

The Old Stone Houses

Words and Music: Nigel Harbron

The musical score is written in 3/4 time with a key signature of two flats (Bb and Eb). It consists of seven staves of music. Above each staff are chord symbols: Bb, F, Gm, Eb, Bb, Cm, F, Bb, F, Gm, Eb, Bb, F, Bb, Bb, Eb, Bb, Cm, F, Bb, Eb, Bb, F, Bb, Bb, F, Eb, F, Bb, Bb. The lyrics are: In ev - ery vil-lage and ev - ery town, The old stone hous-es are fal - ling down. The old is out and the new is in, Now con - crete tiles re-place sheets of tin. When old stone cot-tag - es were the rule, Hand hewn peat was the on - ly fuel; When it was wet 'twas a waste of space, But when it was dry it would warm your face. Roofs were of - ten just made of earth, with gras - ses and flowers grow-ing in the turf. Hea-ther or bra-cken could some-times be bound, Pro - vi - ded a that - cher could be found.

*Ch: In every village and every town
The old stone houses are falling down.
The old is out and the new is in,
Now concrete tiles replace sheets of tin.*

When old stone cottages were the rule,
Hand-hewn peat was the only fuel;
When it was wet 'twas a waste of space,
But when it was dry it would warm your face.
Roofs were often just made of earth
With grasses and flowers growing in the turf.
Heather or bracken could sometimes be bound
Provided a thatcher could be found.

Around the cottages vegetables grew -
Praties and carrots for Irish stew.
There was room for a cow and sometimes a pig,
And often a space where you'd dance a jig.
Children were born there, young people wed,
There was always a room to lay out the dead;
Death and misfortune were borne with grace,
The house was an ever-enduring place.

When families moved out, the old dwellings died,
And the people lost their sense of pride.
Now in their place new houses grow -
Ostentatious, so full of show.
They have many rooms, but little inside,
And they're springing up both far and wide.
As each one is given a fancy name
The old stone houses look on in shame.



Quaint, but no doubt miserable for a family to live in, most of the remaining old cottages are now holiday homes as the vast majority of country dwellers have built themselves monstrous piles in which they rattle round. Having said this, the Tiger Economy has virtually ground to a halt, so very few new buildings have appeared since the 'crash', and many part-built dwellings remain eerily incomplete.

