**A most excellent Song of the love of young *Palmus*, and faire *Sheldra*, with their unfortunate love.**

**To the tune of Shackey-hay.[[1]](#footnote-1)**

1. V: Young Palmus was a Ferriman, whom Sheldra faire did love:

At Shackley where her sheep did graze, she there his thoughts did prove.

But he unkindly stole away, and left his love at Shackley hay.

Fa, la la, fa, la la la la.

So loud at Shackley did she cry, the words resound at Shackley-hay.

Fa, la la, fa, la la la la.

1. W: But all in vaine she did complaine, for nothing could him move:

Till wind did turne him backe againe, and brought him to his love.

When she saw him thus turnd by fate, She turnd her love to mortall hate.

Then weeping to her did he say, A: Ile live with thee at Shackley-hay.

1. V: ‘No no’ (quoth she) ‘I thee deny, my love thou once didst scorne:

And [to][[2]](#footnote-2) my prayers[[3]](#footnote-3) wouldst not heare, but left me here forlorne:

And now being turnd by fate of wind, Thou thinkst to win me to thy mind.

Go, go, farewell, I thee denay, Thou shalt not live at Shackley-hay.

1. [Palmus] A: ‘If thou dost my love disdaine, because I live on seas:

Or that I am a Ferry man, my Sheldra doth displease:

I will no more in that estate, Be servile unto wind and fate.

But quite forsake Boate, Oares, & Sea, And live with thee at Shackley-hay,

1. A: ‘My Sheldra’s bed shall be my Boat, her armes shall be my Oares,

where love in stead of storms shall float, on pleasant downes and shores:

Her sweetest breath my gentle gale, Through tides of love to drive my saile,

Her looke my praise, and she my joy, To live with me at Shackley-hay,

1. ‘*Not Phao[[4]](#footnote-4) shall with me compare, so fortunate to prove:*

*Faire Venus never was his fare, Ile beare the Queene of love:*

*The working waters never feare, For Cupids selfe our Barge shall steere,*

*And to the shore I still will cry, My Sheldra comes to Shackley-hey.*

1. A: ‘To strew my Boate for thy availe, Ile rob the flowrie shores:

And whilst thou guid’st the silken saile, Ile row with silver Oares:

And as upon the streames we float, A thousand Swans shal guide our boat.

And to the shore still will I cry, My Sheldra comes to Shackley-hay.

1. *‘And have a story painted there, wherein there shall be seene:*

*How Sapho lov’d a Ferriman, being a learn-ed Queene.*

*In golden letter shall be writ, How well in love himselfe he quit.*

*That all the Lasses still shall cry, With Palmus wee’le to Shackley-hay.*

1. *‘And walking easily to the Strand, wee’le angle in the brooke:*

*And fish with thy white-lilly hand, thou needst no other hooke:*

*To which the fish shall soone be brought & strive which shall the first be caught*

*A thousand pleasures will we try, As we doe row to Shackley-hay.*

1. *‘And if we be opprest with heat, in mid-time of the day:*

*Under the Willowes tall and great, shall be our quiet bay:*

*Where I will make thee fans of bowe From Phoebus beames to shade thy browe*

*And cause them at the Ferry cry, A boat, a boat to Shackley-hay.*

1. A: ‘A troupe of dainty neighbouring girles shall dance along the strand:

Upon the gravell all of pearles, to wait when thou shalt land,

And cast themselves about thee round, Whilst thou with garlands shall be crown[‘d]

And all the shepheards with joy shall c[ry] O Sheldra is come to Shackley-hay.

1. A: ‘Although I did my selfe absent, ‘twas but to try thy mind’:

[Sheldra]V: ‘But now thou maist thy selfe repent, for being so unkind:

For now thou art turnd by wind & fa[te] In stead of love th’hast purchast hate.

Wherefore returne thee to the Sea, And bid farewell to Shackley-hay.

**The second part, to the same tune.**

1. V: Thus all in vaine he did complaine, and no remorse could find:

Young Palmus through his own disdaine made Sheldra faire unkind:

And she is from him fled and gone, He laid him in his boat alone,

Fa, la la, & c.

And so betooke him to the Sea, And bad farewell to Shackley-hay.

Fa, la la, & c.

1. V: Then from the happy sandy shore, into the floating waves:

His vessell fraught with brinish teares, into the maine he laves.

But all in vaine, for why, he still, With weeping eyes his boat did fill,

And lancht [ie launched] his boat into the sea, And bade farewell to Shackley-hay.

1. [Palmus] A: ‘Now farewell to my Sheldra faire, whom I no more shall see:

I meane to leave my life at sea, by thy unconstancy.

Come Neptune, come, to thee I cry, With thee Ile live, with thee Ile dye.’

Thus he lancht himselfe into the sea, And bade farewell to Shackley-hay.

1. A: But farre from thence he had not gone, ere Sheldra faire returned

Whose heart kind pity made to move, such passion in her burned:

But when she to that place arriv’d, She found the shore from him depriv’d.

And her deare Palmus now at sea, Had bade farewell to Shackley-hay.

1. A: She then with bitter sighes complaind, her griefe did so abound:

Oft grieving, that she him disdaind, whom she so loving found:

But now (alas) ‘twas all in vaine, For he was gone by her disdaine.

Leaving that place to her alone, Who now laments that he is gone.

1. [Sheldra] V: ‘O wretched Sheldra,’ then, quoth she, ‘confesse what fond disdaine,

Hath wrath caus-ed to fall on thee: [by][[5]](#footnote-5) this long-suffering paine,

By thee (alas) so soone forgot, Serv’d to thy loves strange hatefull lot.

And thus to lye, and for him crie, Whom thou so fondly didst deny.

1. V: ‘Who once did truely love, I see, shall never after hate,

As doth too well appeare by me, in my forsaken state.

Alas, I meant my scorne to prove, By onely tryall of his love.

Now haplesse me, since I doe see, He hath forsaken wofull me,

1. A: Thus all this while in roughest seas, poore Palmus boat was tost:

But more his mind with his disease, because he Sheldra lost.

In midst of this, he her forsweares, He rent his boat and tore his haires.

Threw hope away, for he, alas, Could be no more drownd then [=than] he was.

1. BOTH: Even as his griefe had swallowed him, so strove the greedy waves:

About his boat, and o’re the brim, each lofty billow raves:

There is no trust to swelling powers, That what it may, it still devoures,

But by the breach the seas might see, the boat felt more the rage then [= than] hee.

1. V: Thus wrackt & scatterd was their state while he in quiet swomme:

Through liquid pathes to Thetis gate, by soft degrees went downe

Whom when the Nymphs beheld, the Girles, Soone layd aside their sorting pearles.

And up they heav’d him as a guest, Unlookt for, now come to their feast.

1. V: His case they pittied: but when they beheld his face right faine:

For very love, into the sea they pulld him backe againe:

So were they with his beauty mov’d, For what is faire is soone belov’d.

Thus with Nymphs he lives in the sea That lost his love at Shackley-hay.

1. A: Then Sheldra faire to Shackley went, to end her wofull dayes,

V: Because young Palmus cast himselfe into the floating Seas.

A: At Shackley-hay did faire Sheldra dye, V: And Palmus in the sea doth lye,

BOTH: So as they lived, so did they dye, And bade farewell to Shackley-hay.

1. See Simpson, p. 647 (the earliest version of the tune is the best one). It may well have been a dance tune and so probably shouldn’t be taken too slowly, especially given the number of verses! How about an unaccompanied group rendition, as you did for ‘The noble riddle’ in the Belfast concert (a male voice; a female voice; and everyone for the refrains)? [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. Word added in other editions so that the line scans properly. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. Pronounce ‘pray-ers’ (2 syllables)? [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. Ancient Greek lover of Sapho. [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. This edition as ‘could not’ here but it makes no sense and other versions correct it to ‘by’. [↑](#footnote-ref-5)