

A. E. Housman (1859-1936)

*2 Bredon Hill*  
(*A Shropshire Lad*, 21)

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)