

# The Yellow Haired Laddie - A Retreat

Buttrey Manuscript #4  
Chord suggestions by Ian Bell

D Bm D D A D Bm

D G A D D D A Bm D A

D Bm D A D D

7

14

There seem to be two sets of words for this song melody from the 18th century. Both fit the tune well. One version is by Allan Ramsay (1686-1757). The tune is supposed to be much older. It appears in Jane Austen's papers and is still played by Scottish fiddlers as a slow air.

## Allan Ramsay lyrics:

The yellow hair'd laddie sat down on yon brae,  
Cried, Milk the ewes, lassie, let nane o' them gae.  
And aye as she milked, she merrily sang,  
The yellow hair'd laddie shall be my gudeman.  
And aye as she milked she merrily sang,  
The yellow hair'd laddie shall be my gudeman.

The weather is cauld, and my claithing is thin:  
The ewes are new clipped and they winna bught in -  
They winna bught in, although I should dee;  
O, yellow-hair'd laddie, be kind unto me.  
They winna bught in, although I should dee;  
O, yellow hair'd laddie be kind unto me.

The goodwife cries butt the house, Jenny, come ben,  
The cheese is to make, and the butter's to kirn;  
Though butter, and cheese, and a' should gang sour,  
I'll crack and I'll kiss wi' my love ae hauf hour;  
It's nae lang hauf hour, and we'll e'en make it three,  
For the yellow-hair'd laddie my gudeman shall be

## Alternate lyrics:

In April, when primroses paint the sweet plain,  
And Summer approaching rejoiceth the swain,  
The yellow-haired laddie would oftentimes go  
To wild and deep glens, where the hawthorn trees grow.

There under the shade of an old sacred thorn.  
With freedom he sung his loves, evening and morn:  
He sang with so soft and enchanting a sound,  
That sylvans and fairies unseen danced around.

The shepherd thus sang: "Though young Mary be fair.  
Her beauty is dashed with a scornful proud air;  
But Susie was handsome, and sweetly could sing,  
Her breath like the breezes perfumed in the Spring.

That Madie in all the gay bloom of her youth,  
Like the moon was inconstant, and never spoke truth;  
But Susie was faithful, good humored and free,  
And as fair as the goddess who sprung from the sea.

That mamma's fine daughter, with all her great dower,  
Was awkwardly airy, and frequently sour;  
Then, sighing, he wished would parents agree,  
The witty sweet Susie his mistress might be.