

# Folk & Traditional Song Lyrics

[www.traditionalmusic.co.uk](http://www.traditionalmusic.co.uk)

## When I Was a Wee Thing

When I Was a Wee Thing

When I was a wee thing,  
And just like an elf,  
All the meat that e'er I gat,  
I laid upon the shelf.

The rottens and the mice  
They fell into a strife,  
They wadnae let my meat alane  
Till I gat a wife.

And when I gat a wife,  
She wadnae bide therein,  
Till I gat a hurl-barrow,  
To hurle her out and in.

The hurl-barrow brake,  
My wife she gat a fa';  
And the foul fa' the hurl-barrow,  
Cripple wife and a'.

She wadnae eat nae bacon,  
She wadnae eat nae beef,  
She wadnae eat nae lang-kail,  
For fying o' her teeth:

But she wad eat the bonnie bird,  
That sits upon the tree:  
Gang down the burn, Davie, love,  
And I sall follow thee.

---

Herd MSS.; Herd 1776 II.213 (tune, John Anderson my Jo);  
Montgomerie SNR (1946), 87 (no. 107; omits st. 2 and 4),  
probably from Moffat 50 TSNR (1933), 23, similarly  
defective [with tune, a version of John Anderson]; ODNR  
96 (no. 71), "When I was a little boy" etc.; first ref.  
Tommy Thumb's Pretty Song Book, c. 1744. The last two  
lines are from the conclusion of stanza 1 of Robert  
Crawford's "Doun the Burn, Davie", a love song appearing  
in TTM (1724), and with music in Orpheus Caledonius,  
1725.

