

A. E. Housman (1859-1936)

2 *Bredon Hill*

In summertime on Bredon
The bells they sound so clear;
Round both the shires they ring them
In steeples far and near,
A happy noise to hear. 5

Here of a Sunday morning
My love and I would lie,
And see the coloured counties,
And hear the larks so high
About us in the sky. 10

The bells would ring to call her
In valleys miles away:
“Come all to church, good people;
Good people, come and pray.”
But here my love would stay. 15

And I would turn and answer
Among the springing thyme,
“Oh, peal upon our wedding,
And we will hear the chime,
And come to church in time.” 20

But when the snows at Christmas
On Bredon top were strown,
My love rose up so early
And stole out unbeknown
And went to church alone. 25

They tolled the one bell only,

Groom there was none to see,
The mourners followed after,
And so to church went she,
And would not wait for me. 30

The bells they sound on Bredon,
And still the steeples hum.
“Come all to church, good people,” —
Oh, noisy bells, be dumb;
I hear you, I will come. 35

1896

(From *A Shropshire Lad*. London: E. Grant Richards, 1907)