



**Dialect and Folk Life Studies in Britain:
The Leeds Archive of Vernacular Culture in its Context
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***Grouping, Grawping and Groping* towards a Critical
Edition of the James Madison Carpenter Collection of
Traditional Song and Drama**

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Introduction

It is with mixed feelings that I speak at this conference today. The MA in Folk Life Studies which I took here at the University of Leeds in 1982-83 introduced me to an academic discipline which I have pursued vigorously and remained fascinated by ever since. In the past few years, I have myself taught MA students in folklore studies and I am always reminded of the inspiration that I found in the MA courses which I took. The teaching I received, as is the case with much folklore teaching internationally, was intimately linked to the existence of an active archive of folkloristic and linguistic materials. It is an honour to be present at this conference which marks the last stages of a project to promote professional standards of arrangement and description in what is now known as the Leeds Archive of Vernacular Culture, and to make it more accessible via an online catalogue in Encoded Archival Description, selective digitisation of materials and their online presentation. I am also proud to be married to Robin Wiltshire, one of the members of the team who has carried out this work which so crucially supports the empirical side of folklore and dialect study.

I also, however, feel regret knowing that the archive has remained dormant for almost twenty years, from exactly the same time as I finished my MA degree, because the Institute of Dialect and Folk Life Studies was closed down in 1983. Whilst celebrating the re-emergence and renewed visibility of the archive, I cannot help but reflect on the absence of that inspirational teaching and research programme, at least in folklore studies, to which such an archive should be integral.

The James Madison Carpenter Collection

My own postdoctoral research has also had an archival orientation, namely the James Madison Carpenter Collection. Born in 1888 in Mississippi, Carpenter went to

Harvard in 1920 to study for a doctorate in English. As far as we know, it is through the inspirational teaching of the redoubtable scholar George Lyman Kittredge that Carpenter gained an interest in folksong. Under his supervision, Carpenter completed a thesis on sea shanties which drew on fieldwork undertaken in the United States and ports in the British Isles from a summer visit in 1928. Kittredge was so impressed with Carpenter's abilities as a fieldworker that he acquired funding for him to return to Britain in 1929 for further research. In the event, Carpenter remained here for six years, collecting traditional songs of many kinds, and



James Madison Carpenter, The James Madison Carpenter Collection, AFC 1972/001 Photo 099.

broadened his interests to folk drama, children's folklore, custom, dialect and folktales. The result is one of the most extensive collections of English and Scottish folksong and drama ever made, together with other items subsequently collected in America.



James Madison Carpenter sitting in an Austin car, The James Madison Carpenter Collection, AFC 1972/001 Photo 101.

Despite his association with Kittredge and, later, Frank C. Brown at Durham, North Carolina, Carpenter never managed to establish himself as an academic folklorist and, despite various phases of transcription and editing, the collection was never published. It was eventually purchased by the Library of Congress in 1972 where it remained, like the archive here at the University of Leeds, dormant for some twenty years. Most of the papers were microfilmed in the 1970s and disc recordings copied but, despite the work of pioneering scholars such as Paul Smith, Mike Preston and Christopher Cawte in drawing attention to the importance of the Carpenter Collection, it remained neglected due to the lack of arrangement and detailed cataloguing, and the fact that the materials were held in the United States.

In 2001, a team of scholars, namely David Atkinson, Eddie Cass, Elaine Bradtke, Tom McKean, Bob Walser, and myself, gained funding from the Arts and Humanities Research Board Resource Enhancement Scheme to produce an online, item-level finding aid in Encoded Archival Description for the Carpenter Collection. This work is now complete and published by HRIOne, the online 'press' of the Humanities Research Institute at the University of Sheffield (<http://www.hrionline.ac.uk/carpenter>).¹

Work on the Carpenter online catalogue was greatly facilitated by the simultaneous digitisation of the Collection, under the auspices of the Archive of Folk Culture of the American Folklife Center, Library of Congress. Work is currently being carried out on tracing the descendants of those who contributed to the Collection so that the image and sound files can be mounted for free, online presentation as part of the Library of Congress's American Memory website. The images and sound files will also be directly accessible through the online catalogue at Sheffield. Thus the project will open up this remarkable resource for use by scholars and performers.

Towards a Critical Edition of the Collection

My colleagues and I are now engaged, with funding from the National Endowment for the Humanities under the auspices of the American Folklore Society, and from the British Academy, in producing a critical edition of the Carpenter Collection. Part of the rationale for this work will, I hope, become evident through the following discussion

¹ The catalogue was joint recipient of the 2003 Brenda McCallum Prize of the American Folklore Society and was commended in the Chartered Institute of Librarians and Information Professionals' Neilson Reference Award in the same year.

which will focus on the process we are currently engaged in of working out detailed and rigorous editorial methods. The way in which such an edition, projected to be in hard copy, might interact with the online catalogue and digitised collection will also be touched on. Specifically, I want to outline a linguistic issue with which we are currently grappling, and to seek the opinions on this matter of those here who are linguists/dialectologists and/or represent different constituencies of potential users of the edition.

The first aim of the critical edition is a faithful representation of the materials in the Collection. A second and simultaneous aim is to represent the way in which Carpenter himself compiled and constructed those materials. Our third aim is to describe the manner in which we, as editors, have treated the materials to enable their use by as wide an audience as possible, encompassing scholars, students, performers, and the general reader.

One of the difficulties that any user of the Collection encounters is the multiple, and to some extent overlapping, versions of individual items by the same performer. This arises from several factors: the nature of the material itself, Carpenter's collecting methods, and his subsequent work on the Collection in terms of transcription and editing. Most complicated in this respect are the ballads. An example will illustrate the problem:

A search on the ballad 'The Outlandish Knight' (Child 4/Roud 21), as sung by Sarah Phelps, of Avening, Stroud, Gloucestershire, yields four results from the catalogue. The four sources within the Collection for this one song by this performer are as follows: two typed copies (one a rough copy with handwritten emendations, and one a fair copy), Carpenter's music notation and accompanying text, and a sound recording. From what we know of Carpenter's various accounts of his collecting, transcription and editing methods (Bishop 1988),² we can infer the following about the status and relations of these versions:

1. Rough copy (Fig. 1, below). This was taken down at the singer's dictation by Carpenter who typed it directly onto a portable typewriter. Some of the emendations appear to have been introduced in the act of editing the song for Carpenter's project publication, but others could have been made on a subsequent visit to the singer or from another rendition on the same occasion. The text appears to be 'complete'.

² Carpenter's dates are given in this article as 1888-1984 but subsequent research, as yet unpublished, shows that Carpenter died in 1983.

"If I must take off my silken dress,
 Play turn your back to me,
 For it is not firtin that such a ruffan
 A naked woman should see."

He turned his back towards her,
 An viewed the lakes so green,
 She caught him round the middle so small,
 And bundled him into the sea.

He grouped high, an he grouped low,
 Until he came to the side,
 "Take houl't o my hand, my pretty lady,
 An I will make you my bride."

"Lie there, lie there, you false-hearted man!
 Lie there instead of me,
 For six pretty maid's thou hast drowned here,
 The seventh hath drowned mee."

She mounted on her lily-white steed,
 An led the dabble grey,
 She rode till she came to her own father's door,
 Three hours before it was day.

The parrot bein up in the window so high,
 An seein the lady did say,
 "I fear that some ruffan hath led you astray,
 That you've tarried so long away."

"Don't prittle nor prattle my pretty polly,
 Nor tell no tales of me,
 Your cage shall be made of some glitterin gold,
 Although it is made of a tree."

[04925]

p. 3

THE OUTLANDISH KNIGHT, Mrs. Sarah Phelps,
 Avening, Stroud

The king bein up ~~in~~ in his chamber so high,
 An herin the parrot, did say,
 "What ails you, what ails you, my pretty ~~polly~~ polly,
 That you prattle so long before day?"

"It's no laughin matter," the parrot replied,
 That so loudly I called unto thee,
 For the cats have got into the window so high,
 And I'm afraid they will have me."

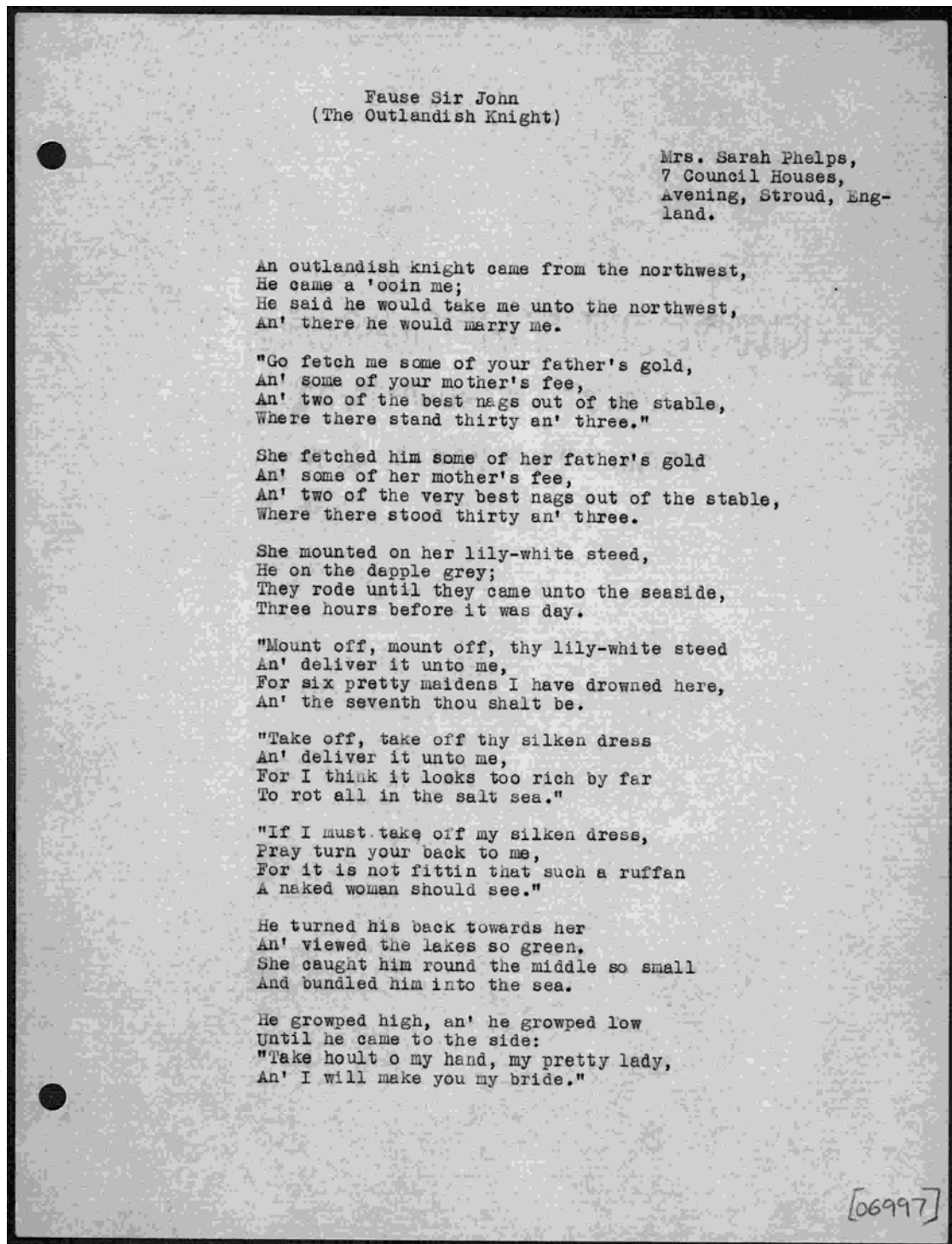
"Well turned, well turned, my pretty polly!
 Well turned, well turned forme,
 Thy cage shall be made of some glitterin gold,
 An the door of the best irovy."

*See Edward Warren
 South Marston*

[04926]

Fig. 1. Words (rough copy) of 'The Outlandish Knight', taken down from Sarah Phelps, The James Madison
 Carpenter Collection, AFC 1972/001 MS pp. 04924-04926.

2. Fair copy (Fig. 2, below). This was probably typed up by a secretarial assistant rather than Carpenter himself. It is clearly based on the rough copy, reproducing the bulk of it and with decisions taken from the alternatives presented by the emendations. Sometimes, the fair copy contains changes not noted at all in the rough copy.



Fause Sir John
(The Outlandish Knight)

Mrs. Sarah Phelps

"Lie there, lie there, you false-hearted man!
Lie there instead of me,
For if six pretty maids thou hast drowned here,
The seventh hath drowned thee."

She mounted on her lily-white steed
An' led the dabble grey;
She rode till she came to her own father's door
Three hours before it was day.

The parrot bein' up in the window so high,
An' seein' the lady did say,
"I fear that some ruffan hath led you astray,
That you've tarried so long away."

"Don't prittle nor prattle, my pretty polly,
Nor tell no tales of me.
Your cage shall be made of some glitterin' gold,
Although it is made of a tree."

The king bein' up in his chamber so high
An' hearin' the parrot, did say,
"What ails you, what ails you, my pretty polly,
That you prattle so long before day?"

"It's no laughin' matter," the parrot replied,
"That so loudly I called unto thee,
For the cats have got into the window so high,
And I'm afraid they will have me."

"Well turned, well turned, my pretty polly!
Well turned, well turned for me.
Thy cage shall be made of some glitterin' gold,
An' the door of the best ivory."

[06998]

Fig. 2. Words (fair copy) of 'The Outlandish Knight', taken down from Sarah Phelps, The James Madison Carpenter Collection, AFC 1972/001 MS pp. 06997-06998.

3. Sound recording. This was recorded on a Dictaphone cylinder machine, by Carpenter, and subsequently copied by him onto 12-inch disc. This is typical of Carpenter's recordings in that it contains a partial rendition, that is, it is incomplete in comparison with the dictated text (in this case only stanzas 1, 2, 3, and 6 of the text

as transcribed by Carpenter from dictation). The recording contains some textual details which are different from the rough and fair copies in the stanzas which these versions have in common. The recording is of poor sound quality.

4. Music notation (Fig. 3). This was made by Carpenter from the sound recording (probably the cylinder in most cases). The transcription does not always present all of the recording, although it does here, apart from Mrs Phelps' false start to stanza 2.

Oldy, Seabel and the elf Knight.
(An Outlandish Knight) Sarah Phelps

[08480]

♩ = m. 5/6

An outlandish Knight came from the north west, He
 came a woo-ing me, He said he would take me up
 to the north-west, And there he would marry me.
 Go fetch me some of your father's gold, And
 some of your mother's fee, And two of the best eggs
 out of the stable, Where there stands thirty and three
 She brought him some of her father's gold, And
 some of her mother's fee, And two of the best eggs
 out of the stable, Where there stands thirty and three
 Take off take off that silken dress, And de-

No. 1 F

The image shows a page of handwritten musical notation on aged paper. At the top, there is a title that is mostly illegible but appears to be 'The Outlandish Knight'. Below the title, there are two staves of music. The first staff has the lyrics 'Deliver it un-to me, for I think it looks too' written below it. The second staff has the lyrics 'rich by far To get all in the salt sea' written below it. The rest of the page contains several empty musical staves. In the bottom right corner, there is a handwritten number in brackets: [08481].

Fig. 3. Words (fair copy) of 'The Outlandish Knight', taken down from Sarah Phelps, The James Madison Carpenter Collection, AFC 1972/001 MS pp. 06997-06998.

Not only does the text differ from the rough and fair copies, taken from dictation, but details of the text as transcribed by Carpenter may also differ from our own perceptions of what the singer actually sang as captured by the recording.

The choices facing the user – and the editors – of the Collection, whether for scholarly analysis or performance, are manifest. Which of these has the most authority? Whose authority are we seeking and is it possible always to distinguish between the singer's authority and Carpenter's? What mode of synthesis should be employed to produce a text or texts with some sort of authority for study and performance? What kind of audit trail of divergent readings between Carpenter's texts and 'new' transcriptions by the editors, and editorial decisions regarding these, should be included? What form should this audit trail take in order to avoid encumbering the text or presenting a host of minutiae which the reader could find online, if they felt so inclined?

When we look more closely at the kinds of choices with which the Carpenter Collection presents us, it is clear that many involve non-standard spellings of words. An example of this is Mrs Phelps' stanza 9, a stanza only present in the rough and fair copies of the dictated text:

	Rough copy	Fair copy
9. 1	He grouped [ms. grawped] high an he grouped [ms. grawped] low	He groped high an' he groped low
2	Antil [ms. Until] he came to the side	Until he came to the side
3	Take hoult o my hand, my pretty lady,	Take hoult o my hand, my pretty lady,
4	An I will make you my bride.	An' I will make you my bride.

9.1 *grouped/grawped/groped* -- These appear to be Carpenter's attempts to represent a regional pronunciation of the word 'groped'.

9.2 *Antil* -- This could be another attempt to represent pronunciation, or perhaps a typographical error (although A and U are nowhere near each other on the keyboard).

Another detail that is consistent between the rough and the fair copy is also relevant:

9.3 *hoult* – This appears to be Carpenter's attempt to represent the pronunciation of the word 'hold'.

The texts of the Carpenter Collection contain numerous examples of this kind. Their frequency, and the fact that he collected a few examples of dialect speech make it reasonable to conclude that Carpenter was interested in dialect generally,

and in these particular cases was striving to represent aspects of the pronunciation of his contributors. On the other hand, Carpenter's spelling could be erratic and inconsistent. He spelt Skye as *Ski*, consistently entitled the ballad 'The Battle of Harlaw' as 'The Battle of Harlow', and sometimes spelt names in several different ways, e.g. 'Mowat' 'Mowet' and 'Mowett'.

What should editorial policy be on Carpenter's attempts and alternative attempts to render linguistic details, especially the phonological aspects of English pronunciation through respelling (we shall come to Scots in due course)? Guidance seemed to be at hand in the article "Ritin' Fowklower Daun 'Rong: Folklorists' Failures in Phonology", by Dennis R. Preston (Preston 1982).

Trying to Write Folklore Down Right

Preston's article criticises folklorists for too readily respelling words to convey 'pronunciation' details (i.e. the phonological aspect of a language or dialect). On the basis of a survey of folklorists' transcriptions of items of verbal folklore, including songs,³ Preston claims that:

- a) folklorists' use of respelling is not systematic or exact;
- b) folklorists display a bias towards respelling the words of certain groups;
- c) they tend to emphasise the pronunciations which have struck them as non-standard or unusual in relation to their own notion of the standard; and
- d) such respellings cannot but demote the speaker from the reader's point of view, regardless of whether it is folklorists' intention to do so.

Preston therefore formulates some rules for transcription:

- a) transcribe differences at the morphological level and above;
- b) avoid respelling phonological differences if the phonetic shape of a form is predictable (variably or categorically);
- c) avoid eye dialect (in the strict sense of a respelling which does not alter pronunciation);

³ These were drawn from the *Journal of American Folklore* during the 1970s, singling out the words therein not given a standard spelling.

- d) ignore the above under certain circumstances (which Preston details), or if such differences are important to the analysis or a complete understanding of an item.

Preston also points out that much respelling reflects running speech rather than, say, regional varieties, but such differences tend to be noted more often when we are dealing with the speech of 'others', especially certain groups. At the end of the day, Preston's claim is that respelling is only a token means of adding 'flavour' to a text. It gives the semblance of accuracy when no rigorous phonetic work has been done at all.⁴

Carpenter's respellings are, by and large, exactly the sorts of things that Preston is concerned about. In one way, following his rules would simplify the editorial task. In the example of 'The Outlandish Knight' by Sarah Phelps, it relieves us of having to make a decision about *growped*, *grawped* or *grouped*. If we regard these alternatives as Carpenter's way of representing Mrs Phelps' regional pronunciation, we can standardise them as *groped*.

Other decisions are also made straightforward in Sarah Phelps' text. *An/An'* (e.g. line 9.4) can be rendered as *And*, and *fittin* (7.3) can be rendered *fitting*, since, even if not features of her regional dialect, they are common in casual speech. *Ooin* (1.2) would clearly be rendered *wooin* as indeed it is in the text of the music transcription. This again appears to be a good editorial decision in that it is impossible to sing *a-'ooing* without introducing a rest or staccato effect in the melodic line. It may be that Mrs Phelps did omit the initial consonant when she dictated the text to Carpenter in line with predictable aspects of her regional variety's phonology.⁵

⁴ One folklorist in particular, Elizabeth Fine, has objected to Preston's views (see Fine 1983). Perhaps her most compelling arguments are that casual speech can be 'an important contextual indicator of the psychological scene and interpersonal relationships of the participants in a performance. Whether or not casual speech usages indicate a regional dialect, they indicate the conscious or unconscious choices of a performer, which can convey important information about folklore and its social use' (Fine 1983: 327). She also argues that those interested in verbal art as performance will be impeded by the lack of detail concerning phonetic realization (327). Another of her doubts with relevance to us as editors of the Carpenter Collection is that if folklorists follow Preston's rules 'then the readers of our texts would need expert knowledge of phonological rules in order to "hear" the pronunciation that we did not record through respelling' (328).

⁵ See Martyn Wakelin's discussion of the loss of [w] in *wool*, *woman*, etc., in the regional speech of the South West of England (Wakelin 1977: 94).

Slightly more problematic is the line 'An led the dabble grey' (11.2). This is a ballad formula referring to the colour of a horse, usually 'dapple grey'. Indeed, Mrs Phelps apparently said 'dapple grey' in 4.2, according to Carpenter's text (regrettably, neither stanza 4 nor 11 is on the sound recording for verification). This could be an idiosyncrasy of the singer, possibly a slip of the tongue, or a slip in Carpenter's transcribing or a mishearing, although he preserves it in fair copy which suggests he was fairly sure that that was what he had heard. We are inclined to leave this as it stands simply because it is hard to know what Carpenter's intention – or indeed Mrs Phelps's – was here and because, as far as we are aware, this is not a predictable phonetic change.

Finally, with regard to this song, Carpenter gives the spelling *ruffan* (12.3) for what is presumably *ruffian*.⁶ One wonders whether to treat this as a respelling reflecting regional pronunciation of the word or whether this is a lexical item. When does, say, a regional pronunciation become a dialect word in its own right? What authority can we appeal to, if any, for help in these matters?

Scots

A great deal of the material in the Carpenter Collection is in Scots, raising the question of how Preston's rules apply to these items. This depends on whether Scots is regarded as a dialect of English or a language in its own right. As Chambers and Trudgill emphasise, languages are often distinguished from dialects on the basis of political, cultural and geographical criteria, not necessarily purely linguistic ones (Chambers and Trudgill 1980: 5). Aitken's introduction to the *Concise Scots Dictionary* puts the case well:

The language of contemporary Lowland Scotland can fairly be described as fluid. [...] This mixed and variable speech is the country's everyday vernacular, but now no more than that. [...] Nearly all conversation beyond local and intimate settings is in Standard English. [...] It may therefore reasonably be asked if there is any sense in which Scots is entitled to the designation of a language any more than any of the regional dialects of English in England? [...] In reply one may point out that the Scots tongue possesses several attributes not shared by any regional English dialect. In its linguistic characteristics it is more strongly differentiated from Standard English than any English dialect. The dictionary which follows displays a far larger number of

⁶ The word is *ruffian* in other English versions of this ballad. See, for example, versions E and F in Child 1965: 1, 58-60.

words, meanings of words and expressions not current in Standard English than any of the English dialects could muster, and many of its pronunciations are strikingly different from their Standard English equivalents (Aitken 1996: xii).

Although acknowledging similarities with Northern England, he continues:

What most distinguishes Scots is its literature. Nowhere in the English-speaking world is there a dialect literature which remotely compares with Scottish literature for antiquity, for extent and variety, and for distinction (Aitken 1996: xiii).

He concludes:

The unique characteristics of Scots [...] – its linguistic distinctiveness, its occupation of its own ‘dialect-island’ bounded by the Border, its individual history, its own dialect variation, its varied use in a remarkable literature, the ancient loyalty of the Scottish people to the notion of the Scots language, as well as the fact that since the sixteenth century Scots has adopted the nation’s name – all of these are attributes of a language rather than a dialect. Manifestly Scots is to be seen as much more than simply another dialect of English (Aitken 1996: xiii).

There is no doubt in our minds that the critical edition of the Carpenter Collection should reflect this view of the Scots language. How do we deal with Carpenter’s spellings in this context? ‘The Laird o Drum’ (Child 236), as sung by Jean Esselmont of Cuminestown, exemplifies some of the issues, as the following sample stanzas illustrate:⁷

	Rough copy	Fair copy
1	The Laird o Drum’s a huntin gane ‘Twas in the morning airlie There he spied a weel-faured maid A sheerin at her barley.	The laird o Drum’s a huntin gane ‘Twas in the morning airly There he spied a weel-faured maid A shearin at her barley
2	Indeed, kind sir, I winna fancy you Nor lat my shearin be For I’m nae fit tae be your wife And your mistress I’d scorn tae be.	Indeed, kind sir, I winna fancy you Nor lat my shearin be For I’m nae fit ti be your wife And your mistress I’d scorn ti be
3	It’s I canna wash your cheena cups Nor mak a cup o tea	It’s I canna wash your cheena cups Nor mak a cup o tea

⁷ There is unfortunately no extant sound recording of this item in the Carpenter Collection.

	But weel could I milk coo or ewe [ms. yowe]	But weel could I milk coo or yowe
	Wie [ms. Wi] a coggie on my knee	Wi a coggie on my knee.
4	It's I winna tak off the goons o grey They fit my middle weel An I winna put on the silk and scarlet For tae hardle [ms. harrel] at my heel.	It's I winna tak off the goons o grey They fit my middle weel An I winna put on the silk and scarlet For ti harl at my heel

Some of the editorial dilemmas in these texts arise from the lack of a standardised written form for the Scots language, such as the following:

1.1 *gane* is the past participle of *gae* (*go*), but how should this be spelt?

1.2 Is *airlie*, also spelt *airly* by Carpenter, a representation of Scots pronunciation of standard English *early* or is it a Scots word in its own right? If it is the latter, which spelling should take priority?

2.3 and 2.4 show evidence of Carpenter making changes which go beyond pronunciation. It seems clear from a comparison of the rough and fair copies that he was trying to regularise the spelling of *tae*, rendering it as part of the infinitive by the form *ti*, and as a preposition by the form *tee*.

3.3 indicates that Carpenter changed the spelling from *ewe* to *yowe*. This could indicate that he made a mistake whilst taking down the text from dictation, substituting the word that was familiar to him, and that he later corrected this, perhaps on the basis of memory. On the other hand, it could indicate that he was in some way consciously trying to make his texts more Scots.

We have been drawing on the *Concise Scots Dictionary* and the *Dictionary of the Scots Language* to help us adjudicate in terms of lexical items versus pronunciations and preferred spellings. In addition, consultation with a number of experts on Scots has alerted us to the fact that there will be further guidance available online soon with a new Scots headword list. Here will be an authority (based on statistical usage and a number of other preferences) on choices between *tae/ti/tee*, *An* and *And*, and *airlie/airly*.

To edit the Carpenter Collection will involve a myriad of decisions along these lines, and requires consistency and transparency in the decision-making process. We are currently trying to decide whether Preston's advice is relevant here and, if so, how to implement it in relation to Carpenter's texts. Clearly we do not want to demote

the status of Carpenter's contributors, wittingly or unwittingly. Nor do we want to reproduce Carpenter's inaccuracies, inconsistencies and, most importantly, his linguacentrism, if it can be avoided. But what impact will respelling, under certain circumstances, have on scholarship and performance? A final example, which may be a special case, is nonetheless illustrative of the problem.

The example in Fig. 4 (below) is the mummings play from Lower Heyford, Oxfordshire, which Carpenter collected from Chas Brock. Unusually for the mummings plays, we not only have Carpenter's transcription but also the cylinder recording from which it came.

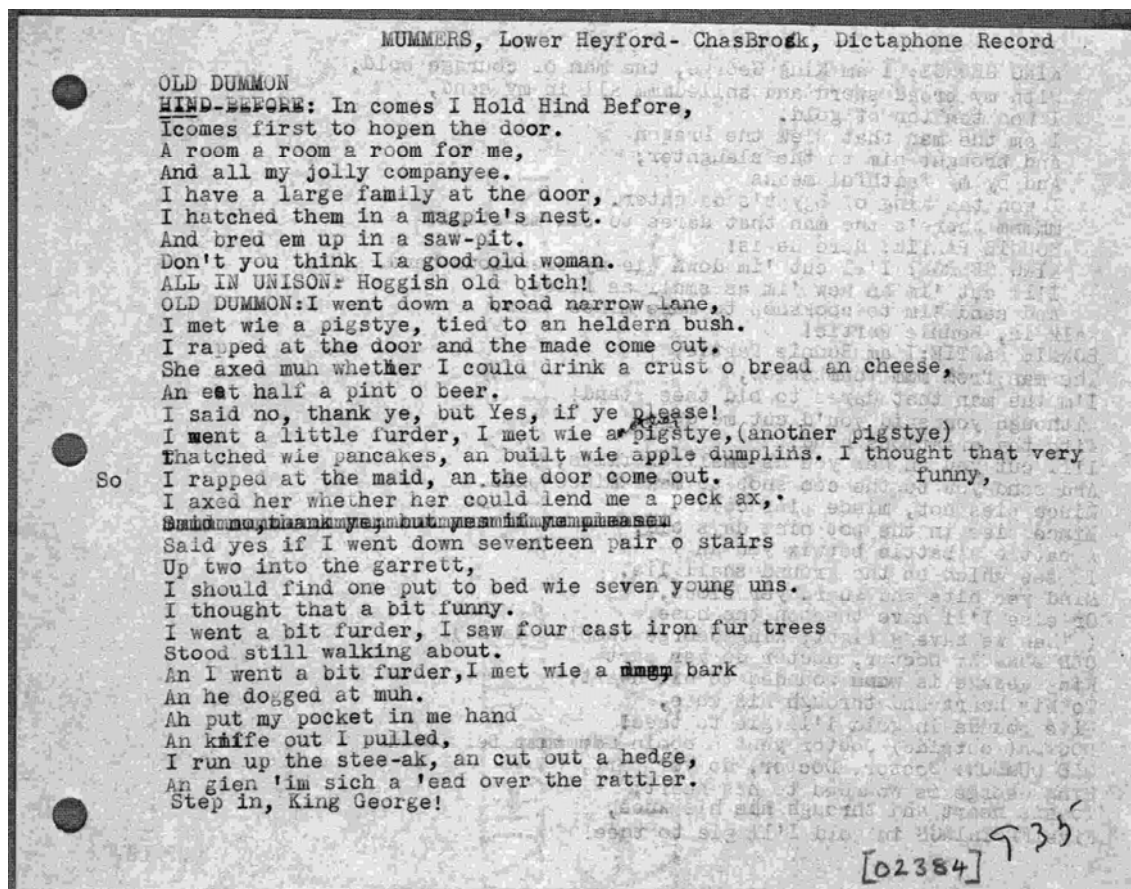


Fig. 4. Mummings play (first page only) from Lower Heyford, Oxfordshire, taken down from Chas Brock, The James Madison Carpenter Collection, AFC 1972/001 MS p. 02384.

The main point I want to pick up on here is the character which Carpenter designates Old Dummon. This character is known as Old Woman in all other sources, except one, of the hero-combat plays from this region and elsewhere. In this text, however, and in a number of other texts which Carpenter took down from Oxfordshire, Northamptonshire, Gloucestershire and Berkshire, this character is given as Old Dummon. Upton, Parry and Widdowson attest that *woman* is pronounced without the

initial [w] sound in Devon, Cornwall and Somerset, in the phrase 'old woman' (old ummon) though this does not necessarily indicate the same pronunciation in the counties represented in the Carpenter Collection (Upton *et al.* 1994). It seems that 'old ummon' was what Carpenter was hearing but that he chose to render it 'old dummon'. In this case, one can seek verification of the performer's pronunciation in the recording. Although the character names as such are not spoken in the rendition, there is a reference to 'a good old woman' at the end of the Old Dummon's first speech. This sounds to us as if it is being pronounced 'old woman', which suggests rendering the character name Old Woman in the edition.

Eddie Cass has pointed out, however, that Tiddy has a Lower Heyford text which was 'written out by the boys of an evening school for the Rev. H. Furneaux in 1885' (Tiddy 1923: 219).⁹ In the introductory speech of this is the line 'Don't you think me a good old dummun (woman)?'. There is no character Old Dummon in the script but it does provide evidence of this pronunciation. Should we follow Tiddy and reproduce the character's name as Old Dummon, or the evidence of Carpenter's sound recording (which points to the pronunciation in a sentence but not the character name as such)?

This editorial decision has ramifications for the ten further texts in the Collection in which the old woman character is given as Old Dummon but for which there are no sound recordings. Are we justified in changing these to Old Woman based on evidence external to the Collection, or should we retain Carpenter's transcription as potential evidence of the usage Old Dummon and let the reader and performers decide?

Likewise, how do we deal with the fact that there is also a morris tune and brief song called 'Old Woman Tossed Up in a Blanket' which in some cases Carpenter renders as 'Old Woman Tossed Up' and in others 'Old Dummon', or a mixture of the two. This item is widely known outside the Collection as 'Old Woman Tossed Up' and is entered in the Roud Index as such (Roud 2005). Should Carpenter's examples be standardised to Old Woman in both the title and words of the song, therefore, or Old Dummon retained?

⁹ See also Tiddy 1923: 219-221. I am grateful to Eddie Cass for drawing my attention to this instance.

Conclusion

We have not reached a final decision on a number of these issues and we welcome feedback from scholars in a range of disciplines and a spectrum of potential users of the Collection in order to help guide our thinking.¹⁰

In conclusion, it is pertinent to mention the work of Tony Green, one of the lecturers at the Institute of Dialect and Folk Life Studies here at Leeds. He made the point over thirty years ago that it is surprising how little folksong has been subjected to linguistic analysis (Green 1972: 21). Our 'gropings' regarding the presentation of the texts of the Carpenter Collection underscore the same point, in relation to folksong and the mummers play. Once again we have proof, if such were needed, of the integral relationship between the study of folklore and language, and the key role of archival repositories in supporting such work. Institutes of dialect and folk life studies are ideally placed to undertake such research. One wonders why that at Leeds was ever closed down.

¹⁰ There was much helpful discussion of the issues raised in the paper when it was presented at the Dialect and Folk Life Studies in Britain conference (University of Leeds, 19 March 2005).

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