

Pollard and the Wild Boar

Words and Music: Nigel Harbron

The musical score is written in 4/4 time with a key signature of two flats (Bb and Eb). It consists of three staves of music. The first staff begins with a treble clef and a key signature of two flats. The notes are: G4, A4, Bb4, C5, Bb4, A4, G4, F4, E4, D4, C4. Above the staff are the chords: Bb, Eb, F, Bb, Bb, Gm. The lyrics are: 'Come ga-ther round me peo-ple, as a sto-ry I will tell, From the town of Bi-shop Auck-land where a'. The second staff continues with notes: G4, A4, Bb4, C5, Bb4, A4, G4, F4, E4, D4, C4. Above the staff are the chords: Eb, F, Eb, Bb, Eb. The lyrics are: 'fierce boar it did dwell. It ter-ro-rised the peo-ple, it made them wail and'. The third staff continues with notes: G4, A4, Bb4, C5, Bb4, A4, G4, F4, E4, D4, C4. Above the staff are the chords: F, Bb, Eb, F, Bb. The lyrics are: 'cry, Till King and Bi-shop both de-creed that wild boar it must die.'

Come gather round me people, as a story I will tell
From the town of Bishop Auckland where a fierce boar it did dwell.
It terrorised the people - it made them wail and cry,
Till King and Bishop both decreed that wild boar it must die.

Young Pollard set forth on his horse to stalk the cunning boar.
He watched the hog for many a day, its routes and lairs he saw.
He scattered beech masts round a tree, and waited for the beast:
And very soon the boar came by, intent upon a feast.

The battle lasted through the night, until the boar lay dead.
The sword came down a final time to relieve it of its head.
Before he rested 'neath the tree, his aching limbs to nurse,
Young Pollard cut that wild boar's tongue and put it in his purse.

As Pollard lay upon the ground, Lord Mitford he chanced by.
The boar's head tucked into his bag, he thought his luck to try.
He found the King in castle grand, and loudly was received.
When Pollard woke in morning sun, he knew he'd been deceived.

But Pollard knew the Bishop was a man of high degree,
And straightaway he sought him out, the tongue to let him see.
The Bishop grasped him by the hand, and said that he'd be able
To keep the land he rode around while the cleric sat at table.

But Pollard, 'stead of dashing out, sat calmly for a while,
Then walked around the palace walls, admiring their style.
The Bishop knew he'd met his match, and took the Knight aside.
He offered Pollard all he saw from the Great Hall's window wide.

So Pollard settled for the land, and there he built his hall.
He had no rent or tithes to pay, he had no dues at all.
And when at last he passed away, his effigy was neat -
He had a carving of a boar placed underneath his feet.



The Bishop's Palace, Bishop Auckland



The Saxon Church at Escomb, near Bishop Auckland

I think Pollard's tomb - complete with wild boar effigy - is in Escomb Church, but, even if it isn't, the church is well worth a visit. My mother went to school in Bishop Auckland, and it was while taking her back to her roots one day that I discovered the story of Pollard.