

# Elizabethan Ballads

## Outline

1. Ballads
  - a. Registered with the Company of Stationers of London
  - b. Tended to have simple, modal tunes that everyone could sing
2. Ballads Referenced in Shakespeare Plays
  - a. *Goddesses* (1609) in the *Fitzwilliam Virginal Book*, later Playford
    - i. As Blow, Blow Thou Winter Wind in *As You Like It* (1599)
    - ii. As *A North Country Lass* in *The Winter's Tale* (1609)

A North Country lass  
Up to London did pass  
Although with her nature it did not agree  
Which made her repent  
And so often lament  
Still wishing again in the North for to be  
Where the oak and the ash and the bonny ivy tree  
Do flourish at home in my own country
  - b. *Jog On* (Hanskin, 1588)
    - i. As *Eighty-Eight* in *Love's Labor Lost* (1594)

Some years of late, in eighty-eight,  
As well I do remember,  
It was some say the month of May,  
But some say in September.

Our Queen was then at Tilbury,  
What more could we desire, a?  
Sir Francis Drake, for her dear sake,  
Did set them all on fire, a.

Then let them neither brag nor boast,  
For if they come again-a,  
Let them take heed they do not speed,  
As they did they know when-a.
    - ii. As *A Cup of Wine* in *Henry IV* (1596)
    - iii. As *Fools Had Ne'er Less Grace* in *King Lear* (1605)
    - iv. As *Jog On* in *The Winter's Tale* (1609)

Jog on, jog on, the footpath way  
And merrily hent the stile-a;  
Your merry heart goes all the day,  
Your sad (heart) tires in a mile-a.

Your paltry money bags of gold,

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What need have we to stare for,  
When little or nothing soon is told  
And we have less to care for.

Cast care away, let sorrow cease!  
A fig for melancholy:  
Let's laugh and sing, or, if you please  
We'll frolic with sweet Dolly.

v. Music in Byrd's *Fitzwilliam Virginal Book* (1609)

c. *Packington's Pound* (1585)

- i. As *Black Spirits* in *Macbeth* (1606)
- ii. Broadside *Unto the Prophet Jonah* (1620)

Unto the Prophet Jonas I read,  
The word of the Lord secretly came,  
Saying to Niniva passe thou with speed,  
To that mightie Citie of wondrous fame.  
Against it quoth he  
cry out and be free,  
Their wickednesse great is come up to me,  
Sin is the cause of great sorrow and care,  
But God through repentance his vengeance doth spare

Then Jonas rose up immediatly,  
And from the presence of the Lord God,  
He sought by sea away to flie,  
And went downe to Joppa where many ships rode,  
The fare he did pay,  
and so got away.  
And thus the Lords word he did disobey.  
Sin is the cause of great sorrow and care,  
But God through repentance his vengeance doth spare.

d. *Fortune My Foe* (1583)

- i. As *Welladay, or Essex's Last Goodnight* (1576)
- ii. In *Merry Wives of Windsor* (1597)

Fortune, my foe, why dost thou frown on me?  
And will thy favors never lighter be?  
Wilt thou, I say, forever breed my pain?  
And wilt thou not restore my joys again?

iii. Music in Byrd's *Fitzwilliam Virginal Book* (1609)

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### e. *The Bonny Broom*

- i. In *Two Noble Kinsmen* (1611)
- ii. Music in Playford (1651)

Oh the broom, the bonnie, bonnie broom  
The broom of Cowdenknowes  
Fain would I be in the north country  
To milk my daddy's ewes

### f. *Heart's Ease* (?) in *Romeo and Juliet* (1594)

- i. As *Sing Care Away* in Playford (1651)

Sing care away with sport and play past time is all our pleasure  
If well we fare for naught we care, in mirth consists our treasure  
Let snudges lurk and drudges work, we do defy their slav'ry  
He is a fool that goes to school, all we delight in brav'ry.

- ii. As *Sigh no More* in *Much Ado about Nothing* (1598)

Sigh no more, ladies, sigh no more.  
Men were deceivers ever,  
One foot in sea, and one on shore,  
To one thing constant never.  
Then sigh not so, but let them go,  
And be you blithe and bonny,  
Converting all your sounds of woe  
Into hey nonny, nonny.

- iii. As *Where is the Life* in *Taming of the Shrew* (1593), and *Henry IV* (1596)

### g. *Monsieur's Almain* (1584). Tune name from Francois, Duke of Anjou.

- i. As *O Noble England* (1588) in *Love's Labor Lost* (1594), *Midsomer Night's Dream* (1595), and *All's Well That End's Well* (1602)

O Noble England, fall downe vpon thy knee:  
And praise thy God with thankfull hart which still maintaineth thee.  
The forraine forces, that seekes thy vtter spoile:  
Shall then through his especiall grace be brought to shamefull foile.  
With mightie power they come vnto our coast:  
To ouer runne our countrie quite, they make their brags and boast.  
In strength of men they set their onely stay:  
But we, vpon the Lord our God, will put our trust alway.

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### h. *The Jovial Tinker* (1585)

#### i. As *The Famous Ratcatcher* in *Romeo and Juliet* (1594)

There was a rare Rat-catcher,  
Did about the Country wander,  
The soundest blade of all his trade,  
Or I should him deeply slander:  
For still would he cry, a Ratt ta tat, Ratt ta tat,  
tara rat, tara rat, ever:  
To catch a Mouse, or to carouse.  
such a Ratter I saw never.

He was so brave a bowzer,  
that it was doubtful whether  
He taught the Rats, or the Rats taught him  
to be drunk as Rats, together.

#### ii. As *Tom a Bedlam* in *Henry VI* (1590), *Henry V* (1599), and *King Lear* (1605)

### 3. Other Ballads

#### a. Martin Said to his Man

##### i. Thomas Ravenscroft's *Deuteromelia* # 16 (1609)

Martin said to his man: 'Fie, man, fie!'  
Martin said to his man: 'Who's the fool now?'  
Martin said to his man: 'Fill thou the cup and I the can,  
'Thou hast well drunken, man -- who's the fool now?'

Well I saw the mouse chase the cat: 'Fie, man, fie!'  
I saw the mouse chase the cat: 'Who's the fool now?'  
I saw the mouse chase the cat, then the cheese ate the rat  
'Thou hast well drunken, man -- who's the fool now?'

#### b. Yonder Comes a Courteous Knight

##### i. Thomas Ravenscroft's *Deuteromelia* (1609)

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### c. My Thing is My Own

Lyrics from Pills to Purge Melancholy

I, A TENDER young Maid have been courted by many,  
Of all sorts and Trades as ever was any:  
A spruce Haberdasher first spake me fair,  
But I would have nothing to do with Small ware.  
My Thing is my own, and I'll keep it so still,  
Yet other young Lasses may do what they will.

A Master of Music came with an intent,        2  
To give me a Lesson on my Instrument,  
I thank'd him for nothing, but bid him be gone,  
For my little Fiddle should not be played on.  
My thing is my own, and I'll keep it so still,  
Until I be married, say men what they will.

The Cadet Drinking Song (published for the first time today)

These fine lovely ladies have stopped once again  
To watch fencing or at least watch the men.  
But all of the fairest I lay my eyes on  
are firmly wrapped up in the arms of a Don.

Chorus:

A Pox on the Dons, they teach us to win  
By beating us over and over again.  
They charm all the ladies and have all the fun.  
A Pox on the Dons, I want to be one.

I made a new doublet, I'm quite proud of it.  
With lace and brocade, it cost quite a bit.  
But when I think my clothes will bring me fame  
Along comes a Don who's looks put me to shame.

The Dons will all say, just practice some more,  
And practice and practice 'till your legs are sore.  
It's then that you'll see of what White Scarves are made,  
so until you have questions I'll sit in the shade.

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# Goddesses

## The Northern Lasse's Lamentation

Music from the English Dancing Master, 1651

Lyrics by Martin Parker

**Gm Gm F Gm**

A North-Coun-try Lass up to Lon - don did pass, Al - though with her na - ture it did not a-gree, Which  
Fain would I be in the North Coun - try, Where the ladds and the lass - es are mak - ing of hay, There  
Since that I came forth of the plea - sant North, Ther's no - thing de-light - ful I see doth a-bound, They  
A maid - en I am, and a maid I'll re-main, Un-til my own Coun-trey a - gain I do see; For

**D**

made her re - pent and so oft - en la-ment, Still wish - ing a - gain in the North for to be.  
should I see what is plea - sant to me A mis- chief light on them hath in - tic'd me a - way.  
nev - er can be half so mer - ry as we, When we are a dan - cing of Sel - lin - ger's round.  
here in this place I shall ne'r see the face Of him that's al - lot - ted my Love for to be.

**Gm Bb F Gm F Gm**

O the Oak, the Ash, and the bon-ny I - vy Tree, Doth flou - rish at home in my own Coun - try.

# Jog on

from The English Dancing Master, 1651

Chords: D G D G D

Jog on, jog on, the Foot path way, And  
Your Cast care a way, ny let bags sor row Gold, cease, What  
A

Chords: G C G D D D G C

mer ri - ly hen't the stile - a; Your mer - ry heart go'es  
need have we to stare - for, When little or no sing, thing  
Figg for Me - lan - cho ly; Let's laugh and sing, or

*\* play extra note for dance only*

Chords: G D G D C G

all soon the day, Your sad tires in a mile - a.  
if you please We'l we have the less to care - for?  
Dol - ly.



# Unto the Prophet Jonas I read

Broadside ballad  
from the Pepys collection, 1615

Packington's Pound  
English, 16th Century

Voice

Piano

4

Then Un - to the Pro - phet Jon - as I read, the  
But Jo - nas rose u - p im - me - di - ate - ly, And  
Then God se - nt out such a migh - ty great wind, Come  
Then each un - to his fel - low did say, And  
Then took they up Jo - nas in place where he stood, And

## Unto the Prophet Jonas I read

7

word of the Lor - d se - cret - ly came. — Say - ing to Nin - i - veh  
 from the pre - sence — of the Lord God, He sought — by se - a a -  
 That a sore tem - pest u - pon the sea came. Which great - ly tor - men - ted the  
 let us cast lo - ts be - tween us each one. To know — for which of our  
 threw him out of the ship in - to the sea. And pre - sent - ly — the

10

pass thou with speed, to — that migh - ty ci - ty of wond - drous fame. A -  
 wa - y to flee, And went down to Io - ppawhere ma - ny ships rode. The  
 mar - ri - ner's minds, Their ship be - ing like to be broke by the same. And  
 sin - es this day, This grie - vou - s tem - pest u - pon us is blown. The  
 fierce ra - ging flood, — With the great tem - pest the Lord did a - lay. And

13

gainst it quoth he, cry out and be free. Their wic - ked - ness great - is  
 fare he did pay, and so got a - way. And thus the Lord's wo - rd he  
 be - ing a - fraid, no time they de - layed, But each one un - to his God  
 truth for to tell, when wise - ly and well, The lots were all cast, u - pon  
 then pre - sent - ly, they all did e - spie, — That the sea most calm and

16

come up to me. Sin is the cause of great sor - row and care, but  
 did dis - o - bey.  
 ear - nest - ly prayed.  
 Jo - nas it fell.  
 qui - et did lie.

16

19

God in re - pen-tance His ven - geance doth spare.

19

22

A

22

26

Great wha-le fi - sh the Lord sent that way, which Swal - lowed up Jon - as im -

The first system of the musical score, measures 26-28. It features a vocal line in treble clef with a key signature of two sharps (F# and C#) and a common time signature. The lyrics are: "Great wha-le fi - sh the Lord sent that way, which Swal - lowed up Jon - as im -". The piano accompaniment is in bass clef, with a key signature of two sharps and a common time signature. It consists of a single bass note (C2) in each measure, marked with a fermata.

29

med - i - at - ly Three days and three nights in its bel - ly he lay, and

The second system of the musical score, measures 29-31. It features a vocal line in treble clef with a key signature of two sharps (F# and C#) and a common time signature. The lyrics are: "med - i - at - ly Three days and three nights in its bel - ly he lay, and". The piano accompaniment is in bass clef, with a key signature of two sharps and a common time signature. It consists of a single bass note (C2) in each measure, marked with a fermata.

32

there \_\_\_ full oft to the Lord he did cry. Then God did com-mand the

The third system of the musical score, measures 32-34. It features a vocal line in treble clef with a key signature of two sharps (F# and C#) and a common time signature. The lyrics are: "there \_\_\_ full oft to the Lord he did cry. Then God did com-mand the". The piano accompaniment is in bass clef, with a key signature of two sharps and a common time signature. It consists of a single bass note (C2) in each measure, marked with a fermata.

35

whale out of hand, to cast up the Pro - phet up - on the dry land.

35

38

Sin is the cause of great sor - row and care, but God in re - pen - tance His

38

41

ven - geance doth spare.

41

44

The musical score is written for a voice and piano. It begins at measure 44. The key signature is G major, indicated by one sharp (F#). The time signature is 4/4. The vocal part is written on a single staff with a treble clef and contains two measures of whole rests. The piano accompaniment is written on two staves (treble and bass clefs) joined by a brace. The right hand plays a melody of eighth and quarter notes, while the left hand provides a harmonic bass line with dotted half notes and quarter notes. The piece concludes with a double bar line.

# Fortune my foe

from the Roxburghe ballads

Anon

**Dm A Dm A Dm C Dm A Dm A Dm A**

For - tune my Foe, why dost thou frown on me? And will thy fav - ours  
In vain I sigh, in vain I wail and weep; In vain my eyes re -  
Then will I leave my love in For - tunes hands, My dear - est love, in

**Dm C Dm A(no3rd) F F**

nev - er bet - ter be? Wilt thou, I say, for ev - er breed my  
frain from qui - et sleep; In vain I shed my tears both night and  
most un - con - stant bands, And on - ly serve the sor - rows due to

**C Dm Gm A(no3rd) D**

pain? And wilt thou not re - store my joys a - gain?  
day; In vain my love my thou sor - rows to be - wray.  
me; Sor - row, here after thou shalt my Mis - tress be.

# Broom, broom, the bonny, bonny broom

The Broom of Cowdenknows

Music from The English Dancing Master, 1651

Lyrics from The Scots Musical Museum, 1787

How blyth was I each morn to see My swain come o'er the hill! He leap'd the burn, and  
I nei - ther want - ed ewe nor lamb, While his flock near me lay; He ga - ther'd in my  
While thus we spent our time, by turns Be - twixt our flocks and play, I en - vy'd not the  
A - dieu, ye Cow - den - knows, a - dieu, Fare - wel a' plea - sures there: Ye gods, re - store me

flew to me, I met him wi' good will. O the broom, the bon-ny, bon-ny broom, The  
sheep at night, And chear'd me a' the day. gay. care.  
fair - est dame, Tho' ne'er so rich and gay. care.  
to my swain, Is a' I crave, or care.

broom of Cow - den - knows! I wish I were wi' my dear swain, Wi' his pipe and my ewes.



# Heart's ease

## Cast care away

From the English Dancing Master, 1651

Lyrics by anon. from Misogonus, c.1560

**Gm Gm F Cm D Gm D Gm D Gm Cm D Gm**

Cast care a-way, with sport and play; Pas - time is all our plea - sure. If  
 What doth't a-vail, far hence to sail, And lead our life in toil - ing? Or,  
 No - thing is worse, than a full purse, To nig - gards and to pinch - ers. They

**Gm F Cm D Gm D Gm D Gm Cm D**

well we fare, for naught we care; In mirth con - sist our trea - sure.  
 to what end, should we here spend, Our lives in irk - some moil - ing?  
 al - ways spare, and live in care; There's no man loves such flinch - ers.

**Gm F F Gm D Gm Cm D**

Let snud - ges lurk, and drud - ges work; We do de - fy their slave - ry. He  
 It is the best, to live at rest, And take't as God doth send it; To  
 The mer - ry man, with cup and can, Lives long - er than doth twen - ty. The

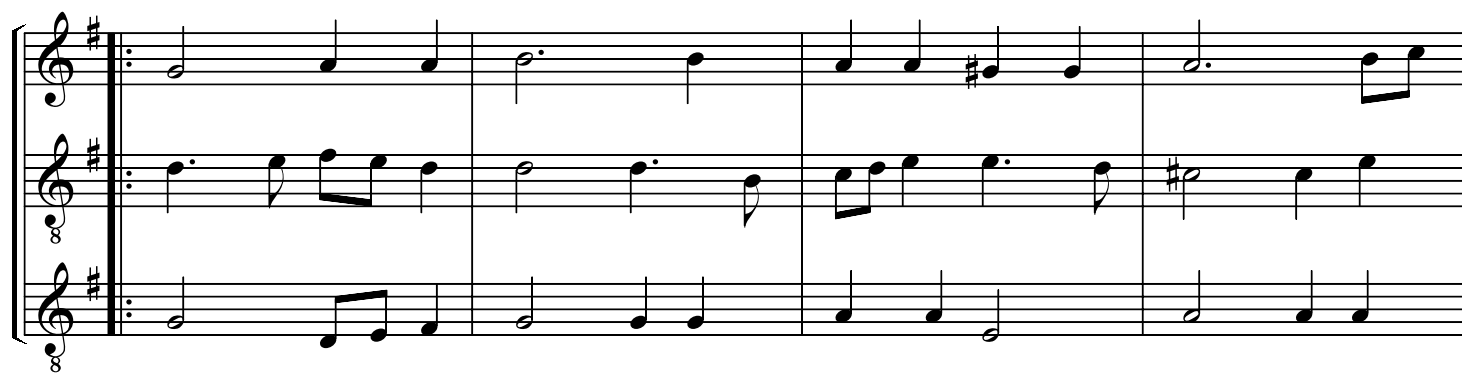
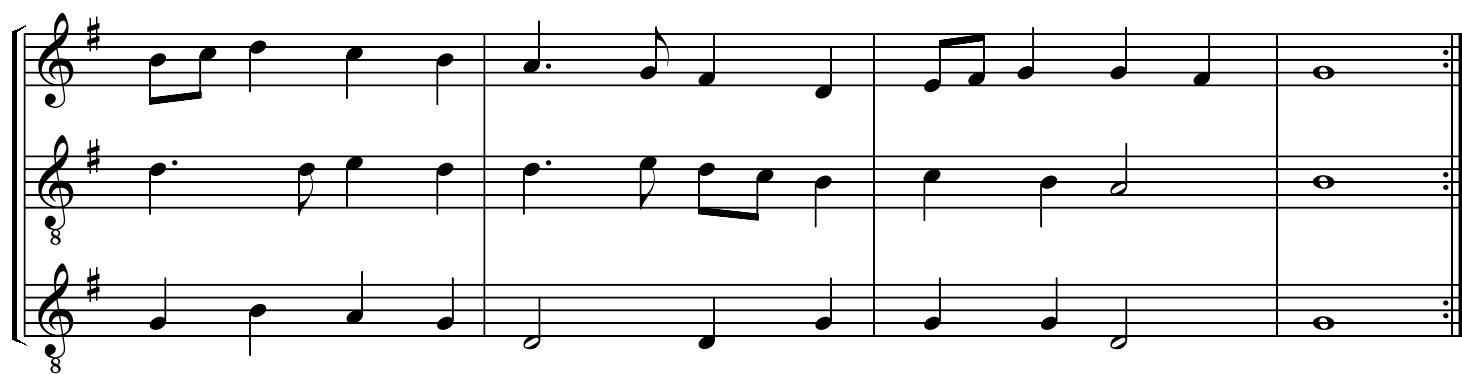
F B $\flat$  F Gm Dm Gm D Cm D G

is but a fool, that goes to school; All we de-light in brave - ry.  
 haunt each wake, and mirth to make, And with good fel - lows spend it.  
 mi - ser's wealth, doth hurt his health; Ex - am - ples we have plen - ty.

'Tsa beastly thing, to lie musing,  
 With pensiveness and sorrow.  
 For who can tell, that he shall swell  
 Live here until the morrow?  
 We will therefore, forevermore,  
 While this our life is lasting,  
 Eat, drink, and sleep, and lemans keep;  
 Its popery to use fasting.

In cards and dice, our comfort lies,  
 In sporting and in dancing.  
 Our minds to please, and live at ease,  
 And sometimes to use prancing.  
 With Bess and Nell, we love to dwell,  
 In kissing and in haking.  
 But whoop ho holly, with trolly lolly,  
 To them we'll now be walking.

# Monsieur's Almaine



from the Shirburn Ballads **The famous Ratketcher**

Anon.

Am Am E Dm C C

There was a rare Rat - ketch - er did a - bov't the Coun - try wan - der, The

C F C C G C Dm E Am E Am

sound - est blade of all his trade, or I should him great - ly slaun - der. For

C C C Dm C

still would he cry, 'A Rat, rat, rat, rat, ta - ra Rat, ta - ra Rat!' ev - er. To

C F C C G C Dm E Am E Am

catch a Mouse, or to ca - rouse, such a Rat - ter I saw nev - er.

# Martin said to his man

from Deuteromelia, 1609

Thomas Ravenscroft (c.1582-c.1635)

Mar - tin said to his man fie man, fie, O

Mar - tin said to his man who's the foole now?

Chords: G G G D

Mar - tin said to his man fill thou the cup and I the can,

Mar - tin said to his man fill thou the cup and I the can,

8 Mar - tin said to his man fill thou the cup and I the can,

Mar - tin said to his man fill thou the cup and I the can,

Chords: G D G D G C D G

thou hast well drunk - en man, who's the foole now.

thou hast well drunk - en man, who's the foole now.

8 thou hast well drunk - en man, who's the foole now.

thou hast well drunk - en man, who's the foole now.

I see a sheepe shering corne,  
Fie man, fie:  
I see a sheepe shearing corne,  
Who's the foole now?  
I see a sheepe shearing corne,  
And a couckold blow his horne,  
Thou hast well drunken man,  
Who's the foole now?

I see a man in the Moone,  
Fie man, fie:  
I see a man in the Moone,  
Who's the foole now?  
I see a man in the Moone,  
Clowting of Saint Peters shoone,  
Thou hast well, &c.

I see a hare chase a hound,  
Fie man, fie:  
I see a hare chase a hound,  
who's the foole now?  
I see a hare chase a hound,  
Twenty mile about the ground,  
Thou hast well drunken man,  
Who's the foole now?

I see a goose ring a hog,  
Fie man, fie:  
I see a goose ring a hog,  
Who's the foole now?  
I see a goose ring a hog,  
And a snayle that did bite a dog,  
Thou hast well, &c.

I see a mouse catch the cat,  
Fie man, fie:  
I see a mouse catch the cat,  
Who's the foole now?  
I see a mouse catch the cat,  
And the cheese to eate the rat,  
Thou hast well drunken man,  
Who's the foole now?

# Yonder comes a courteous knight

from Deuteromelia, 1609

Thomas Ravenscroft (c.1582-c.1635)

The musical score is written in 3/4 time and consists of four systems. Each system includes a vocal line and a four-part instrumental accompaniment (treble and bass staves for two instruments). Chords are indicated above the vocal line.

**System 1:** Chords: G, G, G, Dm, A, Dm, Dm. Lyrics: Yon - der comes a cour - teous Knight, Lus - te-ly ra - king

**System 2:** Chords: C, Am, E, G, G, D, Am. Lyrics: o - uer the lay, He was well ware of a bon - ny

**System 3:** Chords: G, C, G, C, F, G, D. Lyrics: lass, As she came wan - dring o - uer the way,

**System 4:** Chords: G, D, C, Am, Em, D. Lyrics: Then she sang downe a downe hey downe der - ry downe,

Then she sang downe a downe, hey downe der - ry.

2. Ioue you speed fayre Lady, he said,  
among the leaues that be so greene:  
If I were a king and wore a Crowne,  
full soone faire Lady shouldst thou be a queen.  
Then she sang, downe, &c.

5. When she came to her fathers hall,  
it was well walled round about:  
She rode in at the wicket gate,  
and shut the foure ear'd foole without.  
Then she sang, &c.

3. Also Ioue saue you faire Lady;  
among the Roses that be so red:  
If I haue not my will of you,  
full soone faire Lady shall I be dead.  
Then she sang. &c.

6. You had me (quoth she) abroad in the field,  
among the corne amidst the hay:  
Where you might had your will of mee,  
for, in good faith sir, I neuer said nay.  
Then she sang, &c.

4. If you will carry me gentle sir,  
a mayde vnto my fathers hall:  
Then you shall haue your will of me,  
vnder purple and vnder paule.  
Then she sang, &c.

7. He pulled out his nut-browne sword,  
and wipt the rust off with his sleeue:  
And said; Ioues curse come to his heart,  
that any woman would beleue.  
Then she sang, &c.

8. When you haue your owne true loue,  
a mile or twaine out of the towne,  
Spare not for her gay clothing,  
but lay her body flat on the ground.  
Then she sang, &c.



# My THING is my Own.

from Wit and Mirth: or Pills to Purge Melancholy

Edited by Thomas D'Urfe

D A G D G D A D A D

I a ten - der young Maid have been court - ed by ma - ny, Of all sort and Trades as ev - er was any:  
A spruce Ha - ber - dash - er first spake me fair; But I would have nothing to do with Small ware.

This system contains the first four measures of the song. The melody is in D major (two sharps) and 4/4 time. The lyrics are written below the first staff. The chords D, A, G, D, G, D, A, D, A, D are indicated above the staff.

D D A D D Am G D G A D G D G D A

My thing is my Own, and I'll keep it so still, Yet oth - er young lass - es may do what they will. My

This system contains the next four measures of the song. The melody continues on the first staff. The lyrics are written below the first staff. The chords D, D, A, D, D, Am, G, D, G, A, D, G, D, G, D, A are indicated above the staff.

G D G D G D G D A D

thing is my Own, and I'll keep it so still, Yet oth - er young lass - es may do what they will.

This system contains the final four measures of the song. The melody continues on the first staff. The lyrics are written below the first staff. The chords G, D, G, D, G, D, G, D, A, D are indicated above the staff.