

The Derby Ram

Informant/Performer:
Charles Ingenthron
Walnut Shade, MO, 1941

Source:
Library of Congress AFS 5252 A1
Collected by Vance Randolph

1. Oh, as I went down to Der - by* town, all on a sum - mer's day, _____

It's there I saw the fin - est ram, that's e - ver fed on hay. _____

Chorus:
And if you don't be - lieve me and think I tell a lie, _____

Just you go down to Der - by and you'll see the same as I. _____

* pronounced "Darby"

2. Oh, the wool upon this ram's back
It drug to the ground,
And I hauled it to the market
And it weighed ten thousand pounds.

(Chorus)

3. Oh, the horns upon this ram's head
They reached to the moon,
For the butcher went up in February
And never got back till June.

(Chorus)

4. Oh, the ears upont his ram's head
They reached to the sky,
And the eagle build his nest in there
For I heard the young ones cry.

(Chorus)

5. Oh, every tooth this ram had
Would hold a bushel of corn,
And every foot he stood on
Would cover an acre of ground.

(Chorus)

Background Information

There is a tradition that George Washington sang this song to the children of Chief Justice Ellsworth and even a further tradition which believes that "this was the only song that George Washington ever sang." It is a "lying song" as fantastic as Paul Bunyan's Blue Ox and as popular.