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**YORKSHIRE DIALECT POEMS
(1673-1915)**
and
Traditional Poems

Compiled
with an Historical Introduction
by

F. W. Moorman

(Professor of English Language, University of Leeds)

London

Published for the Yorkshire Dialect Society
by Sidgwick and Jackson, Ltd., 1916

[NP]

TO
THE YORKSHIREMEN SERVING THEIR
COUNTRY IN TRENCH OR ON BATTLESHIP

I RESPECTFULLY DEDICATE

THIS COLLECTION

OF

SONGS FROM THE HOMELAND

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P R E F A C E

SEVERAL anthologies of poems by Yorkshiremen, or about Yorkshiremen, have passed through the press since Joseph Ritson published his *Yorkshire Garland* in 1786. Most of these have included a number of dialect poems, but I believe that the volume which the reader now holds in his hand is the first which is made up entirely of poems written in "broad Yorkshire." In my choice of poems I have been governed entirely by the literary quality and popular appeal of the material which lay at my disposal. This anthology has not been compiled for the philologist, but for those who have learnt to speak "broad Yorkshire" at their mother's knee, and have not wholly unlearned it at their schoolmaster's desk. To such the variety and interest of these poems, no less than the considerable range of time over which their composition extends, will, I believe, come as a surprise.

It is in some ways a misfortune that there is no such thing as a standard Yorkshire dialect. The speech of the North and East Ridings is far removed from that of the industrial south-west. The difference

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consists, not so much in idiom or vocabulary, as in pronunciation—especially in the pronunciation of the long vowels and diphthongs.¹ As a consequence of this, I have found it impossible, in bringing together dialect poems from all parts of the county, to reduce their forms to what might be called Standard Yorkshire. Had I attempted to do this, I should have destroyed what was most characteristic. My purpose throughout has been to preserve the distinguishing marks of dialect possessed by the poems, but to normalise the spelling of those writers who belong to one and the same dialect area.

The spelling of "broad Yorkshire" will always be one of the problems which the dialect-writer has to face. At best he can only hope for a broadly accurate representation of his mode of speech, but he can take comfort in the thought that most of those who read his verses know by habit how the words should be pronounced far better than he can teach them by adopting strange phonetic devices. A recognition of this fact has guided me in fixing the text of this anthology, and every spelling device which seemed

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to me unnecessary, or clumsy, or pedantic, I have ruthlessly discarded. On the other hand, where the

1.- Thus in the south-west *fool* and *soon* are pronounced *fooil* and *sooin*, in the north-east *feel* and *seean*. Both the south-west and the north-east have a word *praad*—with a vowel-sound like the *a* in *father*—but whereas in the south-west it stands for *proud*, in the north-east it stands for *pride*.

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dialect-writer has chosen the Standard English spelling of any word, I have as a rule not thought fit to alter its form and spell it as it would be pronounced in his dialect.

I am afraid I may have given offence to those whom I should most of all like to please—the living contributors to this anthology—by tampering in this way with the text of their poems. In defence of what I have done, I must put forward the plea of consistency. If I had preserved every poet's text as I found it, I should have reduced my readers to despair.

In conclusion, I should like to thank the contributors to this volume, and also their publishers, for the permission to reproduce copyright work. Special thanks are due to Mr. Richard Blakeborough, who has placed Yorkshiremen under a debt, by the great service which he has rendered in recovering much of the traditional poetry of Yorkshire and in giving it the permanence of the printed page. In compiling the so-called traditional poems at the end of this volume, I have largely drawn upon his *Wit, Character, Folklore, and Customs of the North Riding*.

F. W. MOORMAN,

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INTRODUCTION

THE publication of an anthology of Yorkshire dialect poetry seems to demand a brief introduction in which something shall be said of the history and general character

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of that poetry. It is hardly necessary to state that Yorkshire has produced neither a Robert Burns, a William Barnes, nor even an Edwin Waugh. Its singers are as yet known only among their own folk; the names of John Castillo and Florence Tweddell are household words among the peasants of the Cleveland dales, as are those of Ben Preston and John Hartley among the artisans of the Aire and Calder valleys; but, outside of the county, they are almost unknown, except to those who are of Yorkshire descent and who cherish the dialect because of its association with the homes of their childhood.

At the same time there is no body of dialect verse which better deserves the honour of an anthology. In volume and variety the dialect poetry of Yorkshire surpasses that of all other English counties. Moreover, when the rise of the Standard English idiom crushed out our dialect literature, it was the Yorkshire dialect which first reasserted its claims upon the muse of poetry; hence, whereas the dialect literature of most of the English counties dates only from the beginning of the nineteenth century, that of Yorkshire reaches back to the second half of the seventeenth.

In one sense it may be said that Yorkshire dialect poetry dates, not from the seventeenth, but from the seventh century, and that the first Yorkshire dialect poet was [xx]

Caedmon, the neat-herd of Whitby Abbey. But to the ordinary person the reference to a dialect implies the existence of a standard mode of speech almost as certainly as odd implies even. Accordingly, this is not the place to speak of that great heritage of song which Yorkshire bequeathed to the nation between the seventh century and the fifteenth. After the Caedmonic poems, its chief glories are the religious lyrics of Richard Rolle, the mystic, and the great cycles of scriptural plays which are associated with the trade-guilds of York and Wakefield. But in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries the all-conquering Standard English spread like a mighty spring-tide over England and found no check to its progress till the Cheviots were reached. The new "King's English" was of little avail in silencing dialect as a means of intercourse between man and man, but it checked for centuries the development of dialect literature. The old traditional ballads and songs, which were handed down orally from generation to generation in the speech of the district to which they belonged, escaped to some extent this movement towards uniformity; but the deliberate artificers of verse showed themselves eager above all things to get rid of their provincialisms and use only the language of the Court. Shakespeare may introduce a few Warwickshire words into his plays, but his English is none the less the Standard English of his day, while Spenser is sharply brought to task by Ben Jonson for using archaisms and provincialism in his poems. A notable song of the Elizabethan age is that entitled "York, York, for my Monie," which was first published in 1584; only a Yorkshireman could have written it, and it was plainly intended for the gratification of Yorkshire pride; yet its language is without trace of local colour, either in spelling or vocabulary. Again, there appeared in the year 1615 a poem by Richard Brathwaite, entitled, "The Yorkshire Cottoneers," and addressed to "all true-bred Northerne Sparks, of the generous society of the Cottoneers, who hold their High-rodde by the Pinder

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of Wakefield, the Shoo-maker of Bradford, and the white Coate of Kendall"; but

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Brathwaite, though a Kendal man by birth, makes no attempt to win the hearts of his "true-bred Northern Sparks" by addressing them in the dialect that was their daily wear. In a word, the use of the Yorkshire dialect for literary purposes died out early in the Tudor period.

As already stated, its rebirth dates from the second half of the seventeenth century. That was an age of scientific investigation and antiquarian research. John Ray, the father of natural history, not content with his achievements in the classification of plants, took up also the collection of outlandish words, and in the year 1674 he published a work entitled, *A Collection of English Words, not generally used, with their significations and Original, in two Alphabetical Catalogues, the one of such as are proper to the Northern, the other to the Southern Counties*. Later he entered into correspondence with the Leeds antiquary, Ralph Thoresby, who, in a letter dated April 27, 1703, sends him a list of dialect words current in and about Leeds.¹

Side by side with this new interest in the dialect vocabulary comes also the dialect poem. One year before the appearance of Ray's *Collection of English Words* the York printer, Stephen Bulkby, had issued, as a humble broadside without author's name, a poem which bore the following title: *A Yorkshire Dialogue in Yorkshire Dialect; Between an Awd Wife, a Lass, and a Butcher*. This dialogue occupies the first place in our anthology, and it is, from several points of view, a significant work. It marks the beginning, not only of modern Yorkshire, but also of modern English, dialect poetry. It appeared just a thousand years after Caedmon had sung the Creator's praise in Whitby Abbey, and its dialect is that of north-east

1.- Some years before Thoresby's letter was written, another Yorkshireman, Francis Brokesby, rector of Rowley in the East Riding, communicated with Ray about dialect words in use in his district. See Ray's *Collection of English words*, second edition, pp. 170-73 (1691).

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Yorkshire—in other words, the lineal descendant of that speech which was used by Caedmon in the seventh century, by Richard Rolle in the fourteenth, and which may be heard to this day in the streets of Whitby and among the hamlets of the Cleveland Hills.

The dialogue is a piece of boldest realism. Written in an age when classic restraint and classic elegance were in the ascendant, and when English poets were taking only too readily to heart the warning of Boileau against allowing shepherds to speak "*comme on parle au village*," the author of this rustic dialogue flings to the winds every convention of poetic elegance. His lines "*baisent la terre*" in a way that would have inexpressibly shocked Boileau and the Parisian *salons*. The poem reeks of the byre and the shambles; its theme is the misadventure which befalls an ox in its stall and its final despatch by the butcher's mallet! One might perhaps find something comparable to it in theme and treatment in the paintings of the contemporary school of Dutch realists, but in poetry is unique. Yet, gross as is its realism, it cannot be called crude as a work of poetic art. In rhyme and rhythm it is quite regular, and the impression which it leaves upon the mind is that it was the work of an educated man, keenly interested in the unvarnished life of a Yorkshire farm, keenly interested in the vocabulary and idioms of his district, and determined to produce a poem which should bid defiance to all the

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proprieties of the poetic art.

Eleven years later—in 1684—appeared two more poems, in a dialect akin to but not identical with that of the above and very similar in theme and treatment. These are *A Yorkshire Dialogue in its pure Natural Dialect as it is now commonly spoken in the North Parts of Yorkeshire*, and *A Scould between Bess and Nell, two Yorkshire Women*. These two poems were also published at York, though by a different printer, and in the following year a second edition appeared, followed by a third in 1697. To the poems is appended Francis Brokesby's "Observations

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on the Dialect and Pronuaciation of Words in the East Riding of Yorkshire," which he had previously sent to Ray¹, together with a collection of Yorkshire proverbs and a "Clavis," or Glossary, also by Brokesby. The author of these two poems, who signs himself "G. M. Gent" on the title-page, is generally supposed to be a certain George Meriton, an attorney by profession, though Francis Douce, the antiquary, claims George Morrinton of Northallerton as the author.

"G. M." is a deliberate imitator of the man who wrote the *Dialogue Between an Awd Wife, a Lass, and a Butcher*. All that has been said about the trenchant realism of farm-life in the dialogue of 1673 applies with equal force to dialogues of 1684. The later poet, having a larger canvas at his disposal, is able to introduce more characters more incident; but in all that pertains to style and atmosphere he keeps closely to his model. What is still more apparent is that the author is consciously employing dialect words and idioms with the set purpose of illustrating what he calls "the pure Natural Dialect" of Yorkshire; above all, he delights in the proverbial lore of his native county and never misses an opportunity of tagging his conversations with one or other of these homespun proverbs. The poem is too long for our anthology², but I cannot forbear quoting some of these proverbs:

"There's neay carrion can kill a crow."

"It's a good horse that duz never stumble,
And a good wife that duz never grumble."

"Neare is my sarke, but nearer is my skin."

"It's an ill-made bargain whore beath parties rue."

"A curst cow hes short horns."

"Wilfull fowkes duz never want weay."

"For change of pastures macks fat cawves, it's said,
But change of women macks lean knaves, I'se flaid."

1.- See p. xxi footnote.

2.- It has been republished by the late Professor Skeat in the English Dialect Society's volume, *Nine Specimens of English Dialects*.

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The excellent example set by the authors of the Yorkshire Dialogues was not followed all at once. Early in the eighteenth century, however, Allan Ramsay rendered conspicuous service to dialect poetry generally by the publication of his pastoral drama,

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The Gentle Shepherd (1725), as well as by his collections of Scottish songs, known as *The Evergreen* and *Tea table* miscellanies. Scotland awoke to song, and the charm of Lowland Scots was recognised even by Pope and the wits of the coffee-houses. One can well believe that lovers of dialect south of the Tweed were thereby moved to emulation, and in the year 1736 Henry Carey, the reputed son of the Marquis of Halifax, produced a ballad-opera bearing the equivocal title, *A Wonder, or An Honest Yorkshireman* 1. Popular in its day, this opera is now forgotten, but its song, "An Honest Yorkshireman" (see p. 6) has found a place in many collections of Yorkshire songs. It lacks the charm of the same author's famous "Sally in our Alley," but there is a fine manly ring about its sentiments, and it deserves wider recognition. The dialect is that of north-east Yorkshire.

In 1754 appeared the anonymous dialect poem, *Snaith Marsh* 2. This is a much more conventional piece of work than the seventeenth-century dialogues, and the use which is made of the local idiom is more restricted. Yet it is not without historic interest. Composed at a time when the Enclosure Acts were robbing the peasant farmer of his rights of common, the poem is an elegiac lament on the part of the Snaith farmer who sees himself suddenly brought to the brink of ruin by the enclosure of Snaith Marsh. To add to his misery, his bride, Susan, has deserted him for the more prosperous rival, Roger. As

1.- Two editions of this ballad-opera were published in 1736. The title of the first (? pirated) edition runs as follows: *A Wonder; or, An Honest Yorkshire-man. A Ballad Opera; As it is Performed at the Theatres with Universal Applause*. In the second edition the words, "A Wonder." disappear from the title.

2.- Edited by J. O. Halliwell in his *Yorkshire Anthology*, 1851.

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much of the poem is in standard English; it would be out of place to reprint it in its entirety in this collection, but, inasmuch as the author grows bolder in his use of dialect as the poem proceeds, I have chosen the concluding section to illustrate the quality of the work and the use which made of dialect.

From the date of the publication of *Snaith Marah* to the close of the eighteenth century it is difficult to trace chronologically the progress of Yorkshire dialect poetry. The songs which follow in our anthology—"When at Hame wi' Dad" and "I'm Yorkshire, too"—appear to have eighteenth-century flavour, though they may be a little later. Their theme is somewhat similar to that of Carey's song. The inexperienced but canny Yorkshire lad finds himself exposed to the snares and temptations of "Lunnon city." He is dazzled by the spectacular glories of capital, but his native stock of cannyness renders him proof against seduction. The songs are what we should now music-hall songs, and may possibly have been written for the delights of the visitors to Ranelagh or Vauxhall Gardens.

"The Wensleydale Lad" seems to be of about the same period, for we learn from the song that the reigning monarch was one of the Georges. Its opening line ss a clear repetition—or anticipation—of the opening line of "When at Hame wi' Dad"; but whereas the hero of the latter poem, on leaving home, seeks out the glories of Piccadilly and Hyde Park, the Wensleydale lad is content with the lesser splendours of Leeds. The

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broad humour of this song has made it exceedingly popular; I first heard it on the lips of a Runswick fisherman, and since then have met with it in different parts of the county.

In the year 1786 Joseph Ritson, the antiquary, published a slender collection of short poems which he entitled *The Yorkshire Garland*. This is the first attempt at an anthology of Yorkshire poetry, and the forerunner of other anthologies. All the poems have a connection with

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Yorkshire, but none of them can, in the strict sense of the word, be called a dialect poem.

In the year 1800 the composition of Yorkshire dialect poetry received an important stimulus through the appearance of a volume entitled, *Poems on Several Occasions*. This was the posthumous work of the Rev. Thomas Browne, the son of the vicar of Lastingham. The author, born at Lastingham in 1771, started life as a school-master, first of all at Yeddingham, and later at Bridlington; in the year 1797 he removed to Hull in order to engage in journalistic work as editor of the recently established newspaper, *The Hull Advertiser*. About the same time he took orders and married, but in the following year he died. Most of the poems in the little volume which his friends put through the press in the year 1800 are written in standard English. They display a mind of considerable refinement, but little originality. In the form of ode, elegy, eclogue, or sonnet, we have verses which show tender feeling and a genuine appreciation of nature. But the human interest is slight, and the author is unable to escape from the conventional poetic diction of the eighteenth century. Phrases like "vocal groves," "Pomona's rich bounties," or "the sylvan choir's responsive notes" meet the reader at every turn; direct observation and concrete imagery are sacrificed to trite abstractions, until we feel that the poet becomes a mere echo of other and greater poets who had gone before him. But at the end of the volume appear the "Specimens of the Yorkshire Dialect," consisting of three songs and two eclogues. Here convention is swept aside; the author comes face to face with life as he saw it around him in Yorkshire town and village. We have the song of the peasant girl impatiently awaiting the country fair at which she is to shine in all the glory of "new cauf leather shoon" and white stockings, or declaring her intention of escaping from a mother who "scaulds and flytes" by marrying the sweetheart who comes courting her on "Setterday neets." What is interesting to notice in these songs is the influence

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of Burns. Browne has caught something of the Scottish poet's racy vigour, and in his use of a broken line of refrain in the song, "Ye loit'ring minutes faster flee," he is employing a metrical device which Burns had used with great success in his "Holy Fair" and "Halloween." The eclogue, "Awd Daisy," the theme of which is a Yorkshire farmer's lament for his dead mare, exhibits that affection for faithful animals which we meet with in Cowper, Burns, and other poets of the Romantic Revival. In the sincerity of its emotion it is poles apart from the studied sentimentality of the famous lament over the dead ass Sterne's *Sentimental Journey*; indeed, in spirit it is much nearer to Burns's "Death of Poor Mailie," though Browne is wholly lacking in that delicate humour which Burns possesses, and which overtakes the tenderness of the poem as the lights and

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shadows overtake one another among the hills. The other eclogue, "The Invasion," has something of a topical interest at a time like the present, when England is once more engaged in war with a continental power; for it was written when the fear of a French invasion of our shores weighed heavily upon the people's minds. In the eclogue this danger is earnestly discussed by the two Yorkshire farmers, Roger and Willie. If the French effect a landing, Willy has decided to send Mally and the bairns away from the farm, while he will sharpen his old "lea" (scythe) and remain behind to defend his homestead. As long as wife and children are safe, he is prepared to lay down his life for his country.

The importance of Browne's dialect poems consists not only in their intrinsic worth, but also in the interest which they aroused in dialect poetry in Yorkshire, and the stimulus which they gave to poets in succeeding generations. There is no evidence that the dialogues of George Meriton, or *Snaith Marsh*, had any wide circulation among the Yorkshire peasantry, but there is abundant evidence that such was the case with these five poems of Thomas Browne. Early in the nineteenth century enterprising booksellers [xviii]

at York, Northallerton, Bedale, Otley, and Knaresborough were turning out little chap-books, generally bearing the title, *Specimens of the Yorkshire Dialect*, and consisting largely of the dialect poems of Browne. These circulated widely in the country districts of Yorkshire, and to this day one meets with peasants who take a delight in reciting Browne's songs and eclogues.

Down to the close of the eighteenth century the authors of Yorkshire dialect poetry had been men of education, and even writers by profession. With the coming of the nineteenth century the composition of such poetry extends to men in a humbler social position. The working-man poet appears on the scene and makes his presence felt in many ways. Early in the century, David Lewis, a Knaresborough gardener, published, in one of the chap-books to which reference has just been made, two dialect poems, "The Sweeper and Thieves and "An Elegy on the Death of a Frog"; they were afterwards republished, together with some non-dialect verses, in a volume entitled *The Landscape and Other Poems* (York, 1815) by the same author. A dialogue poem by Lewis, entitled "The Pocket Books," appears in later chap-books. It cannot be claimed for him that his poetic power is of a high standard, but as the first Yorkshire peasant poet to write dialect verse he calls for notice here. His "Elegy on the Death of a Frog" is perhaps chiefly interesting as showing the influence of Burns upon Yorkshire poets at the beginning of the nineteenth century. In idea, and in the choice of verse, it is directly modelled on the famous "To a Mouse."

The reader will doubtless have noticed that in this historic review of Yorkshire dialect poetry it has always been the life of rural Yorkshire which is depicted, and that the great bulk of the poetry has belonged to the North Riding. What we have now to trace is the extension of this revival of vernacular poetry to the densely populated West Riding, where a dialect differing radically from that of the north and east is spoken, and where an astonishing

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variety of industries has created an equally varied outlook upon life and habit of

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thought. Was the Sheffield cutler, the Barnsley miner, the Bradford handloom-weaver, and the Leeds forge-man to find no outlet in dialect verse for his thoughts and emotions, his hopes and his fears? Or, if dialect poetry must be concerned only with rustic life, was the Craven dalesman to have no voice in the matter? Questions such as these may well have passed through the minds of West Riding men as they saw the steady growth of North Riding poetry in the first forty years of the nineteenth century, and passed from hand to hand the well-thumbed chap-books wherein were included poems like "Awd Daisy," "The Sweeper and Thieves," and dialect-songs. The desire to have a share in the movement became more and more urgent, and when the West Riding joined in, it was inevitable that it should widen the scope of dialect poetry both in spirit and in form.

A West Riding dialect literature seems to have arisen first of all in Barnsley and Sheffield in the fourth decade of the nineteenth century. Between 1830 and 1834 a number of prose "conversations" entitled, *The Sheffield Dialect: Be a Shevild Chap*, passed through the press. The author of these also published in 1832 *The Wheelswarf Chronicle*, and in 1836 appeared the first number of *Shevild Chap's Annual* in which the writer throws aside his *nom-de-plume* and signs himself Abel Bywater. This annual, which lived for about twenty years, is the first of the many "Annuals" or "Almanacs" which are the most characteristic product of the West Riding dialect movement. Their history is a subject to itself, and inasmuch as the contributions to them are largely in prose, they can only be referred to very lightly here. Their popularity and ever-increasing circulation is a sure proof of their wide appeal, and there can be no doubt that they have done an immense service in endearing the local idiom in which they are written to those who speak it, and also in interpreting the life and thought of the great industrial

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communities for whom they are written. The literary quality of these almanacs varies greatly, but among their pages will be found many poems, and many prose tales and sketches, which vividly portray the West Riding artisan. Abundant justice is done to his sense of humour, which, if broad and at times even crude, is always good-natured and healthy, as well as to his intense love of the sentimental, which to the stranger lurks hidden beneath a mask of indifference. Incidentally, these almanacs also present a faithful picture of the social history of the West Riding during the greater part of a century. As we study their pages, we realise what impression events such as the introduction of the railroad, the Chartist Movement, the Repeal of the Corn Laws, mid-Victorian factory legislation, Trade-Unionism, the Co-operative movement and Temperance reform made upon the minds of nineteenth-century Yorkshiremen; in other words, these almanacs furnish us with just such a mirror of nineteenth-century industrial Yorkshire as the bound volumes of *Punch* furnish of the nation as a whole. Among the most famous of these annual productions is *The Bairnsla Foak's Annual, an Pogmoor Olmenack*, started by Charles Rogers (Tom Treddlehoyle) in 1840, and *The Halifax Original Illuminated Clock Almanac* begun by John Hartley in 1867. The number of these almanacs is very large; most of them are published and circulated chiefly in the industrial districts of the Riding, but not the least interesting among them is *The Nidderdill Olminac*, edited by "Nattie Nidds" at Pateley Bridge; it began in 1864 and ran until 1880. Wherever published, all of these almanacs conform more or less to the

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same pattern, as it was first laid down by the founder of the dialect almanac, Abel Bywater of Sheffield, in the year 1836. Widely popular in the West Riding, the almanac has never obtained foothold in the other Ridings, and is little known outside of the county. The "Bibliographical List" of dialect literature, published by the English Dialect Society in 1877, mentions only four annuals or almanacs, in addition

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to those published in the West Riding; two of these belong to Tyneside, and two to Lancashire.

Abel Bywater finds a place in our anthology by virtue of his "Sheffield Cutler's Song." In its rollicking swing and boisterous humour it serves admirably to illustrate the new note which is heard when we pass from rural Yorkshire to the noisy manufacturing cities. We exchange the farm, or the country fair, for the gallery of the city music-hall, where the cutler sits armed with stones, red herrings, "flat-backs," and other missiles ready to be hurled at the performers "if they don't play 'Nancy's Fancy' or onay tune we fix."

We are not concerned here with the linguistic side of Yorkshire dialect literature, but the reader will notice how different is the phonology, and to a less extent the vocabulary and idiom, of this song from that of the North Riding specimens.

Returning once more to the North Riding, we must first of all draw attention to the poet, John Castillo. In the country round Whitby and Pickering, and throughout the Hambleton Hills, his name is very familiar. Born near Dublin, in 1792, of Roman Catholic parents, he was brought up at Lealholm Bridge, in the Cleveland country, and learnt the trade of a journeyman stone-mason. Having abjured the faith of his childhood, he joined, in 1818, the Wesleyan Methodist Society and acquired great popularity in the North Riding as a local preacher. His well-known poem, "Awd Isaac," seems to have been first printed at Northallerton in 1831. Twelve years later it occupies the first place in a volume of poems published by the author at Whitby under the title, *Awd Isaac, The Sleepchase, and Other Poems*. Like most of his other poems, "Awd Isaac" is strongly didactic and religious; its homely piety and directness of speech have won for it a warm welcome among the North Yorkshire peasantry, and many a farmer and farm-labourer still living knows much of the poem by heart. As "Awd Isaac" is too long for an anthology, I have chosen

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"The Lucky Dream" as an illustration of Castillo's workmanship. Apart from its narrative interest, this poem calls for attention as a Yorkshire variant of an ancient and widely dispersed folk-tale, the earliest known version of which is to be found in the works of the thirteenth-century Persian poet Jalalu'd-Dia. Castillo died at Pickering in 1845, and five years later a complete edition of his poems was published at Kirkby Moorside.

Less popular than "Awd Isaac," but often met with in collections of dialect verse, is the poem entitled "The York Minster Screen." This was the work of George Newton Brown, a lawyer by profession, who lived at Nunnington in Ryedale. The poem, which is in the form of a dialogue between two Yorkshire farmers, was first published at Malton in 1833. The conversation, which is of the raciest description, is supposed to

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take place in York Minster and turns on the repairs which were made in 1832 to the famous organ-screen which separates the nave and transepts from the chancel. The question of altering the position of the screen is debated with much humour and vivacity.

Before leaving the North Riding, reference must be made to Elizabeth Tweddell, the gifted poetess of the Cleveland Hills. Born at Stokesley in 1833, the daughter of Thomas Cole, the parish-clerk of that town, she married George Markham Tweddell, the author of *The People's History of Cleveland*, and in 1875 she published a slender volume of dialect verse and prose entitled *Rhymes and Sketches to Illustrate the Cleveland Dialect*. In her modest preface Mrs. Tweddell declares that the only merit of her work lies in "the stringing together of a good many Cleveland words and expressions that are fast becoming obsolete"; but the volume has far deeper claims on our gratitude than this. There is much homely charm in her rhymes and sketches, and the two extracts which find a place in this collection are models of what simple dialect-poems should be. Above all, Mrs. Tweddell has the gift of humour; this is well illustrated by the song, "Dean't mak gam o' me," and [xxxiii]

also by her well-known prose story, "Awd Gab o' Steers". Her most sustained effort in verse is the poem entitled "T' Awd Cleveland Customs," in which she gives us a delightful picture of the festive seasons of the Cleveland year from "Newery Day," with its "lucky bod," to "Kessamus," with its "sooard dancers."

The western portion of the North Riding, including Swale and Wensleydale, has been less fruitful in dialect poetry than the eastern. Apart from the anonymous "Wensleydale Lad" already noticed, is represented this anthology only by the spirited poem, "Reeth Bartle Fair," the work of a true lover of dialect speech, Captain John Harland, who published for the English Dialect Society a valuable glossary of Swaledale words (1873).

The Craven country, the dialect of which differs materially from that spoken in the manufacturing districts of the West Riding, is not without its bards. These include James Henry Dixon (1803-1876), a local historian and antiquary of scholarly tastes, who edited for the Percy Society the delightful collection of folk-poetry entitled *Ancient Poems, Ballads, and Songs of the Peasantry of England* (1846). Mr. Dixon wrote comparatively little poetry himself, but his song, "The Milkin'-time," has the lilt of the best Scottish folk-songs and well deserves its inclusion here. In a longer poem, "Slaadburn Faar" (1871), he gives a humorous and racy description of adventures of a farmer and his wife on their journey from Grassington to Slaidburn to attend the local fair. In general idea it resembles Harland's "Reeth Bartle Fair" which appeared in the preceding year.

But the typical poet of the Craven country was Twistleton, a farmer near Settle, whose *Poems In the Craven Dialect* first appeared in 1869, and soon ran through several editions. He was a disciple of Burns, and his poem "The Christmas Party" (see p.56) daringly challenges comparison with the immortal "Halloween." His description of the dancing in the farm-house kitchen, and of the adventures [xxxiv]

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of the pair of lovers who escape from the merry throng, is singularly vivid, and illustrates the author's ready humour and keen observation of rustic life and character.

Reference has already been made to the *Nidderhill Olminac* which was produced by "Nattie Nidds" between 1864 and 1880 and published at Pateley Bridge. Among the contributors to it was Thomas Blackah, a working miner of Greenhow Hill, who in 1867 published a volume of dialect verse entitled *Songs and Poems in the Nidderdale Dialect*. In their truth to life, homely charm and freedom from pretentiousness, these dialect poems resemble those of Mrs. Tweddell, and deserve a wider recognition than they have so far won.

After this excursion into the dales of the North and West Riding, where, apart from mining, the life of the people is largely spent on the farm, we must turn once again to the industrial Yorkshire of the south-west, and see to what extent dialect poetry has flourished in the smoke-laden air of chimney-stacks and blast-furnaces, and with what success the Yorkshire dialect poets of the towns and cities have interpreted the life and thoughts of those who work in the mill or at the forge. As we have already seen, the first attempts to interpret in dialect poetry the life of industrial Yorkshire were made at Sheffield early in the nineteenth century by Abel Bywater. As the century advanced, the movement spread northwards, and the great artisan communities of Bradford, Leeds, and Halifax produced their poets. Among these pre-eminence belongs to Ben Preston, the Bradford poet, who stepped swiftly into local fame by the publication of his well-known poem, "Natterin' Nan," which first appeared in a Bradford journal in 1856. This is a vigorous piece of dramatic realism, setting forth the character of a Yorkshire scold and grumbler with infinite zest and humour. But it is in pathos that the genius of Preston chiefly consists. In poems like "Owd Moxy," " 'T Lancashire Famine," and [xxxv]

"I niver can call her my wife," he gives us pictures of the struggle that went on in the cottage-homes of the West Riding during the "hungry forties." In "Owd Moxy" his subject is the old waller who has to face the pitiless winter wind and rain as he plies his dreary task on the moors; but in most of his poems it is the life of the handloom-weaver that he interprets. The kindness of his nature is everywhere apparent and gives a sincerity to the poems in which he portrays with rare discernment and sympathy the sufferings of the artisan, toiling from morning to night on eight shillings a week. His pathos has dignity and restraint, and in the poem "I niver can call her my wife" it rises to the heights of great tragedy. This is Ben Preston's masterpiece, and, though scarcely known outside of the county, it deserves to take a place side by side with Hood's "Song of the Shirt" by reason of the poignancy with which it interprets the tragedy of penury.

The example set by Ben Preston has been followed by other dialect poets living in the district round Bradford. Mention may be made of James Burnley, whose poem, "Jim's Letter," is a telling illustration of the fine use which can be made of dialect in the service of the dramatic lyric; and of Abraham Holroyd, who not only wrote original verse, but also made a valuable collection of old Yorkshire songs and ballads.

The rivalry between Bradford and Leeds is proverbial, and, though the latter city has lagged behind Bradford in the production of dialect literature, the *Yorkshire Songs* of J. H. Eccles, published in 1862, is a notable contribution to the movement whose history is here being recorded. In John Hartley, Halifax possessed the most versatile dialect-writer

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that Yorkshire has so far produced. For fifty years this writer, who died in 1915, poured forth lyric

1.- The first edition of Ben Preston's poems appeared in 1880 with the title, *Poems and Songs in the Dialect of Bradford Dale*.

2.- A. Holroyd: *A Collection of Yorkshire Ballads*, ed. by C. F. Forshaw. G. Bell, 1892.

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song and prose tale in unstinted measure. Most of his dialect work found a place in the *Original Illuminated Clock Almanac*, which he edited from 1867 until his death; but from time to time he gathered the best of his work into book form, and his *Yorkshire Lyrics*, published in 1898, occupy a place of honour in many a Yorkshire home. The examples from his works here given will serve to illustrate his fine ear for metrical harmony, his imaginative power, and his sympathetic interpretation of Yorkshire character.

Of the younger generation of Yorkshire poets, most of them still alive, I must speak more briefly. But it must not be overlooked that, so far from there being any falling off in the volume or quality of dialect-verse, it is safe to say that it has never been in so flourishing a condition as at the present day. Dialect poems are now being written in all parts of the county. Editors of weekly papers welcome them gladly in their columns; the Yorkshire Dialect Society has recently opened the pages of its annual *Transactions* to original contributions in verse and prose, and every year the printing presses of London and Yorkshire publish volumes of dialect verse. Of individual writers, whose work finds illustration in this anthology, mention may be made of the Rev. W. H. Oxley, whose *T' Fisher Folk o' Filey Brig* (1888) marks, I believe, the first attempt to interpret in verse the hazardous life of the east-coast fisherman. Farther north, Mr. G. H. Cowling has given us in his *A Yorkshire Tyke* (1914) a number of spirited and winsome studies of the life and thought of the Hackness peasant. The wold country of the East Riding has found its interpreter in Mr. J. A. Carlill, whose *Woz'ls* (1913) is full of delightful humour, as readers of "Love and Pie" will readily discover for themselves. "The File-cutter's Lament" (p. 82), which I have selected from Mr. Downing's volume, *Smook thru' a Shevviold Chimla*, will show that the Sheffield "blade" is doing his best to carry on the tradition set by Abel Bywater eight years ago. Airedale still has its poets, among the most ambitious of whom is Mr. Malham-Dembleby,

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who published in 1912 a volume of verse entitled, *Original Tales and Ballads in Yorkshlre Dialect*. Mr. F. J. Newbould has deservedly won fame as a prose-writer in dialect; his dialect sketches which have for some years appeared in *The Yorkshire Observer* are full of broad humour and dramatic power, and his dainty little lyric "Spring" (p. 87) is a sufficient indication that he has also the dower of the poet. In Alderman Ben Turner of Batley Yorkshire possesses a courageous advocate of the social betterment of the working man and woman, and in the midst of a busy life he has found time to give utterance to his indignation and his faith in dialect-poems which appeal from the heart to the heart. Mr. Walter Hampson of Normanton, writes in a

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lighter vein has his *Tykes Abroad* (1911); he is our Yorkshire Mark Twain, and his narrative of the adventures of a little party of Yorkshiremen in Normandy and Brittany is full of humour. Songs are scattered through the story, and one of these, "Owd England," finds a place in this collection. The Colne Valley and the country round Huddersfield has been somewhat slow in responding to the call of the homely muse of dialect, but Mr. E. A. Lodge's little volume of verse and prose entitled *Odds an' Ends*, marks a successful beginning.

In our account of the history of dialect poetry in Yorkshire it will have been noticed that the chief forms of verse to which local poets have had recourse have been the song, personal or dramatic, the ballad, and the dialogue. Among the most hopeful signs of the times has been the recent extension of dialect to poems of a more sustained character. Within the last twenty years two writers, associated with the far north and the far south of the county respectively, have made the bold attempt to use dialect in narrative poems of larger compass than the simple ballad. These are Mr. Richard Blakeborough, the author of *T' Hunt o' Yatton Brigg* (1896), and Mr. J. S. Fletcher, who, as recently as 1915, published in the dialect of Osgoldcross his *Leet Livvy*. These two poems are in general character
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poles apart: that of Mr. Blakeborough is pure romance, whereas Mr. Fletcher never steps aside from the strait path of realism. *T' Hunt o' Yatton Brigg* is steeped in all the eerie witch-lore of the Cleveland moors. The plot is laid in the district round the famous Roseberry Topping, and deals with the adventures which befall a certain Johnny Simpson, who, when crossed in love, seeks the aid of the witches to aid him in his work of vengeance on the woman who has cast him off. The story is told with great vividness, and the author has made an effective use of all the malevolent powers of witchcraft, seconded by the elemental forces of thunder and lightning, to aid him in telling a story of great dramatic power. *Leet Livvy*, on the other hand, is as sober and restrained as one of the verse-tales of Crabbe, and the only resemblance which it bears to Mr. Blakeborough's witch-story lies in the fact that its hero, like Johnny Simpson, belongs to the peasantry and has suffered at the hands of a woman. The tragic story of "Owd Mattha o' Marlby Moor" is recorded by the sexton whose duty it is to toll the passing-bell, and Mr. Fletcher, whose reputation as a novelist is deservedly high, has rendered the narrative with consummate art. The use of dialect enhances the directness and dramatic realism of the story at every turn; the characters stand out sharp and clear, and we are brought face to face with the passion that makes for tragedy. The poem is purged clean of all sentiment and moralising: it is narrative pure and simple, but aglow with the lurid flame of a passion that burns to the very roots of life. It is no exaggeration to say that *Leet Livvy* is the greatest achievement in Yorkshire dialect poetry up to the present time; let us hope that it is an earnest of even greater things yet to come.

The duty still remains of offering a few words of explanation concerning the poems which find a place in the second part of this anthology, and which I have classified as traditional poems." It is not contended that all of
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these are folk-poems in the strict sense of the term, but all of them are of unknown authorship, and for most of them a considerable antiquity may be claimed; moreover like the folk-song, they owe their preservation rather to oral tradition than to the labours of the scribe. Many of these poems enshrine some of the customs and superstitions of the country-side and carry our thoughts back to a time when the Yorkshireman's habit of mind was far more primitive and childlike than it is to-day. Moreover, though many of the old popular beliefs and rites have vanished before the advance of education and industrialism, the Yorkshireman still clings to the past with a tenacity which exceeds that of the people farther south. For example, nowhere in England does the folk-play which enacts the combats of St. George, with his Saracen adversaries enjoy such popularity as in the upper waters of the Calder Valley and in busy Rochdale over the border. This play, known locally as "The Peace [or Pasque, *i.e.* Easter] Egg," was once acted all over England. Driven from the country-side, where old traditions usually live the longest, it survives amid the smoke-laden atmosphere of cotton-mills and in towns which pride themselves, not without reason, on their love of progress and their readiness to receive new ideas. It is, for our purpose, unfortunate that this fine old play preserves little of the local dialect and is therefore excluded from anthology.

Apart from "The Peace Egg," it is the remote Cleveland country in the North Riding in which the old traditional poetry of Yorkshire has been best preserved. This is the land of the sword-dance, the bridal-garter, and the "mell-supper," the land in which primitive faiths and traditions survive with strange tenacity. The late Canon Atkinson

1.- The reader will find a reprint of the West Riding version of *The Peace Egg*, with an attempt by the editor of this anthology to throw light upon its inner meaning, in the second volume of *Essays and Studies of the English Association* (Clarendon Press, 1911).

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has made this land familiar to us by his fascinating *Forty Years in a Moorland Parish*, and, to the lover of traditional dialect songs, an even greater service has been rendered by a later gleaner in this harvest-field, Mr. Richard Blakeborough of Norton-on-Tees, whose *T' Hunt o' Yatton Brigg* has already been considered. In his supplement to the little volume which contains that poem, and again in his highly instructive and entertaining *Wit, Character, Folklore, and Customs of the North Riding of Yorkshire*, Mr. Blakeborough has brought together a number of traditional songs and proverbial rhymes of great interest, and, to some extent at least, of high antiquity. Many of these have been collected by him among the peasantry, others are taken from a manuscript collection of notes on North Riding folklore made by a certain George Calvert early in the nineteenth century, and now in Mr. Blakeborough's possession.

Of the first importance in this anthology of traditional song are the "Cleveland Lyke-wake Dirge" and "A Dree Neet." The former has been well known to lovers of poetry since Sir Walter Scott included it in his *Border Minstrelsy*; the latter, I believe, was never published until the appearance of *T' Hunt o' Yatton Brigg* in 1896. The tragic power and suggestiveness of these two poems is very remarkable. It is, I think, fairly certain that they stand in intimate association with one another and point back to a time when the prevailing creed of Yorkshire was Roman Catholicism. Both depict with deep

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solemnity the terrors of death and of the Judgment which lies beyond. Whinny Moor appears in either poem as the desolate moorland tract, beset with prickly whin-bushes and flinty stones, which the dead man must traverse on "shoonless feet" on his journey from life. And beyond this moor lies the still more mysterious "Brig o' Dreed," or "Brig o' Deead," as "A Dree Neet" renders it. It would be tempting to conjecture the precise significance of this allusion, and to connect it with other primitive myths and [xli]

legends of a similar character; but space falls us, it may well be that the very vagueness of the allusion is of more haunting tragic power than precise knowledge. It is also interesting to notice the effective use which is made in "A Dree Neet" of all the superstitions which gather about the great pageant of death. The flight of Gabriel ratchets, or Gabriel hounds, through the sky, the fluttering of bats at the casement and of moths the candle flame, and the shroud of soot which falls from the chimney of the room where the dying man lies, are introduced with fine effect; while the curious reference to the folk that draw nigh from the other side of the grave has an Homeric ring about it, and recalls the great scene in the *Odyssey* where the ghosts of Elpenor, Teiresias, and other dead heroes gather about the trench that Odysseus has dugged on the other side of the great stream of Oceanus, hard by the dank house of Hades.

It is unnecessary to speak at any length of the other songs, proverbial rhymes, and "nominies" which find a place among the traditional poems in this collection. The mumming-songs, the boisterous "Ridin' t' stang" verses, and all the snatches of folk-song which are associated with the festive ritual of the circling year either carry their own explanation with them or have been elucidated by those who have written on the subject of Yorkshire customs and folklore. I heartily commend to the reader's notice the three songs entitled "The Bridal Bands," "The Bridal Garter," and "Nance and Tom," which we owe to Mr. Blakeborough, and which present to us in so delightful a manner the picture of the bride tying her garter of wheaten and oaten straws about her left leg and the bridegroom unloosing it after the wedding. It is hoped, too that the reader may find much that is interesting in the singing-games verses and the rhymes which throw light upon the vanishing customs, folklore, and faiths of the county. They serve to lift the veil which hides the past from the present, and to give us visions of a world which [xlii]

is fast passing out of sight and out of memory. It is a world where one may still faintly hear the horns of elf-land blowing, and where Hob-trush Hob and little Nanny Button-cap wander on printless feet through the star-lit glades; where charms are still recited when the moon is new, and where on St. Agnes' Eve the milkmaid lets the twelve sage-leaves fall from her casement-window and, like Keats's Madeline, peers through "the honey'd middle of the night" for a glimpse of the Porphyro to whom she must pledge her troth.

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PART I

YORKSHIRE DIALECT POEMS

1673–1915

[3]

PART I

YORKSHIRE DIALECT POEMS

1673–1915

ANONYMOUS

A YORKSHIRE DIALOGUE BETWEEN AN AWD
WIFE, A LASS, AND A BUTCHER¹ (1673)

AWD WIFE. Pretha now, lass, gang into t' hurn²

An' fetch me heame a skeel o' burn³;

Na, pretha, barn, mak heaste an' gang,

I's mar my deagh,⁴ thou stays sae lang.

LASS. Why, Gom,⁵ I's gea, bud, for my pains,

You's gie me a frundel⁶ o' your grains.

AWD WIFE. My grains, my barn! Marry! not I;

My draugh's⁷ for t' gilts an' galts⁸ i' t' sty.

Than, pretha, look i' t' garth and see

What owsen⁹ i' the stand-hecks¹⁰ be.

[3]

¹ Printed at York as a broadside by Stephen Bulkley in 1673. The original broadside is lost, but a manuscript transcript of it was purchased by the late Professor Skeat at the sale of Sir F. Madden's books and papers, and published by him in volume xxxii, of the *Dialect Society's Transactions*, 1896.

² Corner.

³ Bucket of water.

⁴ Dough.

⁵ Grand-mother.

⁶ Handful.

⁷ Draff.

⁸ Sows and boars.

⁹ Oxen.

¹⁰ Stalls.

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LASS. Blukrins! they'll put,¹¹ I dare not gang
 Oute'en¹² you'll len' me t' great leap-stang.¹³
 AWD WIFE. Tak t' frugan,¹⁴ or t' awd maulin-shaft,¹⁵
 Coom tite¹⁶ agean an' be not daft.
 LASS. Gom, t' great bull-segg¹⁷ he's brokken lowse,
 An' he, he's hiked¹⁸ your broad-horned owse;
 An' t' owse is fall'n into t' swine-trough,
 I think he's brokken his cameril-hough.¹⁹
 AWD WIFE. Whaw! Whaw! lass, mak heaste to t'
 [smedy,²⁰
 He's noo dead, for he rowts²¹ already;
 He's bound; oh! how it bauks an' stangs!²²
 His lisk²³ e'en bumps an' bobs wi' pangs.
 His weazen-pipe's²⁴ as dry as dust,
 His dew-lap's swelled, he cannot hoast.²⁵
 He beals²⁶; tak t' barghams²⁷ off o' t' beams
 An' fetch some breckons²⁸ frae the clames.²⁹
 Frae t' banks go fetch me a weam-tow³⁰
 My nowt's³¹ e'en wreeken'd, he'll not dow.³²
 E'en wellanerin!³³ for my nowt,
 For syke a musan³⁴ ne' er was wrowt.
 Put t' wyes³⁵ amell³⁶ yon stirks an' steers
 I' t' owmer,³⁷ an' sneck the lear-deers.³⁸

¹¹ Gore.
¹² Unless.
¹³ Pole.
¹⁴ Oven-fork.
¹⁵ Handle of even-mop.
¹⁶ Quickly.
¹⁷ Bullock.
¹⁸ Gored.
¹⁹ Bend of hind-leg.
²⁰ Smithy.
²¹ Snorts
²² Swells and stings.
²³ Flank.
²⁴ Windpipe.
²⁵ Cough.
²⁶ Bellows.
²⁷ Horse-collars.
²⁸ Bracken.
²⁹ Heaps
³⁰ Belly-band.
³¹ Ox.
³² Recover.
³³ Alas!
³⁴ Wonder.
³⁵ Heifers.
³⁶ Among.
³⁷ Shade.

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See if Goff Hyldroth be gain-hand³⁹
 Thou helterful,⁴⁰ how dares ta stand!
 LASS. He'll coom belive,⁴¹ or aibles titter,⁴²
 For when he hard i' what a twitter⁴³
 Your poor owse lay, he took his flail
 An' hang'd 't by t' swipple⁴⁴ on a nail;
 An' teuk a mell⁴⁵ fra t' top o' t' wharns.⁴⁶
 An' sware he'd ding your owse i' t' harns.⁴⁷
 He stack his shak-fork up i' t' esins⁴⁸
 An' teuk his jerkin off o' t' gresins.⁴⁹
 Then teuk his mittens, reached his bill,
 An' off o' t' yune-head⁵⁰ teuk a swill⁵¹
 To kep t' owse blude in. Leuk, he's coom.
 AWD WIFE. Than reach a thivel⁵² or a strum⁵³
 To stir his blude; stand not to tauk.
 Hing t' reckans⁵⁴ up o' t' rannel-bauk.⁵⁵
 God ye good-morn, Goff; I's e'en fain
 You'll put my owse out o' his pain.
 BUTCHER. Hough-band him, tak thir⁵⁶ weevils
 hine⁵⁷
 Frae t' rape's end; this is not a swine
 We kill, where ilkane hauds a fuat⁵⁸.
 I's ready now, ilkane leuk to it.

[6]

Then "Beef!" i' God's name I now cry.

³⁸ Barn-doors.
³⁹ Near at hand.
⁴⁰ Halter-full.
⁴¹ Soon.
⁴² Perhaps sooner.
⁴³ Perilous state.
⁴⁴ Flap-end.
⁴⁵ Mallet.
⁴⁶ Hand-mill.
⁴⁷ Brains.
⁴⁸ Eaves.
⁴⁹ Stairs.
⁵⁰ Oven-top.
⁵¹ Bucket.
⁵² Porridge-stick.
⁵³ Stick.
⁵⁴ Iron chains for pot-hooks.
⁵⁵ Chimney cross-beam.
⁵⁶ Those.
⁵⁷ Away.
⁵⁸ Quantity

The Salamanca Corpus: Yorkshire Dialect Poems (1673-

1915) (1916)

Stretch out his legs an' let him lie
Till I coom stick him. Where's my swill?⁵⁹
Coom hither, lass; haud, haud, haud still.
LASS. What mun I do wi' t' blude? BUTCHER.
Thou fool,
Teem⁶⁰ 't down i' t' garth, i' t' midden-pool.
Good beef, by t' mass! an' when 'tis hung
I's roll it down wi' tooth an' tongue,
An' gobble 't down e'en till I worry.
An' whan neist mell⁶¹ we mak a lurry⁶²
A piece o' this frae t' kimlin⁶³ browt
By t' Rood! 't will be as good as owt.
AWD WIFE. Maut-hearted⁶⁴ fool, I e'en could greet!⁶⁵
To see my owse dead at my feet.
I thank you, Goff; I's wipe my een
An', please, you too. BUTCHER. Why, Gom Green?

HENRY CAREY
(DIED 1743)

AN HONEST YORKSHIREMAN

I IS i' truth a coountry youth,
Nean used to Lunnon fashions;
Yet vartue guides, an' still presides
Ower all my steps an' passions.

[7]

Nea coortly leer, bud all sincere,
Nea bribe shall iver blinnd me;
If thoo can like a Yorkshire tike,
A rogue thoo'll niver finnd me.

Thof envy's tongue, so slimly hung,
Would lee about oor coonty,
Nea men o' t' earth boast greater worth,
Or mair extend their boonty.
Oor northern breeze wi' us agrees,

⁵⁹ Bucket.

⁶⁰ Pour.

⁶¹ Next harvest-supper.

⁶² Merry feast.

⁶³ Tub.

⁶⁴ Maggot-hearted.

⁶⁵ Weep.

The Salamanca Corpus: Yorkshire Dialect Poems (1673-

1915) (1916)

An' does for wark weel fit us;
I' public cares, an' love affairs,
Wi' honour we acquit us.

Sea great a maand⁶⁶ is ne'er confaand⁶⁷
Tiv onny shire or nation,
They gie un meast praise whea weel displays
A larnèd eddication;
Whaal rancour rolls i' laattle souls,
By shallow views dissarnin',
They're nobbut wise at awlus prize
Good manners, sense, an' larnin'

ANNONYMOUS

From "SNAITH MARSH" (1754)

ALAS ! will Roger e'er his sleep forgo,
Afore larks sing, or early cocks 'gin crow

[8]

As I've for thee, ungrateful maiden, done,
To help thee milking, e'er day wark begun?
And when thy well-stripp'd kye⁶⁸ would yield no more,
Still on my head the reeking kit⁶⁹ I bore.
And, oh! bethink thee, then, what lovesome talk
We've held together, ganging down the balk,
Maud'ring⁷⁰ at time which would na for us stay,
But now, I ween, maes⁷¹ no such hast away.
Yet, O! return eftsoon and case my woe,
And to some distant parish let us go,
And there again them leetsome days restore,
Where, unassail'd by meety⁷² folk in power,
Our cattle yet may feed, tho' Snaith Marsh be no more.
But wae is me! I wot I fand⁷³ am grown,
Forgetting Susan is already gone,
And Roger aims e'er Lady Day to wed;
The banns last Sunday in the church were bid.

⁶⁶ Mind.

⁶⁷ Confined.

⁶⁸ Well-milked kine.

⁶⁹ Pail.

⁷⁰ Finding fault.

⁷¹ Makes.

⁷² Mighty.

⁷³ Fond, foolish.

The Salamanca Corpus: Yorkshire Dialect Poems (1673-

1915) (1916)

But let me, let me first i' t' churchyard lig,
For soon I there must gang, my grief's so big.
All others in their loss some comfort find;
Though Ned's like me reduc'd, yet Jenny's kind,
And though his fleece no more our parson taks,
And roast goose, dainty food, our table lacks,
Yet he, for tithes ill paid, gets better land,
While I am ev'ry way o' t' losing hand.
My adlings wared,⁷⁴ and yet my rent to pay,
My geese, like Susan's faith, flown far away;

[9]

My cattle, like their master, lank and poor,
My heart with hopeless love to pieces tore,
And all these sorrows came syne⁷⁵ Snaith Marsh was
no more.

ANONYMOUS

WHEN AT HAME WI' DAD

WHEN at hame wi' dad,
We niver had nae fun, sir,
Which meade me sae mad,
I swore away I'd run, sir.
I pack'd up cleas⁷⁶ sae smart,
Ribbed stockings, weastcoats pretty;
Wi' money an' leet heart,
Tripp'd off to Lunnon city,
Fal de ral de ra.

When I did git there
I geap'd about quite silly,
At all the shows to stare
I'a spot call'd Piccadilly.
Lord ! sike charmin' seights:
Bods⁷⁷ i' cages thrive, sir,
Coaches, fiddles, feights,
An' crocodiles alive, sir,
Fal de ral de ra.

[10]

⁷⁴ Earnings spent.

⁷⁵ Since.

⁷⁶ Clothes.

⁷⁷ Birds.

Then I did gan to see
The gentry in Hyde Park, sir,
When a lass push'd readely⁷⁸ by,
To whom I did remark, sir:
"Tho' your feace be e'en sae fair,
I've seen a bear mair civil."
Then, the laattle clease they wear!
God! Lunnon is the divil,
Fal de ral de ra.

To t' play-house then I goes,
Whar I seed merry feaces,
An' i' the lower rows
Were sarvants keepin' pleaces.
The players I saw sean,
They managed things quite funny;
By gock! they'd honey-mean
Afore they'd matrimony.
Fal de ral de ra.

Now havin' seen all I could
An' pass'd away my time, sir,
If you think fit an' good,
I'll e'en give up my rhyme, sir.
An', sud my ditty please,
The poppies in this garden
To me would be heart's-ease;
If not, I axe your pardon.
Fal de ral de ra.

[11]

ANONYMOUS

I'M YORKSHIRE TOO⁷⁹

By t' side of a brig, that stands over a brook,
I was sent betimes to school;
I went wi' the stream, as I studied my book,
An' was thought to be no small fool.
I never yet bought a pig in a poke,
For, to give awd Nick his due,

⁷⁸ Rudely.

⁷⁹ From *A Garland of New Songs*, published by W. Appleton, Darlington, 1811.

The Salamanca Corpus: Yorkshire Dialect Poems (1673-

1915) (1916)

Tho' oft I've dealt wi' Yorkshire folk,
Yet I was Yorkshire too.

I was pretty well lik'd by each village maid,
At races, wake or fair,
For my father had addled a vast⁸⁰ in trade,
And I were his son and heir.
And seeing that I didn't want for brass,
Poor girls came first to woo,
But tho' I delight in a Yorkshire lass,
Yet I was Yorkshire too!

To Lunnon by father I was sent,
Genteeler manners to see;
But fashion's so dear, I came back as I went,
And so they made nothing o' me

[12]

My kind relations would soon have found out
What was best wi' my money to do:
Says I, "My dear cousins, I thank ye for nowt,
But I'm not to be cozen'd by you!
For I'm Yorkshire too."

ANONYMOUS

THE WENSLEYDALE LAD

WHEN I were at home wi' my fayther an' mother, I
niver had na fun;
They kept me goin' frae morn to neet, so I thowt frae
them I'd run.
Leeds Fair were coomin' on, an' I thowt I'd have
a spree,
So I put on my Sunday cooat an' went right merrily.

First thing I saw were t' factory, I niver seed one afore;
There were threads an' tapes, an' tapes an' silks, to sell by monny a score.
Owd Ned turn'd iv'ry wheel, an' iv'ry wheel a strap;
"Begor!" says I to t' maister-man, "Owd Ned's a rare strong chap."

⁸⁰ Earned a lot.

The Salamanca Corpus: Yorkshire Dialect Poems (1673-1915) (1916)

Next I went to Leeds Owd Church—I were niver i'
one i' my days,
An' I were maistly ashamed o' misel, for I didn't
knew their ways;

[13]

There were thirty or forty folk, i' tubs an' boxes sat,
When up cooms a saucy owd fellow. Says he, "Noo,
lad, tak off thy hat."

Then in there cooms a great Lord Mayor, an' over his
shooders a club,
An' he gat into a white sack-poke,⁸¹ an' gat into t'
topmost tub.
An' then there cooms anither chap, I thinks they
call'd him Ned,
An' he gat into t' bottommost tub, an' mock'd all t'
other chap said.

So they began to preach an' pray, they prayed for
George, oor King;
When up jumps t' chap i' t' bottommost tub. Says
he, " Good folks, let's sing."
I thowt some sang varra weel, while others did grunt
an' groan,
Ivery man sang what he wad, so I sang "Darby an'
Joan."⁸²

When preachin' an' prayin' were over, an' folks were
ganguin' away,
I went to t' chap i' t' topmost tub. Says I, "Lad,
what's to pay?"
"Why, nowt," says he, "my lad." Begor! I were
right fain,
So I click'd hod⁸³ o' my gret club stick an' went
whistlin' oot again.

[14]

THOMAS BROWNE
(1771-1798)

A SONG

⁸¹ Corn-sack.

⁸² Another reading is "Bobbing Joan".

⁸³ Took hold.

YE loit'ring minutes faster flee,
Y' are all ower slow by hauf for me,
That wait impatient for the mornin';
To-morn's the lang, lang-wish'd-for fair,
I'll try to shine the fooremest there,
Misen in finest claes adornin',
To grace the day.

I'll put my best white stockings on,
An' pair o' new cauf~leather shoon,
My clane wash'd gown o' printed cotton;
Aboot my neck a muslin shawl,
A new silk handkerchee ower all,
Wi' sike a careless air I'll put on,
I'll shine this day.

My partner Ned, I know, thinks he,
He'll mak hissen secure o' me,
He's often said he'd treat me rarely;
But I's think o' some other fun,
I'll aim for some rich farmer's son,
And cheat oor simple Neddy fairly,
Sae sly this day.

[15]

Why mud not I succeed as weel,
An' get a man full oot genteel,
As awd John Darby's daughter Nelly?
I think misen as good as she,
She can't mak cheese or spin like me,
That's mair 'an⁸⁴ beauty, let me tell ye,
On onny day.

Then hey! for sports and puppy shows,
An' temptin' spice-stalls rang'd i' rows,
An' danglin' dolls by t' necks all hangin';
An' thousand other pratty seets,
An' lasses traul'd⁸⁵ alang the streets,
Wi' lads to t' yal-hoose gangin'
To drink this day.

Let's leuk at t' winder, I can see 't,

⁸⁴ Than.

⁸⁵ Trailed.

The Salamanca Corpus: Yorkshire Dialect Poems (1673-

1915) (1916)

It seems as tho' 't was growin' leet,
The clouds wi' early rays adornin';
Ye loit'ring minutes faster flee,
Y' are all ower slow be hauf for me,
At⁸⁶ a wait impatient for the mornin'
O' sike a day.

A SONG

WHEN I was a wee laattle totterin' bairn,
An' had nobbud just gitten short frocks,
When to gang I at first was beginnin' to lairn,
On my brow I gat monny hard knocks.

[16]

For sae waik, an' sae silly an' helpless was I
I was always a tumblin' doon then,
While my mother would twattle me⁸⁷ gently an' cry,
"Honey Jenny, tak care o' thisen."

When I grew bigger, an' got to be strang,
At I cannily ran all about
By misen, whor I liked, then I always mud gang
Bithout⁸⁸ bein' tell'd about ought;
When, however, I com to be sixteen year awd,
An' rattled an' ramp'd amang men,
My mother would call o' me in an' would scaud,
An' cry—"Huzzy, tak care o' thisen."

I've a sweetheart cooms noo upo' Setterday nights,
An' he swears at he'll mak me his wife;
My mam grows sae stingy, she scauds an' she flytes,⁸⁹
An' twitters⁹⁰ me oot o' my life.
Bud she may leuk sour, an' consait hersen wise,
An' preach agean likin' young men;
Sen I's grown a woman her clack⁹¹ I'll despise,
An' I's—marry!—ttak care o'misen.

⁸⁶ That.

⁸⁷ Prattle to me.

⁸⁸ Without.

⁸⁹ Argues.

⁹⁰ Worries.

⁹¹ Talk.

THE INVASION: AN ECLOGUE

Impius haec tam culta novalia miles habebit?—VIRGIL.

[17]

A WANTON wether had disdain'd the bounds
That kept him close confin'd to Willy's grounds;

Broke through the hedge, he wander'd far astray,
He knew not whither on the public way.
As Willy strives, with all attentive care,
The fence to strengthen and the gap repair,
His neighbour, Roger, from the fair return'd,
Appears in sight in riding-graith adorn'd;
Whom, soon as Willy, fast approaching, spies,
Thus to his friend, behind the hedge, he cries.

WILLY

How dea ye, Roger? Hae ye been at t' fair?
How gangs things? Made ye onny bargains there?

ROGER

I know not, Willy, things deant look ower weel,
Coorn sattles fast, thof beas⁹² 'll fetch a deal.
To sell t' awd intak⁹³ barley I desaagn'd,
Bud couldn't git a price to suit my maand.
What wi' rack-rents an' sike a want o' trade,
I knawn't how yan's to git yan's landlords paid.
Mair-ower⁹⁴ all that, they say, i' spring o' t' year
Franch is intarmin'd on 't to 'tack us here.

WILLY

Yea, mon! what are they coomin' hither for?
Depend upon 't, they'd better niver stor.⁹⁵

ROGER

⁹² Beasts, cattle.

⁹³ Enclosure.

⁹⁴ Besides.

⁹⁵ Stir.

The Salamanca Corpus: Yorkshire Dialect Poems (1673-

1915) (1916)

True, Willy, nobbud Englishmen'll stand
By yan another o' their awn good land.

[18]

They'll niver suffer—I's be bun' to say—
The Franch to tak a single sheep away.
Fightin' for heame, upo' their awn fair field,
All power i' France could niver mak 'em yield.

WILLY

Whaw! Seer⁹⁶ you cannot think, when put to t' pinch,
At onny Englishmen'll iver flinch!
If Franch dea coom here, Roger, I'll be hang'd
An' they deant git theirsens reet soondly bang'd.
I can't bud think—thof I may be mistean—
Not monny on 'em'll git back agean.

ROGER

I think nut, Willy, bud some fowk'll say,
Oor English fleet let t' Franch ships git away,
When they were laid, thou knaws, i' Bantry Bay;
At⁹⁷ they could niver all have gien 'em t' slip,
Bud t' English wanted nut to tak a ship.

WILLY

Eh! that's all lees!

ROGER

I dinnot say it's true,
It's all unknow'n to sike as me an' you.
How do we knaw when fleets do reet or wrang?
I whope it's all on't fause, bud sea talks gang.
Howsiver this I knaw, at when they please,
Oor sailors always beat 'em upo' t' seas.

[19]

An' if they nobbut sharply look about,
They needn't let a single ship coom oot.
At least they'll drub 'em weel, I dinnot fear,
An' keep 'em fairly off frae landin' here.

⁹⁶ Surely.

⁹⁷ That.

WILLY

I whope sea, Roger, bud, an' if they dea
Coom ower, I then shall sharpen my awd lea.⁹⁸
What thof⁹⁹ I can bud of a laatile boast,
You knaw yan wadn't hae that laatile lost.
I's send our Mally an' all t' bairns away,
An' I misen'll by the yamstead¹⁰⁰ stay.
I'll fight, if need; an' if I fall, why, then
I's suffer all the warst mishap misen.
Was I bud seer my wife an' bairns were seafe,
I then sud be to dee content eneaf.

ROGER

Reet, Willy, mon, what an' they put us tea 't
I will misen put forrad my best feat.¹⁰¹
What thof I's awd, I's nut sae easily scar'd;
On his awn midden an awd cock fights hard.
They say a Franchman's torn'd a different man,
A braver, better soldier, ten to yan.
Bud let the Franch be torn'd to what they will,
They'll finnd at Englishmen are English still.
O' their awn grund they'll nowther flinch nor flee,
They'll owther conquer, or they'll bravely dee.

[20]

DAVID LEWIS

ELEGY ON THE DEATH OF A FROG (1815)

YA summer day when I were mowin',
When floores of monny soorts were growin',
Which fast befor my scythe fell bowin',
As I advance,
A frog I cut widout my knowin'—
A sad mischance.

Poor luckless frog, why com thoo here?
Thoo sure were destitute o' fear;
Some other way could thoo nut steer

⁹⁸ Scythe.

⁹⁹ Though.

¹⁰⁰ Homestead.

¹⁰¹ Foot.

The Salamanca Corpus: Yorkshire Dialect Poems (1673-

1915) (1916)

To shun the grass?
For noo that life, which all hod dear,
Is gean, alas!

Hadst thoo been freeten'd by the soond
With which the mowers strip the ground,
Then fled away wi' nimble boond,
Thoo'd kept thy state:
But I, unknawin', gav a wound,
Which browt thy fate.

Sin thoo com frae thy parent spawn,
Wi' painted coat mair fine than lawn,
And golden rings round baith ees drawn, All gay an' blithe,
Thoo lowpt¹⁰² the fields like onny fawn,
But met the scythe.

[21]

Frae dikes where winter watters stead¹⁰³
Thoo com unto the dewy mead,
Regardless of the cattle's tread,
Wi' pantin' breathe,
For to restore thy freezin' bleed,
But met wi' deeth.

A Frenchman early seekin' prog,¹⁰⁴
Will oftentimes ransack the bog,
To finnd a sneel, or weel-fed frog,
To give relief;
But I prefer a leg of hog,
Or roond o' beef.

But liker far to the poor frog,
I's wanderin' through the world for prog,
Where deeth gies monny a yan a jog,
An' cuts them doon;
An' though I think misen incog,
That way I's boun.

Time whets his scythe and shakes his glass,

¹⁰² Leaped.

¹⁰³ Stood.

¹⁰⁴ Food.

The Salamanca Corpus: Yorkshire Dialect Poems (1673-

1915) (1916)

And though I knew all flesh be grass,
Like monny mair I play the ass,
Don't seem to know;
But here wad sometime langer pass,
Befoor I go.

[22]

Ye bonnie lasses, livin' flooers,
Of cottage mean, or gilded booers,
Possessèd of attractive pooers,
Ye all mun gang
Like frogs in meadows fed by shoovers,
Ere owt be lang.

Though we to stately plants be grown,
He easily can mow us doon;
It may be late, or may be soon,
His scythe we feel;
Or is it fittin' to be known?
Therefore fareweel.

ABEL BYWATER

SHEFFIELD CUTLER'S SONG (1837)

COOM all you cutlin' heroes, where' ersome' er you be,
All you what works at flat-backs,¹⁰⁵ coom listen unto me;
A basketful for a shillin',
To mak 'em we are willin',
Or swap 'em for red herrin's, aar bellies to be fillin',
Or swap 'em for red herrin's, aar bellies to be fillin'.

A baskitful o' flat-backs, I'm sure we'll mak, or more,
To ger¹⁰⁶ reight into t' gallery, wheer we can rant an'
roar;
Throw flat-backs, stoness an' sticks,
Red herrin's, bones an' bricks,

[23]

If they don't play "Nancy's fancy," or onny tune we fix,
We'll do the best at e'er we can to break some o'
their necks.

¹⁰⁵ Knives.

¹⁰⁶ Get.

Hey! Jont, lad, where art ta waddlin' to?
Does ta work at flat-backs yit, as tha's been used to
do?

Ha! coom, an' tha's go wi' me,
An' a sample I will gie thee,
It's one at I've just forged upon Geoffry's bran-new
stiddy.¹⁰⁷
Look at it well, it does excel all t' flat-backs i' aar smithy.

Let's send for a pitcher o' ale, lad, for I'm gerrin'
varry droy,
I'm ommost chok'd wi' smithy sleek,¹⁰⁸ the wind it is so hoigh.
Gie Rafe an' Jer a drop,
They sen¹⁰⁹ they cannot stop,
They're i' sich a moighty hurry to get to t' penny hop,
They're i' sich a moighty hurry to get to t' penny hop.

Here's Steem at lives at Heeley, he'll soon be here, I
knew,
He's larnt a new maccaroni step, the best you iver
saw;

[24]

He has it so complete,
He troies up ivery street,
An' ommost breaks all t' pavors¹¹⁰ wi' swattin'¹¹¹ daan
his feet.
An' Anak troies to beat him, whenever they doon¹¹²
meet.

We'll raise a tail by Sunda, Steem; I know who's
one to sell,
We'll tee a hammer heead at t' end to mak it balance
well.
It's a reight new Lunnon tail,
We'll wear it kale for kale,¹¹³
Aar Anak browt it wi' him, that neet he coom by t'
mail.

¹⁰⁷ Anvil.

¹⁰⁸ Dust.

¹⁰⁹ Say.

¹¹⁰ Paving-stones.

¹¹¹ Hammering.

¹¹² Do.

¹¹³ Turn and turn about.

We'll drink success unto it—hey! Tout, lad, teem¹¹⁴ aat t' ale.

ANONYMOUS

ADDRESS TO POVERTY

SCOOLIN' maid o' iron broo,
Thy sarvant will address thee noo,
For thee invites the freedom
By drivin' off my former friends,
To leak to their awn private ends,
Just when I chanc'd to need 'em.

[25]

I've had thy company ower lang,
Ill-lookin' wean,¹¹⁵ thee must be wrang,
Thus to cut short my jerkin.

I ken thee weel, I know thy ways,
Thoo's awlus kept back cash an' claes,
An' foorc'd me to hard workin'.

To gain o' thee a yal¹¹⁶ day's march
I straave; bud thee's sae varra arch.

For all I still straave faster,
Thoo's tripp'd my heels an' meade me stop,
By some slain corn, or failin' crop,
Or ivery foul disaster.

If I my maand may freely speak,
I really dunnot like thy leak,
Whativer shap thee's slipp'd on;
Thoo's awd an' ugly, deeaf an' blind,
A fiend afoore, a freight behind,
An' foul as Mother Shipton.

Fowks say, an' it is nowt bud truth,
Thoo has been wi' me frae my youth,
An' gien me monny a thumper;
Bud noo thee cooms wi' all thy weight,
Fast fallin' frae a fearful height,
A doonreet Milton plumper.

[26]

¹¹⁴ Pour.

¹¹⁵ Child.

¹¹⁶ Whole.

Sud plenty frae her copious horn,
Teem¹¹⁷ oot to me geod crops o' corn,
An' prosper weel my cattle,
An' send a single thoosand pund,
'T wad bring all things completely roond,
An' I wad gie thee battle.

Noo, Poverty, ya thing I beg,
Like a poor man without a leg,
Sea, prethee, don't deceive me;
I knaw it's i' thy power to grant
The laatile favour at I want—
At thoo wad gang an' leave me.

ANONYMOUS

THE COLLINGHAM GHOST

I'LL tell ye about the Collingham ghost,
An' a rare awd ghost was he;
For he could laugh, an' he could talk,
An' run, an' jump, an' flee.

He went about hither an' thither,
An' freeten'd some out o' their wits,
He freeten'd the parson as weel as the clerk,
An' lots beside them into fits.

The poor awd man wha teak the toll
At Collingham bar for monny a year,
He dursn't coom out to open his yat¹¹⁸
For fear the ghost sud be near.

[27]

He teak to his bed an' there he laid,
For monny a neet an' day;
His yat was awlus wide oppen thrown,
An' nean iver stopp'd to pay.

Awd Jerry wha kept the public hoose,
An' sell'd good yal to all,
Curs'd the ghost wi' hearty good will,

¹¹⁷ Pour.

¹¹⁸ Gate.

For neabody stopp'd to call.

It made sike a noise all roond aboot,
That folks com far to see;
Some said it was a dreadful thing,
An' sum said 't was a lee.

Gamkeepers com wi' dogs an' guns,
Thinkin' 't was some comical beast;
An' they wad eyther kill him or catch him,
Or drive him awa at least.

Sea into Lady wood right they went
Ya beautiful meenleet neet;
A lot o' great men an' a lot o' rough dogs,
Enew¹¹⁹ a poor ghost to eat.

They waited lang, the ghost didn't come,
They began to laugh an' rail,
"If he coom oot of his den," says yan,
"We'll clap a bit o' saut of his tail."

[28]

"Nay, he knows better than turn oot,
When we are here to watch him,
He'd git a bullet through his lug,
Or Mungo there wad catch him."

When close to their heads wi' a terrible clatter
The ghost went whirrin' up,
An' ower the woods he laughed an' shouted,
"Bobo, bobo! who whoop, who whoop!"

The gamkeepers all tumbled doon,
Their hair thrust off their hat,
They gaped an' grean'd¹²⁰ an' roll'd aboot,
An' their hearts went pit-a-pat.

Their feaces were white as onny clout,
An' they said niver a word,
They couldn't tell what the ghost was like,
Whether 'twas a beast or a bird.

They stay'd nea langer i' t' wood that neet,

¹¹⁹ Enough.

¹²⁰ Groaned.

The Salamanca Corpus: Yorkshire Dialect Poems (1673-

1915) (1916)

Poor men were niver dafter,
They ran awa hame as fast as they could,
An' their dogs ran yelping after.

The parson then, a larnèd man,
Said he wad conjure the ghost;
He was sure it was nea wandrin' beast,
But a spirit that was lost.

[29]

All languages this parson knew
That onny man can chat in,
The Ebrew, Greek, an' Irish too,
As weel as Dutch an' Latin.

O! he could talk an' read an' preach,
Few men knew mair or better,
An' nearly all the bukes he read
Were printed in black letter.

He read a neet, he read a day,
To mak him fit for his wark,
An' when he thowt he was quite up,
He sent for the awd clerk.

The clerk was quickly by his side,
He took but little fettlin',
An' awa they went wi' right good will
To gie the ghost a settlin'.

Aye off they set wi' all their might,
Nor stopp'd at thin or thick,
The parson wi' his sark¹²¹ an' buke,
The clerk wi' a thick stick.

At last by t' side o' t' bank they stopp'd,
Where Wharfe runs murmurin' clear,
A beautiful river breet an' fine,
As onny in wide Yorkshire.

[30]

The parson then began to read,
An' read full loud an' lang,
The rabbits they ran in an' oot,

¹²¹ Surplice.

The Salamanca Corpus: Yorkshire Dialect Poems (1673-

1915) (1916)

An' wonder'd what was wrang.

The ghost was listnin' in a hole,
An' oot he bang'd at last,
The fluttrin' o' his mighty wings,
Was like a whirlwind blast.

He laughed 'an shooted as he flew,
Until the wild woods rang;
His who-who-whoop was niver heard
Sea bod an' clear an' strang.

The parson he fell backwards ower
Into a bush o' whins,
An' lost his buke, an' rave¹²² his sark,
An' prick'd his hands an' shins.

The clerk he tried to run awa,
But tumml'd ower his stick,
An' there he made a nasty smell
While he did yell an' fick.¹²³

An' lots o' pranks this ghost he play'd
That here I darn't tell,
For if I did, folks wad declare
I was as ill as hissel.

[31]

For eighteen months an' mair he stay'd,
An' just did as he thowt;
For lord nor duke, parson nor clerk,
He fear'd, nor carèd nowt.

Efter that time he went awa,
Just when it pleas'd hissel;
But what he was, or whar he com fra,
Nea mortal man can tell.

ANONYMOUS

THE YORKSHIRE HORSE-DEALERS

¹²² Tore.

¹²³ Surplice.

The Salamanca Corpus: Yorkshire Dialect Poems (1673-

1915) (1916)

BAIN¹²⁴ to Clapham town-end lived an owd Yorkshire
tike,

Who i' dealing i' horseflesh had ne'er met his like;
'T were his pride that i' all the hard bargains he'd hit,
He'd bit a girt monny, but niver bin bit.

This owd Tommy Towers (by that name he were known)
Had an owd carrion tit¹²⁵ that were sheer skin an' bone;
To have killed him for t' curs wad have bin quite as
well,

But 't were Tommy's opinion he'd dee on himsel!
Well! yan Abey Muggins, a neighborin cheat,
Thowt to diddle owd Tommy wad be a girt treat;
He'd a horse, too, 't were war¹²⁶ than owd Tommy's, ye
see,

For t' neet afore that he'd thowt proper to dee!

[32]

Thinks Abey, t' owd codger'll niver smoke t' trick,
I'll swop wi' him my poor deead horse for his wick,¹²⁷
An' if Tommy I nobbut can happen to trap,
'T will be a fine feather i' Abraham cap!

So to Tommy he goes, an' the question he pops:
"Betwin thy horse and mine, prithee, Tommy, what
swops?

What wilt gie me to boot? for mine's t' better horse
Still?"

"Nowt," says Tommy, "I'll swop even hands, an' ye
will!"

Abey preached a lang time about summat to boot,
Insistin' that his were the liveliest brute;
But Tommy stuck fast where he first had begun,
Till Abey shook hands, an' said, "Well, Tommy,
done!

"O! Tommy," said Abey, "I's sorry for thee,
I thowt thou'd hae hadden mair white i' thy ee;
Good luck's wi' thy bargain, for my horse is deead."
"Hey!" says Tommy, "my lad, so is mine, an' it's
flead¹²⁸!>>

¹²⁴ Near.

¹²⁵ Nag.

¹²⁶ Worse.

¹²⁷ Quick, living.

¹²⁸ Flayed.

So Tommy got t' better o' t' bargain a vast,
An' cam' off wi' a Yorkshireman's triumph at last;
For thof 'twixt deead horses there's not mich to
choose,
Yet Tommy were richer by t' hide an' fower shoes.

[33]

JOHN CASTILLO
(1792-1845)

THE LUCKY DREAM

YA Kessmas neet, or then about,
When measons all were frozen oot,
I went to see a country friend,
An hospitable hoor to spend.
For gains, I cut across o' t' moor,
Whoor t' snaw sea furiously did stoor.¹²⁹
The hoose I gain'd an' enter'd in,
An' were as welcome as a king.
The storm agean t' windey patter'd,
An' hail-steans doon t' chimley clatter'd.
All hands were in, an' seem'd content,
An' nean did frost or snaw lament.
T' lasses all were at their sewing,
Their cheeks wiv health an' beauty glowing.
Around the hearth, in cheerful chat,
Twea or three friendly neighbours sat,
Their travels telling, whoor they'd been,
An' what they had beath heerd an' seen.
Till yan did us all mich amuse,
An' thus a story introduce.
"I recollect lang saan,"¹³⁰ says he,
"A story that were tell'd to me,
At seems sea strange i' this oor day
That true or false I cannot say.

[34]

A man liv'd i' this neighbourhood,
Nea doot of reputation good,
An' lang taame strave wi' stiddy care,
To keep his hoosehod i' repair.

¹²⁹ Drive.

¹³⁰ Long ago.

1915) (1916)

At length he had a curious dream,
For three neets runnin' 't were the seame,
At¹³¹ if on Lunnon Brig he stood,
He'd hear some news would dea him good.
He labour'd hard, beath neet an' day.
Tryin' to draave those thowts away;
Yet daily grew mair discontent,
Till he at last to Lunnon went.
Being quite a stranger to that toon,
Lang taame he wander'd up an' doon,
Till, led by some mysterious hand,
On Lunnon Brig he teak his hand.
An' therehe waited day by day,
An' just were boun¹³² to coom away,
Sea mich he thowt he were to bleame
To gang sea far about a dream,
When thus a man, as he drew near,
Did say, "Good friend, what seek you here,
Where I have seen you soon and late?"
His dream tiv him he did relate.
"Dreams," says the man, "are empty things,
Mere thoughts that flit on silver'd wings;
Unheeded we should let them pass.
I've had a dream, and thus it was,
[35]

That somewhere round this peopled ball,
There's such a place as Lealholm Hall¹³³;
Yet whether such a place there be,
Or not, is all unknown to me.
There in a cellar, dark and deep,
Where slimy creatures nightly creep,
And human footsteps never tread,
There is a store of treasure hid.
If it be so, I have no doubt,
Some lucky wight will find it out.
Yet so or not is nought to me,
For I shall ne'er go there to see."
The man did slyly twice or thrice
The Cockney think for his advice;
Then heame agean withoot delay
He cherfully did tak his way.
An' set about the wark, an' sped,

¹³¹ That.

¹³² Ready.

¹³³ In the neighbourhood of Whitby.

1915) (1916)

Fun' ivvery thing as t' man had said;
Were iver efter seen to flourish
T' faanest gentleman iv all t' parish.
Folks wonder'd sair, an' weel they might,
Whoor he gat all his guineas bright.
If it were true, i' spite o' fame,
Tiv him it were a lucky dream."
[37]

J. H. DIXON
(1803-1876)

THE MILKIN'-TIME

MEET me at the fowd at the milkin'-time,
Whan the dusky sky is gowd at the milkin'-time;
Whan the fog¹³⁴ is slant¹³⁵ wi' dew,
An' the clocks¹³⁶ go huminin' thro'
The wick-sets¹³⁷ an' the branches of the owmerin'¹³⁸
yew.

Weel ye know the hour of the milkin'-time,
The girt bell sounds frev t' tower at the milkin'-time;
Bud as gowd sooin turns to gray,
An' I cannot have delay,
Dunnot linger by the way at the milkin'-time.

Ye'll find a lass at's true at the milkin'-time,
Shoo thinks of nane bud you at the milkin'-time;
Bud my fadder's gittin' owd,
An' he's gien a bit to scowd,
Whan I's ower lang at the fowd at the milkin'-time.

Happen ye're afeard at the milkin'-time;
Mebbe loike ye've heerd at the milkin'-time
The green fowk shak their feet,
Whan t' moon on Heeside's breet,
An' it chances so to-neet, at the milkin'-time.

[37]

There's yan, an' he knows weel whan it's milkin'-time;

¹³⁴ Aftermath.

¹³⁵ Wet.

¹³⁶ Beetles.

¹³⁷ Quick-sets.

¹³⁸ Overshadowing.

1915) (1916)

The Salamanca Corpus: Yorkshire Dialect Poems (1673-

He'd feace the varra de'il at the milkin'-time.
He'd nut be yan to wait
Tho' a barguest¹³⁹ war i' t' gate,¹⁴⁰
If the word I'd nobbud say 't at the milkin'-time.

BEN PRESTON
(1819-1902)

I NIVER CAN CALL HER MY WIFE

I'M a weyver, ye knaw, an' awf deead,
So I do all at iver I can
To put away aat o' my heead
The thowts an' the aims of a man.
Eight shillin' i' t'wick's what I arn,
When I've varry gooid wark an' full time,
An' I think it's a sorry consarn
For a fella at's just in his prime.

Bud aar maister says things is as weel
As they have been or iver can be,
An' I happen sud think so misel
If he'd nobbud swop places wi' me.
Bud he's welcome to all he can get,
I begrudge him o' noan of his brass,
An' I'm nowt bud a madlin¹⁴¹ to fret,
Or to think o' yon beautiful lass.

[38]

I niver can call her my wife,
My love I sal niver mak knawn,
Yit the sorra that darkens her life
Throws its shadda across o' my awn.
When I knaw at her heart is at ease,
Theer is sunshine an' singin' i' mine;
An' misfortunes may come as they pleease,
Yit they seldom can mak me repine.

Bud that Chartist wor nowt bud a slope¹⁴²—
I were fooid by his speeches an' rhymes,
For his promises wattered my hope,

¹³⁹ The barguest is an apparition, taking usually the form of a big black dog with saucer eyes.

¹⁴⁰ Way, road.

¹⁴¹ Fool.

¹⁴² Impostor.

The Salamanca Corpus: Yorkshire Dialect Poems (1673-

1915) (1916)

An' I leng'd for his sunshiny times;
Bud I feel at my dearest desire
Within me'll wither away;
Like an ivy-stem trailin' i' t' mire,
It's deein for t' want of a stay.

When I laid i' my bed day an' neet,
An' were geen up by t' doctors for deead,
God bless her! shoo'd coom wi' a leet
An' a basin o' grewil an' breed.
An' I once thowt I'd aat wi' it all,
Bud so kindly shoo chatted an' smiled,
I were fain to turn ovver to t' wall,
An' to bluther an' roar like a child.

An' I said, as I thowt of her een,
Each breeter for t' tear at were in 't,
It's a sin to be niver forgeen,
To yoke her to famine an' stint;

[39]

So I'll e'en travel forrad throo life,
Like a man throo a desert unknowen;
I mun ne'er have a home nor a wife,
Bud my sorras'll all be my awn.

So I trudge on alone as I owt,
An' whatever my troubles may be,
They'll be sweetened, poor lass, wi' the thowt
At I've niver browt trouble to thee.
Yit a bird has its young uns to guard,
A wild beast a mate in his den,
An' I cannot bud think at it's hard—
Nay, deng it, I'm roarin' agen!

COME TO THY GRONNY, DOY¹⁴³

COME to thy gronny, doy, come to thy gronny,
Bless thee, to me tha'rt as pratty as onny;
Mutherlass barn of a dowter unwed,
Little tha knaws, doy, the tears at I've shed;
Trials I've knawn both for t' heart an' for t' heead,
Shortness o' wark, ay, an' shortness o' breed.

¹⁴³ Darling.

These I could bide, bud tho' tha'rt noan to blame,
Bless thee, tha browt me both sorra an' shame;
Gronny, poor sowl, for a two month or more
Hardly could feshion to lewk aat o' t' door;
T' neighbours called aat to me, "Dunnot stand that,
Aat wi' that hussy an' aat wi' her brat."

[40]

Deary me, deary me! what could I say?
T' furst thing of all, I thowt, let me go pray;
T' next time' I slept I'd a dream, do ye see,
Ay, an' I knew at that dream were for me.
Tears of Christ Jesus, I saw 'em that neet,
Fall drop by drop on to one at His feet.

After that, saw Him wi' barns raand His knee,
Some on 'em, happen, poor crayturs like thee;
Says I at last, though I sorely were tried,
Surely a sinner a sinner sud bide;
Neighbours may think or may say what they will,
T' muther an' t' dowter sal stop wi' me still.

Come on 't what will, i' my cot they sal caar,¹⁴⁴
Woe be to them at maks bad into waar,¹⁴⁵
Some fowk may call thee a name at I hate,
Oft this hard world into t' gutter 'll shove thee,
Poor little lamb, wi' no daddy to love thee.

Dunnot thee freeat, doy, whol gronny hods up,
Niver sal tha want a bite or a sup;
What if I work these owd fingers to t' boan,
Happen tha'll love me long after I'm goan;
T' last bite i' t' cupboard wi' thee I could share't,
Hay! bud tha's stown¹⁴⁶ a rare slice o' my heart.

Spite of all t' sorra, all t' shame at I've seen,
Sunshine comes back to my heart throo thy een;

[41]

Cuddle thy gronny, doy,
Bless thee, tha'rt bonny, doy,
Rosy an' sweet fra thy braa to thy feet,

¹⁴⁴ Cower, take shelter.

¹⁴⁵ Worse.

¹⁴⁶ Stolen.

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Kingdoms an' craans wodn't buy thee to-neet.

OWD MOXY

OWD Moxy wrowt hard for his morsil o' breaad,
An' to keep up his courage he'd sing,
Tho' Time wi' his scythe hed mawn t' crop on his heead
An' then puffed it away wi' his wing.

Reight slavish his labour an' little his wage,
His path tuv his grave were bud rough,
Poor livin' an' hardships, a deal more nor age,
Hed swealed¹⁴⁷ daan his can'le to t' snuff.

One cowd winter morn, as he crept aat o' bed,
T'owd waller felt dizzy an' sore:—
"Come, frame¹⁴⁸ us some breykfast, Owd Duckfooit,"
he said,

"An' I'll finish yond fence up at t' moor;

"I'll tew¹⁴⁹ like a brick wi' my hammer an' mall,¹⁵⁰
An' I'll bring home my honey to t' hive,
An' I'll pay t' bit o' rent an' wer¹⁵¹ shop-score an' all,
An' I'll dee aat o' debt if I live."

[42]

So Peg made his pobs¹⁵² an' then futtered¹⁵³ abaat,
An' temm'd¹⁵⁴ him his tea into 't can,
Then teed up some bacon an' breaad in a claat,
For dearly shoo liked her owd man.

Then Moxy set aat on his wearisome way,
Wadin' bravely throo t' snaw-broth i' t' dark;
It's a pity when fellas at's wakely an' grey
Hes to walk for a mile to their wark.

Bud summat that mornin' made Moxy turn back,
Tho' he hardly knew what it could meean,

¹⁴⁷ Melted.

¹⁴⁸ Prepare.

¹⁴⁹ Toil.

¹⁵⁰ Mallet.

¹⁵¹ Our.

¹⁵² Bread and milk.

¹⁵³ Bustled.

¹⁵⁴ Poured.

The Salamanca Corpus: Yorkshire Dialect Poems (1673-

1915) (1916)

So, cudlin' Owd Peggy, he gave her a smack,
An' then started for t' common ageean.

All t' day a wild hurricane wuther'd¹⁵⁵ throo t' glen,
An' then rush'd like a fiend up to t' heeath;
An' as Peggy sat knittin' shoo said tuv hersen,
"Aw dear! he'll be starruv'd to t' deeath."

An' shoo felt all that day as shoo'd ne'er felt afore,
An' shoo dreedaded yit hunger'd for neet;
When harknin' an' tremlin' shoo heeard abaat t' door
A mutterin, an' shuffin o' feet.

Five minutes at after,¹⁵⁶ Owd Peg, on her knees,
Were kussin' a forehead like stone;
An' to t' men at stood by her wi' tears i' their ees,
Shoo said, "Go, lads, an' leave me alone."

[43]

When they straightened his body, all ready for t' kist,¹⁵⁷
It were seen at he'd thowt of his plan;
For t' shop-score an' t' rent wor safe locked in his fist,
So he deed aat o' debt, like a man.

FLORENCE TWEDDELL

DEAN'T MAK GAM O' ME (1875)

I WENT last week to Stowsley¹⁵⁸ Fair,
My sweetheart for to see;
She promis'd she would meet me there—
Bud dean't mak gam o' me:
Oh, dean't mak gam o' me!

I rigg'd misel' all i' my best,
As fine as fine could be;
An' little thowt how things would to'n¹⁵⁹;
Bud dean't mak gam o' me:
Oh, dean't mak gam o' me!

¹⁵⁵ Roared.

¹⁵⁶ Afterwards.

¹⁵⁷ Coffin.

¹⁵⁸ Stokesley.

¹⁵⁹ Turn out.

I walk'd to t' toon, an' bowt a cane,
To cut a dash, ye see;
An' how I swagger'd up an' doon!
Bud dean't mak gam o' me:
Oh, dean't mak gam o' me!

[44]

I thowt, if nobbut Poll would come,
How happy we sud be!
I'd treat her into t' penny show,
Bud dean't mak gam o' me:
Oh, dean't mak gam o' me!

At last I saw her coomin' in;
Bud what else did I see?
Jack Hodge was walkin' biv her saade!
Bud dean't mak gam o' me:
Oh, dean't mak gam o' me!

Stright up I went, an' "Poll!" says I,
I's waiting, lass, for thee!"
"Then thoo mun wait!" was all she said,
Bud dean't mak gam o' me:
Oh, dean't mak gam o' me!

She teak Jack's airm, an' there I stead
Quite flabbergash'd, ye see:
I thowt I sud hav dropt to t' grund,
Bud dean't mak gam o' me:
Oh, dean't mak gam o' me!

Poor Nancy Green com seaglin'¹⁶⁰ up,
"What's matter, Dick?" says she:
"Jack Hodge is off wi' Poll!" says I,
Bud dean't mak gam o' me:
Oh, dean't mak gam o' me!

[45]

"Why, niver maand her; let her gan;
She's better gean!" said she:
Bud I thowt nut; an' then I cried,
Bud dean't mak gam o' me:

¹⁶⁰ Sauntering.

The Salamanca Corpus: Yorkshire Dialect Poems (1673-

1915) (1916)

Oh, dean't mak gam o' me!

I's nobbut a poor country lad
At's lost my heart, ye see:
I'll gan nea mair to t' Pomesun Fair¹⁶¹,
Sea dean't mak gam o' me:
Oh, dean't mak gam o' me!

COOM, STOP AT YAM TO-NEET, BOB

"COOM, stop at yam¹⁶² to-neet, Bob,
Dean't gan oot onnywhere:
Thoo gets thisel t' leeast vex'd, lad,
When thou sits i' t' awd airm-chair.

"There's Keat an' Dick beath want thee
To stop an' tell a teale:
Tak little Keatie o' thy knee,
An' Dick'll sit on t' steal.

"Let's have a happy neet, Bob,
Tell all t' teales thoo can tell;
For givin' pleasure to the bairns
Will dea thee good thisel.

[46]

"I knaw it's sea wi' me, Bob,
For oft when I've been sad,
I've laik'd an' laugh'd wi' them, mon,
Untel my heart's felt glad.

"An' sing that laatile sang, Bob,
Thoo used to sing to me,
When oft we sat at t' river saade,
Under t' awd willow tree.

"What happy taames them was, Bob,
Thoo niver left me then
To gan to t' yal-hoose neet be neet
Amang all t' drunken men.

¹⁶¹ The fair held at Stokesley on the Saturday before Palm Sunday.

¹⁶² Home.

"I does my best for thoo, Bob,
An' thoo sud dea t' seame for me:
Just think what things thoo promised me
Asaade t' awd willow tree!"

"I prithe say nea mair, lass,
I see I ain't dean reet;
I'll think of all thoo's said to me,
An' stop at yam to-neet.

"I'll try to lead a better life—
I *will*, an' that thoo'll see!
Fra, this taame fo'th I'll spend my neets
At yam, wi' t' bairns an' thee!"

[47]

J. H. ECCLES
(1824-1883)

ODE TO T' MOOIN

I LIKE to see thy quaint owd face
Lewk softly daan on me,
E'en though I ne'er could find thy nose
Nor catch thy watchful ee.

Full monny times I've seen thee rise,
When busy day were done,
When daan behint t' owd maantain tops
Had passed t' breet evenin' sun.

I like to see thee when sweet spring
Cooms back to hill an' vale;
When odours rise through t' hawthorn bush,
An' float on t' evenin' gale.

When lovers walk on t' primrose benks,
An' whisper soft an' low;
Dreamin' just same as me an' t' wife
Did monny years ago.

I like to see thee when t' June rose
Is wet wi' fallin' dew,

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1915) (1916)

When t' nightingale maks t' owd woods ring
Wi' music fresh an' new.

[48]

When fairies dance on t' top o' t' flaars
An' roam through t' pleasant dells,
Like monarchs i' their marble halls,
I' t' lilies' virgin bells.

I like to see thee when t' ripe corn
Is wavin' to an' fro;
When t' squirril goes a-seekin' nuts
An' jumps thro' bough to bough.

When t' purple heather covers t' hills,
An' t' hunters, tired and worn,
Back throug the fairy-haunted glens
Unto their homes return.

I like to see thee when all raand
is white wi' drivven snow,
When t' streams are stopp'd by owd Jaek Frost
An' foaks slip as they go.

I like to see thee all t' year raand,
When t' sky is fair an' breet,
An' allus hail wi' fond delight
The noble queen o' t' neet.

I used to think at I could reach
Up to thy face wi' ease,
If I had but a big long stick;
For tha were but green cheese.

[49]

But naa I've got far different thowts,
An' learnt to understand
At tha art one o' t' wondrous works
Formed by t' gert Maker's hand.

AUNT NANCY

AUNT NANCY'S one o' t' savin' sort,
At niver lets t' chonce pass;
Yet wouldn't do owt mean or low

For t' sake o' gettin' t' brass.

Her home's as clean as need be seen,
Whoiver may go in;
An' as for Nancy, dear-a-me!
Shoo's like a new-made pin.

Shoo's full o' thrift an' full o' sense,
An' full o' love beside;
Shoo rubs an' scrubs thro' morn to neet
An' maks t' owd haase her pride.

Her husband, when his wark is doon,
Sits daan i' t' owd arm chair;
Forgets his troubles as he owt,
An' loises all his care.

Wi' pipe an' book i' t' chimley nook
Time flies on noiseless wing;
Shoo sits an' knits wi' pleasant face,
He's happy as a king.

[50]

Wi' tattlin' folks shoo's niver seen
I' alley, loin¹⁶³ or street,
But goes her way wi' modest step,
Exact an' clean an' neat.

Her neighbours soomtimes watch her aat,
An' say shoo's praad an' stiff;
But all their gossip cooms to nowt,
Aunt Nancy's reight enif.

Wi' basket oft shoo walks abroad
To some poor lonely elf;
To ivery one shoo knaws t' reight way
At's poorer nor¹⁶⁴ herself.

Shoo niver speyks o' what shoo gives,
Kind, gentle-hearted sowl;
I' charity her hands find wark,
Shoo's good alike to all.

He niver tells her what he thinks,

¹⁶³ Lane.

¹⁶⁴ Than.

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Nor flatters nor reproves;
His life is baand wi' gowlden bands
To t' woman at he loves.

God bless her, shoo's a dimond breet,
Both good i' mind an' heart;
An angel spreedin' light an' love,
That plays a noble part.

[51]

Shoo's worthy of a monarch's choice
Her worth can ne'er be towld;
Shoo cam to mak folks' hearts feel glad,
Shoo's worth her weight i' gowld.

THOMAS BLACKAH

COOM, DON ON THY BONNET AN' SHAWL
(1867)

COOM, don on thy bonnet an' shawl,
An' straighten thy cap an' thy hair;
It's really beginnin' to stall¹⁶⁵
To see thee sit dazzin'¹⁶⁶ i' t' chair.

Sea coom, let us tak a walk oot,
For t' air is as warm as a bee;
I hennot¹⁶⁷ a morsel o' doot
It'll help beath lile Willy an' thee.

We'll gan reet throo t' Middle Toon,
As far as to Reavensgill Heed¹⁶⁸;
When thar, we can sit wersens doon
On t' crags close at side o' t' beckstead.

An' then, oh! hoo grand it'll be
To pass a few minutes away,
An' listen t' birds sing on each tree
Their carols for closin' the day.

[52]

¹⁶⁵ Grow tired.

¹⁶⁶ Dozing.

¹⁶⁷ Have not.

¹⁶⁸ Near Pateley Bridge.

An' all about t' green nobby hills,
T' lile daisies their beauties will show;
An' t' perfume at Flora distils
Like breath o' the mornin' will blow.

Then don on thy bonnet an' shawl,
An' coom let's be walkin' away;
I's fairly beginnin' to stall
To see thee sit dazzin' all t' day.

MY AWD HAT

I'LL wear thee yet awhile, awd hat,
I'll wear thee yet awhile;
Though time an' tempest, beath combined,
Have changed thy shap an' style.
For sin we two togither met,
When thoo were nice an' new,
What ups an' doons i' t' world we've had,
Bud awlus braved 'em through.

That glossy shade o' thine, awd hat,
That glossy shade o' thine,
At graced thy youthful days is gean,
Which maks me noo repine.
Fra monny a gleam an' monny a shoor
Thoo's sheltered my awd heead;
Bud sean a smarter, tider hat
Will shelter 't i' thy steead.

[58]

Though friends have proved untrue, awd hat,
Though friends have proved untrue,
An' vanished in adversity,
Like mist or mornin' dew;
Yet when fierce storms or trials com
I fand a friend i' thee;
Sea noo, when thoo's far on, awd hat,
Thoo'st finnd a friend i' me.

Some nail or crook'll be thy heame
O' t' joists, or back o' t' door;

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Or, mebbe, thoo'l be bunched¹⁶⁹ about
Wi' t' barns across o' t' floor.
When t' rain an' t' wind coom peltin' through
Thy crumpled, battered croon,
I'll cut thee up for soles to wear
I' my awd slender shoon.

JOHN HARLAND

REETH BARTLE FAIR¹⁷⁰ (1870)

THIS mworning as I went to wark,
I met Curly just coomin' heame;
He had on a new flannin sark¹⁷¹
An' he saw at I'd just gitten t' seame

[54]

"Whar's te been?" said awd Curly to me.
"I've been down to Reeth Bartle Fair."
"Swat¹⁷² te down, mun, sex needles,"¹⁷³ said he,
An' tell us what seets te saw there."

"Why, t' lads their best shoon had put on,
An' t' lasses donn'd all their best cwoats;
I saw five pund of Scotch wether mutton
Sell'd by Ward and Tish Tom for five grwoats.
Rowlaway had fine cottons to sell,
Butteroy lace an' handkerchers browt;
Young Tom Cwoats had a stall tuv hissel,
An' had ribbins for varra near nowt.

"Thar was Enos had good brandy-snaps,
Bill Brown as good spice as could be;
Potter Robin an' mair sike-like chaps
Had t' bonniest pots te could see.
John Ridley, an' awd Willy Walls,
An' Naylor, an' twea or three mar,
Had apples an' pears at their stalls,
An' Gardener Joe tea was thar.

¹⁶⁹ Kicked.

¹⁷⁰ The fair held at Reeth in Swaledale on St. Bartholomew's Day, August 24.

¹⁷¹ Shirt.

¹⁷² Sit.

¹⁷³ "sex needles" is literally the interval of time during which a knitter would work the loops off six needles.

"Thar was scissors an' knives an' read¹⁷⁴ purses,
An' plenty of awd cleathes on t' nogs¹⁷⁵,
An' twea or three awd spavin'd horses,
An' plenty o' shoon an' new clogs.

[55]

Thar was plenty o' good iron pans,
An' pigs at wad fill all t' deale's hulls¹⁷⁶;
Thar was baskets, an' skeps, an' tin cans,
An' bowls, an' wood thivles for gulls.¹⁷⁷

"Thar was plenty of all maks¹⁷⁸ o' meat,
An' plenty of all sworts o' drink,
An' t' lasses gat monny a treat,
For t' gruv¹⁷⁹ers war all full o' chink.
I cowp'd¹⁸⁰ my black hat for a white un,
Lile Jonas had varra cheap cleath;
Jem Peacock an' Tom talk'd o' feightin',
But Gudgeon Jem Puke lick'd 'em beath.

"Thar was dancin' an' feightin' for ever,
Will Wade said at he was quite griev'd;
An' Pedlety tell'd 'em he'd never
Forgit 'em as lang as he leev'd.
They knock'd yan another about,
Just warse than a sham to be seen,
Charlie Will look'd as white as a clout,
Kit Puke gat a pair o' blaek een.

"I spied our awd lass in a newk,
Drinkin' shrub wi' grim Freesteane, fond lad;
I gav her a varra grow¹⁸¹ leuk;
O, connies,¹⁸² but I was just mad.

[56]

Sea I went to John Whaites's to drink,
Whar I war'd¹⁸³ twea an' seempence i' gin;

¹⁷⁴ Red.

¹⁷⁵ Pegs.

¹⁷⁶ Sties.

¹⁷⁷ Sticks for stirring hasty puddings.

¹⁷⁸ Sorts.

¹⁷⁹ Miners.

¹⁸⁰ Bartered.

¹⁸¹ Ugly.

¹⁸² Mates.

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I know not what follow'd, but think
I paddl'd through t' muck thick an' thin.

"For to-day, when I gat out o' bed,
My cleathes were all sullied sea sar,
Our Peggy and all our fwoak said
To Reeth Fair I sud never gang mar.
But it's rake-time,¹⁸⁴ sea I mun away,
For my partners are all gain' to wark."
Sea I lowp'd up an bade him good day,
An' wrowt at t' Awd Gang¹⁸⁵ tell 't was dark."

TOM TWISLETON (1845-1917)

THE CHRISTMAS PARTY

WHEN cowl December's sturdy breeze
In chimley-tops did grumble,
Or, tearing through the leafless trees,
On lang dark neets did rumble,
A lot o' young folks, smart an' gay,
An' owds uns, free an' hearty,
Agreed amang thersels at they
Would have a Christmas party
At hame some neet

[57]

They kicked up sich a fuss an' spread,
An' made sich preparations;
They baked grand tarts an' mixed their bread
Wi' spices frae all nations.

To drive away baith want an' cowl
It seem'd their inclination;
An' t' neebours round, baith young an' owd,
All gat an invitation
To gang that neet.

Smart sprigs o' spruce an' ivy green
Were frae the ceiling hinging,
An' in their midst, conspicuous seen,
The mistletoe was swinging.

¹⁸³ Spent.

¹⁸⁴ Time for the next shift.

¹⁸⁵ A lead mine.

The lamp shone forth as clear as day,
An' nowt was there neglected;
An' t' happy, smiling faces say,
Some company is expected
To coom this neet.

An' first com Moll wi' girt lang Jack,
A strapping, good-like fella;
An' following closely at their back
Com Bob and Isabella.
With "How's yoursel?" an' "How d'ye do?"
They sit down i' their places,
Till t' room sae big, all through an' through,
Wi' happy smiling faces
Was filled that neet.

[58]

A merrier lot than this I name
Ne'er met at onny party;
All girt grand balls they put to shame,
They were sae gay an' hearty.
Here yan had made hersel quite fine,
Wi' lace an' braid's assistance;
An' there a girt grand crinoline,
To keep t' lads at a distance,
Stood out that neet.

The lads draw up to t' fire their chairs,
An' merrily pass their jokes off;
The lasses all slip off upstairs,
To pu' their hats an' cloaks off.
Befoor a glass that hings at t' side
They all tak up their station,
An' think within theirsels wi' pride
They'll cause a girt sensation
'Mang t' lads that neet.

An' now the lusty Christmas cheer
Is browt out for t' occasion;
To pies an' tarts, an' beef an' beer,
They git an invitation.
An' some, i' tune to put it by,
Play havoc on each dainty,
Whal some there is, sae varra shy,
Scarce let theirsels have plenty
To eat that neet.

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[59]

Against the host o' good things there
They wage an awful battle;
They're crying out, "A lile bit mair!"
An' plates an' glasses rattle.
Here, yan's nae time a word to pass,
Thrang¹⁸⁶ supping an' thrang biting;
There, simpering sits a girt soft lass
That waits for mich inviting
An' fuss that neet.

An' when this good substantial fare
Has gien 'em satisfaction,
They side¹⁸⁷ all t' chairs, an' stand i' pairs,
Wi' heels i' tune for action.
See-sawing, t' fiddler now begins
The best that he is able;
He rosins t' stiek an' screws up t' pins
An' jumps up on to t' table,
To play that neet.

There, back an' forrad, in an' out,
His elbow it gaas silting,¹⁸⁸
An' to an' fro, an' round about,
The dancers they are liting.
Some dance wi' ease i' splendid style,
Wi' tightly-fitting togs on,
Whal others bump about all t' while,
Like drainers wi' their clogs on,
Sae numb'd that neet.

[60]

An' when they've reel'd an' danc'd their fling,
Their chairs all round are rangèd;
They tell droll tales, they laugh, they sing,
An' jokes are interchangèd.
A merry tune t' girt kettle sings,
An' t' fire is blazing breetly;
Wi' cheerful din t' owd farmhouse rings,
An' hours fly ower them sweetly
An' swift that neet.

¹⁸⁶ Busily.

¹⁸⁷ Clear away.

¹⁸⁸ Rising up.

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T' owd women preach an' talk about
Their claes being owd an' rotten,
An' still being forc'd to speck an' clout,¹⁸⁹
It's sich a price is cotton.
T' owd men sit round, wi' pipe an' glass,
In earnest conversation;
On t' ways an' means o' saving brass,
An' t' rules an' t' laws o' t' nation,
They talk that neet.

Now girt lang Jack, that lives on t' moor,
Wi' cunning an' wi' caution,
Is beckoning Moll to gang to t' door
Wi' sly mischiévous motion.
Moll taks the hint, nor thinks it wrang,
Her heart that way inclining;
She says to t' rest she thinks she'll gang
To see if t' stars are shining
Out clear that neet.

[61]

Then down a field they tak a walk,
An' then they wend their way back;
To have a bit o' pleasant talk
They shelter under t' haystack.
She did not say "For shame!" not she,
Though oft-times Johnny kiss'd her;
She said she just would run an' see
If t' other folks had missed her
Frae t' room that neet.

A chap that had two watchful een,
Of which they warent thinking,
When peeping round that neet, had seen
Long Jack at Molly winking.
Says he, "Now's t' time to have a stir,
Let's just gang out an' watch her;
We's have some famous fun wi' her,
If we can nobbut catch her
Wi' him this neet.

Then two or three, bent on a spree,
Out to the door gang thungein',¹⁹⁰
But hauf a yard they scarce could see,

¹⁸⁹ Mend and patch.

¹⁹⁰ Thumping.

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It was as dark as dungeon.
Jack hears their footsteps coming slow,
An' frae her side he slinks off;
Runs round t' house-end, jumps ower a wa',
An' up ower t' knee i' t' sink-trough
He splash'd that neet.

[62]

Now, ye young men, be who ye may,
That's bent on fun an' sportin',
Whare'er ye be, by neet or day,
Remember Jack's misfortin.
Though things unlook'd for on ye creep,
Don't do owt in a splutter;
But learn to look befoor ye leap,
Lest ye in some deep gutter
Stick fast some neet.

JOHN HARTLEY (1839-1915)

NELLY O' BOB'S

WHO is it at lives i' that cot on the lea,
Joy o' my heart an' leet o' my ee?
Who is that lass at's so dear unto me?
Nelly o' Bob's o' t' Crowtrees.

Who is it goes trippin' ower dew-spangled grass,
Singin' so sweetly? Shoo smiles as I pass,
Bonniest, rosy-cheek'd, gay-hearted lass!
Nelly o' Bob's o' t' Crowtrees.

Who is it I see i' my dreams of a neet?
Who lovingly whispers words tender an' sweet,
Till I wakken to find shoo's nowheer i' t' seat?
Nelly o' Bob's o' t' Crowtrees.

[63]

Who is it at leads me so lively a donce,
Yet to tawk serious ne'er gies me a chance,
An' niver replied when I begged on her once?
Nelly o' Bob's o' t' Crowtrees.

Who is it at ivery chap's hankerin' to get,

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Yet tosses her heead an' flies off in a pet,
As mich as to say, "You've not getten me yet"?
Nelly o' Bob's o' t' Crowtrees.

Who is it could mak life a long summer's day,
Whose smile would drive sorrow an' trouble away,
An' mak t' hardest wark, if for her, seem like play?
Nelly o' Bob's o' t' Crowtrees.

Who is it I'll have if I've iver a wife,
An' love her, her only, to th' end o' my life,
An' nurse her i' sickness, an' guard her from strife?
Nelly o' Bob's o' t' Crowtrees.

Who is it at's promised, to-neet if it's fine,
To meet me at t' corner o' t' mistal¹⁹¹ at nine?
Why, it's her at I've langed for so long to mak mine—
Nelly o' Bob's o' t' Crowtrees.

BITE BIGGER

As I hurried through t' taan to my wark,
—I were lat,¹⁹² for all t' buzzers had goan—
I happen'd to hear a remark
At 'ud fotch tears thro' th' heart of a stooan.

[64]

It were rainin', an' snawin', an' cowl,
An' t' flagstones were cover'd wi' muck,
An' th' east wind both whistled an' howl'd,
It saanded like nowt bud ill luck.

When two little lads, donn'd¹⁹³ i' rags,
Baat¹⁹⁴ stockin's or shoes o' their feet,
Com trapsin' away ower t' flags,
Boath on 'em sodden'd wi' t' weat.

Th' owdest mud happen be ten,
T' young un be haulf on't, no more;
As I look'd on, I said to misen,
"God help fowk this weather at's poor!"

¹⁹¹ Cow-shed.

¹⁹² Late.

¹⁹³ Dressed.

¹⁹⁴ Without.

T' big un samm'd¹⁹⁵ summat off t' graand,
An' I look'd just to see what 't could be,
'T were a few wizen'd flaars he'd faand,
An' they seem'd to hae fill'd him wi' glee.

An' he said, "Coom on, Billy, may be
We sal find summat else by an' by;
An' if not, tha mun share these wi' me,
When we get to some spot wheer it's dry."

Leet-hearted, they trotted away,
An' I follow'd, 'cause t' were i' my rooad;
But I thowt I'd ne'er seen sich a day,
It wern't fit to be aat for a toad.

[65]

Soo in t' big un agean slipp'd away,
An' samm'd summat else aat o' t' muck;
An' he cried aat, "Look here, Bill, to-day
Arn't we blest wi' a seet o' gooid luck?"

"Here's a apple, an' t' mooast on it's saand,
What's rotten I'll throw into t' street.
Wern't it gooid to lig theer to be faand?
Naa boath on us can have a treat."

So he wip'd it an' rubb'd it, an' then
Said, "Billy, thee bite off a bit;
If tha hasn't been lucky thisen,
Tha sal share wi' me sich as I get."

So t' little un bate off a touch,¹⁹⁶
T' other's face beam'd wi' pleasure all through,
An' he said, "Nay, tha hasn't taen mich,
Bite agean, an' bite bigger, naa do."

I waited to hear nowt no more;
Thinks I, there's a lesson for me;
Tha's a heart i' thy breast, if tha'rt poor;
T' world were richer wi' more sich as thee.

Two pence were all t' brass at I had,
An' I meant it for ale when com nooin;

¹⁹⁵ Picked.

¹⁹⁶ Small piece.

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1915) (1916)

Bud I thowt, I'll go give it yond lad,
He desarves it for what he's been doin'

[66]

So I said, "Lad, here's twopence for thee,
For thisen." An' they star'd like two geese;
Bud he said, whol t' tear stood in his ee,
"Naa, it'll just be a penny apiece."

"God bless thee! do just as tha will,
An' may better days speedily come;
Though clamm'd¹⁹⁷ an' hauf donn'd,¹⁹⁸ my lad, still
Tha'rt a deal nearer Heaven nor¹⁹⁹ some."

ROLLICKIN' JACK

I KNOW a workin' lad,
His hands are hard an' rough,
His cheeks are red an' braan,
But I like him weel enough.
His ee's as breet's a bell,
An' his curly hair is black,
An' he stands six foot in his stockin' feet,
An' his name is Rollickin' Jack.

At morn, if we should meet,
He awlus has a smile,
An' his heart is gay an' leet,
When trudgin' to his toil.
He whistles, or he sings,
Or he stops a joke to crack;
An' monny a lass at he happens to pass
Looks shyly at Rollickin' Jack.

[67]

His mother's old an' gray;
His father's deead an' goan;
He'll niver move away
An' leave her all aloan.
Choose who²⁰⁰ should be his wife,

¹⁹⁷ Starved.

¹⁹⁸ Dressed.

¹⁹⁹ Than.

²⁰⁰ Whoever.

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Shoo'll mak a sad mistak,
For he's ivery inch a mother's lad,
Is this rough an' rollickin' Jack.

An' still I think sometimes
Th' old woman wants a nurse;
An' as for weddin' Jack,
Why, there's monny a lass done worse.
Of coorse it's not for me
To tell him who to tak,
But there's one I could name, if I could but for shame,
Just the lass to suit Rollickin' Jack.

JAMES BURNLEY

(BORN 1842)

JIM'S LETTER

WHAT'S this? A letter thro'²⁰¹ Jim?
God bless him! What has he to say?
Here, Lizzie, my een's gettin' dim,
Just read it, lass, reight straight away.
Tha trem'les, Liz. What is there up?
Abaat thy awn cousin tha surely can read;
His ways varyy oft has made bitter my cup,
But theer—I forgive him—read on, niver heed.

[68]

That's it—"as it leaves me at present"—
His father's expression to nowt!
Go on, lass, t' beginnin's so pleasant
It couldn't be mended wi' owt.
What's that? He has "sent a surprise"?
What is 't, lass? Go on! a new gaan, I'll be bun',
Or happen a nugget o' famous girt size;
Whatever it is it's t' best thing under t' sun.

Ay, lad, I dare say, "life is rough,"
For t' best on 't is nut varyy smooth;
I' England it's hilly enough,
Niver name wi' them diggers uncouth.
But theer, Liz, be sharp an' let's have his surprise.
I'm capt²⁰² wheer tha's gotten that stammerin' cough,

²⁰¹ From.

²⁰² Puzzled.

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Tha reads a deal better nor that when tha tries.
Good gracious! What's t' matter? Shoo's fainted
reight off!

Hey! Lizzie, tha ffays²⁰³ me; coom here,
An' sit wheer tha'll get some fresh air:
Tha'rt lookin' so bad at I fear
Tha's much war²⁰⁴ nor I were aware.
That's reight, lass, get tul it once more,
Just read reight to t' end on 't, an' then
We'll just tak a walk for a bit aat o' t' door,
Whol tha feels rayther more like thisen.

[69]

What! Bless us! Aar Jim gotten wed!
It *is* a surprise, on my word.
Who is she? That's all at he's said?
I wish then I niver had heard.
At one time I thowt happen thee he'd admire,
An' that's haa we all sud have liked it to be.
Bud, sithee! What's that, Liz, at's burnin' on t'
fire?
It's t' ribbin Jim bowt thee! Ay, ay, lass, I see.

GEORGE LANCASTER
(BORN 1846)

A YORKSHIRE FARMER'S ADDRESS TO A
SCHOOLMASTER

GOOD day to you, Misther skealmaisther, the evenin'
is desperate fine,
I thowt I wad gie ye a call aboot that young sonnie o'
mine.
I couldn't persuade him to come, sea I left him behont²⁰⁵
me at yam,²⁰⁶
Bud somehoo it's waintly²⁰⁷ a possess'd me to mak a
skealmaisther o' Sam.
He's a kind of a slack-back, ye knaw, I niver could
get him to work,

²⁰³ Frightenest.

²⁰⁴ Worse.

²⁰⁵ Behind.

²⁰⁶ Home.

²⁰⁷ Strangely.

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He scarcelins wad addle²⁰⁸ his saut wiv a ploos, or a shovel, or fork.

[70]

I've tried him agean an' agean, bud I finnd that he's
nea use at yam,
Sea me an' my missus agreed to mak a skealmaisther
o' Sam.

If I sends him to wark, why, he'll chunther²⁰⁹ an' gie
me the awfulest leaks,

He'd a deal rayther lig upo' d' sofy wi' novels an'
them soort o' beaks.

Sea I thowt a skealmaisther wad suit him, a lowse
soort o' job, do ye see,

Just to keep a few bairns oot o' mischief, as easy as
easy can be.

Of coorse you've to larn 'em to coont, an' to figure a
bit, an' to read,

An' to sharpen 'em up if they're numskulls, wiv a
lalldabber²¹⁰ ower their heead,

Bud it's as easy as easy, ye knaw; an' I think it wad
just suit oor Sam,

An' my missus, she's just o' my mind, for she says
that he's nea use at yam.

It was nobbut this mornin' I sent him to gan an' to
harrow some land,

He was boamin'²¹¹ asleep upo' d' fauf,²¹² wiv a rubbishly beak iv his hand;

I gav him a bunch²¹³ wi' my feat, an' rattled him
yarmin'²¹⁴ off yam.

Sea I think that I'll send him to you, you mun mak a skealmaisther o' Sam.

[71]

He's a stiff an' a runty²¹⁵ young fellow, I think that
he'll grow up a whopper,

He'd wallop the best lad you've got, an' I think he
wad wallop him proper;

Bud still he's a slack-back, ye knaw, an' seein' he's
nea use at yam,

I think I shall send him to you, you mun mak a
skealmaisther o' Sam.

²⁰⁸ Earn.

²⁰⁹ Grumble.

²¹⁰ Cuff.

²¹¹ Trailing along.

²¹² Fallow.

²¹³ Kick.

²¹⁴ Whining.

²¹⁵ Thick-set.

W. H. OXLEY

THE WINDOW ON THE CLIFF TOP (1888)

" WHAT! Margery, still at your window
In this blinding storm and sleet!
Why, you can't see your hand before you,
And I scarce could keep my feet.

"Why, even the coast-guards tell me
That they cannot see the sand;
And we know, thank God, that the cobbles
And yawls have got to land.

"There's five are safe at Scarbro',
And one has reach'd the Tyne,
And two are in the Humber,
And one at Quay,²¹⁶ makes nine."

[72]

'Aye, aye, I'd needs be watchful,
There's niver a soul can tell,
An' happen 'twixt yan o' t' snaw-blints²¹⁷
Yan mud catch a glimpse o' t' bell.

"I reckon nowt o' t' coast-guards!
What's folks like them to say?
There's neer a yan amang 'em
Knaws owt about oor bay.

"It's niver leave my winder
Whiles there's folks as has to droon;
An' it wadna be the first time
As I've help'd to wakken t' toon.

"I isn't good for mich noo,
For my fourscore years is past;
But I's niver quit my winder,
As long as life sal last.

" 'Twas us as seed them Frenchmen
As wreck'd on Speeton sands;

²¹⁶ Bridlington.

²¹⁷ Snow-storms.

The Salamanca Corpus: Yorkshire Dialect Poems (1673-

1915) (1916)

" 'Twas me as seed that schooner
As founder'd wi' all hands.

'Twas me first spied oor cobles
Reight ower t' end o' t' Brig,
That time when all was drooned;
I tell'd 'em by their rig.²¹⁸

[73]

"Aye, man, I's neen sae drowsy,
Don't talk o' bed to me;
I's niver quit my winder,
Whiles there's a moon to see.

"Don't talk to me o' coast-guards!
What's them to sike as me?
They hasn't got no husbands,
No childer, lost i' t' sea.

"It's nobbut them at's felt it,
As sees as I can see;
It's them as is deead already
Knaws what it is to dee.

"Ye'd niver understan' me;
God knaws, as dwells above,
There's hearts doon here, lives, broken,
What's niver lost their love.

"But better noo ye'd leave me,
I's mebbe not misen;
We fisher-folks has troubles
No quality can ken."

[74]

EDMUND HATTON

AAR MAGGIE

I BELIEVE aar Maggie's coortin',
For shoo dresses hersen so smart,
An' shoo's allus runnin' to t' window
When there's ony o' t' chaps abaat:

²¹⁸ Appearance.

1915) (1916)

Shoo willent wear her owd shawl,
Bud dons a bonnet atstead,²¹⁹
An' laps her can in her gaan
As shoo goes to t' weyvin' shed.

Of a neet wi' snoddened²²⁰ hair,
An' cheeks like a summer's cherry,
An' lips fair assin'²²¹ for kisses,
An' een so black an' so merry,
Shoo taks her knittin' to t' meadows,
An' sits in a shady newk,
An' knits while shoo sighs an' watches
Wi' a dreamy, lingerin' lewk.

Thus knittin', sighin' an' watchin',
Shoo caars²²² aat on t' soft meadow grass,
Listenin' to t' murmurin' brooklet,
An' waitin' for t' sweetheart to pass;

[75]

Shoo drops her wark i' her apron,
An' glints aat on t' settin' sun,
An' wonders if he goes a-courtin'
When his long day's wark is done.

When shoo hears t' chap's footsteps comin',
Shoo rises wi' modest grace;
Ay, Mag, thou sly, lovin' lassie,
For shame o' thy bashful face!
Shoo frames²²³ to be goin' home'ards,
As he lilts ower t' stile,
Bud when he comes anent²²⁴ her,
Shoo gies him sich a smile.

Then he places his arm araand her,
An' shoo creeps cloise to his side,
An' leyns her hecad on his waiscoit,
An' walks wi' an air o' pride.
Bud oh! you sud see her glances,
An' oh! you sud hear 'em kiss,

²¹⁹ Instead.

²²⁰ Smoothed out.

²²¹ Asking.

²²² Cowers, sits down.

²²³ Makes pretence.

²²⁴ Beside.

When they pairt thro' one another!
If shoo isn't coortin', who is?

ANONYMOUS²²⁵

PARSON DREW THRO' PUDSEY

HE shut his een and sank to rest,
Death seldom claimed a better;
They put him by, bud what were t' best,
He sent 'em back a letter,

[76]

To tell 'em all haa he'd goan on,
An' haa he gate to enter,
An' gav 'em rules to act upon
If iver they sud ventur.
Saint Peter stood wi' keys i' hand,
Says he, "What do ye want, sir,
If to go in, you understand,
Unknown to me, you can't, sir.
Pray what's your name? Where are ye thro'²²⁶?
Just make your business clear?"
Says he, "They call me 'Parson Drew,'
I've come thro' Pudsey here."

Ye've come thro' Pudsey, do ye say?
Don't try sich jokes on me, sir;
I've kept these doors too long a day,
I can't be fooled by thee, sir."
Says Drew; "I wodn't tell a lie
For t' sake o' all there's in it,
If ye've a map o' England by,
I'll show you in a minute."

So Peter gate a time-table,
They gloor'd²²⁷ ower t' map together,
An' Drew did all at he were able,
But couldn't find a stiver.
At last says he, "There's Leeds Taan Hall,
An' there stands Bradford's Mission;
It's just between them two—that's all,

²²⁵ For the authorship of this poem, see Preface to Second Edition and Appendix II.

²²⁶ From.

²²⁷ Stared.

Your map's an old edition.

[77]

"Bud theer it is—I'll lay a craan;—
An' if ye've niver knawn it,
Ye've miss'd a bonny Yorkshire taan,
Though monny be at scorn it."
He oppen'd t' gate; says he, "It's time
Somebody coom—I'll trust thee;—
Tha'll find inside no friends o' thine,
Tha'rt first at's coom thro' Pudsey."

ANONYMOUS

PATELEY REACES, 1874²²⁸

ATTENTION all, baith great an' small,
An' doan't screw up your feaces;
While I rehearse i' simple verse,
A count o' Pateley Reaces.

Fra all ower moors they com by scores
Girt skelpin'²²⁹ lads an' lasses;
An' cats an' dogs, an' coos an' hogs,
An' horses, mules an' asses.

Awd foaks were thar, fra near an' far,
At couldn't fairly hopple;
An' laffin' brats, as wild as cats,
Ower heeads an' heels did topple.

[78]

The Darley lads arrived i' squads,
Wi' smiles all ower their feaces;
An' Hartwith youths, wi' screwed-up mooths,
In wonder watched the reaces.

Fra Menwith Hill, and Folly Gill,
Thorngat, an' Deacon Paster,
Fra Thruscross Green, an' t' Heets were seen
Croods coomin' thick an' faster.

²²⁸ From *The Nidderdill Olminac*, 1875, edited by "Nattie Nidds" (Pateley Bridge).

²²⁹ Huge.

'Tween Bardin Brigg and Threshfield Rig
Awd Wharfedeale gat a thinnin';
An' Gerston plods²³⁰ laid heavy odds
On Creaven Lass for winnin'.

Sich lots were seen o' Hebdin Green,
Ready sean on i' t' mornin',
While Aprick chaps, i' carts and traps,
Were off to Pateley spornin'.²³¹

All Greenho Hill, past Coddstone's kill,²³²
Com toltherin²³³ an' singin',
Harcastle coves, like sheep i' droves,
Awd Palmer Simp were bringin'.

Baith short an' tall, past Gowthit Hall,
Tup dealers kept on steerin',
For ne'er before, roond Middles Moor,
Had there been sich a clearin'.

[79]

All kinds and sorts o' games an' sports,
Had Pateley chaps provided,
An' weel did t' few their business do
At ower 'em all persided.

'Twad tak a swell a munth to tell
All t' ins an' t' oots o' t' reaces,
Hoo far they ran, which horses wan,
An' which were back'd for pleaces.

Awd Billy Broon lost hauf a croon
Wi' Taty-Hawker backin',
For Green Crag flew, ower t' hurdles true,
An' wan t' match like a stockin'.

An' Creaven Lass won lots o' brass,
Besides delightin' t' Brockils,
An' Eva danc'd, an' rear'd and pranc'd;
As gif²³⁴ she stood o' cockles.

²³⁰ Grassington labourers.

²³¹ Spurring.

²³² Kiln.

²³³ Hobbling.

²³⁴ If.

But t' donkey reace were star o' t' pleace,
For awd an' young observers;
'Twad nicade a nun fra t' convent run
An' ne'er again be nervous.

Tom Hemp fra t' Stean cried oot, "Weel dean,"
An' t' wife began o' chaffin';
Whal Kirby Jack stack up his back,
An' nearly brast wi' laffin'.

[80]

Sly Wilsill Bin, fra een to chin,
Were plaister'd up wi' toffy,
An' lang-leg Jane, he browt frae t' Plain,
Full bent on winnin' t' coffee.

Young pronsy²³⁵ flirts, i' drabbl'd skirts,
Like painted peacocks striches²³⁶ ;
While girt chignons like milkin'-cans
On their top-garrits perches.

Fat Sal fra' t' Knott scarce gat to t' spot,
Afore she lost her bustle,
Which sad mishap quite spoil'd her shap,
An' meade her itch an' hustle.

Lile pug-nosed Nell, fra Kettlewell,
Com in her Dolly Vardin,
All frill'd an' starch'd she proodly march'd
Wi' squintin' Joe fra Bardin.

Tha're cuffs an' falls, tunics an' shawls,
An' fancy pollaneeses,
All sham displays, ower tatter'd stays,
An' hard-worn ragg'd chemises.

Tha're mushroom fops, fra' fields an' shops,
Fine cigarettes were sookin',
An' lots o' youths, wi' beardless mooths,
All kinds o' pipes were smookin'.

[81]

An' when at last the sports were past,

²³⁵ Over-dressed.

²³⁶ Strut about.

The Salamanca Corpus: Yorkshire Dialect Poems (1673-

1915) (1916)

All heamward turn'd their feaces;
To ne'er relent at e'er they spent
A day wi' Pateley Reaces.

BEN TURNER

PLAY CRICKET (1909)

WHATEVER task you tackle, lads,
Whativer job you do,
I' all your ways,
I' all your days,
Be honest through an' through:
Play cricket.

If claads oppress you wi' their gloom,
An' t' sun seems lost to view,
Don't fret an' whine,
Ask t' sun to shine,
An' don't o' livin' rue:
Play cricket.

[82]

If you're i' debt, don't growl an' grunt,
An' wish at others had
T' same want o' luck;
But show more pluck,
An' ne'er mak others sad:
Play cricket.

If in your days there's chonce to do
Good deeds, then reight an' fair,
Don't hesitate,
An' wait too late,
An' say you'n²³⁷ done your share:
Play cricket.

We've all a row to hoe, that's true,
Let's do it best we can;
It's nobbut once
We have the chonce
To play on earth the man:
Play cricket.

²³⁷ You have.

E. DOWNING

THE FILE-CUTTER'S LAMENT TO LIBERTY
(1910)

NAY, I'm moithered,²³⁸ fairly maddled,²³⁹
What's a "nicker-peck"²⁴⁰ to do?
My owd brain's a egg that's addled,
Tryin' to see this matter through.

Here's a strappin' young inspector—
Dacent lad he is, an' all—
Says all things mun be correct, or
I shall have to climb the pole.

[83]

Says as all my bonny pigeons
As I keep wi' me i' t' shop,
Mun be ta'en to other regions;
Here the law wain't ler 'em stop.

Says as how my little terrier
Mun foind kennellin' elsewheer.
I expect awst²⁴¹ have to bury 'er;
Shoo'll rest nowheer else bur²⁴² here.

Says as I mun wear a apron
Throo my shoulder to my knee;
An' (naa, listen! this puts t' capper on)
Says how cleanly it mun be.

Each ten men mun have a basin,
Fastened, mark you, fixed and sure,
For to wesh ther hands and face in;
Not to throw it aat o' door.

There's to be two ventilators,
In good order and repair;

²³⁸ Perplexed.

²³⁹ Bewildered.

²⁴⁰ File cutter.

²⁴¹ I shall.

²⁴² But.

The Salamanca Corpus: Yorkshire Dialect Poems (1673-

1915) (1916)

Us at's short o' beef an' taters,
Has to fatten on fresh air.

Each shop floor mun be substantial—
Concrete, pavement, wood, or brick—
So that water from the branch'll
Keep the dust from lyin' thick.

[84]

An' for iv'ry bloomin' stiddie²⁴³
There's so many cubic feet,
We'st²⁴⁴ ha' room to play at hiddie²⁴⁵
Us at isn't aat i' t' street.

Eh, I can't tell hauf o' t' tottle²⁴⁶
Of these Regulations steep;
I expect a suckin'-bottle
Will be t' next we have to keep.

Eh! I know, mun! who knows better?
It's for t' good of all, is this.
Iv'rybody's teed to t' letter,
'Cause o' t' few at's done amiss.

Eytin' leead-dust brings leead-colic,
Sure as mornin' brings the day.
Does te think at iver I'll lick
Thumb and fingers' dirt away?

Well, good-bye, my good owd beauty—
Liberty, naa left to few!
Since the common-weal's my duty,
Dear owd Liberty—adieu!

[85]

JOHN MALHAM-DEMBLEBY

A KUSS (1912)

YE may bring me gowd bi t' bowlful,
Gie me lands bi t' mile,

²⁴³ Stithy.

²⁴⁴ We shall.

²⁴⁵ Hide and seek.

²⁴⁶ Total.

Fling me dewy roses,
Stoor²⁴⁷ set on my smile.
Ye may caar²⁴⁸ ye daan afoor me,
Castles for me build,
Twine me laurel garlands,
Let sweet song be trilled.
Ye may let my meyt be honey,
Let my sup be wine,
Gie me haands an' hosses,
Gie me sheep an' kine.
Yit one flaid²⁴⁹ kuss fra her would gie
Sweeter bliss to me
Nor owt at ye could finnd to name,
Late²⁵⁰ ye through sea tul sea.

I've seen her hair gleam gowden
In t' Kersmas yollow sun,
An' ivery inch o' graand she treeads
Belang her sure it mun.
Her smile is sweet as roses,
An' sweeter far to me,
An' praad she hods her heead up,
As lass o' heigh degree.

[86]

Bonnie are green laurel leaves,
I'd sooiner my braa feel
T' laughin' lips o' t' lass I love,
Though bays be varry weel.

I'm varry fond o' singin',
What bonnier could be
Nor my fair lass hersen agate²⁵¹
A-singin' love to me?
It's reight to live on spice an' sich,
An' sup a warmin' glass,
But sweet-stuff's walsh,²⁵² an' wine is cowd,
Aside my lovely lass.
Tak ye your haands an' hosses,
Tak ye your sheep an' kine;

²⁴⁷ Value.

²⁴⁸ Cower.

²⁴⁹ Trembling.

²⁵⁰ Search.

²⁵¹ Busy.

²⁵² Insipid.

The Salamanca Corpus: Yorkshire Dialect Poems (1673-

1915) (1916)

To finnd my lass ower t' hills I'll ride,
She sal be iver mine.

RICHARD BLAKEBOROUGH
HUNTIN' SONG

IT's neet an' naa we're here, lads,
We're in for gooid cheer, lads;
Yorkshiremen we all on us are,
Yorkshiremen for better or war²⁵³;
We're tykes an' we're ghastr²⁵⁴ uns,
We're paid uns an' fast uns,
Awther for better or awther for war!

[87]

All t' lot

Then shaat till ye've gor hooast,²⁵⁵ lads,
Sing, "Yorkshiremen, wer toast, lads,
Wer king, wer heeath, wer haands, lads,
Wer hooam, wer hearth, wer baans,²⁵⁶ lads."

There's some at nooan are here, lads,
Forger em we sal ne'er, lads
Yorkshiremen they all on 'em war,
Yorkshiremen yit all on 'em are.
There's thrang²⁵⁷ uns an' looan²⁵⁸ uns,
There's wick uns an' gooan uns,
They're all reight somewheer,
an' we'st be no war!

All t' lot

Then shaat till ye've gor hooast, lads,
Sing, "Yorkshiremen, wer toast, lads,
Wer king, wer heeath, wer haands, lads,
Wer hooam, wer hearth, wer baans, lads."

F.J. NEWBOULT

²⁵³ Worse.

²⁵⁴ Spirited.

²⁵⁵ Got hoarse.

²⁵⁶ Children.

²⁵⁷ Busy.

²⁵⁸ Lonely.

SPRING (1914)

OWD Winter gat notice to quit,
'Cause he'd made sich a pigsty o' t' place,
An' Summer leuked raand when he'd flit,
An' she says, "It's a daanreyt disgrace!
Sich-like ways!

I niver did see sich a haase to come intul i' all my born days!"

[88]

But Spring says, "It's my job, is this,
I'll sooin put things streyt, niver fear.
Ye go off to t' Spaws a bit, Miss,
An' leave me to fettle up here!"

An' sitha!

Shoo's donned a owd apron, an' tucked up her
sleeves, an' set to, with a witha!

Tha can tell, when t' hail pelts tha like mad,
At them floors bides a bit of a scrub;
Tha knaws t' flegstuns mun ha' been bad,
When she teems²⁵⁹ aat all t' wotter i' t' tub.

Mind thy eyes!

When shoo gets hod o' t' long brush an' sweeps aat
them chamers, I'll tell tha, t' dust flies!

Whol shoo's threng²⁶⁰ tha'll be best aat o' t' gate²⁶¹:
Shoo'll care nowt for soft tawk an' kisses
To tell her thy mind, tha mun wait
Whol shoo's getten things ready for t' missis.

When shoo's done,

Shooll' doff her owd apron, an' slip aat i' t' garden,
an' call tha to come.

Aye, Summer is t' roses' awn queen,
An' shoo sits i' her state, grandly dressed;
But Spring's twice as bonny agean,
When shoo's donned hersen up i' her best

Gaan o' green,

An' stands all i' a glow, wi' a smile on her lips an' a leet
i' her een.

[89]

²⁵⁹ Pours.

²⁶⁰ Busy.

²⁶¹ Way.

1915) (1916)

The Salamanca Corpus: Yorkshire Dialect Poems (1673-

To t' tips of her fingers shoo's wick.²⁶²
Tha can see t' pulses beat i' her braa.
Tha can feel her soft breath comin' quick,
An' it thrills tha—tha duzn't know haa.
When ye part,
Them daffydaandillies shoo's kissed an' then gi'en
Tha—they'll bloom i' thy heart!

A.C. WATSON

HEAME, SWEET HEAME (1914)

WHEN oft at neet I wanders heame
To cosy cot an' busy deame,
My hardest day's wark seems but leet,
When I can get back heame at neet,
My wife an' bairns to sit besaade,
Aroond my awn bit firesaade.
What comfort there's i' steep²⁶³ for me,
A laattle prattler on my knee!
What tales I have to listen tea!
But just at fost there's sike to-dea
As niver was. Each laattle dot
Can fain agree for t' fav'rite spot.
Sike problems they can set for me
'T wad puzzle waaser heeads mebbe.
An' questions hawf a scoor they ask,
To answer 'em wad prove a task;
For laattle thowts stray far away
To things mysterious, oot o' t' way.

[90]

An' then sike toffer²⁶⁴ they torn oot,
An' pratty lips begin to poot,
If iverything's nut stowed away
To cumulate frae day to day.
Sike treasures they could niver spare,
But gether mair an' mair an' mair
In ivery pocket. I've nea doot
They've things they think the Wo'ld about.
An' when their bed-taame's drawin' nigh,
Wi' heavy heead an' sleepy eye,

²⁶² Alive.

²⁶³ In store.

²⁶⁴ Odds and ends.

1915) (1916)

It's vary laattle din they mak,
An' when on t' lats²⁶⁵ they've gone aboon,
I fills my pipe an' sattles doon
To have a comfortable smewk.
An' then at t' news I has a lewk;
Or hods a bit o' talk wi' t' wife,
The praade an' comfort o' my life.
Cawd winds may blaw, an' snaw-flakes flee,
An' neets may be beath lang an' dree,
Or it may rain an' rain agean,
Sea lang as I've my day's wark dean,
I wadn't swap my humble heame
For bigger hoose or finer neame.
If all could as contented be,
There'd be mair joy an' less mis'ry.

[91]

E. A. LODGE

THEN AN' NAE²⁶⁶

WHEN I were but a striplin'
An' bare a scoor year owd,
I thowt I'd gotten brains enew
To fill all t' yeds²⁶⁷ i' t' fowd.

I used to roor wi' laffin'
At t' sharpness o' my wit,
An' a joke I made one Kersmiss
Threw my nuncle in a fit.

I used to think my mother
Were a hundred year behund;
An' my father—well, my father
Nobbut fourteen aence to t' pund.

An' I often turned it ovver,
But I ne'er could fairly see
Yaeiver²⁶⁸ sich owd cronies
Could hae bred a chap like me.

²⁶⁵ Laths.

²⁶⁶ Privately printed by Mr. E.A. Lodge in a volume entitled *Odds an' Ends* (n.d.)

²⁶⁷ Heads.

²⁶⁸ However.

The Salamanca Corpus: Yorkshire Dialect Poems (1673-

1915) (1916)

An' whene'er they went to t' market,
I put my fillin's in;
Whol my father used to stop me
Wi' "Prithee, hold thy din.

[92]

"Does ta think we're nobbut childer,
Wi' as little sense as thee?
When thy advice is wanted,
We'st axe thee, does ta see."

But they gate it, wilta, shalta,
An' I did my levil best
To change their flee-blown notions,
Whol their yeds were laid to t' west.

This happened thirty year sin;
Nae I've childer o' my own,
At's gotten t' cheek to tell me
At I'm a bit flee-blown.

WALTER HAMPSON

OWD ENGLAND²⁶⁹

THA'RT welcome, thrice welcome, Owd England;
It maks my een sparkle wi' glee,
An' does mi heart gooid to behold thee,
For I know tha's a welcome for me.
Let others recaant all thi failin's,
Let traitors upbraid as they will,
I know at thy virtues are many,
An' my heart's beeatin' true to thee still.

There's a gladness i' t' sky at bends ower thee,
There's a sweetness i' t' green o' thy grass,
There's a glory i' t' waves at embrace thee,
An' thy beauty there's noan can surpass.

[93]

Thy childer enrich iv'ry valley,
An' add beauty to iv'ry glen,

²⁶⁹ From *Tykes Abroad* (W. Nicholson, Wakefield, 1911).

The Salamanca Corpus: Yorkshire Dialect Poems (1673-

1915) (1916)

For tha's mothered a race o' fair women,
An' true-hearted, practical men.

There's one little spot up i' Yorkshire,
It's net mich to crack on at t' best,
But to me it's a kingdom most lovely,
An' it holds t' warmest place i' my breast.
Compared wi' that kingdom, all others
Are worthless as bubbles o' foam,
For one thing my rovin' has tow't me,
An' that is, there's no place like hooam.

I know there'll be one theer to greet me
At's proved faithful through many dark days,
An' little feet runnin' to meet me,
An' een at²⁷⁰ howd love i' their gaze.
An' there's neighbours both hooamly an' kindly,
An' mates at are worthy to trust,
An' friends my adversity's tested,
At proved to be generous an' just.

An' net far away there's green valleys,
An' greeat craggy, towerin' hills,
An' breezes at mingle their sweetness
Wi' t' music o' sparklin' rills;
An' meadows all decked wi' wild-flaars,
An' hedges wi' blossom all white,
An' a blue sky wheer t' skylark is singin',
Just to mak known his joy an' delight.

[94]

Aye, England, Owd England! I love thee
Wi' a love at each day grows more strong;
In my heart tha sinks deeper an' deeper,
As year after year rolls along;
An' spite o' thy faults an' thy follies,
Whatever thy fortune may be,
I' storm or i' sunshine, i' weal or i' woe,
Tha'll allus be lovely to me.

May thy sons an' thy dowters live happy,
An' niver know t' woes o' distress;
May thy friends be for iver increeasin',
An' thy enemies each day grow less.

²⁷⁰ That.

May tha niver let selfish ambition
Dishonour or tarnish thy sword,
But use it alooan agean despots
Whether reignin' at hooam or abroad.

[95]

J. A. CARLILL

LOVE AND PIE²⁷¹

WHIN I gor hoired et Beacon Farm a year last Martinmas,
I fund we'd gor a vory bonny soort o' kitchen lass;
And so I tell'd her plooin' made me hungry—that was
why
I awlus was a laatile sthrong on pudden and on pie.
And efther thot I thowt the pie was, mebbe, middlin'
large,
And so I ate it for her sake—theer wasn't onny charge;

[96]

Until it seems t' missus asked her rayther sharply why
She awlus used t' biggest dish for pudden and for pie.
I wasn't mich of use, ye know, et this here fancy talkin',
She had no chance o' goin' oot for armin' it and
walkin'.
But thin I knawed I gor her love whin I could see t'
pies;
I knawed her thowts o' me were big by bigness o'
their size.
The pies and gell I thowt thot geed,²⁷² they hardlins
could be beaten,
She knawed I'd awlus thowts on her by way t' pies
were eaten;
Until it seems t' missus asked her rayther sharply why
She awlus used t' biggest dish for pudden and for pie.
Noo just thoo wait a bit and see; I'm only thod-lad²⁷³
noo,
I moight be wagoner or hoind within a year or two;
And thin thoo'll see, or I'm a cauf, I'll mak 'em ring
choch bell,
And carry off et Martinmas yon prize-pie-makkin' gell.

²⁷¹ From *Woz 'ls: Humorous Sketches and Rhymes in the East Yorkshire Dialect* (n. d.).

²⁷² Good.

²⁷³ Third lad on the farm.

The Salamanca Corpus: Yorkshire Dialect Poems (1673-1915) (1916)

And whin thoo's buyin' coats and beats²⁷⁴ wi wages
thot ye take,
It's I'll be buyin' boxes for t' laatile bits o' cake;
And whin I've gor a missus ther'll be no more askin'
why
She awlus gers oor biggest dish for pudden and for pie.

[96]

GEORGE H. COWLING

I'S GOTTEN T' BLISS (1914)

I's gotten t' bliss o' moonten-tops to-neet,
Thof I's i' bondage noo, an' blinnd an' deef.
Brethren, I's stoun²⁷⁵! an' fand it varry sweet,
Sea strike my neame off, if't be your belief
I's slidin' back.
Last neet, as I were shoggin'²⁷⁶ 'on up t' street,
I acted t' thief.

Ye think I's hardened. Ay! I see ye lewk.
I stell't,²⁷⁷ it's true; bud, brethren, I'll repay.
I'll pay back ten-foad iverything I tewk,
An' folks may say whate'er they like to say.
It were a kiss,
An' t' lass has promised iv oor ingle-newk
To neame t' day.

A NATTERIN' WIFE

THE parson, the squire an' the divil
Are troubles at trouble this life,
Bud each on em's dacent an' civil
Compared wi' a natterin'²⁷⁸ wife.

[97]

A wife at mun argie an' natter,
She maks a man's mortal life hell.

²⁷⁴ Boots.

²⁷⁵ From *A Yorkshire Tyke: Rustic Tunes mainly in the Doric Mode* (Grant Richards, Ltd. 1914).

²⁷⁶ Jogging.

²⁷⁷ Stole.

²⁷⁸ Nagging.

1915) (1916)

The Salamanca Corpus: Yorkshire Dialect Poems (1673-

An' that's t' gospel-truth o' t' matter,
I knaws, 'cause I's got yan misel.

O! WHAT DO YE WESH I' THE BECK

"O! WHAT do ye wesh i' the beck, awd wench?
Is it watter ye lack at heame?"
It's nobbut a murderer's shrood, young man,
A shrood for to cover his weam.²⁷⁹

"O! what do ye cut i' the slack, awd hag?
Is it fencin' ye lack for your beas²⁸⁰?"
It's nobbut a murderer's coffin, sir,
A coffin to felt²⁸¹ his feace."

"O! what do ye greave²⁸² at the crossroads, witch?
Is it roots ye lack for your swine?"
"It's nobbut a murderer's grave, fair sir,
A grave for to bury him fine."

"An' whea be-owes²⁸³ coffin an' shrood, foul witch?
An' wheas is the grave i' the grass?"
"This spell I hae woven for thee, dear hairt,
Coom, kill me, an' bring it to pass."

[99]

PART II

TRADITIONAL POEMS

²⁷⁹ Belly.

²⁸⁰ Beasts, cattle.

²⁸¹ Hide.

²⁸² Dig.

²⁸³ Owns.

[101]

PART II
TRADITIONAL POEMS

CLEVELAND LYKE-WAKE DIRGE²⁸⁴

THIS ya neet, this ya neet,
Ivvery neet an' all;
Fire an' fleet²⁸⁵ an' can'le leet,
An' Christ tak up thy saul.

[102]

When thoo frae hence away art passed²⁸⁶
Ivvery neet an' all;
To Whinny-moor thoo cooms at last,
An' Christ tak up thy saul.

If ivver thoo gav owther hosen or shoon,
Ivvery neet an' all;
Clap thee doon an' put 'em on,
An' Christ tak up thy saul.

Bud if hosen or shoon thoo nivver gav nean²⁸⁷,
Ivvery neet an' all;

²⁸⁴ The text of this version of the "Lyke-wake Dirge" follows, with slight variations, that found in Mr. Richard Blakeborough's *Wit, Character, Folklore, and Customs of the North Riding* (p. 123), where the following account is given: "I cannot say when or where the Lyke Wake dirge was sung for the last time in the North Riding, but I remember once talking to an old chap who remembered it being sung over the corpse of a distant relation of his, a native of Kildale. This would be about 1800, and he told me that Lyke-wakes were of rare occurrence then, and only heard of in out-of-the-way places ... There are other versions of the song; the one here given is as it was dictated to me. There is another version in the North Riding which seems to have been written according to the tenets of Rome; at least I imagine so, as purgatory takes the place of hellish flames, as given above." In the Appendix to this volume will be found the other version with the introduction of purgatory to which Mr. Blakeborough refers. I have taken it from Sir Walter Scott's *Border Minstrelsy* (ed. Henderson, vol. ii. pp. 170-2), but it also finds a place in John Aubrey's *Remains of Gentilisme and Judaisme* (1686-7), preserved among the Lansdowne MSS. in the British Museum. Aubrey prefixes the following note to his version of the dirge: "The beliefe in Yorkshire was amongst the vulgar (perhaps is in part still) that after the person's death the soule went over Whinny-moore, and till about 1616-24 at the funerale a woman came (like a Praefica) and sang the following song." Further information about this interesting dirge and its parallels in other literatures will be found in Henderson's edition of the *Border Minstrelsy*, p. 163) and in J.C. Atkinson's *Glossary of the Cleveland Dialect*, p.595.

²⁸⁵ Floor.

²⁸⁶ The line reads as follows in Mr. Blakeborough's version: "When thoo frae hither gans awaay." Sense and rhyme alike show that the last three words are a corruption, and I have substituted for them the reading of the *Border Minstrelsy*.

²⁸⁷ None.

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T' whinnies'll prick thee sair to t' bean,²⁸⁸
An' Christ tak up thy saul.

Frae Whinny-moor when²⁸⁹ thoo mayst pass,
Ivvery neet an' all;
To t' Brig o' Dreed thoo'll coom at last,
An' Christ tak up thy saul.

If ivver thoo gav o' thy siller an' gowd,
Ivvery neet an' all;
At t' Brig o' Dreed thoo'll finnd foothod,
An' Christ tak up thy saul.

Bud if siller an' gowd thoo nivver gav nean,
Ivvery neet an' all;
Thoo'll doon, doon tum'le towards Hell fleames,
An' Christ tak up thy saul.

[103]

Frae t' Brig o' Dreed when thoo mayst pass,
Ivvery neet an' all;
To t' fleames o' Hell thoo'll coom at last,
An' Christ tak up thy saul.

If ivver thoo gav owther bite or sup,
Ivvery neet an' all;
T' fleames'll nivver catch thee up,
An' Christ tak up thy saul.

Bud if bite or sup thoo nivver gav nean,
Ivvery neet an' all;
T' fleames'll bon²⁹⁰ thee sair to t' bean,
An' Christ tak up thy saul.

A DREE NEET²⁹¹

'T WERE a dree²⁹² neet, a dree neet, as t' squire's end
drew nigh,
A dree neet, a dree neet, to watch, an' pray, an' sigh

²⁸⁸ Bone.

²⁸⁹ Blakeborough reads "that."

²⁹⁰ Burn.

²⁹¹ From R. Blakeborough's "Old Songs of the Dales", appended to his *T' Hunt o' Yatton Brigg*, p.37, second edition.

²⁹² Gloomy.

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When t' stream runs dry, an' t' deead leaves fall,
an' t' ripe ear bends its heead,
An' t' blood wi' lithin'²⁹³ seems fair clogg'd, yan kens
yan's neam'd wi' t' deead.

[104]

When t' een grows dim, an' folk draw nigh frae t'
other saade o' t' grave,
It's late to square up awd accoonts a gannin' sowl to
save.

T' priest may coom, an' t' priest may gan, his weel-
worn tale to chant,

When t' deeah-smear clem a wrinkled broo, sike
disn't fet yan's want.²⁹⁴

Nea book, nea can'le, bell, nor mass, nea priest iv onny
lan',

When t' dree neet cooms, can patch a sowl, or t'
totterin' mak to stan'.

'T were a dree neet, a dree neet, for a sowl to gan away,
A dree neet, a dree neet, bud a gannin' sowl can't stay.

An' t' winner shuts²⁹⁵ they rattled sair, an' t' mad wild
wind did shill,

An' t' Gabriel ratchets²⁹⁶ yelp'd aboon, a gannin' sowl
to chill.

'T were a dree neet, a dree neet, for deeah to don his
cowl,

To staup²⁹⁷ abroad wi' whimly²⁹⁸ tread, to claim a
gannin' sowl.

[105]

Bud laal²⁹⁹ deeah recks hoo dree t' neet be, or hoo a
sowl may pray,

²⁹³ Thickening.

²⁹⁴ The literal meaning of this line is, When the death-salve bedaubes a wrinkled brow, rites such as these do not fetch (*i.e.* supply) one's want. The reference is to extreme unction.

²⁹⁵ Window shutters.

²⁹⁶ The hounds of death.

²⁹⁷ Stalk.

²⁹⁸ Stealthy.

²⁹⁹ Little.

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When t' sand runs oot, his sickle reaps; a gannin'
sowl can't stay.

'T were a dree neet, a dree neet, ower Whinny-moor to
trake,³⁰⁰
Wi' shoonless feet, ower flinty steanes, thruf monny a
thorny brake

A dree neet, a dree neet, wi' nowt neaways to mark
T' gainest trod³⁰¹ to t' Brig o' Deead; a lane lost sowl
i' t' dark.

A dree neet, a dree neet, at t' brig foot theer to meet
Laal sowls at³⁰² he were t' father on, wi' nea good-
deame i' seet.

At t' altar steps he niver steead, thof monny a voo he
made,
Noo t' debt he awes to monny a lass at t' brig foot
mun be paid.

They face him noo wiv other deeds, like black spots on
a sheet,
They noo unscape,³⁰³ they egg him on, on t' brig his
doom to meet.

[106]

Nea doves has sattled on his sill, bud a flittermoose³⁰⁴
that neet
Cam thrice taames thruf his casement, an' flacker'd
round his feet.

An' thrice taames did a raven croak, an' t' seame-like
thrice cam t' hoot
Frae t' ullets' tree; doon chimleys three there cam
a shrood o' soot.

An' roond t' can'le twea taames there cam a dark-
wing'd moth to t' leet,
Bud t' thod³⁰⁵ it swirl'd reet into t' fleame, wheer

³⁰⁰ Wander.

³⁰¹ Shortest path.

³⁰² That.

³⁰³ Stir up memories

³⁰⁴ Bat.

³⁰⁵ Third.

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gans his sowl this neet.

'T were a dree neet, a dree neet, for yan to late³⁰⁶ to
pray,
A dree neet, a dree neet, bud a gannin' sowl can't stay.

.....

THE BRIDAL BANDS³⁰⁷

BLUSHING, theer oor Peggy sits,
Stitchin', faane stitchin',
Love-knots roond her braadal bands,
Witchin', bewitchin'.

[107]

T' braade's maids all mun dea a stitch,
Stitchin', faane stitchin',
An' they mun binnd it roond her leg,
Witchin', bewitchin'.

Bud some bau³⁰⁸ swain at's soond o' puff,
Stitchin', faane stitchin',
Will claim his reet to tak it off,
Witchin', bewitchin'.

An' he aroond his awn love's leg,
Stitchin', faane stitchin',
Will lap³⁰⁹ it roond to binnd his love,
Witchin', bewitchin'.

Whal she, sweet maid, 'll wear his troth,
Stitchin', faane stitchin',
Maanding each taame she taks it off,
Witchin', bewitchin',

That day when she will hae to wear,
Stitchin', faane stitchin',
Nut yan, bud twea, a braadal pair,
Witchin', bewitchin'

Oh! happy day, when she sal stitch,

³⁰⁶ Attempt.

³⁰⁷ From R. Blakeborough's *Wit, Character, Folklore, and Customs of the North Riding*, p. 97.

³⁰⁸ Sturdy.

³⁰⁹ Wrap.

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Stitchin', faane stitchin',
Her braadal bands, the wearin' which
Maks maids bewitchin'.

[108]

THE BRIDAL GARTER³¹⁰

A CATCH

HERE's health to t' lass whea donn'd this band
To grace her leg,
An' ivvery garter'd braade i' t' land:
Sea sip it, an' tip it, bud tip it doon your wizan.³¹¹

Aroond her leg it has been bun',
I wish I'd bun' it.
A trimmer limb could nut be fun':
Sea sip it, an' tip it, bud tip it doon your wizan.

May ivvery yan at lifts his glass
To this faane band
Uphod³¹² he gans wi' t' best-like lass:
Sae sip it, an' tip it, bud tip it doon your wizan.

Frae wrist to wrist this band we pass,
As han' clasps han';
I' turn we through it draw each glass:
Sea sip it, an' tip it, bud tip it doon your wizan.

An' here's tiv her at fost³¹³ did weer
A braadal band
Bun' roond her leg; gie her a cheer:
Sea sip it, an' tip it, bud tip it doon your wizan.

[109]

An' here's to Venus; let us beg
A boon at she
Will gie each braade a pattern leg:
Sea sip it, an' tip it, bud tip it doon your wizan.

³¹⁰ From Mr. Richard Blakeborough's "Old Songs of the Dales," appended to his *T' Hunt o' Yatton Brigg*, p.57, 2nd edition.

³¹¹ Throat.

³¹² Uphold, maintain.

³¹³ First.

NANCE AND TOM³¹⁴

I' T' merry taame o' harvestin'
Lang sen,³¹⁵ aye well a day!
Oor Nancy, t' bonniest lass i' t' field
Had varra laal to say.
An' Tom whea follow'd, follow'd her,
An' neigh as dumb were he,
An' thof he wark'd some wiv his hands
He harder wark'd his ee.

For Nan were buxom, Nan were fair,
Her lilt were leet an' free;
An' Tom could hardlins hod³¹⁶ his wits,
He couldn't hod his ee
Frae Nancy's face; an' her breet smaale
Made Tom's heart lowp³¹⁷ an' thump;
Whal Nancy awn'd t' fost kiss he gav,
Her stays mun git a bump.

[110]

Bud o' ya neet, Tom set her yam,
"Noo, Nance," tell'd he, "I've gitten
A caivin' coo, an' twea fat pigs;
Wi' thy fair charms I'm smitten.
Thoo knaws I have a theak,³¹⁸ my lass,
An' gear, baith gert an' small,
I've fotty pund ligg'd by at yam,
Tak me, lass, tak it all."

Nance hing'd her heead an' dropp'd her een,
An' then she sighed, "Ah, dear!
Noo hod thy whisht,³¹⁹ thoo's tell'd t' same tale
To monny a maid, I fear."
Bud Tom just bowldly sleev'd³²⁰ her waist
An' chuck'd her unner t' chin.

³¹⁴ From Mr. Richard Blakeborough's "Old Songs of the Dales," appended to his *T' Hunt o' Yatton Brigg*, p.44, 2nd edition.

³¹⁵ Long ago.

³¹⁶ Hold.

³¹⁷ Leap.

³¹⁸ Thatched roof.

³¹⁹ Hold thy tongue.

³²⁰ Encircled.

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"O' Sunday neet," said he, "I'll wait
To hug³²¹ thy milk-skeel³²² in.

(A verse is missing)

[111]

She bun' about her matchless cauf
Four cletchin' streas,³²³ did Nan,
Twea wheaten an' twea oaten streas,
Bud niver tell'd her man.
She platted 'em when t' harvest mean
Her colour'd cheek made pale,
For nea lass plats her band for bairns
And then blirts³²⁴ out her tale,

An' t' mean for sham' ahint a clood
Her smaalin' feace did hide;
Sea nea hedge-skulker gat a peep
At Nan's leg when 't were tied.
An' nean i' t' village would have knawn,
At roond her leg, like thack,³²⁵
She'd bun' a band to gie her bairns,
Bud she tummel'd offen³²⁶ t' stack.

An' deaz'd she ligg'd, her shapely limb
Laid oot for all to see;
An' roond her leg a platted band
Were bun' belaw her knee.
Then up she sprang, an' laughin' said,
"Noo, Tom warn't here to see;
An' nean can say I's scrawmy³²⁷ cauf'd,
An' t' band still guards my knee."

[112]

THE WITCH'S CURSE³²⁸

³²¹ Carry.

³²² Milk-pail.

³²³ Thatching straws.

³²⁴ Blurts.

³²⁵ Thatch.

³²⁶ Off.

³²⁷ Unshapely.

³²⁸ From Mr. Richard Blakeborough's *T' Hunt o' Yatton Brigg*, p.12; see also the same author's *Yorkshire Wit, Character, Folklore, and Customs*, p. 169.

FIRE coom,
Fire gan,
Curlin' smeak
Keep oot o' t' pan.
Ther's a tead³²⁹ i' t' fire, a frog on t' hob,
Here's t' heart frev a crimson ask³³⁰;
Here's a teath fra t' heead
O' yan at's deead,
At niver gat thruf his task.
Here's prick'd i' blood a maiden's prayer,
At t' ee o' man maunt³³¹ see;
It's prick'd upon a yet warm mask,³³²
An' lapp'd³³³ about a breet green ask,
An' it's all fer him an' thee.

It boils,
Thoo'll drink;
He'll speak,
Thoo'll think:

It boils,
Thoo'll see;
He'll speak,
Thoo'll dee.

[113]

RIDIN' T' STANG³³⁴

(GRASSINGTON VERSION)

HEY dilly, how dilly, hey dilly, dang!
It's nayther for thy part, nor my part,
That I ride the stang.
But it's for Jack Solomon,
His wife he did bang.
He bang'd her, he bang'd her,
He bang'd her indeed,
He bang'd t' poor woman
Tho' shoo stood him no need.

³²⁹ Toad.

³³⁰ Newt.

³³¹ May not.

³³² Brew.

³³³ Wrapped.

³³⁴ From B. J. Harker's *Rambles in Upper Wharfedale*. Other versions, more or less similar to the above, are to be found in R. Blakeborough's *Wit, Folklore, and Customs of the North Riding*, and J. Nicholson's *Folk Speech of the East Riding*. In the Yorkshire Dialect Society's *Transactions*, vol. iii., part xvi., will be found a racy account, in the Beverly dialect, of the custom of "ridin' t' stang."

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He nayther took stick, stain, wire, nor stower,³³⁵
But he up wi' a besom an' knock'd her ower.
So all ye good neighbours who live i' this raw,
I pray ye tak warnin', for this is our law.
An' all ye cross husbands
Who do your wives bang,
We'll blow for ye t' horn,
An' ride for ye t' stang.
Hip, hip, hip, hurrah!

[114]

ELPHI BANDY-LEGS³³⁶

ELPHI bandy-legs,
Bent, an' wide apart,
Nea yan i' this deale
Awns a kinder heart.
Elphi, great-heck,
Greatest iver seen,
Nea yan i' this deale
Awns a breeter een.
Elphi, little chap,
Thof he war so small,
War big wi' deeds o' kindness,
Drink tiv him yan an' all.
Him at fails to drain dry,
Be it mug or glas,
Binnot woth³³⁷ a pescod,
Nor a buss³³⁸ frae onny lass.

THE DEAD PIG³³⁹

T' OWD pig's got mezzles³⁴⁰ an' she's deead, poor thing.
An' what will you mak o' her poor awd heead?
'T will mak as good as yune³⁴¹ as iver baked bread.
An' what will you mak o' her poor awd legs?
As good a set o' bed-props as iver propped beds.

[115]

³³⁵ Pole.

³³⁶ Written in an old cook-book and signed "J.L. 1699"; from Gordon Home's *The Evolution of an English Town*, p. 208.

³³⁷ Is not worth.

³³⁸ Kiss.

³³⁹ Current in Wensleydale, and supplied by Mr. T. L. Croft, formerly of Middleham.

³⁴⁰ Measles.

³⁴¹ Oven.

An' what will you mak o' her poor awd skin?
'Twill mak as good a blanket as iver man lay in'.
An' what will you mak o' her poor awd tail?
'Twill mak as good a hammer-shaft as iver drove a nail.
An' what will you mak of her poor awd lugs?³⁴²
As good a pair o' bed-flops as iver flopped bugs.

SINGING GAMES³⁴³

I

STEPPING up the green grass
Thus and thus and thus;
Will you let one of your fair maids
Come and play with us.

We will give you pots and pans,
We will give you brass;
We will give you anything
For a pretty lass.

We won't take your pots and pans,
We won't take your brass,
We won't take your "anything
For a pretty lass."

We will give you gold and silver,
We will give you pearl;
We will give you anything
For a pretty girl.

[116]

Come, my dearest Mary,
Come and play with us;
You shall have a young man
Born for your sake.
And the bells shall ring,
And the cats shall sing,
And we'll all clap hands together.

II

Sally made a pudden,
Shoo made it ower sweet;
Shoo dursn't stick a knife in 't,

³⁴² Ears.

³⁴³ From S. O. Addy, *A Sheffield Glossary*, p. 239; current in other parts of England.

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Till Jack cam home at neet.

John, wilta have a bit like?
Don't say nay,
For last Monday mornin'
Was aar weddin'-day.

III

Sally Water, Sally Water,
Come sprinkle your can,
Why do you lie mournin'
All for a young man?
Come, choose o' the wisest,
Come, choose o' the best,
Come, choose o' the young men
The one you love best.

[117]

IV

Diller a dollar,
A ten o'clock scholar,
What maks you coom sae soon?
You used to coom at ten o'clock,
Bud noo you coom at noon.

FRAGMENT OF THE HAGMENA SONG³⁴⁴

(As sung at Richmond, Yorkshire, on the eve
of the New Year, by the Corporation Pinder.)

TO-NIGHT it is the New-year's night, to-morrow is the
day,

And we are come for our right, and for our rey,³⁴⁵
As we used to do in old King Henry's day.
Sing, fellows, sing, Hagman-heigh.

If you go to the bacon-flick, cut me a good bit;
Cut, cut and low, beware of your maw;
Cut, cut and round, beware of your thumb,
That me and my merry men may have some.
Sing, fellows, sing, Hagman-heigh.

³⁴⁴ Hagmena or Hogmanay, is a north-country name for New Year's Eve; the name is also applied to the offering for which children go round and beg on that evening.

³⁴⁵ A Portuguese coin of small value.

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If you go to the Black-ark, bring me ten mark;
Ten mark, ten pound, throw it down upon the ground,
That me and my merry men may have some.
Sing, fellows, Sing, Hagman-heigh.

[118]

ROUND THE YEAR

NEW YEAR'S DAY

LUCKY-BIRD, lucky-bird, chuck, chuck, chuck!
Maister an' mistress, it's time to git up.
If you don't git up, you'll have nea luck;
Lucky-bird, lucky-bird, chuck, chuck, chuck!

CANDLEMAS

ON Can'lemas, a February day,
Throw can'le an' can'lestick away.

A Can'lemas crack
Lays mony a sailor on his back.

If Can'lemas be lound³⁴⁶ an' fair,
Ya hauf o' t' winter's to coom an' mair.
If Can'lemas day be murk an' foul,
Ya hauf o' t' winter's gean at Yule.

FEBRUARY FILL-DYKE

FEBRUARY fill-dyke,
Fill it wi' eyther black or white.
March muck it oot,
Wi' a besom an' a clot.

[119]

PALM SUNDAY

³⁴⁶ Calm.

PALM SUNDAY, palm away;
Next Sunday's Easter-day.

GOOD FRIDAY

ON Good Friday rist thy pleaf,³⁴⁷
Start nowt, end nowt, that's eneaf.

Lang Friday's niver dean,
Sea lig i' bed whal Setterday nean.

ROYAL OAK DAY

IT's Royal Oak Day,
T' twenty-naanth o' May.
An' if ye dean't gie us holiday,
We'll all run away.

HARVEST-HOME AND THE MELL-SHEAF³⁴⁸

WE have her, we have her,
A coo iv a tether.
At oor toon-end.
A yowe³⁴⁹ an' a lamb,
A pot an' a pan.
May we git seafe in
Wiv oor harvest-yam,
Wiv a sup o' good yal,
An' some ha'pence to spend.

[120]

HERE we coom at oor toon-end,
A pint o' yal an' a croon to spend.
Here we coom as tite as nip³⁵⁰
An' niver flang ower,³⁵¹ but yance iv a grip.³⁵²

³⁴⁷ Rest thy plough.

³⁴⁸ The "mell" is the last sheaf of corn left in the field when the harvest is gathered in.

³⁴⁹ Ewe.

³⁵⁰ Very quickly.

³⁵¹ Tumbled.

³⁵² Ditch.

WEEL bun' an' better shorn
Is Mr. Readhead's corn.
We have her, we have her,
As fast as a feather.
Hip, hip, hurrah!
Hurrah! Hurrah! Hurrah!

JOHN METCALFE has gitten all shorn an' mawn,
All but a few standards an' a bit o' lowse corn.
We have her, we have her,
Fast i' a tether
Coom help us to hod her.
Hurrah! Hurrah! Hurrah!

BLEST be t' day that Christ was born,
For we've getten t' mell o' t' farmer's corn.
It'g weel bun', but better shorn.
Mell! Shout, lads, Mell!

GUY FAWKES DAY

A STICK and a stake,
For King James's sake.
Please give us a coil,³⁵³ a coil.

[121]

AWD Grimey sits upon yon hill,
As black as onny awd craw.
He's gitten on his lang grey coat
Wi' buttons doon afoor.
He's gitten on his lang grey coat
Wi' buttons doon afoor.

CHRISTMAS

I WISH you a merry Kessenmas an' a happy New Year,
A pokeful o' money an' a cellar-full o' beer.
A good fat pig an' a new-cauven coo;
Good maisther an' misthress, hoo do you do?

³⁵³ Coal.

CLEVELAND CHRISTMAS SONG³⁵⁴

GOD rist you merry, gentlemen,
Let nothin' you dismay,
Remember Christ oor Saviour
Was born o' Kessmas day,
To seave wer sowls fra Sattan's power;
Lang taam we've gean astray.
This brings tidin's o' comfort an' joy.

Noo stright they went to Bethlehem,
Wheer oor sweet Saviour lay;
They fan' him iv a manger;
Wheer oxen fed on hay,
To seave wer sowls fra Sattan's power;
Lang taam we've gean astray.
This brings tidin's o' comfort an' joy.

[122]

God bliss t' maister o' this hoose,
An' t' mistress also,
An' all your laatile childeren
That roond your teable go;
An' all your kith an' kindered,
That dwell beath far an' near;
An' I wish you a Merry Kessamas
An' a Happy New Year.

A CHRISTMAS WASSAIL³⁵⁵

HERE we coom a-wessellin'³⁵⁶
Among the leaves so green,
An' here we coom a-wanderin'
So fair as to be seen.

Chorus—

An' to your wessel
An' to jolly wessel,
Love an' joy be to you
An' to your wessel-tree.

³⁵⁴ From Mrs. Tweddell's *Rhymes and Sketches*, p. 14.

³⁵⁵ From Easter and Lees, *Almondbury and Huddersfield Glossary* (English Dialect Society Publications, vol. 39, pp. xvii-xviii).

³⁵⁶ Wassailing.

The wessel-bob³⁵⁷ is made
O' rosemary tree,
An' so is your beer
O' the best barley.
An' to your wessel, etc.

[123]

We are not beggars' childeren
That begs from door to door,
But we are neighbours' childeren
That has been here before.
An' to your wessel, etc.

We have got a little purse
Made o' ratchin³⁵⁸ leather skin,
An' we want a little money
To line it well within.
An' to your wessel, etc.

Bring us out your table
An' spread it wi' a cloth;
Bring us out your mouldy cheese
Likewise your Christmas loaf.
An' to your wessel, etc.

God bless the master o' this house,
Likewise the mistress too;
An' all the little childeren
That round the table go.
An' to your wessel, etc.

Good master an' good misteress,
While you're sittin' by the fire
Pray, think of us poor childeren
That's wanderin' i' the mire.
An' to your wessel, etc.

[124]

SHEFFIELD MUMMING SONG³⁵⁹

³⁵⁷ Wassail-bough.

³⁵⁸ Stretching.

³⁵⁹ From S. O. Addy, *Sheffield Glossary* (English Dialect Society Publications, vol. xxii. p. 153). The song is sung at Christmas time in the villages about Sheffield at the conclusion of the folkplay, "The Peace Egg." See S. O. Addy, *Sheffield Glossary* (English Dialect Society), p. 153

COME all ye jolly mummers
That mum in Christmas time,
Come join with us in chorus
Come join with us in rhyme.

Chorus—

And a-mumming we will go, we'll go,
And a-mumming we will go;
With a white cockade in all our hats,
We'll go to t' gallant show.

It's of St. George's valour
So loudly let us sing;
An honour to his country
And a credit to his King.

Chorus—

And a-mumming we will go, we'll go,
And a-mumming we will go;
We'll face all sorts of weather
Both rain, cold, wet, and snow.

[125]

It's of the King of Egypt,
That came to seek his son;
It's of the King of Egypt,
That made his sword so wan.

Chorus—

And a-mumming, etc.

It's of the black Morocco dog
That fought the fiery battle;
It's of the black Morocco dog
That made his sword to rattle.

Chorus—

And a-mumming, etc.

CHARMS, "NOMINIES," AND POPULAR RHYMES

WILFUL weaste maks weasome want,

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An' you may live to say:
I wish I had that sharve³⁶⁰ o' breead
That yance I flang away.

A ROLLIN' stone gethers no moss,
A ram'lin' lad saves no brass;
A whistlin' lass an' a crowin' hen
Will fotch t' devil oot o' his den.

[126]

THAN awn a crawin' hen,
I seaner wad t' awd divil meet,
Hickity O, pickity O, pompolorum jig!
Or breed a whistlin' lass,
I seaner wad t' awd divil treat,
Hickity O, pickity O, pompolorum jig!

Nowt bud ill-luck'll fester where
There craws an' whistles sike³⁶¹ a pair;
May hens an' women breed nea mair.
Pompolorum jig.

MEEAT maks,
An' clease shaps,
But that is nut t' man;
For bonnie is that bonnie diz,
Deny it if you can.

THE MILLER'S THUMB

MILLER, miller, mooter-poke,
Teak a laid an' stale a stroke.³⁶²

DOWN i' yon lum³⁶³ we have a mill,
If they send more grist we'll grind more still.
With her broad arm an' mighty fist
Shoo rams it into t' mooter-chist.³⁶⁴

[127]

³⁶⁰ Slice.

³⁶¹ Such.

³⁶² Took a load of corn and stole a half-bushel; mooter, or multure is the toll of meal taken by the miller for grinding the corn: mooter poke, or multure-pocket, is accordingly a nickname for a miller.

³⁶³ Wood.

³⁶⁴ The chest in which the toll of meal was kept.

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HOB-TRUSH HOB

"HOB-TRUSH HOB, wheer is thoo?"
"I's tryin' on my left-foot shoe,
An' I'll be wi' thee—noo!"

GIN Hob mun hae nowt but a hardin' hamp,
He'll coom nae mair nowther to berry nor stamp.³⁶⁵

NANNY BUTTON-CAP

T' MOON shines breet,
T' stars give leet,
An' little Nanny Button-cap
Will coom to-morra neet.

THE NEW MOON

A SETTERDAY'S mean
Cooms yance i' seven year ower sean.

I SEE t' mean an' t' mean sees me,
God bless t' sailors oot on t' sea.

NEW mean, new mean, I hail thee,
This neet my true love for to see.
Not iv his best or worst array,
Bud iv his apparel for ivery day.
That I to-morrow may him ken
Frev amang all other men.

[128]

EVENIN' red an' mornin' gray
Certain signs o' a bonnie day.
Evenin' gray an' mornin' red
Will send t' shepherd weet to bed.

SOUTHER, wind, souther!³⁶⁶
An' blow my father heame to my moother.³⁶⁷

³⁶⁵ The meaning seems to be, If Hob is allowed nothing more than a smock-frock of coarse hemp, he will not come again either to thresh corn or to beat flax.

³⁶⁶ Veer to the south.

³⁶⁷ This is the lilt of the children of the east-coast fishermen when the boats are at sea.

FRIDAY UNLUCKY

DEAN'T o' Friday buy your ring,
O' Friday dean't put t' spurrins³⁶⁸ in;
Dean't wed o' Friday. Think on o' this,
Nowther blue nor green mun match her driss.

AN OMEN

BLEST is t' bride at t' sun shines on,
An' blest is t' deead at t' rain rains on.

A CHARM

TAK twea at's red an' yan at's blake,³⁶⁹
O' poison berries three,
Three fresh-cull'd blooms o' devil's glut,³⁷⁰
An' a sprig o' rosemary.

[129]

Tak henbane, bullace, bummlkite,³⁷¹
An' t' fluff frev a deead bulrush,
Naan berries shak frae t' rowan-tree,
An' naan frae t' botterey-bush.³⁷²

A GIFT³⁷³ o' my finger
Is seer to linger;
A gift o' my thumb
Is seer to coom.

SUNDAY clipt, Sunday shorn,
Better t' bairn had niver been born.

A MONDAY's bairn'll grow up fair,
A Tuesday's yan i' grace thruf prayer;

³⁶⁸ Banns.

³⁶⁹ Yellow.

³⁷⁰ Bindweed.

³⁷¹ Blackberries.

³⁷² Elder-tree.

³⁷³ White speck.

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A Wednesday's bairn has monny a pain,
A Tho'sday's bairn wean't baade at heame.
A Friday's bairn is good an' sweet,
A Settherday's warks frae morn to neet
Bud a Sunday's bairn thruf leyfe is blist,
An' seer i' t' end wi' t' saints to rist.

A COBWEB i' t' kitchen,
An' feat-marks on t' step,
Finnd nea wood i' t' yune³⁷⁴
An' nea coals i' t' skep.³⁷⁵

[130]

SNAW, snaw, coom faster,
White as allyblaster,
Poor owd women, pickin' geese,
Sendin' t' feathers daan to Leeds.

JULIUS CÆSAR made a law,
Augustus Cæsar sign'd it,
That ivery one that made a sneeze
Should run away an' find it.

A WEDDIN', a woo, a clog an' a shoe,
A pot-ful o' porridge, away they go!

CHIMLEY-SWEEPER, blackymoor,
Set o' t' top o' t' chapel door.
Tak a stick an' knock him daan,
That's the way to Chapeltaan.

THE LADY-BIRD

COW-LADY, cow-lady, hie thy way wum,³⁷⁶
Thy haase is afire, thy childer all gone;
All but poor Nancy, set under a pan,
Weyvin' gold lace as fast as shoo can.

THE MAGPIE

³⁷⁴ Oven.

³⁷⁵ Scuttle.

³⁷⁶ Home.

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I CROSS'D pynot,³⁷⁷ an' t' pynot cross'd me.
T' devil tak t' pynot an' God save me.

[131]

TELL-pie-tit,
Thy tongue's slit,
An ivery dog i' t' toon'll get a bit.

THE BAT

BLACK-black-bearaway,
Coom doon by hereaway.

THE SNAIL

SNEEL, sneel, put oot your horn,
Your fayther an' muther'll gie ye some corn.

HALLAMSHIRE

WHEN all the world shall be aloft,
Then Hallamshire shall be God's croft.
Winkabank and Templebrough
Will buy all England through an' through.

HARROGATE³⁷⁸

WHEN lords an' ladies stinking water soss,³⁷⁹
High brigs o' stean the Nidd sal cross.
An' a toon be built on Harrogate moss.

[132]

THE RIVER DON

THE shelvin', slimy river Don
Each year a daughter or a son.³⁸⁰

³⁷⁷ Magpie.

³⁷⁸ Attributed to Mother Shipton.

³⁷⁹ Gulp.

³⁸⁰ Compare to Dartmoor rhyme:

APPENDIX

SIR WALTER SCOTT'S VERSION OF THE CLEVELAND LYKE-WAKE DIRGE

This ae nighte, this ae nighte,
Every nighte and alle;
Fire and sleete and candle lighte,
And Christe receive thye saule.

When thou from hence away are paste,
Every nighte and alle;
To Whinny-muir thou comest at laste;
And Christe receive thye saule.

If ever thou gavest hosen and shoon,
Every nighte and alle;
Sit thee down, and put them on;
And Christe receive thye saule.

If hosen and shoon thou ne'er gavest nane,
Every nighte and alle;
The whinnes shall pricke thee to the bare bane;
And Christe receive thye saule.

From Whinny-muir when thou mayst passe,
Every nighte and alle;
To Brigg o' Dread thou comest at laste,
And Christe receive thye saul.

[134]

(A stanza wanting)

From Brigg o' Dread when thou mayst passe,
Every nighte and all;
To purgatory fire thou comest at laste;
And Christ receive thye saule.

If ever thou gavest meat or drinke,
Every nighte and alle;
The fire shall never make thee shrinke;
And Christ receive thye saule.

If meate or drinke thou never gavest nane,
Every nighte and alle;
The fire will burn thee to the bare bane;
And Christe receive thye saule.

This ae nighte, this ae nighte,
Every nighte and alle;
Fire and sleete, and candle lighte,
And Christe receive thye saule.