

Song Collecting in Newfoundland: Maud Karpeles, 1930

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Maud Karpeles' first collecting trip to Newfoundland in the late summer and fall of 1929 had been remarkably successful, given the short time she had available and the logistical difficulties she encountered when travelling to outports in the north of the island. She was aware that she had only visited a small part of the country, and she determined to make a second trip the next summer, with the principal aim of exploring outport communities along the south coast.

Arriving back in St. John's by ship from England on June 30th, Karpeles had six weeks available for her second expedition. She initially stayed for a few days with her friends the Emersons, and on the evening of July 1st they took her out for an evening meal at Brigus. On the way there they passed through her old haunts in the Conception Bay area, and she renewed acquaintance with several of her previous informants. She noted in her diary that they had all been delighted to see her again.¹ The next day she called on Gerald Doyle and others to get as much information as she could about the best places to visit on the Southern Shore and the difficulties of transportation in the region. As a result of the advice she obtained, she decided that her best bet was to go first to Placentia, next to the Burin Peninsula, and thereafter to take the coastal steamer further west.

The first region Maud visited was therefore the western coast of the Avalon Peninsula, with Placentia

as her base. On July 4th she recorded her first impressions in her diary: "Placentia a beautiful place...[but] does not look promising for songs. Strolled out after tea and made some enquiries. Seems rather hopeless."² However, the next day was a little more promising. This is Maud's record of how she fared that Saturday:

Took car to Pt. Verde. There made several calls. Everybody most friendly, but they have no songs. Got several addresses... After dinner made some calls in Placentia finishing up with the Griffins. They got Mr. Carrol to come in & he sang "William's Ghost." He is a fine singer & no doubt has other songs. Arranged to call tomorrow. Feeling very tired, but am cheered at the thought of having got even one song.³

Mr. Carrol was actually Michael Carroll, Sr. Maud had noted the ballad that he sang her, "Sweet William's Ghost," on four different occasions during her 1929 collecting trip and she would encounter it when she reached Hermitage on the southern coast, but Michael Carroll's tune was the one she would eventually choose to publish as her A version in *Folk Songs from Newfoundland*. The singer decorated and varied the melody slightly from verse to verse, so the following is only an approximation of his tune:

The image shows a musical score for the song "Sweet William's Ghost" in G major (one sharp) and 4/4 time. The title is in green, and the composer is listed as "Anon". The score is for voice and consists of three lines of music with lyrics underneath. The lyrics are: "La dy Marg'ret was sitting in her own loyal bower, 'Twas built of lime and stone... La dy Marg'ret was sitting in her own loyal bower, When she heard a dead man's moan, When she heard a dead man's moan." There are some red markings in the original image, including a red "Voice" label and a red line under "stone...".

Lady Margaret was sitting in her own loyal bower,
'Twas built of lime and stone;
Lady Margaret was sitting in her own loyal bower,
When she heard a dead man's moan.

"Now is it my father the king?" she cries,
"Or is it my brother John?
Or is [it] my own Willie," she said,
"From Scotland here have come?"

"No, 'tis not the king," he replied,
"It is no your brother John,
But it is your own dear Willie
From Scotland here have come."

"Did you bring to me any token of love,
Did you bring to me a ring,
Did you bring to me any token at all
That a true love ought to bring?"

"No, I've brought to you no token at all,
I've brought to you no ring,
But I've brought to you my winding-sheet
That my body lies mouldering in."

Karpeles spent the next few days visiting small communities strung out along the bumpy coastal road, initially on foot and later by taxi. She recorded her impressions as follows:

Took car along Cape Shore to Ship's Cove and Gooseberry. Everyone extraordinarily friendly and anxious to sing, but they have few genuine folk songs – what they have are poor versions, so got very little. They are all delighted to see a stranger. The most beautiful drive – a little like the coast around Torquay. Another song from Mrs. Flinn on my return & then paid another visit to Mr. Carroll from whom I got another song. Wrote out tunes & got to bed about 12.⁵

Mrs. Flinn was Placentia housewife Margaret Flinn, and Maud noted two songs from her, "Constant Farmer's Son" and "The Dreams of Lovely Nancy." Karpeles next went collecting by motor boat. It was an hour's trip up the North East Arm to the village of Dunville, where the Hunt family lived. Maud recorded her candid impressions of the Hunts in her diary that evening:

[Jimmie] Hunt has known lots of songs, but he is old and childish and cannot remember things. However his son came to the rescue and gave me a couple of songs, and another son the words of "G. Laddie" – tune no good. It is a filthy house, but the people as everywhere most charming and friendly. Absolutely

Now in crossing over the frozen plain
On a cold and stormy night,
In crossing the plains of a cold winter's night
In a dead man's company.

Now when they came to the old churchyard
Where the graves were mossy green,
Saying: "Here is my place of residence,
For me to take a sleep."

"Is there any room at your head?" she said,
"Or any at your feet?
Or any room about you,
For me to take a sleep?"

"No, my father is at my head," he said,
"My mother is at my feet,
And there's three little devils
For my soul to take.

"One of them is for my drunkenness,
And the other is for my pride,
And the other is for deluding of fair pretty maids
And staying out late in the night."⁴

no trouble to get them to sing. Only a little embarrassed in fear their lack of education will make the songs unsuitable 'for the likes of me'. A lovely spot at the head of the N. East Arm – like a big lake surrounded by wooded hills. A lovely trip back to the harbour.⁶

It was Patrick Hunt who sang "The Gypsy Laddie" for her, but Jimmie's other son, John, proved the best informant. Maud noted "A Man in Love" from him, and he also provided the song that has become the best known of any that she collected, "She's Like the Swallow" :

She's like a swallow that flies so high,
She's like a river that never runs dry,
She's like the sunshine on the lee shore,
I love my love, but love is no more.

Down to a garden this fair maid did go,
To pluck the beautiful prim-a-rose,
The more she plucked, the more she pulled,
Until she got her apron full.

Then out of those prim-a-roses she made
A thorny pillow for her head,
She laid her head down, no word did say,
And then this poor maid's heart did break.

She's like a swallow that flies so high,
She's like a river that never runs dry,
She's like the sunshine on the lee shore,
I love my love, but love is no more.⁷

She's Like the Swallow

Anon

Voice

She's like the swal-low that flies so high, She's like the ri-ver that
nev-er runs dry, She's like the sun-shine on the lee shore. I love my love and
love is no more.

The image shows a musical score for the song 'She's Like the Swallow'. It consists of three staves of music in G major (one sharp) and 6/8 time. The first staff begins with a treble clef, a key signature of one sharp (F#), and a 6/8 time signature. The melody is written on a single staff with lyrics underneath. The second staff continues the melody and lyrics. The third staff concludes the piece with the lyrics 'love is no more.' and a double bar line.

Maud soon decided that it was time to move on, and that meant going across Placentia Bay to the Burin Peninsula. She stayed on the Burin peninsula for the best part of a week, visiting such communities as Marystown, Beau Bois, Salmonier, Frenchman's Cove and Garnish. Her informants in this area were mainly descendants of English settlers from Dorset and Devon, and so even when the songs she obtained were variants on those collected the previous year they often differed significantly from the Irish versions. She began collecting in Marystown by taking the ferry to the south side of the inlet and calling on people suggested by her landlady, Mrs. Farrell. She only found one singer (May Mitchell) who offered the kind of songs she wanted but, as this comment in her diary indicates, she noticed a marked difference in attitude between Marystown residents and people on the Avalon Peninsula:

Everyone friendly and willing to sing, but only Mrs. Mitchell any good. She gave me some nice songs. Got a man to row us back...He had no doubt I was making lots of money over the songs. He is the first person to make this remark. The people on this coast very different from East Coast. Do not show curiosity – much more friendly at first sight and require little or no persuasion to sing. They are anxious to oblige a stranger and are quite regretful when they have not any songs. I hope you will succeed is the unfailing remark as you leave them. The interest in songs is much more widespread than on the East Coast but not such fine songs about. Here, as everywhere, the proportion of genuine folk songs is very small compared to the repertory of composed songs.⁸

May Mitchell sang one ballad that Maud had not previously found in Newfoundland, “The Dewy Dales of Yarrow.”

The Dewy Dales of Yarrow

Anon

Voice

There was a squire lived in the town, He had one daugh-ter Sar-ah.
She ad-mired her fath-er's clerk, The ___ plough-boy John from Yar-row. ___

The image shows a musical score for the song 'The Dewy Dales of Yarrow'. It consists of two staves of music in G major (one sharp) and 4/4 time. The first staff begins with a treble clef, a key signature of one sharp (F#), and a 4/4 time signature. The melody is written on a single staff with lyrics underneath. The second staff continues the melody and lyrics, ending with a double bar line.

There was a squire lived in the town,
 He had one daughter Sarah.
 She admired her father's clerk,
 The ploughboy John from Yarrow.

As he was going up the lane,
 The lane so very narrow,
 And there he spied nine hired men
 Waiting for his carrow.

Three he drew and three he slew
 And three he had slightly wounded,
 And her brother John stepped up behind
 To pierce him bodily under.

"Go home, go home, you false young man,
 And tell your sister Sarah,

That the prettiest flower that bloomed in June
 Is the man who died in Yarrow."

She said: "Brother dear, I had a dream,
 I dreamed I was gathering flowers,
 I dreamed I was gathering flowers
 In the dewy dales of Yarrow."

"Sister dear, I can read your dream
 That caused you in fear to sorrow.
 The sweetest flower that bloomed in June
 Is the man who died in Yarrow."

Her father said to her one day:
 "What caused you in grief to sorrow?"
 She threw herself in her father's arms
 And she never saw tomorrow.⁹

May Mitchell sang three other ballads on this occasion: "The Cruel Mother," "Lamkin" and "The Gypsy Laddie." This was a fine haul, and Maud sensed that she had found a fine singer with an extensive repertoire, so she called on her again next morning (July 12th). May was certainly willing to sing, she knew a lot of songs, and "literally poured them out." Most, in Maud's estimation, were "not traditional" but she noted two more of them, "A Man in Love" and "Floro" (aka "The Shepherd.")

On July 15th Karpeles crossed the Burin Peninsula to Garnish on the north-west coast. She was sorry to leave Marystown which she called "quite the most

friendly place I have struck," commenting that "the people really make you feel at home and one of themselves." She stopped off at Salmonier on the way, picking up a version of "The Cruel Mother" from Mrs. Sarah Lundigan. In the evening she went prospecting at Frenchman's Cove, where she was mistaken for the new nurse.¹⁰ Apart from causing this disturbance, Maud also made her usual enquiries for old songs, and found one singing couple, Mr. and Mrs. Jacob Courage, from whom she noted three ballads. Mrs. Courage sang a striking version of "The Cruel Mother":

The Cruel Mother

Anon

Voice

There was a lady lived in York, Fair flowers the valley O, She
 fell in love with her father's clerk, In the green woods of valley O.

There was a lady lived in York,
 Fair flowers the valley O,
 She fell in love with her father's clerk,
 In the green woods of valley O.

She laid her back against the thorns,
 And there she had two pretty babes born.

She put them in a cradle deep,
 'Twas there she bound them hands and feet.

She took her penknife long and short,
 'Twas there she pierced their tender hearts.

As she was walking her father's hall,
 Two pretty babes came passing by.

Two pretty babes if you were mine,
 I'd dress you in the silk so fine.

O yes, false murderer, when we were yours,
 You neither dressed us in coarser clothes.

Two pretty babes, O can you tell
Whether I'll go to heaven or hell.

Yes, false murderer, we can tell
Whether you'll go to heaven or hell.

Jacob Courage contributed a version of "The Gypsy Laddie" and one of "Hind Horn" (Child # 17) called "The Beggar Man." Then it was time to endure another sea crossing, this time across Fortune Bay in an open motor boat to Belleoram on the south coast of central Newfoundland. Despite its beautiful location on a small bay surrounded by hills, Belleoram itself proved rather crowded and too industrial. There were some singing communities on the peninsula, Maud was informed, but they were further west, on Hermitage Bay.¹² But before she went there, she was told, she really ought to go to Rencontre, on the other side of Belle Bay.

Maud took this advice, and on July 18th another motor-boat ride landed her at the remote and isolated outpost of Rencontre East. She described the trip in her diary: "A lovely day and we went through beautiful scenery. Enormously high cliffs and perpendicular

Heaven is high and hell is low,
Fair flowers the valley O,
But when you dies to hell you must go
For murdering those babes of Bonny O."¹¹

walls of red rock going sheer down into the water. Rencontre one of the most beautiful places I have been in."¹³ Rencontre was not only spectacularly beautiful, it also had singers who knew traditional ballads. Maud found rather primitive lodging with the Coffin family ("not very wholesome and flies are appalling") but one compensation was that Mr. Clarence Coffin sang her "Wearing of the Blue." Door to door enquiries led Maud to the Quann family. Joseph Quann, an unemployed cripple, knew two Child ballads, "Hind Horn" and "Lamkin." He could not remember all the verses of the latter song but his simple version of "Hind Horn," which, like Jacob Courage, he knew as "The Beggar Man," was quite extensive, although evidently the product of oral transmission and prone to relapse into doggerel. Maud did not record what she thought of the last verse.

Hind Horn (The Beggar Man)

Anon

Voice

On board of the ship and a - way sailed he, He sailed a - way from his
own coun-tree. He looked at his ring that was pale and dim, He knew that his love was
false to him

On board of the ship and away sailed he,
He sailed away from his own coundree.
He looked at his ring that was pale and dim,
He knew that his love was false to him.

On board of the ship and back sailed he,
He sailed right back to his own coundree.
He looked at his ring that was pale and dim,
He knew that his love was false to him.

He rode and he rode and he rode up the street,
An old beggarman he chanced to meet.
"What news, what news have you got for me?"

"Tomorrow is you true love's wedding-day,
And the squire is invited to give her away."

"You haul off your begging rig
And I'll take off my driving suit.
The begging rig it won't fit me,
Your driving suit it won't fit thee."

But let it be right or let it be wrong,
The beggar's suit he did put on.
He rode till he came to Napoleon's gate,
And he lay on his staff in a weary state.

He saw his true love tripping down the stairs,
 Gold rings on her fingers and gold in her hair,
 And in her hand a glass of wine
 All for to treat the old beggarman.

He drank and he drank and he drank so free,
 And into the glass the ring slipped he.
 "Did you get it by land, did you get it by strand,
 Or did you get it from a drowned man's hand?"

"I neither got it from the land, I neither got it from the
 strand,
 Nor neither did I get it from a drowned man's hand,

Maud sensed that this was one occasion when it would be a good idea to pay an informant for his generosity, and she found the family's profuse gratitude when she gave them a dollar "quite embarrassing." She also got "two nice songs" from a young girl,

But I got it from your true love was courting you so free,
 And now I'm returned on your wedding day."

Then the gold from her fingers she then hauled off,
 And the gold from her hair it did fall off.
 "I will follow my true love for ever, ever more,
 And beg my bread from door to door."

Between the kitchen and the hall
 The old beggar's suit he did let fall.
 He showed his true love the flower of them all,
 He's the nicest little fellow that stands in the hall.¹⁴

Minnie Augot, and her mother Janie: "Farewell Nancy," which Maud thought bore some resemblance to "High Germany," and an interesting version of "Willie of Winsbury," which Janie Augot knew as "Willie Barber."¹⁵

Willie Barber (Willie o' Winsbury)

Anon

Voice

Dear daughter, dear daughter, the father did say, What
 makes you look so pale and wan? You look like you've had a
 fit of sickness, Or been lying with some young man, Or been lying with some young
 man.

As she was looking over her father's castle wall
 When she saw a ship sailing in.

"Dear daughter, dear daughter," the father did say,
 "What makes you look so pale and wan?
 You look like you've had a fit of sickness,
 Or been lying with some young man,
 Or been lying with some young man."

"Dear father, dear father," the daughter did say,
 "It's no wonder for me to look pale and wan,
 For all the troubles of my poor heart,
 My true love is long at sea."

"Is he any lord, duke, or noble man,
 Or a man of high degree,
 Or is he one of our seven sea-boys
 That ploughs o'er the raging sea?"

"He is no lord, duke, or noble man,
 Nor a man of high degree,
 But he is one of our seven sea-boys
 That ploughs o'er the raging sea."

"Dear daughter, dear daughter," the father did say,
 "It's truth you're telling unto me,
 For tomorrow morning at eight o'clock

It is hanged he will surely be.”

“Dear father, dear father,” the daughter did say,
“It’s truth you’re telling me;
For if you hang my own true love
You won’t get no good of me.”

Her father called down his seven sea-boys,
By one, by two, by three,
And sweet Willie that always used to be the first
But the last came down was he.

He came down, he came tripping down,
He was clothed all in silk,
His cheeks was of the roses red,
His skin was as white as the milk.

“Dear daughter, dear daughter,” the father did say,

“It’s no wonder that thanks must be,
For if I was a woman instead of a man
I would die for the love of he.”

“Will you marry my daughter,” he says,
“And take her by the hand?
And you can come and live with me,
And be heir to all my land.”

“I will marry your daughter,” he says,
“And take her by the hand,
But I won’t come to live with you,
Nor a fig for none of your land.

“If you can give her one guinea,
I can give her thirty-three,
Although you calls me the young Barber
That ploughs o’er the raging sea.”¹⁶

The mail boat for Hermitage Bay, although due at noon, didn't arrive until midnight, and Maud had quite an experience getting on board: “Pitch dark, thunder and lightning, but no rain. No landing stage, and had to row out in a boat with no lights and climb up a ladder on to steamer.”¹⁷ The ship waited for the fog to clear at English Harbour West before rounding the headland to Harbour Breton. Early the next morning it ploughed through rough seas, arriving at Hermitage at 9 a.m. Maud went out prospecting immediately, although she was feeling “rather empty and very tired.” She soon decided that it had been a good idea to visit Hermitage because she found three singing families that morning. Her diary entry that night read: “Went and explored soon after arrival and got

six songs before dinner - a record!” In fact, she noted seven songs that day in Heritage and she could have got more had not her activities attracted so many spectators: “I had about 40 people in the room and impossible to take down anything.”¹⁸ Before her audience swelled to these proportions Maud collected three songs from Thomas Sims, two from William Ball, and two from the Parsons family. Bill Ball's offerings were “The Turkish Lady” and “The Discharged Drummer,” while Tom Sims provided “The Cruel Mother,” “Lord Bateman” and another variant of “Sweet William's Ghost.” John Parsons’ daughter Myrtle knew “The Three Butchers” and he himself sang “The Nightingale”:

The Nightingale

Anon

Voice

One eve-ning, one eve-ning, one eve-ning so fair, I met a young

cou-ple, so come-ly they were; And one was a la-dy, a rich la-dy fair, And the

oth-er was a sol-dier, a brave vol-un-ter.

One evening, one evening, one evening so fair,
I met a young couple, so comely they were,

And one was a lady, a rich lady fair,
And the other was a soldier, a brave volunteer.

They had not been walking past one mile or two,
 When out of his knapsack a fiddle he drew;
 He made such music on the tip of the string,
 On the banks of the river, where the nightingales sing.

The soldier to the lady: "'Tis time to go home."
 "O no," cried the lady, "We'll have one more tune.
 Your tune it entices me one tip of the string,
 On the banks of the river, where the nightingales sing."

The lady to the soldier: "Will you marry me?"
 "O no," cried the soldier, "That never can be;

I've a wife in old Ireland and children have three,
 And another in Oporto is too many for me."

"I will go back to old Ireland, I'll stay there one year,
 And instead of cold water I'll drink whisky clear;
 And if ever I return it shall be in the Spring,
 To watch the water gliding and hear the nightingales sing."

Come all you pretty maidens wheresoever you be,
 And never court a soldier of any degree;
 They'll kiss you and court you and leave you behind
 On the banks of the river to hear the nightingales sing.¹⁹

Maud was elated by her success with song-hunting that day, but she decided that she had made a mistake in her choice of lodging: "Not clean, flies, children & food poor... for tea nothing but biscuits and tinned apricots."²⁰

Grole, a small outport on Hermitage Bay, was a another place that Maud had been recommended to visit, and she had an introduction to one of the residents there, Henry Burton. A scheduled motorboat left for Grole next morning (July 23rd) and Maud was on it. This was how she recorded the day's events in her diary that night when she was safely and comfortably ensconced in the Burtons' "nice clean house":

Started off about ten in motorboat for Grole, calling at other harbours on way...Arrived [there] about 1 pm and was warmly welcomed by Mr. Henry Burton...Mr. B. quite thrilled at my visit and work I am doing, and busied him-

self getting singers to come to the house. In due course Mr. G. Taylor arrived after having changed his clothes and gave me some good songs. Unfortunately a bad throat so he was not up to singing a great deal. In the evening there was company and I got more songs from Mr. Jakeman. This is certainly collecting made easy, to have singers brought to one's door, an organ on which to play over the tunes after they have been noted, and I even typed the words out direct from dictation.²¹

Despite his sore throat George Taylor provided Maud with four ballads: "The Discharged Drummer," "The Green Wedding," a version of Child # 81 "Little Mugsgrave and Lady Barnard" titled "Marshall Groves," and "Pretty Sally," which Maud identified as a variant of "The Brown Girl," a song that Baring-Gould had noted in the English west country and forwarded to Child:

Pretty Sally

Anon

Voice

A squire from Dover, a squire he came, He courted pretty Sally, pretty
 Sally was her name. She grew so proud and lofty and her portion was so high, And 'twas on a young
 sail - or she scarce winked an eye.

A squire from Dover, a squire he came,
 He courted pretty Sally, pretty Sally was her name.
 She grew so proud and lofty and her portion was so high,

And 'twas on a young sailor she scarce winked an eye.
 "O Sally, dear Sally, O Sally dear," said he,

"I'm afraid that your false heart and mine won't agree,
And if your hatred don't turn out in love,
I'm afraid that your false heart my ruin will prove."

"My hatred don't be to you nor to any other man,
For to say that I love you 'tis more than I can.
[So keep your intentions and hold your discourse,
For I never will love you unless I am forced.]"

Six long months being over and past,
Sally, pretty Sally, grew sick in love at last;
She grew sick in love and she knew not for why,
And she sent for the young man that she had once denied.

Saying: "Am I the doctor that you do want to see,
Or am I the young man that you have sent for me?"
"Yes, you are the doctor can kill or can cure,

And the pain that I do feel, my love, is hard to endure."

"Can't you remember when you slighted me for scorn,
And now I will reward you for what you have done."
"For what is gone and past, my love, forget and forgive,
And so spare me a little longer in this world for to live."

"O yes, I might forget it love, but never could forgive,
I will dance on your grave, my love, when you lies under-
neath."

She took rings from her fingers, 'twas one, two, by three,
Saying: "Take this, lovely Willie, in remembrance of me.
In remembrance of me, my love, when I am dead and gone,
And perhaps you might be sorry, love, for what you have
done."²²

The "Mr. Jakeman" to whom Maud referred in her diary entry was Joseph C. Jackman, and he sang "The

Merchant's Daughter," "Henry Martin" and "The Cuckoo."

The Cuckoo

Anon

Voice

The cuc koo is a fine bird, She sings as she flies, And the
more she sings cuc koo, The more the sum mer draws nigh.

The cuckoo is a fine bird,
She sings as she flies,
And the more she sings cuckoo
The more the summer draws nigh.

I wish I was a scholar
And could handle my pen,
I would write a private letter
To my true love I would send.²³

Another member of the Jackman family, Theodore, also contributed a Child ballad (# 286), "The Golden Vanity." The next morning Maud "wandered round and talked to people and sang songs to a crowd that collected around me outside the store and took their photographs." She liked Grole and was sorry to leave, and she sensed that the locals were also sorry to see her go. However, Mr. Burton had promised to take Maud in his motor boat to Pass Island, so that was the itinerary for July 24th. But when they attempted to make the crossing the seas proved too rough for his tiny boat, and they had to return to harbour and borrow a bigger boat. This was adequate, although they tossed about and "got pretty wet" but to Maud's surprise she did not feel seasick and found the trip exhilarating.

On Pass Island Maud found lodging with Mrs. Torching who was "thrilled at the idea of having an English lady... an ebullient, affectionate soul." In the afternoon she stepped out to go song-hunting and bumped into Alice Sims, who was coming to call:

Met Mrs. Sims on the door step and she came in and sang me a couple of beautiful songs. After tea accompanied by a little contingent of interested admirers I walked to Muning Cove and called on Mrs. Sims' father, old Mr. Percy. News of my coming had spread around and there must have been 40 people or more in the room. I got only one song, the rest no good. I sang a lot to them and altogether we spent a delightful evening. They were quite upset at the idea of my leaving them so some pressed me to stay. I felt very inclined to do so...but

decided that on the whole my time would be more profitably spent by going to St. Mary's.²⁴

Alice Sims sang to Maud "The Bailiff's Daughter of Islington" and "Farewell Nancy," while George Pearcey provided a complete version of "The False Bride."

The False Bride

Anon

Voice

The image shows a musical score for the song 'The False Bride'. It consists of three staves of music in G major (one sharp) and 3/4 time. The lyrics are written below the notes. The first staff starts with a rest for one measure, then the melody begins. The second staff continues the melody. The third staff concludes the melody with a final rest.

Six weeks be-fore East-er, the wea-ther being clear, On a fine sum-mer
morn-ing how cold blows the air, We went out in the for-est to see what was
there, And the for-est was cov-ered with bush-es.

Six weeks before Easter, the weather being clear,
On a fine summer morning how cold blows the air,
We went out in the forest to see what was there,
And the forest was covered with bushes.

The bride and bride-maidens they call a grand show,
And I followed after with my heart full of woe,
And I followed after with my heart full of woe,
Saying, "Here is the man who shall have her."

The first time I saw my love was in the church stand,
With glove coming off and a ring putting on,
And my limbs they did tremble, I scarcely could stand,
To see my love tied to another.

Said the parson to the people, "You stand out of the way
To let us hear what this young man got to say;
If this is the fair one that shall be his bride,
She shall never be tied to another."

The next time I saw my love was coming out of church,
I got off my seat and I stood in the porch.
As she passed me by I wished her much joy,
And I cursed the man who stood by her.

The next time I saw my love she sat down to meat,
I sat myself down but nothing could eat,
I love her sweet company more better than meat
Although she was tied to another.

The next time I saw my love she was going to bed,
With a store of jewels all round my love's head.
I gone in between them, I kissed the bride,
Saying, "I could lie by you forever."

Come dig me a grave both long, wide and deep,
And roll it right over with lilies so sweet,
That I might lie on it and take my last sleep,
Here's adieu to false maidens forever.²⁵

Maud greatly enjoyed her reception on Pass Island and clearly would have loved to stay longer. The problem was the steamer schedule. It was a matter of taking a boat early next morning or staying in the area for another week. She reluctantly decided to opt for the boat trip back east to St. Mary's Bay.

Maud's decision meant that she would travel no further west along the south coast but would spend the remainder of her trip on the Avalon peninsula, mainly on the Southern Shore. It was a choice she probably came to regret. She did find some good

songs at Riverhead, Point La Haye and Gaskiers on St. Mary's Bay but the pickings were slimmer and required a great deal of hard walking from outport to outport.

At Point La Haye she found Patrick Bishop, who sang two Child ballads to her, "The Cruel Mother" and "Henry Martin," while at Gaskiers she obtained "Sir James the Ross" (Child # 213) from Pat Kiley. Despite these successes, Maud felt frustrated. Other calls that she made led to nothing concrete, although she found that most people knew of and were familiar

with the old songs. She lamented in her diary that although the old ballads had been present in these communities it was now “nearly always impossible to get them... they have been forgotten or old people who sing them have died.”²⁶ This was frustrating. Moreover, Maud discovered that there was no road south of Gaskiers, and so the only way to get to Trepassey (which was only 50 km away as the crow flies) was to go by car to St. John’s and then take a train down the Atlantic coast. So she did that.

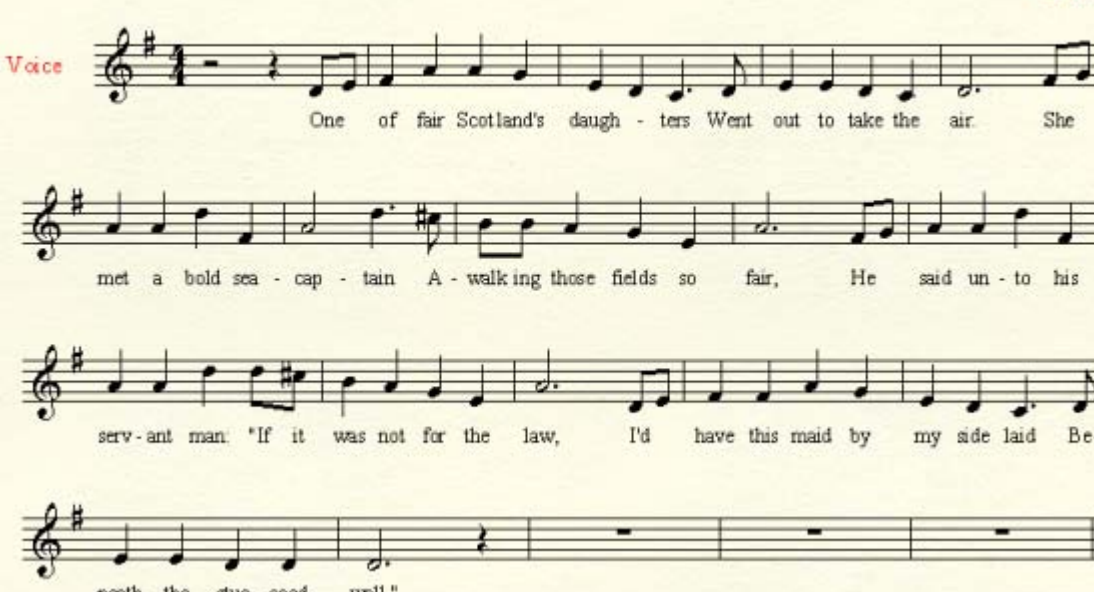
By August 2nd Karpeles was song-hunting in Trepassey, knocking on many doors. The results were less than she had hoped, and she wrote in her diary: “A disappointing day of house-to-house visitations

and nothing for my pains. The songs have all gone from Trepassey.”²⁷ This was actually an exaggeration since she did collect four songs there, but they were all variants of ballads that she had come across elsewhere. Apart from “The Sea Captain,” they were “Sir James the Ross” (sung by Bill Kennedy), “The Green Wedding” (sung by Maggie Sutton), and an unknown informant’s rendition of “Lord Bateman.” While based at Trepassey, Maud also visited Portugal Cove South, where she found the Coombs family and noted two Child ballads from Mrs. K.M. Coombs, “The Cruel Mother” and “Captain Wedderburn’s Courtship” (Child # 46).²⁸

Captain Wedderburn's Courtship

Anon

Voice



One of fair Scotland's daugh - ters Went out to take the air She
met a bold sea - cap - tain A - walking those fields so fair, He said un - to his
serv - ant man: 'If it was not for the law, I'd have this maid by my side laid Be -
neath the stuc - coed wall."

One of fair Scotland’s daughters
Went out to take the air.
She met a bold sea-captain
A-walking those fields so fair.
He said unto his servant man:
“If it was not for the law,
I’d have this maid by my side laid
Beneath the stuccoed wall.”

“You must get me for my breakfast
A fish without a bone,
And for my dinner you must get
A cherry without a stone,
And for my supper you must get
A bird without a gall,
Before I’ll comply with you to lie
Beneath the stuccoed wall.”

“When a fish it is for sporned
In it there is no bone,

And when a cherry’s in blossom
In it there is no stone,
The dove she is a gentle bird,
She flies without a gall,
So you must comply with me to lie
Beneath the stuccoed wall.”

“You must get for me some of the fruit
That in November grows,
You must get for me a new slip
Bound with never thread worn through it,
A sparrow’s horn and a priest unborn
For us to wed at our call,
Before I’ll comply with you to lie
Beneath the stuccoed wall.”

“My father has some of the fruit
That in November grows,
My mother has a new slip
Bound with never thread worn through it,

A sparrow's horn is easy got,
There's one on every claw,

But the priest unborn I cannot call,
So I'll leave this stuccoed wall."²⁹

On August 5th Maud took the early morning train to Fermeuse, an outport on the Atlantic coast a few miles south of Ferryland. She walked to Admiral's Cove and knocked on many doors there, including one house where only bachelors resided, "much to the amusement of the neighbours." Her efforts were almost entirely in vain, although she did get one song, "The Councillor's Daughter," from Joseph

O'Neill.³⁰ She devoted the next day to collecting in Ferryland. The Walsh family proved good informants, and she obtained a version of "Lord Bateman" from Mrs. Walsh and from James Walsh versions of "The Blind Beggar of Bethnal Green" and "Green Bushes." The latter was only a fragment, but it had a pretty tune:

Green Bushes

Anon

Voice



I'll buy you fine silks... I'll buy you fine gowns, I'll buy you petti-
coats that will flounce to the ground, If you'll spite your true love and will come to follow
me... Bid a - dieu to the green bush-es and for ev - er will be.

I'll buy you fine silks, I'll buy you fine gowns,
I'll buy you petticoats that will flounce to the ground,

If you'll spite your true love and will come to follow me,
Bid adieu to the green bushes forever.³¹

And that was it. These were the last songs Maud ever collected in Newfoundland. In nearly all of the outports that she visited on the southern Avalon Peninsula, from Calvert to St. Shotts, she had in fact picked up one or two good items. But most of what she collected consisted of inferior variants of songs she already had, and it was clearly a case of diminishing returns. Disappointed, she returned to St. John's feeling a little frustrated and somewhat relieved that the hardships of collecting were over. It was some consolation that she could now spend her last few days in Newfoundland with her friends the Emersons.

As before, it was only when she systematically reviewed what she had found that she came to the conclusion that her second trip had been, on the whole, rather successful. As she wrote laconically in her draft autobiography, "Tramped many miles, usually in the evening, to visit people with reputations as singers, but more often than not the results were disappointing. Nevertheless, I eventually managed to get quite a number of good folk songs, and

in retrospect I can say that my visits to Newfoundland were worthwhile."³² When Maud got back to England she showed her collection to Vaughan Williams: he was delighted with it and offered to arrange piano accompaniments for several of the songs. They were included in the 1934 version of *Folk Songs from Newfoundland* and also published separately by Oxford University Press. One of them, "She's Like the Swallow," was even issued singly as sheet music.

Maud would not return to Newfoundland until 1970, when she was given an honorary doctorate by Memorial University. But her experience in Newfoundland had a significant impact on her life, and on the role she would play in the second revival. To those who encountered her late in life, she seemed totally sure of herself and her views, even arrogant and doctrinaire. But beneath that armored shell there was an introspective loner who had never found a partner to replace the lost love of her life, Cecil Sharp. As her draft autobiography reveals, the Maud Karpeles of 1929-30 was far from being the self-

assured dragon lady that she seemed in the postwar epoch. At times she was moody and depressed, lacking confidence in herself and her abilities, and she often felt unequal to the task of carrying on Sharp's work.³³ Collecting in Newfoundland was therefore a baptism of fire for her. She had trained herself for the task, she forced herself to do it, and she succeeded, if not beyond her wildest hopes, at least well beyond her sober expectations.

It was Maud's two expeditions to Newfoundland that gave her the confidence that she had the ability, after all, to shoulder Sharp's mantle, and that she, not Frank Howes or Douglas Kennedy, knew the correct path to be followed by the EFDSS. Moreover, during her time in Newfoundland she experienced a warmth of human friendship that meant a great deal to her.

The first thing she did on her 1930 trip was to drive to Conception Bay to revisit the friends she had made there,³⁴ and in 1970 she was again determined to find the Snow, Hall and McCabe families.³⁵ The close bond she established with St. John's lawyer and musician Frederick Emerson and his wife endured for many decades, and she later visited the couple in Canada after they moved to Nova Scotia.³⁶ Newfoundland reinforced what Maud had learned in the Southern Appalachians with Cecil Sharp: that traditional music was an international bond that could overcome differences of nationality, class, politics and religion. It was, she came to believe, an important force for world understanding and peace that could transcend national rivalries and international politics.

Notes

1. Maud Karpeles, "Field Diary # 2 (June 30th – August 6th, 1930)". Entry for 1st July, 1930. Maud Karpeles Collection MUN-FLA 78-003.
2. Karpeles, "Field Diary # 2". Entry for 4th July, 1930.
3. Karpeles, "Field Diary # 2". Entry for 5th July, 1930.
4. Maud Karpeles, ed., *Folk Songs from Newfoundland*, 50-51 (Hamden, Conn.: Archon Books, 1970).
5. Karpeles, "Field Diary # 2". Entry for 7th July, 1930.
6. Karpeles, "Field Diary # 2". Entry for 8th July, 1930.
7. Karpeles, *Folk Songs from Newfoundland*, 243.
8. Karpeles, "Field Diary # 2". Entry for 10th July, 1930.
9. Karpeles, *Folk Songs from Newfoundland*, 95-96.
10. Karpeles, "Field Diary # 2". Entry for 15th July, 1930.
11. Karpeles, *Folk Songs from Newfoundland*, 32.
12. Karpeles, "Field Diary # 2". Entry for 17th July, 1930.
13. Karpeles, "Field Diary # 2". Entry for 18th July, 1930.
14. Karpeles, *Folk Songs from Newfoundland*, 30-31.
15. Karpeles, "Field Diary # 2". Entry for 18th July, 1930.
16. Karpeles, *Folk Songs from Newfoundland*, 73-74.
17. Karpeles, "Field Diary # 2". Entry for 19th July, 1930.
18. Karpeles, "Field Diary # 2". Entry for 21st July, 1930.
19. Karpeles, *Folk Songs from Newfoundland*, 232.
20. Karpeles, "Field Diary # 2". Entry for 21st July, 1930.
21. Karpeles, "Field Diary # 2". Entry for 23rd July, 1930.
22. Karpeles, *Folk Songs from Newfoundland*, 108.
23. Karpeles, *Folk Songs from Newfoundland*, 245.
24. Karpeles, "Field Diary # 2". Entry for 24th July, 1930.
25. Karpeles, *Folk Songs from Newfoundland*, 126-127.
26. Karpeles, "Field Diary # 2". Entry for 29th July, 1930.
27. Karpeles, "Field Diary # 2". Entry for 2nd August, 1930.
28. Karpeles, "Field Diary # 2". Entry for 4th August, 1930.
29. Karpeles, *Folk Songs from Newfoundland*, 39-40.
30. Karpeles, "Field Diary # 2". Entry for 5th August, 1930.
31. Karpeles, *Folk Songs from Newfoundland*, 244.
32. Karpeles, Maud. *Draft Autobiography*, p. 173. This is a typed manuscript in the Karpeles Collection at Vaughan Williams Memorial Library, Cecil Sharp House, English Folk Dance & Song Society, London, U.K.
33. Karpeles, *Draft Autobiography*, pp. 117-120.
34. Karpeles, Maud. "Field Diary # 2 (June 30th – August 6th, 1930)". Entry for July 1st.
35. Carpenter, Carole Henderson. "Forty Years Later: Maud Karpeles in Newfoundland", in *Folklore Studies in Honour of Herbert Halpert: A Festschrift*, edited by Kenneth Golstein & Neil V. Rosenberg, pp. 112-114. St. John's: Memorial University of Newfoundland, 1980.
36. Karpeles, *Draft Autobiography*, pp. 164-165.