

Folk & Traditional Song Lyrics

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The Cockerham Devil

The Cockerham Devil

It is said that in Cockerham the devil did dwell
Sing twiddlum, twaddlum and hi-fallee
It is said that in Cockerham the devil did dwell
So afraid were the people they wished him to hell
The people they wished him to hell.

They called the school master a wise man and true
Sing twiddlum, twaddlum and hi-fallee
They called the school master a wise man and true
Since he was so clever this task for to do
This difficult task for to do.

The devil come up to this stout-hearted man
Sing twiddlum, twaddlum and hi-fallee
The devil come up to this stout-hearted man
Saying "Set me three problems to solve if I can
Three problems to solve if I can."

"Well first, on the thorns, you must count the dew-drops"
Sing twiddlum, twaddlum and hi-fallee
"Well first, on the thorns, you must count the dew-drops
And then count the stalks on yon fine field of crops
The stalks on yon fine field of crops."

The devil took off and away he did fly
Sing twiddlum, twaddlum and hi-fallee
The devil took off and away he did fly
The tasks he soon solved and returned by and by
The devil returned by and by.

"You've got one more chance," cried the devil with glee
Sing twiddlum, twaddlum and hi-fallee
"You've got one more chance," cried the devil with glee
"And then my fine feller you're coming with me
My fine feller you're coming with me."

"Plait a rope of fine sand that you'll find on the moss"
Sing twiddlum, twaddlum and hi-fallee
"Plait a rope of fine sand that you'll find on the moss
"And then you must wash it without any loss
Must wash it without any loss".

The devil he tried it again and again
Sing twiddlum, twaddlum and hi-fallee
The devil he tried it again and again
And again and again and again and again
And again and again and again.

The devil he shrieked and he ranted and raved
Sing twiddlum, twaddlum and hi-fallee
The devil he shrieked and he ranted and raved
Says the master "I've won and my soul it is saved
I've won and my soul it is saved."

If anyone living should need any proof
Sing twiddlum, twaddlum and hi-fallee
If anyone living should need any proof
There's a bridge out at Pilling with the marks of the hoof
Where the devil he landed from Cockerham church roof
On his way to his home down in hell.

I heard this song on a folk programme on the radio about fifteen years ago,
sung unaccompanied "in the key of F minor, would you believe, in case you're
taking notes" by Bernard Wrigley (solo: lines 1, 3 and 4), and Gary and Vera
Aspey and Wilf Darlington (chorus: lines 2 and 5).

Cockerham and Pilling are villages on the coast of north Lancashire, mid-way
between Lancaster and Blackpool. They are about five miles apart, which gives
some idea of how far the devil jumped in the last verse! MU

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