

# Singing the Child Ballads

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This was initially going to be my final quartet of Child ballads. There are no other ballads from Child's canon in my repertoire but I do have a few variants learned to illustrate Dave's conference papers. So there will be one last set in the next issue of *Canadian Folk Music*. I can think of one of them already and I nearly included it, but as it's a variant of "The Braes of Yarrow," of which I gave a version before, I'll set it aside in favour of the following. None of these four ballads has previously appeared in this column.

## Child #46: "Captain Wedderburn's Courtship"

Guitar accompaniment, from Stephen Sedley's *The Seeds of Love* (Essex Music Limited in association with the E.F.D.S.S., 1967).

Not really one of my favourites, but it has a good tune, riddles, and what is supposed to be a happy ending. The present text is condensed from Child's first two sets, collated with an 1800s Scottish chapbook copy. Tune from Bronson's *The Traditional Tunes of the Child Ballads*.

## Child #56: "Dives and Lazarus"

Unaccompanied. This song is a lot of fun in this version collected in Sussex by Lucy Broadwood and included in *English County Songs*.

It was thanks to Dave that I learned it – we gave a presentation on Lucy's collecting a few years ago in Edmonton as part of an Athabasca University Friday afternoon "Research Seminar" series. The tune is definitely part of its success and is, if I'm not mistaken, none other than that employed by the Irish favourite "Star of the County Down."

## Child #112: "The Baffled Knight"

Unaccompanied, and also from *The Seeds of Love*, where it's called "Blow Away the Morning Dew."

I learned this recently as another addition to the small collection of cheerful songs in my Child ballad repertoire. I like the carefree tune and the resourceful female victory expressed in such

joyful taunting as verses 7 and 8. I've printed the last verse in Stephen Sedley's version, but as it was clearly added by a disgruntled male I leave it out in performance. As Sedley says, the story, like "Our Goodman," is found throughout European folklore (and, I would think, further afield as well). The tune was collected by Hammond from William Bartlett in Wimborne, Dorset, and is accompanied by the comment that it is "a mixture of the 'Morning Dew' and 'Blow away ye morning breezes.'"

## Child #228: "Glasgow Peggie"

Guitar accompaniment. My version of both text and tune I learned years ago as an undergraduate at Keele University, from whom I have completely forgotten, but it was one of those songs that was 'around' at the time.

I didn't include it first time round because I had never thought of it as being a Child ballad and was quite surprised to discover it was. I'm glad to include it now—it's eminently cheerful and a crowd-pleaser.

And on that happy note—thanks for accompanying me in my journey through Child's 5 volumes. Although there are many fine ballads that Child should have included but didn't, and although my personal Child ballad repertoire leaves out some excellent examples of the genre such as #7, "Earl Brand", #67, "Glasgerion", #93, "Lamkin", #272, "The Suffolk Miracle", and that marathon epic #106, "The Famous Flower of Servingmen"—just to name a few—I hope that it's been of interest to at least some of our readers to see how a combination of choice and happenstance shaped one person's ballad collection.

Next issue I am going to slip in a few of those alternative versions that I have sung on certain special occasions, usually when Dave asked me to illustrate a talk. But that will be it for Child. Now, there are all those other excellent ballads in my repertoire that Child did not know about or somehow omitted...

Anyway, some of these Child ballads are very special for me, and I've been happy to share them with you. I wish you all good singing!



The dove she is a gentle bird, she flies without a gall,  
And we'll both lie in one bed and you'll lie next the wall."

"O hold away from me, kind sir, and do not me perplex,  
For I'll not lie in your bed till you answer questions six.  
Six questions you must answer me and that is four and twa,  
Before I lie in your bed at either stock or wall.

"O what is greener than the grass, what's higher than the trees,  
O what is worse than a woman's wish, what's deeper than the seas?  
What bird crows first, what tree buds first, what first on them does fall?  
Before I lie in your bed at either stock or wall."

"Death is greener than the grass, heaven's higher than the trees,  
The devil's worse than a woman's wish, hell's deeper than the seas.  
The cock crows first, the cedar buds first, dew first on them does fall,  
And we'll both lie in one bed, and you'll lie next the wall."

Little did this lady think that morning when she raise,  
It was to be the very last of all her maiden days.  
For now she's Captain Wedderburn's wife, a man she never saw,  
And they both lie in one bed, and she lies next the wall.

## **Diverus and Lazarus**

As it fell out upon one day, rich Diverus he made a feast,  
And he invited all his friends and gentry of the best.  
And it fell out upon one day, poor Lazarus he was so poor,  
He came and laid him down and down, even down at Diverus' door.  
*(last two lines may be repeated)*

So Lazarus laid him down and down, even down at Diverus' door:  
"Some meat, some drink, brother Diverus, to bestow upon the poor."  
"Thou art none of mine, brother Lazarus, lying begging at my door –  
No meat, no drink will I give thee, nor bestow upon the poor."

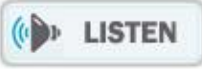
Then Lazarus laid him down and down, even down at Diverus' wall:  
"Some meat, some drink, brother Diverus, or surely starve I shall."  
"Thou art none of mine, brother Lazarus, lying begging at my wall;  
No meat, no drink will I give thee, and therefore starve thou shall."

Then Lazarus laid him down and down, even down at Diverus' gate:  
"Some meat, some drink, brother Diverus, for Jesus Christ his sake."  
"Thou art none of mine, brother Lazarus, lying begging at my gate;  
No meat, no drink will I give thee, for Jesus Christ his sake."

Then Diverus sent his merry men all, to whip poor Lazarus away;  
They had not power to whip one whip, but threw their whips away.  
Then Diverus sent out his hungry dogs, to bite poor Lazarus away;  
They had not power to bite one bite, but licked his sores away.

# Lazarus

Anon



[www.canfolkmusic.ca/songs/issue43\\_1/Lazarus.mp3](http://www.canfolkmusic.ca/songs/issue43_1/Lazarus.mp3)

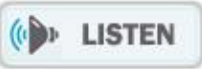
Voice

As\_ it fell out up - on one day, Rich Di-ver-us he made a  
feast, And he in - vit - ed\_ all his friends, and gent - ry of\_ the best. And  
it fel out up - on one day, Poor La za rus he was so poor, He\_ came and laid him  
down and down, Ev'n down at Di ver us' door. And it fell out up - on one day, Poor  
La - za - rus he was so poor, He came and laid him down and down, Ev'n  
down at Di - ver - us' door

And it fell out upon one day, poor Lazarus he sickened and died;  
There came two angels out of heaven, his soul thereto to guide.  
“Rise up, rise up, brother Lazarus, and come along with me;  
There is a place prepared in heaven, for to sit upon an angel’s knee.”

And it fell out upon one day, rich Diverus he sickened and died;  
 There came two serpents out of Hell, his soul thereto to guide.  
 "Rise up, rise up, brother Diverus, and come along with me;  
 There is a place prepared in hell, for to sit upon a serpent's knee."

## The Baffled Knight



[http://www.canfolkmusic.ca/songs/issue43\\_1/Baffled\\_Knight.mp3](http://www.canfolkmusic.ca/songs/issue43_1/Baffled_Knight.mp3)

Anon

Voice

There was a knight was drunk with wine, Came rid-ing down the way, And  
 there he met a lad-y fair a - mong the cocks of hay. Singing loud-ly whistle in the wind,  
 Blow the wind hi - ho, Blow a - way the morn-ing dew, How sweet the winds do  
 blow.

There was a knight was drunk with wine  
 Came riding down the way  
 And there he met a lady fair  
 Among the cocks of hay

*Chorus:* Singing loudly whistle in the wind  
 Blow the wind hi ho  
 Blow away the morning dew  
 How sweet the winds do blow.

Says he, "Shall you and I, lady,  
 Among the grass lie down?  
 And I will have a special care  
 Of rumpling of your gown."

"If you will go along with me  
 Unto my father's hall,  
 You shall enjoy my maidenhead  
 And my estates and all."

He put her on a milk-white steed,  
 Himself all on another,  
 And all the day they rode along  
 Like sister and like brother.

And when she came to her father's gate  
 She tirmed at the pin,  
 And ready stood the porter there  
 To let the fair maid in.

Says she, "I am a maid within,  
 And you're a fool without.  
 There never were a butcher's boy  
 Put me in so much doubt.

"There is a cock in father's barn,  
 He never trod a hen;  
 He flies about and flaps his wings,  
 And I think you're one of them.

“There is a flower in our garden,  
 We call it marigold;  
 And if you will not when you may,  
 You shall not when you would.”

When you meet a pretty maid  
 A mile or two from town,  
 Never mind her gay clothing,  
 But lay her on the ground.

## Glasgow Peggy



[http://www.canfolkmusic.ca/songs/issue43\\_1/Glasgow\\_Peggy.mp3](http://www.canfolkmusic.ca/songs/issue43_1/Glasgow_Peggy.mp3)

Anon

Voice

Am Em Am Em Am

Hie-land lads are brisk and braw, Hie-land lads are young and mer - ry,

C Dm Am C G Am

And I'm a-wa' to Gles-ca toon, to steel a - wa' my bon - nie Peg - gy.

Hieland lads are brisk and braw,  
 Hieland lads are young and merry  
 And I'll awa' to Glesca toon  
 To steal awa' my bonnie Peggie.

Her faither he's got wind of this,  
 And O but he was wondrous angry;  
 “Ye can tak my owsen and a' my kye,  
 But leave to me my bonnie lassie.”

“Ye can keep your owsen and a' your kye,  
 For I have cows and ewes already;  
 I'll no tak your owsen and a' your kye,  
 But I'll steal awa' your bonnie Peggie.”

He's mounted up on his milk-white steed,  
 And she is on his wee grey naggie,  
 And they hae rid till the break of day –  
 He's taen awa' the bonnie lassie.

They rid ower hills and they rid ower dales,  
 They rid thro' moors and mosses many;  
 Until they met with the Earl of Hume,  
 Ridin' wi' his young son Johnie.

Then oot and spak the Earl of Hume,  
 And O but he was wondrous sorry;  
 “The bonniest lass in Glesca toon,

And she's awa' wi' a Hieland Johnie!”

They rid ower hills and they rid ower dales,  
 They rid thro' moors and mosses many;  
 Until they came to yonder glen,  
 And she's lain doon wi' her Hieland laddie.

Her bed was of the gay green turf,  
 Her blankets of the bracken bonnie;  
 Wi' her tartan plaid beneath her heid,  
 And she's lain doon wi' her Hieland Johnie.

“There are blankets and sheets in my faither's  
 hoose,

Sheets and blankets a' made ready;  
 And wouldna he be angry at me,  
 For lyin' doon wi' a Hieland laddie!”

He's taen her up yon high, high hill,  
 When that the sun was shinin' clearly;  
 Says, “A' that ye see belongs to thee,  
 For lyin' doon wi' the Hieland laddie.

“A' that ye hae left behind  
 Was a wee cot hoose and a wee kail yardie;  
 But noo ye'se the heir to a' my lands  
 For lyin' doon wi' the Hieland laddie.”