

Folk & Traditional Song Lyrics

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The Boy Who Put the Butter on the Old Man's Bow

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When I first tried a tune on me faither's violin
Wi' a dee a doo a durn a diddle-aye-dum-doe
All me folk were away on a summer sabbath day
When I skippet on his fiddle wi' the old man's bow.
Gi'ed a twiddle tae the string and put the fiddle to me chin,
Wi' a mind tae keep the sabbath, sae I thought I'd try a hymn,
but I got an awful skreek, no' a doo a durn a diddle
When I slippet on his fiddle wi' the old man's bow.

Noo the wee ginger cat dooket underneath the mat,
Wi' a dee a doo a durn a diddle-aye-dum-doe
And the dog raised his jowl and gi'ed such a fearful howl,
that he drowned ou' the scowling o' the old man's bow.
Then I tried to tak' me tempo frae the wag upon the wa',
but me sacky sounded awfae like the turkey in the straw,
So I tried another key, but the skreek was worse than ever,
When I slippet on his fiddle wi' the old man's bow.

Noo I ken o'er weel hoo to cure a squeakin' wheel,
Wi' a dee a doo a durn a diddle-aye-dum-doe
And I'm thinkin', says I, that there's somethin' guid and dry,
So I dou't will meet to lubricate the old man's bow
By I hunted in the glory hole that's in below the stair,
In the box ahind the tractor, but there was no' any there.
Faith, I hunted a' the house, but the oil had been a'missing,
So I rubbed a bit o' butter on the old man's bow.

Gi'ed a twiddle tae the string, put the fiddle to me chin,
Wi' a dee a doo a durn a diddle-aye-dum-doe
But alas for me chin, ye c'ad heard a drappin' pin,
For there was no' e'en a whisper frae the old man's bow.
Why I worket at the fiddle like a joiner wi' a saw,
'til the clods o' Orkney butter fairly studded off the wa'
But I could no' get a dee or a doo a durn a diddle
When I slippet on his fiddle wi' the old man's bow.

Then then kirk-folk cam' in and I smarted for me sin,
Wi' a dee a doo a durn a diddle-aye-dum-doe
For he played such a tune that I could no' set me down,
But was minded o' the butter on the old man's bow
Noo I'm finished wi' the fiddle, and theres no' the slightest doubt,
If I ever learn an instrument, it's going to be the flute

For when unco'n folk come by, and they mak the introductions
I'm the boy that put the butter on the old man's bow.

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