

The Green Mossy Banks of the Lee

When _____ first in this coun__ try a _____ stran - ger
Cu - ri - - os - - i - - ty caused me to roam,
In _____ Eur - - ope I re - solved to be a ran - - ger
When I left Phil - a - - del - phia my home. Then I quick__ ly sailed
ov - er to _____ Eng__ land _____ Where _____ forms of great beau - ty did shine;
'Twas _____ there I be - held a fair dam - sel _____ And I wished in my heart she was mine.

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.

Source: Mrs Packer, Winchcombe. Collected by Percy Grainger 4th April 1908.

Notes: The words on the recording are very indistinct. The words given here are from Fred Crumpton, Wentnor, Shr from an unassigned text in Alfred Williams' MSS.
Note that last 2 lines of each verse are often repeated.