

Summer Solstice Cecil Sharp House

18.6.2023



Shovel Dance Collective
ORDER OF SERVICE

Shovel Dance Collective are:

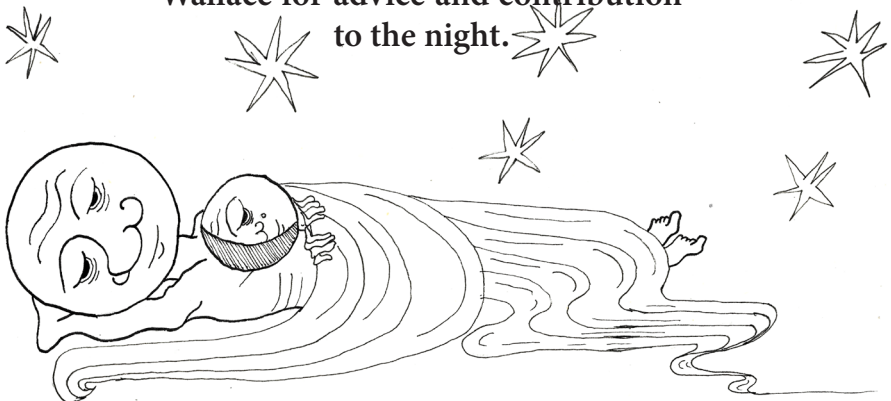
**Alex Mckenzie
Daniel S. Evans
Fidelma Hanrahan
Jacken Elswyth
Joshua Barfoot
Mataio Austin Dean
Nick Granata
Oliver Hamilton
Tom Hardwick-Allan**

Joining us tonight are:

**London Sacred Harp
Dawn Terry**

Special thanks to:

**Cecil Sharp House for hosting us.
Anthony of Baba Yaga's Hut, for
making the night possible. Gordon
Wallace for advice and contribution
to the night.**





As the clock struck midnight and we passed into the longest day of June 21st 2021, we arrived at the Hilly Fields stone circle to play until the sun came up. As the end of lockdown seemed in sight, but outside socialising was still the norm, we came up with idea one drunken Deptford evening, realising that the summer solstice coincided with our first gig back after the pandemic. The small 30 person COVID capacity show at Cafe OTO was to be followed by an informal gathering with no limits, so we made the poster asking people to arrive in the dead of night, with no idea if anyone would come. The turnout was way beyond our wildest expectations, and with some help we played and sang until the sun rose (albeit hazy behind the clouds). After so long, to not ask permission - from the sun, the stones, Lewisham council - and simply be in a place and play was euphoric.

This is our third invitation. From a stone circle installed for the millenium, to a mile long procession from that stone circle to the Ivy House pub, and now the home of the English Folk Song and Dance Society. An invitation is all we can provide, the only sure thing is that the sun will rise again afterwards.

Dawn Terry

Dawn Terry plays slow, melancholic, optimistic music for sad people. Based in Newcastle, she's a veteran drone artist, producing work that is heavy, dreamlike, open and hypnotic.

Working for years as one third of Bong, Dawn supplied heavy distorted bass and vocals. Bong are a drone-doom band, renowned for reaching beyond their metal roots towards a sound that incorporates the psychedelic and cosmic. They produced a high frequency of releases in the form CD-Rs documenting live performances, to compliment their occasional studio works.

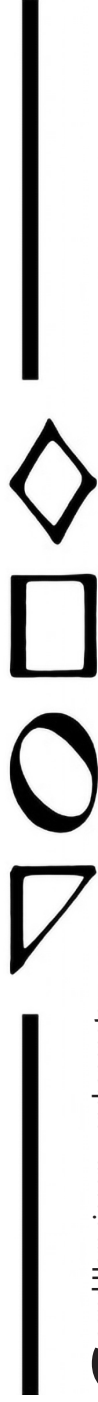
In her more recent solo work Dawn has turned towards the acoustic resonances of accordion, hurdy-gurdy, and voice. Both cleaner and denser than ever before, Dawn is now producing large scale minimalist landscapes characterised by an austere openness, barely punctured by hypnotic drumming or slowly intoned vocals.

London Sacred Harp

There's quite frankly too much to say about Sacred Harp for one small side of this booklet. Many of us in the collective have been big fans of this tradition for a long time now and some of us have also gone along to sing with London Sacred Harp before. It is the most well known form of Shape Note singing, a kind of sacred music written in four part harmony, with each part often physically making up four quadrants of a square in the room. It's name comes from the eponymous book from which singers pick the songs, often taking turns to choose verses and lead the choir. The 'Sacred Harp' book is the most famous compilation of this specific form of sacred music, although different volumes are also regularly sung.

Originating in American Protestant churches, Shape Note singing was conceived as an easy way to teach people how to read music, and sing complex harmony in church. Although American in origin, it has roots in the hymnody of British West Galley music which was sung particularly in the rural low churches across the country. Sacred Harp now has a foothold across the world, and has become a much beloved way of singing by secular and religious alike. It's pretty much one of the most euphoric things you'll ever hear so we hope this encourages you to get obsessed too and join in with local singings. London Sacred Harp is open to all and have several singings a month. It's certainly a rabbit hole to dive down and we are really honoured to host them tonight. On the next side you'll see a sheet explaining a bit more, with some words and an example of a page from the book. You'll be asked to join in tonight, so prepare yourselves for some singing.

LONDON SACRED HARP



Sacred Harp singers – or shapenote singers – aren't part of a choir in the usual sense. We don't often perform, but we don't call what we do rehearsing either. We just get together and sing for the joy of it.

Our music originated in the Protestant Christian tradition, which is reflected in the texts we use, but we aren't a religious group: people of all faiths and (more often) no faith are welcome. We try to create a welcoming, inclusive and supportive space for everyone.

The music is divided into four parts: treble, alto, tenor (which carries the tune), and bass. We don't usually stand in a line like we will tonight. Instead, we sit facing each other across a 'hollow square', with each voice part taking one of the four sides. Any type, quality, and range of voice should find a comfortable and important place within our

harmonies. Most of us have felt like we 'can't sing' at some point, but in shapenote music everyone can fit somewhere. There are no auditions or conductor: we each take a turn to choose a song from the book, and (if we want to) step into the middle of the square to lead it – the hand waving you might see is just us keeping tempo, which is how we get that rhythmic 'pulse'.

Shapenote tunes take that name because, although they're written in standard notation, the notes have different shapes. This system was designed to teach music to people who have no previous training. It's a bit like the scales you might have heard in *The Sound of Music*: do-re-mi-fa-sol-la-si-do, but we use a four-shape system. Our circle is a 'sol', the rectangle a 'la', the triangle a 'fa' and the diamond a 'mi'. These shapes repeat

to make a scale, and from there a song. We sing the sound of the shapes before we get into the verses.

Below is a song from our book. We'd love you to sing it with us! You'll see two sets of four 'staves' (lines of music). The top line is for our trebles (the higher voices whatever your gender) and below that the altos. Tenor comes next – the tune, which is accessible to most voices – with bass at the bottom.

One of our group will give the starting notes. From there just pick a part – tenor, that third line, might be easiest to begin with – and join in, preferably in full voice!

We sing most weeks. Details are at <https://londonsacredharp.org>. People often say they come for the music but stay for the people. You'll be very welcome.

HALLELUJAH. C.M.

Ab Major Charles Wesley, 1759.

"Let me die the death of the righteous, and let my last end be like his." -- Num. 23:10.

William Walker, 1835

1. And let this fee - ble bod - y fail, And let it faint or die;
My soul shall quit this mourn - ful vale, And soar to worlds on high,
2. Shall join the dis - em - bod - ied saints, And find its long - sought rest,
That on - ly bliss for which it pants, In my Re - deem - er's breast.

3. O what are all my suf - frings here, If, Lord, Thou count me meet
4. With that en - rap - tured host t' ap - pear, And wor - ship at Thy feet!
But joy or grief, give ease or pain, Take life or friends a - way,
let me find them all a - gain, In that e - ter - nal day.

you'll sing hal - le - lu - jah, And we'll all sing hal - le - lu - jah, When we ar - rive at home.

you'll sing hal - le - lu - jah, And we'll all sing hal - le - lu - jah, When we ar - rive at home.

THE MERRY GOLDEN TREE

There are many different versions of this old song. In England it is known variously as ‘The Golden Vanity’ and the ‘Sweet Trinity’, in Scotland as the ‘Sweet Kumadee’ and ‘The Golden Victory’, in Wales as ‘The Green Willow Tree’, and in Ireland as ‘Sailing for the Lowlands Low’. In each version the enemy is different: sometimes they are Turkish, sometimes Spanish, in this case they are British pirates. The British enemy points to the American origin of these particular lyrics. The song is a Child Ballad (collected with the English names, ‘The Sweet Trinity/The Golden Vanity’) and has its origins in a song, first collected in the 17th century, ‘Sir Walter Raleigh Sailing in the Lowlands’. The ‘lowland sea’ in the song could refer either to the North Sea off the coast of Holland or to the Mediterranean Sea, this, together with the ever-changing enemy ship, reflects shifting British involvement in various imperialist conflicts from the Anglo-Dutch Wars, to the French Revolutionary Wars and the related Anglo-Spanish Wars of the 18th century. In all versions, the lowly cabin boy is the hero of the tale and saves the titular ship from the enemy ship by sinking the latter. In most versions he is betrayed by the captain who first offers him great riches and marriage to his daughter, and then drowns him rather than keep his promises. In the versions with Raleigh, he keeps some of his promises to the cabin boy but does not permit marriage to his daughter. The tale laments the expendability of lower class crew and demonstrates how the officer class are always ready to endanger the lives of ordinary workers to save their own skins. Shirley Collins learned ‘The Merry Golden Tree’ in America while collecting folk songs with Marxist ethnomusicologist Alan Lomax. We have used her lyrics but altered the melody of the second and third lines of each verse according to our own composition. This song is part of a vast, watery, trans-Atlantic culture which carried workers’ songs from these islands to the Americas as a by-product of processes of colonisation and imperialism.

There was a little ship and it sailed on the sea
The name of the ship was the merry golden tree
Sailing on the low and lonesome low
Sailing on the lonely lowland sea

They hadn't been out scarce two days or three
Until they sighted the British Robbery
Sailing on the low and lonesome low
Flaunting the Jolly Roger on the lowland sea

Up jumped the captain a ringing of his hands
He cried "Oh Lord now what shall we do?
They'll sink us in the low and the lonesome low
They'll sink us to the bottom of the lowland sea"

Up and spoke the little cabin boy
Saying "what will you give me if I then destroy?
If I sink 'em in the low and the lonesome low
Sink 'em to the bottom of the lowland sea"

"Well I'll give you gold and I'll pay you fee
My youngest daughter and she will marry thee
If you sink 'em in the low and the lonesome low
Sink 'em to the bottom of the lowland sea"

So he turned on his back and away swam he
Until he came to the British Robbery
Sailing on the low and lonesome low
Flaunting the Jolly Roger on the lowland sea

Where some was playing cards and some were at the dice
And some were taking their best friends advice
Sailing on the low and lonesome low
Flaunting the Jolly Roger on the lowland sea

Well he had a little tool just right for the use
He bore nine holes just to let in the juice
Sailing on the low and lonesome low
Flaunting the Jolly Roger on the lowland sea

Well some threw their hats and some threw their caps
But they could not stop those salt water gaps
Sailing on the low and lonesome low
Flaunting the Jolly Roger on the lowland sea

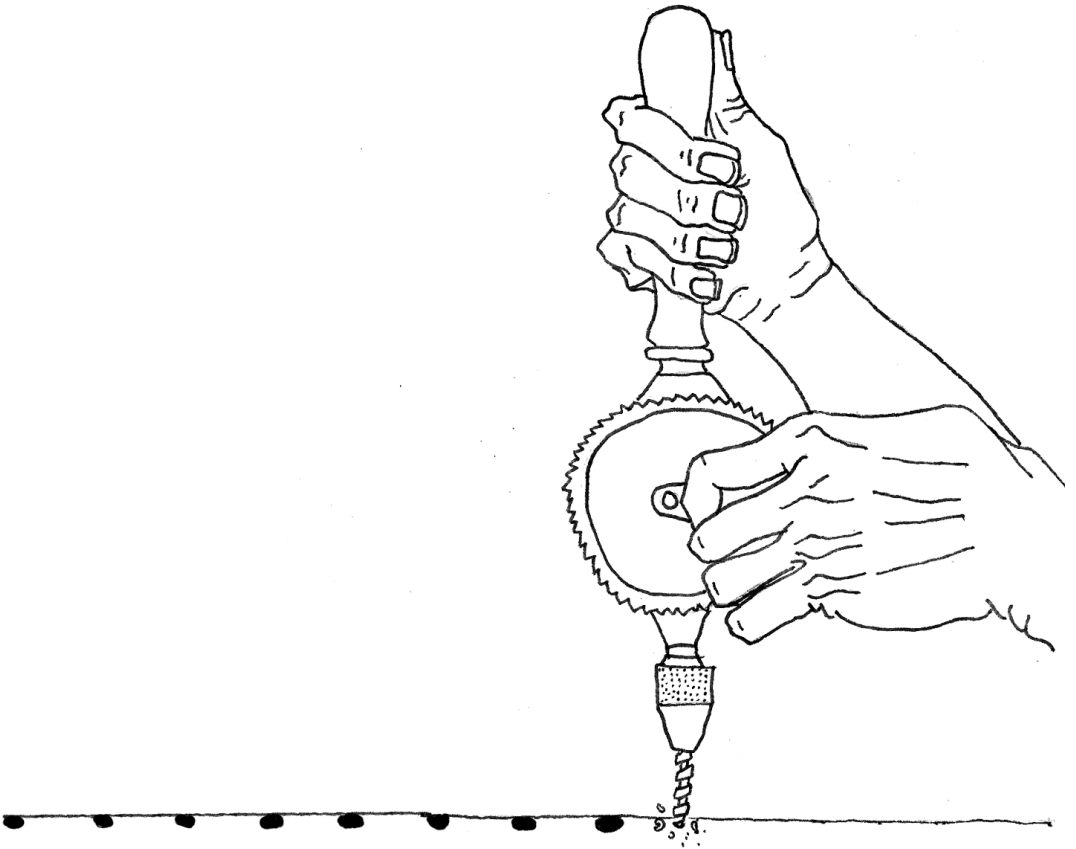
Well he turned on his back and away swam he
Until he came to the Merry Golden Tree
Sailing on the low and lonesome low
Sailing on the lonely lowland sea

“Captain oh captain take me onboard
You’ll do unto me just as good as your word
For I sank ‘em in the low and the lonesome low
I sank ‘em to the bottom of the lowland sea.”

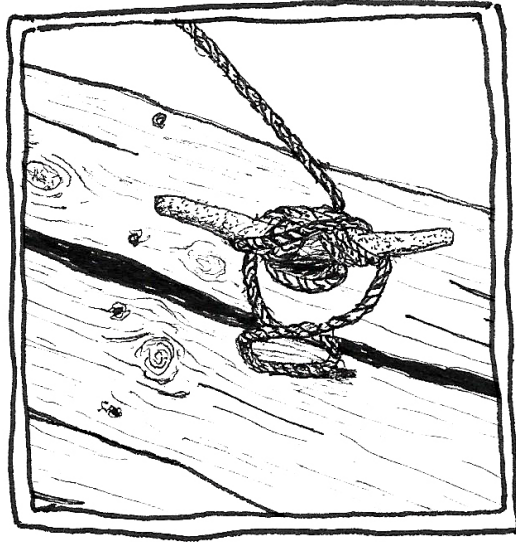
“I’ll not pay you gold nor yet pay your fee
My youngest daughter she’ll never marry thee
I’ll sink you in the low and the lonesome low
Leave you to drown in the lowland sea.”

“If it wasn’t for your daughter nor yet for your men
I’d do unto you just as I did to them
I’d sink you in the low and the lonesome low
Sink you to the bottom of the lowland sea”

But he turned on his back and away swam he
“Farewell to you, you Merry Golden Tree
I’m drowning in the low and the lonesome low
I’m drowning in the lonely lowland sea.”



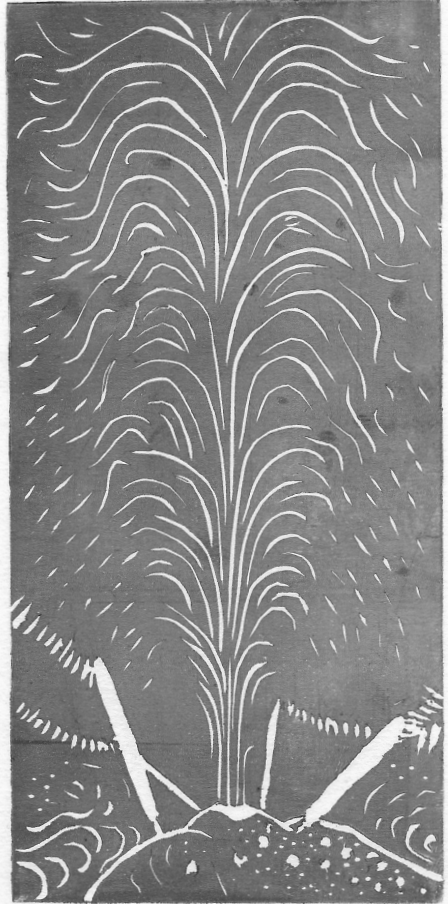
THE BOLD FISHERMAN



The first in a four part medley. An instrumental setting of a song from the repertoire of the Copper Family of Rottingdean, traditionally performed unaccompanied. The words tell of a woman courted by a lord who she initially takes for a common fisherman. The folklorist and singer A. L. Lloyd has a theory that the song plays on the symbolism of early Christian mysticism (the Royal Fisherman, the three Vestures of Light, the Recognition and Adoration, and the House of the Father). This might be a bit far-fetched - but either way it's a great song, and a wonderful tune when allowed to stand on its own.

THE WEARY WHALING GROUNDS

A song lamenting the terrible conditions on board a whaling ship. There are many of a similar ilk, where often the narrator expresses adamantly that they will never go whaling again, before running out of money and leaving for Greenland once more. We are reminded of the model of work that was created on board these private vessels that still exists today: the priority of profit over safety and comfort, the almost comically low pay for the most terrible work, and the abuse of the notion of ‘what happens at sea, stays at sea’. The whale changes, but the captains have very much remained the same. During a band trip to the Deptford foreshore, Nick and Mataio realised they both knew the song, and thought it fitting that they sing it there (being so close to a ‘Deptford pub’), providing the impetus for the creation of *The Water is the Shovel of the Shore*.



If I had the wings of a gull, my boys,
I would spread 'em and fly home.
I'd leave old Greenland's icy grounds
For of right whales there is none.

And the weather's rough and the winds do blow
And there's little comfort her.
I'd sooner be snug in a Deptford pub,
A-drinkin' of strong beer.

Oh, a man must be mad or want money bad
To venture catchin' whales.
For we may be drowned when the fish turns around
Or our skulls be smashed by his tail.

Though the work seems grand to the young green hand,
And his heart is high when he goes,
In a very short burst he'd as soon hear a curse
As the cry of: "There she blows!"

"All hands on deck now, for God's sake,
Move briskly if you can."
And he stumbles on deck, so dizzy and sick;
For his life he don't give a damn.

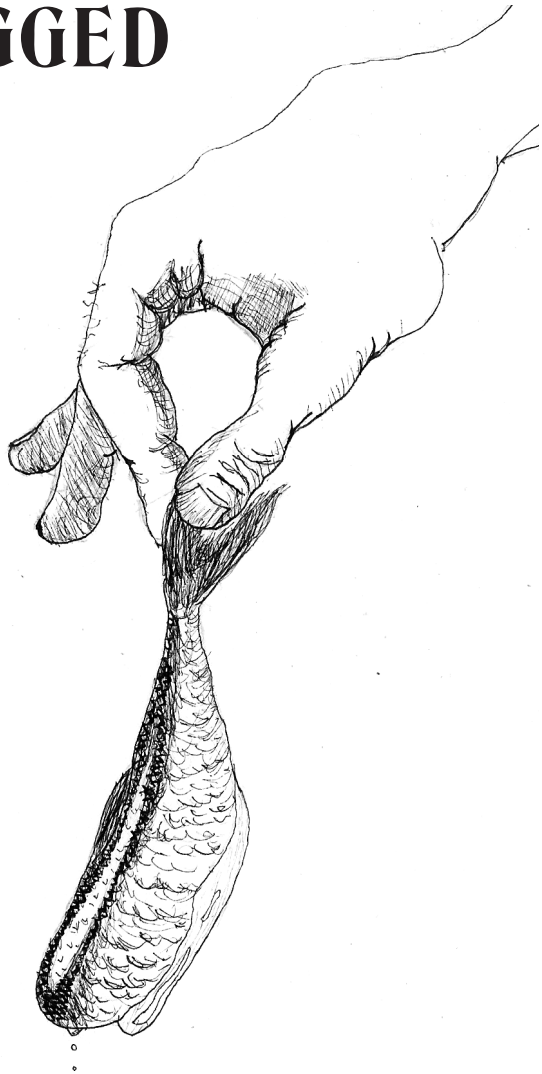
And high overhead the great flukes spread,
And the mate gives the whale the iron,
And soon the blood in a purple flood
From the spout-hole comes a-flying!

Well, these trials we bear for night four year,
Till the flying jib points for home.
We're supposed for our toil to get a bonus of the oil,
And an equal share of the bone.

But we go to the agent to settle for the trip,
And we've find we've cause to repent.
For we've slaved away four years of our life
And earned about three pound ten.

FISHERMAN'S SONG FOR ATTRACTING SEALS - THE FULL RIGGED SHIP

A tune-set comprising two jigs – the first from the Scottish Highlands, and the second from Shetland. The wonderfully named Fisherman's song for attracting seals was first notated by the Reverend Patrick McDonald in 1784 for his book 'A Collection of Highland Vocal Airs with Country Dances', where it's also given the Gaelic title Maol dònaidh. McDonald was one of the earliest collectors of Scottish traditional music, and apparently took an approach to the work that prized simplicity over tidying up or embellishment – a quality which perfectly suits this quite stark tune. Jack-en learned it from Cath and Phil Tyler. The Full Rigged Ship apparently used to be played in freer time, rolling and diving like a swaying ship under sail – in his early 1980s PhD thesis 'The Fiddle Tradition of the Shetland Islands' Peter Cooke lists it as a slow air. Today it's more commonly played in the stricter jig time that we use for it, though our ringing and creaking around the edges of the tune perhaps recall something of these origins.



JOWL, JOWL AND LISTEN LADS

To 'jowl' was Northumbrian miner's jargon for testing the coal face by tapping it first with the haft of your pick and listening. A trained ear would know if it was safe enough to hew, or unstable and likely to cause an accident. The figures of mining injury and death throughout the lifetime of the profession in the UK are staggering, especially in the C19th. Workers couldn't rely on their bosses' protection, only their skill and intuition could prevent disaster, but even then, too often, that wasn't enough. We sing it in memory of those who have, and will yet, lose their life in dangerous work. We heard it first on a documentary about Bert Lloyd, who came across it after a call out he made on the radio for miners songs. He recieved a huge amount of letters telling touching tales of a hard job which was none-the-less hard to lose. The second verse comes to us by way of a mistake made by a forum user on 'mudcat cafe' (a folk forum as old as jesus christ himself), who mixed up the verses a singer called Jack Elliott sung for that song, for a another called Rap her the Bank. Elliott's grandchild piped up and corrected the commenter, but we liked their mistake. Just as the misheard lyric at a folk club can become canon, why not the misquoted lyric on the folk forum?

Jowl, jowl and listen lads
Before you go a-hewin'
There's many a miner missin' lads
Because they wouldn't listen, lads

My father always used to say
that pit work's more than hewin'
You've got to coax the coal along
And not be drivin' or chewin'

So, jowl, jowl and listen lads
Before you go a-hewin'
There's many a miner missin' lads
Because they wouldn't listen, lads

And when that awful day arrived
The last shift for my father
A fall of stones and broken bones
And yet above the clatter

He said, jowl, jowl and listen lads
Before you go a-hewin'
There's many a miner missin' lads
Because they wouldn't listen, lads

LOVELY ON THE WATER - GALWAY BAY

This highly popular English song tells of the pain and desolation of imperialist war from the point of view of the people left behind to mourn their husbands, sons, and sweethearts. The song begins with the familiar English rural idyl - with small birds singing on the spray amidst the fecund glory springtime, but ends with the strikingly dark image of Tower Hill crowded with women all 'weeping sore' for their loved ones lost to the pointless horror or war. Our version combines the more well-known version collected by Ralph Vaughan Williams from a Mr. Hilton in Norfolk with another version collected in Hampshire in the early 20th century.

*As I walked out one morning
In the springtime of the year,
I overheard a maiden,
Likewise her soldier dear.*

*They sang a song together,
Made the valleys for to ring
And the birds on the spray and the meadows gay
Proclaimed the lovely spring.*

*"And if I had my way dear girl,
Along with you I'd stay,
But the Queen she does want soldiers
So I must sail away,
But it's lovely on the water to hear the music play."*

*They both shook hands and parted
That they might meet once more,
For there's one above does guard us
Where cannons loudly roar.*

*Oh there's many the mother's darling
Was taken on the main,
And it's in this dreadful battle
Many thousands will be slain.*

*Oh Tower Hill is crowded
With women weeping sore
For their husbands, sons, and sweethearts
Gone to face the cannons' roar.*



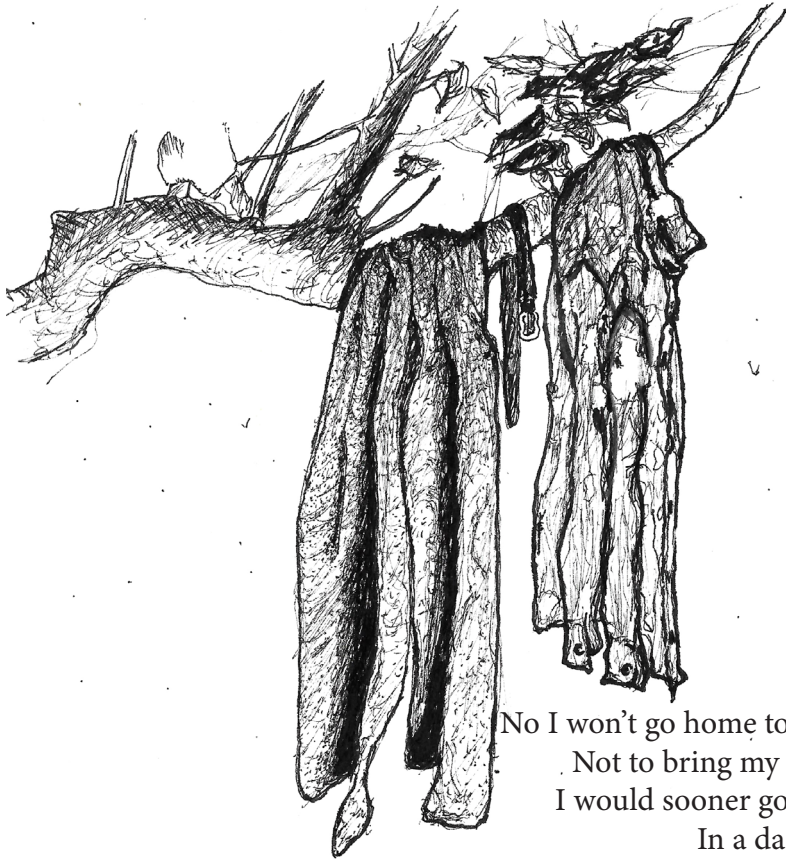
IN CHARLESTOWN THERE DWELLED A LASS

There are so many traditional songs of this kind of story. Where a woman falls in love, finds herself with child, and then is cruelly abandoned by their partner. The outcome in these songs is so often devastating. You might imagine, back in the day, these were sung as a warning to women in a highly repressive time not to have sex out of wedlock. Today they read rather differently. Whatever motives we might imagine, it's also easy to imagine women taking a lot of comfort in songs like this, especially in a world where a few careless words, said 'for fun' can end a woman's life. That final line, where Willy (it's always a Willy) laments Mary's death, making his sorry excuse for abandoning her, we think, makes it especially poignant. Not only as a comment on patriarchy, and a lesson on the importance of reproductive rights, but also the everyday tragedy that it's those who love us the most who are capable of hurting us the most. It comes to us via recordings of the great Mary Delaney, a singer of the Irish Travelling tradition, who spent much of her life in London raising 16 children. Though the song has been collected all over Britain and Ireland, with the events occurring in Camden, Brighton, Kilmarnok and more, the closest relation to our song places the songs in Charlottetown in Canada.

In Charlestown there dwelled a lass
She was as costant as she was true
When a young man fell a-courting her
And drew her in despair

He courted her for six long months
And to him she proved so kind
He's courted her for six long months
And to him she's proved a child

Go home, go home, to your dwelling place
For to bring your parents in disgrace
Oh, go home, go home to your dwelling place
for you've proved with a false young man



No I won't go home to my dwelling place
Not to bring my parents in disgrace
I would sooner go and drown myself
In a dark and lonely place

As Willy he went out a-walking
He went out to take the fresh air
There he's seen his own love Mary
On the waves of the silvery tide

He's taken off his fine clothing
In to the river, there, he swam
And he's pulled his own love Mary
From the waves of the silvery tide

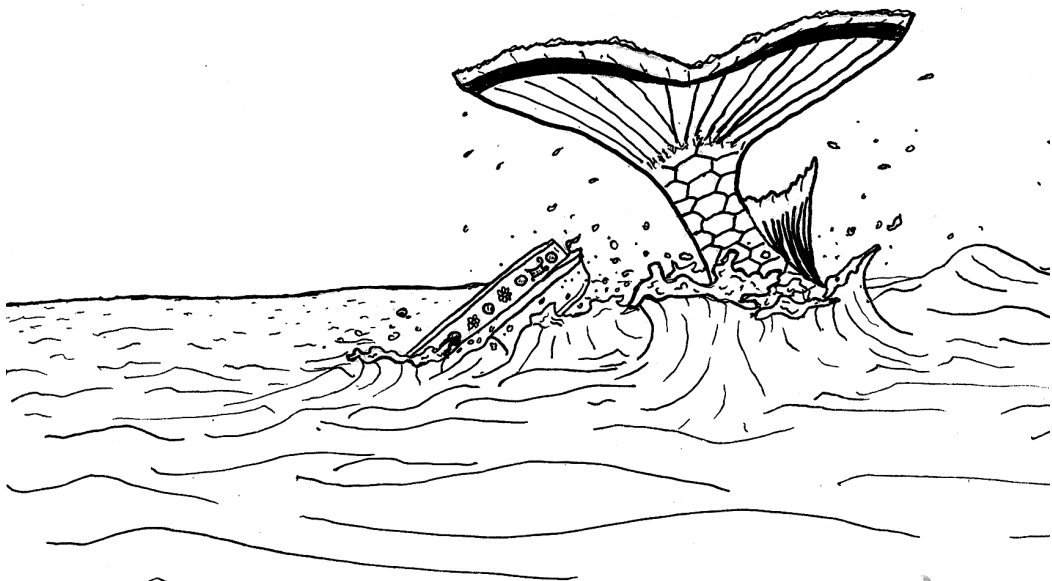
Oh, Mary dear. Darling Mary,
What have you done?
Those last words that I said to you
I had just said it for fun

JER THE RIGGER - THE FOXHUNTER'S REEL - THE HERRING'S HEAD

'The Herrings Head' is one of a series of ritual king-killing songs, such as 'the Cutty Wren', 'John Barleycorn', 'the Derby Ram', found throughout England, Wales, Scotland, and Ireland, whereby the king (here the king of the sea) is ritually slain and its small body unfolded and shared on an impossible scale. We see these strange, often comical, totemic, magical songs as anthems for revolutionary change.

Oh what will we do with old herring's head?
We'll bake it in loaves and sell 'em for bread!
That's herring's head and loaves of bread and all such things as that.

[Well of all the fish that live in the sea the herring is the fish for me!]



A set of tunes opened with a song. Kissing's Nae Sin is a short exposition on the blessed nature of an amorous and affectionate gesture, which came to us via Ewan MacColl. Newcastle and Portsmouth are both dance tunes published in Playford's Dancing Master in the 1600s. The words to Newcastle seem to have been added within a century of its publication. The words to 'Portsmouth' were added by us, taken from the Portsmouth song 'Come come my brave boys,' collected from merchant seaman Fredrick Fennemore in the Portsmouth workhouse in 1907. The song hasn't been collected anywhere else and is likely to be of Fennemore's own creation. The tune of 'Come come my brave boys' is less agreeable than that of Portsmouth and we thought the latter tune more accurately conveys the sense of joy at seeing the familiar Hampshire coastal waters around the Isle of Wight, Spithead, and Southsea after a long voyage - and knowing pay is soon to be on its way!



KISSIN'S NAE SIN

Some say that kissing's a sin

But I think it's least of all

For kissing has wandered this world

Ever since there was two.

If it wasn't lawful
Lawyers wouldn't allow it.

If it wasn't holy
Ministers wouldn't do it.

If it wasn't modest
Maidens wouldn't have it.

If it wasn't plenty
Poor folk wouldn't get it.

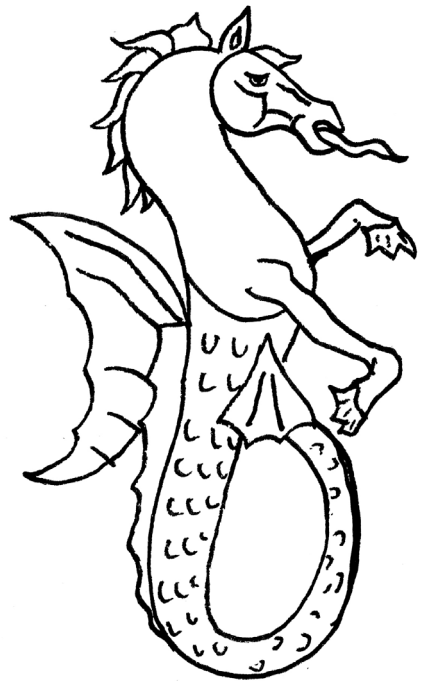
NEWCASTLE

Come you not from Newcastle
Come you not there away?
Oh met you not my true love
Riding on a bonnie bay?

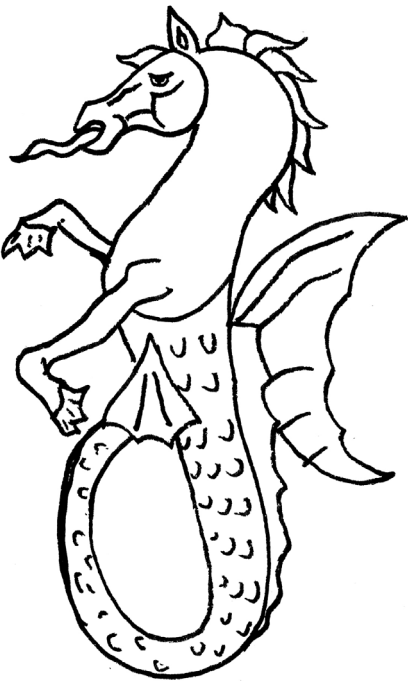
Why can I not love my love?
Why can my love not love me?
Why can I not speed after him
If love to all is free?

In spite of all blame and danger
With Willie I'll roam,
His arms my safe depender
His breast my happy home.

Why can I not love my love?
Why can my love not love me?
Why can we not together roam
If lover to all is free?



PORTSMOUTH (COME, COME, MY BRAVE BOYS)



Come come my brave boys
Never mind how she rolls
As soon as the gale is over
We'll sling a fresh bowl
While straight across our masthead
It blows a sweet gale
We'll soon see the Isle of Wight
if we clap on more sail

We have arrived at Spithead,
and we are at our ease
We'll pipe hands to skylark
And do just as we please
While no more cries our Captain:
It blows a sweet gale
We'll soon take our whack
if the bank it do not fail

PLEASANT AND DELIGHTFUL (THE CASTLE HILL ANTHEM)

Pleasant and Delightful (interchangably ‘Happy...’, ‘Charming...’ etc. ‘..and Delightful’) tells of a sailor who is sent off to the horrors of war. He receives the token of a ring from his distraught lover, not knowing if he will ever return. This gifting of objects was vital both as a symbol of hope for the men, and indeed as a way of identifying the sailor if he were to die in combat. Despite the promise of marriage upon his return the song leaves the narrative unresolved. We can’t help but feel for the couple and hope their story ends in happiness but the obvious weight of war and death lingers like a melancholy cloud over the melody.

This song is a favourite of ours, and one to sing along to. Ollie sang it at his Brother’s wedding recently whilst Nick and Dan discovered a hometown connection. On an archive of Yorkshire folksongs Pleasant and Delightful was labelled as ‘The Castle Hill Anthem’ referring to a landmark in Huddersfield. This same landmark was the home of a Rag-and-Bone man who inspired the eponymous character of Alan Garner’s recent novel ‘Treacle Walker’. It’s these chance connections through time, and way songs punctate life events, that we cherish about folk music so much.

It was pleasant and delightful on a midsummer’s morn
When the greenfields and the meadows were all buried in corn
And the blackbirds and thrushes sang on every green spray
And the larks they sang melodious at the dawning of the day

Now a sailor and his true love were a-walking one day
Said the sailor to his true love, “I am bound far away
I’m bound for the East Indies where the loud cannons roar
And I’m bound to leave you Nancy, you’re the girl that I adore”

Then the ring from off her finger she instantly drew
Saying, "Take this, dearest William, and my heart will go too."

And as they were embracing tears from her eyes fell
Saying, "May I go along with you?" "Oh no, my love, farewell"

"Fare thee well my dearest Nancy, I must be on my way
For the topsails are hoisted and the anchors aweigh,
And the big ship lies waiting for the fast flowing tide,
And if ever I return again, I will make you my bride



