

## The Drummer Boy

When I was a young girl at the age of six - teen, I  
from my par - ents ran a - - way, all for to serve the queen, I  
'list - ed in the ar my like a - - ny pri - vate man, and  
ve - - ry soon they learned me for to beat up - - on the drum

My waist being long and slender, my fingers thin and small,  
Oh for to beat upon the drum I soon succeeded all  
The officer enlisting me said I was a nice young man,  
"I think you'll make a drummer, so it's come along, my lad."

I was sent up to my quarters all for to go to bed,  
And sleeping by a soldier's side, I did not feel afraid.  
In pulling off my britches, to myself I often smiled  
To think I lay with a man, and a maiden all the while.

And many was the prank that that I've seen on the field  
And many a Frenchman I have forced to yield.  
And many are the slaughters I have seen of the French  
So boldly I fought, when I was but a wench.

I was sent up to London, all for to guard the tower,  
And there I might have been till this very day and hour.  
Till a young girl fell in love with me, and I told I was a maid.  
And straightway to my officer my secret she betrayed.

So fare thee well, dear officer, you have been kind to me,  
And likewise my dear comrades, I'm not forgetting thee.  
And if the duke is short of men, before the French are slain  
So boldly I will march and fight for him again.

Source: Mrs Mary Hawker, Broad Campden, collected by Percy Grainger 17th November 1907.

Notes: Mrs Hawker told Grainger "It was in the French war. This girl went after her lover as a drummer boy laying with the rest of the soldiers. Don't know whether she found her lover or no."

The words on the recording are very indistinct and so most have been supplied from other versions.