

FOLKLIFE TRADITIONS 66. JAN. 2021

FW's FOLKLIFE TRADITIONS PAGES
 Our aims include stimulating a wider interest in folk studies & folk culture: [the FT pages](#)

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ONLINE DIRECTORY www.folklife-traditions.uk

- ◇ **List 7, FOLKLIFE SOCIETIES** online only, on above FT website
- ◇ **List 8, FOLKLIFE STUDIES & INSTITUTIONS** ditto
- ◇ **List 9, SEASONAL LOCAL CELEBRATIONS**, a list, & photos, mostly by Doc Rowe online and p10

○ In these pages, the © symbol denotes *Folklife Members* - regular FT contributors receive free *Folklife Membership*; *do join us!*

www.folklife-traditions.uk - FT, these Folklife Traditions pages online

- **FT Directory:** lists 7,8,9 - detailed listings online
- **FT Archive:** individual FT issues, index, links to articles & most of FT

FOLKLIFE TRADITIONS PAGES: contributors.
 We are regularly indebted to regular contributors **Doc Rowe** for his list & pictures; to **Roy & Lesley Adkins, Brian Bull, Charles Menteith, Gwilym Davies, Meurig Williams, Ian Pittaway, Chris Stewart, and Helen Adam**, for songs, tunes, articles, & notes; and to **others**, from time to time, as listed in FT.
 And we remember the late **Roy Palmer**, a generous contributor for over 30 years, from August 1983 in FW's predecessor, the *Somers' Broadsheet*.

FT header artwork: © our logo, **Chris Beaumont**; and morris dancers © **Annie Jones**; from *The Roots Of Welsh Border Morris* (Dave Jones)

**All My Life's Buried Here
 - The Story of George Butterworth**

George Butterworth (1885-1916) was a pioneering British composer, musician, folk song collector and dancer cut down in his prime on the battlefield of the Somme.

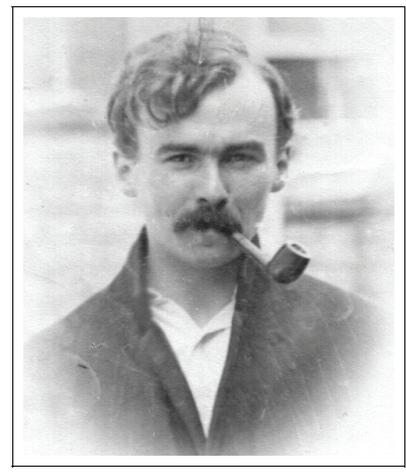
This landmark film aims to bring about a better understanding of his life and work and presents fascinating, newly-uncovered information on the composer and his achievements. Having screened at many UK cinemas and folk festivals in 2019 to great acclaim, the DVD & Blu-Ray is now available and invites viewers to enjoy the film in the comfort of their own home.

Each DVD/BluRay comes with an additional colour illustrated booklet featuring new articles on Butterworth by Anthony Murphy, Katie Howson, Malcolm Taylor and Shirley Collins. Plus there are extra interviews and bonus music recordings not included in the main feature.

The film builds a rounded portrait of George Butterworth through insightful commentary from his biographer Anthony Murphy, family members and other distinguished contributors. We accompany Butterworth on his folk song collecting trips into the countryside with Ralph Vaughan Williams, and discover who the folk singers actually were and how their music inspired Butterworth's own craft. We learn why Butterworth once described himself as a 'professional morris dancer' and experience his finest orchestral music in classic performances under conductor (and friend of Butterworth) Sir Adrian Boult. We enjoy Butterworth's Housman songs in exclusive new live renditions by Roderick Williams and hear contemporary reactions to these works, as well as uncovering what led Butterworth to destroy so much of his own music after volunteering in World War One. Through his letters home and the memoirs of those who fought alongside him we follow Butterworth's journey to the frontline of the Somme in 1916 where he met his tragically early demise, and are witness to a remarkable memorial ceremony still held annually in his honour in the French village where he died.

ALL MY LIFE'S BURIED HERE - The Story of George Butterworth is available exclusively from the website www.georgebutterworth.co.uk

ALL MY LIFE'S BURIED HERE
The Story of George Butterworth



For the first time in a film the remarkable story of **George Butterworth (1885-1916)** his music, life and times.

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Drawing on a treasure trove of archival materials this feature length documentary offers a fresh look at a gifted young artist lost in the Great War. We examine Butterworth's role as a folk song collector and morris dancer, revisit his friendship with Vaughan Williams and explore the Edwardian English folk revival and its impact on Butterworth as a composer.

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"Highly recommended" - Ian A. Anderson (fRoots)
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"The best film account of a composer I have ever seen"
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FOLKLIFE TRADITIONS in the Folklife West print magazine

FOLKLIFE, January 2021.

All prices below are to be confirmed.

Advert rates below are as before. These will be confirmed nearer the time, depending on whether we print as normal, or as this time, reduced circulation (no multiple copies to folk clubs), so reduced rates.

Membership. Price rise from £16 a year to **£18 a year** for 1 copy per issue. **Postage increased 15%***; we have increased prices by 12½%.
* 1 magazine UK, 2nd class (<250g): 25/3/19 was £1.32; then £1.40 on 23/3/2020; then £1.53 on 1/1/2021.

This issue was a special one, combining 3 issues of Folklife Traditions pages, and no news & diary pages.
Therefore: smaller than usual, so credit of £2 for those receiving 1 copy (other sizes pro rata), and for those joining now, for 1 issue including January, membership is £16 (usual £18, less £2 credit).

As of now (1/1/2021) we don't know whether we will print as normal in May. If we don't, then again we will issue credits to members.



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OUR INFO-PAGE

Membership, word limits, advert info, deadlines, reselling discounts
❖ JAN 2021 ❖ FOLKLIFE WEST, No 66 ❖

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- www.folklife-directory.uk ~ online Directory
- www.folklife-traditions.uk ~ FT: articles, Directory



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OUR INFO-PAGE

- **FW Jan 1st** < Jan • Feb • Mar • Apr > **Copy by 19 Nov**
 - **FW May 1st** < May • Jun • Jul • Aug > **Copy by 19 Mar**
 - **FW Sept 1st** < Sep • Oct • Nov • Dec > **Copy by 19 July**
- Articles for Folklife Traditions: 2 months (= 1 Nov, Mar, Jul)
• Non-members news to Correspondents: 2 months (= 1 Nov, Mar, Jul)

❖ **LATE CHANGES?** Possibly ... **CONDITIONS APPLY** ~
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❖ Reviews: we are not a reviews magazine. We recommend Living Tradition.
So please don't send CDs to editors. You can join and publicise your CD (200 words).
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❖ CORRESPONDENTS: 350 to 700 words [depends on local events, & FW circulation & adverts]

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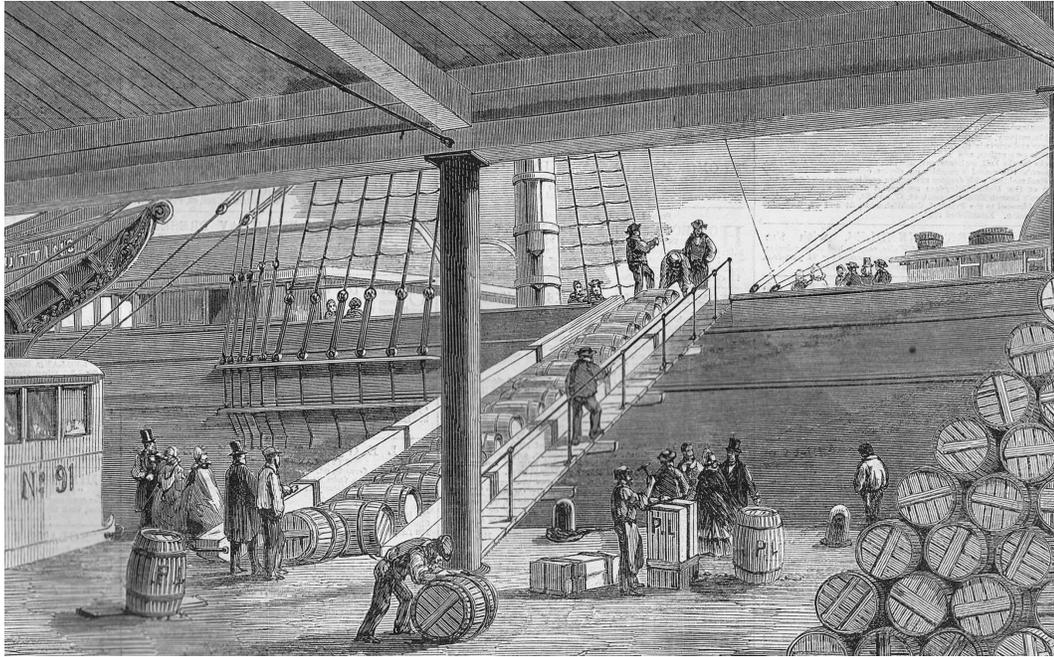
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**'The Leaving of Liverpool' by Roy & Lesley Adkins****Unloading a clipper ship at Liverpool, 1863**

One of the songs most popular with folk club audiences is *The Leaving of Liverpool* (Roud Number 9435), with its distinctive chorus:

**'So fare thee well, my own true love,
When I return united we shall be.
It's not the leaving of Liverpool that grieves me,
But me darlin' when I think of thee.'**

The song carries the simple story of the regret of a sailor who has to leave Liverpool and his lover to sail in a harshly run Yankee clipper ship that was ultimately bound for California. Clippers were sailing ships powered by the wind, and they were built to carry freight at high speeds so as to compete with the rapidly growing fleets of cargo ships powered by steam. Before too long, they were racing each other because the fastest ships produced the highest profits. Inevitably, this led to stricter discipline and forced labour on board the clippers, where bullying, violence and risk-taking became normal and captains pushed their crews to the limit.



FIGURE-HEAD OF "DAVID CROCKETT."

Figurehead of the David Crockett, now in the Mystic Seaport Museum, Connecticut

In *The Leaving of Liverpool*, the clipper ship is named as the *Davy Crockett*, which was actually the *David Crockett*, launched in 1853 on the Mystic River in Connecticut. The vessel was sold to Lawrence Giles & Co. of New York a few years later and, in about 1869, to George Howes & Co., also of New York. (1) Although the song has no known author, it can be closely dated and was written when one of these two firms was the owner. Two lines say: 'And Burgess is the captain of her, And they say she is a floating hell'. John A. Burgess became captain of the *David Crockett* in 1860 and was one of the most successful clipper captains, though, as the song suggests, he had a reputation for driving the men too hard.

The song refers to the ship as a 'Yankee clipper'. This was the period of the American Civil War, and although the conflict effectively ended in 1865, the term 'Yankee' continued to be used for the northern states for some years. The song is written as if the voyage begins and ends in Liverpool, which was most likely the case for the sailor whose story it tells, because ships took on crew members at each port to replace those who deserted, died or were too ill or injured to continue.

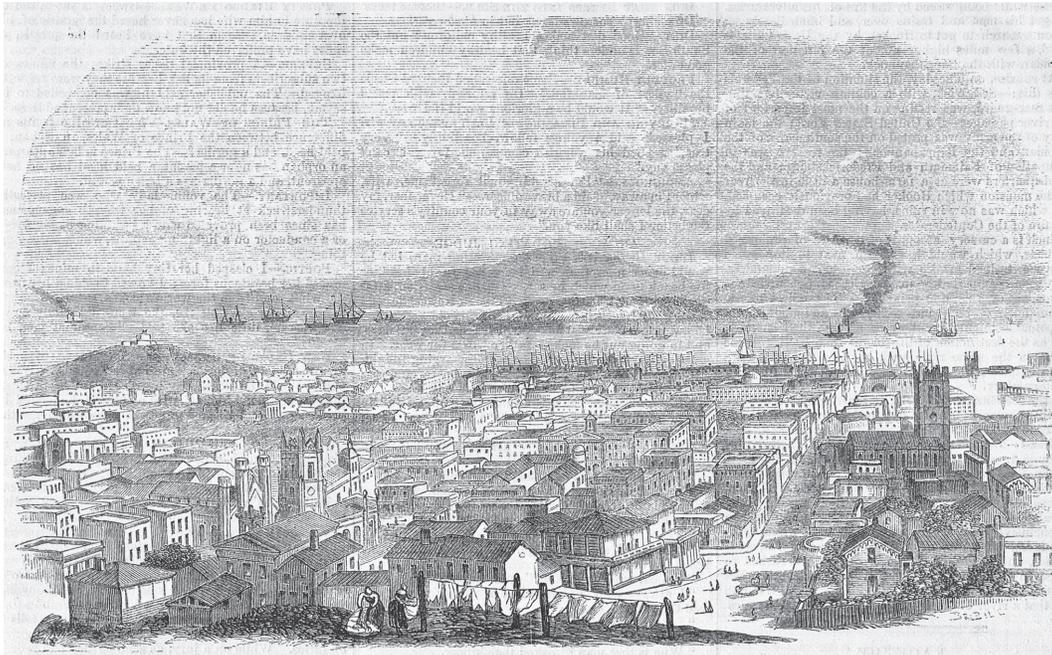
In actual fact, the *David Crockett* was based in New York, and the normal route was to take a cargo around Cape Horn to San Francisco. The Panama Canal, which provided a quicker, safer route to the west coast of America, was not opened until 1914, so the fastest passage was around Cape Horn off the southern tip of South America, where the Atlantic and Pacific Oceans meet. The area is characterised by strong currents, stormy conditions and icebergs, making it extremely hazardous for shipping and difficult for sailing ships to navigate. Once past Cape Horn and docked at San Francisco, the clipper was unloaded and a new cargo taken on, before sailing across the Atlantic to the seaport of Liverpool. Here, another exchange of cargoes took place, before the ship returned to New York.

The first time the *David Crockett* is known to have been at Liverpool was in February 1863. A decade later, in March 1873, the vessel sailed from Liverpool for the last time with Burgess as captain. He had planned to retire in 1874, but on the voyage back to Liverpool from San Francisco in June 1874, in the South Atlantic, he was lost overboard. The song was therefore most likely to have been written somewhere between 1863 and 1873. The mate, John Anderson, took command of the ship, and on arrival at Liverpool a few weeks later, one newspaper reported the incident:

A SHIPMASTER DROWNED AT SEA

The David Crockett, which has arrived at Liverpool from San Francisco, reports that, on June 25, in lat. 38 26 S, long. 28 3 W, during a violent gale from the NW, the captain (J.A. Burgess) was washed overboard and lost. Three lifebuoys were thrown overboard to him, and everything possible was done to save him, but having on a heavy oilcoat at the time he sank before he reached either of the buoys.' (2)

The news of his death reached America around the same time, and the *New York Herald* published details:



San Francisco in 1863

'OBITUARY.*Captain John A. Burgess.*

The death of the above-named well-known American ship commander, late master of the famous clipper David Crockett, is announced by report from his home at Somerset, Mass. On the 25th of June, while off the River Plate, in the South Atlantic, during a violent gale, Captain Burgess was washed overboard from the deck of his ship. Captain Burgess was a man of fine appearance and excellent character, a kind and indulgent husband and father, a straightforward, honest man and warm friend, loving justice for its sake. He was suddenly taken away from life in the 61st year of his age, and on a return voyage from San Francisco, which, as he had written home, was to be his last.' (3)

There was no suggestion that Burgess's death was anything other than an accident, though this final voyage had been delayed by a mutiny among the crew at San Francisco. With Burgess gone, the mate John Anderson was later made captain of the *David Crockett*, which continued as a clipper ship on voyages between New York and San Francisco, around Cape Horn, until 1883. After that the ship had several owners, eventually being converted to a coal barge and wrecked in 1899.

The song outlived the ship, being passed around among sailors, and it was heard in 1885 by an American sailor, Dick Maitland, who liked it and learned it. Much later, he sang it to the song collector William Main Doerflinger, who published it in 1951. (4) It is strange to think that a song now so widespread and popular was hardly known at all before Doerflinger published it seventy years ago.

References

- 1 Basil Lubbock 1929 *The Down Easters: American Deep-Water Sailing Ships 1869-1929* (Glasgow), pp.41-9, 266-7
- 2 *The Shields Daily Gazette* 14 August 1874, p.3
- 3 *New York Herald* 13 August 1874, p.10
- 4 First published by William Main Doerflinger in *Shantymen and Shantyboys* (1951), which was republished in a revised edition as *Songs of the Sailor and Lumberman* (1972), with 'The Leaving of Liverpool' on pp.103-5. See also Roy Palmer, 2001, *Boxing the Compass* (Tadmorden), pp.248-9

Roy and Lesley Adkins © 2021

Roy and Lesley Adkins are authors of books on naval and social history, including *Jack Tar* and *Trafalgar*. Their latest book, *Gibraltar: The Greatest Siege in British History*, is now published in paperback by Abacus (ISBN 9780349142395). See www.adkinshistory.com.

**Folkife news: societies & organisations; letters**

❖ **The Folklore Society** @
www.folklore-society.com
Office address: The Folklore Society, 50 Fitzroy Street, London W1T 5BT, 0203 915 3034. Our Folklore Society Library and Archives are still at University College London Library and Special Collections, and publicly available for consultation. Many of our books can be loaned by Folklore Society members.
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From Barbara Brown: Books and recordings for sale

Hello all,
We have a large number of books (many of them folk song, music, dance, drama, custom and lore, but also other arts and music books, as well as history, social history, biographies, religion, fiction and a lot more) and quite a few recordings of various kinds, including vinyl, which we need to get rid of. If you think you might be interested, I would be happy to send the list of books and/or the list of recordings for you to look over.

Please e-mail me if you would like either or both lists, and do pass this on to anyone else you think might be interested.

Thank you.
Best wishes, Barbara

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Tunelines



Y Ferch o'r Scêr / The Maid of Sker

Welsh traditional tune, second part Helen Adam

This lovely tune comes from the Cambrian Minstrelsie, a 'National Collection of Welsh Songs' from 1893 collected and arranged by Joseph Parry and David Rowlands. The title is the name of a song as well as the name of the tune and the words, below, tell of the anguish of a jilted lover. Rowlands tells us that there was a harpist who had been engaged to be married to the fair maid of Sker but before they married he lost his sight and she broke off the engagement. He cites a possible writer who is a harpist named Thomas Evans of Newton Nottage who may have written the words in around 1760.

The name Sker itself is from the old Norse and means skerry (or rocky islet). Sker and Sker point are on the coast of Wales between Port Talbot and Porthcawl at the end of Kenfig sands. It was the scene of a terrible tragedy in 1947 when a liberty ship, the Samtampa, was ship wrecked off the point with the loss of life of all 39 crew members as well as all 8 members of the RNLI rescue crew. This tragic incident is commemorated in a plaque in the rocks at Sker Point.

There is also a stately home, Sker house, which was the setting for R.D. Blackmore's book 'The Maid of Sker' about a mysterious founding child. Interestingly a Welsh horror video game has just been released set in a Welsh mansion and called 'The Maid of Sker'.

The tune itself is so charming that I personally am surprised it is not played or sung more. Despite the sadness of the words it has quite a cheerful feel, especially when treated as a stand-alone tune. I've put it in D major here as that is a nice key for most folkies and I hope you enjoy the second part. As usual the original tune is the top line and the second part and suggested harmonies are my own, though in this case the chords used are quite similar to those used by Joseph Parry.

Y Ferch o'r Scêr

Mab wyf fi sy'n byw dan bennyd
Am f'an wylid fawr ei bri
Gwith ei charu'n fwy na digon
Curio wnaeth fy nghalon i
Gwell yw dangos beth yw'r achos
Nag ym aros dan fy nghur
Dere'r seren at a'in llawen
Ti gei barch a charied pur

Pwylla'r bachgen gwyllt ei anian
'Rwyf dan ofnau rhwymo'm llaw
Gwaith cael digon o rhybuddion
Wrth gariadon yma a thrw
'Rwy'n rhy ifange eto i ddiange
Cym'raf bwyll cyn mynd rhy bell
Pan bwy'n barod ryw ddiwarnod
Clywed gei, os byddi gwel.

English translation by David Rowlands

I adore a youthful maiden
Fairer than the morning light
By her image I am haunted
Through the watches of the night
Better to declare my passion
Than in silent anguish pine
Beam upon me star of beauty
Promise quickly to be mine.

Wayward youth! Restrain thy passion
Nor indulge in thoughts absurd
The mistakes of reckless lovers
Warns me not to pledge my word
Eager maids who haste to marry
Live to rue it when too late
Yet some day when I am ready
Thou shalt haply hear thy fate.

Helen Adam © 2021
helenadamfiddle@gmail.com

Helen Adam is a freelance fiddle/violin player, singer, performer and composer living in beautiful West Wales. A prolific composer and songwriter, whose current project is a collection of duets to introduce more of the lesser known Welsh dance tunes to a wider audience. Also performing with George Whitfield as the **Fiddlebox** duo (George, accordion and vocals, and Helen, violin and vocals), a unique sound blending our varying influences and styles, including Klezmer, Rock, Classical, Celtic folk, Welsh dance music and song, Blues, Bluegrass, www.fiddlebox.net

❖ See also **WALES NEWS PAGES** this issue, and our **ONLINE WALES DIRECTORY**, www.folklife/Cymru



**The Roots of
Welsh Border Morris**
by the late Dave Jones,
1988, revised 1995;
ISBN No. 0 9526285 0 3.

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Y Ferch o'r Scêr / The Maid of Sker

Welsh traditional tune, second part Helen Adam



Book Review: *Mummers' Plays Revisited* by Peter Harrop. Reviewed by Stephen Rowley.

The Death of the Pagan Mummer.

Book Review: *Mummers' Plays Revisited* by Peter Harrop

Historians have an old adage - absence of evidence is not evidence of absence. This is the mantra of those who claim the origins of mummers' plays lay in pagan death and resurrection rituals. The reason we have not found a missing link between the collected plays and the ancient Britons doesn't mean that there isn't one, just that no-one wrote it down.

Peter Harrop's book *Mummers' Plays Revisited* cuts through this argument with an evidence-based study that reveals how the plays were a product of their time, and their time was the mid-C18th.

As professor of performing arts at the University of Chester, Peter has a thorough knowledge of drama history which he brings together with his personal experience as a mummer. The core of his book is an examination of the six earliest plays for which we have records. The first being the 'mock play' of Alexander and The King of Egypt published in a chapbook around 1850. This text is considered in its historical context. In the late C17th, John Dryden was well-known for his 'heroic dramas', serious plays on historical topics depicting great heroes defeating adversity. The heroic dramas were then parodied in humorous or satirical plays. These parodies themselves were parodied in the form of 'mock plays'. A parody of theatre itself and promoted in chapbooks for the new fashion of amateur performances in domestic settings.

Have you ever wondered why the leading protagonist is often variously named St George, Prince George or King George? These mock plays were peopled by 'stock' characters from contemporary theatre. The Alexander play features Prince George, who was very much alive at the time. The Turkish Knight is not St George's opponent from the crusades, but the stock Turk, from the Turkish Wars (1683-1699), often featured in heroic dramas. The Quack or Mountebank Doctor with his gobbledygook speeches and miraculous cures was a popular figure in theatre and very familiar to audiences. Mock plays were crammed full of the elements of popular entertainment in the mid C18th.

What about all the evidence of mumming going back to the C14th? This is the original 'non-play' mumming. A seasonal activity to go house-visiting in disguise, speaking in very high voices and playing games like - 'Guess which one of your neighbours I am?' It became a cadging (money collecting) tradition. Mummers adopted the mock play as an added value entertainment - guaranteed to bring in more money.

In other chapters, Harrop looks at the wider evidence for the two kinds of mumming and shows the hey-day of the play to be in the mid-C19th. Soon after, when the mummers play was already declining, James Frazer wrote his book *The Golden Bough*, which postulated that all the world's mythologies were the remnants of pagan death/rebirth rituals. Without considering any actual evidence of mummers' play origins, early folklorists and collectors seized on the notion that the doctor's magical cure was a perfect example of Frazer's theory. Thus, a myth was born.

Stephen Rowley

○ *Mummer's Plays Revisited*, by Peter Harrop.

Routledge Advances in Theatre and Performance Studies, Abingdon, Oxon, New York. Routledge 2019, 217 pages.

Hardback, ISBN: 978-0-8153-4837-5, £120.

e-Book, ISBN: 978-1-351-16704-8, £40 (Amazon Kindle, Vital Source eBooks); Rental 6/12 months £22.20/£27.00.

Paperback: expected March 2021.

○ Stephen Rowley is a dancer, musician, mummer and researcher. His mumming career started in the early 1970s with English Folk Packet and continues to the present time. In 2011 he founded and chaired the *Mummers Unconvention* which evolved into the *International Mummers Festival and Mummers Symposium*. He also founded the *International Pipe and Tabor Festival*.

○ The Mummers Festival is online 2nd - 4th January 2021, see www.mummersfestival.org

Right: The Potterne Christmas Boys or The Potterne Mummers

see www.wiltshirefolkarts.org.uk/wfmummers.htm, and

www.facebook.com/The-Potterne-Christmas-Boys-or-The-Potterne-Mummers-179714485371908/





A New York State Folk Tale, from Catherine LaBier. By Gwilym Davies



A folk tale from Gwilym's new book, which he collected it from Catherine LaBier of New York State. It's a version of a cantefable folktale which is still current amongst Scottish Gypsies.

A boy and a girl were sent by their mother to collect wood for the oven. The girl collected wood, but the boy spent all the time playing with a bird that insisted on flying around him. When they returned home, the mother was angry with the boy, and while he was raiding the biscuit barrel, she chopped off his head and then proceeded to cook him. The story continues:

'It was almost dinner time and Papa was coming home and he could smell something good cooking. And when he got into the house he says, "Woman," he says, "where did you get the meat? I could find nothing out in the woods today." And, well, she says, "A neighbour came in and gave us some meat." And he says, "Well, it smells good," he says, "and I'm starved. Feed me." And he called the little girl, but she got under the table and little tears were coming down her eyes, and he says, "Get up here and eat with us." And she says, "No, I just want the bones," she says, "and I'll gather them in my little handkerchief." Well, they started to eat, and he was giving her the bones under the table when along came this bird. And the little bird was singing:

"My mother cooked me, my father did eat me,

And my sister will gather my tiny little bones in her handkerchief."

Well, Mama was very upset about this, so she kicked the little girl and she says, "Get out there and chase that bird away!" So, the little girl did. She got up and she took the broom and she chased the little bird into the woods.

Well, a short time later she came out of the woods and walked into the house and she had on a brand-new dress with a beautiful ribbon sash and a big bow to match in her hair and new shoes on her feet. Mama said, "Where did you get those new things from?" She says, "The little bird gave them to me." She says, "Hmmp! Likely story!" But the little girl got back under the table and spread out her handkerchief and started to gather once again Papa's bones. Well, a short time later that little bird came back and singing the same little song:

"My mother will cook me, my father will eat me,

And my sister will gather my tiny little bones in her handkerchief."

Well, Mama was really upset, and she said to Papa, "Take that broom and go on and get rid of that bird once and for all!"

So, he went outside and he's chasing the bird into the woods and a short time later he came out and he had a brand-new suit, new boots, even a gold bob on his waistcoat, and a new chapeau. And Mama said, "Where did you get those new things from?" And he says, "That bird gave 'em to me." She said, "Likely story!" So, they finished up dinner and they were enjoying it and the little girl was still under the table gathering those tiny little bones when that bird came back, and Mama says, "I will take care of that bird this time." So, she picked out the broom and the little bird had perched on the porch roof and she went out and she started to hit that little bird and the sky really darkened and the thunder roared. And a streak of lightning came down and struck Mama into a pile of dust. And the wind gusted up and blew open the door and blew all the dust into the house. And that, my friends, is why we have dust in our house.'

Gwilym Davies © 2021

*Gwilym is a collector, singer, dancer, and musician, and helped set up **Glostrad**, <http://glostrad.com>*

*His new book is "Catch it, Bottle it and Paint it Green" aka **Tales of a Folk Song Collector**, see review next page.*

*There is also a companion CD of the archive recordings on the Musical Traditions label, see **books & recordings announced**, see next page.*

Folklife news: societies & organisations



trac, Music Traditions Wales @

The folk development organisation for Wales, which works to promote our traditional music, dance and song at home and beyond. It is funded by the Arts Council of Wales and the Welsh Government. www.trac.wales and www.trac.cymru

Free online resources:

- **Traditions:** Articles on Wales' iconic instruments & song traditions according to the experts. <https://resources.trac.wales/traditions>
- **A Collection of Welsh Folk Songs** with the help of **Arfon Gwilym**, one of our major tradition bearers: videos, soundfiles, dots, and words. <https://songs.trac.wales>
- **Tunes:** get playing videos, soundfiles, and dots. <https://resources.trac.wales/tunes>

trac organises **Gwerin Gwallgo**, a residential Folk Weekend for 11-18s.

See **trac** website, <https://trac.wales>, for **news, directory, listings, resources**, and on **Facebook**, at facebook.com/traccymruwales, where you will find videos, details of online gigs, etc. PO Box 205, Barry CF63 1FF, 01446 748556

• **The Traditional Song Forum (TSF) @** A national organisation dedicated to the promotion, performance and publication of traditional folk song in the UK. The Traditional Song Forum has organised successful talks on Zoom, more are planned. These talks are very popular, now attracting international visitors, currently limited to 100 places; so if interested, see www.tradsong.org sooner rather than later. This website is a gateway to a number of useful resources for those interested in researching or performing traditional folk songs. There is a newsletter to sign up to. Latest details on www.tradsong.org

All enquiries to @ **Martin Graebe** (TSF Secretary), martin.graebe@btinternet.com



Book Review: *Catch It, Bottle It, Paint It Green: Tales of a Folk Song Collector* by Gwilym Davies. Reviewed by David Kidman.



Whatever our involvement in traditional folk music, we readily acknowledge a huge debt to the successive waves of collectors, from the pioneering activities of Sharp, Vaughan Williams and Broadwood through to Bert Lloyd and more recent exponents like Mike Yates and Nick Dow (to name but two). Gwilym Davies has since the early '70s been recording source singers, initially in his native Hampshire then subsequently in Gloucestershire and in the USA. He has amassed around 1700 individual items – complete songs and tunes, as well as fragments and interview snatches – of which probably 900 are distinct songs. (There are also a large number of videos in Gwilym's private collection...) The plan is that all the

audio recordings will in due course be available to listen for free on the British Library *Sounds* website, but for the time being just 25 of them (23 songs and 2 tunes) are to be found on a new CD available from Musical Traditions. This disc is to be regarded as an essential companion to this book, in which Gwilym discusses his work and regales us with tales of his encounters with the "colourful characters" he met while collecting.

But there's more to this 200-page volume than just an entertaining and interesting read, for Gwilym's ruminations provide us with much on which to cogitate further. To avoid any undue preconceptions or misconceptions, Gwilym has, with typical modesty, set out his stall thus: "This book is not intended to be an academic work, but simply my various thoughts on English folk traditions". So, from the starting point of what folks consider "traditional", Gwilym recounts his experiences of song collecting in the context of community and ownership, and examines how traditions – and the concept of tradition in English folk song – have changed throughout the 20th century, the classic songs and ballads being increasingly supplanted by an even broader "acceptable repertoire" (to the point where "rock'n'roll is simply the new folk music").

Gwilym's style is very readable and companionable, to the extent that he really brings alive those "characters" whose songs he has recorded. And, importantly, Gwilym's book plugs another gap in our knowledge by affording us a real insight into the working practices of a modern-day collector – indeed, what makes him tick (as a well-regarded singer and musician in his local region). Gwilym's unbridled enthusiasm for his task cannot be denied, and neither can his undying, humble gratitude and respect for those from whom he has collected.

After the book's text comes a 60-page Appendix, which contains transcriptions of all the items included on the above-mentioned Musical Traditions CD, together with the book's Index.

All told, this is an important addition to the corpus of books about folksong collecting, and as such deserves a place on your shelves. Oh, and I must decline to explain the book's title – suffice to say, it revolves around the punch-line of a joke...

David Kidman

○ *Catch It, Bottle It, Paint It Green: Tales of a Folk Song Collector* by Gwilym Davies. Pegasus Publishers, ISBN-9781784655914, www.pegasuspublishers.com

○ David Kidman is a Folk Singer, Poet, Folk Club MC, Compere, Writer and Music Reviewer.



books & recordings announced

• **Publicity for appropriate books** and for **CDs of collected songs:** please see www.folklife-traditions.uk → "Contributions" page
These FT pages: we don't review 'Folk' CDs, so please don't send them!
Folk News pages: members, please do send in news about your own folk CDs

Gwilym Davies writes: Dear all,

I am pleased to announce that my book "Catch it, Bottle it and Paint it Green" aka *Tales of a Folk Song Collector*, was published on 24th September. To order a copy now, go to <https://pegasuspublishers.com/books/coming-soon/catch-it-bottle-it-and-paint-it-green>

The advertising blurb reads "Gwilym Davies has spent a lifetime enthusiastically recording folk songs and tunes, mainly from southern England and the USA. He follows in the footsteps of well known folk song collectors such as Cecil Sharp and Ralph Vaughan Williams. This book describes hidden musical gems, drinking songs, children's ditties, ballads, wassails and bawdy tales, along with colourful characters he met along the way. Through this book Gwilym shares his passion for our folk heritage and traditional songs.

The book mainly deals with Hampshire, Gloucestershire, Devon and the USA but touches on other areas. There's a chapter on Gypsy songs and one on children's songs. It's not an academic book but more of a ramble through my brain.

Musical Traditions will be putting out a companion CD of the same name containing the field recordings of some of the songs mentioned in the book "Catch it...etc". To reserve your copy, contact **Mustrad** <https://www.mustrad.org.uk/>.

Be good and stay safe, Gwilym

Saydisc ®

Saydisc announce the release on 7 sets of 6CDs the iconic **Matchbox Bluesmaster Series** with notes by the renowned blues writer and researcher, **Paul Oliver** - originally issued in the 1980s on LP. The first two 6CD sets for release in Jan 2021.

Saydisc's re-issue programme of themed compilation double CDs with a single CD price tag includes "*Traditional Dances of Britain and Ireland*" (Saydisc CDSDL449) and "*Traditional Songs of Britain and Ireland*" (Saydisc CDSDL450) featuring The McPeake Family Trio, Ray Fisher, Margaret Barry, Siwsann George, Jo Freya, Bob Roberts, Julie Murphy and many more.

Earlier folk-oriented releases were "*The Funny Side of Saydisc*" (Saydisc CDSDL444), "*Harp, Dulcimers & Hurdy Gurdies*" (Saydisc CDSDL446), "*Awake & Join the Cheerful Choir*" (Saydisc CDSDL442) and "*World's Away*" (Saydisc CDSDL440).

See www.saydisc.com for full details. **Gef Lucena** ®



MUSICAL TRADITIONS ®

Catch It, Bottle It, Paint It Green
 Songs from the Gwilym Davies collection: a companion CD to the book of the same name
 MTCD379 + 24 page integral booklet in DVD case. 25 tracks, 64 minutes.
MT Records' website, £12.

Gwilym Davies has been recording source singers in the UK and USA for nearly 50 years. This CD is a selection of 25 recordings and is a companion CD to his book, *Catch It, Bottle It, Paint It Green*, which can be obtained from Pegasus Publishers.

Now available from MT Records' website, **just £20. Rod Stradling** ®

- **Musical Traditions Records**, with on-line credit/debit card purchasing at: www.mtrecords.co.uk
- **Musical Traditions Records is on Facebook.**
- **1 Castle Street, Stroud, Glos GL5 2HP, 01453 759475, mobile 0793 099 1641, rod@mustrad.org.uk.**
- * **Musical Traditions Internet Magazine** at: www.mustrad.org.uk



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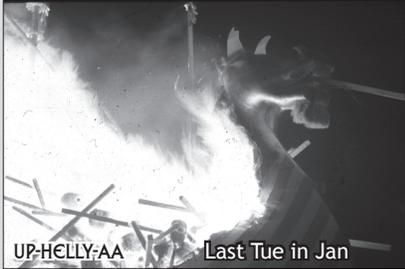
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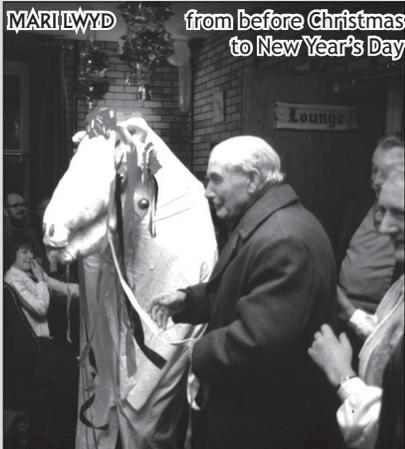
UP-HCLLY-AA Last Tue in Jan



UP-HCLLY-AA Last Tue in Jan



GOATHLAND PLOUGH STOTS
1st Sat after Plough Mon



MARI L W Y D from before Christmas
to New Year's Day

The Doc Rowe Collection Support Group has been set up to support the Archive of Doc's unique collection.
See: www.docrowe.org.uk

All listings & photos © Doc Rowe, unless stated otherwise. We are very grateful to Doc, for generously providing detailed listings and photos. All from Doc, except in italics; additional info from ‡Chris Ridley, ‡Bill Pullen ©, Tom & Barbara Brown ©, ‡Audrey Smith, Gary Heywood-Everett and the Editors ©.

More entries welcome (& further details &/or contact details), subject to consent of the event's organisers - some may not want publicity.

For links to websites, see Doc's website: www.docrowe.org.uk

Dates believed to be correct, but some weekday dates seem to be changing towards weekends.

Detailed reports - and photos - are welcomed for our *FolkLife Traditions* pages; FT website is <https://folklife-traditions.weebly.com> Each FT includes a list for that issue, updated as appropriate.

All listings © Doc Rowe *except any in italics*. All photos © Doc Rowe unless otherwise credited
In italics & other Wales listings: see our FOLKLIFE WALES Directory, bywyd-gwerin.org.uk
LISTINGS UNDERLINED = see photos # Longtown Wassail photo on www.folklife.org.uk/herefs

JANUARY

Wassailing in many places in England West & Mid-West, some listed here

<u>Mari Lwyd</u>	different places - different days	S.E. Wales	before Christmas to New Year's Day
Wassailing	Combe in Teignhead	Devon	January
Wassailing	Churchstanton	Somerset	January
Mummer's Day	Padstow	Cornwall	1st January
Haxey Hood Game	Haxey	Lincs	6th Jan [Twelfth Night]
Bodmin Wassailing	Bodmin	Cornwall	6th January [Twelfth N.]
Twelfth Night Revels	Southwark	London	near 6th January
<u>Goathland Plough Stots</u>	Goathland	North Yorks	1st Sat after Plough Mon
Straw Bear Day	Whittlesea	Cams	Sat nr 6 Jan
<i>Hen Galan [old New Year], Calennig [New Yr gifts]</i>	Cwm Gwaun	Sir Benfro /Pemb	13 Ion/Jan
<u>Longtown Wassail #</u>	Longtown	Herefds	2020 was Sat 11th January
Apple Tree Wassailing	Whimble	Devon	17th Jan [Old Twelvy Night]
Wassailing	Carhampton	Somerset	17th Jan [Old 12th Night]
<i>Dydd Santes Dwynwen / St Dwynwen's Day</i>		Cymru/Wales	25 Ion/Jan
<u>Up-Helly-Aa</u>	Lerwick	Shetland	Last Tue in Jan
<u>Mari Lwyd</u>	different places - different days	S.E. Wales	before Christmas to New Year's Day

FEBRUARY, MARCH, INCLUDING SHROVE TUESDAY (28 FEB 2017), ASH WED. (DAY AFTER)

Carlows Charity	Woodbridge	Suffolk	2nd February
Cradle Rocking	Blidworth	Notts	Sunday near 2nd February
Chinese New Year	various	UK	2020: Saturday 25 January
Quit Rents Ceremony	Royal Courts of Justice	London	February
Trial Of Pyx	Goldsmiths Hall	London	February (and May)
Red Feather Day: Sir John Cass	Service Aldgate	London	Friday near 20th February
Westminster Greaze	Westminster School	London	Shrove Tuesday
Sedgefield Ball Game	Sedgefield	Co. Durham	Shrove Tuesday
Football	Alnwick	Northumberland	Shrove Tuesday
Football	Atherstone	Warks	Shrove Tuesday
Ashbourne Royal Football	Ashbourne	Derbys	Shrove Tuesday and Wednesday
Hurling the Silver Ball	St Columb Major	Cornwall	Shrove Tuesday and Saturday following

❖ Unique in being a Shrovetide football where the ball is hurled, not thrown. Hundreds of hurlers turn up, the two teams being the Townsmen and the Countrymen. Goals are about two miles apart, but a goal can also be scored by being carried over the parish boundary. There is an afternoon and an evening game. Youngsters get 'silver cocoa' and the silver ball goes round the pubs being submerged in beer to provide 'silver beer'. Based on information from © Chris Ridley.

Ref: *Hurling at St Columb, Ivan Rabey (Lodenek Press, Padstow: 1972).*

Cakes And Ale Ceremony	St Pauls	London	Ash Wednesday
Dame Elizabeth Marvyn Charity	Ufton Nervet	Berks	Mid Lent
<i>Dydd Gŵyl Dewi (dathliadau, digwyddiadau ysgol)</i>		Cymru	1 Mawrth /
<i>/ St David's Day (celebrations, school events)</i>		Wales	1 March
Kiplingcotes Derby	Market Weighton	Yorks	Third Thursday in March
Tichborne Dole	Tichborne	Hants	25th March

APRIL, and MAUNDY THURSDAY, PALM SUNDAY, GOOD FRIDAY, EASTER

Sir John Stow Quill Pen	St Andrew Undershaft	London	5th April or near
Palm Sunday Cakes	various (esp. Herefordshire)	Palm Sunday	
Henry Travice Charity	Leigh	Manchester	Maundy Thur
Skipping	Alciston	Sussex	Good Friday
Uppies And Doonies	Workington	Cumbria	GF/Tues & following Sat
Midgley Pace Egg Play	Calder Valley	Yorks	Good Friday
<i>Heptonstall Pace Egg</i>	<i>Heptonstall</i>	<i>West Yorks</i>	<i>Good Friday [Gary H-E]</i>
Widow's Bun Ceremony	Bow	London	Good Friday
Britannia Coconut Dancers	Bacup	Lancs	Easter Saturday
Brighouse Pace Egg Play	Brighouse	W. Yorks	Easter Saturday
Easter Parade	Battersea Park	London	Easter Sunday
Church Clipping	Radley	Oxon	Easter Sunday
Maypole Lowering	Barwick-in-Elmet	W Yorks	Easter every 3 years
Harness Horse Parade	Regents Park	London	Easter Monday
Egg Rolling	Preston	Lancs	Easter Monday
Orange Rolling	Dunstable Down	Beds	Easter Monday
Chulhurst Charity Dole	Biddenden	Kent	Easter Monday
Hare Pie Scramble & Bottle	Kicking Hallaton	Leics	Easter Mon
Tupenny Starvers	St Michaels	Bristol	Tuesday after Easter
Maidservants Charity	St Mary's Church House	Reading	Thursday after Easter
Hungerford Hocktide	Hungerford	Berks	2nd Tuesday after Easter
St Georges Court	Lichfield	Staffs	23rd April

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