

RATTLIN ROARIN WILLIE — CONCLUSION, REFERENCES, ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

CONCLUSION

When I set out on the journey to find out about *Rattlin Roarin Willie* I already knew that there was more to his tune than is commonly realised, but not that there were so many songs associated with it, nor that anything was known of the detail of his life. The Teviotdale connection, leading from the Opies to Sir Walter Scott and Sir Walter Elliot, took Willie's story further back in time, to Jeddart justice and the last days of the blood feuds of the Border reivers, but brought it closer in space, to familiar places along the road from Hawick to Teviothead.

The verses William Henderson wrote or inspired touch on the themes of love, death, and the archetype of the minstrel. His tune, whether he composed it or whether it was made in his honour, simply cannot be tied down: it is a song air, a fiddle tune and a pipe tune, a dance tune and a performance piece, with roots in the Borders and branches from Aberdeen to Ayr, Galloway to Gateshead. No two versions are the same, yet it is always recognizable. It was powerfully conceived. It has been rattling, roaring, ranting and roving for 380 or so years, and it shows no intention of stopping.

REFERENCES

1 - WEB

cradle string:

<http://sniff.numachi.com/pages/tiWALLFLW2.html>

Lyra-viol:

<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Lyra-viol>

FARNE (Folk Archive Resource North East):

<http://www.asaplive.com/Farne/Home.cfm>

For the Rattlin Roarin Willie article, click on "Learn" in the left-hand menu, then "Core tunes", then the "Introduction" (for context) and "Rattlin Roarin Willie".

Map of Teviotdale:

<http://www.nls.uk/maps/early/blaeu/page.cfm?id=122>

Nursery rhyme:

http://www.scils.rutgers.edu/~mjoseph/mother_goose/Jacky_Come_Give_Me_Your_Fiddle.htm

2 - MANUSCRIPT

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LOOSE ENDS

Mention is made above of two lyrics written to be sung to the tune of *Rattlin Roarin Willie* which are unrelated in content to the traditional song, Allan Ramsay's *To L. M. M* and Thomas Whittle's *The Mitford Galloway's Rambles* (the full text of which is in John Bell's *Rhymes of Northern Bards*, Newcastle, 1812). In discussing Thomson's *Select Melodies of Scotland* WEL also mentions "a set of words written by W. Smyth for a smaller edition published in 1822; the music being arranged by Haydn." This was also included in a folio edition published between 1831-8. WEL later gives the first lines of this lyric as well as another written in 1803 by Mrs Grant of Laggan on a then topical subject, a failed negotiation for bringing William Pitt into office.

Among four musical texts sent to WEL by his correspondent Mr Muir Wood is one, *Wully's gane to France*, for which no source is given and which remains unidentified; similarly titled tunes have been found but they are unrelated to *Rattlin Roarin Willie*.

A curiosity which has not yet been investigated is a version "arranged, with variations, as a pianoforte piece by Daniel Ross, and published by J. Hamilton, 24 North Bridge, Edinburgh." (WEL)