**English Versions of Pushkin’s Eugene Onegin**

**А.С. Пушкин, *Евгений Онегин* по-английски**

**Including many versions of Chapter One, Stanza I**

«Переводчики почтовые лошади просвещения»

*Some information about some partial translations (not containing any chapter in its entirety) can be found at* partial.doc.

Bonver’s version omits Chapter 8, Stanzas 32-51 inclusive. Cahill translates Chapter 1 only. Unlike all others, the translations by Cahill and Clarke (both editions) are in prose. Corré translates Chapters 1 and 2. Litoshick translates Chapters 1 to 3. I have not been able to locate the translation by Harding. Liberson is a paraphrase rather than a translation. Lowenfeld is, strictly speaking, a partial translation as no complete chapter is translated, but it includes a substantial proportion of the whole. Phillipps-Wolley translates Chapter 1 alone (but is of interest because of its early date). Stone is another paraphrase. I have not been able to locate the translation by Turner (the page on partial translations contains some extracts translated elsewhere by Turner). Some biographical information about the translators is available at translators.doc.

* **Pushkin:** A. S. Pushkin, *Eugene Onegin*, with introduction and bibliography by A.D.P. Briggs and a vocabulary compiled by Frances F. Sobotka. London: Bristol Classical Press 1993. ISBN 1 85399 396 4. An earlier version of this appeared as A. S. Pushkin, Eugene Onegin, with Preface by Ronald Hingley & Vocabulary complied by Frances F. Sobotka, with Bibliography by A.D.P. Briggs. London: Bristol Classical Press 1991. ISBN 1 85399 247 X. The Russian text is on the web at http://www.rvb.ru/pushkin/01text/04onegin/01onegin/0836.htm?start=0&length=all

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3. **Beck:** Alexander Pushkin, *Eugene Onegin*. Translated with an introduction and notes by Tom Beck [1941- ]. Sawtry, Cambs: Dedalus 2004. ISBN 1 903517 28 1.
4. **Bonver:** *Evgeny Onegin (A Novel in Verses).* Translated by Yevgeny Bonver [Евгений Бонвер]. 2001−2003; last correction 2004. On the web at http://www.poetryloverspage.com/yevgeny/pushkin/evgeny\_onegin.html
5. **Briggs:** *Yevgeny Onegin: A Novel in Verse* by Alexander Pushkin, translated from the Russian with an introduction by Anthony Briggs. London: Pushkin Press 2016. ISBN 978 1 782271 91 8.
6. **Cahill:** *Eugene Onegin: A Novel in Verse* by Alexander Pushkin. A Prose Version of Chapter One by Christopher Cahill based on the Literal Translation of Vladimir Nabokov.
7. **Cahill (rev):** *Eugene Onegin: A Novel in Verse* by Alexander Pushkin. A Prose Version of Chapter One by Christopher Cahill based on the Literal Translation of Vladimir Nabokov. This is an intermediate version which is being revised with a view to publication. 1999 on.
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9. **Clarke (2011):** *Eugene Onegin: A novel in verse by Alexander Pushkin. Translated and with a commentary by Roger Clarke* [1939- ] (includes the Russian text on facing pages). Richmond: Oneworld Classics 2011. ISBN 978-1-84749-160-2.
10. **Clough:** Pushkin’s *‘Eugene Onegin’*. A new version with the text by S.D.P. Clough. Malvern Wells *or* Oxford: S.D.P. Clough [1988]. ISBN 0947998063.
11. **Corr:** *Eugene Onegin* by A. Pushkin. Translation of Cantos 1 and 2 by Alan D[avid]. Corr. 1999. On the web at https://pantherfile.uwm.edu/corre/www/pushkin/
12. **Deutsch (1936):** *Eugene Onegin, a novel in verse* [translated by Babette Deutsch, 1895−1982] in *The Poems, Prose and Plays of Alexander Pushkin*. Selected and Edited, with an Introduction by Avraham Yarmolinsky. New York: Random House 1936 and 1943. British Library Shelfmark 2338.e.6. LCCN (Library of Congress Control Number): 37000079.
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14. **Deutsch (1964):** Alexander Pushkin, *Eugene Onegin: A novel in verse*. Translated by Babette Deutsch [1895−1982]. London, etc.: Penguin 1964. ISBN 0 14044151 4.
15. **Elton:** Alexander Pushkin, *Evgeny Onegin* by A.S. Pushkin; translated by Oliver Elton [1861−1945] and illustrated by M.V. Dobujinsky; with a foreword by Desmond MacCarthy. London: The Pushkin Press, 1937, reprinted 1943. LCCN (Library of Congress Control Number): 38011103.
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17. **Emmet & Makourenkova:** A.S. Pushkin, Eugene Onegin. Translated by Olivia Emmet, Svetlana Makourenkova [Светлана Александровна Макуренкова]. Москва: Прогресс-Традиция [Moscow: Progress-Traditsiya] 1999. Reprinted Москва: Река Времен [Moscow: Reka Vremen] 2009. ISBN 978-5-85319-124-2.
18. **Falen:** Alexander Pushkin, *Eugene Onegin: A Novel in Verse*. Translated and with an introduction by James E. Falen [1935- ]. Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press 1995. ISBN 0 19 282491 0. Audio version read by Stephen Fry available on the web at http://fryreadsonegin.com/
19. **Harding:** *Eugene Onegin*. Translated by R.C.E. Harding. Wellington, 1967. Typewritten copy. Mentioned in the bibliography by Leighton referred to below, but nothing is known about it apart from this mention.
20. **Hobson** *А.С. Пушкин Евгений Онегин: роман в стихах. В переводе Мэри Хобсона / Evgenii Onegin: A novel in verse by Alexandr Pushkin. Translated by Mary Hobson* [1926− ]. Москва: Русская школа 2011 [Moscow: Russkaya shkola (Russian school) 2011]. ISBN 978-5-91696-012-9. The same text is reprinted (with a small number of corrections made) London:

Anthem Press 2016. ISBN 978-1-78308-458-6, with the title changed to

*Eugene Onegin: A Novel in Verse* (although the hero is still referred

to as Evgenii in the text). Available as a Naxos Audiobook. Not in British

Library or Library of Congress. See http://www.rusterra.com/2009/02/12/meri-hobson/ and http://www.newmillennium.ru/

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2. **Hoyt:** Alexander Pushkin, *Eugene Onegin: A novel in verse*. In the original Russian and in English Translation by Henry M. Hoyt [1914-2012]. Indianapolis IN: Dog Ear Publishing 2008. ISBN 978 159858 340 3.
3. **Johnston (1977):** Alexander Pushkin, *Eugene Onegin*. Translated by [Sir] Charles [Heburn-]Johnston [1912−1986]. London: Scolar Press 1977. British Library Shelfmark X.989/52100. LCCN (Library of Congress Control Number): 79309650. This version with minor revisions is on the web at http://lib.ru/LITRA/PUSHKIN/ENGLISH/onegin\_j.txt
4. **Johnston (2003):** Alexander Pushkin, *Eugene Onegin*. Translated by [Sir] Charles [Hepburn-]Johnston [1912-1986] (revised edition with a preface by John Bayley). London: Penguin 2003, ISBN 978-0140448030.
5. **Kayden:** Alexander Pushkin, Eugene Onegin: A Novel in Verse. Translated from the Russian by Eugene M[ark]. Kayden [1886−1977]. Yellow Springs, OH: The Antioch Press 1964.
6. **Kline:** Alexander Pushkin, *Eugene One*gin. Translated by A. S. Kline 2009. On the web at http://www.poetryintranslation.com/klineaspushkin.htm
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8. **Kozlov (1998):** Pushkin A.S. *Eugenij Onegin: novel in verse.* Translated by S[ergej]. N[ikolaevich]. Kozlov [Сергей Николаевич Козлов] [Профессор, Московский Государственный Социальный Университет; Professor, Moscow State Social University]. Москва: Риф “Рой” [Moscow: Rif “Roj”] 1998. ISBN 5-89956-108-4. Rare in the West; British Library Shelfmark YA.2003.a.40485.
9. **Ledger:** Pushkin’s *Yevgeny Onegin*. A dual language version. English translation by G[erard]. R. Ledger. Oxford: Oxquarry Books 2001. ISBN 0 9540272 0 5. On the web at http://www.pushkins-poems.com/
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18. **Portnoi** *Russian Dual Language Book: Eugene Onegin in Russian and English* by Alexander Pushkin, Nikolai Portnoi, CreateSpace Independent Publishing Platform 2016. ISBN 978-1533206848.
19. **Radin & Patrick:** *Eugene Onegin*. Translated from the Russian of Alexander Pushkin by Dorothea Prall Radin [1889−1948] and George Z[inovei]. Patrick [1886−1946]. Berkeley, CF: University of California Press 1937. LCCN (Library of Congress Control Number): 37027746. British Library Shelfmark 20030.bb.36.
20. **Sharer:** Michael Sharer [Michael Shuwarger] [1913− ], *A Rendition of Alexander Pushkin’s “Eugene Onegin”: A Novel in Verse*. Los Angeles: Beamish Publishers 1996. LCCN (Library of Congress Control Number): 96222888.
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23. **Stone:** *Eugene Onegin: A Novel in Verse*, by Alexander Sergeevich Pushkin (translated by Marilyn K. Stone). (Unpublished manuscript, 2005) Referred to on the web at http://www.cogsci.indiana.edu/EugeneOnegin.html
24. **Thomas:** Onegin, by Alexander Pushkin, translated by D[onald] M[ichael] Thomas [1935- ], London: Francis Boutle Publishers 2011 ISBN 978 1903427 64 4. Extract (Chapter 8, XXXIX−XLVII) in *Modern Poetry in Translation: Polyphony* Series 3 No. 14 (2011) and at http://www.mptmagazine.com/poem/extract-from-yevgeni-onegin-160
25. **Turner:** *Eugene Onyegin* by A. S. Poushkin, translated by C[harles]. E[dward]. Turner [1831−1903]. St. Petersburg: K. L. Ricker. n.d. Not in the British Library or in the Library of Congress. Referred to in L Leighton, “A new Onegin”, *The Slavic and East European Journal* **41** (4) (1997), 661-666; Leighton, however, says that “no one seems to have seen” this translation.

**Chronological Order**

1. Spalding 1881
2. Phillipps-Wolley 1883
3. Turner n.d.
4. Deutsch 1936
5. Elton 1937
6. Radin & Patrick 1937
7. Deutsch (revised) 1943
8. Simmons 1950
9. Arndt 1964
10. Deutsch (re-revised) 1963
11. Kayden 1964
12. Nabokov 1964
13. Harding 1967
14. Liberson 1975
15. Nabokov (revised) 1975
16. Johnston 1977
17. Liberson (revised) 1987
18. Clough 1988
19. Arndt (revised) 1992
20. Kozlov 1994
21. Elton/Briggs 1995
22. Falen 1995
23. Sharer 1996
24. Kozlov (revised) 1998
25. Cahill 1999
26. Cahikll (rev) 1999 on
27. Clarke 1999
28. Corr 1999
29. Hofstadter 1999
30. Emmet & Makourenkova 1999
31. Ledger 2001
32. Litoshick 2001
33. Johnston (revised) 2003
34. Beck 2004
35. Bonver 2004, reprinted 2005
36. Stone 2005
37. Hoyt 2008
38. Mitchell 2008
39. Kline 2009
40. Lowenfeld 2010
41. Thomas 2011
42. Clarke (revised) 2011
43. Hobson 2011, reprinted 2016
44. Briggs 2016
45. Portnoi 2016

**The Overall Structure of the Novel**

*Eugene Onegin* consists of eight chapters of roughly equal length together with fragments of *Onegin’s Journey* and various authorial notes. (There are also some fragments of a projected “Chapter Ten”.) It consists of 5541 lines, 5523 of which are iambic (and the other 18, in “The Song of the Girls” are in trochaic trimeter with long terminals). Most of it is written in the Onegin stanza.

**The Onegin Stanza**

The Onegin stanza consists of rhymed iambic tetrameters with the following rhyme scheme, where capital letters indicate double (feminine) rhymes:

A b A b C C d d E f f E g g

The lines with double rhymes have an extra unstressed syllable. Some of the translations, namely those by Arndt, Beck, Deutsch, Elton, Falen, Hofstadter, Johnston, Mitchell, and Sharer, use the Onegin stanza. It is used in English by by Vikram Seth in his 1986 novel *The Golden Gate* and by Diana Lewis Burgin in *Richard Burgin: A Life in Verse*. It is also used by Jon Stallworthy in ‘The Nutcracker’, *London Review of Books* **9** (16) (1987), by John Fuller in *The Illusionists*, London: Secker and Warburg 1980, and by Matt Rubinstein in ‘Equinox[’](file:///C:\Users\pml\Documents\onegin\equinox.doc) (originally published in the *Sydney Morning Herald* between 22 Sep 2004 and 21 Sep 2005; see equinox.doc) and by Jim Blyth in *Kim and Jim: The Length of Love Street*. H R F Keating in his detective story *Jack the Lady Killer* writes in an approximation to the Onegin stanza. It is used in English by Vikram Seth in his 1986 novel *The Golden Gate,* A shorter example is ‘On Translating Eugene Onegin,’ Vladimir Nabokov, *The New Yorker* (1955 January 8) (see nabokov\_1955.doc). Samples from all of these and a few others by Ben Borek, Andy Croft and W N Herbert can be found in the Word file samples.doc.

**Bibliography**

The section on translations of *Eugene Onegin* in *A Bibliography of Alexander Pushkin in English: Studies and Translations*, compiled by Lauren G. Leighton. Lewiston, NY and Lampeter : Edwin Mellen Press c. 1999 [ISBN 978-0773481701], pp. 258-264, can be found at leighton.doc.

*Encyclopedia of Literary Translation Into English*, Volume 2: M–Z, edited by O. Classe, Routledge 2000. The entry on Pushkin, taken from http://www.books.google.co.uk

can be found at enc\_lit\_trans.docx.

**Microsoft Word Versions**

Microsoft Word versions (adapted from web sites quoted above) of the following:

* [Russian Text](file:///C:\Users\pml\Documents\onegin\onegin_pushkin.doc)
* [Bonver](file:///C:\Users\pml\Documents\onegin\onegin_bonver.doc)
* Cahill\_1999
* Cahill\_rev
* Corré
* [Johnston](file:///C:\Users\pml\Documents\onegin\onegin_johnston.doc)
* Kline
* Kozlov (1994)
* Ledger
* [Litoshick](file:///C:\Users\pml\Documents\onegin\onegin_litoshick.doc)
* [Phillipps-Wolley](file:///C:\Users\pml\Documents\onegin\onegin_pw.doc)
* Simmons
* [Spalding](file:///C:\Users\pml\Documents\onegin\onegin_spalding.doc)

can be found on my web site <http://www-users.york.ac.uk/~pml1/onegin/>

**Early references to Pushkin in English**

Two of the earliest references to Pushkin in English occur in reviews as follows:

* *Westminster Revi*ew, 1/1 (January 1824) pp. 80-101 (attributed in some sources to John Bowring); see

http://www-users.york.ac.uk/~pml1/bronze\_horseman/anon\_1824.pdf

* *The Foreign Review and Contemporary Miscellany*, 2/4 (1828), pp. 279-309; see

http://www-users.york.ac.uk/~pml1/bronze\_horseman/anon\_1828.docx or

http://www-users.york.ac.uk/~pml1/bronze\_horseman/anon\_1828.pdf

**Original and Translations of Chapter One, Stanza I**

**(A few more versions can be found on the page on partial translations)**

**0. Pushkin**

«Мой дядя самых честных правил,

Когда не в шутку занемог,

Он уважать себя заставил

И лучше выдумать не мог.

Его пример другим наука;

Но, боже мой, какая скука

С больным сидеть и день и ночь

Не отходя ни шагу прочь!

Какое низкое коварство

Полуживого забавлять,

Ему подушки поправлять,

Печально подносить лекарство,

Вздыхать и думать про себя:

Когда же чёрт возьмёт тебя!»

**1. Arndt (1963)**

“Now that he is in grave condition,

My uncle, decorous old prune,

Has earned himself my recognition;

What could have been more opportune?

May his idea inspire others;

But what a bore, I ask you, brothers,

To tend a patient night and day

And venture not a step away:

Is there hypocrisy more glaring

Than to amuse one all but dead,

Shake up the pillow for his head,

Dose him with melancholy bearing,

And think behind a stifled cough,

‘When will the Devil haul you off?’”

**2. Arndt (1992)**

“Now that he is in grave condition,

My uncle, decorous old dunce,

Has won respectful recognition;

And done the perfect thing for once.

His action be a guide to others;

But what a bore, I ask you, brothers,

To tend a patient night and day

And venture not a step away:

Is there hypocrisy more glaring

Than to amuse one all but dead,

Shake up the pillow for his head,

Dose him with melancholy bearing,

And think behind a public sigh:

‘Deuce take you, step on it and die!’”

**3. Beck**

“My uncle’s acted very wisely,

to seek his bed when he’s so sick;

his family’s reacted nicely

and he’s most happy with his trick.

He’s set the world a good example,

which others really ought to sample,

but it’s a bore, when night and day

the sick man forces you to stay!

To keep him sweet, as if he’s dying,

give him his daily medicine

and make quite sure that it goes in,

adjust the pillows while one’s sighing:

‘Don’t even think of getting well,

the devil take you, go to hell!’”

**4. Bonver**

“My uncle, of the best traditions,

When being almost deceased,

Forced men to treat him with distinction,

Which was the best of his ideas.

Yes, his example − to us for learning,

But, Heavens, how it is boring

To sit with him all day and night,

Not having right to step aside!

What a deplorable deception

To entertain the man, half-dead,

To fix a pillow in his bed,

To give him drugs with sad attention,

To sigh and think in deeps of heart:

When will the deuce take you apart?”

**5. Briggs (2016)**

“Uncle, a man of purest probity,

Has fallen ill, beyond a joke.

Respected now, and scorned by nobody,

He has achieved his masterstroke

With this exemplary behaviour,

But it would try the Holy Saviour

To tend a sickbed night and day,

And never stir a step away,

Employing shameful histrionics

To bring a half-dead man some cheer,

Plump pillows and draw sadly near,

Indulging him with pills and tonics,

Heaving deep sighs, but thinking, ‘Ooh!

When will the devil come for you?’”

**6. Cahill (1999)**

“My uncle is a man of honest principles; when he became ill, he forced us to respect him for the first time, as if we’d never been able to find a reason to before. He’s an example to others; but, good God, what a bore to sit by the sick day and night, not wandering a step away! How deceitful to amuse a half-dead man, fluff his pillows for him, give him his medicine, sigh − all the while thinking, ‘When *will* the devil take you?’”

**7. Cahill (rev)**

“My uncle’s a man of honest principles: when he got ill, he forced

us to respect him for the first time − his best trick ever. He’s an

example to others; but, good God, what a bore to sit by a sick man day and

night, never wandering a step away! How deceitful to amuse a half-dead man,

fluff his pillows, give him his medicine, and sigh − all the while

thinking, ‘When will the devil take you?’”

**8. Clarke (1999)**

‘My uncle − man of the highest principles . . . since he fell ill in earnest, he’s won everyone’s respect − couldn’t have thought of a better way. His example’s a lesson to us all . . .

‘But, God! − what a bore to sit by an invalid day and night, never moving one step away! What base hypocrisy to keep amused someone half-dead, straighten his pillows, solemnly bring him his medicine, sigh and sigh − and be thinking to oneself “Will the Devil never take you?”!’#

**9. Clarke (2011)**

“Man of highest principles, my uncle...

When he fell ill in earnest,

he won respect – he couldn’t

have thought of a better way.

His example’s a lesson to others...

But, God! – what a bore

to sit with an invalid day and night,

never moving one step away!

What base hypocrisy

to try to amuse a man half-dead,

straighten his pillows,

solemnly administer medicine,

keep sighing – and think to oneself,

‘Will the Devil never take you?’!”

**10. Clough**

⎯“When Uncle took to his bed

it was clearly going to be no joking matter

(he’s a gentleman of the most punctilious principles).

O yes, he’s made me respect him ⎯

couldn't have thought of a better way ⎯

sets an example to the rest of us. . .

but my God! What a bore it all is!

Sitting with a sick man day and night,

not being able to step outside his room

(the crafty bastard’s arranged it all),

trying to amuse a near corpse, shaking up its pillows every few minutes,

bringing it medicine with a suitably long face ⎯

but inwardly sighing, privately thinking

‘When is the Devil coming to collect you?’⎯”

**11. Corr:**

“My uncle, long a prince among  
The upright, got so very ill.  
But honors of the highest rung  
He asked for, and he got his fill.  
His model men came to adore.  
But, oh my goodness! what a bore  
To sit with uncle night and day,  
And never from his bedside stray!  
What an awful, low-down scene  
His half-dead person to amuse,  
Arrange his pillows, and to choose  
Lugubriously his medicine,  
While sighing in sad undertones:  
‘When will old Nick consume your bones?’”

**12. Deutsch (1936)**

“My uncle’s shown his good intentions

By falling desperately ill;

His worth is proved; of all intentions

Where will you find one better still?

He’s an example, I’m averring;

But, God, what boredom⎯there, unstirring,

By day, by night, thus to be bid

To sit beside an invalid!

Low cunning must assist devotion

To one who is but half-alive:

You puff his pillow and contrive

Amusement while you mix his potion;

You sigh, and think with furrowed brow⎯

‘Why can’t the devil take you now?’”

**13. Deutsch (1943)**

“My uncle always was respected;

But his grave illness, I confess,

Is more than I could have expected:

A stroke of genius, nothing less.

He offers all a grand example;

But, God, such boredom who would sample?⎯

Daylong, nightlong, thus to be bid

To sit beside an invalid!

Low cunning must assist devotion

To one who is but half-alive:

You smooth his pillow and contrive

Amusement while you mix his potion;

You sigh, and think with furrowed brow⎯

‘Why can’t the devil take you now?’”

**14. Deutsch (1964)**

‘My uncle always was respected,

But his grave illness, I confess,

Is more than could have been expected:

A stroke of genius, nothing less!

He offers all a fine example.

But, God, such boredom who would sample⎯

As day and night to have to sit

Beside a sick-bed − think of it!

Low cunning must assist devotion

To one who is but half-alive;

You puff his pillow and contrive

Amusement while you mix his potion;

You sigh and think with furrowed brow:

“Why can’t the devil take you now?”’

**15–16. Elton; Elton/Briggs is unchanged**

‘When Uncle, in good earnest, sickened

(His principles were always high),

My own respect for him was quickened;

This was his happiest thought,’ said I.

He was a pattern edifying:

− Yet, heavens! how boring, and how trying.

To tend a patient night and day

And never move a step away!

And then − how low the craft and gross is! −

I must amuse a man half-dead,

Arrange the pillows for his head,

And bring, with a long face, the doses

And sigh, and wonder inwardly,

‘When *will* the Devil come for thee?’

**17. Emmet & Makourenkova**

“My Uncle based life’s regulation

“On high ideals; when he fell ill,

“His bearing forced our admiration,

“One could not dream of better still,

“A model posed to tutor others;

“But God Almighty, what a bother,

“A bedside watch by night and day,

“Without a chance to step away!

“How filled with shame and gross deception

“To entertain the living dead,

“To smooth the pillows at his head,

“While sadly bringing pill and potion,

“To sigh, and think with hidden woe:

“When will the devil come for you!”

**18. Falen**

‘My uncle, man of firm convictions . . .

By falling gravely ill, he’s won

A due respect for his afflictions⎯

The only clever thing he’s done.

May his example profit others;

But God, what deadly boredom, brothers,

To tend a sick man night and day,

Not daring once to steal away!

And, oh, how base to pamper grossly

And entertain the nearly dead,

To fluff the pillows for his head,

And pass him medicines morosely⎯

While thinking under every sigh:

The devil take you, Uncle. Die!’

**19. Harding**

I have not been able to locate the translation by Harding.

**20. Hobson**

My uncle, honest fellow, seeing

That he was now a dying man,

Required my last respects, this being

His best, indeed, his only, plan.

The plan may be worth imitating;

The boredom is excruciating.

Sit by a sick-bed night and day

And never move a step away.

With what low cunning one tries madly

To amuse a man who’s half alive,

Adjust his pillows, and contrive

To bring his medicine to him sadly.

Then sigh while proffering the spoon,

‘Let’s hope the Devil takes you soon.’

**21. Hofstadter**

“My uncle, matchless moral model,

When deathly ill, learned how to make

His friends respect him, bow and coddle ⎯

Of all his ploys, that takes the cake.

To others, this might teach a lesson;

But Lord above, I’d feel such stress in

Having to sit there night and day,

Daring not once to step away.

Plus, I’d say, it’s hypocritical

To keep the half-dead’s spirit bright,

To plump his pillows till they’re right,

Fetch his pills with tears veridical ⎯

Yet in secret to wish and sigh,

‘Hurry, dear Uncle, up and die!’”

**22. Hoyt**

“My uncle’s ruled by utmost honor:

When taken seriously ill,

He got himself to be respected,

And nothing better could devise.

His case for others is a lesson,

But God, how boring to be sitting

With a sick person day and night,

Not moving even one step off.

What despicable calculation

To keep a half-dead man amused,

Glumly his medicine to serve him,

To set his pillows straight for him,

To heave a sigh and to reflect,

When will the Devil take you off?”

**23-24. Johnson (1977; unchanged in 2003)**

‘My uncle − high ideals inspire him;

but when past joking he fell sick,

he really forced one to admire him −

and never played a shrewder trick.

Let others learn from his example!

But God, how deadly dull to sample

sickroom attendance night and day

and never stir a foot away!

And the sly baseness, fit to throttle,

of entertaining the half-dead:

one smoothes the pillows down in bed,

and glumly serves the medicine bottle,

and sighs, and asks oneself all through:

“When will the Devil take you off?”

**25. Kayden**

“My uncle was the soul of honor

And, when at last he took to bed,

He had the sense to make his kin

Respect his smallest wish, in dread

Before his disapproving gaze.

But Lord above! what fearful boredom

To tend the sick all day and night,

And never move for days and days!

What pitiful dissimulation

A dying man to entertain,⎯

Arrange the pillows for his head,

Prepare his medicine, then feign

A sigh of grief and wonder why

The devil takes his time to die.”

**26. Kline**

‘My uncle, what a worthy man,

Falling ill like that, and dying;

It summons up respect, one can

Admire it, as if he were trying.

Let us all follow his example!

But, God, what tedium to sample

That sitting by the bed all day,

All night, barely a foot away!

And the hypocrisy, demeaning,

Of cosseting one who’s half alive;

Puffing the pillows, you contrive

To bring his medicine unsmiling,

Thinking with a mournful sigh,

“Why the devil can’t you die?’

**27. Kozlov (1994)**

‘My uncle keeps to honest systems:   
By falling ill, yet not in jest,   
He made me love him with insistence   
And couldn’t find some better test.   
Well, his example gives a lesson;   
But goodness me, it’s quite distressing   
To sit with him all day and night,   
Not stepping out of his sight.   
And what insidiousness you show   
When you amuse a man half dead   
Arrange the pillows in bed   
Then sadly give him drugs in sadness, though  
You sigh, not speaking of your will,   
When will the devil come for him!’

**28. Kozlov (1998)**

“My uncle keeps to honest systems:

By falling ill, if not in jest,

He made me love him with insistence

And couldn’t find some better test.

Well, his example gives a lesson;

But goodness me, it’s quite distressing

To sit with him all day and night,

But staying always in his sight.

What perfidy you are displaying

When you amuse a man half-dead

Arranging pillows in his bed

Then sadly give him drugs, delaying

Your sigh, not speaking of your dream,

When will the devil come for him!”

**29. Ledger**

“My uncle, a most worthy gentleman,

When he fell seriously ill,

Constrained everyone to respect him,

Couldn’t have done better if he tried.

His behaviour was a lesson to us all.

But, God above, what crashing boredom

To sit with the malingerer all day

Not moving even one footstep away.

What demeaning hypocrisy

To amuse the half-dead codger,

To fluff up his pillows, and then,

Mournfully to bring him his medicine;

To think to oneself, and to sigh:

When the devil will the old rascal die?”

**30. Liberson (1975)**

“My uncle was a clever man ⎯

“By getting seriously ill,

“He knew I’d be his faithful fan,

“Worthy heir of a worthy will.

“But what a chore to please a patient,

“To fix his pillow, smile and sigh,

“To amuse him, so frail and ancient

“And yet to think: when will you die?”

**31. Liberson (1987)**

“My uncle is a clever man ⎯

“By getting seriously ill,

“He knew I’d be his faithful fan,

“Worthy heir of a worthy will.

“But what a chore to please a patient,

“To fix his pillow, smile and sigh,

“To amuse him, so frail and ancient

“And yet to think: when will you die?”

**32. Litoshik**

My uncle was a man of virtue,

When he became quite old and sick,

He sought respect and tried to teach me,

His only heir, verte and weak.

He had the fun, I had the sore,

But gracious goodness! what a bore!

To sit by bedplace day and night,

Not doing even step aside,

And what a cheep and cunning thing

To entertain the sad,

To serve around, make his bed,

To fetch the pills, to mourn and grim,

To sigh outloud, think along:

‘God damn old man, why ain’t you gone?’

**33. Lowenfeld**

“ My uncle, man of rules, most honest,

When he fell ill beyond all joke,

Respect for himself forced upon us

(Better than that could not be hoped)

Let others learn from his example,

But Lord, how deathly dull to sample

The patient’s sickbed night and day,

And never take a step away!

What execrebly base dissembling

To keep someone half-dead amused,

Prop up his pillows, sadly brood,

With melancholy bring him medicine,

Sigh — as you ask yourself — all though —

When will the Devil come for you!”

**34. Mitchell**

My uncle is a man of honour,

When in good earnest he fell ill,

He won respect by his demeanour

And found the role he best could fill.

Let others profit by his lesson,

But, oh my God, what desolation

To tend a sick man day and night

And not to venture from his sight!

What shameful cunning to be cheerful

With someone who is halfway dead,

To prop up pillows by his head,

To bring him medicine, looking tearful,

To sigh − while inwardly you think:

When will the devil let him sink?

**35. Nabokov (1964)**

“My uncle has most honest principles:   
when he was taken gravely ill,   
he forced one to respect him   
and nothing better could invent.   
To others his example is a lesson;   
but, good God, what a bore to sit   
by a sick person day and night, not stirring   
a step away!   
What base perfidiousness   
To entertain one half-alive,   
adjust for him his pillows,   
sadly serve him his medicine,   
sigh⎯and think inwardly   
when *will* the devil take you?”

**36. Nabokov (1975)**

“My uncle has most honest principles;

when taken ill in earnest,

he has made one respect him

and nothing better could invent.

To others his example is a lesson;

but, good God, what a bore

to sit by a sick man day and night,

without moving a step away!

What base perfidiousness

The half-alive one to amuse,

adjust for him the pillows,

sadly present him the medicine,

sigh⎯and think inwardly

when *will* the devil take you?”

**37. Phillipps-Wolley**

A perfect life without a flaw,

Till sickness laid him on his bed,

My grandsire lived: himself a law

By which our lesser lives were led.

Respect from all (or high or low),

The best he knew, or cared to know!

Yet, oh, my God! how slow to spread

The pillows for the sick man’s head:

What prostitution of one’s wit

To raise a smile on lips half cold,

With downcast eyes his medicine hold.

All day, all night, beside him sit,

And sighing to oneself still muse

“When will the Devil take his dues?”

**38. Portnoi**

“My uncle was a man of most honorable principles,

When he was taken seriously ill,

He made everyone respect him,

And couldn’t have had a better plan.

His example is a lesson for others;

But, oh my God, what a bore it is

To sit at the sick man’s bedside day and night,

Not moving a step away!

What a low dishonesty it is

To entertain a half-dead man,

To adjust his pillows,

To solemnly serve him his medicine,

To sigh and to say to oneself,

‘When will the devil take you?’”

**39. Radin & Patrick**

“My uncle’s verse was always upright

And now that he has fallen ill

In earnest he makes one respect him:

He is a pattern for us still.

One really could not ask for more ⎯

But heavens, what a fearful bore

To play the sick-nurse day and night

And never stir beyond his sight!

What petty, mean dissimulation

To entertain a man half-dead,

To poke his pillows up in bed,

And carry in some vile potation,

While all the time one’s thinking, ‘Why

The devil take so long to die?’”

**40. Sharer**

“My uncle ought to be respected:

As soon as he was gravely ill,

He told his kin they were expected

To be attentive to his will.

One must obey when fate is calling.

But, Lord, what can be more appalling

Than through the day and through the night

To be the ailing man’s delight?

How wearisome and unaesthetic

To have a helpless patient fed,

To tiptoe softly round his bed,

Be sensitive and sympathetic,

And think, while trying to console:

‘When will the devil take your soul?’”

**41. Simmons**

“Heigh ho, what a fatigue, and what a bore,

To sit all day beside a dying man,

And only steal away when he doth snore,

And for the half-dead some amusements plan;

To give him medicine; his brow to fan;

To think when you his crumpled pillow shake,

‘When will the devil this old devil take?’

My uncle lives a life of rectitude,

An honest man, if ever there were such,

But given much, I fear, to platitude ⎯

It seems to me he utters them too much;

But when this fever his old bones did touch

Upon his relatives he forced respect;

On his example others made reflect.”

**42. Spalding**

“My uncle’s goodness is extreme,

If seriously he hath disease;

He hath acquired the world’s esteem

And nothing more important sees;

A paragon of virtue he!

But what a nuisance it will be,

Chained to his bedside night and day

Without a chance to slip away.

Ye need dissimulation base

A dying man with art to soothe,

Beneath his head the pillow smooth,

And physic bring with mournful face,

To sigh and meditate alone:

When will the devil take his own!”

**43. Stone**

“My uncle makes a big production   
of being ill, and truth be told,   
I’d offer him just one instruction:   
‘Give up the ghost — you’re weak and old!’”

**44. Thomas**

‘Now that my uncle’s truly dying

He seems more decent than before…

You have to praise the way he’s trying

To keep a grip, if nothing more.

A fine example to us all, but

The thought of what I face – appalling!

Sitting with him by day and night,

Not venturing as step outside!

What boredom, what a base betrayal,

To entertain a man half-dead,

Plump up the pillows by his bed,

Sigh, with a spoon held to his frail

Old lips, while thinking to yourself,

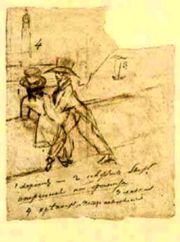
When will the devil take you off!’

**45. Turner**

I have not been able to locate the translation by Turner.

while on 17 December 2009 http://translate.google.com/ offered

“My uncle is the most honest rules   
When not in the joke was sick,   
He was forced to respect themselves   
I could not invent better.   
His example to other science;   
But, my God, what a bore   
From patients to sit day and night,   
Not leaving a single step away!   
What kind of low cunning   
Half alive amuse,   
He cushion correct,   
Sadly hold medicine   
Sigh and think to myself:   
When the devil take you! ”



*Drawing by Pushkin of himself with Onegin*

A wordcloud of the original created by <http://www.wordle.net> can be seen below:



On the web at http://www-users.york.ac.uk/~pml1/onegin/welcome.htm

Revised 8 October 2016 by Peter M Lee (peter.lee@york.ac.uk)