

Good Ale

The song was included in Volume 7 of Baring Gould (1895) Old English Songs from English Minstrelsie (xix-xx, 60-61). He commented: "This old tune has gone through many changes, and has been adapted on one side to a cock-fighting song, and on the other has become that still popular song, O Rare Turpin Hero, which is sung by our peasantry. Mr. Chappell points out that O Good Ale resembles in the outset the air "John, come kiss me now". The song is to be found on half-sheet music in the British Museum (G. 312)." This version as sung by John Hancox.

'Tis of good ale to you I'll sing
And to good ale I'll always cling,
I like my mug filled to the brim
And I'll drink all you'd like to bring,

Chorus

*Oh good ale, thou art my darling
Thou art my joy both night and morning.*

'Tis you that makes me have to work
And from a task I'll never shirk
If the landlord offers me one free
Instead of one pint I'll have three

Chorus

I love you in the early morn
I love you in daylight, dark or dawn,
And when I'm weary, tired and spent
I'll turn the tap and ease the vent,

Chorus

It's you that makes my friends my foes,
It's you that makes me wear old clothes,
But when you come so near my nose
It's up you comes and down you goes,

Chorus

If all my friends from Adam's race
Were gathered here all in this place,
I'd part from all without one tear
Before I'd part from my good beer,
Chorus

You've caused me debts I've often swore
I'll never drink strong ale no more,
But you for all that, I forgive
And drink strong ale, long as I live,
Chorus

Not acceptable - though performed with relish by John Hancox
{And if my wife did me despise
How soon I'd give her two black eyes,
But if she loved me like I love thee
What a happy couple we should be}