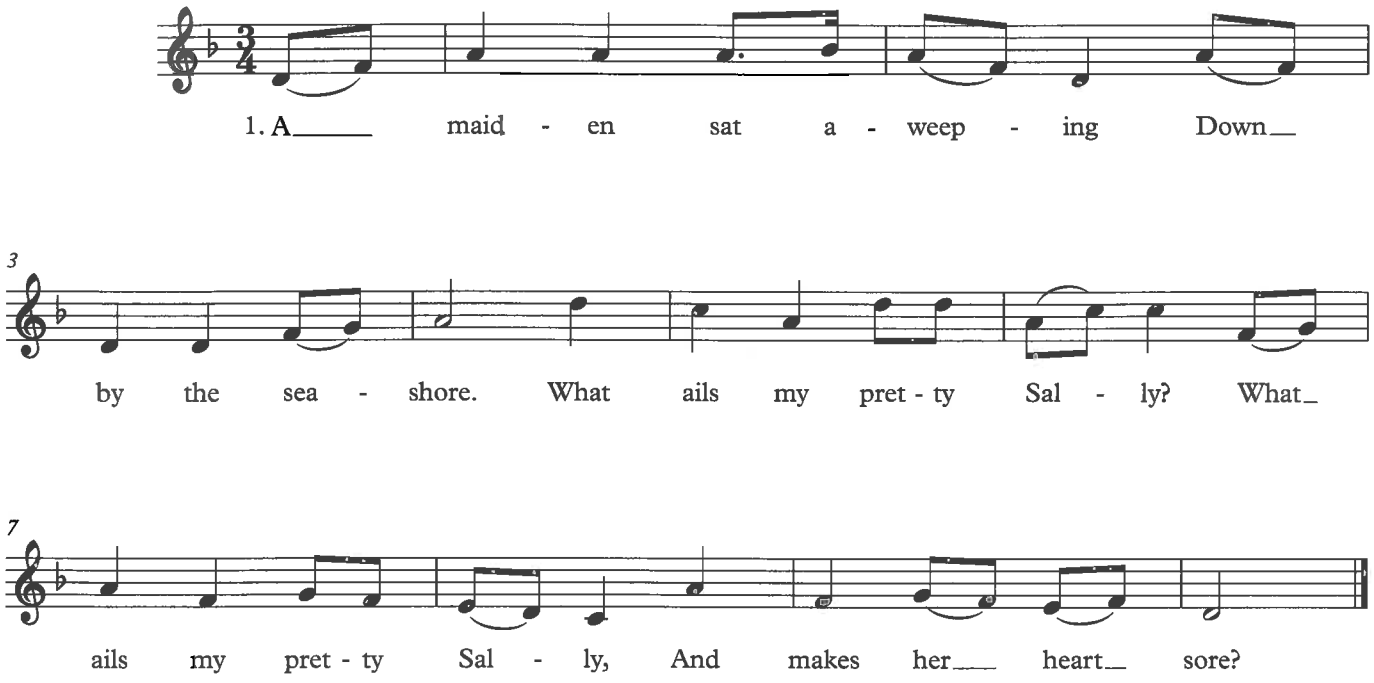Disc 2

11 Pronunciation guide

The Forsaken Maiden

Devon, England



2. Because I am a-weary
A-weary in my mind.
No comfort and no pleasure,
No comfort and no pleasure
Henceforth can I find.

3. I'll spread my sail of silver,
I'll loose my rope of silk.
My mast is of the cypress tree,
My mast is of the cypress tree,
My track is white as milk.

4. I'll spread my sail of silver,
I'll steer toward the sun,
And thou, false love, will weep for me,
And thou, false love, will weep for me,
For me when I'm gone.

This is a hauntingly sad song, first found in the 16th century. There are two 'voices': the first verse narrator and then the maiden herself. She, it seems, is distraught at being abandoned by her lover, possibly a seaman, and the words of verse 3 hint at her taking her own life through a sailing-ship analogy, the 'sad' cypress possibly being her 'gallows'. Despite the simplicity of the tune, this is a song full of emotional possibilities.

© 2008 by The Associated Board of the Royal Schools of Music