



The Doc Rowe Collection

calendar customs, seasonal events, folk-singers, storytellers, events, lectures, pub sessions, ...

A documentary, and a successful crowdfunder to digitise Doc's pre-digital moving-image material. That material is now being digitised. Selected/curated material will be on line in due course. See pages 18-19.

Doc's photos & list of seasonal local celebrations - see pp19-20.



Granny Awards! Coincidentally, two contributors have songs from their grandmothers:

- **The Golden Glove**, by Rosie Upton (pp 10-11)
- **The Knocker Up**, by David Harley (pp 5-6)

*The lady was pleased when she heard him so bold
And she gave him her glove that was broidered with gold
She told him she'd picked it up whilst walking along
As she was out hunting with her dog and her gun*



A pal of mine once said to me will you wake me up at half past three
So I went by at half past one tapped at the window and said 'Oh John



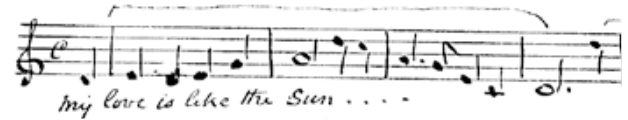
Jane Teare & Catherine Ann Lawson: two singers from Jurby, Isle of Man,
by Stephen Miller (8 tunes; pp 7-9)

The Curragh of Kildare

The Holy Well, by Charles Menteith (pp 4-5)



As it fell out on a ho - li - day,



My love is like the Sun ...

The ship is all laden, by Keith Gregson; additional tune by Johnny Handle (pp 12-13)

*One of Wearside's
oldest known songs*

*The ship is all laden, and ready for sea
The foy-boat is cummin', away let us be;
Come hoist up your topsails -we'll go without fail
The wind's west-nor-west and it blows a fresh gale*

*The skipper goes forward and there takes his stand,
Both growling and grumbling, and giving command,
Haul this rope, haul that rope, he doesn't know which
And when he has time -gives his breeches a hitch*

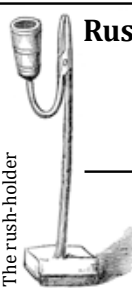
My Love's Gone, William Shepherd; by Verorica Lowe (p 3)



As I was a - - walk - ing down by the sea shore



Uppermill
rush-cart
in 1890



The rush-holder

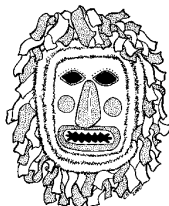
Rushes, by Roy & Lesley Adkins (pp 14-16)

Trac Cymru:

Folk Development for Wales (p 2)

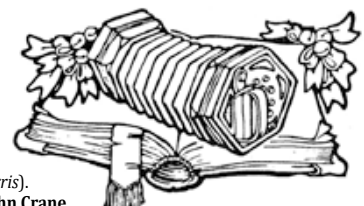


- **Folklife Societies & Researchers' news:** Access Folk's Small Project Grants, p11. Vic Gammon ~ Dave Harker's *Books on NE Music & Song* now online, Collectomania Conference, Traditional Song Forum, Vaughan Williams Library Lectures, Folklore Society, The Cornish National Music Archive, p17. • **Obituary:** Pete MacGregor, October 1942 to January 2024, p16.
- **Books:** Ballad Partners, p17. • **Recordings:** Blues, p13. • **Film:** King For A Day, p18.



Morris dancers © Annie Jones (Dave Jones, *The Roots Of Welsh Border Morris*).

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Folklife Organisations feature: Trac Cymru



After April 1st Trac Cymru will no longer receive their core operational funds from the Arts Council of Wales. This decision threatens to have a disastrous effect, not just for Trac Cymru but for anyone who is passionate about keeping Welsh traditional music alive.

There will be no organisation taking responsibility for training the new generations of folk musicians or for helping them make successful careers; no initiatives that support young people to create new songs for their communities, or find a community of musicians who share their love of our traditions.

In 2003 Trac Cymru sent ten young women to a folk camp in Sweden so that they could see for themselves the tremendous power of folk music to change lives. They are all now active musicians. Some are professional musicians touring the world. Some teach canu gwerin and clog dancing in their primary schools. Some just enjoy playing the fiddle with their friends. Each of them has brought on new generations of young Welsh musicians, who in turn are bringing our living heritage to the globe and more importantly to their villages, schools, chapels and homes.

Trac Cymru's work has reached over 188,000 people. Some of them have been audiences at **Tŷ Gwerin**, our groundbreaking partnership with Eisteddfod Genedlaethol; many of them as adults on our **Big Experiment Arbrawf Mawr (BEAM)** who now use their spare time to run their own folk workshops over the year. More recently Trac have worked with many young people in music workshop projects such as **Gwerin Gwallgo** and **Gwerin Iau**, which helped create our first Youth Folk Ensemble of Wales (AVANC) who are now a highly acclaimed independent folk band performing all around Wales and Europe in festivals such as Festival Interceltique de Lorient.

The Arts Council say they are planning to undertake a 'strategic intervention' in the future. But that is likely to result in some form of gap, maybe of years, before any organisation will be supported to do the scale of work Trac Cymru do now. They are hoping to be able to eventually offer more support for Welsh traditional music but the pandemic has taught us that many things don't regrow quickly, if they come back at all.

Trac Cymru are trying to approach this with positive determination, and remains committed to preserving and celebrating the rich cultural heritage of Wales. This includes working on externally funded projects, including the 3-year *Cân y Cymoedd* project. This will continue to be at the heart of their efforts.

However, their plan to reach into the new curriculum and make sure that every pupil in the country has the chance to discover Welsh folk songs is now under threat. Their plans to reach all the communities of Wales by having dedicated staff members working in local hubs have been knocked back indefinitely. Their online news service, newsletters and website could disappear. We could be back to the 1990s, when there were very few resources available to support Welsh traditional arts.

But you can help. Trac Cymru need you to now stand with them, support them, and be a part of their journey. Your help, in terms of donations, funding, and raising awareness, will be invaluable. <https://trac.cymru/en/donate/>

Trac Cymru extends their deepest thanks to each and every one of you who has supported them over the years. Your belief in their mission has been their driving force, and they are immensely grateful for your trust and encouragement. As they embark on this new chapter, they remain steadfast in their commitment to preserving the vibrant traditions and cultures of Wales.

Wales is called the Land of Song for a reason. Now is the time to raise your voices. Together, we can ensure that the cultural tapestry of Wales continues to thrive for generations to come.

Seren Owen-Hicks

☐ **Trac Cymru** Free online resources: <https://trac.cymru/en/learning-resources/> includes:

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

- **Tunes:** get playing videos, soundfiles, and dots. <https://trac.cymru/en/tunes/>

- **Gwerin Gwallgo**, a residential Folk Weekend for 11-18s [see also our **FESTIVALS & WORKSHOPS DIARY**, in **FOLKLIFE WEST** magazine]

See **trac** website, <https://trac.cymru>, for news, directory, listings, resources, and on Facebook, at facebook.com/traccymruwales, where you will find videos, details of gigs, etc.

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

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**My Love's Gone, sung by William 'Daddy' Shepherd, Winchcombe.**

As I was a - - walk - ing down by the sea shore
 Where the wind and the waves and the bill - - ows did roar,
 Where the wind and the waves and the wa - - ters run down
 I heard a shrill voice make a sor - - row - - ful sound,
 Cry - - ing, "Oh my love's gone who I does a - - dore.
 He's gone and I nev - er, no nev - er, shall see my love more."

2. "Oh why should I mourn for my true love who's slain
 While his body lies under the watery main?
 The shells of the oysters shall make my love's bed,
 And the shrimps of the sea shall swim over his head."
 Crying, "Oh my love's gone who I does adore.
 He's gone and I never, no never, shall see my love more."
3. As I was a-going to go on my way
 I heard this fair damsel so pleasant and gay.
 She'd thrown her fair body right into the deep
 And closed up her eyes in the water to sleep.
 Crying, "Oh my love's gone who I does adore.
 He's gone and I never, no never, shall see my love more"

Source: William Shepherd, aged 93, Winchcombe, 5th April 1908, collected by Percy Grainger.

© Gloucestershire Traditions

My Love's Gone, sung by William 'Daddy' Shepherd, from the glostrad.com collection

Recorded in Winchcombe Workhouse by Percy Grainger, 5th April 1908

The folk process is a wonderful thing. Examples of this song, My Love's Gone, are spread far and wide on both sides of the Atlantic. The form and verses are found in The Drowned Lovers in England, and I Never Will Marry, as sung by Dolly Parton, Joan Baez and others. Snippets of words and music change and memory has stored the outline of a song, but each singer claims it and takes ownership of evolving versions.

The song was sung by William 'Daddy' Shepherd on 5th April 1908, recorded by Percy Grainger on a visit to Winchcombe workhouse. Daddy Shepherd was 93 when he sang into Grainger's wax cylinder recording machine. This makes him one of the earliest born people whose voice we can still hear. It is mind boggling that we have songs in the voice of a man born the year of the Battle of Waterloo. It is also remarkable that a man of his advanced age could sing with such clarity.

It is the kind of spark of history that has made involvement with the conservation of our aural local heritage so rewarding, and such a privilege.

Veronica Lowe © March 2024

See <https://glostrad.com/my-loves-gone/> to hear this song and tune as collected and hear a version to sing, in various formats.

Gloucestershire Traditions - GlosTrad - is the one-stop website for songs and tunes collected in Gloucestershire. See <http://glostrad.com/>

Gloucestershire Traditions was set up by Carol Davies, the late Gwilym Davies, Stephen Gale, Charles Menteith, and Veronica Lowe.

Thanks to Veronica, who has kindly volunteered to send us contributions from the The GlosTrad archives.



The Holy Well by Charles Menteith

The following was sung by J Hancocks at Monnington, Herefordshire in October 1908 (1). Words in square brackets are from a chapbook printed in Birmingham about 1843 (2). They replace the words between stars. Apart from the absence of the 11th verse, Hancock's version differs only in details.

The Holy Well, J Hancocks, Monnington, 1908



1. As it fell out *upon a day*, [one May morning]
*On a bright *and a holy day*, [And] [holiday]
Sweet Jesus asked of his dear Mother
If He might go and play
2. "To play, to play sweet Jesus shall go
To play now get You gone,
And let me hear of no complaints
Tonight when You come home." [At night]
3. Sweet Jesus went down to yonder town
As far as the Holy Well,
And there did *He* see as fine children [-]
As any *town* can tell. [tongue]
4. He *bid* God bless *them* every one [said] [you]
And Christ *their* portion be. [your]
"Little children, shall I play with you?
And you shall play with Me."
5. But they jointly answered *Him* " No." [-]
They were lords' and ladies' sons,
And He, the meanest of them all,
Was born in an ox's stall.
6. Sweet Jesus turned Himself around,
And *neither did laugh nor smile*, [He neither laughed nor smiled]
But *the* tears came trickling from His eyes, [-]
As the rain falls from the skies. [Like water]
7. Sweet Jesus turned *Himself* around, [him]
To His *mother* home went He, [mother's dear]
He says, " I have been *down to* yonder town [And said] [in]
As far as you can see.
8. I have been down to yonder town
As far as the Holy Well,
And there did *see* as fine children [-] [I meet]
As any *town* can tell. [tongue]
9. I bid God bless them every one,
And *Christ* their bodies *hear* and see; [-] [Christ save]
'Little children, shall I play with you,
And you shall play with Me?'
10. But they *jointly* answered Me ' No,' [-]
For they were lords' and ladies' sons, [-]
And I, the meanest of them all,
Was born in an ox's stall."
11. [Though you are but a maiden's child,
Born in an ox's stall,
Thou art the Christ, the King of Heaven
And the Saviour of them all.]
12. "Sweet Jesus, go down to yonder town
As far as the Holy Well,
And take away those sinful souls
And dip them deep in Hell! "
13. "Nay, nay," sweet Jesus *smiled and* said, [mildly]
" Nay, nay, that must not be,
For there are too many sinful souls,
Crying out for the help of Me."
14. * Then *up and spoke* the angel Gabriel [O] [bespoke]
Upon *our* good St. Stephen, [one]
"Although *Thou art* but a maiden's child, [you are]
Thou art the King of Heaven." [you are]

The first 5 verses of the *Holy Well* tell the same tale as those in the *Bitter Withy*, though after that the two stories diverge. The *Holy Well* presents a forgiving, theologically acceptable image of Christ, unlike the revengful Christ of the *Bitter Withy*. The *Bitter Withy* was transmitted purely by word of mouth; in contrast the *Holy Well* was accepted by the churches. It was published in William Sandys' Christmas Carols, Ancient and Modern (1833) (3), as well as by Bramley and Stainer in their Christmas Carols (4). Sandys gives no tune, while Stainer's tune resembles that of the Copper Family's Month of May, Hancocks' tune resembles the one to which James Layton sang the Sally Twigs. Unlike Hancocks's dorian tune, many are in the major mode. As a fairly local example, I quote the following version from Armscote, Warks, sung by the unusually named gipsy, Mrs Reservoir Butler, in 1913, collected by CJ Sharp. (5)

The Holy Well, Mrs Butler, Armscote, 1913



1. As it fell out on a high holiday,
A high holiday so high,
Sweet Jesus he asked his own mother dear
Whether he should go to play.
2. To play, to play, my own dear son,
It's time that you are gone,
And don't let me hear no complaints of you,
At night when you do come home.



- | | |
|---|---|
| <p>3. You'll go back to the merry little town,
As far as the Holy Well
And there you'll see as fine chil-der-en
That ever any tongue can tell.</p> <p>4. They say that they were lords and ladies sons,
The mainest among them all,
While I was nothing but a mild Mary's child
Born down in an oxen's stall.</p> <p>5. If you were nothing but a mild Mary's child
Born down in an oxen's stall.
You shall be the ruler, the King of Heaven,
And ruler amongst them all.</p> | <p>6. Sweet Jesus he turned himself right round,
Never a laugh nor a smile.
But the tears they falled from Sweet Jesus' eyes
Like the water from the sky.</p> <p>7. Oh no, dear Mother, such a thing shall never be
And that you know full well.
There is too many a poor sinful souls
Crying out for the help of me.</p> <p>8. Oh, hell is dark and hell is dim
And hell is full of woe,
God grant it to any poor sinful souls
That is passed from sweet Jesus Christ.</p> |
|---|---|

Sandys states: "This and the three following are taken from popular broadside carols: the two first contain rather curious legends, of which one may have already been observed in the old carol for St. Stephen". Indeed, the *Holy Well* appears on a number of broadsides. The "standard broadside text" (6), as printed in London or Birmingham did not vary much, while Bramley's text, "traditional, Derbyshire", is particularly similar to the chapbook. The main differences are "And Christ their portion be." (v 9 line 2), the same as in verse 4, and "Upon a good set steven." (v 14 line 3), which, we are told, means "Appointed time". As we saw above, Hancocks' version is derived from this group.

The Manchester broadside text has been contaminated by the Seven Virgins. The first verse typically starts "Honour the leaves and the leaves of life/Upon this blest holiday," (7) before continuing with the usual story. The Seven Virgins concerns events around the crucifixion of Christ. It has nothing in common with the Holy Well, apart from these lines borrowed by a few versions of the latter song. On the other hand, the Holy Well and the Bitter Wither have much in common, which suggests they may be derived from a single earlier song.

Charles Menteth © March 2024

References

- (1) Ella M. Leather et al, Journal of the Folk-Song Society, June 1910, Vol. 4, No. 14 pp. 3- 51: Carols from Herefordshire <http://www.jstor.com/stable/4433939>
- (2) Quoted by B Harris Cowper, *The Apocryphal Gospels*, 1870, London & Edinburgh, Williams and Norgate, p XXXIX. <https://archive.org/details/TheApocryphalGospels/mode/2up>
- (3) Sandys, William, Christmas Carols Ancient And Modern, Including the Most Popular in the West of England, London, Richard Beckley, 1833, p 150
- (4) Bramley, HR & Stainer, J, Christmas Carols New and Old, London, Novello, 1880, p 136.
- (5) VWML: <https://www.vwml.org/record/CJS2/10/2866>: Journal of the Folk-Song Society 5 18 (1914) pp 5-7, <https://www.jstor.org/stable/4434000>
- (6) McCabe, Mary Diane (1980) A critical study of some traditional religious ballads, Durham theses, Durham University. <http://etheses.dur.ac.uk/7804/>
- (7) Howitt, William, *The Rural Life of England, Vol 2, p 214-15*, 1838, London, Longman et al. https://books.google.com/books/about/The_Rural_Life_of_England.html?id=D_QPAAAAAAAJ



A Song My Grandmother Taught Me: The Knocker Up, by David Harley

Back in the 1960s, when I first fell in love with folk music, it was almost obligatory for folk club performers to introduce a song as "a song I learned from my grandmother", though it was widely suspected, as someone (Steve Benbow, perhaps?) said at that time, that "most of those grandmothers live in the library at Cecil Sharp House."

As it happens, my grandmother, Ethel Parker, really had been a musician in her youth: I think her weapon of choice was the accordion or melodeon, but she hadn't owned or played one in many years when I knew her. Still, we did, for a while, play harmonica duets together, and she was certainly no beginner on that instrument, either. I don't remember what we actually played, but she did teach me a couple of songs, though I'm not able to reveal a shining example of a rediscovered major ballad, sadly. One was a version of the song usually known as *There Ain't No Bugs On Me* or *It Ain't Gonna Rain No More*.

The Knocker Up is probably older and is certainly more 'English' than that – not least in that, in the US, "being knocked up" has a meaning that has nothing to do with the story behind this song – though it may be used over here now since the 2007 film. Which reminds me of a notorious gaffe related by David Niven. He claimed (if I remember correctly) in *The Moon's A Balloon* to have fallen foul of "two nations separated by a common language" on a Transatlantic liner, when he offered to 'knock up' a female fellow passenger early in the morning. It's been suggested by some of his contemporaries, however, that he was not averse to exaggerating for comic effect (a sin I too have been known to commit) or even claiming that anecdotes concerning other people were about him, so who knows?

The Knocker Up, however, refers more sedately (if somewhat obliquely) to the times when an alarm clock would have been a luxury item. A "knocker up" would walk through the streets in the early morning tapping on workers' bedroom windows with a stick or even a peashooter, to ensure that the workers made it to the mill or the pit on time for their day's work. There are a number of serious, modern-ish songs that refer to this occupation, such as Mike Canavan's* *The Knocker Up Man* and the Ted Edwards song *Coal Hole Cavalry*.

Both those songs are mentioned in a Mudcat thread at <https://mudcat.org/thread.cfm?threadid=79341> (reading that thread, I note that Niven was not the only person to have been embarrassed by his ignorance of the American idiom).

Continues over page.

*As it happens, I knew Mike Canavan when I lived in Manchester for a while in the 1970s. He was, as I recall, a fine songwriter, but apart from his *Knocker Up Man*. I (mis)remember with some affection a song of his including a terse verse about the River Irk, which empties unobtrusively into the Irwell. Despite the verse's brevity, there's a line I can't remember, but the last one was to the effect of 'your leaping, bounding waters are in places six feet wide'. He did release an album called *Some Songs* on the Smile label that included *Knocker Up Man*, but I don't think the Irk song was on it.

**A Song My Grandmother Taught Me: The Knocker Up, by David Harley**

While I was writing this piece, I couldn't help wondering how the knocker up got up in time to perform his task, and that Mudcat thread includes a snippet that poses the same question. The Lancashire Mining Museum quotes a tongue-twister from that period that gives an answer of sorts, and the article also has plenty of other relevant information and illustrations.

We had a knocker-up, and our knocker-up had a knocker-up
And our knocker-up's knocker-up didn't knock our knocker up, up
So our knocker-up didn't knock us up 'cos he's not up.

<https://lancashireminingmuseum.org/2017/09/07/who-knocked-up-the-knocker-upper/>
Here's another informative article: <https://www.geriwalton.com/knocker-up/>

The song my grandmother remembered described a less formal arrangement, with deliberate comic effect.

A pal of mine once said to me
"Will you wake me up at half past three?"
So I went by at half past one,
Tapped on the window and said, "Oh, John,
I've just come round to tell you,
Just come round to tell you,
Just come round to tell you
You've two more hours to sleep."

Please excuse the rather random music notation. I'm not very music-literate at the best of times, and I haven't quite got to grips with the software I'm using yet.

Andantino

A pal of mine once said to me will you wake me up at half past three
So I went by at half past one tapped at the window and said 'Oh John

5
I've just come round to tell you just come round to tell you just come round

9
to tell you you've two more hours to sleep.'

The tune is very well known: variations and tunes to a similar metrical pattern have been used for sea songs, children's songs, rugby songs and much else under various titles including as *(So) Early In The Morning* or *Over The Hills And Far Away*. You can find lyrics under those titles in many places, including https://www.traditionalmusic.co.uk/irish-songs-ballads-lyrics/so_early_in_the_morning.htm.

Here's a stanza from that version that makes me wonder if Sydney Carter had a similar version in mind when he wrote *Lord Of The Dance*:

I'll dance when I rise in the morning light,
I'll dance all day and in the night
In the summer sun, on a winter's day,
I'll dance forever if you will play.

Here's a shorter version that apparently comes from the Clancy Brothers and Tommy Makem: https://tunearch.org/wiki/Annotation:So_Early_in_the_Morning

However, in folk clubs – the ones I've visited, anyway – the tune is probably best known as the song 'William Brown' or 'Keep That Wheel A-Turning', first published by the Independent Labour Party in 1927 with words by Arthur Hagg, with additional verses by Bill Keable. According to the version I first heard, William (Brown, that is) turned out so much product that the market slumped, the price fell, and William was sacked. A similar version can be found on Mudcat: <https://mudcat.org/@displaysong.cfm?SongID=3362> (that thread also includes a version of the same song that my Grandmother knew, along with some other fragments).

The later additions by Bill Keable tell us that the company became so profitable that it was sold to another company, and again, William was sacked. <https://oursubversivevoice.com/song/12320/>

The latter part of the tune is also used for the equally popular song from the North East *Oor Geordie's Lost His Penka*, associated with Jack Elliot of Birtley, among others (Roud 8244).

There's a version of the lyrics in the Digital Tradition collection here: <https://mudcat.org/@displaysong.cfm?SongID=2207>

A longer version of this article is available at <https://whealalice.com/2023/11/21/songs-my-grandmother-taught-me/>

David Harley © November 2023

David Harley is an author and sometime musician who sometimes fails to resist combining the two activities.

*Earishlioar Seihll Tradishoonagh is Folklife Traditions Journal in Manx (thanks to Culture Vannin for the translation)*

Jane Teare and Catherine Ann Lawson: two singers from Jurby, Isle of Man by Stephen Miller

JANE TEARE (1818–1902)

Jane Teare is one of the group of singers from Jurby in the Isle of Man who was photographed by the Rev. Frederick Stubbs, the incumbent of the parish. She was visited by the Gill brothers on 6 August 1895, and they recorded just the one tune from her, "A Virgin Unspotted". This is a well-known traditional Christmas carol, which appeared in *Christmas Carols New and Old*, first published in 1870 (and with subsequent editions thereafter). The 1891 census sees her living and farming at Ballasalla, a widow by the time of the 1881 census, with her two sons, John and William Teare, aged 34 and 28 years old. John worked on the farm, while William was a tailor. Sophia Kneale, 24, also a widow, lived there as a domestic servant.



"A Virgin Unspotted"

CAROL - "A Virgin unspotted" *from Mrs Teare - Ballasalla - July - Oct. 71
By W.H.G. 6 Aug 95* ❖

0.57

See C III. 7.

** Pitch uncertain something between B & C*

Last 8 bars repeated as chorus in quick time.



(typed below photo)

Mrs. Lawson of Jurby East
One of the singers from whom Dr. Clague and his associates
recorded folk-songs
(Photo by Rev. F. W. Stubbs, 1897)

CATHERINE A[NN] LAWSON (1839–1917)

Catherine Ann Lawson was another of the Jurby singers visited by the Gill brothers and again one who was photographed by the Rev. Frederick Stubbs. She was recorded on three occasions, once in 1895, on 3 August, and twice in 1898, on 11 and 13 October. In the 1891 census, she was a farmer's wife, aged 52, living at Kerrow Croie, with her husband, James (55), with their three children, John (25), Mary (19), and William (18). According to the 1881 census, they farmed eighteen acres. The 1901 census enumerates her as a Manx speaker and this is reflected in a number of the titles of the tunes collected by the Gills:

- (1) "Bock Kilkenny," ("The Kilkenny Geld") or "Inneen Kilkenny" ("The Kilkenny Women")
- (2) "Yn Colbagh Breck er Strap" ("The Speckled Heifer on a Strap")
- (3) "The Curragh of Kildare"
- (4) "The Prodigal [Son]"
- (5) "Sooree" ("Courting")
- (6) "Thurot [and Elliot]" (with English text)
- (7) [Untitled]

Continues over page



Jane Teare and Catherine Ann Lawson: two singers from Jurby, Isle of Man by Stephen Miller

Continues from previous page

MEEVEANAGH / MAR. 2024

EARISHLIOAR SEIHL TRADISHOONAGH / FOLKIFE TRADITIONS JOURNAL 75.

- (1) "Bock Kilkenny," ("The Kilkenny Geld") or "Inneen Kilkenny" ("The Kilkenny Women")

Song "Bock Kilkenny or Inneen Kilkenny" Taken down by W.H. Gill from Mrs Lawson, Kervu Croze, or Dallycherry, Jurby, East. 11 Oct 1898. 49

Mrs Lawson says this song is about going to Douglas with buttermilk. On the way the cart is capsized + the milk spilt.

- (2) "Yn Colbagh Breck er Sthrap" ("The Speckled Heifer on a Strap")

COLVACK BRECK (Chorus same) Taken down by W.H. Gill from Mrs Lawson, Kervu Croze, Jurby East. 11 Oct 1898. (copy 65)

(See post -)

- (3) "The Curragh of Kildare" (the song words below the tune have been enlarged)

SONG "The Curragh of Kildare" D. D. 13 Oct 1898.

My love is like the Sun
I repeat ad lib.

My love is like the Sun In the firmament It's the ~~starry~~ sun
That is always constant and true But yours is like the Moon
That wanders up and down Thinking every month that is new.

I'll put on my cap of black
With the fringe all round my neck
Gold rings on my fingers I will wear
And it's this'll undertake In my true love's sake
Tho' he rides in the Curragh of Kildare (? logue)

Cold winter is gone past, Pleasant summer comes at last
Small birds upon every green tree
The hearts of those are glad
White wine is very sad
In my true love is absent from me.



(4) "The Prodigal [Son]"

CAROL 'The Prodigal' Do Do.

(5) "Sooree" ('Courting')

SOOREE. (DURIAN) 6/8

Mr. Lawson, Kermowegon, July East
taken by W.H.G. 3 Apr 1895 (age 265)

(6) "Thurot [and Elliot]" (with English text)

THUROT English words. (M.M. Vol XXI p.76) Do Do.

♩ = 100

(7) [Untitled]

50

Taken from by W.H.Gill for
Mrs Lawson - Ballachury, July
13 Oct 1898.

Stephen Miller, RBV © March 2024

A dedicated researcher into Manx folklore, folksong, and folk dance, plus the figures and collectors involved with the Celtic revival, Stephen's extremely impressive work in Manx and Celtic Studies are shared freely online, in print and in person, and freely available to others on his **Chiolagh Books** website, <http://chiolaghbooks.com> RBV: winner of the annual Reih Bleeaney Vanannan award 2020, see <https://culturevannin.im>

Comments from musicians on these tunes would be most welcome.



Golden Gloves and the Squire of Tamworth (Roud 141 & Laws N20) by Rosie Upton

The Golden Glove is surely one of my favourite songs. Partly because it's a wonderful story, but more importantly for me, my own family history is associated with it. My grandmother **Ada Goodwin** sang it, and though she was born at a farmhouse in Buckland Hollow, near Ripley in Derbyshire, her mother, from whom she learnt it, came from Brailes in Warwickshire. The tune very similar to one collected by Cecil Sharp from Edwin Clay, singer and Morris Dancer (1833 – 1915), a contemporary and neighbour in Upper Brailes of my great grandmother Emma Bloxham (1836 – 1929). The Bloxham and Clay families worked in the local industries as weavers and agricultural labourers. Edwin's mother was a school mistress, and my great grandmother was a student teacher at Brailes Free School. Emma later moved to Derbyshire to marry her own farmer!

There is a splendid photograph of an elderly Edwin Clay being interviewed by Cecil Sharp taken in Brailes circa 1900, copyright to EFDSS.

The Golden Glove was one of the most popular Broadside in its day and spread throughout the land and beyond during the 19th century. Also known as **The Squire of Tamworth** in more recent years, or occasionally **Dog and Gun**. I suspect the popularity was because unlike so many ballads it has a happy ending and as such had a wide appeal. A narrative so different from the tough lives and deprivation of the labouring poor – the agricultural workers and cloth workers. Perhaps it offered some comfort or at least a break from the drudgery of daily life.

The story is completely improbable, pure fiction, but who doesn't like a fairy-tale romance? A woman promised to a wealthy and powerful man she clearly doesn't love and jilts him at the altar. She then cross-dresses as a hunter with a dog and gun in pursuit of the man she really loves. Eventually securing this handsome farmer for her husband whilst looking forward to an idealised portrayal of life as a farmer's wife. It has all the elements of the most romantic love stories. The very opposite of reality. Would they have lived happily ever-after? I'm not convinced. I'm also not convinced that it is based on a true story as I've occasionally heard some people claim.

The earliest known example of the text, according to the Notes to the Songs in *"The New Penguin Book of English Folk Songs"* edited by Steve Roud and Julia Bishop, is when Timothy Connor, an American prisoner of war in Forton Prison, Portsmouth, copied it as a "new song" into his songbook in 1777 - 79. The words he copied closely resemble the words collected from Sally Withington of Edmond, Shropshire in 1883 that she learnt as a girl in farm service 1820-30. Steve and Julia also confirm my own belief that any basis in fact, an event that allegedly happened in the reign of Elizabeth I, is "almost certainly a legend" (See pages 64, 65, 395 and 396 in *The New Penguin Book of English Folk Songs*.)

There are numerous excellent recordings of this song. Edith Fowke, the Canadian folklorist (1913 – 1996) made a field recording of Oliver John (O J) Abbott (1874 – 1962) from Quebec (though born in Enfield, England) singing Dog and Gun. One of 80 recordings she made of songs performed by him. She noted that "This popular English ballad was printed as a broadside in the United States in the early nineteenth century and spread across the continent. It has been collected in Newfoundland and Nova Scotia as well as in many parts of the States." O J Abbott can be heard singing it on Smithsonian Folkways *"Irish and British Songs from the Ottawa Valley"*.

The great Sheffield singer and farmer Frank Hinchliffe (1923 – 1995) can be heard singing it in a recording made at Frank's home in July 1976 by Mike Yates, Ruairidh and Alvina Greig on the Topic album *"In Sheffield Park - Traditional songs from South Yorkshire"*. Will Noble, another great Yorkshireman and fine singer, sings the version he learnt from Frank Hinchliffe.

Perhaps the two best known recorded versions are from Nic Jones on his album *"The Noah's Ark Trap"* and from Muckram Wakes, who collected it from George Fradley (1910 – 1985) of Sudbury, Derbyshire, and recorded it on their album *"Map of Derbyshire"*. The words of both are similar though the tunes differ. A recording of George Fradley singing The Squire of Tamworth can be heard on the Veteran album *"One of the Best - Songs from Derbyshire"*.

It should be noted that the words of most of the broadsides and collected versions are closely related, with barely any significant variation, and there is a similarity between the various collected tunes and those used by singers today. The text of the Golden Glove was clearly a popular one and became widely distributed as a penny broadside and printed and reprinted with only slight reworking by countless printers. These were obviously without any musical notation but since the broadside sellers promoted them by singing the verses on street corners and other public places the tunes became popular. Thus, by passing them on in this manner, it is no surprise that there is so little variation in the tunes. Indeed, the sellers frequently used tunes that were already well known. The texts have survived in written form and the tunes, except when subsequently published as manuscripts, have been passed down through the oral tradition. The tune used by my grandmother reminds me of the tune to Cushie Butterfield which was a popular Tyneside "folk" song from the 19th century written by Geordie Ridley in the Music Hall style so popular in its day. Could this have been a well-liked and already well-known tune used by some broadside pedlars to promote The Golden Glove?

The broadsides and chapbooks were produced by numerous different printers, indeed the majority of those working in the trade, including J. Catnach of London's Seven Dials, H. Disley of London St Giles, Swindell's of Manchester, and Harkness of Preston. The songs were later printed in manuscripts and a version included in Cecil Sharp's *Folksongs for Schools* which undoubtedly took The Golden Glove to an even wider audience.

A search of the Roud Index at The Vaughan Williams Memorial Library reveals numerous entries (approximately 500 results) collected from a widespread area including Cornwall, Derbyshire, Devon, Shropshire, Somerset, Wiltshire, Dorset, Hampshire, Sussex, Essex, London, Westmorland, Yorkshire, Glasgow, Edinburgh and further afield including from County Clare, Mississippi, the Southern Appalachians and Newfoundland. The collectors equally wide-ranging including Sabine Baring-Gould, Lucy Broadwood, Percy Grainger, George Gardiner, Anne Geddes Gilchrist, Gavin Greig, Henry Hammond, Maud Karpeles, Frank Kidson, Cecil Sharp, and Ralph Vaughan Williams. More recently Nick and Mally Dow collected versions in Fleetwood and Blackpool and a version from the Hammond and Gardiner Manuscripts is featured in Nick's *"Southern Songster - English Folk Songs from the Hammond and Gardiner Manuscripts"*. This includes a tune collected in Bath which is a variant of Villikins and Dinah. Notably the late folk singer and collector Gwilym Davies (1946 – 2022) collected a version in Staverton, Gloucestershire, from gypsy singer Danny Brazil in 1978 of which there is a recording on Musical Traditions *"The Brazil Family - Down by the Old Riverside"*.

Though the squire in most of the collected and printed versions is from Tamworth, clearly copied by one printer to another, there are a few where the squire comes from Falmoth (Falmouth?), Ipswich, London, Pemwith (Penwith?), near Plymouth, Portsmouth, Thomastown, Timber, Timney, Timworth, Tinmath (Teignmouth?), Tynemouth, the North Country and Yarmouth. Some of these are so clearly mondegreens where the name of the place is misheard and/or incorrectly written down.

The ballad continues to be as popular as ever and there are numerous singers performing it into the 21st century. We all like a happy ending!

Here the words to the Golden Glove as sung by my grandmother, and subsequently by me on my album *"Basket of Oysters"*. The words are very similar to most of the collected versions, and the tune closely resembles that as sung by Edwin Clay to Cecil Sharp.

**Golden Gloves and the Squire of Tamworth (Roud 141 & Laws N20) by Rosie Upton****The Golden Glove as sung by my grandmother, Ada Goodwin:**

*Of a wealthy young squire in Tamworth we hear
He courted a nobleman's daughter so fair
To marry this fine lady it was his intent
All friends and relations gave willing consent*

*The time was appointed for their wedding day
A young farmer chosen to give the bride away
As soon as the farmer this lady did spy
She inflamed his heart oh my love he did sigh*

*She turned from the squire but nothing she said
And instead of getting married she took to her bed
The thought of that young farmer ran sore in her mind
A way to secure him she quickly did find*

*Coat, waistcoat and britches she then did put on
And she went out hunting with her dog and her gun
She hunted around where the farmer did dwell
Because in her heart she did love him right well*

*And oft times she fired, but nothing she killed
Till at length that young farmer came into the field
And as to discourse with him it was her intent
With her dog and her gun up to meet him she went*

*I thought you had been at the wedding, she cried
To wait upon the squire and to give him his bride
Oh no said the farmer if truth I may tell
I can't give her away for I love her too well*

*The lady was pleased when she heard him so bold
And she gave him her glove that was broidered with gold
She told him she'd picked it up whilst walking along
As she was out hunting with her dog and her gun*

*The lady went home with a heart full of love
And she gave out a notice that she'd lost her glove
And whoever shall find it and bring it back to me
Whoever he is he my husband shall be*

*The farmer was pleased when he heard of the news
With a heart full of love to this fine lady he goes
Dear honoured lady its I have found your glove
Now won't you be so kind as to grant me your love*

*It is already granted and I'll be your bride
I love the sweet face of the farmer she cried
I'll be mistress of his dairy and a milking of the cow
Whilst my jolly brisk farmer goes whistling to plough*

*And when they were married she told of the fun
How she went out hunting with her dog and her gun
And now that I have caught you so fast in my snare
I'll love you forever I vow and declare*



Emma Bloxham of Brailes, Warwickshire following her marriage to tenant farmer Thomas Goodwin of Buckland Hollow, Derbyshire. © Rosie Upton 2024

Rosie Upton © March 2024**Acknowledgements and further reading:**

- Bodleian Library Broadside Ballads Online - University of Oxford.
- Vaughan Williams Memorial Library Online.
- The New Penguin Book of English Folk Songs edited by Steve Roud and Julia Bishop and published in association with EFDSS.
- Southern Songster - English Folk Songs from the Hammond and Gardiner Manuscripts. Selected by Nick Dow, musical annotation by Cohen Braithwaite-Kilcoyne and notes by Steve Gardham.
- Mainly Norfolk: English Folk and Other Good Music. Index of songs and tunes.

Folklife news: societies & organisations, and researchers**Access Folk: Call for Applicants**

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Access Folk is a University of Sheffield-based project led by folk singer and scholar **Prof. Fay Hield** that explores ways of increasing and diversifying participation in folk singing in England. Our **Small Project Grants** support people who are thinking about ways that folk singing can become more accessible to a wider range of people. But beyond thinking, awarding grants is one way of turning ideas into actions, testing out new strategies, and connecting people with related goals.

We're offering a rolling deadline for application submissions up until 31 May 2024. Our next round of applications are due on **29 March 2024**.

For more information and to apply, visit our website

<https://accessfolk.sites.sheffield.ac.uk/activities/action-research>



The Ship Is All Laden, by Keith Gregson

Keith Gregson reflects on recent discoveries made in relation to one of Wearside's oldest known songs

I. The ship is all laden, and ready for sea
The foy-boat is cummin', away let us be;
Come hoist up your topsails –we'll go without fail
The wind's west-nor-west and it blows a fresh gale

II. The skipper goes forward and there takes his stand,
Both growling and grumbling, and giving command,
Haul this rope, haul that rope, he doesn't know which
And when he has time –gives his breeches a hitch

III. The men are all groggy! We can't find a boy
Billy Wilson's too lazy to work for his foy;
A rope is fast here, and a rope is fast there –
The foy-boat's away –smash my wig if I care

IV. Such wrangling, such jangling, such cutting of ropes;
Such squalling, such bawling, such staving of boats;
Such cracking of bowsprits, such rattling of rails,
Such smashing of sterns, and such tearing of sails

V. Our owner comes down with his wig on one side;
He blows like a grampus to see such a tide;
Bowse, bowse, boys the capstan, hang me if haw care –
Haw'll hev her ta sea if she strikes on the bar

VI. He's fra the Low Quay; then he's at the pier-end;
Then into some yall- house to drink with a friend;
We'll leave him there drinking his bumbo of rum;
We are stuck in the Narrows – the tide it is dune

VII. The ship is safe moored, and all hands gone ashore,
To court all the pretty girls that they adore;
They dance with their sweethearts, and what not beside,
And if they think fit, they will court them next tide

Put *The Ship is all laden* into any search engine, and you will come up with references to an early 21st century recording made by Graeme Danby and the 'Lemingston' (Lemington!) Male Voice Choir. There is little else about this song online, and that is a pity as it is a song of considerable interest both to historians of Sunderland's River Wear and to those involved in researching traditional music and song. I believe it is still sung from time to time at folk clubs to a number of different tunes (there is no recommended tune in the earliest publications).

The words of the song appeared originally in Cuthbert Sharp's *Bishoprick Garland* (1834) with a footnote and later in an article written in a Sunderland newspaper in 1865. The 1865 article and others by the same author, retired master mariner Edward Robinson (1810-69), were reproduced in 2019 in a book put together by Sunderland historian Sharon Vincent (1). Robinson makes frequent reference to maritime related song and poetry throughout these articles. Clearly his family was a musical one as another of its members – also a retired sea-faring Edward Robinson – was to be a major resource for shanties when 20th century American collector James Madison Carpenter (1888-1983) visited Sunderland (2). References to song in the mid-19th century articles are nearly all accompanied by complete songs or extracts from songs. The author also indicates that his writings and therefore the songs are relevant to the coastal coal trade during the period immediately after the Napoleonic Wars (c 1820). The last chapter in Sharon Vincent's book, (which also forms the last article in the newspaper series), is based completely on the *Ship Is All Laden* and is littered with fascinating explanations and observations.

Robinson suggests that this 'famous old song' was written '70 years ago' (c1795) and was 'a lively portrait of the bustle and confusion of a ship going to sea'. Although the text is true to Sharp, Robinson notes that the song was known to Robinson's own father and had been written 'by some keelman or sailor of the town'. Both Robinson and his father knew the authors of 'several local songs' personally and could also recall 'snatches of songs'.

One major observation made by Robinson is that in the early/mid eighteenth century few ships were able to actually load in Sunderland harbour. This was especially true of the coal loads carried to the harbour by river for export under sail across the world. Even by the time in which *The Ship is All Laden* was set, the folks from South Shields were said to call the entrance to the River Wear a mere 'creek' and Robinson was wont to admit that tides inevitably caused 'confusion' and 'a great stir'. He felt the song reflected this confusion with two or three tides needed to clear the river on occasions and some of the loading of sea-going vessels having to take place out on the high seas. The middle verses certainly reflect this confusion - of which Robinson wrote 'there could be no better description'.

The last few verses describe admirably the usual outcome of such 'confusion'. Owner, fitters and pilots would run up and down the quayside when there was a chance of a suitable tide (3). If a vessel got stuck 'in the Narrows', however, that was it until the next suitable tide. In such a case, it was back to the pub for everyone and as hinted at in the final verse, to nefarious activities such as 'what not!' It is also possible to assume that the Billy Wilson mentioned in verse III was a real person and known to Robinson's father. According to the article writer, Wilson was 'a well-known, good natured fellow, but didn't like work, and didn't like those who did like it'.

Much of Sunderland and Wearside history is closely linked to the problems experienced by the Wear which was the hub of the local economy. The river mouth was ever tricky and much of its early stretch near the sea still cuts its way through high cliffs. The Tees was equally tricky and at one point had to have a navigable cut inserted. With relatively few problems on its journey from Tynemouth to Newcastle, it is hardly surprising that the Tyne has always had the upper hand when it comes to industry and trade. *The Ship is All Laden* still sings well and is at times amusing. It is also, as noted earlier, an invaluable source for a variety of historical researchers.

**Tune Notes**

I came across *The Ship is All Laden* unaware that both Johnny Handle and possibly Benny Graham had put tunes to its words. For some reason the beautiful Irish traditional tune *Slane* (used for the hymn *Lord of All Hopefulness*) kept drifting through my head as I read the words. Some may feel that the tune needs to be more strident but I sense a gentle humour behind the words which may render this tune suitable. Johnny has kindly agreed to my attaching his own tune to the article.

Tune: Slane – ‘Lord of All Hopefulness’**Tune for The Ship Is All Laden by © Johnny Handle**

Keith Gregson © March 2024

Endnotes

- (1) Sharon Vincent (ed), *Recollections of the Coal Trade – From the Chronicles of a 19th Century Sunderland Sea Captain* (Sunderland: Private, 2019), pp158 -60 for quotations.
- (2) <https://www.vwml.org/archives-catalogue/JMC>; <https://www.abdn.ac.uk/elphinstone/carpenter/>
- (3) Coal fitters were important and often prosperous men who saw to the filling of vessels. Ship brokers did a similar job – usually with general cargoes.

The following publications may also be of interest

- The Bishoprick Garland, or a Collection of Legends, Songs & Ballads etc. Belonging to the County of Durham – Cuthbert Sharp(e) (London: Nichols and Baldwin and Craddock 1834)
- Gregson, Keith. 2004. "Sharp, Sir Cuthbert (1781–1849)". *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*. Oxford: University Press. [<http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/25207>]

publications &**recordings announced**

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Gef Lucena [F]

SAYDISC



Rushes, by Roy & Lesley Adkins

Several folk songs mention rushes, such as 'Green Grow the Rushes, O' and 'The Bunch of Rushes', because for centuries rushes were essential, especially for covering floors. An early instance is recorded for the late 13th century, when William, son of William of Aylesbury, held land by providing services to the king, which included 'finding for the King, when he should come to Alesbury in Summer ... Grass or Rushes to strew his Chamber'. (1) From hovels to palaces, rushes were scattered over earthen floors, sometimes mixed with fragrant herbs and flowers. Most people freely gathered rushes each year in order to replace the filthy, stinking ones in their homes, though rushes could also be strewn over the old layers. Their use continued long after floors were boarded, flagged or tiled. (2)

Rushes in churches were particularly important, as they provided a warmer and less harsh surface for kneeling and standing during long services, especially when there was no seating and the nave floor was hard, beaten earth. Payments for rushes appear in churchwardens' accounts, such as in 1604 for St Michael's church at Kirkham in Lancashire: 'Rushes to strew the church cost this year 9s. 6d.' At St Martin's church in Leicester, the accounts for 1641-2 show that 2 shillings and 6 pence were spent on rushes at Whitsuntide, and at the Church of St Nicholas in Durham the 1667-8 accounts note: 'For rashes [rushes] at Whit. 1667, 3s.' and later 'For a 18 burthen of rushes att midsummer last, '68 [1668], 4s. 6d.' Even when benches and pews were installed and flagstones laid, rushes were still needed, though their use gradually ceased. (3)

In 1861 a resident of Saddleworth in the West Riding of Yorkshire wrote to *Notes and Queries*:

'This custom of gathering rushes is very old, and dates its origin from times when such luxuries as carpeted pews, with cushions and curtains, hot water or gas pipes, were not known in our country churches. In those days, at the approach of winter, the young people collected the rushes and took them to the parish church, and covered the floor with them to keep warm the feet of the good Christians, whom the cold winter's wind, and the long dreary walk over the snow-covered Yorkshire moors, could not keep from attending matins or even song.' (4)

His local church was St Chad's at Saddleworth, which the architect George Shaw mentioned in a talk in 1870: 'The last time rushes were put in the church was in 1821, and my father was churchwarden. Bishop Law, then Bishop of Chester, came on horseback ... to visit the church, and my father was sent for, and I went with him.' (5) The bishop was angry about the rushes, claiming that the church was a stable. Afterwards, the floor was partly flagged and partly boarded, with no more rushes used, but a few years later the entire church was rebuilt.

Carrying rushes to the church ('rush-bearing') developed into an annual ceremony, quite often in the summer and close to the anniversary of the consecration of the church. Payments are recorded in churchwardens' accounts for removing the old rushes, as at St Chad's church, Rochdale, in 1642: 'Paid for getting out Rishes and sweeping church 05s. 01d.' and at St Peter's in Burnley, Lancashire, in 1760-1: 'To cleansing church at Rushbearing 1s 0d'. The old rushes might be used as bedding for cattle. (6)

Writing in the early 18th century, John Lucas, Master of St John's Charity School at Leeds, recounted the rush-bearing ceremony at the church of St Oswald in Warton, Lancashire, where he grew up. It occurred in early August, and he was pleased that the Sunday before was no longer spent dancing and drinking to excess, but that the inhabitants and visitors went instead to church and enjoyed sober cheer at home. The actual rush-bearing was on the Monday:

'They cut hard rushes from the marsh which they make up into long bundles and then dress them in fine linen, ribbons, silk, flowers &c; afterwards the young women take the burdens upon their heads and begin the procession (precedence being always given to the Churchwardens bundle) which is attended with a great multitude of people with musick, drums, ringing the bells and all other demonstrations of joy they are able to express.' (7)

The rushes were delivered to the church, and even though it was not May, celebrations took place round the maypole:

'When they arrive at the church they go in at the West end (the only publick use that ever I saw that door put to) and, setting down their bundles in the church, they strip them of their ornaments leaving crowns or garlands placed over the cancelli [lattice-work chancel screen]. Then they return to the town and chearfully partake of a plentiful collation provided for that purpose, and spend the rest of the day and evening in dancing about a May Pole adorned with greens, flowers &c or else in some other convenient place.' (8)

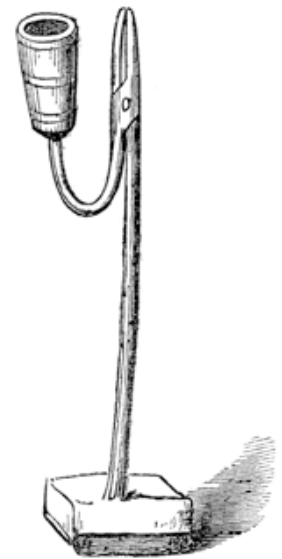
Rushes were carried to many churches in one or more highly decorated carts. In 1846 the Victorian poet Elijah Ridings left a description in 'A Village Festival-A Lancashire Wakes; or Rush-Bearing, Thirty-Five Years Ago':

*Behold the rush-cart and the throng
Of lads and lasses pass along;
Now, view the nimble morris-dancers,
The blithe, fantastic, antic prancers,—
Bedeck'd in gaudiest profusion,
With ribbons in a sweet confusion.*

Later in the poem, the rush-cart was unloaded at the church:

*And now the merry wakes are o'er;
The rushes on the chapel-floor
Are spread, in time for winter's cold,
To warm the feet of young and old;
When simple hearts the sacred lays
Chaunt to our great Creator's praise.* (9)

Apart from the annual rush-bearing, rushes might also be replaced on special occasions, such as at Christmas or for significant weddings, but with the introduction of pews and the paving and tiling of floors, the use of rushes died out. (10)



THE RUSH-HOLDER.

Rushlight holder and candlestick (from *The Book of Days*, vol. 1, 1863, p.506)



UPPERMILL RUSHCART.

The rush-cart at Uppermill, Saddleworth, in 1890 (from Burton 1891, p.82)



RUSH-BEARING.

Rush-bearing (from *The Book of Days*, vol. 1, 1863, p.506)

When earthen floors in people's homes were replaced by flagstones, tiles and timber, mats were generally preferred, but rushes continued to be used for various domestic purposes, such as twisting into ropes, mats, chair seats and most of all for lighting. The main source of lighting after dark was the hearth fire, perhaps supplemented by candles, though they were expensive and needed to be purchased from candle makers (chandlers). Candles had been taxed since 1709, and it was illegal to make candles at home, so candle moulds were hidden. This tax was only repealed in 1831. Gilbert White, a clergyman and naturalist, pointed out in a letter of November 1775 how cheap rushlights could be made:

'The proper species of rush for this purpose seems to be the juncus conglomeratus, or common soft rush, which is to be found in most moist pastures, by the sides of streams, and under hedges. These rushes are in best condition in the height of summer; but may be gathered so as to serve the purpose well, quite on to autumn. It would be needless to add that the largest and longest are best. Decayed labourers, women, and children, make it their business to procure and prepare them.' (11)



THE RUSH-CART.

The rush-cart (from Alfred Burton 1891 *Rush-Bearing*, p.41)

Continues over page



Rushes, by Roy & Lesley Adkins

Continued from previous page

The process of making rushlights then began:

'As soon as they are cut they must be flung into water, and kept there; for otherwise they will dry and shrink, and the peel will not run. At first a person would find it no easy matter to divest a rush of its peel or rind, so as to leave one regular, narrow, even rib from top to bottom that may support the pith: but this, like other feats, soon becomes familiar even to children.' (12)

It was important to keep a narrow strip of the outer peel, because the pith was too fragile to support itself. Once peeled, the rushes were bleached and dried: 'they must lie out on the grass to be bleached, and take the dew for some nights, and afterwards be dried in the sun'. At this stage, they were ready to be drawn through hot fat or grease:

'The careful wife of an industrious Hampshire labourer obtains all her fat for nothing; for she saves the scummings of her bacon pot for this use; and if the grease abounds with salt, she causes the salt to precipitate to the bottom, by setting the scummings in a warm oven. Where hogs are not much in use [and so bacon fat less common], and especially by the sea-side, the coarser animal oils will come very cheap. A pound of common grease may be procured for four pence; and about six pounds of grease will dip a pound of rushes.' (13)

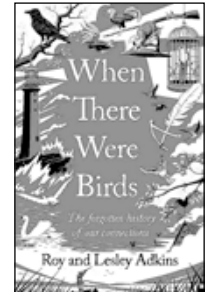
White reckoned rushlights gave a good clear light, though he was not so keen when tallow was used: 'Watch-lights (coated with tallow), it is true, shed a dismal one [light], "darkness visible."' He also conducted experiments to determine how long rushlights burned: 'A good rush, which measured in length two feet four inches and a half ... burned only three minutes short of an hour: and a rush still of greater length has been known to burn one hour and a quarter.' (14) He failed to mention some of the disadvantages. They actually produced a poor light and needed to be burned at an angle of roughly 45 degrees in a holder, a simple clamp made at home or by the local blacksmith. At its most basic, a cleft stick was used. Rushlights dripped fat everywhere as they were burned at an angle, and although they could be burned at both ends simultaneously, this resulted in twice the mess and half the burning time. His estimate of their burning time was optimistic, since most rushlights lasted barely 30 minutes. They also needed constant trimming, and worst of all were the dreadful smell, black smoke and smuts. In hard times it was not even possible to make rushlights, as there was insufficient fat and grease, and so candles had to be bought.

Roy and Lesley Adkins © March 2024

Roy and Lesley Adkins are authors of books on naval and social history, including *Jack Tar* and *Eavesdropping on Jane Austen's England*. Their latest book is *When There Were Birds: the forgotten history of our connections*, published by Little, Brown (in hardback, e-book, audiobook and now in paperback). See www.adkinshistory.com.

References

- 1 Thomas Blount 1784 *Fragmenta Antiquitatis; or, Antient Tenures of Land and Jocular Customs of some Manors* (York), pp.123-4.
- 2 Alfred Burton 1891 *Rush-Bearing: An Account of the old custom of strewing rushes; carrying rushes to church; the rush-cart; garlands in churches; morris-dancers; the wakes; the rush* (Manchester), pp.1-12.
- 3 William Andrews 1890 *Curiosities of the Church: Studies of Curious Customs, Services and Records* (London), p.55; J. Charles Cox 1913 *Churchwardens' Accounts from the fourteenth century to the close of the seventeenth century* (London), pp.243-5; Thomas North (ed.) 1884 *The Accounts of the Churchwardens of St. Martin's, Leicester 1489-1844* (Leicester), p.193; Surtees Society (vol. 84) 1888 *Churchwardens' Accounts of Pitlington and Other Parishes in the Diocese of Durham from A.D. 1580 to 1700* (Durham, London & Edinburgh), p.225.
- 4 *Notes and Queries* 12 (2nd series), 1861, p.230.
- 5 Shaw's talk is in Joseph Bradbury 1871 *Saddleworth Sketches* (Oldham, Manchester and London), pp.253-9.
- 6 Burton 1891, pp.17, 19, 79; Nicholas Orme 2021 *Going to Church in Medieval England* (London), p.100.
- 7 See pp.160 and 165 in W.O. Roper 1889 'The Missing History of Warton, by John Lucas' *Transactions of the Historic Society of Lancashire and Cheshire* 38 (new series 2, for 1886), pp.159-69.
- 8 Roper 1889, p.165.
- 9 See pp.152 and 155 of Elijah Ridings 1846 'The Village Festival-A Lancashire Wakes; Or Rush-Bearing, Thirty-Five Years Ago' in *The Odd Fellows' Quarterly Magazine* 9 (July 1846), pp.150-5; Burton 1891, pp.25, 39-88.
- 10 Orme 2021, pp.99-100.
- 11 Gilbert White 1837 *The Natural History and Antiquities of Selborne by the Rev. Gilbert White, M.A. with the Naturalist's Calendar and Miscellaneous Observations from his papers* (London), p.291. The letter was to Daines Barrington, an antiquary and naturalist. For rushlights, see also Roy & Lesley Adkins 2013 *Eavesdropping on Jane Austen's England* (London), pp.98-101; David Eveleigh 2003 *Candle Lighting* (Princes Risborough), pp.5-6, 10; and Burton 1891, pp.173-7.
- 12 White 1837, p.291.
- 13 White 1837, pp.291-2.
- 14 White 1837, p.292.



Obituary: Pete MacGregor, October 1942 to January 2024



Pete MacGregor, October 1942 to January 2024, was involved in folk music throughout his life as a performer, folk club organiser and sound-desk man. He will be remembered for his fine singing and sensitive guitar accompaniments as well as his lively wit. His powerful tenor voice had a dramatic resonance and natural warmth.

He was born during the war in Dorking, Surrey, in his maternal grandparents' house in Rosehill, who by coincidence were friends of Ralph Vaughan Williams. Pete, whose father came from the Isle of Lewis, always thought of himself as Scottish, and it was at school in Scotland that he grew to love the great Scottish ballads and began singing them whilst at Edinburgh University in the early 1960s. Jimmy MacBeath and Jean Redpath were both influential in his style of song.

He moved first to London, and then to the West Country where he was part of a successful trio, Chanticleer, performing songs from the English tradition with his first wife Mary MacGregor and Dave Galloway, who had an impressive bass voice. Pete ran Bath Traditional Folk Club at The Hat and Feather, first with Mary, and subsequently with Rosie Upton. The club closed in the late 1970s following a move to Bradford on Avon, where they opened Boafolk Club, and from there becoming an integral part of the Village Pump iconic folk club and festival based in Trowbridge. As well as singing traditional songs, his own songs recorded on "When Years Were Long" combined humour with political and social comment.

A stalwart of the folk scene from the virtual beginnings of the revival, and a man whose musical abilities and knowledge of the tradition were beyond question.



Folklife news: societies & organisations, and researchers

From VIC GAMMON: DAVE HARKER'S BOOKS on NORTH EAST MUSIC AND SONG now ONLINE.

Six volumes of Dave Harker's books on North East music and song, published since 2012 and richly illustrated and contextualised, are now available online. You can read and refer to them online or download them as pdfs or other forms of electronic documents. The books are:

- **Gannin' to Blaydon Races: The Life and Times of George Ridley** (2012) <https://archive.org/details/ridley-2012/page/183/mode/2up>
- **Cat-Gut Jim the Fiddler: Ned Corvan's Life and Songs** (2017) <https://archive.org/details/cat-gut-jim-corvan-2017>
- **The Gallowgate Lad: Joe Wilson's Life and Songs** (2017) <https://archive.org/details/gallowgate-lad-wilson-2017-copy>
- **Billy Purvis: The First Professional Geordie** (2018) <https://archive.org/details/purvis-2018>
- **Tyneside Song From Blind Willie to Bobby Nunn** (2019) <https://archive.org/details/tyneside-song-blind-willie-to-nunn-2019>
- **The Northern Minstrels: From Richard Whirlepipyn to James Allan** (2020) <https://archive.org/details/northern-minstrels-2020>

Harker's book, *Fakesong* (1985) ... which covers the period from c. 1700 to the 1980s, is both historical and critical and has given rise to substantial debate, has been available for some time from the same source. <https://archive.org/details/FakesongD.Harker/page/n7/mode/2up>

I am pleased to have helped place some of Dave Harker's books on popular song and music in North East England in the nineteenth century and before on the Internet Archive. Taken together, I think the books constitute the most extensive body of information on local song in its historical context in England that has ever been made. I am pleased this will now be available for those interested and for future generations. I believe hard copies of some of the books may still be available and anyone interested should contact Dave Harker at d1harker@btinternet.com. All were produced in limited editions and are likely to become rarities.

Vic Gammon, Hexham, January 2024.

Phones: 07905 032012 (mobile) 01434 600526 (home). Email vic.gammon@icloud.com

Publications on line: <https://newcastle.academia.edu/VicGammon>

Access 'Vic Gammon Audio Archive Guide' at URL above or via <https://archive.org/details/vic-gammon-audio-archive-guide>

COLLECTOMANIA CONFERENCE. Sat. 20th July – Sun. 21st July: Collectomania! Folk Song and Music Collectors and their Worlds.

At Cecil Sharp House, 2 Regents Park Road, London NW1 7AY.

For well over two hundred years, and for a variety of reasons, 'folk' song and music enthusiasts have ventured into the field and become collectors - gatherers of the material which has greatly enhanced our understanding of the vernacular culture of the past. But their activities have come under increased scrutiny in recent years, and it is time for a wide-ranging re-assessment of the collectors' lives and works. This major two-day conference will investigate collectors as individuals and networks, their achievements and failures, motives, methods, strengths and weaknesses, social and political context, and the underlying ethos of collecting itself.

The focus will be on collecting in Britain and Ireland, but we would also be pleased to hear from researchers in countries with strong historical folk cultural ties to these islands. The conference will be in-person, but papers from delegates who cannot attend can be pre-recorded and played on the day. **Proposals for papers (20 minutes) and other presentations are invited.**

Organised jointly by the **English Folk Dance & Song Society (EFDSS)** & the **Traditional Song Forum (TSF)**; with the support of the **Irish Traditional Music Archive (ITMA)**, the **Welsh Folk Song Society**, & the **Elphinstone Institute (Aberdeen)**. **Contact: Steve Roud (steveroud@gmail.com)**

TSF

THE TRADITIONAL SONG FORUM (TSF) [F]

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. Videos of all the TSF Online meetings are available on the TSF YouTube channel - <https://youtu.be/tv-Or2wGhKQ>

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

Dates: • 6 April, **Traditional Song in Eastern England**

(in person, all day), Stowmarket.

- 14 April, **TSF Online 62**, Speakers tbc
- 19-20 July, **Collectomania** (in person two-day conference on the collectors and collecting), London

All enquiries to [F] **Martin Graebe** (TSF Secretary),

martin.graebe@btinternet.com

[F] VAUGHAN WILLIAMS LIBRARY: 'LIBRARY LECTURES' on Zoom.

☉ Tue. 12 March, 7.30pm. Adèle Commins: *Shaping and controlling tradition: Charles Villiers Stanford's contributions to the preservation and reworking of folk melodies.*

☉ Tue. 16 April, 7.30pm. Nigel Tallis: *Seeing music: George Scharf and the street musicians of London.* Artist who depicted the music and dance of Georgian London's streets, and may hint at the origins of some of English folk culture's traditional beasts.

Details: www.vwml.org/vwml-news/7006-library-lectures-2024

[F] OUR NEXT DEADLINE: 1 June for 1 JULY 2024 JOURNAL.

For more details see folklife-traditions.uk or email sam@folklife.uk



THE FOLKLORE SOCIETY [F]

Office address: The Folklore Society, 50 Fitzroy Street, London W1T 5BT, 0203 915 3034. Our 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 FLS members.

Forthcoming Folklore Society Events:

☉ Tue. 26 March, **Fact, Fiction and Folklore in Film and Television** online talk by Dr Diane A. Rodgers (Sheffield Hallam University), 6pm-7.30pm. **£6 (FLS Members £4).**

Folklore brings us tales of witches, ghosts and ghouls, myths and legends. How these are communicated in the media can influence our beliefs, actions and understanding of the world, but it doesn't mean they are literally true. Folklore is a core element of folk horror often overlooked. This talk explores the conventions of what we now think of as film and television folk horror, and discusses folk horror as part of a broader cultural context arising from 1970s popular culture and its continued impact on filmmakers today.

Details on www.folklore-society.com

THE CORNISH NATIONAL MUSIC ARCHIVE is a fantastic resource for anyone wanting to hear and play traditional tunes and songs from Cornwall. It can be accessed on YouTube [www.youtube.com/channel/UC-FQd0apFJSPoE6AAwt2vaw], although a new website is currently being built (<https://cornishnationalmusicarchive.co.uk>). There is a vast library of performances from Tea Treats to pipe music, including music that goes back to medieval days such as the Rescorla Snail Creep. Snail Creeps were popular in the clay country and involved a procession of people walking behind a variety of instruments, eventually forming a close spiral. One is still performed every year in July at the Rescorla Festival. **Lamorna Spry**

[F] Kernow/Cornwall: Kesskriker/Correspondent for *Folklife West*

publications & recordings announced up to 200 words per publication welcome

Publishing Co-Op 'The Ballad Partners' goes from strength to strength



The Ballad Partners, the not-for-profit folk publishing company founded in 2018, has had another successful year.

Books published in 2023 included *Thirsty Work and Other Legacies of Folk Song* and, to celebrate the 150th anniversary of his birth, *Ralph Vaughan Williams and Folk: 150th Birthday Essays*. And most recently the imprint's first full-length biography - *Cecil Sharp and the Quest for Folk Song and Dance: A New Biography*, by David Sutcliffe. The book represents the first full treatment for over 50 years of the life and work of Sharp, the most prolific and outspoken of Victorian and Edwardian folk collectors.

The Ballad Partners is a cooperative venture, founded with investment from interested individuals and utilising the invaluable professional expertise of experienced editors David Atkinson and Steve Roud. Under their guidance conference proceedings and other material on folk song, music, dance, custom and related subjects are published, always with the aims of helping raise awareness and encouraging the study of the folk arts through books that are both very readable and affordable.

More exciting books are currently in the pipeline for 2024, so watch this space - or keep an eye on

The Ballad Partners website for more news and book sales: <https://www.theballadpartners.co.uk/publications>

Sue Allan

**FILM: KING FOR A DAY: a documentary by Dr Barbara Santi about Padstow's spectacular May Day Obby Oss tradition.**

Inspirational story of indigenous Britain following a marginalized community at the heart of one of Europe's oldest folk customs. Padstow's "sexy, savage springtime rite", known as the Obby Oss, is an ancient, ritualistic celebration welcoming the summer on May 1st.

Tensions between tradition and progress in a rapidly changing world punctuate the importance of cultural identity and the relevance of folk customs in our globalised society. A cinematic journey interweaving audio-visual archive spanning 150 years. Will this be the last generation to tease the 'Old Oss' from her stable to welcome the Summer?

King for a Day is a story about friendship, hope, celebration and unity. For the first time, we see the significance of May Day through local eyes. "The film signals the need for wider, overdue conversations about what we truly value in the face of the relentless onslaught of capitalism. The film returns the custom to the terms in which folk traditions have historically been understood: as a dynamic, multi-layered act of identity confirmation but also as a political act, where, for a brief moment, the tables are turned - sometimes literally." William Fowler, BFI National Archive and co-founder of The Flipside at BFI Southbank.



www.awen.org.uk/
Vimeo on Demand <https://vimeo.com/ondemand/kingforadayder>
Barbara Santi Documentary Director | Creative Producer.

**THE DOC ROWE COLLECTION: a documentary, and a crowdfunder to digitise Doc's pre-digital moving-image material. So, then. This morning, 17 November 2023, we reached the end of an exhaustingly brilliant 28-day crowdfunding campaign.**

In that time, we have successfully raised over £58,000 to help digitise all of the audio-visual footage* shot by "Britain's Greatest Living Folklorist", David 'Doc' Rowe: that includes calendar customs, seasonal events, folk-singers, storytellers, events, lectures, pub sessions, and so much more.

Two days after launching, we hit the first of our informal targets (£9k), then passed the next (£17k) just in time for Hallowe'en. On 4 November, ahead of Bonfire Night, we hit our main funding target of £25k, meaning we knew that, in conjunction with awen productions cic's lottery funding, we could definitely digitise all of Doc's wondrous footage of vernacular seasonal events stretching back decades.

And with two weeks to go before the end of the campaign, we had a new and very ambitious plan...

Could we raise enough to digitise all of the film and video that Doc's ever recorded?

By 9 November we got to our first stretch goal of £39k ensuring all Doc's VHS footage was safe, then £43k on 13 November also guaranteed all his C-VHS footage. And this morning, in the final minutes of the campaign, we made it past a frankly astonishing £58k - meaning all of Doc's Mini-DV footage will join the digitised collection. Phew!

Everything. He. Has. Ever. Filmed. *

The real work starts here, and we have already begun the process of digitising, marking-up and cataloguing, and soon co-directors Rob & Tim will begin trawling through all 1,500 hours of footage, selecting material to use in the film.

The team behind the campaign are still recovering from it all, to be honest! But we owe quite a lot of thank-yous.

A big thank-you to all those who shared the campaign with your friends, family, colleagues, musicians, dancers, green men, osses, beasts, fools and more. A few of the influential people who lent their voices to help get the message out were Alice Fisher, Elizabeth Alker, Mathew Baynton, Billy Bragg, Eliza & Martin Carthy, Bridget Christie, Rob Cowen, Tom Cox, Mackenzie Crook, Jeremy Deller, Neil Gaiman, Robin Ince, Keir-La Janisse, Phill Jupitus, Andrew Kötting, Sam Lee, Benjamin Myers, Maxine Peake, and Martin Simpson. A big thank-you also, to those who donated rewards for us to share with backers, including Alan Moore, Robert MacFarlane, Johnny Flynn, Mat Osman, Stephen Ellcock, Boss Morris/Alex Merry, and Folklore Tapes (plus a few of you whose rewards we simply couldn't include in time - but thank you too!)

An absolutely massive thank you to the over 1000 (!) people and organisations who supported the campaign with your money, especially in this time when we know so many people have so many other calls on their budget.

An enormous and incalculable thank-you to all the people and communities who have carried, maintained, and updated so many of these customs and traditions for decades, riding out one revival or another, and coming out year after year.

And above all, we all owe an enormous debt of thanks to The Doc himself. He has maintained, often unsupported, this unique and irreplaceable archive himself for many decades - sometimes ensuring the archive was safe and housed when he himself wasn't. The legacy he has built and continues to build constitutes the most extraordinary record of mainland working-class Britain in the second half of the 20th century that we may ever have seen.

Cheers from - Rob Curry, Tim Plester, Jo Breeze, Simon Costin, John McMahon, Stephanie Besford, Ben Edge, Barbara Santi, Sophie Parkes-Nield, Anna Fc Smith & Neil Fox.

**(prior to switching to digital recording techniques)*

And please note that donations are still being accepted at <https://www.crowdfunder.co.uk/p/docrowe> although we're sadly no longer able to offer any of our campaign rewards.

Rob Curry and Tim Plester

UPDATE: now reached £60,760, see Crowdfunder webpage above - Eds.

As ever, we wish to record our appreciation of Doc allowing us to use his photos and lists of seasonal local celebrations for over 20 years. For every issue we have added: The Doc Rowe Collection Support Group has been set up to support the Archive of Doc's unique collection. See: www.docrowe.org.uk and click on "contact"; please support them.



Continued from previous page THE DOC ROWE COLLECTION.

DOC ROWE WRITES:

The media - radio tv and newspapers have implied that everything is being digitised and being removed to somewhere else etc, etc. This explains exactly where it is. It is only the moving image material that is being digitised. Selected /curated material will be on line in due course.

The text below is also on Doc's Facebook page:

<https://www.facebook.com/docrowearchive>

Forgive my apparent lack of response to the recent incredible, staggering, overwhelming crowdfunding scheme created by Rob Curry, Tim Plester and Jo Breeze. I have to say that their initial suggestion was met with a simple appreciation of their interest but I was slightly bemused. That changed dramatically after the second day, to being completely overwhelmed and honoured by the reaction. It was initially inspired by a lottery funded project in Cornwall, that local film-maker, Barbara Santi, had set up before the pandemic, for me to digitise all of my Cornish audio and visual material to return to the local community. Barbara and I are now into the second year of that undertaking and that is also going well.

Rob and Tim have also been shadowing me in that period for their proposed film and in order to use some of my earlier moving-image material it needed digitising. Hence the crowdfunding scheme, principally to process the footage of calendar events. Such has been the support and generosity of everyone - both here and abroad - it rapidly exceeded the requisite fund of £25,000. We were equally stunned when the total established in excess of £59,000 and is still being added to. It does mean that we can now look to include the music, song and dance footage, as well. This I know, many supporters will have been hoping for, so eternal thanks to everyone.

As you might appreciate, I am finding it extremely challenging to find the appropriate and adequate words just to simply say how indebted, humbled and privileged I feel to have received such confidence in the collection and the support from all over. I am aware of some friends and colleagues who have donated and value their involvement and friendship. I haven't yet been able to access the complete list of contributors but assure you, I will be attempting to thank you all personally where possible. Notably, I am grateful that people do recognise and appreciate my over-riding responsibility to keep the material as safe as possible. This, for those who over the years have allowed me to document their performances, words, actions and beliefs for their future descendants and researchers.

Personally, it has been a whirlwind of media interest over the weeks. As many of you know, following a piece in a weekend 'Observer' I was rolled-out on Monday's 'BBC Today' programme, this was followed a few days later by a wider-ranging piece on CBC Radio, Canada. 'Yorkshire Post' then did a full page piece [embarrassing me and wasting half-a-page of text, by showing me in close-up looking at a spool of tape!] Finally, last Friday a two-minute clip at the end of ITN News was shown as a "good-news-item" for the weekend.

Inevitably, I've had to experience undesirable usage of words such as 'weird', 'eccentric' and 'quirky' and sadly, as they were all recorded in advance, brevity in final edited broadcasts. A few essential statements were not included and erroneous captions declared, for instance, that "all the archive" has been "saved" or "digitised" however, there still remain audio-recordings in multiple formats; thousands of transparencies; black and white negatives; cuttings and manuscripts which also need digitising and do represent an equal volume of material. Since the year 1999, I have been recording digitally and this is all discretely stored on forty-two hard drives. Yes, I know, yet another worry! There was also a leading newspaper headline stating "the campaign hopes to give it a proper home" - Oh, how we wish.

Finally, one major omission is the fact that none of this could have been achievable but for the astonishing Archive Support Group set up by Johnny Adams, almost a quarter-of-a-century ago, for individuals to pledge the equivalent of the price of a pint per month which goes towards the rental of correctly conditioned storage. Again, I don't know the names of most of these good people but feel they should be acknowledged here and applauded for their continued financial support. One hopes that this current media interest in the collection plus the demonstration of this substantial assistance and private funding will provoke major awareness and offer of permanent housing.

Doc Rowe

Padstow May Day



SEASONAL LOCAL CELEBRATIONS ❖ A LIST & PHOTOS © Doc Rowe

ALL LISTINGS & PHOTOS © DOC ROWE, unless stated otherwise.

MARCH

Dydd Gŵyl Dewi (dathliadau, digwyddiadau ysgol)	Cymru	1 Mawrth /	*Gol.
/ St David's Day (celebrations, school events)	Wales	1 March	* Ed.
Kiplingcotes Derby	Market Weighton	Yorks	3rd 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 Travece 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
Heptonstall Pace Egg	Heptonstall	West Yorks	Good Friday
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
Chulkhurst 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

MAY, & WHIT & ASCENSIONTIDE [A/tide is 40 days after Easter]

Well Dressing	various	Derbyshire	Ascensiontide - Sept
May-Pole Raising	Barwick In Elmet	Yorks	Whit/May
Padstow May Day	Padstow	Cornwall	1st May
Minehead Hobby Horse	Minehead	Somerset	1st-3rd May
Jack In The Green	Hastings	Sussex	May Bank Holiday wk'end
Cadi Ha' [Summer Kate] street dance	Holywell	Flintshire	Early May *Eds
Well Dressing	Malvern	Worcs	May BH weekend *Eds
Randwick Cheese-Rolling	Randwick	Glos	1st Sun in May
Randwick Wap	Randwick	Glos	Sat after Cheese-rolling * Audrey Smith †
Knutsford Royal May Day	Knutsford	Cheshire	1st Saturday in May
Ickwell Green May Day	Ickwell	Beds	Saturday / Monday
Helston Flora Dance	Helston	Cornwall	8th May
Abbotsbury Garland Day	Abbotsbury	Dorset	13th May
Etwell Well Dressing	Etwell	Derbys	2nd week in May
May Festival	Hayes Common	Kent	2nd Saturday in May
Dunting The Freeholder	Newbiggin by the Sea	Northumberland	Wed near 18th May
Cyclists Memorial Service	Meriden	West Midlands	Sun near to 21st May
Mayoring Day/Hot Pennies	Rye	E. Sussex	23rd May
Blessing The Sea	Hastings	E. Sussex	End of May
Castleton Gala Day	Castleton	Derbys	29th May
Grovely Rights	Wishford Magna	Wilts	29th May
Founders Day	Chelsea Royal Hospital	London	29th May
Arbor Tree	Aston on Clun	Salops	29th May

CONTINUES OVER PAGE



our Folklife Traditions Directory is on www.folklife-traditions.uk

A LIST & PHOTOS © Doc Rowe

All listings & photos © Doc Rowe, unless stated otherwise.

We are very grateful to Doc, for generously providing detailed listings and photos.

Additional info from †Chris Ridley, †Bill Pullen, Tom ‡ & Barbara Brown @, †Audrey Smith, Gary Heywood-Everett, and the Editors.

We welcome more listings, also further details, contact details, photos, 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 weekend dates seem to be changing towards weekends.

Detailed reports - and photos - are welcomed.

Gŵyl Ifan: Raising the Summer Pole. June
© Cwmni Dawns Werin Caerdydd



The Burry Man, South Queensferry, Lothian
2nd Fri. in Aug.



Abbots Bromley Horn Dance, Staffs.
Mon after 1st Sun after 4th Sept



Pearlies Harvest Festival, 2nd Sun in Oct., ©
2012 Carole Jolly (Pearly Queen of Crystal Palace), & Secretary of the LPKQ Society [‡]



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

MAY, & WHIT & ASCENSIONTIDE, continued [A/tide is 40 days after Easter]

Bampton Morris Dancing	Bampton	Oxon	Spring Bank Holiday
Headington Quarry Morris	Headington	Oxon	Spring Bank Holiday
Hunting The Earl Of Rone	Combe Martin	N Devon	Spring Bank Holiday
Cheese Rolling	Cooper's Hill, Birdlip	Glos	Spring Bank Holiday
Maypole Raising	Barwick-in-Elmet	W. Yorks	Spring BH every 3 yrs: next 2025
Dicing For Maids Money	Guildford	Surrey	Mid-May [was late Jan]
Dovers Games	Chipping Campden	Glos	Friday after Bank Holiday
Scuttlebrook Wake	Chipping Campden	Glos	Sat. after Bank Holiday
Planting the Penny Hedge	Whitby	Yorks	Ascension Eve
Beating The Bounds	Tower Of London	London	Ascension Day every 3yrs: 2023
Bisley Well Dressing	Bisley	Glos	Ascens. Day * Audrey Smith †
Wicken Love Feast	Wicken	Northants	Ascension Day
Well Dressing	Tissington	Derbys	Ascension Day
St Mary Redcliffe Rush Sunday	St Mary Redcliffe	Bristol	Whit Sunday
Bread & Cheese Throwing	St Briavels	Glos	Whit Sunday
Dicing For Bibles	St Ives	Camb	Whit Monday

JUNE

Thaxted Morris Festival	Thaxted	Essex	June / July
Blessing the Boats	Whitby	N. Yorks	June
Appleby Fair	Appleby	Cumbria	2nd week June
Border Riding	Hawick	Borders	Fri after 2nd Mon in June
Gŵyl Ifan: Codi'r Pawl Haf		Caerdydd	Mehefin / *Gol.
/St John's Day Festival: Raising the Summer Pole		Cardiff	June *Ed
Election of Mayor of Ock Street	Abingdon	Berks	Saturday near 19th June
Selkirk Ridings	Selkirk	Borders	3rd week in month
Midsummer Fires	various	Cornwall	23rd June
Youlgreave Well Dressing	Youlgreave	Derbys	Saturday near 24th June
Tideswell Well Dressing	Tideswell	Derbys	Saturday near 24th June
Winstar Wakes	Winstar	Derbys	Sat following Sun after 24 Jun
Cakes And Ale Ceremony	Bury St Edmunds	Suffolk	Last Thursday in June
Rushbearing	Warcup	Cumbria	28th June
Walking Day	Warrington	Cheshire	Friday near 30th June

JULY

Horse Fair	Seamer	Yorks	July
Kilburn Feast - Mock Mayor & Mayoress	Kilburn	Yorks	July
Rushbearing	Gt. Musgrave & Ambleside	Cumbria	1st Saturday in July
Grand Wardmote of Woodmen of Arden	Meridan	Warks	July/August
Orange Parades	various	N. Ireland	12th July
Vintners Street Sweeping to St James Garlickhythe church		London	2nd Wed July
Holsworthy Pretty Maids	Holsworthy	Devon	2nd Wednesday in July
John Knill Ceremony	St Ives	Cornwall	25 July (every 5 yrs). Next 2026
Honiton Fair	Honiton	Devon	Tu. before Wed. after 19th Jul
Italian Festival	Clerkenwell	London	3rd Sunday in July
Swan Upping	The Thames	various	Usually 3rd week in July
Doggets Coat and Badge Race	London Bridge to Chelsea	London	Late July
Eisteddfod Genedlaethol / National Eisteddfod		Pontypridd	3-10 Aug 2024 ⁹ ⁹ varies every year

AUGUST

Gooseberry Contest	Egton Bridge	N. Yorks	1st Tuesday in August
Rose Queen Ceremony	Little Beck	N. Yorks	1st Tuesday in August
Feast of St Wilfrid	Ripon	N. Yorks	1st Saturday in August
Knighthood of Old Green	Southampton	Hants	1st full week in August
Rushbearing	Grasmere	Cumbria	Saturday near 5th August
The Burry Man	South Queensferry	Lothian	2nd Friday in August
Burning The Bartle	West Witton	Yorks	Saturday near 24th August
Coracle Race	Cilgerran	Pembs	Mid-Aug, date tba * Eds
Notting Hill Carnival	Notting Hill	London	Bank Holiday Sat to Mon
Football in the river	Bourton-on-the-Water	Glos	Bank Holiday Mon * Bill Pullen †
Eyam Plague Sunday	Eyam	Derbys	Last Sunday in August

SEPTEMBER

St Giles Fair	Oxford	Oxford	Mon+Tue of 1st full week in Sept
Abbots Bromley Horn Dance	Abbots Bromley	Staffs	Mon after 1st Sun after 4th Sept
Sheriff's Ride	Lichfield	Staffs	Saturday nr 8th Sept.
Widcombe Fair	Widcombe	Devon	2nd Tuesday in September
Church Clipping	Painswick	Glos	Sunday nearest 19th Sept
Bluecoat March	City of London	London	21st September or near
LPQS [‡] Costermongers Harvest Festival Parade Service		London	Last Sun Sept

OCTOBER [‡] London Pearly Kings & Queens Society [§] Original Pearly Kings & Queens Association

Nottingham Goose Fair	Nottingham	Notts	Last 3 days of 1st week in Oct
Billingsgate Harvest Festival	Billingsgate	London	1st Sunday in October
Pearlies Harvest Festival [§]	St Martins in the Field	London	1st Sunday in October
Bellringers' Feast	Twyford, nr Winchester	Hants	7th October
Pearlies Harvest Festival [‡]	St Paul's Church, Covent Garden, London		2nd Sun in Oct [LPKG]
Goozey Vair	Tavistock	Devon	2nd Wednesday in Oct
Court Leet	Clifton, York	N. York	October
Bampton Pony Fair	Bampton	Exmoor	Last Thursday in October
Punkie Night	Hinton St George	Somerset	Last Thursday in October
Quit Rents Ceremony	Royal Courts of Justice	London	Late October
Antrobus Soulcakers	Antrobus	Cheshire	31st October and on
Trick Or Treat	various	UK	31st October



All events subject to change, please check first.

