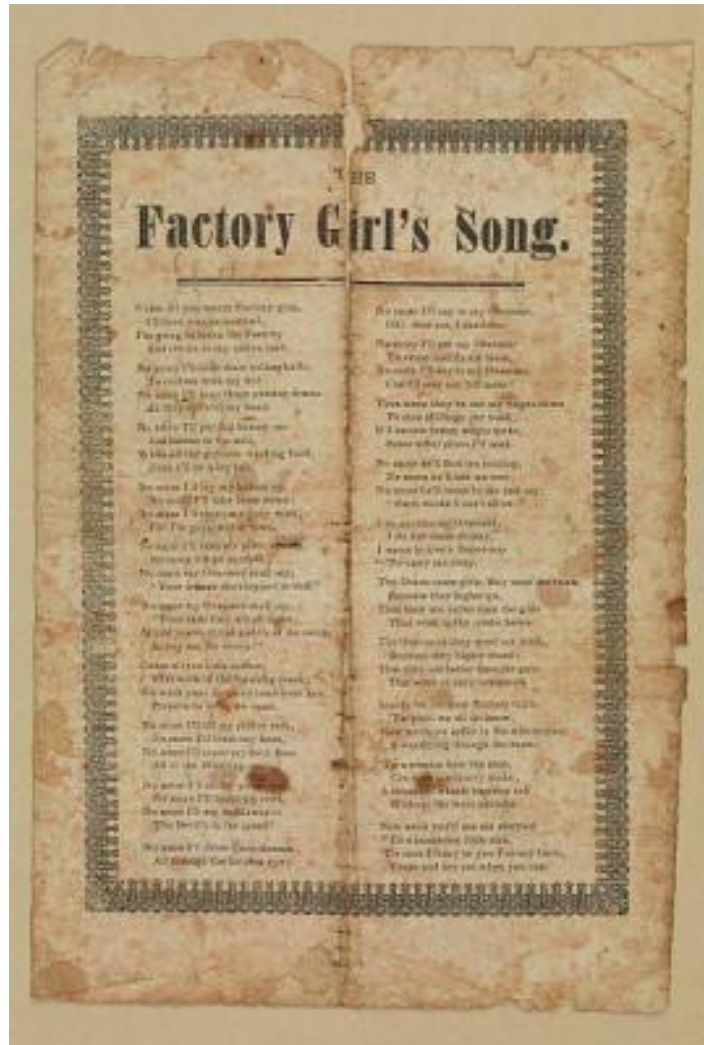


The Factory Girl's Song



Description:

This broadside contains the lyrics to "The Factory Girl's Song," a folk song whose origins date back at least to the 1830s. The song's nineteen 4-line stanzas describe the daily work of the mill girls in different jobs: spinning, weaving, and dressing the finished cloth. At the end the singer tells of returning home to marry, giving up the rigors of tending the machinery and working for harsh overseers. The song may have originated in Lowell, Massachusetts, but some scholars suggest that the reference to wages

earned in “shillings” instead of dollars may mean it had connections to Canadian immigrants to the Lowell textile mills. Several iterations of the song are known, including “The Lowell Factory Girl”, “The Factory Girl’s Come-All-Ye” from Lewiston, Maine, and generalized versions titled “Factory Girl.”

The Factory Girl's Song

Come all you weary Factory girls,
I'll have you understand,
I'm going to leave the Factory
And return to my native land.

No more I'll have these tolling bells,
To call me from my bed:
No more I'll hear those passing drums
As they roll o'er my head.

No more I'll put my bonnet on
And hasten to the mill,
While all the girls are working hard,
Here I'll be lying still.

No more I'll lay my bobbins up,
No more I'll take them down:
No more I'll clean my dirty work,
For I'm going out of town.

No more I'll take my piece of soap,
No more I'll go to wash,
No more my Overseer shall say
"Your frames are stopped to doff."

No more my Overseer shall say,
"Your ends they are all down,
While you're in the middle of the room,
Acting out the clown!"

Come all you little doffers,
That work in the Spinning room;
Go wash your face and comb your hair.

Prepare to leave the room.

No more I'll oil my picker rods,
No more I'll brush my loom,
No more I'll scour my dirty floor
All in the Weaving-room.

No more I'll oil my picker rods,
No more I'll brush my reed,
No more I'll say to MARIA —
The Devil's in the speed!

No more I'll draw these threads
All through the harness eye;
No more I'll say to my Overseer,
Oh! dear me, I shall die.

No more I'll get my Overseer
To come and fix my loom,
No more I'll say to my Overseer,
Can't I stay out 'till noon?

Then since they've cut my wages down
To nine shillings per week,
If I cannot better wages make,
Some other place I'll seek.

No more he'll find me reading,
No more he'll see me sew,
No more he'll come to me and say
"Such works I can't allow."

I do not like my overseer,
I do not mean to stay,
I mean to hire a Depot-boy
To carry me away.

The overseers they need not think,
Because they higher stand;
That they are better than the girls
That work at their command.

Tis wonder how the men
Can such machinery make,
A thousand wheels together roll
Without the least mistake.

Now soon you'll see me married
To a handsome tittle man.
'Tis then I'll say to you factory girls,
Come and see me when you can.