

DOWE-EAST BALLADS AND SONGS

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PREFACE

During the spring of 1946, Mr. Wendell Hadlock of Ellsworth, Maine informed me that he knew a number of ballad singers and suggested that they be recorded, because there had never been a completely comprehensive study made of Maine folk songs.

I, therefore, decided to attempt a short, intensive study of the region, both on the seacoast and inland, to try to find out four things: the status of folk song in colonial times, the status of folk song now as compared to twenty-five years ago, when most of the collections of Maine folk songs were made, the full extent of folk singing regarding the topics used in folk songs of Maine, and finally, the historical value of these songs.

In 1948, with Mr. Hadlock opening the way to my first informant and supplying me with some songs from him, I visited Mr. Dale Potter of Kingman, Maine, who turned out to be a magnificent ballad singer and of inestimable help in the preparation of this thesis. From this beginning, the songs swelled to one hundred and twenty, from seventeen informants located in various places throughout the state.

The songs collected here are by no means all the songs in Maine, nor are the seventeen informants all the people left who can still sing songs. (In all probability there are no more Dale Potters, for he is a singer that answers the collector's dream.) At present I have the names of nearly twenty informants whom I

*material collected between 1948 & 1951*

## BAWDY SONGS

For some reason folklorists are somewhat reluctant to print either bawdy songs or stories. Whatever the reason for not printing them, it can hardly be because they have never collected such material. Of course, a few songs escape this general statement. For example, we have THE DARBY RAM, HOME DEARIE HOME and THE FOGGY FOGGY DEW; but, by and large, these are exceptions to the rule. The preponderance of folk song material in print is anything but bawdy.

This is not to be construed as a plea to print pornographic materials. However, it does not appear entirely proper to print but one side of a culture pattern. To produce shanty boy songs and sailor songs that are only of one shade, and use these songs as representative of the singing culture of these groups, is not exactly fair. Actually, there were probably as many bawdy as polite songs sung by these groups. Had the writer printed all the bawdy material he was exposed to, this phase of the collection would almost equal in size the other portions.

Whenever males in our society congregate there seems to be a tendency, in the lighter moments, to tell an "off color" story or sing a ribald song. Whether or not this is true of other peoples is unimportant in this discussion. What is of interest is exactly what sort of songs are sung. Unfortunately, there has been little work done on these lines, and the

BAWDY SONGS cont'd.

following facts must, therefore, rest on their own merits. The following group of ribald songs have been selected as representative of a much larger collection, and a perusal of them will reveal a few facts of interest.

In the first place, the size of the collection and the completeness of the individual texts indicate that these songs are still popular, widely known, and often sung. Further, from what small evidence we have to go on, they are as widely dispersed as any of the other songs collected. Finally, they give indications of being of as great antiquity as many of the better known ballads.

A close study of this material indicates that these songs, in a large measure, are parodies on known, respectable folk songs. One in this collection appears to be a parody on a hymn. The tunes appear to be copied, and the songs themselves have the trappings, like refrains, come-all-ye beginnings, and clichés that appear in the best ballad form. Finally, they are rather obscene than profane and seldom show much originality of composition beyond a cleverness of parody.

When we compare these songs with the songs of the same caliber sung by the more sophisticated members of our society we are at once conscious of a marked difference. The sophisticated song tends to be much more original in form; it is much more suggestive in content and tends a great deal more

BAWDY SONGS cont'd.

often toward the profane rather than the obscene. The folk, on the other hand, show a marked tendency toward subtlety in the introduction of pornographic elements, but almost immediately expand upon the incident, as if in fear that the suggested idea had been overlooked or only partially understood by the listener.

The absence of the profane may, perhaps, be explained by the fact that the folk often tend to take a superstitious view of religion which would preclude profane songs from the group. Although profane language is used very commonly, there is a certain churchly quality to even the most rollicking tune that might well keep the folk from singing in such a vein.

Perusal of these songs will indicate clearly their importance in the entertainment of the logger and the sailor, and at the same time it will indicate the gaping difference between folk pornography and that of the sophisticates. Much more could be made of these songs than the tiny amount included here. However, the idea was to include them as rounding out the general folk song problem in camp and fo'c'sle, not to subject them to intensive study.

Before turning to these songs, there remains yet one more point to be considered--the relationship of this type of humor to the humor of another group engaged in the lumbering and shipping operations. It has been mentioned earlier that lumber camps and sailing vessels contained large numbers of American

## BAWDY SONGS cont'd.

Indians. One would assume, therefore, that there would be a free passage of ideas, humor included, between them. Although undoubtedly true among the white groups represented, there seems to have been no interchange of this bawdy humor between the Indian and the white. Those things that the Indian found amusing never appear in these songs, and the Indian never uses this type of humor either among his own kind or when dealing with whites.<sup>1</sup>

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1. For a study of the Indian concept of humor, see H. P. Beck, "INDIAN HUMOR," PENNSYLVANIA ARCHAEOLOGIST, Vol. XIX, Nos. 3-4, pp. 54-61.

## HOME DEARIE HOME

This song is one that seems to be constantly popular. A modern, somewhat bawdy version is known as "BELL BOTTOM TROUSERS." From this version sprang a parody which has had some radio popularity. It appears that the song has undergone many changes in its long life (if we may judge from its many divergent variants.) Obviously of Scotch origin, since many versions contain Scotch words and phrases, it has changed its locality from "in the North Countree" to "in North Amerikee."

While searching for references it was discovered, with some surprise, that the stanza beginning, "The sailor being weary, he hung down his head" has been included in other songs until it has become almost a stanzaic cliché. The following are a few examples of songs containing this stanza. "KNOXVILLE GIRL," (Gardner and Chickering, p. 403.) "YOUNG JOHNNY," (Brewster, p. 189.) "YOUNG EDWIN IN THE LOWLANDS LOW," (Brewster, p. 202.) "GREEN BEDS," (Belden, p. 160.) "WEXFORD GIRL," (Hudson, No. 30.) and "POLLY OLIVER" (see songs). To this list must be added an old nursery rhyme, supplied by Mr. John Greenway, wherein the first line is used, "Here is a candle to light you to bed.

And here comes a headsman to chop off your head."

The bibliography for the song itself is as follows:

Gardner and Chickering, p. 77./ Colcord, pp. 87-88./  
Chappell, p. 60./ JAFSL, Vol. 63, No. 249, p. 283.

## HOME DEARIE HOME

## 1

The sailor being drowsy, he hung down his head.  
He asked for a candle to light him to bed.  
She lit him to bed, as maidens ought to do,  
And he vowed and declared she must come to him too.

## Chorus

Home dearie, home, to your own country,  
Home dearie, home, to your old country,  
Where the oak and the ash and the bonny birch tree,  
Are all growing green in North America.

## 2

She being young, she thought it no harm.  
She jumped in beside him to keep herself warm.  
He hugged her; he kissed her; he called her his dear,  
And she wished the short night had been a long year.

## Chorus

## 3

Next morning early, the sailor arose,  
And into her lap he heaped handfuls of gold  
Saying, "Take this my dear, 'twill buy you milk and bread.  
And that is what you will get for lighting sailors to bed."

## Chorus



## HOME DEARIE HOME

4

And if it is a girl, she shall wear a gold ring,  
 And if it is a boy, he shall fight for his King,  
 With his little quartered shoes and his jacket so blue,  
 He shall walk the quarterdeck as his daddy used to do.

Chorus

Captain Archie Spurling, Islesford,  
 Maine

## HOME DEARIE HOME (B)

1

To the pay master you go, if you want to get your pay.  
 He figures it out to the minute and the day.  
 He hands you the money with a careless sort of slam.  
 The money don't belong to him; he doesn't give a damn.

Chorus

It's home boys, home, it's home that we should be.  
 It's home boys, home, in the North Amerikee,  
 Where the ash and the oak and the curly maple tree,  
 They all grow together in the North Amerikee.

HOME DEARIE HOME (B)

2

To the doctor you go when you feel a little ill.  
He writes a prescription, and he gives you a pill,  
And if you should die and cheat your Uncle Sam,  
The Doctor done his duty, and he doesn't give a damn.

Chorus

Col. Smith

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## RAMBLE AWAY

1

While I was awalking one night in Verdun,  
I took lovely Nellie for my sweetheart.  
She hugged me and kissed me and to me did say,  
"Are you the young man they call Ramble Away?"

2

While I was awalking one morning in May,  
I spied lovely Nellie awalking my way.  
I says to myself, "I'll be seein' you by-an'-by."  
I could tell by the look in her bonny, blue eye.

## Chorus

Ramble away, yes ramble away.  
Oh, the night we get married, we'll ramble away.  
Ramble away, yes ramble away.  
For the night we get married, we'll ramble away.

3

Now six months had passed, and three months had come,  
And lovely Nellie grew stout in her form.  
Her corsets don't meet, and her strings they don't tie,  
And that's what she got by the look in her eye.

## RAMBLE AWAY

4

Six months had passed, and three months had come,  
 And lovely Nellie brought forth a young son.  
 She hugged it and kissed it and to it did say,  
 "Your pappy, my darling, has rambled away."

Chorus

5

Silks and blue velvet my baby shall wear,  
 And a bunch of blue velvets to tie on his hair.  
 And the bells they shall ring, and sweet music will play,  
 The night I get married to ramble away.

6

My story is finished, thank God it's no worse.  
 I'll take my little baby and go out and nurse,  
 And when I get lonesome, I'll set down and cry,  
 When I think of those moments I took nink (?) on the sly.

Chorus

Chaney Ripley

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## WHILE STROLLING THROUGH NORFOLK

Shay (AMERICAN SEA SONGS) p. 40.

## NORFOLK

1

While strolling through Norfolk one day on a spree,  
 I sighted a packet, her sails flowing free.  
 She was broad in the counter and bluff in the bow;  
 She flew the tricolour; her gaskets hung low.

## Chorus

Singing, faldi I aldi I, singing faldi I aldi I, faldi I  
 aldi I faldi I ay.

2

I ran up a signal, a signal she knew.  
 She backed her main topsail and for me hove to.  
 I hailed her in English, she answered, "I ay."  
 She was from The Blue Anchor, bound for Tigers Bay.

## Chorus

3

I broke out my bow chaser and for her I bore,  
 And yardarm to yardarm, along we just tore.  
 We sailed along fleetly, both meekly and sweet,  
 And when we dropped anchor, 'twas on Avon Street.

## Chorus

NORFOLK cont'd.

4

Behind a breakwater, from storms well insured,  
 In a snug little harbor, she soon had me moored.  
 She furled up my mains'l, my tops'ls and royals,  
 Put her lily white hand on my boom tackle falls.

5

I inspected her locker, found plenty of room,  
 And down in her oarlock I stowed my jib boom.  
 She yawed with her sternsheets, both ample and wide,  
 And at me let fly with a ringing broadside.

Chorus

6

Well, I fought with the Russians, the Prussians also,  
 And I've fought with the Limeys and Johnny Crapaud,  
 But of all the damn fighters I ever did see,  
 She reminded me most of that stinkpot Chinee.



Col. Smith

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## JACK SIMPSON


1

Come all who take delight in frolic and song,  
 Give ear to my ditty, 'twill not take you long.  
 It's of a young sailor who courted and sparked  
 A captain's young wife while all in the dark.

*r/B*  Dearie-I-dol day, ~~Right wack fol di diddle,~~ ~~Right wack fol de day.~~ 

2

Jack Simpson the sailor, for that was his name,  
 He had a young wife, a beautiful dame.  
 She ventured on shipboard, her husband to see,  
 "And dear me," said the Captain, "a charmer for me."

 ~~Dearie-I-dol day, ~~Right wack fol di diddle,~~ ~~Right wack fol de day.~~~~

3

Now supper being over, and all things was o'er,  
 The ladies were ordered to go up on shore,  
 While us poor sailors, on shipboard must stay,  
 The Captain will go his dear charmer to see.

 ~~Dearie-I-dol day, ~~Right wack fol di diddle,~~ ~~Right wack fol de day.~~~~

JACK SIMPSON cont'd.

4

Now Jack he mistrusted that something was wrong.  
 In the age of the evening he slyly slipped home,  
 And under the bed he stored himself away,  
 To see what the Captain to his dear wife would say.

~~Dearie I-dol day, Right wack fol di diddle, Right wack fol de day.~~

5

*S/* Here's fifty bright guineas, my joy and delight,  
 If you will consent to lie by me this night.  
 Your husband shall have a promotion at sea.  
 I will do better by him than I did agree. *S/*

~~Dearie I-dol day, Right wack fol di diddle, Right wack fol de day.~~

6

The sight of the money soon lured this fair dame,  
 And soon she consented to play up the game.  
 It's straight to bed this couple did go,  
 And there they did play gitche-up-and-I-O.

~~Dearie I-dol day, Right wack fol di diddle, Right wack fol de day.~~

7

Now, this tiresome work it soon lulled them to sleep.  
 From under the bed, Jack slyly did creep.  
 He put on the Captain's pants, vest and his coat,  
 His cap and his wig for to make up the joke.

~~Dearie I-dol day, Right wack fol di diddle, Right wack fol de day.~~



JACK SIMPSON cont'd.

8

Now, Jack he was dressed from top to toe,  
 And straight to the Captain's own home he did go,  
 And when he got there, he was awful bold,  
 For he was all dressed in bright, glittering gold.

~~Dearie I-dol day, Right wack fol di diddle, Right wack fol de day.~~

9

Now a servant girl came to the door with a light.

Jack didn't appear to be in any fright.

“Is your mistress at home?” “Yes, she's into bed.”

“Throw open the parlor door,” Jack quickly said.

~~Dearie I-dol day, Right wack fol di diddle, Right wack fol de day.~~

10

Now, Jack he pretended to be awful drunk.

He turned around, give the candle a puff.

He jumped into bed, as all sailors do,

And he reffed her and hove her 'til he hove her to.

~~Dearie I-dol day, Right wack fol di diddle, Right wack fol de day.~~

11

It's then he began to tickle this lady's knee.

It's then that this lady began to get pleased.

It's tat and for tat this couple did play,

And she laid in Jack's arms 'til the broad break of day.

~~Dearie I-dol day, Right wack fol di diddle, Right wack fol de day.~~

JACK SIMPSON cont'd.

12

When morning did come, she beheld a strange face.

8/ /Oh my, / says the lady, /What a pitiful case. / —

8/ /Oh mistress, kind mistress, don't be in any fright,

8/ For your husband's been hugging my wife all this night. /

~~Dearie-I-doi day, Right wack fol di diddle, Right wack fol de day.~~

13

It's there she did lay 'til Jack's story was told.

It's then she did laugh all her two sides would hold,

8/ Saying, /Go hitch up my shay, I vow and protest,

8/ 'Til I see how that rogue looks in his tarpolein vest. /

~~Dearie-I-doi day, Right wack fol di diddle, Right wack fol de day.~~

14

Now, Jack and his mistress they started to go,

Oh Jack and his mistress they cut a fine show.

And when they got there, the first words were spoke,

8/ /Here's fifty bright guineas, Jack, take off my coat.

8/ Here's fifty bright guineas, Jack, take off my coat, 8

If this to the sailors you will not report,

For sailors will often get caught, Jack, you know,

8/ And here is four hundred right here in a row. /

Dale Potter

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## THE CAPTAIN AND THE SQUIRE

1

Now it's of a sea capting, a sea capting of late.  
 He married a lady with a fine estate,  
 And before they were married, he was bound to sea,  
 And before they were bedded, he was called away.

Refrain


□ They had rowdy dum dum, they had rowdy dum day.

2

Now the capting being gone, it was the Squire's intent,  
 To go see this lady, he was fully bent.  
 So with his butler and his footman and his coachman so fine,  
 He went up to this lady to bid her be kind.

Refrain

3

He stepped up to this lady and gave her a kiss.  
 He says, /A slice of your cup, it will never be missed.   
 He threw his arms around her and gave her another,  
 /It will do you no harm, and it will make you a mother."

Refrain

## THE CAPTAIN AND THE SQUIRE cont'd.

4

At last she consented, so to bed they did go.  
 The cook and the butler, they followed also.  
 With the coachman and the housemaid, it was all of the same,  
 And the footman slept up in the garret with Jane.

Refrain

5

Now six months being over, and seven months being come,  
 This lady began to grow thick 'round the waist.  
 When eight months was over, and nine months had gone,  
 And the very same night the sea captain came home.

Refrain

6

He stepped up to his lady, all her to embrace,  
 And he said, /My fair jewel, you grow thick 'round the waist. ✓  
 /It is fat. It is fat, / this fair lady did say,  
 /Would you have me as lean as when you went away? ✓

Refrain

□ I've had, etc... ✓

7

He then took his lady and went out in the hall.  
 She opened her mouth, and loud she did bawl.  
 /The colic, the colic, the colic, / she cried,  
 /I'm so sick with the colic, I fear I shall die. ✓

Refrain

THE CAPTAIN AND THE SQUIRE cont'd.

8

They sent for the midwife, and when she got there,

She ordered the cook for some tea to prepare.

The cook she made answer, all in the next room,

✓I'm so sick with the colic that I can not come.✓

~~Refrain~~

9

They sent for the doctor, and when he got there,

He delivered this lady with a beautiful air.

The cook and the housemaid they all stood the same,

Both one of them all, it was all of the same.

[and]

~~Refrain~~

10

✓Well, well,✓ says the captain, ✓as sure as I live,

All for this joke's sake I will freely forgive.

But tell me, my lady, tell me if you can,

Do all these four babies belong to one man?✓

~~Refrain~~

11

✓No, no,✓ says the lady, ✓the Squire got me beguiled,

And each of my servants gave my maids a child.✓ —

✓No matter,✓ says the capting, ✓no matter for that,

The night that I went away I had a bit of old hat.✓

~~Refrain~~

## THE JOLLY PLOUGHBOY

Of this song Creighton writes, "Through folk songs we see pictures of life as it was lived in olden times. Songs such as this...shatter our belief that women of the period were always demure." Fortunately, the song as it stands here is a parody on the one Creighton collected. However, the fact that this parody exists shows, perhaps more clearly than any lengthy bibliography, the popularity that this piece at one time enjoyed, for it is fairly well established that only the best known materials are parodied, else the main effect of the effort is lost--to poke fun at something that has become over popular for one reason or another.

Chappell, p. 127./ MacKenzie (BALLADS), No. 45. (In this version the ploughboy is pressed for sea and rescued in the end.)/ Creighton and Seator, pp. 176-176./ (This is definitely not the song referred to in Campbell and Sharp No. 59.)

*This is  
by Dunlop,  
in Pills, 1719.  
get quote from  
He ming quango  
for the more  
of "make the dirt more"  
the girl asking the American  
for the American  
de referring to her again  
in inter change.*

## THE JOLLY PLOUGHBOY

1

Come all you laás and lassies, it's who are fond of fun,  
 Come set you down beside me; I'll sing to you a song.  
 It is a funny little song, about Miss Rosy Lee,  
 That you can sing to your best girl, as she sets on your  
 knee.

## Refrain

I de ink to well tum a lul lo day,  
 I de ink to all the day, tum a right fol lol, right fol de  
 doll, right wack fo lol de day.

2

Now, it's of a famous ploughboy that went ploughing up his  
 land.  
 He said "hea" unto his horses and boldly bid them stand,  
 Set down upon his plough for to whistle and to sing,  
 And the echo of Jack's charming voice caused the valley  
 for to ring.

## Refrain

3

Now, it's of the squire's daughter who was nutting in the wood,  
 And hearing of Jack's charming voice, it charmed her where she  
 stood,  
 And all the nuts that she had picked she threw them all away.  
 Behind the bush and out of sight, she could no longer stay.

## Refrain

THE JOLLY PLOUGHBOY cont'd.

4

Now she come tripping up to John as he sat on his plough.

"Oh, John," says she, "I feel so queer. I scarcely can tell how."

He took her by the middle small, and laid her on the ground.

"Oh, John," says she, "I long to see this world go 'round and  
'round."

Refrain

5

Oh, once he kissed her ruby lips, as she lay on the ground.

Oh, twice he kissed her ruby lips, as she lay on the ground.

Three times he kissed her ruby lips, as she lay on the ground.

"Oh, John," says she, "I think I see this world go 'round and  
'round."

Refrain

6

.....

.....

She leaned her head upon his breast as they stood on the plain.

"Oh, John," said she, "I'd like to see the world go 'round again."

Refrain



THE JOLLY PLOUGHBOY cont'd.

7

Jack and the Squire's daughter are married now for life,  
And may she never rue the day she became his wife.  
Their riches are increasing, their pleasures do abound,  
And every night and morning, they see the world go 'round.

Dale Potter

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## KITTY O'MOREY

Gardner and Chickering, pp. 393-394./ Kitteridge, JAFL, Vol.  
XXXV, P. 237 for discussion./ Sharp and Karpeles, No. 115.

## KITTY O'MOREY

1

Come all you gentlemen, and ladies too,  
Come listen to my story.  
I'll tell you how I formed a plan  
To cheat one Kitty O'Morey

Refrain

Right tu ri iddle and a tu tu toot,  
Right to ri iddled I aye.

2

I went down to Kate's father's house,  
Just like some gay young fellow.  
I told her that the plums and grapes  
Were ripe and getting mellow.

Refrain

KITTY O'MOREY cont'd.

3

I told her that my sister Nell,  
 'Way down in yonder bower,  
 Would like to have us come that way,  
 And spend a half an hour.

Refrain

4

Now Kate and I, we trudged along,  
 We trudged along together.  
 I told her that my sister Nell  
 Knew nothing of this matter.

Refrain

5

Kate squeezed my hand and seemed quite pleased,  
 "There's one thing more I fear, Sir.  
 My father he's a-carting oats below,  
 And he will catch us here, Sir."

Refrain

6

Kate said to me, "You climb that tree,  
 And wait 'til he goes past, Sir,  
 And then we will eat plums and grapes,  
 And we will sport and play, Sir."

Refrain

KITTY O'MOREY cont'd.

7

I climbed the tree Kate pointed me,  
 Not being the least offended.  
 And Katie, she stood back and winked at me,  
 To see how I ascended.

Refrain

8

"Now you're up there. Your ugly looks,  
 You look just like a mouser.  
 You may pick your plums and eat your grapes;  
 It's now I'm going to run, sir."

Refrain

9

Now Kate ran down across the field,  
 Just like some one distracted,  
 I cursed, I swore, my shirt I tore,  
 To see how Katie had acted.

Refrain

10

It's now I'll go make a wife of her,  
 And get my old shirt mended.  
 It's now I've made a wife of her,  
 And all my troubles are ended.

Refrain