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This  
so very fine  
and pleasing set of rounds  
numbering 2, 3, 4, 5, 8 & 9 partes  
in one, is put forth here  
for honest delight  
& joy.

Written by Crispin Sexi  
A.S. LIX

Come troll the bowl around with me,  
And thusly we shall well agree.

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**Lochac A&S Competition**  
**March Crown A.S LIX (2025)**  
**“Music for the Choir”**

**Entrant:** Master Crispin Sexi, OL, OP (mundanely Jaysen Ollerenshaw).

**Description of Item:** A set of 20 rounds, 12 of which were written expressly for this competition.

**Previous Experience:** Crispin was laurelled for musical composition in 2004. He has written over 230 pieces in a period style, and his annotated transcription of the Lant Roll collection of rounds is available from his website.

**Effort:** The 12 new rounds in this roll each took on average around 5 hours to compose, including both the lyrics and the music, so about 30 hours of new composition time went into this entry.

Typesetting the booklet using period-style fonts took 14 hours.

Documentation would have been around 7 hours.

**Inspiration / Historical Evidence:**

The Lant Roll was a collection of 57 rounds written in 1585 by Thomas Lant. It's a parchment roll 16 feet long and 3¾ inches wide (*Vlasto*), currently in the collection of Kings College Cambridge and they were kind enough to take quality digital photographs of it (for a fee!) when I could not find any copy of it published or online.

In places it is somewhat hard to read, and I spent ages transcribing it and turned the result into a handy booklet. The Lant Roll is somewhat novel by being hand written on a long strip of joined vellum. A print-out of the entire roll plus my booklet is included with this entry as supporting evidence of a collection of rounds from period.

There are other existing collections of rounds, including The Red Book of Montserrat (14thC) and The Winchester Fragments (early to mid 16thC). These two are handwritten and contain other, non-musical material.

The most significant collection of Renaissance rounds from England are the three books published by Thomas Ravenscroft in 1609 to 1611. There is overlap between the Winchester, Lant and Ravenscroft collections, with one round (“As I Me Walked”) occurring in all three.

Ravenscroft’s three books are printed with movable type, including the musical notation, allowing for a large print run.

### **On Composition of Rounds:**

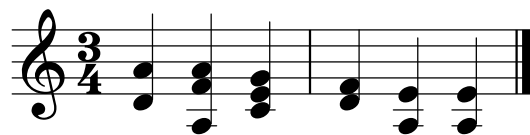
William Bathe (*Bathe*) provides some insight into how one could write canon, providing a table for determining the available notes to use as you proceed along writing a melody note by note that will actually sound nice when sung by two voices and a ground.

However a round is somewhat different from canon, in

that it is in the unison (all voices start on the same note) and that the entry of following voices is evenly spread throughout the song. This means that it might be simpler to write a ground or bass line that provides the harmonic structure of the piece, and instead treat writing a round as an exercise in writing a short multi-part piece of choral music, where each singer sings all the parts one after another, entering after the previous singer has finished the top line.

The main difference in practice is that, unlike standard Renaissance choral music, the lines in a round often cross over one another, rather than staying in their lane.

Here are all the notes in Lant Roll #43 “Lady Com Down & See”:



Together these make the sequence of chords...

Dm - F - C - Dm - Am - Am

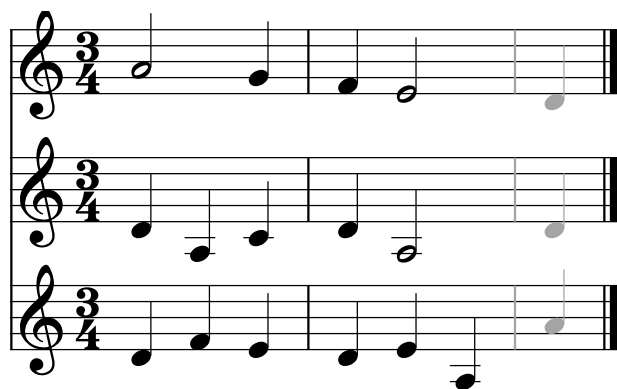
Those last two chords could also be A major rather than A minor, but since the 3<sup>rd</sup> is missing we don't know for sure.

This piece is in the Dorian mode, starting on D and ending on the dominant A. Modes are the medieval equivalent of today's keys like D minor or C major. The Lant Roll's rounds are in a variety of modes. 13 of them have been given a B-flat key signature, effectively transposing a

mode up a 4th.

You can see that there are not always three different notes for the three different parts, so a lot of the time two of the three voices for this round will be singing the same note.

But that doesn't mean they have the same tune! Instead each part moves differently from one chord to the next:



Even when two parts sound the same note, they each move to a different following note, for example, when one goes down the other goes up. This is called contrary motion, and is one of several techniques they used back then to come up with choir music that sounded nice harmonically but everyone had different melodies.

For my rounds, I have largely followed this technique of writing out the sequence of chords and then selecting notes from those chords to write different melodies, and setting those melodic fragments one after the other to make the full song.

### **My Set of Rounds:**

It took me enough time to write a dozen new rounds, that I

gained a new appreciation of just how much work went into the 57 rounds in the Lant Roll and the 126 rounds in Ravenscroft's three books. Give me another six months and I might get there. As for now, my collection is shorter.

I have tried to cover a variety of the topics covered in period rounds, and I checked that all the words I used were period. Unlike Lant and Ravenscroft, all my rounds are all in English as I don't know any other languages well enough to write poetry in them. I had a brief attempt at Latin, but quickly realised that, even with automated language conversion *à la* Google, I was not up to it.

I used a variety of modes (Dorian, Phrygian, Myxolydian, Aeolian and Ionian) and a variety of number of voices in my rounds. See the index on the last page here for the full list.

For each of my rounds I have included modern notation here, along with a note or two about each piece.

### **Recorded Performance:**

I recorded myself using laptop and Windows sound recorder. I ran out of time to edit all the sound files using Audacity into multipart arrangements. Also I made a few mistakes in singing.

### **On Producing the Period-Style Copy:**

I set out with the intention of hand writing a roll of rounds

on vellum in the style of Lant, however as I set upon learning the required bastard secretary hand I found that I had bitten off more than I could chew within the timeframe left. This grand project will have to wait until I have practised calligraphy for at least a year.

Instead I have reverted to using JSL Ancient and JSL Musica fonts (made by Jeff Lee, a Laurel from Trimaris) and printing on paper, in the style of Ravenscroft. Block capitals and ornamental woodcuts in my period-style printout are copied from Ravenscroft.

I attempted to follow some of the practices of Ravenscroft, such as:

- The second letter of the lyrics being upper case (following on from the block capital),
- Keeping each round on the one page (where possible)
- Adding filler stave lines to pad things out,
- The little symbols at the end of each line that indicate the next note ...I did that late at night, so hopefully they are all on the correct line!

Unlike Ravenscroft, I ordered the pieces by date of composition, earliest to most recent.

I ran out of time to bind it in a period style, but that might be nice to do for the future.

## **Conclusion:**

This was a challenging endeavour, but very enjoyable. And the rounds have come out sounding pretty good and



interesting to my ear. I'm also very pleased with the range of topics I have ended up with.

Making this as a handwritten roll will have to remain on my list of things to do in future.

### **References:**

Lant, Thomas, "The Lant Roll (MS KC 1)", 1585.

Ravenscroft, Thomas, Pammelia, Musicks Miscellanie, William Barley, London, 1609.

Ravenscroft, Thomas, "Deuteromelia: Or, The Second Part of Musicks Melody", Thomas Adams, London, 1609.

Ravenscroft, Thomas, "Melismata: Musicall Phansies", Thomas Adams, London, 16011.

Sexi, C, "The Lant Roll", Jaysen Ollerenshaw, Canberra, 2019.

Vlasto, Jill, "An Elizabethan Anthology of Rounds", The Musical Quarterly, Vol. 40, No. 2 (Apr., 1954), pp. 222-234, Oxford University Press.  
URL: <http://www.jstor.org/stable/739672> (Accessed: 27/04/2013)

Bathe, William, "A Briefe Introduction to the Skill of Song", c. 1587, B. Rainbow (Ed), Boethius Press Limited, Kilkenny, Ireland, 1982.



## **Previously composed rounds**

Ignore these for the purposes of the competition; they are filler to make the book longer!

These are rounds that I wrote in previous years, and some (as noted) have been submitted into previous A&S competitions.

I have not provided a recording of them.

## 1) Agincourt (4 pts, Aeolian)



Hey down, ho down, der - ry down down,  
Yeo - man, bow - man, mow them all down,



Wind our way un - to the war,  
Make it look like Ag-in-court.

“Agincourt” was the first round I wrote, back in 2002. I was particularly trying to have a narrow vocal range for this round as I had discovered that many period rounds have quite a wide range in order to sound out full chords in root position. I achieved a range of a 6<sup>th</sup> by using a first inversion E chord to go with the root position A chord.

## 2) Westron Wynde (4 pts, Dorian)

West - ron wynde when wilt thou blow, the  
If my love were in my arms, and

smal - le rayne down can rayne  
I yn my bed a - gayne.

The lyrics to Westron Wynd are some of the earliest English lyrics in existence. I didn't know of any music at the time for this song, so I wrote my own in 2002.

It turns out there are some quite lovely extant Westron Wynd pieces that sound nothing like this!

### 3) Weary From Work (4 pts, Ionian)

Wea-ry from work on a hot Sum-mer's day,  
\*  
tend-ing the gar-den and har-vest-ing hay,  
down the tools and down the pail,  
dish out me din-ner and poor out some ale.

A more adventurous, longer round from 2003, this time putting into play what I had learnt about avoiding parallel 5ths and 8ves in Renaissance music.

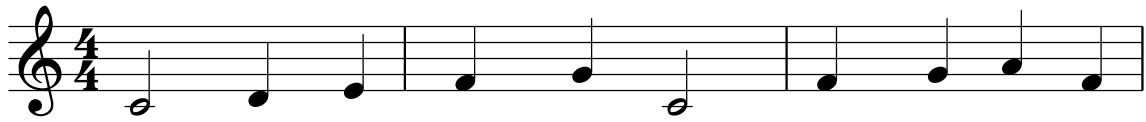
#### 4) 'Tis So, My Hedgerow (4 pts, Phrygian)

'Tis so, my hedge row,

myr-tle, box, hol-ly and yew doth grow.

I had been researching mazes around the time I wrote this round in 2005. It's an early experiment for me in the Phrygian mode, which is a weird-sounding key based on E.

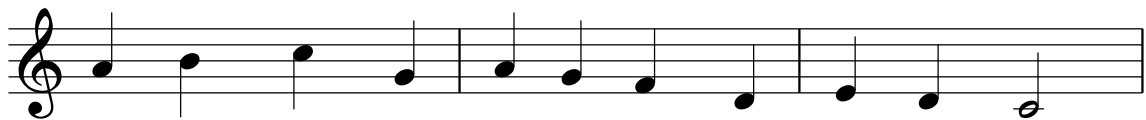
### 5) Come with me (3 pts, Ionian)



Come with me, Come with me, Where the for-est



meets the sea, Through Earth's gar - den



we will wind, So let us see what we can find,



Fa la la Fa la la la la la la la la la la



la la la.

My lady Joan wrote the lyrics to this one; the music is by me, written in 2009.

I was surprised to find out afterwards that while “fa la la” is used in madrigals and ordinary partsongs, it is not used as filler words in rounds. Instead you see a lot of “trolley lolly” and “hey ho”, amongst other such things.



## 6) A Fellow Who Fancied (8 pts, Ionian)

A fel-low who fan-cied a maid at the fair, Said  
dal-ly my dam-sel, with me if you dare, I'll  
shew you such sights as you ne-ver did see, With  
tri-fles and trin-kets, make mer-ry with me.

With jugglers and mummers, make merry with me.  
With shycock and skittles, make merry with me.  
With carols and catches, make merry with me.  
Come gabble and gossip, make merry with me.  
With candy and comfits, make merry with me.  
With dancing and leaping, make merry with me.  
Hey fa la la la la, make merry with me.

This round from 2009 stemmed from my study into writing 8-part 16thC music. This study cemented my understanding that every part should be an “independent” melody, even though they all need to concord harmonically with each other. Note that there are no two parts ever moving in parallel 5<sup>ths</sup> or 8<sup>ves</sup> and even when parts sound the same notes, they move in different ways.

A group of us sang this and “I gave Her Cakes” as an arts and sciences competition entry in 2010.

## 7) On Lush Vines (4 pts, Ionian)

On lush vines the fruit hangs low, To  
\*  
fill the butts all in a row, The land-lord wil-ling,  
Our cups fil - ling, Mer - ry we will sing of  
love and dy-ing.

This round was an entry into a Lochac arts and sciences competition in 2013.

The lyrics are inspired by a Rhine river cruise in 2012 when I was impressed by the vineyards arrayed on the valley slopes.

Noting that the Lant Roll rounds move around a bit on the clef, I transposed this to Bass for no good reason. This has a range of an octave and a half, which is quite common in period rounds.

## 8) Joan Came Home / Rowany Braid (5 pts, Dorian)

Joan came home and boi - led the

wash - ing, Ten loads in the tub to

beat and to scrub, So sing we now to-

- ge - ther.

This song was written as part of teaching my apprentice about counterpoint the day after coming home from Rowany Festival in 2013.

The term “Rowany Braid” has come to mean the decorative brown edging on hems after multiple days of festivities in rain and mud.

## **Newly Composed Rounds**

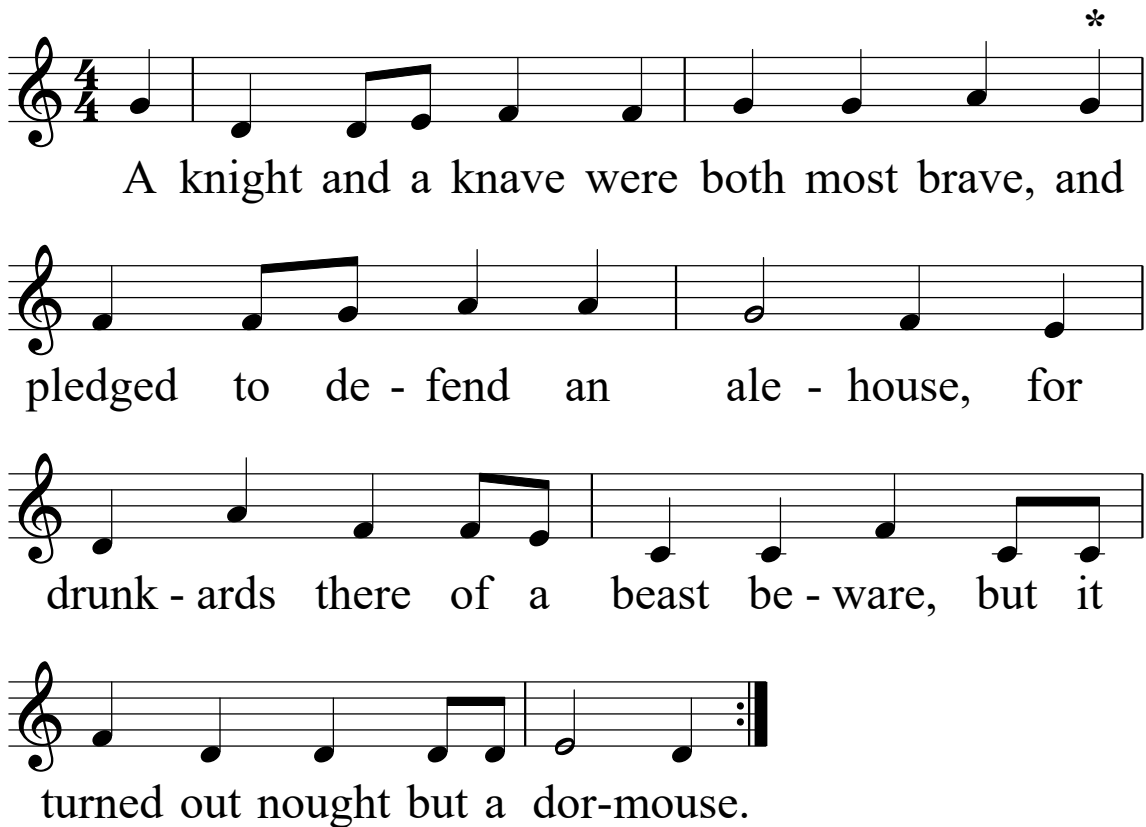
Please pay more attention to these songs – they were written in early 2025 expressly for this competition!

With the subjects of these rounds I have tried to represent some of the variety that is present in the Lant Roll. So there are drinking rounds, somewhat humourous rounds, mentions of people, animals, gardens and church bells. Also nonsense.

I have validated every word in the lyrics as being used either in the Lant Roll or in Shakespeare or listed in a dictionary as used before 1600.

I have provided recorded versions of these songs for the competition.

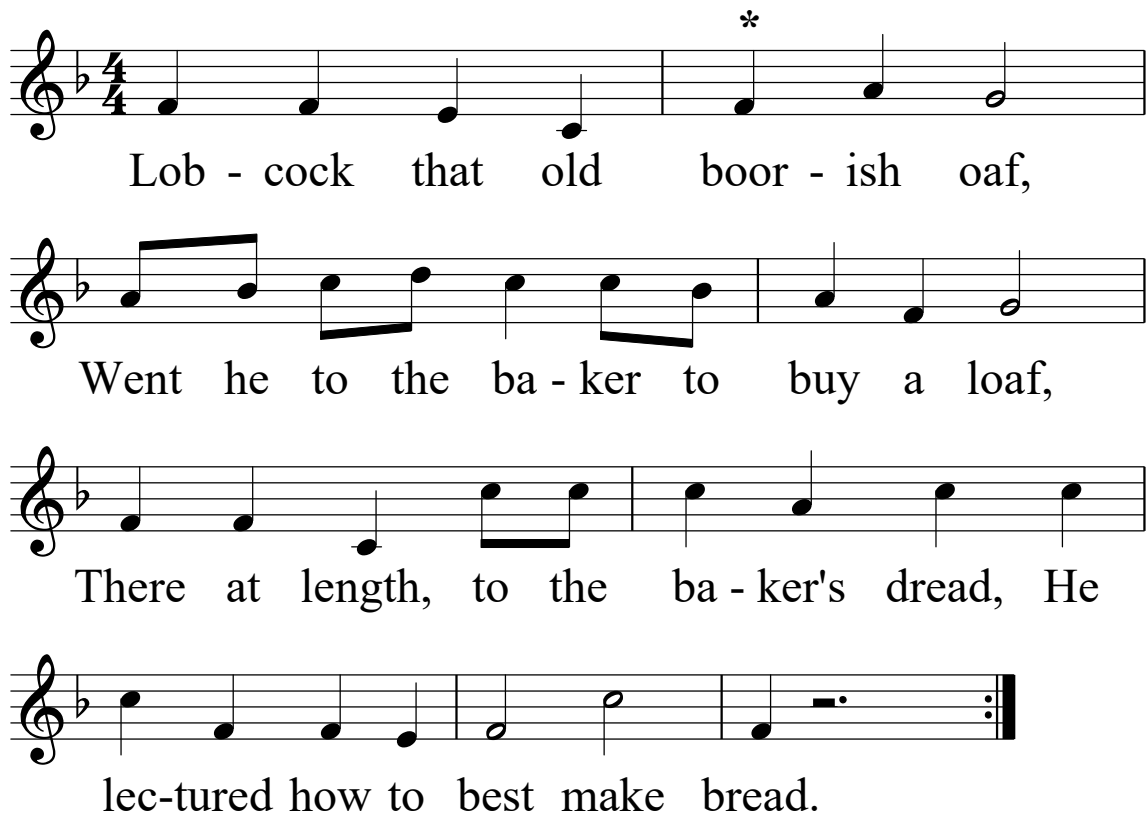
### 9) A Knight and a Knave (4 pts, Dorian)



A knight and a knave were both most brave, and  
pledged to de - fend an ale - house, for  
drunk - ards there of a beast be - ware, but it  
turned out nought but a dor-mouse.

This is inspired by the stories told in #21 “Jenkin the Jestor” and #29 “Now god be wth old Simion” from the Lant Roll, along with the many other rounds about drinking.

### 10) Lobcock (9 pts, Ionian in F)



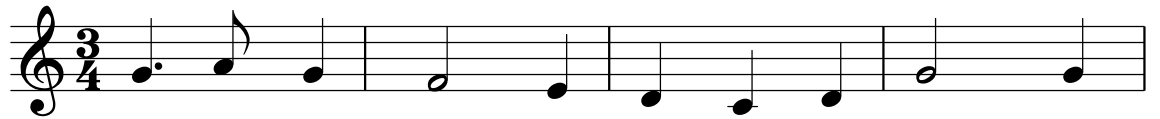
Lob - cock that old boor - ish oaf,  
Went he to the ba - ker to buy a loaf,  
There at length, to the ba - ker's dread, He  
lec-tured how to best make bread.

The more parts you have in a round, the harder it gets to have all of them independent melodies. In this case I added a suspension in bar 7 so as to not move F to E at the same time as in bar 1.

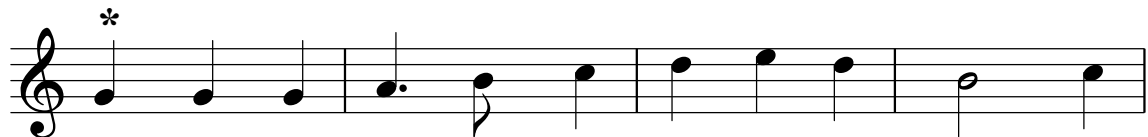
Lobcock is a villain character from period rounds, in this case I had him commit the sin of mansplaining.

See Lant Roll #33 “Let Lobcock leave his wyfe at home” and #45 “God be wth good felowes all”.

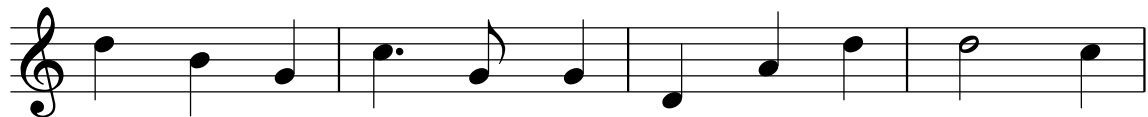
### 11) All the Year Round (4 pts, Mixolydian)



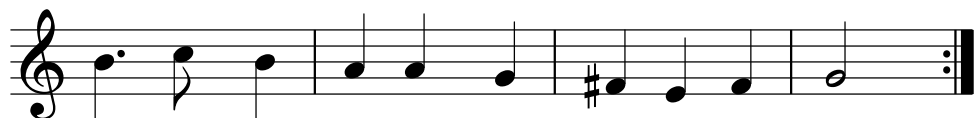
All the year round, the sea-sons we sing, Through



Sum-mer and Au-tumn and Win-ter and Spring, The



heat and the har-vest, the cold and the prime, Oh



ce - le-brate all of them, all of the time.

A round about the seasons. Plenty of songs about May and springtime from period, probably because they were happy to be out of Winter and could get back to the pub.

See Lant Roll #11 “As I me walked” for mention of May, and of course there is the much older “Summer Is Icummin In” from the a couple of hundred years earlier.



## 12) Ut re mi fa / Ding dong (3 pts, Ionian in F)

The musical score is written on five staves in 4/4 time, using a treble clef and a key signature of one flat (Bb). The melody is as follows:

- Staff 1: Four measures of half notes. Notes: F4 (ut), G4 (re), A4 (my), Bb4 (fa). Lyrics: ut re my fa
- Staff 2: Four measures. Notes: Bb4 (fa), A4 (my), G4 (re), F4 (ut). Lyrics: fa my
- Staff 3: Four measures. Notes: F4 (re), G4 (ut), A4 (With), Bb4 (a). Lyrics: re ut, With a
- Staff 4: Four measures. Notes: Bb4 (ding), A4 (with), G4 (a), F4 (dong). Lyrics: ding, with a dong,
- Staff 5: Four measures. Notes: E4 (Hear), D4 (me), C4 (ring), Bb4 (and). Lyrics: Hear me ring and
- Staff 6: Four measures. Notes: A4 (come), G4 (a), F4 (long), E4 (come). Lyrics: come a - long,
- Staff 7: Four measures. Notes: D4 (Fol), C4 (low), Bb4 (me), A4 (and). Lyrics: Fol-low me and
- Staff 8: Four measures. Notes: G4 (join), F4 (the), E4 (throng), D4 (Ding). Lyrics: join the throng, Ding
- Staff 9: Four measures. Notes: C4 (dong), Bb4 (dong), A4 (ding), G4 (dong). Lyrics: dong, ding dong.

This round combines the idea of solfege/solmization, originally developed as a singing teaching aid by Guido of Arezzo in the 11<sup>th</sup>C, with the idea of church bells calling the townsfolk in to service.

See Lant Roll #1 “All in to service” for bells, and #2 “My harte of golde” for starting the round with solmization.

### 13) Welcome Weary (8 pts, Aeolian)



Wel - come wear - y to our town,  
Sit and rest and ease thy frown,  
Pour a cup of per-ry, Then we shall be mer-ry,  
Down a down a der-ry down down.

Another 8-parter, but this time the next singer enters every bar.

Speaking of bars, this is a drinking song, with “perry” being pear cider.

I’m particularly taken by the melody for “Pour a cup of perry”, because it introduces the second beat of the bar as being an F chord, which was hitherto anticipated as an Am chord.

#### 14) I Beg Your Pardon (2 pts, Dorian in G)

I beg thy par - don, Said Joan in the  
gar-den, O Wi-ther shall I ev-er see such a  
flo-wer as thee?

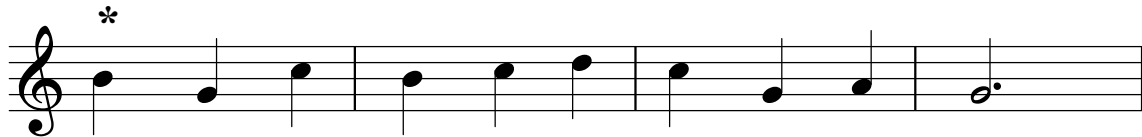
There are a few different rounds from period about Joan. Since my lady's name is Joan, I felt I should write some more.

See Lant Roll #37 "Jone come kisse me now" and #33 "Let Lobcock leave his wyfe at home".

### 15) Innkeeper, Innkeeper (4 pts, Mixolydian)



Inn-keep-er, inn-keep-er, make it all clear:



How will you show us you war-rant our cheer?



Ex-cel-lent pies and ve-ry good beer, A



praise-wor-thy meal for the fine gen-tles here.

Based on the reoccurring subjects, my theory is that rounds from period were often sung in taverns.

See Lant Roll #49 “Fille the cuppe & drinke” and #47 “The wynde blowes out of the west” for cheery drinking songs. Or #12 “Hey ho nobodie at home” for a morose drinking song where there’s no money for food.

## 16) O Lovely Joan (4 pts, Ionian in F)

O Love-ly Joan live-ly went down to the  
fair, To see craf-ty Cris-pin a ca-per-ing  
there, The maze was a mud-dle as all did de-  
-clare, So sang trol-ly lol-ly-lo that ve-ry fine  
pair.

My lady often finds herself wondering what I have gotten up to. I have keen interest in turf mazes, which were sometimes part of a village fair.

See Lant Roll #7 “Singe we nowe merilie” for some trolly lolly.

**17) He Left on a Little Boat (4pts, Dorian)**

He left on a lit-tle boat in a red tuft-mock-a-dow

coat.

This one was not part of my competition entry; I've written and added it later after the event. Tuftmockadow is a type of fabric.

### 18) A Hound and Horse (2pts, Mixolydian)

A hound and horse, good friends were  
they, One would Bark, the oth - er  
Neigh, And fol - low each oth - er a -  
- round and a - round, Un-til said the horse and  
said the hound.

Animals feature here and there in rounds. This one is a catch, where due to cunning placement of rests, the animal noises get mixed up and hilarity ensues.

See Lant Roll #34 “The owld dog” for an animal-themed catch, and #33 “Let Lobcock Leave” for another catch. In #33 the careful placement of rests mean the cry of “Ti hee” is obviously followed by “Tah ha” from the other voice.

## 18) Come Troll the Brown Bowl (2 pts, Aeolian)



Come troll the brown bowl, Sing a round, O



trol - ly lol, Be - gin now, hold in now, We



both a-gree and do a-vow, Hey ho, there we



go, heave & ho hey trol - ly lol - ly lo



trol-li - lo-li-lo. List-en well, what shall I say? Two



parts in one, a cheer - ful match,



Chase me on my mer - ry way, But

thou wilt ne-ver Catch ut mi ut re

mi fa mi mi mi Here I must fi-nish, for

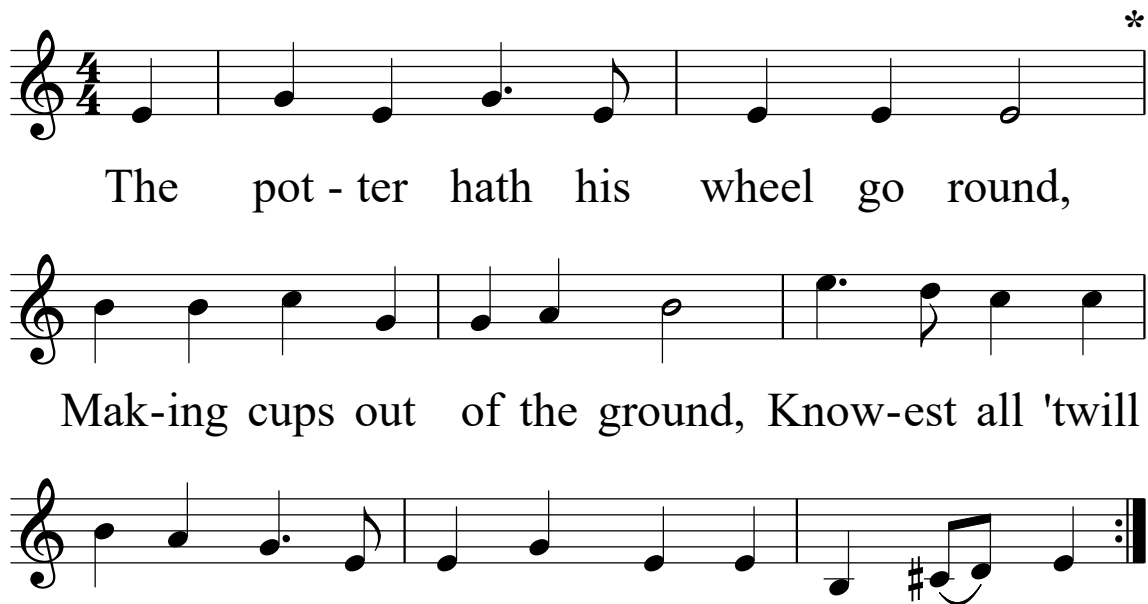
tolls the great bell, whip & go, whip & go, a-

- dieu and fare-well.

This one is written as a canon, like number 54 “All into service”, so not expected to be repeated and in this case has only two voices at once.


I collected up a bunch of nonsense words from the Lant Roll and shoved them into a new long and winding song, a la #30 “Com follow me merily”, #2 “My Harte of Golde” and #44 “Fare well my hart of gould”.

### 19) The Potter (4 pts, Phrygian)



The pot - ter hath his wheel go round,  
Mak-ing cups out of the ground, Know-est all 'twill  
not go long, A - fore this comes a drink - ing song.

**Ground**



Roun - de-lay Roun - de-lay

See Lant Roll #31 “Conso re my fa” for a round with a bass ground that stays on the same note.

Ground = clay, get it? It’s a pun!

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For number 20 “Hail to Thee”, I grabbed a few short phrases from Shakespeare (“my hearty mates”, “mark my greetings well”, “thou shalt have my leave”) and made the final round of the collection be a greeting and a farewell.

## 20) Hail to Thee (5 pts, Aeolian in D)



Hail to thee my heart - y mates and

mark my greet-ings well, I bring the gift of

friend-ship fair and have fine tales to tell, From

pla - ces near and far from here, I'll

men-tion what be - fell, But thou shalt have my

leave ere long when I shall cry fare-well! Hey

down a down and down a down, hey

down a down a dell.

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