

# Old Man Came Home Again as Drunk as He Could Be

As sung by  
Charles Dietz  
09-02 1946 Monroe, WI

The Old Man Came Home Again

The old man came home a-gain, as drunk as he could be. "Dear wife, lov-ing wife, 'tis cur - i - ous to me. Whose horse is in the place where mine ought t' be." "You old fool, you blind fool, can't you hear nor see? 'Tis noth-ing but the sow pig my grand-ma sent to me." "I've tra-velled, I've tra-velled, some thous-and miles or more, But the sad-dle on a sow pig, I nev-er saw be - fore."

The image shows a handwritten musical score on aged paper. The title 'The Old Man Came Home Again' is written at the top. The music is written on five staves, each with a treble clef and a key signature of one sharp (F#). The lyrics are written below the staves, with some words hyphenated across lines. The handwriting is in ink and appears to be from the mid-20th century.

## Verse 1.

The old man came home again, as drunk as he could be  
"Dear wife, loving wife, 'tis curious to me,  
Whose horse is in the place where mine ought to be?"  
"You old fool, you blind fool, can't you hear nor see?  
'Tis nothing but the sow pig my grandma sent to me."  
"I've traveled, I've traveled some thousand miles or more  
But the saddle on a sow pig I never saw before."

## Verse 2.

The old man came home again, as drunk as he could be  
"Dear wife, loving wife, 'tis curious to me,  
Whose coat hangs in the place where mine ought to be?"  
"You old fool, you blind fool, can't you hear nor see?  
'Tis nothing but the bed-quilt my grandma sent to me."  
"I've traveled, I've traveled some thousand miles or more  
But pockets on a bed-quilt I never saw before."

Verse 3.

The old man came home again, as drunk as he could be  
“Dear wife, loving wife, ‘tis curious to me,  
Whose boots are in the place where mine ought to be?”  
“You old fool, you blind fool, can’t you hear nor see?  
‘Tis nothing but some pudding bags my grandma sent to me.”  
“I’ve traveled, I’ve traveled some thousand miles or more  
But spurs on a pudding bag I never saw before.”

Verse 4.

The old man came home again, as drunk as he could be  
“Dear wife, loving wife, ‘tis curious to me,  
Whose head is in the bed where mine ought to be?”  
“You old fool, you blind fool, can’t you hear nor see?  
‘Tis nothing but the milking maid my gran’ma sent to me.”  
“I’ve traveled, I’ve traveled some thousand miles or more  
But whiskers on a milking maid I never saw before.”

*Transcription and lyrics from the Helene Stratman-Thomas Collection.*

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## Critical Commentary

Transcriptions by Peters, p. 168, and HST

### HST notes:

In the Professional Papers series:

(Child no. 274)

*Sung by Charles Dietz, age 76, Monroe, 1946.*

*The husband’s queries and the wife’s deceptive replies in Mr. Dietz’s version bear a marked similarity to Version A of Our Goodman, Child, no. 274. In many of the versions collected in the southern states, the milking maid has been changed to a cabbage head.*

### Editor’s notes:

This song was first published in 1776 by David Herd; its tune is also used for The Baffled Knight, The Derby Ram, The Wonderful Hunter, Swinging in the Lane (published as early as 1710) (Silber 259). Scarborough writes that this song is popular in Europe, parts of the US, and northern England (Scarborough 231-2).

Alternate titles/related songs: “Three nights of Experience,” “Old Wicket and his Wife,” “I Called to my Loving Wife,” “Parson Jones,” “Will de Weaver,” “The Adulteress,” “A Blackguard Song,” “Cario Girl,” “Down Came the Old Man,” “The Drunkard’s Song,” “Hobble and Bobble,” “Home came the Old Man,” “Kind Wife,” “When I Came Home the Other Night,” “Drunkard Blues,” “The Drunken Fool,” “Drunkard’s Special,” “Cabbage Head,” “Mr. Goody Goody,” “You Old Fool,” “Saddle On a Milk Cow,” “Old Man Brown,” “Four Nights Drunk,” “The Cabbage Song,” “Ole Lady.”

**Sources:**

- “Five Nights Drunk (Our Goodman).” From Digital Tradition Mirror. <<http://sniff.numachi.com/~rickheit/dtrad/pages/tiGOODMAN.html>> [accessed 27/05/05] “Five Nights Drunk (Our Goodman).” Text only. Note at bottom: “Child #274
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K.G.