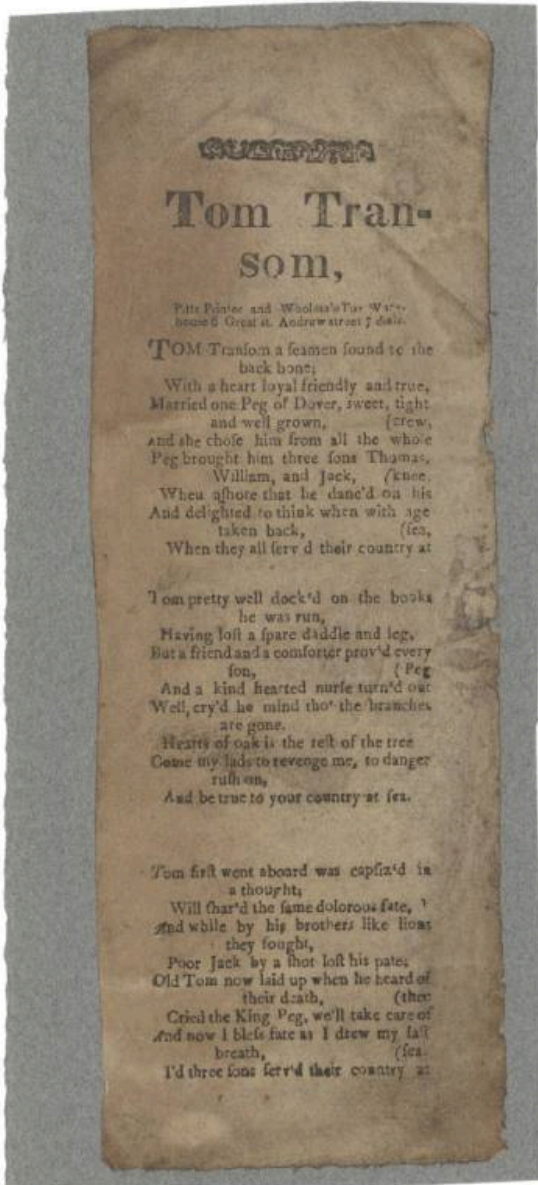


Basic Detail Report



00017389

Title

Broadsheet ballad 'Tom Transom'.

Date

1802 - 1844

Primary Maker

John Pitts

Medium

Woodcut engraving and printed text on paper mounted on card.

Dimensions

Overall: 268 x 95 mm, 0.024 kg

Name

Broadsheet

History

TOM TRANSOM Tom Tranfom a feaman found to the back bone; With a heart loyal friendly and true, Married on Peg of Dover, sweet, tight and well grown, And she chofe him from all the whole crew, Peg brought him three fons Thomas, William and Jack. When afhore that he danc'd on his knee, And delighted to think when with age taken back, When they all ferv'd their country at fea, Tom pretty well dock'd on the books he was run, Having loft a fpare daddle and leg, But a friend and a commander

prov'd every fon, And a kind hearted nurfe turn'd out Peg Well, cry'd he mind tho' the branches are gone. Hearts of oak is the reft of the tree Come my lads to revenge me, to danger rufh on, And true to your country at fea. Tom firft went aboard was capfiz'd in a thought ; Will fhar'd the fame dolorous fate, And while by his brothers like lions they fought, Poor jack bya fhot loft his pate ; Old Tom now laid up when he heard of their death, Cried the King Peg, we'll take care of thee, And now I blefs fate I drew my laft breath, I'd three fons ferv'd their country at fea. Broadsheets or broadsides, as they were also known, were originally used to communicate official or royal decrees. They were printed on one side of paper and became a popular medium of communication between the 16th and 19th centuries in Europe, particularly Britain. They were able to be printed quickly and cheaply and were widely distributed in public spaces including churches, taverns and town squares. The cheap nature of the broadside and its wide accessibility

meant that its intended audience were often literate individuals but from varying social standings. The illiterate may have also had access to this literature as many of the ballads were designed to be read aloud. The ballads also covered a wide range of subject matter such as witchcraft, epic war battles, murder and maritime themes and events. They were suitably dramatic and often entertaining, but occasionally they were designed as elaborate cautionary tales for those contemplating a life of crime. The broadside ballads in the museum's collection were issued by a range of London printers and publishers for sale on the streets by hawkers. They convey, often comically, stories about love, death, shipwrecks, convicts and pirates. Each ballad communicates a sense that these stories were designed to be read aloud for all to enjoy, whether it was at the local tavern or a private residence.