



46 Drive thy sheep to the low.  
Thou may not hear except I blow,  
as ever have I heal.

*Then he blows on his horn and cries "Aho! Io! O!" Then the second Shepherd comes, carrying a crow's feather and wearing somewhat old clothes.*

2ND SHEPHERD It is no shame for me to show  
50 how I was set for to sew  
with the feather of a crow  
a clout upon my heel.

*Sits down.*

55 Fellow, now be we well met.  
And though methink our need is ...  
had we Tudd here by us set  
then might we sit and feed us.

1ST SHEPHERD Yes, to feed us friendly in fay, *faith*  
how might we have our service?  
60 Cry thou must loud, by this day,  
Tudd is deaf and may not well hear us.

*The second Shepherd cries in a low voice "How, Tudd, Tudd!"*

2ND SHEPHERD How, Tudd! Come, for thy father's kin.

1ST SHEPHERD Nay, fay! Thy voice is wondrous dim.  
Why, knows thou not him?  
Fie, man, for shame!

*Then he calls in a resonant voice, as before.*

1ST SHEPHERD Call him "Tudd, Tibby's son!"  
66 and then will the shrew come.  
For in good faith, it is his won *custom*  
to love well his dame's name.

2ND SHEPHERD How, Tudd, Tibby's son!

3RD SHEPHERD Sir, in faith, now I come,  
71 for yet have I not all done  
that I have to be done;  
to seeth salve for our sheep  
and -- lest my wife should it weet -- *know*  
75 with great gravel and grit  
I scour an old pan.

80 Hemlock and goosegrass -- take heed --  
with tar-ointment must been all tamed, *mixed*  
pennywort and butter for fat sheep;  
for this salve am I not ashamed.

Ashamed am I not to show  
no skill that belongs to my craft;  
no better -- that I well know --  
in land is nowhere left.

85 For, good men, this is not unknown  
to husbands than been here about:  
that each man must to his wife bown, *submit*

and commonly, for fear of a clout.

90	Thus for clouts now care I; all is for fear of our dame-kin. Now will I cast my wares hereby, and hurry that I were with Hankin.	
94	Hankin, hold up thy hand and grip me, that I were on the hill there by thee.	
1ST SHEPHERD	Gladly, sir, and thou would be by me, for loath me is to deny thee.	
2ND SHEPHERD	Now since God has gathered us together, with good heart I thank him of his grace. Welcome be thou, well fare wether!	<i>my fine ram</i>
100	Tudd, will we prepare for some solace?	<i>fun</i>
3RD SHEPHERD	Solace would best be seen in that we get ready for our supper; for meat and drink, well I deem, for each deed is most dear.	<i>consider</i>
1ST SHEPHERD	Set out each man ilich what he hath left from his livery. And I will put forth my pitch with my share first of us all three.	<i>alike provisions portion</i>
2ND SHEPHERD	And such store as my wife had in your sight soon shall you see, at our beginning, us for to glad; for in good meat there is much glee.	<i>make happy</i>
110		
115	Here is bread this day was baken, onions, garlic, and leeks, butter that bought was in Blacon, and green cheese that will grease your cheeks.	<i>[village nw of Chester]</i>
3RD SHEPHERD	And here ale of Halton I have, and what meat I had to my hire; a pudding may no man deprave, and an oatcake of Lancastershire.	<i>[village 10 miles ne of Chester]</i>
120		
124	Lo, here a sheep's head soused in ale, and a pig's snout to lay on the green, and sour milk. My wife had ordained a noble supper, as well is seen.	
1ST SHEPHERD	And as it is well seen, ye shall see if somewhat I have in my sack: a pig's foot I have here, perdy, and some tripe in my pack --	<i>indeed</i>
130	some tripe, fellows, now have I! a liver, as it is no lack, and entrails – boiled shall be. This burden I bear on my back.	
2ND SHEPHERD	Now will I cast off my cloak and pull out part of my livery, put out that I have in my poke, and a pig's foot from pudding's puree.	<i>provisions bag</i>
135		

- 3RD SHEPHERD  
140  
Abide, fellows, and ye shall see here  
this hot meat – we serve it here --  
gambons and other good meat together,  
a pudding with a skewer in the end.
- 1ST SHEPHERD  
My satchel to shake out  
to shepherds I am not ashamed --  
and this tongue cut round about  
with my teeth it shall be atamed! *subdued*
- Then they shall eat together, and the First Shepherd shall say:*
- 1ST SHEPHERD  
146  
Bid me do gladly, and I thee, *if I thrive*  
for by God here is good eating!  
Come eat with us, God of Heaven high --  
but take no heed though here be no housing!
- 2ND SHEPHERD  
150  
Housing enough have we here  
while that we have heaven over our heads.  
Now to wet our mouths time it were;  
this flask will I tame, if thou tell us.
- 3RD SHEPHERD  
155  
And of this bottle now will I bib, *drink*  
for here is bowls of the best.  
Such liquor makes men to live;  
this joy may nowhere be lost.
- 1ST SHEPHERD  
160  
Fellows, now our bellies be full,  
think we on him that keeps our flocks.  
Blow thy horn and call after Trowle,  
and offer him some of our bitlocks. *left-overs*
- 2ND SHEPHERD  
Well said, Hankin, by my truth.  
For that shrew, I suppose, us seeks.  
My horn to sound I will not cease  
till that lad have some of our leeks.
- 3RD SHEPHERD  
166  
Leeks to his portion is liking;  
such a lad nowhere in land is.  
Blow a horn-note for that miting *youth*  
while that horn now in thy hand is.
- 1ST SHEPHERD  
170  
With this horn I shall make a “How!”  
that he and all Heaven shall hear.  
Yonder lad that sits on a low *hill*  
the sound of this horn he shall hear.
- Then Trowle shall sing and say:*
- TROWLE  
175  
Good Lord, look on me  
and my flock, here as they fed have.  
On this moor walk we;  
are no men here, that no way!  
All is flat land, perdee. *by no means*  
Therefore, sheep, we must go. *indeed*  
No better may be *go on*  
180  
among beasts that blood and bone have.
- Know I not, day or night,  
necessaries that I may be needing --  
nettle, tar-box and tar-ball,

185	small clothes that I may be needing, hemlock and butter abiding, and my good dog Dottynoll who is not choosy about his barking.	
190	If any man come me by and would know which way best were, my leg I lift up where I lie and wish him the way east and west-where. If I rose where I lay, I would think that labour lost. For king nor duke, by this day, rise I will not, but take my rest here.	<i>-wards</i>
195		
200	Now will I sit here adown and pipe this pot like a pope! Would God that I were down unharm'd, as I hastily hope. From me all men learn mon this "golgotha" grimly to grope. No man drink here shall save myself, the devil of a sop.	<i>believe may [skull shaped cup?]; handle drink</i>
205	All these horn-calls I set at lit -- nay, ye lads, set I not by ye! With you have I many a rotten fit. Thou foul filth, though thou flite, I defy thee!	<i>don't care about time rage</i>
1ST SHEPHERD	Trowle, pay attention to my talking. For thy tooth here is good tugging. While thy wethers are walking, on this loin thou may have good gnawing.	
210		
TROWLE	Fie on your loins and your livery, your victuals, livers and lungs, your sauce, your sausage, your savoury, your sitting without any songs!	<i>portions of food</i>
215		
	On this hill I remain here. No chance of your hot meat have I. But argue with my fellows together, and your sheep most securely save I.	
2ND SHEPHERD	That thou save our sheep, good knave, take heed; since thou may not sleep, come, eat of this sauce.	
221		
TROWLE	Nay, the dirt is so deep stuck therein for to steep and the grubs thereon do creep at home at thy house.	<i>soak</i>
225		
230	Therefore meat, if I may, prepared by you today eat I will not, by no way, till I have my wage. I thought to have been gay, but see! So ragged is mine array! Ay always scanty is your pay to every poor page.	<i>resplendent</i>
235		

3RD SHEPHERD	Trowle, boy, for God's tree, come eat a morsel with me -- and then wrestle will we here on this wold.	<i>cross</i>  <i>moor</i>
TROWLE 241	That shall I never flee! Though it be with all three to wager my livery, that will I hold.	<i>refuse</i>  <i>portion</i> <i>keep to</i>
	<i>Then he shall go to his masters and shall say:</i>	
TROWLE 245	Now comes Trowle the True; a turn to take have I tight with my masters. Before I rue, put him forth that is most of might.	<i>planned</i> <i>think better of it</i>
1ST SHEPHERD	Trowle, better thou never knew. Eat of this – meat fit for a knight!	
TROWLE 251	Nay, spare! If I spew, all upon your heads shall it light.	
2ND SHEPHERD	How should we suffer this shame, by a shrew thus to be shent?	<i>destroyed</i>
3RD SHEPHERD	This lad lusts to be lame and lose a limb before he went.	<i>goes</i>
TROWLE 257	Have done! Begin we this game! But beware lest your balls glent! That would be little grief to our dame, though in the midst of the Dee ye were drent!	<i>drop off</i>  <i>[river]; drowned</i>
1ST SHEPHERD 261	False lad, fie on thy face! On this ground thou shall have a fall. Take a grip and hold what thou has, if thou luck has. All go to all!	
TROWLE 265	Take this, sirs, here for solace! Hankin, shepherd, shame thee I shall. Angry thou art, worse than thou was. Beware lest thou lie here by the wall.	<i>comfort</i>
	<i>Then he throws the First Shepherd, and the Second Shepherd shall say:</i>	
2ND SHEPHERD 270	Boy, lest I break thy bones, kneel down and ask me a boon. Lest I destroy thee here on these stones, cease, lest I kill thee too soon.	<i>favour</i>
TROWLE 275	Howl on with grimaces and groans! It were good thou save thy old rags soon! Little doubt of such drones, from what I know of thy deeds done!	
	<i>Then the Second Shepherd is thrown.</i>	
3RD SHEPHERD	Out, alas! He lies on his lends. But let me go now to that lad. Shepherds he shames and shends,	<i>limbs</i>  <i>destroys</i>

for last now I am out shad.

*isolated*

TROWLE  
281

Both your backs here to me bends;  
For all your boasts, I proved you two bad!  
Hold your arses and your hinder lends;  
then I expect to have with you as I have had.

*backsides*

285

The better in the bore  
as I had before  
of this braggart.  
Yea, expect I more.  
Keep well thy score,  
for fear of a fart.

*Then he shall throw the third Shepherd, and Trowle shall say:*

TROWLE  
291

Lie there, cur, in the lake.  
My portion now will I catch:  
this curry, this offal, and this cake,  
for ye be thrown, now will I catch.

*take*

295

To the Devil I you all betake,  
as traitors convicted of your tach!  
On this moor with this will I wake.  
Let the world wonder at the watch!

*crime*

*watchman*

*And thus Trowle shall withdraw and the First Shepherd shall say:*

1ST SHEPHERD  
300

Fellows, this a foul case is,  
that we have been thus thrown by a knave,  
All against our wills he has his;  
but I must needs hold the harms that I have.

*his (will)  
injuries*

2ND SHEPHERD  
305

That I have, needs must I hold.  
Of these unhappy harms oft hear I.  
Therefore will I watch on this wold  
upon the weather, for I am weary.

*moor*

3RD SHEPHERD  
315

Though we be weary, no wonder!  
What between wrestling and watching.  
Oft we may win, now be we under.  
God amend it with his making.

*beaten*

*Then they shall sit down, and the star shall appear, and the First Shepherd shall say:*

1ST SHEPHERD  
311  
315

What is all this light here  
that blazes so bright here  
on my black beard?  
For to see this light here  
a man may be afraid here,  
for I am scared.

2ND SHEPHERD  
320

Scared for a fray now  
may we all be now;  
and yet it is night --  
yet seems it day now.  
Never, truly to say now,  
see I such a sight.

*terrifying thing*

3RD SHEPHERD  
325

Such a sight seeming  
and a light gleaming;  
lets me to look.  
All to my deeming,

*stops me looking  
judgment*

from a star streaming  
it to me struck.

TROWLE

330

That star if it stand  
to seek will I fond,  
Though my sight fail me.  
While I may live in land,  
why should I not fond,  
if it will avail me?

*attempt**make the attempt*

*Then Trowle, looking towards the firmament, shall say:*

TROWLE

335

Ah, God's mightiness!  
In yonder star light is.  
From the sun this sight is,  
as it now seems.

1ST SHEPHERD

340

It seems, as I now see,  
a bright star to be,  
there to abide.  
From it we may not flee  
but ever stare on the glee,  
till it down glide.

*joyful thing*

2ND SHEPHERD

345

Fellows, will we  
kneel down on our knee  
asking for comfort  
from the true Trinity,  
for to lead us for to see  
our forefathers' Lord?

3RD SHEPHERD

351

Our Lord will us lere  
in our prayer  
what this star meant;  
and why on high here  
the air is so clear,  
now we shall be kent.

*teach**informed*

TROWLE

360

Lord, of this light  
send us some sight  
why that it is sent.  
Before this night  
had I never such fright  
of the firmament.

1ST SHEPHERD

365

Nay, fie! By my fay,  
now is it nigh day;  
so was it never.  
Therefore I pray  
the truth us to say,  
before we depart.

*faith*

*Then the Angel shall sing "Gloria in excelsis Deo et in terra pace hominibus bonae voluntatis."*

1ST SHEPHERD

370

Fellows together,  
may ye not hear  
this singing on high?

2ND SHEPHERD

In "glore" and in "glere"?  
Yet no man was near  
within our sight.

3RD SHEPHERD 375	Nay, it was a "glory." Now I am sorry without more song.	<i>sad</i>
TROWLE	In this strange story such rejoicing is merry. I would it be among.	<i>be part of it</i>
1ST SHEPHERD 381	As I then deemed "selsis" it seemed that he sang so.	<i>judged</i>
2ND SHEPHERD 385	While the light gleamed, vengeance me weaned; I knew never who.	<i>expected who (it was)</i>
3RD SHEPHERD 390	What song was this, say ye. That he sang to us all three? Expounded it shall be ere we hence pass; for I am eldest of degree and also best, it seems to me, it was "grorus glorus" with a "glee: it was neither more nor less.	<i>in rank</i>
TROWLE 395	Nay, it was "glorus, glarus, glorius"; methinks that note went over the house. A seemly man he was, and curious; but soon away he was.	<i>strange</i>
1ST SHEPHERD 400	Nay, it was "glorus, glarus" with a "glo," and much of "celsis: was thereto. As ever I have rest or woe, much he spake of "glass."	
2ND SHEPHERD	Nay, it was neither "glass" nor "gly." Therefore, fellow, now stand by.	<i>stand aside</i>
3RD SHEPHERD 405	By my faith, he was some spy, our sheep for to steal -- or else he was a man of our craft, for skilful he was, and wonder deft.	
TROWLE	Nay, he came by night -- all things left -- our rams with tar to teal.	<i>said and done mark</i>
1ST SHEPHERD 411	Nay, on a "glor" and on "glay" and a "gly" spoke Gabriel when he so gloried. When he sang, I might not be sorry. Through my breast-bone singing he bored.	<i>sad</i>
2ND SHEPHERD 415	Nay, by God, it was "gloria" said Gabriel when he began so. He had a much better voice than I have, as in Heaven all other have so.	
3RD SHEPHERD 420	Will ye hear how he sang "celsis"? For on that seriously he set him. Neither sang "Sara," nor so well "Cis", nor "Pax merry Maud" when she had met him.	<i>Cicely "Kiss of Peace"</i>

TROWLE	One time he touched on "Terre," and thereto I took good intent. All Heaven might not have gone higher, that note on high when he up hent.	<i>lifted up</i>
425		
1ST SHEPHERD	And after, of "pax" or of "peace" up as a jay he piped; such a voice – these are no lies -- nothing in my life me so liked.	
2ND SHEPHERD	Upon "hominibus" he muted; that much marvel to me was. And ever I shook when he so hooted; I durst not heed what note it was.	<i>sang</i>
431		
3RD SHEPHERD	Yet, yet he sang more than all this, for some word is worthy a fother. For he sang "bonae voluntatis": that is a thing that passeth all other.	<i>a great deal</i>
435		
TROWLE	Yet, and yet, he sang more to; from my mind it shall not start. He sang also of a "Deo." Methought that healed my heart.	<i>go out</i>
440		
	And that word "Terra" he tamed -- to that I took good intent. And "pax" also may not be blamed. For that, to this song I assent.	<i>heed</i>
445		
1ST SHEPHERD	Now pray we to him with good intent, and sing I will, and me unbrace: that he will allow us to be kent, and to send us of his grace.	<i>give forth taught</i>
2ND SHEPHERD	Now, since I have all my will -- for never in this world so happy I was -- sing we now, I advise, shrill a merry song, us to solace.	<i>clearly</i>
451		
TROWLE	Sing we now – let see, some song I will assay. all men now, sing after me, for music from me learn ye may.	
455		
<i>Then they shall sing here "Trolly, lolly, lolly, lo." At this point the Angel shall appear and shall say:</i>		
ANGEL	Shepherds, of this sight take not a fright, for this is God's might. Take this in mind: to Bethlem go now right! There ye shall see in sight that Christ is born tonight to deliver all Mankind.	<i>at once</i>
460		
465		
3RD SHEPHERD	Now go we forth to Bethlem -- that is best our song to be -- for to see the star-gleam, the fruit also of that maiden free.	<i>noble</i>

1ST SHEPHERD 471	Now follow we the star that shines till we come to that holy stable. To Bethlem bend your limbs; follow we it without any fable.	
2ND SHEPHERD 475	Follow we it, and hurry full fast; Such a friend we don't wish to fail. Launch on! I will not be the last upon Mary for to marvel.	
TROWLE 480	To Bethlem take we the way for with you I think to wend, that Prince of Peace for to pray Heaven to have at our end.	
485	and sing we all, I read, some joyful song to his majesty, for certainly now see we it indeed -- the King's Son of Heaven is he.	<i>advise</i>
	<i>Here they shall go towards Bethlehem.</i>	
3RD SHEPHERD	Stop now! Go no more steps, for now the star beginneth to stand. Harvey, that good been our haps we see by our Saviour found.	<i>fortunes</i>
1ST SHEPHERD 491	Sim, sim, certainly here I see Mary, and Jesus Christ fast by, wrapped in hay.	
2ND SHEPHERD 495	Kneel we down in hie and pray we him of mercy, and welcome him worthily that woe puts away.	<i>at once</i>
3RD SHEPHERD 500	Away all our woe is and many man's more is. Christ, Lord, let us kiss the cradle or the clothes.	
TROWLE 505	Joy now to see this builds in my breast bliss -- never after to do amiss, a thing that to him loath is.	<i>hateful</i>
1ST SHEPHERD	Whoever is this old man that here is! Take heed how his head is hore. His beard is like a bush of briers with a pound of hair about his mouth and more.	<i>gray</i>
2ND SHEPHERD 511	A greater wonder is to me now, for to sleep greatly he needs. Listless is he now for ever to his heels he heeds.	<i>i.e. looks down</i>
3RD SHEPHERD 515	Why, with his beard – though it be rough -- right well to her he heeds. Worthy sir, know would we now. Will ye refuse to teach us, worthy in weeds?	<i>attends</i>  <i>your array</i>

MARY	Shepherds, truly I see that my Son you hither sent through God's might in majesty that in me alighted and here is lent.	<i>remains</i>
520	This man married was to me for no sin by such assent; but to keep my virginity, and truly for none other intent.	<i>agreement</i>
525		<i>purpose</i>
JOSEPH	Good men, Moses take in mind: as he was led through God Almighty, ordained laws us to bind which that we should keep of right; man and woman for to bind lawfully, them both to delight; to multiply, as men may find, that time was wedded every wight.	<i>person</i>
530		
535	Therefore wedded to her I was as the Law required, her for to lere -- not for gossip nor slander nor trespass -- and through that deed the Devil to dere, as told me Gabriel full of grace.	<i>instruct</i>
540	When I had packed all my gear to flee, nevermore to see her face, by him was I halted there.	<i>harm</i>
545	For he said to me sleeping that she blameless was of sin. And when I heard that tokening, from her durst I no way twin. Therefore go forth and preach this thing, all together and not in twin; that you have seen your Heavenly King come on all Mankind to min.	<i>sign</i> <i>separate</i> <i>separately</i> <i>think</i>
1ST SHEPHERD 551	Great God, sitting in thy throne, that made all thing of nought, now we may thank thee each one: this is he that we have sought.	
2ND SHEPHERD 555	Go we near anon with such as we have brought. Ring, brooch, or precious stone -- let see if we can proffer ought.	
3RD SHEPHERD	Let us do him homage.	
1ST SHEPHERD	Who shall go first? The page?	
3RD SHEPHERD 561	Nay, ye be father in age, therefore ye must first offer.	
1ST SHEPHERD 565	Hail, King of Heaven so high, born in a crib; Mankind unto thee thou hast made full sib.	<i>close kin</i>
	Hail, King born in a maiden's bower. The prophets did tell thou should be our succour; this clerks do say. Lo, I bring thee a bell.	<i>i.e. womb</i>

570	I pray thee, save me from Hell so that I may with thee dwell and serve thee for ay.	
2ND SHEPHERD	Hail, the Emperor of Hell and of Heaven als.	
575	The Fiend shalt thou fell, that ever hath been false.	<i>cast down</i>
	Hail, the maker of the star that stood us before.	
580	Hail, the most blessed bairn that ever was born.	<i>child</i>
	Lo, son, I bring thee a flacket. Thereby hangs a spoon for to eat thy pottage with at noon, as I myself full oft-times have done.	<i>flask</i>
585	With all my heart I pray thee to take it.	
3RD SHEPHERD	Hail, Prince without any peer, that Mankind shall relieve. Hail, the foe unto Lucifer, the which beguiled Eve.	
590	Hail, the granter of hope, for on Earth now thou dwells. Lo, son, I bring thee a cap, for I have nothing else.	
595	This gift, son, that I give thee is but small; and though I come the hindmost of all, when thou shalt men to thy bliss call, good Lord, yet think on me.	
TROWLE	My dear, with love unto thee I me dress, my place in the fellowship that I do not lose; and for to save me from all ill-sickness, I offer unto thee a pair of my wife's old hose.	<i>present myself</i>
600		
605	For other jewels, my son, have I none thee for to give that is worth anything at all -- but my good heart while I live and my prayers till death doth me call.	
1ST SHEPHERD	Now farewell, mother and maid, for of sin nought thou knowest. Thou hast brought forth this day God's Son, of might most.	
610	Wherefore men shall say: "Blessed in every coast and place be thou, example for us all." And that we may from sin fall and stand ever in thy grace, our Lord God be with thee.	
615		
2ND SHEPHERD	Brethren, let us all three singing walk homewardly. Unkind will I never in no case be, but preach ever what I know, and cry, as Gabriel taught by his grace me.	<i>proclaim it</i>
620		

Singing, away hence will I.

3RD SHEPHERD

625

Over the sea, if I may have grace,  
I will go and about go  
to preach this thing in every place;  
and sheep will I keep now no more.

TROWLE

630

I counsel we among us agree  
for our misdeeds amends to make,  
for so now will I;  
and to the child I wholly me betake  
for ever certainly.  
Shepherd's craft here I forsake;  
and to an hermitage near by  
I will go, and in my prayers both watch and wake.

*commit myself*

1ST SHEPHERD

635

And I an hermit  
to praise God, to pray,  
to walk by path and by street,  
in wilderness to walk for ay.  
And I shall no man meet  
but for my sustenance I shall him pray,  
barefoot on my feet.  
And thus will I live ever and ay.

640

For ay, ever, and once,  
this world I fully refuse,  
my sins to atone with moans.  
Turn to thy fellows and kiss,  
I urge, for in youth  
we have been comrades iwiss.  
Therefore lend me your mouth,  
and as friends let us kiss.

*once for all  
completely reject*

645

2ND SHEPHERD

651

From London to Louth  
such another shepherd I do not know is.  
Both friend and couth,  
God grant you all his bliss!

*acquaintance*

3RD SHEPHERD

655

To that bliss bring you  
great God, if that thy will be.  
"Amen" all sing you.  
Good men, farewell ye!

TROWLE

660

Well for to fare, each friend,  
God of his might grant you;  
for here now we make an end.  
Farewell, for we from you go now!