

Folk & Traditional Song Lyrics

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When First My Jamie He Cam to the Town

When First My Jamie He Cam to the Town

When first my Jamie he cam to the town,
He had a blue bonnet--a hole in the crown;
But noo he has gotten a hat and a feather;
Hey, Jamie lad, cock your beaver.
Cock your beaver, cock your beaver,
Hey, Jamie, lad, cock your beaver!

There's gowd ahint, there's gowd afore,
There's silk in every saddle-bore;
Silver jingling at your bridle,
And grumes to haud your horse when he stands idle.
So cock your beaver, cock your beaver,
Hey, Jamie, lad, cock your beaver!

Chambers PRS (1847), 192; (1870), 32; Montgomerie SNR
(1946), 84 (no. 101).
Original scrap in Herd (1776), II.205:

When first my dear Johny came to this town,
He had a blue bonnet, it wanted the crown;
But now he has gotten a hat and a feather,
Hey, my Johny lad, cock up your beaver.
Cock up your beaver, cock up your beaver,
Hey, my Johny lad, cock uo your beaver;
Cock up your beaver, and cock it nae wrang,
We'll a' to England ere it be lang.

SMM IV (1792), 319 (no. 309), "improved" by Burns; differs in
lines 5-8:

Cock up your beaver, and cock it fu' sprush;
We'll over the border and gie them a brush;

There's somebody there we'll teach better
behaviour,

Hey, brave Johnie lad, cock up your beaver.

Cunningham Songs of Scotland (1825), II.344, to this adds
another eight lines, presumably his own.

The tune is first published in Durfey's Choice New Songs
(1684), p. 3 [Simpson BBBM, 113], set to his song "The Horse-
Race"; labelled "an excellent Scotch Tune, called, Cock up
thy Beaver." In all edd. of PPM. It is in Dancing Master,
7th ed., 1686, and in The Division Violin (1685), entitled
Johney Cock thy Beaver, A Scotch Tune. Not in Scottish
collections till Wm. McGibbon's Third Book, 1755, 20, and CPC
book vii, 2, about the same date. A good version in Margaret
Sinkler's MS. Book, 1710 (Glen ESM 160). Gillespie MS.
(1768), no. 77, Cock up your Bevar. The tune resembles Hooly
and Fairly [SMM II.199; and previously in McGibbon's Scots
Tunes, 4th Book, c. 1770], as Dick says (Notes, 1908, 98);
but Simpson (115) finds the kinship exaggerated.

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