

Catch it, Bottle it, Paint it Green

Gwilym Davies, often accompanied by his wife Carol, has been recording source singers in the UK and USA for nearly 50 years. This CD is a selection from the recordings and is a companion CD to the book of the same name. The book can be obtained from Pegasus Publishers at: <https://pegasuspublishers.com/books/coming-soon/catch-it-bottle-it-and-paint-it-green> or from most bookshops.

Gwilym's interest in folk song started in his teens in Hampshire and led him on a paper chase that led from skiffle, through blues and work songs and Irish and Scottish music, to eventually discover music from his locality, i.e. southern England. Visits to Sussex to meet the Copper family reinforced that interest and eventually he decided to find out if there were still folk songs 'out there' separate from the folk revival scene. Armed with a borrowed mono cassette recorder he started making enquiries in the early '70s in the north of Hampshire where he was living and working and he soon discovered several old singers, starting with the 85 year-old Charlie Milam who sang him a version of *John Barleycorn* and other songs. That set him on a quest around Hampshire, recording a number of folk songs and some tunes.

A move to Gloucestershire in 1972 allowed him to explore new territory and he was soon discovering source singers in the area where he found several unknown versions of the Gloucestershire wassail, along with descriptions of the custom. A collecting trip in 1977 to explore the music of local Gypsies led him on to record many songs and tunes from the Brazil [pronounced 'Brazzle'] family, especially Danny Brazil. In the late 1990s, a 6-month work assignment to the USA opened up new doors for his collecting and with the help of local folklorists, he was able to record traditional ballad singers in the Appalachian and Adirondack mountain areas, including the Cleveland family of Upstate New York who sang him many of their family songs. That collecting has continued although returns now are very sparse. His large audio collection is soon to be put on line at the British Library Sound Archive, whilst the video part of his collecting still remains unpublished.

As well as Gwilym's collecting activities, he has researched many areas of folk music and has given countless talks on the subject, from Gypsy music to wassailing and the history of Morris dancing. He has many articles to his name in various folk magazines, both printed and on line.

Why 'Catch it, Bottle it and Paint it Green'?

On Gwilym's collecting trip to Upstate New York in 1998, he expected to hear songs but was also delighted to encounter story tellers, namely Colleen Cleveland, who knew several of her grandmother's folk tales, and Catherine LaBier who had family tales along with other ones she had collected from other story tellers. Catherine's stories were full of demon fiddlers, shape-shifting animals, talking bones and so on. Colleen's stories were earthier and from her family's Irish inheritance. In several of them the hero was Tim, with a similar role to the Jack stories of the Appalachians. In the stories, Tim outwits giants and devils with equal ease. Here is one of Colleen's stories, learnt from her grandmother:

"There were three men walking down the road in Ireland one day, travelling about their way, and as they were going down the road, out from behind the bushes jumps the Devil and he stops them, and he says, "I'm going to whisk you all away to hell." They obviously didn't want to go, so they complained, and he said, "All right, I'll make you a deal. If each one of you can set me a task that I can't do, then you get to go free."

So, the Englishman steps up first and he looks off in the distance and there was a big huge mountain. He looks at the Devil and says, "Here, you make that mountain disappear," and the Devil smiles and

goes whoosh... and away goes the mountain. And whoosh... away goes the Englishman.

Well, that was that, and the Scotsman was next, and he looks off into the distance and there's a big huge lake and he says, "Well, make the lake disappear all in a minute." And the Devil looks at him and whoosh... away goes the lake. Again whoosh... and away goes the Scotsman.

And the Irishman stands there and he thinks and he thinks and he looks at the Devil and all of a sudden he lets out a great big huge fart, and he says, "Catch that, bottle it, and paint it green all in a minute" - and you know, the Devil he couldn't and he had to let him go.'

The Singers and musicians

Bob Arnold

Bob Arnold was known to many as the voice of Tom Forrest, the amiable gamekeeper in the long-running radio serial *The Archers*, his rich rural accent being ideal for the part. Bob was born in 1910 in Oxfordshire and grew up in a pub in Asthall, near Burford, where his father was the publican. So as a boy, Bob heard many country songs sung in the bar which he remembered throughout his life. He joined the BBC in 1937 in a radio programme called *In the Cotswolds* and went on from there to appear in children's and nature programmes. In 1951 he joined the cast of *The Archers* and remained with them throughout his life.

Bob had a rich singing voice and as well as the stock of folk songs from his youth, he was encouraged to learn more by local folklorists such as Harry Albino and the Kettlewell family. These he performed regularly on his radio appearances. He became fascinated by the songs collected by Alfred Williams in the area, as published in *The Wilts and Gloucester Standard*. By this method, he found tunes for the songs *Needlecases* and *The Bellingers*. He made several recordings, notably "Mornin' All" with the Yetties in 1972. Although several folk song collectors called in on him including Peter Kennedy, Russell Wortley and Francis Collinson, no systematic noting of his repertoire was made. Gwilym visited Bob in 1991 and 1992 and noted many of his songs. This collecting was followed up in 1994 by a visit from collectors Bob and Jacqueline Patten from Devon, whose recordings may be heard on the British Library Sound Archive website.

Bob passed away in 1998.

Arthur Baker (1888-?)

Arthur was born in North Warnborough, Hampshire and lived there for most of his life apart from National Service. At the age of 13 he was working as a shepherd, like his father, and did farm labouring work thereafter. Every Sunday evening he used to sit and sing in the Fox and Goose public house in Greywell, Hampshire, encouraged by his son and daughter in law, where Gwilym recorded him in the early 70s.

Danny Brazil

Danny was one of a Gypsy family of 15 siblings, most of whom could sing, play an instrument or step dance. Danny was born in Ireland in 1913, and lived his early days there before the family moved to Gloucester in about 1940 and lived in the county - he died in 2003. During WWII he was an ambulance driver. He had a large repertoire of songs and unusually for many Gypsy singers, he mainly knew songs all the way through with complete sets of verses, even though he was illiterate. His hoarse voice was the result of an altercation when he was younger which damaged his voice box, but despite that he sang with clear articulation and tuning. At one time he had been an expert step dancer, and could also play the mouth organ.

He was first recorded by folk song collector Peter Shephard in the mid-60s but this work was not made known until several years later. Gwilym first met him in 1977 when searching for Gypsy singers in

Gloucestershire and was surprised when Danny lent him a type-written book "Songs and Ballads of Brazil Family of Gloucestershire", but Gwilym did not discover until some years later that it had been compiled by Peter Shephard. Armed with a copy of the book, Gwilym started visiting Danny on Sunday mornings to record the songs, and as is usual with revisiting source singers, found several that Peter Shephard had not recorded from Danny. He was very proud of his song repertoire and was very happy to record it for posterity. Most of his songs were classic folk songs, with a sprinkling of music-hall and comic songs but without the Country songs that many Gypsy singers perform. He told Gwilym that he preferred the older songs.

Billy Buckingham

Billy was born in Kingscourt near Stroud, in Gloucestershire in about 1902. When he was 12 years old, he and friends including his uncle Albert would go around the area as far as Woodchester singing their version of the Gloucestershire wassail, collecting money and being given cider. Their 'bowl' was a decorated chamber pot. In his later years, he was one of a regular crowd of singers in the now defunct Stonehouse Arms where Gwilym first recorded him in a lively lunchtime session in the Stonehouse Arms in February 1979 - this recording can be heard on the CD *You Lazy Lot of Bone Shakers* (Topic TSCD666) In 1999, Gwilym and his wife Carol videoed Billy in his home in Stonehouse, talking about the custom and singing the song, The video of Billy singing the song can be found at:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yFdmB8jM-js>

Lemmie Brazil

Lemmie was an older sister of Danny Brazil. She was born in about 1890 in England, but the family moved to Ireland where she lived for 27 years before moving to Gloucestershire. She never married and lived in her own trailer on the Sandhurst site at Gloucester. In Ireland she often played for dancing and had a repertoire of tunes which included hornpipes, jigs, waltzes and popular tunes, played on her one-row melodeon. Peter Shephard recorded her singing and playing in the 60s and Gwilym met and recorded her in 1977-78 and later in 1981.

Colleen Cleveland

Colleen is a traditional singer from the area of Brant Lake, New York State. She learnt her songs from her grandmother, Sara Cleveland. Sara was 'discovered' when her son Jim took a notebook of her songs along to the Saratoga Springs folk singaround and it was realised that Sara was a true traditional singer with a large repertoire including a version of Child ballad 52 *The King's Tochter Jane*. Song collectors Sandy Paton and Kenneth Goldstein visited her and recorded her songs and thereafter Sara was in great demand at folk festivals. By her side was her granddaughter, the young Colleen Cleveland who was quietly absorbing all the family folklore. After Sara's death, Colleen has been proud to continue her grandmother's songs and has appeared in many singing events in the area. In fact, the whole Cleveland family are a treasure-trove of songs and Colleen maintains her family tradition with great pride. Colleen has done several jobs including forest guide and decorator. Gwilym met up with Colleen and her nephew James at a folk festival in Connecticut in 1997 and arranged to travel up to see her and her family in 1998, recording not only Colleen and James but also Colleen's father Jim.

James Cleveland

James is the nephew of Colleen Cleveland and has grown up hearing the family repertoire. He was 17 years old when Gwilym recorded him in 1997 and 1998, singing the family songs with great confidence and style.

Jimmie Cooper

Jimmie was born in 1929 in South Tawton, Dartmoor. He was a friend of Bob Cann, the iconic local musician and when Bob revived the step dancing at the Dartmoor folk festival in 1979 in South Zeal, he called upon Jimmie to accompany the dancing. Gwilym recorded him at the festival and subsequently visited Jimmie in his home, recording more

tunes from him on both concertina and accordeon as well as snatches of songs.

Ray Driscoll

In the mid 1990s, it was rare to meet a singer of folk songs who had a large repertoire of songs and who had not been particularly influenced by the folk music revival. However, one such person was Ray Driscoll.

Ray was born in County Mayo, Ireland in 1922. His father was in the 5th Royal Irish Lancers and the family moved to England when Ray was three years old. Although Ray spent most of his life in England, he always retained a strong Irish streak. From an early age he learned songs from his father, who played the fiddle. Ray's father was also an Irish Gaelic speaker and from him Ray learned to speak much of the language. After spending his boyhood in London, Ray and his two younger brothers were evacuated to Hanwood in rural Shropshire when the Blitz started. There Ray met and married his first wife, whose family knew a number of folksongs which they would sing in the house after returning from the pub, the Cock Inn at Hanwood. Ray served with the Royal Navy during World War II, spending time at both ends of the British Isles, at Scapa Flow and Portsmouth, and continued to pick up songs wherever he went. After the war, Ray went back to London and worked as a printer in Fleet Street. Following the death of his first wife, he married Sheila, a Londoner, and the couple moved back to Shropshire after her retirement.

In the '90s, Ray was 'discovered' when someone tipped off Mike Yates that they had heard a man singing some unusual songs at a party. Mike recorded a few songs from Ray and then put Gwilym on the case. Gwilym went to visit Ray in 1993 in his home in Dulwich and was immediately impressed by the friendly welcome extended to him from Ray and his wife Sheila. That afternoon, Gwilym recorded a dozen or so songs from Ray, including the rare ballad *Death of Queen Jane* and songs unique to Ray such as *The Pompalerie Jig*, *The Doughty Packman* and *The Wild, Wild Berry*. This was the start of a long friendship as Gwilym introduced Ray to the folk 'scene' at a few singaround-type folk festivals in the south of England. In Gloucestershire he became great friends with the Gypsy singer Wiggy Smith, based on their mutual interest in martial arts.

A feature of Ray's musical life is that although he was never part of the folk 'scene' until his later years, he took a keen interest in folk culture and was a regular at Padstow for the May Day celebrations. There he met and befriended several folk singers including members of 'Elsie's Band' from Kent, who learned and performed some of Ray's songs. He was once booked for the National Folk Festival at Loughborough where he shared the stage with the MacPeake family and never stopped talking about it thereafter!

Ray had other talents. He won many bouts as an amateur wrestler and remained strong and fit into his 70s. He often fought and beat Jackie Pallo whom he regarded as a poor wrestler - being drawn against Jackie was like getting a bye. Once a doctor told Ray to squeeze his hands to test his grip - and nearly broke the doctor's bones.

Ray was always very fond of Shropshire and lived his later years there in Shrewsbury, where he died in 2005.

David Gardner

David Gardner was born in 1924 in Tresham, Gloucestershire. He played the melodeon at 6 years of age, learnt the piano as a child and played the church organ. He learnt songs as a boy from farm labourers - he took every opportunity to travel on the farm carts with them, or to go hunting rabbits. He attended the grammar school in Wotton Under Edge and then went to work as an apprentice engineer at the R. A. Lister company of Dursley.

During WWII he joined up "in the thick of things" and was in 21st Army group during the British occupation of the Rhine during which he was

recognised for his bravery under heavy enemy fire when he rescued a severely injured officer. He also used his shooting skills as a sniper and was involved at D Day in "Monty's own Division". He also learnt songs from his army friends during the war.

After the war he continued to sing and play guitar, piano accordion, harmonica, piano and organ around local pubs, clubs and gatherings, forming a skiffle group called 'The Ragtime Rascals' who appeared on a Television talent show called *Now's Your Chance* in the late 1950s.

Gwilym went to visit David in 1997 following a tip-off from local musician Paul Burgess. He kept in touch with David who came up to sing in Gloucester in 2002, where Gwilym videoed his performance.

David Gardner died just short of his 90th birthday in 2013

Archer Goode

Archer was born in 1906 in Herefordshire into a long line of farm workers, originally from near Leominster, Herefordshire. He grew up in agricultural society and had a special fondness for horses and wrote several songs about aspects of farming life. In his younger days, he was a friend of the Ilmington Morrisman Sam Bennett and spoke warmly of their meetings at social gatherings at Abergavenny, where Sam would entertain with songs and a broom dance.

Archer was a stalwart of the Cheltenham Folk Song Club in the 1970s. Gwilym and Carol met him when they lived near him in Charlton Kings, Cheltenham in the early '70s and spent several evenings in his company. Archer had a reel-to-reel recorder with which he recorded much of his repertoire and he would lend the tapes to Gwilym to dub. He died in Cheltenham in 1984.

Gordon Hall

Gordon was a folk singing phenomenon. He had a prodigious memory for songs and a big voice and personality to match. He was born in London in 1933 into a musical family. His maternal grandparents both knew songs but it was from his mother Mabs that he inherited most of the repertoire. His family moved out of London during the war and Gordon eventually settled in Sussex. He worked at various jobs including scrap metal merchant and various manual jobs.

Gordon was a veritable sponge for songs and learnt them from every quarter, from his family, from the army and from country singers he met, but always referred to his mother as his main influence. He even learnt French songs phonetically from his brother Albert who lived in France, even though Gordon did not know the French language himself. He was also an avid collector of broadsheets and supplemented his knowledge of songs by extra verses from these broadsheets. His singing style was distinctive with a definite Cockney overlay. He sang with a measured emphatic style, and this, along with his habit of repeating the last 2 lines of every verse of most of his songs, meant that his versions were of incredible length. His version of *Lord Bate-man*, which he called *Lord Becket*, lasted 18 minutes and his version of *The Leaves of Life* runs to nearly 9 minutes.

Gwilym met Gordon in Padstow during the May Day Festival in 1996 and arranged to go and see him subsequently, along with traditional singer Ray Driscoll, in his house in Pease Pottage, Sussex. Gordon regaled Gwilym and Ray for several hours with his views on singing and singers. He was a fluent raconteur who jumped from subject to subject and from time to time Gwilym had to pin him down to sing a song all the way through. That was the only time Gwilym had a chance to record him as he died in 2000 aged 67.

Tony Lloyd

Tony was well known around the Malvern area for his singing. According to his lifelong friend Eric Payne, Tony was "'three parts woodsmoke', heavily influenced by the many travellers he was surrounded by as he grew up." He played guitar and melodeon and had a huge repertoire of songs. Among the songs he learnt from travellers

were *Pretty Polly (The Cruel Ship's Carpenter)*, *The Death of Bill Brown* and *Newlyn Town*.

Dick Parsons

Dick was born about 1909 and lived all his life around the area of Bentham/Shurdington, south of Cheltenham. He was 'discovered' by local folksinger Ken Langsbury in the 1960s and Ken would attend singing sessions at what was termed "The Rampant Cat" in a farm building near Birdlip, Gloucestershire. At that time, Dick was living in a caravan with his brother. Later he frequented the Cheeserollers pub, Shurdington, south of Cheltenham, where Gwilym recorded him. In his later days, he was in a care home in Charlton Kings, Cheltenham, where Gwilym managed to record a version of *The Seven Joys of Mary* from him.

Phyllis Marks

Phyllis was considered one of the last of the old style ballad singers from West Virginia. She was born in 1927 and passed away in 2019 at the age of 92. Many of her songs came from her mother and grandmother. At the age of 14, treatment for an allergic reaction led to her sight being impaired and at the age of 54 she went completely blind. She worked for many years in a local café and could often be heard singing as she did the washing up or cooking, However, her blindness also meant that she made a point of committing her songs to memory. In particular she liked the ballads *Barbara Allen*, *The House Carpenter*, *Lord Thomas and Fair Eleanor*. She was always in great demand for local folk festivals. Gwilym visited her in 1998 in the company of local singer Helen Triplett and recorded many songs over the course of two days.

More about her life here: <https://wvfolklife.org/2019/07/02/a-tribute-to-ballad-singer-phyllis-marks-june-51927-june-22-2019/>

Spencer Moore

Spencer was originally from North Carolina, where he was born in 1919, and grew up listening to country singers such as Jimmie Rodgers. While in his teens, he bought his first guitar and formed a duo with his brother Joe. At one point the Moore brothers played on the same bill as the famous Carter family. Whilst serving in the armed forces in France in WWII, General Eisenhower heard him play and gave him a guitar. Back in the USA, he became a tobacco farmer in Chilhowie, Virginia, but continued in great demand for his music. In 1959 he was visited by the folklorists Alan Lomax and Shirley Collins whose visit he remembered with great affection. He continued playing and singing, with a phenomenal memory for songs, until his late 80s. He passed away at the age of 92.

Charlie Milam

Charlie (1884-1971) was born in Long Sutton, Hampshire, and lived in the village for most of his life, where he worked as a carter. Charlie was one of 12 children and came from a long line of agricultural workers in the north of Hampshire.

Don Mitchell

Don was one of a group of friends that met every week to sing and socialise in the Bisley House pub, Stroud, where singing sessions were led by Jackie Booth and his wife on the piano.

George Privett

George Privett (born about 1918) from Shedfield, Hampshire, was one of a number of country musicians who would play melodeon and sing in the local pub every Saturday. It is probably that he mixed with Gypsy or fairground folk as he had a knowledge of Gypsy speech and could play for step dancing. From the mid-70s for about 30 years he performed in pubs in the area with Ruth Askew, a traditional melodeon player from Devon. Gwilym met him in 1971 and thereafter visited him a number of times in Sam's Hotel, a lively pub near Fareham, Hampshire, singing and playing along with him.

Dick Richards

Dick, from New York State, was born in 1918 and was christened Clarence Jackson Richards. However, later friends started calling him "Daddy Dick" and that title remained with him throughout his life. He was born into a musical family: his father played fiddle and his mother sang. He quickly learnt to play several instruments and by the age of 11 was playing for dances. His musical career nearly stopped when at the age of 17 he lost his left hand in an industrial accident. Undeterred, he learnt a method of playing both guitar and fiddle with specially adapted instruments and carried on with a musical career with several bands until his death in 2000.

There were many facets to Dick's life: he was proud of the fact that he was one quarter Mohawk and supported the local Mohawk community in New York State.

He also a well-known entertainer, appearing on a number of television channels. He was a great raconteur and storyteller, especially within the Adirondack Liars' Club, established to enable people to get together and tell tall tales.

The Songs and Tunes

Roud numbers quoted are from the databases, *The Folk Song Index* and *The Broadside Index*, continually updated, compiled by Steve Roud. Currently containing over half a million records between them, relating to over 31,000 separate songs, they are described by him as "extensive, but not yet exhaustive". The indexes are freely available online at the Vaughan Williams Memorial Library website (www.vwml.org) and, for heavy users, as downloads for home use. Contact steveroud@gmail.com

Child numbers, where quoted, refer to entries in *The English and Scottish Popular Ballads* by Francis James Child, Boston, 1882-98. Laws numbers, where quoted, refer to entries in *American Balladry from British Broad-sides* by G Malcolm Laws Jr, Philadelphia, 1957

1 - Lemmie's Hornpipes

(Recorded at the Sandhurst caravan site, Gloucester, 13 October 1977)

Lementina Brazil, known to her family as Lemmie, played melodeon tunes that she had learnt in England and Ireland and often played for step dancing. The second of these tunes has been picked up by the folk revival as Lemmie's Number 2 and is often played in tune sessions.

2 - The Waysailing Bowl (Woodchester) (Roud 209)

Sung by Billy Buckingham. Recorded in Stonehouse, Gloucestershire, 13 February 1999)

Waysail, waysail, all over the town,
Our bread it is white and our ale it is brown.
And our bowl it is made of the best mottling tree,
To the waysailing bowl I'll bring unto thee.

Now here's a health to our master and to his right eye,
Pray God send our master a good Xmas [sic] pie,
And a good Xmas pie that we may all see
To me waysailing bowl I'll bring unto thee.
To me waysailing bowl I'll bring unto thee.

Now here's a health to our master and to his right ear
Pray God send our master a happy New Year.
And an happy New Year that we may all see
To me waysailing bowl I'll bring unto thee.

Now here's a health to my master and to his right arm,
Pray God send our master a good crop of corn,
And a good crop of corn and another of hay

To pass the cold wintery wyunds (winds) away.

Now here's a health to my master and to his right hip,
Pray God send our master a good flock of ship (sheep),
And a good flock of ship that we may all see,
To me waysailing bowl I'll bring unto thee.

Now here's a health to my master and to his right leg,
Pray God send our master a good fatted pig,
And a good fatted pig that we may all see
To me waysailing bowl I'll bring unto thee.

Now butler come fill us a bowl of your best
I hope that in heaven your soul will rest
But if you should bring us a bowl of your small
Then down shall go butler, bowl and all.

There was an old woman she had but one cow
And how to maintain it she did not know how
She built up a barn to keep her cow warm
And a drop of your cider will do us no harm.

Billy learnt this splendid version of the Gloucestershire wassail as a lad in the Stroud area and used to earn money (and cider!) by singing it around the big houses and farms at Christmas time in the area south of Stroud, down to Woodchester. They did not have a bowl to take, and so they decorated up a chamber pot. They wore women's clothes and blacked their faces. He was still singing the song 60 years later in the pubs of Stonehouse.

3 - Jan's Courtship (Roud 575)

Sung by Archer Goode. Recorded at Ryeworth Road, Charlton Kings, Cheltenham, 4 January 1975)

"Come listen son Jan, now thou art a man,
I'll give thee best counsel in life.
Come sit down by me and my story shall be
I'll tell how to get thee a wife,
Yes I will, man I will, sure I will
And I'll tell how to get thee a wife."

"Thyself thee must dress in thy Sunday go best,
They'll first turn away and be shy.
But boldly thou kiss each pretty maid that thou see'st
They'll call thee their love by and by
Yes they will, man they will, sure they will
And they'll call thee their love by and by."

So a-courting Jan goes, in his Sunday best clothes,
All trimmed, nothing tattered nor torn.
From the top to the toe with a bright yellow rose,
He looked like a gentleman born
Yes 'e did, man 'e did, sure 'e did
And he looked like a gentleman born.

The first pretty lass that Jan did see pass
Was a farmer's fat daughter named Grace.
He'd scarce said "How do?" and a fine word or two,
When her fetched him a slap in the face
Yes, 'er did, man 'er did, sure 'er did
And 'er fetched him a slap in the face.

Now Jan never caring of nothing at all
Was a-walking one day by the lock.
He kissed parson's wife, which caused such a strife,
And Jan was put into the stocks
Yes he was, man he was, sure he was
And Jan was put into the stocks.

"If this be the way to get me a wife,"
Thinks Jan, "then I'll never have none.
I'd sooner stop single the whole of me life,
And home to me mammy I'll run

Yes I will, man I will, sure I will
And home to me mammy I 'll run.

Archer learnt this song from the Ilmington Morris dancer Sam Bennett.
It is not a common song but goes back to the 18th Century. So far as is known, this is the only version to be recorded on audio.

4 - The White Cockade (Roud 191)

Sung by Charlie Hill. Recorded in Spreighton, Devon, 1 May 1988)

'Tis true my love's enlisted, he wears the white cockade.
He is both gay and gallant as any roving blade.
He's gone to be a soldier, the white cockade he wears,
While I am here awaiting in sorrow and despair.

"Leave off your grief and sorrow, likewise your doleful strain.
The white cockade adorns me as I march o'er the plain.
When I return, I'll marry by this cockade I'll swear.
'Til then, my love, be patient and my departure bear."

"I bring to you sad tidings," the sergeant he did say.
"Your love was slain in battle, he sends you this today."
He handed her the plumage, bedraggled by his gore.
"With his last kiss he sent it, the white cockade he wore."

She spoke no words and at her tears, they fell in salten flood,
And from the bedraggled plumage she washed the stains of blood.
"Oh mother, I am dying, and when I'm in my grave
Just pin it to my bosom, my lover's white cockade."

The song *The White Cockade* is known to many in the folk song revival but most versions stop at the soldier going off to war with a promise to return and marry his sweetheart. Charlie Hill's version is unusual, having the soldier die on the battlefield and his sweetheart dying of grief. Charlie says he learnt it from the local Gypsy Penfold family. However, the words seem to be a rewriting by the Rev Sabine Baring-Gould. The tune is one used for other songs, including *The Irish Girl*.

5 - Andrew Bergine (Roud 104, Child 167/250)

Sung by Colleen Cleveland. Recorded at Riverview Orchards Rexford, New York State on 18 January 1998)

There were three loving brothers in Merry Scotland
And three loving brothers were they
And they all cast lots to see who would go
A-robbing all round the salt sea,
A-robbing all round the salt sea.

The lot it fell to Andrew Bergine
The youngest one of the three
That he should go sailing all round the salt sea
To keep his two brothers and he,
To keep his two brothers and he.

He sail-ed east, he sail-ed west
Until three ships he espied
A-sailing far off and a-sailing far on
'Til at last they came sailing close by,
'Til at last they came sailing close by.

"Who's there, who's there?" cried Andrew Bergine
"Who's there with colours so high?"
"We are three merchant ships from merry England.
And if no offence, let us pass by,
And if no offence, let us pass by."

"Oh no, oh no," cried Andrew Bergine
"Oh no, that never can be.
For your ships and your cargo
my men they will have,
And your bodies I'll sink in the sea,

And your bodies I'll sink in the sea."

So broadside to broadside the vessels did sail
And cannons so loudly did roar.
And Andrew Bergine sank
the three merchant ships
And he sailed off to find some more,
And he sailed off to find some more.

Then the news it reached King Henry's ear
The king that sat on the throne
That his ships and his cargo at sea were all lost
And his merry men they were all drowned,
And his merry men they were all drowned.

The king, he sent for Captain Charles Stuart
Saying "This thing you must do for me.
Go build you a ship and catch Andrew Bergine
And his body you'll sink in the sea,
And his body you'll sink in the sea."

The ship it was built and ready to sail
With cannons and men by the score
And one dark morning her anchor did weigh
And she sailed from old England's shore,
And she sailed from old England's shore.

She sail-ed east, she sail-ed west
Until three ships she espied
A-sailing far off and a-sailing far on
'Til at last they came sailing close by,
'Til at last they came sailing close by.

"Who's there, who's there?"
cried Captain Charles Stuart.
"Who's there with colours so high?"
"We are three bold robbers from merry Scotland.
And if no offence, let us pass by,
And if no offence, let us pass by."

"Oh, no, oh no" cried Captain Charles Stuart
"Oh no, that never can be.
For your ships and your cargo
my men they will have,
And your bodies I'll sink in the sea,
And your bodies I'll sink in the sea."

So broadside to broadside the vessels did sail
And cannons so loudly did roar.
And Andrew Bergine beat Captain Charles Stuart
And he sent him back to England's shore,
And he sent him back to England's shore.

"Go back, go back," said Andrew Bergine
"And tell old King Henry for me
That he may be king of all England,
But I will reign over the sea,
But I will reign over the sea."

Colleen learnt the song from her grandmother, Sara. The song itself exists in various versions in the USA and Canada and gave rise to the English song *Henry Martin*. It is not often that English folk songs can be traced back to an actual event 500 years previously but this does seem to be the case with the ballad 'Henry Martin'.

First the history: Andrew Barton (c.1466 - 1511) was a Scottish sailor, one of three brothers, who around the year 1507 was commissioned by James IV of Scotland to attack Portuguese shipping who had attacked Scottish ships. His interference with Portuguese shipping earned him the reputation in England of being a pirate. In 1511, as Barton was cruising the English coast looking for Portuguese shipping, he and his two ships were captured off Kent. Balladry has it that Barton was subsequently beheaded, despite his letter of permission from the

Scottish King, although another account states that he died as a result of wounds sustained from the battle.

The story must have lingered long enough in public imagination for a ballad to appear over 100 years later with the snappy title "A True relation of the life and death of Sir Andrew Barton, a pirate and rover on the seas to the tune of, Come follow me loue." In this ballad, Henry [VIII] is lobbied by mariners to do something about Andrew Barton who is interfering with their shipping. Lord Charles Howard volunteers to stop Barton, and Henry commands that a ship be built and that the finest archers in the land be put on board. After a fierce sea battle, Barton is slain and beheaded.

At this point the story becomes complicated. Information is lacking for the 1600s to 1700s but we can assume that the tale continued in oral tradition. In the USA, the ballad took root, with many variations on the name Barton, including Bardeen, Batan, Bergine, Marteen etc. In some of the American versions, history is turned on its head with Barton being the victor in the sea battle and sending the English ships back to England with a flea in their ear.

Meanwhile, a cut down version of the story, recounting little more than the pirate taking and sinking a rich merchant ship, much to the king's displeasure, started to appear in the UK. The name of the hero had by then changed from Andrew Barton to Henry Martin and this is the ballad widely collected in the British Isles, even up to recent times. In this form 'Henry Martin' the ballad has also been collected in the USA, along with 'Andrew Barton'. It seems evident that Henry Martin derives from the older Andrew Barton, but mercifully cut down from over 60 verses to 7 or 8.

Colleen's ballad has similarities to *Captain Ward and the Rainbow* (Child 46, Roud 224) which may have influenced the text.

6 - She was a Lady Gay (Marrowbones) (Roud 183)

Sung by Phyllis Marks. Recorded in Glenville, West Virginia, 7 March 1998)

She was a lady gay and our town she did dwell
She loved her husband dearly
and another one twice as well.

Chorus: Mush-em tiggery awri awri
Mush-em tiggery awri-ay

She listened at the keyhole, she heard the old man say
"If I suck six dozen marrybones it'll take my sight away."

She ran to the butcher to see what she could find
She got six dozen marrybones to make the old man blind.

She took them back to the old man; she made him suck them all
"Now," said the old man, "I cannot see at all."

"It's you you're sick and blind," said she, "and here you cannot stay
But if you'd like to drown yourself, I'll gladly lead the way."

She took him gently by the hand and led him to the stream
"You'll have to help me," said the old man, "I cannot see a thing."

She got upon the brink to push the old man in.
He stuck out his foot and she went thrashing in.

"It's murder, it's murder," as loud as could scream
"I'd help you," said the old man, "but I cannot see a thing."

He being kind-hearted, and knew she couldn't swim
He went and got a long pole and pushed her further in.

"I have eleven children and none of them are mine.
I wish that every country gent would come and claim his own."

This is a version of the song universally known as *Marrowbones* or *The Blind Man He Could See*. Ironically Phyllis Marks was herself blind. The last verse is unusual and perhaps comes from another song

7 - Three Brothers in Fair Warwickshire (Roud 3207)

Sung by Danny Brazil. Recorded in Staverton, Glos, 19 February 1979)

All for three brothers fair in Warwickshire
Three daring young men you all shall hear.
To rob and plunder was their intent
To go robbing along the highway they went.

The first they met it was Lord Grangeville
With his coach and four there they did rebay,
The heavy blow struck him on the head
And they left him on the highway for dead.

They took his watch and his money too
So soon they prov-ed his sad overthrow,
They run away it's with all their speed
And they left him on the highway to bleed..

Now they were taken all for the same
They was put in prison 'til the trial came.
They was put in prison bound in iron strong
Until the 'sives it did come on.

Now at the bar these three young men 'peared
They was pleading guilty you all shall hear,
The judge and jurymen all did say
For those are cast and condemned to die.

"Their names, their names have you young men three?
Your names your names you come to tell me,"
"My name's Will Atkin, from once I came."
"Yes, and many a time I have heard your name."

"The age, the age of you young men three?
Your age, your age you come to tell me."
"One eighteen, nineteen and the other twenty
[repeat tune of previous line]
Isn't it a shocking and a sight to see
Three clever young men on the gallows tree?"

Now at the bar their poor mother 'peared
She was wringing of her tender hands, tearing out her hair
Saying, "Judge and jurymen, spare their lives
For they are my sons and my heart's delight."

"It's go you home, dearest woman, dear,
You've come too late, for their time it's near.
Tomorrow morning at the hour of three
You can claim their bodies from the gallows tree."

"It's go you home, dearest mother, dear,
You've come too late, for our time it's near.
Tomorrow morning, that is the day
And from all our friends we must die away."

"Come all you people that is standing by
That have come here for to see us die
You shun bad company, take to good ways
That's the way to live and see happy days."

The fact that Danny's 11-verse rendering is the only collected version of this ballad is remarkable. The story refers to a crime of 1818 when William Warner, Thomas Ward and Thomas Williams were convicted of robbery and assault on George Greenway. The three were tried and hanged. An original broadside of the incident has the snappy title 'The Lamentation of W Warner, T Ward and T Williams Who Were Executed at Warwick, August 14, 1818'. Mr Brazil's version shows signs of having

gone through some oral process, and one can assume that the song has been passed through the family for nearly 200 years.

8 - Three Little Babes (The Wife of Usher's Well) Roud 196, Child 79
Sung by Spencer Moore. Recorded in Chilhowie, Virginia, 29 November 1997)

There was a bride, a most beautiful bride
Three little babes had she
She sent them away to a northern college
To learn their grammaree.

They hadn't been away but a little while
'Bout three months and a day
'Til death spread wide all over the land
And took her babes away.

"Oh, Saviour dear," cried the beautiful bride
Who used to wear a crown
"Send to me my three little babes
Tonight or in the morning soon."

But it being close [to] Christmas time
And the nights being long and cold
Down come running those three little babes
Into their mother's home.

She fixed them a table in the backside room
Spread over with bread and wine
"Come and eat and drink, my three little babes
Come and eat and drink of mine."

"We can't eat your bread, sweet mother dear
Neither can we drink your wine
For yonder stands my sweet Saviour
From this we must resign."

She fixed them a bed in the backside room
Spread over with a nice clean sheet
On top of that was a golden spread
She fixed them a place to sleep.

"Take it off, take it off, sweet mother dear
Take it off," then again said he
"How can we stay in this wide wicked world
When there's a better place for me."

Mr Moore learnt this song from his father. It derives from the old British ballad of *The Wife Of Usher's Well*, long forgotten in the British Isles but still in oral tradition in the Appalachians.

9 - Three Men Went a-Hunting (Roud 283)
Sung by George Privett. Recorded in Hampshire, 20 October 1974)

For it's three men went a-hunting to see what they could find.
Until they came to an hedgehog and that they left behind.
The Englishman said it was an hedgehog, the Scotsman he said, "Nay."
And Paddy said 'twas a pincushion with the pins turned the 'tother way.

Chorus [to same tune]:
For 'twas half past five in the morning in the middle of the night.
The ducks began to quarrel and the pigs began to fight.
The neighbours looked out of the window to see that all was right,
For 'twas half past five in the morning in the middle of the night.

Three men went a-hunting to see what they could find.
Until they came to a donkey and that they left behind.
The Englishman said it was a donkey, the Scotsman he said, "Nay."
And Paddy said 'twas his grandfather with his hair all growing grey.

*For it's three men went a-hunting to see what they could find.
Until they came to an old cowpat and that they left behind.*

*The Englishman said it was a cowpat, the Scotsman he said, "Nay."
And Paddy said 'twas a rhubarb tart with the crust all blown away.*

*For it's three men went a-hunting to see what they could find.
Until they came to a haystack and that they left behind.
The Englishman said it was an haystack, the Scotsman he said, "Nay."
And Paddy said it was an old thatched barn with its windows blown away.*

The last two verses were spoken to Gwilym, not sing. The gentle humour of this song has persisted in English tradition for nearly five hundred years and versions of are still turning up in the English-speaking world.

10 - Jimmie Cooper's Hornpipes
(Recorded at the Dartmoor Folk Festival in South Zeal, Devon, August 1979)

The first tune is well-known among Devon musicians as the *Schottische Hornpipe*. The second tune, *Jack the Lad*, is a variant of what Bob Cann called *Cokie's Hornpipe*.

11 - Down by the Bramble Bushes (Roud 18988)
(Sung by Esther Johnson, aged 7 ..Recorded in Cambridge, 7 May 2020)

Down by the bramble bushes, down by the sea
(clap, clap clap)
True love for you, my darling, true love for me.
When we get married, we'll raise a family.

Spoken:
A boy for you, a girl for me
How many fishes in the sea?
Twelve and twelve make twenty four
Kick your teacher out the door.
If she does not understand that
Hit her on the head with a baseball bat.
Teacher, teacher, I declare
I can see your underwear.
Is it black or is it white?
Oh my gosh, it's dynamite.
10, 9, 8, 7, 6, 5, 4, 3, 2,
Blast off!

This is one of many playground songs and ditties that Gwilym collected from his daughter when she was in primary school in Cheltenham. For the recording, she taught it to her daughter, Gwilym's granddaughter Esther.

12 - The Leaves of Life (Roud 127)
Sung by Gordon Hall. Recorded in Pease Pottage, Sussex, 3 February 1996)

All under the leaves and the leaves of life
I met with virgins seven.
Foremost of them was Mary so mild,
Our dear Lord's mother in Heaven.

"Oh what are you seeking, you seven fair maids
All under the leaves of life?
Pray tell me, pray tell me, what seek you
All under the leaves of life?"

"We seek not gold nor leaves, Thomas,
For that dear son of mine
We are seeking for sweet Jesus Christ
For to be our guide and thine."

"Then haste ye to Jerusalem
Seek not in Galilee

For it's there you'll find sweet Jesus Christ,
Nail-ed to a gurt yew tree."

With haste they to Jerusalem
As fast as foot could fall.
With many a grievous bitter tear
From the virgins' eyes did fall.

Now when they reach-ed Calvary
The salt tears fell like rain.
"Oh, woe is me, my own dear son
For to see you bear such pain."

High on a cross on that green hill
With hands and feet nailed fast
Despis-ed and rejected of men
By false prophets outcast.

"Oh mother I pray you your weeping cease
I pray you do not grieve.
For I must suffer this," he said,
"For Adam and for Eve."

"Oh, how can I my weeping cease,
My sorrows overthrow?
When I do see my own son die
Sweet sons I give no more."

"Oh, mother sweet mother, you must take John
To be your only son
And he will comfort you betimes
Mother, as I have done."

"Then welcome John, the Evangelist
Then welcome unto me
More welcome yet than my own dear son
That have dangled upon my knee."

The rose the blood red rose
And the fennel that grows so green.
God grant us grace in everie place
For to pray for our king and queen.

And furthermore for our enemies all
Our prayers they must be strong
Amen, good Lord, your sweet charity
Is the ending of my song.

This song would appear to be of some antiquity but can only be traced back to the mid 19th Century. It is rare in tradition and this is only the second time that it has been recorded in audio from a traditional singer. Gordon's version is remarkable for its detail and his impressive performance but he was known to enhance songs he knew from his large collection of broadsides. According to Gordon, the Hall family sang it every Easter.

13 - **The Wild Wild Berry** (Roud 23845)

Sung by Ray Driscoll. Recorded at 14 Eynella Rd, Dulwich, London, 27 October 1993)

Young man came from hunting faint and weary.
"What does ail my lord, my dearie?"
"Oh mother dear, let my bed be made
For I feel the gripe of the woody nightshade."
Lie low, sweet Randal,

Chorus:

So come all you young men that do eat full well
And they that sup right merry
'Tis far better, I entreat to have toads for your meat
Than to eat of the wild, wild berry.

This young man he died eft soon
By the light of the hunter's moon.
'Twas not by bolt nor yet by blade
But the deathly gripe of the woody nightshade.
Lie low, sweet Randal

This lord's false love they hanged her high
For her deeds were the cause of her lord to die
And in her hair they entwined a braid
Of the leaves and berries of the woody nightshade.
Lie low, sweet Randal.

Ray Driscoll learnt the song from a farm worker in Shropshire. It seems to be a reworking of the Lord Randal ballad, but no other version of *Wild, Wild Berry* has come to light.

14 - **The Schoolmaster's Son** (Roud 13267)

Sung by Danny Brazil. Recorded in Staverton, Glos, 5 May 1978)

When I was a young girl, a young girl at home,
My parents they sent me to school,
'Til I became over-courted all by a false young man,
That was all by my schoolmaster's son.

Then my parents they turned me out of doors, out of doors,
Was because that my character was gone,
It never would have been if it wasn't for him,
That was all by my schoolmaster's son.

As I was a-walking up great London street,
You'd have heard of the same and before,
Who should I chance to spy but my own true love
Where my thoughts would never would have been [sic - as sung].

For he tiled me an apple along of the floor,
He was thinking to 'tice me once more,
I tiled it back again, straight back to him again,
"Your apple it's rotten to the core."

"Come hold up your head pretty maid, pretty maid,
Come hold up your head, don't cry dear,
We'll have wedding bells to ring,
We'll have college girls to sing,
We'll have tied hands all on our wedding day."

This song is rare indeed. A version was collected, again from a Gypsy in Gloucestershire by Cecil Sharp in 1922. Danny's is the only version to have been recorded in audio in oral tradition.

15 - **The Waysailing Bowl** (Roud 209)

Sung by Dick Parsons. Recorded at the Cheese Rollers pub, Cheltenham, Glos, 28 July 1974)

Come butler, come butler, fill us a bowl of the best,
Hoping your soul in heaven may rest.
In heaven may rest where we shall all be.
To my waysailing bowl, we'll drink unto thee.

But if he should fill us a bowl of the small
Down will go butler, and bowl and all
Down he shall go to the bottom of the sea
To my waysailing bowl, we will drink unto thee.

Here we come a-wass'ling all over the town,
Our cup it is white and our ale it is brown.
Our bowl it is made of the sycamore tree
To my waysailing bowl I'll drink unto thee.

Here's to the (h)ox and to his right horn
God send my master a good crop of corn.
A good crop of corn that we may all taste

To my waysailing bowl, don't drink it in haste.

Here's to the (h)ox and to his right ear,
God send my master a barrel of beer.
A barrel of beer that we may all taste
To my waysailing bowl, don't drink it in haste.

Here's to the (h)ox and to his right eye
God send my master a good Christmas pie
A good Christmas pie that we may all taste
To my waysailing bowl, don't drink it in haste.

Here's to the (h)ox and to his right leg
Wishing my master a barrel of keg.
A barrel of beer that we may all taste
To my waysailing bowl, don't drink it in haste.

The Gloucestershire wassailing tradition was kept up at least to the start of WWII. Dick Parsons' version, with its unusual tune, was sung by him and his companions around the southern districts of Cheltenham until the 30s. They carried with them a bowl in which they collected drink as they moved from house to house. Verses 1 and 2 were recorded and the remainder were dictated off microphone.

16 - **The Devil and the Farmer's Wife** (Roud 160, Child 278)

Sung by Dick Richards. Recorded at Rexford, New York State, 18 January 1998)

A farmer was ploughing beneath the sun,
Singing Miranda, Miray-eh,
A farmer was ploughing beneath the sun
When up from the earth the Devil come
With his right leg, left leg, upper leg, under leg
Singing Miranda Miray-ay

"It is [for] my son that you have come?" etc
"Oh no," said the Devil, "'tis not your son
'Tis your wife, that son of a gun," etc

"Oh take her, oh take her with all of my heart, etc
I pray every day that you never do part," etc

And so he slung her right over his back, etc
Down the hill he went wickety-wack, etc

Oh when she got there, she did very well, etc
She said, "Someday, I'll be Queen of Hell," etc.

One little devil peeped over the spire, etc
She threw ten others right into the fire, etc

Another little devil peeped over the wall, etc
Said "Take her back, daddy, she'll kill us all," etc.

The farmer was peeping through the crack, etc
He saw the old Devil come lugging her back, etc.

So now she'll do whatever she will, etc
If the Devil won't have her, now who in hell will, etc.

This is a song of great popularity, particularly in the USA. One reference takes it back to the early 18th Century.

17 - **The Shooting Gallery** (Roud 1568)

Sung by Arthur Baker
(Recorded in the Fox and Goose pub, Greywell, Hampshire, 14 March 1971)

[It's] through a shooting gallery I'm settled now for life,
For there I first beheld the girl I since have made my wife.
She held a rifle in her hand in such a winning way

And when I took it from her, she smilingly did say

Chorus: "You've got to hit the bull's-eye before you ring the bell
Take a steady aim, love, and try to do it well.
Hold your rifle higher and don't let it misfire
For you've got to hit the bull's-eye before you ring the bell.

I quickly fired the rifle but I failed to ring the bell
Although I tried, it was no use, how 'twas I cannot tell.
I did as she instructed me, and for a shot paid her.
In such a coaxing manner, she whispered in my ear.

I kept on firing but I found the bull's-eye far too small.
The more I kept on firing, it was never hit at all.
And then she said, "Try one more shot, for really you can't tell.
The next time that you fire your gun, perhaps you'll ring the bell."

And now to tell the truth, my friends, and cut my story short,
I'm married now and I'm now at home and got some proper sport
I've got a shooting gallery in a garret near the sky
When I look out of my window, all my neighbours quickly cry.

This cheeky song is older than it looks and can be traced back to a 19th century broadside. It is very rare in tradition.

18 - **The Streets of Minturno** (Roud 29969)

Sung by Don Mitchell
(Recorded in the Bisley House pub, Stroud, Glos, 10 September 1979)

Now there is blood on the streets of Minturno
It's the blood of the brave and the few.
Of a division that went into battle
To do a job that no other could do.
Now the Yanks said they couldn't cross that river
They said it just couldn't be done
And to prove what they thought of our chances
They were betting at twenty to one.

But they didn't know the old Fifth Division
When there's a job to be done
There was nothing on earth what could stop us
Not even the square-headed Hun.

So forward we went into battle
Not a man thought of death.
All grim and looking determined
But in their hearts they were saying a prayer.

Yes, they thought of their wives, and their mothers
They thought of the loved ones who knew
For they knew when they crossed over the river
There was many who'd never return.

Yes there's blood on the streets of Minturno.
It's the blood of the brave and the few.
May their souls live in glory forever
And their hearts live in heaven above.

This song is unique in tradition. An internet search reveals that it was also sung to the tune of *The Red River Valley*. During much of WWII the Italian town of Minturno was occupied by German troops. After much fighting, the American and British troops managed to cross the River Garigliano and retake the town. The song suggests that the British forces were able to succeed where the American forces had not, but history suggest that American troops supported the British 5th Division to win the day.

19 - **My Bonny Bon Boy** (Lord Randal) (Roud 10, Child 12)

(Recorded at Riverview Orchards Rexford, New York State, 18 January 1998)

“What had you for your dinner, my bonny, bon boy?
What had you for your dinner, my comfort and joy?”

“Oh, eels fried in butter, mother, make my bed soon
For I’m sick unto my heart and I want to lie down.”

“What will you leave your brother,” etc
“Oh, my horse and my saddle,” etc

“What will you leave your father,” etc
“Oh, my house and my lands,” etc

“What will you leave your mother,” etc
“Oh, the gates to heaven open,” etc

“What will you leave your wife,” etc
“Oh, the gates to hell wide open,” etc

This song, and its many versions, is one of the most collected in the English-speaking world. This unusual version has been sung in the Cleveland family for generations.

20 - The Bedmaking (Roud 1631)

Sung by Bob Arnold. Recorded in Burford, Oxfordshire, 10 November 1991

Now my father he were such a mean old man
Sent me off to service when I was young
But the misteress and me, we never could agree
Because the master he would kiss me.

First in the kitchen and then in the hall
Then in the parlour before them all
Oh the misteress and me, never could agree
Because the master he would kiss me

Then the missus her sent I upstairs to the loft
To make up a bed so neat and soft
Master followed on with a little gold pin
“Take this, Betty, for the bedmaking.”

But the missus her come upstairs in haste
Copped the master with his arm around me waist
From the top of the stairs her did him fling
“Take that, master, for the bedmaking.”

Then the missus her called I a dirty little whore
Said as her didn’t want to see I any more
The night was cold, and my clothes were thin.
And I wished as I were back at the bedmaking.

Six months over, seven months past
This pretty little maid grew thick around the waist
Her stays they ‘ouldn’t meet nor her pinafore pin
And her cried when her thought about the bedmaking .

Eight months over, nine a-coming on
This pretty fair maiden she had a little son
Took him to the church, and she had him christened John
Then she took him back to the dear old man.

Then she cursed him in the kitchen, down through the hall
Out through the parlour, among the women all
Saying “ If you won’t pay me, take your little son John
‘Cause he cost you nothing but the bedmaking.”

Bob learnt this song in the pub where he grew up in Asthall, Oxfordshire when he was a young teenager. It was sung in the pub by an old woman about 80 years old who never had any money but people used to buy her a drink to sing it. The song is surprisingly rare, only having been collected a handful of times, mainly in England, although it may

have been printed in the 1820s, and there are broadsides of the later 18th century mentioning the tune ‘The Bedmaking’.

21 - Lamkin (Roud 6, Child 93)

Sung by Tony Lloyd. Recorded at the Nag’s Head pub, Malvern, Worcs, 4 April 1993)

Oh the lord said to his lady before he went out
“Beware of Long Lamkin for he’s walking about.”

“What care I for Long Lamkin or any of his kin,
When the doors they are all bolted
and the windows close pinned?”

One door left unbolted, Long Lamkin crept in
For to prick that little baby with a silver bodkin.

Said Lamkin to the false nurse, “Where’s the heir of this house?”
“He’s asleep in his cradle as quiet as a mouse.”

How sound he does slumber, how sound he does sleep.
Then with a silver bodkin stabbed the baby so deep.

“Oh lady, oh lady, how sound he does sleep.
Don’t you hear your little baby for to mourn and to weep.”

“How durst I come down in the midst of the night
No candle a-burning, or fire alight.”

“Put on your gold mantle, you may see by that.”
Bold Lamkin, he was ready for to catch her in his lap.

“Oh Lamkin, oh Lamkin, spare my life one half hour
I’ll fetch you my daughter Betsy, she’s the sweetest of flower.”

“What care I for your daughter Betsy or any of your kin?
She may hold the silver basin for to catch your blood in.”

There’s blood in the kitchen, there’s blood in the hall.
There’s blood in the parlour where the lady did fall.

‘Twas early next morning before break of day
When the maid she saw her master come a-riding that way

“Oh master, oh master, don’t you lay the blame onto me
Bold Lamkin he has murdered the lady and the baby.”

Bold Lamkin shall be hung from the gallows so high
And the false nurse shall be burned in the fire close by.

The bells will ring slowly, they’ll make a dull sound
With the lady and the baby lay dead on the ground.

This gory and dramatic ballad has been around for at least 250 years. Despite its grim plot, it has persisted in oral tradition until recent times. Tony Lloyd learnt it from a local Gypsy singer, Joe Jones. The tune here is Green Bushes,

22 - The Gloucester Blinder (Roud 1735)

Sung by David Gardner. Recorded in Tresham, Gloucestershire, 1 February 1997)

In Gloucestershire where I comes from, they calls I an artful old dodger.
They asked I o’er and o’er again if I could be a soldier
They asked I o’er and o’er again if I could take a shiner
And they told I that the name of me corps would be the Gloucester Blinder.

Chorus: With a fa-la-la here and a fa-la-la there.
Fa-la-la-la when I get whome.

They took I on the square that day, a-followin’ up the band, sir.

And a gurt tall chap way out in front, why didn't he thump that drum, sir.
He'd swing his sticks up over his y'ead, wallop, he brought 'em down, sir.
And he hut [hit] a gurt hole in the side of the drum,
As bigger than a mangle wurzle.

They took us on parade thuck [that] day, doin' our duty manual
And round and round thuck square we went, as the rifles we did handle
'Twas eyes right, eyes left, dammit hold your y'head up
And if thee's durst as much as answer 'em back they'd stick 'ee in the lock-up.

Now they brought us in 'twas dinner time, I was as hungry as a hunter
But I dursn't touch or smell one bit, 'til theh officer had been round, sir
They brought a dish, dished it up, on an old tin platter
And all that I had when it come to my turn
Was bone and a blooming gurt tyater [potato].

Lord don't I wish I were back, a vollowin' our old plough sir
Lord don't I wish that I were back, a-milkin' our old cow sir
Lord don't I wish that I were back, alongside a leg o' mutton
With a damn gurt knife and a rusty old fork, ah lummeec couldn't I cut 'en.

This song is better known than song collections would have you believe. Versions of it are sprinkled throughout the southern and eastern counties of England, with varying names. In Oxfordshire it is "The Yorkshire Blinder" "or "When first I came to Sherborne Town", in Suffolk "Bungay Roger" or "Mudley Barracks", in Cornwall it is "In the Village of St Merryn", whilst in Hampshire it is "To Portsmouth Town" or "The Bold Mariner" Furthermore, it has usually become a vehicle for local dialect.. It must have been around long enough to give rise to regional variations and yet no printed copy can be found and collected versions only date from the 1960s. The theme has echoes of the Irish "Kerry Recruit" and the broadside "The Awkward Recruit", both of which deal with a country yokel joining the army, but neither of these songs bears any resemblance in words to our song.

Mr Gardner's son Michael, who also sings the song, wrote a further verse in honour of his father:

When I gets back to Gloucestershire,
I'll go whome to me village
But I could never forget thuck bloody war,
and the pals lost in the carnage
I'll go to church on Sunday morn
and thank the Lord in heaven
For the fields and the hills and the
valleys and the trees
And that long old winding Severn.

23 - John Barleycorn (Roud 2141)

Sung by Charlie Milam. Recorded in a care home in Basingstoke, Hampshire, 1 October 1970

There were three kings came from the east,
Their fortunes for to tell.
And these three kings did swear and vow,
John Barleycorn should fall.

To me right fol de rol, riddle all the rol.
Right fol the rol di day.

They got their ploughs, they ploughed him in,
Put clods all over his head,
[And these three kings did swear and vow,
John Barleycorn was dead.

John he laid in the ground for one fortnight,
The rain from Heaven did send,
John Barleycorn sprang up again,
Made liars of them all.

[There he remained] 'til midsummer,
As others farmers did

.....

.....

The farmer with his scythe [so sharp]
He cut him off at knee
[And then poor little Barleycorn
They used most barbarously.

The pitcher with his pronged hook sharp,
He stabbed him through the heart
[And like a dreadful tragedy,
They bound him to a cart.

Here's brandy in a bottle
and cider in a can,
But Barleycorn in a stout pint mug
will floor the jolliest man.

This song is very common all over England, less so in Scotland, Ireland and Canada but hardly at all in the USA. The theme is very old: the ballad of 'Sir John Barleycorne' was registered in 1624 and a Roxborough ballad of the mid 17th century tells of 'The Bloody Murder of Sir John Barleycorn'. This latter song tells in fanciful fashion of the turning of barley into beer and contains many elements of the more recently collected versions. Although Charlie's version is very incomplete, it is worth including as it was the first traditional folk song that Gwilym collected. The last verse was spoken by Charlie to Gwilym after the microphone was switched off.

24 - Around her Leg she Wore a Yellow Garter (Roud 10642)

Sung by Gwilym Davies. Recorded in Winchcombe, Glos in May 2020)

Around her leg she wore a yellow garter
She wore it in the springtime and in
the month of May (hey, hey)
And if you ask her why the hell she wore it
She wore it for that airman who is far, far away
Far far away (not far enough),
far away (not far enough)
She wore it for that airman who is far, far away.

And in the spring she wheels a perambulator
She wheels it in the springtime and in
the month of May (hey, hey)
And if you ask her why the hell she wheels it
She wheels it for that airman who is far,
far away. Far away etc.

Behind the door her father keeps a shotgun
He keeps it in the springtime and in
the month of May (hey, hey)
And if you ask him why the hell he keeps it
He keeps it for that airman who is far,
far away. Far away etc.

This song is one of many Gwilym learnt out of the earshot of the teachers at his secondary school in the early 60s. It is widely known, especially in the Armed Forces, and is a later version of the song *All Around my Hat*.

25 - Pompalerie Jig (Roud 18853)

Sung by Ray Driscoll. Recorded at 4 Eynella Rd, Dulwich, London, on 27 October 1993)

Wellington addressed us on the eve of Waterloo
We've the Grenadier Guards and Coldstreams and you have the Scots Guards,
too
And as for the old moustaches, why you shouldn't give a fig.
You've your muskets, swords and bayonets and your Pompalerie Jig.
And in the heat of battle on the field of Waterloo
Oh, we volleyed and we charged them and we ran them through and through
And as for the old moustaches, why, they squealed just like a pig

At our muskets, swords and bayonets and our Pompalerie Jig.

And at the end of battle, old Boney said, "Tell me do,
However did you beat me on the field of Waterloo?"
And we said, "We're glad you asked us for we knew you'd never twig.
It was our muskets, swords and bayonets and our Pompalerie Jig."

And Boney sat and thought awhile and said to me, "Me man,
I think I have the answer, pray correct me if you can.
It wasn't your arms nor regiments for my armies were too big
So the only thing that defeated me was your Pompalerie Jig."

And how did they serve the veterans that did these daring deeds?
Why, they published us a Vagrancy Act to furnish all our needs,
All passed by act of Parliament, by the Tories and the Whigs
And they left us all with nothing but a Pompalerie Jig.

This satirical song is unique to the singing of Ray Driscoll. No other version has been found, which is curious as it seems to date from soon after the battle of Waterloo. Ray learnt the song from an Irishman in Wigan who earned the nickname Pompey due to the frequency with which he sang the song. The tune is the first part of the hornpipe, *Boney Crossing the Alps*.

Credits:

My wife Carol has accompanied me and supported me on many of my collecting trips. My thanks to Mike Yates for introducing me to Ray Driscoll. My Devon collecting was facilitated by my old friend Colin Andrews. In the USA, there are many people that I could thank, but especially George Ward and his late wife Vaughn in New York State, and the good folk of the Greater Washington Folklore Society.

But, mainly, I must thank all those men and women who were kind enough to let me record them and who shared their music and good times with me.

Booklet: text, song notes
and most of the photos
by Gwilym Davies

Booklet: editing, DTP, printing
CD: formatting, production
by Rod Stradling

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Above: George Privett, 1975.
Photo by Chris Sullivan.

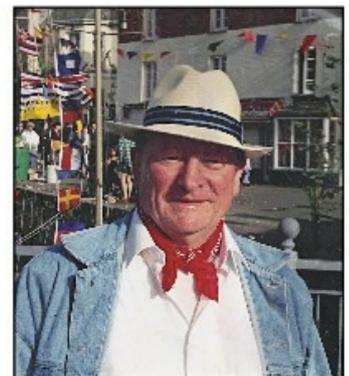
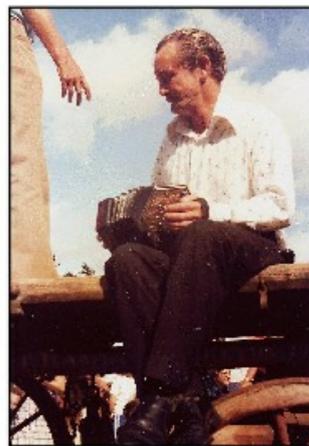
Right:
James and Colleen Cleveland



Above: Wiggie Smith
and Ray Driscoll.
Photo by Paul Burgess.



Below: Gwilym Davies recording Phyllis Marks



Above: Ray Driscoll
Above left: Jimmie Cooper



Left: Billy Buckingham

Below: Spencer Moore



All photos by Gwilym Davies,
except those noted.