

THE OLD WIFE OF COVERDALE (C. 59)

(UNDER THE LEAVES 2006)

There lived an old wife in Coverdale
Merrily turns the Wheel
There lived an old wife in Coverdale
Children she had three
She sent them away to northern lands,
She sent them away for to learn their grammerye

Sad news came to her at Martinmas
Merrily turns the wheel
Her children had sickened and died
And buried they were all three
My curse on the moon and the stars she cried
My curse upon God, he that took them away from me

The moon it rose high on Coverdale
Merrily turns the wheel
The old wife she wept bitter tears
As she lay in her narrow bed
And there in the doorway her children stood
Their hats were of birch and their eyes as grey as lead

She arose to prepare a feast for them
Merrily turns the wheel
And all the while tears down fell
And so bitterly she did weep
We want none of you meat or your ale mother
But let us return to our graves for to take our sleep

The cock it crows loud in Coverdale
Merrily turns the wheel
The sun it rose red as blood
And the Moon it fled to the west
The worm it is calling us home mother
And all of your tears they will not let us rest