

*A Collection of*  
**RIDDLES FROM SHETLAND**

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and  
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In the month of August 1954 one of the co-authors of this article went to Shetland to collect material for the archives of the School of Scottish Studies. The School was thus enabled to establish direct contact for the first time with the Shetland Folk Society, which had been in existence since 1942 and which had done invaluable work in stimulating an interest in folk life and traditions among the people of Shetland. In Shetland to-day there is more widespread interest in folk-tradition than anywhere in Scotland. To this the influence of the Shetland Folk Society has contributed in no small measure.

Chief among the Shetlanders who helped the work of the School's representative was Dr. T. M. Y. Manson, Editor of the *Shetland News*. During the course of a conversation with him the suggestion was made that his newspaper should sponsor a competition for the best collection of Shetland guddicks, or riddles, especially riddles from oral rather than printed sources. Dr. Manson immediately welcomed the idea, and the following collection was the ultimate result. In all there were 17 entrants, and the prizes were donated by the School of Scottish Studies.<sup>1</sup> The original Mss. were lent to the School so that typescript copies could be made, and were later returned to Shetland and finally presented to the Shetland Folk Society.

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In preparing this collection of riddles for publication we have been confronted with various problems. The collection contains much new material not available to Archer Taylor when he compiled his *English Riddles from Oral Tradition* (1951); indeed, about one-third of the collection (if variants are included) falls into this category. Of these riddles, many are paralleled in Scandinavian, and particularly Norwegian, collections, as one might expect from Shetland's history. Again, the collection contains many examples of conundrums, Biblical and learned riddles, clever-question types, and other enigmatical material supplementary to the "true" riddles to which Taylor confined his attention. Finally, there is a linguistic problem to be faced. The contributors to this collection write sometimes in literary English and more often in dialect; but each uses his own orthographic conventions, not always consistently even within a single text, to represent the phonetic values of his own, or his neighbours', speech. All these factors have influenced the editorial principles to be adopted.

#### PROBLEMS OF CLASSIFICATION

The new material falls into two main categories. There are, firstly, those "true" riddles which were not available when Taylor undertook his magnificent survey of the field of traditional riddles in the English-speaking world (Taylor 1951). Secondly, there are the other types of riddle, for which a system of classification must be devised.

Clearly, the "true" riddles should be classified according to the principles of conceptual comparison laid down in Taylor's pioneering study, and new material should be inserted into this framework. Difficulties arise, however, in allocating numbers to new material; and Taylor's publication, with its closed system of numbers, should be revised eventually. In view of the detailed comparative study of riddles in other languages provided in his commentary, the revision might take account of a contingent problem which is conspicuously revealed in an archive such as that of the School of Scottish Studies, which contains material both in Scots or Scottish-English, and in Scottish Gaelic. For instance, the well-known riddles in which an egg is described as a house with no windows, nos. 1132-1138 in Taylor's study of riddles in English (1951), are to be found as nos. 326-327 in Hull and Taylor's study of riddles in Irish (1955). The archivist has to decide whether examples of riddles in the two language groups are to be

registered together under the same numbers, as a convenient aid to comparative study, or separately. A possible solution would be to retain, and supplement where necessary (see e.g. no. 23 of our collection), the main headings listed in the Analytical Table (Taylor 1951:xiii-xxx), and to devise a new system of sub-dividing the examples under each heading, perhaps by a decimal system analogous to that used in Stith Thompson's *Motif-Index of Folk-Literature*. Since new collections are to be expected from Scotland, as from other countries, it is, however, perhaps too soon to attempt a detailed classification system of this kind.

In printing this collection of riddles we have therefore numbered the items consecutively, adding references to Taylor (1951) on the right-hand margin of the page, and inserting new material where it would fall according to the principles of classification formulated by him. Three examples may suffice to illustrate our method.

The first riddle in the collection is a version of the Scots bell riddle, of which Taylor cites two versions numbered 4a and 4b. The figure 4 is to be found in the right-hand margin, while the riddle is listed as no. 1 in our collection.

Turning to nos. 23 and 24 of our collection, we find the comparison of smoke to a living creature that goes out but never comes in (no. 23), and of a stream to a living creature that runs but cannot walk (no. 24). Taylor's nos. 128-130, *Goes to a Named Spot without Moving*, are represented by no. 22 of our collection. Taylor's nos. 133-135, *Goes Out and In*, are not represented (but cf. our nos. 28-32, Taylor's 205-207). We assume that if our no. 23 had been available to him he would have had a category *Goes Out, Does Not Go In* after his nos. 133-135, and we print it next. Taylor's no. 143, *Runs, Does not Run Up*, is likewise not represented in our collection, but we assume that if our no. 24 had been available he would have had a category *Runs, Does not Walk* before passing to his nos. 144 et seq. We therefore print our no. 24 before passing to our nos. 25-27, which are examples of Taylor's no. 166.

The other kinds of enigmatical material have been arranged under various headings, following in the main the categories in Hull and Taylor (1955) and Alver (1956). These headings are, *Witty Questions and Conundrums*, *Naming-Riddles* (after Alver), *Learned Riddles* (including Biblical riddles), *Arithmetical Riddles*, *Alphabet Riddles* and *Punning Riddles*. The collection, like all collections of riddles from oral tradition, includes also seventeen

items of the *Erotic Scene* category (Taylor's nos. 1739-1749): the texts, which we do not publish here, are lodged in the archives of the School of Scottish Studies.

#### TEXTS AND REFERENCES

The texts of the riddles are printed as written by the contributors to the collection apart from a few instances in which a word or letter has obviously been omitted inadvertently. All emendations supplied by us are in square brackets. Difficult dialect words are glossed after each text.<sup>2</sup>

Significant variants are printed as separate items, but the material has been condensed in two ways. Where the same riddle was collected in standard English and equivalent dialect, only one text is published, the two texts being regarded as identical since we are concerned here with the folkloristic aspect of the collection rather than the linguistic. Secondly, minor variants are indicated by a device which may be illustrated by reference to no. 81. The following two texts were collected:

- (a) *A baird a' flesh in a mooth a' horn | Sic a baste wis never born.—  
A cock.*
- (b) *A baerd o' flesh, a mooth o' horn | Sic a craetir wis never born.—  
A cock.*

The first text appears in print here, with the following note: "Two versions; b *sic a craetir.*"

References to parallels in printed sources relating to Scotland are listed, in chronological order of publication, after each text: e.g. in no. 1, Gregor 81; Findlay 58 refers to examples cited on pages 81 and 58 of the authors' works listed in the bibliography at the end of the article. The references are not exhaustive but cover the main collections of Scottish material.

#### SOME FEATURES OF THE COLLECTION

These riddles, culled in the islands which so long formed a part of the Norwegian dominion overseas, reflect their Shetland provenance in various ways.

The traditional features of Shetland folk life, and the material culture in particular, emerge in many riddles. Nos. 43-46, for example, are riddles about the spinning-wheel; 119 and 226 about wool cards; 69-74 about the quern; 47 and 65 the water-mill. The interior of the house also supplies objects

around which the riddler can build his enigmatical metaphors: the hook and chain (no. 219) and the old-fashioned cooking-pot which swung from them appear in the collection (nos. 112-115). So too does a reference to the shuttered box-bed (no. 102, *Stumpie stood at my bed door*), while nos. 240 and 241 refer to carrying peats home in the traditional type of basket.

Norway appears in no. 60 with its striking image of the sea, while in no. 121 the unfettered wind roars across the North Sea to Norrowa's land. There are other features, too, which reveal the Scandinavian affinities of the collection: these include the typically Scandinavian formula of nos. 19 and 20 (Taylor 1951:701, note 125); the many parallels to be found in Norwegian collections, in particular the largely unpublished Mss. of the Norsk Folkemminnesamling and the Torleiv Hannaas Collection in the University of Bergen, to which Mr. Brynjulf Alver introduced one of the co-authors of this article; and the Swedish parallels for no. 39 (von Sydow 1915:66) and no. 266 (Geijer and Campbell 1930:39).

In other ways too the collection has interesting features. In no. 4 it supplies another instance of the generally known comparison of a cabbage to a man standing on one leg, of which the only English language version in Taylor (1951) was collected in Bermuda. Nos. 58 and 59 supply two solutions to a riddle cited by Chambers with the answer lacking, while no. 144 does the same for a riddle for which Saxby quotes no answer. Furthermore, in practising the traditional entertainment of "laying up guddicks" (Saxby 1932:68), the contributors to this collection have added much riddle material not hitherto collected in the language-group which we may broadly call English.

These additions to our knowledge of the resources and affinities of riddles in English are net gains. But an assessment of the general state of tradition must also take into account the cases where informants appear not to have understood the riddles or to have given corrupt or half-remembered texts. To cite a few examples, in no. 37 "flies" should probably read "runs"; nos. 45 and 46 show doubts about the number of fingers used in spinning; in no. 75 the solution "pigs" is supplied, perhaps inadvertently, for "mill-stones"; in no. 92 "skiff" should read "staff"; and in no. 105d the snow-goddess has probably been confused with a well-known Scottish football team. Linguistically too there is much uncertainty, not only in matters of orthography: "calved" in no. 114 is a false and

meaningless anglicisation of “caaed” =drove, beat; in no. 139 “peer” =?poor should probably read “peerie” =small; and in no. 166 “shaped laek a triangle” is almost certainly an attempt to supply “crookit in a tangle” or some such phrase. It is also symptomatic of the state of tradition that in a few instances one doubts whether the texts are properly speaking to be considered as riddles, c.g. no. 301, a “veesik . . . softly crooned to a melancholy tune, and with hands stretched upwards and outward in earnest beseeching” (Saxby 1932:59). But there is an enigmatical quality in this as in such other instances as nos. 102, 302, and 303-304; and some of the informants have seen no distinctions between these, modern or literary riddles, and the older traditional material.

We have therefore thought it right to print the collection as it stands, drawing attention to some of the problems it poses, and leaving a fuller critical study until such time as new and exhaustive collections of riddles have been garnered from all parts of Scotland. Not the least important aspect of this Shetland collection is the promise it gives for future harvests.

1. *Hinghin high, crying sair, | He's da heid bit wants 4*  
*da hair.—Church bell.*  
*He's=Has. Gregor 81; Findlay 58.*
2. *I hae eyes in I hae nane, | I hae joints withoot a*  
*been, | I hae a face withoot a fetter | Bit I discern*  
*every critter.—A mirror.*  
*Been=bone; fetter=feature. Four examples,*  
*of which one lacks the first two lines.*
3. *I have an eye, I have none, | I have a leg without a*  
*bone, | I have a face without a feature | Yet I dis-*  
*cern every creature. — A telescope.*
4. *What is it dat staands on wan leg we its hert in its 32*  
*head? — A kale stock.*  
*Two examples.*
5. *What gangs upo' four legs in da morning, twa legs 47*  
*at noon, and three legs at night? — Man (crawling,*  
*walking, and walking on stick).*  
*Two examples. A. Nicolson 20.*
6. *Doon in yon meadow sits in stands | Six feet in twa cf. 55*  
*hands. — Wife milking a cow.*  
*S.S.S.R.L. 804.13.*

7. *Doon ida müdow, sits an staands | Eight feet an fower haands, | Lichts an livers lives tree. | Guess dis guddik an dan you'll see. — Woman, accompanied by a little girl, milking a cow.* 55  
*Tree=three.*
8. *Doon i'da meadow sits and staunds | Eight feet and fower hands, | Twa lookers | Two crookers | Twa upstaunders | And a flap tae flap awa da flees. — A woman and child and a cow.* cf. 55 and 1481-1489
9. *Twa hengen, fower gengen | An twa lyin in press. — The Virgin Mary sitting on the ass on her way to Bethlehem before Jesus was born.* cf. 57
10. *Fower feet rinnin, twa feet hingin, | Six feet lying in press. — Woman with child riding on a mare in foal.* cf. 57
11. *Ten taes, hunder nails, not a fit bit ene. — Thistle.* cf. 58  
*Fit=foot.*
12. *As I went to my faither's feast, | I met a grumbly guest, | 10 taes, 300 nails, an no a leg bit een. — A thistle.* cf. 58-60  
*Cf. Chambers 110; Gregor 80.*
13. *Three feet up cauld an dead, | Twa feet doon flesh in bluid, | Da head o' da livin i the mooth o' da dead. — An old man with a kettle on his head.* 67  
*Chambers 113; cf. Firth 135, The head o' the living in the mooth o' the dead | If thoo guesses this thoo'll get butter wi' thee bread.*
14. *Twa legs a' flesh an bluid, | Tree legs as cauld a[s] lead, | Da head o' da livin' a' da mooth o' da dead. | Guess my guddick or I'll shut de dead. — A man carrying a kettle on his head.* cf. 67  
*Shut=shoot.*
15. *Long legs and short thighs, | Peerie head and no eyes. — A pair of tongs.* 79  
*Peerie=little. Gregor 80.*
16. *Lang legs crookit thighs, | Sma' head an nae eyes. — Fire tongs.* 79  
*Four examples. J. Nicolson 92.*

17. *Lang leegs, no thighs, | Sma' head, an' no eyes. —* cf. 79,  
*Teengs.* 80  
Firth 135.
18. *Lang legs, nae knees, | Round feet like bawbees. —* cf. 79,  
*Fire tongs. Bressay.* 80  
Two examples.
19. *What is it dat gengs and gengs but never wins ta da* cf. 125-  
*door? — The clock.* 126  
Two examples. S.S.S.R.L. 795.2
20. *What gengs aa day bit never wins ta da door? —* cf. 125-  
*The clock.* 127  
Two examples.
21. *Aye rinnin, bit never wins ony farder. — The burn.*
22. *What gengs fae here ta Lerook and never moves? —* 128-130  
*The road.*  
*Lerook=Lerwick.*
23. *What gengs oot, but never comes in? — Smoke.*
24. *Whit rins but canna walk? — A burn.*
25. *Whin I geng I geng atween twa woods, | Whin I* 166  
*come I come atween twa watters. — Going to the well*  
*with two dafficks.*  
*Dafficks=wooden pails. Five examples. Gregor*  
*82; A. Nicolson 42.*
26. *Whin I guid fae da hoose I guid atween twa wids, |* 166  
*Whin I cam back I cam atween twa watters. —*  
*Going to the well with two wooden pails or dafficks.*  
Two examples.
27. *I gude oot atween twa wids | An' I cam back atween* 166  
*twa waters — Person fetching water in wooden*  
*dafficks.*  
Four examples. Spence 184, Saxby 68.
28. *Oot a hol in in a hol | Trailing a' hits guts ahint* cf. 133-  
*hit. — Needle and thread.* 135,  
Two examples. A. Nicolson 48. 205-207
29. *Oot a hole, an' in a hole, | Trailin' a' its guts eftir*  
*it. — A needle and thread.*  
Seven examples. J. Nicolson 91.



30. *Out a hole and in a hole | And all its guts trailing.*  
— *A needle and thread.*
31. *Oot a høl and in a høl dreggin aa its innards efter it.*  
— *A needle.*  
Two examples.
32. *Oot a door an' in a door dregin' its guts ahint it.* —  
*Needle and thread.*
33. *Atween twa hills I heard a roar, | I looked aroond* cf. 229-  
*and saw it no more.* — *Wind.* 232
34. *Aye aetin' an' never fu'.* — *A horse.* cf. 237
35. *What is it that sleeps a' day an' wakes a' night?* cf. 254,  
— *A pair of shoes, the eyelets being closed with laces* 255  
*during the day and open at night when unlaced.*
36. *Rins fastest wi hits leg broken.* — *A hedder cow.*  
*Hedder cow*=branch of heather.  
Four examples. Firth 134, *rins best*; A. Nicolson  
34.
37. *What is it that flies fastest when its leg is broken?* —  
*A heather kow.*
38. *What has no feet, but wears shoes?* — *The horse.*
39. *Hookiti, krookiti, whaar rins du? | Clippit-tail*  
*every year, why spoörs du?* — *Conversation between*  
*the meadow and the burn. The meadow calls the burn*  
*hookiti krookiti because of its twists and turns. The*  
*burn replies and calls the meadow clippit-tail because*  
*it is mown every year.*  
*Spoörs*=asks. Nine examples. Spence 184, *foo*  
*runs du?*; Firth 134, *whit wants thoo?*; J. Nicolson  
89.
40. *Alkie palikie foo rins do? | Clippet tail every year*  
*foo spuir do?* — *Corn.*
41. *I lay de up a guddick, guess him if do can | He rins*  
*aboot da world, wi ten heads on.* — *A thorn.*
42. *What has many een but canna see?* — *Potato.* 277
43. *I hae a eye I canna see | I hae twa herts in my body |*  
*Every time I turn aboot | My guts dey ay come*  
*turning oot.* — *A spinning wheel.*

44. *I have one heart in my bodie | I have one eye but cannot see | I have three legs but cannot walk | I make a noise but cannot talk. — A spinning wheel.*
45. *I hae an ee but canna see, | I hae twa herts in my body, | I hae four maids at my command, | I hae three legs bit no a haand, | I rin as fast as ony mill | And yit me feet ir standing still. — A spinning wheel.*
46. *I hae a ee, bit I canna see, — I hae twa herts in my boady, | I hae tree feet ithoot a haand, | I hae five maids at my command, | An whidder I be in ir oot | Mi guts ir alwis mi withoot. — A spinning wheel. cf. Spence 183.*
47. *As I cam doon trow yonder hill | I heard a rumble root, | Aye she rushed in aye she roared | In aye she ran aboot. — A water mill.*
48. *Hogie, bogie oot a dyke, hogie, bogie in a dyke | If doo touches hogie bogie, hogie bogie will bite dee. — A nettle. 342*  
Chambers 109; Gregor 80; Simpkins 306.
49. *Hogie-bogie oot a decks | Hogie-bogie in a decks | If du touches hogie-bogie | Hogie-bogie'll bite de. — A thistle. 342*  
Four examples, with *Hittie pittie*, *Heggie peggie*, *Haggie paggie*. J. Nicolson 90, *Haggie paggie*.
50. *Henkie Penkie oot a decks | Henkie Penkie in a decks | If do meets Henkie Penkie | Henkie Penkie'll bite de. — Barbed wire. 342*
51. *Born baneless, flees wingless, in sings till it dies. — Wind. cf. 365-366*  
Two examples.
52. *Peerie fool feaderless, noo come oot o' Paradise, | Sat upo da castle wa'. | By cam Lord Laandless, peshed him up haandless, | Red awa horseless. — Snowflakes. 367-369*  
*Peerie*=little; *fool*=fowl.  
Cf. Gregor 81; S.S.S.R.L. 795.2.
53. *Der cam a peerie white bird fae Paradise, | An sat on da mukklee haa wa. | By cam Lord Landless an sweepit him awa. — Snow followed by rain. 367-369*

54. *White fool featherless new come oot o' paradise | Flying ower da mill dams, catch hit if do can. — Snow.* 367-369  
Two examples; b *peerie foal featherless fleein' ower*; Spence 184; *peerie fool . . . catch me if du be a man.*
55. *Peerie fo'l fedderless | Came ower da mill dam | New come oot o' paradise | Guess what I am. — A snowflake.* 367-369
56. *Peerie fool feaderless, noo com oot o' Paradise, | Fleein' o'er da sea an laand, | Deein' in my haand. — Snaw.* 367-369  
Two examples; b *fool fleein' fedderliss.*
57. *Fleein far but featherless | New come oot o' Paradise, | Fleein ower da sea, an laund, deein imme haund. — Snow.* 367-369  
Two examples. Saxby 68.
58. *Up i' yon haa | I heard a cock craw | A dead man seekin' a drink. — Door creaking and requiring oiling.* 378  
Five examples; c *doon in yon haa.*  
Chambers 109, *doon*, answer lacking; J. Nicolson 92.
59. *Doon in yon ha' I heard a cock craw, | A deid man seekin' a drink. — A kettle boiling dry.* 378  
Chambers 109, answer lacking.
60. *The roaring bull o' Norrawa, he roars aa day and he roars aa night, he roars about the marable stane, and white milk he brings hame. — The sea.* cf. 397
61. *Da perrie broon bull wi ae horn, | Aets far mair dan a scroo o' corn. — A brown teapot.* cf. 399-400  
Two examples; b *ates mair dan a hale screw o' corn.*
62. *A mylke-white steed tied fast till his tree, | He gings mony a weary gaet, it he doesna laek ta be. — A sailing ship.*
63. *Bridled and saddled in tied ta her t[r?]ee | Money days ride whaur her hert widna be. — A boat tied in a noost.* cf. 419  
*Noost = boat-pen.*

64. *What is it dat staands afore da bed gaping for your banes? — Your smucks.* 453  
*Smucks*=cloth slippers. Gregor 82.
65. *As I cam by yon peerie hoose door | I heard a njaarm mute. | Aye it drank | And aye it drank, | An' aye it spat it oot. — The water mill grinding.*  
*Njaarm*=cat.
66. *Shu sits at da fire we a taund at her tail, | In blows laek da steamer comin in wo da mail. — Teapot.*  
*Taund*=ember.
67. *Twa feet sat upo three feet. | In came fower feet and took a fit fae twa feet. | Up got twa feet and hoved three feet efter fower feet and took a fit again. — A wife sitting sweein sheeps feet. Da dog taks wan; shu hoves da tree-legged stool efter him an gets da sheeps fit back again.* 461  
*Swee*=to singe.
68. *As I cam ower da mires o lea | Fower an twenty monsters cam shaestin me, | And hed I no been baith witty an we, | Da foremaist ane wid a grippit me. — A little mouse escapes being caught by the cat; and exaggerates.*  
*Shaestin*=chasing.
69. *Da mair she gits, da mair she cries. | Da lesser she gits da stiller she lies. — A hand-mill.* 481
70. *Doon in yon meadow lies twa gaats, | Da mair dey get da mair dey cry, | Da lesser dey get da stiller dey lie. — The two millstones grinding.* 481  
*Gaats*=pigs.  
Two examples.
71. *Twa grey gaats in yonder hoose did lie | Da mair dey get da mair dey cry, | Da lesser dey get, da stiller dey lie. — Millstones.* 481  
Two examples. J. Nicolson 90.
72. *Twa graet goats lay in yon sty, | Da mair dey get, da mair dey cry. | Da lesser dey get, da stillir dey lie. — The mill stenes.* 481  
*Goats* i.e. *gauts*=pigs.  
Three examples. Firth 134, third line lacking.

73. *Twa grey grumpies, lycin' in a sty | Da mair dey aet, da mair dey cry, | Da lesser dey git, da stiller dey lie. — The two millstones.* 481  
Two examples; b *Twa grey grices*. Spence 184, *lay in ae sty*.
74. *Twa peerie gray grices lycin in a sty | Da mair dey gie dem da mair dey cry | Da lesser dey gie dem da stiller dey lie. — Da mill-stanes.* 481
75. *Twa grey gailties lying ida sty | Da mair dey get da mair dey sigh | Da less dey get da shurer dey die. — Pigs [Millstones].* 481
76. *A crii a white sheep, an a red ram in da middle. — The teeth and tongue.* 498  
*Crii*=pen.  
Two examples.
77. *Twinty white horses upun a rid hill | Dere dey go, dere dey go, | Dere dey staand still. — Teeth moving on tongue.* 503  
Two examples; b *fower an' twenty*.
78. *Twinty white horses upon a red hill | Gallopin, gallopin, in dan da staund still. — Eating with your teeth.* 503  
Two examples; b *therty . . . yet dey stand still*.
79. *Auld mither twitchet haes only wan eye | In a lang tail it shu lets fly | Every time shu goes over a gap | Shu laves a bit o her tail in a trap. — Sewing with a needle.* 533  
*Twitchet, twitsket*=sullen, surly; *in*=and; *it*=that.
80. *Hentle pentle bent his back | Tree times afore he spak | A beard o' flesh in a mooth o' horn | Sic a man was never born. — A cock crowing.* 539-542  
cf. Chambers 109.
81. *A baird a' flesh in a mooth a' horn | Sic a baste wis never born. — A cock.* 539-542  
Two examples; b *sic a craetir*.
82. *My back is wid, my belly is wid, my sides is lined we leather, | A nose a brass and a hole on my back and its very windy weather. — Bellows.* 553  
cf. Findlay 59.

83. *My back is widden, my belly is widden | My sides is guid tanned ledder. | My nose is brass it dey stuck ida ase | Am used in aa kinds o wadder. — Bellows. Ase=ash.* 553
84. *Lang man legless cam tae da door staffless. "Guid wife tak in your hens and duiks, for cats an' dogs I carena." — A worm. Five examples; e fir cats in dugs hits needless. Chambers 111; cf. Gregor 81; S.S.S.R.L. 795.2.* 562
85. *High up in the air I was hung, | A hairy lass, an' an iron tongue | Dumb to all that passes by | Touch my tail an' then I'll cry. — The kirk bell.*
86. *There was an ancient prophet, his name no-one can tell, | For he was in the garden before Adam fell, | Sin and adultery was a' as een ta him | Fir at da 'our o' death he wis never reproved for sin. — A cock. cf. Chambers 112; Findlay 60.* cf. 585
87. *There was a man in Adam's race | His name I dare not tell, | He was in the Ark with Noah | And Peter when they fell. | He wears a coat like Joseph's coat | A coat of many colours, | He wears a collar round his neck | And so does all his fellows. — A cock. cf. 585*
88. *Jenny wi' her white petticoat an' her red nose | Da langer she stands da lesser she grows. — A candle. Four examples; c white goon; d nettie cot an' her white petticoat. A. Nicolson 44; J. Nicolson 89.* 607-631
89. *What is it da langer hit lives, da shorter hit grows? — A candle.* 625-631
90. *A peerie short man wi a peerie red cott | A staff in his haand, an a bane in his trott. — Fiddle and bow. Trott=throat. Two examples; b peerie peerie . . . red red.* cf. 640
91. *A peerie peerie man wae a red red coat, | A staff in his haand an' a bane in his trot | Singin' Reedle im-a reedle-im-a rot tot tot. — A fiddle.* cf. 640

92. *Riddle me, riddle me, rot, tot, tot, | A wee wee man wi a red red cot, | A skiff i his haand, an a stane i his kooat, | Riddle me, riddle me, rot, tot, tot. — A plum.* 640  
cf. Chambers 109; Gregor 80; Findlay 58.
93. *I guid an' I kent na whar, I cam an I kent na foo, I got da thing that I'll never forget, an cam a maiden back. — A christening.*
94. *What maks strife an strife between twa kings | An maks true lovers glad? — The pen.* cf. 674-677
95. *Frae my midder dey took me young, | An' wi' a knife dey cut me tongue, | An' made me spaek against me will, | Sometimes guid, an' sometimes ill. — Quill pen.*
96. *What gengs aboot da hoose a' day | An' he's at da back o' da door at nicht. — A floor brush.* 695
97. *What is it dat wanders aroond da hoose aa day bit never rins oot da door? — The broom sweeping the floor.* 695-699
98. *Whin do gengs fae da hoose do gengs we di face ta him | An whin do comes ta da hoose do comes wi de back ta him. — A man rowin in a boat.* cf. 722-724  
Ten examples. Saxby 69.
99. *Wha ist it haes his face ti dee till he's oot i sight and comes backleens haem agen? — A man rowing a boat to the fishing and back again.* cf. 722-724
100. *Virda field puts on his cap | Erisdale has a laugh at dat. — Mist on the hill, none in the valley.*  
cf. Chambers 374 for a similar weather-rhyme from Galloway.
101. *Humpty Dumpty sat on da wall | Humpty Dumpty had a great faa | A' da King's noblemen | Couldna pit him together again. — Egg falling out of a nest.* 738  
cf. Gregor 78.
102. *Stumpy stood at my bed door, an' stumpy got a fa' | An' a' doctors in da laand couldna cure stumpy's fa'. — A bottle.* 742

103. *Puff puff ida auld mans pan. — A man smoking a pipe.*
104. *Fire water earth air | Every customer taks twa pair. 796*  
— *A set of horse shune.*
105. *De Queen o' da Nort | She pluckit her geese | An sent da fedders doon ta Leith. — Snowflakes falling.*  
Four examples; c *Cock o' da Nort*, d *Queen o' da Sooth.*  
J. Nicolson 90. Cf. Chambers 184, *The men o' the East | Are pyking their geese | And sending their feathers here away, here away.*
106. *Peep, peep, | If da wattir is ever sae deep, | A'al win ower, an' a' me sheep. — The moon and stars.*  
*A'al = I'll.*  
Three examples. J. Nicolson 91.
107. *Hookitie, crookitie, rinnin' me lane | Cairdin' oo aff a muckle stane | Whirmin among da heddercoves | Chestin' masel' round da ferry knowes. — A mountain stream.*  
*Cairdin' oo = carding wool; whirmin' = twisting; heddercoves = heather stems; chestin' = chasing; ferry knowes = fairy hills.*  
Three examples. Saxby 69.
108. *Oot about in about, rinnin me lane, | Cairdin oo aff a muckle stane. | Whirmin amang da hedder coves | Shaestin mesel roon da ferry knowes. — A hill burn.*
109. *As I cam' ower da Brig o' Dee | I met my sister Annie | I dang aff her head an' drank her bluid | An' left her body standin'. — Man drinking from a bottle. 805*  
Seven examples; b *pood aff . . . an sookit*; c *London Bridge . . . braik her kneck*; d *bottle brig . . . took aff. — Bottle of wine*; e *cam down trow yonder hill . . . cut her trot — Wine*; f *yon heathery hill . . . cutted her trot*; g *Brig o' Fitch . . . brook her neck — Wine.*  
J. Nicolson 90; S.S.S.R.L. 795.2. Cf. Gregor 76, 77.



110. *Underneath water I lay | Neither drowned nor cast  
away | And by experience I can tell | Water made  
my belly swell. — A barrel.* 821-822
111. *Scratch me back in am naebody | Keep me clean in  
am everybody. — A mirror.* 826
112. *Reddie lays at blackie's tail an a' his guts wallops.  
— Kettle boiling.* 873  
Five examples; c *Blackie's back*; d *likks at*; e  
*dings*.  
J. Nicolson 91; cf. G.W.R. 53, *A reed bull fightin'  
at the [hin'-end] o' a black bull an' the black bull's  
guts rumlin'*. — *A pot boiling over the fire.*
113. *Redda caaing in blacka's boddam in aa his gutts  
walloping. — An iron kettle boiling on an open fire.* 873  
Two examples; b *Riddie dings in*.
114. *Reida calved in Blacka's erse | and a' her guts wal-  
lowed. — A fire burning beneath a kettle.* 873
115. *Redi beats Blackie till aa his guts rumble. — Fire and  
boiling kettle.* 873
116. *Ten men in a den, an nane o' de[e]m ootmost. —  
Spokes of a wheel.* cf. 906-  
916
117. *Doon in yon meadow lies a lump o' fat, | Four and  
twenty carpenters going at, going at, | Some wi'  
black and blue jackets, some wi' saft hats | I'll ca'  
de a wise man if do can guess me dat. — Honey bees.* cf. 946-  
950
118. *Two auld grey men began ta fight whin da world  
began in dere fightin yet. — Da sea in da rocks.*
119. *Dey klure een anodder a day | An' lie in een [an]  
idders bosoms a' nicht. — Pair o' cairds.* 968  
*Klure*=claw.  
Spence 183; Firth 135.
120. *Himli, bumli, brook his baand | An' he set add ta  
Norroway's laand; | Da King an' aa his noblemen |  
Couldna bring Humli back again. — A storm.*  
*Add*=out.  
Two examples. J. Nicolson 92.

121. *Humblie bumblie brook his baand | An fled awa ta Norrowa laand. | Da King in a' his noble men | Couldna bring him back again. — Da wind.*  
cf. Chambers 184, *Arthur o' Bower has broken his bands | And he's come roaring owre the lands | The King o' Scots and a' his power | Canna turn Arthur o' Bower.*
122. *Doon in the meadow, tink, tank, ten aboot four. — 978*  
*Wife milking a cow.*
123. *Tink, tank, under da bank | Ten upo fower. — 978*  
*Milking a cow.*
124. *Tank, tank, anunder a bank | Ten aboot fower. — 978*  
*Someone milking a cow.*  
Four examples; c and d, *ten aboot fower* (bis).  
Spence 182, *twa in a bank*. Firth 135.
125. *Tink, tank, in a watery bank | Ten ipo four. — 978*  
*Milking a cow.*  
Seven examples; g *hank tank*.  
J. Nicolson 91.
126. *Hank tank feathery bank, ten aa pa four. — Some- 978*  
*one milking a cow.*
127. *I sat in my love and drank out of my love | An my love she gave me light | A cup o' guid ale to any man | That reads my riddle right. — A man who made a chair from his sweetheart's bones, drank out of her skull, and made candles from her fat.*
128. *I sat i my love, an' I drank i my love, | An' my love she gave me light. | A pint o' wine to any man that reads my riddle richt. — Wood—chair, cup and firewood, all wood.*  
cf. Chambers 108.
129. *He loved her, and she hated him | Yet, woman-like, sought after him. | Her success was his down-fall | For he died—crack. — A flea.*  
Two examples; b *his overthrow*.
130. *I hae seven bridders a' da same age | An' four sisters quadruplets. | Ah'm da youngest een; I grow older an' dey dinna | An' yet I never o'ertak them. — The month of February.*

131. *What is it that goes to the hills before its father is born? — Smoke from a fire.* 985
132. *We ir twa bridders heavy burdens we bear | We dem we ir bitterly prest | We're foo aa day in empty at night | When we geng ta rest. — Boots.* 991
133. *Two brothers are we, heavy burdens we bear, | When night comes we go to bed empty and rest. — A pair of shoes.* 991  
S.S.S.R.L. 795.2.
134. *Twa bridders we are | Great burdens we bear | A' day we're oppressed | An' at night we're at rest. — A pair of boots.* 991
135. *Twa bridders we are, heavy burdens we bear, | Sorely oppressed a' day an' empty whin we go tae rest. — A pair of boots.* 991
136. *Two brothers we are | Great burdens we bear | By which we are heavy oppressed | We work hard all day | No food we deserve | And at night we go empty to rest. — A pair of buits.* 991
137. *Auld midder auld | Lives ida cauld | Brings oot her young | Everyene without a tongue. — Tattie.* 1021
138. *Auld midder, auld, staunds i' da cauld, | An' brings oot her bairns we eyes, bit nae tongue. — A potato.* 1021
139. *A lazy wife a hard wirkin man in 12 peer black bairns. — A clock.*
140. *Da peerie lazy faider | Da lang hard wrocht midder | An' twelve black bairns. — A clock face.*
141. *A lazy faider an' a wirkin' midder | An twall peerie bairns sittin' roond da floer. — A clock.*
142. *A lang hard-wirkin midder, a peerie lazy faeder, an twal peerie black bairns on a clean washen flör. — Minute and hour hands and the numbers on the face of the clock.*
143. *A hard working midder and a lazy auld fadder, twelve peerie black bairns in a hoose sweeped white. — Face of a clock.*

144. *Heddercow röt I grow | Birkin fit I staand | I redd  
a mare niver was foaled | An leddit da midder i mi  
haand. — A boat.*  
Informant adds the following explanations for  
each line: small beginning; the tree; sea waves;  
*Moder dy* or mother wave.  
Saxby 68, answer lacking.
145. *Down in a meadow I grew | An axe did me destroy |* cf. 1059  
*Dead I was but quick I am | And now I sing for joy.*  
*— A fiddle made from a tree.*  
Four examples; c *once dead I was, now live I am;*  
d *I wing with joy.*  
S.S.S.R.L. 795.2.
146. *What rows o'er da hoose, lack a hallo o' strae? —*  
*Reek.*  
*Hallo*=bundle of straw used as fodder.
147. *Whit is't it seeks its wye furt lack a halloo i strae?*  
*— "Reek" finding its way out from an open fire in the  
centre of the floor, and twisting about like a bundle of  
"treshen" corn.*
148. *The flour of England, the fruit of Spain, | Met* 1096  
*together in a shour of rain. | Rowd in a napkin, tied*  
*wi' a string. | Guess my riddle an' I'll gie you a ring.*  
*— A plum pudding.*  
*Rowd*=rolled.  
Two examples; b *Read di me riddle an du's get a  
ring. — A currant pudding.*
149. *Da floor o' England and da fat o' Spain | Baith met* 1096  
*ta-gedder in a shooer o' rain, | Pitten in a pock tied*  
*wi a string, | Read do me a riddle an' do sall get a*  
*ring. — A dumpling.*  
*Pock*=bag.  
Two examples; b *put in a bag . . . | Guess my  
guddick.*
150. *The peeriest lom aboot da hoose | haes mair dan a*  
*hunder girds. — A reel of thread.*  
*Lom*=vessel, utensil.
151. *Da peeriest loum aboot da hoose | Hes maist girds*  
*aboot hit. — Reel of thread.*  
Two examples.

152. *A peerie ha hoose | Wi' neither door nor window. —* 1132  
*An egg.*  
 Two examples; b *doors nor lums*. A. Nicolson 32.
153. *A peerie ha hoose | Foo o' meat | An' wi nedder doors* 1135  
*or windows. — An egg.*  
 Two examples; b *peerie hoose*. J. Nicolson 91.
154. *A peerie white haa hoose, a' foo a meat, nae doors or* 1135  
*windows tae lat you in tae eat. — An egg.*  
 cf. Gregor 79.
155. *Peerie hoose weel packit, | Nedder door nor window* 1135  
*at it. — An egg.*
156. *A marable waa as white as milk | An lining ta it as* 1138  
*saft as silk | Aroond aboot it a fountain clear | And*  
*in a ta da hert o it a golden pear. — An egg.*
157. *A marble wall as white as milk | Inside of that is* 1138  
*lined with silk | Inside of that is a fountain clear |*  
*And inside that a golden pear. — An egg.*
158. *Wir neebir wife axed fir a lenn i my boddamless tub* 1173  
*ta pit her flesh in. — A wedding ring.*
159. *Queen Elizabeth sent Queen Anne | A bottomless* 1173  
*barrel ta pit beef in. — A ring.*
160. *Hummell-bummell boddomless hads a at incomes. —*  
*A skirt.*  
 Twelve examples; *humbley bumbley; hum bum,*  
*etc.—skirt or petticoat*. J. Nicolson 90.
161. *Black aboot spooting oot | Laeking ta be mair. —*  
*Rain.*
162. *Wingle, wangle, in a tangle | If it wis even, hit wid*  
*rekk ta heevin. — Smoke from a chimney.*  
*Rekk*=reach. Four examples; b *winglety wangle;*  
 c and d, *If I was even*. J. Nicolson 92.
163. *Wingle, wangle like a tangle and reaches up sae*  
*high. — Smoke.*
164. *Wingle wangle lik a tangle | If I was straight I'd*  
*rek tae da sky. — Smoke.*  
 Two examples; b *crooke laek a tangle | if it was*  
*straight.*

165. *Winglety ringlety crookit like a tangle | Takkin' its wey wi' never a jangle | Winglety ringlety if it wiz even | Hit could reach frae here to Heaven. — Smoke from a chimney.*  
Three examples. Saxby 69.
166. *Wingelty, ringelty, shaep-ed laek a triangle, | Makkin mi wey wi money a kangle, | I belaeve it iv I wis even | I wid raech fae here ta heeven. — Reek coming out of the lum on a calm day.*
167. *What is it which dead men eat | If living men ate they would die? — Nothing.*
168. *As I went oot one morning in May | I found a thing in a cole o' hay | Hit wis neither fish, flesh, feather or bone | So I left it till hit could go alone. — An egg.* 1237  
*Cole*=haycock. Eight examples; *d in the face o' my hay*, *e* and *f fish flesh skin or bane*, *g bruskie or ben*, *h sinnoo or bane*. *Bruskie*=gristle. Spence 185.
169. *What is taen tae da table | Cut but never eaten? — Cards.*
170. *Peerier dan a moose, bigger dan a loose | Hit haes mair windows on it as a' da King's hoose. — A thimble.* 1264  
Six examples; *d gritter dan a loose*, *e* and *f haes as mony windows*. S.S.S.R.L. 795.2.
171. *Bigger as a loose peerier as a moose | Yet has mair doors an windows as i' da King's hoose. — A thimble.* 1264  
Three examples; *c It haes mair windows*. J. Nicolson 91.
172. *What is it that's higher than a steeple, lighter than a feather, yet no man can lift it? — A shadow.*
173. *Roond as an O | Black as a tanny | A wee wee wife in a wee wee many. — Penny.*  
*Tanny*=a dark complexioned person.
174. *As roond as an O, aan as broon as tan | A wee wee wife an' a wee wee man. — A penny.*

175. *Roond as an O, an clear as crystal. — A drop o' water.* 1314
176. *As roond as an O, an' as clear as crystal | If du dusna guess my guddick I'll shut de wae my pistol. — A rain drop.* 1314
177. *Roond as an O as clear is crystal | If do dosena guess dat a'll shoot de wi my pistol. — Moon.* 1314
178. *Roond as an O | An' clear as crystal | If du guess me guddick | Ise shut de wi' me pistol. — A watch.* 1314  
cf. Gregor 76; Findlay 58.
179. *Roond as an O, an' deeper as a cup, | An' a' da men in Shetland canna lift him up. — A well.* cf. 1315-1325
180. *Roond as a grind steen | Luggit lake a kert | A' da ribs wethin hits boadie | Rins till hits hert. — A mill wheel.*
181. *Roond laek a mill stane luggit laek a cat | If do wid guess aa day do widna guess dat. — A muckle kettle.* cf. 1343  
Seven examples; e *if do gusses ä day dööl never guess me dat*, f *guess du aa day du'll no guess dat*, g *do can guess a' day*.
182. *Roond like a mill stane | Lugged like a cat | Standing upon three legs | Can du guess dat? — Old-fashioned three-legged pot.* cf. 1343  
Spence 184.
183. *Roond as a millstane | Luggit as a cat | Ye can guess a' day | Ye'll no guess dat. — Washing-tub.* 1343  
Three examples. J. Nicolson 91; cf. Gregor 79.
184. *As roond as an O, lugged lik a cat, | If you'd guess aa day you widna guess dat. — A muckle kettle.* cf. 1343
185. *Roond as a mill-stane shaped laek a cup | Aa da men in Europe coodna lift hit up. — Moon.*
186. *Round as an O, sharp as a lance, | If do wis apon its back it wid carry de ta France. — Da moon.* 1348  
Four examples; c *cood win ipon his back*, d *wis on da tap o hit*.

187. *Roond as a riddle | Sharp as a lance | If ye wid jump  
ipo me | I'd carry you ta France. — The moon.* 1348  
*Riddle=sieve. Two examples; b upo my back.*  
J. Nicolson 92.
188. *Roond as a lum, an' spottit laek a lark, | An' every  
time its hert baets, it gies a peerie bark. — A clock.*
189. *As hard as horn, as soft as silk, | As red as blood, as  
white as milk. — An egg.*
190. *Hard as horn and soft as silk | Black as tar, an' as  
white as milk. — Da swan.*
191. *Foo dark, foo dark, foo deep it is | Foo rough about  
da mooth it is, | For Kings and priests and lords it  
is. — A grave.*
192. *Mouth like a mill door | Luggit like a cat | Guess  
a' day | An' doo'll no guess dat. — A three-legged  
pot.* 1397  
Chambers 109; Firth 134, *lugs like a cat. — A  
lugged sheu (shoe); G. W. R. 53.*
193. *Shapet laik a mill door | Lugget laek a cat | Guess  
aa day an' du'll no guess dat. — A sack of meal.*
194. *Hairy oot hairy in | Lift di fit in shove him in. — A  
sock.* 1416  
Two examples.
195. *Oo without, oo within, | Lift de leeg and push it in.  
— A stocking.* 1416  
*Oo=wool. Firth 135, woo' | Not a single bit of  
skin | Lift thee leg an' shove it in.*
196. *Hair athoot and hair ithin | A' hair an' nae skin. —  
A hair rope.* 1418  
Chambers 109; Gregor 80; Findlay 59.
197. *Hair without, hair within | All hair in nae skeen.  
— Girsy simminds.* 1418  
*Girsy=grassy; simmind=rope; skeen=skin.*
198. *Hairy without an hairy within, | Aa hair an nae  
skin. — A wirsit glove.*  
*Wirsit=worsted.*



199. *Hair withoot, hair within, | A' hair an' nae skin.*  
— *A rower.*  
*Rower*=carded wool rolled between the backs of the cards and ready for spinning.
200. *What is neither within da hoose nor without the house? — The window.* 1423
201. *What is it, dats nedder in da hoose nor oot o' da hoose, an yet hits aboot da hoose? — The windows.* 1423  
Nine examples; i part of the house. Gregor 82.
202. *What's neider outside o' da hoose, or inside o' da hoose, an' yet is in da hoose? — The door.* 1423
203. *I'm nedder i' da hoose | Nor oot o' da hoose | Bit I'm aboot da hoose. — The lum.* 1423  
Two examples.
204. *Afore laek a fork | Behint laek a stock | Da middle laek a spoot | Whaur da watter rins oot. — An ox.*
205. *A heid lik a yarn klo' | An' a body lik a buggy o' sids. — Cat.*  
*Yarn klo'*=ball of yarn; *buggy*=sheepskin bag; *sid*=a husk of oats, etc.
206. *A head like a simint cloo | A body like a buggie o ooo | A tail like a staff. — A cat.*  
*Simint cloo*=ball of rope, cord. Two examples; b has first two lines transposed.
207. *Head lake a simmond clue | Bodie lake a buggy o' oo | Heid lake a green hazel staff. — A cat.*  
*Heid* inadvertently for *tail* in line 3.
208. *A belly laek a buggy o ool | A heid laek a yarn clue | In a tail lake a lazy staff. — A cat.*
209. *A body like a buggie a oo | A head like a heather clue | A tail like a bismer. — A cat.*  
*Bismer*=balance (for weighing).
210. *A head laek a hedder clew | A boady laek a buggie o' oo | A tail laek a rower. — A cat.*  
*Rower*=roll of carded wool.
211. *A body like a sock a oo | A head like waftie clue | A tail like a rower. — A cat.*  
*Waft*=warp.

212. *What has a heid lik a cloo | An' a boady lik a buggy  
o' suds? — Cat.*  
*suds, i.e. sids=husks.*
213. *A boody lik a buggy o oo | A head lik a simmond  
clew, | Four feet an twenty nails, | An' a tail lik a  
teengs. — A cat.*  
*Teengs=tongs. S.S.S.R.L. 795.2.*
214. *Patch ore Patch, withoot ony stitches, | If do tell me 1438  
dis riddle I'll gie de my breeches. — Kale stock.*
215. *What goes in saft in dry in comes oot weet in dreepin? cf. 1448-  
— Tea. 1452*
216. *In he goes, cauld, raw, soople, oot he comes haet,  
boiled, stivvened. — Cooking sheep's puddings.*  
*Stivvened from steeve=stiff, firm.*
217. *What is highest with the head off? — A pillow. 1454*
218. *What is its aa holes and yet it hadds water? — 1459  
Sponge.*
219. *What is all holes and yet it holds water? — Crook 1461  
and links used on an old Shetland open fire-place.*  
*Six examples.*
220. *Twa lookers and twa crookers | Twa flappers and 1476  
fower gingers an fower hingers | An a flap tae flap  
da flees awa. — Cow.*  
*I.F.C. Ms. 1026, 112.*
221. *Four still-staanders, four dill-dawners | Twa 1478  
lookers, twa crookers an' a switcher. — A cow.*  
*dill=to sway, swing about.*
222. *Four stiff standers, four dilly danders | Twa un- 1478  
lookers, twa hookitie crookers, | An one dilly dander.*  
*— A cow.*  
*cf. Spence 182.*
223. *Four hang and four go | Two stand firm and fast | cf. 1481-  
Two shine like the sky | And een comes last. — A 1489  
cow—has four teats, four legs, two horns, two eyes  
and one tail.*  
*Three examples. Saxby 69.*

224. *Fower hingers, fower gingers, twa upstaanders | Ane coming on behint ta flap da flies away. — A cow.* cf. 1481-1489
225. *Ruffie raise an raxed him, stuid a while and stivened him. Fower i da earth i twa i da air. Ane oot ahint and ane oot afore. — Grise—pig.* cf. 1490-1494  
*Raxed*=stretched.
226. *Four neuked, tail teuked, teeth oot a number. — Wool cards.*  
*Neuked*=cornered; *teukit*=? hardened, rigid.  
 Nine examples; g *tail djukit*, h *tail kuikit*, i *teeth ithoot number*. Spence 183; J. Nicolson 89.
227. *Two white sticks an tree white sheets | An she walks o'er da watter, withoot any feet. — Sailing ship.*
228. *Black withoot in black within | A' hair in nee sken. — A rower.*
229. *Black and ugly though I be, der no a leddy in the land that widna tak me in her hand. — A tea kettle.*
230. *Everything has what da puddin has. | What has da puddin? — A name.* 1573-1575
231. *Du dusna hae it, an du widna laik tae hae it, | But if du had it du widna laik tae want it. — A bald head.* 1593
232. *Formed long ago, yet made to-day, | Employed while others sleep, | What few would like to do without | And none would like to keep. — A bed.* 1596
233. *What is it nane likes ta keep in nane likes ta gee awa? — Bed.* 1596
234. *What is it few men wid laek ta keep bit nae man wid laek ta want? — Their bed.* 1596
235. *What is it that everyone requires and no-one wants to keep? — Your bed.* 1596
236. *Trow a rock trow a reel trow an auld spinny wheel | Trow a sheeps shank bone sick a trick wis never done. — A worm in a sheep's fit.* cf. 1597-1603  
*Fit*=foot. Firth 134; *As I cam' ower the hill o' heather | There I met a man o' leather | Throw a rock . . . Sic a man was never known. — A wood-worm.*

237. *Trou a rock, trou a reel | Trou an aald spinnie wheel* cf. 1597-  
*| Trou a sheep shank bone | Sic a job was never done.* 1603  
 — *A man weaving.*  
 Two examples. cf. Spence 184, line 4 lacking,  
 — *A web of cloth*; J. Nicolson 90.
238. *What can gang up da lum doon but canna go doon da* 1604  
*lum up? — An umbrella.*  
 Four examples.
239. *What can't go down a rainpipe up but can go up a* 1604  
*rainpipe down? — Umbrella.*  
 Two examples; b *can go up a spout down.*
240. *I gaed awa abune da eart an' cam agen anunder da*  
*eart. — A person going away with an empty kishie*  
*and returning with it full of peats or mould.*  
*Kishie* = a straw basket.
241. *It guid west abune an' cam hame in-under. — A*  
*man carrying a burden of "flaws".*  
*Flaa* = flake of turf torn up by hand and used  
 in thatching.
242. *What goes in through a womble bore | An' canna*  
*come oot through an ox byre door? — Snow.*  
*Womble* = augur.
243. *Whit can win in tru a whomlie bore | Yit canna com*  
*oot tru an ox byre door? — The sun.*
244. *Whit ist it canna turn itsel in a coo's byre, yet can*  
*geng troo a moose hol? — A sunbeam.*  
*Saxby 69, coo's byre for size — Sunshine.*
245. *What is it, it never wis, an never will be? | Hadd* 1629  
*dy haand up, an den du'll see. — The little finger is*  
*always shorter than the rest.*
246. *I guid an I got it, | I set me doon an sought it, | An'* 1632-1642  
*whin I couldna fin it | I took it hame wi' me. — A*  
*thorn in the sole.*  
 Two examples.
247. *I guid an got it, I sat an socht it | Caase I coodna fin* 1632-1642  
*it, I cam hame carrying it. — A thorn in the foot.*

248. *Banks foo and brae foo, gadder a day and doo'l never get de haand foo. — Mist.* 1651  
 Thirteen examples with minor variations, e.g. *de neive foo; grip all day.* cf. Chambers 184; Gregor 81; Saxby 68; J. Nicolson 92; S.S.S.R.L. 795.2.
249. *As I cam ower da Brig o' London | Da Brig o' London brook | An' a' da men in London | Dey couldna big it up. — Ice breaking.* cf. 1670-1671  
*brook=broke; big=build.* Two examples. Chambers 110; A. Nicolson 24; J. Nicolson 91.
250. *When I cam ore da Brig o' London den da Brig o' London bruke | And aa da men in London could no hale him up. — Frost.* cf. 1670-1671  
*Hale=drag.*
251. *Khittle my craig an claw my belly | An whit do tinks I say? — Fiddle.*  
*Khittle=tickle; craig=neck.*
252. *What is it, if you cut aff at baith ends, it aye grows longer? — A ditch.* 1693
253. *Watter canna weet, in da sun canna dry. — Butter.*  
 Four examples.
254. *What is it da sun canna dry, an' water canna weet? — Butter.*  
 J. Nicolson 92.
255. *What is it, da mair you dry it, da weeter it gets? — Butter.*
256. *Water canna weet, an fire canna burn. — Butter.*
257. *Hit rins ower da hedder in hit sinks ida sea | Da fire canna burn it so what can it be? — Da sun.*  
 Three examples.
258. *Lifts ower the heather | Sinks idda sea | Fire canna burn it | What can it be? — The sun.*  
 Four examples; Saxby 68; A. Nicolson 28.
259. *Sails on da hedder an sinks a da sea | Fire canna burn it an what can it be? — Mist.*
260. *Sweems apa da laund in sinks apa da sea. — The sun.*

261. *Hit rins ower da land, hit flees ower da sea, | Fire canna burn it, an' what can it be? — Mist.*  
*Firth 134, rins on the land, swims on the sea;*  
*G. W. R. 53, hooks owre the heather cowes, sails owre the sea.*
262. *Sinks in da heddar | And sweems in the sea | Fire canna burn it, | And what can it be? — Water, but in the Fair Isle programme they called it the Sun.*  
 The informant refers to a B.B.C. feature broadcast. Two examples.
263. *Sinks through the heather | Sweems through the sea | Fire canna burn it | What can it be? — The sun.*  
 Two examples.
264. *Sinks in da heather, sweems in da sea, | Fire canna burn it, whit can it be? — Rain.*
265. *It shines i' da wattir, an' it sweems i' da sea | An' fire canna burn it, an' what can it be? — Sunbeam.*
266. *Da blind man saw a hare, | Da dumb man cried "Where?" | Da legless man ran an' got it, | Da naked man pat hit in his pocket. — Impossibility.*
267. *What God never saw, kings seldom see, yet we see every day. — His equal.* 1715
268. *What is it that God never saw, the king seldom sees, but we see it every day? — An equal.* 1715  
 A. Nicolson 62.
269. *We see it often | The King sees it seldom | But our Maker never saw it. — Our equal.* 1715  
 Two examples; b see every day . . . An God never sees.
270. *What is it da rich man puts in his pocket | But da puir man bals at his feet? — Mucous—blowing the nose.* 1724  
*Bals=throws.*
271. *What is it dat da rich man gives, da poor man has, and all men carry ta der graves? — Nothing.* cf. 1726-1727
272. *What is it all men love more than life, | That which contented men desire, | The poor possess, the rich require, | The miser spends, the spendthrift saves, | And all men carry to their graves. — Nothing.* cf. 1727

273. *There was a man bespoke a thing and to the owner home did bring, | The man that made it did refuse it, the man that brought it could not use it, | The man that owned it couldn't tell whether it fitted ill or well. — A coffin.* cf. 1728  
cf. Chambers 108.
274. *Da man it made it selled it, and da man it bought it never used it, and da man it used it never saw it. — A coffin.* 1729  
Two examples.
275. *Da man it maks it dusna need it, but da man it needs it dusna see it. — A coffin.* 1729
276. *What is it a man makes only once, and after he's made it, he never sees it. — A widow.*
277. *Scoor me weel in keep me clean | Fire a ball in calis green. — A gun.*  
Calis=? Calais. cf. Chambers 159, rhyme on Mons Mcg: *Powder me well and keep me clean, | I'll carry a ball to Peebles green.*
278. *I grew wi da coo, yet wis made be a man | I bor till his moo, what wis boiled ida pan. — A horn spoon.*

#### WITTY QUESTIONS AND CONUNDRUMS

279. *Fu mony hairs in a cats tail? — None, dae are all on da outside.*
280. *What way is a wife['s] beauty like a sovereign? — Because once changed it shoon gengs.*
281. *What time a year is da maist hols open? — The hairst with all the holes in the corn stubbles opened. Hairst=harvest.*
282. *What is the "fool" wi da red neb? — Goat.*
283. *What is the "duke" wi da black fit? — Thaw. Duke=duck.*
284. *What is the most polite thing in the world? — A ship, because she always advances with bows.*
285. *Why is a widow compared to a turnip? — Because the better half is under the ground.*

NAMING-RIDDLES

286. *Peg, Meg, an' Marget was my true lover's name. | Hit was neither Peg, Meg nor Marget | Bit yet I've spelled her name. — An[n].*
287. *I sat inta white, and I stude inta white | An I saw white, aetin white, | I pat white oot trow white ta pit white oot a white. — A woman in a white shawl, standing in a white house, looks out and sees white sheep eating ripe corn. She sends a white dog to drive them away.* cf. 845-850
288. *I sat itta me cheerum charrum | An luikit troo me leerum laarum | An dere I saa da ree raa | Carryin me linty pipes awaa. | I swore be me britti bratti | At if I hed me twitti twatti, | I wid mak da ree raa | Lat me linty pipes faa.*  
*Cheerum charrum=chair; leerum laarum=lum in middle of roof; ree raa=crow; linty pipes=chicken; britti bratti=? Bible; twitti twatti=gun.*
289. *I sat in my sheeram sharrim | An looked trou da leeram laarim, | I saw da ree-raw, | Carrying da linti pipes awa. | I swore by my bretti bratti | If I hed my tweeti twatti, | I wid shut da ree-raw | An mak da linti pipes ta faa. — A man sitting in his chair, and looking through the windows, saw a raven carrying off a lamb; he swore that if he had his gun, he would shoot the raven, and save the lamb.*
290. *I sat ida leerim laurim in lookit oot da cleerim clarum. I saw da ree raw rinnin away wi da rantie pipes. If I hed my roostie rapie I wid a shot da ree raw in made da rantie pipes ta faa. — A crow running away with chickens and a man wishing he had a gun to shoot it with.*
291. *I sat in my sheeram shaarim | An' looked trou da leeram laarim | I saw da ree raw | Carryin' da lintie pipes awa' | I swore by my breeti braati | If I had my tweeti twaati | I wid shut da ree raw | An' mak' da linti-pipes ta fa'. — A man sitting in a chair, looking through the windows and seeing a raven carrying off a lamb. He swore if he had his gun he would shoot the raven and save the lamb.*

J. Nicolson 93.



292. *I sat upo my hump-dumpy | I luikit oot my luck-  
aleery | I saw da ree-ra peckin my linti-ties awa. —  
Crow picking off chickens.*
293. *I sat in my snjeerin snjaarin | An luikit trow da  
leerin laarin | I saw da ree raw | kerryin da rantie  
pipes awa. | I swore by my brutie bratti | If I had my  
tweetie twattie, | I wid shut da ree raw | An makk  
da rantie pipes faa. — Sitting in my house, looking  
through the window, I see a raven carry away a young  
lamb. I swore if I had my gun I would shoot the  
bird and get the lamb back.*
294. *I sat upo me humpie birlie | An luikit troo da humpie  
dirlie | An I saw the ree raw | Carrying da lintie  
pipes awa | An I swore be mi nittie nattie | I wid  
tak mi wittie wattie | An mak the ree raw | Pey fi  
carryin da lintie pipes awa.  
Saxby 68.*
295. *I sat upo mi hootie cootie, an lookit ower mi nemple  
rootie, an I saw da ree raw, baer da lintie pipes awa.  
— Crow carrying awa da sheep's faa.  
cf. Chambers 185; I sat upon my houtie croutie | I  
lookit owre my rumple routie | And saw John  
Heezlum Peezlum | Playing on Jerusalem pipes. —  
The Man in the Moon.*
296. *I sat apon my humpty dumpty | I cried upo my gaffie  
allie | I saw tree neckie nockies | eatin' oot o' my  
lentie whitie. | I sed if I had my ree-raw | I wid lat  
dem a' tree fa'. — A man sitting on a stool sees three  
white maws eatin' oot o' his rig. He cried upo his dog  
an' said if he could get his gun he'd shoot dem.  
Maw=gull.*
297. *Roondie roondie at da fire | Snudie at da wall | Guffie  
guffie ida door | Piggie ida strae.  
Roondie=teapot; snudie=wheel (noise of); guffie  
=dog; piggy=pig.*
298. *Fiddeks at da fire, trimmiks at da wa, | Guff, guff  
i da door, dummie ida sta. — Brünnies baking, a  
spinning wheel, a pig and a horse.  
Brünnies=bannocks of bere or oats.*

LEARNED RIDDLES

299. *He walked on earth, he talked on earth, | convicting  
man of sin; | He's not on earth, he's not in heaven,  
| Nor yet can enter in. — Balaam's ass.*
300. *She walked on earth, she talked on earth, | She  
rebuked a man for sin, | She's not on earth, she's not  
in Heaven, | Or likely to get in. — Balaam's ass.*
301. *Nine lang oors pa rötless tree | Hung He dere fir aa  
ta see. | A bluidy mett wis in His side, | Med bi a  
lance—it widna hide, | Nine lang oors pa rötless  
tree, | Bit ill wis da fokk an guid wis He. — The  
body of Jesus hanging on the Cross.  
Mett=wound.  
Saxby 59.*
302. *What chews da cud every yule morning laik every  
udder horse? — The White Horse of Hoosfield.*
303. *Clippit taes an nippit taes | O'er da meadow rides  
do. | Boanie feet an braw feet | Hame under da  
caldron bides do. — Peat moss.  
cf. Chambers 68 and 69 in two versions of  
"Rashie-coat".*
304. *Boanie fit an braa fit | Ower da burn ride, | Nippit  
fit an clippit fit | Haem aboot bide. — "Essiepattel  
an da Blue Yow".  
Lines 1 and 3 have been transposed by the  
informant.*

ARITHMETICAL RIDDLES

305. *Da Bishop and da Minister and Mr Andrew Lamb  
| Gaed in da gairden whar three pair hang, | Dey  
aa took ene and still twa hang. — All the one man.  
Two examples; b three apples. Cf. Chambers 111,  
A priest and a friar and a silly old man.*
306. *As I wis gaeing ta St Ives I met seven wives. Every  
wife had seven sacks and in every sack wis seven cats  
and every cat had seven kittens, kittens, cats, sacks  
and wives, foo mony wir gaeing ta St Ives? — One.*

307. *As I gude tae St Ives I met seven auld wives. Every wife had seven skits, and every khit had seven cats, every cat had seven kettlins. How many went to St Ives? — One.*

#### ALPHABET RIDDLES

308. *Roond aboot da raggit rock | The raggit rascal ran. | Foo mony Rs and Ds in that? | Come tell me if you can. — None.*
309. *Arrond da ragged rock da ragged raskle ran, | Foo many Rs in dat, pray tell me if do can? — None in "dat".*
310. *The beginning of eternity, the end of time and space, | The beginning of end, and end of every place. — Letter E.*
311. *Paul had it behind, Luke had it before. | All girls have it once, boys cannot have it. | Old Mrs Mulligan had it twice in succession. | Dr Lull had it before and behind, | And twice as often behind as before. — The letter L.*
312. *Up a hill and doon a hill | Up a hill in stop dere. — Letter N.*
313. *In Amsterdam its common | Holland wants it still. | It's no in aa the world | And yet it's in a mill. — The letter M.*  
Six examples; f my snuff mill.  
S.S.S.R.L. 795.2.

#### PUNNING RIDDLES

314. *How is an olick like a telephone bell? — A peerie ting-a-ling.*  
*Olick=a young ling.*
315. *What [is] da difference between a black coo, and a white een? — One is a black cow, the other is a white fish.*  
*White een=whiting.*
316. *What weys da hen? — Scales.*  
*Weys=way is.*

NOTES

- <sup>1</sup> The contribution submitted by Mr. G. R. Deyell, Bixter, was adjudged the best, while the second and third awards went to Mrs. S. G. Jameson, Burgh Road, Lerwick, and Mrs. Jas. Umphray, Sellafirth, Yell, respectively. The other contributors were Miss J. A. Linklater, Park, Bressay; Mrs. Johnson, Newton, Quarff; Mrs. Fred Robertson, West Houlland, Bridge of Walls; C. C. Smith, 4 St. Clair Road, Cunningsburgh; James A. Gray, Dykes, Isle of Foula; G. Murray, Mossbank; C. H. Robinson, Weisdale; Mrs. A. J. Sandison, Altona, Mid Yell; Miss J. A. Williamson, Neapaback, Burravoe, S. Yell; Jerry Eunson, 6 Battlefield Avenue, Glasgow, (Fair Isle); Charles Williamson, Vidlin; J. J.; Mrs. Smith, 38 Robertson Crescent, Lerwick; and E. J. F. Clausen, 5 Sycamore Place, Aberdeen.
- <sup>2</sup> We should like to thank Mr. David Murison, Editor of *The Scottish National Dictionary*, for help with the glossary and for other useful suggestions, some of which we regretfully were unable to incorporate in this presentation of the collection.

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