

Wassail the Silver Apple

Words and music © M.J. O'Connor 5 January 1999. Harmonies arranged by Sarah Morgan

Intro

TUNE
Was- sail! Was- sail! May the com- ing year, Peace and plen- ty bring to

HARMONY 1
Was- sail! Was- sail! May the com- ing year, Peace and plen- ty bring to

HARMONY 2
Was- sail! Was- sail! May the com- ing year, Peace and plen- ty bring to

7
all who was- sail here. Drink to the bud and the blos- som, drink to the root of the tree, drink to the
all who was- sail here. Drink to the bud and the blos- som, drink to the root of the tree, drink to the
all who was- sail here. Drink to the bud and the blos- som, drink to the root of the tree, drink to the

16 Coda
fruit of the sum- mer, Was- sail, let cid- er run free. Was- sail! Was- sail!
fruit of the sum- mer, Was- sail, let cid- er run free. Was- sail! Was- sail!
fruit of the sum- mer, Was- sail, let cid- er run free. Was- sail! Was- sail!

23
May the com- ing year, Peace and plen- ty bring. To all who was- sail here.
May the com- ing year, Peace and plen- ty bring. To all who was- sail here.
May the com- ing year, Peace and plen- ty bring. To all who was- sail here.

Wassail the Silver Apple

Words and music © M.J.O'Connor 5 January 1999. Harmonies arranged by Sarah Morgan

Wassail! Wassail! May the coming year,
Peace and plenty bring, to all who wassail here.

Drink to the bud and the blossom.
Drink to the root of the tree,
Drink to the fruit of the summer.
Wassail! Let cider run free.

Fire at the spirit of winter.
Fire at the spirit of night,
Fire at the spirit of darkness.
Wassail the bringer of light.

Wassail the silver shilling.
Wassail the silver moon,
Wassail the silver apple.
Drink hail the sign of the Sun!

Wassail! Wassail! May the coming year,
Peace and plenty bring, to all who wassail here.

About the song

This song was written by Mike O'Connor, who is a songwriter, story teller, and fiddle player (among other attributes!). Wassailing is an ancient tradition with a centre of gravity in the West Country. The words *waes hael*, be whole, i.e. have good health, are Saxon in origin, and are recorded as a toast by Geoffrey of Monmouth in his *History of the Kings of Britain* of about 1150. The tradition of frightening away evil spirits from orchards is recorded in late Medieval times and is probably early Medieval in origin. *Wassail the Silver Apple*, also called the *Kit Hill Wassail* was written for the orchard of Jon Heslop and Kathy Wallis, who then lived on the slopes of Kit Hill. Mike says "In this wassail I tried both to invoke and refer to the superstitions that lie behind traditional wassails and take both singers and listeners a little closer to the medieval world in which the tradition evolved."

Performance notes

The song is in three sections - intro, verses and coda.

The pattern is as follows: sing the intro, then all three verses, then the intro again, followed by all three verses again. Finish with the coda. We sing the intro and coda quite slowly and freely, but make the verses a lot faster and with a very marked rhythm.