

Gil Brenton (Child 5A)

- 1 GIL BRENTON has sent oer the fame,
He 's woo'd a wife an brought her hame.
- 2 Full sevenscore o ships came her wi,
The lady by the greenwood tree.
- 3 There was twal an twal wi beer an wine,
An twal an twal wi muskadine:
- 4 An twall an twall wi bouted flowr,
An twall an twall wi paramour:
- 5 An twall an twall wi baken bread,
An twall an twall wi the goud sae red.
- 6 Sweet Willy was a widow's son,
An at her stirrup-foot he did run.
- 7 An she was dressd i the finest pa,
But ay she loot the tears down fa.
- 8 An she was deckd wi the fairest flowrs,
But ay she loot the tears down pour.
- 9 'O is there water i your shee?
Or does the win blaw i your glee?
- 10 'Or are you mourning i your meed
That eer you left your mither gueede?
- 11 'Or are ye mourning i your tide
That ever ye was Gil Brenton's bride?"
- 12 'The[re] is nae water i my shee,
Nor does the win blaw i my glee:
- 13 'Nor am I mourning i my tide
That eer I was Gil Brenton's bride:
- 14 'But I am mourning i my meed
That ever I left my mither gueede.

- 15 ‘But, bonny boy, tell to me
What is the customs o your country.’
- 16 ‘The customs o ’t, my dame,’ he says,
‘Will ill a gentle lady please.
- 17 ‘Seven king’s daughters has our king wedded,
An seven king’s daughters has our king bedded.
- 18 ‘But he ’s cutted the paps frae their breast-bane,
An sent them mourning hame again.
- 19 ‘But whan you come to the palace yate,
His mither a golden chair will set.
- 20 ‘An be you maid or be you nane,
O sit you there till the day be dane.
- 21 ‘An gin you ’re sure that you are a maid,
Ye may gang safely to his bed.
- 22 ‘But gin o that you be na sure,
Then hire some woman o youre bowr.’
- 23 O whan she came to the palace yate,
His mither a golden chair did set.
- 24 An was she maid or was she nane,
She sat in it till the day was dane.
- 25 An she ’s calld on her bowr woman,
That waiting was her bowr within.
- 26 ‘Five hundred pound, maid, I ’ll gi to the,
An sleep this night wi the king for me.’
- 27 Whan bells was rung, an mass was sung,
An a’ man unto bed was gone,
- 28 Gil Brenton an the bonny maid
Intill ae chamber they were laid.
- 29 ‘O speak to me, blankets, an speak to me, sheets,
An speak to me, cods, that under me sleeps;
- 30 ‘Is this a maid that I ha wedded?

Is this a maid that I ha bedded?"

- 31 'It 's nae a maid that you ha wedded,
But it 's a maid that you ha bedded.
- 32 'Your lady 's in her bigly bowr,
An for you she drees mony sharp showr.'
- 33 O he has taen him thro the ha,
And on his mither he did ca.
- 34 'I am the most unhappy man
That ever was in christend lan.
- 35 'I woo'd a maiden meek an mild,
An I 've marryed a woman great wi child.'
- 36 'O stay, my son, intill this ha,
An sport you wi your merry men a'.
- 37 'An I 'll gang to yon painted bowr,
An see how 't fares wi yon base whore.'
- 38 The auld queen she was stark an strang;
She gard the door flee aff the ban.
- 39 The auld queen she was stark an steer;
She gard the door lye i the fleer.
- 40 'O is your bairn to laird or loon?
Or is it to your father's groom?"
- 41 'My bairn 's na to laird or loon,
Nor is it to my father's groom.
- 42 'But hear me, mither, on my knee,
An my hard wierd I 'll tell to thee.
- 43 'O we were sisters, sisters seven,
We was the fairest under heaven.
- 44 'We had nae mair for our seven years wark
But to shape an sue the king's son a sark.
- 45 'O it fell on a Saturday's afternoon,
Whan a' our langsome wark was dane,

- 46 ‘We keist the cavils us amang,
To see which shoud to the greenwood gang.
- 47 ‘Ohone, alas! for I was youngest,
An ay my wierd it was the hardest.
- 48 ‘The cavil it did on me fa,
Which was the cause of a’ my wae.
- 49 ‘For to the greenwood I must gae,
To pu the nut but an the slae;
- 50 ‘To pu the red rose an the thyme,
To strew my mother’s bowr and mine.
- 51 ‘I had na pu’d a flowr but ane,
Till by there came a jelly hind greeme,
- 52 ‘Wi high-colld hose an laigh-colld shoone,
An he ’peard to be some kingis son.
- 53 ‘An be I maid or be I nane,
He kept me there till the day was dane.
- 54 ‘An be I maid or be I nae,
He kept me there till the close of day.
- 55 ‘He gae me a lock of yallow hair,
An bade me keep it for ever mair.
- 56 ‘He gae me a carket o gude black beads,
An bade me keep them against my needs.
- 57 ‘He gae to me a gay gold ring,
An bade me ke[e]lp it aboon a’ thing.
- 58 ‘He gae to me a little pen-kniffe,
An bade me keep it as my life.’
- 59 ‘What did you wi these tokens rare
That ye got frae that young man there?’
- 60 ‘O bring that coffer hear to me,
And a’ the tokens ye sal see.’

- 61 An ay she ranked, an ay she flang,
Till a' the tokens came till her han.
- 62 'O stay here, daughter, your bowr within,
Till I gae parley wi my son.'
- 63 O she has taen her thro the ha,
An on her son began to ca.
- 64 'What did you wi that gay gold ring
I bade you keep aboon a' thing?
- 65 'What did you wi that little pen-kniffe
I bade you keep while you had life?
- 66 'What did you wi that yallow hair
I bade you keep for ever mair?
- 67 'What did you wi that good black beeds
I bade you keep against your needs?'
- 68 'I gae them to a lady gay
I met i the greenwood on a day.
- 69 'An I would gi a' my father's lan,
I had that lady my yates within.
- 70 'I would gi a' my ha's an towrs,
I had that bright burd i my bowrs.'
- 71 'O son, keep still your father's lan;
You hae that lady your yates within.
- 72 'An keep you still your ha's an towrs;
You hae that bright burd i your bowrs.'
- 73 Now or a month was come an gone,
This lady bare a bonny young son.
- 74 An it was well written on his breast-bane
'Gil Brenton is my father's name.'