



A Croxley Song Book

There cannot be many villages which can boast a collection of songs of their very own. This is one such collection. I owe a debt to Godfrey Cornwall who, having introduced me to the words of some of the songs, encouraged me to search for the tunes. During the course of my enquiries, I discovered even more songs, to which I have added two of my own, and one written by pupils of Durrants School.

Life in Croxley has changed greatly since the last war, and many of its traditions have died. Where now is Cherry Sunday, or Garland Day? What a loss it would be to Croxley's own culture if its songs died as well! I hope therefore that local schools and societies will welcome this little collection, that younger Croxleyites will soon be singing the village songs, and that the older inhabitants will have memories stirred by some of these words and tunes.

My thanks go to Godfrey Cornwall, Bill, Alfred and Algy Hedges, Fred Randall for words and music, to Bob Roome for writing out the music, to Richard Canton and pupils of Durrants School for illustrations, and to Marian Bryant for the publication of this booklet at Durrants.

Enjoy your singing!



DURRANTS SCHOOL

Presents:-

A Croxley Song Book

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- 1980 -

CROXLEY ANTHEM

As I walked on the Green at Croxley one after-noon in June,

I came across some sporting revellers dancing to this tune.

CHORUS
We're the mighty men of Croxley Finest to be seen, All the maids a

-round us flocks to revel on the green.

There I met a merry maiden, sparkling and fair,
Asked her if she'd come and join me, would she revel there?

We're the mighty men of Croxley, finest to be seen,
All the maids around us flocks to revel on the Green.

She said, "Kind sir, you ask a favour, I shall grant it thee
Let's join in the merry-making, the romps and revellry."

We're the mighty men of Croxley, finest to be seen,
All the maids around us flocks to revel on the Green.

When at last the romps were over and golden was the moon,
She asked me to return to Croxley one afternoon next June.

We're the mighty men of Croxley, finest to be seen,
All the maids around us flocks to revel on the Green.

Croxley Anthem: I wrote this song to suggest what a Revels folk song might have been like if it had existed!

4.
The North End Boys: The first version was collected from Fred Randall, and the second version from Bill Hedges.

2nd version:

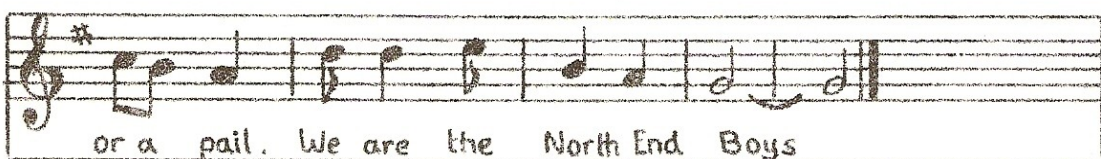
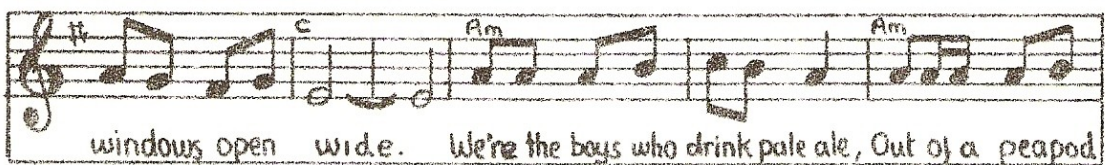
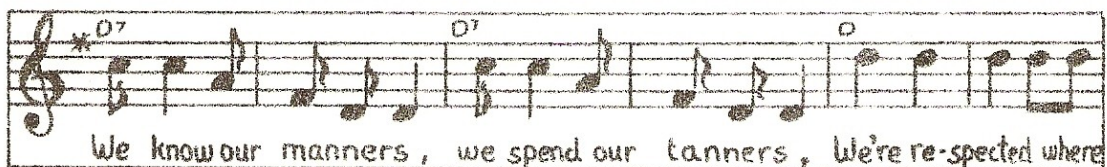
We are the North End Boys.
We are the North End Boys.
We know our manners, we spend our tanners,
We're respected where-ever we go.
When we go marching down the old New Road,
Doors and windows open wide.
All the boys do holler out
"Put your bloomin' Woodbines out".
We are the North End Boys.

The North End Boys were a Croxley football team before World War I; the majority being members of the Croxley Lads Brigade. Most of the players were killed in the war, as a report in the Watford Observer, dated 14th October 1916, shows: "Of the 35 Croxley Lads Brigade who rushed to the colours at the outbreak of the war, only 6 or 7 remain in the fighting line, the others being killed or wounded."

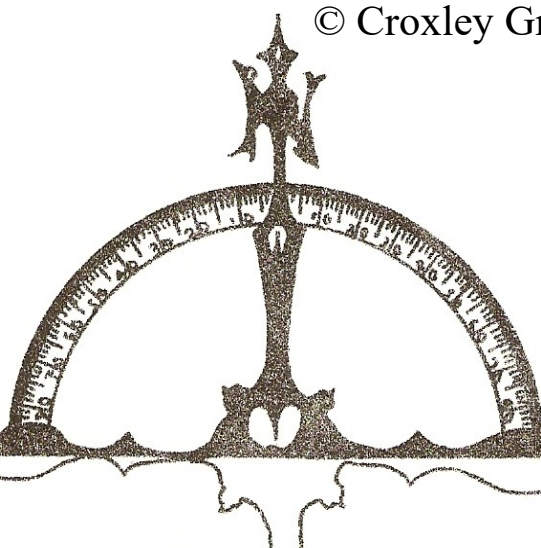
The origins of this song are not entirely clear. The tune is a version of "Who were you with last night?" The words indicate that there may be further variants; they certainly seem to be based on a national song, sung to a tune which is only vaguely similar. The words, given to me by Jack Brown, are:

We are some of the KRR's, we are some of the boys.
We know our manners, spend all our tanners,
We are respected wherever we may go,
When we're marching down the village street,
Doorways and windows open wide.
All the girls begin to cry, "The KRR's are coming by."
We are some of the boys.

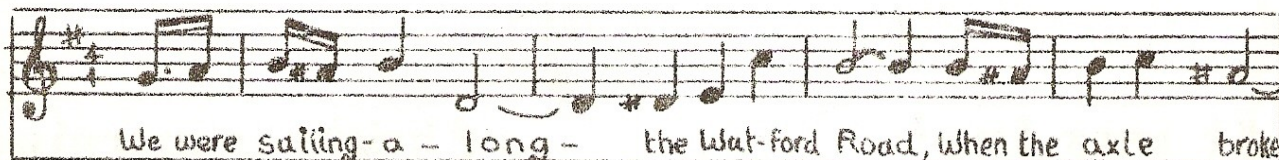
NORTH END BOYS



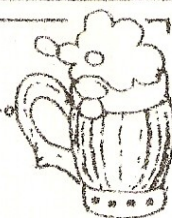
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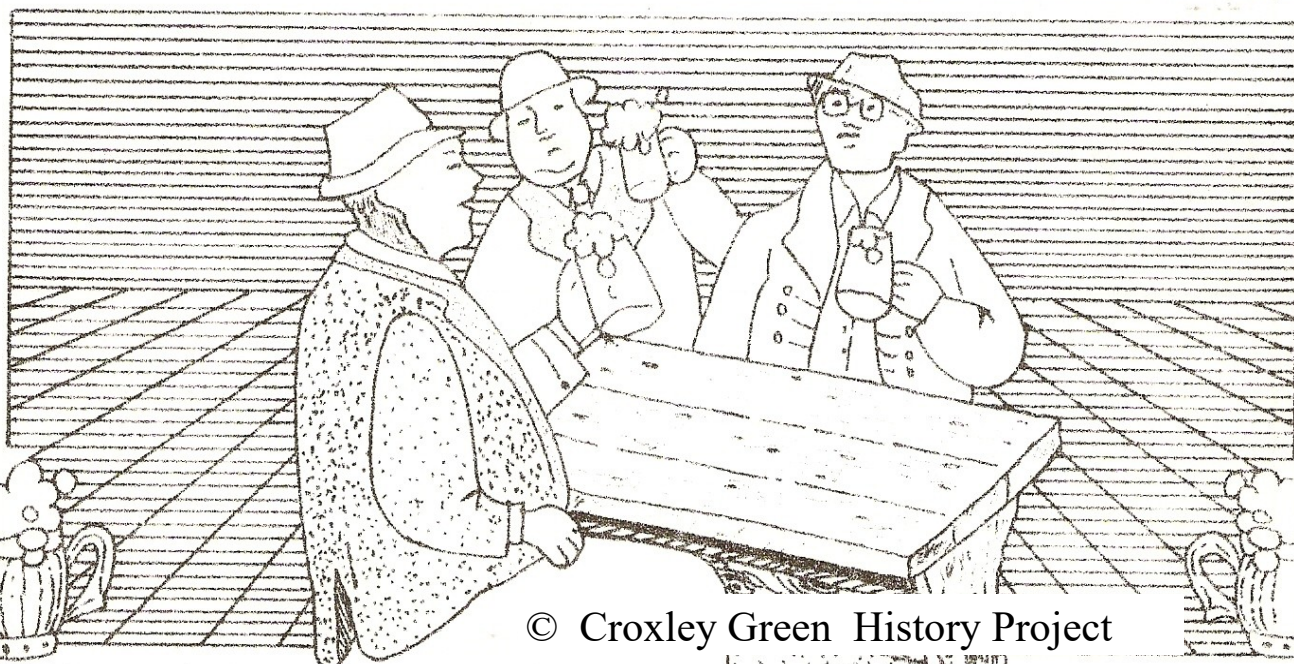
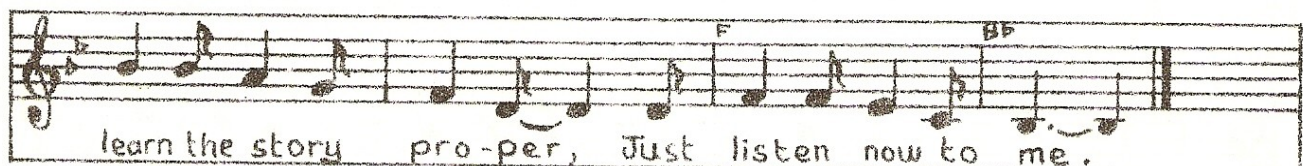
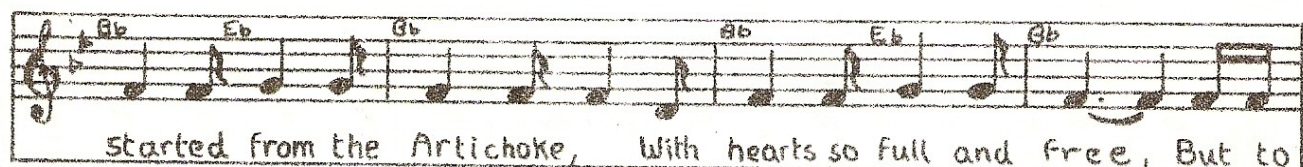
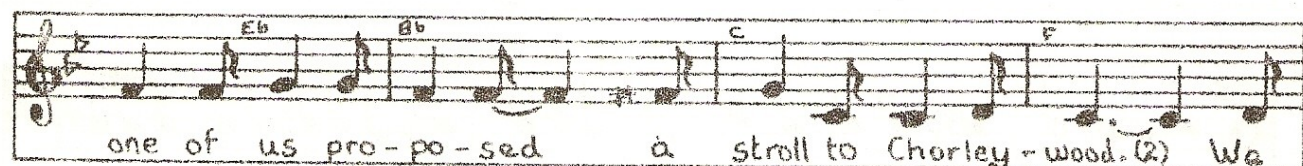
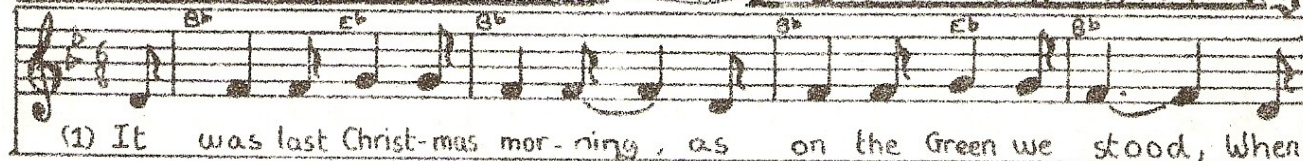
A NEW AXLE FOR ME



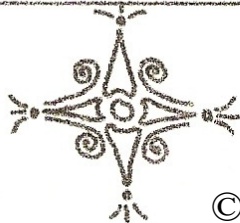
New Axle for Me: Another song about the North End Boys. Mr. Wilbec, owner of horse-omnibuses, or brakes, used to transport the footballers on away matches.



It was last Christmas morning.



(3) There was Long Wit the navvy And little Benjamin Danky Wells, one of the swells And Archie Putti-man.	(4) There was also Foreman Owen And Grady, big and bold But to cut our story shorter We were twenty-four all told.
(5) Then up the Green we strolled Along Loudwater Lane The twenty-four all told To Chorleywood all came.	(6) We gazed at one another Then hanging out his tongue Jock Adams that old blighter Said, Thy will be done.
(7) We called in at the White Horse Its Mrs. Sales you know And for to shift her beer Not one of us was slow.	(8) Some of us had bottled ale Some others they had gin Then after blowing out our hides We all sat down to sing.
(9) When in walked Benny Goodman And on a seat he sunk Well, just to put it mildly He was paralytic drunk.	(10) We asked him if he'd have a drink He said Oh! gracious lor! I think that we had better Order three rounds more.
(11) The singing then had started The drinking it was great When poor old Benny Goodman Recited his cycle's fate.	(12) When he had biked to Bushey And stopped to quench his thirst He sat inside the public house When both his tyres burst.
(13) We went on drinking bottled ale, Whiskey, ginger wine, Cider and stout, to blow us out And beer of every kind.	(14) We bade goodbye to Mrs. Sales Then making for the door We found our poor old Edgar Lying drunk upon the floor.
(15) All of us stopped, we picked him up We stood him on his feet Then very shortly found ourselves In Croxley High Street.	



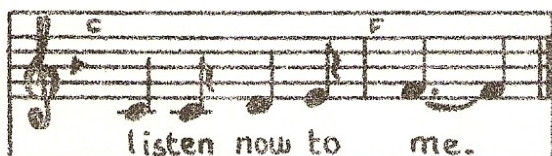
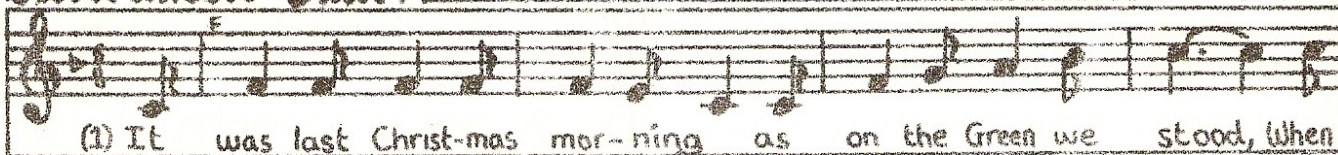
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It was last Christmas morning: A third song about the North End Boys telling us a little of their drinking habits! The local lads referred to are:-

Long Wit	- Alf Worn	Foreman Owen	- Arthur Owen
Little Benjamin	- Ben Gunnell	Grady	- Albert Gravestock
Dankey Wells	- Dank Wells	Edgar	- Edgar Gravestock
Archie Putiman	- Archie Putman	Jock Adams	- Fred Adams

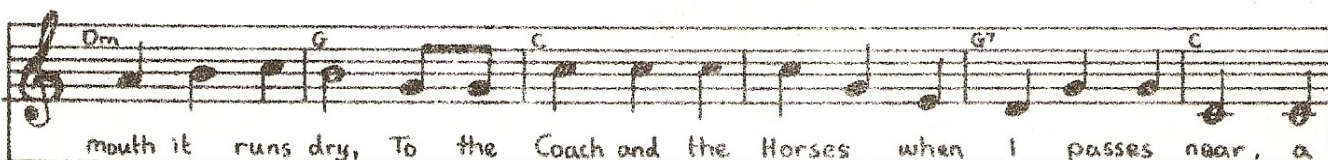
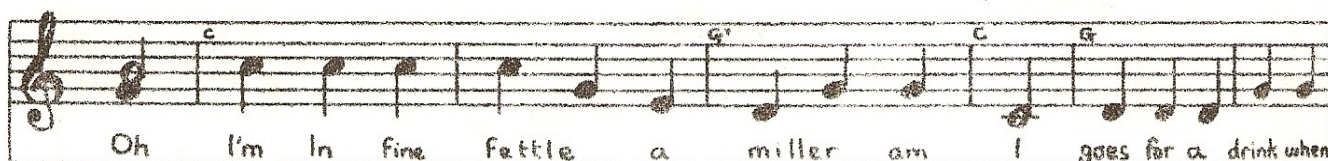
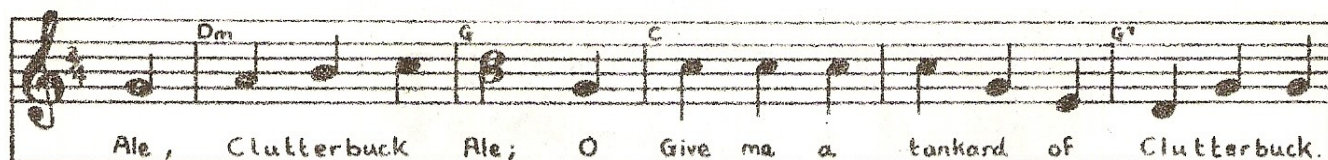
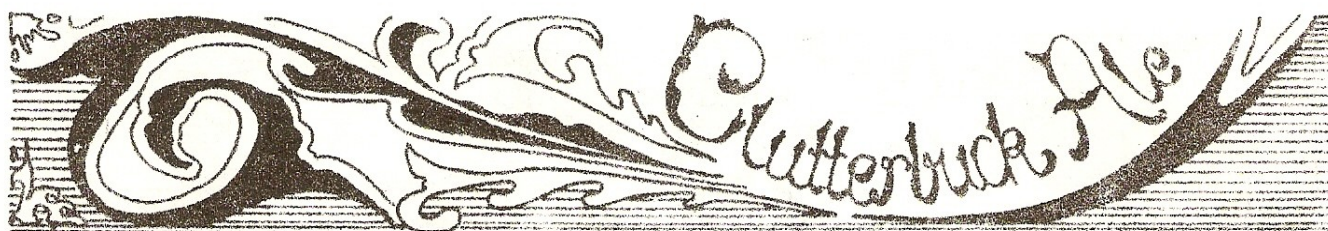
It was last Christmas morning

Alternative Tune



Clutterbuck Ale: The old Croxley family, the Clutterbucks, used to make a fine brew of beer, so I wrote this song to celebrate it.

May Song: The tune is of a Hertfordshire May carol, but as far as I can discover, and I cannot be certain, these words were written in the 1920's by York Road Girls School. Algie Hedges says: "They had to make up a poem about the 1st May. I can always remember my sister. She started off 'The first of May is a happy day' and that's as far as she got with it. My two brothers (Alf and Bill) and myself kept giving her fresh lines for it. None of them was right for it."



Oh I'm in fine fettle a miller am I

1. Goes for a drink when my mouth it runs dry
To the Coach and the Horses when I passes near
And has me a drink of that fine Croxley beer.

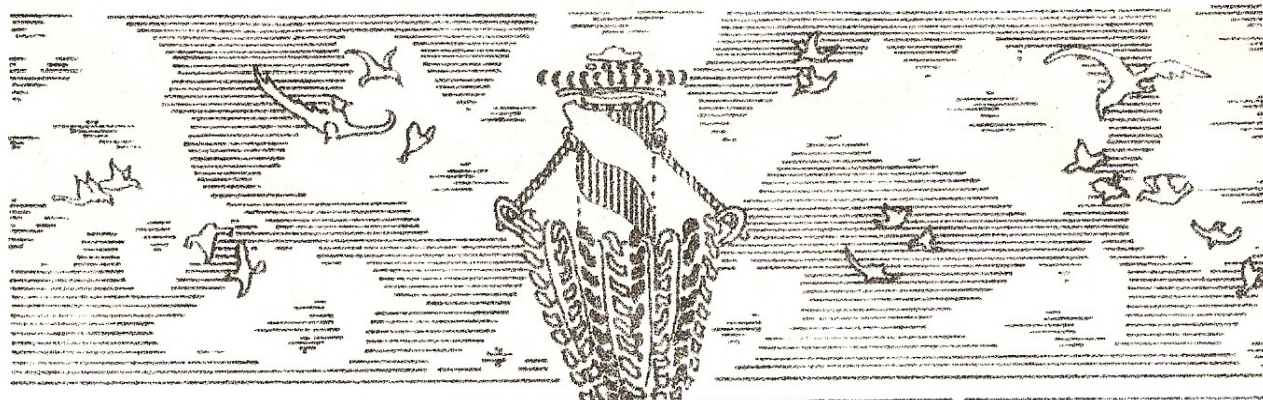
~ CHORUS ~

2. Now I am a soldier when I gets the chance
I fights for England in Spain or in France
When fighting is over I return home
To have a drink of the beer for which Croxley is known.

~ CHORUS ~

3. Oh Clutterbuck, oh Clutterbuck you're the finest of ales
I'll join in with anyone who sings of the tales
Of the finest and tastiest of all Croxley beers
So join with us sing with us, come on now my dears.

~ CHORUS ~

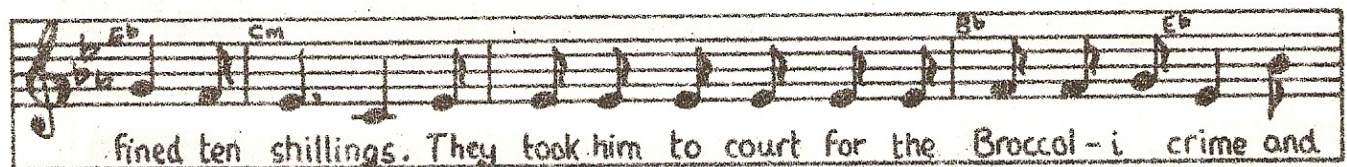
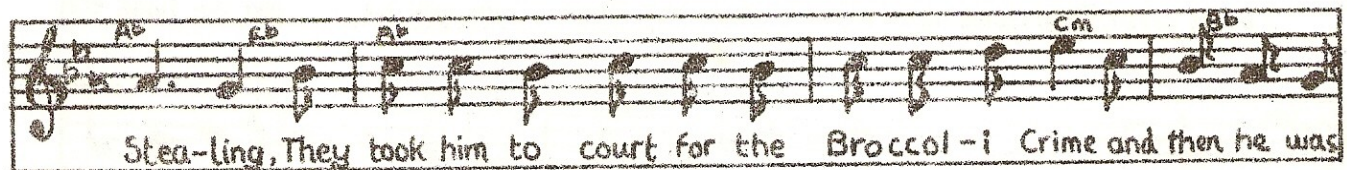
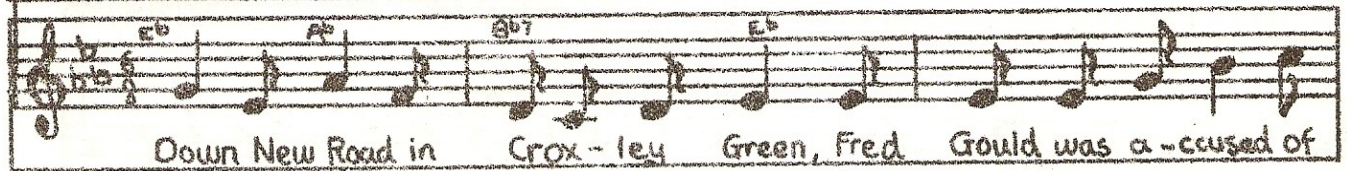
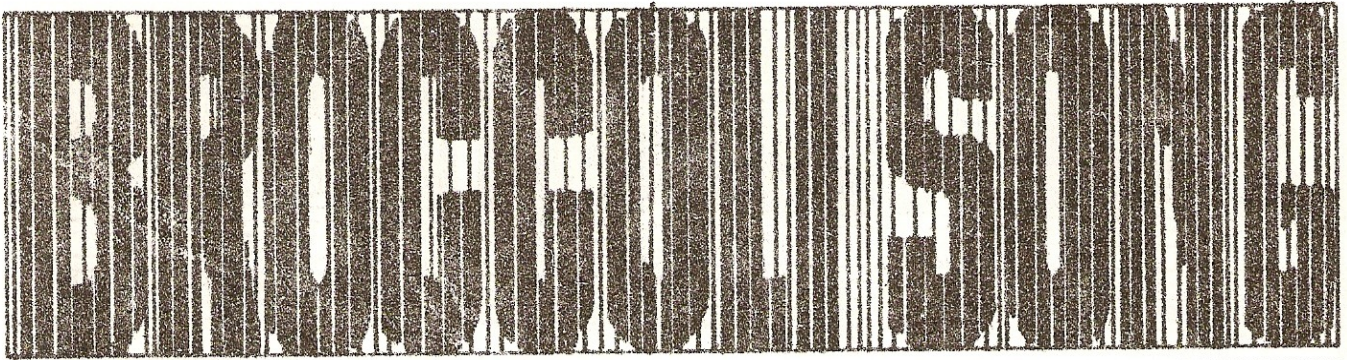


MAY SONG



2.
People, people, all awake
And awake you all shall hear
How Christ the Lord he loveth us
And loveth us so dere.

2.
And if you haven't any strong beer
Well be content with small
And take the goodwill of your home
And thank the Lord for all.



Constable Human had had a complaint from Mr. Webb that evening.
Fred Gould was the man who had taken the plants
For this he was charged with thieving.

Fred Gould was the man who had taken the plants
For this he was charged with thieving.

When in court he stood in the box, admitted he'd taken the plants.
Fred said he had intended to pay, but he never had the chance.

Fred said he had intended to pay, but he never had the chance.

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Broccoli Song: A song written by Durrants pupils concerning a crime
committed on May 22nd, 1926 by Fred Gould.

Lay of Modern Croxley: This was written as a piece of doggerel soon after the Watford Riots of June 26th 1902, which were caused by the preparation for Edward VII's coronation being postponed. The Watford Observer, July 5th 1902, reports:

In consequence of the rumour that the body of roughs who brought such disgrace on the hitherto eminently respectable town of Watford on Thursday were to pay a visit to the village on the following night, it was thought advisable to get prepared for the occasion. With their usual good organising ability the Men of Croxley with Mr. Barton-Smith at the head of affairs rapidly arranged a formidable defence corps. About 40 stalwarts were sworn in as special constables at Rickmansworth and took up a strategical position on the Watford Road with the cricket pavillion as headquarters. The whole of the roads were also patrolled by small companies and cyclists acted as scouts till past midnight, when all fear of an attack was at an end. On the following nights however a strict watch was kept. The local police expressed their thanks for the assistance and there is no doubt that the rioters would have experienced a very warm time indeed had they ventured to carry out their Threat.



There is a tape-recording available of these songs, performed by pupils and teachers of Durrants School with the invaluable help of pupils of Little Green School.

Songs 1, 6 and 7 are copyright Roger Bennett 1980.