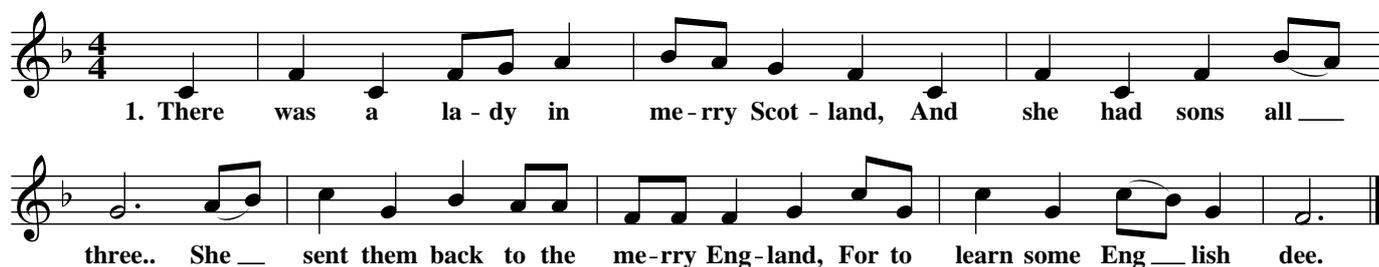


The Wife of Usher's Well



1. There was a la - dy in me - rry Scot - land, And she had sons all —
three.. She — sent them back to the me - rry Eng - land, For to learn some Eng — lish dee.

2. They had not been in merry England
Past twelve months and one day,
When the news came back to their own dear mother
That their bodies was in cold clay.
3. [She would not believe in Christ, she said,
Nor Christ nor the Trinity}
Without you send me my three sons
The same as they went from me.
4. [They sent her three sons back
Their bodies all in their chest
And send them back to their own dear mother
For in heaven they could not rest.]
5. [And when they got to their own mother's gate,
They loud at the bell did ring,
There was no one so ready as their own sweet mother
To let these sweet souls in.]
6. [The cloth was spread and the meat put on
"No meat, oh Lord, can we eat.
Since it's been as long and many a day
Since we have been here before."]
7. [The bed was made and the sheets put on,
"No bed, Lord, can we take
Since it's been as long and many a day
Since we have been here before."]
8. [Why don't you eat", dear children she say,
"Why don't you make some cheer?
Since it has been ever so long,
Since we have seen you before?"]
9. ["How can we eat, dear mother", they said,
"How can we make any cheer
When you would not let our sweet souls rest
At heaven when we were there?"]

10. [Up did crow the milk-white cock
And then did crow the red
And "Ain't that a pity" they all then said,
"As the quick shall part from the dead."]
11. [They ta'en a high yew tree by the top
And 'splored it by the root.
And "Ain't that a pity" they all then said,
"As the quick shall part from the dead."]
12. Farewell stick and farewell stone,
Farewell to the maidens all.
Farewell to the nurse that gave us stick,
And down the tears did fall.

Source: Mr Fletcher, Cinderford. Collected by Cecil Sharp 5 Sep 1919 (words only).

Notes: Mr Fletcher's text had no tune and was incomplete, so his version has been merged with a version collected in Oxfordshire in August 1912. The added words are given in brackets.