

John Reilly

Mr and Mrs Truell

Collected by Ralph Vaughan Williams, Gravesend, 31st December 1904

Ralph Vaughan Williams MSS Collection RVW2/1/208, RVW2/3/37

Roud 270



1. John Reilly is my true love's name, he lives down by the quay
He is the fairest of young men that ever my eye did see
My father he got riches great, young Reilly he was poor
Because I loved my sailor bold he could not me endure
2. My mother took me by the hand these very words did say
If you are fond of Reilly, you must leave this counterie
Your father says he['ll] take his life and that without delay
And you must either go abroad or shun his company
3. O mother dear don't be severe (?) O where I'm set by love
My very heart lays in his breast as constant as a dove
O daughter I'm not severe here is one thousand pounds
Sail over to Amerikay and purchase there some ground

4. O when she got the money to young Reilly she did run
This very night to take your life my father charged his gun
Here is one thousand pounds in gold my mother gave to me
Sail over to Amerikay and I will follow thee
5. When Reilly got the money next day he sailed away
And when he stepped his foot on board these very words did say
6. O less than twelve months after was walking by the sea
Young Reilly he came back again and fetched his love away
The ship got wrecked all hands were lost
..... and her [?]
7. They found a letter in her breast and that was writ with blood
Saying cruel were my parents that thought to shoot my love
I hope this will a warning be to all young maids so gay
And never let the lad you love go to Amerikay