

English Rebel Songs 1381–1984

Chumbawamba

Retrieved on March 3, 2023

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<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oEdPqZ0sX0U>

<i>English Rebel Songs 1381–1984</i>	
Studio album by Chumbawamba	
Released	1988/1994/2003
Recorded	1988/2003
Genre	Folk, a cappella
Length	36:28
Label	Agit-Prop Records/MUTT
Chumbawamba chronology	
<i>Never Mind the Ballots</i>	(1987)
<i>English Rebel Songs 1381–1984</i>	(1988)
<i>Slap!</i>	(1990)

English Rebel Songs 1381–1984 is the third studio album by English band Chumbawamba. It was originally released in 1988 with a slightly different track list under the title *English Rebel Songs 1381–1914*, then re-recorded in 2003. Composed mostly of traditional English protest songs, the recording was a stark contrast to the group's previous punk recordings, pointing towards their future integration of choral and a cappella music, as well as a greater focus on harmony in their musical sound. The 2003 recording added some light instrumentation on some tracks.

Some of the songs come from *Stand Together* by Hackney and Islington music group, *100 Songs Of Toil* by Karl Dallas, *A Touch On The Times*, and *A Ballad History of England* by Roy Palmer. Many of the songs are still performed by modern English folk bands such as The Houghton Weavers and Coope, Boyes & Simpson.

The original LP recording (1988) was released on CD in 1994 by One Little Indian Records. Chumbawamba re-recorded the album (and modified the title) in 2003, adding two extra tracks, releasing it under their newly formed MUTT Records label.

Reception

Allmusic called the album "eloquent", with "utterly relevant" songs, emphasizing that the singing in the 1988 version "was far better than anyone expected", and commending the improved technical quality of the 2003 recording,¹ while *The Independent* praised the album as having "rousing" songs, with "excellent" vocal performances, but expressed concern that there were no songs from later than 1984.²

¹ Chumbawamba: English Rebel Songs 1381–1984, reviewed by Chris Nickson; at Allmusic; retrieved 8 December 2016

² Album: Chumbawamba: English Rebel Songs 1381–1984, Mutt at *the Independent*; published 12 June 2003; retrieved 8 December 2016

Track listing (2003 version)

#	Song Name	Length	Year	Notes
1	"The Cutty Wren"	1:55	1381?	Said to have been written during the Peasants' Revolt, but not recorded before 1776
2	"The Diggers' Song"	2:31	17th century	Written by Gerrard Winstanley, leader of the Diggers
3	"Colliers' March"	2:28	1782	Written by John Freeth; Refers to a march of workers in Birmingham protesting at the price of bread
4	"The Triumph of General Ludd"	3:02	1812	Refers to the Luddite Rebellion
5	"Chartist Anthem"	1:34	1847	Written by Ben Boucher. Refers to the People's Charter drawn up by the Chartists in 1838 demanding universal suffrage
6	"The Bad Squire"	3:54	1847	Adaptation of a poem by Charles Kingsley written in defence of poachers. The original text can be found here.
7	"Song on the Times"	2:35	1840s	Written after the repeal of the Corn Laws
8	"Smashing of the Van"	2:09	1867	Refers to the Manchester

From the 2003 re-release: "Now, fifteen years later, we felt we'd learned enough about our voices to try again, updating and rearranging the songs against a backdrop of US/British warmongering. The songs were discovered in songbooks and in folk clubs and on cassette tapes, chopped and changed and bludgeoned into shape with utmost respect for the original tunes."

Track listing (1988/1994 versions)

1. "The Cutty Wren (Part 1)"
2. "The Diggers Song"
3. "Colliers March"
4. "The Triumph of General Ludd"
5. "Chartist Anthem"
6. "Song on the Times"
7. "Smashing of the Van"
8. "The World Turned Upside Down"
9. "Poverty Knock"
10. "Idris Strike Song"
11. "Hanging on the Old Barbed Wire"
12. "The Cutty Wren (Part 2)"

According to the 1994 CD notes: "The words are sung, with a couple of exceptions, exactly how we found them written. To start chopping and changing them all to fit in with modern language and ideas would have destroyed the reason why we wanted to do them like this (Which isn't to say that folk music isn't to be changed, edited and modernised.) Consequently the language and meaning seem a bit peculiar at times."

Personnel

2003 re-recording

- Lou Watts
- Harry Hamer
- Danbert Nobacon
- Jude Abbott
- Boff Whalley
- Neil Ferguson
- Simon "Commonknowledge" Lanzon

1988 recording

- Harry
- Simon Commonknowledge
- Lou
- Boff
- Mavis Dillon
- Cobie Laan
- Danbert Nobacon
- *Alice Nutter was otherwise engaged*
- *Dunst was reading football fanzine*

The Ted K Archive

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<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/English_Rebel_Songs>

www.thetedkarchive.com