

Walter and Merry



Wake up Walter, time to get dressed,
There's churches to dedicate, altars to bless.
Here is the list of the places to do
in Warwickshire, Worcestershire, Gloucestershire too.
Here's your horse, a dappled grey mare
who'll carry you safely everywhere,
Her name is Merry and she is ready
to take you on this jamboree.

Walter Maidstone liked to dine,
He stayed with monks and drank their wine.
Each day he went to a different church
His staff having found them in a search.
Peasants swept whilst vicars prayed,
The Bishop of Worcester must be obeyed.
For many churches in Walter's care
lacked his confirmation that they were there!

Kidderminster was first on the list
to welcome Walter into its midst.
Merry, she carried him into town
and outside the church she set him down.
People gathered from far and wide
and Walter led them all inside.
The great altar was consecrated
and mass could now be celebrated.

Walter travelled around a lot
and Merry she happily did a fast trot.
It didn't take long to reach the south,
People knew they were coming through word of mouth.
Fine processions were seen on the way
with giants and beasts 'most every day.
The dancers and singers joined the fun,
This meant it was something for everyone.

Walter was the party king,
A churchwarden's ale was really his thing.
He loved sports and mystery plays,
At Frampton he met with a giant St Blaise.
Whaddon put on a special dance
and Harescombe's shawms played at his entrance.
The Fretherne feast was such a delight
he nearly partied through the night!

All too soon his work was done,
The last church to visit was Cherington.
Walter arrived there and knocked on the door,
He sprinkled water on walls and floor.
Incense wafted through the air
and much of the service was spent in prayer.
Hoorah for Walter in thirteen fifteen
and all of the s'ven hundred years between.

Walter Maidstone was quite a chap,
His work seemed to leave little time for a nap.
His fine pony deserved a rest
and Merry retired where the grass was best.
Come then join us and sing and dance
for to celebrate our heritage we have a chance.
We're pleased to bring this song to you,
The tune is local, *Edi Beo Thu*.

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