

The Unknown Words

Second Ethereal Edition, AS XLVI

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Preface to the Second Ethereal Edition

If this book were a human being, it'd be old enough to get sloshed at the Festival tavern by now, legally.

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, bits of this, bits 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 that 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.

You will always find people who insist that the SCA has no place for modern music, whether written in period style or filked from the Top 40. They will insist that singing such songs is an affront and an assault, and a proper SCAdian must not stoop to such things. These people are well-meaning, possibly well-educated, and *utterly, completely wrong*. I recommend that they be patted on the head and sent back to their table or their tent. The bardic tradition of the SCA is older and stronger than the tradition of authenticity and research, and it binds the Society together more tightly. Furthermore, there is always room for every style of fun in an organisation as large as ours – fencing, archery and heavy fighting co-exist, for example, at least when no cretinous foreigners are trying to ban one or another of them – and the fans of period music generally have no trouble finding singers and an audience should they desire such things.

By encouraging bardic singing in the SCA, “from *Gaudete* to the *Stickjock* song and everything in between”, we make our events more accessible to more people. Some of those people will go on to become devotees of one particular style of music, perhaps filk or perhaps purely period song, but they will only do so because their first experience with music was warm, welcoming and inclusive. That's how it has always been. I hope it will never change.

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.
Tuesday 28 June 2011, AS XLVI.

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.

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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.

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...

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 the 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

Traditional

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 contio, 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

Anonymous

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.

The Hammer Of Thor

Author unknown

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.

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King Henry

Child Ballad #32

Let never a man a-wooing 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". "Nichte" 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 uber 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...
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, so...

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

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, so...

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, so...

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, so...

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, so...

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

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', so...

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.

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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.

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 and 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 and 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 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.

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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 and 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.

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

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?

RAPED 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

Author Unknown

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.

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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.

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.

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.

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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 noone 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

Anonymous

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 radical
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 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!

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.

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The Blacksmith

Anonymous

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 *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?

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Black Fox

Graham Pratt

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

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

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 “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”	“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”

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.
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,
Get 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
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.
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
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

Anonymous

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

Anonymous

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

Anonymous

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 sung 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

Anonymous

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.
Hengest has called us from Gotland and Frisia
To Vortigan'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 Hengest 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,
Harold Hadrada's come over the sea
His longships he's laden with Beresarks 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 Northman 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

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

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

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

and so on, for:

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 raped...

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...

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...

There thee'll catch thy death of cold...

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.

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

Anonymous

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 worst."

"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

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.

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!*

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The Rattlin' Bog

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,
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,
And 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,
Give him advice, maybe save his hide,
"You meddle with bards, have cause to fear"
Is 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 in 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 whatever Flanders and Swann's *Commonwealth Fair* is to the tune of.

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 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!

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.”

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!

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. They have nothing to do with peerages.

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. I believe Steeleye Span do a version of it, but I think I prefer his for reasons of nostalgia (and because Maddie Pryor sings through her nose).

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.

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.

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.

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.

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 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-sciencey 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 Llewelyn the Unruly sings. It is, so rumour has, the story of an old English tradition, involving senseless violence to small innocent birdies. It's probably one of them metaphoricals.

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.*

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 above 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 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.

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 old old old Festival site at Fairholme Park, 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.

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*.

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.

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.

The Hammer of Thor, often called Axe Time

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.

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.

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.

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.

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.

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 for getting 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 send the tone for my visit, and inspired me to follow suit. And the rest, as they say, is hysteri.

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.

Maids, When You're Young

See above. *Please* sing this properly!

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?

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. 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 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!

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 something else I haven’t identified, 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.

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 Alaine 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.

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.

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 pair with *The Court of King Cornelius*. I have no idea *at all* what the last line means.

The Raven Banner

A recent request, and a haunting tale.

Red-Haired Girl

I can't consider myself the best filker in Lochac, because Harry of Eccles is here. He's just bloody good. 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.

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!

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.

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 Kiplied 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 Sinéad 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 Llewenn 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/protege thang, 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.

Stickjock

Snorri, a true Bard and now a peer and a 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*.

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 this one being less than a century old. 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.

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. It's pretty much up there with *Hunting The Devil* 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.

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 for **THE BOLD BITS**.

A Wife's Lament

A little song to slash your wrists to. Remember: down, not across.

You're Mundane

Go on. Tell me you *don't* know anyone this could have been written for. I won't believe you.

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Blodeuwedd y Gath o Nedd Isabella di Millefiora