Preface

All the songs on this and the preceding long-playing record (L57) are members, circulating within recent decades in various parts of the United States, of the classic and authoritative canon of traditional narrative songs of English and Scottish growth now universally known as the "Child Ballads," after the great nineteenth-century scholar who first assembled and edited them: Professor Francis James Child of Harvard University. Child had a vast and historic knowledge of balladry, defying barriers of language and ranging familiarly through the centuries. After the most strenuous efforts, prolonged for decades, to recover every record of value, he concluded that only a handful were still traditionally alive. What would have been his delighted amazement to learn -- a fact that has been discovered only in our own century and which is spectacularly demonstrated in the Archive of Folk Song -- that scores of his chosen ballads are even today being sung in strictly traditional forms, not learned from print, across the length and breadth of this country, in variants literally innumerable! The aim of the present selection is to display some of the Archive's riches, a representative cross-section from the hundred of Child variants collected by many interested field workers and now safely garnered in the Library of Congress.
References for Study: Professor Child set forth his ballad canon in the monumental English and Scottish Popular Ballads (Boston, Houghton, Mifflin, 1882-1898, 10 parts in 5 volumes; reprinted in 3 volumes, New York, Folklore Press, 1956). Mention should also be made of the useful one-volume abridgement of the complete work, the "Student's Cambridge Edition," prepared by Helen Child Sargent and George Lyman Kittredge (Boston, Houghton, Mifflin, 1904).

The music of the ballads, a subject receiving scant attention in Child's time, was first extensively collected and published by the British scholar, Cecil J. Sharp, whose English Folk Songs from the Southern Appalachians (London, Oxford, 1932, 2 volumes; reprinted 1952) contains more than 350 American tunes for 45 of the Child ballads. A full compendium of the extant melodies, B.H. Bronson's The Traditional Tunes of the Child Ballads with Their Texts (Princeton), is currently in preparation. The first volume, printing close to 1,000 tunes for ballads 1-53, was published in 1959.

The number of important books and articles on traditional balladry, particularly the Child ballads, is much more extensive than can be suggested here. An effective key to much of it, however, is the "Critical, Bibliographical Study of the Traditional Ballads of America," which forms the major part of Tristram P. Coffin's book, The British Ballad in North America (Philadelphia, American Folklore Society, 1950).

For those interested in reading more about Child's life and lifework, the eighth chapter of Sigurd Hustvedt's Ballad Books and Ballad Men (Cambridge, Harvard, 1930) is heartily recommended.
THE WIFE OF USHER'S WELL
(Child No. 79)

AI
[(b) "The Three Babes." Sung by Mrs. Texas Gladden at Salem, Virginia, 1941. Recorded by Alan Lomax.]

This version of "The Wife of Usher's Well" differs in some particulars from the most famous Scottish forms: the knight is an unnecessary intruder, who does nothing useful yet robs the lady of some of her former pathos. Additional pathos should accrue by the reduction of "stout and stalwart sons" to "little babes" -- but this change, although perhaps universal in America, is surely wrong, as the conduct and speech of the children shows. In some versions, "cold Christmas" is, rather, "old Christmas," which recalls to memory the shift in the English calendar in 1752, when those unwilling to capitulate celebrated "old Christmas" on January 6 rather than on the day which was, they thought, only by fraud called December 25. The k-sound in "dark" may have been carried over to the next word in Mrs. Gladden's version. Also, the "winding sheet" in stanza 4 seems to have come forward from the last stanza, to the detriment of the sense. Contrary to the versions known to Child, this one in its final statement carries the positive suggestion that the sons come back to forbid obstinate grief. Doubtless, in our up-to-date psychology, this would be explained as a mechanism designed to rid the mother of her feelings of guilt for allowing her grief to cool.

The tunes of this ballad are generally speaking some of the most consistent and beautiful that tradition has kept alive.

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1. There was a knight and a lady bright
   And three little babes had she
   She sent them away to a far countr-ee
   To learn their grammary.

2. They hadn't been gone but a very short time
   About three months and a day
   Till the Lord called over this whole wide world
   And taken those babes away.

3. It was on a dark, cold Christmas night
   When everything was still
   She saw her three little babes come running
   Come running down the hill.
4. She spread a table of bread and wine
   That they might drink and eat
She spread a bed, a winding sheet
   That they might sleep so sweet.

5. Take it off, take it off, said the oldest one,
   Take it off, take it off, said (he)
I can't stay here in this wide wicked world
   For there's a better one for me.

6. Cold clods, cold clods down by my side,
   Cold clods down at my feet
The tears my dear mother has shed for me
   Would wet my winding sheet.

SIR ANDREW BARTON and HENRY MARTYN
(Child Nos. 167 & 250)

A2
[(a) "Andrew Batann." Sung by Warde H. Ford at Central
Valley, California, 1938. Recorded by Sidney Robertson Cowell.]

Not much of actual history remains in this spirited amalgamation of "Sir Andrew Barton" and "Henry Martin." Originally, Henry VIII's noble captains, Sir Thomas and Sir Edward Howard, captured the Scottish marauder, Sir Andrew Barton, after strenuous fighting. Charles Stewart seems to have been borrowed, to his own discomfiture, from naval service in Lake Erie, in the War of 1812. The eleventh and thirteenth stanzas appear to have been taken over from another naval contest as commemorated in "Captain Ward and the Rainbow" (Child No. 287), along with the iniquitous victory of the pirate.

1. There once were three brothers from merry Scotland
   From merry Scotland were they
They cast a lot to see which of them
   Would go robbing all o'er the salt sea.

2. The lot it fell to Andrew Batann
   The youngest one of the three
That he should go robbing all o'er the salt sea
   To maintain his three brothers and he.

3. He had not sailed but one summer's eve
   When a light it did appear
It sailed far off and it sailed far on
   And at last it came sailing so near.
4. Who art, who art, cried Andrew Batann
   Who art that sails so nigh
   We are the rich merchants from old Eng-l-and
   And I pray you will let us pass by.

5. O no, o no, cried Andrew Batann,
   O no, that never can be
   Your ship and your cargo I'll take them away
   And your merry men drown in the sea.

6. When the news reached old Eng-l-and
   What Andrew Batann had done
   Their ship and their cargo he'd taken away
   And all of their merry men drowned.

7. Build me a boat, cried Captain Charles Stuart
   And build it strong and secure
   And if I don't capture Andrew Batann
   My life I'll no longer endure.

8. He had not sailed but one summer's eve
   When a light it did appear
   It sailed far off and it sailed far on
   And at last it came sailing so near.

9. Who art, who art, cried Captain Charles Stuart,
   Who art that sails so nigh?
   We're the jolly Scots robbers from merry Scotland
   And I pray you will let us pass by.

10. O no, o no, cried Captain Charles Stuart,
    O no, that never can be
    Your ship and your cargo I'll take it away
    And your merry men drown in the sea.

11. What ho, what ho, cried Andrew Batann
    I value you not one pin
    For while you show me fine brass without
    I'll show you good steel within.

12. Then broadside to broadside these ships they stood
    And like thunder their cannon did roar
    They had not fought but two hours or so
    Till Captain Charles Stuart gave o'er.

13. Go home, go home, cried Andrew Batann
    And tell your king for me
    While he remains king upon the dry land
    I'll remain king of the sea.
This is an extraordinary survival indeed! What's the Jacobite Rising of 1715 to Florida, or Lord Derwentwater to Mrs. Griffin, that she should lament for him? The narrative behind this disordered and confusing text is as follows: Derwentwater, a Scottish Earl who rose to support his companion in France, James Stewart, the Old Pretender, against the House of Hanover and George I, was captured at the Battle of Preston (November 14, 1715), was attainted and brought to the block, February 24, 1716. His youth -- he was only 27 -- and his open bearing excited popular sympathy for his fate. The ballad describes the summons to London for trial and the Earl's premonitions of doom. In earlier versions, he leaves houses and land to his eldest son, £10,000 to his second son, and a third of his estate to his lady, who is in child-bed when he departs. Probably "It's two and two" is a corruption of "to you and to you." On the way, his horse stumbles, and his nose begins to bleed -- two bad omens. The "jolly old man" who commands his life is properly the headsman with a "braid axe." The Earl deals money to the poor, in a final generous gesture, and his velvet coat as a fee to the executioner. His only treason, he says, was the keeping of 500 (or 5000) men to fight for King James, his rightful sovereign.

Professor Alton Morris, who brought Mrs. Griffin's large repertoire to the attention of the Archive of Folk Song, recounts her singing of this rare fragment in the Journal of American Folklore (vol. XLVII, 1934, pp. 95-96) and on pages 308-310 of his Folksongs of Florida (Gainesville, University of Florida Press, 1950).

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1. The king he wrote a love letter
   And he sealed it all with gold
   And he sent it to the Duke of Melanto (r)
   To read it if he could.

2. The first few lines that he did read
   It caused him for to smile
   But the next few lines that he did read
   The tears from his eyes did flow.
3. He called up his oldest one  
   To bridle and saddle my steed  
   For I've got to go to Lunnon Town  
   Although I have no need.

4. It's make your will, you Duke of Melanto (r)  
   It's make your will all around  
   It's two and two to my two oldest sons  
   It's two, it's two all around  
   For all of my steeds and the rest of my property  
   We'll retain to her lady's side.

5. Before he rode up in the edge of town  
   He met a jolly old man  
   Your life, your life, you Duke of Melanto (r)  
   Your life I will command.

6. He stooped over the window  
   There the flowers swelled so gay  
   Till his nose gushed out and bleed  
   Come all you lords, you pretty lords, ye,  
   Be kind to my baby  
   Come all you lords, you pretty lords, ye,  
   Be kind to my baby  
   For all my steeds and the rest of my property  
   We'll retain to her lady's side.

JAMES HARRIS or THE Daemon Lover  
(Child No. 243)

((c)) "Well Met, My Old True Love." Sung by Mrs. Pearl  
Jacobs Borusky at Antigo, Wisconsin, 1940. Recorded by  
Robert F. Draves.]

Mrs. Borusky's version, brought from the Appalachians, tells  
a connected story that is in no need of explanation, having  
its counterpart in every day's newspapers. For some reason,  
this ballad, no longer much sung in Britain, has in America  
been very well-liked and frequently collected. The English  
broadside tradition, dating from the seventeenth century  
(as from Plymouth), is what has been perpetuated here, but  
there are much more impressive Scottish forms. Of these  
the most famous is called "The Daemon Lover" in Scott's  
Minstrelsy, wherein the seducer turns supernatural on the  
voyage, with dismal countenance and "drumlie ee." After  
showing his cloven hoof, he strikes the topmast with his  
hand, the foremost with his knee, breaking the gallant ship  
to pieces. As the song is ordinarily sung, it is redeemed  
from cheapness by its fine melody.
The version of Mr. Walters, which follows, has unusual touches. There is a suggestion of magic in the splendor of the ship and the sweet music; just as in the earlier copies "the sails were o the taffetie, the masts o the beaten gold," and the ship was run by no visible human agency.

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1. Well met, well met, my old true love  
   Well met, well met, said he  
   I have just returned from the salt, salt sea  
   And it's all for the sake of thee  
   And it's all for the sake of thee.

2. I once could have married a king's daughter fair  
   And she would have married me  
   But I refused that rich crown of gold  
   And it's all for the sake of thee.  
   And it's all for the sake of thee.

3. If you could have married a king's daughter fair  
   I'm sure you are much to blame  
   For I am married to a house carpenter  
   And I think he's a fine young man.  
   And I think he's a fine young man.

4. If you'll forsake your house carpenter  
   And go along with me  
   I will take you where the grass grows green  
   On the banks of the sweet Willie.  
   On the banks of the sweet Willie.

5. If I forsake my house carpenter  
   And go along with thee  
   What have you got for my support  
   And to keep me from slavery?  
   And to keep me from slavery?

6. I have six ships upon the sea  
   And the seventh one at land  
   And if you come and go with me  
   They shall be at your command.  
   They shall be at your command.

7. She took her babe into her arms  
   And gave it kisses three  
   Saying, stay at home my pretty little babe  
   To keep your father company.  
   To keep your father company.
8. She dressed herself in rich array
   To exceed all others in the town
   And as she walked the streets around
   She shone like a glittering crown.
   She shone like a glittering crown.

9. They had not been on board more than two weeks
   I'm sure it was not three
   Until one day she began to weep
   And she wept most bitterly.
   And she wept most bitterly.

10. O are you weeping for your houses or your land
    Or are you weeping for your store
    Or are you weeping for your house carpenter
    You never shall see any more
    That you never shall see any more

11. I'm not weeping for my houses or my land
    Nor I'm not weeping for my store
    But I am weeping for my pretty little babe
    I never shall see any more
    I never shall see any more.

12. They had not been on board more than three weeks
    It was not four, I am sure
    Until at length the ship sprung a leak
    And she sunk to arise no more.
    And she sunk to arise no more.

13. A curse, a curse to all seamen
    And a curse to a sailor's wife
    For they have robbed me of my house carpenter
    And have taken away my life
    And have taken away my life.

A5
[(e) "The Ship Carpenter." Sung by Mr. Clay Walters at
  Salyersville, Kentucky, 1937. Recorded by Alan and Eliz-
  abeth Lomax.]

See the preceding note, A4.
2. Oh, I could have married the king's daughter fair
   She all the same would have had me
   But I refused that rich crown of gold
   And it's all for the sake of thee.

3. If you could have married the king's daughter dear
   I'm sure that you are to blame
   For I wouldn't have my husband to hear tell of thee
   For ten thousand pounds of gold.

4. Oh, I am married to a ship carpenter
   And a ship carpenter I obey
   And by him I have a little son
   Or I would go along with thee.

5. What have you to maintain me on
   Is it houses, land, gold, and fee
   I've seven loaded ships a-sailing on the sea
   Besides the one that brought me to land.

6. She picked up her baby all in her arms
   And kissed it sweetly embraced
   And laid it down on a soft bed of down
   And bid it to go to sleep.

7. As they walked down by the seashore
   The water is set running so bold
   The sides was lined with silver so bright
   And the top was the purest of gold.

8. As they sailed all on the sea
   The music did seem so sweet
   She thought of her babe she had left behind
   And set herself down to weep.

9. Are you weeping for my gold, said he?
   Are you weeping for fee?
   Or are you weeping for some other man
   That you love far better than me?

10. I'm not a-weeping for your gold
    Neither am I a-weeping for fee
    But I'm weeping to return to dry land again
    My poor little babe to see.

11. If you had ten thousand pounds of gold
    And would give it all unto me
    You never should return to dry land again
    Your babe you never will see.
12. What hills, what hills, my own true love,
   That look so white like snow?
It's the hills of Heaven, my own true love
   Where all righteous people go.

13. What hills, what hills, my own true love,
   That look so dark and low?
It's the hills of Hell, my own true love,
   Where you and I must go.

14. Straight news, straight news to the ship carpenter
   Straight news come back to the land
The ship that his own dear wife sailed in
   Went sinking to the sand.

15. Sailors may be the worst of men
   That lead poor women astray
The sailor has ruined the ship carpenter
   By deluding his poor wife away.

THE SUFFOLK MIRACLE
(Child No. 272)

Bl [(a) "There Was an Old and Wealthy Man." Sung by Mr. Dol
   Small at Nellysford, Virginia, 1950. Recorded by Maud Karpeles
   and Sidney Robertson Cowell]

Mr. Small was one of the singers discovered by Cecil J.
   Sharp and Maud Karpeles in their epoch-making tours of the
   Appalachians during the years 1916-18. The present song
   was sung to them at Nellysford, Virginia, on May 22, 1918,
   and that version, as printed in Sharp's English Folk Songs
   from the Southern Appalachians, Vol. I, pp. 264-5, shows
   only slight variation from the present rendition.

Small's version of the song does not make it clear in
   stanza 3 that the lover's heart is literally, not figura-
   tively, broken, so that he dies. Knowledge of this fact
   is necessary for proper appreciation of the ominous night-
   ride, which according to tradition is performed with mir-
   aculous speed. The edifying conclusion -- rather undepend-
   able, we may fear, for use in a stable society -- is of
   course more characteristic of the broadside habit than of
   true stark traditional balladry, which seldom has time to
   point morals.

Child's notes on this ballad reveal a surprisingly
   wide range of analogues in tale and song across the whole
   face of Europe. Bürger's famous poem, "Lenore," is based
   upon the theme.
1. There were an old and wealthy man
   He had a daughter great and grand
   She were neat, handsome, and tall
   She had a handsome face withal.

2. There were many a guy there came this way
   This handsome lady for to see
   At length there were a widow's son
   'T was found he were her chosen one.

3. It was when the old folks came this to know
   They sent her two thousand miles from home
   Which broke this young man's tender heart
   To think that he and his love must part.

4. It was on the cold and stormy night
   He started for his heart's delight
   He rode till he came to the place he knew
   Says he, my love, I've come for you.

5. It's your father's request, your mother's heed
   I've come for you all in great speed
   And in two weeks or a little mo'
   I'll set you safe at your father's do'.

6. They rode till they came to the old man's gate
   He did complain his head did ache
   With a handkerchief that she had out
   With it she bound his head about.

7. They rode till they came to the old man's stile
   Says he, my love, let's tarry awhile
   Alight, alight, alight, says she,
   And I will put your steeds away.

8. She knocked upon her father's do'
   The sight of her lover she saw no mo'
   It's welcome home, my child, says he,
   What trusty friend has come for thee.

9. It's the one I love, I love so well
   I love him better than tongue can tell.
   It made the hair stand on the old man's head
   To think that he'd been twelve months dead.

10. Then princes grand and judges, too
    Summons'd for to witness this grave's undo
    It's though he had been twelve months dead
    Her handkerchief were around his head.
11. Now this is warning to young and old
Who love their children better than gold
If you love them, give them their way
For fear their love may lead astray.

THE FARMER'S CURST WIFE
(Child No. 278)

B2
[(b) "The Devil and the Farmer's Wife." Sung by Mrs. Carrie
Grover of Gorham, Maine, 1941. Recorded by Alan Lomax.]

This vigorous exemplar of the Sex War seems to have an
equal appeal for both women and men -- for women because
it shows them equal to any occasion, and men, perhaps, be­
cause it proves they need not be ashamed of being worsted
by odds which are, after all, insuperable. The moral of
an Irish version, that women are worse than men because
when they're sent down to Hell they get sent back again
is, to borrow Feste's words, "but a cheveril glove to a
good wit: how quickly the wrong side may be turned outward!"

A tale on the theme of a wife formidable to devils has
traveled the wide world, from the Far East to the Far West,
and from India in the South to Russia in the North. Mrs.
Grover's version, with its whistling chorus, is much like
a Sussex version of the mid-nineteenth century that was
chosen by Child to stand at the head of his series.

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1. Oh, the Devil he came to the farmer one day
   (Whistle)
   Saying you owe me a debt and I will 'a' my pay
   To my right fol-lol-fol-laddi-i-day.

2. It is not your children or you that I crave
   (Whistle)
   But your old scolding wife and it's her I must have
   To my right fol-lol-fol-laddi-i-day.

3. Oh, take her, oh take her, with all my heart
   (Whistle)
   And I hope you and she will never part
   To my right fol-lol-fol-laddi-i-day.

4. So the Devil he mounted her onto his back
   (Whistle)
   And like a bold pedlar went carrying his pack
   To my right fol-lol-fol-laddi-i-day.

- 13 -
5. Nine little devils were hanging in chains
   (Whistle)
   She up with a poker and knocked out their brains,
   To my right fol-lol-fol-laddi-i-day.

6. She climbed on a stool for to make herself higher
   (Whistle)
   She threw round her left leg and knocked nine in the fire,
   To my right fol-lol-fol-laddi-i-day.

7. Nine little blue devils peeped over the wall
   (Whistle)
   Oh, take her back, Dad, or she'll kill us all,
   To my right fol-lol-fol-laddi-i-day.

8. So the Devil he mounted her onto his back
   (Whistle)
   And like a bold pedlar went carrying her back.
   To my right fol-lol-fol-laddi-i-day.

THE CRAFTY FARMER
(Child No. 283)

B3

The version of this ballad admitted by Child into his collection (No. 283) is prefaced in the abridged edition by a single sentence: "This very ordinary ballad has enjoyed great popularity, and is given for that reason and as a specimen of its class." There must be some special appeal in a ballad which "has enjoyed great popularity" for more than a century; and perhaps in this case it is a sort of simple childlike happiness, the quality of a story in which all turns out surprisingly well, against odds not too alarming but sufficient to elicit an anxious concern in the listener. The prosaic text, careful not to omit any useful detail, moving ahead in a straight, unhurried narrative line, always making do with the expressions nearest to hand, is supported by an utterly unpretentious tune, and admirably conveyed in the work-a-day rendition of the singer, homely, unselﬁshconscious, and comfortable. The mellifluous and very suitable refrain is there to remind us that this is indeed a song. It is impossible to hear it through without feeling better.
1. In Oxford there lived a merchant by trade 
   He had for his servants a man and a maid 
   A true Hampshire lad he had for his man 
   All for to do his business, his name it was John. 
   Laddy tell I day, tell I do, laddy laddy tell I day.

2. One morning quite early he called upon John 
   And Johnny heard his master and quickly did run. 
   "Oh take this cow and drive her to the fair 
   For she's in good order and her I can spare." 
   Laddy tell I day, tell I do, laddy laddy tell I day.

3. So Johnny took the cow and away he did go 
   He drove her to the fair as far as I do know 
   Before the day was over he sold her to a man 
   Who paid him the chink which was six pounds ten. 
   Laddy tell I day, tell I do, laddy laddy tell I day.

4. They went to a tavern for to get a drink 
   'Twas there the tradesman laid down the chink 
   Johnny turned to the lady and unto her did say 
   "Oh, what shall I do with my money, I pray?" 
   Laddy tell I day, tell I do, laddy laddy tell I day.

5. "Sew it up in your coat lining," the lady did say 
   "For fear you will be robbed along the highway." 
   The highwayman sat behind him a-drinking up his wine 
   And said he to himself, "That money's all mine." 
   Laddy tell I day, tell I do, laddy laddy tell I day.

6. Then Johnny took his leave and away he did go 
   The highwayman followed after him as far as I do know 
   He overtook the lad upon the highway 
   "You're well overtaken, young man," said he. 
   Laddy tell I day, tell I do, laddy laddy tell I day.

7. "Oh jump on behind me, oh jump on and ride 
   How far are you going?" Little Johnny replied, 
   "About twelve miles, as far as I do know;" 
   And Johnny jumped a-horseback and away he did go. 
   Laddy tell I day, tell I do, laddy laddy tell I day.

8. They rode along together till they came to a dark lane 
   There the highwayman spoke up very plain; 
   "Deliver up your money without fear or strife, 
   Or in this lonesome valley you'll lose your pleasant life." 
   Laddy tell I day, tell I do, laddy laddy tell I day.
9. So Johnny seeing there was no time for dispute
   Came down from the horse without fear or doubt
   From his coat lining he pulled the money out
   And in the tall grass he strewed it well about.
   Laddy tell I day, tell I do, laddy laddy tell I day.

10. The highwayman suddenly got down, got down from his horse
    And little did he think it was for his loss
    For while he was picking the money that was thrown
    Little Johnny jumped his horseback and away he did go.
    Laddy tell I day, tell I do, laddy laddy tell I day.

11. The highwayman followed after him and bid him for to stay
    But Johnny never minded him and still rode away
    And home to his master thus he did bring
    Horse, saddle, and bridle and many a fine thing.
    Laddy tell I day, tell I do, laddy laddy tell I day.

12. The servant maid seeing Little Johnny's return
    She went and told his master as near as I can learn
    The master came out and he looked very cross
    And said, "Have you turned my cow into a hoss?"
    Laddy tell I day, tell I do, laddy laddy tell I day.

13. "Oh no, dearest Master, your cow I have sold,
    But be robbed on the highway by a highwayman bold
    And while he was picking the money in his purse
    All for to make amends I came off with his horse."
    Laddy tell I day, tell I do, laddy laddy tell I day.

14. The saddle bags were opened and there as I've been told
    Ten thousand pounds and (sic) silver and gold
    A brace of loaded pistols. "Oh, Master, I vow,
    I think for a boy I have well sold your cow."
    Laddy tell I day, tell I do, laddy laddy tell I day.

15. "Oh yes, for a boy you have done quite rare;
    Two-thirds of this money you shall have for your share
    And as for the villain with whom you had to fight,
    I think you've played him a true Hampshire bite."
    Laddy tell I day, tell I do, laddy laddy tell I day.

THE SWEET TRINITY or THE GOLDEN VANITY
(Child No. 286)

B4 [(c) "The Golden Willow Tree." Sung by Jimmy Morris, Hazard, Kentucky, 1937. Recorded by Alan and Elizabeth Lomax.]
The home port of the victor in this chance naval encounter, by whatever name the vessel is known, is likely to change with every fresh version, though latterly at least in this country, the Turks seem to have a fairly constant claim to her opponent, and the Lowlands Low is always the scene of the engagement. There is, so far as has been determined, no historical basis for the story, which anyhow occurred too early for Russian divers to have had anything to do with the catastrophe. Sir Walter Raleigh is charged in the earliest version known (late seventeenth century) with the Captain's inexplicable treachery to his little ship-boy, so good at need with his invaluable instrument. But Raleigh's fair fame seems to have defeated these unjust aspersions in the long run, for tradition has apparently not cared to preserve them. The Turkish seamen's way of amusing themselves when not on duty ("reading checks") is a novelty in Morris's version. Earlier, they played with dice, and from that to playing checkers is no unbridgeable distance. But the checks had best have been written with a nautical pen -- a later invention than the sea-going augur.

Though both our versions come from inland sources, the song has been current mainly in the maritime states.

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1. There was a little ship in South America-e-e-e
   Cryin' O the lands that lie so low
   There was a little ship in South America-e-e-e
   That went by the name of the Weepin' Willow Tree
   And it sailed in the Lowlands so low.

2. It hadn't been a-sailing but two weeks or three
   Cryin' O the lands that lie so low
   It hadn't been a-sailing but two weeks or three
   When it was approached by a Turkish Traveler
   To sink her in the Lowlands low.

3. Captain, o captain, what will we do?
   Cryin' O the land that lies so low
   Captain, o captain, what will we do?
   If they overtake us they'll cut us in two
   They will sink us in the Lowlands so low.

4. Up stepped a little carpenter boy,
   Cryin' O the land that lies so low
   Up stepped a little carpenter boy,
   Said What will you give if the ship I'll destroy?
   I will sink'em in the Lowlands so low.
5. I'll give silver and I'll give gold,
Cryin' O the land that lies so low
I'll give silver and I'll give gold,
I'll give the fairest daughter in my household
If you'll sink 'em in the Lowlands so low.

6. He dived straight down and away swum he,
Cryin' O the land that lies so low
He dived straight down and away swum he,
He swum till he come to the Turkish Travelee
To sink her in the Lowlands low.

7. He had a little instrument suitable to his use,
Cryin' O the land that lies so low
He had a little instrument suitable to his use,
He bored nine holes and in flowed the juice
Then he sunk 'em in the Lowlands so low.

8. The men was playing cards and some was reading checks,
Cryin' O the lands that lie so low
Some was playing cards and some was reading checks,
First thing they know'd they's in water to their necks
They was sinkin' in the Lowlands low.

9. He turned back around and back swum he,
Cryin' O the lands that lie so low
He turned back around and back swum he,
He swum till he come to the Weepin' Willow Tree
Where she sailed in the Lowlands low.

10. Captain, o captain, take me on board,
Cryin' O the lands that lie so low
Captain, o captain, take me on board,
And be unto me as good as your word
I have sunk 'em in the Lowlands so low.

11. (No,) o no, I won't take you on board,
Cryin' O the lands that lie so low
No, o no, I won't take you on board,
And I won't be to you as good as my word
Though you sank 'em in the Lowlands so low.

12. If it wasn't for the love that I have for your men,
Cryin' O the lands that lie so low
If it wasn't for the love that I have for your men,
I would do unto you as I done unto them
I would sink you in the Lowlands so low.

- 18 -
13. (He) dived straight down and down swum he,  
Cryin' O the lands that lie so low  
He dived straight down and down swum he,  
He swum till he come to the bottom of the sea  
Sunk himself in the Lowland so low lie low  
Sunk himself in the Lowlands so low.

B5  

See preceding note, B4.

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1. A ship set sail for North America  
And she went by the name of the Turkish Revelee  
As she sailed along the lonesome lowlands low  
As she sailed along the Lowland Sea.

2. There was another ship in the north countre-ee  
And she went by the name of a Golden Willow Tree  
As she sailed upon the lonesome lowlands low  
As she sailed upon the Lowland Sea.

3. Captain, o captain, what will you give me  
If I overtake her and sink her in the sea  
If I'll sink her in the lonesome lowlands low  
If I'll sink her in the Lowland Sea?

4. I have a house and I have land  
And I have a daughter that will be at your command  
If you'll sink her in the lonesome lowlands low  
If you'll sink her in the Lowland Sea.

5. I have a little tool just fitted for the use  
Boring for salt water, letting in the sluice  
As she sails upon the lonesome lowlands low  
As she sails upon the Lowland Sea.

6. He fell upon his back and away swam he  
Until he overtaken the Golden Willow Tree  
As she sailed along the lonesome lowlands low  
As she sailed along the Lowland Sea.

7. Some with their hats and some with their caps  
Trying to stop the salt water gaps  
As she sailed along the lonesome lowlands low  
As she sailed along the Lowland Sea.
8. He fell upon his back and away swam he
Until he overtaken the Turkish Revelee
As she sailed along the lonesome lowlands low
As she sailed along the Lowland Sea.

9. Captain, o captain, take me on board
And be to me as good as your word
For I've sunk her in the lonesome lowlands low
For I've sunk her in the lowlands low.

10. Neither will I take you on board
Or be to you as good as my word
Though you've sunk her in the lonesome lowlands low
Though you've sunk her in the Lowland Sea.

11. If it wasn't for the love I have for your men
I would serve you as I have served them
I would sink you in the lonesome lowlands low
I would sink you in the Lowland Sea.

THE MERMAID
(Child No. 289)

[(b) Sung by Mrs. Emma Dusenbury near Mena, Arkansas, 1936. Recorded by Sidney Robertson Cowell and Laurence Powell.]

At the age of 17, the late Mrs. Emma Dusenbury had set out to learn all the songs in the world. Discovering that "people keeps a-makin' songs," she was finally obliged to abandon the project, but not before amassing a remarkably large repertoire. Through the efforts of collectors Laurence Powell and Sidney Robertson Cowell, the old blind lady in a small Ozark village enriched the Archive of Folk Song by 125 valuable songs and ballads.

Child found no source for "The Mermaid" earlier than the mid-eighteenth century Glasgow Lasses Garland, although sailors' superstitions regarding the sighting of a mermaid and setting sail on a Friday are ancient. Much of the song's American perpetuation has been in comic and other popular printed forms. A list of some songsters and collegiate songbooks in which it appeared during the last century is given on page 172 of John Harrington Cox's Folk-Songs of the South (Cambridge, Harvard University Press, 1925).

"Mask" and "landlord" are not unreasonable substitutes for the nautical terms intended when Mrs. Dusenbury's landlocked environment is taken into consideration. When Mr.
Powell asked what the landlord was doing on board ship, Mrs. Dusenbury replied "Sleepin', I reckon." (Cf. Vance Randolph's Ozark Folksongs (Columbia, Missouri State Historical Society, 1946; vol. I, p. 203).

---

1. As I sailed out one Friday night
   I was not fur from land,
   When I spied a pretty girl a-combing up her hair
   With a comb and a glass in her hand.

   Chorus:
   And the sea is a-roar, roar, roar,
   And the stormy winds may blow,
   While us poor sailor boys are climbing up the mask,
   And the landlord a-lying down below.

2. Up stepped the captain of our gallant ship,
   A well spoken captain was he,
   Saying we're all lost for the want of a boat,
   And will sink to the bottom of the sea. Chorus.

3. Up stepped the mate of our gallant ship,
   A well spoken mate was he,
   Saying we're all lost for the want of a boat,
   And will sink to the bottom of the sea. Chorus.

4. I have a wife and children three,
   This night they're looking for me,
   They may look, they may wait till the cold water rise,
   They may look to the bottom of the sea. Chorus.

5. I have a mother and sisters three,
   This night they're waiting for me,
   They may look, they may wait till the cold water rise,
   They may look to the bottom of the sea. Chorus.
APPENDIX

AN INDEX TO THE CHILD BALLADS AVAILABLE ON LIBRARY OF CONGRESS LONG-PLAYING RECORDS

*Selections marked with asterisk are also available on 78 rpm records

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