TEXTS

Witches' Song

The Owl is abroad, the Bat, and the Toad, And so is the Cat-a-mountain, The Ant, and the Mole sit both in a hole, And Frog¹ peeps out o' the Fountain; The Dogs, they do bay, and² the Timbrels play, The Spindle is now a-turning; The Moon it is red, and the Stars are fled, But all the Sky is a-burning:

> Ben Jonson, from The Masque of Queens, and entitled '3. Charm'

The Owl

When cats run home and light is come, And dew is cold upon the ground, And the far-off stream is dumb, And the whirring sail goes round, And the whirring sail goes round; Alone and warming his five wits, The white owl in the belfry sits.

When merry milkmaids click the latch, And rarely smells the new-mown hay, And the cock hath sung beneath the thatch³ Twice or thrice his roundelay, Twice or thrice his roundelay; Alone and warming his five wits, The white owl in the belfry sits.

Alfred Lord Tennyson

Diaphenia

Diaphenia, like the daffadowndilly, White as the sun, fair as the lily, Heigh ho, how I do love thee! I do love thee as my lambs Are beloved of their dams; How blest were I if thou wouldst prove me!

¹ Britten set 'And the Frog'.
² Britten omitted the 'and' here.
³ Britten set 'hatch' but here corrected to match the original.



BENJAMIN BRITTEN



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