

## HUNTINGDON LULLABY or The Green Cradle

Original song by Sheila Chesters, sung at the Second English Folk Music Festival, October, 1958.

Thy daddy was a basket maker Cress, sorrel, the gypsy weaver,  
 a-cutting willows by the river Cress sorrel and sanfer.  
 He made an egg basket for my mother a willow hat to please my  
 father and he vowed that he would be my lover Cress sorrel and sanfer.

Thy daddy was a basketmaker  
 Cress, sorrel, the gypsy weaver  
 A-cutting willows by the river  
 Cress, sorrel, and sanfer  
 He made an egg basket for my mother  
 A willow hat to please my father  
 And he vowed that he would be my lover  
 Cress, sorrel, and sanfer.

He made for me a love token  
 Cress, sorrel, the gypsy weaver  
 A crown of willow ne'er to be broken  
 Cress, sorrel and sanfer  
 He wove a white square to be my pillow  
 A fine green cradle of the green willow  
 But Cromwell sent him o'er the billow  
 Cress, sorrel, and sanfer.

Then ba la loo and do not sorrow  
 Cress, sorrel, the gypsy weaver  
 He'll come to-day—or else to-morrow  
 Cress, sorrel and sanfer.  
 He vowed that he would never leave me  
 And all his heart was just to please me  
 Oh whispering willows do not tease me  
 Cress, sorrel, and sanfer.

Note—Sanfer = succulent of the Fens, a great delicacy.

This was one of the three highly commended original songs submitted at the Festival. Of the other two, "When Sixty Solid Sailors went a-cheering of the Queen" by Cyril Tawney is under consideration for publication by a leading music publisher, and "The Arbroath Disaster" by Fred Dallas has already been published on a broadsheet.

## BUCK AND WING

Notes on Lancashire Clog Dancing  
 by Julian Pilling

"BUCK and Wing" and "Buck Dancing" are local terms in the area from Blackburn to Colne in Lancashire for step dancing in clogs. Everybody in Lancashire has heard of clog dancing, but the number of people who have seen it is small nowadays, and unless there is a revival, is becoming smaller.

The etymology of "Buck" and "Wing" is not clear. Maybe they are descriptive by comparison with the movements of a horse, "wing" meaning to kick out sideways,<sup>1</sup> also "buck" knees are inclined inwards.<sup>1</sup> Note also "wing" (with a soft "g") meaning to shrink or draw in, applied to a "horse . . . when about to strike."<sup>2</sup> "Wang" on the other hand, according to *Tum o' Dick o' Bob's Lankisher Dickshonary* (n.d. but after 1873), is equivalent to "bang" which brings us to "buckthwang, buckwang, buckfang" given in Taylor's *Folkspeech of South Lancashire* (1901), "a form of punishment inflicted by schoolboys who hold their victim by the hands and feet and swing him against a wall." "Whang" can also mean a shoe-lace, being derived from the Anglo-Saxon "pwang = a thong." Clogs were originally brought to Lancashire by Flemish weavers, and the following Dutch terms are perhaps of interest: "boken maken," to cut capers, and "bok stavast," leap frog.

Clogs were usually specially made on the pattern of miners' clogs, but with flatter soles. They were bought for dancing one size smaller than normal to ensure a close fit, for working clogs are worn loose to the foot. A pair of shoes that had been clogged would also do; this appears to have been accepted by stage dancers but scorned by local enthusiasts who took great pride in their equipment. At a pinch miners' clogs with the irons taken off could be used, for irons are never worn on dancing clogs. In making clogs the clogger would display his craftsmanship by tooling on the leather, making square toes or long pointed toes, putting in eyelets of contrasting colour or extra ones purely for ornament. In Colne they called these "dandy clogs"; at one time it was a fashion to wear them, and visitors can still buy them to take home as Lancashire souvenirs. Compare also the highly ornamented clogs of the Bacup Coconutters. The floral designs tooled on the leather belong to the same type of popular art as the painting on canal barges, and have even been compared to "rose painting," a traditional peasant art of Norway.

It was a common practice to hollow out the heels, put in a couple of pennies and to screw on aluminium<sup>3</sup> plates to serve as

1. Horseman's cant, according to Webster's *New International Dictionary* (1909).
2. A. E. Pease, *Dialect of the North Riding of Yorkshire* (1928).
3. Aluminium was first separated from its ore in 1828 and became a commercial proposition about 1900.



