

New England Folk Songs

For voice and piano

Steve Danyew

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New England Folk Songs

- I. Wake, little sprout
- II. Bee! I'm Expecting You!
- III. Midsummer Night
- IV. Autumn Fields
- V. A Country Boy in Winter

Notes

In 2014, I began thinking of ideas for my second song cycle (the first was *Alcott Songs* in 2013-14). I thought it might be fun to compile a series of texts that describe the seasons in New England. Having grown up in Connecticut, I always feel a special bond with New England poets and descriptions of the wonderful New England landscapes. I decided to develop this idea and compose a song cycle based on seasons in New England with texts by New England poets.

The cycle begins with a Louisa May Alcott text about a sprouting seed in spring, just after winter. Next is a lighthearted Emily Dickinson poem that is essentially a letter from a fly to a bee in the springtime. The third song is a setting of Sarah Orne Jewett's poem "Boat Song," which describes a lazy summer evening on the water. The fourth song uses stanzas from Jewett's "Top of the Hill," which paints a vivid picture of a small New England town in Autumn. The final song is a setting of Jewett's "A Country Boy in Winter," a wonderful depiction of a young boy's winter adventures.

Originally, I planned to call the cycle, "Songs from New England," but as I began writing, I felt like each song developed some folksong qualities. All the music is my own composition, but perhaps with folksong influences. Inspired by the simplicity and folk-like elements of the texts and picturing the serene New England landscapes as they change and unfold throughout the year, I chose, in the end, to name the cycle, "New England Folk Songs."

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New England Folk Songs

Louisa May Alcott

I. Wake, little Sprout

Steve Danyew

Slowly ♩ = ca. 76

Voice

Piano

p

ped. *ped.* *sim.*

4

V

Sleep lit-tle seed deep in your bed—

Pno.

7

V

rit. **With excitement** ♩ = ca. 76

while win-ter— snow lies ov-er head

Pno.

rit. **With excitement** ♩ = ca. 76

p

ped. *ped.*

11 *mf*

V

Wake, lit - tle sprout and

Pno. *mf*

sim.

15

V

drink the rain, till sun - shine calls you to rise a - gain

Pno.

19 *mf*

V

Strike

Pno.

23 *mp* *mf*

V

deep, young root, in the earth be - low;

Pno.

27 *mp* *mf*

V

un - fold, pale leaves,

Pno.

31 *f*

V

be - gin to grow.

Pno.

35 *f*

V

Ba - by bud,

Pno.

Detailed description: This system contains measures 35 through 38. The vocal line (V) starts with a whole rest in measure 35, followed by a whole rest in measure 36, and then a half note 'Ba' in measure 37 and a half note 'by bud,' in measure 38. The piano accompaniment (Pno.) features a rhythmic pattern of eighth notes in the right hand and chords in the left hand. The key signature has two sharps (F# and C#), and the time signature is 2/4. A dynamic marking of *f* (forte) is placed above the vocal staff in measure 37.

39

V

dance in the warm sun; bloom, sweet

Pno.

Detailed description: This system contains measures 39 through 42. The vocal line (V) has a quarter note 'dance' in measure 39, a quarter rest in measure 40, a half note 'in the warm' in measure 41, a quarter note 'sun;' in measure 42, a quarter rest in measure 43, a half note 'bloom,' in measure 44, and a quarter note 'sweet' in measure 45. The piano accompaniment (Pno.) continues with eighth notes in the right hand and chords in the left hand. The key signature has two sharps, and the time signature is 2/4.

43

V

rose. Life has be - gun

Pno.

mp

Detailed description: This system contains measures 43 through 46. The vocal line (V) has a quarter note 'rose.' in measure 43, a quarter rest in measure 44, a half note 'Life' in measure 45, and a half note 'has be - gun' in measure 46. The piano accompaniment (Pno.) continues with eighth notes in the right hand and chords in the left hand. The key signature has two sharps, and the time signature is 2/4. A dynamic marking of *mp* (mezzo-piano) is placed above the piano staff in measure 45.

Emily Dickinson

II. Bee! I'm Expecting You!

Lively ♩ = 112

V

Pno.

Lively ♩ = 112

mp

mf

sim.

mf

Bee! I'm ex-pect-ing you!

was say-ing yes - ter - day to some - bod - y — you know

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Sarah Orne Jewett

III. Midsummer Night

Relaxed, peaceful ♩ = ca. 40 ***p***

V

Relaxed, peaceful ♩ = ca. 40 Oh.

like lapping waves

Pno. ***p***

ped. ad lib throughout

5 *freely*

V rest your oars_ and let_ me drift while all the stars come out

Pno.

8

V to see! The birds are talk - ing_ in_ their sleep as

Pno.

11

V

we go by so si - lent - ly.

Pno.

14

V

The i - dle winds are in the pines; the

Pno.

17

V

rip-ples touch a - gainst the shore. Oh, rest your oars and let

Pno.

rit. *a tempo*

20

V

me drift, and let me dream for - ev - er - more.

Pno.

23

V

Pno.

27

V

The

mp

Pno.

mp

31
V
sweet wild rose - s hear and wake, and send their fra - grance through

Pno.

34
V
the air; the hills are hid - ing in the dark, there

Pno.

37
V
is no hur - ry an - y - where.

Pno.

40

V

The shad - ows close — a - round — the boat, ah,

Pno.

43

rit. *a tempo*

V

why should we — go back — to shore! — So rest your oars and — we

rit. *a tempo*

Pno.

46

V

will float with - out a care — for - ev - er - more. —

Pno.

49

V

Pno.

Detailed description: This system contains measures 49 through 52. The voice part (V) is on a single staff in G minor, starting with a whole note G4, followed by rests for the next two measures, and ending with a whole note G4. The piano accompaniment (Pno.) consists of two staves. The right hand (RH) plays a sequence of chords: G4-Bb4 (measures 49-50), G4-Bb4 (measure 51), and G4-Bb4 (measure 52). The left hand (LH) plays a steady bass line of G3-Bb3 in pairs of eighth notes. A fermata is placed over the final G4 note in the voice part.

53

V

p

Oh, lit - tle waves — that splash

Pno.

p

Detailed description: This system contains measures 53 through 55. The voice part (V) begins in measure 53 with a whole rest, followed by a quarter rest in measure 54, and then the lyrics "Oh, lit - tle waves — that splash" in measures 55 and 56. The piano accompaniment (Pno.) features a rhythmic pattern of eighth notes in the right hand and a bass line of G3-Bb3 in the left hand. A piano dynamic marking (*p*) is present in both systems.

56

V

and call, how fast you lead us — out — of sight! and

Pno.

Detailed description: This system contains measures 56 through 59. The voice part (V) starts in measure 56 with the lyrics "and call, how fast you lead us — out — of sight! and". The piano accompaniment (Pno.) continues with the same rhythmic pattern as the previous system, with a piano dynamic marking (*p*) in the first measure.

Sarah Orne Jewett

IV. Autumn Fields

Reflective, reverent ♩ = ca. 80

V

Reflective, reverent ♩ = ca. 80
poco rubato throughout

Pno.

Ped.

rit.

a tempo

Green slope of au-tumn fields, and

rit.

a tempo

V

Pno.

Ped.

soft No - vem - ber sun, and gold - en leaves, _____ they

V

Pno.

Ped.

sim.

9

V

lin - ger _____ yet _____ while tas - selled pines _____ new

Pno.

Detailed description: This system contains measures 9 and 10. The vocal line (V) is in a single treble clef with a key signature of one flat (Bb). It features a melodic line with eighth and quarter notes, including rests. The piano accompaniment (Pno.) consists of two staves: the right hand has a treble clef and plays chords and moving lines, while the left hand has a bass clef and plays a steady eighth-note accompaniment.

11

V

frag - rance _____ get, _____ though sum - mer - time is

Pno.

rit.

Detailed description: This system contains measures 11 and 12. The vocal line (V) continues the melody. At the start of measure 12, the tempo is marked *rit.* (ritardando). The piano accompaniment (Pno.) features a treble clef with chords and a bass clef with a steady eighth-note accompaniment. The system ends with a double bar line and a 4/4 time signature.

13

V

done. _____

Pno.

a tempo

mp

Ped.

Detailed description: This system contains measure 13. The vocal line (V) has a treble clef and a 4/4 time signature, ending with a long note and a fermata. The piano accompaniment (Pno.) has two staves: the right hand has a treble clef and a 4/4 time signature, playing a rhythmic pattern of eighth and sixteenth notes; the left hand has a bass clef and a 4/4 time signature, playing a simple bass line. The tempo is marked *a tempo* and the dynamic is *mp* (mezzo-piano). Pedal markings (*Ped.*) are present at the beginning and end of the piano part.

16 *rit.* *a tempo* *mf*

V

Pno.

mp

sed. *sim.*

18

V

love the stee - pled town, the riv - er wind - ing down, the

Pno.

20

V

slow salt tide that creeps be - side a shore that sleeps,

Pno.

Sarah Orne Jewett

V. A Country Boy in Winter

Like midnight snow ♩ = 100 *rit.* Slower, dreamlike ♩ = 69

V

Pno.

5

5

9

9

pp *p* *mp*

8va *8va* *8va*

Leg. *Leg.* *Leg.*

mp

*

13

V

Pno.

17

V

accel.

Pno.

p

21

V

Joyfully ♩ = 100

Pno.

ff

Joyfully ♩ = 100

25

V

Pno.

28

V

Pno.

30

V

Pno.

wind may blow the snow a - bout, for all I care says Jack, and

mf

p

f

mf

32

V

I don't mind how cold it grows, for then the ice— won't crack. Old

Pno.

34

V

folks may shiv-er all day long but I shall nev-er freeze; what

Pno.

36

V

cares a jol - ly boy— like me for win - ter days like

Pno.

f

cresc.

f

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38

V

these.

Pno.

38

p

40

V

mf

Far down the long snow - covered hills — it

Pno.

40

f

mf

42

V

is such fun — to coast, so clear the road! the fast-est sled there

Pno.

42

3

44
V is in school I boast. The paint is pret - ty well worn off, — but

Pno.

46
V then I take the lead; A dan - dy sled's a loi - ter - er, — and

Pno. loco
cresc. f

48
V I go in for speed.

Pno. p

The image shows a musical score for a vocal and piano performance. It consists of three systems of music. The first system (measures 44-45) has a vocal line and a piano accompaniment. The second system (measures 46-47) also has a vocal line and piano accompaniment, with a tempo change to 'loco' and dynamic markings 'cresc.' and 'f'. The third system (measures 48-49) has a vocal line and piano accompaniment, with a dynamic marking of 'p'. The piano part in the third system features a series of chords in the right hand and a melodic line in the left hand. The score is marked with a large diagonal watermark: 'NOT FOR DISTRIBUTION OR PERFORMANCE'.

51 *poco rit.*

V

Pno.

ff

p legato

Slower ♩ = 84

54 *poco rit.* *mp*

V

When

Pno.

poco rit.

57 *a tempo*

V

I go home at sup - per - time, _____

Pno.

a tempo

mp

59

V

Ki! but my cheeks are red! They burn and sting like

Pno.

62

V

an - y - thing; I'm cross un - til I'm fed. You

Pno.

65 *mf* *accel. poco a poco*

V

ought to see the bis - cuit go I am so hun - gry

Pno.

65 *mf* *accel. poco a poco*

32

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68

♩ = 100

f

V

then; And old aunt Pol - ly says that boys eat

Pno.

68

♩ = 100

f

71

mf

rit.

Slower ♩ = 84

mp

mp

V

twice as much as men. There's

Pno.

71

mf

rit.

Slower ♩ = 84

p

3

74

V

al ways some - thing I can do to pass the time a -

Pno.

74

mp

77

V

way; The dark comes quick in win - ter - time a

Pno.

77

80

V

short and storm - y day And when I give my

Pno.

80

stornly 3 *mf*

83

V

mind to it, It's just as fa - ther says, I

Pno.

83

rit. *f* *mf*

34

New England Folk Songs

♩ = 60

V 86 *p*

al - most do a man's work now

and help him man - y

Pno. 86 *mp* *p*

Joyfully ♩ = 100

V 88 *mf*

ways.

Joyfully ♩ = 100

Pno. 88 *f* *p*

V 90 *mf*

I shall be glad when I grow up — and

Pno. 90 *f*