



Meg Merrilies

Rutland Boughton

(1878–1960)

Meg Merrilies

Rutland Boughton

Allegro, molto marcato

S *f* Old Meg, she was a Gip - sy, And liv'd up - on the Moors; Her

A *f* Old Meg, she was a Gip - sy, And liv'd up - on the Moors; Her

T *f* Old Meg, she was a Gip - sy, And liv'd up - on the Moors; Her

B *f* Old Meg, she was a Gip - sy, And

S ⁵ *dim.* bed it was the brown heath turf, Her house was out of

A *dim.* house was out of doors, was out of

T *dim.* house was out of doors, was out of

B *dim.* liv'd up - on the Moors.

Meg Merrilies

9

S doors.

A doors. Old Meg, she was a gip - sy.

T doors.

B doors.

pp

pp

pp

pp

mf *sempre*

p

marcato il basso

Her

Her ap - ples were swart

14

S Her wine was

A Her cur - rant pods o' broom, Her

T ap - ples were swart black - ber - ries, Her cur - rant pods o'

B black - ber - ries, Her cur - rant pods o' broom, Her

p

p

17

S dew, Her look a church - yard tomb, Old

A wine was dew of the wild rose, Her book a church - yard

T broom, Her book a church - yard tomb.

B wine was dew of the wild white rose, Her book a church - yard tomb.

pp

mf

pp

dim.

pp

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21

S Meg, she was a Gip - sy. Her Bro - thers were the

A *pp* tomb. Her Bro - thers

T Her Bro - thers were the

B Her Bro - thers

f

25

S crag - gy hills, Her Sis - ters larch - en trees, A - lone with her great

A were the crag - gy hills, Her Sis - ters larch - en

T crag - gy hills, Her Sis - ters larch - en trees, A - lone with

B were the crag - gy hills, Her Sis - - - ters

cres.

29

S fam - i - ly She lived as she did

A trees, A - lone she lived as she did

T her great fam - i - ly, She lived as she did

B larch - en trees, A - lone she

Meg Merrilies

33

S please.

A please.

T please.

B lived, Old Meg, she was a Gip - sy.

pp

37

poco meno mosso

S

A No brak - fast had she ma - ny_a morn, No din - ner ma - ny_a noon, And

T No break - fast had she ma - ny_a morn, No

B No

p

42

S No break - fast had she ma - ny_a morn, No

A she would stare Full hard a - gainst the Moon, In -

T din - ner ma - ny_a noon, In - stead of sup - per she would

B break - fast had she ma - ny_a morn, No din - ner ma - ny_a noon,

p

Meg Merrilies

46

S din - ner ma - ny_a noon, And 'stead of sup - per she would stare Full

A stead of sup - per, she would

T stare Full hard a - gainst the Moon,

B And 'stead of sup - per she would

cres.

50

S hard a - gainst the Moon, full hard a -

A stare Full hard a - gainst the Moon, a -

T stare full hard a - gainst the

B stare full hard a - gainst

mf *dim.*

54

S gainst the Moon.

A gainst the Moon.

T moon. Old Meg, she was a Gip - sy.

B the Moon.

pp

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Tempo 1mo.

58

S But ev - 'ry morn of wood - bine fresh She made her gar - land -

A But ev - 'ry morn of wood - bine fresh She made her gar - land -

T But ev - 'ry morn of wood - bine fresh She made her

B But ev - 'ry morn of wood - bine fresh She made her

62

S ing, And ev - 'ry night the dark glen Yew She

A ing, And ev - 'ry night the dark glen Yew She

T gar - land - ing, And ev - 'ry night the dark glen Yew She

B gar - land - ing, And ev - 'ry night the dark glen

65

Attacca senza pausa

S wove and she would sing. And with her fin - gers

A wove and she would sing. And with her fin - gers

T wove. And with her fin - gers old, And

B Yew she wove. And with her fin - gers old, And

Meg Merrilies

69

S brown, She plait - ed Mats o' Rush - es, she

A brown, She plait - ed Mats o' Rush - es, she

T with her fin - gers brown, She plait - ed Mats o' Rush - es,

B with her fin - gers brown, She plait - ed Mats o' Rush - es, plait - ed

73

S plait - ed Mats o' Rush - es, And gave them to the

A plait - ed Mats o' Rush - es, And gave

T plait - ed Mats o' Rush - es, And gave them

B Mats o' Rush - es, And gave them

77

S Cot - ta - gers, to the Cot - ta - gers She met a - mong the

A them to the Cot - ta - gers In the

T to the Cot - ta - gers She met a - mong the

B to the Cot - ta - gers.

Meg Merrilies

81 *pp* *poco rit.*

S Bush - es. Old Meg, she was a Gip - sy.

A Bush - es. Old Meg, she was a Gip - sy.

T Bush - es. Old Meg, she was a gip - sy.

B — Old Meg, she was a Gip - sy.

84 *a tempo*

S Old Meg was brave as Mar - garet Queen, And tall as Am - a -

A Old Meg was tall as Am - a -

T Old Meg was brave as Mar - garet, And tall as

B Old Meg was brave and tall as Am - a -

88

S zon, An old red blan - ket cloak she wore, A chip - hat she had

A zon, An old red blan - ket cloak she wore, A chip - hat

T Am - a - zon, An old red blan - ket cloak she wore,

B zon, An old red blan - ket cloak, And a

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92

S on. God rest her a - ged bones some - where—

A she had on. God rest her

T A chip - hat she had on, God rest her a - ged

B chip - hat she had on. God rest her a - ged

dim.

dim.

dim.

dim.

96

S She died full long a - gone, God

A a - ged bones some - where— She died full

T bones some - - - where— She died

B bones some - where— She died

pp

pp

100

S rest her a - ged bones some - where— She died full long

A long a - gone, she died full long

T full long a - gone, full long

B full long a - - - gone!

pp

pp

104

S
a - gone!

A
a - gone!

T
a - gone! Old Meg, she was a Gip - sy.

B
Old Meg, she was a Gip - sy.

Novello and Company
(1908)

Rutland Boughton (1878–1960) was the son of a grocer of Aylesbury, Buckinghamshire. He showed exceptional talent at an early age and studied briefly at the Royal College of Music, but finances caused him to abandon the RCM after only one year. Although he was substantially self-taught, he had opportunity to study with Charles Villiers Stanford and Walford Davies. He was good friends with Gustav Holst, Granville Bantock, Edward Elgar, Thomas Beecham and George Bernard Shaw. Boughton's output included three symphonies, several concertos, part-songs, songs, and chamber music but he is primarily known as a composer of opera and the principal English advocate of Richard Wagner's theories of music drama. Boughton set out to create a new form of opera he called "choral drama". He was enamored with Arthurian legends and created an "Arthurian Cycle" of operas. He planned a fourteen-day cycle of dramas on the life of Christ in which the story would be enacted on a small stage in the middle of an orchestra while soloists and the chorus would comment on the action. However, it never developed. His *Bethlehem* (1915) is based on the Coventry Nativity Play and is noted for its choral arrangements of traditional Christmas carols. The work became very popular with choral societies worldwide. Arthurian legends, narrative folk-tales or folk songs were often the basis for his part-songs. Some were titled "Choral Variations," especially those with texts in strophic form, sometimes resulting with a slightly more expansive part-song.

Meg Merrilies

The character Meg Merrilies appears in Sir Walter Scott's *Guy Mannering* (1815) and was based on Jean Gordon, an inhabitant of the village of Kirk Yetholm, in the Cheviot Hills, in the middle of the eighteenth century. The poet John Keats heard of the Scottish Gipsy woman when on a walking tour of Scotland.

Keats' poem is of the old gipsy woman on the moors of Scotland; an area of open, peaty wasteland, overgrown with heath. Keats describes her free, though hard and lonely, homeless life. He compared her bravery of to that of Queen Margaret of Scotland (1286-1292). The name 'Meg' is the short form of 'Margaret'. The name 'Merrilies' suggests that she passed her life happily and lived a very long life.

Meg Merrilies

John Keats (1795–1821)

Old Meg she was a Gipsy,
And liv'd upon the Moors:
Her bed it was the brown heath turf,
And her house was out of doors.

Her apples were swart blackberries,
Her currants pods o' broom;
Her wine was dew of the wild white rose,
Her book a churchyard tomb.

Her Brothers were the craggy hills,
Her Sisters larchen trees—
Alone with her great family
She liv'd as she did please.

No breakfast had she many a morn,
No dinner many a noon,
And 'stead of supper she would stare
Full hard against the Moon.

But every morn of woodbine fresh
She made her garlanding,
And every night the dark glen Yew
She wove, and she would sing.

And with her fingers old and brown
She plaited Mats o' Rushes,
And gave them to the Cottagers
She met among the Bushes.

Old Meg was brave as Margaret Queen
And tall as Amazon:
An old red blanket cloak she wore;
A chip hat had she on.
God rest her aged bones somewhere—
She died full long agone!

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