

The Unknown Words

Third Ethereal Edition, A.S. I

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Preface to the Third Ethereal Edition

I always said I'd update this book as the fancy took me. This time it took me four years, but here's the Third Ethereal Edition with a whole bunch of new songs added to it. Rejoice!

I produced *The Known Words 1*, a songbook of sixty songs in April 1994, after about two years of collecting and editing. It was a snapshot of the state of bardic singing in Lochac in the AS twenties: some period stuff, some filk, some of this, some of that. I'm a bard myself, so I put a fair few of my own songs into the mix. The result was mildly popular, and fairly good. Notice how the number one was in the title from the start? That's because it was always intended to be the first of a series, and sure enough I produced a sequel, *The Known Words 2*, four years later. People liked them, people sang with them. That's what you call a success, by any reasonably relaxed standard. But it was never quite right.

What you see before you is *The Known Words* as it should be. It's got all the songs that stood the test of time (as judged entirely by my gut feeling) and a few new ones I'm pretty sure will prove just as popular. The design has evolved to a point that I'm happy with. I think this can be the metric standard Lochac songbook for as long as people want such a thing.

My focus is very much on the sort of songs you will sing around a bardic fire: entertainment is much more important to me than authenticity, and always will be. Other songbooks exist, within and outside Lochac, for those whose tastes tend toward proper, documented period works, so I feel no shame in providing a service to those whose preference is elsewhere.

When I took the Green Book and the Blue Book (TKW 1 and 2 respectively) and mashed them together to create the first Ethereal Edition, I applied the principles of natural selection and decreed that some of the songs in there just hadn't survived. I ditched them and added new ones. Does that mean the ones I removed were bad? Not always: some were simply too hard to get copyright permission for, with the deadline I'd set myself. Some were too dated, too tied to the early nineties in the eastern Australian SCA, and my wish was for *The Known Words* to transcend its origins. Some were beloved of my choral chums but much less well-known among the bardic bellowers for whom the book is most directly intended. And some, specifically some that I'd written myself, were just bloody awful. I knew I'd find more, and I also knew there might be a few I'd bring back, once the original rush to publication had faded from memory. Which is now: among the new songs in this edition, you'll find a fair few that were in the original books, though not the bloody awful ones. You'll also find some brilliant new stuff, and I think you'll be pleased with the mix.

So for those who love bardic circles as I do, *The Known Words* was created. As I have said before and will say many times again as new editions are produced: *Share and enjoy!*

Baron Karl Faustus von Aachen, formerly Eric of Tobar Mhuire, commonly called Eric the Fruitbat, mundanely Paul Sleigh.

Wednesday 30 December 2015, A.S. L.

Crusader's Blood

Karl Faustus von Aachen

Crusader's blood runs in my veins.
Crusader's blood runs in my veins.
Crusader's blood, crusader's blood,
Crusader's blood runs in my veins.

My father marched at Bohemund's side.
My father marched at Bohemund's side.
My father marched, my father marched,
My father marched at Bohemund's side.

And so on, for...

He held the wall / at Antioch...

He saw the Saints / on horseback ride...

He died to free / Jerusalem...

Crusader's blood / runs in my veins...

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Uislenn

Silfren the Singer

Dawn is breaking, across the land.
Spears are rising in every hand.
The children of the living and the ghosts of the dead
Will waken to the thunder of the warrior's tread.

Uislenn cha'niel bas ach ruidgh,
Fill your tankards, raise them high.
Here's a health to the dream that never dies:
Uislenn cha'niel bas ach ruidgh.

The blazing beacons have called the clans.
The fate of our kindred is in our hands.
Bound to the land by ties of blood,
Bound to our brothers by oath and sword.

The ravens are calling, blood is on the spears.
The songs of our fathers ring in our ears.
All men are mortal, he who lives must die:
Uislenn cha'niel bas ach ruidgh

Pronunciation guide: "Uislenn cha'niel bas ach ruidgh" is pronounced "oo-shlenn, khahn-yell, bahss-ahkh roo-eye", with the phlegmy "kh" sound of "loch" or "Bach", and a rolled R as in Italian opera. It translates as "Noble heroes, there is no death but defeat".

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Oh Lord, Won't You Buy Me

Arian Shieldbreaker

To the tune of *Mercedes Benz* by Janice Joplin

Oh Lord, won't you buy me a new battle axe?
My old one is broken, it no longer hacks.
The haft is all splintered and the head's full of cracks,
So Lord, won't you buy me a new battle axe?

Oh Lord, won't you buy me a new suit of tin?
My old one is dented, and rust has set in.
My gorget's all twisted and I've nothing on my shin.
So, Lord, won't you buy me a new suit of tin?

Oh Lord, won't you buy me a brand new helm?
My old one is dented and rings like a bell.
Made of stainless steel, the best in the realm.
So, Lord, won't you buy me a brand new helm?

Oh Lord, won't you please put that crown on my head?
I'd do it myself, but I always wind up dead.
I'd like to be King, that goes without being said.
So, Lord, won't you please put that crown on my head?

Oh Lord, won't you buy me a new battle axe?
My old one is broken, it no longer hacks.
The haft is all splintered and the head's full of cracks,
So, Lord, won't you buy me a new battle axe?

A Wife's Lament

Morna of River Haven

I waved you off to war, my Lord,
Our son held at my side.
And as you passed beyond the gates,
I turned my back and cried.

Oh, my Lord, come back to me!
My love, my love, don't let me be
Alone, dead I would rather be
Than without you by my side!

Back you rode from war, my Lord,
Your banners raised on high.
A mighty warrior proved to be;
I held you close and cried.

Oh my Lord, you're back to me!
My love, my love, don't let me be
Alone, dead I would rather be,
Than without you by my side!

Back you rode to war, my Lord,
Our son now at your side.
And as you pair passed out of sight,
I closed the door and cried.

My son, my Lord, come back to me!
My loves, my loves, don't let me be
Alone, dead I would rather be
Than without you by my side!

Back you came from war, my loves,
Now carried side by side.
I buried you this very morn,
Then hung my head and cried.

My son, my Lord, you've gone from me!
My loves, my loves, you've let me be
Alone, dead I would rather be,
Than without you by my side!

Geordie

Anonymous, possibly by way of Robert Burns

There was a battle in the north,
And soldiers there were many.
And they have killed Sir Charlie Hay,
And laid the blame on Geordie.

Oh, he has written a long letter
And sent it to his lady.
“Oh, you must come to Edinburgh town
To see what news of Geordie.”

When first she looked the letter on,
She was both red and rosy.
She had not read a word but two,
When she grew pale as a lily.

“Go fetch to me my good grey steed.
My men shall all go with me.
For I shall neither eat nor drink
‘Till Edinburgh town shall see me.”

Then mounted she her good grey steed.
Her men they all went with her.
And she did neither eat nor drink
‘Till Edinburgh town did see her.

And first appeared the fatal block,
And then the axe to head him,
And Geordie coming down the stairs
With bands of iron upon him.

Though he was chained in fetters strong,
Of iron and steel so heavy,
Oh, not a one in all the court
Was fine a man as Geordie.

Oh, she’s down on her bended knee
I’m sure she’s pale and weary.
“Oh pardon, pardon, noble kings,
And give me back my dearie.”

“Go tell the headed man, make haste,”
Our king replies full lordly.
“Oh noble king, take all that’s mine,
But give me back my Geordie.”

The Gordons came and the Gordons ran,
And they were stark and steady,
And aye, the word among them all
Was Gordons keep you ready.

An agèd lord at the kings right hand
Says, “Noble lord, but hear me.
Let her count out five thousand pounds,
And give her back her dearie.”

Some gave her marks, some gave her crowns
Some gave her royals many.
And she’s counted out five thousand pounds
And she’s gotten again her dearie.

She’s glanced blithe in her Geordie’s face,
Says, “Dear I’ve bought thee, Geordie,
But blood would’ve flowed upon the green
Before I lost my laddie.”

He clasped her by the middle small,
And he kissed her lips so rosy.
“The finest flower of woman kind
Is my sweet bonny lady.”

Bay Leaves

Eric of Tobar Mhuire

To the tune of *Greensleeves*

I thought I'd join for a bit of fun,
Maybe tell a joke, maybe make a pun.
And if I ever offend someone,
You can bet they'll be named after bay leaves.

Bay leaves, in a wreath of green,
There are bay leaves growing, it's widely seen.
Call them Laurels, but what they mean
Is a bush full of smelly green bay leaves.

I tried researching a name, of course,
Using Tolkien's books as my primary source.
But now they tell me that Bilbo ain't Norse,
And I'm tired of complaints from the bay leaves.

My coat of arms is a major coup,
Coloured green, red, purple, black, brown and blue,
With ermined wombats and kangaroos,
But it's not widely loved by the bay leaves.

I'm growing tired of their bickering,
They complain non-stop when I do my thing.
I wonder now, if I weren't the King
Would I earn all this pain from the bay leaves?

Martin Said To His Man

From Thomas Ravenscroft's *Deuteromelia*, 1609

Martin said to his man (*fie, man, fie!*)
Martin said to his man (*who's a fool now?*)
Martin said to his man,
Fill thou the cup and I the can.
(*Thou hast well drunken, man!*
Who's a fool now?)

I saw a maid milk a bull (*fie, man, fie!*)
I saw a maid milk a bull (*who's a fool now?*)
I saw a maid milk a bull
Every stroke a bucket full...
(*Thou hast well drunken, man!*
Who's a fool now?)

I saw a hare chase a hound...
Twenty miles above the ground...

I saw the mouse chase the cat...
And the cheese to eat the rat...

I saw a goose ring a hog...
And a snail bite a dog...

I saw a sheep shearing corn...
And a cuckold blow his horn...

Now make up your own verses!

Gaudete

From *Piæ Cantiones*, 1582.

Gaudete, Gaudete, Christus est natus,
Ex Maria Virgine, Gaudete!

Tempus adest gratiæ, hoc quod optabamus,
Carmina lætitiæ, devote reddamus.

Deus homo factus est, natura mirante,
Mundus renovatus est, a Christo regnante.

Ezechielis porta, clausa pertransitur,
Unde lux est orta, salus invenitur.

Ergo nostra concio, psallat iam in lustro,
Benedicat Domino, salus Regi nostro.

The Jomsviking Song

Wulfwine Grimwaldson

To the tune of *Nicky Nacky Nocky Noo* as sung by the Wiggles and others

Hand on my head – what is this here?
This is my **helm-wearer** that I hold dear.
Helm-wearer, helm-wearer, burn another village down!
That’s what they teach us in Jomsviking Town.
Trelleborg, Trelleborg, drain your horn down.

Hand on my chin – what is this here?
This is my **beard-grower** that I hold dear.
Beard-grower, helm-wearer, burn another village down!
That’s what they teach us in Jomsviking Town.
Trelleborg, Trelleborg, drain your horn down.

Hand on my arm – what is this here?
This is my **axe-wielder** that I hold dear.
Axe-wielder, beard-grower, helm-wearer,
burn another village down!
That’s what they teach us in Jomsviking Town.
Trelleborg, Trelleborg, drain your horn down.

Hand on my chest – what is this here?
This is my **mail bearer** that I hold dear.
Mail-bearer, axe-wielder, beard-grower, helm-wearer...

Hand on my gut – what is this here?
This is my **ale-hoarder** that I hold dear.
Ale-hoarder, mail-bearer, axe-wielder, beard-grower,
helm-wearer...

Hand on my eel – what is this here?
This is my **maid-spoiler** that I hold dear.
Maid-spoiler, ale-hoarder, mail-bearer, axe-wielder,
beard-grower, helm-wearer...

Hand on my knee – what is this here?
This is my **groin-wrecker** that I hold dear.
Groin-wrecker, maid-spoiler, ale-hoarder, mail-bearer,
axe-wielder, beard-grower, helm-wearer...

Hand on my foot – what is this here?
This is my **head-stomper** that I hold dear.
Head-stomper, groin-wrecker, maid-spoiler, ale-hoarder,
mail-bearer, axe-wielder, beard-grower, helm-wearer...

Hand on their KING! What is this here?
This is their **Bretwalda** that WE don’t fear!
Bretwalda, head-stomper, groin wrecker, maid-spoiler,
ale-hoarder, mail-bearer, axe-wielder, beard-grower,
helm-wearer, burn another village down!
That’s what they teach us in Jomsviking Town.
Trelleborg, Trelleborg, drain your horn down.

Nicky-nacky-nocky, nicky-nacky-nocky, nicky-nacky-nocky
NOOOOOOOOOOO!

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The Innkeeper's Song

Brigid of Acchil

Raise up your tankards, scull your ale down.
Death'll come tomorrow, maybe.
And if you be spared that fatal blow,
Come back and buy a round from me.

Now I've seen many men come and go,
Dreaming dreams of victory.
And many a corpse I've seen carried back,
So buy another round from me.

The gods of war drink deep in death.
They're fickle, sly and bloodthirsty.
But the warriors here have more human thirsts
Come on and buy a drink from me.

A warrior's thirst makes a strong man weak,
As deep as the grave it be.
Yet death'll dry your throat with one good blow
Make haste and buy a drink from me.

If a sword bites deep in the morrow's fight,
You'll not drink again maybe.
So wet your throat, grab your lady dear,
And have yourself a drink on me.

Raise up your tankards, scull your ale down.
Death'll come tomorrow, maybe.
And if you be spared that fatal blow,
Come back and have a drink with me.

The Crusader's Song

Conn MacNeill

I'm for the Holy Land sailing,
To win back Jerusalem's walls.
I'm for the Holy Land sailing,
And I'll win a fortune or a martyr I'll fall.

As my ship sails out, I watch the far coastline.
For leaving of kinsmen my heart is full pain.
And I've traded all for this cross on my shoulder
No land for a third son, so I'm away.

As I look around me at the men on the benches,
Their eyes are like mine, so I know their heart's pain.
I sing them a song of bravery in battle,
And now their eyes shine like their keen polished blades.

I followed King Richard to Sicily island.
Johanna's dowry 'gainst Tancred prevailed.
Now a fortune in silver and a new wife hath Richard
And I've a swift horse and a fine coat of mail.

At landfall in Cypress they refused Berengaria.
Richard in anger has answered in steel.
Now the crown of Cypress he's added to England's
And I've added knighthood's gold spurs to my heels.

I followed the banner to battle at Acre.
And held it aloft when its bearer was slain.
Now we've given Richard a tower of the city.
He's given me rank and a full captain's pay.

At Arsouf on the coastline we met with the Paynim.
We won the battle though many men fell.
One was a Baron with lands that need tending
Now they are mine and I'll tend them well.

Now I sit in court over Christian and Moslem
And I've a strong keep and soldiers ten score.
King Richard's army has sailed back to England
I bid them farewell, for I'll see them nay more.

You see... I'm in the Holy Land staying,
To guard my own castle walls.
I'm in the Holy Land staying,
Now I've won my fortune, so farewell to all!

The Battle Of The Dyle

Eric of Tobar Mhuire

They came in ships on the ice-clad sea,
Burned and murdered unceasingly.
The devils of the north came to Luther's land,
To take it from the Christian to the heathen's hand.

So pitch your tent by the riverside,
Take your shield and be ready to ride.
For the northmen covered in blood will come,
And we'll give them death to carry home.

To the river came an army of the East Franks' King,
To save us from evil and peace to bring.
But the devils on the marshes took them by surprise,
Burned all the villages and stole their supplies.

The army came together for the Baptist's birth,
And wondered if the northmen would pillage the earth.
They raised their banners and they marched to war,
But the northmen made them wonder what they're marching for.

The devils had scouts and the scouts could run,
They scurried to their camp, every heathen one.
And the army like a rabble followed blindly there,
Straight to the northmen's captured lair.

The northmen roared like a lion's pride,
Advanced on the army and threw them aside,
Slaughtered all the prisoners and stole their gold,
And escaped to the land of the demon's cold.

But Arnulf, King of the East Franks, came,
He'd heard of his soldiers' loss and shame.
He swore to avenge the noble band
Who'd died to protect this Christian land.

So he gathered with an army at the river called Dyle.
The northmen were stationed in their usual style,
In a fort made of earth between the river and marsh;
They jeered at the King with voices harsh.

The King called to God on his heavenly throne,
And prayed that He make His divine will known.
With banner raised high he leapt from his horse,
Led the charge on foot against the Viking Norse.

The King and his army made a charge that day.
The devils of the north were swept away.
The multitude fell to the army's might,
For they fought for justice by the Lord's own light.

Do You Hear The Tavern Ring?

Eric of Tobar Mhuire

To the tune of *Do You Hear The People Sing?* from *Les Miserables*

Do you hear the tavern ring, singing a song in minor key?
It is the music of the cider, warping brains of such as we.
When the ailing of your skull echoes the sculling of your ale,
We can be sure that silence comes, when your voices fail.

Will you join in our crusade? Who has the skill to hold a tune?
Our memories may degrade, for we've been drunk all afternoon.
So join in the crowd that will let you bay loud at the moon!

Will you drink all you can drink so that our voices fill the air.
Some will hold and some will crack, but we're so drunk we hardly care.
Each one in a separate key, and our voices we share.

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She Moved Through The Fair

Somewhat by Padraic Colum, in a manner of speaking

My young love said to me, "My mother won't mind,
And my father won't slight you for your lack of kind."
Then she stepped away from me, and this she did say,
"It will not be long, love, till our wedding day."

She stepped away from me and she moved through the fair,
And fondly I watched her move here and move there.
And she went her way homeward with one star awake,
As the swan in the evening moves over the lake.

The people were saying no two e'er were wed,
But one has a sorrow that never was said.
And she smiled as she passed me with her goods and her gear...
And that was the last that I saw of my dear.

I dreamed it last night, my young love came in.
So softly she entered, her feet made no din.
She came close beside me and this she did say:
It will not be long, love, till our wedding day.

Axe Time

Tune: Thorgeirr Eikenskjald the Thirsty. Words: Janet of Arden and others

Axe time, sword time,
Bend your backs to the oar!
Wind time, wolf time,
Here's to the hammer of Thor!

I searched the world for a perfect brew,
Let's wallow in blood and gore,
But all I've got is a drunken crew,
Here's to the hammer of Thor!

I've searched the world for a maid to keep,
Let's wallow in blood and gore,
But all I've got is a mangy sheep,
Here's to the hammer of Thor!

Male voices:

We Vikings love our wives so dear,
Let's wallow in blood and gore,
That's why we leave home for half the year
Here's to the hammer of Thor!

Female voices:

The men have been gone for half the year,
Let's wallow in blood and gore,
But that's all right, the smith's still here,
Here's to the hammer of Thor!

I hope that I will in battle fall,
Let's wallow in blood and gore,
And spend my time in Odin's hall,
Here's to the hammer of Thor!

But with my luck I'll die in bed,
Let's wallow in blood and gore,
And be forgotten when I'm dead,
Here's to the hammer of Thor!

Let's drink a toast to all my friends,
Let's wallow in blood and gore,
May they all meet appropriate ends,
Here's to the hammer of Thor!

Let's drink a toast to the common flock
Let's wallow in blood and gore,
They will all perish in **Ragnarok!**
Here's to the hammer of Thor!

A Viking Love Song

Iestyn ap Sais, known as Justin the Bard

To the tune (more or less) of *Ghost Riders In The Sky*, originally by Stan Jones

Oh, I'm a sturdy Viking lad, with hairy chest and chin
To match my furry garments, so you can't tell where they end;
I'm hung just like a horse to keep a lady satisfied,
And now I've come down from the North to hunt me up a bride.
I saw you in your father's fields, and knew him to be rich,
So I cut his legs off at the knees, and threw him in a ditch;
I plundered all his cattle, and I took his larder, too,
And now I hie me back to Jarl with hopes to marry you.

I'm a man! A Viking man!
And what's more (worse) - I think I'm in love!

I've lots of wealth to offer, and that's truly not a boast,
For I've all the wealth of half the farms along the Eastern coast.
I've slaughtered all your family just to prove to you my heart,
And by your hair I've dragged you home, so we need not be apart.
I've also many servants that will also be as yours:
There's Gertrude and Brunhilda, who can help you with the chores,
And there's young Lena, whom upon a former maid I sired,
And I bed one down each night, so you need not get tired.

Yes, I'm a sturdy Viking lad, a fine catch to be sure,
For, though I smell much like an ox, my heart is Viking pure...
And I thank Odin, I thank Frey for smiling on my life,
For on (for us) this lucky day, you shall become my wife.

King Henry

Child Ballad #32

Let never a man a-wooning wend that lacketh thing-ès three:
A store of gold, an open heart, and full of charity.
And this was said of King Henry, as he lay quite alone,
For he's taken him to a haunted hall, seven miles from the town.

He's chased the deer now him before, and the doe down by the glen,
When the fattest buck in all the flock, King Henry he has slain.
His huntsmen followed him to the hall, to make them burly cheer,
When loud the wind was heard to howl, and an earthquake rocked the floor.

As darkness covered all the hall where they sat at their meat,
The grey dogs, yowling, left their food and crept to Henry's feet.
And louder howled the rising wind, and burst the fastened door,
When in there came a grisly ghost, a-stamping on the floor!

Her head hit the roof-tree of the house, her middle you could not span.
Each frightened huntsman fled the hall, and left the King alone.
Her teeth were like the tether-stakes, her nose like club or mell,
And nothing less she seemed to be than a fiend that comes from Hell!

“Some meat, some meat, you King Henry, some meat you bring to me,
“Go kill your horse, you King Henry, and bring some meat to me!”
And slain has he his berry-brown steed, 'though it made his heart full sore,
For she's eaten it up, both skin and bone, left nothing but hide and hair!

“More meat, more meat, you King Henry, more meat you give to me!
“Oh you must kill your good greyhounds, and bring some meat to me!”
And slain has he his good greyhounds, ’though it made his heart full sore
For she’s eaten them up, both skin and bone, left nothing but hide and hair!

“More meat, more meat, you King Henry, more meat you give to me!
“Oh, you must slay your good goshawks, and bring some meat to me!”
And slain has he his good goshawks, ’though it made his heart full sore
For she’s eaten them up, both skin and bone, left nothing but feathers bare!

“Some drink, some drink, you King Henry, some drink you give to me!
“Oh you sew up your horse’s hide, and bring some drink to me!”
And he’s sewn up the bloody hide, and a pipe of wine put in,
And she’s drank it up all in one drop, left never a drop therein!

“A bed, a bed, now King Henry, a bed you’ll make for me!
“Oh you must pull the heather green, and make it soft for me!”
And he has pulled the heather green, and made for her a bed,
And taken has he his good mantle, and over it he has spread.

“Take off your clothes, now King Henry, and lie down by my side!
“Now swear, now swear, you King Henry, to take me as your bride!”
“Oh, God forbid,” said King Henry, “that ever the like betide,
“That ever a fiend that comes from Hell should stretch down by my side!”

Then the night was gone, and the day was come, and the sun did fill the hall.
The fairest Lady that ever was seen lay between him and the wall!
“I’ve met with many a gentle Knight that gave me such a fill,
“But never before with a perfect Knight, that gave me all my will!”

The Court Of King Cornelius

Karl Faustus von Aachen, from a commission by Sybille la Chatte

To the tune of *The Court of King Caractacus* as arranged by Rolf Harris

Oh, the nobles of the kingdom of the court of King Cornelius were just passing by.
Oh, the nobles of the kingdom of the court of King Cornelius were just passing by.
Oh, the nobles of the kingdom of the court of King Cornelius were just passing by.
Oh, the nobles of the kingdom of the court of King Cornelius were just passing by.

Oh, the peerage in the service
Of the nobles of the kingdom of the court of King Cornelius were just passing by...

Oh, the squires who are indentured
To the peerage in the service
Of the nobles of the kingdom of the court of King Cornelius were just passing by...

Oh, the alcoholic wenches on the tavern's wooden benches serving cider
To the squires who are indentured
To the peerage in the service
Of the nobles of the kingdom of the court of King Cornelius were just passing by...

If you'd like to have adventures
With the alcoholic wenches on the tavern's wooden benches serving cider
To the squires who are indentured
To the peerage in the service
Of the nobles of the kingdom of the court of King Cornelius
You're too late!
Because they've just... passed... by!

The Wyke Wake Dirge

Anonymous

This ae nighte, this ae nighte,
Any nighte and all,
Fire and fleet and candle-lighte,
And Christ receive thy soul.

When thou from hence away art past,
Any nighte and all,
To Whinny Moor thou com'st at last;
And Christ receive thy soul.

If ever thou gavest hose and shoon,
Any nighte and all,
Sit thee down and put them on;
And Christ receive thy soul.

and so on, following the pattern:

If hose and shoon thou ne'er gav'st nane...
The thorns shall prick thee to the bare bane...

From Whinny Moor whence thou may'st pass...
To Bridge o' Dread thou com'st at last...

If ever thou gav'st silver and gold...
At Bridge o' Dread thou wilt find foothold...

But if silver and gold thou never gav'st nane...
Down thou tumblest to Hell flame...

From Bridge o' Dread whence thou may'st pass...
To Purgatory fire thou com'st at last...

If ever thou gav'st meat or drink...
The fire shall never make thee shrink...

If meat or drink thou ne'er gav'st nane...
The fire will burn thee to the bare bane...

This ae nighte, this ae nighte,
Any nighte and all,
Fire and fleet and candle-lighte,
And Christ receive thy soul.

Pronunciation guide and notes:

I've modernised the spelling where it didn't hurt the sound, just to make it a little easier to read, but some words are left alone to remind you that they're pronounced differently. "Ae" is pronounced "ay". "Nighte" and "lighte" are pronounced "neat" and "leet". I changed "hosen" to "hose", but didn't change "shoon" to "shoes" because it would mess up the rhyme. In general "gavest" and "gav'st" are both being pronounced as a single syllable here, and "thou wilt" can be elided as "thou'lt" or even "thou'll" if you find it easier.

The Marvellous Axe

Jhondo Oakenshield

To the tune of *The Marvellous Toy* by Tom Paxton

When I was just a wee Viking lad, full of health and joy,
My father homeward came from raid and he gave to me a toy.
A wonder to behold it was, made of steel so bright;
The moment I laid hands on it, it became my heart's delight.

It went swish when it moved, and splat when it stopped; it never did stand still.
A Viking axe is what it was, and it was made to kill.

The first time that I picked it up, I had a big surprise,
'Cause I swung it, then it swung me; I couldn't believe my eyes.
It first swung once, then swung twice, then whirled over my head,
And when I went on my first raid, this is what it did...

It first slashed left, then slashed right, then flew out of my hand.
And when I looked where it had gone, not an enemy did stand.
I found that it had slashed right through a hundred Mongols' heads;
And when I picked it up again, the Ka-Khan too was dead.

Slower:

The raids have gone by too quickly it seems, I have my own little brat;
And yesterday I gave to him my marvellous Viking axe.
His eyes nearly popped right out of his head, and he gave a sneer of glee.
Neither one of us knows just what it is, but he loves it just like me.

It goes swish when it moves, and splat when it stops; it never does stand still.
A Viking axe is what it is, and it was made to kill.

Loud Cliché

Eric of Tobar Mhuire and Michelle de Chenonceaux

To the tune of *Gaudete*

Gaudete, gaudete, Christus est natus,
Ex Maria virginæ, gaudete.
Gaudete, gaudete, Christus est natus,
Ex Maria virginæ, gaudete.

Latin:

Gaudeamus igitur, domine vobiscum,
Amor vincit omnia, ave, carpe diem.

Cave canem, caveat, veni vidi vici,
Pater noster, fiat lux, modus operandi.

French:

Honi soit qui mal y pense, avant garde, Debussy,
Menu, Monet, parlez vous, c'est la vie, Sans Souci.

German:

Ich bin ein Berliner, ja! Beethoven und Mahler,
Was ist das? Oktoberfest! Deutschland über alles!

Russian:

Vodka, comrade, KGB, perestroika, glasnost.
Leningrad, Siberia, what's a loaf of bread cost?

Spanish:

Don Quixote, si señor, girl from Ipanema,
Enchilada, taco sauce, he's from Barcelona.

Italian:

Fettucine, mafia, Mona Lisa, vino,
Mama mia, Romeo, pizza, cappuccino.

Greek:

Aristotle, Macedon, Plato, Archimedes,
Zeus, bouzouki, baklava, parthenon, dolmades.

Japanese:

Hirohito, anime, Fujiyama, sushi,
Sanyo, Sulu, Astro Boy, manga, Mitsubishi.

Scottish:

Rip a sheep's intestines oot, fill with wheat an' bake it.
Tartan, sporran, Rabbie Burns, the engines cannae take it!

The Wench's Lament

Blodeuwedd y Gath o Nedd

Oh, greasy water's the bane of me.
I'll be washing dishes 'till I'm eighty three.
My back it aches and my feet are sore.
A wench's life is a terrible chore.
A wench's life is a terrible chore.

Now it's true I've my pick of the knights and the squires.
They'll buy me my ale, they'll warm my desires,
They'll cuddle my waist and they'll take me to bed.
But come the bright morning they'll want to be fed.
But come the bright morning they'll want to be fed.

Now you'd think that the king would give me a rest.
Of lovers and fighters he's sure to be best.
But the king can eat more than three of his men,
And guess who gets stuck with the dishes again.
And guess who gets stuck with the dishes again.

Now I cut and I slice and I simmer and toast,
I fry and I stew and I bake and I roast,
And just when I think that my work is all through,
There's a dirty great stack of the dishes to do.
There's a dirty great stack of the dishes to do.

Now you may think that I'm hard on the men in this song,
But it seems they just give me work all the day long.
The only men who my woes truly discern
Are the sober men slaving out in the tavern.
Are the sober men slaving out in the tavern.

Young ladies, you may think my life is great fun.
I'm never decorous, I'm permitted to run,
I can have any man who takes my fancy,
But there's always a burnt pot a-waiting for me.
But there's always a burnt pot a-waiting for me.

Now I think I would like a Laurel to be,
I'd sit on soft cushions and sew finery.
But my life it is full of pots and of pans,
So I'll just have to get me a Pel-i-can!
So I'll just have to get me a Pel-i-can!

Optional extra verse:

There's only one woman works harder than me.
She rises each morning at five forty-three,
She goes to the bakery, she baketh the bread,
Then refuses to rest and does wench-work instead.
She refuses to rest and does wench-work instead.

The Vulgar Birthday Song

Author Mercifully Unknown

To the tune (stretching the definition somewhat) of *The Volga Boatmen*

Happy birthday - ugh! Happy birthday - ugh!
May the cities in your wake burn like candles on your cake.
Happy birthday - ugh! Happy birthday - ugh!

Death, destruction and despair, people dying everywhere...

Your servants steal, your wife's untrue, your children plot to murder you...

Hear the women wail and weep, kill them all but spare the sheep...

You must be wedded very soon, the baby's due the next full moon...

You're a period cook, it's true, just ask the beetles in your stew...

We brought you linen, white as clouds, now let's sit and sew your shroud...

It's your birthday, never fear, you'll be dead this time next year...

'Twas bad enough your hair turned grey, now it's falling out they say...

The Black Plague has struck your town, you yourself feel quite run down...

Now you've reached the age you are, your demise cannot be far...

They steal your sheep, your gold, your house, take your sheep but not your spouse...

You saved the damsel in distress, now your social life's a mess...

Now you've lived another year, and your death is drawing near...

People dying on the earth, go ahead, eat your dessert...

Any man who sings this far, we know what a fool you are...

Vulgar birthday songs are drear, just be glad it's stopping here...

Three Jolly Coachmen

Traditional

Three jolly coachmen stopped at a Bristol tavern.
Three jolly coachmen stopped at a Bristol tavern.
And they decided –
And they decided –
And they decided –
To have another flagon!

So Landlord, fill the flowing bowl until it doth run over.
Landlord, fill the flowing bowl until it doth run over.
For tonight we'll merry merry be –
For tonight we'll merry merry be –
For tonight we'll merry merry be –
Tomorrow we'll be sober.

Here's to the man who drinks no ale
and goes to bed quite sober...
(He) fades as the leaves do fade...
And drops off in October!

Here's to the man who drinks good ale
and goes to bed quite mellow...
(He) lives as he ought to live...
And dies a very fine fellow!

Here's to the maid who steals a kiss
and runs to tell her mother...
She's a very foolish thing...
She'll never get another!

Here's to the maid who steals a kiss
and comes back for another...
She's a boon to all mankind...
She'll very soon be a mother!

Stewart:

Here's to the axes on the wall,
their days are long now over...
No longer men shall go to war...
Our fighting days are over!

Eric of Tobermory:

Here's to the Cav who trims his beard
and wears the finest linen...
He's a ponce but what the hell...
He still gets all the women!

Here's to the man who sings in tune
through every verse and chorus...
All the inn he'll entertain...
A shame he's not before us!

Here's to the man whose pitch is off,
who sings with loud abandon...
Please excuse his lack of skill...
You can see he's barely standin'!

The Spotted Cow

Anonymous

One morning in the month of May as from my cot I strayed,
Just at the dawning of the day, I met with a charming maid.
Just at the dawning of the day, I met with a charming maid.

“Good morning to you, whither?” said I, “good morning to you now.”
The maid replied, “Kind sir,” she cried, “I’ve lost my spotted cow.”
The maid replied, “Kind sir,” she cried, “I’ve lost my spotted cow.”

“No longer weep, no longer mourn, your cow’s not lost, my dear.
I saw her down in yonder grove, come love and I’ll show you where.
I saw her down in yonder grove, come love and I’ll show you where.”

“I must confess you’re very kind, I thank you sir,” said she.
“We will be sure her there to find, come sweetheart and go with me.
We will be sure her there to find, come sweetheart and go with me.”

And in that grove they spent the day, they thought it passed too soon.
At night they homeward bent their way, while brightly shone the moon.
At night they homeward bent their way, while brightly shone the moon.

If he should cross the flowery dale, or go to view the plough,
She comes and calls, “You gentle swain, I’ve lost my spotted cow.”
She comes and calls, “You gentle swain, I’ve lost my spotted cow.”

The Miracle

Llewen the Unruly (and friends)

Come listen to the story of a miracle I've found.
You all have seen its glory and the battle cries resound.
I've lost in many tournaments, of that it must be said,
But still I stand here singing, when really... I am dead!

For... my head it lies in Stormhold, my arms in Innilgard,
My legs have been chopped off all over this great land.
But still I stand here 'fore you, of miracle I'm proof,
Alive and well as ever, to sing to you this spoof.

My gore has rusted many swords, its wielder, ornament.
But do not cry, no do not weep, or even to lament.
Our miracle preserves me, my appendages renewed,
And where the killing blows got through,
my armour's been re-glued.

So once again into the fray, I gaily leap away,
To offer up my body, so all may have their way.
I go in to die for glory, but I come away unscathed,
For the road to high Valhalla is now with duct tape paved.

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The False Knight On The Road

Anonymous

"What brings you out so late," said the Knight on the road
"I go to meet my God," said the child as he stood.
And he stood, and he stood, and 'twere well that he stood.
"I go to meet my God," said the child as he stood.

"How would you go by land," said the Knight on the road.
"With a stout staff in my hand," said the child as he stood.
And he stood, and he stood, and 'twere well that he stood.
"With a stout staff in my hand," said the child as he stood.

"How would you go by sea," said the Knight on the road.
"With a good ship under me," said the child as he stood...

"Methinks I hear a bell," said the Knight on the road.
"And it's ringin' ye to hell," said the child as he stood...

"What brings you out so late," said the Knight on the road
"I go to meet my God," said the child as he stood...

Pissed As A Parrot

Harald of Sigtuna

To the tune of Waltzing Matilda

Once a jolly viking lay beside a cider keg,
Under the table at quarter past three,
And he sang as he belched & waited for another round,
“Come get as pissed as a parrot with me.”

Pissed as a parrot, pissed as a parrot,
Come get as pissed as a parrot with me.
And he sang as he belched & waited for another round,
Come get as pissed as a parrot with me.

Down came the serving wench to refill the cider keg.
Up jumped the viking and grabbed her with glee.
And he da da-da da da da-da-da the serving wench,
Come get as pissed as a parrot with me.

Up jumped the owner, looking rather furious,
Up jumped the bouncers, one two three.
And he laughed as he gave them the digitus impudicus,
Come get as pissed as a parrot with me.

Down came the bouncers to rearrange his vertebrae.
Up jumped the viking, “The next round’s on me!”
The bouncers were trampled, the owner sighed & manned the bar,
Come get as pissed as a parrot with me.

Once a jolly viking lay beside a cider keg
Under the table at half past three
And he muttered as he snored, asleep beside the serving wench,
Come get as pissed as a parrot with me.

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Dancing Bear

Eric of Tobar Mhuire and Clan Womble

To the tune of The Bear Dance

Dancing bear, dancing bear, your paws in the air,
And your hind feet follow the beat,
Dancing, delicate bear.

Dancing, prancing, terrible smile, none may copy your style,
As you glide so, hither and fro,
Dancing delicate bear.

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Where Have All The Vikings Gone?

Author Unknown

To the tune of *Where Have All The Flowers Gone?*

Where have all the flowers gone?

Long time passing.

Where have all the flowers gone?

Long time ago.

Where have all the flowers gone?

STOMPED BY VIKINGS, EVERY ONE!!!

When will they ever learn?

When will they ever learn?

Where have all the young men gone?

Long time passing.

Where have all the young men gone?

Long time ago.

Where have all the young men gone?

KILLED BY VIKINGS, EVERY ONE!!!

When will they ever learn?

When will they ever learn?

Where have all the young girls gone?

Long time passing.

Where have all the young girls gone?

Long time ago.

Where have all the young girls gone?

TOOK BY VIKINGS, EVERY ONE!!!

When will they ever learn?

When will they ever learn?

Where have all the houses gone?

Long time passing.

Where have all the houses gone?

Long time ago.

Where have all the houses gone?

BURNED BY VIKINGS, EVERY ONE!!!

When will they ever learn?

When will they ever learn?

Where has all the treasure gone?

Long time passing.

Where has all the treasure gone?

Long time ago.

Where has all the treasure gone?

BURNED IN HOUSES, EVERY ONE!!!

When will they ever learn?

Pillage *before* you burn!

You're Mundane

Alfredo el Bufon

To the tune of *You're So Vain* by Carly Simon

Well, you walked into the feast hall
Like you were walkin' into a gym.
You went and turned on the electric lights,
'Cause you found the candles dim.
And you had to show off your new garb,
With plastic day-glo trim.
And all the gentles hoped you'd soon be leavin',
You'd soon be leavin', 'cause

You're mundane.
You prob'ly think this song is a ballad.
You're mundane.
I bet you think this song is a ballad.
Don't you? Don't you?

Well, you signed up several years ago.
You wanted to be an orc.
And to this day you can't understand
Why you can't be the Duke of York.
And when you're eating roasted beef
You always use a fork.
And to events you bring hot-dogs and cola,
Hot dogs and cola, 'cause...

Well, I hear you fought in a tournament
Against Sameric of St Ive,
And that when he dealt you a killing blow,
You continued to stay alive.
You said you deserved a saving throw;
Your armour was plus five.
And now they're draggin' you off to the dungeon,
Dungeon, they're draggin', 'cause...

My Lady, My Land

Cillian an Sealgair

If it's treasonous to say my lady's fairer than the Queen
Then since I've dwelled within this land, a traitor have I been.
My lady is beloved by every maid and every man,
And she holds to her bosom all throughout her land.

One moment she's serene like a River Haven dawn,
The next my lady rages as a Rowany Easter storm.
My sword is hers to call on, and a thousand more besides,
And each man knighted in her land takes her as his bride.

A great stone adorns her navel, changing colour with her mood,
And from her man is gifted with clear water, wine and food.
Girt by a golden halo in a gown of nature's hues,
My lady smiles upon me with eyes of grey and blue.

And when I'm called to battle, her lands and honour to defend,
It's her name I cry to God as her enemies I rend.
With "Lochac! Lochac!" on my lips I fight, I kill, I die.
With "Lochac! Lochac!" on my lips, I fight I kill, I die.

If it's treasonous to say my lady's fairer than the Queen
Then since I've lived in Lochac, a traitor have I been.

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I Sing Of Dead Bunnies

Author Unknown

I sing of dead bunnies, and burnt baby chicks,
Barbecued squirrels, and hamsters on sticks,
Ducklings in blenders, and frogs off the road,
Opossums on fenders and deep french-fried toad.

Sliced and diced sparrows, dead dogs on the lawn,
Cats riddled with arrows, and disembowelled faun,
Pickled canaries, and clubbed baby seals,
Mice served in berries, and turtles 'neath wheels.

Minced baby earwigs, koala fillet,
Rat pie with custard, and cockroach purée,
Fred's little brother, and Mystery Beast:
These are the things that they served at the feast!

Gairistiona's Wenching Song

Yolande Kesteven

The cleavage is polished, and it rolls softly bare
Above the tight bodice, and beneath the brushed hair.
The knickers were left by the fireside with care,
And we all go wenching again.

We've paid for no cider, but our cups overflow.
Lords we could not abide are beginning to grow
On us, and our morals – 'tis soon they will go,
And we all go wenching again.

We've drunk 'till the taverner knows us all by name,
And two knights have retired, their heads aching with shame,
But to dance on the table is part of the game,
And we all go wenching again.

And when we wake up in the dawn's early light,
And try to remember the name of that knight,
Oh, our heads they'll be aching, we'll be looking a sight,
But we'll long to go wenching again.
'Though the stories they tell us will fill us with fright,
We'll soon be wenching again!

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Squires

Llewen the Unruly

Look well upon their eager brow, where sweat it proudly stands,
With boyish look or girlish laugh, they take their swords in hand.
So lift your arms with me I cry, to the squires of this land,
For all that we do hope and seek, is held within their hands.

They be Kings one day, or Queens I say.
Oh! doubt ye not my words.
They be Kings one day, or Queens I say
All by the right of arms.

And will they gain what they do seek, with grace and courtesy,
And will they someday bear with pride, the chains of chivalry.
So ask ye well their noble knight, who holds their oath in hand,
To nurture well the good there found, as well their skill at hand.

And if those squires then be knights, new squires in their stead,
And ere the story told again, let all the same be said.
So look ye well the future bodes, and what it holds for all,
And walk with them a noble path, or else with them we'll fall.

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Follow Me Up To Carlow

Patrick Joseph McCall (1861-1919)

Lift MacCahir Og your face,
Brooding o'er the old disgrace
That black FitzWilliam stormed your place
And drove you to the Fern.
Grey said victory was sure,
Soon the firebrand he'd secure,
Until he met at Glenmalure
With Fiach McHugh O'Byrne.

Curse and swear, Lord Kildare!
Fiach will do what Fiach will dare!
Now FitzWilliam have a care,
Fallen is your star low.
Up with halberd, out with sword,
On we'll go for, by the Lord,
Fiach McHugh has given his word:
"Follow me up to Carlow!"

See the swords of Glen Imayle,
Flashing o'er the English pale.
See all the children of the Gael
Beneath O'Byrne's banners.
Rooster of a fightin' stock,
Would you let a saxon cock
Crow out upon an Irish rock?
Fly up and teach him manners!

From Tassagart to Clonmore,
There flows a stream of Saxon gore,
And great is Rory Og O'More
At sending loons to Hades.
White is ill, Grey is fled,
Now for black FitzWilliam's head:
We'll send it over drippin' red
To Liza and her ladies!

Pronunciation Guide:

MacCahir.....mac-KIHR (rhymes with beer)
Fiach.....FEEK or FEE-yuk (but run together as a single syllable)
O'Byrne.....oh-BURN or oh-BURN-ee, whatever fits in the rhythm
Tassagart.....tuh-SAGG-ut, rhymes with maggot

Bill The Very Last Man

Morna of River Haven

Of loss and pain and death, oh yes,
I know them far too well.
But if it means beating my enemy,
I'd follow him into hell.
And we'll fight and die till the very last man,
And follow him into hell.

Oh Lady Death, don't come for me
Until my quest is done.
For I would see my foeman dead,
Every single one.
And we'll fight and die till the very last man,
Every single one.

It's been five years since I have seen
My home, my land, my kin,
But I would die a thousand deaths
Before I'd see them win.
And we'll fight and die till the very last man,
Before I'd see them win.

I'd sell my soul if I could once more
See my lover's face.
Just one more time to be held close
In love's close warm embrace.
And we'll fight and die till the very last man,
For love's close warm embrace.

And so we march for weeks on end,
Following their trail.
God grant our wish that when we meet,
Our might will prevail.
And we'll fight and die till the very last man,
That our might will prevail.

Come gather close now, brother arms,
The battle soon we'll fight.
They've run from us so long but now
They'll face us on this night.
And we'll fight and die till the very last man,
They'll face us on this night.

And so we faced them on the field
And we did charge them then.
My only hope is, if I die,
That I'll take ten of them.
And we'll fight and die till the very last man,
And I'll take ten of them.

They thought that they had escaped us.
They'll soon find out they're wrong.
For death it is no barrier
For this our quest so strong.
And we'll fight and die till the very last man,
For this our quest so strong.

Of loss and pain and death, oh yes,
I knew them far too well.
But since it meant beating my enemy,
I've followed them into hell.
And we fought and died till the very last man,
And followed them into hell.
And we fought and died till the very last man,
And followed them into hell.

Me Husband's Got No Courage In Him

Anonymous

As I walked out one May morning to view the leaves and trees a-springing,
I saw two maidens standing there and one of them her hands were wringing.

Oh dear oh, oh dear oh,
Me husband's got no courage in him, oh dear oh!

All sorts of vittals did I provide, all sorts of meats that fitting foxed him,
With oyster pie and rhubarb too, but nothing will put courage in him.

Me husband's admired wherever he goes, and everyone looks well upon him,
With handsome features and well-shaped leg, but still he's got no courage in him.

Me husband can dance and caper and sing, and do anything most fitting for him,
But he cannot do the thing I want, because he's got no courage in him.

Every night when I goes to bed, I lie and throw my leg right o'er him,
And my hand I claps between his thighs, but I can't put any courage in him.

Seven long years I've made his bed and every night I've lain beside him,
And this morning I woke with me maidenhead, for still he's got no courage in him.

Well I wish me husband he were dead, and in his grave I'd quickly lay him,
And then I'd get another one that's got a little courage in him.

So all you maids, where e'er you be, don't marry a man until you've tried him,
Or else you'll sing this song with me, my husband's got no courage in him.

The Songs Of The West

Eric of Tobar Mhuire

We are not your bastard sons; we are not your helpless daughters;
We are not your fighting foemen; we are not your welcome guests.
We are born to be the ones who will rule these southern waters;
We're the songs of knight and bowman, we're the songs of the West.

There are rivals in this country, there are neighbours long at war,
There are those who'd see all others trampled down and put to rest.
But at night the warring gentry cheer their rivals through their door,
To the feast of faithful brothers and the songs of the West.

All the wily old campaigners making war upon their charts;
All the histories of glories stirring hearts within their chests;
All the bards and entertainers of the classic muses' arts:
We are one with all their stories and their songs of the West.

You can speak to us of freedom, whether handed down or won;
You can tell us we are fledglings and we may not leave the nest.
But the cradle of the kingdoms is the place where we've begun
In the learning and the teaching of the songs of the West.

The Burden Of The Crown

Baldwin of Erebor

The battlefield is silent, the shadows growing long.
Though I may view the sunset, I'll not live to see the dawn.
The trees have ceased to rustle, the birds no longer sing.
All nature seems to wonder at the passing of a king.

And here you stand before me, your father's flesh and blood,
Begotten of my sinews on the woman that I loved.
So difficult the birthing, the mother died that day,
And now you stand before me, to bear my crown away.

The hour is fast approaching when you come into your own,
When you take the ring and sceptre and you sit upon the throne.
Before that final hour, when we each must meet our fate,
Pray gaze upon the royal crown, and marvel at its weight.

This cap of burnished metal is the symbol of our land,
Supporting all we cherish, the dreams for which we stand.
The weight you'll find is nothing, when you hold it in your palm –
The burden of the crown begins the day you put it on.

See how the jewels sparkle as you gaze on it again.
Each facet is a subject whose rights you must defend.
Each point of light a burden you must shoulder as your own,
And mighty is the burden of the man upon the throne.

The day is nearly ended, my limbs are growing cold
I feel the angels waiting to receive my passing soul.
Keep well for me my kingdom when my memory is dead,
And forgive me for the burden I place upon your head.

Climbing The Ladder

Antoine le Rêveur and Wilfred Bearslayer

You've heard of the society they call the SCA,
Where people dress in silly clothes as though they're in a play.
It's totally nonsensical, it's such a joke you see,
To get acclaim is easy, you just listen here to me.

Climbing the ladder in the SCA,
It's not what you know, it's who you've had in the hay.
It's not what you've done for the Society,
It's mostly what you've done for people higher than thee.

You hang around for long enough, you get an AoA.
You stay a little longer and you'll get a girl to lay.
You play a little tune and the King thinks it is swell,
You play a little longer and you get an ORL.

The next in the procession is the pretty OLM:
You have to work your guts out so you don't want one of them.
A laurel is much harder still, you have to use your head,
It's not what you make, it's who you make it with instead.

You're aiming for the peerage and you wouldn't mind a beak,
Then sleep with landed barons and you'll soon get what you seek.
But if you are a stickjock and your fame is based on might,
Then beat up on the royalty, you'll soon become a knight.

You're aiming for the pinnacle, not satisfied with less,
Unlike before there's no one left above you to impress.
With social graces lacking, your skill must take you through,
A sovereign without chivalry, so what else is new?

Rose Red

Traditional

Rose, Rose, Rose Red
Will I ever see thee wed?
I will marry at my will, sir,
At my will.

Hey ho, nobody home.
Meat nor drink nor money have I none.
Still I will be merry, merry.
Hey ho, nobody home.

Ah poor bird,
Why art thou
Hiding in the shadows
Of this dark hour.

Ah poor bird,
Take thy flight,
Far above the sorrows
Of this sad night.

Ah my love,
Lov'st thou me?
Then quickly come and save him,
Who dies for thee.

Ah poor squire,
Slain again.
Battle after battle
Will the pain not end?

And, for maximum silliness:

$$x = \frac{-b \pm \sqrt{b^2 - 4ac}}{2a},$$

Negative B
Plus or minus square root
B squared minus four A C,
All over two A.

Good Brother Michael

Eric of Tobar Mhuire

Good Brother Michael, standing in the square,
He speaks his fiery, fearsome sermons there:
Of all the demons crowding at the gate,
Who for the souls of sinners lie in wait;

And all who hear Good Brother Michael speak,
They feel their bones and sinews stricken weak;
They know this man from God is surely come;
They know his words will strike the sinner dumb.

Good Brother Michael, speaking of the end,
He calls the sinful man his life to mend.
For if you choose the easy path to take,
Your soul shall burn, your eyes and skin shall bake!

And all who hear Good Brother Michael speak...

Good Brother Michael, preaching to the crowd,
Allows his voice to still where it was loud.
He stands alone, before them in the square,
And all who see him, wait upon him there.

And all who see Good Brother Michael stand,
They feel the steel of God's almighty hand;
They know this man with the Lord is lost in prayer,
So bravely standing, silent in the square.

Good Brother Michael, standing in the place,
His head is bowed, his hood conceals his face.
He seems to all who watch him on that day,
A man apart, a thousand miles away.

And all who see Good Brother Michael stand...

Good Brother Michael, opens now his eyes,
His flock in wonder hear his thunder rise.
He speaks of all who preach that very day,
As if this man had heard each word they say.

And all who hear Good Brother Michael's word,
Among their friends, they ask, "What have you heard?
"How spoke this day Good Brother James and John?"
And all agree, each Brother spoke as one!

Good Brother Michael, silent now and calm,
To all who watch extends his sturdy arm:
So many men who have heard his words of gold,
He welcomes now into the priestly fold.

And all who hear Good Brother Michael's word...

Now Brother Michael, tired from the day,
In cloisters cold, to council makes his way.
In secret meets with Brothers James and John.
To plan the next day's miracle as one!

When I'm King No More

Kylson Skyfyre and Timotay Tayshun

To the tune of *When I'm Sixty Four*, by the Beatles

When I'm an "old King" and I step down,
Not too far from now,
Will they still consider me the regal sort -
"Hi there, handsome, see you in court!"?
When they walk by me, will they still smile,
And bow down to the floor?
Will they still need me, will they still heed me,
When I'm King no more?

You'll be Countess too,
And if you say the word, I will fight for you.

If I get hungry, late in the day,
When the fights are done,
Will they still invite me to the royal feast,
Sit at high table, carve the roast beast?
Bottomless goblets, seconds and thirds,
And maybe even four.
Will they still need me, will they still feed me,
When I'm King no more?

Every tourney we can sneak around at the eric
when there's no one there.
We'll play hide and seek (know what I mean?)
No need to hide your eyes, I will let you peek.

When I'm an old King, too old to fight,
Many years from now,
Will we still get passionate on the tourney field,
Clothing displacement, offers to yield?
Will you believe me, when I want sleep,
Or will you ask for more?
Will they still need me, will they still breed me,
When I'm King - everybody sing, oh
When I'm King no more?

The Feral Privies Song

Blodeuwedd y Gath o Nedd

To the tune of *Oh Dear, What Can The Matter Be?*

Oh dear, what can the matter be?
I've just lost my favour down the privy
I don't know what my lord he will say to me
Or how I'll get it from there.

Those privies are filthy, those privies are feral,
They cannot be clean and they cannot be sterile.
If you go in the dark then your life is in peril:
You may never get out of there.

Those privies are feral, those privies will fight you.
They'll kick and they'll scream and they'll scratch and they'll bite you,
And if you're a smoker they may well ignite you,
And burn off your curly brown hair!

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The Blacksmith

Traditional

A blacksmith courted me, nine months and better,
He fairly won my heart, wrote me a letter.
With his hammer in his hand, he looked so clever,
And if I were with my love, I'd live forever.

And where is my love gone with his cheeks like roses?
Oh, he's sailed across the sea, gathering primroses.
I'm afraid the shining sun will scorch and burn his beauty,
And if I were with my love, I'd do my duty.

Strange news is come to town, strange news is carried.
Strange news flies up and down; my love is married.
I wish them both much joy, though they don't hear me,
And may God reward him well for the slighting of me.

What did you promise me when you lay beside me?
You said you'd marry me and you'd not deny me.
"If I said I'd marry you, it was only for to try you,
So bring your witness, love, and I'll not deny you."

Oh, witness have I none, save God Almighty,
And may he reward you well for the slighting of me.
Her lips grew pale and white, it made her poor heart tremble,
To think she loved a one, and he proved deceitful.

A blacksmith courted me, nine months and better,
He fairly won my heart, wrote me a letter.
With his hammer in his hand he looked so clever,
And if I were with my love, I'd live forever.

All I Want Is A Peerage

Eric of Tobar Mhuire and Karl Faustus von Aachen

To the tune of the chorus to *It's Hard To Be Humble* by Mac Davis

Oh, all I want is a Laurel,
The leaf of a tree known as bay.
I may be a sexual pervert,
But I document every way.
I wear a chain mail g-string,
And I don't use no sewing machine.
Oh, all I want is a Laurel,
To turn all my metal friends green.

Oh, all I want is a Knighthood;
I deserve it, I bruise pretty well.
I'm a legend at Monday night training:
I can lose best of three with a pell.
I'm always a model of courtesy,
And I've never been wrong, always right.
Oh, all I want is a Knighthood,
'Cause I look pretty speccy in white.

Oh, all I want is a Pelican.
Won't somebody give me one please?
I've run simply dozens of kitchens,
And I love to dig out those privies.
I live just to hobnob with bigwigs,
Though I never would dare interrupt.
So if someone don't give me my Pelican,
It just proves the whole system's corrupt!

Oh, all I want is a Duchy;
A County just won't do as well.
"Your Grace" is the swankiest title,
And the hats are as sexy as hell!
My girlfriend is sick of "My Lady",
Says "Duchess" would be just the thing.
Oh, all I want is the Duchy,
So why do I have to be King?

Oh, all I want is the Order,
The new one they made for Defense
They told us we couldn't be white-belts -
I'm sure in their heads it made sense!
It might be 'cause fencers are poncy,
And better pushed off to the side,
But I reckon the knights are just jealous
'Cause we're the ones in *Princess Bride*!

Black Fox

Graham Pratt

© Graham Pratt (words and music). Used with permission.

As we were out a-hunting
One morning in the spring,
Both hounds and horses running well
Made the hills and valleys ring.

But to our great misfortune,
No fox could there be found.
And the huntsmen cursed and swore but still
No fox moved over the ground.

Up spoke our master huntsman,
At the head of hounds rode he:
“Well, we have ridden for a full three hours,
But no fox have we seen.”

“And there is strength still in me,
And I will have my chase.
And if only the Devil himself come by,
We’d run him such a race!”

And then there sprang, like lightning,
A fox from out his hole.
His fur was the colour of a starless night,
His eyes like burning coals.

They chased him over the valley,
They chased him over the field,
They chased him down to the riverbank,
But never would he yield.

He’s jumped into the water
And he’s swum to the other side.
He’s laughed so loud that the greenwood shook,
Then he’s turned to the huntsmen and cried:

<i>Original version</i>	<i>Lochac-traditional version</i>
“Ride on, my gallant huntsmen! When must I come again? Oh never shall you want a fox To chase along the plain.”	“Ride on, my gallant huntsmen! When must I come again? Just call on me and you shall have The best of a sport and a game!”
“And when your need is greatest, Just call upon my name, And I will come and you shall have The best of sport and game!”	

All the men looked up in wonder;
All the hounds ran back to hide;
For the fox had changed to the Devil himself,
Where he stood at the other side.

And men and hounds and horses
Went flying back to town,
And hard on their heels came the little black fox,
A-laughing as he ran:

“Ride on, my gallant huntsmen! When must I come again? Oh never shall you want a fox To chase along the plain!”	“Ride on, my gallant huntsmen! When must I come again? Just call on me and you shall have The best of a sport and a game!”
--	---

The Cruel Sister

Anonymous

There lived a lady by the North Sea shore.
Two daughters were the babes she bore.
One grew as fair as in the sun.
So coal-dark grew the elder one.

A knight came riding to the lady's door;
He'd travelled far to be their wooer.
He courted one with gloves and rings,
But the other he loved above all things.

“Oh sister, sister, won't you walk with me,
To see the ships that sail o'er the sea?”
And as they walked the windy shore,
The dark girl pushed her sister o'er.

Sometimes she sank, sometimes she swam,
Crying, “Sister, reach to me your hand.
Oh sister, sister, please let me live,
And all that's mine, I'll surely give.”

“It's your own true love that I want and more
That thou shalt never come ashore.”
And as she floated like a swan,
The salt sea bore her body on.

Two minstrels walking by the windy strand,
They saw her body float to land.
They made a harp of her breastbone,
Whose sound would melt a heart of stone.

They took three strands of her yellow hair,
And with them strung this harp so rare.
They took the harp to her father's hall,
There to play before them all.

But when they sat that harp upon a stone,
It began to play alone.
The first string sang, a doleful sound,
“The bride her younger sister drowned.”

The second string when this they tried,
“In terror sits the black-haired bride.”
The third string sang beneath their bow,
“And now her tears will surely flow.”

There lived a lady by the North Sea shore.
Two daughters were the babes she bore.
One grew as fair as in the sun.
So coal dark grew the elder one.

My Lady's Eyes

Eric of Tobar Mhuire

You petty lords who squabble in my court and at my feast,
To prove yourself the greatest and your enemy the least.
You look at me and see my crown and wish to take my place,
But let me tell you why you see a tear upon my face.

For my lady's eyes I'll never see,
Her hair I'll not caress,
And all the ships I now command,
They could not serve me less
For King I am, of all I see,
Yet all I wish is barred to me,
For King I am.

A roguish lad more prone to games than any holy books,
I ran amid the mighty woods and swam in icy brooks.
I never knew the life I led would ever have to pass,
Until I saw my lady as she stood upon the grass.
To see her there, her golden hair, her eyes of forest green,
To me, she was the fairest maid that any lad had seen.
I stared in awe, so thunderstruck, my legs could barely stand.
She smiled to me, without a word, and offered me her hand.

Her brother was a scholar, never married but to books,
Who guarded her with watchful eyes, and me with acid looks,
And though we loved as any two who ever strode the stars,
Yet all the love we ever shared was whispered from afar.
For how could I reveal my name, and win my love by gold,
When every coin, beside her smile, was valueless and cold?
To him I was a brazen knave, with neither skill nor art,
And better men than me she'd find, to win away her heart.

And when one day she came no more to see me in the glen,
And though I searched a thousand days, I saw her not again.
And when the crown was passed to me, the day my father died,
My people thought I mourned for him when I hung my head
and cried.

So you petty lords who squabble in my court and at my feast,
To prove yourself the greatest and your enemy the least.
You look at me and see my crown and wish to take my place,
But let me tell you why you see a tear upon my face.

Fight At Festival In Rowany

Karl Faustus von Aachen

To the tune of *Chunder In The Old Pacific Sea* by Bazza McKenzie (Barry Humphries)

I was down in Ynys Fawr
By the icy southern shore,
But the island was deserted as could be (*as could be*).
So I asked a polar bear
Where they'd gone. He said, "Up there,
Off to fight at Festival in Rowany."

Armour up, armour up,
Grab your gumbie and your stick and follow me!
If you want to make a name, mate,
There isn't any game
But to fight at Festival in Rowany!

So I got my camping gear,
And I paid the gondolier
Double time to sail upon the open sea (*the open sea*).
And I made it to the site
– In the middle of the night! –
Just to fight at Festival in Rowany!

Oh, the wars were awful rough
'Cause the fighters do it tough
I was killed once by a eucalyptus tree (*a bloody tree!*).
But I came along to play,
So I battled every day,
And I fought at Festival in Rowany.

Now the fighting's pretty cool,
But I'd really be a fool
If I told you it was all there was to see (*there was to see*).
When the wars are fought and done,
There's a different kind of fun
Than to *fight* at Festival in Rowany.

Limber up, limber up,
Learn some acrobatic talents and you'll see:
Many fellows like to fight, but
There's better fun at night,
In your tent at Festival in Rowany!

A Lusty Young Smith

Richard Leveridge, 1705; possibly modified somewhat later on.

A lusty young smith at his vice stood a-filing.
His hammer lay by but his forge still a-glowed.
When to him a buxom young damsel came smiling,
And asked if to work in her forge he would go.

With a jingle bang jingle bang jingle bang jingle.
With a jingle bang jingle bang jingle high ho.

I will, said the smith, and they went off together,
Unto the young damsel's forge they did go.
They stripped to go to it, 'twas hot work and hot weather.
She kindled the fire and she soon made him glow.

Her husband, she said, no good work could afford her.
His strength and his tools were worn out long ago.
The smith said, Well, mine are in very good order,
And I am now ready my skill for to show.

Red hot grew his iron, as both did desire,
And he was too wise not to strike while 'twas so.
She said, What I get I get out of the fire,
So prithee, strike home and redouble the blow.

Six times did his iron, by vigorous heating,
Grow soft in her forge in a minute or so,
And ere it were hard and yet heating and beating,
But the more it were soft, it did harden more slow.

The smith then would go, left the maid full of sorrow.
Oh, what would I give could my husband do so.
Good lad with your hammer come hither tomorrow,
And pray won't you use it once more ere you go!

The Eve Of Hastings

Blodeuwedd y Gath o Nedd

To the tune of *Capital I* from Sesame Street

We here stand on the battlefield side,
Looking upon Hastings where tomorrow we must fight,
And on the winds, we hear our women cry,
Weeping for the sons and husbands who tomorrow die,
Tomorrow die, tomorrow die.

Harald stands, the King of England true,
To fight against Duke William for a crown *he's* no claim to,
And also stand English nobility,
To fight the Bastard's pirates brought across from Normandy
Normandy, Normandy.

All this day, we'll sharpen up our swords,
To sacrifice our lands to Normans we can ill afford,
And in the evening we'll settle by our fires,
Knowing in the morning they may be our funeral pyres,
Funeral pyres, funeral pyres.

Pray to Christ and God we may survive,
That in a day or two we may be back home with our wives,
And pray to Tor that, if our bodies lie,
We'll take a Norman with us and we nobly shall die,
Nobly die, nobly die.

We here stand on the battlefield side,
Looking upon Hastings where tomorrow we must fight,
And on the winds, we hear our women cry,
Weeping for the sons and husbands who tomorrow die,
Tomorrow die, tomorrow die,
Tomorrow die, tomorrow die.

Twa Corbies

Child Ballad #26 (one of several versions)

As I was walking all alane,
I heard twa corbies makin' mane.
And t'ane untae the t'ither did say, oh,
"Where shall we gang and dine today, oh,
"Where shall we gang and dine today?"

"In behind yon auld fail dyke,
"I wot there lies a new-slain knight,
"And nae body kens that he lies there, oh,
"But his hawk and his hound and his lady fair, oh,
"But his hawk and his hound and his lady fair."

"His hound is to the hunting gane,
"His hawk to fetch the wild fowl hame,
"His lady's ta'en another mate, oh,
"So we may make our dinner sweet, oh,
"So we may make our dinner sweet."

"Ye'll sit upon his white hause bane,
"And I'll pike out his bonny blue een:
"Wi' a lock o' his golden hair, oh,
"We'll thiek our nest when it grows bare, oh,
"We'll thiek our nest when it grows bare."

"Mony a one for him makes mane,
"But none shall ken where he is gane:
"O'er his white banes, when they are bare, oh,
"The wind shall blow for evermair, oh,
"The wind shall blow for evermair."

Maids, When You're Young

Roud Folksong Index #210, circa 1791

An old man came courtin' me, hey ding doorum down,
An old man came courtin' me, me bein' young.
An old man came courtin' me, fain would he marry me.
Maids, when you're young, never wed an old man.

For they've got no falloorum, high diddle-eye doorum,
They've got no falloorum, high diddle-eye day.
They've got no falloorum,
they've lost their dingdoorium,
Maids, when you're young, never wed an old man.

Now, when we went to church, hey ding doorum down,
Oh, when we went to church, me bein' young.
Oh, when we went to church, he left me in the lurch.
Maids, when you're young, never wed an old man.

Now, when we went to bed, hey ding doorum down,
Oh, when we went to bed, me bein' young.
Oh, when we went to bed, he lay as if were dead.
Maids, when you're young, never wed an old man.

I threw my leg over him, hey ding doorum down,
I threw my leg over him, me bein' young.
I threw my leg over him, damn nearly smothered him.
Maids, when you're young, never wed an old man.

Now, when he went to sleep, hey ding doorum down,
Oh, when he went to sleep, me bein' young.
Oh, when he went to sleep, out of bed I did creep,
Into the arms of a jolly young man!

And I found his falloorum, my diddle-eye doorum
And I found his falloorum, my diddle-eye day.
And I found his falloorum, he got my dingdoorium,
Maids, when you're young, never wed an old man.

The Lords Who Sing Off-Key

Rugen Axegrinder

To the tune of *Lord Of The Dance*

Off-tune, off-tune, wherever I may be,
For I am the lord who sings off-key.
And I'll sing off-key where ever I may be,
And you'll sing off-tune if you sing with me.

I sang at the tourney and I sang at the feast,
My voice was listened to the least.
They told me be silent, they told me be gone,
But there's still more words so my song goes on.

I sang at the campfire and I sang at the quest,
For our tactics were a little different to the rest.
We sang at the monsters till they bribed us be gone,
But there's still more clues so my song goes on.

I sang at the tourney and I sang at the war,
I sang till the fighters could not take any more.
They picked up their weapons and challenged me to fight,
But the song goes on 'cause I called their blows light.

I sang for the Prince and I sang for the King,
To them my song seemed to have a different ring.
They did not shout nor did they complain,
They just banned me from singing for the rest of the reign!

Green Grow the Rushes, Oh

Roud Folksong Index #133

I'll sing you one, oh, green grow the rushes, oh
What is your one, oh?

One is one and all alone and evermore shall be so.

I'll sing you two, oh, green grow the rushes, oh
What is your two, oh?

Two for the lily-white boys, clothèd all in green, oh.
One is one and all alone and evermore shall be so.

I'll sing you three, oh, green grow the rushes, oh
What is your three, oh?

Three, three, the rivals.
Two for the lily-white boys, clothèd all in green, oh.
One is one and all alone and evermore shall be so.

I'll sing you four, oh, green grow the rushes, oh
What is your four, oh?

Four for the gospel makers.
Three, three, the rivals.
Two for the lily-white boys, clothèd all in green, oh.
One is one and all alone and evermore shall be so.

I'll sing you five, oh, green grow the rushes, oh
What is your five, oh?

Five for the symbols at your door.
Four for the gospel makers.
Three, three, the rivals.
Two for the lily-white boys, clothèd all in green, oh.
One is one and all alone and evermore shall be so.

and so on, for:

Six for the six proud walkers...

Seven for the seven stars in the sky...

Eight for the April rainers...

Nine for the nine bright shiners...

Ten for the ten commandments...

Eleven for the eleven who went to heaven...

Twelve for the twelve apostles...

A Sailor's Love Song

Karl Faustus von Aachen

Some men sell their souls, oh, for diamonds and silver,
Some give their heart to a sword that is strong.
But I am a sailor with no sword nor silver,
And I know where my heart and my soul they belong:
My lover, my Lady, my song.

I hear her in the wind on the ocean,
I hear her in the waves on the sea.
I hear my lover, and I long to be with her,
My lover, my Lady, my song, oh,
My lover, my Lady, my song.

Some men give their ladies fine silk for their dresses,
Some give a house with the servants in throng.
But I am a sailor with no silk for dresses,
So I sail for my fortune to win her ere long,
My lover, my Lady, my song.

Some men have a bed where they sleep on fat pillows,
Some have a house with a floor, flat and long.
But I have the sea and the sail as it billows,
And I dream of my Lady, whose love it is strong,
My lover, my Lady, my song.

(After final chorus)

I hear her in the storm on the ocean,
I hear her in the thunder at night..
I hear my lover, and I go to be with her,
My lover, my Lady, my song, oh,
My lover, my Lady, my song.

Maids When They're Dull

Karl Faustus von Aachen

To the tune of *Maids, When You're Young*

An old song is haunting me (hey, dull boring tune),
An old song is haunting me (ugly and wrong),
An old song is haunting me, frequently taunting me.
Maids, when they're dull, never learn a new song.

For it's got no decorum, I'd rather ignore 'em.
It's got not decorum, it's too bloody long.
It's got not decorum, don't sing, I'm imploring 'em.
Maids, when they're dull, never learn a new song.

Now, when I hear them start (hey, dull boring tune),
Now, when I hear them start (ugly and wrong),
Now, when I hear them start, I'd rather hear a fart.
Maids, when they're dull, never learn a new song.

I threw all the words away (hey, dull boring tune),
I threw all the words away (ugly and wrong),
I threw all the words away, they sing it anyway.
Maids, when they're dull, never learn a new song.

I'll make them all shut up (hey, dull boring tune),
I'll make them all shut up (ugly and wrong),
I'll make them all shut up, put hemlock in their cup.
Maids, when they're dull, never learn a new song.

Then, when they're dead and gone (hey, dull boring tune),
Then, when they're dead and gone (ugly and wrong),
Then, when they're dead and gone, singing will still go on.
I'll teach the knights all *The Viking Love Song!*

And it's got less decorum, the Laurels abhor 'em.
It's got less decorum than Alfar in drag!
It's got less decorum, you can't go ignoring 'em.
Knights, when they sing, would make anyone gag!

The Song Of The Shield Wall

Malkin Grey (tune by Peregrynne Windrider)

Hasten, O sea-steed, over the swan road,
Foamy-necked ship, o'er the froth of the sea.
Hengist has called us from Gotland and Frisia
To Vortigern's country, his army to be.
We'll take our pay there, in sweeter than silver,
We'll take our plunder in richer than gold,
For Hengist has promised us land for our fighting,
Land for the sons of the Saxons to hold.

Hasten, O fyrds-men, down to the river,
The dragon-ships come on the in-flowing tide.
The lindenwood shield and the old spear of ashwood
Are needed again by the cold water side.
Draw up the shield-wall, O shoulder companions.
Later, whenever our story is told,
They'll say that we died holding what we call dearest,
Land that the sons of the Saxons will hold.

Hasten, O house-carls, north to the Dane-law,
Harald Hardrada's come over the sea
His longships he's laden with Berserks from Norway,
To gain Canute's crown and our master to be.
Bitter he'll find here the bite of our spear-points,
Hard-ruling Northmen too strong to die old.
We'll grant him six feet, plus as much as he's taller
Of land that the sons of the Saxons will hold.

Make haste, sons of Godwin, southward from Stamford,
Triumph is sweet and your men have fought hard.
But William the Bastard has landed at Pevensey,
Burning the land that you have promised to guard.
Draw up the spears on the hill-top at Hastings,
Fight till the sun drops and evening grows cold.
And die... with the last of your Saxons around you,
Holding the land we were given to hold.

Red-Haired Girl

Harry of Eccles

To the tune of *Fat Bottom Girls* by Queen

Are you gonna show me how to fight,
Aah, down beside that headless light,
Are you gonna try to knock me out,
You red-haired girl, you make all fighters hit the ground.

I was just a skinny lad, found light fighting not so bad,
But when heavies got too close I'd turn and flee.
Now I've seen this female heavy, always armed and always ready:
Red-haired woman, you'll make a stickjock out of me.

I see the damsels on these benches,
Doe-eyed maids and buxom wenches,
I've seen every blue-eyed boozy Queen of May.
But their beauty and their style
Wear kind of smooth after a while:
Give me two-handed sword ladies every time.

Aah, won't you show me how to fight,
Aah, down beside that legless knight,
Aah, decapitate me with one shot,
You red-haired girl, you make all fighters hit the ground.
You red-haired girl, you make all fighters hit the ground.

Hordes of soldiers came and fought her,
At her hands there was a slaughter,
Dead and maimed all lay in her vicinity.
And if I see a look of pleasure on that stocky armoured treasure,
Red-haired woman, you scare the shit right out of me!

Are you gonna show me how to fight,
Aah, by that burning city's light.
Are you gonna rip my entrails out,
You red-haired girl, you make all fighters hit the ground.
You red-haired girl, you make all fighters hit the ground.
(Get on your horse and ride!)

Lindisfarne

Ragnar Magnussen (as a young man)
To the tune of *Green Grow The Rushes, Oh*

I'll sing you one, oh, sword, axe and spear, oh
What is your one, oh?

One we go to Lindisfarne and burn it to the ground, oh!

I'll sing you two, oh, sword, axe and spear, oh
What is your two, oh?

Two, two, the Christian monks lying in their blood, oh.
One we go to Lindisfarne and burn it to the ground, oh!

Lindisfarne 2.0

Ragnar Magnussen (with the benefit of a lifetime of wisdom)

Twelve for the Gods in Asgard...
Eleven for the treewise Odin...
Ten is the Mighty Thor...
Nine for the nine at Uppsalla...
Eight for the Jarls and Hersir...
Seven for our seaborne dragons...

and so on, for:

Three, three, we're Vi-i-i-ikings!
Four for the ships we sail in...
Five for the symbols on our shields...
Six for the Saxons that we've killed...
Seven for the wenches that we've... *known*...
Eight for the gold we've stolen...
Nine for the cities that we've sacked...
Ten for mighty Odin...
Eleven for bright Valhalla...
Twelve for the gods in Asgard...

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Six for the scattered Saxons...
Five for the fine shieldmaidens...
Four for chosen slain...
Three, three, we're Vi-i-i-ikings!
Two, two, the Christian monks lying in their blood, oh...
One we go to Lindisfarne and burn it to the ground, oh!

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Stickjock

Snorri Blóðdrekkr ór Óðinslundi

To the tune of *Asshole* by Denis Leary

Spoken:

Gentlefolks, I'd like to sing a song about the tournament scene;
About me, about you;
About the way our fighters' hearts beat way down in the bottom of our breastplates;
About that sweaty feeling we get on the inside of our jupons;
Maybe below the jupon, maybe in the sub-jupon area;
Maybe in the short-ribs, maybe in the kidney-belt,
Maybe even in the cup;
We don't know.

I'm just a quiet young lord in a fairly new group.
We haven't any Old Farts with alphabet soup.
I like feasting, and dancing, and madrigals too;
Got my own fancy banner, in a nice shade of blue.
I do all my sewing, and calligraphy too;
I make my own feast-gear, and a lovely home brew.
But sometimes that just ain't enough to keep a lord like me interested, *O nay, no way, uh uh!*
No, I've gotta go out and knock holes in someone else's defense, *O yay, lay on, pray fight fair!*

I like to count bruises and revel in pain,
I think that my helm is too tight for my brain,
I'm a stickjock, *he's a stickjock, he's a stickjock!*
I'm a stickjock, *he's a stickjock, such a stickjock!*

I have blue-jean leggings, and white-sneakered feet,
I wear an old sweaty gambeson in the mid-summer heat,
I'm a stickjock, *he's a stickjock, he's a stickjock!*
I'm a stickjock, *he's the world's biggest stickjock!*

And then when my swordblows find unarmoured places,
There's impolite language from grimacing faces,
I'm a stickjock, *he's a stickjock, he's a stickjock!*
I'm a stickjock, *he's a really tough stickjock!*

Maybe I should have accepted that blow;
It left a great dent in the bridge of my nose.
Am I upset if my rhino-rep grows?
Naaay!

I'm a stickjock, *he's a stickjock, he's a stickjock!*
I'm a stickjock, *he's the world's baddest stickjock!*

Monologue, obnoxiousissimo:

You know what I'm gonna do? I'm gonna get myself a seventeen-year-old, bubble-gum-popping Valley girl, bottle blonde, in a bunny-fur bikini and fluoro-coloured chain mail lingerie and a Viking helmet with fur-rimmed horns on it. Huzzah! And I'm gonna let her follow me around saying things like "Wow, fer sure!" and "Totally radical, dude!", slurping down slushees from the convenience store in the two-litre, jumbo, movie-promotional cups; and then when she's done slurping down her artificially sweetened cola slushee, she'll unzip the Velcro™ on her fake fur leopard-skin pouch, wipe her lips with a towelette, say "Icky!" and pass me the mobile phone so I can accept an incoming call, and there ain't a BoD-damned thing anyone can do about it. Y'know why? Because I'll be the King, that's why! Four words: by-Right-of-Arms-King! Ok? Laurels, Knights, Pelicans, they can have all the meetings they want. They can have a big meeting right there in the middle of Pennsic War and it won't make a lick of difference because I'll be the King! Ok? Viking Jack's not here, he's sleeping. As soon as he fell asleep we took his armour and when he wakes up he's gonna be purty upset. Y'know why? Have you ever seen a purple plastic sequin? Well, we sewed fifteen million of those suckers on his armour; that's how upset Jack's gonna be! I'm gonna get Viking Jack and Rhino Mick and Bossy Bob (*Hold!*) and Florentine Fred (*Hold!*) and a barrel of mead (*Hold!*) and drive down to Ansteorra (*Hold!*) and...

You know, you really are a stickjock!
Why don't you just armour up and lay on, pal?

I'm a stickjock, *he's a stickjock, he's a stickjock!*
I'm a stickjock, *he's the world's biggest stickjock!*
S! T I! K J! O K! Everybody! S! T I! K J! O K! (Stick-jo-ock, jo-ock, jo-ock!)

I'm a stickjock, and I'm proud of it.

Once I Had A Sweetheart

Anonymous

Once I had a sweetheart, but now I have none.
She's gone and she's left me, to weep and to moan,
She's gone and she's left me, another to see,
But I'll soon find another, much better than she.

Green grows the laurel, soft falls the dew.
Sorry was I love at parting from you.
Sorry was I love at parting from you.
But I'll change the green laurel to violets of blue.

I pass by her window, both early and late.
The look that she gives me, well it makes my heart break.
The look that she gives me, a thousand would kill.
'Though she hates and detests me, I love that girl still.

I wrote her a letter, on red rosy lines.
She wrote me an answer, all twisted and twined,
Saying, "Keep your love letters, and I'll keep mine,"
Saying, "You write to your love, and I'll write to mine."

Well, oft times I wonder why young girls love men,
And oft times I wonder why young men love them,
For to my own knowledge, and it's well I should know,
Young girls are deceivers, wherever they go.

Pastime With Good Company

Henry VIII of England

Pastime with good company
I love, and shall until I die.
Gruch who lust but none deny,
So, God be pleased, thus live will I.
For my pastance, hunt, sing, and dance, my heart is set
All goodly sport, for my comfort, who shall me let?

Youth must have some dalliance,
Of good or ill some pastance.
Company methinks then best,
All thoughts and fancies to digest.
For idleness is chief mistress of vices all
Then who can say but mirth and play is best of all?

On Ilkley Moor

Anonymous

Where hast thou been since I saw thee? (I saw thee?)
On Ilkley Moor ba'at hat.
Where hast thou been since I saw thee?
(Where hast thou been since I saw thee?)
Where hast thou been since I saw thee?
On Ilkley Moor ba'at hat (ba'at hat)
On Ilkley Moor ba'at hat (ba'at hat)
On Ilkley Moor ba'at hat

Tha's been a-courting, Mary Jane...

Company with honesty,
Is virtue, vices to flee.
Company is good and ill,
But every man hath his free will.
The best ensue, the worst eschew, my mind shall be
Virtue to use, vice to refuse, thus shall I use me.

There thee'll catch thy death of cold...
Then we shall have to bury thee...
Then t'worms shall come and eat thee up...
Then ducks shall come and eat up t'worms...
Then we shall come and eat up ducks...
Then we shall have our old one back...
There is a moral to this tale...
Don't go a-courting Mary Jane...

The Raven Banner

Malkin Gray and Peregrynne Windrider

Sigurd, the Jarl of the Orkney Isles,
Has called to his banner a Viking band
And sailed to Dublin to make himself
King of the Irish lands.

But crowns are never so quickly won,
The Norns they well know.
The king of the Irish blocks our way.
We must to battle go.

The Raven Banner of the Orkney Isles
Brings luck in battle but its bearer dies.
Two men have fallen 'neath its wings today,
But still the raven flies.

The Jarl bids a third man to take it up.
The third man answers, "No!
The devil's your own, take it up yourself,
And back to battle go."

"'Tis fitting the beggar should bear the bag,"
Replied the Jarl, "And I'll do so here."
He fought with the banner tied around his waist,
And fell to an Irish spear.

He died and the Irish broke our lines.
We had no chance but flight.
But I'm not hurried, it's a long way home.
I won't get there tonight.

The Norns have woven a bloody web,
A tapestry made of guts and bone.
And parcelled it out the Orkney host;
Our day in Ireland's done.

The grey wolf howls and the raven soars
Beyond the arrow's flight.
And Odin is waiting beyond the fray
For some of us tonight.

The Far Cup, And I

Eric of Tobar Mhuire

Oh, I'm a knight, yes I'm a knight of the good round table.
Oh, I'm a lord, yes I'm a lord of all I see.
Oh, and I fight, yes I fight any time I'm able.
Till I'm gored, or I've scored the victory.

And now I'm gone, I'm so far gone, on an expedition.
I'm on a quest, a sacred quest for the holy grail.
This here's my song, so sing along, it's my rendition,
I'm the best, but to stay the best, I dare not fail!

The far cup and I is the plot, it's a sad and sorry lot,
It's a tale of hard travail and adversity.
For to find that distant mug, I fear my own deep grave I've dug,
But I vow to bring that old far cup to me!

Now I recall, I well recall, when I heard the mention,
Of the grail, the Saviour's grail and a vision grand.
That goblet's call became my all, and my intention
Was thus to sail upon the trail to the holy land.

The far cup and I, is the goal, this I swore upon my soul,
To be first to quench my thirst from a holy stein!
But those early bragging dreams have slipped away from me,
it seems,
And I wonder if that far cup will be mine.

I found a home away from home to begin my seeking.
I gathered round good men and sound to play the game.
But I feel today, that all that they ever do is speaking:
And I'm bound, I can tell I'm bound to become the same!

The far cup and I, where'd it go, can these planners ever know?
Do we need to write and read for a thousand years?
Yes, I know it's right to plan, but I'm not a youthful man,
And the far cup's getting further in my fears.

Now I'm bogged, completely bogged, my dreams are vapour.
Every step I try to step is a chore for me.
It must be logged, the ocean's clogged with bits of paper.
No one's got pep, except for – yep! – the bureaucracy!

So far cup and I, this I say, to the blockheads in my way.
If your schemes have killed your dreams, why even try?
Life was worth the living once; this makes you happy,
then you're a dunce.
So grow a spine or you can all far cup and I.

Don't Let A Landsknecht

Eric of Tobar Mhuire

A nobleman true was the Baron of Spodd;
A strong man and fair, he behaved as he oughta.
But for all his obedience to King and to God,
The Baron was cursed and the curse was his daughter.
His daughter was fair as a midsummer morn,
There wasn't a fellow not longing to court 'er.
But her favour the sleeve of a knight did adorn,
For a Landsknecht had taken and married his daughter.

You can spit in the ale of a Viking berserk,
You can lead a crusade to a meaningless slaughter,
You can holler abuse at an armour clad Turk,
But don't let a Landsknecht marry your daughter.

The Baron prepared for a righteous crusade,
He gathered some men who were not scared of water.
From Spodd off to Saxony proudly they made,
To capture the Landsknecht and rescue the daughter.
The ocean was grey and the sky full of rain,
The clouds declared war and they never gave quarter,
The hailstones fell till they addled his brain,
But all he could see was the face of his daughter.

The Baron arrived at the doors of a keep.
He picked up a knife and dismembered the porter.
He massacred guards and garrotted the sheep,
And fought for the life of his beautiful daughter.
But when to the bedroom he ran at full tilt,
No sign of a Landsknecht to capture and slaughter.
His daughter was wed to a man in a kilt,
For a Scotsman had captured the heart of his daughter!

So spit in the ale of a Viking berserk,
And lead a crusade to a meaningless slaughter,
Even holler abuse at an armour clad Turk,
There's worse things than Landsknechts
to marry your daughter!

The Cutty Wren

Anonymous

“Where are you going” said Miller to Moulder.

“We cannot tell you,” said Cecil to Bose.

“We’re off to the greenwood,” said John the Red Nose.

“We’re off to the greenwood,” said John the Red Nose.

“What will you do there?” said Miller to Moulder.

“We cannot tell you,” said Cecil to Bose.

“We’ll shoot the Cutty Wren,” said John the Red Nose.

“We’ll shoot the Cutty Wren,” said John the Red Nose.

“How will you shoot it?” said Miller to Moulder.

“We cannot tell you,” said Cecil to Bose.

“With bows and with arrows,” said John the Red Nose.

“With bows and with arrows,” said John the Red Nose.

“That will not do then,” said Miller to Moulder.

“What will we do then?” said Cecil to Bose.

“Great guns and great cannon,” said John the Red Nose.

“Great guns and great cannon,” said John the Red Nose.

“How will you fetch her?” said Miller to Moulder.

“We cannot tell you,” said Cecil to Bose.

“On four strong men’s shoulders,” said John the Red Nose.

“On four strong men’s shoulders,” said John the Red Nose.

“That will not do then,” said Miller to Moulder.

“What will we do then?” said Cecil to Bose.

“Great carts and great wagons,” said John the Red Nose.

“Great carts and great wagons,” said John the Red Nose.

“How will you cut her?” said Miller to Moulder.

“We cannot tell you,” said Cecil to Bose.

“With knives and with forks,” said John the Red Nose.

“With knives and with forks,” said John the Red Nose.

“That will not do then,” said Miller to Moulder.

“What will we do then?” said Cecil to Bose.

“Great hatchets and cleavers,” said John the Red Nose.

“Great hatchets and cleavers,” said John the Red Nose.

“How will you boil her?” said Miller to Moulder.

“We cannot tell you,” said Cecil to Bose.

“In pots and in kettles,” said John the Red Nose.

“In pots and in kettles,” said John the Red Nose.

“That will not do then,” said Miller to Moulder.

“What will we do then?” said Cecil to Bose.

“Use bloody big brass cauldrons,” said John the Red Nose.

“Use bloody big brass cauldrons,” said John the Red Nose.

“Who’ll get the spare ribs?” said Miller to Moulder.

“We cannot tell you,” said Cecil to Bose.

“Give ’em all to the poor,” said John the Red Nose.

“Give ’em all to the poor,” said John the Red Nose.

Mattie Groves

Traditional

One high, one high, one holiday
The best day of the year
Little Mattie Groves to church did go,
God's holy word to hear.

Well the first to enter was the lady in white,
The next the lady in blue
The last to come was Lord Arlen's wife,
The flower among the few.

She cast her eye on little Mattie Groves,
Little Mattie Groves on she
"What would you give, my fine young man
To spend one night with me?"

"I dare not come, I dare not go,
I dare not for my life
For I see by the ring on your finger, you're
The great Lord Arlen's wife."

"So what if I am Lord Arlen's wife?
Lord Arlen is not at home
He is gone to London town
To fetch King Henry's throne."

Well, a little footpage was standing by,
He took to his heels and he run
He run till he come to the waterside,
He bent his breast and he swum.

"What news, what news, my little footpage,
Is my castle burning down?
Or is my lady brought to bed
Of a daughter or a son?"

"No, your castle it is not burning down,
You have no daughter or son
Little Mattie Groves is in bed with your wife
They lie as they were one."

Well they hadn't been in bed about two hours
I'm sure it was not three
Lord Arlen appeared in their chamber
Standing at their bedfeet.

"And how do you like my pillows, Milord?
And how do you like my sheets?
And how do you like that fair young maid
Who lies in your arms asleep?"

"It's well that I like your pillows, Milord,
It's well that I like your sheets
But it's best of all I love this fair young maid
Who lies in my arms asleep."

"Get up, get up, little Mattie Groves,
Get dressed as fast as you can
It'll ne'er be said in all England
I slew a naked man!"

"Oh, I can't get up, I won't get up,
I dare not for my life
For at your side hang two broadswords
And I've not a pocket knife."

"If at my side hang two broadswords
They cost me deep in the purse
But you shall have the better of the two,
And I shall have the worse."

"And you shall strike the very first blow
And strike it like a man
And I shall strike the very next blow
And I'll kill you if I can."

The very first blow little Mattie struck
And he struck Lord Arlen sore
The second blow Lord Arlen struck,
Little Mattie struck no more.

He's taken his lady by the hand
And placed her on his knee
Saying "Who do you like the best, my dear,
Little Mattie Groves or me?"

"It's well that I like your rosy red cheeks,
It's well that I like your chin
But it's best that I love little Mattie Groves,
Than you or all your kin."

He's taken her by the lily white hand
And led her through the hall
He's taken her to an upper room
And killed her before them all.

"Go place these lovers in one grave,
Go place them deep within
But place my lady on the top,
For she was of noble kin."

My Son, I've Been A Rover

Karl Faustus von Aachen

Son sings:

“Oh Father, may I marry?

Oh Father, hear my plea!

I've met a lovely lady and she's just the girl for me!

Oh, Father hear my pleading,

Oh, Father soothe my sighs...”

But all his prayers are gone for naught, for thus his Dad replies:

Father sings:

“My son, I've been a rover since I was barely grown,

And many a lady's wall I've climbed when the lady was alone.

That fair young maid you pine for, I cannot soothe your sighs:

As fair as fair indeed she is, for she has your Father's eyes!”

Son sings:

“Oh Father, may I marry?

Oh Father, hear my plea!

I've met a *second* lady and she's just the girl for me!

Oh, Father hear my pleading,

Oh, Father calm my fears...”

But all his prayers are gone for naught, for this is what he hears:

Father sings:

“My son, I've been a rover since I was barely grown,

And many a lady's wall I've climbed when the lady was alone.

That fair young maid you pine for, I cannot calm your fears:

As fair as fair indeed she is, for she has your Father's ears!”

Son sings:

“Oh Father, may I marry?

Oh Father, hear my plea!

I’ve met a *third* young lady and she’s just the girl for me!

Oh, Father hear my pleading,

Oh, Father ease my woes...”

But all his prayers are gone for naught, for this is how it goes:

Father sings:

“My son, I’ve been a rover since I was barely grown,

And many a lady’s wall I’ve climbed when the lady was alone.

That fair young maid you pine for, I cannot ease your woes:

As fair as fair indeed she is, for she has your Father’s nose!”

Son sings:

“Oh Mother, I’m despondent!

I’m wrecked, to say the least!

I think I’ll quit the worldly life and train to be a priest!

It seems that I’m related

To every girl in town...”

But here his Mother gave a smile and sang away his frown:

Mother sings:

“My son, I’ve been a rover since I was barely grown,

And many a young man’s wall I’ve climbed when the young man was alone.

Those fair young maids you pine for, go marry one with no shame,

For all you have of your Father dear is nothing but his name!”

Viking Men

Author Unknown

To the tune of *Jingle Bells*

Dashing through the town, our firebrands burning bright,
Striking foemen down, setting things alight,
Swords on axes ring, making spirits bright,
What fun it is to laugh and sing a *slaying* song tonight!

We're viking men, viking men, plundering your shore.
Another dragon ship sails in, dispatching twenty more.
We're viking men, viking men, axes red with gore,
Shouting out our battle cries and singing praise to Thor.

See your harbour fair, filled with our dragon ships,
See men with flame-red hair, and foam on bearded lips.
We come at break of day, to depredate your land,
And then when we have gone away no unburnt building stands.

... dispatching forty more...

We're carrying away whatever we admire.
Your forces to delay, we've set the rest on fire.
With you we've had our will, and varied was your cost.
We sacked the convent on the hill and more than gold was lost!

... dispatching eighty more...

There is one simple way to keep us from your shore.
If you'll the Danegeld pay, we'll be your friends once more.
This act you will not rue, you'll have no cause to fear,
Until the next instalment's due when we come back next year!

... dispatching thousands more...

The Chandler's Shop

Broadside 1819-1844 (Pitts, Printer); Roud Folksong Index V26879

Oh, I went into the chandler's shop, some candles for to buy.
I looked around the chandler's shop but no one did I spy.
I was disappointed and some angry words I said,
Then I heard the sound of a ●●● up above my head.
Yes, I heard the sound of a ●●● up above my head.

Well I was slick and I was quick, and up the stairs I sped,
And much to my surprise I found the chandler's wife in bed;
And with her was another man of most gigantic size,
And they were having a ●●● right before my eyes.
Yes, they were having a ●●● right before my eyes.

When the fun was over and done and the lady raised her head,
Quite surprised was she to find me standing by the bed.
"If you will be discreet, my lad, if you would be so kind,
I'll let you come up for some ●●● whenever you feel inclined.
Yes, I'll let you come up for some ●●● whenever you feel inclined."

So, many a day and many a night when the chandler wasn't home,
To get myself some candles to the chandler's shop I'd roam.
But nary a one she gave to me, but gave to me instead,
A little bit more of the ●●● to light my way to bed.
Just a little bit more of the ●●● to light my way to bed.

So, all you married men take heed, if ever you come to town,
If you must leave your wife alone, be sure to tie her down.
Or, if you would be kind to her, just lay her on the floor,
And give her so much of that ●●● she doesn't need any more!
Yes, give her so much of that ●●● she doesn't need any more!

The ●●● in this song is usually performed as a quick triple clap or stamp, but provided you match the correct rhythm, you can pretty much do anything that suits the mood. (I tell my kids it's a secret code for "chocolate cake".)

Oh! The Baron

Karl Faustus von Aachen

A feisty lad he was, and of the ladies very fond:
The short, the tall, the in-between, the dark, the red, the blonde.
He swore he would bewitch them with his mighty magic wand.
But oh the Baron, oh the Baron, oh!

“Be mindful,” said the Baron, “for there is no other way:
“Go courting with the ladies, but take heed of what they say.
“A ‘yes’ can be a wondrous thing, but ‘nay’ is always ‘nay’,”
Said oh the Baron, oh the Baron, oh!

“I may be young and handsome sir, where you are old and wise,
“But still I have the wit to pierce a lady’s fay disguise!
“A ‘no’ may be upon her lips, a ‘yes’ within her eyes...”
Then oh the Baron, oh the Baron, oh!

And oh the Baron’s hairy, hairy chin, his hairy chin!
And oh the Baron’s mighty smile, his mighty tongue within!
He taught the boy his error, and he taught the boy his sin!
And oh the Baron, oh the Baron, oh!

“I’ll let you speak again, for you deserve a second chance.”
But still the lad was resolute, despite a nervous glance:
“A simple word should not obstruct the roadway to romance...”
Then oh the Baron, oh the Baron, oh!

And oh the Baron’s hairy, hairy chin, his hairy chin!
And oh the Baron’s mighty smile, his mighty tongue within!
He taught the boy his error, and he taught the boy his sin!
And oh the Baron, oh the Baron, oh!

A third and final time the Baron told the boy the truth,
In due consideration of his ignorance and youth:
“To take what’s not been given is an act I call uncouth.”
Said oh the Baron, oh the Baron, oh!

And here the lad considered, ere he made his third reply:
“There’s more to love and courtship than the chase, I can’t deny
“But when it’s all considered, ‘tis a game and hence a lie...”
Then oh the Baron, oh the Baron, oh!

And oh the Baron’s hairy, hairy chin, his hairy chin!
And oh the Baron’s mighty smile, his mighty tongue within!
He taught the boy his error, and he taught the boy his sin!
And oh the Baron, oh the Baron, oh!

So off the lad meandered on his worn and weary way
And if any saw his features this is all he had to say:
“I’m having an adjustment to my attitude today...”
And oh the Baron, oh the Baron, *oh!*

The Rattlin' Bog

Roud Folksong Index #129

Oh-oh, the rattlin' bog, the bog down in the valley, oh!
Oh-oh, the rattlin' bog, the bog down in the valley, oh!

In the bog there was a **tree**,
A rare tree, a rattlin' tree.
Tree in the bog,
And the bog down in the valley, oh!

On the tree there was a **trunk**,
A rare trunk, a rattlin' trunk.
Trunk on the tree,
And the tree in the bog,
And the bog down in the valley, oh!

On the trunk there was a **limb**,
A rare limb, a rattlin' limb.
Limb on the trunk,
And the trunk on the tree,
And the tree in the bog,
And the bog down in the valley, oh!

And on the limb there was a **branch**,
A rare branch, a rattlin' branch.
Branch on the limb,
And the limb on the trunk,
And the trunk on the tree,
And the tree in the bog,
And the bog down in the valley, oh!

On the branch there was a **twig**...

On the twig there was a **leaf**...

On the leaf there was a **nest**...

In the nest there was an **egg**...

From the egg there came a **bird**...

From the bird there came a **feather**...

From the feather there came a **bed**...

On the bed there was a **woman**...

On the woman there was a **man**...

From the man there came a **seed**...

From the seed there grew a **tree**...

Lord McGee

Karl Faustus von Aachen

Here's a newcomer come to her very first feast,
Her garb is a valiant try, at least:
Her velvet's crushed and there's miles of lace
But she's here, and that's a start.
And here's the old fart, Lord McGee,
With opinions he'll happily share for free,
Critiquing the newcomer to her face,
And politely breaking her heart.

And I watch as another one slips away;
Another lass won't be a Queen one day.
And I wonder if raising our standards high
Is worth maybe killing them dead.
And I ought to take Lord McGee aside,
Give him advice, maybe tan his hide,
If his arrogant air didn't leave me shy,
Then here's what I might have said:

Lord McGee don't make me angry:
You wouldn't like me when I'm angry.
Lord McGee don't make me angry:
You wouldn't like me at all.
Lord McGee don't make me angry:
You wouldn't like me when I get angry.
Lord McGee don't make me angry:
You wouldn't like me, you wouldn't like me,
You wouldn't like me at all.

Here's a brand new herald in his very first bout,
On the tourney field, just having a shout.
His projection's crap and he mangles names,
But it's *still* not a bad first try.
And there's McGee in his shiny helm,
To explain how we do things in this realm.
The new boy's there with his public shame:
Volunteered, now he wonders why.

And I watch as the light in his eyes grows dim;
We need more heralds but it won't be him.
And I wonder if teaching the proper ways
Is worth making everyone small.
And I ought to take Lord McGee aside,
Give him advice, maybe tan his hide,
But a minute with him makes my eyes glaze,
And I might just stand and call:

Lord McGee don't make me angry:
You wouldn't like me when I'm angry.
Lord McGee don't make me angry:
You wouldn't like me at all.
Lord McGee don't make me angry:
You wouldn't like me when I get angry.
Lord McGee don't make me angry:
You wouldn't like me, you wouldn't like me,
You wouldn't like me at all.

Here's a blazing fire and a healthy crowd,
All singing their guts out, strong and loud,
From *Gaudete* to the *Stickjock* song
And everything in between.
And Lord McGee, with ears assaulted,
Into the circle catapulted,
Swears that we're doing it all quite wrong,
And frequently obscene.

And I watch as some of the singers cringe,
But a few take on a darker tinge;
There's a lot of the kingdom started here,
With a song and a tale or two.
So *this* time I take McGee aside,
To give him advice, maybe save his hide,
"You meddle with bards, have cause to fear,"
It's a warning, old and true.

And Lord McGee, he made me angry:
He didn't like me when I'm angry.
Lord McGee, he made me angry:
He didn't like me at all.
Lord McGee, he made me angry:
He didn't like me when I got angry.
Lord McGee, he made me angry...
You don't see him around any more.

The Last Lochacian Herald

Karl Faustus von Aachen

To the tune of *The Last Saskatchewan Pirate* by the Arrogant Worms

Well, I used to be a newbie, had a lot to fill my days,
A-cooking and calligraphy and archery displays,
But one September morning as I sat amid the crowd,
A double-peer espied me and she told me, “Gosh, you’re loud”.
A voice like I’d been blessed with was a useful tool
To let it stay unutilised, I’d surely be a fool!
I ought to see if anyone could fit me to a role:
Confucius say, no man can dig himself out of a hole!

Then I thought: who gives a damn if there are tender ears around?
I’m gonna be a herald, and make loud, obnoxious sounds!

’Cause it’s an oh-yay, oy-vey, mispronounce a name,
Lose your registration and never take the blame
And it’s an oh hey, no way, everyone look out,
When you see the golden trumpets and you hear the mighty shout.

Well I learned the way to run a court, and let my voice be heard
Occasion’ly the king would talk, but really that’s absurd
The heralds are the royal voice, all eyes are shining onto
And kings are gone in half a year, so we do what we want to.
A superduke politely tried to register a name,
We gave him books in Greek and Dutch and said, “Just play the game!
Fill out your forms in triplicate, be sure it’s fully checked,
It shouldn’t take us more than half a decade to reject.”

Well, Blazon is our language, it's a form of mangled French,
You'd think it was invented to impress a comely wench.
But listen up, I'll tell you all the reason why it's used:
It's 'cause it makes it easier to keep you all confused!
A herald's staff, a tabard green, and nerds for company
We sit around inventing rules to thwart the royalty.
Your favourite charge is disallowed, by Laurel Queen's decree;
If you wanna get your coat of arms, you gotta get by me!

Well the herald life's appealing but it's also pretty hard.
You have to watch the fights and write the winner on a card.
And when you call a Gaelic name to combat for the round,
You need to gargle gravel first, to get the proper sound.
Now first remove is coming, there are servers I should call;
I stand up straight and pompous at the far end of the hall.
I'm trained in voice projection, the better to be heard:
And so you know I'll flerble grarble borgle every word!

Throw

Celsa

To the tune of *Throw Your Arms Around Me* by the Hunters & Collectors

I will come to you in combat.
I will rout you from your keep.
I will hit you in four places,
Hit your head but not your feet.
We will beat the life out of you,
You'll make us laugh and make us cry.
And we will never forget it.
We'll do honour to the Crown,
And shout "Huzzah!" to the blue Autumn sky

We may never fight again,
So armour up and let's get started.
With your bow,
Loose arrows at me.
With your bow,
Loose arrows at me.

When the fighting is all over,
Good gentles we will set a feast.
There will be music and dancing,
And bold tales of noble feats.
We'll feast on many kinds of meat,
And share sweet jugs of wine,
And we will never forget it.
We'll do honour to the court,
And shout "Huzzah!" to the cold, moonlit sky.

We may never feast again,
So pass the bread and let's get started.
For tomorrow,
We're back to fighting.
For tomorrow,
We're back to fighting.

I Am A SCAdian

By Jacques des Glaces & Bess of Buckland

To the tune of *I Am Australian*, by Bruce Woodley and Dobe Newton

I hearken from an age of yore,
From the wild Scythian plains.

A man of the Renaissance,
Or of Medieval name.

I've played over a thousand years,
I watched the Kingdoms come.
For over forty years I've been
The first true SCAdian.

I came upon a Viking ship,
Weighed down with heavy chain.
I crossed the bridge, withstood the charge,
And fought on through the rain.

I'm a raider, I'm a halberdier,
By God! I'm having fun!
A newbie, then a veteran,
I became a SCAdian.

I'm the daughter of a Laurel,
Who sought to learn it all.
My father was a Pelican
Who'd never let me fall.

I'm the child of a great white-belt.
I saw the first Crown won.

I'm an artist, I'm an archer,
I am a SCAdian.

We are one, but we are many
And from all the Known World we have come.
We live the Dream, and sing with one voice,
"I am, you are, we are all SCAdian."

I'm a teller of stories,
I'm a singer of songs.
I work in a hot smithy
And I wield the glowing tongs.
I'm a corsair on a pirate ship,
I'm a Mongol or a Hun.
Taught the Galliard of Good Queen Bess,
I am a SCAdian.

I'm the hot air from the Tavern,
I'm the crack of campfire flames.
I'm the dust upon the battlefield;
Bright pennants on the plain.
I am the Crown, I am the peers,
The heralds, every one.
The spirit of this great game
I am a SCAdian.

We are one, but we are many,
And from all the Known World we have come.
We live the Dream, and sing with one voice.
"I am, you are, we are all SCAdian."
"I am, you are, we are all SCAdian."

The Nasty Song

By Eric of Tobar Mhuire and Karl Faustus von Aachen

To the tune of *Widcombe Fair*, by way of Flanders and Swann's *Commonwealth Fair*.

The Fairholme Park years

The Rowany Festival comes once a year –

Dust, mud, sunburn and plague!

We've barely recovered and once more it's here –

I can't wait to get there again!

I can't wait to get there again!

Ten light-years of highway, packed up to the gills...

Surviving on caffeine and hayfever pills...

The autocrat panics and worries and frets...

And handles the local cops' regular threats...

The privies with lanterns gone black from the heat...

And splashes of thigh-burning lime on the seat...

The waterhole filled with obese ugly men...

Resounding with pained, icy screams now and then...

The government caught us, so now we set sail...

For the "excellent drainage" of Camp Silverdale...

The Silverdale (Tara) years

The "excellent drainage" cannot be denied –

Grass, mud, girl guides and rain!

Let's watch Alfar's camp-bed go past on the tide –

I can't wait to get there again!

I can't wait to get there again!

There's actual toilets, but don't shout hooray...

They'll only take ten or so people a day...

The locals are bogans, they all love our cars...

No Beemers or Mercs will escape without scars...

The old farts are grumpy: this site is too flat...

No ti-tree to trip you, what's fun about that?

The contract's exclusive - till Scout Jamboree...

Will Crossroads be better? Let's try it and see...

The Crossroads years

The Co-op's creating a village on site –

Dust, hills, guild halls and pain!

No river; no rainfall; so something's not right –

I can't wait to get there again!

I can't wait to get there again!

Your armour and underwear fill up with dust...

We'll look on the bright side – at least you won't rust...

The portaloos stink and they're blocked half the time...

I'm almost nostalgic for privies with lime...

Your money's been spent on that very nice hall...

Don't lean on it too hard, you'll go through the wall...

The council won't let us have fire or flame...

But Webers and Maglites just don't seem the same...

Five long years of asthma and fire bans and dust...

This new site at Glenworth is nicer, we trust...

The Glenworth Valley years and beyond

The Valley is lovely and spacious and free –

Mush, slush, rivers and rain!

But now the drought's broken, let's go to Plan B –

I can't wait to get there again!

I can't wait to get there again!

They said there were leeches we needed to stomp...

So where did they go? Guess they drowned in the swamp...

The composting toilets are best in their class...

But sadly designed for the smaller sized arse...

The trail-bike riders come by for a peek...

We're the funniest spectacle *they've* seen all week...

If rain doesn't suit you, just wait half a day...

The sunshine's bad too, but at least it's not grey...

The truth of the matter's abundantly clear...

We'll put up with anything, Festival's here!

A Drop Of Nelson's Blood

Traditional

Oh, a drop of Nelson's blood wouldn't do us any harm,
No, a drop of Nelson's blood wouldn't do us any harm,
A drop of Nelson's blood wouldn't do us any harm,
And we'll all hang on behind!

So we'll roll the old chariot along,
We'll roll the old chariot along,
We'll roll the old chariot along,
And we'll all hang on behind!

Oh, a little mug of beer wouldn't do us any harm...

Oh, a plate of Irish stew wouldn't do us any harm...

Oh a little slug of gin wouldn't do us any harm...

Oh a night upon the shore wouldn't do us any harm...

Oh a little drop of wine wouldn't do us any harm...

Oh, a nice fat cook wouldn't do us any harm...

Oh, a long spell in jail wouldn't do us any harm...

Oh, a nice watch below wouldn't do us any harm...

Oh, a night with the gals wouldn't do us any harm...

The Song Of The Men's Side

Rudyard Kipling

Once we feared The Beast — when he followed us we ran,
Ran very fast though we knew
It was not right that The Beast should master Man;
But what could we Flint-workers do?
The Beast only grinned at our spears round his ears —
Grinned at the hammers that we made;
But now we will hunt him for the life with the Knife —
And this is the Buyer of the Blade!

Room for his shadow on the grass — let it pass!
To left and right-stand clear!
This is the Buyer of the Blade — be afraid!
This is the great god Tyr!

Tyr thought hard till he hammered out a plan,
For he knew it was not right
(And it is not right) that The Beast should master Man;
So he went to the Children of the Night.
He begged a Magic Knife of their make for our sake.
When he begged for the Knife they said:
“The price of the Knife you would buy is an eye!”
And that was the price he paid.

Tell it to the Barrows of the Dead — run ahead!
Shout it so the Women's Side can hear!
This is the Buyer of the Blade — be afraid!
This is the great god Tyr!

Our women and our little ones may walk on the Chalk,
As far as we can see them and beyond,
We shall not be anxious for our sheep when we keep
Tally at the shearing-pond.
We can eat with both our elbows on our knees, if we please,
We can sleep after meals in the sun,
For Shepherd-of-the-Twilight is dismayed at the Blade,
Feet-in-the-Night have run!
Dog-without-a-Master goes away (Hai, Tyr, aie!),
Devil-in-the-Dusk has run!

Room for his shadow on the grass — let it pass!
To left and to right — stand clear!
This is the Buyer of the Blade — be afraid!
This is the great god Tyr!

Sir Agro Went A-Roving

Karl Faustus von Aachen

Sir Agro went a-roving around the Central West.
He met with Dukes and heroes, that mighty Kingdom's best
Then one day on the listfield, he found he'd met his match:
A young unbelted fighter who Sir Agro could not catch!
(And he was singing...)

He's just a random blackbelt,
While I'm a famous Knight!
It shouldn't be too difficult
To trounce him in a fight!
He's nothing but a novice,
And I've been training well...
So why's he got me feeling
Exactly like a pell?

They fought it best-of-seven; he started out OK.
It wasn't really serious, but just a bit of play.
But that unbelted fighter, he set Sir Agro straight,
With raps and snaps and loving taps at quite a frightful rate.
(And he was singing...)

Sir Agro beat him three times, and crashed and died three more.
He only needed one more kill to even out the score.
But that unbelted fighter, he moved like he was oiled.
Sir Agro said, "Let's call it quits! You've fairly got me foiled!"
(And he was singing...)

Much later in the feast hall, Sir Agro got to meet
That same unbelted fighter who he couldn't hardly beat:
None other than a Viscount and a Knight of Kingdom West...
Sir Agro said, "It's good to see you finally fully dressed!"
(And now he's singing...)

You're not a random blackbelt,
You are a famous Knight!
This might be why it's difficult
To trounce you in a fight!
You're much more than a novice,
And I *have* been training well...
Thank God I can stop feeling
Exactly like a pell!

One Misty Moisty Morning

Traditional

One misty moisty morning when cloudy was the weather,
I met with an old man a-clothed all in leather.
He was clothed all in leather with a cap beneath his chin,
Singing how do you do and how do you do
And how do you do again?

This rustic was a thresher as on his way he hied,
And with a leather bottle fast buckled by his side.
He wore no shirt upon his back but wool unto his skin,
Singing how do you do and how do you do
And how do you do again?

I went a little further and there I met a maid,
A-going a-milking, a-milking, sir, she said.
Then I began to compliment and she began to sing,
Saying how do you do and how do you do
And how do you do again?

I having time and leisure, I spent a vacant hour
A-telling of my treasure while sitting in the bower.
With many kind embraces I stroked her double chin,
Singing how do you do and how do you do
And how do you do again?

I said that I would married be and she would be my bride,
And long we should not tarry and twenty things beside.
I'll plough and sow, reap and mow and you shall sit and spin,
Singing how do you do and how do you do
And how do you do again?

Her parents then consented, all parties were agreed,
Her portion thirty shillings, we married were with speed.
Then Will the Piper he did play whilst others dance and sing,
Singing how do you do and how do you do
And how do you do again?

Then lusty Ralph and Robin with many damsels gay
Did ride on Roan and Dobbin to celebrate the day.
And when they met together their caps they off did fling,
Singing how do you do and how do you do
And how do you do, and how do you do again?

High Among The Heather

Michael Spencer

To the tune of *The Blacksmith*

A worm he met a lark, high among the heather.
The lark said to the worm, "Let us talk together."
And she sang so sweet and clear, with her voice so tender,
And the lark she killed the worm, high among the heather.

The lark she met a hawk, of the shiny feather.
The hawk said to the lark, "Let us fly together."
And they flew so high on the wind, as they soared in splendour,
And the hawk he killed the lark, high above the heather.

The hawk he met a fox, and he looked so clever.
The fox said to the hawk, "Let us dine together."
So the hawk flew down to the ground, as a bird should never,
And the fox he killed the hawk, high among the heather.

The fox he met a man, with fine boots of leather.
The man said to the fox, "Let us run together."
"You have fine fur," said the man, "warm in cold weather."
And he killed the fox as they ran, high among the heather.

The man he told a Thief of his trick so clever.
"That is fine fur," said the Thief, "and fine boots of leather."
And he killed the man, with his knife, there among the heather.
And the worm said to the man, "Let us lie together."
And the worm said to the man, "Let us lie together."

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Coventry Carol

Traditional, at least as far back as 1534

Lully lulla, thou little tiny child,
By by lully lullay.

O sisters too, how may we do
For to preserve this day.
This poor youngling, for whom we do sing
By by lully lullay.

Herod the King, in his raging,
Charged he hath this day
His men of might, in his own sight,
All young children to slay.

That woe is me, poor child for thee,
And ever morn and day,
For thy parting, neither say nor sing,
By by lully lullay.

One Medieval Morning

Hrolf Herjolfssen

To the tune of One Misty Moisty Morning

One misty moisty morning, when cloudy was the weather,
I met with a young man, armoured all in leather.
He was armoured all in leather with a padded thing within,
Singing how do you do, and how do you do,
And how do you do again.

He said he was a fighter, to tourney he would stride,
And not an actor in a play, a thought he couldn't bide.
I'm from a big Society, where they do dance and sing,
Singing how do you do, and how do you do,
And how do you do again.

I went a little further and there I met a maid
And with her Tudor finery, her beauty was displayed.
"We're opening up the feast hall, you're welcome to come in."
Singing how do you do, and how do you do,
And how do you do again.

I entered in the feast hall, where banners were displayed.
"Oh pray put on some garb now, prithee, sir" she said.
A skirt to me she handed, it showed a lot of skin,
Singing how do you do, and how do you do,
And how do you do again.

This skirt she called a tunic, and gave me tights beside,
A fancy hat and dagger, that hung down at my side.
"All the lords do dress like this, the ladies for to win."
Singing how do you do, and how do you do,
And how do you do again.

I got into the costume (my friends would never see).
I'd have a little food now, and a drink or three.
A surprise there was in store now, as the feast begins,
Singing how do you do, and how do you do,
And how do you do again.

The room was full of people, four or five full score,
I soon knew plenty of them, I wanted to know more,
It seems that I was fated, a new life to begin,
Singing how do you do, and how do you do,
And how do you do again.

And now I don my armour, and to the field do go.
At taking up these customs, I trust I proved not slow.
A beauteous lady at my side, I hope her love to win,
Singing how do you do, and how do you do,
And how do you do, and how do you do again.

One Of Us

Marian of Heatherdale

Before I got to fighting (or when fighting got to me)
I looked to find examples on the field of chivalry.
I saw mighty arms much stronger than my arms would ever be,
And I thought perhaps the field was not for me.

But I stayed and watched the fighting 'til one figure stood apart,
In armour newly fashioned and a helm more pot than art.
But each blow was thrown with honour and a lightness of the heart,
So I took that step which soon became a start.

'Cause she was not the biggest fighter, nor one to raise a fuss,
But I remember being proud that she was one of us.
And we may never stand together in the shield-wall side by side,
But because of her I lift my sword with pride.

She was ladylike and lively, not the type you would expect,
With a braver heart than many and a slot-shot to respect.
I guess she'd once decided this was where she'd like to be,
And I thought if she could do it, why not me?

'Cause she was not the biggest fighter nor one to raise a fuss,
But I remember being proud that she was one of us.
And we may never stand together in the shield-wall side by side,
But because of her I lift my sword with pride.

So now as I gather armour, bits and pieces here and there,
I think about examples: how you act, and what you dare.
'Cause you never know who's watching or how far the story goes,
And where'er that Lady is I hope she knows.

'Cause she was not the biggest fighter, nor one to raise a fuss,
But I remember being proud that she was one of us.
And we may never stand together in the shield-wall side by side,
But because of her I lift my sword with pride.
We may never stand together in the shield-wall side by side,
But because of her I lift my sword with pride!

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The Barley Mow

Traditional

Now here's good luck to the gill-pot,
Good luck to the Barley Mow.
jolly good luck to the gill-pot,
Good luck to the Barley Mow.
The gill-pot,
Half-a gill,
Quarter-gill,
Nipperkin,
And a round bowl.
And here's good luck, good luck,
Good luck to the Barley Mow

Now here's good luck to the half-a-pint...
... pint-pot...
... the quart-pot...
... half-a-gallon...
... the gallon...
... half-a-barrel...
... the barrel...
... the landlord...
... the landlady...
... the daughter...
... the slavey...
... the brewer...
... the company...
... tavern...

Bedlam Boys

Traditional

For to see mad Tom of Bedlam,
Ten thousand miles I'd travel.
Mad Maudlin goes on dirty toes
For to save her shoes from gravel.

Still I sing bonnie boys, bonnie mad boys,
Bedlam boys are bonnie.
For they all go bare and they live by the air,
And they want no drink nor money.

I went down to Satan's kitchen,
For to get me food one morning.
And there I got souls piping hot,
All on the spit a-turning.

Me staff has murdered giants,
And me bag a long knife carries.
For to cut mince pies from children's thighs,
With which to feed the fairies.

The spirits, white as lightning,
Would on me travels guide me.
The moon would shake and the stars would quake,
When ever they espied me.

And when that I have murdered
The man in the moon to a powder,
His staff I'll break and his dog I'll shake,
And there'll howl no demon louder.

For to see mad Tom of Bedlam,
Ten thousand years I'd travel.
Mad Maudlin goes on dirty toes,
For to save her shoes from gravel.

Never Ye Mind

Eric of Tobar Mhuire

A lass I saw, a lady fair, with golden eyes and shining hair.
I asked the lass to walk with me, to sit beneath a spreading tree.
She spoke to me, deriding loud, her voice in scorn, her posture proud.
She cut me down, she cut me dead, and this is what that lady said:

“Well, never ye mind your walking ways,
And never ye mind your tree.
I’d sit alone a thousand days,
Before I’d sit with thee!”

A maid I met, as pale as milk, with skin as soft as Persian silk.
I made my suit, I plied my case, I sang to her with glowing face.
I spoke of all my love for her, of how she made my spirit stir.
I asked the maiden for a kiss, but all she said to me was this:

“Well, never ye mind my silken skin,
And never ye mind your words:
Before I’d lie with thee in sin,
I’d fly with all the birds!”

My heart was broke, my soul was spent, so to a childhood friend I went.
I told her all my tales of woe, and asked her why, and begged to know.
And with a gentle friendly smile, she said, “I’ve been here all the while.
“If all you fear’s a lonely night, then stay with me, I’ll put you right!”

“And never ye mind your distant dove,
And never ye mind your woes.
Your friend can be your finest love,
Until the darkness goes!”

A Pict Song

Rudyard Kipling

Rome never looks where she treads.
Always her heavy hooves fall
On our stomachs, our hearts or our heads;
And Rome never heeds when we bawl.
Her sentries pass on—that is all,
And we gather behind them in hordes,
And plot to reconquer the Wall,
With only our tongues for our swords.

We are the Little Folk—we!
Too little to love or to hate.
Leave us alone and you'll see
How we can drag down the State!
We are the worm in the wood!
We are the rot at the root!
We are the taint in the blood!
We are the thorn in the foot!

Mistletoe killing an oak—
Rats gnawing cables in two—
Moths making holes in a cloak—
How they must love what they do!
Yes—and we Little Folk too,
We are busy as they—
Working our works out of view—
Watch, and you'll see it some day!

No indeed! We are not strong,
But we know of Peoples that are.
Yes, and we'll guide them along
To smash and destroy you in War!
We shall be slaves just the same?
Yes, we have always been slaves,
But you—you will die of the shame,
And then we shall dance on your graves!

You Make Me Feel Like Fighting

Arian Shieldbreaker

To the tune of *You Make Me Feel Like Dancing*, by Leo Sayer.

You got a cute way of fighting,
You beat the hell out of me,
Just swing your sword and I'm falling,
Like a leaf falling from a tree.
You fight so well you know,
You treat me like a pelt you know,

You make me feel like dying,
So, I'm lying on the ground,
You make me feel like dying,
So, I'm lying on the ground,
You make me feel like dying,
I feel like dying, woah,
Dying, woah,
Lying on the ground,
I feel like dying,
I feel like dying,
Wooooooooaaaaah

I tried to fight you two handed,
It didn't even slow you down.
Snap, hip-flick, wrap, and I'm falling,
So here I am lying on the ground.
You fight me so well you know,
You beat me all to hell you know,

You make me feel like crying
While I'm lying on the ground...

Now I just watch from the sidelines,
Because at last I understood,
Hung up my helmet and my sword belt,
'Cause now I know that you are too good.
But watching you inspires me,
You light all the fires in me,

You make me feel like fighting!
I'm gonna go and grab my helm...

Lion Heart

Karl Faustus von Aachen

To the tune of *Camouflage*, by Stan Ridgway

I was a Frankish serf in the Holy land, huntin' Moslems down
It was in the Third Crusade of '91.
My halberd broke and I got stuck in deepest Palestine,
And I could hear the mullahs chantin' in the settin' sun.
Just then I heard a rock roll and I grabbed my broken pike,
And I said a prayer to the Virgin and her child
And then a mighty knight, a soldier with a lion on his chest
Appeared there by my sand dune and said "Smile!"

When he came in close beside me he said, "Good soldier, have no fear!
"In battle against these foe I shall take your part."
I said, "Bonjour, Monsieur". I told him my name and asked him his,
And he said, "My men just call me Lion Heart."

Whoa, Lion Heart
Kings are never quite the way they seem
Whoa, Lion Heart
I was awfully glad to see his armour gleam.

Well we fought all night, for God and Christ, we slaughtered heathen scum,
And I wondered how the sword blows missed this knight
'Cause they seemed to all fall shorter, must be 'cause the swords were curved
But we kept our heads and made it to the morning light.
And it was near a stand of palms when the towel-heads came on top of us,
And I thought we'd be a brace of shish kebabs,
Then an arrow with my "X" on it came whizzing through the trees,
And that knight just chopped it down with a mighty jab! (Just like it was a squire!)

Whoa, Lion Heart
Kings are never quite the way they seem
Whoa, Lion Heart
This must have been a fever dream!

*(And I knew there was somethin' strange about him,
Cos then he went and had a drink from the oasis,
And I ain't never seen a Frenchman drink anything but wine!
And he even enjoyed it!)*

When he led me back to Acre, I saw my camp and bowed goodbye
He just winked at me from the desert and left quick smart.
And when I got back to King Phillip there I told him about the fight,
And the fun I had had killin' heathen scum with Lion Heart.

When I said his name, King Phil just frowned, and a gendarme took my hand,
And led me to a prison dark and cold.
He said, "You may be speaking truth son, but in there is Lion Heart,
"And he's been in there since he offended Leopold.
("In fact he's been in there long enough to smell!")

"But before we got him, he had a laugh, and said he'd soon escape,
"And help to win the war with all his art.
"So here, take his tabard son, I'm sure he'd want you to have it now."
And we both blessed the name of an English dog named Lion Heart.

Whoa, Lion Heart
Kings are never quite the way they seem
Whoa, Lion Heart
I wonder how it came to be 'im

Whoa, Lion Heart
Kings are never quite the way they seem
Whoa, Lion Heart
He never seemed real French to me!

Whoa, Lion Heart
Whoa, Lion Heart...

Battle Hymn Of The Herald

Amanda Martel and Sorle Maknicoll

To the tune of... good grief, do you really need me to tell you? All right... it's *Greensleeves*. (Not.)

Mine eyes have seen the burning of a purple elephant.
It was just the kind of blazoning good heralds will resent.
But it can still be registered with Laurel King's consent:
Twee blazons linger on!

Awful, awful coats of armour!
Awful, awful coats of armour!
Awful, awful coats of armour!
Twee blazons linger on!

A conflict-clearing nightmare raised its ugly head one day.
The disappointed client sat, but still must have their way.
Just shrink it down, a bordure on, and let's be on our way:
Twee blazons linger on!

A special individual went out to have some fun,
So they listed all their hobbies and they blazoned every one.
To hold their charges numerous, the shield must weigh a ton:
Twee blazons linger on!

A dragon and an eagle and a lion all in gules.
A field of gold, a sword or three, and all the blacksmith's tools.
And what the heck is *slot machine*? I'll get this passed, you fools!
Twee blazons linger on!

A gyronny of eight, some vair, and lozengy the rest.
A mascle counterchanged throughout, it somehow fails the test.
The Six Bored Herald's show us all, simplicity's the best:
Twee blazons linger on!

The naughty bits are rather fun, we pizzle what we can.
The harpy and the mermaid both will please that kind of man.
But don't you try a bonacon, the cleanup's 'gainst the plan:
Twee blazons linger on!

Next there came a unicornate, wingèd sea-squirrèl
With purple stars on ermine bars, and checky green as well.
The only thing I'd use it for is the coat of arms of hell:
Twee blazons linger on!

A shield of red, with pictured there a round-shield from the war:
From this ancient registration, now our conflict check's a bore.
The heralds of A.S. seven have a lot to answer for!
Twee blazons linger on!

The heralds who came before us had a few tricks up their sleeve,
Designing coats of arms for folks who ask and then receive.
If you don't like what you're assigned, then live with it or leave:
Twee blazons linger on!

And when selecting names, we ask, to fiction don't you go,
And also baby-naming books, no matter what they show.
And if you must be Legolas, I'll hit you with a hoe:
Yet Tolkien lingers on!

A Grazing Mace

Hrolf Herjolfssen

To the tune of *Amazing Grace*

A grazing mace, how sweet the sound
That staved a wretch like thee.
I once was squire, but now am peer;
Was serf, but now am free.

'Twas a mace that taught thy heart to fear;
A mace my fears relieved.
How precious did that mace appear,
The hour I first believed!

Through many tourneys, moils and wars,
I have already fought.
A mace has brought me safe thus far:
A win is all I've sought.

Now I've been in a thousand fights,
And won more than my share.
A mace has brought me safe thus far,
A mace shall see me there.

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Jerusawocky

Lewis Carroll, arranged by Karl Faustus von Aachen and Adelindis filia Gotefridi

To the tune of *Jerusalem*, by William Blake, tune by Hubert Parry

'Twas brillig, and the slithy toves
Did gyre and gimble in the wabe:
All mimsy were the borogoves,
And the mome raths outgrabe.

“Beware the Jabberwock, my son!
The jaws that bite, the claws that catch!
Beware the Jubjub bird, and shun
The frumious Bandersnatch!”

He took his vorpal sword in hand:
Long time the manxome foe he sought –
So rested he by the Tumtum tree,
And stood awhile in thought.

And, as in uffish thought he stood,
The Jabberwock, with eyes of flame,
Came whiffling through the tulgey wood,
And burbled as it came!

One, two! One, two! And through and through
The vorpal blade went snicker-snack!
He left it dead, and with its head
He went galumphing back.

Galumph, galumph, galumph, galumph,
Galumph, galumph, galumph, galumph,
Galumph, galumph, galumph, galumph,
Galumph, galumph, galumph, galumph!

“And, hast thou slain the Jabberwock?
Come to my arms, my beamish boy!
O frabjous day! Callooh! Callay!”
He chortled in his joy.

'Twas brillig, and the slithy toves
Did gyre and gimble in the wabe;
All mimsy were the borogoves,
And the mome raths outgrabe.

Crown Tourney

Karl Faustus von Aachen

To the tune of *Moonshadow*, by Cat Stephens

I've been thinkin' 'bout a Crown Tourney,
Crown Tourney, Crown Tourney,
Tryin' my chances in a Crown Tourney,
Crown Tourney, Crown Tourney,

And if I ever authorise
And find a sword just my size
Oh, if I ever authorise,
A-way...
I may never fight at all.

And if I enter in the lists
I surely won't, I must insist
But if I enter in the lists
A-way...
I may simply die and fall.

I've been fightin' in a Crown Tourney,
Crown Tourney, Crown Tourney,
A-ducking and weaving in a Crown Tourney,
Crown Tourney, Crown Tourney,

And if I win in my first bout
I may just die and be knocked out
But if I win in my first bout
A-way...
I may lose the next and fail.

So here I am, the final round
I hit my foe, he hits the ground
So here I am, the final round
A-way...
I guess I'm the King—

Oh I'm the winner in a Crown Tourney,
Crown Tourney, Crown Tourney,
I beat all the comers in a Crown Tourney,
Crown Tourney, Crown Tourney,

“Will you now sit beside me?”
I ask the maid in green.
“Will you now sit beside me, oh—
And are you gonna be my Queen?”

I've been ruling since a Crown Tourney,
Crown Tourney, Crown Tourney,
Lord and Master since the Crown Tourney,
Crown Tourney, Crown Tourney.
Crown Tourney, Crown Tourney.

Known World

Karl Faustus von Aachen

To the tune of *Mad World* by Tears For Fears

All around me are a hundred faces,
Swords and maces, courtly graces.
Brightly flicker in the candle's traces,
Going Dreaming, going Dreaming.
They cheer now, raising up their tankards:
No evasion, no evasion.
Hide my smile, I want to say it's crazy,
Far too hazy, even lazy

But I find it right and proper, I find it just the thing:
We learned our way of living from *The Once and Future King*.
It's written on the cover, and it's there for you to see:
"To dream the Middle Ages just exactly as they
Should be, should be."

Children learning even though they hate school:
This is still cool, this is still cool.
Play at being king and queen of misrule,
Bright eyes glisten, bright eyes glisten.
When I started I was very nervous,
Just a newbie, just a newbie.
Found a way to figure what's my talent.
Now just watch me, now just watch me.

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Come Again

John Dowland

Come again! Sweet love doth now invite
Thy graces that refrain to do me due delight.
To see, to hear, to touch, to kiss, to die
With thee again in sweetest sympathy.

Come again! That I may cease to mourn
For thy unkind disdain, for now left and forlorn
I sit, I sigh, I weep, I faint, I die
With thee again in sweetest sympathy.

Gentle Love, draw forth thy wounding dart,
Thou canst not pierce her heart, for I that do approve
By sighs and tears more hot than are thy shafts
Do tempt while she for triumph laughs.

If I Was A Viking

Efenwealt Wystle

If I was a viking, I'd never go to school.
I'd never use a toothbrush and I'd hardly ever drool.
I'd sail on the northern seas finding folks to aggravate.
If I was a viking, then life would be just great.

If I was a viking I'd never change my clothes.
I'd bathe semi-annually and I'd sometimes pick my nose.
I'd have a great big long-ship with an ugly dragon's head.
I wish I was a viking, just like old Eric the Red.

If I was viking, well I'd be pretty smart
'Cause I can whistle lots of songs and some tunes I can fart
And writing stuff would be easy. I'd be happy all the time,
'Cause Nordic poetry alliterates. It does not have to rhyme.
(*excuse me: 'rhyne'*)

If I was a viking, I'd be fierce and brave.
I'd never have to comb my hair and I'd rarely have to shave
And I'd worship Thor and Odin, and maybe Heimdall too.
Then I'd party in Valhalla when my body is maggot food.

If I was a viking, I'd never run away.
And I'd bring all my booty right back home to old Norway.
And when missionaries convert me, and I become Christian
Then I'll forsake my pagan life,
Yes I'll forsake my pagan life,
I *might* forsake my pagan life and end this song. AMEN!
Yodel-odel-ay-he-hoo!

Hedeby's Quarter

Karl Faustus von Aachen

Down from Bjarkoy we ride on the slow-turning tide
With our skins and our beasts all for trading
In Sciringesheal port we will trade as we ought
No more need now for reeving and raiding.
And she's not one to wave from the harbourside,
As we sail for the cold open sea
And I hope, while I'm gone, that her smile will shine on,
But I hope she'll shed some tears for me.

We are Othere's men, on the ocean again
Trading deer to the southlands for treasure.
All the brightest and best we will win, south and west,
All their jewels and their wine in full measure.
And she's not one to vow she'll be ever true,
'Though I always we be so to she
And I hope, while I'm gone, that her smile will shine on,
But I hope she'll shed some tears for me.

In a month and a week we will win what we seek
When our ship comes to Hedeby's quarter
And our futures are made from the treasures we trade
For the life of the wind and the water
And my shipmates can dream of adventuring
But the only dream I know will be
That I hope, while I'm gone, that her smile will shine on,
But I hope she'll shed some tears for me.
Yes I hope, while I'm gone, that her smile will shine on,
But I hope she'll shed some tears for me.

Pronunciation Guide:

As advised by Giovanni Basilio di Castronovo, formerly known as Jon the Prevert, the pronunciations of the mostly-Icelandic names should go something like this:

Bjarkoy.....BYAR-koy
Sciringesheal.....skih-RING-guh-shall
Othere.....OATH-air-uh
Hedeby.....HED-uh-bee

Rosebud In June

Anonymous

It's a rosebud in June,
And the violets in full bloom,
And the small birds singing
Love songs on each spray.

We'll pipe and we'll sing love,
We'll dance in a ring, love,
When each lad takes his lass
All on the green grass.

And it's oh, oh to plough
Where the fat oxen graze low,
And the lads and the lasses
To sheep-shearing go.

When we have all sheared
All our jolly, jolly sheep,
What joy can be greater
Than to talk of their increase?

For their flesh it is good,
It's the best of all food,
And their wool it will clothe us
And keep our backs from the cold.

Here's the ewes and the lambs,
Here's the hods and the rams.
And the fat withers too,
They will make a fine show.

Marco Polo

Eric of Tobar Mhuire

Marco Polo, he came back from travel.
He was hungry, he was thirsty, had a light in his eyes. He said,
“Of all the mysteries I had to unravel,
I still wonder how the Chinaman, he got so wise.”

“They’ve got a curse, I remember how they word it.
Greatest curse on their very long list.
It fairly knocked me flat, the first time I heard it.
They’ve got a Chinese curse, it goes like this: they say...”

“May you live in interesting times.
May all adventure come a-knocking on your door.
May every god you knew
Have special plans for you.
May they hold you in their hearts and more!”

I told him then and there that I don’t see it.
“Oh, my Italian friend, you mystify!
It seems a blessing, not a curse – how be it?”
He smiled a weary smile, and fixed my eye – he said...

And from the day I spoke to Marco Polo,
I’ve lived my life in interesting times.
The peaks are wonderful, the troughs are so low, but I know
That on the final day I’ve paid for my crimes! So I say...

John Barleycorn

Traditional

There were three men came out of the west,
Their fortunes for to try,
And these three men made a solemn vow,
John Barleycorn must die.
They plowed, they sowed, they harrowed him in,
Threw clods upon his head,
And these three men made a solemn vow,
John Barleycorn was dead.

They let him lie for a very long time
Till the rain from heaven did fall,
Then little Sir John threw up his head,
And so amazed them all.
They let him stand till the midsummer day
'Til he grew both pale and wan,
And little Sir John grew a great long beard
And so became a man.

They hired men with scythes so sharp
To cut him off at the knee,
They rolled him and tied him around the waist,
Serving him most barbarously.
They hired men with the sharp pitchforks
To prick him to the heart,
But the drover served him worse than that,
For he bound him to a cart.

They drove him around and round the field
Till they came upon a barn,
And these three men made a solemn mow
Of poor John Barleycorn.
They hired men with crab-tree sticks
To strip him skin from bone,
But the miller he served him worse than that,
For he ground him between two stones.

There's little Sir John in a nut-brown bowl,
And brandy in a glass;
But little Sir John in the nut-brown bowl
Proved the strongest at the last.
And the huntsman he can't hunt the fox,
Nor loudly blow his horn,
And the tinker he can't mend kettle or pot
Without a little Barleycorn.

Chastity Belt

Anonymous

Oh pray, gentle maiden, may I be your lover,
Condemn me no longer to moan and to weep,
Struck down like a hart I lie wounded and panting
Oh let down your drawbridge, I'll enter your keep.
Enter your keep, nonny nonny,
Enter your keep, nonny nonny
Let down your drawbridge, I'll enter your keep.

Alas gentle errant, I am not a maiden,
I'm married to Sir Oswald, the cunning old Celt;
He's gone to wars for a twelvemonth or longer
And taken the key to my chastity belt.
Chastity belt, nonny nonny,
Chastity belt, nonny nonny
Taken the key to my chastity belt.

Fear not, gentle maiden, for I know a locksmith;
To his forge we will go, on his door we will knock
And try to avail us of his specialized knowledge,
And see if he's able to unpick your lock.
Unpick your lock, nonny nonny,
Unpick your lock, nonny nonny
See if he's able to unpick your lock.

Alas, sir and madam, to help I'm unable,
My technical knowledge is to no avail.
I can't find the secret of your combination,
The cunning old bastard has fitted a Yale.
Fitted a Yale, nonny nonny,
Fitted a Yale, nonny nonny
That cunning old bastard has fitted a Yale.

I'm back from the wars with sad news of disaster,
A terrible mishap I have to confide,
As my ship was passing the Straits of Gibraltar
I carelessly dropped the key over the side.
Over the side, nonny nonny,
Over the side, nonny nonny
I carelessly dropped the key over the side

Alas and alack I am locked up forever!
Then up stepped the page boy saying, Leave this to me!
If you will allow me to enter your chamber
I'll open it up with my duplicate key.
Duplicate key, nonny nonny,
Duplicate key, nonny nonny
I'll open it up with me duplicate key.

Everybody's Makin' It Big

Arian Shieldbreaker

Agro is a hero, he's a superstar,
And Elffin's king of Drachenwald, that boy's gone so far,
Now Brusi, he's the best we got,
And Styvren's really running hot,
And everybody's makin' it big but me

Everybody's makin' it, makin' it,
Everybody's makin' it big.
Everybody's makin' it, makin' it,
Everybody's makin' it big.
They've got squires to tend their needs,
And all I have is, well, me,
And everybody's makin' it big but me.

Now Antoine has a sword that's over five feet long,
And without it he fights florentine, and that's just as strong,
Damon's got his sword and shield,
And Sir Torg has his mace to wield,
And everybody's makin' it big but me.

Everybody's makin' it, makin' it,
Everybody's makin' it big.
Everybody's makin' it, makin' it,
Everybody's makin' it big.
Every tourney I confront my fears,
While Sir Richard hasn't fought in years,
And still everybody thinks he's better than me.

Now Reynardine's a man who used to be a knight,
He may not have his white belt, but he sure can still fight,
Kane's from Aneala in the west,
And Gareth, he fights with the best,
And everybody's makin' it big but me,

Everybody's makin' it, makin' it,
Everybody's makin' it big.
Everybody's makin' it, makin' it,
Everybody's makin' it big.
Sebastion fights with his left hand,
And still he makes me look bland,
And everybody's makin' it big but me.

Well I wear real pretty armour, just like Corin does,
And I've got the same style helmet as Sir Bran does,
I went to fight a knight of renown,
And he just calmly struck me down,
And everybody's makin' it big but me.

Everybody's makin' it, makin' it,
Everybody's makin' it big.
Everybody's makin' it, makin' it,
Everybody's makin' it big.
Just how do you become a peer?
'Cause I don't think I'm even near,
'Cause everybody's makin' it big but me.

The Moved Through The Fair

Karl Faustus von Aachen

To the tune of *She Moved Through The Fair*

My young man said to me, “Your mother won’t know,
And your father’s a pisspot. We might as well go.
I fancy a quickie, and I know you do too,
Loaf of bread, jug of wine, picnic blanket, and you.”

He moved right beside me, and we skirted the Fair
Off to somewhere secluded, where no-one would stare
And he left when ’twas over, all rather too soon
As a snake or a lizard moves under the moon.

The people were saying, “Do you see how she swells?
That lassie, I’d wager, will be hearing some bells.”
So I checked with the doctor, the answer was clear...
And that was the last that I saw of my dear.

I dreamed it last night, my young man came in.
His hair held some grey now, and a beard on his chin.
He laid his eyes on us, and this he did say:
“Can you lend me a fiver, then I’ll be on my way.”

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Since First

John Ford

Since first I saw your face I resolved
to honour and renown you;
If now I be disdained I wish
my heart had never known you.
What? I that loved and you that liked,
shall we begin to wrangle?
No, no, no, my heart is fast,
and cannot disentangle.

If I admire or praise you too much,
that fault you may forgive me;
Or if my hands had strayed but a touch,
then justly might you leave me.
I asked you leave, you bade me love;
is’t now the time to chide me?
No, no, no, I’ll love you still
what fortune e’er betide me.

The Sun, whose beams most glorious are,
rejecteth no beholder,
And your sweet beauty past compare
made my poor eyes the bolder:
Where beauty moves and wit delights
and signs of kindness bind me,
There, O there! where’er I go
I’ll leave my heart behind me!

Dance In The Greenwood

Maudeleyn of Bryn Aur

Where are we going to, my handsome young lover?
Where are we going to, my dearest dear?
We're off to the forest, to sing in the moonlight,
To dance in the greenwoods, and lie on green grass.

Who shall we meet there, my handsome young lover?
Who shall we meet by the full moon's bright light?
We'll meet the fairies, so strange and so lovely,
As we dance in the greenwoods, and lie on green grass.

What can we eat there, my handsome young lover?
What can we eat there, to keep us from hunger?
We'll eat the berries that hang from the briars
As we dance in the greenwoods, and lie on green grass.

And what can we drink there, my handsome young lover?
What can we drink there, to keep us from hunger?
We'll drink of the dewfall, sweeter than the best wine,
As we dance in the greenwoods, and lie on green grass.

And what will you give me, my handsome young lover?
What will you give me, should I dance with you?
I'll give you a fine cloak, all wove of sheep's wool
If you'll dance in the greenwoods, and lie on green grass.

What more will you give me, my handsome young lover?
What more will you give me, should I lie with you?
I'll give you an old book, all full of wisdom,
If you'll dance in the greenwoods, and lie on green grass.

Then I will dance with you, my handsome young lover,
I'll lay down beside you, take me in your arms,
And all through the night, we'll share this sweet magic,
As we dance in the greenwoods, and lie on green grass.

Now where are the fairies, my handsome young lover?
Where is the warmth of that sweet summer night?
Gone, all is gone, as the cold leaves are falling,
Where we danced in the greenwoods, and lay on green grass.

I'd heard those stories, my handsome young lover,
That ne'er should one drink of the fairies' sweet dew,
For months they will pass in the space of one evening,
As you dance in the greenwoods, and lie on green grass.

And where are you going, my handsome young lover?
Where are you going, you dark fairy rath?
Going back to the fairies, leaving me lonely,
To dance in the greenwoods, and lie on green grass.

And what do you leave me, my handsome young lover?
A book and a cloak and a child with green eyes
And when she is grown, then she too will leave me,
To dance in the greenwoods, and lie on green grass.

The Three Ravens And The Maiden's Prayer

Adelindis filia Gotefridi

To the tune of *The Three Ravens*

There were three ravens sat in a tree
(*Down a down, hey down hey down*)

They were as black as black can be
(*With a down*)

The one of them said to his mate,
Where shall we our breakfast take?
(*With a down, derrie derrie derrie down down*)

I saw a maiden standing near
(*Down a down, hey down hey down*)
And asked her what 'twas she did fear
(*With a down*)

A-questing did my lover go
I know not yet, was he laid low?
(*With a down, derrie derrie derrie down down*)

God spake, and he must ride away...
I've waited here for many a day...
Now he hath sent to me no word,
But sounds of combat have we heard...

The ravens gather on the tree...
I fear their greedy eyes on he...
They scent a death upon the air.
I dread the word of who lies there...

I sent, for word, my youngest page...
To see whose shield is there displayed...
Oh, will it be my lover fair,
Or doth some stranger lie yet there?

Then came he riding by the tree...
Sore wounded in his victory...
Tired horse led by a weary boy,
And she cried aloud with joy...

Yonder rides my lover fair...
Oh, God hath listened to my prayer...
Died he not with wounds so red,
But victorious instead...

Seeing him my fears do flee...
He's returned at last to me...
Prowess proved, can we be wed,
And I take him to my bed...

The Fruit Of The Yew

James Treebull the Stubborn

Grim warriors appeared, decked in iron and gold,
Their bright banners snapped in the breeze.
Harvest was over, the weather was cold,
Turning hot breath to cloud in the freeze.

They moved in array over meadow and field.
The peasantry scattered before.
They gathered the wealth of the land on their shields
And carried it off to the shore.

“How can this happen, and where is our King?
Where are the warriors we pay?”
“Aye, the King may be King where he sits on his throne,
But his throne is four days ride away!”

Swift word was sent to the men of the wood:
There'll be no trade for Winter this year.
No sacks of grain for the skin of the fox,
No ale for the flesh of the deer.

But deep in the woodlands of Wales grows a tree.
The name of that tree is the yew.
And the fruit of the yew is a stout longbow stave,
Throwing straight clothyard shafts strong and true!

They gathered in numbers from forest and fen,
Walking soft as the hunting-men do.
And strung at their belts were the straight clothyard shafts,
In each hand was the fruit of the yew.

And, slipping by night through the still-burning steads,
They looked for the camp by the shore.
And each made a vow, as he passed by the dead,
That the morning would even the score.

Well, morning broke clear, and the raiders awoke
With a leisurely thought for the day,
Till one showed himself, and a soft bowstring spoke
From three hundred paces away!

And as he fell dead, a loud, taunting voice cried
“It's a pleasure to pay you your due!
You come seeking all of the fruits of our land?
Have a taste of the fruit of the yew!”

And what use are shields that don't cover the leg?
Or helms that don't cover the eyes?
Or shirts of bright mail 'gainst a straight clothyard shaft
That can pierce through a stag on the fly?

The King arrived early, mud-spattered and tired,
Just to look on a field of the dead.
Cut down from the front where they'd stood in their line,
Cut down from the rear as they fled!

“And where are the men who have done me this good?”
Said the King, from his horse ridden lame,
“’Twas outlaws and brigands from back in the woods.
They’ve since fled back whence they all came.”

“And would they take Pardon, and live in my Peace?”
Asked the King of his Counsellor true.
Said the Counsellor, “Nay, they're a quarrelsome lot;
They'll not become lawful for you.”

Raiders, take heed to the gist of my tale
(It may lengthen your lives, if you will!)
When you go a-reavin' be sure of your mark!
Have a care that it matches your skill!

For England pays silver, and Spain will give gold,
France will grant land, that is true,
But seek not for wealth in the woodlands of Wales,
For we pay in the fruit of the yew!

Notes on the Songs

Some notes on the history and provenance of the songs in *The Known Words*, to satisfy any trivia buffs who may have wandered in. These are entirely my own work, from memory and with nothing in the way of research or justification. In the words of Tom Lehrer, “If anyone objects to any statement I make, I am quite prepared not only to retract it, but also to deny under oath that I ever made it.”

A Grazing Mace

This may be the oldest Lochacian filk song. Ynys Fawr’s Baron Hrolf wrote it many years ago, inspired by a cartoon in *The Known World Handbook* (a kind of paper Wikipedia from the time before electrons). He was travelling in what we used to call the Central West a little later and found to his surprise and joy that his song had preceded him, *sans* byline, listed merely as “Anonymous”.

All I Want Is A Peerage

A silly little filk, one of the first I wrote after joining the SCA in the early nineties. I was inspired somewhat by the pleasantly irreverent denizens of River Haven, that fair and filking barony. More recently I added the fourth verse, because those with pointy hats do like to remind us that royal peers are peers too, you know! And then the BoD decided to add fencers as a fifth peerage (referred to almost universally as the fourth peerage, since even they ignore the royal peers) so I added a fifth verse to snark about that. The copyright notice is getting ridiculously complicated.

Axe Time, often called **The Hammer Of Thor**

A song imported, mainly by River Havenites, from Lochac Sinister, the Crescent Isles, Gottmark, etc, mundanely *The Land Of the Long Stressed Schwa*, also called *New Zealand*. I gather there are many more verses, but I’ve not heard them. Perhaps one of these days we’ll make it to Canterbury Faire and I’ll find out first-hand.

The Barley Mow

This is one of those songs, like *The Rattlin’ Bog* and *Green Grow The Rushes, Oh*, that grows longer with each verse. You start with just the gill-pot, half-a gill, quarter-gill, nipperkin and round bowl (these are all measurements, in descending order of volume I think), and then you add the half-pint at the start in the next verse, then the pint pot in the verse after, and so on until you suffocate to death and have to be revived with some of the fine beverages you expired singing about. Why do people do this to themselves? I presume life was really dull before television.

The Battle Hymn Of The Heralds

My fellow heralds Amanda and Sorle share many of my strong feelings about heraldry, and my love of filk. That they produced this master work (Sorle was responsible for the first verse and Amanda for the rest) is of no surprise to anyone who knows them.

The Battle Of The Dyle

Another of the first songs I wrote (I stuck firmly to the shallow end of the alphabet in those days) and definitely the first to have any kind of research behind it, even if it was just one of my Dad's old history books. The actual battle occurred between the East Franks and some Norse invaders back in the three-digit years, and was won by the Franks only after they twigged that horses and marshes don't mix, but that a charge on foot might be just the thing given that they outnumbered the foe quite tidily. Enlightened management in the dark ages! The tune is simple and has a good driving beat for drummers to play along to.

Bay Leaves

I wrote this when I realised with a shock *I'd never filked Greensleeves!!!* Bay leaves are the generally-dried leaves of the laurel tree or bush or tuber or somesuch, and add a nice flavour to a spag bol. Given that they smell nice, make a clear contribution to an important art (cooking), and do not generally cause anyone to break out in an allergic reaction, you can see that they have nothing to do with peerages.

Bedlam Boys

There are a fair few songs in this book that made themselves known to me originally via Steeleye Span. That's not to say I ever listened to any Span in my youth, oh dear me no; but those songs, probably on this weird thing called vinyl LPs that they used to have in the olden days, were pretty much the only thing the founders of Lochac ever listened to, as far as I could tell. This is one of their better tunes, and eminently filkable if I ever get around to it (ie when I'm not busy collating songbooks).

Black Fox, commonly known in the SCA as either **Hunting The Devil** or **The Foxy Song**

Llewen the Unruly heard this on a folkie radio show when Lochac was young, and although he managed to tape it and learn it, he missed hearing the author's name. He modified it slightly, removing a couple of lines of what we in the SCA consider its chorus, and it became his signature tune for many years. Wishing to give it its proper attribution, I practised my Google-fu and discovered it to be the work of one Graham Pratt, under its correct title of *Black Fox*. Mr Pratt generously gave his permission for me to include the song in this book, for which I am grateful. Meanwhile, I bought Llewen a copy of the original CD with *Black Fox* on it, and he was chuffed beyond measure.

The Blacksmith

Mercurio used to sing this one, despite not being a poor, love-lorn lass. Steeleye Span do two versions of it, both of them with Maddie Pryor's signature adenoidal whine; the better one is on *Hark! The Village Wait*, not on *Please To See The King*, where it drags like a suitcase full of sick.

The Burden Of The Crown

One of the encouraging facts of the SCA is that those at the top learn to see their power as a responsibility as well as a privilege. It teaches them to see their role as protector, not merely ruler, and we're better for it. Baldwin's *Burden of the Crown* is perhaps the best demonstration of this philosophy, which is why it's lasted so well in the Society. I recommend that you learn the tune, and do not under any circumstances sing it to the theme from *Gilligan's Island*.

Cairistiona's Wenching Song

A rude song of the wenching life, from one of Lochac's finest. (Finest what, you ask? Never you mind!)

The Chandler's Shop

A terribly naughty song, and one I inexplicably left off the roster for previous editions of this book, despite thinking "I must include that" every single time I heard it. Never mind; it's here now.

Chastity Belt

I left this one out previously because I thought it was by the Silly Sisters (see also *Me Husband's Got No Courage In Him*), but again it turns out to be older than that, quite definitely some years older than the SCA. I advise you not to go looking for a recording on YouTube if you're of a sensitive disposition or don't know how to empty your browser history...

Climbing The Ladder

Antoine denies all knowledge of this song. It wasn't him; it was someone else of the same name. I believe him. Unusually for me, I've bowdlerised one line in this, because I think it was a little *too* rude. If you can find anyone old enough to remember the original, I can only pray they will have developed sufficient couth in their dotage that they won't let on.

Come Again

After I'd been in the SCA for a handful of years, I got suckered into joining university choirs, which is where I met several lovely altos (one of whom I married) and several Dowland songs. This one, like all the rest, is about sex. See what happens when you don't have Facebook to take up your time, kiddies? Watch out!

The Court Of King Cornelius

This was written on commission before Sir Cornelius won Crown the first time. I had to go find the original, Rolf Harris's *The Court of King Caractacus*, because I'd never heard it. I still use it occasionally to sing my younger daughter to sleep; if that has any hidden significance, I shudder to imagine what it might be. Like many songs, this one has outlived the popularity of its subject; about that I will say no more.

Coventry Carol

Non-parents look at me funny when I start shouting gleefully along with the bit about slaying young children. Other parents understand.

The lyrics to this are authentic to period, give or take some spelling. They were written down as early as 1534 as part of *The Shearmen and Tailor's Pageant*, a part of the Coventry Cycle of mystery plays. The tune can be found as early as 1591, but by then they were both well known.

Crown Tourney

My notes from *The Known Words 2* remind me I wrote this after a long filk-less drought, the likes of which I've never since repeated. It's always tempting to filk Cat Stephens songs ("Another wannabe knight and I ain't got no white belt / I got a red one but it ain't the same / ..." something something) but I really should pace myself or nobody under the age of fifty will have the slightest idea what they're hearing.

The Cruel Sister

A properly gory folk song. What is it with minstrels making harps out of dead womens' rib cages? Freaky. There are multiple versions of this, but I prefer this one because it doesn't go on quite as interminably. Brevity is the heart, soul and indeed the very essence of wit.

Crusader's Blood

I whipped this one up when entertainment was needed at a feast. It beats *Battle of the Dyle* to the title of my most minimalist tune, but it just rolls along. Check out the first crusade for the stories of the saints on horseback: I'm sure it was inspirational to the troops, but it sounds to me like someone got too much middle eastern sun.

The Crusader's Song

Conn MacNeill's songbook came back from Pennsic with a bunch of local fighters, and for a while there you couldn't get them to sing (or listen to) anything else. This is the one that stood the test of time: it seems to strike a chord with our thumpy brethren and sistren. There's something delightful about seeing them grooving along to this around a bardic fire, and then swearing black and blue that they don't like all that artsy-sciency stuff.

The Cutty Wren

Pretty much the canonical example of folk drift, this song. Who said what to whom varies with the version; I've modelled this one on the version Llewen the Unruly sings. It is, so rumour has it, the story of an old English tradition, involving senseless violence to small innocent birdies. It's probably one of them metaphoricals.

Dance In The Greenwood

I threw this one into the mix very early on, simply because I liked the tune and the words. I never expected to be able to get hold of the author to get permission to use it, so I figured I'd have to remove it one day. But lo and behold! Barely five minutes after I posted a question on an internet mailing list, one Margo Anderson owned up that yes indeed, she was the author, and she'd be pleased as a very pleased thing to have it included in my book. She added: "By the way, it's a true story. I really was taken into the faerie realm and stayed for a week. It happened in the Haight-Ashbury..."

Dancing Bear

The Bear Dance doesn't get danced very often nowadays, due perhaps to the baleful influence of all those Laurels who prefer to stick to documentable dances. This is a shame, because it was the only one I ever actually enjoyed; the rest felt too much like full-body chess. My old household, Clan Womble, helped me put words to the tune. We would have three-way competitions with dancers, musicians and singers, seeing who could last the longest as each verse went faster than the last. Meanwhile, one Gerg the Unspelled of Clan Womble wrote his own filk of this song: *Dancing chicken, dancing chicken / Your wings finger-lickin' / And your hind feet / Are good to eat / Dancing delicate chicken*. I never realised what I was feeling when he sang that, until I became a parent and recognised the sensation of fatherly pride. Being filked by your clansmen is an even bigger honour than having one of your songs sung by someone with genuine talent, and almost as thrilling as finding your lyrics listed in a songbook as "Anon/Trad" (see *A Grazing Mace*).

Do You Hear The Tavern Ring?

The traditional way to deal with earworms is to filk them. Since *Les Miserables* is chock full of earworms, I've subjected it to my wit a few times, but this is the one that stuck. It can be tricky; I evidently do something odd in my rendition because I always finish fifty octaves higher than I started. I'd take another listen to the musical, but I fear what the resulting new filk would do to the fabric of eleven-dimensional spacetime.

Don't Let A Landsknecht

The notes to *The Known Words 1* remind me that this song arose from a rather dull Bal d'Argent in Politarchopolis (dull for me at least – see *Dancing Bear* for my opinion of SCA dancing). For all its roughness, I rather like it. Gilbert and Sullivan were always important influences on my style, such as it is, and I love the way they could fit complex concepts in a scarcity of words, all with a rollicking rhythm. “He massacred guards and garrotted the sheep” is one of my most Gilbertian lines, I think.

A Drop Of Nelson's Blood

The name's a bit of a give-away that this one is post-period, so if that bothers you, skip the first verse. This is another like *Martin Said To His Man*, a song you can make up words to. Get a bunch of singers going, each making up a line for the verses, and you'll find it goes for a while and gets everyone involved. I'm just hoping nobody assumes that the Jarvis Cocker version of this song is the correct tempo: if it doesn't roll along, you're doing it wrong. In fact, it's a major earworm: if you can get it out of your head without using Torchwood memory-erasure drugs, you're *definitely* doing it wrong.

The Eve Of Hastings

The second hardest kind of filk to write is serious filk. I've done a few, and they weren't easy; something about the echo of the original in your listeners' minds makes it easy to be funny but hard not to be. The hardest kind, however, and the kind I've never managed to write, is serious filk that isn't bitter and vindictive. This is one of those.

Everybody's Makin' It Big

Arian is the other Lochacian filker who keeps me humble(ish). This is to the tune of a Doctor Hook song, and has plenty of flexibility: fit in your own preferred knights to replace the somewhat legendary worthies in the lyric.

The False Knight On The Road

Legend has it, if Mercurio is to be believed, that when you die you find yourself on a road, where the devil may choose to test you. He will ask you three questions, and if you answer with a lie, or take too long about it, or can't tell the airspeed velocity of an unladen swallow on demand, you'll be cast into the fiery pit to join the tax collectors and record company executives. This is a song about that.

The Far Cup, And I

A throw-away line, a rambling discussion with metal-weapons chums, and this was the result. If you're feeling particularly bitter about the lawyerisation of the SCA and the way your kingdoms are turning into nanny states, this is the battle hymn for you.

The Feral Privies Song

If you never experienced the drop privies of the original Festival site at Fairholme Park (see *The Nasty Song*), you may be fooled into thinking that manky portaloos are as bad as it can get. Let this song be an education to you. If you find a real old fart, ask them about the Dolphin torch that someone dropped; apparently it was dug up years later and, with fresh battery installed, still worked perfectly. They don't make 'em like *that* any more.

Fight At Festival In Rowany

Chunder in the Old Pacific Sea is a staple of the Australian university choral scene. This one manages to repeat the old trope about Rowany (that it's not just the public daytime activities that make it fun) and captures the feel of the event rather nicely. If I do say so myself.

Follow Me Up To Carlow

One of the highlights of Rowany Festivals for me was the bardic circles at which Fionnbharr ui Neill would play the fiddle and sing this. He went away for a while but has returned in recent years, and his music is still as glorious as it was. This song isn't period, being written some years after the fact about a just-post-period battle, but we always give folk music a bit of leeway if it's damn good.

The Fruit of the Yew

Here's one I heard on The Knowne World Bardcast, just as I *thought* I was putting the Third Ethereal Edition to bed. It struck me that other groups in our Society have their own anthems – *Squires* and *One Of Us* for the fighters, *The Barley Mow* for the drinkers, *Cairistiona's Wenching Song* for the wenches, *The Last Lochacian Herald* and *The Battle Hymn Of The Heralds* for the heralds, *A Pict Song* for the bards – but there's nothing much here for the archers. So we open up the list one last time, and in comes what I think might be the kick-arrest archery song since the theme to *Robin Hood: Men In Tights*. Win!

Gaudete

Goodness! Authenticity! And in a foreign language too! Will wonders never cease? Of course, I'm happy to provide multiple ways to ruin the effect: *Loud Cliché* is one and, for an added bonus, try substituting the words of any verse for *Advance Australia Fair*, *Good King Wenceslas*, the theme from *Gilligan's Island*, or *Estuans Interius* from *Carmina Burana*. See also *The Burden Of The Crown* if you must.

Geordie

The battle and its aftermath, and the identity of Geordie, remain mysterious, apparently. They're not quite period either, but folk song often gets a bit of a free pass provided it doesn't mention a date or a location in the americas. There's an undercurrent of menace to this song that I'm sure would mean more to me if my knowledge of history extended much beyond the reign of Charlemagne, but it's still a fun song regardless.

Good Brother Michael

Some medieval priests had a scam going. They would get together in secret and share their plans for the next day's sermons, including the little tricks and gimmicks any accomplished speaker always throws in. Their audiences would share the stories of the sermons afterwards and marvel at how Father X and Brother Y had spoken the exact same words, or used the exact same metaphors, or even gone into trances and revealed what their fellows were saying, *right across town!* And this in the days before the iPhone! This is a song about that. I must admit, I always thought it a bit dry and academic, and was pleasantly surprised to find that, among collegians in some parts of Lochac, it is widely loved. This is what *The Known Words* is for, so I'm glad.

Green Grow the Rushes, Oh

Someone out there has done the research on what the hell this song is all about. They know who the lily-white boys and the April rainers are. But they haven't told me, so I just sing it.

He Moved Through The Fair

It amuses me that it's only ever women who sing *She Moved Through The Fair*, even though the "young love" in the song is female. Either they're singing in quotation marks, or it's the new lesbian anthem; beats me which. Anyhow, I thought the time was right for a rewritten version that fixes this minor glitch. Regrettably, we quickly see the reason this hasn't been done before: it turns into *The Blacksmith* before it's half over. Ah well.

Hedeby's Quarter

I've mentioned elsewhere that my involvement in university choir led eventually to me marrying an alto. Well before that happened, I wrote *A Sailor's Love Song*, the subject of which was not an alto. You can deduce from those two facts, combined with the knowledge that *Hedeby's Quarter* is a sequel to that song, that any suggestion of a "happily ever after" in those lyrics would be inaccurate. Ah well. (No worries though; we're still friends, and I got two good songs out of the deal. And we're both quite happy *now*, thank you very much!)

High Among The Heather, also called The Worm Song

Baroness Finn introduced this one quite recently. It was written by Michael Spencer of *Taliesin*, an Australian folk band, "an attempt to capture the serial betrayal at the heart of human existence". I love that it's often called The Worm Song here – barracking for the little guy!

I Am A SCAdian

If ever they work out how to apply the Geneva Convention to filk, Bess and Jacques will be first against the wall. The original song, a piece of jingoistic muzak of almost diabetes-inducing sickliness, can only be improved by filking, but I can't imagine how they could bear to listen to it often enough to get the lyrics down! Nevertheless, the result is pure brilliance. I recommend singing it while you wait on hold to a great Australian telecommunications monopoly.

I Sing Of Dead Bunnies

In Politarchopolis, at least, feasts were never quite this bad. The song remained popular for many years though. Perhaps it was out of sympathy for the citizens of the Rivenstar barony, in the Middle kingdom, where the song originated. Years later, I formed my own canton, Lightwood, in which cooking is even more legendary and this song is even more loved, so I have to assume there's a correlation there.

If I Was A Viking

Master Efenwealt came to visit Lochac many years ago. He's a lovely chap, and one of my role models. This is is collection of viking cliches with bonus Tom Lehrer reference. See what I mean?

The Innkeeper's Song

This is one of the rare Brigid of Acchil songs in which some people get out alive. It's worth it just for that.

Jerusawocky, also called Jabbarusalem

This started as a throw-away joke, when my Beloved noted that the rhythm of Blake's *Jerusalem*, which we were singing in choir, fit quite well to the rhyme scheme of *Jabberwocky* from Carroll's *Through the Looking-Glass and What Alice Found There*, the sequel to *Alice In Wonderland*. There it would have stayed, unremarked, except that I noticed that singing it to *Jerusalem* required an extra verse, so I added the "galumph galumph" verse, and suddenly it became a new and frightening thing. My Beloved figured it was worth sharing, so here it is.

John Barleycorn

Another old folk song brought to you by Steeleye Span, those paragons of death, smut and shrilly-vibrating nasal passages. It's all about alcohol, this time.

The Jomsviking Song

Despite being the father of uncountable Batpups, I've avoided The Wiggles, that saccharine kiddie-band with their dinosaurs and pirates and – god only knows – probably ninjas and aliens as well, if they're keeping up with trends. It came as a surprise to me that this delightful viking ditty is a filk of one of their works. Whatever; this version is better. Sometimes filk transcends the original, although in this case that wouldn't be hard. Note that the title is pronounced YOMZ-viking, not DJOMZ-viking.

King Henry

Torg o' Hawkhurst, the first Baron of Rowany, loved this song and insisted on having it sung whenever he could get away with it. It's unusual in that its tune changes halfway through, which works well to change the mood; rather a useful technique. I hear there's a final verse where they all get legally married, but that sounds far too respectable for this audience.

Known World

This is a surprise. I really thought this one was in here already. I wrote it by accident, almost, trying to compose something rude and snarky about some kind or other of SCAdian tosser – I don't recall. I came up with this instead, a song in praise of the delightfully impractical Dream of the SCA, as found on the back cover of the paperback of TH White's *The Once And Future King*: "A glorious dream of the Middle Ages as they never were but as they should have been". Thanks, unnamed New York Times book critic: you gave us our mission statement right there, probably for a cent a word if you were lucky.

The tune is *Mad World*, by either Tears For Fears or Gary Jules, depending on whether you like upbeat or trippy. I prefer the latter in this case, but you should feel free to make up your own mind.

The Last Lochacian Herald

It was the lovely Katje who put me onto the Arrogant Worms' *The Last Saskatchewan Pirate*, and it became a near-fatal earworm. As I often do in such cases, I retaliated by filking it. Part of this song is a true story: it was fifteen years ago, while I was sitting in the crowd at September Coronet Tourney in Politarchopolis, that Mistress Rowan Peregrine overheard me making some rude retort from the far side of the field and suggested that with projection like that *I should consider becoming a herald*. The light went on in my brainstem and the rest is history. If only she'd thought of sending a handy squire over to thump me, the world would have been a much quieter place. Ah well.

This song has changed slightly as of the First Ethereal Edition of the Known Words: the final verse used to be an in-joke of interest only to other heralds. After the umpteenth time of singing it and knowing it was letting the rest down, I finally came up with a much better version. I don't often rewrite my own work, but in this case I think the result was worth it.

Lindisfarne

A filk of *Green Grow the Rushes, Oh*, about the lovely vikings, written by the great Ragnar himself. The original verse seven was "Seven for the wenches that we've raped", but I asked Ragnar if he'd mind changing that. See my notes on *Where Have All The Vikings Gone* for more on that. The new version, "Seven for the wenches that we've... *known*", maintains the biblical euphemism and, in the opinion of the author, makes the point perfectly well. I agree! Sir Ragnar also offered an updated version, rather more authentic in its concerns than the original, which was a bit of a horned-helmets cliché of a song. We present the two, side by side, as a demonstration of his growth in wisdom.

Lion Heart

Stan Ridgway's *Camouflage* became an earworm for me after Canberra's one and only commercial FM radio station (this was the 1980s) decided to play it twenty times a day. It's a ghost story set in the Vietnam War; the filk is a slightly less ghostly story set in the Crusades. Not a lot of difference, really.

Lord McGee

At a bardic circle at a long-ago Rowany Festival, a tedious old alcoholic came up to me and berated me for allowing mundanity into the Society with all this filking and folksong. It wasn't, he assured me, like that in his day! *But I remember his day*. His day was just as filk-filled and irreverent as today, and – let's be honest here – his attempts to inject a little authenticity into proceedings were even less popular then, possibly due to his interminable vibrato and the fact that his supposedly ribald songs would have put St Augustine to sleep. I've spoken elsewhere about the importance of the bardic tradition, and the fact that it's older (by a few weeks at least) than the tradition of authenticity: consider that the first invocation in the first court at the first SCA event was a translation into Latin of a line from a Winnie The Pooh book! So I wrote this: the Lord McGee of the song isn't any single person (sadly; he'd be easier to run out of town if he were) but you're welcome to sing this any time you see our fun being trampled by sourpusses. The last verse has a reference to the old saying, cribbed from Tolkien: *Meddle not in the affairs of Bards, for they are subtle and quick to anger, and your name scans to **Greensleeves***. Oh, and bonus points if you identified the seventies pop-culture reference of the chorus and title. I think it has just the right level of menace.

The Lords Who Sing Off-Key

This might be the first filk I heard, the first time I popped up to River Haven. Near fatal hymn-induced flashbacks to my Catholic upbringing notwithstanding, it set the tone for my visit, and inspired me to follow suit. And the rest, as they say, is hysteri*.

* Like history, but more exciting.

Loud Cliché

The logic goes something like this: *Gaudete* is in Latin, which hardly anybody knows. Therefore, hardly anybody knows what the verses mean, which means you can replace them with any old Latin and nobody will be the wiser. And once you've accepted that small fib, it becomes a natural thing to add a few verses in other languages too. I wrote this one with Michelle at a choral party, the first I ever attended, and it was a hit there too.

A Lusty Young Smith

People tell me there's some kind of innuendo in this song, but I find that hard to believe. Smut? In a folk song? Inconceivable!

The Lyke Wake Dirge

A lyke is a corpse; a wake is a watch. Back before autopsies (or, indeed, medicine) one did not want to bury anyone in haste, lest the coffin be found later to have desperate fingernail scratches on the inside that weren't there when it was closed... So a wake would be held, during which the corpse had ample opportunity to wake from its sleep or hangover and give everyone a pleasant surprise (except the beneficiaries of the will, I suppose). This simple, haunting tune was one they sang over the body to keep the chill out.

Maids When They're Dull

Some people get the words wrong in *Maids When You're Young*, making it *Maids When They're Young* instead, which messes up the meaning of the song (it's supposed to be a warning, not a report on the status quo) and irritates the trows off me. Approximately the zillionth time I heard that, I wrote this. Feel free to substitute a local two-syllable knight (male, presumably) for Alfar in the last verse.

Maids, When You're Young

See *Maids When They're Dull* for my rant on the subject of missed lyrics. *Please* sing this properly!

Marco Polo

There are those who claim that "May you live in interesting times" is a blessing, not a curse. I consider it more of an affirmation of the status quo.

Martin Said To His Man

A very old (possibly period) song of silliness. It works as poetic calisthenics: make up a first line and sing it. By the time the end of the verse comes around, you need to have written the second line. Try to avoid ending a line with *month*, *silver* or *orange* and you should be OK. Verses should be implausible for maximum effect: "I saw Alfar get a Laurel" would be one possibility (try to finish it without using the word "quarrel", if you can).

The Marvellous Axe

The original to this used to be a staple of *Let's All Sing*, the primary school sing-along radio show I used to avoid. (Bit of trivia: I had a taboo about singing in public until I was sixteen; I still refuse to allow my singing voice to be recorded.) Sing the last verse more slowly, as in the original, but with even more evil schoolboyish glee if possible.

Mary Mac

“A little song,” as I wrote in *The Known Words* 1, “about the institution of marriage,” which is true enough. But I continued with “Me, I’m not so ready to be put into an institution...” which turned out not to be so prescient. I am now quite happily in exactly that institution, and am not at all displeased. So anything’s possible, eh? This is almost certainly no more than a couple of hundred years old, and may be much younger, but as I’ve already said, we don’t fuss too much about folk songs as long as they don’t go all out mentioning Margaret Thatcher and the importance of unionisation in coal mines.

Mattie Groves

You may know Mattie or Matty as the adversary of Lord Banner, Lord Donald, Lord Arlen or, gods only know, Lord Vader maybe. This one has undergone more folk drift than just about any song here (see also *The Cutty Wren*). I rather like Efenwalt Whystle’s version that ends *But bury my Lady at the top / 'Cause she liked that kind of thing*. More smut!

Me Husband’s Got No Courage In Him

I’d been fooled into thinking this was an original by The Silly Sisters, one of Maddie Pryor’s adenoidal side projects, but in fact it’s firmly Trad and Anon, and therefore fair game. Watch out for the evil glint some women get in their eyes as they sing this one.

The Minstrel Boy

How many of you first heard this one on an episode of *Star Trek: The Next Generation*, hmmm? Come on, own up! Yep, thought so. The rest of you are probably too young to be singing in the tavern.

The Miracle

This one, the good Llewenn tells me, was written in AS XX or so, “to celebrate the re-occurring miracle of new life that is found on the tourney field.” He added a reference to duct tape because we all know it’s period, right?

My Lady, My Land (Cillian’s Lochac Song)

Cillian’s a bastard. For years I tried to write the perfect anthem for Lochac, and he just came out with this one and made the rest obsolete. And then, knowing that no living composer is ever immortal enough, he died. Really, actually died. Damn it! It’s not as if we have enough great Bards, men of honour and character and talent, and he had to go join the Great Majority a good several decades too early. How is that fair? So yes, he’s a bastard. And I miss him.

My Lady's Eyes

Ah, this one. It still reduces queens to tears, you know. It's the biggest, soggiest, most appalling piece of tripe I've ever written, and yet it tugs on heartstrings like a V8 motorised heartstring tugger with turbo boost. And it was all done on purpose: there's no magic here, merely a sort of cynical art: "How," I asked myself, "can I make sure my audience is caught, hook, line and sinker?" So people like it, and keep requesting it. All art is a bit like that, you know: the artist looks at the audience and asks himself, "Now what would you like?" Ah well.

My Son I've Been A Rover

This is an old tale, but I like the way it came out. Singing the parts in three different octaves is a bit tricky, but if Cat Stephens can do it, what the hell! There's an old calypso song with the same plot (*Shame & Scandal*: "Your daddy ain't your daddy but your daddy don't know") but I don't think I knew it when I wrote it. Never mind; there's nothing new under the sun; doubly so in this book.

The Nasty Song

I wrote the Fairholme Park portion of this song many years ago, and included it in *The Known Words 2*, but somehow it never really clicked so I took it out of this collected version. In the intervening time, Rowany Festival moved from site to site, so just before meeting the newest site at Glenworth Valley, I decided to put my recollection of all the sites into the song. The serendipitous discovery that the words fit with the tune of Flanders and Swann's *Commonwealth Fair*, which is itself a filk of *Widcombe Fair*, meant I could replace the rather clunky tune I'd originally come up with and the result is much better.

Oh Lord Won't You Buy Me

Arian's famous Janis Joplin filk, one of my elder daughter's favourites. In recent years, my Beloved has added it to her repertoire – which, given her strong focus on authenticity, feels a bit like the Dalai Lama expressing a preference for kicking kittens.

Oh! The Baron

A young man at his first Festival expressed the opinion that one of the nice things about the women there is that no doesn't *always* mean no. The Evil Baron Elaine objected to this principle and, to test it, asked the lad if he'd like a big sloppy kiss. The lad said no. Oh, dear. It took three tries (oh, *dear!*) but the Evil Baron eventually convinced the lad that a lost opportunity is not the greatest tragedy in the world, and that behaving with honour is generally the wiser course.

On Ilkley Moor

I'll admit it: the first time I heard this one, possibly at a Torlyon feast, I couldn't see what the appeal was. Something silly in north country accents. Ecky Thump with ducks. Ho hum. But it grows on you. It's a song of the great cycle of nature, the eternal truths of love and death, courtship and dinnertime. With ducks. What more could you ask?

Once I Had A Sweetheart, also called **Green Grows The Laurel**

Here's a tune that Damocles used to sing a fair bit. Love lost and all that. You can make this one sound delightfully nasty if you put some work into it.

One Medieval Morning

Baron Hrolf's retelling of *One Misty Moisty Morning*, in the spirit of central-SCA songs like *Welcome To The Current Middle Ages*. I love the line about "my friends will never see". Ah, the naivety of newcomers...

One Misty Moisty Morning

Yep, Steeleye Span again. I never *got* this song, until one time I listened to it and it turned into a huge earworm that I had to filk to shift. Now it's here. For a filk (not the one I wrote, which was too topical for inclusion), see Hrolf's *One Medieval Morning*.

One Of Us

As I write this, it's bare months since Lochac gained its first female knight, Sir Eva von Danzig. It used to be that knighthood was the last boys' club in the SCA, and Llewenn's song *Squires* was their theme song. I suspect that this tear-jerker, by Mistress Marian of Heatherdale, is already the theme song for female fighters, and I hope one day it will be considered unremarkable for any knight, with or without Y chromosome, to wipe away a tear when it's sung. Slowly, slowly, we're getting there.

Pastime With Good Company

This was allegedly penned by one Henry the V-8, well-known lady-killer and wearer of Tudor Stubbies. So perhaps, as Flanders and Swann say, the royalties go to royalty. I wonder if they'll send a bill.

A Pict Song

This was recommended to me years ago, but I just didn't see the attraction. Clearly I wasn't involved in SCA politics in quite the same way as I am now! There are two tunes I know of, by Leslie Fish and Billy Bragg. I think I prefer Leslie's, though it's harder to find online.

Pissed As A Parrot

The other song, along with *The Lords Who Sing Off-Key*, that defines River Haven in fond memory. Is it any wonder I felt at home when I visited?

The Rattlin' Bog

Here's another in the class of songs that double as lung capacity tests, to go along with *The Court of King Cornelius* and *The Barley Mow*. I have no idea *at all* what the last line means. By the time you get to it, you won't care much; you'll be glad it's over.

The Raven Banner

A recent request, and a haunting tale. Imagine being given a ceremonial job (holding the banner for your side in a battle) knowing that it made you such a big target that the banner was considered cursed! I'd be like the man who told the Jarl to stuff it. No, actually, I'd stay right out of the battle in the first place, and emigrate to a nice civilised century where battles are a thing of the past. Not sure when that is, but I think the heat death of the universe might get there first. Ah well.

Red-Haired Girl

I can't consider myself the best filker in Lochac, because Harry of Eccles is here. He's just bloody good. His classic filk of *Pretty Fly For A White Guy*, titled *Pretty Svelte For A Whitebelt*, is guaranteed a spot in a future edition of this book if he ever gets around to finishing it! This one is dedicated to a legendary St Ursulan seneschal, a lovely lass with flame-red hair and an evil smile.

Rose Red

Probably the most approachable round I've heard, and the one with the most versions. A crack team of choristers can make this one go for hours and leave you wanting more. Of course, I had to add some silliness, found from an old songbook.

Rosebud In June

Here's yet another Steeleye Span favourite, also well known in choral circles. It's about sheep, sure it is. No metaphors at all, dear me no.

A Sailor's Love Song

It took me, I usually tell audiences, a year to write the first line of this and a day to write the rest. That's just a poetic way of saying I was going out with the young lady in question for about twelve months before I got around to writing a song for her. The cautionary tale attached is this: I was asked to sing it around a bardic fire at Spring War one year, and even though I knew it by heart *and had the subject of the song sitting beside me*, I still managed to forget the words. Moral of the story: always carry your songbooks!

See *Hedeby's Quarter* for the sequel, kinda-sorta.

She Moved Through The Fair

It annoys me when Loreena McKennit and Jig Zag and the rest sing "my dead love came in" in the last verse. Way to dumb it down, kiddies! And missing out the third verse just seems silly; it's not like the thing's too short to pad out with some interminable piping/fiddling/gaelic yodelling as it is. My way is better. So there, nyaa.

It happens that the authorship of this is complicated. A fellow named Padraic Colum (1881-1972) claimed to have written the first three verses but not the tune; it appears he may have cribbed much of those verses from somewhere else, but as usual it just takes a bit of laxness in record-keeping to render the truth impossible to find. I'm granting him the benefit of the doubt in the byline.

Sir Agro Went A-Roving

I was sitting round a fire with Sir Agro and Mistress Glynhavar, and Agro told me a story of his recent adventures in the (then) Central West. As soon as he gave me the punchline to this one, I knew there was a song in it. I went away to the tavern, sat in a corner and wrote it, and then raced back just in time to sing it for them before they went to bed.

The Song of the Men's Side

Baroness Silfren the Singer has always been a fan of Kipling, and I've Kiplered with her on a number of occasions. Ruddy old Rudyard writes a good anthem - *The Pict Song* is a good one for getting all fired up about the injustices of power abused - but I think this neolithic superhero origin story is just about the best.

The Song Of The Shield Wall

Malkin Grey, long since lost to Mundania, nevertheless answered my call for permission to print this song for *The Known Words 2*. She was quite pleased that it's lasted, and amused at the example of folk drift: apparently the tune has shifted over time, and evolved to a version she likes much better.

The Songs Of The West

Sir John Theophilus opined, some years back, that the reason Lochac had not at that stage made it to the status of Kingdom was that our baronies were more like kingdoms, and we didn't have an overarching sense of identity as a larger group. As a demonstration, he pointed out that Lochac had no obvious anthem. I decided to remedy this lack (this was years before Cillian stepped up to the plate and scored a home run, as our American brethren would say). This one was carefully constructed to remind people that our origins are important but the future is where we'll be spending the rest of our lives. A secret, revealed here for the first time: the tune is a much-modified Sinead O'Connor song, *Red Football*, but it's mutated enough that it can't be considered a filk.

The Spotted Cow

Now, there are those who will insist that this spotted cow is some kind of euphemism or metaphor or somesuch, and the real topic of this little ditty is rather less fit for genteel conversation. I refuse to believe it, of course.

Squires

Here, as Llewen says, is a song "written specifically to honour the squires of Lochac and the Known World, and to point out the weight of their responsibility to us, and ours to them." I don't *get* the whole squire/apprentice/protegé thing, being about as far from peer material as you can get, but I can respect a bunch of thumpy-thumpy sports nuts who nevertheless understand courtesy and honour to such a degree as this. For the specifically distaff side, may I also recommend *One Of Us*.

Stickjock

Snorri, a true Bard and now a peer and a former landed Baron, is entirely too respectable to have composed this. It was probably his evil twin.

Three Jolly Coachmen, also known as Landlord, Fill The Flowing Bowl

Here's when I knew I was famous. I was in River Haven, and I'd been singing some of my songs, and a bunch of Havenites responded with this song, including a new verse they'd heard recently: *Here's to the Cav who trims his beard...* Oh dear. When your own contributions pass beyond mere infamy into the halcyon lands of Anonymous, you know you've *arrived*.

The Three Ravens And The Maiden's Prayer

My Beloved was once a respectable young lady of the parish, before she fell in with disreputable company (and then married it). She now produces filk songs... but they're still of the best quality and, as it happens, a vast improvement on the originals. *The Three Ravens* is another version of the song that *Twa Corbies* is the better-known exemplar of. This version is better still.

She reminded me that this is not exactly a filk. I make the distinction between *tropes*, which reuse a song's tune and modify its lyrics, and *broadballads*, which simply take the tune and throw the words away. Both of those terms apply mostly to period, or demonstrably old, songs; I use filk mainly to refer to tropes of modern tunes; Baron Hrolf likes to call these *mopes*. So this isn't a filk, or a mope, it's a trope. Got that? Good!

Throw

Celsa is up there with Morna and even Llewen for the sheer power of her voice, and like those two worthies, she's chosen to use her powers for evil. Woohoo!

Till The Very Last Man

And speaking of Morna: as I said in the first book, "If you haven't heard her sing, *you lose!*" Bloodthirsty war songs don't come any better.

Twa Corbies

At last! Another period song! ... Right? Well, no, actually. The evidence points to the tune for this one being barely a century old, though the words are older, and exist in a less cynical form with bonus 50% extra tweety-birds as *The Three Ravens*. Fortunately, you can get away with it if you bung on a Robbie Burns accent and don't sit too close to any crack Research Laurels (which is advice I try to follow generally, so it's no hardship).

Uislenn

It's possible to sing this song and make it sound like a canvas bag of porridge rolling down a slight hill. Eurghh. However, if you give it a good rhythm and remember that it's a war song, you'll do OK. Silfren the Singer wrote this, with Gaelic proofreading from Grainne of Starmount, basing the tune somewhat on *Mo Ghile Mear* by Seán Clárach Mac Dhomhnaill (c. 1691-1757). It's pretty much up there with *The Black Fox* as the most requested songs in Lochac, which is as it should be.

A Viking Love Song

This fellow was tough to find, in the days before Google made everyone next-door neighbours. I even had to use *Usenet!* But I found him and got permission to include this song, which has the perfect air of viking arrogance to it.

Viking Men

There are many concepts in a typical SCA song that belong together: blacksmiths and smut, cows and smut, crows and death with a passing reference to smut, and so on. But one that I can't explain is this: vikings and filks of *Jingle Bells*. There are dozens of them! This one is the best of the lot, but the glut of pretenders makes it very hard to find the author.

Another reason I like it is because it doesn't come right out and mention rape, which is apparently required in every bloody viking song ever. I don't like that, so I de-emphasise it (see *Where Have All The Vikings Gone* and *Lindisfarne*) and I prefer songs with a little more consideration.

The Vulgar Birthday Song

I have evidence that this appalling song, in one form or another and with a variety of different verses, predates the SCA by a good dozen or more years, having been sung in the 1950s and before. It's genuinely Anon. One word of advice, however: if you find an audience able to sit through the entire thing, don't bother to sing the *Lyke Wake Dirge* over them, because they're already dead.

The Wench's Lament

For a few years in the 1990s, the original Rowany Festival included The Greasispoone, a kind of diner-cum-greasetrap that would play host to bardic circles in the evening after dinner. Blod was "just" a serving wench in those days, as well as one hell of a bard. She wrote this one to celebrate the skilled and dedicated wenching community of the day.

When I'm King No More

Sir Kylson is another bard who is no longer with us, having bowed out of his last tourney in particularly final fashion. This has got to stop! Will the talented, funny men and women of the SCA please stop dying? It's not amusing any more. Thank you.

Where Have All The Vikings Gone?

Ah, an old joke, but a good one. I have no idea who wrote this; it seems such an obvious idea in retrospect, maybe nobody did. Feel free to channel Vyvyan from The Young Ones (or Cookie Monster from Sesame Street if that reference is lost on you) to get the right voice when singing/shouting **THE BOLD BITS**.

Please note: I bowdlerised a line. The young girls were all now "TOOK BY VIKINGS" rather than "RAPED BY VIKINGS", because for gods' sake, there's enough rape in real life without making funny songs about it. If that bothers you, you're welcome to make your own songbook. I can suggest a good printing company, an excellent source of paper, and an orifice you can stick it up when you're done.

A Wife's Lament

A little song to slash your wrists to. Please don't. We'd miss you.

You Make Me Feel Like Fighting

One last Arian Shieldbreaker song. This is best sung with a disturbing falsetto, being a filk of a Leo Sayer song.

You're Mundane

Go on. Tell me you *don't* know anyone this could have been written for. I won't believe you.

Acknowledgements

A lot of people helped me get this songbook out of its dead-tree prison and into the ether. These are the proofreaders and editors who have done some work for me so far, as well as the contributors of individual songs and/or tunes. If you fancy seeing your name here, find some typos and mail me at bat@flurf.net any time, or lend me a song!

Adelindis filia Gotefridi
Alfredo el Bufon
Aliena de Savigny
Amanda Martel
Anne de Tournai
Annys Blodwell
Antoine le Rêveur
Arian Shieldbreaker
Baldwin of Erebor
Bess Haddon of York
Bess of Buckland
Celsa sive Celsovildis
Cillian an Sealgair
Conn MacNeill
Drusticc inigena Eddarrnonn
Efenwealt Wystle

Graham Pratt
Harald of Sigtuna
Harry of Eccles
Hrolf Herjolfssen
Ian Barker
Iestyn ap Sais
Isabella di Millefiora
Jacques des Glaces
James Treebull the Stubborn
Janet of Arden
Jhondo Oakenshield
Kylson Skyfyre
Llewen the Unruly
Malkin Grey
Marian of Heatherdale
Maudeleyn of Bryn Aur

Michael Spencer
Michelle de Chenonceaux
Morna of River Haven
Peregrynne Windrider
Ragnar Magnussen
Rugen Axegrinder
Silfren the Singer
Snorri Blóðdrekkr ór Óðinslundi
Sorle Maknicoll
Stewart
Thorgeirr Eikenskjaldr the Thirsty
Timotay Tayshun
Wilfred Bearslayer
Wulfwine Grimwaldson
Yolande Kesteven