

## Common Ground on the Hill

### Finding Common Ground Through Song

Owen Hooks, Thom Nolan and Bill Troxler

[www.3sheets.band](http://www.3sheets.band)   <https://soundcloud.com/3sheets>

### Songs that Use Imagery and Imagination to Convey History

#### Recorded Examples

World War I – a soldier's view from the trenches

The Hills of Sweet Lislea

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oTNn6855JDg>

Chincoteague Moon

<https://soundcloud.com/3sheets/chincoteague-moon>

To My Brother George

<https://soundcloud.com/3sheets/to-my-brother-george>

#### Live Examples

Lady Katie of Cambridge

Don't They Just Set You to Dreamin'

#### Back Stories

##### Chincoteague Moon

The inspiration for this song came from the true story of the tragic murder of young Ginny Hill in 1885 in the Deep Hole neighborhood of Chincoteague Island. There is an actual "deep hole" in the Assateague Channel – possibly caused by a fragment from the meteor that struck the Norfolk area 36 million years ago. The murder of Ginny Hill and suicide of Tom Freeman remain an active story on the Island. This song has entertained hundreds of audiences since it was written in 2013.

##### Don't They Just Set You to Dreamin'

During one of 3 Sheets' concerts in 2016 a mother-daughter duo from Indiana asked us why we didn't have a song about the wild ponies on Assateague. We didn't have an answer! But, they sent us a poem about the Assateague Ponies. Owen turned that poem into this song. The title comes from a quote found in Owen's books about the Wild Ponies of Assateague.

Lady Katie of Cambridge

Thom made the observation that 3 Sheets only sings songs about ships that sink. So, he researched the names of skipjacks and settled on Lady Katie. The ship berthed at Cambridge, Maryland. He recycled the Irish melody from the song Queen of Connamara to create *The Lady Katie of Cambridge*.

##### To My Brother George

Legend has it that the pirate Charles Wilson of South Carolina buried ten iron bound chests of treasure on the shore of Assateague Island sometime before 1750. The date is important to the story because Mr. Wilson was allegedly hanged at Tyburn in London in 1750. The legend comes about because in 1948 a letter was discovered that seems to have been written by Charles Taylor. It's addressed to his brother George and is

somewhat of a “Last Will & Testament”. The text of the letter gives very specific directions required to unearth the Wilson spoils of piracy.

It’s a great story. But one that diligent historians have been unable to verify. Still many contemporary treasure hunters believe they know exactly where to find the Taylor treasure. Federal law prohibits treasure hunting on Assateague Island. There is also the geological matter that the 1750 shoreline of Assateague is now hundreds of yards out to sea. The stake in the heart of this story is that the records of the Newgate Ordinary – the chaplain at Newgate Prison where the condemned were held before execution at Tyburn – has no record of Charles Wilson being hanged around 1750.

The story of how the letter was discovered and the timing of the discovery further assault the credibility of the legend. Nonetheless, the letter is a compelling story. And that why I composed “To My Brother George”. Think of the song as the piratical Charles Wilson recalling his glory days raiding on the sea while the Ordinary of Newgate tries to get him to confess his sins. In the end Charles Wilson remains a sociopath and is prepare to “sail on eternal fire”.