



# Old Joe Clark

Fiddle tune

Arr: Gilbert DeBenedetti

VERSE: Old Joe Clark, he had a house, Eight-een sto-ries high,

Ev'-ry sto-ry in that house was filled with chick-en pie. CHORUS: Fare thee well, Old Joe Clark,

Fare thee well I say, Fare the well, Old Joe Clark, Ain't got long to stay.

Wished I had a nickel  
Wished I had a dime  
Wished I had a pretty girl  
To kiss and call her mine

Old Joe Clark, the preacher's son,  
Preached all over the plain  
The only text he ever knew  
Was High, low, Jack and the game

Wish I was a sugar tree  
Standin' in the town  
Every time a pretty girl passed  
I'd shake some sugar down

I will not marry an old maid  
I'll tell you the reason why  
Her neck is so long and stringy  
I'm afraid she'll never die

I won't go home with Old Joe Clark  
I'll tell you the reason why  
He blowed his nose in a cornbread crust  
And called it pumpkin pie

I wish I had a sweetheart  
I'd set her on the shelf  
And every time she'd smile at me  
I'd get up there myself

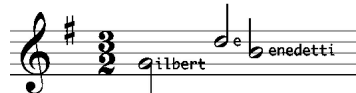
I asked my girl to marry me  
And what do you think she said  
Time enough to marry you  
When all the rest are dead

I went up on the mountain top  
A-huntin' sugar cane  
Stuck my foot in a holler log  
And out jumped Liza Jane

I used to live on mountain top  
But now I live in town  
I'm boarding at the big hotel  
Courting Betsy Brown

*more words on next page*

More sheet music at:  
[www.gmajormusictheory.org](http://www.gmajormusictheory.org)



# Old Joe Clark

Words collected and adapted by John A. and Alan Lomax, 1947

1. Old Joe Clark, the preacher's son,  
Preached all over the plain  
The only text he ever knew  
Was "High, low jack and the game."
2. Old Joe Clark had a mule,  
His name was Morgan Brown,  
And every tooth in that mule's head  
Was sixteen inches around.
3. Old Joe Clark had a cow,  
She was muley born,  
It takes a jaybird a week and a half  
To fly from horn to horn.
4. Old Joe Clark had a yellow cat,  
She would neither sing or pray,  
She stuck her head in the buttermilk jar  
And washed her sins away.
5. Old Joe Clark had a dog  
As blind as he could be,  
Ran a redbug round a stump  
And a coon up a holler tree.
6. Old Joe Clark had a house  
Fifteen stories high,  
And every story in that house  
Was filled with chicken pie.
7. I went down to old Joe's house,  
He invited me to supper,  
I stumped my toe on the table leg  
And stuck my nose in the butter.
8. I wouldn't go down to old Joe's house,  
Tell you the reason why,  
Can't get around his garden spot  
For tearing down all his rye.
9. I won't go to old Joe's house,  
I've told you here before.  
He fed me in a hog-trough  
And I won't go anymore.
10. Old Joe Clark's dead and gone,  
I hope he's gone to Hell,  
He made me wear a ball and chain,  
Made my ankles swell.
11. I would not marry an old maid,  
Tell you the reason why,  
Her neck so long and stringy, boys,  
'Fraid she'd never die.
12. Now I wouldn't marry a widder,  
Tell you the reason why,  
She'd have so many children  
They'd make those biscuits fly.
13. I wouldn't marry a schoolteacher,  
I tell you the reason why,  
She blows her nose in yellow cornbread  
And calls it pumpkin pie.
14. I wouldn't marry a yellow gal,  
Tell you the reason why,  
She'd eat a barrel of sauerkraut  
And drink the river dry.
15. Masser had a yaller gal,  
Brought her from the South,  
Wrapped her hair so very tight  
She could not shut her mouth.
16. He took her to the blacksmith shop,  
To have her mouth made small,  
She backed her ears and opened her mouth  
And swallowed shop and all.
17. Sixteen horses in my team,  
The leaders they are blind,  
And every time the sun goes down,  
There's a pretty girl on my mind.
18. Eighteen miles of mountain road  
And fifteen miles of sand.  
If I ever travel this road again,  
I'll be a married man.
19. Never got no money,  
Got no place to stay,  
Got no place to lay my head,  
Chicken's a-crowin' for day.
20. I wish I was in Arkansas  
Sittin' on a rail  
A jug of whiskey under my arm  
And a possum by the tail.
21. Wish I was in Tennessee  
Settin' in a big arm cheer,  
One arm round my whiskey jug,  
And the other round my dear.
22. Wish I had a sweetheart,  
I'd set her on the shelf,  
And every time she smiled at me,  
I'd get up there myself,
23. I climbed up the oak tree  
And she climbed up the gum,  
Never saw a pretty lil' gal  
But what I loved her some.

More sheet music at:  
[www.gmajormusictheory.org](http://www.gmajormusictheory.org)

