

Caroline Hughes

Sheep-Crook and Black Dog

(MTC365-6)

CD One:

1	<i>If I Only Had the One I Love</i>	1:43
2	<i>Sheep-Crook and Black Dog</i>	1:39
3	<i>The Game of All Fours</i>	2:49
4	<i>I Don't Want A Girl</i>	0:56
5	<i>All Over Those Hills</i>	1:46
6	<i>The Atching Tan Song</i>	0:47
7	<i>The Banks of Sweet Dundee</i>	1:04
8	<i>Barbry Ellen</i>	3:02
9	<i>The Bird in the Lily Bush</i>	1:43
10	<i>Betsy the Milkmaid</i>	1:38
11	<i>If I Were a Blackbird</i>	2:53
12	<i>A Blacksmith Courted Me</i>	2:41
13	<i>The Blue Eyed Lover</i>	2:19
14	<i>The Bridgwater Farmer</i>	4:35
15	<i>I Am a Brisk Young Lad</i>	0:30
16	<i>Buttercup Joe</i>	1:23
17	<i>The Butcher Boy</i>	2:36
18	<i>Catch Me If You Can</i>	0:45
19	<i>Clementine</i>	0:48
20	<i>On a Cold and Winter's Night</i>	1:59
21	<i>The Cows is in the Clover</i>	1:08
22	<i>The Cuckoo</i>	2:33
23	<i>Diddling Song</i>	0:58
24	<i>Fair Wackford Street</i>	1:17
25	<i>Erin Go Bragh</i>	0:55
26	<i>Erin Go Bragh</i>	1:35
27	<i>Fair Ellen</i>	2:01
28	<i>The False-Hearted Lover</i>	1:40
29	<i>The Folkestone Murder</i>	0:57
30	<i>We Dear Labouring Men</i>	1:04
31	<i>Irish Molly-O</i>	1:10
32	<i>Georgie</i>	2:37
33	<i>The Girl I Left Behind</i>	1:16
34	<i>Still I Love Him</i>	0:47
35	<i>Flash Gals and Airy Too</i>	1:12
36	<i>Go and Leave Me</i>	0:28
37	<i>All You Paddies Lay Down</i>	0:46
38	<i>The Pretty Ploughing Boy</i>	1:04
39	<i>Once I Had a Good Little Boy</i>	3:22
40	<i>The Running, Running Rue</i>	2:50
41	<i>The Jealous Lover</i>	1:19
42	<i>The Famous Flower of Serving Men</i>	4:43

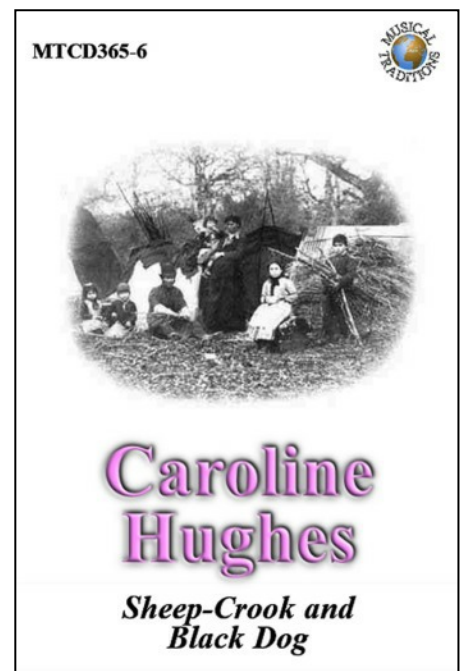
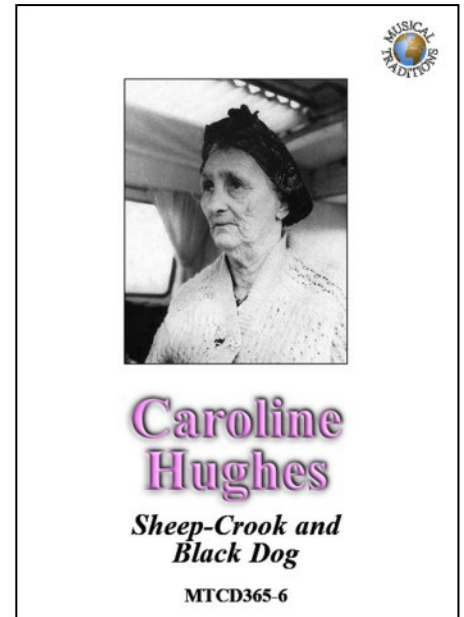
Total: 73:39

90 tracks, 142 minutes

CD Two:

1	<i>Green Grows the Laurel</i>	1:27
2	<i>Henry My Son</i>	2:02
3	<i>Billy Boy</i>	0:56
4	<i>The Rich Farmer From Chesfield</i>	2:21
5	<i>I Was A Reckless Young Fellow</i>	0:27
6	<i>The Irish Girl</i>	0:38
7	<i>Betsy</i>	1:05
8	<i>In My Father's Garden</i>	1:22
9	<i>The Prentice Boy</i>	3:51
10	<i>Jel Along</i>	2:05
11	<i>The Jew's Garden</i>	1:34
12	<i>The Jolly Herring</i>	2:36
13	<i>The Blue Jacket</i>	0:31
14	<i>The Little Ball of Twine</i>	1:10
15	<i>The Little Chimney Sweep</i>	1:49
16	<i>Little Poppa Rich</i>	0:31
17	<i>Bold Dollery</i>	0:25
18	<i>Young But Growing</i>	1:00
19	<i>Bold Robert Emmet</i>	0:55
20	<i>Mandi Went to Poov the Grais</i>	0:30
21	<i>McCaffery</i>	1:38
22	<i>My Boy Willy</i>	0:31
23	<i>My Love Cold Beneath My Feet</i>	1:18
24	<i>The Broomfield Hill</i>	1:41
25	<i>The Broomfield Hill</i>	1:30
26	<i>The Lady and the Soldier</i>	3:51
27	<i>Two Pretty Gypsy Girls</i>	0:46
28	<i>The First day in October</i>	1:29
29	<i>The Old Riverside</i>	3:14
30	<i>Old Tom Cat - Rackymandoo</i>	2:47
31	<i>Once I Had A Colour</i>	1:40
32	<i>Johnny Doyle / The Green Bed</i>	1:23
33	<i>Child's Rhyme</i>	0:18
34	<i>The Oyster Girl</i>	0:57
35	<i>The Green Bushes</i>	1:36
36	<i>Riddle</i>	0:44
37	<i>Three Long Steps</i>	2:10
38	<i>The Little Beggar Boy</i>	2:25
39	<i>Sweet William</i>	0:44
40	<i>Twenty-One Years</i>	2:14
41	<i>The Three Butchers</i>	1:33
42	<i>Bell Bottom Trousers</i>	1:53
43	<i>Died For Love</i>	2:04
44	<i>Final Speech</i>	1:34
45	<i>Space - fragments:</i>	0:10
46	<i>Lord Bateman</i>	0:18
47	<i>The Dark Eyed Sailor</i>	0:11
48	<i>Brennan On The Moor</i>	0:14
49	<i>The Black Velvet Band</i>	0:28

Total: 69:00



This legendary Gypsy singer is thought by many to be the finest exponent of the art. In addition, we have a few songs from her husband, brother-in-law, daughter, and Emily Baker, another singer in their Traveller group.

These are the rarely heard 1963 and 1966 recordings made by Ewan MacColl, Peggy Seeger and Charles Parker, which we're proud to make widely available for the first time. All Caroline Hughes' best-known songs are here, plus eight never before heard, which have been allocated new Roud Numbers. If the fragmentary nature of some of her songs displease you, just enjoy the wonderful tunes, the variable verse lengths, long and short lines, and her brilliant musicianship.

Caroline Hughes 1900 - 1971

Caroline Hughes (née Bateman) was born in 1900 in a horse-drawn caravan in Bere Regis, Dorset.

"My mother's name was Lavinia Bateman and my father was Arthur Hughes. I was one of seventeen children. My parents worked all their lifetime to bring we up clean and respectable. My father was a rat-and-varmint destroyer. We could bide anywhere, and was respected with anybody. My father had a good name and a good character. My mother worked hard, use to go hawking to get a living in a straightforward way. Never done no wrong. Never been had up for stealing, robbing, lived a straight life ... I started to go hawking with my mother, time I got up old enough, then I went to school 'til I was ten year old. Then I took off with my mother to get my living, just like all my sisters did. And I grew up to get married and I knew how to get my living."

"I met my husband arter he done three years in France a-fighting. When he come back he had a long tarry in hospital. We never courted long before we got married. I was married two years and five month before I had my first child. After that I had three children in three year and seven month. I knowed how to take the basket on my arm to get my own living honest. I didn't want teaching. I knowed to get my living working on a farm, doing things straightforward. My children used to help me go out in the field to pull docks ... I been out in the fields hoeing all day and come back and done my girt tubs o' washing. I was proud o' that, and done it until I turned fifty-three. Then I met with an accident, which turned me an invalid for nine years. This car driver, he ran straight on and never stopped. Never mind ... I left that to God."

"Don't I wish they old times would come back again ... where we used to go and have a drink at a public house, all come back on the old common, singing, hang on our pots of girt big suety puddings, hocks o' bacon, pigs heads ... we done nice then. We was all healthy, never much illness amongst the family. Farmers come round, talking with our fathers and mothers. We children playing with their children. Dancin', playin' gramophone records, tap-dancin', clog-dancin'. You could stay anywhere ... not today. The world's turned upsidedown part, you can't do as you like. It's a different law. I reckon to myself the Lord Almighty, he died to save all we in this world. God wasn't a proud man. He liked every form of mother's child. He liked mine and other children too. He sent this world for we poor people. Sent the mountains for us, sent everything for us all to have a share o't, everything. The Lord send bushes, he send trees, birds, comfort, greens, swedes, potatoes, flowers, everything in the world for one another. Not for one, for the lot."

"My name is Caroline Hughes. I'm a principled woman. I can't read but I tell you I got my knowledge. I got my little wooden caravan, and I got my eight nice children and my thirty-five grandchildren and I love to hear the birds in the morning and get to the copses and woods and set round the old camp-fire. I don't want no saucepans to cook with. I want to follow my great-great-great-grandmother with the old-fashioned three-gallon pot. My great grandmother had a grandmother lived 'til she was 104. The next was 101. The next one again was my grandmother, she was 103. That was Alice Bateman, my father's mother. His father was more than a hundred when he died, but my mother was only seventy-two and my father eighty-two, so they didn't follow on their families. But I want to reach there if I can."

Of her songs, she said, "My mother sang all the time. When she were making clothes-pegs or making we children's bloomers, shifts and petticoats. We be all around the fire singing these old songs, and I been with my mother listening, listening, and I made her sing them over and over 'til I learned the lot. Many a time my father and mother have come back with a glass of beer in their hands and they'd say to we children, "Would you like to hear a song?" "Yes," says we. And my father and mother they've sat and sung songs, and there've been local people out in the road a-listening. That was my father and mother, the bestest singers in the world. And there was my brother, he used to play a fiddle and he would sing."

At this point, one of Caroline's daughters interrupted to say: "My mother done the same with us. She would always sing when she was making tea or to keep we kids quiet. And she always sang to us at bed-time. On Sundays too, when the men came back from the pub, that would always be a time for singing."

Caroline Hughes concluded the story of her life with these words: "Where you going to find a good mother when she's gone? One who's worked, slaved hard, runned and raced for you, been through bitter frost and snow, finding snitches of wood, buckets of water, through all the ups and downs. The young girls today don't know the meaning of it. What do they do today? Wear their clothes above their knees so you can almost see their fanny. And there's paint and powder. They're not like the gals what's fifty years ago, nothing like they was thirty, forty years ago. I'm a gal, my name is Caroline Hughes. I been out a-beggin' for my bread. I wish I could do it now."

'Queen' Caroline Hughes died in 1971 and was given a Gypsy funeral. As is the traditional way among older Gypsies, her caravan and all her possessions were burned in the presence of her tribe.

We first visited the Hughes group in 1963. At that time, they were living on a temporary camping site situated on a piece of waste ground some twenty yards off the Wareham Bypass, five miles outside Poole, Dorset. Our visit was ill-timed. The Ratepayers' Association of a nearby private housing development had just initiated a campaign against the Travellers and feelings were running high. A petition had been drawn up which called for drastic measures to be taken. It included the following passage:

We feel that our elected representatives on the borough council were elected to bring progress and prosperity, happiness and a sense of well-being to the population as a whole. And it is not understood why there should be so much

time wasted and trouble caused by a handful of dirty, filthy, unhygienic, scrounging non-entities.

Not unnaturally, the Travellers at first greeted us with suspicion and hostility. Nevertheless, they were prepared after some argument to discuss our request to record them. After a short debate they decided that we should be allowed to record the matriarch of the tribe, Mrs Caroline Hughes, or 'Queen Caroline', as they called her.

This remarkable old lady who, several years earlier, had been permanently crippled by a hit-and-run driver, was carried down the steps of her horse-drawn caravan and seated on a mound of cushions placed on the ground. She was immediately surrounded by several younger women, some of whom were her daughters, and by a score of young children. A short distance away, three or four men were dicking for a horse, a process in which ritual disinterest and a sharp exchange of insults alternated with disconcerting suddenness. Another nearby group was engaged in dismantling an old car, while on our left several women were busy sorting out a huge pile of rags into three separate heaps. And, of course, there were the dogs and the endless roar of passing traffic.

When we visited Mrs Hughes four years later her health was such that the interview had to be conducted at her bedside. The reduction in the number of onlookers was merely a relative one. In addition to ourselves and Mrs Hughes, nine other people were packed into the interior of her little caravan. This kind of communal participation characterised all the recording sessions which involved English and Scots Travellers. Essentially, there was no 'audience-performer' relationship established during these sessions. Indeed, there was virtually no 'audience'. Instead, there were a number of individuals each of whom could, on occasion, act as custodian of the group's collective memory. As far as the singers were concerned, we - the collectors - were entirely incidental to the proceedings, mere observers of a community rite.

The high esteem in which Mrs Hughes was held was due, to some extent, to the fact that she was the oldest woman in her community and grandmother to more than half the children on the site. But it was also because she was regarded as the Singer of the group - though as far as we could judge almost everyone else in the community knew the stories and themes of her songs well enough to prompt her with an opening line or to supply a missing stanza. Occasionally, particularly when a long, narrative song was being sung, a debate would develop among those present concerning 'the right order' or sequence of action. These moments of disagreement, in which as many as half-a-dozen voices might be heard simultaneously reciting different parts of the story, often ended with Mrs Hughes declaiming *her* verse in a loud voice and then, everyone having been silenced, she would begin to sing again.

It was our impression that Mrs Hughes, and the community to which she belonged, possessed a group of stories and a group of melodies which could be brought together in any kind of combination the singer might find satisfying. Sometimes the results of such dovetailing are unsatisfactory and, occasionally, unintelligible, but a surprising number of these mutant texts possess both dignity and their own kind of dramatic sense.

Since that first recording session with Caroline Hughes, we have visited a number of caravan sites occupied by English Travellers and on each occasion we have observed the same phenomenon: the existence of a body of traditional songs and stories known to the entire group and used to maintain and reinforce the Travellers' identity. The fact that the greater part of this traditional repertory was made originally by *Gorgios* is unimportant, since the *Gorgios* have, on the whole, abandoned it. As with the scrap cars, obsolete sewing machines and old radios which litter their sites, the Travellers have taken whatever was retrievable of that abandoned repertory and made it their own. It is interesting to note that all our English singers held the view that the songs they sang had actually *originated* among Travellers.

It may be argued that we are guilty of exaggeration when we suggest that the travelling people have become the real custodians of English and Scots traditional song. But the evidence, in the form of innumerable tape collections recorded in the course of the last twenty years, is overwhelming. In our view, a significant part of our national heritage has passed into the hands of the Travellers and is dependent upon them for its survival. We are not saying that there are no traditional singers left in Britain other than those who are Travellers. Obviously, there are; indeed, there is a surprisingly large number of them. But most of them are old and nearly all of them live in communities which have, for the most part, relegated the old songs - and their singers - to the lumbershed along with the reaping-hook and the Rotherham plough. As often as not, their only audience is the visiting collector, folklorist or city folk-club enthusiast.

Among the Travellers, old age is not penalised. The old man or woman is an honoured and still-useful member of the community. Their songs and stories are regarded as important contributions to the group and the possession of them benefits each individual within the group.

Quoted from: *Travellers' Songs from England and Scotland*, by Ewan MacColl and Peggy Seeger, by kind permission of Peggy Seeger

Comments:

by Rod Stradling

Much has been written about the fragmentary nature of English Gypsy songs - and I wouldn't argue with any of it, except to say that it is by no means true of *all* English Gypsy families. The Brazil family of Gloucester had a huge repertoire of generally coherent songs; the Willetts in Kent and the Smiths in Cheltenham were the same, as were Mary Ann Haynes and Phoebe Smith. All of the above-mentioned were visited frequently by their principal collectors, and so were able to eventually sing complete and coherent versions of their songs to them - even though they may not have been able to do so at the first encounter. I recall Paul Burgess telling me that

Danny Brazil would actually 'prepare' a few songs ready for Paul and Gwilym Davies' next visit with their tape recorder. This contrasts starkly with the single contacts of some other collectors - the 'drain them and move on' approach.

We also have to remember the situations in which these Gypsy singers learned their songs, and in which they sang them. They were not revivalists who learned a song from a book or recording, and performed it, complete, to a silent and culturally unfamiliar audience ... or self-aware traditional singers like Harry Cox, who prepared his songs carefully for a very sophisticated group of singers in his local singing pubs. The Gypsies absorbed their songs bit by bit from their mothers' singing around the home whilst performing routine domestic tasks, or from their male relatives around a stick fire after a session in the pub. Nor do I get the impression that the whole of a long song would often get sung in the latter situation - there would always be interruptions (social or domestic), and, anyway, since everyone in the group already knew the songs, there was no impetus for the sort of reverential atmosphere we tend to associate with hearing traditional songs today. Some other songs were learned from other Gypsy families at the fairs and meetings which used to form an integral part of the Gypsies' life, or at the occasional chance encounters at traditional camping places.

My feeling is that these songs were learned and sung in a way which is analogous to that of today's session musicians who don't read music - like me. I've been absorbing tunes for nearly 50 years, at sessions (home and stick fire situations) or at events like the English Country Music Weekends or Bampton ('fair' type situations) as well as 'learning' a few of them for public performance in dance bands. And I know that it was rare for me to learn *exactly*, note for note, the tune as I had originally heard it. Of the others; generally I never even knew the names of many of them - or have forgotten!

Every now and then one will come back to me unbidden in a session - sparked by a phrase from another tune perhaps, or just floating in out of the ether. I can play it - maybe correctly, maybe not - and its A part won't necessarily match its correct B part. Or, if somebody says "do you remember that tune that goes ..." and diddles me the start of a tune, I may well be able to play it, even if I've not played it for decades - but I may have no idea what it's called or whether it's correct or not. But if there is the necessity - if someone else wants to learn it - I can probably come up with a fairly correct version eventually.

I'd like to suggest that this may be a little like the situation for Gypsy singers - they *can* remember the old songs, but not necessarily completely or correctly ... and probably not the first time they are asked!

This situation is by no means unique to Gypsies; Mike Yates says that, when he was collecting songs from the Oxfordshire singer, Freda Palmer, they 'had to be teased out of her memory over a long period of time'.

Regarding the fragmentary nature of many of Caroline Hughes' songs, we should note that it is 'many', but not 'all'. Several songs - *The Brake of Briars*, *All Fours*, *Hear the Nightingale Sing*, *The Green Bushes*, *The Oxford Girl*, *The Highwayman Outwitted*, *We Poor Labouring Men*, *The Seeds of Love* - are complete and 'correct' enough to pass without comment, were they found in the repertoires of other traditional English singers. Moreover, it's interesting to note how very similar many of her versions are to those of other English Gypsy singers. For example: her *Brake of Briars* is pretty close to Mark Stevens' *Fields of Hunting*; her *Bird in the Lily Bush* is very like Wiggy Smith's; her *Highwayman Outwitted* is very close to Jack Smith's; and there are many other examples.

Presumably, these songs were learned from other Gypsy families at the fairs and meetings which used to form an integral part of the Gypsies' life, or at the occasional chance encounters at traditional camping places. The fact that these songs seem to have been preserved more-or-less intact, whilst other songs - maybe learned in different circumstances, or from different people - are treated with far less care, makes me wonder about another thing I've learned from the MacColl/Seeger book:

It is interesting to note that all our English [Gypsy] singers held the view that the songs they sang had actually *originated* among Travellers. When it was pointed out to Nelson Ridley that non-Travellers also sang them, he said: "Not the old songs, the real old songs. They just sing these modern things."

So, is it possible that songs learned from other travellers are treated differently from those learned from *Gorgios*? Another interesting comment in the MacColl/Seeger book, which might have some bearing on this, runs:

The comments of those present at the Hughes recording sessions generally concerned the songs rather than the manner in which they were sung, and singers and audience, as a rule, made the same kind of comments: "That's a *true* song, that is." "That's an *old* song." And 'true' and 'old' appeared to be equally significant measures of praise. Of *Barbara Allen*, *Geordie*, *Little Sir Hugh* and other long narrative pieces, Caroline Hughes said, "Them's our *relegends*." (She says "That's a relegend ..." at the end of the recording of *The Oxford Girl* on these CDs). Thinking we had mis-heard, we questioned her about the word. Billy Cole, a thirty-year-old Hampshire Traveller, explained: "Relegends is our history, like. Take 'em away and what we got? We got nothing!"

It's also interesting to note that the recordings Peter Kennedy made of Caroline Hughes in 1968 show a number of similarities and differences. Broadly, the songs with a clear narrative line (in her versions) remain pretty much the same in these later recordings, while those made up of largely unconnected verses tend to contain the same verses, but often in a completely different order. This remains true of songs which *do* have a clear narrative line in their 'standard' versions, but not in Mrs Hughes' version. Exactly why this should be so must, I imagine, remain open to conjecture.

'Queen' Caroline Hughes was someone whose name was known to 'everybody' back in the day, but I have been surprised recently to discover how few people had actually heard any of the recordings made of her singing. There were actually three sets of recordings (that I know about): one, made in 1962 by Ewan MacColl, Peggy Seeger and Charles Parker (as recordist); a second set made by the same collectors in 1966; and a third set made by Peter Kennedy in 1968. Although the latter became available for general purchase on the Folktrax label, few people we knew bought them because of the antipathy towards Kennedy's treatment of the traditional performers he recorded and exploited. The MacColl/Seeger recordings have never (up to this point) been available, except, I think, to some members of The Critics Group ... and some of these 'escaped' and began to circulate amongst trad folkies as very poor quality cassette copies in the late-1960s. I'm sorry to say that the appreciation of Gypsy singing was extremely limited in those days, and that we heard that the recordings were often being listened to on a "Have you heard this awful stuff" basis - something to have a laugh over. We eventually got to hear some of them and, underneath the tape noise and hum, discovered some wonderful and extraordinary performances.

So we, along with many other people, were very excited to hear of Topic Records' imminent release of a whole CD of Carolynne Hughes (Kennedy's strange spelling of her name). The actual CD came as a bit of a let-down, because the beautifully cleaned recordings featured some rather flat performances. Actually, this should have been no surprise, had we done our homework. Mrs Hughes had been knocked down by a hit-and-run driver in the late-Fifties, was bed-ridden for the rest of her life, and died in 1971. We tend to think that most of Peter Kennedy's recordings were made in the 1950s, but he didn't record Mrs Hughes until 1968 - just three years before she died.

Ewan MacColl and Peggy Seeger gave a lot of details of their meeting and recording Caroline Hughes in their hugely interesting 1977 book, *Travellers' Songs from England and Scotland*, and made the following observations:

When we visited Mrs Hughes four years later [in 1966] her health was such that the interview had to be conducted at her bedside ... [She] was forced to adopt a continual reclining posture which affected her breathing to such an extent that she rarely sang a long phrase without breathing at mid-phrase. Her light vocal effort, lavish use of speaking tones, and fairly up-tempo delivery may well have been due to the same cause.

So it ought not to have surprised us that, by 1968, she was no longer the singer that she had been six years earlier.

The Songs:

Roud numbers quoted are from the databases, *The Folk Song Index* and *The Broadside Index*, continually updated, compiled by Steve Roud. Currently containing over 390,000 records between them, they are described by him as "extensive, but not yet exhaustive". Copies are held at: The Vaughan Williams Memorial Library, London; Taisce Ceol Duchais Eireann, Dublin; and The School of Scottish Studies, Edinburgh. The Folk Song Index is also accessible on-line at: <http://library.efdss.org> They can also be purchased direct from Steve at Southwood, Maresfield Court, High Street, Maresfield, East Sussex, TN22 2EH, UK. E-mail: sroud@btinternet.com

Child numbers, where quoted, refer to entries in *The English and Scottish Popular Ballads* by Francis James Child, Boston, 1882-98. Laws numbers, where quoted, refer to entries in *American Balladry from British Broad-sides* by G Malcolm Laws Jr, Philadelphia, 1957. Reference may also be made to Sam Henry's *Songs of the People*, Eds. Huntingdon, Herrmann & Moulden, University of Georgia Press, Athens and London, 1990.

Many of Caroline Hughes' songs will appear to be greatly fragmented to today's readers, but an attempt to clarify possible omissions or misinterpretations would only result in the text being an unintelligible mess. We have decided to simply print what she sang on that particular day, and leave it to readers to come to their own conclusions. The Song Notes should make some of the more obvious possibilities clear. A few songs are completely composed of 'floating verses' - to the extent that it's not really possible to say which song they may actually be. Also, a number are new entrants to the Roud Index. For these reasons, a number of songs can have no Song Notes.

I should also remind you that these 50-year-old recordings were made in a temporary camping site situated on a piece of waste ground some twenty yards off the Wareham Bypass. As a result, the sounds of passing cars, lorries and motorbikes can be heard on many of them. It is possible to largely remove them by digital processing - but the results are detrimental to the quality of singing. I have decided that these extraneous sounds were a normal part of the Hughes group's sound environment and, as such should remain (if slightly muted) in the recordings. There are also a few places where the tape surface has deteriorated, or other technical faults are present - and there really isn't anything we can do about them. These are not 21st century digital studio recordings!

I should add that it was not only Caroline Hughes who MacColl, Seeger and Parker recorded during their meetings with the 'Hughes Group'. We are pleased to be able to include three songs from William Hughes, Caroline's husband, two from her brother-in-law Henry Hughes, one from her daughter Sheila, and one from another of the group, Emily Baker.

The recordings used on these CDs are those deposited in the Ewan MacColl & Peggy Seeger Archive at Ruskin College, Oxford, and there catalogued. It would appear, from our perusal of the text transcriptions in the MacColl and Seeger book, *Travellers' Songs from England and Scotland*, that it is likely that not all of their recordings were deposited there, as there are times when additional text is printed that does not appear in the recordings we have. Either that, or the original tapes were catalogued in a way which rendered these *other recordings* inaccessible to us.

For this reason, readers who have the MacColl and Seeger book may notice that some of the song transcriptions there differ from those given here. It appears that the authors have 'clarified' the texts in places to make them more comprehensible, and that, in a few cases, have printed fuller texts compiled from those other recordings. We normally attempt to print exactly what the singer sang but, in the case of these CDs, we have adopted a slightly different policy. Where the words sung are only slightly different from the 'clarified' versions we have printed exactly what Mrs Hughes sang; where the authors printed a 'fuller' text than was available to us from the recordings in the Archive, we have used that, with the additional lines or verses shown in italics.

In the following Song Notes, all Musical Traditions Records' CDs are referred to only by their Catalogue Numbers (i.e. MTCxxxx), as are all Topic Records' CDs (i.e. TSCDxxx), and Veteran CDs (i.e. VTxxx). The names of all other CD publishers are given in full.

CD One:

1 - 1 If I Only Had the One I Love (Willow Tree) (Roud 18831)

Oh, 'tis my true love's a sailor boy
He spreads(?) the ocean deep and wide
Well, he carries the mark all on his arm
And he brings those membrance back to me.

Well, I wish that I had the one I love, dearly love,
How happy happy should I be.
Oh, but there's my hand but not my heart
And friends we'll meet and friends we'll part.

Oh, now fetch to me the one I love, dearly love,
And you fetch her, fetch her back to me
But if I only had the one I love, dearly love,
How happy, happy should I be.

Mrs Hughes' variations on this well-known tune are both remarkable and beautiful. Roud has 15 versions of this lovely song, five of which are from North America. The others are from May Bradley and Bill Smith, of Shropshire, plus Sam Richards collected it from Bill 'Pop' Hingston, of Dittisham, Devon, as did Gavin Greig from a Miss Ross, in Scotland, and Lucy Broadwood from both Mr and Mrs Petulengro in Westmorland.

Mrs Hughes' 'he carries the mark all on his arm' in her first verse becomes the splendid 'he carries my name all on his arm' - a tattoo! - in Tom and Chris Willett's version.

Other CD recordings: Tom and Chris Willett (MTC361-2); May Bradley (MTC349); Bill Smith (MTC351).

1 - 2 Sheep-Crook and Black Dog (Roud 948)

Oh, there's my black dog and sheep-crook, I will give it to you,
There's my bag and my budget, I will bid it adieu;
There's my sheep-crook and black dog, I will leave it behind,
Fine floral, fine laurel, you've proved all unkind.

Oh, a little time after, oh, a letter was wrote;
Oh, to hear my dear Dinah laid dead on the ground.
'Tis a-thinking about my own true love, I will never do so no more;
Fine floral, fine laurel, I've proved unkind.

"Now, we'll both now go to sibby (?) if the day ain't too late,
And then we'll get married, and both settle down."
Oh, the very next come up to me, she lived a contrary life,
And I said that I'd rather be a young shepherd's bride.

*"Now, I'll go into service if the day ain't too late,
To wait on a fine lady it is my intent;
And when into service a year or two bound,
It's then we'll get married, and both settle down."*

*All to my dear Dinah these words I did say,
"Tomorrow we'll be married, love, tomorrow is the day."
"Tis too soon, dear Willie, my age is too young;
One day to our wedding is one day too soon."*

*Oh, a little time after a letter was wrote,
For to hear if my dear Dinah had changed her mind;
And she wrote that she lived such a contrary life,
And she said that she'd never be a young shepherd's wife.*

Here's my bag and my budget, I will bid it, oh, adieu;
Here's my black dog and sheep-crook, I will leave it to you,
Since floral, fine floral, I've proved all unkind.

Not a very well-known song, with just 44 Roud entries - it's more usually called *Floro* after the central character (here named Dinah). Mrs Hughes' 'black dog and sheep-crook' verse is very arresting. Only three singers have been recorded singing it, and it's a terrible shame that the lovely Cassie Sheeran version from the cassette, *Here is a Health*, isn't available on CD.

1 - 3 The Game of All Fours (Roud 232)

Oh, as I were a-walking from Broadway to Glasgow
Oh, a fair pretty damsule come walking my way;
Oh, quicklye I met oh that fair pretty damsule
Quicklye now she took hold my hand.

I said, "Where are you going, my fair purty damsule?
Where are you going so early this way?
For I am a-going my way home to Glasgow.
Can I now make you and walk 'long with you?"

Well, we walked and we talked on together,
'Til we come to an old elder tree.
Now she sat down and I sat down beside her,
Then we start playin' says High Low the Game.

Well, she chucked the cards out and pulled out the pack, love.
She chucked the Jack, oh, and I chucked the Queen.
She chucked the Jack, love, and I chucked the Queen, then.
That's how I come, now, Jack High Low the Game.

Now, he said, "Will we play a bit longer?
Now I feels weary and tired as well.
I say, young girl, I'll allow that you beat me
If you will play the game over again."

"Oh now, will you be this way tomorrow?
Tell me if you'll be on this highway again?
Yes, I will promise you I'll be this way tomorrow
Then we will play the game over again."

On the surface we are dealing with card play, and Hoyle's *Rules of Games* (1955) indeed lists *All Fours*. In her edition of *Cecil Sharp's Collection of English Folk Songs* (1974), Maud Karpeles places, in the section devoted to sports and pastimes, *The Game of Cards*, a version of the song Hoyle noted in 1908. Yet this is a transparently erotic piece which had to wait until 1960 to appear in respectable print, in James Reeves' anthology of English traditional verse, *The Everlasting Circle*. That it was well known a century earlier is attested by the broadside issued by Henry Disley of London, a political adaptation or parody dealing with Garibaldi's struggle for Italian unity under the title of *The Game of All Fours*. At much the same time, the catalogue of the Manchester ballad printer, T Pearson, included the original *Game of All Fours*, twinned with *The Steam Loom Weaver*.

A fairly widely collected song, found only in the southern half of England, with 68 Roud entries, the most northerly being from Staffordshire and Norfolk. It seems to be very popular amongst Travellers and George Dunn, Charlie Wills and Sam Larner are about the only *Gorgios* amongst the singers named. Vic Legg informs us that *All Fours* is still played in a number of pubs in the china-clay areas near St Austell in Cornwall; indeed, they have a League - for the card game, that is.

Other versions available on CD: Phoebe Smith (MTC357-8); Sarah Porter (MTC309-0); George Dunn (MTC317-8); Levi Smith (TSCD661); Sam Larner (TSCD511).

1 - 4 I Don't Want a Girl (Roud 24238)

Oh, I don't want a girl who rides a bike,
Who rides a bike, who rides a bike,
The saddle might slip and go into her rump,
I don't want a girl who rides a bike.

I don't want a girl with trousers on,
With trousers on, with trousers on,
It takes a long time to get them undone,
I don't want a girl with trousers on.

I don't want a girl with fall (false?) blue eyes,
With fall blue eyes, with fall blue eyes,
She'll take all your money and give you the push,
And I don't want a girl with fall blue eyes.

1 - 5 All Over Those Hills (Roud 24140)

Oh, as I was a-going all over those hills,
Was a place called Hop and Bottle;
Oh, where my true love he've got deluded from me,
Now he's causeded my poor heart now to wander.

Now, I will walk on to the public house,
And I'll look all through those windows;
Oh, who should I see but my Henry dear,
He was sitting by the side of his Ellen.

Oh, for I will go home, and I'll make my mind quite happy
For the doors I'll smash and the windows I'll break,
And I'll leave the roof now in shadows.
But before I part from my Henry dear
I would sooner leave him die in a union.

Seemingly the only time this song has been encountered was when Mrs Hughes sang it to MacColl and Seeger. They spend a whole page discussing its possible origins, mentioning half a dozen songs which find echoes here, but conclude that it probably isn't a version of any of them.

1 - 6 The Atching Tan Song (Roud 1732)

We packed up our tent rods,
Our ridge-poles, our pots and kittlees.
We went along the road so nice.
We pulled off to camp, to have a cup o' tea.

'Long come the p'lice-man, he said "You got ta move."
Where's your horses? In the poov. "Get 'em out!"
We have to shift at one o'clock in the morn-ing to get on.

Ridge-poles and tent rods and all things like that
Chadders in the bottlers they got to lei out
Broad day in the morning at four, oh, p.m.
Get the grais in their burdles and jell straight away.

Travellers arrive at a likely camping spot; a policeman arrives and tells them to move on. Although it's the middle of the night, they do. This shares some lyrics (references to 'tent-rods, ridge-poles, and kittlees') in the first verse with another *Atching Tan Song*, but they seem otherwise separate, although Roud has the same number for both. An 'atching tan' was a stopping place; it was common practice for Travellers to camp in an unauthorized place, then let their horses into a farmer's field after dark with the intention of retrieving them before dawn. Often as not, they were caught and the horses impounded.

1 - 7 Banks of the Sweet Dundee (Roud 148)

Oh, the box all on his shoulder
And that it happened so
"You walk with me my fair pretty maid,
All on the king's highway"
She was young and innosee,
She walked on by his side
"Oh I'll show you the near road,
Across the country."

Well all in my uncle's garden
These lonesome tales was told
Although she fought for liberty,
"Pray kill me now" said she,
And the trigger stood (?) and shot her dead,
On the banks of the Sweet Dundee.

Now come you motheree woman
Do have pity what I say
There's me and my companion
Who are just now walking on
With the box all on my shoulder
And as it happened so
I lost my mind and shot her dead
On the banks of the Sweet Dundee.

Widely popular throughout the English speaking world, with 320 Roud entries, this was described by Cecil Sharp as being 'known to every singer of the present day'. It was even found as a capstan shanty with the words 'Heave away my Johnny, heave away' sung after every line.

While most versions have the two lovers being parted, never to re-unite, there are a number that end with William returning; and one broadside, *An Answer to Undaunted Mary*, describes his adventures at sea and his coming back in disguise in order to test Mary's faithfulness.

Other recordings on CD: Danny Brazil (MTCD345-7); 'Straighty' Flanagan (MTCD331-2); Fred Jordan (VTD148CD); Walter Pardon (TSCD515); Bob Brader (TSCD665); Maggie Murphy (VT134CD); Reg Bacon (Helions Bumpstead NLCD 5/6); Walter Gedge (Helions Bumpstead NLCD 54).

1 - 8 Barbry Ellen (Roud 54, Child 84)

Oh, in Reading Town where I was born,
There's a fair young lady dwelling;
Well, I picked her out for to be my bride
Af her name was Barbry Ellen, Ellen,
Af her name was Barbry Ellen.

"Now, Mother dear, you make up my bed,
You'll make it soft and easy;
Oh, that I might die for the sake of love,
Yes, and she might die for sorrow ..."

"Now, Mother dear, you'll look up over my head,
You'll see my gold watch standing;
Oh, there's my gold watch and my guinea gold ring,
Will you 'liver it to Barbry Ellen ..."

"Now, Mother dear, look at the side of my bed,
You'll see a bowl there standing,
What is full of tears that I've lost this night
For the loss of Barbry Ellen ..."

Now, as I were a-walking across the fields,
Well, I met, oh, a corpse a-coming;
"Oh, you put him down, my six young lambs
Oh that I might well gaze on him ..."

While strollily I walkèd on,
Well, I heard the knell a-telling,
And as it tolled, oh, it seemed to say:
"Hard-hearted Barbry Ellen ..."

This is the most widely-known ballad I've yet encountered in Steve Roud's *Song Index*, with an astonishing 1191 instances (including 311 sound recordings) listed there. Needless to say, it's found everywhere English is spoken - though Australia boasts only one version in the Index - and, very unusually, there's even one from Wales ... although it comes from Phil Tanner in that 'little England', the Gower Peninsula. The USA has 600 entries! It doesn't appear to be quite so well-known in Ireland, with only 35 *Index* instances, or Scotland with 61.

The story comes in two general types: in one, Barbara upbraids Johnny for slighting her, and leaves him to die; in the other, she laughs at his corpse and is condemned as 'cruel-hearted' by their friends standing by. In both cases 'It was he that died for love, and she that died of sorrow'. The 'gold watch' and 'bowl of tears/blood' verses which make up much of Mrs Hughes' version can be found in either type. Her 'I picked her out for to be my bride' line in the first verse is very unusual; I've only heard it in the Jim Wilson (MTCD309-0) version, noted below. The ballad frequently ends with the rose and briar tied in a true-lovers' knot motif, seemingly floated in from the *Lord Lovell* ballads.

Other versions currently on CD: Sarah Makem (MTCD353-5); Jim Wilson (MTCD309-0); Joe Heaney (TSCD518D); Patsy Flynn (MTCD329-0); The Brazil Family (MTCD345-6); Bob Hart (MTCD301-2); Wiggy Smith (MTCD307); Andy Cash (MTCD326-7); Stanley Hicks (MTCD321-2); Garrett and Norah Anwood (MTCD323-4); Jane Turriff (Springthyme SPRCD1038); Phoebe Smith (VT136CD), Fred Jordan (VTD148CD), Texas Gladden (Rounder CD 1800), Rebecca Jones (Appleseed APR CD 1035), Frank Hinchliffe (VTC7CD), Jessie Murray (Rounder CD 11661), Debbie and Pennie Davies (MTCD333 and MTCD345-7).

1 - 9 The Bird in the Lily Bush (Roud 290)

Oh, I met with some young man I know,
Oh, I met with some young man I know;
Now, I asked that young man if he have got any skills,
Oh, to catch me a small bird or two.

"Oh yes, I'm some very nice skills,
Oh yes, I'm some very nice skills;
If you'll come along with me down til yonders lily-bush,
I will catch you a small bird or two."

Straightaway that young man and me went,
Straightaway to that lily-green bush;
Oh, we wrapped up the bush as that birdie did fly out
He fled little above my white knee.
Oh, tonight I'll take my pay, and tomorrow I will spend it
We'll go home by the light of the moon.

This song, most usually titled *Three Maidens a-Milking Did Go*, is quite unusual in that - if Roud's 79 instances are representative - it seems never to have spread outside its native England. This is doubly strange, since its first appearance is in a Scottish book, Thomas Lyle, *Ancient Ballads and Songs* (1827) p.144.

Other versions available on CD: Charlie Bridger (VTC4CD); Fred Hewett (TSCD660).

1 - 10 Betsy the Milkmaid (Blackberry Fold) (Roud 559, Laws O10)

*There was a young squire, through Bristol he dwelled
With his father and his mother, he've bid them farewell
Oh, he met with a milkmaid so fond and so love
"It's very cold this morning, you step inside."*

Well, she was young and foolish and she thought it no harm,
And she got into bed, love, to keep herself warm.
Well, the next early morning she jumped for her gown;
She walked through the fields as hard as she could.

Well he run behind her, both screaming she did
"Let me have the will of your body, will you?
If you don't now yield to me my sword's at my side
And I'll leave you to die out in these cold open fields."

Oh now uggling and struggling, sweet Betsy got free,
So early her voice from, she stopped the young man
"Oh, I'll never go out no more with no more milk carts
And he won't make me his lady so long as he could."

If this confused example can be considered to be a version of *Blackberry Fold*, then we can say that many folksongs deal with the relationship between a squire and a village maiden. In *The Banks of Sweet Dundee* - a highly popular piece - the squire dies. Here, however, he survives and is united with pretty Betsy. Today the song is no longer widespread, and of the 95 versions which we know about, some from as far away as Illinois and Labrador, most seem to be based on the broadsides issued by John Pitts c.1825 and in the 1850s by Henry Parker Such. In England the area of popularity is entirely in the south; there is just one version from Scotland.

Other recordings on CD: Danny Brazil (MTCD345-7); George Spicer (MTCD311-2); Harry Cox (TSCD512D); Phoebe Smith (VT136CD).

1 - 11 If I Were a Blackbird (Roud 387)

Oh, for I can't not think the reason why women loves men,
No, I can't not think the reason why men should love they;
But since a man has been my ruin, now I will send him downfall,
But he've a-causeded me to lay between lime and cold stone.

Now, I once loved a sailor, he was a britchdèd young man,
My parents disliked me, turned him from the door;
And now he have left me and gone far away,
Long as breath's all in my body, I'll still love that one.

Now, if I was a scholar, well I'd handle my pen,
I would write my love a letter to return home again;
And when I did meet him, I would crowned him with joy,
And I'd kiss the fond lips of my bold Irish boy.

Now, if I were a blackbird, then I'd whistle and I'd sing,
I'd follow that true ship my true love sailed on;
All on the top riggin'then I'd will build my nest,
And I'd sleep the long night on his lily-white breast.

May Bradley called this song *My Love*, and before singing it she liked to explain that she had heard "a modern song" like this, but she sings it "in the old way". Sussex Gypsy singer Mary Ann Haynes was very much of the same opinion; she had a rather similar song, which she called *The Bold Sailor Boy*, and believed that *If I were a Blackbird*, with its verse about 'Donnybrook Fair', was a later, and different, piece. And she may well have been right, because most recorded singers seem to have been influenced by the 1939 recording of the song by the singer Delia Murphy, which was often played on the radio (as was Ronnie Ronalde's 1950s recording).

Some commentators have described *If I were a Blackbird* as a song composed entirely of 'floating verses', although most collected sets seem to be quite similar, a fact that suggests broadside origins - although Roud doesn't list any. Certainly, Mrs Hughes' version appears to be almost all 'floaters'. The song does not seem to have been popular in America (only 4 examples out of a total of 81), though several of the verses associated with it do turn up in any number of Appalachian songs, such as *Pretty Saro*, *The Turtle Dove*, *The Wagoner's Lad* and *Little Sparrow*.

Other versions available on CD: May Bradley (MTC349); Mary Ann Haynes (MTC320); Cyril Poacher (MTC303); Bob Hart (MTC301-2); Walter Pardon (MTC305-6); Harry Brazil (MTC345-7); Albert 'Diddy' Cook (VT140CD and TSC665); Blanche Wood (Rounder CD 1786).

1 - 12 A Blacksmith Courted Me (Roud 816) Sung by William Hughes

*A blacksmith courted me,
And I loved him dearly,
A blacksmith courted me,
And I loved him dearly;
Just to think how I love that man
When he's so false-hearted.*

Now there was a flowing glass
And I loved him dearly
I looked into the glass
My head I shook him
Just to think now I loved that girl
When she's so false hearted

Now I courted you nine months
Oh, nine months and better.
I courted you nine months
Oh, not no other
And why should you slighted me
Just to wed some other.

There is nine long months you've gone
As I proved a child
That's nine long months, oh, has gone
As I proved with child
Now yer be I in ...
A ruined girl for ever.

Can you bring your witness, love,
Now I won't deny you
It's witness I've got none
But my own Almighty
And it's with my, with my love
I'm going to do my duty.

Now Willie is your name
And you can't deny me
'Tis Willie is your name
And you can't deny me
I've proved that child by you
Oh and not no other.

Now my love's across those fields
Gathering fine roses
My love's across those fields
Gathering fine roses
I'm afraid the sun will rise
Now and spoil his beauty.

Spoken: That's very goodsome isn't it?

It's likely that this is quite an old song, even though its earliest collection was only in 1905 - the line "So bring your witness in and I never will deny you" dates back to about 1672. It is certainly a song much loved by English Gypsies; all of Roud's 77 entries are from England and the majority of the named singers have Gypsy surnames. It appears only to be found in the South - although that may just be the result of where collectors were active - and to have been rarely printed as a broadside; otherwise, I'm sure it would have been more widely known.

As is so often the case with the Hughes family songs, there's very little of the story's narrative left, and all the verses are concerned with emotional drama and dialogue.

Other versions available on CD: Danny, Harry and Tom Brazil (MTC345-7); Phoebe Smith (TSC672D and VT136CD); Charlie Scamp (TSCD 672D).

1 - 13 The Blue-Eyed Lover (Roud 16637)

Oh, once I had a blue-eyed lover,
Once he thought this world of me;
Until one day he found some other,
Then his love was not on me.

You take this ring from off your finger
And that locket from round my neck;
You'll give it to the one you fancy,
Give it to the one you love.

Oh, once I was on my bed of hap'ness,
Now I'm on my bed of sad;
But when you meet my blue-eyed baby
Then you'll want me back again.

Oh, can't I see those hills and valley
Can't I see those mountains stand?
Oh, can't I see the sea a-tossing
Where my time it used to roam.

Well, all alone, oh all alone,
By the seashores he left me;
Many happy hour with he I've spent,
It's all this time I'm left a widow
At the cottage near the sea.

Repeat last verse.

This beautiful song is very rare - Roud names only three other singers who are known to have sung it, but all are still available on CD: May Bradley (MTC349); Sarah Porter (MTC309); Davie Stewart (Rounder CD 1793).

1 - 14 The Bridgwater Farmer (The Brake of Briars) (Roud 18, Laws M32)

Spoken:
... near Bridgwater,
He had two sons and a daughter dear;
They feeled it fitting to plough the ocean
To plough the ocean that raged so clear.

Our servant man's going to wed my sister,
My sister she have got mind to wed.
They have soon courtship and their blood they have ... (slaughter?)
And send her to a silent grave

Well now hunting three days and three nights she lately dreamed
She dreamed, she dreamed of her own true love;
By her bedside there was tears like fountains,
Covered over with gores of blood.

She rose in the morning and come to her brothers
"Dear brothers, you're welcome home
And where's our dear servant man?
My brothers you killed him and ain't you cruel?"

She got hold of her horse, she saddled her horse;
Down through the copse as she was riding,
She heard a mournful, dreadful noise
She got off from her horse and she raised down on him
She pulled her pocket handkerchief and she wiped his eyes
With tears of salt like any bride.
My brothers have killed you and ain't they cruel?
That's just to send you to your silent grave.

Sings the tune.

Then, sung:
Oh there was a farmer living near Bridgwater
Well he had two sons and one daughter dear;
Well she felt it fitting for to plough the ocean
Oh to plough the ocean oh that raged so clear.
*Surely, surely, they was deluded,
Which caused this poor farmer to live in fear.*

Well, our servant man's a-going to wed my sister,
Yes, my sister she have got mind to wed.
You will soon courtship and it won't be longing

Surelye, surelye, that will drive me wild.

Well three days and three nights, oh she lately mention,
Oh she dreamed, she dreamed of her own true love;
Oh by her bedside there was tears like fountains,
Covered over and over all by gores of blood.

She come dressed herself, she come down to her brothers,
A-crying tears like lumps of salt;
Dear brother, oh, tell, do tell me where he's?
You've killed my love, and you'll tell me too

Down through the woods oh that she went a-riding,
Oh, she heard a mournfully bitter cry;
Surelye, surelye, that's my own dear true love,
In the brake of briars oh he's throwed and killed.

Oh she got off'n her horse and she looked down on him,
Wiping the tears from her eyes oh like any brine;
My brothers have killed you and ain't they cruel?
Surelye, surelye, that now would drive me mad.

Roud's 121 entries carry a considerable variety of titles, with the *Break of Briars / Bramble Briar* being the most common; though *Bruton / Seaport Town* runs it a close second. Most entries are from the USA, though England has 37; the ballad seems unknown in Scotland or Ireland.

A girl falls in love with her father's serving man. Her brothers are outraged, and take the lad hunting and kill him. They claim to have lost him, but he appears to his lover in a dream and reveals the truth. Accused by their sister, the two brothers are forced to flee - or in some versions 'all for the same, you shall both get hung'.

In Boccaccio we find the *Tale of Isabella and Lorenzo*. Keats would in turn make this into a poem, *Isabella, or the Pot of Basil*. It should be noted, however, that the Boccaccio version is fuller than the song. The beginning is the same, with the young couple falling in love and the brothers murdering their sister's swain, after which she finds the body. But the sequel in the Decameron is macabre: She takes her lover's head and hides it in a pot of basil. The brothers steal the pot and bury it. I would not categorically deny the link between the Italian story and the English, but the English tale is noticeably more natural.

As far as I can see, the only other version available on CD is the Kennedy recording of Carolyne Hughes on TSCD672D.

1 - 15 I am a Brisk Young Lad (Roud 24241)

Oh, we'll get up in the night and we'll take the ship's light,
And we'll swear everything is our own, my brave boy;
And we'll swear everything is our own.

Af the p'liceman he comes, we'll stand bold at his side,
And we'll swear everything is our own, my brave boy;
And we'll swear everything is our own.

1 - 16 Buttercup Joe (Roud 1635)

Oh, I am a true bred country gent
And my father come from Wareham;
He had a few more in the family
But he couldn't rear one like I am.

Oh, do thees know my woman
They do call her Our Mary?
She do work so busy as a bumble bee
Down on Johnson's dairy.

Oh, don't her make her dumplings nice,
But I would like to try one.
I'm axing her if she would like
To wed a true bred country gent like I am.

Oh, I can reap or I can mow,
Or I can plough or sow
Well I'm as fresh as the daisy growing in the field
And they do call I Buttercup Joe.
Oh, do you know our woman
She called Mary Ann?
She'd do her best to please us all
While I'm out to work.

Oh, I can plough or milk a cow
I can reap or mow;
But the only job that I love best
Is the job of termut hoeing.

It seems extraordinary that Mrs Hughes can sometimes completely mangle a ballad with a very clear story-line, yet retain this bit of nonsense with no story at all, in a form very close to the original publication in an 1872 Songster.

It was quite well-known, with 43 Roud Entries, including 23 sound recordings - though only that by Jim Wilson (MTCD309-10) is available on CD.

1 - 17 The Butcher Boy (Roud 409, Laws P24)

At London Town where I came from,
Well, the butcher boy I loved so deep;
He courted me my life away,
In that same town where I could not stay.

"Oh, Mother dear, oh you don't not know
What pains and sorrows for I've had to bear;
Get me a chair and I'll set down,
And pen and ink, I will write it down."

Well, her father come home late one night,
And he found the house without a light;
Upstairs he goes in his daughter's room,
Found her hanging by her bedside by a rope.

And with a knife he cut her down,
In her left breast the note was found:
"And what a silly girl am I
To hang herself for the butcher's son."

"Oh, mother dear, you (c)arve my grave
You have it deep and very wide;
And in the centre, place a dove,
Will show this wide world I died for love."

The Butcher's Boy appears to be derived from at least three separate British broadsides, namely *Sheffield Park*, *The Squire's Daughter* (also known as *The Cruel Father* or *The Deceived Maid*) and *A Brisk Young Sailor*, which is also sometimes called *There is an Alehouse in Yonder Town*. It's a very well-known ballad, with 290 Roud instances, 90 of which are sound recordings, but almost all are from the USA. England has only 11 entries, with just 5 named singers.

Other versions available on CD: Sarah Makem (MTCD3453-5); Garrett & Norah Arwood (MTCD503-4); Frank Hinchliffe (MTCD311-2); Emma Pruitt (MTCD341-2); the Blue Sky Boys (JSP JSP7782 box set, and Bear Family BCD 15951 EK); Frank Proffitt (Folk-Legacy CD 1); Ephraim Woodie & the Henpecked Husbands (Old Hat CD 1001); Kelly Harrell (Document DOCD 8026); Melcina Smith and Elias Fazer (Root & Branch 1); Chuck Reed (Rounder CD 11661).

1 - 18 Catch Me if You Can (Roud 1028)

Oh, I pick you flowers, love, and purty too
And I'll show you what you have never seen.

Oh 'tis nine long months, now, 'tis gone and past
Oh nine long months is this poor child was born.

Well I'll catch the young man all if I can
Yes, and he shall pay, love, for my bastard.

Although the lovely Legg Family version is extremely well-known in the Revival, this song was not found much in the oral tradition. Roud has but 12 entries, with only two recordings: the Sophie Legg one, and another Gypsy singer, Eddie Penfold from Sussex.

1 - 19 Clementine (Roud 9611)

Whip me darling,
Whip me darling,
I was once your Clementine
When I kissed my little sister
That's when I lost my valentine.

Whip me darling,
Whip me darling,
I am once thy clever time
When I kissed my little sister
That's when I lost my valentine.

This once popular American song was written by written by Percy Montrose in 1885, but was not the sort of thing British collectors thought worthy of noticing so, amongst Roud's 19 examples there's only one such entry - it appeared in Bennett, *Bawdy Ballads & Dirty Ditties of the Wartime R.A.F.*

1 - 20 It Was on a Cold and Winter's Night (The Fatal Snowstorm) (Roud 175, Laws P20)

It was on of a cold and winter's night
When it first came down to snow;
Here's my innocent babe all in my arms,
Not knowing where to go.

Oh, how cruel it was my father
When he turned the door on me;
And how cruel it was your false-hearted mother
When she knowed what things would be.

Later, Mrs Hughes sang this verse:
*How cruel was my father
When he turned the door on me;
And how cruel was that false-hearted man
When he changed his love for gold.*

So, come all you nice young ladies
Will you take warning what now I say?
Don't trust yourself to no young man
'Til your heart don't grieve no pain.

They will kiss, they'll coax, they'll cuddle you,
And they'll call to you their bride;
And they'll leave you like my first love left me
With sorrow, grief and pain.

Oh, come hush-a-bye, my darling son,
Oh, and don't you begin to cry,
Now if your daddy did but know
All these things you're suffering from,
He would roll you in his arms this night
And wrap you in flannel warm.

Oh, we both jogged on together
'Til we come to some union door.
Now as we feeled tired and sleepy,
Oh, we set ourselves down to rest;
And we closed our eyes to the heavens above
And we both laid there and died.

Not a very well-known song in the oral tradition, with only 38 Roud entries, but very well-known to today's readers as *'Twas in the Month of January* - from Sarah Makem's wonderful version. It's most frequently found in Ireland, but has been heard all over these islands and in north America.

It treats one of the oldest themes in traditional song: a young girl betrayed and abandoned by her lover and cast by cruel parents into the snow. Herbert Hughes prints a fragmentary version of this song, called *The Fanaid Grove*, in *Irish Country Songs*, Vol.1. For an augmented text see Kennedy, *Folk Songs of Britain and Ireland*. Other versions available on CD: Sarah Makem (MTCD353-5); Paddy Tunney (TSCD656); Geordie Hanna (Fisher's Cot CD).

1 - 21 **The Cows is in the Clover** (Roud 15785)

Oh, the cows is in the clover
And they wobbles as they walks,
Oh, Maggie go and drive 'em
From the old red barn.

We're not allowed to keep a beau
Nor ramble on the shore,
But when I hears my Maggie's voice
Come rapping at the kitchen door
Maar, Maar, Maggie

The cows is in the clover
They waggles as they walk
Maggie go and drive 'em
From the old red barn.

We ent allowed to keep a beau
Nor ramble on the shore,
But when I hears my Maggie's voice
Come rapping at the kitchen door.

Steve Roud writes: Now this is a real surprise! It's already got a number (15785) - see the Max Hunter collection - <http://maxhunter.missouristate.edu/songinformation.aspx?id=432> - where it was sung by Harry Bennett, of Wheatland, Missouri on November 23, 1959, but we can't find it anywhere else. Mr Bennett sings pretty-well the same tune as Caroline, too, so it seems only fair to let you see his text:

*I love to wander by the stream
That winds among the trees
An' watch the birds flit to an' fro
Among the autumn leaves
From morn 'til night, is my delight
To wander by the shore
But when I do my Mothers voice
Comes from the kitchen door:*

*Chorus:
Maggie, Maggie -
The cows are in the clover
They've trampled there since morn
Go an' drive them Maggie
To the ole red barn.*

*I'm never allowed to have a beau
Except it's on the sly
He came an' took me yesterday
We walked in through the rye
We strolled along, so lovingly
It seemed just like a dream
When just within the kitchen
Came that ole familiar scream:*

Chorus - Maggie!

This, I think, clarifies Caroline's version a little. Heaven knows where she heard it.

1 - 22 **The Cuckoo** (Roud 413)

Oh, 'tis night oh after night, love, I do lay on my bed,
With the pillows of feathers all under my head;
Neither sleeping no nor waking, oh no rest can I take,
But the thought of that young man, he still troubles my mind.

Well, I will rise then I will meet him, Love, as the evening draws nigh;
I will meet him as the evening, as the evening draws nigh;
Well, if you think you love a little girl, for your mind for to ease,
Oh, can't you love the old one, 'til the young one comes on?

It's like the flowers all in your garden when the beauty's all gone,
But can't you see what I'm come to by a-loving that one?
Now, your grave he will rot you, he will rot you all away,
Not one young man out of twenty a young maid can you trust.

Now, I'll take my week's wages, unto an alehouse I'll go,
Oh, and there I'll set drinking 'til my money's all gone;
Here's my wife and little family, quite home, starving too,
There's me in this alehouse, oh a-spending all I earn.

Now, ain't the cuckoo, she's called a merry bird, Love, don't she sing as she flies?
Oh, she brings us good tidings and she tells we no lies;
Oh she sucks all small birds' eggs for to keep her voice clear,
And every time she hollers "cuckoo!", don't the summer draw nigh?

This is an extremely popular song, with 272 entries in Roud - more than half of which are from North America - and it's rare in Scotland and Ireland. In fact, it's really just a collection of 'floating verses' which combine to form any number of songs. This tendency is so pronounced that Roud has two numbers for it - 413 for the *Cuckoo* variant, and 414 for the *On Top of Old Smokey* variant (which shows a further 235 entries, all from North America).

Other versions available on CD: Minty Smith (MTCD320); Bill Smith (MTCD351); Walter Pardon (MTCD305-6); Hobart Smith (Rounder CD 1799).

1 - 23 **Diddling Song**

MacColl and Seeger fill almost two pages of their book with the texts and staff notations of these two lilt; but I think listening to them is probably the more useful option. The Hughes group had no musicians, so the women sang these for dancing at night when the men returned from the pub.

1 - 24 **As I was a-Walking up Fair Wackford Street** (Too Young) (Roud 564, Laws P18)

As I was a-walking up fair Wackford Street,
I met a poor girl a-singing this song;
And I poppèd the question to her,
And the answer it was "too young, too young",
And the answer it was "too young".

"The younger, my dear, the better for me
To be an old man's slave
And after a month I've got you,
I can say I married a wife, a maid,
I can say I married a wife, a maid."

"And after the first nine months was up,
Then you can say you provèd a child by me
You can say you provèd a child by me."

"Well then, what am I to wrap it in?"
"You'll wrap it in your petticoat, my dear,
And you'll diddle it on your knee."
"That's not the promise you made to me
When I was only sixteen years of age,
When I was only sixteen years of age."

"You promised to me you'd marry me,
And make to me your lawful bride, your bride,
Make me your lawful bride."

I've noticed that a number of English Gypsy songs have the peculiarity of starting with a four-line A tune, followed by a B tune developed from it (as do most dance tunes), but then never return to the A tune. The same happens here in this terrific song, except that the melody continues to develop throughout the rest of the song, changing from 5, to 4, to 3-line verses, and including both short and long lines to delight the ear.

Steve Roud writes: I think the first half is pretty definitely 564, and the rest fits with the sentiment of that song even if the exact words don't seem to occur elsewhere - so I would stick with that number.

So it seems to be a rare version of a well-known song, with 112 entries in the Roud *Index*, 36 of which are sound recordings. Almost all are from England, plus a few from the north of Ireland and North America. Gypsy names crop up frequently amongst the listed singers. It usually has the name *Down by the Old Riverside* or similar and, as is frequently the case, one can't really be sure if Mrs Hughes' song is truly the same as the rest of the Roud 564 entries - certainly the first two verses are unusual, and I've heard the 'I can say I married a wife, a maid' line in one or two other songs.

Other versions available CD: Danny, Harry and Lemmie Brazil, Doris Davies (MTCD345-7); May Bradley (MTCD); George Spicer (MTCD311-2); Mary Lozier (MTCD341-4); Fred Jordan (Veteran VTD 148CD); Harry Cox (TSCD512D).

1 - 25 **Erin go Bragh** (Roud 1627, Laws Q20)

Oh, they all flockèd around me
Like flocks of wild bees,
I said "Where is the villain
That struckèd the police
And if I catch him, I'll grab him,
I'll give him the law,
For I'll make him remember
Young Erin go Bragh.

Oh, I pities the poor police now
As he's laying ill,
I pities the poor police now
As he's laying dead.
If it wasn't for the clothes-o
And the boots-o he wears
But I would not forget pattern of
The clothes that he wears.

Steve Roud writes: The first four lines are clearly *Erin go Bragh* but the rest I can't account for. There are other songs with the same title, but they bear no relation to Caroline's words. I'm reluctant to give this a new number, so will stick to the usual 1627, but preferably with a note explaining this.

So, this may be seen as a fragment of the fairly well-known *Erin go Bragh* (98 Roud entries, 25 sound recordings). Indeed, if it's combined with husband William's version (following track, sung to the more usual tune) a more-or-less complete version of the story emerges. Duncan Campbell, a Highlander in Edinburgh, has an altercation with a Policeman on account of his accent - the Polis says he's Irish - "Ye aa' turn tae Scotsmen as soon's ye get here" - an argument and then a fight ensues. Duncan prevails, but the populace turn on him and drive him away. So not an Irish song, as many seem to believe, but a commentary on the cultural gulf between the Highlands (and Islands) and the 'saft' southern half of Scotland.

This and the following track appear to be the only CD recordings, and the only collections of the song in England.

1 - 26 **Erin go Bragh** (Roud 1627, Laws Q20) Sung by William Hughes

Oh, as I was a-walking up fair Wackford Street
A saucy young villain I chanced to meet.
He looked in my face and he tipped me some jaw
Saying "What brought you over from Erin go Bragh?"

Here's a lump of black tarmac I hold in my wrist,
In around his great napper I made it to twist.
Here is blood from his napper I quicklèd did draw,
And I made him remember bold Erin go Bragh.

Here's the neat little pack that I've got to my back
I'll pack up my clothing and soon I'll be off.
For wealth I've got one friend, I'm sure he got six
And I won't forget Pat, nor the weight of his stick

I have travelled through old England a good many miles
Through France and through Scotland, through France and through Spain
And I'll never forget Pat, nor the weight of his gain.

For notes, see the previous track.

1 - 27 **Fair Ellen** (Lord Thomas and Fair Eleanor) (Roud 4, Child 73)

Oh, Fair Ellen she got houses and land
The brown girl she've got none
I really do think 'tis too hard for me
To marry that ritual(?) young girl.

Spoken: I can't sing that right.
I'm only a clever young feller, Lord Thomas,
To wed two brides all in one day. He got married to Ellen and got back and the brown girl looked at him so sad, and he stuck her right through with a sword. Is you blind or can't not see or all that blood run down by her side.

Well, Fair Ellen she got houses and land,
Oh, the brown girl she got none;
Oh rather you loved her little finger
Nor you did her whole body.

Well, the brown girl she now set to one side
Because she was now very poor,
She's the handsomest young woman there
That ever the sun shone on.

Well Fair Ellen she have houses and land
She stepped right into the lord's arms
She went to the wedding ... the red white and blue
And then she

Spoken: "I can't get hold of that word, love. I knows it right through, if I could only get hold of they few words. Well, when she went to the wedding, look Ellen come back. The brown girl was one of the bridesmaids; the brown girl come in and Lord Hallerton said he'd sooner have the brown girl. "Well" they said, "go and kiss your bride." Before he kissed his bride, Sweet Ellender, he drew the sword from his side and he struck her through the side. They looked up and said "Is you blind or can't you see your own heart's blood a-running down by the side?"

Although quite an old ballad, *Lord Thomas and Fair Ellender* has remained popular with ballad singers over the years. This may be partly to do with the story, with its dramatic ending, and partly because it was frequently printed on broadsides. The earliest known text can be dated from between 1663 to 1685, and there are several eighteenth century broadsides. In Norway and Denmark the ballad is known by the title *Sir Peter and Liten Kerstin* which, again, was frequently printed on eighteenth century broadsides.

Roud lists 754 entries, with the great majority from the USA - but England has around 90 and Scotland 40. Of the 80 sound recordings, the great majority are also American, but Bob Copper and Charlie Wills recorded it in England, as did Willie Edward and Jessie Murray in Scotland.

Other versions available on CD: both Cas and Doug Wallin (MTCD503-4); Jessie Murray (Rounder CD1175); Texas Gladden (Rounder CD1800).

1 - 28 **The False-Hearted Lover** (Roud 954)

Oh, but once I had a colour,
Well it were just like a rose;
Oh, but now I'm so pale as
The lily what do grow.

Oh, there's me and my baby,
Now contented we'll be;
Well, I will try and forget you,
Oh, as you forgot me.

Like the flowers all in the garden
When the beauty's all gone;
Can't you see just what I'm come to
By a-loving that one?

Oh now, all you young ladies,
You take warning by me;
Never let a young man
Get one inch above your knee.

He will kiss and he'll coax you,
And he'll call you his love;
And a false hearted 'ceitful,
Will bid you farewell.

Well, there's love on the ocean,
And there's love on dry land;
Long as breath's in my body
I'll still love that one.

This is just about recognisable as a version of the ubiquitous *Flash Company / Yellow Handkerchief* song, even though all Mrs Hughes' verses can also be found in other popular songs.

It's a song that is almost exclusive to Suffolk these days, although there are a small number of sightings along the south coast - Sussex, Hampshire and Dorset. We heard it in the repertoires of at least six singers in Suffolk in the late 1960s. The song was first noted in Limerick in the 1850s and was still well known recently, not only in East Anglia, but also among Travellers throughout southern England. Roud has 89 instances of the song, 22 of which are sound recordings.

Other versions available on CD: Cecilia Costello (MTCD363-4); Phoebe Smith (MTCD356-7); Cyril Poacher (MTCD303); Pop Maynard (MTCD401-2); Mary Ann Haynes (EFDSS CD 002).

1 - 29 **The Folkstone Murder** (Roud 897)

Oh, there was a town near Folkstone
That murdering deed was done,
Miss Anna Maria Sweet Caroline
Got murdered with Sissling John.

Oh, earlye next day morning,
Oh, before the break of day,
"Oh mercy!" cried her own mother
With her hair pulled to the ground.

"I said it was not safe, my dear,
To go with a man alone,
You should have took your brother in
To go with a man alone."

Well on the ground lay bleeding
Poor Ria shook for fear

This was also sung by both Lemmie and Danny Brazil, and it has seemed to be well known, certainly among Travellers. Something of a surprise, then, to find only

30 instances noted in Roud ... and 7 of these refer to George Spicer! Other known singers have been Mrs Coomber of Sussex, Charlie Bridger and Phoebe Smith's brother Charlie Scamp (both of Kent). George Spicer's son Ron also recorded it, in 1994, on the cassette *Steel Carpet* (MATS 0010), and I remember Jack Smith, the Milford, Surrey based Gypsy, singing it in the mid-sixties.

'Switzerland John' was Dede Redaines, born in the 1830s in Belgrade. He came to England in 1855 and was enlisted into the British Swiss Legion stationed at Dover Castle. He became acquainted with a laundry worker, Mrs Back, whose husband was a dredger in Dover harbour.

During the summer of 1856, Redaines was courting the elder Back daughter, Caroline. On August 2nd he accused her of receiving attentions from a sergeant in his unit. She denied this and he appeared satisfied. He proposed a walk over the downs to Shorncliffe Camp the following day. Mrs Back insisted that they be chaperoned by Caroline's younger sister Maria. At Steddy's Hole, some five miles out, he killed them both.

Redaines was captured the following day at Milton Chapel Farm, Chartham, near Canterbury, after having tried to commit suicide. He was tried, found guilty and hanged at Maidstone on New Year's Day 1857.

Other CD recordings: Tom Willett (MTCD361-2); Danny Brazil (MTCD345-7); George Spicer (MTCD309-0); Charlie Bridger (VTC6CD).

1 - 30 **We Dear Labouring Men** (Roud 1394)

Oh, there's some do say the farmer's best,
But I've got need say so;
If it weren't for we poor labouring men,
What would the farmers do?
They would beat up all their old hard stuff
Until some new come in;
And there's never a trade in old England
Like we poor labouring men.

Oh, but some do say the baker's best,
But I've got need say so;
If it weren't for we poor hard-working men,
What would the bakers do?
They would beat up all their old hard stuff
Until some new come in;
And there's never a trade in old England
Like we dear working men.

Oh, well, some did say that the butcher's best
But I've got need say so;
If it weren't for we poor working men,
What would the butchers do?
They would beat up all their old hard stuff
Until some new come in;
There's many a trade in old England
Like we dear labouring men.

*Let every true-born Englishman
Lift up a flowing glass,
And drink a toast to the labouring man,
Likewise his bonnie lass;
And when these cruel times are gone,
Good days will come again;
There's never a trade in old England
Like we dear labouring men.*

Another example of an entirely *un*-fragmented text from Mrs Hughes. I'd always thought that this was a fairly well-known song, but Roud has just six entries, all from central southern England (except for George Butterworth having noted it from Jack Dade in Norfolk) and none are sound recordings.

1 - 31 **Irish Molly-O** (Roud 2168)

..... thirty Irish girls, "Come dus (?) to me" she said,
"Me hands all in me pocket, love", and as it happen so;
I pulled out a golden guinea, for to treat me Molly wi'.

Now she's young, oh, and she's beautiful, the fairest one I know;
Did ever you build your nest on top of any oak tree.
The green leaves they will wither, boy, and the roots will fairly fade,
And the beauty of an Irish girl will soon, now, fade away.

Oh, I stepped to young miss damsule, the fairest one I know,
To the primrose, the violet, before my guinea go;
And the only one that 'tice-ted me was me Irish Molly - O.

Once quite a popular song in England and Scotland (79 Roud entries, but with only one sighting in Ireland) yet it hasn't remained so - the latest collection, apart from this, was in 1911.

1 - 32 **Georgie** (Roud 90, Child 209) Sung by Henry Hughes

Once, oh, I had such a good little boy, now so good a little boy now as any;

What would run five miles now in one half-an-hour,
With a letter to now my Georgie.

Now my Georgie's going to be hung, now, in some chains of some gold,
In chains that you don't see so many;
With the broad, bright sword hanging by now his side,
Don't I pity you now, gay lady?

Oh sir, what now have he done, now my good lord judge?
Have he murdered or killed any other?
He've stoled sixteen now of the Queen's fat deers,
And he sold 'em in yonders-a valley.

Now your Georgie's going to be hung now in some chains of some gold,
Into chains that you don't see many,
With the broad, bright sword hanging by now his side,
Won't I fight for the life of my Georgie?

Now there's six purty babes I've had-a by you,
And the seventh lays in, oh, my body;
I will freelye part, oh, from every one
If you spare me the life of my Georgie.

Oh, now once I did live on Shooter's knowe,
Oh, of vassals I've had plenty;
I'm a-giving the silver to every man,
If you spare me the life of my Georgie.

Another very well-known ballad, with 305 Roud entries, mostly from printed sources; 105 from England, 84 from the USA, 63 from Scotland. There are 43 sound recordings, though few appear to have ever been published.

Scholars have long argued over the origin of the ballad, which exists in two basic forms. The first, from Scotland, is apocryphally ascribed to an incident involving George Gordon, fourth Earl of Huntley, who fell from Royal favour in 1554. The second possibly stems from two English 17th century blackletter broadsides which, between them, supplied most of the verses used by later printers, including Henry Parker Such of south London.

Other recordings on CD: Jasper Smith (MTCD320); Alec Bloomfield (MTCD339-0); George Bloomfield (TSCD 673T); Levi Smith (TSCD661); Harry Cox (TSCD512D).

1 - 33 **The Girl I Left Behind** (Roud 262, Laws P1a/P1b)

I was brought up with some good old parents,
Like any young squire, you know;
But since I've took up to rambling,
Oh that's been the ruins of me.

Well, as I walked over old George's Square,
The post-boy met me there;
For he handed to me a letter, Love,
For to give me quite understand.

So rambling I will give over,
Good company I will deserve (?)
For the girl that I left in old Dublin Town
She's got wed to another man.

So rambling I will give over.
Bad company I will deserve (resign?)
No more will I go rambling
For the girl as I left behind.

The phrase 'the girl I left behind' appears in countless other songs, but I'd never realised that the one bearing this title was so popular - 241 Roud instances! Mind you, I suspect Mrs Hughes' example is nothing more than four 'floaters', one of which contains that phrase.

Most of Roud's instances are from the USA, as are most of the 66 sound recordings, few of which ever seem to have been published.

Other versions available on CD: Evelyn Ramsey (MTCD501-2); Hobert Stallard (MTCD505-6); Grayson & Whitter (Old Hat CD 1001); Spencer Moore (Rounder CD 1702); Texas Gladden (Rounder CD 1800).

1 - 34 **Still I Love Him** (Roud 654)

With his bell bottom trousers, with the seams up the legs
His hair cut in the fashion and curl to one side
Didn't I love him? Couldn't deny him, I'll be with him wherever he goes.

Well, I promised to meet him at Bamebow Fair
He'd to buy me a neckercher red white and blue
I don't want it, dever denied it, I'll be with you wherever I goes.

Spoken: But here's another one: When I was single I weared a plaid shawl, but now I am married I got none at all. That it?

This song is not as well-know as I would have imagined, but Roud's 27 entries come from all over England. This may be because it's a fairly recent song (the earliest collection was in the 1950s), and because of this there are 20 sound recordings and no broadsides. Other singers include Margaret Barry, Bob Roberts,

Mabs Hall, Charlotte Higgins and Phil Hamond.

Other versions available on CD: Johnny Doughty (VTC6CD); Stanley Robertson (Elphinstone Institute EICD 003).

1 - 35 **Flash Gals, and Airy Too** (Seventeen Come Sunday) (Roud 277, Laws O17)

Oh yes, as I was a-walking, oh my love,
Oh, so early in the morning;
Oh, I met with a fair and a purty girl,
She said, "Morning, darling, do you love my - Roo dum day?"
Fol the diddle die doe, Flash gals and airy too.

Oh, she got her horse and saddle ready,
Down through the copses she did ride;
Oh, she met her true love down through the -
Said, "Hello, darling, do you love me?"
"Yes my dear, I loves you; but don't you tell my daddy now."

"Oh, will you have a man, my fair purty maid,
Yes, will you have a man, my honey?"
Oh, she answered me quite civility:
"Yes, I'm seventeen come Sunday, with my - Roo dum day"
Fol the diddle die doe, Flash gals and airy too.

A very popular song with 334 instances in Roud, from all over the British Isles, USA, Canada and Australia. It appears with numerous titles, among the most appealing of which is *Flash Gals and Airy, Too* - also used by Win Ryan. Obviously it has remained a favourite with country singers, and particularly Travellers, into the present era, since there are 78 sound recordings.

Mrs Hughes' musical skills are evident where she's moulded an otherwise fairly rhythmic tune to fit her uneven text, particularly in the second verse - brilliant!

Other versions available on CD: Mary Delaney (MTCD325-6); Bob Hart (MTCD301-2); Walter Pardon (MTCD305-6); Bill Smith (MTCD351); Sarah Makem (MTCD353-5); Annie Jane Kelly (MTCD353-5); Joe Heaney (TSCD651 and TSCD518D); Stanley Robertson (Elphinstone Institute EICD 003); Jumbo Brightwell (VT154CD); Jean Orchard (VT151CD); Fred Jordan (VTD148CD); Seamus Ennis (Saydisc CD-SDL 411).

1 - 36 **Go and Leave Me** (Roud 459)

Oh, go and leave me, if you wish to
There's many happy hour with you I spent;
But if you thinks that I'm not worth having,
For you'll go your road and I'll go mine.

There's three crossroads now can I see them ...

Short and sweet, and sung to the same tune Percy Webb used in Suffolk. Where the 'three crossroads' come from, I have no idea.

1 - 37 **All You Paddies Lay Down** (Roud 5199)

Oh, as I went to market, I vow and declare,
As I went to market, 'twas all on a cow;
The cow was so lazy she chucked on me arm,
She dirtied my shoes and she dirtied my clothes,
And sing ay, ay; sing ay to myself,
Oh 'tis ay, oh you paddies, lay down.

I looked all up to my magistrate well,
I asked him the place if he knowed it quite well.
When he got there, nothing could he see,
But thousand potatoes growing on a pear tree
And sing down, down; sing down, down;
Sing down, all you paddies, lay down.

Roud has two numbers for this song; 1687 which is *Paddy Backwards*, and 5199 which is unique to this example, as seems more likely!

1 - 38 **The Pretty Ploughing Boy** (Roud 186, Laws M24)

Oh, that was not the song, boy, we wrote it going along,
When five horses stood underneath the shade.
My purty ploughing boy, now, I'm come to let you know
That we got to be stowed all in the wars for slaying.

Now T stands for Tom, oh, and J spells for John,
And my Willie is the best of all the lot.
Well, I will not cut down, no a feather at a fall,
And get married to the young girl I redore.

Oh, that was not the song, boy, we wrote it going along,
When five horses stood underneath the shade.
Oh, my purty ploughing boy, now, I've come to let you know
That you got to be stowed all in the wars for slaying.

This was also sung by most of the Brazil Family of Gloucester. Indeed, it's quite a popular song, with 227 Roud entries - mostly from England. No doubt its popularity stems from the large number of broadside printings it enjoyed.

Other versions available on CD: both Harry and Lemmie Brazil (MTCD345-7); Daisy Chapman (MTCD308); Walter Pardon (TSCD514); Harry Cox (TSCD512D); Bob Lewis (VTC6CD).

1 - 39 **Once I Had a Good Little Boy** (Lady Maisry) (Roud 45, Child 65)

Oh, once I had, oh, a good little boy,
Oh, the first three miles that little boy run,
And the second three miles that he walked;
Oh, he walked 'til he come to a fair riverside,
And he laid on his sweet breast and swum.

Well, he swum 'til he got to the lord's front door,
That he just now as they started meals.
Oh, he rung all the bell and out come, now, the lord,
"Oh, what brought you here, oh my dear little boy?"

"If you only knowed that news that I've got to tell you, my lord,
Not one more bit of food would you eat.
Now, I'm come to let you know that your true love's laying ill
And will die now before you can come."

"You'll go and saddle to me, oh, my milk-white stag,
Oh, that I now might ride and see;
Oh, that I may go and kiss her two true cherry lips,
That before now she's quite gone to clay."

The lady, oh, she died on a Monday morning
Just before the village clock now struckèd twelve;
And the gentleman he died on the Tuesday morning
Just before the village bell struckèd one.
Now, the lady she was buried in a vault so deep,
And the gentleman was buried in a tomb.

Out of the lady's breast grewed a pretty rose-briar,
And he grewed 'til he got to sich a height,
Then he twisted and twined to a true-lovier's knot,
And a rose wropped around my sweet-briar.

Although assigned the Child number 65 by most collectors, Ewan MacColl & Peggy Seeger have pointed out that it is: 'made up of floater-verses from a number of ballads and yet does not appear to be derived from any particular one'. MacColl & Seeger have identified lines from at least ten Child ballads - these are: *Lady Maisry* (Child 65), *Lord Lovel* (Child 75), *Little Musgrave* (Child 81), *The Knight and Shepherd's Daughter* (Child 110), *Child Maurice* (Child 83), *Fair Mary of Wallington* (Child 91), *Bonny Barbara Allen* (Child 84), *Fair Margaret and Sweet William* (Child 74), *The Gypsy Laddie* (Child 200) and *Geordie* (Child 209). They conclude with the comment: 'What does stand out, and make this song unique, is that a whole series of ballad formulas have been selected and put together in a form which has remained stable'.

Other versions available on CD: Alice Penfold (MTCD320).

1 - 40 **The Running, Running Rue** (Plenty of Thyme) (Roud 3)

Oh now, come all you young maids and young men,
You come listening to just what I say;
Never you go wed in your garden so gay,
Never let no young girl steal away your thyme.

Oh, it's love, I've got plenties of thyme,
I've got thyme in my garden for you;
Now I'm just like a bit of grass that's been tread down underfoot,
Give me time, I will rise and grow again.

Oh, that running, running, running, running rue,
Now he runs all too soon for me;
Oh it's I will cut down, oh, that running, running rue
And I'll plant up the jolly oak tree.

Oh that purty William tree will freely grow,
He will freely now grow any higher;
Well, he'll twist and he'll twine to a true lovier's knot,
And a rose wrapped round my sweet briar.

Now, I walkèd my garden all down,
And I walkèd my garden along;
Well, in all in the midst of my pretty flowers grown,
There was one sprig of thyme could I find.

Now, my jolly old gardener stood by,
And I askedèd him to choose for me;
Oh he choosèd me the violets, sweet lilies and the pinks,
Out of them I did gain them all five.

Oh stand off, oh stand off, my purty oak,
And 'tis you, oh you now fade away;
Oh for I will be so true to that young maiden there
As the stars shine so bright in the sky.

One might presume that the popularity of this archetypal southern English love song (nearly 300 Roud entries) stems from the fact of it being the first song Cecil Sharp collected from the oh-so-appropriately named John England, in Hambridge, Somers-

set, in 1903. However, the earliest printed versions date from the eighteenth century, and there were many earlier collections, so it seems, simply, that it was a very popular song and no surprise at all that Mr England should have chosen it to sing.

In essence, it's a very old song, and belongs to that class of songs and ballads (going back at least to *A Nosegaie Alwaies Sweet* ... included in *A Handful of Pleasant Delights*, 1584) which centre around the symbolism of flowers - thyme for virginity, rue for its loss, rose for passion, willow for regret, etc.

Over the years the song has turned up repeatedly, usually with little textual or melodic variation. Both Catnach and Such printed the song in London, as did Sanderson in Edinburgh, Swindells in Manchester, Collard in Bristol, Taylor in Birmingham and Ward in Ledbury, and most English collectors have noted at least one version of the song. Roud lists 297 instances, almost all from England, of which 51 are sound recordings.

Other versions available on CD: George Dunn (MTC317-8); Cyril Poacher (MTC303); Alec Bloomfield (MTC339-0); an Unknown singer (MTC333); Ernie Payne (VTC6CD); George Withers (VTC9CD); Fred Jordan (VTD148CD); Herbert Bailey (VT135CD); Pop Maynard (TSCD 660); Billy Bartle (EFDSS CD 002).

1 - 41 **The Jealous Lover** (Poison in a Glass of Wine, Young Maria, Oxford City) (Roud 218, Laws P30)

Three girls they went to service together,
A lady invited them to tea;
But how to 'stroy their own true lovier,
She put some poison in a glass of wine.

She drank the wine and then she uttered:
"Praying, young man, will you take me home?
For the glass of wine that you've kindly give me,
That will carry me to my grave."

"Well, if that will carry you to your grave, dear,
Hand it to me and I'll drink the same;
In each other's arms we will die together,
And there put an end to all jealousy mind."

Too young to court, too young to marry,
Too young to yer (hear) of a wedding day;
But when you're married you're bound forever,
When you're single you've sweet liberty.

A very well-known song - there are 190 entries in Roud and, more to the point, it's a song which has remained in the country repertoire right up to the present time, particularly amongst Gypsies and Travellers. It has numerous titles in addition to the four shown above, but whatever it may be called by the singer, the song would appear to stem from a broadside issued by John Pitts of London in the early 1800s - and about one third of Roud's entries refer to broadsides.

Most versions are from England, but there are also 4 from Ireland, 8 from Scotland, 20 from the USA, one from Canada, and one from Tristan da Cunha noted. Forty-five sound recordings are known, but the following are the only other ones available on CD: Jack Smith (MTC356-7); George 'Pop' Maynard (MTC401-2 and MTC309-10); May Bradley (MTC349); Louie Saunders (MTC309-10); Garrett & Norah Arwood (MTC503-4); Freda Palmer (MTC311-2); Danny Brazil (MTC347-8); Fred Jordan (VTD148CD); Sheila Stewart (TSCD515); Joseph Taylor (TSCD653).

1 - 42 **The Famous Flower of Serving-Men** (Roud 199, Child 106)

Oh, my father he built me a shady bower,
And he civered it over with the shamrock leaves;
Was the purtiest bower that ever you see,
What my agèd father he built for me.

Oh, could my brother do me a bigger grudge
Oh, to send nine robbers all in one night?
Oh, to send nine robbers all in one night
All to murder my baby and to slave my life.
For I had nothing for now to wrap it in,
But the linen sheets that my love died in.

*Left him there on the highway, there to die.
They killed my husband all in my arms,
So sudden we had no time to fly;
But every blow struck him all on the crown,*

Oh, I'm all alone, all alone, yes I'm all alone;
'Til I took the fiddle and I played a tune:
Oh, for once I was a fair lady gay,
And my husband he was now a noble lord.

Now, I caught hold to the pen and I wrote a line,
I wrote it long and I wrote it neat;
But every blow struck him all on the crown,
Left him all on the highway, oh there to die.

Now I'll cut off my hair and I'll change my name,
From Fair Ellender to Sweet William-boy;
Yes, and every town, love, oh that I sails through,

They will take me, my love, for to be the Queen.

Oh now, I rung oh the bell and out come the lord,
*I rung the bell one time and three;
And when he came, I bowed full very low
Oh, it's have you any house-duties for me?*

Oh do you want now a house-groom,
Or do you want now a stableman?
No, I wants a man-servant to attend to the hall,
Now to 'tend to the hall when the lord is gone.

Oh, it's are you married or am you free,
Or am I bounded for now to be your bride?
Oh, a married life it will as soon suit me,
If contented mind don't dare beat jealousy.

Oh, it's are you married, or am I bound,
Or am I bound here to be your bride?
Oh, a maid again that I will never be
Whilst an apple grows on an orange tree.

Now 'tis earlye, earlye all in the spring
While the birds they whistles and they softly sings,
Well, they changes their notes so from tree to tree,
And the song they sang it were 'Home, Sweet Home'.

Now as I crossed over the foggy moor,
I soon lost sight of my true love's face;
Well, I looked behind as I looked befront,
That's my aged old father I will see no more.

Spoken: How's that?

Bronson has extensive notes about the complicated history of this ballad, where both text and tune seem to have suffered from editorial activity. Walter Scott rewrote the story as *The Border Widow's Lament*, which is a little too orderly and neat to be the pure result of tradition.

Although this rare ballad has 95 Roud entries, most are from printed sources, and only 19 singers are named - most of whom are from Scotland. Mrs Hughes is one of only four English singers named. MacColl & Seeger discuss her deeply fragmented version thus:

This song has a number of pivot-points at which events, common in balladry, take place. For instance, in stanza 3, a man gets killed. In *The Three Butchers*, also, a man is killed. So Mrs Hughes switches, in the space of one stanza, from *The Famous Flower* to *The Three Butchers*. In theory, it would be possible to continue and finish with *The Three Butchers* or she might (as she does in our text) come back to *The Famous Flower* in stanza 4. In stanza 6, this happens again, but this time the second half of the verse belongs to *Lord Thomas* (Child 73) and the pivot-point subject is a woman travelling from one place to another. Verses 7 and 8 contain emotional and atmospheric substitutions from other songs, slotted in with astonishing facility. Yet the overall story of the *Famous Flower* is dominant over these intrusions. Sometimes the results of such dovetailing are unsatisfactory and, occasionally, unintelligible, but a surprising number of these mutant texts possess both dignity and their own kind of dramatic sense.

Other versions available on CD: Mary Delaney (MTC325-6); Ellen Mitchell (MTC315-6); Jasper Smith (TSCD661); Carolyne Hughes (TSCD672D).

CD Two:

2 - 1 **Green Grows the Laurel** (Roud 279)

Oh, once I was a school-maid with my pencil and slate,
But can't you see what I'm come to by stopping out late;
My parents disliked me, they turned me 'way from the door,
Then I told them that I'd ramble like I rambled a-fore.
Then I picked up my baby as I walked from the door,
Then I told them that I'd ramble just like I used to be fore.

Then it's green grows the laurels, yes and cold blow the dew,
How sorry was I when I first met with you.
It's like the lilies in the garden, oh, when their beauty's all gone,
They will go 'way and they'll leave you, like my true love left me.

The laurel has always occupied an important place in folklore: as a symbol of peace or victory; as a cure for various ailments, including rheumatism; and even to induce poetic inspiration. In some parts of the world it was used to bring about forgetfulness and the Pennsylvania Indians were said to have used it to commit suicide. In Europe, it was best known as a love charm, to cement a relationship or, when burned, to bring back an errant lover. In England, it was believed that if a pair of lovers pluck a laurel twig and break it in half, each keeping a piece, they will remain lovers. The laurel verse often turns up in traditional songs, as here, as a 'floater' verse, indicating unrequited or lost love.

Other versions available on CD: Mary Delaney (MTCD325-6); Daisy Chapman (MTCD308); Louie Fuller (TSCD665).

2 - 2 **Henry My Son** (Lord Randal) (Roud 10, Child 12) Sung by Sheila Hughes

“Where have you been all day, Henry my son?
Where have you been all day, my beloved one?”
“Fields, dear mother, fields, dear mother;

Chorus:
I have a pain in my head and
I wants to go to bed,
And I wants to go to sleep.”

“What have you had to eat, Henry my son?
What have you had to eat, my beloved one?”
“Snakes, dear mother, snakes, dear mother;
Chorus”

What do you want to drink, (etc.) Poison (etc.), (chorus)

How many pillows, (etc.) One (etc.), (chorus)

How many sheets, (etc.) One (etc.),

(chorus):
I have a pain in my head and
I wants to go to sleep,
And I wants to rest.”

Mrs Hughes' daughter Sheila clearly exhibits the stylistic differences between generations of English Gypsy singers at this period. Most obvious is the use of vibrato, and the so-called 'Country & Western' accent. I've always found the suggestion of the influence of Country & Western records rather puzzling; all the older generation of singers I've heard would have had plenty of opportunity of hearing such music, yet seldom seem to have taken up the style, whilst their children appear to have adopted it almost uniformly. I would have expected them to have used it for the American songs they sing, but stayed true to their parents' way of singing the old songs. People are strange!

This is another very well-known ballad, with 607 entries in Roud's Index - half of which are from North America. Professor Child called this *Lord Randal*, and gave over a dozen examples. It is known in one form or another all over Europe; Child noted that the ballad was popular in Italy c.1629, so it is probably quite an old story.

Like the ballad *Edward* (Roud 200, Child 13), we have little idea of what actually lies behind this apparently motiveless murder. Not that this has bothered singers, who continue to enjoy the piece. Usually we find that the ballad's victim has been poisoned by eating either small fish, snakes or eels.

There are quite a number of other versions available on CD, including those by: Bill Smith (MTCD351); George Spicer (MTCD311-2); George Dunn (MTCD317-8); Fred Hall (MTCD333); Paddy Reilly (MTCD325-6); Gordon Hall (Country Branch CBCD095); Mary Delaney (TSCD667) and Joe Heaney (TSCD518D - this being sung in Irish). Jeannie Robertson's superb version, *Lord Donald*, is regrettably only available in a truncated form (along with similar versions from Elizabeth Cronin, Thomas Moran, Colm McDonagh and Eirllys & Eddis Thomas) on Rounder CD 1775; Ray Driscoll (EFDSS CD02).

2 - 3 **Billy Boy** (Roud 326, Child 12 App.)

Did she lay so close to you,
Billy Boy, Billy Boy?
Did she lay so close to you, Billy Boy?
Yes, she laid so close to me
With her hair so black as ink
Oh, 'twas Nancy tickled my fancy,
Oh my charming Billy Boy.

Did she axe you to eat, Billy Boy, Billy Boy?
Did she axe you to eat, Billy Boy?
Well she astèd me to eat with a silver knife and fork
And so Nancy tickled my fancy,
Oh my charming Billy Boy.

Did she axe you to eat, Billy Boy, Billy Boy?
Did she axe you to eat, Billy Boy?
Well she astèd me to eat with a silver knife and fork
And so Nancy tickled my fancy,
Oh my charming Billy Boy.

Mrs Hughes' version certainly predates the one recorded commercially by Frank Crummit in 1925; indeed, the earliest known sets are from Scotland, one version being included in the Herd manuscript of 1776, whilst another appears as *My Boy Tammy* in Johnson's *Scots Musical Museum* of 1797, and many are claimed to have been written by Hector MacNeill and first published in 1791.

When Baring-Gould collected a traditional version in 1885 from a West Country nurse, he attributed the words to the first part of the old ballad *Lord Randal* (Child 12) and later scholars, including Bronson, have tended to agree with him, although it seems that the evidence for this is rather thin. Roud has a surprising 318 examples - mostly from North America.

Other recordings on CD: Johnny Doughty (MTCD311-2)

2 - 4 **The Rich Farmer from Chesfield** (The Highwayman Outwitted) (Roud 2638, Laws L2)

Oh, there were a rich farmer lived in Chesfield,
Oh, to market his daughter did go;
She were thinking that nothing would happen,
Oh, she'd been on the highway before.

Well, she met with three daylighted robbers
And three links did they hold to her breast;
“You'll deliver me your money and clothes,
Or else you shall die in distress.”

Well, they stripped the poor damsule stark naked,
And they gave her the bridle to hold;
And there she stood shivering and shaking,
Much perished to death by the cold.

Well, she slipped her right foot in the stirrup,
And she mounted her horse like a man;
Over hedges and ditches she galloped:
“Come, catch me, bold rogues, af you can!”

Well, she rid to the gates of her father,
Oh, she shouted - her voice like a man:
“Dear father, I've been in great danger,
But the old rogues didn't do me no harm.”

Well, she whipped the grey mare in the stable,
And the white sheet she spread on the floor;
She counted her money twice over,
She had five-hundred bright pounds, if not more;
But the old rogue, he done her no harm.”

The Farmer of Cheshire, in common with another ballad *The Boy and the Highwayman*, is related to the ballad of *The Crafty Farmer* (Child 283) in which a farmer outwits a would-be robber. In Caroline's version the girl escapes on the robber's horse, which carries a saddlebag of money, previously stolen by the robbers. Most versions of the song employ a 17th century tune, *The Rant*, which was also known as *Give Ear to a Frolicksome Ditty*, a tune that is also found with some versions of both *The Boy and the Highwayman* and *The Crafty Farmer*. Roud offers 96 examples, virtually all of which are from England.

The song is widespread within the English Gypsy community and it has been suggested (by Sam Richards) that the girl's actions reinforce the travellers' own attitudes to a somewhat hostile world. The farmer, and his daughter, usually come from either Chester or Sheffield - accounting for Mrs Hughes' 'Chesfield' perhaps. Bearing in mind the fragmentary nature of some of her songs, we should note that this one is almost completely intact.

Other recordings on CD: Jack Smith (MTCD356-7); George 'Pop' Maynard (MTCD401-2); Jimmy McBeath (MTCD311-2); Alec Bloomfield (MTCD339-0); Wiggy Smith (MTCD307); Mary Ann Haynes (MTCD320); Charlie Stringer (VTC2CD); Packie Manus Byrne (VT132CD).

2 - 5 **I Was a Reckless Young Fellow** (Roud 829)

I once was a reckless young fellow;
I never took much heed of my life.
I travelled the country all over,
To find Caroline and her young sailor boy.
I landed from Liverpool to Scotland, through France;
I landed from France, oh, to America and ...

2 - 6 **Irish Girl - diddling song** (Roud 24239)

For I axed me girl to come a jig; she come with me to Narity,
Me Irish girl stepped up to me and I looked for Johnny Carity.

Diddles a jig tune.

2 - 7 **Betsy** (Roud 156)

Oh, Betsy dear, you pack up your clothes,
And come with me for a day or two;
On every Queen's ship that we sails by
We'll sure and make our tidings.

His mother hung her hair and she tored her hair,
Just like a woman in deep despair.
For the little boat that was on the sea,
Then how can I live now my Willie's gone?

And a short time after, now, oh, her son lay dead,
Oh, she screamed her hair, and she tored her hair.
She said “If my son, oh, would rise again,
Then I'd send for Betsy to come at once.”

Most versions of this song have 'Betsy' in their title, and most come from north

America, with about 15 from England and 10 from Scotland. Rather surprisingly, there have been few broadside publications. Of the 11 sound recordings, only that by Harry Cox (TSCD 512D) is available on CD.

2 - 8 In My Father's Garden (Roud 843) Sung by Henry Hughes

What a clever young man, now, young Willie was,
When he's first taken his true love from her home.
Now, as he took her from her father and he led her astray,
And he left her in this old wide world to roam.

Now if ever he turns all home back again,
Those curly, curly locks I will unfold.
I would never breathe one word, oh, for what he have a-done,
And he couraging for being, yer, so bold.

It was in my father's garden, all 'neath that willow tree,
That was the very hour and the time;
Now I says "My Willie dear, I've proved ... recording
breaks up at this point ... sailor so bold.

Steve Roud writes: This one is particularly annoying. The motif 'It was in my father's garden' crops up in at least six different songs but in this case it appears to be No.843. But the last two lines of the second verse (especially that her father will not scold but will 'encourage her for being so bold') is familiar from another song, which I can't place even though it's in my head somewhere. Can it be given as 843 but with a note explaining its tentative nature?

2 - 9 The Prentice Boy (The Oxford Girl) (Roud 263, Laws P35)

There was once a man he lived in London Town,
Well, he had such a joys for while,
If he spent one pound he spent ten,
It were all for the want of a wife.

Oh, then Jackie went a-walking with his own true love,
Oh, strange thoughts came into Jackie's mind;
Oh, to murder his own true love
And for slighting in her poor life.

She said, "Jack, my dear, don't murder me,
For I is not fit to die;
Oh, Jack, my dear, don't murder me,
'Cause I'm improving a child by thee."

Oh, he pulled a stick out of the hedge,
And he beat her across the head;
And the blood came trinklin' from that innocent girl,
It come trinklin' all down her sides.

Oh, for he caught hold of her curly locks,
And he dragged her to the ground;
He dragged her to some riverside
Her poor body lays there to drown.

Oh, he went alone to his master's house,
At eight o'clock at night;
While they come down to let him in
By the strivings of candlelight.

Well, they asted him, they questioned him,
Oh, what stained his hands with blood?
Oh, the answer he 'plied back to they:
"Only the bleeding all from my nose."

Oh, then he went up to get to bed,
Oh, no rest could ever Jackie take;
For out of belching flames of fire all round he flew,
All for murdering his own true love.

It were just a few days after that,
That poor innocent girl she were found;
She come floating by her mother's door
What did live in old London Town.

Oh, then that young man he was took and tried,
And oh, he was condemned to die;
He said, "My mother died while I were young,
Oh, five children she left small:
Have mercy on me this day,
For I'm the caretaker of the all."

Spoken: Well, that's a relegend - but 'twas a love song.

A very well-known song indeed, with 355 Roud instances, 98 of which are sound recordings. MacColl & Seeger quote an American source who says that the villain in this song was a John Mauge, who was hanged at Reading, Berkshire, in 1744. But, we know that *Waxford Town* comes originally from a long 17th-century ballad *The Berkshire Tragedy, or The Wittam Miller*, a copy of which may be seen in the Roxburgh Collection (vol. viii p.629), and it may be that Mauge's name came to be associated with the earlier ballad because of the similarity of his crime. Later printers tightened the story and reissued it as *The Cruel Miller*, a song which has

been collected repeatedly in Britain (59 instances) and North America (228 instances - where it is usually known as *The Lexington/Knoxville Girl*).

Both Laws and Roud differentiate between the two versions, giving Roud 263, Laws P35 for this one and Roud 409, Laws P24 for the other - usually known as *The Butcher Boy*. However, since Roud includes 318 and 275 examples respectively, it must be clear that there will be many versions which, like Caroline's above, fall into the grey area between them.

Other recordings on CD: Jack Smith (MTCD356-7); Lizzie Higgins (MTCD337-8); Mary Ann Haynes (MTCD320); Mary Delaney (MTCD325-6); Harry Cox (TSCD512D); Phoebe Smith (TSCD673T).

2 - 10 Jel Along (Roud 24143)

*Oh, a-beggin' I will go, my love,
And a-beggin' I will go;
But a kushti cant among you
At the farm all in the trees.*

Jel along, jel along, my kushti cant,
Jel along, jel along, jel along;
But if our matches ain't gilted
I'm sure we shall get no scan.

Oh, since we been to bed all night
We been rolling in champagne,
But there isn't a penny amongst us
To buy a brimstone pot.

Jel along, jel along, my rawie of a nee,
Jel along, jel along, jel along;
But a kushti cant among you
At the farm all in the trees.

Spoken:
MacColl - What's the first line again Caroline?

Sung:
Jel along, jel along, my kushti cant,
Jel along, jel along, jel along;
But a kushti cant among you
At the farm all in the trees

Oh, since we been to bed all night
We been rolling in champagne,
But there isn't a penny amongst us
To buy a brimstone pot.

Spoken: Well, years and years ago, hundreds of years ago, see, the people got a struggle to get their living. Well, they used to go and make their matchsticks out of wood, and buy the brimstone to gilt the matches to sell them. Well, then they gilt all the matches and sold them and they bought champagne, and they got drunk, and they never had no money to get no bread with, and matches the next day morning. Well, in the trees there was a farm; well they sing - jel along, jel along my kushti cant. ...jel along, that's Roman; I can say to you 'go along, go along ... No, 'walk along, walk along, my fair pretty maid, walk along, a kushti bit of bread I beg you at the farm all in the trees.'

Contrary to my suggestions earlier, it would seem that at least some of Mrs Hughes' Anglo-Romani songs are no less fragmented than her English ones.

2 - 11 The Jew's Garden (Roud 73, Child 155)

Spoken:
*Down in merry Scotland
Where the rain it did come down,
There was two little boys went out one day
To have a game with the ball.*

He kicked the ball so very, very high,
He kicked the ball so low;
'Twas pitched all over the Jew's garden
Where the Jew lived just down below.

Out come one of the head Jews. He asked the little boy what he wanted. He said, "I kicked my ball in the garden." "You come, you shall have your ball again." He took the little boy and he laid 'm on the table and he stuck him like a sheep. He said, "Let me say these last few words before I die." He said:

"You'll dig my grave so very, very deep
Put a marble stone on my grave;
And if my tender mother should happen to come this way,
You tell her I'm asleep."

Mrs Hughes then sings the melody.

Mrs Hughes is not alone in being uneasy about actually *singing* this song - Peter Shephard had a similar problem getting Lemmie Brazil to sing it; she also preferred to recite the words and la-la the tune.

This ballad has 272 Roud instances, most coming from North America, with some 54 from England. There are 45 sound recordings listed, though few seem to have ever been published. It was widely printed in broadsides, which may account for

its popularity.

Although the supposed 12th-century murder of Hugh of Lincoln has been cited by some scholars as the origin of this ballad, it would seem more likely that it is, in fact, based on even earlier beliefs - mythological rather than historical.

The ballad has remained popular with Gypsies in Britain - an ironic fact when one considers that this is a ballad concerning the persecution of the Jews, being sung by Gypsies, some 2 million of whom died alongside 6 million Jews in Nazi Germany. In several American sets the murderer is even shown to be a Gypsy - a reflection there of the prejudice that is inherent in so many societies.

Other versions available on CD: Cecilia Costello (MTCD363-4); Minty Smith (MTCD320); Calvin & Viola Cole (MTCD501-2); Lemmie Brazil (MTCD345-7); Ollie Gilbert (Rounder CD 1707); Margaret Stewart (Greentrax CDTRAX 9005).

2 - 12 The Jolly Herring (Roud 128)

Oh, there was all three men, they went out on a ship,
La, da dee da, lie dee da, dee dee dee, dee.
I've hunted, I've syphed, all these words he went through,
But I can't get the writing, the stick that I want(?).

Now, 'tis hunting, 'tis hunting I did want to go,
I couldn't find no horses, nor hounds nor no dogs;
I made it me mind now to catch a large ship,
I done it by duty right out of my head.

Now what do you think that I made of his head?
I made the finest large ship that ever were sail;
There was life-boats and little boats and sailors, right true,
Don't you think I done well with my jolly herring?

Now, what do you think that I made of his tail?
I made the finest pack hounds that ever was made;
There was footmens and whippers and all such nice things,
Don't you think I done well with my jolly herring?
Oh yes, if 'tis true what you says.

Oh, what do you think that I made of his back?
I made the finest lot of ridin' horses that ever you seen;
There was little ones and big ones and all things like that,
Don't you think I done well with my jolly herring?
Oh yes, if 'tis true, oh now what you've told me.

Now, what do you think that I made of his legs?
I made the finest lot of whip mins(?) that ever you seen;
There was little ones and big ones and all things like that,
Now, don't you think I done well with my jolly herring?
Yes, if it is true now what you have told me.

Lie, tooral lie, di diddle, lie dee dee, dee;
Lie, die dee dee, lie dee dee, deedle ee, day.
Lie, die dee dee, dee dee dee, lie did dee, dee'
But I'm not such a fool as you take I to be!

Quite a well-known song, with 111 Roud instances; almost all from England with just a handful from Ireland, Scotland and North America. Forty-one sound recordings are noted, though not many of them appear to have ever been published. There are dozens of ways of making the song, but I've never heard anything remotely like Caroline's first two verses!

Other recordings on CD: Phoebe Smith (VT136CD); Mikeen McCarthy (TSCD664); Ted Chaplin (VTC5CD); Johnny Doughty (TSCD657); Lorna Tarran (VT135CD).

2 - 13 The Blue Jacket (Roud 954)

Oh, it's fiddling and dancing
Oh bein' all my delight
But if ever I prove false
To, oh, the young man I love.

First I loved William
Oh, but then I loved Tom
But then I loved Johnny
What a clever young man.

With his white cotton stockings
And his low ankle boots
For he wears a blue jacket
Wheresomever he goes.

Steve Roud says this is enough like *Flash Company* to satisfy him; who am I to argue?

2 - 14 The Little Ball of Twine (Roud 1404)

Oh, the blackbird and the thrush
They got playing in the bush
When he wound up her little ball of twine.

Oh, will you promise me too, Sir
You will give me all I wants
And not intend to do me any harm
He quickly crossed the field
And he found it wouldn't be seen
Af he wound up her little ball of twine.

Now you must go to the Sir
That got money and fine clothes
When he wound up her little ball of twine.

That would not do promise
You made all unto me
And underneath that pretty blackberry bush
You promised me a robe
That you never will forget
Af you wound up my little ball of twine

Still quite a popular song (68 Roud entries), and versions are found all over the Anglophone world. *The Little Ball of Yarn*, as it's more usually known, has caused all sorts of speculation as to the origin, and meaning, of its title. Interestingly, in America the song was copyrighted in 1884 to one Polly Holmes, and all the earliest collections are from the States. According to Roud there are no known broadside publications of the song, a fact which suggests a late date of composition. Cecil Sharp collected a version in 1904 (the earliest known collected version - still unpublished!) and it could well be that this version, along with all the subsequent collected versions, is based on what may have once been quite an innocent song in the eyes of Ms Holmes (if, indeed, she was the composer of the song).

Other versions available on CD: Ben Willett (MTCD361-2); Mary Ann Haynes (MTCD320); May Bradley (MTCD349); Nora Cleary (MTCD331-2); Walter Pardon (MTCD305-6); Danny Brazil (MTCD345-7); Elizabeth Stewart (EIC D 002); Ray Hartland (VTC7CD); Charlotte Renals (VTC1CD); Gordon Woods (VTC2CD).

2 - 15 The Little Chimney Sweep (The Lost Child Found) (Roud 1549) Sung by William Hughes

It was down in Stony Bottom
A place called Derbyshire
When the women sat in the window
A-spinning of their yarn;
All in the street that little boy
Contentedly did play,
Along did come a chimney-sweep
And stoled him right away.

When three long years had gone and past
And he could not be found,
That chimney-sweep came by that way again;
This lady called out to him:
"There's work for you," she said,
"Now my chim-a-ley wants sweeping,
I'm stifled out with smoke."

My little boy got ready,
That chimney for to sweep,
She viewed him, yes she
Viewed him up and down;
Her spirits they was lifted up
When she viewed his tender face,
"It be the hour of Providence,
My lost dear child is found!"

Now that little boy upstepped
And this chim-a-ley to sweep,
Oh, she viewed him,
She viewed him up and down;
"Why you are my long lost child,"
That tender mother cried,
"For I marked you with that cherry
In under your left eye."

Come, all you motherly women,
A warning take by me,
Never let your children
Wander from your knee;
Never let your little ones
Now wander far away,
Or along will come that chimney-sweep
And stole them right away.

Spoken: There you are.

Apart from a very few broadside publications, this song seems confined to southern England - Hampshire, Somerset and Dorset. George Gardiner heard it from three Hampshire singers in 1906-7, and Peter Kennedy also recorded a very similar version from Caroline's husband, now on TSCD672D - but names him as John.

2 - 16 Little Poppa Rich (Roud 16639)

Little Poppa Rich you draw your long lannet,
Set by the fire and spin;
The hen in the window a-combing her hair,

The cat in the corner a-frying his fish,
The bull in the barn a-sheening his corn;
Cock-a-pen dungle a-blowing his horn,
The wind was high and it blowed him away.

This may be a fragment of a slightly longer piece of nonsense called *Cocks on the Dunghill*, and has but 6 Roud entries. 'Little Poppa Rich' is a character from Gypsy tradition, who seems to have no connection with the rest of this song.

2 - 17 **Bold Dollery** (Roud 24236)

"Bold Dollery, what do you mean?"
My oldest son cried out
My oldest son cried out
"I bet on ye Brave Dollery".

"From six to nine we got ...
I was breaking old Reuben's jawbone
Fight on, fight on brave Dollery
For the battle's is all you own."

2 - 18 **Young But Growing** (Roud 31, Laws O35)

Oh dear mother, oh dear mother, oh, you knows just what you done,
You wed me to a nice young man, but you know I was too young.
Well, out of one-hundred, I looked so blooming small,
But my bonnie boy, he's young, but he's growing.

The age of seventeen he was the father of a son,
The age of eighteen, love, his grave was growing green,
And it put now soon an end to his growing.

Roud shows this song to be widely known, with 257 entries from right across the Anglophone world, and with the majority from England. It is most usually titled *The Trees they do Grow High*, but examples along the lines of *Long a-Growing* are also very frequent. Clearly its popularity endured until recently, since about one third of the entries are sound recordings.

Although the sad tale of such failed arranged marriages was universal, Aberdeenshire claims it firmly for the marriage, and death three years later, of the young Laird of Craigston in 1634, as attested by James Maidment in *A North Country Garland* (1824).

Other versions available on CD: May Bradley (MTCD349); Mary Ann Haynes (MTCD320); George Dunn (MTCD317-8); Ellen Mitchell (MTCD315-6); Lizzie Higgins (MTCD337-8); Harry Brazil (MTCD345-7); Fred Jordan (VTD148CD), Joe Heaney (TSCD518D), Harry Cox (Rounder CD1839), Walter Pardon (TSCD514), Duncan Williamson (Kyløe 101).

2 - 19 **Bold Robert Emmet** (Roud 3066)

Oh 'tis bold Robert Emmet
Yes he's the darling of Erin
Yes bold Robert Emmett
What died with a smile.

Oh it's fare ye well companions
Well I'm your own arising darling
Well I'd lay down my life
For my own Erin's Isle.

Well you hark the bells chiming
Yes I well know your meaning
You don't dare to call me
One coward nor slave.

Although I've been treated
And most shameful you treat me
The arrow (hero?) will live
Or the arrow will die.

Another rare song; only three broadsides are known, and Roud lists just three singers - Joe Saunders in Kent, Esther Williams in London (both probably Gypsies), and Margaret Byrne in Ireland.

2 - 20 **Mandi Went to Poov the Grais** (Roud 852)

Oh, 'tis mandi went to poov the grais
All around the stoggers to kai
The gavver's arter mandi
To lei me oprey.

"Ma," says the rakli, pickin' up a shovel,
"'Tis like your dear old daddy says, you can't kor well."

Well, all around the stoggers, stealin' a bit o' kas,
The gavver said, "Whaddaya got?" I had to put it down.

Translation: I went to put the horses to grass, all around the hedges here. The policeman's after me, to take me away. "Ma" says the girl, picking up a shovel, "'Tis

like your dear old daddy says, you can't fight well." All around the hedges, stealing a bit of hay - the policeman said, "Whaddaya got?" I had to put it down.

A fairly well-known Anglo-Romani song which has 13 Roud entries - and although only 6 singers are named, most have been recorded. Roud has given the same number to this song and *All Through Mi Rakli*, which, although telling a somewhat similar story, I think is a different song.

This is a somewhat watered-down version of a song found in Alice Gillington's *Songs of the Open Road* (1911). Gillington's text tells of a Gypsy who has an argument with a policeman whilst putting a horse out to graze. In the end she hits the policeman and runs away to a barn, where she spends the night. The following morning she steals a cart and once again encounters the policeman, who threatens her life.

Other recordings on CD: Mary Ann Haynes (MTCD320); Wiggy Smith (MTCD307); Peter Ingram (TSCD661).

2 - 21 **McCaffery** (Roud 1148)

I was scarcely year, eighteen years of age,
Oh, to join the army I was a-full in advance;
Oh, to join the army I was a-full in defence,
For to join the Forty for some regiment.

Now, as I was put there all on guard one day
Three soldiers' children came out to play;
They gave me orders for to take their names
Well, I took one's name there out of the three.

I done the deeds, I shot his blood,
In old Liverpole his body lays.
Oh Captain me water I was content to kill
For I shot my Colonel all against my will.

Well, I've got no mother to take my part,
I've got no father to break my heart.
I had one friend and a woman was she,
She would lay her life down for me again.

Many traditional singers were uneasy about this song - it carries its own stories and superstitions. There was a strongly held (but quite erroneous) belief that it was illegal to sing *McCaffery* in public. This may account for the fact that Roud has only 43 instances of a song which, in my experience, almost all singers used to know. It's also surprising that there appears to have been only one broadside printing.

Other available CD versions: May Bradley (MTCD349); Danny Brazil (MTCD345-7); Bill Smith (MTCD351); Jimmy McBeath (Rounder CD 1834); Paddy Grant (TSCD673T).

2 - 22 **My Boy Willy** (Roud 24244)

Oh, on a Sunday morning, how sweet the wind do blow,
Oh, 'tis nine long rounds (?) now, it is gone by,
Is it true that my love's now all on board with you?
Oh, the other night when the wind blowed high
I thought on my sailor, I thought on my sailor boy,
Now, was on board a ship.

Steve Roud writes: This is similarly frustrating as it sounds so familiar. It's not *Father Build Me a Boat*, or *Willie's Ghost*, but there is another song where the girl is trying to get her sweetheart back from on board which I can't pin down.

2 - 23 **My Love Lays Cold Below My Feet** (Roud 2513)

Oh, we was a-sitting by the fire
Of a cold winter's night,
We was telling purty tales
That we dreamed the other night;
Oh, if me love will give me comfort
Then I will give him joys,
Oh, strange thoughts
That come knocking at my door.

"Oh good morning to you, my fair purty damsule
How come you here so early?"
My love's laying so cold below my feet;
Oh, for the night is coming very dull,
The morning's coming very bright,
Strange faces I'm going to meet the day.

"Oh, for that was'n't what you promised me
Oh, nor never own no other,"
My love lay so cold below my feet;
Oh, then you promised you would marry me, boy,
Oh, and never own no other."
But don't my love lay so cold below my feet.

This is a song for which Steve Roud had to allocate a new number, as he'd seen no other example of it. Neither had I.

2 - 24 **The Broomfield Hill** (Roud 34, Child 43)

*Oh, a wager, a wager, a wager I'll bet on you,
I'll bet you fifty guineas to your one:
That you sha'n't rise and kiss her before she's gone to clay
For her true love's been here, but now he's gone.*

Where is he now, my running faithful dog,
The dog as I been running with before?
It's you I have a-killed and his blood I'm going to spill
And we'll let these little wild birds have their fill.

Oh, for what hard-hearted young man, oh what heart he must have had,
He must have had a heart like any stone!
For murdering of that dear girl he dearly, dearly loved
And he doted the ground that she walked on.

Oh, for three times, three times I walked round the crownings of her hair
Three times around the soles of her shoes,
It's you I have a-killed and your blood I'm going to spill,
And we'll let these little small birds have their fill.

Well I laided myself in a bonnie bunch of blue
A-listening to what my true love had to say,
Instead of being asleep, oh I should have been awake,
I should've have knowed the deeds that false young man had done.

Oh, what a hard-hearted young man, what heart he must have had,
He must have had a heart like any stone!
For murdering that dear girl he dearly, dearly loved
And he doted the ground that she walked on.

This is a very old ballad which has been somewhat stabilised into its modern form by broadsheet printers. In its original form, the ballad tells of a wager between a girl and a supernatural knight who threatens her virginity, and wagers she will not keep a tryst with him. To outwit him the girl resorts to witchcraft, agreeing to meet the knight in a broom field where the broom plant's magical qualities will send him to sleep. As in all good ballads, the magic works and, after encircling the knight's sleeping body three times as a further magical precaution, the girl slips her ring on to his finger, thus proving her presence and, accordingly, winning the wager.

An ancient song then, but one which nevertheless still proved popular among country audiences in southern England until quite recently - of Roud's 193 instances, only 37 are outwith this geographical area. Most Roud entries are of printed sources, with only 43 singers from the oral tradition being named, and only 30 of these having been recorded.

Other CD recordings are available by: George Dunn (MTCD317-8); Cyril Poacher (MTCD303); Pop Maynard (MTCD400-1); Walter Pardon (TSCD600); Viv Legg (VT153CD) and Jean Orchard (VT151CD).

2 - 25 **The Broomfield Hill** (Roud 34, Child 43)

Oh, for what hard-hearted young man, oh what heart he must have had,
He must have had a heart like a stone!
For murdering of that dear girl, oh he dearly, dearly loved
And he doted the green grass she walked on.

Oh, for I laided myself, love, in a bonnie bunch of blue
And listened to what my true love had to say,
Astead of being awake sleeping, love, I should have been awake,
I would've have knowed the deed the false young man had done.

Oh, three times that he walkèd around the soles of her shoe,
Three times around the crowning of her hair;
O, 'tis you I have a-killed and your blood I'm going to spill,
And we'll let the little wild birds have their fill.

Oh, what a hard-hearted young man, what heart he must have had,
He must have had a heart like any stone!
For murdering of the young girl, oh he dearly, dearly loved
And he doted on the green grass she walked on.

For Notes to this song see previous track.

2 - 26 **The Lady and the Soldier** (Hear the Nightingale Sing) (Roud 140, Laws P14)

Oh, as I were a-walking one morning in May,
Oh, a fair pretty couple I chanced for to meet.
Oh, one she were a fair maid, she were dressed all in blue,
And the other was a soldier, he's a jolly dragoon.

"Oh, where now are you going, my fair purty maid,
Oh, where are you going so early this way?"
"Oh, for I am a-going down to yonder shady tree,
Oh, to set and watch the flowers grow and hear the nightingales sing."

"Oh, may I come 'long with you, my fair purty maid?
Oh, may I come 'long with you so early your way?"
Now, we both walked on together, me boys,

"Til we come to some old shady tree.
Oh, he throwed off his knapsack and he pulled out his flute.
He played her such music caused the valleys to ring,
"And 'tis thus, me lovely fair maid, how a nightingale sing."

"Oh now," said the soldier, "It's time to give o'er."
"Oh no," said the fair maid, "play me up one tune more.
Well, I would rather hear your fiddle play by the touch of its string
There I'd set and watch the flowers grow and hear the nightingale sing."

"Oh now," said the fair maid, "will you marry me?"
"Oh no," said the soldier, "it won't never be.
For I've got a little wife at home in my own countree,
She's called the cleverest little woman that your eyes ever see."

"Well now," said the fair maid, "Oh, what shall I do?
My apron strings won't tie now, my gown won't pull to.
And if ever I return again, it shall be in the spring,
Oh, to set and watch the flowers grow; hear the nightingale sing.
And if ever I return again, it shall be in the spring,
Oh, to set and watch the flowers grow; hear the nightingale sing."

Under a variety of titles, including *The Bold Grenadier*, *The Soldier and the Lady* and *The Nightingale*, this gentle, sensuous song had a huge spread across Britain and North America. Roud's 219 entries include 61 sound recordings, but comparatively few appear to have made the transition to CD.

Other versions available on CD: George Dunn (MTCD317-8); both Hobert Bowling and Mildred Tucker (MTCD505-6); Neil Morris (Rounder CD 1707); Viv Legg (VT153CD); Charlie Pitman (VTC9CD); Raymond & Frederick Cantwell (Rounder CD 1778).

2 - 27 **Two Pretty Gypsy Girls** (Roud 24142)

There was two purty Gypsy girls
Their names was Hat and Kate,
They come from Wood-Greentrees
On the far side o' Sals'b'ry, Hants.
They goes out a hawk-in'
With their bundles up their backs,
And bobbies in their arms,
Suckin' an' cryin' all day long.
La de de la de de doo, die dee la de de
Bumpety, bumpety, bumpety bump!
Comes the galloping major.
All the boys declare, oh he's a gay old stager
Oh, boys, clear the road,
Here comes the galloping major.
Bumpety, bumpety, bumpety
Straight-a-way into me charger,
All the boys declare,
I think you're a gay old stager
Oh boys, clear the road,
Here come's the drunken sailor!

Steve Roud has had to give this a new number, since the first part is obviously unconnected with the second, borrowed from *The Galloping Major*. Mrs Hughes used it as a dandling song to cheer up various infant grandchildren on several occasions during these recording sessions.

2 - 28 **The First Day in October** (The Oakham Poachers) (Roud 24141)

Oh, it was the first day in October
When young Georgie Parkins he got caughted, boys;
When he brought these keepers so handy,
By firing of the gun.

Oh, through that bush, my love, oh did he ramble,
Oh, through forest, fen and bonny old Ireland;
For he killed nine hares nor ten
He was ordered before he now got shot.

Oh, for will all you men give me great orders,
For I am only one, oh amongst you?
If you'll give my life fair play, my boys,
I'll fight you one 't a time.

Oh, for young Georgie got up to fight 'em,
Down through the copse some of them a-run, love;
When the gamekeeper fired and shot him dead,
And left his poor body lay round.

Steve Roud has allocated this song a new number, though I would have thought it is almost certainly a version of *The Oakham Poachers* (Roud 1686). Although well-known in the revival, this is not a song much sung in the oral tradition - it has been collected from only three singers: Robert Miller of Sutton, Norfolk (by E J Moeran, in 1922); Goliath Cole of Oakley, Hampshire (by George B Gardiner, in 1908); and Wiggy Smith in Gloucester. It's found in a handful of books and journals, but is mostly known from its appearance in around 20 broadsides or catalogues of broadsides - in the light of which, it's surprising that *The Oakham Poachers* is so seldom encountered today. Wiggy Smith's powerful version on (MTCD307) is the only one available on CD.

2 - 29 **My True Love's Got a Watery Grave** (Lily-White Hand, Down by the Old Riverside) (Roud 564, Laws P18)
Sung by William Hughes (first two verses sung by Caroline Hughes)

Spoken: I don't know this one. I'll sing it - I don't know it though

Sung:

As I were a-walking one bright summer's morning
Down by the old riverside
A fair pretty damsule I chanced for to meet,
And how quickllye she took my eye.

I astèd that young girl if she'd set down by my side
In terms that I would marry her.
That was not the promise you ...

Spoken: I knows he knows some. Come on then.

As I was a-walking one bright summer's morn,
Down by the old riverside;
A fair pretty damsel I chanced to meet,
And she quickllye took my eye.

I asked that young girl if she'd set down by my side
In terms I could marry her.
For the night being dark and the morning being light,
Some other flash gal to find.

"How do you think I could marry sich a one
What latelye me led astray?
For how can I go home to my father's house
Take both shame and disgrace?
No, before that I would, I would go and drown myself,
Or to die in a lonesome place."

I catchèd holt of her lily-white hand,
I kissed both cheek and her chin;
I catchèd holt of her middle so small,
And I gentllye throwed her in.

You should see how she float, see how she go,
See her going down by the tide;
Now, tonight my true love got a watery grave,
When she ought to have been my bride.

Now, gel, it's off to another foreign part
Another flash girl for to find;
Nobody knows now the deeds that I done
But the dear girl I left behind.

Spoken: That's all I know of that one.

A well-known song, with 112 entries in the Roud Index, 36 of which are sound recordings. Almost all are from England, plus a few from the north of Ireland and North America. Gypsy names crop up frequently amongst the listed singers.

Other versions available on CD: almost all members of the Brazil Family (MTCD345-7); May Bradley (MTCD349); George Spicer (MTCD311-2); Nimrod Workman (MTCD 512); Mary Lozier (MTCD505-6); Fred Jordan (VTD148CD); Harry Cox (TSCD512D).

2 - 30 **Old Tom Cat by the Fire** (Roud 24240) / **The Rackyman Doo** (Roud 1880)

Oh, the old tom cat sat by the fire,
The old tom cat sat by the fire,
She got soft and he got hard
And the bloomin' old bugger, he screwed her.
She pedalled, she poofed, she farted,
The old gel went to the doctor,
The doctor got the same and he got hard,
And the bloody old fool, he screwed her.

Spoken: Oh I picked 'em up after - I'll sing you a better one than that.

Oh, as I was a-walking all up the road,
But who should I meet but a nice young fellow?
I said, "Hello, and how do you do?
Would you like to have a game on my rackyman doo?"

"Well, the rackyman doo, pray what is that?"
"It's something smooth, like a pussy cat,
'Tis hairs all 'round and split in two,
And will you come and have a game on my bangyman doo."

She took him down her father's cellar;
She gave him wine and whiskey too.
Well, I've gave you wine and whiskey, too;
"For to come and have a game on my bangyman doo?"

"Well, the bangyman doo, pray what is that, ee?"
"It's something smooth like a pussy cat;
With hairs all 'round and split in two,
And then you'll have a game on my bangyman doo."

Lilts the tune.

MacColl asks about another verse she'd sung told them about.

Well, he took her down her father's cellar;
"Have you got a licence to be a whore?"
"Oh no young man, my fanny's private,
Well, I says come and have a bang on my bangyman doo"
"Well, the bangyman doo, say what is that?"
"It's something smooth like a pussy cat;
With hairs all 'round and split in two,
Oh, and that's what they calls, on, my bangyman doo."

Old Tom Cat was new to Steve Roud, and so has a new Number. *Rackyman Doo* is a pretty rare piece in Britain, and Roud's list of 38 instances are mostly from the USA. Only Ken Collier (Norfolk) and Stan Walters (Essex) are named as having sung it here.

2 - 31 **Once I Had a Colour** (Roud 954)

Oh, but once I had a colour, well it was just like a rose,
Oh, but now I'm so pale as the lily what do grow.

Oh, there's me and my baby, now contented we'll be;
Well, I will try and forget you, oh, as you forgot me.

Like the flowers all in the garden, a-when their beauty's all gone,
Can't you see just what I'm come to by a-loving that one?

Oh, now all you young ladies, you take warning by me,
Never let a young man get one inch above your knee.

He will kiss and he'll coax you, and he'll call you his love,
And the false-hearted 'ceitful will bid you farewell.

Well, there's love on the ocean, and there's love on dry land,
Long as breath's in my body I'll still love that one.

Yet another *Flash Company* version (see also tracks 1 - 28 and 2-13).

2 - 32 **Johnny Doyle / Green Bed** (Roud 24237)

Oh, poor Jack he hung down his head
Being drowsy all the way.
Now how do you get your living, Jack,
Through bitter frost and snow?
Well, I told me dad, right from my heart,
That I love young Johnny Doyle
Now my stay lace only won't knots all over
My gown they won't pull through.
Now will you take young Emly dear
To be your own sweetheart?
Oh, before I wed your daughter dear
I will wed some common whore.

Well, poor Jack he hung down his head
Oh, oh, being drowsy for one week.
The green bed have been open,
Oh, been open for a week.
So up the hill they carried he,
They carried him over hills and dales.
And the Lord go with young Johnny boy
For one ever and a day.

Steve Roud writes: Although it mentions a *Green Bed* (276) and *Johnny Doyle* (455) it has nothing else in common with them. The 'hung down his head' line is clearly from *Rosemary Lane* (269), but the rest I can't place at all. The best I can do is give it a new number, which may well have to be changed if the rest of the song turns up.

2 - 33 **Child's Rhyme - spoken**

... .. sat at the fire and spin
The ...in the window combing her hair
The cat in the corner finally speaks
.....
..... (baby crying covers all other words)
MacColl - let's hear that.

2 - 34 **The Oyster Girl** (Roud 875, Laws Q13)

"Oh, good morning, Sir, good morning, Sir,
Good morning", I did say.
"Well have you got a private room for that oystrey girl and me?
She picked up in my basket, with all my money in
And she've left me with a basket of oysters."

"Oh Landlord, oh Landlord, will you answer me?
For have you got this private room for that oystrey girl and me?"

For the baby that is born and it got nobody here,
And she've left me with a basket of oysters."

Diddles tune.

Spoken: Is that it?

According to Gavin Greig (who noted no fewer than 13 versions of this song) 'It is a lively ditty and very popular. The sum stolen from the gentleman varies in different copies from five hundred to ten thousand pounds'. The song appears to have been first printed in a Stirling chapbook of eight texts called *A New Patriotic Song*, by M Randall, c.1794-1812, under the title *The Eating of Oysters*. Chris Willett also calls them "oysters".

Roud shows 75 entries, mostly from England (Essex to Northumberland) and Scotland, including 16 sound recordings.

Other CD recordings: Chris Willett (MTCD361-2); Mary Ann Haynes (MTCD320); George Dunn (MTCD317-8); Phil Tanner (VT145CD).

2 - 35 **The Green Bushes** (Roud 1040, Laws P2)

As I was a-walking one morning in May,

Down by the bonny bushes a-where I thinks to meet you;
He was like some little schoolboy, playing bat with his ball.

"There's no falst-hearted young girl, she never served meself no more,
I'll forsake my own truelove, yes and married to thee."

*"I will give you fine beavers and fine silken gowns,
I will give you fine petticoats flounced to the ground.
I will give you nice beavers and fine silken gowns
If you leave your own true love and marry with me."*

I don't want your beavers, not the beads that you wears,
I don't want your flounces, not the feathers you wears.
I don't want your money, nor the pride that you wears,
Af forsake your own true loveier, oh, and come long wi' me.

Oh, lest we be for going, from in under those trees;
Oh, let we be for going, from in under these trees.
Oh, yonder's my truelove, can I see him now a-coming,
Down by the green bushes where he thinks to meet me."

*"Oh, why are you loitering, my pretty maid?"
"I wait for my true love, kind sir," she did say.*

*"If I be your true love, oh will you agree
To leave your own sweetheart and tarry with me?"*

Oh, when he got down there, oh, he found I was gone;
He was like some little schoolboy, running 'bout wi' his ball.
"There's no falst-hearted young girl, she never served me so no more,
I'll forsake my own truelove, and get married to you."

A very popular song amongst English Gypsy singers. Although *The Green Bushes* was printed widely on broadsides it does not appear to have survived very well in tradition, a surprising fact when one considers its one-time popularity. In 1845 J B Buckstone used the song as a basis for a stage play, and in 1850 the popular music-hall singer Sam Cowell included a set in his *120 Comic Songs*, and a similar tale appeared in Carey's *Musical Century* of 1740.

Most examples from the oral tradition come from England, though it was fairly popular in Ireland due, possibly, to a 78 recording. It has been seen published in a 'Sing a Song of Ireland' type book and has been sung at fleadh competitions, where it seems acceptable as an authentic Irish ballad. Roud lists 260 oral sources of which 51 are sound recordings, few of which ever seem to have been published.

Other versions available on CD: both Harry and Lemmie Brazil (MTCD345-7); Walter Pardon (MTCD305-6); Cyril Poacher (MTCD303); Geoff Ling (MTCD339-0); Phoebe Smith (VT136CD).

2 - 36 **Riddle**

There was a young man in love once with a nice young girl, she was so dark and handsome. He courted she and her life away, but he didn't like her. He asked her to go for a walk down by the spring. She goes for a walk with him down by the spring. He told her to come and pick nuts; he didn't want the nuts, and he didn't want she. He only courted she just for one thing. He stabbed her through by the sword. done, that wicked man. gold It was done. Will you tell me the riddle, you'll never be ... You couldn't tell.

2 - 37 **Three Long Steps** (The Banks of Sweet Primroses) (Roud 586)

Oh, 'tis three long steps I steppèd up 'til her
And the last three steps I heard a mournful groan;
"Oh, 'tis you what have causèd my poor mind to wander
Af you'll give me comfort and all in vain."
"Oh, go home, go home, oh, you false damn-ceilful,
Oh, to see what a curse, oh, you been to me;
Oh, 'tis you what have causèd my dear mind to wander
Af you'll give me comfort and all in vain."

Well, the twelve o'clock oh the next day morning
It was just before the old clock struck twelve,
She come 'pearing up to me, oh, like any virgin
"Oh, good morning dear, how come you this way?"

"Oh, I've come to tell you that I've been weepin',
I been weepin' all on these cold stones all night,
Oh, 'tis you that have causèd my poor mind to wander
If you'll give me comfort and all in vain."

"Oh, go home, go home, oh, you artful, 'ceilful,
Oh, to see what a curse, oh, you've proved to me;
Oh, 'tis you what have causèd my poor mind to wander
If you'll give me comfort and all in vain."

A very popular song, right up to the present, with 46 of Roud's 239 instances being sound recordings. It's been found in most parts of England, together with isolated sightings in Wales (Phil Tanner), Scotland and Canada. It was widely printed on broadsides and in books.

Other versions available on CD: Bob Hart (MTCD301-2); Pop Maynard (MTCD401-2); Rebecca Penfold (TSCD672D); The Copper Family (TSCD534 and TSCD600); Fred Jordan (EFDSS CD 002); Phil Tanner (TSCD651 and Rounder CD1741); Ray Driscoll (Artesion CD 703); Harry Green (VT135CD).

2 - 38 **The Little Beggar Boy** (Roud 6355) Sung by Emily Baker

I am a little beggar boy,
My mother she is gone.
My father is a drunkard,
He won't buy me no bread.

I goes up to the pantry
To get a slice of bread,

My daddy come behind me
And whipped me up to bed.

I set beside the window
To hear the organ play
God bless my dear old Mummy
Who is dead and far away

Ding Dong, my castle bell
Farewell my Mummy
You bury me in the same churchyard
Along the side of my Mummy.

My coffin shall be black
Six white angels at the back
Two to pray and two to the watch
(this line more usually reversed)
And two to carry my soul away.

This recording is the only Roud entry for this song, although it seems to be very similar to *My Coffin Shall Be Black* (Roud 1704). It was sung by children at Norton Park School, Edinburgh, recorded by Alan Lomax for the BBC in the 1950s, as *I'm a Little Orphan Girl*, but without the 2nd verse above. It was reported elsewhere in Scotland as a children's skipping song, and Baring-Gould heard it from a schoolboy at Altarnun, Cornwall. The two final verses also appear in James Joyce's *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man*.

2 - 39 **Sweet William** (Roud 24243)

.... hawking with Sweet William,
'Til the dawning of the day,
So, so, dear Mother, I'm dying.
Will you try to ease my pain?

You bring up my dear blue-eyed baby,
Fetch it up like one o' your own.
If it lives to grow a woman,
Never tell it, now, my downfall.

2 - 40 **Twenty-One Years** (Roud 2248, Laws E16)

The judge said, "Stand up, babe, dry up your tears."
They're sending me to Dartmoor for twenty-one year.
You'll hoist up your hand, babe, and wish me goodbye,
For twenty-one years, babe's a mighty long time.

Well now, six months is gone past, babe, I wish I was dead,
While the dirty old jailhouse my floor for my bed.
It's raining, 'tis hailing, the moon gives no light,
And baby, please tell me why you never write.

I've counted the days, babe, I've counted the nights,
I've counted your footsteps, I've counted the files(?);
I've counted your footsteps, I've counted the files(?),
I've counted one million of those prison bars.

Now, come you young fellows, with hearts brave and true,
Don't b'lieve in a woman; you're beat if you do;

Don't trust any woman, don't matter what for,
For twenty-one years, boys, is a mighty long time.

An American song, written by Bob Miller in 1930. Roud's first sighting is John Lomax's 1934 recording of George Smith in North Carolina, and the majority of the 25 entries are from the USA. England has just five named singers - all Gypsies, I would guess. Indeed, I'm surprised that there aren't more Gypsy recordings, as I've heard the song from several. It appears that this will be the only version available on CD.

2 - 41 **The Three Butchers** (Roud 17, Laws L4)

"Oh hark, oh hark!" cried Johnson,
"Well, I heard a poor woman cry.
They got her yer (here) stark naked
With her hair pinned to the ground."

Oh, they flogged this poor woman,
They dragged her with hair of the head,
They dragged her through forest copses
And pinned her to the ground.

"Well now ride on, ride on!" said Johnson,
"Let's hear that voice again!"
"Oh no, Oh no," said the other butcher boys,
Said "Do let's go away."

Well, Johnson was a clever boy
Well, he fought with courage bold,
"Oh hark, said hark!" said Johnson,
"For I hear that woman again."

Oh, Johnson he was boley (?)
He found a woman there;
He found the woman stark naked
With her hair pinned to the ground.

They dug the skewer through Johnson's back,
All five he felled at once;
He was one of the cleverest butcher boys
That ever the sun shone on.

It is odd that Child did not include this popular ballad in his collection as it not only fulfils his definition of a ballad but has also been popular with country singers at least since 1678, when it appeared as a black-letter broadside under the title of *The Three Worthy Butchers of the North*.

Subsequent printing by broadside presses tended to reduce the story somewhat, but the general narrative and much of the early poetry has remained. The full story is as follows: two or three butchers are riding home from market carrying a large sum of money. The butchers hear a cry and find a naked woman bound to the ground. She explains that she has been robbed and left there by robbers. One of the butchers, usually Johnson, covers her with his coat and takes her up behind him on his horse. As they ride along the highway she screams or in some manner gives a signal, at which a band of robbers springs out in ambush and commands Johnson to halt. A fight ensues in which he kills most of the robbers before being stabbed from behind by the woman. The woman is captured and punished and Johnson's death is lamented.

It's a characteristic of songs containing the exploits of named protagonists that these names rarely remain constant. In this ballad, two of the three butchers have acquired a huge array of the most unlikely sounding names over the centuries, yet hero Johnson remains undiminished in almost every version.

Roud has 236 instances of this ballad - from most of the Anglophone world, with English examples being the most numerous - amongst which are 40 sound recordings.

Other versions available on CD: Biggun Smith (MTCD307); Bob Scarce (MTCD339-0); Nimrod Workman (MTCD505-6); Mary Drain (Rounder CD 1108); Harry Cox (TSCD512D); Walter Pardon (TSCD514).

2 - 42 **Bell Bottom Trousers** (Rosemary Lane) (Roud 269, Laws K43)

Sailor took lodging at number twenty five
Axed for his lodging at number twenty two.
Mary was single, she was thinking it was no harm,
She jumped to bed with the sailor just to keep herself, now, warm.

Early next morning the sailor jumped for shore
His hand in his pocket; he chucked her a rusty five pound note
"You take this, my darling, for the damage I have done
A-leaving you in charge of a father or a daughter."

"Well, if 'tis a girl, you diddle her on your knee
And if 'tis a boy, you send him out to sea.
Well, bell bottom trousers with a soup (suit) of navy blue.
Just make him climb the riggings, oh, just like I climbed on you."

But up come a mighty pot and hit him in the head
"You take this, you bastard, for doing me in bed."
Well, all you young country girls take a warning now by me,
You never trust a sailor one inch bebove your knee.

If you do you'll never, you'll never be forgot
He'll always pluck the feathers from the old crow's nest."

The cautionary tale of a decamping sailor who leaves provision for the fruit of his one-night encounter is told in this song, also known as *Rosemary Lane*, *The Oak and the Ash* or *Home Dearest Home*. No other version I've heard has this provision as 'a rusty five pond note'! This is a very popular song with 206 Roud entries, including 46 sound recordings. Most are from England, plus a good many from the USA and two dozen from Scotland. I've never encountered the 'mighty pot' couplet before - but it's truly wonderful!

Other recordings on CD: Cecilia Costello (MTCD363-4); Charlie Whiting (MTCD309-10); George Dunn (MTCD317-8); Jumbo Brightwell (TSCD652); Chris Willett (TSCD661); Lucy Woodall (VTC7CD).

2 - 43 **Died for Love** (Roud 60, Laws P25)

Oh, for that dear girl, she roamed those meadows.
She were picking these flowers by one, two or three;
She picked, she plucked until she gained
Until she gathered her apron full.

Oh, when I was single, I wear my apron strings long;
My love passed by me and say nothing;

But now my belly it's up to my chin,
My love he pass by and frowns on me.

A grief, a grief, I'll tell you for why,
Because that girl got more gold nor me;

Well, gold shall glitter, her beauty will fade,
That's why it puts back a poor girl like me.

On yonders hill, there stands an alehouse,
Where my true love goes and sets hisself down,
He takes another strange girl on his knee
And kisses her and frowns on me.

Well, a grief, a grief, I'll tell you for why,
Because that girl she's got more nor me;
For gold shall glitter, her beauty will fade,
And that's why it puts back a poor girl like me.

On yonders hill there's blind beetles crawl,
As blind as blind could be;
I wish to God that I'd been one of those
Before I known my love's company.

Although Steve Roud has this song as *Died For Love* (Roud 9) in his *Folksong Index*, Mrs Hughes' version contains more 'floating verses' than anything else - most particularly the last one. Mike Yates tell us that there's a folktale about this, well known to Gypsies and Travellers. Before Jesus was captured by the Roman soldiers he was being pursued, and the soldiers were asking everybody if they had seen Jesus. Everyone said no, except the beetle, who told the soldiers where Jesus had gone. As a result of this Jesus was captured and, as a punishment, he turned the beetle blind, so that he would not be able to help the Romans any further. Duncan Williamson had a very fine short version of the tale, printed in *Scottish Traditional Tales* by Alan Bruford and Donald MacDonald, Polygon, 1994.

It's a song everyone knows - even today in the right company - so it's no surprise that there are 289 Roud entries, or that 61 of these are sound recordings, encompassing almost every singer you care to think of. Closer to the truth is that everyone knows a *version* of it, because it's one of those songs which attracts 'floating verses' like a magnet, while being alarmingly close to countless other songs which musicologists tell us are actually different. Who cares - it's a great wallow in almost any circumstances!

Other versions available on CD: Sarah Porter (MTCD309-10); Jasper Smith (MTCD320); May Bradley (MTCD349); 'Pop's' Johnny Connors (MTCD325-6); Amy Birch (TSCD661); Alf Wildman (MTCD356-7); Emma Vickers (EFDSS CD 002); Jean Orchard (VT151CD); Viv Legg (VT153CD).

2 - 44 **Final Speech**

I'm a woman who's a-speaking now in the name of Caroline Hughes. I've been the mother of ten children; I've been a Romany all my life-time. All my son-in-laws have fought the British war. My husband and his brother spent the 1914 war. They had nothing for it - only just what the Lord had. He had a cross and we had a caravan for doing our duty. It isn't fair on us. Then if you want to stay, you've got to pay through your nose. You're out on the road - you got to be summonsed. You gotta be hiked on. Why? If you don't, we'll pull you out and summons you, make you pay!

Well, we've got to take the worst sometimes and go. We only leaves that work to God. It's all right down here, but 'tis in the next world. What's them going to do when they meet that Christus? The Lord knows who's he's going to pick out, the best from the worst. We put our trust in God; we're Romanies. The Lord Jesus left the mountains, he left the world, left the greens, cabbage, potatoes, wood, lakes, mountains for everybody in the world, which it was took away from us. Why? Shouldn't take it away from us. Because they bought bye-laws and took it away - robbed us. As I tell it right or wrong to the world, I knows I'm telling right!

2 - 45 **10 second space - fragments:**

2 - 46 **Lord Bateman** (Roud 40, Child 53)

Come riddle, come riddle, my bold forester;
He is the keeper of our Queen's deers.
Oh, wasn't Lord Bateman the cleverest young fellow
That ever the sun shone on.

Spoken: To wed two brides all on one day.

2 - 47 **The Black Velvet Band** (Roud 2146)

She had hair hung over her shoulders
Tied up with a black velvet band

2 - 48 **Brennan on the Moor** (Roud 476, Laws L7)

Oh bold Brennan on the Moor
Young Erin's daughter stood
Bold Brennan on the Moor.

Spoken: I don't know it.

2 - 49 **The Dark Eyed Sailor** (Roud 265, Laws N35)

Oh, the other night when the wind blowed high
It was the other night when the wind blowed low
Was the other night when that wind blowed high
I thought on my sailor ...

Spoken: No that's ...

Credits:

First and foremost, thanks to Peggy Seeger for making available the recordings she and Ewan MacColl made of Caroline Hughes and her family in 1962 and 1966, and for allowing me to quote extensively from the book *Travellers' Songs from England and Scotland* they published in 1977. Without Peggy's willing assistance, these CDs would never have been published.

This is not the first time Peggy has been of assistance to MT Records - several of the recordings on George Dunn: *Chainmaker* (MTCD317-8) and all those on Joe Heaney: *the road from Connemara* (TSCD518D), and the whole Joe Heaney article (MT057) were also kindly made available by her.

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