

Prologue: to the ploughboy

Come all you young ploughboys and help me
to sing,
I'll sing in the praise of you all
For if we don't labour how can we get
bread?
Let's sing and be merry withal.

Refrain:

Let's sing, sing, sing and be merry, be merry,
Let's sing and be merry withal.

Here's April, here's May, here's June and July
What pleasure to see the corn grow
In August we'll moil it, we reap sheath an tie
And go down with our scythes, for to mow.

(Refrain)

And when we have laboured and reaped
every sheaf, And gleanèd up every ear,
We'll make no more ado but to plough we
will go,
To provide for the very next year.

(Refrain)

De boerenknechten worden uitgenodigd om mee te zingen met dit vrolijke lied. Ze beschrijven hoe hard ze moeten werken om brood op de plank te krijgen, en als de oogst binnen is beginnen ze weer van voren af aan met ploegen voor de volgende oogst.

Voorjaar 1

Early in the Spring

O early, early in the Spring,
The cuckoo and the nightingale
So sweetly were singing.
As I walked out one May morning
O, there I did two lovers see,
They were taking of the air, O...
Then this young couple they walked along,
And this young man he sang a song,
Thinking to gain her favour.
'Since you've gained my heart', said she,
'And stolen away my liberty,
Pray grant to me your name, Sir.
To church then this young couple went,
And married were, in sweet content,
She and her own true lover.

Twee geliefden scheppen een luchtje terwijl de nachtegaal en de koekoek zingen. De jongeman maakt het meisje het hof door voor haar te zingen, ze trouwen en leven nog lang en gelukkig.

<p><i>Voorjaar 2</i> May song</p> <p>O we've been rambling all this night And some part of this day, And now we have returned again And have brought you a branch of May.</p> <p>A branch of May we've brought to you And at your door it stands, It is but a spray, but it's bright and gay By the work of our Lord's hands. Ah. Ah..</p> <p>The fields they are so green, So green as any leaf; Our Lord, our God has watered them With heavenly dew so sweet.</p> <p>Awake, awake, you pretty, pretty maid, Out of our rosy dream, And step into your dairy below And fetch us a bowl of cream.</p> <p>Our song is done and we must be gone, No longer can we stay, So God bless you all, both great and small, And we wish you a joyful May.</p>	<p>Een vrolijk liedje dat wordt gezongen tijdens het "Maying", de gewoonte om een bloesemtak te geven in ruil voor wat geld of eten. "Maying" lijkt wat dat betreft veel op "caroling" of St Maarten</p>
<p>Piano intermezzo</p>	<p>Sfeer foto voorjaar</p>
<p>Summer is a-coming in and the Cuckoo</p> <p>Summer is a-coming in Loudly sing cuckoo, Groweth seed an bloweth mead And springeth the wood a-new. Sing cuckoo, sing cuckoo. Merry sing cuckoo</p> <p>O the cuckoo she's a pretty bird She singeth as she flies; She bringeth good tidings, She telleth no lies. She sucketh white flowers For to keep her voice clear; And the more she singeth "Cuckoo" The summer draweth near. Ah..</p>	<p>Vrolijk zomer lied over de koekoek die de zomer aankondigt</p>

The sprig of thyme

Come all ye pretty maidens
have you keep your gardens clean
And let no one steal your thyme.

My garden was planted full
Of flowers ev'rywhere, flowers ev'rywhere.
But for myself I wouldnot choose
The flower I held so dear.

The primrose I did refuse
Because it came too soon
The lily and pink I overlooked
And vowed I would wait till June.

In June came the rose so red
And that's the flower for me:
But when I gathered the rose so dear
I gained but the willow tree.

My garden is now run wild,
When shall I plant it new?
My bed that once was filled with thyme
Is all overrun with rue.

Green willow it will twist,
Green willow it will twine,
And I wish I was in that young man's arms
That once had the heart of mine.

Het lijkt een lied over een tuin die verwilderd is, maar als je naar de betekenis van de bloemen kijkt is het een waarschuwing om trouw te blijven aan je jeugdliefde en niet te lang te wachten op de overweldigende verliefdheid die niet blijvend is. Dan zit je straks met de wilg en de ruit die je tuintje hebben overwoekerd, of wel verdriet en spijt. Dan verlang je terug naar je eerste liefde.

The sheep shearing

It's a rosebud in June,
and the violets in full bloom
The small birds are singing
love songs from each spray.

Refrain:

We'll pipe and we'll sing, Love,
We'll dance in a ring, Love.
When each lad takes his lass,
All on the green grass,
And it's all to plow
Where the fat oxen graze low;
And the lads and the lasses do
sheepshearing go.

When we have all shear'd, our jolly, jolly
sheep
Nothing brings more joy, than to talk of their
increase.

(Refrain)

Een vrolijk dansliedje bij het
schaapscheerdersfeest

The green meadow

It's of a lawyer fine and gay,
As he rode through the city
O there he spied on a lovely maid,
She was handsome, fair an pretty.

"Good morning unto you fair maid,
And where are you a-going?"
"Down in yonder green meadow," said she,
"Where my father is a-mowing."

"So now you come to London," he says,
"It's there a fine lady I'll make you,
And you shall enjoy a silken gown,
Diamonds rings, gold chain and gold laces."

"I'd rather be a poor man's wife
And sit at my wheel a-spinning,
Than I would be a lawyer's jade
In my laces and fine linen."

And now she is a poor man's wife,
Her husband dearly loves her;
She lives a sweet contented life,
No lady in town is above her.

Een advocaat ziet een leuk meisje lopen en
probeert haar te verleiden om zijn liefje te
worden met mooie kleren en sieraden. Maar
ze trouwt liever met een arme man, ook al
moet ze dan hard werken. Zo hoeft ze zich
voor niemand te schamen.

Torrents

As torrents in summer, Half dried in their
channels,
Suddenly rise, tho' the sky is still cloudless.
For rain has been falling.
Far off at their fountains;

So hearts that are fainting Grow full to
o'erflowing,
And they that behold it, Marvel, and know
not
That God at their fountains
Far off has been raining!

Zoals een droge rivier in de zomer plotseling
stijgt doordat het stroomopwaarts regent,
zo kunnen harten moed putten in een
moeilijke tijd omdat God het laat regenen bij
de bron.

John Barleycorn

There came three men from out the West
Their victory to try,
And they have taken a solemn oath
John Barleycorn should die.

Refrain:

Sing right follol the diddle all the dee
Right folleero dee.

They took a plough and ploughed him in
Laid clods upon his head
And they have taken a solemn oath
John Barleycorn is dead.

So then he lay for three long weeks
Till the dew from heaven did fall,
John Barleycorn sprang up again
And that surprised them all.

There he remained till midsummer
And looked both pale and wan,
For all he had a spikey beard
To shew he was a man.

But soon came men with their sharp scythes
And chopped him to the knee
They rolled and tied him by the waist
And served him barbarously.

We'll tip white wine into a glass
And scarlet into a can
John Barleycorn and his brown bowl
Shall prove the better man.

Dit lied gaat over de gerst oogst en het bier
brouwen. Een stuk minder gewelddadig dan
je op het eerste gezicht zou denken. John
Barleycorn is de gerstekorrel. Uiteindelijk is
bier beter dan rode of witte wijn.

The unquiet grave

Cold blows the wind to my true love,
And a few drops the rain,
I never had but one true love,
And in greenwood he was slain.

I'll do as much for my true love
As any young girl may;
I'll sit and weep down by his grave
For twelve months and a day

When twelve month were come and gone,
This young man he arose
"What makes you weep down by my grave,
I can't take my repose?"

"One kiss, one kiss of your white lips
One kiss is all I crave
One kiss of your lips
And return back to your grave".

"My lips they are as cold as clay,
My breath is earthly and strong
And if you were to kiss my lilywhite lips,
Your days would not be long."

"My time be long, my time be short,
Tomorrow or today,
Sweet Christ in Heaven have all my soul
And take my life away, away."

Een jonge vrouw treurt al meer dan een jaar op het graf van haar geliefde. Haar geliefde kan geen rust vinden omdat zij hem niet los wil laten Hij smeekt haar om te stoppen met treuren, maar zij wil nog een kus van hem. Hij dreigt dat ze dan zal sterven, en dat kan haar niets schelen, ze is jet leven moe.

An acre of land

My father left me an acre of land,
Ivy, sing Ivery,
My father left me an acre of land,
And a bunch of green holly and Ivery.

I ploughed it with a ram's horn;
Ivy, sing Ivery,
I sowed it with a thimble,
And a bunch of green holly and Ivery.

I harrowed it with a bramble bush;
Ivy, sing Ivery,
I reaped it with a penknife,
And a bunch of green holly and Ivery.

I sent it home in a walnut shell;
Ivy, sing Ivery,
I threshed it with my needle and thread,
And a bunch of green holly and Ivery.

I winnowed it with my handkerchief;
Ivy, sing Ivery,
I sent it to mill with a team of great rats;
And a bunch of green holly and Ivery.

The carter brought a curly whip;
Ivy, sing Ivery,
The whip did pop and the wagon did stop;
And a bunch of green holly and Ivery.

Een vrouw heeft van haar vader een klein lapje grond gekregen en moppert dat het zo klein is. Ze beschrijft het hele proces van ploegen, zaaien, eggen en maaien, dorsen en wannen en het naar de molen brengen van het graan. De vrachtrijder ziet haar ploeteren en heeft medelijden met haar en helpt haar, en wie weet, met al die hulst en klimop (huwelijkstrouw) in het refrein, leven ze vervolgens nog lang en gelukkig samen.

Snow

O snow, which sinks so light,
Brown earth is hid from sight
O soul, be thou as white as snow,
O snow, which falls so slow,
Dear earth quite warm below;
O heart, so keep thy glow
Beneath the snow.

O snow, in thy soft grave
Sad flow'rs the winter brave;
O heart, so sooth and save, as does the
snow.
The snow must melt, must go,
Fast, fast as water flow.
Not thus, my soul, O sow
Thy gifts to fade like snow.

O snow, thou'rt white no more,
Thy sparkling too, is o'er;
O soul, be as before,
Was bright the snow.
Then as the snow all pure,
O heart be, but endure;
Through all the years full sure,
Not as the snow.

De sneeuw bedekt de aarde en houdt haar warm, en beschermt op die manier de bloemen. Bewaar zo je hart, puur als de sneeuw, zoals de sneeuw de bloemen bewaart, maar blijf volhouden, niet zoals de sneeuw die smelt en verdwijnt.

Children's Christmas Song

We've been a-while a-wandering
Amongst the leaves so green.
But now we come a wassailing
So plainly to be seen.

For it's Christmas time,
when we travel far and near;
May God bless you
and send you a happy New Year.

We are not daily beggars
That beg from door to door;
We are your neighbors children,
Whom you've seen before;
For it's, etc.

Good master and good mistress,
While you're sitting by the fire,
Pray think of us poor children
That's wandered in the mire;
For it's, etc.

We've got a little purse;
Made of leathern ratchin skin;
We want a little of your money
To line it well within;
For it's, etc.

Bring us out a table
And spread it with a cloth,
Bring us out a mouldy cheese
And some of your Christmas loaf;
For it's, etc.

De kinderen zwoegen door modder en
sneeuw langs de huizen om kerstliederen te
zingen. Ze smeken de boeren om een beetje
geld in hun beurs en wat eten op tafel.

Wassail Song

Wassail, Wassail, all over the town,
Our bread it is white and ale it is brown;
Our bowl it is made of the green maple tree;
In the Wassail bowl we'll drink unto thee.

Here's a health to the ox and to his right eye,
Pray God send our master a good Christmas
pie,
A good Christmas pie as e'er I did see.
In the Wassail bowl we'll drink unto thee.

Here's a health to the ox and to his right
horn,
Pray God send our master a good crop of
corn,
A good crop of corn as e'er I did see,
In the Wassail bowl we'll drink unto thee.

Here's a health to the ox and to his long tail,
Pray God send our master a good cask of ale,
A good cask of ale as e'er I did see,
In the Wassail bowl we'll drink unto thee.

Come, butler, come fill us a bowl of the best;
Then I pray that your soul in heaven may
rest;
But if you do bring us a bowl of the small,
May the Devil take butler, bowl and all!

Then here's to the maid in the lily white
smock,
Who tripp'd to the door and slipp'd back the
lock;
Who tripp'd to the door and pull'd back the
pin,
For to let these jolly Wassailers walk in.

De "Carollers" wensen iedereen een goede gezondheid, maar ze verwachten wel wat te drinken in hun pul, want anders wensen ze de butler heel wat anders toe. Maar de dienstmeid die hen stiekem binnenliet die wensen ze het allerbeste.

In Bethlehem City

In Bethlehem city, in Judea it was,
That Joseph and Mary together did pass,
All for to be taxed when thither they came,
For Caesar Augustus commanded the same.

Chorus:

Then let us be merry, cast sorrow away,
Our Saviour Christ Jesus was born on this
day.

But Mary's full time being come as we find,
She brought forth her first-born to save all
mankind;
The inn being full of the heavenly Guest,
No place could she find to lay Him to rest.

(Chorus)

Then they were constrained in a stable to lie
Where horses and asses they used for to tie.
Their lodging so simple the look in no scorn,
Our Saviour, Our Saviour was born!

(Chorus)

Then God send an angel from Heaven so
high
To certain poor shepherds in fields where
they lie.
And bade them no longer in sorrow to stay
Because that our Saviour was born on this
day.

(Chorus)

Then presently after the shepherds did spy,
Vast numbers of angels did stand in the sky;
So merry were talking, so sweetly did sing,
"All glory and praise to the heavenly King!"

Chorus:

Then let us be merry, cast sorrow aside,
Our Saviour Christ Jesus was born on this
tide.

Klassiek kerstverhaal op muziek gezet

God bless the Master

God Bless the master of this house,
with happiness beside
Where'er his body rides or walks
His God must be his guide
His God must be his guide.

God Bless the mistress of this house
With gold chain on her breast
Where'er her body sleeps or wakes,
Lord send her soul to rest,
Lord send her soul to rest.

God Bless your house, your children too,
Your cattle and your store,
The Lord increase you day by day
And send you more and more
And send you more and more.

De "carollers" wensen de eigenaar van het
huis, zijn vrouw, en kinderen voorspoed toe