

And Then I'm Going Home

Bright Morning Stars

Traditional

Recorded live at Stone Soup Coffeehouse, September 12, 1998

Aubrey Atwater: vocals

Elwood Donnelly: vocals

Richard Walton: MC

Bright morning stars are rising (3x)

Day is a-breakin' in my soul

And where are our dear fathers

Oh where are our dear fathers

They're down in the valley a-prayin'

Day is a-breakin' in my soul

And where are our dear mothers

Oh where are our dear mothers

They've gone up to heaven a-shouting

Day is a-breakin' in my soul

And how can I be lonely

When you are ever near me

Such wondrous love surrounds me

Day is a-breakin' in my soul

Prodigal Son

Traditional, from the singing of Rick Lee and Dock Boggs

Recorded live at The Blackstone River Theatre, September 30, 2000

Aubrey Atwater: vocals, banjo

Elwood Donnelly: vocals, guitar

When I left my father's house, I was well supplied,

I made a mistake and I did go, and I'm dissatisfied.

CHORUS: I believe I'll go back home, I believe I'll go back home

I believe I'll go back home, and acknowledge I've done wrong.

I'll go back to my father's house. I'll fall down on my face.

I'll say "I am unworthy", and seek a servant's place.....**CHORUS**

I'll go back to my father's house; the place I love so dear.

There they have bread to eat; I'm a-starvin' here.....**CHORUS**

Father's seen him coming; he met him with a smile.

He threw his arms around him, said, "This is my wandering child.".....**CHORUS**

Father says to his servants, "Go kill the fatted calf."

Invite both friends and relatives; my son's come home at last.....**CHORUS**

Banquet's in position; all sorrow is past.

Father's heart was filled with joy; his son's come home at last.....**CHORUS**

Elder son was jealous; I believe I heard him say,

"You gave my brother his portion; I never went away.....**CHORUS**

Father says to his eldest son, "You've been both good and kind.

Not a fatted calf I've given thee, but all I have is thine.".....**CHORUS**

Two Sisters

Child Ballad #10

This 16th century ballad has many versions around the world including "The Wind and the Rain" and "The Bonny Swans". Some versions of the story end supernaturally where the murdered sister's body parts are turned into a fiddle or a harp: her long black hair becomes the strings, her finger bones the tuning pegs, and "the only tune that the fiddle could play was oh, the wind and the rain." We learned this particular version from Cari Norris, whose family is from Eastern Kentucky. She found the words of her grandmother's (Lily Mae Ledford) version at home in a drawer and asked her mother to sing the tune. One interesting feature of this version is that it is also a dance or a play party song, with a beautiful chorus of motions and love sentiments that blend eerily with the murder theme.

Recorded live at The Blackstone River Theatre, September 30, 2000

Aubrey Atwater: vocals, guitar

Elwood Donnelly: vocals, guitar

There was an old man in the North Country, bow down

There was an old man in the North Country, bow and bend to me

There was an old man in the North Country, he had daughters fair to see

I will be true, true to my love, love if my love will be true to me

The old man gave the little one a hat, bow down

The old man gave the little one a hat, bow and bend to me

The old man gave the little one a hat, the older sister couldn't stand that

I will be true, true to my love, love if my love will be true to me

She said go put your new hat on.....

And we'll go down by the old mill pond.....

They walked down by the mill pond's brim.....

The old one pushed the little one in.....

Oh, sister, sister, give me your hand.....

And you may have my house and land.....

She pushed her further out from the shore.....
All for the sake of the hat she wore.....

The miller saw her floating about.....
He took his hook and he drew her out.....

He took off all of her fine gold rings.....
And pushed her back in the water again.....

The miller was hanged for the deadly sin.....
The older sister ought to have been.....

Devil and the Farmer's Wife

Child Ballad #278

As learned from Dana Hamilton of Arlington, Texas. We've also heard Jean Ritchie, Pete Seeger and Sheila Kay Adams sing this song.
Recorded live at Stone Soup Coffeehouse, April 8, 2000
Aubrey Atwater: vocals, mountain dulcimer
Elwood Donnelly: vocals, guitar

There was an old man lived up on the hill
If he ain't moved away he's living there still

Chorus: Singing hi diddle li,diddle li fi,diddle li,diddle li,ay

Well the devil came up to the farmer one day
Says "One of your family I'm gonna take away."

Please don't take my eldest son,
'Cause there's work on the farm and it's gotta be done.

But you can have my naggin' old wife,
By heaven she's the curse of my life.

So he put the old lady up upon his back
And they went off to hell with a clickety-clack.

Well he got on down to the fork in the road,
Said "Golly woman, you're one devil of a load!"

He marched right up to the gates of hell,
Said "Stoke up the fire boys, we'll roast her well."

One little devil with a ball and chain
She up with her slipper and she kicked in his brains.

Two little devils come a peepin' round the door

She up with her slipper, killed ninety-nine more.

Ten little devils come a runnin' down the hall
Said "Take her back daddy, she'll murder us all!"

So he put the old lady up upon his back
Said "Come on woman I'm a takin' you back."

Well the farmer he up and he looked out a crack
Said "Oh my stars, he's a bringing her back!"

Well he crawls himself up under the bed
But she yanked him out by the hair of his head

Well, here's your wife, I hope she's well
If I'd a kept her any longer, she'd ruin hell.

Now I've been a devil most all of my life
But I never been in Hell till I took your wife

This proves that the women are better than the men
'Cause they go down to hell and they come back again.

Uncle Boo Boo Story #1

Traditional

We heard this version from a French Canadian fellow named Robin who was working at the John C. Campbell Folk School in Brasstown, NC, November, 1999.

Recorded live at Stone Soup Coffeehouse, April 8, 2000.

Elwood Donnelly: spoken word

Angel Band

Jefferson Hascall/William Bradbury, mid 19th century

Recorded live at The Blackstone River Theatre, September 30, 2000.

Aubrey Atwater: vocals, mountain dulcimer

Elwood Donnelly: vocals, guitar

My latest sun is sinking fast, my race is nearly run
My strongest trials now are past, my triumph is begun

CHORUS:

Oh, come, angel band, come and around me stand

Oh bear me away on your snowy wings

To my immortal home

Oh bear me away on your snowy wings

To my immortal home

I know I'm near the holy ranks
Of friends and kindred dear
I've brushed the dew on Jordan's banks
The crossing must be near...CHORUS

I've almost gained my heavenly home
My spirit loudly sings
The holy ones, behold, they come
I hear the noise of wings...CHORUS

O bear my longing heart to those
who bled and died for me
Whose blood now cleanses all from sin
and brings us victory...CHORUS

Laundry

Aubrey Atwater

From her book, Don't Bother the Phoebe.

Recorded live at Stone Soup Coffeehouse, April 17, 1999.

Aubrey Atwater: spoken word

Drowned Lovers

Child Ballad #216

As heard sung by both Nic Jones and Kate Rusby from England. Also called "Clyde's Water" and "The Mother's Malison"--the story of two wicked mothers who curse their children who are in love.

Recorded live at The Blackstone River Theatre, September 30, 2000.

Aubrey Atwater: vocals, guitar

Elwood Donnelly: vocals, harmonica

Willie sits in his stable door and he's combing his coal black steed
He's doubting on fair Margaret's love and his heart begins to bleed
"Give corn unto me horse, Mother, and meat to my man John
"And I'll away to fair Margaret's bower before the night comes on"

"Stay at home with me, dear Willie, oh stay at home with me
"And the very best cock in all the roost, your own supper will be"
"For all your cocks and all your roosts, I value not a pin
"And I'll away to fair Margaret's bower before the night comes in"

"Well if you go to fair Margaret's bower without the leave of me
"In the deepest part of the Clyde water then drowned you shall be"
"Oh the good steed that I ride upon cost me thrice thirty pounds
"And I'll put trust in his swift feet to take me safe and sound"

And he's ridden o'er yon high, high hill and down yon dowey den
And the rushing of the Clyde water would fear five hundred men

"Oh roaring Clyde, you roar so loud, your streams are wondrous strong
"Make me a wreck as I come back but spare me as I'm going"

And when he's got to fair Margaret's bower he's turl'd low on the pin
"Rise up, rise up me May Margaret, rise up an let me in"
"Oh who is that at me bower door calling May Margaret's name"
"Oh it's only your first love little Willie this night come to her home"

"Open up your gates this night oh open and let me in
"For my boots are full of the Clyde water and I'm frozen to the skin"
"My barns are full of corn, Willie, and the stables full of hay
"And me bowers are full of gentlemen and they won't remove til day"

"Fare thee well then me May Margaret, fare thee well and adieu
"For I have won my mother's own curse by coming this night to you"
And he's ridden o'er yon high, high hill and down yon dowey den
And the rushing of the Clyde water took Willie's hat from his

And he's leaned him over his saddle bow to catch his hat again
And the rushing of the Clyde water took Willie's cane from him
And he's leaned him over his saddle bow to catch his cane by force
And the rushing of the Clyde water took Willie from his horse

The very hour this young man sank into the part so deep
Up and arose miss May Margaret out from her dreary sleep
"Come here, come here me mother dear and read to me my dream
"I dreamt my love was at our gate and no one let him in"

"Lie there, lie there me May Margaret, lie there and take your rest
"For since your love was at our gate it's but two quarters past"
Nimbly, nimbly rose she up unto the water's brim
And the louder that this young girl cried, the louder grew the wind

The very first step that she went in, she's up unto her feet
And it's "Oh and alas," this young girl cried, "Your water's wondrous deep"
The very next step that she went in, she's up unto her knees
Cried she, "I would go further still, if my true lover could see"
The very next step that she went in, she's up unto her chin
And in the deepest part of the Clyde water she found young William in
She said, "You've had a cruel mother, Willie, and I have had another
"And now we sleep in the Clyde water like sister and like brother"
Saying, "You've had a cruel mother, Willie, and I have had another
"And now we sleep in the Clyde water like sister and like brother"

The Scotsman

Mike Cross 1979, copyright Vic Ray Publishing {ASCAP}

Recorded live at Stone Soup Coffeehouse, April 19, 1997

Aubrey Atwater: vocals, banjo

Elwood Donnelly: vocals

Noah Donnelly: bodhran

A Scotsman clad in kilt left a bar one evening fair
And one could tell by how he walked he'd drunk more than his share
He staggered 'round until he could no longer keep his feet
Then he stumbled off into the grass to sleep beside the street

CHORUS: Ring-ding diddle-liddle aye-dee-oh, Ring-aye diddle-aye-oh
(repeat last line of previous verse)

About that time two young and lovely girls just happened by
And one said to the other with a twinkle in her eye
See young sleeping Scotsman so strong and handsome built
I wonder if it's true what they don't wear beneath their kilts...CHORUS

They snuck up to that Scotsman oh as quiet as could be
And lifted up his skirt about an inch so they could see
And there behold for them to view beneath his Scottish skirt
Was nothing more than God had graced him with upon his birth.....CHORUS

They marveled for a moment then one said we must be gone
Let's leave a present for our friend before we move along
And as a gift they left a blue silk ribbon tied in a bow
Around the bonny star the Scotsman's kilt did lift and show...CHORUS

The Scotsman woke to nature's call and headed for a tree
Behind a bush he lifts his skirt and gawks at what he sees
In a startled voice he says to what's before his eyes
Oh, lad I don't know where you've been but I see you've won first prize...CHORUS

Imagine Peace

Phil Edmonds

Recorded live at Stone Soup Coffeehouse, April 8, 2000

Aubrey Atwater: tin whistle

Elwood Donnelly: guitar

Four Marys

Child Ballad # 173

Also called "Mary Hamilton". We have heard many versions of this tragedy in New England, Prince Edward Island, Kentucky, and Ireland. Older versions are much longer, perhaps 100 verses!

Recorded live at The Blackstone River Theatre, September 30, 2000.

Aubrey Atwater: vocals, mountain dulcimer

Elwood Donnelly: vocals, guitar

Last night there were four Marys
Tonight there'll be but three

There was Mary Beaton and Mary Seaton
And Mary Carmichael and me

Oh word has gone to the kitchen
And word has gone to the hall
That Mary Hamilton is with child
To the highest stewart of all

He courted her in the kitchen
He courted her in the hall
He courted her down in the low cellar
And that was the worst of all

She's taken her wee little baby
And cast it out into the sea
"Sink ye or swim ye my bonnie wee child
"But be no more with me"

They've taken her down to the sheriff's court
Where she did laugh and sigh
Before she had come back again
She was condemned to die

"Oh often I have dressed my queen
"And put on her fine silk gown
"And all I've gotten for my reward
"Is to the be hanged in Edinburgh town"

Young Man Who Wouldn't Raise Corn

Traditional

We learned this Jean Ritchie version from Daniel Dutton of Somerset, KY
Recorded live at The Blackstone River Theatre, September 30, 2000.

Aubrey Atwater: vocals, guitar

Elwood Donnelly: vocals, bodhran, rainstick

Come all young people and listen to my song
I'll tell you about a young man who wouldn't raise corn
The reason why I cannot tell
This young man was always well

In the month of June he planted his corn
In July he laid it by,
In October there came a frost
The seed of his corn this young man lost

He goeth down and he peepeth in
The weeds and the grass grew up to his chin
The weeds and the grass they grew so high
Caused this young man for to cry

He goeth down to his near neighbor's land
Goin' a-courtin' as I understand
Goin' a-courtin' as sure as your born
"Kind sir, have you wed your corn?"

"Yes, my dear," in reply,
"Yes, my dear, I've laid it by,
"But it ain't worthwhile to strive in vain.
"I don't believe to my soul it's gonna raise one grain."

"Well a healthy young man that won't raise corn
Is the laziest man that ever was born
Single I am and single I'll remain
A lazy man I won't maintain."

Come all young people and listen to my song
I'll tell you about a young man who wouldn't raise corn
The reason why I cannot tell
This young man was always well

Uncle Boo Boo Story #2

Traditional

We heard this version from a French Canadian fellow named Robin who was working at the John C. Campbell Folk School in Brasstown, NC, November, 1999.

Recorded live at Stone Soup Coffeehouse, April 8, 2000.

Elwood Donnelly: spoken word

Going Up Home

Avril Gearheart and Ralph Stanley

Recorded live at The Blackstone River Theatre, September 30, 2000.

Aubrey Atwater: vocals, banjo

Elwood Donnelly: vocals, guitar

Troubles and trials often betray us
Causing our weary bodies to stray
But we shall walk beside the still waters
With the good shepherd leading the way

CHORUS:

Going up home to live in green pastures
Where we shall live and die never more
Even the lord will be in that number
When we have reached that heavenly shore

Those who have strayed were sought by the master
He who once gave his life for the sheep

Out on the mountain still he is searching
Bringing them in forever to keep...CHORUS

We will not heed the voice of the stranger
For he would lead us unto despair
Following on with our loving master
We shall all reach that country so fair...CHORUS

Sign

Aubrey Atwater

From her book, Don't Bother the Phoebe.

Recorded live at The Peep-toad Coffeehouse, March 10, 2000.

Aubrey Atwater: spoken word

Lord Franklin

Traditional

Sir John Franklin set out to find the Northwest Passage in 1845 and he and his crew met with disaster. Lady Franklin sent out five search crews after the British Admiralty gave up. Skeletons were found in 1859.

Also called "Lady Franklin's Lament"

Recorded live at Stone Soup Coffeehouse, April 8, 2000.

Aubrey Atwater: vocals, guitar

Elwood Donnelly: vocals, harmonica

Twas homeward bound one night on the deep
Swinging in my hammock I fell asleep
I dreamed a dream and I thought it true
Concerning Franklin and his gallant crew

With a hundred seamen he sailed away
To the frozen ocean in the month of May
To seek that passage around the pole
Where we poor seamen do sometimes go

Through cruel hardships his men they strove
Their ship on mountains of ice was drove
Where the eskimo in a skin canoe
Was the only one who ever came through

In Baffin's Bay where the whalefish blow
The fate of Franklin no one may know
The fate of Franklin no tongue can tell
Lord Franklin with his sailors do dwell

And now my burden it gives me pain
For my long lost Franklin I'd cross the main
Ten thousand pounds would I freely give

To say on earth that my Franklin do live

We'll Camp a Little While in the Wilderness

Traditional

As learned from both Randy Wilson and Sheila Kay Adams

Recorded live at Stone Soup Coffeehouse, April 4, 1998

One of the endearing things about native Rhode Islander's is our sense of distance.

A span of about 22 miles from Providence might as well be California to some.

That 22 miles brings one to the highest point in RI, Jerimoth Hill, a whopping 812 feet above sea level, which gets significantly more snow than other parts of the state, hence, more snow days. A long-running joke in RI is from winter morning radio:

"No school Foster-Glocester."

Aubrey Atwater: vocals

Elwood Donnelly: vocals

We'll camp a little while in the wilderness

In the wilderness, in the wilderness

We'll camp a little while in the wilderness

And then I'm going home

And then I'm going home

And then I'm going home

We're all making ready, oh ready

And then I'm going home

Oh fathers are you ready

Ready, oh, ready

Oh fathers are you ready

And then I'm going home

And then I'm going home.....

Oh mothers are you ready.....

Oh children are you ready.....