

WELSH FOLK - SONGS



Sung by Meredydd Evans



FW 6835 Folkways Records : New York

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1742
E92
W462
1954

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MUSIC LP

Meredydd Evans, who is, at the present, a Graduate Student in Philosophy at Princeton University, was born and brought up in rural Wales and most of these songs that he has recorded were an inherent part of his background. But these are just a few of the hundreds that have been preserved through the efforts of "The Welsh Folksong Society" and the work is till continuing.

Introduction:

During the first decade of this century "The Welsh Folk-song Society" was established with the aim of collecting and publishing what songs and ballads could be found. Some of the professional musicians were skeptical and some downright indifferent. Moreover, was it not the case that the Welsh people already sang "Ar hyd y nos" (All through the Night), "Llwyn Onn" (The Ash Grove), "Rhyfelgyrch Gwyr Harlech" (March of the Men of Harlech) and a few others? These were well known in many parts of the world and this was enough to show that the Welsh were, at least, a little different from the rest of the inhabitants of Britain - a little quaint perhaps, indeed rather nicely "quaint". Add to this a dash of Druidism, fairies and gaints roaming in the Celtic twilight, a morose and melancholy national spirit and there you had it - the unique significance of Wales.

Meanwhile, a substantial part of the nation's inheritance was virtually unknown outside rural Wales; there was a rich corpus of folk music waiting to be noted, a folk culture threatened with extinction in the face of increasing Anglicisation and the pressure of an ever-growing urban population. But this was not the whole story. An historical event of great importance, within the traditional social structure of Wales itself, had already dealt a rather damaging blow to the folksong and the dance.

In the eighteenth century, a religious reform movement --- the Methodist revival -- swept the country. Small chapels were established everywhere and the itinerant preacher attracted vast crowds. This was, in all respects, a nation-wide reform, and as the movement gathered momentum the puritan element in it became increasingly predominant. The fair, the market, the tavern, even the neighborly singing party was made the target of the intense attacks. By the beginning of the nineteenth century the prestige and the authority of the preacher had become so well established that John Elias, an extremely powerful orator, succeeded in closing Rhuthin fair, a truly Hogarthian institution, in the space of a few hours. The folk-song and dance, with their secular associations, were immediately threatened, although peculiarly enough some of the folk melodies survived as hymn tunes. In the course of this reform it is safe to assume that many folk songs were completely lost but a sufficient number of them survived for the Welsh people to have a body of folksong which is as rich as that of any other people. The old ballad singer died hard, and in time the folksong became once again "respectable".



Frederic Ramsey, Jr.

Side One

1) "Un O FY MRODYR I" (One of my Brothers)

A cumulative song from the county of Anglesey in North Wales, a county that is very rich in folksong.

Translation: "Well, one of my brothers sent me one ox, one bullock, one wolf, one dog, one hoof, one foot, one wolf, one dog, ox and bullock, wolf and dog, sent one of my brothers to me." The song as recorded carries the numbers up to four.

Wel, un o fy mrodyr i,
 Wel, un o fy mrodyr i,
 Wel, un o fy mrodyr a yrodd i mi
 Un yon, un tarw, un blaidd, un ci.
 Un carn, un troed, un blaidd, un ci,
 Ych a tharw, blaidd a chi
 A yroda un o fy mrodyr i mi.

Wel, dau o fy mrodyr i,
 Wel dau o fy mrodyr i,
 Wel, dau o fy mrodyr a yrodd i mi,
 Dau ych dau darw, dau flaid, dau gi.
 Lau garn, dau droed, dau flaid, dau gi,
 Un carn, un troed, un blaidd, un ci,
 Ych a tharw, bleida a chi
 A yroda dau o fy mrodyr i mi.

Wel, tri o fy mrodyr i,
 Wel, tri o fy mrodyr i,
 Wel, tri o fy mrodyr a yrodd i mi
 Tri ych, tri tharw, tri blaidd, tri chi.
 Tri charn, tri throed, tri blaidd, tri chi,
 Dau garn, dau droed, dau flaidd dau gi,
 Un carn, un troed, un blaidd, un ci,
 Ych a tharw, blaidd a chi
 A yrodd tri o fy mrodyr i mi.

Wel, pedwar o fy mrodyr i,
 Wel, pedwar o fy mrodyr i,
 Wel, pedwar o fy mrodyr a yrodd i mi
 Pedwar ych, pedwar tarw, pedwar blaidd, pedwar
 ci,
 Pedwar carn, pedwar troed, pedwar blaidd,
 pedwar ci,
 Tri charn, tri throed, tri blaidd, tri chi,
 Dau garn, dau droed, dau flaid, dau gi,
 Un carn, un troed, un blaidd, un ci,
 Ych a tharw, blaidd a chi
 A yroda pedwar o fy mrodyr i mi.

2) "Y GELYNEN" (The Holly Tree)

Another Anglesey song in praise of a tree symbolic of joy. The song is probably connected with Christmas festivities.

Translation: "My gentle friends, come and praise the green tree. A worthy, comely, fine tree called the holly. To what shall I compare it -- to the oak, to the yew tree, or to a stately hall or palace? Is it not a fine tree? The sparrow and the blackbird have nested there, and in its shadow sits my fair beloved."

Fy mwyn gyfeillion dewch ynghyd,
 Mewn pryd i gannol y glasbren:
 Pren canmolus gweddus gwiw
 A'i enw yw y Gelynen.
 Ffal-di-rw-di-lam-tam,
 fw-li-ri-dl-i,
 tryla lam tam tylan tani,
 Pren canmolus gweddus gwiw
 A'i enw yw y Gelymen.

I ba beth y cyffelybaf hon,
 I foesen gron neu'r ywen.
 Neu rhyw neuadd wych o blas,
 On'd ffeind yw y las gelymen?

Aderyn to a gafodd dy,
 A cheiliog du'r fwyalchen,
 Ac eistedd mae f'anwylyd wen
 Lan gysgod pren y gelynen.

3) "HIRAETH" (Longing)

Both words and melody of this lovely song are very old. The word "hiraeth" cannot be adequately translated by any English word; it is a compound of longing, nostalgia and homesickness, -- a rather sad, meditative yearning for things loved.

Translation: "Tell me, thou great ones of learning, of what is hiraeth made, and what kind of material is it that never frays with wear? Gold, silver, velvet, satin and all such treasures pass away, but hiraeth never does. It is great, cruel hiraeth that breaks my heart. At dead of night when I am asleep hiraeth comes and awakens me. Hiraeth, hiraeth, go away; don't press so heavily upon me. Move a bit to the edge of the bed and let me sleep".

Dwedwch, fawrion o wybodaeth
 O ba beth y gwnaethpwyd hiraeth
 A pha ddefnyd a roed yndao
 Na ddarfyddo wrth ei wisgo?



Frederic Ramsey, Jr.

Derfydd aur a derfydd arian,
 Derfydd melfed, derfydd sidan;
 Derfydd pob dilledyn helaeth,
 Eto er hyn ni dderfydd hiraeth.

Hiraeth mawr a hiraeth creulon,
 Hiraeth, sydd yn torri 'nghalon,
 Pan fwy dryma'r nos yn cyagu
 Fe ddaw hiraeth ac a'm deftry.

Hiraeth, hiraeth, cilia, cilia,
 Paid a phwyso mor drwm arna',
 Nesa tipyn at yr erchwyn,
 Gad i mi gael cyagu gronyn.

"Y CARIAD CYNTAF" (The First Love)

An eighteenth century love song. The words highly metaphorical in parts and hence no translation could convey the beauty of them. Note the internal rhyming and alliteration; this is very characteristic of Welsh lyric poetry in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. The melody is also very characteristically Welsh.

Translation: "Thy beauty if second only to that of Eve; hear my plea. Promise thy love to me tonight; we will swear before we leave to link our lives together - make thy vow and say that thou'll come with me. Love of my heart, the fairest I have ever courted, make thy vow. In thy eyes, truth, grace and virtue shine; to see is my delight - hear my plea."

Mae prydfferthwch ail i Eden
 Yn dy fynwes, gynnes feinwen,
 Fwyn gariadus, liwus lawen;
 Seren syw, clyw di'r claf.

Addo'th gariud i mi heno;
 Gwnawn amodau cyn ymado
 I ymrwymo doed a ddelo;
 Rho dy gred, a dwed y doi.

Liwus lonad, serch fy mynwes,
 Wiwdeg orau 'rtoed a gerais,
 Mi'th gymeraf yn gymhares;
 Rho dy gred, a dwed y doi.

Yn dy lygaid caf wirionedd
 Yn serennu gras a rhinwedd;
 Mae dy weld i mi'n orfoledd;
 Seren syw, clyw di'r claf.

5) "EI DI'R DERYN DU?" (Will you go, blackbird)

It is not unusual to find Welsh folksongs which include an occasional English word or phrase, but this song is probably unique in that the lines are alternatively Welsh and English.

Translation: "Will you go, blackbird, to my dearest love? Tell my fair one that I am so deep in love. Nowhere have I seen such a darling in my sight as the maid so pale of color. She is a beauty bright. Her yellow hair is just like a ring of gold,

and her skin like the driven snow. The truth, it must be told."

Ei di'r deryn du
To my dearest love?
Dwed wrth fly nghanen gu
That I'm so deep in love.

Ni welef yn un man
Such a darling in my sight,
A'r ferch mor lan o liw
She is a beauty bright.

Mae'i gwallt yn felyn aur
Just like a ring of gold,
A'i phryd, fel eira gwyn
The truth, it must be told

Band 6 & 7

"Y CYNTAF DYDD O'R GWYLLIAU" (The First Day of the Season)

This is a Welsh version of the well-known "Twelve Days of Christmas", but the contrast between the usual English version and the melody of this one is very marked. The first time that Meredydd Evans heard this version was from the lips of John Thomas, an eighty-two year old man, who had an inexhaustible supply of Welsh ballads, and who dwelt long and lovingly on very high note that came his way. (The second rendering of the song is an attempt to convey John Thomas' way of singing it) The song as recorded carries the numbers of it's charming cumulative song to three, where the most interesting transition occurs. The remaining numbers repeat the same pattern.

Translation: "The first day of the season my love sent to me a partridge on a pear tree. The second day of the season my love sent to me two tame doves and a partridge on a pear tree. The third day of the season my love sent to me three French hens, two tame doves and a partridge on a pair tree."

Y cyntaf dydd o'r Gwylliau,
Fy nghariad anfonodd i mi
Betrisen ar y pren gerllyg.

Yr eilfed ddydd o'r Gwylliau,
Fy nghariad anfonodd i mi
Dwy golomen ddfod a phetrisen,
Ar y pren gerllyg.

Y trydydd dydd o'r Gwylliau,
Fy nghariao anfonodd i mi
Tair iar Ffrainc, a dwy golomen ddfod,
A phetrisen ar y bren gerllyg.

Band 8

"CYFRI'R GEIFR" (Counting the Goats)

There is more than one version of this song in Welsh, but this is certainly the most interesting of all the "goat" songs. The words are tongue-twisters and the trick is to sing them at the fastest possible rate. Hence the "three-speed" character of the present recording.

Translation: "Oh, why is it that there are rough, short hairs on the point of a goat's beard? Because she chews hazel and holly in the hedges, clirwm clarwm, that is the reason why there are rough, short hairs on the point of a goat's beard. Red goat, quite red, tawny red tail, red flank, beard and tail."

Beth yw'r achos fod garw flewyn man
yn mlaen barf gafr?
Am fod hi'n pori cyll a chelyn ar y
cloddiau clirwm clarwm,
Dyna'r achos fod flewyn garw man yn
mlaen barf gafr.

(First chorus) Gafr goch bur goch felan gynffon
goch,
Ystlys a chydyn a chynffon goch.

(Second chorus) Gafr ddu bur ddu felan gynffon
ddu,
Ystlys a chydyn a chynffon ddu.

(Third chorus) Gafr wen bur wen felan gynffon
wen,
Ystlys a chydyn a chynffon wen.

Band 9

"Y BROGA BACH" (The Little Frog)

This is a song about the little frog who went a-woooing, of which there are so many variants. There is only one verse extant in Welsh.
Translation: "A little frog went out a-riding on his horse with a neat saddle, and he happened to see a mouse."

Broga bach seth maes i rodio,
Twy-wy-a-di-o,
A-mi-dym-da-di-dym-tym-to;
Ar gefen ei farch a'i gyfrwy cryno;
A-mi-dym-da-di-dym-tym-to.
Beth lygadai ond llygoden. Twy-wy-
a-di-o,
A-mi-dym-da-di-dym-tym-to.

Band 10

"BUGEILIO'R GWENITH GWYN" (Watching the Ripened Wheat)

A well-known and lovely song about a happy - go-lucky, young farmhand who, nonetheless, has fallen prey to his fair Gwen. The song is one that Welsh children learn in their teens; it is a veritable "unavoidable". There is some evidence to show that even film tycoons have heard of it!
Translation: "I am a carefree youth, forever following my fancy; I watch over the ripened wheat while others reap it. Why don't you follow me one day since, in my eyes, my little maid, you get fairer every day? As long as the water of the sea is salty, and my hair is growing, and as long as there is a heart in my breast, I will be faithful to you. Oh, tell me the truth, and swear to your answers - tell me, Gwen, whether it is I, or someone else that your heart loves best."

Myfi sydd fachgen ieuanc ffol,
Yn byw yn ol fy ffansi,
Myfi'n bugeilio'r gwenith gwyn,
Ac arall yn ei feddi.
Paham na ddeui ar fy ol,
Rhyw ddydd ar ol ei gilydd?
Gwaith r'wy'n dy weld, y feindir fach,
Yn lanach lanach beunydd!

Tra bo dwr y mor yn hallt,
A thra bo 'ngwallt yn tyfu
A thra bo calon dan fy mron
Mi fydda'n ffyddlon iti;
O! dywed i mi'r gwir heb gel
A rho dan sel d'atebion,
P'run ai myfi ai arall Gwen
Sydd orau gen dy galon.

"AR CYFER HEDDIW'R BORE" (On This Very Morning)

A Christmas folk carol, simple and reverent.

Translation: "On this very morning, a little babe of the house of Jesse, was born. The mighty one that came from Bosrah; the lawgiver from Sinai; the Saviour from Calvary, sucked Mary's breast as a little babe."

Ar gyfer heddiw'r bore'n faban bach,
yn faban bach
Y ganwyd gwreiddyn iesse'n faban bach;
Y Cadarn ddaeth o bosra,
Yr lawn gaed ar Galfaria,
Y leddfwr gynt ar Seina'n faban bach,
yn faban bach,
Yn sugno bron riaris'n faban bach.

Band 12

"SI-HWI-HWI"

The melody on which this song is based is very old, and is usually referred to as "Rhuddlan Marsh". The present singer was often lulled to sleep by this song; his mother learned it when she was a young woman, but apart from being able to give the name of the man she heard singing it, she could supply no more details about it. The words clearly belong to the last century, and were associated with the struggle for slave-emancipation. They express the feelings of a slave woman singing her baby to sleep.

Translation: "Si-hwi-hwi-; si-hwi-hwi, si-hwi-hwi-lwli; your mother's darling. Why do they harm you? Tomorrow the white man will come with his whips. Oh, that my heart were full so that I might cry; the grave would be a joy for me - there would I find peace."

Si-hwi-hwi, si-hwi-hwi,
Si-hwi-hwi, lwli,
Tlwe dy fam, O paham
Y gwneir cam iti?
Daw'r dyn gwyn gyda'i ffyn
Erbyn dydd yfory,
O! na chawn i fynwes lawn
Fel y cawn wylo,
Byddai'r bedd imi'n wledd
Mi gawn hedd yno.

Band 13

"TITRWM TATRWM,"

A delightful love song. The internal rhymes and the occasional alliteration in the words form a pleasing pattern.

Translation: "Titrwm, tatrwm (these are meaningless syllables) my lamb-like Gwen, colour of the soft clover, I am knocking. The wind off the lake is blowing coldly; Oh, flower of the valley, awake! Blow the fire, it will light soon; it is a stormy night. If I go far from my country, what shall I do with my love - shall I take her with me or leave her in hiraeth? From everywhere my heart flies to the hills and hollows of Pentraeth. Sometimes I am far away from her. Were I near her I would embrace my rose-bloom."

Titrwm, tatrwm, Gwen lliw'r wyn,
Lliw'r meillion mwyn 'rwy'n curo;
Mae'r gwynt yn oer oddiar y llyn,
O flodyn y dyffryn deffro;
Chwyth y tan, mi gynith toc,
Mae'n hin ddrygthinog heno.

Os ymhell o'm gwlad yr af
Pa beth a wnaef a'm genath ---
Pa un ai mynd a hi efo mi,
Ai gadael hi mewn hiraeth?
Hed ty nghalon o bob man
I fryniau a phantiau Pentraeth.

'Rwf weithiau yn Llundain ac weithiau
yng Nghaer
Yn gweithio'n daer amdani;
Weithiau 'rwy'n gwasgu fy hun mewn
cell,
Ac weithiau ymhell oddiw'rthi,
Mi gofleidiwn flodau'r rhos
Pe bawn i yn agos atti.

Band 14

"FFARWEL I LANGYFELACH LON." (Farewell L Llangyfelach)

The last verse of this song (not included here) suggests that it was written by a young girl whose sweetheart was serving abroad in the King's forces. She prays night and day, she says, that he will be freed before long. Llangyfelach is, of course, the name of the young couple's village! The young man sings:

Translation: "Farwell to Llangyfelach and all the young girls; I'm off to see what country is best. I marched on to Pontfaen (Cowbridge) and there they were enlisting men for the "Duke of York". I turned into a house where there was gold and silver a-plenty; the drums and the pipes were sounding and I enlisted in the "Light Dragoons". A letter came early one morning and another in the afternoon to say that the English Fleet was setting sail. Farewell, my father and dear mother who reared me so tenderly on a happy hearth, and a hundred farewells to the fair ladies."

'Ffarwel fo'i Langyfelach lon,
A'r merched i'anc i gyd o'r bron,
'Rwy'n mynd i dreio pa un sy well
Ai'm gwlad fy hun, ai'r gwledydd pell,

Martsio a wnes i yn y blaen
Nes i mi ddod i dre Pontfaen,
Ac yno 'roeddent yn fawr eu sport
Yn listio'r gwyr at y Duke of York.

Mi drois fy mhen ac i ryw dy;
Yr aur a'r arian oedd yno'n free,
Y drums a'r fites yn cario'r swm,
A listio wnes at y Light Dragoon.

Llythyr a ddaeth yn fore iawn
Ac un arall y prynhawn,
Fod yr English Fleet yn hwylio ma's
A minnau ar y cefnfor glas.

Ffarwel fy nhad a'm hannwyl fam,
Sydd wedi'm magu a'm hannwyl fam,
Yn dyner iawn ar aelwyd lan; ---
A chan ffarwel fo i'r merched glan.

1) "ROBIN DDIOG" (Lazy Robin)

There was once a man, so lazy that he would not move from his chair to see the view that he loved best of all. This is he; but his laziness was of the contented, meditative kind, and this makes all the difference - or does it? Robin is the human race at its relaxed best.

Translation: "I have a neat little house with the wind at the door each morning. Open the door a little bit so that I may see the sea waves. Then my world will be blest with the wind at the door each morning.

Mae gen i dipyn o dy bach twt,
O dy bach twt, o dy bach twt.
Mae gen i dipyn o dy bach twt,
A'r gwynt i'r drws bob bore.
Hei-di-ho-, di-hei-di-hei-di-ho,
A'r gwynt i'r drws bob bore.

Agorwch dipyn o gil y drws,
O gil y drws, o gil y drws.
Agorwch dipyn o gil y drws
'Gael gweld y mor a'r tonnau.
Hei-di-ho, di-hei-di-hei-di-ho,
'Gael gweld y mor a'r tonnau.

Ac yma byddaf yn llon fy mynd,
Yn llon fy mynd, yn llon fy mynd.
Ac yma byddaf yn llon fy mynd,
A'r gwynt i'r drws bob bore.
Hei-di-ho, di-hei-di-hei-di-ho,
A'r gwynt i'r drws bob bore.

2) "DIOFAL YW'R ADERYN" (The Carefree Bird)

A merry song about the carefree life of a bird. One has a sneaking feeling that it has a certain overtone of jealousy.

Translation: "How carefree is the bird, It neither sows nor reaps; without a worry in the world, it sings all year long.

Diofal yw'r aderyn,
Ni hau, ni fed 'run gronyn,
Heb un gofal yn y byd
Mae'n canu 'rhyd y flwyddyn,
Dym-y-li, dym-y-li, dym-y-li,
dym-y-li, etc.
Rew-di-rew-di-rano, rew-di-rew-
di-rano,
Heb un gofal yn y byd
Mae'n canu 'rhyd y flwyddn.

3) "MAE 'NGHALON I CYN DRYMED" (My Heart is Heavy)

A simple little song expressing a profound feeling. This speaks for itself.

Translation: "My heart is as heavy as the steed that climbs the hill; although I try to be happy, I cannot. The little shoe pinches and there are many sorrows which break my heart."

Nae 'nghalon i cyn drymed
A'r march sy'n dringo'r rhiw,
Er ceisio bod yn llawen
Ni fedraf yn fy myw;
Mae'r esgid fach yn gwasgu
Mewn man nas gwyddoch chwi,
A llawer gofid meddwl
Sy'n torri 'nghalon i,

4) "PA LE MAE 'NGHARIAD I"? (Where is my Sweetheart?)

The young lad is waiting for his sweetheart, but this time he waits in vain. He will never wait for her again.

Translation: "Where is my sweetheart? Is there anyone who knows where she can be? It is getting late; I cannot hear her footsteps, and she has never before failed me. Is this my sweetheart? Why is everybody so sad, and why are the tears flowing? Thy eyes so still, and thy countenance so pale - where art thou going, my sweet? I will follow thee to the edge of thy grave. Farewell, my sweetheart.

Pa le mae 'nghariad i?
'Oes neb yn unman wyr?
Pa le mae 'nghariad i?
Mae'n dechrau mynd yn hwyr,
Ac nid oes ddim o swm ei throed
Pa le mae 'nghariad i?
Ni throedd Gwen mo'i gair erioed
Pa le mae 'nghariad i?

Ai hon yw 'nghariad i?
Paham mae pawb yn brudd
Uwchben fy nghariad i,
A'r dagrau ar bob grudd?
Ei llygau syn, a'i gwelw wedd,
Ele'r ei di, 'nghariad i?
Dof gyda thi hyd lan dy fedd;
Ffarwel fy nghariad i.

5) "WEL, BACHGEN IFANC YDWYF" (The Young Man's Song)

It seems very likely that this melody was one of the many that were de-secularized since it was one of the most frequently sung hymn tunes in the great Welsh religious revival of 1904-5.

Translation: "I am a lad of twenty-one, unlucky with the girls but prosperous enough. I own houses and land, many a head of cattle, sheep on the mountain-side and four ricks of peat. I am like the angler walking along the lake-shore, seeing many a fish but failing to catch a single one. I am like the dove pecking in the cornfield, an innocent creature who harms no one."

Wel, bachgen ifanc ydyf,
Bron un-ar-hugain oed,
Os ydwi'n llac fy ngafel
'Rwy'n stedi ar fy nhroed;
'Rwy'n berchen tai a thiroedd
A gwartheg lawer iawn,
A defaid ar y mynydd
A phedair tas o fawn:
Mawn, mawn, a phedair tas o fawn,
A defaid ar y mynydd
A phedair tas o fawn.

'Rwy'n debyg i'r pysgotwr
Sy'n rhodio glan y llyn,
'Rwy'n gweld pysgod lawer
Ond yn methu dal yr un;
'Rwy'n debyg i'r golomen
Yn pigo'r gwenith gwyn,
A honno mor ddiwed
Na wnaiff hi ddrwg i ddim;
Dini, dim, na wnaiff hi ddrwg i ddim,
A honno dor ddiwed
Na wnaiff hi ddrwg i ddim.

6) "DACW 'NGHARIAD I LAWR YN Y BERLIAN"
(There's my Sweetheart Down in the Orchard)

A love song which is a great favourite in all parts of Wales.

Translation: "There's my sweetheart down in the orchard - Oh, that I were there myself. There's the house and there's the barn, and there's the door of the cowshed opening. I set my mind on a fair maiden, and this is almost breaking my heart; it has also caused her to weep a little over me."

Dacw 'nghariad i lawr yn y berllan
Tw-rym-di-ro-rym-di-radl-idl-al,
O na bawn i yno fy hunan,
Tw-rym-di-ro-rym-di-radl-idl-al,
Dacw'r ty a dacw'r 'agubor,
Dacw ddrws y beudy'n agor,
Ffal-di-ral-di-ridl-al,
Tw-rym-di-ro-rym-di-radl-idl-al.

Rhois fy mryd ar eneth dirion,
Hyn sydd bron yn torri aghalon,
A bu'n achos iddi hithau
Wyllo peth amdanaf finnau.

7) "BACHGEN BACH O DINCER" (The Tinker Man)

In the old days the tinker used to travel through the country-side mending pots and pans and doing various other odd jobs in the houses and farms that employed him. It is possible that this little song was used to advertise the tinker's wares. This particular version of it has a rather peculiar chorus consisting of some badly garbled English words and a few others whose origin is anybody's guess - they may have been part of a dialect peculiar to the tinker's profession. It seems that there was such a dialect - one of the "mysteries" of tinkerhood.

Translation: "A tinker lad journeying the country-side, carrying his tools and wares and working at cheap rates. In his hand is an iron tool, on his back a box, in his mouth a squat pipe and a beard under his chin.

Chorus: Potshiar a peipar a twigar
owns agen, y potshiar oh the peipar
oh the knickerbocker line; la-di-da-
di-da-di hock it on the chen, y
potshiar oh the peipar oh the knicker-
bocker line."

Bachgen bach o dincer yn crwydro
'rhyd y wlad,
Oario'i dwls a'i daela, gwneud ei
waith yn rhad,
Yn ei law 'roedd hacarn ac ar ei
gefn 'roedd bocs,
Pwt o getyn yn ei geg, a than ei
drwyn 'roedd locs:
Potshiar a peipar a twigar-owns-
agen, etc.

8) "YR HEN WYDDELES" (The Old Witch)

The song of the disgruntled husband, a complaint that seems to be old as the human race. It is only fair to add that the position is sometimes reversed and that there are known to be songs by disgruntled and disappointed wives.

Translation: "When I was a lad of about twenty-one I set my mind on the girls, hoping for a happy life. At last I married the fairest I could find but it would have been better for me had I not married her. She could neither

knit nor sew, neither wash my clothes clean nor iron them - she could not even patch my britches. The old witch ought to be kicked. Finally, death came along; he took hold of her by the heels, dragged her out of this world and that was all I wanted."

YR HEN WYDDELES

Pan oeddwn i gynt yn fachgen,
Lym-di-lidl-lai, Lym-di-lidl-lai,
Oddeutu un ar hugen,
Ac ar y merched rhois fy mryd,
Ie 'mryd, do, fy mryd,
I wneud fy myd yn llawen,
Lym-di-lidl-lai.

O'r diwedd mi briodais,
Lym-di-lidl-lai, etc.
A'r lanaf ferch a welais,
Ond gwell fuasai fel 'rwyf byw, etc.
Na phriodi'r hen Wyddeles,
Lym-di-lidl-lai.

Ni allai na gwew na gwnio,
Lym-di-lidl-lai, etc.,
Na golch'n lan na amwddio,
Na rhoddi clwtyn ar fy mritsh, etc.,
Fel ddylsai'r wits h gael ei chicio,
Lym-di-lidl-lai.

O'r diwedd fe ddaeth angau,
Lym-di-lidl-lai, etc.,
Gafaelodd yn ei sodlau
Ac aeth a'r filen gas o'r byd, etc.,
A dyna i gyd oedd eisiau,
Lym-di-lidl-lai.

9) "MAB ANNWYL DY FAM" (Your mother's dear son)

This is a Welsh version (not the only one) of the "Lord Randall" ballads. As a result of transportation to American the noble lord became plain Jimmy Ramble, (just as the "Three Dukes who went a-roving" ended up in the mid-west as the "Three Dukes went a-roving"). In Wales the noble lord turned up as a nameless son. The Welsh version, as compared with some of the Scottish ones, is, for some reason, incomplete. In the latter versions we are given the reason why the young son wishes to see his sweetheart hung - she had poisoned him. In the Welsh version, on the other hand, one has to infer that something of this sort has happened from the chorus that follows each verse. . . "Oh make my bed, I am sickening and nearing my grave."

Translation: "Where were you last night, dear son? I went fishing, dear mother. What was the colour of your fish, dear son? Speckled, dear mother. What will you give your father, dear son? Five pounds, dear mother. What will you give your sister, dear son? A sewing machine, dear mother. What will you give your mother, dear son? A fortune, dear mother. . . What will you give your sweetheart, dear son? A rope to hang her."

P'le buost ti neithiwr, mab annwyl
dy fam?

Pyagota, mam annwyl;
O! c'weiriwch fy ngwely, 'rwy'n
glaf, 'rwy'n glaf,
A'm calon ar fyned i'r bedd.

Pa liw oedd dy bysgod, mab annwyl
dy fam?
Rhai brithion, mam annwyl;
O! c'weiriwch fy ngwely, 'rwy'n
glaf,
A'm calon ar fyned i'r bedd,
Be 'roi di dy dad, mab annwyl dy fam?
O pum punt, mam annwyl;
O! c'weiriwch fy ngwely, 'rwy'n
glaf, 'rwy'n glaf,
A'm calon ar fyned i'r bedd.

Be 'roi di dy chwaer, mab annwyl
dy fam?
Wel injan wnio;
O! c'weiriwch fy ngwely, 'rwy'n
glaf,
A'm calon ar fyned i'r bedd.

Be 'roi di dy fam, mab annwyl dy
fam?
Wel ffortiwn, mam annwyl;
O! c'weiriwch fy ngwely, 'rwy'n
glaf, 'rwy'n glaf,
A'm calon ar fyned i'r bedd.

Be 'roi di dy gariad, mab annwyl
dy fam?
Wel cortyn i'w chrogi;
O! c'weiriwch fy ngwely, 'rwy'n
glaf, 'rwy'n glaf,
A'm calon ar fyned i'r bedd.

- 10) "I BLE 'RWYT TI'N MYNED FY NGENETH FFEIN
FFEIN GU?" - (Where are you going to my
pretty, fair maid?)

No comment is required with respect to
this well-known theme; it is to be found, in some
form or other, among the folksongs of most
people.

Translation: "Where are you going to my pretty,
fair maid? I'm going a-milking sir,
she said. (This chorus follows every
verse: Two rosy cheeks and two
dark eyes: I saw her at the foot of the
mountain.) Can I come with you, my
pretty, fair maid? If you wish to
sir, she said. May I kiss you, my
pretty, fair maid? Yes, if you wish
to sir, she said. What is your
fortune, my pretty, fair maid? All
that you see sir, she said. Then I
will not marry you, my pretty, fair
maid. I did not ask you to sir, she
said."

I ble'r wyt ti'n myned, fy ngeneth
ffein gu?
Myned i odro, o syr, mynte hi:
o're ddwy foch goch, a'r ddau lygad du,
draw wrth y mynydd y gwelais hi.

A gaf fi ddod gyds thi, fy ngeneth
ffein gu?
Cewch os y mynnwch, o syr, mynte hi:
O'r ddwy foch goch, etc.

A gaf dy gusanu, fy ngeneth effin gu?
Cewch os y mynnwch, o syr, mynte hi:
o'r ddwy foch goch, etc.

Beth yw dy waddol, fy ngeneth effein gu?
Cymaint ag a welwch, o syr, mynte hi:
O'r ddwy foch goch, etc.

Yna ni'th briodaf, fy ngeneth effein gu;
Ni ofynnais ichwi, o syr, nynte hi:
O'r ddwy foch goch, etc.

- 11) "YR HEN WR MWYN" (The gentle old man)

A little conversation piece in carefree vein.
Translation: "Where will you go tonight, gentle
old man? To hunt the hare, Betsy.
And what will you do with the hare,
gentle old man? I'll sell it for beer,
Betsy. What if you get drunk gentle
old man? Well, that would be that,
Betsy. Where do you want to be
buried, gentle old man? Under the
hearth-stone, Betsy. And what would
you do there, gentle old man? Listen
to the porridge plopping, Betsy.

Ple'r ei di heno, yr hen wr mwyn,
Yr hen wr mwyna'n fyw?
I hela 'sgwarnog, Beti, a ffi-dl-di a
ram ti,
A ffi-dl-di a ram-ti rai tam to.

Beth wnei di a'r 'agwarnog, yr hen wr mwyn,
Yr hen wr mwyna'n fyw?
Ei gwerthu am gwrw, Beti.

Beth pe baet yn medwi?
Wel hynny fyddai, Beti.

Beth pe baet yn marw?
Dim ond fy ngladdu, Beti.

Lle mynnet dy gladdu?
Dan garreg yr aelwyd, Beti.

Beth wnaet fan honno?
Gwrando'r uwd yn berwi, Beti.

- 12) "BUGAIL HAFOD Y CWM" (The shepherd
of Hafod y Cwm).

Probably one of the saddest of English
folksongs is "The Three Ravens". The melody
somehow crossed the border into Wales and was
adapted, in the artless way in which folksongs are,
to express a happy mood. "The Three Ravens"
is a song about a knight slain on the field of
battle; this song is about a shepherd of the Welsh
mountains.

Translation: "I am the shepherd of Hafod y Cwm,
singing happily in spite of my poor
state. I have a wife and three child-
ren living at the valley's end - fa-la-la,
I am happy, fa-la-la-la. The master
of Plas-y-nant goes striding by, a
prosperous man; but I am happier than
he when I hear my sheep bleating -
fa-la-la, I am happy, fa-la-la-la."

Myfi yw bugail Hafod y Cwm,
Ffa-la-la-la-la-la-la-la,
'Rwy'n canu'n llon er 'mod i'n llwm,
Ffa-la-la;
Mae gen i wraig a thri o blant
Yn byw yng ngwaelod isa'r Nant,
Ffa-la-la, O! 'rwy'n hapus,
ffa-la-la-la!

Mynd heibio'n gawr mae gwr Plas-y-
nantm
Mae'n berchen cyfoeth lawer cant,
Ond 'rwy'n hapusach nag yw ef,
Yng nghanol swyn y praidd a'u bref,
Ffa-la-la, O! 'rwy'n hapus,
ffa-la-la-la!