



Photo: The Hidden Orchard - Coton, Cambridge © Anna Gazeley

# THE HIDDEN ORCHARD

A Wassail\* for Coton, and all our Traditional Orchards

Beneath the gaze of winter trees,  
Behind the tangled veil,  
Before the lengthening of days,  
We come to sing, "Wassail!"

*Wassail the apple! Beat the bounds!  
Wassail this hallowed ground!*

These sentinels, the ancient seers,  
Where knot and rot are rife,  
All bear the fruit of rolling years,  
Decaying into life.

*Wassail the apple! Beat the bounds!  
Wassail this hallowed ground!*

Beneath each scarred, bedizened branch,  
Flocks and herds are fed.  
Between the heartwood and the bark,  
Multitudes are bred.

*Wassail the apple! Beat the bounds!  
Wassail this hallowed ground!*

Below the sward, in sweetened ground  
A world of being teems.  
And wassail words are passed around  
Between the listening trees.

*Wassail the apple! Beat the bounds!  
Wassail this hallowed ground!*

Walk this forest row by row.  
Read between the lines.  
Bless this ark of applewood.  
Observe this sacred time.

*Wassail the apple! Beat the bounds!  
Wassail this hallowed ground!  
Wassail this hallowed ground!*

Debbie Whitton Spriggs

\* From Middle English, waes hael – be in good health





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