

New England Traditions in Folk Music

by *Sandy Paton*

The English-speaking population of the northeastern United States arrived in three major stages. First were the English, who came to this country in the seventeenth century to escape religious persecution; from their initial settlements in Massachusetts, these early colonists quickly spread into what are now Rhode Island and Connecticut. The eighteenth century saw a great influx of Scotch-Irish from the north of Ireland who were forced to migrate following a series of repressive economic measures imposed on them by the Crown. In the mid-nineteenth century, fleeing starvation and the cholera epidemic that followed the potato famine of 1845-47, thousands of Irish immigrants arrived in America. Each of these groups, together with a smaller number of Scots, brought with it the traditional music of its native land, and much of that music thrives to this day.

The songs the Irish brought here are still very much in circulation and are more easily gathered than those of the earlier migrations, although it is not always possible to identify a specific geographical source for the classic ballads we find in the Northeast. The Scotch-Irish were but a century removed from their native Scotland; thus many of our Scottish ballads may well have arrived by way of Ulster.

Together with this imported music we find a large number of native American songs and ballads in this region. Lumbermen created many songs directly related to their occupation. Songs of the sea were composed on both sides of the Atlantic and freely exchanged, for many American sailors shipped out of English ports--not always of their own free will. Printers in Boston, New York, and Philadelphia added native American broadsides to those from British sources, and these enjoyed a wide circulation throughout the Northeast.

Stylistically the traditional music of the Northeast remains closer to its British roots than does that of most other parts of the nation. It has been less influenced by Afro-American music than has that of Appalachia and the Deep South and, to judge by the remarkably complete texts of many broadside ballads, considerably more influenced by print. Most of our singers continue to present their songs without accompaniment, instruments being used almost exclusively for dance tunes, and in the *rubato parlando* manner associated with the British tradition.

A word about the vigor of the broadside ballad in oral tradition. While the number of Child ballads (Francis James Child, 1825-1896, authority on the ballad) recovered in the Northeastern states compares very favorably with those found elsewhere in the country (approximately one-third of Child's 305 "popular" ballads have been collected in these states), an appreciably larger number of broadsides have been found north of the Mason-Dixon line than south of it. G. Malcolm Laws observes in *American Balladry from British Broadside*:

. . . the isolation of the South has properly been credited with preserving much British folklore and folksong. But obviously an isolated South could not benefit greatly from the influx of balladry which came with the immigrants to Northern ports long after the population of the South had been stabilized.

Thus the Irish immigrants of the mid-nineteenth century contributed greatly to the stock of ballads in circulation in the Northeast. The extremely popular songsters of that century contained many ballads of broadside origin, and these served to reinforce their currency in the oral tradition. Observing that the "fastidious" collector might consider these texts to be "contaminated" by their appearance in print, Phillips Barry in the *Bulletin of the Folk-Song Society of the Northeast* admitted that the effect was "to stabilize, for many songs, a 'vulgate' text." However, he continued:

Print is, in fact, but an accident in the history of a folk-song. It may enter into the tradition at any time. But the stabilized text may not be expected to remain static--once passing into tradition, it will undergo the same sort of change as the original text of a ballad.

He concluded:

No greater mistake was ever made than to suppose that ballads survive best among the most illiterate and ignorant. A ballad may have sufficient vitality to survive in spite of illiteracy, but it does not thrive on it.

Indeed, many of our Northeastern singers kept chapbooks in which they pasted clippings from the very popular song columns published in many newspapers and magazines during the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Interspersed among these clippings one often finds handwritten texts of songs learned from oral sources. Thus did the widespread literacy of the citizens of the Northeastern states contribute to the preservation of many fine examples of traditional ballads that otherwise might have disappeared.

Similarly, many of our traditional instrumentalists were quite capable of learning a melody from a printed source, although the larger number of their tunes seem to have been learned by ear from other musicians. This aural element in the transmission process, quite like that of the oral transmission of songs, produces the numerous variations that make the study of folk music endlessly fascinating. To quote Barry again: "It is *tradition* that makes the folk-song a distinct *genre*, both as to text and music."

This album presents a necessarily brief survey of the types of traditional songs and tunes found in the Northeastern United States. I have selected representative examples of classic ballads, broadsides, songs, and instrumentals, some imported and some native, some ancient and some relatively new, all collected within the past fifteen or twenty years in various parts of New England and New York State. Together, they constitute a sampling of the rich musical heritage of our people.

A General Caveat

All the music on this album has been drawn from field recordings; none of the artists were recorded in the acoustically controlled environment of the studio. The quality of the original tapes varies remarkably from good to simply adequate. What could be done to enhance the poorest recordings has been done, but the listener must allow for the technical limitations of field recording. Boisterous conversations that were occurring in the kitchen while the singer was being recorded in the living room will occasionally intrude, as will the sounds of passing traffic. You will hear exactly what the

collector heard, and perhaps this is as it should be, for this is the environment in which the music exists.

I realize that it is impossible to capture "pure" folk music on a recording. Heisenberg's Principle of Uncertainty (that the instrument used to measure the event alters, by its presence, the nature of the event) applies to folk-song collecting as much as it does to physics. The conscientious collector attempts to minimize the effect his presence has on the material he collects and on the style in which it is presented, but some influence is unavoidable. Who could possibly sing a lullaby to a microphone precisely the same way they would sing it to an infant? Cecil Sharp wrote admiringly in *English Folk Song: Some Conclusions* of the "unconscious" art of the true folk singer and of the resultant honesty of his expression.

Track 1

A Frog He Would A-Wooing Go (Traditional)

Sung by Mrs. Gail Stoddard Storm, Norwell, Massachusetts. Recorded by Sandy Paton, February 1977.

Our first song is also one of our oldest. Evelyn K. Wells points out that it is first mentioned in *The Complaynt of Scotland* (1549). In 1580 a broadside titled "A moste Strange Weddinge of the ffrage and the mouse" was licensed at Stationers' Hall in London to one Edward White, and in 1611 "The Marriage of the Frogge and the Mouse" appeared with music in Ravenscroft's *Melismata*. Wells suggests that the 1580 version may have been "revised from the older song with topical import" at the time of the proposed marriage of the first Queen Elizabeth to the Duc d'Alençon, the French ambassador. She explains:

. . . the idea of this foreign marriage was highly unpopular in England. Preachers inveighed against it, a pamphleteer who wrote about it had his right hand struck off in punishment, and Spenser's satire on the subject, *Mother Hubbard's Tale*, probably caused his exile to Ireland. . . . After interest in this episode subsided, the song, newly familiar, returned to the nursery and gradually lost all connection with the special incident.

Indeed, it was as a nursery song that our present version was handed down in Mrs. Storm's family, which has lived near the eastern shore of Massachusetts since the first English settlers arrived at Plymouth. Her grandmother sang it to her as a child's entertainment, and she has now taught it to her own daughters, who, I am confident, will continue the family tradition by teaching it to their own children when that time comes.

A frog he would a-wooing go,
Uh-hmmm, uh-hmmm.
A frog he would a-wooing go,
Whether his mother would let him or no,
Uh-hmmm, uh-hmmm.

Similarly:

He rode right to Miss Mousie's den;
Said he, "Miss Mousie, are you within?"

"Ah yes, kind sir, I sit to spin;
Won't you please to walk right in?"

"I'd like to have you for my wife,
To sit and spin for me all of my life."

"I don't know what to say to that,
Till I have spoken with Uncle Rat."

When Uncle Rat came home from town,
He brought Miss Mousie a wedding gown.

Where shall the wedding breakfast be?
Down in the stump of a hollow tree.

The first to come was Captain Flea;
He strung his fiddle across his knee.

The next to come was chickadee;
He danced a jig with a bumble-dee-bee.

The last to come was a crawly bug;
He broke the bottles and smashed the jugs.

The frog and the mouse they went to France,
And that is the end of my romance.

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Track 2

The Farmer's Cursed Wife (Child 278) (Traditional)

Sung by Lewis Lund, Jacksonville, Maine. Recorded by Dr. Edward D. Ives, October 1959. (Used by permission of the Northeast Archive of Folklore and Oral History.)

A humorous ballad of this sort might often have been sung, together with regional ballads of lumbering tragedies, sea songs, music-hall ditties, and popular parlor songs, from the "deacon's seat" in the lumbermen's shanty. Horace Beck tells us:

By far the most important aspect of camp life, as far as folklore was concerned, was the singing. After work in the evenings the card games, storytelling, and making of axe handles was liberally interspersed with singing.

A Michigan singer placed this story in context by explaining: "The devil keeps coming around and taking things away from the farmer according to some pact between them. His cows and horses are taken, until he has only hogs left to plow with" (E. E. Gardner and G. J. Chickering, *Ballads and Songs*

of *Southern Michigan*, Hatboro, Pennsylvania, 1967). In most versions of this "very old ballad, steeped in demonology," that have been recovered from tradition, such a pact is only implied. Generally, the farmer appears to be relieved that the devil is after his wife rather than himself or his oldest son, but the D text in *British Ballads from Maine*, edited by Barry, Eckstorm, and Smyth, which closely resembles Lewis Lund's, suggests that the farmer "cares for his wife, but considers her capable of holding her own even against the Devil, who in the end has to acknowledge himself beaten and brings her back in order to get rid of her." The editors of that excellent collection remark that all their Maine texts are "characteristically English" in origin, but the ballad itself may have come to England from Scotland centuries ago. The one text from oral tradition published by Francis J. Child was collected in Scotland, and Robert Burns's "Carle of Kelly-Burn Braes" is actually an adaptation of the ballad. Child notes that "a curst wife who was a terror to demons is a feature in a widely spread and highly humorous tale, Oriental and European."

Lund, who sings the ballad here in a fine north-woods style, called it "The Young Devils' Song" and seemed surprised that Dr. Ives would be interested in recording "that old thing!" "Scratch" has been used in England as a nickname for the devil since the eighteenth century.

This recording is from the Northeast Archive of Folklore and Oral History at the University of Maine, Orono.

There was an old man, he had a large farm,
Fee-fol-diddle-fee-dum,
There was an old man, he had a large farm,
He had no oxen to carry it on,
Scratch-a-fol-dee fiddle-fi-dee-fi-dum.

Similarly:

He yoked up his pigs in order to plow,
And down come the devil, sayin', "How are
you now?"

"Oh," says the old man, "you're after my life."
"But no," says the devil, "I'm after your wife."

"Go take her, go take her, with all of my heart,
And I hope to God you never will part."

The devil he took her up onto his back,
And down to hell he went clickity-clack.

She saw the young devil preparin' their chains;
She up with the foot and kicked out all his brains.

The young devils began to boost her up higher;
She swung round her leg and knocked nine in the fire.

The young devils began to howl and to bawl,
Say, "Take her out of this, or she will kill us all."

The old devil he done her up into a sack,
And like a damn fool he went luggin' her back.

He lugged her right back to the man with the plow,
Sayin', "Here is your wife, you can live with her now."

"Oh," says the old man, "you've done very well!
You've killed all the devils and reigned over hell."

Track 3

The Two Brothers (Child 49) (Traditional)

Sung by Ben Mandel, Queens, New York. Recorded by Sandy Paton, June 1964.

Ordinarily, one searches for remnants of our ballad tradition in the more remote byways of the countryside, but in fact the classic ballads are apt to survive anywhere. Ben Mandel learned this version of "The Twa Brothers" (as Professor Child called it) as a child in the Hebrew National Orphan Home, Yonkers, New York. That a tragic tale of fratricide should become a children's street song after several centuries of a more dignified existence may seem strange, but it is not at all unusual: "Lord Randal" has been found as a Cockney street song in London, and what appears to be a retelling of "The Two Sisters" was collected as a children's song in Nebraska in 1931. Two of Child's texts of "The Twa Brothers" were from children. His G(a) version was "taken down from the singing of little girls in South Boston," and G(b) was communicated to him by W. W. Newell as "from a child in New York, 1880."

Much of the ancient Scottish story survives in Mandel's New York version, although his stanza about the angels may be an intrusion from the "White Paternoster."

Mandel's delightfully incongruous final stanza clearly derives from another urban street rhyme, but its presence serves to make this version unique.

Johnny and Willie were a-comin' from school
On a Friday afternoon,
And Johnny said to Willie,
"Do you wanna have a fight
Or watch the boys throw stones?
Or watch the boys throw stones?"

Similarly:

"I don't wanna have no fight,
Don't wanna throw no stones,
I am too weak, I am too small,
So please let me alone."

But Johnny took out his pocket knife,
And the end of it was sharp;
He stuck it into Willie's heart,
And the blood came pouring out.

Johnny took off his Holland shirt,
And he ripped it gore from gore,
And he wrapped it round poor Willie's heart,
But it just bled the more.

"If you see Father going home,
And he asks for my returning,
Tell him I'm in the old schoolhouse,
And from my new books learning.

"If you meet Mother going home,
Tell her I am dying.
My own heart's blood is pouring out,
I'm in the schoolyard lying.

"Six little angels at my side
To help me on my way;
Two to weep, two to pray,
Two to carry my soul away.

"Johnson, Johnson is my name,
Brooklyn is my station,
Heaven is my resting place,
And God is my salvation."

Track 4

My Man John (Traditional)

Sung by Mrs. Gail Stoddard Storm, Norwell, Massachusetts. *Recorded by Sandy Paton, February 1977.*

This is the Stoddard family version of the well-known "Keys of Canterbury" or "Keys of Heaven," most frequently found in America in its "Paper of Pins" variant. At first hearing it appears to be a fanciful, if somewhat mercenary, dialogue of courtship, but the song comes to us with a dark and mysterious history. Eloise Hubbard Linscott reports a version from her family in Taunton, Massachusetts, complete with instructions on how it was played as a children's singing game, and observes that it dates back to "an old mummer's dance, and as such was highly dramatic, for it depicted the offers of the Devil seeking to win an adherent" (*Folk Songs of Old New England*, New York, 1939). In one of the earliest published collections of American folk songs, W. W. Newell states that it was known around 1880 "throughout the Middle States." Describing English forms of the song, he writes:

. . . it seems to contain the primitive idea, where the wooer appears as a prince, who by

splendid presents overcomes the objections of a lady. This mercenary character being repugnant to modern taste, the Scotch rhyme represents the suitor as the Evil One in person, while in the United States the hero is, in his turn, made to cast off the avaricious fair, or else the lady [as in our present version] to demand only love for love.

A. G. Gilchrist in the *Journal of the Folk-Song Society* (III, 33, London, 1929) refers to a song from the coal-mining districts of Scotland titled "Old Nick in Love" that had been printed in *The British Minstrel* in 1842. She tell us that the title,

remained a puzzle until amongst the "fireside nursery stories" in Chambers' *Popular Rhymes of Scotland*, I came upon a version, partly told in prose as a story, under the title "The Tempted Lady," and discovered that in this Scotch version of the old dialogue-song the suitor is in reality "Auld Nick himsel' disguised as a gentleman, who began to make love to the young leddy"--offering her first "a pennyworth of preens" to walk with him.

After refusing a number of tempting offers, the young lady is finally invited to accept "the hale of Bristol town, with coaches rolling up and down." Gilchrist continues: "The 'Tempted Lady' succumbs to this magnificent bribe (perhaps reminiscent of the Temptation in the Wilderness), consents, and the devil straightway flies off with her." It seems our little "Paper of Pins" is far from the trivial love song we once thought it to be.

The formal--one could almost say courtly--language of Mrs. Storm's version suggests an English origin, and Cecil Sharp gives two examples that are remarkably similar to the one sung here (*English Folk Songs*, Centenary Edition, II, and *Journal of the Folk-Song Society*, II, 7, London, 1905). Comparing these with the song recorded here, we must conclude that the Stoddard family preserved the song in a form very close to its direct English ancestors throughout the generations of its American existence.

Whether in the nursery or as a children's street rhyme, this song remains very popular in both Britain and America. It is included in almost every major American collection.

My man John, what can the matter be?
"I have a lady love I love, but she will not love me,
Nor will she be my joy, my pride, and my dear,
Nor will she take a walk with me anywhere."

"Madam, I will give you a gown of silk and lace,
And ribbons fair to deck the hair that curls about your face,
If you will be my joy, my pride, and my dear,
If you will take a walk with me anywhere."

"Sir, I'll not accept of you a gown of silk and lace,
Nor ribbons fair to deck the hair that curls about my face,
Nor will I be your joy, your pride, and your dear,
Nor will I take a walk with you anywhere."

"Madam, I will give you a pair of golden combs,
To wear within your tresses fair when I am far from home,
If you will be my joy, my pride, and my dear,
If you will take a walk with me anywhere."

"Sir, I'll not accept of you a pair of golden combs,
To wear within my tresses fair when you are far from home,
Nor will I be your joy, your pride, and your dear,
Nor will I take a walk with you anywhere."

"Madam, I will give you a pair of spanking bays,
To draw you all bout the town within a little chaise,
If you will be my joy, my pride, and my dear,
If you will take a walk with me anywhere."

"Sir, I'll not accept of you a pair of spanking bays,
To draw me all about the town within a little chaise,
Nor will I be your joy, your pride, and your dear,
Nor will I take a walk with you anywhere."

"Madam, I will give you the keys to my heart,
If you will keep them in your own and we will never part,
If you will be my bride, my pride, and my dear,
If you will take a walk with me anywhere."

"Sir, I shall accept of you the keys to your heart,
And I will keep them in my own and we will never part,
And now I'll be your bride, your pride, and your dear,
And now I'll take a walk with you anywhere."

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Track 5

Ladies' Walpole Reel (Traditional)

Played by Newton F. Tolman (flute), Nelson, New Hampshire, and Mrs. Kay Gilbert (piano), Peterborough, New Hampshire. *Recorded by Sandy Paton, February 1977.*

The flute is not often found as a folk instrument in the United States, although it is still quite popular in Ireland. In the early New England country dance orchestras it was not at all uncommon.

Newt Tolman lived on the large tract of land his Grandpa Ebenezer acquired on his return, in 1787, from soldiering in the American Revolution. During Newt's childhood the family housed summer boarders in the farmhouse and in the cottages at Tolman Pond, and these guests were frequently entertained by the Tolman family orchestra. In his book *Quick Tunes and Good Times*, Newt

explains:

Back in my prehistoric boyhood, suburbia was still a long way off. Most of the old social customs still prevailed. Every township had at least one so-called family orchestra, and I played sometimes with others besides our own. They ranged from professional calibre, like the New England Conservatory-trained Peaveys down in Milford, to the most illiterate of backwoods performers.

Newt had dreams of becoming a classical flutist, but he gave them up when he was forced to leave school at seventeen. During the popular square-dance revival of the Thirties he managed to earn extra money playing with various groups, but his heart wasn't in it. "Our music had been handed down in the family from generations back," he says, so he had little enthusiasm for tunes like "Darling Nellie Gray" or "Turkey in the Straw," which were the standard fare. "I could usually get through the evening only by making frequent trips to the woodshed, where we kept a bottle of some appropriate anaesthetic handy." In the late Forties Newt participated in weekly square dances in the Nelson town hall, but they too were musically frustrating:

In fact, during the whole time from 1930 to 1965, I almost never got to play any of the fine old melodies I had learned in younger days. Nor was anyone else playing them. We could never find any musicians who knew them, or any callers who would use them.

But the "fine old melodies" did come back into use, partly through the enthusiastic efforts of Dudley Laufman, a young poet, dance prompter (as they were called in New England), and entrepreneur who was the catalyst in a new revival of genuine New England country dancing. Once again the Nelson town hall became a mecca for regional dancers, this time with the stately contradances being performed to their authentic Scottish, English, and Irish tunes.

In 1977, when this was recorded, Newt Tolman was spending most of his time supervising the cutting of timber in his carefully managed forests, but one day a week was set aside for music, and he let nothing interfere with it. He would drive to Kay Gilbert's studio in Peterborough, and the two spent many hours playing the music they love:

Like a rapid passage in a difficult violin concerto, a good jig can merit no end of polishing--diminuendo and crescendo, smooth slurring here and staccato there, emphasis of certain key notes and phrases.

When not busy with the forest or music, Newt found time to write several books and a number of articles. Most important for lovers of this music would be *The Nelson Music Collection*, which he put together in collaboration with Kay Gilbert.

"Ladies' Walpole Reel," sometimes written as "Lady Walpole's Reel," is of Scottish origin, according to Beth Tolman and Ralph Page, and its dance is "about the most popular of the early ones in this country."

Track 6

Brave Boys (Laws K21) (Traditional)

Sung by Gale Huntington, Martha's Vineyard, Massachusetts. Recorded by Sandy Paton, February 1977.

Whaling, which was to become a major industry in the Northeastern United States, began inauspiciously with coastal farmers and fishermen taking advantage of the occasional beached whale. Soon they were setting out in small boats after those that could be sighted from shore, much as the Indians had done before them. Gale Huntington tells us that the only difference was that the Indian ate the whale, while the colonist merely "tried him out" for the oil. As whale sightings became less common along our coast and the demand for oil and bone made such a venture profitable, men (and boys) began to put to sea in search of them. By the end of the eighteenth century, whaling voyages would often last a year or even longer as the ships would round Cape Horn to seek their valuable prey in the Pacific. Toward the end of the whaling era, voyages of two, three, and even four years were not unusual. As Gale puts it, "That's a long time for a man to be away from his home and family."

Over the roughly two and a half centuries of the industry, seaports in southeastern Massachusetts were the centers of the trade, although Hudson, New York, many miles up that river from the sea, was also a major whaling port a century ago. Gale proudly adds:

Martha's Vineyard, while it never had a whaling fleet to compare in size with those of its two great rivals [Nantucket and New Bedford], always furnished far more than its share of men and masters, mates and boatsteerers for the ships of both of them.

Huntington grew up on Martha's Vineyard, married a Vineyard girl, and eventually became a history teacher on the island, but he continued farming and lobstering as a sideline through all his working life. His wife's family, the Tiltons, were all men of the sea, and Gale first began learning his ballads and songs from them. Gale spent much of his time poring over old logbooks in libraries and museums. This research, together with the songs of the singing Tiltons, produced the wonderful collection *Songs the Whalers Sang*. Gale's singing style reflects that of his sources ("Now here's the way Welcome Tilton used to sing that one . . ."). Occasionally he will add a simple guitar accompaniment, but only when appropriate.

"Brave Boys" (also known as "The Greenland Whale Fishery") is one of two distinct versions of this ballad sung in his wife's family. I have decided to include this one because its melody is less common and it appears to be the older of the two. Joanna C. Colcord points out that "it arose in the British, not the American whaling trade, probably in the latter part of the eighteenth century, and in the earlier British versions, the ship's name, the *Lion* [is] preserved" (*Roll and Go*, Indianapolis, 1924).

It was eighteen hundred and thirty-nine, on the fourteenth day of May,
When we weighed our anchor and set our sail
And for Greenland bore away, brave boys,
And for Greenland bore away.

Now our captain's name it was William Moore,
And the mate's name was the same,
And our ship she was called the *Lion* so bold
As she plowed the ragin' main, brave boys,

As she plowed the ragin' main.

And the captain he stood in the top crosstree,
And a fine-lookin' man was he,
A-searchin' the horizon with a spyglass in his hand.
"It's a whale, a whale, a fish, brave boys,
It's a whale, a fish," cried he.

And the mate he stood on the quarterdeck,
An' a fine-lookin' man was he.
"Overhaul, overhaul, let your davit tackles fall,
And its lower your boats to the sea, brave boys,
And its launch your boats to the sea."

Now your boats being lowered and the whale being struck,
He give one flurry with his tail.
Down went the boat and those six jolly tars,
And they never come up anymore, brave boys,
No, they never come up no more.

When the captain he heard of the loss of his men,
It grieved his heart full sore,
But when he heard of the loss of that whale,
Why, it grieved him ten times more, brave boys,
Yes, it grieved him ten times more.

But the summer months are past and gone,
Cold winter's a-comin' on,
So we'll steer our course back to New Bedford,
And the pretty gals standin' on the shore, brave boys,
And the pretty gals a-standin' on the shore.

Track 7

Fair Fannie Moore (Laws O38) (Traditional)

Sung by Mrs. Sara Cleveland, Hudson Falls, New York. Recorded by Sandy Paton in Brant Lake, New York, June 1965.

The broadside ballad forms a large and very important part of the repertoires of our Northeastern singers. According to G. Malcolm Laws in *American Balladry from British Broadsides*, eighty percent of the broadsides found in oral tradition in the United States have been recovered in the North but only fifty percent in the South.

According to Claude M. Simpson,

the word *broadside* designates a single sheet, usually of folio size, printed on one side. Broadsides thus include proclamations, news letters, and other prose pieces . . . as well

as ballads. [These ballads were] written usually by a hack versifier to a common tune, sold in bookstalls or fair booths or hawked about cities and towns by street singers.

Leslie Shepard in *The History of Street Literature* describes them as "a kind of musical journalism, the forerunner of the popular prose newspapers, and a continuation of the folk tradition of minstrelsy." The earliest known broadside dates from about 1506, when Wynken de Worde printed "A Lytel Geste of Robyn Hode."

American presses produced "hundreds of native compositions dealing with current events as well as many ballads reprinted or rewritten for the American trade" (Laws, *op cit.*). Many of the ballads were of relatively poor quality, but others were, in the judgment of the folk, worthy of preservation. Quite a few were verbatim borrowings from traditional ballads that had been in circulation for centuries. James Catnach, a Northumbrian printer who set up shop in London in 1813, actually paid men to collect ballads from singers in country taverns. Laws describes the impact of this practice on our own folk heritage:

The Child ballads which have been received only in fragmentary form from singers in America are usually those which do not have a record of printed texts behind them. On the other hand, ballads which have been found widely dispersed and in good condition are the very ones which appeared frequently in print during the nineteenth century.

"Fair Fannie Moore" is a broadside ballad of British origin. It is sung here by Mrs. Sara Cleveland, surely one of our country's most important ballad singers. Her superb repertory includes many Child ballads, broadsides, and lyric songs, plus a number of homiletic and topical pieces. Sara's father was born in Ireland and lived in County Cork before coming to this country in 1873. Her maternal grandparents emigrated to America from the north of Ireland in 1840. Her mother, the source of many of Sara's finest ballads, was born in New York State in 1866. Sara was born in 1905. Aside from the songs inherited from both sides of her family, she also gathered songs from friends and neighbors. A favorite uncle, her mother's brother Robert, contributed songs he learned while working in the sawmills and lumber camps of the Adirondacks.

Since I first recorded her in 1965, she has been invited to sing at a number of folk festivals and concerts, has been the subject of an unpublished study by Dr. Kenneth S. Goldstein at the University of Pennsylvania, and has made two important records albums (see Discography).

There's a cot in yonder valley, it's deserted and alone,
It has lately been neglected and is green overgrown.
As you enter at the door, see the bloodstains on the floor.
Oh, that is the blood of the fair Fannie Moore.

To Fannie, all a-blooming, to her two lovers came.
One offered young Fannie his wealth and his fame;
But with all of his riches he could not allure
The true loving heart of the fair Fannie Moore.

Young Henry, the shepherd, was of lowly degree,

But he won her fond heart, and accepted was he.
Then quick to the altar he there did secure
The hand and the heart of the fair Fannie Moore.

As Fannie was a-sittin' in her cottage one day,
When duty had called her young husband away,
Young Randall the haughty came in at the door
And clasped in his arms the fair Fannie Moore.

"O spare me, O spare me in mercy," she cried.
"O spare me, in mercy; I now am a bride."
"Oh no," said young Randall, "you'll go to your rest,"
And he buried his knife in her snowy white breast.

Young Randall the haughty was taken and tried,
For Fannie, so blooming, in her bright beauty died.
Young Randall was hung on a tree by the door
For shedding the blood of the fair Fannie Moore.

Young Henry the shepherd went distracted and wild,
And he wandered away from his own native isle.
But at last, when death claimed him, he was brought to the shore
And laid by the side of his fair Fannie Moore.

Track 8

The Jam on Gerry's Rock (Laws C 1) (Traditional)

Sung (with guitar) by Lawrence Older, Middle Grove, New York. Recorded by Sandy Paton, January 1963.

The tall, straight trees from the abundant forests of the New World were in great demand for masts and spars for the sailing vessels of Europe in the seventeenth century. Thus began an industry that flourishes in the Northeast to this day. Sawn timbers, stowed below or lashed on the open decks, formed an important part of the cargo of nearly every ship returning to England from her American colonies. Horace P. Beck divides the history of lumbering (in Maine) into four,

distinct, but overlapping phases. . . . First came the masting industry. . . . Next came the heyday of lumbering--cutting pine--which ended about 1860 when the third phase of lumbering took over--cutting spruce. The fourth, last, and most mundane of the lumbering operations is the one still carried on today. This was begun in the present century and is the cutting of pulpwood to fill the insatiable and stinking maws of the paper mills.

. . .

[At first] the lumber camp consisted of three or four men and a few yoke of oxen. Gradually the number grew until a dozen or more men and a cook were employed. . . . The camps, by 1926, had grown to such proportions that some of them contained as many as a hundred and twenty men.

The men were housed in rough shanties of logs and shingles, with a line of bunks along the walls and a central woodstove. The "deacon's seat" was a roughhewn bench on which the men would sit during the long, cold northern evenings, sharpening saws and axes, making ax handles, playing cards, sometimes picking lice out of their blankets, vying with one another for the tallest tale or biggest lie, or singing their favorite songs. A good singer could well become the most popular man in the camp, for, as it was on the sailing ships, entertainment consisted only of what the men themselves could provide.

Many men signed on as sailors during the summer, returning to swing an ax in the lumber woods in the winter, a practice that led to the survival of many ballads of the sea among landbound lumbermen. Great favorites, of course, were the ballads that spoke of their own dangerous occupation. As Stewart H. Holbrook phrased it: "Death always stood just behind the logger and very close to the riverman" (*Holy Old Mackinaw*, New York, 1938; quoted by William M. Doerflinger). During the cutting, a man could easily be crushed by a falling tree or limb. Sleds, drawn by oxen or horses, piled high with logs being hauled to the banks of the frozen rivers, might tip or break loose, sending huge timbers crashing in all directions as the teamster scrambled for his life. But the greatest danger came after the streams were clear of ice and the river drive was under way. Logs were sent tumbling through the rapids of streams swollen with the spring melt-off, guided by men who scampered from log to log in their calked boots, keeping them moving with pike poles and peaveys.

According to Doerflinger:

The tensest hours in the dangerous life of the riverman came when things went wrong and logs caught on a rock, bridge pier, or other obstacle, causing the whole mass to pile up behind them in a groaning, treacherous jam. Then the key logs had to be peaveyed or dynamited loose. Sure-footed white-water boys clambered onto the perilous tangle and went to work. Often the jam would suddenly "break and go," transformed in an instant into a thundering, foaming sluice of logs and water. The boys went with it. Comrades buried some of them on the river shore, cut their name in the bark of a tree, hung their calked boots from a limb overhead, and hurried on with the drive.

"The Jam on Gerry's Rock," perhaps the most widely sung lumberman's ballad in America, describes exactly such an event. It is sung here by Lawrence Older, who worked all his life in the Adirondack timber country. An album of his ballads, songs, and fiddle tunes was produced in 1964 (see Discography).

Come all you bold young shantyboys and list while I relate
Concerning a young shantyboy and his untimely fate,
Concerning a young riverman so manly, true, and brave;
'Twas on a jam at Gerry's Rock he met a watery grave.

'Twas on a Sunday morning, as you will quickly hear,
Our logs were piled up mountains high, we could not keep them clear.
Our foreman said, "Come on, brave boys, with hearts devoid of fear,
We'll break the jam on Gerry's Rock, and for Agginstown we'll steer."

Now some of them were willing, while others they were not;
All for to work on Sunday, they did not think they ought.
But six of our brave shantyboys had volunteered to go
And break the jam on Gerry's Rock with their foreman, young Monroe.

They had not rolled off many logs when they heard his clear voice say,
"I'd have you boys be on your guard, for the jam will soon give way."
These words he'd scarcely spoken, when the jam did break and go,
Taking with it six of those brave boys and their foreman, young Monroe.

Now when these other shantyboys this sad news came to hear,
In search of their dead comrades to the river they did steer.
Six of those mangled bodies a-floatin' down did go,
While crushed and bleeding near the bank lay the foreman, young Monroe.

They took him from his watery grave, brushed back his raven hair.
There was a fair form among them whose cries did rend the air.
There was a fair form among them, a girl from Saginaw town,
Whose moans and cries rose to the skies, for her lover who'd gone down.

Fair Clara was a noble girl, the riverman's true friend.
She and her widowed mother lived at the river's bend.
And the wages of her own true love the boss to her did pay,
But the shantyboys for her made up a generous purse next day.

They buried him quite decently; 'twas on the first of May.
Come all you brave young shantyboys and for your comrades pray.
Engraved upon the hemlock tree that by the grave does grow
Is the age, a date, and the sad fate of the foreman, young Monroe.

Fair Clara did not long survive; her heart broke with her grief.
And less than three months afterwards death came to her relief.
And when the time had come and she was called to go,
Her last request was granted to be laid by young Monroe.

Come all you brave young shantyboys, I'd have you call and see
Two green graves by the riverside where grows a hemlock tree.
The shantyboys cut off the wood where lay those lovers low;
'Tis the handsome Clara Vernon and her true love, young Monroe.

Track 9

And Now, Old Serpent, How Do You Feel? (Traditional)

Track 10

Who Will Bow and Bend Like a Willow? (Traditional)

Sung by Mrs. Morris Austin, Clinton, Connecticut. Recorded by Sandy Paton, March 1977.

Mrs. Austin learned these two Shaker Spirituals at the Hancock, Massachusetts, Shaker community where she was taken as an orphan in 1903 at the age of seven. She became a covenanted member of the Shaker Society when she was twenty-one. She was eighty-two when these recordings were made. (The village is now preserved as a Shaker museum.)

The Shaker sect (the United Society of Believers in Christ's Second Appearing) originated in Bolton and Manchester, England, about 1747. Nine members of the sect came to America in 1774 and established a settlement in the swampy wilderness of Niskeyuna (now Watervliet), New York. Under the guidance of Mother Ann Lee, the order began to gain converts, and eventually communities were formed in Massachusetts, Connecticut, New Hampshire, and Maine, as well as several shorter-lived settlements in Kentucky, Ohio, and Indiana.

The Shakers were a millennial order, living in celibacy, holding all goods and property in common. The Society reached its maximum growth during the second quarter of the nineteenth century, when there were approximately six thousand members in the various communities.

Edward Deming Andrews describes Shaker ritualism as

a true folk art. Though the tunes, songs, marches, ring dances and other forms of devotional "exercises" were composed by individuals, they were intended for common use. . . . Popular pieces such as "Come life, Shaker life" [and] "'Tis the Gift to be Simple". . . became authentic symbols of a distinct folk culture.

Mrs. Austin explained that the first of these two spirituals is "a militant one" and the second "a humility song." The wine in the second hymn is symbolic of spiritual inspiration.

I would like to express my gratitude to Dr. Daniel Patterson, of Chapel Hill, North Carolina, our leading authority on the music of the Shakers, for introducing me to Mrs. Austin.

And Now, Old Serpent, How Do You Feel?

And now, old serpent, how do you feel,
Expiring in your torture?
I'll roast you well, you're doomed for hell,
With me you'll get no quarter.
(Repeat)

You've injured me sufficiently,
And now I'll strongly bind you.
No more shall ye impose on me;
Oh, how I love to grind you.
(Repeat)

Who Will Bow and Bend Like a Willow?

Who will bow and bend like a willow?
Who will turn and twist and reel
In the gale of sinful freedom,
From the bower of union flowing?

Who will drink the wine of power
Dropping down like a shower,
Pride and bondage all forgetting?
Mother's wine is freely working.

Oh, oh, I will have it;
I will bow and bend to get it.
I'll be reeling, turning, twisting,
Shake out all the starch and stiff'ning.
(Repeat)

Track 11

A Medley of Scottish Fiddle Tunes (Traditional)

Played by Harvey Tolman (fiddle) and Rose Tolman (piano), Nelson, New Hampshire. Recorded by Jay Iselin, December 1976.

During the 1960s and 1970s, Harvey Tolman, an electrician and a second cousin to Newt Tolman (see note for Track 5), had been inspired by a number of fine fiddlers from Cape Breton, Nova Scotia, now living in the Boston area. Many of the Scottish melodies in his repertory were learned from them, continuing a time-honored tradition of new immigrants adding more music to the local store.

The tunes played here by Harvey and his wife Rose are "Jessie Smith," "Lady Mary Ramsey," "Jenny Dang the Weaver," "Geordie McLeish," "The Hawick Lassies," and "John Howat." This performance was recorded at a fund-raising program held in the Nelson town hall for a local nursery school. Nelson may have only about five hundred residents, but I know no community of comparable size that can boast so many fine local musicians. Imagine what it was like in the early nineteen-hundreds, when there were the town fife-and-drum band, the regular town band or orchestra, and at least three well-known family bands. Newt Tolman says: "The Barretts were probably the best known; they had eleven boys in the family, and all of them made music. The Pages were known for their stringed instruments. And, of course, there was the Tolman family band, which included cornet, piccolo, flute, piano, and drums, among other instruments, depending on who was at home at any time."

Track 12

The Flowers of Edinburgh (Traditional)

Played on hammered dulcimers by Phil, Paul, and Sterl Van Arsdale, Frewsburg, New York. Recorded by William Gulvin, July 1976.

Essentially the hammered dulcimer is a flat, usually trapezoidal box strung laterally with nine to twenty-one courses of strings. These pass over a bridge placed at a slight angle just to the left of the

center of the sounding board (or top), dividing the length of the strings to produce a different pitch on each side of the bridge, usually at the interval of a fourth or fifth. Often a second bridge is added on the right to support a series of bass strings. The instrument is generally tuned in a scale. The strings are struck with small wooden mallets or hammers, one held in each hand. A sustained note is obtained by allowing the hammers to bounce rapidly on the strings. Most of the hammered dulcimers I have seen were clearly homemade, but a number of factories were producing them in the nineteenth century.

Phil, Paul, and Sterl Van Arsdale learned to play the hammered dulcimer from their maternal grandfather, Jesse R. Martin, who was born in Kiantone, New York, in 1854. Martin taught himself to play the instrument at the age of nine, ignoring the strong disapproval of his Yankee parents. By the time he was fourteen he was playing regularly for local dances. Many of the tunes he eventually passed on to his grandsons were learned from fiddlers with whom he played. In June 1881, he played for a dance held on a huge lumber raft in the Allegheny River near Warren, Pennsylvania. He worked the regional vaudeville and theater circuit, played on local radio, and became quite famous, although he never learned to read music. In 1925 and again in 1927 he traveled to Michigan at the invitation of Henry Ford to play for that old-time-music enthusiast.

Each summer, in Frewsburg, the Van Arsdals hold a family reunion that results in several days of music making. The present recording was made at one of these. The tune is popular among Northeastern fiddlers. It appears as a hornpipe in Captain Francis O'Neill's *The Dance Music of Ireland*, where we are told:

The hornpipe commonly known as the "Flowers of Edinburgh" at once suggests a Scotch origin, yet when compared with "Beside a Rath" (Cois Leasa), its evolution from the latter traditional Irish strain becomes evident.

Helen Creighton has collected a version of "The False Knight on the Road" (Child 3) in Nova Scotia that is set to a variant of this splendid old melody (*Folk Music from Nova Scotia: see Discography*).

Track 13

The Good Old State of Maine (Lawrence Gorman)

Sung by James Brown, South Branch, New Brunswick, Canada. Recorded by Sandy Paton and Dr. Edward Ives, August 1963. (Used by permission of the Northeast Archive of Folklore and Oral History.)

The dangers of working in the lumber woods or on a river drive were accepted by the men as part of the job, and their ballads often describe accidental death with never a hint of protest; but to feed a crew poorly (or to cheat a man of his wages) was an outrage worthy of caustic satire. This fine song, which James Brown learned during his years in the lumbering camps of Maine and New Hampshire, was composed by one of the best of the north-woods songmakers, Larry Gorman. Dr. Edward D. Ives has written a highly readable study of the life and songs of Larry Gorman, from which we learn that Gorman was born on Prince Edward Island in 1846. As a young man he often worked in the lumber camps of New Brunswick during the winter, returning to the island in the summer to do farmwork or commercial fishing. In the early eighteen-eighties Gorman left Prince Edward Island,

never to return. Some say he was forced to leave because of a song he had made that poked a little too much fun at an influential citizen. We do know that he spent the rest of his life working in the sawmills and lumber camps of the mainland. Ives dates "The Good Old State of Maine" "between 1884, when Henry's logging railroad went into operation, and 1892, when he moved his whole operation to Lincoln."

Gorman's reputation as a maker of satirical songs was widespread. Doerflinger tells of hearing of an occasion when Gorman stopped for a bite to eat at a farmhouse:

The farmer's wife, not realizing who the young man was, and not suspecting that her reputation hung in the balance, made the mistake of serving him stale bread and weak tea. Larry, who was just as critical of home cooking as he was of camp grub, repaid this neglect with a tongue-in-cheek song that suggests the power wielded by those who make a country's ballads.

Doerflinger then gives these two stanzas:

And when they see me coming,
Their eyes stick out like prongs.
Sayin' "Beware of Larry Gorman;
He's the man who makes the songs!"

I told her that her bread was good,
Likewise her tea was strong;
But little she knew I was Gorman,
The man who made the songs!

Gorman died in Bangor, Maine, in 1917. According to Dr. Ives:

That was all for "the man who made the songs." But there was still that little black trunk he kept at home and into which he threw a copy of every poem he ever wrote. Billy Bell tells the story of that:

"And so he passed on. And there was somebody, I don't know who it was, that came there and offered her [his widow] a hundred dollars for the trunk with the stuff that was in it, and she said no, she wouldn't sell it. She said that Larry had made too many enemies with his poetry while he was living, he wasn't going to make any more after he was dead. And she burnt the whole works."

So that was all for his songs.

Come by, men all, give ear a call, until I will relate
From my experience in the lumbering woods; 'twas in the Granite State.
Its snow-clad hills and winding rills, it mountains, rocks, and plain,
You would find it very different from the good old state of Maine.

The unioners and foreigners they flock in by the score;
The diversity of languages would equal Babel's tower.
The Italians, Russians, Poles, and Finns, the Dutchman and the Dane,
You would never hear such drones as those in the good old state of Maine.

The difference in the wages, boys, is scarcely worth a dime,
For it's every day you cannot work, you're forced to lose your time.
For to pay your passage to and fro, you'll find but little gain;
You'll do as well to stay at home in the good old state of Maine.

For it's in the Zealand Valley you'll find seven feet of snow,
And work when the thermometer is 35 below.
They average there three storms a week of sleet, or snow, or rain;
You will seldom find such weather in the good old state of Maine.

Our boss he will direct you with a loud commanding voice,
Saying, "You know the regulations, boys, therefore you have your choice."
Of course, he did not make those rules, of him we can't complain,
But I never heard such rules as those in the good old state of Maine.

Oh, it's every night, with pen and ink, they figure up the cost;
The crew is held responsible for all things broke or lost:
An ax, a handle, or a spade, a cant hook or a chain.
A man is never charged for tools in the good old state of Maine.

They figure things so very fine, it's hard to save a stamp,
For it's every month they do take stock of all things round the camp.
Stove pots, tea kettles, knives and forks, the draw shave and the plane,
Of those they take but small account in the good old state of Maine.

The rules and regulations, as I mentioned here before,
In typewriting and in copies posted up on every door,
For to lose your time and pay your board and work in snow and rain.
They would call us fools to stand such rules in the good old state of Maine.

Now if you do not like the style, you can go down the line.
But if you leave them in the lurch, they'll figure with you fine,
Cut down your wages, and they'll charge your carfare on the train.
I never heard of such a thing in the good old state of Maine.

Oh, 'tis of the grub I'll give a rub, of which it well deserves.
Our cook become so lazy he allowed the men to starve.
'Twas bread and beans, and beans and bread, and bread and beans again.
For grub we sometimes had a change in the good old state of Maine.

Here is adieu to camp and crew, to Henry and Son.
Their names are great throughout the state, they're some of the sons of guns.
I wish them all prosperity until I return again,
But I'll mend my ways and spend my days in the good old state of Maine.

Track 14

The Dreadnaught (Traditional) (Laws D 13)

Sung by Gale Huntington, Martha's Vineyard, Massachusetts. Recorded by Sandy Paton, February 1977.

Joanna C. Colcord informs us that the *Dreadnaught*, although not the fastest, was probably the best known of all the Western Ocean packets. "She was built at Newburyport, Mass., in 1853, and was 1413 tons register; a very large ship for those days." Doerflinger, who uses the preferred spelling *Dreadnought*, says that her building was financed by a syndicate for her well-known skipper, Captain Samuel Samuels, and that she flew the house flag of the Red Cross Line. He continues: "Captain Samuels . . . in his memoirs, describes the packet sailors of his day as 'the toughest class of men in all respects.'" Perhaps, but not too tough to express their admiration for a fine ship and a skillful captain, to judge by this ballad.

Quoting from Captain Clark's *The Clipper Ship Era* (no publisher or date given), Colcord writes:

The *Dreadnaught* was strikingly handsome and well designed, though by no means a sharp ship. Her masts, yards, sails, ironwork, blocks, and standing and running rigging were of the best material, and were always carefully looked after. She was a ship that would stand almost any amount of driving in heavy weather, and her fast passages were in a measure due to this excellent quality, though mainly to the unceasing vigilance and splendid seamanship of her commander. She was wrecked in 1869, while under the command of Captain P. N. Mayhew; her crew were rescued after being adrift fourteen days in the boats, but the noble old packet ship went to pieces among the rugged cliffs and crags and roaring breakers of Cape Horn.

Gale Huntington learned this version of "The *Dreadnaught*" from Bill Tilton, his wife's great-uncle, who was a sperm whaler as a young man and then, before he retired from the sea to become a fisherman on Martha's Vineyard, worked as a shantyman on British and American vessels.

There is a crack packet, a packet of fame,
She hails from New York, and the *Dreadnaught's* her name.
You can talk of your flyers, *Swallowtail* and *Blackball*,
But the *Dreadnaught's* the packet that sure heads them all.

Now the *Dreadnaught's* a-layin' at Liverpool dock,
Where the boys and the girls hang around in a flock.
Loose your fore- and main-topsails, your courses also,
Bound away in the *Dreadnaught* to the westward we go.

Now the *Dreadnaught's* at anchor in the river Mersey,
A-waitin' for the tugboat to tow her to sea.

Out around the Black Rock where the wild tides do flow,
Bound away in the *Dreadnaught* to the westward we go.

Now the *Dreadnaught's* a-sailin' down the wild Irish shore
With her passengers all sick and our messmates all sore.
We'll give her one cheer as the wild winds do blow,
Bound away in the *Dreadnaught* to the westward we go.

The *Dreadnaught's* a-sailin' the Atlantic so wide,
Where the tall surgin' waves roll along her black side.
Says the shark to the whale, as they swim to and fro,
"She's the Liverpool packet, Lord God, let her go!"

Now the *Dreadnaught's* a-sailin' on the banks of Newfoundland,
Where the waves are so green, where the bottom's all sand.
Says the fish of the ocean, as they swim to and fro,
"She's the Liverpool packet, Lord God, let her go!"

Now the *Dreadnaught's* a-sailin' down the Long Island shore;
The pilot will board us as he's oft done before.
Fill away your fore-topsail, board your maintack also,
Bound away in the *Dreadnaught* to the westward we go.

Here's a health to the *Dreadnaught*, likewise her brave crew,
Likewise Captain Samuels, his officers too.
You can talk of your flyers, *Swallowtail* and the rest,
But the *Dreadnaught's* the packet that's always the best.

Track 15

Three Men They Went A-hunting (Traditional)

Sung by Mrs. Sara Cleveland, Hudson Falls, New York. Recorded by Sandy Paton in Brant Lake, New York, June 1965.

Here we have another lighthearted song with a long and distinguished past. According to Iona and Peter Opie's *Oxford Dictionary of Nursery Rhymes*:

... in Fletcher and Shakespeare's joint work, *The Two Noble Kinsmen*, which may be dated 1613, the jailor's daughter sings (III. V),

There were three fooles, fell out about an
 howlet
The one sed it was an owle
The other he said nay,
The third he sed it was a hawke, and her bels
 were cut away

John Harrington Cox (*Folk-Songs of the South*, Cambridge, Mass., 1925), who found the song in West

Virginia, tells us that "the mad Celania in Davenant's comedy *The Rivals* (licensed and printed in 1668)" sings:

There were three Fools a Mid-summer run mad
About an howlet, a quarrel they had,
The one said't was an Owle, the other he said nay,
The third said it was a Hawk but the Bells were
cutt away.

A much longer version than the one sung here was published in 1843 as "Cape Ann" by the famous Hutchinson Family of New Hampshire, who performed it regularly in their concerts. In Vermont, Dorothy Canfield Fisher sang her mother's version for Helen H. Flanders and George Brown (*Vermont Folk Songs and Ballads*), who called it "an eighteenth century American version." A 1908 issue of the *Journal of American Folklore* noted that "seventy years before [that date], it was an old circus song sung by Alabama negroes" (quoted by B. A. Botkin).

In English versions, the target of the song's humor is often a Welshman, as it is in one of the two texts published in 1883 by W. W. Newell, although most American texts do not specify the nationalities of the hunters. After the Irish immigration of the mid-nineteenth century, however, poor "Paddy" became the butt of all too many derogatory jokes, some of which are still in circulation. But self-deprecating humor was the stock-in-trade of many Irish-American music-hall entertainers, and it is quite possible that they were responsible, at least to some degree, for our version.

Mrs. Cleveland, who is as Irish as the shamrock, tells me that she learned the song from her mother, although her Uncle Bobby also sang it.

Three men they went a-hunting, a-hunting went one day,
Until they came to the rising sun, as they were on their way.
The Englishman said, "It's the rising sun."
The Scotsman he said, "Nay."
"Bejeebers," said Pat, "it's a roll of cheese,
But none of it rolls this way."

Three men they went a-hunting, a-hunting went one day,
Until they came to a porcupine, as they were on their way.
The Englishman said, "It's a porcupine."
The Scotsman he said, "Nay."
"Bejeebers," said Pat, "it's a pin cushion,
With the pins stuck in the wrong way."

Three men they went a-hunting, a-hunting went one day,
Until they came to a horned owl, as they were on their way.
The Englishman said, "It's a horned owl."
The Scotsman he said, "Nay."
"Bejeebers," said Pat, "it's the devil himself."

And then they all ran away.

Track 16

Erin-Go-Bragh (Laws Q 20) (Traditional)

Sung by Edward Kirby, Sharon, Connecticut. Recorded by Sandy Paton, March 1977.

The irrepressible Irish, however, had songs to offer in retaliation, although they seem to have borrowed this one from the Scots. James N. Healy (*The Mercier Book of Old Irish Street Ballads*, Cork, 1967) says "this is, in fact, a Scottish version of an Irish song," but most of the authorities I have consulted insist that the song originated in Scotland, and it does enjoy a wide currency there. Under the title "Duncan Campbell" it appears in a number of nineteenth-century Scottish collections as well as in W. Roy Mackenzie's *Ballads and Sea Songs from Nova Scotia*, but it seems to be rare in our own oral tradition. This is surprising, since Mackenzie points to two New York printings--"a De Marsan broadside" and *Delaney's Irish Song Book*, No. 3 (no date is given for either)--and says that "this misapprehension [that the song is Irish] . . . was communicated to the broadside versions, which sometimes presented the hero as 'Pat Murphy.'"

In all the "Duncan Campbell" texts the hero is a Scotsman "from the town of Argyll" who is mistaken for an Irishman by a London (or Edinburgh) policeman. "I know you're a Paddy by the cut of your hair;/I know you're a Paddy by the clothes that you wear," he says. In the text given by John Ord (*Bothy Songs and Ballads*, Paisley, Scotland, 1930), Campbell cries:

I am not a Paddy, though Ireland I've seen,
Nor am I a Paddy, though in Ireland I've been,
But though I was a Paddy, that's nothing ava,
There's many a bold hero from Erin-go-Bragh.

Robert Ford's *Vagabond Songs and Ballads of Scotland* (Paisley, Scotland, 1904) offers this fine last stanza:

Now, all you brave fellows that listen to my song,
I don't care a farthing to where you belong;
I come from Argyll, in the Highlands so braw,
But I ne'er take it ill when called Erin-go-Bragh.

Ed Kirby learned these five stanzas from his father when the family lived in southwestern Massachusetts.

In London one day, as I walked down the street,
A quarrelsome fellow I happened to meet,
And, lookin' me over, he gave me some jaw,
Sayin', "What brings ye over from Erin-Go-Bragh?"

Well, the big blackthorn stick that I held in me fist
Around his big body I gave it a twist,
And I silenced his mouth with a blow to the jaw,

And I showed him the game played in Erin-Go-Bragh.

Well, they are all gathered round like a pack of wild geese.

"So here's our old Paddy disturbin' the peace.

We'll lock him in prison for breakin' the law,
This quarrelsome ruffi'n from Erin-Go-Bragh."

"The devil you'll get me, you pack of shelawns,
For here comes Mike Brophy from valley Natlong,
And me mother's first cousin, McQuay from Fort Law,
And big Paddy Kelly from Erin-Go-Bragh."

Well, the lickin' we gave 'em was delightful to see,
And, oh, how we waved our shillelaghs with glee,
As we lathered them well and we laughed at them long,
And we showed 'em the game played in Erin-Go-Bragh,
And we showed 'em the game played in Erin-Go-Bragh.

Track 17

Give an Honest Irish Lad a Chance (Traditional)

Sung by Mrs. Sara Cleveland, Hudson Falls, New York. Recorded by Sandy Paton in Brant Lake, New York, June 1965.

In his excellent *American Labor Songs of the Nineteenth Century*, Phillip S. Foner writes:

Many Irish peasants came to America when their English landlords dispossessed them following the drop in the price of grain after the Napoleonic wars. But the greatest migration came after the potato famine of 1846. Over half the working class of Ireland emigrated to America to stave off starvation. They formed the largest national group among the 4,300,000 immigrants who arrived between 1840 and 1860.

Most of the Irish peasants came to this country as unskilled laborers, and they worked under murderous conditions on canals, turnpikes and railroads. But thousands found no work at all for some years after they arrived; the notation "No Irish Need Apply" became a common feature of job advertisements of the pre-Civil War decade. The bitter reaction of the Irish to job discrimination spawned many songs.

The other version of this song I have been able to locate appears in Robert L. Wright's *Irish Emigrant Ballads and Songs*, where it is reprinted from *Canada's Story in Song* by Edith Fowke, Alan Mills, and Helmut Blume (Toronto, 1960). Froner tells us that it may also be found "as a broadside published by Barr of Glasgow (in the Central Library, Belfast) and by P. Brereton, Dublin (in the UCLA library)." As I have not seen either of these, I cannot compare them to our present text.

Sara Cleveland learned the song from her father, Jerry Creedon, who was born in Cork and came to America in 1873. Sara says, "I don't know whether he learned it in this country or not. He might have had it from his people."

Oh, my name is MacNamara and I come from County Clare
In that darling little isle across the sea,
Where the mountains and the hills, the lakes and rippling rills,
Are singing sweetest music all the day.

Oh, our little farm was small, it would not support us all,
So one of us was forced away from home.
And I bade them all good-bye with a teardrop in my eye,
And sailed for Castle Garden all alone.

Chorus

I'm an honest Irish lad, of work I'm not afraid,
If it's pleasure to you, I will sing or dance.
I'll do anything you say, if you'll only name the day,
And give an honest Irish lad a chance.

When I landed in New York, I tried hard to get work,
And I traveled through the streets from day to day.
I went from place to place with starvation in my face,
But every place they'd want no help, they'd say.

But still I wandered on, a-hoping to find one
That would give a lad a chance to earn his bread.
But then it's all the same, though I know I'm not to blame,
And often I have wished that I were dead.

(Chorus)

But I know I've one kind friend, who a helping hand will lend
To a poor boy; and to help him on at home
I will bring my mother here, and my little sister dear,
And nevermore from them again I'll roam.

I will try to do what's right; I will work both day and night.
Yes, I'll always do the very best I can.
And God will bless the heart who will take a poor boy's part,
And make an honest Irish lad a man.

(Chorus)

Track 18

Knit Stockings (Traditional)

Played by Wilfred Guillette (fiddle), Newport, Vermont, and Maurice Campbell (piano), Orleans, Vermont. Recorded by Sandy Paton, January 1965.

The Canadian border has never served as a cultural dividing line for our folk artists. We share a

common ballad tradition with English-speaking Canadians from the Maritime Provinces in the east to British Columbia in the west; the songs sung in our northern lumber camps are equally popular among loggers in Ontario. The same can be said of our instrumental music, with the added advantage that a good fiddle tune has no language barrier to cross. Many fiddle tunes were brought to this country by French-speaking Canadians who came to work in the lumber woods or on our northern farms. A vigorous cultural exchange has been taking place for centuries, and French-Canadian fiddlers play many Scots and Irish melodies as well as those that derive from their French heritage.

Wilfred Guillette is a Vermonter whose French-speaking family came from Quebec many years ago. He lives very near the Canadian border in a community that is essentially bilingual. Guillette does carpentry for a living, but he fiddles for joy (and often for local square dances). When I asked him about learning to play the violin, he told me this story:

"My father had a good fiddle and he always told me, 'Don't touch!' He'd play for awhile and then he'd put the fiddle away, up on a shelf in the closet. The minute he was gone off to work, I'd have that fiddle down, teaching myself some of the tunes I'd heard him play. One night, after he'd played a few tunes, he put the fiddle down on the table. 'May I try that?' I asked him. 'Oh, all right,' he said, 'but be careful with it!' I picked it up and started right in--dum-de-dum-dum, dum-de-dum--playing away. 'Hey!', 'he said, 'where did you learn to do that? 'Oh, I just sort of caught it, right this minute,' I told him. I don't think he ever did believe me, you know?"

Guillette learned this tune, which seems closely related to the familiar "Old Molly Hare," from another fiddler, whom he met in Island Pond, Vermont. The foot tapping you hear is a common practice among French-Canadian fiddlers, who call it the *tappé des pieds*. It allows a seated fiddler to provide his own rhythm section.

Track 19

The Johnstown Flood (Laws G 14) (Traditional)

Sung by Mack Moody, Huntington, Vermont. Recorded by Sandy Paton, November 1963.

In his *Native American Balladry*, G. Malcolm Laws writes: "The great flood at Johnstown, Pa., in which some 2500 lives were lost, occurred May 31, 1889." Of such tragedies are our ballads born, but Laws adds: "This sentimental piece seems too skillfully constructed to have originated with a folk composer. It may have had its start as newspaper verse." Regardless of its origin, it has been found in oral tradition in New York and Nebraska, as well as in Vermont.

Mack Moody was a farm laborer who lived in a one-room cabin without electricity when we got to know him in Huntington, but he had worked in the Green Mountain lumbering camps in his younger days. He sat in our kitchen one afternoon and sang forty-seven songs for us, including several Child ballads, all in the remarkable declamatory style heard here. "The Johnstown Flood" was one of his favorites.

"Twas on a balmy day in May, and the sun shone far away,
And the birds were sweetly singing in the skies above.

There a city stood serene in a valley both rich and green,
Where thousands dwelt in happiness and love.

Now the scenes are changed, just like up in the range,
And the flood came rushing through that quiet town.
The wind it raved and shrieked, thunder rolled and the lightning streaked,
And the rain it poured an awful torrent down.

A cry of distress rose from east to the west;
Our dear old country now is plunged for woe.
Many people were burnt and drowned in the city of Johnstown,
And were lost in the great overflow.

Now, like a Paul Revere of old, came a rider both brave and bold,
On a big bay horse he's flyin' like a deer,
Giving warning shrills, "Quickly, fly up to the hills!"
But the people smiled and showed no signs of fear.

Ears they were turned away. Both the rider and his bay,
And the many thousand lives he tried to save,
They had no time to spare, or to offer up a prayer,
But was hurled at once into a watery grave.
(Repeat third stanza)

Track 20

The Good Old Days of Adam and Eve (Traditional)

Sung by Mrs. Rosalie Shaw, Essex Junction, Vermont. *Recorded by Sandy Paton, July 1965.*

Our good friend and nearest neighbor in Huntington, Vermont, was Arkley Horner, from whom we first heard a fragment of this thoroughly Yankee song. Later, Mrs. Shaw gave us the two stanzas recorded here. Rosmarie von Trapp, a daughter of the famous Trapp family, contributed the following stanza, which she had obtained from the Flanders manuscript collection (now kept at Middlebury College):

Well, the girls in my day didn't gad about;
If they had one dress, they were will fixed out.
But today, with so many clothes on their backs,
They look like a pumpkin sewed in a sack.

We promptly wrote to Mrs. Flanders, who could not recall the song, but her husband, Senator Ralph Flanders, recalled this stanza from his boyhood:

The boys used to be both happy and gay,
And able to work both night and day.
Now they look like an eel that is skinned;
They tremble like a cornstalk shaking in the wind.

On another occasion, after we had sung for the Vermont State Legislature's annual "Sugar-on-Snow" party, Beech Bly, who was then State Highway Commissioner, gave us an additional stanza he had heard his mother sing:

When I was young and very little,
We used to have a meeting house without any
steeple.
Now you must have a steeple and a bell,
And if you don't go to meetin', you'll surely go
to----.

After piecing together what we thought was a fairly complete song from these varied sources, we received a photocopy of two pages from *The Book of 1001 Songs* (a songster printed in New York around 1846) from Joe Hickerson at the Archive of Folksong in Washington, D.C. There was our song, containing five double stanzas, none of which duplicated those we had found in Vermont. The songster version was all about the evils befalling New York City in those days. One example:

When drinking ale made strong men stronger,
And doctors made folks live the longer;
When our grand dads brew'd gobs of porter,
And thought it a sin to go to bed sober;
Then was the time for games and gambols,
When all New York was covered with brambles;
Hedges and ditches and ponds of water,
But now there's nothing but bricks and mortar.
Sing hey, Sing ho! I can but grieve,
For the good old days of Adam and Eve.

Thus we may see how thoroughly the folk will adapt a music-hall song to suit their own purposes.

When I was young and very little,
We used to make sugar in a potash kittle,
But now you must have an evaporator 'n' pan.
If you don't make white sugar, it ain't worth a damn.

Chorus

O dear, O dear, I can't but agree
With the good old days of Adam and Eve.

When I was young and used to go to balls,
Used to go in ox team or no team a'tall,
But now you must have a horse and a sleigh
And three, four buffalos, and everything gay.

(Chorus)

Track 21

I'll Hit the Road Again, Boys (Traditional: Jehila "Pat" Edwards [?])

Sung (with guitar) by Grant Rogers, Walton, New York. Recorded by Sandy Paton, April 1975.

I know only one other version of this fine song, that which Norman Cazden collected from the excellent Catskill Mountain singer George Edwards and published in *The Abelard Folk Song Book*. In his notes for the song, Cazden writes:

This George Edwards song is probably the most typical example of Catskill Mountain music, and the most personal. Claims to the making of songs by a folk singer or his family often turn out to be exaggerated, but we are convinced after much study that this sturdy autobiographical song did in fact originate in the Catskills and was composed by Jehila "Pat" Edwards, father of the singer. No text like it appears in the folk tradition.

Edwards's song was set to a distinctly Irish melody, with a pronounced modal effect, while the tune sung here is built on a straight major scale. Grant Rogers met George Edwards some years ago and once told me that he also knew Pat Edwards slightly. I suspect that Grant, who has been making up songs all his life, heard the song from one of those two men and simply added it to his own repertory with a simplified tune that he made for himself. There are also a few textual variations of no great significance.

Rogers worked most of his life in the Catskill Mountain stone quarries, singing and fiddling for square dances as a sideline. He made several recordings (see Discography), mostly of his original songs, for Grant is truly a "songmaker of the Catskills."

I am a poor unlucky chap, and I'm very fond of rum.
I'm on the road from morn till night, and I ain't ashamed to bum.
My clothes are wore, my shoes are tore, but still I don't complain;
I'll get up and I'll heist my turkey, and I'll hit the road again.

Chorus

I'll hit the road again, boys, hit the road again;
Be the weather fair, I'll comb me hair, and I'll hit the road again.

Got a job at the Susquehanna yards, where the pay was a buck a day.
Was so hard to make a livin' that I thought she'd hardly pay.
They said they would raise our wages; if they do, I won't complain.
If they don't, I'll heist my turkey, and I'll hit the road again.

(Chorus)

Well, I worked for about a couple of months, and I saved me a little cash,
But then I went out on a spree, and me money went to smash.
Not a damnded penny did I have left, but still I don't complain;
I'll get up and I'll heist my turkey, and I'll hit the road again.

(Chorus)

Now I'm on the road again, boys, and I don't know where I'll go.
Misfortune has been cruel to me, and a-why, I'll never know.
The devil that rides upon my back, well, he sure does make me sore;
But damn his hide, just let him ride, and I'll hit the road once more.
(Chorus)

Track 22

Cherish the Ladies (Traditional)

Played by Brendan Mulvihill (fiddle), Kevin Taylor (accordion), and Seamus Logue (guitar), Bronx, New York. Recorded by Wendy Newton in the Bronx, October 1976.

Can anyone deny that Irish music is alive and well and that a good part of it is living in the Bronx?

Irish culture is as ancient as any that at present thrives in the United States, for Ireland possessed a flourishing musical and literary culture when most of northern Europe was populated by barbarians. The honor and respect granted by the common people to the Irish bard were second to none in the land. What nation can boast a culture of such depth and strength that it could better withstand, as Ireland's has done, centuries of repression and exploitation? When her very language was outlawed, Irish scholars risked their lives to gather their pupils behind the hedgerows and inspire them with the poetry of their native tongue, the wonder of their ancient myths, the pageantry of their history, and the living beauty of their art.

The individual touch of the Irish instrumentalist is very much his own, but it is drawn from his tradition. Each slide, each grace, each decorative invention that enhances the basic melody is contributed by the artist, but it must always be "right"--that is, in accord with the style of the area from which his music has come. No classical musician could work more diligently to perfect his skills than the performers heard here. Some may find it necessary to work at other occupations to make ends meet, but in their approach to their art they are as dedicated as any professional concert violinist.

I feel that this performance, recorded on a night of joyous revelry at the Old Abbey Pub in the Bronx (now closed, sad to say), makes a most appropriate finale for our record. Through three and a half centuries, immigrants from all parts of the world have brought their folk arts to America. Here, sometimes, they have been changed to fit the new environment; in other cases they have been carefully preserved, cherished by those who knew and practiced them. Like the Irish music heard here, each of these now represents a part of the cultural heritage of all Americans.

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New England Traditions in Folk Music

- 1 A Frog He Would A-Wooing Go (Traditional) (2:01)
Gail Stoddard Storm, vocal
- 2 The Farmer's Curst Wife (Traditional) (2:52)
Lewis Lund, vocal
- 3 The Two Brothers (Traditional) (1:28)
Ben Mandel, vocal
- 4 My Man John (Traditional) (2:25)
Gail Stoddard Storm, vocal
- 5 Ladies' Walpole Reel (Traditional) (1:00)
Newton F. Tolman, flute; Kay Gilbert, piano
- 6 Brave Boys (Traditional) (1:44)
Gale Huntington, vocal
- 7 Fair Fannie Moore (Traditional) (3:18)
Sara Cleveland, vocal
- 8 The Jam On Gerry's Rock (Traditional) (4:20)
Lawrence Older, vocal and guitar
- 9 And Now, Old Serpent, How Do You Feel? (0:45)
Mrs. Morris Austin, vocal
- 10 Who Will Bow and Bend Like a Willow? (Traditional) (0:56)
Mrs. Morris Austin, vocal
- 11 A Medley of Scottish Fiddle Tunes (Traditional) (4:09)
Harvey Tolman, fiddle; Rose Tolman, piano
- 12 The Flowers of Edinburgh (Traditional) (1:47)
Phil, Paul, and Sterl Van Arsdale, hammered dulcimers
- 13 The Good Old State of Maine (Lawrence Gorman) (5:32)
James Brown, vocal
- 14 The Dreadnaught (Traditional) (1:55)
Gale Huntington, vocal
- 15 Three Men They Went a-Hunting (Traditional) (1:05)
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- 16 Erin-Go-Bragh (Traditional) (1:22)
Edward Kirby, vocal
- 17 Give an Honest Irish Lad a Chance (Traditional) (4:12)
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- 18 Knit Stockings (Traditional) (1:07)
Wilfred Guillette, fiddle; Maurice Campbell, piano

- 19 The Johnstown Flood (Traditional) (2:11)
Mack Moody, vocal
- 20 The Good Old Days of Adam and Eve (Traditional) (0:35)
Rosalie Shaw, vocal
- 21 I'll Hit the Road Again, Boys (Traditional) (2:28)
Grant Rogers, vocal and guitar
- 22 Cherish the Ladies (Traditional) (3:39)
Brendan Mulvihill, fiddle; Kevin Taylor, accordion; Seamus Logue, guitar

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TEL 212.290-1680 FAX 212.290-1685
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