



Passamezzo

Old Christmas Returned

PROGRAMME

Wednesday 15 December 2021
St Michael's Church, Bath

1981 – 2021

BATH //
RECITALS



Introduction

Christmas celebrated, banned & restored in 17th Century England

Tonight's programme will take you on a journey through the days of Christmas as it was celebrated in 17th Century England. The Christmas began officially just after Hallowe'en, with a fast that lasted from St Martin's Day until Christmas Eve. This was followed by days of feasting and revelry, not only on Christmas Day itself, but also on St Stephen's Day, St John's Day, Innocents' Day, New Year (when gifts were given), Twelfth Night and Candlemas.

The Christmas season was a time when the wealthy opened their houses to poorer folk, and provided food for their workers throughout the days of the holiday. The lyrics of several carols make it clear just how much these quantities of roast beef, pig, goose, plum pudding (also known as plum broth or porage) and minced pies, not to mention plenty of ale and sack, were appreciated. The carol Hey for Christmas describes the sort of riotous revelry that accompanied those feast days.

Twelfth Night was a time for wassailing crops to help them grow, and of drinking from the wassail bowl, as described in Wassell, wassell. Many people began to return to work after Twelfth Day, but, Christmas was not considered to be truly over until the feast of Candlemas (2nd February), when candles were blessed in church, and evergreen decorations were finally taken down.

These festivities were reviled by the Puritans, who saw them as ungodly, and made several attempts to ban Christmas during the Civil War and the Interregnum. This is described in the songs that follow:

Christmas' Lamentation, a complaint about the lack of charity being shown in the times; Old Christmas now is come to town and The World Turned Upside Down, lamenting the abolition of Christmas by Parliament; and three songs delighting in the return of Christmas after the abolition of the Rump and the restoration of Charles II.

Bath Recitals 2021

Passamezzo Programme

Anon: The Shropshire Wakes or Hey for Christmas

Reading **William Prynne:** Histriomastix

Thomas Ravenscroft: Remember o thou man

Christmas Eve

Robert Herrick: Ceremonies for Christmas Eve

Christmas Day

This day our Saviour Christ was born

Reading **William Shakespeare:**

The Hallowed Time

Orlando Gibbons: A Song for Christmas Day

Anon: Balulalow - Ane sang for the birth of Christ

Reading **Jeremy Taylor:** Hymn for Christmas Day

Anon: The Angel's voice

Martin Peerson: Upon my lap

Reading Provide for Christmas

Anon: A carol for Christmas Day at night

St Stephen's Day

Purcell: Carol for St Stephen's Day

St John's Day

A carol for St John's Day

Innocents' Day

Coventry Carol

New Year

Anon: The Shepherd's Carol for New Year's Day

John Wilson: The New Year's Gift

Reading **Robert Herrick:** The New Year's Gift

Beat up a drum for Christmas reigns

INTERVAL

Twelfth Night

William Byrd: Vidimus Stellam

Anon: Wassail, wassail

Candlemas and the End of Christmas

Thomas Farmer: A carol for Candlemas Day

Reading **Robert Herrick:**

Ceremonies for Candlemas Eve

Anon: Christmas' Lamentation

Christmas Banned

Old Christmas now is come to town

Reading **John Taylor:** Christmas In and Out

Anon: The world turnd upside down

Edmund Nelham: Let's dance and sing

Christmas Restored

Anon: A song when the Rump was first dissolved/A hue
and cry after Christmas

Anon: The Merry boys of Christmas

Matthew Locke: Old Christmas returned



The Shropshire Wakes or Hey for Christmas

Being the Delightful Sports of most Countries.

Come Robin Ralph, and little Harry,
and merry Thomas at our Green,
Where he shall meet with Bridget and Sary,
and the finest young wenches that ere were seen:

*Then hey for Christmas once a year
And where we have Cakes, both ale and beer,
And to our Christmas feast there comes,
Young men and Maid to shake their bums.*

For Gammer Nichols has gotten a Custard
My Neighbour Wood a roasted Pig,
And Widow Franklin hath beer & mustard,
& at the Thatcht house there is good swig.

There's a fiddler for to play e'ry Dance
When the young Lads and Lasses meet:
With which the Men & Maids will prance,
with the fiddler before them down the street:

The Morice dancers will be ready,
Meat and Drink enough to lade ye:
And in a Fools dress will be little Neddy,
to entertain our Christmas Lady:

And when that they shall all appear,
that are to be at our brave Wakes,
To eat up the Meat, and drink up the Beer,
And to play at cards for Ale and Cakes:

They side and then tun round about
and briskly trip it to each other:
And when they have danct it out,
they presently call for another:

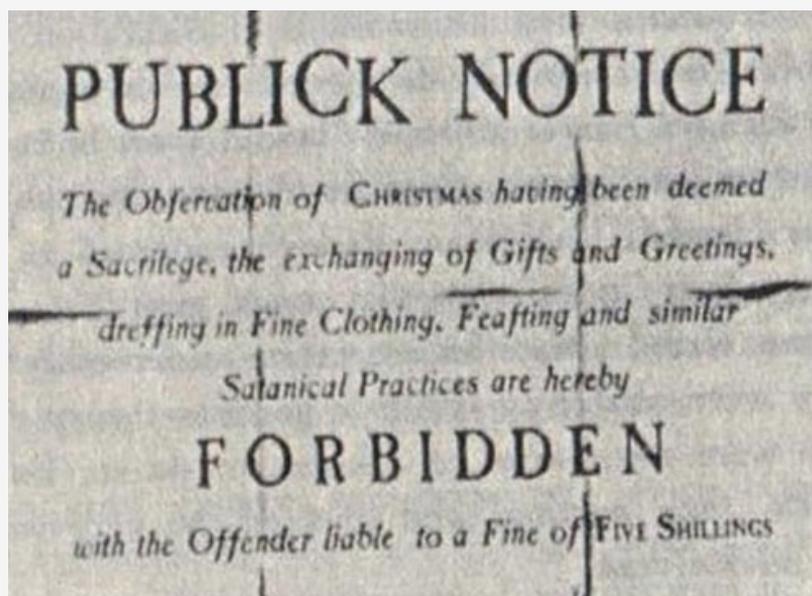
Then they sat down to their good cheer,
and pleasant were both Maids and Men,
And having din d and drank their beer,
they rose and went to dance again,

Thus they did daunce from noon till night,
and were as merry as Cup and Can,
Till they had tired the Fiddler quite,
and the sweat down their buttocks ran.

Then they went to the little thatcht house,
and plaid at Cards a game or two,
And with the good Liquor did so carouse,
that they made drunk both Tom and Hugh.

Who took the Fiddler and broke his pate
and threw his fiddle into the fire:
And drunkenly went home so late,
that most of them fell in the mire.

Anon: Douce Ballads, c1620



Reading:

William Prynne: *Histriomastix*

Mixt Dancing, Dicing, Stage-playes, fiddlers, wanton Fashions, Face-painting, Health-drinking, Long haire, womens curling, pouldring and cutting of their haire, Bone-fires, New-yeares-gifts, lascivious effeminate Musicke, excessive laughter, luxurious disorderly Christmas-keeping, Mummeries, with sundry such like vanities which the world now dotes on, as laudable, good, and Christian, are mere sinfull, wicked, unchristian pastimes, vanities, cultures and disguises, which the primitive Church and Christians quite abandoned, condemned; however we admire, applaud them now to Gods dishonour and religions shame.

Owickedness, O prophaness beyond all expression! Even thus to abuse our Saviours solemne birth-time, as to make it a patronage for all kinde of sinne! Were wee to celebrate the very foulest Idol-Divels birthday (as many wretches doe in deedes, whiles they solemnize Christs in shew) how could we please or honour him more than to court him with lascivious Masques or Stage-playes, (an invention of and for himself, which he hath oft exacted from his worshippers upon his solemne festival;) or to give him the very selfsame welcome that most men give to Christ, in the feast of his Nativity: when the Divell hath commonly more professed publike service done him, than all the yeare beside? For may I not truly write of our English

Citties and Country villages in the Christmas season, those who make conscience to redeeme all other seasons, deeme it a point of Christianity to misspend all this, eating, drinking, and rising up to play, whole dayes and nights together. Those who are civill at other seasons, will be now deboist; and such who were but soberly dissolute before (if I may so speak) will now be stark mad, forgetting not onely their Saiour but themselves. Those who repute it a shame to be unruly disorderly any other part of the yeare; thinke it an honour to be outrageously disordered and distempered now, turning day into night, and night into day, against the course of nature.

When our Saviour was borne into the world at first, we heare of no feasting, drinking, healthing, roaring, carding, dicing, Stage-playes, Mummeries, Masques or heathenish Christmas pastimes; alas these precise puritanicall Angels, Saints and shepherds (as some I feare account them) knew no such pompous Pagan Christmas Courtships or solemnities, which the Divell and his accused instruments have since appropriated to his most blessed Nativitee. Here we have nothing but Glory be to God on high, on earth peace, good will towards men: This is the Angels, the shepherds only Christmas Carrol.



Thomas Ravenscroft: Melismata

A Christmas Carol

Remember, O thou man, thy time is spent
Remember, O thou man, how thou art dead and gone
And I did what I can, therefore repent.

Remember God's goodness, his promise made
Remember God's goodness, he sent his son doubtless
Our sins for to redress, be not afraid.

The angels all did sing on shepherds' hill,
The angels all did sing, praise to our heavenly King,
And peace to man living with a good will.

To Bethlem did they go, the shepherds three
To Bethlem did they go, to see where 'twere so or no
Whether Christ were born or no to set man free

As the Angels so did say, it came to pass
As Angels so did say, they found a babe whereas he lay
In manger wrapt in hay, so poore he was.

Give thanks to God alway most joyfully
Give thanks to God alway for this our happy day
Let all men sing and say, holy, holy.

Robert Herrick:

Ceremonies for Christmas Eve

Come, bring with a noise, my merry, merry boys, The Christmas Log to the firing;
While my good Dame, she bids ye all be free; And drink to your heart's desiring.
With the last year's brand light the new block, and For good success in his spending,
On your Psaltries play, that sweet luck may Come while the log is a-tending.
Drink now the strong beer, cut the white loaf here, The while the meat is a-shredding;
For the rare mince-pie and the plums stand by To fill the paste that's a-kneading.

Robert Herrick, Hesperides, 1648

Christmas Day

This day our Saviour Christ was born

Chis day our Saviour Christ was born at Bethlem in a common inn,
On Calvary was his body torn to pay the pain the ransom of our sin.
Nay, from the manger to the cross, he made his life a mystic story,
And of his blood he thought no loss, to bring his enemies to glory.
His life hath buried all our sins, his death our endless glory wins.
Then let us carol to his praise the choicest of our holy lays,
And thus inflamed with melting fire, the saints will chant it in our choir.

Anon, 17th Century

Orlando Gibbons

A Song for Christmas Day

As on the night before this blessed morn,
A troop of angels unto shepherds told,
Where in a stable He was lowly born,
Whom nor the earth, nor heav'n of heav'ns can hold. Thro' Bethlem rung this news at their return;
Yea, angels sung that "God with us" was born:
And they made mirth because we should not mourn. His love therefore, oh! let us all confess,
And to the sons of men his works express.
This favour Christ vouchsafed for our sake;
To buy us thrones He in a manger lay;
Our weakness took, that we His strength might take, And was disrob'd, that He might us array;
Our flesh He wore, our sin to wear away;
Our curse He bore, that we escape it may;
And wept for us that we might sing for aye

George Wither, 1623

Anon

Balulalow - Ane sang for the birth of Christ

I come from Heaven high to tell
the best Nowells that e'er befē
To you their tidings true I bring,

And I will of them say and sing,
This day to you is born a child
Of Mary meek, and Virgin mild,
This blessed babe, benign and kind
Shall you rejoice both heart and mind.

Let us rejoice and be blithe,
And with the herdsmen go full swift,
And see what God of his grace hath done,
Through Christ to bring us to his throne,
My soul and life, stand up and see,
Who lies in a crib of tree,
What babe is that, so good and fair?
It is Christ, God's son and heir.

God that made all creature,
How art thou now become so poor,
That on the hay and straw will lie,
Amongst the asses, oxen and kine?
And were the world ten times so wide,
Clad over with gold and stars of pride,
Unworthy then it were to thee
Under thy feet a stool to be.

Oh my dear heart, young Jesus sweet,
Prepare thy cradle in my sprit,
And I shall rock thee in my heart,
And never more from thee depart,
But I shall praise thee evermore,
With songs sweet unto thy gloir,
The knees of my heart shall I bow,
And sing that right Balulalow.

*Alexander Wedderburn: The Gude and Godlie
Ballatis, 1567*

Jeremy Taylor

Hymn for Christmas Day

Where is this blessed Babe that hath made
All the world so full of joy and expectation;
That glorious boy that crowns each nation
With a triumphant wreath of blessedness?
Where should he be but in the throng,
And among his angel ministers, that sing
And take wing
Just as may echo to his voice,
And rejoice,
When wing and tongue and all
May so procure their happiness?
But he hath other waiters now: a poor cow,
An ox and mule, stand and behold, and wonder
That a stable should enfold Him that can thunder.

Martin Peerson

Upon my lap

U pon my lap my sovereign sits and sucks upon my breast.
Meantime his love maintains my life, and gives my sense her rest.
Sing lullaby, my little boy, sing lullaby, my only joy.
When thou hast taken thy repast, repose, my babe, on me;
So may thy mother and thy nurse thy cradle also be.
Sing lullaby, my little boy, sing lullaby, my only joy.
I grieve that duty doth not work all what my wishing would,
Because I would not be to thee but in the best I should.
Sing lullaby, my little boy, sing lullaby, my only joy.

Yet as I am, and as I may, I must and will be thine,
Though all too little for thyself, vouchsafing to be mine.
Sing lullaby, my little boy, sing lullaby, my only joy.

Richard Verstegan, 1620

Reading:

Provide for Christmas

P rovide for Christmas ere that it do come
To feast thy neighbour good cheer to have some;
Good bread and drink, a fire in the hall,
Brawn, pudding, souse and good mustard withal;
beef, mutton, pork, and shred pies of the best,
Pig, veal, goose, capon, and turkey well drest;
Apples and nuts to throw about the hall,
That boys and girls may scramble for them all.
Sing jolly carols, make the fiddlers play,
Let scrupulous fanatics keep away;
For oftentimes seen no arranter knave
Than some who do counterfeit most to be grave.

Poor Robin's Almanac, 1664

Anon

A Carol for Christmas Day at night

My master and dame, I well perceive are purposed to be merry tonight,
And willingly have given me leave to combat with a Christmas knight.
Sir Pig, I see, comes prancing in and bids me draw if that I dare;
I care not for his valour a pin, for Jack of him will have a share.
My Lady Goose among the rest upon the table takes her place,
And piping-hot bids me do my best, and bravely looks me in the face:
For pigs and geese are gallant cheer, God bless my master and dame therefore!
I trust before the next new year to eat my part of half a score.
likewise see good minced pie here standing swaggering on the table:
The lofty walls so large and high I'll level down if I be able;
For they be furnished with good plums, and spiced well with pepper and salt,
Every prune as big as both my thumbs to drive down bravely the juice of malt.
Fill me some more of your Christmas beer, your pepper sets my mouth on heat,
And Jack's a-dry with your good cheer, give me some good ale to my meat. And for the plenty of this house,
God keep it thus well-stored always;
Come, butler, fill me a good carouse, and so we'll end our Christmas Day.

New Christmas Carols, 1662

Purcell

A Carol for St Stephen's Day

St Stephen did endure the bitter pangs of death,
His faith did him assure though he resign'd his breath:
That he should enter into joy, he was a martyr mild,
And though they did his life destroy, he never once revil'd.

A Cabinet of Choice Jewels, 1688

Anon

A Carol for St John's Day

In honour of Saint John we thus do keep good Christmas cheer;
And he that comes to dine with us, I think he need not spare.
The butcher he hath killed good beef, the caterer brings it in;
But Christmas pies are still the chief if that I durst begin.
Our bacon hogs are full and fat to make us brawn and souse;
Full well may I reject thereat to see them in the house
But yet the minced pie it is that sets my teeth on water;
Good mistress, let me have a bit, for I do long thereafter.
And I will fetch your water in to brew and bake withal,
Your love and favour still to win when as you please to call.
Then grant me, dame your love and leave to taste your pie-meat here;
It is the best in my conceit of all your Christmas-cheer.
The cloves and mace and gallant plums that here on heaps do lie,
And prunes as big as both my thumbs, enticeth much mine eye.
Oh, let me eat my belly-full of your good Christmas-pie;
Except thereat I have a pull, I think I sure shall die.

New Carrolls for this Merry Time of Christmas, 1661

Innocents' Day

Coventry Carol

Lully Lulla, thou little tiny child, By by lully lullay.
O sisters too, how may we do, for to preserve this day,
This poor youngling for whom we do sing, by by lully lullay.
Herod the king in his raging, charged he hath this day,
His men of might in his own sight, all young children to slay.
That woe is me poor child for thee, and ever morn and say,
for thy parting, neither say nor sing, by by lully lullay.

Pageant of the Shearmen and Tailors, c1534

Anon

The Shepherd's Carol for New Year's Day

The New Year is begun, good morrow, my masters all!
The cheerful rising sun now shining in this hall
Brings mirth and joy to man and boy With all that here doth dwell
Whom Jesus bless with loves increase, so things prosper well.
A New Year's gift I bring unto my master here,
Which is a welcome thing of mirth and merry cheer
A New Year's lamb come from thy dam an hour before daybreak,
Your noted ewe doth this bestow, Good master, for thy sake.
And to my dame so kind this New Year's gift I bring;
I'll bear an honest mind unto her whilst I live,
Your white-wooled sheep I'll safely keep from harm of bush or brier,
That garments gay for your array may clothe you the next New Year.
And to your children all these New Year's gifts I bring;
And though the price be small, they're fit for queen or king;
Fair pippins red kept in my bed a-mellowing since last year,
Whose beauty bright so clear of sight their hearts will glad and cheer.
And to your maids and men I bring both points and pins;
Come bid me welcome then, the good New Year begins:
Thy office show before I go, my bottle and bag come fill,
And for thy sake I'll merry make upon the next green hill.

New Christmas Carols, 1661

John Wilson

The New Year's Gift

Let others look for pearl and gold,
Tissues, or tabbies manifold:
One only lock of that sweet hay
Whereon the blessed baby lay,
Or one poor swaddling-clout, shall be
The richest New-Year's gift to me.

Robert Herrick, Hesperides, 1648



Anon

Beat up a drum for Christmas reigns

Beat up a Drum for Christmas reigns, and from the Plaines he drives the Swaines
And still maintaines the title of a King
Christmas is come a Champion bold though very cold, that vowes to hold
His Honour old, in spight of youthfull Spring.
Fire your Beacons, whet your Weapons, kill your Capons and fall on;
As it fitts use your Spitts, Winter lyes a bleeding,
When he findes you feeding, all his force is gone.
Christmas early, sounds a Parley, juice of Barley, crownes the Bowle:
Make him cough, cut him off, that derides a Drinker,
When so brave a Skinker, rules without controwl.
Arme, Arm, Arme, behold thy foe,
From top to toe in Ice and Snow,
Doth puff and blow, his fury to provoke:
Dreadless of harme, draw Hogsheads dry,
Let Flagons fly, make fires nose-hye,
Alarum cry, twill make his army smoake.
Soundly warme him, that will charme him;
Then disarm him, he'll give way:
Now he flyes, now he dyes, the Retreat is sounded,
Winter is confounded, Christmas hath the day:
All renown him, that have known him, Conquest crowne him, 'tis his due:
Bid this Chear, once a year; for his sake amend it
When this old year's ended, frolick for a New

Anon, 17thC

William Byrd

Vidimus Stellam

Vidimus stellam eius in Oriente, et venimus cum muneribus adorare Domnum.
We have seen his star in the East and come with gifts to adore the Lord.

Anon

Wassail, wassail

Wassail, wassail, our jolly wassail is thus to be understood,
Tis a health to the good, but the bad it doth provoke 'em
With the slanders and lies and projects they devise, the Devil choke 'em,
With a wassail, a jolly wassail.
Bring the wassail bowl away, and cast yourselves into a ring.
Give the ale leave to wave the spice, room to play,
And hush, no words but what we sing.
Kneel down, and drink a health unto the King.
With peace and mirth, and wealth to the state,
Drink in wood to our drinking in plate.

Anon, 17th century

Reading:

Ceremonies for Candlemas Eve

Down with the rosemary and bays, down with the mistletoe;
Instead of holly, now up-raise the greener box (for show).
The holly hitherto did sway; let box now domineer
Until the dancing Easter day, or Easter's eve appear.
Then youthful box which now hath grace your houses to renew;
Grown old, surrender must his place unto the crisped yew.
When yew is out, then birch comes in, and many flowers beside;
Both of a fresh and fragrant kin to honour Whitsuntide.
Green rushes, then, and sweetest bents, with cooler oaken boughs,
Come in for comely ornaments to re-adorn the house.
Thus times do shift; each thing his turn does hold;
New things succeed, as former things grow old.

Robert Herrick: Hesperides, 1648

Anon

Christmas' Lamentation

Christmas's Lamentation for the loss of his Acquaintance,
Showing how he is first to leave the Country, and come to London.
Christmas is my name, far have I gone, without regard
Whereas great men by flocks there were flown, to London-ward;
Where they in pomp and pleasure do waste
That which Christmas was wonted to feast,
Welladay!

Houses where music was wont for to ring
Nothing but bats and owlets do sing.
Welladay! Welladay! Welladay! Where should I stay?

Christmas beef and bread is turn'd into stones and silken rags;
And Lady Money sleeps and makes moans in miser's bags;
Houses where pleasure once did abound nought but a dog and a shepherd is found,
Welladay!

Places where Christmas revels did keep are now become habitations for sheep.
Welladay! Welladay! Welladay! Where should I stay?

Since price came up with the yellow starch, poor folks do want,
And nothing the rich man will to them give, but do them taunt;
Charity from the country is fed, and in her place hath left naught but need:
Welladay!

And corn is grown to so high a price, it makes poor men cry with weeping eyes.
Welladay! Welladay! Welladay! Where should I stay?

Roxburghe Ballads, 17th Century

Christmas Banned

Old Christmas now is come to town

Old Christmas now is come to Town, though few do him regard,
He laughs to see them going down that have put down his Lord.
Angry Neptune curls his brow, the Dutch still shout and Vapour,
With Wooden Horses they do now make Cavaliers to caper.
Cheer up, sad hearts, crown Christmas bowls, banish dull grief and sorrow,
Though you want clothes, you have rich souls, the Sun may shine tomorrow.
Hope well, how ever, Times may mend, before our Hearts do break,
When all our Woes are near an end, losers may freely speak.

Anon, Mercurius Democritus, 1652

Reading: John Taylor

Christmas In and Out

There were lately some over curious, hot zealous Brethren, who with a superbian predominance did doe what they could to keep Christmas day out of England; They did in divers places Preach Me for dead in Funerall Sermons, and labour'd tooth and nail to bury me alive in the grave of oblivion; they were of opinions, that from the 24 of December at night, till the 7 of January following, that Plumb-Pottage was mere Popery, that a Coller of Brawn was an abomination, that Roast Beef was Antichristian, that Mince Pies were Reliques of the Whore of Babylon, and a Goose, a Turkey, or a Capon, were marks of the Beast.

In detestation of which superstitious diet, they assum'd to themselves spirituall and temporall jurisdiction, power, and authority to search and plunder Pottage-pots, to ransack and rifle Ovens, and to strip spits stark naked, and and triumphantly carry the pillage to be disposed of as the pleased for the profit and edification of the righteous and the chastisement of the wicked. I am old and born to tell the nose wise Brethren of these critick daies, that my great Master is King of Kings, & Lord of Lords, who is the ancient of daies, who never had beginning, and never shall have end. And on this day, which is kept in thankfull remembrance of his blessed incarnation 1652 years since, I, Christmas, have not failed to make my anniversary and yearly progress into Christendom.

But now of late the case is quite altdred. Christ and Christmas are both alike unwelcome. It is a lamentable and too long a story to relate what a pittifull quandary I and my followers have been in any time these twelve years, when we came into this Country. I was in good hope that so long a misery would have made them glad to bid a merry Christmas welcome: But welcome or not welcome, I am come, and at my coming (a little before day), I gazed to and fro to make choice of the best houses, and house-keeper to take up my quarters amongst them; but alas, the comfort that I found was colder than the weather.

This was no good news to me and my company; we had not been used to such uncomfortable breakfasts, which made us all search up and down the chief Cities for better chear, and wandring into the Countrey up and downe from house to house, I found little or small comfort in any.

John Taylor: Christmas in and out, 1652

Anon

The world turn'd upside down

Listen to me and you shall hear, news hath not been this thousand year:
Since Herod, Caesar, and many more, you never heard the like before.
Holy-days are despis'd, new fashions are devis'd,
Old Christmas is kicked out of Town

*Yet let's be content, and the times lament, Y
You see the world turn'd upside down.*

The wise men did rejoyce to see our Saviour
Christ's Nativity:
The Angels did good tidings bring, the
Shepherds did rejoyce and sing.

Let all honest men, take example by them.
Why should we from good Laws be bound?

Yet let's be content, etc

To conclude, I'll tell you news that's right,
Christmas was kill'd at Naseby fight:
Charity was slain at that same time,
Jack Tell troth too, a friend of mine,
Likewise then did die, rost beef and shred pie,
Pig, Goose and Capon no quarter found.

Yet let's be content, etc

Thomason Tracts, 1646

Reading: John Taylor

Christmas In and Out *(continued)*

Indeed (to speake truth) my best and freest welcome was with some kind of Countrey Farmers, I will describe one for all the rest in Devonshire and Cornwall, where as soon as they spied me, they saluted me with much love and reverend curtesie.

The Good-man, with the Dame of the house, and all the rest of men were exceeding glad to see me, and with all Countrey curtesie and solemnity, I was had into the Parlour, there I was placed at the upper end of the Table and my company about me, we had good chear and free welcome, and we were merry.

A, ha, quoth I, this piece of the world is well mended, this was as Christ-mas would have it, here is neither too much cost, nor too little meat; here is no surfeit on the one side, or hunger on the other; they are always the best \Feasts where the poor are reliev'd, for the rich can help themselves. After Dinner we arose from the Boord, and sate by the fire, where the Harth was imbrodered all over with roasted Apples, piping hot, expecting a bole of Ale for a cooler (which presently was transformed into warm Lambswooll:) within an houre after we went to Church, where a good old Minister uttered many good speeches concerning Me, exciting and exhort- ing the people to love and unity one with another, and to extend their char- ities to the needy and distressed.

After prayers we returned home, where we discoursed merrily, without either prophaneness or obscenity; supper being ended, we went to Cards, some sung Carrols, and merry Songs (suitable to the times;) then the poor labouring Hinds and the maid servants, with the Plowboyes, went nimbly to dancing, the poore toying wretched being all glad of my company, be- cause they had little or no sport at all till I came amongst them; and there- fore leaped and skipped for joy, singing this catch:

Edmund Nelham

Let's dance and sing

Let's dance and sing, and make good cheer,
For Christmas comes but once a year:
Draw hogsheads dry, let flagons fly, for now the bells shall ring;
Whilst we endeavour to make good the title 'gainst a King.

Reading: John Taylor

Christmas In and Out *(continued)*

Thus at active games, and gambols of hotcockles, shooing the Wild Mare, and the like harmless sports, the tedious night was spent; and early in the morning we took our leaves of them thankfully, and though we had been thirteen dayes well entertained, yet the poor people were very unwilling to let me goe; soe I left them out of hope to have my company againe for a Twelve-months space, that I were not banished in my absence they should have my presence againe the next 25 of December 1653.

John Taylor: Christmas in and out, 1652

Anon: Christmas Restored

A song when the Rump was first dissolved

This Christmas time, 'tis fit that we should feast and sing, and merry be,
It is a time of mirth;
For never since the world began, more joyful news was brought to man
Than at our Saviour's birth.
But such have been the times of late, that holidays are out of date,
And holiness to boot,
For they that do despise and scorn to keep the day that Christ was born
Want holiness no doubt.
The Parliament that took away the observation of that day,
We know it was not free;
For if it were, such acts as those had ne'er been seen in verse or prose,
You may conclude with me.
This tale's now done, the Speaker's dumb, thanks to the trumpet and the drum,
And now I hope to see
A Parliament that will restore all things that were undone before
That we may Christians be.

The Rump, 1662

Anon

A hue and cry after Christmas

Any man or woman that can give any knowledge, or tell any tidings of an old, old, very old, grey-bearded Gentleman, called Christmas, who was wont to be a very familiar guest, and visit all sorts of people, both poor and rich, for his coming. Whosoever can tell what is become of him, and he may be found, let them bring him back again into England.

An Hue and Cry after Christmas, 1646



Anon

The Merry Boys of Christmas

Come, come my roaring ranting boys, let's never be cast down,
We'll never mind the female toys, but loyal be to the crown,
We'll never break our hearts with care, or be cast down with fear,
Our bellies then let us prepare to drink some Christmas beer.

Then here's a health to Charles our King, throughout the world admir'd,
Let us his great applauses sing, that we so much desir'd,
And wish't amongst us for to reign when Oliver rul'd here,
But since he's home return'd again, come fill some Christmas beer.

These holidays we'll briskly drink, all mirth we will devise,
No treason will we speak or think, but bring us brave mince pies,
Roast beef, and brave plum porridge our loyal hearts to cheer,
Then prithee make no more ado, but bring us Christmas beer.

Roxburghe Ballads, c1660

Matthew Locke

Old Christmas Returned or Hospitality Revived.

All you that to Feasting and mirth are inclin'd,
Come here is good news for to pleasure your
mind,
Old Christmas is come for to keep open house
He scorns to be guilty of starving a mouse,
Then come boys and welcome, for diet the chief

*Plum pudding, Goose, Capon, minc't pies, &
Roast beef.*

The holly and ivy, about the walls wind,
And shows that we ought to our neighbours be
kind,
Inviting each other for pastime and sport
And where we best fare, there we most do r
resort.
We fail not of victuals, and that of the chief

*Plum pudding, Goose, Capon, minc't pies, &
Roast beef.*

Although the cold weather doth hunger provoke
'Tis a comfort to see how the Chimneys do
smoke,
Provision is making for Beer, Ale and wine,
For all that are willing, or ready to dine,
Then hast to the Kitchen for diet the chief

*Plum pudding, Goose, Capon, minc't pies, &
Roast beef.*

Then well may we welcome old Christmas to
town
Who brings us good cheer, and good liquor so
brown,
To pass the cold winter away with delight
We feast it all day, and we frolic at night,
Both hunger and cold we keep out with relief

*Plum pudding, Goose, Capon, minc't pies, &
Roast beef.*

Pepys Ballads, 17th Century

Pazzamezzo

Passamezzo is an established early music ensemble known for their ability to bring historical events to life through imaginative performance and programming.

The ensemble specialise in English 16th and 17th Century repertoire, and concerts have a distinct theatrical air created by costume, readings and presentation. The ensemble delights in all aspects of musical life, from the intimacy of the lute song, to the brash raucousness of the broadside ballad, from the sacred part song, to the profane insanity of bedlamite mad songs. The programmes are carefully researched with music frequently taken from manuscript sources, unearthing pieces that have lain hidden for centuries.

Passamezzo often work with dancers and actors and have played in a great variety of venues including the British Museum; the Shakespeare Institute; The National Gallery; the V&A Museum; Shakespeare's Globe Theatre; Hampton Court Palace and in theatres, concert halls, stately homes, churches, palaces and ruins throughout England. Passamezzo also work with with Moroccan Sufi musicians, Ensemble Mogador Soufie, performing 17th Century English and Moroccan music in both countries as part of the Shore to Shore project.

Eleanor Cramer

Soprano, Bass Viol

Eleanor started her vocal studies at the junior department of the Royal Academy of Music, where she also studied cello. She began singing at Cambridge when she won a choral award at Clare College, and went on to sing with the choir of Sidney Sussex College, and with the Lady Frances Singers. She has also sung with the Choir of London in collaboration with the RPO. Her solo work has included soprano arias in Bach's St John Passion at St John's, Cambridge, and at Snape Maltings.

In addition to several CDs with Passamezzo, her recording work includes the vocal consort Alamire and solo tracks on a CD of Weelkes with the viol consort Fretwork. Eleanor has played Miles in Britten's Turn of the Screw with Seastar Opera. Eleanor is also a midwife.

Robin Jeffrey

Lute, Guitar, Tenor

Robin has played and recorded with many of the well-known names in the early music field, including The Sixteen, The King's Consort, English Baroque Soloists and Red Byrd, and with ensembles such as the ECO, the Academy of St Martin in the Fields, and the BBC Concert Orchestra. Besides his work in early music, he is active in the performance of Middle Eastern classical and traditional music, playing the oud, laouto and tambour, and he has performed traditional Jewish music internationally with the Burning Bush. He regularly gives recitals accompanying soprano Alessandra Testai, in a repertoire ranging from Renaissance Italy to the Ottoman Empire, taking in various European folk traditions along the way.

Alison Kinder

Viols, Recorders

Alison read music at Oxford and was then given a scholarship by Trinity College of Music where she studied viol with Alison Crum, being awarded the college's Silver Medal for Early Music Studies. She plays with Chelys consort of viols, who have just released a recording of Dowland with Dame Emma Kirkby, and has a particular interest in Renaissance viols (early viols made with no soundpost) with with The Linarol Consort who play on copies of the earliest surviving viol. Venturing into the 18th Century with a beautiful 7-string viol named Flo, Alison plays with Lynda Sayce in Apollo's Revels, trio sonata group Saltarello, and the Christian Baroque ensemble Dei Gratia, where she also plays baroque violin. Alison has a great love of working with singers, and the affinity between the sound of the viol and the voice.

She has recently been enjoying working with Musica Secreta on their projects 'Lucrezia Borgia's Daughter', recording the earliest published music from the musical convents of renaissance Italy, and the Lamentations of Jeremiah by Antoine Brumel.

A keen teacher of both children and adults, Alison is a tutor on a number of Early Music courses including the Easter Early Music Course and Norvis, and she regularly leads workshops for the various Early Music Fora. She is co-director of Rondo Viol Academy, which runs weekend courses for players of all standards, and directs the Warwick-shire Youth Waits, a Renaissance band for young players which includes everything from recorders and viols to crumhorns, shawms, sackbuts and more!

Alison has had a number of educational books published including group teaching material for viols and recorders, and a children's music theory series called 'The Notehouse People'. She has also published a modern edition of the divisions from Christopher Simpson's 'Division Viol' treatise. with Seastar Opera.

Tamsin Lewis

Renaissance Violin, Viols, Alto

Tamsin studied violin at the Florence Conservatoire and read Classics & Italian at Oxford. As an early music consultant for film and television, her recent work has included projects with Lucy Worsley, Gareth Malone, Lucie Skeaping, Danny Dyer, and on Deborah Harkness' A Discovery of Witches. Tamsin has written, arranged, directed and played music for a number of theatre productions at venues including Shakespeare's Globe, the Rose Theatre and Hampton Court, and has collaborated with theatre and dance historians and practitioners to reconstruct masques and other court entertainments for Historic Royal Palaces and at Bolsover Castle.

Tamsin has published several books of early modern music with Rondo Publishing, and is currently working on a series of books about John Playford's London. She is a member of the Lions part theatre company, and appears in their Globe-based festivals as a violin playing bear.

Michael Palmer

Actor, Baritone

Michael has worked with Passamezzo for ten years. His theatre credits include: All Creatures Great and Small (UK tour, Bill Kenwright Ltd); The Butterfly Lion (UK tour, BKL); The Merchant of Venice playing Shylock and Twelfth Night playing Malvolio and Sir Andrew Aguecheek (Actors From The London Stage); Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde (one man show, Creation TC, Oxford UK); Friend or Foe by Michael Murpogo (UK tour); A Doll's House (Cambridge, UK); the title role in Volpone (Wilton's Music Hall, London); The Country Wife at the Bridewell; Hamlet, King Lear, and The Merchant of Venice for Compass Theatre Company; Gamblers at Battersea Arts Centre; Descent: The Diary of a Madman (one man show, Edinburgh festival); The Mysteries at the Orange Tree in Richmond; Breaking the Code, As You Like It, and The Real Thing in Basingstoke.

He also has recorded numerous Shakespeare plays on CD. Musicals include tours of Footloose; The Wedding Singer; Sing-along-a- Abba; Company at Westcliffe, UK; and the title role in Did You, Dr Crippen? at the Trafalgar Studios, London.

On television Michael has appeared in Bear Behaving Badly, How Not to Live Your Life, Waking the Dead, Casualty, and Wish Me Luck.

Michael also teaches Drama at the Sylvia Young Theatre School.





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