

[1] The Courtiers Health, or The Merry Boys of the Times

He that loves sack doth nothing lack, if he that loyal be,
 He that denys Bacchus supplies shows mere hypocrisy
 Tune: *Come Boys Fill Us a Bumper*

Come, boys, fill us a bumper,
 We'll make the nation roar,
 She's grown sick of a Rumper*
 That sticks on the old score.
 Pox on phanaticks, rout 'em,
 They thirst for our blood;
 We'll taxes raise without 'em,
 And drink for the nation's good.
*Fill the pottles and gallons,
 And bring the hogshead in,
 We'll begin with a tallen,
 A brimmer to the King.*

Round, around, fill a fresh one,
 Let no man bawk his wine,
 We'll drink to the next in succession,
 And keep it in the right line.
 Bring us ten thousand glasses,
 The more we drink we're dry;
 We mind not the beautiful lasses,
 Whose conquest lyes all in the eye.

We boys are truly loyal,
 For Charles we'll venture all,
 We know his blood is royal,
 His name shall never fall.
 But those that seek his ruin
 May chance to dye before him,
 While we that sacks are woeing,
 For ever will adore him.

I hate those strange dissenters
 That strives to hawk a glass,
 He that at all adventures
 Will see what comes to pass:
 And let the Popish nation
 Disturb us if they can,
 They ne'er shall breed distraction
 In a true-hearted man.
 He that denyes the brimmer
 Shall banish'd be in this Isle,
 And we will look more grimmer
 Till he begins to smile:
 We'll drown him in Canary,
 And make him all our own,
 And when his heart is merry
 He'll drink to Charles on's throne.

A Royalist ballad from the early 1670s. The broadsheet is illustrated by two woodcuts - one showing three drinkers round a table and a rather harrassed-looking serving wench, the other showing what looks like a Lady Bacchus emptying wine into a large jug. A caption reads: Here she stands and fills it out amain, Says they: Let's have the other bout again'. *'Rumper' was the so-called 'Rump Parliament', the remnant of the Long Parliament after the expulsion, by Cromwell in 1648, of those who opposed his purposes.

[2] The Country Lass

Tune: *Cold and Raw/Stingo*

Although I am a country lass,
 A lofty mind I bear-a,
 I think myself as good as those
 That gay apparel wear-a;
 My coat is made of homely grey,

Yet is my skin as soft-a,
 As those that with the chiefest wines
 Do bathe their bodies oft-a;
*Downe a down a derry downe downe,
 Hey downe a downe a down a,*

What though I keep my father's sheep
 A thing that must be done-a
 A garland of the fairest flowers
 Shall shield me from the sun-a
 And when I see they feeding be
 Where grass and flowers spring-a
 Close by a crystal fountainstream
 I sit me down and sing-a.

Dame nature crowns us with delight
 Surpassing court and city,
 We pleasures take from morn till night,
 In sport and pastimes pretty;
 Your courtly dames in coaches ride
 Abroad for recreation,
 We country lasses hate their pride
 And keep the country fashion.

I care not for a fan nor maske
 When summer heat reflecteth,
 A homely hat is all I ask,
 Which well my face protecteth;
 Yet am I in my country guise
 Esteemed a lass, as pretty
 As those that every day devise
 New shapes in court and city.

I have no jewels in my ears,
 Nor gems to deck my neck-a,
 Nor glittering ring with stones I wear,
 My fingers for to deck-a,
 But for the man, when e'er it chance
 That I shall grace to wed-a,
 I'll keep a jewel worth them all,
 I mean my maidenhead-a

The main part of the text (by ballad-writer Martin Parker) comes from the Pepys broadsheet but in his anthology 'Wit and Mirth or Pills to Purge Melancholy', Thomas Durfey added a pretty 'moral' as a last verse which is included here. The tune *Cold and Raw* was evidently a favourite of Queen Mary, the Consort of William III. An anecdote relates that on one occasion, while in the company of Henry Purcell, she asked to hear a performance of the *ballad Cold and Raw*. Purcell noted this and subsequently incorporated the tune into the bass line of an air in her next birthday ode, *May her blest example 1692*.

[3] The Crost Couple, or A Good Misfortune

Which in a pleasant ditty discovers
 The fortunate cross of a couple of lovers
 Tune: *The Crost Couple*

I'll tell you a tale no stranger than true,
Of a fa la la la, la lero
 The sport on't is old but the sonnet is new:
Tis a fa la la la, la lero
 The story sprung from under a bush,
 From a tongue and tune as sweet as a thrush,
 But I fear it will make a fair lady to blush,
With a fa la la la, la lero

Nay do not turn your faces away,
 Here's nothing that can your virtue betray,
 Let not your fancies look a-squint,
 The author would never have put it in print,

If there had been any uncivil word in't,
 I tell you no stories of battles and fights,
 Of wonders, of monsters, of goblins or sprights,
 Nor yet of a thief that got a reprieve,
 I do not intend your spirits to grieve,
 My story's as old as Adam and Eve.
 I went for a walk one evening-tide,
 My fancy did lead me by the woodside,
 'twas in the prime of all the spring,
 Which giveth delight to everything:
 I saw a maid listen to hear a man sing,

The tempting dressings that she was in
 Would almost seduce a new saint to sin,
 She was a fair and lovely maid,
 About her waist his arm he laid,
 The beautiful'st baggage is soonest betrayed.

I got me straight up into tree
 Where I might see all and no man might see me;
 The tree was thick and full of growth,
 The top on't did hover so over them both,
 That if I had fell I had dropped in her mouth.

There many an amorous glance did they cast,
 But that was not all, the best is the last:
 Some thing, it seems, this youth would do,
 Which she would not consent unto,
 Have patience and you shall know all e'er you go.

When laid on her side she turn'd to the tree,
 I durst have sworn she look'd upon me,
 He many points of division did run,
 But she cried out 'No - I shall be undone!'
 He tun'd up his pipes, though, and thus he begun,
 'This hearty kiss is a sign thou wilt yield,
 The white of thy eyes speak peace in the field;
 Then, for a veil to hide thy face,
 I'll cloud thee with a sweet embrace,
 There's many would wish that they were in thy place

'Oh do not sigh to hear me entice -
 Thou hadst never been got had thy mother been nice!'
 He many points of division did run,
 But she cried out 'No, I shall be undone!'
 He tun'd up his pipes, though, and thus he begun.

'But oh, my own dear, why liest thou so still?
 Art thou in a swoond, or what is thy will?
 I prithee, joy, take no such grief,
 Since I am so near to thy relief,
 Oh let me play the amorous thief!'

Then on her brow her veil she spread,
 As if he'd been going to cut off her head;
 He with his lips her mouth did wipe,
 And gave her many an earnest gripe,
 For just now my lady was yielding ripe.

Ah, what a fret was I in up that tree
 That I had not then another by me!
 Then I perceiv'd they whisper'd a while,
 With many fair pleadings he did her beguile,
 Sure something he showed her which made her to smile.

He said he was sure they could not be spied,
 (But I, if I durst, could have told him he lied!)
 I feared I should be brought to light
 She so often cast up her eyes so bright,
 The pleasures of love did so dazzle her sight.

My gamester could no longer forebear,
 No more should I if I had been there;
 I turn'd and skew'd my body around,
 To see my gallant scale the town,
 But his getting up made me tumble down.

Such was my fortune, no mischief I had,
 My lovers both ran as if they'd been mad!
 And now I hope a warning twill be,
 How they, in such sinful pleasures agree,
 For fear of the Devil that fell from the tree.

[4] The Countryman's Joy

at the Coronation of King William and Queen Mary, April the 11th 1689

Tune: *I'll tell thee Dick*

Ods whirlikins! what mun I do,
 To get to London Town?
 Chill zell my oxen and my plough,
 Nay more my dun and dapple too,
 To zee the volk a crown'd.

To Whitehall Gate che rid like mad,
 Where though che knockt with vorce
 They were zo vull of guests, they zaid,
 There was no lodging to be had
 Vor me, nor vor my horse.

But when che came to Westminster,
 What zights did che behold?
 Many a Lord and Lady var,
 As e'er were zeen in our Shire,
 In crowns of shining gold.

With many other gallant volk,
 To Marchioness and Duchess,
 In pairs like cattle in a yoke;
 Ods bub, che wish beneath my cloak,
 I had her in my clutches.

After the rest, in state were led,
 Our King and Queen, God bless 'em!
 Under the tester of a bed,
 You'd think them going to be wed,
 They did so vinely dress'em.

God zave! the cry was all along,
 King William and Queen Mary!
 While all the burden of my zong,
 Was cursing the pickpocket throng,
 That made poor Giles miscarry.

Of zhillings vorty-vour che brought,
 To pay my score in town;
 Of all those crowns not one poor groat,
 When I was dry, to wet my throat,
 Was left to bring me down.

But should che live another reign,
 On horseback, or afoot,
 If e'er ye catch me there again,
 Then make a znuffbox of my brain,
 And zteal my hyde to boot!

One of several broadside ballads inspired by a comical song written in 1640 by Sir John Suckling for the wedding of his friend the Earl of Orrey which was conceived as a West-country rustic's humorous account of the nuptials, beginning: 'I'll tell thee Dick where I have been'.

[5] Seldom Cleanly

or A merry new ditty wherein you may see
The trick of a huswife in every degree
Then lend your attention while I do unfold
As pleasant a story as you have heard told.
Tune: *Upon a Summer's Day*

Draw near you country girls
And listen unto me,
I'll tell you here a new conceit,
Concerning huswifery:
Three aunts I had of late,
Good huswives all were they,
But cruel Death hath taken
The best of them away.
*O this was one of my aunts,
And the best of all the three,
And surely, though I say it myself,
A cleanly woman was she.*

And when she went to see
Her cattle in the fields,
When she came home two pounds of dirt
Hung draggling from her heels;
And there she let it hang
From Candlemas to May,
And then she took a hatchet in hand,
And chopped it clean away.

In making of a cheese,
My aunt she showed her cunning,
Such perfect skill she had at will,
She never used running,
For having strained her milk,
In turning once about,
She had the best curd that you ever did see
By the scent of the straining clout.

Another trick she had,
As I shall now declare:
She only swept the house
But about four times a year;
And when she swept the hall,
The parlour or the spence,
The dust was worth to her at least
A shilling or fourteen pence.

My aunt so patient was,
Of this I dare be bold,
That with her neighbours, surely she
Was never known to scold;
Her lips, with loathsome words,
She seldom would defile;
But sometimes she would whisper so loud,
You could hear her half a mile!

The garments she did wear
Did shine like a brazen crock,
And where she sent she bore such a scent
That the flies blew up her frock;
If otherwise she had
But of a dishclout fail,
She would set a dish to the dog to lick
And wipe it with his tail.

My aunt so curious was,
As I to you may tell,
She used to make fat puddings,
In market for to sell;
The smallest candle's end
My aunt would never lose,

It would help to make her puddings fat
With the droppings of her nose;

A ballad full of humour and irony, although its editor J. Ebsworth (The Roxburghe Ballads 1871-99) evidently did not see the joke commenting: 'Price [Lawrence Price, possibly the ballad's author] must have been greatly at a loss for a subject to have taken so disagreeable a theme for his satire as the most uncleanly slattern of womankind'. The tune takes its name from another ballad beginning 'Upon a summers day' and appears in Playford's *The Dancing Master* and also in arrangements for keyboard and cittern.

[6] A Merry Jest of John Thomson and Jakaman his wife whose jealousy was justly the cause of their strife

Tune: *Peg-a-Ramsey*

When I was a batchelor,
I led a merry life
But now I am a married man
And troubled with a wife
I cannot do as I have done
Because I live in fear
If I go but to Islington
My wife is watching there
*Give me my yellow hose again,
For now my wife she watcheth me,
See yonder where she goes*

But when I was a prentice bound
And my indentures made,
In many faults I have been found,
Yet never thus afraid,
For if I chance now by the way,
A woman for to kiss,
The rest are ready for to say,
'Thy wife shall know of this!'

Thus when I come in company
I pass my mirth in fear,
For one or other merrily
Will say my wife is there,
Then my look doth make them laugh,
To see my woeful case,
How I stand like John Hold-my-Staff,
And dare not show my face,
Then comes a handsome woman in,
And shakes me by the hand,
But how my wife she did begin,
Now you shall understand:
'Fair Dame', quoth she, 'why dost thou so?
He gave his hand to me,
And thou shalt know before thou go
He is no man for thee!'.
'Good wife' quoth she 'now do not scold,
I will do so no more,
I thought I might have been so bold,
I knowing him before'
With that my wife was almost mad,
Yet many did intreat her,
And, God knows, was very sad
For fear she would have beat her.

Thus marriage is an enterprise,
Experience doth show,
But scolding is an exercise
That married men do know;
For all this while there were no blows,
Yet still their tongues were talking,
And very fain would yellow hose
Have had her fists a walking.

But now I see she is so hot
And lives so ill at ease,
I will go get a soldier's coat
And sail beyond the seas;
To serve my captain where and when,
Though it be to my pain,
Thus 'Farewell, gentle Jackaman,
Till we two meet again'.

An early ballad to a tune entitled variously 'Peg a Ramsey', 'Peggy Ramsey' or 'Pigges of Rumsey' after another ballad no longer extant. Up until about the time of the Commonwealth the wearing of yellow stockings or 'hose' was a symbol of love, or at least availability, and in the refrain the singer mourns the passing of his bachelor days by wishing he could still wear them. In Shakespeare's *Twelfth Night* the love-struck Malvolio declares: 'I will be strange, stout, in yellow stockings'. Shakespeare makes a further allusion to the symbolism of yellow stockings by having Sir Toby call Malvolio a 'Peg-a-Ramsey' - a reference to the ballad which would no doubt have been picked up by the audience.

[7] The Seven Merry Wives of London, or The Gossips Complaint

against their husbands for their neglect as they met together over half a dozen bottles of Canary
Tune: *Fond Boy*

There's seven young wives met together of lat
In a tavern not far from the Bell-Savage Gate,
Where they called for the best of Canary with speed
And in pleasant discourse they began to proceed
Quoth the Waterman's Wife 'I must drink and then run,
For a woman's work, sisters, you know is ne'er done'.

The Shoemaker's Wife fill'd a bowl to the brim
Crying out "Her's a bumper, sweet sisters, to him,
That is able to please a young wife to the heart!
But alas, to my sorrow, the truth I'll impart,
I'm afraid I shall never have a daughter or son,
Tho' I labour, a woman's work never is done.

My husband is lusty, young proper and tall,
Yet I think that he has but a short Pegging-aul
Which does nothing to purpose, dear friend, as I live,
All the shoes in my shop I would willingly give
To enjoy a young beautiful daughter or son,
But my work, I must tell you, is never well done'.

The Pewterer's Wife then spoke up with grace:
'Loving sister, believe me, I pity thy case,
There is no greater grief in the world, I declare,
Than to have a dull soul, for I solemnly swear,
Seven years I've been foolishly baffled with one,
For my work, loving sisters, is never well done.

A man of much mettle I took him to be
Or else, faith, he had never been married to me.
But alas, to my sorrow, I find I am fool'd
For he seldom casts into the mould that he should,
Which has caused my eyes like fair fountains to run,
For to think that my work it was never well done'.

A Surgeon's Wife then immediately swore,
That she now had been married a twelve month or more,
Yet he never had entered, nor found the right vein
'Therefore surely' said she 'I have cause to complain:
If he don't mend his manners, astray I shall run,
For tis fit that a woman's work should be well done'.

The Wife of a Fiddler cried: 'Hear me I pray -
My unnatural husband he seldom will play
His kind wife a sweet lesson, but once in a moon;
He complains that his fiddle is still out of tune!
If he don;t mend his manners, astray I shall run
For you know that a woman's work must be well done'.

The Wife of a Pavier cried out it was true:
'And I have as much reason as any of you
To complain of my Pavier who has but one stone,
And besides, is the worst rammer as ever was known,
To a neighbour for help I am forced to run,
For you know that a woman's work must be well done'.

The wife of a young Vulcan she took of her bowl,
And delacted that her husband he was a boon soul,
She had no kind of cause to complain of these wrongs,
For he followed his labour with hammer and tongs,
Having five or six daughters besides a young son,
Therefore truly her work had been very well done.

A group of women complain about their husbands over a drink with a very modern kind of frankness - only the Vulcan's wife, in the final verse, seems satisfied with her lot. The broadsheet calls for the much used 'Fond Boy', a tune which takes its name from an earlier ballad beginning 'Fond Boy, what dost thou mean'.

[8] Old England Grown New

Tune: *The Blacksmith/Greensleeves*

You talk of old England I truly believe,
Old England is grown new and doth us deceive,
I'll ask you a question or two by your leave,
And is not old England grown new.
Where are your soldiers with slashes and scars?
They never use'd drinking in no time of wars,
Nor shedding of blood in mad drunken jars,
And is not old England grown new.

New captains are made that never did fight,
But with pots in the day and punks in the night,
And all their chief care is to keep their swords bright,
Where are your old swords, your bills and your bows?
Your bucklers and targets that never feared blows?
They are turn'd t stilletos with other fair shows,

Where are your old courtiers that used to ride,
With forty blue-coats and footmen beside?
They are turn'd to six horses, a coach with a guide,
And what is become of your old English clothes,
Your long-sleeve doublet and your trunk hose?
They are turn'd to French fashions and other gewgaws,

We have new-fashioned beards and new-fashioned locks,
And new fashioned hats for your new-pated blocks,
And more new diseases besides the French pox,
New houses are built and the old ones pulled down,
Until the new houses fell all the old ground,
And the houses stand like a horse in the pound,

New fashions in house new fashions at table,
Old servants discharged and the new not so able,
And all good old custom is now but a fable,
New trickings, new goings, new measures, new paces,
New heads for men, for your women new faces,
And twenty new tricks to mend their bad cases,

New tricks in the law, new tricks in the rolls,
New bodies they have, they look for new souls,
When the money is paid for building old Pauls

Then talk no more of New England
 New England is where Old England did stand,
 New furnish'd, new fashion'd, new woman'd, new man'd.

It is often said that 'life was so much better in the olden days' so it is interesting to see from this ballad that people in earlier times felt the same. The tune is a version of Greensleeves, also sometimes known as 'The Blacksmith' after another broadside ballad of the time.

[9] Good advice to Batchelors, How to court and obtain a young lass

Tune: *Lilli burlero*

You that a fair maid's heart would obtain,
 Eagerly court and ogle and kiss,
 Whining and sighs are all but in vain,
 Courage does lead the way into bliss,
Touse her, tempt her, hap at a venture,
Tho' she cry 'Fie Sir, pray you be gone!'
Do but you try, Sir, she'll sooner die, Sir,
Than you shall leave her wishing alone.

Win her with fairings and sweetening treats,
 Lasses are soonest o'ercome this way.
 Ribbons and rings will work most strange feats,
 And bring you into favour and play,
 Walk with her out into the fields,
 Merrily give her a grass-green gown,
 Tickle her fancy until she yields,,
 Else she'll esteem you a cowardly clown,
 Kiss her and play with her snow-white breasts,
 Tell her a thousand wanton new tales,
 Such pretty sport no maiden molests,
 For she knows well what her lover ails,
 Tickle her knees and something that's higher,
 Kissing and feeling go hand in hand,
 No flesh and blood but what will take fire,
 Tho' she may first seem to withstand,
 When the outworks they fairly are won,
 Enter the fort, it now is your own,,
 Plunder and storm it from sun to sun,
 Revel and sport until weary grown,
'Fie Sir, why Sir, I'll sooner die, sir!'
Now are exchanged for another tone,
Blushing and smiling and wantonly toying,
Are the soft language of lovers alone.

Put your feminist principles on hold for this lesson in seventeenth-century foreplay, one of many ballads that calls for the tune 'Lillibulero'. Authorship of the tune is sometimes credited to Purcell since a keyboard arrangement entitled 'A New Irish Tune' appears in his 'Musick's Hand-maid' 1689, but in fact it had already appeared in print three years earlier in Robert Carr's 'The Delightful Companion'.

[10] Neptune's Raging Fury or The Gallant Seaman's Sufferings

Being a relation of the perils and dangers, and of the extraordinary hazards they undergo in their noble adventures. Together with their undaunted valour and rare constancy in all their extremities and the manner of their rejoicing on shore at their return home.

Tune: *When the stormy winds do blow*

You Gentlemen of England that lives at home at ease,
 Full little do you think upon the dangers of the seas,
 Give ear unto the marriners and they will plainly show,
 The cares and the fears *when the stormy winds do blow.*

All you that will be Seamen must bear a valiant heart,
 For when you come upon the seas you must not think to start,
 Nor once be faint-hearted in hail, rain or snow,
 Nor to shrink, nor to shrink *when the stormy winds do blow.*

The bitter storms and tempests poor Seamen must endure,
 Both day and night with many a fright we seldom rest secure,
 Our sleep it is disturbed with visions strange to know,
 And with dreams on the streams *when the stormy winds do blow.*

In claps of roaring thunder which darkness doth enforce
 We often find our ships to stray beyond our wanted course,
 Which causeth great distractions and sinks our hearts full low,
 Tis in vain to complain *when the stormy winds do blow.*

The lawyer and the usurer that sits in gown and fur,
 In closets warm can take no harm, abroad they need not fear,
 When winter fierce with cold doth pierce and beats with hail and snow
 We are sure to endure *when the stormy winds do blow.*

We sometimes sail to the Indies to fetch home spices rare,
 Sometimes again to France and Spain for wines beyond compare,
 Whilst gallants are carousing in taverns on a row,
 Then we sweep o'er the deep *when the stormy winds do blow.*

When we return in safety with wages for our pains,
 The Tapster and the Vintner will help us share our gains,
 We'll call for liquor roundly, and pay before we go,
 Then we'll roar on the shore *when the stormy winds do blow.*

Of all the ballads that call for this tune, the majority have some kind of connection with the sea. The broadsheet features a woodcut showing two large galleons in full sail.

[11] The North Country Lovers

or The plain downright merry Wooing between John and Joan
 Johney addresses to his Joan most dear,
 And on her piggsneys casteth many a lear,
 Telling her how he wealth and love had got,
 The which so far transports the subtle slut,
 That unto Venus sport she drew him in,
 And in her mortice fastened straight his pin.
 Tune: *Wolsey's Wilde*

Quoth John to Joan 'Wilt thou have me,
 I prithee now do and I'll marry with thee,
 My cow and calf, my house and rents,
 And all of my lands and tenements,
Say my Joan, say my Joan will that not do,
For I cannot come every day to woo.

I've corn and hay in the barn hard by,
 And three fat hogs penn'd up in a sty,
 I have a mare and she is coal-black,
 I ride on her belly to save her back,

I have a cheese upon the shelf,
 I cannot eat it all myself,
 I have three mark tied up in a rag,
 In the nook of a chimney instead of a bag,

To marry, I would have thy consent,
 But I faith I cannot complement,
 I cannot court but 'Hey gee ho!'
 Such as I say at cart and plough,
 What is't my John that thou wouldst ha?
 A-milking I must and cannot stay;
 I'se hear mine kine begin to moo,

And I'se must dabble in the dew,
Then say my John, say my John what wouldst thou do
Since you cannot come every day to woo?

Come, shall we gang to younder hedge,
To see if margery be fledged?
Or I'se tomorrow gang to kirk,
And I'll provide for thee a sirk,

Udsbobs I'se like it wondrous well,
But thinkst thou that the hedge wont tell?
For if it should, by these new shoone,
I'se, in revenge, would cut it down,

I'se under yon broad oak will lie
Upon mine back to see the sky;
But first you shall swear on my pale
That you tomorrow will not fail,

Now we are come unto the place,
Let me my pretty pig embrace,
Tomorrow for the marriage day,
And then the priest will bid us play,
But after this now we must part,
Which grieves poor Joan unto the heart,
But till tomorrow we divide,
And then thou shalt be John's bride,

Comic songs in which simple folk boast of their 'rustic wealth' date back to the Middle Ages. Described on the broadsheet as 'A pleasant new song as it was sung before the court at Windsor', this ballad is one of many written as a dialogue between two country clowns or bumpkins. The broadsheet calls for the tune entitled 'Quoth John to Joan'. However, William Chappel (Popular Music of the Olden Time 1859) connects the text with another tune 'Wolsey's Wilde' (also known as 'Wilson's Wile') which is used here.

[12] The Lunatick Lover

or The Young Man's call to Grim King of the Ghosts for cure
Tune: *Grim King of the Ghosts*

Grim King of the Ghosts make haste,
And bring hither all your train,
See how the pale moon does waste,
And just now is in the wain,
Come you Night-Hags with all your charms,
And revelling witches away,
And hug me close in your arms,
To you my respects I'll pay.

I'll court you and think you fair,
Since love does distract my brain,
I'll go and I'll wed the Night-Mare,
And kiss her and kiss her again,
But if she prove peevish and proud
Then a pies on her love, let her go!
I'll seek me a winding shroud,
And down to the shades below.

A lunacy sad I endure,
Since reason departs away.
I call to those hags for a cure,
As knowing not what I say,
The beauty whom I do adore,
Now slights me with scorn and distain,
I never shall see her more,
Ah, how shall I bear my pain!

I ramble and rage about,
To find out my charming saint,

While she at my grief does flout,
And smiles at my loud complaint,
Distraction I see is my doom,
Of this I am now too sure:
A rival has got in my room,
While torments I do endure.

I dream that my charming fair,
Is then in my rival's bed,
Whole tresses of golden hair,
Are on the fair pillow spread,
Then this doth my passion inflame,
I start, and no longer can lie,
Ah! Sylvia, art thou not to blame,
To ruin a lover, I cry.

Grim King of the Ghosts be true,
And hurry me hence away,
My languishing life to you,
As tribute I freely pay.
To the Elysian shades I pass,
In hopes to be free from care,
Where many a bleeding ghost,
Is hovering in the air.

One of the loveliest ballad tunes combines with a heartfelt text to produce a song to rival any of the more artful lute songs of the age. In 1682 a two-stanza song entitled 'The Frantick Lover' was printed in 'A New Collection of the Choicest Songs'. A few years later it appeared in extended form on a broadsheet. The tune entitled 'Grim King of the Ghosts' was a evidently popular as it was used in at least ten ballad operas including John Gay's *The Beggar's Opera*.

[13] The Downfall of Dancing

or The Overthrow of three fiddlers and three bagg-pipe players who lately broke their fiddles and bagpipes and tore their cloaks so that they are utterly ruined. All this was done in a fearful fray when one of the fiddlers caught his wife with his fellow bagpipe player at Uptails All.

Tune: *Robin Goodfellow*

Three pipers and three fiddlers too,
They all belonged to a gang;
One fiddler had a wife tis true,
And she as good as e're did twang;
One piper he most craftily,
Did give the fiddler's wife a fall:
With her content, then too't they went
To play the game of Uptails All

Quoth she 'The pleasure doth excell,
Therefore play me the other strain';
He pleased the fiddler's wife so well,
That they must needs go too't again;
The fiddler, missing him so long,
He stepped home to give a call,
Where suddenly he did espy,
The piper playing at Uptails All.

This did the fiddler to provoke,
And all his senses did surprise;
Then giving him a sturdy stroke,
A dreadful quarrel did arise:
Thus blow for blow then too't they go,
The fiddler he was stout and tall,
Then with a stroke his pipes he broke,
For playing the game of Uptails All.

'Truth husband, be not in a rage,
I strive to mollify your mind:

Let reason now your wrath assuage
 For he has been to me most kind.
 I do profess in my distress,
 His love and kindness was not small,
 Sweet husband dear, thou need not fear,
 I scorn to play at Uptails All'.

'Why should you be in such a heat?
 Dear husband, I was in a swoond;
 He came to feel my pulses beat,
 As I lay panting on the ground.
 Then why should thou this quarrel make
 To fight and chase and fret and brawl?
 I do protest - tis your mistake,
 To think we play at Uptails All'.

And when they were in this debate,
 The rest of all the tribe came in,
 The fiddler did to them relate
 What he before his eyes had seen;
 He then did rave and called him slave,
 And thus from words to blows did fall:
 A bloody fray was there that day,
 For playing thus at Uptails All.

The pipers took their pipers part,
 And shook the fiddlers by the cloak,
 They, with a bold undaunted heart,
 Did deal them many a sturdy stroke;
 Their cloaks they tore in this uproar,
 As they in this confusion fall;
 The fiddlers wife did cause the strife,
 In playing a game of Uptails All.

The pipers did the fiddlers maul,
 And now begins the rebel rout,
 The fiddles now in pieces small,
 And bagpipes they did fly about;
 Those naughty fools did break their tools,
 Their crouds and pipes in pieces small,
 And she the while did stand and smile,
 To think of the game of Uptails All.

At length this did subdue the pride
 Of all this cross confused crew,
 The room bestrew'd from side to side
 With pipe and broken fiddles too;
 So now this rout and dreadful bout
 Did prove the fiddlers fatal fall,
 And pipers too, and all the crew
 Did curse the game of Uptails All.

Those pipers and those fiddlers they,
 Nay every man and mother's son,
 Had ne'er an instrument to play,
 Those creeping curs are all undone
 And now too late, they curse their fate
 They tear their hair and fret their gall,
 For in this fight they are ruined quite,
 And swear they'll ne'er play Uptails All.

A ballad to appeal to anyone who has ever been in a band. The broadsheet calls for the tune 'Robin Goodfellow' which is combined here with another tune, a dance from Playford's collection conveniently entitled 'Uptails All'.

[14] The Saint Turn'd Sinner

or the Dissenting Parson's Text Under the Quaker's Petticoats
 Tune: *A Soldier and a Sailor*

You friends to reformation,
 Give ear to my relation,
 For I shall now declare, sir,
 Before you are aware, sir,
 The matter very plain:
 A Gospel cushion-thumper,
 Who dearly loved a bumper
 And something else beside, sir,
 If he is not be-ried, sir,
 This was a Holy Guide, sir,
 For the dissenting train.

And for to tell you truly,
 His flesh was so unruly,
 He could not, for his life, sir,
 Pass by the draper's wife, sir,
 The spirit was so faint;
 This jolly, handsome Quaker,
 As he did overtake her,
 She made his mouth to water,
 And thought long to be at her,
 Such, sir, is no great matter,
 Accounted by a saint.

Says he: 'My pretty creature,
 Your charming handsome feature
 Has set me all on fire,
 You know what I desire,
 There is no harm in love';
 Quoth she: 'If that's your notion,
 To preach up such devotion,
 Such hopeful guides as you, sir,
 Will half the world undo, sir;
 A halter is your due, sir,
 If you such tricks approve'.

The Parson, still more eager,
 Than lustful Turk or Neger,
 Took up her lower garment,
 And saw there was no harm in't,
 According to the text;
 For Solomon, more wiser
 Than any dull advisor,
 Had many hundred misses
 And why should such as this is
 Make you so sadly vexed?
 Make you so sadly vexed?

The frightened female Quaker
 Perceived what he would make her,
 Was forced to call the Watch in,
 And stop what he was hatching,
 To spoil the light within.
 They came to her assistance,
 As she did make resistance
 Against the Priest and Devil,
 The actors of all evil,
 Who were so grand uncivil,
 To tempt a Saint to sin.

The Parson then confounded
 To see himself surrounded
 With mob and sturdy Watchmen,
 Whose business is to catch men
 In lewdness with a punk;
 He made some faint excuses,
 And all to hide abuses,
 In taking up the linen,
 Against the Saint's opinion,
 Within her soft dominion,
 Alleging he was drunk.

But, though he feined reeling,
 They made him pay for feeling,
 And lugg'd him to a prison,
 To bring him to his reason,
 Which he had lost before;
 And thus we see how Preachers,
 That should be Gospel Teachers,
 How they are strangely blinded,
 And are so fleshly minded,
 Like carnal men, inclined
 To lie with any whore.

The Quaker movement began in England in 1652 and followers were frequently ridiculed for their prohibition of such things as alcohol, holidays, theatre, wigs and jewelry and for their pacifism. Here the female Quaker is sarcastically referred to as a 'saint' and considered fair game. The tune is by John Eccles and takes its name from a song in Congreve's comedy *Love for Love* 1695.

[15] An Old Song on the Spanish Armada, or Sir Francis Drake

Tune: *Jog on or Eighty-eight*

Some years of late, in 'eighty-eight,
 As I do well remember,
 It was, some say, on the nineteenth of May
 And some say in September[1]

The Spanish train launched forth amain,
 With many a fine bravado;
 Their (as they thought, but it proved nought)
 Invincible Armada.

A little man[2] that dwelt in Spain,
 That shot well in a gun-a[2],
 'Don Pedro hight', as black a wight[3]
 As the Knight of the Sun-a[4].

King Phillip made him an Admiral,
 And bade him not to stay-a,
 But to destroy both man and boy,
 And so to come away-a.

Their Navy was well victualled,
 With bisket, peas and bacon,
 They brought two ships well fraught with whips[5],
 But I think they were mistaken.

They coasted round about our land,
 And so came in by Dover,
 But we had men set on 'em then,
 And threw the rascals over.

The Queen was then at Tilbury,
 What could we more desire-a?
 Sir Francis Drake, for her sweet sake,
 Did set 'em all on fire-a.

Away they ran by sea and land,
 So that one man killed three score-a,
 And had not they all run away,
 O' my soul! we had killed more-a.

Then let them neither brag nor boast.
 For if they come again-a.
 Let them take heed they do not speed.
 As they did *'they know when-a'*.

This ballad looks back at the Spanish Armada, of 1588. Some of the details may be blurred but the image of victory is clear

enough. An early version of the tune 'Jog On' appears in an arrangement by Richard Farnaby in the Fitzwilliam Virginal Book and may well be the same as that sung by the ballad pedlar Autolicus in Shakespeare's *Winter's Tale* which begins 'Jog on, jog on, the footpath way'. Owing to its association with this particular text, the tune also became known as 'Eighty-eight'.

NOTES

1. The confusion about the date is due to the fact that the starting out from Lisbon was planned for May but storms and repairs delayed it until August.
2. Pietro de Valdez Hight, Spanish Admiral
3. wight: wretched person
4. Don Pedro was known as 'Knight of the Sun' after the hero of a Spanish romance 'The Mirrour of Princely Deedes and Knighthood' which was widely known in England through translations.
5. It was commonly believed that one of the Spanish ships had a cargo of torture-whips.

[16] The Female Captain, or The Counterfit Bridegroom

Comical news from Bloomsbury, giving a full and true relation how one Madam Mary Plunket, alias Williams, a young woman of eighteen years of age, who put on man's apparel, assumed the name of Captain Charles Fairfax, set up for a young heir, courted a young gentlewoman of Bloomsbury and, by the consent of her friends (in hopes of gain), was married to her by a Jacobite Parson, they being at the charge of the wedding clothes, ring, dinner etc. Of her living with the young woman a whole month undiscovered, using a strange instrument for generation, with the strange manner of the discovery by an old woman of the pretended Captain's acquaintance; how being taken up for a cheat and committed to the new Prison at Clerkenwell where she now remains.

Tune: *'Ladies of London'*

Come all ye frolicksom jilts of the town,
 Whose trade like yourselves is uncertain;
 Since whoring like other professions goes down,
 I'll show you a new way to good fortune:
 Cheer up your hearts, to be merry prepare,
 Execute but a little preamble,
 I'll sing you a jest if you have not a care,
 It shall give you the 'thorough-go-nimble'.

A lady well skilled in intrigues of the town,
 Reduced to a slender condition,
 Who lived by the trade of 'shove-up-and-go-down',
 Which has so long time been in fashion;
 But money's so scarce and taxes so great,
 Poor Cully is grown unable
 To give a half-crown for a bit of his cat,
 Or to put up his nag in the stable.

Resolving, at last, some new measures to try,
 To raise up her fortune to riches,
 She lays her profession and petticoats by,
 And boldly she puts on the breeches;
 Her carriage so pleasing, and full of air,
 Her talk so delightful and witty,
 In masculine habit she now does appear,
 As gay as a beau in the city.

She takes noble lodgings, sets up for an heir,
 And passes for the same, of a certain,
 She bates with delusion her amorous snare,
 Desiring to hook in some fortune;
 A cunning old miser, full of design,
 Being blessed with a pretty young daughter,
 With whom our young 'heir' did his project begin,

And craftily managed the matter.

The father being eager to make up the match,
Proposing a very good portion
Of money and plate, which the miserly wretch
Had got by his cursed extortion;
The lovers themselves did quickly agree,
The father was also consenting,
Expecting his daughter a 'lady' should be,
And he without cause of repenting.

The day was declared to consummate the match,
With joy to the innocent creature;
The miser, being greedy and busy to catch
So hopeful a prize for his daughter;
The father provided a plentiful feast,
In grandeur they went to be wedded,
The portion was paid - but the cream of the jest
Was what they did when they were bedded.

The bridegroom had prudently got a sheep's gut,
Blow'd up very stiff as a bladder,
But what he did with it, or where it was put,
I'll leave you good folks to consider.
The innocent bride no difference knew,
And seemed to be greatly delighted,
But ladies, I warrent, there's none among you>>
That would be so easily cheated!

This for a month undiscovered pass'd on,
At last an old turbulet woman
(Made privy to the project when just 'twas begun,
And knew the young spouse to be no 'man') -
One morning resolved to open the jest
Without any further delaying,
The bedclothes she tossed, showed the beared of the beast,
And pulled off the politik play-thing!

An extraordinary tale, and all the more so since, judging by the description at the top of the broadsheet, it appears to be based on fact. The tune is connected to a song of the same name that appeared in Durfey's 'Compleat Collection' in 1687. It must have been instantly popular since most of the thirty or so ballads that call for it were printed within a year.

[17] London Mourning in Ashes

or lamentable narrative lively expressing the ruin of that royal city by fire which began in Pudding Lane on September the second 1666 at one of the clock in the morning, being Sunday, and continuing until Thursday night following, being the sixth day, with the great care the King and the Duke of York took in their own persons, day and night, to quench it.

Tune: *In sad and ashy weeds*

Of fire, fire, fire I sing,
That have more cause to cry,
In the Great Chamber of the King,
A city mounted high,
Old London that hath stood in state
Above six hundred years,
In six days space, woe and alas!
Is burn'd and drown'd in tears.

The Second of September,
In the middle of the night,
In Pudding Lane it did begin,
To burn and blaze out right,
Where all that gazed were so amazed
At such a furious flame,
They knew not how or what to do,
That might expel the same.

It swallowed Fish Street hill, and straight
It licked up Lombard Street,
Down Cannon Street in blazing state,
It flew with flaming feet,
Down to the Thames whose shrinking streams
Began to ebb away,
As thinking that the power of fate
Had bought the latter day.

With hand and feet in every street
They pack up good and fly;
Pitch, tar and oil increase the spoil,
Old Fish Street 'gins to fry;
Out of the shops the good are taken,
And hall'd from every shelf,
As in a shipwreck, every man
Doth seek to save himself.

The fire so hot a strength hath got,
No water can prevail;
A hundred tun, were it power'd on,
Would prove but like a pale;
The crackling flames do fume and roar
As billows do retire;
The city, though, upon the shore,
Doth seem a sea of fire.

Up to the head of ag'd St Pauls
The flame doth fluttering fly;
Above a hundred thousand souls
Upon the ground do lie;
Sick souls and lame do flee the flame,
Women with child we know
Are forced to run, the fire to shun,
Have not a day to go.

From Sunday morn till Thursday at night,
It roared about the town;
There was no way to quell its might,
But to pull houses down;
And so they did as they were bid
By Charles, His Great Command;
The Duke of York, some say, did work
With bucket in his hand.

Many of French and Dutch were stopp'd,
And also are confined;
Tis said that they their fireballs dropp'd
And this plot was designed
By them and those that are our foes,
Yet some think nothing so,
But that our God with his flaming rod,
For Sin sends all this woe.

Although the fire be fully quench'd,
Yet if our sins remain,
And that in them we still are drench'd,
The fire will rage again;
Or what is worse, a heavier curse
In famine will appear,
Where we shall tread when want of bread,
And hunger draweth near.

If this do not reform our lives,
A worse thing will succeed;
Our kindred, children and our wives,
Will die for want of bread;
When famine comes,
Tis not our drums,
Our ship, our horse or foot

That can defend, but if we mend,
We never shall come to't.

One of several ballads about the Great Fire of London that give eyewitness accounts of the devastation, panic and looting. The fire broke out in the early hours of 2nd September 1666 in Pudding Lane, the house of the King's baker Thomas Farriner, and raged for four days and nights, destroying two-thirds of the city until houses in its path were blown up with gunpowder to halt it. Foreigners on the streets were arrested on suspicion of arson but the ballad-writer here suggests that the cause is more likely to be God's Vengeance. The tune called for on the broadsheet, 'In sad and ashy weeds', survives as a mid-seventeenth-century virginal piece.

[18] The Famous Ratcatcher

Tune: *Tom a Bedlam*

There was a rare ratcatcher,
Did about the country wander;
The soundest blade of all his trade,
Or I should him deeply slander:
*For still would he cry, a rat tat tat,
Tara rat rat ever:
To catch a mouse, or to carouse,
Such a ratter I saw never.*

Upon a pole he carried
Full forty fullsome vermin,
Whose cursed lives without any knives
To take he did determine
His talk was all of India
The voyage and the Navy
What mice or rats or wild polecats
What stoats of weasels have ye

He knew the Nut of India
That makes the magpie stagger,
The mercuries and cantharies
With arsenic and roseaker.
Full often with a negro
The juice of poppies drunk he,
Eat poison frank with a mountebank,
And spiders with a monkey
But on a time a damosel
Did him so far entice,
That for her a bait he laid straight,
Would kill no rats nor mice
And on the bait she nibbled,
So pleasing in her taste,
She licked so long that the poison strong
Did make her swell i' the waist.
He was so brave a bowzer
That it was doubtful whether
He taught the rats or the rats taught him
To be drunk as rats together
With their bag of poisons, ratcatchers specialised in the
treatment of venereal diseases as well as in the extermination of
rats. The earliest appearances of the tune are a lute manuscript
and a virginal arrangement c.1613-16. It is called for in an
number of ballads about itinerant beggars and tinkers and, also,
as its name suggests, several ballads on the theme of
'madness'.