Graham's Songbook

Volume 1

by Graham Irwin

Lyrics, melody and guitar chords for a dozen well known and not so well known folk songs. I don't pretend that the scores or the chords are 100% accurate, but they (mostly) work for me. I hope they do for you, but feel free to make your own changes if necessary.

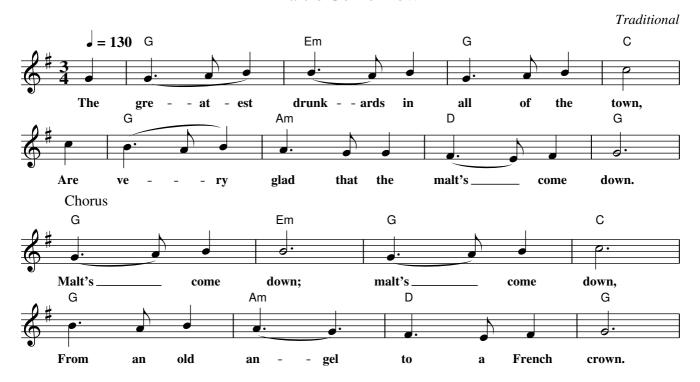
Some, but by no means all of the songs I have recorded on my YouTube channel https://www.youtube.com/c/GrahamIrwin-Paciano

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Malt's Come Down



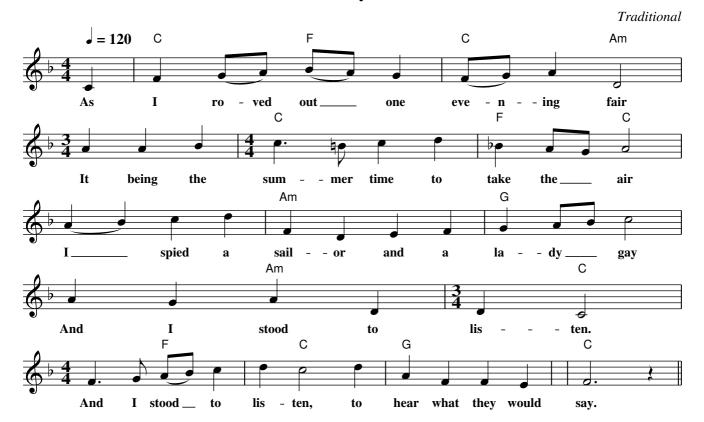
There's never a maiden in all of the town But sleeps all alone now the malt's come down.

The gentleman leaves his porter brown And drinks with his ploughboy now the malt's come down.

And many's the clergyman with a grim frown, There's none to the Mass now the malt's come down.

There's many a scholar while donning his gown Has skipped off his studies now the malt's come down.

The Dark-Eyed Sailor



He said, "Fair lady, why do you roam,
For the day is spent and the night is on."
She heaved a sigh while the tears did roll.
"For my dark-eyed sailor.
For my dark-eyed sailor, so young and stout and bold."

"'Tis seven long years since he left this land, A ring he took from off his lily-white hand. One half of the ring is still here with me, But the other's rolling. But the other's rolling, at the bottom of the sea."

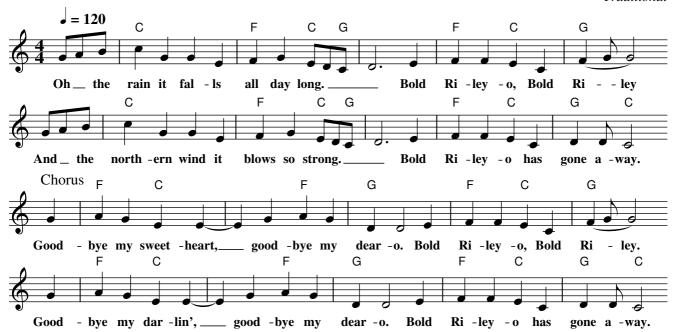
He said, "You may drive him out of your mind, Some other young man you will surely find. Love turns aside and soon cold has grown, Like a winter's morning. Like a winter's morning, the hills all white with snow."

She said, "I'll never forsake my dear, Although we're parted this many a year. Genteel he was and no rake like you, To induce a maiden. To induce a maiden, to slight the jacket blue."

One half of the ring did young William show, She ran distracted, in grief and woe. Saying, "William, Will, I have gold in store, For my dark-eyed sailor. For my dark-eyed sailor, has proved his honour true." And there is a cottage by yonder lea, This couple's married and does agree. So maids, be loyal when your love's at sea, For a cloudy morning. For a cloudy morning, brings in a sunny day.

Bold Riley

Traditional



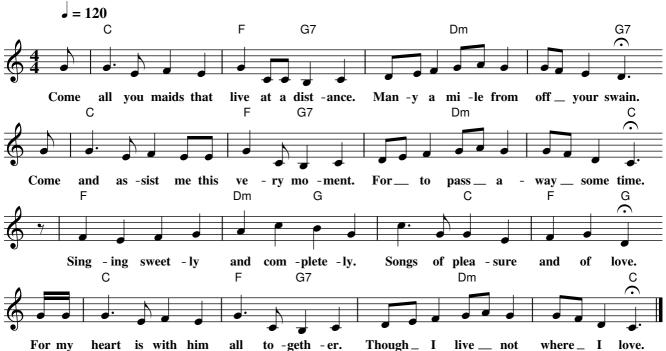
Well come on Mary, don't look glum Bold Riley-o, Bold Riley Come White-stocking Day you'll be drinkin' rum Bold Riley-o has gone away.

Oh the anchor's aweigh and the sails are set Bold Riley-o, Bold Riley And them Liverpool girls we'll ne'er forget Bold Riley-o has gone away.

We're outward bound for the Bengal Bay Bold Riley-o, Bold Riley Get bending, me lads, its a hell-of-a-way Bold Riley-o has gone away.

I Live Not Where I Love





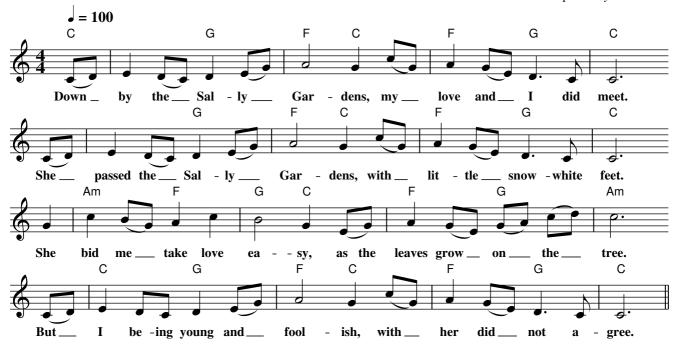
When I sleep I dream about him
When I wake I find no rest
For every moment thinking of him
My heart e'er fixed in his breast
Although far distance may be assistance
From my mind his love to remove
Yet my heart is with him all together
Though I live not where I love.

All the world shall be one religion
Living things shall cease to die
Before that I prove false to my jewel
Or any way my love deny
The world shall change and be most strange
If ever I my mind remove
For my heart is with him all together
Though I live not where I love.

So farewell lads and farewell lasses
Now I think I've got my choice
I will away to yonder mountain
Where I think I hear his voice
And if he calls then I will follow
Through the world though it is so wide
For my heart is with him all together
Though I live not where I love.

Sally Gardens

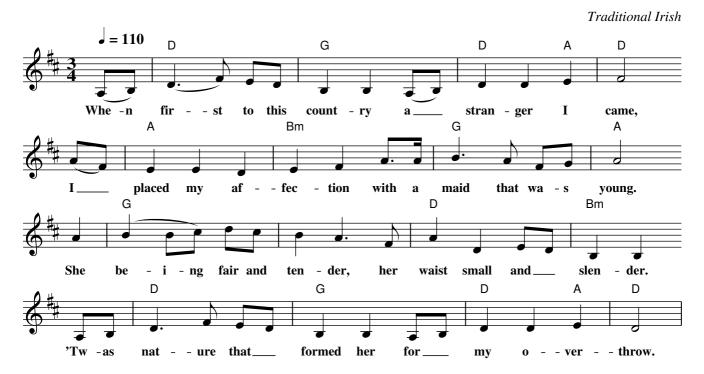
Based on a poem by WB Yeats



In a field down by the river my love and I did stand And on my leaning shoulder, she laid her snow-white hand She bid me take life easy, as the grass grows on the weirs But I was young and foolish and now am full of tears.

Down by the Sally Gardens, my love and I did meet She passed the Sally Gardens, with little snow-white feet She bid me take love easy, as the leaves grow on the tree But I being young and foolish, with her did not agree.

Banks Of The Bann



On the banks of the Bann, it was there I first met her She appeared like an angel or Egypt's fair queen Her eyes were like diamonds or stars brightly shining She's one of the fairest in the world that I've seen.

Oh it was her cruel parents that first caused a variance Because she is rich and above my degree But I do endeavour to gain my love's favour Although she is come of a high family.

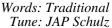
Oh, my name it is Delaney, it's a name that won't shame me And if I had saved money I'd never have roamed But drinking and sporting, night rambling and courting Are the cause of all my ruin and my absence from home.

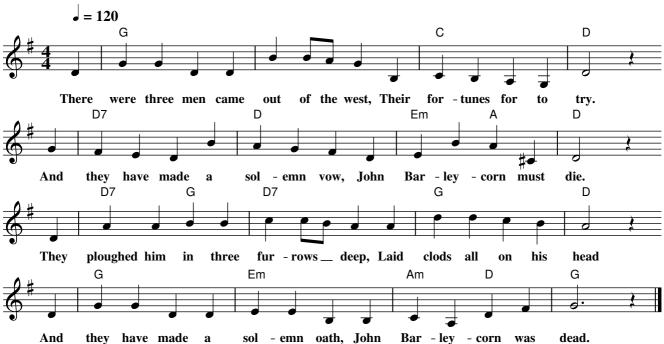
Now since I have gained her I'm contented for life, I'll put rings on her fingers and gold in her ear.

We'll live on the banks of the lovely Bann river,

And in all sorts of splendour I'll style her my dear.

John Barleycorn



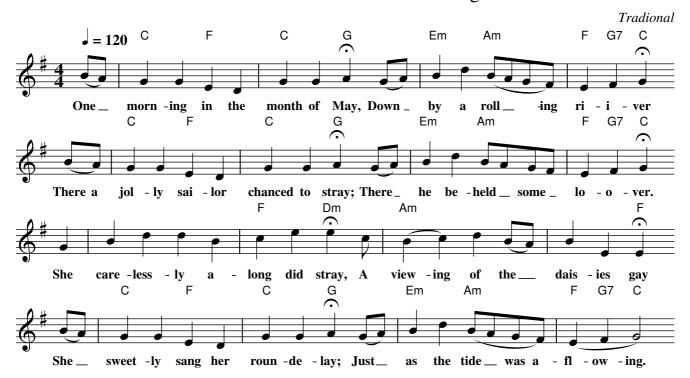


They let him lie for a very long time, Till the rains from heaven did fall John Barleycorn sprang up again, And so amazed them all. They let him stand till midsummer's day, Till he looked both pale and wan And little Sir John's grown a long long beard, And so became a man.

Then came men with great sharp scythes, To cut him off at the knee And they rolled him, they tied him around the waist, And they served him barbarously. And they hired men with the crab tree sticks, To cut him skin from bone The miller has used him worse than that, He ground him between two stones.

They wheeled him here, they wheeled him there, They wheeled him into the barn And they have used him worse than that, They bunged him in a vat. They worked their will upon John Barleycorn, But he lives to tell the tale We pour him into an old brown jug, And we call him home-brewed ale.

Just As The Tide Was A-Flowing



Her dress it was a white as milk, And jewels did adorn her skin, It was as soft as any silk, Just like a lady of honour. Her cheeks were red, her eyes were brown, Her hair in ringlets hanging down, Her lovely brow without a frown, Just as the tide was a-flowing.

I made a bow and said, "Fair maid, How came you here so early; My heart by you it was betrayed, And I could love you dearly. I am a sailor come from the sea, If you'll accept my company, To walk and see the fishes play, Just as the tide was a-flowing.

No more was said, but on her way, We both did gang together; The small birds sang, the lambs did play, And pleasant was the weather. We both being weary sat us down, Beneath a tree with branches roune Then to the church we soon were bound, Just as the tide was a-flowing.

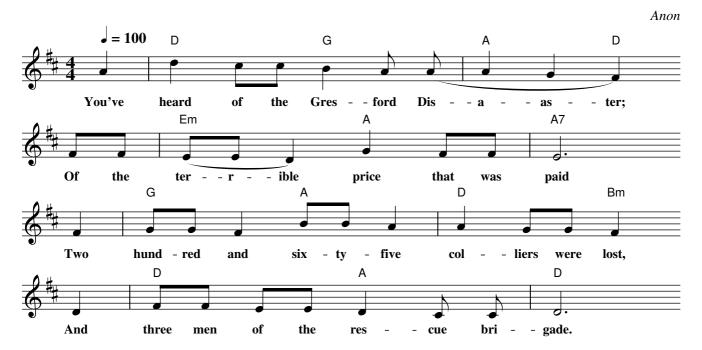


Oh lass you have a cosy bed, and cattle you have ten Can you not live a lawful life, and live with lawful men But must I use old homely goods while there's foreign gear so fine Must I drink at the waterside, and France so full of wine.

Though well I like to see you Kate, with the baby on your knee My heart is now with gallant crew that plough thro' the angry sea The bitter-gales, the tightest sails, the sheltered bay our goal It's the wayward life, it's the smuggler's strife, it's the joy of the smuggler's soul.

And when at last the dawn comes up and the cargo safely stored Like sinless saints to church we go, God's mercy to afford And it's Champagne fine for communion wine and the parson drinks it too With a sly wink prays, "Forgive these men for they know not what they do!"

The Gresford Disaster



It occurred in the month of September At three in the morning, the pit Was racked by a violent explosion In the Dennis where gas lay so thick.

Now the gas in the Dennis deep section Was packed there like snow in a drift And many a man had to leave the coal-face Before he had worked out his shift.

Now a fortnight before the explosion To the shotfirer Tomlinson cried "If you fire that shot we'll be all blown to hell!" And no one can say that he lied.

Now the fireman's reports they are missing The records of forty-two days; The collier manager had them destroyed To cover up his criminal ways.

Down there in the dark they are lying They died for nine shillings a day; They have worked out their shift and now they must lie In the darkness until Judgement Day.

Now the Lord Mayor of London's collecting To help out the children and wives; While the owners have sent some white lilies To pay for the poor colliers' lives.

Farewell, all our dear wives and our children Farewell, all our comrades as well Don't send your sons down the dark dreary mine They'll be doomed like the sinners in hell.

Plaisir D'Amour The Joys Of Love

Jean-Paul-Égide Martini (1784)



The joys of love are but a moment long The pain of love endures the whole life long

Your eyes kissed mine, I saw the love in them shine You brought me heaven right there when your eyes kissed mine

My love loves me, a world of wonder I see A rainbow shines through my window; my love loves me

And now she's gone like a dream that fades in the dawn But the words stay locked in my heartstrings; my love loves me

(Repeat first verse)

Star Of The County Down



As she onward sped I turned my head And I looked with a feeling rare I said, says I, to a passer by "Who's the maid with the nut brown hair?"

He smiled at me and he said, said he,
"She's the gem of Ireland's crown.
Rosie McCann From the banks of the Bann
She's the Star of the County Down!"

The harvest fair she'll be surely there So I'll dress in my Sunday clothes With my shoes shone bright and my hat cocked right And a smile for my nut brown rose.

No pipe I'll smoke, no horse I'll yoke Till my plough is a rust coloured brown And a smiling bride by my own fireside Sits the Star of the County Down.

About the songs

Malt's Come Down

An English folk song from the sixteenth century. A reduction in the price of beer is always cause for great celebration. Verses have been added over time. The first verse is by Gregg Butler[†], the last verse by yours truly.

The Dark Eyed Sailor

A classic broken token ballad. When, after many years, the lovers are reunited, the young man tests his love's fidelity and she proves true. They get married and live happily ever after.

Bold Riley

A sea shanty whose origins seem to be lost in the mists of time. It appears to be traditional but there are no records of the song before the 1960s. The tune most likely started life as a Tobago reel.

I Live Not Where I Live

An Elizabethan madrigal. It is claimed that the song first appeared on broadsheets before the English Civil War (1642).

Sally Gardens

From a poem by William Butler Yeats. It was an attempt by Yeats to reconstruct a song that he had heard sung by an old woman, and was originally entitled 'An Old Song Re-Sung'.

Banks Of The Bann

A delightful separation song from Ireland. The tune, named 'Slane', is used for the hymn 'Lord Of All Hopefulness'. The song is also known as 'The Bonny Brown Girl'.

John Barleycorn

A traditional ballad about the death and rebirth of the Corn God, to the tune 'Wir Pflügen' by J A P Schulz (1747-1800). One of several songs about John Barleycorn.

Just As The Tide Was A-Flowing

A traditional song, believed to be from the south of England, a song about a returning sailor. Not all versions of the song end quite so happily.

Smuggler

This seemingly traditional song was mostly written by Ian McCalman[†] with inspiration from the poem 'A Pilgrimage to the Land of Burns' by Hew Ainslie. Ailsa Craig is an island off the west coast of Scotland; Lendalfoot is the closest mainland village to Ailsa Craig.

The Gresford Disaster

This song commemorates one of Britain's worst mining disasters, at the Gresford colliery in Denbighshire, north Wales. On 22 September 1934 an explosion in one of the mine shafts led to the death of 265 miners and three rescuers. The words are by anonymous; the tune, named St Peter, was written by Alexander Robert Reinagle in 1836. The bodies of all but eight colliers remain buried down the pit.

Plaisir D'Amour

A French love song written in 1784 by Jean-Paul-Égide Martini, based on a poem by Pierre Claris de Florian. This version is in French and English.

Star Of The County Down

An Irish ballad. The words are by Cathal MacGarvey (1866–1927) and the melody was also used in an Irish folk song called 'My Love Nell'.

[†] – used with kind permission.