

Jack in the Green

The image shows a musical score for the song 'Jack in the Green'. It consists of six staves of music in 3/4 time, with a key signature of two flats (B-flat and E-flat). The lyrics are written below the notes. The first five staves contain the main melody, and the sixth staff is a concluding line. A triplet of eighth notes is marked with a '3' and a slur over the notes 'Jack in the Green' in the fifth staff.

Now Win-ter is o - ver I'm hap - py to say and we're
all met a - gain in our rib - bons so gay And we're
all met a - gain, to re - joice in the spring And to
go a - bout danc - ing with Jack in the Green
Jack in the Green, Jack in the Green and we'll
all dance each Spring - time with Jack in the Green

- 1 Now Winter is over I'm happy to say
And we're all met again in our ribbons so gay
And we're all met again, to rejoice in the spring
And to go about dancing with Jack in the Green
Jack in the Green, Jack in the Green
And we'll all dance each springtime with Jack in the Green
- 2 Now Jack in the Green is a very strange man
Though he dies every Autumn he's born every spring
And each year on his birthday, we will dance through the street
And in return Jacky will ripen the wheat
Jack in the Green, Jack in the Green
And we'll all dance each springtime with Jack in the Green

- 3 Now all you young maidens I 'd have you beware
Of touching young Jack for there's strange powers there
For if you but touch him there is many will tell
Like the wheat in our fields so your belly will swell
 Jack in the Green, Jack in the Green
 And we'll all dance each springtime with Jack in the Green

- 4 With his mantle he'll cover the trees that are bare
Our gardens he'll trim with his jacket so fair
But our fields he will sow with the hair of his head
And the grain it will ripen till old Jack is dead
 Jack in the Green, Jack in the Green
 And we'll all dance each springtime with Jack in the Green

- 5 Now the sun is half up and it signals the hour
That the children arrive with their garlands of flowers
So now let the music and the dancing begin
And touch the good heart of young Jack in the Green
 Jack in the Green, Jack in the Green
 And we'll all dance each springtime with Jack in the Green

This song was written when Cherri and I were living to the East of Exeter in the area that is marked on the Ordnance Survey map as 'Jack in the Green'. We were also drinking fairly often in the pub of the same name and the connection led to the above bit of fantasy based on traditional themes. A number of people have told me at different times that they have heard Jack in the Green described as a traditional song. It was the first of my songs to turn up on the Internet where it was described on the Digital Tradition database as a traditional song. Most recently someone told me about an American CD of pagan music that includes Jack as an example of a traditional pagan song from the British Isles.