Music by James Butterfield (1837-1891) Lyrics by George Washington Johnson (1839-1917)

Mr. Johnson, a schoolteacher, wrote the lyrics as a poem circa. 1864 for his student Maggie Clark. They were married in 1864; she died in 1865.

The song with Butterfield's music was published in 1866.

The song has been variously reported to be Irish, Scot, or English. Actually, Johnson was Canadian, and the scene with the creaking old mill was in Ontario Province. Butterfield was English-born but had immigrated to the USA and was living in Detroit when he wrote the music.

A superb recording made in 1925 by the Irish-born tenor John McCormack can be found on the Internet.

I wandered today to the hill, Maggie
To watch the scene below
The creek and the rusty old mill, Maggie
Where we sat in the long, long ago.
The green grove is gone from the hill, Maggie
Where first the daisies sprung
The old rusty mill is still, Maggie
Since you and I were young.

A city so silent and lone, Maggie
Where the young and the gay and the best
In polished white mansion of stone, Maggie
Have each found a place of rest
Is built where the birds used to play, Maggie
And join in the songs that were sung
For we sang just as gay as they, Maggie
When you and I were young.

They say I am feeble with age, Maggie My steps are less sprightly than then My face is a well written page, Maggie But time alone was the pen. They say we are aged and grey, Maggie As spray by the white breakers flung But to me you're as fair as you were, Maggie When you and I were young.

And now we are aged and grey, Maggie The trials of life nearly done Let us sing of the days that are gone, Maggie When you and I were young.







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