

Dancing at Whitsun

(words by John Austin Marshall)

It's fifty long springtimes since she was a bride,
But still you may see her at each Whitsuntide
In a dress of white linen with ribbons of green,
As green as her memories of loving.

The feet that were nimble tread carefully now,
As gentle a measure as age will allow,
Through groves of white blossoms, by fields of young corn,
Where once she was pledged to her true-love.

The fields they stand empty, the hedges grow (go) free--
No young men to turn them or pastures go see (seed)
They are gone where the forest of oak trees before
Have gone, to be wasted in battle.

Down from the green farmlands and from their loved ones
Marched husbands and brothers and fathers and sons.
There's a fine roll of honor where the Maypole once stood,
And the ladies go dancing at Whitsun.

There's a straight row of houses in these latter days
All covering the downs where the sheep used to graze.
There's a field of red poppies a gift to be seen (a gift from the Queen)
But the ladies remember at Whitsun,
And the ladies go dancing at Whitsun.