

Traditional & Folk Songs with lyrics & midi music

www.traditionalmusic.co.uk

Old Black Joe

Old Black Joe

(S.C. Foster, 1860)

Gone are the days when my heart was young and gay,
Gone are my friends from the cotton fields away,
Gone from the earth to a better land I know,
I hear their gentle voices calling "Old Black Joe".

cho: I'm coming, I'm coming, for my head is bending low,
I hear their gentle voices calling "Old Black Joe".

Why do I weep, when my heart should feel no pain,
Why do I sigh that my friends come not again.
Grieving for forms now departed long ago.
I hear their gentle voices calling "Old Black Joe"

Where are the hearts once so happy and so free?
The children so dear that I held upon my knee
Gone to the shore where my soul has longed to go,
I hear their gentle voices calling "Old Black Joe"

I suppose songs like this make people very nervous about being politically incorrect, but I think it's a shame that most of the songs Stephen Foster wrote have been edited out of our history. Certainly, the songs reflect attitudes that are no longer acceptable; but I don't think that it's acceptable to whitewash away part of our history.

On the other hand, I think it's probably good that songs like this are no longer in grammar school songbooks. I learned this song by heart when I was in grade school. Maybe it's just as well my kids didn't. Nonetheless, I think the song should be included in the database. It's part of our history. JO

JO

oct97