

Old Black Joe

As sung by
Lily Richmond
08-23-1946 Lancaster, WI

Gone are the days when my heart was young and gay, gone from this earth to them
cot-ton fields a-way. Why should I mourn when my heart doth feel no pain? I
hear those gen-tle voi-ces cal-ling: "old black Joe." I'm com-ing, I'm com-ing, my
head is ben-ding low. I hear those gen-tle voi-ces cal-ling: "old black Joe."

Lyrics

Gone are the days
When my heart was young and gay,
Gone from this earth
To them cotton fields away.
Why should I mourn
When my heart doth feel no pain?
I hear those gentle voices calling:
"Old black Joe."
I'm coming, I'm coming,
My head is bending low.
I hear those gentle voices calling:
"Old black Joe."

Critical Commentary

HST notes:

In the Professional Papers series:

Aunt Lily Richmond. Sung by a colored lady, the last of the slaves of Wisconsin of the Lancaster vicinity. Came to Wisconsin from Missouri near the end of civil war pursued by the confederates.

Editor's notes:

This song was written by Stephen Foster.

Sources:

Chapple, Joe Mitchell. *Heart Songs Dear to the American People: and By Them Contributed in the Search for Treasured Songs Initiated by the National Magazine*. Boston, Mass.: Chapple Publishing, 1909.

K.G.