

## Apple Tree Wassail

*Modern wassail of unknown origin<sup>14</sup>, heard by Mike Hepworth on the wireless in 2026. The words, but not the tune, has roots in traditional wassails. This is included in The Worms as it lends itself to community participation at a Wassail ceremony.*

Oh apple apple tree  
*Oh apple apple tree*  
We have come to Wassail thee  
*We have come to Wassail thee*  
Will you bear some fruit for me?  
*Will you bear some fruit for me?*  
When the season changes  
*When the season changes*

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<sup>14</sup> <https://www.facebook.com/watch/?v=1111914575934398>

## Wassailing (Here we come a')

*Words and Music: English Traditional. "Wassail" is an old English word for a toast similar to "Good Health" and the wassail is the content of the glass or goblet (spiced or mulled wine or ale). Wassailing is a traditional rural event carried out in January to wish the land-owners a good harvest - traditionally for cider apples - in the coming year and to cadge a bit of money from them. Bradford Observer (26 Dec 1874), Roud 209.*

*Traditionally held on 'Old Twelvey Night' which is 17 January because that was Twelfth night before the Gregorian Calendar messed things up in 1752.*

*Ratching is a very rare word that means scratched or torn.*

Here we come a-wassailing among the leaves so green  
Here we come a-wassailing, so fair to be seen

### Chorus

*Love and joy come to you and to you your wassail, too  
And God bless you and send you a Happy New Year  
And God send you a Happy New Year*

*We are not daily beggars that beg from door to door  
But we are neighbours' children whom you have seen before*

### Chorus

*Good master and good mi-s-tress as you sit by the fire  
Pray think of us poor children, who stand here in the mire*

### Chorus

*We have a little pu-rse made of ratching leather skin  
We want some of your small change to line it well within*

### Chorus

*God bless the master of this house likewise the mistress too  
And all the little children that round the table go*

### Chorus

## Wassail the Silver Apple

*Words and tune by Mike O'Connor(199x). O'Connor is a songwriter and collector who lives in Cornwall. Of this song he said, 'It was written to Wassail a small orchard in a garden on the side of Kit Hill in East Cornwall. I wrote it to sound dynamic and exciting rather than traditional but the words explore the ancient folk lore around Wassailing.'*

<slow - legato>

Wassail! *Wassail!*  
*May the coming year*  
*Peace and plenty bring*  
*To all who wassail here*

<fast - staccato>

*Drink to the bud and the blossom*  
*Drink to the root of the tree*  
*Drink to the fruit of the summer*  
*Wassail let cider run free †*

*Fire at the spirit of winter*  
*Fire at the spirit of night*  
*Fire at the spirit of darkness*  
*Wassail the bringer of light †*

*Wassail the silver shilling*  
*Wassail the silver moon*  
*Wassail the silver apple*  
*Drink, hail the sign of the Sun*

<slow>

Wassail! *Wassail!*  
*May the coming year*  
*Peace and plenty bring*  
*To all who wassail here* <drop a tone lower on last note>

# Wassail! Wassail! All Over the Town

*Alternate Title: Gloucestershire Wassail. Words and Music: English Traditional<sup>15</sup>.  
Roud 209.*

*The toast refers to the practice of placing stale toasted bread dipped in cider in the apple trees to placate the spirits that may spoil the cider apple harvest.*

## Chorus

[Singer 1] Wassail! wassail! all over the town  
*Our toast it is white and our ale it is brown  
Our bowl it is made of the white maple tree  
With the wassailing bowl we'll drink to thee*

[Singer 1] Here's to our horse, and to his right ear  
God send our master a happy new year  
A happy new year as e'er he did see  
With my wassailing bowl I drink to thee

## Chorus

[Singer 2] So here is to Cherry and to his right cheek  
Pray God send our master a good piece of beef  
A good piece of beef that ere we did see  
With the wassailing bowl we'll drink to thee.

## Chorus

[Singer 3] Here's to our mare and to her right eye  
God send our mistress a good Christmas pie  
A good Christmas pie as e'er I did see  
With my wassailing bowl I drink to thee

## Chorus

<more>

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<sup>15</sup> <https://archives.vwml.org/records/COL/5/67>

[Singer 4] So here's to Broad Mary and to her broad horn  
May God send our master a good crop of corn  
And a good crop of corn that may we all see  
With the wassailing bowl we'll drink to thee  
Chorus

[Singer 5] And here is to Fillpail and to her left ear  
Pray God send our master a happy New Year  
And a happy New Year as e'er he did see  
With the wassailing bowl we'll drink to thee  
Chorus

[Singer 6] Here's to our cow and to her long tail  
God send our master a bowl of good ale  
Of a cup of good beer I pray you draw near  
And our jolly wassail it's then you shall hear  
Chorus

[Singer 7] Come butler come fill us a bowl of the best  
Then we hope that your soul in heaven may rest  
But if you do draw us a bowl of the small  
Then down shall go butler bowl and all  
Chorus

[Singer 8] Then here's to the maid in the lily white smock  
Who tripped to the door and slipped back the lock  
Who tripped to the door and pulled back the pin  
For to let us jolly wassailers in  
Chorus

## Mummers' Song

*Traditional Hampshire song noted by Charles Kennedy Scott.*

*Mummers' Plays are folk plays performed by troupes of amateur actors, traditionally all male, known as mummers or guisers (also by local names such as rhymers, pace-egggers, soulers, tipteerers, wrenboys, and galoshins).*

*Mumming spread from the British Isles to a number of former British colonies. It is sometimes performed in the street but more usually during visits to houses and pubs. It is generally performed seasonally or annually, often at Christmas, Easter or on Plough Monday, more rarely on Hallowe'en or All Souls' Day, and often with a collection of money, in which the practice may be compared with other customs such as those of Halloween, Bonfire Night, wassailing, pace egging and first-footing at new year. Roud 230<sup>16</sup>.*

*The roads are very dirty my boots are very thin  
I have a little pocket to put some money in  
Knock on the knocker! Ring at the bell!  
Please give me a copper because I've sung so well - **Oi!***



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<sup>16</sup> <https://archives.vwml.org/songs/RoudFS/S231282>