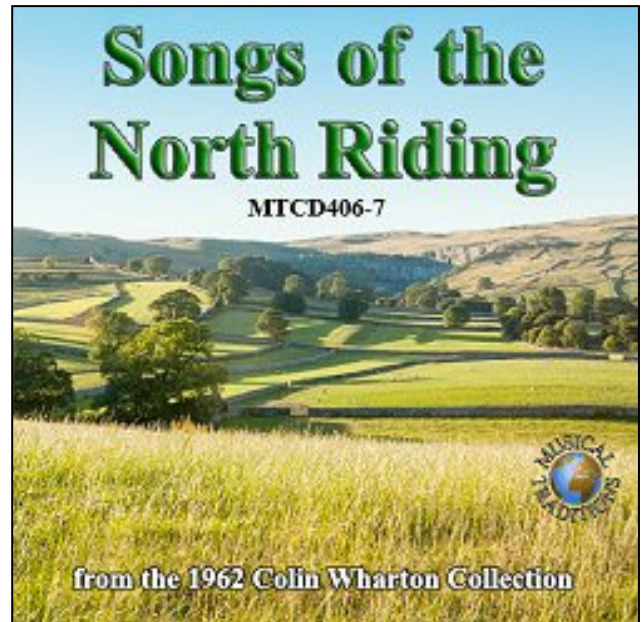


In 1962 Colin S Wharton published his thesis 'Folk Songs from the North Riding'. This thesis was the culmination of his collecting in the North Riding of Yorkshire. The finished work was 149 pages long and divided into five sections, according to subject matter: Songs of Love and Courtship, Songs from the Farm, Hunting Songs, Occasional Songs, and Songs of Sorrow. My thanks to Mossy Christian for the following extracts from the thesis, of which I don't have a copy.



Wharton stated that Arthur Wood, a meticulous man, notated his songs in an exercise book. After his death the book was burned - thankfully Nigel Huddleston had copied the songs in full. This version of *Dick Turpin's Ride to York*, is one from Arthur Wood's own pen: 'Mr Wood composed this early this century at the request of his friends'. He also wrote

his wonderful version of *The Tailor's Britches*, which is clearly based upon the traditional version, but greatly improved! The final track on the first CD of this release, *The Mangy Fox*, is another of his own compositions, reportedly based on a true sequence of events. Wharton wrote 'It is an example of folk composition and worth preserving, though as in many hunting songs, the promise 'it will not take long' is not kept!'

Of *The Ship That Never Returned*, Wharton records 'The pains of parting and going to sea are seen from the point of view of the folk, which is genuine. There is no lachrymose sentiment or exaggerated self-pity: the tragedy is stated simply and objectively, briefly and impersonally, and the nature of the song is reflected in the clear, bold intervals and crisp rhythm of its tune'.

Willy Went To Westerdale was sung by James Duell, who learned the song as a young boy and 'Insisted on closing all doors and windows before singing' possibly because it 'inclined to the bawdy'! Wharton considered that *The Country Lad*, sung by Jack Watson was 'Full of self-appropriation, and probably not very old', and also that it was 'not the best example of folk song'.

It was noted that *Fylingdales Parish*, sung by Fred Grayson, was 'perhaps the best-known song in the North Riding'. Wharton also explained that 'Unlike [Frank] Kidson, who was more interested in the tunes and had 'no wish to inflict upon the readers more than two verses of this effusion', I am pleased to present the whole song'

One song collected from Tom Batterbee was *Farmer Giles*. Wharton commented that the song 'was used to accompany the North Skelton Sword Dance Team, of which Tom was a member'.

Wharton wrote at length - citing many folklorists - about the possible significance of *The Derby Ram*, sung here by Fred Swails, and noted that 'It was in fact part of an old traditional masque'. Wharton later referred to the sacrificial significance of the play, with which he believed this song to be connected, but also that 'The lies persist for their absurdity and entertainment when the pagan belief is dead, and to-day the Derby Ram is a comic song'.

Bill Pennock provided Wharton with multiple songs - including the *Bonny Hawthorn*, which 'must be 100 years old at least', and 'was well known in the North Riding as 'Lealholm's National Anthem''. (Lealholm being a small village ten miles to the north of Goathland). In the thesis, Wharton filled in the missing verses with those he collected from Mr Williamson, of Castleton, Whitby.

There was a precedent for collecting from the Pennock family, as Billy's father - Nesswell Pennock - was visited by Frank and Ethel Kidson, then again in 1914 by Cecil Sharp, Ellis Roberts, and Maud Karpeles. Peter Kennedy later recorded Bill Pennock, as did Mary and Nigel Huddleston.

William Noble sang *T'Awd Sow*, and it was published as the first song in the section 'Songs from the Farm'. Wharton observed that 'The informants were proud of their dialect, and eager for me to take the words down as pronounced'.

Wharton published the text of the song *The Lord Nelson Inn* in the thesis, but not the tune. Notated from William's elder brother Ralph Noble, who had been given the words by Mrs Peggy Dobson - the landlady of one of the public houses in Beck Hole, a small village near Goathland. He sadly could not remember the tune to this charming promotional song, the last verse being '*Drink success to old Peggy's hotel in Beck Hole, in chorus we'll join till we make the woods ring, with health to brave Nelson and God save the King!*'

Jim Crow's a Dandy was recorded from Ralph Noble. Wharton remarked that 'The Crow is black, and the phrase 'Jim Crow' in the USA implied Negro and white segregation, or the old southern tradition of white master and black slave'. He also speculated that it entered the English folk tradition most probably via 'Negro minstrels'. Whether a song of such origins, and with such connotations would be so readily sung today is questionable.

Some of the singers recorded here had been previously visited by Mary and Nigel Huddleston, and their songs would later be published in the Huddleston's book *Songs of The Ridings, The Yorkshire Musical Museum*.

I must apologise for the quality of these sound recordings. It appears that they were 'digitised' by being copied to a minidisk in 2005, some 43 years after their initial recording, and a minidisk recording utilises a 'lossy' compression algorithm to minimise the size of the resultant files. It seems that Mr Wharton was clearly capable of making good recordings, so I would imagine that somewhere in the chain of digitising and subsequent copying, the faults you can hear crept in. The compressed nature of the sound has meant that noise reduction software, whilst removing some noise, actually causes unacceptable distortion to the results. I have removed as many of the clicks, pops and burbling that I can, by hand - happily, these are mostly confined to the first few seconds of the affected tracks, but the final results are not as good as I would wish.

I should also offer my sincere thanks to Jim Carroll, who actually copied the three reels of tape in his possession three times, in order to get the best results possible - so what you have here is the best we can do.

I should also add that I've put all the hunting songs together at the end of CD 2 because I don't like hunting songs and I know that many others don't either - even though many of them have superb tunes. If you like them, they're there - if not, just stop listening after track 22.

The Singers:

Brief notes on singers by Colin Wharton, 1962.

Tom Batterbee, (about 65) - 31, Oxford St, Boosbeck.

Has always resided in this area. Formerly member of North Skelton sword dance team.

Tom Boyes, (80) Conn House, Castleton, Whitby

Renowned in North Riding as extremely shrewd horsedealer and huntsman. Claimed to know many hunting songs, but required enormous quantities of whisky. Announced the names of his songs after singing them.

Jimmy Duell, (67) 67 High Street, Hinderwell

Mrs G H Freer, (81) 48 Hillcrescent Avenue, Scarborough

Lived in Scarborough five years and near Hull before that. Qualified music teacher; has had a life of music

Fred Grayson, (about 65) Water Ark Cottage, Goathland Formerly member of Goathland Plough Stots sword dance team. Has always been a resident of the area.

Harry Grayson, (80) Green End, Goathland, Whitby
Brother of Fred Grayson above. Has long been a resident of the area. Formerly a huntsman.

Joe Hodgeson, (80) Inges Terrace, Grosmont, Whitby
Always lived in the area. Formerly a farmer. Remembered several fragments and whole songs, and was most charming.

Anthony Newton, (80) Greengate Cottage, West Barnby
Always lived in the district. Humourist; formerly a music-hall entertainer.

Walter Nichols, (about 55) The Schoolhouse, Newton,

Ralph Noble, (70) Cuba Cottage, Burythorpe, Malton
Lived at Goathland until retired from work five years ago. Formerly a farmer and fiddler in the Plough Stots team.

William Noble, (about 63) 6 Priory Park, Grosmont, Whitby
Brother of Ralph Noble above. Also a native of the area and former member of the Plough Stots team.

Bill Pennock, (75) 6 Water Ark Cottages, Goathland,
Native of Goathland and son of Mr Nesswell Pennock who sang for Kidson, and who died in 1947, aged 86. Still works as a blacksmith. Knows several non-folk songs. Also played fiddle in Plough Stots team.

Frank Pickering, (75) Forge House, Lealholm, Whitby

Reg Pickering, (72) The Ranch, Fylingdales, Whitby
Farmer cousin of Frank Pickering above. Local native.

Fred Swales, (about 50) Bell Cross Nurseries, Howden.
Excellent voice and member of Nowden Minster choir, but not one of the 'folk'.

Jack Watson, (about 68) Howden Dyke, Howden
Formerly a music-hall entertainer with John Beaumont.

Frank Weatherill, (70) Oakfield, Danby, Whitby

Bill White, (62) Chestnut View, Ugthorpe, Whitby
Born and always lived in Ugthorpe. Farmer. Roman Catholic; 8 children. Refused to sing bawdy songs though he admitted they were acceptable within the folk tradition.

George Williamson, (72) Castleton, Whitby

Jim Winspear, (about 40) Denby, The Carrs, Sleights

Dave Winter, (about 30) Kay Green Farm, Egton Bridge
Farm manager. Goes hunting regularly.

Arthur Wood, (82) 15 Ovington Street, Middlesborough
Married fifty two years; four children, two of whom are now in Australia. Both he and his wife born at Goathland, where they lived until 1920. Arthur's grandparents kept the old mill and 'Bay Horse Inn' at Littlebeck where, as a boy, Arthur learnt many of his songs.

His parents kept the 'Board Hotel' at Lealholm Bridge from 1888 to 1898. Arthur left school at eleven and first worked in a gannister quarry, and subsequently in the whinstone mines, ironstone mines, and a coal mine; then he went to sea.

Travelled to India and elsewhere, and was a fireman on board ship during World War I. Left the sea in 1920, moved to Middlesborough and became boilerman. But when retired, he returned to ships again as watchman: watched the 'Northumbrian Coast' whenever this vessel was in the Tees, and retired from this work only eight months ago. Arthur knew several less genuine folk songs. He sang seriously and slowly and with purpose. Has a predilection for sad songs and has written the words of all his songs in an exercise book. Very charming and helpful.

Track lists:

- | | | | |
|----|---|----|---|
| 1 | <i>The Bonny Hawthorn</i> - Billy Pennock | 1 | <i>Willie Went to Westerdale</i> - James Duell |
| 2 | <i>The Tailor's Britches</i> - Arthur Wood | 2 | <i>The Soldier's Return</i> - Arthur Wood |
| 3 | <i>Down In The Meadows</i> - Joe Hodgeson | 3 | <i>The Baby's Name</i> - Billy Pennock |
| 4 | <i>Smock's made of Linen</i> - Billy Pennock | 4 | <i>Gentle Annie</i> - Arthur Wood |
| 5 | <i>The Ship that Never Returned</i> - Arthur Wood | 5 | <i>The Old Yow</i> - Walter Nichols |
| 6 | <i>Betsy Baker</i> - Bill White | 6 | <i>The Page Boy</i> - Jack Watson |
| 7 | <i>Marrow Bones</i> - Arthur Wood | 7 | <i>The Sailor's Farewell</i> - Arthur Wood |
| 8 | <i>The Sucking Pig</i> - Bill White | 8 | <i>All Jolly Fellows/Plough</i> - Ralph Noble |
| 9 | <i>Stowbrow</i> - Frank Pickering | 9 | <i>The Indian Lass</i> - Arthur Wood |
| 10 | <i>The Banks of Sweet Dundee</i> - Arthur Wood | 10 | <i>Farmer Giles</i> - Tom Batterbee |
| 11 | <i>Leeds Old Church</i> - Jack Watson | 11 | <i>Spencer the Rover</i> - Arthur Wood |
| 12 | <i>The Anchor's Weighed</i> - Arthur Wood | 12 | <i>The Country Lad</i> - Jack Watson |
| 13 | <i>Rumpsy Bumpsy</i> - Harry Grayson | 13 | <i>Jim Crow's a Dandy</i> - Ralph Noble |
| 14 | <i>Joe Muggins</i> - John Beaumont | 14 | <i>Maggie</i> - Arthur Wood |
| 15 | <i>The Battle of Trafalgar</i> - Arthur Wood | 15 | <i>The Scarlet and Blue</i> - Ralph Noble |
| 16 | <i>Spanish Ladies</i> - John Beaumont | 16 | <i>The Merry Ploughboy</i> - Jim Allonson |
| 17 | <i>The Parson's Sheep</i> - Joe Hodgeson | 17 | <i>Between Whitby & Yarmouth</i> - Anthony Newton |
| 18 | <i>The Sailor's Grave</i> - Arthur Wood | 18 | <i>Gentle Annie</i> - Billy Pennock |
| 19 | <i>Barley Mow</i> - Tom Batterbee | 19 | <i>Dick Turpin's Ride to York</i> - Arthur Wood |
| 20 | <i>The Dark Eyed Sailor</i> - Arthur Wood | 20 | <i>The Bonny Hawthorn</i> - George Williamson |
| 21 | <i>Two Little Maids</i> - Billy Pennock | 21 | <i>Stowbrow</i> - Unnamed singer |
| 22 | <i>Johnny Sands</i> - Bill White | 22 | <i>Faithless Lover</i> - Arthur Wood |
| 23 | <i>The Rose of County Clare</i> - Arthur Wood | 23 | <i>A Fine Hunting Day</i> - Joe Hodgeson |
| 24 | <i>The Crocodile</i> - Fred Swales | 24 | <i>The Horn of The Hunter</i> - Dave Winter |
| 25 | <i>The Bride's Good Health</i> - Joe Hodgeson | 25 | <i>Fylingdales Parish</i> - Frank Pickering |
| 26 | <i>Boarding School Lasses</i> - Harry Grayson | 26 | <i>The Ullswater Hunting Song</i> - Dave Winter |
| 27 | <i>Pretty Nancy of Yarmouth</i> - Arthur Wood | 27 | <i>Fylingdales Parish</i> - Fred Grayson |
| 28 | <i>T'Awd Sow</i> - William Noble | 28 | <i>Valentine's Day</i> - Reg Pickering |
| 29 | <i>Three Jolly Fishermen</i> - Frank Wetherill | 29 | <i>The Glaisdale Harriers</i> - Jim Winspear |
| 30 | <i>The Cliffs of Ould Whitby</i> - Arthur Wood | 30 | <i>A Fine Hunting Day</i> - Lynas Bennison |
| 31 | <i>The Derby Ram</i> - Fred Swales | 31 | <i>Drink Puppy Drink</i> - Lynas Bennison |
| 32 | <i>The Battle of Waterloo</i> - Arthur Wood | | |
| 33 | <i>A Yacre o' Land</i> - Frank Weatherill | | |
| 34 | <i>Timothy Briggs The Barber</i> - Arthur Wood | | |
| 35 | <i>The Old Fox</i> - Mrs G H Free | | |
| 36 | <i>The Mangy Fox</i> - Arthur Wood | | |

Rod Stradling, Musical Traditions Records
Autumn 20129