

Green Mossy Banks of the Lea

When first in this coun-try a stran-ger ___ Cur - io - si - ty caused me to roam, ___ In
Eu-rope I re-solved to be a ran-ger, ___ When I left Phi - la - del-phia my home. ___ In
Eu-rope I re-solved to be a ran-ger, ___ When I left Phi - la - del-phia my home. ___

James Harding appears to have divided the usual verses into two, and to have repeated the second half of each fragment as a chorus, as indicated under the music.

Source: Sung by James Harding, Stow-on-the-Wold. Collector Cecil Sharp on 28 March 1907 (tune only, no words). Words from Fred Crumpton, Wentnor, Shropshire, 29 July 1949, coll F Collinson, supplemented from an unassigned text in Alfred Williams' ms.

1. When first in this country a stranger
Curiosity caused me to roam,
In Europe I resolved to be a ranger
When I left Philadelphia my home.
Then I quickly sailed over to England,
Where forms of great beauty did shine;
'Twas there I beheld a fair damsel
And I wished in my heart she was mine.
2. One morning I carelessly rambled
Where the pure winds soft breezes did blow,
'Twas down by a clear crystal river,
Not knowing where else for to go.
It was there I espied a fair damsel,
Some goddess appearing to me,
And she rose from the brink by the river,
On the green mossy banks of the Lea.
3. I stepped up and wished her good-morning,
Her fair cheeks did blush like a rose;
Says I: "The green meadows are charming,
Your guardian I'll be if you choose."
She said: "Sir I ne'er want a guardian,
Young man, you're a stranger to me.
And yonder my father is coming,
On the green mossy banks of the Lea."

4. So I waited till up came her father,
And I plucked up my spirits once more.
Says I: "If this be your fair daughter
This beautiful girl I adore..
Ten thousand a year is my fortune,
A lady your daughter may be,
Who shall ride with her chariot and horses,
On the green mossy banks of the Lea.

5. So they welcomed me home to their cottage,
Soon after in wedlock to join.
And there I erected a castle,
In grandeur and splendour to shine..
So now the American stranger
Both pleasure and pastime can see,
With the adorable gentle Matilda,
On the green mossy banks of the Lea.

6. So it's all you pretty fair maids take warning,
No matter how poor you may be,
For there's many a poor girl as handsome
As those with a large propertee.
By flattery let no one deceive you,
Who knows what your future may be?
Just like that young gentle Matilda,
On the green mossy banks of the Lea.