

Where Have All the Flowers Gone?

Words & Music by Pete Seeger and Joe Hickerson, 1955, 1960 © all rights reserved

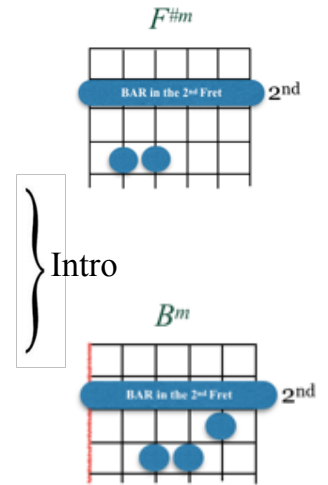


All Saints Hymns and Songs as you go

Where Have All the Flowers Gone?

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A *F#m* *D* *E*
 Where have all the flowers gone, long time passing?
A *F#m* *D* *E*
 Where have all the flowers gone, long time ago?
A *F#m* *D* *E*
 Where have all the flowers gone? Young girls picked them, every one.
Bm *A* *D* *E* *A* *F#m* *D* *E*
 When will they ever learn? When will they ever learn?



A *F#m* *D* *E*
 Where have all the young girls gone, long time passing?
A *F#m* *D* *E*
 Where have all the young girls gone, long time ago?
A *F#m* *D* *E*
 Where have all the young girls gone? Gone to the young men, every one.
Bm *A* *D* *E* *A* *F#m* *D* *E*
 When will they ever learn? When will they ever learn?

A *F#m* *D* *E*
 Where have all the young men gone, long time passing?
A *F#m* *D* *E*
 Where have all the young men gone, long time ago?
A *F#m* *D* *E*
 Where have all the young men gone? Gone for soldiers, every one.
Bm *A* *D* *E* *A* *F#m* *D* *E*
 When will they ever learn? When will they ever learn?

A *F#m* *D* *E*
 Where have all the soldiers gone, long time passing?
A *F#m* *D* *E*
 Where have all the soldiers gone, long time ago?
A *F#m* *D* *E*
 Where have all the soldiers gone? Gone to grave yards, every one.
Bm *A* *D* *E* *A* *F#m* *D* *E*
 When will they ever learn? When will they ever learn?

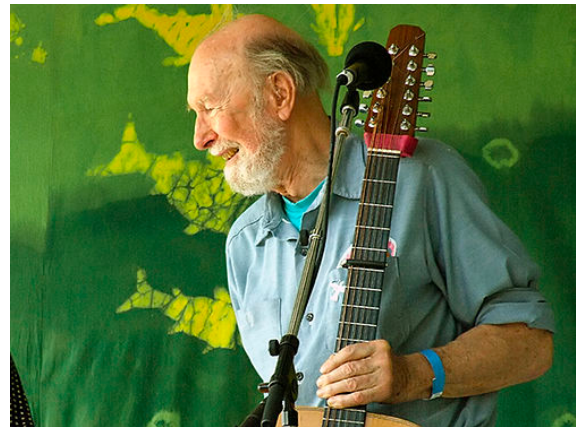
A *F#m* *D* *E*
 Where have all the grave yards gone, long time passing?
A *F#m* *D* *E*
 Where have all the grave yards gone, long time ago?
A *F#m* *D* *E*
 Where have all the grave yards gone? Gone to flowers, every one.
Bm *A* *D* *E* *A* *F#m* *D* *E* *A*
 When will they ever learn? When will they ever learn?

History

"Where Have All the Flowers Gone?" a contemporary folk song that could be a world view statement, or within the ubi sunt tradition.

Ubi sunt (literally "where are... [they]"); a phrase taken from the Latin *Ubi sunt qui ante nos fuerunt?*, meaning "Where are those who were before us?"; a meditation on mortality and life's transience.

Quoth Pete Seeger, "I had been reading a long novel—"And Quiet Flows the Don"—about the Don River in Russia and the Cossacks who lived along it in the 19th century. It describes the Cossack soldiers galloping off to join the Czar's army, singing as they go. Three lines from a song are quoted in the book: 'Where are the flowers? The girls plucked them / Where are the girls? They're all married / Where are the men? They're all in the army.' I never got around to looking up the song, but I wrote down those three lines. "Later, in an airplane, I was dozing, and it occurred to me that the line 'long time passing'—which I had also written in a notebook—would sing well. Then I thought, 'When will we ever learn.' Suddenly, within 20 minutes, I had a song. There were just three verses. I Scotch-taped the song to a microphone and sang it at Oberlin College. This was in 1955.



Seeger at the Clearwater Festival
in June 2007

"One of the students there had a summer job as a camp counselor. He took the song to the camp and sang it to the kids. It was very short. He gave it rhythm, which I hadn't done. The kids played around with it, singing 'Where have all the counselors gone? / Open curfew, everyone.'

"The counselor added two actual verses: 'Where have all the soldiers gone? / Gone to graveyards every one / Where have all the graveyards gone? / Covered with flowers every one.' Joe Hickerson is his name, and I give him 20 percent of the royalties. That song still brings in thousands of dollars from all around the world."

Sources Wikipedia and *Performing Songwriter, Happy Birthday Pete Seeger!* by Lydia Hutchinson, May 3, 2013