

# And The Rose Grew 'Round The Briar

by Paul Cooper

After writing this column for over ten years, I decided it was time to publish the most widely sung ballad in the English language. I listened to over two dozen versions on Youtube to find one that I thought was simple, clear, easy to learn, and fairly true to the original. I found this one by an interesting foksinger named Farya Faraji:

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kHRoDCd6nS0&list=RDkHRoDCd6nS0&start\\_radio=1](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kHRoDCd6nS0&list=RDkHRoDCd6nS0&start_radio=1) I

have transcribed it in the same key, so you can play along with the recording. You can also hear this version on the HFMS Audio Archives page at: <https://www.houstonfolkmusic.org/AudioArchives>

## Barbara Allen

- *Traditional*

**C G C**

'Twas in the merry month of May

**F C**

When green buds all were swellin'

**F Am**

Sweet William on his death bed lay

**C F G C**

For love of Bar - bara Allen

He sent his servant to the town

To the place where she was dwellin'

Saying, "You must come to my master, dear

If your name be Barbara Allen"

"Oh, mother, oh, mother, go dig my grave

Make it both long and narrow

Sweet William died of love for me

And I will die of sorrow"

So slowly, slowly she got up

And slowly she drew nigh him

And the only words to him did say

"Young man, I think you're dying"

"And father, oh, father, go dig my grave

Make it both long and narrow

Sweet William died on yesterday

And I will die tomorrow"

He turned his face unto the wall

And death was in him wellin'

"Goodbye, goodbye to my friends all

Be good to Barbara Allen"

Barbara Allen was buried in the old churchyard

Sweet William was buried beside her

Out of sweet William's heart there grew a rose

Out of Barbara Allen's, a briar

When he was dead and laid in grave

She heard the death bells knellin'

And every stroke to her did say

"Hard-hearted Barbara Allen"

They grew and grew in the old churchyard

Till they could grow no higher

At the end they formed a true lover's knot

And the rose grew 'round the briar