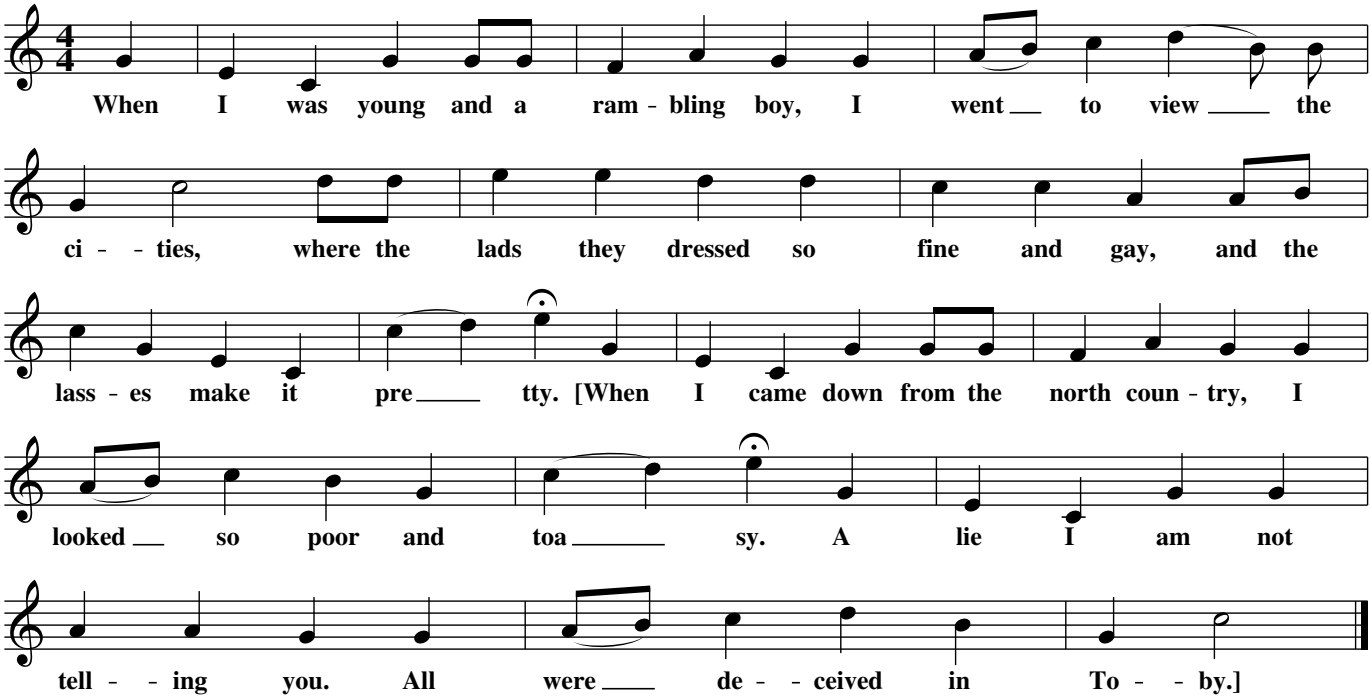
Toby



When I was young and a rambling boy
I went to view the cities
Where the lads they dressed so fine and gay
And the lasses make it pretty.
[When I came down from the north country
I looked so poor and toasy
A lie I am not telling ye
All were deceived in Toby.]

[First came I to a public house
Enquiring for some liquor
They thought by my clothes I was a fool
And they called me drunken dicker
They thought by my clothes I was a fool
'Cos I as poor and shroby
I threw down a crown and I drank ale down
They were all deceived in Toby.]

I went unto a wrestling ring
They were huffing and cuffing each other
[They asked me if I'd have a turn
And called me loving brother
They asked me if I'd have a turn]
As I looked mean and shroby
So I jumped in the ring, the best man I did fling
They were all deceived in Toby.

I went unto a National School
Enquir'd for the master
[They thought by my clothes I was a fool
And all broke out in laughter
They thought by my clothes I was a fool
'Cos I looked poor and shroby
But I strapped them about, (made) them look about.
They were all deceived in Toby.]

[Next went I on a man of war
And entered as a sailor
They thought by my clothes I had been a tar
They sent me to the Holy Landut me to the halyard.
They thought by my clothes I had been a tar,
'Cos I was poor and shroby
I nimbly ran up to the mizzen top.
They were all deceived in Toby.]

[Next went I where men played at cards
I stood and looked beside them.
They asked of me if I'd have a game,
And I could not well deny them.
They asked of me if I'd have a game
'Cos I was poor and shroby.
I shuffled the pack, cheated them of a groat.
They were all deceived in Toby.]

Source: Sung by Henry Corbett (61) at Snowshill. Collected by Cecil Sharp August 13th 1909.

Notes: Mr Corbett's text was incomplete. The remainder, in brackets, is from from Matthew Ford of Menheniot, Cornwall.

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