

Folk & Traditional Song Lyrics

www.traditionalmusic.co.uk

Three Dukes

Three Dukes

1.

There came three dukes a-riding, a-riding, ride, ride, riding;
There came three dukes a-riding,
With a tinsy, tinsy, tee!

Come away, fair lady, there is no time to spare;
Let us dance, let us sing,
Let us join the wedding ring.

2.

The Campsie dukes a-riding, a-riding, a-riding;
The Campsie dukes a riding, come a rincey, dincey, dee.

3.

There's three dukes a-riding, a-riding, a-riding,
there's three dukes a-riding,
Come a ransin, tansin, my gude wife.
Come a ransin, tansin te-dee,
Before I take my evening walk,
I'll have a handsome lady,
The fairest one that I do see.

4.

Here are two Dukes arriving,
Arriving, arriving;
Here are two Dukes arriving,
My Ramsy, Tamsy, Telimsay.

What is your good will, sir,
Good will sir, good will, sir;
What is your good will, sir,
My Ramsy, Tamsy, Telimsay?

My will, sir, is to get married,
Get married, get married;
My will, sir, is to get married,
My Ramsy, Tamsy, Telimsay.

Take one of my fair daughters,
Fair daughters, fair daughters,
Take one of my fair daughters,

My Ramsy, Tamsy, Telimsay.

They are all so black and so browsy,
They sit on the sides o' Rousay;
They have no chains about their necks,
And they are all so black and so browsy.

Good enough for you, sir,
You, sir, you, sir;
Good enough for you, sir,
My Ramsy, Tamsy, Telimsay.

Before I ride the cities so wide,
I will take Miss ----- to be my bride.

5.
Here comes three Dukes a-riding,
A-riding, a-riding,
Here come three Dukes a-riding,
With a hansom-tansom-tay.

Pray what do you want with us, sirs,
With us, sirs, with us, sirs,
Pray what do you want with us, sirs,
With a ransom-tansom-tay?

We have come to marry, to marry, etc.
Will ever a one of us do, sirs? etc.

You're all as stiff as pokers, etc.
We can bend as well as you, sirs, etc.

(1) Gomme II.245, from the West of Scotland [Folklore Record, IV.174]

(2) Gomme II.247, from Biggar;

(3) *ibid.*, from Roseheart, Pitsligo.

(4) Greig FSNE art. clii.2, from Sandwick, Orkney.

[Another instance of the tribal marriage imitated by children, for at least a thousand years. Gomme suggests that the chorus preserves an old slogan or war cry.]

(5) Rodger Lang Strang (1948), 32. Three boys play the dukes, advancing and retiring with st. 1; the girls in a line take hands and advance and retire with the second stanza, etc.

Gomme & Sharp, *Children's Singing Games I* (1909), 20;
Opies *Singing Game* (1985), 76 (no. 11), with refs.

MS

oct97