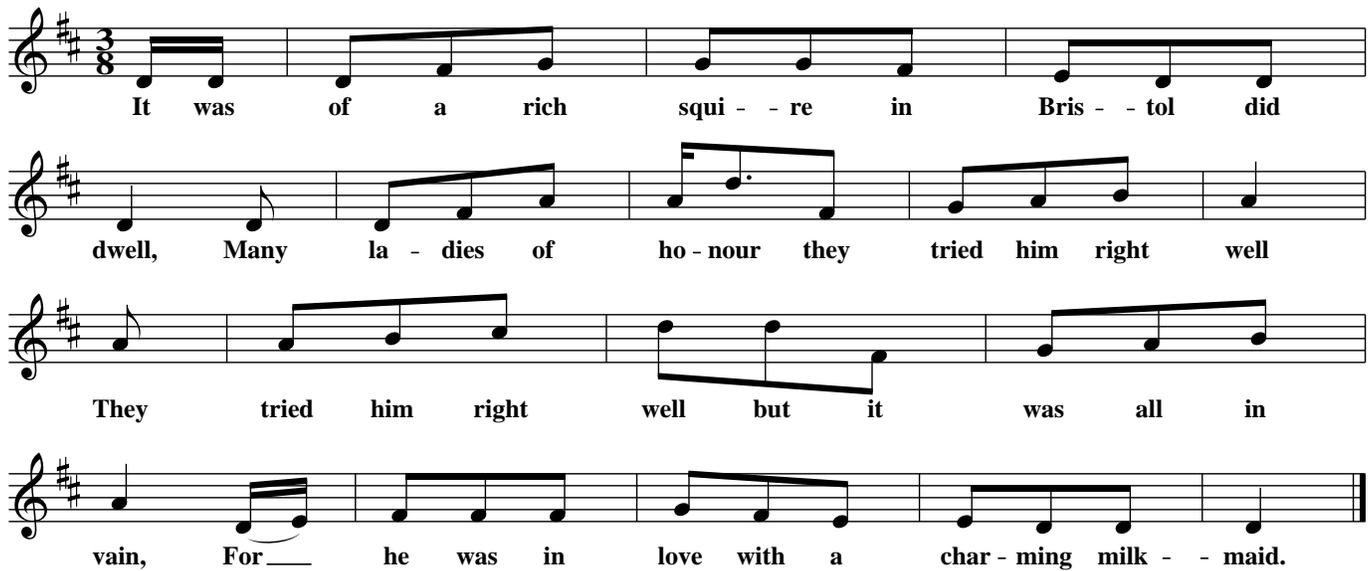


## The Rich Bristol Squire



It was of a rich squire in Bristol did  
dwell, Many ladies of honour they tried him right well  
They tried him right well but it was all in  
vain, For he was in love with a charming milkmaid.

2. 'Does you want any milk?' pretty Betsy she says,  
'Oh yes,' says the squire, 'Step in, pretty maid.  
But it's your fair body that I do adore  
Was there ever a lover so wounded before?'
3. 'Oh hold your tongue, squire, and let me go free,  
And don't make your games at my poverty.  
There are ladies of honour more fitting for you  
Than me, a poor milkmaid bred up to my cow.'
4. Then a ring from his finger he instantly drew  
And right in the middle he broke it in two  
And half he gave to her as I have been told  
They both went a-walking to Blackberry Fold.
5. 'Oh now pretty Betsy, let me have my will  
And a constantly squire I'll prove to you still,  
And if you deny me in this open field  
Then I will force you and make you to yield.'
6. With hugging and struggling poor Betsy got free  
And with her own weapons she pierced his body  
She pierced his body till the blood it run down  
Then home to her master like lightning she flew.
7. She went home to her master with tears in her eyes,  
'I've wounded the squire till I'm afraid that he'll die.  
But now my fair body begins to grow bold  
And I left him a-bleeding in Blackberry Fold.'

8. Then the coach it was sent for, the squire fetched home,  
Likewise a doctor to heal up his wounds.  
Pretty Betsy was sent for, this gay lady  
That had wounded the squire bought his heart in a snare.

9. And the parson was sent for this couple to wed  
And now she enjoys her sweet marriage bed.  
It's better to be honest if you are ever so poor  
He made her his wife instead of his whore.

Source: Mary Anne Roberts, Winchcombe workhouse. Collected by Eliza Wedgwood  
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