One evening so silent, as I was out walking, 
I spied an old woman sat down by a tree; And as I drew nigh her, I could hear her soft talking. These wishes she made for the child on her knee. For the child on her knee, These wishes she made for the child on her knee.

First, I'll wish that in peace you may always be living, 
Oh, never to kill at a sergeant's command; 
For King and for country's no reason for giving 
Your life and some blood in some far away land. 
Some far away land ...
May you be your own master; let no man control you,
Whether tyrant of government, factory or farm.
No matter the wages they'll pay to console you,
To slavery's orders ne'er lift a strong arm.
Ne'er lift a strong arm ...

Good health be your fortune; no gift can excel it,
But guard it from those who would take it away;
In mills, mines, and factories they'll force you to sell it
For industry's profit most dearly you'll pay.
Most dearly you'll pay ...

And the last of my hopes is for friendship and kindred,
For the love of companions is our greatest need;
And though you may live to the age of a hundred,
It's young you'll remain while friendships succeed.
While friendship's succeed ...

So now, lads and lasses, come fill up your glasses
And drink a good health to our children so dear,
To peace free from classes, while history it passes;
To friends and to loved ones, a happy new year.
A happy new year ...

Song for the New Year
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In 1990, Ottawa singer, songwriter, and electron microscopist Ian Robb wrote "I guess this song was a combination of wishes for my own kids and, by extension, for everyone else's too. It was an attempt to touch a whole lot of social bases in one song, and the down side of that, of course, is that you always regret the things you overlooked or missed out. The child in the song is male, mainly to fulfil the requirements of the anti-war verse, and I regret in a way that this made it hard to write a feminist verse. As the father of three girls, I might just complete the song one day!" On Ian's record Rose and Crown and in live performance, he accompanies the song with a concertina, though guitarists will find it easy to accompany with the usual three chords (C, F, and G in the key in which it's notated here). This is written in a style that just about demands a chorus to sing the repeats of each verse's last line.