



## Come Singing newsletter, September 2025

Dear Everyone,

It's September already! Although it spells the end of the holidays, September always feels like a time for new starts, burst of golden sunshine, apples ripening and chutney bubbling on the stove...

As I began thinking about this letter, Manchester United had just been defeated by tiny, valiant Grimsby and it reminded me of being told of the Manchester heatwave of 1906. In July that year, Manchester City had paid £1,000 to buy Jimmy Conlin, one of the first superstar footballers, from Bradford City. The temperature was 34 degrees for his debut game, on 1 September 1906 and Conlin played with a knotted hankie around his head! He collapsed in the heat and came back in the second half, but several other Manchester City players retired due to heat exhaustion. This was long before talk of global warming, but there were wildfires in Yorkshire and reports of increased infant mortality in the cities because of problems with polluted water...



[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VADPSxPb\\_BA](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VADPSxPb_BA)

Can you name the anthems for these football clubs? (Answers at the end!)

1. West Ham
2. Liverpool
3. Ipswich
4. Manchester City
5. Crystal Palace
6. Newcastle

By September the apples are usually ripening, and this year it's been interesting to see how my little family of trees has reacted to the drought and climate change. They all have such different personalities and this year Blenheim Orange is on strike, having a year off, and the tiny James Grieve has only produced a few tiny fruit instead of its usual half dozen huge golden globes. You're supposed to pick and store D'Arcy Spice on Bonfire Night while they still taste like cardboard, but by Christmas they are crisp, succulent and delicious! This year the tree been raining down windfalls for ages, so goodness knows if there'll be any left by November, and the Ellison's Orange is loaded but the fruit are wormy. The poor things are as confused as we are by the weather...



Here are a few apples in songs to go with your crumble and custard!  
(Answers at the end)

1. Sung by the wonderful Nina and Frederick The prettiest girl i ever saw,  
saw sipping .... through a straw.
2. One for the Cockneys among us - 'apples and pears' as rhyming  
slang. I wonder if you can understand even half of it!
3. It's cherry pink and ..... when your true love comes your way.
4. A riddle song, collected in Dorset in 1906. Do you know the answers?  
I will give my love an apple without e'er a core,  
I will give my love a house without e'er a door.  
I will give my love a palace, wherein she may be  
And she may unlock it without e'er a key.
5. A good way to become teacher's pet!
6. One for spring: 'With a heart that is true, I'll be waiting for you' - but  
where??
7. Who is sweet as apple cider?
8. An old Christmas carol: The tree of life my soul hath seen, laden with  
fruit and always green; the trees of nature fruitless be, compared  
with .....

Autumn has always inspired poets - and don't you find that your dreams are at their most vivid in autumn and spring? Here's a poem describing the gentle change of season...

When you are already here  
you appear to be only  
a name that tells of you  
whether you are present or not

and for now it seems as though  
you are still summer  
still the high familiar  
endless summer  
yet with a glint  
of bronze in the chill mornings  
and the late yellow petals  
of the mullein fluttering  
on the stalks that lean  
over their broken  
shadows across the cracked ground

but they all know  
that you have come  
the seed heads of the sage  
the whispering birds  
with nowhere to hide you  
to keep you for later

you  
who fly with them  
you who are neither  
before nor after  
you who arrive  
with blue plums  
that have fallen through the night  
perfect in the dew

W.S.Merwin



September is back-to-school time, with memories of new exercise books, getting used to lace-ups and new Clarks sandals, and all the palaver of getting back into routine. Do you still divide the year into school terms, I wonder?

Over the holidays I've been re-reading some of the books I enjoyed as a child and on the way made a few real discoveries. The first was that Rudyard Kipling was a gifted artist and illustrated some his own books, including Just So Stories and Jungle Book. He was the son of an art teacher and nephew of the famous artist Sir Edward Burne-Jones and some of his illustrations have taken on a life of their own: my favourite is The cat that walked alone but there are so many more - an extraordinary talent.



I wonder what Kipling would have made of this!  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fwTCIRr1x6g>

Another discovery was that the author of the rather scary Moonfleet, John Meade Falkner, also only wrote a fascinating mystery story The Nebuly Coat, and was the chairman of the arms manufacturer Armstrong Whitworth during World War 1, an expert in paleography and honorary Librarian to the Dean and Chapter Library of Durham Cathedral. This gave him the right to live in the Divinity House, just outside the front door of the Cathedral - how heavenly!



Even if Victorian novels aren't your thing, The Nebuly Coat is a wonderful read and kept me guessing until the very end.

At this point there should be a recipe of some kind or another, and it's certainly the time to fill the pantry with plum jam, apple chutney, quince jelly and suchlike to get you through the winter. But in case you don't have time to stand, stir and simmer, here instead is a recipe for uncooked apricot chutney, not with fruit from the garden but dried apricots! It's delicious and very simple.

#### Uncooked chutney

225g (8 oz) dried apricots  
900g (2 lb) tart cooking apples (Bramleys?)  
225g (8 oz) sultanas  
225 g (8 oz) dates, stoned  
450g (1 lb) onions  
2 garlic cloves  
350g (12 oz) light soft brown sugar  
425 ml (15 fl oz) malt vinegar  
1 tsp ground ginger

1. Place the apricots in a bowl, cover with water, soak overnight and then drain. (If you use no-need-to-soak apricots, omit this step!)
2. Mince all the fruit, onions and garlic together or chop in a food processor. Add the sugar and vinegar,
3. Stir well and spoon into cool, sterilised jars. Cover with vinegar-proof lids and store for at least three months before using.

And that's about it for this ragbag of a newsletter...

Don't forget the wonderful Heritage Open days from September 12th - 21st. Lots of the venues and talks are in Norwich, but there are plenty throughout the county and they're all free - chance to satisfy your curiosity about fascinating buildings and places that may not always open their doors to the public! <https://norfolkheritageopendays.co.uk/>

And otherwise keep well and happy, and we'll hope to see you soon at singing the Millennium Library or Earlham Library!

With best wishes from all at Come Singing



## Quiz answers

### Football anthems

1. I'm forever <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hfvegiuYHB4>
2. You'll never walk alone -  
[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OV5\\_LQArLa0](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OV5_LQArLa0)
3. Singing the blues <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wJA8b3esxfE>
4. Blue Moon <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qoi3TH59ZEs>
5. Glad all over <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EipdAjlImrc>
6. Going Home <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3DB-uJ0TxKQ>

### Apple songs answers

1. Sipping cider through a straw  
[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EwVL\\_UNsAug](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EwVL_UNsAug)
2. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Afn6JsyjHHA>
3. Apple blossom white [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=q\\_86hrZHs5k](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=q_86hrZHs5k)
4. My head is the apple without e'er a core, My mind is the house without e'er a door; My heart is the palace, wherein she may be; And she may unlock it without e'er a key.
5. Apple for the teacher <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JEEEnCK6P0Ik>
6. In the shade of the old apple tree  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lmSB4DxdVZE>
7. Ida! <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rkrrTAb2kBM>
8. Jesus Christ the apple tree  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iPJBFYuUWvY>