



# The Full English Folk Chorus Songs Selection



THE  
BLACKBIRD  
AND THRUSH

London,—H. P. SUCH, Machine Presser and Publisher, 177, Union Street, Box

HOW pleasant and delightful :  
 morn,  
 When the ...

ahead for people  
It was me - sum  
15 Jan 7 he

Sx. 89  
(Presumably)

The Punch Lard  
I  
was

Come all ye  
Give an ear  
To him in his  
Good brand  
There's

the Punch &  
I  
was  
long  
praise

Give to England - crystal

(7) ...  
... To  
... payo  
... pretty  
... evening  
... with

# ***The Full English***

The Full English was a unique nationwide project unlocking hidden treasures of England's cultural heritage by making over 58,000 original source documents from 12 major folk collectors available to the world via a ground-breaking nationwide digital archive and learning project. The project was led by the English Folk Dance and Song Society (EFDSS), funded by the Heritage Lottery Fund and in partnership with other cultural partners across England.

The Full English digital archive ([www.vwml.org](http://www.vwml.org)) continues to provide access to thousands of records detailing traditional folk songs, music, dances, customs and traditions that were collected from across the country. Some of these are known widely, others have lain dormant in notebooks and files within archives for decades.

The Full English learning programme worked across the country in 19 different schools including primary, secondary and special educational needs settings. It also worked with a range of cultural partners across England, organising community, family and adult learning events.

**Supported by the National Lottery through the Heritage Lottery Fund, the National Folk Music Fund and The Folklore Society.**



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Produced by the English Folk Dance and Song Society (EFDSS), June 2014  
Compiled by Gavin Davenport and Frances Watt

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# ***The Full English***

## ***Folk Chorus Songs Selection***

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### ***Additional Resources***

Audio recordings of all the songs in this pack sung by Laurel Swift and Ben Moss are available for free download from [www.efdss.org/resourebank](http://www.efdss.org/resourebank)

## Introduction

One type of song that has remained popular across English speaking traditions is the 'chorus song'. These are often led by one singer (in a pub, for example) with the community joining in with the repeated **chorus**, **refrain** or **burden**. This can be simple unison or improvised harmonies of varying levels of complexity. You can hear (and join in with) chorus songs in many folk clubs, singarounds, concerts and festivals.

Here are some well-known chorus songs to provide some starting points for social singing from The Full English digital archive. Due to their popularity many of these songs are geographically widespread and may appear in many versions with all kinds of variation in words and melody.

We have presented examples from various collections in the digital archive, together with 'standard' versions of the lyrics and tunes you might hear today. Where the printed words here differ from those in the digital archive, it is because we have presented a common form of the song for broadest social appeal. Other interesting and unusual versions often exist within the digital archive which you can access at [www.vwml.org](http://www.vwml.org). We have provided the Roud Number for each song, which you can use in the online Advanced Search to locate different variants of the songs presented here.

There are many different types of songs from a range of historical periods which reflect both the social climate at the time of their creation and some of the tastes of those groups and individuals who continued to sing and adapt them. You can find out more about different types of songs at [www.efdss.org/resourcebank](http://www.efdss.org/resourcebank)



## The Barley Mow (Roud 944)

*The Barley Mow* (Roud 944) is a cumulative song found throughout the British Isles. There are versions in the archive from Sussex, Kent, Somerset, Cornwall, Kent, Wiltshire, Dorset, Oxfordshire and more. The 'barley mow' of the title is a stack of barley, gathered one assumes, in readiness for the manufacture of beer!

[www.vwml.org/record/HHA/23/1](http://www.vwml.org/record/HHA/23/1)

Handwritten musical score for "Good Luck to Barley Mow". The score is written on a single sheet of paper with musical notation and lyrics. The title "Good Luck to Barley Mow" is written at the top. The lyrics are: "now here's good luck to Bar-ley, good luck to Bar-ley now - now here's good luck to Bar-ley, good luck to Bar-ley now - with the pint pot, gill pot, half a gill, pitchin and callin' for more, here's good luck - good luck to Barley now - now here's good luck to the quant pot, good luck to Barley now - now here's good luck to the quant pot, good luck to Barley now - oh the quant pot, pint pot, etc". The score includes a 2nd verse and a 3rd verse. The 3rd verse is marked "3rd Verse" and the lyrics are: "now here's good luck to the 'alf a gallon, good luck etc". The 2nd verse is marked "2nd Verse" and the lyrics are: "oh the 'alf-gallon, quant pot, pint pot, etc". The 3rd verse is marked "3rd Verse" and the lyrics are: "And so it goes on building up, as in other cumulative songs. I think all will be obvious if the final verse is given:-". The final verse is marked "Last Verse" and the lyrics are: "now here's good luck to the company, good luck to Barley now etc". The score includes a refrain: "oh the company, sailors, the soldiers, the slaves, the landlord, the landlady, barrel, the 'alf barrel, gallon, the 'alf gallon, quant pot, etc as above". The score is written in G major (one sharp) and 3/4 time. The notation is in treble clef. The score is written by Francis Fryer and collected from 'Wilcox'.

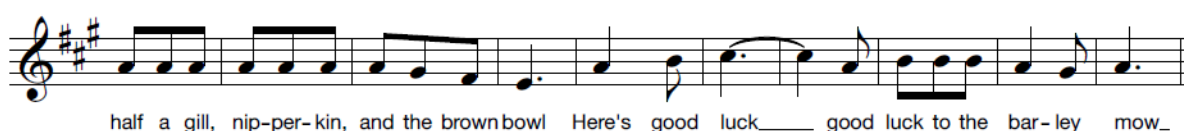
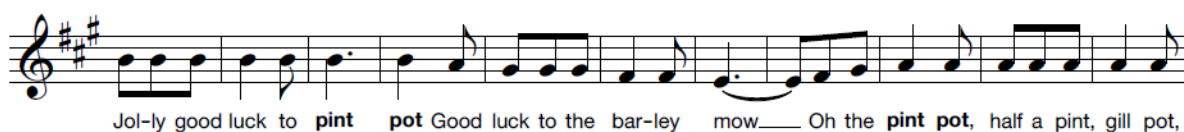
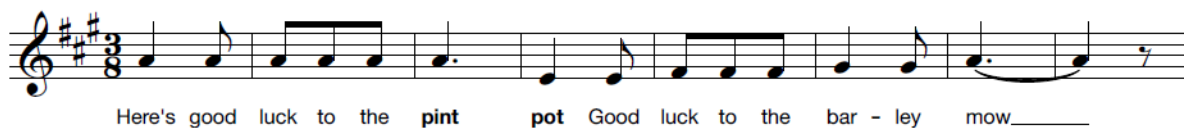
A Version Collected from 'Wilcox' by Francis Fryer and sent to Harry Albino, Sussex

## The Barley Mow

Standard version

Roud Number: 944

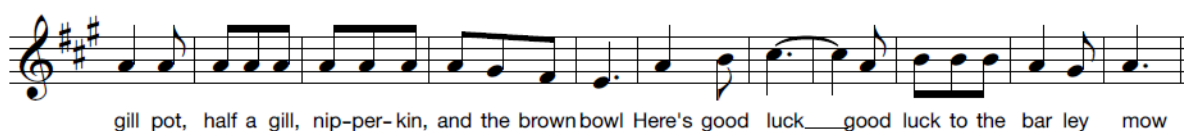
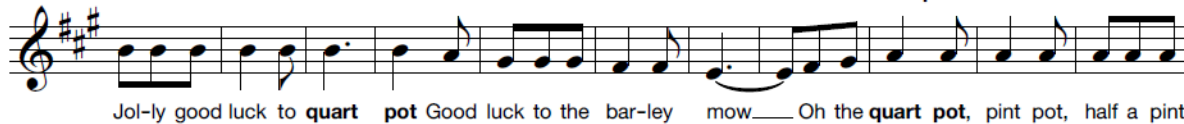
Traditional



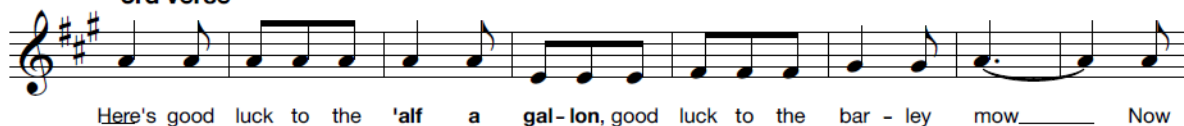
### 2nd verse



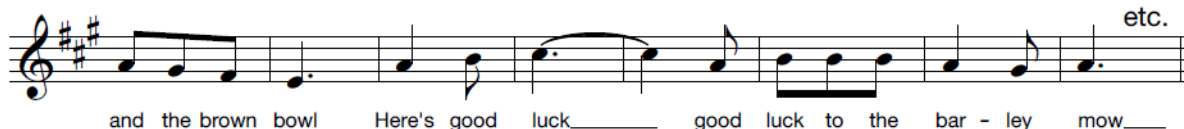
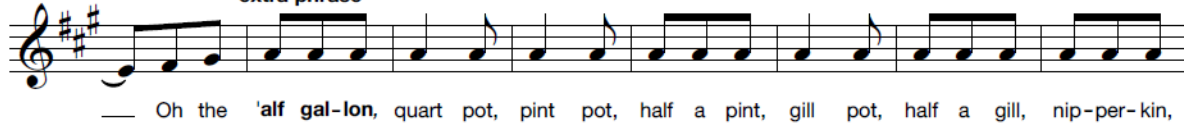
### extra phrase



### 3rd verse



### extra phrase



## The Barley Mow (standard version)

Here's good luck to **the pint pot**

Good luck to the barley mow

Jolly good luck to the pint pot

Good luck to the barley mow

**Refrain: the pint pot, half a pint, gill pot, half a gill, quarter gill, nipperkin, and the brown bowl**

*Here's good luck (good luck!), good luck to the barley mow*

Now here's good luck to **the quart pot**

Good luck to the barley mow

Jolly good luck to the quart pot

Good luck to the barley mow

**Refrain: the quart pot, pint pot, half a pint, gill pot, half a gill, quarter gill, nipperkin, and a round bowl**

*Here's good luck (good luck!), good luck to the barley mow*

### Cumulative verses

*the half-gallon*

*the gallon*

*the half-barrel*

*the barrel*

*the landlord*

*the landlady*

*the daughter*

*the drayer*

*the slavey*

*the cooper*

*the brewer*

*the company*

Up to 12 verses later depending on your enthusiasm or stamina, the traditional 'final' verse

Now here's good luck to the **company**

Good luck to the barley mow

Jolly good luck to the company

Good luck to the barley mow

**Refrain:** *Oh, the company, the brewer, the cooper, the slavey, the drayer, the daughter, the landlady, the landlord, the barrel, half-barrel, the gallon, the half-gallon, quart pot, pint pot, half a pint, gill pot, half a gill, quarter gill, nipperkin, and the brown bowl*

*Here's good luck (good luck!), good luck to the barley mow*

# The Sweet Nightingale (Roud 371)

The words of *Sweet Nightingale* were first published in Robert Bell's *Ancient Poems of the Peasantry of England*, 1857, with the note:

"This curious ditty—said to be a translation from the ancient Cornish tongue... we first heard in Germany... The singers were four Cornish miners, who were at that time, 1854, employed at some lead mines near the town of Zell. The leader, or captain, John Stocker, said that the song was an established favourite with the lead miners of Cornwall and Devonshire, and was always sung on the pay-days and at the wakes; and that his grandfather, who died 30 years before at the age of a hundred years, used to sing the song, and say that it was very old." Unfortunately Bell failed to get a copy either of words or music from these miners, and relied in the end on a gentleman of Plymouth who "was obliged to supply a little here or there, but only when a bad rhyme, or rather none at all, made it evident what the real rhyme was. I have read it over to a mining gentleman at Truro, and he says it is pretty near the way we sing it."

The tune most people sing was collected by Rev. Sabine Baring-Gould from E.G. Stevens of St. Ives, Cornwall. [www.vwml.org/record/SBG/3/2/7](http://www.vwml.org/record/SBG/3/2/7)

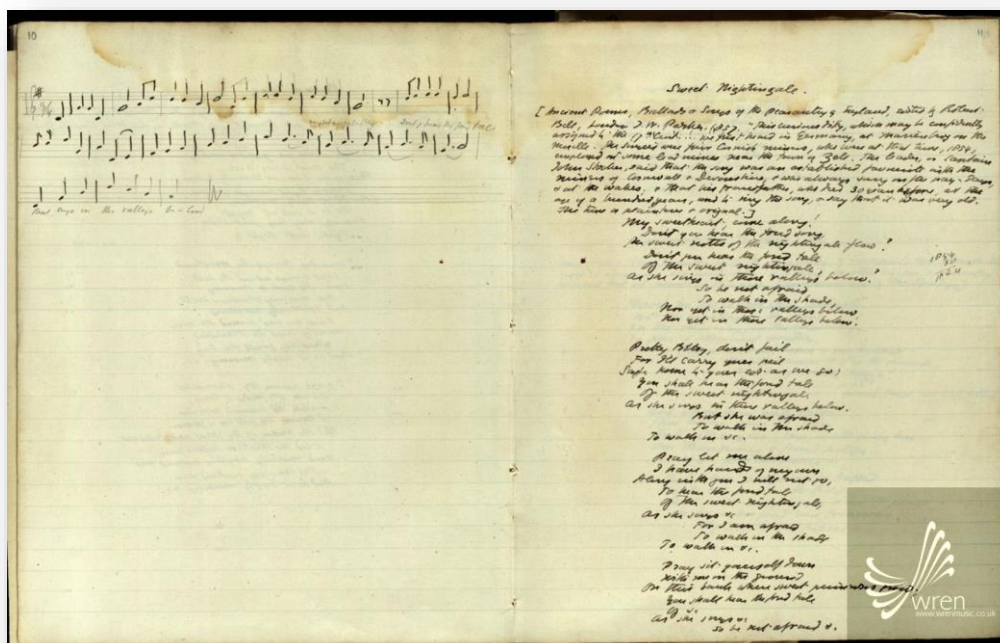


Photo: original manuscript from The Full English digital archive



## Sweet Nightingale

Standard version

Roud Number: 317

Traditional

My sweet-heart, come along! Don't you hear the fond song? The sweet notes where the nigh-tin-gale flows? For to hear the fond tale of the sweet nigh-tin-gale as she sings in the val-ley be-low. As she sings in the val-ley be-low.

My sweetheart, come along! Don't you hear the fond song?  
The sweet notes where the nightingale flows?  
For to hear the fond tale of the sweet nightingale,  
As she sings in the valley below,  
As she sings in the valley below.

Pretty Betsy, don't fail, for I'll carry your pail,  
Safe home to your cottage we'll go;  
You shall hear the fond tale of the sweet nightingale,  
As she sings in the valley below,  
As she sings in the valley below.

'Pray leave me alone, I have hands of my own;  
And along with you, sir, I won't go,  
For to hear the fond tale of the sweet nightingale,  
As she sings in the valley below,  
As she sings in the valley below.

Come sit yourself down with me on the ground,  
On the banks where sweet primroses grow;  
And you'll hear the fond tale of the sweet nightingale,  
As she sings in the valley below,  
As she sings in the valley below.

This couple agreed; to be married with speed,  
And it's off to the church they did go.  
She's no longer afraid for to walk in the shade,  
Or to walk in the valley below,  
Or to walk in the valley below.

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# Fathom The Bowl / Punch Ladle

## (Roud 880)

*Fathom the Bowl* probably began life as a printed broadside, for example [www.vwml.org/record/FK/13/42/1](http://www.vwml.org/record/FK/13/42/1) as the collected versions are all very similar in their wording, most coming from the southern counties of England.

Alfred Williams collected in the countryside around the Upper Thames in the early part of this century and found *Fathom the Bowl* sung all the way from Malmesbury to Oxford.

These lyrics follow closely the version collected from Richard Frost by Clive Carey on 17 Aug 1911 in Stedham, Sussex. [www.vwml.org/record/CC/1/89](http://www.vwml.org/record/CC/1/89)

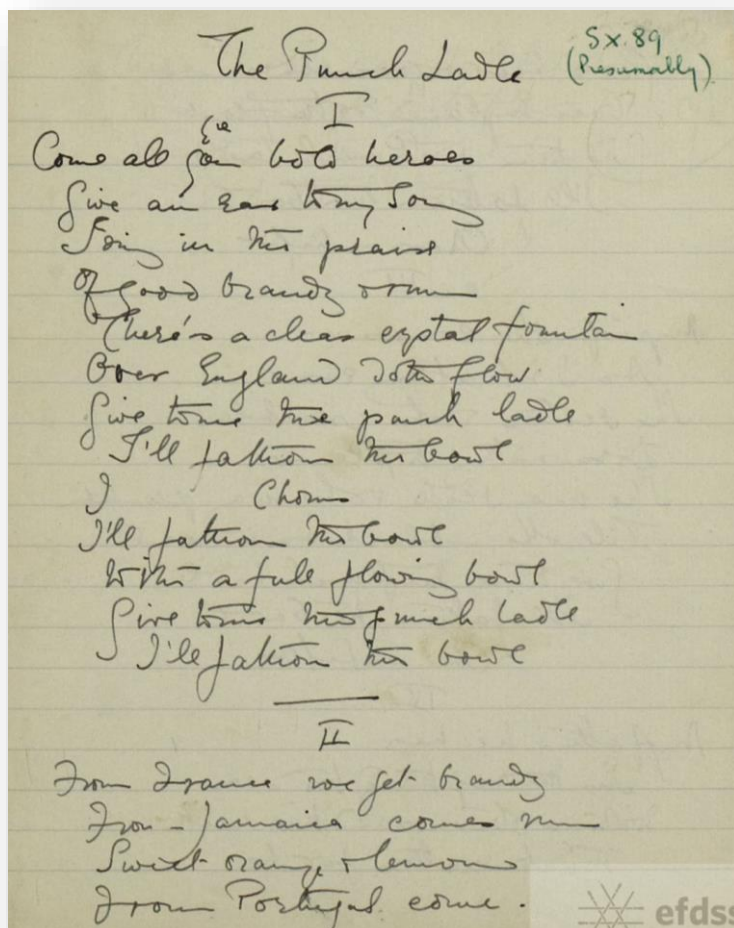


Photo: original manuscript from The Full English digital archive

## Fathom the Bowl

Standard version

Roud Number: 880

Traditional

Come all you bo-ld her-oes, give an ear to my song And we'll sing in\_\_ the\_\_ pra-ise of good  
bran-dy and rum There's a clear cry-stal fo-unt-tain near Eng-land shall ro-ll Give  
me the punch la\_\_dle, I'll fa-thom the bowl, I'll fa-thom the bowl I'll  
fa-thom the bo-wl, Give me the punch la-dle, I'll fa-thom the bowl

Come all you bold heroes, give an ear to my song  
And we'll sing in the praise of good brandy and rum  
There's a clear crystal fountain near England shall roll  
Give me the punch ladle, I'll fathom the bowl

### Chorus

*I'll fathom the bowl, I'll fathom the bowl  
Give me the punch ladle, I'll fathom the bowl*

From France we do get brandy, from Jamaica comes rum  
Sweet oranges and apples from Portugal come  
But stout and strong cider are England's control  
Give me the punch ladle, I'll fathom the bowl

My wife she do disturb me when I'm laid at my ease  
She scolds and she grumbles as much she please  
she may scold and may grumble til she's black as the coal  
Give me the punch ladle, I'll fathom the bowl

My father he do lie in the depths of the sea  
With no stone at his head but what matters for he  
There's a clear crystal fountain, near England shall roll  
Give me the punch ladle, I'll fathom the bowl

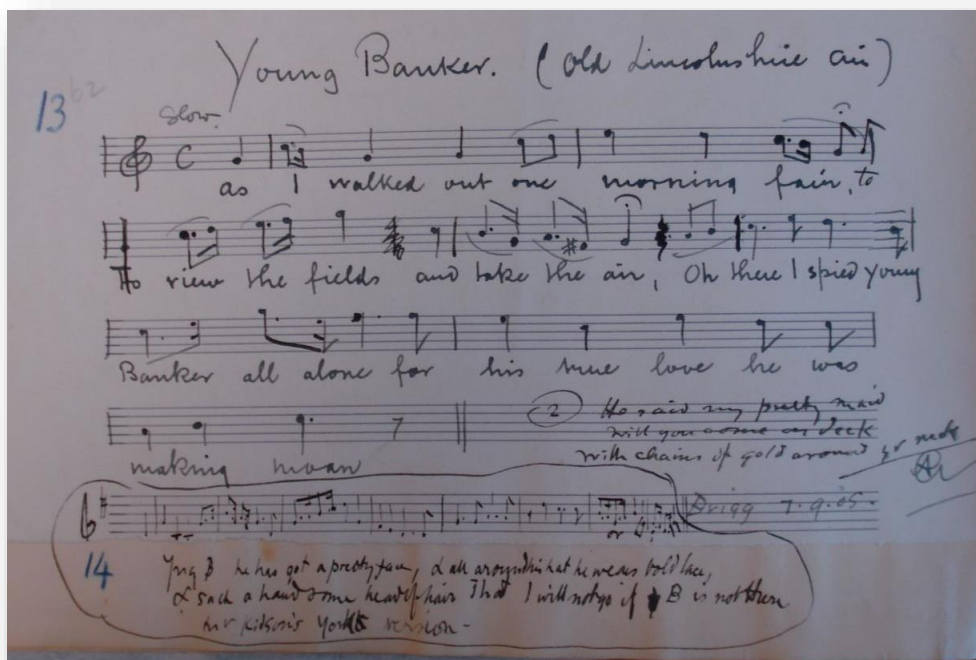
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# Young Banker (Roud 3321)

**Percy Grainger & Frank Kidson Collections**

[www.vwml.org/record/PG/1/14](http://www.vwml.org/record/PG/1/14)

[www.vwml.org/record/FK/3/63](http://www.vwml.org/record/FK/3/63)



*Young Banker* is a classic tale of a spurned lover (see *The Wedding Song* by the Copper family for another) who prepares to take rejection on the chin and set off on their own, only for the object of his affections to change her mind. Having been scorned by the girl, the boy then rejects her. A 'banker' in this sense is not a member of a financial institution but a 'banksman' overseeing the loading and unloading of a boat.

The version of *Young Banker* most commonly sung these days is an amalgamation of two pieces collected by Frank Kidson. One from The Isle of Axholme, near Doncaster and the other from Knaresborough, and put together and popularised by **The Watsons**, a well-known singing family from Hull in East Yorkshire.

Percy Grainger's version was collected from Frank Kidson himself.



## Young Banker

Collected from Charles Lolley by Frank Kidson, 1892, Leeds  
[www.vwml.org/record/FK/3/63](http://www.vwml.org/record/FK/3/63)

Roud Number: 3321  
Traditional

As I walk-ed out on-e morn-ing fair To view the gre-en fields and take fresh air I  
saw young bank - er sta-nd-ing there, And h - is tr - ue love was a la - dy fair Young  
bank-er he had such a hand - some face, And all a - round his hat he wore a band of lace Be-  
sides such a hand - some he - ad of hair, For my\_\_ you - ng bank - er I will go there

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As I walked out one morning fair,  
To view the green fields and take fresh air,  
I saw young banker standing there,  
And his true love was a lady fair.

### Chorus (after each verse):

*Young banker he had (such) an handsome face,  
(And) all around his hat he wore a band of lace,  
Beside such an handsome head of hair,  
For my young banker I will go there.*

He said me pretty fair maid will you go on deck,  
With a chain of gold around your neck,  
Whatever you do I will prove true,  
But the answer that she gave, I'll have none of you.

Young banker turned around for to go away,  
But she called after him for to bid him stay,  
stay stay and I will prove true,  
But the answer that she gave, I'll have none of you.

Now she thought that she heard a foreman say,  
Come pack up your clothes and come away,  
It pierced her through the very heart,  
To think that young banker and her should part.

So come all you pretty fair maids your senses of loss,  
Since the day in love you have been crossed,  
For you may lament and you may say,  
Forever rue the day that you said nay.

# Pleasant and Delightful

(Roud 660)

[www.vwml.org/record/COL/6/77](http://www.vwml.org/record/COL/6/77)

This song is widespread in England and still heard in many folk club and festival singing sessions. Often the delivery of the verses is quite perfunctory with all the emphasis of the singing being placed on the communal delivery of the chorus. Though on surface reading the lyric is the same sentimental fare as many other songs of sailors parting from their beloved, it is rarely rendered in anything other than a slightly comic manner. It is quite common that as the song progresses audience members will add in humorous actions to illustrate various words in the song, including adding a comic 'pop' to the drawing of the ring.

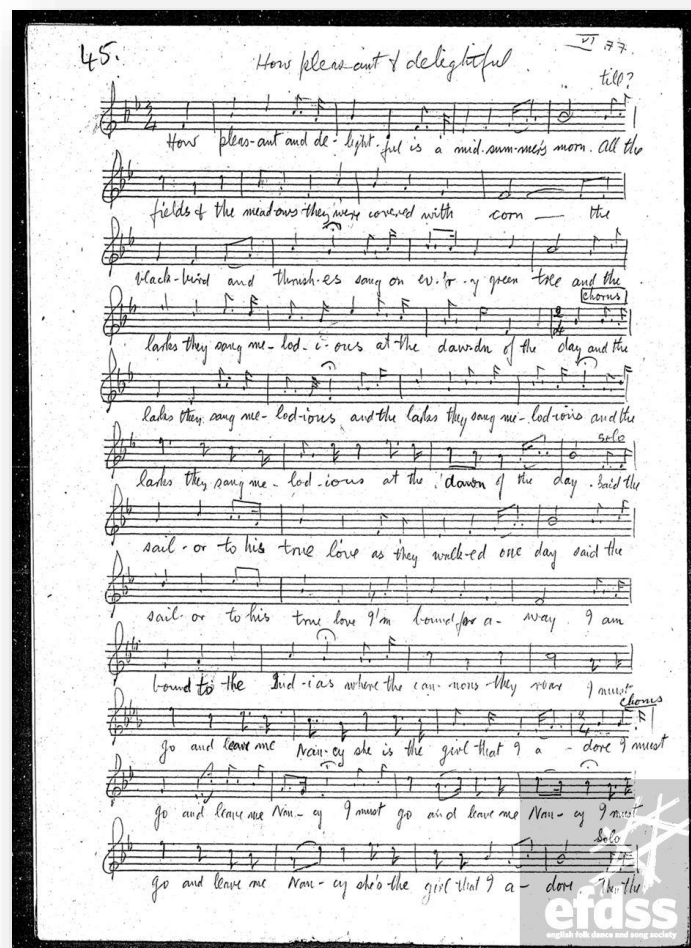


Photo: original manuscript from The Full English digital archive

## Pleasant and Delightful

Collected by Francis Collinson  
[www.vwml.org/record/COL/6/77](http://www.vwml.org/record/COL/6/77)

Roud Number: 660  
Traditional



It was plea-sant and de-light-ful on a mid su-mmers morn And the green fields and  
mea-dows were all cov-eerd in corn And the black-birds and\_ thru-shes sang on ev-er-y green  
Chorus  
spray And the larks they sang mel-o-di-ous at the dawn-ing of the day, And the  
larks they sang mel-o-di-ous And the larks they sang mel-o-di-ous And the  
larks they sang mel-o-di-ous At the dawn-ing of the day

The Full English: [www.vwml.org](http://www.vwml.org)  
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It was pleasant and delightful on a midsummer's morn  
And the green fields and the meadows were all covered in corn;  
And the blackbirds and thrushes sang on every green spray  
And the larks they sang melodious at the dawning of the day,  
And the larks they sang melodious (3x) at the dawning of the day.

Now a sailor and his true love were a-walking one day.  
Said the sailor to his true love, "I am bound far away.  
I'm bound for the East Indies where the load cannons roar  
And I'm bound to leave you Nancy, you're the girl that I adore,  
And I'm bound to leave you Nancy (3x) you're the girl that I adore."

Then the ring from off her finger she instantly drew,  
Saying, "Take this, dearest William, and my heart will go too."  
And as they were embracing tears from her eyes fell,  
Saying, "May I go along with you?" "no, my love, farewell,"  
Saying, "May I go along with you?" (3x) "no, my love, farewell,"

"Fare thee well my dearest Nancy, no longer can I stay,  
For the topsails are hoisted and the anchors aweigh,  
And the ship she lies waiting for the fast flowing tide,  
And if ever I return again, I will make you my bride,  
And if ever I return again (3x), I will make you my bride."

# To Be A Farmer's Boy (Roud 408)

Tune collected by Clive Carey: [www.vwml.org/record/CC/1/382](http://www.vwml.org/record/CC/1/382)

Words collected by Lucy Broadwood: [www.vwml.org/record/LEB/5/52/2](http://www.vwml.org/record/LEB/5/52/2)

*To Be A Farmer's Boy* (Or *The Farmer's Boy*) evokes a hugely sentimental image of a rural past, where hard work on a farm is every bit as heroic as the career of a story book knight, with the wandering child growing up to get the farm and the girl as a result of his steadfast nature and hard work. It appears as a 19<sup>th</sup> Century broadside called the *Lucky Farmer Boy* which was collected by both Cecil Sharp and Frank Kidson and appears to have caught the ear of the general population, turning up a number of times with singers around the country. Many songs echo these sentiments and it is an old fashioned British equivalent of the 'American Dream' model – that anyone can achieve their modest dreams by hard work and persistence.

This was once the closing song of The National Folk Festival, England, where all the attendees would join in the choruses to bring the festival to a close.

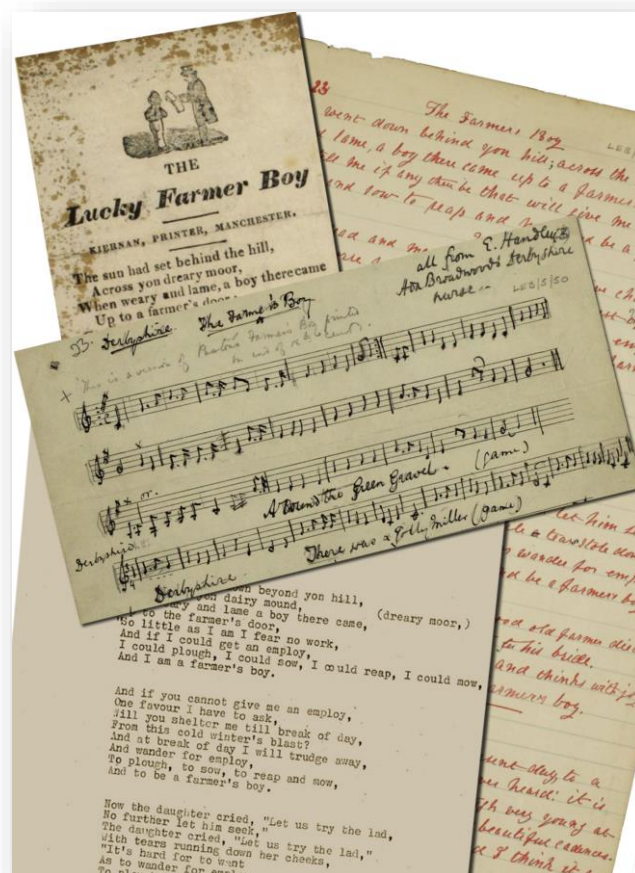


Photo: examples of original manuscripts of *The Farmer's Boy* from The Full English digital archive



## To Be A Farmer's Boy

Tune collected by Clive Carey: [www.vwml.org/record/CC/1/382](http://www.vwml.org/record/CC/1/382)

Words collected by Lucy Broadwood: [www.vwml.org/record/LEB/5/52/2](http://www.vwml.org/record/LEB/5/52/2)

Roud Number: 408

Traditional

The sun went down be - yond yon hill, ac - ross the drea - ry moor Wea -

- ry and lame a boy there came up to a far - mers door Can you tell me if an - y

there be that will gi - ve me em - pl - o - y To reap and sow, to

plough and mow, to be a farm - er's boy - To be a farm - er's boy

The sun went down beyond yon hill, across the dreary moor  
Weary and lame a boy there came up to a farmer's door  
Can you tell me if any there be that will give me employ:  
To reap and sow, to plough and mow, to be a farmer's boy, to be a farmer's boy

My father's dead and mother's left with her five children small  
And what is worse for mother still I'm the eldest of them all  
Though little I be I fear no work if you will me employ  
To reap and sow, to plough and mow, to be a farmer's boy, to be a farmer's boy

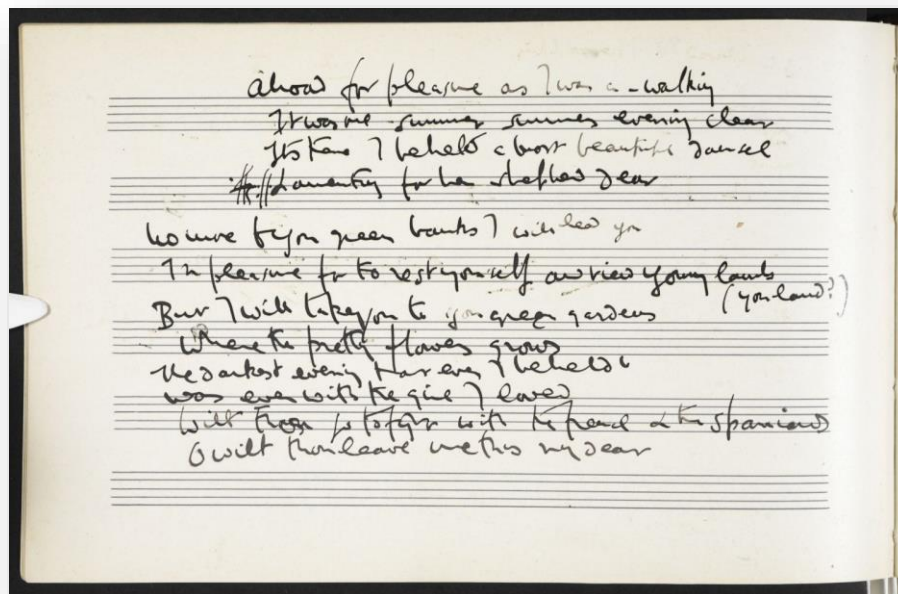
The daughter said "Pray try the lad, no farther let him seek"  
"Oh yes, dear Doll" the farmer cried, while a tear stole down his cheek  
"For those who'll work 'tis hard to want or wander for employ  
To reap and sow, to plough and mow, to be a farmer's boy, to be a farmer's boy"

In course of time he grew a man and the poor old farmer died  
He left the lad the farm he had and the daughter for his bride  
The boy that was, now farmer is, he smiles and thinks with joy  
That lucky day he came that way to be a farmer's boy, to be a farmer's boy

## Abroad for Pleasure (Roud 1046)

Alternative titles: Pratty Flowers or The Holmfirth Anthem

[www.vwml.org/record/RVW2/6/7](http://www.vwml.org/record/RVW2/6/7)



*Photo: Version Collected by Ralph Vaughan Williams, 30 August 1911, Barnard Castle, Co. Durham*

This song is associated strongly with the old West Riding of Yorkshire, though it has been collected widely throughout England. It is a pastoral love song set against the backdrop of a soldier or sailor about to head off to war against foreign enemies. This is a very common theme in English folk song. Often known as the Holmfirth Anthem, it has strong links with the Holm Valley, and was a favourite of **hunt suppers** (events following a day's fox hunting) where it would be led by a noted singer with the rest of the audience joining in on the repeated phrases. Its place in these kind of communal environments has led to it turning p in sessions of **traditional Christmas carols**, where secular songs often form part of a program later in the afternoon. The adoption of these models of social singing has led to this song being the now traditional closing song of the Whitby Folk Week, in August every year, where all the remaining attendees sign this song before claiming a piece of lucky heather from the garland to see them through to the next year.

## Abroad for Pleasure

(standard version)

Roud Number: 1046

Traditional

A - broad for plea - sure as I was a - walk - ing On one sum mer sum mer's eve - ning clear A -

clear There I be - held a most beau - ti - ful dam - sel La - ment - ing

for her shep - herd swain La - ment - ing for her shep - herd swain

Abroad for pleasure as I was a-walking  
On one summer summer's evening clear  
There I beheld a most beautiful damsel  
Lamenting for her shepherd swain

The fairest evening that e'er I beheld thee  
Evermore with the lad I adore  
Wilt thou go fight the French and the Spaniards  
Wilt thou leave me thus my dear?

No more to yon green banks will I take thee  
With pleasure for to rest myself and view the lambs  
But I will take you to yon green garden  
Where the pretty pretty flowers grow



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