

The Beauty Bride

Informant/Performer:
Aunt Molly Jackson of Kentucky
New York, NY, 1935

Source:
Library of Congress AFS 825 A4
Collected by Alan Lomax and
Mary Elizabeth Barnicle

Parlando-rubato

Once I court - ed a fair beau - ty bride,*

I court - ed her by day and I court - ed her by night,

Her par - ents found out I was court - ing her for love,

They locked her in her sit - ting room and threw the keys a - way.

* bright

2. I rapped on her window just to let her know,
I rapped on her window as hard as I could go,
I rapped on her window, she answered me and cried,
"I'll ne'er forget you, Johnny, until the day I die."
3. Then the thought struck me then to the army I would go,
To see if my true love would forsake me or no,
But when I got there, the army shined so bright,
It put me in remembrance of my own heart's true delight.
4. Six long years before I returned
Back to my own, my native home again,
Her parents saw me coming, they wrang their hands and cried,
"Our daughter loved you dearly and for your sake she died."
5. There I stood like a man a-going deranged,
And the tears run down my cheeks like small showers of rain,
Crying, "Lord, have mercy on me, and tell me what to do,
My true love's sleeping in her grave, and I want to go there, too."

Background Information

Southern folk singers generally made no distinction between the traditional ballads and the love songs. Both conveyed the same melancholy, nostalgic feeling, and both were termed 'old-time love songs'. Thus, as the old British stories gradually lost their significance in the New World, the ballads were often turned, bit by bit, into lyric songs. The present song is an example of a British come-all-ye in the early stages of becoming a lyric piece.