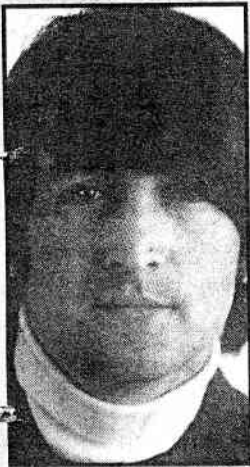


# CHAPTER AND VERSE ON AULD LANG SYNE



Lennon...another year

**NEW Year is a time for quiet reflection on what's gone, together with optimism for what's to come.**

**As Edward Fitzgerald dreams in *The Rubalyat of Omar Khayyam*:**

*Now the New Year reviving old Desires  
The thoughtful soul to Solitude retires*

**It's also a time to consign all that was unpleasant to the memory bin in a joyous abandonment of what has caused us hurt and pain. As Tennyson, so stridently proclaims in the noble sentiments of *In Memoriam*:**

*Ring out old shapes of foul disease  
Ring out the narrowing lust of gold  
Ring out the thousand wars of old  
Ring in the thousand years of peace.*

*Ring out false pride in peace and blood  
The civic slander and the spite  
Ring in the love of truth and right  
Ring in the common love of good.  
Ring out the old, ring in the new  
Ring happy bells across the snow*



*The old year is going, let him go  
Ring out the false, ring in the true.*

**John Lennon, likewise, was glad to jettison the bad and to look forward hopefully into the future on behalf of all humanity as this festive time of potential renewal in *Merry Christmas: War Is Over*.**

*So that was Christmas  
And what have you done  
Another year over, and a new one just begun  
And so that was Christmas  
For weak and for strong  
For rich and for poor ones  
The world is so wrong  
So thank God for Christmas  
And the start of a year*

*Let's hope it's a good one  
Without any fear.*

**For the animal kingdom and the world of nature there is no ritual celebration of the new year. Rather, early January represents the middle of winter, a major battle to survive with only the prospect of dread weather still to come. Our present Poet Laureate Ted Hughes reminds us of this in *New Year Song*, which focuses on the plight of the lambs, the flowers, and the birds:**

*Now there comes  
The tight-vest lamb  
With its little hooves  
to dot the snow  
Following its mother  
into worse cold and worse  
And worse cold to come.*

*And now there comes  
The brittle crocus  
to be nibbled by the starving hares  
To be broken by snow  
And the robin and the wren*

*they rejoice like each other  
In an hour of sunlight  
Though the worst cold's to come.*

**The final word on the birth of the New Year is with Minnie Louise Haskins whose verse was used by King George VI in his Christmas Broadcast in 1939:**

*I said to the Man  
Who stood at the gate of the year,  
"Give me a light that I may tread safely  
into  
the unknown." And he replied, "go out  
into  
the darkness and put your hand into  
the hand of God. That shall be to you  
Better than light and safer than a  
known way."  
So I went forth, and, finding the Hand  
of God,  
Trode gladly into the night. And He  
let me towards the hills and the breaking  
ing  
of day in the lone East.*