

Coulter's Candy

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Coulters Candy

1.

Johnnie Scott was awfu thin,
His banes were stickin through his skin;
Noo he's got a double chin
Wi eatin Colter's candy.

Allabally, allabally bee,
Sittin on yer mammie's knee,
Greetin for anither bawbee,
Tae buy Colter's candy.

2.

Ally, bally, ally bally bee,
Sittin' on yer mammy's knee
Greetin' for anither bawbee,
Tae buy mair Coulter's candy.

Ally. bally, ally, bally bee,
When you grow up you'll go to sea,
Makin' pennies for your daddy and me,
Tae buy mair Coulter's Candy.

Mammy gie me ma thrifty doon
Here's auld Coulter comin' roon
Wi' a basket on his croon
Selling Coulter's Candy.

Little Annie's greetin' tae
Sae whit can puir wee Mammy dae
But gie them a penny atween them twae
Tae buy mair Coulter's Candy.

Poor wee Jeannie's lookin' affa thin,
A rickle o' banes covered ower wi' skin,
Noo she's gettin' a double chin
Wi' sookin' Coulter's Candy.

3.

Ally, bally, ally, bally, bee,
Sittin' on your mammy's knee,
Greetin' for anither bawbee,

To buy mair Coulter's candy.

Mammy, gie me ma "thrifty" doon,
Here's auld Coulter comin' roon,
Wi' a basket on his croon
Selling Coulter's candy.

Here is Coulter comin' roon,
A big lum hat upon his croon,
He's been roon' about the toon
Singin' and sellin' candy.

Ally, bally, ally, bally bee,
Sittin' on your mammy's knee,
Greetin' for another bawbee
To buy mair Coulter's candy.

4.
There was a wee lassie awfy thin,
A bundle o' bones wrapped up in skin.
Now she's gettin' a wee double chin,
Wi' eatin' Coo'ter's candy.

[Cho.:] Ally bally, ally bally bee,
Sittin' on your mammy's knee,
Greetin' for another bawbee
To buy some Coo'ter's candy.

Poor wee Annie's greetin' too,
What can her poor mammy do,
But gi'e them a penny between them two,
To buy some Coo'ter's candy?

[Cho.]

`Mammy gi'es my banky doon,
Here's auld Coo'ter comin' roon',
Wi' his basket on his croon
An' sellin' Coo'ter's candy.'

[Cho.]

`Dinna you greet, my wee babby,
You know your daddy's gone to sea,
Earnin' pennies for you and me
To buy some Coo'ter's candy.'

[Cho.]

(1) Montgomerie SC (1948), 133 (no. 232), from Edinburgh.

(2) Buchan, 101 SS (1962), 138, with music. In 3.1

thrifty = "money box, piggy bank".

(3) A Garland of Folk Songs, ed. John MacPherson;
Mozart Allan, n.d. (1970?), p. 6, with music.

(4) Scotsgate (ed. Hendry and Stephen, 1982), 38, with
music.

Buchan notes (p. 156) that "Coulter" was Robert Coltart,
who sold his home-made candy round the Borders in the early
part of the century. B. learned the song (from the actor
Roddy Macmillan) with two verses, and added another (the
second), now accepted as part and parcel of the song; cf.
version 4. Another verse came from a correspondent (cf.
version 3, st. 3):

Here come Coulter doon the street,

A big lum hat upon his heid,

He's been roon' about a' the toon,

Singin' an' sellin' candy.

Hendry/Stephen Scotscape (1978), 26 has the chorus, line 4
"To buy some sugar candy"; Ritchie Singing Street (1964), 54,
(omits "some") used "for a greetin' bairn".

The tune is yet another variant of Ah vous dirai-je maman.
Another verse collected by the editor in 1971, from a lady
who came from Friockheim, learned c. 1910:

There's no money for a poor wee soul,
Yer daddie's signing on the dole,
But there's a penny in the sugar bowl
To get your Coulter's candy.

The parent of the song may be a rhyme preserved in Maclagan,
GDA (1901), from Argyll, perhaps a conflation of the candy
rhyme and "Bobbie Shafto":

Hullaballa, hullaballa, sitting on his mother's knee,
Crying for a wee bawbee to get some sugar-candy.
My wee lad's awa' to sea, he'll come back and marry me,
Silver buckles on his knee; my wee lad's a sailor.

MS