

## The Ballad-Singer in Georgian and Victorian London

For three centuries, ballad-singers thrived at the heart of life in London. One of history's great paradoxes, they were routinely disparaged and persecuted, living on the margins, yet playing a central part in the social, cultural, and political life of the nation. This history spans the Georgian heyday and Victorian decline of those who sang in the city streets in order to sell printed songs. Focusing on the people who plied this musical trade, Oskar Cox Jensen interrogates their craft and their repertoire, the challenges they faced and the great changes in which they were caught up. From orphans to veterans, prostitutes to preachers, ballad-singers sang of love and loss, the soil and the sea, mediating the events of the day to an audience of hundreds of thousands. Complemented by sixty-two recorded songs, this study demonstrates how ballad-singers are figures of central importance in the cultural, social, and political processes of continuity, contestation, and change across the nineteenth-century world.

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Oskar Cox Jensen



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## Recordings

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Songs are numbered in the order in which they are first encountered in the text.

- 1 ‘Sprig of Shillelah’ (Popularised by John Henry Johnstone, *c.*1800)
- 2 ‘The Black Joke’ (Of Irish origin, 1720s)
- 3 ‘The Ladies’ Fall’ (English, 1619 or earlier)
- 4 ‘Tyburn Tree’ (John Gay, 1728, to the tune of ‘Greensleeves’)
- 5 ‘Polly Will You Marry Me?’ (Sung by Billy Waters, 1810s)
- 6 ‘The Primrose Girl’ (John Moulds, 1790)
- 7 ‘Oh! Cruel’ (First performed in Liverpool, 1810)
- 8 ‘Winter’s Evening’ (*c.*1770s, a variant of ‘The Maid of Bedlam’)
- 9 ‘Little Bess the Ballad Singer’ (Samuel Arnold, 1794)
- 10 ‘The Ballad Singer’ (George Linley, 1854)
- 11 ‘The Ballad-Singer’s Petition’ (Stephen Storace and Prince Hoare, 1790)
- 12 ‘Beggars and Ballad Singers’ (*c.*1800)
- 13 ‘The Dustman’s Brother’ (After 1835, to the tune of ‘The Literary Dustman’)
- 14 ‘Billy Nutts, the Poet’ (*c.*1840)
- 15 ‘For My True Love is Gone to Sea’ (Thomas Arne, 1765)
- 16 ‘Lines on the Death of Eliza Fenning’ (1815, tune chosen: ‘Ned that Died at Sea’)
- 17 ‘Gallant Cambridge Jumping Over Prince Albert’ (1856, to the tune of ‘Rory O’Moore’)
- 18 ‘Fortune My Foe’ (Of Irish origin, sixteenth century)
- 19 ‘Good People, I Pray, to these Lines now Attend’ (Robert Wright, 1779, tune chosen: ‘King John and the Abbot of Canterbury’)
- 20 ‘Blooming Beauty of Surrey and her Father’s Servant Man’ (1865, to the tune of ‘Lucy Neal’)
- 21 ‘Lord Viscount Maidstone’s Address’ (1852, to the tune of ‘Bow Wow Wow’)
- 22 ‘Sit Down Neighbours All. Bow Wow Wow’ (Charles Morris, *c.*1783)
- 23 ‘London Cries’ (1800, to the tune of ‘The Heaving of the Lead’)

- 24 'The Arethusa' (William Shield and Prince Hoare, 1796, to the tune of 'The Princess Royal')
- 25 'Listen to the Voice of Love' (James Hook, 1795)
- 26 'The Death of Nelson' (John Braham, 1812)
- 27 'The British Grenadiers' (Of English origin, early seventeenth century)
- 28 'The Bay of Biscay' (John Davy and Andrew Cherry, 1806)
- 29 'The Storm' (George Alexander Stevens, *c.*1770, to the tune of 'The Sailor's Complaint')
- 30 'Tom Bowling' (Charles Dibdin, 1790)
- 31 'The British Seaman's Praise' (Or 'The Hardy Tar', William Boyce, 1770s)
- 32 'The Wooden Walls of Old England' (James Hook and Henry Green, 1773)
- 33 'The Sea' (Sigismund von Neukomm and Barry Cornwall, 1830s)
- 34 'A Life on the Ocean Wave' (Henry Russell and Epes Sargent, 1838)
- 35 'Lord Bateman' (Probably of English origin, early seventeenth century)
- 36 'The Outlandish Knight' (Of Scottish origin, eighteenth century or earlier)
- 37 'Sir Patrick Spens' (Of Scottish origin)
- 38 'Exile of Erin' (Thomas Campbell, *c.*1805).
- 39 'Gee Ho Dobbin' (Arranged by Thomas Arne, 1762)
- 40 'The Shufflers' (1801, to the tune of 'Gee Ho Dobbin')
- 41 'The Ivy Green' (Henry Russell and Charles Dickens, *c.*1840)
- 42 'The Cabbage Green' (1840s, to the tune of 'The Ivy Green')
- 43 'Alice Gray' (Virtue Millard, *c.*1828)
- 44 'Isle of Beauty' (Charles Shapland Whitmore and Thomas Haynes Bayly, *c.*1830)
- 45 'The Bold Pedlar and Robin Hood' (Of English origin, seventeenth century)
- 46 'Old Dog Tray' (Stephen Collins Foster, 1853)
- 47 'Black-Ey'd Susan' (Richard Leveridge and John Gay, *c.*1720)
- 48 'Cherry Ripe' (Charles Edward Horn and Robert Herrick, 1825)
- 49 'Just Before the Battle, Mother' (George Frederick Root, 1866)
- 50 'Early One Morning' (Of English origin, eighteenth century)
- 51 'Sally in Our Alley' (Henry Carey, 1710s)
- 52 'The Wolf' (William Shield and John O'Keefe, 1798)
- 53 'The Beautiful Maid' (John Braham, 1802)
- 54 'Buy a Broom' (Arranged by Alexander Lee and D. A. O'Meara, *c.*1824, to the tune of 'O du lieber Augustin')

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- 55 'The Huntsman's Chorus' (English translation after Carl Maria von Weber, 1821)
- 56 'Who's Coming Out for a Midnight Ramble?' (Thomas Dodsworth, 1876)
- 57 'Will Watch, the Bold Smuggler' (John Davy, *c.*1820)
- 58 'Answer to Old Dog Tray' (*c.*1855, to the tune of 'Old Dog Tray')
- 59 'Home, Sweet Home' (Henry Bishop and John Howard Payne, 1823)
- 60 'Ben Block' (John Collins, 1790s)
- 61 'The Ratcatcher's Daughter' (Sam Cowell, 1855)
- 62 'Dearest, Then, I'll Love Thee More' (Charles and/or Stephen Glover, 1849)

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acknowledge that this book and, such as it is, my career were made possible by this ERC project.

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## Note on the Text

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I have attempted, where possible, to supply a recording of every song discussed. If a recording is available, this is clearly indicated in the text by an underlining of the song title at its first mention. A list of all recordings may be found in this book's front matter. The recordings themselves are available to download at [www.cambridge.org/ballads](http://www.cambridge.org/ballads).

Unless specified, place of publication in all references is assumed to be London.

## Abbreviations

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BL Mus.	British Library Music Collections
Bod.	Broadside Ballads Online Collection, Bodleian Library, Oxford
<i>ODNB</i>	<i>Oxford Dictionary of National Biography</i>
<i>OED</i>	<i>Oxford English Dictionary</i>
POB	Proceedings of the Old Bailey