

"Bingo", also known as "Bingo Was His Name-O", "There Was a Farmer Had a Dog", and "C'era un contadino che aveva un cagnolino di nome Bingolino" or informally "B-I-N-G-O", is a Scottish children's song of obscure origin. Additional verses are sung by omitting the first letter sung in the previous verse and clapping instead of actually saying the word. It has a Roud Folk Song Index number of 589.

Lyrics

The contemporary version generally goes as follows.

There was a farmer who had a dog,
 and Bingo was his name-o.
 B-I-N-G-O
 B-I-N-G-O
 B-I-N-G-O
 And Bingo was his name-o.

There was a farmer who had a dog,
 and Bingo was his name-o.
 (clap)-I-N-G-O
 (clap)-I-N-G-O
 (clap)-I-N-G-O
 And Bingo was his name-o.

There was a farmer who had a dog,
 and Bingo was his name-o.
 (clap)-(clap)-N-G-O
 (clap)-(clap)-N-G-O
 (clap)-(clap)-N-G-O
 And Bingo was his name-o.

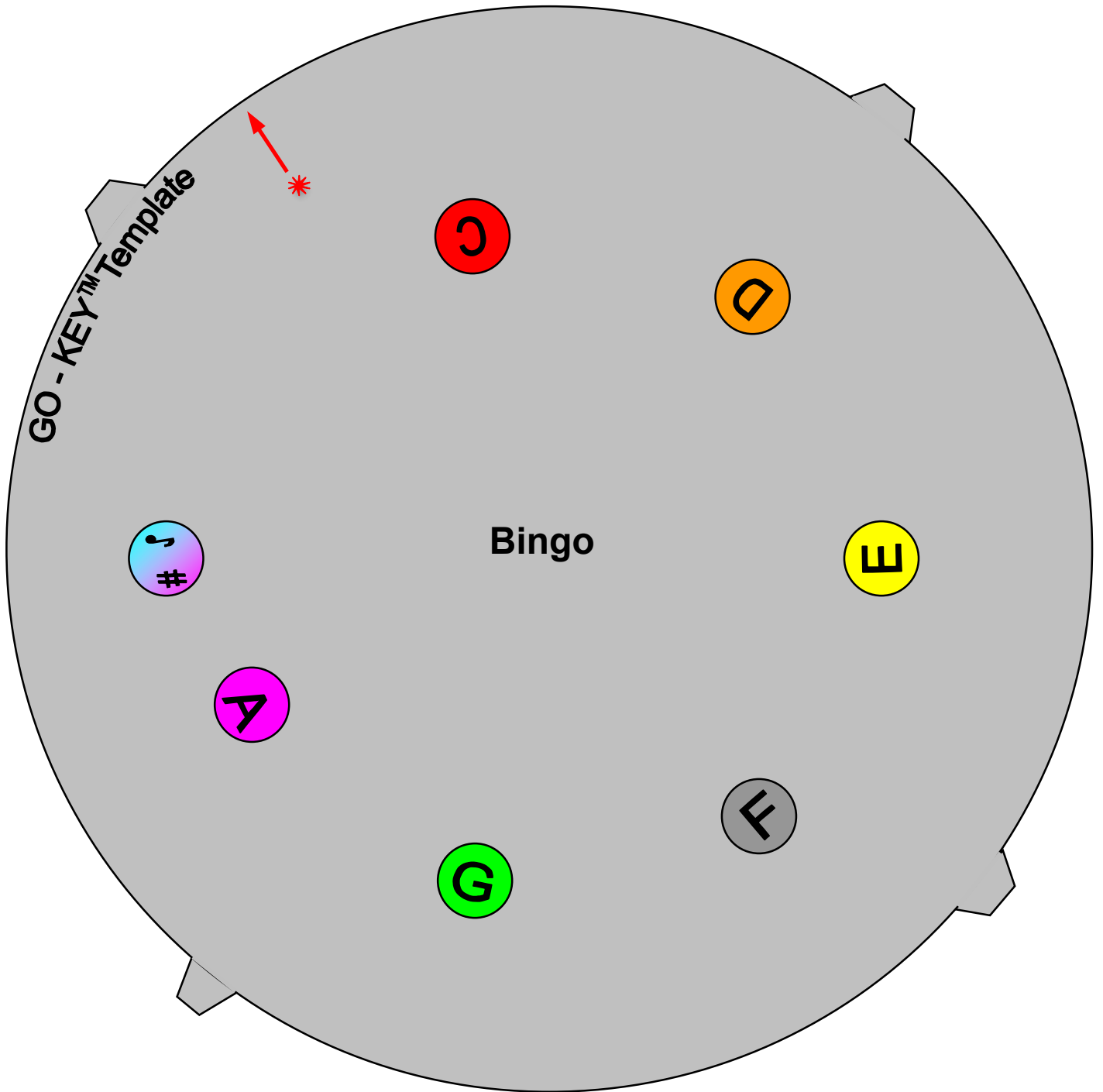
There was a farmer who had a dog,
 and Bingo was his name-o.
 (clap)-(clap)-(clap)-G-O
 (clap)-(clap)-(clap)-G-O
 (clap)-(clap)-(clap)-G-O
 And Bingo was his name-o.

There was a farmer who had a dog,
 and Bingo was his name-o.
 (clap)-(clap)-(clap)-(clap)-O
 (clap)-(clap)-(clap)-(clap)-O
 (clap)-(clap)-(clap)-(clap)-O
 And Bingo was his name-o.

There was a farmer who had a dog,
 and Bingo was his name-o.
 (clap)-(clap)-(clap)-(clap)-(clap)
 (clap)-(clap)-(clap)-(clap)-(clap)
 (clap)-(clap)-(clap)-(clap)-(clap)
 And Bingo was his name-o.

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History and Origin

The earliest reference to any form of the song is from the title of a piece of sheet music published in 1780, which attributed the song to William Swords, an actor at the Haymarket Theatre of London. Early versions of the song were variously titled "The Farmer's Dog Leapt o'er the Stile", "A Franklyn's Dogge", or "Little Bingo".

An early transcription of the song (without a title) dates from the 1785 songbook "The Humming Bird", and reads: This is how most people know the traditional children's song:

The farmer's dog leapt over the stile,
his name was little Bingo,
the farmer's dog leapt over the stile,
his name was little Bingo.
B with an I — I with an N,
N with a G — G with an O;
his name was little Bingo:
B—I—N—G—O!
His name was little Bingo.

The farmer loved a cup of good ale,
he called it rare good stingo,
the farmer loved a cup of good ale,
he called it rare good stingo.
S—T with an I — I with an N,
N with a G — G with an O;
He called it rare good stingo:
S—T—I—N—G—O!
He called it rare good stingo

And is this not a sweet little song?
I think it is — by jingo.
And is this not a sweet little song?
I think it is — by jingo.
J with an I — I with an N,
N with a G — G with an O;
I think it is — by jingo:
J—I—N—G—O!
I think it is — by jingo.

The presence of the song in the United States was noted by Robert M. Charlton in 1842. English folklorist Alice Bertha Gomme recorded eight forms in 1894. Highly-differing versions were recorded but all of these versions were associated with children's games, the rules differing by locality. Early versions of "Bingo" were also noted as adult drinking songs.

Versions that are variations on the early version of "Bingo" have been recorded in [classical](#) arrangements by Frederick Ranalow (1925), John Langstaff(1952), and Richard Lewis (1960). Under the title "Little Bingo", a variation on the early version was recorded twice by [folk](#) singer Alan Mills, on *Animals, Vol. 1* (1956) and on *14 Numbers, Letters, and Animal Songs* (1972).