

THE CONTENTED WIDOW

A widow poor, I am,
I three score years have seen,
Contented I dwell in a little cot,
Covered o'er with ivy green.
The rich I envy not,
Their pleasures or houses fine,
I'd rather be in this peaceful abode,
This little thatch'd cot of mine.

The parish fare I trust,
O! I may never want,
Neither shall I, if heaven do but
Good health unto me grant.
I live just to my means,
Through life, day after day,
No more I crave, I'm happy with these,
Though humble my display.

How do I life maintain
You say, no doubt you do,
I'll tell you soon if you listen to me
How this life I get through.
A garden I have large,
And grow I do therein,
Enough for myself and some to sell,
Which money doth turn in.

A stye I have there too,
A pig always in store,
And therefore vegetables and meat
Have inside my door.
And in my garden grows
All sorts of food so rare,
And these I sell to pay my rent,
And oft I have to spare.

Sometimes the fruit doth fail,
Potatoes take disease,
I murmur not, nor doth complain,
For 'tis what heaven please.
Sometimes a pig will die,
Which is a trouble sore,
I murmur not, but doth bestow,
More care upon my store.

To fields in harvest time,
I all day long repair,
To pick the straggling ears of corn,
For winter to prepare.

Sometimes a sack of corn
In the season perhaps I'll glean,
Which then enables me to have
Some extras in between.

To woods, when nuts are brown,
My bag and crook I take,
And creep among the hazel trees,
And bushes well I shake,
Like hail about my ears
The nuts come rattling down;
A store I get for the childrens pence,
When Christmas time comes round.

And thus I pass my life,
From year to year, just so,
Oft times to heaven with humble thanks
My heart doth overflow.
I've reason much to thank
My God for mercies kind,
To give me strength to work and have
An independant mind.

When this poor life is done,
When death shall lay me low,
I trust that they will bury me
As simple as they know.
No friends I have to mourn,
My goods I leave them free
To the parish overseer, who'll find
Enough to bury me.