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The Student and the Tunnel

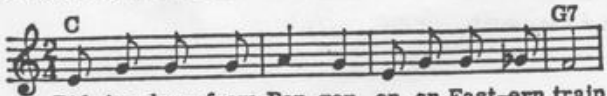

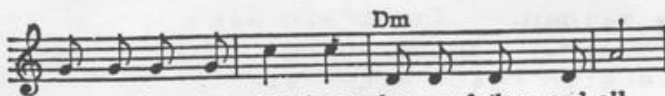
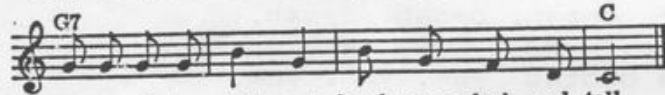
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The Student and the Tunnel


 Rid-ing down from Ban-gor on an East-ern train,

 Af-ter weeks of hunt-ing in the woods of Maine;

 Quite ex-ten-sive whis-kers, slop-py clothes and all,

 Sat a nob-le stud-ent, hand-some, dark, and tall.

2. Empty seat behind him,
 No one at his side;
 Sets him down in silence
 For a lonely ride,
 Enter aged couple,
 Take the hindmost seat;
 Enter village maiden,
 Bashful and petite.

3. Blushingly she falters,
 "Is this seat engaged?"
 Sees the aged couple
 Properly enraged.
 Student quite ecstatic
 Sees her ticket through,
 Thinking of the tunnel
 And what he will do.

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4. Pleasantly they're chatting,
 While the cinders fly;
 Then the noble student
 Gets one in his eye.
 Maiden sympathetic
 Turns herself about,
 "May I, if you please, Sir,
 Try to get it out?"

5. When that noble student
 Feels her gentle touch,
 And she gently murmurs,
 "Do I hurt you much?"
 Then that noble student
 Laughs with might and main,
 As into glorious darkness
 Rides that choo-choo train.


6. Da da da da da da,
 Da da da da da, etc.

7. Out into the daylight
 Rides the choo-choo train,
 Maiden's hair is ruffled,
 Just a tiny grain,
 Student's hair is tousled,
 Tie is messed as well,
 Tiny hairpin in mustache,
 Doesn't he look swell?

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R. R. 1, Box 399
Raymond, Maine 04071
October 26, 1992

Dear Ms. Dickens,

The Wednesday Morning Reading Group was thrilled with the response to my Clearing House request and wanted me to thank everyone who took the time to come to our aid. I am enclosing a copy of a version which is slightly different from your version.

The poem/song enjoyed a variety of titles: "Through the tunnel," "Riding Down from Bangor," "The Harvard Student," and "Coming Down from Bangor." The student was identified as a "fellow student," "a Harvard student," a "Colby student," and a "University of Maine Student." In one version the aged couple were the parents of the village maiden. The train was called a "pullman train," an "eastern train," an "evening train," and a "western train." One version read "After six weeks of fishing off the coast of Maine." In some versions the fifth or sixth stanza had choruses of "ompah, ompah, ompah." In some, the words were "da, da, da, da," and in one version the words were "Rap, slap, bang." One quoted "yum, yum, yum."

Although words did vary, the basic story was the same and the memories which it revived were all happy ones. Some remembered hearing a father or grandfather singing the song. Others learned the poem/song at Brownies or at Scouts. Some remembered it as a college song of the 1940's. One woman sang it at Brownie meetings in England. Good things travel far!

The author of the poem is Louis Shreve Osborn who was a Harvard graduate. Two different people were given credit for arranging the music, Aubrey Kennett and S.E. Farwell.

I've had a wonderful time reading the stories which surround this good humored tale. Thank you for sending your version and the information on the Bagaduce Music Lending Library. My husband has quite an extensive collection of sheet music which I am encouraging him to donate a portion of to your library.

Sincerely,

Jeannette Pottle

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