

August 2019

Bonny Black Bess

Author Unknown

Follow this and additional works at: https://egrove.olemiss.edu/kgbsides_uk



Part of the [Folklore Commons](#), and the [Music Commons](#)

Recommended Citation

Unknown, Author, "Bonny Black Bess" (2019). *Broadside Ballads: England*. 773.
https://egrove.olemiss.edu/kgbsides_uk/773

This Book is brought to you for free and open access by the Kenneth S. Goldstein Collection: Broadside Ballads at eGrove. It has been accepted for inclusion in Broadside Ballads: England by an authorized administrator of eGrove. For more information, please contact egrove@olemiss.edu.

LASS OF RICHMOND HILL.

BONNY BLACK BESS.

LET the lover his mistress's beauty rehearse,
And laud her attractions in languishing verse,
Be it mine in rude strains, but with truth to express,
The love that I bear to my bonny Black Bess.

From the West was her dam, from the East was her sire
From the one came her swiftness, the other her fire!
No peer of the realm better blood can possess,
Than flows in the veins of my bonny Black Bess.

Look! look! how that eyeball glows bright as a brand!
That neck proudly arches, those nostrils expand!
Mark that wide flowing mane! of which each silky tress
Might adorn prouder beauties—though none like
Black Bess.

Mark! that skin sleek as velvet, and dusky as night,
With its jet undi-figured by one lock of white,
That throat branched with veins, prompt to charge or
Now is she not beautiful—bonny Black Bess. (caress,
Over highway and byway, in rough & smooth weather,
Some thousands of miles have we journey'd together;
Our couch the same straw, and our meal the same mess,
No couple more constant than I and Black Bess.

By moonlight, in darkness, by night or by day,
Her headlong career there is nothing can stay,
She cares not for distance—she knows not distress—
Can you show me a courser to match with Black Bess?

Once it happened in Cheshire, near Dunham, I popped
On a horseman alone, whom I speedily stopped;
That I lightened his pockets you'll readily guess—
Quick work makes Dick Turpin when mounted on Bess.

Now it seems the man knew me; 'Dick Turpin,' said he,
'You shall swing for this job, as you live, d'ye see';
I laughed at his threats and his vows of redress,
I was sure of an 'alibi' then with Black Bess.

The road was a hollow, a sunken ravine,
Overshadowed completely by wood like a screen;
I clambered the bank, and I needs must confess,
That one touch of the spur grazed the side of Black Bess.

Brake, brook, meadow, and ploughed field, Bess fleetly
bestrode.

As the crow wings her flight, we selected the road;
We arrived at Hough Green in five minutes or less,
My neck it was saved by the speed of Black Bess.

Stepping carelessly forward, I lounged on the green,
Taking excellent care that by all I am seen,
Some remarks of time's flight, to the squires I address,
But I say not a word on the flight of Black Bess.

I mention the hour—it was just about four—
Play a rubber at bowls—thinking danger is o'er,
When athwart my game, like a checkmate at chess,
Come the horsemen in search of the rider of Bess.

What matter details? off with triumph I came,
He swears to the hour,— & the squires swear the same;
I had robbed him at four—and at four they profess,
I was quietly bowling—all thanks to Black Bess.

Then one halloo, boys,—one loud cheering halloo—
For the swiftest of coursers—the gallant, the true,
For the sportsman unborn shall the memory bless,
Of the horse of the highwayman, bonny Black Bess.

THE Blighted Flower.



London:—H. Such, Printer & Publisher,
177, Union Street, Boro'. S. E.

I HAD a flower within my garden growing,
I nourished it with fond and anxious care,
Rich in its charms of nature's own disposing,
Of tints unrivalled and with fragrance rare.
In an evil hour there came about my dwelling,
One who had blighted many a flower before,
He saw my gem in innocence excelling,
He smiled upon it and it bloomed no more.

Next day I found it withered and degraded,
Thrown by the spoiler carelessly away,
Its fragrance gone—its varied beauties faded,
Despised, forsaken, hastening to decay.
Vainly I strove the faded flower to cherish,
Nought now remains of what was once so dear,
Only with life can fond remembrance perish,
Or cease to flow the unavailing tear.

LASS OF RICHMOND HILL

ON Richmond Hill there lives a lass,
More bright than May day morn,
Whose charms all other maids surpass,
A rose without a thorn.

This lass so neat, with smiles so sweet,
Has won my heart complete,
I'd crowns resign, to call her mine,
Sweet lass of Richmond Hill.

Ye zephyrs gay that fan the air,
And wander through the grove,
O whisper then my charming fair,
I die for her I love.

How happy will that shepherd be,
Who calls this nymph his own,
O may her choice be fixed on me,
Mine's fixed on her alone.