Songs of the Polly, 1795

A Garland of Songs, Ballads, and Ditties from Stephen Cahoon's Journal
aboard the Whaleship Polly of Gloucester, Massachusetts

Stuart M. Frank

The Kendall Whaling Museum & Sharon, Massachusetts USA
2001
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To the Memory of
William Main Doerflinger
Friend and Mentor

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COVER ILLUSTRATION: Whaleship Polly of Gloucester, Ink drawing by Stephen Cahooon in his journal of the Polly, 1795. [The Kendall Whaling Museum, Logbook #423. KWM photo by Hayato Sakurai.]

FRONTISPICE: Ship Polly of Gloucester, drawn by Stephen Cahooon in his journal, showing the whole page, inscribed “Stephen Cahooon / The Book / God Gave To him / To Look Thrin [Therein] / Not onely Look / But under Stand / The Year of our Lord / 1795.” Elsewhere the journal is inscribed, “Stephen Cahooon / His Book / God Gave him Grace Thereon to Look / Not onely Look / But under Stand / God is the maker of the Land.” Page size 30 x 17.8 cm (12 x 7 1/4 inches). [KWM photo by Hayato Sakurai.]

BACK COVER: “A Song of Whaling” [“A Song of Whaling (I)”], original whaleman’s song transcribed and probably written by Stephen Cahooon in his Polly journal, 1795. [KWM photo by Hayato Sakurai.]
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[Handwritten text and a ship illustration]
Songs of the Polly, 1795
A Garland of Songs, Ballads, and Ditties from Stephen Cahoon's Journal aboard the Whaleship Polly of Gloucester, Massachusetts

In the course of a whaling voyage of about eleven months in 1795, Stephen Cahoon of Cape Cod, age twenty-three, collected and transcribed into his journal the lyrics of fourteen songs and ballads. Writing in a sometimes all-but-indecipherable, eighteenth-century schoolboy scrawl, the young whalingman employed esoteric spelling, random capitalization, inconsistent divisions of lines and phrases, and almost no punctuation—which indicates that his songs were for the most part written down directly from singing or from oral recitation, rather than copied from printed sources. In the aggregate they constitute a significant little archive, as they are almost the only direct evidence that survives of the kinds of songs and ballads that were known, and were likely sung, aboard Yankee ships in the early decades of the Young Republic—an epoch that Robert Greenhalgh Albion has called the Heroic Age of American maritime commerce.

The songs, though comparatively few in number, run the gamut of contemporaneous types. "The Suffolk Miracle" (Child #272; song #1) is one of the old so-called English and Scottish Popular Ballads, the type collected and canonized in a later age by Francis James Child.1 Of the so-called broadside ballads of the Industrial Revolution epoch, a species defined and classified by G. Malcolm Laws,2 there are but two: "The Children In the Woods" [#3] and "The Silk Merchant's Daughter" [#4]. There are some quaint period pieces from popular culture: "The Cuckoo" [#6] was one of the most popular folk songs of the eighteenth or any other century, and "A Song of Old" [#5] concerns the peculiar courtship ritual of binding, reputed to have been a clandestine practice on Cape Cod. "I Am a Brisk and Sprightly Lad" [#10] comes from the London stage; the excellent nautical ballad "The Captain Calls All Hands" [#11] is an early manifestation of a classic Sailors' Farewell song that was still current more than a century later; and two original whalmen's compositions, each entitled "A Song of Whaling" [#13 and #14], are narrative ballads concerning specific events of the voyage, at least one of which was likely authored by Stephen Cahoon himself. The diarist provides not so much as a whisper about when or why or how these songs may have been cherished or sung or performed at sea, if they ever were; but as an inventory of at least one Yankee sailor's tastes and gleanings, and in the absence of other evidence, they may be regarded as an indicator of musical predilections in the whale fishery at the time, and perhaps as representative of the whalmen's entire caste.

The Polly, 241 tons, a British-built ship of indeterminate age, was owned by David Pearce, registered at Gloucester, Massachusetts, commanded by Elkanah Mayo, and bound to the whaling grounds known as "Woolwich Bay" (Cahoon calls it "Wolley Bay") — Yankee parlance for Walvis Bay, in southwestern Africa, which in Dutch and Afrikaans means literally Whalefish Bay. Alexander Starbuck's incomplete statistics3 and the slender Cahoon journal appear to be the only surviving records of the voyage. Unfortunately, Cahoon was not a conscientious diarist; his journal entries are only sporadic and intermittent, and his sketchy summary, which occupies one page of the volume, is hardly a satisfactory account of the cruise. Starbuck lists the Polly as having sailed in 1794, but gives no actual date of departure. They were surely preparing and provisioning in November and December of 1794, but the ship actually embarked on 11 January 1795 and arrived at Walvis Bay on May 29th, "all well." They took a humpback on June 6th and a right whale on the 17th. Cahoon gives no specifics about their greedy luck thereafter, but on 17 September they were homeward bound: "set sail from Wolley Bay all well on Bord at Present Bound to amercia with all speed." They soon ran into trouble. On 24 November, in Latitude 31° 39' North, Longitude 70° 00' West (which would put them nearing the American coast roughly in the latitude between Jacksonville and Savannah), the ship developed a serious leak. No doubt the crew spent many tedious hours at the pumps while the Polly headed for Barbados for repairs, arriving on December 12, "all hands well on Bord[,] with our Ship Leaking very Bad and our Pumps a foaming." [The complete text of Cahoon's abstract is reproduced as Appendix I, p. 39.]

Apart from the sailing date, Starbuck's notations are consistent with Cahoon's account: that the Polly was whaling on the "Woolwich" grounds, "Put into the West Indies in November or

3. Alexander Starbuck, History of the American Whale Fishery, from Its Earliest Inception to the Year 1876 (1878).
December of 1795, in distress,” and “Probably arrived home early in 1796” with 1400 barrels of whale oil — quite a respectable catch for a voyage of this era and duration, especially considering the end-game difficulties.

Relatively little is known about Stephen Cahoon beyond what is revealed in his journal. His genealogy is clear enough but only the general outlines of his biography can be pieced together from the chards of evidence that remain. His parents, Stephen and Martha Rogers Cahoon, were married at Harwich, Cape Cod, in 1771. Stephen Jr. was born 17 October 1772 at nearby Orleans, the second son (and the eldest to survive to adulthood) among four sons and six daughters. The Polly is his only known whaling cruise. He married Phebe Kendrick (1775-1848) of Harwich on 18 October 1799 (the day after his twenty-seventh birthday) and fathered ten children, born during 1800-18, of whom nine survived to adulthood and seven survived their father. After his marriage he continued to earn his living at sea, then as a shoemaker and cobbler, while simultaneously farming. Entries in his journal (which he recruited as business ledger, using blank pages left over from the whaling voyage) indicate that he owned property (as he collected rents, sold potatoes, beef, corn, and livestock, occasionally hired out as a farmhand, and probably held an ownership interest in at least one local trading vessel (he paid for “rigging a schooner” in 1807). Two of his daughters died in January 1842, perhaps from one of the horrible, deadly epidemics that struck periodically in those days. Stephen followed a few months later, on 26 December 1842, aged 70.

The Polly’s skipper, Ekanah Mayo (1752-1832), was a seasoned whaling master whose three or four prior voyages had all been successful. He was born in 1752 at Brewster, Cape Cod, and in 1776 married Eunice Snow (1753-1823). Over the next fifteen years the union produced seven children, five daughters and two sons. Of his career prior to the Revolution nothing is recorded. Judging from his rapid rise in the whale fishery a few years afterwards, he must have made several youthful whaling voyages in the 1770s. In response to the call to arms for local defense in 1778, at age 26 and already the father of two infant daughters, he enlisted as a private in Captain Abijah Bang’s company of Major Zenas Winslow’s 2nd Barnstable County Regiment of militia, mustering at Harwich and Yarmouth. He likely participated in bivouacs and maneuvers for the duration, but the actual armed conflicts had by that time moved too far south for his unit to have seen significant action. Meanwhile, the war disrupted the dominance of Nantucket in the whaling trade and broke up the exclusive Rhode Island oil cartel, so that after cessation of hostilities some of the more northerly outports outfitted vessels for whaling in the South Atlantic. One of these was Gloucester, already on the rise as a deepwater fishing port. Maintaining his domicile at Harwich, Mayo must have resumed his whaling activities in the middle 1780s, for by 1788—coincidentally with ratification of the United States Constitution—Jonathan Coffin, Ekanah Mayo, and a Captain Rich were the three principal whaling masters of Gloucester.

Mayo’s first command was the Gloucester brig Sea Horse to the Coast of Africa (1788-89), from which he returned 800 barrels of oil and “Reported the sudden sinking part of the shores of Woolwich Bay” (Starbuck, 1821): “The brig Sea Horse, Captain Mayo, which arrived at Cape Ann [Gloucester], October 4, 1789, from a whaling voyage to Woolwich Bay, reported a very singular sinking of a point of land there, in sight of quite a large fleet both English and American, the water having a depth of six fathoms where just before was apparently solid land” (Starbuck, 90). His second outing was in the same vessel to the Cape of Good Hope (1789-90), returning 800 barrels of oil and 10,000 pounds of “bonc” (baleen); and his next was to the Brazil grounds in the brig Two Friends (1791-92), returning 100 barrels of sperm oil and 900 barrels of whale oil. Meanwhile, the Polly, a much larger vessel than either of Mayo’s brig’s, had completed a longer voyage to the same grounds (1789-91) under Jonathan Coffin, bringing home a cargo of 1600 barrels of whale oil and 15,000 pounds of bone. The 1795 voyage was evidently Mayo’s last, and there is no record of the leaky old Polly ever going whaling again either.

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4. William Cahoon (d. 1768) married Sarah O’Kelley David circa 1716; their son James (1721-1776) married Rebecca Eldredge in 1740; their son Stephen Cahoon Sr. (d. 1818) resided at Harwich, Mass., and married Martha Rogers in 1771; their son Stephen Cahoon Jr. (1772-1842), the second of ten children, resided at Orleans, Mass., and married Phebe Kendrick (1775-1848) of Harwich in 1799 [Cahoon genealogy files, Sturgis Library].

5. The Cahoon children were: Polly (1800-42), Tabathy (1801-42), Richard (1804-80), Stephen III (1805-82), Patty (1807-52), Charlotte (1809- ), Abraham (1811- ) , Phebe (1813-42), Mahala (1816-79), and Emily (1818- ) [Journal].

6. Ekanah Mayo (born 20 July 1752) and Eunice [née Snow] Mayo (born 21 August 1753), marriage solemnized by Rev. Isaiah Dunster, 28 July 1776. Children: Abigail, born 1777; Eunice, 1778; Lydia, 1780; Ekanah Jr., 1781; Jonathan, 1784; Phebe, 1788; and Fanny, 1792 [Vital Records of Harwich, 289].

7. Massachusetts Soldiers and Sailors of the Revolutionary War, 10:405.
1.

The Suffolk Miracle

Being a true Relation of a man Who a month after his Death appeared to his Sweet heart
and Carried her Behind him on horseback above Forty miles,
with many things worthy of note
(Child #272)

This is the only canonical so-called "Child Ballad" in Cahoon’s repertoire — that is, the only song belonging to the group of old ballads that were definitively anthologized by Francis James Child in his classic English and Scottish Popular Ballads (5 vols., Boston, 1882-98). The whaleman’s transcription carries a full-blown seventeenth-century style descriptive subtitle, as though copied directly from a printed text. Child did not think much of “The Suffolk Miracle” and says that he included it primarily because of its thematic kinship with various German and Eastern European analogues; and it is with this kinship that the bulk of his voluminous comments are concerned. He cites several broadsides but quotes only one, printed in London circa 1689, of which the subtitle is reminiscent of but not identical with the whaleman’s rendition: “The Suffolk Miracle, or, A relation of a young man who a month after his death appeared to his sweetheart and carried her behind him forty miles in two hours time and was never seen after but in the grave.” Likewise, the whaleman’s text is similar but not identical.

The tune indicated on all of the old broadsides is “My bleeding Heart,” which unfortunately is now lost (Simpson 1966, 230; Bronson 1972, IV:84); but it may still have been extant in Cahoon’s day. Bronson points out the possibility of another melody: “My bleeding Heart” as a tune for a ballad is frequently paired with ‘In Crete’ as an alternative or equivalent. The latter title comes from the first line of a ballad formerly well known...[and] it is barely possible that the tune [‘My bleeding Heart’] merely took on another name [‘In Crete’], to identify it more readily.” In any case, many Elizabethan and Baroque ballad airs were difficult, complex, and ostentatiously “artistic,” not necessarily suited to amateur vocals and thus not always preserved by traditional singers. If they were sung at all (and some appear never to have been), they often underwent reduction or simplification. “In Crete” [Tune A] seems a prime candidate for such a process. In the almost 250 years of the ballad’s history from the time it was first printed to the time it was collected from singing, several variant tunes had become associated with it. Bronson gives thirteen that “all seem to belong to a widespread type, favorite for lugubrious themes such as pathetic deaths, awful portents, and moralizing carols.” Of these, two are from New England; and of those two, only one seems to fit the mood and spirit of Cahoon’s text.


1. a Wonder Stranger ne’er was known
   Then what i know Shall treat upon
   in Suffolk there did lately dwell
   a Farmer rich and known full well

2. He had a Daughter fair and bright
   on whom he Placed his whole Delight
   Her Beauty was beyond Compare
   She was both virtuous and fair

3. Thare was a young man driving by
   Who was So Charmed with her Eye
   that he Could never be at rest
   he was by Love so much Possesst

4. He made address to her and She
   Did grant him Love immediately
   But when her Father came to hear
   He Parted her and her Poor Dear

5. Forty miles distant was She Sent
   unto his Brother with intent
   That She Should there So Long remain
   Till She has Changed her mind again

6. Thereat this young man Sadly grievd
   But knew not how to be relieved
   He Sighd and Sobd Continually
   That his true Love he Could not See

7. She by no means Could to him Send
   Who was her hearts Spoused Friend
   He Sighd he Greiwd But all in vain
   For She Confind must Still remain

8. He mournd So much that Doctors art
   Could Give no Ease unto his heart
   This was So Strangely terrifid
   that in Short time for Love he dyd

9. She that from his was Sent away
   knew nothing of his dying Day
   But Constant Still She did remain
   and Lovd the Dead altho in vain

10. after he had in Grave Been Laid
    a month of more unto this maid
    He Came in the middle of the night
    Who joyd to See her hearts delight

11. Her Fathers horse which well She knew
    Her mothers hood and Safe Guard too
    He Brought with him to testify
    Her Parcants order he Came by

12. Which when her uncle understood
    He hopd it would before her Good
    and Gave Consent to her Straitway
    That with him She Should Come away

13. When She was got her Love behind
    They Passd as Swift as any wind
    That in two hours or little more
    He Brought her to her Fathers Door

14. But as they did this Grate haste make
    He did Complain his head did ake
    His handkerchief She then took out
    and tyd the Same his head abought

15. And unto him She thus did Say
    Thou art as Cold as any Clay
    When we Come home a fire we’ll have
    But Little dreamd he went to Grave

16. Soon ware they at her Fathers Door
    and after She ne’er Saw him more
    i’ll set the horse up then he Said
    and there he Left this harmless maid

17. She knookd and Strait a man he Cryd
    Whos their tis i She then replidy
    Who wonderd much her voice to hear
    and was Possesed with Dread and fear

18. Her Father he did tell and then
    He Stard Like an affrighted man
    Down Stairs he ran and when he See her
    Cryd out my Child how Camst thou hear

19. Pray Sir did you not Send for me
    By Such a messenger Said She
    Which made his hair Stir on his head
    as knowing well that he was dead

20. Whaire is he then to her he Said
    He’s in the Stable Qoth the maid
    Go in Said he and Go to Bed
    i’ll See the horse well Littered

21. He Stard about and there Could he
    no Shape of any mankind See
    But found his horse all in a Sweat
    Which made him in a deadly fret

22. His Daughter he Said nothing to
    Nor none else tho full well they knew
    that he was dead a month before
    For of Grieving her full Sore
23. Her Father to the Father Went
of the Deceas'd with full intent
To tell him what his Daughter Said
So both Came back unto this maid

24. They asked her and She Still did Say
Twas he that then brought her away
Which when they heard they were amazd
and on Each other Strangely gazd

25. a handkerchief She Said She tyd
[about his head, and that they tried]
The Sexton they did speak unto
That he the Grave would then undo

26. affrighted then they did behold
His Body turning into mould
and though he had a month been dead
This handkerchief was bout his head

27. This thing unto her then they told
and the whole truth they did unfold
She was threat So terrify[d]
and Greaved that she Quickly dyd

28. Part not true Love you rich man then
But if they be right honest men
Your Daughters Love Give them their way
For force oft breeds their Lives Decay

*Spermaceti Whale*. Watercolor by whaleman Thomas Wetling, from his journal aboard the ship *William* of London, commanded by George Fitch, 1796-97. [KWM Log #898. Photo by Mark Sexton.]
2. The Virtuous Wife

[A Worthy Example of a Vertuous Wife; The Grecian Daughter; Roman Charity]

Unaccountably, Francis James Child did not admit this old ballad to his canon, but its antiquarian provenance is certainly adequate to have qualified it for inclusion: its central premise is resonant with King Lear (and, for entirely different reasons, with the denouement of John Steinbeck's The Grapes of Wrath), it was already at least two centuries old when the whaler wrote the lyrics into his journal, and it was printed and reprinted in broadside editions across four or five generations. Cahoon must have copied his text from a printed source, as the misspellings and anomalies that characterize his transcriptions (especially his own original compositions) are greatly reduced here.¹ His version of 44 stanzas is titled in the manuscript "Virtuous Wife — a New Song." There seems to be neither a manuscript nor any printed broadside in the great Pepys Collection (Magdalen College, Cambridge) — hence, perhaps, Child's omission. However, Rolls lists two seventeenth-century broadsides and one from the late sixteenth century that are unequivocally ancestral forms of the same ballad: "A worthy example of a vertuous wife who fed her father with her owne mille" was registered for copyright at London in 1675 (Rollins #3042); "In Rome I read a nobleman" was licensed in 1624 (#1235); and "a most excellent example of a vertuous wife, that fed her father with her owne mille being Condemned to be famished to deathe" in 1596 (#1803). A specimen in the Euing Collection (Glasgow) bears another variant title, indicating yet another edition: "A Worthy example of a Vertuous Wife, who fed her Father with her own Milk, being condemned to be starved to death, and afterwards pardoned by the Emperor" (a facsimile of Euing #403 shows a woodcut of clandestine breast-feeding in an Elizabethan dungeon). This edition states boldly, "The Tune is FLYING FAME." According to Simpson, this melody was also used for "The Shepherd and the King" (licensed 1578), "Chevy Chase" (circa 1600), "A mournful Dittie on the death of faire Rosamund" (1607), and numerous other ballads, significantly including "A Lamentable Song... of King Lier [Lear], and his Three Daughters" (1620). Also according to Simpson, the tune is lost, unless it be the same as the air for "Chevy Chase" (Child #162).² William Chappell goes further. He says of "the tune usually entitled Chevy Chace," as featured in Pills to Purge Melancholy (1715), The Beggar’s Opera (1728), and Trick for Trick (1735): "Another name, and probably older, is FLYING FAME, or When Flying FAME, to which a large number of ballads have been written" (Chappell II:198). In any case, "Chevy Chase," which may be, probably is, the same tune as "FLYING FAME," appears to be the only candidate for an extant air for "The Virtuous Wife." This being said, however, there are several dissimilar melodies for "Chevy Chase" — Bronson gives ten — all of them with equivalent claims on being the possible "original."³


TUNE B — "Chevy Chase": from William Chappell, Popular Music of the Olden Time, 1855, I:199.

¹ There are many instances in which words, phrases, and conventions misused elsewhere in Cahoon’s transcriptions are correct here. However, many errors and esoteric usages remain, and in three or four places Cahoon confuses his capital D’s and B’s, in two or three instances writing Beath instead of Death. This latter is the only correction attempted, as the error clearly resulted from an oversight.

² The confusion of tunes in this case is more convoluted than usual even with ballad airs, and Simpson is evidently not convinced by Chappell’s assumption that "Chevy Chase" and "Flying Fame" are the same. See Simpson 1966, pp. 96-99, 104, 137, 229, 369, 588, 628, 677.

³ See Bronson III, #162, for extensive discussion of the tunes and additions to Chappell’s list of ballad operas.
1. In Rome i Read a nobleman  
The Emperor did offend  
And for that fault he was adjudged  
unto a Cruel End
2. That he Should Be in Person Cast  
With irons many a one  
And there be Famished unto Death  
And Brought to Skin and Bone
3. And more if any one was known  
By night or yet By day  
To Bring him any kind of food  
His hunger to allay
4. The Emperor Swore a mighty oath  
Without Remorse Quoth he  
Thou Shall Sustain the Cruellest Death  
That Can devised Be
5. This Cruel Sentence once Pronounced  
The nobleman was Cast  
Into a dungeon in Rank and Deep  
With irons fetterd fast
6. There when he had with hunger great  
Remained ten days Space  
And tasted neither meat nor Drink  
In a most woeful Case
7. The tears along his aged face  
Most Piteously did fall  
And Grieuously he did Begin  
For to lement withall
8. O Lord Quoth he what Shall i do  
So hungry Lord am i  
For want of Bread one bit of Bread  
I Perish Starve and die
9. How Precious is one Grain of wheat  
unto my hungry soul  
One Crust or Crumb or Little Piece  
my hunger to Controll
10. Had i this Dungeon heaped with Gold  
I would forego it all  
To By and Purchase one Brown Loaf  
Yea were it never So Small
11. O that I had But Every day  
one Bit of Bread to Eat  
The ne'er So mouldy Black or Brown  
My Comfort would be Grate
12. Yea albeit i would take it up  
Trod down in dirt and mire  
It would be Pleasing to my taste  
And Sweet to my desire
13. Good Lord how happy is the hand  
That Labours all the day  
The drudging mule the Pleasant Poor kind  
That at Command do Stay
14. They have their ordinary meals  
They take no heed at all  
Of those Sweet Crumbs or Crusts that they  
Do Carelessly let fall
15. How happy is that Little Chick  
Who without fear may go  
And Pick up those most Precious Crumbs  
That they away do throw
16. That Some Pretty Little mouse  
So much my Friend would be  
To bring some old forsaken Crust  
into this Place to me
17. But oh my heart it is in vain  
No Succor Can i have  
No meat nor Drink nor warter Eke  
My Loathed Life to Save
18. O Bring Some Bread for Christ his Sake  
Some Bread Some Bread for me  
I die i die for want of food  
Nought but Stone walls i See
19. This day and night he Cried out  
in most outrageous Sort  
That all the People far and near  
Was grieved at his report
20. And tho that many friends he had  
And Daughters in the town  
Yet none drost Come to Succor him  
Fearing the Emperors frown
21. Yet now behold one Daughter dear  
He had as i do find  
Who Livd in his displeasure Graet  
For matching aginst his mind
22. Altho She Livd in mean Estate  
She was a virtuous wife  
And for the help her father deer  
She ventur'd thus her Life
23. She Quickly to her Sisters went
   And of them did intreat
   That [by] Some Secret means they would
   Convey their Father meat

24. Our Father deer doth Starve she said
   The Emperors wrath is Shuch [such]
   He dies alas for want of food
   Of which we have too much

25. Pray Sisters therefor use Such means
   His Life for to Preserve
   And Suffer not yor Father dear
   In Prison for to Starve

26. Alas Quoth they what Shall we do
   His hunger to Sustain
   You know tis death for any man
   That would his Life maintain

27. And tho we wish him well Quoth they
   We never will agree
   To Spoilt ourselves we had as Lief
   That he should die as we

28. And Sister if you Love yourself
   Let this attempt alone
   Tho you do need [to] Secret work
   At length it will Be known

29. O hath our Father Brought us up
   And nourished us Quoth She
   And Shall we now forsake him Quite
   In his Extremity

30. Now i will venture Life and Limb
   To do my Father Good
   The worst that is i Can But die
   To fit a Tyrants mood

31. With that in hast[e] away she hies
   And [to] the Prison goes
   But with her woeful Father dear
   one might not Speak Each knows

32. Except the Emperor would Grant
   Her favor in that Case
   The keeper would admit no weight
   To Enter in that Place

33. Then she unto the Emperor hies
   And falling on her knees
   With wringing hands and Bitter Cries
   These words Pronounced She

34. My hopeless Father Sovereing Lord
   offending of your Grace
   is Judged unto a Pining death
   With in a doleful Place

35. Which i Confess he hath deserved
   Yet mighty Prince Quoth She
   Vouchsafe in Gracious sort to Grant
   one Single boon to me

36. It Chanced So i matchd myself
   Against my Fathers mind
   Wherby i do Procure his wrath
   As fortain hath assigned

37. And Seeing now the time is Come
   He must Resign his Breath
   Vouchsafe that i may Speak to him
   Before his hour of Death

38. And ReconCile myself to him
   His favor to obtain
   That when he dies i may not then
   Under his Curse Remain

39. The Emperor Granted her Request
   Conditionally that She
   Each day unto her Father Came
   Should thoroughly Search be

40. No meat nor drink She with him [her] brot
   To help him theire distressed
   But every day She nourished him
   With milk from her own Breast

41. Thus By her milk he was Preserved
   A twelvemonth and a day
   And was as fair and fat to See
   Yet no man knew wch way

42. The Emperor musing much theerat
   At Length did understand
   How he was fed and not his Laws
   Was Broak by any hand

43. He much admird at the Same
   and her Grate virtue Shone
   he Pardond him and honorrd her
   with grate Preferments known

44. her father ever after that
   did Lover her as his Life
   and Blessd the day that She was made
   a Loveing wedded wife
3.

The Children in the Woods

[The Babes in the Woods; The Norfolk Gentleman's Last Will and Testament; etc.]

(Laws #Q-34)

This is the one transcription in the journal that is not in Cahoon's own handwriting. Sailors often swapped songs among themselves; here a shipmate must have written it directly into the journal. Unfortunately, the scribe's punctuation and spelling are little better than Cahoon's.

Laws lists the ballad as "The Children in the Woods" or "The Babes in the Woods," the names by which it is known in the watered-down form that survived in folk tradition. However, he is keenly aware of its antiquity and cites several of the many broadside editions issued since it was first registered as "The Norfolk Gent, his Will and Testament" in 1595. In Traditional Ballad Airs, W. Christie remarks that the ballad "has been supposed by some to have been written on Richard III and his nephews" (I:142f). This makes it sufficiently venerable for Child to have included it in The English and Scottish Popular Ballads, but perhaps the Professor judged it to be too crude or too vulgar for his canon. It had an uncommonly long life in print; the poet Joseph Addison (1672-1719) is said to have been a great admirer of it and to have promoted it; the ballad served as the basis of a musical play performed and published at Boston circa 1795 (Sonneck, 62f); and "Ten New England editions suggest the American popularity" (Simpson, 103). The Polly version is certainly based on a printed source and is the "long" form of the ballad, scarce in America: "A three stanza lament on the fate of the children called 'The Babes in the Wood' is widely known in American tradition, but the long ballad is rarely met with" (Laws II:290f). Unfortunately, the text is incomplete in the manuscript, lacking what according to Cahoon's count would be the final seven stanzas, 34 through 40.1 The missing verses (printed in italics below) are supplied from three broadsides in the Euing Collection, each one of which is entitled "The Norfolk Gentleman, his Last Will and Testament: And how he committed the keeping of his Children to his own Brother, who dealt most wickedly with them, and how God plagued him for it" (Euing #254, 255, 256). For comparison, another whaleman's transcription, made by Abner Butler aboard the sloop Diligence in 1755, is included as Appendix IV (p. 41). These two vary slightly, but each is surprisingly consistent with Stephen Cahoon's text.

The three specimens in the Euing Collection corroborate Simpson's claim that most seventeenth-century broadsides direct that the ballad be sung to "Rogero." This air actually came to be known also as "Now ponder well," from the first line of the "Children in the Wood" text; in the ballad opera Penelope (1728), it is entitled "The Children in the Wood." Simpson maintains (without providing details) that "Rogero" is of European origin2 and "was called for in nineteen ballad operas, including [several] in which the music was printed," an impressive list that includes John Gay's The Beggar's Opera (1728) and Henry Fielding's An Old Man taught Wisdom (1735). It is also connected to "Chevy Chase" and "Flying Fame" [see "The Virtuous Wife," #2; and Simpson, 104f]. In any case, the tune was known in England by 1557 (Chappell I:93).

TUNE A — "Rogero": from William Chappell, Popular Music of the Olden Time, 1855, I:93.

TUNE B — "Rogero": from Claude Simpson, The British Broadside Ballad and Its Music, 1966, 104..

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1. In the broadsides (e.g., Euing #254ff) the verses are doubled with respect to the melody, totalling twenty stanzas of eight lines each, rather than the whaleman's count (were the MSS complete) of forty stanzas of four lines each.
2. This is a modernized version of what Simpson (103) and Rollins (#1962) give as "the form of the title as it appears in seventeenth-century editions: 'The Norfolk gent his will and Testament and how he Committed the keeping of his Children to his owne brother who deleste moste wickedly with them and howe God plagued him for it.'"
3. "During the Renaissance the relationship between England and the Continent was musically a two-way street. A few broadside tunes came from abroad, e.g., 'Chi Fata, 'The Spanish Pavane,' 'Rogero,' and, in a later generation, 'Farinell's Ground'" (Simpson, xiii).
1. Now ponder well you Parents dear
these words which I Shall write
A doleful Story you Shall hear
in time brought forth to Light

2. a Gentleman of Good account
in norfolk lived of late
whose fame and Credit did Surmount
most men of his estate

3. So Sick he was and Like to die
no help he then Could have
His wife by him as Sick did lie
and both Postess [posess'd] one Grave

4. no love between these two was Lost
Each was to other kind
in love they livd in love they dyd
and Left two babes behind

5. the one a fine and Pretty boy
not Passing three years old
the other a Girl more young than he
and made of beauteous mould

6. the father Left his Little Son
as Plainly doth appear
when he to Perf[e]t age Should Come
three hundred pounds a year

7. and to his Little Daughter Jane
two hundred pounds in Gold
for to be paid on money day
which might not be Controld

8. but if these Children Chenced to die
e'er they to age did Come
the uncle Shold Possess the wealth
for So the will did run

9. now Brother said the dying man
look to my Children dear
Be Good unto my Boy and Girl
no fri[e]nd eye have I hear

10 to God and you do I Commend
my Children night and day
a Little while be sure we have
within this world to Stay

11. you must be father mother both
and uncle all in one
God knows what will become of them
when I am dead and Gone

12. with that bespoke the mother dear
O brother kind quoth She
you are the man mayst bring my babes
to welth or misery

13. If you do keep them carefully
then God will you reward
If otherwise you Seem to deal
God will your deeds regard

14. with Lips as cold as any Stone
She kissed her Children Small
God bless you both my Children dear
with that the tears did fall

15. these speeches then the brother spoke
to the Sick Couple there
the keeping of your Children dear
Sweet Sister never fear

16. God never Prosper me or mine
nor ought else that I have
if I do [w]rong your Children dear
when you are Laid in Grave

17. the Parents being dead and gone
the Childrens home he takes
and brings them home unto his house
and much of them he makes

18. He had not kept these Pretty babes
a twelve month and a day
but for their welth he did devise
to make them both away

19. he bargain'd with two Ruffians rude
who were of furious mood
that they Should take these Children young
and Slay them in a wood

20. and told his wife and all he had
he did the Children send
to be brought up in fair London
with one that was his frind

21. away then went these pretty babes
Rejoicing at the tide
and smiling with a merry mind
they on Cock horse should ride

22. they prate and prattle pleasantly
as they rode on the way
to those that Should their butchers be
and wisk their Lives decay
23. So that the pretty Speech they had
those murderers heart relent
and they that took the deed to do
full Sore they did repent

24. Yet one of them more hard of heart
did vow to do his Charge
Because the wretch who hired him
had paid him very large

25. the other would not agree thereto
So here they fell at Strife
with one another they did fight
about the Childrens Life

26. and he that was of mildest mood
did Slay the other there
within an unfrequented wood
where babes do quake for fear

27. he took the Children by the hand
when tears Stood in their eye
and bid them Come and Go with him
and See they did not Cry

28. and two long miles he led them thus
while they for bread Complain
Stay here quocie he I'll bring you bread
when I do Come again

29. these Pretty Babes with hand in hand
went wandering up and down
But never more they Saw the man
approaching from the town

30. their Pretty Lips with black berries
were all besmeard and dyd
But when they Saw the Darksome night
they Sat them down and Cryd

31. thus wandered these two Little babes
till death did end their Grief
in one another's arms they dyd
as Babes wanting relief

32. No Burial these pretty babes
of any man receives
But Robin red breast Painfully
did cover them with Leaves

33. and now the heavy wrath of God
upon this uncle fell
yea fearful fiends did haunt his house
his Conscience felt an hell

34. His barns were fir'd his goods consum'd
His Lands were barren made,
His cattel dy'd within the field,
and nothing with him staid.

35. And in the Voyage of Portugal,
two of his sons did dye,
And to conclude, himself was brought
unto much misery:

36. He paund and mortguag'd all his Land,
e're seven years came about,
And now at length this wicked act,
did by this means come out.

37. The fellow that did take in hand
these Children for to kill,
Was for a Robbery judg'd to dye,
as was Gods blessed will:

38. Who did confess the very truth
the which is here exprest,
Their Uncle dy'd while he for Debt
did long in prison rest.

39. All you that be Executors made,
and overseers eke:
Of Children that be fatherless
and infants mild and meek:

40. Take your example by this thing,
and yield to each his right
Lest God with such like misery
your wicked minds requite.
4.

Constant Lovers; or, A Valiant Young Lady
[The Silk Merchant's Daughter; The Merchant's Daughter Turned Sailor]

This is an early manifestation of the broadside genre that would proliferate in America in the nineteenth century. The phenomenon was already going full throttle in England and Scotland at the time Cahoon was at sea. Like many broadside ballads themselves, the method of their authorship, publication, and distribution in America was largely modeled after the British prototype. Newsworthier events and dramatic daily occurrences, as well as the plights of ploughboy, soldier, and sailor, had long been versified for public consumption by formula poets and amateur bards, put to whatever tune might be current, set in type, and printed cheaply on one side of a single sheet (thus called broadside)—or assembled into little fold-up booklets—and sold in bookstalls or hawked on street-corners. The practice flourished in Elizabethan times; Samuel Pepys (1633-1703), a prodigious collector of ballads, records many examples from his own era. In the 1790s, the celebrated battles and heroic exploits of British naval and military prowess were already long established as topical staples in an ever-popular medium. To this, the patriotism of the American Revolution (and later, Yankee naval exploits in the War of 1812) added new, energetic venues for ballad-making. To the songsmiths of the Industrial Revolution, an increasingly literate public meant an escalating market, resulting in a veritable flood of ballad sheets. Nor did timely, topical pieces crowd out the turgid and melodramatic stuff of the "old" ballads—the romantic sort that had been current in Pepys's day and were canonized by Francis James Child in the nineteenth century, but which had been eclipsed by the Age of Reason: love blighted, maidens rescued, pirates, highwaymen, and bold dragoons in armed combat for Love and Honour. As it did in high art, music, and literature of the Academy and of the avant garde—epitomized, perhaps, in Goethe, Beethoven, epic poetry, and tragic opera—the libidinal and visceral realms of Light and Shadow, Nature and supernatural, archetype and symbol, infused themselves with renewed vigor into the songs of the folk. The means of their introduction was as much the broadside press as it was oral transmission. Herman Melville describes the phenomenon, based on his visit to Liverpool more than forty years after Cahoon's Polly voyage. Melville was surprised to find so many ballad-singers, who, after singing their verses, hand you a printed copy, and beg you to buy. One of these persons, dressed like a man-of-war's-man, I observed every day standing at a corner in the middle of the street. He had a full, noble voice, like a church-organ; and his notes rose high above the surrounding din. ... He was full of marvelous adventures, and abounded in terrific stories of pirates and sea murders, and all sorts of nautical enormities. He was a Newgate Calendar of the robberies and assassinations of his day, happening in the sailor quarters of the town; and most of his ballads were upon kindred subjects. He composed many of his own verses, and had them printed for sale on his own account. To show how expeditious his business, it may be mentioned, that one evening on leaving the dock to go to supper, I perceived a crowd gathered about the Old Fort Tavern; and mingling with the rest, I learned that a woman of the town had just been killed at the bar by a drunken Spanish sailor from Cadiz. The murderer was carried off by the police before my eyes, and the very next morning the ballad-singer with the miraculous arm, was singing the tragedy in front of the boarding-houses, and handing round printed copies of the song, which, of course, were eagerly bought up by the seamen. (Redburn, 1849, Ch. 39)

G. Malcolm Laws traces the ballad to an American broadside that names no city or publisher other than "Sold near Liberty-pole" (Laws II:208). It is dated 1794, the year before Cahoon sailed in the Polly, and bears the title "The Constant Lovers; or, The Valiant Young Lady," a reasonably close match to the title by which Cahoon knew it. The text survives in a variety of distinct forms, some of which are delicately intertwined with chards of other, structurally similar ballad texts with which elements of "The Constant Lovers" have become infused. Later manifestations of the ballad are so changed that, disguised under such titles as "The Test of Love" and "The Castaways," they are all but unrecognizable as genetic progeny.

3. The address indicates that the printer was probably Ezekiel Russell (1743-1796) of Boston, formerly of Salem.
4. Transcribed by whalerman George Wilbur Piper, ship Europa of Edgartown, 1868-70 (Frank 1985, #152; 2001 #85).
5. Greenleaf 1933, #25. Ord 1930, 63, has "The Merchant's Daughter Turned Sailor" (Aberdeenshire).
Cahoon's text, "Constant Lovers / Valiant young Laday / An Excellent New Love Song to a Be[a]utiful Song [i.e., to a Beautiful Tune]," incorporates all of the elements delineated by Laws as definitive of "The Silk Merchant's Daughter." A wealthy merchant opposes his daughter's marriage to his porter, whom the father dismisses; she dons men's garb to follow her lover to sea; "on her way she kills two heathens who attempt to murder her" (in the whaleman's text they are Indians); still incognito, she finds her beau and enlists with him in the same ship, "which later springs a leak and sinks." On the brink of starvation in the lifeboat, "the crew casts lots to see who shall be killed for food. The girl is chosen and her lover is designated executioner. She reveals her identity by producing a broken ring, and he offers to die in her place, but a ship is sighted, all are saved, and the lovers marry" (Laws II:207). A curious feature of Cahoon's text is that the porter is sent away to serve the queen (rather than the king), which suggests that the setting may be intended as, or the ballad itself may even date back as far as, the reign of Queen Anne (1702-14), the only British queen reigning between Elizabeth I (1558-1603) and Victoria (1837-1901). Because part of a leaf was torn from the manuscript long before it came into the museum collection, the transcription lacks the two final stanzas and the narrative trails off just as the conflict is being resolved.6

Only very few of what Laws calls "native American ballads" and "American ballads from British broadsides" have an American provenance tracing back to the eighteenth century; fewer still have been located in so early an American imprint. Various tunes have survived in tradition, of which the four collected by Cecil Sharp (1932) may be taken as representative. In terms of a Bronson-like taxonomy, the tunes fall into two closely related major-modal and minor-modal groups, the latter being more prevalent and showing in the aggregate considerable variation within and between individual manifestations, but constituting a rather stable tradition on the whole.


6. Traditional texts that contain all or most of these identifying characteristics are many, though some elements (such as the broken ring token) are occasionally absent. At least two foreshorten the narrative, eliminating the merchant entirely and commencing the story with the two lovers already on shipboard. This alters the texture considerably, making the ballad more of a sea song about shipwreck and cannibalism; understandably, it is therefore a form perhaps more popular at sea than "complete" versions (notable examples are the Yankee whalerman's version and a steamship sailor's version from Newfoundland cited in footnotes 3 and 4, above; and an Ontario sailor's version whereof the air is an adaptation of "The Bold Princess Royal" [Doerflinger B72, 290]. In some instances "Silk Merchant's Daughter" has become identified with "Jack Munroe" ("Jack Went Sailing") (Laws #817; Frank 1985 #96; Frank 2001 #84). The latter is another lengthy ballad of "family opposition to love," in which the paterfamilias is generally a rich merchant, the daughter dons men's clothing to follow her lover across the sea to the battlefront; she finds him wounded, nurses him to health (in some versions), brings him home, and proclaims her love for him before her father (usually in a crowded parade). The distinguishing features are the shipwreck-and-cannibalism motif in "Silk Merchant's Daughter" and the battle-and-rescue sequence in "Jack Munroe." It is not difficult to envision how phrases and even entire stanzas from the one might be integrated into the other. In fact, most of the traditional airs are compatible with both texts and have many similarities in any case.
Constant Lovers

Valiant young Laday

An Excellent New Love Song to a Be[a]utiful Song

1. Both Young men and damsels that to Love belong
   Come draw near and Listen a while to my Song
   I make no Grate Question but that this new ditty
   unto many People well Pleasing may be

2. This of a rich merchant in London i Right
   He had a fair daughter his hearts Chief delight
   She Lovd a Porter and to Prevent the day
   Of marriage he forced this young man a way

3. For to Serve the Queen and when Gone from the Shore
   This forsaken damsel was Grieved full Sore
   Then in Mans apparel in a marchants Ship
   She ventur'd her Life over the raging deep

4. When Come to anchor near Some Sovereign Land
   Where She went a Shore as i do understand
   A Sword of the Captains in her hand She took
   A way She did wander her Love for to Look

5. Then going thro a forest Long time before night
   A Couple of indians appeard in her Sight
   When drawing near to them these two heathens they
   Intended to take this fair maid's Life away

6. But She having a Sword her Life to defend
   From Blood thirsty ones who did murder intend
   Thro marcy [mercy] She Conquerd one of them She killd
   And forced the other for to Q[u]it the field

7. She wandered So Long till some Smoak did appear
   Which made her to think that Some houses were near
   But as She Sought truly in the Evening tide
   She Came to a town that Stood by the Sea Side

8. In this harbour there was a Ship bound to See [sea]
   With all Expedition unto Jamaica
   In which She did Sail and Came to Kingston [town]
   When to her Grate joy unexpected she found

9. Her Love this young Porter was walking the Street
   She made it her business this young man to meet
   And Said what Ship Brother Fray tell unto me
   He told her and Said Bound unto England we be

10. She Said unto London i am Willing to go
    But how to get thither i do not well know
    I am not a Sailor But if you want a man
    For my Passage home i will do the best i Can

11. Not knowing who it was he Took her on bord
    The Captain Said what do you do with a Sword
    Account of her travels unto him she gave
    And told how that Sword once her Life did save
12. They Set Sail for England and now Give Ear  
What Sudden destruction to them did appear  
The Ship Sprang a Leak and to Bottom She went  
When out at main Seas to their Great discontent

13. Thirty Seven hands were Confined in a Boat  
In which Small allowance of Room they did float  
Food being all Gone death appeared So nigh  
The Captain then made Lots to See who might die

14. They were made of Paper as the Captain tho’t fit  
To draw for Life fairly on them to be writ  
A number of figures beginning at one  
unto thirty Seven which thing was soon done

15. Then in a Small Bag they together were Shook  
and So at a venture Each one his Lot took  
This Poor damsels Lot Was to draw the least  
For one must die first to feed all the Rest

16. They drawed Lots a Gain that they fairly might die  
Who a mong them all her butcher must be  
it was a hard Lot you will Say when you hear  
She was to be Slain by that young man her dear

17. For whose Sake So far She had venturd her Life  
For to do his office he Came with a knife  
Another with a bowl the blood for to take  
At which motion She Sighed and these words She Spake

18. Spare me a few minutes i have Something to Say  
Unfortunete Creature this unhappy day  
I might have Escaped if i had ben wise  
Lord have mercy upon me and hear my Sad Cry

19. Must i who have venturd So many Score miles  
Thro forests and hedges high mountains and Stiles  
Shund So many dangers and Last indeed  
Die a Sacrifice to hunger a man for to feed

20. Round the neck she Caught him and with a kiss Said  
You are Young to kill a Poor innocent maid  
a Rich merchants daughter of London i be  
See what i am Come to by Loveing of thee

21. She Shewd him a Ring that between them was broke  
He knowing the token then with a Sigh Spoke  
Alas Poor Lady my heart it will burst  
for hopes of your Long Life my dear i’ll die first

22. With tears Runing down Each other Embraced  
to Satisfy hunger the Rest were in haste  
The Captain Said if your Loves debt you will Pay  
Prepare now for death i Can no Longer Stay

23. Like a noble martyr this Loving young man  
Said to him that Stood with a knife in his hand  
Be Quick in your office my business is done  
Before the Stoke was given they all heard a gun
24. At which this Poor young man Cryd out hold thine hand
I did here a gun we are near Some Ship or Land
Within half an hour then a Ship did appear
Bound for Ireland with Sight did them Cheer

25. They were taken up and to Dub[lin] Conveyd
This Captain and Couple as it is now Said
They Came to fair London Powder treason day
And there at a tavern this Couple did Stay

26. While the Captain unto her father did go
He askd for his Daughter his a[n]swer w[a]s So
This twenty five weeks my dear Child has been lost
To be Shure She is dead wich my Life it will Cost

27. My Heart it will break for the Lost of my Child
To hear these Expressions he Said with a Smile
She has been near Death But now is alive and well
Now [no] Souls Grief on Earth Can he Sorrows Excel

28. Account of her travels unto him he Gave
And told him how Such a young man did her Save
Well if it Be So then She Shall be his Wife
And I Shall adore him all the days of my Life

29. The captain sent... [illegible]
5.

A Song of Old

[A New Song In Favor of Courting; The Whore on the Snow Crust]

This is one of three classic ballads about bundling, which, simply put, is the practice of "a man and a woman lying on the same bed with their clothes on." Some commentators have explained the phenomenon as an "expedient" owing to a "scarcity of beds" or to conserve firewood. That kind of bundling appears occasionally to have provided an improbable solution to straightforward problems, but inadequate sleeping accommodations and shortages of heating fuel are also euphemisms for the practice of bundling as a courtship ritual, whether or not it also saved beds and firewood. This was intended to enable a marriageable couple to become better acquainted in intimate but ostensibly virtuous circumstances, "with the mutual understanding that innocent endearments should not be exceeded" (Stiles 1869, I). Sometimes the couple would merely retire to the same bed with their clothes on, but the classic form was to install a bundling board or center board or dividing board down the middle of the bed: this was supposed to separate the pair and inhibit any actual physical contact. Of course, center board or not, bundling often resulted in actual physical contact. According to Rev. W. Bingley, based on his travels in Wales in 1804, "Much has been said of the innocence with which these meetings are conducted, but it is a very common thing for the consequence of the interview to make its appearance in the world within two or three months after the marriage ceremony has taken place" (quoted by Stiles 1869, 9f).

Courtsip bundling is commonly associated with the working classes in remote agricultural regions of Britain and New England—Wales; Cornwall; Connecticut; Cape Cod—but even the existence of bundling has characteristically been repudiated or disavowed wherever it is alleged to have been practiced (in the nineteenth century nobody seems to have wanted to acknowledge that bundling took place in their locale). And contrary to Reverend Bingley's claims that it was "scarcely ever heard of in England" until "within the last few years," it actually appears to have a long history extending back to at least medieval times, to have been widely practiced in Europe and the British Isles well into the nineteenth century, and to have erupted into the popular press in the late eighteenth century and the turn of the nineteenth. In his classic monograph of 1869, Dr. Henry R. Stiles mobilizes a few literary and historical allusions from that era, including Washington Irving's Knickerbocker's History of New York (1809), where the author claims in his celebrated satirical tone that bundling was introduced to Gotham from New England; and

that wherever the practice of bundling prevailed, there was an amazing number of sturdy brats annually born unto the state, without the license of the law or the benefit of clergy. Neither did the irregularity of their birth operate to the least to their disparagement. On the contrary, they grew up a long-sided, rawboned, hardy race of whoreson whalers, wood cutters, fishermen, and peddlers; and strapping corn-fed wenches, who by their united efforts tended marvelously towards populating those notable tracts of country called Nantucket, Piscataway, and Cape Cod. (Quoted by Stiles, 20)

According to Dr. Stiles, bundling was excoriated in the pulpit in New England, and around 1785 a broadside ballad was circulated entitled "A New Bundling Song: Or a reproof to those Young Country Women, who follow that reproachful Practice, and to their mothers for upholding them therein" (American Antiquarian Society, Worcester, Mass.). Another ballad, entitled "A Poem Against Bundling: Dedicated to the Youth of Both Sexes," was written not long afterwards "by a learned and distinguished clergyman settled in Bristol county, Massachusetts, who was a graduate of Harvard University, and a doctor of divinity" (Stiles, 46ff). The first of these attacks, and possibly both, inspired the ballad defense of bundling transcribed by Stephen Cahoon. He calls it "Song of Old," but a printed broadside in the American Antiquarian Society has the title "A New Song / In Favor of Courting." This has 20 stanzas, compared with the whaleman's 15; even so, Stiles notes that it "is evidently not complete, several verses having been left out on account of their containing more truth than poetry, but these may be supplied from a manuscript copy... from a volume of manuscript ballads in the handwriting of Israel Perkins, of Connecticut, written in 1786, when he was eighteen years old, and teaching school." Titled "The Whore on the Snow Crust" (Stiles, 42ff), it has 26 stanzas and a host of Biblical allusions, with several stanzas and phrases similar to the whaleman's text that are lacking from the broadside, and, like the whaleman's text, it is more explicit and notably saltier than the broadside. The tune is unknown.
1. Adam the first was formed of dust
   as Scripture doth record
   and did receive a Wife called Eve
   from his Creator Lord

2. From Adam's side the Crooked Bride
   the Lord was pleased to form
   ordain'd that they in bed might lay
   and keep each other warm

3. To Court indeed they had no need
   She was his wife at first
   and She was made to be his aid
   w'ose origin was dust

4. This new made pair full happy were
   and happy might remain
   if his helpmate had never eat
   the fruit that was restrained

5. Tho Adam's wife destroy'd his Life
   in manner that was awful
   yet marriage now we all allow
   to be but just and lawful

6. But woman must be Courted first
   Because it is the fashion
   and they oft times commit great crimes
   caus'd by a Lustful Passion

7. And now a days there are two ways
   which of the two is right
   to lie between sheets neat and clean
   or set up all the night

8. But some suppose bundling in clothes
   doth heaven sorely vex
   then let me know which way to go
   to Cort the fairer Sex

9. Whether they must be hugd and buss'd
   While sitting by the fire
   or whether in bed may lay
   which doth the Lord require

10. Natures request is grate for rest
    our Bodies seek repose
    Night is the time and its no crime
    to Bundle in our cloaths

11. For since in bed a man and maid
    may Bundle and be Chaste
    it does no Good to Burn up wood
    Shure tis a needless waste

12. Let coat and shift be thrown adrift
    and breeches take their flight
    an honest man and virgin can
    Lay quiet all the night

13. But if there be dishonesty
    implanted in their minds
    Breeches not Smocks nor Scarcel Padlocks
    the urge of lust can bind

14. Kate and Sue both find it true
    who Bundling do use
    Ruth is Beguilde and got with child
    who Bundling did refuse

15. Whore will be whore and on the floor
    it has been often said
    to set over Smoke and ashes Poke
    won't keep a girl a maid
6.
A-Walking and A-Talking
[The Cuckoo; The False-Hearted Lover]

Numerous versions, variants, and offshoots of this song are known in the British Isles and North America. It is certainly the ancestor of the well-known nineteenth-century American folk song “Old Smokey” (“On Top of Old Smokey”). In that song the cuckoo metaphor is absent and a smoky mountain setting is substituted, but the lyrics of “Old Smokey” otherwise resemble “A-Walking and A-Talking” — better known as “The Cuckoo” — in every particular, word for word. “The Cuckoo” is also said to be closely related to “The Wagoner’s Lad” and, less so perhaps, to several other traditional songs of disappointed love. It was evidently almost new when Cahoon wrote it into his journal in 1795. In tracing the provenance, Norman Cazden points out external clues to its age, including a version “in the Glasgow garland of 1802,” cited by Sabine Baring-Gould, which consists of only “the four ‘cuckoo’ stanzas”; “a nursery form of the song” from circa 1796, almost precisely coeval with the whaileman’s transcription; and the earliest trace, Vance Randolph’s mention of “a stanza about the cuckoo and its glad tidings in David Herd’s Ancient and Modern Scottish Songs of 1776” — but though this has an analogous cuckoo image, it may not be the same song or the same form of the song that Cahoon knew. However, in something like the form that Cahoon transcribed it, “The Cuckoo” has been widely distributed among English-speaking peoples ever since, though evidently not so much in New England, where it has not hitherto been encountered in tradition. Cazden has quite a lot to say about the “delightful and widely known lyric,” whereof the cuckoo motif and the “sycamore” or “green willow tree” images regularly associated with The Cuckoo” (which are also present in the whaileman’s text) are among the textual elements that have become “intertwined” with those of several other songs:

The parent strain would seem to be The Cuckoo, even though in some the “cuckoo” references [allusions] have dropped out... Among the common songs related to or largely derived from The Cuckoo are The Unconstant Lover, Old Smokey, and The Wagoner’s Lad. Most forms of these retain the basic images... the walking and talking together, the meeting and parting sequence, reproach of the unconstant lover as “worse than a thief,” and the graveyard desolation of a world without trust.

Eighteenth-century origins and widespread distribution notwithstanding, folk songs of this sort were not commonly recorded until the early twentieth century, when folklorists began going into the field to collect old songs from actual singers. Thus, Stephen Cahoon’s version may be the earliest text of “The Cuckoo” to survive — an ancestral form of variants collected more than a century later. Based on the first line of many texts (including the whaileman’s), some versions are titled “A-Walking and A-Talking.” The signature stanza — “The cuckoo is a fine bird...” — is the ninth verse in Cahoon’s text, but it sometimes appears as the first stanza and, in any case, is the source of the more distinctive alternate title “The Cuckoo.” Apart from this variable feature (and allowing for the whaileman’s eccentric rendition of phonetic English), Cahoon’s version is orthodox, preserving the characteristic female narrative voice, the allusion to the sycamore, and the cuckoo as the central metaphor. Like most of Cahoon’s transcriptions, deciphering the text requires that obstacles of handwriting, spelling, and syntax be overcome (for example, by Cow Co he means cuckool).

The melody is a composite, not unlike the ones collected from singing tradition in New York State and Newfoundland. As the song has been scarce in New England for at least a hundred years, no melody is known to survive specifically from Cahoon’s native region. And of the many tune variants that have been collected in other places, the ones from New York State (Cazden 1982, #34; Cazden 1958, 301) and Newfoundland (Karpel 1970, #85) are the ones geographically closest to what might reasonably be expected to have been sung in Massachusetts. These, in turn, seem to be descended from the same common ancestor as an English melody for “The Cuckoo” published by Cecil Sharp in Folk Songs from Somerset (circa 1904):
1. A walking and a talking
   and a walking all day
   for to meet with Pritty[
   he will be here Bimeby

2. for if I Shall meet him in the meadow
   tis all my delight
   for I will walk and talk with him
   from morning till night

3. A walking is a Pleasure
   But Sorrow Brings Greafe
   and onconstant Love you
   is wors than a theafe

4. for the theaves they will Rob you
   and they will take all you have
   But an unconstant Lover
   Brings me to my Grave

5. for the Grave it will Rot you
   and Bring you to dust
   to an unconstant Lover
   where now one can trust

6. Come all you Pritty madedens
   wheare ever you Be
   Place not your reflet tions
   [In a s[y]camore tree

7. for the leaves they will wither
   and the roots they will die
   as i am forsaken
   i [k]now not for why

8. For they will kiss and cort you
   Pritty girls to deseave
   and their is scarce won in twenty
   that you Can Beleave

9. For the Cow Co is a fine Burd
   for She Sings as She flies
   She Brings us glad tidings
   and tells us now Lies

10. She sucks the Sweet flowers
    For to Coope her voyce Clear
    and when she sings Cow Co
    the Summer is near

---

Love-Songs. Copper engraving attributed to William Blake (1757-1827) after Thomas Stothard (1755-1834), produced as an illustration for the "Love-Songs" section of Joseph Ritson's A Select Collection of English Songs (3 vols., London, 1783), I:108. The woodcuts on ballad broadsides were seldom of such quality, but some of the better songbooks were lavishly illustrated. [Private collection. KWM photo by M. Zilberstein.]
Free Thinker's Reasons for Refusing to Preach

This is a "convivial song" (an eighteenth century euphemism for drinking song), a type that was rampant in Georgian England and became obsolete in High Victorian times. Part of the joke here (in the eyes of the Anglican majority) is that Low Church ascetics do not customarily endorse the recreational use of alcoholic stimulants. Like the two British nonconformist preachers alluded to in the text, which is British in origin, it has an American provenance: Huntington reports that a form of it appeared (some years after the Polly voyage) in Volume II of The Jovial Songster, printed at Dedham, Massachusetts, in 1806. Whatever may be said about Yankee provincialism and Puritan austerity, the Young Republic prided itself as the home and refuge of Freethinkers.

1. I am Plagued With my Friends and my neighbors to Boot To know what Religion my Conscience would suit If a never am Savd i'll Speak as I Think I'll wish man kind better and take a good drink
2. Some Call me a Quaker Some Call me a Jew Some Say I the Laws of mahomet Persue But if i've Good Liquor i'll fill to the brink I'll wish mankind better and take a good drink
3. I've Read the opinions of wise men and fools in Classical authors who taught in the Schools and Philosophy teaches me freely to think To Love God and man and to take a good drink
4. The good Church of England i like very well Good Papists or Baptists will ne'er Go to hell But the Principal duty for mankind i think is to have Charity for all man and take a good drink
5. I hope the Dissenters may all be forgiven and whitefield and Sandeman both go to heaven But many Poor Souls to the Bottom will Sink For the want of Good Reason as well as Good drink
6. Perhaps some may Call me a Bold Libertine But Let them to Reason one moment incline Their Eyes will be open with me they'll all think They'll be jowel [jovial] and free and They'll take a Good drink

1. Huntington MS, 516, gives the date as 1807, possibly a later edition. Wolf #23 is Stephen Jenks, The Jovial Songster No. II. Being a selection of some of the most favorite and sentimental songs... (Dedham: S. Jenks, March 1806).
2. Whitefield and Sandeman were notorious dissenters from the established churches who, after making their reputations as preachers in Britain, came to New England—which was already populated by Puritan, Baptist, and even Quaker dissenters from the Anglican and Presbyterian mainstream—to evangelize the colonies. George Whitefield (1714-1770) first adopted Methodism at Oxford, was ordained deacon (1736) and priest (1739), then split with John Wesley (1741) after his first American visit and a short pastorate at Savannah, Georgia. An accomplished orator, he proselytized all over the British Isles and died at Newburyport, Mass., on his seventh American tour. Robert Sandeman (1718-1771), originally a linen manufacturer in Perth (Scotland), was a zealous disciple of his father-in-law, John Glass (1695-1773), founder of the nonconformist Glassite sect that became better known as Sandemanians after Sandeman carried its fundamentalism to London (1744-49), then America (from 1746), founding congregations in New England. He died at Danbury, Conn. (Century II: 1756; III:472; III:4119; Webster's 599, 130-8, 1967.)
8.  

**An Old Song**  
[Sweet Colleen Rue; Sweet Combeana]

This is almost certainly an original composition by Cahoon himself, quite the clumsiest lyrics in Cahoon's repertoire and the least legible. If it is indeed "an old song," as the title suggests, it can hardly be a faithful copy text: the diarist must have written it down from memory or recitation. However, no other text or direct prototype has been located. The sweetheart's pet name in the first stanza, Colleen rue, should properly be Colleen rue, but the name is replaced in all subsequent stanzas by what appears (in Cahoon's equivocal handwriting) variously to be Combeana, Combercne, Comberne, or Comberene. It is largely a formula piece, stringing together familiar-sounding catch phrases and clichés from broadside ballad tradition, such as "one morning being fair I rode to take the air," "where the streams did gently glide," and "sweet beautiful queen." From its ostensibly Irish overtones it appears that the author may have been emulating the Irish romantic genre, likely with an Irish tune in mind, perhaps "The Colleen Rue," Captain Francis O'Neill, the celebrated collector of Irish traditional tunes, remarks in 1910, "Among the many unpublished airs which I learned at the old homestead [in Bantry] were 'The Friars' Hill,' 'My Love is a Bandboy,' 'The Colleen Rue,' 'My Darling I am fond of you,' and 'Teige Maire's Daughter'" (Irish Folk Music, 68f). But the tune itself is elusive.

1. One morning being fair I rode to take the air  
   Down by one River Clear alone She Did go  
   So advanceing By the Side whair the Streams did gently glide  
   Twas there first Enjoyed my Sweet Colleen rue

2. as I Stood gaising in transported a musing  
   with Genteliness my Bosom Did glow  
   Their alone She was Seen She was the fairest on the green  
   that Sweet Butiful Queen and my Sweet Combeana

3. as I stood gaising in transporting a musing  
   The [illegible] my Bosom did glow  
   She was Comly and fair and few with her Can Compare  
   and She hath my heart in Swair and my Sweet Comb[

4. She was Soft in her fatures and Sweet in her Stature  
   and I find by all Nature she was Comly not Low  
   She was Pleasing and Sweat Sincear modest and desent  
   and all Pleasuers doth agree with my Sweet Comb[

5. Now threw the groves in Search of my Love  
   Each day I will Rove the grove threw and threw  
   I will Sharch out Every Shaid u[n][t]ill I find out that maid  
   that hath my heart Betraed my Sweet Comb[

6. one night all alone By the Light all alone  
   By the Light of the moon over hills and over dalls  
   and over valies thats Low  
   their no Comfort could I hear But Sharch of my dear  
   But in Sorrow I will Spend the year for my Sweet Comb[

9.

**New Song**

[Ye Maidens Pretty]

The presence of this ballad in Cahoon's journal may be the only evidence that any form of it was ever current in American tradition. By the time folklorists took to collecting ballads in the field it must have become extinct in America. It was comparatively scarce in Britain, as well, where it survived as quite a different kind of song. Cecil Sharp collected a version from the singing of a thatcher in the West of England around the turn of the last century — about a hundred years after the whalingman transcribed his version in his journal. Sabine Baring-Gould published it in *Songs of the West: Folk Songs of Devon and Cornwall* and, perhaps in collaboration with Sharp, makes several points about its history: "The words and melody are probably of the Elizabethan age"; "the ballad goes back to a remote antiquity" in its incarnation as a "complainte romanesque" in France; "the fullest Broadside version" of it, published at Aberdeen (Scotland) in 1871, is "very corrupt"; and an undated broadside entitled "The Cruel Father and the Affectionate Lovers," printed at London by James Catnach (fl. 1807-37), "is a new version of the original ballad" (Baring-Gould, #17, Notes, 6f). G. Malcolm Laws mentions the piece but did not consider it a proper ballad, probably because it fails to satisfy his criteria for telling a full-scale story. But had Laws known Cahoon's version he might have revised his judgement, as in standpoint of dramatic value and narrative content the whalingman's rendition is much more ballad-like than Sharp's. Comparison of the two texts shows that while they may once have been the same song (or at least share a common ancestry and a few phrases), they became quite dissimilar, diverging in many particulars of syntax and phrasing — including that Sharp's has four stanzas constructed differently than the whalingman's text, and a kind of chorus or refrain absent in Cahoon's rendition:

1. Ye maidens pretty  
   In town and city,  
   I pray you pity  
   My mournful strain.  
   A maiden weeping,  
   her night-watch keeping,  
   In grief unsleeping  
   Makes her complain:

   Refrain:  
   In tower I languish  
   In cold and sadness,  
   Heart full of anguish,  
   Eye full of tear.  
   Whilst glades are ringing  
   With maidens singing,  
   Sweet roses bringing  
   To crown the year.

2. Thro' hills and vallies  
   Thro' shaded alleys,  
   And pleached palis —  
   Ading of gove;  
   Among fair bowers,  
   Midst fragrant flowers,  
   Pass sunny hours,  
   And sing of love.

3. Enclosed in mortar,  
   By wall and water,  
   A luckless daughter  
   All white and wan;  
   Till day is breaking,  
   My bed forsaking,  
   I all night waking  
   Sing like the swan.

4. My cruel father  
   Gave straitest order,  
   By watch and wader  
   I bair'd should be.  
   All in my chamber,  
   High out of danger,  
   From eye of ranger,  
   In misery.

   Refrain:  
   In tower I languish  
   In cold and sadness,  
   Heart full of anguish,  
   Eye full of tear.  
   Whilst glades are ringing  
   With maidens singing,  
   Sweet roses bringing  
   To crown the year.

By contrast, the whalingman's version makes the protagonist a sailor and adopts phrases that have closer affinities to the sailor broadside genre. Given the rugged syntax and esoteric spelling, it seems unlikely that Cahoon copied his text from any printed source. But whether or not it is a proper ballad, it is a familiar kind of piece, at least emulating the broadside ballad formula and thus reminiscent of many. Perhaps most of all, in spirit, sensibility, and even in one or two specific phrases, it resembles a nautical ballad commonly known as "Tarry Trousers," expressing the familiar theme of a parent's opposition to the daughter's union with a sailor — in this case also a sailor on his way to fight in a foreign war. Roy Palmer dates "Tarry Trousers" to 1820 or earlier, based on a text appearing in *The New Skylark*, printed in London by J. Evans around that time; but it is almost certainly somewhat earlier, at least coeval with the Napoleonic Wars, and perhaps even earlier than that. To whatever degree "Ye Maidens Pretty" may be an ancestral or coeval form of "Tarry Trousers," it is the earliest American manifestation yet to come to light.
TUNE A - “Ye Maidens Pretty.” From S. Baring Gould et al., *Songs of the West*, [1905] 1913, #17, p. 34. Signed “C.J.S.,” indicating that text and tune were collected by Cecil J. Sharp, in this case from the singing of James Parsons, hedger of Lew Down.

TUNE B - “Tarry Trousers.” Originally learned from the singing of Mark Herman, Columbia University, 1968; and Ellen Cohn, Mystic and New Haven, Connecticut, circa 1970s: virtually identical to a version collected by Ralph Vaughan Williams in 1904 (Palmer 1973, #2, p. 9; IFS II:153) except for the difference of one note (the tune here is in the Mixolydian mode; the Vaughan Williams air is in the Dorian mode).

1. ye Maidens Pretty in town and Sitty
   Come hear with Pity my mournful Strain
   a maid Confounded in Sorrow drowned
   and deeply wounded in grief and pain

2. all for the Sake of a Lively Sailor
   that I ly weeping in wasting tears
   whilst other maidens are fondly Playing
   I am a grieving for my young Sailor Dear

3. threw hills and vallyes threw Shaids of vallyes
   and all around Each Lovely grove
   Roold in Sweat flours and rural Bouars
   We Spent Soft [h]ours in mut[u]al love

4. But now my Sailor he Croast the otion [ocean]
   and Left his juel Resting here
   Cu[r]st be the armes that deprivd my arms
   of my Sweat Lovely young Sailor dear

5. although he is gone I Cannot Blaim him
   for thus my Sailor he was forst away
   By my hard fortune my Cruel Parents
   Contrivd to have him Sent to Sea

6. My father Left Sevral orders
   that Cloast Confind I Should Be
   all in my Chamber for fear of danger
   at Least I Should my darling See

7. thirteen Long weeks on Bread and water
   I Lived and had no other Cheer
   Cruel yousage to give a daughter
   for Loving off a young Sailor dear

8. five hundred Pounds Left me By my unkle
   Besides five hundred Pounds in gold
   It is for that Reason I do Disdain him
   for he is Beneath my young Sailor Bold

9. Could I obtain the wealth of Indies
    and once my Sailor Should appear
    the I would Resigne up my golden mine
    and marry a gain with my Sailor Dear
10.

I Am a Brisk and Sprightly Lad
[The Brisk and Sprightly Lad; A Sailor's Life for Me]

This very British patriotic ditty originally appeared on the London stage in *The Spoilt'd Child*, a play commonly attributed to the Irish-born comic dramatist Isaac Bickerstaffe (c1735-c1812). According to the *British Union Catalogue*, it was "sung by Mrs. Jordan" in the second act of a production of circa 1790, and was published as sheet music around the same time — in London by S., A. & P. Thompson and also by I. Fentum; and at Edinburgh by R. Ross. For its American debut it was "Sung by Mrs. Marshall" in a Philadelphia production of 1794 (Sonneck, 158f, 197). The inscription at the end of the whaleman's text is evidently unrelated to the song.

1. I am a brisk and Sprightly Lad
   But just come home from Sea Sir
   of all the Lives I Ever Led
   A Sailor's Life for me sir

   Chorus:
   Yeo, yeo, yeo, yeo
   Whilst the Boatswain Pipes all hands
   With yeo yeo yeo

   2. What girls But loves the merry tar
      We o'er the ocean Run Sir
      in every climate we find a Port
      in every Port a home sir

   3. But when our Country's foes are nigh
      Each hastens to his guns Sir
      We make the Boasting Frenchmen fly
      and Bang the [al]lusty Dons' Sir

   *Our foes subdued once more on shore*
   *Come unto me all ye [al]lusty Souls*
   *and I will give you Rest*

---

1. The attribution is dubious, especially if the original was as late as 1790. Bickerstaffe—who was at one time a page to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland and was later dismissed "under discreditable circumstances" from a commission in the Royal Marines, wrote a large number of farces and burlesques. "His career was abruptly ended in 1772, when he fled to Europe after being accused of a felony" (Wier 1943, 81), which is said to have been "a capital offense" (Enc. Brit. 1910, 3913). The song has only rarely been anthologized, and appears with "new words by Pamela Margetson" in Desmond MacMahon, *The New National and Folk Song Book* (1781, #35).

2. This was Irish-born actress Dorothea Bland Jordan (1762-1816), daughter of the Dublin actress Grace Phillips, who was known as Mrs. Frances. "Mrs. Jordan" is remembered in part for having revived and composed a new melody for "The Blue Bells of Scotland," but even more for having scandalized London as the mistress of the Duke of Clarence, afterwards King William IV, whom she bore ten children in the course of their liaison (1790-1811); these were "enrolled under the name FitzClarence, the eldest being created earl of Munster" (Enc. Brit., 1910, 15:508f).

3. Rev. Brewer's date of 1805 for what he lists as "The Spoilt Child" (Brewer, IV:378) is clearly in error, perhaps based on some later production or publication, as the Polly transcription antedates this by a full decade. His attribution to Bickerstaffe is also tentative.

4. Schnapper, II:969. Samuel, Ann, and Peter Thompson were London music publishers doing business as such from circa 1780 to 1794 (Kidson 1900, 127); John Fentum from circa 1770 at least until 1825 (Ibid., 47); and Robert Ross at Edinburgh "towards the close of the eighteenth century" (Ibid., 193).

5. That is, the Spaniards.
A Song Concerning Love
[The Captain Calls All Hands; Our Captain Cried]

The customary title of this splendid Sailors' Farewell comes from what usually appears as the first line, "The captain calls all hands and away tomorrow" (Huntington 1964, 99) or "Our captain calls all hands on board tomorrow" (Kennedy, 370). In the Polly journal the lyrics appear in somewhat different form, with a variant opening line, "Fair you well my dearest dear since I must leave you," which combines phrases from lines that sometimes appear later in the same stanza. On metrical, musical, and textual grounds, Ralph Vaughan Williams maintains that it is related to the great ballad "The Brave Wolfe" of circa 1759. Another whaler's text, reported from the ship Bengal of Salem, Massachusetts, 1832-35 (Huntington 1964, 99), illustrates that "The Captain Calls All Hands" was still in circulation among mariners in the middle of the nineteenth century. It is interesting and may be significant that the two whalenmen's texts are virtually the only vestiges of the song that have been encountered in North America, and that they are from Gloucester and Salem, adjacent ports on the North Shore of Boston. In the text here, the characteristic phrases appear in stanza 4, the first couplet of stanza 5, and in stanza 6 (of which the syntax is characteristic though the meaning be obscure). Kennedy observes that the song is a kind of corollary of "The Blacksmith" ("The Blacksmith Courted Me"), of which the evident antiquity of the fine modal melody collected by Vaughan Williams' [Tune B] makes it a suitable alternative to the air in a major key [Tune A] that is also associated with the lyrics.


1. Huntington arbitrarily contends that "The Captain Calls All Hands" is related to the ballad "The Bold Privateer.

TUNE B

1. Huntington arbitrarily contends that "The Captain Calls All Hands" is related to the ballad "The Bold Privateer."

While the two share an analogous farewell theme, in that the woman in each resists her lover's imminent departure
to sea (a very conventional feature, shared with dozens of parting songs and farewell ballads), the stories are entirely
different. "The Bold Privateer" is a broken-token ballad, where a ring or other material object is divided as a signet or
token between lovers; and most of the distinctive elements of this are absent in "The Captain Calls All Hands," as is readily apparent from Law's succinct summary of "The Bold Privateer": "Molly begs Johnny to stay at home with her instead of risking his life at sea. He replies that her friends dislike him and her brothers would take his life. He offers to exchange rings with her, and, if his life is spared in the war, to return and marry her." (Laws #O-32) Kennedy's comparison with "The Blacksmith," which he astutely regards as merely a form of the same song, is far more compelling, though his notion that the two songs may once have been paired as a duet is only speculative:

["The Blacksmith" is] an interesting song, in that there are really two forms: The Blacksmith, from the girl's point of view, and Our Captain Calls, from the man's viewpoint:

Our captain calls all hands on board tomorrow
Leaving my dear to mourn in grief and sorrow
Dry up those briny tears and leave off weeping
So happy we may be at our next meeting

...Because of the existence of men's verses and women's verses in the various collected versions, it can be
assumed that at one time the song existed in an extended form as a duet-type love song. In our four-verse
version of "The Blacksmith," we have only the point of view of the girl who has been left behind while her
blacksmith goes off "fighting for strangers"; other versions supply the man's viewpoint (Kennedy, 370).

2. "The faithful 'hero' of this song [The Blacksmith] is just as often a shoemaker as a blacksmith. Both metre and
tune are rather unusual, recalling the well-known Brit Young Widow in SFS III [C.J. Sharp & C.L. Marson, Folk Songs from Somerset, London, 5 vols., 1904-09], and Brave Wolfe, a song celebrating the hero of Quebec, often found in America though not reported in Britain (Brave Wolfe is not to be confused with Bold General Wolfe, which is fairly common in England). The opening of the 'strange news' verse also appears in some sets of Brave Wolfe" (Vaughan Williams 1959, 111).

1. Fair you well my dearest dear Since I must leave you
I Can no Longer Stay I must go from you
O I Shall Pine and dye if you go from me
So stay at home my Dear and do not Leave me

2. Why would you go to Sea to Fight for Strangers
When you [could stay] at home free from all dangers
I will infold you in my arms my dearest juel
and I will keep you from all harnes Love dont be Cruel

3. down By one River[side] as I was a walking
a man and a maid I Espied as they were a talking
their hands were jointed together as they were a going
twas a Black and a Rowling Ere that Proved my Ruin

4. our Captain Calls us Now with haist and hurry
I Can no Longer Stay I must go from you
So dry up your watry tears and Leave off weaping
For happy we Shall Be at our Next meeting

5. then on her [k]nees she fell like one a dying
and Spreading her arms a Broad and this Replying
awake you Rocks and Stones that is now relenting
all for the Sake of one I dye Lamenting

6. Fair well you Parents dear father and mother
you have Lost your darter dear I have no other
It is in vain to weap for me for I am going
whare joys forever Be and fountains a flowing

3. Corrective additions for the sake of meter and continuity are indicated in italics in brackets.
A New Song Made
[Voyage of the Olive Branch; Outward Bound from Gloucester]

What Cahoon calls (in classic broadside fashion) “A New Song Made” is certainly some sailor’s original ballad about a Cape Ann (Gloucester) ship named Olive Branch. It was likely written by Cahoon himself, but the vessel and specific incident have not been identified. Like his ballad “A Song of Whaling (1)” [#12], this one concerns an abortive voyage — in this case on account of damage suffered in a storm and the desperate effort to save the vessel. Like the Polly in “A Song of Whaling,” here the Olive Branch encounters trouble early in the voyage, struggles to survive, puts back to Cape Ann for repairs, and after some delay finally takes on a pilot and sets sail again. There were three whalers named Olive Branch, all of them too late to be the vessel named here: a schooner of Provincetown (1822), a ship listed for Providence “but [which] probably belongs to Provincetown, Mass.” (1831), and a ship of New Bedford (1845).1 The brigantine Olive Branch, 140 tons, was plying unspecified trade routes out of Newburyport, just north of Cape Ann, by 1790; and another Olive Branch, a brig of 158 tons, was launched by Ebenezer Mann at Fry’s Mill, on the North River at nearby Salem, Mass., in 1793.2 However, neither of these was a ship and neither is specifically associated with Gloucester or Cape Ann.

The text is extremely crude even for Stephen Cahoon, with overlong, ungainly lines in some stanzas, and the meter so uneven in places that the lyrics are virtually unsingable whatever the tune may have been. The melody is not specified and there are no definitive internal clues to what may have been intended. Several of the standard contemporaneous ballad airs fit equally well (or equally badly), but thematic affinities and the widespread use of “The Storm” [Tune A] and “The Bold Princess Royal” [Tune B] by English and American sailors for nautical ballads suggest these tunes above all others — added to which they each feature an expandable flexibility in the lengths of the lines that the Olive Branch lyrics certainly require. [See illustration, p. 40.]

TUNE A — “The Storm” (“The Tempest”). From broadside sheet music “Printed for J[ohn] Bland, No. 45, Holborn” (London, circa 1775-94), which attributes neither words nor music [collection of the Kendall Whaling Museum]. The melody is an adaptation of the traditional English air “Welcome, brother debtor” or “Come and listen to my ditty,” originally published in 1729 or 1730. George Alexander Stevens (1710/20-1784) expropriated the tune for his lyrics entitled “The Storm” (“Cease, rude Boreas, blistering raider”) in 1754 — a song that both Richard Henry Dana, Jr., in Two Years Before the Mast (1840) and Herman Melville in Moby Dick (1851) list among the three or four “classical songs of the sea.” Reprinted from Stuart M. Frank, The Book of Pirate Songs, 1998, #4.

What Cahoon calls (in classic broadside fashion) “A New Song Made” is certainly some sailor’s original ballad about a Cape Ann (Gloucester) ship named Olive Branch. It was likely written by Cahoon himself, but the vessel and specific incident have not been identified. Like his ballad “A Song of Whaling (I)” [#12], this one concerns an abortive voyage — in this case on account of damage suffered in a storm and the desperate effort to save the vessel. Like the Polly in “A Song of Whaling,” here the Olive Branch encounters trouble early in the voyage, struggles to survive, puts back to Cape Ann for repairs, and after some delay finally takes on a pilot and sets sail again. There were three whalers named Olive Branch, all of them too late to be the vessel named here: a schooner of Provincetown (1822), a ship listed for Providence “but [which] probably belongs to Provincetown, Mass.” (1831), and a ship of New Bedford (1845).¹ The brigantine Olive Branch, 140 tons, was plying unspecified trade routes out of Newburyport, just north of Cape Ann, by 1790; and another Olive Branch, a brig of 158 tons, was launched by Ebenezer Mann at Fry’s Mill, on the North River at nearby Salem, Mass., in 1793.² However, neither of these was a ship and neither is specifically associated with Gloucester or Cape Ann.

The text is extremely crude even for Stephen Cahoon, with overlong, ungrammatical lines in some stanzas, and the meter so uneven in places that the lyrics are virtually unsingable whatever the tune may have been. The melody is not specified and there are no definitive internal clues to what may have been intended. Several of the standard contemporaneous ballad airs fit equally well (or equally badly), but thematic affinities and the widespread use of “The Storm” [Tune A] and “The Bold Princess Royal” [Tune B] by English and American sailors for nautical ballads suggest these tunes above all others — added to which they each feature an expandable flexibility in the lengths of the lines that the Olive Branch lyrics certainly require. [See illustration, p. 40.]

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1. The 30th August twas on that Verry day
   Our Captain Come along Side our orders was away
   With our ankers wait all on our Bows and our topsails Spread a Clew
   God Prosper the Ship olive Branch and all her jovial [jovial] Crew

2. The wind Being att S[outh] W[est] my Boys we Quickly Left the Land
   Till 4 a Clock in the After noon as you Shall understand
   all in a Squall the wind did hall which proved a Dismal Strook [stroke]
   We Lost our fore and main mast and our mizen top mast Broak

3. O then we went to work our Riggen for to Save
   thinking for to get back again twas all that we did Crave
   Att 9 Aclock our fore Sail we did Set as you Shall understand
   and headed her to westward all for to make the Land

4. arily Next morning our decks Not yet Being Clear
   all hands was Cald to go to work Come up with a good Clear
   at 8 a Clock our main Sail Set we as you Shall understand
   we maid Cape Cod Bairing W[est] S[outh] W[est] all under the high land

5. all hands was to work a Clearing of Decks the Biggest Part of that day
   and Cep [keep] her By the wind my Boys as near as She would ly
   and the wind Being to the Laward as it was the day Before
   at Eight a Clock we ankard all under the Cape Shore

6. Early next morning the wind Being But Small
   We Let her Lay till 6 a Clock Before we hove a Pall\textsuperscript{3}
   then the wind Breasdt at S[outh] W[est] my Boys and Blew a Pleasant Gail
   we got our ankers on our Bows and hoisted up our Sails

7. we got up a fore top mast and topgallant mast Like wise
   Set a Single Reeft top Sail unto all our great joys
   with our J [jury] Sailes and Jig Sails yet She was a dismal Sight
   We ankered in Cape ann harbour by 8 a Clock that night

8. It was thrsday morning the day we left Cape ann
   On Sattaday we ankerd all under the high Land
   On Sattaday Night we got Back again unto our harts Content
   On Sunday bowld along Side of the wharf & on monday our Sails we onbent

9. O then we went to work again all with a good Clear
   To fit her for the Sea a gain Nothing we Did fear
   But the time it Being delaid for 5 weaks or more
   twas on the 6 of October we Left our Native Shore

10. twas att 12 a Clock that Verry day the Pilot Come on Bord
    then we went our good Ship to onmoore [unmoor]
    With the wind Breasdt at N[orth] E[ast] my Boys Come whisling threw the trees
    We hoisted up our Top Sails and trimd them to the Breas

\textsuperscript{1} Starbuck 246, 284, 424.
\textsuperscript{2} Fairburn V.3039; V.2896; 1:558.
\textsuperscript{3} To \textit{heave a pavel} is to weigh anchor by heaving the windlass pawls (capstan bars).
13.
A Song of Whaling (I)

Stephen Cahoon may have written this ballad himself — perhaps about some previous voyage he may have made out of Nantucket — or obtained it from a fellow whaler, but it is definitely of whaler's authorship. Entitled "A Song of Whaling," it narrates a typical voyage of several weeks from Nantucket to the sperm whaling grounds off the Cape Verde Islands and the coast of southwestern Africa. The Isle of "May," mentioned in stanza 7, is a literal translation of Maio, one of the Cape Verdes, several of which provided convenient provisioning and recruiting ports for Yankee whalers, either when hunting in adjacent waters or on the outward-bound passage to more distant grounds. From the fifteenth century to the twentieth the archipelago was a colony of Portugal (and is part of Portugal today), but until the end of the eighteenth century Maio itself was occupied by Britain.

Though it be sketchy about technical details of the hunt, the ballad is surprisingly explicit, perhaps even a bit long-winded, about the homeward passage and the difficulties of entering Nantucket harbor over the infamous sandbar. Typically of Cahoon, the poetry itself is not very proficient: the first stanza has two extra lines, the rhyme scheme and meter are irregular throughout, the erratic spelling requires phonetic deciphering, punctuation is entirely lacking, and the tune is not identified.

1. September Last the Point we Past
   with A westly Breas So fair
   We went over the Sholes Like jovels soles [jovial souls]
   A whailing Course to Steer
   We Past the grait Rip in [a] New Ship
   and so jovel [jovial] Rolled Along

2. At 8 A Clock we went Nine Nots
   with a westly gail So Strong
   The wind at East it did increas
   & Blow So very Strong

3. our jovle Crew hove our Ship too
   & sent down Topgallant yard
   The weather was fine twas our divine
   To stop at the Cape devards [Cape Verde Islands]

4. We Trimm our Sails unto the Gails
   Got up Top Gallant yards
   We Run our Recking out we Saw a Spout
   We hove our Topsails To the mast

5. The We Swung our Crains & Loward a main
   & after them So fairst [fast]
   We Struck them Both A harty Stroak
   & kild them Both At Last

6. As soon as they dyed Got them along Side
   & our Cabels well maid fast
   By the day Light all hands was Piped
   We Cut [cut-in: butchered] them Boath that day

7. When the Last Peace Come in the Sails we trimd
   & then we Bore away
   We had a Pleasant traid & the Land we maid
   we Stopt at the ile of May
8. We Loward our Boats got hogs and goats
& then we bore away
We had a Plesent time a Crost the Line [Equator]
We Run our Reckning allmost

9. We Saw Lively grounds and whalils all Round
The Spouts they Line the Coast
For to Begin they took to wind
To the Southard they all Past

10. Then for 48 [degrees] we Maid our waik Straight
Where we arrived at Last
We Croust the Spanish Shore 3 Month or more
Before our Vige [voyage] would obtain

11. The Southards Blew hard we Squard our yards
& left the Spanish Main
and Now at Last the Season is Past
To the Nor'ard [Northward] we will Stear

12. It Being Late when we Past the Capes
whair the Traids Blows fair & Clear
As we Sail along we will Pack Sail on
To Nantcuket [sic] we are Bound

13. Threw the otian [ocean] wide our Ship doth Slide
Till we Arrivd in the Sound
At Narwhy Bite we lay that night
Till day Light did appear

14. When the Eastern tide Maid our ankers waid
& for the Bar did Steer
we got there that day and there we lay
Till the Lighter Come along side

15. Then off[If] our jackets Striept and
Lighted our Ship
To git over the next high tide
We too the wind which against us Maid
I soon tell to you

16. I heard the Sound we are hard aaground
all in the flats of Corlue
we got from thair without Cair
I got to the wharf next day

17. and now at Last She is well maid fast
and their Ship doth Last
when she is well mord we will jump on shore
and there we will work a while
15.  
A Song of Whaling (II) 
A Song of Whailing: A Doom on a very melancholy accident viz Benjamin Hopkins 
who was killed by a whale near the Cape devards Islands

This original ballad, with its elaborate, broadside ballad-style subtitle, is apparently based on an 
actual event. But even more than death at sea it dwells upon theological aspects of Death itself; 
and despite anachronistic spelling and an utter lack of punctuation, it does so poignantly and 
articulately. Unfortunately, Cahoon's haphazard journal is not sufficiently complete to include a 
narrative account of the death of a shipmate named Benjamin Hopkins — if indeed that event 
ever actually occurred on this voyage of the Polly. However, the poetry compels the notion that 
it is based on authentic firsthand experience. It was almost certainly written by Stephen Cahoon 
himself.

While the tune is not specified, metrical and textual evidence suggest the melody used for 
"The Ship In Distress," an eighteenth-century English deepwater ballad which, coincidentally 
perhaps, is also set in offshore waters near the Cape Verdes Islands. Compare the first stanzas of 
"Ship In Distress" as given by Ralph Vaughan Williams (left, below) and Cecil Sharp (right):

You seamen bold who plough the ocean. 
See dangers landsmen never know. 
It's not for honour and promotion; 
No tongue can tell what they undergo. 
In the blusterous wind and the great dark water 
Our ship went drifting on the sea, 
Her headgear gone, and her rudder broken 
Which brought us to extremity

Ye seamen bold that plough the ocean, 
See dangers landsmen never know, 
’Tis for no honour nor promotion, 
No tongue can tell what they undergo. 
There's blusterous wind and the heat of battle, 
Where there's no back door to run away; 
But thund’ring cannons loudly rattle. 
There's danger both by night and day.

Even when he is presumed to have copied a text directly from a printed source Stephen Cahoon’s 
division of lines into stanzas does not always match the model text or the air — such as when he 
sets down the lyrics as four-line stanzas even where the prototype text and tune require eight-line 
stanzas. That is much the situation here, and to fit the lyrics to either version of the tune requires 
that the stanzas be doubled and the first stanza be repeated at the end, as though there were eleven 
stanzas of eight lines each (instead of 22 stanzas of four lines each).

Folk Songs(1959), p. 96.

TUNE B - "The Ship In Distress." From Cecil J. Sharp, One Hundred English Folk Songs(1916), #90, p. 208.
1. your Stought young men who go a whailing
   and who Cross the Rageing Sea
   Little thinking while your Sailing
   that grim Death may near you be

2. I hope these Lines will move your Pitty
   and a warning Be to all
   I am Sure it is a mournfull Ditty
   unto youth it Loud doth Call

3. Twas on the twenty fifth of august
   it was in the afternoon
   then a youth Both Stought and [hearty]
   Snatchd away while in his Bloom

4. a noble school of whales appeared
   and for us they Straight did Come
   with Eager hearts for them we Steared
   and we soon made fast to one

5. our other Boats with Speed they hastened
   and they Rowed up to one
   this youth with Courage to him fastned
   But he sent him to his toomb

6. he Stove their Boat in Rage and madness
   on the waves he Struck them all
   it filled our hearts with fear and Sadness
   they for help alone did Call Call

7. We made great hast[e] them to deliver
   and from Danger set them free
   But all the best of mens Endeavors
   will not alter Gods Decree

8. We Did Save But five in number
   One was Banished from our Sight
   In death Cold Shade Ly Down to Slumber
   out a Dark a lonesom night

9. alass Poor youth now we Lement the[e]
   we Bewail thy awfull Doom
   Cruel Death he Quickly Sent the[e]
   to that Cold and watry toomb

10. We Little Thought grim Death So nigh
    the[e]
    when the morning Sun Did rise
    But Ere it Set Pale death Past By the[e]
    and did Close thy Sightless Eyes

11. may Each of us whose Lives are Spared
    now Gods Goodness Loud Proclaime
    who when in Danger for us Cared
    Blest and Praised Be his name

12. and may all youth now take a warning
    we thus seen this awfull sight
    we've Seen a flower fresh at morning
    Cropt and gone Before twas night

13. Death flew in Rage it did not tarry
    made us all to Quake and fear
    But have we got this news to Carry
    unto aged Parents Dear

14. methinks I See them fall a Crying
    while tis Dreadfull news they hear
    methinks [I] See them Sob and Sighing
    for a Darling Son most Dear

15. But why my friends will Set weeping
    you to him must Surely Go
    he will not Leave his Quiet Sleeping
    for his Bid this world adue

16. But let me tell his Parents Dear
    Brothers and Sisters thats So nigh
    we have no friends are to[o] near
    None that are too Dear to die

17. We know his Body must Ly Sleeping
    untill God Shall Bid it Rise
    we hope his Soul is now a Reaping
    Joy and Blest above the Skies

18. What though the waves Do Roar and
    tumble
    over his Body thats below
    what though the thunder Low Doth rumble
    Lightnings fly Both to and fro

19. It wont Disturb his Quiet Sleeping
    none Can hinder his Repose
    he Dont Regard his friends aweeping
    feels no trouble fears no foes

20. But though he is gone to us hes Crying
    Let us mind what he Doth Say
    you Living men Prepare for Dying
    you to me must Come away

21. you like the rays of Light are flying
    time Doth Swiftly waft you on
    twill Soon Be Said that you are Dying
    Soon be Said that you are gone
Appendix I

Stephen Cahoon's Summary of the Polly Voyage

Cahoon did not keep a regular journal with daily entries on the Polly. He recorded events only sparsely and intermittently, and the manuscript contains mostly song transcriptions, a few pious invocations (such as the one embedded in the text below), reference notes on mathematical calculations (in a copperplate hand), and later records of financial transactions on Cape Cod concerning farming, shoemaking, rental properties, and the sale of produce. Thus, as Cahoon's journal provides no sustained account of the Polly voyage, and as no other logbook or journal of the voyage is known to survive, it is Cahoon's brief abstract (reproduced in facsimile, below left; transcribed verbatim, below right) that furnishes the only overview of the voyage. [KWM photo by Hayato Sakurai.]

---

In the year of our Lord 1795
We set sail on Bord the Ship Polley
From Gloucester the 11 of Janewery
With Capt Elkanah Mayo Commander bound
to Wooley Bay and arriv'd there the 29th of
May all well the 6 of Juane got one Hump Back
the 9 of June we got one Right Whail
The 17 of September we set sail from
Wolley Bay all well on Bord at Prefent
Bound to americca with all speed

Stephen Cahoon his Book
God gave him Grace toke there in not
merely look but under stand God is the
maker of the Land

November the 24 on tuesday in Lattid 31 - 39m
Long 70 - 00m our Ship Proved very Leeky and
Put away for the west indies and we arriv'd
in Barbados the 12 of December all hands
well on Bord with our Ship Leeking
very Bad and our Pumps a foaming

Stephen Cahoon
His Book and hand
Appendix II

Stephen Cahoon’s Seaman’s Protection Paper (Passport)

Though he may or may not have gone whaling again after the Polly voyage, Cahoon continued to work as a sailor for a few years before taking up shoemaking and farming full time. Beginning in 1789, the new Congress required that each American seaman carry an official passport certifying citizenship, as protection against impressment and other depredations on the high seas and in foreign ports. Cahoon would certainly have had one of these so-called Seaman’s Protection Papers on the Polly voyage. He was issued a new one at Boston in 1799 (italics indicate handwritten entries on the printed form): “I Benj. Lincoln Collector for the District of Boston and Charlestown, do hereby Certify that Stephen Cahoon, an American Seaman, aged Twenty six Years, or thereabouts, of the Height of five Feet, seven Inches, dark complexion, light Eyes, dark hair, has this Day produced to me Proof, in the Manner directed by the Act, entitled ‘An Act for the Relief and Protection of American Seamen,’ and pursuant to the said Act, I do hereby Certify, that said Stephen Cahoon is a Citizen of the United States of America. / In Witness whereof, I have hereunto set my Hand and Seal of Office, this 17th Day of April in the Year of our Lord, 1799. / [Signed] B. Lincoln Collector.” [Collection of the Kendall Whaling Museum. KWM photo by Hayato Sakurai.]
Appendix III
Scenes of Sperm-Whaling in the Pacific, 1796

Stephen Cahoon was not much of an artist, but fellow whaleman Thomas Wetling did several fine watercolors of ships, whales, and whaling scenes on his own voyage to some of the same whaling grounds at around the same time, in the ship William of London, Captain George Fitch, 1796-97. In the absence of contemporaneous firsthand illustrations of Yankee whaling during this era, Wetling's renderings are the best available pictures of sperm-whaling in the Pacific in the 1790s. The Ship William and her Boats killing Whales [below] shows the Londoners using essentially the same technology in Yankee-style whaleboats lowered from a ship much like the Polly. A Strong Gale [bottom] could be an illustration for Cahoon's Olive Branch ballad. [KWM #O-29 and Log #898. Photos by Mark Sexton and M. Zilberstein.]
Appendix IV
Abner Butler's Shipboard Text of “The Children in the Woods,” 1755

In a journal aboard the colonial sloop Diligence in 1755, commanded by William Pease, First Mate Abner Butler transcribed an orthodox version of “The Children in the Woods.” It is a text of 38 stanzas, of which the first 33 are virtually identical to Stephen Cahoone's rendition forty years later. Except for differences in spelling and capitalization, variations from the Cahoone text are here highlighted in italics.

1. Now Ponder Well You Parents Dear
These Words Which I Shall Write
A Doeful Story You Shall hear
In Time Brought forth To Light

2. A Gentleman of Good a Count
In Norfolk Lived of Late
Whose fame and Credit Did Surmount
Most Men of his Estate

3. So Sick he was and Like To die
No help That he then Could have
His Wife By him as Sick Did Lie
And Both Possess one Grave

4. No Love Between These Two was Lost
Each was to other kind
In Love they Liv'd on Love They Dyed
And Left Two Babes Behind

5. The one a fine and Prity boy
Not Passing Three years old
The other was younger yet
And made of beautys mould

6. The father Left his Little Son
As Plainly Deth appear
When he to Perfect age Should Come
Three hundred Pounds a year

7. And to his Little Daughter Jane
Two hundred Pounds in Gold
For to Be Paid on Marriage Day
Which might not Be Controul

8. But if these Children Chance to Die
E'er they To age Did Come
The Uncle Should Posses the wealth
For So The Will Did Run

9. Now Brother Said the Dying Man
Look To My Children Dear
Be Good Unto [my] Boy And Girl
No Friend [i.e., I have] hear

10. To God and You Do I Command
My Children Night and Day
A Little While Be Sure We have
Within this World to Stay

11. You Must Be father mother Both
And Uncle all in One
God keep You all Now from harm
When I am Dead [and] gorn

12. With That Bespeak her mother Both
uh Brother kind Quoth She
you are The man must Bring my Babes
To welth or misery

13. If you [do] keep them Carefully
Then God Will You Reward
If otherwise you Seem to Deal
God Will Your Deeds Regard

14. With Lips as Cold as any Ston
She kiss'd her Children Small
God keep you all my Children Dear
With that the Tears Did fall

15. These Illegible then the Brother Spoke
To the Sick Couple ther[el]
The keeping of Your Children Dear
Sweet Sister Dost Not fear

16. God Never Prosper me Nor mine
Nor all things[i] that I have
If I Do Wrong Your Children Dear
When you Have Laid in Grave

17. The Parents Being Dead and Gone
The Children home he Takes
And brings them home unto his house
And Much of them he makes

18. He had not kept these Pretty Babes
A twelve month and a Day
But for their weth He did Devise
To make them Both away

19. He Bargained With Two Ruffians Rude
Which were of furious mood
That they [should] take these Children [young]
And Slay them in the Wood

20. And told his wife and all he had
He did the Children Send
To Be Brought Up In fair London
With one that was his friend

21. Away then went these Pretty Babes
Rejoicing at the tide
And Smiling with a merry mind
They should on Cock horse ride

22. They Prate and Prattle Pleasantly
As They Rode In the way
To them That Should their Butcher Be
And not there Lives Decay

23. So That the Pretties Speech they had
Made Murderer hart's Relent
And they that took the Deed to Do
Full Sure they Did Repent

24. Yet one of them more hard of hart
Did vow to Do his Charge
Because the Retch that hired him
Had paid him very Loarg

25. The other Would not agree thereto
So here were all Strife
With on a Mother they Did fight
About the Children's Life

26. and he that was of mildest mood
Did Stay the other There
Within an unfrequented By the wood
Where Babes Do Quake for fear

27. He Took The Children By the hand
When Tears Stood in their Eye
And bid them Come and go with him
And See they Did Not Cry

28. And these Long miles he Led them thus
While they for Bread Complain
Stay here quote he I Bring you Bread
When I Do come a Gain

29. These Pretty Babes with hand in hand
Went wandering up and Down
But Never More They Saw the man
Approaching from The Town

30. There Pretty Lips with Black berries
were all Besmeard and Dyed
But when they Saw The Darksome Night
They sat them down and Cryed

31. thus wandered These Two Little Babe
Till Deth Did End their Grief
In on a Nookers arms they Dyed
As Babes wanting Relief

32. No Burial These Pretty Babes
Of any man Receives
Till Robin Read breast Painfully
Did Couver them with Leaves

33. And now the heavy Rath of God
Upon the unc late fell
Yet Each Contends Did hunt and hawl
His Contience fell in hell

34. His Barns were fired his Goods
Consumed
His Lands were barren made
His Cattle Dyed with in his the [sic]
field
And Nothing with him staid

35. And in a voyage to Portugal
Two of his Sons Did Dye
And to Conclude himself was Brought
Unto much misery

36. He Pawned and mortgaged all his land
Ere Seven years came about
And now at Length this wicked act
By this means Did come out

37. The fellow that Did take in hand
These Children for to kill
Was for a Robber judged to Dye
As was God's Bless Will

38. Who did confess the very truth
That which is hear Expresst
The uncle Dier when he for Debt
Did in the Prison Rest

This song writ on Board Sloop Diligence
In the year 1755 By Abner Butler
References for the Texts and Tunes

JAF Literary Journal of American Folklore
JFN Journal of the Folk Song Society


3. The Children in the Woods (The Bakers in the Woods), Laws 3-48 (cites Percy’s Reliques, IAF 35, 348; Roxburgh Ballads, in Ashton, 24). PSI. Chappell 1931; Ewing #254, 255, 256; Harris 1939; Gardner 1939; Morris 1950; Rollins 1962; Sharp 1916; Simpson xii, 105; Sonneck, 626, 399; Vance 1946-50; Welsh & Tillingham #620-50, 1595, 2012.

4. Constant Lovers (The Shirt Merchant’s Daughter), Laws #11, PSIS. Doerflinger 1972; Greenleaf and Mansfield 1937; Harris 1950; Moore & Moore 1946; Randolph 1946; Sharp 1916.

5. A Song of Old (Bundling), Stiles 1869, 39-45.


8. An Old Song (Sweet Combe她es; Sweet Beautiful Queen). Not found elsewhere.

9. New Song (Ye Maidens Pretty), Baring-Gould #17. See also: "Tarry Trouser" ("The Mother and Daughter"); Laws 1264; Frank 1985 #7; Frank 1995, 7; Greenleaf #31; Huntington 1964, 96; Palmer 1973 #2; Sharp 1932 #133.

10. I Am a Brisk and Sprightly Lad (The Brisk and Sprightly Lad; A Sailor’s Life for Me). SIC #4533. MacMahon, v1; Schiaparelli 1957 #59; Sonneck, 158, 197.


12. A New Song Made [Voyage of the Olive Branch]. Whalen’s original song not encountered elsewhere.


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