



5. The ewes and their lambs, with the kids and their dams,  
To see in the country how finely they play;  
The bells they do ring, and birds they do sing,  
And the fields and the gardens are pleasant and gay.  
**Chorus**
6. At wakes and at fairs, being freed of all cares,  
We there with our lovers did use for to dance;  
Then hard hap had I, my ill fortune to try,  
And so up to London, my steps to advance.  
**Chorus**
7. But still I perceive, I a husband might have,  
If I to the city my mind could but frame;  
But I'll have a lad that is North Country bred,  
Or else I'll not marry, in the mind that I am.  
**Chorus**
8. A maiden I am, and a maid I'll remain,  
Until my own country I again I do see,  
From here in this place I shall ne'er see the face  
Of him that's allotted my love for to be.  
**Chorus**
9. Then farewell my daddy, and farewell my mammy,  
Until I do see you, I nothing but mourn;  
Rememb'ring my brothers, my sisters, and others,  
In less than a year I hope to return.  
**Chorus**

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"The Oak and the Ash", also known as "The Oak and the Ash and the Bonny Ivy Tree", "North Country Lass", "The North Country Maid" and "Quodling's Delight" is an Northumbrian air in 4/4 time and G Minor.

There is a black-letter copy of this ballad in the **Roxburghe Collection** (published in the 17th century). It appears in the **Fitzwilliam Virginal Book** (circa 1608-16) as "Quodling's Delight" (attributed to Giles Farnaby).

"Sir Walter Scott, in his novel of 'Rob Roy', makes the narrator of the tale (Francis Osbaldiston), in recounting the recollections of his childhood, tell how his Northumbrian nurse (old Mabel) amused him by singing the ditties of her native country, and specially names 'O! the Oak and Ash and the bonny Ivy Tree' as a Northumbrian ballad." (Bruce & Stokoe)

The tune is older than the ballad. It started life as a dance tune, found in many places and under many titles but especially in Sir James Hawkins' **Transcripts of Music for the Virginals**. There is a similar air in **The Dancing Master** (1651-1686) under the title "Goddesses".

It was printed in Bruce & Stokoe's **Northumbrian Minstrelsy** (1882) and William Cole's **Folk Songs of England, Ireland, Scotland & Wales** (1992).

It appears in the **Roud Folk Song Index** as #1367.

It was recorded by Isla Cameron and Louis Killen on **The Waters of Tyne** (1961), The Watersons on **The Watersons** (1966) (as "The North Country Maid"), The Galliard on **England's Great Folk Group** (1963) (as "The North Country Maid"), Maddy Prior on **Seven for Old England** (2008) (as "North Country Lass"), Molly Drake on **The Tide's Magnificence** (2017) (as "The Oak and the Ash"), Megson on **On the Side** (2005) (as "Oak and Ash") and Paul and Linda Adams on **Country Hirings** (1976) (as "North Country Lass").