# THE SINGING GAMES

## 1. A-HUNTING WE WILL GO

The most general method of play is found in the game description for the first (1.A) and third (2.A) variants, from Gomme (I, 1894b) and Fowke (1969) respectively. The children march across the room in pairs, separate at the end, one line going right, the other left, back to where they started. There they meet and march down the centre again. Another method of play is found in one of three variants from MUN (3.A). There, children are facing each other as partners. The first pair dance down and up between the lines, then the two lines separate, each line led to the bottom by the first pair. The two meet, form an arch and the rest dance through in couples to begin again. The method of play of this MUN variant (3.A), a "country dance" type, is most typical of the "Grand Old Duke of York" variants (#11). The Wilman variant (1.B) seems to have elements from another game, "Fox in the Fold" (Gomme I, 1894b, p. 142), not found in any variants in this collection.

There are distinctive characteristics of the three groups of melodies of "A-hunting We Will Go" variants. In the first group, the melody of the 1.A and 1.B variants is found in British variants of the singing games the "Farmer's in His Den" (#9, 2.A) and the "Grand Old Duke of York" (#11, 1.B–C). In these, the melody rests on A in the second line, and moves to B, then C in the third line (a range of G to C or *do* – *fa*). In the second group of melodies, the melody goes to B in the second line, then to D in the third line (a range of G to D, or *do* – *so*). This form of the melody, in Fowke (2.A) and in the first two MUN variants (2.B–C), is found in other Canadian variants of the "Grand Old Duke of York" (#11, 3.A–C). It is also found in the variants 1.A–B of the "Farmer in the Dell" (#9), from Canadian and British sources. In addition, the melody is found in the Canadian variants of "Sally Go Round the Sun" (#46, 1.A–B). This form of the melody is "most often used in the present day" for variants of "A-Hunting" (Opie & Opie, 1985, p. 213). The phrase analysis program also revealed a connection between this form of the melody and the melody of the second section of some "Looby Loo" (#27) variants, where a different melody is sung for the "You put your right hand in ..." action verses.

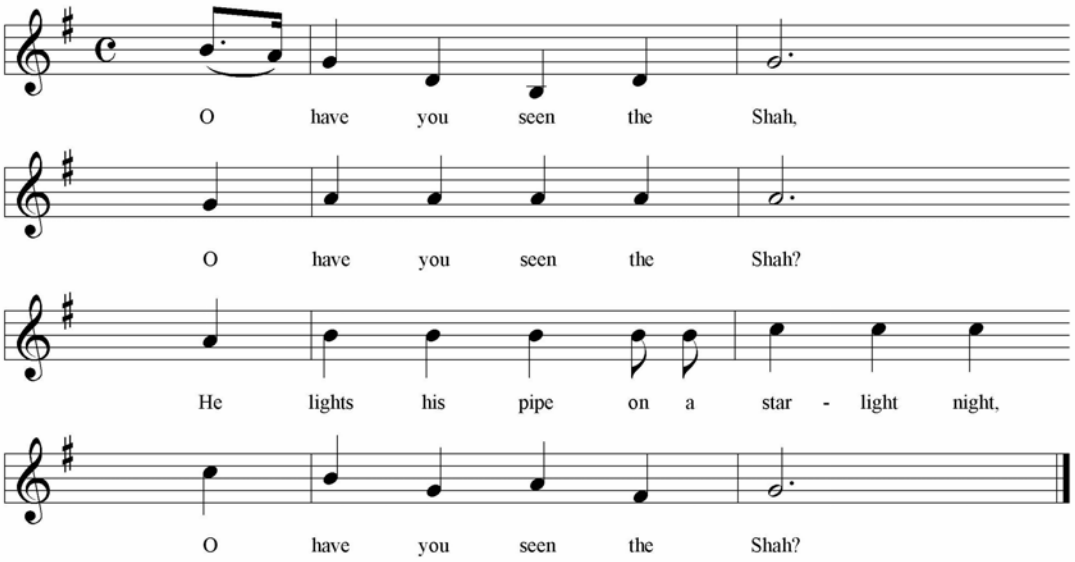
In the third group of melodies, there is a connection between the melody of the third MUN variant (3.A) as well as between the game form, noted above, of the British variants of the "Grand Old Duke of York" (#11), of Kidson (2.A) and Kerr (2.B). In these variants, the focus of the melody begins on low D (low *so*) and it ends on the tonic. Kerr (1912) printed a variant of the "Jolly Miller" (#21), in which the "A-hunting We Will Go" text was a part of that game (p. 3). It is included in #21, 5.A below.

This singing game's basic melody, with the variable second and third line phrase structure, is one of the more common melodies of the collection. The form of the melody of the Canadian variants in the second group of melodies of "A-hunting," 2.A–C (ascending to D), is characteristic, *generally*, of the Canadian variants of the "Farmer in the Dell" (#9), and the "Grand Old Duke of York" (#11). It is also the tune most often used in the present day for variants of "A-hunting" (Opie & Opie, 1985, p. 213). This tendency to ascend to "higher notes" is quite common in Canadian variants of other singing games, as will be noted throughout the text.

# 1. A-HUNTING WE WILL GO

## 1.A

(Gomme I, 1894b, p. 243, Text iii)



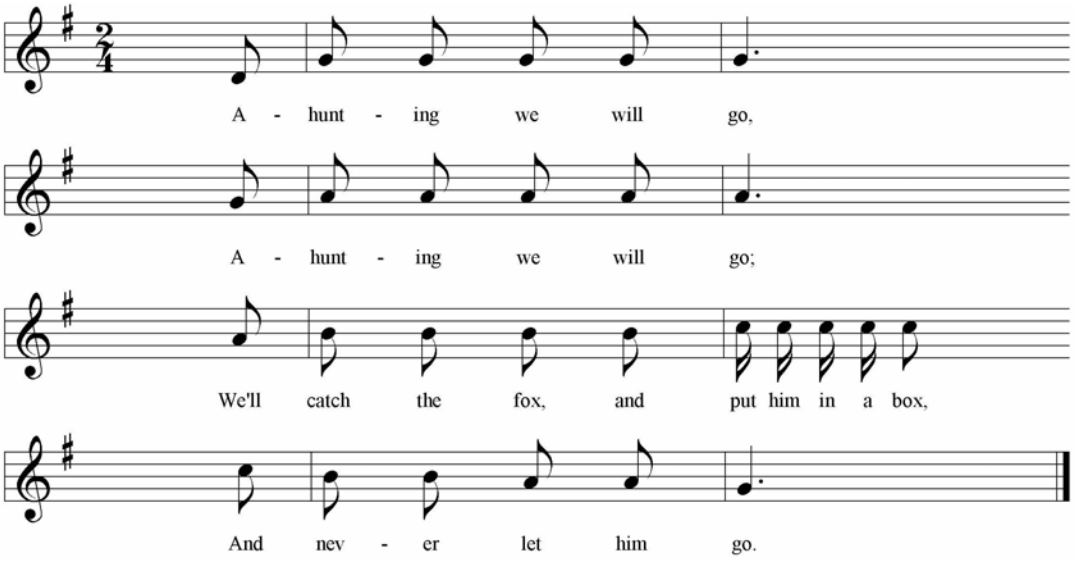

For a-hunting we will go,
A-hunting we will go;
We'll catch a fox and put him in a box,
A-hunting we will go.

GAME: The children range themselves in double rank at one end of the room or playground, and march down to the other end hand in hand. At the bottom they loose hands and divide, the first rank turning right, the second left, and march back in two single files to the other end again, where they re-form as at first, and repeat their manoeuvre, singing the verses alternately.

# 1. A-HUNTING WE WILL GO

## 1.B

(Wilman, 1915, p. 55)




GAME: The players form up in two lines, as though going to march. Each pair joins hands, and one player is in front, being known as the "Fox." The Fox begins to run, and is pursued by the other players, who keep step to the music, and sing:

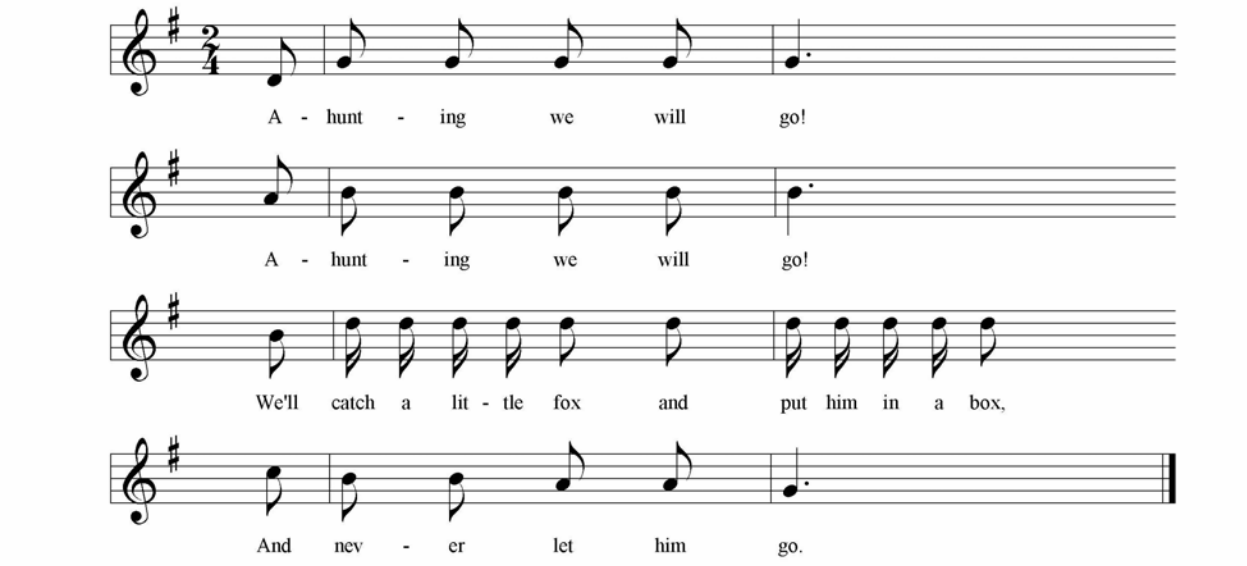
And if he's in, he's in,
And if he's out, he's out;
But when we've got him fairly in,
We'll never let him out.

When the Fox is caught, the players form a ring, and put him inside. The singing continues, and the Fox endeavours to escape from the "box" by passing beneath the arms of the players. To prevent him doing so, the ring closes up towards this point. When the Fox manages to escape, he may choose the next Fox, and the play recommences.

# 1. A-HUNTING WE WILL GO

## 2.A

(Fowke, 1969, p. 36)

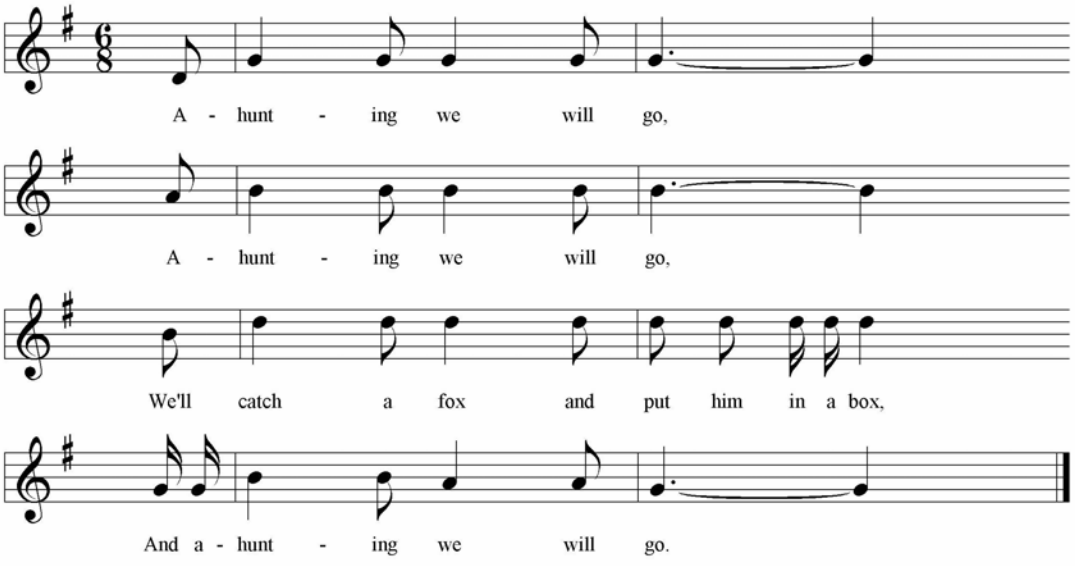



GAME: Children march across the room in pairs, separating at the end, one line going right and the other left, back to the other end where they meet and march down the centre together again.

# 1. A-HUNTING WE WILL GO

## 2.B

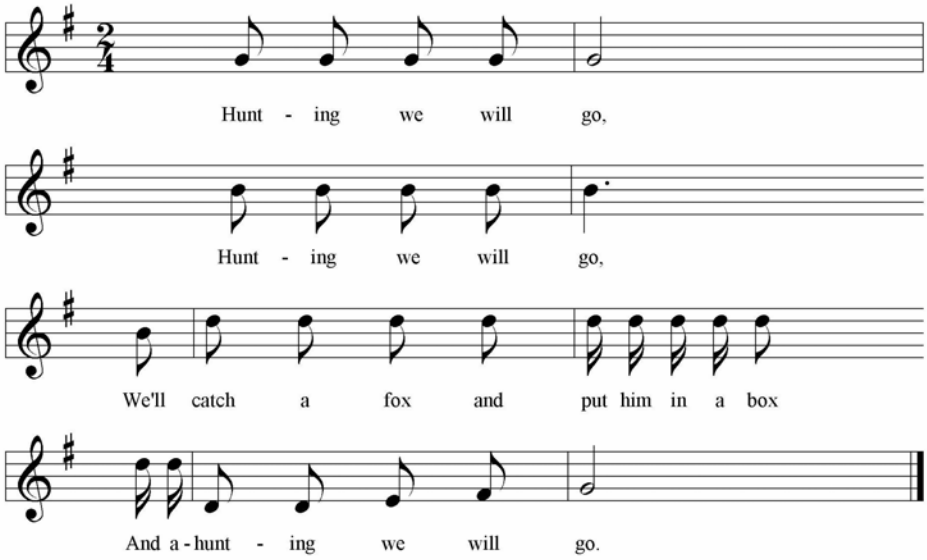
Mrs. Dwyer, Tilting, July 16, 1964
MUNFLA 64–13/C87
Collectors: John D.A. Widdowson & Fred Earle



# 1. A-HUNTING WE WILL GO

## 2.C

Zach Sacrey, St. John's, April 5, 1969
MUNFLA 69–23/C601
*Collector:* Zachariah Sacrey

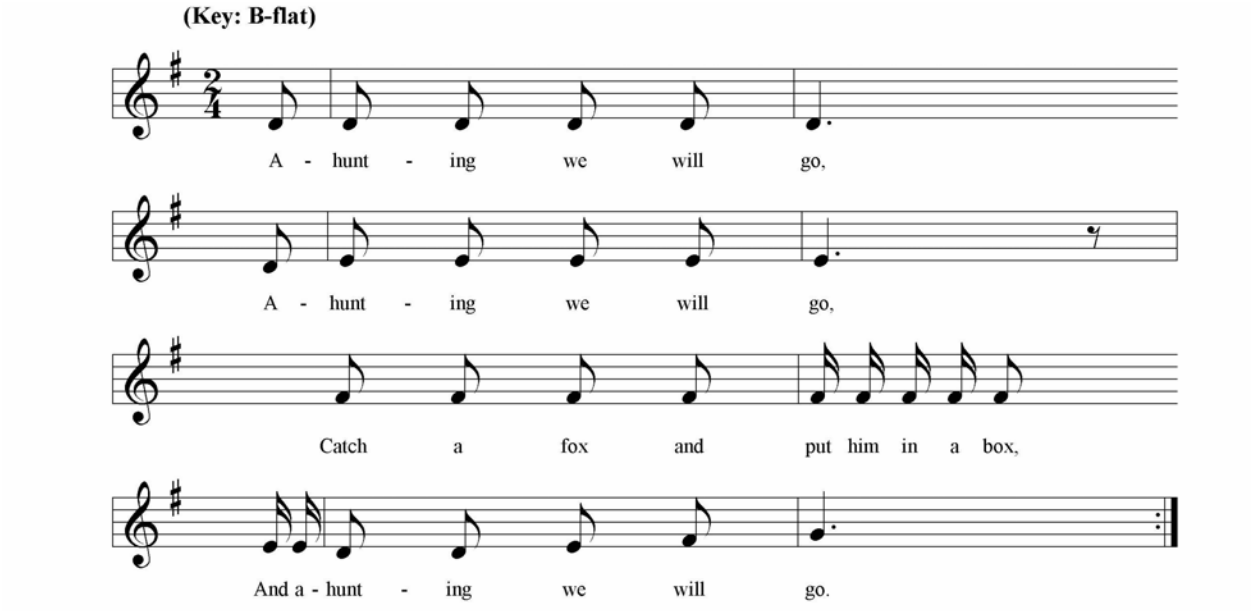



When you're up, you're up
When you're down, you're down
When you're only halfways up
You're neither up nor down.

# 1. A-HUNTING WE WILL GO

## 3.A

Wm. C. Earle, Change Islands, August 13, 1965
MUNFLA 65–17/C168
Collectors: John D.A. Widdowson, and Fred Earle




GAME: Every man has a partner, men on one side, girls on the other. Men take girls and go up and down between the men and girls. Then all come through under man and girl's hands.

# 2. THE ALLEY, ALLEY, OH

The variants, except 1.B, are all from Canadian oral tradition. There are 3 groups of tunes, more simplified than the one printed in Opie and Opie (1985) as "The Big Ship Sails" (p. 50). Of the variants discussed there, most date from the late 19th and early 20th centuries. The Opies state that "The Big Ship Sails" was unknown to Gomme, yet the form of the game is not new (p. 52).

The Opies (1985) note that this is "the most played of arch games by girls today. It is a development of 'Thread the Needle' (#51) that little girls find almost mesmeric in the neatness with which it works out" (p. 50). This form of the game is well preserved in the Newfoundland and Ontario variants of "The Alley, Alley, Oh" (1.C–3.A). For an illustration of the game, see the photos in the Opie's chapter, *Chains and Captives*. These photos illustrate the contrast between the older forms of play of "Thread the Needle" (#51) with the now popular "Big Ship Sails" (1985, pp. 34–35).

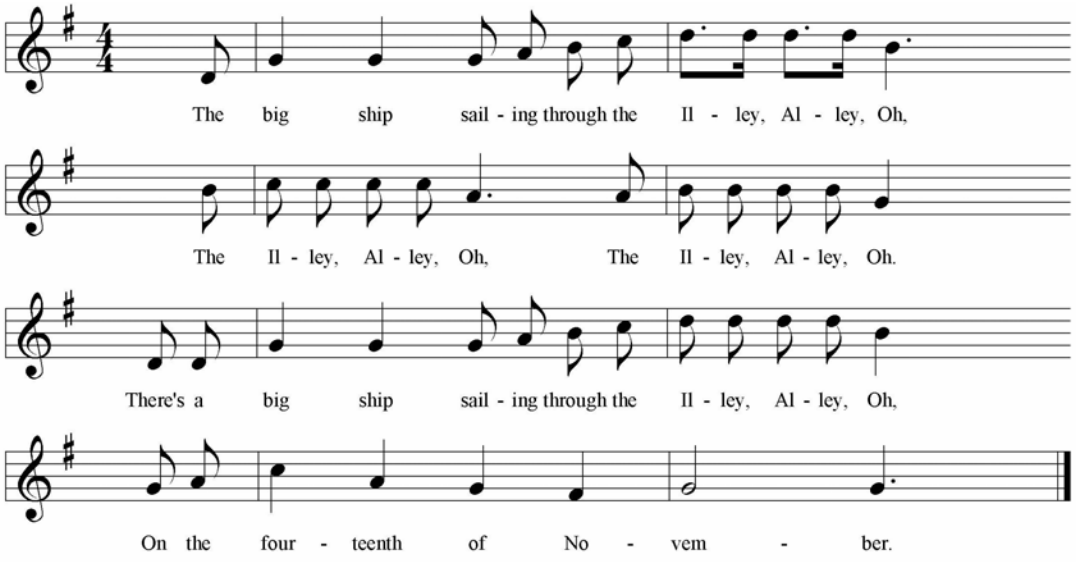
There is only 1 verse in the Canadian variants. The last line of each of these verses records different dates and months. The first variant comes from a Scottish lady who learned it in the 1940s in Glasgow. She attributes the date, "the fourteenth of November" to Nelson's victory at Trafalgar. The one published version, 1.B, is also from Scotland and the border.

It is interesting that the first group of tunes, 1.A–C, is also found in the first group of "Old Roger" (#34) variants. There are only three other variants in the entire collection that have the same first and third phrase patterns (see "London Bridge," #26, 4.A, "Nuts in May," #31,3.A, and "Three Dukes," #52,3.A). The second group of tunes of "The Ally, Alley, Oh" (#2.A–B) are variants of the common "Mulberry Bush" (#30) melody, as is the 3.A variant of "Old Roger" (#34). Then the third group of tunes of "The Alley, Alley, Oh" (3.A–B), from Fowke, are more limited in range in each of the phrases.

# 2. ILLEY, ALLEY, OH

## 1.A

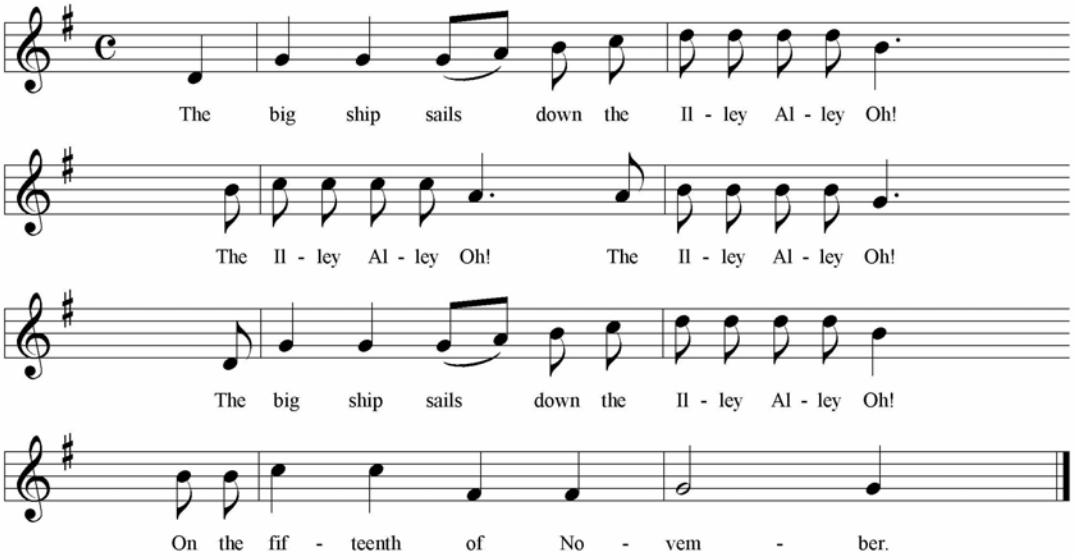
Mrs. Swan, St. John's, 1972
MUNFLA 72–143/C1139
*Collector:* George Brodie



## 2. THE BIG SHIP

1.B

(Douglas & Briggs, n.d.)

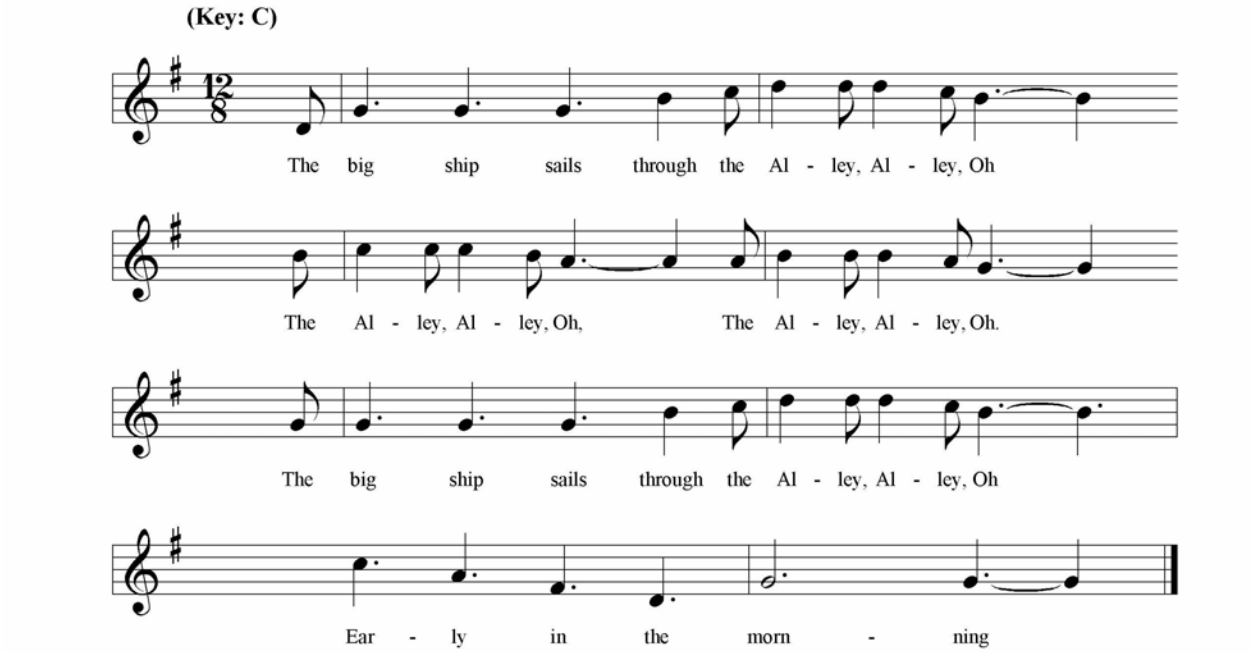



GAME: The children stand in line, holding hands. The end one puts her hand against a wall or a tree, to make an arch. As they sing, the leader of the line runs around and passes under this arch, followed by the rest of the children. The end one does not go under, but allows herself to be pulled round with arms crossed, facing the opposite direction to the rest. The leader then goes under the arm of the child next to the end one, and so on, till everyone is turned round with arms crossed. The two ends then join to form a circle, and they play Jock McCurdy.

# 2. ALLEY, ALLEY, O

## 1.C

Mrs. Brodie, St. John's, 1972
MUNFLA 72–143/C1139
*Collector:* George Brodie

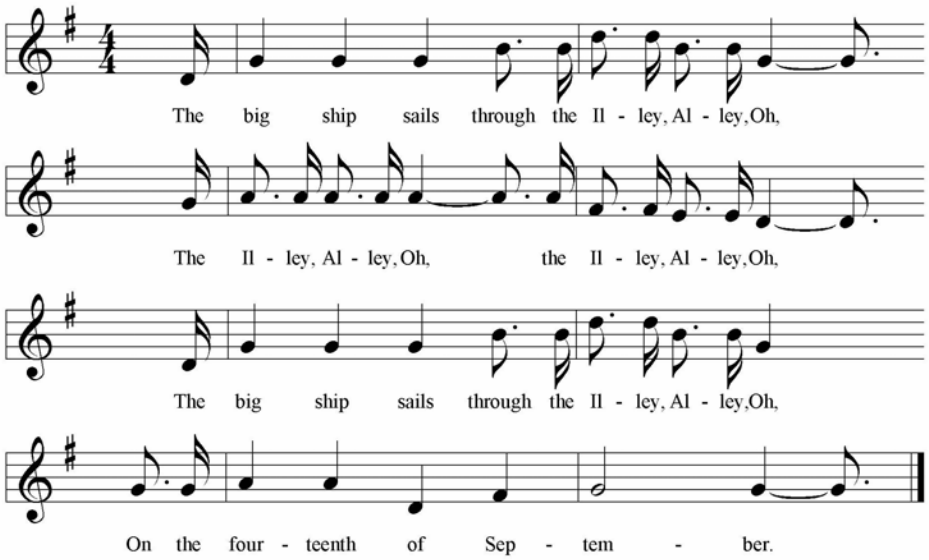



GAME: A child has her hand on a lamp post. The other children go round and round, as they sing, through the arch of the one at the lamp post. They keep going until all wound up!

# 2. THE ILLEY, ALLEY, OH

## 2.A

Janet McGrath Kelly, St. John's, September 11, 1967
MUNFLA 67–37/C458
*Collector:* Leslie McGrath Ayre

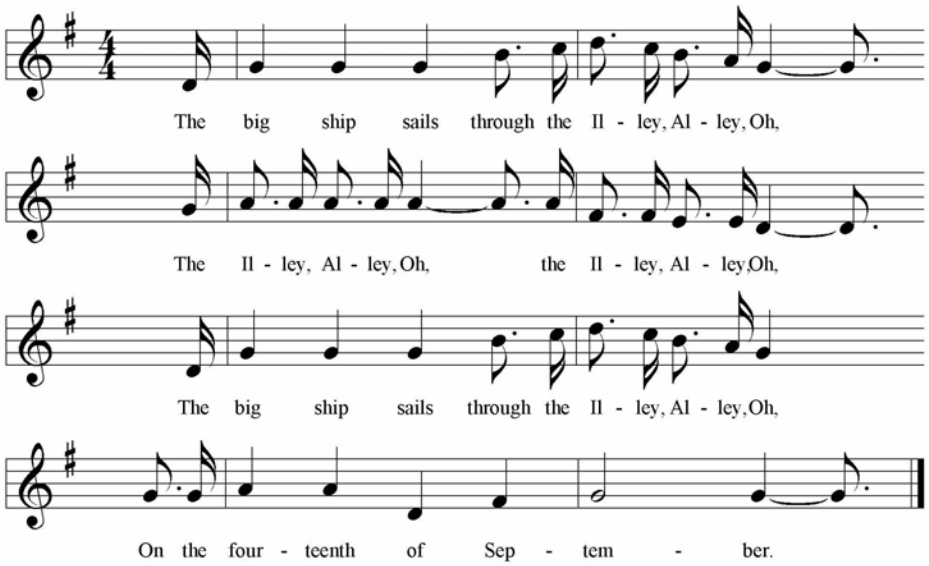



GAME: You have a line of kids and the first one would put his arm up against a wall and all the others would go underneath and keep on going through. Then the arms would be crossed and then you would be all in a circle. Then they would jump up and down and sing the song over again.

# 2. THE ILLEY, ALLEY OH!

## 2.B

School Children, St. John's, March 1972
MUNFLA 72–104/C1256
*Collector:* Maria M. Fitzpatrick

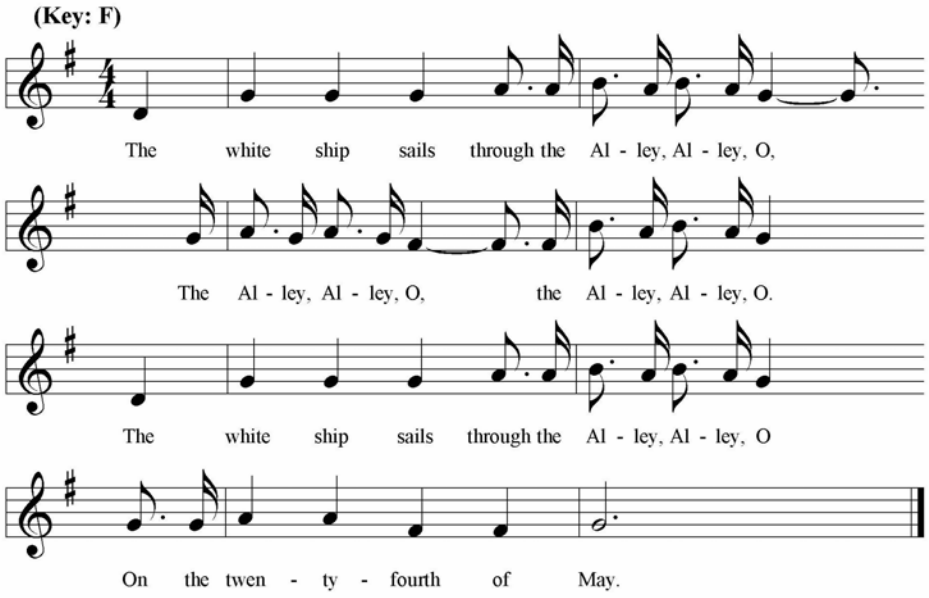



GAME: One girl is the bridge, the end girl goes under, criss cross arms, then the next girl is the bridge, etc. until all become the bridge.

# 2. THE WHITE SHIP SAILS

## 3.A

(Fowke, 1969, p. 37; FO 81)

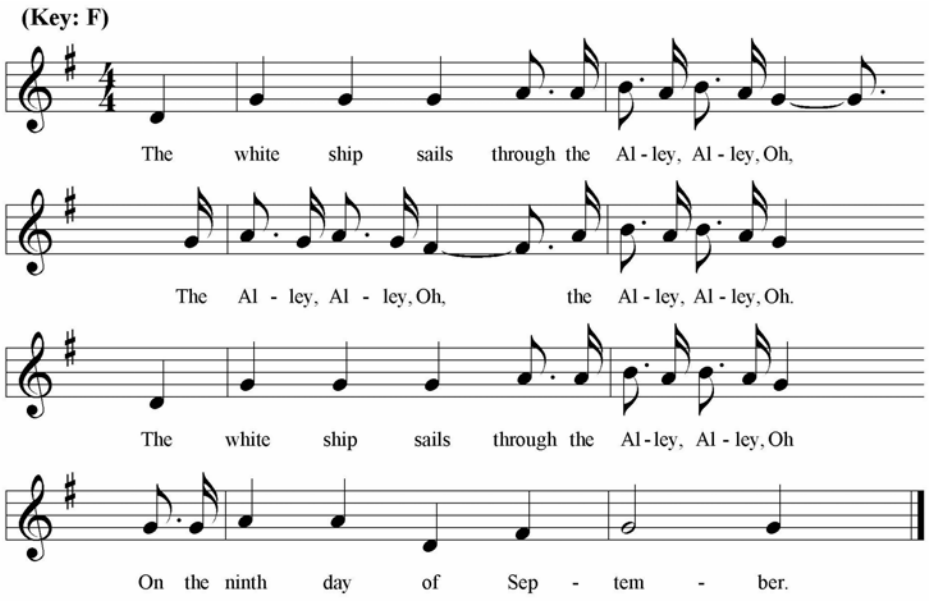



GAME: Children join hands in continuous line; two at end raise arms while the line, starting at the far end, parades under the arch and then reverses. Also used as a skipping chant.

# 2. THE WHITE SHIP SAILS

## 3.B

(FO 82)



# 3. BABBITY BOWSTER

"Bab at the Bowster" (or "bab wi" the "bowster") is a very old Scottish form of the "Cushion Dance." It was formerly the last dance at weddings and merry makings. The word "bab" in Lowland Scottish means "to play backward and forward loosely; to dance." A bolster or pillow was at one time always used, but by the nineteenth century it was danced with a handkerchief (see Gomme I, 1894b, p. 9).

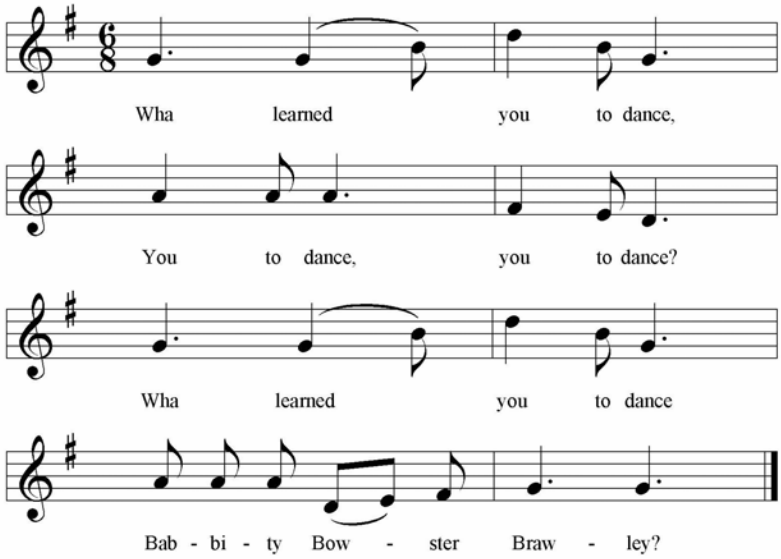
The singing games presented here do preserve the traditional elements of the older and newer dance forms. The game description given by Gomme in variant 1.A seems closer to the original dance formation, while the remaining five variants are played with all but one child in a circle formation. In Kidson's (2.C) variant, the child in the centre carries a cushion; in the other two printed variants, from Moffat (2.D) and Kerr (2.E), the child carries a handkerchief. The tune of the latter five variants, including two Scottish variants from MUN, is basically the same. Gomme's tune is a variation of the "Mulberry Bush" (#30), and the Opies (1985) printed a third tune (p. 207).

According to the Opies (1985) the "Cushion Dance" was a very popular and boisterous affair, noted as early as the seventeenth century (pp. 190–197), and found in several sources today from oral tradition, "played" during the early years of this century in Canada. Indeed, these are among the most favourite of singing games remembered by informants of the MUN collection, born ca. 1900 and recorded before 1976. These "plays" are, for example, "Jolly Sailors" (#22), "King William" (#24), "On the Green Carpet" (#36), "Poor Widow" (#39), "See This Pretty Little Girl of Mine" (#48) and "Silly Old Man" (#49).

# 3. BABBITY BOWSTER

## 1.A

(Gomme I, 1894b, p. 9)




My minnie learned me to dance,
Me to dance, me to dance;
My minnie learned me to dance
Babbity Bowster brawly.

Wha ga'e you the keys to keep,
Keys to keep, keys to keep?
Wha ga'e you the keys to keep,
Babbity Bowster brawly?

My minnie ga'e me the keys to keep,
Keys to keep, keys to keep;
My minnie ga'e me the keys to keep,
Babbity Bowster brawly.

One, twa, three, B, ba, Babbity,
Babbity Bowster neatly;
Kneel down, kiss the ground,
An' kiss your bonnie lassie (or laddie).

GAME: The dance took place at the end of a country ball. The lads all sat on one side and the girls on the other. It began with a boy taking a handkerchief and dancing before the girls, singing the first verse. Selecting one of the girls, he threw the handkerchief into her lap, or put it round her neck, holding both ends himself. Some spread the handkerchief on the floor at the feet of the girl. The object in either case was to secure a kiss, which, however, was not given without a struggle, the girls cheering the companion at every unsuccessful attempt which the boy made. The girl then took the handkerchief, singing the next verse and having thrown the handkerchief to one of the boys, she went off to her own side among the girls, and was pursued by the chosen boy. When all were thus paired, they formed into line, facing each other, and danced somewhat like the country dance of Sir Roger.

# 3. BEE BAW BABBITY

## 2.A

Abbey Wood, Dunfermline, Scotland, August 12, 1969
MUNFLA 69–37/C608
*Collector:* Margaret Bennett

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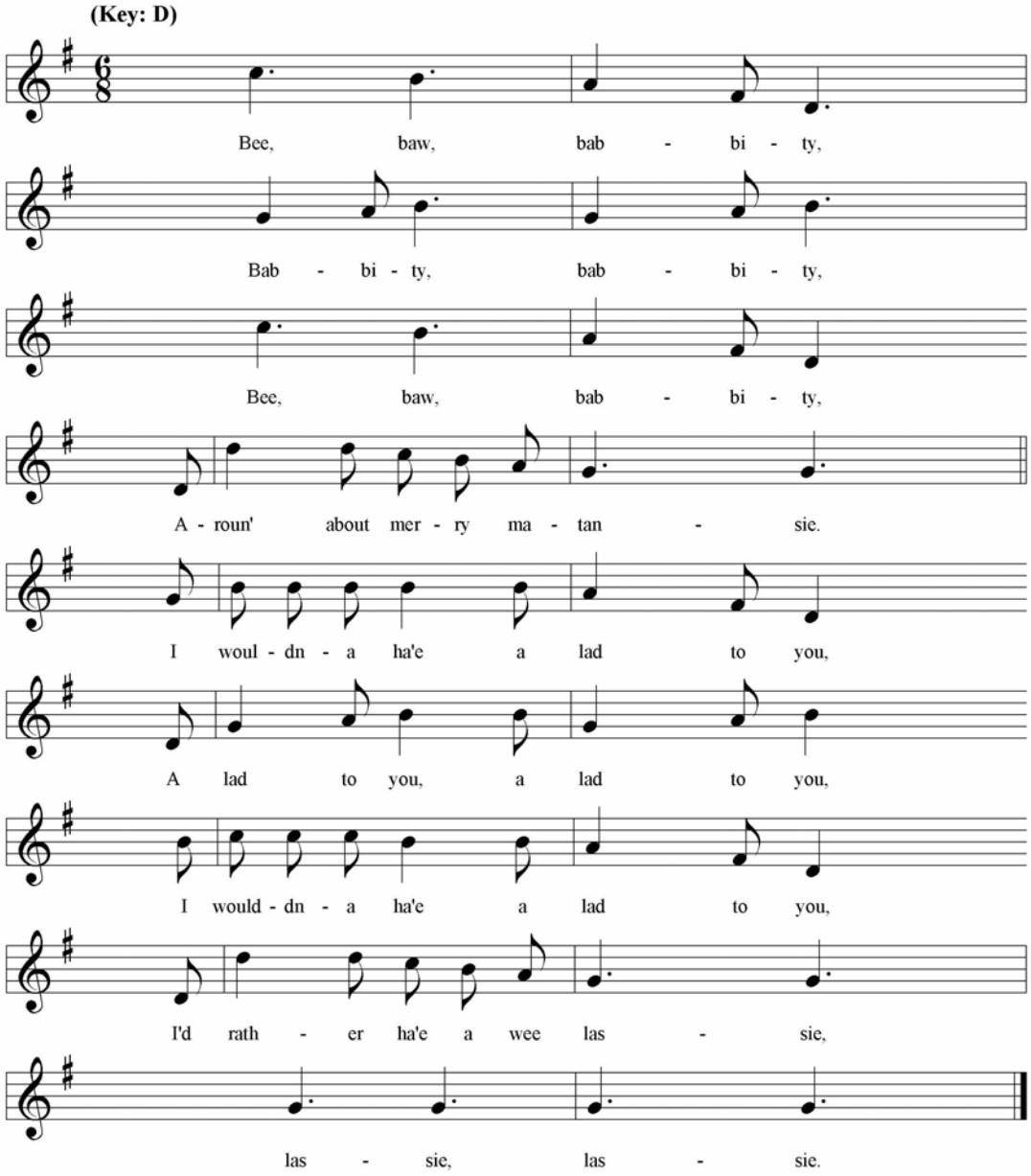
Mrs. Ashe, St. John's, 1972
MUNFLA 72–143/C1139(1)
*Collector:* George Brodie

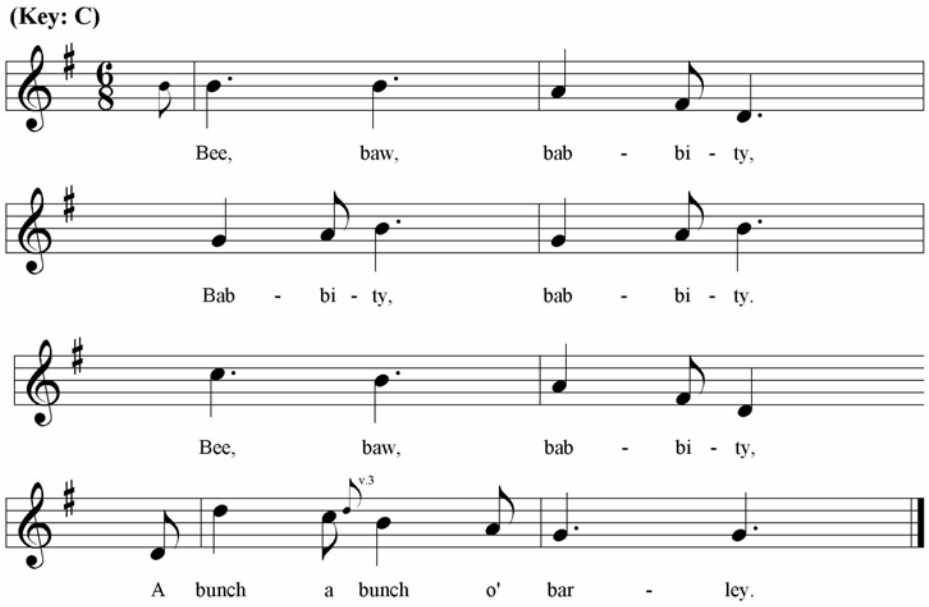



GAME: A ring game, one in the centre, alternate boy and girl.

# 3. BEE, BAW BABBITY

## 2.B

Mrs. Brodie, St. John's, 1972
MUNFLA 72–143/C1139(2)
*Collector:* George Brodie




Choose, choose, for your part,
For your part, for your part,
Choose, choose, for your part
A lassie or a laddie.

I wouldna' ha'e a laddie, O
Laddie, O, laddie, O
Wouldna' ha'e a laddie O,
Ha'e a bonnie wee lassie, lassie, lassie.
(repeat last note)

GAME: A kissing game. When played in the streets there was no kissing–the boys wouldn't.

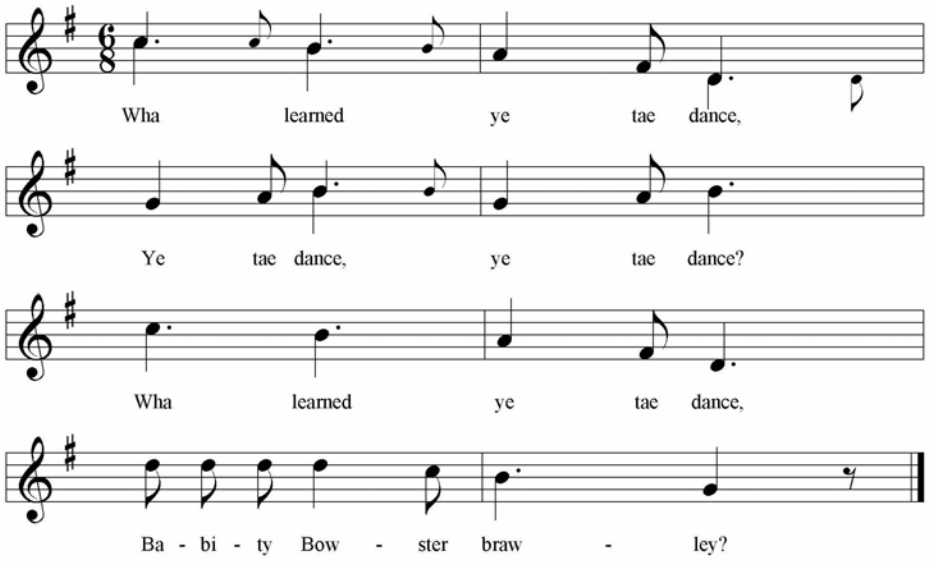
# 3. BABBITY BOWSTER

## 2.C

(Kidson, 1916, p. 20)

GAME: The children join hands in a circle and move round, while one of their number dances in the centre with a cushion in his or her hand.

Children in circle sing:–




Child in centre:–

Mither learned me tae dance,
Me tae dance, me tae dance,
Mither learned me tae dance,
Babity Bowster brawly.

Children in circle:–

Kneel down, kiss the crown,
Kiss the crown, kiss the crown,
Kneel down kiss the crown,
Kiss a bonnie wee {lassie/laddie}.

Child in centre:–

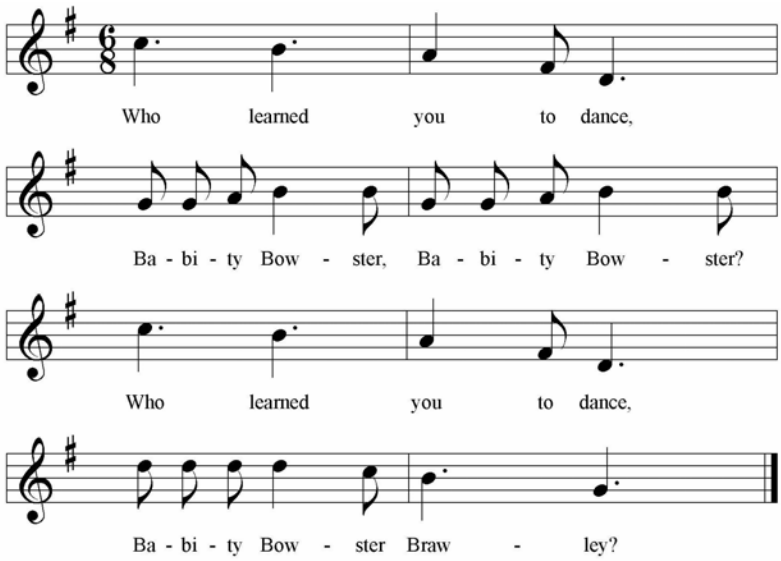
I would-na' ha'e a {lassie/laddie} O,
A {lassie/laddie} O, a {lassie/laddie} O,
I would-na' ha'e a {lassie/laddie} O,
I'd rather ha'e a wee {laddie/lassie}.

The child in the centre lays the cushion on the ground in front of the boy or girl chosen and both children kneel on it and kiss each other. The second child then goes into the centre with the cushion.

# 3. BABBITY BOWSTER

2.D

(Moffat, 1933, p. 13)




My *minnie learned me tae dance,
Babity Bowster, Babity Bowster,
My minnie learned me tae dance,
Babity Bowster brawly.

Who gi'ed ye the keys tae keep,
Babity Bowster, Babity Bowster?
Who gi'ed ye the keys tae keep,
Babity Bowster brawly?

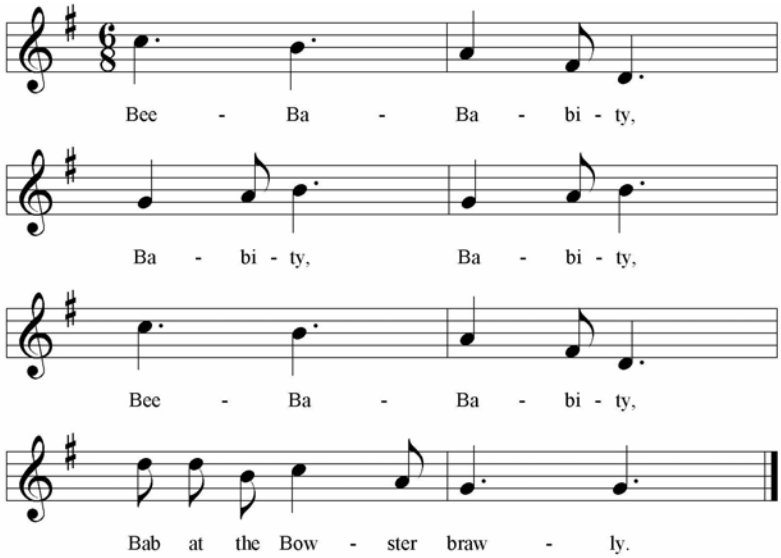
My minnie gi'ed me the keys tae keep,
Babity Bowster, Babity Bowster,
My minnie gi'ed me the keys tae keep,
Babity Bowster brawly.

* *Minnie = Mother*

# 3. BEE-BA-BABBITY OR BAB AT THE BOWSTER

2.E

(Kerr, 1912, p. 4)




Kneel down kiss the ground,
Kiss the ground, kiss the ground,
Kneel down kiss the ground,
Kiss a bonny wee {lassie/laddie},

I wouldna ha'e a {laddie/lassie} oh,
A {laddie/lassie} oh, a {laddie/lassie} oh,
I wouldna ha'e a {laddie/lassie} oh,
I'd rather ha'e a wee {lassie/laddie}.

GAME: In this familiar old Scottish singing game, players join hands and dance in a ring round one of their number. At the words, “Kneel down, kiss the ground,” the player in the centre kneels until the conclusion of the song, when he or she spreads a handkerchief in front of the partner chosen, on which they both kneel and kiss. The game then goes on with the new player occupying the centre of the circle.

# 4. BINGO

Gomme printed eight different text versions (I, 1894b, pp. 29–31). The games are all similar to the one described for the first variant printed here. In only one of her eight versions, from Liphook and Wakefield, the children clap while the letters are being spelled, turn around at the last line, join hands and begin again. This method of play is similar to that described by Fowke (1.E). The remaining variants are played with children spelling the letters in succession, either singing or saying the letters.

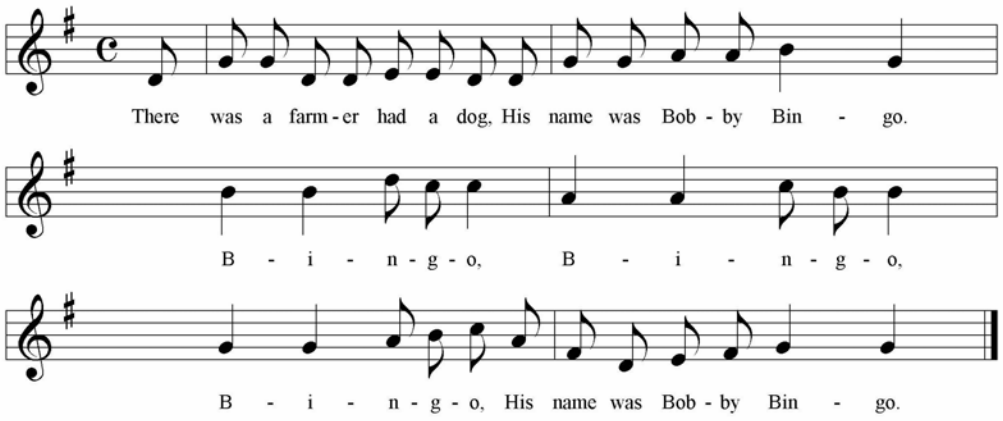
Of the five tunes given by Gomme (I, 1894b, p. 29), two are similar to the one printed (1.A), one is a variant of "Yankee Doodle," and the last is a fragment of the "Mulberry Bush" (#30) tune. The tunes of variants 1.A–D are practically the same. Fowke's tune (1.E) varies particularly in the opening and closing phrases. The Fowke variant 2.A, called "Bobby Bingo," contains a modernized extension of the text of the first half, sung to the tune of "Yankee Doodle," concluding with the same spelled letters and melody of variants 1.B–D.

The Opies (1951) refer to an old folk song "A Farmer's Dog Jumped Over the Stile, and I Think his Name was Bingo," sung at the Theatre Royal, c. 1780 (p. 155). Rimbault (1845) printed a version of this song, collected from oral tradition, entitled "Little Bingo" (pp. 62–63). It is mentioned by Gomme (I, 1894b) as one of her variants from Lancashire (p. 33) and contains the first three verses as Rimbault's. The tune of his variant is not similar to any of the tunes printed here, but the variant is included for interest. It is also discussed in Opie and Opie (1985), who state that "by the end of the (19th) century, it had turned into a game, played in a variety of ways and with a variety of wordings, but always hinging on the spelling of the dog's name" (p. 410). The Opies include this game in their chapter, *Buffoonery*, together with "Sally Go Round the Sun" (#46) and "Looby Loo" (#27).

# 4. BINGO

## 1.A

(Gomme I, 1894b, p. 29, Text iv)

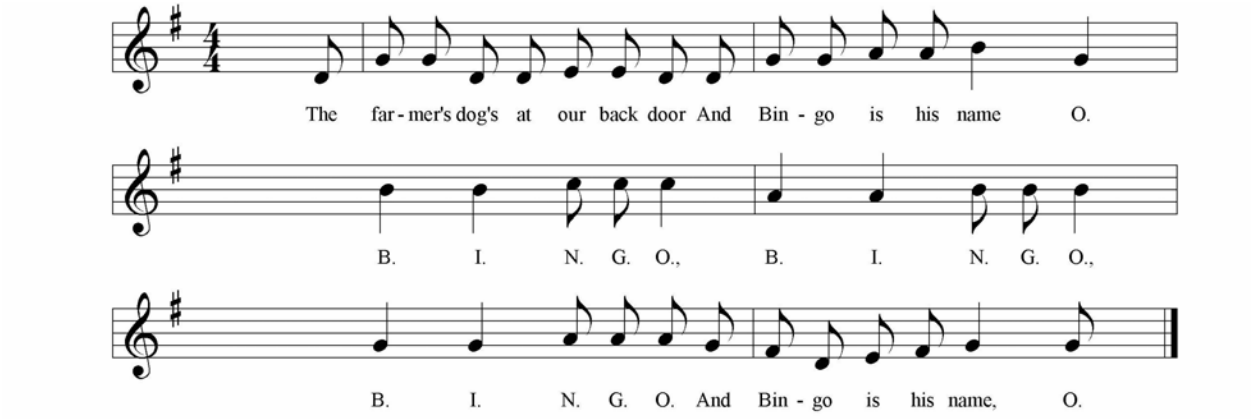



GAME: One child represents the Farmer. The rest of the children stand round in a circle, with the Farmer in the centre. All dance round and sing the verse. When they come to the spelling part they stop, the one in the middle points to five of the others in turn, who have to say the letters forming "Bingo," while the one to whom the O comes has to sing it on the note on which the others left off. Anyone who says the wrong letter, or fails to sing the O right, takes the place of the middle one.

# 4. BINGO

## 1.B

(Kerr, 1912, p. 19)

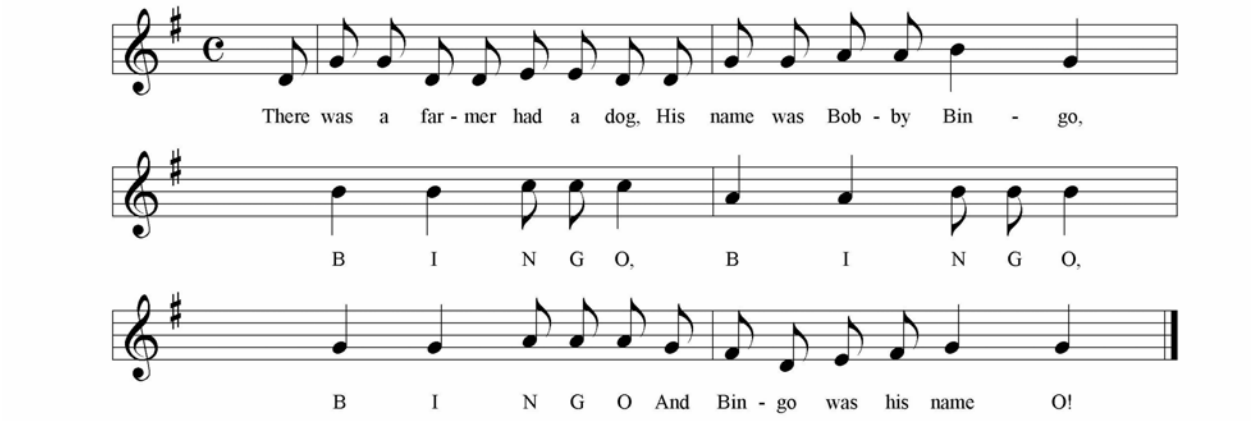



GAME: Forming a ring, the children circle slowly round as they sing the first two lines. At the third bar the Leader, who is in the centre of the circle, sings the first B of Bingo, pointing as he does so to someone in the ring, who follows with the "I." The player to the left then sings the "N" on the signal of the Leader; and so on until the last "O" is reached in the fifth bar. The player who sings this letter then changes place with the Leader; and the game is resumed.

# 4. BOBBY BINGO

## 1.C

(Wilman, 1915, p. 8)



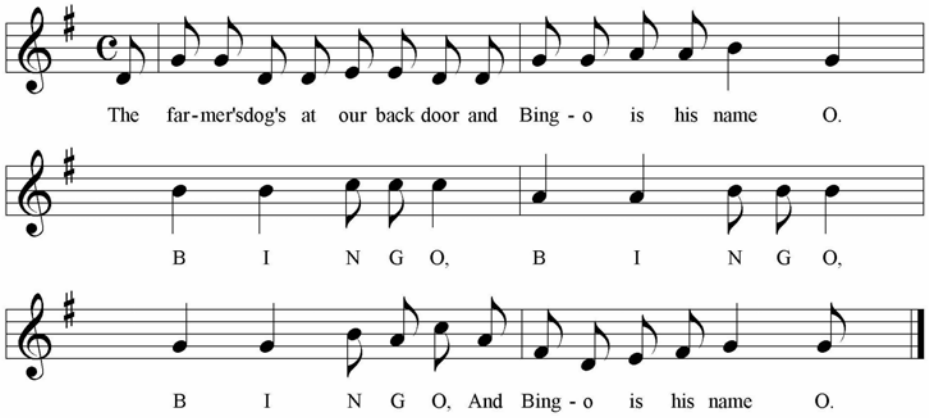

GAME: The players join hands and stand in a ring, around one central player. The words of "Bobby Bingo" are then sung, at the conclusion of which the central player points in turn to four persons, who must respectively say, B, I, N, G, while the fifth person pointed to must remain silent, and merely nod his head. Should any one of the five act wrongly, he must exchange places with the centre man, and the game continues as before.

This game may be made more difficult by the centre man choosing five players beforehand, and giving each of them one of the letters, B, I, N, G, O. In this case, each of the first four must sing his letter in its place in the music, while the player who represents O must keep silent.

# 4. BINGO

## 1.D

(Kidson, 1916, p. 111)



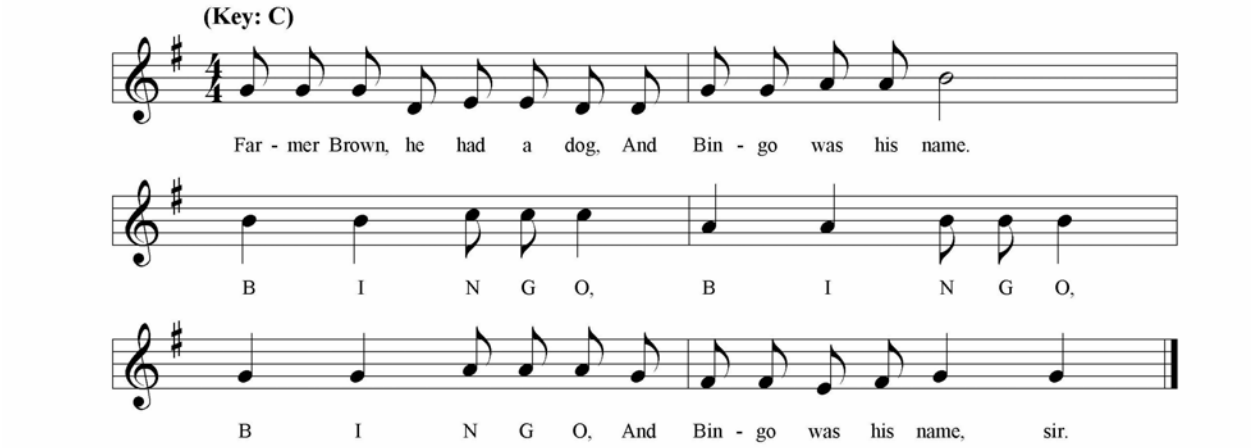

GAME: The children join hands in a ring and dance round from left to right singing. One of their number, the "Schoolmaster" stands in the centre. When the spelling of the name Bingo begins, he says the first B, then points to one of the children who must sing the I. N,G,O are sung in succession by the children to the left of this one, the Schoolmaster always pointing to the child who is to sing the required letter. He who sings the last O of the three times spelled name becomes the Schoolmaster.

| | |
|---|---|
| ALL | The farmer's dog's at our back door |
| | And Bingo is his name O |
| SCHOOLMASTER | B, |
| FIRST CHILD | I, |
| SECOND " | N, |
| THIRD " | G. |
| FOURTH " | O, |
| FIFTH " | B, |
| SIXTH " | I, |
| SEVENTH " | N, |
| EIGHTH " | G, |
| NINTH " | O, |
| TENTH " | B, |
| ELEVENTH' | I, |
| TWELFTH " | N, |
| THIRTEENTH | G, |
| FOURTEENTH | O. |
| ALL | And Bingo is his name O. |

# 4. BINGO

## 1.E

(FO 84; Fowke, 1969, p. 91)




GAME: Repeat the song, replacing each letter, consecutively, by a clap, beginning with O:

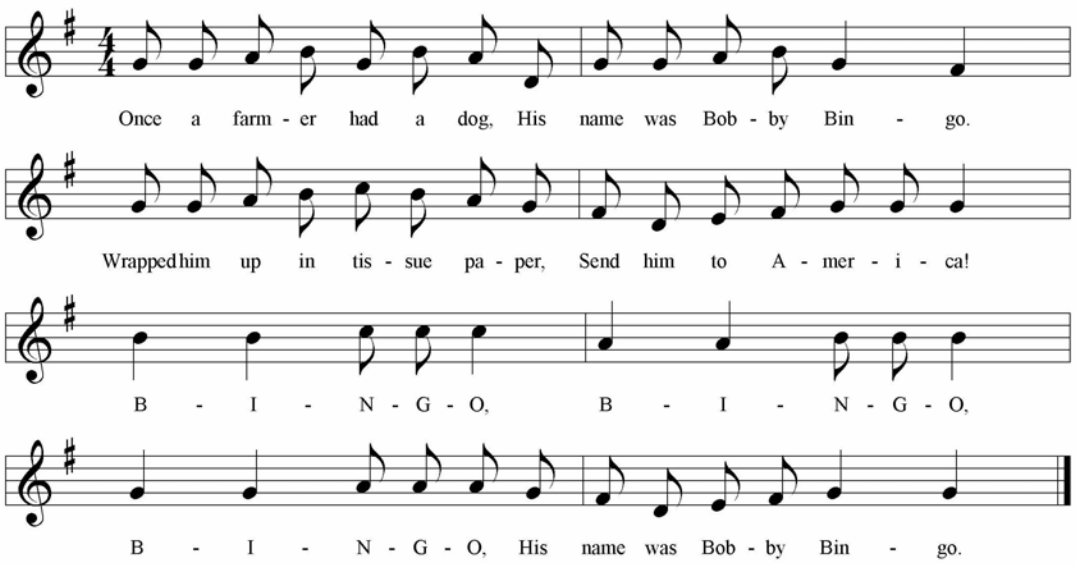
Farmer Brown, he had a dog,
And Bingo was his name.
B-I-N-G (clap), B-I-N-G (clap), B-I-N-G (clap),
And Bingo was his name, sir.

# 4. BOBBY BINGO

## 2.A

(FO 85)

**(Key: C)**

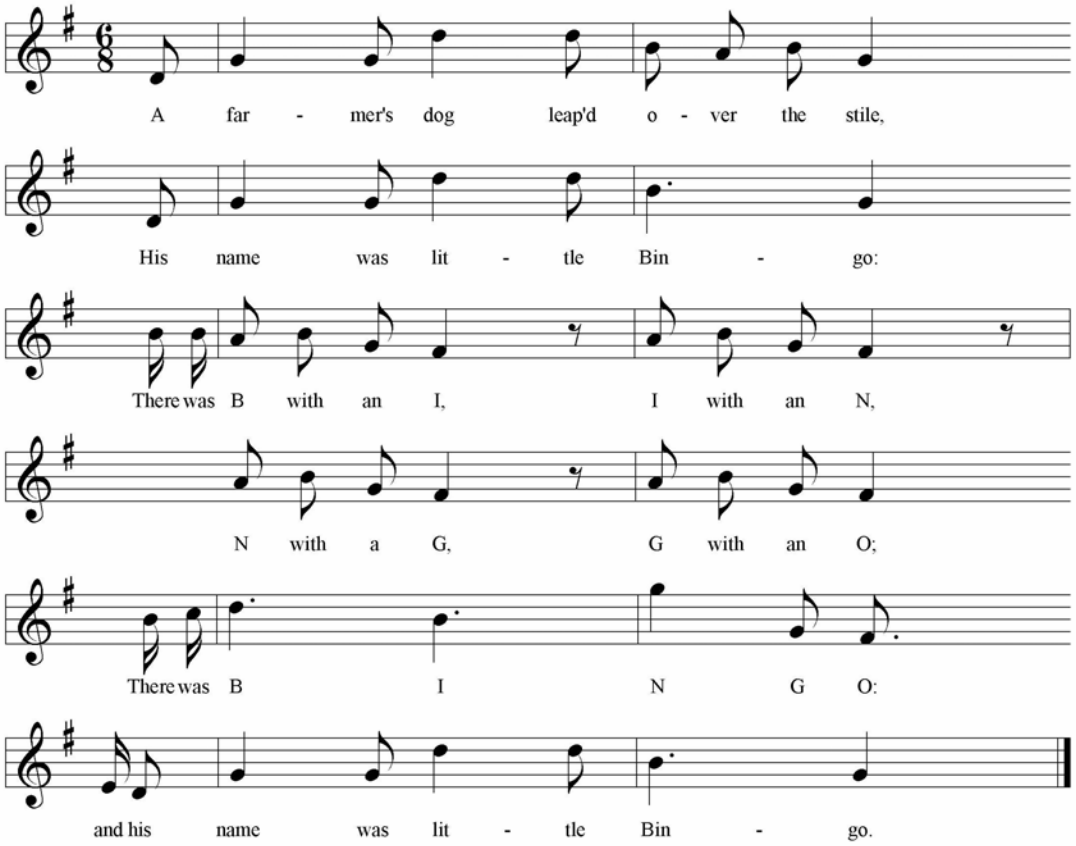


# 4. LITTLE BINGO

(not analyzed)

## 2.B

(Rimbault, 1846, p. 62)




The farmer loved a cup of good ale,
And called it very good STINGO:
There was S with a T,
T with an I, &c.

The farmer loved a pretty young lass,
And gave her a wedding RING-O:
There was R with an I,
I with an N, &c.

Now is not this a nice little song?
I think it is, by Jingo:
Here is J with an I,
I with an N, &c.

# 5. BLUEBIRD, BLUEBIRD

The form of this singing game occurs only in Canadian sources that were collected from oral tradition. It is similar, in game form, to “Dusty Bluebells” (Opie & Opie, 1985), “considered to be one of the most popular song games in the present day” (pp. 366–367). The Opies’ variant of “Bluebird” (pp. 364–365) is as Newell's (1883) “Here Comes a Bluebird Through the Window” (p. 118), but with a different game. Newell printed the text only. The tunes of both the Opies' variants are the same, as for the games “O Belinda” or “The Paw Paw Patch,” but different from the Canadian variants.

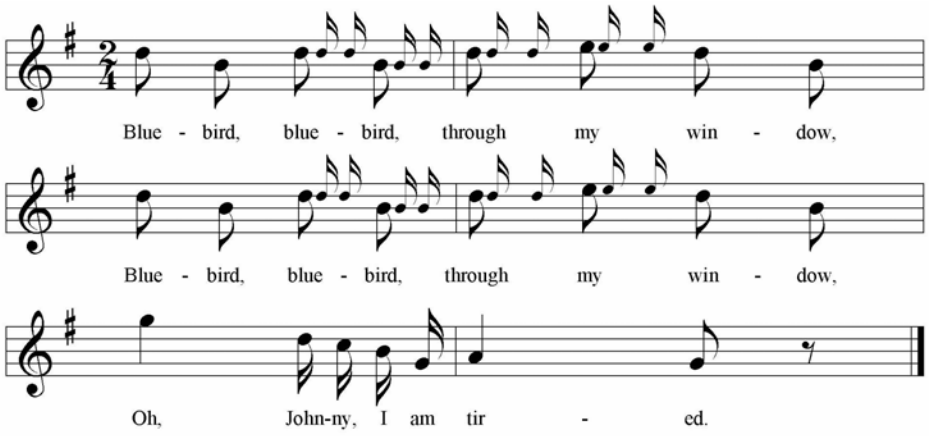
There are two forms of melody in the Canadian variants: the first is a three-line pentatonic melody in *A A B* form (variants 1.A–C), the second is a four-line *D0* hexachord melody in *A B AC* form (variants 2.A–C). The game directions for Fowke's 2.C variant differ only for the second verse from the other Canadian variants. These are all played as “Dusty Bluebells.”

The melody of Fowke's 2.C variant is found in Fowke's variants of “The Wind, The Wind” (“Rain, Rain, Rain,” #41, 3.A–C). Indeed, the final refrain of variants 3.A–B there, “O Michael (Denis), I love you”, is common to the Bluebird variants included here.

# 5. BLUEBIRD, BLUEBIRD

## 1.A

(Creighton, MS 83–10)



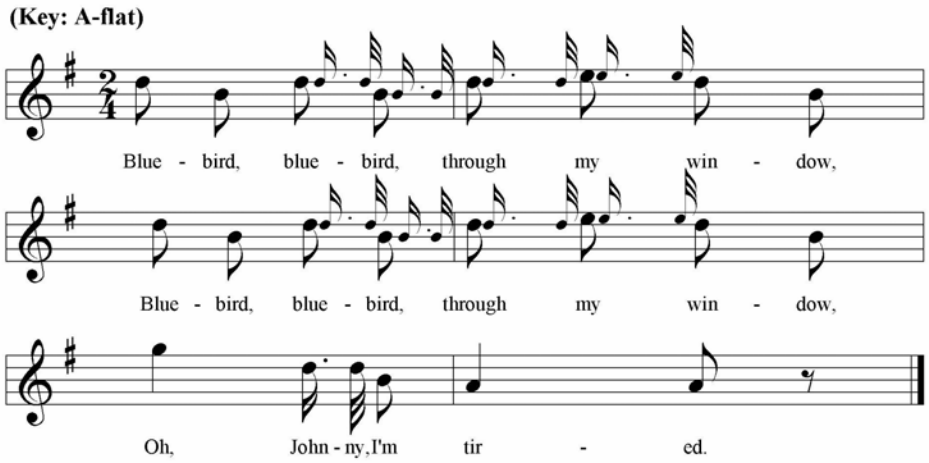

Take a little girl and tap her on the shoulder,
Take a little girl and tap her on the shoulder,
Oh, Johnny, I am tired.

GAME: During the first verse, children stand in a circle, hands joined and raised to form arches for a window. A child goes in and out around the circle during the singing of the first verse. Then the child chooses someone and taps her on the shoulder while the other children clap to the singing of the second verse. The game continues with two bluebirds going in and out until all have been chosen.

# 5. BLUEBIRD, BLUEBIRD

## 1.B

(Creighton, MS 30–6)




Take a pretty girl and tap her on the shoulder,
Take a pretty girl and tap her on the shoulder,
Oh, Johnny, I'm tired.

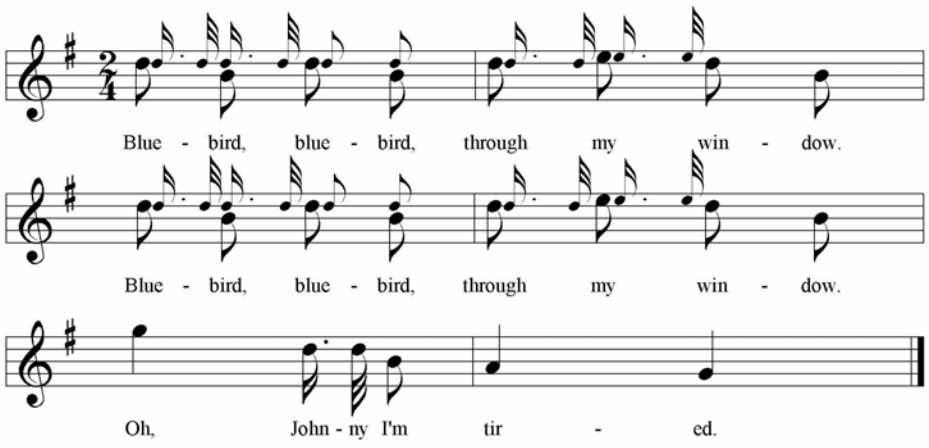
Bluebird, bluebird, through my window,
Bluebird, bluebird, through my window,
Oh, Johnny, I'm tired.

GAME: As previous.

# 5. BLUEBIRD, BLUEBIRD

## 1.C

(FO 85)

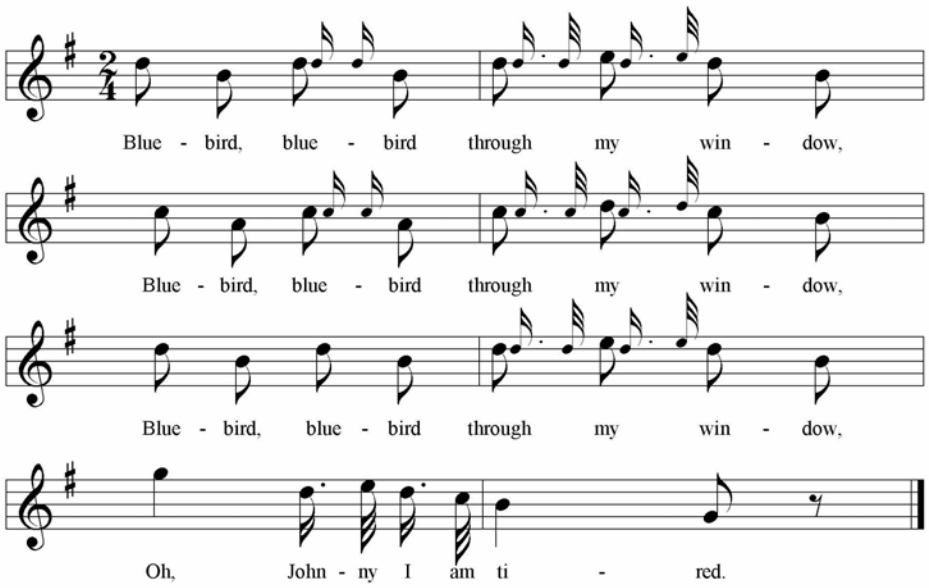



Take a little girl and tap her on the shoulder
Take a little girl and tap her on the shoulder
Oh, Johnny, I'm tired.

# 5. BLUEBIRD BLUEBIRD

## 2.A

(Creighton, L.C. 150A)




Take a pretty girl, tap her on the shoulder,
Take a pretty girl, tap her on the shoulder,
Take a pretty girl, tap her on the shoulder,
Oh, Johnny, I am tired.

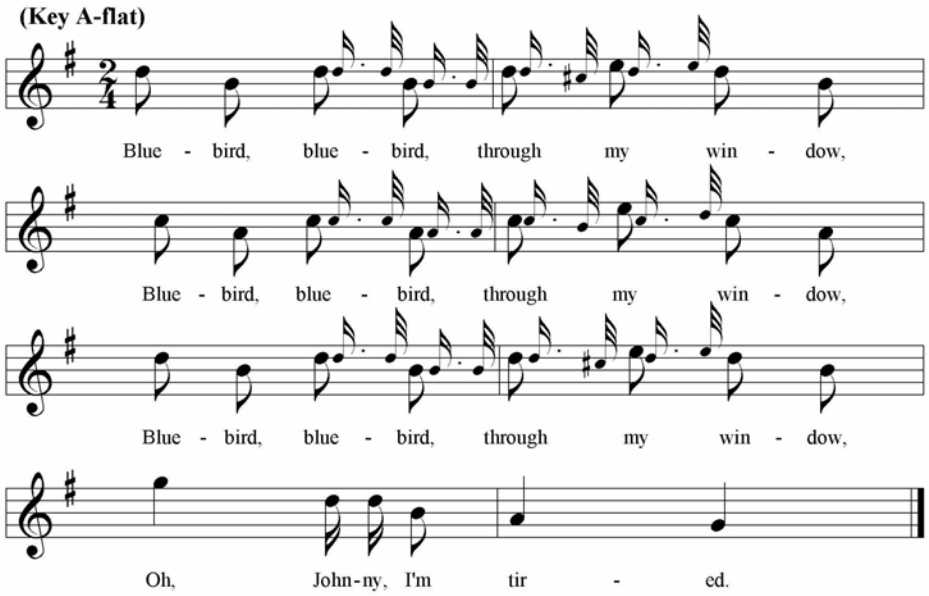
Bluebird, bluebird, through my window,
Bluebird, bluebird, through my window,
Bluebird, bluebird, through my window,
Oh, Johnny, I am tired.

GAME: As previous.

# 5. BLUEBIRD, BLUEBIRD

## 2.B

(Creighton, MS 10–10)



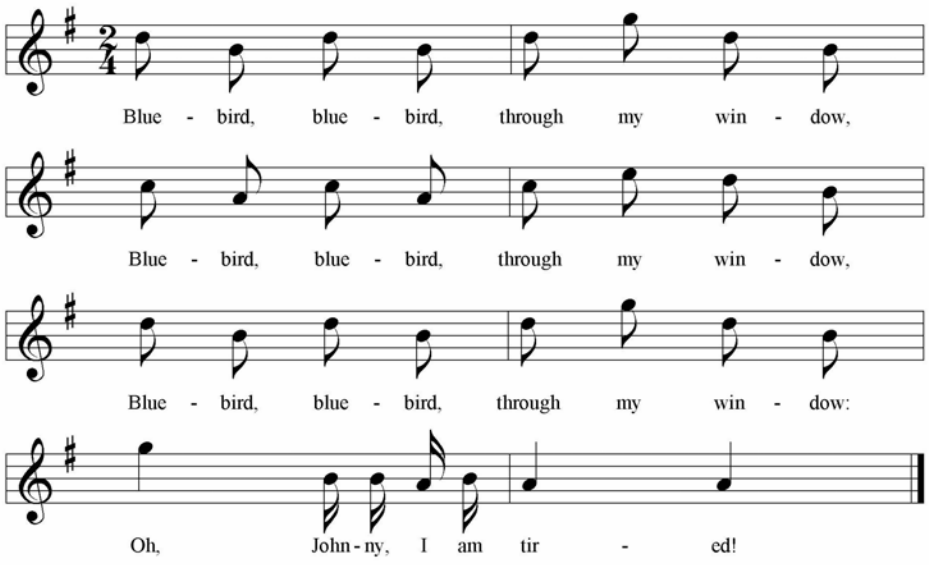

Take a little girl and tap her on the shoulder,
Take a little girl and tap her on the shoulder,
Take a little girl and tap her on the shoulder,
Oh, Johnny, I'm tired.

GAME: As previous.

# 5. BLUEBIRD, BLUEBIRD

## 2.C

(Fowke, 1969, p. 24)




Take a little girl and tap her on the shoulder,
Take a little girl and tap her on the shoulder,
Take a little girl and tap her on the shoulder:
Oh, Johnny, I am tired!

Bluebird, bluebird, through my window,
Bluebird, bluebird, through my window,
Bluebird, bluebird, through my window:
Oh, Johnny, I am tired!

GAME: Children form a ring with hands clasped and raised over their heads. One child walks around the ring on the outside and enters under a pair of arched arms. She chooses another who follows her out of the ring and then takes her place.

*(Original printed in 4/4 metre.)*

# 6. DAME GET UP AND BAKE YOUR PIES

Variants of this song, (1.A–C), agree with the text in Opie and Opie (1951, pp. 141–42). There they state that “by the late eighteenth century this song was widely scattered and had been cast in several local moulds” (p. 142). No method of play is suggested for any of the variants except Kidson's (1.D). This variant consists of two verses of embellished text, in which the words of the previous variants have been extended, to have participants make a plum pudding. A forfeit is required from the player who represents an ingredient called for by the “Cook” (Dame), otherwise the “Cook” pays a forfeit.

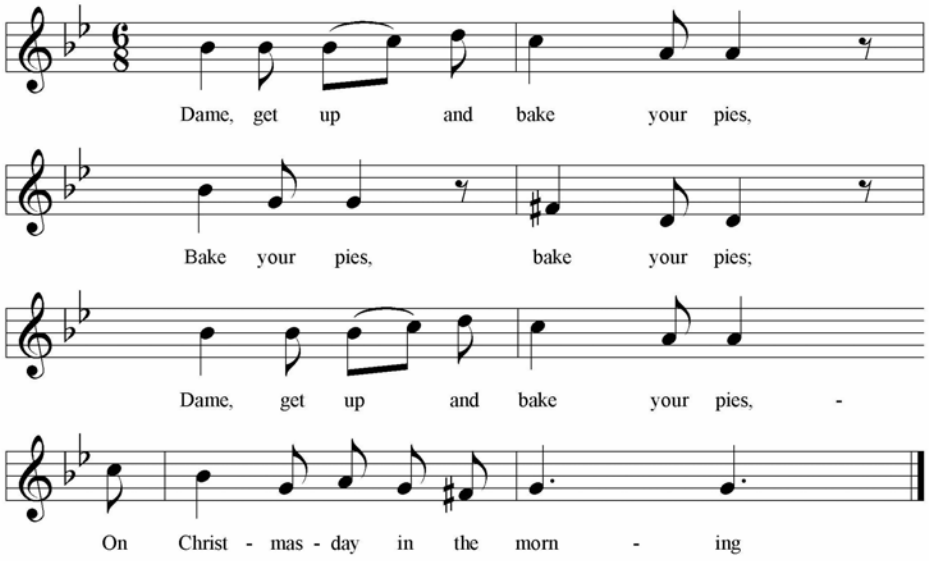
Some slight variations may be observed in the melodies of all four variants. As Kidson (1916) and the Opies (1951, p. 143) comment, the melody is a variant of the sixteenth century tune “Greensleeves.” All the variants thus are included for comparative purposes.

Curiously, the #49, “Silly Old Man” 2.A variant from MUN is sung to the natural minor form of the “Greensleeves” melody.

# 6. XMAS DAY IN YE MORNING

## 1.A

(Crane, 1877, p. 30)




Dame, what makes your maidens lie,
Maidens lie, maidens lie?
Dame, what makes your maidens lie,
On Christmas-day in the morning?

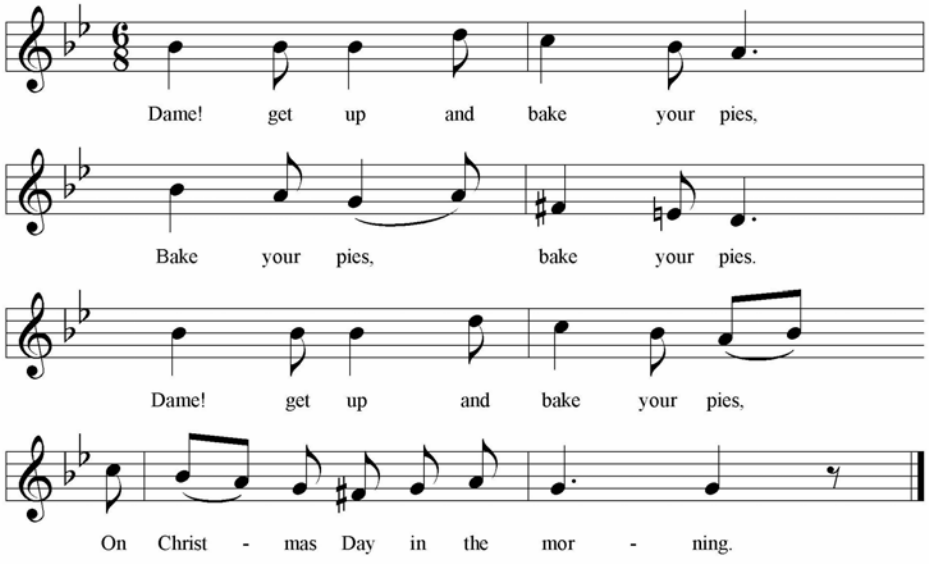
Dame, what makes your ducks to die,
Ducks to die, ducks to die?
Dame, what makes your ducks to die,
On Christmas-day in the morning?

Their wings are cut, they cannot fly,
Cannot fly, cannot fly;
Their wings are cut, they cannot fly,
On Christmas-day in the morning.

# 6. DAME! GET UP AND BAKE YOUR PIES

## 1.B

(Linley, 1860, p. 12)




Dame! What makes your maidens lie,
Maidens lie, maidens lie;
Dame! What makes your maidens lie,
On Christmas-day in the morning?

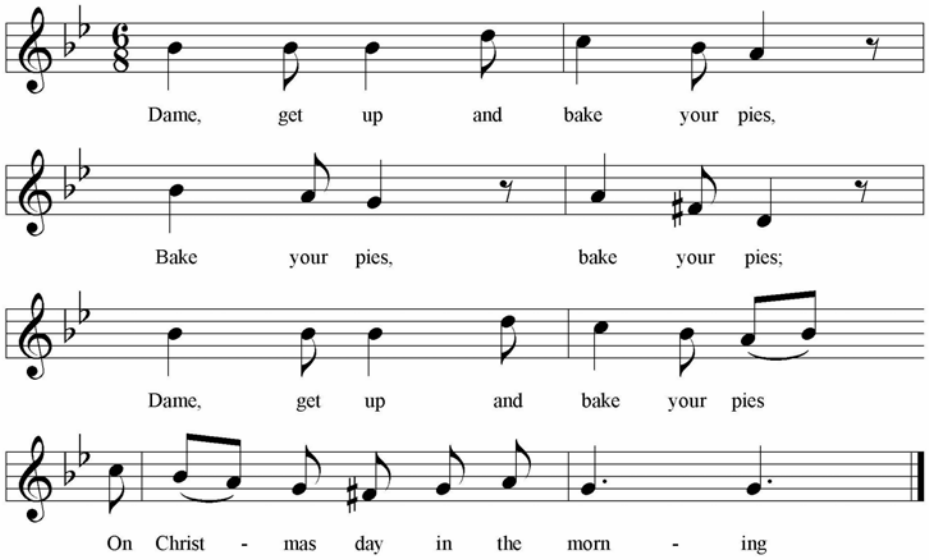
Dame! What makes your ducks to die,
Ducks to die, ducks to die;
Dame! What makes your ducks to die,
On Christmas-day in the morning?

Their wings are cut and they cannot fly,
Cannot fly, cannot fly;
Their wings are cut and they cannot fly,
On Christmas-day in the morning.

# 6. DAME GET UP AND BAKE YOUR PIES

## 1.C

(Moffat, 1912, p. 5)




2. Dame, what makes your maidens lie?
Maidens lie, maidens lie;
Dame, what makes your maidens lie
On Christmas Day in the morning?

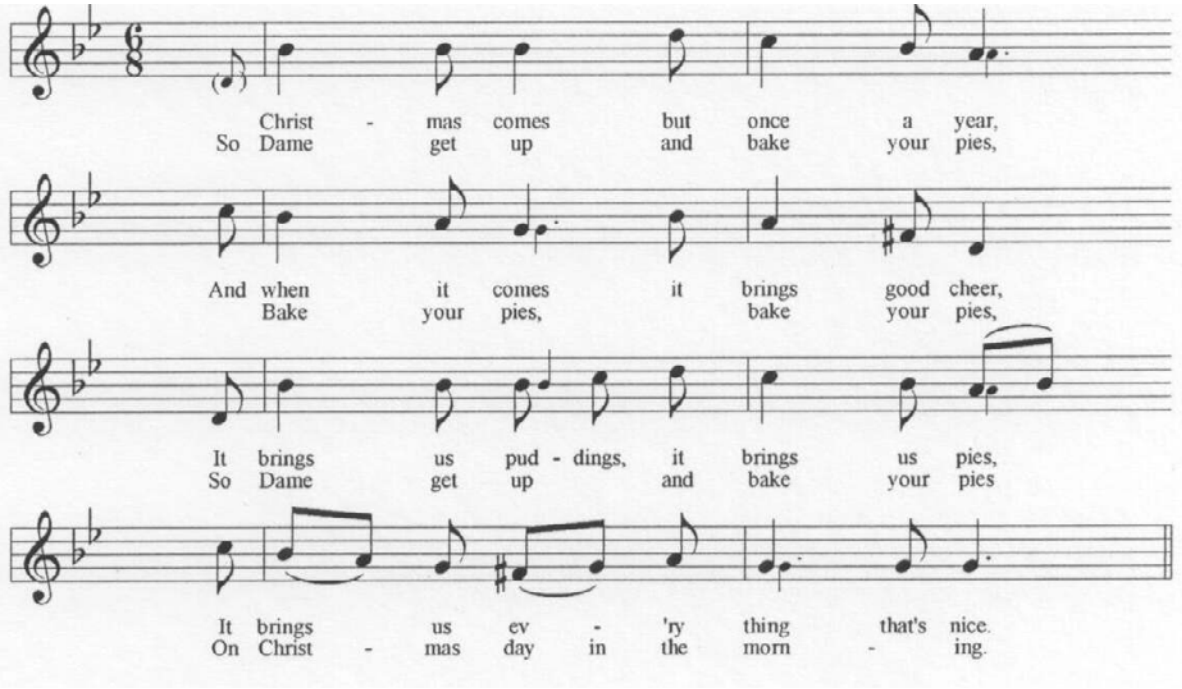
3. Dame, what makes your ducks to die? etc.

4. “Their wings are cut, they cannot fly; etc.

# 6. THE CHRISTMAS PUDDING

## 1.D

(Kidson, 1916, p.66)




Here we're making the plum pudding,
And stirring it merrily while we sing,
And every one shall have a slice
It's better than suet, or even rice.
So Dame get up and bake your pies,
Bake your pies, bake your pies,
So Dame get up and bake your pies
On Christmas day in the morning.

GAME: The children agree each to represent a component part of the plum pudding. One is raisins, one sugar, one flour and so on. All this is arranged without the knowledge of the "Cook" (otherwise the "Dame"). The children join hands in a ring and sing the two verses, finally making a general crowd or group, The Cook threads in and out of this, pushing one here and one there and by this mixes, or stirs the pudding. She now stops and proclaims that there is too much "salt" or suet or flour, or any other material in it, and the child who represents this goes out and pays a forfeit. If the cook names an article which is unrepresented she pays a forfeit and is deposed, the game beginning again with a fresh "Dame."

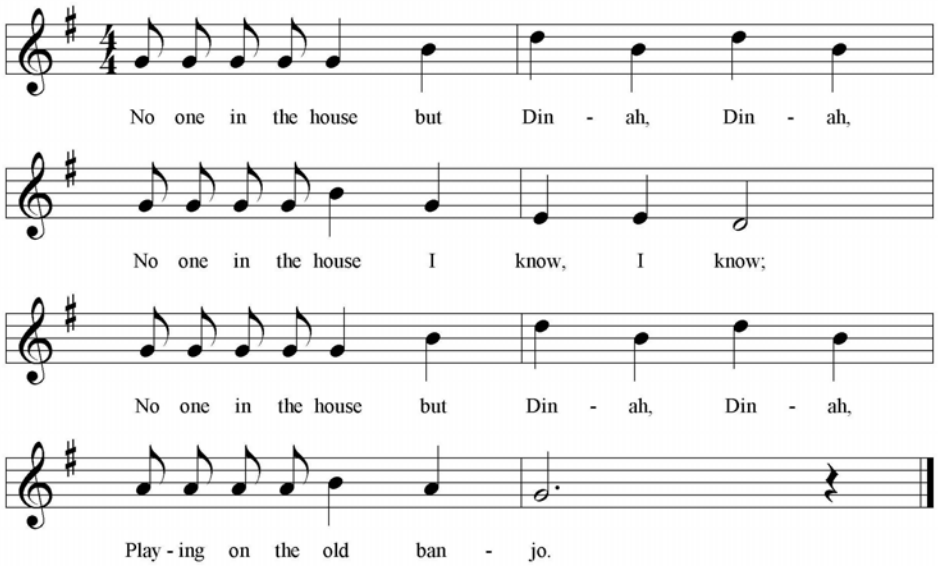
# 7. DINAH

Gomme (I, 1894b) states that “Dinah” was a Christy Minstrel song in the “fifties” (p. 97). The game resembles “Buff” and “Muffin Man” (#29). “Dinah” is included in this collection for its intrinsic value as a game. A variant of “Someone’s in the Kitchen with Dinah” is printed in Opie & Opie (1985, p. 435).

# 7. DINAH

## 1.A

(Gomme I, 1894b, p. 97)




GAME: A ring is formed, and a girl stands blindfolded inside. As the verse is sung and finished, Dinah goes to any one in the ring, and, if successful in guessing her name, takes her place, the other taking the place of Dinah, the game going on as before.

# 8. DOCTOR FAUSTUS

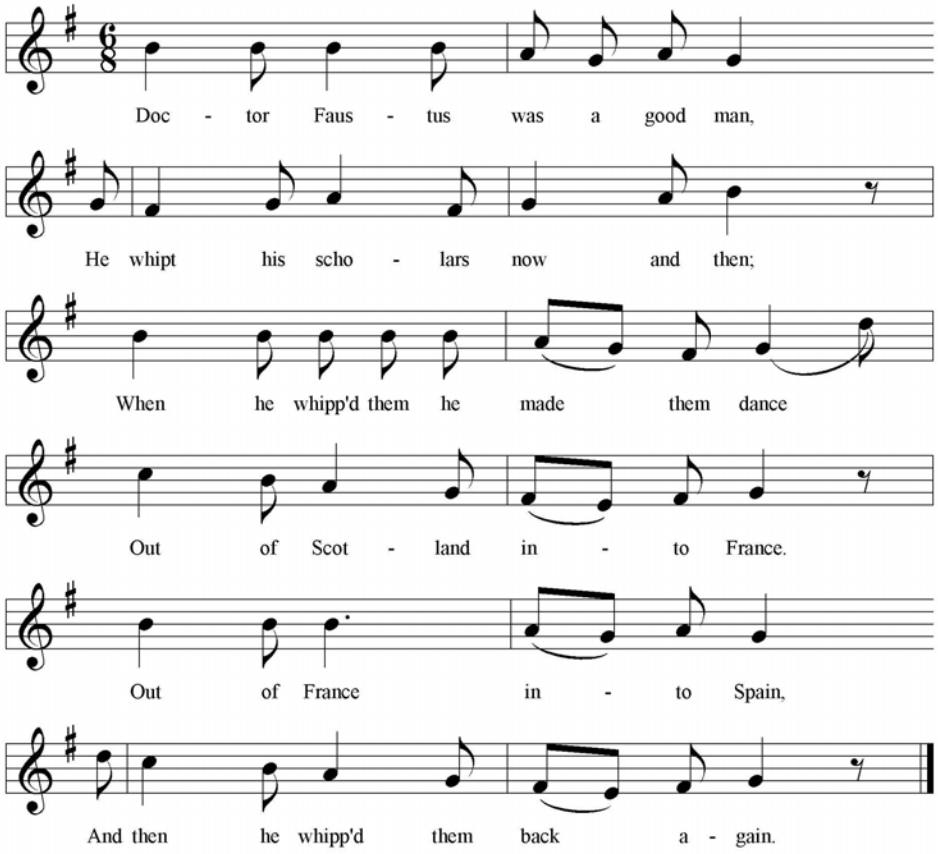
The earliest text version noted by the Opies in *The Oxford Dictionary of Nursery Rhymes* (1951) is from 1795. It was to be used as a counting out rhyme at that time and had a different ending (p. 168). The text version that occurs in the variants printed here was published by Halliwell in 1842, in which, as the Opies state, "the legendary German magician, Dr. Faustus, puts in an appearance in Scotland" (1951, p.168). In their book, *The Singing Game*, the Opies equate the tune of "Oats, Peas, Beans" (#32) with the country dance, Dr. Faustus (1985, p.182). Although further research is necessary, the third section of the tune variant that they print (p. 178) is very similar to the opening few phrases of the "Doctor Faustus" variants printed here.

Kidson's variant (1.B) is played in a rather elaborate form of a ring game of forfeit. His is the only variant printed with a game description. The text and melody of all the variants are basically the same.

# 8. DOCTOR FAUSTUS WAS A GOOD MAN

## 1.A

(Linley, 1860, p. 15)

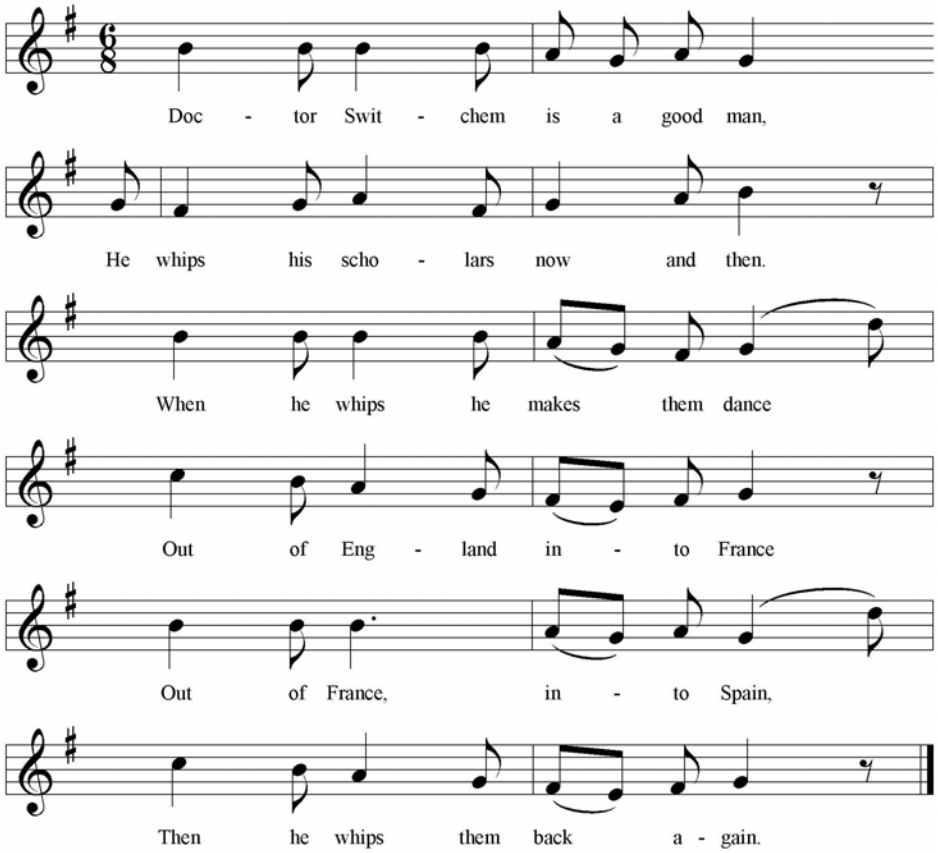


# 8. DOCTOR SWITCHEM

## 1.B

(Kidson, 1916, p. 70)

GAME: Dr. Switchem's school is formed by a group of children, joining hands in ring form. The Doctor stands in the middle, armed with a few twigs to give the idea of an old fashioned birch rod, while one of his scholars stands outside the circle. The ring goes round, all singing:–



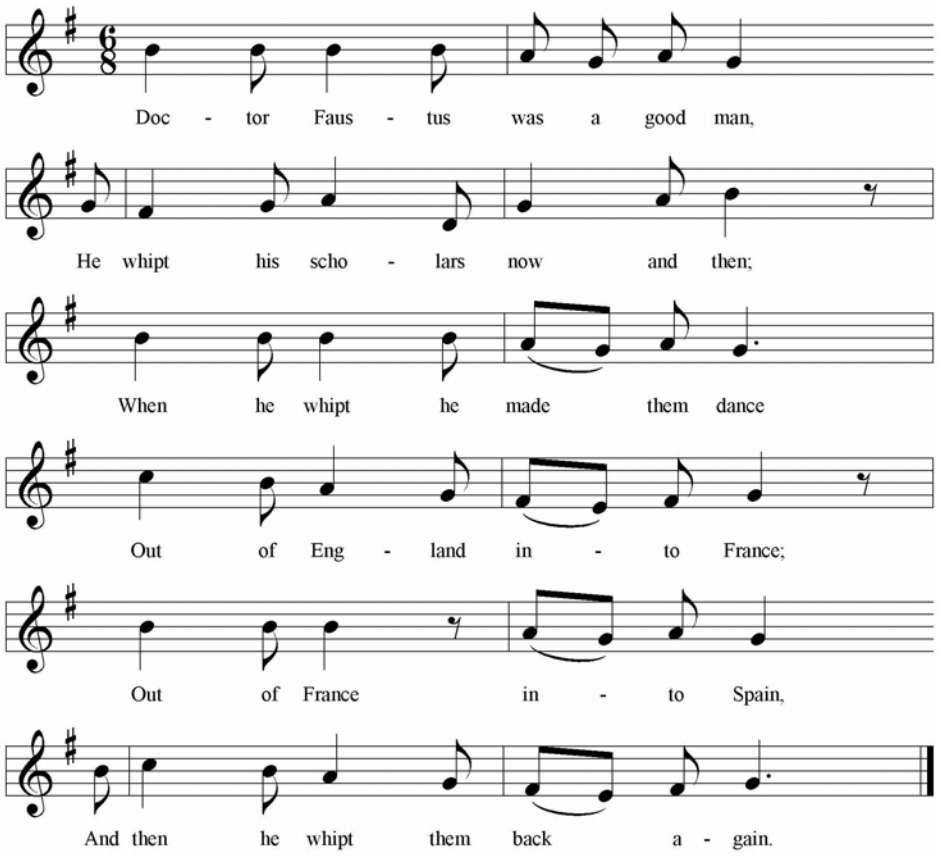

After the verse has been sung twice, Dr. Switchem breaks through the ring, and chases the scholar round and through it. The ring meanwhile sings the verse several times over.

At the end of each repetition, the Doctor must be within the ring and the scholar without, under the penalty of a forfeit. The scholar may at the end of any repetition of the verse, quickly change places with any child in the ring, and the game goes on until all the scholars have been chased.

# 8. DOCTOR FAUSTUS

## 1.C

(Crane, 1877, p. 46)



# 9. FARMER IN THE DELL

In all variants of this singing game, the children circle round one in the centre who then in turn chooses another. The last child chosen becomes the "farmer" for the next game. The last one chosen is the "dog," the "bone," the "cheese," or in one instance, the "knife."

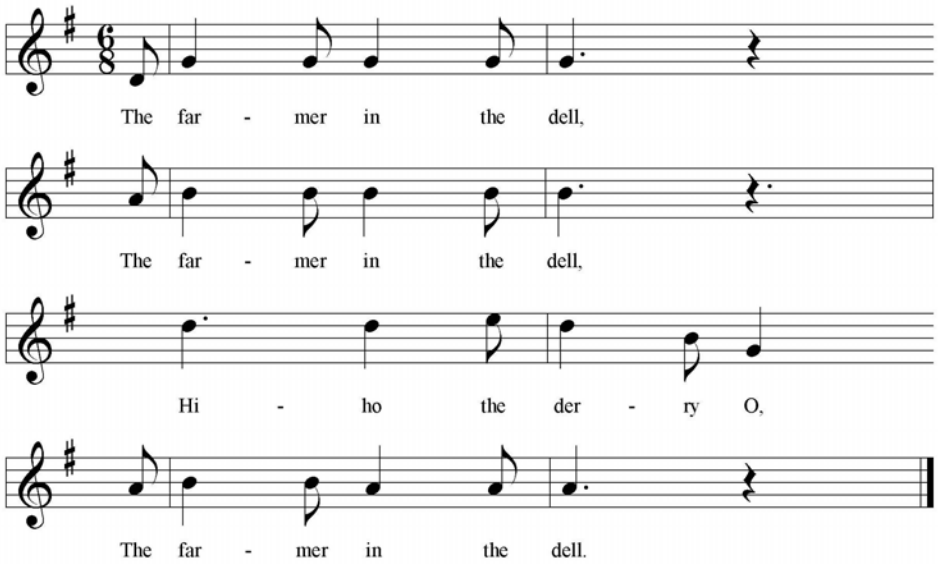
The majority of the variants contain six verses, the Fowke and Creighton (1.A) contain nine verses, and one of the MUN variants (3.A) contains eleven verses. The refrains are either "Hi ho the derry O," or some form of "Hi ho Victorio."

The tunes of the Canadian variants are quite varied, especially in the opening phrases, but resemble, most closely, the Scottish-American tunes printed in Opie and Opie (1985, p. 184). As noted there, these are variants of tunes for "A-hunting We Will Go" (#1), and the "Grand Old Duke of York" (#11). Specifically, the melody of 1.A, from Fowke and Creighton, is perhaps the one most associated with this game. It is found in variants 2.A–C of "A-Hunting," variants 3.A–C of the "Grand Old Duke," and variants 1.A–B of "Sally Go Round the Sun" (#46), all Canadian variants of those singing games. Only the melody of Kerr's variant (2.A) ("Another Version"), contains the more limited range of the British variants of "A-Hunting" and the "Grand Old Duke." The remaining four variants from MUN contain a mixture of the limited range of the beginning of the British variants with the closing phrases of the Canadian variants. Gomme (in 1.B) printed the text, only, for the "Farmer's Den" (II, 1898, p. 420), similar to Kerr's variant, as it was not well known then in Britain. The Opies (1985) state that the game seems to have "arrived in America, whence it has been taken by West Germanic immigrants" (see pp.186–87).

# 9. THE FARMER IN THE DELL

## 1.A

(Fowke, 1969, p. 13; Creighton, MS 10–8)



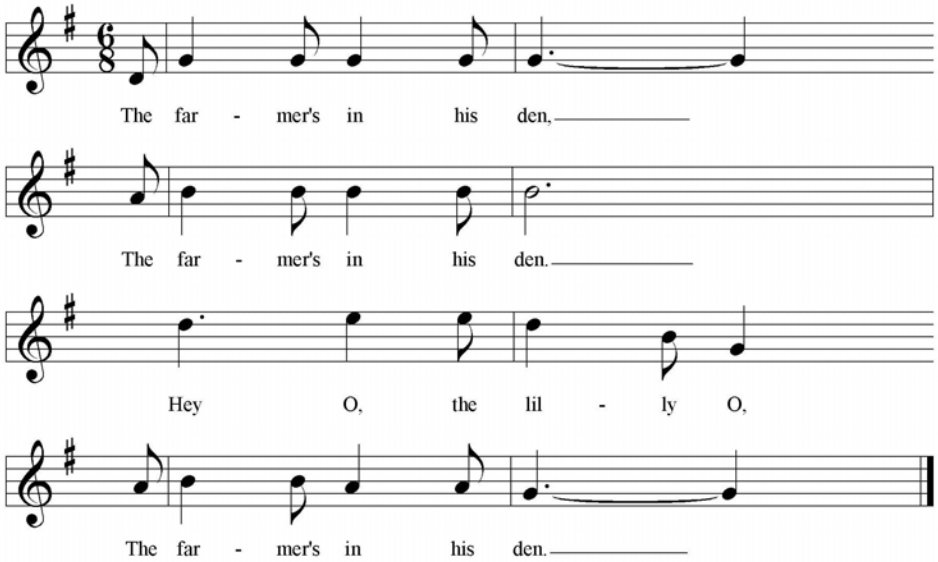

2. The farmer takes the wife,
3. The wife takes the child,
4. The child takes the nurse,
5. The nurse takes the dog,
6. The dog takes the cat,
7. The cat takes the rat,
8. The rat takes the cheese,
9. We all take a bite.

GAME: Children circle around one in the centre who chooses another, and she in turn chooses another. The last child chosen becomes the “farmer” for the next game.

# 9. THE FARMER'S IN HIS DEN

## 1.B

(Kerr, 1912, p. 21; Gomme II, 1898, p. 420)




*Verse 2*

The Farmer takes a wife
The Farmer takes a wife
Hey O, the lilly O,
The Farmer takes a wife

*Verse 3*

The Wife takes a child
The Wife takes a child
Hey O, the lilly O,
The Wife takes a child

*Verse 4*

The Child takes a nurse, etc.,

*Verse 5*

The Nurse takes a dog, etc.,

*Verse 6*

The Dog takes a bone, etc.,
or
We all clap the dog; etc.,

*Verse 7*

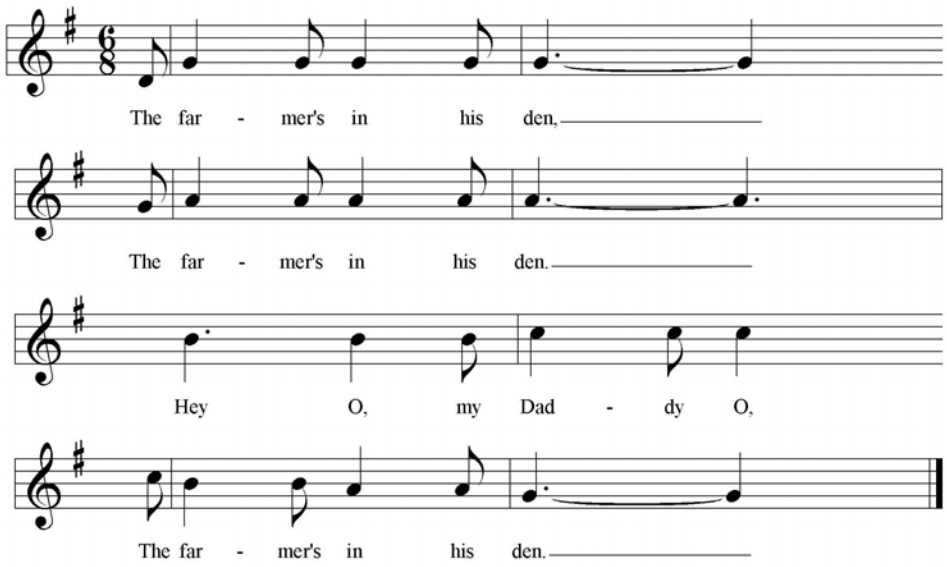
The Bone stands still, etc.,
or
The Bone's left alone, etc.,

GAME: A ring game with one player left in the centre as the Farmer. At the second verse he chooses someone from the circle as his wife, who takes his place and in turn chooses the Child; and so on until the last verse, when all the players advance to the centre and slap the "Bone." A slight variation is occasionally introduced in concluding at the alternative sixth verse, the players then suiting the action to the words, "We all clap the dog."

# 9. THE FARMER'S IN HIS DEN
## (Another Version)

### 2.A

(Kerr, 1912, p. 21)




Additional verses as 1.B

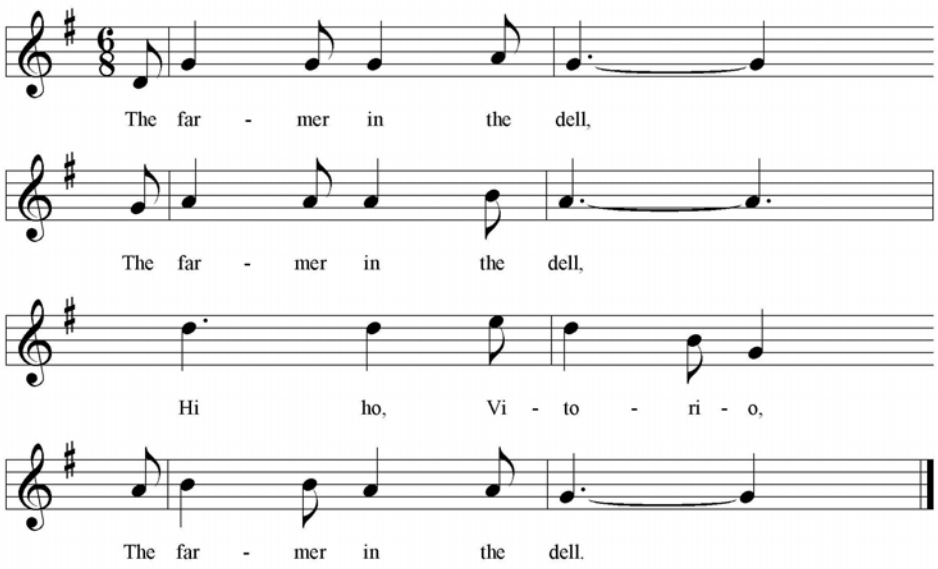
GAME: As 1.B

# 9. THE FARMER IN THE DELL

## 2.B

2 Children, St. Shott's, July 21–22, 1968
MUNFLA 68–43/C530
*Collector:* Herbert Halpert

**(Key: F)**

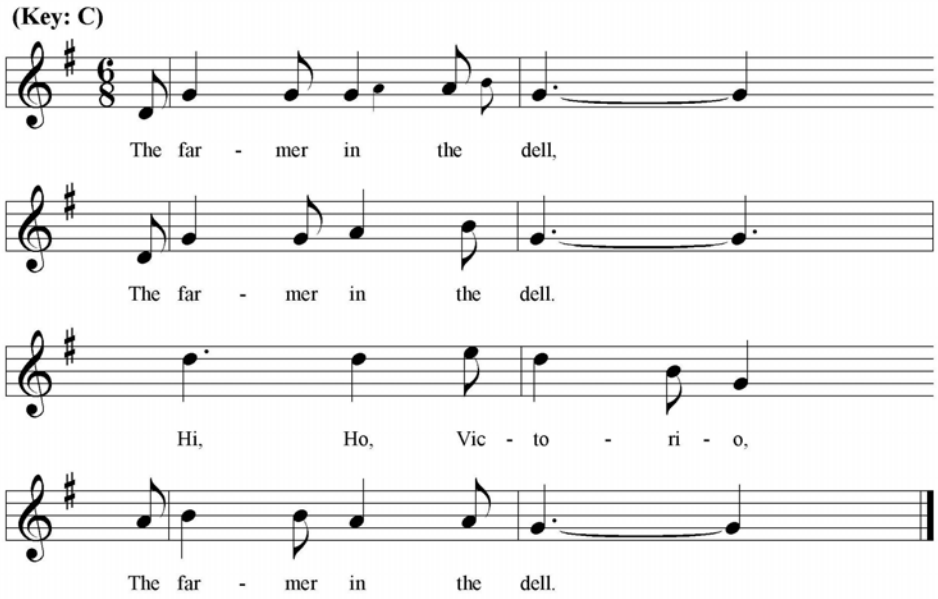



2. The farmer takes his wife
3. child
4. dog
5. bone
6. The bone stands alone.

# 9. THE FARMER IN THE DELL

## 3.A

Mrs. Dwyer, Tilting, July 16, 1964
MUNFLA 64–13/C87
Collectors: John D.A. Widdowson & Fred Earle



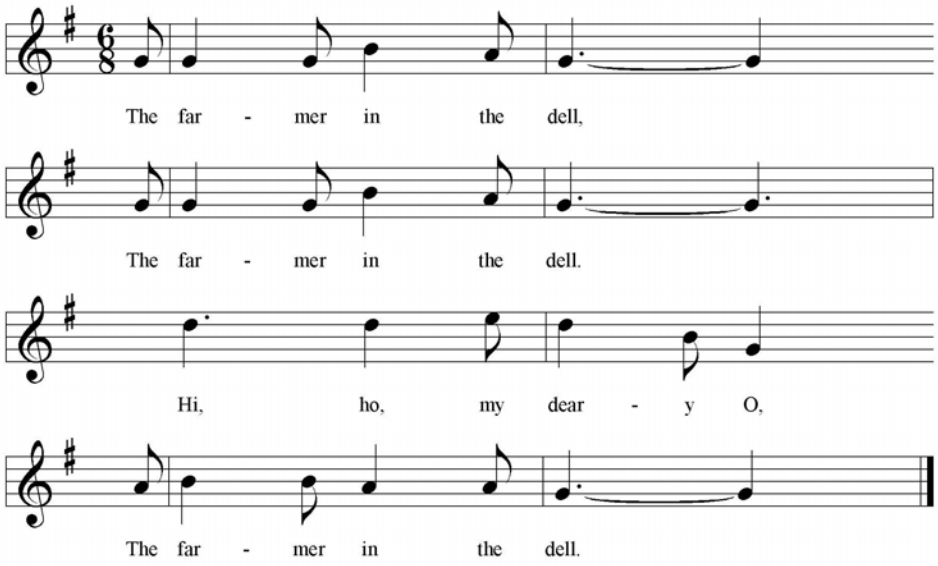

2. The farmer takes a wife
3. child
4. nurse
5. dog
6. The dog stands alone

# 9. THE FARMER IN THE DELL

## 3.B

9 year old girls, Ramea, December 19, 1967
MUNFLA 68–7/C477
*Collector:* Jesse Fudge

**(Key: B)**

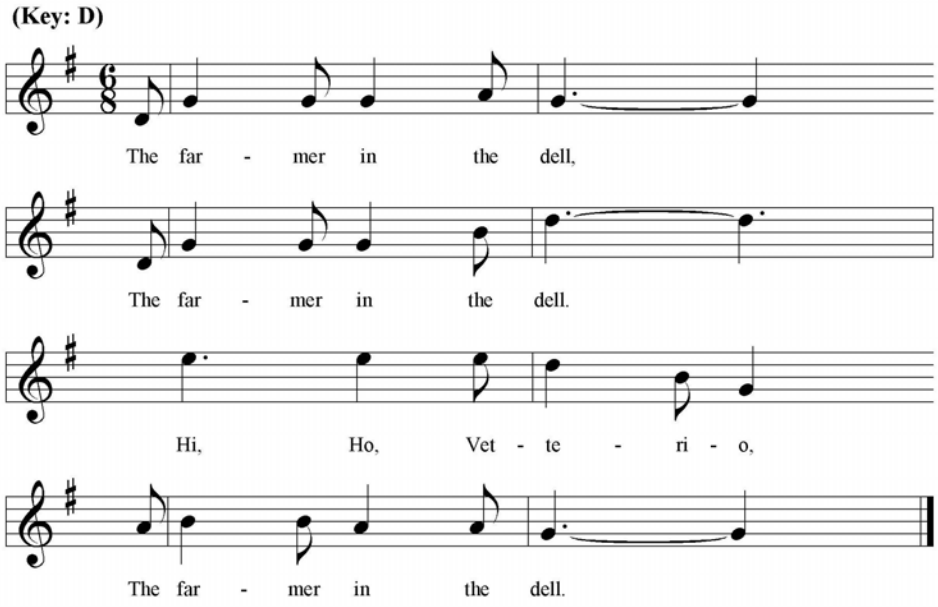



2. wife
3. child
4. nurse
5. dog
6. bone
7. cat
8. rat
9. cheese
10. knife
11. stands alone

# 9. THE FARMER IN THE DELL

## 4.A

Martha Hutching, Cow Head, August 25, 1966
MUNFLA 66–24/C256
*Collectors*: Herbert Halpert & John D.A. Widdowson




2. The farmer wants a wife
3. The wife takes a child
4. cat
5. cheese
6. stands alone

# 10. GIRLS AND BOYS

This song used to be repeated formally as a call to players. The earliest references to the song are in adult literature, in dance books, in satires, and in political broadsides of the early eighteenth century. (See, for example, Plate IV, from *The Second Book of the Complete Country Dancing-Master*, 1719, that also includes the dance instructions, in Opie & Opie, 1951) However, the Opies (1951) believe that "the verse seems already in Queen Anne's time to have belonged to children and probably dates from the middle of the previous century" (p. 100).

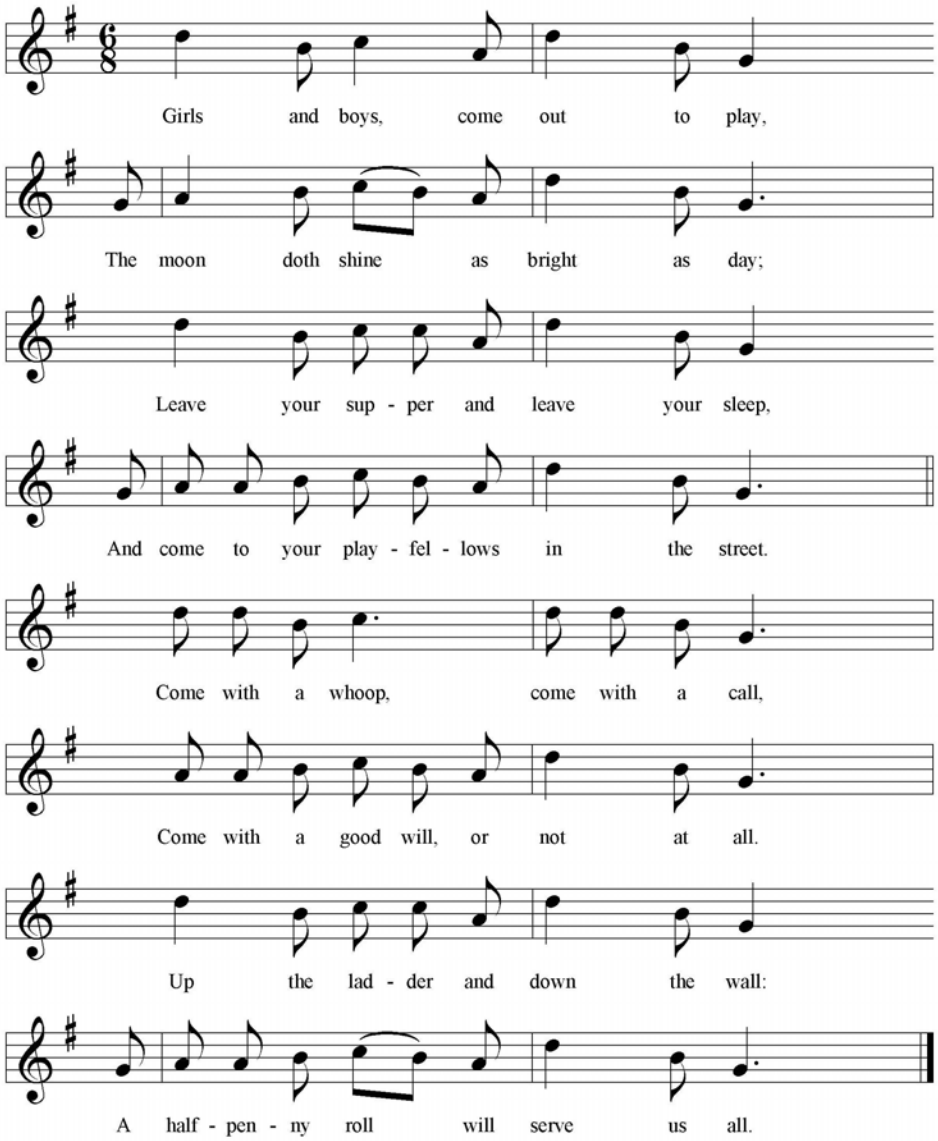
Gomme (I, 1894b) reprinted the tune from *The Dancing Master* (1728), without mentioning that the first strain is to be repeated (p. 44). It is the basis of the melodies found below, although the second half of the Crane variant (1.B) modulates down a fourth, not found in the dance tune. The text Gomme reprinted (p. 44) from *Useful Transactions in Philosophy* (1708), that predates the Dance tune, contains only six of the eight lines found in the following variants. The earlier sources noted by Gomme and the Opies begin with the text "Boys, Boys," or "Boys and Girls." The more modern sources of the variants all begin with "Girls and Boys." These eight-line texts are the same as the first eight of ten lines printed in Opie & Opie (1951, p. 99). The verse, according to them, has been more popular in juvenile literature, perhaps, than in any other (p. 99). No variants are recorded in their 1985 collection. Newell (1883) states that:

> In the last generation children still sang in our towns the ancient summons to the evening sports–
>
> Boys and girls, come out to play,
> The moon it shines as bright as day;
>
> and similarly in Provence, the girls who conducted their ring-dances in public squares, at the stroke of ten sang:
>
> Ten hours said,
> Maids to bed.
>
> But the usage has departed in the quiet cities of Southern France, as in the busy marts of America. (p. 32)

# 10. GIRLS AND BOYS

## 1.A

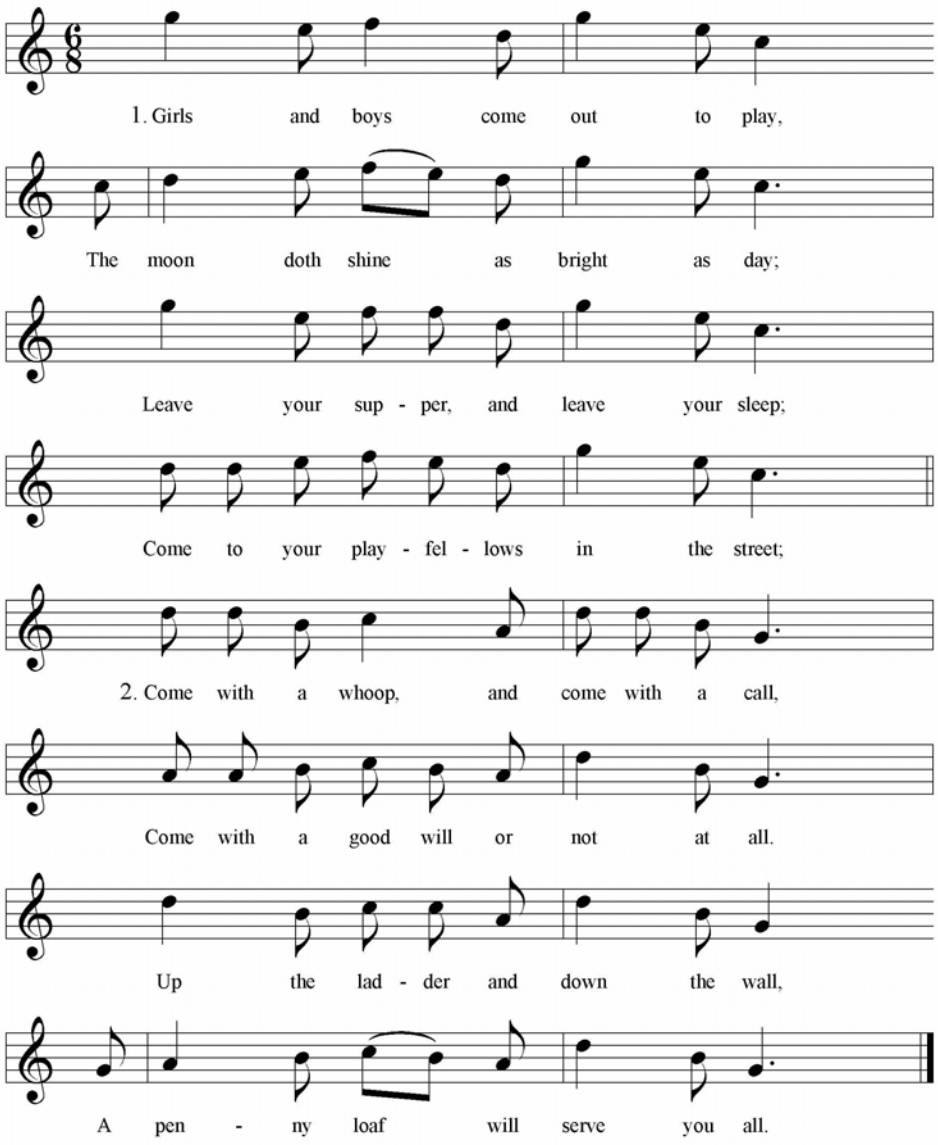
(Rimbault, 1846, p. 1)



# 10. GIRLS AND BOYS

## 1.B

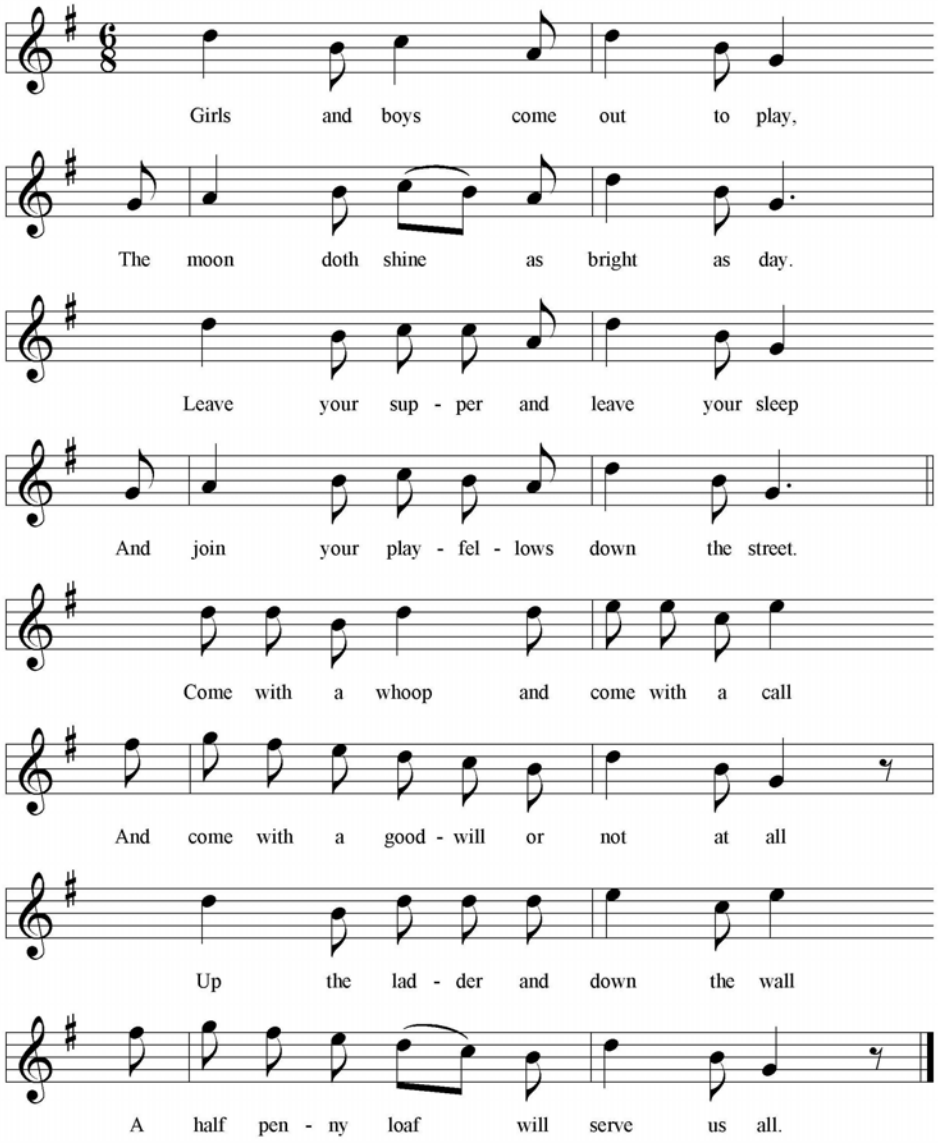
(Crane, 1877, p. 9)



# 10. GIRLS AND BOYS COME OUT TO PLAY

## 1.C

(Moffat, 1911, p. 41)



# 11. GRAND OLD DUKE OF YORK

According to the Opies (1951), the origin of the "King of France with Forty Thousand Men," was mentioned by a James Howell, a future Historiographer Royal, in 1620. It was composed when King Henry levied a huge army in 1610. The song probably was popular in oral tradition ever since it was composed, but the Opies have not found it included in seventeenth and eighteenth century song books. A more recent off-shoot is probably the song "The Duke of York." The tune is old French, a version of "Le Petit Tambour" (p. 176). This tune is the melody of variants 1.A–C.

The "Grand" or "Noble Duke of York" eight line text only is printed in Gomme (I, 1894b, p. 121) and in Opie and Opie (1951, p. 442; 1985, p. 214). This is the text of most of the variants. Kidson's 1.C variant contains a rather humorous second verse, to which the children must march like soldiers.

The differences between the tunes noted for "A-Hunting" (#1) are exhibited here in the MUN (1.A), Kerr (1.B), and Kidson (1.C) variants as compared with the other variants, (3.A–C), which are from Fowke and Creighton. The main difference is in the range of the melody, where the former have a narrower range, from *do – fa*, whereas the latter have a broader range, from *do – so*. These latter (3.A–C), from Fowke and Creighton, are in compound (6/8) metre, whereas the MUN (1.A) and British variants are in duple metre. Parallel differences in tune variants are also noted for the "Farmer in the Dell" (#9) and "Sally Go Round the Sun" (#46) variants.

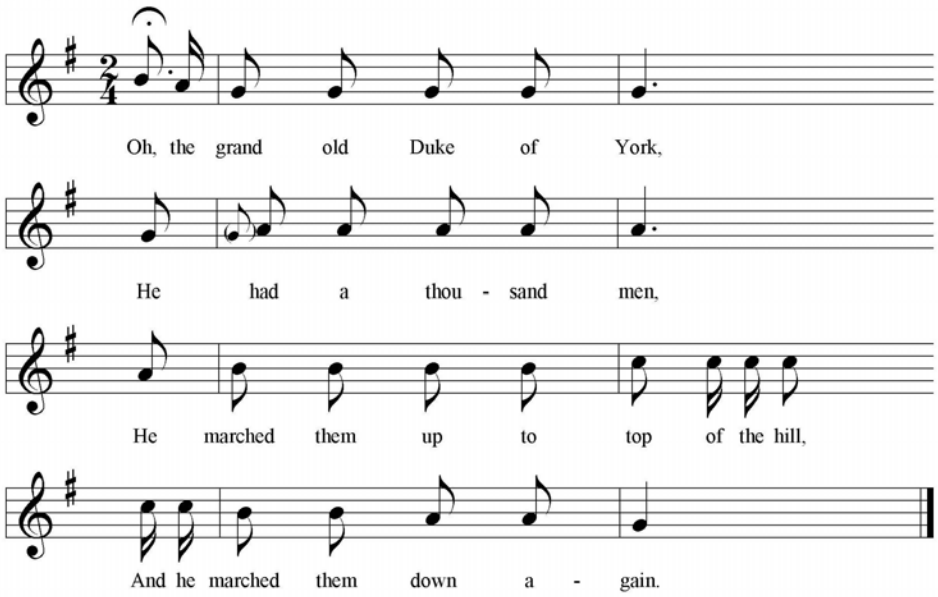
A third group of variants of the "Duke of York," also from Kidson and Kerr (2.A–B), are set to yet another tune, which has been noted above for the MUN 3.A variant of "A-hunting." Kidson's and Kerr's method of play, like a country dance, is the most common form for most of the "Grand Old Duke of York" variants. A more simplified method of play is given for some of the Canadian variants, such as 1.A, and as described above for "A-hunting" (#1, 1.A).

# 11. GRAND OLD DUKE OF YORK

## 1.A

Mrs. Brodie, St. John's, 1972
MUNFLA 72–143/C1139
*Collector:* George Brodie

**(Key: B-flat)**



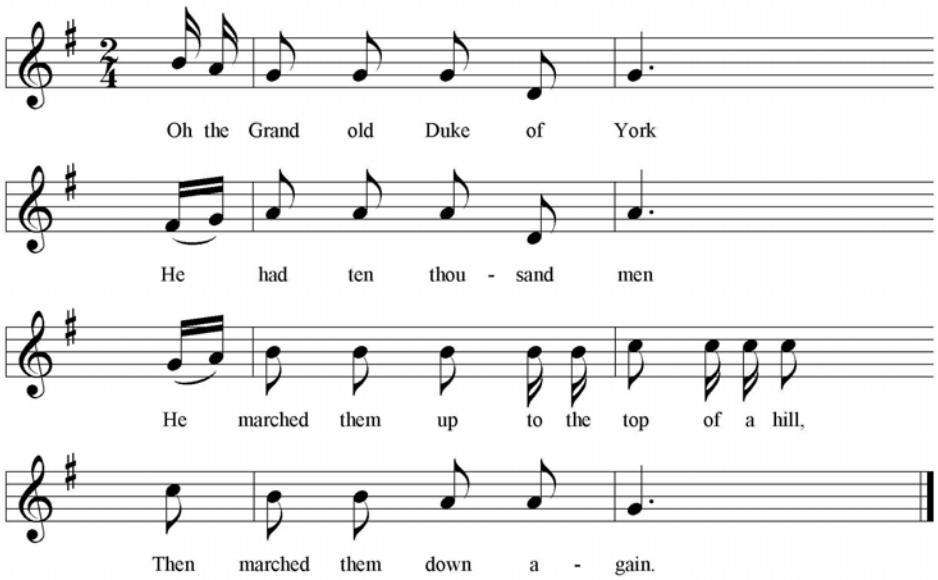

Oh, when they were up, they were up,
And when they were down they were down,
And when they were only halfway up,
They were neither up nor down.

GAME: Partners lined up, girls on one side, boys on other. Each walked around the hall. The first couple met at top, formed an arch, and the rest walked through in couples.

# 11. THE GRAND OLD DUKE OF YORK
## (second version)

### 1.B

(Kerr, 1912, p. 2)



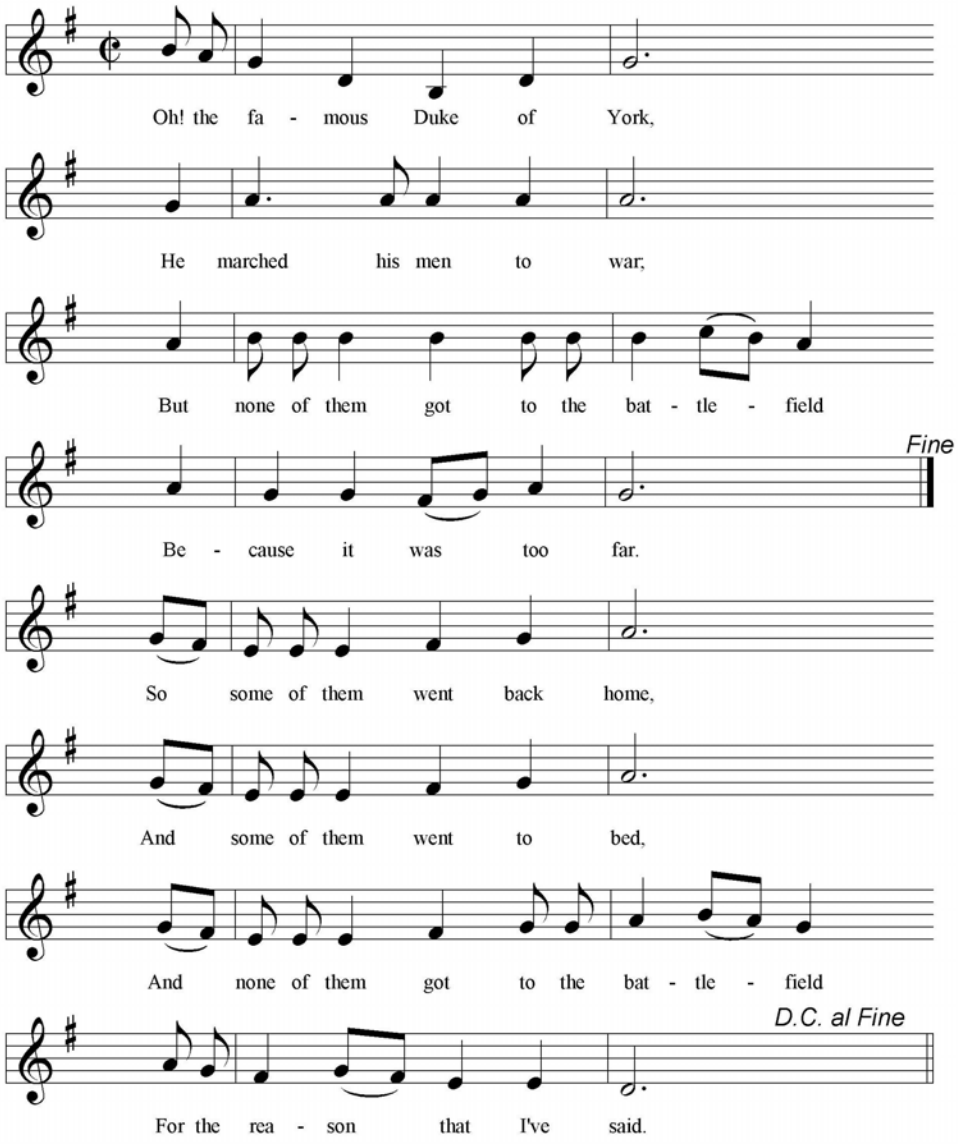

And when they were up, they were up,
And when they were down, they were down,
And when they were only half way up,
They were neither up nor down.

GAME: Ranging themselves in two lines as for a country dance (boys in one line, girls facing them in another) the verse is sung through from beginning to end. As it is resumed, the top boy, taking the right hand of his partner, leads her down the centre to the foot and back again. Separating at the top, the boy marches round behind the line of his fellows, and his partner behind the line of girls, each being followed by their respective lines in single file. As the original partners meet once more at the foot, they take hands to form an arch, beneath which all the others pass in pairs. The second boy and girl now assume the leadership; and the game proceeds until all the players have in turn lead off from the top.

# 11. THE DUKE OF YORK

## 1.C

(Kidson, 1916, p. 14)



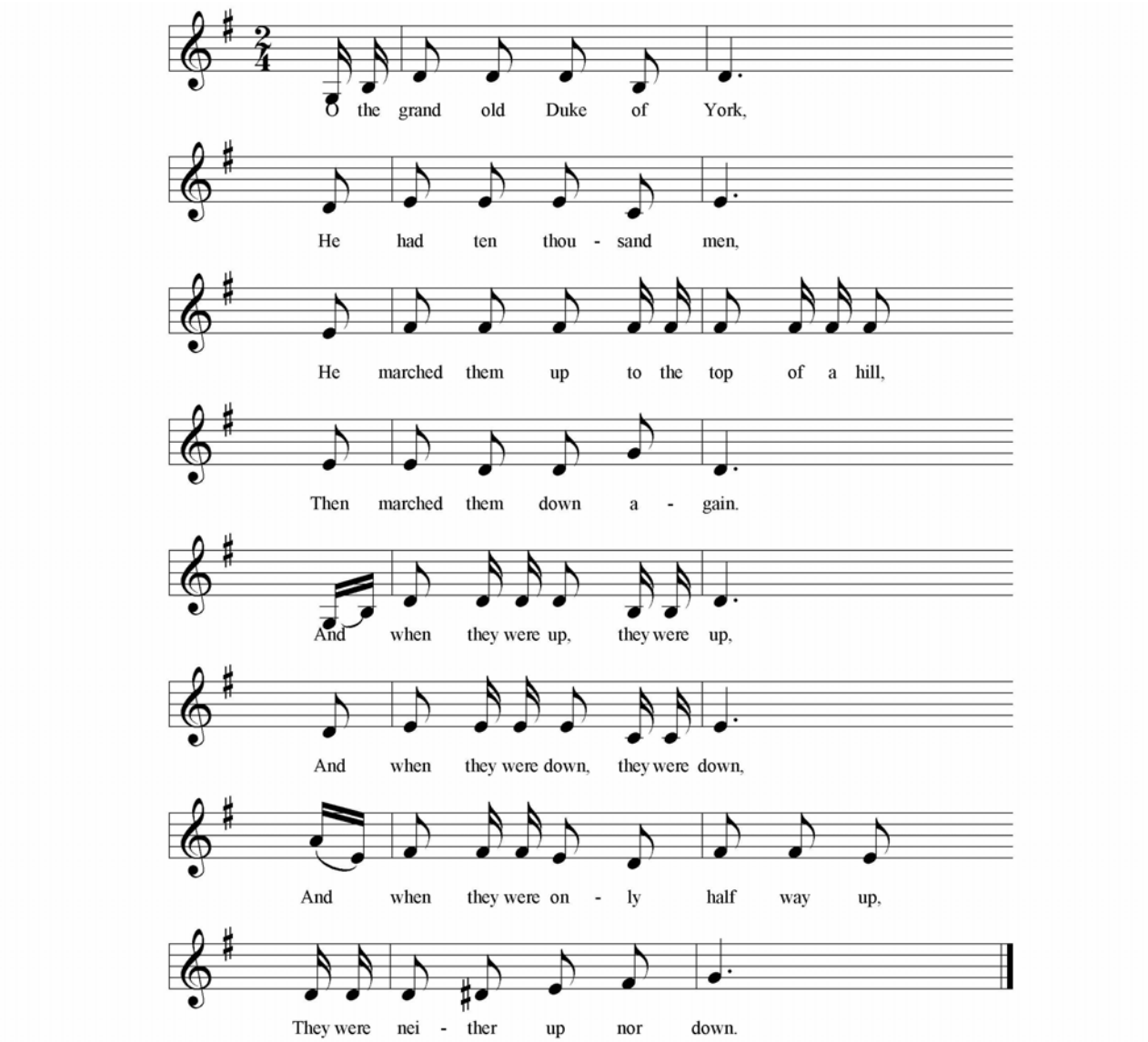

Oh! the famous Duke of York,
He had ten thousand men,
He marched them all right up a hill,
And then marched down again.
And when they were up, they were up,
And when they were down, they were down;
And when they were half-way up the hill,
They were neither up nor down.
Oh! the famous Duke of York,
He had ten thousand men,
He marched them all right up a hill,
And then marched down again.

GAME: The children form themselves into a military squadron armed with broomstick guns, lath swords, paper cocked-hats and such instruments of martial music as are afforded by toy drums and trumpets. After some scientific evolutions directed by the Duke of York in person, they march round singing the above verses, towards the end of which they climb an extemporised hill made of forms, boards, or benches (if practical).

# 11. THE DUKE OF YORK
## (Another Version)

### 2.A

(Kidson, 1916, p. 15)

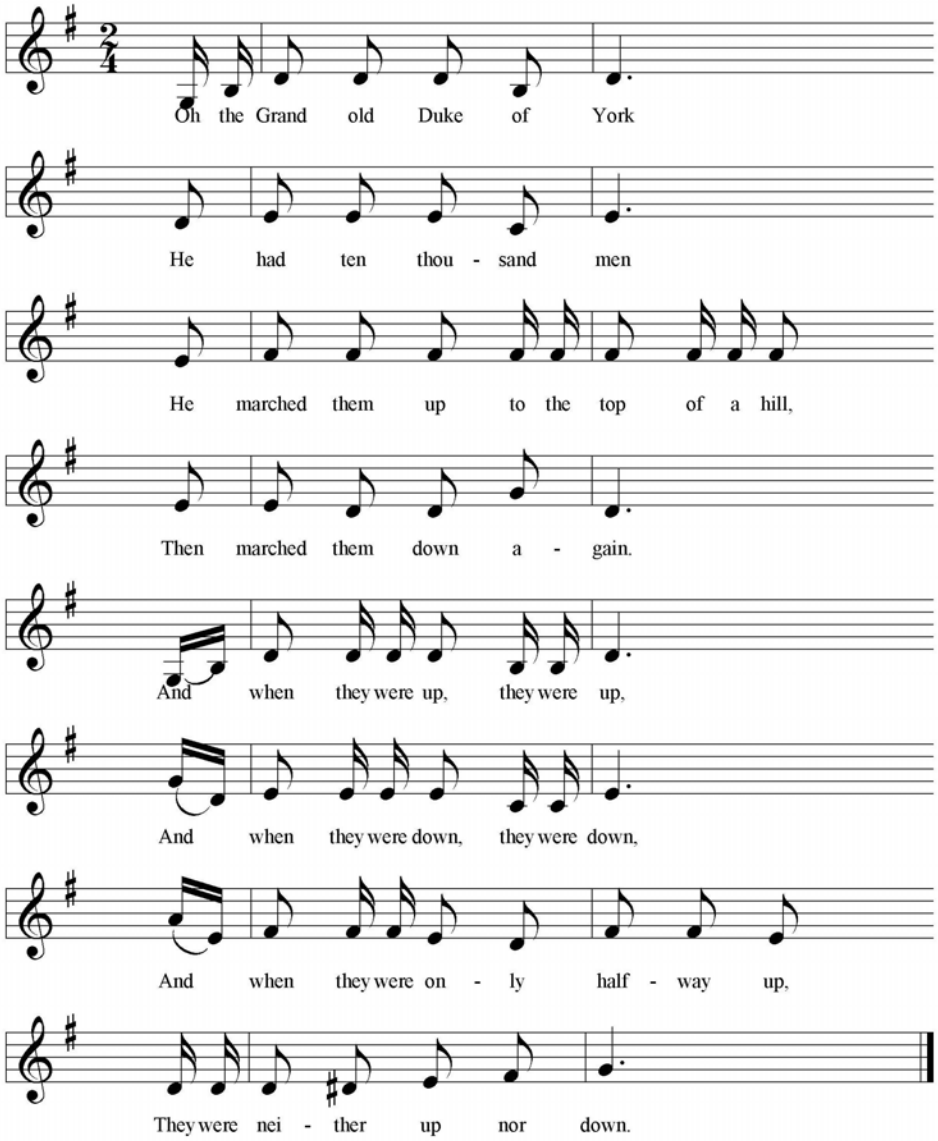



GAME: This is a country dance as well as a singing-game. The children face each other in two rows, the boys at one side and the girls at the other. They all sing the verse through. Then the leading boy and girl stop singing, and, while the others sing the verse again, march down eight steps between the rows to the foot. They turn and march eight steps up again, separate at the top, turn to right and left respectively, and march down behind the rows followed by the other children in single file. When the leading couple meet at the foot, they take each others' hands and raise them. The other children pass in couples under the arch thus formed, and once more range themselves in two rows. The second couple now takes the lead and the game proceeds until all are in their original position.

# 11. THE GRAND OLD DUKE OF YORK

## 2.B

(Kerr, 1912, p. 2)

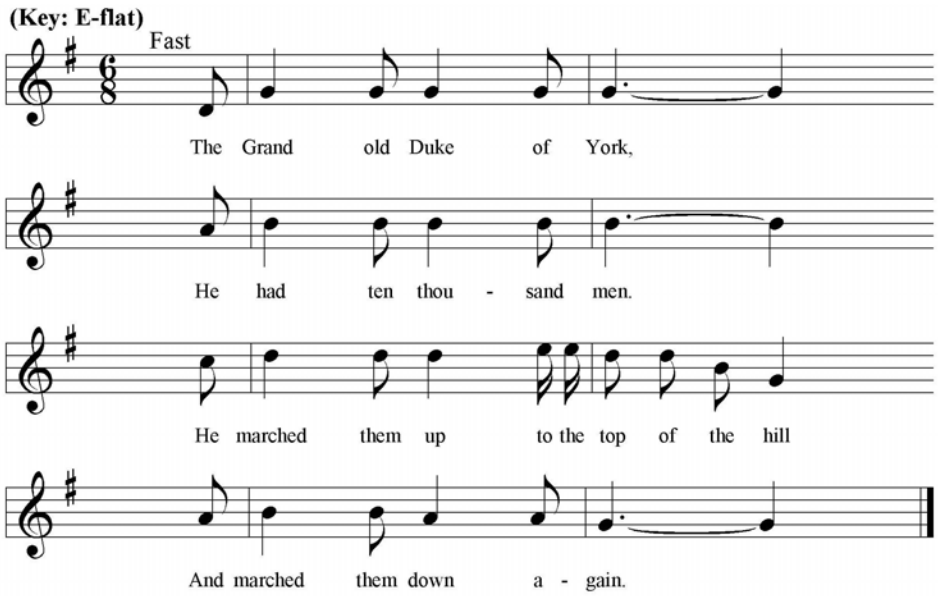



GAME: As 1.B.

# 11. GRAND OLD DUKE OF YORK

## 3.A

(FO 82)



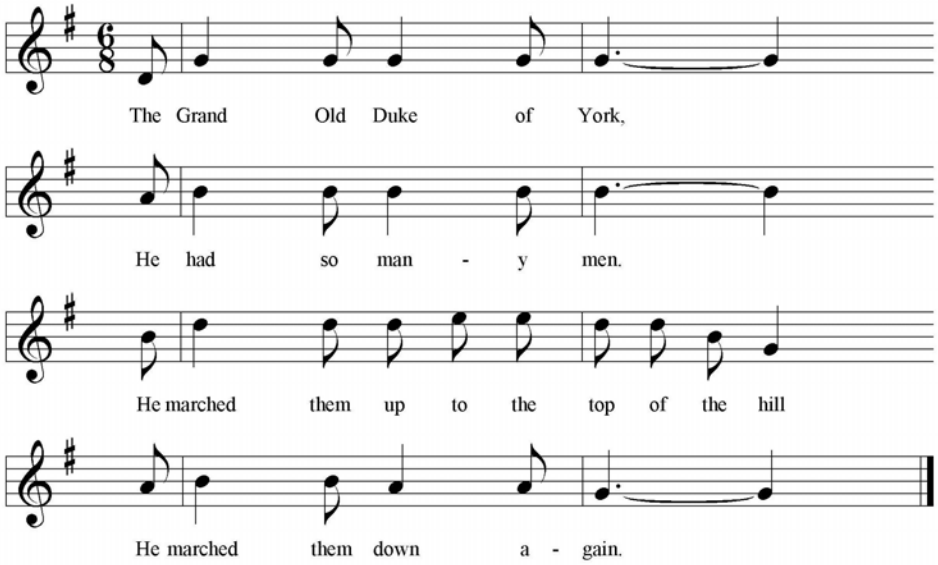

And when they're up, they're up,
And when they're down, they're down,
When they're neither half way up
They're neither up nor down.

GAME: Children march around in a line; on "when they're up" they stretch tall with hands above head; on "when they're down" they crouch; on "half-way up" they walk with knees bent. Also played like 1.A above, "A-Hunting We Will Go" (#1, 2.A), and used like a skipping rhyme.

# 11. THE GRAND OLD DUKE OF YORK

## 3.B

(Creighton, MS 10–4; FO 81)



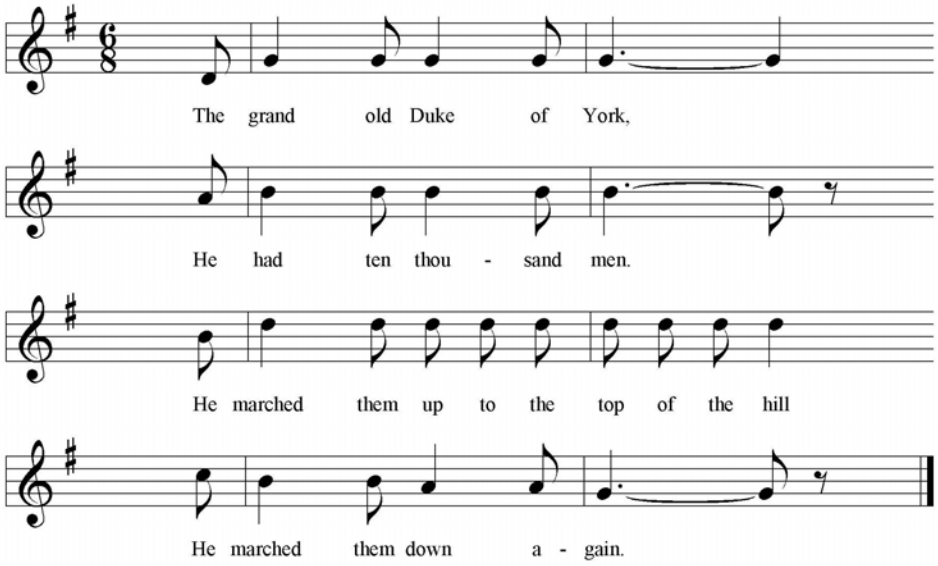

And when they're up they're up,
And when they're down they're down.
And when they're half-way up the hill
They're neither up nor down.

GAME: Played like 1.B, except first one line goes through the arch, then the other line goes through.

# 11. THE GRAND OLD DUKE OF YORK

## 3.C

(Creighton, MS 30–3; Fowke, 1969, p. 37)




And when you're up you're up,
And when you're down you're down;
And when you're only half-way up
You're neither up nor down.

GAME: As 1.B.

# 12. GREEN GRASS

Although the Opies include this game in their "Matchmaking" chapter, they and Gomme believe it may have belonged originally to a burial rather than a wedding. A child is sought and promised a duke, a drake, and a young prince (in later variants, she is promised a blackbird, a wren, a swan, and so on); but then it is stated, that "if this young prince dieth, (and leaves his wife a widow) then you shall get another." This juxtaposition of courting and burial elements, and inclusion of phrases possibly associated with funerals in ancient times makes it difficult to determine the age of the game or its original purpose. The Opies state that the game was popular from 1820 to 1920 (1985, pp. 116–120).

Gomme (I, 1894b) has recorded fourteen text versions, two with melodies (pp. 153–162). The shorter form of text in variant 1.A (Kidson and Moffat) was common in Scotland and in the northern part of Britain from "about 1825 to the end of the century" (Opies, 1985, p. 117). It is similar to the rhyme Gomme quoted from Chamber's (1870) *Popular Rhymes*, pp. 137–138 (Gomme I, 1894b, p. 154). The simplest method of play is described in variant 1.A, although the melody of this variant does not occur in the remaining variants included here. The tune of variant 2.A is a repeated two line melody, except in the section beginning "Suppose he were to die..." The text is similar to 1.A, with the addition of the "Naughty girl she won't come out" set of verses that occur in variants 2.B–3.A.

The verses of variant 1.A are all sung to the same melody, whereas the first verse of variants 2.B–3.A is sung usually to a variation of the "Mulberry Bush" (#30) tune. The middle verses of these variants are in various sections. Variants 2.B–3.A contain a second verse beginning "Fair maid, pretty maid, give your hand to me," sung to a new tune, followed by certain promises. Variants 2.B–2.C also contain the "We all go roving" verse found in 1.A, but sung to yet another tune. Then all the variants, except 1.A, contain the end verses beginning "Naughty girl she won't come out," followed by the last verse of rejoicing when the girl finally consents. This verse is sung to a "Mulberry Bush" (#30) variant tune in variants 2.A–C. Plunket's (3.A) first and last two verses are sung to a more limited-in-range melody of "Milking Pails" (28, 1.A–C) variants. In general, then, in the "Green Grass" variants, there is an overarching *A B A* melodic structure to the verses of these 2.B–3.A variants' melodies, with the *B* section containing a variety of texts and tunes.

The Opies (1985) suggest that the form of the game of the variants was beholden to the "Cushion Dance," a form common to variants from the south of England, and also possibly from Ireland (pp. 118–119). The lines beginning "For we will (we'll all) go a-roving," or "One by one, side by side," as noted above in variants 1.A and 2.B–2.C, are found in the "Jolly, Jolly Lads" (#22, 1.A) variant from MUN of the "Jolly Sailors," which is derived from the "Cushion Dance." As well, the end verses, beginning "Naughty girl..." are vestiges of the "Cushion Dance" (see Opie & Opie, 1985, pp. 190–197). These verses are found interpolated into some "more modern" variants of the "Three Knights from Spain" (#53, 1.A and 2.B), sung there, as well, to the "Mulberry Bush"(#30) tune.

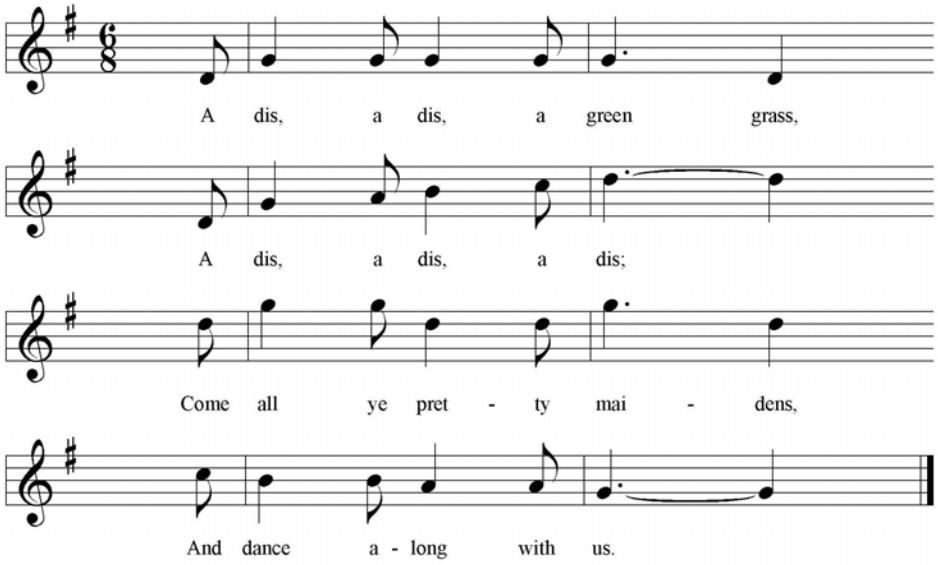
An additional observation is the occurrence in the first verse of the line "(On a) dusty, dusty, day" in variants 2.A–B (Gomme) and 3.A (Plunket), and of "Nancy, Tancy, Tay" in variant 2.C (Gillington). These lines are common refrains in the "Three Dukes" (#52), also sung to variations on the "Mulberry Bush" (#30) tune.

A rather singular aspect that may indicate that this game possibly may have originally belonged to a burial rather than a wedding is the tune of the middle section of variants 2B–3A. This is the part of the text beginning "Fair maid, pretty maid," and the tune is a variant of "Wallflowers" (#55) variants 1.A and 1.B from Gomme and Kidson, respectively. As well, the text there refers to the fact that the girls are all maidens, "and we shall all die." As noted for those variants, however, the game "Wallflowers" has not been recorded before 1874. Known "Green Grass" variants predate those of "Wallflowers" whose variant texts are quite consistent in form. It is possible, then, that "Wallflowers" may have had a much longer history. It is curious, as well, that the tune of the second section of the "Green Grass" variants (2.B–3.A) and the "Wallflowers" variants (1.A–B) also occurs in the beginning lines of the MUN variant of "Thread the Needle" (#51, 2.A). These variant sections' tunes are all in four measure phrases, as are all the variants of "Wallflowers" (#55). For further interconnections between these and other variants, consult Appendix A (p. 529), as well as the Introductions to each of the singing games mentioned above.

# 12. A DIS, A DIS, A GREEN GRASS

## 1.A

(Kidson, 1916, p. 95; Moffat, 1933, p. 10)




GAME: This is a game for little girls. They all join hands in a row except two, who face the line at a short distance from it. All sing and dance with a sort of swaying motion.

For we will go a-roving,
A-roving in the land,
We'll take this pretty maiden,
We'll take her by the hand.

During the singing of the second verse, the two girls advance to any point in the line and choose a child, whom they place between them. This child stops singing till the verses are finished, but the others continue.

And you shall get a deuk dear,
And you shall get a drake,
And you shall get a young prince,
A young prince for your sake.

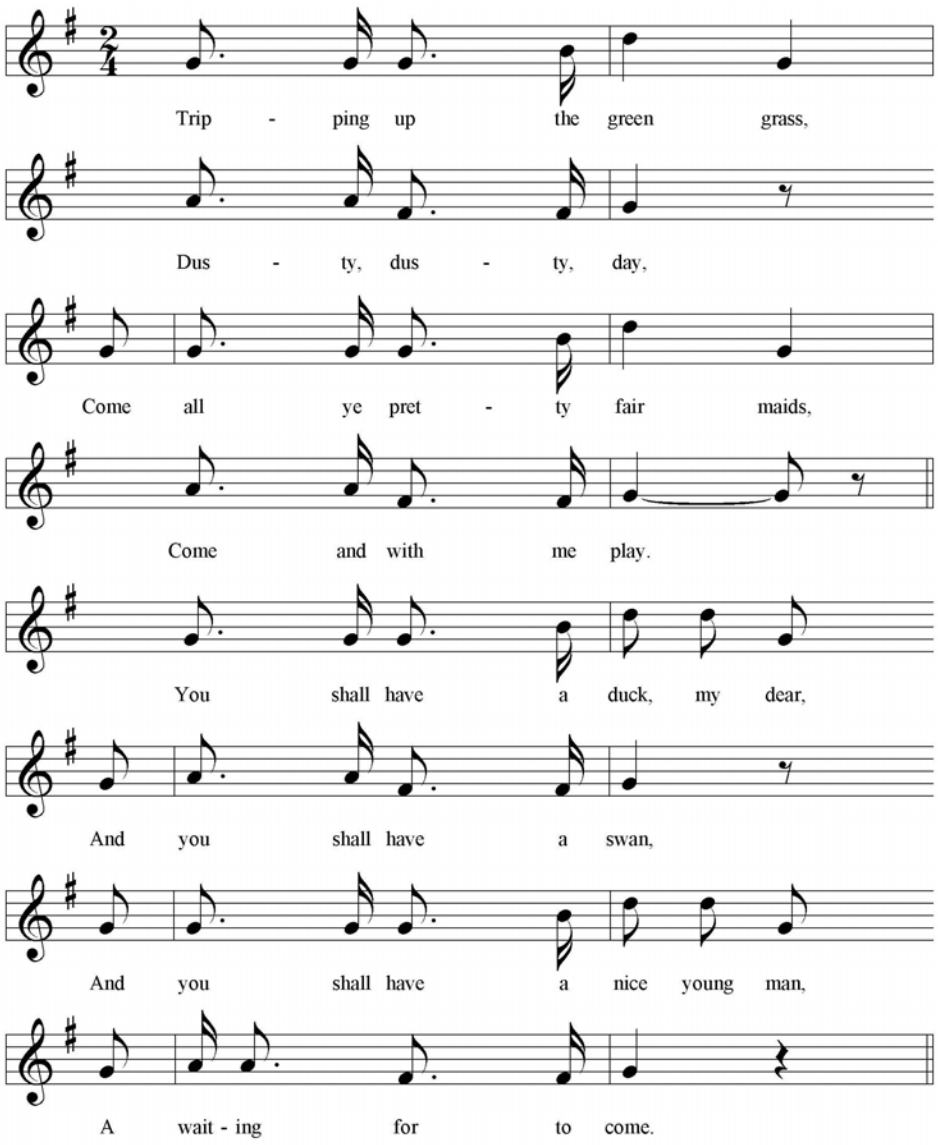
And if this young prince dieth,
Then you shall get another,
The bells will ring, the birds will sing,
We'll all clap hands together.

All clap hands at the last line. The game begins again with the three girls facing the line, and is repeated until every child has been chosen. (*The last verse is omitted in Moffat's variant*).

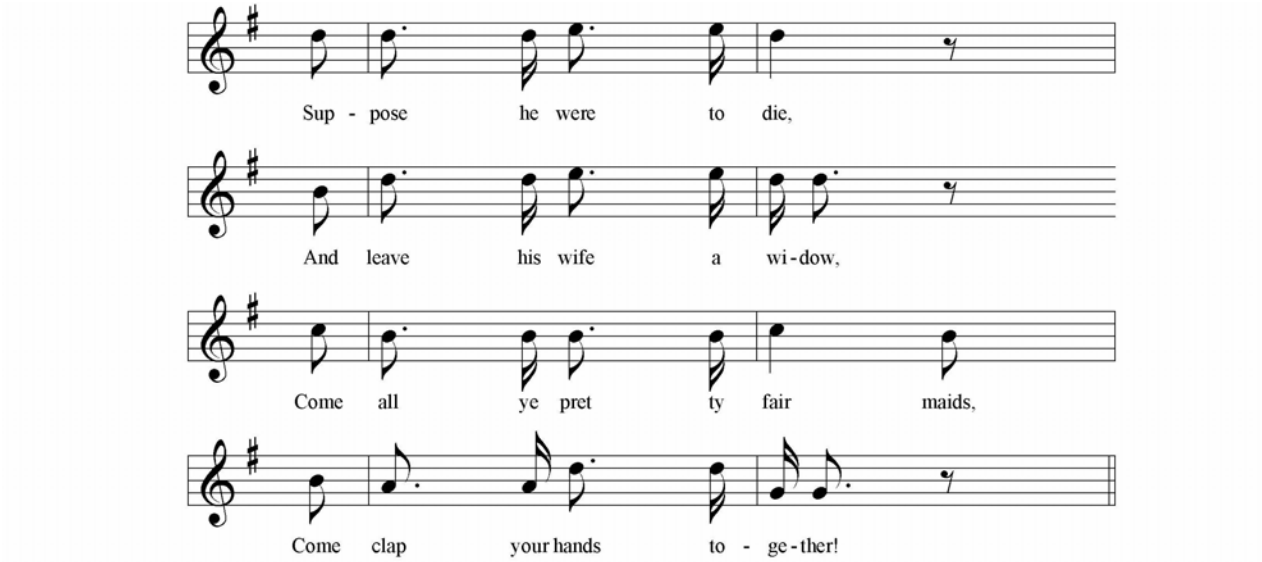
# 12. GREEN GRASS

## 2.A

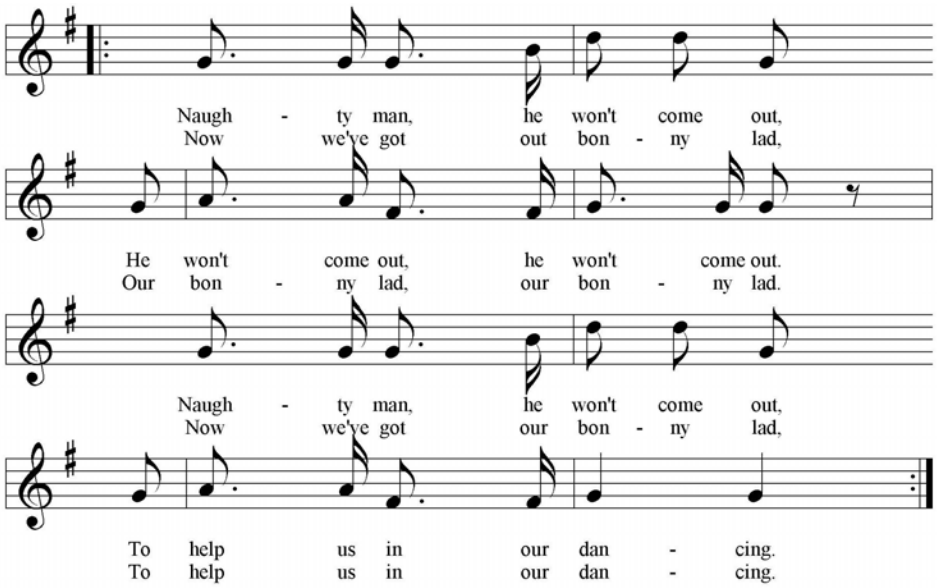
(Gomme I, 1894b, p. 153, Text vii)



"WILL YOU COME?" "NO!"




"WILL YOU COME?" "YES!"

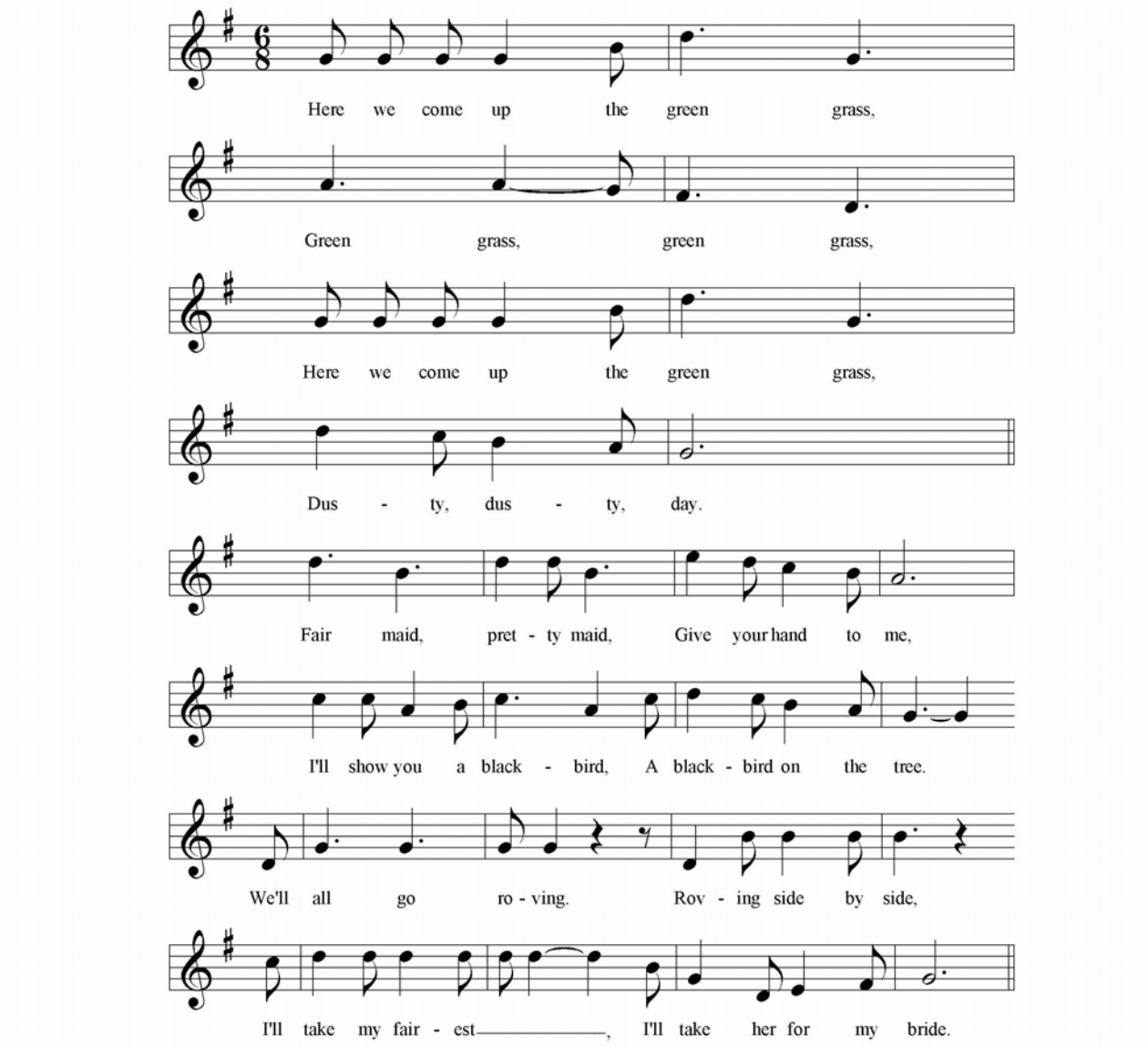



GAME: As described for Kidson's variant (previous), except the one child (or two) advances and retires while singing the verses. When the answer "yes" is given, the child chosen goes to the opposite side and the two dance round together while singing the next verse. The game begins again by the two singing the verses, getting a third child to join them, and so on.

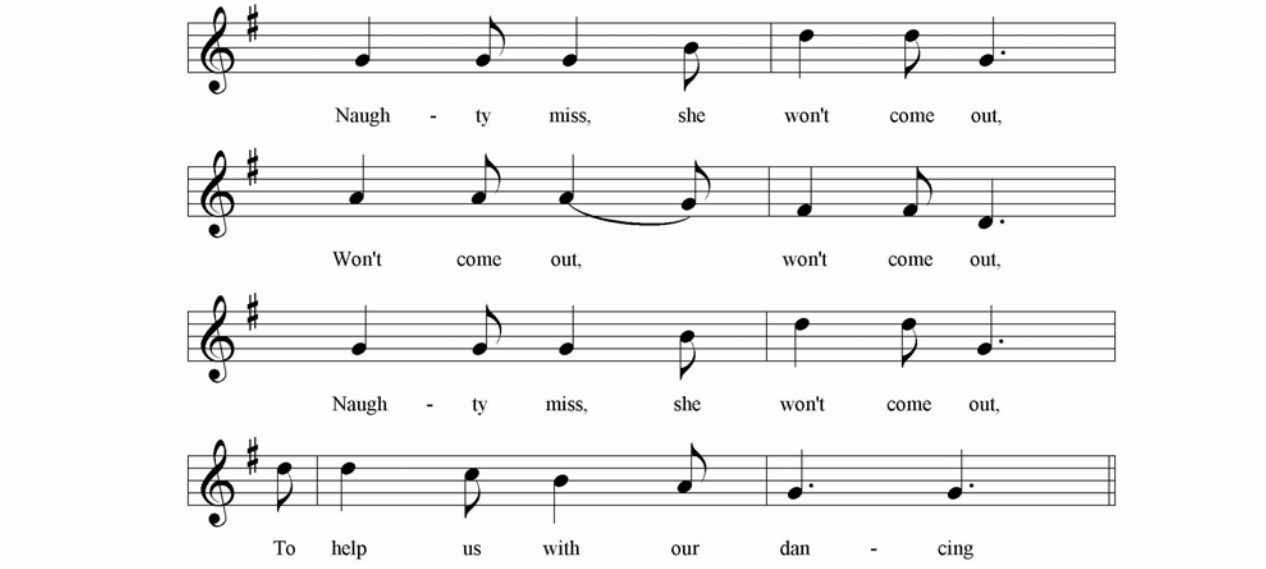
# 12. GREEN GRASS

## 2.B

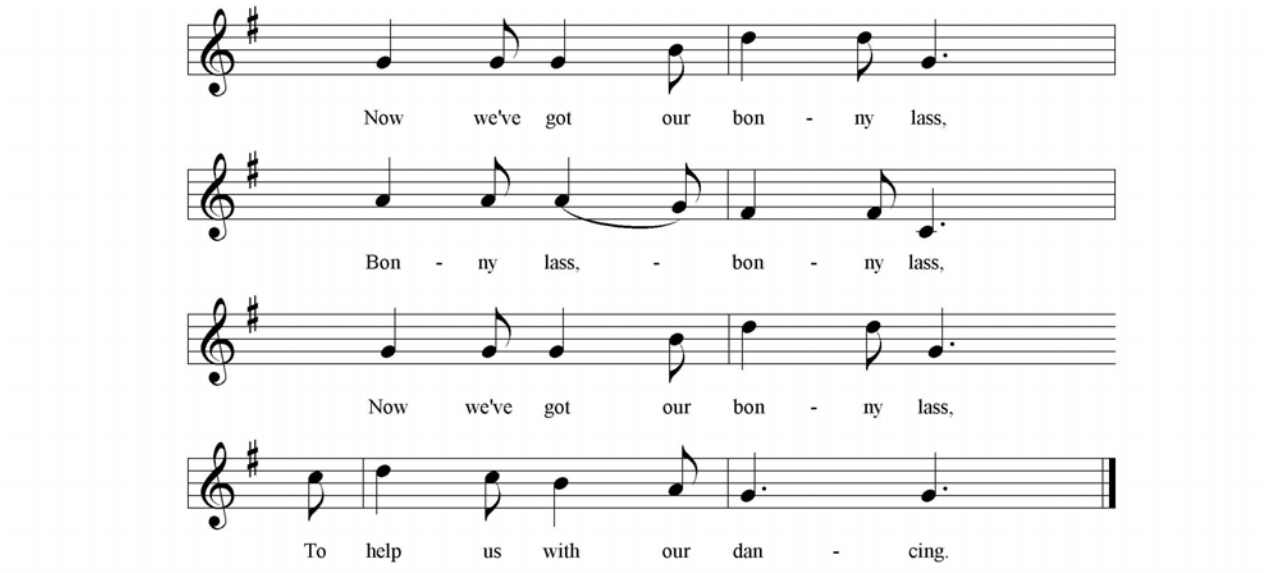
(Gomme I, 1894b, p. 153, Text xi)



“WILL YOU COME?” “NO!”




“WILL YOU COME?” “YES!”



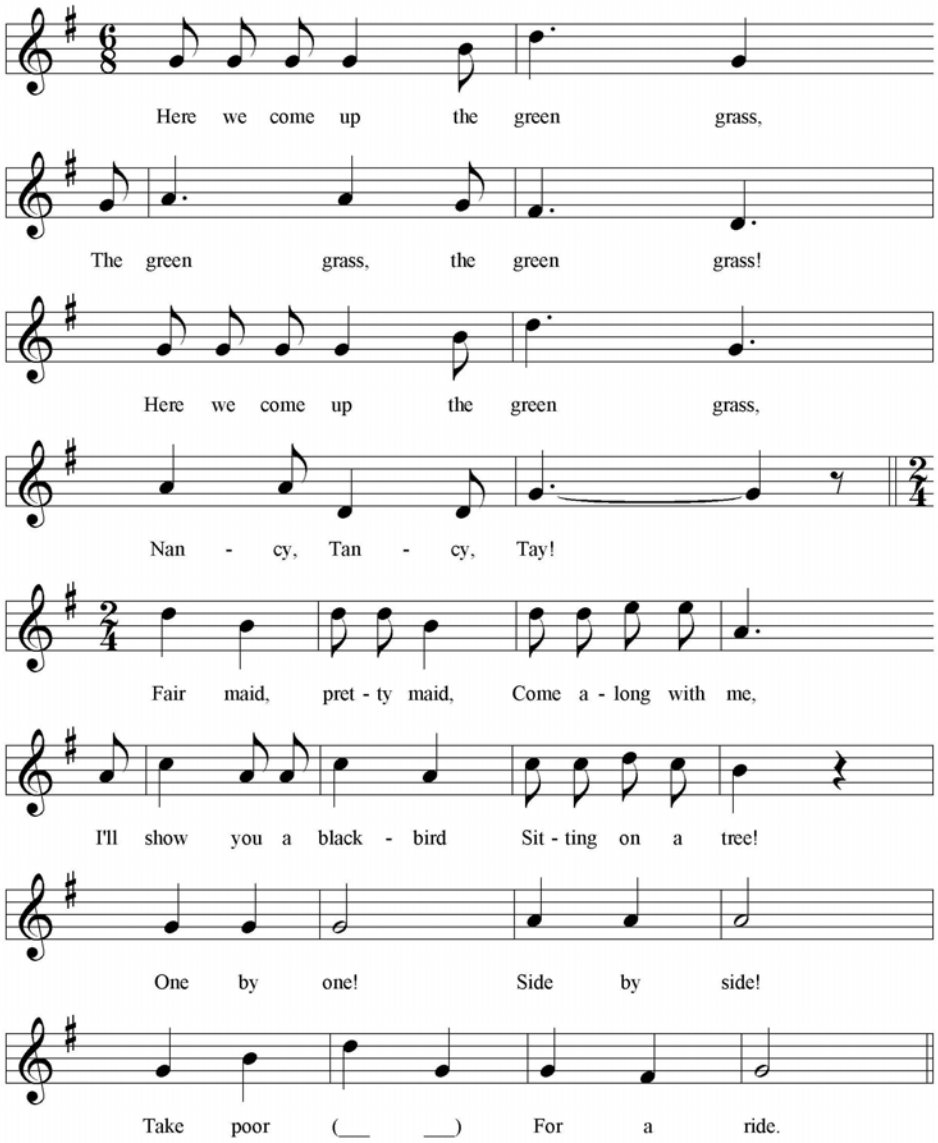

GAME: This variant is played in two lines of equal number.

# 12. HERE WE COME UP THE GREEN GRASS

## 2.C

(Gillington, 1909b, p. 18)

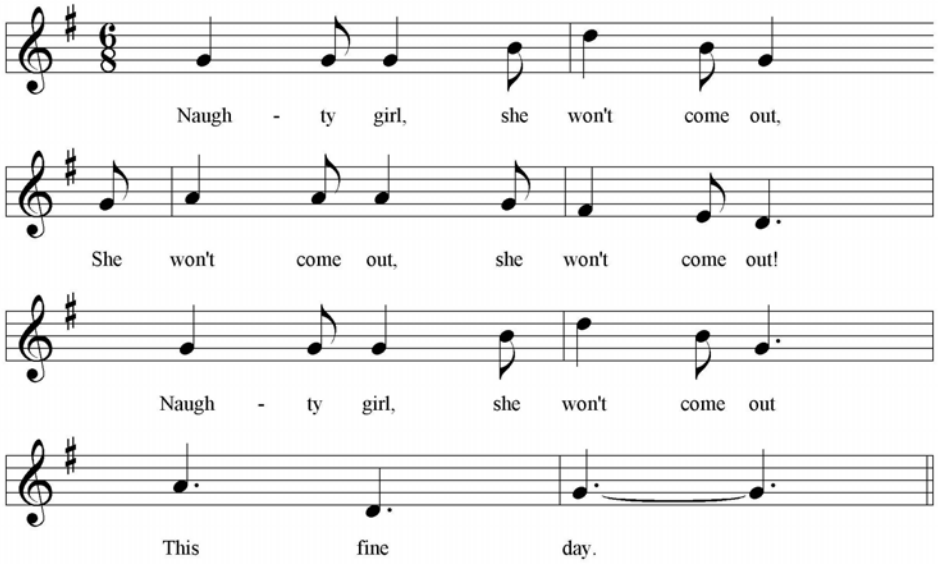
GAME: Two girls walk backwards and forwards in front of the others, who stand in a row, holding hands. They pace up four steps, and retreat four steps, singing:



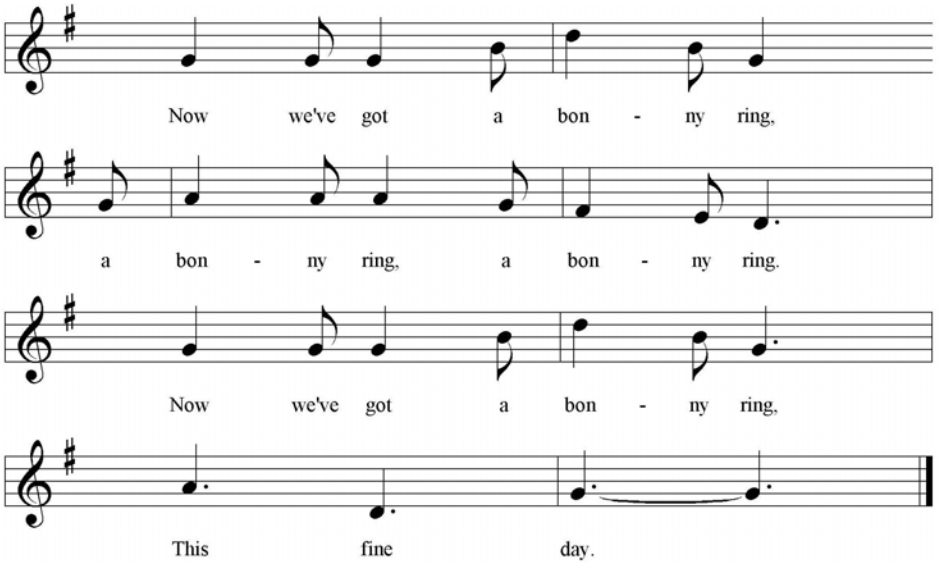

*(The section in 2/4 metre was originally printed as 8 measures in 4/4 metre.)*

Spoken to the girl named: "WILL YOU COME?"

If she answers: "NO!" the two who are out spin each other round and round, singing:




If she answers: "YES!" they lead her out, and the three dance round, singing:




Then the three walk backwards and forwards again in front of the others, singing:

"Here we come up the green grass!"

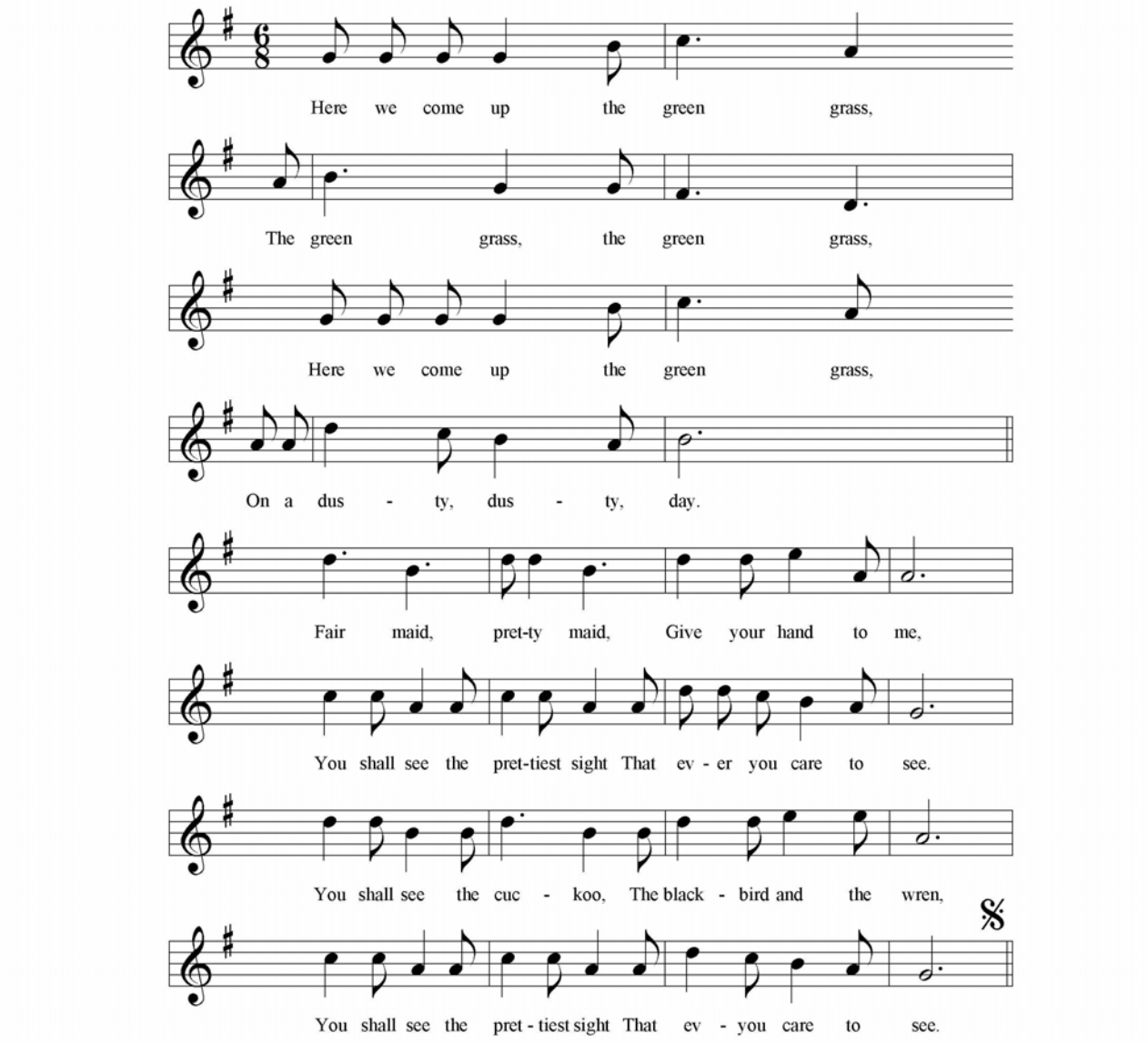
And so on, till all are chosen out.

# 12. HERE WE COME UP THE GREEN GRASS

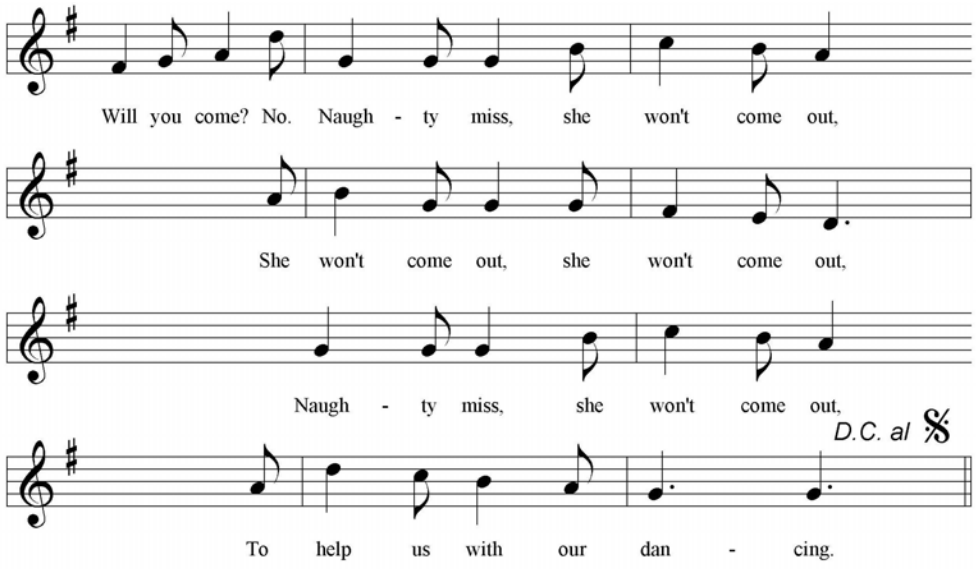
## 3.A

(Plunket, 1886, p. 26)

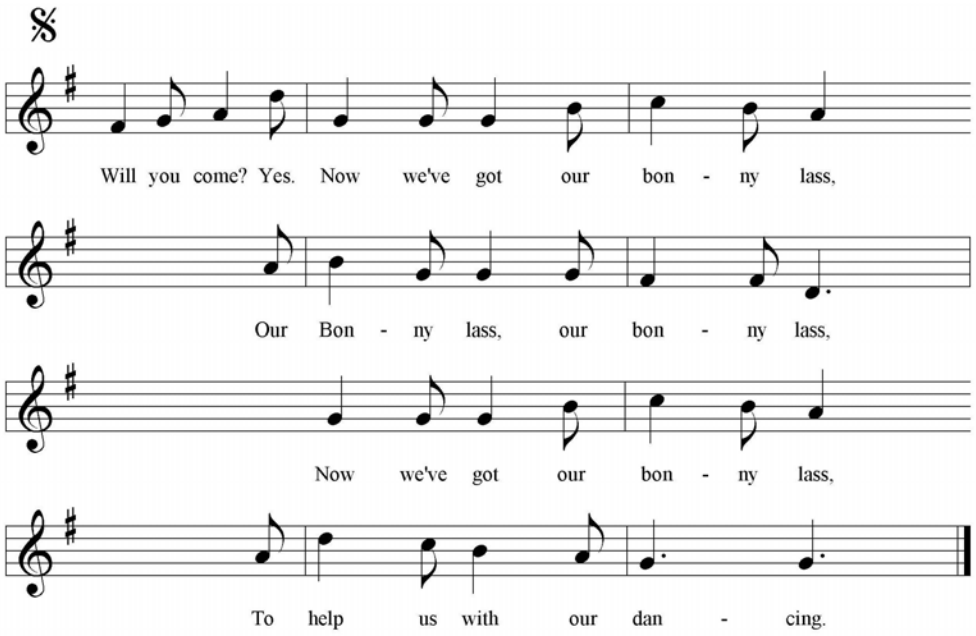
GAME: The children from two lines; the elder on one side, the younger on the other. The elder children advance and sing–



The youngest of the younger children answers them (at this time of asking), “NO.” The elders dance off in high dudgeon, singing as they go–




The elders advance again and sing the first verse. The youngest child now answers, “YES,” and the elders take her by the hand, and dance off singing–




Now reinforced by their “bonny lass,” they advance and persuade the younger ones, one by one, to join them, till the whole party dance round in a ring.

# 13. GREEN GRAVEL

Gomme (I, 1894b) suggests that this is a funeral game, (p. 177) although the Opies (1985) discount this (pp. 239–242). They include this game in their chapter on *Witch Dances*, and it is related to "Wallflowers" (#55) in the method of play. The girl named turns around to face outward at the end of game. The more common forms of the text and method of play are in Gomme's variant 1.A, the fourth of seventeen text variants (Gomme I, 1894b, pp. 170–183).

A four line text is the most common, as found in variants 1.A–3.A, and in the remaining Creighton and MUN texts (4.A, 5.A, & 6.A). The origin of the interpolated lines in Gomme's (3.B) and Kidson's (3.C) variants is unclear: "I'll wash you in new milk and dress you in silk, And write down your name with a gold pen and ink." The Opies (1985) state that this six line text most often recurs in variants recorded in the second half of the 19th century (p. 40). Then too, these two lines constitute the second half of the four line text in variants from Gillington (3.D & 4.B).

It is interesting that in Creighton's variants, 4.A and 5.A, the song has been transformed into one of courtship and the game has changed accordingly for the latter. Indeed, the 5.A variant contains vestiges of the "Cushion Dance." The MUN (6.A) variant contains the most straightforward text and is sung to a variation of the "Mulberry Bush" (#30) melody. It is a four line text: "Green gravel, green gravel, your grass so green. Your Mother and Father is still to be seen; Your true love is dead and cannot be found, So here is a message to turn you around."

Although there is some variation between variants in the basic form of the melody, the tunes are quite fragmentary in nature, with much repetition of a basic phrase pattern in each. There are connections between British and Canadian variants within the different tune groupings. There are two patterns for the opening phrase: most of the variants, 2.A–B and 3.A–D, begin with a descending pattern: *s m d*, or *s s m;* whereas variant 1.A (Gomme), and variants 4.A (Creighton) and 4.B (Gillington), begin with $s_l$ *d m*, an ascending pattern. With one exception (Creighton, 5.A), the tunes are in 6/8 metre. In variants 3.A–C (from Gomme and Kidson) the melody of the text lines "O Mary, O Mary, --- letter to turn round your head" is repeated a

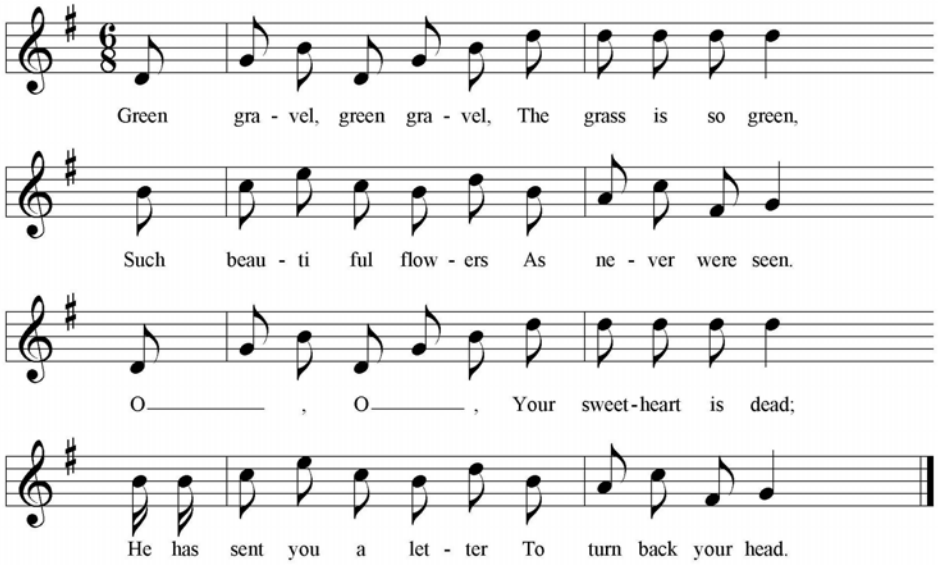
fourth higher than the beginning text lines. However, an interesting example of the infinite forms of variation is in the fact that Gomme's 3.A–B variants' first phrases begin a *fourth lower* in the dominant key than the final 2 phrases to the text, "O (Mary), O (Mary), your true love is dead." In Kidson's variant the third and fourth phrases begin a *fourth higher* for the "O (Mary), O (Mary)" text, in the sub-dominant key, to return to the tonic key for the fifth and sixth phrases. This "modulation" is for the same text lines as in Gomme's variant but pairs of lines are in a different order in Kidson's.

The MUN (2.A) melody is the basis for variants of "Queen Mary" (#40, 1.A–C). It begins *s /s m s s m* and ascends to high *do* at the beginning of the second measure. In Creighton's 3.A variant of "Little Sally Walker" (#47), this opening phrase is the tune of the marriage formula fragment there. Fowke's 1.B "Green Gravel" variant begins *s /m d s m d* and also ascends to high *do* in the second measure.

# 13. GREEN GRAVEL

## 1.A

(Gomme I, 1894b, p. 170, Text iv)



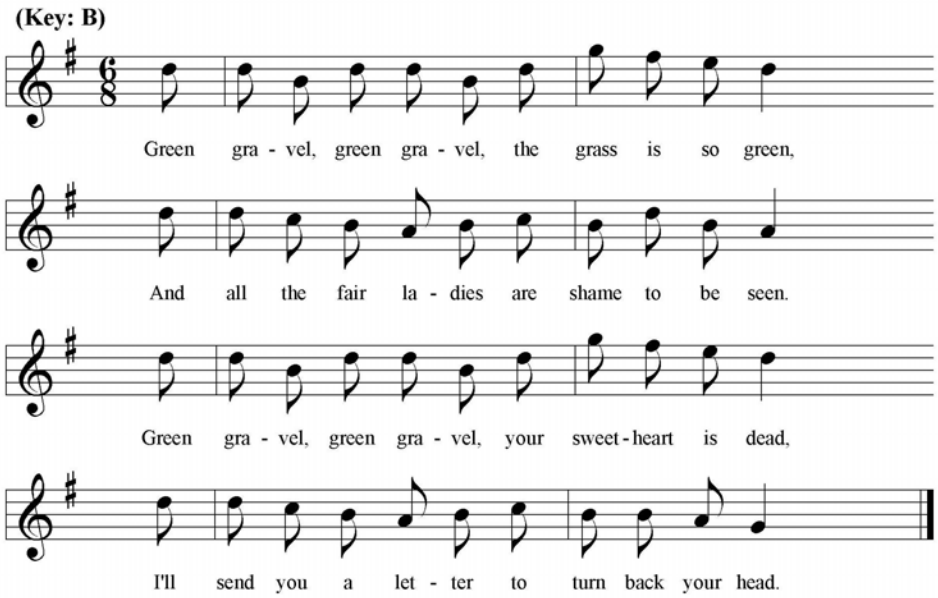

GAME: Children form a circle and walk round singing the verse. When the last line is sung, the child whose name is mentioned turns round, facing the outside of the circle and having her back to the centre. She continues to hold hands with the others, dancing round with them in that position. The game is repeated until all children have turned their backs to the inside of the circle.

(*Original melody is printed in 3/4 metre, 4 measures per line.*)

# 13. GREEN GRAVEL

## 2.A

Janet McGrath Kelly, St. John's, September 11, 1967
MUNFLA 67–37/C458
*Collector:* Leslie McGrath Ayre



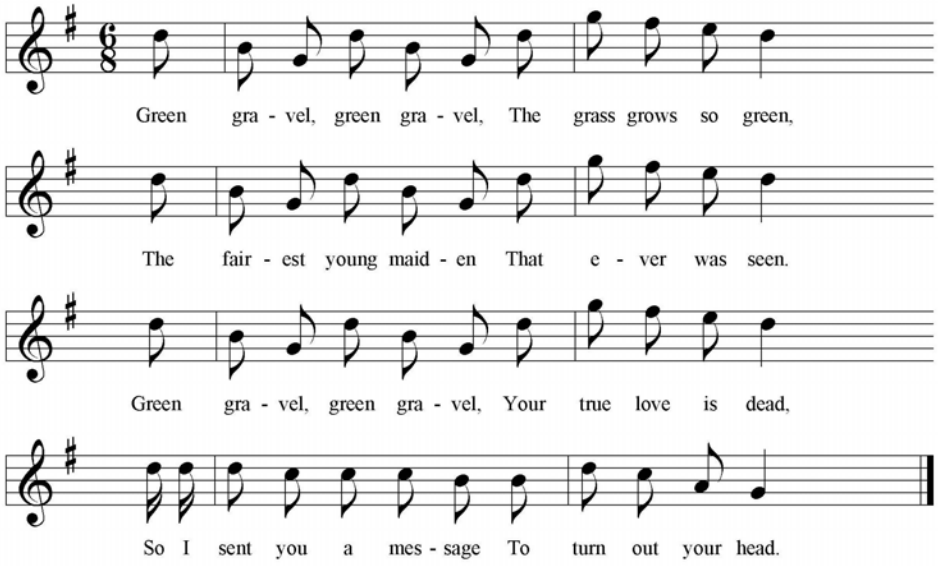

GAME: Ring, one person went around the outside and tapped you on the back, then you turned around backwards, and this way until everybody was backwards. Walked very slowly, in time to the music.

# 13. GREEN GRAVEL

## 2.B

(Fowke, 1969, p. 25)

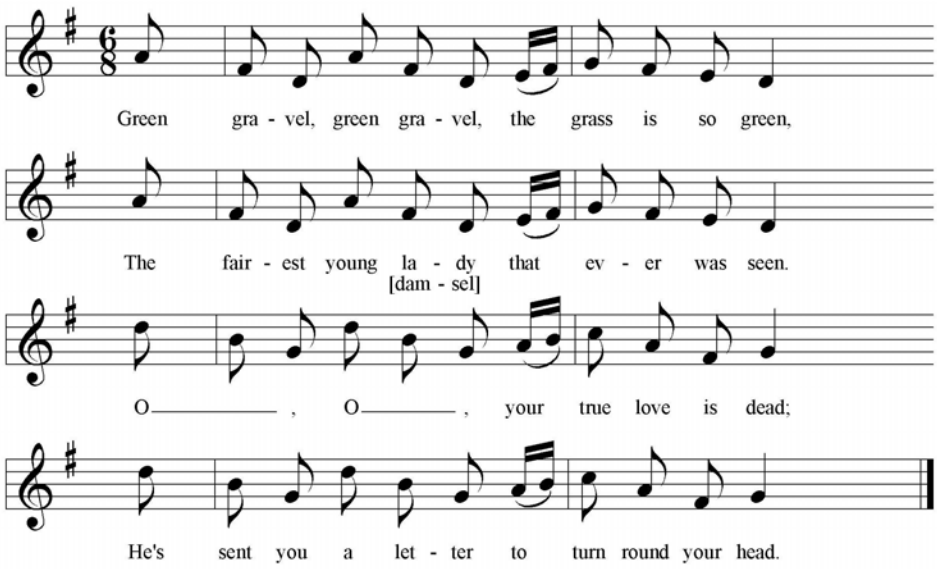
GAME: Children join hands and circle. The child named reverses to face the outside, joining hands in that position. The song is repeated until all children are facing out.



# 13. GREEN GRAVEL

## 3.A

(Gomme I, 1894b, p. 171, Text vi)



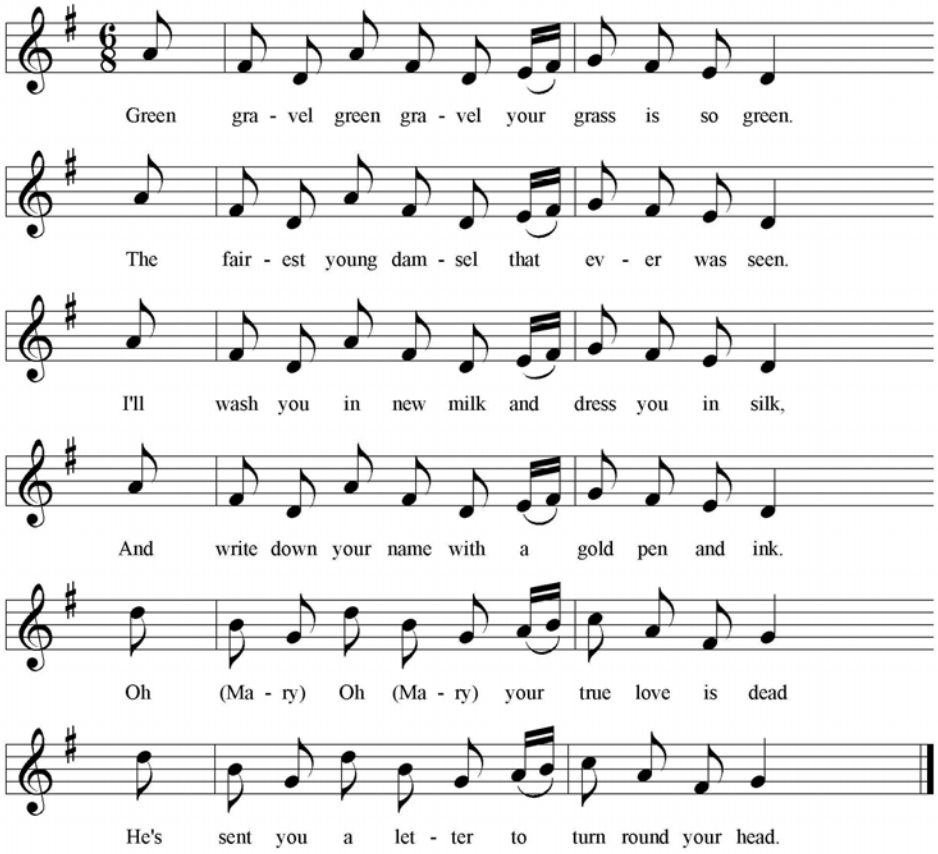

GAME: As 1.A.

(*Original is printed in 3/4 metre, 4 measures per line.*)

# 13. GREEN GRAVEL

## 3.B

(Gomme, 1894a, p. 28)




GAME: As 1.A.

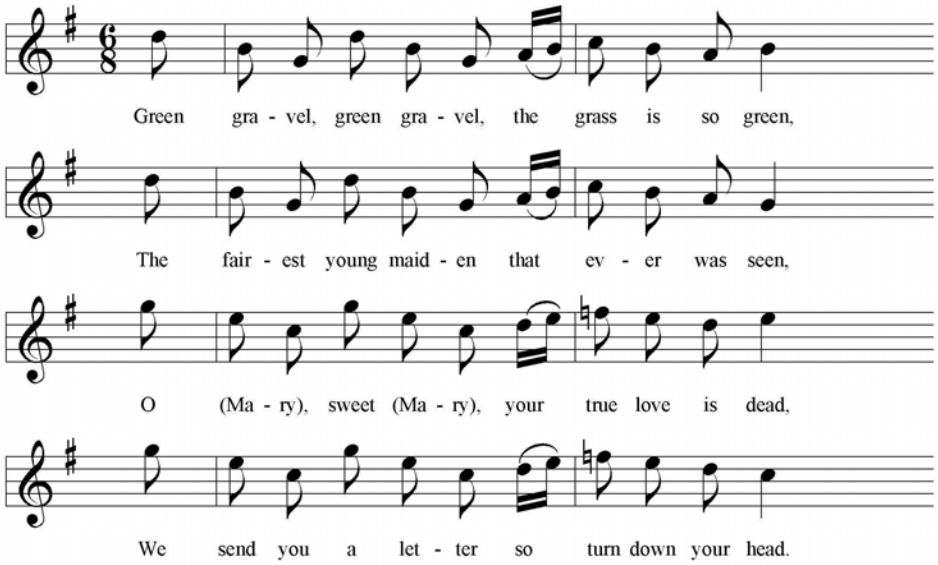
(*Original is printed in 3/4 metre, 4 measures per line.*)

# 13. GREEN GRAVEL

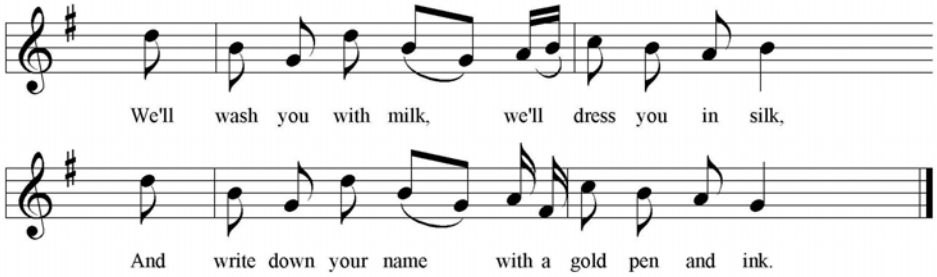
## 3.C

(Kidson, 1916, p. 7)

GAME: The children join hands and move slowly round in a circle while they sing.




The child addressed by name turns round in her place and faces outwards. She moves round with the others who sing:–



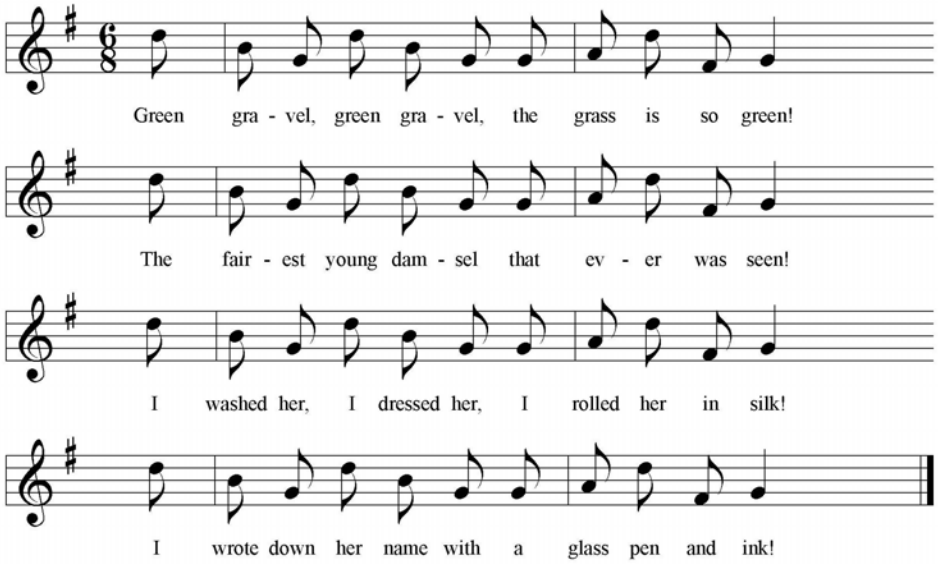

The song is repeated until all the children face outwards.

(*Original is printed in 3/4 metre, 4 measures per line.*)

# 13. GREEN GRAVEL
## 1st Tune
## 3.D

(Gillington, 1909a, p. 10)

GAME: All join hands round one in the middle, singing:



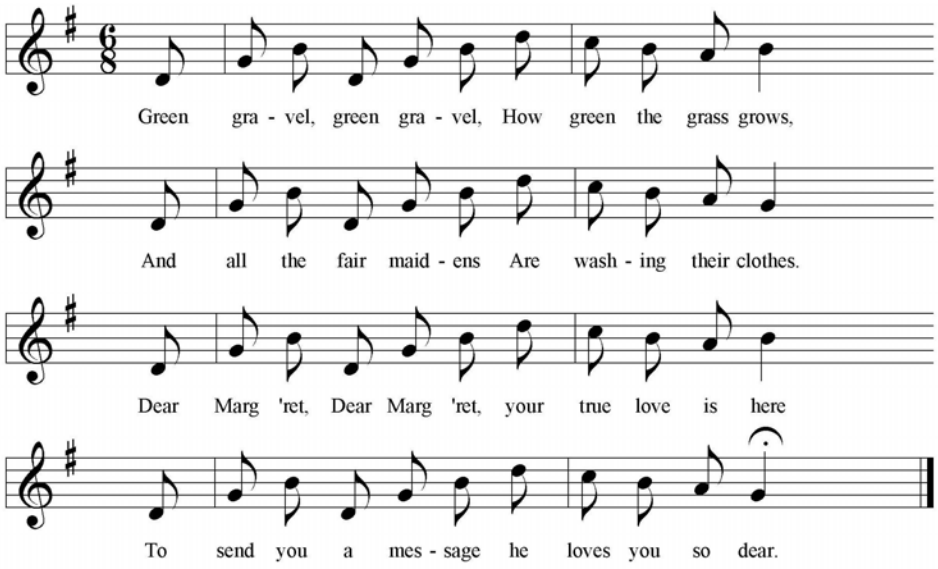

And so continue till every girl has stood in the centre, the rest singing round her the same rhyme.

(*Original is printed in 3/8 metre, 4 measures per line.*)

# 13. GREEN GRAVEL

## 4.A

(Creighton, MS 31–5; 75–6b)

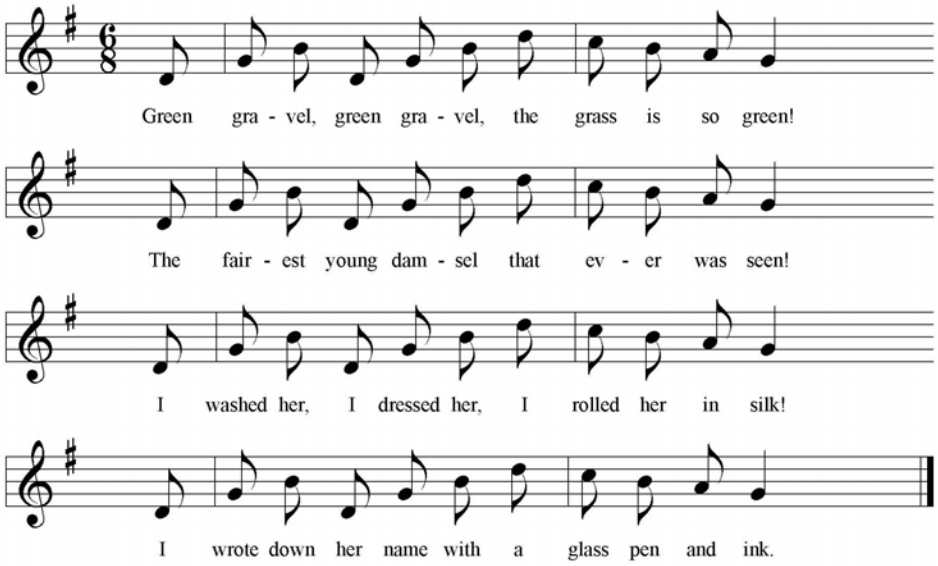



GAME: As 1.A.

# 13. GREEN GRAVEL
## 2nd Tune
## 4.B

(Gillington, 1909a, p. 11)

GAME: All join hands round one in the middle, singing:




And so continues until every girl has stood in the centre, the rest singing round her the same rhyme.

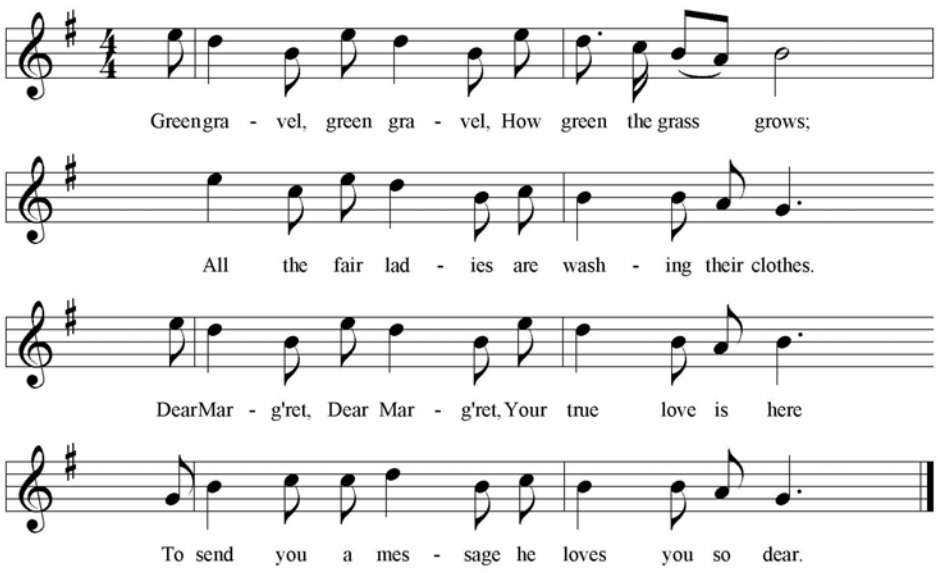
(*Original is printed in 3/8 metre, 4 measures per line.*)

# 13. GREEN GRAVEL

## 5.A

(Creighton, MS 75–6a)

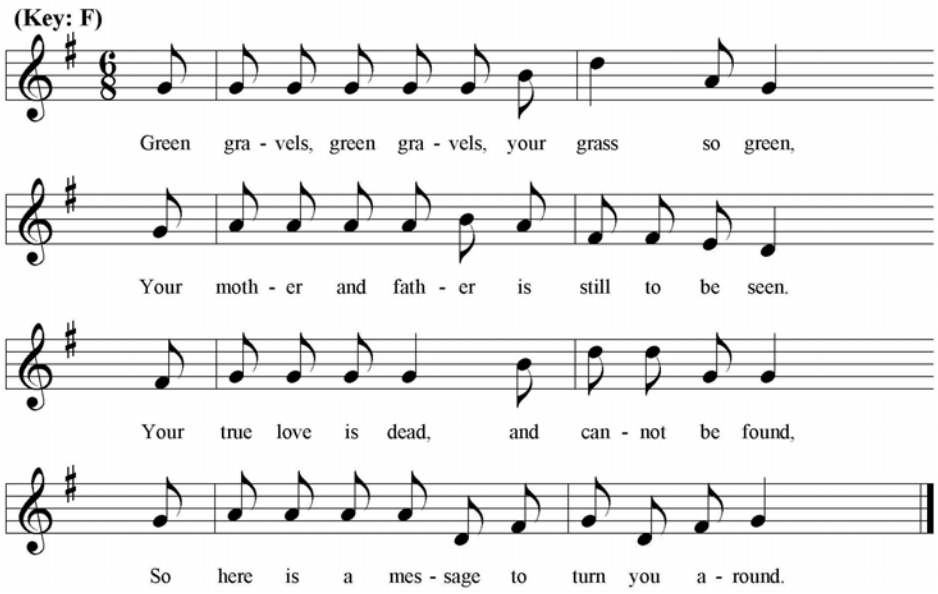
GAME: The girls form a circle from which the boys are banished. At the end of the verse, a "doorkeeper" calls a boy's name. He whispers the name of the girl he loves, and kneels before her. If she accepts him, she smiles, if not, she shows her disdain and the boy has to find another.



# 13. GREEN GRAVEL

## 6.A

Claris Langdon, age 7, Grole, December 19, 1967
MUNFLA 68–7/C489
*Collector:* Jesse Fudge




GAME: Form a circle and run around.

# 14. HARK THE ROBBERS

Gomme (I, 1894) printed one tune and seven text versions (pp. 192–197). Variant 1.A, reproduced here, is a more modern form, whereas Fowke's 1.B and Gillington's 2.A variants contain the prisoner element that possibly dates the text to earlier times. A more simplified form of Gillington's (2.A) text containing the prisoner element is found in "London Bridge" variants (#26, 1.A–2.C). It is possible that these verses were grafted in to that game from "Hark The Robbers" after the eighteenth century (Opie & Opie, 1951, p. 275).

Five of Gomme's variants are played in the form of a line game (as Gomme 1.A). Gillington's (2.A) is played with three robbers kneeling and being taken one by one as the rest pass around them in equal sides joining hands across. The robbers then try to escape and are chased. Fowke's 1.B and Kidson's 2.B variants are played like "London Bridge" with a tug of war at the end.

The connection with "London Bridge" is more apparent when the tunes are compared. It is interesting to note the two basic forms of the melody. "Hark the Robber" variants 1.A–B are similar to variants #26, 2.A–D ("London Bridge"), while variants 2.A–C are similar to Gomme's and Kidson's #26, 1.A–B melodies with the different second phrase. (Variant 2.C, from MUN, contains only 1 verse.) Indeed, the last six verses of the "London Bridge" #26 variants 1.A, 1.B, and 7.A (called a "new" version), incorporate the basic text of "Hark the Robbers." It is difficult to know whether "Hark the Robbers" is an off-shoot of "London Bridge" or is the remnant of a game with a separate history that now often gets attached to "London Bridge" (Opie & Opie, 1985, p. 68). According to the Opies, the sequence of verses of "Hark the Robbers" has been recorded only since the second half of the nineteenth century (p. 70). Kidson's (2.B) variant of "Hark the Robbers" is noted to be a version of "Shootman" (#26), "Oranges and Lemons" (#37), and "London Bridge" (#26). It contains the "Tread upon his toes and let him go" verse and variant melody that are found in his "Shootman" (#26, 8.A) variant. Kidson (1916) claimed that in one form or other this is among the most popular of British ring games. He also stated that "in some verses the words begin 'Hark at the Robbers' passing by" (p. 58).

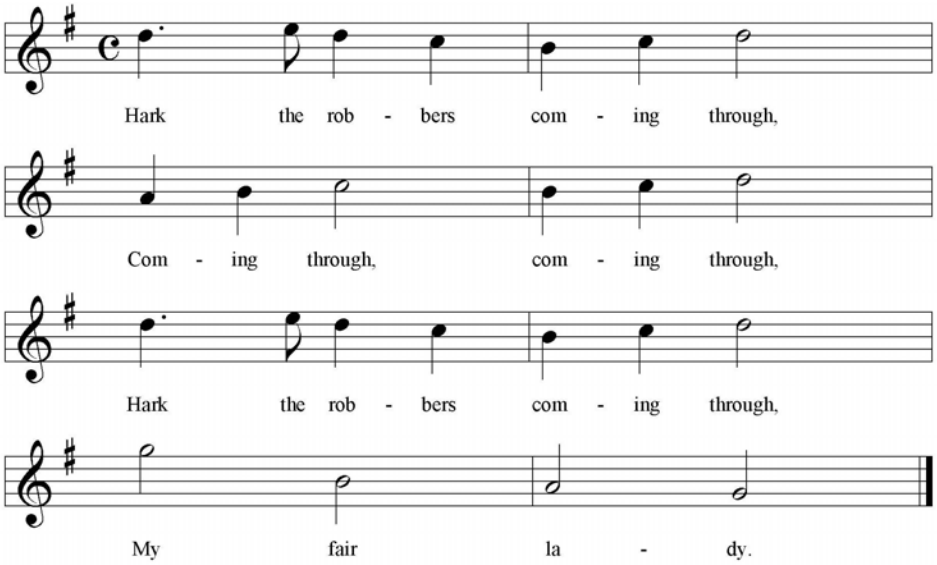
In addition, it is interesting to note that the verse "broke my watch and stole my chain" occurs only in

Fowke's variant, and in Gomme's Belfast variant (p. 193, text ii) – except there the robbers "steal your watch and break your chain." These words are common to variant #26, 1.A of "London Bridge" as well.

# 14. HARK THE ROBBERS

## 1.A

(Gomme I, 1894b, p. 192, Text iv)




What's the robbers done to you,
Done to you, done to you,
What's the robbers done to you,
My fair lady?

They have stole my watch and chain,
Watch and chain, watch and chain,
They have stole my watch and chain,
My fair lady.

What's the price will set you free,
Set you free, set you free,
What's the price will set you free,
My fair lady?

Half-a-guinea will set me free,
Will set me free, will set me free,
Half-a-guinea will set me free,
My fair lady.

Half-a-guinea you shall not have,
Shall not have, shall not have,
Half-a-guinea you shall not have,
My fair lady.

Let's join hands, it is too late,
'Tis too late, 'tis too late,
Let's join hands, it is too late,

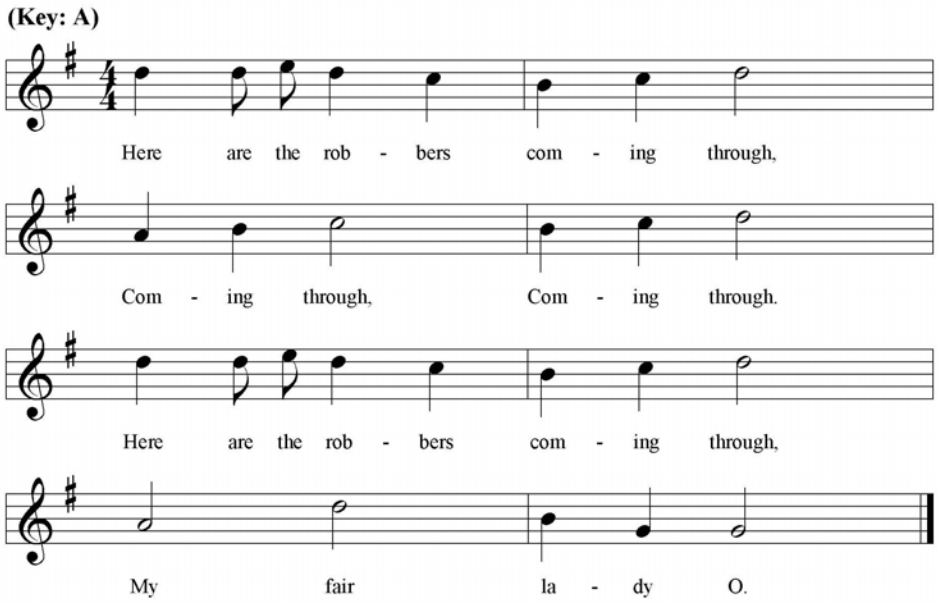
My fair lady.

GAME: The first six verses are sung by the alternate parties, who advance and retire, tramping their feet at first, to imitate the robbers. The last verse is sung altogether going round in a ring.

# 14. THE ROBBERS COMING THROUGH

## 1.B

(FO 83; Fowke, 1969, p. 31)




What did the robbers do to you,
Do to you, do to you?
What did the robbers do to you,
My fair lady O?

Broke my watch and stole my chain,
Stole my chain, stole my chain.
Broke my watch and stole my chain,
My fair lady O.

Off to prison you must go,
You must go, you must go,
Off to prison you must go,
My fair lady O.

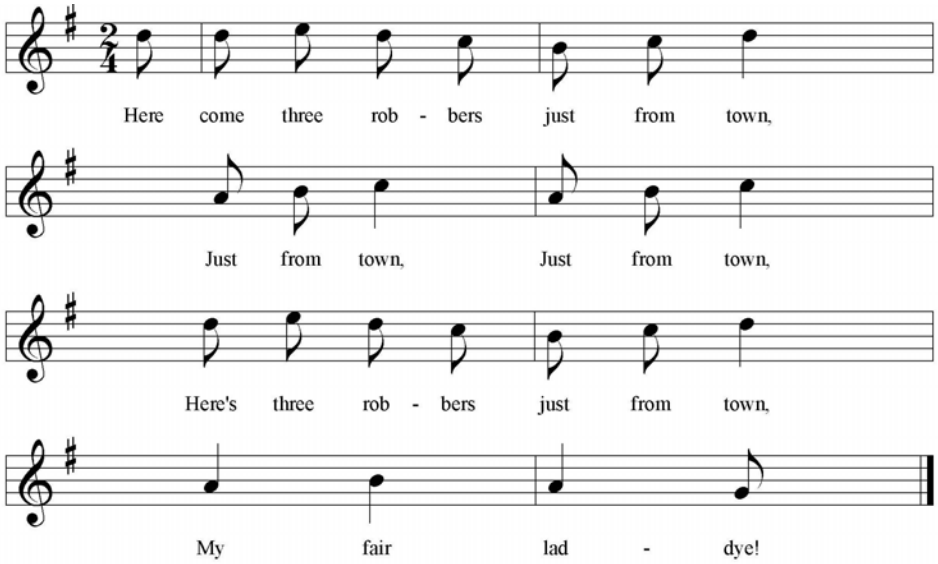
GAME: Played like "London Bridge;" that is, as Kidson's variant 2.B below.

# 14. MY FAIR LAYDE

## 2.A

(Gillington, 1909a, p. 18)

GAME: This game is very similar to the last, ("London Bridge," #26, 4.A), except that the three robbers kneel down one behind the other, and the rest pass round them in equal sides joining hands across.




The Robbers:
"We're not robbers just from town, etc.
Nice fair layde!"

"They have stole your rings and broach, etc.
My fair layde!"

The Robbers:
"We've not stole your rings and broach, etc.
Nice fair layde!"

"They have stole your watch and chain, etc.
My fair layde!"

The Robbers:
"We've not stole your watch and chain, etc.
Nice fair layde!"

"They have stole a nice silk dress, etc.
My fair layde!"

The Robbers:
"We've not stole your nice silk dress, etc.

Nice fair layde!”

They catch hold of one of the robbers:

“Off to prison you must go! etc.
My fair layde!”

The Robbers:
“Off to prison we shan’t go! etc.
Nice fair layde!”

“One hundred pounds you’ll have to pay, etc.
My fair layde!”

The Robbers:
“One hundred pounds we have not got, etc.
Nice fair layde!”

“Then off to gaol you must go, etc.
My fair layde!”

They haul up one of the robbers, and begin again till all three are taken and put aside. Then they spring up and attempt to escape, and the rest run after and catch them.

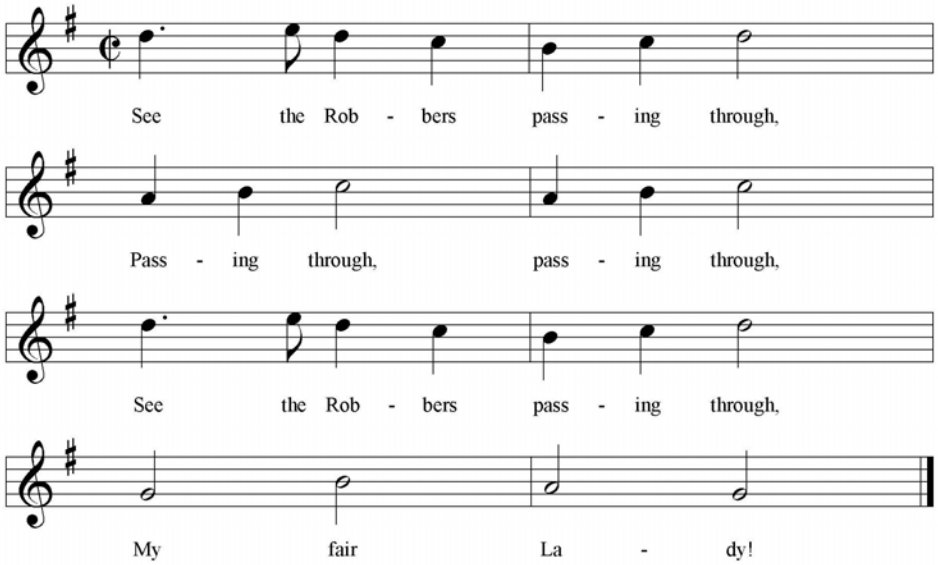
*The accent falls on the underlined words.*

# 14. THE ROBBERS

## 2.B

(Kidson, 1916, p. 58)

GAME: Two of the tallest players join hands, having previously secretly settled that they shall each represent some article, animal, or object. This may be a Swan, a Dove, a Dog, a Horse, etc. The other players range themselves in single file, holding each other's coat tails or frocks. The two players who have joined hands face each other, and holding their arms as high as possible, allow the file to go through, while all sing the first three verses:




What have the Robbers done to you?
Done to you, done to you.
What have the Robbers done to you?
My fair Lady!

The Robbers have stole my watch and chain,
Watch and chain, watch and chain,
The Robbers have stole my watch and chain,
My fair Lady!

During the singing of the song the file of players have been passing beneath the upraised arms. As the last in the train is about to pass, the arms are suddenly dropped and the child is imprisoned. He is then asked in a whisper whether he will be a "Swan," a "Dove," or whatever the selected names happen to be. He answers accordingly and the two who hold him commence to vigorously tread upon his toes, singing:

Tread on his toes and let him go,
Let him go, let him go,
Tread on his toes and let him go,
My fair Lady!

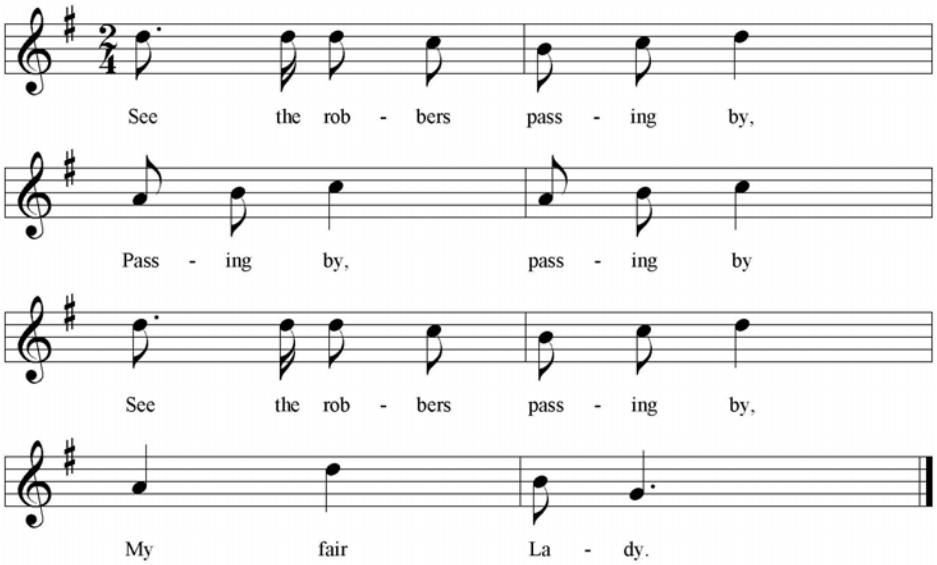
He is placed behind the "Swan," or the "Dove," and the game goes on again until all are on one side or the other. The finale of the game is a tug of war.

# 14. SEE THE ROBBERS

## 2.C

Edith Muriel Dawe, Burnt Head, Cupids, August 27, 1967
MUNFLA 67–34/C425
*Collector:* Victor Dupree

**(Key: Low D)**



# 15. HOW MANY MILES TO BABYLON

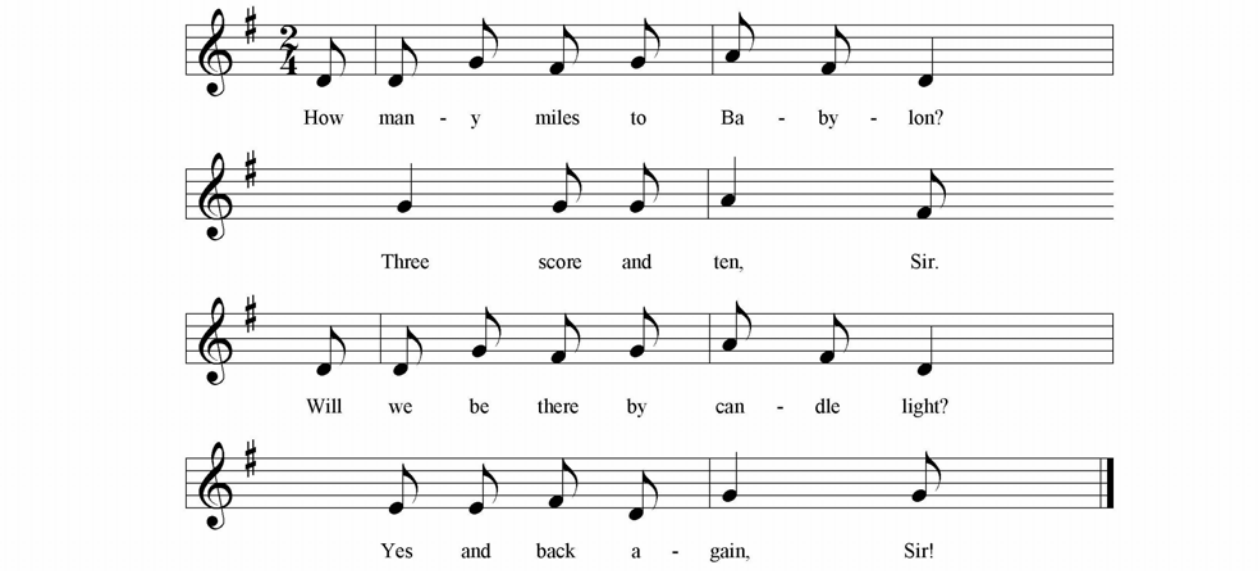
"How Many Miles to Babylon" is one of the games that, according to the Opies (1985), displaced "Thread the Needle" (#51) in the 19th century (p. 44). The Opies call "How Many Miles to Babylon" a little more than a slowing down of the basic game. They trace the text to as early as the thirteenth century, and certainly to the seventeenth (pp. 45–46). Parts of the "Thread the Needle" text are in Kidson's (1.B) and Plunket's (4.A) variants. In the latter, the first verse is spoken. The mention of King Charles (King George in some of Gomme's variants) is indicative of a newer variant. Variants 2.A.–4. A contain longer texts where payment is claimed. These demand a more lively form of play. The MUN (5.A) variant gives the distance as "four score and ten," and the payment required is "gold." This not being forthcoming, the injunction given is to "turn and go away."

Gomme (I, 1894b) printed fifteen text variants only and described many methods of play (p. 231). Wilman's (3.A) method is similar to "Thread The Needle" (#51, 1.A), in which children create arches successively after they go under the first arch. Plunket's (4.A) variant game is played in the traditional threading the needle form as described in the Opies (1985, p. 33), and also for "How Many Miles to Babylon" (p. 44). Kidson's first variant (1.B), which he calls an Irish version, is a ring game with a "grand chain" at the end. In his second variant (2.A), in Kerr's (2.B), and in Wilman's (3.A) variants, there are 2 lines of children, one of which forms arches for the others to pass through at the end. There are five different tunes. The first (1.A–B) is described by Kidson (1916) as an "Old Irish Air" (p. 28). The second tune of Kidson's (2.A) and Kerr's (2.B) variants is almost the same as their variants of "I Sent a Letter to My Love" (#17, 1.A–B), Kidson's variant of "A Ring, A Ring O'Roses" (#43, 2.A), as well as of a MUN and Kidson's and Kerr's variants of "Wallflowers" (#55, 2.A–C). All of these variants are in four-measure phrases. The MUN variant (5.A) tune of "How Many Miles" has a broad range, not typical of children's songs. Wilman's (3.A) variant tune is unique as well. Plunket's (4.A) tune is a variant of "Girls and Boys" (#10), formerly a general call to play. It could be said that the Plunket variant is certainly in the transition stage between the old and new!

# 15. HOW MANY MILES TO BABYLON?

## 1.A

(Moffat, 1933, p. 29)



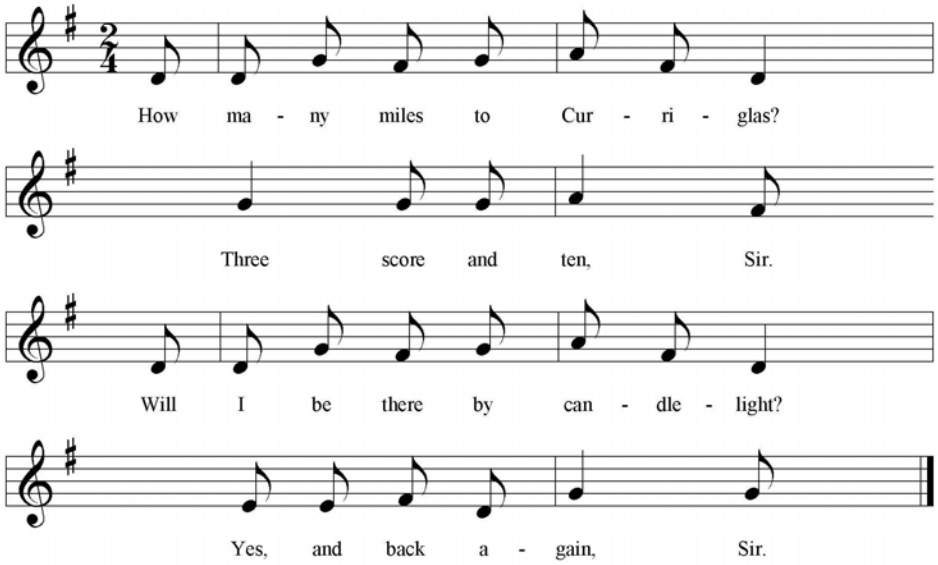

Ope' your gates and let us through,
Not without a beck and boo!
There's a beck and there's a boo,
Ope' your gates and let us through!

*Beck* = curtsy  *Boo* = bow

# 15. HOW MANY MILES TO CURRIGLAS?

## 1.B

(Kidson, 1916, p. 28)

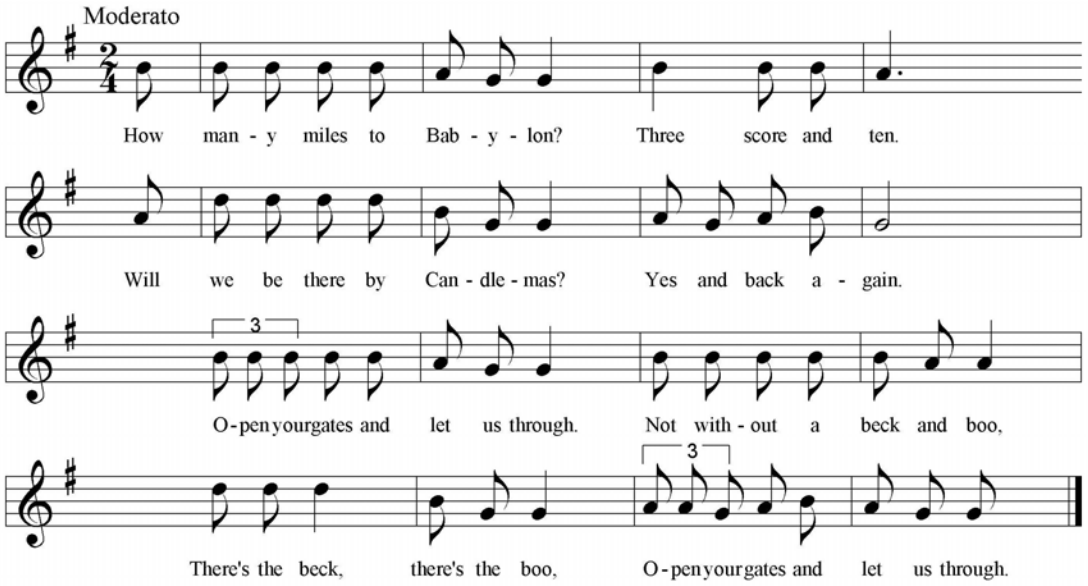



GAME: The players join hands and form a ring, singing the verse. They then shout, "Thread, thread the needle and sew!" The players now take hands right and left alternating as they pass round the circle, forming what is called in Quadrilles "The Grand Chain."

# 15. HOW MANY MILES TO BABYLON?

## 2.A

(Kidson, 1916, p. 94)




GAME: The children face each other in two rows, those in the second row joining hands to form the "gates."

FIRST ROW. How many miles to Babylon?
SECOND ROW. Three Score and ten.
FIRST ROW. Will we be there by Candlemas?
SECOND ROW. Yes, and back again.
FIRST ROW. Open your gates and let us through.
SECOND ROW. Not without a beck and boo.
FIRST ROW. (bending first backwards, then forwards.)
There's the beck, there's the boo,
Open your gates and let us through.

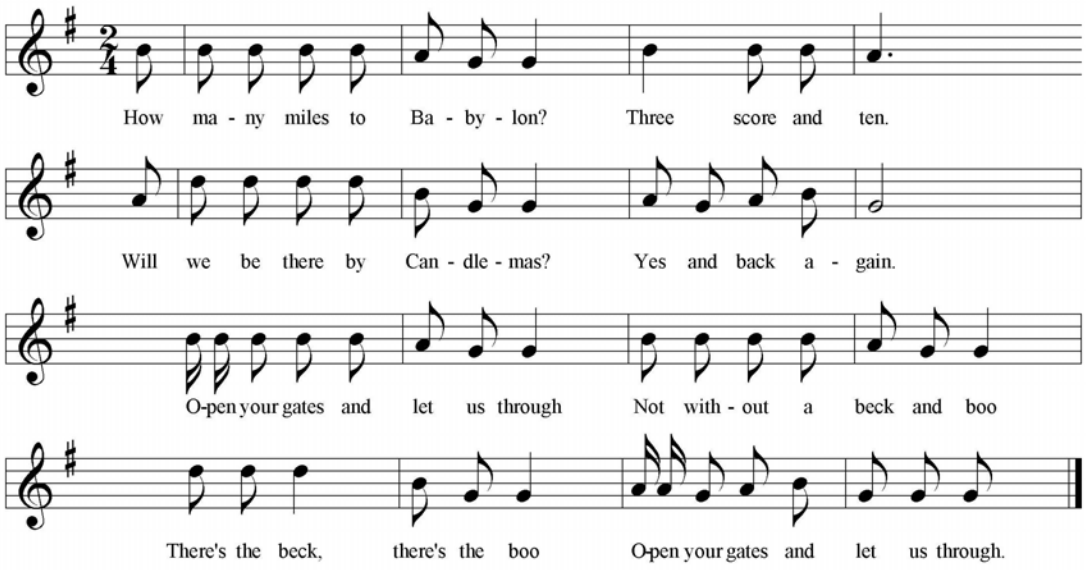
The children in the second row raise their joined hands, forming a row of arches through which the other children run. The first row now joins hands to make the gates and the game begins again.

# 15. HOW MANY MILES TO BABYLON?

## 2.B

(Kerr, 1912, p. 30)

GAME: Players are arranged in two rows, which stand facing each other.




For this familiar game children are ranged again in two rows, each row singing the part allotted it in question and answer. In the last line the request to "Open your gates and let us through" is met by the second row taking hands and raising them to form an arch, through which the opposing players rush; and the places now being changed, the game is resumed, the second having now become the first row.

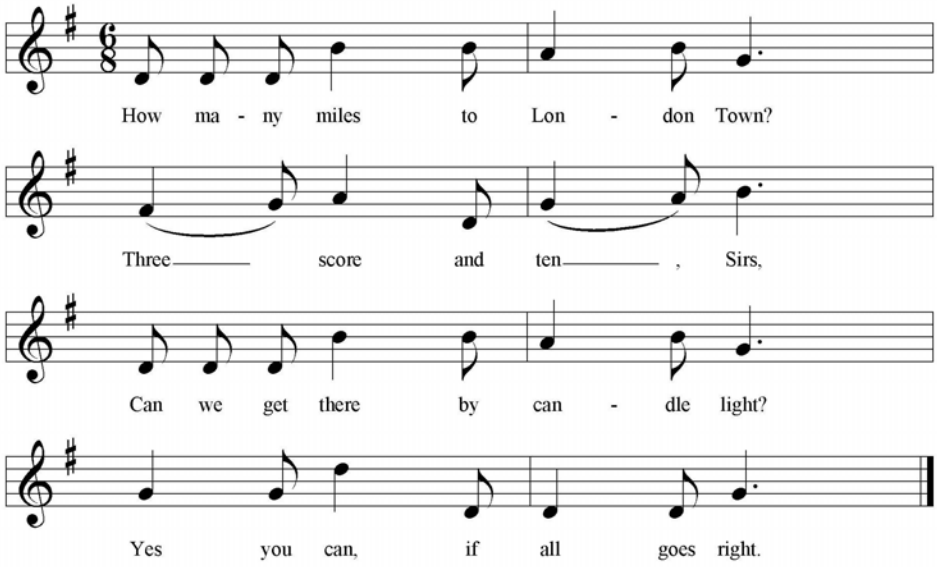
# 15. HOW MANY MILES TO LONDON TOWN?

## 3.A

(Wilman, 1915, p. 26)

GAME: Two players form an archway, and the others advance in marching order. The travellers sing the first and third lines of the verses, while the gate-keepers sing the second and fourth.

Verse 1. This is sung as the travellers advance towards the gate.




*Verse 2.* The line stands waiting to pass through the gate.

Please do not shut to us the gate.
Pray come through, and do not wait.
What is your fee if we come through?
Just one bow before you go.

*Verse 3.* The players now bow, and then pass beneath the arch. As each couple passes through, it too forms an arch, until all players are forming arches.

And now we're off to London Town.
As you go you must take care.
That we shall do, and not fall down.
Then you'll soon be safely there.

In repeating the game, the top couple should form the archway, the others marching beneath it and round the room, while singing the first verse, at the end of which the line should again be at the gate seeking admission.

# 15. HOW MANY MILES TO BARLEY BRIDGE?

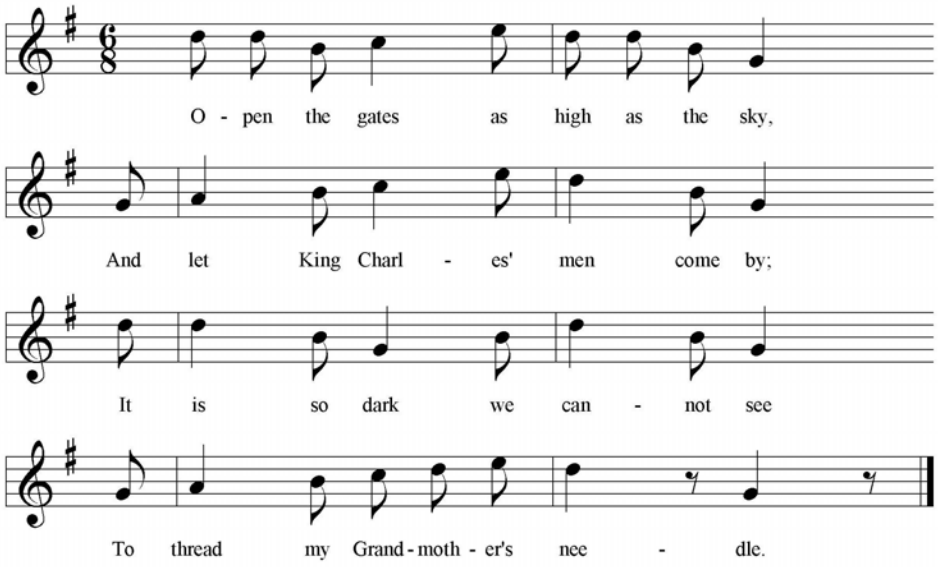
## 4.A

(Plunket, 1886, p. 30)

GAME: The children hold hands in a line; the last two at one end represent gatekeepers, the child at the other end advances leading the other children; they question the gatekeepers, and they reply:

How many miles to Barley Bridge?
Three-score and ten.
Can I get there by candle light?
Yes, and back again.
Open the gates and let us go through,
Not without a beck and a boo;
Here is a beck and here is a boo,
So open the gates and let us go through.

At the words "Here is a beck and here is a boo," the children all curtsey and bow; the gatekeepers lift up their arms and they run under them, still holding hands and singing:

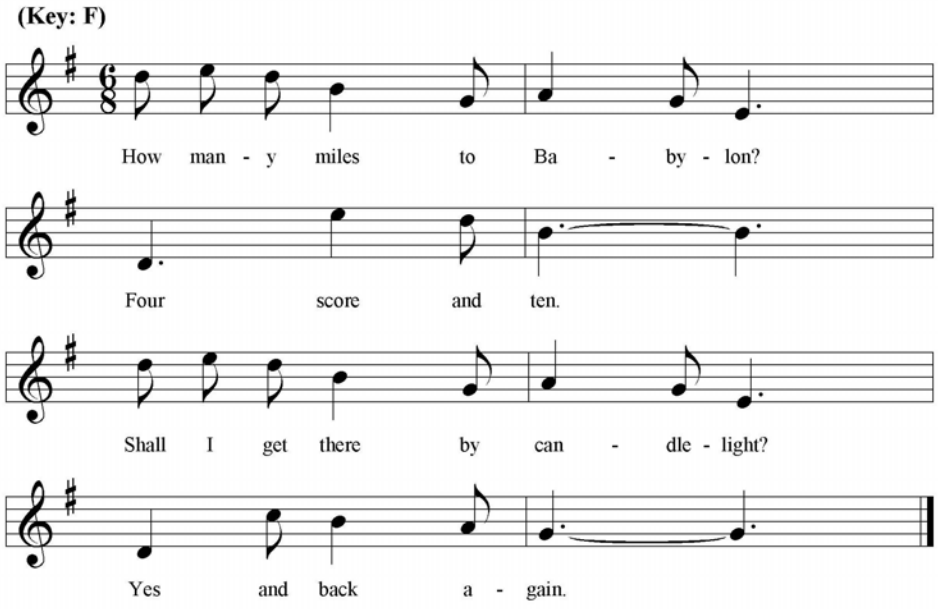



The outermost gatekeeper stands firm; but the other one twists under the arch, and the game begins again; but now the two last knights are gatekeepers, and the gatekeepers knights.

# 15. HOW MANY MILES TO BABYLON

## 5.A

Janet McGrath Kelly, St. John's, September 11, 1967
MUNFLA 67–37/C457
*Collector*: Leslie McGrath Ayre




Open the gates and let me in,
Show first your gold.
I have no gold, what shall I do?
Turn and go away.

# 16. HUNT THE SLIPPER

In this game a child brings a slipper that is to be mended to the cobbler. The child returns to retrieve the slipper, and after several pretences given by the cobbler decides to search for it. The slipper is then quickly passed secretly round the circle. The child from whom the slipper is taken becomes the owner of it the next time.

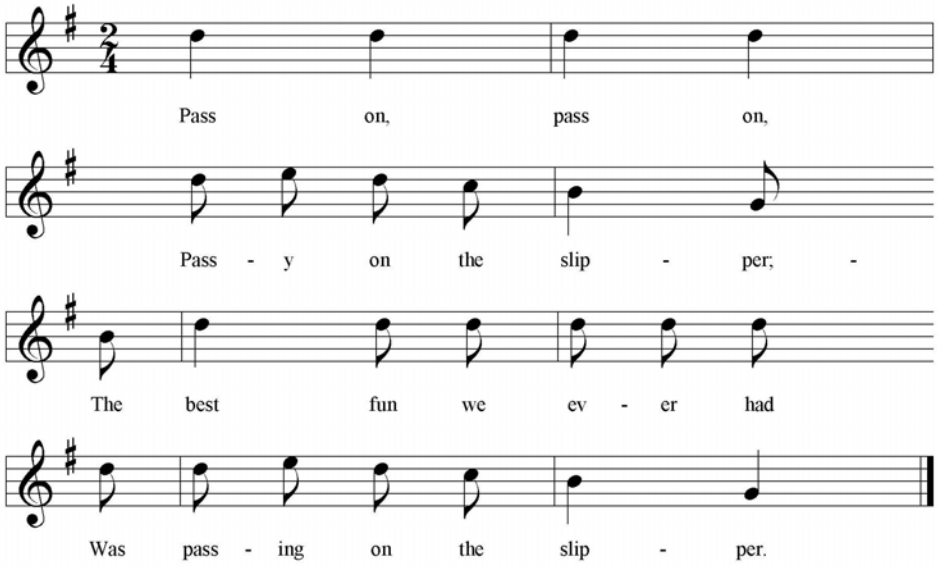
This description from Gomme (I, 1894b), variant (1.A), is for the text, “Cobbler, cobbler, mend my shoe, Get it done by half-past two” (pp. 241–242). Gomme had collected many variants but included the melody for only the variant 1.A below. The Opies (1951) add the following lines, “Half-past two is much too late, Get it done by half-past eight” (p. 125). The method of play of Kidson (2.A) is very similar to Gomme’s description. Plunket’s (3.A) text is closest to the Opies’. Kidson (1916) stated that this “is an English game of great antiquity” (p. 77).

The tunes of all three variants are different and possibly were added to the original text form. The tune of Kidson’s (2.A) variant is the one normally associated with the tune of “Little Bo-Peep”.

# 16. HUNT THE SLIPPER

## 1.A

(Gomme I, 1894b, p. 241, Text iii)




GAME: All the players but one sit on the floor in a circle with their legs crossed (Turkish fashion), one acting as Chief, all pretending to work at making or mending shoes. The other player brings a slipper to the Chief Cobbler, and desires it to be mended, saying (or singing the above text)–

Cobbler, cobbler, mend my shoe,
Get it done by half-past two.

The child walks away, and returns in a few moments and asks whether the shoe is ready. The Cobbler says, "Not quite; call again in an hour's time," or makes any other excuse which occurs to him. When the child calls again, she is told it has been sent home. After several pretences the child declares an intention to search for it. The Cobblers in the ring then all place their hands under their knees, and pass the slipper secretly from one to another in such a way as to prevent the owner of the shoe getting it for some time. The Cobbler from whom the shoe is taken becomes the owner next time.

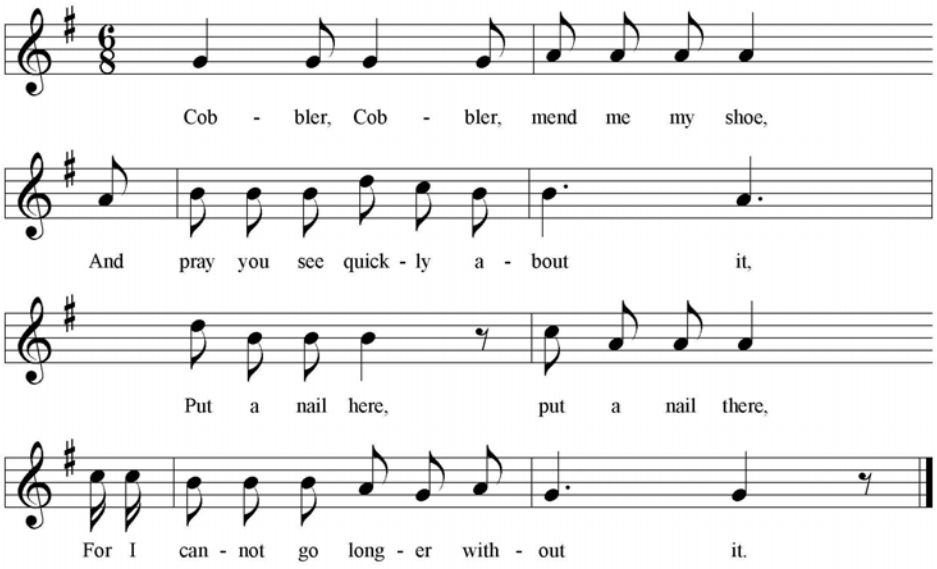
(*The original melody was written in 4/4 metre in 4 measures.*)

# 16. HUNT THE SLIPPER

## 2.A

(Kidson, 1916, p. 77)

GAME: The players are seated on the ground in a circle with their knees well up. One who is not in the ring brings a small slipper or shoe and presents it to the chief cobbler (the seated ones are all supposed to be journeymen shoemakers), singing the following verse. The others join in by altering the pronouns.



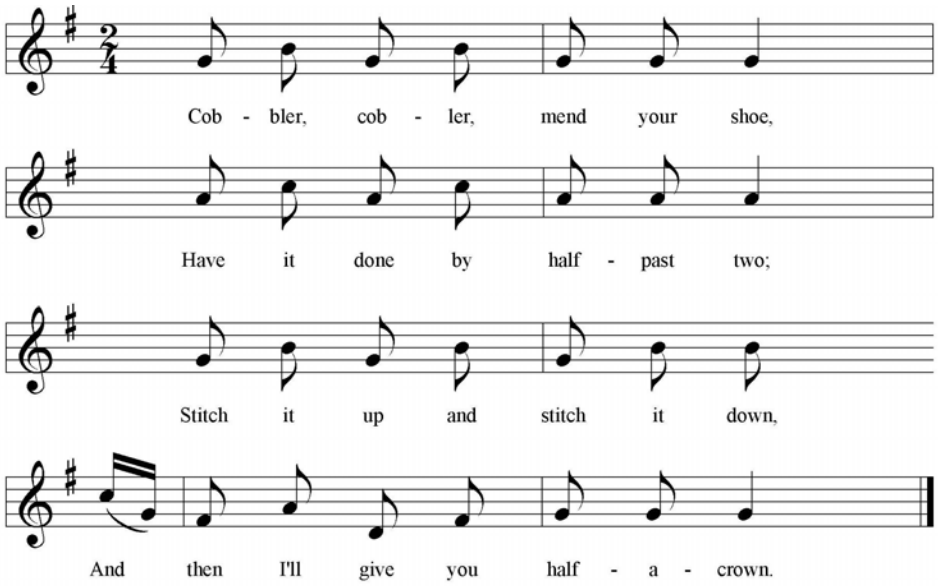

The chief cobbler takes it, says, “Very well, call again for it to-morrow,” hands it to one of his journeymen who quickly passes it under his knees onward. The single player now asks for the shoe but is told that it is lost and that he can have it if he finds it. This he endeavours to do, and to locate it as it passes along. Sometimes he is tapped on the back with it, and much fun is created by the players who haven’t got it displaying great anxiety to hide it. The person in whose hands it is found takes the place of the seeker.

# 16. HUNT THE SLIPPER

## 3.A

(Plunket, 1886, p. 9)

GAME: The children sit on the floor in a circle. One in the middle gives a slipper to one of the circle, saying—"This must be quickly mended." The cobbler promises. The circle, pretending to work, chant the following:




The customer demands his shoe. The cobbler has not got it. It is quickly passed about; the child with whom it is found goes into the middle.

# 17. I SENT A LETTER TO MY LOVE

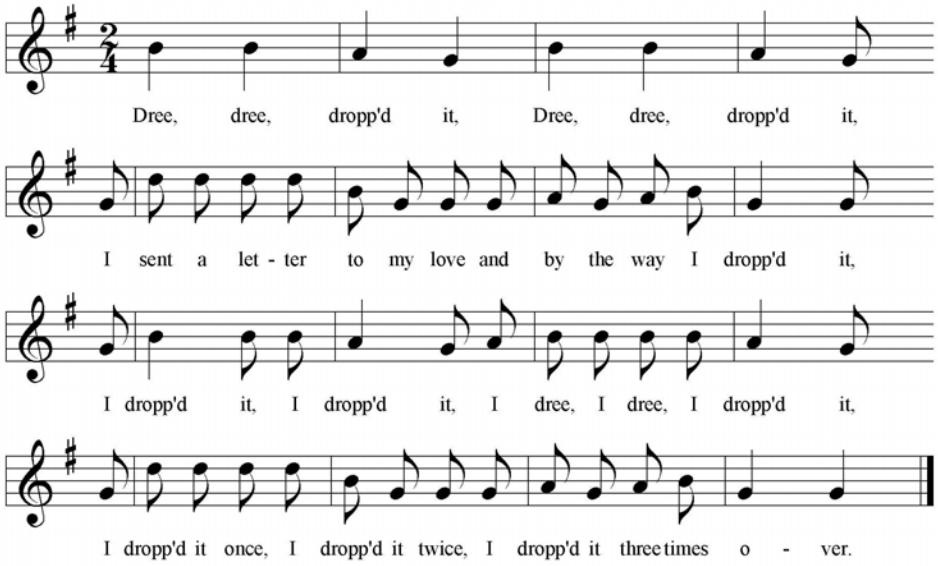
The variants of this singing game represent the variety of games and melodies associated with the text described by the Opies (1969, pp. 198–202) and Gomme (I, 1894b, pp. 109–112: "Drop Handkerchief", and pp. 305–310: "Kiss in the Ring"). The more modern method of play, and of most of the variants included below, is a game of chase. For variants 1.A and 2.A (Kidson calls variant 2.A a Scottish form of the English "Drop Glove"), the child drops the glove or handkerchief and runs in and out of the circle pursued by a child who must follow exactly. In variants 4.A and 5.A, the first child is chased round the ring. The older method of play is for the chosen child to run in the opposite direction to the child who dropped the handkerchief, each making for the open space. The one who arrives back last has to go round the circle for the next game. Variants 3.A (Wilman) and 5.C (Creighton) are played in this way.

Variants of the Scottish text's melody (1.A–B) are found in "How Many Miles to Babylon" (#15, 2.A–2.B), "A Ring O' Roses" (#43, 2.A) and "Wallflowers" (#55, 2.A–C). These variants are all in 4 measure phrases. Variant 3.A's melody is the same as the first half of "Bingo" (#4). The last line, "Not you, not you" etc., is sung to a descending scale passage. Variant 4.A, from "The Globe" (1909), Toronto, was recorded in *JAFL* (xxxi, 1918, p. 57), sung to the first half of the tune of "Yankee Doodle." It is almost identical to Fowke's variant, 5.A. Both are entitled "I Wrote A Letter To My Love," and the words at the end are spoken, as in many of Gomme's variants. A text only, from Grey County, titled "Drop the Handkerchief," was printed in *JAFL*, (xxxi, 1918, p. 107). It also is a variant of Fowke's 5.A text. Creighton's variant 5.B employs the full melody of "Yankee Doodle." As well, six new lines of text are added after the first two found in most other variants. These are part of variants from various places quoted by the Opies (1969, p. 200). Another of Creighton's variants (5.C), also based on the tune of "Yankee Doodle," is titled "Drop the Handkerchief." According to the Opies (1969), "Yankee Doodle" is one of the tunes that was traditionally sung. The first depiction of the game in print was 1744, and this "Kiss in the Ring" game continued to be popular throughout the nineteenth century, "played by 'grown lads and ladies' as well as by children" (pp. 200–201).

# 17. I SENT A LETTER TO MY LOVE
## ( Second Version)

### 1.A

(Kidson, 1916, p. 23)



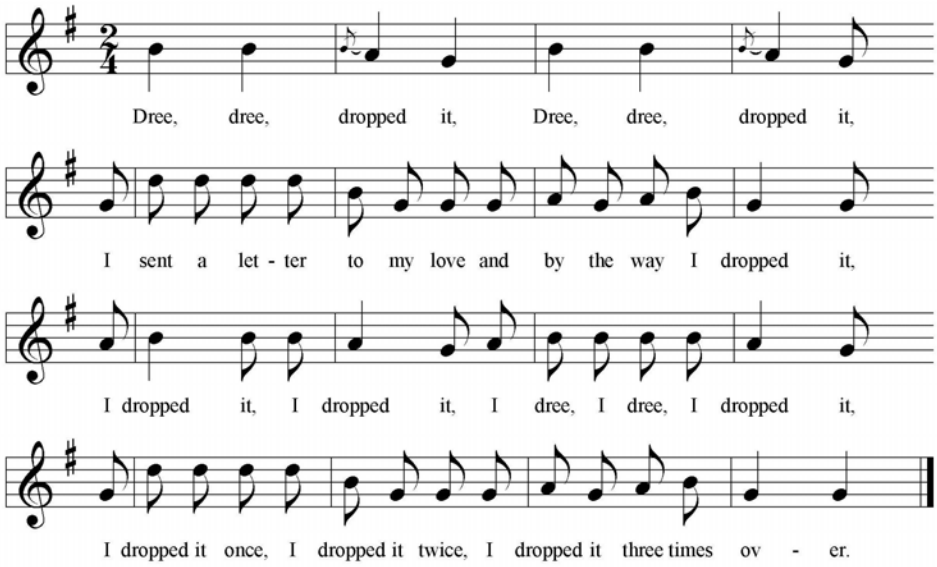

My hen's laying, my pot's boiling,
I sent a letter to my love and by the way I dropp'd it,
I dropp'd it, I dropp'd it, I dree, I dree, I dropp'd it,
I dropp'd it once, I dropp'd it twice, I dropp'd it three times over.

*(Original is printed in 4/4 metre, 2 measures per line.)*

# 17. I DREE, I DREE, I DROPPED IT

## 1.B

(Kerr, 1912, p. 32)




My pot's boiling, My hen's laying,
I sent a letter to my love and by the way I dropped it,
I dropped it, I dropped it, I dree, I dree, I dropped it,
I dropped it once, I dropped it twice, I dropped it three times over.

GAME: All the players but one seat themselves on the ground in a large circle, leaving a space between each. The remaining player marches round the outside of the circle holding a handkerchief, which he drops behind on of the players as the verse concludes, and immediately begins to thread his way rapidly out and in among the others. The player at whose back the handkerchief is dropped rises immediately when he or she perceives this, and give chase; being careful, however, to follow exactly the same route in and out among the seated players. Failure to do this entails the loss of his place in the ring, which is taken by the other player; and the game is resumed with the loser marching round holding the handkerchief.

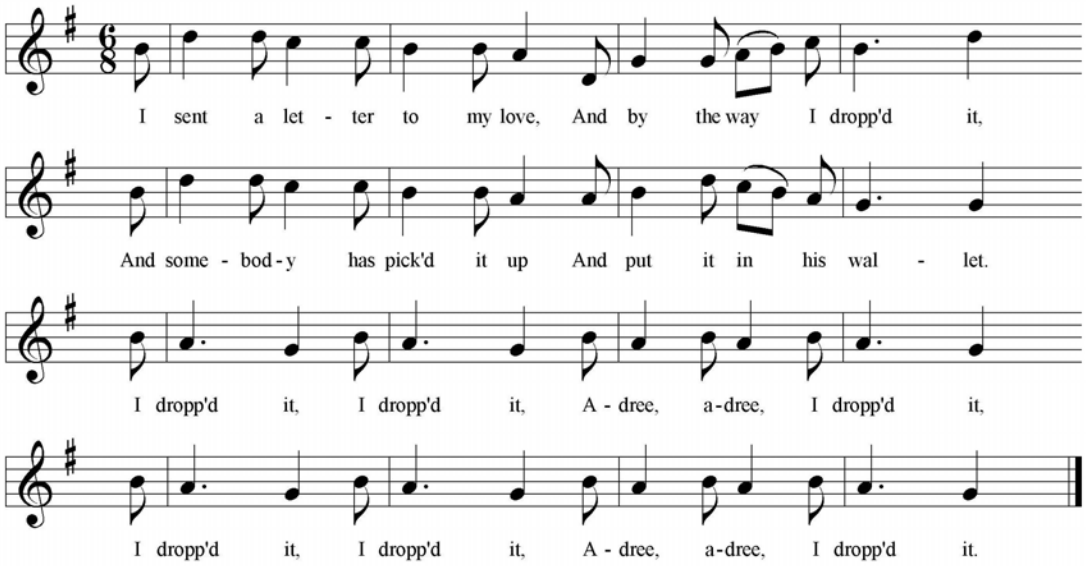
*(Original is printed in 4/4 metre, 2 measures per line.)*

# 17. I SENT A LETTER TO MY LOVE

## 2.A

(Kidson, 1916, p. 22)

GAME: The players seat themselves in a ring at a short distance from one another. One player walks round the outside with a handkerchief or glove in his hand, and sings this verse:–

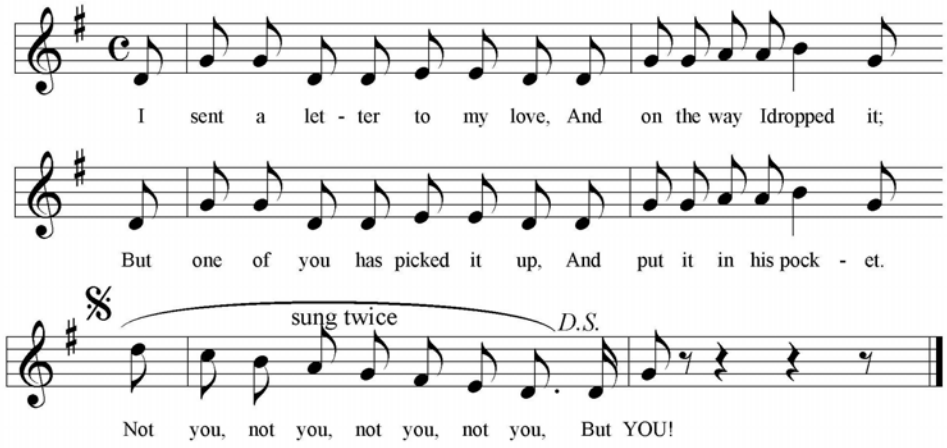



He suddenly drops the glove or handkerchief upon or behind one of those in the ring, and runs in and out among the players, pursued by the child on whom the article has been dropped. This player must follow the exact course of the first player. If he makes a mistake in the route the children shout out “A cookie, a cookie.” The pursuer must then take the glove and sing the song.

# 17. I SENT A LETTER TO MY LOVE

## 3.A

(Wilman, 1915, p. 28)



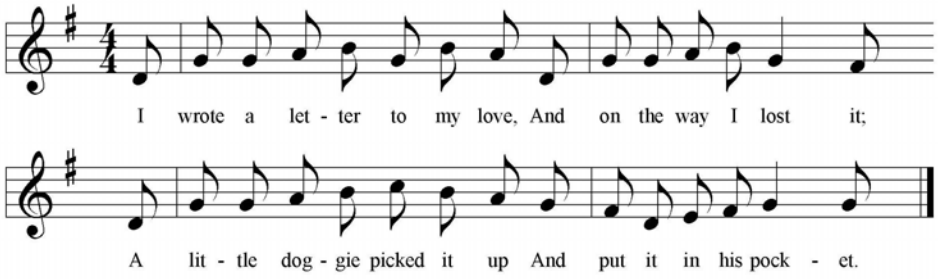

GAME: The players form a ring with joined hands. One, having a handkerchief in hand then walks round the outside while the verse is being sung. This done, he continues with "Not you, not you, not you, not you," as directed by the music. Each time he says "Not you" he should tap a player, until, finishing with "But you," he drops the handkerchief and runs all round the ring. The player behind whom the handkerchief has been dropped must then pick it up and run in the opposite direction, both players making for the vacant place. The one who fails to secure the place then continues the game.

# 17. I WROTE A LETTER TO MY LOVE

## 4.A

(JAFL, xxxi, 1918, p. 57)

GAME: The children join hands in a circle and sing:–

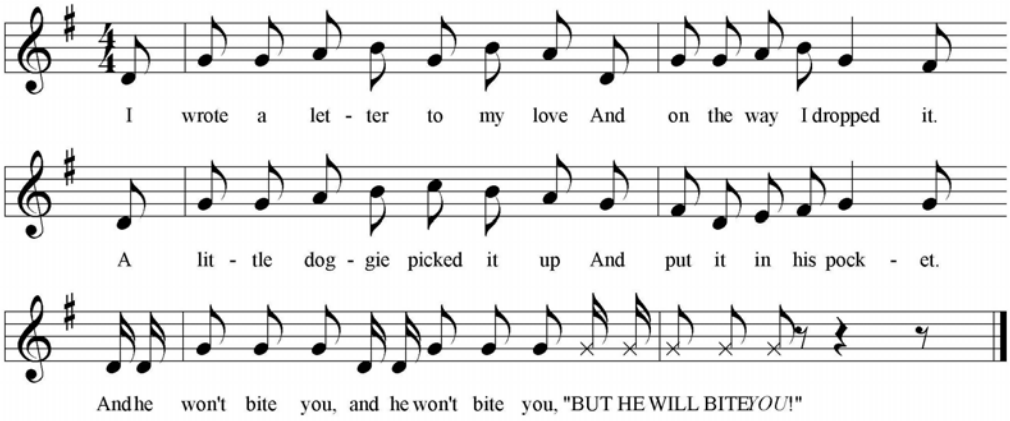



A player who has been selected as "it" then runs around the outside of the circle, flicking a handkerchief first at one and then another, at the same time repeating, "I won't bite you, and I won't bite you" etc. Finally he throws the handkerchief at some one in the circle, and shouts "And I will bite you." The one who gets the handkerchief then gives chase, and, if he catches the other, takes the latter's place outside the ring. Then the game is repeated.

# 17. I WROTE A LETTER TO MY LOVE

## 5.A

(Fowke, 1969, p. 11; FO 84)



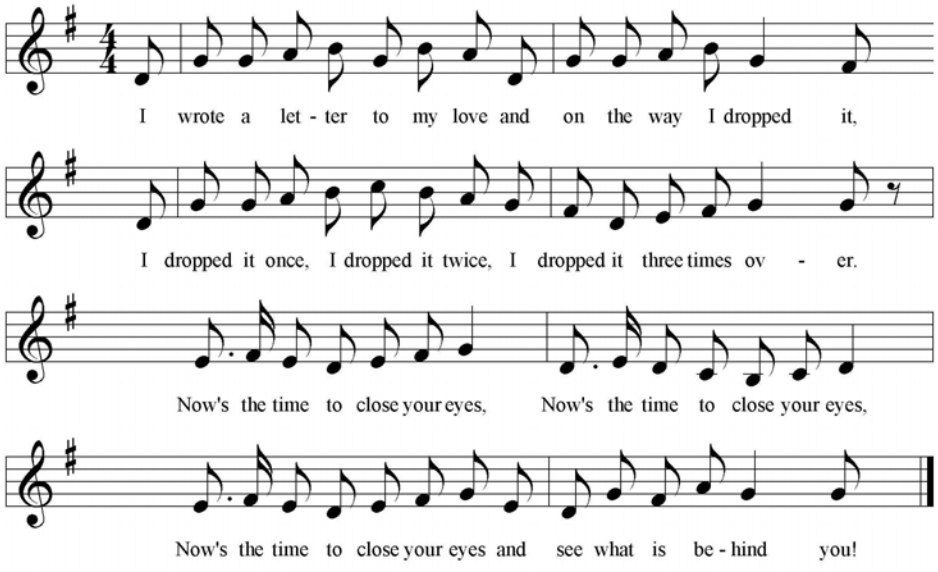

GAME: One child walks around the outside of the ring and drops a handkerchief behind someone on "I will bite you." That child chases the first around the ring, and when he catches him takes his place for the next round.

(*The original melody is printed as 6 text lines of 2 measures each in 2/4 metre*.)

# 17. I WROTE A LETTER TO MY LOVE

## 5.B

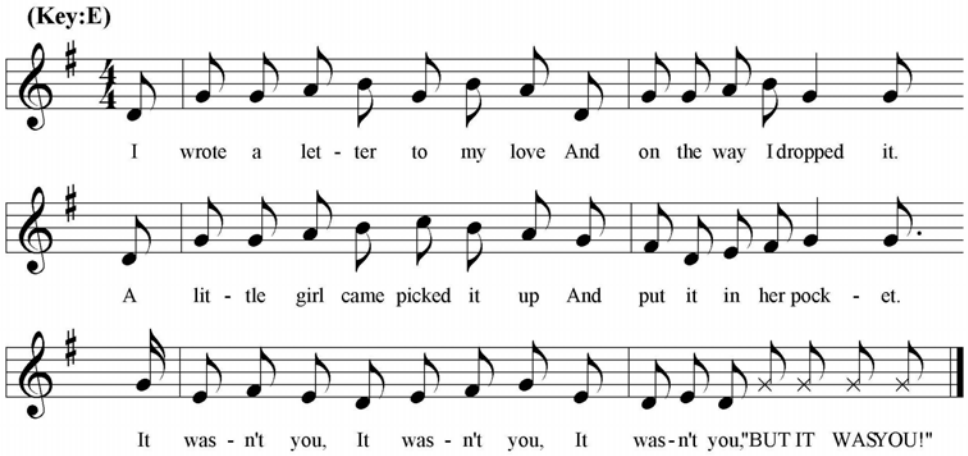
(Creighton, MS 107B–4)



# 17. DROP THE HANDKERCHIEF

## 5.C

(Creighton, MS 10–5)




GAME: One person carrying a handkerchief walks around the outside of the circle. He drops the handkerchief behind someone, then runs in the opposite direction. The first person back stays, while the other person walks around for the next game.