

We Shepherds are the Best of Men

The musical score is written in 6/8 time with a key signature of one flat (Bb). It consists of six staves of music. The lyrics are: "We shep - herds be ___ the best of men that e'er trod Eng ___ lish ground, ___ When we come to ___ an ale-house ___ we val - ue not ___ a crown, ___ We spends our mo ___ ney free - ly ___ and pays be - fore ___ we go, ___ With no ale in ___ the vale where the cold win - try winds ___ do blow. We spends our mo ___ ney free - ly ___ and pays be - fore ___ we go, ___ With no ale in ___ the vale where the cold win - try winds ___ do blow." The lyrics are placed below the corresponding musical notes.

2. A man that is a shepherd doth need a valiant heart,
He must not be faint-hearted but boldly do his part,
He must not be faint-hearted be it rain or frost or snow,
With no ale in the vale where the cold wintry winds do blow.
(Repeat last two lines)
3. When I kept sheep on Tresham Hill it made me heart to ache
To see the ewes hang out their tongues and hear the lambs to bleat,
Then I set out with courage and o'er the hills did go
And penned them there in the fold while the cold wintry winds do blow.
(Repeat last two lines)
4. As soon as I had penned them there I turned me back in haste
Unto some jovial company some liquor for to taste,
For drink and jovial company they are me heart's delight
While me sheep lie asleep all the forepart of the night.
(Repeat last two lines)

Source: Richard Chidlaw, collected by Gwilym Davies October 1980.

Notes: "sheep" pronounced "ship"; "asleep" pronounced "aslip"; "fold" pronounced "vold"