

A New Psalm (*inspired by Psalm 19*)

The earth beneath the feet of all runners and walkers
 Declares the glory of God, our Cherisher!
 The roots of trees and grasses, the mole
 And all organisms in the rich realm of darkness...
 These are God's handiwork.
 Our life in the realm of sunlight
 Is upheld by the vital earth. God made it so.
 All creatures that live on the land
 depend on the soil,
 Which is like a strong parent,
 Providing for all peoples and
 All creatures that live above the waters.
 Praise be to the holy ground that is softly under
 our feet;
 Praise be to God who has blessed the living carpet
 That He has spread for our walking,
 In the days of our living in the flesh,
 And into which our rich residues will return.

-- Francis Doan Hole

... And New Words to Old Tunes. ...

Some Think That Soil Is Dirt

Some think that soil is dirt and quite disgusting
 (This is not true! This is not true!)
 Some think it makes the air all brown and dusting
 (Good dust to you! Good dust to you!)
 Praise Mother Earth, she is our earthly Mother
 (She gives us bread! She gives us bread!)
 Praise ground, the holy ground that's softly under
 (Our feet that tread! Our feet that tread!)

Vigor, vigor from the soil does flow!
 Roots and life are teeming down below!
 No wonder that this land's so green,
 the farms and flowers so fresh and clean!
 Soil is everywhere!
 From it sweet blessings gently flow.

Where Have All The Bedrocks Gone?

Where have all the bedrocks gone?
 Long time weathering.
 Where have all the bedrocks gone
 That have formed so long ago?

Where have all the bedrocks gone?
 Gone to residuum....
 And to the sediments....
 And to the vital soils!

Oh Give Me A Home

Oh give me a home
 On a deep mellow loam
 That supports the trees and the grass;
 Where we hardly recall
 A bad crop year at all,
 and the crickets rejoice as we pass.

Home, home on the loam
 that supports the trees and the grass.
 Where we hardly recall
 a bad crop year at all,
 and the crickets rejoice as we pass.

'Tis A Gift To Have Soil

'Tis a gift to have soil,
 'Tis a gift to have land,
 'Tis a gift to belong to
 The place where we stand.
 And if we are contented with
 The work that we are doing
 We've discovered a community
 That's energy renewing.

Chorus: When true community is gained,
 To bow and to bend
 We shall not be ashamed.
 To turn and to turn
 Will be our delight,
 Till by turning, turning
 We come round right.

'Tis a gift to have seed,
 'Tis a gift to have plants,
 'Tis a gift to behold
 So much beauty at a glance
 As we survey a garden
 Where we've given hours of toil
 A community of flora, fauna,
 People and of soil.

This Our Life Finds Tongues In Trees

This our life finds tongues in trees;
 Books in brooks that read with ease;
 Sermons in stone and soils that sing;
 Something good in every thing.

One great good beneath our feet
 Is wondrous earth: clay, sand, and peat;
 With roots of plants in firm embrace,
 The soil supports the human race.

In myself are intertwined
 flesh and spirit well inclined;
 Dust I am with gift of breath:
 I feel safe in life and death.

(melody on reverse)

You Are My Soil, My Only Soil

You are my soil...my only soil;
 You keep me vital [by] night and day.
 This much I know, friend,
 You do support me:
 Please don't erode my life's soil away!

Darkle, Darkle

Darkle, darkle little grain.
 I wonder how you entertain
 A thousand creatures microscopic.
 Grains like you from pole to tropic
 Support land life upon this planet.
 I marvel at you, crumb of granite!

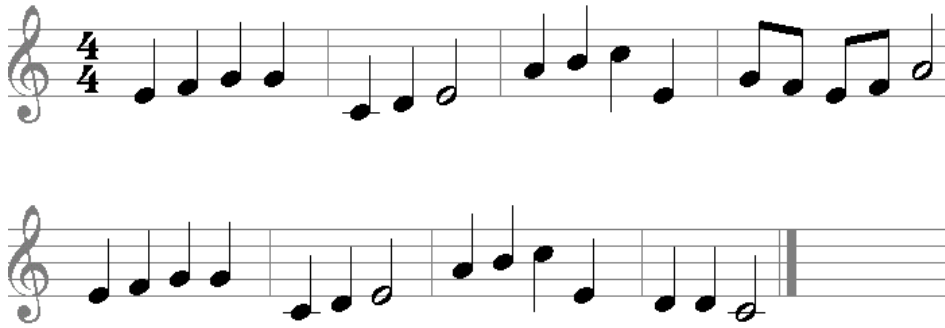
The Antigo Silt Loam Song **F. D. Hole (1980)**

An - ti - go, a soil to know, Wis - con-sin's crops and livestock grow; and forests too, on

An - ti - go; and forests, too, on An - ti - go.

2. Great Lakes region, fertile land; glaciers spread both clay and sand;
 Winds blew silt, then forests grew, giving soils their brownish hue.
3. Great Lakes region, fertile land, you strengthen us in heart and hand;
 Each slope, each flower, each wild bird call proclaims a unity in all.
4. Plant a seed and pull a weed; the soil will give us all we need
 And plenty more, so birds may feed: and plenty more, so birds may feed.
5. Of all the crops, true peace is tops; its soil is love that never stops;
 It blesses sand and water drops: it blesses sand and water drops.

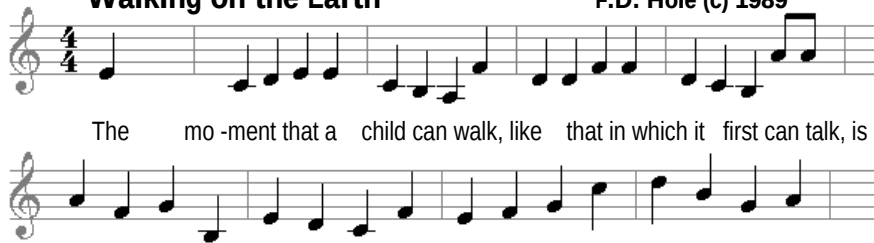
This Our Life Finds Tongues In Trees



(See reverse of this sheet for F.D. Hole's lyrics to this melody.)

Walking on the Earth

F.D. Hole (c) 1989



The mo-ment that a child can walk, like that in which it first can talk, is a

pre-cious start of ex-plo-ra-tion in-to land-scapes of cre-a-tion.



Chorus: Walk-ing, walk-ing, walk-ing, walk-ing, walk-ing on the earth!

2. By sense of touch the feet assess the nature of the wilderness of earth beneath; yet human speech cannot express what feet can teach.

These two pages show only a selection of the soil songs Francis Hole has written. He once made up a booklet of songs in a sequence visualizing the life history of soils, starting with the long-ago world of rocks only ("No foot, no green! No plant is seen!") through weathering ("Where have all the bedrocks gone?") to actual soil ("It's soft, it's dark, it's full of vital spark; above is green where the plants are seen and we hear the meadow lark").

Once the world has soil, Francis asks us to consider the way soil works in our world. **Soil is the root domain** ("Where are the roots of trees? Badgers and bumble bees, products like bread and cheese, work place and leisure ease depend on the soil.") **Soil is home** ("Our native soil claimed us all from the start! Gave us our landscape and captured our heart!"). **Soil is an irreplaceable gift** ("Tis a gift to have soil" ... "You are my soil, my only soil").

Soil in its darkness has color ("A rainbow of soil is under our feet: red as a barn and black as a peat. It's yellow as lemon and white as the snow; bluish gray ... so many colors below. Hidden in darkness as thick as the night; the only rainbow that can form without light. Dig you a pit or bore you a hole, you'll find enough colors to rest your soul."). **Soil teaches us the experience of time**, season to season ("The Soil in the Four Seasons") and ever to forever ("Inch by Inch, Age by Age"). And **soil connects all lands** all over the world ("What's It Like To Be A Kangaroo? What's It Like To Be A Soil There Too?" ... "Soils, All Over These Lands"). **Soil underlies our joy**: "Something in me is making me sing, in spite of complaints about every thing. Look at the wet mud and what do we see? Flowers all blooming and a sweet honey bee!"

(Notes written for Francis, with love,
by one who has listened and watched for
these last 34 years! --Gundega Korsts 8 Feb. 2001)

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Francis Hole died on 15 Jan. 2002

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Inch by inch, age by age, granite crumbles.
At every stage plants build porous, fertile loam of a depth that does astound. Prairie makes a soil that's black; forest soil is pale for lack of fibrous roots and sunshine pouring over the lively ground.

Inch by inch, year by year, soils of our country disappear. The work of ages is undone by uses that impair. Topsoil washes, goes to waste; crops are grown in too much haste; technical fix cannot improve a soil no longer there.

Inch by inch, day by day, we'll bring the topsoil back to stay. We'll heal the earth and raise our crops according to Nature's plan. We'll gladly pay a grocery bill that helps keep soil on yonder hill, and debt-free families on the farm. Eden's where it all began.

Inch by inch, hour by hour, subtle change in soil or flower makes a natural landscape new! Surprise is always there. The best-laid plans of the human race cannot match Dame Nature's space. We'll read her signs, study her ways, and show her that we care.