

Lamentation of James Rodgers

Composer Unknown
arr. D.Smith

Voice

Come all you ten-der Christ - ians I hope you will draw near, and
like-wise pay a - tten - tion to those few I have here For the mur-der of Mi - ster
Swan - ton I am con-demned to die On the twelvth day of No - vem - ber u -
pon the the ga - llows high.

Come all you tender Christians, I hope you will draw near,
And likewise pay attention to those few lines I have here:
For the murder of Mr. Swanton I am condemned to die,
On the twelfth day of November upon the gallows high.

My name is James Rodgers--the same I ne'er denied,
Which leaves my aged parents in sorrow for to cry,
It's little ever they thought, all in my youth and bloom,
I came into New York for to meet my fatal doom.

My parents reared me tenderly, as you may plainly see,
And constantly good advice they used to give to me,
They told me to shun night walking and all bad company,
Or states prison or the scaffold would be the doom for me.

In bad houses and liquor I used to take delight,
And constantly my companions they used me there invite
They all persuaded me the use of knives were free,
I might commit a murder, and hanged I would not be.

Upon the fatal night, as you may plainly see,
My companions advised me to go and have a spree,
My passion got the best of me, as you may plainly know,
I drew the fatal knife, and it proved my overthrow.

Mr. Swanton and his wife were passing through the street,
And in my drunken passion I chanced them for to meet.
They surely did not injure me--the same I'll ne'er deny,
But Satan being so near me, I could not pass them by.

I staggered up against them, and then he turned around,
And demanded if the sidewalk had not enough of ground,
It's then I drew the fatal knife, and stabbed him to the heart,
Which leaves the loving wife from her husband for to part.

To Woodbridge then I quickly fled, thinking to escape,
But the hand of Providence was before me--indeed I was too late,
There I was taken prisoner, and fetched unto my doom,
To die upon the gallows, all in my youthful bloom.

My trial came on quickly, and condemned I was to die,
My companions and associates, they were standing by,
I told them to take warning by that my humble fate,
To shun night walking and bad company ere it be too late.

Farewell, my aged father, I ne'er will see you more.
And my broken-hearted mother, my loss you do deplore,
My sisters and brothers, to you I bid adieu,
Upon this fatal forenoon I have to part with you.

The morning of my execution most heartrending for to see,
My sister came from Jersey to take the last farewell of me,
She flew into my arms, and bitterly did cry,
Saying, my dear and loving brother, this day you are to die.

Thanks to the sheriff for his kindness to me,
Also my noble counsellor, who thought to get me free,
And likewise my faithful clergy who brought my mind to bea?,
For now I die a true penitent I solemnly declare.

My life is now ended--from this world I must part,
For the murder of Mr. Swanton I am sorry to the heart,
Let each wild and vicious youth a warning take by me,
To be ruled by their parents, and shun bad company.