

Fairport Convention, Red And Gold

Red and Gold are royal colours
Peasant colours are green and brown
Green is the corn in the brown earth when it's growing
Red and gold when the harvest is cut down.

Through Cropredy in Oxfordshire the Cherwell takes its course
And the willows weep into its waters clear
My name it is Will Tims and it's here that I was born
And raised in faith my King and God to fear.

In 1644 the King in Oxford Town did dwell
Though we'd heard that Cromwell's army was nearby
It did not occur to me that little Cropredy
Could be witness to the meeting of both sides

On June the 29th that year I was about my work
Cutting hedges in the meadow by the stream
My blade slipped, I cut my hand and my own dear blood did flow
Upon the brown earth and the corn still green

Now it did distress me so to watch my own blood flow
And quickly soak into the greedy ground
In red and gold my colours swam and sweat broke on my brow
And faint I knew that I must lay me down

At first I thought the thundering was just inside my head
So I raised myself above the hedge to see
And I watched as in a dream as the armies fought downstream
The Battle for the Bridge at Cropredy

Now the King's men fought in red and gold though Cromwell's men were plainer
The blood they spilled was coloured just the same
Through the hedgerow's fragile cover I saw brother killing brother
And all of this was done in Jesus' name

All that day and all the next the battle it was raging
Though when darkness came I slipped away
But the crying of the dying kept me wakeful and just lying
In my bed until the dawning of the day

And the dreams I had were red and gold
And the little stream became a flood
From all my brothers killing one another
Till waking I realised it was all my own dear blood

Some were buried in the church and some just where they fell
With no markers to declare their place of rest
But the poppies they do grow where they were never sown
And to my mind they do declare it best

And each year when the green corn once again turns into gold
And the poppies in the field again remind me
Like the scar upon my hand and the blood spilled on this land
And the hungry earth so eager to confine me

For red and gold they are the colours
One is blood and one is power
Though I may find my rest in Cropredy Church
In golden fields forever will spring the poppy flower

By Cropredy the Cherwell is still bidden to keep flowing
And the willows by its side still gently weep
But still in restless dreams by this most peaceful stream
The poppies wake me from my rightful sleep

And the dreams I have are red and gold
And the little stream becomes a flood
From all my brothers killing one another
Till waking I realise it's all my own dear blood