

Sylvie

Mr Ford

Collected by Anne Geddes Gilchrist, Blackham, Sussex, June 1906

Anne Geddes Gilchrist Collection AGG/3/6/21, *Journal of the Folk-Song Society* 8 (1930) p.227

Roud 7

"Boldly, well marking the time"

Syl- vie she rode out one day, She drest her- self in a man' ar-
ray, With sword and pis- tol down by her side, To meet her
true love To meet her true love a- way did- a ride

1. Sylvie she rode out one day,
She drest herself in a man's array,
With sword and pistol down by her side,
To meet her true love away did-a ride.
2. And when she met him along the plain
She boldly bid him for to stand;
"Stand and deliver, kind sir," she says,
"Or else this moment your life I'll have!"
3. After she had robbed him of all his store,
She says "Kind sir, there is one thing more:
There's a diamond ring which I saw you wear –
Deliver it and your life I'll spare".
4. "My diamond-a-ring's a token true.
Before I part from that my life I'll lose."

She being tender hearted, much like a dove

She rode away from her own true love.

5. As they were walking in the garden green,
Like two lovers, they were seen:
He spied her [sic] watch hanging by her clothes
Which made him blush like the morning's rose.
6. "What makes you blush, you silly thing?
'Twas I that wanted your diamond ring –
'Twas I that robbed you all on the plain –
So here's your watch, my love, and gold again."
7. I only did it for to see –
To prove whether you was a man or no.
But since I've had a contented mind,
My heart and all my love shall ever be thine!

Anne Gilchrist noted that

"Sylvie" or "Silvery" (i.e. Sylvia) was learnt as a boy from the singer's 'mother-in-law' (i.e. step-mother).

There is however no evidence that William's father John Ford remarried after the death of his wife Harriet, so it is unclear who is meant by William's "step-mother".