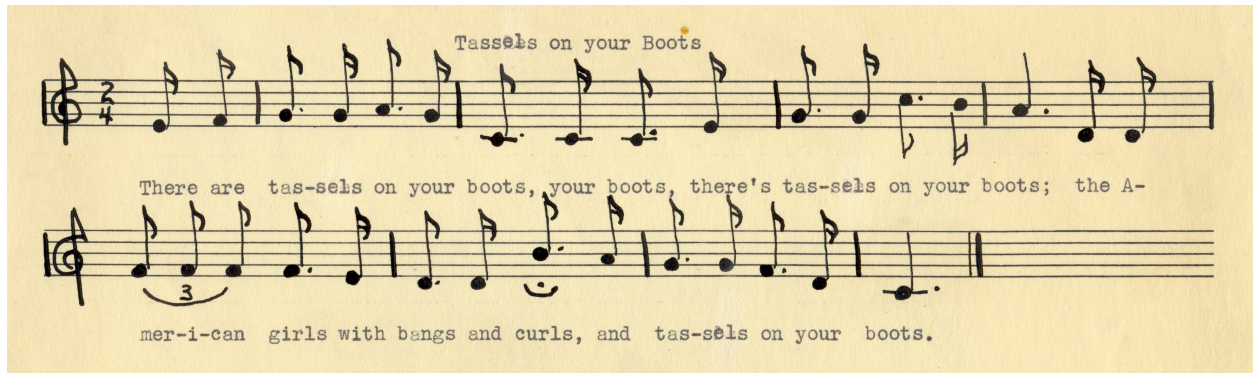


Tassels on Your Boots

As sung by
Minnie Plimpton Pendleton
08-23-1946 Lancaster, WI



Verse 1.

'Twas at a fancy ball, I met my charmer fair,
'Midst waltzing swells and dashing Belles, the prettiest dancer there.
I watched her while the music play'd the latest waltz of "Cootes,"
And fell in love, no not with her, but the tassels on her boots. Oh yes,

Chorus

Those tassels on her Boots,
A style I'm sure that suits
The Yankee girls with hair in curls,
Those Tassels on her Boots.

Verse 2.

I watched her up the stairs, when we to supper went,
Upon those tassels on her boots, my soul was so intent;
They asked me to propose a health, said I, "Here's one that suits,
So fill your glasses up and drink to the tassels on the boots."

Spoken: I meant to drink to the ladies' health, but I could think of nothing, but –

Verse 3.

I asked this girl if I might call. She said, "You may,
But tell my why you gaze upon the ground in such a way?
You're sad, perhaps for life is full of very bitter fruits."
"Oh, no," I said, "I'm looking at the tassels on your boots."

Spoken: What is a more lovely sight when you walk down Broadway than to look at –

Verse 4.

I called on her next day, and Cupid's cruel shoots
Soon made me throw myself before those tassels on her boots;
Now when we're married and we've got a lot of little toots,
I'll make them, whether boys or girls, wear tassels on their boots.

Spoken: If I were to have twenty children they should every one wear those pretty, pretty, pretty—

Transcription and lyrics from the Helene Stratman-Thomas Collection.

Critical Commentary

Transcriptions by Peters, p. 158, and HST

HST notes:

In the Professional Papers series:

Sung by Mrs. Minnie Plimpton Pendleton, age 68, Lancaster

Mrs. Pendleton remarked: "My brothers played this song as a dance tune at least fifty years ago. The Plimpton brothers played all their music by ear."

Godey's Lady Book of the decade 1865-1875 depicts the fashions described in the song. Spaeth states that the song was written in 1869 by Robert Coombs and was publicized by the negro minstrel singer Billy Emerson.

Editor's notes:

Randolph quotes Gilbert (*Lost Chords*, 1942, p. 60), writing that this song is "like the fashion it mentions, apparently an English importation in the late 60's" (Randolph 257).

Sources:

Peters, Harry B., ed. *Folk Songs out of Wisconsin: An Illustrated Compendium of Words and Music*. Madison, WI: The State Historical Society of Wisconsin, 1977.

Randolph, Vance, collector and editor. *Ozark Folksongs*. Vol. III. Columbia, Mo.: State Historical Society of Missouri, 1946-50. text only

Spaeth, Sigmund. *Weep Some More, my Lady*. New York: Doubleday, Page & Company, 1927.
"Tassels on the boots"

K.G.