongue that can never lie."

"My tongue is mine ain," True Thomas said:  
"A guidly gift ye wad gie to me!  
I neither dought to buy or sell,  
At fair or tryst where I may be.