

Folk & Traditional Song Lyrics

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The Young Sailor Cut Down in His Prime

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As I was a-walking down by the Royal Albert,
Black was the night and cold was the day;
Who should I see there but one of my shipmates.
Wrapped in a blanket far colder than clay.

He asked for a blanket to wrap 'round his head,
Likewise a candle to light him to bed;
His poor heart was breakin', his poor head was achin',
For he's a young sailor cut down in his prime.

We'll beat the big drums and we'll play the pipes merrily,
Play the dead march as we carry him along,
Take him to the churchyard and fire three volleys o'er him
For he's a young sailor cut down in his prime.

At the corner of the street you will see two girls standing,
One to the other did whisper and say.
"Here comes a young sailor whose money we'll squander,
Here comes a young sailor cut down in his prime."

His kind-hearted mother, his kind-hearted father,
Both of them wondered about his past life,
For along with the flash-girls he would wander,
Along with the flash-girls it was his delight.

(Sung by Harry Cox)

note: Harry Cox, famous septuagenarian folksinger from Norfolk, England, has recorded more than 50 songs from his huge repertory for the B.B.C. archives. This recording of his singing was made by the noted English collector, Peter Kennedy. For an article on Harry Cox, and several of his songs see the Journal of the English Folk Dance and Song Society, Volume VIII, No. 3, December, 1958, pp. 142-155.

This recording may also be heard as part of the album Field Trip - England (Folkways FW 8871), edited by Jean Ritchie. KG

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