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The Farmer's Boy

Collected from Rob Johnson, who learnt it from George Sewell, 18 April 1904. Vaughan Williams collected this popular song, which was reproduced in many broadside collections, four times in Essex.

The sun had set behind yon hill across the dreary moor when
 weary and lame a boy there came up to a farmers door Can
 you tell me wherever there be one that will me employ for to
 plough and sow, to reap and mow, and be a farmers boy

The sun went down behind yon hill across the dreary moor,
 Weary and lame a boy there came up to a farmer's door,
 Can you tell me wherever there be one that will me employ
 For to plough and sow, to reap and mow and be a farmer's boy.

My father's dead and mother's left with her five children small
 And what is worse for mother I'm the eldest of them all,
 Though little I be I fear no work if you will me employ
 For to plough and sow, to reap and mow and be a farmer's boy.

And if you cannot me employ one favour I've to ask,
 Oh shelter me till break of day from this cold chilling blast,
 At break of day I'll trudge away elsewhere to seek employ
 For to plough and sow, to reap and mow and be a farmer's boy.

The daughter said, Pray try the lad, no longer let him seek,
 Oh yes dear child, the farmer cried, for tears stole down her cheek,
 For those who work 'tis hard to want or wander for employ
 For to plough and sow, to reap and mow and be a farmer's boy.

In course of time he grew a man, the good old farmer died,
 He left the lad the farm and the daughter for his bride,
 The boy that was, now farmer is, he smiles and thinks with joy
 Of the lucky day when he came that way to be a farmer's boy.