

Folklore Friday Goes Digital

The Old Man at the Mill

Chorus:

Same old man working at the mill
The mill turns around of its own free will
Hand in the hopper and the other in the sack
Ladies step forward and the gents fall back

Down sat the owl his head all white
Lonesome day and a lonesome night
Thought I heard a pretty girl say
Work all night and you sleep next day

Chorus

Well my, said the raven as she flew
If I was a young man I'd have two
One for to fetch and the other for to sew
I'd have a little string for my bow, bow, bow

Chorus

My old man's in Kalamazoo
He don't wear no "yes, I do"
First to the left and then to the right
This old mill grinds day and night

Chorus

The Willow Tree (aka *The False Young Man*)

There was a youth, a cruel youth
Who lived beside the sea;
Six little maidens he drowned to death
By a lonely willow tree.

As he walked forth with Sally Brown,
As he walked by the sea;
An evil thought then came to him
To hurl her into the sea.

"Take off your gown, your golden gown.
Take off your gown," said he,
For though I am going to murder you
I'd not spoil your finery."

"Ah! Turn around, you false young man.
"Turn around," said she,
"For tis not meet that such a youth
A naked woman should see."

He turned around, that false young man
He turned and faced the sea
And seizing him boldly in both of her arms,
She hurled him into the sea.

"Lie there, lie there, you false young man
Lie there, lie there," said she
"Six little maidens you've drowned to death
...Go keep them company."

He sank beneath the icy waves,
He sank down into the sea.
And no living thing wept a tear for him, save
That lonely willow tree.

Blackbirds and Thrushes (aka *Hares on the Mountain*)

If all the young ladies were blackbirds and thrushes
If all the young ladies were blackbirds and thrushes
Then all the young men would go beating the bushes
Rye fol de dol diddle dol diddle dol day

If all the young ladies were ducks on the water (2x)
Then all the young men would go swimming in after

If all the young ladies were rushes a-growing (2x)
Then all the young men would get scythes and go mowing

If the ladies were all trout and salmon so lively (2x)
Then d'vil the men would go fishing on Friday

If all the young ladies were hares on the mountain (2x)
The men with their hounds would be out without counting

Johnny Has Gone for a Soldier

Oh I wish I was on yon green hill, there I'd sit and cry my fill, and every tear would turn a mill... my Johnny has gone for a soldier.

Chorus (in Gaelic)

Siubhail, siubhail, siubhail, a ruin!
Siubhail go socair, agus siubhail go ciuin,
Siubhail go d-ti an doras agus eulaigh liom,
Is go d-teidh tu, a mhurnin, slan!

I'll sell my clock, I'll sell my reel, I'll sell my only spinning wheel, to buy my love a sword of steel... my Johnny has gone for a soldier.

Chorus

I'll dye my petticoat, I'll dye it red, and 'round the world I will bake my bread. To find my love alive or dead, my Johnny has gone for a soldier.

Chorus

Chorus Translation

Move, move, move, O treasure !
Move quietly, and move gently,
Move to the door, and elope with me,
And mayest thou go, O darling, safe.

Pleasant and Delightful

It was pleasant and delightful on a midsummer's morn
Where the green fields and meadows were buried in the corn
And the blackbirds and thrushes sang on every tree
And the larks they sang melodious at the dawning of the day

Well a sailor and his true love were out walking one day
Said the sailor to his true love, "I am bound far away.
I am bound for the Indies where the loud cannons roar."
And I'm going to leave my Nancy, she's the girl that I adore.

Said the sailor to his true love, "Well I must be on me way
The topsails are all hoisted and the anchors are weighed;
Our big ship lies waiting for the next flowing tide
And if ever I return again then I'll make you my bride."

Then the ring from off her finger she instantly drew
Saying "take this dearest William and my heart will go too."
And as he embraced her tears from her eyes fell
Saying, "May I go along with you?"
"Oh no, my love, farewell."

John Barleycorn

There were three men came out of the West
Their fortunes for to try
And these three men made a solemn vow
John Barleycorn must die

They've plowed, they've sown, they've harrowed him in
Threw clods upon his head
And these three men made a solemn vow
John Barleycorn was dead

They let him lie for a very long time 'til the rains from heaven did fall
And little Sir John sprung up his head
And so amazed them all

They let him stand 'til midsummer's day
Till he looked both pale and wan
And little Sir John's grown a long, long beard
And so become a man

They've hired men with the scythes so sharp
To cut him off at the knee
They've rolled him and tied him by the waist
Serving him most barbarously

They've hired men with the sharp pitchforks
Who pricked him to the heart
And the loader he has served him worse than that
For he's bound him to the cart

They wheeled him around and around the field
'til they came unto a barn
And there they made a solemn oath
On poor John Barleycorn

They've hired men with the crab-tree sticks
To cut him skin from bone
And the miller he has served him worse than that
For he's ground him between two stones