

"Bricks and mortar will not stay"

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I've always been immersed in music, and I never forget a song lyric. So a college friend used to call me "Verse Boy" and would occasionally challenge me to come up with a hymn or folk song's lesser-known stanzas on command. "National anthem, verse three" he might say, and off I'd go with "And where is that band /Who so vauntingly swore..." (That one's a doozy, by the way. Compared to verse three, verse one might as well be "[This Is My Song](#).")

Anyway, this week someone linked to an old *Mental Floss* post on [subsequent verses of children's songs](#). A few were familiar to me: I knew that the little teapot was not just short and stout but also clever (though I think we sang "special"), and I knew that after you talk to the black sheep about wool you should ask around the barnyard about other stuff before you go. I also knew Ella Fitzgerald's riff on her yellow basket, and I think I could have come up with most of darlin' Clementine's story and at least a little of my Bonnie's.

I had no idea, however, that Bingo's farmer moonlighted as a homebrewer. ("He called it rare good Styngo!") Or that "London Bridge" offers a detailed primer on building materials and the risks involved. Actually, I grew up singing just one additional verse to that one: "Take the keys and lock her up," which [Wikipedia's substantial article](#) doesn't even mention.

Anyway, children's folk songs are fascinating. Have a good weekend.