

The Golden Willow Tree

Informant/Performer:
Elmer George
North Montpelier, VT, 1939

Source:
Library of Congress AFS 3714 B
Collected by Alan Lomax and
Helen Hartness Flanders

♩ = 66-72



1. There was a ship in the south coun-tree, sail - ing o'er the low - lands lie so low;



There was a ship in the south coun - tree, and it went by the name of the Gold - en Wil - low Tree,



As she sailed o'er the low - lands low down low, - As she sailed o'er the low - lands low.

Transcribed by Gail Needleman and Anne Laskey

2. There was another ship in the same countree
Sailing o'er the lowlands lie so low
There was another ship in the same countree
And it went by the name of the Turkish Shagaree,
And she sailed o'er the lowlands, low down low,
As she sailed o'er the lowlands low.
3. Well, up speaks one little cabin-boy
Saying O, the lowlands lie so low
Oh, up speaks one little cabin-boy
Saying "What will you give me if that ship I'll destroy?
If I sink her in the lowlands, low down low,
If I sink her in the lowlands low."
4. "I'll give you gold and I'll give you fee,"
Saying O, the lowlands lie so low,
"I'll give you gold and I'll give you fee
And my oldest daughter your wedding-bride shall be,
If you sink her in the lowlands, low down low,
If you sink her in the lowlands low."
5. He bent upon his breast and away swam he
Saying O, the lowlands lie so low
He bent upon his breast and away swam he
And he swam till he came to that [Turkish Shagaree]
As she sailed o'er the lowlands, low down low,
As she sailed o'er the lowlands low.
6. He had an instrument was fixed for the use,
Saying O, the lowlands lie so low,
He had an instrument was fixed for the use
And he bore nine holes and he bore them all to once,
And he sank her in the lowlands, low down low,
And he sank her in the lowlands low.
7. Then he bent upon his back and back came he
Saying O, the lowlands lie so low
He bent upon his back and back came he
And he swam till he came to the Golden Willow Tree
As she sailed o'er the lowlands, low down low
As she sailed o'er the lowlands low.

8. "O captain, O captain, O take me on board,"
Saying O, the lowlands lie so low
"O captain, O captain, O take me on board,
And be unto me as good as your word,
For I've sunk her in the lowlands, low down low,
For I've sunk her in the lowlands low."
9. "O no, O no, I won't take you on board,"
Saying O, the lowlands lie so low,
"O no, O no, I won't take you on board,
Nor be unto you as good as my word,
If you've sunk her in the lowlands, low down low,
If you've sunk her in the lowlands low."
10. "Well, if it wasn't for the love that I have for your men,"
Saying O, the lowlands lie so low,
"If it wasn't for the love that I have for your men,
I would do unto you as I did unto them,
I would sink you in the lowlands, low down low,
I would sink you in the lowlands low."
11. But he wrote a message and sent it to his friends,
Saying O, the lowlands lie so low,
He wrote a message and sent it to his friends
To let them know of his dreadful end,
And he sailed o'er the lowlands, low down low
And he sailed o'er the lowlands low.
12. Then he bent upon his head and down swam he,
Saying O, the lowlands lie so low,
He bent upon his head and down went he
And he swam till he came to the bottom of the sea,
And he lay in the lowlands, low down low,
And he lies in the lowlands low.