

# ***The GEORGIAN CONCERT Society***



## **Season 2022-23**

### **Passamezzo**

**Old Christmas Returned: Music, words and song for  
Christmas in 17<sup>th</sup> Century England**

Emily Atkinson (soprano, bass viol),  
Alison Kinder (viols, recorders),  
Arngeir Hauksson (lute, guitar),  
Tamsin Lewis (renaissance violin, viols, alto),  
Michael Palmer (actor, baritone)

**Saturday 10th December 2022**

**St Andrew's & St George's West Church, Edinburgh**

**Chamber  
Music  
Scotland**



ALBA | CHRUTHACHAIL

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The Georgian Concert Society SC003740

## PROGRAMME

Anon: The Shropshire Wakes or Hey for Christmas

*William Prynne: Histriomastix*

Thomas Ravenscroft: Remember o thou man

**Christmas Eve** - Ceremonies for Christmas eve

**Christmas Day** - Anon: This day our Saviour Christ was born

Anon: Balulalow – Ane sang for the birth of Christ

Anon: Dialogue between the Angel and Shepherds

**St Stephen's Day** - Henry Purcell: Carol for St Stephen's Day

**St John's Day** - Anon: A Carol for St John's Day

**Innocents' Day** - Anon: Lully lulla thou little tiny child

**New Year** - Anon: The Shepherd's Carol to be sung on New Year's day

Anthony Holborne: The New Year's Gift

*Robert Herrick: The New Year's Gift*

Anon: Beat up a drum

**Twelfth Night** - William Byrd: Vidimus Stellam

Anon: Wassail, Wassail

**Candlemas and the end of Christmas** - Thomas Farmer: A carol for Candlemas Day

*Robert Herrick: Ceremonies for Candlemas Eve*

**No Charity at Christmas** - Anon: Christmas' Lamentation

**Christmas Banned** - Anon: Old Christmas now is come to town

*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

*An hue and cry after Christmas*

Matthew Locke: Old Christmas returned

## PROGRAMME NOTES

Old Christmas Returned: Christmas celebrated, banned and restored in 17th Century England Tonight's programme will take you on a journey through the days of Christmas as it was celebrated in early modern 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 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 two songs delighting in the return of Christmas after the abolition of the Rump and the restoration of Charles II.

## BIOGRAPHIES

### **Passamezzo**

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.

### **Emily Atkinson: Soprano**

American soprano Emily Atkinson studied at the Crane School of Music in New York and the Royal College of Music in London. She has appeared as a soloist in more than forty Bach cantatas with the Sweelinck Ensemble for Lutheran Vespers Services in the City of London.

As a consort singer, she has toured extensively with the Tallis Scholars and participated in their premiere of John Tavener's Requiem Fragments at the BBC Proms. Emily is also a busy chamber music recitalist, performing with viol consorts, baroque chamber groups and other early music ensembles in the UK and abroad. She enjoys presenting creative song recitals with other musicians, and she is an experienced and dedicated teacher of primary class music.

### **Arngeir Hauksson: Lute, Guitar**

Arngeir was born in Iceland but came to London for his postgraduate studies on the guitar and the lute at the Guildhall School of Music and Drama.

Arngeir now specializes in historical plucked instruments from the medieval, renaissance and baroque periods performing on copies of original instruments. He also plays classical, folk and electric guitars, as well as percussion and the hurdy-gurdy. Arngeir performs and records with many major English ensembles

and opera companies. These have included The Sixteen, Ex Cathedra, City Music, Blondel, Glyndebourne, English National Opera, English Touring Opera, Opera North, the BBC Concert Orchestra and BBC National Orchestra of Wales. He has for 10 years been a principal player and musical director for Shakespeare's Globe Theatre, also performing in the National Theatre, London's West End and on Broadway, New York. He has a keen interest in new music and has collaborated with artists such as Damon Albarn, Sally Beamish, Tony Allen, Bruce Dickinson and William Lyons and he regularly performs in The Historic Royal Palaces, Hampton Court Palace and Tower of London.

### **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 The Linnarol 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 Warwickshire 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.

### **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, Bolsover Castle and Penshurst Place.

Tamsin is a Fellow of the Royal Historical Society and an associate lecturer on Renaissance art and music at the Courtauld Institute. She has written and edited a number of books on early modern music and society.

As a member of the Lions part theatre company, Tamsin 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-aAbba*; *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.

## **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, 17<sup>th</sup> Century*

### **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. O wickedness, 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 birth-day (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 shepheards (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 Nativitie. Here we have nothing but Glory be to God on high, on earth peace, good will towards men: This is the Angels, the shepheards only Christmas Carroll.

*William Prynne: Histriomastix*

### **A Christmas Carol - Remember, O thou man,**

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.

*Thomas Ravenscroft: Melismata*

### **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*

### **This day our Saviour Christ was born**

This 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*

### **Ane sang of the birth of Christ**

I come from Heaven high to tell the best Nowells that e'er befell.  
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*

### **A Dialogue between the Angel and shepherds proper for Christmas Day**

SHEPHERD Look, shepherds, look!

SHEPHERD Why where?

SHEPHERD See ye not yonder, there? Methinks it doth appear like glory  
coming near!

ANGEL Listen, shepherds, listen round

SHEPHERD Hark, hark, hear ye not a sound? Lord, what a heavenly noise  
beats through the air! Ne'er was there sweeter voice, nor note so clear!

CHORUS Heavenly musick, Glorious light! Yet more fearful than the  
night!

ANGEL Fear not shepherds, for behold. Better tidings ne'er was told.

News I bring you this same tide, this blessed morn:

To you and all mankind beside, A Saviour's born!

Haste to Bethlehem, haste about Haste to find the infant out.

With this sign you shall begin, in a stable, in an inn.

You shall find his mother Maid, poorly friended

And the babe in manger laid, worse attended.

When you find him, loudly cry "Glory be to God on high."

CHORUS Glory be to God on high, peace on Earth, amongst men Love.

Death and Hell are now beguil'd, God and man are Reconcil'd

*Anon, 17thC*

### **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*

### **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*

### **Coventry Carol - Lully Lulla, thou little tiny child,**

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*

### **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 The New Year's Gift*

### **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*

### **Beat up a drum**

*Beat up a Drum for Christmas reignes, 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 spite 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 flies, 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*

### **Vidimus stellam**

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

### **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, 17thC A Carol for Twelfth Day*

### **A Carol for Candlemas-Day**

Now Candlemas is come at last, therefore my dearest friend,  
Since Christmas time is almost past, I mean to make an end  
Of this our mirth and merriment, and now the truth to tell,  
He must be from our presence sent, O Christmas, now farewell.  
With nappy ale both brown and stale, we'll fill our bumpers full,

And pippins too as I am true, they make the best lambswool:  
So fast and smooth it will go down, thy sorrow to expel,  
And then at last when all is past, Christmas we'll bid farewell.  
*A Cabinet of Choice Jewels, 1688*

### **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 A*

### **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, 17thC*

### **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*

### **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 Pottagepots, 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 altered. 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 wandering 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*

### **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, 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, and the times lament, You see the world turn'd  
upside down.

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, and the times lament, You see the world turn'd  
upside down.

*Thomason Tracts, 1646*

### **Let's dance and sing**

Indeed (to speake trut) 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 Christmas 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  
exhorting the people to love and unity one with another, and to extend  
their charities 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 toyling wretched being all glad of my company, because they had  
little or no sport at all till I came amongst them; and therefore leaped  
and skipped for joy, singing this catch:

*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.*

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 again the next 25 of December 1653.

*John Taylor: Christmas in and out, 1652*

### **A Christmas 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*

### **An 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*

### **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 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, 17thC*

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*The Georgian Concert Society reserves the right to change programmes if required.*