

The Roving Journeyman

The Willett Family -

Tom Willett, with Chris & Ben

Traditional English Songs sung by Traditional Singers

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Traditional English Songs sung by THE WILLETT FAMILY
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Topic Records Ltd acknowledges the help of Ken Stubbs of Lingfield, Surrey,
who first located and recorded the Willetts

The Singers

Tom Willett and his two sons, Chris and Ben are gipsies. They have spent most of their lives travelling in Sussex and Kent. None of the songs on this record are peculiar to gipsies, whether they be true Romanys or Didikais - they are from the tradition of country people in general. Perhaps because of their social conservatism and a sort of pride that makes them 'outsiders' in contemporary urban and semi-urban communities, travelling people tend to keep the traditions of singing and playing very much alive. And so we are able to present some fine examples of English folk song sung in the traditional style by this gipsy family.

The Willetts have their songs from the aural tradition, from the singing of relatives or of people in common meeting places, at public houses, fairs and markets. Perhaps it may be thought surprising that many of the songs included here closely follow the texts collected by, for example, Cecil Sharp some forty years ago. At the time, Sharp was of the opinion that English folk song would die out within a few years! The songs are of course sung unaccompanied. Tom Willett, though an old man, retains the 'free' style of singing, with subtle variations and decorations of melody and pulse. His son Chris does not have this ability to the same extent, for he seems to have been influenced by the general style of 'pub-singing' in towns. Although recorded on location with portable equipment, the quality of recording is excellent.

The Songs

Lord Bateman One of the best known of all ballads, perhaps due to its publication on Broadside and music hall parodies, this tells of the Lord who is released from prison by the captor's daughter, and how he fulfils his vow of fidelity. The ballad may refer to the time of the crusades.

The Blacksmith Courted Me A widely known lyrical song of a forsaken woman.

The Little Ball of Yarn A song of rural seduction that is very typical of the genre.

Died For Love Another very widely known song of a forsaken woman. It is the original of 'There is a Tavern in the Town'

The Rambling Sailor Of Broadside origin, the song deals with the free and easy dealings of the sailor Young Johnson with women - an attitude popularly supposed to be typical of sailors and soldiers.

Riding Down to Portsmouth Apparently not collected previously, this song tells of the sailor who falls foul of a woman, and is wiser for the experience.

As I was Going to Salisbury A brief version of the story of the girl on her way to market. Her garter needs some adjustment, and help is at hand.

The Roving Journeyman A Song extolling the virtues of the travelling life.

While the Gamekeepers Lie Sleeping Poaching used to provide a living for country people. Whilst many songs deal with poachers who are captured and transported, here the hares are caught and sold without detection.

The Old Miser A rich man has his daughter's humble suitor pressed to sea or transported in order to get him out of the way.

The Game of Cards A description of a game of 'All Fours' cloaks an amorous encounter.

INTRODUCTION

The Recordings. These recordings were made on location and therefore a certain amount of extraneous noise was unavoidable, though we believe we have achieved an acceptable minimum. The aim during recording was to maintain an informal atmosphere and yet capture the presence of the singers. Tom and Ben Willett were recorded at a caravan site in Middlesex, Chris Willett was recorded in a public house near Paddock Wood, Kent.

Editing of the recordings has been kept to a minimum. We have not collated versions collected at different times, even though fuller versions may have been obtained in this manner. Tom Willett sang some verses of Riding Down to Portsmouth in a different order from that found here. We have replaced the verses in the order that the "story" of the song demands.

The Texts. Both Tom and Chris Willett punctuate their songs with frequent use of 'oh' and 'now'. We have omitted these from the transcribed texts except where their use seems essential to the mood and meaning of the song. Notes on dialect words etc. will be found after the appropriate text.

THE FAMILY

'I'm a Romany Rye, a real didikai!' sings Tom Willett in a song of music hall origin. This illustrates the confusion in the use of terms for nomadic peoples. The term 'travellers' covers Romanies (real gipsies) and Didikais (gipsies of English ancestry, sometimes blended with Romany).

Travellers, in England and elsewhere, show a marked love of music and often are talented performers. Socially conservative, they keep alive the English folk songs and dance airs. Travellers, in their twenties, can sing the old songs in addition to the latest hits. Go into a public house in the 'hopping' part of Kent, in early September, and there one will find players of the fiddle, melodeon, mouth organ and tambourine, as well as singers.

The Willetts are a didikai family. A 'Rye', Tom's son Chris explained, means a gentleman or toff. This is an apt description of the father, for he is well dressed, clean shaven, of polite manner and comfortable means. Both his trailer caravan and his bungalow (of caravan dimensions) are well appointed and spotlessly clean; nevertheless the family mixes intimately with those living in the more primitive style. When these songs were recorded, Tom was eighty-four (born 1878) but he carries his years lightly. He spent much of his early life in and around Copthorne, on the Surrey/Sussex border. His main trade was as a horse dealer. He was a close friend of George 'Pop' Maynard, the renowned singer and marbles champion, who died in 1962.

His wife comes of the well known show family, the Smarts. Tom worked as an animal trainer in their circus. A sideline was training dogs for poaching and cocks for fighting. Tom learnt most of his songs from his father, but, with the quick ear of the singer in the aural tradition, he picked up others in the alehouse and circus. He is always glad of an opportunity to sing, and Chris recalls that his father never needed beer to start him singing around the camp fire.

Chris Willett was forty-four when his songs were recorded (born 1918) and gives the occupation of himself and his brother Ben as 'trader' or general dealer. They buy and sell cars and scrap materials. With his family, he lives in a trailer caravan in Kent. He learnt his songs from his father. Ben is a bachelor and usually camps with his father. He also knows many of his father's songs, but is shy of singing.

MUSICAL NOTE

Generally speaking, the older a folk singer grows, the less sure he becomes in intonation, rhythm and ornament. So it is to some extent in the case of Mr Tom Willett, who nevertheless presents a fine example of the old free imaginative style of folk singing, a style which at first hearing seems to have more to do with 'telling' a song than with singing it. On deeper acquaintance, the subtleties and virtues of the performance become apparent, as do the beauties of the melodies used. For an aged singer, Mr Tom Willett shows himself remarkably musical, contriving to remain in tune, as a rule, throughout the length of songs containing a number of awkward intervals that the trained singer would find difficult to negotiate without loss of pitch. In only one instance is Mr Willett's intonation seriously at sea. That is, with the opening of the ballad of Lord Bateman where, through fatigue or loss of familiarity with the song, he fails to pitch correctly and drifts through the keys of B flat, B and C until finally by stanza four he is safely in the comfortable key of D where he remains almost until the end of the song. In most other instances his pitch is sure, and his sense of modal definition - as for instance in the curious melody of *The Blacksmith Courted Me* - remarkably clear.

Tom Willett's son Chris affords an interesting contrast, chiefly in dynamics. His songs have been learnt from his father but he sings them with much greater regularity of pulse. In consequence, his tunes are more easily grasped and much simpler to notate; on the other hand they lack the secrets and surprises that his father is able to convey by his free-spun, more introspective manner.

It may be that the Willetts display certain characteristics of style peculiar to travelling people - gipsies, didikais, 'tinkers' and such; but to isolate those characteristics would require more study than has yet been undertaken in the music of our nomads and semi-nomads. One thing is sure, none of the items on this record are peculiar to travelling people; as usual with the gipsy and didikai repertory, all these songs are from the musical storehouse of the country population in general. It does happen that travelling folk are unusually diligent conservers of folk songs, but the extent of their creation of texts or tunes seems to be small, and specific musical traits do not show themselves clearly.

THE SONGS

LORD BATEMAN *Tom Willett*

Now the turnkey had but one only daughter
The finest young girl that ever was seen
She stole the keys of her father's prison
And swore Lord Bateman she would go and see

Now it's I've got houses and I've got land
And half of Northumberland belongs to me
I'll give it all to you, fair young lady
Then if out of prison you will let me free

Now it's seven long years I will wait for you
And two more years to make up nine
Then if you don't wed with no other woman
Then it's I won't wed with no other man

Now the seven long years was gone and passed
And the two more years then to make up nine
She took a ship, sailed across the ocean
Unto she got to Northumberland

Now is this is now Lord Bateman's castle
And is his lordship with now in
Oh yes, oh yes, cries this proud young porter
I've just now taken of his new bride in

Go and ask him for a slice of bread
And a bottle of his very best wine
Tell him not to forget that fair young lady
That out of prison did let him free

Then away, away, goes this proud young porter
And away, away, and away goes him
And when he got to Lord Bateman's chamber
Down on his bended knees fell him

What news, what news, my proud young porter
What news, what news have you brought to me
Oh there is the fairest of all young creatures
That ever my two eyes had seen

Now she has got rings on every finger
On some of them she has got three
And as much gay gold hanging round her middle
That would buy half of Northumberland

Now she's asked you for a slice of bread
And a bottle of your very best wine
And you're not to forget that fair young lady
That out of prison did let you free

Now Lord Bateman flew all in a passion
His sword he broke in three pieces three
I'll seek no more for no other fortune
Oh it's since Sophia now have crossed the sea.

Mr Willett's text is very similar to many published versions of this most popular ballad. See, for example Kidson's 'Traditional Tunes'. The singer, however, has lost the verses which introduce Lord Bateman and place him in Turkey - indeed the Turk has become 'turnkey'. The final verses in which Bateman dismisses the previous bride and her mother are also missing. There can be no doubt that the singer has this song directly or indirectly from a Broadside or Ballet Sheet. The tune, a good major one, is not one of those usually attached to the text of Lord Bateman. The three-fold repetition of the tonic at the end suggests that it may be Irish in origin.

THE BLACKSMITH COURTED ME *Tom Willett*

Oh the blacksmith courted me, for six months and better
When he first gained my heart, he wrote to me a letter
With his hammer all in his hand, which he strikes so mighty and clever
Now if I was with my love, I should live for ever

Now my love is gone across those fields, with his cheeks like the roses
Now I'm afraid the burning sun will scorch and spoil his beauty
Then if I was with my love, I would do my duty

Now bad news have come to town, that my love is married
But I wish him all most joy, but he's not here for to hear me
I shall never die for love, young man believe me

Do you know what you promised me when you first knowed me
You promised you would marry me, you only done it to deceive me
But I wish you all most joy, but he's not here for to hear me
I shall never die for love, young man believe me.

This widely known English love song has been noted by Cecil Sharp and many other collectors. A version with somewhat similar text and tune, collected by R Vaughan Williams, appears in the 'Penguin Book of English Folk Songs'. (It was from yet another set of this song that Vaughan Williams adapted the hymn tune *Monksgate*, used for *To be a Pilgrim*). Mr Willett sings verses two and three as three line stanzas. This practice of omitting a second line is fairly common amongst country singers.

The interesting tune is handled in masterly fashion by the aged singer, and is perhaps the prize piece of the record. Basically it is an aeolian-type hexatonic (six-note scale) melody; the seventh step appears only once and then as a passing note merely, and constitutes what ethnomusicologists, borrowing a term from Chinese theory, called a 'pyen' note.

THE LITTLE BALL OF YARN *Ben Willett*

Sure in the merry month of May
When the men were making hay
When I strolled across my grandfather's farm
There I spied a pretty maid and to her I gently said
May I wind up your little ball of yarn

Oh no kind sir, said she, you're a stranger unto me
And no doubt you have some other lady charm
Oh no my turtle dove, you're the only girl I love
May I wind up your little ball of yarn

Sure I took that pretty maid and I laid her in the hay
Not intending to do her any harm
Sure it was to my surprise when I looked into her eyes
Then I wound up her little ball of yarn

Sure I pulled down all her clothes and I slipped across that green
Not letting anyone know that I'd been there
It was nine months from that day, when I met that pretty maid
And she had a little baby at her breast
There I said my pretty miss, now you did not expect this
When I wound up your little ball of yarn

Now its all you young maidens that goes walking in the morning
When the blackbirds and the thrushes,
they go warbling through the bushes
Keep your hand right on your little ball of yarn.

This song had not appeared in printed collections until Hugill's *Shanties of the Seven Seas* was published in 1961. However, in bawdier forms the song is widely known, notably among servicemen and rugby football players. It is the only song that Ben Willett can be persuaded to sing. The melody here, a different one from Hugill's, is a 19th century music hall tune - *Nellie Ray*. It has been attached to a large number of texts, mostly ribald.

DIED FOR LOVE *Tom Willett*

It's down the green meadow where the poor girls they roam
A-gathering flowers just as they grow
She gathered her flowers and way she came
But she left the sweetest rose behind

There is a flower that I've heard say
That never dies nor fades away
But if that flower I could only find
I'd ease my heart and torment his mind

There is an alehouse where my love goes
Where my love goes and sits himself down
He takes a strange girl on his knee
Now don't you think that's a grief to me

A grief and a grief, I'll tell you for why
Because she's got more gold than I
But her gold will glitter, her silver will fly
And in a short time she'll be as poor as I

My love he is tall and handsome too
My love he is tall and slender too
But carries two hearts in the room of* one
Won't he be a rogue when I'm dead and gone

Now dig my grave both long and deep
A marble stone, both head and feet
And in the middle a turtle dove
To show the wide world I died for love.

This favourite lyrical song has been often collected and is still sung in many parts of the countryside. The flower symbolism is sexual and may be compared with that found in such songs as *The Seeds of Love*; for instance, 'rose' in verse one of Mr Willett's song clearly refers to virginity. The country poet John Clare re-made the text of this song into his handsome poem - *A Faithless Shepherd*. A student re-make is - *There is a Tavern in the Town*. The tune used by Mr Willett - one of many tunes attached to this song - is related to the melody used by

(perhaps adapted by) the mid-19th century stage comedian Sam Cowell in his burlesque version of the ballad of Lord Lovel. Several of Cowell's tunes gained enormous currency in the towns and villages (e.g. *Villikins and his Dinah*).

* in the room of: instead of

THE RAMBLING SAILOR *Chris Willett*

I am a sailor stout and bold
Many a time I have ploughed the ocean
Now I says: Brother sailors, I'll bid you all adieu
No more to the sea will I go with you
I will travel this country both far and near
And still be the rambling sailor

Then it's on to a village town* I went
Where I saw lasses plenty
I boldly stepped up to one of them
For to court her for her money
Now I says: My girl, what do you choose?
Ale or wine or the rum-punch too,
All besides a fine pair of silken shoes
For to travel with your rambling sailor

Now it's when I woke it was in the morn
I left my girl a-sleeping
I left her for an hour or two
While some other girl I went a-courting
Now if she stays there till I return
She may stop there till the day of doom
I'll court some other girl all in her room**
And still be the rambling sailor

Then it's on to a village town I went
Where I saw lasses plenty
I boldly stepped up to one of them
For to court her for her beauty
I says: My girl, be with all good cheer
I'll leave you not, so you need not fear
I will travel the country both far and near
And still be the rambling sailor

Now it's if you want to know my name,
My name it is Young Johnson
I've got commission from the Queen
For to court all girls that's handsome
With my false heart and my flattering tongue
I'll court them all both old and young.
I'll court them all and I'll marry none
And still be the rambling sailor.

Chris Willett learnt all his songs from his father. The text here is a little jumbled but surely of broadside origin. Whether old Mr Willett got it directly from a broadside or obtained it from a singer who had learnt the song from print is not clear. A similar text, noted by Baring Gould at Widdecombe, Devon, is in James Reeves' 'Everlasting Circle'. The tune used here is practically identical with that collected by Cecil Sharp from George Wyatt of West Harptree, Somerset. The song has several tunes, nearly all of them Mixolydian, like this one, and mostly excellent. According to Baring Gould, this melody was used as a West Country hornpipe. An Irish variant of it, called The Roving Sailor, is in Joyce's *Old Irish Folk Music and Songs* (1909).

* 'village town' - some broadsides give 'Woolwich' or

'Greenwich' Town'

** in her room - in her stead

RIDING DOWN TO PORTSMOUTH *Tom Willett*

Now as I was a-riding along in the heighth* of my glory
Now as I was a-riding along, you shall hear of my story
Then I fell in love with a fair pretty maid
And I asked her if she'd go along with me
Some pleasure and some pastimes to see
We're a-riding down to Portsmouth

Now sailor if I go along with you, then it's must be carried
Now sailor if I go along with you, then it's I must be married
Then she slept all in my arms all that night
And she gave me what was ten times worse**
She left me all the reckonings to pay
We're a-riding down to Portsmouth

Oh Landlord tell me what there is to pay, for I might be missing
Oh Landlord tell me what there is to pay, for I might be a-jogging
For she's robbed me of my gold watch and purse
And she gave me what was ten times worse
Now landlord don't you think I'm under a curse
We're a-riding down to Portsmouth

Saying damn me to myself, now I've paid for my kissing
Saying damn me to myself, now I've paid for my learning
Now my horse I shall leave you in pawn
And I bet you through the wars I'll return
And all gallus*** girls I will shun
And I'll ride no more to Portsmouth.

Although the present writers can trace no published versions of this song, its theme is, of course, a common one. (See e.g. *Ratcliffe Highway* - Penguin Book of English Folk Songs). It is reported that a correspondent sent a version called *Riding Down to Pochemar* to Cecil Sharp, but the manuscript is now missing. The tune, a major one, is sung in a very vagarious manner. The vagaries are consistent, however, and are clearly not the product of tentative semi-improvisations as they might at first seem.

* heighth - dialect form of height

** this phrase 'ten times worse' is somewhat ambiguous as it appears in both verses 2 and 3. It may refer to venereal disease.

*** gallus - cursed, mischievous.

AS I WAS GOING TO SALISBURY *Chris Willett*

As I was going to Salisbury upon a market day
I met a fair young lady and she were going my way
She were going my way, sir, butter and eggs to sell
So we jogged along together, with me tit-i-fol-or-al-ay

As we were a-walking side by side
There came a serious accident, her garter came untied
Her garter came untied, sir, and slipped below her knee
So we jogged along together, with me etc.

Would you be so kind, sir, would you be so free
Just to tie my garter an inch above my knee
Yes I will, I know I will, till we get to yonders hill
So we jogged along together, with me etc.

Although the song is rather inconclusive, its meaning is obvious. It is perhaps best regarded as a fragment of a longer song such as *The Aylesbury Girl* sung by the noted Sussex singer George Maynard among others. There are no generally published versions, but the song is extremely common and appears in the MS collections of almost every English collector of importance. (The continuation of the above text can be inferred from these verses from George Maynard's *The Aylesbury Girl*

Now since you've been so kind to me, so frisky and so free
If you'll come with me to yonders grove, you shall tie it up for me
Oh yes, oh yes, oh yes, I will go to yonders grove
So we both jogged on together etc.

When we came to yonders grove, the grass was growing high
I laid this little damsel down, her garter for to tie
And in tying up her garter, such sights I never did see
So we both jogged on together etc.

Now since you've had your will of me, pray tell to me your name
Likewise your occupation, from whence and where you came
My name is Johnny the Rover, from Dublin Town I came
And I live alongside of the Ups and Downs, sing etc

Since old Mr Willett (Tom) knew George Maynard, he may well have had this song in its entirety at one time).

THE ROVING JOURNEYMAN *Tom Willett*

I am a roaming journeyman, I roam from town to town
And when I get a job of work I'm willing to sit down
With my bundle on my shoulder, with my stick all in my hand
And it's round the country I will go, like a roaming journeyman

Now when I get to Brighton Town, the girls they jump for joy
Saying one unto the other, there comes the roaming boy
One hands to me the bottle and the other holds the glass
And the toast goes round the table, here's good luck to the journeyman

I cannot think the reason why my love she looks so sly
I never had any false heart to any young female kind
I never had a false heart to any young female kind
But I always went a-roaming for to leave my girl behind.

A fuller version under the same title from the Sharp manuscript collection appears in 'The Idiom of the People'. Baring Gould's 'Songs of the West' contains a presumably edited version, and refers to a broadside text. Mr Willett's version is obviously somewhat degraded since line 1, verse 3 refers to no previous context, and is obscure. The bottle and glass motif is common, and appears in Irish versions. The song is firmly Irish in origin and usually the text refers to the locality of Carlow. However, the Mixolydian tune used by the Willetts is not the one generally employed for the song in Ireland. The popular Irish singer Delia Murphy recorded a good version of this song on HMV IM747.

THE ROVING JOURNEYMAN *Chris Willett*

We have included Chris Willett's version of the song so that his style may be directly compared with that of his father. The text here is much abbreviated.

WHILE THE GAMEKEEPERS LIE SLEEPING

Tom Willett

My dog and me went out last night
For to view this habitation
Up jumps the hare and away she ran
Till she ran into my plantation

She hollered and she squealed and she made a noise
But something stopped her hollering
Lay still, lay still, you pretty little puss*
For your uncle's just a-coming

Now I picked her up and cracked her neck
And put her in my pocket
Saying I to my dog, time we was gone
For the gamekeeper's a-coming

Now I'll go unto some labourer's house
I'll ask him what he will give** me
One crown a brace I will give to you
Brave boys, if you will bring fifty

I'll go unto some public house
And there I will get merrilye
I will spend this crown and another one down
Ain't I a hearty good fellow.

There appears to be only one generally published version of this poaching song, given by Kidson in 'Traditional Tunes' as Hares in the Old Plantation. Mr Willett's text is superior. The theme is somewhat unusual in that the poaching operation is completely successful. A variant of this major tune is sometimes used for the ballad called The Banks of Green Willow, known in Scotland as Bonnie Annie (Child 24).

* puss - term of endearment for a hare

** gipsies often use 'gave' for 'give'

THE OLD MISER Chris Willett

There was what an old miser, in London did dwell
He had but one daughter that a sailor loved well
And when this old miser was out of the way
She was courting a sailor both night and by day

And when this old miser became for to know
Straightaway to the captain, straightaway he did go
Saying captain, oh, captain, good news I have to tell
I have got a young sailor here a transport* to sell

What will you give me, this old miser did say
I will give you ten guineas, I will send him away
I will take him, I will send him straight over the main
That he will never come to England for to court her again

But when this young damsel became for to know
Straightaway to the captain, straightaway she did go
Saying captain, oh, captain, bad news I have to tell
You have got my young sailor here a transport to sell

Oh no, says the captain, that never will be
For your father has sold him as a transport to me
I have took him, I have sent him straight over the main
That he will never come to England for to court you again

Put her hand in her pocket, pulled out handfuls of gold
And down in the quarterdeck ten hundred she told**
I will give you this money and twice as much more
If you will grant to me my sailor, he's the lad I adore

Oh no, says the captain, that never will do
For your father has sold him as a transport to me
I have took him, I have sent him straight over the main
That he will never come to England for to court you again

Put a curse on my parents where somever they maybe
For I think in my own heart they have quite the ruin of me
I'll go home to my cottage, I'll set myself down
All night for my sailor, all night I will mourn.

Although this song is almost certainly of broadside origin, we have found no reference to it in print. The theme of the rich man who has his daughter's humble suitor pressed to sea is one of the commonest of 18th century song subjects. The present text is paralleled by that of the well-known Brisk Young Ploughing Boy, except that the latter ends happily. The tune belongs to the numerous Polly Oliver family and resembles fairly closely the familiar song called The Deserter (Journal of the FolkSong Society' Nos. 5 and 19).

* transport - one to be transported to a penal settlement.

** told - counted.

THE GAME OF CARDS *Tom Willett*

Now as was a-walking one fine summer's morning
As I was walking along this highway
Oh and there did I spy such a fair pretty maiden
And unto her then I quickly did say

Now where are you going to my pretty fair maid
Its where are you going to along this highway
I'm going to Windsor, kind sir, she made answer
That sweet pleasant place where I was born

May I go along with you it's my pretty fair maid
To bear up your company along this highway
Then she turned herself round and looked upon me
She says kind sir, you can walk if you please

Now as we were a-walking and talking together
Those sweet pleasant banks, I set myself down
Then I says pretty fair maid, would you sit yourself beside of me
And then I will show you a sweet pleasant game

I'm not given to gaming, I'm not given to gaming
I'm not given to gaming, kind sir, she did say
But if I do play you, then it must be All Fowers*
And then I will give you two chalks** to my one

He shuffles up those cards, it was her time to cut them
He happened to chuck the Jack at the Piece***
Well she threwed the Ace, which took the Jack from him
Which is commonly called the best card in the pack

Now look how he blushes and see how he trembles
To think that a woman should conquer a man
But he says my pretty fair maid, if you're this way tomorrow
And then I will play that game over again.

The elaborate symbolism, slightly confused in Tom Willett's version, cloaks a sexual encounter. In one Sussex version, a key verse, missing here - runs

'Well, she lay down her ace and she took my little Jack,
And that made her High, low, Jack and the Game,
And she raised her pretty head and she smiled as she said:
Oh, can you not play that game over again ?'

Most folk song collectors have come across versions in various parts of England though there seems to be no printed sets. In the South the song is usually called - High, Low, Jack and the Game. In East Anglia a common title is All Fours. A recorded version from Suffolk may be found on a Folkways record FG 3507, sung by Sam Lerner.

* All Fowers - All Fours, a (usually) two-handed card game sometimes called Seven Up. Four items count towards the score: High (the highest trump out); Low (the lowest trump out); Jack (the knave of trumps); and Game (scoring an extra point to the ultimate holder of the more valuable tricks).

** Chalks - possibly a reference to a scoring system; but perhaps a corruption of 'Jacks' which play a prominent part in All Fours.

*** Piece - an item of card lore we cannot trace.

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