

Twenty Years Ago - song lyrics

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TWENTY YEARS AGO.

I have wandered by the village, Tom; I've sat beneath the tree.
Upon the school-house playing-ground, which sheltered you and me;
But none are left to greet me, Tom, and few are left to know.
That played with us upon the green, just twenty years ago.

The grass is just as green, dear Tom: barefooted boys at play
Are sporting just as we were then, with spirits just its gay;
But master sleeps upon the hill, all coated o'er with snow,
That afforded us a sliding-place just twenty years ago.

The old school-house is altered some; the benches are replaced
By new ones, very like the same our penknives had defaced;
But the same old bricks are in the wall, the bell swings to and fro.
The music just the same, dear Tom, 'twas twenty years ago.

The boys are playing some old game, beneath that same old tree;
I do forget the name just now-you have played the same with me;
On that same spot 'twas played with knives, by throwing so and so-
The leaders had a task to do there twenty years ago.

The river is running just as still; the willows on its side
Are larger than they were, dear Tom, the stream appears less wide;
The grape-vine swing is ruined now, where once we play'd the beau.
And swung our sweethearts-pretty girls-just twenty years ago.

The spring that bubbled 'neath the hill, close by the spreading beach.
Is very high -'twas once so low that we could almost reach;
But in kneeling down to get a drink, dear Tom, I started so.
To see how sadly I am changed since twenty years ago.

Down by the spring, upon an elm, you know I cut your name;
Your sweetheart is just beneath it, Tom-and you did mine the same;
Some heartless wretch has peel'd the bark-'twas dying sure but slow
Just as the one whose name you cut, did twenty years ago.

My lids have long been dry, dear Tom. but tears come in my eyes-
I thought of her I loved so well-those early broken ties:
I visited the old churchyard, and took some flowers to strew
Upon the graves of those we loved some twenty years ago.

Some are in the churchyard laid, some sleep beneath the sea.
But few are left of our class, excepting you and me;
But when our time shall come, dear Tom, and we are called to go,
I hope they'll lay us where we play'd just twenty years ago.