

Three Men of Gotham (Peacock / trad)

*I was delighted to find this very different sort of drinking song in **The Pocket Book of Poems and Songs for the Open Air** compiled by Edward Thomas, given to me by Susan Hills. It's obviously linked to the nursery rhyme: "Three wise men of Gotham went to sea in a bowl. / If the bowl had been stronger, my song would be longer."*

Seamen three, what men be ye?
Gotham's three wise men are we.
Whither in your bowl so free?
To rake the moon from out the sea.
The bowl goes trim, the moon doth shine.
And our ballast is old wine.
And your ballast is old wine.

Who is this so fast adrift?
I am he they call Old Care.
Here on board we will thee lift.
No. I may not enter there.
Wherefore so? 'Tis Jove's decree;
In a bowl care may not be.
In a bowl care may not be.

Fear ye not the waves that roll?
No, in charmed bowl we swim.
What's the charm that floats the bowl?
Water may not pass the brim.
The bowl goes trim, the moon doth shine.
And our ballast is old wine.
And your ballast is old wine.

From Judy Cook's CD "If You Sing Songs..."

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