

Father, Dear Father, Come Home with Me Now

As sung by
Laura Avanel
08-22-1946 Linden, WI

Father, Dear Father

"Fa-ther, dear fath-er, come home with me now; The clock in the stee-ple strikes
one.. You said you were com-ing right home from the shop, As
soon as your day's work was done. Our fire's gone out, our house is all dark, and
moth-er's been watch-ing since tea, With poor bro-ther Ben-nie so sick in her arms, and
no-one to help her but me. Come home, come home, come home. Please
fath-er, dear fath-er, come home." Hear the sweet voice of the child, which the
night winds re-peat as they roam. Oh, who could re-sist the most
pi-ti-ful prayer, "Please, fa-ther, dear fath-er, come home."

The image shows a page of handwritten musical notation on aged paper. It features ten staves of music in a single system, with lyrics written below each staff. The title 'Father, Dear Father' is centered at the top. The lyrics are written in a simple, typewritten font. The paper has a yellowish, aged appearance with some minor stains and a slightly uneven texture.

Verse 1.

Father, dear father, come home with me now,
The clock in the steeple strikes one.
You said you were coming right home from the shop
As soon as your day's work was done.
Our fire's gone out, our house is all dark,
And mother's been watching since tea,
With poor brother Bennie so sick in her arms,
And no one to help her but me.

Chorus

Come home, come home, come home,
Please father, dear father, come home.
Hear the sweet voice of the child
Which the night winds repeat as they roam.
Oh who could resist the most pitiful prayer,
Please father, dear father, come home.

Verse 2.

Father, dear father, come home with me now,
The clock in the steeple strikes two.
The night has grown colder, and Bennie is worse,
But he has been calling for you.
Indeed he is worse; Ma says he will die,
Perhaps before morning shall dawn,
And this is the message she sent me to bring,
Come quickly, or he will be gone.

Verse 3.

Father, dear father, come home with me now,
The clock in the steeple strikes three.
The house is so lonely, the hours so long
For poor weeping mother and me.
Yes we are alone, for Bennie is dead
And gone with the angels of light.
And these were the very last words that he said:
“I want to kiss Papa good-night.”

Transcription and lyrics from the Helene Stratman-Thomas Collection.

Critical Commentary

Transcriptions by Peters, p. 260, and HST.

HST notes:

In the Professional Papers series:

Mrs. Laura Avaneil. Plentiful prayer – “pitiful.”

Editor’s notes:

This song was written by Henry Clay Work, and copyrighted in 1864. Randolph notes that it was “featured in the play ‘Ten Nights in a Bar-Room,’ credited to W. W. Pratt” (Randolph 396).

Alternate titles/related songs: “Come Home, Father.”

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 Pub. Co., 1909. "Come home father."

Peters, Harry B., ed. *Folk Songs out of Wisconsin: An Illustrated Compendium of Words and Music*. Madison, WI: The State Historical Society of Wisconsin, 1977.

Randolph, Vance, collector and editor. *Ozark Folksongs*. Vol. II. Columbia, Mo.: State Historical Society of Missouri, 1946-50. Chorus not included.

Wier, Albert E. *The Book of a Thousand Songs: The World's Largest Collection of the Songs of the People, Containing More than a Thousand Old and New Favorites*. New York: Mumil Publishing Co., 1918. "Come home, Father."

K.G.