

## THE THRESHER AND THE NOBLEMAN

Vaughan Williams refers to Sussex Songs for the rest of the words of this song. As far as I can see the nearest to this song in Sussex Songs is called The Bold Servant Man although Lucy Broadwood has a version in English County Songs from Oxfordshire. I have used as a comparison text the broadside version.

A noble man there lived in the village of late  
There was a poor thresherman his family was great  
He had got seven children and most of them were small  
He'd nothing but hard labour to maintain them all

The Thresher and the Nobleman

THE SQUIRE AND THRASHER

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A noble man lived in a village of late  
 He kept a poor thrasher whose family was great  
 He'd a poor wife and seven children and most of them was  
small  
 With nothing but his hard labour to maintain them all

So careful and content each morning he went  
 Unto his daily labour with joy and content  
 With his flail at his back and a bottle of beer  
 As cheerful as those that have a thousand a year

This nobleman met his poor thrasher one day  
 And frankly accosted him saying tell to me I pray  
 Thou hast a wife and many children I know it to be true  
 How can you maintain them as well as you do

Sometimes I do reap sometimes I do mow  
 And other times a hedging and ditching I go  
 There's nothing comes amiss to me neither cart, harrow  
or plough  
 And so I get my living by the sweat of my brow

My wife she is willing to join in the yoke  
 We be like two turtle doves and never do provoke  
 And times are very hard and we are very poor  
 But still we keep the landlord and bailiffs from the door

When my day's work is over I go home at night  
 My wife and my children is all my delight  
 My children come round me with their prattling joys  
 And these are the riches a poor man enjoys

Now since you have spoken so well of your wife  
 I'll make you live happy all the rest of your life  
 Here's fifty acres of good land I will give unto thee  
 For to maintain thy wife and thy large family

Their tongues were unable in full to express  
 The depth of their joy and true thankfulness  
 They made many a curtsey and bow to the ground  
 Such nobleman there are few to be found