

# The Little Musgrave

John Wesley Harding

As it fell out upon a day  
As many in the year  
Musgrave to the church did go  
To see fair ladies there

And some came down in red velvet  
And some came down in pall  
And the last to come down was the lady barnard  
The fairest of them all

She's cast a look on the little musgrave  
As bright as the summer sun  
And then bethought this little musgrave  
This lady's love I've won

Good day good day you handsome youth  
God make you safe and free  
What would you give this day musgrave  
To lie one night with me

I dare not for my lands, lady  
I dare not for my life  
For the ring on your white finger shows  
You are lord barnard's wife

Lord barnard's to the hunting gone  
And I hope he'll never return  
And you shall slip into his bed  
And keep his lady warm

There's nothing for to fear musgrave  
You nothing have to fear  
I'll set a page outside the gate  
To watch til morning clear

And woe be to the little footpage  
And an I'll death may he die  
For he's away to the green wood  
As fast as he could fly

And when he came to the wide water  
He fell on his belly and swam  
And when he came to the other side  
He took to his heels and ran

And when he came to the green wood  
'twas dark as dark can be  
And he found lord barnard and his men  
Asleep beneath the trees

Rise up rise up master he said  
Rise up and speak to me  
Your wife's in bed with little musgrave  
Rise up right speedily

If this be truth you tell to me  
Then gold shall be your fee

And if it be false you tell to me  
Then hanged you shall be

Go saddle me the black he said  
Go saddle me the grey  
And sound you not the horn said he  
Lest our coming it would betray

Now there was a man in lord barnard's train  
Who loved the little musgrave  
And he blew his horn both loud and shrill  
Away musgrave away

I think I hear the morning cock  
I think I hear the jay  
I think I hear lord barnard's horn  
Away musgrave away

Lie still, lie still, you little musgrave  
And keep me from the cold  
It's nothing but a shepherd boy  
Driving his flock to the fold

Is not your hawk upon it's perch  
Your steed is eating hay  
And you a gay lady in your arms  
And yet you would away

So he's turned him right and round about  
And he fell fast asleep  
And when he woke lord barnard's men  
Were standing at his feet

And how do you like my bed musgrave  
And how do you like my sheets  
And how do you like my fair lady  
That lies in your arms asleep

It's well I like your bed he said  
And well I like your sheets  
But better I like your fair lady  
That lies in my arms asleep

Get up, get up young man he said  
Get up as swift as you can  
For it never will be said in my country  
I slew an unarmed man

I have two swords in one scabbard  
Full dear they cost my purse  
And you shall have the best of them  
I shall have the worst

So slowly, so slowly he rose up  
And slowly he put on  
And slowly down the stairs he goes  
Thinking to be slain

And the first stroke little musgrave took  
It was both deep and sore  
And down he fell at barnard's feet  
And word he never spoke more

And how do you like his cheeks, lady  
And how do you like his chin  
And how do you like his fair body  
Now there's no life within

It's well I like his cheeks she said  
And well I like his chin  
And better I like his fair body  
Than all your kith and kin

And he's taken up his long long sword  
To strike a mortal blow  
And through and through the lady's heart  
The cold steel it did go

As it fell out upon a day  
As many in the year  
Musgrave to the church did go  
To see fair ladies there