



Songs & Ballads



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This version of the ballad "Earl Brand" comes from the Rockfish Valley region of Nelson County, Virginia.

"Earl Brand"

Sunday, February 24, 2008

*"Wake you up, wake you up, you seven sleepers,
And do take warning of me;
O do take care of your oldest daughter dear
For your youngest are going with me."*

This version of the ballad "Earl Brand" comes mostly from the Rockfish Valley region of Nelson County, Virginia. It is taken from several different versions collected by [Cecil Sharp](#) in April and May of 1918.

The tune and most of the verses come from the version that Sharp labels "G" in his collection, **English Folk Songs From The Southern Appalachians**, which was sung by Mr. Clinton Fitzgerald, of Afton, Virginia, on April 28, 1918.

I've added two verses from Sharp's "F" version, which

was sung by Mr. Philander H. Fitzgerald, of Nash, Virginia, on May 7, 1918. They are the verses that begin with "O hold, O hold, Lord William, she cried", and "O Mother, mother, dig my grave".

I've also added a verse from Sharp's "L" version, which sung by Mrs. Margaret Jack Dodd, of Beechgrove, Virginia, on May 24, 1918. It is the verse that begins with "He looked over his left shoulder".

The first verse, which is quoted above, is taken from Sharp's "E" version, sung by Mrs. Lizzie Gibson, of Crozet, Virginia, on April 26, 1918. Also, Lord William's "dark apple grey" comes from Mrs. Gibson's version.

All four of these versions come from the eastern slope of the Blue Ridge within a distance of about 35 miles from each other, with Crozet on the north and Nash on the south. With the exception of Crozet, which is in Albemarle County, all of the other communities are within Nelson County, Virginia. Click [HERE](#), for quotes from Sharp's diary about his travels in Nelson County and for a picture of Philander Nash and his wife. Scroll down to the year 1918.

The ballad "Earl Brand" is number 7 in [Child's](#) collection of [The English and Scottish Popular Ballads](#). My version was inspired by the singing of [Custer](#) LaRue on her CD "[The True Lover's Farewell](#)"

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