

Folk & Traditional Song Lyrics

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Bill Norrie

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Young Bill Norrie's a fine lad, and he lives like the wind,
Eyes shine like the silver or gold in morning sun.

"Oh friend John, dear John, and do you see what I see?
"Yonder stand the first woman that ever loved me".

"Here's a glove, a glove, John, lined with the silver grey,
"Give it to her and tell her to come to her young Billy".

"Here's a ring, a ring, John, all gold but the stone,
"Give it to her and tell her to ask the leave of none".

"Oh friend Billy, dear Billy, you know my love for thee,
I'll not go to nobody to steal his wife away".

"Friend John, dear John, swing not against the tide,
Be with me in the scheme, John, for I will be obeyed".

John ran down to the high house, and he rang low at the door
Who was there but this woman to let young Johnny in.

"Here's a glove, a glove, lady, lined with silver grey,
Bids you come to greenwood to meet your young Billy".

"Here's a ring, a ring, lady, all gold but the stone,
Bids you come to greenwood and ask the leave of none".

Husband stood in the shadow, and an angry man was he,
"I never thought the man lived my love loved more than me".

He's gone down to her room and he dressed in her array,
Like some woman he's gone down to find this young Billy.

Young Billy sat in the greenwood, and he whistled and he sang,
"Yonder comes the woman that I have loved so long".

Billy ran down and down there to meet her as she came,
All the sight that he saw, his heart was still as stone.

Billy ran down and down there to help her from her horse,
And O, and O, he cries out, "Woman was never so coarse".

Husband he had a long knife, hanging by his knee.
He took the head of young Billy off his fair body.

He's run home and home then, and down into his hall,
Tossed Billy's head to her there, and, "Lady, catch the ball!".

She's taken up the head there, she's kissed it cheek and chin,
"I love better this head than all my kith and kin".

She's taken up the head there, and she hugged it to her womb,
"Once I was full of this boy as the plum is of the stone".

"And when I was in my dad's house and my virginity,
A young man came to my room, and we got young Billy".

"I loved him in my room in secrecy and shame,
I loved him in the greenwood, all out in wind and rain".

"I will kiss his sweet head, and I will kiss his chin,
I will vow to stay true, and I'll ne'er kiss man again".

Up and spoke the husband, and a sad, sad man was he,
"If I had known he was your son, he would not have been killed by me".

Note: An distant relation of Lord Musgrave? RG

Recorded by Martin Carthy, Rite of Passage

WOOF