

TRANSCRIPTION

Belle Stewart sings “In London’s Fair City”

ScottishVoicesProj.0568

[This recording was made at a ceilidh hosted in July 1984 by the singer and educator Sheila Douglas, along with her husband, the poet and educator Andrew Douglas, at their home in Scone, Perthshire. Present were Belle Stewart (the guest of honor); her friend or relation Nellie Higgins; John Niles and his wife Carole Newlands; two other friends of the Douglas’s; and a visiting American couple.]

All: [*Loud laughter from a previous exchange.*]

BS: [*Sings:*]

1 Oh in London's fair city there lived a lady
And the truth to you I'll tell,
She was courted by a plooman laddie
Who always thought that she loved him well.

2 She loved him too but at a distance
Until she became not quite so fond.
“I'm afraid young maid, I'm afraid you slight me
Oh don't you love some other one?”

3 For if you do, why don't you marry
And put an ending to my strife
For I would work both late and early
If you would become my bewedded wife.”

[*Speaks:*] “Don't get the next verse wrong!”

4 “Oh but I'm too young, too young tae marry
Too young tae claim those marriage vows
For when you're married, your pleasure's over
And all your joyful time is gone.”

5 So not long after, not so very long after,
To a ball this fair maid did go.
She was followed by her jealous young man
Who meant to be her overthrow.

[*There is a 10-second gap in the recording at this point.*]

6. — — — — —
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For she was dancing with another,
 Jealousy rose within his mind
And he took some poison between his fingers
 And he dropped it into a glass of wine.

7 “Here's one for you, my fairest jewel
 Here's one for you and another for me.”
And she took the glass between her fingers
 And she drank it up with her spirit free.

8 But as she was finishing with the liquor
 She cried, “Oh dear, oh dear, please take me home,
For I'm afraid this wine I've drunken
 Has put an end to my joyful time.”

9 “Oh but I have drank the same as you, love
 That I may die just the same as thee.”
So they both clasped into each other's arms.
 Fair maids beware of cruel jealousy.

All: [*Sounds of appreciation from the audience.*]