

THE LITTLE TOWN BOY

This is a fragment of a Victorian broadside ballad.

Stop said the lady to the little town boy
What food have you had on the road
I've had nothing but the sloes which upon the bushes grow
And it's nearly brought my body to the grave

The Little Town Boy

Stop said the lady to the little town boy what food have you had on the
road I've had nothing but the sloes which upon the bushes grows and its
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THE LITTLE TOWNS BOY

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One cold winter's evening the stormy winds did blow
And the rain fast down it did fall
When a little towns boy was wandering on so slow
And for pity's sake this little boy did call
He said I've wandered north, south, east and west
And am doomed to wander still
For my sister does complain and my breast aches with pain
For old England is going down the hill

Oh once I had a father and mother so kind
But now they are both dead and gone
And we poor orphans must roam to seek a distant home
For 'tis poverty makes thousands to mourn
We happiness could taste when we run through father's grave
And of food we both had our fill
Sad and hungry now we stay or beneath a bush to lay
For old England is going down the hill

My little sister dear O she is not far from here
To rest her little bones she does lay
I'll away to yonder stile and tarry there awhile
For to guard her little body until day
He turned round again in his agonising pain
For his limbs he could scarce hold them still
Saying sister do not lay on that cold bank of clay
For old England is going down the hill

There's the pretty robin said the little towns boy
Lamenting with his shining breast so red
We orphans are the same for to avoid the shame
I would labour for a morsel of bread
We know there's one above does his little children love
We'll firmly trust to his good will
Like the children in the wood we must wait with patience good
Whilst old England is going down the hill

A lady standing by who heard the little boy cry
With a voice so meek and low
Then her eyes did start with tears saying come my little dear
For compassion I'm resolved for to show
So quickly gave to them a shelter from the storm
She did it with her free good will
For she said there's none can learn under what planet they
were born
Whilst old England is going down hill

'Twas then said the lady to the little towns boy
What food upon the road did you have
O nothing but such sloes as upon yon bushes grows
And it nearly brought our bodies to the grave
But now so free from sorrow is the little towns boy
So happy with his sister still
But they think upon the poor that are drove from door to doo
Whilst old England is going down the hill