



# Death and Burial of Poor Cock Robin

*H. L. Stephens*

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## **Death and Burial of Poor Cock Robin** H. L. Stephens

Death and Burial of Poor Cock Robin by H. L. Stephens. "Who Killed Cock Robin" is an English nursery rhyme, which has been much used as a murder archetype in world culture. It has a Roud Folk Song Index number of 494.

Although the song was not recorded until the eighteenth century, there is some evidence that it might be much older. The death of a robin by an arrow is depicted in a 15th-century stained glass window at Buckland Rectory, Gloucestershire, and the rhyme is similar to a story, Phyllyp Sparowe, written by John Skelton about 1508.

The use of the rhyme 'owl' with 'shovel', could suggest that it was originally used in older middle English pronunciation. The theme of Cock Robin's death as well as the poem's distinctive cadence have become archetypes, much used in literary fiction and other works of art, from poems, to murder mysteries, to cartoons.

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