

## RETROSPECTIVE REPERTOIRE ANALYSIS: THE CASE STUDY OF BEN HENNEBERRY, BALLAD SINGER OF DEVIL'S ISLAND, NOVA SCOTIA<sup>1</sup>

DIANE TYE

The recent proliferation of studies focusing on folksong makers and performers has contributed significantly to the understanding of folksong's personal and cultural meanings. As yet, however, proponents of this perspective generally have chosen to react to earlier collecting priorities and theoretical interpretations, rather than to build on the work of previous collectors. The approach is unfortunate in that earlier publications often provide contemporary scholars with their only glimpse of previous folksong traditions. For example, W. Roy Mackenzie's insightful collecting and analysis in Nova Scotia during the first years of the twentieth century<sup>2</sup> illuminate a tradition that Mackenzie estimates was thriving in the 1840s and describes as all but dead in 1909.<sup>3</sup> It is now most certainly beyond the reach of present-day fieldworkers.

While it is a difficult, and often speculative, task to evaluate the meaning of songs to deceased performers and their communities, the repertoires of informants represented in earlier folksong collections can provide insights into traditions that have since changed dramatically or disappeared. One of Helen Creighton's primary informants, Benjamin Henneberry (1863-1951), Devil's Island, Nova Scotia, has contributed significantly to the Canadian published resource of folk ballads. Of the more than 150 ballads he sang for Creighton, approximately eighty appear in her *Traditional Songs from Nova Scotia* and *Songs and Ballads from Nova Scotia*.<sup>4</sup> Several of his ballads, performed by his son Edmund, form the basis of *Folk Music of Nova Scotia*, Folkways recording FM 4006. The following examination of this man's published ballad repertoire illustrates some of the cultural and biographical information that may be derived from such a repertoire analysis.

Helen Creighton met Ben Henneberry very early on in her fieldwork. From her first efforts in 1928 to collect "old songs," she was encouraged to go to Devil's Island in Halifax Harbour to see Henneberry: "For some weeks I culled songs from the mainland in the Eastern Passage district, finding my singers most cordial and hospitable, and always ready to oblige with a song. But wherever I went people said, 'Why don't you go to Devil's Island and see Mr. Ben Henneberry? They'll sing you lots of songs over there.'"<sup>5</sup> When she made her way to the island and met Henneberry, Creighton recalls, "Of course I asked him to sing, which he did very gladly, and here I heard folk singing as I have heard it neither before nor since."<sup>6</sup> From then until Henneberry's death in 1951, Creighton made return visits to the singer and spent a solid week of collecting on Devil's Island. She grew as close to Henneberry as to any of her informants. When he died Creighton had a dream she interpreted as an omen and once when experiencing stress, she felt Henneberry's presence even though he had died several years earlier. Creighton describes how Henneberry's spirit calmed her when working on a television broadcast of folksongs:

Then in some extraordinary way that I can't explain, I got a message from my old singer, Ben Henneberry who had died some years before. He was saying, 'You're doing very well; just keep it up.' Had the singers known I was having a supernatural experience in the middle of a broadcast, they would have been the ones to collapse. Mr. Henneberry had never appeared to me before, nor has he come since, but some how I knew the message was from him and I was immediately strengthened.<sup>7</sup>

What little we know of Ben Henneberry must be gleaned or inferred from his obituary<sup>8</sup>, a one-column newspaper tribute to him after his death,<sup>9</sup> comments dispersed throughout Helen Creighton's books and articles, and general information concerning the community of Devil's Island. A descendent of the island's original settler,<sup>10</sup> "Mr. Ben" as he was commonly called, was born there in 1863. As the first school-house was erected in 1851, very likely he would have received at least some formal education on Devil's Island. Inhabitants depended on the fishery for their livelihood, which they supplemented with market gardens. In 1907 A.M. Payne estimated that "About 2000 quintals of cod-fish, haddock and pollock are taken each year by the fishermen, an increasing proportion of which are marketed in the fresh state. The herring, mackerel, and lobster fishing is also carried on with fair results...."<sup>11</sup> He described the island as having twenty-seven acres of rock and soil where hay, potatoes, and cabbage were raised for domestic use.<sup>12</sup>

In her writing, Creighton indicates some of the dangers associated with life on Devil's Island, dependent on the sea. For example, she comments that it was important for residents to be home from fishing or visiting off the island before dark.<sup>13</sup> That Ben Henneberry had some harrowing experiences during his life-time is certain for Creighton tells of one incident when he was almost washed to sea in an attempt to save his boat in a storm. In addition to his daily encounters with the sea as a fisherman, for forty-two years Henneberry served as coxswain of the government-owned lifeboat that was stationed on the island.

The picture that emerges of life on Devil's Island is far from isolated or stagnate. Inhabitants appear to be in frequent contact with life on the mainland. Many residents, including Ben Henneberry, were members of the Saint Andrew's Roman Catholic Church at Eastern Passage, and Creighton comments that islanders went into nearby Halifax daily to sell their fish and to buy supplies.<sup>14</sup> She also remarks that Henneberry learned some of his songs fishing off the Newfoundland banks<sup>15</sup> and while Creighton does not specify that he ever spent a winter in the Maine lumberwoods, it is probable for she describes lumbering as part of a common occupational pattern that helped to foster the folksong tradition in Halifax County:

A fisherman explained it this way: 'Men in Halifax Co. fish in the summer and go into the lumber woods in winter. When fishermen have time to put in away from home they sing, and in the lumber woods they stay in camp for two or three months and this is how they entertain themselves.' This means songs are always being exchanged and that is what has kept them alive.<sup>16</sup>

The combination of self-sufficiency and frequent interaction with the outside world encouraged the growth and maintenance of a strong traditional culture on Devil's Island that manifested itself in many forms, including belief in forerunners, foresight, and other supernatural experiences. The name of the community itself implies an active folk-narrative tradition. While in all likelihood "Devil" is a corruption of the surname

“Duval,” Devil’s Island has been linked to several legends concerning the appearance of the Devil.<sup>17</sup> In 1928 when Helen Creighton visited the island, however, it was the folksong tradition that impressed her. She found herself in a collecting paradise where singing was a natural part of everyday life. Creighton describes how Ben Henneberry would sing while mending his nets in the morning or while fishing in his boat.<sup>18</sup> During the Christmas season, particularly, everyone was expected to contribute. Creighton describes: “Celebrations at Devil’s Island in Halifax Harbour begin with visits where a different chairman was chosen for each house who had to sing whether he could or not. Singing and dancing went on in the lighthouse for weeks.”<sup>18</sup>

As has been found in other folksong traditions, on Devil’s Island the emphasis was on quantity rather than vocal quality. Creighton comments:

It is not the quality of Mr. Henneberry’s voice that is so appealing, but his songs are all so interesting. Frequently he sings melodies which the listeners have heard before. This gives a pleasant sense of familiarity, since Mr. Ben never repeats himself to the extent of growing tiresome. On the other hand, he very often sings songs which they have never heard before. His companions who fish with him say that he is always singing in his boat, and even they who see him every day are constantly surprised when they hear him sing some new song.<sup>20</sup>

For Ben Henneberry singing appears to have been important not only to occupational contexts, but within familial settings as well. Ben’s father, grandfather, uncle, and brother all sang. In addition, the singer passed on his songs to at least two of his children.<sup>21</sup> His son Alexander — with whom he lived at nearby Eastern Passage after the government resettled the island when it was perceived to be in a militarily-vulnerable position during World War II — sang at least one song of publishable quality for Creighton. It was Edmund, however, who appears to have inherited his father’s musical ability for Creighton comments that this son knew all his father’s songs.<sup>22</sup> In addition, a photograph illustrating Creighton’s article, “Fiddles, Folk-Songs, and Fishermen’s Yarns”<sup>23</sup>, shows Edmund playing a fiddle, and on *Folk Music from Nova Scotia* he plays the mouth organ. When he died at the age of eighty-eight, Ben Henneberry had thirty-two grandchildren and sixty-two great grandchildren. Creighton comments, “He was greatly revered by family and friends alike down to the youngest great grandchild.”<sup>24</sup> She remarks, “When Mr. Ben Henneberry sings, his children, grandchildren, and friends all gather about him with the same fascination their fathers felt towards the ballad singers of their day.”<sup>25</sup>

## THE BALLAD REPERTOIRE<sup>26</sup>

### The Child Ballads

Ben Henneberry’s repertoire of nine Child ballads is larger than that collected from any other singer in Nova Scotia. Consistent with Laurel Doucette and Colin Quigley’s survey of the entire Canadian Child ballad corpus, his repertoire represents a miscellaneous selection of ballad types.<sup>27</sup> As well, the repertoire supports one of the authors’ few generalities — that the Romantic and Tragic ballad types proportionately enjoy a greater popularity. Henneberry’s repertoire of Child ballads breaks

down as follows: Witcombat (1); Romantic and Tragic (3); Magical and Marvelous (1); Yeoman Minstrelsy (2); Historical (1); and Comic (1).

That Henneberry's repertoire contains nine Child ballads when Doucette and Quigley indicate that two or three are typical, challenges Edward Ives's suggestion that Child ballads might be a female-dominated genre.<sup>28</sup> In the community of Devil's Island in the late 1920s, men — or at least one man — played an important role in the maintenance of the Child ballad tradition. On the other hand, it might be argued Henneberry's male perspective influenced both his choice and rendition of the ballads he sang. For example, Henneberry's repertoire includes "The Farmer's Curst Wife," which derives some of its humour from male identification with the wife's suffering husband. Henneberry's final verse is variable<sup>29</sup> but the version sung by his son Edmund would strike the audience as incongruous if delivered by a woman:

Oh women they are so much worse than men,  
If you send them to hell they get sent back again.

In addition, Henneberry whistles one line within each stanza of "The Farmer's Curst Wife":

There was an old farmer lived on a hill  
(whistle second line)  
There was an old farmer lived on a hill,  
And if he's not dead he lives there still.<sup>31</sup>

With the inclusion of whistling he further tailors the ballad to a male performer for while some women no doubt whistled, they were culturally discouraged from doing so.<sup>32</sup>

As in "The Farmer's Curst Wife", Henneberry's variant of "False Knight Upon the Road" provides an opportunity to demonstrate more than vocal talent. The incorporation of fiddle-playing and/or step-dancing not only imparts a male mark on the ballad, it changes the nature of the song. Doucette and Quigley have paralleled Henneberry's variant of "The False Knight Upon the Road" to "The Farmer's Curst Wife." As in both A and B versions of Child 3, the first part of Henneberry's ballad describes a child meeting a false knight or devil on a road. The second section, however, contains six riddles, five of which appear in variants of Child 1 "Riddles Wisely Expounded." Added to this unusual combination is a jig-like melody where the singer dances to a refrain of fiddle or mouth music. Doucette and Quigley comment, "This version at least has moved far away in tone from Child's encounter between child and devil, and has come closer in spirit to a humorous devil-human encounter such as that featured in the "The Farmer's Curst Wife."<sup>33</sup> Certainly the riddling question, "What is worse than women coarse?" presents an interesting parallel to "The Farmer's Curst Wife" where the annoying wife proves too much for the only creature considered worse than she.

In one respect, "The Cruel Mother," "False Knight Upon the Road," "The Farmer's Curst Wife," "The Bold Pedlar and Robin Hood," and "Robin Hood's Progress to Nottingham" may be interpreted as contests. Whether a match of wits, physical strength, or moral supremacy, each ballad represents competitive interaction between two characters or tale roles.<sup>34</sup> Nowhere is Henneberry's fascination with confrontation more evident than in his fragment of "Robin Hood's Progress to Nottingham." Only a bloody conflict is described while both the factors contributing to the skirmish and its results are missing.

In each of the ballads mentioned above, there is the development of what Orrin Klapp defines as the unpromising hero.<sup>35</sup> Here an individual, who one thinks would be unlikely to succeed, emerges in the superior position. This pattern, which will be seen to surface again in other sections of the repertoire, mirrors Herman Bausinger's conclusions concerning the final configuration of characters in schwank ballads. Bausinger argues that the unifying factor in these ballads is the inferior economic status.<sup>36</sup>

Also emerging from Henneberry's collection of Child ballads is an acceptance of the supernatural as reality. The most striking example is "The Cruel Mother" where the more the mother washes the knife, the more bloody it becomes, and the farther she throws the knife, the closer it comes towards her.<sup>37</sup> From the Devil's Island entries in Creighton's *Bluenose Magic* and island legends published in *Bluenose Ghosts*<sup>38</sup>, it is evident several of the residents, including Ben Henneberry, experienced what they interpreted as supernatural occurrences. The inclusion of supernatural elements in the community's ballad repertoire, therefore, is not surprising in that it reinforces rather than contradicts locally-held belief.

What is not present in the repertoire is equally revealing. Perhaps the item most surprisingly absent is "Barbara Allen" (Child 84). This ballad, identified by Tristram Coffin as the most widely collected in North America, appears in *Traditional Songs from Nova Scotia*, sung by Rita Henneberry, Devil's Island. An accompanying note reads, "Mr. Ben Henneberry sings this to the tune of the Rich Counsellor." This comment provides room for fascinating speculation. Obviously Mr. Ben knew the ballad yet it is not included with the majority of his Child Ballads in *Ballads and Songs from Nova Scotia*. As Creighton was primarily interested in the collection of Child ballads, one would expect that she would publish even a fragment of it, had he produced it for her. When "Bonny Barbara Allen" appears in the 1950 publication, it is sung by another community resident. This suggests that while Mr. Ben knew the ballad, Creighton must have found Rita Henneberry's version more ascetically pleasing.

The question presents itself: why was this ballad not given priority in Ben Henneberry's repertoire? Helen Creighton herself may have an explanation, but based on a general knowledge of folksong traditions elsewhere, a solution may lie with ownership. In their discussion of repertoire classification, George Casey *et al.* identify the association of a song with another member of the community as reason for inactive status of an item. They quote Kenneth Goldstein, "As Goldstein has pointed out, awareness of the relationship of one's repertoire to that of others in the community is indicated in the fact that a portion of the inactive repertoire of any singer will consist of songs which are in the active repertoire of other singers in the community."<sup>30</sup> Perhaps on Devil's Island "Bonny Barbara Allen" was Rita Henneberry's song. As it is the only one sung by her in Creighton's published works, it is possible that the ballad represents an important element in a limited repertoire.

A second possibility may be that Ben Henneberry chose not to sing "Bonny Barbara Allen," or at least to sing it infrequently, as the ballad is the antithesis of other ballad messages in his repertoire. "Young Beichan," "Hind Horn," and "Katharine Jaffray" depict lovers overcoming opposition and obstacles to their love. In this respect the love-centred ballads illustrate a concern with opposition and the development

of an unpromising hero placed in a conflict situation. Instead of working towards a resolution of odds, in "Barbara Allen" the confrontation which takes the form of a request met with a refusal, leads to two senseless deaths.<sup>40</sup> It provides a sharp contrast to other ballads that depict strong characters who are rewarded for seeking true love at all cost.

Certain ballad types, too, are missing from Ben Henneberry's repertoire. For example, no religious ballads are present. His obituary mentions involvement in a church organization yet this area of his life is unrepresented in the ballad selection. Perhaps the need was filled through songs other than ballads — such as hymns — that Creighton either did not document or did not publish. In addition, many of his Child, Native American, and British Broadside ballads demonstrate a moral truth. The ballads that implicitly endorse Christian values and reinforce the importance of acting on personal conviction may have relieved his need for an explicit articulation.

### **Native American Balladry**

"Katharine Jaffray" (Child 221) may be classified as an historical ballad and the two Robin Hood Child ballads may be interpreted as semi-historical, but it could be argued that in this repertoire these do not function as a documentation of what is seen to be historical fact. Robin Hood is a folk hero and the appeal of ballads describing his physical challenges probably lies in their sense of adventure. Where Ben Henneberry's sense of history emerges clearly is in his collection of Native American ballads. For example, all those recorded by G. Malcom Laws<sup>41</sup> depict incidents that have been documented or were perceived to be factually based by those who sang or heard them. That Laws describes many of the items in Henneberry's repertoire as being of "doubtful oral circulation" because they have only been collected once relates to the fact they are local compositions. For example, "McCarthy's Song" is reported to have been composed by Michael McCarthy, a school-teacher on Devil's Island in 1865. "Meagher's Children," composed in circa 1842, tells of children who were lost and perished in woods about ten miles from the island.

Whereas Child ballads may be likened to *Märchen* in that settings and characters are removed from everyday life, North American balladry parallels the legend in content, attitude, certain stylistic features, and performance situation. Set in a familiar world, often characterized by the presence of local people and place names, the Native American ballad tells of events regarded as true. Herbert Halpert comments: "This giving of local habitation and a name to a song strengthens the folk audience's belief in it."<sup>42</sup> In her notes to Henneberry's "Prince Edward Island Murder" Creighton reveals the singer's belief in the factual basis of the ballad:

Mr. Henneberry gives the composer of this song as Mrs. C.A. Barren, Halifax. The murder, he says, took place about forty-five years ago. Apparently the murderer meant to place the body in a deep hole, with the incriminating rock which he had put on as weight.<sup>43</sup>

This explanation offered for the events of a ballad supports Halpert's observation that "a most striking phenomenon was the folksinger's intense belief in the factual basis of his songs."<sup>44</sup> The performance of ballads such as "The Prince Edward Island Murder" creates the opportunity for audience members to contribute details, state personal belief,

or question the factualness of the incident. As a result, the ballad performance may serve as impetus for debate, a major criterion of legend as defined by contemporary narrative scholars such as Linda Degh.<sup>45</sup>

Parallels between legend and Henneberry's native American ballads appear to extend to aspects of performance style. When Creighton describes Ben Henneberry singing "Meagher's Children" at their first meeting, she tells of how at the end of a familiar line, an older woman present joined him and sang along.<sup>46</sup> In some of Henneberry's other ballads the refrain would have allowed an opportunity for participation.

Finally, a subject analysis of Ben Henneberry's Native American ballads further supports the possibility that they may function much as legends. As classified by Laws, Henneberry's repertoire contains one ballad concerning war, eleven centering on the sea or sailors, two concerning tragedies and disasters, and one about a murder. A man who depended on the sea for his livelihood and participated in fishing expeditions to Newfoundland would predictably demonstrate an interest in the sea. In addition, as head of a large family and an older member of the community, Ben Henneberry might well have envisioned himself as a link with his family and community past. That he felt the need or desire to pass on the story of the island and to relate accounts from local history is reflected in the number of local compositions found in the repertoire.

Absences in Henneberry's repertoire of Native American ballads are more puzzling. No ballads of cowboys, pioneers, lumberjacks, or criminals are present. In particular the lack of songs about lumbering is intriguing. Based on Creighton's assertion that singers in Halifax County developed their repertoire through an interaction with other fishermen in the summer and lumbermen in the winter, why is there no representation from the woods tradition? Edmund sang "Jam at Gerry's Rock" for Creighton so at least some ballads that describe life in the woods existed on the island.<sup>47</sup> Perhaps Ben Henneberry never entered the lumberwoods himself so that occupational songs of lumbering held little personal appeal. On the other hand, he may have felt or known they were of limited interest to his audience whose life experiences were removed from those of the camps. Of course many of the ballads in Henneberry's repertoire were actively sung in the lumbercamps so although none specifically describe occupational hardships, this is not to say they do not come to Devil's Island from the tradition. They could be associated contextually with the lumbercamp tradition even if they make no specific reference to it. Nonetheless the contrast with the large number of songs that celebrate the sailors' life is a sharp one.

### **British Broadside**

Henneberry's collection of British broadsides comprises the largest section of his repertoire and reflects similar themes as are found in his versions of Native American ballads: war (3); sailors and the sea (4); crime and criminals (3); and humorous and miscellaneous (3). It is love, however, that emerges as the central concern of this genre. Twenty-one broadside ballads deal with the love relationship: family opposition (6); lover's disguises and tricks (7); faithful lovers (7); and unfaithful lovers (1).

The fact that only one of twenty-one ballads concerns unfaithful love underlines the repertoire's emphasis on the surmounting of obstructive odds. Collectively, the broadsides present a description of the obstacles one must face in life and many depict heroes who reinforce widely held cultural values in their overcoming of difficulties. Herbert Halpert's description of a singer's intense emotional involvement in a song<sup>48</sup> and singer Almeda Riddle's identification of appropriateness as a factor in the selection of songs to learn or perform,<sup>49</sup> suggest individuals chose to sing ballads that they recognize as being of value. As singers identify with the characters in their ballads, discuss the possible motives behind their actions and the repercussions that may follow, the protagonists may even come to represent aspects of the singer's personality or priorities. As a respected member of the community and the patriarch of a large family, it was likely that Ben Henneberry wished to present positive role models to his audience and to personally be regarded as endorsing moral and commendable actions. Based on Creighton's comments about Henneberry, the moral nature of the folksinger's repertoire is in keeping with his own character. She describes how he came to suffer a facial deformity later in his life that made it difficult for him to articulate clearly. Creighton talks of the fortitude Henneberry showed in dealing with the affliction and mentions how he never expressed any jealousy or even regret that it was his son Edmund who would be asked to publicly perform his songs for television and radio, rather than himself.<sup>50</sup>

It is interesting that the moral code emerging from the Native American and British broadside ballads in Henneberry's repertoire does not recommend abstinence from alcohol. "McCarthy's Song" warns against excess yet there are verses in "Captain Conrad" that lament the conditions on a "dry" ship. In Devil's Island where drink played a role in community life and recreation in general, and the maintenance of a lively folksong and music tradition in particular, the advocacy of abstinence expressed in balladry would have presented the settlement with a contradiction in values.

## Conclusion

Ben Henneberry's repertoire of Child, Native American, and British broadside ballads is full of action-packed plots with strong characters who overcome difficulties. Accounts of criminal deeds are usually presented from the remorseful transgressor's point of view. Through the description of misadventures experienced by those who leave home such as is related in "Young Beichan," "McCarthy's Song" (where a young man is physically assaulted), or "Barrack Street" (in which a man loses his money in a city brothel), the threat of the unknown is sharply contrasted to the safety of home. Moral conviction is rewarded and anti-social or immoral acts punished. In all likelihood such a repertoire represented a personal as well as communal source of strength, reinforcing community-held attitudes and norms of behaviour. The ballads' messages probably provided Ben Henneberry and others with the assurance of authority created through the illustration of past example. Viewed as a communal activity, ballad-singing would have allowed Ben Henneberry and his fellow islanders to both explore and reaffirm personal and cultural values.



Kenneth Goldstein points out that not all songs within an individual's repertoire are of equal importance. Some are actively sung, while others remain largely in the passive repertoire.<sup>51</sup> In the situation of a now-deceased singer who was regularly probed by a folklorist, it is almost impossible to distinguish between active and inactive repertoire items. Some of the very few clues are contained in song fragments that suggest either situations did not occur in which the singer could perform such a song, the ballad did not appeal to the performer, or the piece was a difficult one to learn and/or retain. In a note to "Napoleon's Farewell to Paris", Creighton indicates that the latter is the reason why this variant of Henneberry's is fragmented:

Strangely with all his large and varied repertoire Mr. Henneberry found this song beyond him, although he tried to learn it many times. His uncle sang it often, but the Devil's Island men are all doubtful whether anybody can be found who knows the whole song.<sup>52</sup>

When Creighton located the poem on which she thought the song was based, she understood why Henneberry found it difficult to memorize. It begins, "I visited the splendid city, the metropolis called Paris...."<sup>53</sup>

Creighton's brief comments concerning "Napoleon's Farewell to Paris" and "Tacking of a Full-Rigged Ship off Shore" offer some of the only hints as to how Ben Henneberry actually learned his songs. The latter ballad is a poem by Walter F. Mitchell which Henneberry enjoyed and set to music.<sup>54</sup> This indication that the singer was literate substantiates the lack of inner unity found in the songs and suggests memorization was the method by which the singer obtained most of his repertoire items. Certainly the majority of his versions do not reflect the structure characteristic of oral ballads.<sup>55</sup>

How Ben Henneberry learned his ballads points to some of the obvious drawbacks in retrospective repertoire analysis. The most important aspect in Henneberry's efforts to learn "Napoleon's Farewell to Paris" may well have been its association with his uncle who sang the song. Unfortunately associative connotations are almost impossible to determine once the singer has died and discussion of situational and cultural meaning must be confined to content. Like aspects of situational and cultural context, such elements went largely undocumented. In the Devil's Island community, for example, information concerning interactions among the ballad and other folksong, dance and music traditions is virtually nonexistent.

The obvious gaps and drawbacks notwithstanding, retrospective repertoire analysis represents a valid new direction for folksong studies. In so much as Helen Creighton — now eighty-nine years young — is still a working folklorist, this case study represents the exception where the collector herself might be able to provide additional biographical and contextual data, and possibly answer some of the questions raised here. In place of such discussions, or even in addition to them, the analysis of past informants' repertoires — supplemented by information from oral and documentary sources — promises to provide valuable insights into the wealth of texts compiled by pioneer collectors and reveal as yet unexplored aspects of earlier traditions. Certainly it is only through a more complete dyachronic description of Canadian folksong that a fuller understanding of the contemporary context will emerge.

**Child Ballads:**

- Ch. 3 "The Fause Knight Upon the Road". Type A. 6 sts & chor.  
 Ch. 12 "Lord Randal". Type A. 7 sts.  
 Ch. 17 "Hind Horn". Type G. 12 sts.  
 Ch. 20 "The Cruel Mother". 17 sts.  
 Ch. 53 "Young Beichan". Type L. 17 sts.  
 Ch. 132 "The Bold Pedlar and Robin Hood".  
 Ch. 139 "Robin Hood's Progress to Nottingham". 3 sts & chor.  
 Ch. 221 "Katherine Jaffray". 16 sts.  
 Ch. 278 "The Farmer's Curst Wife". Type A. 13 sts. & chor.

**Native American Ballads (Laws):**

War Ballads

- A18 "Cumberland's Crew". 11 sts.

Ballads of Sailors and the Sea

- D19 "Charles Gustavus Anderson". 15 d sts.  
 D20 "George Jones". 19 d sts.  
 D22 "Bound in Newfoundland". 8 d sts.  
 D25 "Gallant Brigantine". 7 d sts.  
 D28 "The E. A. Horton". 6 d sts.  
 dD45 "Saladin's Crew". 7 d sts.  
 dD46 "Unicorn". 7 d sts.  
 dD48 "Guysboro Song". 11 d sts.  
 dD49 "Loss of the Philosophy". 8 d sts.  
 dD52 "Captain Conrod". 13 d sts & chor.

Murder Ballads

- dF59 "Prince Edward Island Murder", 13 1/2 d sts.

Ballads of Tragedies and Disasters

- G17 "Young Charlotte". 22 sts.  
 G25 "Meagher's Children". 19 d sts.

Ballads on Various Topics

- dH51 "Casey's Whiskey". 5 d sts & chor.  
 dH52 "McCarthy's Song". 14 d sts.

**British Broadside Ballads (Laws):**

War Ballads

- J6 "Erin Far Away". 7 d sts.  
 J10 "The Heights of Alma". 10 sts. & chor.  
 J12 "Donald Monro". 9 d sts.

Ballads of Sailors and the Sea

- K2 "Ye Gentlemen of England". 6 6-line sts.  
 K3 "Bay of Biscay Oh". 7 d sts.  
 K22A "Captain Glen". 12 sts.  
 K26 "Bold McCarthy". 9 d sts.

### Ballads of Crime and Criminals

- L4 "The Three Butchers". 8 d sts.  
L13A "Whiskey in the Jar". 7 d sts.  
L18 "Van Dieman's Land". 6 d sts.

### Ballads of Family Opposition to Lovers

- M9 "Willie Riley's Courtship". 78 sts.  
M17 "Mary Neal". 12 d sts.  
M24 "The Jolly Plowboy". 9 sts.  
M25 "The Banks of Dundee". 11 d sts.  
M31A "William and Dinah A". 9 d sts.  
M38 "Nancy of Yarmouth". 13 d sts.

### Ballads of Lovers' Disguises and Tricks

- N3 "Female Sailor Bold". 12 d sts.  
N6 "Disguised Sailor". 10 d sts.  
N16 "The Rose of Britain's Isle". 7 d sts.  
N20 "The Golden Glove". 10 d sts.  
N21 "The Female Highway Man". 7 sts.  
N26 "The Lawyer Outwitted". 11 d sts.  
N38 "The Mantle So Green". 2 sts.

### Ballads of Faithful Lovers

- O25 "The Lady of Carlisle". 5 d sts.  
O26 "The Turkish Lady". 12 sts.  
O27 "Jolly Roving Tar". 4 d sts.  
O35 "A-Growing" 7 d sts.  
O39 "The Sheffield Apprentice". 10 d sts.  
O41 "The Constant Lovers". 4 1/2 d sts.

### Ballads of Unfaithful Lovers

- P40 "Jessie Munroe". 5 d sts.

### Humorous and Miscellaneous Ballads

- Q19 "Dornan's Ass". 6-8 line sts & chor.  
Q25 "Tom O'Neill". 1/9 d sts.  
Q38 "The Valiant London Prentice". 17 d sts.

### **British Broadside**s mentioned in *Laws' Native American Balladry*:

- "The Quaker's Courtship". 4-6 line sts.  
"Maggie Mae". 5 sts. & chor.  
"Ocean Queen". 8 sts.  
"Jockey to the Fair". 4-9 line sts.  
"Prentice Boy". 8 sts.  
"Prentice Boy". 7 sts & chor.  
"Tarry Trousers". 7 sts.  
"Barrack Street". 11 sts.  
"Bonny Light Horseman". 5 sts & chor.  
"Jack Robson". 11 sts.  
"Rambling Rover". 6 sts.  
"Alphabet Song". 5 sts & chor.  
"The Deaf Woman's Courtship". 1 st.  
"Derby Ram". 10 sts. & chor.  
"Indian Song". 10 sts.  
"Well Sold the Cow". 12 sts. & chor.

NOTES

1. This article is based on an earlier paper submitted to Dr. David Buchan as part of the requirements for Memorial University of Newfoundland's Folklore 6445. I would like to thank Dr. Buchan for his helpful comments.
2. W. Roy Mackenzie, *Ballads and Sea Songs from Nova Scotia* (Hatboro, PA: Folklore Associates, 1962) and *The Quest of the Ballad* (New York: Haskell House, 1966).
3. W. Roy Mackenzie, "Ballad-Singing in Nova Scotia," *Journal of American Folklore* 22 (1909): 327.
4. Helen Creighton, *Songs and Ballads from Nova Scotia* (New York: Dover, 1932, rpt. 1966) and Helen Creighton and Doreen Senior, *Traditional Songs from Nova Scotia* (Toronto: Ryerson, 1950).
5. Creighton, *Songs and Ballads* xii.
6. Creighton, *Songs and Ballads* xiii.
7. Helen Creighton, *A Life in Folklore* (Toronto: McGraw 1975) 195.
8. *Halifax Chronicle Herald* 12 October 1951: 20.
9. "Pay Tribute to Singer of Folk Songs," *Halifax Mail-Star* 15 October 1951: 18.
10. In 1831 Andrew Henneberry moved to Devil's Island from McNab's Island, Halifax Harbour. Andrew and his large family were joined by Andrew's brother, Gasper and three Edwards brothers (H.W. Hewitt, "History of Devil's Island," *Dartmouth Patriot* 13 July 1901: 1). Andrew, his wife, and son James, were drowned on their way home from a Christmas shopping trip to Halifax in 1846 but their descendants remained on the island.
11. A.M. Payne, "Devil's Island at the Mouth of the Harbour of Halifax," *Halifax Morning Chronicle* 2 December 1907: 10.
12. Payne 10.
13. Creighton, *Songs and Ballads* xiv.
14. Helen Creighton, "Ballads from Devil's Island," *Dalhousie Review* 12 (1933): 503.
15. Creighton, *A Life in Folklore* 59.
16. Creighton, *Songs and Ballads* xvii.
17. Mary Jollimore, "Devil's Island ghost stories 'just fables'," *Halifax Mail Star* 4 August 1978: 21.
18. Creighton, *Songs and Ballads* xv.
19. Helen Creighton, "Old Christmas Customs," *Canadian Geographical Journal* 63 (1961): 220.
20. Creighton, "Ballads from Devil's Island" 508.
21. He married at least once and was father to five daughters and three sons. Helen Creighton, *Bluenose Magic* (Toronto: McGraw, 1968) 18 describes how Ben and son Edmund experienced a forerunner of Mrs. Henneberry's death several days before she died of childbirth. As Creighton later refers to his wife in the present, Ben must have remarried (*Songs and Ballads* xiv).
22. Creighton, *A Life in Folklore* 60.
23. Helen Creighton, "Fiddles, Folk-Songs and Fishermen's Yarns," *Canadian Geographical Journal* 51 (1959): 212-21.
24. Helen Creighton, "Folk-Singers of Nova Scotia," *Canadian Forum* 32 (1952): 86.
25. Creighton, "Ballads from Devil's Island" 507-8.
26. See: Appendix A: Ben Henneberry's Ballad Repertoire.
27. Laurel Doucette and Colin Quigley, "The Child Ballad in Canada: A Survey," *Canadian Folk Music Journal* 9 (1981): 8.
28. Edward D. Ives, "Lumbercamp Singing and the Two Traditions," *Canadian Folk Music Journal* 5 (1977): 23.
29. Creighton, *Traditional Songs* 95 indicates Henneberry's last stanza could be:  
 "This proves that women are better than men,  
 They go through hell and come back again."  
 or:  
 "They can go to the devil and come back again."
30. Creighton, *Traditional Songs* 96.
31. Creighton, *Ballads and Songs* 18.
32. For example, the following well-known traditional proverb which links a whistling woman with bad luck has been collected in Nova Scotia:  
 A whistling woman and a cackling hen  
 Neither come to any good end.
33. Doucette and Quigley 9.

34. For treatments of tale role and role relationships within Child ballads see David Buchan, "Propp's Tale Role and Ballad Repertoire," *Journal of American Folklore* 95 (1982): 159-72 and Roger D. Abrahams, "Patterns of Structure and Role Relationships in the Child Ballad in the United States," *Journal of American Folklore* 79 (1966): 488-92.
35. Orrin Klapp, "The Folk Hero," *Journal of American Folklore* 62 (1949): 20.
36. Bausinger's work on the schwank ballad was discussed by Klaus Roth in "German and English Schwank Ballads Concerning Adultery: Their Structure Classification, Realism and Function," Folk Narrative Congress, Helsinki, 1974.
37. Elisabeth Bristol Greenleaf and Grace Yarrow Mansfield *Ballads and Sea Songs of Newfoundland* (1933; Hatboro, PA: Folklore Associates, 1968) 15 includes a recited version of this ballad collected from Mrs. Susan Walters, Rock Harbour, Newfoundland, with the following sixth stanza:  
She went to the river to wash her knife.  
She couldn't get the blood off to save her life. (15)  
All other thirteen versions found in published collections from Atlantic Canada have no reference of this kind.
38. Helen Creighton, *Bluenose Ghosts* (Toronto: McGraw, 1957).
39. George Casey et al, "Repertoire Categorization and Performer-Audience Relationships: Some Newfoundland Examples," *Ethnomusicology* 16 (1972): 401
40. It may be argued by some that "Lord Randal," also in Henneberry's repertoire is similar to "Barbara Allen" in this lack of resolution. Here, however, the interchange between a pragmatic mother and a romantic son on his deathbed is the essential tension explored in the ballad. The woman who poisoned the son is not an important figure and the audience does not know why she has taken this action or why the son accepts his fate so passively. In "Barbara Allen" the conflict is petty and the inflexibility that causes the deaths inexplicable and frustrating.
41. See: G. Malcolm Laws Jr. *Native American Balladry* (Philadelphia, PA: American Folklore Society, 1964).
42. Herbert Halpert, "Truth in Folk Songs — Some Observations on the Folk-singer's Attitude," in J. Harrington Cox, *Traditional Ballads and Folksongs Mainly from West Virginia*, ed. George Herzog and Herbert Halpert (New York: National Service Bureau, 1939) xv.
43. Creighton, *Songs and Ballads* 308.
44. Halpert xxii.
45. Linda Degh and Andrew Vazsonyi, "The Dialectics of the Legend," *Folklore Reprint Series* 1:6 (1973).
46. Creighton, *Songs and Ballads* xiv.
47. Creighton, *A Life in Folklore* 59.
48. Halpert xv.
49. Roger D. Abrahams, "Creativity, Individuality, and the Traditional Singer," *Studies in the Literary Imagination* 3 (1970): 9.
50. Creighton, *A Life in Folklore* 113.
51. Kenneth Goldstein, "On the Application of the Concepts of Active and Inactive Traditions to the Study of Repertory," *Journal of American Folklore* 84 (1971): 63.
52. Creighton, *Songs and Ballads* 148.
53. Creighton, *Songs and Ballads* 149.
54. Creighton, *Songs and Ballads* 323.
55. For a discussion of the structural characteristics of oral balladry, see: David D. Buchan, *The Ballad and the Folk* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1972).
56. Francis James Child, *The English and Scottish Popular Ballads I-IV* (1882-1898; New York: Dover Pub., 1965); G. Malcolm Laws, *Native American Balladry*; and G. Malcolm Laws, *American Balladry from British Broad-sides* (Philadelphia, PA: American Folklore Society, 1957).

Résumé: *Diane Tye analyse le répertoire de Ben Henneberry, chanteur de ballades résident à Devil's Island, Nouvelle Ecosse et l'un des anciens informateurs principaux de Helen Creighton, qui a publié souvent des chansons recueillies de cet individu. Diane Tye offre l'inventaire catégorisé de ces chansons, et discute comment elles sont représentatives des attitudes de la communauté sociale qui a influencé leurs création et transmission.*