

# Hey Betty Martin

Informant/Performer:  
A.T. Vance  
Long Island, New York

Source:  
Carl Sandburg  
*The American Songbag*  
New York: Harcourt, Brace & Co., 1927



- Johnny, get your hair cut, hair cut, hair cut,  
Johnny, get your hair cut, hair cut short.

(Improvise verses)

## Background Information

"The tune is at least as old as the War of 1812, when drummer boys beat it on their drums and sang words about "Hey Betty Martin Tiptoe." We have that drummer's melody and words from A.T. Vance, a Long Island, New York, fisherman who was raised in Kansas, and whose great-grandfather was a drummer in the War of 1812. The tune is traditionary [sic] in the Vance family and is executed with variations by Comfort Vance, son of A.T. The tempo is allegretto scherzando, which in 1812 meant 'Make it snappy,' or 'Let's go.'"