

Who Knocks There?

Cecil Sharp wrote, "This was often done at harvest homes. One man knocked at the door with his stick, whereupon the above dialogue took place. The last four lines were sung to a major version of "The Miller of Dee." Then they all said 'Boom' (to represent a bell), then took a deep pull at their glasses. This repeated three times."
[No tune collected]

Who knocks there?
Poor Peg
What's poor Peg want?
A shroud to wrap poor Tom in.
What's poor Tom dead?
Yes.
When did 'er die?
Yesterday in the morning gray
Parted poor Tom and I.
I heard a bird singing in the wood
Poor Tom was like to die.
Now what shall us do
For poor Tom's sake
For he was a right honest man.
We'll take this cup and drink him up
And so shall everyone.
Ring a right and do no wrong.
Poor Tom is dead and gone.
Boom (drink). Boom (drink). Boom (drink)

Source: William Shepherd, Winchcombe, on 8 April 1909. Collected by Cecil Sharp.