

Three Songs (Two of them Traditional)

We'd like to include a regular column in which we print older songs that are still current in oral tradition in Canada, as well as more recently crafted songs that especially appeal to us, for one reason or another. This time here are two traditional songs that we heard sung in New Westminster while we were there for the CSTM conference in early November. The first has a beautiful tune, and I believe that Bert Lloyd was the first to introduce it to revival singers, back in the late 1950s or early 1960s. If you've never heard Judy Collins' recorded version, then make a point of seeking it out. The second is a shanty that received a particularly vigorous rendition from Jon Bartlett, and probably needs no introduction. A recorded version can be found on the *Songs and Stories of Canada* CD-ROM, which we reviewed in the last issue. The third song I recently discovered in a folder of old submissions to *Canadian Folk Music* and, as far as I can tell, we apparently never printed it. We obviously should have done, but better late than never. It will serve to remind us of a CSTM stalwart who was suddenly taken from us and who is badly missed.

Farewell to Tarwathie

Anon

The musical score is written on six staves of a single treble clef in 3/4 time. The lyrics are: Fare - well to Tar - wath - ie, a - dieu moor and hill, and the dear land of Crim - onn I bid you fare - well, I'm bound out for Green - land, I'm read - y to sail, I'm in hopes to find rich - es in hunt - ing the whale.

Farewell to Tarwathie, adieu moor and hill,
And the dear land of Crimond I bid you farewell,
I'm bound off for Greenland, I'm ready to sail,
In hopes to find riches in hunting the whale.

Farewell to my comrades, for a while we must part,
And likewise the dear lass who first won my heart,
The cold coast of Greenland my love will not chill,
And the longer my absence more loving she'll feel.

Our ship is well rigged and she's ready to sail,
 The crew they are anxious to follow the whale,
 Where the icebergs do float and the stormy winds blow,
 Where the land and the ocean is covered with snow.

The cold coast of Greenland is barren and bare,
 No seed time or harvest is ever known there,
 And the birds they sing sweetly in mountain and glen,
 But there's no bird in Greenland to sing to the whale.

There is no habitation for a man to live there,
 And the king of the country is the fierce Greenland bear,
 And there'll be no temptation to tarry long there.
 With our ship bumper full we will homeland repair.

John Kanaka

Anon

I thought I heard the old man say,
 John Ka - na - ka - na - ka Toor - i - ay! To - day, to - day is a
 hol - i - day, John Ka - na - ka - na - ka toor - i - ay.
 Toor - i - ay, Oh, toor - i - ay! John Ka - na - ka - na - ka,
 toor - i - ay!

I thought I heard the old man say
 John Kanaka-naka toor-i-ay!
 Today, today is a holiday,
 John Kanaka-naka toor-i-ay!
 Toor-i-ay, oh, toor-i-ay!
 John Kanaka-naka toor-i-ay!

Oh, haul, oh, haul, oh, haul away,
 Oh, haul away and make your pay.

We're bound away at break of day,
 We're bound away for 'Frisco Bay.

We're bound away around Cape Horn,
 We're bound away tomorrow morn.

Well, it's one more pull and that'll do,
 For we're the bullies to kick 'er through!

The Folky Geologist

Words and Music by Norm Walker

Come all of you ge - olo - gists, come lis - ten to my song. There
 are a lot of ver - ses, the stor - y's ver - y long; Con -
 cern - ing some young fel - lows, I know 'cause I was one. We
 went to look for dia - monds, up in North Sask - at - che - wan.

2. Just as the snow was melting, in the spring of '84,
A man named William Sarjeant, came knocking at my door;
"Would you like to go hunt diamonds, we're gathering a crew.
I know you're no geologist, but as a folkie you will do."
3. I says, "I am a singer, of folkie kinds of songs.
What's that to do with diamonds? I think you've got me wrong."
Says he, "I'm not mistaken, and this I know is true,
That all the great geologists were also folkies too."
4. "If you will pay good wages, transportation to and fro,
And providing you will feed us, then along with you I'll go."
Says he, "We have a bargain, in the morning we will fly."
But he seemed somewhat distracted, with a glaze upon his eye.
5. Bill Sarjeant was a geologist, no equal in his field.
He knew just what to look for, and what the search might yield.
His knowledge of the folk song had far and wide repute,
But planning an expedition was not his strongest suit.
6. He worked us dawn til sunset, like the devil never could;
He talked of giving days off, although he never would.
And in the evening by the campfire, he'd sing to us a song;
A slow and mournful ballad, 900 verses long.
7. The black flies they did feast on us, I tell you that it's true,
But thanks to Wade Hemsforth, we knew just what to do.
With bacon grease and balsam gum we smeared that deadly stain;
By Christ I've never seen such a mess or hope to ever again.

Ending # 1 – following a classic folk song form in which everyone dies, the crew, upon receiving word of their impending doom, goes through the four classic stages of anger, denial, grief and resignation:

14. The crew became unruly, and later did deny;
Still later mournful wailing, with northern loons did cry;
At last was resignation, our fate was sealed and known —
The winter's chill, us all did kill, . . . up north . . . and all
. . . alone . . .

8. We sang to ease our labours, we sang to ease our pain;
We sang when we got homesick through summer sun and rain;
We sang from early morning, to noon and on to night;
We sang to keep our spirits up when things were not so bright.
9. Our foreman was a decent lad, Hugh Hendry was his name;
Geologist of high degree, and singer of the same;
I still can hear his stories and songs of long ago,
Of Scotland's pride and liberty, and "flow sweet Afton flow".
10. Dave Spalding was my partner, we walked for many a mile;
He had a keen eye for a mineral and a song to make you smile.
One day while out prospecting on cruel unstable ground,
He slipped and fell right off a cliff — his hat was all we found.
11. We searched the ground below us, no trace of him was found,
But then we saw him hanging, unconscious upside down;
We rescued him from certain death and shuddered at the thought,
And marvelled at the tensile strength of his shoelace that got caught.
12. For three long months we laboured, no minerals did find;
No silver, gold nor copper, no stinkin' diamond mine.
We says to William Sarjeant, "We think it's time to go,
"Before we all fall victim to the unforgiving snow."
13. But Bill was somewhat nervous, he said he had no dough;
He said we cannot fly out with no minerals to show;
No money for our wages, no money for the plane;
He'd bet our lives on profits, not a summer of no gain.

*Ending #2 – Bill Sarjeant is the hero, and everyone lives happily ever after.
Bill said, "I like this one better."*

14. The crew became unruly, I lifted up a rock
To smash that bastard Sarjeant, for sealing all our lot.
"What's in your hand?" says William, "The diamonds you have found;
We've camped upon the Kimberlite, for three long months around!"
15. He took us all for partners, we filed out our claim:
The world's biggest diamond mine, with glory and with fame.
And now we all are filthy rich and gone our separate ways,
And we all opened folk clubs and in peace lived out our days.

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 Music notation transcribed by Susan Bond according to
 Norm's a capella singing of the song in the free style of a traditional ballad singer.