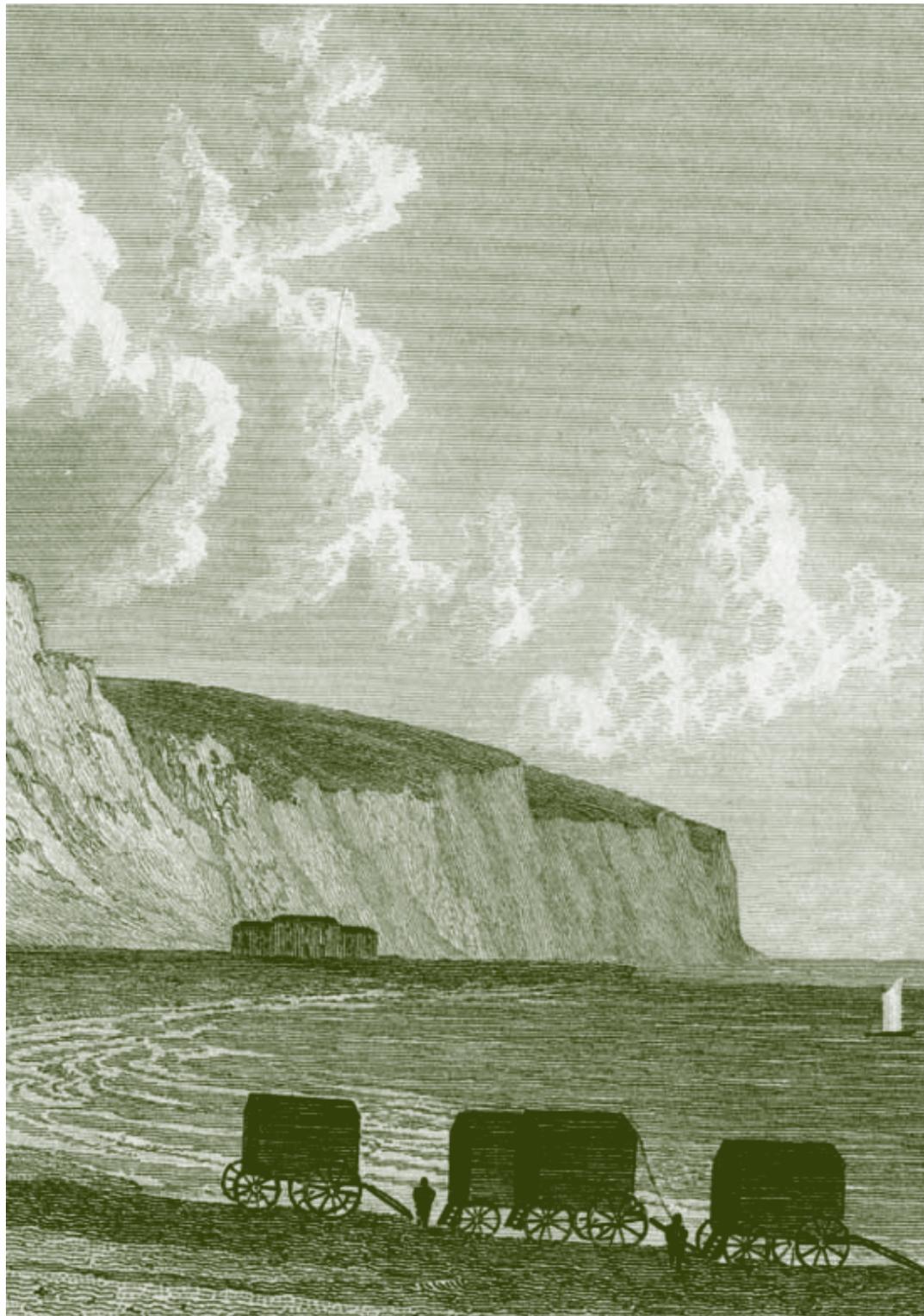


singing  
histories

**Kent**





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## Introduction

Music for Change is a leading arts and educational organisation committed to promoting awareness, understanding and respect for cultural diversity. An essential part of our work, especially with children and young people, is the development of an understanding about other people. We therefore hope that this book will be used in two ways.

We hope to bring back to life songs that are intrinsic to the history and traditions of the local people of Kent, and to provide the resources that could be used as the basis for a regional cultural celebration. We are also hoping that the songs will be used by those moving to the area, both from within the UK and further afield, to find out a little more about the heritage of the community they are now part of. Schools, youth groups and libraries will all find the resource informative and easy to use and Music for Change is thrilled to have been part of this project.

We would like to offer our sincere thanks to Bob Kenward, Sue Hudson, Stuart Pendrill and Sue Watson, for sharing their collections of songs, and to Sing London for providing us with the opportunity to put this booklet together.

*Julie Larner and Katy Diamond-Jalloh*  
*Music for Change*

# Foreword

Kent has always been the Garden of England and the gateway to Europe. Any traveller passing through can still see the grazing, orchards and fertile farming land which supplied London with meat, fruit and vegetables. Before the Industrial Revolution, Kent was the richest county in England.

Yet it has always been a county of contrasts. Ship-builders, yeoman farmers, iron-founders, agricultural labourers, wealthy merchants from the City, papermakers, weavers, sawyers, lawyers, millers, miners, tradesmen and craftsmen settled and worked in Kent alongside paupers and noblemen.

Travellers of all descriptions – pilgrims, gypsy fruit-pickers, tourists, East-End hoppers, commuters, seaside day-trippers – came and went with the seasons. The Royal Navy's sailors, bargees, Channel ferrymen, fishermen, pleasure-boat crews and merchant seamen shared the tideways off the Kent coast. All these people brought with them their own songs and stories.

Some of the folk songs in this booklet are very old, sung from generation to generation without being written down. They were remembered because they had a good tune and because the words meant something to the people who sang them.

Some songs told the story of how people lived and worked. Often songs began with an actual event, a great battle, a local quarrel or a notable occasion like the opening of a railway. When many people could not read, they were a way of passing on news, or good advice.

Just like today, though, when life was hard, people wanted excitement. So ballads of murder and fantasy spread. They had heroes and villains. Singers added fresh thrills to their performance, or left out verses which might

offend the local lords. Over the centuries the story might twist and turn, but the song went on.

The writing of new songs is all part of the tradition. Someone might tell a balladeer their life story, or a good joke, or a tale of lost love. Maybe someone was whistling or humming a tune while they worked. Someone, somewhere, first put the words and tune together. Over and over again they would try to think of better words and maybe change the tune so that it sounded right to them. Then, when they were happy with their song, they sang it to someone else.

If the listener liked it, he or she tried to remember it too. So, from person to person and town to town, the song was passed on. If it wasn't liked, no-one sang it any more and it was forgotten. If it was well liked, it might be carried all over the country by people moving around for work. Someone, somewhere, might try to write it down so that more people could sing it. The new songs in this book are just beginning their journey.

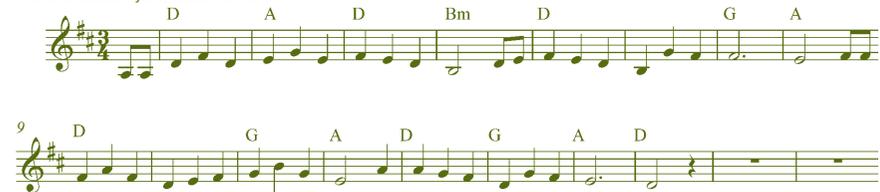
## **And you**

People sing for many reasons – to make themselves feel better, to make a joyful noise, to pass on their experiences to other people or just to have a good time. The best songs are stories too – they pass on the singer's heritage and tradition to all who listen and all who sing along.

We hope that this booklet will help you to do this too. 'Folk song is the gathering of many voices'...

# Man of Kent

Words & Music by Bob Kenward 1977



The farmer will tell of the field  
and the tree  
For the good soil of Kent's known  
all over  
And the traveller returning  
is gladdened to see  
The welcoming sea-cliffs of Dover

*For the hop's on the bine out  
Faversham way  
And the apple's in fruit around  
Marden  
Here's health to the Darent, likewise  
the Medway  
And the Downs that surround  
England's garden*

The Canterb'ry pilgrims once  
walked on their way  
And beneath forest shade  
were they rested  
Now the plough and the harvester  
work for the day  
Where the wind blows the grass  
around Yelsted

Now Maidstone's a market that's  
held in esteem  
Where the cattle and crops  
are worth selling  
And Faversham's breweries produce  
shepherd's dream  
Bringing many a tale to the telling

It's the Medway distinguishes  
we Men of Kent  
From the Kentish Men west  
of the river  
But we'll meet at St Lawrence,  
the Nevill or Mote  
To celebrate willow and weather  
Though there's hundreds of houses  
surrounding the green  
The beauty of Kent is not waning  
There's still Romney Marsh and old  
Tenterden town  
The oasts and the downland  
remaining

Can you picture all the places in this song? There have been many changes in the County since Man of Kent was written. Nowadays the traveller is just as likely to pop up from the Channel Tunnel, while wheatfields stretch across the Downs and Kent play most of their cricket at Canterbury. There are towns which didn't exist, like King's Hill, and there are hardly any working hop gardens. The breweries are included, because they were the reason for all the oasts, which are so still much a part of our countryside.

Some of the Canterbury pilgrims may have walked along the North Downs Way, but many would have come over Rochester Bridge and through Sittingbourne. See if you can find Yelsted on the map! It's more or less between the two routes...

There's so much the variety in Kent. You can start on the mysterious Thames marshes, go over the back of the chalk hills, into the Weald and out again, over the ridges, through pretty towns like Cranbrook, drop down onto the Romney levels and end up on the wonderfully strange shingle of Dungeness – all in an afternoon (and now you can see pictures of it all on the internet). And there are many unusual place-names...

Kent is still a lovely county, and I still think I'm lucky to live here.

# The Old Farmer and His Wife

Sung by 69 year old Edward (Ted) Richardson at Rainham, Kent in 1976.



There was an old man on a farm  
and this he said to me, sir:  
He said he could do more work  
in a day than his wife could do  
in three, sir.

If that be so the old wife said  
to this you will agree, sir:  
That I will drive the plough today  
and you will milk the cow, sir.

But you must watch the speckled  
hen for fear she lay away, sir  
And you must watch the spool  
of yon\* that I spun yesterday, sir.

The old wife took the stick in hand  
and went to drive the plough, sir.  
The old man took the pail in hand  
and went to milk the cow, sir.

But Tiny fussed and kicked about  
and Tiny cocked her nose, sir  
And Tiny gave the man a kick –  
the blood ran from the blow, sir.

My pretty little Tiny dear, my pretty  
cow stand still!  
If you will milk another day be sore  
against my will, sir.

He went within to feed the pigs  
which were within the sty, sir:  
He knocked his head against the  
door which made the blood to fly, sir.

He went to watch the speckled hen  
for fear she lay away, sir  
But clean forgot the spool of yon his  
wife spun yesterday, sir.

And time he looked at pig and cow  
he said, 'I do agree, sir,  
If my wife never works again she'll  
not be blamed by me, sir!'

When two people live together, it seems the busier they get the more often they argue about who does more work – and whose work is more important. This old song shows that it's nothing new. In 1970 a law was passed called the Equal Pay Act to make sure that men and women each receive the same rate of pay for equal work. But, as this song shows, the idea of what is equal work can still vary from one person to another!

Married with three daughters, Ted was very much the 'man of the house' and always thought of himself as in charge, despite being outnumbered by the women. Yet there was always the feeling that his wife, Marjorie, was quietly ruling the house in her own unassuming way. After Ted had finished singing his song, Marje said she had a verse to add to the end, which Ted had conveniently 'forgotten':

*And when the sun was going down and set the trees  
a-glowing  
His wife and horses hove in sight – they'd finished all  
the ploughing!*

This song shows us how far a folk song could travel even without modern radio or CDs – just by one person singing it to another. It is well known in many parts of the USA as 'Father Grumble'.

# Hardy Flint

Words & Music by Bob Kenward 1982



Hear the pickers cuss and groan:

*Flint, flint, the hardy flint*

Always growing, never sown

*Flint's all in the clay*

*Up, down, all around*

*Flint, flint, the hardy flint*

*Pick 'em up and pile 'em round*

*Flint's all in the clay*

Firestone or the knapped-edge axe:

Makes weary hands and aching

backs:

Countless as the Coty Stones:

Sharp and black or dull as bones:

If owl hoots in the frosty night:

If corn and poppies blow so bright:

Clear the furrow for the plough:

We'll not hear such ringing now:

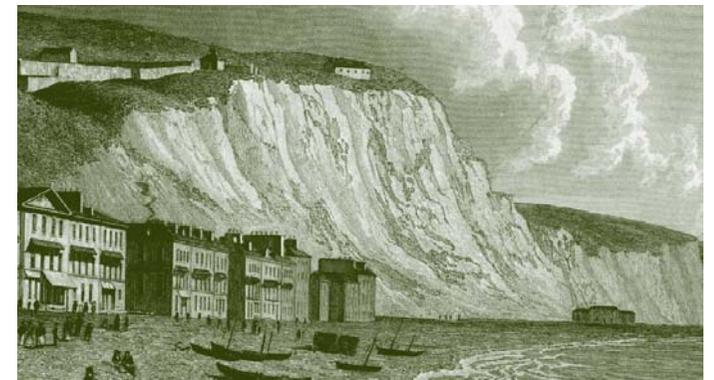
Flint white early in the morn:

Pick 'em up, you're never done:

Have you ever wondered what farmworkers did in the winter, after the crops were gathered in and the grain had been thrashed and stored? Up on the Downs, flintpicking was a cold and unpleasant winter job which the farmer gave his younger hands to keep them employed. After every fall of rain flints appeared from the clay soil as if they were a harvest. They were a nuisance to horses, ploughs and wheels. So someone had to pick them up.

Barns and farmhouses were built of the larger stones, often cracked or 'knapped' in half to reveal the shiny black inner face. Farm walls were made from the medium-sized stones in their natural creamy-white, roundy-knobbled form. Even small flints were useful, as they could be crushed for roadstone or shovelled into potholes to repair the damage heavy carts had caused in the rough tracks about the farm.

The Coty stones in the song are those near Aylesford, known as Little Kit's Coty (I grew up saying Cot-y, some people say Coat-y). They are supposed to be impossible to count – although that depends upon whether you include the gravel. The legend says that an accurate guess will awaken Old Nick...



## A Blacksmith Courted Me



For a blacksmith he courted me,  
just nine months or better  
Until he won my heart, wrote  
to me a letter  
With his hammer in his hand,  
strikes his blows so neat and clever  
And if I were with my love, I'd live  
for ever

Now he talks about going abroad,  
fighting for strangers  
And he'd better stay at home,  
and keep from all dangers  
For you stay at home with me,  
my dearest jewel  
And you stay at home with me,  
and don't prove cruel

My true love's gone across the sea,  
gathering fine posies  
My true love's gone across the sea,  
with his cheeks like roses  
I'm afraid that broiling sun will spoil  
his beauty  
And if I was with my love, I'd do  
love's duty

For it's once I had gold in store,  
they all seemed to like me  
And now I'm low and poor, they all  
seem to slight me  
For there ain't no belief in a man,  
nor your own brother  
So it's: girls, whenever you love,  
love one another

Ever since there were nations there have been wars between them, and families and friends have had to say goodbye to a loved one who is going away to fight. Traditional folk songs about the parting or return of a soldier or sailor have therefore always been popular. Some tell the story from the point of view of the woman left behind; others show the feelings of the serviceman who wonders if the one he loves could stay faithful while he is away.

In the 18th and 19th centuries, recruiting parties would come to town offering 'the King's shilling' to persuade poor men to join the army. If they did, their wives or sweethearts might never see them again. In this song, the young woman may have already married her blacksmith; at least it seems her prospects for future happiness look bleak.

Like so many women or men married to members of the armed forces today, she waits at home, fearing for his safety in a distant and unknown land. The singer of this song is not only worried about the dangers of battle: 'gathering fine posies' refers to the custom of carrying a bunch of herbs in the pocket to protect against catching diseases.

You may recognise this traditional tune: it became famous when it was chosen for the hymn 'To Be a Pilgrim'.

# King Hop

Words & Music by Bob Kenward 1980



January is a bitter plough  
Poles but February's show:

*Hop is King, he will rise again  
In pints, in jugs, in glasses  
In pints, in jugs and glasses*

In March the stringer stalks the sky  
April shoots do upwards wind:

May's the green boy clung to twine  
June the rising of the man:

He stalks July both leaved and long  
August grows a thorny crown:

September scythes his thorny bine  
October men they press him down:

In the brewer's pocket by November  
Barrel-chested by December:

You can find oast houses all over Kent, but why were they built? Before piped water, ale and beer were safer to drink than a bucket of something drawn from the well or river. Brewing killed many of the germs in the water. Beer could be a weak drink. Hops were used to add flavour.

You could find hop gardens and their long poles and strings everywhere. Each month brought its own task. The stringer on stilts threaded twine webs for the young hop-bines to twine around. In June the hop bines snaked upwards, sometimes a foot and a half each night. September is when the top grew shaggy and lush. A slash with a scythe cut the string and brought down the bine. Once the female flowers were hand picked by hoppers – some of these hoppers were local but many more were from London. Nowadays they are picked mechanically, to the endless clatter of the stripping machine.

In the oast-house, the hop flowers are spread out for drying on a rack-floor over a carefully tended fire. White steam creeps around the cowls. When they are ready, the dried flowers are pressed into sacks known as pockets and taken away to breweries. Handling the bines mazes your skin with tiny cuts, and the hop-juice makes them sting, but who wouldn't pay such a price for a 'holiday' in Kent?



# Hops

From the Kentish Gazette, Sept. 4, 1776. A New Song for the year 1776. Addressed to the Farmers of Kent



You farmers of Kent who are jolly  
and gay  
Come listen awhile and pray mind  
what I say  
May this season be crown'd with  
plentiful crops  
And off from an acre a load of good  
hops  
*Oh good hopping, oh good hopping,  
oh good hopping, good hopping, oh*

Oh may they prove fine too and fetch  
a great price  
That you my brave boys may get  
rich in a trice  
For as ye are ever both hearty  
and free  
Success to you all for to fill you  
with glee  
*Oh good hopping, oh good hopping,  
oh good hopping, good hopping, oh*

To crown your repast in the hopping  
this year  
I wish that the weather may be fine  
and clear  
For when it is wet it is wretched  
and sad  
From morning till night in a hop-  
ground to pad  
*Oh sad hopping, oh sad hopping,  
oh sad hopping, sad hopping, oh*

Then to see the poor hoppers alas  
what a sight  
Tis enough to put modesty into  
a fright  
For they are so draggled and wet  
to the skin  
They're much to be pitied –  
their clothing's so thin  
*Oh poor creatures, oh poor  
creatures, oh poor creatures,  
poor creatures, oh*

In case of this weather let there  
be no flaw  
Take care to provide them  
with plenty of straw  
That when the poor creatures retire  
to their nest  
They may lie in comfort and take  
all their rest  
*Oh poor hoppers, oh poor hoppers,  
oh poor hoppers, poor hoppers, oh*

But above all that's said, pray don't  
cheat the King  
For if you do that, it is sure a bad  
thing  
As he'll have his duty by hook  
or by crook!  
Beware, oh beware, lest you're  
in the black book  
*Oh sad doings, oh sad doings, oh sad  
doings, sad doings, oh*

Though you have more honour  
at least so I trust  
I'd have you be always quite upright  
and just  
For honour and honesty carry  
the sway  
Then from these great maxims ne'er  
venture to stray  
*Oh rare hopping, oh rare hopping,  
oh rare hopping, rare hopping, oh*





If you visit a Kent farm, when fruit or vegetables are being harvested by hand, you might hear the workers speak a language you do not understand. Many farmers could not pick their crops without the help of people who come from afar to stay for a season and work hard for basic wages. But do you know that this is nothing new?

In the 19th century, Kent had 72,000 acres of hop gardens. For each acre, 200 workers were needed for two or three weeks every year to pick the hops, which were used to flavour beer. So every year, at the end of August, crowds of casual workers travelled to Kent from all over southern England and especially from London. They joined others who had already spent the summer on the farm, fruit-picking and harvesting.

For many, it was a chance for a paid holiday – but pay and working conditions were poor. Basic accommodation was provided, often in a barn or a one-room hut on the farm. Hop-pickers slept on the ground, on a sack filled with straw. They were paid for 'piece work' – a penny (now 0.4p) for every bushel basket they filled. They worked long hours to earn as much as possible; but if the weather was wet, they could not pick.

In the song, the farmer is reminded to be honest and just. The 'measurer', who counted how many bushels had been picked, was often so keen to save his master's money that he squeezed down the hops to avoid having to pay for a full basket.

# The Old Country Train

Words & Music by Bob Kenward 1997



Paddock Wood to Hawkhurst  
by way of Horsmonden  
Pulling through the hopyards,  
pushing back again  
Ramblers for Cranbrook, wagons  
for Churn Lane  
We'll never see the like  
of the Old Country Train  
  
Driver up the car end, sitting  
at his ease  
Fireman on the engine, doing  
as he please  
By Wealden woods and orchards,  
all the seasons through  
We worked the line by pull-and-  
push on duty 312:  
  
We'd a Chatham tank from  
Tonbridge, 17-0-4  
And a two-set off the Brighton line,  
seen better years before

Never had a guard, just a crate  
Jor two of fruit  
And a couple-or-three passengers all  
in their market suits:  
  
September brought the hoppers,  
we watched them all go past  
Coppertops and Converts, working  
fit to bust  
  
Hammering through Goudhurst,  
charging Badger's Oak  
With the roughest of the old stock  
they could find up in the Smoke  
  
I've taken out a Crompton from  
the yard at Hither Green  
Come home off the Dover run,  
my working clothes all clean  
But give me back the rails and  
that old Chatham tank  
I'd be back on steam tomorrow,  
charging Cranbrook bank



Have you ever wondered why there are Station Roads with no railway nearby? Kent's small branch lines, now closed, are fondly remembered by those who travelled on them. The Hawkhurst line wandered up into the hills, past hop gardens and farms, using pull-and-push trains for passengers.

Pull-and-push meant that the driver didn't have to shunt his engine to the front for every journey. On the way back he drove the train back from the last coach, working the brakes and using a bell to tell the fireman when to put on steam. The fireman had to shovel coal, check the water level, open the regulator and keep the engine moving all on his own.

Enginemens often had affectionate nicknames for their locomotives, such as 'Coppertop' (the D class which first ran with a shiny brass dome). Old locomotives like these were used for hop-picking specials made up of carriages which spent most of their time rusting away in sidings. When diesels came in, 'Cromptons' or Class 33s were familiar sights all over Kent.

This song was written after talking to two railwaymen. Although they both worked on diesels and electrics, it was their hot, dangerous, heavy, dirty, oily, dusty days on steam engines that Brian Jeffrey and Mick Wright (of Tonbridge shed) looked back on with pride.

# Street Cries (Aldington)

*Knife-Grinder's Cry*



*Birdstarver's Cry*



*Broomsellers Cry*



*Knife-Grinder's Cry*

Carving knives, table knives,  
scissors or razors  
Any umbrellas to mend?

*Bird-Starver's Cry*

Away you old devils, away  
Away you old devils, away  
You eat too much  
You drink too much  
You carry too much away, away

*Broom-seller's Cry*

Will you buy a broom?  
Will you buy a broom?  
Will you buy a broom today?

There is one for the lady and one  
for the baby  
Will you buy a broom?  
Will you buy a broom?  
Will you buy a broom today?

Since the very first villages and towns existed, people have competed with one another to sell their goods. Before there were shops, goods and services of all kinds were promoted and sold outside in the street. Street cries were a way for these sellers (known as 'costermongers' or 'hawkers') to 'hawk' their products and services in the open-air. To stand out from the others, each one developed their own short song or cry. The idea is used to this day in advertising: a bright tune or sound catches the attention of the public and a simple message is repeated often so it is remembered. They are sometimes called 'jingles'. Can you sing any adverts or recall any phrases describing a product?

You can still hear something like these street cries in some streets and outdoor markets. Look out for the fruit and vegetable seller offering something like 'two punnets a pound your strawberries' or the newspaper seller calling out the name of their newspaper.

The three street cries above can be sung simultaneously. You could write your own street cry and join in. You may already know this well-known old cry:

*Hot cross buns! Hot cross buns!*

*One a penny, two a penny, hot cross buns!  
If you have no daughters, give 'em to your sons  
One a penny, two a penny, hot cross buns!*

# He Rode the Waves

Words & Music by Sue Watson



My Grandad was a fisherman,  
he set forth every day  
Laurita, Curlew and Beau Jesse,  
his boats he'd proudly sail  
The life was hard, the days were  
long, he'd work 'til late at night  
But he was happy doing this, for him  
this life was right

*He rode the waves, he sailed  
the stormy sea  
He rode the waves, he lived his life  
so free*

When war arrived, he did his bit,  
he joined in with the fight  
And with the bomb disposal squad  
he defused mines at night  
And at Dunkirk he and his friends  
took fishing boats to sea

And ferried all the soldiers home  
to England's shore at Deal  
His black sheep son, he didn't want  
to be a fisherman  
But still the sea was in his blood,  
the lifeboat he did man  
For people stuck on Dover cliffs,  
to bring them up he'd climb  
He joined the air-sea rescue,  
put his life upon the line  
His brother took the family line,  
a fisherman became  
And his son too, he followed on,  
took up the family game  
Now he takes parties out to sea  
to fish and take the air  
And sometimes when he's on the  
sea, he feels his grandad's there

Have you heard of the shingle beach at Deal, or the Goodwin Sands? The Royal Navy would moor warships in the deeper water to ride out storms, and many boatmen could make a living putting to sea and taking provisions to and fro. They knew the waters very well and, in the days before the RNLI, would be needed to save drowning sailors when the weather was bad.

Sue Watson hails from the coastal town of Deal in South-East Kent, traditionally a fishing town, with a shingle beach and fishing boats lined up along the shore. This song tells the true story of three generations of her family throughout the twentieth century and their connections to the sea they live by – ranging from sea fishing and daring exploits during World War II, to manning the local lifeboat and participating in air-sea rescue operations on Dover Cliffs.

It also highlights the changes in the local fishing industry over the years. Although there are still fishing boats on the shore at Deal, there are fewer nowadays, and their use has changed over the years to mainly pleasure craft. This song is inspired mainly by conversations with members of Sue's family and also childhood memories of being taken to see the boats – and even being taken out for a ride in them on the English Channel as a treat on special occasions!

Maybe someone in your family has a story which you could make into a song? Just as there are fishing families who know all there is to know about a particular stretch of water, so other families have memories of working in different ways. Most people are only too glad to talk about how it was when they were younger. They will talk about their skills and the way things have changed and soon you will have plenty to write a song about.

# FE5 the Happy Return

Words & Music: Stuart Pendrill

The musical score is written in treble clef with a key signature of one sharp (F#) and a 4/4 time signature. It consists of six staves of music. The first staff begins with a treble clef, a key signature of one sharp, and a 4/4 time signature. The melody starts on a whole note C4, followed by quarter notes D4, E4, F#4, G4, A4, B4, C5, D5, E5, F#5, G5, A5, B5, C6, D6, E6, F#6, G6, A6, B6, C7. The second staff starts at measure 6 with a whole note C4, followed by quarter notes D4, E4, F#4, G4, A4, B4, C5, D5, E5, F#5, G5, A5, B5, C6, D6, E6, F#6, G6, A6, B6, C7. The third staff starts at measure 11 with a whole note C4, followed by quarter notes D4, E4, F#4, G4, A4, B4, C5, D5, E5, F#5, G5, A5, B5, C6, D6, E6, F#6, G6, A6, B6, C7. The fourth staff starts at measure 16 with a whole note C4, followed by quarter notes D4, E4, F#4, G4, A4, B4, C5, D5, E5, F#5, G5, A5, B5, C6, D6, E6, F#6, G6, A6, B6, C7. The fifth staff starts at measure 21 with a whole note C4, followed by quarter notes D4, E4, F#4, G4, A4, B4, C5, D5, E5, F#5, G5, A5, B5, C6, D6, E6, F#6, G6, A6, B6, C7. The sixth staff starts at measure 26 with a whole note C4, followed by quarter notes D4, E4, F#4, G4, A4, B4, C5, D5, E5, F#5, G5, A5, B5, C6, D6, E6, F#6, G6, A6, B6, C7. The score ends with a double bar line.

In 1905 out of disaster – the FE5  
she sailed in  
The Happy Return they named her –  
the Good Intent to replace  
To fish for the people of Folkestone  
as onto the channel she fared  
When the FE5 sailed on the waters –  
the crew were all pleased to say  
That this fine Cornish built fishing  
lugger – kept them safe when out  
at sea:

*She'll not go – she'll not fall – she will  
– out last us all*

*The trusty FE5 was built to survive  
– and The Happy Return will sail  
again*

In 1916 she got power – no longer  
at the will of the winds  
And for over 50 years she remained  
here – taking her catch from the sea  
Then she moved up the coast to the  
Wash – and continued there to pay  
her way  
Those storms in 87 tried to wreck  
her – the insurance men said she'd  
have to go  
Brought back – repaired and refitted  
– once more she was soon out to sea:

Her end ordered from Brussels  
where – strange decisions are made  
They want boats the size of small  
islands that – take everything from  
the sea  
So this fine and proud old fishing  
vessel – was told that she would  
have to go  
But instead of going all to pieces –  
the Cornish men saved her soul  
They restored that fine old fishing  
lugger – to the way – they built  
her long ago:

Its been one hundred years since  
she first sailed into – harbour at  
Folkestone town

That fine and trusted fishing  
lugger was – truly made – with  
'Good intent'  
Many boats have come and gone  
their way now – many fine men lost  
unto the seas  
So the FE5 named the Happy Return  
is – well known by St Peter too  
In the next hundred years we'll still  
see her – sailing proudly out upon  
the seas



### **How do fishing boats get their names?**

In September 1904, a sudden storm caused the shipwreck and destruction of a fishing boat belonging to the Saunders family of Folkestone. Fortunately, the entire crew were rescued. In those days, however, fishing was not only a major source of food but also a major employer; therefore its loss was a blow to the local economy.

The mayor of Folkestone organised an appeal to purchase a replacement vessel from Cornwall and in 1905 the replacement vessel sailed into Folkestone harbour. It was registered as the FE5 (FE denoting Folkestone) and the family named it Happy Return, in recognition of the safe return of the crew from their shipwreck.

The 1987 storms caused severe damage and she was declared a total loss, but she was brought back and repaired. In 1998 she was ordered to be decommissioned, but instead of being destroyed she was returned to Cornwall where she was fully restored by the Mounts Bay Luggar Association where she continues to sail for pleasure.

Remarkably in 2005, on her centenary, the tough old boat made a happy return into Folkestone harbour. She had been in constant use as a fishing boat up to 1998, sixty-four years out of Folkestone and twenty-nine years from Kings Lynn.

# Petition of the Pigs in Kent

The Sporting Magazine, Nov. 1809



Ye owners of woodlands, with all  
due submission  
We humbly beg leave to present  
our petition  
That you will be pleased to recall  
your decree  
Which tells us that acorns no longer  
are free  
In Sussex and Surrey and Middlesex  
too  
Pigs may ramble at large without  
much ado  
So why then in Kent should  
pretences be found  
To drive us like culprits and thieves  
to the pound  
Since we and our fathers and others  
before 'em  
Have ranged in your woods with  
all proper decorum  
No poachers are we for no game  
we annoy  
No hares we entrap and no  
pheasants decoy

Contented are we if an acorn we find  
Nor wish for a feast of a daintier kind  
Besides we are told and perhaps not  
mistaken  
That you and your friends love a slice  
of good bacon  
But if of good bacon you all love  
a slice  
If pigs are to starve, how can bacon  
be nice?  
For these and for other wise reasons  
of state  
We again our petition most humbly  
repeat  
Ye owners of woodlands, with all  
due submission  
We humbly beg leave to present  
our petition  
That you will repeal this severest  
of laws  
So your woods shall resound to our  
grunting applause

Have you ever been asked to add your name to a petition, protesting against a decision made by an official authority? When this song was written, petitions were a common way for citizens to make their views known to the government.

In this song the petition is made on behalf of the pigs of Kent. It asks landowners to continue a custom called 'pannage', which allowed people to let their pigs loose in the woods to feed on fallen acorns for six weeks every autumn. It was a very good way of fattening the pigs ready for slaughter: their salted meat was a very important food for the winter.

At one time in England there were a lot of 'common lands' which could be freely used for the grazing of animals. In the 19th century, new laws called Enclosures Acts meant that many common lands passed into the ownership of private landlords, who could then charge a fee for grazing or 'pannage'. As a result, many poor people found they could no longer afford to keep livestock. With only very low wages to live on, they could face starvation unless they moved into towns to find work in a factory.

# The Hoodeners' Rant

Words & Music by Bob Kenward 1994



When winter comes to home  
and heart  
And deepest frost will ne'er depart  
We'll brave December's foul impart  
And beat a path to your door:

*Comes the turning of the year  
All good men have duty clear  
To bring good luck on the winter  
drear  
And ride the Hooden Horse*

First the Molly-Man comes in  
That's turned his coat all outside-in  
He can't be seen by the devil or man  
So drives Old Nick from the door:

Then the Waggoner's come  
to the chase  
With whip and halter to settle  
the case  
To master Hooden without a trace  
And lead him back to the door:

The rider he's a brisk young blood  
To straddle bold Hooden and ride  
to the wood  
With never a thought for the sticks  
or mud

He tumbles back to the door:  
In come Hooden all at his ease  
As kind a nag as takes the breeze  
But anyone here should him  
displease

He'll kick you back to your door:

And when that we have done  
the task  
And Hooden he is ridden at last  
We'll drink good health and we'll  
raise a glass  
And dance away from your door:

Why are those people performing a play, and why is one dressed as a horse?

The Hooden Horse play is traditional to East Kent, though it can be seen more widely now every Christmas. Whitstable Hoodener Mark Lawson asked for a song in the 1980s and gave me all the information. The story is quite easy to follow: after the Molly-Man clears the way, the Waggoner and Rider try to tame the black-cloaked Hooden Horse. Of course, being a clever creature, he resists their attempts, clacking his wooden jaw and making them very uncomfortable. Hooden does things at his own pace and if left to do so is as nice as pie. However, he is not afraid to make his annoyance felt if someone tries to take advantage of him. This may have been a message to the audience, as it was the poor farm workers who presented the play to the owners of the big houses in their area. Usually they were given some money or mince pies as thanks, which would have been very welcome in hard times. Some say that acting out the play makes for a good harvest. Would you risk bad luck by turning the Hoodeners away?



## **Where to find out more**

### *In print*

The English Folk Dance and Song Society has a database of lyrics.

Kent County Reference Library has a few books with song lyrics.

Fran & Geoff Doel have written many useful books on Kentish Customs and Folklore.

Bygone Kent magazine has informative articles by George Frampton.

### *Recordings*

Finding recordings by local singers can be difficult, as most are not available in the major shops. Internet searches for Kent Folk, Tundra, Arky's Toast, TanTethra, Andy Turner, Pig's Ear and Steel Carpet will bring up useful links. Adding the word 'folk' after the artist's name will speed your search, as will limiting your search to the UK. Otherwise you'll find out a lot about Kent State USA!

For those wishing to learn more about the stories behind 'The Old Country Train', Branch Line's DVD 'Classic Southern Region Vol. 1' explores the Hawkhurst, Westerham and Allhallows train lines using archive cine film, and on it you can hear Mick Wright and Brian Jeffrey talking about the life of railway men in the steam era.

### *Live music*

Most main towns in Kent have folk and acoustic music venues. To find your nearest, try the free booklets 'Around Kent Folk' and 'Folk In Kent' in the library or search (*your chosen town*) Folk Club. Many, like the long-established Faversham, Dartford, Tonbridge and Deal folk clubs, feature guests from all over the country and hold regular singers' nights where new singers are welcomed. We all remember singing our first song in public!

The largest annual festivals in Kent are Broadstairs in August and Rochester Sweeps in May, but all around the county you can find weekends of music like the Faversham Hop, Deal Maritime, Whitstable Oyster and Tenterden Festivals, as well as the many smaller day events. All have open sessions where you can hear local melodies mingling with a whole world of folk song.

Hoodeners, Mummers and Morris Men abound in season. BBC Radio Kent has a weekly programme hosted by Simon Evans, which also carries news of local events.

### Write your own songs

Here are two Kentish Tunes and a Tune of Kent composed by Bob for you to write your own words to. They do have names, but you can make up your own title to suit the lyrics.

#### *Howey's Adventure*

Musical notation for 'Howey's Adventure' in 2/4 time, G major. The melody consists of three staves. The first staff starts with a treble clef and a key signature of one sharp (F#). The notes are: C4, D4, E4, F#4, G4, A4, B4, C5, B4, A4, G4, F#4, E4, D4, C4. The second staff starts with a rest for 8 measures, then continues with: B4, A4, G4, F#4, E4, D4, C4, B4, A4, G4, F#4, E4, D4, C4. The third staff starts with a rest for 13 measures, then continues with: B4, A4, G4, F#4, E4, D4, C4, B4, A4, G4, F#4, E4, D4, C4, ending with a double bar line.

#### *The Countless Stones*

Musical notation for 'The Countless Stones' in 4/4 time, G major. The melody consists of three staves. The first staff starts with a treble clef and a key signature of one sharp (F#). The notes are: C4, D4, E4, F#4, G4, A4, B4, C5, B4, A4, G4, F#4, E4, D4, C4. The second staff starts with a rest for 7 measures, then continues with: B4, A4, G4, F#4, E4, D4, C4, B4, A4, G4, F#4, E4, D4, C4. The third staff starts with a rest for 13 measures, then continues with: B4, A4, G4, F#4, E4, D4, C4, B4, A4, G4, F#4, E4, D4, C4, ending with a double bar line.

#### *Malling Jig*

Musical notation for 'Malling Jig' in 4/4 time, G major. The melody consists of three staves. The first staff starts with a treble clef and a key signature of one sharp (F#). The notes are: C4, D4, E4, F#4, G4, A4, B4, C5, B4, A4, G4, F#4, E4, D4, C4. The second staff starts with a rest for 7 measures, then continues with: B4, A4, G4, F#4, E4, D4, C4, B4, A4, G4, F#4, E4, D4, C4. The third staff starts with a rest for 13 measures, then continues with: B4, A4, G4, F#4, E4, D4, C4, B4, A4, G4, F#4, E4, D4, C4, ending with a double bar line.

### Notes on the contributors

Bob Kenward likes to write songs about his home county, Kent. Sometimes they come from the memories of people he has listened to, so that a new generation can sympathise with the ways of the past. Sometimes his songs arise from events as they happen. Most of all, Bob likes to sing with other people – to join with friends in choruses which celebrate the loveliness of the Garden of England.

Sue Hudson is an acknowledged specialist in traditional and old songs of Kent. As part of the popular duo Tundra, with Doug Hudson, she toured the UK, Europe and the USA presenting the songs of Kent in concert, often appearing on TV and radio, as well as recording four albums. She continues to research and write on historical subjects, as well as regularly performing folk music and song.

Stuart Pendrill has been playing and writing music for over thirty years. Well-known at various festivals and folk clubs, from Dorset to Yorkshire, he regularly enjoys playing at the local folk clubs in Deal, Dover and St Mary in the Marsh – all of which have a great atmosphere and offer a great night out. Many of his songs are written about Kent and Kentish events, so playing them locally adds another dimension to them.

Sue Watson hails from the coastal town of Deal and began singing harmonies with her family when young. She is well known at folk clubs and festivals in East Kent and further afield. Sue also has music-hall songs and ballads in her repertoire. Like most singers throughout the ages, if she likes a song she will sing it, wherever it comes from.



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