

Traditional & Folk Songs with lyrics & midi music

www.traditionalmusic.co.uk

The Ship Carpenter's Wife

The Ship Carpenter's Wife

Pay heed to my ditty, you frolicsome folk,
I'll tell you a story, a comical joke,
It's a positive fact I'm going to unfold
Concerning a woman by auction was sold.

There was a ship carpenter lived close to here
Who was not as fond of his wife as his beer,
He was hard up for brass, to be sure all his life,
And so for ten shillings he auctioned his wife

This husband and wife, they could never agree
Because he was fond of going out on the spree,
They settled the matter without more delay,
And the day of the auction they took her away.

They sent round the bellman announcing the sale
Unto the haymarket and that without fail,
The auctioneer struck with his hammer so smart,
While the carpenter's wife stood up in the cart.

Now she's put up without grumble or frown;
The first was a tailor to bid half a crown,
Who began, "I will make her a lady so spruce,
For I'll fatten her well upon cabbage and goose."

"Five and sixpence three farthings," a butcher he said.
"Six and ten," said a barber with his curly head.
Up jumps a cobbler and with a loud bawl
"Nine shillings bid for her, bustle and all."

"Just look at her beauty, her shape and her size,
She's mighty good-tempered and sober likewise."
"Go on," says a sailor, "she's one out of four,
Ten shillings bid for her, but not a screw more."

"Thank you sir, thank you," says the bold auctioneer,
"She's going at ten; is there nobody here
To bid any more? Isn't this a sad job?
She's going, she's going, she's going -- at ten bob"

The hammer came down, concluding the sale,

Poor "Tarry" paid down then the brass on the nail ,
He shook hands with Betsy and gave her a smack,
And took her away straight home on his back.

The people all relished the joke, it appears,
They gave the young sailor three hearty good cheers.
He never called "Stop" with his darling so sweet
Till he landed with Betsy right on his own street.

They sent for the piper and fiddler to play,
And they danced and they sung until it was day,
When Jack told the company 'twas time now to go
The piper and fiddler played "Rosin the Bow."

Oh, Betsy is happy at home in the croft,
Jack boxes the compass and goes up aloft,
While roving the ocean regardless of life,
He sings as he thinks of his ten shilling wife.

And long may they prosper and flourish through life,
For Jack was well pleased with his ten-shilling wife.
(Last 4 words spoken)

From Songs of the People, Henry
Collected from William John McIntyre, Portrush