

August 2019

# Poor Bill Brown

Author Unknown

Follow this and additional works at: [https://egrove.olemiss.edu/kgbsides\\_uk](https://egrove.olemiss.edu/kgbsides_uk)



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

---

## Recommended Citation

Unknown, Author, "Poor Bill Brown" (2019). *Broadside Ballads: England*. 1206.  
[https://egrove.olemiss.edu/kgbsides\\_uk/1206](https://egrove.olemiss.edu/kgbsides_uk/1206)

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](mailto:egrove@olemiss.edu).



# THE NEW DESERTER

London:—H. P. SUCH, Machine Printer and  
Publisher, 177, Union-st., Borough, S.E.

**A**SI wandered through Radcliffe-highway,  
The recruiting party came beating that way,  
They enlisted me, and treated me, till I did not  
know,  
Then to the Queen's barracks they forced me to go.

When first I deserted I thought myself free,  
Until my cruel comrades informed against me ;  
I was quickly followed after and brought back  
with speed,  
I was handcuff'd and guarded, heavy irons on me.

Court martial, court martial they held upon me,  
And sentence passed upon me three hundred and  
three,  
May the Lord have mercy on them for their sad  
cruelty,  
For now the Queen's duty lies heavy on me.

When next I deserted I thought myself free,  
Until my cruel sweetheart informed upon me,  
I was quickly followed after and brought back  
with speed,  
I was handcuffed and guarded, had heavy irons  
on me.

Court martial, court martial, court martial they  
got,  
The sentence passed on me for to be shot,  
The Lord have mercy on me for their sad cruelty,  
For now the Queen's duty lies heavy on me.

Then up rode Prince Albert in a carriage and six,  
Bring to me the young man whose death it is fixed,  
So cast off his irons and let him go free,  
He will make a good soldier for his Queen and  
country.



# POOR BILL BROWN

**Y**E gentlemen both great and small,  
Gamekeepers, poachers, sportsmen all,  
Come listen to my simple clown,  
I'll sing you the death of poor Bill Brown,  
I'll sing you the death of poor Bill Brown.

One stormy night as you shall hear,  
(It was in the season of the year,  
We went to the woods for to catch a fat buck,  
But ah ! that night we had bad luck,  
Bill Brown was shot, and his dog was struck.

When we got to the wood our sport begun,  
I saw the gamekeeper present his gun,  
I called on Bill to climb the gate  
To fetch the buck, but it was too late,  
For there he met his untimely fate.

Then dying he lay upon the ground,  
And in that state poor Bill I found,  
And when he saw me he did cry  
" Revenge my death," " I will," said I,  
For many a hare we have caught hard by.

I know the man that shot Bill Brown,  
I know him well and could tell his clown,  
And to describe it in my song,  
Black jacket he had and red waistcoat on,  
I know him well, and they call him Tom.

I drest myself up next night in time,  
I got to the wood and the clock struck nine ;  
The reason was, I tell you why,  
To find the gamekeeper I'll go try,  
Who shot my friend, and he shall die.

I ranged the woods all over and then  
I looked at my watch and it was just ten ;  
I heard a footstep on the green,  
I laid myself down for fear of being seen,  
For I plainly saw that it was Tom Green.

Then I took my piece in my hand,  
Resolved to fire if Tom did stand,  
Tom heard the noise and turned him round,  
I fired and brought him down,  
My hand gave him his deep death wound.

No revenge you see my hopes have crowned,  
I've shot the man that shot Bill Brown,  
Poor Bill no more these eyes will see,  
Farewell, dear friends, farwel to ye.  
For I've crowned his hopes and his memory.