

FIELD TRIP -- ENGLAND

COLLECTED BY **jean ritchie & george pickow**

EDITED BY **jean ritchie**



SIDE I, Band 1:

Two morris dances, "Leapfrog," and "The Guid Man of Ballingigh," played on the pipe and tabor by Winsome Bartlett at Dartington Hall, Devonshire.

For centuries, the pipe and tabor have been used to accompany morris dances, both in England and in the Basque country. It is a kind of one-man band, since both the pipe and the tabor (a small home-made drum) are played by one person at the same time. The player fingers the pipe with the left hand, while the drum, slung on the left wrist, is beaten by a stick held in the right hand. Douglas Kennedy, in his book, England's Dances, explains, "The ritual folkdance demands both pulse and drone, or continuo, the pulse giving the dancer his life while the drone sustains the movement, binding each part to make a whole."

SIDE I, Band 2: The Death of Queen Jane,
sung by Douglas Kennedy.

Many singers of this song, especially those in rural Scotland, will take oath that every word of it is true, and certainly it makes a dramatic tale. History, however, relates that Queen Jane died twelve days after giving birth to her son in a natural way. From a news point of view, one can readily understand that the broadsheet proclaiming that the Queen had her right side cut open would be a far better seller than it would be if the minstrel-author had kept to the facts. This ballad is popular in England, Scotland, and has several beautiful and heartrending American variants. It is sung here by the Director of the English Folk Song and Dance Society, a position he has held since the death of its founder, Cecil Sharp. Douglas Kennedy is a member of a great singing family, the Kennedys of Scotland.

Death of Queen Jane

(sung by Douglas Kennedy, London)

Queen Jane was in labor
For six days or more;
Till her women got tired
And wished it were o'er.

Good women, good women,
Good women if you be,
Will you send for King Henery,
For King Henery I must see.

King Henery was a-sent for
And King Henery did come home,
For to meet with Queen Jane. My Love,
Your eyes do look so dim.

King Henery, King Henery,
King Henery if you be,
If you'll have my right side opened
You'll find my dear babee.

Queen Jane, my Love, Queen Jane, my Love,
Such a thing was never known.
If you have your right side opened
You will lose your dear babee.

Will you build your Love a castle,
And dig down so deep,
For to bury my body
And christen my dear babee?

King Henery went a-mourning
And so did his men,
And so did his dear babee,
For Queen Jane did dyen.

How wide was the mourning,
How wide were the bands,
How yellow, yellow were the flamboys
They carried in their hands.

There was fiddling, there was dancing
On the day the babe was born,
While the royal Queen Jane, beloved,
Lay cold as a stone.

SIDE I, Band 3: The Church Bells of Empingham,
W. Maddison, Captain

Rutlandshire has the distinction of being the smallest shire in England, the church-ringers of Empingham told us with pride. They are proud also of their church and of their bell-ringing which is considered a family tradition --the honor of operating each bell is passed down from father to son. The bells are treated as personalities, each being referred to by name as is, for instance, "Great Tom," or "Little John."

The control of the heavy bell on its long rope is not an easy matter, and learning to ring the intricate chances requires considerable art and a talented memory. I can vouch for this, having been invited to try my hand at ringing. If the change-caller had not caught me in time, I should have been hauled up and dashed against the belfrey ceiling at the first up-swing of the great mellow tenor.

SIDE I, Band 4: Orange and Lemon,
sung by Dianne Endicott

A children's game, played in the lanes of London and throughout the country. Dianne's spoken instructions are sweetly and clearly given, so I have left them on the record in case anyone wants to play the game.

Orange and Lemon
(sung by Dianne Endicott, Devonshire)

Orange and lemon,
Says the bells of St. Clemens;
I owe you five farthings,
Says the bells of St. Martins;
And when shall I pay you?
When I grow rich,
Like a little dog ditch.
Here comes a candle
To light you to bed,
Here comes a chopper
To chop off your head.
Chop! chop! chop! chop!
Last man's head.

(Explanation: No. Like, there's two that holds up the arms in an arch, and they all go through, and when it says, "Chop, chop, chop," you put your arms around them and catch them, and then you say -- you see, one person is, like, orange and the other, lemon, and you ask them which they want. Then, if you're orange, they go behind you. And at the end, when everybody's gone through, and they're each behind one another, they pull and see which side wins.)

SIDE I, Band 5: Cherry Stones,
sung and played by schoolchildren
of Sidbury, Devonshire.

This is music to bounce a ball to. As I remember it, all the children sang the song while one of them had his turn at bouncing. On some of the rhymes, the action gets very complicated, but this one is easy. During the first part of the song the ball is bounced simply from hand to floor; at the rhythm change, "tinker, tailor, etc.," the ball is bounced under the right knee for two lines, and under the left knee for the last two lines of the song. The place in the song on which a child misses the bounce may tell what sort of person he will marry.

Cherry Stones

(schoolchildren of Sidbury, Devonshire)

Cherry stones, cherry stones,
Cherry stones upon my plate;
One, two, three, four,
And there're lots more;
Every one counts a wish:
Tinker, tailor,
Soldier, sailor,
Rich man, poor man,
Beggaman, thief,
Lady, baby,
Gypsy queen,
Will you, won't you
Marry me?

SIDE I, Band 6: Have a Cigarette, Sir,
Sidbury children.

Now the fun begins. For the first "verse," with the straight rhythm, the child bounces the ball from hand to floor; on the repeat, where the rhythm shifts, the ball follows this pattern (Note: On single-underlined words, ball hits floor; on double-underlined words, ball hits wall; on words not underlined, ball hits hand; and the blank spaces indicate one silent beat while ball falls from wall to floor):

Have a Cigarette, Sir

(Sidbury children)

Have a cigarette, sir,
No, sir. Why, sir?
Because I got a cold, sir.
Where'd you get your cold, sir?
From the North Pole, sir.
What were you doing there, sir?
Catching polar bears, sir.

SIDE I, Band 7: Johnny Todd,
sung by Isla Cameron and
Ewen MacColl.

Isla says she used to skip rope to this gay song when she was a little girl playing on Tyneside. It does not seem to have the usual characteristics for a rope-skipping rhyme (counting, ABCs, naming actions, etc.), but certainly its easy catchy rhythm makes it a fine one for skipping, ball-bouncing, or just plain singing.

Johnny Todd

(sung by Isla Cameron and Ewen MacColl)

Johnny Todd he took a notion
For to cross the oceans wide,
And he left his true love behind him,
Walking by the Liverpool tide.

For a week she wept full sorely,
Tore her hair and wrung her hands,
Till she met with another sailor
Walking on the Liverpool sands.

Why, fair maid, are you a-weeping
For your Johnny gone to sea?
If you'll wed with me tomorrow,
I will kind and constant be.

I will buy you sheets and blankets,
I'll buy you a wedding ring;
You shall have a golden cradle
For to rock your baby in.

Johnny Todd came back from sailing,
Sailing o'er the oceans wide,
But he found that his fair and false one
Was another sailor's bride.

Now, young men who go a-sailing
For to fight the foreign foe,
Do not leave your love, like Johnny;
Marry her before you go.

SIDE I, Band 8: Windy Old Weather,
sung by Bob Roberts, accompanying
himself on the melodeon.

Bob Roberts lives in Ipswich, Suffolk, and is well known to English collectors for his singing of sea songs. Our friend Peter Kennedy visited Bob during his years of collecting folk music of England. for BBC, and took this song down from him. It is the old "song of the fishes," famous among chantey lovers in this country as well as in England.

Windy Old Weather

(sung by Bob Roberts with melodeon, Ipswich.
Peter Kennedy recording)

As we were out fishing
Off _____ Light,
_____ and hauling
And trawling all night,

CHORUS:
It was windy old weather,
Stormy old weather,
When the wind blows
We all pull together.

When up jumped a herring,
The queen of the sea,
Says now, Old skipper
You cannot catch me.

We sighted a thresher
A-slashing his tail,
Time now, old skipper,
To hoist up your sail.

Then along comes a mackerel
With stripes on his back,
Time now, old skipper,
To shift your main tack.



Tinker's Caravan

Then up jumped a slip sole
As strong as a horse,
Says now, Old skipper,
You're miles off your course.

We sighted a placer,
'E's got spots on his side,
Says, not much longer
These seas you can ride.

Then up rears a conger
As long as a mile,
Wind's coming east'ly,
He says with a smile.

I think what these fishes
Are saying is right,
We'll haul up our gear now
And steer for the Light.

SIDE I, Band 9: The Young Sailor Cut Down in His Prime
sung by Harry Cox of Yarmouth, Norfolk.

The hero of this tale is one of the many descendants
of "The Unfortunate Rake", known in the USA as the
"Dying Young Cowboy" or "The Streets of Laredo".
In some versions, the unfortunate one is a girl. But
sailor, cowboy, or young girl, they all had "done
wrong," and the moral is clear. This version of the
"Young Sailor" was collected by Peter Kennedy, London.

The Young Sailor Cut Down in His Prime

(sung by Harry Cox, Yarmouth)

As I was a-walking down by the Royal Albert
Dark was the night and cold was the day;
Who should I see there but one of my shipmates,
Wrapped in a blanket far colder than clay.

He asked for a blanket to wrap round his head;
Likewise a candle to light him to bed.
His poor heart was breaking, his poor head was aching,
For he's the young sailor cut down in his prime.

We'll beat the big drums and we'll play the pipes
merrily,
Play the death march as we carry him along,
Take him to the churchyard and fire three volleys
o'er him,
For he's the young sailor cut down in his prime.

At the corner of the street you will see two girls
standing;
One to the other did whisper and say,
Here comes the young sailor whose money we
squandered,
Here comes the young sailor cut down in his prime.

His kind-hearted mother, his kind-hearted father,
Both of them wondered about his past life;
For along with the * _____ girls he would wander;
Along with the * _____ girls it was his delight.

(* Sounds like, "Flesh-girls")

SIDE I, Band 10: Widdecombe Fair,
sung by Bill Westaway

"Widdecombe Fair" was collected by the Reverend
Sabine Baring-Gould in Devonshire early in this
century. His subsequent revision of it soon
became well-known and loved all through Britain
and the USA. My older sisters learned it years
ago at the Pine Mountain Settlement School,
Pine Mountain, Ky., and so our family has sung
it as far back as I can remember. Therefore, I
was delighted when Peter Kennedy took us to see
Bill Westaway, a grand old gardener and the son
of the original singer who gave the song to
Baring-Gould. Here we give you the opportunity
to hear the song as it was before the collector
changed it, and perhaps to decide as we did,
that we liked Mr. Westaway's original every bit
as much as Mr. Baring-Gould's revision.

Widdecombe Fair

(sung by Bill Westaway)

Tom Pierce, Tom Pierce, lend me thy gray mare,
Ri-fol-lol-the-dol-diddle-i-doe;
That I may ride up to Widdecombe Fair
With Phil Lewer, Jan Brewer, Harry Hawkins, Hugh
Davy, Philly Whitpot, George Pausley,
Dick Wilson, Tom Cobbley and all,
Here is Uncle Tom Cobbley and all.

O when shall I see my gray mare home again?
Ri-fol-lol-the-dol-diddle-i-doe;
By Friday night or Saturday morn,
With Phil Lewer, Jan Brewer, etc.

O Friday was past and Saturday was come,
Ri-fol etc.
Tom Pierce's old mare he was not a-came home
With Phil Lewer, Jan Brewer, etc.

Tom Pierce, he went up on a high hill,
Ri-fol etc.
He saw his old mare down making his will
With Phil Lewer, Jan Brewer, etc.

So how did you know it was your old mare?
Ri-fol etc.
Her one foot was shoed and the other three bare
With Phil Lewer, Jan Brewer, etc.

The wind whistles hard on the moor of a night,
Ri-fol etc.
Tom Pierce's old mare, he appeared ghastly white
With Phil Lewer, Jan Brewer, etc.

Then all the night long we heard shirkilins and groans,
Ri-fol etc.
Tom Pierce's old mare, he was rattling his bones.
With Phil Lewer, Jan Brewer, etc.

Tom Pierce's old mare, he was took sick and died,
Ri-fol etc.
Tom Pierce, he sat down on the stones and he cried
With Phil Lewer, Jan Brewer, etc.

So this is the end of my shocking affair,
Ri-fol etc.
I've give you the career of Tom Pierce's old mare
With Phil Lewer, Jan Brewer, Harry Hawkins, Hugh
Davy, Philly Whitpot, George Pausley,
Dick Wilson, Tom Cobbley and all,
Here is Uncle Tom Cobbley and all.
Old Uncle Tom Cobbley and all,
Old Uncle Tom Cobbley and all!

SIDE II, Band 1: My Bonny Lad,
played on Northumbrian Small Pipes

During the several hours that my husband and I saw
Jane Hair at the Dance Festival in Stratford-On-
Avon, she was never without her pipes. She was
learning to pipe with Jack Armstrong, who is con-
sidered the best Northumbrian piper in England,
and although she kept insisting she couldn't play
well, it sounded fine to us. Jane plays with love.

Northumbrian small pipes are not blown by mouth,
but by means of a bellows-inflated bag. The bellows
are strapped to the waist and pumped by the right
arm, while the bag is held under the left arm.

About the pipes, Jane writes, ... "The making and
playing of these pipes is traditional in this part
of the country, and in it alone, and the tradition
has never died...each set is craftsmen-made; you
cannot buy any spare parts for them, and most
people know, if not the whole history of their set,
at least who made it and how old it is.

"My Bonny Lad," is a Tyneside lament for the young
lad who is drowned while mooring his keel. Here
are the words that go with the tune:

Hae ye seen ought o' my bonny lad,
And are ye sure that he's weel-O?
He's gyan ower land wi' his stick in his hand,
Gyan to moor the keel-O.

Yes, I hae seen your bonny lad,
Upon the seas I spied him;
His grave is green, but ne'er wi' grass,
And tha'll never lie aside him.

SIDE II, Band 2: John Barleycorn,
Haxey, Hood singers and
customers at "The Kings Arms,"
Haxey, Lincolnshire(?)

On January 6th, in the little village of Haxey,
a strange and very rough celebration takes place,

called the Haxey Hood Games. It is probably the
remnant of a primitive pagan winter ritual.
There is not space to tell about it here, but it
consist of several teams in tug-o-wars, fighting
to gain possession of "the 'ood," a long, tightly-
rolled piece of leather. On the eve before the
games, the Hood carollers gather in their head-
quarters, the Kings Arms public hourse, and warm
up to begin their rounds. The songs cannot
properly be called carols, being drinking songs,
and at each house where they stop to sing their
Hood Day songs, cake and claret is served to them.
The three songs always sung for Hood are "Drink
Old England Dry," "Farmer's Boy," and "John
Barleycorn," the last of which is given here.

John Barleycorn

There were two brothers stood on yon hill,
As it might be you and I;
And between those two brothers there rose a dispute
That John Barleycorn should die,
That John Barleycorn should die.

So they buried him on yonder hill so high,
And they threw soil over his head,
And there he lay a considerable time
Till they thought he was almost dead,
Till they thought he was almost dead.

He lay till springtime of the year,
Till the weather was pleasant and warm;
And then, St. John! how he plucked up his head
And he did no one no harm,
And he did no one no harm.

He lay till midsummer time of the year,
Till the weather was pleasant and warm;
And then, St. John! how he grew a beard,
And he soon became a man,
And he soon became a man.

Then they wheeled him around and around again,
Till they wheeled him into a barn,
And there they made a fool of him
And with that they thought no harm,
And with that they thought no harm.

Then they hired men with a flail so strong,
And they picked the flesh from his bones,
But the miller used him a-ten times worse,
For they ground him betwixt two stones,
For they ground him betwixt two stones.



Jean Ritchie with a Marsfield Mummers
Photo by George Pickow

You can put red wind into a glass,
Put brandy into a can;
You can put St. John in a nut-brown jug
And he'll make the merriest man,
And he'll make the merriest man.

He'll make a maid dance around this room,
Stark naked as ever she was born;
He'll make a parson hold his boots
With a little John Barleycorn,
With a little John Barleycorn.

He'll turn your gold into silver,
Your silver into brass;
He'll make a man become a foll,
And a fool become an ass,
And a foll become an ass.

SIDE II, Band 3: Three Scamping Rogues,
sung by George Endicott,
South Zeal, Devonshire.

This is a version of the humorous little song telling of the differing reactions to ordinary things, (for instance, a haystack) by an Englishman, a Scotchman, and an Irishman. The Englishman, dull and conservative, is always right ("It's a haystack, of course"); the Scotsman, suspicious and unwilling to be found wrong, merely says, "Nay," to everything; the Irishman roughly gives a fanciful definition, calculated to make a delightful joke of the whole situation (Poor Paddy said 'twas an elephant with the trunks 'um blown away!). Perhaps I am wrong in reading philosophy into this harmless ditty, which we found British country people singing wherever the occasion called for "a funny one."

Three Scamping Rogues
(sung by George Endicott, South Zeal, Devonshire)

There lived a man in London,
And a violent man was he,
Three sons at his board
And he turned them out of doors
Because they would not sing.
Because they would not sing,
Because they would not sing,
Three sons at his board
And he turned them out of doors
Because they would not sing.

Now the first he was the miller,
And the second he was the weaver,
And the third he was the little tailor,
Three scamping rogues together.
Three scamping rogues together,
Three scamping rogues together,
And the third he was the little tailor,
Three scamping rogues together.

Now the miller he stole corn,
And the weaver he stole yarn,
And the little tailor stole broadcloth enough
To keep those three rogues warm.
To keep those three rogues warm,
To keep those three rogues warm,
And the little tailor stole broadcloth enough
To keep those three rogues warm.

Now the miller was drowned in his pond,
And the weaver was hanged in his yarn,
And the devil ran away with the little tailor
With the broadcloth under his arm.
With the broadcloth under his arm,
With the broadcloth under his arm,
And the devil ran away with the little tailor
With the broadcloth under his arm.

SIDE II, Band 4: Bushes and Briars,
sung by Isla Cameron.

Isla Cameron was born and raised on Tyneside, but learned most of her earliest songs from a Scottish grandmother. However, her parents and her environment were both English, so she is a fine singer in either tongue. Although "Bushes and Briars" was collected in Essex by Ralph Vaughn Williams, around the turn of the century, Isla says she herself heard it "in the rough" from an old country woman from Ingatestone, which is near the place where Vaughn Williams found it.

Bushes and Briars
(sung by Isla Cameron)

Through bushes and through briars
I lately took my way,
All for to hear the small birds sing,
And the lambs to skip and play;
All for to hear the small birds sing,
And the lambs to skip and play.

I overheard my own truelove,
His voice did sound so clear;
Longtime I have been waiting for
The coming of my dear;
Longtime I have been waiting for
The coming of my dear.

Sometimes I am uneasy
And troubled in my mind.
Sometimes I think I'll go to my love
And tell to him my mind;
Sometimes I think I'll go to my love
And tell to him my mind.

But if I should go to my love,
My love he will say, Nay.
If I show to him my boldness,
He'll ne'er love me again;
If I show to him my boldness,
He'll ne'er love me again.

SIDE II, Band 5: Earsdon Sword Dance
English Country Dancers in
performance at a festival.

This is probably a Northumbrian dance, since it is in Northumbria that the complicated "stepping" has reached its highest level of competence. The dancers used to wear clogs, but nowadays wear light slippers which produce a sound not unlike a modern-day tap dancer. The applause heard during the dancing broke out when the dancers came together in a closed circle, linked their swords into a "star" which the captain bore aloft for all to see. In many of the sword dances of England, the captain, or "Father" places his head in the center of this star of locked swords, then each of the other dancers, his "sons," draws out

his sword with a flourish, "killing" him. He is revived after a short time, proclaiming that his visit to the underworld during his "death" has enabled him to leave there all of the past years mistakes, bad luck and hardships, and has fitted him for robust leadership for the coming year. The dance ends in celebration.

SIDE II, Band 6: Barbara Allen
sung by Mr. Rew, Sidbury,
Devonshire

One of the most widely-known and multi-versioned songs in the world is here sung in a charming "proper Devon" accent, so thick it can almost be called a dialect, by Mr. Rew, a gardener in Sidbury. Mr. Rew plays the concertina, although he is a little shaky now and cannot handle it as well as he used to.

Barbara Allen
(sung by Mr. Rew, Sidbury, Devonshire)

In Scarlet Town, where I was born,
There lived a fair maid dwelling,
Made every youth cry well-a-way,
Her name is Barbara Allen.

All in the merry month of May
When green buds they were swelling,
Young Jimmy Grove on his deathbed lay
For love of Barbara Allen.

Then slowly, slowly she came on,
And slowly she came nigh him,
For all she said when there she came,
Young man, I think you're dying.

Father, Father, dig my grave,
O dig it long and narrow.
My own truelove is buried today
For I shall die tomorrow.

Farewell, said she, Ye virgins all,
My own the fault I fell in;
Henceforth take warning by the fall
Of cruel Barbara Allen.

SIDE II, Band 7: Marshfield Mummers Play,
and their song

The Mummers Play is performed in Marshfield, Chippenham, Wiltshire, on the 26th day of December, in England called Boxing Day. The Christmas mummers plays are directly tied in with the dramatic element of the sword-dance, in that the "Father," of some other-named leader in the group, is killed and is revived for the benefit of the community. In this is readily seen the old pagan idea of community purification through sacrifice, which became the heart of many of the world's religions.

The Marshfield Mummers are known as The Old-Time Paper-Boys, because they wear costumes and hats made of hundreds of narrowly-sewn strips of paper.

Marshfield Mummers Play and their Song
(players of Marshfield, Chippenham, Wiltshire)

Town Crier: (Rings bell) Oyez! Oyez! Oyez!
I've much pleasure in introducing
the celebrated Marshfield Mummers,

known as the Oldtime Paperboys.
God save the Queen!

Father Christmas: In comes I, Old Father
Christmas. Christmas or Christmas
not, I hope Old Father Christmas
will never be forgot. Christmas
comes

In comes I, Old Father Christmas.
Christmas or Christmas not,
I hope Old Father Christmas
Will never be forgot.
Christmas comes but once a year,
Then we generally get good cheer:
Roast beef, plum pudding, and mince
pie--
Who likes that better than King
William and I?

Saucy Jack: I! Room! Room! A gallant room
I say.
If Old Father Beelzebub is in this
room,
Let him step this way.

Father Beelzebub:
In walks I, Old Father Beelzebub
On my shoulder I carry my club,
And in my hand, my money can;
What d'you think of me for a jolly
old man?
A little of your Christmas ale would
make us boys dance and sing.
A little of your money in our pocket
would by a jolly fine thing!
Ladies and gentlemen, sit down at
your ease
And give us what you please.

Marshfield Mummers' Song

It's of a noble Welshman
I heard the people say,
As I rode up to London
All on St. David's Day.

CHORUS:
Fa-la-la, fa-la-la,
Fa-la-la, dee-die-doe.

Heigh, heigh, heigh, the people cry,
We'll concern a king,
Seated on a nanny goat,
Just like a Christmas king.

There is a house on yonder hill,
So high, I do declare;
Twas on a cold warm winter's night
My grandmother left me there.

SIDE II, Band 8: Hark, The Herald Angels Sing,
Empingham hand bell ringers,
Charles Wilson, Captain. Rutlandshire.

Mr. Wilson is one of seven men (one for each note in the scale, and they can each ring two bells, if the tunes go higher or lower than one octave, and most tunes do) who have been meeting to ring handbells for many years. It is a sort of club, and much more sociable than church-bell ringing. All stand round a small table covered with a heavy cloth to deaden the sound of setting down the bells after they are

rung. Also, sometimes they ring real changes where the bells are rotated around the circle until the change is completed. They perform for various functions in the village, and, of course, ring carols from house to house at Christmastime.

Jean Ritchie

ABOUT JEAN RITCHIE

Jean Ritchie was born and raised in Viper, Kentucky, in the Cumberland Mountains. She is the youngest in a family of fourteen children born to Balis and Abigail Ritchie, who were, like most other folks in the region, of Scottish-Irish-English descent. According to local history, James Ritchie with five of his brothers sailed from England in 1768, and a few years thereafter, James pioneered with his family into the Appalachian wilderness, and died somewhere near what is now the Carrs Fork of Troublesome Creek in Kentucky. His family stopped there, becoming one of the first few families to settle in that section.

Five generations passed and saw little change in their way of life. Other parts of the country had forged ahead, the Industrial Revolution had brought radical growth to cities and "level country" farms, but the Ritchies and their neighbors, walled in by the rugged ridges of the Cumberlands, continued to farm their hillsides, using the primitive old-world methods; continued to entertain themselves with the play-party dances, the beautiful ballads and the lonesome love complaints handed down through the generations from their British Isles ancestors.

In Jean's generation, the change began. Her older sisters recollect the exciting time when the first railroad train pushed its thunderous way up their narrow valley, the first load of coal taken from the new mines, the first of the "Quare women" who came up from the level lands to open settlement schools. Jean herself remembers the first radio, the first movie house, and now of course, television has come to Viper, all bringing popular modern music to mountain hollows.

There are still many people, however, who say the old songs are the best, and when Jean was growing up and singing with the family on the front porch of an evening, it wasn't the new, so-called "hillbilly" songs or the catchy tin-pan alley tunes that were the favorites. It was songs like "Barbry Ellen," "A Pretty Fair Miss A-Workin in the Garden," "Sourwood Mountain," "Lord Randal." There were newer ones, too, news accounts of local events--hangings, elections, ground-hog hunts, murders, feuds--all meaningful, each one a living part of the growth of a people.

Many folk-song collectors have come to the Ritchies, have noted down tunes and words and set them in books, have come to refer to this family as, "The Singing Ritchies," because of their knowledge and love of the old songs.

Jean was graduated from the Viper High School, then from Cumberland Junior College, Williamsburg, Kentucky, finishing, with highest honors and a Phi Beta Kappa Key, at the University of Kentucky, Lexington. She took her bachelors degree in social work, and so went to New York to gain practical

experience at the Henry Street Settlement. With her mountain dulcimer, which she had learned to play from her father, she taught her family songs and games to the children of New York's Lower East Side, and learned theirs in return. Her friends began to ask her to sing at their parties, then, schoolteachers begged her to come to their classes. Through a friend at the Settlement, she was introduced to Alan Lomax who recorded her songs for his collection and for the Library of Congress Folksong Archives. Soon she was asked by Oxford University Press to write the history of her family's growing-up in the mountains, and her book, SINGING FAMILY OF THE CUMBERLANDS, called an American classic by leading reviewers throughout the country, was published in 1955. Other books followed, and Jean, who never meant to be a writer, is currently working on two more, soon to be published.

The response to her singing, too, has grown far beyond anything she ever imagined. Calls for her to sing have come from many parts of the United States and Europe. She has sung at such places as Town Hall in New York and Orchestra Hall in Chicago; been featured at folklore seminars and festivals at Harvard University, Columbia University and the University of California; and has given countless recitals at colleges and universities throughout the country.

In 1952, Jean won a Fulbright scholarship which enabled her to travel about the British Isles in order to trace the sources of her family songs, learning and comparing the variants now being sung by the countryfolk of Britain with the Ritchie variants. While in England, she appeared in concert at the Royal Albert Hall and at Cecil Sharp House.

In 1953, she attended the International Conference of Folk Music in Biarritz-Pamplona as the sole representative of the United States.

She has appeared many times on all the major TV and radio networks (NBC's "Wide, Wide World" once visited her family at Christmastime) in this country and for the BBC in London, Radio Erin in Dublin and Radio Paris in France. She has made record albums for Folkways, Westminster, Elektra, Riverside, Tradition, and Classic Editions companies, and for HXV and Argo companies in London.

Jean sings in a light, clear, untrained voice, and her songs are presented with simplicity and directness. Her Kentucky dulcimer accompaniments are free-flowing and tasteful, pointing up the ethereal beauty of the mountain tune.