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The Oyster Girl

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As I walked up Manchester Street,
A pretty little oyster girl I happened for to meet,
And into her basket so neatly I did peep
To see if she had gotten any oysters.

cho: "O, it's oysters, oysters, oysters," quo' she,
"If you want any oysters, buy them a' frae me,
It's four for a penny, but five I'll gie to thee,
If you deal in my basket o' oysters."

"We'll go down to yon tavern, yon tavern, quo' she,
"And we'll get a bottle, it's one, two or three,
"And then to the dance hall an hour, two or three,"
Where she laid down her basket o'oysters.

We danced till my noddle was all in a clew,
Then out of my pocket my treasure she drew,
And downstairs like lightning this oyster girl flew
And left me her basket o'oysters.

"O, it's landlord, landlord, landlord," quo' he,
"Did you see the little oyster girl was dancing with me?
She has rifled my pockets and stolen my money
And left me a basket o' oysters."

"Oh ho," says the landlord, "that's a fine joke,
Since you've got no money, you must pop off your coat,
For the landlady says she has got it in her book
That she gave you bread and butter to your oysters."

I've traveled through England, Ireland and France
And in all my travels I ne'er met such a lass,
For the Manchester girls, they would teach you how to dance
If you deal in their basket of oysters.

from Songs of the People, Henry
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