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**To the Editor of the *North Devon Journal*.**

**THE GUDE OLD TIMES IN WELCOMBE**

Witchcraft continuy'd

Dree miles vrom yer an neer to Morwenstow,  
Old\* Cherry Vanstone karry'd aun hur games,  
Hur was, as ivery boddy yused tu naw,  
The dred ov childern, an ov farmer's dames;  
An 'twas no wonder thet thay was a'feerd,  
Vor ivery wan, vor minny miles arown,  
Aythur sawd Cherry, or ov hur had heerd,  
Rite dru vrom Kilkiden tu Hartland Town.  
Th' old hag was quite if inny wan wud playse hur,  
An if thay pay'd hur, hur wud du min gude,  
But laur a massy, if you did but tayse hnr,  
Vor sartin avaur long yu wud be lude;

Hur'd slock away the mayt from little brats  
Wen gwain tu skule, or stayl ther clokes an hats,  
An if thay shude offend hur wanse or twise,  
They wud be shore tu bring hoam lots ov lise;  
An shore as fate, abowt ther skin thay'd bide,  
Avaur ther fathers went to git mun cride.  
The neyburs was afeerd ov Cherry's spite,  
Zo yused to giv hur things to keep hur rite.  
The Passon gied hur milk vrow day to day,  
An vay owt som hur sildom went away.  
Wan day it happened thay forgot to save it,  
Zo wen hur kald, ov kuse, hur kuden have it,  
They maydens boath hexpressed ther greef about it,  
Nex day thay'd zee hur shudden go way owt it.  
Old Cherry turned away in zitch a pet,  
An jibbered owt "This thing thay shall regret."  
Wen passin by the hogs hup in the sty,  
Hur glinted pon mun way hur hievil hie.  
The passon had a zow an twelve yong pegs,  
Zo fine a brude as iver stood pon legs,  
But awl wud stan hupon ther hinder veet,  
Wile way ther vaur wans thay the hare wud beet,  
Like boys playin a drum, 'twas sad tu zeet.  
In dree days time the yong wans awl was ded,  
The pore old zow, thay nack'd hur pon the hed.  
Som zed 'twas kleer vrom thare peculyar ways,  
Thay dide vrom nort but vute and mowth disayse,  
Or thic new thing thay kal the rinderpest,  
Ware zom die hoff and then thay kill the rest.  
But hew can zay that thay baint auverluded,  
As in old times wen thay the same was tuded;  
Vor if 'twas true thay did in olden days,

Kill pegs and kattel way ther witchen ways,  
Muss be the same tu-day—thare's witches still,  
Hew, owt ov spite, wud hurt, an mayn, an kill.  
How is it? zur the please doant luke abowt,  
An try ther best to veind the witches owt;  
An if 'tis prued thay hurt the kavs or kows,  
Let mun be hanged, or kept in prison howze,  
Like yurs ago, the thing was prued zo klear,  
Thay hanged the witches hup in Lankysheer.  
Twassen onny vrom the passon's,  
That hur had hur littel vavers,  
Vor the farmers ov the Parish,  
Zom vrom feer an zom vrom kindness,  
Yused vor gie hur hot hur wanted,  
Hude vor yet hurzel in winter,  
An in zummer frute an tettys,  
An in autumn cups of honny.  
But wan time as I muss tell ee,  
Farmer Hockin did offend hur,  
Kind an gude was he tu pore vokes,  
An tu Cherry mangst the tethers,  
It was his delite an plashur,  
Tu reeleeve a needy naybur,  
In his corte he had a huderick,  
An wan day he zed tu Cherry,  
If by chance thee wantst a facket,  
Com and hav hot thee requirest.  
You may think he niver wanted,  
Tu repayt his ginres hoffer,  
Aich halternat day vownd Cherry,  
At the farmer haupen doreway.  
An aich time hur had hur fardel,

Dru the winter and the spring time,  
Till it kom'd tu time wen hosses,  
Be turn'd owt tu zummer paster,  
Wen the farmer thort his neybur,  
Had recayvd a gudely portion,  
Ov his rick or huded hackets,  
Zo wan day he zed, "My humman,  
I hev vownd ee hude in winter,  
Onny Thesdy yude a facket,  
An tew days vaur thet anether,  
Yu muss naw my ricks ov fackets,  
Wassen made aloan vor neyburs.  
I hev vownd ee hude in winter,  
But cant du it in the zummer."  
In the nite wen thay was slaypin,  
Missus yerd a klap ov thinder,  
In hur frite hur nudged the measter,  
An zed hur "Old Cherry's wakin,  
How I wish I'd rinnd and catch'd hur,  
An a gied hur thickly facket,  
Measter zed he wish'd hur'd din zo,  
But thit now 'twas no yuse frettin,  
Thay muss wayt hotel the mornin,  
Wen he haupd all would be vitty,  
But law massy in the mornin,  
Thay was friten'd awl tu pieces,  
Wen thay vownd ded in the hedgestraw,  
The best hoss in ther possesshun.  
Will the oldest son kom'd rinnin,  
In tu tell the dredful storey,  
Owt thay went greevin, lamentin,  
Vowin vengeance pon old Cherry,

Wile thay awl was in the rawdway,  
Siddenly long kom'd the passon,  
Wen the farmer told his storey,  
How hid bin zo kind to Cherry,  
An ses he "Zee how her'th sarved me,"  
I hev awlways payd my Church rates,  
An the tithes in proper sayson,  
An beezides I've voted vor ee,  
In the vestry as you've wished me,  
An I vow tis part awl rayson,  
That a witch shude be permitted,  
To vetch owt hur spite an henvy,  
Way the litenin an the thinder,  
As yer revrinse zees beaur ee.  
Then the passon neerly menshun'd,  
'Twas fhe litenin that had dun it.  
"Iss zed Hockin but old Cherry  
Worked it hup to zitch a pitch  
That it struke the hoss and nack'd en  
Pon his back rite in the ditch.  
'Twas in vayn the passon hargeyd,  
That 'twas dun by natur's laws,  
Moar he zed zo, moar the farmer,  
Zed old Cherry was the cause.  
Vaur I stap I'd like vor tell ee  
How a chap sarved Nanny Neale.  
Though a witch hur had hur raysons,  
An cud yer, and zee, and veel,  
But the rascals vexed an taysed hur,  
In hur cottage ov a nite,  
An thay zed if hur kan witch us  
Let hur du it in hur spite!

The Salamanca Corpus: "The Gude Old Times in Welcombe" (17th December, 1885)

Wan dark nite a chap named Bobby,  
Klimm'd hup tu the chimbley top,  
An the strange honearthly rumpus,  
Made the pore old Nanny hop.  
Pore old sawl was boylin tettys,  
In a krock hupon stoans,  
An hur zot beside a watchin,  
Like a heep ov skins an boans.  
Bobby lowered down the chimblay,  
Way a roap a littel hook,  
An he lifted Nanny's tettys,  
In a twink rite hoff the crook.  
Nanny watched hur tettys travellin,  
Slawly tu the chimblay top,  
Pore old crayter hur cude du nort  
Onny meerly cry owt stop!  
Then hur ring'd hur hands an muttered—  
"Massy pon my sinful sawl!  
Awl my supper's hup the chimblay,  
Tettys, water, crock, an awl."  
Bobby clamber'd down the ladder,  
An kom'd round tu Nanny's dore,  
Puttin down the krock, he rattild,  
An hur vownd hur krock wanse moar.  
"Ah!" zed hur, "Hot made thee bolt  
Hup the chimblay in zitch haste,  
Thee was glad tu kom tu holt,  
Ov the cold thee's had a taste."  
Nanny hoften told the storey  
Ov hur pore repentant krock,  
How wan nite he went an left hur,  
Then kom'd back tu dore an nock'd.



The Salamanca Corpus: "The Gude Old Times in Welcombe" (17th December, 1885)

Wan day Bobby told his maister,  
Way a twinkel and a twitch,  
How he'd prued zo cleer as daylite,  
Thet old Nanny was no witch.  
For, ses he, "I tuke a ladder,  
An had zitch a splendid spree,  
Tuke hur tettys hup the chimbley,  
But hur niver thort t'was me."

In my nex an konkludin letter on witchcraft I intend to tell abowt Lucy Passmore, the  
Wite Witch ov West Mill, an hot hur yused tu kar awn.

Yours truly,

R. GILES

Welcombe, Dec. 12, 1885.

\*Name altered.

