

OLD SONGS & BOTHY BALLADS



× Grand To Be a Working Man ×

The recordings on this CD were made in May 2008 during the annual Traditional Singing Weekend at Collesie in Fife – a highlight of the year for Scotland's traditional song enthusiasts.

Guest singers at the weekend included here are **Brian Watson** from Prudhoe in Northumberland, renowned for his rich repertoire of Geordie, Tyneside and Northumbrian song; **Sara Grey** originally from the USA and now living in Perth with her extensive repertoire of ballads and songs - some accompanied on 5-string banjo; **Shona Donaldson** a fine young singer from Huntly; **Ellen Mitchell** from Glasgow; **Jimmy Hutchison** from Newburgh and **Alex Clarke** with his light hearted songs and rich tales of Dundee. Many other singers took part in the weekend events and the CD captures some of these performances: a welcome return visit by **Jock Duncan** of Pitlochry; a fine ballad version from Yorkshire based **Chris Coe**; a song from **Tom Spiers** - self-accompanied on fiddle and a ballad from **Rod Stradling** of Stroud.

1: IN THE SHADE OF THE LAMP ✕ **Alex Clarke** 2.11

In the shade o the lamp on oor stair,
Ye're share tae find my sister there,
Wi a lad caad Mackay, he's only one eye,
On the tap o his head there's nae hair;
In the shade o that bonnie wee licht,
They're share tae be there every nicht,
For like twa little dears, they've been stannin for years,
In the shade o the lamp on oor stairs.

2: PRETTY SARO ✕ **Sara Grey** 3.25

When I first came to this country in eighteen and forty nine,
I thought myself lucky but I never saw mine;
I viewed them all around me, I found I was quite alone,
And me a poor stranger and a long way from home.

3: GRAND TO BE A WORKING MAN ✕ **Brian Watson** 3.32

Now it's early in the mornin and I'd like tae lie the day,
But that's not the way the work gets done, I've heard the old men say;
So I'll up and get the claes on for it's time to be away,
Oh it's grand to be a working man,
Working man, working man,
Oh it's grand to be a working man.

4: I ONCE LOVED A BOY ✕ **Ellen Mitchell** 3.12

I once had a boy and a bonny, bonny boy,
And a boy that I once callèd mine;
But noo he's gaen and left me all for some other one,
And he's left me to sing fare-thee-well, fare-thee-well,
And he's left me to sing fare-thee-well.

5: OFTEN DRUNK ✕ **Jimmy Hutchison** 5.59

Oh I'm often drunk and I'm seldom sober,
I'm a constant rover from town to town;
And when I'm sick and my days are over,
Oh lay me down my Molly Bawn.

6: LOW DOWN IN THE BROOM ✕ **Shona Donaldson** 2.13

My daddy is a cankered carle,
He'll no twin wi his gear,
My mither she's a scaldin wife,
Hauds aa the hoose a-steer.
But let them say or let them do,
It's aa the ane tae me,
For he's low down in the broom,
He's waiting in the broom for me.

7: PIRN-TAED JOCKIE ✕ **Jock Duncan** 3.48

Oh fin I wis a little wee pirn-taed loonie,
I was aye caad silly little Jockie,
Ae nicht I wis sittin on my grannie's window sill
Eatin sweetsies oot a broon paper pyockie;
By cam a lassie an she offered me a kiss,
A thing I wid never think o scornin,
But she bolted wi ma sweetsies, dang my heid through the windae,
An ma grannie tellt me that neist mornin.

8: REDESDALE AND WISE WILLIAM ✕ **Chris Coe** 4.15

Redesdale and wise William,
Sat drinking at the wine,
And all the talk between them two,
Was about the ladies fine,
Was about the ladies fine.

9: JOHN RILEY'S ALWAYS DRY ✕ **Alex Clarke** 2.02

I have a great companion, boys,

John Riley is his name,
In fair or stormy weather, boys,
John Riley's always the same;
His heart is like a mountain,
And his honour ye can't deny,
But with his elbow bending, boys,
John Riley's always dry.

10: THE MERRY WILLOW TREE ✖ **Sara Grey** 4.55

Oh there was a little ship that sailed upon the sea,
And the name of the ship was the Merry Willow Tree;
As she sails upon the low and lonesome low,
Sails upon the lonesome sea.

11: BONNIE WEE LASSIE ✖ **Tom Spiers** 2.24

Oh I've come tae a pass where I met a wee lass,
And said I, "Ma wee lass are ye willing tae go?"
She says, "Sir, I will if ye give me a gill,
For it's I'm the wee lassie that never said no."

12: THE RUE AND THE THYME ✖ **Ellen Mitchell** 4.41

There's a rose in yon garden is now in full bloom,
Has been spreading and growing, it will soon be a tree;
I reached right in tae it the red rose tae find,
But a thorn pricked my finger and I left it behind.
Oh rue, oh rue, oh rue is in prime,
Oh ye'll pull the red rose, I will pull the rue in time.

13: THE KIELDER HUNT ✖ **Brian Watson** 5.11

Hark hark I hear Lang Will's clear voice ring thro the Kielder Glen,
Where the raven flaps her glossy wing and the fell fox has his den,
There the shepherd lads are gathering up wi mony a guid yauld grew,
An wiry terrier game an keen an foxhound fleet and true.
Hark away! Hark away!
Ower the bonnie hills o Kielder, hark away!

14: THE GYPSY LADDIES ✖ **Shona Donaldson** 4.00

Three gypsies cam tae oor haa door,
And oh they sang sae bonnie O;
They sang sae sweet and too complete,
They stole the hert o a lady O.

15: THE BANKS OF GREEN WILLOW ✖ **Rod Stradling** 6.41

It's of a sea captain,
Come o'er the salt sea billow;
And he has courted a fair maid,
By the banks of green willow;
And he has courted this fair maid,
Till she was with child O.

16: YOUNG HUNTING ✖ **Sara Grey** 3.09

"Come in, come in my own true love,
And spend this night with me;
For I have a bed, it's a very fine bed,
I'll give it up for thee,
I'll give it up for thee."

17: FAIR DRUMALLACHIE ✖ **Jock Duncan** 3.34

It was a chill November time when autumn leaves were gone,
One evening as I ventured forth along the banks o Don;
There I met a fair young maid and softly thus sighed she,
"My love is far from Sinnahard and fair Drumallachie."

18: THE OVERGATE ✖ **Jimmy Hutchison** 2.58

Oh as I gaed up the Overgate,
I met a bonnie wee lass,
And she winked tae me wi the tail o her ee,
As I gaed a-roving past.
Ricky doo dum day, doo dum day,
Ricky dicky doo dum day.

TEXTS & NOTES: Full song texts and notes on the songs and the singers are on the internet at: www.springthyme.co.uk/ah07

CREDITS: Thanks to all the singers who have given free use of their recordings to the East of Scotland Traditional Song Group.
Recorded by Tom Spiers. Design & transcriptions by Peter Shephard. Photography by Davey Stewart.

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**AUTUMN
HARVEST**

AUTUMN HARVEST

Balmalcolm House, Balmalcolm, Cupar, Fife KY15 7TJ Scotland

tel: ++44 (0) 1337 830773 • internet: www.springthyme.co.uk

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