

**Synopsis**

A young man searching for work is employed by a ganger and lodges in the ganger's house. The ganger's daughter falls in love with him and follows him on the tramp.

**Text**

When I was young and tender / I left my native home  
And often to old Scotland / I started out to roam  
As I walked down through Bishoptown / A-seeking for employ  
The ganger he knew by me / I was a navvy boy

As soon as I did get employ / For lodgings I did seek  
It happened to be that very night / With the Ganger I did sleep  
He had one only daughter / And I became her joy  
For she longed to go and tramp / With her own Navvy boy

Say the mother to her daughter / I think it very strange  
That you should wed a navvy boy / This wide world for to range  
For navvies they are rambling boys / And have but little pay  
How could a man maintain a wife / With fourteen pence a day

Says to daughter to the mother / You need not run them down  
My father was a navvy boy / When he came to this town  
He roamed about from town to town / Just seeking for employ  
Go where he will, he's my love still / My bonny navvy boy

Now just a short time after this, / Her father died I'm told  
And left unto his daughter / Five hundred pounds in gold,  
And when she got the money; / Soon I became her joy  
For she longed to go and tramp it with / Her bonny navvy boy.

**Glossary:**

**Source of Text:** Victoria's Inferno  
Sam Henry Collection No. 760, Belfast Central Library

**Music.**



**Source of Music:** Victoria's Inferno  
Sam Henry Collection No. 760  
From the singing of Robert Lyons, Greenhill, Blackhill, Coleraine

**Printer:** Oral

**Where Printed:** Oral

**Author :** Anonymous

**Variants Set:** No Variants found

**Date:** 1840 or soon after. See Notes on the Song and Its Historical Background

### **Notes on the Song and Its Historical Background**

In the period 1839-1841 work was progressing on two lines in the vicinity of Bishopton: the Glasgow, Paisley, Kilmarnock and Ayr Railway; and the Glasgow – Greenock Railway. [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Glasgow,\\_Paisley\\_and\\_Greenock\\_Railway](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Glasgow,_Paisley_and_Greenock_Railway) and [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Glasgow\\_and\\_Paisley\\_Joint\\_Railway](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Glasgow_and_Paisley_Joint_Railway)

The native home referred to in the song is probably Ireland. Many Irish men came to Scotland by way of the steamer services from Belfast to Greenock.

By 1841 a railway station at Bishopton had opened and many Irish navvies who had come to Scotland to work on the Glasgow to Ayr line decided to stay in the area.

(<http://wikimapia.org/2362731/Bishopton>)