

Play Party Games

1. The Needle's Eye

As sung by
Charles Dietz

Originally in E
09-02-1946 Monroe, WI

The musical score is written on three staves in treble clef with a key signature of one sharp (F#) and a 6/8 time signature. The melody consists of eighth and quarter notes. The lyrics are written below the notes, with some words hyphenated across lines. The first line of music ends with a double bar line. The second line starts with a measure rest labeled '6'. The third line starts with a measure rest labeled '12'.

The need-le's eye that doth sup-ply the thread that runs so tru - ly, it's ma-ny a beau that
6
I've let go be - cause I wan-ted you. — Be - cause I wan-ted you, — be - cause I wan - ted
12
you, — it's ma - ny a beau that I let go be - cause I wan - ted you. —

Verse 1.

The needle's eye that doth supply
The thread that runs so truly,
It's many a beau that I've let go
Because I wanted you.
Because I wanted you,
Because I wanted you,
It's many a beau that I've let go
Because I wanted you.

Verse 2.

The needles eye that doth supply
The thread that runs so truly,
It's many a lass that I've let pass
Because I wanted you.
Because I wanted you,
Because I wanted you,
It's many a lass that I've let pass
Because I wanted you.

Verse 3. (incomplete)

You do intend before we end
To have this couple meet;
...
...
With a bow so neat,
And a kiss so sweet,
We do intend before we end
To have this couple meet.

Critical Commentary

HST notes:

In the Professional Papers series:

Sung by Charles Dietz, age 75, Monroe, 1946.

Editor's notes:

Linscott gives a description of the game: "Two players, a boy and a girl, stand on chairs facing each other and make an arch with their arms raised and hands clasped, as in 'London Bridge.' As the song begins, the remaining players walk under the arch (alternately boy and girl) till at the words, 'And now it has caught you,' the arch drops to hold one player imprisoned. If the one caught is a girl, the boy on the chair leans forward, kisses her as the players sing the refrain. When they have finished, she steps up to take the girl's place on the chair. If the player caught is a boy, the girl in the chair leans forward for her kiss, steps down, and the boy replaces the boy on the chair. The choice of players to be caught is entirely arbitrary" (Linscott 43). Linscott also records that her informant "remembers playing the game fifty years ago, when the young people went to kissing parties instead of to dances" (Linscott 43). Randolph gives a different description of the game: the arch is the same, but "the other players hold hands and dance through the arch in single file, and at the words 'because I wanted you' the couple forming the arch drop their arms so as to catch one of the dancers. When a girl is caught she takes her position behind the girl in the arch, while the boys caught fall in behind the boy. Each of these players clasps the person in front around the waist, and all pull together to break the arch. When the arch is broken the two arch-makers join the line of dancers, and a new arch is formed by the boy and girl next in line" (Randolph 351). This song is probably of British origin, and later in France it was a dance (Linscott 43).

Alternate titles/related songs: "Through the Needle's Eye, Boys," "Threading the Needle."

Sources:

Linscott, Eloise Hubbard, coll. and ed. *Folk Songs of Old New England*. New York: Macmillan, 1939.

HST has more verses.

Randolph, Vance, coll. and ed. *Ozark Folksongs*. Vol. III. Columbia, Mo.: State Historical Society of Missouri, 1946-50.

K.G.

Play Party Games

2. King William

As sung by
Charles Dietz

09-02-1946

King Wil - liam was King James' - s son, and of the roy - al race he come. Up -

3
on his breast he wore a star point - ing the way that com-pass - es are. Go

5
choose her East, go choose her West, go choose the one that you love best. If

7
she's not here to take your part, go choose a - no - ther with all your heart.

The musical score is written on four staves of a grand staff (treble clef). The first staff begins with a common time signature (C). The melody consists of eighth and quarter notes. The lyrics are placed below the notes, with line numbers 3, 5, and 7 indicating the start of new lines of music. The piece concludes with a double bar line.

Lyrics

King William was King James's son,
And of the royal race he come.
Upon his breast he wore a star
Pointing the way that compasses are.
Go choose her East, go choose her West,
Go choose the one that you love best.
If she's not here to take your part,
Go choose another with all your heart.

Critical Commentary

Transcriptions by MB and Treat, no. 51.

HST notes:

In the Professional Papers series:

Sung by Charles Dietz, age 75, Monroe, 1946.

The simple directions for playing the game are given in the Dictionary of British Folk-Lore: "In Sheffield a ring of young men and women is formed. A man goes into the ring and walks round within it, whilst others sing the verse. The young man then chooses a sweetheart, and the two walk round arm-in-arm within the ring whilst the same verses are sung. When the singing is ended, the girl picks a young man, and so they all pair off."

Extra verses: Now on this carpet you must kneel, as surely as the grass grows in the field. Salute your bride and kiss her sweet, and then arise upon your feet.

Now you're married you must be good so split your wife some kindling wood. Split it fine and carry it in then she will let you kiss her again.

Editor's notes:

Treat compares this song to "Charlie's Sweet," which has a tune similar to the one Treat transcribed, but words and tune different from Dietz's version. Randolph's informant described the game, "the players join hands to form a big circle, with one odd boy in the center. All dance about as the first stanza is sung, but halt to sing the second, while the boy in the middle walks around scrutinizing each girl in turn. At the beginning of the third stanza he kneels before one of the girls, bows his head and kisses her hand. This done, he rises and steps into the line beside her, and the man whose place he takes must go into the center and be the next one to represent King William" (Randolph 345). Stratman-Thomas did not record Dietz singing this third stanza, but transcribed it in her fieldnotes. Randolph also writes that "it is said that the game is of English origin, and represents recruiting in war time" and that Iwan Bloch (*Sex Life in England*, New York 1934, p. 273) "says that such a game is mentioned in Shakespeare's Henry VIII" (Randolph 344).

Alternate titles/related songs: "Charlie's Sweet," "King William was King George's Son."

Sources:

Botkin, B. A. *The American Play-Party Song, with a Collection of Oklahoma Texts and Tunes.*

Lincoln: The University Studies of the University of Nebraska, XXXVII (Nos. 1-4), 1937.

Davis, Arthur Kyle. *Folksongs of Virginia: A Descriptive Index and Classification.* Durham, N.C.: Duke University Press, 1929.

Hudson, Arthur Palmer. *Folksongs of Mississippi and Their Background.* Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1936.

Lomax, John A., and Alan Lomax, colls. and comps. *Our Singing Country; A Second Volume of American Ballads and Folk Songs.* Ruth Crawford Seeger, music ed. New York: Macmillan, 1941. "King William was King George's son." tune rather different.

Morris, Alton C., ed. *Folksongs of Florida*, trans. by Leonhard Deutsch. Gainesville: University of Florida Press, 1950.

Newell, W. W. *Games and Songs of American Children.* New York: Harper and Brothers, 1883.

Randolph, Vance, coll. and ed. *Ozark Folksongs.* Vol. III. Columbia, Mo.: State Historical Society of Missouri, 1946-50.

Treat, Asher. "Kentucky Folksong in Northern Wisconsin." *Journal of American Folk-Lore* 52 (January-March 1939): 1-51.

Play Party Games

3. Come Filander*

As sung by
Charles Dietz

Originally in E
09-02-1946 Monroe, WI



Come fi - lan - der let us be a march - ing round and round our true love a - search - ing.



Search a - round for her now or ne - ver call her by name and tell her how you love her.

Verse 1.

Come filandor let us be a-marching
Round and round our true love a-searching.
Search around for her now or never
Call her by name and tell her how you love her.

Verse 2.

Oh dear Harry how I love you
None on this earth I admire above you.
My heart you've got, my hand I'll give you
Kiss me quick for I must leave you.

* In HST's notes as filander, alternate spelling of "philander."

Critical Commentary

Transcriptions by MB, HST.

HST notes:

In the Professional Papers series:

Sung by Charles Ditz, age 75, Monroe 1946. No references

philander: to make love ... [can't read writing], a lover, disposed to lovemaking

philanderer: one who philanders, male flirt

K.G.