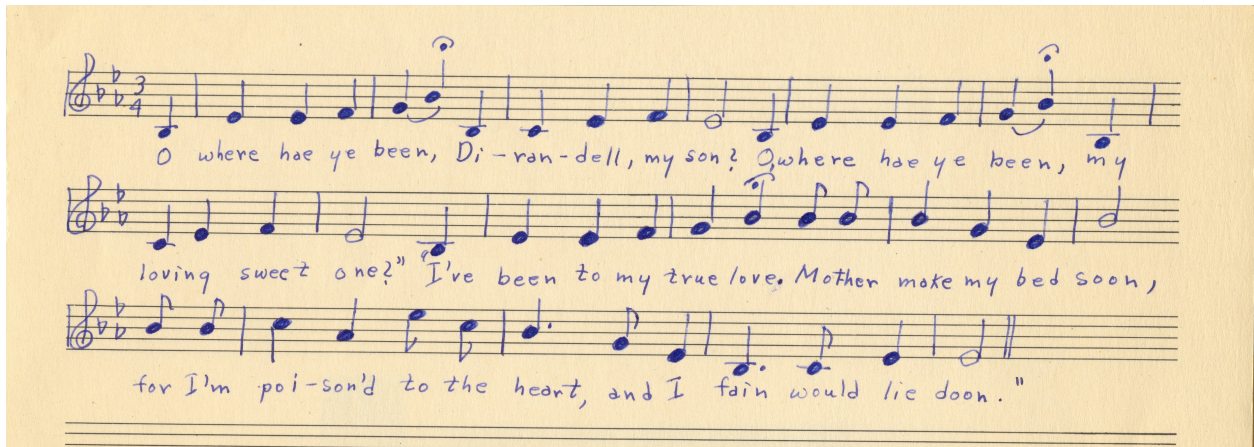


# Dirandell

As sung by  
**Winifred Bundy**  
04-04-1941 Madison, WI



O where hae ye been, Di-ran-dell, my son? O where hae ye been, my  
loving sweet one?" I've been to my true love, Mother make my bed soon,  
for I'm poi-son'd to the heart, and I fain would lie doon."

## Verse 1.

"Oh where hae ye been, Dirandell, my son?  
Oh where hae ye been, my loving sweet one?"  
"I've been to my true love, Mother, make my bed soon,  
For I'm poisoned to the heart, and I fain would lie doon."

## Verse 2.

"What had ye for dinner, Dirandell, my son?  
What had ye for dinner, my loving sweet one?"  
"Eels fried in butter. Mother, make my bed soon,  
For I'm poisoned to the heart, and I fain would lie doon."

## Verse 3.

"And who had your leavin's, Dirandell, my son?  
And who had your leavin's, my loving sweet one?"  
"My hawks and my hounds. Mother, make my bed soon,  
For I'm poisoned to the heart, and I fain would lie doon."

## Verse 4.

"Then where are your hounds, Dirandell, my son?  
Then where are your hounds, my loving sweet one?"  
"They swelled up and they died. Mother, make my bed soon,  
For I'm poisoned to the heart, and I fain would lie doon."

## Verse 5.

"I fear ye are poisoned, Dirandell, my son.  
I fear ye are poisoned, my loving sweet one."  
"O yes, I am poisoned. Mother, make my bed soon,  
For my love, she is false, and I fain would lie doon."

Verse 6.

“What’ll you leave to your brother, Dirandell, my son?  
What’ll you leave to your brother, my loving sweet one?”  
“My house and my lands. Mother, make my bed soon,  
For I’m poisoned to the heart, and I fain would lie doon.”

Verse 7.

“What’ll you leave to your sister, Dirandell, my son?  
What’ll you leave to your sister, my loving sweet one?”  
“My gold and my silver. Mother, make my bed soon,  
For I’m poisoned to the heart, and I fain would lie doon.”

Verse 8.

“What’ll you leave to your true love, Dirandell, my son?  
What’ll you leave to your true love, my loving sweet one?”  
“Hell-fire and brimstone. Mother, make my bed soon,  
For I’m poisoned to the heart, and I fain would lie doon.”

*Transcription and lyrics from the Helene Stratman-Thomas Collection.*

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## **Critical Commentary**

Transcriptions by Peters, p. 195, and HST.

### **HST notes:**

In the Professional Papers series:

*Dirandell (Lord Randal) Child no. 12*

*Sung by Winifred Bundy, age 57, 1941*

*Miss Bundy remarked, “I learned this song from my mother, who used to sing it to us children when they were all in a gay and festive mood and wanted something to laugh at. I believe Dirandell is a corruption of the famous Lord Randal, but mother learned it from someone far in her youth, who either said Dirandell or Lord Randal in such a garbled way that mother heard it incorrectly. However I will sing it faithfully as I remember it.”*

*In the versions collected in the Southern states by Cox, the victim of the poisoning is known as Johnnie Randal, Johnny Randolph, Johnny Ramsey, Johnny Reeler.*

*As to the origin of the song, Sir Walter Scott ventures the opinion “I think it not impossible, that the ballad may have originally regarded the death of Thomas Randolph or Randal, nephew to Robert Bruce, and governor of Scotland. This great warrior died at Musseburgh, 1332” [this quotation is from Scott: *Mistrels of the Scottish Border*, 1902 Ed., Vol. III, pp. 51-58.]*

### **Editor’s notes:**

Linscott writes that the song she collected “is a New England version of the traditional English ballad, ‘Lord Randall, My Son’” (Linscott 191). The earliest publication of its text and tune was a fragment in *The Scots Musical Museum*, by James Johnson in 1787 (Linscott 191). Linscott’s version, which refers to “grandmother” instead of “true love,” “belongs to a tradition associated

with the Soper family of London, represented in America by the descendants of Joseph Soper, who settled in Boston in 1656" (Linscott 191). Miss Bundy's version uses "true love," which Linscott writes is "of the older Scottish and English texts;" the substitution "may have been influenced by a secondary form of the ballad known in Scotland as Croodlin Doo" (Linscott 191). Gardener and Chickering note the relationship of this song to Child no. 12, "Lord Randal," and write, "Child gives nineteen versions and calls attention to the very wide distribution of the ballad in German, Dutch, Swedish, Danish, Magyar, and Wendish" (Gardener and Chickering 35). Scarborough notes that various versions exist within the United States as well, and that different titles come from different areas of this country (Scarborough 179).

Alternate titles/related songs: "Lord Rendall," "Lord Randal," "Randal, My Son," "Tiranti, My Son," "Durango," "John Willow," "Johnny Rillus," "Ransel," "Jonny Rilla," "Johnnie Randolph," "Billy Randall," "Johnny Reynolds," "John Elzi," "Cup of Cold Poison," "Dirante, My Son."

**Sources:**

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- Scarborough, Dorothy. *A Song Catcher in Southern Mountains; American Folk Songs of British Ancestry*. New York, Columbia University Press, 1937.
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K.G.