

Three weeks before Easter

Verses 1, 2, 4, 6, 7.

Three weeks before Easter, the days long and clear so bright shall they
moan and blew in thy ear as I stepped into the forest to
gather flowers gay but the fields they would not yield me any posies—
last line of verses 3 & 5
young men and young maidens come along this way

The musical score consists of four staves of music in G major (one sharp). The first three staves correspond to the first three lines of lyrics. The fourth staff begins with the text 'last line of verses 3 & 5' and contains the melody for the final line of lyrics. The music is written in a simple, folk-like style with a mix of quarter and eighth notes.

THREE WEEKS BEFORE EASTER

Most of the oral versions of this song contain about six verses and all have varying texts. Ted Nevill's verse six compares interestingly with verse ten of the Roxburgh Broadside ballad.

Three weeks before Easter the day long and clear
So bright shall they moan and blew in they ear
As I stepped into the forest to gather flowers gay
But the fields would not yield me any posies

Young men and young maidens to church they do go
Young menthey do make a fine show
And I follow wide after with my heart full of woe
Was to hear how my false lover was guarded

I saw her my false lover all in the church stand
With a ring on her finger a glove in her hand
And the parson he married her and the words he did say
Young men and young maidens come along this way

Young menfrom the church they do go
SAME AS ABOVE

I saw my false lover sat down at meat
And I sat my self by her but none could I eat
For the sight of my false lover was better than meat

I saw my false lover take the candle to bed
With tears in my eyes that dazzled my sight
I pick up my hat and I wished them goodnight
And adieu to all false lovers

O dig me a grave both long wide and deep
Trim it all over with flowers so sweet
That I may lie down and take a long sleep
And that sleep will last me for ever