

The Oak and the Ash

Recorded under the title *Quodling's Delight, The Oak and the Ash* is an anonymous folksong from the *Fitzwilliam Virginal Book*, believed to have been compiled by keyboard player Francis Tregian between 1609 and 1619. The song is about a maid who does not like city life and longs to go back to the country.

A North Country maid up to London had strayed,
And though with her nature it did not agree.
She wept and sighed, and she bitterly cried,
"I wish once again in the North I could be!
Oh, the oak and the ash, and the bonny ivy tree,
They flourish at home in my own country."

"As sadly I roam, I regret my dear home,
Where lads and young lasses are making the hay.
The merry bells ring and the birds sweetly sing,
The meadows are pleasant and maidens are gay.
Oh, the oak and the ash, and the bonny ivy tree,
They flourish at home in my own country."

"No doubt if I please, I could marry with ease,
Where maidens are fair, many lovers will come,
But the one whom I wed must be North Country bred,
And carry me back to my North Country home.
Oh, the oak and the ash, and the bonny ivy tree,
They flourish at home in my own country."