

## Down the Lane

Collected by Gardiner from Mrs. Hopkins (26), Axford, Hants 1907  
Arrangement © Craig Morgan Robson

Down the lane as I was a-walking  
On one fine Summer's morning clear  
There I spied a youthful maiden  
Lamenting for her shepherd dear  
Lamenting for her shepherd dear

“Dearest, haven't you ever a-slighted me?  
You have robbed me of my mind.  
Didn't you promise me this day twelve-month  
That you would make me your beautiful bride  
That you would make me your beautiful bride?”

“Don't you hear those bells a-ringing  
And the music gaily play?  
Don't you see my true love coming  
For this is my wedding day  
For this is my wedding day.”

Now at last it is all over  
Never to feel the same no more.  
Never no more shall I go with you  
Where those pretty flowers grow  
Where those pretty flowers grow.

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## Provenance

It is pretty much common knowledge nowadays that this song, although harmonized and arranged c1850 by Joe Perkin, Holmfirth choirmaster, was an adaptation of an existing folk song found on late eighteenth century broadsides titled *The Maiden's complaint for the Loss of her Shepherd*. Copies can be seen in the Madden Collection in Cambridge University Library (Slip songs H-N, VWML microfilm 72, item 1059), and in Manchester Central Library in *The Warblers Garland* (Br f821.04, Ballads vol. 3, p5) of the late eighteenth century. It probably originated in the London pleasure gardens such as Vauxhall or Ranelagh; it certainly has the flowery language associated with the songs of this type.

1

As thro' yonder grove I walked,  
In a summer's evening clear,  
A youthful maiden I espied,  
Lamenting for her shepherd dear.

2

Dearest Strephon, I shall see you,  
Never more, alas, I fear;  
You must fight the French and Spaniards,  
Must I leave you thus my dear?

3

On these banks no more you'll rest you,  
Whilst with pleasure you see your lambs,  
With looks so innocent and gentle,  
Sport beside their fleecy dams.

4

To the wake no more you'll take me,  
Where the lads and lasses go;  
In the garden I ne'er shall meet you,  
Where the pretty flowers grow.

5

Neptune, God of Britain's ocean,  
Guard my Strephon when he's away,  
Send him safe to England's shore,  
And let me see the happy day.

6

Gentle Strephon, be but constant,  
As I'll be to you my Life;  
And if you'll come home again,  
The priest shall make us Man and Wife.

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A three-stanza version Abroad for Pleasure, much closer to our Holmfirth Anthem was printed by Harkness of Preston c1850 and this can be seen at Madden Collection 18, Country printers 3, VWML microfilm 85, item 1056. The most noticeable difference between Holmfirth Anthem and the Harkness version is the latter stanza two starts 'Dearest Edward, when shall I behold thee'.

In most nineteenth century printings of the Holmfirth Anthem the arranger is named J Perkins which should be Perkin.