

STEREO
FOLKWAYS RECORDS FH 5330

Folksongs of the Midwest



Loman D. Cansler

FOLKWAYS RECORDS FH 5330

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Loman D. Cansler*

DESCRIPTIVE NOTES ARE INSIDE POCKET

COVER DESIGN BY RONALD CLYNE

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INTRODUCTION

The oral tradition as an integral part of our American heritage is coming into its own. For such a long time we were lulled into the belief that the oral tradition in folk song belonged to the rural folk, semilliterate Appalachian or Ozark who passed along ballads they little understood. Not so! The migration to urban and industrial areas, ease of travel and universal education have given us a new look in folk singers and the rise of research centers has given us an opportunity to re-examine our traditions. The ambitious recording projects of Folkways Records and the Library of Congress have preserved many of our musical folk heritages. Analysis and performances of the tunes are essential to their protection and continuance.

Loman Cansler has established himself as a performer on his album Missouri Folk Songs (Folkways FH 5324) and in personal appearances at the Smithsonian Folklife Festival in 1968, at the Missouri Folklife Festival in St. Louis in 1971, and the "Sears Night" 4-H Club Regional Meeting, Kansas City Music Hall in 1972. His articles on folksongs, traditional and composed, and other folklore genre have appeared in regional folklore society and university journals and are recognized for their scholarship and clarity. Alfred Frankenstein wrote in the San Francisco Chronicle, "He is a first-rate singer and guitarist, and his record (Missouri Folk Songs) is one of the best state collections to be found on a disc. This is partly due to Cansler's taste and skill and partly to the fact that Missouri is a crossroad of east and west, north and south, and so its folklore is tremendously rich and varied."

When Mr. Cansler became a counselor at North Kansas City High School, he did not put away his collecting, researching, or performing activities. While his first album concentrated on Missouri folk songs he has not limited his activities to his native state. In expanding his present repertoire to include songs of the Mid-west he shows us how these songs, universal in character, have been collected from urban or near-urban sources but which still reflect the rural, agrarian culture of our immediate past. In no way has Mr. Cansler allowed his own education to intrude in his performances. He retains the vitality and freshness inherent in the songs. His analyses attempt to transcend mere program note format. His contribution as acknowledged by Ray M. Lawless in Folk-singers and Folksongs in America (2nd ed., N.Y.: Meredith Press, 1965) and Irwin Stambler and Grelun Landon's Encyclopedia of Folk, Country and Western Music. (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1969) is impressive, the proof is in the pudding, or more correctly in the hearing. Draw your chair up, and give a little listen to --.

Jack L. Ralston, Director
Institute for Studies in American Music

Cover Material

Cansler, Loman D. educator; b. Long Lane, Dallas County, Mo; s. Pruitt H. and Nettie (Broyles). B.S. and M.S. in ed. 1950, Univ. of Mo., Columbia; m. Laura McElwain, 1952. children -- Philip, Joel, Myra. 1950 to 1952, teacher and counselor, Fayette, Mo.; 1952 to present, North Kansas City, Mo. Articles, in Ozark Guide, Western Folklore, Southern Folklore Quarterly, Kentucky Folklore Record, Mo. Council of the Social Studies Bull., Studies in the Literary Imagination. Home: Houston Lake, Mo.

ADAM AND EVE

A few of the songs that my grandfather, James R. Broyles (1865-1957), sang for me to

record in 1954, stirred a vague consciousness that had been registered in my memory during childhood, but this one -- except the melody -- escapes me. Grandpa said that he learned the song in his youth, "down below Lebanon" near the Osage Forks River in Laclede County, Missouri. His grandfather and father migrated from White County, Tennessee, just a few years prior to the Civil War.

While I have not found this song in print, I think of it as a White Spiritual and believe it was probably printed in a Nineteenth Century Protestant church hymnal.

Adam and Eve lived all alone
The Garden of Eden was their home.
And I don't want to stay away,
I don't want to stay away,
I don't want to die in Egypt Land.

All kind of fruit that ever did grow
Was planted there just in a row.
(Refrain is repeated after each stanza)

Forbidding fruit grow on a tree
The Lord told Adam for to let it be.

Adam and Eve knowed that wasn't right
Adam and Eve both took a bite.

THE LITTLE FAMILY

The school year had just ended in 1960 when our family decided to accept Mr. and Mrs. Malvern "Red" Rabeneck's invitation to spend some time at their place on the Buffalo River in Searcy County, Arkansas. Much of my time was spent collecting folklore.

At Gilbert, Mr. Clinton Spriggs sang two stanzas of an untitled song that turned out to be my first contact with "The Little Family." Born in Wayne County, Illinois, in 1875, Mr. Spriggs and his wife had moved to Arkansas in 1924.

Twenty-seven days after visiting Clinton Spriggs -- the last day of June, in fact -- Mrs. Bettie (White) Wilcox, Wayne County, Missouri, sang a song "about Lazarus" that she had learned from her mother, Mary (Twidwell) White, seventy years before. Her's is the version used for this album.

While my wife, Laura, and our three small children stayed near the tent pitched in the Sam Baker State Park, I spent most of the day recording Mrs. Wilcox. The thirty to forty-five minutes it took Mrs. Wilcox to recall all the stanzas of the song, I felt was time well spent. She told me how at the age of eight her mother read for her the Biblical account of Jesus raising Lazarus from the dead, and then ended by singing this story "about Lazarus."

It was about one month later in 1960 that ninety-five year old, William T. Herd, Ozark County, Missouri, sang his version -- without a title -- of "The Little Family."

All three versions have a similar tune.

References:

Cox, p. 407; Belden, p. 447; Brown, III, 648-652; Eddy, p. 295; Gardner/Chickering, p. 366; Jackson (SFSEA), p. 36; Randolph, IV, 48. In Jackson (WS), he says the tune is about the same as Sharp's "Johnny German." See also, Laws, p. 233.

There was a little family
Who lived in Bethany,
Two sisters and a brother
Composed the family.
With singing and with shouting
Like angels in the sky,
At evening and morning
They raised their voices high.

Though poor and without money,
 Their kindness made amend,
 Their house was ever open
 To Jesus and his friends.
 Although they lived so happy,
 So kind so pure and good,
 Their brother was afflicted
 And by it thrown in bed.
 Poor Martha and her sister
 They wept aloud and cried,
 But still he grew no better,
 He lingered on and died.
 The Jews came to the sisters
 Laid Lazarus in the tomb,
 They tried for to comfort
 And drive away the gloom.
 When Jesus heard the tidings
 When in a distant land,
 So swiftly he did travel
 To see the lonely band.
 When Martha saw him coming
 She met him on the way,
 She told him that her brother
 Had died and passed away.
 When he was saw a-coming
 Mary met 'em too,
 Down at his feet a weeping
 Rehearsed the tale of woe.
 When Jesus saw her weeping
 He fell a weeping, too,
 He wept until they showed Him
 Where Lazarus was entombed.
 He rolled away the cover,
 And looked upon the grave,
 And prayed to the Father
 His friend Lazarus to save.
 Then Lazarus with full vigor
 Came from the gloomy mound,
 With full life and vigor
 He walked upon the ground.

All you who love Jesus
 And do his blessed will,
 Like Martha and like Mary
 He'll always use you well.
 He'll comfort and redeem you
 And take you home to rest,
 And bid you live forever
 Where pleasures never die.

THE STEPMOTHER

My wife, Laura's maternal grandmother, Edith (Miner) Walker (1869-1941), compiled a remembrance or manuscript book between the ages of twelve and fifteen. She lived in Knox County, Illinois. Among the songs that I copied from the book in December, 1951, was "The Stepmother."

During the summer of 1954, in Peoria County, I collected a shorter version and the tune of this song from eighty-eight year old, Mrs. Etta (Camp) Conover. The next summer, Mrs. Ivy Stemler, from the same Illinois county, sang a version similar in content and melody to that of Mrs. Conover. She called it, "I Could Not Call Her Mother." (Mrs. Stemler was born in Lee County in 1871.)

When I played these versions for my Mother-in-Law, Lillie McElwain, she thought their melodies went about the same as she remembered her mother singing the song.

Some people tend to lump such songs as "The Stepmother" as sentimental, tear-jerkers, or some other title implying make-believe or contrived situations. That such songs do exist, I will admit. But, I have known a number of high school youth who have wrestled with the attitudes and deep-seated feelings that are portrayed in this song. In fact, Mrs. Conover's chuckle that June day in 1954, spanned eighty-odd years and revealed a similar deep-seated emotion, when she told how an older friend, Jenny, who had a stepmother, used to sing this song and substitute "a darn sight blacker face" instead of the words, "a fairer younger face."

References:

See Pound (FSNCW) and Randolph, IV, 196.

The marriage vow was over
 And I turned myself aside,
 To keep the guests from seeing
 Those tears I could not hide.

I wreathed myself in smiles
 And led my little brother,
 To greet my father's chosen
 But I could not call her Mother.

She was a fair young creature
 With meek and gentle air,
 With blue eyes soft and lovely
 And dark and sunny hair.
 I knew my father gave her
 The love he bore another,
 But if she were an angel
 Oh, I could not call her Mother.
 Last night I heard her singing
 Those songs I used to love,
 When every word was uttered
 By the one that sings above.
 It painted my heart to hear her;
 Those tears I could not smother,
 When every note was uttered
 By the dear voice of my Mother.
 They changed my Mother's portrait
 From its old accustomed place,
 And hung beside my father's
 A fairer younger face.
 They made her dear old chamber
 The boudoir of another,
 But still I can't forget her
 My own, my angel, Mother.
 My father in the sunshine
 Of happier days to come,
 Will not forget the sorrow
 Which darkens our dear home.
 But he is no more lonely,
 But I and little brother
 Must still be orphan children,
 God gave us but one Mother.

Notes:

Edith (Miner) Walker arranged this song in nine stanzas of four lines each. Mrs. Stemler's handwritten copy showed stanzas of four lines, also, but the portion of the song she sang for me was a stanza with eight lines.

For this album I have borrowed four lines found in both the versions from Peoria County to form the last part of stanza four. Making the real mother's chamber "...the boudoir of another..." adds to the completeness of this song and readies the listener for the ultimate expression of ambivalence.

THE LAST FIERCE CHARGE

Also known by the title, "Two Soldiers," some believe this song depicts the Battle of Fredericksburg where General Lee's army defeated General Burnside's men, December 13, 1862. From the hills along the Rappahannock River, known as Marye's Heights, the Confederate forces repelled wave after wave of Union men as they hopelessly tried to gain command of the hills and eventually take over this city in Virginia.

Whether this song actually was based upon this battle does not detract from its authenticity. The thoughts expressed by these two men are common to the thoughts of men in any battle of any war. That the feelings expressed by these two men are genuine -- not morbid sentimentality -- of the men who fought in the Civil War, particularly, is substantiated time and again by the information presented in Bell Irvin Wiley's book, *THE COMMON SOLDIER IN THE CIVIL WAR*.

I collected this song in Dallas County, Missouri, from Charles D. Scott, an outstanding bearer of tradition, July 9, 1954. He thought that his grandfather, Julius (1838-1925), a soldier in the Union Army, Company K, 12th Regiment, Missouri Volunteer Cavalry, brought the song home with him or started singing it very soon after the War was over.

References:

Beiden, pp. 383-387; Brown, II, 539; Eddy, pp. 301-305; Pound (FSNCW), p. 39; Laws, pp. 126-127; Randolph, II, 297.

'Twas just before the last fierce charge
 Two soldiers drew their rein,
 With a parting look and a touch of the hand
 They may never meet again.
 One had blue eyes and curly hair
 Nineteen but a month ago;
 There was red on his cheeks, down on his chin,

He was only a boy you know.

The other was tall and dark and proud
His faith in the world was dim,
He only trusted the more in her
Who was all the world to him.
They had rode together for many a day,
Had marched for many a mile;
And always before had met the foe
With a calm and a happy smile.

But today they looked each other in the face
With an awful ghastly gloom;
The tall dark man was the first to speak,
Saying, "Charley, my time has come.
We'll ride together upon this hill
But you'll ride back alone;
Oh, promise me, Charley, some trouble to
take

For me when I am gone.

"You'll find a picture upon my breast
I'll wear it into the fight;
With dark blue eyes and curly hair
Like thine 'tis morning light.
Like morning light 'tis gladness to me
In the lone dark hour of gloom,
But little cared I for the frown of fate
When she promised to be my own.

"Write to her, Charley, when I am gone,
Send back this fair fond face;
Tell, Oh, tell her how I died
And where is my resting place.
Tell her that I will wait for her
On the borderline between
Heaven and earth until she comes,
It won't be long I dream."

Tears filled the blue eyes of the boy
His voice was low with pain,
"I'll do your bidding, comrade mine,
If I ride back again.
But should I be left and you ride back
Will you do as much for me?"

I've a Mother at home must hear the news
Oh, write to her tenderly."
"One after another of those she loved
She has buried a husband and a son,
And I was the last my country called
She cheered me and sent me on.
She's praying at home like a weeping Saint
Her fond face wet with tears;
Her heart'll be broken when I am gone,
I'll see her no more, I fear."
Just then the order came to charge
For an instant hand touched hand,
They answered it and on they went
That brave devoted band.

And on they went to the top of the hill
Where the Rebels with shot and shell,
Poured rifle blast into their ranks
And cheered them as they fell.
At last they reached that awful height
The height that was hard to gain,
And those that death had kindly spared
Rode slowly back again.
But among the ones who was left behind
Was the boy with the curly hair,
And the tall dark man who rode by his side
In death lay sleeping there.
No one to tell the blue eyed girl
The words her lover said,
A mother at home waits for her boy
To hear that he is dead.
May never more sorrow come to her
But soothe and soften her pain;
Until she crosses the River of Death
And stands by his side again.

Notes:

Mrs. Conover (see, "Josiah and His Sally") sang a fragment of this song for me, another version came from Laura Setser (see, "Charley Brooks"), and finally, Miss Sissy Williams of Dallas County, Missouri, gave me the words in 1952 that she had clipped from the local newspaper many years before. All three versions used the title of the "Two Soldiers." None were as complete as Scott's.

On my album issued in 1959 by Folkways Records (FH 5324, MISSOURI FOLK SONGS), four of the fourteen songs were collected from Charlie Scott (1895-1961): "The Lovers' Quarrel," "Joe Bowers," "Far Away," and "A Knot of Blue and Gray."

OLD MOTHER HUBBARD

Most anyone interested in children's lore will recognize the title and first stanza of this song as traditional. However, I have yet to find a Mother Goose version similar to this one collected in 1954, Knox County, Illinois, from Mrs. Ruth (Grant) Eggerstedt. Born in Jackson County, Iowa, Mrs. Eggerstedt learned the song from her mother, Louesa (Nelson) Grant (1877-1931), who was also born in Iowa.

Ruth accompanied herself on the piano when she sang Old Mother Hubbard for me back in 1954. She said that her mother also played the piano.

In March, 1972, I learned that Mrs. Eggerstedt had retired in 1966, and in a telephone conversation with her, she told me that her maternal grandparents had come from Denmark (Schleswig-Holstein area) when her grandmother was a girl of about fifteen.

References:

Miss Judith St. John of the Osborne Collection, Toronto, Canada Public Library (see NOTES under "Little Dame Crump"), in a letter, March 20, 1972, stated that she could "...throw no light..." on this variant of "Old Mother Hubbard."

Old Mother Hubbard she went to the cupboard
To get her poor doggie a bone,
But when she got there the cupboard was bare
And so the poor doggie got none.
Poor doggie looked up with a tear in his eye
Because he was hungry, you know;
He wagged his tail, his little short tail,
And said to her, "Bow-wow-wow."

Old Mother Hubbard then turned from the cupboard

And said, "Now come along Snap!
We'll go to Dame Hines and if she is kind,
I'm sure she will give us a scrap."
The Dame was at home and she said when they came,

"There's enough for both of you now,
Some mutton and shanks,"
Mother Hubbard said, "Thanks!"
And doggie said, "Bow-wow-wow."

Old Mother Hubbard oft turned to the cupboard,
But seldom could meet with a bone.
It's hard to be old and hungry and cold
With poor little doggie alone.

My Maw is so good she would give her some
food
If old Mother Hubbard lived now;
How happy we'd be, Mother Hubbard to see!
And hear her dog say, "Bow-wow."

Notes:

Still living in Knox County, Mrs. Eggerstedt remarried after her husband's death and is now Mrs. Ruth Childers.

OL' KING GUINE

Born in 1866, this Missourian, a native Ozark Countian, had split many rails in his day and still had a huge pile of wood split and ready for the kitchen stove, when my wife, Laura, our three small children, and I introduced ourselves that June morning in 1960. After Mr. William T. Herd and his widowed daughter, Mrs. Allie Mahan, showed us the garden he tended, where he still used a horse to pull the double-shovel plow for the corn, potatoes, tomatoes, and the like, I set up the tape recorder and accepted their invitation to stay for dinner.

Laura was flattered when ninety-one year old Mrs. Herd, who was blind, asked permission to feel her face so that she could know what Laura looked like. We were invited to come back. I had collected three or four songs on this visit.

Almost two months later, July 27, I paid my second visit to the Herds, taking my mother along to meet these hospitable, genuine folk. Fortunately, Mrs. Mahan had jotted down names of songs, stanzas of some, and other reminders, that her father had sung since my first visit with them.

Altogether Mr. Herd recalled fragments to complete songs numbering twenty-four during my two sessions with him, including "My Old Parents (theme of the girl left behind but mentions St. James' Square and Margaret Reilly)," "The Younger Boys," and a long untitled song, "Colonel Sharp." This last one Mr. Herd said was learned when he was a boy from an old man, Bud Southers, who said that

"he knew the song to be true."

When Mr. Herd sang "Ol' King Quine" for me, he left out the "fifers" in the sequential build up, but they fell into place behind the drummers at the next opportunity when the lyrics reversed and wound themselves all the way back to the "fiddlers." While Mr. Herd seemed perturbed that he could not recall more stanzas for the song, I was elated since no one had sung it for me before. And I might add, not in the twelve years since, either.

References:

I have been unable to locate this song in print. Could it be a Mother Goose melody or a variant of "Old King Cole?"

Apparently the song is not in the Osborne Collection (see the Notes under "Little Dame Crump").

Ol' King Quine an' he called for his wine
And he called for his fiddlers three,
Every fiddler could play well
For a very fine fiddle had he.
Fiddle fiddle fiddle goes your fiddler,
And we'll sing to the girls in old Scotline
Come play a fine tune like thee.

Ol' King Quine an' he called for his wine
And he called for his harpers three,
Every harper could play well
For a very fine harp had he.
Twingle twingle twingle goes your harper,
Fiddle fiddle fiddle etc.

Ol' King Quine an' he called for his wine
And he called for his fifers three,
Every fifer could play well
For a very fine fife had he.
Tootie ootie 1 goes your fifer,
Twingle twingle twingle etc.

Ol' King Quine an' he called for his wine
And he called for his drummers three,
Every drummer could play well
For a very fine drum had he.
Rubby dubby dubby goes your drummer,
Tootie ootie 1 etc.

Ol' King Quine an' he called for his wine
And he called for his farmers three,
Every farmer could farm well
For a very fine farm had he.
'Hoe Buckadevil says your farmer,
Rubby dubby dubby etc.

Ol' King Quine an' he called for his wine
And he called for his barbers three,
Every barber could shave well
For a very fine razor had he.
Haul away your snout says the barber
'Hoe Buckadevil says your farmer,
Rubby dubby dubby goes your drummer,
Tootie ootie 1 goes your fifer,
Twingle twingle twingle goes your harper,
Fiddle fiddle fiddle goes your fiddler,
And we'll sing to the girls in old Scotline
Come play a fine tune like thee.

Notes:

Even though Mr. Herd was alert, his being hard of hearing made communicating with him difficult. I find myself wondering how much was missed in my not meeting him some twenty years before.

A note from Mrs. Mahan several years ago informed me that her father, William T. Herd, had died at the age of ninety-nine.

AUNT JEMIMA'S PLASTER

I first collected "Aunt Jemima" in July, 1954, from Charley Scott, Dallas County, Missouri, and had already been singing the song publicly when Mr. Ralph Wills, Knox County, Illinois, sang a similar version for me in June, 1956. Ralph's "Aunt Jemima's Plaster" had a first stanza four lines longer than the other three and a chorus much longer than Scott's.

Where Mr. Wills learned this song is not known, but his father came from Ohio to Illinois in about 1850. This Illinois version has no stanza about "a sister very tall" and ends with the admonition "...And if you wish to live in peace / Avoiding all disaster / Take my advice and try the strength of Aunt Jemima's Plaster."

With an unbridled imagination, one can easily see the humor this song reflects with respect to the era in our Country's history when "granny women," midwives, or other practitioners -- of which there

were many -- plied their home remedies to bring about cures or relief from colds, thrash, bold hives, the seven-year itch, ringworm, warts, and other such ailments and diseases. Then as now -- every, or almost every endeavor -- found the Aunt Jemima's usually present. So, too, were the few who knew how to sprinkle the proper amounts of humor and satire.

In my public performances I have combined the two versions into the one as it is sung on this album. That is, I use the first stanza and chorus from the Illinois version, and the other stanzas as they appear in the Missouri version. The Missouri text is printed below.

References:

See Brown, II, 628 and Randolph, IV, 153, where the former states that J. Andrews of New York printed "Bees Wax" which was sung by Dan Emmet, it being no doubt the original form of "Aunt Jemima's Plaster," though neither North Carolina version very closely follow Emmet's lyrics.

Aunt Jemima she was old
But very kind and clever,
She had a notion of her own
That she would marry never.
She said that she would live in peace
That none should be her master,
She made her living day by day
Selling of a plaster.

Chorus (after each stanza):
Sheepskin and beeswax
Made that awful plaster,
The more you tried to get it off
The more it stuck the faster.

There was a thief at night and day
Kept stealing from the neighbors.

None could keep the rascal out
With all their tricks and labors.
She set a trap upon the step
And caught him with the plaster,
The more he tried to get away
The more it stuck the faster.

She had a sister very tall
And if she's kept on growing,
She might have been a giant now
In fact there is no knowing.
All of a sudden she became
Of her own height the master,
And all because upon each foot
Jemima put a plaster.
Her neighbor had a Thomas cat
That ate like any glutton,
He never caught a mouse or rat
But stole both milk and mutton.
To keep it home she tried her best
But n'er could be its master,
Until she stuck it to the floor
With Aunt Jemima's plaster.

Now if you have a dog or cat,
A husband, wife or lover,
That you would wish to keep at home
This plaster just discover.
Jemima she was taken sick
You may not believe this story
But she put a plaster on her head
And it drew her up to Glory.

CHARLEY BROOKS (Two Letters)

From early childhood days I can remember hearing my parents sing this song. Mom was more apt to sing as she went about the housework; Dad, relaxing by the wood-burning stove after supper during the winter months, or sitting on the front porch singing the sun down in the summertime.

Quite often, too, each would chord on the Pump organ and sing this, other traditional songs, and especially religious songs.

Dad's paternal uncles, Charley and Henry, both sang this song and played it on the fiddle and the organ. They probably learned the song from their mother, Margaret (Hinkle) Cansler. My parents think that they learned the song from Charley's daughters, Lydia and Eva, but Mom told me recently that "Almost everybody knew the song back then." (1918)

Reference:

See Randolph, IV, 211.

It's a year since I left the city
 I find I've changed my mind
 But pray don't think me fickle
 Or dream me the least unkind.
 I find that we're both mistaken,
 I know that you'd never suit me,
 But as my heart is another's
 I hope my friend you'll agree.

Please send me the ring I gave you
 The photograph, too, as is fair,
 And please be so kind as to free me
 From a bit of a flirt, Ada, dear.
 And send me the locket I gave you
 And also the letters and books,
 Henceforth we are strangers, Miss Ada,
 Respectively (sic) yours, Charley Brooks.

I received your letter, dear Charley,
 The last one you wrote to me,
 I've read it over and over
 Of course, my friend, I agree.
 I'd rather that you would be happy
 With the fine young heiress Miss Gray,
 I've heard all about it, dear Charley,
 And I thought it would end this way.

Oh, here is your picture, dear Charley,
 It's almost faded away
 Because I've kissed it so often
 And this you must tell Miss Gray.
 And here are your letters, dear Charley,
 I burned mine up as they came
 And I think without reading them over,
 You'll commit them all to the flame.

And here is your ring, dear Charley,
 Don't give it to her, I pray
 Unless you tell her 'twas once mine
 And I've had it one year today.
 Only a year, dear Charley,
 Happy were we both
 You swore that you'd never forsake me
 But you proved untrue to your oath.
 Oh, now I will say goodbye
 My letter is at an end
 But, Oh, remember, dear Charley,
 I'm forever and ever your friend.

Notes:

Besides the version from my Mother and Father (Nettie and Pruitt H. Cansler, Dallas County, Missouri), I have three other versions of this song, all collected in Missouri. The first from Jasper County, taken in 1950 from the Remembrance Book of T.J. Rodgers' Grandmother, Laura Setser, who was born in 1870. She called the song, "Two Letters." The next text by the same title comes from Chariton County, as known by Mr. Warren Wolf, and sent to me in 1958 by Mr. Ellis Huling. Mr. Wolf sang the song earlier that summer to me -- a tune similar to the one learned from my parents -- but I did not have time then to record him. The third version of "Charley Brooks" I collected from Mrs. Georgia (Coppedge) Oaks, Kansas City, in 1960, but she had learned it in Phelps County, where she was reared.

The Parlor organ (Kimball) that I chord for singing this song, is the pride of Mrs. Marianna (Taylor) McAfee, Platte County. Her husband, Arthur, replaced the worn out bellows with a motor several years ago, which eliminates the need for pumping.

Mrs. McAfee's Grandfather, Nathan Ridgeway, a Quaker preacher, migrated from Amboy, Indiana, prior to 1872, and named his daughter born in that year, Indiana. Before her birth he had said that he would buy an organ if their baby were a girl. Later that year he rode horseback from McLouth (Jefferson County, Kansas) to Leavenworth, Kansas,

bought the organ for Indiana and had it shipped by train. Before her death in 1959, Mrs. Indiana Taylor gave the organ to her daughter, Marianna McAfee.

For this recording, I only had three stops out: Celeste, Vox Humana, and Diapason. Imagine the volume of sound if all eleven stops had been at the out position and the knee swells fully opened!

JOSIAH AND HIS SALLY

The first and only time this song was ever sung to me was in June, 1954, by Mrs. Etta (Camp) Conover (1866-1959), Peoria County, Illinois.

Charlie Scott of Dallas County, Missouri told me that he had heard the song but he could recall neither the lyrics nor its melody. Mrs. Conover learned the song at the age of six, probably from a brother-in-law, a native Kentuckian, rather than from her father who came from the state of Ohio.

'Twas Sunday night in Podunk Valley
 Clear cold winter weather,
 Josiah Perkins and his Sally
 Sat by the fire together.

The apples by the chimney lug
 Was slowly getting warmer,
 The cider in the pewter mug
 Was bubbling in the corner.

A wooden settle firm and good
 Their loving forms supported,
 'Twas made of seasoned white pine wood
 And just the thing for courting.

At one end Sally stuck like pitch
 While Josiah seemed to fear her,
 Until at length he gave a hitch
 And he got a little nearer.
 Sal, cast her eyes down, looked quite tame,
 Though very sweetly blushing;
 While all the blood in Josh's frame
 Seemed to his face a gushing.
 He hitched again and he got quite near,
 He could not then resist her;
 He called her his own, Sally, dear,
 And bashfully he kissed her.

Good gracious! Sal gave a start from him,
 Her anger did not smother;
 Says she, "If you do that again
 Now, Josh, I'll tell my Mother!"
 They soon made up and Sal came back
 And she calmed her agitation,
 When last I saw them through the crack
 They were kissing like tarnation.

WILL, THE WEAVER

Mrs. Gertrude (Pollack) McKee, Peoria County, Illinois, told me in July of 1955, that she was born in 1876 and had learned "Will, the Weaver," when she was a young girl.

Stopping by to see her the next summer, I was told that she had died earlier in the year. Then -- and many times since -- I recalled how she teetered so near to singing and so close to not singing, that summer day. That I had not collected this song before, nor in the seventeen years since, serves to keep this memory ever present.

Even though "Will, the Weaver," is traced to a British broadside (Laws, p. 280), this does not detract from its value. An accurate portrayal of society as it exists and has existed, is not complete without such songs.

References:

See Brewster, p. 360; Randolph, IV, 413; and Sharp, p. 204.

"Mother, Mother, now I've married
 How I wish I'd longer tarried
 For my wife she does declare
 That the britches, she will wear."
 "Son, Oh, son, go home and love her
 And to me no more discover.
 Give that daughter what's 'er due
 And let me hear no more from you."
 "I'll give her gold, I'll give her silver,
 I'll give her all things if she's clever;
 'Pon my word, she does rebel
 Take a stick and thrash her well."
 So, this poor man went home in a blunder.
 At the door he rapped like thunder.
 "Who is there?" the Weaver cried!
 "'Tis my husband, you must hide."
 So up the chimney he did venture,
 Then she let her husband enter;
 Soon as the clat began to glow -- Oh,
 Thinking husband would not know.
 "Oh, wife, Oh, wife, give me no reflections,
 You've got to go by my directions.
 Draw me some beer for I am dry,"
 Thus her husband did reply.
 He searched the house all around and around
 And not a soul could there be found.
 'Til up the chimney he did gaze
 And there he saw the soul amaze.

'N there he saw the ragged soul
Stickin' a straddle of the chimney pole.

"Oh! Will, Oh! Will, I'm glad I found you
For I'll neither hang nor drown'd you."
But thus was thought but nothing spoke,
"I will trifle you with smoke."

So, he kicked up a roaring fire
Just to please his own desire.
His wife cried out with a free good will,
"Husband! Husband! the man you'll kill!
Take him down, spare his life,
For I become your lawful wife."

So off the chimney pole he took him,
'Round the room like fun he shook him;
Crying out at every stroke,
"Come back no more to stop my smoke."
I never saw a chimney sweeper
Half as black as Will, the Weaver;
His hands, his face, his clothes likewise,
Sent him home with two black eyes.

DICK NORMAN, THE COBBLER

My only version of this song was collected in July, 1959, from Mr. Clark Bell, Henry County, Illinois. Born in the state of Indiana in 1871, Mr. Bell's parents moved to Decatur County, Kansas, when he was seven. At an early age he learned this song from his father, and at 88 still sang with much gusto.

He told me when he helped build the 150 mile stretch of railroad through the Black Hills of South Dakota in 1890, that in the evening around the campfire, men told tales, sung songs, swapped stories, and the like. Even in 1959, Mr. Bell still walked to and from work five and six days a week. His work included answering the telephone, taking down messages, and other routine tasks.

When Mr. Bell sang "Dick Norman, the Cobbler," he accompanied himself, as his father before him had, with hand and arm movements done in rhythm with the melody. Seating himself, he began singing with his arms widely extended. Then he brought his hands in a sweeping motion -- slightly downward -- until they met near his waistline. With a quick motion of the right hand as though he were pushing a needle through tough leather, releasing it momentarily, only to grab the needle again and pull it on through; then half-flinging the hands slightly upward and outward, he would be back to where he started -- with his arms widely extended. Each line of the song found Mr. Bell making a complete swoop of the hands from the extended position to the center and back again, all done in rhythm with his singing.

When the last chorus began, Mr. Bell clinched his right fist and began pounding rhythmically on his right knee. The pounding became a little harder when he began the last line of the chorus, and ended with the hardest lick being struck on the last word. Consequently, the last nail had been sunk in the heel of the shoe, and perhaps with it. Dick Norman symbolically buried his wife who was "...the Devil's grandmother to scold me...."

References:

See Gardner/Chickering; Pound (FSNCW), p. 68; Randolph, I, 385; and Flanders, pp. 223-224, where the latter reports it as "Old Hewson, the Cobbler," and tells about John Hewson, a shoemaker, who aided Cromwell in the Irish campaign of 1649-50, later became unpopular and fled to Amsterdam for fear Charles II would put him to death since Hewson earlier had signed a death warrant for Charles I.

My name is Dick Norman, the Cobbler,
I've served all my time up in Kent;
They call me an old persecutor
But now I'm resolved to repent.
Chorus (sung after each stanza):

Tum a wing fing fingle die do,
Tum a wing fing fingle O day,
Tum a huba-bub, huba-bub blarry,
What folly do diddle O day!

My wife, she's blue-eyed, she's blickie,
She's old, she's homely, she's black;
She's the Divil's grandmother to scold me,
And her tongue, it goes clickety clack.

We parted very early one morning,
'Twas about three hours before light;
I gave her three ducks in the river,
And cautiously bid her goodnight.

THE REVOLUTIONARY TEA

Mrs. Pearl (Stull) Stansbury (1895-1971), Holt County, Missouri, learned this song from her teacher, Florence Wartham, Spirit Lake Grade School, Dickinson County, Iowa. When Mrs. Stansbury sang this song for me to record here at our house in southern Platte County, March, 1963, she sang from one of her handwritten Remembrance Books that she had begun compiling at the age of ten in her native Iowa.

Even though her mother, Mary Lucy (Noffsinger) Stull (born in 1870), sang several traditional songs, Mrs. Stansbury learned most of her songs at the Grade Schools she attended in Iowa. Among other things, new songs were sometimes learned at the opening exercises that usually preceded the more formal learning activities of the day. Some teachers, according to Mrs. Stansbury, also had such exercises when "books took up" after the noon hour.

When Pearl's older brother, Homer, was alive and younger, he played the fiddle and she would second after him on the Pump or Parlor organ. She also accompanied herself on the organ and sang many of her songs. Unfortunately, I never got to record either of these occasions.

References:

Morris, p. 19, has a similar version to this one in content, and reports that "Emerson's THE GOLDEN WREATH, a singing-school manual of 1857, contains a variant of 'Revolutionary Tea' quite similar to this Florida piece."

See Laws, p. 130, for other references to this song.

There was an old lady lived over the sea
And she was an island queen,
Her daughter lived off in a new country
With an ocean of water between.
The old lady's pockets were filled with gold
But never contented was she,
So she called on her daughter to pay her a
tax
Of three pence a pound on her tea --
Of three pence a pound on her tea.

"Now, Mother, dear Mother," the daughter
replied,
"I shan't do a thing you ax (ask).
I'm willing to pay a fair price for the tea
But never the three penny tax."
"You shall" quoth the mother and reddened
with rage
"For you're my own daughter you see,
And sure 'tis quite proper the daughter
should pay
Her mother a tax on her tea --
Her mother a tax on her tea.

And so the old lady her servants called up
And packed off a budget of tea,
And wages for three pence a pound she put on,
Enough for a large fam-i-ly.
She ordered her servants to bring home the
tax,
Declaring her child should obey;
Or old as she was and almost woman grown
She'd half whip her life away --
She'd half whip her life away.

The tea was conveyed to the daughter's door
All down by the ocean side,
And the bouncing girl poured out every pound
In the dark and boiling tide.
And then she called out to the island queen,
"Oh, Mother, dear Mother," quoth she,
"Your tea you may have when 'tis steeped
enough
But never the tax from me --
No, never, the tax from me."

THE DRUNKARD'S SONG

Had Mrs. Millie (Mack) Bright (1859-1958) called this "The Drunkard's Hic-cup," that June day in 1954 when I called at her house in Knox County, Illinois, I might have been spared a few

uneasy moments. But I'm getting ahead of the story.

The temperature just about matched Mrs. Bright's age that summer day when I knocked on the screen door of her small house. As she moved near the door I introduced myself, told her who had suggested that I see her, and of my interest in preserving the songs of her childhood and youth. She told me that she used to sing but asthma, heart trouble, arthritis, and old age had all but ended that once enjoyable pastime. I interjected that anything she could recall would be worthwhile.

"Well, there was a song my father used to sing (she was born in Indiana and thought he was born in Ireland) that I liked a lot. Maybe if I thought about it awhile, I could get it together for you." Anyway, she told me that she would sing it and then I could decide if I wanted it.

By this time Mrs. Bright had stepped outside and we sat down on the rock step in the direct sunlight. She began the song with me reflecting about her age and health condition there in the heat and wondering if I had been wise in coaxing her to sing.

The first few lines as well as the melody were unfamiliar to me. The next moment my heart tried to move into my throat when this aged woman seemed to be gasping or trying to catch her breath. Many thoughts flooded my consciousness. None, I hasten to say, were pleasant! Then simultaneously with her chuckle, it dawned on me that the break in the song -- what I took as gasping for air -- belonged in the song and was, indeed, a hic-cup!

Later when we were inside the house and I was readying the tape recorder, I learned that this was her favorite song. In fact, once when she was very ill and had thoughts about death, she sent for her father and asked that he sing this song. She frankly admitted to me, a stranger that her spirits were greatly lifted when her father gladly obliged.

While this was the only song Mrs. Bright sang for me, she used to know others, including McInfee's Confession. In fact, her father, she said, had known McInfee in Indiana before he poisoned his wife.

Reference:

See Randolph, Ill, 134.

I went up the road one very dark night,
I saw a big dog and I thought he would bite,
I thought in my soul that dog he would bite

me,
(Hiccup) 'um, what shall I do?
(Hiccup) 'um where shall I go?
I wonder if I'll ever get home!
I went up the road 'til I came to a well,
My foot slipped and in it I fell,
So ggodbye world and howdy-do-Hell!
(Hiccup) 'um, what shall I do?

etc.
I went right home, right straight into bed,
They rattled a brandy keg over my head,
I thought in my soul they'd kill me stone
dead!

etc.

Mrs. Bright seemed to think that there was another stanza to the song -- a warning -- but she could not get it together.

BIRDIE DARLING

When Margaret Schroeder lived in Clay County, Missouri, she lent me the Remembrance Book that her mother had kept when she was young. Born in 1885, Myrtle (Windsor) Loomis, lived in Laclede County, Missouri, and wrote the songs in her book between 1891 and 1901. Some of the songs were also written in the keepsake book by an older half-brother, Floyd Windsor.

Less than three weeks after borrowing the Remembrance Book I visited Floyd in Laclede County and found that he knew most of the songs written in the book. That August afternoon in 1959, Floyd sang with genuine interest, "Birdie Darling." Somehow its melody fit both the symbolic and literal feelings portrayed in the story. I knew then that this was a song I

wanted to commit to memory. I was glad to get its melody on tape.

That was my first and last visit with Floyd Windsor. He sang and visited as though we had known each other for years. He knew of "Uncle" Jim Broyles, my grandfather, who had grown up several miles from where Floyd was reared. But the real rallying point, aside from the songs, themselves, was that I knew his niece, Mrs. Sydney Schroeder.

Reference:

See Belden, p. 210, for a version learned between 1865-70, having five stanzas and a chorus -- each consisting of four lines. No melody is provided. Belden notes that "This varies little from the print in Wehman's ballad series, No. 248..." and reports the song as being found in tradition from Illinois (see TALES AND SONGS OF SOUTHERN ILLINOIS, by Charles Neely and J.W. Spargo, 1938, pp. 254-57).

Fly across the ocean Birdie,
Fly across the glowing sea,
There you'll find a truant lover
Who has pledged his life to me.
Tell him how my heart is aching,
Aching that I gave him pain,
That my pride will not allow me
To recall those words again.
Chorus (after each stanza)
Birdie, Birdie, darling Birdie
Do not tarry on the way,
When you hear the ocean murmur
Birdie, Birdie, fly away.
Take with you this glossy ringlet
Place it on his bosom bare,
Tell him Birdie to remember
How my curls have nestled there.
Let him call to mind the moments
When our hearts were both so free,
When he pledged his life forever
Unto me, as unto me.
Let him think how once he faltered
'Neath the window by my side,
When he asked me would I love him,
When he asked me for his bride,
Fly away now, Birdie, darling,
Stay no more to hear me sigh;
There now, Birdie, bless you, bless you,
Bear the message through the skies.

LITTLE DAME CRUMP

Before I collected this song from Mrs. Henrietta (Osborn) Turner Black (1900-1971), August, 1957, she had sung it for our children while baby sitting with them. Henrietta learned the song from her mother, Loretta (Powers) Osborn, who was born near Atwood, Michigan, Charlevoix County, in 1868. Loretta, in turn, had learned the song from her father, Cyrenius Powers, who was born in New York State. A younger sister of Loretta's, ninety-five year old, Mrs. Mary (Powers) Acker, Lewis County, Washington, early this year sent her version of this song and stated that the Powers Family was in this Country two generations before the Revolutionary War.

When Cyrenius Powers, his wife, and eight children came to Kansas City, Kansas, in 1835, "Little Dame Crump" wasn't left behind. Traveling in two covered wagons, there was surely time to share their folklore heritage as the wagons creaked and strained along.

There in Kansas City, Kansas, Loretta married Joel "Jim" Osborn in 1887. Her parents and brothers and sisters migrated to the states of Washington and Idaho. The Osborns remained in Kansas City, Kansas, where their children, including Henrietta, were born and reared. In fact, most of Henrietta's life was lived in Kansas, outside of a brief stint in Dent and Platte Counties, Missouri, and the last decade with a son, Roy Turner, in Milwaukee, Wisconsin. References:

The chapbook version, THE HISTORY OF DAME CRUMP AND HER LITTLE WHITE PIG, S. Marks and Sons: London. ©1875.

Valentine, Mrs. Laura (Jewry), ed. AUNT LOUISA'S GOLDEN GIFT. Frederick Warne and Company: London (?) ©1875.

Little Dame Crump with her little hair broom,
One morning was sweeping her little bedroom;
When casting her little gray eyes on the ground
In a snug little corner a penny she found.

"Hum dum," said the Dame as she gazed with surprise,
 "How lucky I am, bless my soul what a prize!
 To market I'll go and a piggy I'll buy,
 And little Dan Cupid shall build him a sty."

So she washed her face clean and put on her gown,
 She locked up her house and started for town;
 And when she got there a bargain she made,
 And for a white piggy a penny she paid.
 When she purchased the pig she was puzzled to know,
 How they both would get home if the pig wouldn't go.
 And fearing that piggy would play her a trick,
 She drove him along with a little crab stick.
 Piggy trotted along 'till he came to the hill
 Where the bridge stood over the stream by the mill;
 There he snapped and he quaffed and no farther would go,
 "Oh, why little pig treat little Dame so?"
 So she went to the miller's and borrowed a sack,
 In it she popped piggy and put 'em on 'er back;
 Piggy squealed to get out but little Dame said,
 "If you won't go by fair means you'll have to be made."
 When at length to the end of their journey she came,
 She was mightily glad to get piggy home.
 Then she put little pig in a nice little sty
 And gave him an arm full of hay warm and dry.
 A hand full of peas little piggy she fed,
 Then put on her gown and jumped into bed;
 First saying her prayers and turned out the light,
 And being quiet tired, we'll bid her, good night!

Notes:

Dr. Katherine M. Briggs, Oxford, England, in reply to my enquiry of late 1971, wrote that "Little Dame Crump" was not in the Opies' *DICTIONARY OF NURSERY RHYMES*. I am grateful to her for referring me to Miss Judith St. John, Librarian in charge of the Osborne Collection of the Toronto Public Library, Ontario, Canada. Miss St. John sent me the words to both the chapbook and Valentine versions of this song; the former being very similar in content to Mrs. Black's. Four of its stanzas, however, make only one of Mrs. Black's.

The Valentine version is longer, consisting of twelve stanzas of four lines each. Whereas the chapbook used black and white illustrations, this one was printed in colors and gold with the original designs being created by M. Tilsey. Of particular interest to me was a portion of the preface Miss St. John included in her letter:

"... 'Little Dame Crump and her Pig' will, we hope, delight those young people who do not yet know her, while nearly everybody will welcome 'Hush-a-bye Baby'... as old friends..."

It would appear from this that "Little Dame Crump" was in oral circulation in England as it must have been in New York State when Cyrenius Powers lived there.

I have met two of Henrietta Black's sisters, Mrs. Ethel Snider, Wyandotte County, Kansas, and Mrs. Ruth Swearingen of Cowley County. They provided some information about the family and put me in touch with their Aunt, Mary (Powers) Acker, who has been very helpful.

WAIT FOR THE TURN OF THE TIDE

When Mrs. Nannie (Cunningham) Butler was twenty-three, she left her native Casey County, Kentucky, and came to Missouri. When she was eighty-five in 1960, her fingers could no longer pick the 5-string banjo, but she could still sing with much feeling. Had I met her twenty or twenty-five years before at her place there in Ray County, I would have got to hear her banjo talk. Had I lived near her in 1915 or Twenty, I would have been among the neighbor's who wandered up the hill before sundown and leaned against the stone wall that stood guard over the front porch where Mrs. Butler often sat and played and sang.

me that she had learned the song at the age of nine from a Great Uncle, John Dobkins, Dickinson County, Kansas. He, too, was a native of Kentucky.

Most likely the people who stood or sat along the rock wall in those days listening to Mrs. Butler sing, found some relevancy for their lives in the song, "Wait for the Turn of the Tide." She told in sailing along the river of life
 Over its waters wide,
 We all have to battle with struggle and strife
 And wait for the turn of the tide.
 Men of each other are prone to be jealous,
 Hopes and allusions are not what they seem;
 Life and its pleasures philosophers tell us
 Go floating away like a leaf on a stream.
 Chorus (after each stanza)
 Then try to be happy and gay my boys,
 Remember the world is wide;
 Rome wasn't built in one day my boys,
 So wait for the turn of the tide.

Some people sit fretting their lives away --
 I can't for a moment surmise,
 If life is a lottery as they say,
 We cannot all turn up the prize.
 Folly it is to be sad and dejected,
 If fortune shows favor, she's fickle besides.
 She may knock at your door some fine day unexpected
 If you patiently wait for the turn of the tide.

Man was sent in this world we're told
 To do all the good that he can,
 Yet how many worships the chain called gold
 And never once thinks of the man.
 If you are poor and your friends keep a distance,
 Hold up your head though your funds are but small;
 Once let the world know you need its assistance.
 Be sure then you never will get it at all.

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