

**The Rich Merchant Man, or,  
What the Punishment of Greed Sounded Like  
in Early Modern English Ballads**

**Una McIlvenna  
Queen Mary, University of London**

A London 'Prentice ruined is our theme,  
Drawn from the fam'd old song that bears his name.  
We hope your taste is not so high to scorn  
A moral tale esteem'd ere you were born;  
Which, for a century of rolling years,  
Has fill'd a thousand thousand eyes with tears.

From the 'Prologue' of *The London Merchant* (lines 21-34)<sup>1</sup>

The eighteenth-century play *The London Merchant* claimed to be based on a 'fam'd old song' with 'a moral tale esteem'd...for a century of rolling years'. This paper reveals that the song and the tale were even older, and that they were integrally associated with a specific melody, a ballad tune that for its sixteenth- and seventeenth-century listener-singers conjured up a cluster of associations around the themes of greed and punishment. 'The Rich Merchant Man' is the tune used for at least twenty-six known seventeenth-century ballads, and can be traced back to a ballad by Thomas Deloney, 'A most sweet Song of an English Merchant born in Chichester', about an English merchant sentenced to be executed in Emden, Germany.<sup>2</sup> That ballad was licensed in 1594, but may well have been much older. Many of the ballads set to the melody indicate the tune as a variant of that original

---

<sup>1</sup> George Lillo, *The London Merchant*, ed. William H. McBurney (London: Arnold, 1965).

<sup>2</sup> Claude M. Simpson, *The British Broadside Ballad and its Music* (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 1966), 602-604.

title: 'The Merchant', 'The Merchant Man', 'The Merchant of Emden', but Claude M. Simpson's nomenclature of 'The Rich Merchant Man' will be used here.

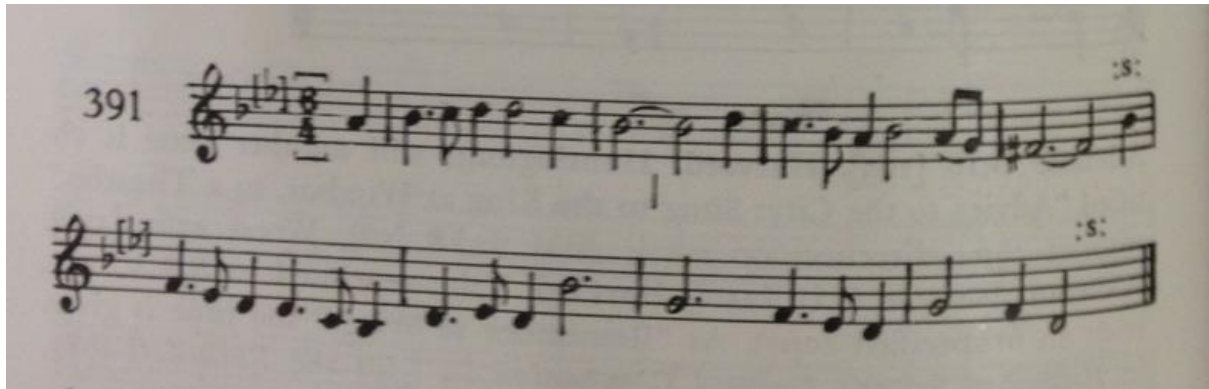


Figure 1. 'The Rich Merchant Man' from Simpson, *British Broadside Ballad*, 602.

If we examine the themes of the ballads set to this tune, a striking continuity becomes apparent: with few exceptions, they are on the interrelated themes of punishment, repentance, greed and desperation, with a particular focus on material wealth, the sins that it could drive people to commit, and the subsequent punishments. While ten of the twenty-six ballads deal with accounts of crimes and their state-sanctioned punishments, the others depict retribution in supernatural or divine form, or instead encourage their listener-singers to repent, employing millenarian language that foresees such divine punishments as imminent.<sup>3</sup> Central to these themes is the audience to which many of the songs are addressed: the servant or apprentice class that made up a large part of the market for broadside ballads in seventeenth-century England.<sup>4</sup> While some of the ballads tell stories

---

<sup>3</sup> See the Appendix for ballads to this tune; all ballads discussed here with an EBBA ID can be listened to via the website.

<sup>4</sup> For the ways in which ballads were regularly marketed to servants and apprentices see Patricia Fumerton, *Unsettled: The Culture of Mobility and the Working Poor in Early Modern England* (Chicago: University of

about servants or apprentices, others address them directly with advice on how to conduct themselves. This paper explores how the melody of the ‘Rich Merchant Man’ was fundamentally linked to a drive to educate the serving classes of seventeenth-century England in the appropriate expectations of the ever-growing merchant class, via a negative model of punitive retribution that stressed the need to be charitable and to shun greed for material wealth. In so doing, it offers a case-study of the multi-media methods by which this moral lesson of frugality and even charity – so seemingly contradictory for a merchant class that defined itself by the accumulation of wealth – could be inculcated in the youth it was attempting to train.

The ‘Rich Merchant Man’ tune comprises a four-line stanza known as a ‘poulter’s-measure quatrain’, with iambic feet of 3, 3, 4 and 3 stresses, and rhyming second and fourth lines. This was an extremely popular measure for both balladry and poetry from the Elizabethan era onwards, and made the melody simple to sing and thus well-known. I have written elsewhere about the significance of certain melodies for the transmission of meaning in ballads.<sup>5</sup> By re-using familiar tunes, a technique known as contrafactum, ballad-writers exploited the cultural and emotional associations that listener-singers brought to that melody and to its new

---

Chicago Press, 2006), 133. On the disposable income of servants and apprentices see Paul Griffiths, *Youth and Authority: Formative Experiences in England, 1560-1640* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1996).

<sup>5</sup> Una McLivenna, ‘The Power of Music: the Significance of Contrafactum in Execution Ballads’, *Past & Present* 229, 1 (November 2015): 47-89. See also Christopher Marsh, *Music and Society in Early Modern England* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011), 288-327; Kate van Orden, ‘Female “Complaintes”: Laments of Venus, Queens, and City Women in Late Sixteenth-Century France’, *Renaissance Quarterly* 54, 3 (Autumn, 2001): 801-845; Robert Darnton, *Poetry and the Police: Communication Networks in Eighteenth-Century Paris* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2010), 79-102; Rebecca Wagner Oettinger, *Music as Propaganda in the German Reformation* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2001); Martin Picker, ‘Contrafactum (2. After 1450)’, *Grove Music Online* (accessed 22/11/2012); and Michael Tilmouth, Richard Sherr, ‘Parody’, *Grove Music Online* (accessed 22/11/2012).

textual reworkings. Researching the various ballad texts set to a particular tune is key to understanding the overlapping and intertextual meanings that they carried for their audience, and ‘The Rich Merchant Man’ is a good example of the rich matrix of melody, moral lesson and class commentary that the multimedia early modern ballad could transmit.

The melody itself has an interesting feature which has potential ramifications for the text’s meaning when performed. It is in the major key of B♭, so the tonic, or main chord, of the melody is B♭ and the dominant, or second most common chord, is F. The melody keeps predictably to this pattern until the last long note of the second line of verse, where it somewhat unexpectedly drops to F♯, before immediately resolving back into F natural.<sup>6</sup> This drop to F♯ draws the listener’s attention more strongly to the final word of the second line of verse, which, given the abab rhyme scheme, rhymes with the last word of the stanza. This emphasizes the stress on the two words already created by the rhyme, and also offers performers the option of drawing out the note on particularly significant or emotive lyrics. Take, for example, a verse from the ballad ‘The Unfaithful Servant’, about a servant who conspires to murder her mistress, recently delivered of a child:

Strong poyson we contriv'd  
this was our hanious Sin,  
That she of Life might be depriv'd  
poor Soul when she lay in.<sup>7</sup>

---

<sup>6</sup> I would like to thank Matthew Ingleby for his assistance with the music theory.

<sup>7</sup> ‘THE Unfaithful Servant; AND The Cruel Husband. Being a perfect and true account of one Judith Brown, who together with her Master Iohn Cupper, conspired the Death of her Mistris, his Wife, which accordingly they did accomplish in the time of Child-bed, when she lay in with two Children, by mixing of her Drink with cruel

The drop to F# focuses the listener's attention on the word 'Sin', a potent term that becomes even more emotive when it is juxtaposed with the rhyming 'lay in'. Thus, in this particular ballad the melody helps to increase the emotional impact of the shocking news of the murder of a woman who had only just given birth. It is perhaps this ability of the 'Rich Merchant Man' melody to guide its listeners in the appropriate emotional response that results in its use in so many ballads that preach a message of repentance for the sin of greed. While early modern ballad tunes are often quite versatile, being used for ballads on a range of topics and in a range of moods, this particular tune was associated from its origins with a didactic message about the punishment of greed.<sup>8</sup>

The plot of the original Merchant Man song, 'A most sweet Song', presents its audience with the depiction of the model repentant sinner. After killing a man 'through quarrels,' a rich merchant from Chichester is sentenced to be executed in Emden, Germany. He represents the ideal successful merchant both in appearance and behavior. Dressed 'all in Velvet black as jet'

Bare-headed was he brought,  
his hands were bound before  
A Cambrick Ruff about his neck  
as white as milk he wore,

---

Poyson; for which Fact she received due Sentence of Death at the late Assizes in the County of Salop, to be Burned; which was accordingly Executed upon the Old Heath near Shrewsbury, on Thursday the Twenty-first day of August, 1684.' Magdalene College Pepys 2.151, EBBA 20769.

<sup>8</sup> Christopher Marsh gives several examples of ballads whose tunes seem, to a modern ear, incongruous with the topic of the song. Marsh, *Music and Society*, 295-99.

His Stockings were of silk  
as fine as fine might be,  
Of person and of Countenance,  
a proper man was he<sup>9</sup>



Figure 2. 'A most sweet Song of an English Merchant', University of Glasgow Library Euing 230, EBBA 31745. Note the detailed dress of the protagonists in the woodcut.

That the ballad devotes nearly three stanzas to the merchant's dress alerts us to its significance for its audience.<sup>10</sup> He appears in black velvet with a white cambric ruff

<sup>9</sup> 'A most sweet song of an English Merchant born in Chichester. To an Excellent New Tune.', University of Glasgow Library Euing 232, EBBA 31747.

<sup>10</sup> The woodcut – the same on all extant versions of the broadside ballad – matches the narrative remarkably well: the condemned prisoner on the gallows is stepping down to take the hand of a lady as if her offer has released him, and he is bareheaded and wearing an extremely fine, well-detailed ruff. He even appears to be showing us his fine stockings as he steps down. The clothing worn in the woodcut, which matches with that described in the ballad, especially the cambric ruff, was out of fashion by the 1630s, the earliest printing dates that we have for any extant broadsides. However, we know the song was registered as early as 1594. While it is

and silk stockings, luxury items and fabrics that would have distinguished him as wealthy, and yet his choice of colours would have muted claims of ostentation or extravagance. In this period, as Ulinka Rublack reminds us, ‘black denoted constancy and sombreness; white symbolised faith and humility’.<sup>11</sup> Our introduction to the merchant is therefore – despite his conviction for murder – overwhelmingly positive. This is notable because of the potentially problematic role of merchants in the developing seventeenth-century English economy.

Between 1520 and 1700 the population of England doubled, producing inflation along with what has been called ‘the steady pressure of a prolific population on inelastic resources’.<sup>12</sup> The need for expanded trade, both internal and international, in order to feed and clothe the populace meant that merchants were in a position to both help and exploit their fellow citizens. Such power could be held in suspicion: the contemporary economist and politician Charles Davenant noted that trade was ‘in its nature a pernicious thing’, creating excessive luxury and corruption.<sup>13</sup> A depiction of a merchant – who, given the German location, is clearly an international merchant – as a model of charity, benevolence and honour

---

impossible to make a definitive argument that the woodcut was originally custom-carved for earlier, non-extant editions of the ballad, the details suggest that the woodcut was strongly associated with this ballad in printers’ minds and probably in the minds of the public as well, and that the appearance of the merchant was of significance. I thank Megan Palmer-Browne of EBBA for her assistance in my investigation of the woodcut.

<sup>11</sup> Ulinka Rublack, *Dressing Up: Cultural Identity in Renaissance Europe* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010), 70. The choice of colours would also have pointed to the likelihood of the merchant being Protestant; see Graeme Murdock, ‘Dressed to Repress?: Protestant Clerical Dress and the Regulation of Morality in Early Modern Europe’, *Fashion Theory: The Journal of Dress, Body & Culture* 4, no. 2 (May 2000): 179-99.

<sup>12</sup> Keith Wrightson and David Levine, *Poverty and Piety in an English Village: Terling, 1525-1700* (New York: Academic Press, 1979), 3.

<sup>13</sup> Paul Slack, ‘Material Progress and the Challenge of Affluence in Seventeenth-Century England’, *Economic History Review* 62, 3 (2009): 576-603, 594.

was therefore a didactic lesson for those who were themselves merchants, and for the apprentices they were training.

This portrayal is reinforced by the actions of the other merchants of the town, as told in the ballad: although they offer ‘a thousand pound’ to set him free, the condemned merchant refuses these gifts to secure his liberty, accepting his execution as just. Totally repentant of the murder which he depicts as rash and unintentional (‘sore against my will’), he bemoans the fate of the dead man’s widow and children, bequeathing them ‘a hundred pound a piece/their comforts to restore’. His only request is that ‘They will speak well of Englishmen/though I have done amisse’, a request that would have made him an endearing figure to English listeners. Then, based on popular belief that were a virgin to offer herself in marriage to the condemned he would be pardoned, multiple women come forth to offer him their hand in marriage; he refuses all their offers, instead giving them a thousand pounds in gold to share equally.<sup>14</sup> Finally, at the very moment at which the executioner steps forward to decapitate the merchant, a damsel steps forward and offers up her life for him:

Ile dye within thy arms,  
if thou wilt dye (quoth she)  
Yet live or dye sweet English-man,

---

<sup>14</sup> In Germany, where the ballad is set, this belief was popular until the nineteenth century although it had no legal status; see Richard van Dülmen, *Theatre of Horror: Crime and Punishment in Early Modern Germany*, trans. Elisabeth Neu (Cambridge: Polity, 1990), 110-11. It was also a strongly held belief in Britain: Andrea McKenzie relates that in 1722 six or seven ‘young women dressed in white and carrying white wands carried a petition to St. James’s, promising one of them would marry the condemned robber John Hartly if his life were spared; the petition was unsuccessful’. Andrea McKenzie, *Tyburn’s Martyrs: Execution in England, 1675-1775* (London: Hambledon, 2007), 219.



ile live and dye with thee:

This selfless act impresses the merchant enough to accept her offer and, to the crowd's delight, he is pardoned and released to marry her 'that day'. The ballad offers a model of spectacular selflessness, in the actions of both the merchant, who refuses all previous offers to spare his life, and the damsel, who is prepared to sacrifice herself for true love – notably, after he has given his wealth away. The merchant is endowed with characteristics and traits associated with the ideal aristocrat: immaculate appearance, bravery in the face of death and great wealth wisely managed. His claim that 'your Country Law is such,/ It takes but hold upon my life,/ my goods it cannot touch' reminds us of the theme of financial wealth that runs throughout the ballad.<sup>15</sup> What the merchant does with his wealth is central to the ballad's moral lesson: he refuses monetary gifts to save his life, and willingly gives his money to the most vulnerable of the community.

Although it is about an execution, 'A most sweet Song' does not follow the structure of a traditional execution ballad. It does not detail the crimes of the condemned, nor portray him as a wicked sinner who has led a life of wickedness

---

<sup>15</sup> This claim that German law was unable to seize the merchant's property seems to be included as a plot device, allowing the merchant to demonstrate his generosity. The claim has no solid basis in fact: although the 1532 *Constitutio Criminalis Carolina* (often referred to as the 'Carolina') mandated a unified criminal law for the Holy Roman Empire, laws were not universally enforced across the German lands in the early modern period. For more on the German penal system see Richard Evans, *Rituals of Retribution: Capital Punishment in Germany 1660-1987* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1996) and Richard van Dülmen, *Theatre of Horror: Crime and Punishment in Early Modern Germany*, trans. Elisabeth Neu (Cambridge, MA: Basil Blackwell, 1990).

leading up to the crime for which he is to be executed.<sup>16</sup> Moreover, it makes no claim to dates or names that might identify the event in Germany, and instead presents itself as an exemplar of positive behaviour in the guise of total selflessness. Specifically, it depicts a model of ideal conduct of the merchant class. Although the ballad's plot is centred around punishment, there is implied redemption through charity, particularly the merchant's concern for the now-impoorished widow and children of his victim, redemption which becomes actualized in his life being pardoned.

### **Teaching charity through song**

This concern for the poor is a theme that runs through many of the ballads set to the 'Rich Merchant Man' tune. Several of these employ a narrative that was common across early modern Europe, characterised by what Tom Cheesman calls 'the hard-heartedness motif'. In his study of German balladry, Cheesman identifies thirty-six distinct chapbook ballad versions of this theme.<sup>17</sup> In the songs' narrative, a poor person is driven to begging others for food in the form of corn, flour or bread in order to feed numerous small children at home. The poor person is rebuffed by a wealthier citizen who can be a merchant, farmer or member of the nobility, but who is often a member of their own family, usually an in-law. This greedy person is inevitably punished in a supernatural manner while the poor

---

<sup>16</sup> Sandra Clark, *Women and Crime in the Street Literature of Early Modern England* (Houndmills: Palgrave Macmillan, 2003), Ch. 3; V. A. C. Gattrell, *The Hanging Tree: Execution and the English People, 1770-1868* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1996), 123-96.

<sup>17</sup> Tom Cheesman, *The Shocking Ballad Picture Show: German Popular Literature and Cultural History* (Oxford: Berg, 1994), 50-51.

parent is miraculously given the means to feed the hungry children. Such ballads can be seen to be nostalgic for an earlier, less commercial time: Joyce Appleby notes that the Tudor statutes regarding food production had envisioned the growing of corn, the milling of flour and the baking of bread as principally social activities rather than economic ones, social underpinnings that were shaken by the economic crises of the early 1620s which forced the government to buy grain abroad and allowed merchants to manipulate the market.<sup>18</sup> We find elements of the dissatisfaction with mercantile greed in ‘The Kentish Miracle’, a ballad whose protagonist is a widow with seven children who sells her coat and gown at market but has her purse stolen before she is able to buy any food.<sup>19</sup> Her brother-in-law, a corn merchant, refuses her even ‘a peck of corn’, and scolds her for being foolish. But she is aided by a baker’s boy who gives her a burnt loaf out of charity, which miraculously goes on to feed her family for seven weeks. While the poor family is delighted with their spartan meal of bread, apples and water, the thief who stole her purse breaks his neck before being able to spend her money, and the brother-in-law’s crops are destroyed in a flood. In the end, kindly ‘Gentlemen’ who witness the miracle give the widow material gifts such ‘that ner more wanted she’. The biblical overtones of the song, particularly the parallels with the New Testament miracle of feeding the five thousand with loaves and fishes, are a reminder of

---

<sup>18</sup> Joyce Oldham Appleby, *Economic Thought and Ideology in Seventeenth-Century England* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1978), 27-36.

<sup>19</sup> ‘The Kentish MIRACLE: OR, A Strange and Miraculous work of Gods Providence, shewed to a poor distressed Widow, and her Seven small Fatherless Children, who lived by a burn sixpenny Loaf of Bread, and a little Water, for above seven Weeks, in the wild of Kent, to the Praise and Glory of Almighty God.’ National Library of Scotland Crawford 1105, EBBA 33677.

God's generosity to those who are faithful.<sup>20</sup> The frugal meal in which the simple family takes great delight and for which they show gratitude stands in direct contrast to the greed of the cutpurse and the corn merchant, who represent the negative aspects of the country's new economic restructuring, and who are punished accordingly.

In another 'poverty' ballad to the same tune, 'A new Ballad, shewing the great misery sustained by a poore man in Essex', the poor father's desperation to feed his starving family drives him, after being refused by hardhearted farmers, to accept a bag of gold from a man who is the Devil in disguise.<sup>21</sup> He is barely rescued from betraying his entire family to damnation by the charity of 'the chiefest man,/that in the Parish dwelt' who 'With meat and mony thither came,/which liberally he dealt'. Again and again the ballads depict poverty leading desperate people to betray (or almost betray) their families, and depict generosity as the only antidote to evil.

Even the ballads to the 'Rich Merchant Man' tune that relate no narrative and are rather simply didactic and moralising continue this theme of generosity towards the poor. These songs are explicit in their warnings about the divine punishments that will ensue if their listener-singers mistreat the needy, with titles such as 'A Warning-piece for all Wicked Livers'. This ballad's refrain offers a generic moral lesson, advising repentance to all groups of society:

---

<sup>20</sup> Alexandra Walsham, *Providence in Early Modern England* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999); Brodie Waddell, *God, Duty and Community in English Economic Life, 1660-1720* (Boydell Press, 2012), esp. Ch. 2 'Judgement, Providence and the Prayers of the Poor'.

<sup>21</sup> 'A new Ballad, shewing the great misery sustained by a poore man in Essex, his Wife / and Children: with other strange things done by the Devill.' British Library Roxburghe 1.286-287, EBBA 30202.

Then lets with speed repent  
before our time be past  
For every man, woman & child  
must yield to death at last. <sup>22</sup>

However, the verses of the ballad are much more specific about the kinds of behaviour it seeks to root out, most of which involve greed for financial wealth:

The covetous miser he  
doth mind his bags of Gold,  
'Tis his delight both day and night  
his treasure to behold,  
His riches and his wealth  
his only god he makes  
Before he will relieve the Poor  
hee'l rather from them take.

Although other sins, such as pride, blasphemy, vanity, idleness and drunkenness, are mentioned in the ballad, it is greed that listener-singers are encouraged to focus their energies on, eradicating such sinfulness through charity to the vulnerable in society:

Pray Love the Fatherless,  
to the Widdow be a Friend,

---

<sup>22</sup> Thomas Lanfiere, 'A Warning-Piece for all VVickd Livers, OR, A Caviet for all People to remember their Latter End. Being very good instructions for Old and young, Rich and Poor, to amend their Lives, and repent before it be too late.' National Library of Scotland Crawford 1199, EBBA 34083.

Relieve those that are in distress,  
then God will thee defend:

A Covetous mind don't bear,  
if thou art blest with store,  
But spare some part of what thou hast,  
for the help of the poor:  
Although that wealth thou hast,  
yet it is but lent to thee,  
Then comfort and give alms to those  
that are in misery.

However, it appears that the ballad's author, Thomas Lanfiere, had little confidence in his audience's ability either young or old to follow his call for charitable acts, for in the final section of the ballad, in which he specifically encourages 'Young people' to have respect for their parents and warns them against 'Idleness and Sloth', he reminds them to

Indeavour and get in Youth,  
to keep you when you are old  
For if Poverty doth come you'l find,  
that Charity will be cold.

Although the Poor Law had been in place since 1601 and there were systems established for the social welfare of those most vulnerable in society, these ballads that incessantly preach the need for charity and bemoan the ill-treatment of the

poor are testament both to the popular belief that charity should begin at home, rather than with the state, and to the fear that it was all too often absent in the community.<sup>23</sup> As the seventeenth century saw a gradual movement from open, indiscriminate philanthropy to a more selective concern for the ‘respectable’ poor, the truly needy could be left behind.<sup>24</sup> Ballads to the tune of the ‘Rich Merchant Man’ are repeatedly eloquent in their support for the most vulnerable, and the popular melody thus became associated with the necessity to share one’s material wealth with those most in need, especially members of one’s family.

While ‘A Warning-piece for Wicked Livers’ promises only a lack of charity and eventual death for those who ignore its warnings, evidence of the more spectacular supernatural punishment for the mistreatment of the poor can be found in the ballad also to the tune of ‘The Rich Merchant Man’ about Dorothy Winterbottom, better known to her friends (and enemies) in Southwark as ‘Dirty Doll’. Already ‘notorious’ for her many vices, such as drinking, begging and cursing, Winterbottom was most despised for exploiting the poor by lending out money ‘upon the Tally’ (offering high interest loans, the records of debtors being kept on a ‘tally’, or register). This exploitation of the poor at their most vulnerable moment is criticised in the verse:

Extortion is a thing  
by Heaven is quite forbid;

---

<sup>23</sup> Steve Hindle, *On the Parish? The Micro-Politics of Poor Relief in Rural England 1550-1750* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009).

<sup>24</sup> Paul Slack, *Poverty and Policy in Tudor and Stuart England* (London: Longman, 1988), esp. Ch. 8 ‘The Growth of Social Welfare’, 162-87.

And often doth to ruin bring;  
such sins will not lye hid.<sup>25</sup>

Winterbottom was an early modern loan shark, whose thin patience with her debtors eventually led to her threatening to imprison them, and invoking the Devil as her witness. This was a rash gesture, especially in the world of broadside ballads: on 17 or 18 August 1684, the Devil (or devils, depending on the account) entered her home and physically assaulted her, leaving her arm ‘as black as jet’ and ‘her Thumb almost pinched off’.<sup>26</sup> Gangrene quickly set in, which killed her only a week later, on 25 August 1684. Her funeral, the ballad tells us, was attended by crowds of rejoicing spectators. Dirty Doll’s lack of repentance is made explicit in the ballad, and the singer fears that she is therefore doomed:

So that at last she dy’d  
a sinfull Soul I fear,  
Not one do give her a good word  
that I do come a near.

---

<sup>25</sup> ‘Dirty Dolls Farevvel. Being an account of a certain Woman, known by the Name of Dirty Doll, once living near Horslydown in Southwark, who was in her Life-time so notorious for several misdemeanours, that it is said, The Devil about the 17th, or 18th, of August 1684. appeared to her, between whom there hapened a terrible Combat, in which Dirty Doll was much bruised, so that one of her Arms was as black as a Cole, and her Thumb almost pinched off: She dyed on the 25th. of the same month, and was buried the 28th. Being accomodated to the Grave with whooting and hallowing, in a strange manner.’ Magdalene College Pepys 3.233, EBBA 21247.

<sup>26</sup> The story is discussed in Waddell, *God, Duty and Community*, 58-9. Dirty Doll’s story is also told in the ballad ‘Sad and Dreadful News from Horsly-Down, in the Parish of St. Mary Magdalen Bermondset; OR, A Warning to Brokers, Tally-men, and such like unconscionable Carter-pillars; by the sad Example of Dorothy Winter-bottom, Alias Dirty-Doll, late of Horsly-Down, who according to her own Report, as ‘tis Credibly attested, by contending with the Devil, received such mortal Bruises, as occasioned her death, she dying on the 27th. of August, and war buried at St. Olives Southwark, on the 28th. of the same month, 1684.’ Magdalene College Pepys 2.152, EBBA 20770.



Dirty Doll therefore stands as the antithesis of the original English merchant in Emden, whose wealth had come from honest dealings and who happily shared that wealth with those less fortunate. Doll is offered as a counter-example of how not to conduct oneself in business, a cautionary tale reinforced by the chorus, 'For cursed Cheats and false Deceits/do never prosper long'.

'Dirty Doll's Farewell' warned its listener-singers about the potential supernatural – and thus inescapable – nature of punishment for greed, and thus resembles the hardheartedness ballads we have seen also on the 'Rich Merchant Man' melody, such as 'The Kentish Miracle' or the ballad about the poor Essex man. But its identification of a notorious figure of London life also links the song about Dirty Doll and her punishment to the genre of execution ballad, even though her death was the result of divine retribution rather than a sanctioned state execution. While execution ballads addressed the punishment of a broad range of crimes and motives, the execution ballads set to the tune of 'The Rich Merchant Man' conspicuously deal with crimes originating from material greed. Thus 'The Golden Farmer's Last Farewell', a ballad about William Davis (or Davies), a highwayman and robber, better known as the 'Golden Farmer' because of his habit of taking only gold coins from his victims, lists some of the many violent ways in which he and his gang would extort money from victims:

We always gagg'd and bound  
most of the Family,  
That we might search until we found

their hidden Treasury;  
Which if we could not find,  
a Pistol cock'd streightway,  
Presented at their Breast, to make  
them shew us where it lay.<sup>27</sup>

Unlike other contemporary ballads that romanticised the deeds of highwaymen, Davis's execution ballad follows the pattern of ballads set to the 'Rich Merchant Man' tune and excoriates Davis's evil ways, presenting him as remorseful and repentant:

I solemnly declare,  
who am to Justice brought,  
All kind of wicked Sins that are,  
I eagerly have wrought;  
No Villains are more rife,  
than those which I have bred;  
And thus a most perfidious Life  
I in this world have led.

It would appear that the choice of the 'Rich Merchant Man' melody required the portrayal of Davis in a repentant posture. To depict him as a traditional 'game' outlaw would have been incongruous to listeners familiar with the tune and its associated themes. By comparison, the portrait of the highwayman Claude Du Val

---

<sup>27</sup> 'THE GOLDEN Farmer's Last FAREWEEL Who was arraigned and found Guilty of wilful Murther, and likewise many notorious Robberies; for which he received a due Sentance of Death, and was accordingly Executed on the 22d. of December, 1690 in Fleetstreet.' Magdalene College Pepys 2.187, EBBA 20802.

in the ballad ‘DEVOL's last Farewel’, set to the tune ‘Upon the Change’, is full of accounts of his dashing appearance and bold adventures, a romanticisation of his criminal exploits as ‘frolicksom Intreigues’:

When I was mounted on my Steed,  
I thought myself a Man indeed;  
With Pistol cockd and glittering Sword,  
Stand and deliver, was the word,  
Which makes me now lament and say,  
    pity the Fall of great Devol,  
Well-a-day, well-a-day.<sup>28</sup>

Such a ‘frolicksom’ account of crimes is eschewed in the execution ballads set to the ‘Rich Merchant Man’ tune, that without exception portray the crimes as heinous and the condemned as remorseful.

### **Training the ‘Young people’ through melody**

The same is true for the ballad ‘The Unfaithful Servant; and The Cruel Husband’, which relates the crimes of Judith Brown, a maidservant convicted in 1684 of conspiring with her master to murder his wife:

Young Maidens all beware,  
that sees my Dismal state,  
    Endeavour now to shun the Snare,

---

<sup>28</sup> DEVOL's last Farewel: Containing an Account of many frolicksom Intreigues and notorious Robberies, which he committed: Concluding vwith his mournful Lamentation, on the Day of his Death.’ University of Glasgow Library Euing 77, EBBA 31760.

before it is too late.

I was a Servant Maid,  
and liv'd most happily,  
Until at last I was betray'd,  
to this Debauchery.

Then with my Master I,  
did take the cause in hand,  
Resolv'd my Mistris she should dye  
by our most cruel hand.

Strong poyson we contriv'd  
this was our hanious Sin,  
That she of Life might be depriv'd  
poor Soul when she lay in.

To you that come to see,  
a woful sinners fall,  
O let those cruel flames now be,  
a warning to you all.

THE  
**Unfaithful Servant;**  
 AND  
**The Cruel Husband.**

Being a perfect and true account of one *Judith Brown*, who together with her Master *John Copper*, conspired the Death of her Mistress, his Wife, which accordingly they did accomplish in the time of Child-bed, when they lay in with two Children, by mixing of her Drink with cruel Poyson; for which Fact she received due Sentence of Death at the late Assizes in the County of *Ssex*, to be *Executed*, which was accordingly Executed upon the Old Heath near *Sixenbury*, on *Thursday* the Twenty-first day of *August*, 1684.  
 To the Tune of, *The Rich Merchant-man*: Or, *George Barnet*.

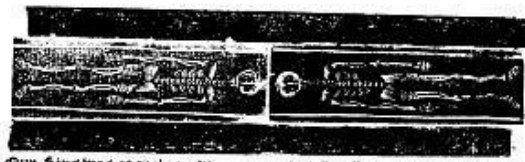


**Y**oung Maidens all beware,  
 that in my Dismal state,  
 Endeavour now to shun the Sware,  
 before it is too late.

I was a Servant Maid,  
 and liv'd most happily,  
 Until at last I was betray'd,  
 to this Debauchery.

Too late I do lament,  
 my deep heart doth bleed,  
 That ever I did give consent,  
 to that most wicked deed.

My yielding to his toady,  
 his wicked base desire,  
 Yes, by that means I end my days;  
 in cruel flames of Fire.



Our Sins was at their greed,  
 that none but them be blame,  
 So be indeed the cause we both  
 did end our days in Shame.

We could not be content,  
 with what the fell had done,  
 But afterwards we did invent,  
 in worse extremes to run.

Then with my Master I,  
 did take the cause in hand,  
 Resolv'd my Mistress she should dye  
 by our most cruel hand.

Her Life we did betray,  
 to satisfy our will,  
 When she alas! in Child-bed lay,  
 & our Soul she thought no ill.

Strong poyson we contriv'd  
 this was our banious Sin,  
 That she of Life might be depriv'd  
 poor Soul when she lay in.

My conscience strove with me,  
 but I a wicked elf,  
 Desired that my Master he,  
 should give it her himself.

But we did disagree,  
 as you may understand,  
 For Conscience would not suffer us  
 to put it in her hand.

Though neither he nor I,  
 had power to do this deed,  
 Yet all this would not satisfy,  
 but still we did proceed.

Printed for J. Daines, at the Angel in *Grub-street*, without *Newgate*.

In what she was to drink  
 we mixt the poyson strong,  
 That she might take it & not think  
 the least of any wrong.

By which at length she dyed,  
 and I was left behind,  
 To dye a cruel death beside,  
 the horror of my mind.

Alas! you may behold,  
 my sad and dismal doom,  
 Both hands & heart, and cry-part:  
 in flames you'll see consume.

The Sorrows of my heart,  
 in this extremity,  
 Although it is my due desert,  
 I do for mercy cry.

Farewel my woody Friends;  
 and my offences foul,  
 Good Lord forgive me all my sins,  
 have mercy on my Soul.

In this bewouring flame,  
 my life must now expire;  
 And my sins I needs must blame,  
 I end my days in fire.

To you that come to see,  
 a woful sinners fall,  
 Let those cruel flames now be;  
 a warning to you all.

By this a warning take,  
 and better run astray,  
 And God will never you forsake;  
 if you his Ways obey.

Figure 3. 'The Unfaithful Servant; and The Cruel Husband', Magdalene College Pepys 2.151; EBBA ID: 20769

The ballad is in the voice of the condemned criminal herself, who sings to 'young maidens' of her slide from virtue into vice, first giving into the lustful desires of her master and then conspiring with him to poison his wife. It closes with her expressions of dread at the thought of her punishment by burning, and a final warning to spectators at the execution to learn from her example and turn away from sin. Significantly, the long detailed title offers much more information than the song itself: the singer's name and that of her master, the location of the assizes court where she was prosecuted, and the exact date and location of the execution (see note 21). It is important that these details are reserved for the title, because although it is possible for us to read the broadside and thereby locate this event in

time and space, many members of its early modern audience would never have read the ballad, either because they had little literacy, or because they simply heard someone else singing it. Although establishing literacy rates in early modern England is problematic and the source of endless scholarly dispute, we can be confident that the group of people least likely to have been literate in seventeenth-century London was female servants.<sup>29</sup> Were they to only hear the ballad being sung, rather than reading it and its informative title, they may never have learned anything more about the tale than that a maidservant conspired with her master to replace her mistress and was burned to death for it. The ballad in its purely aural reception therefore becomes a interwoven group of moral imperatives applicable to any young woman in service: avoid amorous relations with your master, respect your mistress, and above all, avoid the temptation to get ideas above your station that will lead you to ruin.<sup>30</sup>

Offering a contrasting depiction to the ballad version was a prose account of the event: *A Just Account of the Horrid Contrivance of John Cupper, and Judith Brown his Servant, In Poysoning his Wife* by William Smith, Rector of Bitterley, whose six-page detailed prose account provides more detailed information about the case than the ballad.<sup>31</sup> There is much greater focus in the pamphlet on the husband, John

---

<sup>29</sup> David Cressy, *Literacy and the Social Order: Reading and Writing in Tudor and Stuart England* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006); Eve Rachel Sanders and Margaret W. Ferguson, 'Literacies in Early Modern England', *Critical Survey* 14, no. 1 (2002): 1-8; Keith Thomas, 'The Meaning of Literacy in Early Modern England', in *The Written Word: Literacy in Transition*, ed. Gerd Baumann (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1986), 97-131.

<sup>30</sup> For the interplay between oral and written culture as it relates to early modern balladry, see Adam Fox, *Oral and Literate Culture in England 1500-1700* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2000), esp. Ch. 6, 'Ballads and Libels'.

<sup>31</sup> *A Just Account of the Horrid Contrivance of John Cupper, and Judith Brown his Servant, In Poysoning his Wife* (London: Edw. Robinson, Bookseller in Ludlow, 1686).

Cupper, whose punishment is elided in the ballad (the pamphlet's title page tells us he was 'hang'd in chains').<sup>32</sup> Smith's pamphlet also features a Latin inscription on its title page which explicitly marketed its contents to those most likely to have an understanding of the language: educated men of the upper classes. The inscription 'Hippomanes carmenque loquar, coctumque venenum, uxorique datum?', which translates as 'Why tell of love potions and incantations, of poisons brewed and administered to wives?', is a modification of a quote from Juvenal's Satire 6, 'Hippomanes carmenque loquar, coctumque venenum, *privignoque* datum?' ('...administered to stepsons? [by murderous stepmothers]').<sup>33</sup> The adaptation of one of the most famously misogynist works of the classical period alerted its readers to the pamphlet's themes: Judith Brown is referred to on the first page as 'a Notorious Strumpet', and the central message appears to be about the need for husbands to protect their wives from dangerous female servants.<sup>34</sup> The prose pamphlet is therefore directed at elite men and offers them a very different version of the news events than the ballad, which may include the elite among its audience but is directed at young women both explicitly, in its opening address to 'young maidens' and implicitly, by virtue of its aural nature, and by its first person voice which would have enabled a more acute identification with the condemned among its young female singers. The ballad, set to a tune now firmly associated with the

---

<sup>32</sup> M. Rebecca Livingstone, 'Unsettled Households: Domestic Homicide in Seventeenth-Century England' (unpublished doctoral dissertation, Tulane University, 2007), 224-226.

<sup>33</sup> Juvenal, *The Satires*, trans. Niall Rudd, ed. William Barr (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1991).

<sup>34</sup> For studies of the representations of 'dangerous' female domestic staff in early modern England see Frances Dolan, *Dangerous Familiars: Representations of Domestic Crime in England, 1550-1700* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1994); Joy Wiltenburg, *Disorderly Women and Female Power in the Street Literature of Early Modern England and Germany* (Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 1992).

chastisement of greed, ‘The Rich Merchant Man,’ presents the story of Judith Brown as a didactic exemplar of the righteous and inevitable punishment of the misplaced ambitions of lowly maidservants.

The pitfalls of failing to live by the expectations of one’s social class were also the focus in what was arguably the most popular ballad set to ‘The Rich Merchant Man’ melody, ‘An Excellent Ballad of George Barnwel an Apprentice in London’, a ballad found in almost every major English ballad collection today.<sup>35</sup> It was such a popular contrafact that ‘George Barnwell’ became another widely-used name for the melody, and so, for example, the song about Judith Brown gives its tune indication as ‘To the tune of, *The Rich Merchant-man: Or, George Barnwel*’. The ballad, which opens ‘All Youths of fair England’, tells the story of an apprentice who, out of greed for money to lavish on the prostitute with whom he is besotted, murders his rich uncle. When the money runs out, she informs on him to the authorities, whereupon he escapes, but then writes a confession implicating them both. They are both executed, and the final lines offer the summary of the moral lesson:

Lo, here's the end of wilful youth,  
that after Harlots haunt,  
Who in the spoil of other men,  
about the streets do flaunt.

---

<sup>35</sup> ‘An Excellent Ballad of George Barnwel, an Apprentice of London, who was undone by a Strumpet, who having thrice robbed his Master, and murdered his Uncle in Ludlow, was hanged in Chains in Polonia, and by the means of a Letter sent from his own hand to the Mayor of London, she was hang'd at Ludlow.’ British Library Roxburghe 3.26-27; EBBA ID: 30382.



In his examination of seventeenth-century London apprentices, Steven Smith identifies them as ‘a separate order or subculture’ populated predominantly by males in their teens and early twenties.<sup>36</sup> Apprenticeship was

a transitory period between ‘the morality learned by the child, and the ethics to be developed by the adult’. The large number of ethical warning pieces testifies to this and the ballads and stories of riotous apprentices show that many learned ethical behaviour through ‘role experimentation’ and adult punishment.<sup>37</sup>

Although there were numerous ballads and stories about apprentices, as well as conduct literature to guide them through this transitory period, the ballad of George Barnwell was perceived to be so instructive that it was often included in their induction rituals.<sup>38</sup> Its popularity led to it becoming the inspiration for the play *The London Merchant (Or the History of George Barnwell)* by George Lillo.<sup>39</sup> First performed in 1731, *The London Merchant* was based directly on the events of the ballad, even using the same names and locations as the song. The manager of the theatre in which it was performed, Theophilus Cibber, who also acted the part of Barnwell in the play, recounted the links between the ballad and the play:

---

<sup>36</sup> Steven Smith, ‘The London Apprentices as Seventeenth-Century Adolescents’, *Past & Present* 61 (1973): 149-161, 157.

<sup>37</sup> Smith, ‘The London Apprentices’, 158.

<sup>38</sup> Smith, ‘The London Apprentices’, 158.

<sup>39</sup> George Lillo, *The London Merchant*, ed. William H. McBurney (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1965).

The old ballad of George Barnwell (on which the story was founded) was on this occasion reprinted and many thousands sold in one day. Many gaily-disposed spirits brought the ballad with them to the play, intending to make their pleasant remarks (as some afterwards owned) and ludicrous comparisons between the ancient ditty and the modern play...But the play was very carefully got up, and universally allowed to be well performed ... [and] in general, spoke so much to the heart, that the gay persons before mentioned confessed, they were drawn in to drop their ballads, and pull out their handkerchiefs.<sup>40</sup>

The play was instantly popular, so much so that by the middle of the century it had become the customary offering on the Lord Mayor's Day and Shrove Tuesday, when it was traditional for apprentices to go to the theatre.<sup>41</sup> Until this point, apprentices had usually been offered *The London Cuckolds* by Edward Ravenscroft, the story of apprentices cuckolding their masters<sup>42</sup>, and so by contrast *The London Merchant* was 'judged a proper entertainment for the apprentices, &c. as being a more instructive, moral, and cautionary drama, than many pieces that had usually been exhibited on those days with little but farce and ribaldry to recommend them.'<sup>43</sup> The play's message of edification for apprentices meant that it became 'the centerpiece of a theatre for aspiring young men'.<sup>44</sup> The punishment of George Barnwell was felt to be, like his counterpart's execution in the ballad, a powerful

---

<sup>40</sup> Lillo, *The London Merchant*, xii.

<sup>41</sup> It would go on to be translated into several languages; see Lawrence Marsden Price, 'George Barnwell Abroad,' *Comparative Literature* 2, no. 2 (Spring 1950): 126-56.

<sup>42</sup> *The Cambridge Companion to English Restoration Theatre*, ed. Deborah Payne Fisk (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 277.

<sup>43</sup> Lillo, *The London Merchant*, xiii.

<sup>44</sup> Lucinda Cole, 'The London Merchant and the Institution of Apprenticeship', *Criticism* 37, no. 1 (1995): 57-84, 74. Cole credits Samuel Richardson's *Vade Mecum*, an apprenticeship manual published three years after the initial production of *The London Merchant*, with promoting this new kind of didactic theatre for apprentices.

deterrent and didactic tool for a riotous and volatile group that was perceived as a potential threat to social order.

The power of the repentance voiced by Barnwell for the sins motivated by his greed was so enduring that the novelist Charles Dickens would use him as a plot device in *Great Expectations*. When Pip, on the eve of his apprenticeship, meets the aspiring actor Mr Wopsle in the street, ‘Mr Wopsle had in his hand the affecting tragedy of George Barnwell’, and ‘he appeared to consider that a special Providence had put a ‘prentice in his way to be read at’. When Wopsle forces Pip to act out the part of Barnwell, Pip’s own reaction shocks himself:

What stung me, was the identification of the whole affair with my unoffending self. When Barnwell began to go wrong, I declare that I felt positively apologetic, Pumblechook’s indignant stare so taxed me with it.<sup>45</sup>

As the novel centres on a young apprentice’s ambition to achieve the trappings of a higher social class, Dickens’ choice of George Barnwell as a cautionary figure of the potential pitfalls of striving for material wealth demonstrates that the original moralistic message of the ballad had endured. Indeed, despite the play’s claim, the ballad had for *more* than ‘a century of rolling years ... fill'd a thousand thousand eyes with tears’. Dickens’ contemporary readers were clearly still familiar with the story, and would have recognised in Pip’s fruitless pursuit of Estella, the beautiful, wealthy and unattainable woman, an echo of Barnwell’s pursuit of Sara Millwood

---

<sup>45</sup> Charles Dickens, *Great Expectations*, eds. Margaret Cardwell and Robert Douglas-Fairhurst (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008).

the prostitute, sinking deeper and deeper into debt in order to maintain a lifestyle that is out of his reach. Of course, Dickens' nineteenth-century *bildungsroman* allows the possibility of the development of character and social mobility that the seventeenth-century execution ballad simply could not. Nevertheless, ambition in the novel is still seen to be problematic, and in Pip's case is built on a base of crime and punishment, his benefactor being a convicted murderer.

Throughout its trajectory the 'Rich Merchant Man' melody accrued firm and enduring associations with ideas of appropriate behaviour for the merchant classes and the young people who served them and trained with them. Moral imperatives of charity, of satisfaction with one's social place and income, and of the awful punishments that would ensue were one to ignore those imperatives, were closely linked with a tune that was known to all classes of society for what appears to have been centuries. Although economic historians have argued for increasing levels of prosperity through the seventeenth century, the ballads set to the 'Rich Merchant Man' melody offer a contradictory viewpoint, in which poverty is prevalent, charity must be repeatedly encouraged, and the only way for the serving classes to avoid the temptations and pitfalls of financial avarice is for them to 'know their place'. At a moment in English history when affluence was on the rise yet perceived as increasingly problematic, the 'Rich Merchant Man' melody acted – in all its versions – as an aural warning of the perils of the unequal distribution of wealth. As the English market economy developed through widening global trade, giving rise both to an increasingly complex relationship between workers and goods and

to fears of market manipulation and greed, the ballads also appear to have transformed over time, from providing exemplars of noble behaviour in the merchant classes to offering punitive visions of greedy and criminal behaviour. That their lyrics and format addressed an audience of young, impressionable servants and apprentices as well as merchants themselves resulted in a powerful conjunction of melody, market and moral lesson. For ballads set to the 'Rich Merchant Man' tune, the recycling of the melody reinforced the ballad's didactic potency by aurally reminding its listeners of the cautionary tales it had told before.

**Ballads Written to the Tune of 'The Rich Merchant Man'  
(categorised by their dominant theme)**

**Execution/Punishment**

- A Warning to all Priests and jesuites, by the example of two Masse-priests, which for seducing and stealing away the hearts of the Kings Loyall Subjects, were hangd, drawne, and quartered: whose execution was on Friday, being the 21. day of January, 1642. To the Tune of, A Rich Marchant Man. (1643) Ashm. H 23(47); Bod4933
- An Excellent Ballad of George Barnwel an Apprentice in London, who was undone by a Strumpet, who thrice Robbed his Master, and Murdered his Uncle in Ludlow. Magdalene College Pepys 2.158-159; EBBA ID: 20778
- Dirty Dolls Farevvel. Being an account of a certain Woman, known by the Name of Dirty Doll, once living near Horslydown in Southwark, who was in her Life-time so notorious for several misdemeanours, that it is said, The Devil about the 17th, or 18th, of August 1684. appeared to her, between whom there hapened a terrible Combat, in which Dirty Doll was much bruised, so that one of her Arms was as black as a Cole, and her Thumb almost pinched off: She dyed on the 25th. of the same month, and was buried the 28th. Being accomodated to the Grave with whooting and hallowing, in a strange manner. Magdalene College Pepys 3.233; EBBA ID: 21247
- THE GOLDEN Farmer's Last FAREWEEL Who was arraigned and found Guilty of wilful Murther, and likewise many notorious Robberies; for which he received a due Sentence of Death, and was accordingly Executed on the 22d. of December, 1690 in Fleetstreet. Magdalene College Pepys 2.187; EBBA ID: 20802
- THE Unfaithful Servant; AND The Cruel Husband. Being a perfect and true account of one Judith Brown, who together with her Master John Cupper, conspired the Death of her Mistris, his Wife, which accordingly they did accomplish in the time of Child-bed, when she lay in with two Children, by mixing of her Drink with cruel Poyson; for which Fact she received due Sentence of Death at the late Assizes in the County of Salop, to be Burned; which was accordingly Executed upon the Old Heath near Shrewsbury, on Thursday the Twenty-first day of August, 1684. Magdalene College Pepys 2.151; EBBA ID: 20769
- The Arrainement condemnation and execution of the grand [cutpurse] Iohn Selman who was executed at White-hall vppon Twesday the seuenth of Ianuary. 1612. Magdalene College Pepys 1.131; EBBA ID: 20057
- The Cucking of a Scould. To the tune of, The Merchant of Emden. Magdalene College Pepys 1.454; EBBA ID: 20029
- The Merchant-man and the Fidlers wife: Discovering a pretty conceit how a Fidler, in hope of gain (and trusting too much to his Wifes honesty) was made a Cuckold by the Merchant; and lost his Fiddle to boot. He laid his Fiddle to a Ship, In hopes for to be made But Peggy let the Merchant flip, and Robin he was betray'd. To a Pleasant Northen Tune, by J.P. Magdalene College Pepys 4.163; EBBA ID: 21825
- The fearefull Judgement of almighty god, shewed vpon two sonnes who ... murdered

their ... father. Tune: 'The Marchant of Emden or Crimson Velvet' (Shirburn MS, 1616)  
Cited in Simpson, *British Broadside Ballad*.

- The Unnatural Mother: Being a true Relation of one Jane Lawson, once living at East-Barnet, in Middlesex; who Quarreling with her Husband, urged him to strike her, and thereupon the same night, being the first of Sept. 1680. Drowned her self and two poor Babes in a Well. The Tune is, There was a Rich Merchant Man. Magdalene College Pepys 2.191; EBBA ID: 20806
- The vvofull Lamentation of William Purcas, vvho for murtherin his Mother at Thaxted in Essex was executed at Chelmsford. To the tune of, The rich Merchant. British Library Roxburghe 1.444-445; EBBA ID: 30299
- The Ungrateful Son; OR, An Example of God's Justice upon the abusefull Disobedience of a Falsehearted and cruel Son to his Aged Father. To the Tune of Kentish miracle. National Library of Scotland Crawford 953; EBBA ID: 33528
- Treason justly punished: or, A full relation of the condemnation and execution of Mr. William Staley who was found guilty of high treason, at the Kings-bench-barr at Westminster, on Thursday the 21st. of Nov. 1678. For speaking dangerous, and treasonable words against his most Sacred Majesty the King. For which he was sentenced to be drawn, hang'd, and quartered. And was accordingly executed upon Tuesday the 26th. of this instant Nov. 1678. at Tyburn. Tune of, The rich merchant-man &c. VVith allowance. (1679) Harvard University Library, Wing T2077A

### **Noble Exemplar**

- A Godly Ballad of the Just Man Job.  
Wherein his great patience he doth declare,  
His plagues and his miseries, and yet did not despair.  
The Tune is, The Merchant. National Library of Scotland Crawford 1239; EBBA ID: 32808
- A most sweet Song of an English Merchant born in Chichester.  
To an Excellent new Tune. University of Glasgow Library Euing 230; EBBA ID: 31745

### **Poverty**

- A new Ballad, shewing the great misery sustained by a poore man in Essex, his Wife and Children: with other strange things done by the Devill. To the tune of, The rich Merchant man. British Library Roxburghe 1.286-287; EBBA ID: 30202
- A true sence of Sorrow: OR THE Poor York-shire-Man protected by Providence, in the greatest time of trouble. When Grief and Care, almost Dispair, does seem to overthrow; Men in Distress and heaviness, the Lord can kindness show. Magdalene College Pepys 2.53; EBBA ID: 20677
- The Kentish MIRACLE: OR, A Strange and Miraculous work of Gods Providence, shewed to a poor distressed Widow, and her Seven small Fatherless Children, who lived by a burn fixpenny Loaf of Bread, and a little Water, for above seven Weeks, in the wild of Kent, to the Praise and Glory of Almighty God. National Library of Scotland Crawford 1105; EBBA ID: 33677

## Repentance

- A Warning-Piece for all VVickd Livers, OR, A Caviet for all People to remember their Latter End. Being very good instructions for Old and young, Rich and Poor, to amend their Lives, and repent before it be too late. National Library of Scotland Crawford 1199; EBBA ID: 34083
- Christ's Tears over JERUSALEM; OR, A Caveat for England to call to God for mercy, lest we be plagued for our contempt and Wickedness. Magdalene College Pepys 2.6; EBBA ID: 21664
- Friendly Advice to EXTRAVAGANTS Shewing the Vanity of those, Who to themselves are cruel foes, By their delays for to prepare, grim Death he will not long forbear But unawares will give the blow, They'l mourn when they do find it so National Library of Scotland Crawford 927; EBBA ID: 33423
- The doleful Dance, and Song of Death; Intituled, Dance after my Pipe. Magdalene College Pepys 2.62; EBBA ID: 20686
- A dittie most excelent for euerie man to reade/that doth intend for to amende & to repent with speede. Tune: 'a rich marchant man or John come kiss me now' (c. 1616) BM MS Add. 15255, f. 56
- The cruel lover: or, The credulous maid. Being an account of a young man near London, who, after he had courted a young maid, and gain'd her consent to lie with him, cruelly murder'd her, and afterwards threw her into Ann-is-so-clear, near Shore-ditch, &c. Tune: George Barnwell (c. 1760) Harvard University Library, Wing
- Strange Newes from Brotherton in Yorke-shire, being a true Relation of the raining of Wheat on Easter day last, to the great amaizment of all the Inhabitants. It hath rained Wheate more or lesse every day since, witnessed by divers persons of good ranke and quality, as the Lady Ramsden who gathered some her selfe, some of it was sent to Judge Green, and M. Hurst dwelling at the Fountaine Taverne in Saint Anns Lane neere Aldersgate in London. To the tune of The rich Merchant Man. (1648) In Henry Rollins, *The Pack of Antolycus* (Cambridge MA: Harvard University Press, 1927), 40-43.