

The Hunting of the Cheviot (Child 162B)

- 1 GOD prosper long our noble *king*,
our liifes and saftyes all!
A woefull hunting once there did
in Cheuy Chase befall.
- 2 To driue the deere with hound and horne 5
Erle Pearcy took the way:
The child may rue *that* is vnborne
the hunting of *that* day!
- 3 The stout Erle of Northumberland
a vow to God did make 10
His pleasure in the Scottish woods
three *sommers* days to take,
- 4 The cheefest harts in Cheuy C[h]ase
to kill and beare away:
These tydings to Erle Douglas came 15
in Scotland, where he lay.
- 5 Who sent Erle Pearcy present word
he wold *prevent* his sport;
The English erle, not fearing that,
did to the woods resort, 20
- 6 With fifteen hundred bowmen bold,
all chosen men of might,
Who knew ffull well in time of neede
to ayme their shafts arright.
- 7 The gallant greyhound[s] swiftly ran 25
to chase the fallow deere;
On Munday they began to hunt,
ere daylight did appeare.

- 8 And long before high noone the had
a hundred fat buckes slaine; 30
Then hauing dined, the drouyers went
to rouze the deare againe.
- 9 The bowmen mustered on the hills,
well able to endure;
Theire backsids all with speciall care 35
that day were guarded sure.
- 10 The hounds ran swiftly through the woods
the nimble deere to take,
That with their cryes the hills and dales
an eccho shrill did make. 40
- 11 Lord Percy to the querry went
to veiw the tender deere;
Quoth he, Erle Douglas *promised* once
this day to meete me heere;
- 12 But if I thought he wold not come, 45
noe longer wold I stay.
With *that* a braue younge gentlman
thus to the erle did say:
- 13 ‘Loe, yonder doth Erle Douglas come,
hys men in armour bright; 50
Full twenty hundred Scottish speres
all marching in our sight.
- 14 ‘All men of pleasant Tiuydale,
fast by the riuer Tweede:’
‘O ceaze *your* sportts!’ Erle Percy said, 55
‘and take *your* bowes with speede.
- 15 ‘And now with me, my countrymen,
your courage forth advance!

- For there was neuer champion yett,
in Scotland nor in Ffrance, 60
- 16 ‘*That* euer did on horsbacke come,
[but], and if my hap it were,
I durst encounter man for man,
with him to breake a spere.’
- 17 Erle Douglas on his milke-white steede, 65
most like a baron bold,
Rode formost of his company,
whose armor shone like gold.
- 18 ‘Shew me,’ sayd hee, ‘whose men you bee
that hunt soe boldly heere, 70
That without my consent doe chase
and kill my fallow deere.’
- 19 The first man *that* did answer make
was noble Percy hee,
Who sayd, Wee list not to declare 75
nor shew whose men wee bee;
- 20 ‘Yett wee will spend our deerest blood
thy cheefest harts to slay.’
Then Douglas swore a solempne oathe,
and thus in rage did say: 80
- 21 ‘Ere thus I will outbraued bee,
one of vs tow shall dye;
I know thee well, an erle thou art;
Lord Percy, soe am I.
- 22 ‘But trust me, Percy, pittye it were, 85
and great offence, to kill
Then any of these our guiltlesse men,
for they haue done none ill.

- 23 'Let thou and I the battell trye,
and set our men aside:' 90
'Accurst bee [he!]' Erle Pearcye sayd,
'By whome it is denyed.'
- 24 Then stept a gallant squire forth —
Witherington was his name —
Who said, 'I wold not haue it told 95
to Henery our *king*, for shame,
- 25 '*That* ere my captaine fought on foote,
and I stand looking on.
You bee two Erles,' quoth Witherington,
and I a squier alone; 100
- 26 'I 'le doe the best *that* doe I may,
while I haue power to stand;
While I haue power to weeld my sword,
I 'le fight *with* hart and hand.'
- 27 Our English archers bent their bowes; 105
their harts were good and trew;
Att the first flight of arrowes sent,
full foure score Scotts the slew.
- 28 To driue the deere with hound and horne,
Dauglas bade on the bent; 110
Two captaines moued with mickle might,
their speres to shiuers went.
- 29 They closed full fast on euerye side,
noe slacknes there was found,
But many a gallant gentleman 115
lay gasping on the ground.
- 30 O Christ! it was great greeue to see
how eche man chose his spere,
And how the blood out of their brests

- did gush like water cleare. 120
- 31 At last these two stout erles did meet,
like captaines of great might;
Like lyons woode they layd on lode;
the made a cruell fight.
- 32 The fought vntill they both did sweat, 125
with swords of tempered steele,
Till blood downe their cheekes like raine
the trickling downe did feele.
- 33 'O yeeld thee, Pearcye!' Douglas sayd,
'and in faith I will thee bringe 130
Where thou shall high advanced bee
by Iames our Scottish *king*.
- 34 'Thy ransome I will freely giue,
and this report of thee,
Thou art the most couragious *knight* 135
[that ever I did see.]'
- 35 'Noe, Douglas!' quoth Erle Percy then,
'Thy *profer* I doe scorne;
I will not yeelde to any Scott
that euer yett was borne!' 140
- 36 With *that* there came an arrow keene,
out of an English bow,
Which stroke Erle Douglas on the brest
a deepe and deadlye blow.
- 37 Who neuer sayd more words then these: 145
Fight on, my merry men all!
For why, my life is att [an] end,
lord Pearcy sees my fall.
- 38 Then leauing liffe, Erle Pearcy tooke

- the dead man by the hand; 150
Who said, 'Erle Dowglas, for thy life,
wold I had lost my land!
- 39 'O Christ! my verry hart doth bleed
for sorrow for thy sake,
For sure, a more redoubted *knight* 155
mischance cold neuer take.'
- 40 A *knight* amongst the Scotts there was
which saw Erle Douglas dye,
Who streight in hart did vow revenge
vpon the Lord Pearcy. 160
- 41 Sir Hugh Mountgomerye was he called,
who, with a spere full bright,
Well mounted on a gallant steed,
ran feircly through the fight,
- 42 And past the English archers all, 165
without all dread or feare,
And through Erle Percyes body then
he thrust his hatfull spere.
- 43 With such a vehement force and might
his body he did gore, 170
The staff ran through the other side
a large cloth-yard and more.
- 44 Thus did both those nobles dye,
whose courage none cold staine;
An English archer then perceiued 175
the noble erle was slaine.
- 45 He had [a] good bow in his hand,
made of a trusty tree;
An arrow of a cloth-yard long
to the hard head haled hee. 180

- 46 Against *Sir* Hugh Mountgomerye
his shaft full right he sett;
The grey-goose-winge *that* was there-on
in his harts bloode was wett.
- 47 This fight from breake of day did last 185
till setting of the sun,
For when the rung the euening-bell
the battele scarce was done.
- 48 With stout Erle Percy there was slaine 190
Sir Iohn of Egerton,
Sir Robert Harcliffe and *Sir* William,
Sir Iames, that bold barron.
- 49 And with *Sir* George and *Sir* Iames,
both *knights* of good account,
Good *Sir* Raphe Rebbye there was slaine, 195
whose prowesse did surmount.
- 50 For Witherington needs must I wayle
as one in dolefull dumpes,
For when his leggs were smitten of,
he fought vpon his stumpes. 200
- 51 And with Erle Dowglas there was slaine
Sir Hugh Mountgomerye,
And *Sir* Charles Morrell, *that* from feelde
one foote wold neuer flee;
- 52 *Sir* Roger Heuer of Harcliffe tow, 205
his sisters sonne was hee;
Sir David Lambwell, well esteemed,
but saved he cold not bee.
- 53 And the *Lord* Maxwell, in like case,
with Douglas he did dye; 210

- Of twenty hundred Scottish speeres,
scarce fifty-fiue did flye.
- 54 Of fifteen hundred Englishmen
went home but fifty-three;
The rest in Cheuy Chase were slaine, 215
vnder the greenwoode tree.
- 55 Next day did many widdowes come
their husbands to bewayle;
They washt their wounds in brinish teares,
but all wold not prevayle. 220
- 56 Theyr bodyes, bathed in purple blood,
the bore with them away;
They kist them dead a thousand times
ere the were cladd in clay.
- 57 The newes was brought to Eddenborrow, 225
where Scottlands *king* did rayne,
That braue Erle Douglas soddainlye
was with an arrow slaine.
- 58 'O heauy newes!' *King* Iames can say;
'Scotland may wittensse bee 230
I haue not any *captaine* more
of such account as hee.'
- 59 Like tydings to *King* Henery came,
within as short a space,
That Pearcy of Northumberland 235
was slaine in Cheuy Chase.
- 60 'Now God be with him!' said our *king*,
'sith it will noe better bee;
I trust I haue within my realme
fiue hundred as good as hee. 240

- 61 'Yett shall not Scotts nor Scotland say
but I will vengeance take,
And be revenged on them all
for braue Erle Percyes sake.'
- 62 This vow the king did well performe 245
after on Humble-downe;
In one day fifty *knights* were slayne,
with lords of great renowne.
- 63 And of the rest, of small account,
did many hundreds dye: 250
Thus endeth the hunting in Cheuy Chase,
made by the Erle Pearcye.
- 64 God saue our *king*, and blesse this land
with plentye, ioy, and peace,
And grant hencforth *that* foule debate 255
twixt noble men may ceaze!