

To the Beggin I will go Greig~Duncan 3-488

Widely sung in Scotland and particularly popular in the NE, there are 18 variants in the Greig~Duncan Collection. The version Tom Sings comes from the late Peter Hall, and the tune is slightly different to those in G~D.

O aa the trades that man can try
the beggin is the best
for faan a beggars weary
he can aye sit doon an rest

It's I'll gang tae the cobbler
An gar him sort mi sheen
An inch thick on the bottom
Aye an clootit weel abeen

An I'll gang tae the tailor
Wi a wab o hodden grey
An gar him mak a cloak tae me
Tae hap me nicht an day

An yet ere I begin my trade
I'll let mi beard grouw strang
Nor pair mi nails this year or day
For beggars weer them lang

I'll pit nae waater on my hands
An little on mi face
For the blacker that mi skin becomes
The mair my trade I'll grace

When I come tae the Fairm-toon
I'll stan wi hat in han
Can a beggar man get lodgins here
Alas I canna stan

And when they a come in-aboot
It's then I'll start tae sing
An' dae mi best tae mak them lauch
Aa roon about the ring

If there's a waddin in the toon
I'll airt me tae be there
An shower mi kindest benisons
Upon the happy pair

It's some will gie me beef an breed
An ithers gie me cheese
And in an oot among the folk
I'll gaiter the bawbees

If beggin be as good a trade
As I hiv heard men tell
It's faa wid be a Monarch
Faan a beggar lives sae well

Aye gin beggin be as good a trade
As I hiv heard them say
It's time that I wis oot o here
An huddin doon the brae

aa=all
abeen=above
airt=aim, choose route
aye=always, yes
bawbees=coins, halfpennies
brae=hill
breed=bread
clootit=covered
doon=down
faa=who
faan=when
fairm-toon=farm buildings
gaiter=gather
gang=go
gar=induce
gie=give
gin=if
grouw=grow
hap=cover
hiv=have
huddin=going, hurrying
ithers=others
lang=long
mair=more
mak=make
mi=my
nae=no
o=of
oot=out
pit=put
sae=so
sheen=shoes
tae=to
waater=water
wab=piece, web
weel=well
weer=wear
wid=would