



sing yonder

vol. 9

simple contemporary settings for songs 81-90 in the Roud Index

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introduction

Welcome to this 9th volume of the Sing Yonder series. Once again we find ourselves primarily in Scotland. This is mainly due to the very active Scottish collectors of the 18th and 19th centuries being a major source for Harvard academic Francis Child's collection of folk songs, from which Steve Roud cherry-picked his favourites for the first one hundred or so entries in the index that bears his name.

This is the perfect time to reference the early index, which Steve started about fifty years ago, using for his database the leading technology of the time, a sequence of index cards. As a result, he is readily able to accept that there may be some errors here and there which have rippled through the decades to the present day, one of which we are presented with in this volume. I refer of course to the mystery of the missing Roud 86. Well, it's not really a mystery, Steve can't remember for sure but the most likely theory is that he just missed out a number in all of the excitement of the early 1970s folk scene, thus leaving a blank card in the index. It left me with a problem with what to put on those pages. I thought of just leaving it totally blank in homage to the tradition, but this paper is expensive; it seemed a shame not to use it for something useful. I ambitiously decided to condense Steve's epic book on the subject of traditional song "Folk Song in England" (published by Faber and Faber (available from all good bookshops*)) into two small pages. The theory being that not everyone picking up these books might be aware** of the work of Francis Child or William Motherwell, and there's even less space in the history of each song to cover these commonly occurring figures every time they turn up, which at the moment, is often. While it will be (literally) old news to many of you, I hope it is helpful for some others.

Finally, this volume is going out just after the release of Sing Yonder 2, the album. A follow up to Sing Yonder 1, I asked some tremendous friends with their combined immense treasury of diverse musical talents to tackle the songs in volume 2 of the book. They have delivered a wide ranging smörgåsbord of folk, beautifully demonstrating a multitude of ways that these songs could be tackled. I hope it offers delight and inspiration for everyone tackling these songs. It certainly does for me, and I am eternally grateful to everyone that helped to make it. You can buy it from the Bandcamp website. Thank you for your support.

Karl Sinfield, May 2025.

* This is the perfect metric on which to base the goodness of any bookshop, I would suggest.

** Though if you have read all of the previous eight books, you should be somewhat aware of them by now.

a note on the settings

My process to arrive at each arrangement was first to listen to every version I could find, although in some cases these were thin on the ground, or totally absent. However, generally this is much easier these days thanks to streaming platforms*, and sometimes I found more than 40 versions of each song at my fingertips. There might be the basis of something in there I can use, or at least over the course of a few listens, something might work almost untouched, something might need a bit of tweaking to fit, or if nothing else, just the general feeling of the song will lead me to a new version.

Of course, a huge help in the listening odyssey I have been on is the tireless work of Reinhard Zierke and his Mainly Norfolk site, which provides a great resource for finding tunes when the names vary (I have listed some of the alternative names underneath each song title to save you some time if you want to search for them yourself), and the site also includes a plethora of illuminating sleeve notes.

I have also suggested a few tracks for further listening. These might be related to the setting in some way, or a contrast, or just something I think is interesting. I have tried to straddle both new and old sources. But do go out and find your own favourites, they are all good, even the bad ones.

Finally, this project has also hugely increased my knowledge and appreciation of these old stories (which is the main reason I started in the first place), and those singers that have carried them for us all for generations. I have included a list of some of the sources (there are lots more in earlier volumes if you want a fuller reading list) that have helped me on this journey at the end of the book.

recordings

This book is aimed at people with basic skills, so I have made some very rough homemade "guide recordings" to accompany this book, and these can be found, along with the book in PDF format, at the website singyonder.co.uk. DISCLAIMER: It should be apparent that I'm no great singer, and my guitar skills are conspicuously average. Thus, I am the perfect test bed for these simple tunes - if I can play them, anyone can. And if I can play them in a way that's vaguely tolerable, I'm sure you will make them sound amazing.

I have used simple open chords for each setting in this book (plus alternates are given), to make everything playable for people of all skill levels. Where I have used a capo in the recording to make the song work for my vocal range, or to give easier access to embellishments, that will be noted on the song page.

* My current favourite platform is Bandcamp, it is currently the fairest way to support musicians, and traditional folk artists, especially the younger ones, are well represented there. This will no doubt change at some point as the world of commerce continues to pitch and turn in unpredictable directions, but it's what we have for now.

ROUD 81

Young Logie

AKA: The Laird o' Logie, The Gallant Laird o' Young Logie, May Collean, The Laird of Ochiltree

Summary:

A young lord is imprisoned, and his sweetheart helps him to escape, after which they are reunited in love.

Setting notes:

This is the (more or less) true story of John Weymyss, Laird of Logie, who was imprisoned by James VI of Scotland in 1591. Only one version of the ballad recounts a crime for which he was imprisoned; that of "stealing a kiss". The true reason was Weymyss' involvement with the Earl of Bothwell, and his plot to kidnap the king. It's also true that Weymyss was aided in his escape by Lady Margaret - the real life Margaret Vinstarr, a Danish noblewoman - although the specific details such as the glove, the Queen's assistance, and the pistols* are not recorded in history, and are most likely poetic additions. It is however true that Weymyss and Vinstarr were reunited after the rescue. Weymyss was pardoned in 1593 and the couple married** soon after. This ballad has been very rarely performed*** in the revival era, with only a scant few recordings - the version given here is based on the tune from singing sisters Amelia and Jane Harris, whose repertoire was collected in the mid 19th century, but were learned from a prior generation of singers, dating the ballads from the mid 18th century at the latest. The words are abridged from a copy of the ballad printed in Stirling, dated around 1800.

Suggested further listening:

"Laird Logie", Bandoggs, *Bandoggs*

"Young Logie", Katherine Campbell, *The Songs of Amelia and Jane Harris*

"The Laird o' Logie", Ewan MacColl, *Blood & Roses Volume 3*

* I have to agree with Francis Child that the ability to identify the escaping laird solely by the sound of his pistol shots does indeed demonstrate "peculiar sagacity" on the part of the King.

** Sadly their marriage was short-lived, because, in a very ballad-esque twist, Weymyss was arrested and hanged in the Netherlands in 1597, accused of plotting to capture a gunpowder tower for the Spanish.

*** This ballad often draws comparison with another song on the same topic; that of a woman pleading for her lover's life. This other ballad however seized the public interest in a more lasting way, and is discussed as the final entry in this book.

ROUD 82

Jock o' The Side

AKA: John o' the Side

Summary:

An imprisoned border reiver is helped to escape.

Setting notes:

The titular border reiver has some historical precedence: he is John Armstrong* of Mangerton, who plied his larcenous trade in the mid-16th century in the Liddesdale region of the Scottish Borders. He was one of a number of ruthless marauders that were reported to the Bishop of Carlisle in 1550, and subsequently imprisoned in Newcastle, later to be sprung free by exiled Englishman Hobbie Noble and a couple of his associates. The first mention of this ballad (but no words or tune) is from a manuscript dated no later than 1592, but we do have a few subsequent versions to work from. Despite its cheerfully violent and swashbuckling narrative, it remains steadfastly unpopular today, with only a couple of recorded instances, although there is evidence it was popular** in pre-revival times, as it has been found as far away as Pennsylvania. The ballad has some unusual characteristics, mainly its 6/8 time signature, and final line refrain; some versions eschew the "dang-diddle"-ing for a final line repeat***. The words given here (which have been abridged and anglicised) and tune come from a manuscript found among the papers of great Yorkshire folk song collector Frank Kidson in the early 20th century.

Suggested further listening:

"Jock o' the Side", Ewan MacColl, *Blood & Roses Vol. 3*

"Jock O The Side", Andrew Calhoun, *Rhymer's Tower*

* Not the same John Armstrong from Roud 76, as his execution in 1530 would preclude any marauding in 1550, and this John hails from a different region, possibly the hamlet of Syid from which he may have taken his name.

** Francis Child was effusive in his praise of this ballad, commending it as "the best in the world", and enough to turn anyone into a border reiver on hearing it. Don't be getting any ideas now.

*** This is a perfectly valid option for those who for whatever reason cannot embrace the "hey nonny nonny" aspect of traditional song.

ROUD 82: JOCK O' THE SIDE

Em Em7 G Bm
Now Liddesdale has ridden a raid
Em G Bm D
He'd have done better to rest at home;
Am G
For Michael o' Whinfield he has died
Em G Bm
And Jock o' the Side is prisoner taken.
Em G Em
Fa dang diddle, la la dow diddle.

Alternate chords:

Am Am7 C Em
Am C Em G
Dm C
Am C Em
Am C Am

His mother's away by the waterside, / She's kilted her coat about her knee,
And when she came to Mangerton / The tears were running down from her eyes.

"What news, what news?" the Laird he cried, / "O what's the news you've brought to me?"
"The news is ill, my brother dear, / For Michael is dead end they've taken my Johnny."

"O never you fear, my sister dear, / For I have cows and ewes for money;
My barns and byres are all well-filled / And I'll give them all to save our Johnnie.

"There's three of my men will ride the night, / All harnessed with Toledo steel;
The English dogs'll rue the day, / They'll all remember our Johnnie well.

So when they came to Newcastle town, / Jock cried: "The gates we must bring down"
But the porter stood on the wall so high / And cried, "You cannot come in the town."

Jock's jumped down from his horse's back / And wrung the keeper's neck in two;
They've taken his life and they've taken his keys / And cast his body over the wall.

And when they came to Newcastle gaol / Unto the prisoner they did call:
"Sleep you or wake you, Jock o' the Side? / We've come to fetch you over the wall."

The Laird's Jock broke the iron bands, / And Jock o' the Side on his back he's taken.
And he's gone leaping down the stairs / With Jock o' the Side and the iron chain.

Now, Hobbie he said to the Laird's own Jock, / "Some of the weight you may lay on me."
"You needn't bother yourself," said Jock, / "I count him as light as a bumblebee."

Then out of Newcastle they all did ride, / Jock o' the Side and his kinsmen three;
And they're away through the broken gates / Ranting and singing so wantonly.

And when they came to the riverside / The water of Tyne ran like the sea;
And the Laird's man Watt, he roared and cried, / "We'll all be drowned and I'm feared
to die."

"Come fire or flood," says the Laird's own Jock, / "There's no man dies before his
time."
And he's led them into the roaring flood, / And they have crossed the water o' Tyne.

They scarce had come to the northern side / When they heard the cries of men behind;
And they mocked and jeered at the English loons / Who dared not cross the water o'
Tyne.

Then they had ridden to Liddesdale, / Just as fast as they could ride;
And when they came to Liddesdale / They cast the chains from Jock o' the Side.

They filled a bowl with the good red wine, / And after that they filled another;
And all the toasts rung round and round / Just as if they had been brother and brother.

ROUD 83

Bold Dickie

AKA: Archie o' Cawfield, The Bold Prisoner, The Brothers, Billie Archie, Bold Archer, Billy Broke Locks, Escape of Old John Webb, Johnny Ha'

Summary:

Much like the previous ballad*, a prisoner is aided in his escape from jail.

Setting notes:

The oldest version of this ballad, normally found under the title "Archie o' Cawfield", is largely the previous ballad with the names changed**, although there are minor differences that make it just about worthy of its own entry. It has also been more popular, and therefore more subject to the amendments, abridgements and transformations characteristic of the oral tradition, giving us a disparate range of interpretations***. In the UK, a severely trimmed**** version appeared as broadside printed in the early 19th century in London titled "The Bold Prisoner" became the source of a tradition south of the border, and has remained the most popular interpretation in England today. This is mostly thanks to a 1965 source recording from the great Norfolk singer Harry Cox under the title "Bold Archer". The version given here is very similar to that variant, but is actually an abridged and modernised version of "The Ballad of Bold Dickie"*****, collected from a J.M. Warson of Clarks Island, Massachusetts and published in the Journal of American Folklore in 1895.

Suggested further listening:

"The Brothers", Duncan Williamson, *Borders*

"Bold Archer", Harry Cox, *The Bonny Labouring Boy*

"Bold Dickie and Bold Archie", Jim and Lynette Eldon, *Jim and Lynette Eldon*

"The Escape of Old John Webb", Green Matthews, *Roots & Branches*

* A third border ballad which is very similar, named "Kinmont Willie", is Roud 4013, and therefore probably beyond the scope of this project.

** It's harder to pin this ballad to real events. Although the names do seem to correspond with those of active border reivers of the time, there's no record of either of them involved in imprisonment, or an escape thereof.

*** In Salem, Massachusetts in 1730, a John Webb was imprisoned for printing obsolete banknotes. Records show he was released without charged, but somehow this ballad was reworked as "Billy Broke Locks", or "Escape of Old John Webb" celebrating his triumphant escape, and the peerless destructive prowess of Billy.

**** As with Sing Yonder, many broadsides were abridged in order to fit onto the page.

***** The distinguishing feature of which is the twist at the end where the sheriff is more worried about losing the iron in his prisoner's manacles than the prisoner himself.

ROUD 84

Hughie Graeme

AKA: Hugh the Grame, Hughie the Graham, The Life and Death of Sir Hugh of the Grime, Sir Hughie the Grame, Our Lords are to the Mountains Gane

Summary:

Border reiver Hughie Graeme is seized by the authorities for stealing the Bishop of Carlisle's mare*. Several senior figures apparently well disposed to Graeme plead for mercy, but he is put to death.

Setting notes:

Another 16th century reiver tale, this one has seemingly little to do with reality, as there is no record of a member of the notorious Graeme clan called Hugh, let alone his execution, nor the crime of which he was accused. Still, it was a popular song, probably due to the sympathetic tone in regards to the plight of the noble, fearless Hughie. It was first found in broadsides in London in the late 1600s, and has been quite popular in the tradition, although no versions can be found by the usual Scots source singing suspects. However, the folk revival brought two new versions from Ewan MacColl in 1956, which have sustained it well through the modern era, and you can find many recordings of it today. The version given here comes via MacColl; this setting has a two line refrain, derived from a tune with no words entitled "Good Lord Scroope alias Hughie Graham" found in the Blaikie manuscript from 1692**.

Suggested further listening:

"Hughie Grame", Ewan MacColl, *Classic Scots Ballads*

"Hughie Graeme", June Tabor, *An Echo of Hooves*

"Hughie The Graham", Malinky, *The Unseen Hours*

* In a twist worthy of a daytime soap opera, some versions include a coda that it was actually Graeme's wife who stole the horse (and sometimes his gown too), while she was having an affair with the Bishop. Presumably to preserve his wife's honour, Graeme was not moved to mention this during the trial.

** As usual, there's no direct evidence this tune was once applied to the words of the ballad, but given the title and the timing of its publication, it's as good a link as you will find in folk music history terms.

ROUD 84: HUGHIE GRAEME

G D G D
 The Laird o' Hume he's a huntin' gone
 G D G D
 Over the hills and mountains clear,
 Em
 And he has taken Hugh the Grame
 D Am G Am
 For stealing of the Bishop's mare.
 D Am
 Chorus: Tay ammarey, O Londonderry
 Em G Am
 Tay ammarey, O London dee.

Alternate chords:

C	G	C	G
C	G	C	G
Am			
G	Dm	C	Dm
G			Dm
Am		C	Dm

They have taken Hugh the Grame / And led him down through Strievlng town,
 Fifteen of them cried out at once, / "Sir Hugh the Grame he must go down!"

"Were I to die," said Hugh the Grame / "My parents would think it a very great
 lack"

Full fifteen feet in the air he jumped / With his hands bound fast behind his back.

Then out and spoke the Lady Black, / And oh her will she was right free,
 "A thousand pounds, my lord, I'll give / If Hugh the Grame set free to me."

"Hold your tongue, you Lady Black / And you'll let ll your pleading be!
 Though you would give me thousands ten / It's for my honour he would die."

Then out and spoke her Lady Hume / And oh a sorry woman was she,
 "I'll give you a hundred milk-white steeds / So you'll give Hugh the Grame to me."

"O hold your tongue, you Lady Hume / And you'll let all your pleading be,
 Though all the Grames were in this court, / He should be hanged high for me."

He looked over his left shoulder / It was to see what he could see,
 And there he saw his old father / Weeping and wailing bitterly.

"O, hold your tongue, my old father / And you'll let all your mourning be!
 For if they bereave me of my life / They cannot hold the heavens from me."

"You'll give my brother, John, the sword / That's pointed with the metal clear,
 And bid him come at eight o'clock / And see me pay the Bishop's mare."

"And brother James, take here the sword / That's pointed with the metal brown
 Come up the morn at eight o'clock / And see your brother putten down."

You'll tell this news to Maggie, my wife / Next time you go to Strievlng town,
 She is the cause I lose my life / She with the Bishop played the loon."

ROUD 85

The Lochmaben Harper

AKA: The Blind Harper, Wanton Brown, The Auld Harper, Silly Poor Harper, The Blind Harper of Lochmaben, The Jolly Harper

Summary:

A blind harpist is encouraged by his wife to go to England and steal King Henry's finest horse. The harpist took his old mare to the King's stables and secretly tied the King's horse to the mare's tail. Using the magical enchanting properties of his harp*, he lulls the court to sleep, meanwhile the mare returns to its foal that the harpist had left at home, with the King's horse in tow. He not only pulls off this elegant heist, but also gets paid for his musical services**.

Setting notes:

A ballad with the title "The Blende Harper" was listed in the 16th century in the Stationer's Register, a licensing body that was formed in 1557 with the intent of curbing publishers from printing unlicensed works. However, no more is known of it from this time. It was first officially collected in the early 19th century in the border region of Scotland by Walter Scott. There is no record of it being performed until the 20th century folk revival when Nic Jones added it to his repertoire sometime around 1970. This has become the predominant version found today, although do give a listen to Martin Carthy's version, who chose to sing it to an unrelated Scottish air. The version given here is based on Nic Jones' interpretation, using his anglicised lyrics, and loosely based on the tunes found in the 19th century.

Suggested further listening:

"The Blind Harper", Nic Jones, *From the Devil to a Stranger*

"The Lochmaben Harper", Martin Carthy & Dave Swarbrick, *Life and Limb*

"Wanton Brown", Rakoczy, *Frontrunner*

* Magical harps and their somnolent properties appear elsewhere in folklore and traditional song, for example, the ballad King Orfeo (Roud 136), the Irish folk tale The Harp of Dagda, and popular traditional Scandinavian ballad *Harpans kraft*.

** A rare and refreshing example of a border klepto-ballad that results in victory for the thief, with not a drop of blood spilled on the way. And an even rarer example of a folk musician getting paid over the odds for a gig.

INTERMISSION

There is no Roud 86.

AKA: Steve Roud missed out a number when compiling the index, so we are taking a short break from the songs. Steve's book "Folk Song in England" is an essential primer in the history of folk music, but at nearly 1000 pages might be too much of a time investment for Sing Yonder readers. So here's a brief summary of folk song collecting and collectors, which will hopefully act as an introductory guide to the subject, and these books.

A Short History of Folk Song Collecting

The collection and preservation of folk songs in Britain emerged as a response to rapid social, economic, and cultural transformations. This movement gained momentum during the 19th and early 20th centuries, driven by individuals who sought to preserve oral traditions they perceived to be threatened by industrialization, urbanization, and the standardization of culture.

Origins

Folk song collecting began as an extension of antiquarian interest in oral traditions. In Britain, this interest was linked to a broader Romantic fascination with the "common people" and their culture. Pioneers of this movement believed that folk songs represented an untainted link to the past, embodying the authentic voice of rural communities.

Thomas Percy and Reliques of Ancient English Poetry (1765): Often considered a foundational text in folk song preservation, Percy's work compiled ballads and songs from oral and manuscript sources. Although he sometimes altered the texts for literary effect, Percy's work inspired a deeper interest in traditional songs.

Joseph Ritson and the Push for Accuracy: Ritson criticized earlier collectors for their lack of fidelity to the original material. His *A Select Collection of English Songs* (1783) aimed to present songs more authentically, setting a standard for later collectors.

The Romantic poets, including Wordsworth and Coleridge, also drew inspiration from folk traditions, further popularizing the notion of the folk song as a repository of cultural identity.

The 19th Century: Systematic Collection Begins

By the 19th century, folk song collecting became more methodical, shaped by a growing interest in ethnography and the influence of German Romantic nationalism. Collectors sought not only to preserve songs but to understand their social and historical contexts.

Francis James Child and the English and Scottish Popular Ballads (1882–1898):

Child, a Harvard professor, created the most comprehensive catalogue of English and Scottish ballads, known as the Child Ballads. His work, though academic, relied heavily on earlier printed sources rather than fieldwork. Nevertheless, it provided a crucial foundation for later collectors.

Sabine Baring-Gould and the English Folk Song Revival: In the late 19th century, figures like Baring-Gould began collecting songs directly from singers in rural England. Baring-Gould's *Songs of the West* (1889) was among the first to emphasize field collection, capturing songs as they were sung.

Cecil Sharp and the Folk-Song Society: Founded in 1898, the Folk-Song Society (later the English Folk Dance and Song Society) formalized efforts to collect and preserve folk traditions. Sharp emerged as the leading figure, collecting over 1,500 songs in England and the Appalachian Mountains of the U.S. His focus on melody and structure influenced modern perceptions of folk music, though his interpretations were sometimes criticized for imposing Victorian sensibilities.

Folk Song Collecting in Scotland and Ireland

In Ireland and Scotland, folk song collecting intertwined with nationalist movements, as songs were seen as symbols of cultural heritage.

Scottish Collectors: One of the first significant collections was Allan Ramsay's *The Tea-Table Miscellany* (1723), which included traditional songs and adaptations. This was followed by James Johnson's *The Scots Musical Museum* (1787–1803), a six-volume collection with contributions from Robert Burns, who preserved and revised traditional Scottish songs. Burns' efforts marked a pivotal moment in blending oral tradition with literary refinement. Other important figures of the 18th and 19th centuries include Walter Scott, George Kinloch, Peter Buchan. Alexander Carmichael and Gavin Greig, who documented the traditional ballads circulating at the time, ensuring the survival of Scotland's diverse folk traditions.

Edward Bunting and Irish Traditional Music: Bunting's work in the late 18th and early 19th centuries focused on transcribing music played by traditional Irish harpists. His collections, starting with *A General Collection of the Ancient Irish Music* (1796), aimed to preserve a tradition that was rapidly vanishing.

Francis O'Neill and Irish Music in America: An Irish immigrant and Chicago police chief, O'Neill compiled extensive collections of Irish tunes, such as *The Music of Ireland* (1903). His work bridged the Old and New Worlds, preserving Irish music for the diaspora.

ROUD 87

Waly Waly

AKA: Jamie Douglas, The Water is Wide, Cockleshells, Lady Douglas and Blackwood, The Laird o Blaekwood

Summary:

Lady Barbara Erskine's marriage to James Douglas, Earl of Angus, ends due to false accusations of infidelity. A jealous servant spreads these lies, leading Jamie to reject his wife despite her innocence. Heartbroken, Lady Barbara laments her betrayal and the loss of love.

Setting notes:

The elegiac properties of this historical ballad seem to be inherited from an earlier 18th century love song, fragments of which were originally found in Scotland in around 1725 under the title "Waly Waly, gin love be bony". The true story told by this historical ballad seems to have been woven through a handful of the original song's verses by some enterprising balladeer looking for inspiration for his latest tabloid news. The simpler love song has become a popular threnody all over the world, with many versions spanning a range of genres widely available today. However, the marital problems of Lady Barbara Erskine and Earl Douglas are less widely broadcast, but still appear in a few modern traditional versions, mostly using versions of the beautiful tune published in 1726 in William Thomas' collection of Scottish songs "Orpheus Caledonicus". The setting here is partly based on that tune, with a much simplified second section to make it more accessible for all singers. The words were first published by 19th century Scottish collector George Kinloch in around 1827, collected from John Rae of Lesmahagow, Lanarkshire. I have anglicised them and tweaked them slightly to fit.

Suggested further listening:

"Waly Waly", Peggy Seeger and Ewan MacColl, *Two Way Trip*

"Waly Waly", June Tabor, *Airs and Graces*

"Waly Waly", Martin Simpson, *The Outlandish Knight*

"Waly Waly", Kate Burke and Ruth Hazleton, *Declaration*

"Waly Waly", Buffy Sainte-Marie, *Little Wheel Spin and Spin*

* The term "Waly". is an old Scots word which according to the Scottish National Dictionary is defined as "I. int. As an exclamation of sorrow: alas!, woe is me!, oh dear!"

ROUD 87: WALY WALY

G D
O waly, waly up the bank,
G D G
And waly waly down the brae,
D
And waly, up the river side,
G D G
Where me and my lord used to go.
C Am Em
I leaned me on a willow sweet,
G D G
I leaned me on a willow sour.
C Am Em
My good lord has forsaken me,
G D G
And swears he'll never love me more.

Alternate chords:

C		G	
C	G	C	
		G	
C	G	C	
F	Dm	Am	
C	G	C	
F	Dm	Am	
C	G	C	

There came a young man to this town, / And Jamie Lockhart was his name;
False Blackwood lilted in my lord's ear / That I was in the bed with him.
'Come up, come up, oh Jamie Douglas, / Come up, come up and dine with me,
And I'll set you in a chair of gold, / And hold you kindly on my knee.'

'When cockle-shells turn silver bells, / And mussels hang on every tree,
When frost and snow turn fire-brands, / Then I'll come up and dine with thee.'
My father and mother they got word / That my good lord had forsaken me,
They sent fourscore of soldiers brave / To bring me home to my own country.

The day that I was forced to go, / My pretty palace for to leave,
I went to the room were my lord lay, / But alas! he would not speak to me.
'O fare ye well, oh Jamie Douglas! / And fare ye well, my children three!
I hope your father will prove more kind / To you than he has been to me.

'You take each one to be like yourself, / You take each one that comes to thee;
But I could swear by the heavens high / That I never knew a man but thee.
'O foul fall you, oh false Blackwood, / And an ill death now may you die!
For you were the first occasioner / Of parting my good lord and me.'

When we went down to Edinburgh town, / My father and mother they met me,
With trumpets sounding on every side; / But alas, they could not cherish me.
'Hold your tongue' my father said, / 'And with your weeping let me be;
And we'll get out a bill of divorce, / And I'll get a far better lord to thee.'

'O hold your tongue, father,' she says, / 'And with your talking let me be;
I'd not give a kiss from my own lord's lips / For all the men in the west country.'
Oh and I had my baby born, / And set upon the nurse's knee,
And I myself were dead and gone! / For a maid again I will never be.

ROUD 88

Lord Delamere

AKA: Lord Delaware, The Long-Armed Duke, Devonshire's Noble Duel with Lord Danby in the year 1687

Summary:

Lord Delamere bravely stands up to the King's fiscal reforms, as they would cause even greater suffering for the poor. This enrages a fellow nobleman who challenges Delamere to a duel. The Duke of Devonshire offers to fight on Delamere's behalf, and slays the nobleman, only to discover that the pro-Royal swordsman was secretly wearing the King's armour. The ballad ends with the prediction that if the poor are allowed to starve while the rich increase their wealth, it can only end badly for the ruling classes.

Setting notes:

This ballad, concerning the highly contentious topic of taxation changes in the 17th century, is mystifyingly rare, as it is a great story of bravely battling inequality, with a killer twist, and a grandly portentous ending. Nevertheless, it fell out of favour in the 19th century, and as far as I'm aware no-one was recorded singing it until very recently. One of the reasons may be that there were no tunes taken down for any of the small handful of published versions, all of which seem to originate from the central region of England, home of the real Lord Delamere, 3rd Earl of Warrington. The story seems to be largely fictional; while all the characters existed in history, and their political affiliations are accurately portrayed, there is no record of a duel to the death*. This setting uses the new tune composed in 2024 by Helen Lindley, with an abridged version of the words collected in Derbyshire in 1867 from a (now lost) broadsheet.

Suggested further listening:

"Lord Delamere", Helen Lindley, [Youtube]

"Delamere", Jack Dean and Company, *Tiny Violins*

* The closest event that actually happened around parliament at this time was a dispute between the Duke of Devonshire and Colonel Culpepper, who had a disagreement resulting in Devonshire striking Culpepper with a stick in the drawing room at Whitehall in 1687. Another theory involves Thomas De la Mare who was speaker of the House of Commons in 1377, but while having a similar name, and similarly anti-authoritarian political beliefs, was also not involved in a duel at any time. So we must assume the usual artistic license from the ballad writers.

ROUD 89

Lord Allenwater

AKA: Lord Derwentwater, Lord Ellenwater, The King's Love-Letter, Lord Derwentwater's Death*

Summary:

Lord Allenwater (the name is a corruption of a real figure in history, Lord Derwentwater), a staunch supporter of the poor, is summoned to London by the King. His trip, which is punctuated by various portentous omens, concludes with his execution, the sentence given for his support of the Jacobite uprising of 1715. His disembodied head continues its protestations of innocence.

Setting notes:

This simple story tells of the sad demise** of a popular figure in history, James Radclyffe, the 3rd Earl of Derwentwater, whose involvement in the failed attempt to depose King George I in favour of James VII of Scotland led to his capture and execution in 1716, at the age of 26. This ballad was widespread in Scotland in the 19th century, and was also later found a couple of times in England, and once in Florida in the US in the early 20th century. The setting here uses the most popular melody, based on the singing of Sarah Goodyear of Axford, Hampshire, collected by George Gardiner in 1907. I used the "Allenwater" version of the name, as frankly, it sounds better and is easier to sing.

Suggested further listening:

"Lord Allenwater", Shirley and Dolly Collins, *For Many As Will*

"Lord Allenwater", Blue Blokes 3, *Stubble*

"Lord Ellenwater", Jim Moray, *The Outlander*

"Lord Derwentwater", The Askew Sisters & Craig Morgan Robson, *The Axford Five*

* Another ballad, which is normally found under the title Derwentwater's Farewell, tells the same story from the point of view of Radclyffe himself. This is given number 2616 in the Roud index.

** As is common with the loss of a popular figure, folkloric significance was attached to his death. Legend has it that on the day he was executed, the rivers of his estates ran with blood (not confirmed). Also, on the night his body was returned to the North, the Northern Lights were said to shine brighter than ever before. There are contemporary accounts of the latter natural occurrence, which caused some people to re-brand them "Derwentwater's Lights".

ROUD 89: LORD ALLENWATER

D G A
The King has wrote a long letter

And sealed it up with gold,

D G
And sent it unto Lord Allenwater

A
To read it if he could.

The first two lines Lord Allenwater read / They struck him with surprise,
And the next two lines Lord Allenwater read / Made tears fall from his eyes.

He goes up to his gay lady / As she in child bed lay,
And says, "To London I must go, / I'm sure there is great need."

"Well, if to London you must go, / Before you go away
Make your will, my dear," she said, / "Lest you should go astray."

"Well, I will leave my only son / My houses and my land;
And I will leave my dear wedded wife / Ten thousand pounds in hand."

And he goes out to his stable groom / To saddle up his milk-white steed;
Said, up to London he might ride, / "I'm sure there is great need."

And he put a foot into the stirrup, / The other across his steed;
And the gay gold rings from his fingers burst, / His nose began to bleed.

And as he was riding along the road / His horse caught against a stone.
"Oh, there's signs and tokens enough I've seen, / I'm sure I'll never return."

And as he was a-riding up a London street / So close up the fair Whitehall,
The lords and the ladies stood looking hard, / And a traitor he was called.

"No traitor at all," Lord Allenwater said, / "No traitor at all," cried he,
"Why, I vow I can find you three score men / To fight for King Georgie."

Then it's up and bespoke a grey-headed man, / A broad axe in his hand,
"Oh deliver your soul, Lord Allenwater, / Your life's at my command."

"Well my life I do not value too, / My life I will give to thee,
And the black velvet coat that I have on my back, / You take that for your fee.

There's forty pounds in one pocket, / Pray give it unto the poor,
And there's forty-five in the other one, / Pray give it from door to door."

And he laid his head upon the block, / The man gave a mighty blow.
"Now there lies the head of a traitor," he said, / But it answered and it said
"No!"

Alternate chords:

G C D
D G C
D

ROUD 90

Geordie

AKA: Georgie, As I Walked Over London Bridge, Banstead Downs, The Life of Georgie, Young George Oxbury, The Warminster Song, The Life and Death of George of Oxford

Summary:

Geordie is condemned to die for a crime, normally stealing or poaching. The story is narrated from the perspective of Geordie's devoted lover or wife, who hears of his capture and hurries to plead for his life. Despite her efforts, in many versions of the ballad, Geordie's fate is sealed, and he is executed, leaving his lover heartbroken. In other versions, the plea is successful, and Geordie is pardoned and released.

Setting notes:

This tragic ballad was popular throughout Britain, then followed the well trodden musical diaspora to the US, and then around the world, including a surprisingly strong 20th century tradition in Italy. As with many ballads, there are versions that very specifically name historic characters*, and others that are more general in nature. Originally, the more general ballads were most often found England, while the more specific (and apparently earlier) ones came from Scotland, although Scottish balladeers ultimately readopted the simpler English version too. For centuries it has been very widely sung; we have recordings dating back to the early 20th century, and hundreds more can be found today, in a dizzying array of genres** and languages. With a widespread ballad like this, it can be difficult to settle on a set of words, as there have been so many it's hard to pin down anything definitive amongst the tradition's shifting sands. For concision and clarity I have followed Brian Peters, who expertly assembled the salient parts from various sources in 2008. For the tune we turn to one that was, in a poetic temporal twist, collected by Cecil Sharp almost exactly 100 years earlier, from Charles Neville, of East Coker in Somerset, and has remained popular today.

Suggested further listening:

"Geordie", Martin Carthy, *Crown of Horn*

"My Geordie, Oh", Green Ribbons, *Green Ribbons*

"Georgie", Doc Watson, *Home Again!*

* The primary candidate for the "real" Geordie is George Gordon, Earl of Huntly who defied Mary Queen of Scots and found himself outlawed as a result. He did not die on the gallows, but of a stroke. Later however, his son was beheaded for treason, leading some people to surmise that the ballad could have been more of an allegorical allusion to the downfall of the Huntly clan than an historical record of one man's demise.

** This is the ideal ballad for the very small cadre of people who enjoy both Martin Carthy and banging Italian techno.

ROUD 90: Geordie

Em D C G
As I walked over London Bridge
D
On a Midsummer's morning early,
Em G D Bm
I spied a maid, and a fair young maid,
C D (Bm)Em
Lamenting for her Geordie.

"Come saddle to me my milk-white steed,
Come and bridle her all ready.
That I may ride to fair London town
And beg for the life of my Geordie.

"For my Geordie never stole cow nor calf,
He never murdered any.
But he stole sixteen of the king's fat deer
And he sold 'em under the valley.

"It's six pretty babes have I borne by him,
The seventh lies in my body.
Freely would I part with them every one
If you will spare me the life of my Geordie."

But the judge he looked over his left shoulder
And he seemed so very hard-hearted.
"My pretty fair maid, you are come too late
For he has been condemned already."

"How I wish I was on yonder hill,
Where oft times I have been many.
Give me a broad sword and a pistol too
And I would fight for the life of my Geordie.

"Now my Geordie he will hang in a chain of gold,
Such a chain as ne'er hung many.
And on his grave, these words shall say:
Here lies the heart of a lady."

Alternate chords:

Am G F C
Am C G G
Am C G Em
F G (Em) Am

(The bracketed chord on the final line is optional - it is a quick change and you may want to omit it for ease of playing.)

More info and the audio files that accompany this book can be found at

singyonder.co.uk*

Some things that helped me and/or you might enjoy, in addition to those found in Volumes 1-8**:

Books:

- "The historie and life of King James the Sext", The Bannatyne Club
- "The Poetical Museum", George Caw
- "Old English ballads", Edward Hyder Rollins
- "A History of English Balladry", Frank Bryant
- "Wild White Cattle of Great Britain", John Storer
- "The English Folk Singer", Sam Richards and Tish Stubbs
- "The Glenriddel Manuscript", Robert Burns
- "Orpheus Caledonicus", William Thomson
- "Ancient and modern Scottish songs, heroic ballads, etc" David Herd
- "Ancient ballads and songs, chiefly from tradition", Thomas Lyle
- "The Ballads and Songs of Derbyshire", Llewellynn Jewitt
- "Lord Derwentwater", Alton C. Morris, from Southern Quarterly Vol. 8
- "Shropshire folk-lore", C. S. Burne (ed.)
- "Lord Derwentwater", Ralph Arnold

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FOUNDER MEMBERS: Thank you so much to Brian Pateman for subscribing to the Sing Yonder Substack as a Founder Member. It makes a huge difference.

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* If you are from the future and found a rare hard copy version at the back of a dusty loft, and none of the links or email addresses work, it's possible I have either died, or otherwise departed from the internet to live in a log cabin somewhere. Either way, don't try and find me, go and learn some folk songs instead.

** You can find the full list of references at <http://singyonder.co.uk/references>

“lovely, important work”

Eliza Carthy

“gorgeous”

Jude Rogers, The Guardian

“marvellous...

a key to the folkie locker and a simple first step to singing and playing trad songs... I hope it's picked up by everyone with access to a voice box and/or guitar etc.”

Phil Widdows, FolkCast

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an access point for all to music that spans the centuries, as well as skillsets”

Songlines Magazine

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The Folk Forecast

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TradFolk.co

“excellent...approachable...

I will sing the praises of the Sing Yonder project to anyone who will listen — what I would have given for such a thing when I was first discovering traditional folk song”

Sophie Lichens, Folk London

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