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Bleckell Murry Neet

The thematic material for this piece is loosely based on the melody used in the song by Robert Anderson. This melody was not written down by Anderson and only survived in the oral tradition. A version of the tune was written down in 1907 by Miss Lattimer of Carlisle, on hearing her father sing the song.

Robert Anderson (1770 – 1833) became known as the ‘Cumberland Bard’. He wrote songs in Cumbrian dialect about the people and places he knew and his songs remained popular long after his death. ‘Bleckell’ refers to Blackwell, which was a village to the south of Carlisle and is now a suburb of that expanding city. A ‘murry neet’ (or merry night) is a party, usually with music and dancing.

Robert Anderson wrote about a particular merry night which took place at the White Ox pub. This seems to have been a lively all-night party with people from all around the area having fun. At the end of the night, as they all left, the revellers made a collection for old blind Jenny, a poor woman of the neighbourhood.

When the White Ox was finally demolished at the beginning of the twentieth century, many of the locals were sad at the loss of the historic link to the poems and songs of Robert Anderson.

Bleckell Murry Neet

Aa, lad! sec a murry--neet we've hed at Bleckell,
The sound o' the fiddle yet rings i' my ear;
Aw reet clipt and heel'd were the lads and the lasses,
And monie a cliver lish huzzy was theer:
The bettermer swort sat snug i' the parlour,
I' th' pantry the sweethearters cutter'd sae soft;
The dancers they kick'd up a stour i' the kitchen;
At lanter the caird--lakers sat i' the loft.

The clogger o' Dawston's a famish top hero,
And bangs aw the player--fwok twenty to yen;
He stamp'd wid his fit, and he shouted and royster'd,
Till the sweet it ran off at his varra chin en;
Then he held up ae han leyke the spout of a tea--pot,
And danc'd cross the buckle, and leather--te--patch;
When they cried, 'bonny Bell! ' he lap up to the ceilin,
And ay crack'd his thouns for a bit of a fratch.

The Hivverby lads at fair drinkin are seypers;
At cockin the Dawstoners niver wer bet;
The Buckabank chaps are reet famish sweethearters,
Their kisses just soun leyke the sneck of a yeat;
The lasses o' Bleckell are sae monie angels;
The Cummersdale beauties ay glory in fun--
God help the peer fellow that glymes at them dancin,
He'll steal away heartless as sure as a gun!

The 'bacco was strang, and the yell it was lythey,
And monie a yen bottom'd a whart leyke a kurn;
Daft Fred', i' the nuik, leyke a hawf--rwoasted deevil,
Telt sly smutty stwories, and meade them aw gurn;
Then yen sung ``Tom Linton," anudder ``Dick Watters,"
The auld farmers bragg'd o' their fillies and fwoals,
Wi' jeybin and jwokin, and hotchin and laughin,
Till some thought it teyme to set off to the cwoals.

But, hod! I forgat--when the clock strack eleebem,
The dubbler was brong in, wi' wheyte breed and brown;
The gully was sharp, the girt cheese was a topper,
And lumps big as lapstons our lads gobbl'd down:
Ay the douse dapper lanlady, cried, 'Eat and welcome!
I' God's neame step forret; nay dunnet be bleate!'
Our guts aw weel pang'd, we buck'd up for blin Jenny,
And neist paid the shot on a girt powder plate.

Now full to the thropple, wi' heed--warks and heartaches,
Some crap to the clock--kease instead o' the duir;
Then sleepin and snworin tuik pleast o' their rwoarin,
And teane abuin tudder e'en laid on the fluir.
The last o' December, lang, lang we'll remember,
At five i' the mworn, eighteen hundred and twee:
Here's health and success to the brave Jwohnnny Dawston,
And monie sec meetins may we live to see!

Bleckell Murry Neet

Based on a song by Robert Anderson

Heslam

Lento ♩ = 50

mp

Lento ♩ = 50

mf

6

10

14

The musical score is written for piano in 6/8 time. It consists of four systems of staves. The first system shows the beginning of the piece with a tempo marking of 'Lento' and a quarter note equal to 50 beats. The melody is in the right hand, starting with a half note G4, followed by eighth notes A4, B4, and C5. The left hand provides a harmonic accompaniment with chords. The second system continues the melody and accompaniment. The third system starts at measure 10. The fourth system starts at measure 14. Dynamics include mezzo-piano (mp) and mezzo-forte (mf). The score ends with a final cadence in the right hand.

19

mf

24

29

34