

THE GREEN MOSSY BANKS OF THE LEA

Vaughan Williams wrote the first verse in full in his manuscript with the following notes

See Bunting A pretty maid milking a cow

See Kidson

For rest of words see ballad sheets

He then followed with Mr Broomfield's variants of the Such broadsheet. If these are matched with the song as printed in FSJ Vol 8 it seems that he has used most of Broomfield's variants in the printed text

curiosity	- curiosity
where the pure winds etc	- The winds and sweet breezes blow
purling waters	- pure and waters
Some goddess	- some godder
Spirts	- sperrits
erected	- did erect
American	- your
like adorable gentle Matildia	- likewise Lord Becker(?) Matilda ('That's how I've always sung it')

Last verse omitted by B

When first in this country a stranger
Curoosity caused me to roam over Europe
I resolved to be a stranger
When I left Philadelphia my home

We quickly sailed over to England
Where forms of great beauty do shine
Till at length I beheld a fair damsel
And I wish in my heart she was mine

One morning I careless did ramble
Where the winds and sweet breezes did blow
It was down by a clear crystal river
Where the sweet purling waters did flow

'Twas there I espied a fair creature
Some Goddess appearing to be
As she rose from the reeds by the water
On the green mossy banks of the lea

I step't up and wished her good morning
When her fair cheeks did blush like a rose
Said I The Green meadows are charming
Your guardian I'll be if you choose

She said Sir I ne'er want a guardian
Young man you are a stranger to me
And yonder my father is coming
O'er the green mossy banks of the lea

I waited till up came her father
And plucked up my spirits once more
I said if this is your fair daughter
That beautiful girl I adore

Ten thousand a year is my fortune
And a lady your daughter shall be
She shall ride with her chariot and horses
O'er the green mossy banks of the lea

Then they welcomed me home to their cottage
Soon after in wedlock to join
And there I erected a castle
In grandeur and splendour to shine

And now the American stranger
All pleasure and pastime can see
With adorable gentle Matilda
On the green mossy banks of the lea

So it's all pretty maidens attention
No matter how poor you may be
There's many a poor girl as handsome
As those with a large property

By flattery let no one deceive you
Who knows but your fortune may be
Like that young gentle Matilda
On the green mossy banks of the lea

The Green Mossy Banks of the Lea

When first in this country a stranger - curi o-s-ity

caused me to roam over Europe I resolved to be a

ranger when I left Phila- delphia my home

On this page of Vaughan Williams manuscript he makes these notes about Mr Pottipher

Mr Pottipher made the following remarks about the origin of folksong

When ever there was a murder or anything some one would be sure to make a ballad on it*

Asked who made the tunes he said if you can get the words it's easy to find a tune

If you can get the words the Almighty sends you a tune

P said he had invented tunes himself but would not sing me any

*see the notes for Mrs Horsnell