

Katherine Gallagher and the World of Women's Folksong¹

Diane Tye

ABSTRACT

Maritime folksong tradition is generally seen as a cultural by-product of male occupations such as lumbering and fishing. Diane Tye finds in the repertoire of Katherine Gallagher evidence of female transmission of folksong traditions.

RÉSUMÉ

La chanson populaire traditionnelle des Maritimes est généralement considérée comme un sous-produit culturel des métiers masculins de toujours, comme ceux de l'industrie du bois et de la pêche. Diane Tye nous fait découvrir, dans le répertoire de Katherine Gallagher, l'évidence d'une transmission par les femmes des traditions de la chanson folklorique.

A common explanation for the Maritime Provinces' rich heritage of folksong is the region's link to certain predominate male occupations, notably lumbering and seafaring. In the off-season men returned to their homes with expanded song repertoires which they shared with family and neighbours. Although the interpretation places women on the peripheries,² the number of female singers represented in the region's published collections challenges the notion of folksongs as a male preserve.³ This paper—the first step in my journey of understanding—pieces together something of what the expressive form meant to Helen Creighton's primary female singer, Katherine Scott Gallagher.⁴ In exploring the shape and meaning of Gallagher's repertoire (See Appendix 1), I examine the "female side" of the tradition, to better understand both the place of songs in women's lives and the role of women singers in folksong creation and transmission.

Born in 1897, Katherine—also known as Catherine, Kit, Kate, and Cassen—was the fifth of nine children of Donald and Sophia Horne Scott of Enfield, Nova Scotia.⁵ Both Donald and Sophia grew up in large

farming families although Donald, listed as a farmer in the 1881 census, had become a trackman for the ICR by 1891.⁶ Both parents were at least second generation Nova Scotians from families who were well-established in the Enfield area: Donald descended from Scottish Roman Catholic stock on both sides⁷ while Sophia was of German, Church of England ancestry through her father and Scottish Roman Catholic on her mother's side.⁸

Little is known of Katherine Scott Gallagher's early life. Niece, Marion Lytle, the daughter of Katherine's youngest brother, believes the family was close knit, and remembers being told that her grandmother was a "strong personality" who exercised firm control over her children. Katherine's son, Donald, believes that his mother was a good student:

... She was very very clever, very very smart ... if she'd been around now ... I don't know what she would have been because she had her class A teacher's licence when she was sixteen. She wasn't, she wasn't allowed to teach school because she was too



Katherine ("Kit") Gallagher, singing while ironing; Helen Creighton recording. Photo by E.A. Bollinger, 1952. Public Archives of Nova Scotia 52 160-140.

young ... So she went to Normal College, she went back and she took a thing in Home Economics and Physical Education. So she got both her licenses for that and then she still couldn't teach, she wasn't old enough. She was seventeen. So she went down to New York and she worked in a hotel as a cook. And her speciality was like all this exotic stuff....⁹

Eventually teaching took Katherine Scott to Ketch Harbour, Nova Scotia, where she met and married

Edward Gallagher, descendent of a long line of fishermen. In 1928, Edward, a World War I veteran, took over his father's duties as keeper of the Chebucto Head lighthouse. There they raised a family of three sons: Donald, Max, and Edward.¹⁰ After retirement in 1950, the Gallaghers lived in Ketch Harbour until Katherine's death in 1957 and Edward's death thirteen months later.¹¹ Today, Kit Gallagher is fondly remembered by remaining family members. Donald describes his mother as "very very quiet, a very very gentle person. She didn't have an enemy in the world." Her niece echoes, "Cassen loved everybody. If she

had any biases they were well hidden.” Both describe her wide ranging abilities;¹² Donald concludes, “There was nothing she couldn’t do ... She was an exceptional woman, it’s not just because she was my mother. She was an exceptional woman.”

Among her talents, of course, was her fine voice and large repertoire of folksongs. Relatives puzzle over the source of both¹³ but there may be clues in Gallagher’s unpublished fictional—but thinly veiled autobiographical—account of a young woman who marries a lighthouse keeper. Mattie Collins describes her musical upbringing to two folksong collectors:

Then one lady said, ‘Mrs. Collins are you interested in old songs?’ Mattie replied, ‘I love old songs. We had a book of Heart Songs with music at home and they were lovely. My family at home gathered around the organ in the evenings and sang the old songs over and over again. We never tired of singing them.’ ... ‘We are collecting folk songs. Can you sing? Do you know any old songs?’ Mattie said, ‘Do you mean traditional songs? Yes, I know some lovely ones that my mother used to sing. I cannot sing like my mother. She had a beautiful voice. How I wish I had a voice like her!’¹⁴

Kit Gallagher spoke of learning songs from several family members- including her father and a male cousin- but like Mattie in her short story, Kit credited her mother with teaching her most of the songs, and she claimed, “some of the most beautiful ones.”¹⁵ Of the eleven songs whose provenance she identified on tape for Creighton, she learned nine from her mother.¹⁶ While I have not been able always to determine where Kit Gallagher learned individual pieces, she indicated a general legacy from her mother which started when she was a tiny girl. I have located forty-three items¹⁷

from her repertoire and concluded that it represents not just one woman’s songs, but a link in a female transmitted tradition passed down from mother to daughter.¹⁸ As represented here, Gallagher’s repertoire spans the variety of folksong categories, consisting of eight classical or traditional ballads, seventeen broadside ballads and eighteen lyrical, humorous, and/or nursery songs.¹⁹

Whereas most North American singers know only two or three classical ballads,²⁰ Gallagher was exceptional in that she sang eight: “Lord Randal” (Child 12); “The Bold Pedlar and Robin Hood” (Child 132); “The Bonny House of Airlie” (Child 199); “The Gypsie Laddie” (Child 200); “Henry Martyn” (Child 250); “The Wife Wrapt in Wether’s Skin” (Child 277); and “The Golden Vanity” (Child 286). Half derive from events in British history, such as “The Bonny House o’ Airlie” based on the 1640 commission issued to the Earl of Argyle, which permitted him to subdue certain political and religious undesirables, and which he carried out savagely. The ballads support Marion Lytle’s memories of her aunt as an individual interested in the historical record and a great teller of family stories. As most historical ballads that made their way to North America, these contain an appealing emotional core.²¹ In “The Bonny House o’ Airlie,” for example, the focus is not the details of an historical circumstance but human—and in this case female—reaction to it as it depicts a woman, solely and strongly, defending her home and family against ruthless officials.

This is one of four classical ballads that depict a woman’s point of view. Because we know that singers and communities select ballads that contain relative messages for their lives and do not perform ballads they consider meaningless, it is perhaps not surprising to find an over-representation of ballads which present a female perspective. Characteristic of repertoires of some other women singers, here is an abundance of strong, central female characters who act in an assertive manner.²² Unlike the Marchen, or

folktales, to which classical ballads are often compared, the ballads present women making active choices, if not always positive ones (as in the case of "Young Hunting" and "Lord Randal" where women murder their lovers). Significantly as well, four ballads mention, or explore, motherhood. In addition to the mother who defends her family against attack, in "Lord Randal" a mother attends her dying son, and, in "The Gypsie Laddie," a mother abandons her husband and child to follow the gypsie laddie. Together they present a range of attitudes towards mothering.

The most striking theme to emerge from this group is the contrast between expectations for and reality of relationships. Up to five of the eight classical ballads depict relationships that are revealed to be something other than what they initially seem. All eight contain some form of betrayal, although in at least one case, "The Bold Pedlar and Robin Hood", it is unintentional. Collectively, the ballads warn of disappointment—people are not always what they say they are, people let other people down. An example is "Henry Martyn" where a cabin boy risks his life for the safety of others on his ship only to be betrayed by the captain and allowed to die.²³ Such ballads can be read as a patriarchal message of caution for young women. Yet, women might have specific reasons for wishing to share them with each other. For example, when a woman married, she often left her family to resettle in a new community where she had no female support system and where she had to be careful who to confide in. Finally, the ballads might have contained a warning to young women that the realities of married life do not always live up to expectations. Like motherhood, several options are presented for dealing with disappointment and betrayal—from death to murder—but none of them are positive.

The most attractive characters in these eight ballads are those who demonstrate devotion and sacrifice for others. For example, the cabin boy who risks his life for the safety of others is in sharp contrast to

the captain who betrays him. Likewise, the strength of family bonds is exalted in several examples; Robin Hood embraces the pedlar he initially assaults after he realizes they are cousins and Lord Randal's mother listens tenderly to his dying words. The exception is "The Gypsie Laddie", but its interpretation is open to the audience, who may either condemn the woman's abandonment of home and family for passion, or celebrate her discovery of freedom and true love.

A final classical ballad in Gallagher's collection, "The Wife Wrapt in Wether's Skin," is the story of a man who, at a loss over what to do with his lazy wife, wraps her in a sheep skin and beats her into submission. At first glance, this is one of the most difficult ballads to reconcile in a female singer's repertoire. Of course, during Kit Gallagher's lifetime, to take part in much of our culture's humour was to laugh at, and therefore take part in, one's own oppression as a woman. Certainly Creighton saw no contradiction for her notes describe this as "an amusing story."²⁴ In some ways the message is consistent with others in the repertoire: the wife is punished when she does not live up to her role obligations. Her refusal to make meals, for example, would have been inconceivable to most, if not all, audience members—male and female—in nineteenth and early twentieth century Maritime Canada. The ballads instruct in a humorous way that there are consequences when people fall short of role responsibilities.

The classical ballads reflect certain priorities and interests. There is an absence of magical and marvellous ballads, full of supernatural motifs, witchcraft, and fairylore.²⁵ While classical ballads are usually likened to miraculous Marchen, here most are closer to legend, set in a plausibly real if not identifiable, place and time. While the historical element is present, the emphasis is on experiences of dealing with relationships, and challenges that face women, particularly mothers. All the ballads warn of potential betrayal and disappointment by other people and, in offering

models of behaviour, they highly value qualities traditionally associated with women, such as sacrifice, loyalty and devotion to family.

In the sixteen broadsides (thirteen classified by Laws and the three additional ones not in Laws),²⁶ some of the classical ballad themes are present. Not surprisingly, in broadsides usually associated with legends, there is an even stronger emphasis on historical event. In fact, Helen Creighton believed that Kit Gallagher was the only person who knew the "Chesapeake and Shannon" which documents a 1813 sea battle off Boston.²⁷ Likewise, "Brennan on the Moor" and "The Plains of Waterloo" relate to real historical events. Like the historical classical ballads, however, these broadsides hold appeal other than their documentary nature. For example, "The Plains of Waterloo" is really a broken ring song where, on separation, a couple breaks a ring and the woman is tested before her returned lover reveals his true identity by producing his half of the ring. Another of this type, titled, "The Broken Ring," became known as Gallagher's signature song and formed the basis of a folk opera performed in Nova Scotia.

Parental-child relationships are portrayed, as in "The Bonny Bunch of Roses O" that recounts an exchange between Napoleon and his mother. In the broadsides, fathers figure more prominently than in the classical ballads. In four broadsides, fathers appear three times in relation to daughters. In "Willie," the father, mistaking his daughter for her lover, kills her; in "Young Edmund of the Lowlands," the father kills his daughter's lover for money and the daughter has him hanged as punishment; and, in "Johnny Riley," the mother intervenes to save her daughter's lover to whom the father objects. The lover is drowned en route to America and the ballad ends by putting blame squarely on the father's shoulders. The broadsides depict mothers sympathetically, especially compared to fathers who have anything but a satisfactory relationship with their daughters. Only in "The Gallant Brigantine," where a

sailor mentions his wife and newborn child at home, is there room for any expression of positive emotion. Although this reference is brief and sometimes negatively presented, Creighton mentioned how tenderly Gallagher sang these last few lines.²⁸

As in the classical ballads, the majority of broadsides present some kind of female experience and there is an over-representation of strong, female characters. Pretty Polly dresses in men's clothing to follow her captain; in "When Will Ye Gang Awa?" a woman elopes with her servant; and Peggy Gordon rejects her lover. Only "The Gay Spanish Maid" contradicts the pattern as a woman dies of grief, believing her lover lost at sea. After her death it is discovered that he survived the storm and is alive. These and the broken ring ballads present alternative courses—action or loyalty and patience—but giving up is not a solution.

Tragedy and romance pervade the ballads in both deed and speech. Lovers are kept apart or united and many contain an open articulation of an individual's love for another. In "Come All My Old Comrades," a man about to leave home sings regretfully of leaving his mother and sweetheart; Peggy Gordon's spurned lover yearns for her, and the sailor in "The Gallant Brigantine" sings of his wife and child far away. This demonstration of tenderness and love is in contrast to the depiction of destructiveness brought about by a father's hatred for his daughter's suitor. As a result, woman's role as mediator, confidante and faithful supporter is constructed positively against the backdrop of what may happen when other choices are made. In this way, the ballads not only explore women's possibilities, but the nature of their power.

While the message of Gallagher's ballads are shared by broadsides not contained in her repertoire, she created a world view almost solely through ballads that at least include, if not focus on, a woman's experience.²⁹ In particular, several of her broadsides hold specific messages for daughters of marrying age

and their parents who have difficulty coping with a rupture in the family unit. At least seven of the broadside ballads specifically concern the breaking up of family, an event nineteenth century women's diaries clearly indicate was traumatic for Maritime women.³⁰

The remaining eighteen songs in Gallagher's repertoire are an eclectic group but most can be classified as humorous and appropriate for singing to children. They range from the young girl's lyrical, "I'm going to Get Married Next Monday" to "Old Mickey Brannigan's Pup," the tale of a dog who loved to fight. In some, humour lies chiefly in the display of wit and in others the creation of the ridiculous.

It is impossible, especially retrospectively, to appreciate the full meaning of Katherine Gallagher's songs. For example, we cannot know which songs she knew well and sang often and which were inactive items in her repertoire, performed, and perhaps pieced together for an inquiring folklorist.³¹ Because meaning comes from context as well as text, there are levels we cannot access. In an interview with Creighton, Gallagher indicated that she learned the ballad, "Pretty Polly," from a cousin who had served overseas during World War I.³² This association enhanced the ballad's meaning for Kit and those who knew both the singer and her cousin as the source. Even if Katherine Gallagher were still alive, however, we would be able to appreciate only her associational, personal meanings for she indicated in an interview with Max Ferguson that she did not know where her grandparents were born,³³ suggesting a limited knowledge of her mother's sources and, by extension, contextual associations.

It is also difficult to generalize from individual to collective experience. Knowing that Kit Gallagher's songs were important to her and that she credited her mother as the source of many, it is tempting to try to apply this evidence of an individual female song tradition more generally. Our ability to do this is hampered, however, by the fact that we do not know the

source(s) of Sophia Home Scott's, or even Donald Scott's songs.

Nevertheless, this analysis of individual experience does raise several questions. First, it broadens our understanding of women's participation in the song tradition. Creighton considered Gallagher her finest singer³⁴ and Gallagher felt her own voice did not compare to her mother's. Clearly some women were recognized within their families and community circles as accomplished signers. Carrie Grover, a contemporary of Gallagher, describes her own mother singing at neighbourhood gatherings,³⁵ and recounts how she herself was asked to perform at community dances when just a young child.³⁶

This knowledge challenges our understanding of public and private divisions as we have created them to describe the folksong tradition. Women's role has been downplayed as belonging only to the private sphere but we must question the designation of a fishing crew who sang in the hold of a vessel or a small group of men gathered in a lumber camp dormitory as public, and a neighbourhood gathering or a kitchen party as private. While this categorization may have enhanced our understanding of some aspects of the folksong tradition, it has masked women's participation.

Very little thought has been given to the impact of women singers on song transmission. Yet, this paper surely does not present a unique case of women's involvement. Carrie Grover indicated that she learned songs from both her mother and father and further suggested the importance of women within her father's family to the creation of his repertoire.³⁷ While collectors have traditionally relied on male dominated spaces, such as the lumber camp, as a source for songs, it is very possible that, like Grover's father, some of the male singers learned their songs from women.

As Katherine Gallagher's experience demonstrates, in at least some instances, songs were passed down generationally among women. Songs were im-

portant to Gallagher and we can infer they held meaning for other women as well. Confined to the home for much of their time, performing often dull, repetitive work, singing ballads which described romance or tragedy provided a release and represented a coping strategy. Gallagher spoke of singing while she did her work, reporting, for example, that from a very young age she sang as she baked.³⁸ Carrie Grover similarly remembered women in her family singing as they spun wool, gardened and made beds.³⁹ And, the number of nursery songs contained in Gallagher's repertoire indicate that songs were used to amuse children or to put them to sleep. Both Gallagher⁴⁰ and Grover⁴¹ tell of learning to sing at the same time they learned to talk. Just as sailors relied on the rhythm of sea chanteys to effectively carry out their work, women also depended on songs to perform theirs.

Finally, this cursory look at one woman's repertoire suggests that women used ballads to convey and reinforce certain messages they personally found helpful and/or wanted to share. While part of the ballad's richness is that it can hold different meanings for different people, the songs selected by Katherine Gallagher and her mother at least in part stress the importance of patience, the value of family, and the necessity of being true even in the face of relationships that sometimes let one down—all relevant messages for women. Based on Gallagher's repertoire, one may argue that not only did women play a role in the transmission of the folksong tradition, but that Maritime folksongs had a life and a relevance that extended beyond the region's lumber camps and into its kitchens.

Appendix 1: Katherine Gallagher's Repertoire

I. Classical Ballads (Child)

Ch. 12 Lord Randal [7 sts].

Ch. 68 Young Hunting [14 sts].

Gallagher indicated that she learned this from her mother but was only able to remember part of the ballad (PANS, vol. 2797 #9).

Ch. 132 The Bold Pedlar and Robin Hood [14 sts].

Ch. 199 The Bonny House o' Airlie Fragment

Gallagher identified this as a ballad she learned from her mother (PANS, Tape 2271).

Ch. 200 The Gypsy Laddie [3 sts].

Ch. 250 Henry Martyn [9 sts].

Ch. 277 The Wife Wrapt in Wether's Skin [12 sts].

Ch. 286 The Golden Vanity [7 sts].

This ballad was incomplete in Gallagher's repertoire. Her brother, Andrew, performed it for Creighton (Creighton and Senior, Traditional Songs from Nova Scotia, pp. 103-104).

II. British Broadside Ballads (Laws)

War Ballads

J21 Chesapeake and Shannon [7 sts].

Creighton believed that Kit Gallagher—who recalled this stanza by stanza over the years—was the only person who knew the ballad (Creighton and Senior, Traditional Songs from Nova Scotia, p. 266).

Ballads of Sailors and the Sea

K16 The Gay Spanish Maid [7 sts].

Ballads of Crime and Criminals

L1 Well Sold the Cow [7 sts].

Gallagher had difficulty remembering this (Letter from Gallagher to Helen Creighton, March 27, 1938, PANS, MG1 vol. 2813 #2).

L5 Bonny Bunch of Roses O [2 sts].

L7 Brennan on the Moor [9 sts. & chor].

Gallagher learned this from her mother (PANS, Tape 2272).

Ballads of Family Opposition to Lovers

M8 Johnny Riley [7 sts].

Gallagher described this as "one of mother's songs ... one of the ones I love the best" (PANS, Tape 2271).

M19 Willie [1 st].

M34 Young Edmund of the Lowlands [2 sts].

Ballads of Lovers' Disguises and Tricks

N14 Pretty Polly [5 sts].

Gallagher learned this from a cousin who had served overseas in WWI (PANS, Tape 2272).

N32 Plains of Waterloo [8 sts].

N42 Broken Ring Song [8 sts].

Ballads of Faithful Lovers

O23 When Will Ye Gang Awa? [9 sts].

According to Creighton, this was "one of the songs [Gallagher] learned from her mother which she had always loved (Maritime Folksongs, p. 217).

Humorous and Miscellaneous Ballads

Q21 The Miller of Derbyshire [10 sts].

III. Other Ballads

The Gallant Brigantine [7 sts].

Peggy Gordon [1 st].

Gallagher learned this ballad from her mother (PANS, Tape 2271).

Come All My Old Comrades [5 sts].

Gallagher reported hearing both her mother and father sing this ballad (PANS, Tape 2272).

The Miracle Flower Fragment

Gallagher learned this from her mother when she was barely able to talk. She believed the song to be "very old" (PANS, Tape 2271).

IV. Lyrical

I'm going to be Married on Monday [1 st].

Gallagher reported learning it from mother when she was very young (PANS, Tape 2271).

The Hunter Winds his Bugle Horn [1 st].

V. Humorous

Quaker's Courtship [1 st].

The Old Man [7 sts].

Marrow Bones [8 sts].

Stormy Weather Boys

Paddy Backwards [2 sts].

Wild Irishman [8 sts].

The Deaf Woman's Courtship [6-2 line sts].

Nell Flaherty's Drake [7 sts].

Old Mickey Brannigan's Pup [3 sts. & chor].

Gallagher learned this song from her father (PANS, Tape 2272).

VI. Nursery Songs

The Fox [6 sts].

The Frog He Would A-Wooing Go [11 sts].

The Wild Man of Borneo [8 sts].

The Tree in the Bog [6 sts].

Rabbit in the Rail Pile [1 st].

Cobbler's Song [2 sts. & chor].

Scotland's Burning [1 st].

NOTES

1. I would like to thank Donald Gallagher, Marion Lytle and staff of the Public Archives of Nova Scotia, especially Margaret McBride, for their help in preparing this paper.
2. The neglect of women's experience is ironic considering the contribution of women singers—such as Ameldia Riddle—to folksong scholarship. See Roger D. Abrahams, *A Singer and her Songs* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State UP, 1970). Research concerning gender-dynamics of folk singing in Newfoundland confirmed the centrality of males to the tradition. For example, Gerald Pocius, "The First Day I Thought of It since I was Wed': Role Expectations and Singer Status in a Newfoundland Outport," *Western Folklore* 35 (1976): 106-22 describes a woman—a better singer than her husband—deferring to his status as singer and no longer performing in public after they married. Her role became one of prompter when her husband forgot the words.
3. For many examples of female folksingers, see Helen Creighton's folksong collections. W. Roy MacKenzie, *Ballads and Sea Songs from Nova Scotia* (Cambridge: Harvard UP, 1928) includes forty-seven songs from fifteen female singers. Manny and Wilson draw heavily on the male lumbering tradition in New Brunswick, yet their collection includes seventeen songs by ten female singers. See Louise Manny and James Reginald Wilson, *Songs of Miramichi* (Fredericton, New Brunswick: Brunswick P, 1968).
4. Many of Gallagher's songs are published in Helen Creighton and Doreen H. Senior, *Traditional Songs from Nova Scotia* (Toronto: Ryerson, 1950). From their initial meeting in 1937 to the singer's death twenty years later, Helen Creighton relied heavily on Kit Gallagher to represent the Nova Scotian folksong tradition to a public audience.
5. According to Katherine Gallagher's niece, Marion Lytle, the family consisted of Eleanor (Nell) born 1877; Frederick born 1879; Edward born 1882; Andrew born 1884; Katherine born 1888; Ann Monica born 1891; William Leo born 1893; Mary Theresa born 1895; and Frances born 1897. All quotes from Marion Lytle are from an interview held September 10, 1992.
6. Katherine's son, Donald, indicates that several of the Scotts were "railwaymen." All quotes from Donald Gallagher come from an interview held August 18, 1992.
7. The 1871 census records Donald as the eldest of nine children of William and Catherine Scott. William is listed as "farmer."
8. Not much is known about Sophia Horne but according to her granddaughter, Marion Lytle, she was probably the twelfth and youngest child of Andrew Philip and Ann McDonnell Horne. The Hornes represent the largest extended family in the Enfield area.
9. Both Donald Gallagher and Marion Lytle mentioned their parents' emphasis on education. Lytle offers different details concerning her aunt's stay in the United States. She believes her aunt went to Roxbury, Mass., where Katherine's eldest sister was living. There she was hired by a wealthy family as part of their domestic staff.
10. Donald Gallagher does not describe an isolated family life. There were relatives in Chebucto Head and in Ketch Harbour, and once school age, he and his brothers made the two and a half mile trek into the village daily. Certainly during World War II, it was anything but a solitary place. Donald remembers, "Chebucto Head, that was the thriving community during the war because they had 500 soldiers in there, eh. And there were dances every night, there were shows, there were stage shows, there were card games...we didn't have to go anywhere. As a matter of fact all these people went down there."
11. While their health allowed, the Gallaghers were active in community activities. Both participated in community plays; Katherine made costumes and acted while Edward was responsible for props. Both died in Ketch Harbour. See *The (Halifax) Chronicle Herald*, 27 July 1957, p.2; and *The (Halifax) Chronicle Herald*, 1 September 1958, p.2.
12. Son and niece talk of Gallagher's fine-tuned housekeeping skills, especially her talent as cook and seamstress. As well, Donald recalls his mother's ability to mimic and to act.
13. Donald Gallagher and Marion Lytle both express uncertainty about the origin of both Kit Gallagher's repertoire and vocal ability, yet undoubtedly it was—and still is—a musical family. Kit's brothers, Edward and Andrew, shared part of her repertoire: Lytle has childhood memories of Edward singing nonsense songs and Helen Creighton collected a few ballads from Andrew. (For example, see Andrew's version of "The Golden Vanity" in Creighton and Senior, *Traditional Songs from Nova Scotia*, 103-4.) As

well, Creighton's recordings occasionally captured musical performances of Kit's three sons and today at least one of her grandchildren performs in a band.

14. Public Archives of Nova Scotia (PANS), MG1 vol. 2798 #2,3.

15. In a CBC interview with Max Ferguson, Gallagher credited her mother as the source of most of her songs. See PANS, Tape 6012.

16. She indicated learning eight songs from her mother; one from both her mother and father; one from her father, and one from a male cousin.

17. My findings are based on songs found in Creighton's published collections as well as unpublished material contained in the Creighton collection, Public Archives of Nova Scotia (PANS). In addition to forty-three songs, Gallagher's repertoire also includes a cumulative children's story which Creighton titled, "Bedtime Story of Ducks." Gallagher commented that her mother had told it to her and that she repeated it to her own children (PANS, Tape 2272).

18. Gallagher estimated her total repertoire to include over one hundred items (PANS, Tape 6012).

19. This discussion adopts the traditional categorization of classical ballads—originating in oral tradition and collected by Francis James Child—and broadside ballads—most of which were originally sold on the street as penny broadsides.

20. Laurel Doucette and Colin Quigley, "The Child Ballad in Canada: A Survey," Canadian Folk Music Journal 9 (1981): 12.

21. See Tristram Potter Coffin, "Traditional Ballad as an Art Form," The British Traditional Ballad in North America, Rev. ed., Publication of the American Folklore Society, Bibliographical and Special Series, vol. 2 (Philadelphia: American Folklore Society, 1963), 164-72.

22. See Pauline Greenhill and Diane Tye, "Women and Folklore," in Changing Patterns, 2nd edition, ed. Sandra Burt, Lorraine Code, and Lindsay Dorney (TO: M&S, 1993), 309-37.

23. In "Young Hunting" the male character announces to his lover that he loves someone else; and in "Lord Randal" the protagonist is poisoned by his lover.

24. Helen Creighton and Doreen H. Senior, Traditional Songs from Nova Scotia (Toronto: Ryerson, 1950), 94.

25. This contrasts to Ben Henneberry's repertoire which contains several such ballads. Henneberry, who lived on Devil's Island, Nova Scotia, was Creighton's most prolific singer. See Diane Tye, "Retrospective Repertoire Analysis: The Case Study of Ben Henneberry, Ballad Singer of Devil's Island, Nova Scotia," Canadian Folk Music Journal 16 (1988): 3-15.

26. See Malcolm G. Laws, American Balladry from British Broad-sides (Philadelphia: American Folklore Society, 1957).

27. Creighton and Senior, Traditional Songs, 266.

28. Helen Creighton, Maritime Folksongs (Toronto: Ryerson, 1960), 143.

29. Her repertoire does not include ballads that warn against the evils of drink or explore other such common themes in the context of the sailing vessel or lumber camp. In fact, even though her brothers were lumbermen and she knew woods ballads—such as "Peter Emberley"—she chose to sing very few native American ballads.

30. I explored this in an earlier paper, "The Roots of Oral Narrative: Experiences of Women in Nineteenth Century Maritime Canada" (Paper presented at the Atlantic Canada Studies conference, St. John's, NF, May 1991).

31. As the number of fragments in her repertoire suggests, some of the items in Gallagher's repertoire were inactive. For example, in a letter to Helen Creighton dated March 27, 1938, Gallagher indicated that she was struggling to remember the words to "Well Sold the Cow" (PANS, MG1 vol. 2813 #2). For a discussion of active and inactive repertoire items, see Kenneth Goldstein, "On the Application of the Concepts of Active and Inactive Traditions," Journal of American Folklore 84 (1971): 62-7.

32. PANS, Tape 2274.

33. PANS, Tape 6012.

34. PANS, MG1 vol. 2824 #1.

35. Carrie Grover, A Heritage of Songs (Norwood, PA: Norwood Editions, 1973), 23.

36. Grover, 51.

37. Grover, 1.

38. PANS, Tape 2272.

39. Grover, 1-2; 45; 51.

40. PANS, Tape 2271.

41. Grover, 3.

