

A. C. Swinburne (1837-1909)

5 *Border Ballad*

The leaves are green in the good summer,
The grass is green and long,
Frae the Ailsenshaw to the wat Wellhaugh
The sun was set and strong.

O the Earl's seat is wat wi' dew, 5
And the way is hard to see;
She's ca'd to her her bower-maidens,
She's ca'd them a' but three.

The tane o' thae was her girdle-maid,
The tane looked ower the wa', 10
The third sat in the south chamber,
And that was warst of a'.

When they came ower by O Hershaw
They were twenty men to see;
When they came back frae the Ailsenshaw, 15
They were but ane and three.

"Often have I gane this way
Ayont the Earl's seat;
But now I maun gang this way
Wi' fetters on my feet. 20

Often have I gane this way
Wi' twenty men and three,
But ever the best of a' my men
Are dead for love o' me."

1918

(From *Ballads of the English Border*. Ed. with Introduction,
Glossary and Notes by William A. MacInnes. London:
William Heinemann, 1925)