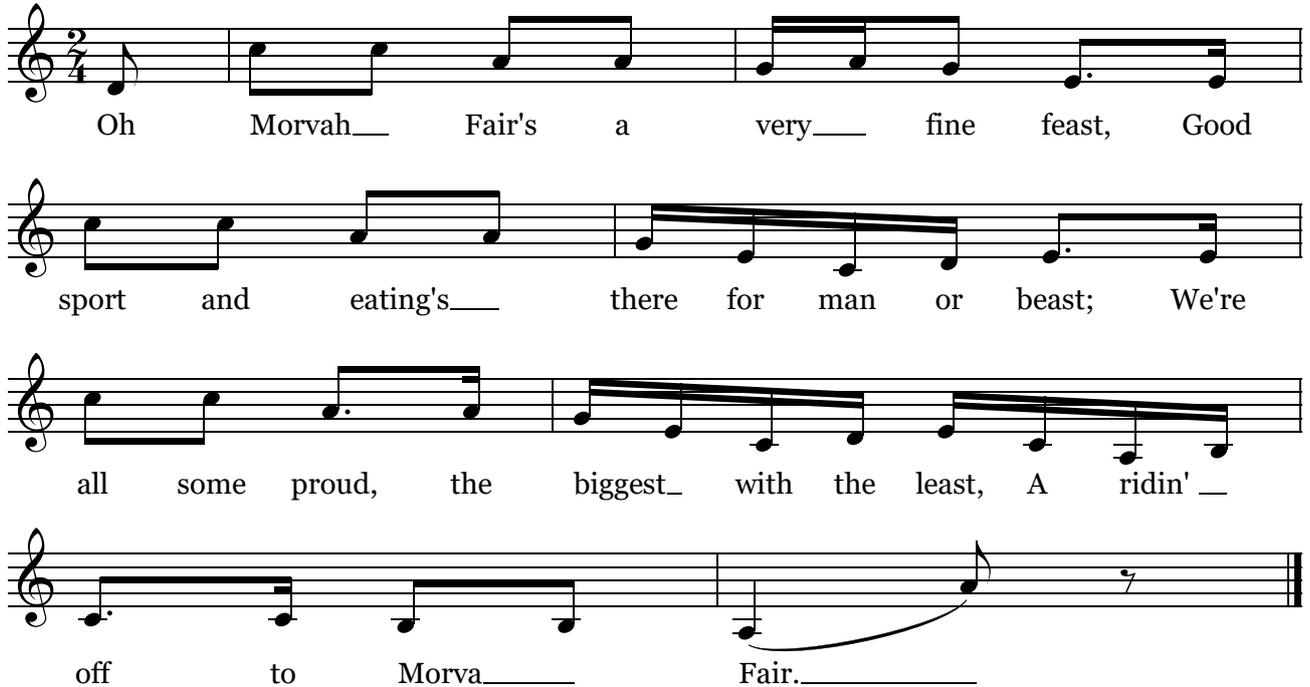


## Morvah Fair

*Cornish Dialect Song*



Oh Morvah Fair's a very fine feast, Good  
sport and eating's there for man or beast; We're  
all some proud, the biggest with the least, A ridin'  
off to Morvah Fair.

2. Our bridle's balch,  
Our saddle's a sack,  
We sit scruffed up  
So tight as us can pack,  
But our old mare'll carry  
Three upon her back,  
A-ridin' Off to Morvah Fair.

3. Astrode first Feyther  
Studdy do sit,  
Next Mawther off  
Our heppin'-stock do git,  
And after she  
There's room for wan moor yit,  
A-ridin' Off to Morvah Fair.

4. While we're a-horseback,  
Riding in style,  
We pass poor neighbours  
Troachin' every mile,  
And feel so grand  
Us can't forbeer to smile,  
A-ridin' Off to Morvah Feer.

5. Leave squires ride by  
In cawches an' pair,  
Weth men before  
To drive 'em everywhere,  
Back after they  
I'd never want to stare,  
A-ridin' Off to Morvah Feer.

6. Leave knights pass  
On in cawches an' four,  
Weth men behind  
To knock upon the door,  
They're wilcome to 'em all,  
For me, I'm sure,  
A-ridin' Off to Morvah Feer.

7. Leave lords roll past  
In cawches an' six,  
With men to lift 'em  
Every time they sticks,  
On things like they,  
My mind I'd never fix,  
A-ridin' Off to Morvah Feer.

8. Leave kings lay back  
In coaches an' eight,  
Weth men to run  
And awpen every gaate,  
For all them things I'm  
Wellin' long to waait,  
A-ridin' Off to Morvah Feer.

9. In all this world  
For nawthen I'd keer,  
If Faist – tide  
Wud laast all round the year,  
For we to jog-trot,  
Three upon wan meer,  
A-ridin' Off to Morvah Feer.

### Notes

#### Dialect Terms

Balch            Rope

Heppen-Stock    A stone block rather like the old milk churn plats still found at old farmsteads. But were used for mounting one's horse.

Troachin        To walk slowly

The version of the lyrics for Morvah Fair provided here is from a music manuscript in St Ives Museum. This song is also included in *Lyver Canow Kernewek* with four part arrangement by Dunstan but the dialect is more limited. Robert Morton Nance offers little explanation about the song except to say that it was inspired by the Old Saying "Three on one horse to Morvah Fair". The original has an eight bar instrumental introduction and Morton Nance probably intended to use it in one of his *Cledry Plays* which he wrote during the early part of the 20th Century whilst living at Nancladra. Some of these plays were published in a collection under that title in 1956, others remain in manuscript form in the Royal Institution of Cornwall Library (Morton Nance box 4 ). The melodies from the *Cledry Plays* were inspired by the West Penwith Dialect and in the preface Morton Nance explains: " the simple airs do not ask for accompaniment or for trained voices to do them justice. They are only a slight extension of the music that West-Penwith voices will put into the dialogue."

Merv Davey 2011