

# Folk & Traditional Song Lyrics

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## Sir John Butler

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BUT word is come to Warrington,  
And Busye Hall is laid about;  
Sir Iohn Butler and his merry men  
Stand in full great doubt.

When they came to Busye Hall  
Itt was the merke midnight,  
And all the bridges were vp drawn,  
And neuer a candle-light.

There they made them one good boate,  
All of one good bull skinn;  
William Sauage was one of the first  
That euer came itt within.

Hee sayled ore his merrymen,  
By two and two together,  
And said itt was as good a bote  
As ere was made of lether.

`Waken you, waken you, deare father!  
God waken you within!  
For heere is your vnckle Standlye  
Come your hall within.'

`If that be true, Ellen Butler,  
These tydings you tell mee,  
A hundred pound in good redd gold  
This night will not borrow mee.'

Then came downe Ellen Butler  
And into her fathers hall,  
And then came downe Ellen Butler,  
And shee was laced in pall.

`Where is thy father, Ellen Butler?  
Haue done, and tell itt mee:'  
`My father is now to London ridden,  
As Christ shall haue part of mee.'

`Now nay, now nay, Ellen Butler,  
for soe itt must not bee;

for ere I goe forth of this hall,  
Your father I must see.'

The sought that hall then vp and downe  
Theras Iohn Butler lay;  
The sought that hall then vp and downe  
Theras Iohn Butler lay.

faire him fall, litle Holcrofft!  
Soe merrilye he kept the dore,  
Till that his head from his shoulders  
Came tumbling downe the floore.

`Yeeld thee, yeelde thee, Iohn Butler!  
Yeelde thee now to mee!  
`I will yeelde me to my vnckle Stanlye,  
And neere to false Peeter Lee.'

`A preist, a preist,' saies Ellen Butler,  
`To housle and to shriue!  
A preist, a preist,' sais Ellen Butler,  
`While that my father is a man aliue!'

Then bespake him William Sauage,  
A shames death may hee dye!  
Sayes, He shall haue no other preist  
But my bright sword and mee.

The Ladye Butler is to London rydden,  
Shee had better haue beene att home;  
Shee might haue beggd her owne marryed lord  
Att her good brother Iohn.

And as shee lay in leeu London,  
And as shee lay in her bedd,  
Shee dreamed her owne marryed lord  
Was swiminng in blood soe red.

Shee called vp her merry men all,  
Long ere itt was day;  
Saies, Wee must ryde to Busye Hall,  
With all speed that wee may.

Shee matt with three Kendall men,  
Were ryding by the way:  
`Tydings, tydings, Kendall men,  
I pray you tell itt mee!'

`Heauy tydings, deare madam;

from you wee will not leane;  
The worthyest knight in merry England,  
John Butler, Lord! hee is slaine!

`Ffarewell, farwell, Iohn Butler!  
for thee I must neuer see:  
farewell, farwell, Busiye Hall!  
For thee I will neuer come nye.'

Now Ladye Butler is to London againe,  
In all the speed might bee,  
And when shee came before her prince,  
Shee kneeled low downe on her knee.

`A boone, a boone, my leege!' shee sayes,  
`Ffor Gods loue grant itt mee!  
`What is thy boone, Lady Butler?  
Or what wold thou haue of mee?

`What is thy boone, Lady Butler?  
Or what wold thou haue of mee?'  
`That false Peeres of Lee, and my brother Stanley,  
And William Sauage, and all, may dye.'

`Come you hither, Lady Butler,  
Come you ower this stone;  
Wold you haue three men for to dye,  
All for the losse off one?

`Come you hither, Lady Butler,  
With all the speed you may;  
If thou wilt come to London, Lady Butler,  
Thou shalt goe home Lady Gray.'

Child #165

Version from Child from Percy

Murder of Sir John Butler at Bewey Hall, Warrington, Lancashire in 1463

LMP

July01