

The Muckin' o' Geordie's Byre--original tune

March



The Muckin' o' Geordie's Byre: This is the old 18th century version, a song tune whose chorus was :

It was never my father's intention
Nor yet my mither's desire;
That I should fyle my fingers
Wi' the muckin' o' Geordie's byre.

There was probably a covert Jacobite sub-text here, a comment on the King Georges I, II or III, the so-called "German Geordies". There are versions in David Herd's *Ancient & Modern Scottish Songs* (1776) and Robert Burns's *Scots Musical Museum* (1797).

The well known modern song made popular by Willie Kemp and Andy Stewart has the same title but completely different words and tune. Kemp claimed to have composed it to a melody he called "traditional" although it bears a striking similarity to the air used by Harold Boulton for his song "Bonnie Strathyre", which was first published in *Songs of the North* (1885, 1905, and 1925) and also to the song "Westering Home".

Altogether this group of related pieces forms an interesting example of how titles, tunes and verbal motifs intermingle, and that writing and print presents no barrier to this kind of fluidity. The modern version begins like this: