BRITISH BROADSIDE BALLADS IN POPULAR TRADITION
Sung by Paul Clayton, with guitar accompaniment

When Cockle Shells Make Silver Bells
Pleasant and Delightful
Three Maidens to Milking Did Go
The Bonny Bunch of Roses
The Bold Thrasher
My Grandmother
The Lost Lady Found
When Pat Came Over the Hill
The Dark-Eyed Sailor
Jim, The Carter's Lad
Geordie
The Oyster Girl
The Bold Fisherman
Brian O'Lynn
The Sweet Primroses
Green Room
Herchard of Taunton Dene
The False-Hearted Knight
The Indian Lass

Recorded by Kenneth S. Goldstein
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Introduction
by Paul Clayton

The broadside press has played a great part in the history of the traditional ballad. These single sheets in varying sizes which printed the words of a song (and occasionally the tune to which it might be sung) have been continuously sold from Shakespeare's day to the present - ballads - when the broadsides were still found in Ireland, and the great broadside press of such was still selling its ballads in the first decade of the present century.

The subjects with which the broadside ballads dealt were the same as those in traditional ballads: love, war, death, humor, political situations, etc. The broadside might be composed by a now unknown or forgotten singer; or it might be a printing of an old traditional ballad emended with an attempt to add timeliness, smooth out meter etc. The broadside put new songs into tradition, and revitalized old songs in tradition.

The broadsides have often been accused of bad meter, bad sentimentality, and of being ephemeral. Yet the best of the broadsides preserved valuable material. Francis James Child relied upon them for many of the texts of his 305 "artistic variants" of the ballad field. The folk in singing broadsides have most often improved upon the texts. The tunes have always been the property of the folk, and are usually fine. As the years have passed, the poerty of the broadsides have dropped from tradition, and the residue still sung today is in general the best of the broadside tradition as changed and improved by oral tradition.

I became interested in the British broadside tradition while engaged in collecting and doing programs in Britain in 1950-51. I learned a considerable number of these songs, such as "Lost Lady Found," and "Bonny Bunch of Roses," from BBC field-recording of the traditional singers, and from the singers themselves. Later I found American versions of some of the British broadsides, while others such as "Jin, the Carter's Lad" did not appear to have crossed the ocean.

While in Chicago combining night club work at the Gate of Horn with research at the Newberry Library, I investigated their great collection of British broadsides, especially some dating from the early nineteenth century which included a number of the songs I had learned in Britain. With permission of the Newberry Library some two hundred of the broadsides reproduced here are from that source. From January to June, 1957, I was again in Europe, and in the course of more research for the BBC had further opportunity to do research with their recordings and to compare printed and traditional texts. The result is this album.

This recording contains nineteen ballads sung as I learned them from recordings of traditional singers. Reproduced next to the traditional texts are the broadsides: a comparison of the numerous oral changes which have taken place. The particular broadsides printed here generally had two songs to a sheet, but out of the pertinent half of the sheet is reproduced.

The ballads recorded here are, I hope, representative of that portion of the vast amount of broadside material which may still be found in oral tradition. The oldest Child ballads are represented by versions of "Lady Isabel and the Elf-Knight" and "Geordie"; the familar "happy ploughboy"-type of English song by "Jim the Carter's Lad"; drinking songs by "The Indian Lass"; sentimental love ballads by "The Dark-Eyed Sailor" as contrasted with the humorous ribald flavor of such a love song as "The Oyster Girl."

Here then, are 19 British broadside ballads as they have been collected in current British popular tradition.

Notes by Kenneth S. Goldstein

SIDE I, Band 1: WHEN COCKLE SHELLS MAKE SILVER BELLS

This merry little ballad of courtship is better known both in the Old World and America by the title "Seventeen Come Sundae," and as "The Old Sailor" by the British broadside printers as it was with traditional singers in England, Ireland and Scotland, though often the versions known in tradition were of a bawdy and ribald nature. Traditional singers found the happy ending of the broadside version to be a little too tame, and substituted the more realistic ending in which the soldier answers the maiden's entreaties concerning marriage with an evasive reply. In this last detail, this ballad is not unlike "The Trooper and the Maid", Child #599. The version sung here was learned from a BBC recording of Seamus Ennis made in Jamestown, Co. Dublin, Ireland, in 1947.

As I moved out one bright May Morning, One May morning merrily, As I moved out one bright May morning, One May morning merrily, I met a maid upon the May morning, She was her mamma's darling.

CHORUS: With my ram's horn, fill the muddle-la
Burry diddle-all lee di-dee-do.
Her shoes were black and her stockings white, And her hair shines like the silver, Her shoes were black and her stockings white, And her hair shines like the silver. She has two nice bright sparkling eyes And her hair hangs o'er her shoulder.

What age are you my pretty fair maid, What age are you my darling? What age are you my pretty fair maid, What age are you my darling? She answered me quite modestly, I'm sixteen years next morning.

And led me to the table, And brought him to the table, And the larks they sang melodious at the dawn of the day. And the larks they sang melodious, And the larks they sang melodious, And her shoes were nice bright sparkling eyes, And her shoes were nice bright sparkling eyes.

She took me by the lily-white hand And took my horse by the bridle right And brought him to the stable; She took me by the lily-white hand And dress-ed soft and hazy; And I must go and leave my Nancy, she's the girl I adore. I must go and leave my Nancy, I must go and leave my Nancy, she's the girl I adore.

And she took my horse by the bridle right And brought him to the stable; She took my horse by the bridle right And brought him to the stable, There's plenty hay for soldier's horses As far as they can take it.

And when will you return again Or when will we get married; When will you return again Or when will we get married - When cockle shells make silver bells That's the day we'll marry.

For additional texts and information, see:
Dean-Smith, M., A GUIDE TO ENGLISH FOLK SONG COLLECTIONS, Liverpool, 1954.
Creighton, H., TRADITIONAL SONGS FROM NOVA SCOTIA, Toronto, 1950.

SIDE 1, Band 2: PLEASANT AND DELIGHTFUL

The theme of this song is a common one in the seacoast counties of England. A sailor's departure from his true-love, perhaps never to return, appears time and time again in both the printed and oral songlore of the English-speaking world (and, indeed, of all peoples). This song is known variously as "The Lover's Departure" and "The Blackbird and Thrush", as well as the more familiar title given here.

The version sung here was learned from a BBC recording of Jumbo Brightwell made at Bel's Foot Pub, in East Bridge, Suffolk, in 1939.

Oh pleasant and delightful is the midsummer's morn, Through the woods and the meadows they were covered with corn, The blackbird and thrushes sang on every great tree, And the larks they sang melodious at the dawn of the day. And the larks they sang melodious, and the larks they sang melodious, and the larks they sang melodious, at the dawn of the day.

Said the sailor to his true love as they were walking one day, Said the sailor to his true love, I am bound far away, I am bound to the Indies where the cannons they roar, I must go and leave my Nancy, she's the girl I adore. I must go and leave my Nancy, I must go and leave my Nancy, she's the girl I adore.

Then the ring from her finger she removed and withdrew, Saying, Take this, dearest William, and my heart shall go too; And while I embraced her as from her I fell, Saying, Oh may I go along with you? Oh no, my love, farewell. Saying, Oh may I go along with you, Oh may I go along with you, Saying, May I go along with you? Oh no, my love, farewell.

Fare you well, my lovely Nancy, I no longer can stay, For it's our sails they're hoisted, our anchors away, Our ship lies a-waiting for the next-floving tide, And if ever I return again, I will make you my bride. And if ever I return again, and if ever I return again, And if ever I return again, I will make you my bride.

For additional texts and information see:
Dean-Smith, M., A GUIDE TO ENGLISH FOLK SONG COLLECTIONS, Liverpool, 1954.
SIDE I, Band 4: THE BONNY BUNCH OF ROSES

This ballad was extremely popular in broadside form at the beginning of the 19th century all over England, Ireland and Scotland. There is an unmistakeable air of sympathy for Napoleon in this song, and though he was the enemy of their country, the simple folk of Britain viewed him as a possible liberator from oppression and misery. There is an air of grandiloquence to both the text and tune that is rarely found in the works of the 19th century broadside scrieners. It was apparently composed to fit the stanzas form of an older broadside song, "The Bunch of Rushes", and most broadsides of the song sung here contained the message that it was to be sung to the tune of the earlier piece. Speculation concerning the meaning of the expression 'bunch of roses' has turned up two interesting theories: some say it symbolizes England, Ireland and Scotland, others that it is a metaphor for the red-coated British army of the period.

The version sung here was learned from a BBC recording of Harry Cox, a farm laborer from Dorset, in 1947.

By the dangers of the ocean, one morning in the month of June,
The feathered warbling songsters their charming notes so sweet did entice;
There I espied a female, so seeming in grief and woe,
Conversing with young Bonaparte concerning the bonny bunch of roses.

Then up spoke bold Napoleon as he took his mother by
Now mother, pray have patience until I'm able to command;
I will raise a terrible army and through tremendous dangers go,
In spite of all the universe, I will gain the bonny bunch of roses.

Now when you saw great Bonaparte you fell upon your
You begged your father's life of him; he granted it right manfully.
Twas then he took an army and o'er the frozen realm did go,
He said, I'll conquer Moscow, then go to my bonny bunch of roses.

He took three hundred thousand men and likewise kings to join his throne,
He was so well provided enough to sweep the world along;
And when he came near Moscow, nearly overpowered by
All Moscow was a-blasting and he lost his bonny bunch of roses.

Now son, ne'er speak so venturesome, old England is the heaven of oak.
England, Ireland and Scotland, their unity has ne'er been broken;
Now son, look on your father, in St. Helen's body lies low,
And you'll soon follow after, so beware of the bonny bunch of roses.

Oh mother, alene forever, now, I'm on my dying bed,
If I had lived, I should have been clever, now I drop down my youthful head,
And while our bones do moulder and the weeping
Brave deeds of bold Napoleon will sting the bonny bunch of roses.

For additional texts and information, see:
Dean-Smith, M., A GUIDE TO ENGLISH FOLK SONG COLLECTIONS, Liverpool, 1947.

SIDE I, Band 5: THE BOLD THRASHER

Better known as "The Nobleman and the Thrasher" and "The Squire and Thrasher", this ballad has been popular with the broadside presses since the 16th century. It has been a favorite with country singers throughout England and Scotland, and has been collected from the countryside with texts which are quite similar but sung to distinctly different tunes. Its popularity may be due to the desire of the country folk to identify themselves with the admirable traits of the thrasher, and the equally important wish to fall into the same type of good luck.

The version sung here was learned from a BBC recording of Walter Scales made in Sutton, Norfolk in 1947.

It's of a nobleman in a village of late,
He had a bold thrasher, his family was great,
He'd a wife and seven children and most of them
Being small,
And he'd nothing but his labor to maintain them all.

Said the farmer to the thrasher, however do you do,
Sometimes I do reap and sometimes I do now,
A-hedging or a-ditching sometimes I do go,
There's nothing comes a-smiting to me, neither cart, harrow or plow,
And that's how I get my living by the sweat of my brow.
When my days work is over and I go home at night,
My wife and my children are all my delight,
The little ones come around me and they make such a prattling noise,
And that is all the comfort that a poor man enjoys.

Well done, my bold thrasher, you speak well of your wife,
I'll make you live happy all the days of your life,
Here's 30 acres of good land, I freely give to thee,
For to maintain your wife and your small family.

For additional texts and information, see:
Dean-Smith, M., A GUIDE TO ENGLISH FOLK SONG COLLECTIONS, Liverpool, 1947.

SIDE I, Band 6: MY GRANDMOTHER

This ballad has proven more popular with American folk singers than with English country singers, for it is reported frequently from wide spread sections of this country, but has appeared in only a single English collection, "The Upper Thames", by Alfred Williams (London, 1903). In any case, broadside versions have been found in England dating back to the last half of the 16th century, and the American versions ultimately derive from this source.

The version sung here was learned from a BBC recording of Nellie Walsh made in Neford, Ireland, in 1947.

My Grandmother lived in next yonder green,
As gay an old woman as ever was seen,
She gave me long lessons in prudence and care,
And of all other things of young men to beware.

Of young men to beware, of young men to beware,
And of all other things of young men to beware.

When first I met Collins, twice in the green grove,
He told me long stories that were all about love,
But my grandmother's lessons ran so in my head,
That I couldn't attend to one word that he said,
To one word that he said, to one word that he said,
That I couldn't attend to one word that he said.

When next I met Collins, his voice he renewed,
He told me his heart was entirely subdued,
He told me he loved me as he loved his life,
And if I would consent sure he'd make me his wife.

He'd make me his wife, he'd make me his wife,
And if I would consent sure he'd make me his wife.
Then off to the church our vows to fulfill,
We went, let my grandmother scold if she will,
If every old woman in town were afraid,
Sure my grandmother herself would have died an old maid.

Would have died an old maid,
Would have died an old maid,
Sure my grandmother herself would have died an old maid.

For additional texts and information, see:
Dean-Smith, M., A GUIDE TO ENGLISH FOLK SONG COLLECTIONS, Liverpool, 1947.
The version sung here was learned from a BBC recording of Charles Chettleborough made at Sutton, Norfolk, in 1947.

Down in a valley a damsel did dwell,
She lived with her uncle we all know full well,
Down in a valley where violets grew gay,
Three gypsies betrayed her and stole her away.

Long time she'd been missing but could not be found,
Her uncle he searched in the country all round,
Till he came to the trustees between hopes and fears,
Well the trustees made answer she has not been here.

Now the trustees pray God with their courage so bold,
We'll see she's not lost for the sake of our gold,
We will have life for life, now the trustees did say,
We'll put you in prison and there you shall lay.

Now there was a young squire who loved her so,
Often times to the schoolhouse together would go,
I'm afraid she's been murdered so great is my fear,
If I'd wings like a dove I would fly to her dear.

Now he travelled through England, through France and through Spain,
He ventured his life on a watery main,
Till he came to a house where he lodged one night,
And in that same house lived his own heart's delight.

Now soon as he saw her, she flew to his arms,
She told him her grief whilst he gazed on her charms;
How came you in Dublin, in Dublin, my dear,
Three gypsies they stole me and then brought me here.

Now your uncle in England in prison do lay,
He's now for your sweet sake condemned to die;
Oh take me to England, to England, she cried,
Ten thousand I'll give you and then be your bride.

Now they went to England, her uncle to see,
When the cart it stood under the high gallows tree,
Oh pardon, oh pardon, she cried,
Why you see I'm alive, his dear life for to save.

Now soon as they heard her they led him away,
And the drums they did beat and the musick did play,
Every house in the valley with mirth did abound,
As soon as they heard that lost lady was found.

For additional texts and information see:
Dean-Smith, M., A GUIDE TO ENGLISH FOLK SONG COLLECTIONS, Liverpool, 1994.
His coal-black eye and his curly hair,  
His pleading tongue did my heart enrage,  
Gentle he was, not a rake like you  
To advise a maiden, to advise a maiden  
To slight the jacket blue.

Half the ring did bold William show,  
She seemed distracted midst joy and woe,  
Oh welcome, William, I've land and gold  
For my dark-eyed sailor, for my dark-eyed sailor  
So many, true and bold we've had,

Now in a cottage down by the sea  
They joined in welcome and well agree,  
All said be true whilst your love's away,  
For a cloudy morning, for a cloudy morning  
Brings forth a sunshine.

For additional texts and information, see:
Dean-Smith, M.,  
A GUIDE TO ENGLISH FOLK SONG COLLECTIONS,  
Liverpool, 1954.

Laws, O.M.,  
AMERICAN BALLADRY FROM BRITISH BROADSIDES,  

Greig, O.,  

Mackenzie, W.R.,  
BALLADS AND SEA SONGS FROM NOVA SCOTIA,  
Cambridge, 1928.

O'Lochlainn, C.,  
IRISH STREET BALLADS,  
Dublin, 1946.

SIDE II, Band 1: JIM, THE CARTER'S LAD

This song is typical of the many broadside songs concerning the pride the country people of England took in their particular occupations. There are numerous broadsides about ploughboys, thrashers, farmers, quarrymen, and, as in this particular song, carters. The poor peasantry of England rationalized their lot in songs such as these, and it is to their credit that they were able to boast and make light of their misery for outsiders to hear.

The version sung here was learned from a BBC recording of Mrs. Louise Hooper made at Hambridge, Hertford, on 18 July 1952.

My name is Jim the carter's lad, a jolly cook am I,  
My horse is always tamed be the weather wet or dry,  
I stick my finger up the snow, I whistle at the rain,  
I've breathed the storm for many a day and can do the same again.

CHORUS:  
Crack, crack, goes the whip, I whistle and I sing,  
I sit upon my peat cart, I'm happy as a king,  
My horse is always willing and for me I'm never sad,  
There's none can lead a jollier life than Jim, the Carter's lad.

Crack, crack, goes the whip, I whistle and I sing,  
I sit upon my peat cart, I'm happy as a king,  
I never think of politics, nor anything so great,  
I care not for the ivory talk about the church's state,  
I act as right to man and man and that's what makes me glad,  
There's none can lead a jollier life than Jim, the Carter's lad.

The girls they all smile at me as I go driving past,  
My horse is such a beauty and he jogs along so fast,  
We've travelled many a weary mile and happy days we've had,  
There's none can treat a horse more kindly than Jim, the Carter's lad.

And now I bid you all goodnight, it's time I was away,  
You know my horse will weary if I do any longer stay,  
To see your smiling faces it makes my heart feel glad,  
So I hope you'll give me the kind applause to Jim, the Carter's lad.

SIDE II, Band 2: GEORGIE

The three stanzas sung here are a fragmentary form of the ballad of "Geor­gie", ballad 990 in the great textual compilation of Francis James Child. Two forms of the ballad exist: the first form, tracing back to two 17th century English broadsides, is merely a 'goodnight' (denoted narratives concerning the execution of some person); the second form is a full ballad, the earliest known version being a Scottish ballad dating from the end of the 19th century. Scholars are almost unanimous in the opinion that the broadsides (though from an earlier date) are literary and contemporary adaptations of the traditional Scottish ballad which must have been known in tradition before the broadside versions. In any case, most texts collected since Child's time, and all of the broadsides of the 19th century, are obviously derived from the early English broadsides in question.

The fragmentary version sung here was learned from a BBC recording of Mrs. Louise Hooper made at Hambridge, Somerset, in 1942.

My Geor­gie shall be hanged in a golden chain,  
That's a chain of many,  
He stole sixteen of the king's wild deers  
And he sold them in Bohenny.

Oh, he never stole no ducks nor so geese,  
Nor he never murdered any;  
He stole sixteen of the king's wild deers  
And he sold them in Bohenny.

Oh, my Geor­gie shall be hanged in a golden chain,  
That's a chain of many,  
He stole sixteen of the king's wild deers  
And he sold them in Bohenny.

Oh, he never stole no ducks nor so geese,  
Nor he never murdered any;  
He stole sixteen of the king's wild deers  
And he sold them in Bohenny.

For additional texts and information, see:
Dean-Smith, M.,  
A GUIDE TO ENGLISH FOLK SONG COLLECTIONS,  
Liverpool, 1954.

Coffin, T.P.,  
THE BRITISH TRADITIONAL BALLAD IN NORTH AMERICA,  

Child, F.J.,  
THE ENGLISH AND SCOTTISH POPULAR BALLADS, Vol. IV,  
New York, 1956.

Ebsworth, J.W.,  
THE ROXBURGH BALLADS, Vol. VII,  
Hartford, 1871-1899.


SIDE II, Band 3: THE OYSTER GIRL

A favorite broadside story in the 19th century was one in which a poor girl or boy proved cleverer than some scheming antagonist, and ended up the richer for it. The theme has many variations, of which the story of "The Oyster Girl" is but one. It was circulated by nearly all of the London broadside printers and sold many thousands of copies during the period, but has been reported rarely from tradition.

The version sung here was learned from a BBC recording of Phil Tanner, the son of a weaver, and, until his death in 1949, one of England's finest traditional singers.

Oh oysters, oh oysters, oh oysters, said she,  
I've got some of the finest oysters that ever you did see,  
Oh tis three a penny I do sell, but four I'll give to thee,  
For to bargain for the basket of oysters.

Oh oysters, oh oysters, oh oysters, said she,  
I've got some of the finest oysters that ever you did see,  
Oh tis three a penny I do sell, but four I'll give to thee,  
For to bargain for the basket of oysters.

Oh landlord, oh landlord, oh landlord, said he,  
Hath thee got a little private room for the oyster girl and me,  
Where we both may sit down and so merry, merry be,  
While we bargain for the basket of oysters.

Oh yes, sir, oh yes, sir, oh yes, sir, said he,  
I've got a little private room for the oyster girl and me,  
Where you both can sit down and so merry, merry be,  
Till you bargain for your basket of oysters.

Oh landlord, oh landlord, oh landlord, said he,  
Hast thee seen that little oyster girl that came along with me,  
She hajh picked my pocket of 50 pounds and more,  
And hath left me with my basket of oysters.

Oh yes, sir, oh yes sir, oh yes, sir, said he,  
I've seen that little oyster girl that came along with me,  
She hajh picked my pocket of 50 pounds and more,  
And hath left me with my basket of oysters.

Oh yes, sir, oh yes sir, oh yes, sir, said he,  
I've seen that little oyster girl that came along with me,  
She hajh picked my pocket of 50 pounds and more,  
And hath left me with my basket of oysters.

For additional texts and information, see:  
Dean-Smith, M.,  
A GUIDE TO ENGLISH FOLK SONG COLLECTIONS,  
Liverpool, 1954.

Laws, O.M.,  
AMERICAN BALLADRY FROM BRITISH BROADSIDES,  

Greig, O.,  

Mackenzie, W.R.,  
BALLADS AND SEA SONGS FROM NOVA SCOTIA,  
Cambridge, 1928.

O'Lochlainn, C.,  
IRISH STREET BALLADS,  
Dublin, 1946.
I've travelled through England, through Ireland, through Scotland and France,
But never was I in all my life served up with such a dance,
By a bold English girl, oh her voice it was so clear,
She has taught me the way to sell oysters.
By a bold English girl, oh her voice it was so clear,
She has taught me the way to sell oysters.

For additional texts and information, see:
Dean-Smith, M.,
A GUIDE TO ENGLISH FOLK SONG COLLECTIONS,
Liverpool, 1954.
Laws, G.M.,
AMERICAN BALLADRY FROM BRITISH BROADSIDES,
Greig, G.,
FOLK-SONGS OF THE NORTH-EAST,
Peterhead, 1914.
Chappell, L.W.,
FOLK-SONGS OF ROANoke AND albemarle,
Morgantown, W. Va., 1939.

SIDE II, Band 4: THE BOLD FISHERMAN

At first listening, this ballad may not appear to be unlike several others that tell of a young woman meeting with a person of high degree whose status is not immediately apparent to her. Lucy Brownwood, an English collector and folklorist, believed it to be the remains of an allegorical legend from early Christian mystical literature, however. Variants of this song make reference to the Royal Fisherman, the three Vestures of Light, the Recognition and Adoration by the illuminated humble soul, and the first person leading to the mystical union of the bride and bridegroom in the House of the Father - all are familiar elements in the mystical symbolism of the early Christian church.

To be sure, such symbolism had lost all of its original meaning to the folksingers from whom the song has been collected since the end of the last century. To them, it was another love ballad, and in this form has come down in tradition to this day.

The version sung here was learned from a BBC recording of Harry Cox, made in Botton, Norfolk, in 1947.

One morning in the month of June
Down by a riverside,
There she beheld a bold fisherman,
Come rowing by the tide.
Morning to you bold fisherman,
How came you fishing here?
I came a-fishing for your sweet sake,
All on this river clear.
He lashed his boat up to the shore,
And to the lady went,
He took her by the milk-white hand
For it was his intent.
Then he pulled off his morning gown,
And gently laid it down.
There she beheld three chains of gold,
Hang dangling three times round.

Down on her bending knee she fell,
So loud for mercy called,
I'm calling you a bold fisherman,
I think you are some lord.
Get up, get up, get up, he cried,
From off your bending knees,
You have not said one single word
That least offended me.
I will take you to my father's hall,
And there make you my bride,
Then you will have a bold fisherman
To row you on the tide.

For additional texts and information, see:
Dean-Smith, M.,
A GUIDE TO ENGLISH FOLK SONG COLLECTIONS,
Liverpool, 1954.
Laws, G.M.,
AMERICAN BALLADRY FROM BRITISH BROADSIDES,
Creighton, H.,
TRADITIONAL SONGS FROM NOVA SCOTIA,
Toronto, 1950.

SIDE II, Band 5: BRIAN O'LYNN

Though usually identified as an Irish nursery rhyme, earliest references to this song indicate a Scottish origin at least 400 years ago. The bumptkin hero of this song is known variously in the many versions collected from all parts of the English-speaking world as 'Tom Boin', 'Harry Treven', 'Bryan O'Flynn', 'Tommy Linn', and many other similar sounding names. Though it has never lost its charm to nursery age children, it has at the same time remained a favorite with adults as well.

This version was learned from a BBC recording of Seamus Ennis made in 1949.

Brian O'lynn had no britches to wear,
He got an old sheepskin to make his pair,
With the flimsy side out and the wooly side in,
They'll be pleasant and cool, says Brian O'lynn.
Brian O'lynn had no shirt to his back,
He went to the neighbors and borrowed a sack,
Then he bucked the meal bag in under his chin,
Sure they'll take 'em for ruffles, says Brian O'lynn.
Oh, Brian O'lynn was hard up for a coat,
So he borrowed the skin of a neighboring goat,
With the horns sticking out from his oxters and then,
Sure they'll take them for pistols, says Brian O'lynn.
Well Brian O'lynn had no hat to put on,
He got an old beaver to make his one,
There was none of the crown left and less of the brim,
Sure there's fine ventilation, says Brian O'lynn.
And Brian O'lynn had no brogues for his toese,
He hopped into crab-shells to serve him for those,
Then he split up two oysters that it matched like a twin,
Sure they'll shine out like buckles, says Brian O'lynn.
And Brian O'lynn had no watch to put on,
He scooped out a turd to make him a one,
Then he placed a young crockett in under the skin,
Sure they'll think it is ticking, says Brian O'lynn.
And Brian O'lynn to his house had no door,
He'd the sky for a roof and the fog for a floor,
He'd a way to jump out and a way to swim in,
Tis a fine habitation, says Brian O'lynn.

And Brian O'lynn went a-courting one night,
He set both the mother and daughter to fight,
For the sake of his hand they both stripped to the skin,
Sure I'll marry you both, says Brian O'lynn.
Brian O'lynn and his wife and wife's mother,
They all lay down in the bed together,
The sheets they were old and the blankets were thin,
Lie close to the wall, says Brian O'lynn.
And Brian O'lynn and his wife and wife's mother,
Were all going home o'er the bridge together,
The bridge it broke down and they all tumbled in,
We'll go home by the water, says Brian O'lynn.

For additional texts and information, see:
Dean-Smith, M.,
A GUIDE TO ENGLISH FOLK SONG COLLECTIONS,
Liverpool, 1954.
Opie, I. & P.,
THE OXFORD DICTIONARY OF NURSERY RHYMES,
Belden, R.M.,
BALLADS AND SONGS COLLECTED BY THE MISSOURI FOLKLORE SOCIETY,
Columbia, Mo., 1946.

SIDE II, Band 6: THE SWEET PRIMROSES

Here is another excellent example of the confusion which occasionally crops up in broadside ballads. The ballad contains the very common beginning concerning a young man out walking who meets a lovely maiden. The young man proposes to her, only to be rejected and accused of deceit. The young lady then threatens to go off to some lonesome valley where no man shall bother her. Obviously the young man's proposition has been rejected; nevertheless, the song ends on a very positive note of happiness in which other maidens are told that every cloud has a silver lining. This obvious inconsistency is found in both the traditional version sung here and in most broadside copies of the song. Several versions of the song which have been collected from tradition, however, indicate that some singers have attempted to make some sense out of the song by having the lonesome valley stanza, mentioned above, spoken by the young man in a manner suggesting that he offers to take her to some lonesome valley where they will, never be bothered by anyone. The young lady then accepts the proposal and the song can consistently end on a happy note.

The version sung here was learned from a BBC recording of Billy Tanner made at Eavecside Home, Pensmaen, shortly before his death in 1949.

Oh as I walked out one mid-summer's morning,
For to view the fields and the flowers so gay,
There on the banks of the sweet primroses
That I beheld a most pleasant maid.
Twas there on the banks of the sweet primroses
That I beheld a most pleasant maid.
Are you sad, fair maid, what makes you wander,
What is the cause of all your grief,
I will make you as happy as any lady,
If you will grant me once more relief.
I will make you as happy as any lady,
If you will grant me once more relief.

Stand off, young man, and don’t be so deceitful,
Tis you that are the cause of all my pains,
For it is you that has caused my poor heart to wander,
And to find me comfort it’s all in vain.
For it is you that has caused my poor heart to wander,
And to find me comfort it’s all in vain.

I will go down to some lovely valley,
Where no man on earth shall there me find,
Where the pretty little small birds do change their voices,
And every moment blows boisterous winds.
Where the pretty little small birds do change their voices,
And every moment blows boisterous winds.

So come all fair maid’s, by me take a warning,
And pay attention to what I say,
There is many a dark and cloudy morning
That I beheld a most pleasant maid.
And her trade was the cutting of broom, green broom,
And her trade was the cutting of broom.

She had but one son and his name it was John,
And he’d lie in his bed till twas noon, bright noon,
He’d lie in his bed till twas noon.
This old woman arose and she put on her clothes,
And swore that she’d spoil Jack’s room, gay room,
And swore that she’d spoil Jack’s room.
If Jack wouldn’t arise and sharpen his knives,
And gang out to the wood to cut broom, green broom,
And gang out to the wood to cut broom.
Well Jack he arose and he put on his clothes,
And swore that he would, he wouldn’t he would,
And swore that he wouldn’t, he would.
A man of my blood with my learning so good,
To gang out to the wood to cut broom, green broom,
To gang out to the wood to cut broom.

Well Jack he went off his mind to content,
And he hitched up his bundle of broom, green broom,
He hitched up his bundle of broom.
When he came to the gates as loud as he could speak,
Pretty maids, do you want any broom, green broom,
Pretty maids, do you want any broom.
Oh the lady sat up in her gay den so high,
Admiring Jack’s beauty and fame, bright fame,
Admiring Jack’s beauty and fame.
She called in the maid that on her did want,
To call in the young blade with his brooms, green brooms,
To call in the young blade with his brooms.
Oh, said she, is fair blade, would you quit your trade,
And marry a maid in her bloom, full bloom,
And marry a maid in her bloom.
Oh yes, then says he, quite welcome you’d be,
But it’s really how could I presume, presume,
Why it’s really how could I presume.
Now the parson was sent for and married they were
All in the fine lady’s gay room, gay room,
All in the fine lady’s gay room.
With compliments fine, Jack kissed her in time,
They were wed in the castle of fame, bright fame,
They were wed in the castle of fame.
There’s no cutter of broom from the east to the west,
But Jack he invited as his guest,
With plenty of drink and a mule, and what do you think,
There’s no thing to compare with the broom, green broom,
There’s no thing to compare with the broom.

For additional texts and information, see:
Dean-Smith, M.,
A GUIDE TO ENGLISH POLK SONG COLLECTIONS,
Liverpool, 1924.

Sharp, C.J.,
FOLK SONGS FROM SOMERSET, Series One,

Kisdon, F.
GAYLAND OF ENGLISH POLK-SONGS,
London, 1926.

SIDE II, Band 6: HERCHARD OF TAUNTON TENE

The delightful little ballad of courtship is known in two versions, each containing basically the same story but with different endings. In one version (as in the one sung here), young Herchard wins Miss Jean; in the other Miss Jean rejects his proposal. Both versions have been popular with English country singers for several centuries. As the folk would have it, however, the happy ending seems to be most popular.

Nineteenth century broadside texts do not appear to have effected the ballad as sung in tradition, for numerous texts, many differing quite radically, have been collected up to the present day.

The version sung here was learned from a BBC recording of George Bunston of Hambridge Green.

One Sunday morn as I’ve heard say,
Young Herchard mounted his doddle grey
And over the hills he rode a mule,
A-courting the parson’s daughter Jean.

CHORUS:
With his doodle-dum dollikin, doodle-dum day,
With his doodle-dum dollikin, doodle-dum day.

I’m an honest lad though I be poor,
And I never was in love before,
And father sent me out to woo,
And I can’t fancy none but you.

Miss Jean came down without delay,
To see what young Herchard had got to say.
He says, suppose you know, Miss Jean,
That I be young Herchard of Taunton Dene.

For I can reap and I can now,
And I can plow and I can sow,
And I goes to market me father’s hay,
And I earns me ninpence every day.
Oh, ninepence a day will never do,
For I must have silk and satin, too;
Twill never be enough for you and I.
Oh come, says Herchard, We can’t but try.

For I’ve a pig poked in the sty,
As’ll come to I when grannys do die,
And if you consent to marry me now,
My father he’ll give me his fine fat sow.

Rick’s compliments were so polite
He won Miss Jean before twelve night,
And when he had no more to say,
He gave her a kiss and she’s runned away.

For additional texts and information, see:
Dean-Smith, M.,
A GUIDE TO ENGLISH POLK SONG COLLECTIONS,
Liverpool, 1924.

Bell, R.,
BALLADS AND SONGS OF THE PEASANTRY OF ENGLAND,
London, 1897.

Brodwood, L.R.,
ENGLISH COUNTY SONGS,
London, 1891.

SIDE II, Band 7: GREEN BROOM

It is surprising to find that though this song was a favorite of the broadside printers and has been collected frequently in the British Isles from traditional singers, that it has never been reported in America. It is certainly of the type that one would normally expect to find passed down to Americans of British descent. The oldest version of the song was printed in T. Durfy’s “Pills to Purge Melancholy”, making the song at least 250 years old. Several versions collected from tradition since Durfy’s time indicate that the song is far more ribald than the innocent sounding text sung here would indicate.

The version sung here was learned from a BBC recording of Patrick Green made in 1947 at Ballinasloe, Co. Longford, Ireland.

There was an old woman and she lived in the East,
And her trade was the cutting of broom, green broom,
And her trade was the cutting of broom.
She had but one son and his name it was John,
And he’d lie in his bed till twas noon, bright noon,
He’d lie in his bed till twas noon.
This old woman arose and she put on her clothes,
And swore that she’d spoil Jack’s room, gay room,
And swore that she’d spoil Jack’s room.
If Jack wouldn’t arise and sharpen his knives,
And gang out to the wood to cut broom, green broom,
And gang out to the wood to cut broom.
Well Jack he arose and he put on his clothes,
And swore that he would, he wouldn’t he would,
And swore that he wouldn’t, he would.
A man of my blood with my learning so good,
To gang out to the wood to cut broom, green broom,
To gang out to the wood to cut broom.

Well Jack he went off his mind to content,
And he hitched up his bundle of broom, green broom,
He hitched up his bundle of broom.
When he came to the gates as loud as he could speak,
Pretty maids, do you want any broom, green broom,
Pretty maids, do you want any broom.
Oh the lady sat up in her gay den so high,
Admiring Jack’s beauty and fame, bright fame,
Admiring Jack’s beauty and fame.
She called in the maid that on her did want,
To call in the young blade with his brooms, green brooms,
To call in the young blade with his brooms.
Oh, said she, is fair blade, would you quit your trade,
And marry a maid in her bloom, full bloom,
And marry a maid in her bloom.
Oh yes, then says he, quite welcome you’d be,
But it’s really how could I presume, presume,
Why it’s really how could I presume.
Now the parson was sent for and married they were
All in the fine lady’s gay room, gay room,
All in the fine lady’s gay room.
With compliments fine, Jack kissed her in time,
They were wed in the castle of fame, bright fame,
They were wed in the castle of fame.
There’s no cutter of broom from the east to the west,
But Jack he invited as his guest,
With plenty of drink and a mule, and what do you think,
There’s no thing to compare with the broom, green broom,
There’s no thing to compare with the broom.

For additional texts and information, see:
Dean-Smith, M.,
A GUIDE TO ENGLISH POLK SONG COLLECTIONS,
Liverpool, 1924.

Sharp, C.J.,
FOLK SONGS FROM SOMERSET, Series Four,

Durfey, T.
PILLS TO PURGE MELANCHOLY, Vol. VI,
London, 1719.

7
SIDE II, Band 9: THE FALSE-HEARTED KNIGHT

This ballad appears as number 4 in Francis James Child's great textual compilation, under the title "Lady Isabel and the Elf-Knight". As a result of its being one of the most widespread of the international ballads, it has been subjected to extensive study by scholars from various nations. The most detailed analysis was made by the Finnish scholar, Dr. Iivar Kemppinen, who came to the conclusion that the ballad probably originated between 1100 and 1200, citing philological and musical evidences in support of his claims. The ballad is still widely known in Europe and America, at least part of its popularity being attributable to the numerous stall printings of the ballad in the 19th century. In most recently collected versions, the supernatural character of the knight has disappeared.

The version sung here was learned from a BBC recording of Jumbo Brightwell made at Bel's Foot Inn, in East Bridge, Suffolk, in 1947. The broadside print shown here was printed in London by R.P. Such.

Now it was of a false knight who came from the north land, He came a-courting me, He promised to take me down to that north land And there his bride make me.

So come give me some of your mother's gold, And some of your father's fee, And two of the best horses out of the stable, Where there stand by thirty and three.

So she mounted up on her milk-white steed, And be on his dapple and grey, And away they did ride to the great water side, So early before it was day.

Jump you off, jump you off that milk-white steed And deliver it up to me, For six pretty fair maids I've drownded in here, And the seventh one you shall be.

And take off, take off that silken gown And lie it upon you stone, For I think it's too rich and I think it's too rare To rot all in the salt sea.

Then if I must take off my silken gown, Then turn your back upon me, For I don't think it's fit that a villain like you A naked woman should see.

And stoop you down and cut that brier That hangs so near the brit, For in case it should tangle my golden clothes Or tear my lily-white skin.

Then she gave him a push and a hearty push, And she pushed that false knight in, Crying, lie in there, you false-hearted knight, Lie in there instead of me.

For if six pretty fair maids you've drownded in here, The seventh one has drowned you.

So she mounted up on her milk-white steed, And she led his dapple and grey, And away she did ride to her father's own hall Two hours before it was day.

The old parrot was up in the window high,

And he cried aloud and did say: I'm afraid that some villain came here last night And have carried my lady away.

Her father he was not so sound asleep That he heard what that bird did say, And he cried, what wert thee, my pretty parrot, Oh hours before it was day.

Why the old cat was up in that window high, And that cat be would o' me slay, So loud did I cry that help should be nigh To drive that cat away.

Well done, well done, my pretty polly, No tales will you tell of me, Thy cage shall be made of that bright glittering gold And a door of white ivory.

For additional texts and information, see:
Dean-Smith, M., A GUIDE TO ENGLISH FOLK SONG COLLECTIONS, Liverpool, 1954.

SIDE II, Band 10: THE INDIAN LASS

American listeners will recognize in this ballad a version of the widely known song "The Little Moxie". Folklorists have never quite decided whether the American ballad is a remaking of the British broadside story, or if the ballad was originally an American sea song from which the British broadside ballad developed. In any case, the American ballad is certainly a better ballad, both in theme and language, than its British relation.

The version sung here was learned from a BBC recording of Jumbo Brightwell, made in 1939 at the Bel's Foot Inn, East Bridge, Suffolk.

As I was a-walking down, down by the distant shore, I stepped into an ale-house just to spend half an hour, And while I sat smoking and a-taking my glass, There, by chance, stepped between the pines an Indian lass.

Now she sat down by the side of me and she squeezed my hand, Says, you are a sailor, not one of this land, I've got good lodgings if along with me you'll stay, My fortune I will, share it without no delay.

With a glass of good liquor she welcomed me in, Kind sir, you are welcome to everything, And while I embraced her, oh this it was her tone, You are a young sailor and so far from your home.

We talked and we tumbled into each others arms, And all that long night I embraced her sweet charms, And with romance all enjoyment so the time it passed away.

I did not go leave her until nine the next day.

Now this lovely young Indian and the place where she stood, I viewed her charming features and I found they was good, She was little and handsome and her age about sixteen, Was raised and brought up in a place called Moreen.

For additional texts and information, see:
Dean-Smith, M., A GUIDE TO ENGLISH FOLK SONG COLLECTIONS, Liverpool, 1954.
Kidson, F., TRADITIONAL TUNES, Oxford, 1891.