

Alternative final verses:

And did Bird receive a pension, or was he to his friends restored?
No, his mouldering bones lie buried on Lake Erie's distant shore;
He's arrested for deserting from the brig *Niagaree*;
"Dearest mother, read this letter, 'tis the last you'll hear from me."

Dark and dismal was the morning Bird was ordered out to die;
Where's the heart that would not pity or for him would heave a sigh?
See him kneel upon his coffin; sure, his death can do no good;
Spare him! Hark! Oh God, they've shot him, see his bosom stream with blood.

Farewell, Bird, farewell forever; home nor friends you'll see no more;
Better far that you had perished 'mid the battle's awful roar;
Bird will ever be remembered, aye, unto this present day;
Oh, what harm can e'er befall them who engage in war or fray?

Singing the Child Ballads

Rosaleen Gregory

In this column Rosaleen Gregory continues her journey through the Child ballads in her own repertoire, and calls for readers' submissions of alternative versions that they sing, or of other ballads in the Child canon that she does not perform. This time we cover Child Nos. 53-68.

Rosaleen writes:

Child # 53 "Young Beichan" ("Lord Bateman")

My last item from the first volume of Child ballads. I took this version from *Songs of England, Ireland and Scotland (A Bonnie Bunch of Roses)*, edited by Dan Milner and Paul Kaplan (New York: Oak Publications, 1983). Milner and Kaplan say that the text is a collation. The tune is adapted from that given by Frank Kidson in *Journal of the Folk-Song Society*, Volume 1, no. 5 (1904), p. 240. Kidson actually gives two slightly different versions of the melody that he says he noted himself "from the singing of two ladies, one learning her song in Shropshire, the other near Nottingham." He does not give the ladies' names. I sing this unaccompanied.

Child # 54 "The Cherry Tree Carol"

The tune and some of the verses of my version come from the *Joan Baez Songbook* (New York: Ryerson Music Publishers, Inc., 1964). Two sets of optional guitar chords are provided there, and I have included one of them. I have added the last five verses, which further round out the story, from William Sandys' *Christmas Carols, Ancient and Modern, including the most popular in the West of England, and the airs to which they are sung* (London: Richard Beckley, 1833). I sometimes sing this in the key of D.

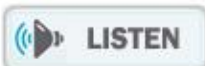
Child # 62 "Fair Annie"

Another unaccompanied favourite from *A Bonnie Bunch of Roses*, where the source is said to be the English revival singer Frankie Armstrong. Apparently the text is a composite, as collated by Frankie. However, the version of this ballad that I associate with her singing is not the same. Maybe Frankie has performed different versions at different times, or maybe this one actually derives from another source mentioned by Milner and Kaplan, Ewan MacColl's recording on *Blood and Roses*. Does anyone know for sure?

Child # 68 "Young Hunting"

This is very similar to the version titled "Love Henry" that Moira Cameron sings on her CD *Lilies Among the Bushes* (1997), where she says her source is Hedy West. Mine is actually a made-in-Canada version collected by Helen Creighton and Doreen Senior from Catherine Gallagher, the wife of the lighthouse keeper at Chebucto Head, near Dartmouth, Nova Scotia. It is included in Creighton and Senior's *Traditional Songs from Nova Scotia* (Toronto: Ryerson Press, 1950). I sing it unaccompanied.

Lord Bateman



www.canfolkmusic.ca/songs/issue40_1/Lord_Bateman.mp3

Lord Bateman was a no - ble Lord, a
no - ble Lord of high de - gree, He lived un - eas - y and
dis - con - tent - ed, some for - eign coun - try for to see.

Lord Bateman was a noble Lord,
A noble Lord of high degree,
He lived uneasy and discontented,
Some foreign country for to see.

He sailed east and he sailed westward,
He sailed till he came to the Turkish shore;
The Turk he caught him and sadly used him
Until his life he would give o'er.

The Turk he had an only daughter,
The fairest creature e'er my eyes did see.
She stole the keys to her father's prison
And vowed Lord Bateman she would go see.

"Have you got gold? Have you got silver?
Have you got lands of high degree?
What would you give to the fair young lady
That out of prison would set you free?"

"I've got gold and I've got silver,
Half Northumberland belongs to me,
I'll give it all to the fair young lady
That out of prison would set me free!"

She took him to her father's hall,
And gave to him the best of wine,
And every health she drank unto him,
Said, "I wish, Lord Bateman, you were mine."

"For seven years I'll make a vow, love,
For seven years and I'll keep it strong,
If you will wed no other woman
Then I will wed with no other man."

She took him to her father's harbour
And gave to him a ship of fame.
"Farewell, farewell, my dear Lord Bateman,
I'm afraid I ne'er shall see you again."

When seven years were gone and past
And fourteen days well known to me,

She packed up all her gayest clothing
And swore Lord Bateman she'd go see.

When she came to Lord Bateman's castle
So boldly she did ring the bell.
"Who's there? Who's there?" cried the proud young
porter,
"Who's there, now come unto me tell."

"Oh is this Lord Bateman's castle?
And is his Lordship here within?"
"Oh yes, oh yes," cried the proud young porter,
"He's just taken his new bride in."

"Then tell him to send me a slice of bread
And a bottle of his very best wine,
And not to forget the fair young lady
That did release him when close confined."

Away, away went this proud young porter,
Away, away and away went he,
Until he came to Lord Bateman's chamber,
Then down on bended knees fell he.

"What news, what news, my proud young porter?
What news, what news have you brought to me?"
"Oh, there is the fairest of all young ladies
That ever my two eyes did see."

"She has got rings on every finger
And round the one she has got three;
There's as much gold hangs around her middle
As would buy all Northumberland for thee."

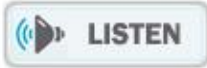
Lord Bateman flew into a passion,
He broke his sword in splinters three,
Saying, "I would give all my father's riches
If that Sophia has crossed the sea."

Then up and spoke the young bride's mother,
Who was never known to speak so free,
"You'll not forget my only daughter,

This very day has wedded thee.”
 “I own I made a bride of your daughter,
 She’s neither the better nor the worst for me;

She came to me with a horse and saddle,
 She may go home with a coach and three.”

The Cherry Tree Carol



www.canfolkmusic.ca/songs/issue40_1/The_Cherry_Tree.mp3

When Jos - eph was an old man, An
 old man was he, He mar - ried Vir - gin
 Mar - y, the queen of Ga - li - lee, He
 marr - ied Vir - gin Mar - y, the queen of Ga - li
 - lee.....

When Joseph was an old man, an old man was he,
 He married Virgin Mary, the queen of Galilee,
 He married Virgin Mary, the queen of Galilee.

Joseph and Mary walked through an orchard green,
 There were berries and cherries as thick as might be
 seen,
 There were berries and cherries as thick as might be
 seen.

And Mary spoke to Joseph, so meek and so mild,
 “Joseph, gather me some cherries, for I am with child,
 Joseph gather me some cherries, for I am with child.”

And Joseph flew in anger, in anger flew he,
 “Let the father of the baby gather cherries for thee,
 Let the father of the baby gather cherries for thee.”

Then up spoke baby Jesus from in Mary’s womb,
 “Bend down the tallest tree that my mother might have
 some,
 Bend down the tallest tree that my mother might have
 some.”

And bent down the tallest branch ‘til it touched
 Mary’s hand,

Cried she, “Oh, look thou, Joseph, I have cherries by
 command,
 Cried she, “Oh, look thou, Joseph, I have cherries by
 command.”

O then bespoke Joseph, “I have done Mary wrong,
 But cheer up, my dearest, and be not cast down,
 But cheer up, my dearest, and be not cast down.”

Then Mary plucked a cherry as red as the blood,
 Then Mary went homeward, all with her heavy load,
 Then Mary went homeward, all with her heavy load.

Then Mary took her baby and set him on her knee,
 Saying, “My dear son, tell me, what this world will be?”
 Saying, “My dear son, tell me, what this world will be?”

“Oh, I shall be as dead as the stones in the wall,
 And the stones in the street shall mourn for me all,
 And the stones in the street shall mourn for me all.”

“Upon Easter Day, mother, my uprising shall be,
 O the sun and the moon shall both rise with me,
 O the sun and the moon shall both rise with me.”

Fair Annie



LISTEN

www.canfolkmusic.ca/songs/issue40_1/Fair_Annie.mp3

It's nar - row, nar - row make your bed, and
learn to lie a - lone, For I'm go - ing o - ver the
sea, fair An - nie, a fine bride to bring home.

“It’s narrow, narrow make your bed, and learn to lie alone,
For I’m going over the sea, fair Annie, a fine bride to bring home.
With her I’ll get both gold and gear, with you I n’er got none,
I took you as a waif woman, I’ll leave you as the same.”

“But who will bake my bridal bread, who’ll brew my bridal ale,
And who will welcome my brisk bride, that I bring o’er the dale?”
“It’s I will bake your bridal bread, and I’ll brew your bridal ale,
And I will welcome your brisk bride, that you bring o’er the dale.”

“But she that welcomes my brisk bride must go like a maiden fair,
And she must lace her middle so neat and braid her yellow hair,”
“But how can I go maiden-like when maiden I am none?
For I have borne seven sons by thee and am with child again.”

She’s taken her young son in her arms, another in her hand,
And she is up to the highest tower, to see him come to land.
“Come up, come up, my eldest son, and look o’er yon sea strand,
And see your father’s new-come bride, before she comes to land.”

“Come down, come down, my mother dear, come from the castle wall,
I fear if long that you stand there you’ll let yourself down fall.”
And she got down and further down, her love’s fine ship to see,
And the top mast and the main mast they shone like silver free.

And she’s gone down and further down the bride’s ship to behold,
And the top mast and the main mast they shone like burning gold.
She took her seven sons in her hand, and O she did not fail,
She met Lord Thomas and his bride as they came o’er the dale.

“You’re welcome to your house, Lord Thomas, you’re welcome to your land,
You’re welcome with your fair lady that you lead by the hand.
You’re welcome to your halls, lady, you’re welcome to your bowers,
You’re welcome to your home, lady, for all that’s here is yours.”

“I thank thee, Annie, I thank thee Annie, so dearly I thank thee,
You’re the likest to my sister, Annie, that ever I did see.
There came a knight from over the sea and stole my sister away,
O shame on him and his company and the land where’er he stay.”

And aye she served the long tables with white bread and white wine,
And aye she drank the wan water to hold her colour fine.

And aye she served the long tables with white bread and with brown,
And aye she turned her round about so fast the tears fell down.

When bells were rung and mass was sung and all were bound for bed,
Lord Thomas and his new-come bride to their chamber they were led.
She took her harp all in her hands to harp those two to sleep,
And as she harped and as she sang full sorely she did weep.

“If my seven sons were seven young rats running on the castle wall,
And I were a grey cat myself, I soon should worry them all.
If my seven sons were seven young hares running on yon lily lea,
And I were a greyhound myself soon worried they should be.”

“My gown is on,” said the new-come bride, “My shoes are on my feet,
And I will to fair Annie’s chamber and see what makes her greet.”
“What ails, what ails thee, fair Annie, that you make such a moan?
Have your wine barrels cast their girds or is your white bread gone?”

“O who was your father, Annie, and who was your mother?
And had you any sisters, Annie, and had you any brother?”
“King Easter is my father dear, the queen my mother was,
John Armstrong from the western lands, my eldest brother is.”

“If King Easter is your father dear, then also is he mine,
And it shall not be for lack of gold that you your love shall tyne.
For I have seven ships of my own, a-loaded to the brim,
And I will give them all to you and four to your eldest son,
And I will thank all the powers in heaven that I go a maiden home.”

Young Hunting



www.canfolkmusic.ca/songs/issue40_1/Young_Hunting.mp3

The la - dy stood in her bo - wer door, In her
bow - er door stood she. She thought she heard a
bri - dle ring, Which filled her heart with glee, glee, Which
filled he heart with glee.

The lady stood in her bower door,
In her bower door stood she,
She thought she heard a bridle ring,
Which filled her heart with glee, glee,
Which filled her heart with glee.

“Will you alight, fair lord?” she said,
“And stay with me this night?
I’ll give you bed, I’ll give you board,
Charcoal and candle light, light,
Charcoal and candle light.”

“I’ll not alight, fair lady,” he said,
“And stay with you alone,
For I have a far better bride than you
To enjoy when I go home, home,
To enjoy when I go home.”

Leaning over his saddle girth
To kiss her ruby lips,
She had a penknife in her hand,
She wounded him full deep, deep,
She wounded him full deep.

“Why wounds’t me, fair lady?” he said,
“Why wounds’t me full sore?
There’s not a lord in fair Scotland
Loves thee, false lady, more, more,
Loves thee, false lady, more.”

“Oh, can you ride, fair lord,” she said,
Can you ride under the moon?
For there’s a doctor in yonder town
Can cure your mortal wound, wound,
Can cure your mortal wound.”

“I cannot ride, false lady,” he said,
“I cannot ride under the moon,
And there’s not a doctor in all of the world
Can cure, but God alone, alone,
Can cure but God alone.”

She called up her waiting maids,
Three hours before t’was day,
Saying, “There’s a dead man in my room,
I wish he was away, away,
I wish he was away.”

Some took him by the golden hair,
Some took him by the feet,
They threw him in a deep, deep well,
Full thirty fathoms deep, deep,
Full thirty fathoms deep.

Then up and flew a little bird
And sat upon a tree,
Saying, “Go home, go home, you false lady,
And pay your maids their fee, fee,
And pay your maids their fee.”

“Come down, come down, you pretty bird,
And sit upon my knee,
For I have a golden cage at home,
I will bestow on thee, thee,
I will bestow on thee.”

“I will not come down,” said the little bird,
“Or sit upon your knee,
For you’ll take my sweet life away,
Like the lord that loved thee, thee,
Like the lord that loved thee.”

“If I had a bow all in my hand,
And an arrow to a string,
I’d shoot you through the very heart
Amongst the leaves so green, green,
Amongst the leaves so green.”

“And if you had a bow all in your hand,
And arrow to a string,
I would take to flight, away I’d fly,
And never more be seen, seen,
And never more be seen.”

